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## SVATMA, Tanjavur opening 2016 - A new boutique hotel puts Tamil Nadu's Temple architecture back on the map

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SVATMA, a restored traditional century-old family mansion in Tanjavur opens as a new 38-room boutique hotel for the winter season – the first luxury offering in the area and home to the great Living Chola Temples of Tamil Nadu, South India. SVA – 'one's own' and ATMA – 'Soul' has been conceived as an immersive destination retreat by Owners & Architects, Krithika and Sumanth Subramainian.

The property will offer a unique insight into Tanjavur's rich heritage through a carefully curated programme of cultural, architectural, culinary experiences and a vibrant schedule of performance arts.

Tanjavur (formerly known as Tanjore) is regarded as the cradle of South Indian religion, art, and architecture and, up until now, has only been known to the most discerning of 'Indophiles'.

Most of the Great Living Chola Temples, which are UNESCO World Heritage Monuments, are located in and around Tanjavur. The foremost among these, the Brihadeeswara Temple, is located in the centre of the city. The city is also home to Tanjore painting, a painting style unique to the region as well as the Bharatanatyam classical dance form and Carnatic music.

### The SVATMA Experience

Guests are invited to choose from eight signature experiences, which will give them a deeper insight into the culture and heritage of the city:

- Temple Site excursion escorted by an academic expert on restoration, architecture and iconography
- Culinary Class offering an introduction into the simple vegetarian Tamil home cooking
- Bronze casting demonstration of the famous 'cire perdue' or lost wax technique by master craftsmen
- Vedic Chanting of the Gayathri Mantra and Shanti Mantra with local priests
- Carnatic Chamber Concert performed by vocalists, percussionists, flautists with a discussion on mood evoked by the Raga renditions
- Lecture & Dance Demonstration on Tanjavur style of Dance or the graceful Bharatanatyam Temple Dance
- Tanjavur Painting demonstrating the art of the local technique, which incorporates gemstones
- Handloom weaving techniques of silk textiles artisans, for which Tanjavur is renowned

### Heritage Accommodation

38 rooms and suites are spread across the original mansion and new built wing. Each bedroom is unique and encompasses the art and architecture of Tamil Nadu, with a contemporary edge. The seven rooms and suites within the heritage part of the building each feature private verandahs. All bedrooms are en-suite and appointed with state-of-the-art shower rooms.

Details include high ceilings with traditional wooden beams, polished wooden floors and white washed walls as well as locally sourced paintings and objets d'art. Locally handmade furniture and antiques have been selected by the Owners to give the feel of an elegant family home.

### Cuisine

SVATMA will highlight Tanjavur's longstanding vegetarian traditions offering guests an authentic taste of Tamil home cooking at Aharam – an all-day fine dining restaurant. Nilai is a rooftop dining terrace, which revives the traditional moonlit dinner of Thanjavur, serving unique 'Nilasapadu' cuisine, within baskets packed in antique tiffin boxes and ecofriendly plates and saucers made with pressed Palm leaf. At Palaharam, traditional coffee and tiffin is available on the verandah surrounded by lush greenery.

**Wellness & Recreation Facilities** The Soukya spa features four treatments rooms and a relaxation area, with a team of therapists administering treatments, which pre-date Ayurveda. Tutors at the Arogyam wellbeing and Yoga centre will offer guests personalised meditation classes. A wellness consultant will prescribe treatments and therapies attuned to the individual's needs as well as programmes, tailored for long stay guests. There is also a communal swimming pool, Jacuzzi and outside deck area.

### Events and Private Dining

The Divyam and Gautama halls host a range of classical music and traditional dance performances and serve as an ideal venue for private dining, events and weddings, with a skilled events team on hand. Divyam has the capacity to seat 250 people and with adjacent gardens and terraces and a traditional feast can be hosted in tented areas adjacent to the hall.

### Library

A wide variety of books from the founders' personal collection of literature technical studies, scriptures in Sanskrit, art and culture themed as well as travelogues are available to browse in the library of the heritage building.

### Corporate Responsibility

The Owners of SVATMA support the Marabu Foundation, an organisation working for the promotion of peace and harmony through Fine Arts, Literature and Traditional Arts.

The foundation's activities are centered in and around Thillaishtanam, a small village near Thiruvaiyaru, 15 kms away from Thanjavur. The aim is to educate underprivileged children with the revival of ancient musical compositions. Guests are invited to include an excursion to the foundation as part of their SVATMA experience.

Prices start from Rs. 16,000 / £170 GBP approx. per night for a Double Bedroom and includes breakfast, excludes taxes.



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