



TOUR REFERENCE
LKBQXZBRVW

Discovering Sanctuary (11 Days)

11 days · 10 nights

Private tour with chauffeur guide

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About this experience

This eleven-day tour links the hill capital of Kandy with the ancient kingdoms of the dry zone, the Jaffna peninsula in the north, and the beaches of Trincomalee on the east coast. Travel is by private vehicle with a chauffeur guide throughout, moving steadily from the cultural heartland through the great archaeological cities before finishing with several days by the sea.

Highlights include the Temple of the Tooth Relic and Royal Botanical Gardens in Kandy, the cave temples of Dambulla, the rock fortress of Sigiriya, an elephant safari at Minneriya National Park, and the ruined cities of Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura. The route continues north to Jaffna for its island temples before heading to Trincomalee, where the pace slows for snorkelling at Pigeon Island and time on the coast.

The itinerary suits travellers who want a thorough look at Sri Lanka's ancient architecture and religious sites balanced against a genuine stretch of coastal relaxation at the end of the trip.



Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 Airport > Kandy

The day is given over to a cultural introduction after arrival in Kandy.



Kandy Cultural Show

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

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Day 2 Kandy

A day spent at two of Kandy's principal sites, one botanical and one sacred.



Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya

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

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Temple of the Tooth Relic

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

A.Savin · FAL

Day 3 Kandy > Matale > Dambulla > Sigiriya

The drive to Sigiriya takes in a spice garden near Matale and the cave temples of Dambulla.

Euphoria Spice and Herbal Garden

A spice garden near Matale, the spice capital of Sri Lanka, with a guided spice tour explaining the island's spices, herbs and their use in Ayurveda.



Golden Temple of Dambulla

Cave temples dating to the 1st century BC with murals depicting the life of Buddha and hundreds of Buddha figurines across five main caves, including the Cave of the Divine King and the Cave of the Great King, plus a giant golden Buddha statue outside the complex.

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Day 4 Sigiriya > Minneriya > Sigiriya

The day combines a climb of the Sigiriya rock fortress with a safari at Minneriya National Park.



Sigiriya Rock Fortress

A 5th century AD rock fortress built by King Kasyapa, entered through a lion-paw gateway, with ancient murals, terraced gardens, working cisterns and tunnels leading to the former palace.

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Minneriya National Park safari

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

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Day 5 Sigiriya > Polonnaruwa > Anuradhapura

The day covers two of Sri Lanka's former capitals, Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura.



Polonnaruwa

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

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Anuradhapura

The ruined city that served as capital for over a millennium until the 10th century AD, with pagodas, monastic buildings and ponds, including Jetavanarama, the Sri Maha Bodhi and the Abhayagiri Monastery.

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Day 6 Anuradhapura > Jaffna

The route north takes in two island sites linked to the Naga people and early Buddhist history.



Nagadeepa Purana Viharaya

One of sixteen of the holiest Buddhist sites in Sri Lanka, believed to be where Buddha stopped during his second visit to the island, with its own distinct architecture and history.

derivative work: Taprobanus (talk) NainathivuNahaVihara.JPG: Regunathan Umapathy · Public domain

Nayinathivu

A historic island north of Jaffna, also known as Nagadeepa or Manipallavam, linked to the Naga people who worshipped the snake, with evidence at the Nainativu Nagapooshani Amman Temple.

Day 7 Jaffna > Trincomalee

The journey to Trincomalee includes an ancient temple and the town's colonial-era fort.

Ancient temple shrine

A temple praised by Indian poet-saints, with murals describing its history, a cave shrine dating to 1580 BC, a main temple developed in 400 BC, and a giant statue of King Ravana.



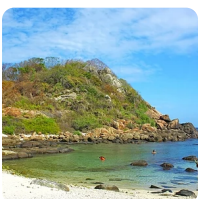
Fort of Trincomalee

A fort originally built by the Portuguese in 1624 CE, with stones remaining from the former Koneswaram temple and the history of Fort Frederick, later dismantled and rebuilt by the Dutch.

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Day 8 Trincomalee

A day exploring the marine park off the Trincomalee coast.



Pigeon Island National Park

A park made up of a smaller and larger pigeon island surrounded by coral reef, home to breeding rock pigeons and a variety of coral and marine life.

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Day 9 Trincomalee

A free day on the coast at Trincomalee.

Trincomalee coast

Time to enjoy the golden sand, palm trees and clear blue sea of the coastline.

Day 10 Trincomalee > Colombo

The tour returns to Colombo for a look at the capital's landmarks and shopping areas.



Colombo city sights

A visit to the capital's landmarks, including the Old Lighthouse, the Old Parliament, Galle Face Hotel, Galle Face Green, Gangarama Temple and the National Museum, along with Independence Square, the Race Course and boutique shops.

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Day 11 Colombo > Airport

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

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

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