

TOUR REFERENCE
LKMB3DS557

History and Heritage (10 Days)

10 days · 9 nights | Private tour with chauffeur guide

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About this experience

This ten-day tour traces Sri Lanka's history from the coast to the hill capital and into the Cultural Triangle, moving from Negombo and Colombo to Kandy, the wilderness of Gal Oya, and the ancient cities of Dambulla, Polonnaruwa and Sigiriya. It takes in colonial Colombo, the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic, the Royal Botanical Gardens of Peradeniya, cave temples, rock fortresses and the ruins of a 10th-13th century capital.

Travellers get a mix of heritage sites, nature and village life: a city and shopping tour of Colombo, a walk through Negombo's fishing market, a jungle safari and boat safari in Gal Oya, a farm cooking demonstration near Polonnaruwa, and a second village and cooking experience near Sigiriya. The pace allows time to explore each site on foot, from temple corridors to rock-cut staircases and jungle trails.

The tour runs with a private, air-conditioned vehicle and a chauffeur guide throughout, so the schedule can be adjusted to suit the traveller across all ten days.



Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 Airport → Negombo

On arrival at Colombo International Airport, you are met by your chauffeur guide and driven to Negombo to check in and rest.

Arrival and transfer to Negombo

After clearing immigration and baggage collection, you are met at the arrivals lounge and driven in an air-conditioned vehicle to Negombo to check in to your hotel.

Day 2 Negombo → Colombo → Negombo

A city and shopping tour of Colombo is followed by a look at Negombo's working fishing village on the way back.



Colombo city and shopping tour

Visit historic monuments including the Old Lighthouse, the Old Parliament, Galle Face Hotel, Galle Face Green, Gangarama Temple and the National Museum. Browse the malls around Independence Square or the Race Course, along with boutique shops and designer stores.

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Negombo Fishing Village

Known locally as the Lellama, this open-air market by the Old Dutch Gate is the second largest fish market in the country. Watch fishermen bring in the day's catch by the boatload, wholesalers and restaurateurs trade, and fish being packed for distribution and export, while vendors negotiate prices with customers in the retail area.

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Day 3 Negombo → Kandy

Travel to Kandy via Peradeniya, with stops at the botanical gardens and an elephant care centre before checking in.



Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya

Formed in the early 19th century, these gardens cover a vast area with over 4,000 species of plants including orchids, spices and medicinal plants. Walk avenues shaded by rare trees, see the cannonball tree, cross the suspension bridge and explore the hedge mazes.

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Millennium Elephant Foundation

This foundation funds the care, medical treatment, food and mahout salaries for elephants, along with a mobile veterinary unit that treats sick elephants around the country. Its Elephant Walk Experience offers an ethical, close-up alternative to elephant riding.

Day 4 Kandy

Spend the day exploring Kandy on foot, from its old streets and markets to its most significant religious site.



Kandy Town walk

Walk through the streets of Sri Lanka's last kingdom, hearing the history as you go. Try Sri Lankan street food, watch garland makers at work, visit a Hindu temple and take a short three-wheeler ride.

A.Savin · FAL



Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic

This UNESCO World Heritage Site was built in the 16th century to house and protect the Buddha's sacred tooth relic. Walk through its painted halls in red, cream and black, past carved pillars and golden statues.

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Day 5 Kandy → Gal Oya

Head to the remote wilderness of Gal Oya, checking in to a jungle lodge before an evening visit to a Veddah village.

Gal Oya Lodge

Set across 20 acres of private jungle, the lodge borders one of Sri Lanka's most remote and least visited wilderness areas and is a base for reconnecting with nature and local culture.

Veddah Village visit

Gal Oya Lodge neighbours one of the last remaining Veddah communities, the island's forest-dwelling indigenous people. The village chief leads a walk through the ancestral jungle, explaining the use of medicinal plants, ancient hunting grounds and cave dwellings.

Day 6 Gal Oya

A full day of wildlife viewing in and around Gal Oya National Park, by jeep in the early morning and by boat in the evening.

Gal Oya National Park jeep safari

Setting off before dawn, collect a wildlife officer at the park base before entering as the jungle wakes with birdsong and insects. Spot grey langurs, deer, birds, small mammals, elephants and reptiles, with a picnic breakfast and a walk along the riverbank through rock formations.

Boat Safari on Senanayake Samudraya

An evening boat safari of two to three hours on Senanayake Samudraya, Sri Lanka's largest lake, reached by a scenic drive from the lodge. With a little luck you may see elephants swimming between the islands or bathing at the water's edge.

Day 7 Gal Oya → Dambulla

An early trek rewards with valley views before the drive to Dambulla, taking in the cave temples en route.

Monkey Mountain trek

A two-hour uphill trek before breakfast leads to the cliffs facing the lodge, with 180-degree views over the forested valley, ideally timed to watch the sun rise over the hills.



Dambulla Cave Temples

These caves at the Golden Temple of Dambulla date back to the 1st century BC and contain murals depicting the life of the Buddha. See hundreds of Buddha and deity figurines across the five main caves, including the Cave of the Divine King, the Cave of the Great King and the Great New Monastery, plus a giant golden Buddha statue outside the complex.

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Day 8 Dambulla → Polonnaruwa → Dambulla

Visit the ruins of the medieval capital at Polonnaruwa, then join a farming family for a cooking demonstration and lunch.



Polonnaruwa ancient city

Sri Lanka's second major capital flourished between the 10th and 13th centuries AD. Walk among its ruins to see the Gal Vihara, Vatadage, the lotus bath, Lankathilaka Temple and the statue of King Parakramabahu, whose reign is considered the city's golden age.

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Priyamali Gedara cooking demonstration

A local farming family hosts an authentic cooking demonstration and farm lunch. Rice, lentils, fresh vegetables, fried fish and poppadum are cooked over wood fires and served on lotus leaves, with kotthu available separately for those interested.

Day 9 Dambulla → Sigiriya → Dambulla

Climb the Sigiriya rock fortress, then spend the afternoon experiencing village life nearby.



Sigiriya Rock Fortress

This 5th century AD rock fortress was the seat of King Kasyapa. Enter through the paws of the lion that gives the site its name, view the fading murals, climb the steep staircase to the terraced gardens and working cisterns, and walk the tunnels leading to the palace.

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Village experience

Descend the rock to a local village for a catamaran ride on a calm lake and a walk through golden paddy fields. A traditional cooking demonstration is followed by a home-cooked lunch served on lotus leaves.

Day 10 Dambulla → Airport

After breakfast, check out and transfer to the airport for your return flight.

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.