

Top destinations of Sri Lanka - 12 nights/12 days

Visiting Negombo, Pinnawala, Dambulla (Cultural triangle), Kandy, Ella, Galle and Colombo

Day 1

Arrive at Colombo (CMB) International Airport.

Night flight arrivals – arrive the night before day 1 and entitle for breakfast and dinner on Day 1

Day flight arrivals – arrive at hotel around mid day.

Travel from the airport to the hotel (25 mins drive) – check in to Goldi Sands Hotel – Negombo



Check-in at Goldi Sands Hotel – Negombo (half board: dinner and breakfast provided)

AM: R&R. PM: Negombo bus tour/visit old Portuguese and Dutch catholic churches (built in 1800's)

Day 2

8.00 am: Check-out early and travel to Dambulla via Pinnawella Elephant Orphanage

10.30 am: arrive at Pinnawella to watch the Elephant bathing



Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage is an orphanage, nursery and captive breeding ground for wild Asian elephants located at Pinnawala village, 13 km (8.1 mi) northeast of Kegalle town in Sabaragamuwa Province of Sri Lanka. Pinnawala has the largest herd of captive elephants in the world. In 2011, there were 10965 elephants, including 4643 males and 968 females from 3 generations, living in Pinnawala.^[1]

The orphanage was founded to care and protect the many orphaned unweaned wild elephants found

wandering in and near the forests of Sri Lanka. It was established in 1975 by the Sri Lanka Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC).^[2]

Entry fee pp: Elephant Orphanage, Pinnawala USD 20

12.30. Depart Pinnawella

Aliya resort and Spa – <https://www.themeresororts.com/aliyaresort/> or similar

Rest & Relax in the afternoon

Half board: dinner and breakfast provided



Day 3

10.30 am: visit Polonnaruwa from Dambulla (45mins drive). Explore 2 -3 hours approx. Can do a relax walk and no climbing hills. Visiting Polonnaruwa is highly recommended.



Polonnaruwa - The second most ancient of Sri Lanka's kingdoms, Polonnaruwa was first declared the capital city by King Vijayabahu I, who defeated Chola invaders in 1070 to reunite the country once more under a local leader.

The *Ancient City of Polonnaruwa* has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Entry fee: Ancient City of Polonnaruwa USD 25

Return to the hotel around 2.00 pm

Optional – relax with a spa treatment at the hotel or specialist Ayurvedic well being centre near the hotel

Day 4

Breakfast at Aliya resort - Visit and climb Sigiriya (Lion Rock) before the temperature gets too hot.



Climb and down takes about 2 - 2.5 hrs. **Sigiriya** or **Sinhagiri** - is an ancient rock fortress located in the northern Matale District near the town of Dambulla in the Central Province, Sri Lanka. The name refers to a site of historical and archaeological significance that is dominated by a massive column of rock nearly 200 metres (660 ft) high. According to the ancient Sri Lankan chronicle the Culavamsa, this site was selected by King Kasyapa (477 – 495 CE) for his new capital. He built his palace on the top of this rock and decorated its

sides with colorful frescoes. On a small plateau about halfway up the side of this rock he built a gateway in the form of an enormous lion. The name of this place is derived from this structure — Sīhāgiri, the Lion Rock. The capital and the royal palace was abandoned after the king's death. It was used as a Buddhist monastery until the 14th century.

Sigiriya today is a UNESCO listed World Heritage Site. It is one of the best-preserved examples of ancient urban planning.

Entry fee pp: Ancient City of Sigiriya USD 30

Return to hotel around mid-day for R&R. Afternoon: around 2.30 visit Minneriya national park safari



Minneriya National Park is a national park in North Central Province of Sri Lanka. The area was designated as a national park on 12 August 1997, having been originally declared as a wildlife sanctuary in 1938.

Day 5

Breakfast at Aliya resort

Visit **Anuradhapura**: Anuradhapura is one of the ancient capitals of Sri Lanka, famous for its well-preserved ruins of an ancient Sri Lankan civilization. It was the third capital of the kingdom of Rajarata, following the kingdoms of Tambapanni and Upatissa Nuwara.

The city, now a World Heritage site, was the centre of Theravada Buddhism for many centuries. The city lies 205 km (127 mi) north of the current capital of Colombo in the North Central Province, on the banks of the historic Malvathu River. It is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world and one of the eight World Heritage Sites of Sri Lanka.



The *Ancient City of Anuradhapura* has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Entry fee: Ancient City of Anuradhapura USD 25 approx

Day 6

Check-out at 10.00 am - 11.00 – visit and explore Dambulla Cave Temple (UNESCO World Heritage site) - 30 mins to climb up to (around 250 steps) explore and down).



Dambulla cave temple: also known as the **Golden Temple of Dambulla** is a World Heritage Site (1991) in Sri Lanka, situated in the central part of the country.^[1] 72 kilometres (45 mi) north of Kandy.

Dambulla is the largest and best-preserved cave temple complex in Sri Lanka. The rock towers 160 m over the surrounding plains. There are more than 80 documented caves in the

surrounding area. Major attractions are spread over five caves, which contain statues and paintings. These paintings and statues are related to Gautama Buddha and his life. There are a total of 153 Buddha statues, three statues of Sri Lankan kings and four statues of gods and goddesses. The latter include Vishnu and the Ganesha. The murals cover an area of 2,100 square metres (23,000 sq ft). Depictions on the walls of the caves include the temptation by the demon Mara, and Buddha's first sermon. UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Dambulla cave temple has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Entry fee pp: Dambulla Cave Temples USD 10 approx

12.30: Depart to Kandy(2 hrs 25 mins drive) from Cave temple to the Kandy. check-in around 3pm.

Check-in to a Kandy Hotel: Earls Regency or similar (HB: dinner and breakfast provided)



5.00 pm: Visit **Sri Dalada Maligawa** or the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic is a Buddhist temple



is a Buddhist temple in the city of Kandy, Sri Lanka. It is located in the royal palace complex of the former Kingdom of Kandy, which houses the relic of the tooth of the Buddha. Since ancient times, the relic has played an important role in local politics because it is believed that whoever holds the relic holds the governance of the country. Kandy was the last capital of the Sri Lankan kings and is a World Heritage Site mainly due to the temple.

Back to the hotel by 7.30 pm.

Entry fee: USD \$10 approx.

The Sri Dalada Maligawa has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Day 7

Early breakfast and check out from hotel around 9.00 am and travel (30 mins) to Royal Botanical Gardens in Peradeniya. Peradeniya Royal Botanical Gardens, the finest of its kind in Asia, the largest of the botanical gardens of Sri Lanka.



Depart around 12 noon to Nuwara Eliya (NE), 3hrs drive through beautiful tea plantations and stop at waterfalls to take in the stunning scenery. Optional to stop at a waterfall and refresh with a dip and taste some local fruit. Visit a tea factory on the way and taste fresh cup of tea after the factory tour.

Check-in to a NE hotel. (HB: dinner and breakfast provided)

Optional – a short round golf at NE Golf course which is Established in 1889.

Day 8

Check out from hotel around 10.00 am and travel (30 mins) to Nanuoya Railway station.

Catch the train from Peradeniya to Ella. Sit back, relax and enjoy a beautiful scenic ride (4 hours)



The train trip from Nanyoya to Ella, or the other way around, is one of the most beautiful train trips in the world. This train ride is four hours long and takes you through stunning landscapes of green and lush tea plantations and mountain views. Sit back, relax, enjoy the ride and get to know the local passengers. This train is very popular with the locals. Your luggage will be transferred in your tour van/bus and your tour van/bus will pick you up at the Ella railway station. Fee USD \$10 pp

Check-in to hotel in Ella – late afternoon. (HB: dinner and breakfast provided)



Day 9

Breakfast and explore Ella and R&R

Ella is a small village in the highlands of Sri Lanka which is filled with tea estates, mountains, waterfalls and of course with some good air to breath. <https://www.visitella.com/about-ella>

Lots of people make Ella as one of their must visit destination just to witness the breathtaking views it creates. It is a dream place for many trekkers with some of the best hikes the Island provides. This hidden village got vastly popular among the tourists lately.

Views of mist and clouds covering the summits of the mountain range and the morning sun rise in Ella are spectacular scenes to witness and captured. After a fresh hike in the morning, hit a waterfall, grab some tasty Sri Lankan foods from somewhere with a beer, rest for a while and go for a railwalk to famous Nine Arch Bridge in the evening, you would sure love the all experience.



Day 10

Check out and travel (3.5 hrs) around 10.00 am and to Tangalle and check-in to a beach hotel

PM: Visit Galle Fort (UNESCO World Heritage site) and watch the fisherman on the stilts

Galle is a city on the southwest coast of Sri Lanka. It's known for Galle Fort, the fortified old city founded by Portuguese colonists in the 16th century. Stone sea walls, expanded by the Dutch, encircle car-free streets with architecture reflecting Portuguese, Dutch and British rule. Notable buildings include the 18th-century Dutch Reformed Church. Galle Lighthouse stands on the fort's southeast tip. **The Galle Fort has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.**



Stilt Fishing is one of the most interesting traditional fishing methods of [Sri Lanka](#). Records indicate that it came into being just after World War II. This mode of fishing was more widely used all along the coast until the tsunami in 2004 which caused such activities to cease temporarily until recent years. The beautiful sight of fishermen perched on branched poles as they fish skillfully during dawn, noon and dusk; can now be commonly along the southern coast in towns such as [Koggala](#), Kaththaluwa and [Ahangama](#). Occasional stilt fishermen can also be seen amongst the waters of Madu River, etc.

Day 11

Check out around 9.00 am travel to Colombo via Hikkaduwa and visit the Turtle Hatchery.



Stop off at Turtle Hatchery Hikkaduwa to meet the little critters born and raised at this conservation center. Marked by a number of colorful turtle murals on the outside wall, this beachside facility aims to protect populations of olive ridley, leatherback, green, hawksbill, and loggerhead. Entry USD15



Ten minutes' drive from the Turtle Hatchery is the Hikkaduwa Tsunami Museum.

Visit a Tsunami museum - this is very small but very educational place to visit and understand the magnitude and the devastation of the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami. There are real pictures to see at this museum of the aftermath that hit the coastal lines of Sri Lanka and surrounding countries. Entry free.

Travel to Colombo from Hikkaduwa (travel time 2.5 hrs)

Colombo is the capital of Sri Lanka, has a long history as a port on ancient east-west trade routes, ruled successively by the Portuguese, Dutch and British. That heritage is reflected in its architecture, mixing colonial buildings with high-rises and shopping malls. The imposing Colombo National Museum, dedicated to Sri Lankan history, borders sprawling Viharamahadevi Park and its giant Buddha.

Check-in to Colombo hotel around 2.00 pm. (HB: dinner and breakfast provided)

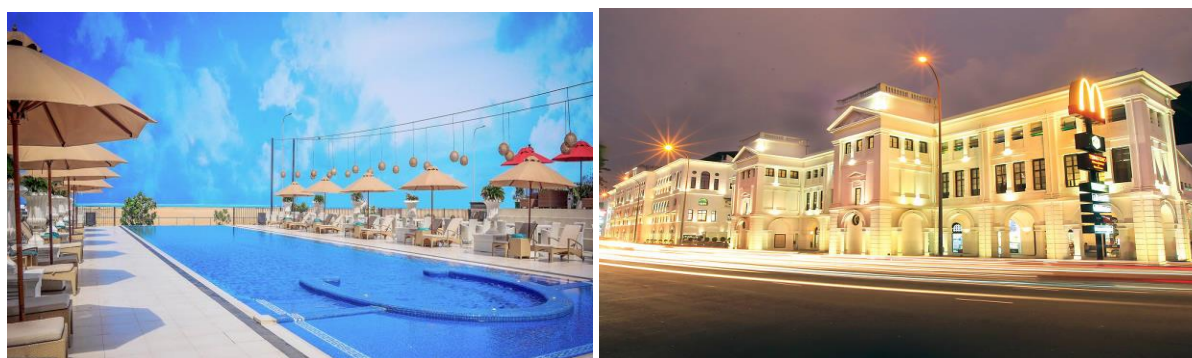
R&R and watch the sunset from Galle Face green or from the beach front hotel.



6.30 pm – optional - visit a popular gem and jewellery shop and return to hotel by 8.00 pm.

Day 12

10.00 am: Colombo City tour and shopping and return to hotel by 1.00 pm for R&R by the pool



Optional – more shopping options (photo right – Racecourse Shopping Complex) close to the hotel.

Night flight departures: Late check out at 6.00 pm. Dinner and depart the hotel around 7.30 pm.

Day 13

Mid day flight departures: early breakfast and check out and leave the hotel around 8.00 am.

Night flights: late check out and depart the hotel around 7.00 pm.

Tour ends.

Tour designed and managed by Amitha (Amita) Weerakoon, Auckland, New Zealand

weerakoon@xtra.co.nz/ Ph. 0064273363363 (work)/0064292924112 (personal)

Cost: NZ \$ 1,990 approx. pp. The cost includes accommodation in 4 -5 star hotels with B&B, twin or triple share, transport thought the tour with a certified guide.

Excludes: Flights and Visa Fee, Travel and medical insurance, Excursions and admission fees to sites, Extras such as laundry, telephone calls and water etc

Disclaimer: This proposed itinerary is prepared by Amitha Weerakoon for his private travel & tours and for Sri Lanka Travel NZ ltd and this communication is privileged and confidential and is directed to and for the use of the addressee only. This information is not be shared or use by any other travel agents other than the addressee only.