



TOUR REFERENCE
LKB5XWS95M

Enchanting Sri Lanka (18 Days)

18 days · 17 nights

Private tour with chauffeur guide

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About this experience

This 18-day tour runs the length of Sri Lanka in a private vehicle with a chauffeur guide, tracing a route from the west-coast beaches at Negombo into the Cultural Triangle, up through the central hill country, down to the wildlife parks of the south-east, and finally onto the southern coast at Unawatuna. It is a wide-ranging trip that pairs ancient sites such as Dambulla and Sigiriya with tea country around Kandy and Nuwara Eliya, a safari in Yala, and a long stretch of beach time to close the holiday.

Travellers get a mix of history, nature and coast: cave temples and a rock fortress, an elephant gathering at Minneriya, a day lived as a villager would, the Temple of the Tooth and the Peradeniya gardens, a scenic train ride through the hills, a hiking day out of Ella, a leopard safari in Yala, and the old fort town of Galle before three days to unwind on the beach at Unawatuna.

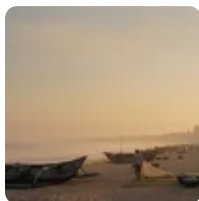
The pace is unhurried, with several multi-night stays built in so there is time to absorb each region rather than rush through it, and the final days are left free for the beach, swimming and water sports before the flight home.



Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 Negombo (days 1–2)

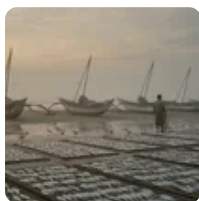
Two days to settle in on the west coast at Negombo, with time for the beach and the town's long-standing fishing trade.



Negombo Beach

Sandy beaches on the Western Coast, with time to swim, relax and try water sports such as diving.

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Negombo Fish Market

A look at the centuries-old fishing industry that still operates along this stretch of coast.

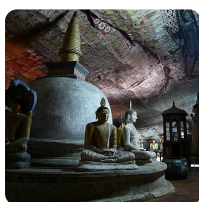
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Shipwreck Dive Site

A 50-year-old shipwreck just off the coast has become home to many varieties of fish, popular with divers for its corals and underwater life.

Day 3 Negombo → Dambulla

The drive inland to Dambulla takes in the cave temples carved into the rock here, among Sri Lanka's oldest Buddhist sites.



Dambulla Cave Temple

Caves dating back to the 1st century BC hold ancient murals depicting the life of the Buddha and hundreds of figurines of the Buddha and other deities across five main caves, including the Cave of the Divine King, the Cave of the Great King and the Great New Monastery.

Lankapic · CC BY 2.5

Golden Buddha Statue

A giant golden Buddha statue stands a short distance outside the cave complex.

Day 4 Dambulla → Sigiriya → Minneriya → Dambulla

A day combining the climb up Sigiriya rock with an afternoon safari in Minneriya National Park, returning to Dambulla for the night.



Sigiriya Rock Fortress

A 5th-century rock fortress built for King Kasyapa, entered through an opening framed by giant lion's paws. The climb passes unfading frescoes, terraced gardens, still-working cisterns and tunnels leading up to the palace ruins.

Wrobell · CC BY-SA 3.0



Minneriya National Park

A three-hour safari through the park, known for the Great Elephant Gathering of over 150 elephants in the dry season between May and October, along with other mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians.

Stuart Pinkney · CC BY 2.0

Day 5 Dambulla

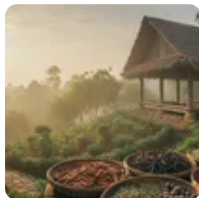
A day given over to village life around Dambulla, away from the main sights.

Village Experience

An oxen cart ride, a catamaran trip across a calm lake, a walk through paddy fields, and a traditional cooking demonstration followed by a home-cooked lunch served on lotus leaves, all giving a feel for rural Sri Lankan life.

Day 6 Dambulla → Matale → Kandy

The route to Kandy passes through Matale's spice country before reaching the Temple of the Tooth Relic.



Spice and Herbal Garden

A garden near Matale, the spice capital of Sri Lanka, growing herbs, spices and plants used in Ayurveda, with a guided spice tour explaining their uses.

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Temple of the Tooth Relic

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

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Day 7 Kandy → Peradeniya → Kandy

A day trip from Kandy to the botanical gardens at Peradeniya.



Royal Botanical Gardens Peradeniya

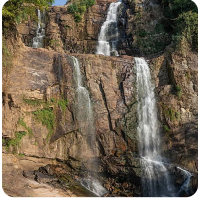
Gardens formed in the early 19th century, spread over a large area with more than 4,000 species of plants, including orchids, spices and medicinal plants, a cannonball tree, a suspension bridge and hedge mazes.

Bernard Gagnon · CC BY-SA 3.0

Day 8

Kandy → Nuwara Eliya

The drive up to Nuwara Eliya passes waterfalls and tea estates before reaching the hill town itself, built by the British as a replica of the English countryside.



Ramboda Falls

The 11th tallest waterfall in the country, seen on the way up to Nuwara Eliya.

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Mackwoods Tea Estate

A guided tour of the tea estate covering the varieties, processing methods and qualities of Ceylon tea, a trade introduced commercially by James Taylor in the 1850s after plants were first brought to the island in 1824.



Hakgala Botanical Gardens

Shaded avenues and colourful mazes to walk through.

Own work of Buddhika Mawella · CC BY-SA 3.0



Lake Gregory

A relaxed walk along the shores of the lake.

Rehman Abubakr · CC BY-SA 4.0



Nuwara Eliya Town

A hill town built in the style of an English countryside settlement, with Georgian and Queen Anne-style homes, an Anglican church, a golf course and well-kept parks, set high enough to keep the air cool and fresh.

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Day 9

Nuwara Eliya → Horton Plains → Nuwara Eliya

A day trip to Horton Plains National Park for its grasslands, cloud forest and viewpoints.



Horton Plains National Park

Montane grasslands and cloud forest in Ohiya, home to endemic fauna and archaeological finds, with views from World's End and the cooling spray of Baker's Falls.

Faslan at en.wikipedia · CC BY-SA 3.0

Day 10

Nuwara Eliya → Ella

A scenic train journey through the highlands connects Nuwara Eliya with Ella.



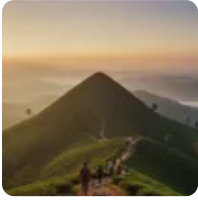
Nanu Oya to Ella Train Journey

A ride through some of Sri Lanka's most scenic highland countryside, passing tea plantations, misty villages, the landscapes around Haputale, mountains, woodland and waterfalls.

Chamal N · CC BY-SA 3.0

Day 11 Ella

A three-hour hike around Ella takes in its best-known viewpoints and landmarks.



Little Adam's Peak

A walk through green tea fields and rocky stretches to reach views from Little Adam's Peak.

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Nine Arches Bridge

A walk over the bridge with its story of construction.

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Demodara Railway Station

The hike ends at the station, known for its unique loop-over track design.

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Day 12 Ella → Yala

A transfer day from Ella to Yala, with check-in at the hotel on arrival.

Day 13 Yala

A safari day in Yala National Park, the second largest park on the island, on the south-eastern coast.



Yala National Park Safari

A three-hour safari with the chance to see Sri Lankan leopards, wild water buffalo, Sri Lankan sloth bears and large herds of elephants, along with many other mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates.

Ranmith Welikala · CC BY-SA 4.0

Day 14 Yala → Ussangoda → Rumassala → Unawatuna

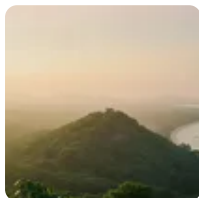
The route south from Yala takes in the bare coastal plateau at Ussangoda, Rumassala hill, and the old fort town of Galle before reaching Unawatuna.



Ussangoda

A treeless coastal plateau with serpentine rock containing toxic heavy metals, which only certain hardy plants can tolerate. Local legend ties its bare ground to the Ramayana, linking it to Hanuman's burning tail and to King Ravana's use of the plateau as a landing site for his chariot.

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Rumassala

A hill east of Galle topped by a white Buddhist dagoba, visible as a landmark from Unawatuna beach. Local legend holds it to be a fragment of Mount Dronagiri dropped by Hanuman, and a place associated with Sita during her time in Lanka.

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Galle Fort

One of the best-preserved fortifications in Asia, built up by the Portuguese and Dutch, with museums, a lighthouse and cobblestoned streets with Dutch-era names.

Rovin Shanila · CC BY-SA 4.0

Day 15 Unawatuna (days 15–17)

Three days free on the beach at Unawatuna, one of Sri Lanka's best-known stretches of sand.



Unawatuna Beach

Time to enjoy the sand, sun and sea breeze, watch the sunset, see turtles nesting, and try water sports such as jet-skiing and windsurfing.

Bernard Gagnon · CC BY-SA 3.0

Day 18 Unawatuna → BIA

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

What's included

INCLUDED

- Transport in a Private Vehicle, Fuel, Parking & Highway tolls.
- Service of English-Speaking Chauffeur Guide.
- All prevailing taxes and service charges.

NOT INCLUDED

- Entrance fees to the respective sites.
- Hotel Accommodation and Meals.
- Chauffeur Guide's Accommodation.
- Expenses of personal nature.
- Visa and Related Expenses.
- Tips & Portages.

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