

## Places of Tourist Interest

### Fountain at Kanniyakumari

Kanyakumari district, which lies in the southern most tip of Peninsular India, is famous for its majestic hills, virgin beaches, pristine rivers and meandering rivulets. The district has a fragrance of architecture culture and customs of neighbouring Kerala mixed with the rich deep traditions, culture and architecture of Tamil Nadu. However, for want of promotional campaign and lack of basic amenities most of the tourists coming to this district return back after seeing just Kanyakumari and Padmanabhapuram Palace. It was at this juncture that the district administration decided to take up tourism promotion initiatives in a major way. Attempt has been made to put up basic amenities at the virgin beautiful spots so as to facilitate the inflow of the tourists.



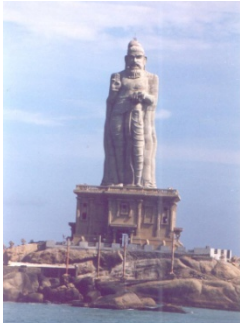
### Mahatma Gandhi Memorial

The place has been associated with great men like Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi in whose names memorials have been here. They are very beautiful and add to the attraction of this place. The beautiful Gandhi Memorial completed in 1956, is situated as a memorial to the Father of the Nation. An urn of Mahatma Gandhi was kept here for public to pay homage before immersion. Mahatma Gandhi visited Kanyakumari twice in 1925 and 1937. Mahatma Gandhi visited Kanyakumari in January 1937. In 1948 his ashes were immersed in the sea waters in Kanyakumari. In commemoration of this event a beautiful monument has been constructed here. Its central shape is 79 feet high representing the age of the Mahatma at the time of the sun at Mid day on 2<sup>nd</sup> October would fall on the peedam through a hole in the roof. The memorial was transferred to the administrative control of the Public (Information and Public Relations) Department from Public Works Department of Government of Tamil Nadu in the year 1978.



Visting Hours -7 AM To 7 PM . Entrance Free

## Thiruvalluvar Statue



Thiruvalluvar Statue - Kanyakumari

Thiruvalluvar is the immortal poet of Tamil Nadu and has given to the world Thirukkural. The memorial statue of Thiruvalluvar is in Kanyakumari. The pedestal of the statue is of 38 feet height and the statue over it is 95 feet tall with a grand total of 133 feet for the entire sculpture. The 3 tier pedestal known as Atharapeedam is surrounded by an artistic Mandapa known as Alankara Mandapam with 38 feet height. Surrounding the Alankara Mandapa stand 10 elephant statues signifying 8 directions with earth and space down. The father of Sri. Rama, the hero of Ramayana was called Dasaratha as he was able to charioteer in ten directions. To help the tourists to worship the holy feet of Thiruvalluvar 140 steps are constructed inside the Mandapa. The pedestal with a height of 38 feet represents the 38 chapters in the Book of Aram in Thirukural and the statue of 95 feet on the pedestal represents the total chapters in Porul (70 chapters) and Inbam (25 Chapters). Thus the statue symbolically, and artistically signifies that the theme of Porul and Inbam are based on Aram. Visting Hours -8 AM To 4 PM .

### SOME DETAILS ABOUT THE STATUE OF THIRUVALLUVAR

Chief Sculptor	-	Dr. V. Ganapathy Sthapathi
Height of the statue of Thiruvalluvar	-	95 feet
Total pieces of stones utilised for the statue	-	1283
Weight of the statue	-	2000 tons
Height of the Athaara Peedam	-	38 feet
Total pieces of stone utilized	-	672
Weight of the stones in the Peedam	-	1500 tons
Total height of the monument	-	133 feet
Height of the Alankara-Mandapam	-	38 feet
Total pieces of stones utilized for the Mandapam	-	1726
Weight of the stones in the Mandapam	-	3500 tons
Total weight of the whole structure	-	7000 tons
Number of steps upward	-	70
Number of steps downward	-	70

## Kamarajar Manimandapam



Free

Another monument Kamarajar Manimandapam was raised and dedicated to Late. Sri. Kamarajar, The freedom fighter, Former Chief minister of Tamil Nadu, President of Indian National Congress. He was popularly known as Black Gandhi among the masses and king maker during congress regime. This monument was constructed where his ashes were kept here for public to pay homage before immersion into the sea. Visting Hours -7 AM To 7 PM . Entrance

## Vivekananda Rock Memorial



Vivekananda Rock Memorial is another place in Kanyakumari which attracts large number of tourists. As its name implies, it is essentially a sacred monument, built by the Vivekananda Rock Memorial Committee to commemorate the visit of Swamy Vivekananda to “Shripada Parai” during 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> December 1892 for deep meditation and enlightenment.

From very ancient times, the rock has been regarded as sacred place. In Puranic tradition, it has been known as

“Sripada Parai: meaning the rock, that has been blessed by the touch of Shripada feet of the Goddess. On the rock, is a projection similar in form to a human foot and a little brownish in complexion, which has traditionally, been revered as a symbol of Shripadam. According to legend, it was on this rock that Goddess Kanyakumari did Tapas.

The memorial consists of two main structures, viz (i) Vivekananda Mandapam and (ii) Shripada Mandapam.

**Vivekananda Mandapam:-** This 180'-11 ½ ' X 56' Mandapam consists of (1) Dhyana Mandapam, i.e., Meditation Hall with six adjacent rooms (2) Sabha Mandapam or the Assembly Hall including Pralima Mandapam (statue section) two rooms, a corridor and an open Prakaram round the Sabha Mandapam (30 Mukha Mandapam (Portion) and (4) the Front Entrance steps with two rooms and a corridor below the steps.

**Shripada Mandapam:-** This square hall consists of (1) Garbha Grahm i.e., (Sanctum Sanctorum) (2) the Inner Prakaram (3) the Outer Prakaram and (4) the Outer Platform all around. Both the Mandapams are so designed that the vision of Swamiji in the statue would be seen direct towards the Shripadam. Visting Hours -7 AM To 4 PM . Entrance Fee - Rs 10 . Ferry Fee Rs 20 for adult .and Rs 10 for students.

## **SUNRISE AND SUNSET**

Sunrise can be seen in Kanniyakumari through out the year at Bay of Bengal. Sunset can be seen from View Tower through out the year except the months of June, July and August.

## **VIEW TOWER AND TELESCOPE HOUSE**



Panoramic view of landscape , seashore, Vivekananda Rock Memorial, Thiruvalluvar Statue etc., can be seen at View Tower and through Telescope.

Visiting hours:- 05.00 A.M. to 07.00 P.M.

Entry Fee :- Rs. 3 /- Adults and Rs. 2 /- for Children.

## **GOVERNMENT MUSEUM**

The Government Museum, situated on the Beach Road offers a good collection of sculptured artifacts and crafts of South Indian Temples and is one of the “Must See” places in Kanyakumari.

Visiting hours:- From 09.30 A.M. to 05.00 P.M. (All Friday and second Saturday holiday)

Entry Fee :- Adults Rs. 5 /- and Children Rs. 3 /- per head. Foreigner Rs.100 /-

## **GUGANATHASWAMY TEMPLE**

This is a 1000 year old temple and is said to have been built by the King Raja Raja Chola. The architectural style of the Cholas is quite apparent in this temple. It is located near Railway Station. There are 16 inscriptions found in this temple that date back to the years 1038 A.D., 1044 A.D., 1045 A.D.

Visiting hours:- From 06.00 to 11.15 A.M and 05.00 P.M to 08.45 P.M.

## **KUMARI - HALL OF HISTORY**

It is located south side of Kanyakumari Railway Station exhibits the pictures of historical wonders and also comprised rare photographs Kamarajar, Gandhiji and other freedom fighters.

Visiting hours:- From 08.30 A.M to 08.30 P.M.

Entry fees :- Adults Rs. 10 /- Students Rs. 5 /-.

## **Suchindrum**

Suchindrum is a small village about 12 km. from Kanyakumari and about seven kilometres from Nagercoil. This holy place is located on the bank of the river Pazhayar, adjoining fertile fields and coconut groves and the temple is dedicated to Sri Sthanumalayan. The word denotes Siva, Vishnu and Brahma as. Sthanu represents Siva, Mal represents Vishnu while Ayan represents Brhamma i.e. Siva, Vishnu and Brhamma in "One Form".



Suchindrum means the place where Indra attained 'Suchi' i.e., purification. The Sthalapurana has it that Indra suffered a curse from sage Gowthama, when he stealthily cast amorous glances at Ahalya the wife of Gowthama. Not able to suffer the mortification brought about by the curse. Indra had to seek immediate redemption. He came to 'Gnana Aranya' as this place was then called and offered worship to Lord Shiva. Relieving Indra of his curse, Lord Shiva granted him of his wish that the place where he attained purification should henceforth be called 'Suchindrum'.

Another story goes to say that the Trimurthys i.e. Brhamma, Vishunu and Shiva, cajoled by their divine consorts came down to the earth to test the chastity of Anusuya, wife of sage Athri at Gnana Aranya. The Gods for this misadventure had to suffer a surse form the Rishipatni and to undergo the purification process, before they could be restored to their former glory.

It is said that Thanumalaya Swamy temple is the only shrine dedicated to the Trinity in India. The present structure of the temple is the work of a number of persons spread over a number of centuries. It is a complex of many beautiful structures constructed at various times and is one of the best specimens and a store house of the Dravidian style of art and architecture.

## **Kanyakumari Bagavathiamman Temple**

Kanyakumari derives its name from from Goddess Kanyakumari Amman, the presiding deity of the area. The most prominent temple, the Kumari Amman, is dedicated to the goddess Parvathi as a virgin. The temple situated at the edge of the ocean for Goddess Kanyakumari has the legendary account that once Banusura, the demon king got supremacy over Devas and meted out cruel punishment to them. The Devas performed a Yagna pleading to annihilate the evils. Goddess Parasakthi came to Kumari in the form of a virgin girl and began her penance. Meanwhile Lord Shiva fell in love with her and arrangements for the marriage were made in the midnight a particular day. Now the Devine sage Narada realised that their marriage would destroy the chances of annihilating



Banusura because he could be killed only by a virgin. When Lord Shiva was on his way to Kanyakumari from Suchindrum at Valukkamparai 5 kms south of Suchindram, Sage Narada assumed the form of a cock and crowed falsely heralding the break of dawn. Thinking that the auspicious time for the marriage was past, Lord Shiva returned disappointed. The Goddess too decided to remain virgin after that. Then, when Banusura attempted to win the Goddess by force, she killed him with her Chakragudha, and relieved the suffering s of Devas. Then she resumed her penance and remained virgin. The contact telephone number of Devasthanam office, Bagavathiamman Temple is 04652-246223. Timings from 4.30 AM to 12.15 PM & 4.PM to 8.15 PM. Annual Festivals are Car festival (May / June) and Navaratri (Nine Days) Festival (September / October).

## Udayagiri Fort



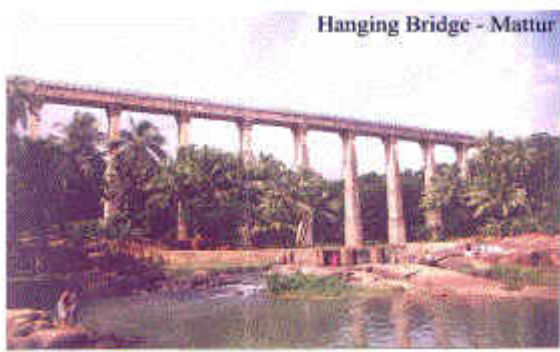
The fort was rebuilt in the reign of Marthandavarma, the Venad King, during 1741-44. Under the supervision of De Lannoy, the Belgian General, who served as the Chief of the Travancore army; East India Company's troops were stationed there till the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Foundry for the manufacture of guns, mortars and cannon balls were also established within the fort under the supervision of the General.

In the early days, the fort was of strategic importance. Prisoners captured in the campaign against Tippu were confined in this fort for sometime. It is further said that a brass gun 16 ft. long bored as a 22 pponder, found in the fort could not be removed even for a few yards by a large number of people, even with the help of 16 elephants.

A village has come up in front of the fort. The people who live here, are mostly agriculturists. A few of them are engaged in trade. Pottery making is the chief Industry among a section of the people. Now, the District Administration, with the help of Forest Department has set up a Biodiversity Park over here. Tourists can see deer, ducks, fountains, birds and over 100 varieties of trees inside the fort.

## Mathoor Hanging Bridge

The Mathoor Hanging Trough is the tallest as well as the longest trough bridge in Asia, having a height of 115 feet and a length of one kilometre. Constructed in 1966, this bridge has become a place of tourist importance and hundreds of tourists visit this place. This is situated in Mathoor, hamlet of Aruvikkarai revenue village in Thiruvattar Panchayat Union.



The bridge has been constructed at Mathoor across the river Parazhiyar at a cost of Rs. 12.90/- lakhs and the trough canal (Pattanamkal canal) on the bridge carries water for irrigation from one side of a hill to the other side of a hill. The trough has a height of seven feet with a width of seven feet six inches. The canal is being shouldered by 28 huge pillars. By the unrelenting efforts of late Thiru. K. Kamaraj, the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, this canal was constructed as a

drought relief measure and for the development of agriculture in Vilavancode and Kalkulam Taluks.

The District Administration has recently put up a staircase from top to the bottom of the bridge and also built a children's park and bathing platforms over here.

The details of the bridge are: Hydraulics Particulars

1.	Length of flume	-	1240 ft. (378.05M)
2.	Width	-	7'-6' (2.286 M)
3.	Height of trough	-	7'-0 (2.13 M)
4.	Full suppl. level	-	5'-6/(1.68 M)
5.	Free board (3-4)	-	1'6' (0.46 M)
6.	Slope	-	1/1000
7.	Velocity	-	5.1 Ft. per second / (1.55M/Sec)
8.	Discharge	-	204 C.ft/Sec.
9.	No. of span pillars	-	28
10.	Length of span	-	40 feet (12.195 M)
11.	Bed level, trough at start	-	230.55 (Cms.)
12.	Bed level, trough at end	-	229.17 (Cms.)
13.	Maximum height above ground level	-	104'.00 (28 M)
14.	Construction cost	-	Rs. 12.90 lakhs

## St. Xavier Church



St. Xavier an outstanding and dedicated priest visited the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu from Goa, he never missed the opportunity of visiting Kottar in Kanniyakumari district which was a celebrated commercial centre at that time. During his stay at Kottar, he used to worship St. Mary in the small temple. He was popularly known as “Valiya Pandaram” among the people of Kottar. While he was at Kottar, he averted the invasion of Padagas on the people of Venad which was appreciated by the king, who became closer to the Priest. In recognition of Xavier’s services, the king allotted a land to him for the

purpose of constructing a catholic church at Kottar. There was already a church in 1544 in the same place, where the St. Xavier’s church stands now.

The church records show that the church was built in the year 1600 A.D. In the year 1865, the Church was enlarged and the shrine of our lady was also renovated and vaulted over. In 1930, the church was raised to the status of a Cathedral.

In 1942, in commemoration of the fourth centenary of the arrival of St. Xavier in India, a beautiful tower to the saint, a grotto to Our Blessed Mother and a small shrine to St. Ignatius who sent him to India were constructed in the Cathedral premises. In 1955, the church was further extended and the chapel of Our Lady was incorporated into the enlarged church.

The Church of St. Xavier enjoys a great fame as a place of miracles from early times. The annual festival is celebrated during the month of November – December lasting for 10 days.