

13 Day Private Tour | Amazing Sri Lanka

Colombo - Negombo - Anuradhapura - Habarana - Kandy - Nuwara Eliya - Ella
- Yala - Galle

From **\$2,999** Typically \$3,999 pp twin share



12 Nights of premium, hand-picked accommodation

Visit a range of exciting, UNESCO World Heritage Sites

Experience a jeep safari in Minneriya & Yala National Park

Enjoy an iconic train ride through the Sri Lankan hills

Description



Visiting Sri Lanka is an incredible experience, as the island nation is a beautiful and diverse country with a rich history and culture. From stunning beaches to lush forests and ancient temples, there is something for everyone in Sri Lanka.

One of the highlights of any trip to Sri Lanka is visiting its many historical sites. The ancient city of Anuradhapura, for example, is home to some of the oldest and most impressive Buddhist temples in the world, including the Ruwanwelisaya stupa and the Jetavanaramaya dagoba. Another must-visit historical site is the Sigiriya rock fortress, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that dates back to the 5th century.

Sri Lanka is home to a wide variety of wildlife, including elephants, leopards, and a multitude of bird species. The Yala National Park, located in the southeastern part of the country, is one of the best places to see wildlife in Sri Lanka.

In addition to its natural and historical attractions, Sri Lanka is also known for its delicious cuisine. From spicy curries to sweet desserts, Sri Lankan food is full of flavor and variety.

Visiting Sri Lanka is a truly unforgettable experience. With its stunning landscapes, rich culture, and welcoming people, this island nation is a destination that should be on everyone's travel bucket list.

Itinerary

Day 1

Colombo - Negombo

Upon arrival at Colombo International Airport, having cleared immigration, collect your luggage and pass through customs, then please make your way towards the exit of the terminal building where you will be met by a Travel Sapphire Representative who will be waiting to greet you with a paging board with your name on it.

Sri Lanka's capital, Colombo is a fascinating city with a cosy mixture of the past and present. Colombo is the commercial capital and largest city of Sri Lanka by population. It is located on the west coast of the island, a busy and vibrant place with a mixture of modern life and colonial buildings and ruins etc.

Upon arrival, travel to Negombo and check in at the hotel.

Meals: Dinner

Accommodation: Negombo Goldi Sands Hotel

Day 2

Negombo - Anuradhapura

Today you will enjoy a city tour of Negombo visiting St. Mary's Church, Dutch Canal, Fish market, Dutch Clock Tower and Dutch Fort. Negombo has been coined as 'Little Rome' for centuries, and you will see these beautiful (Gothic) churches towering alongside the road, over the lush trees. We stop over at the largest and Grandest church (It is called Grand Street Church after-all) from the 1800's. From there on it's a short drive and stroll through the streets that were in the Negombo Fort area where its housing structure is yet very Dutch in all form and manner. We also see the actual fort walls, the very British little church on the hill and the Bell Tower. Being known for its sea-food, the experience would not be complete until you have visited the fish market; where you know, just by being in their presence the love and dedication they have towards this trade that is just in their blood. The dry-fish market is on the beach adjoining, and the process is quite an interesting one.

Later by car or bus travel to Anuradhapura.

Anuradhapura was the first capital and undoubtedly the grandest city of the ancient Ceylon. It is the home of two world heritage sites. Many places of historical and archaeological interest could be visited. Sri Maha Bodhi (Sacred Bo-Tree) was brought as a sampling of the tree under which Prince Siddhartha attained to enlightenment and it is over 2200 years old and is the oldest historically documented tree in the world. The Brazen Palace (2nd century B.C), the 1600 stone columns you see are all that is left of a magnificent multi-storied residence for monks. Ruwanwelisaya (2nd century B.C) is the most famous of all the dagobas. It originally depicted the perfect "bubble shape" that modern restoration has not been able to accurately reproduce. "Samadhi" Buddha statue (4th century AD) is one of the most famous statues, depicting the Buddha in a state of "Samadhi" or deep meditation. Isurumuniya rock temple (3rd century B.C) is well known for its rock carvings.

Upon arrival, transfer to hotel. Rest of the day will be at your leisure.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Accommodation: Anuradhapura Palm Garden Village Hotel

Day 3

Anuradhapura - Habarana

Today start off by exploring the ancient Anuradhapura Archeological Sites.

Later by surface travel to Habarana. Upon arrival, transfer to hotel.

Habarana is a small city in the Anuradhapura District of Sri Lanka. Habarana is situated nearby to the ancient rock fortress and castle/palace ruin of Sigiriya and is situated on the main road from Colombo to Trincomalee, Polonnaruwa and Batticaloa. The population of the city is expected to be in the area of 5000-10,000.

Later, enjoy 4x4 Jeep Safari in Minneriya National Park, 8889 hectares in extent and known for its large population of elephants in herds of 100 to 150 roaming in the jungle and seen in the catchment area of the lake. Wild elephants, wild buffaloes, wild boar, spotted deer, sloth bear, Sambhur, crocodiles, jackals, 9 kinds of amphibians, 25 kinds of reptiles, 160 species of birds, 26 varieties of fishes, 78 varieties of butterflies are recorded to be inhabitants.

Evening will be at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Accommodation: Habarana Habarana Village by Cinnamon

Day 4

Habarana

This morning you will climb Sigiriya Rock Fortress (a UNESCO World Heritage Site). Climb the 5th century Sigiriya Rock Fortress which is a UNESCO world heritage site, built by King Kashyapa (477-495 AD). The "Lion Rock" is a citadel of unusual beauty rising 200 meters from the scrub jungle. The rock was the innermost stronghold of the 70-hectare fortified town. A moat, rampart, and extensive gardens including the renowned water gardens ring the base of the rock. Visit the world-renowned frescoes of the "Heavenly Maidens" of Sigiriya, which are in a sheltered pocket of the rock approached by a spiral stairway. These frescoes are painted in earth pigments on plaster.

Excursion Duration: Time Depends on how fast you climb the visit takes anything from 1.5 hours to 2.5 hrs.

Attire or carry along: Light cool clothing, a cap, and sunscreen, and a camera. It is advised to carry a bottle of water in a backpack.

After this, proceed to take part in a Cooking Class and enjoy an Authentic Sri Lankan Lunch. Indulge in typical Sri Lanka cooking lessons that promise an authentic experience as well as a delicious meal. There is a wide menu to choose from in keeping the mood and the moment. Get hand-on experience with an experienced and knowledgeable instructor and master finer points that help preserve the nutritive values and authentic taste, making it not only enjoyable meal but also a wholesome one. Example of some demos: Steam Rice, Dhal Curry, Beans Curry, Gotukola Sambol, Ambuliyal Fish, Coconut Sambol, and Watalappam for the desert.

Later, enjoy the Village Tour. The Hiriwadunna Village Tour is your journey into the environment of a typical Sri Lankan village. The tour starts off with a ride on a bullock cart (Ox cart) along a dirt track and through rice paddies down to the picturesque Hiriwadunna Lake. The adventure continues with a traditional Catamaran Ride on the lake with its large variety of dry zone bird life and views of the surrounding forest, marshland and vegetable plots of local farmers. The tours end with a Tuk-Tuk ride up to the main road from the gravel road sides of the lake.

Evening will be at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Accommodation: Habarana Habarana Village by Cinnamon

Day 5

Habarana – Matale – Kandy

Travel by surface to Kandy, en-route visit Dambulla Cave Temple and Matale Spice Garden.

Dambulla Cave Temple is a UNESCO World Heritage site and dates back to 1st century BC. Originally it was the refuge of King Walagamba, and the caves were later converted into a rock temple. It has five caves under a vast overhanging rock, the ceilings of the caves are painted with complex patterns of religious images. The caves are considered to be the finest storehouse of Sinhala art and sculptures consists of an imposing 15-metre long reclining Buddha, 150 statues of the Buddhist order, statues of Kings and Hindu deities etc.

Matale Spice Gardens are among the best on the island. You will be introduced to different spices and shown how some of these spices are grown and processed. A processing and training unit has been set up in the area and farmers are grouped in a cooperative to ensure fair prices and you will also be able to purchase spices.

Upon arrival in Kandy, transfer to hotel.

Kandy is the last capital of Sri Lanka. It is amongst a hilly terrain and center of the city houses the most charming Kandy Lake. City lies at an elevation of 465 meters above the sea level. Kandy was last home for Kandyan Kings of yore in 19th century and fountain for all music, arts, crafts and culture in the country.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Accommodation: Kandy Cinnamon Citadel

Day 6

Kandy

Today you will visit the Temple of the Tooth Relic. This temple houses a tooth relic of the Lord Buddha, and is consequently considered one of Sri Lanka's most holy shrines. Although you may not view the actual tooth itself, the casket within which it is said to be is displayed twice a day.

Excursion Duration: approx. 01 hour

Light Colored clothing with sleeves and trousers or skirts below the knee length are recommended

Since this is a religious site – the foot ware should be removed before entering the temple premises. You can wear socks if you wish to.

Enjoy lunch in a Sri Lankan Mansion overlooking the Kandy Lake.

In the evening, enjoy Cultural Dance Show. The Cultural Dance Show is a stimulating Sri Lankan Arts, Dance & Cultural Heritage Show that is a must see for any visitor who visits the historic city of Kandy. It is the first Cultural Dance Show of its kind to be established in Sri Lanka.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Accommodation: Kandy Cinnamon Citadel

Day 7

Kandy – Nuwara Eliya

Today after breakfast travel by car or bus to Nuwara Eliya.

Nuwara Eliya, the ‘Little England’ of Sri Lanka, is set against beautiful backdrops of Mountains, Valleys, Waterfalls and Tea Plantations. It is one of the coolest places in the Island, but it is really just like an English spring day, although the temperature does drop at night. All around Nuwara Eliya you will see evidence of the British influence, houses like country cottages or Queen Ann style mansions.

Late afternoon, visit to Tea Plantation and Tea Factory.

Visit to Tea plantation and Tea factory where one the best tea in the world is produced. You will be explained all about the process of processing tea and also gain first-hand experience. Taste a cup of pure Ceylon tea which begins its journey as raw green leaves in the hills and ends up as a final golden-brown graded product which we all but know too well. Also, Take part in Tea plucking season.

(Note: - Tea factories are closed on Sundays and public holidays)

Later, enjoy a visit to Gregory Lake and Victoria Park.

Lake Gregory is a reservoir in heart of the tea country hill city, Nuwara Eliya. Lake Gregory was constructed during the period of British Governor Sir William Gregory in 1873. It was supposedly created for the purpose of providing electricity. However, the lake was mainly used for leisure and recreation after it was built.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Accommodation: Nuwara Eliya Galway Heights

Day 8

Nuwara Eliya – Ella

This morning after breakfast enjoy the scenic train ride from Nano Oya to Ella.

Board a local train for a journey through the hill country. A ride by local train to the little England is one of the most picturesque rail journeys in the world! You journey through dark tunnels on winding tracks, the famous Ceylon Tea. The rolling mountains are a carpet of velvety green tea plantations, interspersed with gushing streams and tumbling waterfalls.

Ella is a small town in the Badulla District of Uva Province, Sri Lanka governed by an Urban Council. It is in the east of Colombo and is situated at an elevation of 1,041 metres (3,415 ft.) above sea level. The area has a rich bio-diversity, dense with numerous varieties of flora and fauna. Ella is surrounded by hills covered with cloud forests and tea plantations. The town has a cooler climate than surrounding lowlands, due to its elevation. The Ella Gap allows views across the southern plains of Sri Lanka.

Visit the Nine Arches Bridge.

Nine Arches Bridge is located in Demodara, between Ella and Demodara railway stations. The surrounding area has seen a steady increase of tourism due to the bridge's architectural ingenuity and the profuse greenery in the nearby hillsides. Popular rumors suggest that when construction work commenced on the bridge, the Great War began between the empires of Europe and the steel assigned for this site was reallocated to Britain's

War related projects at the battlefield. As a result, the work came to a standstill, leading the locals build the bridge with stone bricks and cement, but without steel.

Upon arrival in Ella, transfer to hotel. Rest of the day is at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Accommodation: Ella EKHO Ella

Day 9

Ella – Yala

This morning after breakfast, visit Little Adams Peak.

Little Adams Peak is located in the southern reaches of the Central Highlands in the Ratnapura District and Nuwara Eliya district of the Sabaragamuwa Province and Central Province lying about 40 km northeast of the city of Ratnapura and 32 km southwest of the city of Hatton. The surrounding region is largely forested hills, with no mountain of comparable size nearby. The region along the mountain is a wildlife reserve, housing many species varying from elephants to leopards, and including many endemic species.

Later by car or bus travel to Yala. Upon arrival in Yala, check-in at the hotel.

Yala National Park is Sri Lanka's most renowned national park and is famous for Elephant, Leopard, Bear, Crocodile and Wild Boar. Claims have subsequently been made that Yala National Park has the world's highest concentration of leopard per square kilometer. This park is primarily shrub jungle with several salt and fresh water lagoons. The areas popular with leopard are rock strewn hillocks with dense shrub in which the animals hide.

In the afternoon, proceed for the Jeep Safari at Yala National Park.

Note: The Block 01 of Yala National Park remains closed in the months of September and October. During these dates, we would provide the Jeep safari to another block which is named as Lunugamwehera National Park. Lunugamwehera is at a distance of 65 Kms with a drive time of 01 Hrs and 20 Mins each way.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Accommodation: Yala Yala EKHO Safari

Day 10

Yala - Galle

After breakfast travel by car or bus to Galle.

Galle said to be the famous Tarshish of the Bible is the Port where the Portuguese first landed in Sri Lanka. Fortified by the Dutch who ruled maritime Sri Lanka in the 17th and 18th centuries, the city still retains the air of old Holland. Old Dutch Churches and monuments with armorial bearings, well preserved Fort, and ramparts, imposing crested and monogrammed gateway dated 1669, many well preserved Old Dutch houses and narrow alleys still bearing Dutch names. As for souvenirs, one may make a pick of exquisite hand-made lace, Ivory carvings, moonstone jewellery and beautiful translucent tortoise shell ware, including bracelets, trinket boxes, and combs - sometimes inlaid with silver.

This afternoon, visit the Galle Fort.

The Galle Fort is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the largest remaining fortress in Asia built by European occupiers. The fort is a living monument, inhabited by a bustling community, within the great ramparts, massive bastions and pepper pot towers. The once sleepy Galle Fort is now a dynamic area with a distinctively Mediterranean atmosphere.

This evening is yours at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Accommodation: Galle Radisson Blu Resort

Day 11

Galle

Full day is at leisure in Galle to enjoy shopping in boutique stores or relax on the beach.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Accommodation: Galle Radisson Blu Resort

Day 12

Galle

Full day is at leisure in Galle to enjoy shopping in boutique stores or relax on the beach.

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 13

Galle - Colombo

After breakfast travel by car or bus to Colombo. Enroute visit Kosgoda turtle hatchery.

Turtle hatchery operated by the wildlife protection society of Sri Lanka. Several species of turtle, especially the hawksbill, are endangered; most vulnerable of all are their eggs; which are left uncovered on beaches all around the coast. The goodwill of Kosgoda area fishermen, who bring these eggs gratis to the hatchery, has led to the hatching and release of 100,000 young turtles in only two years since the hatchery opened.

Upon arrival in Colombo, proceed for a sightseeing tour of Colombo.

Enjoy a walk along the promenade of the Galle Face Green overlooking the Indian Ocean. Continue past the Dutch Hospital complex dating back to the Dutch colonial era, now a heritage building and a shopping and dining precinct. Experience hustle and bustle of the commercial area of the Fort. Drive past the noisy bazaar area of Pettah or Pitakotuwa as the locals calls it.

Visit the Fort Railway station opened in 1917 and to-date functions as the central station for Colombo. Visit The Temple of Gangaramaya. It is one of the most important Buddhist temples in all of Sri Lanka. The temple is built on an island that is connected to the mainland by a wooden bridge. The temple's architecture demonstrates an eclectic mix of Sri Lankan, Thai, Indian, and Chinese architecture.

Later visit the Colombo Lotus Tower. Standing at the height of 356 m, this tower is the tallest tower is South Asia, 11th tallest tower is Asia and 19th tallest tower in the world. The tower basically serves as a transmission center for television and radio. Besides the communication and transmission activities, the tower also houses banquet halls, museums, shopping complexes etc. A visit to the observatory deck is a must as it offers exception view of the city.

Later, transfer Colombo International Airport to board your flight for your onward destination. If you are wanting to extend your time in Sri Lanka, please ask our Customer Service team about accommodation options or extra touring options.

Meals: Breakfast

Inclusions & Exclusions

Inclusions

- 12 nights' accommodation on double / twin sharing basis
- Meals as mentioned in the travel program
- Daily sightseeing, excursions and entrance fee as per the program
- Services of English Speaking Chauffeur Guide
- Services of Air Conditioned Vehicle throughout the program
- Packaged water bottles, Hand Sanitizers, Wet and Dry tissues in the vehicle throughout the trip
- Ground Representative for assistance upon arrival and departure at the Airport
- All current applicable taxes.

Accommodation

- Negombo Goldi Sands Hotel (4 Star Hotel)
 - Anuradhapura Palm Garden Village Hotel (4 Star Hotel)
 - Habarana Habarana Village by Cinnamon (4 Star Hotel)
 - Kandy Cinnamon Citadel (4 Star Hotel)
 - Nuwara Eliya Galway Heights (5 Star Hotel)
 - Ella EKHO Ella (4 Star Hotel)
 - Yala Yala EKHO Safari (4 Star Hotel)
 - Galle Radisson Blu Resort (5 Star Hotel)
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Exclusions

- International Flights
Visa fees
- Travel insurance (strongly recommended)
- Meals & drinks not mentioned
- Any additional requests

Solo Supplement

There is a single supplement of \$1500 on this trip.

Extra Services

Wanting to book pre and/or post accommodation? Need a quote on a flight to Sri Lanka? Contact us for more details!

Travel Insurance: We recommend Covermore travel insurance. To quote and book, please click [HERE](#).