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Sri Lanka Tour

15-day itinerary

Sri Lanka has often been described as a tropical paradise. It's natural beauty has led the country to be referred to as The Pearl of the Indian Ocean. Sri Lanka is home to one of the oldest civilizations in the world and boasts no less than eight UNESCO World Heritage sites. Its history is on display in the Cultural Triangle including the ancient sites of Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya and Kandy. Despite its small size Sri Lanka is rated as one of the top five biodiversity hotspots in the world, with leopards, Asian elephants, sambar deer and wild buffaloes drawing the most attention in the country's many national parks and sanctuaries. Yet it is the more than 400 species of birds that are the glory of the Sri Lanka's wildlife. The unique mix of tropical beauty, ancient heritage and biodiversity makes Sri Lanka a delightful destination to visit.

Included:

- 15 nights accommodation, in hotels as indicated in the itinerary
- 14 breakfasts as indicated in the itinerary
- All transportation, daily tours and entrance fees
- Local Sri Lankan Guides, as indicated in the itinerary
- Experienced Australian tour guide

Not Included:

- Airfares to and from Sri Lanka
- Sri Lankan Tourist Visa
- Arrival and Departure transfers
- Lunches and Evening meals
- Hotel and restaurant tips
- Personal expenditure such as drinks, laundry service and souvenirs
- Personal Travel Insurance

Please Note:

Our guide may need to change the itinerary depending on local daily conditions

Exploranges Sri Lanka 15-day Itinerary

Small Group Tour limited to 12 people.

Tour commences at 09:00 am in the lobby of The Gateway Hotel Airport Garden Colombo, just 5 minutes drive from the Colombo International Airport. Address: 234/238 Negombo Road, Seeduwa, Katunayake, Negombo, Sri Lanka.

Your Exploranges Guides will be staying in this hotel on the night before the tour and can be contacted on mobile +61417873267 or +61417873277.

Day One - Negombo to Dambulla

Meet your Exploranges guides before heading towards Dambulla in Sri Lanka's Central Province - our base to explore the UNESCO World heritage of Sri Lanka's Cultural Triangle.

Travel time - (6 hours)

Dambulla Hotel - [Kassapa Lions Rock](#) or equivalent.



Day Two - Polonnaruwa

UNESCO World Heritage. From Dambulla we take a day trip to Polonnaruwa. The second most ancient of Sri Lanka's kingdoms, Polonnaruwa was first declared the capital city by King Vijayabahu I, who defeated the Chola invaders in 1070. Today the ancient city remains one of the best planned archaeological relic sites in the country, a testimony to the discipline and greatness of the Kingdom's first rulers. We start our visit at the Polonnaruwa Archaeological Museum before exploring the ancient ruins of the city.

Travel time - (2 hours), Meals included (B)

Local Guide included at Polonnaruwa

Dambulla Hotel - [Kassapa Lions Rock](#) or equivalent.



Day Three - Sigiriya

UNESCO World Heritage. An early start to visit Sigiriya (Lion Rock), considered by some to be the eighth wonder of the world. This ancient castle was used by King Kasyapa in the 5th century AD and has the remains of an upper Palace sited on the flat top of the rock, a mid-level terrace that includes the Lion Gate, the famous Sigiriya Frescoes and the lower moats, walls and gardens that extend hundreds of metres out from the base of the rock.

Travel time - (1 hour), Meals included (B)

Local Guide included at Sigiriya

Dambulla Hotel - [Kassapa Lions Rock](#) or equivalent.



Day Four - Dambulla to Kandy

UNESCO World Heritage. After a leisurely breakfast we depart Dambulla heading for Kandy. Our first stop will be at the Golden Temple of Dambulla - the largest and best-preserved cave temple complex in Sri Lanka. The caves contain statues and paintings related to Lord Buddha and his life. We then visit spice gardens in Matale before arriving in Kandy mid-afternoon.

Travel time - (4 hours), Meals included (B)

Kandy Hotel – [Hotel Thilanka](#) or equivalent.

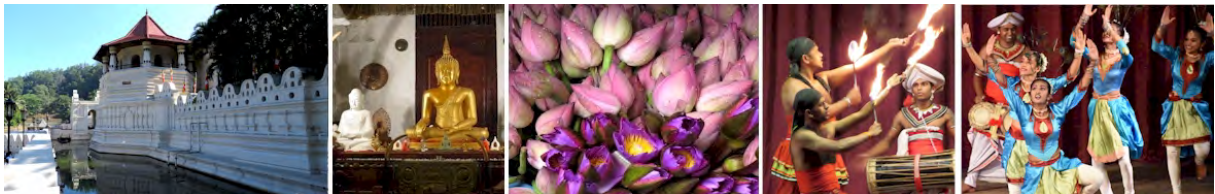


Day Five - Kandy

UNESCO World Heritage. As capital of the Sinhalese Kings from 1592 to 1815, Kandy is a world heritage site declared in part due to the Sri Dalada Maligawa or The Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic. In the morning we will visit the royal palace complex which houses the tooth relic of the Buddha, a tooth, which is venerated by Buddhists. The relic has played an important role in local politics since ancient times, as it's believed that whoever holds the relic holds the governance of the country. In the early evening we will attend a cultural show that highlights the vibrant and unique Sri Lankan traditional music and dancing.

Meals included (B)

Kandy Hotel – [Hotel Thilanka](#) or equivalent.



Day Six - Kandy to Nuwara Eliya

In the morning we head into the mountains towards Nuwara Eliya, considered to be the most important location for tea production in Sri Lanka. At 6000 ft above sea level it has always been a favoured stomping ground for the tea planters and has kept its colonial hill station atmosphere more completely than any place in the subcontinent. On the way we will visit a working tea factory and sample the local brew. In the afternoon we will spend time enjoying the splendour of Hakgala Botanic Gardens.

Travel time - (4 hours), Meals included (B)

Nuara Eliya Hotel – [The Hill Club](#) or equivalent.



Day Seven - Nuwara Eliya to Ella

Today we take the midday train from Nuwara Eliya to Ella. The 3 hour train journey offers incredible views across the Sri Lankan hill country, passing in and out of numerous mountain tunnels, through tea plantations, eucalyptus forests and nearby villages. We arrive in Ella late afternoon and transfer to our guesthouse with panoramic views of Ella Gap to the Southern plains of Sri Lanka.

Travel time - (3 hours), Meals included (B)

Ella Hotel - [Ella Gap Panorama](#) or equivalent.



Day Eight - Ella to Udawalawe

Sri Lanka is liberally endowed with beautiful views, and Ella has one of the best. In the morning we will take a short walk through the tea plantations to Little Adam's Peak. For the more energetic there is also the option of a hike to Ella Rock. In the afternoon we descend from the mountains on our way to visit Udawalawe National Park.

Travel time - (3 hours), Meals included (B)

Ella Hotel - [Grand Udawalawe Safari Resort](#) or equivalent.



Day Nine - Udawalawe

After a leisurely morning we visit Udawalawe National Park for an afternoon safari. Udawalawe is an important habitat for Sri Lankan elephants that are attracted to the waters of the Udawalawe reservoir. It is estimated that there are 400 elephants within the 30,000 hectares of this animal sanctuary.

Meals included (B)

Local Guide included at Udawalawe NP

Udawalawe Hotel - [Grand Udawalawe Safari Resort](#) or equivalent.



Day Ten - Udawalawe to Tissamaharama

After visiting the Udawalawe Elephant Transfer Home, where orphaned baby elephants are cared for until they can be released into the wild, it is just a short distance to travel to Tissamaharama. There are six national parks and three wildlife sanctuaries in this location covering a variety of ecosystems ranging from moist monsoon forests to freshwater and marine wetlands. Here we will spend three nights to allow plenty of time for you to get up, close and personal with Sri Lanka's untamed world of wildlife.

Travel time - (3 hours), Meals included (B)

Tissamaharama Hotel - [Kithala Resort](#) or equivalent.



Day Eleven - Yala Safari

Yala National Park covers 979 square kilometres and was designated as a wildlife sanctuary in 1900. Yala is home to 44 varieties of mammal and 215 bird species. Among its more famous residents are the world's biggest concentration of leopards, majestic elephants, sloth bears, sambars, jackals, spotted deer, peacocks, and crocodiles. We will get up early, pack our breakfast and head out before sunrise to spend the morning exploring around the park - searching for the elusive leopard.

Meals included (B)

Local Guide included at Yala NP

Tissamaharama Hotel - [Kithala Resort](#) or equivalent.



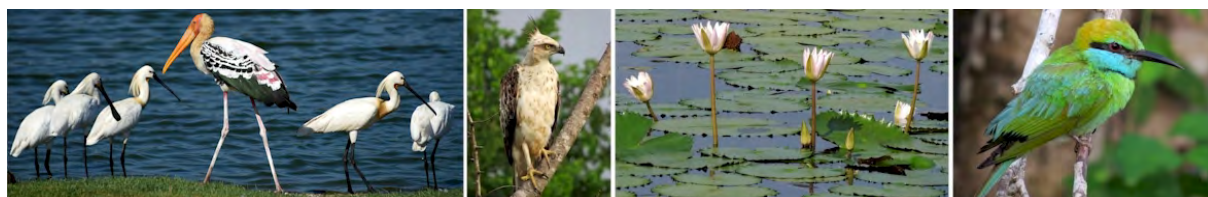
Day Twelve - Bundala National Park

UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Bundala National Park is one of Sri Lanka's foremost destinations for birdwatchers. The park stretches along the coast for around 20km, enclosing five shallow and brackish lagoons, separated by thick low scrubby forest running down to coastal dunes. The lagoons attract an amazing variety of aquatic birds, including ibis, pelicans, painted storks, egrets and spoonbills. In 1991 Bundala became the first wetland to be declared as a Ramsar site in Sri Lanka and in 2005 it was designated as a biosphere reserve by UNESCO. Don't forget your binoculars.

Meals included (B)

Local Guide included at Bundala NP

Tissamaharama Hotel - [Kithala Resort](#) or equivalent.



Day Thirteen - Tissamaharama to Unawatuna

Today we travel along the southern coast of Sri Lanka on the road to Galle. After a short stop at Dondra Lighthouse, on the southernmost point of Sri Lanka, we will drive through the fishing ports of Mirissa and Weligama before arriving in Unawatuna in the early afternoon. Spend the afternoon relaxing on the beach and enjoying the Indian Ocean.

Travel time - (5 Hours), Meals included (B)

Unawatuna Hotel - [Calamander Unawatuna Beach](#) or equivalent.



Day Fourteen - Galle

UNESCO World Heritage. Used by the Portuguese, Dutch and British during its colourful history, the port town of Galle features an impressive fort which has the distinction of being the best-preserved sea fort in South Asia. Originally established by the Portuguese in the 16th Century, it reached its zenith under Dutch rule in the 18th Century, providing spacious housing and all necessary facilities within its walls. We will spend the morning exploring the narrow streets, the colonial buildings the museums and antique shops within the fort.

Meals included (B)

Unawatuna Hotel - [Calamander Unawatuna Beach](#) or equivalent



Day Fifteen - Galle to Colombo

After an early morning swim it is time to head back to Colombo. On the way we will visit a small private turtle conservation centre which works to protect the endangered turtle species. We will witness what remains of the destruction caused by the 2004 Tsunami and see the Tsunami memorial and photo museum.

Travel time - (5 Hours), Meals included (B)

Colombo Hotel - [Mt Lavinia Hotel](#) or equivalent.



Please Note:

Our tour is specifically designed to see the highlights of Sri Lanka without spending most of your time on a bus. Our pace is deliberately casual so that you can relax and enjoy your holiday.

Our tour does not include sightseeing in Colombo. This is because we believe your time and money is better spent exploring other places in Sri Lanka. If you wish to spend time in Colombo you should consider adding it at the start or end of our itinerary.