

High Points EXPEDITIONS & TOURS

Rotary International, USA

South India NID

November 2004

Introduction

In 1999, more than 100,000 Indian Rotary members and their families joined the government of India in immunizing more than 130 million children against polio on a single day, signaling the largest public health event ever in the world.

In November 2004, the members of this trip will participate in promotions in several villages and towns of southern India, and then in distribution of polio vaccines on National Immunization Day (Nov. 21). After the NID, we will participate in house-to-house surveys to make sure no child has been left out.

By joining this event, American Rotarians will have a close experience of the India that most tourists never see.

The deep south of India remained relatively unaffected by the alien invasions that rocked the North after 800 AD. As a result, the ancient Hindu civilization has survived here in its purest and most fascinating form. As we go about our mission on this trip, almost every day will present the breath-taking architecture and sculpture of South India's temples. We can't miss them even if we try!

The sub - tropical beauty of the palm-fringed countryside, the warm welcome of gentle village folk deeply rooted in the highly – developed culture of ancient India, these are some of the images that shall remain with us for a long time.

High Points EXPEDITIONS & TOURS

Itinerary

Nov. 15, 2004 (Mon)	Depart New York (JFK)	8:10pm Air India 112
Nov. 17, 2004 (Wed)	Arrive Mumbai (Bombay)	1:40am
	Depart Mumbai	3:15am Air India 640
	Arrive Chennai (Madras)	5:00am

Clear immigration and customs. A High Points representative will be waiting for you outside the arrival hall to meet and greet you upon arrival and provide a transfer to the hotel.

AM: At leisure.

PM: Guided city tour of Chennai. This was the site of the first settlement of the East India Company, which later went on to establish the British Empire in India. It was founded in 1639 on a piece of land given by the Raja of Chandragiri, and is today a modern, vibrant city with a distinct old-world charm. We shall visit the 17th century Fort St. George and the St. Mary's Church, as well as the 8th century Parthasarthy Temple.

Evening meeting with local Rotary clubs. Welcome dinner.

Nov. 18, 2004 (Thur): Chennai – Kanchipuram – Mahabalipuram: (Drive)

AM: Drive to Mahabalipuram via Kanchipuram, the "City of a thousand Temples" which still has 124 of them! We will join local Rotarians in promoting the NID in several villages along the way and in the town of Kancheepuram.

Later, we shall visit the most spectacular Ekambeshwara Temple. The "gopurams" or towers at its entrance stand 188 ft high, with 10 stories of intricate sculpture.

In the afternoon we continue our drive to Mahabalipuram, set on the deep blue waters of the Bay of Bengal. On arrival check in at the beach resort. Later in the afternoon sightseeing of the famous Mahabalipuram temples: Mahabalipuram is a monument to the glory of the Pallava Emperors who ruled this part of India in the 7th & 8th centuries. Five of the famous "pagodas" here are actually meant to represent the chariots of the gods. These temples have excellent bas-reliefs in stone depicting fascinating scenes from Hindu mythology. Of the many temples that were built along the seashore, only one has survived the ravages of time and the ever-pounding ocean. It stands with its back to the sea, a lonely silhouette - a symbol of man's greatness against the infinite canvass of his universe.

Nov. 19, 2004 (Fri): Mahabalipuram – Chidambaram: (Drive)

AM: Drive to Chidambaram, en-route NID promotions. Visit the magnificent Chidambaram temple, which is dedicated to Lord Shiva in the enthralling form of a Cosmic Dancer (Nataraj). A unique feature of Chidambaram is that a person of any race or religion can visit the shrine and pray.

PM: NID promotions in Chidambaram town.

High Points EXPEDITIONS & TOURS

Nov. 20, 2004 (Sat): Chidambaram – Kumbakonam: (Drive)

AM: Drive to Kumbakonam, en-route NID promotions in villages along the way.

PM: Visit the city sights. This bustling temple town nestles along the Cauvery River some 37 km northeast of Thanjavur (Tanjore). It is noted for its many temples with colorful semi-erotic sculpture. The most important are Sarangapani, Kumbeshwara and Nageshwara, the largest of which is second in size only to the Meenakshi Temple at Madurai. They are all closed between noon and 04:30 PM. Once every 12 years, the waters of the Ganges are said to flow into Kumbakonam's Mahamaham Tank and thousands of devotees flock here to a festival held at that time. According to legend, a kumbh (pitcher) came to rest here after a big flood (hence the town's name). Siva broke the pitcher with his arrow, and its contents spilled to form this sacred tank. Kumbakonam also makes an excellent base from which to visit the impressive temples at Dharasuram and Gungaikondacholapuram (whew!).

Nov. 21, 2004 (Sun): Kumbakonam - National Immunization Day

AM: Join members and families of the local Rotary Clubs. We will spread out in-groups of 2-4 to take over specific duties to ensure that the maximum number of children reaches the booths in this area and that vaccines do not fall short at any booth due to unexpectedly heavy turnouts. We may participate in street and door-to-door campaigning.

Nov. 22, 2004 (Mon): Kumbakonam - Post NID campaigns

Full day house-to-house campaigns.

Late afternoon: Visit the fabulous temple at Gungaikondacholapuram.

Nov. 23, 2004 (Tue): Kumbakonam – Pondicherry

AM: Drive to Pondicherry, en-route post-NID house-to-house campaigns in villages along the way.

PM: Pondicherry tour. This was once the capital of French India. Even today it carries its French culture in its lifestyle. Check in at hotel.

Nov. 24, 2004 (Wed): Pondicherry – Chennai

AM: Short city tour and visit the world-famous Aurobindo Ashram and its community projects.

PM: Drive to Chennai and check in to hotel.

Nov. 25, 2004 (Thu)	Depart Chennai	12:30am	Air India 641
	Arrive Mumbai (Bombay)	2:15am	
	Depart Mumbai	6:30am	Air India 101
	Arrive New York (JFK)	3:40pm	

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Price Per Person in US \$2545.00 (based on two people sharing)

Single supplement \$375.00

The above prices are valid from Oct. 01, 2004 to Dec. 20, 2004 and include the following services as per the itinerary:

- Round trip airfare from New York (JFK) to Chennai on Air India
- High Points accompanying trip manager
- Meeting and assistance at the airport in India.
- Transfers, sightseeing's and inter-city transportation by AC motor coach.
- Sightseeing's with local English guides and entrance fee at the monuments.
- Portorage of member's luggage on tour up to 20 kg per member.
- Twin -sharing accommodation at the hotels indicated below on full board basis (Room + American Breakfast + Lunch + Dinner):

City	Hotel	Category	No. of Nights
Chennai	GRT Grand	Superior First Class	02
Mahabalipuram	GRT Temple Bay	Superior First Class Beach Resort	01
Chidambaram	Saradharam	Tourist Class	01
Kumbakonam	Sterling-Swamimalai Village Resort ¹	Superior Tourist Class- Ethnic	03
Pondicherry	Annamalai International	First Class	01
Chennai	GRT Grand	First Class	01

The following services / expenses are not included in the price:

- Passport, Visa processing fee, fee for inoculations and health certificates.
- Any meals other than specified above.
- Personal expenses such as table drinks, room service items, laundry, telephone calls or tips.
- Any additional expenses caused by, or liability for, disturbance in trip program due to circumstances beyond our control such as airline or railway delays, road blocks, vehicle malfunctions, weather conditions, sickness, natural disasters, wars, riots, etc.
- Liability for or insurance against injury, loss of life, accidents, damage to or loss of goods. Available and highly recommended
- Camera fee or any other item not specifically listed in the program.

 Reservations: Name _____ Phone _____ Twin ____ or Single ____
 Address _____ E-Mail _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Smoking ____ Non ____
 Credit Card _____ exp _____ Roommate _____

Mail \$500 check (or credit card) per person to: Carlson Wagonlit Travel, PMB 244, 64 E. Uwchlan Ave.,
 Exton, PA 19341 (tel 800 937-2256 – e-mail dellis@carlsontravel.com fax 610 363-1567)

¹ Sterling Swamimalai Resort and other hotels in the area provide only vegetarian food due to the proximity of pilgrimage centers.
 June 20, 2004