CHAPTER 4
PROFILE OF TOURISM IN COURTALLAM

4.1 INTRODUCTION:

Anything that has the power to draw visitors to it can be considered an attraction. Attractions provide the single most important reason for leisure tourism to a destination. Attractions are the original grain of sand around which the destination pearl grows. Even though most attractions are site specific, many are not readily identifiable places or features, but are an overall perception of a destination as an attractive place to visit, distilled from a variety of sources and images. The image of a tourist place is the sum of the beliefs, ideas and impressions that people have of the place.

It is important to understand that a tourist attraction can only be defined in relation to the perceptions of someone who considers it an attraction. The determinate of an attraction are therefore related to needs and wants; and tourist perceptions and experiences are the root of its attractiveness. A tourist attraction is a systematic arrangement of three elements: a person with touristic needs, a nucleus (any feature or characteristic of a place that might be visited) and at least one marker (information about the nucleus).

4.2 TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN COURTALLAM:

Courtallam the 'Spa of the south', is a panchayat town situated at a mean elevation of about 167 metres on the Western Ghats in Tirunelveli District of Tamil
Nadu, India. Many seasonal and a few perennial rivers such as the Chittar River, the Manimuthar River, the Pachaiyar River and the Tambaraparani River originate in this region. It is famous for its waterfalls and has a number of health resorts. Its waterfalls are known for their curative and recuperative properties. It contains lot of herbs which are good for the health. The water has medicinal properties since the water runs through forests of herbs and the water has therapeutic qualities to cure physical ailments. During the commencement of southwest monsoon in Kerala terrain, the first showers will be in and around Courtallam, within a radius of three to four kilometres approximately. It continues shower during the season which is from June to September every year. The Town is noted for its salubrious climate and natural scenery, and is often referred to as “Poorman’s Ooty”.

The Town is also referred to as Mukthiveli, Nannagram, Pithurkanda, Theerthapuram, Thirunagaram and Vasanthaperur. Like many other Indian Towns and Cities, Courtallam is also linked with mythological stories. According to Legend, Lord Shiva commissioned saint Agastya to avoid imbalance due to the growing huddle in the Great Kailash on his celestial wedding. When all the gods and goddesses converged at Mount Kailash to witness the celestial wedding of Lord Shiva and Parvathi, their combined weight was so heavy that the northern plate tilted. Lord Shiva summoned Maharishi Agasthya and asked him to proceed south of the Vindhya to balance the weight. So immense was the Maharishi’s yogic powers that the north-south balance was quickly restored.

With his divine vision, Agastya witnessed the wedding right from Courtallam. There are many who still believe that he still lives in the jungles. The five
dance halls of Shiva are Chidambaram, Madurai, Tiruvalankadu, Tirunelveli and Courtallam. Courtallam is also known as Trikootachalam. There are some famous books such as ‘Courtalla Kuravanchi’ written about Courtallam in ancient times.

During season time, thousands of tourists from far and near places visit Courtallam. A shower in the cascading waters is a great experience. The picturesque surroundings with the backdrops of cloud-capped spurs of the Western Ghats lend an unusual charm to the falls. The cool breeze that wafts during seasonal months along with intermittent drizzle and sunlight heightens the rapturous scene of the falls. The mountain abounds with forests of precious trees like teak and exotic fruit plants like Mangustan which are not only sweet but also of great medicinal value. Wild beasts like Sambhar, Elephants and Boars roam in the mountain area. Courtallam is famous for its season, which lasts from June to September, the hottest period of the plains. Due to its number of beautiful waterfalls, Courtallam remains as one of the most sought-after tourist spot of Tamilnadu for the past hundreds of years.

**Europeans and Courtallam:**

The Europeans were the first to call Courtallam the ‘Spa of the South’. In memory of Lord Casa Major, a neighbouring village was named Kasimejapuram. Many magnificent bungalows were built by the English officers of the East India Company and the subsequent rulers. The British were also the ones who had constructed the arch through which water flows to the main falls.

In 1811 A.D, the East India Company deputed a special medical team to study the significance of Courtallam and the medicinal properties of the water. The committee found that the water possessed rare rejuvenating and reinvigorating
qualities. In 1835 A.D, Dr. White did extensive research in the Courtallam hills. According to him there were 2,000 varieties of flowering plants and herbal plants.

**Epigraphy and Courtallam:**

Vattezhuthu and Vattam were the scripts found in the epigraphs of thirteenth century at Courtallam. These scripts were written with more cursive lines and were known as Tekkan Malayalam and Nanamona. Earlier inscriptions in this script were mostly noticed in southern districts, and occasionally in other areas. These new discoveries now help palaeographists to form a complete picture of this scripts’ evolution.
Location:

Courtallam is situated in the Western Ghats lying in the northern half of Tirunelveli District, Tamilnadu between 8° 50´ and 9° 0´ northern latitudes and 77° 10´ and 77° 20´ eastern longitudes.

Physiography:

Courtallam is a hilly region whose height varies from 150 metres to 1500 metres with narrow valleys endowed with steep slopes.

Climate:

The climatic conditions in Courtallam are hot and dry during the summer season. During this time the waterfalls are dry and there is very little rainfall in the area. However during the monsoon season many cascading waterfalls can be seen. The peak season is during the monsoon months and the climate is pleasant during this time. Winter season is a good time to visit the place and the climatic conditions are mild and pleasant. Summer season is from early March to late May. During this time temperatures are high. It is advisable to avoid visiting Courtallam during the summer season.

Temperatures range from a minimum of 32°C and can rise up to a maximum of 38°C. Humidity is low during the summer months. May is usually the hottest part of the year. Monsoon season is from June to September. During this time temperatures are cooler and a pleasant breeze can be experienced in the town. There might be a constant drizzle during the monsoon season. Temperatures are in the mid twenties during this time. Winter months are a good time to visit the place. Temperatures range from a
minimum of 24°C and can rise up to a maximum of 32°C. The lowest temperature is felt during December.

**Rainfall:**

During the monsoon the rains may at times be torrential, at times gentle and it may last for several days. The general rainfall of Courtallam ranges from 175 to 210 centimetres per year. The rainfall is not evenly distributed throughout the year. During June to September and October to December, the hill gets the maximum rainfall from the Southwest monsoon and North east monsoon respectively.

**Demography:**

As of 2001 census, Courtallam had a population and females 59 percent. Courtallam has an average literacy rate of 75 percent higher than the national average of 59.5 percent. Male literacy is 78 percent and female literacy is 74 percent. Seven percent of the population is under six years of age. Although very close to the Kerala border the entire population of Courtallam is homogeneously Tamil.

**Economy**

People in Courtallam mostly depend upon the tourists. All their business are related to the tourist like hotels, toys, massage, etc., The waterfalls, which are the main lifeblood of the local economy, are from completely seasonal streams. The tourism which is linked with the waterfalls, is turned on or off by the flow of the water in the Falls. The local community tries its best to capitalize from this seasonal tourism by opening up other small attractions during the peak season. The streets heading from the temple to the waterfalls are packed with tiny shops selling medicinal herbs, unusual curative concoctions and cheap toys.
Natural Landscapes:

As this town roosts on Western Ghats, it is abundant in natural beauty presented by the Ghats. Its undulations, groves, mountains, and fields seem alluring to the eyes. The height of these ghats varies from place to place. At some places, the mountain peaks are low while at other, like that near Five Falls, is as high as 5000 feet. Panchanthangi is the tallest peak present here.

4.2.1 WATERFALLS IN COURTALLAM:

There are nine waterfalls in Courtallam viz., Main falls, Chitraruvi, Shenbagadevi falls, Honey Falls, Five Falls, Tiger Falls, Old Falls, Orchard Falls and the New Falls. Its bracing season extends particularly from June to September. It has an interesting legend.4

Main Falls (Peraruvi):

Main falls is one of the natural and spectacular waterfalls in the world. It is well known for so many health reasons. As its name suggests, the Main Falls or Peraruvi is the biggest and most frequently visited Waterfalls in Courtallam. It actually originates from Palaruvi and then crosses through Thenaruvi and Shenbagadevi Aruvi and finally reaches it’s main destination which is The Main Falls. When water cascades down at its full strength, the stretch equals the width of fifteen persons standing next to each other. The water first falls into the deep trough, known as the Pongumam Kadal, the place where the visitors can take bathe. As a precautionary measure, Iron bars have been rendered for the bathers. The Main Falls is floodlit for bathing at night and is a great delight to watch the Falls during nights.
Falling from a height of sixty metres, it is located right inside Courtallam Town. Its sheer rock face is carved with old Hindu insignia that is visible only during the dry months of January and February. Therefore it is said that the water that flows has certain kind of sacred sanctity and therefore littering is completely prohibited over here. Not only during the season but also in off season (November to January), the crest receives the Northeastern monsoon emptying itself on the slopes to swell the falls and the Chittar River. During the peak season, this area becomes too crowded and one might have to queue up for a bath. This Falls is surrounded with lush green trees and is located near the Thirukuttralanathar Temple, dedicated to Sri Thirukuttralanathar (Shiva) or Thirukootachalapathi and Kuzhalvaimozhi Amman (Goddess).

**Small Falls (Chitraruvi)**

The Small Falls in Courtallam is just above the Main Falls. There are steps which provides easy access to this Falls. Here men and women have a separate covered area for taking bath in the falls. A ticket is required to enter the area.
Shenbaga Falls (Chembakadevi Falls)

About two kilometers up the Chittar River is the Shenbagadevi Falls, where a small temple and a cave dedicated to the sage Agasthya draws numerous pilgrims on full-moon days. There is a temple in front of the falls called Shenbagadevi Temple with Shenbagadevi as the deity. The deity is situated in a cool and beautiful environment. Any festival done in Thirukkutralanadhar Temple starts from this Shenbagadevi temple. If the tourists trek uphill to Shenbagadevi, they could have a spectacular view of the point where the Chittar River drops to the plains. Shenbaga Falls is situated in a natural environment on the way to Honey Falls about an hour trek (three kilometres) from the Main Falls. The water falls from a height of around 40 feet.
There is a big pool in front of the falls making it a good place to swim around. Dangerous rocks line in the floor of the pool. It is risky to take bath here when the flow of water is high as there is every chance of getting washed away down the hills. There have been several instances of deaths due to careless plunges. Unlike Main Falls only around ten people can take bath here. On full moon days numerous pilgrims visit the Shenbagadevi Temple. During the Tamil month of Chithirai, a ten days festival is arranged which ends in a special prayer. Several flower vendors sell the fragrant Shenbaga flowers on the way to the Temple, which is an offering here.

**Honey Falls (Thenaruvi)**

Honey Falls is situated four kilometres away from the Main Falls and is a Horseshoe shaped waterfalls, which falls vertically from three sides to join into a small Lake. The water stream is named after picturesque beehives that are formed on the face of the rock during dry season. Even though the place is gifted with panoramic views of rainforests and huge rock formation, the waterfall is not accessible and is a risky trek. The trek takes about two hours and people are not allowed to take bath in the falls as
there will be under water currents due to the flow of huge volume of water. This place is a romantic hangout and a complete secluded area where the tourists can spend some quality time with their friends and family. The Falls act just the opposite of the surroundings with roaring sound effects and dashing of swirling water.

Five Falls (Aintharuvi)

Five Falls is the most beautiful waterfall is Courtallam. It is situated at a distance of one kilometre from Courtallam. As the name suggests, these falls separate into five sections before cascading down close to the Aravankadu Pass. Generally, people compare the cascade in five sections with that of the five heads of a hooded cobra. The hiech is that the place echoes with loud speakers blasting songs and advertisements continuously. There is a Swamy Ayyappa Temple and Vinayaga Temple near these waterfalls. There are also fruit stalls near the waterfalls selling fruits like eggfruit, lichees and mangustan.
Orchard Falls (Pazhathotta Aruvi)

The Orchard Falls is situated inside Government Orchard. The Fruit Garden falls is the pampered kid of Courtallam. Seeds and cuttings of different plants and trees that give exotic varieties of fruits can be got from here. Some of the fruits that grow here are ramdan, mangoosten, eggfruit and dorian. The main produce is clove, cardamom, jackfruit and mangoosten. These are exported not only to other parts of our country, but also to foreign countries. Special permission has to be obtained before visiting these waterfalls.
Tiger Falls (Puli Aruvi)

Tiger Falls is called by that name as it was known to have been frequented by tigers looking for water. This falls is situated two kilometres away from Courtallam bus stand. It is a small waterfall with a Sastha Temple and a bathing ghat for pilgrims. This waterfall is a perfect place for children to enjoy.

Until 1950, water was flowing in this Falls without restrictions. But thanks to the efforts of Sri.Karimuthu Thyagaraja Chettiar, the Falls was made suitable for public bathing. He was the one who constructed the Tiger caves in Courtallam. It is believed that the tigers use to visit the caves at night.
Old Falls (Pazhaya Courtallam)

The Old Falls (200 feet) at Courtallam was inaugurated by Shri K. Kamaraj in 1960 when he was the chief minister of Tamil Nadu. It is situated at a distance of ten kilometres from the centre of the town, along the road to Tenkasi. This falls consist of a somewhat stair-stepping upper tier before continuing on in a lower man-modified tier. The man-modified property appears to be brought about because they artificially dammed the plunge pool between the upper and lower falls. So there are shallow pools that are more like swimming or bathing pools. These pools are lined with concrete along with stairs and railings in much the same way that we associated with public swimming pools. There are also options for walking past the pools and getting directly underneath the waterfall itself for a drenching.

Old Courtallam offers a much quieter experience compared to the other waterfalls in Courtallam. The feeding streams of this waterfall are said to pass through groves of naturally growing herbs with medicinal qualities. There are facilities for oil massages and
men and women have separate areas for bathing. The Old Courtallam Falls has its own set of loyal fans. It is comparatively less crowded especially late at night.

New Falls (Puthu Aruvi)

New Falls look like white milk. It is one of highlighting tourist spots of the region, featuring a water stream of a 300 ft fall. The stream means stream of milk in regional dialect that meanders through lush green grooves. Associated with religious belief, the water stream is revered by the natives. For sheltered overlook, tourists can head towards walking path a set of stairs leading up. From this vantage point, travellers can witness a beautiful view of the falls with cascades and rapids. The stream is a part of a cluster Courtallam falls, falling in the Kerala. This falls is amidst sylvan landscape of wild forest. The waters of this Falls apparently have ayurvedic healing properties as the stream flows through some natural herbal groves further upstream. The panoramic view from this ledge is beautiful affording a sight of the entire town below.
4.2.2 THIRUKUTTRALANATHA SWAMY TEMPLE:

Thirukuttralanatha Swamy Temple, dedicated to Lord Thirukuttralanathar (Shiva), is one of the oldest temples of South India. This temple contains many inscriptions about Chola and Pandya Kings. The temple is built in conch shaped style (Prakaram) and is referred to as Sangakkovil. It is one of the 275 Paadal Petra Sthalam temples-one of the 275 most sacred temples dedicated to Lord Shiva. Not only that, this temple is also one of the Shankthi Peet temples-one of the most important temples of Mother Goddess.

This pilgrimage centre got its name since the famous poet "Agathiyar" worshipped here. It is believed that Sage Agastyar got the vision to see the wedding of Lord Siva at Mount Himalaya. Many people get married here honouring the occasion. Lot of small Sannidhi's are present inside the temple which includes Lord Vishnu, Kasi Viswanathar Kasi Visalakshi, Tenkasi ViswanatharSwamy and Ulagammai Ambikai, Madurai Meenakshi and SundareshwararSwamy, Nellaiyappar Gandhimathi Ambal and
Navagrasas. The temple was adorned with hymns of Saiva Saint Thirugnanasambandar. The Sthala Vriksham is Kurum Palaa and the Theertham is Chitrnadhi. This temple has famous waterfalls in it known as Shivamathungai.

Another narrative hat it hat the deity at Courtallanather Temple was initially that of Lord Brahma. It was later transformed into the deity of Lord Vishnu. In its current form, it is the deity of Lord Shiva. The Lord Shiva is called here as "Thirukuttralanathar "and the Amman as "Kuzhalal Vaimozhi ". Many miracles are attributed to the place. In the year 1949, a twelve year old speech-impaired girl named Meenakshi suddenly found herself cured of the disability. Devotees believe that Mother Parvathy had cured the little girl.

Lord Thirukuttralanathar temple is surrounded by mountains and rivers which has placed its name in the famous Thevaram. Also it was well sung by poets belonging to different communities. Kurumpalaveesar, sung in Thevaram is associated with the Sthala Vruksham ‘Kurumpalaa’. Tirikootaraasappakavirayar's well known work ‘Kutrala Kuravanji’ glorifies this shrine. The Tirikootamandapam in the temple is the site of
festivities here. Parvathi's shrine is also of significance here and is regarded as one of the 64 Shakti Peethams. There are many sub-temples in Courtallam and they were maintained by the temple Devasthanam.

4.2.3 Chitra Sabha:

There are five adobes of Lord Nataraj (Shiva in the dancing posture is called as Nataraj), where he did his cosmic dance. The five dance halls of Shiva are Chidambaram, Madurai, Tiruvalankadu, Tirunelveli and Kutralam. One of those five adobes is Chitra Sabha in Courtallam. In Chitra Sabha temple, the main deity Lord Nataraj is in the form of painting. In addition to this painting, one can find a lot of paintings of various Hindu Gods and Goddesses across the entire temple. It is also decorated with a number of mural paintings of devotees, scenes from mythological stories and religious events. The beautiful paintings at Chitrasabha are archaeologically important.  

The wooden carved planks serve as doors. The roof has been decked with copper plates. The highlight of the Temple is that there are no idols in the Temple. Chitra Sabha is made out of medicinal herbs. The paintings are being worshiped in this Temple. Natarajar is brought here during festivals from the Kurumpalaveesar temple. The waterfalls are viewable from the temple. Nine worship services are offered in this temple everyday. Chitra Sabha temple of Lord Nataraj is definitely a rare temple, which one should not miss to visit.
The other Temples in Courtallam are as follows:

- ShenbagaDevi Amman Temple
- Koothar Koil
- Thirugnana sambandar Koil (Pillaiyar koil)
- Courtalla NangaiKoil
- Adiyaetum Paraipanri Madaswamy Koil
- Aavaranap Pillaiyar Koil
- Nannagaram Pillaiyar Koil
- Thittai Pillaiyar Koil
- Pasupatha Sastha Koil
- Sundaramoorthi Koil

4.2.4 Sri Siddheswari Peetham:

Sri Courtallam Sankaracharya Paramahamsa Parivrajakacharya, Jagadguri Siddheswarananda Bharati Maha Swami Vaary is the present peethadhipathi of Sri Siddheswari Peetham in Courtallam, Tamilnadu. He is a renowned poet and scholar,
Great spiritual Leader, Maha Yogi, Manthra Siddha, Kali Prasanna and an author of numerous spiritual books.

Sri Swamiji, formerly known as Dr. Prasadaraya Kulapati Guru, was born on January 23, 1937 at Elchur, Andhra Pradesh. Swamiji’s ancestors were great scholars and poets. Swamiji learned Sanskrit and Telugu traditionally and at a very young age had already gained wide fame for his asu-kavitvam (spontaneous poetry) and avadhanam skills. Swamiji obtained BA from Guntur Hindu College, M.A and Ph.D from Venkateswara University. He worked over forty years as a Lecturer, Professor and Head of the Department and retired as a Principal of Hindu College, Guntur in 1998.

Swamiji was famous for conducting Literary Sabhas such as “Indra Sabha,” “Vaikuntha Sahiti Sabha,” and “Srinatha Vijaya Sabha”. He has travelled with many poets all over India and in several American cities and awed audiences with his scholarship and spontaneous poetry recitals.

From a very young age Swamiji was a great Upasaka and Mantra Sadhaka. He was an Upasaka of Lord Hanuman and recited the Hanuman Mantra a few million times. Over time he was drawn into more spiritual matters. He applied himself to the practice of Dhyana, Mantra Sadhana in the path of Raja Yoga. He advanced rapidly in higher levels of spirituality and attainment of many Siddhis. He practiced Japam (prayer), Homam (fire rituals) and Dyanam (meditation) and continues to teach everyone as the three fold path of Sadhana and is very effective to follow. Swamiji practiced the path of Tantra and attained the grace of Mother Kali. Under the guidance of great Gurus, Swamiji learned many advanced techniques of Mantra Sadhana and practiced them relentlessly. By his Guru’s grace, Swamiji was blessed
Swamiji had a close association with Jillellamoodi Amma. She still continues to guide him in deep meditative sessions. Swamiji wrote thousand poems on Jillellamoodi Amma in a book called “Ambika Sahasri”. The Great Yogi Radhika Prasad Maharaj guided Swamiji to the worship of the Goddess of Brindavan, Sri Radha Devi. Sri Radha Devi blessed swamiji with her divine compassion and initiated him in her Shadakshari (six lettered) mantra. Sri Radha Devi also arranged the Goddess Vajra Vairochani to be Swamiji’s guardian angel in life. “Aindreee Sahasri” is a thousand poem ode to praise this special Goddess.

Through Sadhana, in the practice of meditation, Swamiji had began visualizing details of his many previous births. Swamiji obtained the complete Grace of Divine Mother Kali and saw the murthi of Goddess Kali in Dyanam, he had worshipped in the Himalayas six hundred years ago. Blessing Swamiji, this statue of Mother Kali descended from the sky before many devotees in Swamiji’s Ashram in Guntur. This magnificent powerful idol of Kali has grown in size up to three or four feet as how it is
now and is being worshipped as Swayam Siddha Kali. Sri Swayam Siddha Kali is blessing many devotees and bestowing boons to fulfil their desires.

After establishing the Kali Peetham, Swamiji was contemplating on Sanyasam and wished to settle in Brindavan spending the rest of his life in Sri Radha Sadhana. The Siddha Yogis from the Siddha Mandalam (in Himalayas) also thought that Swamiji should take Sanyasam and conveyed this message to him through the astral body of Swami Sradhananda.

Swamiji was blessed by His Holiness Mouna Swami, the great Vyavastapaka, founder and saint of Sri Siddheswari Peetham at Courtallam and guided him to be the next Peethadhipathi. At that time the Peethadhipathi of Sri Siddheswari Peetham Sivachidananda Bharati Swami, initiated Swamiji into Sanyasam (monkhood) under the name of Sri Siddheswarananda Bharati Swami. After Sri Sivachidananda Swami attained Maha Samadhi, Sri Siddheswarananda Bharathi Swami was appointed as the next peethadhipathi of Sri Siddheswari Peetham on December 19, 2002.

Sri Swamiji is striving to spread the aspects of Dharmam and to promote spiritual Sadhana. Courtallam is an active kendram (spiritual centre) for practicing Sadhana, Japas, Homas and Dyanam. Sadhakas can perform homam by themselves with the guidance of Swamiji and progress in spiritual Sadhanas. Both Vedic and Tantric tradition are performed at the Peetham and allow everyone to practice Mantra Sadhana. As a Peethadhipathi of Sri Siddheswari Peetham Sri Siddeswarananda Bharati Swami Vaaru has travelled near and far and established many Peethams throughout the world to emboss spirituality, encouraging Sadhakas to uplift themselves to higher levels of Sadhana. Sri swamiji puts his audience in a trance while he gives his Anugraha
Bhashyam (Spiritual lectures) everywhere on Sanathana Dharma, Spirituality, Sadhana, puranas, Shastras, Upanishadas were many devotees are spiritually benefited from his talks.

Swamiji continues to inaugurate Peethams and Temples all over the world, performing Yagnas for World peace, bestowing devotees with Mantra Siddhi (power) to solve the problems themselves and grow in the path of spiritual Sadhana to experience Divine Artistic Integrity.

4.2.5 Christu Kula Ashram:

Dr. Savarirayan Jesudason, a product of 1904 batch of Madras Medical College, who completed FRCS from Edinburgh in 1910 started an Ashram in Courtallam. The Ashram was affiliated to the National Missionary Society and it aimed to promote equality between Europeans (as there were preferential treatments to the British nationals and Europeans in Anglican Churches) and Indians and to give an Indian presentation of Christian life and worship. Later the Ashram was developed by Dr. Raja Savarirayan.

This Ashram is located close to Tiger Falls (Puli Aruvi) and by the side of Tamilnadu Tourism Development (TTDC) Guest House on the Tenkasi – Courtallam Road. This Ashram offers all infrastructures to conduct Christian Retreat. From June to September, all the waterfalls offer the best Spa to the visitors. Hence during these
months, this Ashram is heaving booked by Christian Educational Institutions of Thirunelveli and Thoothukudi dioceses

There are family rooms, dormitories with dining hall and facilities for cooking. The Prayer Hall is a perfect place to conduct meditation and the silk cotton grove offers the right ambiance for meditation at dusk.

4.2.6 Courtallam Folk Arts Site Museum:

The Museum in Courtallam, was established in the year 1982 to exhibit the tribal art and culture of hunters. It is having very old manuscripts of pandya, chola and chera Tamil Kings. Microlithic tools, neolithic tools, megalithic black and red burial potteries, iron implements, sculptures, terracotta figurines and wood fossils are the antiques displayed in this museum. The Museum can be visited from 10 a.m to 5 p.m on all days except Fridays.6

4.2.7 Swimming Pool:

The swimming pool was at Courtallam established at a cost of forty lakh rupees just before 2003 seasons. It was set up to entertain tourists whenever the season at Courtallam turned out to be dull owing to scanty rainfall in the Western Ghats. The swimming pool is located adjacent to the Courtallam Special Panchayat Office and it generates significant revenue for the special Panchayat Office. A filter plant to ensure clean water for the pool, bathrooms, dressing rooms and angled benches were also set up in the swimming pool.
Curved green fiberglass reinforced plastic roofing was provided to prevent leaves from the nearby trees falling into the water. Fancy lights were also set up around the pool. A sum of Rs. 25 per hour is charged for using the swimming pool. Competitions on various categories are being conducted as part of the week-long ‘Saaral Thiruvizhaa’.

4.2.8 Boathouse:

‘Merry boating’ facilities are introduced maintained by Tamilnadu Tourism Development Corporation at the Mela Vannamada tank in Courtallam. Tourists can go for boating and enjoy the rocking cradle of the rivers in the region. Four-seaters and an equal number of two-seaters are deployed initially, and more boats are brought in from other centres when the tourist season picks up.

4.2.9 Aquarium:

The Courtallam Town Panchayat has established an Aquarium near Main Falls at a cost of Rs. 7.5 Lakhs. Fishes of amazing colours are put in huge glass tanks.

4.2.10 Oil Massaging:
Tourists who visit Courtallam to get drenched in the Waterfall, almost always drop in for a quick relaxing oil massage before their baths. Every waterfall in Courtallam has its own masseur and they all use til oil, renowned for its natural relaxing properties. They also use oils and balms like ‘Ponnangani’ and ‘Santhanaadi tailum’. The art is learnt from senior masseurs and passed on from one generation to the next. “These massages cool the body, reduce burning in the eyes, improve blood circulation in the body and are good for the face. They relax the body,” says Karippaswamy a renowned massuer. The masseurs usually charges Rs. 40 to Rs. 250 per massage. Especially during the month of July, August and September, when business is at its best, they can make up to Rs. 500 per day.
4.2.11 FESTIVALS IN COURTALLAM:

Saral Vizha

Saral Vizha is a ceremony which involves bathing in the Courtallam Waterfalls. The bathing at the magnificent waterfalls is believed to welcome prosperity and well being. The event is magnified into a ritual which is believed to bring about a pleasant change in the life and body of the devotees. The waterfalls endowed with medicinal properties helps to tone the body and wash away the toxics collected in the body. This helps in the smooth functioning of the human body and hence helps the mind and brings about a feeling of peace and tranquility.

When a person puts his head under the huge amount of water hurling down the mountain, he feel scared, but it is nothing but bliss. With the advent of the season the masseurs are in great demand. One has to wait one's turn to get a massage, much like devotees waiting in Tirupathi for offering their hair. The feeling good, feeling happy state of mind after an 'oil bath' cannot be described in words - it has to be experienced. The tourists and the local people congregate in this place to avail the salubrious Saral breeze. The salubrious season is adorned with Saral (drizzling rain). During this season, the Department of Tourism and the District Administration in coordination with all other Departments conduct a week long ‘Saral Thiruvizha’. The cultural events organized in the festival attract thousands of tourists.

Festivals in Temples:

Arudra Darisanam is celebrated in the Chithrasabha and the Taandava Deepa Aradhanai carried out here is of high significance. Arudhra designates a golden red
flame, representing Lord Siva Himself. It is in the form of light that the Lord performs His functions of creation, protection, destruction and concealment. In the Tamil month of Marghazhi, on the day when Thiruvadirai star and new moon coincide, the ecstatic dance of Lord Siva is celebrated. In the annual festival, Lord Shiva appears as Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Eswara, Sadasiva dn Subramanya. Other festivals celebrated here are Vasanta Utsavam in Chittirai, Pavitrotsavam in Kartikai, Navaratri, Skanda Sashti, Chittirai Vishnu and Aippasi Vishnu. The ivory chariot used in processions is of great beauty.

4.2.12 RIVERS IN COURTALLAM:
Chittar River:

The Chittar meaning little river or Chitranathi meaning beautiful river is a nature’s valuable gift. It is a river which causes a set of splendid cascades in Courtallam and its suburbs an international cynosure often compared to the famous spa falls of Belgium for its curative value. It is a major tributary of River Tamiraparani. The river takes its origin in the eastern slopes of the Western Ghats in the Courtallam Hills called Tirikoodam in literature, at an altitude of 1,750 metres (5,741 feet). From its origin, the river climbs down for about six kilometres and turns north and flows about 16 kilmoetres before turning down towards the east. It’s total length is 80 kilometres. It joins the river Tamiraparani near Sivalaperi village of Tirunelveli Taluk.
Chittar River and its five tributaries and numerous other contributing streams originate in the Courtallam hills of Tirunelveli District in the state of Tamil Nadu in southern India. Together with its tributaries and streams, the Chittar River serves as an important source of irrigation for the region and is a major tributary of the Tambaraparani River along with the Manimuthar River. The Chittar runs for about 80 km before it meets with its first tributary which has an anicut and irrigates about 293.40 hectares of land. One of its next tributaries has a reservoir provided by an anicut, feeding 141.64 hectares. The next tributary has seven anicuts and a reservoir and irrigates 465.39 hectares of land altogether. This pattern continues as each tributary and other contributing rivers has anicuts and reservoirs that provide irrigation for the adjacent land. The Chittar River itself has 17 anicuts irrigating 8,903.27 hectares of land. It eventually joins with Thamirabarani river.
Hanumanathi:

Hanumanathi is a tributary of the Chittar river. It rises at an altitude of 1650 metres (5413 feet) above Courtallam in Tenkasi Taluk. It traverses in the slopes at about ten kilometres and receives Karuppananthi, its tributary. Then it flows and merges with Chittar. The anaicuts built across the river are Mettukal anaicut, Karisalkulam anaicut, Panpoli anaicut, Vallalkulam anaicut, Elathoor anaicut, Nainaragavan anaicut, Pungamkal anaicut and Kambli anaicut.

4.2.13 Kurumbala Herbal & Research Centre:

Kurumbala Herbal and Research Centre was founded by Dr. M. Srinivasa Venkatachalam, hereditary traditional herbal practitioner, in the year 2000 at Courtallam. This center conducts various medicinal researches through traditional and modern systems. The center, promoted by SISI, Government Of India, Chennai, is one of the main successful research study locations to find a permanent herbal contraception to women. Today population expansion is an important issue in India and other under-
developed and developing countries. The bad effects of population expansion make the demand in excess to supplies of natural wealth and resources. Even though successive governments have tried various methods to control population growth, desired results have not been achieved. The reason is simple to understand. The modern methods of birth control using injections and surgery have given rise to fears in the public minds. The existing methods of birth control are complicated in nature either due to toxic or side effects of drugs in long-term use. Hence it is absolutely necessary to produce the traditional herbal medicine for a natural birth control programme. 'BIRTHCONT' gives a permanent solution to all the above problems. Though its efficacy is known in ancient traditional medicines, the anti fertility effect has been understood practically by preliminary research studies conducted by Manonmaniam Sundaranar University-Science Centre at Alwarkurichi. A team of medical research workers has undertaken a thorough research of this preparation. To completely evaluate the efficacy and safety of 'BIRTHCONT', a protocol has been evolved for successful results proved by well-established trials.

4.3 ACCESSIBILITY:

Long Distance Travel:

By Air:

The Town is accessible from both Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The nearest airport is located at Tuticorin which is around 85 km from the town. The airport is well connected to Chennai, Madurai and Coimbatore. This is the best option for those who are arriving by air. There are taxis that can be hired from the airport to reach the place. Taxis charge around Rs 1000 for the trip and the drive takes around 1.5 hours.
By Rail:

The nearest railway station is located in Shengottai, which is around five kilometres from the place. It is connected to Chennai and Tirunelveli by frequent services. Taxis are available from the Station and they charge between Rs 7 and RS 10 per km. It is advisable to hire taxis (air-conditioned) during the summer months as the heat can be intense during this period.

By Road:

Since Courtallam is a major tourist spot, there are many government and private buses that are available from different cities. Buses from Tirunelveli to Courtallam are frequent and they are a good option. They start from the main bus terminus and tickets are cheap. Private buses might be more expensive and they are a comfortable option as well. Courtallam is situated about 200 kilometers from Madurai, 65 kilometers from Tirunelveli and 5 kilometers from Tenkasi. Tenkasi is a bustling town, which has decent bus services to many parts in south Tamil Nadu. Alternatively, special buses operated by the government ply directly to Courtallam during the season.

By Boat:

Though there are numerous waterfalls, they are only from small streams. So, Kuttralam does not have a pier. The nearest Seaport is at Tuticorin.

Local Travel:

By Auto:

Auto Rickshaws are available at every corner and near the waterfalls. They can be used effectively to see the various waterfalls within the place.
By Car:

Hiring a cab is a common mode of transport in Courtallam. The waterfalls have common parking facilities with nominal charges and so it is advisable to hire a cab.

**Table: 4.1**
**Distance from Courtallam to top ten Cities of the world:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of arrival</th>
<th>Place of departure</th>
<th>Distance (in kilometres)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courtallam</td>
<td>Berlin</td>
<td>7484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtallam</td>
<td>London</td>
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**Table: 4.2**
**Distance from Courtallam to important places of Tamilnadu:**

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<th>Place of departure</th>
<th>Distance (in kilometres)</th>
<th>Place of departure</th>
<th>Distance (in kilometres)</th>
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<td>Alangulam</td>
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<td>Pudur</td>
<td>105.4</td>
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<td>Vaikam</td>
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<td>Abiramam</td>
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<td>147.3</td>
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<td>Milavittan</td>
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<td>Vattalkundu</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Vikramasingapuram</td>
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<td>Elur</td>
<td>168.5</td>
<td>Tirunelveli</td>
<td>49.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 4.4 ACCOMMODATION:

Most of the accommodations in Courtallam are in the budget range except for one or two high end ones. Even though Courtallam has several lodges and hotels to stay, one
should do advance booking during the season. Houses are also available on daily rental basis.

**Srishty Garden Resorts:**

Srishty Garden Resorts, the nature lovers’ paradise, is a picturesque spot adjacent to Thirukootamalai [Hills] in Courtallam. The resort is 500 meters from the Old Courtallam Falls. It is an excellent health resort with the fine blend of traditional Indian culture and heritage with authentic Indian cuisine. The services available at Srishty Garden Resorts are: Internet, Travel Desk, Laundry, Valet, Doctor on Call, Safe Vault, Continental Breakfast, Cable Television, Car Rental Desk, Free Newspaper, TV Remote Control, Fax, Copy service and STD/ISD Phone. Srishty Garden Resorts has multi-cuisine restaurant that serves Continental, Chinese, South Indian, Tandoor, Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian food. The spa at Srishty an excellent place to rediscover a new freshness for the visitors. The tariff rate ranges from ₹ 800 – 2500.

**Saaral Resorts:**

Saaral Resorts is a place where one can lay back and rejuvenate. Located in the luscious beauty of Western Ghats in Courtallam and 170 metres above the sea level, Saaral encompasses all the amenities and facilities and make a complete get away from the city life. Saaral Resorts welcomes the wholeheartedly and assures that the stay will be relaxing and a memorable holiday. The spacious multi-cuisine restaurant caters variety of menus to suit every taste bud. The restaurant boasts exotic choice of lip smacking dishes especially sea food that would leave a lingering memory about this place. The Hotel offers services like Internet Facility, Bar, Health & Fitness Club, Swimming pool, Laundry, Valet, Doctor on call, Safe Lockers, Std/Isd Facility, Breakfast, Continental
Breakfast, Cable Television, Car Rental Desk, Fax, Copy Services, Free Newspaper, TV and Remote control. The resort also provides sightseeing packages to the tourists. The tariff rate ranges from ₹500-2000 including breakfast.

The Courtallam Heritage:

The Kuttalam Heritage, an eco-health resort at Kuttalam is ideally located beside the Chenkottai-Kuttalam main road. It offers services which include: 24 Hours Room Service, Doctor on call, Satellite TV, Hot & Cold water, Restaurant, Bar Business Center, Conference Facilities, Foreign Exchange, Cultural Performance, Ayurveda Centre Children's Park and Banquet Hall. The tariff rate ranges from Rupees 800-6500. Exclusive Cottages and well appointed Deluxe Rooms equipped with all the modern amenities assure highest quality of accommodation at the Kuttalam Heritage.

Thick vegetation dominated by trees surrounding the Cottages and Deluxe Rooms add to the greenery and beauty of this little paradise, where one is close to nature as best it can be. The in house restaurant and well stocked bar caters to all wine & dine needs of the guests. The menu comprises of delicacies from Chettinadu, Chinese, Continental, North Indian and ethnic Kerala cuisine. Barbeque dinners are organized on special request. The tariff rate ranges from ₹800-6500.

Suriyaa Tourist Home:

Suriya Tourist Home has 22 rooms and the categories are Double, Triple, AC Room and Suite. It is near the bus stand. The amenities on offer at Suriya Tourist Home are doctor on call, travel desk, car rental, car parking, laundry service, room service, television in the rooms and hot water on request. The facilities offered by this Hotel include: doctor on call, travel desk, valet, cable television, fax, TV remote control, car
rental, room service, car parking, laundry service, credit cards and deposit locker. The tariff rate ranges from ₹ 800 – 1600.

Other accommodations in Courtallam include Pandian Lodge, Aysha Resorts, Aruna Residency, Tamil Nadu Group of Hotels, Kuttralam Resorts, Kurinji Villa Tourist Home, Star Comforts, Madaswamy Devar Guest House, Aruna Lodge, Sri Kumaran Family Cottage, Kurunji Vills Tourist Home, Main Falls Cottage, SivaNarayanan Lodge, Barani Lodge, Sankar Lodge, Kumar Tourist Home, Krishna Tourist Home, T.V.K.House and Thalavai House.

4.5 PLACES OF INTEREST AROUND COURTALLAM:

Agasthiyar Falls:

Agasthiar Falls is located on the western ghats of Pothigai Hills. It is close to the Papanasam Falls, on the banks of the Thamiraparani River where Siva and Parvathi appeared before the great saint Agasthiya. Hence the falls is popularly called the “Agasthiyar Falls”. To commemorate the visit of the divine couple, the Agasthiya temple was built there.
Ambasamudram:

Ambasamudram is a temple town because many temples are situated here viz., Kasi Vishvanathar temple, Thirumula Nathaswamy temple, Veerama thandeswarar temple, Ammaiappan temple, Krishnaswamy temple, Purushotama Perumal temple and Lakshmi Narayana Perumal temple.

Kalyana Theertham:

Kalyana Theertham is located 5 kilometers away from Agasthiar falls. It arises from Western ghats and fills the Karayar and Servalar dam. At the foot of the falls, many sculpture works of Lord Rama, Lakshmana and Goddess Seetha are present.
District Science Centre, Tirunelveli

The District Science Centre is unique institution situated on the banks of Tamiraparani. Popularising science, inculcating the spirit of enquiry, fostering creative talents and infusing scientific temper in life are its objectives. This autonomous body is a unit of the National Council of Science Museums, attached to the Department (HRD) Government of India. This is one among the 124 centres in the country. The centre has three permanent galleries on Ocean; a semi permanent gallery on popular science and a six acre science park where numerous exhibits help create awareness of scientific development among the people.

A good collection of films and video cassettes on nature, wildlife, computers etc. gives face lift to the centre. The center has a sky observatory to view heavenly bodies through telescope and science demonstration and lectures on everything from electronics to salts. Kits are also lent to schools for effective classroom communication. In addition to the above facilities, the District Science Centre organizes programmes like Mobile
Science Exhibition, Planetarium, Film Show, Temporary Exhibitions, Science Drama and Science Fair.

**Ilanji:**

Ilanji is a small village located three kilometers away from Courtalam. Kumaran Kovil is very famous, is in this area. Lord Muruga with Valli and Deivanai blesses the devotees here. The prime deity here is called Varada Raja Kumarar. In the midst green paddy field and grove of coconut trees on the bank of Chithra River, this temple has been renovated by Mara Varman Kulasekara Pandian in 1409 A.D. Buses and Taxis are available from Tenkasi, Courtallam and Shengottai to reach this place.

**Karayar Dam / The Roja falls (Banatheertham):**

Situated in the Western Ghats, Banatheertham is part of the Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve and lies above the Karayar dam. A twenty-minute boat ride (costing Rs 20) takes tourists from the dam across the lake. A ten-minute trek takes tourists to the magnificent waterfalls. Surrounded by dense forest, the waterfalls present a magnificent sight when viewed from the lake. The boat ride also offers a breathtaking view of the adjoining hills. This range is also known for its plant diversity. The legendary Sage Agasthiya, who is called the father of the plant-based Siddha stream of medicine, is believed to have roamed these hills collecting herbs.
Krishnapuram Temple

The sincere and faithful servant of Lord Rama blesses the devotees at Krishnapurm near Kadyanallur. His service to Rama plays an important role during Rama Ravana war. Anjaneyar Jayanthi Vizha is celebrated in this temple during the month of December. The festival starts with ‘Yagasalai Pooja’ and it is celebrated for five days. The Temple is situated 12 kilometers from Tenkasi.
Kodaganallur:

Kodaganallur is situated one kilometre south of Nadukallur which is on Cheran Mahadevi – Mukudal route in Tirunelveli District. This is the third among the Nava Kailayam, Lord Siva Blesses on Lord Guru. The Presiding deity of this temple is Lord Kailasananathar and the Goddess Sivagami Amman. Lord Muruga, Goddesses Valli and Theivanai are also placed here to bless the devotees. The temple is kept open from 7.30 am to 8.30 am and from 4.30 pm to 6.30 pm. Sivarathiri and Thiruvathirai are the festivals celebrated in this temple.

Kumbarutti Falls:

Kumbarutti Falls is located 20 kilometres away from Courtallam. It is a beautiful falls located at Western Ghats along with natural swimming pool (Thandagam).
Kurukuthurai Murugan Temple:

Tirunelveli, the ancient city of South India, has the famous Nellaiyappar and Kanthimathi temple. In addition to that, there is a popular temple named Kurukkuthurai Murugan temple. Murugan temple is located in the area named Kurukkuthurai, on the banks of the river Tamirabarani. Hence, the temple is called as Kurukkuthurai Murugan temple or Kurukkuthurai Subramanya temple. The temple is beautifully carved on both the sides out of a rock known as Thiruvuruvalmalai. It is said that the same rock was used for carving the temple of Lord Muruga at Tiruchendur in 1653.

Tamirabarani River is also called as Jeeva Nadhi as it never dries up. This is perhaps the only river in Tamil Nadu state of India where one can find water for almost the entire year. The devotees after taking bath in the Tamirabarani River and proceed to this beautiful temple. The temple is located so close to the river that during rainy days the entire temple gets submerged into the river. This is a usual happening occurs every year.
The temple is dedicated to Lord Muruga, the son of Lord Shiva. Apart from Lord Muruga’s idol in the main shrine, this temple also houses the idol of Shiva, Parvathi, Ganesha, Utsav Subramanya, and other typical Gods and Goddesses of Saivism (the sect who worship Lord Shiva). The tourists can find peacocks in this temple. Another important aspect of this temple is that the statues of national leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Vivekananda, and V.O. Chidambaram Pillai are kept in the temple tower.

Kunnathur Temple:

Kunnathur is the first in Nadu Kailayam and fourth in Nava Kailayam; the ruling deity of this temple is Lord Kailasanathar alias Kotha Parameswarar. The Goddesses is Sivagami Amman If we pray to Lord Kothaparameswar, marriages which are delayed will be solemnized and those who do not have children would be blessed with children. Once in the fourteenth century happened a miracle which led to the fame of the god. A king who ruled Nellai in the fourteenth century came to the temple to get blessings from the lord, but the priest was unavailable due to illness. At that time the lord disguised himself as the priest and performed the ‘Pooja’, saving the priest from the king’s
punishment. So the Lord is often called "Vaazha Veikum Perumal" (The one who saves). All the devotees who pray to the Lord whole heartedly would surely be blessed by him.

The temple is kept open from 7.00 am to 10.00 am and from 5.00 pm to 6.00 pm on all days. Sivarathri Thiruvvalhirai and Piradhosam are the festivals celebrated in this temple.

**Manimuthar Dam/Falls:**

The river Manimuthar is a major tributary of the Tamiraparani. It arises from the dense forest a top Senkutheri in Ambasamudram taluk at the height of about 1300 metres. The tributaries of the Manimuthar are the Keezha Manimuthar (lower or eastern Manimuthar) and the Varattar. In the year 1957, Manimuthar Dam was built across the river just three kilometres above its confluence with Tamiraparani. 1300 metres is a major tributary of the Tamiraparani. The river runs from its source for a distance of nine kilometres and confluences with the Tamiraparani near Kallidaikurichi. Manimuthar Dam is an ideal picnic spot blessed with beautiful garden and peaceful atmosphere.
Thenmala:

Thenmala, an ecotourism centre, is located at an altitude of 1,640 feet in the Kollam - Shencottai Road and is a short distance away from Courtallam Falls. Often called as the hills that flow with honey, Thenmala is India’s first planned eco-tourism project which is spread over acres of evergreen forest.

This unique eco-tourism habitat lies 500 metres above sea level. It offers plenty of adventure and leisure activities with waterfalls, canopy walkway, mountain biking, rock climbing and river crossing, nature trails and picnic spots attracting naturalists, conservationists and adventure seekers.

The major attractions are the amphitheatre where local art forms and other cultural programs are performed. The musical dancing fountain – a rhythmic ballet of water, sound and light makes for a beautiful sight. The Lotus pond and Shop Court are used by local women for selling forest produce and local handicrafts. There is also a deer rehabilitation centre where spotted deer and Sambar are the main inhabitants. The centre
also has a children's eco-park with tree-top huts and swings. The sculpture garden here depicts the relationship between Man and Nature.

Nellayappar Gandhimathi Temple:

The temple of Nellaiappar and Kanthimathi is situated in the centre of the Tirunelveli town at a distance of two kilometers from the Railway Station. The very name of the town, Tirunelveli which was known in the past as ‘Then Pandyanagaram’ is a part of the town which has developed around the temple of Nellaiyappar. This is a twin temple dedicated to Goddess Parvathi and Lord Shiva. Rare jewels, the Golden Lily Tank, Musical Pillars, the Hall of Thousand Pillars are worth seeing.
Nindrasir Nedumaran who reigned in the seventh century A.D contributed for constructing and renovating important parts in this temple. A beautiful flower garden originated in 1756 A.D. next to this Chain Mandapam welcomes us with many colourful fragrant flowers. This garden had been designated by Thiruvengadakrishna Mudaliar. A square Vasantha Mandapam with hundred pillars is found in the midst of this garden. From the distance itself one can have a beautiful view of the great gopurams (towers) of the temple. Both the gopurams were built according to the rules laid down in the agamasstras by Rama Pandyan.

The Nellaiappar Temple is bigger than the Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple, though the latter is more famous owing to its historical importance. The main sanctum sanctorium has a Vishnu deity in lying pose as seen in famous Srirangam temple.

Shengottai :

Sengottai is a town in the foothills of the Western Ghats. It is located roughly five kilometres from the Coutrallam Waterfall. The Harihara and Kuntaaru rivers flow through the village. The economy of Shengottai is chiefly agrarian in nature and people are engaged in the cultivation of rice, groundnut, ginger, coconut. Terra cotta and pottery industry, cane furniture are the important economic activities. Large number of Saw Mills are present in Shenkottai Piranoor.
Seran Maha Devi:

The Siva Temple at Seran Maha Devi is the second place among the Nava Kailayams. It is located twenty kilometers away from Tirunelveli on the way to Ambasamudram. The Prime deity here is called Sri Amma Natha Swami and the Goddess is Avadi Nayagi Ambal. The Lord Sun and Moon also have some importance here. In the month of Margazhi (December to January) Thirukalyana festival is celebrated. Thiruvathirai, Sivarathri and daily poojas are observed. All the buses from Tirunelveli to Kallidai Kurichi and Ambasamudram passes through Seran Mahadevi.
Tenkasi-Kasi Vishwanathar Temple:

Tenkasi-Kasi Vishwanathar Temple was situated 5 kilometers away from Tenkasi. The name itself implies that this town is ‘Kasi (Varanasi) of the South’. The temple is 554 feet in length and 318 feet width. 172 feet temple tower was built in 1456 by King Parakirama Pandian. Then the temple tower was damaged in 1924 due to thunder and it was rebuilt by Sivanthi Adijhan with height of 163 feet.

Thirumalai Kovil

Thirumalai Kovil is a Murugan temple situated at Panpoli, Tenkasi taluk in Tirunelveli district. The temple is situated on a small hill surrounded by Western ghats in the border of kerala. The Lord Murugan in this temple’s shrine is called as ‘Thirumalai Kumarasamy’ or ‘Thirumalai Kumaran’. Because of the Lord’s name most of the people in this region have the name ‘Thirumalai’. There is one more goddess temple within this temple, called ‘Thirumalai Amman’. This hill temple is surrounded by lot of coconut plantations and the view from the top will be great.
Koyikkal Palace:

Koyikkal Palace has been erected for Umayamma Rani. She belonged to the Venad Royal Family who reigned from 1677-1684. The double storied Palace has been erected in an ethnic style and today it is the most exquisite Museums that houses folklore materials after being confiscated by the Department of Archeology in India.

The Koyikkal Palace is located few kilometers from the Ponmudi Hill Station and Courtallam Waterfalls. The Numismatics Museum is the most elegant fraction that can be enjoyed by the tourists and it is one of the most exclusive Museums in the country. In the Folklore Museum one can find some of the marvelous collection of musical instruments like Chandravalayam which is not found elsewhere in the country and Nanthuni. The former is said to be the musical accompaniment of Sri Ram who wandered in the jungles according to the wishes of his father. The later is an instrument which is played after a good harvest and enjoyed with dance and drinks. Wide ranges of kitchen equipments like the brassware, earthenware and also other kitchen wares are found in the Numismatic Museum. A Venetian coin named Amaida believed to have been presented to Jesus Christ
is also displayed at the Museum. Besides, Rasi, the world's smallest coin is on display at the Museum and one can also see the Laxmi Narayana silver coins at the Numismatics Museum. Gold coins of 374 varieties are also exhibited here. Old manuscripts, Thaliyola, Anklets and Chilambu are also exhibited in the Museum.

V.O.C. Mani Mandapam :

V.O.Chidambaram was the Towering personality of Freedom movement in Tamilnadu, who pulled cooking oil extractor (Chekku) in Coimbatore Jail, where he was imprisoned for fighting against British imperialism. V.O.C. was born at Ottapidaram, now in Tuticorin District. Before independence, the village came under Tirunelveli District. So the Tamilnadu Government built a Manimandapam at Tirunelveli. There is a meditation hall inside the Mandapam. In this hall 6.5 feet height statue of V.O.C is installed. There is also a model oil extractor in stone, which reminds V.O.C’s sacrifices
for national liberation task. At the entrance of the Mandapam, two ship shapes are installed which remind V.O.C’s dynamic approach against British.

Holy Trinity Cathedral (Oosi Gopuram):

The Holy Trinity Cathedral, an elegant and beautiful Church was built in 1826 by Rev. Rhenius and opened to public for worship on June 26, 1826. It took only 175 days for its construction which cost Rupees 2000. The small church with an oblong edifice measuring 64//30 feet still serves as a nucleus for the massive Cathedral, developed in later years. This funds came as donations not only from
Christians but also from Hindus and Muslims as well. Venga Mudalia had donated 168 acres of punjabi land for the maintenance of this Church. Many renovations and additions were made to this structure.

4.6 Arrival of tourists in Courtallam:

Tourism is a modern miracle, which has the capability of turning sands into diamond. The flow of tourists largely determines the growth and pattern of tourism in an area. This is true in the case of Courtallam also. As such the researcher has studied the flow of tourists in Courtallam in order to have an accurate view of the growth of tourism in that area.

The arrival of tourists in Courtallam is analyzed by the researcher and is given in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No:</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Growth %</th>
<th>Foreign tourists</th>
<th>Growth %</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>423552</td>
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<td>2324</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>425876</td>
<td>115.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>464777</td>
<td>127.0</td>
<td>2569</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>467346</td>
<td>126.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>531247</td>
<td>145.2</td>
<td>2746</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>533993</td>
<td>144.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>327527</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>327561</td>
<td>88.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>996410</td>
<td>272.3</td>
<td>4236</td>
<td>147.6</td>
<td>1000646</td>
<td>271.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1423547</td>
<td>389.0</td>
<td>4983</td>
<td>173.6</td>
<td>1428530</td>
<td>387.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1929647</td>
<td>527.3</td>
<td>7830</td>
<td>272.8</td>
<td>1937477</td>
<td>525.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commissioner of Tourism, Chennai
The arrivals of tourists in Courtallam (year wise) is analyzed by the researcher and it shows that there is remarkable increase in the arrival of tourists year after year. Especially during the past three years (2009, 2008 and 2007) there is considerable increase in the arrival of tourists when compared to the base year 2001. There is 35.6 percent growth rate in the tourist arrivals in 2009 when compared to 2008. More and more tourists are attempting to visit Courtallam and this itself is a sign of rapid development of tourism in the area.

4.6.1 Share percent of Courtallam in Tourist arrivals in Tamilnadu (Centre-wise):

There are 29 major tourist centres in Tamilnadu. Tourists from different states of India and different countries visit these tourist centres, depending upon their travel
motivations. It was found that Courtallam gets 2.4 percent share of the total tourist arrivals in Tamilnadu in 2009. The share percent of Courtallam in the domestic tourist arrivals in Tamilnadu is 2.5 percent and the share percent of Courtallam in the foreign tourist arrivals is 0.3 percent.

Table 4.4
Share percent of Courtallam in Tourist arrivals in Tamilnadu (Centre-wise) 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Domestic Share</th>
<th>Foreign Share</th>
<th>Total Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Chennai</td>
<td>12739186</td>
<td>909088</td>
<td>13648274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Elagiri</td>
<td>684602</td>
<td>17401</td>
<td>702003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Mamallapuram</td>
<td>1953329</td>
<td>228536</td>
<td>2181865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Kancheepuram</td>
<td>2159498</td>
<td>130930</td>
<td>2290428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Tiruttani</td>
<td>1431508</td>
<td>18783</td>
<td>1540291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Chidambaram</td>
<td>777997</td>
<td>19728</td>
<td>797725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Pitchavaram</td>
<td>58745</td>
<td>1597</td>
<td>60342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Udhagamandalam</td>
<td>5280743</td>
<td>222529</td>
<td>5503272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Coonoor</td>
<td>856526</td>
<td>9558</td>
<td>866084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Mudumalai</td>
<td>123382</td>
<td>14543</td>
<td>137925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Thanjavur</td>
<td>2002225</td>
<td>81435</td>
<td>2083660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Velankani</td>
<td>1268973</td>
<td>9164</td>
<td>1278137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Nagore</td>
<td>1018811</td>
<td>3389</td>
<td>1022200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Poompuhar</td>
<td>86246</td>
<td>3411</td>
<td>89657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Madurai</td>
<td>7527226</td>
<td>183272</td>
<td>7710498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Kodaikanal</td>
<td>4827036</td>
<td>142946</td>
<td>4969982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Palani</td>
<td>6549399</td>
<td>11595</td>
<td>6960994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Rameswaram</td>
<td>3131831</td>
<td>16814</td>
<td>3151645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td><strong>Courtallam</strong></td>
<td><strong>1929647</strong></td>
<td><strong>7830</strong></td>
<td><strong>1937477</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Panchalankurichi</td>
<td>32404</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>32845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Kanyakumari</td>
<td>3366426</td>
<td>110702</td>
<td>3477128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Thiruchirappali</td>
<td>3211706</td>
<td>127677</td>
<td>3339383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Salam</td>
<td>1388109</td>
<td>5397</td>
<td>1393506</td>
</tr>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>Yercaud</td>
<td>1962830</td>
<td>3831</td>
<td>196661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Hogenakkal</td>
<td>733774</td>
<td>3646</td>
<td>737417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Tiruchendur</td>
<td>5446167</td>
<td>20084</td>
<td>5466251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Coimbatore</td>
<td>2559926</td>
<td>32634</td>
<td>2592560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Kumbakonam</td>
<td>913392</td>
<td>11021</td>
<td>924413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Thiruvannamalai</td>
<td>3612963</td>
<td>21071</td>
<td>3634034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>78037607</td>
<td>2369050</td>
<td>80406657</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commissioner of Tourism, Chennai
Courtallam is gaining importance as a remarkable destination of tourists in Tamilnadu. The development of Courtallam as a tourists centre is a fascinating subject for the researchers. Though ample attractions are found in Courtallam, most of them are not yet properly exposed to the public. Even then, tourists throng this place in several numbers especially during season times. The researcher has made an attempt to analyze the relationship if any, existing between tourist arrivals in Courtallam and tourist arrivals in Tamilnadu.

**Hypothesis:**

There is no relationship between tourist arrivals in Courtallam and tourist arrivals in Tamilnadu.

**Table: 4.5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No:</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tourist arrivals in Courtallam</th>
<th>Tourists arrivals in Tamilnadu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>368824</td>
<td>24585116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>382153</td>
<td>25466395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>425876</td>
<td>27960506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>467346</td>
<td>31134844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>533993</td>
<td>33518787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>327561</td>
<td>40550382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1000646</td>
<td>5200291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1428530</td>
<td>64658671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1937477</td>
<td>80406657</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commissioner of Tourism, Chennai
Karl Pearson’s Coefficient of correlation is applied to test the magnitude of relationship between tourists arrivals in Courtallam and tourist arrivals in Tamilnadu hypothesis. The value of $r = +1$

**Inference:**

The value of Coefficient of correlation is $r = +1$. There is perfect positive correlation between tourists arrivals in Courtallam and tourist arrivals in Tamilnadu hypothesis. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.
Reference:

5. Chithra sabha, tamilnadutourism.org/places/courtallam.html