

## Thanjai mAmaNik koyil



Although this divya dEsam goes by the name of Thanjai mAmaNik kOyil (the treasure of ThanjAvUr), it is a 3-temple cluster where all the three temples are within a few hundred meters of each other. The administration of the temple is the responsibility of ThanjAvUr palace. The age of this temple cluster is cited as the nAyak reign period (16<sup>th</sup> century CE) in Madurai. This divya dEsam is located on the banks of the river called **VeNNARu** –white river (also called ViNNARu which means the celestial river Vraja River supposed to be flowing in VaikunTham). It is 2.5 miles from the ThanjAvUr town center. All the three temples are considered together as a single divya dEsam since (each deity has been sung by the AzhwArs) they are in close proximity to each other. The temple is open during the hours 7 AM-12 noon and 5 PM—8:30 PM. Let us look at the features of each one.

**neelamEgap perumAL temple:** This is called the Thanjai mAmaNik kOyil. The presiding deity goes by the name **neelamEgap perumAL** in a seated posture facing east. The festival idol is called **nArAyaNa**. The goddess goes by the name **Sengamalavalli** installed in a separate sannidhi. The sacred pond is called **amirtha thIrththam** (also kannikA pushkariNi). The vimAnam is called **Soundarya** vimAnam. In the outer enclosure there are shrines for Lakshminarasimha with Lakshmi on his lap, and Lakshmi Hayagreeva.



←---- neelamEgap perumAL



**MaNikunRap perumAL temple:** Here the presiding deity is called **MaNikunRap perumAL** seated facing east. The name of the goddess is **ambujavalli**. The vimAnam is called **maNikUDA vimAnam** and the sacred pond is called **rAma tIrttam**.

The third temple's presiding deity is called **veeranarasimha perumAL**. The shrine itself is called **Thanjai yALi nagar** (yALi is another name for lion in Thamizh).



**Veera narasimha perumAL koyil**

**veera narasimhar**

The festival idol is called nArAyaNa (same as in the other two). The goddess is called **Thanjai nAyaki**. The sacred pond is called **SURya pushkariNi** and the vimAnam is called **vEdasundara vimAnam**.

**Legend:** BrahmANDa purANam mentions this temple. At one time the sage ParAsara and his associates stayed in this place doing penance. They wanted Lord nArAyaNa to give them darshan. Several demons gave them troubles. Among them three brothers, **tAragan**, **taNDagan**, and **tanjagan** (also known as gajamukan) figured prominently. The sages prayed to the lord. Goddess KALi destroyed all of them. But tanjagan escaped. Lord nArAyaNa took the form of narasimha again and killed tanjagan. The demon repented and wanted to be remembered and hence the place came to be known as tanjapuri which morphed into tanjAvUr

**MangaLAsAsanam:** This temple cluster has been sung about in 5 pAsurams by three AzhwArs-- ThirumangaiyAzhwAr (3 pAsurams), nammAzhwAr (1), and BhUdattAzhwAr (1). Let us look at one by ThirumangaiyAzhwAr.

எம்பிரானெந்தை யென்னுடைச் சுற்றம் எனக்கர சென்னுடை வானாள்  
அம்பினா லரக்கர் வெருக்கொள நெருக்கி அவருயிர் செகுத்தவெம் மண்ணல்  
வம்புலாஞ் சோலைமாமதில் தஞ்சை மாமணிக் கோயிலே வணங்கி  
நம்பிகாள் உய்ய நான் கண்டு கொண்டேன் நாராயணா வென்னும் நாமம்.

-திருமங்கையாழ்வார் periya tirumozhi 1.1.6 (NDP 953)

**Meaning:** He is my Lord, my father, my close relative, my ruler, and my life. He, as the Supreme Being shot arrows on the demon clan (who were terrified) and killed them (thereby saving the world). I worshipped in **Thanjai MAmaNi** temple which has huge circumferential walls and surrounded by fragrant flower orchards. Oh, great men, I found the Mantra---that is the good name **nArAyaNA**—to attain salvation.

**Festivals:** In the Thamizh months of panguni, cittirai, and vaikAsi (corresponding to March through June), the annual brahmOtsavams for the three temples are celebrated in succession.

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