

TOUR REFERENCE
LK9TB64BHJ

Coast and Culture (13 Days)

12 days · 11 nights | Private tour with chauffeur guide

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About this experience

This 13-day tour links Sri Lanka's cultural triangle, hill country and southern coast in a single private itinerary, travelling by chauffeur-driven vehicle from Negombo through the ancient kingdoms of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, the rock fortress of Sigiriya, the hill capital of Kandy, the tea country around Nuwara Eliya and Ella, and on to Yala, Ahangama and Galle before finishing in Colombo.

Travellers see UNESCO World Heritage Sites such as Sigiriya, the Dambulla cave temples and the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic in Kandy, alongside lesser-visited ruins at Panduwasnuwara and the standing Buddha statues of Avukana and Sasseruwa. Wildlife and nature stops include safaris at Minneriya and Yala National Parks, a turtle hatchery at Rekawa, a boat trip on the Madu River, and the tea estates and stilt fishermen of the south coast, giving a mix of history, scenery and coastal life over the two weeks.

The tour runs with a dedicated chauffeur guide throughout, who handles airport transfers and driving between regions, leaving travellers free to set the pace at each site and overnight stop.



Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 Negombo

On arrival at the airport you are met by your chauffeur guide and driven to Negombo, a beach town known for its fishing harbour and canals, to rest after the flight.



Negombo

A beach-side resort town close to the airport, known for its cafes, restaurants, fishing village and harbour, and a good place to unwind on arrival.

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Day 2 Anuradhapura

The day is spent exploring Sri Lanka's first ancient capital, with a stop en route at another former royal city.

Panduwasnuwara Kingdom

An ancient kingdom that was briefly the capital in the 12th century, with ruins of pagodas, image houses, meeting halls and a citadel, plus a restored former temple of the tooth relic and a palace site with its surrounding legends.

Sacred City of Anuradhapura

The capital of Sri Lanka for over a thousand years, with pagodas, monastic buildings and ponds spread across a vast area. Highlights include Jetavanarama, once one of the tallest buildings of the ancient world, the Sri Maha Bodhi, and the ruins of Abhayagiri Monastery.

Day 3 Dambulla (days 3–4)

Two days are spent in the heart of the cultural triangle, covering ancient religious sites, rock-carved Buddha statues, the ruined city of Polonnaruwa and a safari at Minneriya.



Mihintale Rock

The site where Buddhism began in Sri Lanka, marking the meeting of King Devanampiyatissa and Monk Mahinda. The visit takes in monastic ruins at the foot of the mountain, the cave where Mahinda resided, and historic stupas including the Ambasthala Dagoba.

Dennis Sylvester Hurd · CC0



Avukana Buddha Statue

A 40-foot standing Buddha statue carved from a single rock, supported only by a thin attachment at the back, with finely carved robe folds and body. Partially collapsed structures nearby suggest it once stood within an image house.

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Sasseruwa Buddha Statue

An incomplete standing Buddha statue a short distance from Avukana, with similarities to it and its own legends about why it was never finished. A cave monastery and ancient image houses lie close by.



Dambulla Cave Temple

The Golden Temple of Dambulla, dating to the 1st century BC, with ancient murals of the Buddha's life and hundreds of Buddha and deity figurines across five main caves, including the Cave of the Divine King and Cave of the Great King. A giant golden Buddha statue stands outside the complex.

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The Ancient Kingdom of Polonnaruwa

Sri Lanka's second major ancient capital, flourishing from the 10th to 13th centuries AD. The ruins include the Gal Vihara, Vatadage, the lotus bath, Lankathilaka Temple and a statue of King Parakramabahu.

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Minneriya National Park

A safari park known for the Great Elephant Gathering, when large herds of elephants congregate in the dry season between May and October, alongside other mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians.

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Day 5 Kandy (days 5–6)

Two days around Kandy cover the Sigiriya rock fortress, a spice garden, a cultural performance and several of the city's temples, including the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic.



Sigiriya Rock Fortress

A 5th-century rock fortress built by King Kasyapa, entered through an opening framed by giant lion's paws. The climb takes in famous ancient murals, terraced gardens, still-working cisterns and tunnels leading to the former palace.

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Matale Spice Tour

A guided visit to a spice and herbal garden in Matale, Sri Lanka's spice-growing centre, covering coriander, chilli, cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg and their uses, along with an introduction to Ayurvedic medicine.

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The Kandy Cultural Show

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

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Kandy Temple Run Tour

A tour of temples around Kandy including the wood-carved Embekke Temple, the Gadaladeniya Temple with its paintings and sculptures, the architecturally notable Lankatilaka Temple, and the Degaldoruwa Cave Temple with its restored wall paintings.



Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic

A UNESCO World Heritage Site built in the 16th century to house and protect the Buddha's sacred tooth relic, with painted passageways, carved pillars and golden statues.

A.Savin · FAL

Day 7 Kandy → Nuwara Eliya

Before leaving Kandy the tour visits the Royal Botanical Gardens, then takes the train to Nuwara Eliya through the central highlands, followed by time exploring the town.



Royal Botanical Gardens of Peradeniya

Gardens established in the early 19th century with over 4000 species of plants, including orchids, spices and medicinal plants, rare trees, a suspension bridge and hedge mazes.

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Scenic Train Ride

A train journey from Peradeniya to Nuwara Eliya through highland countryside, passing tea plantations, villages and misty mountain scenery.

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Nuwara Eliya

A former British hill resort town with cottages, villas and mansions from the colonial era, an old red-brick post office, Queen Victoria Park and the shores of Lake Gregory.

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Day 8 Nuwara Eliya → Ella → Yala

The drive south east includes a tea factory visit and time exploring the sights around Ella ahead of a safari.

Tea Factory

A working tea factory and plantation showing how Ceylon Tea is produced, with background on the introduction of commercial tea growing to Sri Lanka by James Taylor in the 19th century.



Explore Ella

A walk through Ella's tea fields and rocky terrain taking in the views from Little Adam's Peak, the Nine Arches Bridge, and the Demodara Railway station with its loop-over track.

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Day 9 Ahangama (days 9–11)

Three days on the south coast cover a Yala safari, a turtle conservation visit, a tea factory, stilt fishermen and the city of Galle.



Yala National Park

A safari in Sri Lanka's second-largest national park, with chances to see leopards, wild water buffalo, sloth bears and elephant herds, alongside other mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians.

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Rekawa Turtle Hatchery

A visit focused on the five species of endangered sea turtles that nest on Sri Lanka's shores, including a night-time turtle watch and the chance to help with hatchery conservation work.



Handungoda Tea Factory

Also known as the Virgin White Tea Factory, where the rare Virgin White Tea is hand-plucked and processed, followed by a tasting session with tea and chocolate cake.

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Stilt Fishermen

A stop to watch stilt fishermen working off the coast of Koggala, with the chance to hear about the tradition from fishermen who practise it.

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Galle

A former Portuguese and Dutch stronghold, centred on the well-preserved Galle Fort, with the Maritime Museum, Galle National Museum, lighthouse and cobbled streets of Dutch-era buildings.

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Day 12 Colombo

The drive to Colombo includes a boat trip on the Madu River, followed by a city tour taking in Colombo's main sights before departure.



Madu River

A boat ride through the mangrove-lined ecosystem of the Madu River, passing basking crocodiles and water monitors, a cinnamon-harvesting island, a fish massage stop and waterbirds in their natural habitat.

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Colombo City Tour

A tour of Colombo taking in the Old Lighthouse, the Old Parliament, Galle Face Hotel, Galle Face Green, Gangarama Temple and the National Museum, with time for shopping at Independence Square.

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Departure

After breakfast, check out and transfer to the airport for departure.

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.