

Aravind 2013 - Arrival

Charges for Cataract Surgery (Excluding food expenses)								
	SICS WITH IOL	AUROFOLDABLE	AUROVUE	ACRYLIC	ASPHERIC	TORIC	RESTOR (Multifocal)	SICS WITH ACRYLIC
Suite Room	₹. 8600	₹. 13000	₹. 17400	₹. 19300	₹. 24600	₹. 34700	₹. 49400	₹. 13000
A/C Room	₹. 7600	₹. 12000	₹. 16400	₹. 18300	₹. 23600	₹. 33700	₹. 48400	₹. 12000
A-Class Room	₹. 6800	₹. 11200	₹. 15600	₹. 17500	₹. 22800	₹. 32900	₹. 47600	₹. 11200
B-Class Room	₹. 6400	₹. 10800	₹. 15200	₹. 17100	₹. 22400	₹. 32500	₹. 47200	₹. 10800
C-Class Room	₹. 6100	₹. 10500	₹. 14900	₹. 16800	₹. 22100	₹. 32200	₹. 46900	₹. 10500
D-Class Room	₹. 5800	₹. 10200	₹. 14600	₹. 16500	₹. 21800	₹. 31900	₹. 46600	₹. 10200
Day Care	₹. 5600	₹. 10000	₹. 14300	₹. 16200	₹. 21500	₹. 31600	₹. 46300	₹. 10000

Friday 4 Oct 2013

ARRIVAL

Imagine that you wanted to buy a car, and the only car that was for sale was the Cadillac CTS-V (MRSP \$64,500). Thank goodness that is not the case- we have a wide variety of cars to choose from, and although they have all to meet the same safety standards, they don't all have to cost the same.

First impression- everyone here went to the Red Corpuscle School of Driving. Any thought I had of getting a bicycle went out the window after the third fender bender on the ride in from the airport.

The same is not true if you have visually significant cataract and need to have cataract surgery. For most of us, we would only worry about our deductible portion of the cost. However, if you don't have insurance, finding out how much it will cost to see better is difficult at best, and you find that you are effectively going to buy a Cadillac even if your budget is more Chevrolet.



The gate to the old city puts the Snake Bridge to shame.

GETTING HERE IS HALF THE FUN



I got stuck in a travel nightmare- No Visa to visit India – the problem apparently that the consulate did not believe I was going to Aravind Eye Hospital to study their methods rather than to do research. Ultimately after about a month of delays, I was issued a Student Visa, and was off – about 4 days behind schedule. Thanks Pat for making it happen. FedEx arrived at 10 am, I was en route 4 hours later.



Aravind is a big operation- this is one of 6 buildings about the same size. There are separate buildings for inpatient and outpatient services, both charity and paid, as well as research and education buildings.

Accommodations

It is warm here but not hot, and it is humid. Feels more like Baltimore than Tucson. I am staying in the international hostel run by Aravind for visiting faculty types. I think that there are 18 rooms or so.



The room is nice and has a private bath and a/c. There is power and there is wifi, so there is a postcard.



The Aravind operation is in Tamil Nadu.



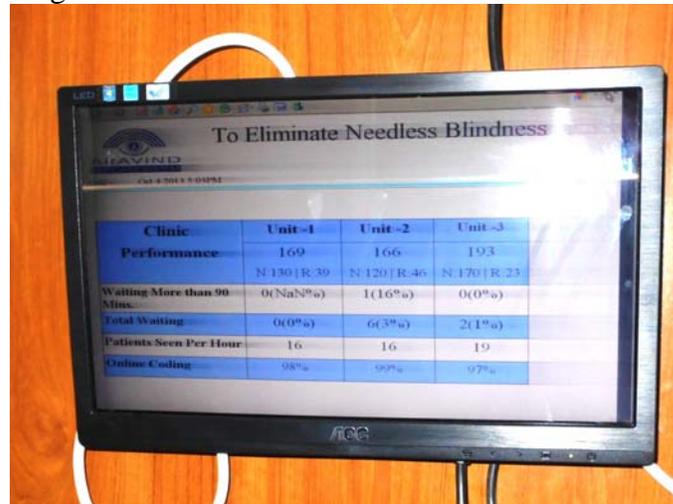
The key things about this region that I have learned so far, are, in order of personal importance: a) they drink coffee and b) they speak English. The Tamil language differs so from

Hindi, the predominant language, that English is the common language.

Here to Learn

I'm here to learn. The first thing I hope to learn is manual small incision cataract surgery. I will start by dropping drops on the cornea in about 2 hours.

I also hope to study the process that Aravind employs in delivering health care. The volume is such that many people do the same task repetitively in order to achieve efficiency. How would you like to stare at this all day long?



That sounds ok but the cost is that you don't know any one person well, and never see anyone longer than necessary. The way your output is measured made me feel like I was visiting a call center. Above is the display mounted on the wall behind the patient, in sight of the ophthalmologist at the slit lamp, which displays the productivity of the individual for the day, and compares to the other doctors and the production goal for the day...

Which reminds me...

If you need to reach me send me an email to my gmail account – jmillermdmph@gmail.com.

I do have access to my eyes account but it is very slow to respond and the gmail account shows up on my tablet.

I will do my best to keep you posted. Till then, I am off to observe and spend a day in the wet lab.

Love to all-

Joe