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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 - Sri Lanka - Northern Explorer



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

Sri Lanka is a one of the most culturally rich holiday destinations in the Indian Ocean, mixing Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Christian faiths and traditions. Colonial powers, Portuguese, Dutch and British have too left their mark. Diverse landscapes provide habitats for world class wildlife, while white sand beaches are an off-duty playground for visitors and residents alike. Island cuisine is first class, distinct flavours providing an enlivening culinary subtext to any visit. However, it's not all good news. Sri Lanka has suffered a succession of travails, not least a long-running civil war. Now, for the first time in decades the Jaffna Peninsula is open to travellers. Tamil and Sinhalese families are once more learning each other's language, and it's noticeable that many visiting Jaffna are Sri Lankans attempting to re-connect families wrenched apart by the war. Tourism, on all levels, is a practical way of introducing much-needed funds into local economies. Even allowing for the island's characteristic warm welcome, more than ever visitors are appreciated. This tour of Sri Lanka doesn't insulate travellers in an all-inclusive international cocoon. The island's sometimes difficult past validates its reality. In fact, it's part of the reason to visit now.

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 (Approximate driving time: 40 minutes)

On arrival transfer to hotel accommodation. The rest of the day is free to relax. Overnight Villa Hundira or similar.

Please note: Early check-in is subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed.

Day 2 – Thaladena Negombo - Dunagaha (Approximate driving time: one hour)

Early this morning we cruise among colourful fishing vessels on the Negombo lagoon, observing coastal birds. Later, after a relaxed breakfast, we drive towards Dunagaha in Gampaha District to experience a taste of village life. Our bungalow accommodation lies on a working coconut estate, set among fragrant spice gardens. The afternoon is free to relax and explore the estate. Overnight Ambarella Lodge or similar. (BD)

Day 3 – Dunagaha

After breakfast it's time to explore the nearby villages by tuk-tuk, accompanied by a local guide. English is little understood, except by the village guide, so communication can be problematic. However, a smile goes a long way and your visit does contribute to the villages' economy. Later we visit a pineapple plantation, a family textile workshop that uses old-style wooden looms, and a small brick factory. Afterwards we call in at a local house for a cookery masterclass, hopefully followed by a delicious lunch based on the results. In the



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afternoon we return to the lodge. The rest of the day is free to relax. Overnight Ambarella Lodge or similar. (BLD)

Day 4 – Dunagaha – Wilpattu National Park (Approximate driving time: three-and-a-half-hours)

Leaving after breakfast, we journey north to Wilpattu National Park. Compared to parks in the south of the country, Wilpattu receives relatively few visitors, ensuring a less hectic safari experience an inherently reduced impact on wildlife biodiversity. In the afternoon we take a safari in a wilderness area on the outskirts of the park. Wildlife highlights may include leopard, elephant, sloth bear and rich birdlife. Overnight Big Game Park Wilpattu (non-air-conditioned tent) or similar. (BLD)

Please note: *Wilpattu National Park is off-the-beaten-track and its vegetation is denser than most other Sri Lankan parks. Wildlife is very much in residence 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 5 – Wilpattu National Park – Anuradhapura – Mannar Island (Approximate driving time: four hours)

Early this morning, when wildlife is most active, we take a further safari in Wilpattu. Afterwards we return to camp for breakfast and then drive to Anuradhapura, the first ancient kingdom of the Sri Lankan kings and now designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Though we can't explore the whole site, we will visit the sacred Bo Tree, regarded by experts as the world's oldest tree, guarded by monks for over 2,000 years. Lunch is taken in a landmark colonial building which has played host to many dignitaries including Queen Elizabeth II. Later we travel back to the west coast, and the fascinating, forgotten Mannar Island, occupied by the Tamil Tigers until 2009. On arrival we explore the town, the ruined 16th century Portuguese fort and its ramparts which afford good panoramic views, and the causeway connecting the 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 6 – Mannar Island

This morning, after an early breakfast, we visit Mannar's fish market. Fishing is the island's main source of income, and a visit to the market offers insights on this important local industry. Mannar is renowned for its dried fish, said to be the best in the country. Leaving the fishermen, we visit the ancient Hindu temple of Thiruketheeswaram, dating from 600BC or possibly much earlier. Afterwards we continue to Doric Bungalow, built in 1801 as the grand residence for the first British Governor of Ceylon. Overlooking the Indian Ocean, it



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is considered as one of the first buildings in the country constructed to a classical plan. Empires come and go, and elsewhere we call in at the ruined Dutch fort in Arippu, in its heyday the centre of lucrative pearl fisheries. If time allows, we walk along the beach and observe enormous mounds of oyster shells left from this time. In the late afternoon we drive to the very tip of Mannar Island and the outpost of Talaimannar. Once ferries to India departed from this point but now the village has become a base for the Sri Lankan Navy and has a slightly eerie feel. From the railway station you can walk the recently restored railway line right to the sea where a lighthouse marks the island's farthest most extent. From here it's only 29km to a set of sandy shoals in the Indian Ocean, the only land border between India and Sri Lanka. Overnight Palmyrah House. (BLD)

Day 7 – Mannar – Jaffna (Approximate driving time: three-and-a-half-hours)

This morning we travel to the far north and the city of Jaffna, just now starting to open up after the end of the civil war and in stark contrast to the much more touristic cities of the south. On arrival we check-in and after some time to relax take lunch at a local Jaffna home. Our local Tamil guide will assist with translation allowing a great opportunity for cultural exchange and a glimpse into the lives of an ordinary family. A special kool, 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 Jaffna specialities. After time to digest lunch we explore Jaffna city by bicycle, visiting the fort, the library, Subramaniam Park and other notable sites. Afterwards we'll return to our hotel to relax and perhaps take a swim. Overnight Jetwing Jaffna or similar. (BLD)

Please note: Let us know if you'd prefer not to cycle as we can arrange a tour by tuk-tuk 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 8 – 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 temple's history and importance will be explained, along with the rituals followed by those worshipping. During the visit we'll learn about Jaffna's culture, its association with south Indian culture, the effects of migration and exile, and the scars of war. Afterwards we explore other areas in and around Jaffna including Karainagar, Casuarina Beach, Kayts Jetty, Hanuman temple, and the miniature Buddhist pagodas of Kantharodai. A memorable banana leaf lunch, in true Jaffna style, will be provided at a village home, with dishes such as fried cuttlefish, Jaffna prawn curry, toasted crab, fish masala, mashed brinjal and drumstick curry. The rest of the afternoon is free to relax at the hotel pool or explore the city independently. Overnight Jetwing Jaffna or similar. (BLD)

Day 9 – Island exploring – Delft Island

Off-limits for years due to the civil war, the islands off the Jaffna Peninsula make a fascinating destination. Today we head to Delft Island where wild ponies roam and the coastline is blessed with clear waters and white sand beaches. During the one-hour ferry crossing our local Tamil guide will explain some of the difficulties and challenges of living on such remote islands. Although around 6,000 inhabit Delft this windswept island feels largely deserted. Our tour includes an abandoned Dutch fort, a 1,000-year-old temple,



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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. Lunch is taken with an island family offering the chance to glean a few more tips on preparing traditional Sri Lankan food. The experience of visiting Delft is difficult to define but this isolated outpost that gazes out towards India leaves its mark on most visitors. Later we return to Jaffna by ferry. Overnight Jetwing Jaffna or similar. (BLD)

Please note: *On sunny days it can be fiercely hot on Delft Island. Please dress accordingly. Wear a hat and ensure you are protected from the sun.*

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 10 – Jaffna – Trincomalee - Nilaveli (Approximate driving time: four-and-a-half-hours)

Today we leave Jaffna and head south via the Elephant Pass, stopping at the war memorial, a sobering reminder of the recent bloody conflict. In the afternoon we explore Trinco (Trincomalee), the main city on the East coast. The city is making a slow recovery after the civil war and the earlier 2004 tsunami. We 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, we take a stroll in the market and visit Koneswaram Temple, site of the famous lovers leap with stunning views out to the ocean. If time allows, we stop at the Trincomalee British War Cemetery. The day ends by driving to the idyllic Nilaveli Beach, our base for the next two nights. Overnight Pigeon Island Beach Resort 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.

Nilaveli

The beach at Nilaveli is fantastic. As the sun rises over the ocean, if you are an early bird, make sure you rise early for a stunning view out over the shimmering expanse of the Indian Ocean. The beach is long and relatively straight so ideal for leisure walks and along the way, you might see fishermen going about their daily routines. Compared to the busy beaches in the South and West of Sri Lanka, Nilaveli has a laid back and rather untouched feel to it.

Day 11 – Nilaveli at leisure with optional whale watching

Optional whale watching: Early this morning we set out in search of marine mammals. If lucky we may see the thrilling acrobatics of spinner dolphins and possibly encounter the largest animal on the planet, the blue whale. Sri Lanka's east coast is renowned for whales although, as with all wildlife, sightings can never be guaranteed. As ever, the trip is subject to weather and sea conditions. Prices are available request. Please let us know at the time of booking if you are interested in this excursion.



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Those preferring to spend the day on shore are free to stroll along the palm fringed beach or perhaps idle by the pool with a good book, recharging before the final leg of our tour. Overnight Pigeon Island Beach Resort or similar. (BD)

Please note: *Snorkelling trips to Pigeon Island may be arranged. Please contact us if you are interested.*

Day 12 – Nilaveli – Habarana – Ritigala – Sigiriya (*Approximate driving time: five hours*)

Today we leave the east coast behind and drive towards Sigiriya. En route we stop for an authentic staple, a rice and curry lunch. Afterwards we continue to Ritigala monastery, the ruins of an ancient Buddhist monastic complex on the lush eastern slopes of Ritigala mountain, dating back to the 1st century BC. We explore this tranquil site and absorb the history-laden atmosphere before continuing to our accommodation. Overnight Kassapa Lions Rock or similar. (BLD)

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 13 - Sigiriya Rock UNESCO and Hurulu Eco Park (*Approximate driving time: one hour*)

This morning we arrive early at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Sigiriya. The air is still cool and large numbers of visitors have yet to appear. In lower reaches of site we explore interesting features such as the Royal Gardens and the water gardens. Then it's time to climb the immense rock fortress itself. Half-way up we visit the remarkably well-preserved frescoes, before the final staircase climb to the rock's summit. Breathtaking views are on offer, stretching for miles in every direction. After descending we take a well-earned rest followed by lunch at a restaurant in Habarana that captures the essence of village cuisine. Lakmal, the proprietor, takes great pride in his coconut sambol, to be enjoyed with rice and bread. Afterwards we continue to Hurulu Eco Park for a jeep safari in search of wild elephants. After the safari we head back to the hotel. Overnight Kassapa Lion Rock. (BLD)

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 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 (*Approximate driving time: four hours*)

After breakfast we leave for Colombo. On arrival there's time for a brief rest before we meet our local guide, Rashan, who will show us his city. At Galle Face Green we sample street food, tasting kottu rotti, an everyday Sri Lankan meal not to be missed and best enjoyed on the street. Later we explore the evening market at Pettah which attracts vendors from all over Sri Lanka. It's a great place to try delicious seasonal fruit. Later we walk through the crazy streets of Slave Island, a great place to observe local people going about their daily lives. Afterwards we return to the hotel for a farewell dinner at the Verandah Restaurant followed by a nightcap at the Travellers Bar, just a stone's throw from the waves breaking on the beach. A fitting way to end the adventure. Overnight Galle Face Hotel. (BD)



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Please note: Extra nights may be booked on request, subject to availability.

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 and Commonwealth Office (FCO). In particular we will always advise clients of any travel warnings. At present there are no warnings 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



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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
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.



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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>.

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



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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.

The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or purchased in your home country can be different in other countries. If you're travelling with prescription or over-the-counter medicine, read this guidance from NaTHNaC on [best practice when travelling with medicines](#). For further information on the legal status of a specific medicine, you'll need to contact the embassy, high commission or consulate of the country or territory you're travelling to.

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.

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.



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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 12/06/19

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