

EXPERIENCING ONAM OF THE 1990s



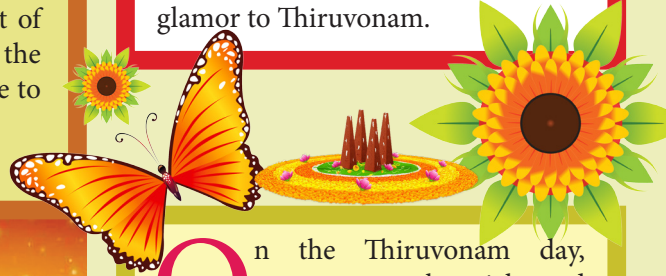
Behold the bygone beauty of Onam

At Saigramam
Enjoy
Onam in all its
Original glory

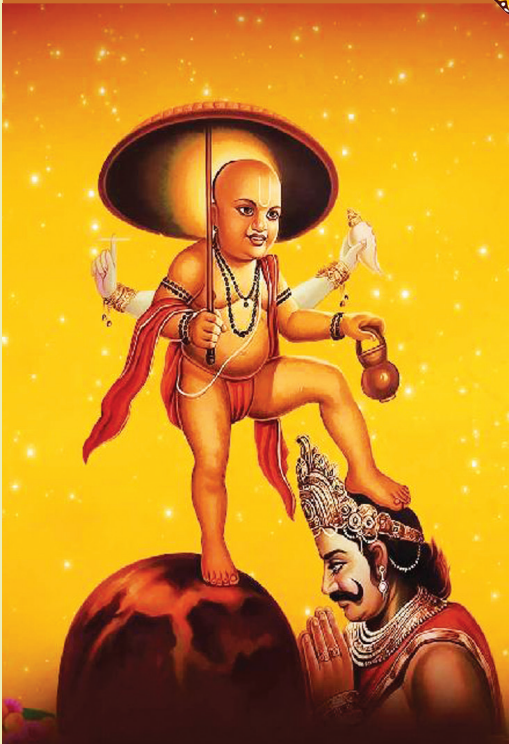
A SOCIAL TOURISM INITIATIVE

Onam is the state festival of Kerala. It is a yearly tribute paid to Lord Mahabali whose rule had gifted the land a golden era during time immemorial. Devas were jealous of the good rule by Mahabali who belonged to their archrivals, Asuras. Consequently, the magnanimous King was pushed down to the nether world by Vamana, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Mahabali was granted a permission to emerge from the underworld and visit his people once in a year. On Thiruvonam, the main Onam day, it is believed that the King Mahabali makes an invisible visit to watch the welfare of his people. In and out of Kerala, people of the State make the occasion exceptionally celebrative to please their beloved King.

The Malayalam month of Chingam heralds Onam. The countdown for Onam begins on Atham day of the month. On Atham day, children start roaming around in groups searching for flowers to make a floral design called Atha Pookalam in front of their homes as a mark of welcome for Lord Mahabali. On the first day, the design will be a single circle. The number of circles grows to ten on the tenth day, which is Thiruvonam. The ninth day is called Uthradam day on which people get into a purchase spree, procuring all gifts and commodities required for adding glamor to Thiruvonam.



On the Thiruvonam day, everyone – the rich and the poor – manage to be clad in new dresses. Together they enjoy Ona Sadya (a traditional feast) for lunch. Ona Sadya is first offered to the departed souls of each family. Elders gift new dresses to youngsters, whereas children take the centre stage by singing songs and running like fluttering butterflies. Ona Sadya is noted for the large number of traditional curries, sweet preparations etc. served on plantain leaves. The feast is also an occasion to see the coming together of family members. Notably, Onam is the only occasion when Kerala's diaspora converges back to their soil, glued together by gaiety.



During ancient times, Onam used to be a revelry accompanied by a score of traditional art forms. It was the occasion for the local traditional artisans to showcase their best works for a lucrative sale. Onam days were euphoric of enticing traditional folk arts and theatrical splendors. Once upon a time, Onam was a majestic mechanism to bring people together, enjoy the merriment equally and enthrall each other with captivating performances of traditional dances, songs, martial arts and local sports and games.

In the flow of time, slowly eroded was the natural goodness of the festival. With the sweeping encounters of modernity, our traditional practices during Onam slowly gave way for a number of modern, readymade practices.

Plucked away was the amusement of all natural constituents and planted were elements of modernity that failed to evoke innate glee in minds. Thus Onam continues to have synthetic components in the place of the virtuous age-old original ones



Social Tourism at Saigramam envisages a unique way to bring back the lost vivacity for Onam. After a long hectic research and retrospective on Onam of the bygone era, Saigramam has found certain imageries, customs and performances that ought to be there for making the occasion lively, absorbing, and unforgettable for all. This is going to be a mission spearheaded by a number of enthusiastic folk artistes, traditional performers and artisans to whom Onam of the olden days are still a rousing notion.



Bygone beauty of Onam

Bygone Beauty of Onam is a thematic reincarnation of the Onam of olden days, wisely making use of the sprawling lawns of Saigramam. Nestled in an elevated, Pandavanmala, a pinnacle of natural scenic splendour, the venue offers a fitting backdrop for celebrating Onam in a way it deserves. It will be a 10-day-long pageantry of vintage Onam celebrations from the Atham day of Chingam month (02 Sept., 19) to Avittam day (12 Sept., 19). During these days, the old fashioned Onam celebration will be brought to life with all enigmatic elements of antiquity including classical presentations of folk art forms.

From the preparation of Atha Pookkalam to Onavillu; and Thumbi Thullal by women to Kolkali of men; and Kathakali to Puli Kali, unfurled will be a medley of memorable experiences. Shared will be the sumptuous traditional meals, snacks, sweets and drinks all made from unadulterated organic products collected from the doorsteps of local farmers and producers in the village neighbourhoods.

Those who take part in the Bygone Beauty of Onam event, can also enjoy a variety of optional activities. It can be just watching the merriment or getting the exaltation of joining a local sports event, or taking away a share of enjoyment by making a company with local cooks for preparing Kerala's own traditional food. Thus the unique event is going to unroll before you a tempting fabric of diverse activities connected to original Onam celebrations of Kerala. After all, Onam is a festival of the people, by the people and for the people to reiterate their ever-glowing tributes for the beloved King Mahabali.

Lots of folk fun



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Enjoy Onam in all its Original glory

ATHAM TO AVITOM
(02 TO 12 SEPT. 2019)



Sept 02-11

Shines of Onam



Shining signs of Onam marked by the ebullient swings (oonjaal) and beguiling floral decorations (pookkalam) are set ready to entertain each and everyone throughout the Onam period.

Sept 04-10

Agri Fest 🕒 9am



Celebrate between the heaps of local vegetables, getting wonderful sights of seeds, seedlings, traditional farming equipment, and tasting your favourite at a festival of local food and savouries.

Sept 04

Differently dazzling 🕒 10am



Children with autism take the centre stage with a variety of performances, including welcome dance, Yoga dance, group dance, folk songs, mimicry, group song and fancy dress from 10am to 1pm.

Sept 05

Youth fiesta 🕒 10am



10am onwards, there will be various performances by students of Sri Sathya Sai Arts and Science College. These include, Bharathanatyam, Mohiniyattam, Onapattu, Thiruvathirakali, Naadanpattu and Vanjipattu.

Sept 06

Children's carnival 🕒 10am

Students of Sri Sathya Sai School accelerate the festivity through Athapookalam competition, Blindfold contest, Musical chair, Uriyadi (catching the pot of butter), Onapattu (Onam songs), Bharatanatyam, Chendamelam and a performance of Thiruvathirakali by Sree Mahadeva Mathru Samithi, Kudavoor.



Sept 07

Village vivacity 🕒 2pm

A carnival of villagers with all vivacity. Local ball game (Nadan Panthukali), Velakali by Sree Mahadeva Velakali Sangham, Ottan Thullal, Kakkarisi natakam, Folk dance, Kerala nadanam, Mohiniyattam, Bharathanatyam and Kuchupudi.



Sept 08

Fabulous folk theatre 🕒 4pm

Devotional music band, Ganapathi Krithi, Sai Sthuthi, Mahabali Charitham - Mohiniyattam, Sivathandavam, Adivasi nrutham, Group dance, Bharathanatyam, Thiruvathirakali, Oppana, Sree Krishna Vaibhavam (Dance drama)



Sept 09

Kalaripayattu 🕒 6pm

A team of expert Kalari performers unravels their extreme mastery in Kerala's famed martial art, Kalaripayattu. Adding frills of thrill, will be a fire fighting presentation.



Sept 10

Rural rhapsody 🕒 4pm

Enchanting medley of typically rural art forms like Parayanthullal, Ottamthullal, Seethanganthullal, Pulluvanpattu. Furthering the fun will be Kummiyattam and a camp fire presented by members of an Adivasi hamlet adopted by Sree Sathya Sai Orphanage Trust.



Sept 11

Rhythms of soil 🕒 9am

On Thiruvonam day, immerse yourself in the spurring rhythms of Thottampattu by Shri. Girish Muttada and Villu pattu performed by able artistes of Nanthuni Kalagramam, Thiruvananthapuram. Both these performances bear the pulse of the soil.



Sept 12

Thudithaalam 🕒 6pm

It is a creative art therapy for gifted children deftly presented by Krishnamizhi, Thavanur, Malappuram.



Try your hand! Prizes galore!!

There are competitions that would cascade a lot of excitement! Be sportive and try your best to bag a prize! Turf is open for all to have truly traditional and rural village games and contests.

Musical chair

Filling the bottle

Sack race

Lemon and spoon

Picking punnakka

Hitting the pot

Uriyadi (Catching the butter pot)

Tug of war



To enjoy everyday



Uriyadi



Types of Oonjaal



Ona Sadya



Sri Sathya Sai Orphanage Trust - Kerala

Founder and Executive Director

Shri. K.N. Anandakumar

Social Tourism Project

Chairman

Shri. Nedumudi Venu

Director

Dr. B. Vijayakumar



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