

Purtassi Pilgrimage Guidelines

Regarding the Bus

1. The bus fees does not include accommodation and meals.
2. In line with immigration conditions, you are going to a foreign country, so you should be carrying sufficient money for your meals and accommodation.
3. Bus Fees are non-refundable.

Regarding the Hotels

Before booking a hotel, please take note of the following:

1. You have to book and pay for your rooms directly with the hotels.
2. The average price of a two sleeper hotel room is P705. That's approx. R920.
3. The currency in Botswana is Pula's. So please calculate the exchange rate yourself. It should be approximately 1.3 Rand's to the Pula.
4. Botswana Hotels that accept cash in Rand's at the counter, but will charge you additional service fees. It's better to pay by Credit Cards than Cash.
5. Hotels in Botswana will charge a P10 per person per night tourism levy.
6. You must have proof of accommodation before we allow you to pay for your bus seats.
7. Hotels have different refund policies. Please familiarise yourselves accordingly.

Regarding Meals

Our organisation does not provide any meals. We can only arrange for meals which you can either buy or donate towards.

The Botswana Temples have already mentioned that they do not have the resources to provide complementary meals.

Friday Meals

All meals for Friday are on bring and share. Please pack sufficient meals and dry snacks.

For those staying overnight at Pretoria Hotels, an arrangement will be made with a local temple or restaurant for veg dinner. You will either have to pay the restaurant or donate towards the respective temple.

Saturday Meals

All meals for Saturday are on bring and share. Please pack sufficient meals and dry snacks. You will really need it. The border can take very long.

The Balaji Temple does not have catering facilities, but will arrange catering for evening dinner at R100 per person. Please pay them at the temple in exact cash.

There's also an Optional Veg Dinner Buffet at Travel Lodge Restaurant at P125 per person.

Sunday Meals

All the Hotels exclude breakfast. You will need to checkout and board the buses by 7am to the Hare Krishna Temple.

Normally pure veg breakfast and lunch is served at one of the temples at a reasonable cost in rand's. We trying for the same again. This should be published by the 30 August on our website.

Regarding the Thirupathi Balaji Temple

1. Do not expect the same procedures as South African temples. I have no influence over any of the temples and we do not tell temples what to do. We follow their instructions.
2. Please respect and follow the rules and procedures of each temple.
3. At the Thirupathi Temple they will conduct a special Archanai. Please go to the Archanai Counter and book and pay R25 per person (exact money) for an Archanai ticket. You will be required to fill in your full names and Nakshaktram (birth star) if you know it.
4. You may bring Prashadam. They will advise you where to place it.
5. If you wish to sing a bhajan or play an instrument, please Whatsapp me the name of your song and I will communicate it to the officials.

Regarding Senior Citizens

Irrespective how fit senior citizens believe they are:

1. All over 70 seniors must be accompanied by a friend or family.
2. All over 80 seniors must be accompanied by immediate family and must bring a wheel chair. They don't have to use the wheel chair, but they must bring it.

Regarding Children under 18 years:

1. All children must have an unabridged birth certificate.
2. All children must be accompanied by both parents, and have a consent affidavit from each of the parents not accompanying the minor.

Regarding Conduct of Pilgrims

1. Irrespective of challenges you may experience along the route, at borders, hotels, buses etc., there should be no condemning or criticising during pilgrimage. This should be a bhakthi-ful (a spiritual) experience.
2. As pilgrims on a devotional journey to visit the abode of Lord Venketeshwara (Lord Balaji , Lord Perumal Swami) during this auspicious period of Purnassami , we expect all pilgrims to observe fast, refrain from alcohol, refrain smoking or at least refrain from smoking on the bus or in the temple premises.
3. Dress for Temple.