Mohanam Village Heritage Centre

Opening the gate to Tamil villages in the Auroville bioregion
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Since 2001, Mohanam Village Heritage Centre has been working to promote and preserve the unique Tamil culture, empower local communities and support sustainable rural tourism. The Centre aims to bridge the gap between tourists, the international Auroville community, and the surrounding villages by raising awareness about Tamil cultural heritage. Mohanam Village Heritage Centre offers a unique rural tourism experience by organizing various educational and creative workshops, music and dance classes, and tours to local Tamil villages.

This booklet aims to help tourists explore various options of cultural and educational activities in local Tamil villages. Tourists will get an opportunity:

- to experience Tamil village lifestyle and culture
- to observe artisans at work in the local craft units and take part in workshops
- to participate in cultural festivals in villages and celebrate together with locals
- to enjoy traditional Tamil cuisine prepared and served in an authentic village style
- to learn to cook local meals
- to mingle with the locals

The Mohanam Village Heritage Centre proudly invites Indian and foreign tourists to experience the rich heritage of Tamil Nadu. Let us together open the gate to the local villages and explore the Tamil culture!
Tour Packages “The Spirit of Tamil villages”

Tourists can choose activities offered in the booklet according to their interests and taste. If you wish, Mohanan Village Heritage Centre also offers seven tour packages to allow you to more easily explore local Tamil villages and the region nearby. Through these tours, the Centre will guide you to the heart of the region and its villages so you can learn more about Tamil culture and history.

1. Spiritual experience and traditional medicine tour  
   *e.g. visiting various temples, astrology, traditional healers, religious festivals*

2. Tamil culture and lifestyle tour  
   *e.g. staying in a hotel or a guesthouse in a local village, cooking classes, sari and dhoti dressing*

3. Village morning tour  
   *e.g. Kolam morning walk and workshop, traditional Tamil breakfast or lunch, visiting local markets*

4. Village evening tour  
   *e.g. children dance and music performances, traditional Tamil dinner*

5. Village artisan tour  
   *e.g. visiting different craft units and participating in workshops*

6. Day of traditional Tamil dance and music  
   *e.g. traditional and classical dance workshops and music performances*

7. Day trips  
   *e.g. trips to Kaluperupakkam Bats Banyan tree, Kaluveli lake, Thiruvakarai park*

Feel free to check our website for more information about our tour packages and do not hesitate to call us!
• Lunar calendar class
  Learn about traditional agricultural practices based on different moon cycles.
  🕒 1.5 hour  ₹ 500

• Udukai workshop
  The udukkai is an hourglass-shaped drum used in Tamil folk music and prayers.
  🕒 1.5 hour  ₹ 800

• Ghatam workshop
  Ghatam is a narrow-mouthed clay percussion instrument. It produces a distinctive metallic sound and is made in several sizes, each size having a different pitch.
  🕒 1.5 hour  ₹ 500

• Veena workshop
  Veena is one of the most ancient string instruments of India. Its main attraction is the mellow tonal quality which is capable of evoking a meditative atmosphere.
  🕒 1.5 hour  ₹ 800

• Thavil workshop
  The thavil is a barrel-shaped percussion instrument from the city of Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu. It is used in temple, folk and Carnatic music, and is an essential component of traditional festivals and ceremonies in South India.
  🕒 1.5 hour  ₹ 500

• Kanjira workshop
  Kanjira is an instrument of the tambourine family and is a relatively difficult drum to play in South Indian Carnatic music.
  🕒 1.5 hour  ₹ 800

• Silambam workshop
  Silambam is a weapon-based martial art form from Tamil Nadu.
  🕒 1.5 hour  ₹ 500

• Henna painting workshop
  🕒 1 hour  ₹ 300

• Sari and Dhoti dressing
  🕒 1 hour  ₹ 200
SANJEEVANI NAGAR

• **Candle making workshop**
  Artisanal candle making with natural scents, soya wax and dried flowers.
  🕯️ 2 hours  ₹ 500

• **Paper lampshade making workshop**
  Create your own paper lampshade that will brighten up your interior.
  🕯️ 2 hours  ₹ 1,200

• **Cooking classes**
  Cooking traditional Tamil meals.
  🕥 4 hours  ₹ 750

• **Kummi dance workshop**
  Kummi is a folk dance popular in Tamil Nadu, performed by women in a circle with rhythmic clapping, facial expressions, repetitive steps, often accompanied with “Kummi songs”.
  🕥 2 hours  ₹ 500

• **Sari and Dhoti dressing**
  Demonstration of how to wear traditional Indian clothing, such as sari (women) and dhoti (men).
  🕥 1 hour  ₹ 200

• **Ayurvedic oil bath treatment**
  A traditional Ayurvedic remedy that has many health benefits, such as relief of back and knee pain, concentration improvement, skin quality, digestion, and sleep. Treatment includes information, oil bath (with castor oil), shower, resting, and herbal drinks and a healthy Tamil lunch.
  🕥 4 hours  ₹ 1,200

• **Stone carving unit visit**
  🕥 45 min  ₹ 250

• **Paper marbling workshop**
  🕥 4 hours  ₹ 800

• **Fire Walk Thimithi festival**
  Held in October-November.
  🕥 4 hours  ₹ 500

• **Street theatre Theru Koothu performance**
  🕥 1 hour  ₹ 500 (min 10 people)

• **Visit traditional Irulas healers**
  Treat snake and scorpion bites.
  🕥 45 min  ₹ 300
KOTTAKARAI

• Beads and paper lampshade unit visit
  🌟 45 min  ₹ 250

• Kolattam dance workshop
  This Tamil folk dance is performed by young girls and boys with pairs of wooden sticks being struck against each other. Come and learn this charming dance!
  🌟 3 hours  ₹ 500

• Kottakarai Eco Art Centre
  A space to inspire ecological awareness through art and culture. Various dance and music workshops.
  🌟 1 hour  ₹ Free

• Wood carving unit visit
  Neem wood, teak wood, pencil wood.
  🌟 45 min  ₹ 300

RAYAPETTAI

• Kolam walk
  Kolams are geometrical patterns applied with rice flour at the entrance of homes to invite the Goddess Lakshmi into the household and to drive away the evil spirits.
  Early morning village walk to watch women making Kolams, then going back to Mohanam Village Heritage Centre for a Kolam workshop, followed by a breakfast.
  🌟 4 hours  ₹ 450

• Village walk
  Explore the rich tradition of Hindu-Muslim harmony in this village.
  🌟 45 min  ₹ 200
IRUMBAI

- **Mudra workshop**
  Mudras, or hand gestures, are used to express emotions and experience. This workshop will explore 32 mudras and how they are used in classical Indian dance and meditation.
  
  🕒 3 hours  ₹ 500

- **Irumbai Shiva temple visit**
  Information about the temple and its history, puja (prayer ritual), ceremonies and ritual explanations.
  
  🕒 1.5 hour  ₹ 250

EDAYANCHAVADI

- **Incense making workshop**
  Learn how incense is made and make your own.
  
  🕒 3 hours  ₹ 800

- **Candle making workshop**
  Artisans candle making with natural scents, soya wax and dried flowers.
  
  🕒 2 hours  ₹ 500

- **Ayyanar temple visit**
  
  🕒 30 min  ₹ 200

- **Yoga classes**
  
  🕒 1.5 hour  ₹ 350

- **Metal welding unit visit**
  
  🕒 30 min  ₹ 150

- **Shivavathiyan music instrument performance**
  
  🕒 1 hour  ₹ Free

- **Thavil and Nadaswaram music instruments performance and workshop**
  
  🕒 1.5 hour  ₹ 500

- **Varunamuthu Mariamman Temple Festival**
  Held in June/July. Rainmaking and chili bath rituals.
  
  🕒 3 hours  ₹ 200

- **Athisakthi theatre performance and workshop**
  
  🕒 1 hour  ₹ Free

- **Kalaripayattu workshop**
  Traditional martial arts and massage.
  
  🕒 1 hour  ₹ 1,500 (monthly)
ANNAI NAGAR

• **Neem leaf healing**  
  *The neem tree is known as the “Miracle Tree”. Neem leaves are known to possess antibacterial, antiviral, anti-fungal, and anti-malarial properties, and they are used to improve various skin conditions and boost immune system.*
  🌼 1 hour  ₹ 200

• **Sprain therapy**  
  *This traditional treatment for sprains include deep massage and manipulation of joints and ligaments using sesame oil with neem tree flower essence.*
  🌼 30 min / 1 hour  ₹ 250 / 300

• **Pottery unit visit and workshop**
  🌼 1 hour  ₹ 400

• **Maruthuvam healing forest visit**
  🌼 1 hour  ₹ 250

ACHARAMAMPATTU

• **Folk dance and music workshop**
  🌼 1 hour  ₹ 250

• **Visit local market**
  🌼 2 hours  ₹ 250

• **Street theatre Theru Koothu performance**
  🌼 1 hour  ₹ 500 (min 10 people)
KUILAPALAYAM

- **Kuila cultural centre**  
  *Silambam and classical Indian dance*  
  📅 2 hours  ₹ Free

- **Various workshops at Yatra Cultural Foundation**  
  📅 2 hours  ₹ Free

- **Ayyanar temple visit**  
  📅 30 min  ₹ 200

- **Lotus pond**  
  📅 30 min  ₹ 100

- **Pongol festival**  
  *Pongol is a harvest festival held in January, dedicated to the Sun God and celebrates fertility and renewal.*  
  📅 3 hours  ₹ 250

- **Stone carving unit visit and workshop**  
  📅 1 hour  ₹ 400

- **Local Tamil astrologist**  
  📅 45 min  ₹ 300

- **Kashmir handicrafts shops**

ALANKUPPAM

- **Various workshops and classes at new Mohanam Village Heritage Centre**

- **Candle making workshop**  
  *Artisanal candle making with natural scents, soya wax and dried flowers.*  
  📅 2 hours  ₹ 500

- **New Moon festival**  
  *Held every month. Dinner included.*  
  📅 2 hours  ₹ 250

- **Various craft units visit**  
  *Leather, hammock, pottery, handloom weaving.*  
  📅 3 hours  ₹ 350

- **Kaali temple festival**  
  *Held in February - March. Dinner included.*  
  📅 3 hours  ₹ 300
KAZHUPERUMPAKKAM

• Kaluperumpakkam bats banyan tree
  *Bike tour (30 min by bike from Auroville) and visit of the village.*
  🚲 2.5 hours  ₹ 300

• Sivavathiyam music instrument performance
  🎵 1 hour  ₹ Free

RAYAPUDHUPAKKKAM

• Thapattam and Bambai dance and music performance
  *During Thappattam dance the performers beat a handheld drum, known as Thappu, and dance to its rhythm. Come and learn a few steps of this famous Tamil folk dance!*
  🎵 3 hours  ₹ 500

• Local farm visit
  🚲 2 hours  ₹ 300

• New Moon festival
  *Held every month. Dinner included.*
  🚲 2 hours  ₹ 300

KALAPET

• Thaipusam festival
  *Held in January. Celebrates the birth anniversary of Lord Murugan. Lunch included.*
  🎵 3 hours  ₹ 200

• Fish market visit
  🚲 45 min  ₹ 150

• Traditional healer
  *Treats broken bones.*
  🚲 45 min  ₹ 200
BOMMAYAPALAYAM

• Canyon walk tour
  🌤️ 3 hours  ₹ 400

• Local Tamil healer
  🌞 45 min  ₹ 150

• Fire Walk Thimithi festival
  Thimithi ritual involves barefoot walking across hot coals and praying for wishes to come true.
  🌞 2 hours  ₹ 200

• Coconut keethu weaver workshop
  🌞 2 hours  ₹ 200

• Sri Sivagnana Jeevasamathi temple visit
  🌞 45 min  ₹ 150

• Metal welding unit visit
  🌞 45 min  ₹ 200

• Bommayapalayam beach

KEEZHPUTHUPATTU

• Natraj temple visit
  🌞 1 hour  ₹ 250

• Manjaneeeswarar Ayyanar temple festival
  Held in July - August in a temple surrounded by forest.
  🌞 3 hours  ₹ 300

• Kaliveli lake visit
  Bird watching. 45 min by bike from Auroville.
  🌞 3.5 hours  ₹ 300
MORATTRANDI

- Navakiraga temple visit
  • 2 hours  ₹ 350

- Kali temple visit
  • 2 hours  ₹ 350

PAPPANANCHAVADI

- Panchamuga Anuman temple visit
  • 2 hours  ₹ 350

- Pappanchavadi music band
  Fusion of modern and traditional Tamil music.
  • 1 hour  ₹ 200

PILLAICHAVADY

- Fish market visit
  • 1 hour  ₹ 200

- Pillaichavady Thirukulam festival
  • 1 hour  ₹ 200

- Baba temple visit
  • 45 min  ₹ 200

- Pillaichavady beach
PERIYARMUDALIARCHVADI

• Ayyanar Temple visit
  🌷 45 min   ₹ 200

• Pottery unit visit
  🌷 30 min

• Stone carving unit visit
  🌷 30 min

• Local Tamil astrologist
  🌷 45 min   ₹ 200

• Auroville Beach

THURUVAI

• Thuruvai Temple Festival
  *If you wish to get married or pregnant, catch a lemon thrown from the top of a palm tree and your wish will come true.*
  🌷 2 hours   ₹ 200

• Iyyar Temple Visit
  🌷 1 hour   ₹ 150

• Vaastu Shastra workshop
  *Learn about ancient Vastu Shastra principles and how they are applied to design and build towns, houses, gardens, and roads.*
  🌷 1 hour   ₹ 600