

HOLY VISIT TO VARANASI AND PERFORMANCE OF RITUALS THEREOF

According to Hindu culture / Vedic writings a Yatra to Rameswaram, Prayagraj (Allahabad), Varanasi, Gaya, again to Varanasi and Rameshwaram for performing the rituals to ancestors is considered sacred at least once in lifetime in order to repay the 3 debts i.e. Aatma Rinam, Daiva Rinam and Pitru Rinam.

- The Yatra begins with a visit to Rameswaram where Sri Rama as per our legend and sastras worshipped Lord Siva in the form of Lingam idol to get rid of his sins derived and accumulated due to the killing of the Rakshasa (a Brahmin decent) in Sri Lanka. Hence during the said visit one has to take bath in the ocean (DHANUSHKODI - Bay of Bengal) in Rameswaram and also from the waters of the holy wells nearby within the Rameswaram temple, before one goes for darshan of the main God and Goddess at the temple. In the process, you should also collect some sand of about 150 gms from the said ocean from where you took bath and preserve the same to carry to Allahabad.
- Then Kasi Yatra begins, which requires at least 5 days to complete the rituals at Prayagraj (Allahabad), Kashi, Gaya, and then back to Kashi. One can also get down at Allahabad if coming by Train to perform the rituals and then come down to Kashi on the same evening.
- Day 1, In Prayagraj (Allahabad) you will be performing Prayashchitta Sankalpam & Shiv Lingam Pooja made of sand brought from Rameshwaram, Vapanam (shaving head) for male karta which is primary for repay of Aatmarinam, Veni Daanam (tying knot to the hair of wife and cutting small piece from edge and offering it to Ganga), Triveni Snaanam and Hiranya Sraddham (at Shiva Muttham) wearing wet cloths. You will also collect a Can of Triveni Sangam water which will be used for Abhishekam of Ramanatha Swamy at Rameshwaram, after completion of your Yatra / rituals at the Kashi / Gaya and Allahabad. After completion of rituals leave the wet cloths there itself and wear casual dress before meals.

Things for Prayag : Sand brought from Rameshwaram, 2 blouse pieces along with sumangali dravyams (seepu, kannadi, valayal, manjal, kumkum, etc.), change of dress (casual) for personal use.

- Day 2 at Kashi starts with Prayachitta mahasankalpam, Manikarnika Ganga Snanam followed by Teertha Shraddham and in the afternoon/evening Devalaya Darshan, list temples may be collected on arrival. A guide may be hired for Rs. 500/- for one visit. No electronic devices, pen, sharp items are allowed near Main Temple.
- Day 3 at Kashi starts with Panchateertha Sraddhams viz. in 5 major ghats by / in a boat in the river ganges by offering Pindams. On completion Ganga Puja will be done. and leave for Gaya in the afternoon by Cab / Train and reach there same night.
- Day 4 at Gaya starts with Sraddhams conducted in 3 different places. One @ the banks of Phalguni river- Hiranya Sraddham, 2 nd @ Vishnu Paadam – Hiranya Shraaddham 3rd at Akshay Vatam which is called Akshyvata Sraddham Parvana Sraddham at Prasad Bhawan followed by Pinda Pradaanam at Akshay Vatam. After completion of all three Sraddham, you return to Kashi by Cab or Train and reach same night.
- Day 5 at Kashi you will perform ****Dampati Puja** followed by feeding Brahmans and complete Kasi yatra.

- Afterwards in the evening you can purchase Kashi Shombu / Spatika malai / Rudraksha malai / Rudraksham from one mukhi to sixteen mukhi if available, Annapoorni and Banaras Sarees for yourself, relatives and friends if you have time and sufficient resources.
- Things that you need to bring - for Gaya - 5 Veshtis (9×5) and for Kashi - 2 Veshtis (9×5) for Teerth Shraaddham and 1 for Dampathi Puja. Total 8 numbers for entire trip.
- One 9 or 6 yards saree, thirumangalyam (optional), Metti 1 pair, 8 blouse pieces (along with sumangali dravyams (seepu, kannadi, valayal, manjal, kumkum, etc.) So total 8 Veshties, 1 Saree, 8 blouse pieces, 1 set metti.
- You should bring with you Panchapatram, A brass chombu, Lock & Key for your room, Torch, Medicines if any you usually take etc. Kanji maav (flour), if you take medicine in the morning

5 madi vesht and sarees for each couples Make them madi at your place itself and put each

in separate polybags. This is to avoid everyday washing and drying the clothes for rituals.

ACCOMMODATION AT KASHI-

1. You can stay at our home in Kashi at Hanuman Ghat for free of cost (only for pilgrims performing rituals), where you will be given one room (per group) with two cots, pillows, bedsheets if required where you have common bath room / western toilets with (hot water supply). Rooms are allotted on first come first serve basis. No reservation is available.
2. In case you want Attached bathroom, Air Conditioner you can book nearby hotels or Lodge, either online or over phone. contact nos. of the hotels will be given on request and you may book accommodation on your own too.
3. The cost of food at home will be Rs.170/- per head per day excluding coffee and tea.
4. to & fro Allahabad to Kashi Rs. 4000/- approx. (for 7 seat) and Rs. 3000/- (for 4 seat)- Please note the cab charges may vary from time to time.
5. Kashi to Gaya costs Rs. 7500/- approx. (7 seat) and Rs. 5500/- (4 seat). Please note the cab charges may vary from time to time.

Address at Allahabad is :-

Shri Vasudeva Shastrigal / Shri Sundaram Shastrigal S/o late Shri Natesa Sastrigal, Shiva Mutt, Daraganj, near Daraganj Police Station.

Phone # 0532-2500799 / 2508886 Cell No. 8318405617 / 9935685978. You are requested to inform Vasudev shastrigal about your arrival a week before you start journey.

Contact at Rameshwaram

Smt. Girija Babu, 29, Pudhu Theru

Rameswaram, ph nos: 8925263398, Girija mami's sister Smt Sharada : 9994519426

Smt Girija : 9786041968

Swamimalai (Late) R. Vishwanatha Shastrigal's Family contact details

1. **Shankar Narayan**, S/o Late Swamimalai V. Ramasesha Shartigal, B5/311 Hanuman Ghat, Varanasi – 221001. Cell number: 6390000397 (WhatsApp)
Phone Nos. 0542-2276134 / 2276533 / 2275173-
Email i.d.: shankar.narayan.kashi@gmail.com
2. **R. Shiva Kumar** –same address as above - Mobile # 91-9415336064.
3. **K. Venkat Ramanan**- same address as above - Mobile # 91-7570009998

For US visitors contact :

Shri V. Srinivasan (3rd son of Rs Vishwanatha Shastrigae)

6303 Pioneer Drive

Sringfield, VA 22150

Mobs 571 241 5323

Emaies vsvasan1950@yahooscom

PLEASE CONTACT US ON THE ABOVE GIVEN NUMBERS FOR THE VEDIC EXPENSES @ VARANASI, ALLAHABAD AND GAYA

Note - Please program your visit to Kashi well in advance and in time after communicating with the above focal for easy and smooth Yatra.

In case you have any queries, kindly note down all in a paper and raise them over Whatsapp, E-mail or Phone at once, in order to avoid calling time and again. Being too busy it would be convenient for us too.

SHUBAMASTU

Continued – FAQ

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Q-1. How many days are required to perform the rituals during Kashi Yatra ?

Ans. Prayag (Allahabad), Kashi & Gaya altogether require minimum of five days. Exclude journey in these 5 days. In case you land down at Prayagraj in the morning after 9.00 am there may be lesser possibilities to perform rituals on that day.

Q-2. Which place shall we start with ?

Ans. If passing through (Prayagraj) Station one may get down at the Prayag station and start with the rituals out there but if arriving before 9.00 am. In that case kindly intimate Shri Vasudeva Shastrigal in advance for pickup and arranging cab to Kashi. However, one can start the rituals in Kashi also.

Q-3. How many clothes shall one bring for personal usage ?

Ans. For religious purpose male may bring at least five sets of Veshti & Anga Vastram and female may bring five sets of sarees. Get it madi (wash & dry) at your place itself and place each in separate polythene bag.

Q-4. Where shall we stay during the Kashi Yatra ?

Ans. You may stay at our place which will be homely for your stay and no rent is charged. The group has to be accommodated in single room consisting of two Cots. Extra persons will be provided with a mat and pillow. However, it is requested that you bring at least one Spreadsheet per person. No charges applicable for rooms. Only common lavatory. No Airconditioner available. reservation for rooms. Rooms are allotted based on first come first serve basis.

Q-5. Will the Hotel rooms will be booked by pilgrim or at our end ?

Ans. You will be provided with the contact numbers of the Hotels nearby and you may book on your own, if you so desire, in order to avoid any misunderstanding. We do assist in getting it booked. Hotel / Lodge room starts from Rs. 1500/- with A.C. & Attached Bathroom. Other facilities like room services and Lift, etc. depends upon hotel. Most of Hotels/Lodges are located within half kilometre to 200 meters.

Q-6. What will be the cost of the foods and other expenses ?

Ans. The food at our place will cost Rs. 170/- per head per day (excluding coffee & tea). Vaidik expenses (will be informed after finalized trip) includes lunch at Gaya, lunch on the

day of shraaddham and Brahman Bhojanam at Kashi. Hotel / Lodge charges has to be borne by you.

Q-7. Is there attached bathroom and air conditioner ?

Ans. There are common bathroom / lavatory (western) and No air conditioner at our place.

Q-8. How can we travel between Kashi-Allahabad & Kashi-Gaya and what will be the charges ?

Ans. You may travel by train but the same will not be convenient due to timing. Bus Services are available to reach earlier between Kashi-Allahabad. Even you can come by vehicle from there to avoid delay in reaching Varansi. A 7 seat vehicle will cost Rs 4000 A.C.) and 4 seat Rs. 3000 A.C. to & fro between Kashi and Prayagra. A 7 seat cab to and fro between Kashi and Gaya will cost Rs. 7500/- and Rs. 5500/- for 4 seat. including Tole Tax & Driver's night stay charges etc. Buddha Gaya sight seeing is not recommended due to paucity of time. However one can visit by paying extra charges for the cab if time permits.

Q-9. What are the places we can visit at three places ?

Ans. You will be provided with the list of sightseeing and temples at all the three places once you reach.

Q-9. How can we visit the temples ?

Ans. At Kashi you will be accompanied with a guide or driver to go to temples or the Cycle Rickshaw puller will guide you through the temples. You will be able to visit all the important temples at Allahabad while coming back from Triveni Sangamam. Similarly, you will be guided by the Driver, if hired private vehicle, at Gaya. Guiding charges applicable.

Q. 10. What all the things are we supposed to bring for Kashi Yatra ?

Ans. you need to bring one 9 or 6 yards saree, Tirumangalyam (optional), Metti, 8 blouse piece (with sumangali dravyams seepu kannadi valayal manjal kumkum etc) ect. You are welcome to bring 4-5 (depending upon the number of Brahmanas) Veshti for Gaya shradha. 2 nos. 9x5 veshti for Teerth shraaddham at Kashi. (Total 8 veshti including 1 for Dampati poojai)

Q. 11. What is the best month to visit Kashi ?

Ans. Anytime between Feb. to March and Aug. to December, is best. However, people visit Kashi, Gaya & Prayaag between Shivratri and Dipawali.

Due to rain, water level of Ganga is high during August-September this results prohibition of boat ride by government. This causes inconvenience in performing Panch Ghata Shraaddham and viewing Ganga Art sitting on the boat. However Panch Ghata Shraaddham can be performed by road on 2 ghats only.

Q. 12. Whether the person performing full rituals can perform Go Daanam (Donating Cow). What will be the cost of Cow and where can one perform that ? What is the rituals involved ?

Ans. Go Daanam used to be an essential ritual in olden days but the trend has changed in due course of time, due to one's capacity to perform the same and therefore we don't insist. However, a Cow ranges from Rs. 30000-50000, depending upon the quantity of milk it gives. Rear part of the body of Cow is worshiped with Shodashopachar Pooja Vidhi. Dohan Paatr (A bucket for milking the cow), Aachchadan Vastra (Cloth), a small bell (to be tied with neck) and fodder for a year is to be born. This is as per Shastra but one can donate fodder as per his wishes & capacity.

Q. 13. What would be the proper timing for enquiry ?

Ans. Morning 10.00 to 3.00 pm and evening 6.00 pm to 9.30 pm. Whatsapp is available at 6390000397 – Shankar Narayan and 7570009998 – Venkat Raman Ghanapathigal. Due to poor network you may have to keep trying calling.