

Agoda.com highlights hotel deals to celebrate the Sri Lankan Nallur Festival

SINGAPORE (July 24, 2013) - Agoda.com, Asia's leading hotel booking site and part of Nasdaq-listed Priceline Group (Nasdaq:PCLN), is offering great deals on hotels in the northern town of Nallur, Sri Lanka, for the annual Nallur Festival, an exuberant and colorful celebration with great spiritual significance for local Hindus. This year the festival will kick off on August 12.



The festival is based around the Nallur Kandaswamy Temple, one of the most important temples in Sri Lanka. It was originally founded in 948 AD, but has been rebuilt and moved several times until the present construction was erected in 1749, with additions and improvements added in the following years. The last major renovations were in 1964 when the Grand Hall was upgraded, and in 2011 when a 30-meter *gopuram*, or ornately decorated tower, was unveiled.

The festival itself is held annually to honor *Skanda* (also known as *Murugan*, *Dhandapani*, and many other names), the Hindu god of war and victory. It's one of the longest festivals you're likely to attend, actually, and takes place over 25 days. This includes parades, food, music, performances and symbolic rounds of the temple made by crowds holding aloft effigies representing Skanda, his holy spear, or his consorts. Special ceremonies called *pujas* are also performed by priests, and the festival's grand finale is a boisterous parade, where thousands of devotees pull an elaborate chariot and its rider - dressed to resemble Skanda - through town to the temple and place him on an ornate throne. The act is said to bring the god closer to his people, witnessing their devotion, love and purity.

Families also head to Nallur in great numbers for the festival, as there are plenty of games for kids, lots of shops and food and a boisterous, party atmosphere that makes for great memories.

The town of Nallur - and the larger town of Jaffna that it sits next to - is also worth visiting in its own right. An important trading port for thousands of years and site of countless battles to exert influence over the region, the town has plenty of buildings and attractions that tell the story of its long history, not to mention easy transportation connections to the rest of this fascinating country.

Get ready for an experience like no other, and check out the six amazing hotels below that will put you right in the middle of the action.

Gnanams Hotel, 1*

Enjoy 20% off your stay. Book before August 15, stay between August 7-September 15th.

http://www.agoda.com/asia/sri_lanka/jaffna/gnanams_hotel.html

Hotel Lux Etioles, 2.5*

Enjoy 15% off your stay. Book before August 15, stay between August 7-September 15th.

http://www.agoda.com/asia/sri_lanka/jaffna/hotel_lux_etioles.html

Pillaiyar Inn, 3*

Enjoy 10% off your stay. Book before August 15, stay between August 7-September 15th.

http://www.agoda.com/asia/sri_lanka/jaffna/pillaiyar_inn.html

Jaffna Heritage Hotel, 3.5*

Enjoy 20% off your stay. Book before August 15, stay between August 7-September 15th.

http://www.agoda.com/asia/sri_lanka/jaffna/jaffna_heritage_hotel.html

Hotel Green Grass

Enjoy 15% off your stay. Book before August 15, stay between August 7-September 15th.

http://www.agoda.com/asia/sri_lanka/jaffna/hotel_green_grass.html

Tilko Jaffna City Hotel, 4*

Enjoy 20% off your stay. Book before August 15, stay between August 7-September 15th.

http://www.agoda.com/asia/sri_lanka/jaffna/tilko_jaffna_city_hotel.html

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