

TOUR REFERENCE
LKGR3NCBND

The Finest of Ceylon (16 Days)

15 days · 14 nights | Private tour with chauffeur guide

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About this experience

This 16-day tour covers Sri Lanka's western coast, deep south, dry-zone wildlife country, hill country and the cultural city of Kandy, moving at an easy pace with several multi-night stays. It begins on the beaches of Negombo, works along the south coast through Galle and its colonial fort, continues to Yala for wildlife safaris, then climbs into the highlands around Ella and Nuwara Eliya before finishing in Kandy.

Travellers get a mix of coast, wildlife, scenery and heritage: turtle conservation work and a mangrove river trip near Galle, leopard and elephant safaris in Yala National Park, the Nine Arches Bridge and Little Adam's Peak at Ella, Horton Plains and World's End near Nuwara Eliya, and Kandy's Temple of the Tooth Relic and Royal Botanical Gardens. Free days are built in at Yala and Kandy for resting or exploring independently.

The tour runs as a private itinerary with a chauffeur guide handling transport throughout, so the schedule can flex around the traveller rather than a fixed group programme.



Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 Negombo (days 1–2)

Two days to settle in on the western coast at Negombo, known for its beaches and long-standing fishing industry.



Negombo Beach

Negombo's sandy beaches sit on the Western Coast of Sri Lanka, where you can watch a fish industry that has operated here for centuries. Water sports are available for those wanting something active.

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Diving and Shipwreck

Dive among corals and reef life, including a 50-year-old shipwreck just off the coast that has become home to many varieties of fish.

Day 3 Negombo → Galle

Travel south to Galle, a town shaped by Portuguese and Dutch rule, with a stop to learn about sea turtle conservation.



Galle Fort

Galle Fort is one of the best-preserved fortifications in Asia, built during the Portuguese and Dutch periods. Walk the cobblestoned streets with their Dutch names, visit the museums and lighthouse, and hear the guide's stories of the old headquarters town.

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Kosgoda Turtle Hatchery

The Kosgoda Turtle Hatchery on the southwestern coast works to protect the nests of five endangered sea turtle species that come ashore in Sri Lanka. The Kosgoda Turtle Care Program improves the hatchlings' survival chances, and visitors can see, touch and feed baby turtles as well as injured adults in care.

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Day 4 Galle

A day around Galle taking in a hilltop landmark and a coastal fishing tradition.



Rumassala

Rumassala hill, three kilometres east of Galle, is topped by a white Buddhist dagoba and is the landmark of Unuwatuna beach. It is one of five Sri Lankan sites linked in legend to fragments of Mount Dronagiri dropped by Hanuman, and is said to have been Sita's abode during her time in Lanka.

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Stilt Fishing at Koggala

Watch fishermen perched on stilts along the Koggala coast, a craft practised here for generations. Local fishermen explain how the technique works, and sunset brings good opportunities for photographs of their silhouettes against the shore.

Day 5 Galle → Balapitiya → Galle

A day trip to the Madu River for a boat journey through its mangrove ecosystem.



Madu River Boat Ride

A two-hour boat ride on the Madu River passes through narrow channels created by mangroves, where crocodiles and water monitors can be seen basking. The trip takes in a small island worked by cinnamon-harvesting residents, a fish massage, and waterbirds in their natural habitat.

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Day 6 Galle → Yala

Head towards Yala, stopping at a specialist tea factory and an unusual stretch of coastline along the way.



Handunugoda Tea Factory

Also known as the Virgin White Tea Factory, this estate produces its famous Virgin White Tea without the leaves ever being touched by human hands during plucking and processing. The visit includes the factory's history and a tasting of tea with chocolate cake, plus the chance to buy tea leaves.

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Ussangoda

Ussangoda is a bare coastal plateau whose serpentine rock contains toxic heavy metals, allowing only specially adapted smaller plants to grow. Ramayana legend attributes its baldness to Hanuman's burning tail setting fire to King Ravana's territory, and also claims the plateau was once used as an airport for Ravana's flying chariot before Hanuman destroyed the landing site.

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Day 7 Yala (days 7–8)

Two days of safari in Yala National Park on the southeastern coast, the island's second-largest park.



Yala National Park Safari

Yala is home to the famous Sri Lankan leopard, wild water buffalo, Sri Lankan sloth bear and large herds of elephants, alongside many other mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates.

Ranmith Welikala · CC BY-SA 4.0

Day 9 Yala

A free day at leisure at the hotel in Yala.

Day 10 Yala → Ella → Nuwara Eliya

Travel into the hill country via Ella, taking in its best-known sights before continuing to Nuwara Eliya.

Ella Highlights

The route passes bright green tea fields and rocky stretches with views of Little Adam's Peak. A walk crosses the Nine Arches Bridge, with the story of its construction, and ends at Demodara Railway Station, notable for its unique loop-over track design.

Day 11 Nuwara Eliya

A day exploring Nuwara Eliya, the hill station built as a holiday resort for the British.



Nuwara Eliya Town

Nuwara Eliya was the premium holiday resort town for the British in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and its streets still hold pretty cottages, quaint villas and mansions from that period. The old red-brick post office sells inexpensive, colourful postcards, and Queen Victoria Park and Lake Gregory offer places to relax.

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Day 12 Nuwara Eliya

A day trip to Horton Plains National Park for its highland scenery and viewpoints.



Horton Plains and World's End

Horton Plains National Park in Ohiya combines montane grasslands with cloud forest. The park's highlights include the sweeping views from World's End and the cooling spray of Baker's Falls, along with sightings of endemic fauna and information on archaeological finds made in the area.

Faslan at en.wikipedia · CC BY-SA 3.0

Day 13 Nuwara Eliya → Kandy

Travel on to Kandy by train, with a cultural show to introduce the city's traditions.



Kandy Cultural Show

This hour-long performance showcases some of the island's most popular art forms, including fire dancers, sword dancers and Kandyan dancers performing to drumming.

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Hatton to Kandy Train Ride

The train journey from Hatton to Kandy passes through some of Sri Lanka's most scenic highland countryside, with views of tea plantations, misty mountain villages, mountains, woodland and waterfalls along the way.

Day 14 Kandy

A day in Kandy taking in its most significant religious site and its botanical gardens.



Temple of the Tooth Relic

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

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Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya

Formed in the early 19th century, the gardens hold over 4,000 species of plants across a large area, including orchids, spices and medicinal plants. Features include the cannonball tree, a suspension bridge, hedge mazes and large trees suited to climbing.

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Day 15 Kandy

A free day at leisure at the hotel in Kandy.

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.