

Rameshwaram,tamiln  
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BUSTER**

Rameswaram town in Ramanathapuram district in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu is famous as Rameshwaram throughout the world. The holy island of Rameswaram called as 'Benaras of the South' is the only place worshipped by both Saivites and Vaishnavites as it is India's most venerated and most visited Shiva shrines and is also associated with the life of Lord Rama, the hero of the epic Ramayana. It is located on an island separated from mainland India by the Pamban channel. Kashi and Rameshwaram together are one of the holiest places in India to Hindus and part of the Char Dham pilgrimages. The Rameshwaram island is spread over 61.8 square kilometers and has shape of a conch. Rameswaram is one of the 12 Jyothirlingas of India and considered one among four most sacred pilgrim centers of India namely Rameswaram in the South, Badrinath in the North, Puri in the East and Dwarka in the West. Among these, Rameswaram is dedicated to Shiva, while the other three are dedicated to Lord Vishnu. The Ramanatha Swamy Temple is the main temple of Rameshwaram and is very beautifully constructed. It can be considered as the masterpiece of Dravidian architecture. The temple has twenty-two wells and surprisingly the taste of the water of each well is different and wells are believed to possess medicinal properties. Dr. Abdul Kalam, Ex-president of India, belongs to a small village, Dhanushkodi situated on the island. Legends say Lord Rama built a bridge Ram Setu across the sea at this place to reach Lanka to rescue goddess Sita and also worshipped Lord Shiva after killing Ravana, who was the greatest worshipper of Lord Shiva and also blessed by Lord Shiva. According to the Puranas Lord Rama along with Sita and Lakshmana installed and worshipped the Sivalinga here to avoid sins of killing Ravana, a Brahmin. Sethu Karai is 22 km before the island of Rameswaram where Lord Rama is

believed to have built a Floating Stone Bridge Ramasetu till Rameswaram that further continued from Dhanushkodi in Rameswaram till Talaimannar in Sri Lanka. Rameswaram is an acclaimed Parihara Sthala, where it is believed all sins get absolved. Devotees take holy dips at Sethu Theertha, Agni Theertha and other sacred waters, offer pujas to get progeny, perform Shraadhha for their ancestors.

### **Places to visit-**

#### **Sri Ramanathaswamy Temple-**

This temple is directly related to lord Rama and believed to be the must visit place for hindus if one wants to attain nirvana from the cycle of birth and death. There are seven such places in India where one would like to offer prayers for achieving salvation in life and Rameshwaram temple is one of those. The temple has the longest corridor in whole of India.

This place has great significance as it is believed that Whole Ramayan was conceived in this place.

#### **Gandhamadhana Parvatham-**

Gandhamadhana is most renowned and worshiped in the southern India having Lord rama's feet imprinted on the chakra placed in the temple.

Gandhamadhana is the deity of several communities in southern India. It is a holy place thronged by devotees from all parts of India. It has Rama tirtham constructed on the Gandamadhana Parvata hence th it is called Gandamadana. It is near Dhanushkodi, where Rama met Vibhishana and has its own historical importance.

**Agnitheertham-**

It is one of the 12 jyotirlingas of India and is one of the holiest place to visit. It has a large lake whose water is considered holy and people believes that taking bath in the place washes away their sins and one attains salvation. It has 22 wells having waters of different taste. It is one visit place.

**Badrakaliamman Temple-**

It is the largest temple of Ma Kali in southern India who is the holy mother for devotes in southern India. The statue of Maa kali is of pure gold and temple has different master pieces of different ages.

**Annai Indira Gandhi Road Bridge-**

It is the longest bridge in southern India connecting Rameswaram Island to the main land. It is also called the Pambam Bridge as it is located beside Pamban, the sacred place where Rama could quench the thirst of Sita by throwing an arrow in the place where they could actually retrieve cool water. It is 7kms long.

**Other temples-**

There are numerous other temple having religious as well as historical significance. Villondi tirtham is one of those temples located on a place where lord Rama buried his bow as villondi means a buried bow. It is about 7 kms from main Rameshwar temple and is considered to be a sacred place by most of the followers. It has a spot where drinking water is available in the midst of salty sea. Dhanushkodi Temple is other main temple on the southern tip of India located near the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean on the other side. The seas are in the shape of bow and arrow when viewed from the top. Lord Rama has his pious feet even in this temple and whole story of Ramayana revolves here as well. Five faceted Hanuman temple is other famous temple. The statues of lord Rama, Laxman, Sita and Hanuman are placed in the temple. The temple has a floating stone which was believed to be used to bulid the bridge on the sea. Nambu Nayagamman Temple is other worth visiting temple

**How to reach-****By Air-**

Nearest airport is Madurai, 163 km from Rameshwaram and has good road connection to it.

**By Train-**

**The railway connects Rameshwaram to places like Chennai, Madurai, Coimbatore, Trichy and Thanjavur and 2 km long Indira Gandhi Bridge connects the island of Rameshwaram with the mainland of Mandapam.**

**By Road-**

**Rameshwaram is well connected by roads to all the major cities nearby, Kanyakumari, Trichy, Pondicherry, Tanjore and Chennai.**