

## The Important Places of Tuticorin District - A Study

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### ABSTRACT

Thoothukudi can be visited anytime in the year; however, the ideal time to visit is between the months of December and March when the weather is pleasant with the maximum temperature going up to only 32°C. The summers and monsoons can be a bit uncomfortable due to high humidity level. Primarily a family destination and a pilgrimage for Hindus and Christians, Thoothukudi is a must-visit in Tamil Nadu. Even for the beach lovers and those seeking to spend some quality time in solitude, the city offers pretty beaches and park. Relishing the sightseeing tour and rejuvenating oneself are the best things to do in Thoothukudi. This Tamil Nadu city is adorned with a beautiful church, Our Lady of Snows Basilica, which also brings the Christian devotees to this place for performing the pilgrimage. There is also a Shiva Temple at the centre of the city which is quite popular amongst the Hindu devotees. Thoothukudi is also known for housing one of the world's oldest seaport, which also drew the attention of the Portuguese for operating their smooth trade with India. Apart from the religious places, Thoothukudi is home to many beach parks and parks in general. Since it is a family destination, these parks act as a perfect getaway for the families who can enjoy the pristine environment amongst the rich flora. Roche Park, Harbour Beach Park, Nehru Park, and Rajaji Park are some of the popular parks in Tuticorin. Other than these, a visitor in Thoothukudi can relish a great beach holiday as this city in Tamil Nadu is blessed with some pretty looking beaches like Muthu Nagar New Beach and Pearl City Beach.

Keywords: Thoothukudi, Tuticorin, district.

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### INTRODUCTION

In the history of India's freedom struggle Thoothukudi District enjoys a unique place. It was Veerapandia Kattabomman the Pelingal of Panchalankurichi who waged a bitter fight against East India Company, V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, a man of immense courage plunged himself in to the Swadeshi movement and launched the movement of boycott of the British goods and had the guts to take in the British when he launched his Swadeshi steam company. Nobody would forget the fiery Bard Subramaniabharathi who in the history of Tamil Poetry has left such an indelible mark. Another illustrious freedom fighter from Chidambaram District was Subramania Siva who was a close associate of V.O. Chidambaram Pillai one of the musical

trinities Sr. Muthusamy Dikshitar as well as the poet Umarupulavar were born at Ettayapuram in this District [1].

#### **Geographical location of the district**

Traditionally known as "Pearl City" on account of the prevailing Pearl fish in the past in the area, Thoothukudi has a fascinating history. On 20th October 1986 a new district, carved out of the erstwhile Thirunelveli district was born in Tamil Nadu and named after V.O. Chidambaram, a great National leader. Since 1997 as in the case of other districts of Tamil Nadu, this district has also been named after its headquarters town Thoothukudi. Thoothukudi district is situated between latitude 08° and 45° and longitude 78° and 11° with an area of 4,621 sq.km [2]

### **Meteorological information**

Its maximum temperature is 41°C and the minimum is 26°C. The climate is conducive for agriculture and horticulture. Thoothukudi comes under low rainfall region. The normal rainfall of the district is 662.2 mm. South west monsoon accounts for 9%, north east monsoon for 65%, winter being 9% and summer being 17% of total rainfall. Thoothukudi depends mainly on north east monsoon rains, which are brought by the troughs of low pressure developing in south Bay of Bengal between October and December.

### **Korkai**

Korkai ancient port city of Pandian dynasty in the Sagam period is located on the main road from Tiruchendur to thoothukudi . It is 29km from Tiruchendur. The Tank of Korkai is said to be korkai kulam with an extent 250 acres. An ancient Vettrivelamman Temple is also situated here. Many a number of tourists visit this temple [3].

### **Kazhugumalai -Jain Temple**

Kazhugumalai Jain Temple is 60Km from Tirunelveli and 21Km from Kovilpatti. This is basically a Jain temple where we can see images of Adinatha, Neminatha Mahaveera Parvanatha, Bahubali. There is also a monolithic Temple called Vettuvan Kovil. This is the only one of the monolithic Pandya Temple that still survive [4].

### **Panimaya Matha Church**

Panimaya Matha Church (Shrine Basilica of Our Lady of Snow") is a famous church built by the Portuguese in 1711. Every year on 5th August the church festival is conducted in a grand manner which attracts a large number of devotees from all faiths.

### **Thiruchendur**

Thiruchendur is one of the major pilgrim centres of South India. This Temple is situated at a distance of 40 kms from Thoothukudi. The sea-shore temple is dedicated to Lord Muruga, is one of the six abodes of Lord Muruga. (Arupadi Veedu).The nine storied tier temple tower of height 157 feet belongs 17th century AD. Visiting Valli Cave, taking sea-bath, and bathing in Nazhikkinaru are treated as holy one. It

is well connected by bus service to all over Tamilnadu and train services to Tirunelveli and Chennai.

### **Vallanadu Blackbuck Sanctuary**

The Sanctuary is located in Vallanadu village of Srivaikundam Taluk on Tirunelveli - Thoothukudi road at a distance of 18Km from Tirunelveli. The Vallanadu Blackbuck sanctuary is an isolated hillock with scrub forest. Police shooting station (Arms Firing Training) here is one of the best in India.

### **Manapad**

In a world full of popular tourist destinations that are being commercially exploited, there are still some truly serene and mesmerising locations. India is no exception to this altering tourism scenario and the quaint coastal village in the state of Tamil Nadu - Manapad - is proof for the existence of such relatively unexplored and untouched places. This small hamlet nestled between naturally formed dunes on one side and enclosed by clear blue seas on three sides stands still with all its beauty and majesty. Ingrained in history and bestowed with inimitable natural splendour, Manapad is a fantastic location for leisure activities and water sports as well. This pristine destination is surrounded by many places of great heritage, tourism and religious significance.

### **Kulasekaranpattinam**

Kulasekaranpattinam is situated on the way to Kanniyakumari from Tiruchendur. It is 20 kms from Tiruchendur and 65 kms from Kanyakumari. This village is famous for Mutharaman Temple, which is located on the shore of Bay of Bengal. This temple is nearly 150 years old. The Dhasara Festival is celebrated in a grand scale every year during October. Folk dance artists from throughout Tamilnadu perform variety of programmes.

### **Panchalankurichi**

Panchalankurichi is a small historic village located 25km from Thoothukudi and 55 km from Tirunelveli. From here the Great warrior Kattabomman popularly known as "Veerapandiya

Kattabomman" raised his voice against the British regime in the 17th century AD. The existing Memorial Fort was constructed in 1974, by the government of Tamilnadu. The Memorial hall has beautiful paintings depict the heroic deeds of the saga which give a good idea about the history of the period. Sri Devi Jakkammal Temple, the hereditary Goddess of Kattabomman, is located in the fort complex. Cemetery of British soldiers can also be seen near the fort. The rest of the old fort is protected by the Department of Archaeology. City bus services available from Thoothukudi. Kattabomman Festival is celebrated on January 15 and May second week every year which attract thousands of people. Small bullock cart race is the special attraction during festival. Tourist can visit the fort from 8.A.M to 1 P.M. and 2 P.M. to 6 P.M on all days. The entrance fee for adult Rs.2 and Child Rs.1. A Tourist Rest house is available here for the benefit of the Tourists.

#### **Meignanapuram**

It is 13km from Tiruchendur and said to be an ancient village. The Pari Pauvlin Church here was built in 1847. It is 110 feet long, 55 feet wide with steeple in the front soaring into the sky a height of 192 feet. This is one of the biggest churches with the tallest steeple in India.

#### **Ettayapuram**

Ettayapuram is the birth place of the revolutionary poet Subramaniya Bharathiyar and is located 76 kms from Tirunelveli and 22 kms from Kovilpatti and 35 kms from Thoothukudi. His home now became a monument. Umarupulavar Dhansha is also located here.

#### **Kayathar**

Kayathar, is situated about 25 kms from Tirunelveli on the way to Madurai. Kattabomman, one of the earliest Freedom fighters of who fought against the British rule in India, was hanged by the British in 1799 at this place. A memorial has been built here by the Tamilnadu government to commemorate the memory of this great freedom fighter.

#### **Kayalpattinam**

Kayalpattinam was a famous port next to Korkai in the 12th and 13th Centuries, situated 30 kms from Thoothukudi and 18 kms from Tiruchendur between Thoothukudi and Tiruchendur highway. It has a fine beach on Bay of Bengal

#### **Adichanallur**

Adichanallur is 20km from Tirunelveli on the way to Tiruchendur. From an Archaeological point of view, this place has a glorious past and it is located on the banks of river Tamirabarani. It is assumed that, in ancient times a civilized habitation flourished here. Urns (burnt-clay vessels which were used for burying dead bodies of the very old people) small mud vessel were found near the river Tamirabarani and they are supportive evidence, for the civilization. This place is now under the supervision of Tamilnadu State Archaeological Department.

#### **Ayyanarsunai**

It is 10km from Tiruchendur and 40 kms from Tirunelveli. Natural water gushes out from the spring at this place. A temple dedicated to Village deity It is a good picnic / excursion centre.

#### **Sinthalakkurai**

Sinthalakkurai is one such pilgrim centre where Goddess Sri Vetkalamman of 42 feet height wonders the people. It is on the way of Thoothukudi to Madurai four way track road. (3km from Ettayapuram). The statue of Mahavishnu of 72 feet length with Rajasayanam on the snake in Thiruparkadal is also there.

#### **Vanchi Maniyachi**

It is a Railway Junction in between Kovilpatti and Tirunelveli at a distance of 31 kms from Thoothukudi. The Original Maniyachi Railway Station was renamed as Vanchi Maniyachi in memory of freedom Fighter Vanchinathan who revolted against the British and assassinated the then British Collector Ash in 1911 as vengeance against the Britishers' oppression.

#### **Ottappidaram**

This is the birth place of Freedom fighter Thiru. V. O Chidambaranar. This place is located at a distance of 25 kms from Thoothukudi and 2kms from

Kattabomman Memorial Fort Panchalankurichi. The house in which he lived has been converted in to a Memorial. He was instrumental in the freedom struggle in the district and operated the Swadesi shipping Company during the rule of the British.

#### **Vanathirupathi**

This beautiful temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu and is situated in a small hamlet called Punnaiyadi. The temple is getting popular among the tourists and locals. This Temple is about 45km from Tirunelveli and around 20 km from Tiruchendur. The nearest railway station is Kachanavilai on the Tiruchendur to Tirunelveli section. Frequent buses are available. The temple is opened from 6.00 A.M to 8 P.M.

#### **Navathirupathi**

The nine Vishnu Temples are located very close to one another. They are all in Thoothukudi District. The Vaishnava shrines are having an interesting legend. The shrines are notable for nine stone carvings and temple architecture.

- Srivaikundam 40km from Thoothukudi Swami Kallapiran Dharshan Time 6-12 A.M and 4.-8 P.M
- Natham 1km Srivaikundam Swami Vijayasanar Dharshan Time 9 A.M To 6 P.M
- Thirupuliyankudi 2km from Srivaikundam Swami Kaisinivenda Perumal Dharshan Time 9 A.M To 6 P.M
- Perunkulam 8km from Srivaikundam Swami Mayakoothan Dharshan Time 7.30 -12.00A.M 5.00 -7.30 P.M
- Erattai Thirupathi 1 10.km from Srivaikundam Swami Devarpiran Dharshan Time 8 A.M To 5 P.M
- Erattai Thirupathi 2 10.km from Srivaikundam Swami Senthamarai Kannan Dharshan Time 8 A.M To 5 P.M
- Thenthirupperai 12 km from Srivaikundam Swami Maharanedungkuzhaikadar Dharshan Time 7.30 -12.00A.M 5.00 -7.30 P.M
- Thirukkolor 8km from Srivaikundam Swami

Vaithimanithi Dharshan Time 7.30 -12.00A.M 5.00 -7.00P.M

- Alwarthirunagari 5 km from Srivaikundam Swami Aathipiran Dharshan Time 7.30 -12.00A.M 5.00 -8.00P.M

Most of the Thirupathi are located on the main road from Tiruchendur to Tirunelveli. Among the nine, two temples i.e Alwarthirunagari and Srivaikundam are located on the main road between Tiruchendur and Tirunelveli. The other seven temples are located little interior from the main road. The pilgrims those who are visiting Thiruchendur they will pay a visit to Alwarthirunagari and Srivaikundam [5]. These two temples are situated on the bank of the river Tamirabarani. In these two temples every year a festival is celebrated in the month of September for 10 days on large scale. Every year in the month of September to October (Tamil month Purataci) all Saturday 's the Tamilnadu State Transport corporation ply the special buses to these Navathirupathi Temples from Tirunelveli New Bus-stand. Advance booking also done.

#### **Chairman Arunachalasamy Temple - Eral**

This Temple is dedicated to an ordinary man called Arunachalam who lived in this town and dedicated his life for the welfare of the people. People of this village believed that he is the incarnation of god and thereby began to worship him after his death [6]. A Temple was constructed in the village. In due course of time this temple town began to attract large number of devotees. The festival is celebrated in a grand manner for 12 days before Adi Amavasai and Thai Amavasai every year (Tel: 04630-271281)

#### **Karkkuvel Ayyanar Temple - Kuthiraimozhitheri - Therikudiyiruppu**

The famous Karkkuvel Ayyanar Temple is situated in the forest in the Kurthiraimozhitheri -Therikudiyiruppu village near Kayamozhi. It is believed by the people of this region that a notorious thief was killed by a king called Vanniyaraja as ordered by the village deity Karkkuvel Ayyanar. and

saved the people. Annual "Kallar Vettu" (Killing the thief) festival is held during the Tamil Month of Karthigai (November/December) which attracts thousands of pilgrims from all over Tamil Nadu.

### **Navakailayam**

Nine Lord Siva shrines highlight as Navagraghas which gives health and wealth to the pilgrims. Among the nine temples five are situated in Thoothukudi district and rest of them in Tirunelveli district. The following Temples referred as Navakailayam shrines (Nine Shiva Temples)

#### **I. Papanasam**

It is 45km from Tirunelveli. Presiding deity of the temple is Pabavinasar alias Kailasanatha and Mother goddess is Ulagammai. A good picnic spot a large number of tourists. Agasthiar waterfalls is 2 kms from here. picnic spot. From here just 2km a famous Agasthiar Falls is located.

#### **II. Cheranmahadevi**

It is 22km from Tirunelveli and is located on the bank of river Tamirabarani. presiding deity of the temple is Sri Ammainathar alias Kailasanathar and Goddess Avudinayaki. Frequent city buses available from Tirunelveli Junction.

#### **III. Kodaganallur**

It is 15km from Tirunelveli on the way to Cheranmahadevi and the temple is located near Nadukallur village. Presiding deity is Kailasanathar and Goddess Sivakamiammai. City buses available from Tirunelveli Junction Bus stand.

#### **IV. Kunnathur**

It is 2km from Tirunelveli Town railway station. And also very near to Thiruvengadanathapuram Kunnathaur is located in small hillock. Presiding deity is Kothai Parameswaran. Goddess Sivakamasundari.

#### **V. Murappanadu**

It is 17km from Tirunelveli and 40km from Thoothukudi on the National

Highways. It is also situated on the banks of river Tamirabarni. Presiding deity is Kailasanathar Goddess Sivakamiammal.

#### **VI. Srivaikundam**

It is 30km from Tirunelveli and 40km from Thoothukudi it is also located on the river Tamirabarni Presiding deity is Kailasanathar Goddess Sivakamiammai. The first Navathirupathi temple is located here.

#### **VII. Thenthirupperai**

It is 38km from Tirunelveli on the way to Tiruchendur. Presiding deity is Kailasanathar Goddess Allakiyaponamal One of the Navathirupathi temple also located here.

#### **VIII. Rajjapathi**

It is 38km from Tirunelveli on the way to Tiruchendur near Thenthirupperai. Presiding deity is Kailasanathar Goddess Alagiya ponnamal and Sivakamiammai.

#### **IX. Senthapoomangalam**

It is 20km km from Thoothukudi on the way to Tiruchendur near Athoor and Ponnakayal. Presiding deity is Kailasanathar Goddess Sivakami Ammai. City bus available from Thoothukudi Old bus stand.

#### **Thoothukudi Port**

Thoothukudi port is the 10th major port of the country functioning with seven cargo berths and three bulk jetties. Thoothukudi port is situated at Latitude 8 degrees 45'N and Longitude 78 degrees 13' E on the East Coast of India about 540 km south west of Chennai. The port is well sheltered from the fury of storms and cyclonic winds. It is strategically located very close to the major international sea routes [7]. One of the main problems with the port is the low depth which was recently improved by the dredging project at a cost of Rs.202 crores to cater the needs of vessels having draught upto 10.7 meters. Port has adequate space and god owns. Thoothukudi port is the first Indian port to win the quality certificate under ISO - 9002.

### CONCLUSION

A beach lover's paradise and a destination to get the insight of Tamil Nadu's culture and history, Thoothukudi or Tuticorin is indeed a must-visit. Known for Pearl fishing, this tourist destination is also famed for its parks where families can enjoy a quality time. Thoothukudi, in fact, is a family destination with a number of attractions that are perfect for each member. One may not find many activities on these beaches, but relaxing and watching the sunset views are the best things to do

here. Thoothukudi is also famous for its macaroons, which are made of cashew, coconut milk, and dry fruits. It's one of those things that you must buy from this tourism place in Tamil Nadu as a souvenir. Interested in knowing more about Thoothukudi? Well, our Thoothukudi travel guide can assist you to learn more about this destination in South India. From where to go to what to eat and when to visit, our guide provides accurate information for you to plan a hassle-free trip to Thoothukudi.

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