



Mysore Palace

Ophthalmology and Eye Care in South India

16 - 29 November 2015

Including flights from the UK:
15 - 29 November 2015

*“This is a hugely imaginative and enjoyable trip which
really gets under the skin of many aspects of India.”*

David and Rhona Rae, Obstetrics in South India, 10 – 27 November 2013



The Royal College of Ophthalmologists



Jon Baines
tours



Commuting in Kerala

From the shore temples at Mahabalipuram to the Chinese fishing nets at Cochin, travel through the southern states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala. Experience ancient Tamil history, the beautiful Coromandel coast, gracious Mysore and gentle, eclectic Kerala. Between the wide ranging professional visits there is ample time to enjoy the cultural treasures and stunning natural beauty of South India.

Transfer from Chennai to start your tour on the shores of the Coromandel coast at Mahabalipuram. Enjoy the afternoon relaxing by the sea, followed by a welcome dinner.

The following day drive to the former French colony of Pondicherry and explore the French and Tamil quarters. This charming city is unlike anywhere else in South India with a distinctly Gallic flavour that can be seen in the architecture, police uniforms and of course the food. Visit the Pondicherry Institute of Medical Sciences and visit the Department of Ophthalmology. There is a partner programme to the influential Aurobindo Ashram and the 'universal city' of Auroville. Return to Mahabalipuram with time at your leisure.

The following morning explore rural India on auto rickshaws past typical Tamil houses, visiting a local temple, a village school and a primary health centre, and enjoy a traditional thali lunch in a village. Return to Mahabalipuram in the afternoon to visit the World Heritage shore temples - an extraordinary open air showcase for Tamil art and the world's largest bas-relief, featuring a stunning composition carved in stone.



Pondicherry



Take tea at the Lalitha Mahal Palace (top);
On the road to Mysore (above)

Next morning fly to the energetic city of Bangalore, known for being the Silicon Valley of India. Visit the MS Ramiah Hospital Ophthalmology Department, with a partner programme to the silk bazaar. In the evening there is a reception with the Ophthalmic Association of Bangalore.

Next morning hear a lecture by the Ophthalmic Association of Bangalore or spend time at leisure, enjoying this city renowned for its green spaces, restaurants and shopping. Continue to Mysore, stopping on the way to visit the elegant Palace of Sultan Tipu, notable for its teak pillars and ornamental frescoes depicting his struggle against the British.

Sumptuous Mysore is famed for its palaces and its silk, sandalwood and spices. In the morning hear a lecture and after lunch visit one of the most astonishingly ornate palaces in India, Mysore Palace. Afterwards, wander through the colourful throngs of the Devaraj Market. As the

sun goes down, relax over a sunset high tea with magnificent views overlooking Mysore from the grand Lalitha Mahal Palace.

Next morning visit Chamundi Hill to witness the procession of the Goddess at the Temple, which towers over the city, before visiting the Bull. Spend the rest of the day at leisure and in the evening see the spectacular illuminations on Mysore Palace.

The next day travel into the Blue Mountains via the beautiful Mudamadali Wildlife Sanctuary, which protects a wealth of wildlife including deer, wild boar, monkeys, birdlife and elephants. Stop here for lunch en route to Ooty, where you will check into Sullivan Court for the night.

Known as the Queen of the Hill Stations, 'Snooty Ooty' is a cool, tranquil town surrounded by hills and tea slopes. From Ooty, take the toy train to Coonoor the next day on an exhilarating



Mysore Palace by night (top); Tea pickers in Coonoor (above)



life unfold as you sail past families swimming, fishing and washing in the canals, past vegetable laden canoes alongside vivid green rice paddies and coconut farms. Enjoy a Keralan lunch on board before returning to Allepy and transferring back to Cochin.

The next morning transfer to the airport for your return flight, or extend your stay in Kerala at the Marari Beach Resort.

switchback ride through the Blue Mountains, to visit a tea plantation and tea factory. Explore the town of Coonor and return to Ooty in the afternoon.

Spend the following day sightseeing in Ooty, including a visit to the beautiful botanical gardens, which were laid out by gardeners from Kew. In the afternoon take a nature walk in the beautiful Ketti Valley.

Drive to Coimbatore for brunch, before boarding the train for a wonderful journey across lush Kerala via the Cardamom Hills and into the coastal city of Cochin - 'The Gateway to Kerala.' Upon your arrival check into the Trident Hotel in the heart of old Cochin.

Next morning visit the Nagajuna Ayurvedic Hospital and learn about traditional approaches to massage, yoga and diet, with a partner programme exploring old Cochin. In the afternoon take a walking tour of Fort Cochin, visiting the oldest church in India, 500 year old Portuguese houses, the spice houses and areas that could be lifted from an English country village. Finish the day with a sunset cruise along Cochin harbour, which takes you past the ethereal Chinese fishing nets.

Drive the short distance to Allepy to board a private converted rice barge for a cruise along the tranquil Keralan backwaters. See Keralan



Chinese fishing nets in Cochin (top); Turmeric sorting in Cochin; Cruise along the backwaters in a converted rice barge (above)

Itinerary 16 – 29 November 2015

B = Breakfast **L** = Lunch **D** = Dinner

3 nights Mahabalipuram - 1 night Bangalore - 3 nights Mysore - 3 nights Ooty - 3 nights Cochin

16 Nov (Mon) Chennai / Mahabalipuram **D**

Am Arrive Chennai and transfer to the Garden Bay Resort
Pm At leisure
Eve Welcome dinner

17 Nov (Tues) Mahabalipuram **B D** / Pondicherry / Mahabalipuram

Am Drive to the former French colony of Pondicherry and explore the French and Tamil quarters
Pm Visit the Pondicherry Institute of Medical Sciences and visit Department of Ophthalmology with lecture.
Partner Programme: Visit the Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville.
Return to Mahabalipuram and at leisure

18 Nov (Wed) Mahabalipuram **B L**

Am Explore the countryside by auto rickshaws, including a visit to Kadumbadi village, a village school and temple and a Primary Health Centre
Pm Thali lunch in village. Visit the World Heritage shore temples
Eve Optional dinner in Mahabalipuram

19 Nov (Thur) Mahabalipuram **B D** / Bangalore

Am Fly to Bangalore and transfer to the Pride Hotel
Pm Visit the MS Ramiah Hospital's Ophthalmology Department.
Partner Programme: Visit the Silk Bazaar
Eve Reception with the Ophthalmic Association of Bangalore

20 Nov (Fri) Bangalore / Mysore **B L**

Am Lecture with Ophthalmic Association of Bangalore
Pm Continue to Mysore, visiting the Palace of Sultan Tipu en route
Eve Transfer to the Royal Orchid Palace Hotel

21 Nov (Sat) Mysore **B D**

Am Lecture and partner programme
Pm Visit Mysore Palace and the colourful Devaraj Market
Eve Sunset high tea at Lalitha Mahal Palace

22 Nov (Sun) Mysore **B L**

Am Visit Chamundi Hill for the procession of the Goddess at the Temple and the Bull
Pm At leisure in Mysore
Eve See Mysore Palace illuminated

23 Nov (Mon) Mysore / Ooty **B D**

Am Drive to Mudamadali Wildlife Sanctuary
Pm Drive into the Blue Mountains and up to the hill station at Ooty

24 Nov (Tues) Ooty **B D**

Am Take the toy train to Coonoor
Pm Visit the tea plantation and factory before returning to Ooty

25 Nov (Wed) Ooty **B D**

Am Visit the famous botanical gardens laid out by gardeners from Kew
Pm Nature walk through the beautiful Ketti Valley

26 Nov (Thur) Ooty / Cochin **B L**

Am Drive to Coimbatore
Pm Take the train across the Cardamom Hills and along the coast to Cochin. Transfer to the Trident Hotel

27 Nov (Fri) Cochin **B D**

Am Visit the Nagajuna Ayurvedic Hospital.
Partner Programme: Explore old Cochin
Pm Walking tour of Fort Cochin and visit the Dutch Palace and the spice houses of Cochin
Eve Sunset cruise past the Chinese fishing nets

28 Nov (Sat) Cochin **B L**

Am Board a rice barge and cruise through the backwaters of Kerala
Pm Lunch on board and continue the cruise

29 Nov (Sun) Cochin / UK **B**

Am Early morning transfer to airport for flights OR extend at the Marari Beach Resort

"I thoroughly enjoyed the whole trip - it was very well organised and the standard of hotels, food and places visited was exceptional... Charles is without a doubt the best national guide I've ever had, truly exceptional."

Felicity McCormack, Optometry in Southern India, 2011



Hotels

Grande Bay Resort (Mahabalipuram)

A beautiful boutique hotel on the waterfront, the Grande Bay Resort is contemporary and stylish set within 5 acres of lovely gardens and facilities including a spa and pool.

The Pride Hotel (Bangalore)

Sleek, contemporary and spacious, this comfortable and friendly hotel is situated in the heart of Bangalore with attractive décor and a rooftop bar.

Royal Orchid Metropole Hotel (Mysore)

An elegant heritage hotel beautifully restored to its colonial style, the Royal Orchid provides comfort amidst lovely rooms and gardens and includes a pool.

Sullivan Court (Ooty)

Located in the Blue Mountains on the cool slopes of Ooty, the Fortune Hotel Sullivan Court has some wonderful views. It is a modern hotel built in Ooty's traditional Victorian style.

Trident Hotel (Cochin)

This beautiful hotel is one of the best in Cochin, blending classic charm with elegant rooms set amidst a lovely central courtyard and landscaped gardens with a pool.

Marari Beach Resort (Kerala extension)

A relaxed, low key resort offering superb service and traditional Kerala style cottages set amongst lush grounds with palm trees going down to the beach, plus a lovely swimming pool. Ayurvedic spa treatments are available.

"I could not believe how welcome I was made. As a single traveller I was apprehensive but I have never had such a fabulous holiday."

Gabrielle Belford, Optometry & Eye Care in North India, 2013

The palm fringed pool at Grande Bay Resort (top); Royal Orchid Metropole Hotel Mysore; The Sullivan Court Hotel lobby; The pool at the Trident Hotel in Cochin (above)



Bright saris in the park

Tour Leader

Harminder Singh Dua is a widely published and acclaimed Indian-British medical doctor and researcher. He is the president of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists, UK, the chair and professor of ophthalmology at University of Nottingham and is the head of the Division of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences. Previously he was associate professor at the Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, USA. Dua is also the co-editor in chief of the British Journal of Ophthalmology. He is president of EuCornea, the European society of Cornea and Ocular surface disease specialists. He is also president of the EVERf (European Association for Vision and Eye Research Foundation) and past president of the association itself.

“A fantastic trip of a life time - great to see some of the non-tourist things”

Jane Ayres, Dental Tour South India 2013

CPD

Continuing Professional Development

may be claimed for this tour. We can provide learning aims and objectives for professional visits and lectures and a signed attendance at the end of the tour. Please contact us for details.

The flight-inclusive price from London is from £2,730 (subject to availability)

The ground only cost of the tour (excludes international flights and airport transfers) is £2,080/ AUD \$4,368

The cost includes:

- 13 nights' accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with medium grade, heritage and first class hotels

The single room supplement is £470 / AUD \$966

- UK tour leader (Professor Harminder Dua)
- Comprehensive briefing notes
- Breakfast and lunch or dinner daily
- Internal flight and taxes
- A full programme of cultural visits and partner programme
- A full programme of professional visits as per the itinerary
- Admission fees where applicable
- National guide throughout (Prince Charles)
- Tips

The cost excludes:

- International flights (see below)
- Airport transfers
- Indian visa
- All personal extras such as portage, laundry, inoculation fees and drinks
- All optional excursions, tours and visits
- Travel insurance

The cost of the extension at the Marari Beach Resort is £450 / AUD \$765 and includes:

- Three nights' accommodation in twin or double-bedded rooms with private facilities at the Marari Beach Resort

The single room supplement is £310 / AUD \$528

- Breakfast daily
- Return transfers

Flights

Please contact Jon Baines in London on **020 7223 9485** or in Melbourne on **03 9343 6367** if you would like assistance with your flights.

“I really enjoyed every moment. It was indeed the trip of a lifetime. Thank you!”

Eduardo Massad, Medicine in South India 2012

About Jon Baines Tours

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. What we also do is make sure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to. We give you a variety of experiences, from the sublime to the humble, in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun.

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The shore temples at Mahabalipuram (top); The Coromandel Coast; A spice seller in Mysore; The serene backwaters of Kerala (above)



Jon Baines
tours

