



CATERING NEWS

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CHETTINAD HERITAGE & TOURISM

Chettinad is the home of the Nattukkottai Chettiars ([Nagarathar](#)), a prosperous banking and business community. It is also known for its local cuisine, architecture, and religious temples.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, many residents of Chettinad emigrated to [South](#) and Southeast Asia, particularly [Ceylon](#) and [Burma](#). By 2010, only 74 villages remained of the original 96. According to Guy Trebay in "Houses of the Holy" (*New York Times*, 17 November 2010), Chettinad now consists of a network of 73 villages and 2 towns forming clusters spread over a territory of 1,550 km² in the Districts of Sivagangai and Pudukottai in the State of Tamil Nadu. It finds itself in the [UNESCO nomination](#) for sites of historic and cultural value.

Chettinad is well known for its cultural and traditional values. Karaikkudi received a very important place in the list of "*Living Heritages*" in May 2007. It is connected with many other important Indian cities with cultural artifacts. The Network of Indian Cities with Living Heritage is formed and managed by UNESCO. Recently, the developing urban center received a new museum. The Karaikkudi Chettinad Heritage Museum is a must visit for fervent travelers. It plays an integral role in the growth and development of Karaikkudi.



Editorial

We are delighted to bring to you this issue of ALU Catering News. A quarterly newsletter dedicated to the field of catering science and hotel management. This is the first visible "output" from the Department of Catering Science & Hotel Management (ICSHM), Alagappa University. The staff of ICSHM is committed to maintaining the high standard of integrity that has always been characteristic of ALU and of the newsletter that represents it. While the ultimate purpose of the newsletter is to engage and strengthen its readers' association with the department, the institution recognizes that it can do so effectively only by earning and retaining the respect and faith of its readers. In this context, these editorial standards are set forth to give readers and contributors a clear idea of what they can and should expect from the letter. However, we would appreciate your feedback regarding how we could improve this publication and enhance its value to the community.

Chettinad Museum

The idea of setting up a *Chettinad Museum* in Karaikkudi began in 2007. This was when UNESCO acknowledged Karaikkudi as a heritage city. Moreover, the UNESCO and Chettinad Heritage committee joined hands to develop the colorful town of Chettiars. During this time, a three day international workshop was conducted in Karaikkudi. The splendid workshop revolved around different strategies that would develop the local heritage of Chettinad. The very first vision was showcased through the "Heritage House". The Heritage House was proposed in 2009. However, later that year, UNESCO offered to establish a fabulous Chettinad Heritage Museum in Karaikkudi, Sivangai District.



Chettinad Heritage Museum

According to UNESCO, the museum is meant to carry the unique lifestyle of Chettiars. It is a combination of the rich community's wealth and culture. The museum recognizes the unique architectures of Chettiars. Many consider the museum as a Heritage Home. It brings to light the living style of early Chettinad people. Tourists regard the Chettinad Heritage Museum as a must visit place in Karaikkudi. The museum features various ornaments, rare jewellery, unique clothes, huge grain bins, unforgettable copper water vats and many other artifacts that were used by Chettiars. These artifacts prove the rich and luxurious life-



style of Chettiars. Also, it leaves traces of the community's glorious activities. The Chettinad Heritage Museum clearly states that Chettiars hate the process of eating out.

Many Chettinad houses are a part of the Chettinad Heritage Museum. These houses can be used to showcase the theme's of Chettinad community feasts, functions, marriages, rituals, arts, crafts and wood carvings. Best time to visit the Chettinad Heritage Museum. The museum could be visited during the months of February, March, October, November and December. These are warm months with a pleasant weather.

Tamil Nadu Chettiar Jewellery Culture

Divine Lakshmi Haram
Code: HDV/BB/02498
Gross Weight: 110 gm
Stone Weight: 4 gm

Zircon Kal Mothiram
Code: FZ/BB/00449
Gross Weight: 4.5 gm
Stone Weight: 0.2 gm

Vellakal Attigai
Code: HRV/BB/02499
Gross Weight: 28 gm
Stone Weight: 5 gm

Jadai Billai
Code: SA/BB/00111
Gross Weight: 248 gm
Stone Weight: 25 gm

Vella Kal Valalay
Code: BVV/BB/01382
Gross Weight: 22 gm
Stone Weight: 2.5 gm

Kempu Kal Valalay
Code: KCV/BB/01285
Gross Weight: 40 gm
Stone Weight: 3 gm

Muthu Valalay
Code: BCUP/BB/01283
Gross Weight: 24 gm
Stone Weight: 3 gm

Divine Lakshmi Valalay
Code: BGV/BB/01281
Gross Weight: 234 gm
Stone Weight: 0.4 gm



The Chettinad Sari



The cotton [sari](#) also known as "kandaangi", is unique in the dramatic and spontaneous use of colour and pattern with bold checks, stripes and contrasting hues. Its vibrance and weight are its distinguishing factors. Records and old photographs show the use of sari by previous generations, before the advent of blouses and underskirts, which is worn rather differently from the regular sari. At present, it is available in Karaikudi.



Aathangudi Tiles



The situation has led to the decline in the market.

Athangudi tiles, named after the place of the manufacture in Chettinad, Tamil Nadu, come in a myriad of colours and patterns, and are made by a unique process using local soil and glass plates. These tiles are a testament to the rich cultural heritage of the Chettiar community, who effectively adapted many influences to their own brand of local craftsmanship. The designs and colours used in Athangudi tiles are still those of a bygone era. However, of late, new designs and patterns are being incorporated.

The Athangudi tiles are hand-made. However, with a short shelf life and relatively slow manufacturing process, these tiles are not

much in demand.



Industry



CECRI entrance.

Chettinad's principal town, Karaikudi is also the location of a branch of the [Central Electro Chemical Research Institute](#) (CECRI), one of the forty national laboratories under the aegis of the [Council of Scientific and Industrial Research](#) (CSIR) in New Delhi. The CSIR lab specializes in electro-chemical research and has been operational for more than fifty years. The campus is on over 300 scenic acres, filled with traditional and ornamental vegetation. It has been awarded [more than 750 patents](#) and published more than 5,000 research articles^[d] in the areas of Electrochemical Science and Technology such as battery, metal finishing, materials science, organic and inorganic electro-chemicals, corrosion prevention and paints. CECRI conducts four-year Engineering and Technology courses in chemical and electro-chemical engineering and technology affiliated with the [Anna University](#) in [Chennai](#).

Travel

The nearest airports are [Madurai Airport](#) and [Tiruchirappalli International Airport](#) while the largest towns in the area are Karaikudi and Devakottai. Trains that run from [Chennai](#) to [Rameshwaram](#) stop at Pudukkottai, Karaikudi, Kanadukaathan (Chettinad Station), Devakottai and Kallal. There are also frequent town buses from Karaikudi to Chettinad.

Notable people

- Dr. [Alagappa Chettiar](#) - founder of the various educational institutions in [Karaikudi](#) and its surroundings. [Alagappa University](#), [Alagappa Chettiar College of Engineering and Technology](#), and [Alagappa Government Arts College](#) are a few institutes named in his honour.
- Raja Sir [Annamalai Chettiar](#) - founder of [Indian Bank](#) and the [Annamalai University](#) bears his name.
- [P. Chidambaram](#) - former [Finance Minister of India](#).
- [Kaviarasar Kannadasan](#) - [Tamil](#) poet.
- Dr. Justice [A. R. Lakshmanan](#) (b. 1942) - former judge of the Supreme Court of India and current chairman of the Law Commission of India.
- [V. Meiyappan](#) - founder of [AVM Productions](#), the oldest and largest film production studio in [Kollywood](#), the [Tamil language](#) film industry of India.



Tourist places in around Karaikudi:

Pillayarpatti :



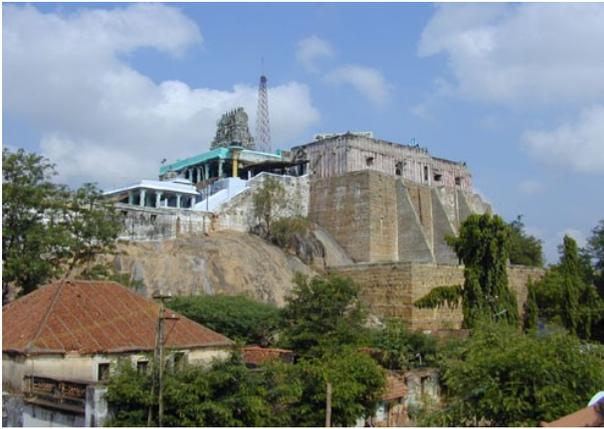
Pillaiyar patti Pillaiyar temple is an ancient rock-cut cave shrine dedicated to [Ganesh](#), located near Thiruppathur, Sivaganai District of Tamil Nadu. It is situated between Kundrakkudi and Tiruppathur. Pilliyarpatti is 12 Kilometers away from Thiruppathur and 3 kilometers from Kundrakkudi. Pillaiyarpatti *Karpaga Vinayagar* is carved out in a cave of Pillaiyarpatti Hillocks. Lord Vinayagar is carved out from the rock of the cave. Lord Thiruveesar is also carved in the rock of this cave. The temple was built under patronisation of Pan-

dyas. The [Āgama](#) texts found on stones in the temple help date the temple between the years 1091 and 1238. The age of the cave temple is 2500 years or more. There are 14 stone Sculptures in the cave (dated from 500 BC to 1284 AD). These stone sculptures state the ancient names of Pillaiyarpatti such as Ekkattoor, Thiruveenkaikkudi, Maruthangudi, and Rajanarayanapuram.

The temple opens at 6 in the morning and stays open till 1 PM. The shrine is again opened at 4PM and is open till 8.30 PM. The Vinayagar sannidhi (Sanctom Sanctorum) is a cave where the 6 feet of Karpaga Vinayagar has been carved inside. As this is a cave formation, there is no provision to go around for the pradakshina.

Kundrakudi:

In Kundrakudi the *Lord Muruga* Temple is set up



in a very small hill. Here [Lord Muruga](#) appears with his wives *Lord Valli* and *Deivanai*. The Murugan statue is set up with six faces and hence here Lord Murugan is called as "*Lord Shanmuga*", the meaning is Lord Murugan with six faces. The temple is under the control of Kundrakudi Adhinam and maintained by them efficiently. At the bottom of the hill, there is a small temple for Lord Ganesha who is the brother of Lord Muruga and another temple is also at the bottom of the hill itself for Lord Muruga in the name Lord Palani Muruga. In this Palani Muruga temple the main statue is not fixed on floor and set up in a bar. Because this statue is brought to palani by the Kundrakudi Pada yatra group people every year at the time of [Thaipooosam](#) festival. Then on the way to the main temple three more mini temples are there, two temples for again Lord Ganesha and one for Lord Kadamba who is one of the devotees of Lord Muruga. In the main temple

as already stated Lord Muruga is appearing with six faces and along with his wives.

Statues of [Lord Ganesh](#), [Lord Shiva](#), [Lord Kulandaivelappar](#), [Lord Nataraja](#), [Lord Bhairavar](#) and *Lords of Nine Planets* are also set up around the above-mentioned main statue of *Lord Muruga*. Generally the Nine Planets Lord are set up facing various directions but here all planets are set up facing the Main statue of *Lord Muruga*.

The [Shanmuga Archana](#) is performed to Lord Muruga here. The present cost for this Archana is Rs.2,000/ - At the time of this Archana all Pooja materials are given by the Temple administrative body themselves and we need not to bring any pooja materials for such Archana.

Kundrakudi is situated very near to Karaikudi. Many famous temples such as Pillayar patti Karpaga Vinayagar Temple, Bhairavar Kovil Bhairavar Swamy Temple, Ariyakudi Thiruventakamudayan Temple, Thirupathur Thiruthalinathar Temple, Thirukostiyur Sowmyanarayar Temple are very near to Kundrakudi. So all of these famous temples can be seen in one day.

Thousand Window House :

Thousand window house, has become popular in Karaikudi. Its name arttappattup intact, the "house of a thousand windows" in the sense that coming.



Aforesaid houses, Karaikudi the tourists, who want to see it, especially as it is very popular. Approximately 20,000 square feet and is located in the very spacious aforesaid houses, year 1941, is built around 1 lakh 25 thousand rupees. At that time, it appeared to be infeasible, now appears to be normal.



In the House, 25 large rooms and hallways are great for. In addition, about 20 doors, there are 100 jannlkalum. For the first time, anyone who enters the house, what's it citaivukkullaki, the worse paramarikkappattiruntalum, kalaiyalakum its original building, which was the first eye glasses will attract and impress.

Ariyakudi :

The 17th Century AD temple has a connection with Three Divya Desams - The idol of Srinivasa Perumal was the Abhisheka idol of Ramanuja at Srirangam, Shatari is from Tirupathi and Sacred fire (Agni) from Thirukoshtiyur .

This is the biggest Perumal temple in the Chettinad and one where there are festivals all round the year just like in Srirangam.

Sevukan Chettiyar used to walk to Tirupathi with a group of devotees on the Thiruvonam day in Puratsi for a darshan of Srinivasa Perumal. On one such trip, when ill health seemed to disrupt his trip to the hill temple, he heard an invisible voice- that of Lord Srinivasa Perumal- say that He, the Lord, would himself provide darshan at the devotee's place rather than the devotee coming all the way here.

Connection with three Divya Desams



He was directed to *Srirangam* to collect the idol, one which was the Abhisheka Murthy of *Ramanuja*. He came back here to this dense forest area of Ariyakudi and installed the idol of *Srinivasa Perumal* and built the first prakara. Subsequently, the 7tiered 80ft tall Raja Gopuram was built along with a separate Sannidhi for *Alarmel Mangai Thayar*.

The speciality at this temple here at Ariyakudi is that the idol is from Srirangam, the Shatari is from Tirupathi and Agni (the sacred fire) is from Thirukoshtiyur.

In memory of the construction by Sevukan Chettiyar, his idol can be seen on one of the main pillars inside the first prakara

Garuda



TEMPLE CHARIOT WITH EXQUISITE SCULPTURES

On the North East corner of the temple is the *Garuda Sannidhi*. Every month on the Swathi star day, a special Thirumanjana, with 108 sacred Kudam, is performed for Garuda, who is said to remove doshams and enemies.

Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar

The 20th century Carnatic Music legend Ramanuja Iyengar hailed from Ariyakudi. An archival record dating back to 1937 features a kutcheri presentation by him here at Ariyakudi.



Ancient Herbal Paintings

There are several ancient herbal paintings inside the temple each of which still has a breadth of freshness about them.



Festivals

- 14day *Brahmotsavam* in *Vaikasi* including *Chariot Festival* and *Theppotsavam*
- Special *Thirumanjana* for Srinivasa Perumal in Chitrai
- *Swarna Garuda Vahana* Procession on the opening day of Chitrai
- *Puratasi Thiruvonam* Festival- Every year during the Thiruvonam festival in Puratasi, devotees have the honour of being blessed by the Lords from these three Divya Desams (via the Abhisheka idol, the shatari and the sacred fire brought from Thirukoshtiyur for the Karpooora Aradhana) at the Dasavathara mandapa.

Temple Tank

There is a huge tank to the North of the temple where the annual *Theppotsavam* takes place in the month of *Vaikasi*.



Mathur :

The Ainootheswarar- Periyanaayaki Temple called as the Mathur temple is 5 kms from Karaikudi via Iluppakudi. Five tier, 70 feet tall Rajagopuram is the special feature of this temple. Apart from this, A single rock cut Mandapadm, with two elephants in the front and Two Dwara palakas [Entrance guards] at the entrance of the Sanctum sanctorum is another special feature of this temple. Vizha mandpam was built in 1949 with a seating capacity of over 500 persons. Excavations that brought out many archaeological evidences including Burial urns to indicate that there were settlements in this area even before 1500 years.

Thirumayam Fort :

The **Thirumayam Fort** is a 40-acre wide [fortress](#) in the town of [Thirumayam](#) in Pudukkottai-Karaikudi Highway in [Pudukkottai District](#), [Tamil Nadu](#), [India](#). It was constructed by [Vijaya Raghunatha Sethupathi](#), the [Raja of Ramnad](#) in 1687. Later the fort was handed over to his brother in law Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman. The fort has been extensively renovated by Archaeological Survey of India in 2012.

The fort originally said to have been a 'ring fort' with seven concentric walls has only four surviving now. The construction of the fort is of inferior quality as small blocks of stone were used along with bricks for the building of the fortification.

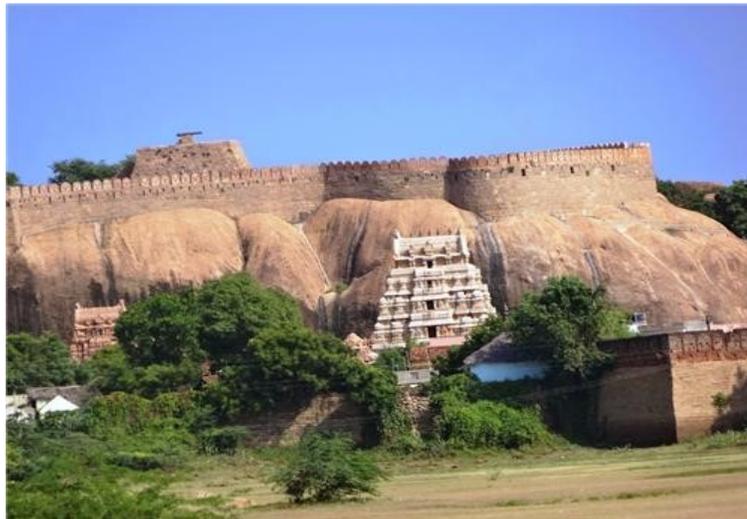
The fort has three entrances; one on the north, another on the south and third on the east. The shrines dedicated to *Hanuman*, *Sakthi*, *Ganapathi*, *Karuppar* (guardian deities of the fort) are noticed on the southern side and shrine to *Bhairava* on the northern side. Halfway to the top on the right side a chamber which was used as magazine was noticed. Opposite to this chamber on the western slope of a boulder is a rock cut cell containing a *linga* on yonipitha, the spout of which is supported by the figure of a dwarf.





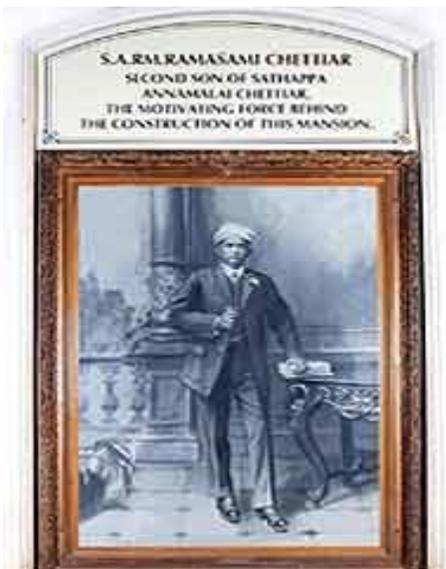
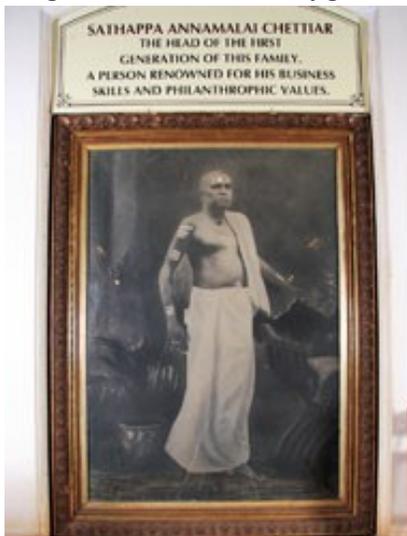
Bastion with cannon of British origin

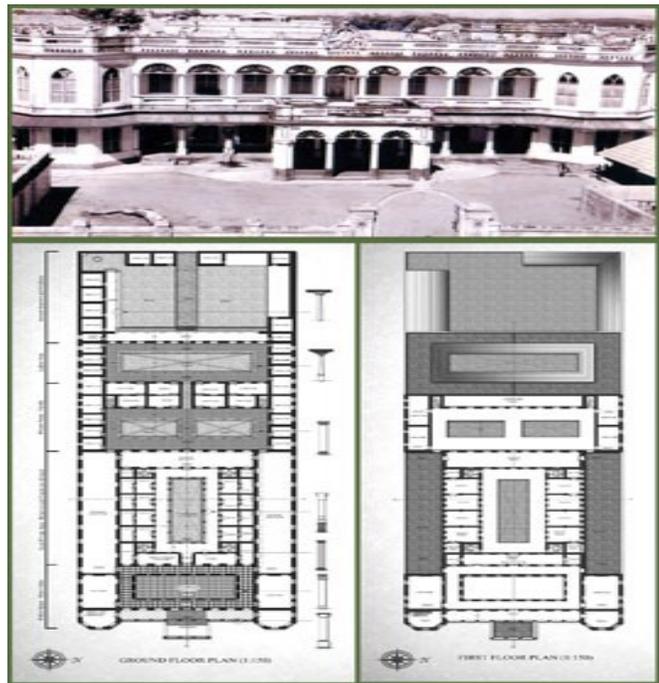
On the top of the rock is a bastion with cannon of British origin. To the south of this Platform is a natural pond. On the southern slope there are two rock cut temples, one of them dedicated to Sri Sathyamurthy-Sri Uyyavanda Nachiar (Vaishnavite) and another to Sri Sathyagireeswarar-Sri Venuvaneeswari (Saivite), Which are historically and religiously more important. To the northwest is another pond and to the southeast another tank. There are six more cannons mounted in the north, south and east gates.



Chettinadu Mansion :

Chettinadu Mansion, in existence since 1902. Located in *Kandukathan* in Tamilnadu, declared as a Heritage Village by the Government of India. The Mansion is spread over a sprawling 80,000 square feet in area. The Heritage of the Mansion has been carefully protected and just 12 rooms are open to guests who get the privilege of privacy. The charm of the resort is that it gives you the true experience of the life in the bygone era. The owners of the resort live in, to give you an account of the village and the Mansion from the 1900s to the present day. But care has been taken for neat and careful housekeeping of the Mansion for the best comfort of guests. The food is hygienic and the atmosphere is informal.





The rooms in the Mansion are maintained in the same style as in the 1900s. The rooms are spacious enough to move around. The wash rooms are stocked with the required toiletries and are clean and dry. Every room in the main block has a balcony, which opens out into life around the Mansion.



As much care as possible is taken to eliminate plastic that is not recyclable. Tea / coffee makers are provided in the rooms. Room service is not entertained in abundant caution to prevent insects. The rooms in the ambience of the village are quiet and are ideal for good nights sleep. Intercom facility is made available in the rooms. Rooms are also Wi-Fi. In short all efforts are made to give you a truly Heritage Stay without compromising on modern day comforts.

The Mansion has activities designed taking into the fact that you arrive from noisier towns. Take rejuvenation massages, swim in the pool, play water pool, bronze under the sun, enjoy a bullock cart ride around the village, take bicycle trips, visit the museum in the Mansion, use the small library in the TV lounge, take a cookery demonstration of the some world famous Chettinad receipes..



CHETTINAD CUISINE

World Famous Chettinad Cuisine

Of all the unique aspects of Chettinad, the most famous ambassador of this region has been its cuisine. Almost no restaurant in India serving non vegetarian food would miss out on having Chicken Chettinad on its menu, and Chettinad cuisine is synonymous with spicy fare even to the Indian palate.

Popular dishes and vast menu

Popular Chettinad dishes include *Pepper chicken*, and *Varuval* – which is dry dish fried with spices and onions. The freshly ground masalas which are made using sun dried assortments and hand pounded on pestles provide an earthy flavor. Dry snacks are very popular, including chips and fried dough in circular shapes called '*Murukku*'. Once again these are hand made in large quantities and go very well with the filter coffee famous in the region. An all-day snack also includes the '*Vada*' which is a deep fried doughnut made with a batter of lentils. Sun dried vegetables are a part of the cooking. This reflects the techniques used in the dry and arid region to preserve vegetables for the off season. Stuffed and steamed dishes like the *kozhakattai* are also part of this vast cuisine. A thick gravy version of curry called *Kozhambu* is made from coconut milk and spices as a base. Chettinad cuisine is



also famous for pickles, particularly with the popularity of spices. *Payasam* is a famous dessert of liquid consistency that is flavored with nuts on a base of milk.



Influenced by the region, culture and travel

The Chettinad cuisine has been influenced by the nature of the region, which is a dry, arid and hot region. At the same time the Chettiars trace back their history to a life near the coastline, so their cuisine also has great seafood like prawns and crabs. The much travelled Chettiars also brought back many influences from abroad and their cuisine was also used while entertaining the British guests during the time of the Raj. Chettiars are legendary for their hospitality and the size of their kitchens and their lavish banquet halls are testimony to the feasts served there. The kitchen was a community affair and a matter of pride for the women in the family and being a joint family system, every meal was a large and elaborate affair. No self-respecting Chettiar would eat outside, and would carry their food when they couldn't be at home for lunch or dinner. Even the kitchen utensils and instruments are collectibles today, valued for their design, large size and vintage make.



Western and local identity

Chettinad Cuisine also has traces of westernized dishes from the history of hosting British guests during the early 19th century. This is accentuated by fine western cutlery used to serve Chettinad dishes. At the same time some meals are still served off banana plantain leaves and eaten with the hand as is the tradition, with a traditional multi course meal that can contain over 20 dishes. The central part of the cuisine is still the rice, as it was hundreds of years ago, which is reflected in the large paddy fields that greet the visitor all over this region. The multitudes of dishes serve as an accompaniment to the rice. Rice takes many forms in the cuisine, starting from steamed rice cakes (idlis) and pancakes (dosas) for breakfast.



Integral part of culture and life

Even today, the cuisine is an integral part of the Chettinad life. The aroma of spices and oils follows you as you walk the by lanes of the town, as each home prepares for its meals. Always freshly prepared at home with ingredients from the local area, every home invariably serves up at least a few classic chettinad dishes for every meal. Chettinad cuisine is spicy, aromatic and contains the liberal use of oil. Popular spices used are peppercorn, cinnamon, bay leaves, cardamom, nutmeg, green and red chilies, coriander, cumin, fenugreek and star anise. Traditionally, the spices were prepared and ground using grinding stones, lending a unique texture and flavor. It is an interesting sight to watch the manual methods of cooking still carried on from centuries of tradition.



