

AARATTU MAHOTSAVAM
SREE JANARDHANA SWAMY TEMPLE, VARKALA

LOCATION

Panchayat/ Municipality/ Corporation	Varkala Municipality
District	Thiruvananthapuram

ACCESSIBILITY

Nearest Town/ Landmark/ Junction	Temple Junction – 500m
Nearest Bus station	Temple Junction Bus Stop – 500m
Nearest Railway station	Varkala Railway Station – 3.1 Km
Nearest Airport	Trivandrum International Airport – 39.4 Km

CONTACT

Sree Janardhana Swamy Temple
Varkala - 695141
Phone: +91-470-2607575

TIME	DATES	FREQUENCY	DURATION
	March-April (*Meenam*)	Annual	10 Days



ABOUT THE FESTIVAL (Legend/History/Myth)

The *Janardhana Swamy* Temple is a famous Vaishnavite shrine of Kerala. It is known as the Banaras of the South and is 2000 year old. Situated on a very steep hill, this temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu. The temple is an example of the traditional South-Indian architecture. The red-tiled roof of the circular building is the main shrine of the temple. The temple is 3 kms from the Varkala railway station and at least ten thousand devotees visit the place every day during *Arattu* festival. People believe that the water in the pond of the temple is holy and a dip in it will wash away one's sins. The standing statue of the deity faces towards east with his raised right hand in *Aachamanam* position. The main idol has four arms holding *chakra* (wheel), *shanghu* (holy conch shell), *kumbham* (pot) and *gada* (mace). The sanctorum entrance has other bright looking idols of Garuda, Lord Shiva, Hanumana and other Gods and Goddesses.



RELEVANCE- (Local / National / International)	NO. OF PEOPLE PARTICIPATED
Local	About 1 Lakh

EVENTS/PROGRAMS

Kodiyettu
Pallivetta
Aarattu
Kathakali
Nirapara
Elephant Procession

DESCRIPTION *(How festival is celebrated)*

The ten-day *Arattu* festival is celebrated at the Janardhana Swamy Temple in Kerala's beach town of Varkala during the Malayalam month of *Meenam*. The festival starts with the *Kodiyettam* or flag hoisting ceremony and ends with a procession of five decorated elephants through the streets. During the fourth and fifth days of the festival, the celebrations include all night long performances such as the traditional *Kathakali*. On an average more than ten thousand people gather everyday to attend the festival. A colorful. procession led by caparisoned elephants in which ornamental silk umbrellas, peacock fans etc. are carried is one of the prominent features of the festival.







