

TOUR REFERENCE
LKZC7TQ6G4

Unforgettable Pearl of Asia (17 Days)

17 days · 16 nights

Private tour with chauffeur guide

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About this experience

This 17-day self-drive-style tour, run in a fully-equipped motorhome with a chauffeur guide throughout, covers the length of Sri Lanka from the west coast beaches to the Cultural Triangle, the hill country and the south coast. It begins in Negombo and moves through Kalpitiya and Wilpattu for dolphin watching and a wildlife safari, before taking in the ancient capitals of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, the rock fortress of Sigiriya and the cave temples of Dambulla.

From there the route continues to the east coast beach of Pasikudah, then climbs into the hill country to Kandy, Sri Lanka's last royal capital, and on to Nuwara Eliya with its colonial-era streets and surrounding tea country. The final stretch runs south through Ella and Yala National Park before ending with beach time at Kirinda and Galle, where the Dutch fort is explored on foot.

Travellers get a broad sweep of the island's landscapes, history and wildlife in one trip: ancient ruins, a rock-top palace, rainforest and grassland national parks, tea estates, and golden-sand coastline. Because the motorhome and itinerary are private, the pace and stops are set for the group alone.

Fuel, parking, highway tolls and the chauffeur's accommodation are covered throughout; flights, meals, entrance fees, beverages and personal expenses are not included.



Day-by-day itinerary

Day 1 Airport → Negombo

On arrival at Colombo airport you are met by your chauffeur guide and driven to Negombo.



Negombo

If time permits, there is an opportunity to explore the town of Negombo before the overnight stop.

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Day 2 Negombo → Kalpitiya → Wilpattu

An early start takes you to Kalpitiya for a dolphin watching trip, weather permitting, before continuing to Wilpattu for the first motorhome stop.

Kalpitiya Dolphin Watching

A boat trip gives the chance to see dolphins in their natural habitat, with a qualified naturalist on hand to explain how to identify different species. The trip is run with a minimal impact on the animals and their environment.

Day 3 Wilpattu

The day is given to a safari in Wilpattu National Park, with the rest of the time free at the campsite.



Wilpattu National Park Safari

A three-hour safari explores the park, known for its 'willus' — natural, sand-rimmed water basins that fill with rainwater. Around 30 species of mammal live here, including Sri Lankan elephant, leopard, sloth bear, spotted deer, buffalo, sambar and mongoose, alongside many other species.

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Day 4 Wilpattu → Anuradhapura → Wilpattu

A day trip to Anuradhapura visits the ruins of Sri Lanka's first capital before returning to Wilpattu for the night.



Anuradhapura Ancient City

The ruined city was Sri Lanka's capital for over a millennium until the 10th century AD, with pagodas, monastic buildings and ponds spread across a wide area. Landmarks include the Jetavanarama, once among the tallest structures in the ancient world, the Sri Maha Bodhi, and the ruins of the Abhayagiri Monastery.

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Day 5 Wilpattu → Habarana → Dambulla

The journey to Dambulla is broken by a village tour in Habarana.

Habarana Village Tour

Habarana has kept its traditional village life, visited here by oxen cart ride and a catamaran safari across a calm lake. The tour passes paddy fields, includes a traditional Sri Lankan cooking demonstration, and ends with a home-cooked lunch served on lotus leaves.

Day 6 Dambulla → Sigiriya → Dambulla

The day is spent at Sigiriya before returning to Dambulla for the night.



Sigiriya Rock Fortress

Dating to the 5th century AD, Sigiriya was the stronghold of King Kasyapa and is entered through an archway formed by a lion's paws, giving the rock its name. The climb passes the site's famous ancient murals, terraced gardens, working cisterns and tunnels leading to the palace ruins at the summit.

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Day 7 Dambulla

A day is spent visiting the Golden Cave Temple before returning to the campsite.

Golden Cave Temple of Dambulla

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

Day 8 Dambulla → Pasikudah

The route to the east coast passes through Polonnaruwa, Sri Lanka's second ancient capital.



Polonnaruwa Ancient City

Polonnaruwa flourished as Sri Lanka's second major capital between the 10th and 13th centuries AD. Highlights among its ruins include the Gal Vihara, the Vatadage, the lotus bath, the Lankathilaka Temple and a statue linked to King Parakramabahu, whose reign is remembered as the city's golden age.

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Day 9 Pasikudah

A free day at Pasikudah Beach, with an optional drive to Trincomalee for those who want to explore further.

Pasikudah Beach

The day is left free for leisure at the beach.



Trincomalee

An optional drive allows time to explore the city of Trincomalee.

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Day 10 Pasikudah → Kandy

The journey continues to Kandy, where the day covers the city's Temple of the Tooth Relic, the Royal Botanical Gardens at Peradeniya, and an evening cultural dance show.



Temple of the Tooth Relic

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

A.Savin · FAL



Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya

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

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Kandy Cultural Dance Show

An hour-long evening show presents some of Sri Lanka's traditional performing arts, including fire dancers, sword dancers and Kandyan dancers performing to drumming.

Arian Zwegers · CC BY 2.0

Day 11 Kandy → Nuwara Eliya

The drive to Nuwara Eliya includes a stop at Ramboda Falls and a visit to a working tea factory and plantation.



Ramboda Falls

Ramboda Ella ranks as the 11th highest waterfall in Sri Lanka and is set near Pussellawa, with three distinct sections. The middle section is visible from the A5 highway near the bridge, while reaching the top section requires a climb along a path before the bridge, rewarded with views over the falls and surroundings.

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Tea Factory and Plantation

A visit shows how Ceylon Tea is produced. Tea was first brought to Ceylon from China by the British in 1824 and planted at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Peradeniya, before James Taylor established commercial tea cultivation at the Loolecondera estate near Kandy after his arrival in 1852.

Day 12 Nuwara Eliya

An early start with a packed breakfast allows a trek through Horton Plains, followed by a city tour of Nuwara Eliya in the evening.



Horton Plains National Park

The park, near Ohiya, is known for its montane grasslands and cloud forests. The trek reaches the precipice at World's End for sweeping views and passes Baker's Falls, with chances to see endemic wildlife and learn about archaeological finds made in the area.

Faslan at en.wikipedia · CC BY-SA 3.0



Nuwara Eliya City Tour

Set in the heart of tea country at altitude, Nuwara Eliya was built by the British as a replica of an English country town, with Georgian and Queen Anne style homes, manicured lawns, an Anglican church, a golf course and parks.

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Day 13 Nuwara Eliya → Ella → Kirinda

The drive south towards Kirinda stops at Ella, taking in the town's best-known viewpoints and landmarks.



Ella

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

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Day 14 Kirinda → Yala → Kirinda

An early morning jeep safari explores Yala National Park before returning to Kirinda for the rest of the day.



Yala National Park Safari

A three-hour safari covers Yala, the island's second-largest national park, set on the southeastern coast. Sightings can include Sri Lankan leopards, wild water buffalo, sloth bears and elephant herds, alongside the park's wider population of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates.

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Day 15 Kirinda → Galle

The journey continues to Galle for a beach stay, with a city tour of the fort area on arrival.



Galle Fort

Built by the Dutch from 1663, the 36-hectare fort occupies a promontory surrounded by the ocean on three sides and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Walking its old walls and streets reveals a mix of colonial-era architecture set against the coastal surroundings.

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Day 16 Galle

A free day is spent at Galle Beach.



Galle Beach

The day is left open for leisure time on the beach.

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Day 17 Galle → Airport

After breakfast, the tour concludes with a transfer to the airport.

What's included

INCLUDED

- Fully-equipped motorhome.
- Inclusive of all chauffeur accommodation, cost of fuel, parking & highway tolls.
- Service of an English-Speaking Chauffeur throughout the tour.
- All prevailing taxes and service charges (Except for Credit Card Charges)

NOT INCLUDED

- International / Domestic Airfare.
- Any expenses of personal nature.
- Tips & Portages.
- Cost of Beverages
- Meals
- Entrance fees where not specified.