TOUR REFERENCE
LKC8V6YMB8

Experience of the North East (11 Days)

11 days · 10 nights | Private tour with chauffeur guide

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About this experience

This 11-day tour traces a loop from the west coast up through the Jaffna peninsula, across to the east coast at Trincomalee, then down through the Cultural Triangle to Kandy and back to Colombo. It combines Tamil heritage sites in the north, a beach stay on the east coast, and the ancient cities and rock fortress of the Cultural Triangle before finishing with Kandy's hill-country culture and a return to the capital.



Travellers see Hindu temples such as Nallur, Nainativu and Munneswaram, Jaffna's Dutch fort and war memorials, the Buddhist shrine of Nagadeepa, Trincomalee's Koneswaram temple and Fort Frederick, and Pigeon Island's coral reefs. Further south the route takes in Polonnaruwa's ruins, a safari in Minneriya National Park, the Sigiriya rock fortress, the Dambulla cave temples, a village experience near Sigiriya, a spice garden near Matale, and Kandy's Temple of the Tooth and cultural dance show. The final days add Colombo's city sights and the Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage before departure.

The tour runs with a private vehicle and chauffeur guide throughout, allowing the pace and stops on each day to be adjusted as needed.

Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 Airport → Negombo

The tour begins with a visit to a significant Hindu temple complex near Negombo on arrival.



Munneswaram Temple

An important regional Hindu temple complex dating back at least to 1000 CE, linked in legend to the epic Ramayana and its hero-king Rama. It is one of five ancient temples in the region dedicated to Shiva.

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Day 2 Negombo → Jaffna

The route heads north to the Jaffna peninsula, taking in its Hindu temples, colonial-era landmarks and war memorials.



Nallur, Nainativu and Mavittapuram Temples

Ancient Hindu temples with over four millennia of history behind them, notable for their architecture and craftsmanship.

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Jaffna Dutch Fort

A colonial-era fort in Jaffna, seen alongside war memorials from the recent conflict.

Saraswathy Mahal Library

A historic library in Jaffna, visited along with the Nagadeepa Vihara and the palace of Cankili I, the last king of Jaffna.



Nainativu Nagapooshani Amman Temple

A temple with a documented history of at least two millennia, recorded by Ptolemy and linked to legends of the god Indra's worship. Its Dravidian architecture includes four Gopurams, several Mandapams and chariots, and it is one of only 64 Shakthi Peedams in the world.

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Day 3 Jaffna

A day in Jaffna focused on one of the island's most sacred Buddhist sites.



Nagadeepa Purana Viharaya

One of sixteen of the holiest Buddhist sites in Sri Lanka, with unique architecture and a history tied to the Buddha's second visit to the island.

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

Day 4 Jaffna → Trincomalee

The drive to Trincomalee takes in an ancient cave shrine, the town's colonial fort, and the Buddhist village of Thiriyaya.



Koneswaram Temple

An ancient temple praised by Indian poet-saints, with murals depicting its history. Its cave shrine dates to 1580 BC, while the main temple developed around 400 BC, and a giant statue of King Ravana recalls his legendary worship here.

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Fort of Trincomalee (Fort Frederick)

Originally built by the Portuguese in 1624 using stones from the destroyed Koneswaram temple, later dismantled and rebuilt by the Dutch as Fort Frederick.



Thiriyaya

A village where Tamil Buddhism was once practised, home to the Girihadu Seya Stupa, said to mark the spot where the Buddha gave hair relics to two traders, and the ruins of a fortress of one of the last Vanniyar chiefs.

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Day 5 Trincomalee

A day exploring the marine life and coral reefs off Trincomalee's coast.



Pigeon Island National Park

A park made up of a smaller and larger pigeon island, the latter ringed by a coral reef. It is a breeding ground for rock pigeons and a place to see a variety of coral and marine life.

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Day 6 Trincomalee

A free day to enjoy Trincomalee's beach setting.



Trincomalee Beach

Golden sand, swaying palms and clear blue sea along the east coast.

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Day 7 Trincomalee → Polonnaruwa → Minneriya → Sigiriya

The journey south passes through the ancient city of Polonnaruwa before a safari in Minneriya National Park on the way to Sigiriya.



Polonnaruwa

The second major capital of Sri Lanka, flourishing between the 10th and 13th centuries AD. Highlights include the Gal Vihara, Vatadage, the lotus bath, Lankathilaka Temple and the statue of King Parakramabahu.

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Minneriya National Park Safari

A safari through Minneriya National Park, known for the Great Elephant Gathering of over 150 elephants between May and October, as well as other mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians.

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Day 8 Sigiriya

The day combines the climb to the Sigiriya rock fortress with a village experience and a visit to the Dambulla cave temples.



Sigiriya Rock Fortress

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

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Village Experience

An oxen cart ride and a catamaran safari on a calm lake, a walk through paddy fields, a traditional cooking demonstration, and a home-cooked lunch served on lotus leaves, giving a feel for village life.



Golden Temple of Dambulla

Cave temples dating to the 1st century BC, with murals of the Buddha's life story and hundreds of Buddha and deity figurines across five main caves, including the Cave of the Divine King and the Great New Monastery. A large golden Buddha statue stands outside the complex.

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Day 9 Sigiriya → Matale → Kandy

En route to Kandy the tour stops at a spice garden near Matale, then visits the city's major Buddhist temple and a cultural dance performance.



Spice and Herbal Garden

A guided tour of spices such as coriander, chilli, cinnamon, cardamom and nutmeg, with a cooking demonstration and workshops on making roti or curry powder.

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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.

A.Savin · FAL



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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Technical Tours

Visits related to crafts such as gem cutting, woodcarving and batik making.

Day 10 Kandy → Colombo

The final stretch heads to Colombo, taking in the city's landmarks and a stop at Pinnawala's elephant sanctuary.



Colombo City Sights

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 shopping around Independence Square and the Race Course.

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Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage

A home for young elephants displaced or lost from their natural habitat, located in the Sabaragamuwa province. It houses around 70 elephants, making it the largest captive herd in the world.

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Day 11 Colombo → BIA

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