

Tamil Nadu takes Centre Stage in World Travel Market London (WTM) 2024

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Tamil Nadu, the southernmost state of India, renowned for its rich history, literature, architecture, diverse landscapes, and vibrant cultural heritage, participated in the World Travel Market London from November 5th to 7th, 2024.



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The tourism industry is one of the largest contributors to India's foreign exchange, and WTM London stands among the premier international trade shows in travel and tourism, providing an essential platform for global businesses to showcase their offerings. This event fostered new connections and partnerships, enabling participants to remain informed about the latest trends, innovations, and challenges in the industry while gaining invaluable insights from experts.

A dedicated Tamil Nadu Tourism pavilion promoted the State's diverse tourism offerings and served as a hub for partnership opportunities. H.E. Mr. Vikram K. Doraiswami IFS, High Commissioner, was the guest of honour at the pavilion's inauguration, marking a significant step in Tamil Nadu's efforts to strengthen connections, drive investment in tourism, and build collaborations with industry stakeholders through B2B meetings with travel agents, tour operators, and hoteliers. The pavilion provided visitors with insights into

Tamil Nadu's heritage tourism, eco-tourism, adventure travel, and cultural experiences, showcasing the state's unique appeal to a global audience.

The delegation representing Tamil Nadu Tourism included Dr. Chandra Mohan. B, I.A.S., Principal Secretary of the Government, Tourism, Culture, and Religious Endowments Department and Chairman of TTDC, along with Thiru C. Samayamoorthy, I.A.S., Commissioner of Tourism and Managing Director of the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation, and other officials.

Tamil Nadu, renowned for its rich and diverse cultural heritage, offers a unique experience for every traveller. The State is home to iconic monuments that reflect remarkable architectural and historical significance, providing insight into its millennia-old culture. The stunning temples and intricate sculptures, lush landscapes and tranquil coastline, vibrant traditions, diverse art forms, and abundant wildlife collectively offer experiences that meet the needs of every traveller.

Tamil Nadu is celebrated for its rich and diverse cultural heritage, offering a unique experience for every traveller. The State's iconic monuments, marked by remarkable architecture and historical significance, provided a glimpse into its millennia-old culture. From its stunning temples and intricate sculptures to lush landscapes and serene coastlines, Tamil Nadu showcased an impressive blend of vibrant traditions, diverse art forms, and abundant wildlife, fulfilling a broad range of travel interests.

Festivals further illuminate the State's rich cultural tapestry, offering a vivid glimpse into cherished traditions. Among the celebrations, the Indian Dance Festival, held in the 4th week of December at Mamallapuram, showcases a vibrant array of music, dance, and visual arts, reflecting the artistic spirit of Tamil Nadu. The *Kanduri Festival* on

December 12th fosters community spirit through joyous feasting and celebration. Simultaneously, the Margazhi Utsav, running throughout December, fills the air with classical music and dance. During this month, the Karthigai Deepam festival also lights up the nights with oil lamps, symbolising the triumph of light over darkness. January marks a special commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Thiruvalluvar Statue in Kanniyakumari, honouring the celebrated Tamil poet and his timeless contribution to Tamil literature and heritage. The same month also brings the vibrant harvest festival of Pongal, which features the thrilling *Jallikattu* event from January 15-17. This traditional Tamil bull-taming sport will be showcased in the lively arenas of Avaniyapuram, Palamedu, and Alanganallur in Madurai. The Tamil Nadu International Balloon Festival, taking place from January 10-19, will fill the skies of Chennai, Madurai and Pollachi with colourful hot air balloons, creating a breathtaking canvas that enchants spectators.

February will host the Tamil Nadu Travel Marts from February 7-9 in Chennai, providing a vital platform for networking opportunities among travel agents, tour operators and hoteliers. This event fosters collaborations that enhance Tamil Nadus appeal as a premier travel destination, showcasing the state's rich cultural heritage, stunning landscapes, and diverse attractions.

By bringing together key industry stakeholders, the Travel Marts will play a crucial role in driving tourism growth in Tamil Nadu, fostering innovative partnerships that promote sustainable practices and elevate the overall visitor experience.

At World Travel Market London (WTM), Tamil Nadu Tourism proudly showcased its destination, committed to expanding its tourism network while upholding environmentally and culturally sustainable practices that align with the evolving needs of travellers

Tourism Proposal 2025:

Tamil Nadu, rich in cultural heritage, is home to six UNESCO World Heritage Sites and various vibrant events, including the Indian Dance Festival, Tamil Nadu International Balloon Festival, and Tamil Nadu International Kite Festival.

The completion of a modern 16-acre *Jallikattu* arena in Madurai underscores Tamil Nadu's dedication to preserving ancient customs while embracing contemporary advancements.

In addition, the destination is developing tourism segments such as **adventure tourism**, with a variety of water sports along its nearly 1,076 kilometres of coastline; and **new niche segments** such as cruise tourism, photo walks and glamping. On the other hand, the State's stunning natural environment is crowned by mountain ranges ideal for a summer getaway to its hill stations, where lesser-known destinations such as Kolli Hills, Jawadhu Hills and Yercaud are being developed.

Tamil Nadu: A Rich Seam of Culture and Nature:

Tamil Nadu is a vibrant tapestry of culture and nature, captivating travellers with its ancient temples and historical monuments, which stand as a testament to the architectural prowess of its ancestors. Visitors can also explore the bustling urban landscapes, serene hill stations, pristine beaches and diverse wildlife.

The State's natural environment, featuring three Biosphere Reserves (Nilgiris, Agasthiyarmalai, and Gulf of Mannar), national parks and mangroves, is an oasis for adventure and outdoor enthusiasts. Activities such as trekking, water sports, and safaris await those eager to explore. Coastal tourism in Tamil Nadu is equally enticing, with the convergence of the Bay of Bengal, Indian Ocean, and Arabian Sea offering stunning maritime experiences. A key highlight is the majestic Thiruvalluvar Statue, standing tall off the coast of Kanniyakumari, symbolising the region's rich literary

heritage while offering visitors breathtaking ocean views from its vantage point.

Culturally, Tamil Nadu is rich with traditional dances, flavorful cuisine, and exquisite handicrafts, including brass and bronze items, sarees, embroidery, jewellery, and pottery. The State is also renowned for its Geographical Indications (GI) tags, with 58 distinct GI-tagged products that highlight its rich artisanal heritage and unique regional specialities. In the heart of the region, amid tea and spice plantations and traditional villages, travellers can immerse themselves in the authentic Tamil way of life. The State's spiritual dimension is equally compelling, with its remarkable pilgrimage sites drawing visitors from near and far.

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