



Tiruvannamalai

Tiruvannamalai is a spiritual pilgrimage destination for devotees from all over India and the world. Situated in Tamil Nadu 200kms from the state capital, (Chennai, formerly Madras), the town grew beside Arunachala (“red mountain” in Sanskrit), a sacred mountain rising majestically from the surrounding plains. It is home to the sprawling and ancient Arunachaleswara temple and the ashram of Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Ramana Maharshi lived until 1950 and was a renowned spiritual guide and mentor. Considered a saint and sage by all who experienced his wisdom, he was a teacher of Advaita Vedanta (Hindu non-dualist philosophy) and advocated self-enquiry based on meditation.

During the cool months from November to February the town is very popular with western travellers and spiritual seekers from all backgrounds and traditions. Accommodation can be scarce during this peak time and should be booked in advance if possible.

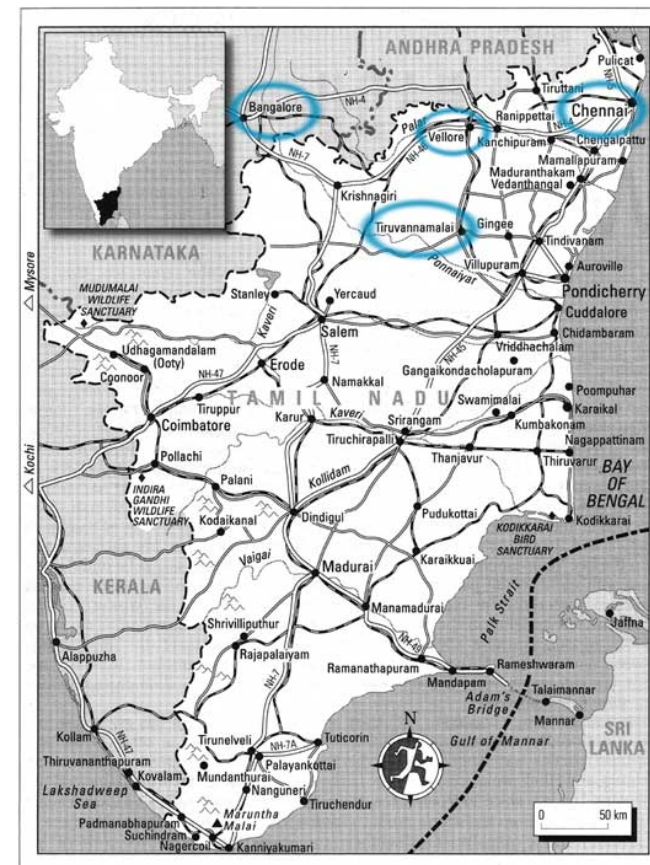
Getting there. People usually arrive at Tiruvannamalai by bus or taxi from Chennai (3.5 hours) or Bangalore (4.5 hours) (see map). There is also a major railway junction at Katpadi near Vellore accessible by train, bus or taxi from Tiruvannamalai.

The old French provincial town of Pondicherry and the modern international community of Auroville, on the coast 100kms away, are also accessible by bus or taxi.

Travellers to Tiruvannamalai can organise in advance a taxi pick up from Chennai, Bangalore or Vellore through Shanti Internet (details below).

Places to stay. There are many in town and some out of town (see table below). A lovely quiet place to stay in a peaceful rural setting is the Anantha Niketan ashram and retreat centre run by Gopi and his wife Chitra (see contact details below).

To get there you travel towards Bangalore on the Chengham road. 7.8 km past Ramana Ashram there is a road off to the right. This is just past the Krishnagiri 101 milepost and there is a sign to Anantha Niketan and another sign saying Pariyapaliyapattu 3. Along this road the ashram front gate is 1 km on the right.



<u>Name</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email, website</u>	<u>Services</u>
Shanti Internet	Kumar	04175 236 035 cell: 0 944 321 0235	kumar@shantionline.com	Travel arrangements, Taxi services, Motorbike hire, Internet, Money changing.
Ramanasramam (Ashram of Sri Ramana Maharshi)	Dr S Murthy		ashram@ramana-maharshi.org www.ramana-maharshi.org	Ashram accommodation on edge of town.
Anantha Niketan	Gopi or Chitra	04188 207 137	gopiramana@rediffmail.com	Ashram accommodation and retreat centre. (see directions above)
Nanagaru Ashram	Mr Rao			Ashram accommodation 1km outside town.
Sesha Bhavan				Guest House in town.
Daya Dharma				Guest House in town.
Pink House				Guest House in town.
Arunai Anantha	Hotel reception	04175 237 275	hotelarunaianantha@yahoo.co.in	Upmarket 3-star accommodation 2km outside town.
Arunachala Ramana Home	T Arumugam	04175 236 120 cell: 0 944 348 9811	arhome_sathish@yahoo.com	Guest House in town.

Notes: This list of services is far from complete. There are now many guest houses and accommodation options in Tiruvannamalai. Cell phone numbers may or may not need the “0” prefix.