

TOUR REFERENCE
LKA9WE66C2

Culinary Expedition (11 Days)

11 days · 10 nights | Private tour with chauffeur guide

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About this experience

This 11-day tour traces Sri Lanka's culinary landscape from the west coast to the Cultural Triangle, the tea highlands, the hill country, the southeast coast and back to Colombo. Alongside the island's major sights, such as Dambulla's cave temples, Sigiriya rock fortress, Polonnaruwa's ancient ruins, the tea country around Nuwara Eliya, Ella and Yala National Park, the route is built around hands-on food experiences: a farm lunch and cooking demonstration, a spice and herbal garden tour, tea plucking and tea factory visits, a strawberry farm, and a guided street food tour in Colombo.



Travellers get a genuine sense of how Sri Lankan food is grown, harvested and cooked, meeting farming families, tea pluckers and spice growers along the way, as well as time to take in the country's historic and scenic highlights between these food-focused stops.

The tour runs in a private vehicle with a dedicated English-speaking chauffeur guide, so the pace and focus stay with the travellers throughout. Transport, chauffeur accommodation and prevailing taxes are included; international and domestic airfare, personal expenses, tips, portage and any compulsory or peak-period supplements are not.

Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 Airport → Negombo

The tour begins on the sandy beaches of Negombo on the west coast.



Negombo Beach

Enjoy the sun on Negombo's sandy beaches and watch its centuries-old fish industry at work, or take on some water sports for an adrenaline rush.

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Diving off Negombo

Dive among corals and underwater life, including a 50-year-old shipwreck just off the coast that is now home to many varieties of fish.

Day 2 Negombo → Dambulla

Travel inland to Dambulla to visit its historic cave temple complex.



Golden Temple of Dambulla

Enter the cave temples dating back to the 1st century BC and view ancient murals depicting the life of Lord Gautama Buddha, along with hundreds of Buddha and deity figurines across the five main caves, including the Cave of the Divine King, the Cave of the Great King and the Great New Monastery.

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Golden Buddha Statue

See the giant golden Buddha statue standing a short distance outside the cave complex.

Day 3 Dambulla → Polonnaruwa → Dambulla

A full day combining the Sigiriya rock fortress, a farm lunch experience and the ancient city of Polonnaruwa.



Sigiriya Rock Fortress

Climb the 5th-century AD rock fortress built by King Kasyapa, entering through the lion's paws that give the site its name, and view the unfading frescoes, terraced gardens, still-working cisterns and the tunnels leading up to the palace.

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Farm Lunch and Cooking Demonstration

Share an authentic farm lunch cooked over wood fires by a local farming family, learning about Sri Lankan cooking as the farmer's wife and daughters demonstrate traditional rice, lentil and vegetable curries, fried fish and poppadum served on lotus leaves, with kotthu available to buy separately.



Ancient City of Polonnaruwa

Walk through the ruins of Sri Lanka's second major ancient capital, which flourished between the 10th and 13th centuries, taking in Gal Vihara, Vatadage, the lotus bath, Lankathilaka Temple and the statue of King Parakramabahu.

Bernard Gagnon · CC BY-SA 3.0

Day 4 Dambulla → Matale → Nuwara Eliya

Head up into the hills via Matale, stopping for a spice garden tour before reaching the tea country of Nuwara Eliya.



Spice and Herbal Garden

Take a guided tour of a spice and herbal garden to learn about coriander, chilli, cinnamon, cardamom and nutmeg, followed by a cooking demonstration on using spices in Sri Lankan cuisine, with a chance to make roti or your own curry powder.

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Tea Factory and Plantation

Visit a tea factory and plantation to see how Ceylon Tea is made, a tradition dating back to 1824 when a tea plant was first brought to the island, and to 1852 when James Taylor established the country's first commercial tea plantation at Loolecondera estate in Kandy.

Day 5 Nuwara Eliya

A day in Nuwara Eliya combining tea plucking, a strawberry farm and the town's colonial-era streets.

Tea Plucking Experience

Dress as a tea plucker in saree or sarong with a woven tea leaf basket, learn the proper plucking method from professional pluckers, and watch the leaves you pick being processed into tea, which you can buy as a souvenir.



Strawberry Farm

Walk through the greenhouses of a local strawberry farm, learn about the conditions needed to grow the fruit, and sample strawberries as milkshakes, with cream, chocolate-topped or in pancakes, with fresh fruit available to buy.

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Nuwara Eliya Town

Explore the former British hill-country resort town, with its cottages, villas and mansions, send a postcard from the old red-brick post office, and relax at Queen Victoria Park or by Lake Gregory.

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Day 6 Nuwara Eliya → Ella → Bandarawela

Travel on to Ella, exploring its best-known sights before continuing to Bandarawela.



Little Adam's Peak

Pass through bright green tea fields and rocky stretches for views across to Little Adam's Peak.

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Nine Arches Bridge

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

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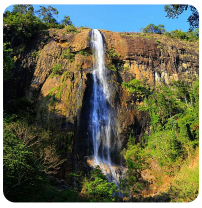
Demodara Railway Station

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

A.Savin · FAL

Day 7 Bandarawela → Koslanda → Bandarawela

A day trip from Bandarawela to see one of the island's highest waterfalls and learn about rubber production.



Diyaluma Falls

Visit Diyaluma Falls, at 220 metres one of the island's highest waterfalls, reached by a short drive or walk from the hotel.

Travel Local · CC BY 2.0

Rubber Plantation

Visit a nearby rubber plantation to learn about traditional methods of harvesting and processing rubber.

Day 8 Bandarawela → Yala

Continue south to Yala for a safari in one of Sri Lanka's best-known national parks.



Yala National Park Safari

Take a three-hour safari in Yala National Park, the island's second largest, on the southeastern coast, with chances to see Sri Lankan leopards, wild water buffalo, Sri Lankan sloth bears and large herds of elephants, alongside many other mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates.

Ranmith Welikala · CC BY-SA 4.0

Day 9 Yala → Galle

Head to the south coast to explore the fortified city of Galle.



Galle Fort

Discover Galle, once a headquarters for the Portuguese and Dutch, and walk through the Galle Fort, one of the best-preserved fortifications in Asia, taking in the Maritime Museum, the Galle National Museum and the lighthouse along cobblestoned streets with their Dutch-era names.

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Day 10 Galle → Balapitiya → Colombo

Travel to Colombo via Balapitiya for a river boat trip, then close the tour with a street food tour in the capital.



Madu River Boat Ride

Take a boat ride on the Madu River, passing through mangrove channels to see basking crocodiles and water monitors, visit a small island where cinnamon is harvested, try a fish massage, and watch water birds in their natural habitat.

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Colombo Street Food Tour

Join a guided street food tour along Galle Face, sampling varieties such as egg hoppers, plain hoppers, tempered kadala, prawn vade, parippu vade and kotthu, including vegan and chicken versions, while taking in the sunset.

Day 11 Colombo → Airport

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

What's included

INCLUDED

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

NOT INCLUDED

- International / Domestic Airfare.
- Any expenses of personal nature.
- Compulsory Supplements/Peak Supplements.
- Tips & Portages.