

TOUR REFERENCE
LKF6GFKARQ

Walk Amidst Culture (8 Days)

8 days · 7 nights | Private tour with chauffeur guide

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About this experience

This eight-day tour runs from the Cultural Triangle to the southern coast, with a private chauffeur guide driving throughout. It opens in Dambulla and Sigiriya, moves through Kandy and the central hills around Nuwara Eliya and Ella, continues to the wildlife parks of Minneriya and Udawalawe, and finishes along the coast at Galle and Hikkaduwa before returning to Colombo for departure.

Travellers see the main historical sites of the interior - the cave temple at Dambulla, the rock fortress at Sigiriya, the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy - alongside the hill-country scenery of tea estates around Nuwara Eliya and the walking trails near Ella. Two safaris, at Minneriya and Udawalawe, and a village experience at Hiriwaduna add contact with rural life and wildlife, while the final days by the coast at Galle and Hikkaduwa bring in colonial architecture, a river boat trip and a turtle hatchery.

The itinerary is run privately rather than as a fixed-group tour, so sightseeing is arranged around a continuous road route rather than a set schedule, and the order and pace of each day's visits follow the route given here.



Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 Airport → Dambulla

On arrival at Colombo International Airport a chauffeur guide meets travellers and drives them to Dambulla, with a visit to the cave temple that evening.



Dambulla Cave Temple

The Golden Temple of Dambulla dates back to the 1st century BC and holds ancient murals depicting the life of Lord Gautama Buddha alongside hundreds of Buddha and deity figurines across five main caves, including the Cave of the Divine King, the Cave of the Great King and the Great New Monastery. A giant golden Buddha statue stands a short distance outside the cave complex.

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Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage

Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage, in the Sabaragamuwa province, is home to young elephants displaced or lost from their natural habitat and now houses around 70 animals, making it the largest captive herd of elephants in the world.

Bernard Gagnon · CC BY-SA 3.0

Day 2 Dambulla → Sigiriya → Minneriya → Dambulla

A full day covering the rock fortress of Sigiriya, a village experience at Hiriwaduna and a safari at Minneriya National Park, before returning to Dambulla.



Sigiriya Rock Fortress

This 5th-century AD rock fortress was the seat of King Kasyapa, entered through steps framed by a pair of giant lion's paws that give the rock its name. The climb passes the well-known frescoes, terraced gardens, still-working cisterns and tunnels leading up to the palace ruins at the summit.

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Hiriwaduna Village Tour

Hiriwaduna is a village that keeps its traditional way of life, visited by oxen cart and by catamaran across a calm lake, with a walk through paddy fields and a cooking demonstration followed by a home-cooked lunch served on lotus leaves.



Minneriya National Park Safari

A jeep 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 found across its scrubland and forest.

Stuart Pinkney · CC BY 2.0

Day 3 Dambulla → Kandy

The drive to Kandy pauses at a spice garden in Matale, followed by an evening of crafts, temple visit and cultural show in Kandy.



Spice Garden, Matale

A guided tour of a spice and herbal garden near Matale, the spice capital of Sri Lanka, covering spices such as coriander, chilli, cinnamon, cardamom and nutmeg, their cultivation and their uses, including in Ayurveda.

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Gem, Woodcarving and Batik Workshops

A tour of workshops in Kandy covering traditional crafts including gem cutting, woodcarving and batik making.



Temple of the Tooth

This UNESCO World Heritage Site was built in the 16th century to house and protect the sacred tooth relic of the Buddha. Its painted halls in red, cream and black and carved pillars and golden statues make it one of the island's most venerated sites.

A.Savin · FAL



Kandyan Cultural Show

An hour-long show of traditional Kandyan dance and music, including fire dancers, sword dancers and drummers.

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Day 4 Kandy → Nuwara Eliya

The journey continues by train from Peradeniya into the hill country, followed by a city tour and tea factory visit in Nuwara Eliya.

Kandy to Nuwara Eliya Train Journey

The train from Peradeniya to Nanu Oya runs through highland countryside, passing tea plantations and villages set against misty mountain backdrops.



Nuwara Eliya City Tour

Nuwara Eliya sits in the heart of tea country and was built by the British in the style of an English countryside town, with homes ranging from Georgian to Queen Anne style, an Anglican church, a golf course and well-kept parks, set at a cool, elevated altitude.

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Mackwoods Tea Estate

A guided tour of the Mackwoods Tea Estate and factory covers the varieties, processing methods and qualities of Ceylon tea, a trade that began when tea was brought from China in 1824 and developed commercially by James Taylor from 1852.

Day 5 Nuwara Eliya → Ella → Udawalawe

The route heads from Nuwara Eliya through a Hindu temple stop to the walking trails of Ella before continuing to Udawalawe.

Sita Amman Kovil

This temple stands in the village of Seetha Eliya, linked by legend to the Ramayana as the place where the demon king Ravana held Seetha captive; three ancient idols were discovered at the site.

Ella Sightseeing

A walk through Ella takes in tea fields and rock outcrops with views of Little Adam's Peak, crosses the Nine Arches Bridge, and ends at Demodara Railway Station, known for its unique loop-over track.

Day 6 Udawalawe → Galle → Hikkaduwa

A morning safari at Udawalawe National Park is followed by a drive to the coast with a stop at the old city of Galle.



Udawalawe National Park Safari

A jeep safari through Udawalawe National Park, created as a wildlife sanctuary in the 1970s, taking in marshes, forests and grasslands known for their water birds and Sri Lankan elephants, along with other mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and butterflies.

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Galle Old Colonial City

Galle was once a headquarters for the Portuguese and Dutch, and its fort is one of the best-preserved fortifications in Asia. The old town includes museums, a lighthouse and cobblestoned streets with Dutch names.

Day 7 Hikkaduwa

A day at leisure by the beach, with an afternoon boat trip on the Madu River and a visit to a turtle hatchery.



Madu River Boat Safari

A boat ride through the Madu River's ecosystem passes through mangrove channels, past basking crocodiles and water monitors, and stops at a small island inhabited by cinnamon harvesters, with the option of a fish massage and sightings of water birds.

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Kosgoda Turtle Hatchery

The hatchery on the southwestern coast works to protect the nests of five endangered sea turtle species that come ashore to nest, caring for hatchlings and injured adult turtles through the Kosgoda Turtle Care Program.

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Day 8 Hikkaduwa → Colombo → Airport

The final day is a drive to Colombo for a city tour before transfer to the airport for departure.



Colombo City Tour

A tour of Colombo takes in landmarks such as the Old Lighthouse, the Old Parliament, Galle Face Hotel, Galle Face Green, Gangarama Temple and the National Museum, along with the shops around Independence Square and the Race Course area.

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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

- Entry Visa Fees.
- International / Domestic Airfare.
- Any expenses of personal nature.
- Entrance fees/Train Tickets.
- Meals (Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner)
- Hotel Accommodation
