

ARATTUPUZHA *Pooram*

2018 March 23 - March 30





Pooram Schedule

Pooram celebration commences formally with Kodiyettam (flag hoisting). It concludes with the grand Arattu (ritual bathe) on the morning after the main Pooram. A summary schedule is as given below



Day	Event	Venue
23-Mar-18	Kodiyettam	Arattupuzha Temple
25-Mar-18	Thiruvathira Vilakku	Arattupuzha Temple
25-Mar-18	Thaikkattusseri Pooram	Thaikkattusseri Temple
25-Mar-18	Narukulangara Ezhunnallippu	Narukulangara Temple
26-Mar-18	Peruvanam Pooram	Peruvanam Mahadeva Temple
27-Mar-18	Pidikkapparambu Elephant Rave	Pidikkapparambu Temple
27-Mar-18	Tharakkal Pooram	Arattupuzha
29-Mar-18	Pisharikkal Ezhunnallippu	Pisharikkal Temple
29-Mar-18	Thottippal Pooram	Thottippal Temple
29-Mar-18	Arattupuzha Pooram	Arattupuzha
30-Mar-18	Koottiyehunnallipu and Arattu	Arattupuzha
30-Mar-18	Upachaaram	Arattupuzha





History of Pooram

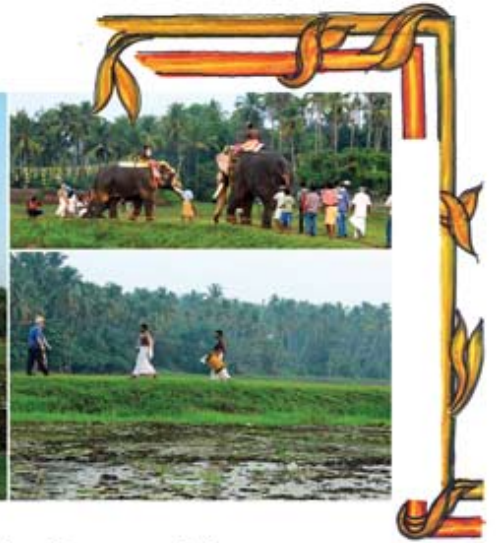
The beautiful and serene village of Arattupuzha in the suburbs of Thrissur city in central Kerala is more or less defined by its annual temple festival, the Pooram. The Pooram in Arattupuzha is considered to be one of the ancient temple festivals in the world, dating back to more than 1400 years.

The Pooram is the central and defining event of a much larger festival that spans twenty four temples in and around the erstwhile Peruvanam Gramam. An Utsavam (temple festival) spanning twenty eight days used to be held in Peruvanam temple involving 108 temples that were in the ambit of the Peruvanam Sanketham.

This festival (Utsavam) got severely affected with the changing times. Some of the temples broke away from the original festival and started their own editions. Thrissur Pooram and Kuttanellur Pooram, famous and popular festivals today in their own right, are two examples. As the ecosystem that supported the temples and their festivals in Kerala slowly crumbled, the festival faced an existential threat. A few enterprising souls then

managed to rally the temples and villagers to revive and reconstitute the festival. Arattupuzha now became the ocal point of the festival, and the Pooram here followed by Arattu became its central events.





Kodiyettam

Kodiyettam (hoisting the flag) marks the beginning of the festival. On this day the whole village assembles in front of the temple. An areca palm is prepared as the flag mast. One among the Uralans (traditional owners of the temple) would sit atop an elephant and perform a ritual tilling of the field where the festival would take place. The flag mast is then hoisted and the festival flag raised indicating the formal commencement of the Pooram.

Thiruvathira Vilakku (Purappadu)

Purappadu (lit. embarking) is the ceremony when the Lord sets off from the temple as part of the Pooram celebration. For Shasthavu, the presiding deity of Arattupuzha, this happens on the day of Thiruvathira. At 2.00 am, the idol is brought out of the sanctum sanctorum accompanied by Paani, a special percussion reserved for extremely important religious occasions. The idol is then attached to the Kolam and mounted on an elephant. Shasthavu accompanied by five elephants then proceeds for the Vilakku. A scintillating





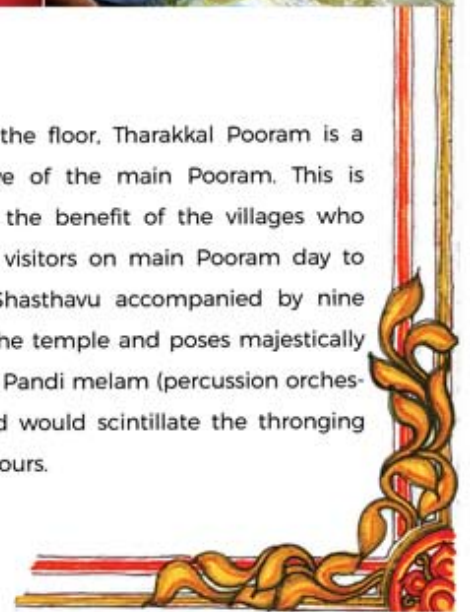
melam (percussion orchestra) accompanies the procession that lasts till dawn.

Peruvanam Pooram

Three days before the main Pooram, Shasthavu proceeds to Peruvanam for the majestic Peruvanam Pooram. Arattupuzha aShasthavu has a major role here. The Lord reaches here around 6.00 pm and after entering the Peruvanam temple through the Southern Gate, the Lord exits the temple through its Eastern gate. There facing east and accompanied by seven elephants, the grand procession accompanied by a scintillating Pandi Melam commences.

Tharakkal Pooram

Literally, the Pooram on the floor, Tharakkal Pooram is a grand festival on the eve of the main Pooram. This is celebrated ostensibly for the benefit of the villages who would be too busy with visitors on main Pooram day to partake in the festival. Shasthavu accompanied by nine elephants comes out of the temple and poses majestically facing the South. A grand Pandi melam (percussion orchestra) now commences and would scintillate the thronging crowd for the next three hours.





Arattupuzha Pooram

The village throbs with anticipation on the day of the festival. The excitement in the air is palpable. It is also a time of reunions as most of the diaspora returns to the village for the grand occasion. The bright summer sun, sultry winds, thronging crowds and merchants, lazing elephants, the meandering river and the verdant landscape - all seem bound by an invisible thread. The festivities are set to begin!

Main Pooram

As the sun is setting at the western end of the green paddy fields, the Lord comes out of the temple. There are different flavors of percussion orchestras (melams) though the most common are Panchari and Pandi. Of these the former is considered more classical. Across Kerala, Arattupuzha Panchari holds a special place in the heart of all art lovers. It is seldom matched for its

scale, stature of artistes and technical perfection. The melam now unfolds in front of Shasthavu progressing elegantly accompanied by fifteen elephants. Thousands from all over India and abroad visits the small village to witness the event. The procession lasts for about four hours and concludes with a brilliant firework.

Other Poorams

Arattupuzha Pooram is famous as Devamela (congregation of Gods) among all temple festivals. Deities from twenty three temples from far and near come to the village in grand processions to participate in the fair. The guest of honor is Lord Sri Rama from Thriprayar temple. He arrives in the village around 2.00 am welcomed and leads proceedings thence.

Koottiyehunnalippu

Once Thriprayar Thevar (as the Lord Sri Rama is called) takes position in the Western end of the paddy field, he is joined by the



Goddesses of Urakam and Cherpu as well as Chathakkudam Shasthavu. A grand procession of seventy or more elephants spanning the entire paddy field then commences. To many, this is the most important and auspicious event of all festivals in Kerala and thousands flock to witness this event irrespective of their age, health and other constraints. As the sun rises in the East, the grand procession progresses towards the Sun in a mesmerizing spectacle.

Arattu

Arattu (ritual bath) is the ceremony from which the village derives its name. All the Goddesses that come to the festival proceeds to the river for their ceremonial dip. The ceremony starts with Pisharikkal Bhagavathy at 2.00 am and concludes with Thriprayar Thevar. It is considered very auspicious to dip in the river with the Goddesses and Thevar and hundreds perform this ritual with devotion every year.

Upacharam

After Arattu comes the poignant concluding ceremony of the Pooram festivities. Shasthavu, the host awaits each of his guests as they come to pay respect after their dip in the river. The greeting between the Gods is an enchanting spectacle as the elephants bearing the idol engage in elaborate protocols. The last to pay homage is Thriprayar Thevar and the greeting holds special significance as the Arattupuzha Shasthavu is considered to be the wise sage Vasishtha and Lord Sree Rama is his most illustrious disciple. Teacher and student engage in a well established protocol of rituals culminating with the teacher accompanying his student for a distance and bids his final farewell. The date for the next years Pooram is announced at this juncture and the majestic student assures his teacher that he shall duly attend and oversee the proceedings. The Pooram ceremony comes to an end! Villages start their anxious wait for the next edition.





Nestled on the banks of Karuvannur Puzha (river) Neelambari offers one of the best holiday experiences in Kerala. The beautiful river, bountiful nature and its setting in the cultural capital of Kerala all come together to make your stay at Neelambari unforgettable. Neelambari also offers the best vantage point to take part in some of the most prestigious festivals in central Kerala, like Peuvanam - Arattupuzha Pooram, Thrissur Pooram, Koodalmanikyam Utsavam, Triprayar Ekadashi. In addition to the convenience of proximity, our tailored festival packages ensure that visitors to the region have complete logistic and information support to make the most of their visit during the festival time.



Neelambari
Nurturing Nature

Neelambari Ecotourism

Arattupuzha, Thrissur, Kerala. 680562

Ph: 91 9400 525150, 91 790 765 4906

Email: sreeni@neelambari.co.in

Website: www.neelambari.co.in

