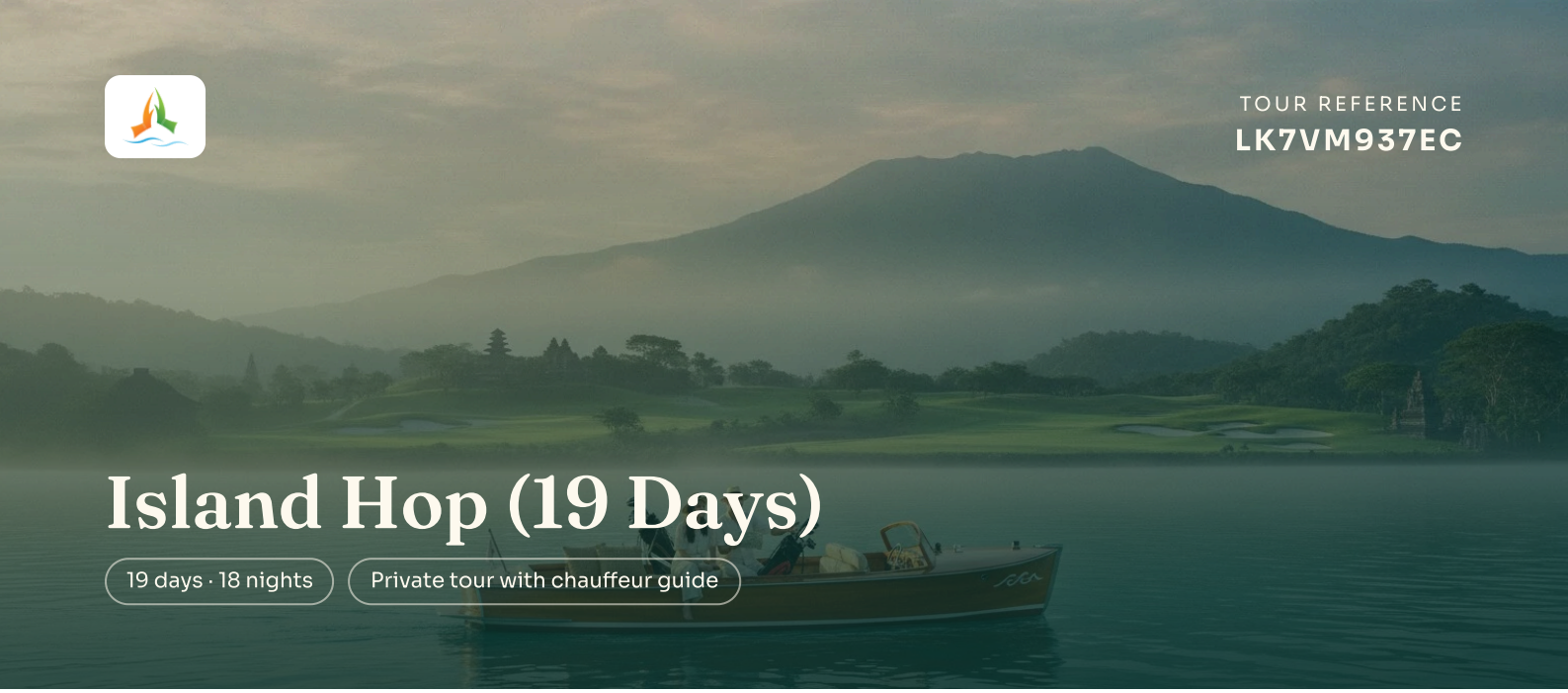


TOUR REFERENCE
LK7VM937EC

Island Hop (19 Days)

19 days · 18 nights | Private tour with chauffeur guide

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About this experience

This 19-day tour takes in the full sweep of Sri Lanka, from the west coast beaches to the southern coast, the hill country, the Cultural Triangle and the east coast, before returning to Colombo. It moves at an unhurried pace, allowing time to explore each region rather than rushing between highlights.

Travellers see a mix of beach time, wildlife safaris, hill-country scenery, ancient cities and coastal relaxation. Highlights include Galle Fort, Yala and Minneriya National Parks, the hill-country towns of Ella and Nuwara Eliya, the Cultural Triangle sites of Dambulla, Sigiriya, Anuradhapura, Yapahuwa and Polonnaruwa, and the beaches of Trincomalee, before finishing in Colombo.

The tour is run privately with a chauffeur guide handling road transfers throughout, so the pace and focus of each day stay flexible to the traveller's interests.



Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 Airport → Negombo

The tour begins on the sandy beaches of Negombo on the west coast, known for its long-standing fishing industry and water sports.



Negombo Beach

Enjoy the sandy beaches of Negombo and watch the centuries-old fishing industry at work. Try water sports or go diving to see the coral and underwater life, including a 50-year-old shipwreck just off the coast that is now home to many fish species.

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Day 2 Negombo → Balapitiya → Galle

Travel south via the Madu River and Kosgoda before reaching Galle.



Madu River Boat Ride

Take a boat ride down the Madu River, passing through narrow mangrove channels and spotting basking crocodiles and water monitors. The route includes a visit to a small island where cinnamon is harvested, a chance to try fish massage, and sightings of waterbirds.

SUPindia · CC BY-SA 4.0



Kosgoda Turtle Hatchery

Visit the Kosgoda Turtle Hatchery to learn about the five endangered sea turtle species that nest on Sri Lanka's shores and how the hatchery protects their nests. Visitors can see, touch and feed baby turtles, and sometimes injured adult turtles in care.

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Day 3 Galle

Spend the day exploring Galle Fort, one of Asia's best-preserved fortifications.



Galle Fort

Walk the cobblestoned streets of Galle Fort, still bearing their old Dutch names, and visit the Maritime Museum, the Galle National Museum and the lighthouse.

Rovin Shanila · CC BY-SA 4.0

Day 4 Galle → Yala

Head along the coast towards Yala, stopping to see traditional stilt fishing and the unusual landscape of Ussangoda.



Stilt Fishermen of Koggala

Watch fishermen perched on stilts along the coast at Koggala and hear from practitioners how the generations-old craft of stilt fishing is done.

Bernard Gagnon · CC BY-SA 3.0



Ussangoda Beach

Visit Ussangoda, a treeless coastal area with toxic serpentine rock that only a few plant species can tolerate. Local legend links its bare landscape to the Ramayana story of Hanuman and King Ravana.

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Day 5 Yala

Spend the day on safari in Yala National Park, the second largest in Sri Lanka.



Yala National Park Safari

Join a three-hour safari in search of Sri Lankan leopards, wild water buffalo, sloth bears and elephant herds, alongside the park's many other mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians.

Ranmith Welikala · CC BY-SA 4.0

Day 6 Yala → Ella

Travel to the hill-country town of Ella, passing tea fields and rocky terrain on the way.



Little Adam's Peak

Pass bright green tea fields and rocky stretches on the way to views from Little Adam's Peak.

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Nine Arches Bridge

Walk over the Nine Arches Bridge and hear the story of its construction.

Deitel55 · CC BY-SA 3.0



Demodara Railway Station

End the walk at Demodara Railway Station, notable for its unique loop-over track design.

A.Savin · FAL

Day 7 Ella → Nuwara Eliya

Travel to Nuwara Eliya, a former British hill-country retreat, via a scenic train ride.



Nuwara Eliya Town

Walk through streets lined with cottages, villas and colonial-era mansions built when Nuwara Eliya was a premium British holiday town. Visit the old red-brick post office and relax at Queen Victoria Park or Lake Gregory.

Abdul malik77 · CC BY-SA 4.0



Scenic Train Ride

Take the train from Ella to Nanu Oya, passing tea plantations, misty villages and highland scenery, with waterfalls and woodlands visible from the windows.

Chamal N · CC BY-SA 3.0

Day 8 Nuwara Eliya → Horton Plains → Nuwara Eliya

Make a day trip to Horton Plains National Park, with its grasslands and cloud forest.



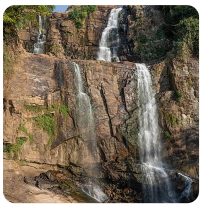
Horton Plains National Park

Visit Horton Plains National Park in Ohiya, with views from World's End and the cooling spray of Baker's Falls. Look out for endemic fauna and learn about archaeological finds in the area.

Faslan at en.wikipedia · CC BY-SA 3.0

Day 9 Nuwara Eliya → Kandy

Travel to Kandy, taking in waterfalls, tea estates and gardens along the way, before visiting the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic.



Ramboda Falls

Stop at Ramboda Falls, the 11th tallest waterfall in Sri Lanka.

A.Savin · FAL

Mackwoods Tea Estate

Take a guided tour of Mackwoods Tea Estate to learn about the varieties, processing and qualities of Ceylon tea, a trade that began when the British planted tea at Peradeniya in 1824 and James Taylor established commercial cultivation at Loolecondera in 1852.



Hakgala Botanical Gardens

Walk through the shaded avenues and colourful planting of Hakgala Botanical Gardens.

Own work of Buddhika Mawella · CC BY-SA 3.0



Lake Gregory

Take a relaxed walk along the shores of Lake Gregory.

Rehman Abubakr · CC BY-SA 4.0



Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic

Visit the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic, a UNESCO World Heritage Site built in the 16th century to house Lord Buddha's tooth relic, with its painted halls, carved pillars and gilded statues.

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Day 10 Kandy

Spend an evening enjoying a traditional cultural performance in Kandy.



Kandy Cultural Show

Watch an hour-long show of traditional Sri Lankan art forms, including fire dancers, sword dancers and Kandyan dancers performing to drumming.

Arian Zwegers · CC BY 2.0

Day 11 Kandy → Peradeniya → Matale → Dambulla

Travel to Dambulla via the Royal Botanical Gardens, a spice garden and the Golden Temple's ancient caves.



Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya

Walk through the Royal Botanical Gardens, established in the early 19th century, taking in orchids, spices, medicinal plants, rare trees, a cannonball tree and a suspension bridge.

Bernard Gagnon · CC BY-SA 3.0



Spice Garden

Take a guided tour of a spice and herbal garden in Matale, learning about coriander, chilli, cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg and their uses.

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Golden Temple of Dambulla

Explore the cave temples of Dambulla, dating to the 1st century BC, with their ancient murals and hundreds of Buddha figurines across the five main caves, including the Cave of the Divine King, the Cave of the Great King and the Great New Monastery, plus the golden Buddha statue outside the complex.

Lankapic · CC BY 2.5

Day 12 Dambulla → Sigiriya → Dambulla

Make a day trip to climb the Sigiriya rock fortress.



Sigiriya Rock Fortress

Climb the 5th-century rock fortress of Sigiriya, entering through the lion's paw gateway, and see the fading murals, terraced gardens, still-working cisterns and the tunnels leading to the former palace.

Wrobell · CC BY-SA 3.0

Day 13 Dambulla → Anuradhapura → Dambulla

Visit the ancient city of Anuradhapura and the Avukana Buddha statue.



Anuradhapura

Walk through the ruins of Anuradhapura, capital of Sri Lanka for over a thousand years until the 10th century AD, taking in pagodas, monastic buildings and ponds, including Jetavanarama, the Sri Maha Bodhi and the Abhayagiri Monastery.

Thisaru Tharuka · CC BY-SA 4.0



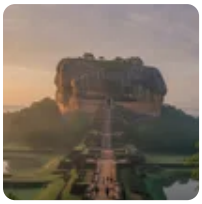
Avukana Buddha Statue

See the 40-foot standing Buddha statue at Avukana, carved from a single rock and supported only by a thin attachment at the back, with the partial remains of what was once a sheltering image house nearby.

Carlos Delgado · CC BY-SA 4.0

Day 14 Dambulla → Yapahuwa → Dambulla

Visit the rock fortress of Yapahuwa, once the seat of government and a former home of the Tooth Relic.



Yapahuwa Rock Fortress

Explore Yapahuwa, seat of government in the 13th century and once home to the Temple of the Tooth Relic, taking in its ornamental stairway, entrance arch, temple ruins and sculptures.

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Day 15 Dambulla → Polonnaruwa → Minneriya → Dambulla

Visit the ancient city of Polonnaruwa and go on safari at Minneriya National Park.



Polonnaruwa

Explore the ruins of Polonnaruwa, which thrived as a commercial and religious centre under royal rule 800 years ago, with archaeological remains of its temples and city life still visible.

Bernard Gagnon · CC BY-SA 3.0



Minneriya National Park Safari

Join a three-hour safari in Minneriya National Park, known for the Great Elephant Gathering of over 150 elephants between May and October, alongside other mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians.

Stuart Pinkney · CC BY 2.0

Day 16 Trincomalee (days 16–17)

Spend two days relaxing on Nilaveli Beach on the east coast.



Nilaveli Beach

Relax on Nilaveli Beach, with its golden sand, palms and clear water, and see the 10th-century Tamil inscription recording the beach's grant to the Koneswaram Temple.

Anton 17 · CC BY-SA 4.0

Day 18 Trincomalee → Colombo

Travel from Trincomalee to Colombo, where you check into your hotel.

Day 19 Colombo → Airport

Spend the final day exploring Colombo before departure.



Colombo City Tour

See Colombo's historic landmarks, including the Old Lighthouse, the Old Parliament, Galle Face Hotel, Galle Face Green, Gangarama Temple and the National Museum, and browse malls, boutiques and designer stores around Independence Square and the Race Course.

Gihanud2001 · CC0

What's included

INCLUDED

- Transport in a Private Vehicle, inclusive of all chauffeur accommodation.
- Service of an English-Speaking Chauffeur Guide throughout the tour.
- All prevailing taxes and service charges.

NOT INCLUDED

- Hotel Accommodation.
- International / Domestic Airfare.
- Any expenses of personal nature.
- Entrance fees to the respective sites.
