TOUR REFERENCE
LKYBCQGVB4

Uncharted Ceylon (7 Days)

7 days · 6 nights | Private tour with chauffeur guide

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About this experience

This seven-day private tour moves through Sri Lanka's ancient kingdoms and hill country before ending on the coast at Colombo. The route runs from Negombo through Panduwasnuwara, Yapahuwa, Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya and Dambulla, then into the hills around Kandy and Mahiyanganaya, with a stop at Kithulgala for hiking and whitewater rafting on the way back down to the capital.



Travellers see a wide span of Sri Lanka's history, from the 5th century BC kingdom of Panduwasnuwara to the Kandyan era temples and the UNESCO-listed Temple of the Tooth Relic. The itinerary also takes in lesser-visited sites such as Yapahuwa's rock fortress and the Mahiyangana Temple, alongside well-known landmarks like Sigiriya rock fortress, the Dambulla cave temples, and the Royal Botanical Gardens at Peradeniya. A day in Kithulgala adds an outdoor element, with hiking to the Belilena Cave Archeological Reserve and rafting on the Kelani River.

The tour runs with a private vehicle and chauffeur guide throughout, so the schedule is set around the traveller rather than a group. Hotel stays, meals and entrance fees are arranged separately, leaving flexibility in how each stop is experienced.

Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 Airport → Negombo

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

Day 2 Negombo → Panduwasnuwara → Yapahuwa → Sigiriya

The day covers two early Sri Lankan capitals before continuing to Sigiriya, taking in ruins spanning several centuries of the island's history.



Panduwasnuwara

One of the first kingdoms of Sri Lanka, this was a capital in the 5th century BC and was used again in the 12th century, leaving a mix of ruins from different periods.

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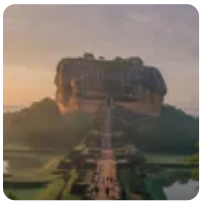

Yapahuwa

A fortress built on a giant rock in the style of Sigiriya, though its architecture differs with wide staircases, stone sculptures and detailed pillar carvings. Visitors climb to the fortress to see the ruins of a stupa at the summit, which holds notable statues and imagery from the Kandyan era. The visit takes a couple of hours.

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Polonnaruwa

The second major capital of Sri Lanka, flourishing from the 10th to 13th century AD. The ruins include the Gal Vihara, the Vatadage, the lotus bath, the Lankatilaka Temple and the statue of King Parakramabahu, whose reign is considered the city's golden age.

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Day 3 Sigiriya → Dambulla → Kandy

The day combines the climb up Sigiriya rock fortress with a visit to the cave temples of Dambulla en route to Kandy.



Sigiriya

A 5th century AD rock fortress built for King Kasyapa, entered through a gateway framed by the paws of a lion, which gives the site its name, the Lion Rock. The climb passes the fortress's unfading murals, terraced gardens, still-working cisterns and tunnels leading up to the palace.

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Golden Temple of Dambulla

A complex of historic caves dating to the 1st century BC, with murals depicting the life of the Buddha and 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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Day 4 Kandy → Mahiyanganaya → Kandy

This day travels out from Kandy to meet an indigenous community and visit one of the island's oldest temples before returning.

Indigenous community

A visit to a community living a traditional lifestyle, seeing their rustic homes and learning about their reliance on hunting animals such as rabbit, deer and wild boar, supplemented by some farming.

Mahiyangana Temple

Begun as a small stupa enshrining a handful of the Buddha's hair, this was the island's first stupa. In 543 BC the Arahant Sarabhu enshrined the Buddha's left collar bone alongside the hair and enlarged the stupa to 18 feet, and later kings continued enlarging it to its current size. It was renovated around four decades ago and remains a peaceful historic site.

Day 5 Kandy

A day exploring temples and gardens around Kandy, ending with a cultural dance performance.



Embekke Temple

Known for its woodworking, with detailed carved panels decorating the pillars, walls and roof.

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Gadaladeniya Temple

Built in the early 14th century by a South Indian architect, with a giant golden Buddha statue, worn but detailed sculptures and paintings, and a main stupa with four satellite stupas.

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Cave temple

A temple built in a cave dug into a large rock, its interior walls entirely covered in colourful Kandyan-era paintings depicting Buddhism.



Temple of the Tooth Relic

A UNESCO World Heritage Site built in the 16th century to house and protect the Buddha's sacred tooth. Visitors walk through embellished passageways and painted halls in red, cream and black, past carved pillars and golden statues.

A.Savin · FAL



Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya

Formed in the early 19th century, the gardens hold over 4000 plant species including orchids, spices and medicinal plants, set along avenues of large and rare trees. Features include the cannonball tree, a suspension bridge and hedge mazes.

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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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Day 6 Kandy → Kithulgala → Colombo

An early start for an outdoor day at Kithulgala before continuing to Colombo.

Belilena Cave Archeological Reserve

A hiking tour leads to this archaeological cave reserve near Kithulgala.



Kelani River

Whitewater rafting on the Kelani River at Kithulgala.

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Day 7 Colombo → Airport

A final morning taking in Colombo's historic landmarks and shopping areas before transferring to the airport for departure.

Colombo landmarks

Visits to historic sites such as the Old Lighthouse, the Old Parliament, Galle Face Hotel, Galle Face Green and the National Museum, along with the shops of Independence Square and the Race Course area.

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.