

Śankara Bhagavadpāda's

|| 'Tat Tvam Asi' Meditations ||

A week-long meditative journey into the knowing, calming and silencing of the *self*, leading to Self-realization

Being the heart of a longer 'Tat Tvam Asi' *Yatra* in South India



“I praise the leader of the Gana of Rudra,
Who is the son of Ishan (Shiv),
Who has a shining and rough tongue,
Who has yellowish corner (pupil) of the eyes,
Who takes an incarnation for mercy, comfort and benevolence, and
Who is attained by the Yogi who sing His praises”. (# 6, in ‘Ganesha Bhujangam’)

- Ādi Śaṅkarāchārya [509 BC to 477 BC]

|| ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ Meditations ||

Under the Aegis of

|| ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ ||

(An Indian Charitable Trust for Dharma & Moksha)



|| Vedic Flower ||

(A Latin American Foundation for Vedic Teachings)



and

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|| ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ Meditations ||

A Meditative Journey in *self*-Knowing & Self-Realization

The Beach Resort, Le Pondy, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu, India

February 15th to 21st, 2016

Being the heart of a longer ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ *Yatra* in South India

Part IV: Safety, Security and Health Guidelines

Safety, Security, Health & Other Guidelines

Kindly note below some basic guidelines that will ensure to make your travel and stay in India a pleasant and fulfilling experience:

Ensure Your Personal Safety:

- ✓ Never leave the group in which you are travelling. If there is an absolute necessity for you to visit some place / location, please ensure that you inform the leader/co-ordinator in such cases so that the appropriate arrangements will be made in order to ensure your personal safety and security.
- ✓ Please ensure that you obtain the relevant and accurate advice on travel, personal, accident and medical insurance cover during your travel.
- ✓ Kindly leave details of your stay and leader/co-ordinator details with your immediate family or friend(s) for them to contact in case of an emergency.
- ✓ All English-speaking participants may load the mobile phone numbers of the local 'Tat Tvam Asi' organizers, (upon arrival in Pondicherry), just in case they are unable to telephonically contact their group leader in a certain situation.
- ✓ It may be a good idea to carry a small torch light, if your mobile does not have the same facility.
- ✓ For those of you carrying laptops and mobile phones, it may be advisable to carry an additional set of 'battery-cells', apart from any usual / additional chargers.
- ✓ If you are a woman travelling in India, you should respect the local dress code and customs. Kindly dress modestly and conservatively.
- ✓ It is unsafe to travel alone. Avoid isolated areas, including beaches when alone at any time of the day
- ✓ Please do not wear expensive jewelry.
- ✓ Please ensure that you carry a copy of your passport and visa. Keep your originals in safe custody (preferably in safe-deposit lockers which will be provided in the place of stay).
- ✓ Kindly ensure that you are, at all times, vigilant and aware of your personal belongings and effects (for e.g., your baggage, jewellery, cash, travel documents, gadgets, souvenirs, etc.). Please make sure that all of the above are kept in safe custody for the duration of your stay.
- ✓ Kindly ensure you carry all emergency numbers to contact in case of emergency,
- ✓ Visa, Master, Maestro Debit / Credit card ATMs are available in all major cities, airports and travel destinations in India, from where you may withdraw cash.

However, please note that there are cash advance fees and interest charges applicable on such withdrawals (starting from 2% upwards on each transaction). Therefore, it is advisable to carry some cash in hand (as per your discretion) *you can also carry Travellers' Cheques which can be encashed at the place of stay and also at many foreign exchange centres in Chennai and Pondicherry.*

- ✓ Credit and Debit cards are accepted in most of the commercial establishments. However if you plan to buy things from the street shops, then you need to carry cash.
- ✓ Kindly carry cash, credit card, debit cards etc., in a personal pouch directly tied around your waist/ hip (out of reach for others) to avoid loss due to pickpocketing and theft.

Prepare Yourself for the India *Yatra*

- ✓ For first time visitors, India might be very noisy and crowded. Please read about the culture so that you are prepared as to what to expect.
- ✓ Ensure you carry tissues, hand sanitizer and wet wipes in your kit.
- ✓ Weather in South India during February will be warm and humid (between 25 and 28 degrees Celsius during the day and about 20 degrees Celsius during the night) compared to the weather conditions in your country. Therefore, please carry light cotton clothes.
- ✓ Upon arrival in Chennai / Pondicherry, you will be able to buy Indian clothes appropriate for the retreat at reasonable prices in local shops or ready-made cotton 'Kurta-Pyjama' sets either at 'Fab India' in Chennai / Pondicherry.
- ✓ For female travellers - even if you don't opt for wearing the costume preferred by many women in India, the 'Indian suits' or '*salwar kameez*' are another option. It is also advisable to always travel with a long scarf made of light-weight fabric. This will come in handy for situations where modesty will be more convenient and will allow you to go into places of worship & inside traditional Hindu temples.
- ✓ While a pair of sports shoes would be comfortable during the flight journey, it will be a good idea to carry light foot wear such as sandals, flip-flops, etc. to wear inside the resort.
- ✓ All participants will have *Yoga* sessions from 6:00 am - 7:15 am during the retreat. Hence kindly carry appropriate / comfortable clothes, and also ensure that you bring lightweight yoga / meditation mats for these sessions.
- ✓ During the pilgrimage to Tiruvannamalai, or during the visit to Auroville or Sri Aurobindo Ashram, or during the visits to a few places in Chennai, if at all, a necessity arises to use public toilets, it is suggested that a small group go together (say at least two or three persons), and this may be mandatory,

especially for female participants.

Take Care of your Health:

- ✓ Please ensure that you carry all basic medicines (i.e. antibiotics, analgesics, anti-inflammatory medicines, etc.) that you use for common cold, fever, digestive disorders like gastritis and diarrhoea, headaches or any similar physical pain, etc.
- ✓ Please carry all your medical prescriptions and related prescription drugs in case you have any pre-existing medical condition. Since English is the language in use amongst medical professionals in India, kindly have your prescriptions in English if the same has to be used in an emergency.
- ✓ Food - During the retreat, freshly cooked vegetarian food will be provided. Organizers are taking additional care to ensure continental food and food that is less spicy is provided. However during your travel, if you dine outside, try to avoid food from non-standard cafes or restaurants / street food, to avoid any health issues.
- ✓ Please inform us in advance in case you have any food or other allergies for e.g. allergies to nuts, milk products, wheat, gluten, certain types of vegetables or fruits, etc. so that the organizers are aware of any such cases and the food can be prepared accordingly for those with such allergies *Kindly note that this must be mentioned clearly in the Registration Form.*
- ✓ Water - Drinking tap water is not advisable in India. Kindly ensure you drink water which is packed and is of a good brand to be sure of the hygienic quality.

During the Retreat:

- ✓ As part of the retreat, during the 9 days stay at Pondicherry, accommodation on a twin sharing basis, breakfast, lunch, dinner and two refreshments (at 11:00 am and 4:00 pm respectively) will be provided. Any additional orders from the room will be charged separately for the guest and will not form part of the package.
- ✓ Kindly note that laundry services during the stay are not included in the package. Guests will have to pay separately for the same as per the tariff card provided at the time of check in.
- ✓ During the retreat, smoking and the intake of alcohol or any other narcotic substances / intoxicating material(s) is strictly prohibited.
- ✓ Mobile phones, tablets and other similar electronic gadgets are not allowed during the retreat sessions (9:00 am to 6:00 pm). We recommend sparing use of such gadgets to ensure that you derive maximum benefit from the retreat.
- ✓ Learning and contemplation after the class will make it more effective than indulging in regular mundane activities.

‘Tat Tvam Asi’ Team, ‘Vedic Flower’ Team, the Organizers and Hosts :

The ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ core-group under the leadership of Śankara, consisted of Premaji, Devikaji, Kannanji, Kumarji, Shreenivasji, Balaji and Gayatriji. They have all put this retreat together for the welfare of the world. There are many more supporters, and well-wishers of ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ but their names are not mentioned here, even though their contributions have been significant. The core-group worked hard for a full year to make this retreat a reality.

At the other end, under the leadership of Ricardoji, many serious *mumukshus* (seekers of *moksha*) in several countries in Latin America have worked together for the fruition of this ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ India *Yatra* in February 2016. Special mention must be made of: (i) the silent contribution of Natalia Isekzon (Lakshmi Shambhavi) from Santiago; (ii) the tremendous support from Maristela (Sivatmika) and Marcos Woortman from Brasilia; (iii) tremendous support from Juan Pablo Diaz and Sylvia from Punta Del Este in Uruguay.

In India and Asia:

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Other relevant ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ documents you can ask for:

- ★ ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ Meditations, Part I (full version)
- ★ ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ Meditations, Part I (abridged version)
- ★ ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ Meditations , Part II (full version)
- ★ ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ Meditations , Part II (abridged version)
- ★ ‘Tat Tvam Asi’ Meditations, Fruits and Blessings

|| Aum Shanti Shanti Shantihi ||