

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF EARTH INDIA SIDDHA

Breath

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Aadhi Kamakshi Amman Temple

The Aadhi Kamakshi Amman Temple in Tiruvannamalai, near Chinnakadai Street, is believed to be more than 1,800 years old. Its history finds mention in the Arunachala Puranam, and tradition holds that it predates even the famous Kamakshi shrine in Kanchipuram.

The temple is dedicated to Goddess Kamakshi, known here as Thavasu Kamakshi because she performed *thavas* (penance) at this very spot. Inside the sanctum, she is depicted in a rare and striking form: holding a Shiva Lingam close to her heart while balancing on the tip of flames. This image captures the depth of her devotion and her yearning for oneness with Lord Shiva.

Legend recounts how Parvathi once closed Shiva's eyes in a playful moment, plunging the universe into darkness. Angered, Shiva sent her to earth to atone. She first performed austerities in Kanchipuram, where Shiva appeared as Ekambareswarar and accepted her back. Yet she longed for something deeper, the complete union where she would become one with Him.

Shiva directed her to Gowthama Maharishi in Tiruvannamalai, who revealed the sacred power of Arunachala and guided her in her penance. At this time, the demon Mahishasura was terrorizing the world. At the gods' request, Parvathi summoned goddess Durga to slay him.

When Durga defeated Mahishasura, she retrieved a Shiva Lingam from his throat. Mahishasura had earlier swallowed Mannatha Rishi, a sage who was carrying a sacred Shiva Lingam with him. While the demon's fiery strength allowed him to digest the sage, the divine Lingam would not move past his throat. When Durga presented the Lingam to Parvathi, it would not leave her grasp once it touched her hands. Parvati realised this was the oneness with Shiva she had long prayed for.

At this sacred spot, she performed the 'Panchgani' penance seated on a palm leaf *paranai* (platform), facing the Arunachala Hill, balancing on the tip of flames as depicted in the temple's sanctum. To protect her during this intense austerity, many divine beings stood guard: Durga, the Ashta Bhairavas, Pachaiyamman, Murugar, Vinayagar, and the *dwarapalikas* Kali and Thundhubi. Their presence is honored in the many shrines that now surround the sanctum, along with the Ekambareswarar shrine recalling her earlier penance in Kanchipuram.

Moved by her devotion, Shiva appeared before her and accepted her as one with himself, manifesting as Ardhanareeswarar, the inseparable form of Shiva and Shakti. The Nandi in this temple faces directly toward the Arunachala Hill, commemorating the direction of her meditation upon the sacred peak.

Even today, the temple remains a place for spiritual growth and celebration, its grounds hosting festivals while carrying the memory of this divine story.

Temple timings: 6 A.M. to 12 P.M. and 4 P.M. to 8 P.M. on regular days

Location: <https://share.google/4YARJLaUQB0U7XNnx>



VIEW OF ARUNACHALA HILL FROM THE TEMPLE



TEMPLE PAINTING PORTRAYING THE IMAGE OF THAVASU KAMAKSHI



MEMBERS OF EIS AT THE TEMPLE



TEMPLE PAINTING PORTRAYING THE DIVINE EVENT OF ARDHANAREESHWARAR AT THE FOOTHILLS OF ARUNACHALA

Kurmasana

GROUNDING AND STEADY: THE WAY OF THE TORTOISE

Kurmasana is named after the humble tortoise, whose shape the practitioner mirrors in this posture. From a seated position, the legs are spread wide, the arms slide beneath the knees as the body folds forward from the hips, and the head gently descends toward the earth. This form echoes the posture's inner effect: turning inward, drawing the restless senses away from the world outside and back toward the self.



Practitioners find that the mind begins to still almost as soon as they settle into Kurmasana. The pose softens the constant pull of sensory activity, creating a deep sense of grounding. Practiced before meditation, this stillness becomes a bridge to a more effortless and centered state of mind. This reflects in our daily life as reduced stress, greater clarity and improved focus.

Physically, the 'tortoise pose' offers a host of benefits. The forward fold stretches and strengthens the spine, eases stiffness, and encourages better blood circulation. It also activates the abdominal region, supporting digestion and metabolic health. When practiced mindfully with respect for the body's limits, it brings relief from tension while gradually improving flexibility.

Kurmasana brings to the practitioner, the patience and endurance of the tortoise: unhurried, deliberate, and always carrying an underlying sense of grounding.

Navarathri: Vanquishing the Inner Darkness

To elucidate the flow of time in nature, our ancestors looked to the journey of the sun. When the sun travels northward, they called it *Uttarayanam*, beginning with the Tamil month of *Thai*, a time celebrated through Pongal, Makara Sankranti, and other harvest festivals. This bright half of the year, stretching till *Aadi*, is predominantly hotter and brighter. The southward journey, *Dhakshinayanam*, begins in *Aadi* and runs till the next *Thai*. These are the months of rain and cold, when the sun's light wanes and darkness takes hold.

This darker passage is ruled by the moon. Her luminous feminine energy is the reason so many of our great festivals fall in this season. Just as Mahashivaratri is attributed to Shiva, Navaratri draws us to the Mother Parvati, in her many forms.

This ten night celebration occurs in the month of *Purattasi*, a time when we transition from rainy season to cool autumn. At this time, the body is naturally more sensitive and takes more time to adapt to changes. Our ancestors knew the wisdom of this shift, advising us to avoid indulgences like meat or excess sexual pleasures, so that we remain attuned to the season.

The beginning of darkness in the world at this time, mirrors within us as strengthened dark subconscious tendencies. At dusk, when the light outside has vanished, we light lamps in our homes to combat its rule over us. Devi represents this very light that conquers all darkness in this period.

On the tenth day of Vijayadashami, we celebrate the Goddess vanquishing the evil *Asura*. He represents the dark movements of our subconscious. To overcome this, we need the blessings of Devi Parvathi. Our ancestors recognised these dark subconscious tendencies to be of ten types. Each day of Navaratri invokes the goddess in a different form, each one the antidote to a specific darkness.

To collectively attune to this as a society, they established it as a festival that is celebrated for ten days a year at this time. The worship is 'Navaratri puja', the victory is Vijaya Dashami, and the deeper, spiritual path is the wisdom of the Dasa Mahavidyas. In her grace, we find the strength to conquer the darkness within, and lead with light.

Siddha Macchamuni

THE EMBODIMENT OF TIME

Listening as Lord Shiva imparted the secrets of Kaula Gnanam to Devi Parvathi, he was so deeply immersed that he became the very embodiment of the evolutionary wisdom he perceived.

Macchamuni, known in the North as Matsyendranath, was a Siddha who embodied the full span of life's evolutionary memory. Born a fish, the earliest form of life, he transformed into a human, the final form in the evolutionary chain. This divine transformation makes him a living vessel of evolutionary wisdom, carried as pure perception.

He went on to found the Kaula tradition of Tantra, exploring the subtle science of *chakras*, *linga*, and yogic alchemy. Associated with Pisces, the sign of perception, he is regarded as "*Kalapurusha*", the embodiment of time.

In his own works, Macchamuni refers to Nandhi and Bogar as his Gurus, while certain texts of Agathiyar mention that he received lessons from Kagabusundar Siddhar. He also alludes to being contemporary to Patanjali Siddhar and Sri Vyaghrapathar.

His legacy endures as one of the Navanath Siddhas and as the guru of Siddha Gorakkar. After attaining spiritual salvation, Machamuni is said to have given away all his wealth to the needy before taking Samadhi at Thiruparankundram.

Macchamuni's presence offers a path to transcend time-bound suffering through perception and inner transformation.



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