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Tour Notes

Sri Lanka - Northern Explorer

Tour Duration – 15 Days



Tour Rating

Fitness ●●●○○ | Off the Beaten Track ●●●●○ | Culture ●●●●○ | History ●●●●○ | Wildlife ●●●●○

Tour Pace

Busy

Tour Highlights

- ✓ Explore the little visited Jaffna peninsula in the far North
- ✓ Excellent wildlife spotting opportunities in off the beaten track Wilpattu National Park
- ✓ Experience the isolated and little visited windswept island of Mannar
- ✓ See wild ponies roaming Delft Island off the Jaffna peninsula
- ✓ Get off the beaten track In Jaffna with a Tamil guide
- ✓ Marvel at the panorama from the summit of Sigiriya Rock
- ✓ The possibility to see elephant gatherings during the dry season
- ✓ Authentic village visits to observe rural traditions and customs
- ✓ Spend time on the laid back east coast at Trincomalee



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Tour Map



Tour Essentials

Accommodation: Mix of comfortable hotels and a permanent safari tented property at Wilpattu

Included Meals: Daily breakfast (B), plus lunches (L) and dinners (D) as shown in the itinerary

Group Size: Maximum 12

Start Point: Negombo (Colombo airport)

End Point: Negombo (Colombo airport)

Transport: Bus or minibus and local ferry

Countries: Sri Lanka

Optional Extensions: So many! The hill country – Southern beaches – Yala National Park please contact us if you would like to extend your stay in Sri Lanka



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Sri Lanka - Northern Explorer

Join us on this small group tour to a largely unexplored part of Sri Lanka. Until recently much of the north of this wonderful country has been off limits and stricken by civil war. On our journey, we head to a working rural coconut plantation where we get a taste for village life. For wildlife lovers we will safari in Wilpattu National Park, intentionally to travel to one of the quieter and lesser visited parks in Sri Lanka, where we hope to spot wildlife such as Sloth Bear, Leopard and Elephants. The next stop is the sun-baked island of Mannar – again few tourists venture here as it is one of the most isolated areas of the country where wild donkeys roam and the landscape is dotted with Baobab trees. We then head on to the Jaffna Peninsula which was until only a few years ago the scene of a fierce civil war between government forces and the LTTE (Tamil Tigers). War damage here is still very much in evidence but we will see how the area is recovering with a Tamil guide and explore points of interest such as Jaffna Fort and the Public Library. We also visit fascinating Delft Island where wild ponies run free. Heading back south we cross the strategically important Elephant Pass and journey towards the East Coast with its excellent beaches and we will explore the main harbour city of Trincomalee. Back in the heart of the country we visit the incredible Sigiriya Rock Fortress; from the summit the views are unparalleled. We hope to see more wildlife and especially elephants at Hurulu Eco Park with the dry season being a particularly good time to see them in numbers. Finally we explore Colombo with a local to soak up the atmosphere of the crazy streets, sample some local Kottu Roti and wander through Pettah Market. Sri Lanka has history, culture, scenery and great wildlife in abundance. Check out the North before the inevitable arrival of mass tourism blunts its authentic charm.

Tour Itinerary Notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested and on occasions alternative accommodation, of a similar standard to that named below, will be used.

Tour Guide

Our guides are a key strength, chosen for their knowledge of and passion for the areas in which they work. All of our guides are carefully hand-picked, and are not just passing through these countries, but are usually locally born. Unlike some companies it should be noted we do not send a guide or tour leader from Undiscovered Destinations in the UK as we have every confidence in our locally appointed representative who is responsible for operating the tour on our behalf. Where possible you will have the same guide throughout your trip but on occasions it may be necessary to change the guide at one or more points during the tour. For tours where the group size is very small – a driver/guide may be used.

Itinerary

Day 1 – Arrive in Sri Lanka - Transfer to Thaladena Negombo (approximately 40 minutes)

On arrival transfer to your hotel where the rest of the day will be at leisure. Kindly note that for early arrivals early check is not guaranteed. Overnight Villa Hundira or similar.

Day 2 – Thaladena Negombo – Driving time approximately 20 minutes

Enjoy a morning boat trip on the Negombo lagoon where we can observe many coastal birds and enjoy the vibrant colours of the Negombo fishing fleet. During the cruise enjoy some fresh tropical fruits. Later after a relaxed breakfast visit Negombo city for a tour before returning to your villa. The rest of the day is at leisure. Overnight Villa Hundira or similar (BD)

Day 3 – Wilpattu National Park (Approximate driving time 3.5 hours)

We depart after a relaxing breakfast and journey north to Wilpattu National Park. Compared to parks in the south of the country, Wilpattu receives relatively few visitors which ensures a more enjoyable and less hectic



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safari experience and hopefully less impact on the biodiversity of the park. After lunch on the outskirts of the park we take an afternoon safari in this wilderness area where if we are lucky we may be able to spot Leopard, Elephant, Sloth Bear and many other species as well as many different bird species. Overnight Big Game Park Wilpattu (non-air-conditioned tent) or similar (BLD)

Kindly note that Wilpattu is more dense and more off the beaten track than most Sri Lankan parks. Wildlife is very much around but sightings cannot be guaranteed.

Wilpattu National Park

Wilpattu is approximately 1,908 sq.km in extent. It has a dense jungle cover, which makes it a very exciting park as animals have to be tracked. There are numerous delightful little lakes - known as villus - and the leopard and sloth bear can sometimes be spotted drinking at these. A large variety of birds are also found in this park.

Day 4 – Wilpattu National Park – Anuradhapura (UNESCO) – Mannar Island – (Approximate driving time today is 3 hours)

Early this morning enjoy a further safari in the wilderness of Wilpattu National Park. After the safari we return to camp for breakfast before continuing to Anuradhapura, the first ancient kingdom of the Sri Lankan kings. We will by no means be exploring the whole site but we will visit the sacred Bo Tree, which is the world's oldest tree on record, and has been guarded by monks for over 2000 years. Lunch will be taken in a landmark colonial building which has played host to many dignitaries including the Queen. Later we travel back to the West coast and a forgotten gem, isolated Mannar Island. On arrival in the town of Mannar we will explore the town and the ruined fort and its ramparts which afford good views of the town and the causeway that connects Mannar Island to the mainland. Overnight Palmyrah House or similar (BLD)

Anuradhapura

For over 1000 years Sinhalese Kings with occasional South Indian interlopers ruled from the great city of Anuradhapura. It is the most extensive and important of the Sri Lankan ancient cities and today you'll get to see it extensively. Anuradhapura was founded in the 4th century BC and is famous for its Dagabas (Temples), Reservoirs, and beautifully landscaped gardens, the ruins of which still remain to this day.

Mannar and Mannar Island

Isolated Mannar is known for its baobab trees and for its fort, built by the Portuguese in 1560 and taken by the Dutch in 1658 and rebuilt; its ramparts and bastions are intact, though the interior is largely destroyed. Formerly the town was renowned as a centre of the pearl fishing industry. The modern town is dominated by its Hindu temples, mosques and churches. The Catholic Church has a diocese headquartered in the town. By rail the town is connected to the rest of Sri Lanka by the Mannar Line. Mannar Island is a sun-baked and windswept island and is one of the poorest and least fertile areas of Sri Lanka and was hit hard during the civil war. Despite its slightly shabby appearance, Mannar Island has an interesting and off the beaten track feel to it where wild donkeys roam a landscape of ancient baobab trees.

Day 5 – Mannar Island

This morning, after an early breakfast we visit the fish market in Mannar. Fishing is the main stream of income on the island and a visit to the fish market gives a great insight into island life. Mannar is renowned as being the source of the best dried fish in the country. Our exploration of fascinating Mannar Island continues with a visit to the ancient Hindu temple - Thiruketheeswaram Temple. Continue to Doric Bungalow, once a grand building and the house of the first British Governor of Ceylon in 1801. Overlooking the Indian Ocean, it is considered as one of the first buildings in the country built to a classical architectural plan. Also visit the ruins of the Dutch Fort in Arippu which in its heyday was at the core of the lucrative pearl fisheries. If time allows we can walk on the beach and observe enormous mounds of shells left over from the past. Later this afternoon we drive to the very tip of Mannar Island to the outpost of Talaimannar. Ferries once departed to India from



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here but now the village has a slightly eerie feel to it and it is a base for the Sri Lankan Navy. From the railway station you can walk the recently restored railway line right to the sea where the lighthouse marks the end of Mannar Island. Overnight Palmyrah House (BLD)

Day 6 – Mannar – Jaffna – (Driving time today approximately 3 hours)

This morning we travel to the far North to the city of Jaffna, just now starting to open up after the civil war and is a stark contrast to the much more touristic south of Sri Lanka. On arrival we check in the hotel after some rest, lunch will be arranged at a local Jaffna home and this is a great opportunity to exchange cultural values and a glimpse into the lives of an ordinary family. Our local Tamil guide will be with you to assist with translation. A special 'kool' or traditional soup will be served first followed by 'Pittu' made from coconut and rice flour usually served with crab curry, fried prawns, dhal curry and other local delights in a real Jaffna feast. After a nice break to allow us to relax after the meal, we explore Jaffna city by bicycle, visiting the fort, the library, Subramaniam Park and other notable sites. Later we return to our hotel where you can relax and enjoy a swim. Overnight Fox Kandy, Jaffna or similar (BLD)

Note – If you do not wish to cycle please let us know and Tuk Tuk's will be arranged instead.

Jaffna Peninsular

Located 246 miles from Colombo, the Jaffna peninsula has an area of 380 square miles. Jaffna was an important city for both the Portuguese and Dutch. The recently restored Jaffna Fort has been fought over for centuries. It was completed in 1632 and covers 55 acres in extent. The Dutch Church inside the Fort dates to 1706. During the civil war, government forces used the fort as an encampment and it was the scene of a 107 day siege where the LTTE (Tamil Tigers) forced the retreat of government troops. There are ruins of Portuguese churches at Myliddi and Chankanai and a ruined Dutch church at Atchuveli. Fort Hammenheil can be found at the entrance to the Kayts Harbour and is located on an island. Jaffna is full of Hindu Kovils. The Nallur Kandasamy Kovil and Vallipuram Kovil at Point Pedro are considered two important Kovils. All over Jaffna peninsular the evidence of the recent war is all too commonplace with ruined homes, bombed churches and other buildings riddled with bullet and shrapnel damage. Since 2009 the area has returned to stability and slowly many of those that left the carnage have started to return.

Day 7 – Jaffna and the peninsular

We start this morning with a visit to Nallur temple. A traditional shalv /Veddi will be provided to wear when you enter the temple. The history and importance of this place will be explained and the basic principles of worshipping at a Hindu temple will be demonstrated. We will delve into Jaffna's culture, similarities and differences of South Indian culture, the scars of war, and the effects of migration and exile has had in the region. Later we explore other areas in and around Jaffna such as Karainagar, Casuarina Beach, Kayts Jetty, Hanuman temple, Kantharodai Buddhist miniature pagodas and more if time allows. Lunch will be provided at a village home with dishes such as fried cuttlefish, Jaffna prawn curry, toasted crab, fish masala, mashed brinjal, drumstick curry, fish gravy to enjoy. The meals tend to be served on banana leaf in the tradition of a true Jaffna style lunch. The rest of the afternoon is free to relax at leisure and idle at quiet Casuarina beach or at the hotel pool. Of course if you wish you can wander some more in Jaffna itself. Overnight Fox Kandy, Jaffna or similar (BLD)

Day 8 – Island exploring – Delft Island

Off limits for years due to the civil war the islands off the Jaffna peninsula are rewarding places to cruise to and visit. Today we will visit the island of Delft where wild ponies roam the landscape and the coastline is blessed with beautiful waters and white sand beaches. During the 1 hour crossing by local ferry, the Tamil guide will explain some of the difficulties and challenges of living on such remote islands. Although around 6000 people live on Delft Island this windswept island feels largely deserted. Our tour of the island will take us to the abandoned Dutch fort and a 1000 year old temple and a huge Baobab tree. We also visit the Pigeon Hole, the Dutch Tower, and the ruins of stables used in colonial times by the British and Portuguese to breed





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horses. Enjoy a local lunch today with an island family where you can learn how to cook traditional Sri Lankan food. The eerie rustic charm of Delft can hardly be put into words, and a trip to this isolated outpost that gazes out towards India is a real privilege. Later we return to Jaffna by ferry. Overnight Fox Kandy, Jaffna or similar (BLD)

Note – On sunny days it can be fiercely hot on Delft Island. Please dress accordingly and ensure you are protected from the sun and wear a hat.

Delft and Nagadipa Islands

Delft Island was first named by the Dutchman Rijckloff van Goens, who was governor of Zeeland in the 1660's. Delft is a flat island surrounded by shallow waters and beaches of coral chunks and sand. The Buddhist Vihara at Nagadipa (Nainativu) Island is a place sanctified by the visit of the Buddha and the dagoba (Buddhist stupa) is an old one. The large number of dagobas in the Kantharodai site dates from the 2nd to 10th Centuries AD. At Keeramalai is a freshwater bathing pond on the beach and it is said to possess therapeutic properties.

Day 9 – Jaffna – Trincomalee (Approximate overall journey time 4.5 hours today)

Today we leave Jaffna and head south on the A9 via the Elephant Pass where we will stop to view the war memorial, a sobering reminder of the not so long ended devastating civil war. This afternoon we explore 'Trinco', the main city on the East coast. The city is making a slow recovery after the civil war and also the terrible Tsunami. Enjoy a walk in the central areas of the city and head to Ruben's place, a renowned spice merchant whose curry mix is famous in town. Continuing on, we take a stroll in the market and visit Koneswaram Temple which is also the site of the famous lovers leap with stunning views out to the ocean. If time allows we can also stop to visit the Commonwealth war cemetery. Overnight Anantamaa Hotel or similar (BD)

Trincomalee

Trincomalee situated on the east coast is a charming town with a natural deep water harbour. Its strategic significance has meant it has been fought over through the centuries and was also badly impacted during the more recent civil war. There are fine views of the town from Kandasamy Kovil and pilgrims from across the country come to visit this ancient place of worship. Swami Rock also known as lovers leap is one of the best places in the world to spot the Blue whale, the largest organism on the planet. Sightings are most common between February and November when the sea is quite calm.

Day 10 – Trincomalee

Spend today at leisure. Overnight Anantamaa Hotel or similar (BD)

Optional: Early in the morning, set out on a boat ride in search for the marine mammals. If you are lucky, you might be able to catch the thrills of the acrobatic spinner dolphins in mid-air and witness the largest animal to have ever inhabited our planet: the Blue Whale. Please let us know if you would like to include this – additional charges apply

Day 11 – Trincomalee – Habarana – Ritigala – Sigiriya (approximate overall driving time is 5 hours today)

We leave the East Coast behind and continue towards Sigiriya. We take a break from our drive to stop for authentic rice and curry lunch. Continue to Ritigala Archaeological Monastery, an ancient Buddhist Monastic complex dating back to the 1st century BC and located on the eastern side of the lush slopes of Ritigala Mountain. We explore this peaceful forest haven and get a feel for the history before continuing to our overnight stay. Overnight Kassapa Lions Rock or similar (BLD)



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Ritigala

Ritigala has most definitely an undiscovered feel to it and bears a certain mysterious nature owing to the long meditational pathways that open into the thick jungle and large stone-lined reservoirs. It is a world away from the more famous historical tourist sites in the country and retains a wonderfully peaceful aura. Make sure you take time to explore in depth and walk all the way to the higher parts of the complex for a rounded appreciation of the site. Take time to sit down and connect with nature in the sacred ancient meditation grounds.

Day 12 - Sigiriya Rock UNESCO – Driving time today approximately 1 hours

This morning we arrive at Sigiriya Rock (UNESCO) early, in the still relative cool of the day and this also beats the main throng of tourist crowds. We explore some of the interesting features in the lower sections of the site such as the Royal Gardens and the water gardens. We then visit the remarkably preserved frescoes situated about half way up the rock before the final staircase climb to the top of the rock where the reward is breathtaking views for miles in every direction. After descending we take a well-earned rest and stop by a local restaurant in Habarana to enjoy yet another lunch that captures the true essence of village cuisine. We head back to the hotel. Overnight Kassapa Lion Rock or similar (BLD)

Day 13 – Hurulu Eco Park

Spend the morning at leisure before setting out on a jeep safari at Hurulu Eco Park in Habarana. Overnight Kassapa Lion Rock or similar (BLD)

OPTIONAL - This morning you will set out on a village cycling tour which explores the lifestyle of the local villagers. This experience is all about the PEOPLE because after all, it's people that makes places beautiful.

You start off by going along the inner village roads where it's good to keep an eye for birdlife. The experience doesn't really have a script and is not staged, so you will be visiting different houses where certain cottage industries takes place.

Some of the stops includes a place where they make bricks out of clay, a house where coir brooms are produced, a quick stop at the house of the village dancing teacher to observe some of the traditional dancing steps and also a stop at a house where a grandma produces a traditional ayurvedic oil. Along the way you will also stop for a local snack with a Tea served in a coconut shell. These are all local experiences which you probably won't experience back at home.

The final stop will be at a village house where you get to taste a mouth-watering traditional Sri Lankan rice and curry lunch prepared by Dilini, a lady from the village.

Notes: Your cycling guide for the trail will be a villager from the area itself and fluent English doesn't come to them naturally. But he will make up for it with his typical Sri Lankan hospitality and in-depth knowledge of the area. The trail is approximately 12 KMs in distance and anyone with decent fitness and cycling balance can manage it since it's mostly flat terrain.

Please let us know at the time of booking if you would like this included. Additional charges apply.

Hurulu Eco Park

Elephants in Sri Lanka tend to constantly transfer from one park to another depending on the time of the year and of course according to the availability of food and water. The most popular parks are the two neighbouring national parks of Minneriya and Kaudulla which also contain lakes where elephants often gather in large herds. However these parks have become desperately overcrowded with jeeps getting dangerously close to herds to get the best views, which is why we are breaking away from the crowds and enjoying the



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relatively little visited Hurulu Eco Park where there is more forest cover and hence it may be harder to see elephants but we strongly feel that the experience is worthwhile, as long as expectations are realistic and importantly we feel that it is necessary to minimise the impact on these magnificent wild animals.

Day 14 – Colombo - Driving time today approximately 4 hours

After breakfast we drive to Colombo. After checking in to the hotel and some brief rest we meet Rashan who will show us around his city. We visit a street food joint at the Galle Face green where you can have a taste of *Kottu Rotti*, an everyday Sri Lankan meal not to be missed and best enjoyed on the street. Later we visit the evening market at Pettah where you will get to see local vendors from all over Sri Lanka and this is a great place to try some seasonal fruit. We take a walk through the crazy streets of Slave Island, a great place to observe locals going about their daily lives. Return to your hotel for a farewell dinner at the Verandah Restaurant at the Galle Face Hotel. After dinner enjoy a final drink at the Travellers Bar just a stones throw from the rollers breaking on the beach. A fitting way to end the adventure! Overnight Galle Face Hotel (BD)

Note – Extra nights can be booked on request and subject to availability at the Galle Face Hotel

Colombo

The largest city and former administrative capital of Sri Lanka, it is a busy and vibrant city with a mixture of modern life and still the remnants of a bygone colonial era. Due to its large harbour and its strategic position along the East-West sea trade routes, ancient traders came ashore over 2,000 years ago. However it was only made the capital of the island when Sri Lanka was ceded to the British Empire in 1815.

Day 15 – Depart Colombo

Transfer to the airport at an appropriate time for your onward flight (B)

Tour inclusions/exclusions

Inclusions:

Arrival and departure transfers
All accommodation
Services of English speaking guide / tour leader
Meals as listed (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner)
Entrance fees for sites listed as part of the itinerary

Excluded:

International flights
Travel Insurance
Visas
Drinks
Items of a personal nature
Tips (Discretionary)

Important Information

Foreign Government Travel Warnings

We constantly monitor the advice posted by the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). In particular we will always advise clients of any travel warnings. At present there are no warnings



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against travel to Sri Lanka to areas that we travel to. Please feel free to contact us should you have any specific concerns or would like to know in detail what measures are being taken to ensure visits remain trouble free and without incident.

It should be noted that this information applies to British citizens. Other nationals are asked to check the current position of their respective government.

Accommodation and Meals

Hotel Check-in Times

As a general rule most hotels will allow guests to check-in from 2pm. Please note that the price of your tour does not include guaranteed early check-in. Therefore please advise us if you would like to ensure that your room is available for an earlier arrival. This is particularly relevant on the first day of the tour and for early morning arrivals. One option is to pre-book and pay for an extra night at the beginning of your tour which will guarantee your accommodation is available irrespective of what time you arrive. Please contact us for information and costs.

It should also be noted that on many of our tours we have set-aside Day 1 of the itinerary as an 'arrival day'. For this reason and because tour participants are likely to be arriving at different times, and often from different countries, guided sightseeing or other activities are not included. If you are arriving early or before the start date of the tour and would like to organise some extra arrangements on a private basis please contact us.

Accommodation Rating

At Undiscovered Destinations we know our travellers prefer to stay in comfortable mid-range accommodation. You can expect accommodation to have private bathroom facilities. In general you will find your accommodation has a restaurant and/or bar.

We welcome solo travellers and single rooms will be allocated subject to the applicable tour supplement. Please note that on occasions you may not always be allocated a double or twin room, as some hotels have designated single rooms. These may be smaller in size. However, the supplement payable takes this into consideration.

Food & Drink

The daily meal basis is shown in the tour itinerary; breakfast (B), lunch (L) and dinner (D). Please note that lunch may be a picnic. Drinks are not included and will be payable locally in cash.

Dietary Requirements

If you have any special dietary requirements you must notify us at the time of booking. While we will make every effort to cater for you, we cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch £5



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Dinner £10

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Bottle of local beer £1- £2

Bottle of water £0.50

Tipping – Guide and Drivers

Tipping is common practice in Sri Lanka. If your local guide has been helpful then you could think about tipping. This amount can obviously be left to you. When tipping a driver, a guide or hotel staff a few dollars will always be gratefully received.

Foreign Exchange

ATM Availability: Sri Lanka is well equipped with ATMs, although less so in smaller towns than in larger cities

Credit or Debit Card Acceptance: Cards are generally only accepted in the more expensive shops and restaurants especially in the lesser visited north of the country

Local Currency: Rupee

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Pound Sterling or US Dollars

Where to Exchange: Your guide will advise you

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive an airport transfer, both on arrival and departure include in the tour price. In order that the transfer can be arranged please ensure that you advise us of your flight information once available. Please advise the date, time and flight number for your arrival/departure. If we have not been advised of this information at least 2 weeks before travel, then you will be required to make your own way to the hotel on Day 1 of your tour.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Undiscovered Destinations that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country and be valid for the entire duration of your holiday.

Visa Information

Most nationals including UK, EU and US visitors require a visa for entry to Sri Lanka. For most nationalities this is done online as an electronic visa. We recommend that you check with your nearest embassy for the most up to date details. For more details on the e-visa please visit <http://www.eta.gov.lk/slvisa/visainfo/center.jsp>.



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Passports

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, valid for at least six months after the date of return to the UK.

We strongly advise that your passport contains a minimum of two blank pages, as this may be a requirement of the local immigration authorities. In addition certain countries will stipulate that the two blank pages are opposite each other. If you are unable to meet these requirements you may be refused boarding by your airline or denied entry by the immigration authorities.

For specific information about the requirements for your destination please check with the country's embassy or consulate. Alternatively UK citizens can visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

Vaccinations & Protection

As with travel to most parts of Asia, we strongly recommend that you contact your doctor's surgery or a specialist travel clinic for up-to-date information, advice and the necessary vaccinations. For a visit of less than one month, almost certainly you will be advised to have immunisations against the following: Diphtheria and Tetanus, Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Meningitis. The use of a DEET-containing insect repellent is highly recommended. Malaria is not known as high risk in Sri Lanka but again speak to your doctor or travel clinic for up to date advice.

Preparing for your tour

Climate

Year round high temperatures in coastal regions: Colombo averages 27°C. There are two monsoon periods: Apr-Sep when rain is confined to the southwest of the country; and Oct-Mar when it falls in the north and east the country which is where we run our small group tour. Please note predicting modern climate patterns have become increasingly more difficult and travellers should only use this advice as a guide.

Clothing

When it comes to clothing it is usually recommended that lighter clothes are worn through the day, and warmer ones at night although in Sri Lanka unless you are in the hill country temperatures never dip too low. A hat is also advised to be worn through the day to protect from the sun, along with at least one piece of waterproof clothing for any days where rain showers may be present.

You should bear in mind that Sri Lanka tends to have a conservative attitude towards dress. Women, and also to a certain extent men, will find that the way they dress will often determine the degree of respect they receive from both men and women.

Equipment

The first thing on your list should be a first aid kit. Whilst there is no undue cause for alarm, travellers are best advised to travel well-prepared: adequately immunized, with sufficient supplies of prescription drugs, along with a medical kit. Suncream/sunblock is a must. Insect repellent, including a bite spray will also be useful to have. It is also recommended to take a torch/head torch in case of any electricity outages at night.

Footwear

Footwear is always a priority consideration on tour and we recommend comfortable walking shoes when sightseeing. Lighter shoes or sandals are suitable when travelling and when at the beach.



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Luggage on tour

Your luggage should not exceed 20kgs (44lbs). One large suitcase/rucksack, and one small hand luggage rucksack is acceptable.

Electric Supply & Plugs

230-240volts. Plugs are usually of the European three round pin variety.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes. These notes were updated 17 October 2023.

