

# **Zone 6 Pilgrimage 2025 Q&A:**

## **Travel, accommodation and daily routine during the pilgrimage.**

### **Before leaving home**

#### **How will I get to India?**

Devotees are responsible for making their own travel arrangements including booking their flights.

#### **How do I get a visa to travel to India?**

Please ensure that passports are up to date and are valid for 6 months after travel.

You can get an E-visa to travel to India. Please visit the Indian government website at

<https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>

The cost is approximately \$25 to \$30 for a 30-day Visa – directly through the Government portal and not through an Agent.

#### **What vaccinations do I need to travel to India?**

Please check with your doctor for details of the vaccinations needed. The vaccination courses or boosters usually advised are Diphtheria; Hepatitis A; Tetanus; Typhoid.

#### **What else do I need to think about or do before I travel?**

Make sure you have travel insurance. It is best to arrange this as soon as you have booked your flights in case of any unforeseen circumstances but definitely before you travel.

Please ensure you are fit to travel. If you have any health issues you would like to consult someone on before you travel, we can arrange for you to speak to one of the doctors that will be part of the pilgrimage group on a confidential basis.

Please make sure that if needed you contact the airline in advance and request a Vegetarian Meal for the flight (note that “Hindu” meal is not vegetarian) and special services (wheelchair).

### **Travel to Puttaparthi and Accommodation**

#### **What is the nearest airport to the Ashram in Puttaparthi to which I should book my flights?**

The closest airport is Bengaluru (BLR – airport code)

#### **Once I arrive at Bengaluru airport how will I travel to the Ashram in Puttaparthi?**

Taxi details can be provided to devotees to arrange their travel from Airport to Prashanthi

### **Who and how will arrangement for accommodation in the Ashram be made?**

The planning committee will ask you to provide information about your arrival and departure from the ashram and your preferences around who you would like to share accommodation with and any specific requirements.

Using this information the planning committee will allocate room or rooms to you and those you are travelling with. Where requested will can try and group people from the same area together – for example so that they are on the same floor of one of the blocks. A google form requesting this information will be sent to all devotees in late April / early May.

### **How will I get into the Ashram and where will I stay?**

You should be able to enter the Ashram in your taxi unless you are arriving outside normal house (10pm to 5am). Please try and avoid this happening – if you do arrive outside normal hours you may need to book a hotel room or wait in your taxi until the Ashram opens. If this is the case, please contact the planning committee.

### **Once I arrive at the Ashram what do I need to do to gain access to the accommodation that has been arranged?**

All Devotees will need to register on arrival at the accommodation office and pay for their room. Room allocation in the Ashram will be done either by the accommodation office or our UK Admin team. This will only be confirmed when we arrive in India, but we will try and make sure volunteers are available to support those arriving with this process. We hope to have a pilgrimage “office” in our accommodation block where help and guidance will be available.

Tariff for rooms with 3 beds (per day):

- Rs. 1000 Recently Renovated North Block Rooms without A.C Facility
- Rs. 1300 Recently Renovated North Block Rooms with A.C Facility

To support the registration process for each traveller please bring:

Passport valid through travel dates and Visa

2 Passport size pictures (for accommodation office)

Photocopies of above documentation in case originals lost during travel.

### **What sort of a room will be allocated to me?**

Where devotees are travelling on their own, we will be asking them to share a room with another devotee. The maximum number of people per room is likely to be around three or four (flexibility around children). Further details on accommodation arrangements will be made available in a couple of months once final numbers attending are known.

### **We cannot guarantee an Air-Conditioned room however all rooms have a fan.**

All devotees coming on the pilgrimage are encouraged to stay together. Usually, we are given one or more of the North Blocks for the whole group.

Devotees are **required to stay with the group inside the Ashram** during the pilgrimage.

# During the Pilgrimage

## **What if I need help when I am there?**

There will be an office on the ground floor of one of the accommodation blocks which will function as our Admin office. This will be staffed by volunteers apart from during Darshan times. You can go to the office to seek help and support when required.

## **What is the dress code while in the Ashram?**

All to wear a Zonal group scarf which we provide, more details in a couple of months.

White and white for bal vikas children (churidhar with shawl for girls, shirt and trousers or kurta for boys)

White and white for men (no shorts)

Coloured sari for women. There will be group saris for all women to wear – this is at a cost of £60 for 7 saris for all women that are part of the group.

## **Do women have to wear a sari?**

Yes, it is important that as a group we wear the same as each other. If any devotees need help with wearing a sari, we can make arrangements for help to be provided. Further communications regarding sarees will follow in the next few days – please look out for the email.

Further information about things like daily timings in Prasanthi, ashram etiquette, banking etc are available on our website.

## **What will I do on a day-to-day basis during the Pilgrimage?**

Each morning the group will go together for Darshan, where there will be Vedam and bhajans. The time that the group will need to line up will be confirmed when we are there but is likely to be around 7:15am.

Again, each afternoon the group will go together for Darshan. The time that the group will need to line up will be confirmed when we are there.

In addition, those taking part in offerings will have practices and for others there will be talks and local trips planned.

## **Where will I eat and what sort of food is available?**

We encourage devotees to stay and eat inside the Ashram. There are three different canteens serving South Indian food, North Indian food and Western food.

If anyone has any Food allergies / dietary requirement they will need to check at the canteen to make sure that their requirements can be met.

## **Where I can I find out more information about facilities in the Ashram etc?**

Further information about things like daily timings in Prasanthi, ashram etiquette, banking etc are available on our website: <https://srisathyasai.org.uk/uk-european-centenary-pilgrimage-2025/prasanthi-nilayam-information/>

## **Annex A: Miscellaneous questions**

### **Do I need to bring my own padlock to lock the room?**

Ideally **yes**. The accommodation office provides a padlock for each room which must be returned when you leave but the padlock has one key. It is advisable to bring your own padlock with keys to share with room mates or a padlock with the number combination.

### **Should I bring my own Bedding?**

The rooms are furnished with the beds and mattresses and most have a sheet over the mattress, but it is advisable to bring sheets to cover the mattresses and sheets to sleep under.

### **How do I get drinking water?**

There are many locations in the Ashram where water bottles can be filled free of charge. Water bottles can also be purchased in the kiosks around the ashram. Large 25 litre water containers can also be purchased and will be delivered to your rooms. To find out how to do this, please contact our Zone 6 office in room N1.

### **How do I purchase an Indian phone SIM?**

There are shops outside the Ashram where Indian SIM cards can be purchased. If you would like details, please contact one of the planning team after arrival, as they can direct you.

### **When is the Zone 6 office staffed?**

The Zone 6 office will be in room N1 of whichever North block we are allocated. It will be staffed outside Darshan times but please be aware that the volunteers are also devotees who need time to do their sadhana and there will be times when the office is closed. You can contact any of the planning team or team leads with queries.

### **Is there a packing list as I have not travelled to Parthi before?**

Yes, there will be a packing list published on our website shortly.

### **What can I take to the Sai Kulwant Hall for Darshan?**

You can take a mat / cushion to sit on and a small vedam book if needed. Nothing else is allowed into the hall.