



# DEVOTION RETREAT SOUTH INDIA

February 23 – March 10 2024



# RETREAT

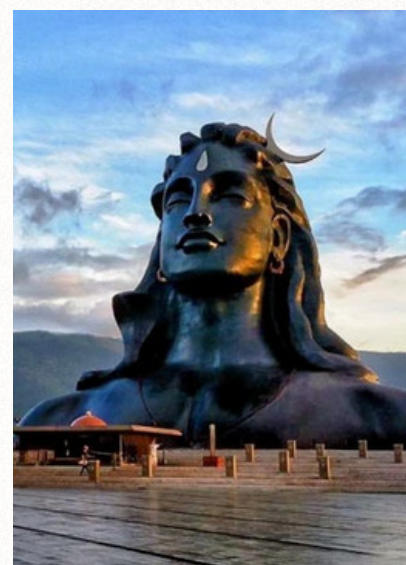
## ABOUT THE RETREAT



This 17-day retreat offers an immersive yoga program in South India, where you can experience the spirituality and natural beauty of Tamil Nadu and the healing Ayurveda of Kerala. You'll have the opportunity to connect with the people and soul of the land, heal your heart, and connect with the Divine. The program includes a forest retreat with a full Ayurvedic healing program and an overnight houseboat experience. The retreat culminates with Shivaratri, a divine celebration.

## HIGHLIGHTS

Experience a devotional journey across Tamil Nadu and Kerala with highlights, including luxury heritage hotels, daily yoga and meditation, cultural tours, visits to sacred ashrams, and a barefoot pilgrimage to the Venkateshwara Tirupati temple. Journey to picturesque Mahabalipuram, visit the Aurobindo Ashram and bike tour the Auroville city of the future. Enjoy a houseboat experience on tranquil Kerala backwaters, personalised Ayurvedic treatments, and a unique Puja at the Iringole Kavu Forest temple. Join the festivities and rituals of the Great Night of Shiva at the Isha Foundation Ashram, ending the program in Coimbatore.



## ITINERARY

### Day 1

Fri, 23 Feb:  
Chennai

Arrive at Chennai Airport (MAA). You will be met on arrival and driven to our luxury 5 star heritage hotel. Relax or explore the old city of Chennai at your leisure. Evening yoga by the pool. Welcome Dinner. Morning yoga and breakfast.

**Stay: Taj Connemara Hotel**

### Day 2

Sat 24 Feb:  
Chennai –  
Tirupati

After morning yoga and breakfast, we visit the Theosophical Society & Peacock walking tour of Chennai historical sites. Shopping to browse clothes, textiles, shawls, attire for Tirupati temple visit and ashram where traditional dress is required. Drive to Tirupati (3.30 hours). Yoga & dinner at hotel.

**Stay: Marasa Sarovar Hotel**

### Day 3

Sun 25 Feb:  
Tirupati

Rise early for yoga and breakfast. We walk the Srivari Mettu pilgrimage route barefoot up the 4000 steps to reach Tirumala Temple at the top of the sacred hill where we join the wave of pilgrims to enter the temple. This golden temple is one of the wealthiest in the world and the sanctum of Venkatesananda is mesmerising, a place where wishes come true. Return to hotel to relax for afternoon. Yoga & dinner at hotel.

**Stay: Marasa Sarovar Hotel**

### Day 4

Mon 26 Feb:  
Tirupati –  
Tiruvanamalai

After morning yoga and breakfast, we drive 4.5 hours to Tiruvanamalai. Arrive at the Athena Hotel, our tranquil accommodation with views to Mt Arunachala and close to the Ramana Maharshi Ashram. We go to the ashram for orientation, to visit the bookshop and sunset arati (prayer). Evening yoga and dinner at hotel.

**Stay: Athena Hotel**

### Day 5

Tue 27 Feb:  
Tiruvanamalai

Morning yoga and breakfast at hotel. Visit ashram temple, library, walk to Golden Pond. Discussion group in outdoor area in ashram grounds. After lunch we do the Pradakshina, a 14 kilometre pilgrimage around the sacred mountain which we do partly walking and rickshaws. Devotees worship Shiva by circumambulating the mountain which now includes roads. There are eight lingams and many mandapas and holy tanks around the Arunachala hill and we stop at all of them. Evening prayer/aratri/meditation at ashram. Yoga & dinner at hotel.

**Stay: Athena Hotel**

### Day 6

Wed, 28 Feb:  
Tiruvanamalai

After yoga and breakfast, we embark on our 2 hour walk on Mt Arunachala to visit the Virupaksha Cave where Ramana Maharshi lived for 17 years in total silence. The great sage Virupaksha Deva also lived in this cave many years before. We visit the Skandashram, a tiny austere ashram on the side of the mountain where Ramana Maharshi lived for the rest of his life. Meditation in both the ashram and cave is an incredibly deep experience. Arati at ashram. Yoga and dinner at hotel.

**Stay: Athena Hotel**

# RETRIBUTE



## ITINERARY

### Day 7

Thu 29 Feb:  
Tiruvanamalai –  
Pondicherry

After yoga and breakfast, drive 4 hours 45 minutes to the beautiful whitewashed French colony Pondicherry on the east coast, with a stop for lunch on the way. Afternoon visits Aurobindo Ashram and bookshop. Explore Pondicherry at your leisure. Dinner at our hotel right on the beachfront promenade.

**Stay: Promenade Hotel**

### Day 8

Fri 1 Mar:  
Auroville

Sunrise yoga by the sea and breakfast. A day at Auroville – the visionary city of the future conceptualized by the 'Mother', who, along with Sri Aurobindo, was the spiritual leader of the ashram. Our day begins at the Visitor Centre and meditation at the Matrimandir. Following this, we enjoy a bicycle tour of Auroville, stopping at galleries, craft centres and rural homes, and lunch at an organic restaurant. We return to Pondicherry in the afternoon—yoga & dinner at the hotel.

**Stay: Promenade Hotel**

### Day 9

Sat 2 Mar:  
Pondicherry –  
Mahabalipuram –  
Chennai

Drive 1.45 hours to Mahabalipuram, where we will visit the Shore Temple and the ancient carved temples which emerge from the sea. You have time to wander through this bustling seaside town and have lunch—sunrise yoga by the sea and breakfast.

### Day 9 afternoon

Sat 2 Mar:  
Mahabalipuram –  
Chennai

We drive one hour back to Chennai and to the home of our teachers AG Mohan and Indra Mohan for an afternoon Devotion program with them. This is a rare privilege to be guided in yoga by these two contemporary masters who embody the qualities of traditional yoga. Following our program we drive for 1 hour to our palatial seaside hotel and enjoy dinner together.

**Stay: Hotel Leela Palace**

### Day 10

Sun 3 Mar:  
Chennai

After yoga and an early breakfast we drive to Chennai airport and take an early 1.5 hour flight to Cochin, Kerala. We drive 2.5–3 hours to Alapuzha where we board our traditional wooden houseboat for our overnight houseboat experience on the tranquil backwaters. We visit villages and churches and stop for evening yoga and meditation before enjoying dinner onboard. We fall asleep to the sounds of the birds, water and village life. Our time on the houseboat is deeply peaceful and relaxing.

**Stay: Houseboat**

### Day 11

Mon 4 Mar:  
Alapuzha –  
Malayatoor

After early morning meditation, yoga and a leisurely breakfast onboard, we disembark and drive 3 hours to the tranquil Namami Health Retreat and Wellness Sanctuary situated in the forest and on the banks of the Periyar River. We enjoy lunch, and you will have a 60 minute consult with an Ayurvedic doctor who will design a personalised Ayurvedic retreat which includes daily 90 minute therapies (such as massage), herbs, yoga, meditation and personalised meals. We also begin our 3 day preparation for the Shivaratri Sadhana (meditation) here with daily herbs, meditations and yoga preparing for the great night of Shiva at the ashram of Sadhguru. Dinner at retreat.

**Stay: Namami Health Retreat & Wellness Sanctuary**

# RETRREAT



## ITINERARY

### Day 12

Tue 5 Mar:  
Malayatoor

Day 2 of our Ayurveda Healing Retreat. Morning meditation, yoga, then a personalised breakfast. 90 minute Ayurvedic therapy (ie massage or other treatment). For those who wish to, after lunch we enjoy a guided hike in the nearby forest. In the afternoon we rest and enjoy a cooking class at our resort. Yoga, dinner and evening meditation program at hotel.  
**Stay: Namami Health Retreat & Wellness Sanctuary**

### Day 13

Wed 6 Mar:  
Malayatoor

Day 3 of our Ayurveda Healing Retreat. Morning meditation, yoga, then a personalised breakfast. 90 minute Ayurvedic therapy (ie massage or other treatment). You have some time to yourself on this day to relax and just be! Or you may like to visit the nearby Kodanad Elephant Sanctuary (30 minute drive) early to see the elephants bathing in the river.

### Day 13

**afternoon**  
Wed 6 Mar:  
Iringole Kavu

We depart our retreat at 3pm to drive 20 minutes to Iringole Kavu Forest temple for a walk and meditation in the sacred forest grove and a special private Durga Puja for our group in the temple. We return to Namami for sunset and meditation and dinner by the river.  
**Stay: Namami Health Retreat & Wellness Sanctuary**

### Day 14

Thu 7 Mar:  
Malyatoor –  
Alandurai –  
Coimbatore

After morning yoga and breakfast, we drive 4–5 hours to the small rural village of Alandurai to the Isha Foundation Ashram, home of Sadhguru. On arrival we register for Shivaratri, meditate in the temple, bathe in the healing pools with the powerful dhyana lingam. We participate in the evening festivities & cultural program. Dinner at ashram.  
**\*Stay: Isha Foundation or Vivanta Coimbatore**

### Day 15

Fri 8 Mar:  
Isha Foundation  
Ashram

Day 3 of Shivaratri Meditation. After morning yoga and breakfast, we go to the ashram for the Shivaratri program which continues until the early hours of the morning, immersing ourselves in both the spectacle and sacredness of this profound night with many thousands of people.  
**\*Stay: Isha Foundation or Vivanta Coimbatore**

### Day 16

Sat 9 Mar:  
Alandurai

We return to our accommodation to rest in the morning after our all night vigil. A restful day of contemplation. If we are at the ashram you can participate in the ashram activities. In the evening we formally close the retreat with a giving circle and ritual to say goodbye and end our retreat process.  
**\*Stay: Isha Foundation or Vivanta Coimbatore**

### Day 17

Sun 10 Mar:  
End

After meditation, yoga and breakfast we close our retreat and say our goodbye to India as our retreat draws to an end. You will be transferred to Coimbatore (CJB) international airport (30 minutes from hotel/1 hour from ashram) for your flight onwards or home.

*\* If accommodation at the Foundation is not available, we will stay in Coimbatore at the Vivanta Coimbatore Hotel which is one hour drive.*

# RETREAT



# PRICING

Please refer to the pricing schedule below.

	EARLY BIRD		STANDARD (1)	
	Book by 30 June. Full Payment Due by 1 Nov 23		Book anytime. (2) Full Payment Due by 30 Jan 24	
	Twin Share \$5, 690	Single Room \$7, 690	Twin Share \$6, 090	Single Room \$8,090
Payment 1 (3)	\$1, 490	\$1, 490	\$1, 490	\$1, 490
Payment 2	\$1, 600	\$2, 600	\$3, 200	\$5, 200
Payment 3	\$1, 600	\$2, 600		
Final Payment (4)	\$1, 000	\$1, 000	\$1, 400	\$1, 400

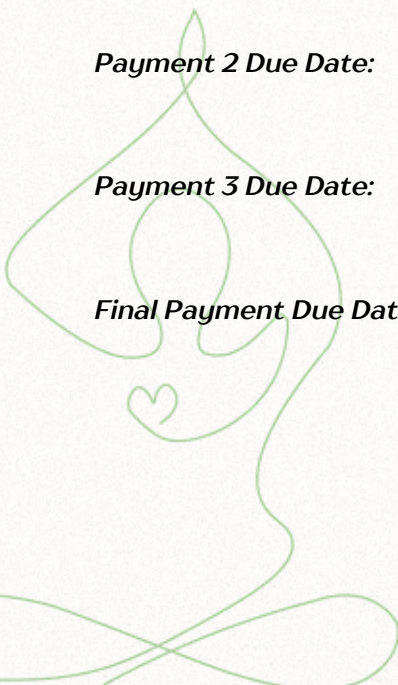
# RETRREAT

(1) 9 or 12 Month Payment Plans available; subject to additional fees. Refer to FAQ section.  
 (2) Subject to availability.  
 (3) \$700 of Payment 1 is not refundable.  
 (4) Payment 4 comprises of the final payment (as per the payment schedule above) and any extra nights booked (before or after the retreat).

**Payment 2 Due Date:** *Early Bird: 1st September 2023*  
*Standard : 1st November 2023*

**Payment 3 Due Date:** *Early Bird: 1st November 2023*

**Final Payment Due Date:** *Early Bird: 1st November 2023*  
*Standard: 30th January 2024*



## PAYMENT

- Payment 1:** This payment is made upon booking.
- Payment 2 & 3:** This payment is to be paid directly to our travel agent. Please refer to the payment details below.
- Final Payment:** You will receive an invoice from Kookaburra Yoga with the amount outstanding (based on any extra nights at beginning or end you have booked) which is to be paid by bank transfer to our account.

## BANK & CREDIT CARD PAYMENT DETAILS

Please review the following payment methods and details to make your second and third payments to our travel agent. Please ensure to select the correct currency as INR. Once you have paid, please send us the transaction details via Email to follow up with the bank.

**Method 1: Debit Card (OR) Credit Card using Visa or Master Card (Preferred Payment Method)**

Total payable amount – INR XXXX (Tour cost + 3.5% bank fee \*)

### Instructions:

- <https://www.payments.indianpanorama.in/>
- Select the Click to Pay button (purple button)
- Enter the following username and password:  
User Name: cholanpayment3  
Password: STwttwip3

### Method 2: Bank Transfer

Name of the Bank: STATE BANK OF INDIA  
Account Name: CHOLAN TOURS PRIVATE LIMITED  
Account Type: Current Account  
Account Number/ IBAN: 30078599634  
Swift Code: SBININBB246  
IFSC Code: SBIN0004060  
Branch Name: State Bank of India, Commercial Branch, 06-Dukes Complex, Bharathiyar Salai, Tiruchirappalli – 620001, India  
Purpose of Remittance: Cost of Tour Package

\*A 3.5% bank fee will be applicable for each card transaction in addition to the payable amount.

# RETRREAT



## FAQ

### What is included in the retreat?

- Transfer from Chennai Airport (MAA) on arrival and to Coimbatore airport (CJB) on departure (for those arriving on the tour commencement date and departing on the tour end date).
- 4 & 5 Star accommodation throughout with Breakfast & Dinner.
- Daily morning and afternoon/evening yoga and meditation sessions
- Tours and activities as stated in the itinerary.
- Domestic flight from Chennai to Cochin
- 3 nights Ayurvedic Program with daily treatments and personalised meals. Full board (breakfast, lunch, dinner)
- English speaking guide service throughout. Entrance fees at monuments, temples and ashrams
- Air conditioned transport service for all transfers and sightseeing tours
- Personalised assistance from local travel agent and guides
- All applicable taxes

### What is excluded in the retreat?

- International flight, Indian visa, compulsory travel insurance.
- Bank or International transfer fees for part payment of retreat cost to Indian travel agent (approx \$100-\$150)
- Airport transfers (if you are arriving and leaving outside tour dates).
- Lunches, extra food (except for Ayurveda retreat which includes full board)
- Laundry
- Personal shopping
- Tips, gratuities and donations

### What other information I need to know before committing to the retreat?

- To enter India it is a requirement that you have a passport valid with at least 6 months from date of travel.
- To enter India you need to obtain an entry visa. Visas must be organised in advance in your own country. For anyone travelling from Australia this must be done online in advance of the retreat. You can apply for an e-visa directly through the India Government's online portal: <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>.
- You must book your own international flight to arrive at Chennai on the commencement date or before. You will need to arrive at Chennai International Airport (MAA).
- You will leave from Coimbatore so therefore your return flight should be booked departing from Coimbatore International Airport (CJB) on the final tour date or afterwards.

# RETREAT





## FAQ

### What other information I need to know before committing to the retreat? (continue)

- Both airports are international so that you will find flights directly to and from these airports. Book flights as early as possible to secure a reasonable price. We usually fly Singapore Airlines as they have the shortest travel times, and we have never had an issue with this airline. You are welcome to book with the airline of your choice. If you wish to travel on the same international flights from Perth as Mandy, we will provide the details.
- Travel insurance is compulsory on this trip. • You must have a travel insurance policy with relevant inclusions and provide us with your Certificate of Currency before departure. You should organise travel insurance when booking international flights to ensure you are covered if you need to cancel.

### Do I need to get travel insurance?

Yes. Your insurance policy should cover you in the event you are unable to travel or need to cancel due to unforeseen circumstances. Please ensure you organise travel insurance as soon as you book.

### What is the retreat size?

We are expecting about 16–20 people to attend. The minimum number, subject to availability of room bookings, is 12.

### What do I need to know if I choose to pay, using a payment plan?

We offer a 9 or 12-month payment plan.

- If you choose to pay using the 9-month plan, an additional \$300 fee will be added to the standard price.
- If you choose to pay using the 12-month plan, an additional \$450 fee will be added to the standard price.

### Is travelling to India safe?

We have travelled to India many times and provide participants with advice and assistance to stay safe in the country. There are inherent risks in any form of travelling. These are largely mitigated through careful planning, engaging the services of reputable local travel agencies, and encouraging scrupulous hygiene and food awareness. We take our own children to India and they sometimes accompany us on retreats. We wouldn't consider risking their wellbeing and equally we wouldn't consider risking the wellbeing of our participants.

# RETREAT



## FAQ

### What should I wear?

Tamil Nadu is hot during the days, reaching temperatures of up to 32 degrees, and warm in the evenings with lows of about 24 degrees (Celsius). The weather should be dry, with the monsoon season starting later in May or June. Clothes should be suited for this type of weather. You can purchase light cotton clothing in the marketplaces. Please note that the weather is variable during the mountain meditation retreat at Coonor, where it may be cold.

- When visiting temples, and any public places, the dress should be conservative with legs to the ankles and shoulders covered. At traditional temples, both men and women are expected to wear formal Indian attire. You will have opportunities to purchase suitable clothing in Chennai.
- Bring bathers for swimming. While there are no issues in hotel pools and the pool at our retreat centre, modesty is essential if swimming in public places, and a sarong or t-shirt over your bathers is recommended for women.
- For yoga, wear whatever clothes you are comfortable moving, stretching, and sitting in. We recommend bringing or buying a shawl for meditation, and you will need mala beads for introspection, which can be purchased at the marketplaces.
- During the ashram visits, you must wear white and pale coloured modest clothing, even during your hatha yoga practice.

Mosquitos will be an issue in the evenings, so loose, long cotton clothing is ideal.

### What information do I need when organising my visa?

To enter India you need to obtain an entry visa. Visas must be organised in advance in your own country. For anyone travelling from Australia this must be done online in advance of the retreat. You can apply for an e-visa directly through the India Government's online portal: <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>.

#### REFEREE OR CONTACT FROM INDIA:

Name: Christy Gomez. Company: Indian Panorama

Address: Pavana Building, K.P. Vallon Road, Kadavanthra P.O, Cochin, Kerala - 682020

Phone: ++ 91 0484 4062000 | Mobile : 09746074145

Email: [christy@indianpanorama.in](mailto:christy@indianpanorama.in)

#### YOUR MAIN ADDRESS IN INDIA:

Taj Connemara Hotel Chennai

Address: Binny Rd, Anna Salai, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600002, India

Phone: +91 44 6600 0000

#### YOUR CONTACT PHONE NO. IN INDIA

If not taking your own mobile phone, you can use Mandy's number +61 422 318 104

# RETREAT



## FAQ

### What is your cancellation policy?

- There is an initial \$1490 payment upon booking.
- The non-refundable deposit portion of this is \$700. This is your commitment to attend and is generally nonrefundable unless we can offer your place to a waitlisted person or you find someone to take your place.
- In exceptional circumstances, we may refund part of the deposit to you. Even then, only the unused portion of the deposit is refundable (we book accommodation, transport etc., as soon as you register to secure seats)
- If you cancel 0–8 weeks before the retreat, the full amount is payable.
- If you cancel 8–12 weeks before the retreat, 50% of the retreat fee will be refunded to you.
- If you cancel more than 12 weeks before the retreat, your full payment (except for the deposit) will be refunded.
- If you need to cancel due to ill health or the death of someone close to you, your travel insurance policy may refund your deposit and all other money paid back to you. Please check with your insurer.
- Travel insurance on this retreat is compulsory.
- If Kookaburra Yoga cancels this retreat 12 weeks or more before the commencement date, all monies paid will be refunded within 30 days.
- If Kookaburra Yoga cancels this retreat within 12 weeks of the tour commencement date due to a natural disaster or unforeseen acts of God, full refunds may not be possible. Please ensure you have adequate travel insurance.
- Ensure you organise travel insurance as soon as you book. Your insurance policy should cover you if you cannot travel or need to cancel due to unforeseen circumstances. Please check your policy carefully to ensure you have suitable cover.

# RETREAT

