

ITINERARY:

Day 01 January 25, 2020 **Mumbai**

On arrival in Mumbai make your way to your hotel to meet your 'Going Places Together' host. The rest of the day is at leisure.

Overnight: The Gordon House or similar

Note: Transfers to your hotel can be arranged on request and at your expense.

Day 02 January 26, 2020 **Mumbai**

After breakfast join your group for your bus tour of Mumbai. Your tour includes a drive-by of important buildings in **Colaba area** (the old city of Mumbai) Church Street Station (formally known as the Victoria Terminus), the City University Grounds, Oval Maiden High Court with a stop at the **Crawford Market** and The Gateway to India then continue your drive along the Queens Necklace past Haji Ali's Mosque to Malabar Hill, stopping at the **Hanging Gardens**. Your drive continues past the Tower of Silence to the **Mahalaxmi Dhobi Ghat (largest outdoor laundry in India)** before returning to your hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure. Join your group for dinner at your hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Overnight: The Gordon House, Mumbai

Day 03 January 27, 2020 **Mumbai**

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel then the rest of the day is at leisure. Time to shop, visit the Prince of Wales museum, wander the old city and the waterfront or put your feet up and enjoy a good book. This is your day.

Meals: Breakfast

Overnight: The Gordon House or similar

The Chinese fishing nets in Cochin, Kerala

Day 04 January 28, 2020 **Mumbai to Cochin**

After breakfast check out of your hotel and board your bus to the Mumbai airport for your flight to Cochin, Kerala. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure. The Brunton Boatyard hotel offers their guests a free sunset cruise of the harbour a chance to see the Chinese fishing nets.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Overnight: Brunton Boatyard Hotel, Cochin

cooking with Sharlet

Kathakali Dancer

Day 05 January 29, 2020 **Cochin (Kochi) Cooking Class / Kathakali Dancers**

A busy day is ahead but so much to see and experience. Join your group and guide after breakfast to begin your tour of Fort Cochin by taking a walk along Old Kochi beach to watch the fisherman demonstrate the 14th century fishing technique using the Chinese fishing nets. Continue to St. Francis Church where the tomb of Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama can be found. Time to hop on a local Tuk-Tuk

to take you to Mattancherry the hub for spice trading and a visit to the 16th century Portuguese Dutch Palace and Jew Town's 400 year old Pardesi Jewish Synagogue. At 1:00 PM you will participate in a cooking school where you will learn to cook S. Indian food, then enjoy your creation. Back at the hotel for a short rest time before heading to see the traditional Kathakali Dancers of Kerala. Be on time as you don't want to miss the pre show. The Dancers show you how they apply their makeup. A work of art in itself.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Overnight: Brunton Boatyard or similar

Backwaters of Kerala

Day 06 January 30, 2020 **Cochin to Alleppey (The Backwaters of Kerala)**

After a leisurely breakfast you check out of your hotel board your bus and travel to the Alleppey jetty where you board your traditional Houseboat for your backwaters cruise.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight: Xandari River Escapes

Day 07 January 31, 2020 **Backwaters of Kerala**

Relax and enjoy your journey as you cruise at a leisurely pace through the scenic backwaters.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight: Xandari River Escapes

Tea plantations

Day 08 February 1, 2020 **Alleppey/ Periyar**

After breakfast your driver will meet you to continue your journey. Today you are going up in to the hills of Kerala to Periyar. The journey is approximately 4 hours. A picnic lunch will be provided on-route. You will stop to visit Pattumala Church and give you an opportunity to photo the tea and coffee plantations. On arrival check in to your hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Picnic Lunch, Dinner

Overnight: The Spice Village or similar

Elephants coming to drink from Lake Periyar

Day 09 February 2, 2020 **Periyar**

A day that will start early but is a new India adventure. You will travel through the National Park by boat on Lake Periyar your chance to see elephants and other wildlife is a good one here as they are protected and come to the water to drink. Then a walk along the trails looking for birds and wildlife with your tribal naturalist before returning to your hotel for breakfast. After breakfast head to the Elephant Junction where you can ride, feed and bath these giant gentle beasts. Always a special time. The rest of the day is at leisure, swim in the hotel pool, enjoy the deck of your cottage or wander in the village.

Meals: Breakfast
Overnight: The Spice Village

Elephant riding at Elephant Junction

The swimming pool at Spice Village

Day 10 February 3, 2020 **Periyar to Madurai**

Your journey continues as you depart Periyar and the jungle and head to Madurai an ancient city located on the banks of the River Vaigai. Madurai is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world that majorly traded with Rome. Chennai is the capital of Tamil Nadu but Madurai claims its soul. Your destination in Madurai is the Meenakshi Temple covered in intricate Dravidian Style paintings and carvings of mythical creatures and Hindu Gods and Goddesses. On arrival you check in to your hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Overnight: Astoria Hotel

ITINERARY continues:

Meenakshi Temple, Madurai

Day 11 February 4, 2020 **Madurai**

After breakfast then join your tour guide for a tour of Madurai which includes The Gandhi Memorial museum and the Tirumalai Nayak Palace a showcase of Islamic architecture. Continue your tour to what the Taj Mahal is to the north, the Meenakshi Temple. Built in the 6th century BC this temple holds a special place in the hearts of all Hindu believers and anyone with the chance to visit it. The magnificent temple stands over 170ft tall and was nominated for a new Seven Wonders Of the World. Return to your hotel for leisure time before returning to an evening ceremony of Aarti.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Overnight: Astoria Hotel or similar

Thirumalai Nayakar Palace

Day 12 February 5, 2020 **Madurai**

This is your day to relax, enjoy this ancient, interesting city, return to the temple or enjoy the hotel walk in the market and do some shopping.

Meals: Breakfast

Overnight: Astoria Hotel or similar

Lakshmi the elephant at the
Ganesh Temple waiting to bless you!

Day 13 February 6, 2020 **Madurai to Pondicherry**

Your journey from Madurai to Pondicherry is a long one but interesting. It is approximately 6 hours in your private vehicle. Photo stops and lunch stop will be included in your journey. On arrival in Pondicherry check-in to your hotel, The Promenade located in the old section of Pondi called White Town. Its name tells you

the location. Join your host and the citizens of Pondi for a traditional evening walk along the Promenade. A special time!

Meals: Breakfast

Overnight: The Promenade or similar

Pondi Temple

Mahatma Ghandi statue Promenade, Pondi

Day 14 February 7, 2020 **Pondicherry**

A corner of India that is forever France! No tour of Pondicherry has been formally included but join your host as Pondi holds a special place in her heart and she is looking forward to sharing it with you. Stroll to the Ganesh Temple along tree lined streets. Visit the market returning to your hotel in time for lunch.

An afternoon visit by tuk-tuk to Auroville with your host can be done either today or tomorrow. It is certainly something you must experience (TBA).

*Auroville was a vision of **The Mother** from **Sri Aurobindo Ashram** at Pondicherry. She envisioned a town where unity will be celebrated and all will have a spiritual vocation.*

The Mother

Bougainvillia of Pondicherry

Back at your hotel the rest of the day is at leisure. The Promenade has a pool and a very special view. Relax!

Meals: Breakfast

Overnight: The Promenade or similar

Day 15 February 8, 2020 **Pondicherry**

Today is considered a day of leisure but once again join your host for more of Pondi. Visit the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, shop in the boutique shops in White Town or venture further to see more of Pondicherry and its life.

Tonight is your last night on this journey. Join your group for a farewell dinner.

Meals: Breakfast, Farewell Dinner

Overnight: The Promenade or similar

This is the end of your Southern India tour with Going Places Together.

Day 16 February 9, 2020 **Pondicherry to Chennai**

Transfer to Chennai airport, that most will be departing from is not included in the price of the tour.

When you have decided what you will do next, arrangements will be made to assist you on your next part of your journey.

1. return home on the 9th from Chennai
2. Visit Sangam, Pune
3. Travel to Dubai (an option for those returning to Canada) from Chennai.
4. Visiting more of India eg Taj Mahal.