Itinerary

2FOR1: Taste of Sri Lanka Small Group Tour

***IMPORTANT NOTE: Any extra nights, optional tours or other amendments, will not be visible on this itinerary.**

DAY 1: Arrive Colombo ~ Negombo

Upon arrival to the wonderful island of Sri Lanka, you will make your own way to your hotel in Negombo, approximately a 30-minute drive from the airport. Most airlines arrive around 10pm so it will likely be a late arrival. Extend your time in Negombo by adding extra nights pre-tour. You can take a taxi from the airport or organise our private transfer for $75 per car [1-2 people]
MEALS: None

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Terrace Green Hotel & Spa (Deluxe Room) or similar

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Pledge Scape (Deluxe Room) or similar

DAY 2: Negombo ~ Sigiriya ~ Dambulla

Rise early this morning for a visit to the Negombo fish market. Morning is the best time to visit the market – your leader will help you navigate the organised frenzy of vendors displaying delicacies like crab, lobsters, and squid.
Say goodbye to Negombo and make the drive to Dambulla, where you'll spend the next two nights. Settle into your hotel then in the late afternoon, head out for one of the highlights of any visit to Sri Lanka, a visit to the magnificent palace of Sigiriya (Lion Rock). This dramatic rocky outcrop, rising from the surrounding plains is topped by a ruined palace. It's a good workout to get to the top – your leader will share stories of the ancient civilization who once lived atop the rock as you climb, and the sight at the top makes it well worth it. In the evening, return to Dambulla.

Special Information:

Today's total driving time is approximately 5 hours.

The visit to Lion Rock takes around 3.5 hours in total. From the Lion's Paw there is a steep, 30-minute climb over often narrow walkways and steps to reach all the points of interest at the site. Those who do not want to climb can wait at the Lion's Paw until the rest of the group return. You must climb to access sites like the water garden, boulder garden, frescoes, and the mirror wall.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Lario Resort (Standard Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Fresco Water Villa (Deluxe Room)

OPTIONAL TOURS:

Sigiriya Lions Rock

DAY 3: Polonnaruwa ~ Minneriya Elephant Safari

Morning optional activity to Polonnaruwa, the capital of the Indian Chola Dynasty after Anuradhapura was conquered in the late 10th century. These ruins are close together and generally in much better repair than those you have just seen. Cycling amid the remains of 1000-year-old Polonnaruwa is once again the best way to get around. Once the heat of the day has eased, you'll visit more palaces, temples, and stupas. A likely highlight will be the massive stone Buddhas: 14-metre-high granite carvings of the iconic reclining Buddha which represent the zenith of Sinhalese rock carving. You'll also visit the well laid-out museum, which has scale models of many of the buildings to show how they would have existed in their time.
In the evening enjoy a game drive in the Minneriya National Park (Approximate 40 Mins) Minneriya National Park is a haven for flora and fauna. Being part of the elephant corridor, which joins up with Kaudulla National Park and Wasgomuwa National Park, you have guaranteed sightings of elephants throughout the year. Every year during August to October, one of the most awesome wildlife spectacles “The Gathering” takes place. Over 300 elephants are seen making their way to Minneriya tank as the ancient tank slowly dries up giving way to fresh grass and shoots which is a feast in abundance. Apart from elephants, there is a huge species of birds, mammals, reptiles, fishes, butterflies, etc. The highlight of the park is the Minneriya reservoir with its historical importance, built in 3rd century AD by the famous monarch King Mahasen. It covers an area of 4,670 acres. Return to your hotel and spend the rest of the day at leisure.

Special Information:

Depending on the period of the year / weather we will provide the safari at different national parks with prior notice, Kaudulla National Park or Eco Park which are located within the same region.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Lario Resort (Standard Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Fresco Water Villa (Deluxe Room)

OPTIONAL TOURS:

Polonnaruwa

Cycle Hire

Picnic Lunch

DAY 4: Dambulla Cave Temple ~ Kandy

This morning you will take a short drive to the incredible Dambulla Cave Temple. Here you’ll discover five caves filled with around 150 beautiful statues and paintings of Buddha – some as many as 2000 years old. Explore the magical cave complex as your leader explains why this World Heritage-listed site has been a place of worship for thousands of years. In the afternoon, start your journey to Kandy. Along the way, stop off in the city of Matale where you will visit a local spice garden and learn about the spices that

have played such an important role in Sri Lanka’s cultural heritage. Continue to Kandy where you’ll have a free evening to explore. Though it’s the second-largest city in the country, Kandy maintains a laidback atmosphere. Perhaps take a peaceful stroll around the city’s centre piece lake.

Special Information:

Today’s total driving time is approximately 2.5 hours.

Please note that there are many steps to the caves and a dress code which requires you to remove your shoes and cover up your shoulders and legs.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Oak Ray Regency (Standard Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Oak Ray Heritage Hotel,

DAY 5: Kandy ~ Cultural Show

Encircled by verdant hill country and home to a picturesque lake, bustling market, old shops and some great restaurants, Kandy is one of Sri Lanka's most pleasant cities. It was at one time also home to Sri Lanka's last king, who managing to resist European control long after the coastal areas had surrendered. This morning optional activity - you’ll can visit Dalada Maligawa (the Temple of the Tooth), which houses the country's most sacred relic: a tooth said to be the Buddha's. Pilgrims have been coming to pay homage at this site since the 16th century.
Visit the magnificent Peradeniya Botanical Gardens with its immense fig tree and impressive orchid collection. Considered among the finest botanical gardens in all of Asia, this is a great spot for the kids to run around in. Next up, witness the cultural show. In the early evening, join a Local family to spoil your sweet tooth with a Kandyan sweet-filled Sri Lankan dinner and cooking class.

Special Information:

When visiting the Temples, you must take your hats and shoes off, do not leave your shoes at the side of the road or the monkeys will run off with them. Store them with the ‘shoe keepers’ for a small charge or put them in your rucksack.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Oak Ray Regency (Standard Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Oak Ray Heritage Hotel

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OPTIONAL TOURS:

Temple of The Tooth

DAY 6: Kandy ~ Ella ~ Scenic Train from Ella to Nanu Oya ~ Nuwara Eliya

Depart Kandy and drive to Ella. From Ella take the 3:30pm scenic train journey to Nanu Oya. Upon arrival into Nanu Oya, you will be transferred to Nuwara Eliya. Nestled even deeper into tea plantation country, Nuwara Eliya sits at an elevation of 1800 metres, making it one of the coolest regions in Sri Lanka.

Favoured by the Scots and English during the colonial-era, remnants of the past can be seen in sculpted gardens and manor homes decorating the city today. In the evening head to the sky-scraping Single Tree temple and embark on a short 40- minute hike, taking in spectacular views of the surrounding hills and tea fields.

Note: Due to the weather event late 2025 some parts of the track are unusable, we have amended the itinerary accordingly. When the main track reopens we will revert back to the original itinerary which uses the train track from Kandy to Nanu Oya

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Oak-Ray Summer Hill Breeze (Deluxe Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Mirage Kings Cottage (Deluxe Room)

DAY 7: Tea Factory Tour ~ Colombo

Make a morning visit to the Pedro Tea Estate. Built in 1885, this fascinating factory still features some original pieces of machinery. You'll have a new appreciation for your humble morning brew after learning about the production process and discovering how the finest tea leaves are transformed into Ceylon black tea. If touring the factory inspires a thirst, you'll have the chance to sample some of the final product yourself. Thereafter, make your way to the Colombo.
As the capital city of Sri Lanka, Colombo holds the lifeblood of our island amidst a bustling array of cultural, shopping, and dining experiences. At the heart of the city is the picturesque Beira Lake, which hosts the Seema Malaka and adjacent Gangaramaya Temples against the backdrop of Colombo's rising futuristic skyline. A step back in time, however, is best taken at the National Museum – a refurbished mansion of a colonial governor, which sits close to the lush Viharamahadevi Park as well as the historic Independence Square.

Special Information:

Today's total driving time is approximately 5.30 hours.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT (3 Star): Mirage Colombo (Standard Room)

OVERNIGHT (4 Star): Morven Hotel Colombo (Deluxe Room)

DAY 8: Colombo ~ End of Tour

Today you will have your final breakfast in the hotel and make your own way back to the airport. Alternatively, if you would like to have some well deserved beach time, book our Hikkuduwa extension or fly to the Maldives for a few days of R & R!
MEALS: Breakfast,