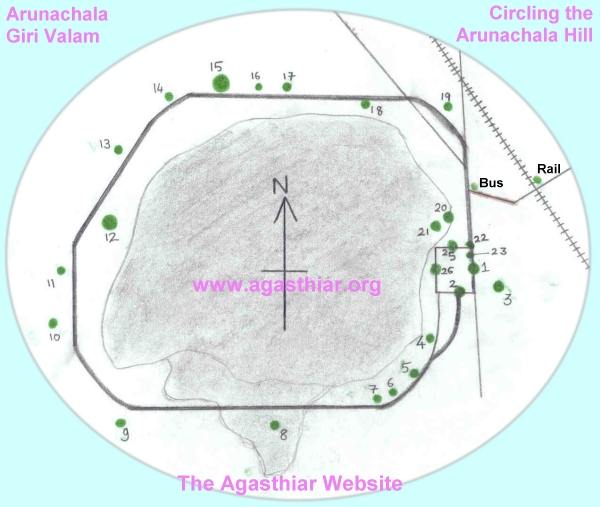
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| **What is Girivalam?**  http://agasthiar.org/img1/clip/agasthiar-150x196.jpghttp://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif[This issue of AUMzine](http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/index.htm#Issue9) is dedicated to [Arunachala](http://agasthiar.org/arunachala/index.htm) and the great annual Deepam festival. In this issue and in past issues, we have mentioned that *the single most effective spiritual practice known to man* is the *Arunachala giri valam* (circling the Arunachala Hill). This article is an elementary introduction to the Siddha way of circling the Arunachala Hill. It contains material that the Siddhas of the Agasthiar lineage wish to reveal to first timers. More advanced practitioners should consult the Sathguru for procedures specifically tailored to them.  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifGiri = Hill, Valam = circumambulation. Hence *Giri Valam* means circling the hill and *Arunachala GiriValam* means circling the Arunachala hill.  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifGiri *Pradakshina* or *Pradakshanam* or *parikrama* mean exactly the same thing as *giri valam* - circling the hill.  **Giri Vala Yoga, The Most Effective Spiritual Practice**  [[Click here!](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/pitrumukti-575x262-web.jpg)](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/pitrumukti-575x262-web.jpg)http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifTo the human eye, the [Arunachala Hill](http://agasthiar.org/arunachala/index.htm) appears to be around 3000 feet high. But to the Siddhas, it stretches out to infinity. Thus we can not even begin to comprehened the spiritual preeminence of Arunachala. The Siddhas say that even Soorya (sun) and Chandra (moon) circle Arunachala without going directly overhead. While there are many deities who are touched by Soorya during His Baskara sparsa pooja, Arunachala is the only deity whom Soorya circumambulates!  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifTo even think of [Arunachala](http://agasthiar.org/arunachala/index.htm), let alone perform giri valam, one must have lots of good karma in his or her spiritual bank account, say the Siddhas. To know the proper Siddha procedure for performing girivalam, one must have the Sathguru's grace. The Sathguru is the key to unlocking the spiritual treasure chest that's Arunachala.  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifThe Siddhas say that any one who visits Arunachala must perform giri valam. Why? Because this is the proper procedure for worshipping Arunachala. Even Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra did it. When the Lord appeared as an infinite jothi sthambam (pillar of light), no one, including Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra could comprehend Him. Only after they performed girivalam could They see Him. So if giri valam is the proper procedure for the Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra Trinity, is it not the proper procedure for us?  [[Click here!](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/yamunadeera-575x366-web.jpg)](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/yamunadeera-575x366-web.jpg)http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifEvery deity, including the Trimoorthi trinity, has performed Arunachala girivalam. It's a spiritual exercise that every one of us must do, irrespective of race, religion or nationality. It's the one panacea for all ills spiritual and material. It's the easiest way towards spiritual upliftment. It's the simplest yet most effective spiritual practice known to man. It's yoga of the highest order. Giri vala yoga is the easiest and most effective yogic practice. There are no complicated postures to learn. If you can walk, you can do girivalam. Even if you can't walk, if you can move, you can do giri valam. Nay, you must do girivalam. And what if you can't even move? No problem. Just ask some kind soul to carry you on the giri valam route! Yearn to do Arunachala girivalam and all the right things will happen; the Siddhas will find a way to accomodate the sincere longing of a pure heart.  **The Grantor of All Desires**  [[Click here!](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/kalirpaduarun-570x344-web.jpg)](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/kalirpaduarun-570x344-web.jpg)http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifArunachala giri valam is the easiest way to get whatever you want. Do you want to become the richest human on the face of the earth? Do you want to become the greatest scientist the world has ever known? Do you want to be an emperor the likes of whom the world hasn't seen? Do you want to become a Siddha? A saint? A devotee? All of these and more can be achieved through Arunachala girivalam. Whatever you want, you'll find in Him. Whatever you desire, whether it be material or spiritual, can be gotten through Arunachala giri valam. [Lord Arunachala](http://agasthiar.org/arunachala/index.htm) is the grantor of all desires. Even divinities reach their exalted state only through His blessings. Arunachala is also the grantor of that sublime, indescribable state of pure, unalloyed bakthi (divine love) in which one merges with Him forever.  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifAs we have mentioned elsewhere in this issue, every cubic inch of the space surrounding Arunachala is filled with millions and millions of *sookshma* (subtle) jothi lingams. Miliions and millions of Siddhas are forever present in this *punya boomi* (holy land). This sacred land is like no other. It's the spiritual refuge for every one of us.  **An Infinity of Visions (Darshans)**  [[Click here!](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/gajapreety-577x323-web.jpg)](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/gajapreety-577x323-web.jpg)http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifWith every step on the girivalam route, we should look at the peak of the [Arunachala Hill](http://agasthiar.org/arunachala/index.htm). Each of these visions is known as a *Arunachala Mukha Darshan*. There are an infinity of these Arunachala visions. The leader of the Siddha community, Maha Guru Sri Agasthiar, has been cataloging these visions for our sake from time immemorial. Sri Nandeesvara has been describing these visions and Sri Agasthiar has been cataloging them. And the endless saga continues! It's with this background knowledge that one should approach the limitless ocean of revelation that's Arunachala giri valam. To think that one can become an expert at Arunachala girivalam in a few years is sheer lunacy!  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifSri Agasthiar has codified a substantial chunk of this spiritual knowledge in the form of 1008 volumes for His Siddha disciples. Each of these volumes is made up of 108 books with 1008 chapters each. He has cataloged 100,008 introductory giri valam procedures for His junior Siddha disciples. There are many more for more advanced Siddhas! There are different sets of girivalam procedures for humans, Siddhas, Devas, deities and so on.  [[Click here!](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/arunkrish-574x287-web.jpg)](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/arunkrish-574x287-web.jpg)http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifThis knowledge was revealed to the Sathguru, Guru Mangala Gandharva Venkataraman by his divine teacher Sri Idiyaapa Eesa Siddha over the course of many years. What we present in this article is not even a millionth part of this knowledge, because according to Sri Agasthiar, the human mind can not even grasp that much. The rest must be learnt directly from the Sathguru. |

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| **A Glimpse Into Beginners' Giri Valam**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifHere's a rough sketch of the Arunachala girivalam route. Though it's not to scale and it's not exact, it can be of help to those of you who are new to Arunachala giri valam. The shaded area is the Arunachala Hill and the thick black line is the girivalam route. The green dots are some of the important landmarks on the giri valam route. These and a few others are described in the text that follows. |



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| **Arunachala East Gopuram Temple Tower**  [[Click here!](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/gopdarsh-534x324-web.jpg)](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/gopdarsh-534x324-web.jpg)http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifEnter the [Arunachala](http://agasthiar.org/arunachala/index.htm) temple through the **East gopuram** (tower), landmark 1 in our girivalam map.  **Arunachala Brahma Lingam - The Starting Point**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifMake your way to the **Brahma Lingam** shrine within the temple. [[Click here!](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/brahmalingh-488x332-web.jpg)](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/brahmalingh-488x332-web.jpg)This shrine is the starting point for your first giri valam. Worship the Lord and make your way to the south gopuram.  **Arunachala Eka Munikkal Koombu Mukha Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifThe **South gopuram** of the Arunachala temple is landmark 2 in the giri valam map. Look at the Arunachala Hill from the south gopuram. This vision is known as **Eka Munikkal Koombu Muka Darshan**. This is the vision that reminds one of forgotten promises. If you don't stay true to your word, whether inadvertently or not, bad karma is the result. This vison reminds you of things that you may have to do to keep up your word.  **Indra Lingam**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifVisit the **Indra Lingam** shrine, landmark 3 in our girivalam map. This is the first of the eight **Ashta Dik Lingams** on the giri valam route.  **Karpaga Vinayaka GANESH**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifThe next stop is the **Karpaga Vinayaka** Ganesh temple, landmark 4 in our giri valam map. Worship Lord Ganesh and continue on the girivalam route.  **Agni Lingam**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Agni Lingam** shrine, landmark 5 in our giri valam map. This is the second of the eight **Ashta Dik Lingams** on the girivalam route. Just within this segment of the giri valam, there are hundreds of important [Arunachala darshans](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/index.htm). These should be learnt directly from the Sathguru.  **Indra**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Indra Theertham** sacred pond and **Indra Mandapam**.  **Thejo Mukha Linga Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Seshadri Ashram**, landmark 6 in our girivalam map. The vision from here is **Théjó Muka Darshan**. This vision makes the indecisive decisive; it gives clarity of thinking to those who are muddled. It helps those who are not successful in business or in making friends.  **Eru Pancha Mukha Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Ramana Ashram**, landmark 7 in our giri valam map. **Éru Pancha Muka Darshan**, the vision that redeems. Expiatory darshan for those who may have sinned because of the pressure of circumstances. Protects them from sinning again. This is the Arunachala darshan near Ramana Ashram.  **Eka Mukha Linga Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifIf you go deep inside the Ramanashram and look at the Hill, Lord Arunachala gives you His **Eka Mukha Linga Darshan**, said Sathguru Venkataraman.  **Arunachala Dhida Mukha Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifNear Ramana Ashram is another little ashram. The vision from here is **Dhida Muka Darshan**. The Lord advised the Universal Mother to see this darshan during Her girivalam! This is the vision that gives one a resolute, purposeful approach to life. The wavering mind becomes purposeful as a result of this darshan. |

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| **Arunachala's Bringi Muni Mayaana Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Nandi Mandapam** on top of a huge rock. The vision from here is **Bringi Muni Mayaana Darshan**.  **Prithvi Bangaru Mukha Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifNext we come across the huge **Prithvi Nandi** deity, the first of the Pancha Bootha Nandi deities on the giri valam route. The vision from here is **Prithvi Bangaaru Muka Darshan**. This is a very important darshan. Offer deepam and incense to [Arunachala](http://agasthiar.org/arunachala/index.htm) from here and prostrate yourselves in front of Him. This vision offers relief from poverty. It blesses one with wealth and gold.  **Yama Lingam**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Yama Lingam** shrine, landmark 8 in our girivalam map. This is the third of the eight **Ashta Dik Lingams** on the giri valam route.  **Appu Nandi and Arunachala Mitra Chaaru Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Appu Nandi** deity in a small mandapam, the second of the Pancha Bootha Nandi deities on the girivalam route. Look at the peak of the hill through the horns of the Nandi deity. This vision is known as **Mitra Chaaru darshan**. This is the vision that reunites those who are estranged or separated; it's the vision that retrieves that which you may have lost, whether it be land, money or anything else.  **Nirrti Lingam**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Nirutthi Lingam** shrine, landmark 9 in our giri valam map. This is the fourth of the eight **Ashta Dik Lingams** on the girivalam route.  **Siva Raja Singan Pond**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Siva Raja Singa** theertham pond. On the banks of this pond is a Nandi deity. Look at the peak of the hill through the horns of this deity. This is the place to make spiritual resolutions. This is the place to give up bad habits. The angel Siva Raja Singa, who guards this spot, is the witness for the resolutions you make here and the bad habits you give up here. Once given up, we dare not succumb to these habits again. Siva Raja Singa will remind us of our holy promise to [Arunachala](http://agasthiar.org/arunachala/index.htm). But if we still break our resolve, we'll have to face the wrath of this most powerful angel. Because of these stipulations, many figure that it's best to not make a resolution. But this is no solution. Spiritual upliftment is the result of making resolutions and sticking to them. To visit Arunachala and not make spiritual resolutions is to have wasted a unique opportunity. Make positive resolutions, stick to them and march on the path of spiritual upliftment.  **Kama Kadu (Forest of Desire) Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifAs we continue on the giri valam route, we see dense shrubbery on our right. This shrubbery is so dense that it obscures Arunachala from our sight. The Siddhas refer to this shrubbery as **Kaama Kaadu**, the forest of desire. Once we "enter" the forest of desire, we can't see [Arunachala](http://agasthiar.org/arunachala/index.htm) any more. This is the symbolism behind this dense shrubbery. This is the place to give up improper desires. If you have succumbed to lustful desires, this is the place to ask for forgiveness. This is the place to expiate the bad karma resulting from lust and the evil wrought by it. This is also the place to expiate those sins resulting from not caring properly for the *yagnopaveetha* sacred thread. How? By doing **anga pradakshinam** upto **Théyu Nandi**. The details should be learnt from the Sathguru. |

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| **Theyu Nandi and Arunachala Chatur Mukha Linga Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Théyu Nandi** deity, the third of the Pancha Bootha Nandi deities on the girivalam route. Look at the peak of the hill through the horns of this deity. This vision is known as the **Chathur Muka Darshan**. Lord Brahma saw this darshan during His giri valam. It's the vision that makes one proficient in the Veda scriptures and well versed in other forms of knowledge. Those who see this darshan will also get Lord Brahma's grace.  **Arunachala Gayatri Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifNext is the important **Gayatri Darshan**. Those who see this darshan will get the grace of Mothers Gayatri, Savitri and Sarasvathi.  **Arunachala Shakti Shiva Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifAs we proceed further we see the **Sakthi Siva Darshan**. This is the vision which offered solace to King Nala and his wife Damayanti. This vision reunites estranged couples and kids who have been separated from their parents. It promotes unity and harmony in family life.  **Surya Lingam**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Soorya Lingam** shrine, landmark 10 in our girivalam map.  **Varuna Lingam**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Varuna Lingam** shrine, landmark 11 in our giri valam map. This is the fifth of the eight **Ashta Dik Lingams** on the giri valam route.  **Mother Unnamulai Amman's Tapasya. Arunachala Somaskanda Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Unnamulai Mandapam** and **Unnamulai Theertham** pond. Mother Unnamulai is Lord Arunachala's consort. She performed years of severe penance at this spot to be united with Arunachala. Remember the Mother's penance when you reach this spot. The vision from Unnamulai mandapam is known as **Somaskanda Drashan**.  **Arunachala Siva Yoga Mukha Linga Darshan**  [[Click here!](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/aruna5-570x384-web.jpg)](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/aruna5-570x384-web.jpg)http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Adi Annamalai** temple, landmark 12 in our girivalam map. The vision of Arunachala from this temple is known as **Siva Yoga Muka Darshan**. The great **Siddha Thirumoolar** saw this darshan. Those who want to get Thirumoolar's grace must get this darshan during their giri valam. This is very importnat for them.  **Arunachala Lavanya Suka Brahma Muni Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Manivaasaga Theertham** pond. Sing Thiruvaasagam songs from this spot. Next is the **Manivaasaga Mandapam**. The darshan from this spot is known as **Lavanya Suka Muni Darshan**. This is the vision that makes one beautiful. However ugly one may be, this vision will make them beautiful some how or the other, may be through cosmetic surgery too! Those who are disfigured will get some of their original looks back through the help of doctors.  **Vayu Lingam**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Vaayu Lingam** shrine, landmark 13 in our giri valam map. This is the sixth of the eight **Ashta Dik Lingams** on the girivalam route. The vision from here is known as **Kanda Neeru Muka Darshan**. It's the vision that offers relief from all physical problems related to wind.  **Janma Sabalya Mukha Linga Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifNext on the route is a Nandi. The vision through the horns of this deity is known as **Janma Saabalya Muka Darshan**. This vision offers salvation from curses received in many many births.  **Arunachala Dasa Mukha Linga Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Abaya Mandapam**, landmark 14 in our giri valam map. The vision from here is the **Dasa Muka Darshan**. It's a darshan that offers relief from many problems. The demon Ravana got redemption from his sins through this darshan.  **Arunachala Shiva Shakti Aikya Swaroopa Darshan - Agasthiar Ashram**  [[Click here!](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/asram.jpg)](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/asram.jpg)http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Sri La Sri Lobha Matha Agasthiar Ashram**, landmark 15 in our girivalam map. This is the ashram which is being established by the Sathguru, Guru Mangala Gandharva Venkataraman, the 1001-st teacher in the Agasthiar divine teacher lineage. The vision from here is the [[Click here!](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/shivikl-572x261-web.jpg)](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/shivikl-572x261-web.jpg)**Siva Sakthi Aikiya Svaroopa Darshan**, the vision of Siva and Sakthi in perfect alignment. This is a great panoramic view of [Arunachala](http://agasthiar.org/arunachala/index.htm)! Those who just can't seem to get married will get married as a result of this vision. This vision reunites estranged couples and promotes harmony in family life. It's the vision for begetting children who will grow up to be Siddhas and saintly beings. |

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| **Adhikara Nandi**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifThe majestic **Adhikaara Nandi** shrine, landmark 16 in our giri valam map.  **Kubera Lingam**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Kubera Lingam** shrine, landmark 17 in our girivalam map. This is the seventh of the eight **Ashta Dik Lingams** on the giri valam route. This is a deity worshipped by Mother Lakshmi Herself and thus a very important stop on the girivalam route.  **Idukku Pillaiaar GANESH**  [[Click here!](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/idukku-pillaiaar-darsh-576x361-web.jpg)](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/idukku-pillaiaar-darsh-576x361-web.jpg)http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Idukku Pillaiaar** Ganesh shrine, landmark 18 in our giri valam map. The shrine which can remove the karma of millions of births.  **Arunachala Pancha Mukha Linga Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifThe very important **Pancha Muka Darshan**. This vision blesses the devotee with career advancement.  **Arunachala Kona Linga Mukha Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifNext we pass by the cemetery area. The vision from here is the important **Kóna Linga Muka Darshan**. This is the vision for renunciants who want nothing but the Lord, whose sole refuge is the Lord's lotus feet, who are pure of heart and who have no desires except the Lord. These souls must see this darshan. It'll do them much good. (By the way, let it be known that the ochre colored robes are meant only for true renunciants. It's a great sin to wear the ochre robes without having renounced everything.)  **Eesanya Lingam**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Eesaanya Lingam** shrine, landmark 19 in our girivalam map. This is the eighth of the eight **Ashta Dik Lingams** on the giri valam route.  **Arunachala Maya Kuzhi Vadu Linga Mukha Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Mother Durga** temple, landmark 20 in our giri valam map. The vision of [Arunachala](http://agasthiar.org/arunachala/index.htm) from here is known as the **Maaya Kuzhi Vadu Darshan**. *If you see this darshan along with the Pournami full moon, the maaya arising out of a million desires, the maaya of an agitated mind that hankers over a million things will go away. Lustful feelings will subside in their intensity. Improper sexual desires will decrease. Those who have led a life of sin should seek expiation at this spot. They should forego their sinful life and lead a good life marked by lots of charitable deeds; they should feed and clothe the poor, offer free medical and educational help to them.*  **Pavazha Kundru Darshan in Arunachala = Palani Muruga Darshan**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Pavazha Kundru Muruga** temple, landmark 21 in our girivalam map. The darshan of the Lord here is equivalent to the darshan of the Lord of the Palani Hills. This is one of the special Siddha secrets given to the world by Sathguru Venkataraman.  **Arunachala Pasupati Darshan. Bootha Narayana, the Girivalam Completion Point**  [[Click here!](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/bootha-narayana-oval-259x457-web.jpg)](http://agasthiar.org/arunapics/bootha-narayana-oval-259x457-web.jpg)http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gif**Bootha Narayana** shrine, landmark 22 in our girivalam map. The vision from this spot is known as **Pasupathi darshan**, meaning that the *pasus* (individual souls) must reach the *pathi* (God) through giri valam by the grace of a Sathguru. This is the spot where the beginners' girivalam is deemed complete, provided you fed the poor and the needy during your giri valam. Offer the results of your girivalam to Lord Bootha Narayana for safe keeping.  **Irattai Pillaiaar GANESH**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifVisit the **Irattai Pillaiaar** Ganesh shrine, landmark 23 in our giri valam map.  **Arunachaleswarar Temple**  http://agasthiar.org/AUMzine/gdot9gv.gifEnter the [Arunachala](http://agasthiar.org/arunachala/index.htm) temple again through the East gopuram. Make your way to the South gopuram and from there to the **West and North gopurams**, landmarks 26 and 25 respectively in our girivalam map. Worship all the deities in the temple including Nandeesvara and the Muruga deities known as *Kambatthu Ilaiyanaar* and *Gopuratthu Ilaiyanaar*. Offer your respects at Sri Durvaasa Rishi's sanctum. Surrender to Lord Arunachala and the Universal Mother in their main sancta and request Their grace. Ask to be Their devotee eternally. Mentally offer your respects to Maha Guru Agasthiar, the revealer of this knowledge and His divine teacher lineage. |

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