

---

# THE GOLDEN CHARIOT “SOUTHERN SPLENDOUR”

---



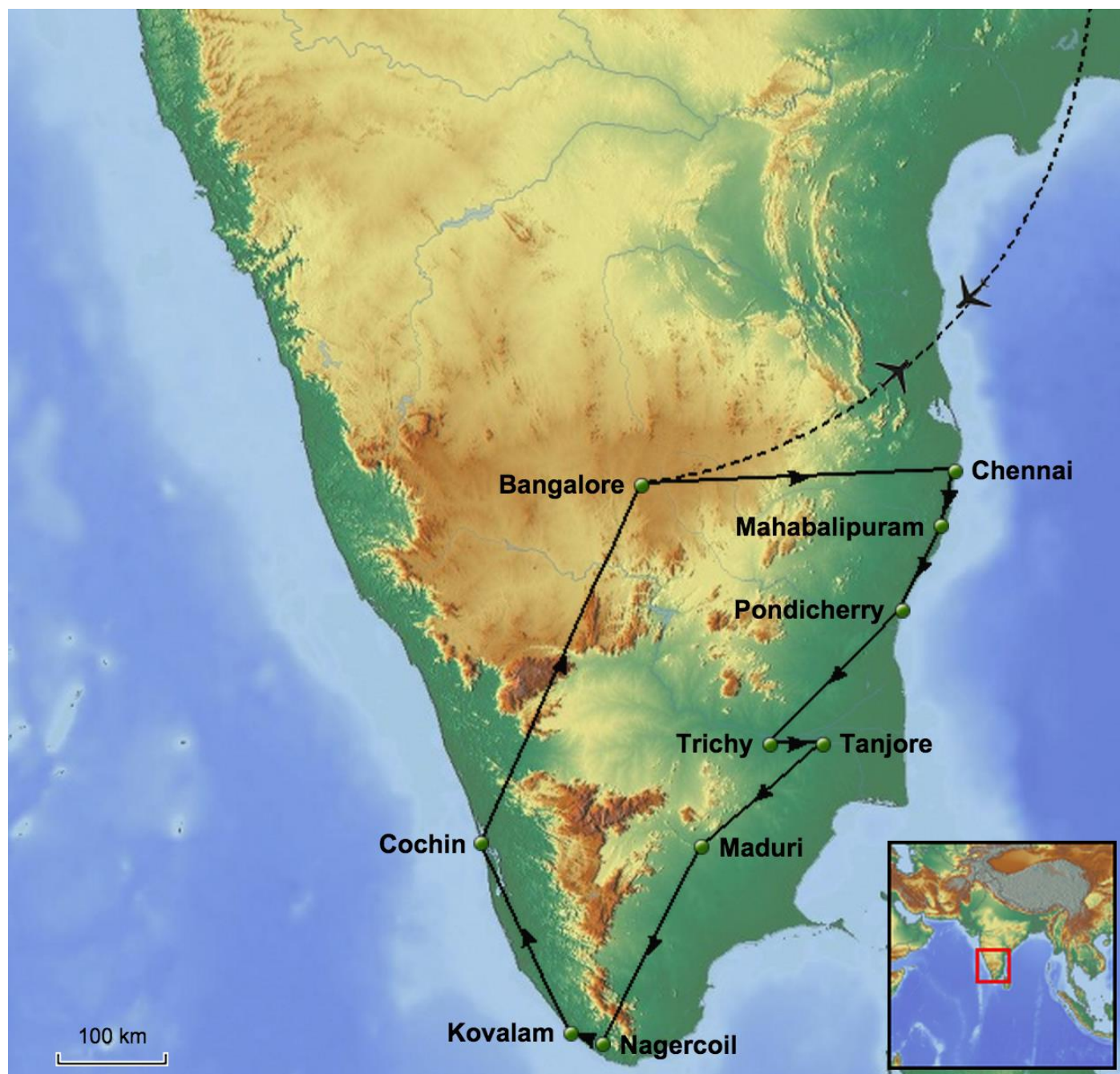
*Over a billion people, several hundred dialects, 29 states, and a cultural diversity that baffles the mind and cannot be put in words...Each of India's states - and the uncountable villages within- has a distinct history, cultural markers and allure. It is a land of a thousand untold stories.*



*Between destinations... journey within and without...*

## **ROUTE MAP**

Route: Bangalore – Chennai– Mahabalipuram – Pondicherry – Tanjore –Trichy– Madurai – Kanyakumari –Kovalam – Alleppey – Kochi – Bangalore





*Between destinations... journey within and without...*

## **ITINERARY**

### **DAY 1: BANGALORE BY FLIGHT**

Arrive at Bangalore. You will be met and assisted by a Secrets of India's representative who shall handover your travel documents and transfer you Taj west End to do check-in formalities of Golden Chariot Train. Enjoy a high tea and visit ISKON Hindu Temple, before reaching railway station to board your train.

**Overnight:** Train  
**Meals Included:** Dinner

### **DAY 2: CHENNAI & MAHABALIPURAM BY TRAIN**

Post breakfast enjoy sightseeing of Sant Thome Cathedral built over tomb of apostle St Thomas & and enjoy a drive on Marine Bay road.

Excursion to Mahabalipuram visit 8<sup>th</sup> century built stone cit Hindu temples complex located on the seashore & now on UNESCO world heritage site. Take a break from the journey & have sumptuous lunch at beach side resort.

**Overnight:** Train  
**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

### **DAY 3: PONDICHERRY BY TRAIN**

Post breakfast depart for Auroville Ashram, conceived in 1968, the meaning of Auroville only becomes clearer in the context of the vision of its founders, which has stimulated people from all over the world to join in this laboratory of evolution. Enjoy screening on Auroville Ashram, tour of Auroville Ashram and Matra Mandir.

Explore Aurobindo Ashram & 17<sup>th</sup> century built Ganesh Hindu temple. Enjoy stroll through 19<sup>th</sup> century built cobble streets called Latin quarters, built by former French colonial rulers.

**Overnight:** Train  
**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

### **DAY 4: TANJORE & TRICHY BY TRAIN**

Tanjore is popular for chola bronze collection and 3 dimensional paintings done in gold leaf. Post breakfast visit the famous Brihadeshwar temple complex, built in early 11<sup>st</sup> century & now a UNESCO world heritage site. The main temple dedicated to Hindu god Lord Shiva is carved out of single granite rock. Later visit former Royal palace with an interesting museum, art gallery & library.



*Between destinations... journey within and without...*

Visit the Sri Rangam temple, dedicated to Hindu God Lord Vishnu. The main entrance rises from base area of 5720 sq ft & goes up to 237 ft. moving up in eleven progressively smaller tiers. The temple is enclosed by 7 concentric walls with total length of over six miles. The complex has 21 towers 39 pavilions, fifty shrines, hall of 1000 pillars and several small water bodies inside. Non Hindus are allowed up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> outer courtyard but not inside the gold topped sanctum sanctorum.

**Overnight:** Train  
**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**DAY 5: MADURAI BY TRAIN**

Madurai has been inhabited since at least 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. Madurai is famous for its silks, pearls and spices. It was this lucrative trade that let its Pandyan Kings erect the mighty Meenakshi temple in 13<sup>th</sup> century.

Visit the Meenakshi Sundareswarar temple, dedicated to Hindu Goddess Paravti. The present temple was reconstructed in 17<sup>th</sup> century & houses 14 gateway towers, tallest of which is 170 ft high. There are an estimated 33,000 sculptures in the complex with two golden structured shrines over the main deities in the inner sanctum.

Evening visit the 17<sup>th</sup> century Thirumalai Nayak Palace, to savour the history and culture of Tamil Nadu at the sound and light show based on Silappatikaram, one of great epics of Tamil Literature.

**Overnight:** Train  
**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**DAY 6: KANYAKUMARI BY TRAIN**

Enjoy excursion to sunrise point at Kanyakumari. This location is the southernmost tip of India peninsula where 3 oceans meet. Explore 17<sup>th</sup> century built Padmanabhapuram wooden palace, one of hallmarks of traditional Kerala Syyle architecture.

Later depart for Kovalam, known for its world famous beaches on the Arabian Sea where you can relax and unwind before enjoying dinner in perfect setting of a 5\* hotel drive back to train for overnight.

**Overnight:** Train  
**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**DAY 7: ALLEPPEY & COCHIN BY TRAIN**

On arrival in Alleppey board the traditional houseboat to enjoy cruise through backwaters of Punnamada Lake, enjoy lunch on board and later disembark and depart for Cochin or Kochi.



*Between destinations... journey within and without...*

Arrive in 16<sup>th</sup> century built fort kochi town, proceed to explore Chinese fishing nets, Jew Synagogue & local spice market.

**Overnight:** Train  
**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**DAY 8:**

**BANGALORE**

**BY TRAIN**

After breakfast, you will disembark at Yeshwanthpura Railway Station, Bangalore.

Bid farewell to the Golden Chariot as your royal passage through the grand vistas of India comes to an end.

**Meals Included:** Breakfast

*Please note venue of meals & timings of sightseeing's would be subject to change as per Indian railways norms.*



*Between destinations... journey within and without...*

**Departure dates (2016 - 2017)**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Dates</b>
November 2016	28
December 2016	26
January 2017	09
February 2017	20

**Rates are available on request from Guidepost Rail Tours  
valid from Nov 2016 till Feb 2017**

**Inclusions**

- Accommodation in Deluxe cabin with attached bath
- All meals including tea, coffee and mineral water
- Transport for sightseeing in deluxe coaches
- Monument entry fee to all palaces & museums
- English speaking guide
- Service tax of 4.50%

**Notes**

- 10% Surcharge shall be levied on departures during Christmas / New Year
- Child below 12 years charged 50% of adult cost & provided bunker bed
- Child below 5 years complimentary without bed.