

Sri Lanka for Family | 14 Days



The island of Sri Lanka is shaped like an enormous teardrop falling from the southern tip of India, separated by a series of stepping-stone coral islets. This lovely island has known Portuguese, Dutch and English colonisation, and today still displays a fascinating blend of local and old colonial cultures in a landscape of upland tea plantations, jungles and a coastline of palm-fringed beaches. Easily accessible, it offers great diversity and value for money for a family holiday! Our Sri Lanka family holiday is designed to be fun with plenty to interest the whole family and be relaxing for both parents and children alike! Sri Lanka has more than something for everyone and never fails to enchant visitors!

Trip Highlights

- Plenty of opportunities for wildlife watching that we know the kids (and their parents!) like so much and often include elephants!
- A bit of culture for the parents
- Plenty of fun activities for kids and parents alike such as white-water rafting
- Opportunities to see rather more of Sri Lanka than the average tour!
- Three full days at the end of the tour to relax on the beach
- Plenty of rest time for the children to use the pools at the hotels
- A stay of 2 or 3 nights in each hotel so the children can unpack and settle down
- Journeys that aren't too long so the children get restless and fidgety and plenty of walks so the children can stretch their legs

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Colombo | Transfer to Negombo (13 km | 30 mins)

Welcome to Sri Lanka! Upon arrival in Colombo a *travel-to-nature Asia* Tour guide/leader, who will accompany us throughout the tour, will be at the airport to greet and take us to our hotel which is about 15 km away and takes approximately 30 mins from the airport. Please look out for your name-card once you exit out of arrival area.

Here you can relax after your long flight and acclimatize near the pool or in the gardens of your hotel. Please meet your tour leader in the hotel reception for a tour briefing in the evening.

Rest of the day at leisure.

Accommodation: Goldi Sands Hotel
Meal: Dinner

Drive Negombo - Sigiriya (146 km | 3 hrs) | Visit Polonnaruwa

We will have our breakfast at hotel and leave for Sigiriya.

Afternoon proceed on a sightseeing tour of Polonnaruwa which was the 2nd capital city of Sri Lanka, built in the 11th and 12th centuries AD, and which is a world heritage site. Here you can see the ruins of the Royal Palace, the Gal Viharaya where 4 splendid statues of the Buddha in 'Upright', 'Sedentary' and 'Recumbent' postures carved out of rock, the Audience Hall, the Lotus Bath, king Parakramabahu's statue, and the Parakrama Samudraya lake built by King Parakramabahu the great. There are also monuments of famous places of worship such as the Shiva Temple, the Lankathilake, the Watadage, the Galpotha, the Kiri Vehera and the remains of a former Temple of the Tooth Relic.

On completion return to hotel.

Accommodation: Sigiriya Village
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

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Day 3: Day trip to Hiriwadunna Village Trial

Experience Village Walk and Ride on Catamaran & Bullock Cart

Today we will visit the scenic village of Hiriwadunna with its unpaved gravel paths and humble village folk. Shaded on either side by dry zone shrub forest, the dusty gravel path and subsequently the red soil of the tank bund will lead the visitors to an indigo reservoir which sets a stunning contrast of colors. A line of cormorants flying in formation will eventually stop to rest on a cormorant tree and the butterflies and dragonflies found at the edge of the shrubs create a kaleidoscope of colour that rivals the equally vibrant wild flowers.

As we walk further the sight of Sigiriya rock fortress appears in the vicinity against the silent and still waters of the reservoir which is rippled only by a lone fisherman mounted on his catamaran. Soon it's already time to take a catamaran ride! Across the reservoir awaits a chena farmer's modest home; a setting that takes you back a few decades to enjoy a black Ceylonese tea brewed by the farmer's wife. Experience the simple pleasures of village-life as you walk across the chena cultivations and through the nearby woods, to board a bullock cart – yet another ancient mode of the humble villagers' transportation. Return to Hotel. Rest of the day at leisure to enjoy the Pool.

Accommodation: Sigiriya Village
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 4: Explore Habarana

Breakfast at hotel. Today we will take a cycle ride through the village pathways to Sigiriya passing village houses and paddy fields. We'll have the opportunity to climb to the summit of Sigiriya famous Lion Rock using a series of steps and walkways which zig-zag their way up the seemingly impenetrable rock cliffs. The site was occupied long before the citadel was built at the end of the 5th century, and it later became a monastery before falling into disrepair. From the base, a moat surrounds impressive water gardens of landscaped beauty. To reach the summit, you'll ascend 200 m, passing an overhanging rock under which superb portraits of native maidens holding flowers and temple offerings still adorn the rock wall, 'the world-renowned frescoes of the 'Heavenly Maidens' of Sigiriya, which are in a sheltered pocket of the rock approached by a spiral stairway. Crowning the flat-topped summit of the rock are the extensive remains of King Kasyapa's summer palace from where there are breathtaking views. Back to hotel for lunch!

Return to your Hotel. Evening at leisure.

Accommodation: Sigiriya Village
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 5: Visit Dambulla & Spice Garden in Matale | Drive Sigiriya - Kandy (91 km | 2.70 hrs)

Breakfast at hotel. Morning we explore Dambulla properly, to learn its fascinating history. The Sinhalese King, Valagam Bahu, took refuge here when he was ousted from his capital. He transformed the five caves of this granite outcrop into a rock temple, decorated by statues of Buddha and frescoes, some of which are over 2,000 years old but still as brightly painted as ever. The steep 150 m ascent to the top of the rock rewards you with more magnificent views down to the jungle and forest below. We then travel southward along the main trunk road to Sri Lanka's second city, Kandy, a journey of around 2-3 hours. We'll pass through a fertile spice-growing area and plantations where coffee, cacao and rubber are cultivated.

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Afternoon take an opportunity to visit spice garden in Matale, to see the different spices, which Sri Lanka is famous for. We will be introduced to different spices and shown how some of these spices are grown and processed. The Family will join for a cookery demonstration at the spice garden. Also, if everyone interested, on route we will go for a village lunch on the hills of Aluwihare. Here lives Mrs De Silva, a renowned batik artist, and former friend of late architect Geoffrey Bawa, she oversees a co-operative of women who run a handicraft and batik workshop. Kids, have you ever seen batik made.

On completion proceed to Kandy. Check-in at Earls Regent. Evening at leisure.

Accommodation: Hotel Topaz
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 6: In Kandy

Breakfast at hotel. Morning proceed to visit the magnificent Peradeniya Botanical Gardens, with their immense fig tree and exquisite orchid collection. Wander around the Royal Botanical Gardens and spot the bats hanging from the trees! Did you know that "The Jungle Book" was filmed here and "Tarzan" and "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom."

This evening we'll visit the Dalada Maligawa, the famous Temple of the Tooth. This is the major shrine where pilgrims have revered Buddha's tooth since the 16th century; its gilded roof seems to act as a beacon to visitors throughout the day and into the evening. Thereafter witness a cultural show featuring traditional Sri Lankan dancing. Return to hotel for dinner and overnight stay.

Accommodation: Hotel Topaz
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 7: Drive Kandy - Kitulgala (59 km | 2 hrs)

Breakfast at hotel. Leave for Kitulgala through the green ranks of tea bushes which cover the higher hillsides on our way to Kitulgala. We continue your drive through this beautiful landscape, descending to Kitulgala, to arrive around lunchtime. Located amidst

thick forest on Sri Lanka's second-longest river, the Kelani, Kitulgala is rapidly becoming something of an adventure centre and is a great place for a variety of activities. The Kelani River is famous for its rafting on Grade 3 and 4 rapids. Check-in at Plantation Bungalow 3* or similar.

The breathtaking scenery here was used for the filming of the Oscar-winning classic 'The Bridge over the River Kwai'. Is an ideal location for swimming and other water-based activities. The surrounding forests with their wide variety of flora and fauna offer you a variety of spectacular walks, with some stunning views over the valley.

This afternoon you will first cross the Kelani River on a suspension bridge used by the local villagers. Then you'll proceed to walk through the small village and the forest reserve on the opposite bank and finally re-emerge on the bank of the Kelani River to take a canoe to get across to the right.

Accommodation: The Plantation Hotel
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 8: Drive Kitugala - Nuwara Eliya (80 km | 3 hrs)

After breakfast at the hotel drive about 80 km (approx 3hrs) along windy roads lined by green slopes of tea leaves. There's plenty of interest along the way however, including a stop at some waterfalls. Upon arrival in Nuwara Eliya check-in at Heaven Seven -

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heart of the tea growing industry and full of colonial charm.

Built entirely during the 19th century, its quirky architecture reflects what you'd normally expect to find in an English country town, which will make you feel like you've stepped back in time. En route you will visit Devon and St Clare's waterfalls.

This afternoon we make a visit to a tea factory to see the process of making one of our favorite drinks in action. We'll see every step of the tea making process, from bush to cup and learn tasting tea.

Accommodation: Galway Heights
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 9: Drive Nuwara Eliya - Yala National Park (160 km | 4.5 hrs)

Breakfast at hotel. Driving southwards we head towards Yala National Park but en route will make various stops to break the journey. After about 3.5 hours you should finally reach Yala. Check-in at Elephant Reach.

The afternoon will be free for relaxation at the Hotel and to enjoy the hotel pool and the surrounding.

Accommodation: Cinnamon Wild Yala
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 10: Explore Yala

Morning proceed on a Jeep Safari to visit the Yala National Park. This Park is famous for its high density of leopards, perhaps the highest in the world. We are also sure to see elephants – grumpy loan males during the dry months and large herds in the wet season. Sloth bears are also a big draw. We will also see mammal such as wild boars, several species of deer and wild buffalo. There is a plethora of reptilian species and platoons of crocodiles.

As is common in Sri Lanka there is a huge diversity of stunning birdlife including migratory species such as the flamingo. It is also one of the few places in the world where the severely endangered black necked stork can still be seen.

The uniqueness of the park is the sheer diversity of the habitat: dense jungles suddenly give way to lagoons and open plain areas and the park has a simply beautiful sea front. Huge, stark boulders dominate the horizon and the elegant, languorous leopard can often be seen basking atop the sun baked rock. On completion return to hotel, rest of the day at leisure.

Accommodation: Cinnamon Wild Yala
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 11: Drive Yala - Beruwala (214 km | 3.33 hrs) | En route visit Galle

We will have our breakfast at hotel and leave for Beruwala, en route visit Galle Dutch Fortress at Galle. The Galle fort was built first by the Portuguese, and then modified by the Dutch during the 17th century. Even today, after 400 years of existence, it looks new and polished with reconstruction work done by Archaeological Department of Sri Lanka.

Today Sri Lankan government and many Dutch people who still own some of the properties inside the fort are looking at making this one of the modern wonders of the world.

Continue to Beruwala. Check in at The Palms.

Accommodation: The Palms
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

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Day 12-13: In Beruwala

Breakfast at Hotel – Day at leisure.

Also known as Golden Mile Beruwala's beautiful golden beaches lined with green palm trees makes it a perfect place to unwind and relax. Beruwala's lighthouse looks breathtakingly beautiful during dawn and so is the fishing harbor.

Accommodation: The Palms

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 14: Depart Colombo

Breakfast at hotel. Our guide pick us up from the hotel and transfer to the airport for our onward journey back home.

Meal: Breakfast

Includes

- Airport (pick up/drop off) transfers by private A/C vehicle
- Twin-Sharing accommodation in all Hotel/Resort/Lodge as mentioned
- Daily breakfast throughout the trip, other meals as mentioned in the itinerary
- All sightseeing and long-distance transportation in private air-condition vehicle (cars/SUVs or mini/micro-bus etc. depending on group size). This includes toll taxes, parking, allowance for driver, outstation overnight charges for the driver
- Monument entrance fees - Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya, Local Village Visit in Sigiriya, Habarana Cycle Tour, Dambulla, Spice Garden visit with cookery demonstration, Temple of the tooth, Botanical Gardens, Kandyan Cultural Dance Performance, Kitulgala trek, 01 Visit to Yala National Park with Jeep Hire
- English speaking local guide
- Assistance of travel representatives at all the main cities

- Two 500 ml mineral bottled water per person per day
- All applicable government taxes

Excludes

- International flight tickets
- Visa fee
- Travel insurance
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Personal clothing and equipment
- Tips for trip leader/guide, driver, hotel staff and porters
- Items of personal nature such as alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, laundry, and other unforeseen expenses
- Items/services not listed in "included"
- Extra expenses/payment for 'Optional' activities/programs if participated

Accommodation

Goldi Sands Hotel, Negombo

Goldi Sands is a glamorous iconic hotel nestled on the golden beaches of Negombo. Just imagine staying in a hotel that's right on the beach, just next to the Indian Ocean... and what a wonderful feeling knowing that the beach is all yours anytime of the day or even the night. Everything at Goldi Sands Hotels is waiting to be experienced.

Sigiriya Village Hotel

A village-themed hotel in the heart of Sri Lanka's Cultural Triangle, tucked away in peaceful tranquility under the shade of the majestic Sigiriya Rock Fortress. Like the legendary fortress, at the foot of which it stands, it remains quietly immersed in the surrounding forest – a hidden sanctuary of rest where rural Sri Lankan hospitality is yours to experience.

Hotel Topaz, Kandy

Welcome to a place where heritage meets luxurious living. Situated on the highest point of Sri Lanka's hill capital, Hotel Topaz is an enchanting Kandy city hotel

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that offers luxury and seclusion in the regal city of Kandy. Breathtaking views, warm hospitality and lavish comforts await you at Hotel Topaz, one of Sri Lanka's most renowned hotels.

The Plantation Hotel, Kitulgala

The Plantation Hotel, Kitulgala is a reflection of the love Joe and Barbara had for nature and conservation. He wanted his first hotel to be a waterfront property on the Kelani River. His discovery of an old planter's bungalow was timely. This bungalow was what has been transformed into a haven of natural landscape and greenery.



Galway Heights, Nuwara Eliya

Among the rich greenery of the central hill country sits a dwelling that welcomes travellers to experience the wonderful hospitality of Sri Lanka. Galway Heights is a Nuwara Eliya hotel offering a heavenly hideaway. Feast your eyes on mesmerising sceneries!

Cinnamon Wild Yala

Cinnamon Wild is more than a resort; it is an extension of the Yala National park and is intended to be part of the National park. It is designed to represent rustic luxury, resembling a game lodge. It exceeds guest expectations with interiors that give the camp look and feel, embedded with large trunk boxes, old vintage furniture, and indigenous artwork.

The Palms, Beruwela

In a blue, cloudless sky the tropical sun blazes down, promising another spectacular sunset to come. On this serene coastline, we too have taken our place to offer an idyllic refuge to those who seek an escape to

where time beats to the rhythm of the waves. Where moments become memories to treasure. Come indulge the seaside heaven of The Palms.

Group/Individual

On this trip you will be traveling privately with your family & friends. Our representative/tour partner will look after your transfers to and from the airport and will be around to answer other questions you may have about your trip.

Accommodation – Hotel, Resort

Your accommodation has been selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a fine heritage hotel in another or a family-run guesthouse or lodges in a smaller town. Accommodation in remote areas tend to be basic and may not have western amenities.

Single Accommodation

Unless you specifically request a single room (single supplement charge applies), we offer double room accommodation throughout the trip.

Food & Transport

Daily breakfasts and dinners are provided/included throughout the trip.

To cover the cost of other meals (mostly lunches and/or some snacks) allowing about €5-7 (approx. US\$5.50 - 8) per day should be enough. Sri Lankan cuisine is a fascinating reflection of the island's heritage; there is a unique fusion of fresh local produce with spices brought to the island over the centuries by Malays, Arabs, Indians as well as the Dutch, Portuguese and English. Despite (or perhaps because of) these influences, Sri Lankan cuisine is often referred to as simply 'Rice and Curry'. This is the staple dish in most restaurants and is usually a serving of rice accompanied by assorted meat and vegetable curries as well as various pickles, 'sambols,' and a handful of tiny poppadum's – all using the

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contrasting flavours of coconut, chilli, curry leaves, cinnamon and garlic.

Vegetarians are well catered for but please inform us before departure of any special dietary requests. Please note that in Sri Lanka the availability of certain products is minimal or non-existent, for example wheat or dairy-free. Please be prepared for this and you may need to bring these from home. Spicier food can be avoided easily and lots of the hotels will serve Western options alongside traditional food.

For airport, sightseeing transfers, and for long drives we use a private air-con car, jeep, van depending upon group size. Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

Weather

Sri Lanka is a year-round holiday destination thanks to its combination of weather systems ensuring that one or several regions, as well as a section of coastline, is statistically always expecting sunshine. Whilst the best time to go to Sri Lanka is between December and mid-April, which is considered to be the countrywide peak season, the traditional summer holiday months are also favourable on the east coast which is at its peak from May to September.

Temperatures are fairly constant year-round, with coastal regions enjoying average temperatures of 25-30°C and the highlands 15-18°C on average. If you're travelling during the summer months (May to September) you'll want to head towards the east coast and northern regions for dry, sunny weather, as the west and south west coasts experience rain at this time. On the flip side, the west and south west enjoy favourable weather conditions during the winter months (October to February) when the monsoon season hits the east and north.

Baggage Allowance

At time of writing the standard weight limit is one checked baggage on Qatar Airways is 25kg (55lb) and hand baggage 7kg (15lbs). We recommend packing only one piece of checked baggage. Luggage allowances for both hand and checked luggage are

subject to change, we suggest you check the airline's website for the latest information prior to your departure.

ESSENTIAL/PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Passport & Visas

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information below is primarily for EU passport holders, and other nationalities should check with the relevant embassies. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Visas are required if you are German and for most other nationalities. Visa information/regulation might have changed; therefore, for the latest information on applying for a visa please follow these links for more information.

<http://www.eta.gov.lk/slvisa/>

Please note: Visa regulations can change without notice, therefore please check the current regulations or contact us.

Vaccination & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad.

There are no mandatory vaccination requirements for this trip. Recommended vaccinations for this trip are: Polio, Tetanus, Diphtheria, Typhoid, Hepatitis A. The risk of malaria on this trip is slight, but you may wish to consult your GP/Family Doctor or travel health clinic for further advice. Dengue fever and/or Chikungunya are known risks in places visited on this trip. Both are

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tropical viral diseases spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available for either, and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites. The above information can change at short notice; as we are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health we strongly recommend you contact your Medical Professional or a Travel Health Clinic prior to departure for up-to date information.

Local Time

GMT + 5 hours and 30 minutes

Electricity

230/240 volts AC, 50 Hz. There are recharging facilities at most of the hotels, the electricity supply is not 100% reliable but it is usually only off for short periods of time.

Money

The national currency of Sri Lanka is the Sri Lankan Rupee (SLR), with an exchange rate at the time of publication of approximately 357 to the Euro and 325 to the US\$. It is illegal to import or export rupees. Do not accept torn or (very) dirty Sri Lankan banknotes from banks or in change as they will almost certainly not be accepted as legal tender. Please ask for low denomination notes of 100, 200, 500 and 1000. You can change money back from Rupees into Euro or Dollars at the international airport (before going through security), but you must produce an exchange receipt showing that you changed money in Sri Lanka. You are advised to bring most of your money in cash as you may have difficulty changing travellers cheques outside Colombo. It makes no difference whether you bring Euro or US Dollars. You should change your money on arrival at Colombo either at the hotel or airport (please note that the hotel often gives a better rate than the airport).

ATM | Credit Cards

There are ATMs in Colombo and other major cities. We recommend you change most of the money you need

for the trip before leaving Colombo. Please do not rely wholly on ATM machines as often they are broken or run out of cash. Credit cards are accepted in larger shops in Colombo and other major cities.

Extra Expenses & Spending Money

You will need to bring some extra money to cover drinks, laundry, souvenirs and any other personal expense, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Though it totally depends on individual but generally an approximate (rough estimate) amount of US\$250 per person, per week should be sufficient (more if you enjoy a few beers); however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount. Or if you are the one frugal with money probably allocating less would also suffice. Sri Lanka has very good opportunities for shopping, especially for locally made goods, and guides may well offer to take you to emporiums as well as workshops where these goods are made. Many people find this a great opportunity to buy local handicrafts, silk, jewelry, carpets etc. Guides will often assume that visitors will want to go shopping, it is very much part of the culture, however if you do not wish to go, please make this clear to your local guide at the time.

Optional Tours may be offered in some city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available. Please ensure you have additional funds available if you feel you may wish to participate in any extra activities. Each optional tour/activity will be arranged locally by our local partner/guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

Tipping

Tipping is of course entirely at your discretion, but it is customary in Sri Lanka. However, do not feel obliged to tip if you are not happy with the service. Tipping can be an awkward affair especially when you are not familiar with the country. Your leader will help with tipping and will provide a list of suggested tips. This will include tips for drivers, porters and other hotel

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staff, local sightseeing guides/escort, and if trekking will include camp staff such as guide, assistants, cooks and pony men. Sometimes your leader will collect a kitty during the trip and sometimes they will collect the tips towards the end of the trip (occasionally for very small groups the leader may need to collect a little more than the suggested amount).

Tipping of the local leader is not included in the above and is at your discretion. However, we suggest around Rs1000-2000 (approx.€11-25 /US \$12-25) per person for the leader depend upon the group size.

Itinerary Change

In case of some unusual events/incidents the order of programs (sightseeing, excursions etc.) might have to change in order to accommodate the local situations. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements while maintaining the overall integrity of your trip.

The domestic airlines may change their schedule frequently and, in such cases, our local partner/guide will inform you about the changes.

Travel Insurance

We highly recommend to keep a copy of your travel insurance documents on your person while on tour. It's prudent to check thoroughly the inclusions and procedure to file claims prior to purchasing insurance coverage. travel-to-nature Asia will not be responsible for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to purchase appropriate travel insurance from the date of booking.

Important Information

On all guided trips although our leaders/guides are well trained to deal with different capabilities, if they have any concerns about someone's ability to safely partake in an activity, or their impact on other people's enjoyment, we authorize them to take necessary action which, in some circumstances, may involve asking someone to miss that activity.