



2024 - TREASURES OF SRI LANKA

Private Tour | 14 Days | Physical Level 2

Colombo – Dambulla – Mahiyanganaya - Kandy - Ella - Yala National Park - Unawatuna - Colombo

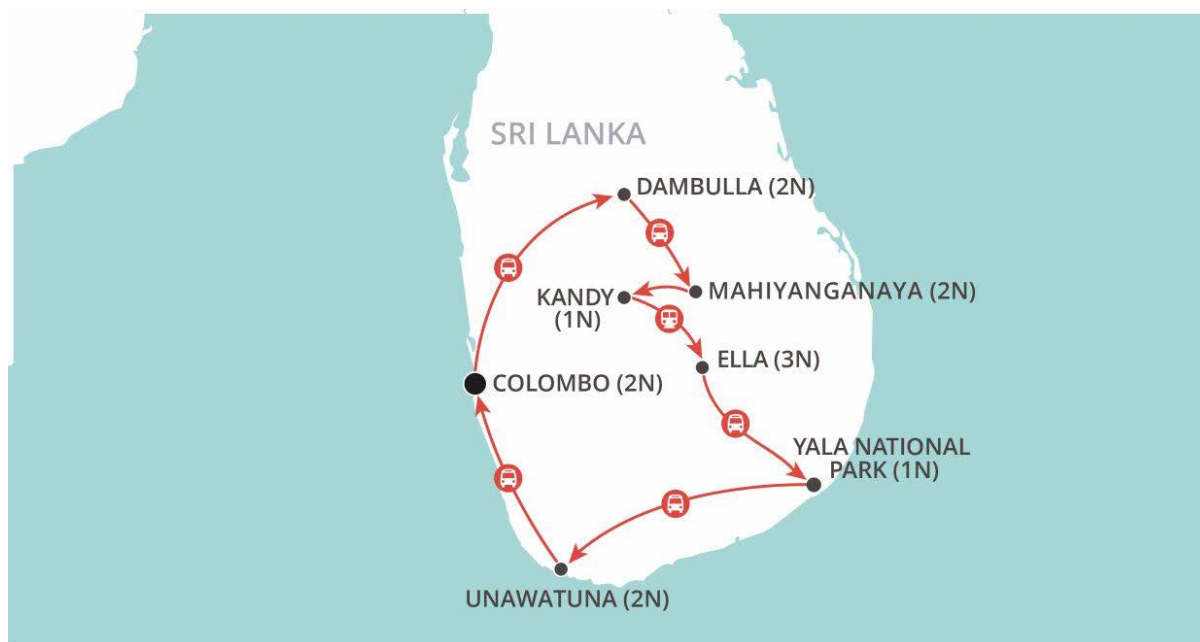
Sri Lanka's diverse wonders unfold from the bustling Colombo to the serene Dambulla Cave Temple. Mahiyanganaya's spiritual significance, Ella's lush landscapes and Yala's thrilling wildlife safari follow before your journey ends on Unawatuna's idyllic shores. From culture to nature, Sri Lanka weaves a tapestry of wonder and awe.

- Climb to the top of Sigiriya Rock Fortress
- Visit the locals at Vedda Village
- Enjoy breakfast at Sorabora Lake
- Witness a cultural dance show
- Take a tuk-tuk to Nine Arch Bridge
- Experience a jeep safari at Yala National Park

To book call **0800 936 3998** or visit your local travel agent

Visit wendywutours.co.nz

TOUR MAP



TREASURES OF SRI LANKA PRIVATE TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- All accommodation
- Meals as stated (B – Breakfast / L – Lunch / D – Dinner)
- Sightseeing and entrance fees as per itinerary
- Transportation and transfers as per itinerary
- English speaking Local Guides
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR: international flights, visas, drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, meals not included early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

PRIVATE TOURS:

These tours are designed for those who want some independence and flexibility. They offer the choice to explore local cuisine, leisure time for optional activities or excursions, and to travel when it suits you. Our Private Tours offer excellent value holidays alongside the assurance that most of your arrangements are taken care of. You will also be accompanied by a dedicated and professional guide whose knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 2:

All our tours feature a physical rating so that you can select the right holiday for you. Our tours require unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sites. 'Treasures of Sri Lanka' is rated '2' on the physical level scale. A reasonable fitness level is required, but it's more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You'll get on and off boats and planes, walk around the sites, and climb some steps.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time.
- Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite several steps, often without handrails
- You will be required to get on and off various sizes of boats and rickshaws throughout the tour.

Of course, our guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. If you require any more information about the pace of our tours, please contact our reservations team, who will be happy to answer your questions.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It is our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrive Colombo

Meals: n/a

Arrive arrival in Colombo, a representative from Wendy Wu Tours will meet you at the airport in the Arrivals Hall and transfer you to your hotel, which takes around 45 minutes. The rest of the day is at leisure.



Destination Information

Colombo – Sri Lanka’s vibrant capital exudes a captivating blend of modernity and tradition. Its bustling markets, colonial architecture, and rich cultural heritage make it a fascinating destination. From historical landmarks to aromatic cuisine, Colombo offers a delightful immersion into the heart of the island's urban charm.

Day 2: Colombo City

Meals: B

This morning, enjoy a tour of the city as you make your way through the bustling urban landscape. Visit iconic landmarks including the Lotus Tower, Fort, and the historic ‘Sea Street’ known for its Goldsmith’s quarters.

This afternoon, embark on a delectable 2.5-hour food tour through the vibrant streets of Pettah, indulging in over 10 types of authentic local delicacies.



Destination Information

Lotus Tower – An iconic landmark and modern architectural marvel. Standing at 350m metres, it is the tallest structure in South Asia. Its primary function is as a telecommunications and broadcasting tower with observation decks at different levels.

Fort Colombo – A historical district and one of the oldest and most significant areas of the city, rich in colonial heritage and architectural splendor. The name ‘Fort’ originates from the time of the Portuguese occupation in the 16th century when they constructed a fortress to protect their interests. Some key attractions include the President's House (formerly known as Queen's House), the Old Dutch Hospital complex, the Colombo Lighthouse, and the Bank of Ceylon building.

Day 3: Dambulla & Polonnaruwa

Meals: B

Travel four hours to Dambulla, with a stop enroute at Priyamali Gardens for lunch - here you'll get to taste authentic Sri Lankan dishes. Continue 1.5 hours to Polonnaruwa, an ancient city with some of the most significant archaeological sites in Sri Lanka.

Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.

**Destination Information**

Polonnaruwa - Kings ruled the central plains of Sri Lanka from Polonnaruwa 800 years ago, when it was a thriving commercial and religious centre. The glories of that age can be found in the archaeological treasures that offer an excellent insight into the city's golden era

Dambulla – A rural village renowned for its scenic beauty surrounded by lush green paddy fields, small lakes and hills. Its main attraction is Hiriwaduna Wewa - a man-made reservoir that sustains local agriculture.

Day 4: Sigiriya, Hiriwaduna & Wasgamuwa

Meals: B, L

Today starts with a visit to one of Sri Lanka's major attractions – Sigiriya Rock Fortress. Only a 30-minute drive from your hotel, this UNESCO World Heritage site is also known as 'Lions Rock'.

Lunch today will be at Hiriwaduna Village, where you embark on a catamaran lake cruise, a tuk-tuk to visit with the locals and you'll also learn to prepare an authentic dish.

Later this afternoon travel 1.5 hours to Wasgamuwa National Park, where you will enjoy a safari ride through the park.

**Destination Information**

Sigiriya Rock Fortress – The majestic Lion Rock that rises 200 meters above the ground, with remnants of an ancient royal palace at the top. The name 'Lion Rock' comes from the enormous lion-shaped gateway that once guarded the palace, however only the paws remain today.

Hiriwaduna – **Hiriwaduna** is a rural village and a popular eco-tourism destination offering visitors an opportunity to experience village life. Interact with friendly villagers, observe their daily activities, and learn about their customs and traditions.

Wasgamuwa National Park - The majestic Wasgamuwa National Park is a hub of biodiversity and home to most of Sri Lanka's land mammals.

Spanning 36,950 hectares, the park is home to elephants, leopards, and bears. Wild boar also dwells in its forests and herds of buffalo, sambar, and spotted deer gambol across its plains.

Day 5: Dambulla to Mahiyanganaya

Meals: B, L

After breakfast, your next destination is Mahiyanganaya, which is about a 2.5-hour drive away. A stop enroute will give you the opportunity to visit the Dambulla Cave Temple, also known as the Golden Temple.



Upon reaching Mahiyanganaya, take some time to relax before you embark on a visit to the Vedda Village, learning all about the island's original inhabitants.

Destination Information

Dambulla Cave Temple – Dating back to the 1st century BC, the famous Dambulla Cave Temple consists of five caves converted into shrine rooms. The caves are home to around 150 Buddha statues and colourful frescoes. In the first cave, observe the 14m statue of Buddha cut out of the rock. At the Buddha's feet are Ananda, the most loyal disciples, and more seated Buddhas nearby.

The second cave is the largest, also known as the Cave of the Great Kings, with 16 standing and 40 seated statues of Buddha. The frescoes on the ceiling depict scenes from Buddha's life and important events from the country's history. Inside the cave is a spring created from the drips from its roof, which is said to have healing powers and is used in sacred rituals.

Vedda Village – This community's history stretches back thousands of years. Remarkably in that time, the unique way of life has been almost completely preserved. The people of Vedda Village embrace a deep spiritual connection with nature, and the simplicity and harmony of their hunter-gatherer traditions thrive alongside their in-depth knowledge of the forest and herbal medicine.

Day 6: Sorabora Lake & Maduru Oya National Park

Meals: B, L

An early start today but well worth it as you enjoy a scrumptious breakfast at the serene Sorabora Lake. Next, it's an ascent to the top of Sorabora Rock for breathtaking views. Afterwards, take a relaxing boat ride on Sorabora Wewa, an ancient water reservoir with a fascinating history.



In the afternoon, venture to the renowned Maduru Oya National Park, known for its diverse wildlife, including elephant leopards and various bird species.

Destination Information

Sorabora Lake - Also known as Sorabora Wewa, this lake is believed to have been constructed during the reign of King Dutugemunu by a legendary giant named Bulatha. It is known for its scenic beauty and serene surroundings.

Maduru Oya National Park – One of the least visited national parks in Sri Lanka. At 500 sq km reservoir full of fish at its centre offers the perfect feeding ground for an abundance of water birds, including black-necked, painted- and woolly-necked storks, spot-billed pelicans, and great egrets. Herds of elephants can sometimes be spotted too. The park was also once the hunting ground of the Veddahs – Sri Lanka's threatened indigenous people, and several archaeological markers from this time remain today.

Day 7: Mahiyanganaya to Kandy

Meals: B

Today you travel 2.5 hours to Kandy where you have time to relax or explore your surroundings before an excursion to the Temple of the Tooth Relic. End the day with a thrilling cultural dance show.



Destination Information

Kandy - Kandy is a vibrant and cultural city nestled in the central hills. Kandy's scenic beauty is captivating, with lush greenery, picturesque hills, and the serene Kandy Lake, providing a tranquil escape in the midst of the bustling city. The annual Esala Perahera, a grand procession of dancers, drummers, and decorated elephants, takes place in Kandy, attracting thousands of spectators, showcasing the city's vibrant cultural traditions. Kandy's unique blend of history, spirituality, and natural charm.

Day 8: Kandy to Ella

Meals: B

After an early breakfast, board the train for your 7- hour journey to Ella. This journey is one of the most scenic and picturesque in Sri Lanka, with stunning views of green hills, tea plantations and waterfalls.

On arrival in Ella, check in at your hotel.

It is important to note that train delays are possible. Tickets for travel are issued 30 days in advance of travel and are at times, a challenge to secure. In the unlikely event tickets cannot be obtained, you will then travel by road.



Destination Information

Ella – A picturesque hill station renowned for its stunning vistas and laid-back atmosphere. Ella is a popular base for exploring tea plantations and the Nine Arch Bridge.

Day 9: Ella

Meals: B

Before breakfast you will visit Little Adam's Peak, locally known as Punchi Sri Pada in Sinhala. The hike to the top takes around 45 minutes to an hour from Ella. It is relatively easy, with only a slight incline towards the end as you approach the summit.



Throughout the walk, you'll be surrounded by lush green landscapes and picturesque tea plantations, creating a serene and immersive experience. The effort is worth it as a breath-taking panorama awaits, offering spectacular views of Ella Rock, Ella Gap, and the majestic Ruwana Falls.

For those who prefer a less strenuous trek (compared to Adam's Peak proper), this is the perfect alternative. Return to the hotel for breakfast and spend the day at your leisure.

Day 10: Ella

Meals: B

After enjoying a hearty breakfast, you'll embark on a tuktuk ride to visit the fascinating Nine Arch Bridge. The journey from your hotel to the Nine Arch Bridge takes approximately 10 minutes. This incredible bridge, also known as the 'Bridge in the Sky,' was ingeniously constructed by connecting two steep mountains during the building of the Badulla – Colombo railway line. Relax in the afternoon.



Destination Information

Nine Arch Bridge - This incredible bridge, also known as the 'Bridge in the Sky,' was ingeniously constructed by connecting two steep mountains at the time of the construction of the Badulla – Colombo railway line. With a length of 90 metres, a width of 7.5 metres, and towering at a height of 30 metres its architectural brilliance and scenic location make it one of the finest examples of railway engineering in the country.

Day 11: Ella to Yala

Meals: B

After breakfast, your 2.5 hour journey will take you to Yala, a haven for wildlife enthusiasts. Upon reaching Yala, check in to your hotel and take some time to relax before your afternoon trip to Yala National Park. Here you'll embark on a wildlife jeep safari as you look out for the leopards that the park is famed for, alongside the many other species that thrive here.



Afterwards, return to your hotel, taking the opportunity to relax and enjoy the facilities for the rest of the day.

Destination Information

Yala National Park - The largest national park in Sri Lanka, located about 24 kilometres northeast of Tissamaharama. Here you may be lucky enough to spot its rare and majestic leopards, or perhaps you will encounter herds of wild elephants, bears, wild boars, buffalos, deer, crocodiles, or a myriad of bird species. The park's vegetation ranges from open parkland to dense jungle, and the abundance of water sources such as waterholes, streams, small lakes, and lagoons ensures a thriving habitat for the animals and birds.

Day 12: Yala to Unawatuna

Meals: B

As we make our way to Unawatuna today, we'll stop off in Weligama to observe one of Sri Lanka's most iconic sights – the traditional stilt fishermen. The total transfer time takes approximately three hours.



The captivating practice of stilt fishing started during World War II when food shortages and overcrowded fishing spots prompted some clever men to try fishing on the water.

At first, they used the wreckage of capsized ships and downed aircraft, then began erecting their stilts in coral reefs. Since then, two generations of 9 fishermen have carried on this physically demanding technique.

Continue your journey to Unawatuna, where on arrival you will check in and take the rest of the day to unwind.

Day 13: Unawatuna

Meals: B, L

After breakfasting this morning, it's time for Karuna's Cookery Class - an authentic Sri Lankan culinary experience. This is a hands-on experience where you will prepare 5-6 traditional Sri Lankan dishes. To kickstart the culinary journey, Karuna will take you to the vibrant Galle Market where you'll purchase the fresh ingredients required for the cooking session.



Your next stop is the iconic Galle Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The journey concludes at the lighthouse on the ramparts, where locals take leisurely sunset strolls and fly colourful kites in the evening.

Destination Information

Galle Fort – Built by the Portuguese in the 16th century, later fortified by the Dutch in the 17th century, and further enhanced by the British, Galle Fort is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The fort is a testament to the diverse cultural influences that have shaped Sri Lanka over the centuries. Today Galle Fort is a vibrant cultural hub with art galleries, boutique hotels, restaurants, and shops that offer local crafts and souvenirs.

Day 14: Depart Colombo

Meals: B

Today you will be transferred to Colombo airport for your departure flight



TREASURES OF SRI LANKA PRIVATE TOUR TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISAS:

New Zealand passport holders currently do require a visa to enter Sri Lanka. Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. Your passport needs to be valid for at least six months beyond your intended return date to New Zealand.

Please note: The Sri Lanka Visa cost is not included in our Private Tours pricing. Please contact our reservations team if you would like the Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department to assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. Full details will be advised by Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department.

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate; Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa. Your travel consultant will inform you if any changes are applicable prior to your departure.

INSURANCE:

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original.

EATING IN SRI LANKA:

Sri Lanka is home to a melting pot of cuisine. Throughout years of colonisation and influence from other countries and a history of spice trading, Sri Lanka has cultivated its own distinct flavour. Meals as outlined in the itinerary (excluding drinks) are included in our tour. Please be aware that dishes selected for your meals reflect the cooking styles and signature dishes of the local area you are in.

Dishes served in restaurants on our tours are varied. Some will be vegetable-based and some meat-based. Our restaurants are aware of the western palate – there are plenty of non-spiced options. Dishes will usually be served either as a set menu with a few choices, or in a buffet style to allow you to sample many different options.

We recommend that when it comes to Sri Lanka, you stay open-minded and try to be adventurous!

**PLEASE INFORM US OF ANY ALLERGIES AND/OR SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS
AT TIME OF BOOKING**

DEVELOPMENT IN SRI LANKA:

Although Sri Lanka is developing quickly, it still lacks the international standards of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities. Concepts of personal responsibility are also different to those in Australia. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in Australia; for example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade.

All our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday, so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from your guide.

ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation has been selected for convenience of location, comfort, or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family-run guesthouse in a smaller town or a heritage-type hotel. In remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard but do please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between New Zealand and Sri Lanka. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards are met.

All hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and a telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort or Local Guide

SOUVENIRS:

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs, so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions that demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone, so we aim to take you to places that hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

TRANSPORT:

Vehicles: Vehicles with air conditioning are used for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Road conditions in Sri Lanka have improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times.

Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of the road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the sections above are approximations only.

TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world with Sri Lanka being no exception. Please see our tipping guide lines below:

Restaurants and Cafes: In restaurants and cafes, a service charge is often included in the bill, ranging from 5% to 10%. However, if the service charge is not included, leaving a tip of around 5% to 10% of the total bill is customary. If you receive exceptional service, consider leaving a higher tip.

Hotels and Resorts: Tipping is common in hotels and resorts, especially for hotel staff who provide direct services. It is customary to tip hotel staff who assist with carrying luggage, room cleaning, and other personal services. A tip of around 50 to 100 Sri Lankan rupees per bag is common for porters.

Tour Guides and Drivers: When taking guided tours or using the services of drivers, it is common to tip them as a show of appreciation for their services. For tour guides, a tip of around 500 to 1000 Sri Lankan Rupees per day per person is standard practice. A tip of around 500 to 1000 Sri Lankan rupees per day is typical for drivers.

Spa and Wellness Services: If you receive spa or wellness services, the therapists or attendants appreciate tipping around 10% to 15% of the service cost.

Miscellaneous Services: Tipping is also customary for other services, such as in local markets or when receiving assistance from locals. A small tip of a few Sri Lankan rupees or rounding up the bill can be a polite gesture of appreciation.

It's essential to consider the level of service provided and the local customs when determining the appropriate tip amount. Tipping in a foreign currency is not customary. Using the local currency (Sri Lankan Rupees) for tipping is best. Remember that while tipping is appreciated, it should not be a financial burden and is entirely at your discretion.

APROPRIATE DRESS:

When visiting temples or mosques, both men and women should dress in conservative, nonrevealing clothing. Full-length trousers with a shirt or t-shirt for men; and pants or skirts well below the knee with a top that covers the shoulders and upper arms for women. Women might also consider carrying a 'modesty shawl' in their daypack – this could be a sarong or light scarf – which they can wear over their shoulders and heads to feel more comfortable while sightseeing at mosques. When visiting Jain temples, you must not wear or take in any leather items such as belts, watches, camera straps, purses and shoes.

Religious sites and homes throughout Sri Lanka require all visitors to remove their shoes to enter. Even if you then need to walk outdoors, over hot, or rough ground, you will not be allowed to wear shoes. You will often find shoe storage rooms near a site's entrance where it is customary to leave your shoes near the threshold. Occasionally there are 'shoe minders' who will offer to keep your shoes safe for a

'tip' – this is not compulsory; you can choose to tip for this service or not. If you do not want to remove your shoes, you will have to remain outside.

We recommend shoes that easily slip on and off and carry a pair of thick, old socks in your daypack, which you can wear to protect your feet from any rough or hot surfaces.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

We recommend that you contact either your Doctor or Health centre for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Safetravel has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.safetravel.govt.nz

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.smartraveller.gov.au as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice including a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

Last Updated: August 2024