

Travelrite International invites you to join us on the 2026

CLASSIC SOUTH INDIA

BY RAIL

13 – 28 February 2026

Visiting Kochi, Kerala Backwaters,
Kovalam, Madurai, Rural Heritage Stay,
Puducherry, Mamallapuram, Chennai,
Mysore, Nagarahole National Park, Ooty



INCLUDES



Flights, accommodation, sightseeing tours, most meals,
private transport, first-class local trains, the Ooty Toy
Train, an Australian tour leader and local guides.



TRAVELRITE
INTERNATIONAL

CLASSIC SOUTH INDIA

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Discover lush and tropical South India on this 16-day rail and cultural experience that explores lavish palaces and vibrant bazaars, colonial old towns and scented spice plantations. Your journey starts in Kochi, with its Portuguese and Dutch historical centre before spending a night aboard a boutique houseboat gliding along the tranquil, palm fringed Kerala Backwaters before relaxing on the golden sands of Kovalam Beach. Travel on the Island Express train to Nagercoil, a local train to Madurai to see the Meenakshi Temple and ride the train on the newly built Pamban Railway Bridge over the waterway to Pamban Island. Spend a night in a heritage mansion in rural Tamil Nadu, explore the French-influenced Puducherry and travel on a fast train from Chennai to Mysore to wander the Maharaja's Palace. Finish by spotting tigers, elephants and jaguars in Nagarhole National Park, tour coffee and tea plantations and ride the famous Toy Train in 'Snooty Ooty.' With an Australian tour leader and an expert local guide, plus support vehicles so you can ride the rails just with light carry-on luggage, Southern India's spirituality, friendly people and delicious food make it a delight to explore.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Wander around Mamallapuram's World Heritage listed temples
- Ride the famous Ooty Toy Train on the Nilgiri Mountain Railway
- Explore the nostalgic Mysore Railway Heritage Museum
- Enjoy colonial architecture in the French Quarter of Puducherry
- Ride the rails, the most atmospheric way to see South India
- Share a delicious meal with a local family during a home visit



YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 Friday February 13, 2026

Kochi

Land in Kochi in the late evening and transfer the 90 minutes to your hotel for check in. *Overnight:* Fragrant Nature Kochi, Kochi

DAY 2 Saturday February 14, 2026

Kochi

This morning, enjoy a tour briefing over breakfast, before exploring Kochi on a guided tour. You'll start by wandering the atmospheric Jew Town, which is full of antique craft shops and funky cafes. See the St. Francis Church and the Santa Cruz Basilica, enjoy lunch and visit the colonial historical centre which oozes old-world charm, ending at Fort Kochi Beach where you'll see the famous Chinese fishing nets at sunset. Later, enjoy a group welcome dinner and witness a Kathakali dance performance. *Overnight:* Fragrant Nature Kochi, Kochi (B,L,D)



DAY 3 Sunday February 15, 2026

Kerala Backwaters

After breakfast, you'll tour the 16th-century Mattancherry Dutch Palace and the Paradesi Synagogue before travelling on the Nethravathi Express train past lush rubber, tea, and coffee plantations to the sleepy village of Alleppey in the serene Kerala Backwaters. The prime attraction here is the winding waterways and traditional houseboats. The town has been described as the "Venice of the East" for the small canals winding through its historic centre and upon arrival, you'll board your private houseboat to enjoy lunch and a day of floating through the dreamy waters of rural Kerala. Stop at a few villages for a stroll to meet the locals, and enjoy a dinner of fish curries, dal and other delights on board. *Overnight:* Exotica Cruises Luxury Houseboat, Alleppey (B,L,D)

DAY 4 Monday February 16, 2026

Kovalam

After a lazy breakfast on your houseboat, we'll travel on the Jamnagar Tirunelveli Express to Kovalam. Arrive in the late afternoon and check

into your hotel. Kovalam was once a calm coastal village clustered around its crescent beaches and backed by a sea of cascading palm trees, but it is now one of India's most popular beach resorts. Once settled into your boutique hotel, with its outdoor pool and marvellous sea views, enjoy dinner together at the beach. The local cuisine is known for its use of fresh seafood, curry leaves and coconuts, so tuck in! *Overnight:* Getaway Beach Resort, Kovalam (B,L,D)

DAY 5 Tuesday February 17, 2026

Madurai

This morning, enjoy some free time before taking the Island Express train, one of the most magical train journeys in India. From your window seat, snap photos of children playing street cricket, elderly men in white sarongs smoking rolled-leaf cigarettes and bullock carts rumbling alongside the railway tracks. Arrive in Nagercoil, and enjoy a cooking demonstration and lunch at a Tamil family home, to learn about, and sample Southern Indian cuisine. Continue on an express train to the grand city of Madurai where you'll check into your heritage hotel before a group dinner at a local restaurant. *Overnight:* Heritage Madurai, Madurai (B,L,D)



DAY 6 Wednesday February 18, 2026

Madurai

This morning, you'll enjoy a tour of the city visiting the Sri Meenakshi Amman Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva and goddess Meenakshi, the Tailor's Market and the local bazaars. Enjoy lunch together, and visit the Mahatma Gandhi Museum which is dedicated to the life and achievements of the 'Father of the Nation'. We'll stop by the extravagant 17th century Thirumalai Nayakkar Palace and return to your hotel for a free late afternoon and evening. *Overnight:* Heritage Madurai, Madurai (B,L)



DAY 7 Thursday February 19, 2026

Pamban Bridge train – Heritage Stay in Kandukathan

This morning, you'll enjoy the thrill and adventure of crossing the newly completed Pamban Railway Bridge that connects the Indian mainland with Pamban Island. Opened in 1914, it was India's first sea bridge, was the longest until 2010 and since late 2024, is the country's first vertical lift sea bridge. Enjoy lunch and drive to Kandukathan and check into your heritage property - an elegantly decorated mansion built in 1902. Later, take a walk around the village to see some traditional townhouses, known as havelis. Enjoy dinner at your hotel. *Overnight:* Chettinadu Mansion, Kandukathan (B,L,D)

DAY 8 Friday February 20, 2026

Puducherry

This morning, we'll travel by train past palm trees and lush green rice paddies to Puducherry. The union territory of Puducherry, known locally as 'Pondy', was under French colonial rule for 138 years until 1954 and is often referred to as the 'French Capital of India.' See French Gallic street names such as Rue Saint Gilles and Avenue Goubert, hear old French spoken, and listen to Indian locals speaking English, with French accents! Enjoy lunch during your train journey and arrive in Pondy in the mid afternoon and transfer to your hotel. Later, re-group for a French Indian style dinner! *Overnight:* Le Pondy, Puducherry (B,L,D)



DAY 9 Saturday February 21, 2026

Puducherry

This morning, we'll tour Pondy to see the strong French influence in the architecture of the city, especially in the old quarters, with its boulevards lined with Mediterranean-style houses, bakeries and shops. Tour the local temples, the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and the richly ornamented Catholic churches. Later, enjoy lunch on the seaside promenade and visit the spiritually-minded Auroville. Designed by French architect



Roger Anger, the bohemian chic 1960s hippie trail vibe town is known as 'The City of Dawn', and is home to people from all over the world. *Overnight:* Le Pondy, Puducherry (B,L)

DAY 10 Sunday February 22, 2026

Chennai

After breakfast, we'll travel in a private vehicle along the scenic coast to the UNESCO World Heritage Site at Mamallapuram where the exquisite architecture harks back to the ruling Pallava dynasty from the 3rd to 9th centuries. See the Shore Temple, with its giant open-air rock relief carved on two monolithic rock boulders, and visit a beach area for a lunch of the famous fish curry. Later, travel to Chennai, which was known as Madras until 1996. Stop at the Mylapore Kapaleeshwar Temple, check into the city's only heritage hotel and explore the vibrant streets of Georgetown Bazaar to enjoy dinner. *Overnight:* Taj Connemara Heritage Hotel, Chennai (B,L,D)



DAY 11 Monday February 23, 2026

Mysore

Rise early for the Mas Vande Bharat Express service from Chennai to Mysore. Travelling in Executive Class, you'll travel 502 kilometres in just over 6 hours and arrive in Mysore at lunch. This culturally rich city, officially known as Mysuru, dates back to 1399 and is known as the "City of Palaces," and the "Pensioners' Paradise" due to the large number of retirees in the city. On arrival, enjoy lunch and check into your hotel. This afternoon and evening are free for you to relax before a busy day tomorrow. *Overnight:* Radisson Blu Plaza, Mysore (B,L)

DAY 12 Tuesday February 24, 2026

Mysore

This morning, we'll visit the lively Devaraja Market with its huge selection of flowers, spices, fruits and vegetables and the exotic Mysore Palace. Tour the building, which is full of mosaics, and mirrors, and amazing works of art and visit St Philomena's Catholic Church. Have lunch and visit the Mysore Railway Heritage Museum and Chamundi Hill, the home of the Sri Chamundeshwari Temple, dedicated to the Hindu Goddess Durga. After marvelling at the panoramic views, we'll return to the hotel for a free evening. *Overnight:* Radisson Blu Plaza, Mysore (B,L)

DAY 13 Wednesday February 25, 2026

Nagarahole National Park

This morning, travel by road to the Nagarahole National Park, one of the best locations in South India for spotting wildlife due to the park's large watering holes where herds of wild elephants and

other animals gather to drink. Check into your rustic, yet luxurious wilderness lodge which is located on a coffee plantation. After check in and lunch, tour the nearby spice and coffee plantation and enjoy a 4WD game drive to spot tigers, black leopards, elephants, sloth bears, crocodiles and 270 species of birds. Return to your lodge for dinner. *Overnight:* Machaan Wilderness Lodge Nagarahole (B,L,D)

DAY 14 Thursday February 26, 2026

Ooty

This morning, you'll enjoy a morning wildlife safari in the Nagarahole Tiger Reserve which has one of the highest density tiger populations in India. Travel by road past some of Kerala's spice plantations, seeing crops such as vanilla, coffee, cocoa, ginger and pepper. We'll enjoy lunch and travel to the 'Queen of Hill Stations' at Ooty, the mild weather summer capital of South India for the British Raj-governed Madras Presidency. Check into the grand colonial hotel, the Taj Savoy and enjoy dinner. *Overnight:* Taj Savoy, Ooty (B,L,D)



DAY 15 Friday February 27, 2026

Ooty

This morning, you'll travel in first class comfort on the famous steam-driven Ooty Toy Train locomotive. Travel through rocky terrain, gorgeous ravines, lush tea estates and thick forests on this thrilling half day journey on the Nilgiri Mountain Railway. In Coonoor, you'll tour the Tea Estate to learn about the history of tea production and enjoy breathtaking views. Return to 'Snooty Ooty' to explore the Botanical Gardens, home to over 650 species of plants and trees. Later, enjoy a free evening. *Overnight:* Taj Savoy, Ooty (B,L)



DAY 16 Saturday February 28, 2026

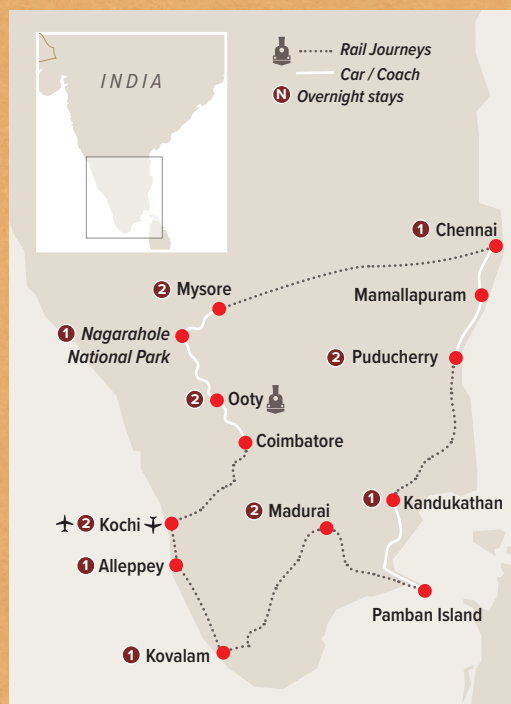
Kochi / Depart

This morning, you'll travel down the scenic mountain road to Coimbatore where you'll enjoy lunch, before taking the Dhanbad Express to Kochi. Coimbatore is Tamil Nadu's second largest city at 2.5 million people and is known as the 'Manchester of India' for its booming textile industry. Enjoy your final train journey, to Kochi, arriving at the Aluva train station and transferring to the nearby Kochi International Airport, arriving at 5pm. Check into your airport hotel and freshen up, enjoy a farewell dinner together and fly out in the late evening. *Overnight:* Kochi Airport Hotel, Kochi / Overnight flight (B,L,D)

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Included in the tour price:

- Return international flights
- Arrival and departure transfers
- 16 nights' accommodation in well-located first-class hotels with private facilities, on a twin-share basis. Hotel taxes and service charges included
- 15 breakfasts, 15 lunches, and 10 dinners
- Two heritage train journeys and experiences
- First-class air conditioned local train journeys
- A support vehicle to carry large luggage while on train
- Entry to all sightseeing attractions mentioned in the itinerary, except for those marked 'optional' plus locally guided tours
- Transport by first-class chartered coaches
- A local tour guide throughout
- Tour management by Travelrite

Tour Price

Per person twin-share \$ 9,580
Single supplement \$ 2,810

Not included in the price:

- Insurance. Travel insurance is strongly recommended
- Indian tourist visa costs
- All items of personal nature, such as drinks, room service, laundry and phone calls
- Meals and drinks, unless specified in itinerary. Breakfasts, lunches, dinners, that are 'included' are marked B, L, D in the itinerary



General information and booking conditions

Touring can involve a considerable amount of walking and stair climbing in the places visited and it is important that all tour participants have a level of physical fitness that allows them to take part in this activity without the need of assistance from others.

TOUR OPERATOR: Travelrite International Pty Ltd. A.C.N. 005 817 0781 (Travelrite International) is the tour operator.

TOUR COSTS: The tour costs are based on transport, accommodation costs and entrance costs at 12 February 2025. Travelrite reserves the right to alter the costs if any of these factors change, giving any passenger that has booked the right to withdraw with full refund of monies paid or modify arrangements. No alterations to costings will be made within 60 days of departure.

DEPOSITS AND PAYMENTS: A non-refundable deposit of \$900 per passenger is required at the time of booking. Full payment will be required 60 days before departure. A 1.5% administration charge will be added to payment by Visa, Mastercard and America Express.

CANCELLATIONS: Cancellations within 60 days prior to departure will result in the loss of all monies paid. Cancellations outside of 60 days prior to departure will result in the loss of the deposit paid per person. Travel insurance is recommended to cover the costs of cancellation fees due to illness, death in family, etc.

CHANGES TO THE TOUR ITINERARY: Travelrite International reserves the right to make changes to the tour itinerary to fit in with operational requirements. Any changes to the itinerary will be replaced with similar arrangements with an equal or greater value.

MINIMUM TOUR NUMBERS: The tour has been costed on the basis of a minimum number of passengers having booked 60 days prior to departure. Travelrite reserves the right to cancel the tour, giving a full refund of all monies paid or offer arrangements to proceed with the tour at a modified cost if the minimum number is not achieved.

REFUNDS: The tour is based on arrangements which do not allow for any refunds in respect to sightseeing, accommodation, meals or other services not utilised after the tour has commenced.

BAGGAGE: All passengers qualify for 1 piece free baggage allowance.

RESPONSIBILITY: Travelrite International Pty Ltd. is the tour organiser. Travelrite International acts only as agents in making of arrangements with carriers, hoteliers and others for the tour. As a result, we cannot accept liability for any act or omission whatsoever, whether negligent or otherwise of those carriers, hoteliers or other persons providing services in connection with the tour over whom we have no direct or exclusive control. We do not accept responsibility for any injury, damage, loss, delay, change of schedule or any other events which are beyond our direct control, such as, but not limited to, war, flood, fire, civil disturbance, acts of God, acts of government, or any other authorities, terrorism, accidents to or failure of machinery or equipment, or industrial action. The passage contract in use by the carriers concerned, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the transportation companies or firms and the purchasers of these tours and the passengers. Baggage is at own risk throughout the tour. The contract shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Victoria and any legal action must be undertaken in the State of Victoria.

DELAYS AND UNFORESEEN EVENTS: You engage Travelrite International to book this tour on your behalf and you acknowledge that Travelrite International acts as your agent for the purpose of making contracts between you and the various providers of accommodation, transportation and other services that comprise the tour. Travelrite International may without reference to you provide or make available to you, or may as your agent engage any third party to provide or make available to you, any good or service which Travelrite International reasonably believes is necessary for your benefit to maintain the tour itinerary, repatriate you or otherwise accommodate, transport or sustain you in circumstances in which the tour itinerary fails wholly or partly for any reason. You appoint Travelrite International your attorney for this purpose. You agree to pay

Travelrite International any cost thereof and you indemnify Travelrite International in respect of any cost it incurs in this regard. Travelrite International advises you to obtain travel insurance generally including in respect of the risk that any such good or service may become required.

HOW TO BOOK: Bookings can be made by completing a booking form and sending it with a deposit of \$900 per person to:

Travelrite International Pty Ltd
423 Whitehorse Road,
Balwyn, Victoria 3103

Further information can be obtained by telephoning

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Email: sales@travelrite.com.au
www.travelrite.com.au

ABOUT TRAVELRITE INTERNATIONAL: Travelrite International Pty Ltd (ABN 64 005 817 078) is a well-established travel company which has been marketing throughout Australia for over 40 years. It has a fully ATAS accredited (No. A10538) office at Balwyn. As such it directly represents the major airlines of the world and all major domestic and international hotel, tour and transport operators. Travelrite International Pty Ltd is a full member of the Australian Travel Industry Association – ATIA.