

Culture and Religion in Tamilnadu

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Abstract:

The Paper throws light on the few cultural and traditional aspects of Tamilnadu with the most familiar trends that enrich the state with glorifying characteristics.

Keywords: Tamilnadu Culture and Tradition

Tamil Nadu is a southern state of India which is supremely rich in culture and heritage. Known to be one of the oldest civilizations in the world, the people of Tamil Nadu belong to the prestigious Dravidian Family. Tamilians also, like other South Indians, take much pride in their rooted Tamil culture and make great efforts to protect their 2000 years old history. The state has been ruled by the Cholas, Pandyas, and Pallavas and has been flourishing since. Art and architecture have been their creations which are used and maintained even today.

Tamil is the official language of the state. It is a derivative of Brahmi script, and the letters represent sounds, much like Mandarin. Not only do most of the people in Tamil Nadu speak Tamil, but it is also spoken by many in Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Singapore, and Malaysia.

Religion

A significant amount of relevance is given to a person's religion regarding personal identity. Although four-fifths of the state's population are Hindus, the rest are divided into Islam, Christianity, and Jainism. Their rituals include deity worship and animisms like tree, animal, and stars and planets worship. Many Hindus are followers of different religious institutions called 'Matha,' which are the centers of Monastic studies.

Traditional Dress

Men can be seen wearing a Lungi with a shirt and Angavastra. Lungi is a rectangular cotton cloth tied across the waist, and Angavastra is draped around the shoulders. It can be worn over or without a shirt. Some people may also wear a dhoti, an extended form of Lungi, the bottom of which is mostly stuck at the waist. Men also wear Vibhuti on their foreheads.

Tamil Nadu women mainly wear a Saree, a five to six yards rectangular cloth made of cotton, silk, or any other fabric. The prints, design, and style depend on the fabric and community rituals.

Kanchipuram Saree is often worn at the time of festivals. Young girls wear half-sarees, including a blouse, a long skirt, and a dupatta from the waist to the shoulders. Nowadays, salwar kameez and even Western wear are preferred.

Tamil Cuisine

If you imagine 'South Indian Food,' the first things which pop in mind are Idli, Dosa, Sambhar, Vada, Upma, and whatnot. It is a typical Madras Food for North Indians. Tamil Food is popular in vegetarian and non-vegetarian contexts—otherwise, rice, lentils, grains, and vegetables are the main ingredients in Tamil Cuisine. Rice is a staple food here. Sambhar and Coconut Chutney are served with almost everything, and guess what? It makes a fine blend with most of them. For non-vegetarians, fish, turtles, mutton, and venison are preferred. Some Tamilians follow the tradition of eating Banana Leaves even today.

Tamilian Music & Dance

Tamil Music has evolved over the years. The most important form of music was Carnatic music which was considered only for the elite who could understand the intricacy of music. For others, Telugu songs and a mix of traditional numbers from a source of entertainment.

Bharatnatyam is the official dance form of Tamil Nadu, recognized all over India and the world. It is a complicated dance form with subtle moves of body parts and expressions. Local people, including tribal people, also perform other folk dances like Parai, Villuputtu Karakaatam, and Kuthu.

Art & Architecture

Kolam (also known as Rangoli) is drawn at the doors of every house in Tamil Nadu. It is drawn before sunrise and is said to welcome Goddess Laxmi. This has become hugely popular among North Indians too.

Tamilians have perfected the art of spinning, weaving, and chiseling over the years, and their brilliance is reflected in different art subjects like bronzes, sculptor works, carvings, etc. Magnificent temples represent Tamil architecture with lofty 'gopurams' and statues of goddesses engraved all over the edifice. Many well-known temples, such as Meenakshi Amman Temple and Breehadeeshwara Temple, are located here, which display a grand vista of ancient Hindu mythological diversity and Tamil heritage.

With a golden history of some great rulers and dynasties having ruled the state, finding such splendor in architecture, literature, and traditions is unsurprising. The people of Tamil Nadu have a great legacy to live up to. The culture and traditions have been safeguarded by them over the years and are manifested today in full vibrancy.

TRADITION AND ARCHITECTURE –

Most traditional arts are religious in some form and usually, center on Hinduism, although the religious element is often only a means to represent universal—and, occasionally, humanist—themes.

The most basic form of Tamil painting is Tanjore, which originated in Thanjavur in the 9th century. The painting's base is made of cloth and coated with zinc oxide, over which the image is painted using dyes; it is then decorated with semi-precious stones and silver or gold thread. A style that is related in origin but which exhibits significant differences in execution is used for painting murals on temple walls; the most notable example are the murals on the Kutral Azhakar and Meenakshi temples of Madurai, the Brihadeeswarar temple of Tanjore.

Tamilnadu sculpture ranges from elegant stone sculptures in temples to bronze icons with exquisite details. The medieval Chola bronzes are considered one of India's most significant contributions to world art. Unlike most Western art, the material in Tamil sculpture does not influence the form taken by the sculpture; instead, the artist imposes his/her vision of the form on the material. As a result, one often sees in stone sculptures flowing forms that are usually reserved for metal.

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