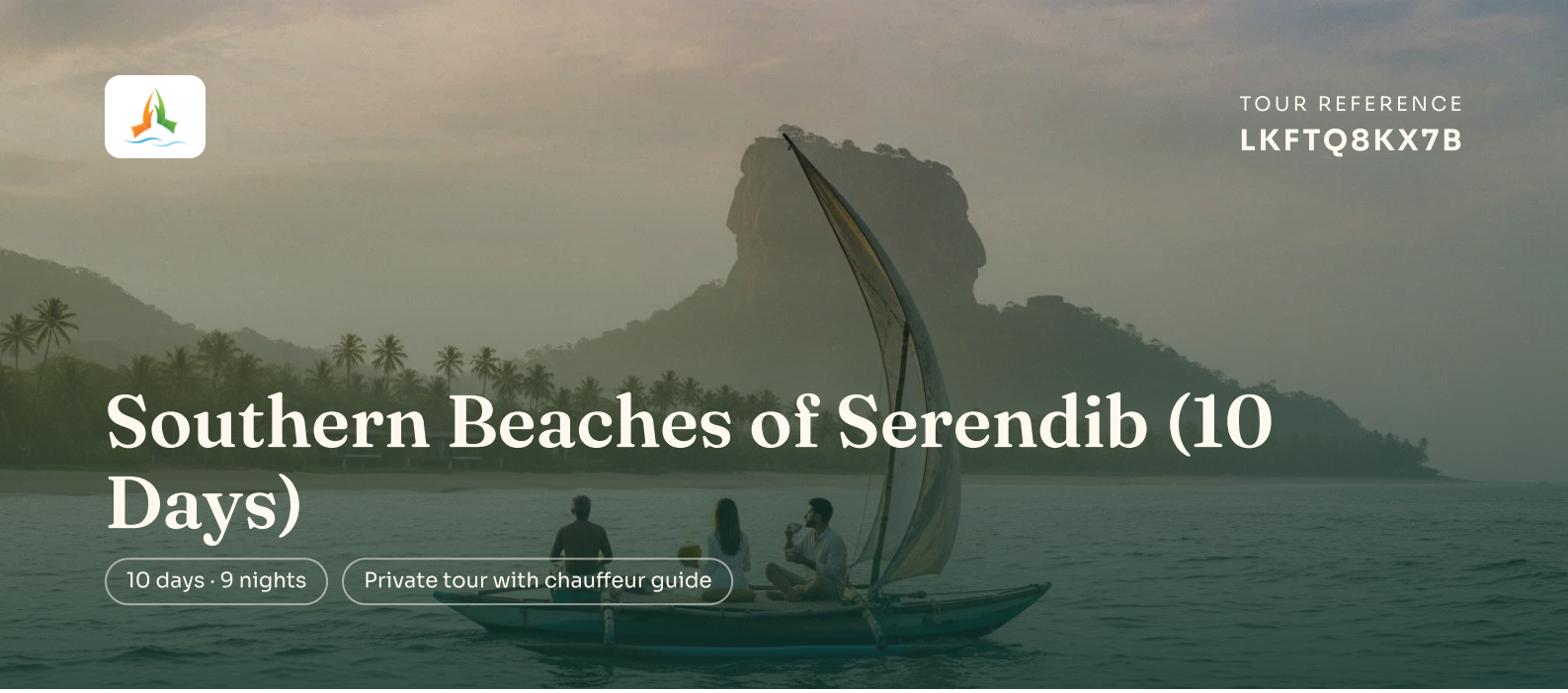


TOUR REFERENCE
LKFTQ8KX7B

Southern Beaches of Serendib (10 Days)

10 days · 9 nights

Private tour with chauffeur guide

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About this experience

This ten-day route runs from Sri Lanka's cultural triangle through the hill country and down to the southern coast, covering ancient temples, a rock fortress, tea estates, and beach towns in one continuous loop ending back in Colombo. Travel is by private air-conditioned vehicle with a chauffeur guide throughout, with one scenic leg by train between Nanu Oya and Ella.



Highlights include the cave temples of Dambulla, the climb up Sigiriya Rock Fortress, a village experience with an oxen cart ride and lake safari, a jeep safari in Minneriya National Park, the Temple of the Tooth Relic in Kandy, and a walk through Nuwara Eliya's colonial-era streets. In the hills, a working tea factory explains how Ceylon tea is made, and the train ride to Ella passes tea country before a hike to Little Adam's Peak, the Nine Arches Bridge and Demodara Railway Station.

On the coast the pace slows: a whale-watching trip from Mirissa, a guided walk through Galle's old fort town, and two full days at leisure in Bentota with the option of a Madu River boat safari and a visit to the Kosgoda Turtle Hatchery. The final days take in Lunuganga, the country estate of architect Geoffrey Bawa, and an evening out in Colombo before departure.

Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 Airport → Chilaw → Dambulla

On arrival at Colombo you are met by your chauffeur guide and driven to Dambulla, stopping en route at Chilaw. The day ends with an evening visit to the cave temples.



Munneswaram Kovil

This is an important regional Hindu temple complex that has existed since at least 1000 CE. Myths connect it to the Ramayana and its hero-king Rama, and it is one of five ancient temples in the region dedicated to Shiva.

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Dambulla Cave Temple

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

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Day 2 Dambulla → Sigiriya → Dambulla

The day is spent exploring Sigiriya's rock fortress and surrounding countryside before an afternoon safari at Minneriya.



Sigiriya Rock Fortress

This 5th-century AD rock fortress was the seat of King Kasyapa, entered through steps framed by the paws of a giant carved lion. Visitors climb past the famous unfading frescoes and terraced gardens with their still-working cisterns, and walk through the tunnels that once led to the royal palace.

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Sri Lankan Village Experience

A visit to a local village includes an oxen cart ride, a catamaran safari across a calm lake, and a walk through paddy fields. A traditional cooking demonstration is followed by a home-cooked lunch served on lotus leaves.



Minneriya National Park

A jeep safari through the park offers the chance to see elephants gathering in large numbers, a seasonal event known as the Great Elephant Gathering that occurs between May and October. The park is also home to a range of other mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians.

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Day 3 Dambulla → Matale → Kandy → Nuwara Eliya

Travelling south towards the hill country, the day includes stops at a spice garden in Matale and the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy before reaching Nuwara Eliya.



Matale Spice Gardens

A guided tour of this spice and herbal garden covers coriander, chilli, cinnamon, cardamom and nutmeg, explaining their uses and the benefits of Ayurveda. The tropical climate here helps the plants retain their natural aroma and properties.

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Temple of the Tooth Relic

This UNESCO World Heritage Site was built in the 16th century to house and protect the sacred tooth relic of the Buddha. Its passageways and halls are richly painted in red, cream and black, with carved pillars and golden statues throughout.

A.Savin · FAL



Nuwara Eliya City

This hill town served as the main holiday resort for the British in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and its cottages, villas and mansions still reflect that era. A walk through town takes in the old red-brick post office, Queen Victoria Park and the shores of Lake Gregory.

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Day 4 Nuwara Eliya → Ella

The morning covers a tea estate visit before the journey continues to Ella by train, one of the most scenic rail routes in the highlands.

Tea Factory and Plantation

A guided tour explains how Ceylon tea is grown and processed. Tea was first brought to Ceylon from China in 1824 and planted at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Peradeniya, with commercial cultivation later introduced by the British planter James Taylor, who settled at Loolecondera estate near Kandy in 1852.



Nanu Oya to Ella Train Journey

The train ride passes through tea plantations and highland villages with misty mountain backdrops, including views of Haputale through drizzle and mist. Mountains, woodlands and waterfalls line the route before arrival at Ella station.

Chamal N · CC BY-SA 3.0

Day 5 Ella → Mirissa

The morning is spent hiking around Ella before the drive south to the coast at Mirissa.

Ella Hike

This walk takes in three of Ella's best-known sights: Little Adam's Peak, the Nine Arches Bridge, and Demodara Railway Station with its distinctive loop-over track. The route passes through tea fields and sections of rocky terrain.

Day 6 Mirissa → Bentota

An early whale-watching trip from Mirissa harbour is followed by a stop in Galle en route to Bentota.



Whale Watching

The tour heads out from Mirissa Fishery Harbour in search of blue whales, sperm whales and fin whales in the waters off southern Sri Lanka. A naturalist on board explains how to identify the different species, with an emphasis on minimising disturbance to the animals.

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Old Colonial City of Galle

Galle Fort was once a Portuguese and Dutch headquarters and remains one of the best-preserved fortifications in Asia. The visit includes the fort's museums, its lighthouse, and a walk along the cobblestoned streets with their Dutch-era names.

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Day 7 Bentota (days 7–8)

Two days are set aside for the beach and hotel facilities at Bentota, with an optional river safari and turtle hatchery visit on one of the days.



Bentota Beach

The beach is rated among the best in Sri Lanka, with sunset views over the ocean and a cluster of hotels along the shore. Turtles can sometimes be seen nesting on the sand, and water sports such as jet-skiing and windsurfing are available.

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Madu River Boat Safari

A boat trip through the Madu River's mangrove channels passes basking crocodiles and water monitors, and stops at a small island where cinnamon is harvested. The experience also includes a fish massage and views of water birds in their natural habitat.

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Kosgoda Turtle Hatchery

Located on the southwestern coast, the hatchery works to protect the nests of five endangered sea turtle species that come ashore here to lay their eggs. Visitors can learn about the hatchery's conservation program and see, touch or feed baby turtles and injured adults in its care.

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Day 9 Bentota → Colombo

The journey to Colombo includes a stop at Lunuganga before an evening out in the capital.



Lunuganga Estate

This was the country home of Sri Lankan architect Sir Geoffrey Bawa, with gardens and living spaces designed in his signature style. A tour covers the parts of the estate open to the public.

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Colombo Nightlife

The evening is free to explore Colombo's nightclubs, beachside parties, casinos and late-night restaurants.

Day 10 Colombo → Airport

After breakfast, the tour concludes with a 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.
- Chauffeur Guide's Accommodation.
- Expenses of personal nature.
- Visa and Related Expenses.
- Tips & Portages.
