Tanjore, Kumbakonam & Cholapuram

TAMIL NADU · 2 DAYS · CHEAT SHEET

Chola temples, a Maratha palace and an ancient dam, in two days around Thanjavur.

PER PERSON	DAYS	BEST SEASON	STAY
Rs 4,290	2	Oct – Mar	ABM Guest House

What it cost, per person

Getting there	Bengaluru to Thanjavur train and the bus back, plus the metro and bus legs at home	Rs 1,393
Stay	ABM Guest House	Rs 750
Food	Coffee Palace breakfasts, two dinners, tea, snacks, juice, coconut water and water	Rs 809
Bike and petrol	Bike hire for the trip, two fill-ups, and two autos in Thanjavur	Rs 980
Entry and fees	Palace tickets, washrooms and shoe keeping	Rs 80
Souvenirs and odds	Dancing dolls and a fridge magnet, a bag deposit, glue	Rs 278
Total		Rs 4,290

Where to eat

- Sri Krishna Bhavan, KRA Complex — Dosa is the famous bit · dinner · medium price
- Chellammal's Manpaanai Samayal — Lunch buffet cooked in clay pots · medium price
- Coffee Palace — Best coffee and rava dosa · breakfast · cheap
- Shops near the new bus stand — Eggs and Kerala parotta · cheap

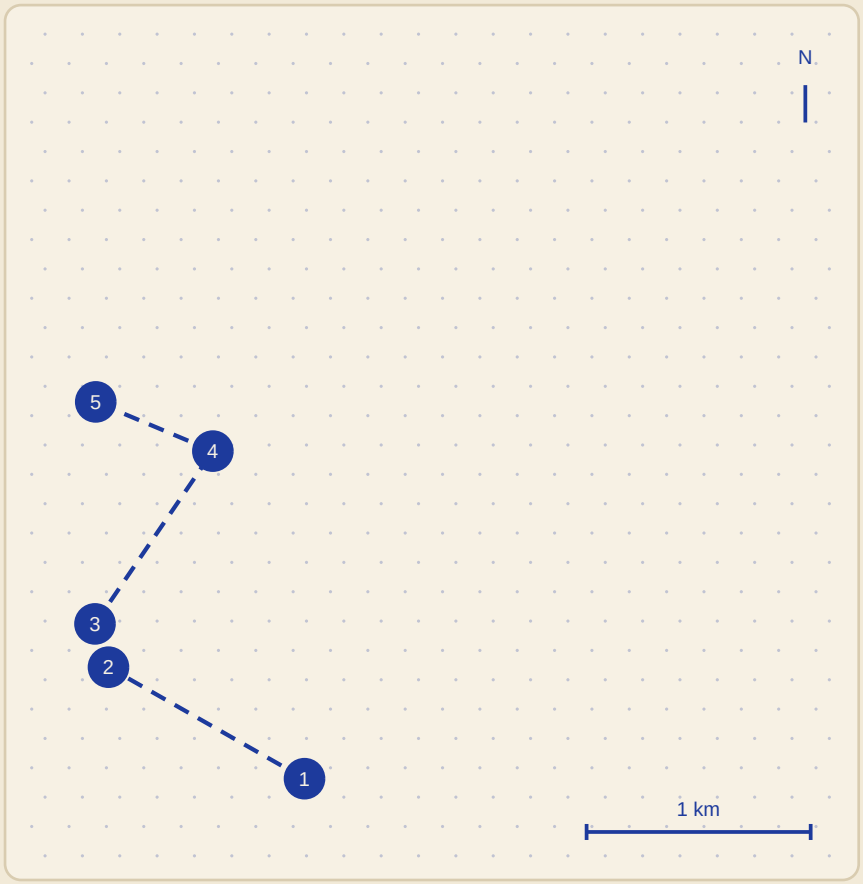
Skip these

- × Squeezing Kumbakonam and Cholapuram into the same day as the city: Day 2 is already a long ride
- × Missing the palace timings: the museum and library close on Wednesdays
- × Leaving the doll shopping for the last minute
- × Eating only at the tourist-facing places: the little shops near the new bus stand do eggs and Kerala parotta cheap

Good to know

- Getting to Thanjavur: Overnight train from Bengaluru, and a night bus back
- Nearest station: Thanjavur Junction, in the middle of the city
- Nearest airport: Tiruchirappalli, about 61 km
- Where I stayed: ABM Guest House
- Bike hire: About Rs 800 for the trip, plus petrol
- Budget level: Backpacker

The route, day by day

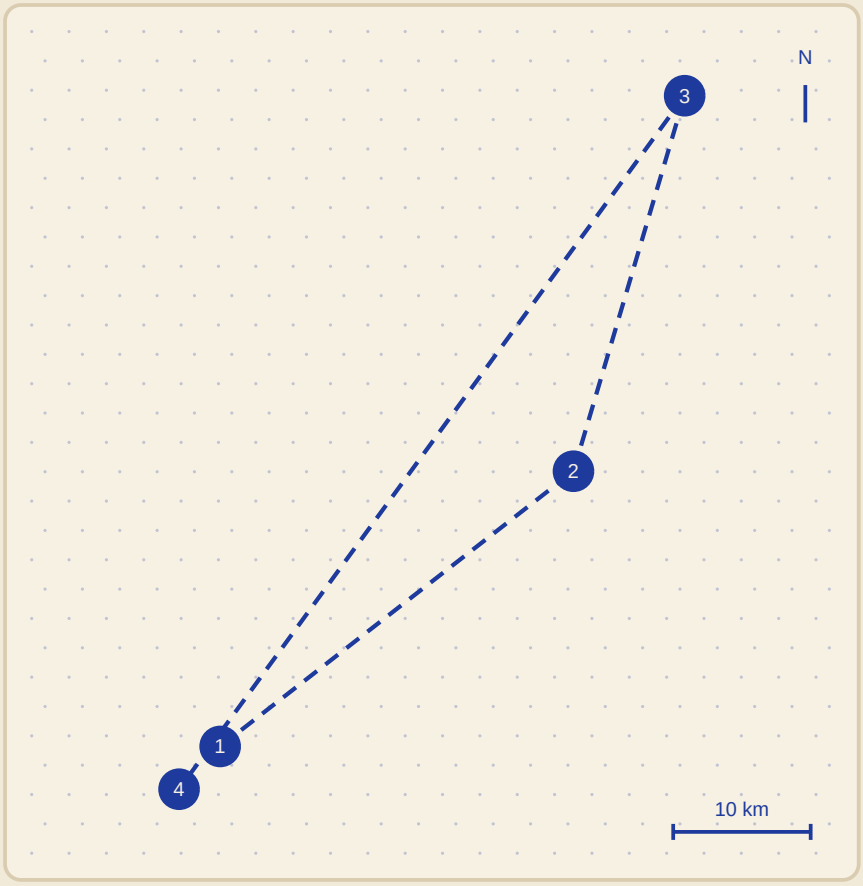


Day 1

Thanjavur and the Kallanai dam

1. **Thanjavur Junction**
   Arrive by train and head to your stay
2. **Brihadeeswarar Temple**
   The Big Temple. Come back after dark
3. **Sivaganga Park**
   Tank with sweet water, right by the temple
4. **Thanjavur Maratha Palace**
   Durbar Hall, art gallery, library and museum
5. **Kallanai (Grand Anicut)**
   The old dam, about 48 km by road. Go for dusk

Open this day in Google Maps →



Day 2

Kumbakonam and Gangaikonda Cholapuram

1. **Thanjavur**
   Pick up the bike early
2. **Kumbakonam**
   Temple town, about 36 km out
3. **Gangaikonda Cholapuram**
   Rajendra Chola's temple, the quiet one
4. **Thanjavur New Bus Stand**
   Night bus to Bengaluru

Open this day in Google Maps →

Dashed line = route · dotted line = way back · ring = where you started