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Discover Sri Lanka Trip Notes

 **Ways to Travel:** Guided Group, Tailor Made Adventures
 **Destinations:** Sri Lanka
 **Programmes:** Culture

Trip Code:
AIL



16 Days Flight Inclusive
15 Days Land only
Min age: 16

Trip Overview

Lapped by the warm waters of the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka is a natural paradise with a landscape of verdant mountains, rainforests, paddy fields, tumbling waterfalls and sweeping gorges. From ancient Buddhist temples, the fortress of Sigiriya, the towns of Kandy and Nuwara Eliya in the hill country, the wildlife of Yala National Park (which has one of the highest concentrations of leopards in the world), to the idyllic palm-fringed beaches of the south coast, this small island offers incredible variety, made extra special by its laid back atmosphere and hospitable people.

At a Glance

- 14 nights comfortable hotels, all en suite
- Travel by private bus
- Additional travel by train, bicycle and jeep
- Some long drives

Trip Highlights

- The magnificent cave temples at Dambulla
- Cycle through rice paddy fields
- Search for leopard in Yala National Park
- Climb the rock fortress at Sigiriya for breathtaking views

Is This Trip for You?

This is not a demanding trip although there are a few long drives, on bumpy and twisty mountain roads. The buses that we use are comfortable and air-conditioned. Temperatures can vary between the tropical heat of the coast to the cool of the mountains.

Following a review of all our trips we have categorised this trip as not suitable for full wheelchair users, but it may be suitable for other persons of reduced mobility. Please contact customer services to discuss the trip and your personal condition.

Group

Our Sri Lankan team of leaders have proved very popular with their incredible knowledge, passion and hospitality adding greatly to the experience. There is no better way to experience Sri Lankan culture than letting a local leader show you around their country.

Adult min age: 16
Min group size: 4
Max group size: 18

Itinerary

Land Only Itinerary

Day 1

Start Veyangoda.

The group flight arrives at Colombo's Bandaranaike Airport and we transfer to our hotel approximately 30 minutes away. Those not flying with the group will meet us at the hotel.

The Covanro or alternative accommodation in the area

Day 2

Visit cave temples at Dambulla; to Sigiriya.

We depart after breakfast for the drive (approx. 4 hours) through lush green countryside (a mix of coconut palms, paddy fields and banana plantations) through Kurunegala to Dambulla. Here we visit the magnificent Cave Temple, for some, the most impressive sight in Sri Lanka. There are colourful, well preserved paintings and statues of Buddha inside the caves, which date back to the 1st century BC. After lunch we continue to Sigiriya where we stay for the night. From our hotel we can see Lions Rock rising up from the plains (occasionally we may stay nearer to Dambulla due to hotel availability).

Hotel Sigiriya or alternative accommodation in the area

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 3

Morning climb to the rock fortress; optional afternoon game drive.

This morning we drive to the foot of the Lions Rock at Sigiriya. The imposing 5th century rock fortress of Sigiriya rises 600 feet from the plains overlooking the surrounding countryside and giving far-reaching views. Used as a safe haven from invaders, the route to the top goes via a series of steep steps and gangways. From the base, where a moat surrounds impressive water gardens, we ascend 200m, passing an overhanging rock under which superb portraits of native maidens holding flowers and temple offerings still adorn the rock wall. Crowning the flat-topped summit of the rock are extensive remains of the King's Summer Palace.

During the afternoon there is a chance to enjoy an optional game drive in either Minneriya or Kaudulla National Park or the Hurulu Eco Park to see elephants in their natural habitat. For those who don't want to take part, there is time to relax at the hotel.

Hotel Sigiriya or alternative accommodation in the area

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 4

To Giritale; bike ride through country villages.

This morning we have a short drive to Giritale where our usual hotel overlooks the scenic Giritale Tank. The island's early inhabitants solved the dual problem of heat and lack of water in this dry area by constructing large tanks to act as reservoirs and cool the warm breeze. Nowadays they provide an important habitat for bird life, particularly from August to April. Today we take to bikes and cycle at a leisurely pace through a series of small villages and lakes (if you do not wish to participate you can hire a tuk tuk locally for approximately £10 per tuk tuk and follow the group but not cycle). We should see plenty of bird life including Egrets, Brahmany kites, Kingfishers and Bulbuls. Stopping for lunch in a traditional village will break up the journey. In the late afternoon we return to our hotel in Giritale.

Giritale Hotel or alternative accommodation in the area

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 5

Visit ancient capital of Polonnaruwa; drive to Kandy via spice garden.

After breakfast we take a short drive to the 10th century capital of Sri Lanka; Polonnaruwa, the ancient capital of the Sinhalese. Here there are many Buddhist relics and ruins dating from a thousand years ago when Sinhalese culture reached its zenith. The city flourished in the 12th century after the decision was made to move the capital from Anuradhapura, so it was further away from incursions from Southern India. The ruins are therefore younger and better preserved than those at Anuradhapura. We visit many of the temples, palaces, huge dagobas (Buddhist stupas) and remarkable Buddhist sculptures. After lunch we head into the hills to the picturesque town of Kandy. On the way we stop at a spice garden near Matale where we can see various spices and herbs growing, and there is a chance to stock up on massage oils, spices and Ayurvedic medicines. This is a long but fascinating day and we arrive at Kandy in the early evening.

Hotel Thilanka or alternative accommodation in the area

Meals included: Breakfast

Days 6-7

Free time in Kandy to explore or relax.

Kandy is located by a small lake and we spend two full days in and around the town. On the first day we will visit the Temple of the Tooth, which houses Sri Lanka's most important Buddhist relic. The Tooth of Buddha was taken from the funeral pyre in 543 BC and only found its way to Sri Lanka in the 4th century AD. There are literally hundreds of worshippers who visit the temple each day and in August the most spectacular ceremony takes place. Some of our trips in August should coincide with the Kandy festival, but the exact dates, decided by priests, are not known until 5 months prior to the event. After our visit we drive to a beautiful viewpoint over Kandy overlooked by a huge Buddha, and visit a gem museum where you can see the products of the traditional methods of gem extraction. Another highlight is the vast Peradeniya Botanical Garden with species of orchid that are endemic to Sri Lanka. In the evening we may have the chance to attend a performance of dancing and fire walking.

The second day is free to explore this wonderful town. The surrounding hills are wonderful, offering fantastic views of the town below and there are many handicraft stores and antique shops in which to browse.

Hotel Thilanka or alternative accommodation in the area

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 8

To Nuwara Eliya via Kitulgala; optional Adams Peak climb (Dec-Apr only).

Leaving Kandy early, we have a spectacular drive through the countryside on the way to Kitulgala. Here we have the opportunity of going on a walk through the jungle or local villages followed by an optional white water rafting excursion. The rafting costs extra (see the Optional Excursions section), lasts a maximum of 1.5 hours and there is a choice of gentle or wild water (grade 3 rapids) depending on your preference. Those of us who do not wish to go rafting will be able to freshen up and relax by the water until the rafters return in time for lunch. Afterwards we will drive to our hotel in Nuwara Eliya.

(Please note that from the full moon day of December to the full moon day of May it is possible to climb Adams Peak. This is optional and you need to be very fit to attempt this. You would leave Nuwara Eliya at 11pm on day 8 and drive to the base of the peak. From here it is a strenuous 4 hour climb to the top in time for sunrise. We then return to Nuwara Eliya to join the group for lunch on day 9).

Mirage Kings Cottage (or similar)

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 9

Free morning in old colonial hillstation of Nuwara Eliya. Visit tea factory in afternoon.

This morning we will have free time to explore the beautiful town of Nuwara Eliya. Nuwara Eliya was a popular hill station during the British era and is situated in the cool highland air at 1890m. Known locally as 'Little England' it is dotted with British style houses and parks and features a golf club and a racecourse! Following lunch we will visit a nearby tea factory and learn about the process of tea production.

Mirage Kings Cottage (or similar)

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 10

Early morning to Horton Plains; walk to World's End viewpoint; to Bandarawela by train.

We have an early start this morning and take a 30km drive south to Horton Plains, a large plateau over 2,000m high, overlooked by the second and third highest peaks in Sri Lanka. The scenery is beautiful and the best way to explore is on foot. We take a guided walk through the rolling grasslands where we hope to see such as the Sambur and Purple Faced monkey. We also visit 'World's End' which is one of the most stunning sights in Sri Lanka where the ground drops 1050m to the plains. Following this we catch a train from the highest railway station in the country - within an hour and a half we drop from 1889m to 1097m. The train travels through the cloud forest into the tea plantations, with breath-taking views of the lush valley below. Please note that at times, particularly in peak season, the train may be extremely busy with standing room only. As a result you may get a choice between taking the train or going by road, and in extreme cases the leader may decide that the whole group should go by road and avoid the train. We get off at Bandarawela, a town relatively untouched by tourism.

Orient Hotel or alternative accommodation in the area

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 11

Scenic drive through Ella Gap to Kataragama; game drive in Yala N.P.

Today we continue on to Ella Gap where we have spectacular views of the coastal plain nearly 1,000m below. Almost the entire southern part of the island is in view and on a particularly clear day the shimmering silver of the Indian Ocean is visible. Heading south out of the hills we travel to Kataragama on the plains; this is our base for visiting Sri Lanka's best known national park, Yala. The park is popular for elephant, leopard, bear, crocodile and Wild boar. At 97,800 hectares, this is the second largest of Sri Lanka's national parks. Its open undulating terrain made it famous for elephants for many years, but recently the park has also become better known for leopard. The park, which is primarily shrub jungle with several salt and fresh water lagoons, has one of the highest concentrations of leopard per square kilometre in the world. (Please note that the sanctuary may be closed for 4-6 weeks from September to October allowing the park authorities to check the welfare of the animals. We therefore go to an alternative area close by, usually Udawalawe National Park).

Mandara Rosen or alternative accommodation in the area

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 12

Drive to Tangalle and walk through rice paddies; coastal drive to Ahangama; optional lunch at Tsunami house.

Today we leave for the coast, with its beautiful palm fringed bays. Stopping on the way at Hambantota and walking to a nearby farm house where you be offered tea in a coconut shell along with a local snack. We will mix with real Sri Lankan life and take part in some traditional Sri Lankan games, returning to our bus in tractors used by the farmers. We have the option of enjoying lunch at one of the houses that we built for Tsunami victims; this may be one of the best curries of your trip! Continuing on to Ahangama in the afternoon we arrive at our coastal hotel and you can relax for the rest of the day.

Insight Resort or alternative accommodation in the area

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 13

Free day to relax on the beach or optional activities including whale watching (Nov to April).

Today is a free day to relax on the beach or by the hotel pool. There are also optional activities during the day including a boat ride through mangrove swamps to a cinnamon plantation or, from November to April you can go whale watching off Dondra head, one of the best places in the world for seeing Blue and Sperm whales. Huge pods of dolphins are also often seen playing alongside the boats.

Insight Resort or alternative accommodation in the area

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 14

To Galle; visit old fort; transfer to Colombo.

We set off today and drive along the coastal road to the historic port of Galle, which dates back to the 17th century, and now a UNESCO world heritage site. On the way we stop at a small folk museum inspired by the local writer Martin Wickramasinghe. The museum is a typical house from the Koggala region and is set amongst beautiful gardens. We continue along the expressway to Colombo reaching our hotel in the late afternoon.

Hotel Mirage or alternative accommodation in the area

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 15

End Colombo.

The trip ends after breakfast. Those on the group flights will be taken to the airport in time for their flight home.

Meals included: Breakfast

Post-trip Extensions

Maldives

If you are keen to end your holiday on a very relaxed note we can arrange a visit to the Maldives for you.

The flight from Colombo is around 1 hour and upon arrival you will be transferred by speedboat (approximately 20mins) to the Paradise Island 4* resort. Paradise Island is a beautiful coral island with a total land area of 178,900 square metres, covered with lush tropical vegetation, numerous palm trees, surrounded by a wide sandy beach and the crystal clear waters of an azure lagoon.

You can choose to add on as many extra nights to your trip as you wish; your time on the island will be at leisure for you to do as you wish. The accommodation used has a swimming pool, restaurant, bar, room service and all rooms are air-conditioned and have en suite facilities. As well as the modern amenities of the resort there is also access to scuba diving and snorkelling or for the less active the chance to swim in these wonderful, calm waters. Either way it is a veritable paradise and a memorable end to the trip.

If you choose to take advantage of this opportunity then we can arrange flights for you to Malé as well as booking the hotel and speedboat transfer to the island.

Accommodation

Hotels

You will spend 14 nights in en suite hotels. Hotels on this trip are generally of a good standard, most with swimming pools and good facilities. The standards and styles of the hotels do vary however and some of our selections are based on location and what is available in the area or the character and atmosphere at the premises.

The hotel that we typically use on the south coast for two nights has been selected because it has a good beach location, where it is possible to swim in the sea most of the time, there are good photo opportunities with the stilt fisherman nearby and it is within close proximity to the optional excursions. Although service at the hotel can sometimes be rather slow it is a small property so the staff and management are flexible and cater for our group's needs.

Please note that hotels in Sri Lanka are becoming increasingly busy and occasionally we have to find alternatives to the ones that we usually use. We will endeavour to find the nearest alternative that provides a similar standard of rooms.

Single accommodation available on request.

Please note paying the single supplement may not mean that you receive a double or twin room for sole use. The room you are allocated may differ from hotel to hotel, and on some nights a smaller room for 'one person' may well be allocated.

Where a single supplement is available, paying for a single will only guarantee a room for single use. It does not necessarily mean a twin or double room will be provided for sole occupancy.

Please note that a member of the group may be allocated a single room by default if the make-up of the group means there isn't anyone for them to share with. Paying the supplement in advance is the only way to guarantee a single room.

Single supplements cannot be refunded retrospectively.

Single supplement from \$902.00

Food & Transport

Eating & Drinking

All breakfasts and 1 lunch is included.

We suggest allowing about £15-£17 (approx. US\$24 - US\$27.50) per day for all other meals. Sri Lankan cuisine is a fascinating reflection of the island's heritage; there is a unique fusion of fresh local produce with spices brought to the island over the centuries by Malays, Arabs, Indians as well as the Dutch, Portuguese and English. Despite (or perhaps because of) these influences, Sri Lankan cuisine is often referred to as simply 'Rice and Curry'. This is the staple dish in most restaurants and is usually a serving of rice accompanied by assorted meat and vegetable curries as well as various pickles, 'sambols,' and a handful of tiny poppadum's – all using the contrasting flavours of coconut, chilli, curry leaves, cinnamon and garlic.

Vegetarians are well catered for but please inform us before departure of any special dietary requests. Please note that in Sri Lanka the availability of certain products is minimal or non-existent, for example wheat or dairy-free. Please be prepared for this and you may need to bring these from home. Spicier food can be avoided easily and lots of the hotels will serve Western options alongside traditional food.

Transportation

We use an air-conditioned minibus or coach depending on the size of the group. Jeeps in Yala National Park and jeeps or a microbus to drive to Horton Plains.

Weather & Seasonality

When to go

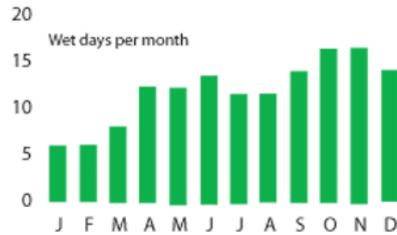
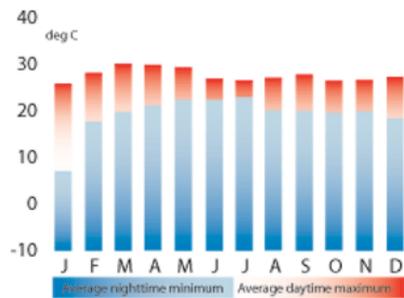
Sri Lanka has a tropical climate with two distinct wet seasons or monsoons. The SW monsoon brings rain to that area of the island between May and August. The NE monsoon takes place from October to January and only really affects the north and east coastal regions.

Weather Information

Generally, you should expect rain at some time but with plenty of sunshine. On the plains, day and night time temperatures are warm to hot with Colombo having an average daytime temperature of 30°C. The temperatures drop as we go higher into the hills and especially at Nuwara Eliya and Horton Plains where daytime temperatures are between 10° - 15° C and night time temperatures will be chilly (about 8° C minimum) and a warmish jacket will be needed.

Weather Charts

Kandy



Joining Instructions

Travelling flight inclusive from London: 16 Days

The group flight from London is an overnight flight departing the day before Day 1 of the itinerary.

Flights from London

We normally use the scheduled services of Sri Lankan Airlines (depending on availability). As flight timings and schedules change regularly we recommend you call one of our specialist sales staff or your agent to confirm up-to-date timings. Please note timings may change at a later date and cannot be confirmed until approximately two weeks before departure.

Travelling land only: 15 days starting in Veyangoda and ending in Colombo

Your trip normally starts at our accommodation in Veyangoda in the afternoon of Day 1 of the itinerary. Details of how to reach the start point are provided in the Final Joining Instructions - sent approximately two weeks before departure.

Accommodation check-in times are normally from around 2 pm.

In the unlikely event of any of your luggage being misplaced or damaged, a Property Irregularity Report (PIR) must be filed with the appropriate airline if you subsequently wish to make a claim against the airline or on your travel insurance. This must be done at the airport where your baggage arrived, or should have arrived.

Regional Flights

The Flight Inclusive price is based on a London departure, but we are happy to tailor this to your local or regional airport. **Please ask about flights from local or regional airports. (/au/regionaldepartures)**

If booking regional flights other than with Exodus, you must allow a minimum connecting time (in addition to the international check-in time) of 1 hour at Gatwick, and 1.5 hours at Heathrow; this is longer than the official minimum, but baggage handling is known to be subject to delays.

Full joining instructions including local emergency numbers will be sent to you as part of our Final Joining Instructions. If you do not receive these at least a week before departure, or require them earlier please contact our office or your travel agent.

Transfers Details

Airport transfers are included for those on the group flights. Please note that transfers are not included for clients arriving on any other flight, even if Exodus has booked it.

If you require airport transfers, you may (by prior arrangement only) be able to join the group transfer. Transfers are arranged to coincide with the arrival time of the group flight - please check the group flight details 2 weeks before departure. If you do not take this transfer, or miss it, you must make your own way to the joining point at your own expense.

Location start: Veyangoda

Location end: Colombo

What to Take

Essential Equipment

1 litre water bottle (ideally with a wide mouth) - plastic bottles are a big issue in many countries where recycling isn't yet widely available and we would like to reduce our impact here. Therefore, the leader can take a kitty and purchase 5 litre bottles of water for the group which is less wasteful than everyone purchasing smaller bottles of water individually.

Sunhat

Sun cream

Light casual clothing

Warm sweater/fleece

Sandals (especially if you want to go rafting)

Trainers / Walking shoes (needed at Kitulgala and Horton Plains)

Light waterproof (especially if climbing Adams Peak)

Swimming costume

Hand washing gel

Torch (especially if climbing Adams Peak)

If you want to visit The Hill Club in Nuwara Eliya (subject to availability), you will need some more formal clothing (no jeans). Especially when visiting temples, men's and women's clothing should cover shoulders and be on or below the knee. Women especially should always dress conservatively to avoid unwanted attention and not to cause offence; vests, tight fitting trousers, short skirts and short shorts are not recommended. It doesn't matter what type of bag or case you use on this trip. You should also bring a small day bag for your valuable items.

At time of writing the standard weight limit for hold baggage on the recommended international carrier for this trip is 20kg. We recommend packing only one piece of checked baggage.

As advice about luggage allowances for both hand and hold luggage is subject to change, we suggest you check the airline's website for the latest information prior to your departure.

Optional Equipment

Small personal first aid kit

Practical Information

Passport

Sri Lanka

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information below is primarily for UK passport holders, and other nationalities should check with their travel agent or the relevant embassies. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Visa

Sri Lanka

The Sri Lankan Department of Immigration & Emigration has announced that from 1 August 2019 to 31 January 2020, British nationals on short visits to Sri Lanka of up to 30 days can get a visa on arrival free of charge. For up-to-date information and advice on visas, check with the [Sri Lankan High Commission in the UK](https://srilankahc.uk/) (<https://srilankahc.uk/>)

A visa (Electronic Travel Authorisation) is required if you are British and for most other nationalities. If you do not hold a British passport, please check the visa requirements with your local Sri Lankan Embassy or the ETA website www.eta.gov.lk (<http://www.eta.gov.lk>). Passengers should also be aware of local laws and customs in Sri Lanka (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/sri-lanka/local-laws-and-customs> (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/sri-lanka/local-laws-and-customs>)). The mistreatment of Buddhist images and artefacts is an offence; please note that people have been refused entry to Sri Lanka because of visible tattoos of Buddha.

Exodus visa information sheet for British passport holders. (https://www.exodus.co.uk/sites/exod/files/visa_sheet_-_sri_lanka_sept_19.pdf?t=117D3Z&_hstc=173457148.119b610557631cadbf3a112e97e59b2d.1578961040756.1578961040756.1578974137572.2&_hssc=173457148.2.1578974137572&_hsfp=40)

Visa regulations can change without notice; please check the current regulations in good time to obtain a visa if one is required.

Vaccination

Sri Lanka

There are no mandatory vaccination requirements.

Recommended vaccinations are: Polio, Tetanus, Typhoid, Hepatitis A.

The risk of malaria is slight but you may wish to consult your GP or travel health clinic for further advice.

Dengue fever is a known risk in places visited. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available for Dengue, and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad.

The above information can change at short notice; as we are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health we strongly recommend you contact your Medical Professional or a Travel Health Clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure for up-to-date information. Please note: vaccinations that are routinely recommended to residents of the UK, North America or Australasia are not considered to form part of the travel health advice, and you should ensure these are kept up to date where necessary.

For additional information please visit: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries> (<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>)

Insurance - are you adequately covered?

It is a condition of joining any of our holidays that you must be fully insured against medical and personal accident risks (to include repatriation costs and air ambulance or helicopter rescue services where appropriate). On arrival in destination for your trip, you will be asked to present details to your leader or local representative of your policy.

If you are resident in the UK we strongly recommend the [Exodus travel insurance policy \(/au/insurance\)](#), this is specifically designed to cover all activities on your trip. If arranging your own policy please ensure that you are covered for all activities that are part of the trip, optional activities that you intend to take part in and/or on high altitude itineraries, that you are covered up to the maximum altitude of the trip.

Local Time

Sri Lanka's Timezone: Asia/Colombo +0530 (GMT +05:30)

Electricity

Sri Lanka's Electricity: 220/230 volts AC, 50 Hz. The electricity supply is not 100% reliable but it is usually only off for short periods of time.

220/230 volts AC, 50 Hz. There are recharging facilities at all the hotels. The electricity supply is not 100% reliable but it is usually only off for short periods of time.

Money

Sri Lanka's Currency

The national currency of Sri Lanka is the Sri Lanka Rupee (LKR), with an exchange rate at the time of publication of approximately 210 to the UK£ and 130 to the US\$.

Exchange rates are correct at the time of publication.

It is advisable to bring your money in cash (Sterling, Euros or US dollars): travellers cheques are very difficult to change. We advise you to change money on arrival at Colombo airport. The hotels will be able to change money as well but the rates will probably not be favourable. There are banks at the airport open 24 hours a day.

ATM Availability

You can change money in Kandy and there are now ATM machines in many of the main towns in Sri Lanka. Please inform your bank before departure that you are travelling to Sri Lanka and carry the relevant telephone number with you in case they put a block on your card. You should keep all exchange receipts as these will be needed if you want to change any excess rupees back into hard currency. It is useful to bring a credit card for more expensive purchases in the better souvenir shops. Visa, MasterCard and American Express are widely accepted.

It is advisable to bring your money in cash (Sterling, Euros or US dollars), it's very hard to obtain Sri Lankan Rupee outside the country: travellers cheques are very difficult to change and are not recommended. We advise you to change money on arrival at Colombo airport. The hotels will be able to change money as well but the rates will probably not be favourable. There are banks at the airport open 24 hours a day. It would be convenient if you change about £100-£150 (approx. US\$160 - US\$240) pounds into local currency on arrival.

Extra Expenses & Spending Money

All entrance fees and activities described above are included except for the optional activities mentioned on some days. It is recommended that you allow at least £5 per day (approx. US\$8) for personal expenditure such as stamps, postcards and soft drinks. Shopping opportunities throughout this tour are endless and we suggest that you take money for souvenirs - even if you are generally not a keen shopper we have found that most people succumb to some of the wide variety of handicrafts on offer.

Optional Excursions

Optional White Water rafting at Kitulgala cost approximately £20-£25 (approx. US\$32-US\$40) each. Your leader will advise you on costs and arrangements of the trip to Adams Peak; it is usually between £15-£30 (approx. US\$25-US\$50) per person depending on how many people would like to attempt the climb. The local boat ride from the beach hotel will cost approximately £10 (approx. US\$16) per person.

Whale watching (November to April)

Please note if you choose to enjoy this excursion on your free day we strongly advise booking a private charter boat through your leader. The more members of the group who wish to join the charter the more cost effective it will be. We do not recommend the larger, commercial boats, they may be cheaper but they do not always respect the welfare of the animals or operate in an environmentally responsible way. We have also had reports of overcrowding on the boats. Please ask your leader for *further details on how to book a private charter*.

The whale watching trip by private boat should cost between £40 and £80 (approx. US\$50-100) per person depending on the number of participants.

Optional game drive on day 3 will cost approximately £25-£38 per person (will vary depending on booking numbers).

Tipping

Tipping is a way of life in Sri Lanka and we suggest you allow about £3 (approx. US\$4.80) per day for this. With the permission of the group, your tour leader may collect a kitty to cover tips for hotel staff, toilet attendants and porters etc. Tipping of the leader, driver and driver's helper is at your discretion.

Responsible Tourism

Tourism can be a real help to local communities, providing income, positive cultural exchanges and a financial incentive to protect their natural environment. Ours is a 'total approach' to responsible tourism, covering everything from the way we plan and operate our trips to the practices of Exodus as a company.

All the hotels used on this trip are dedicated to hiring local staff and uses local produce wherever possible. This thereby provides employment opportunities and ensures that the money stays within the local community. We strongly encourage fostering interaction with the locals and hence, we have visits to a farm house and a Tsunami victim's home in Tangalle to foster friendship over a meal. Additionally, we ensure that the vehicles used on this tour are subjected to annual eco testing and monitored closely to minimise our carbon footprint.

We have financially co-sponsored a local Tsunami relief project – 'Back to Life' after the Tsunami in 2004. This enabled 25 families to be rehoused and for two schools to be equipped with toilets, running water and outdoor swings. In collaboration with a German partner and the village temple, we have helped towards 10 large water tanks and an eye clinic in a remote village with a donation of 200 pairs of glasses. We also assisted in the development of a day care and education of school children in the hill country.

In March 2019, Exodus Travels launched the [Exodus Travels Foundation \(https://www.exodus.co.uk/foundation?hstc=173457148.119b610557631cadbf3a112e97e59b2d.1578961040756.1578961040756.1578974137572.2&hssc=173457148.2.1578974137572&hsfp=4011809727\)](https://www.exodus.co.uk/foundation?hstc=173457148.119b610557631cadbf3a112e97e59b2d.1578961040756.1578961040756.1578974137572.2&hssc=173457148.2.1578974137572&hsfp=4011809727), we support initiatives all around the world. But it cannot exist without travellers who care. Get involved or learn more about what Responsible Travel means to Exodus [here \(https://www.exodus.co.uk/responsible-travel?hstc=173457148.119b610557631cadbf3a112e97e59b2d.1578961040756.1578961040756.1578974137572.2&hssc=173457148.2.1578974137572&hsfp=4011809727\)](https://www.exodus.co.uk/responsible-travel?hstc=173457148.119b610557631cadbf3a112e97e59b2d.1578961040756.1578961040756.1578974137572.2&hssc=173457148.2.1578974137572&hsfp=4011809727)

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Exodus Community

Join the Exodus online community

Don't forget to visit the Community area on our website. You can view the range of Exodus videos and podcasts, read trip write-ups which have featured in the national media and take advantage of some special deals on travel gear and equipment.

In the Community Travel Forum you'll find the Departure Lounge where you can discuss your trip with fellow travellers before you depart. When you get back from your holiday remember to upload your images to the relevant trip page on our website. This helps other people see what our holidays are really like and you'll be entered automatically into our monthly photo competition.

To make full use of the [Community \(/au/community\)](#) you'll need to join My Exodus. It's free, registration is simple and easy, so what are you waiting for?

Important Information

On all guided trips

Although our leaders are well trained to deal with different capabilities, if they have any concerns about someone's ability to safely partake in an activity, or their impact on other people's enjoyment, we authorise them to take necessary action which, in some circumstances, may involve asking someone to miss that activity.

Although rarely enforced, by booking this trip you agree to section 14 of our Booking Conditions which clearly states that our leaders have the authority to do this. In these circumstances we will ensure anyone sitting out is safely provided for and offered alternative options where possible. Refunds will not be provided for activities missed and customers may be liable for additional costs incurred.

On all trips

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call the Exodus office and ask to speak to one of the experts on this itinerary.

In an emergency, please contact our 24 hour out of hours service on +44 (0) 844 326 7041.

Every time that you travel abroad you should take the time to read the warnings in the [essential information \(/au/about-exodus/essential-information\)](#) in the brochure.

Full joining instructions including local emergency numbers, and details of how to reach the start point, will be sent to you approximately 2 to 3 weeks prior to departure. If you do not receive these at least a week before departure, or require them earlier please contact our office or your travel agent.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure or website, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure and website. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; in order to enjoy them you should be prepared to be flexible where necessary. Occasionally, as stated in our brochure, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned. This may be for a variety of reasons - climatic, political, physical or other. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements that maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

As fuel prices, airport taxes and exchange rates fluctuate, and airlines manage their rates to match demand, it is proving harder than ever to guarantee our Flight Inclusive prices. Although we endeavour to keep our website as accurate as possible, daily fluctuations mean that our Flight Inclusive price may be out of date. For accurate prices we recommend that you contact one of our Travel Experts, or your Travel Agent.

This trip includes time by a lake, river or sea, where there may be opportunities to swim. Swimming results in more tourists deaths than any other activity. All customers should always seek local advice before deciding whether to swim, and are requested to treat the sea with extreme caution if they choose to enter the water. Details on how to keep yourself safe while swimming are shown [here \(https://www.exodus.co.uk/sites/exod/files/open_water_safety_guide_lr.pdf?hstc=173457148.119b610557631cadbf3a112e97e59b2d.1578961040756.1578961040756.1578974137572.2&hssc=173457148.2.1578974137572&hsfp=4\)](https://www.exodus.co.uk/sites/exod/files/open_water_safety_guide_lr.pdf?hstc=173457148.119b610557631cadbf3a112e97e59b2d.1578961040756.1578961040756.1578974137572.2&hssc=173457148.2.1578974137572&hsfp=4)

TRAVEL AWARE – STAY SAFE & HEALTHY ABROAD

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the NHS have up-to-date advice on staying safe and healthy abroad. For more on security, local laws, plus passport and visa information, see <https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/> (<https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/>).

Keep informed of current travel health news by visiting <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/> (<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/>).

Advice can change so check regularly for updates.

For all latest travel information about your holiday, please visit our [Travel Safety Advice \(/au/travel-safety-advice\)](/au/travel-safety-advice) page.

