



**INSIDER-TOURS**  
re-connecting people, places and culture

## **SRI LANKA TOURS #1**

This is a sample tour to Sri Lanka. We can mix and match according to the dates and places you would like to visit. Email me your thoughts and I'll email a detailed plan with cost. Note that we don't arrange air flights.

### **Sample Sri Lanka tour: 19 days/18 nights**

**Colombo, Kandy, Sigiriya, Dambulla, Kandy, Ella, Kitulgala, Tangalla - Sri Lanka**

#### **Day one and two**

Is your arrival in Colombo. From the airport, we'll make our way to Horathapola Estate, nestled within the coconut estates and less than an hour from the airport. The 1920s mansion has been converted by its owners, Javana and Pia Fernando. There's a working estate for you to explore, a pool, gardens and verandas.

Overnight: (2 night), Horathapola Estate

#### **Day three, four and five**

After an early breakfast at Horathapola we'll make our way to Habarana. From here you have the option to visit Sigiriya Rock Fortress, Dambulla cave temples, Kahadulla National Park OR Minneriya.

Sigiriya rock fortress that rises magnificently from the jungle. Built in AD43, the fortress is actually more like a palace built on top of a 200m-high rock (377m above sea level), adorned with a moated island, water gardens, cave, frescoes and rock paintings.

We'll visit the temples at Dambulla. The caves' history is thought to date to around the 1st century BC when King Valagambahu, driven out of Anuradhapura, took refuge here for 14 years. When he regained his throne, he had the interior of the caves carved into magnificent rock temples. Five of the caves became shrines. Together, they contain about 150 buddha images.

Overnight: (3 nights), the Other Corner, Eco Villa.

#### **Day six, seven and eight**

We'll take the spectacular journey to Kandy - passing through forests, waterfalls and paddy fields. You'll have the chance to explore the back streets of the city - options include the market, backstreet shops, temples and botanical gardens,



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Temple of tooth and Nattarampota Community Handicraft Village located in the Dumbara Valley.

Overnight: (3 nights), The Kandy House

### **Day nine, ten and eleven**

After breakfast we'll make the spectacular journey by train to Ella and spend the next three days at Water Falls Homestay.

Here we can go on trekking programme with a qualified local naturalist guide through nature trails of tea, agricultural/ home gardens, waterfalls, by train to Diyatalawa and then to Hortain Plains.

Overnight: (3 nights), Water Falls Homestay

### **Day twelve and thirteen**

We'll make our way to the Rafter's Retreat at Kitugala. If you are feeling adventurous, you can hire out mountain bikes to explore the hills, plantations and river banks; go white water rafting; take a dugout canoe ferry over the water; or go walking and trekking around the plantations and ancient caves. Those looking to relax, can lounge on the lawn or dabble their feet on the river.

Overnight: (2 nights), Rafter's Retreat - comfortable and simple accommodation - either rooms or tree-houses above the Kelani river. Camping is also available.

### **Day fourteen, fifteen, sixteen and seventeen**

After breakfast we'll make our way to Tangalla. Tangalla is in the southern part of the island and famous of its beaches. Here we can go on a river safari tour operated by Walawe Nadee Ecotourism organization (Ambalantota), visit to Mulkirigala Temple, Visit the turtle conservation project based near Rekawa.

Overnight: ( 4 nights), Turtle Beach Resort

### **Day eighteen:**

We'll make our way back to Colombo - colourful and bustling. You can either relax, or we'll take you on our off-the-beaten track tour of Colombo with its whirl of sights, smells and tastes. Much under-stated by the conventional tourist crowd, the tour will take you to the city's more intriguing neighbourhoods. You can see the colourful bazaars and back streets of Pettah and visit the city's hauntingly beautiful temples and churches.



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Overnight: (1 night), Galle Face Hotel. Inside the grand four-story colonial building, the sweeping staircase and threadbare red carpet bear witness to a glittering past. You can spend evenings on the marble-tiled veranda taking tea at sunset or wandering along the public promenade.

## **Day nineteen**

We'll take you to the airport for your flight home.

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## **SRI LANKA TOURS #2**

### **Sample Sri Lanka tour: 19 days/18 nights**

**Colombo, Kandy, Ella, Udawalawa national park, Sinharaja Forest Reserve, Tangalla - Sri Lanka**

#### **Day one and two**

Is your arrival in Colombo. From the airport, we'll whisk you straight away to Horathapola Estate, nestled within the coconut estates and less than an hour from the airport. The 1920s mansion has been converted by its owners, Javana and Pia Fernando. There's a working estate for you to explore, a pool, gardens and verandas.

Overnight: (2 night), Horathapola Estate

#### **Day three, four and five**

We'll take the spectacular train journey to Kandy in the hill country - passing through forests, waterfalls and paddy fields. You'll have the chance to explore the back streets of the city - options include the market, backstreet shops, temples and botanical gardens, Temple of tooth and Nattarampota Community Handicraft Village located in the Dumbara Valley.

Overnight: (3 nights), The Kandy House

#### **Day six, seven and eight**

After breakfast we'll make the spectacular train journey to Ella and spend the next three days at Water Falls Homestay.

Here we can go on trekking programme with a qualified local naturalist guide through nature trails of tea, agricultural/ home gardens, waterfalls, by train to Diyatalawa and then to Hortain Plains.

Overnight: (3 nights), Water Falls Homestay

#### **Day nine, ten and eleven**

After breakfast we'll make our way to Udawalawa National park (around 3 to 4 hours drive). The park's 30,821 hectares centre on the large Uda Walawe Reservoir, fed by the Walawe Ganga. Of all Sri Lanka's national parks, this is thought to be the best, with herds of elephants, wild buffalo, sambar deer and leopards. The reserve has been listed by NORAD (a Norwegian funding agency), as a priority area for ecotourism.



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Possible activities at Udawalawe:

You could go on a birdwatching tour around the Chandricka Wewa Reservoir, close to the National Park. You could go on a full day safari inside the National Park with picnic lunch. Evening, you could go to the Elephant Transit Home (Excellent conservation project), Visit to Sankapala Cave Temple (3rd Century-BC) 21 KMS from Udawalawe.

Overnight: (3 nights) at the national park campsite.

### **Day twelve, thirteen and fourteen**

From Udawalawa, we'll turn south to Sinharaja Forest Reserve, staying the next two nights in a simple ecolodge run by a member of the local community and serving the best home-cooked vegetarian meal one could imagine. (note that the eco lodge is very basic, but offers you a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to sleep and wake up in the rainforest).

The forest is totally isolated from the wider world. With the help of an expert guide, we'll explore the rainforest and surrounding villages. No vehicles are allowed in the reserve, so we can take easy walks in relative solitude. The giant canopy trees reach heights of up to 45 m, with nearly all the sub-canopy trees found being rare or endangered. Mammals include the leopard, sambar, barking deer and wild boar, and there are 45 species of reptiles, 21 of which are endemic

Overnight: (3 nights), Sinharaja Forest Ecolodge.

### **Day fifteen, sixteen and seventeen**

After breakfast we'll make our way to Tangalla. Tangalla is in the southern part of the island and famous of its beaches. Here we can go on a river safari tour operated by Walawe Nadee Ecotourism organization (Ambalantota), visit to Mulkirigala Temple, Visit the turtle conservation project based near Rekawa.

Overnight: (3 nights), Turtle Beach Resort

### **Day eighteen:**

We'll make our way back to Colombo - colourful and bustling. You can either relax, or we'll take you on our off-the-beaten track tour of Colombo with its whirl of sights, smells and tastes. Much under-stated by the conventional tourist crowd, the tour will take you to the city's more intriguing neighbourhoods. You



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### **Day nineteen**

We'll take you to the airport for your flight home.

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Seasons**

The climate for travelling in Sri Lanka is best between December and March on the west and south coasts and in the hill country, and from April to September the east coast is at its best. We regularly take visitors around the country outside of these months, and the experiences have always been good. The best thing is to avoid much travelling and time on the road, and instead stay in just a few places, taking short day excursions out.

### **Language spoken in Sri Lanka:**

Sinhala and Tamil. Most people in Sri Lanka can speak good English.