

# Quest for the Endemic Birds & Mammals of Sri Lanka | 13 Days



Sri Lanka has a great deal to offer for those interested in Asian birds. With its 34 of endemic specialties, as it not only possesses a comparatively very rich resident avifauna but also one can enjoy exciting selection of migrant visitors from both northern Asia and the Indian subcontinent. Not only does Sri Lanka have a diverse avifauna but, after two millennia of Buddhist-inspired regard for wildlife.

Our Sri Lanka Endemic Birds & Mammals tour itinerary is specially designed to cover all the Sri Lankan endemic birds and mammals. We will explore most of the principal habitats, including the lowland and foothill rainforests of the wet zone, the jungles of the dry zone, the grasslands and cloud forests of the highlands. More than 20 mammal species regularly recorded on this tour (usually including Leopard, Asian Elephant and Primates), as well as a profusion of colourful butterflies, and a discrete set of reptiles unique to the island, and of course more than 250 bird species. To illustrate the diversity of Sri Lanka wildlife well; we'll also take a boat trip (optional/extension) out of Mirrissa or Galle in search of the world's largest mammal, the Blue Whale as one of the trip highlights.

### Trip Highlights

- Colourful birds and butterflies with a diverse flora & fauna
- Over 250 species of birds to be seen, including Blue-faced Malkoha, Serendib Scops Owl and many more
- Very good chance to see the island's 34 endemic bird species during this tour

- Visit to an area and specifically a botanical garden with exotic and rare trees & plants, and visit to a herbs garden where tropical spices of all kinds are grown
- Over 20 species of mammal to be encountered including Indian Elephant and Leopard
- Endemic Mammals such as Toque Macaque & Purple-faced Leaf Monkey
- Night drives or walks looking for Grey Slender Loris, Fishing and Rusty-Spotted Cats
- Explore verdant forests & habitats in search of Island's endemics
- Visit to Archaeological sites at Sigiriya, Polonnaruwa and Kandy
- The experienced local expert Wildlife Tour Leader who has been involved in various wildlife expeditions in Sri Lanka and research projects.

### Detailed Itinerary

#### Day 1: Arrive in Colombo | Transfer to Sigiriya

Welcome to Sri Lanka! Upon our Arrival in Colombo airport, we will meet our local *travel-to-nature Asia* Tour Leader who will accompany us throughout the tour. Before we proceed to Sigiriya we will drive to nearby airport hotel to freshen up and have a cup of Sri Lanka tea or coffee!

The journey from the airport to Sigiriya is about 145 km and takes approximately 3 hours 30 minutes. On the way we will make several stops looking out for birds and enjoy the first sights of Sri Lanka Nature.

Accommodation: Hotel Sigiriya  
Meal: Dinner

#### Day 2: Explore Sigiriya | Afternoon visit Minneriya or Kaudulla National Park

After our breakfast we explore Sigiriya sanctuary.

King Kashyapa built his rock fortress in the 5<sup>th</sup> century so as to have a bird's eye view of approaching enemies. Today, from its summit it is birds and wildlife the intrepid visitor sees. Surrounded on all sides by vast man-made water tanks, Sigiriya is rich in

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interesting species. From the Asian elephant to a local race of the peregrine falcon, this site never fails to surprise and enchant.

### Possible noteworthy species

Barred Buttonquail, Sri Lanka Junglefowl, Lesser Whistling Duck, Cotton-pygmy Goose, Woolly-necked Stork, Pheasant-tailed Jacana, Peregrine Falcon, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Grey-headed Fish Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Crested Hawk Eagle, Orange-breasted Green Pigeon, Sri Lanka Green Pigeon, Banded Bay Cuckoo, Grey-bellied Cuckoo, Drongo Cuckoo, Blue-faced Malkoha, Jerdon's Nightjar, Indian Nightjar, Brown Fish Owl, Crested Treeswift, Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher, Crimson-fronted Barbet, Coppersmith Barbet, Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Malabar Pied Hornbill, Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker, Rufous Woodpecker, Indian Pitta, Sri Lanka Woodshrike, Large Cuckooshrike, Black-headed Cuckooshrike, Black-naped Monarch, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, Forest Wagtail, Jerdon's Bushlark, Grey-breasted Prinia, Jungle Prinia, Ashy Prinia, Green Warbler, Large-billed Leaf Warbler, Jerdon's Leafbird, Golden-fronted Leafbird, Brown-capped Babbler, Tawny-bellied Babbler, Yellow-eyed Babbler, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Orange-headed Thrush, Indian Blue Robin, White-rumped Shama, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, Baya Weaver.

Afternoon we proceed for jeep safari in Minneriya or Kaudulla National Park depending on the movements of the Elephants.

### Minnerya National Park

This area was declared as a sanctuary in July 1938 and was upgraded to a National Park in August 1997. The park is 8,885 hectares in extent and the core of this park holds one of the country's most diverse natural systems with intermediate forests, bamboo stands, patanas and talawas. The tank supports a wide variety of waterfowl. The vegetation consists of dry mixed evergreen forests, abandoned chena cultivation lands, grass lands and wet lands. The park is famous for the large numbers of Asian Elephants that can be observed on the dry exposed lake shore

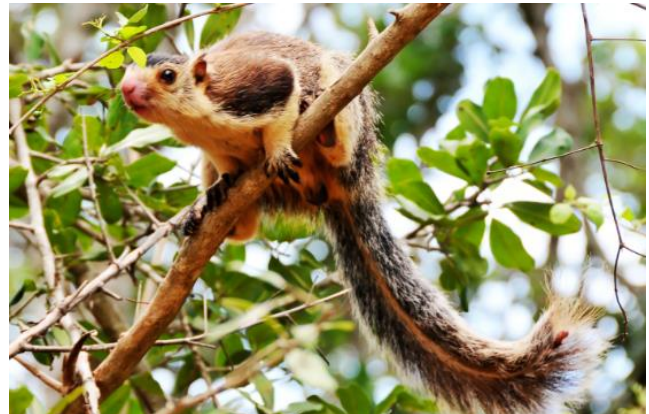
referred to as the "gathering" that can be witnessed during the dry season.

### Possible noteworthy species

Wild Boar, Asian Elephant, Golden-back Jackal, Indian Palm Squirrel, Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel, Toque Macaque, Grey Langur, Purple-faced Leaf Monkey, Spotted Deer, Sambar Deer, Asian Water Monitor, Land Monitor, Mugger Crocodile, Indian Python, Lesser Adjutant, Painted Stork, Spot-billed Pelican, Ruddy Turnstone, Gray Heron, Black-headed Ibis, Black-winged Stilt, Sri Lanka Jungle Fowl, Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot, Brown-capped Babbler, Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Black-crested Bulbul, Crimson-fronted Barbet

Accommodation: Hotel Sigiriya

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner



### **Day 3: Drive Sigiriya - Kandy (93 km | 2.5 hrs)**

After breakfasts proceed to Kandy en-route visiting a Spice Garden 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.

Afternoon we proceed to Peradeniyaa Botanical Gardens for Birding.

Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya is the site of the world-famous National Herbarium and sanctuary for over 4000 plant species, this historic garden,

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established in 1821, covers 147 acres in the old royal capital of Kandy. This popular public park is bordered on one side by the University Of Peradeniya and on the other by the Mahaweli River.

### Possible noteworthy species

Crimson-Fronted Barbet, Jerdon's Leafbird, Common Tailor Bird, Yellow-Fronted Barbet, White-Bellied Drongo, Yellow-Billed Babbler, White-Breasted Waterhen, Common Hawk Cuckoo. Overnight stay in Kandy.

Accommodation: Hotel Topaz  
Meal: Breakfast, Dinner



### **Day 4: Explore Udawattakele Sanctuary | Drive Kandy - Nuwara Eliya (78 km | 2.66 hrs)**

After our breakfast we explore the Udawattakele Sanctuary for Birding.

### Udawattakele Sanctuary

104 hectares of this forest has been declared as a sanctuary and is protected as a Forest Reserve by the Forest Department. This is a very popular site with the birders in Kandy area. This is a tall, wet evergreen forest. The lake within the sanctuary attracts many species of birds that feed on fish.

### Possible noteworthy species

Sri Lanka Jungle Fowl, Brown Fish Owl, Sri Lanka Green Pigeon, Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot, Alexandrine Parakeet, Layard's Parakeet, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher, Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Yellow-fronted Barbet, Crimson-fronted Barbet, Crimson-backed Goldenback, Indian Pitta, Black-naped Monarch, Forest Wagtail, Yellow-browed Bulbul, Black-capped Bulbul, Brown-capped Babbler, Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler, Dark-fronted Babbler, Green Warbler, Large-billed Leaf Warbler, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Common Hill Myna, Indian Blue Robin, White-rumped Shama, Asian Brown Flycatcher, Brown-breasted Flycatcher, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, Forest Eagle Owl.

Afternoon we proceed to Nuwara Eliya en-route visiting 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 5: Explore Horton Plains National Park**

With packed breakfast we should leave Nuwara Eliya early in the morning to increase our chances of seeing some attractive wildlife that are endemic to Sri Lanka. We will spend exploring Horton Plains National Park.

### Horton Plains National Park

Preserved for its biological, hydrological and aesthetic values, Horton Plains offers a breath-taking panorama of grassland valleys, high plateaus, mountains crests and forests. Bakers Falls and World's End are two of this area's not-to-be-missed viewpoints.

It consists of ecosystems such as Montane evergreen forests, grasslands, marshy lands and aquatic ecosystem. At an altitude of 2,100 meters above sea level, Horton Plains spreads across over 3,169 hectares of the highest tableland of the island.

Horton Plains, its surroundings, forests and the adjoining Peak Wilderness constitute Sri Lanka's most important catchment area of almost all major rivers.

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The plains are also of outstanding scenic beauty and conservation importance, containing most of the habitats and endemic plants and animals representative of the country's wet and Montane zones. The western slopes support the most extensive area of Montane cloud forest surviving in the island. Horton Plains is not merely a destination for nature tourists. Since the rich biodiversity of Horton Plains is still grossly underexplored, it affords invaluable opportunities to those engaged on educational and research activities. Overnight stay in Nuwara Eliya.

### Possible noteworthy species

Mammals – Purple-faced Leaf Monkey, Toque Macaque, Black-naped Hare, Sambar Deer, Leopard, Asiatic Otter, Dusky Striped Squirrel, Brown Mongoose.

Birds – Legge's Mountain Hawk Eagle, Black-winged Kite, Dusky-blue Flycatcher, Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher, Orange-headed Ground Thrush, Great Tit, Yellow and Grey Wagtail, Sri Lanka Blue Magpie, Yellow-eared Bulbul, Sri Lanka White Eye, Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush, Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon, Yellow-eared Bulbul, Bush Warbler, Pied Bush Chat, Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch.

In the late afternoon, we will also visit the Hakgala Botanical Gardens on the outskirts of the city. Here we would have another chance to meet the Purple-faced Leaf Monkey, which often visit this attractive garden in troops and we might see more species of birds such as Scimitar Babbler, Yellow-eared Black Bilbuls and more.

### Victoria Park, Nuwara Eliya

This city park was named after Queen Victoria in 1897 to commemorate her 60<sup>th</sup> jubilee coronation. An evening walk in this garden can catch you an encounter with the Pied Thrush, Kashmir Flycatcher, Indian Pitta and the Indian Blue Robin besides some endemics.

### Possible noteworthy species

Indian Pitta, Forest Wagtail, Grey Wagtail, Yellow-eared Bulbul, Sri Lanka White-eye, Blyth's Reed Warbler, Green Warbler, Large-billed Leaf Warbler, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Pied Thrush, Indian Blue Robin, Kashmir Flycatcher, Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher.

Accommodation: Galway Heights

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner



### **Day 6: Drive Nuwara Eliya - Yala NP | En route visit Surrey Bird Sanctuary (163 km | 4.5 hrs)**

Today we proceed to Yala National Park en-route birding in Surrey Estate sanctuary.

### Surrey Bird Sanctuary

The Surrey Bird Sanctuary rests peacefully on 4 acres of deep forest surrounded by many different varieties of vegetation and tall trees, it is just 1.5 Km away from the Welimada town towards Nuwara Eliya & about a 20 min drive from Nuwara Eliya town.

### Possible noteworthy species

Birds – Brown Wood Owl, Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Asian Koel, Scimitar Babbler, Sri Lanka Wood Pigeon, Crimson Backed Woodpecker, Brown-Capped Babbler, Yellow-Fronted Barbet, Orange-headed Thrush, Sri Lanka Junglefowl, Brown-headed Barbet, Black-naped Monarch, Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher, Loten's Sunbird, Purple-rumped Sunbird, Pale-billed Flowerpecker.

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Accommodation: Chaarya Resort & Spa

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 7: Explore Yala National Park

With packed breakfast and lunch (lunch own arrangement) a full day safari to Yala National Park exploring best of wild Yala.

### Yala National Park

Yala is among the oldest and best known National Park in Sri Lanka. It is about 1297 sqkm or 129,700 ha. It is the largest accumulation of protected areas in the country. The diverse ecosystems ranging from Moist Monsoon Forest, to Dry Monsoon Forests, Semi Deciduous Forests, Thorn forests, Grasslands, fresh water & marine wetlands, and sandy beaches, possesses a large number of important plant species and smaller animals.



Kumbukkan Oya in the North East and Menik Ganga and tributaries on the West, flow through the Park providing a source of water to the animals even during the driest months of the year.

Yala West (Ruhuna) National Park is well recognized as one of the best parks in the world to observe leopards. The Park covers an area of over 100,000 hectares and is divided into five blocks.

Block one is the most visited area since it contains the highest density of leopards. Yala West consists of scrub jungle, brackish lagoons and stunning rock

monoliths scattered throughout the park, its eastern edge is bounded by the South East coast. Yala has well over 200 leopards, probably the highest density anywhere in the world. It is also thought that Sri Lankan leopards are a distinct sub-species from their Indian neighbors, and the largest leopards in Asia.

### Possible noteworthy species

Mammals – Toque Macaque, Grey Langur, Black-naped Hare, Sambar Deer, Spotted Deer, Leopard, Stripe-necked Mongoose, Gray Mongoose, Ruddy Mongoose, Asian Elephant, Wild Boar, Water Buffalo, Golden Jackal, Muntjac, Sloth Bear.

Birds – Barred Buttonquail, Sri Lanka Junglefowl, Indian Peafowl, Painted Stork, Woolly-necked Stork, Black-necked Stork, Lesser Adjutant, Spot-billed Pelican, Darter, Common Kestrel, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Grey-headed Fish Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Booted Eagle, Changeable Hawk Eagle, Eurasian Thick Knee, Great Thick Knee, Yellow-wattled Lapwing, Orange-breasted Green Pigeon, Grey-bellied Cuckoo, Sirkeer Malkoha, Blue-faced Malkoha, Jerdon's Nightjar, Indian Nightjar, Oriental Scops Owl, Jungle Owlet, Brown Fish Owl, Crested Tree Swift, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Coppersmith Barbet, Malabar Pied Hornbill, Yellow-crowned Woodpecker, Rufous Woodpecker, Indian Pitta, Sri Lanka Woodshrike, Marshall's Iora, White-browed Fantail, Ashy Drongo, Racket-tailed Drongo, Forest Wagtail, Black-naped Monarch, Forest Wagtail, Jerdon's Bushlark, Ashy-crowned Sparrow Lark Black-capped Bulbul, Grey-breasted Prinia, Jungle Prinia, Ashy Prinia, Blyth's Reed Warbler, Green Warbler, Large-billed Leaf Warbler, Tawny-bellied Babbler, Yellow-eyed Babbler, Rosy Starling, White-rumped Shama, Baya Weaver, Indian Silverbill.

Accommodation: Chaarya Resort & Spa

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 8: Explore Lunugamwehera National Park

With packed breakfast and lunch (Lunch own arrangements) we leave for a full day safari to Lunugamwehera National Park.

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This National Park was declared in 1995 with the intention of protecting the catchment area of the Lunugamvehera reservoir. Ghostly white dead trees decorate the reservoir and its rotting remains make perfect watch towers for nesting White-bellied Sea Eagles. The recent spike in Leopard populations in this park has made it a sought-out alternative to Yala National Park. Mosaic of scrubland and grassland make up the forest which is home to Sloth Bear, Muntjac, Mouse Deer, Stripe-necked Mongoose and an array of birds including the rare Racket-tailed Drongo and common water birds such as the Grey Heron, Black-headed Ibis, Asian Openbill, Painted Stork and Spot-billed Pelican

### Possible noteworthy species

Mammals – Toque Macaque, Grey Langur, Black-naped Hare, Sambar Deer, Spotted Deer, Leopard, Stripe-necked Mongoose, Gray Mongoose, Ruddy Mongoose, Asian Elephant, Wild Boar, Water Buffalo, Golden Jackal, Muntjac, Sloth Bear.

Birds – Black-winged Kite, Painted Stork, Spot-billed Pelican, Black-headed Ibis, Sri Lanka Green Pigeon, Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Malabar Pied Hornbill, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Changeable Hawk Eagle, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Blue-faced Malkoha, Sirkeer Malkoha, Lesser Adjutant.

Accommodation: Chaarya Resort & Spa  
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

### **Day 9: Drive Yala - Udawalawe National Park (78 km | 2 hrs)**

After our leisurely breakfast proceed to Udawalawe NP which takes us approximately 2 hours. This afternoon we go on jeep safari in Udawalawe National Park.

### Udawalawe National Park

The land of the elephants, Udawalawe's mountains look down on the vast spreading reservoir which is home to many fauna and flora. This beautiful landscape is a sanctuary for wild animals which were

displaced during the construction of the Udawalawe reservoir.

### Possible noteworthy species:

Mammals – Toque Macaque, Grey Langur, Ruddy Mongoose, Asian Elephant, Wild Boar, Water Buffalo, Golden Jackal

Birds – Black winged Kite, Plain, Jungle and Grey-breasted Prinia, Barred Button Quail, Painted Stork, Spot-billed Pelican, Black-headed Ibis, Greater Racket Tailed Drongo, Sri Lanka Green Pigeon, Orange-breasted Green Pigeon, Plum-headed Parakeet, Oriental Skylark, Paddyfield Pipit, Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Malabar Pied Hornbill, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Changeable Hawk Eagle, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Blue-faced Malkoha,

Accommodation: Grand Udawalawe Safari  
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner



### **Day 10: Drive Udawalawe - Sinharaja (91 km | 3 hrs)**

Today we proceed to the world famous Sinharaja Rainforest.

Afternoon birding in Sinharaja Village

Accommodation: Blue Magpie Lodge  
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

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## Day 11: Explore Sinharaja Forest

With packed breakfast and lunch (lunch own arrangement) a full day visit to Sinharaja Rainforest.

### Sinharaja Rain-forest

The treasure chest of biodiversity and endemism, Sinharaja is the last remnant of a lowland virgin rainforest in whole of south Asia. Constantly under the threat urbanization this beautiful rainforest has stood its ground and has become one of Sri Lanka's most sought rainforest for the diverse rainforest birds and the islands endemics.

### Possible noteworthy species:

Mammals/Reptiles – Purple-faced Leaf Monkey, Indian Palm Squirrel, Giant Grizzled Squirrel, Dusky Striped Squirrel, Layard's Squirrel, Kangaroo Lizard, Hump-nosed Lizard

Birds - Chestnut-backed Owlet, Sri Lanka Scaly Thrush, Spot-winged Thrush, Green-billed Coucal, Red-faced Malkoha, Sri Lanka Blue Magpie, Scimitar Babbler, Ashy-headed Laughing Thrush, White-faced Starling, SerendibScops Owl, Sri Lanka Frogmouth, Sri Lanka Hanging Parrot, Yellow-fronted Barbet, Orange-billed Babbler, Legge's Flowerpecker, Crimson-backed Goldenback Woodpecker, Black Bulbul, Layard's Parakeet, Sri Lanka Spurfowl, Sri Lanka Crested Drongo, Sri Lanka Jungle Fowl, Sri Lanka Green Pigeon, Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill, Malabar Trogon, Black Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Crested Honey Buzzard.

Accommodation: Blue Magpie Lodge  
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 12: Visit Ketalapathala Village | Drive Sinharaja - Katunayake (190 km | 3.66 hrs)

Today is our last full-day in Sri Lanka. Before we drive to airport hotel we will visit Ketalapathala Village in Sinharaja Rainforest buffer zone. Afternoon we proceed to a hotel near the Airport.

Accommodation: Vivanta Airport Garden Hotel  
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 14: Depart Colombo

Transfer to airport by private vehicle for our homeward-bound flight.

Meal: Breakfast

Interested in extending your trip? Link it up with another adventure!

### **"Whale Watching in Sri Lanka, the Ultimate Voyage in Search of Cetaceans"**

Extend your Sri Lanka wildlife adventure with this 2 Days Whale Watching in Sri Lanka, the Ultimate Voyage in Search of Cetaceans.

### **Beach Extension**

If you wish to relax after a long & tiring wildlife tour would be well advised to choose the **Cinnamon Bey Beruwala** beach extension. The area south of the old historic settlement of Beruwala has been popular with visitors since the very inception of Sri Lankan tourism and offers all the components for a relaxing beach holiday.

For more information & booking contact our Sales Team.

### **Includes**

- Airport (pick up/drop off) transfers by private A/C vehicle
- Twin-Sharing accommodation in all Hotel/Lodge as mentioned on Half-Board basis (Breakfast & Dinner)
- Jeep services in all National Parks
- Services of wildlife/naturalist guide
- All sightseeing and long-distance transportation in private air-condition vehicle (cars/SUVs or mini/micro-van etc. depending on group size). This includes toll taxes,

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parking, allowance for driver, outstation overnight charges for the driver

- Entrance fee for following: Sigiriya, 01 Visit to Minneriya National Park with Safari Jeep, Royal Botanical Gardens, Udawathakele, 01 Visit to Horton Plains with local Van Hire, Surrey Bird Sanctuary, Full Day Visit to Lunugamvehera National Park with Jeep Hire, 01 Visit to Udawalawe National Park with Jeep Hire, 02 Visit to Singheraja Rain Forest, Visit to Ketalapathala Village
- 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



### Hotel Sigiriya, Sigiriya

A luxurious, eco retreat under the shadow of the Rock Fortress. At the beating heart of the cultural triangle of the country, cocooned within the Sigiriya Natural Reserve and offering a glorious view of the world renowned Sigiriya Rock fortress, lies Hotel Sigiriya, an eco-hotel taking one back to the stories of kings and dynasties.

### 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 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.

### 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!

### Chaarya Resort & Spa, Yala

Welcome to the charming Chaarya Resort & Spa at Yala, located 265 km from the capital city of Colombo. Being surrounded by lush greenery and the melodious calls of the wild makes it a real 'escape' from the hectic urban world. It is all about luxurious living in an aesthetically pleasing environment, delectable cuisine, and plenty of outdoor activities to indulge in.

### Grand Udawalawe Safari, Udawalawe

The Grand Udawalawe Safari Resort, offering 4-star facilities, is the only hotel of its' class in the area. The Grand Udawalawe Safari Resort, situated on 7 acres of land, is located 163 kilometers away from Colombo, and only 500 meters from the Ath Athuru Sevana (Elephant Orphanage), and is only a five minutes' drive from the Uda Walawe National Park.



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### Blue Magpie Lodge, Sinharaja

The surrounding of the lodge is unique; peaceful, silent, birds humming, water flowing and the cool breeze gives us the feeling of complete relaxation. Natural cool breeze from the Sinharaja forest as well as the natural stream gives a soothing sensation for Mind, Body & Soul. The Blue Magpie is inspired by the simple Sri Lankan traditional ways of living.



### Vivanta Airport Garden Hotel, Colombo

Nestled amidst a 38-acre coconut plantation bordering the tranquil Negombo Lagoon, Vivanta Colombo, Airport Garden, is located a mere 5 min drive from the Colombo International Airport and a 45 min drive from the capital city of Colombo. Making it the most preferred venue for international business travellers. It is also the perfect destination for leisure seekers to relax and unwind.

### 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 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

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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 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%

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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 be 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 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

# Quest for the Endemic Birds & Mammals of Sri Lanka | 13 Days

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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.