

A Memorable Tour To
SHRINE BASILICA OF LADY OF HEALTH
Vailankanni (03 NIGHTS 04 DAYS)



Day 01: Arrive Trichy / Vailankani (L, D)

Arrive in Trichy. Meet and assist at the airport, drive to Vailankani (160 km / 04 hrs). On arrival there transfer to the hotel. En route lunch at local restaurant. Check in at hotel and evening visit the **Church Complex**. Dinner and overnight stay at hotel.

Vailankani is very famous for its Marian church known as "**Shrine Basilica of Lady of Health**". Thousands of people from all around India and World visit this place and hence is known as "**Mecca of Christians**" and "**Lourdes of the East**". There are a number of churches and other buildings in the Basilica complex and on one side it is flanked by Bay of Bengal sea.

Day 02: Vailankani (B, L, D)

Day at leisure to visit the Church. Overnight at Hotel – All Meals will be at Hotel.

Brief History of Vailankani Basilica Church

The history of Vailankani goes back as far as 16th century. According to legends, Mother Mary appeared twice to milk boys during this period. There are churches on both these places (inside Basilica complex). In the first appearance, Mother Mary asked for milk from a boy. Boy gave milk to mother and later it was found that the milk pot is still full. This place is known as "Our Lady's Tank". In the second appearance, Mother Mary cured a crippled boy. There is a small church at this place now. The third miracle happened sometime during seventeenth century and probably it was this miracle which caused rapid expansion of Vailankani church. A Portuguese ship going from Macao in China to Colombo was caught in a violent storm. The sailors prayed to Mother Mary for protection. It is said that the ship landed in Vailankani and as an offering sailors built a church at the seaside. In subsequent visits, Portuguese continued to build and expand the church complex. In 1962, Pope John XXIII granted Minor Basilica status to Vailankani church. The first bishop of Thanjavur, R.A. Sundaram was behind this decision. A new church extension modeled after the Lady of Lourdes was soon built.

Day 03: Vailankani / Thanjavur Poondi Matha / Trichy (B, L, D)

After early breakfast transfer to visit the sacred **Poondi Matha Church**. Lunch at Thanjavur and visit **Art Gallery Museum**. Return to hotel for dinner and overnight stay.

Poondi Matha Church

In the beginning of the eighteenth century (1714–1718) a great Italian Jesuit missionary named Rev. Fr. Constantine Joseph Beschi S.J., popularly known as Veeramamunivar, built a church and named it as the church of "Mary Queen of Immaculate Conception". Rev. Fr. Lourdes Xavier, Parish Priest of the church in 1955 noticed the bad shape of the roof and consulted an engineer who told that except for the central roof, the rest of the structure was quite strong. He recommended that it was enough to demolish only the roof. After a while on one rainy night, the roof of the church collapsed, leaving everything else intact, thus saving the cost of demolishing. Shortly after this, the number of pilgrims to the Shrine was on the rise and kept increasing as accounts of miracles and cures started to spread. And people gave Her the name Poondi Matha. Matha means Mother in Tamil. Then onwards, the shrine was popularly known as Poondi Matha shrine. Poondi Madha Shrine has been raised to the level of Minor Basilica by Pope John Paul II on 3 August 1999.

Day 04: Vailankani / Trichy and Depart Trichy (B)

Breakfast at hotel. Timely transfer to the airport to onward flight to Colombo.

TOUR ENDS



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