

12 Day Splendor of South India

USA – Mumbai (Bombay) – Cochin – Allapetty - Kerala (Backwater Houseboat Cruise) – Kumarakom – Periyar (Wild Life Sanctuary) – Madurai – Chennai (Madras), Mahabalipuram, Kanchipuram – USA

*****Escorted SMALL group with min. of 10 and max. of 18 travelers*****
Premium service with professional guides, deluxe hotels and sumptuous meals
 Affordable private journeys can be arranged with VIP service of a private English speaking guide, a chauffeur and a car at extra cost

An exploration of the spectacular repository of the Dravidian culture that underlies the Indian reality
 Trace the voyage of King Solomon’s ship that reached Cochin, a palm-fringed paradise at 1000 BC
 Discover dazzling silver beaches, serene green fields, thatched villages, and still jungles
 Unwind aboard the houseboat, slowly wending the meandering, reposeful backwaters of the Arabian Sea
 Marvel at Madurai and Chennai, gloriously templed, largesse of spirit and stone

2009 / 2010 Departure Dates	Tour Cost (US\$) Per person double occupancy departing from				Land Only Includes domestic flights	Single Room Supplement
	Los Angeles San Francisco		New York			
	Tour Cost	Cash Discount Price	Tour Cost	Cash Discount Price		
Apr 30, May 14, 2009	3590	3390	3288	3088	2526	1190
Jan 22, Feb 12, Mar 12, 2009	3880	3680	3590	3390	2820	1391
Sep17, Oct15, Nov19, Dec3, 2009 Jan21, Feb18, Mar18, Apr15,2010	4120	3920	3900	3640	3065	1535

US tax of \$98, Int'l flight fuel surcharge \$290, and India domestic air tax of \$133 per person is extra

****Summer departures and private journeys are also available! Please call 1-800-637-5778****

Enjoy Cash Discount Price and save \$200 per person!
To qualify, you must be the first 10 passengers booked on your tour / departure
Initial deposit can be paid by check or credit card
Remaining balance of the tour cost must be paid by check or money order only

Operated by *Orient Odyssey*



*B-Breakfast, L-Lunch, D-Dinner, F-In flight meals,
 SL / SD-Special local flavor meal or banquet*

Day01 USA – Mumbai (Bombay)

Depart from Los Angeles, San Francisco or New York. Enjoy award winning in-flight meals and services. Move our watch one day ahead as we cross the international dateline. *Prices for departing from other major gateway cities are available upon request. F

Day02 Arrive in Mumbai

After immigration and customs, our representative will greet and accompany us to the 5 star, deluxe, *Hotel Trident Mumbai*. Enjoy a restful night to recover from jetlag. F

Day03 Mumbai (Elephanta Carvings)

Mumbai is India’s most dynamic metropolis. It is the country’s major industrial and financial center, and is also the main hub for the Indian film industry “Bollywood”. It is a melting pot for Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsees and

Sikhs. Centuries of association with the British has left its imprint on the city with numerous buildings in Indo-Saracenic architecture. We first board a wooden ferry at [Gateway of India](#). The cruise takes us across the harbor to the famous [cave temples on the Elephanta Island](#).



Carved between 5th to 8th centuries A.D., it is famous for the magnificently sculpted panels. Return to the city, we will [drive by](#) the [High Court](#), the [ornamental University Building](#), the 280 ft high [Rajabhai Clock Tower](#), the ornate [Victoria Terminus](#), the colorful [Crawford Market](#), and the [Flora Fountain](#). We will visit the [Prince of Wales Museum](#), home to a world class collection of China ware, miniature paintings and sculpture. Then we drive along the [Marine Drive](#), once it was called “[Queen’s Necklace](#)”, to the [Malabar Hill](#), passing [Malaxmi Temple](#). We also tour the [Jain Temple](#) and stroll in the [Hanging Gardens](#) where we can enjoy the beautiful view of the city center and the bay. B/D

Day04 Mumbai – Cochin (Kochi)

After breakfast, we check-in for *Jet Airways*’ flight 9W401 departing at 10:35 a.m., arriving in Cochin at 12:20 p.m.. Welcome to [Kerala](#), known for its spices. Travelers from around the world journeyed here to trade from as early as 1000 B.C. After we check-in at the 5 star, deluxe, *Hotel Trident Cochin*, we set off to explore this fascinating city on the Malabar Coast. We first visit the [Mattancherry Dutch Palace](#), originally built by the Portuguese, and later on repaired by the Dutch (renaming it the Dutch Palace), although its architectural style is Keralan. We will enjoy its frescoes, dating from the 17th century, depict Indian epics in extraordinary vibrant vegetable colors. Next we go to the [Pardesi Synagogue](#) in [Jew Town](#), a settlement that dates back a millennium to the times of King Solomon. We stroll the streets with picture perfect houses in 17th century Dutch and traditional Kerala styles. Today it is still thrives with antique and spice shops. The small synagogue is still used by the diminishing



still thrives with antique and spice shops. The small synagogue is still used by the diminishing

Jewish community; most families have left for Israel. The synagogue is floored with blue and white tiles from Canton, no two of which are the same. We then tour the [Church of St. Francis](#), the oldest European Church in India. It houses some priceless antiquities including a palm leaf titled deed which the local Raja gave to the Portuguese in 1503. We head to the [Fort Cochin area](#) that overlooking the Arabian Sea. A beautiful waterfront community teaming with seafood vendors and expensive colonial style vacation homes. Here we will see the [Chinese Fishing Nets](#). Unique to this part of



Kerala, it is the living symbol of a centuries old Chinese influence on this coast. After diner we will drive to the local [performing arts center](#) to witness the spectacular [Kathakali dance performance](#), a dance drama based on the ancient epics “Kalaripayattu”. It is a display of martial arts originated in the temples of Kerala which also marks the most ancient form of defense in the world. B/D

Day05 Cochin – Allepey - Houseboat

This morning we drive to the village of [Allepey](#) (about three hours). On route, enjoy *Orient Odyssey*’s “[People to People Contact](#)” program with a stop at village [coil making factory](#) and interact with locals. The [backwater](#) region of Kerala is unbelievably beautiful. Travelers can journey through a network of narrow canals and wide lakes where people paddle to their daily tasks. Unlike the wave –tossed western sea shore, which runs roughly parallel, the backwaters are calm.



Boats of all descriptions are punted or sailed along the shallow green waterways with palm arching overhead. Tidy bungalows line up on either side, to give way to great heaps of coconut fiber or clusters of Chinese fishing nets, lit up at night to attract shrimps. Where the waters widen, villagers sometimes can be found up to their

necks, picking up fish from the muddy bottom with their toes and flinging them into terracotta pots that float beside them on the surface. We reach Allepey in time to board our [private houseboat](#). Traditionally called a [Kettuvallam](#), (literally, tied boats). It was built out of jakwood planks sewn together with coir rope. We will spend the rest of the day leisurely plying tranquil, deeply shaded maze of canals and immersing ourselves in life along the backwaters. Not long ago, heavily-laden cargo wallams once plied the same waters, laboriously punted or tugged by sails. They shared their passage with fishing skiffs, chugging ferries and paddled dug-outs carrying goods to the market. We will see beaches with dense palm groves, and towering lighthouses at old trading ports. Each of our Kettuvallam has two or three air conditioned bedrooms with private bath. There is also a sitting area and a day bed in the front where one can lie down and enjoy the passing sceneries. The friendly crews will prepare delicious meals and snacks. The houseboat will dock at night. We will enjoy a drink under the stars and a good sleep. **B/D**



Day06 Arriving in Kumarakom

Wake up by the singing bird and the welcoming sunshine. Enjoy breakfast with a cup of Kerala tea. We continue sailing through the jade smooth waters, passing many villages, quacking squadrons of ducks and oared boats that carries cycles, bearded Syrian Christian priests, newsboys and fishwives with an aromatic basket. Around noon we enter the vast [Vembanad Lake](#). In winter, Water fowls and cuckoos arrive here in abundance. We might even see large flocks of migratory wild ducks from Siberia coming in spectacular formation to roost. We arrive at our tranquil river resort at 3 star, superior, [Kumarakom Lakesong](#), situated right on the lake bank. This is a cluster of little islands like quaint little jewels lies on the eastern shore of the vembanad Lake, and is undoubtedly the most enchanting backwater destination that offers visitors many leisure options. The rest of the day is free. We can enjoy the spectacular sunset, book a spa or massage treatment, or unwind in



the property’s beautiful pool. Try the unique Ayurvedic Messages, in which herbs and oils are used to rejuvenate body and skin. **B/D**

Day07 Kumarakom – Periyar Wild Life Sanctuary

Today’s highlight is a drive (about six hours) with spectacular sceneries. Our bus will climb several thousand feet into the high mountains. Enjoy *Orient Odyssey’s* “[People to People Contact](#)” program, we make random stops at interesting villages and view points including a [rubber plantation](#). Late afternoon we reach our destination. Set high in the ranges of the Western Ghats is the [Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary](#). We check-in at the beautiful, 4 star, [Elephant Court](#). The Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary is one of the best [tropical wildlife sanctuaries](#) in the world



and is the repository of rare endemic flora and fauna. It is home to elephants, tigers, leopards, bison, antelopes, wild boars and a wide variety of birds. The heart of the sanctuary is a reservoir formed in 1895. The lake meanders around the contours of the wooded hills, providing perennial source of water for the local wildlife. The best time to view wild life is at dawn or dusk, when most animals come out of the forest to the shore, to drink water. We will take a [wild life viewing cruise](#) this evening, or early tomorrow morning. **B/D**

Day08 Periyar – Madurai

This morning we tour a [spice farm](#). Through *Orient Odyssey’s* “[People to People Contact](#)” program, we [chat with farmers](#) and learn characters of many spice plants. Kerala has long been regarded as the spice capital of the world. Although pepper remains to be the king of Kerala’s spices, the state also produces of Cardamom, Cinnamon, Nutmeg, Mace, Ginger and Turmeric; as well as a rich cultivation of cashew nuts. We then proceed for a drive to [Madurai](#) (about four hours), the “*temple town of South India*”. On route we stop at a [Tea Farm](#) and / or a [Tea Factory](#). We arrive at the superior, 3 star, [Hotel Sangam Madurai](#) in time for dinner. Madurai is the magnificent “Temple city” synonymous with the



celebrated [Meenakshi](#). Situated on the banks of river Vaigai, Madurai has a rich cultural heritage passed on from the great Tamil era dating back to 2,500 years ago. It has been an important cultural and commercial center from as early as 550 AD, and was the capital city for the great Pandya Kings. Tonight we will attend the mysterious [evening prayer ceremony](#) of “[Aarti](#)” at the Meenakshi Temple, a short and interesting daily ritualistic procession depicting Lord Shiva going to the bedroom to rest for the night. Since the exact time of “Aarti” is to be decided by the senior priests and might vary from day to day, we might have to wait for a long time in the dark temple grounds. **B/D**



Day09 Madurai - Chennai (Madras)

Today we will tour the magnificent [Meenakshi Temple](#) in detail. Dedicated to the goddess, and consort of Siva, this is said to be the biggest temple in the country. It is said to have 33 million sculptures and the most striking Gopurams at four corners. We will enter the [Nayakkar Mandapam Hall](#), “[Hall of Thousand Pillars](#)”. It contains many interesting artifacts, including a single light holder of 1,008 lamps which will be lit on festive occasions. Just outside we will see the musical pillars, when struck, each emitting a different musical note. We will see thousands of devotees come pay homage and play rituals. This afternoon we visit the [Thirumalai Nayaka Palace](#) with its massive [courtyard](#) and [grand hall](#). The next stop is the huge [temple tank](#) of [Mariamman Theppakulam](#), a spot rarely included in conventional tour programs. The tank is almost lake like, and is the largest one in the country. We will enjoy a leisurely stroll along the water front and observe busy local life. Apparently it is also a favorite spot for locals to relax after work. After dinner, the guide will assist us to check-in for [Jet Airway](#)'s flight 9W3520, departing at 8:55 p.m., arriving in Chennai at 10:10 p.m.. We will check-in at the deluxe, 4 star, [Hotel GRT Grand Chennai](#). **B/D**



Day10 Excursion to the Mahabalipuram and Kanchipuram

Welcome to Chennai – also called [Madras](#), the capital of Tamil Nadu, where Dravidian culture reached its zenith. It is a part of the legendary Coromandel Coast with a marvelous tradition of music and dance. The golden sandy beaches merge with the breakers of the Bay of Bengal. One of India's four metropolises, this city of 6 million people has a pronounced colonial heritage dating back to the 17th century, when first the Portuguese and then the British arrived here.



Today we take an excursion to [Mahabalipuram](#), a beautiful village by the sea, where all else is dwarfed by a dream world of awesome Tamil art, an open air museum of sculpture in living rock. The piece de resistance is [Arjuna's Penance](#): “[Descent of the Ganga](#)”. It is [the world's largest bas-relief](#), a beautiful composition of hundreds of celestial beings, human and animals all hurrying to a natural rock cleft that divides the giant stone. We then visit the legendary [Shore Temple](#), stood by the sea for 12 centuries. Its twin spires are pure poetry in granite. In the afternoon we head to [Kanchipuram](#), one of the greatest temple complex. “[The Golden City of a Thousand Temples](#)”, Kanchipuram is one of the seven sacred cities of India. We will explore the most significant site, including [Kailasanathar Temple](#), [Kamakshi Amman Temple](#), [Varadaraiar Temple](#) and [Vaikunta Perumal Temple](#). **B/D**



Day11 Chennai (Madras)

Today we explore the bustling capital city of Chennai, the fourth largest metropolitan city in India and the youngest. Formerly known as [Madras](#), the city remains steeped in rich tradition and civilization despite strong tides of modernization. First we visit [Fort St George](#) built in 1653. Here we will trace reminders of the past at [St. Mary's church](#) – the first church



consecrated on Indian soil. We will also visit the National Art Gallery and explore its bronze collection. The most stunning piece is the Chola period Nataraja, the God Shiva, in cosmic dance pose. Our bus will drive along the marina, the elegant seaside promenade to the old Indian section of Mylapore. Here we will see the San Thome Basilica – the culmination of the enduring legend of **Thomas Didymus**, the apostle who doubted and who is believed to have lived and preached on Mylapore’s shores. The tour ends at the Mylapore Temple. We will enjoy a free evening to explore the city at our own pace. B/D

Day12 Chennai – USA

After breakfast, we savor our unforgettable **journey to the splendor South India**, and board our homebound flight, arriving in USA on the same day. B/F

***Optional Extension**

Our programs are flexible! You can extend your stay in Chennai, or connect this package with a journey to Thailand and other southeast Asian destinations. You can also add an exploration of the majestic mountain kingdom of Bhutan.....Please contact us for more information.

***International Flights**

Orient Odyssey features *Air France, Air India, Japan Airlines, China Airlines, Asiana Airlines, Continental Airlines* and / or *Northwest Airlines / Delta Airlines* as the international carrier for this package. Based on your departure cities and tour logistics, Orient Odyssey reserves the right to secure other major international carrier for your journey. Flight arrangements will be finalized at least 60 days before departure.

Sample international flight schedules are as follows. Schedules are subject to change.

From Los Angeles (LAX):
 DL2096 Los Angeles – Atlanta 2315 / 0625
 DL184 Atlanta – Bombay 1800 / 2045
 DL8612 Chennai – Paris 0235 / 0905
 DL8510 Paris – Los Angeles 1015 / 1350

From New York (JFK):
 IT140 New York – Bombay 2130 / 2245

IT643 Chennai – Bombay 2055 / 2240
 IT141 Bombay – New York 0110 / 0800

***Note**

Fuel surcharges and taxes are subject to change. Due to lowered fuel cost, actual fuel surcharge might be less than quoted. Updated and accurate amount will be advised before the final payment due date. Tour cost is quoted based on current foreign exchange rate as of Dec 1, 2008. Price is guaranteed once full payment is received.

Kindly refer to General Terms & Conditions

For inquiry, please feel free to call

1-800-637-5778

ORIENT ODYSSEY
 1385 Gulf Road, Suite 203
 Point Roberts, WA 98281
 Tel: 1-800-637-5778, Fax: 1-800-564-8893
 E-mail: info@orientodyssey.com

www.orientodyssey.com