

# Sri Lanka's Cultural Triangle & East Coast 2019

10 Day Private Tour – 4V or Boutique accommodation

## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

• Private tour with guide • Sigiriya Rock Fortress • Minneriya National Park Safari • Optional tours available • Great tour for summer travels • 4V or boutique hotel options available • East Coast beach stay • Seaplane transfer

## ITINERARY

### Day 1: Arrive Colombo

Arrive in Colombo this morning, where you will be transferred to Negombo (approximately 20 minutes) to check-in at the **Jetwing Beach or similar (4V option) or Wallawwa or similar (boutique option)** for your overnight stay. The rest of the day is at leisure. (D)

### Day 2: Negombo to the Cultural Triangle

After an early breakfast depart for Habarana by road (approximately 5 hours), upon arrival enjoy the rest of the day at leisure. Commonly referred to as the 'Cultural Triangle', the central plains area boasts of temple ruins and ancient cities combined with national parks and glistening reservoirs. The area boasts an enthralling visit for wildlife and cultural lovers alike. En-route you have the option to stop over at the highly recommended Dambulla Cave Temples and in the afternoon we recommend an enjoyable visit to Polonnaruwa (additional cost), the medieval and ancient capital of Ceylon. Highlights include the Royal Palace complex including the Kings Palace and Audience Hall and the Quadrangle with its concentration of ancient heritage. Also view the spectacular Gal Vihare complex of four massive images of the Buddha, cut from a single slab of granite, a magnificent example of ancient Sri Lankan rock carving. Enjoy 3 nights at the **Habarana Village by Cinnamon or similar (4V option) or Ulagalla Resort by Uga Escapes or similar (boutique option)**. (B,D)

### Day 3:- Sigiriya and Minneriya

An early start today as we visit the magnificent site of Sigiriya Rock. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is one of Sri Lanka's major attractions, highlights include the water gardens, the mirror wall with ancient graffiti, the lion platform and the summit of 1.6 hectares, which was completely covered by buildings during the period of Sigiriya's glory. In the afternoon, you will drive to the Minneriya National Park\* (approx. 30 mins). Sitting amidst Habarana and Polonnaruwa, the 8,890 hectares of Minneriya National Park consists of mixed evergreen forest and scrub areas and is home to favourites such as elephants and sambar deer. The central feature of the park is the ancient Minneriya Tank (built in 3rd century AD). During the dry season (June to September), this tank is an incredible place to observe the elephants who come to bathe and graze, as well as the huge flocks of birds that come to fish in the waters. Overnight **Habarana Village by Cinnamon or similar (4V option) or Ulagalla Resort by Uga Escapes or similar (boutique option)**. (B,D)

\*Depending on the elephant movement, you may visit the nearby Kaudulla National Park or Hurulu Eco Park instead.

### Day 4: Cultural Triangle

Today is at leisure or you could add an optional tour (additional cost) to Anuradhapura. Overnight **Habarana Village by Cinnamon or similar (4V option) or Ulagalla Resort by Uga Escapes or similar (boutique option)**. (B,D)

### Day 5: Cultural Triangle to the East Coast

Today you will drive toward to east coast to Trincomalee (approximately 2 hours). Trincomalee (also referred to as Trinco) has always been an important eastern town throughout Sri Lanka's history. The town is best known for its harbour, the biggest natural harbour in the world, which has seen the ships of the Portuguese, Dutch and British, among others, over the centuries. Enjoy 5 nights on the beach at the **Trinco Blu, by Cinnamon or similar (4V option) or Jungle Beach Resort by Uga Escapes or similar (boutique option)**. (B,D)

### Day 6-9: East Coast beaches

Days at leisure to enjoy the beaches and activities on Sri Lanka's East Coast. Overnights at **Trinco Blu, by Cinnamon or similar (4V option) or Jungle Beach Resort by Uga Escapes or similar (boutique option)**. (B,D)

### Day 10: Depart for Colombo

This morning, transfer to Trincomalee airport for the scenic flight back to Colombo (approximately 1 hour flight). A road transfer (approximately 7 hours) is also available at a reduction to connect onto your onward flight arrangements, or you can extend to the southern beach resorts or add a night in Colombo. (B)

Meals: B=Breakfast, D=Dinner

**This is a set tour itinerary, if you have booked any pre/post or optional tour arrangements please refer to your separate vouchers and final documents.**

# TOUR NOTES

## Pre/Post Tour Options

The first day of the tour is at leisure so allows you enough time to arrive and relax. This tour ends on the east coast of Sri Lanka and a seaplane transfer is included back to Colombo which takes one hour. It may be necessary to add an extra night in Colombo due to flight connection times.

## Time difference

GMT +5 ½ hours (summer) +6 ½ hours (winter)

## A Private Tour

This is a private itinerary, where you will travel with a driver and be met by local English-speaking tour guides for any included sightseeing.

## Tour inclusions

- Air-conditioned transport with private driver/guide until Day 6
- Sightseeing as detailed including entrance fees and still camera fees
- Accommodation and meal inclusions as mentioned
- Road taxes, parking fees, fuel surcharges and portage at airports

## Tour exclusions

- International flight, including all UK and overseas airport taxes and applicable fuel surcharges
- Flight upgrades and airport transfers in the UK
- Insurance
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, laundry, tips & gratuities, video camera fees at monuments
- Anything not detailed on the itinerary

## Accommodation

Occasionally we may need to substitute one or more of the hotels with that of a similar standard

## Journey times

Sri Lanka is a large country and journey times between destinations can sometimes be long, those listed in the itinerary are approximate

## Language

English is widely spoken in Sri Lanka

## Visa requirements

Holders of UK Passports will require a visa to visit Sri Lanka. This must be obtained in advance for US\$30.00 and can be completed at:

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

## Currency

The Currency in Sri Lanka is the Sri Lankan Rupee. There are plenty of banks and ATMs, but you see less once you head out of the cities, so make sure you have enough to cover your drinks and ad-hoc item bills. You may want to carry small amounts of local currency for tips and to buy souvenirs from vendors too! Please note that not all smaller hotels and shops can accept credit cards

## Electricity

The electricity supply in Sri Lanka is 230 volts, as the sockets vary, an 'International traveller's adapter set' is recommended

## Tipping

It is customary to tip in Sri Lanka. 10% is usual in restaurants and a guide for your driver/guide would be \$5 per traveller per day.

## What to pack

- Lightweight, cotton clothes, smart casual is acceptable
- A light sweater or fleece for early mornings and evenings and air-conditioning can be cool in restaurants
- Comfortable, enclosed and sturdy footwear for walking and game-drives
- Casual clothing and sandals for dinner and relaxing at your hotel/lodge
- Sun cream, sunglasses and hat
- Camera and/or video camera with spare batteries and memory cards
- Swimming attire for an occasional swim
- Binoculars
- Mosquito repellent and spray
- Handy wipes, antiseptic hand gel and bottled water where possible
- For visits to religious monuments and buildings clothing rules may apply, for example covering shoulders or removing footwear, your local guide can advise where necessary
- Low denominations of local currency - handy for ad-hoc tipping!

## What to expect

A tour in Sri Lanka is an adventure where anything can happen. We recommend you are of a reasonable fitness as touring often involves long walks and uneven surfaces, this tour is not suitable for those who require special assistance

## Recommended vaccinations

We advise you to discuss your individual requirements for Sri Lanka with your GP at least 6-8 weeks prior to travel.