Madrás

A city where tradition and modernity coexist in light of a rich heritage and cultural past. Chennai is fast becoming one of the most sophisticated metropolitans. With its plethora of historical features, ancient temples, dance and art forms, Chennai is popularly known as the Gateway to South India.

Located on the Coromandel Coast, Chennai (Madras) is an intriguing mix of the ancient and the modern. With an enthralling past, it is a window to the culture and art forms of south India. From Bharatnatyam to Carnatic music, ancient temples to historical churches, the city is a delight for explorers. The alluring temple of Kapileshwar and the grand St. Thomas Basilica situated in Mylapore provide an insight into age-old traditions and beliefs. A blooming software and automobile hub, the city plays host to diverse cultures and yet upholds its traditional charm and vigour. The smallest among the four largest Indian metros, Chennai has much to offer. Affordable real estate makes it the retail capital of India, home to chain stores, shopping malls and old-world family-run establishments. The first British settlement in India, Chennai is also the country’s oldest municipal corporation, based on a charter issued by James II in 1688. Only briefly occupied by the French and the Portuguese, the seaport grew and ebbed with the changing fortunes of the Raj. In Hollywood, they build museums for their movie stars. In Tamil Nadu, they (sometimes) build temples. The late matinee idol MG Ramachandran and actress Kushboo are consecrated in several shrines in rural Tamil Nadu. Chennai’s tryst with moving pictures goes back to 1897, when the Lumière brothers made their presentation here. The Electric Theatre and Gaiety Theatre were its first movie-halls. By the early 20th century, Chennai turned into a film studio hub. Its first silent film was the mythological Keechaka Vatham, screened in 1917. Of the many studios that were set up here, the most famous was the Gemini Studio, founded by SS Vasan in 1941.

When To VISIT


- **Apr**: Pleasant weather. Carry Light woollen. Max: 35.70000076°C, Min: 26.0°C, Rain: 47mm
- **May**: Hot weather. Carry Light clothes, umbrella. Max: 38.09999847°C, Min: 27.39999961°C, Rain: 53.0mm
- **Jul**: Pleasant weather. Carry Light woollen, umbrella. Max: 34.79999923°C, Min: 25.5°C, Rain: 62mm
- **Aug**: Pleasant weather. Carry Light woollen, umbrella. Max: 34.5°C, Min: 25.20000076°C, Rain: 8mm
- **Sep**: Pleasant weather. Carry Light woollen, umbrella. Max: 34.5°C, Min: 25.00000076°C, Rain: 62mm
- **Oct**: Pleasant weather. Carry Light woollen, umbrella.
Max: 32.0°C  
Min: 24.2°C
Rain: 336.5mm

Max: 30.1°C  
Min: 22.9°C
Rain: 374.0mm

Max: 29.2°C  
Min: 21.3°C
Rain: 152.5mm

Marina Beach is a popular hangout of humans and sea-animals alike in Chennai. While swimming or taking a dip in the sea is not possible at Marina beach, it is legally prohibited, there are a range of activities to indulge in at the beach if the distant horizon with huge waves crashing around don’t have you spellbound for hours on end. An endless sandy expanse stretching from Fort George to Besant Nagar, while Marina beach is possibly one of the cleanest you will come across in India, it has lost much of its glory, beauty and natural heritage over the years to pollution. It has been the focus of much conservation efforts and cleanliness drives in recent years.

There are a number of food stalls and different sorts of shops crowding the beach with the Triumph of Labor and Gandhiji’s march to Dandi statue towering in the skyline along with statues of many notable figures of Tamil literature and the MGR Samadhi. While there are a number of joyrides run on the beach, kite flying and pony rides are popular activities out here. Beach cricket was banned out here some years back as it was quite an inconvenience strolling the beach with cricket balls flying at you from all directions. There’s a 34 ft artificial waterfall on one part of the beach. Yet another attraction at the beach is the Marina Beach Aquarium, country’s first aquarium built in 1909, that houses rare species of tropical and fresh water fishes.

Kapaleeshwar Temple

Kapaleeshwar Temple is popularly believed to have been built in 7th century CE by the Pallavas. However, architectural markers of the temple point to a more recent origin that dates 300-400 years back. While its date of origin may be a point of debate but the temple’s beauty and architectural splendour is indisputable. A glorious example of the Dravidian style of architecture, Kapaleeshwar temple gopuram is a 120 feet towering beauty that leaves you mesmerised. Dedicated to Lord Shiva and Goddess Karpagambal, a form of Goddess Parvat translating to Goddess of the Wish Yielding Tree. Around 1.5 kilometers away from the coastline, inscriptions inside the temple date back to the 12th century. While the temple is thronged by devotees daily, the crowd reaches a frenzy during the festivals of Panguni Peruvizha (mid March to mid April), Brahmostsavam and Arupathimoovar. The temple has been immortalized in the poetry of Tevaram, the twelve volume Tamil Saivite devotional poetry where the sixth volume waxes eloquent about the temple.

Fort St. George

Fort St. George is functional since 31st January 1948. Built in 1975, this fort is the first building to be made by the British. It is also said that it is around this fort or building that the whole Chennai city evolved. St. Mary’s church which is also the former Anglican church of India is housed inside this fort. Apart from the church which is also the St George Fort Museum, a Flag Staff and Wellesley House. The Flag Staff is the tallest in the country with a height of 45.72
m.

The building is home to ten galleries spread across three floors. You'll be amazed to see approximately 3661 registered antiquities in the collection. As you enter, you'll be greeted by an imposing marble statue of Lord Cornwallis. Also, you'll observe sketching of the stages of construction from 1640 onward in the lobby area. The galleries house arms, uniforms of the British army, church silverware, oil paintings and various porcelains used by the East India Company. At present, the building comes under the Archaeological Survey of India and is considered to be one of the oldest surviving masterpieces within the fort. Also, it has previously served as the landmark for Madras Bank.

San Thome Basilica

Built in the 16th century by Portuguese and rebuilt by the British in 1893, San Thome Basilica is a Catholic minor basilica. Today what stands is the British form, constructed in the Neo-Gothic style, the favored architectural style in late 19th century of the British architects. Principal church of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Madras and Mylapore, San Thome church was elevated to the status of Basilica by the Pope Pius XII in 1956 and declared a national shrine in February of 2006 by the Catholic Bishop's Conference of India. Resplendent in white and appearing more like a small luminous castle, the church gains its distinction from the fact that it is one of the only three churches in the world built over tomb of one of the twelve apostles of Christ, being that of St. Thomas in case of San Thome. Down a flight of stairs is the underground tomb chapel where the tomb of St. Thomas lies. Encased in glass a marble altar has been built over the tomb with a statue of St. Thomas. A beautiful, serene site, the stained glasses inside telling the story of St. Thomas set it alight with colourful calmness. There is a museum, library and shop selling Christmas cards and prayer material inside the church building.

Arignar Anna Zoological Park

Holding the distinction of being the first public zoo of the country, Arinagar Anna Zoological Park in Vandalur was established in 1885. This place will endow you with 1,500 different species of wild animals, 46 of which are presently endangered. A zoo that began with the Nawab of Carnatic's personal animal collection on the persuasion of Edward Green Balfour, it was thrown open to the public for free in 1861. Over the years as its repository of mammals, birds, reptiles and fish expanded, the zoo changed its location thrice and was finally moved to Vandalur Reserve Forest on the outskirts of the city away from the urban noise.

Where To Eat

1. Anjappar Chettinad
2. Ente Keralam
4. San Thome Basilica
5. Arignar Anna Zoological Park

If you are a connoisseur of spicy Chettinad food, Anjappar Chettinad is most probably will top your list of preferred eateries in the city. With over 40 years of experience, they list some unique dishes. Their chicken dishes are indeed teasing treat for the taste buds as is the seafood menu. Most of their dishes have a variety of spices mixed in the right proportions, imparting to the delicacies just the right flavour. Mutton Sukka - the boneless mutton is every bit juicy and succulent. However, if you are someone who does not prefer spicy food, then we suggest that you take a little assistance while choosing your dishes. Apart from great food, the restaurant also has an ambience that transports you to the land of the Chettiars. At last count they had over 20 branches in the city.
This lovely old world Bungalow is set in the beautiful upscale neighbourhood of Poes Garden and serves as a perfect location for Ente Keralam. The charming décor, with rooms that are set up for quiet evenings is perfect for the wonderful food that is showcased in this restaurant. Food here is simply outstanding and is a perfect example of quality Kerala food, outside of Kerala, served with a lot of style. The Appams are light and crisp and leave you wanting for more. To accompany them they have the stews, both mutton and vegetarian, the Karimeen Pollichathu and the Kappa Vaevichathu are both outstanding. The non vegetarian menu is exciting and the Meen Vatichathu and the Trivandrum Fried Chicken are finger licking delicious. Their biryani’s, both vegetarian and Talaseery are light and fluffy. One of the highlights of Ente Keralam is their Puttu with Kadalakarai that is simply made to perfection. The Elanieer Payasam makes for a perfect ending to a sumptuous meal.

Features:
- Live Music
- Fine Dining
- Air Conditioned
- Home Delivery
- Take Away Counter
- Private Party Rooms

Crowd:
- Couples
- Families
- Students
- Working Professionals
- Youngsters

Specialities:
- Crepe Meridien
- Tandoori
- Fish Steak

Features:
- Kid Friendly
- TV / Big Screen
- Group Friendly
- Fine Dining
- Air Conditioned
- Parking Available
- Take Away Only
- Serves Alcohol

Crowd:
- Couples
- Families
- Working Professionals
- Young Professionals
- Youngsters

Anjappar Chettinad
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Specialities:

- Nattukoli
- Anjappar Chicken
- Mutton Varutha
- Prawn Masala
- Crab Roast
- Promfret Fish
- Viral Meen Curry
- Surupputtu
- Chettinad Fish Masala

Features:

- Buffet
- Business Lunch
- Group Friendly
- Fine Dining
- Air Conditioned
- Corporate
- Parking Available

Crowd:

- Couples
- Families
Quick LOCATE

See
A: Marina Beach
B: Kapaleeshwar Temple
C: Fort St. George
D: San Thome Basilica
E: Arignar Anna Zoological Park

Accommodation
F: Mahalakshmi
G: Modern condo unit with swimming pool
H: Maple Serviced Apartments Llp
I: Mahalakshmi
J: Modern condo unit with swimming pool
K: Maple Serviced Apartments Llp
L: Mahalakshmi
M: Modern condo unit with swimming pool
N: Maple Serviced Apartments Llp

Food
O: Anjappar Chettinad
P: Ente Keralam
Q: Dhabba Express
R: Candles and Roses
S: Anjappar Chettinad