



# District 5340 Rotary 5340 2007-08 GSE Team to India



December 21, 2007

As I write this on December 21st. We have acquired uniforms, purchased gifts, suffered immunizations, visited sponsoring clubs, rehearsed presentations, partied and squabbled. But now the team is ready and raring to go!

We leave at 7.45 am on Wednesday December 26th from Lindbergh via, New York, Brussels, and Chennai and arrive in Tiruchirapalli (Trichy) on Friday December 28th at 2.30 pm – 55 hours by the clock or 44 hours elapsed time – assuming flights are on time!

For family members and friends here is some background about Tamil Nadu - the state we will be visiting.



Tamil Nadu (Land of the Tamils) is a state at the southern tip of India. The island nation of Sri Lanka, which has a significant Tamil minority, lies off the southeast coast. Tamil Nadu is the second most industrialized state in India. We will be passing through Chennai (Madras) the 4th largest city of India and the state capital. Also known as the auto capital of India, Chennai is the home of Marina Beach, the second longest beach in the world. We will spend time in each of the following cities and small towns Chennai, Trichy, Thanjavur, Srirangam, Perambalur, Karur, Dindigul, Kodaikanal, Theni, Thekkady, Madurai, and Pudukkottai (see our itinerary and map below).

Tamil Civilization is one of the oldest in the World. Tamil Nadu's recorded history dates back 6,000 year. There is some evidence that the Dravidian people were part of the early Indus River Valley settlers.

Unique cultural features, like Tanjore paintings, dance, architecture, give Tamil Nadu a heritage to be proud of. Tamil Chola kings conquered lands as far North as the Himalayas, and as far East as Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia and Indonesia. The world's oldest dam was built across the Kaveri river in Tamil Nadu by King Karikala Chola. Today, the rapidly increasing IT boom in Tamil Nadu cities like Chennai and Coimbatore makes Tamil Nadu the economic hotspot of India.

The Pandyas rose to prominence in the early 14th century but they were soon subdued by Muslim invaders from the north in 1316. The city of Madurai was ransacked and completely destroyed. This 14th century invasion caused a retaliatory reaction from the Hindus, who rallied to build a strong new kingdom, called the Vijayanagara empire. This was the most prosperous dynasty in the south. Around 1609, the Dutch established a settlement in Pulicat. In 1639, the British, under the British East India Company, established a settlement further south, in present day Chennai. The British fought with the various European powers in India - notably the French and the Dutch. They also fought four wars which led to their eventual domination of India's south.

Following independent in 1947 the country was re-organized several times. In 1968, Madras State was renamed Tamil Nadu, partly to resist the imposition of Hindi as a national language by the Central Government.

Tamil Nadu's population is approximately 65 million. It has the second most industrialized state with the world's biggest bagasse based Paper mills in Karur as well as the world's sixth largest manufacturer of watches. Tamil Nadu is the largest garment exporter in India and sometimes referred to as Textile valley of India. Heavy engineering and manufacturing-based companies are centered around Chennai (nicknamed, "The Detroit of India"). Chennai boasts global vehicle manufacturing giants like Ford, Caterpillar, Hyundai, BMW and Mitsubishi as well as local companies like MRF, TI cycles of India, Ashok Leyland, Royal Enfield. Everything from automobiles, railway coaches, battle-tanks, tractors, motorbikes and heavy vehicles are manufactured here. Tamil Nadu is one of the few Indian states with surplus power electricity, enabling the electrical authority to sell it to neighboring states.

Tamil Nadu has historically been an agricultural state. Tamil Nadu is India's second biggest producer of rice, next to Punjab where there is perennial source of irrigation. Chennai is the second leading Software exporter in India, after Bangalore. And it is emerging as the most preferred destination for high-end financial services, healthcare and other back-office services for multinational companies.

Tamil Nadu has been a pioneering state in E-Governance initiatives in India. A large part of the government records like land ownership records are already digitized and all major offices of the state government like land registration offices, and transport offices have been computerized, thereby improving the quality of service and transparency in operations.

Tamil Nadu is a land of varied beauty. It is famous for its Hindu temples based on the Dravidian architecture. Hill stations like Kodaikanal boast some of the stunning landscapes in India.

Shown below is our city-by-city itinerary. As we drive through the countryside we hope to share our experiences with you.

### Our Itinerary



Day/Date	Activity
Wednesday, December 26, 2007	Depart SAN AA 7.40 am
Thursday, December 27, 2007	Arrive Brussels 7.45 am
Friday, December 28, 2007	Arrive Trichy 2.30 PM
Saturday, December 29, 2007	District Conference Presentation
Sunday, December 30, 2007	District Conference Ends
Monday, December 31, 2007	Thanjavur

Tuesday, January 01, 2008 Srirangam & Local  
 Wednesday, January 02, 2008 Vocational Visit  
 Thursday, January 03, 2008 Leisure  
 Friday, January 04, 2008 Perambalur Club Meeting  
 Saturday, January 05, 2008 Karur Vocational Visit  
 Sunday, January 06, 2008 Karur: Free Day  
 Monday, January 07, 2008 Palani/Pallappatti: stay at Dindigul  
 Tuesday, January 08, 2008 Dindigul: Multi Club Meeting  
 Wednesday, January 09, 2008 Dindigul Vocational Visit  
 Thursday, January 10, 2008 To Kodaikanal & Club Meeting  
 Friday, January 11, 2008 Kodaikanal Vocational Visit  
 Saturday, January 12, 2008 Kodaikanal  
 Sunday, January 13, 2008 Theni, Thekkady & Free Day  
 Monday, January 14, 2008 After Breakfast proceed to Madurai  
 Tuesday, January 15, 2008 Madurai: Multi Club Meeting  
 Wednesday, January 16, 2008 Madurai: Shopping & Leisure  
 Thursday, January 17, 2008 Madurai: Vocational Visit  
 Friday, January 18, 2008 Madurai  
 Saturday, January 19, 2008 Madurai  
 Sunday, January 20, 2008 Pudukkottai Free Day  
 Monday, January 21, 2008 Pudukkottai Vocational Visit  
 Tuesday, January 22, 2008 Trichy: Lunch Dinner: All clubs  
 Wednesday, January 23, 2008 Depart Trichy @ 2.55 PM  
 Diner: Chennai Depart @ 1.15 am arrive 9.45  
 Thursday, January 24, 2008 pm

**Stay tuned.....**  
**The GSE Team**