

Safari in Sri Lanka

9 days | Starts/Ends: Colombo



WILDLIFE TOUR: Safari in Sri Lanka on this unique wildlife tour which takes in five of the beautiful Tear Drop Isle's best national parks – Wilpattu, Wasgamuwa, Gal Oya, Udawalawe and Yala. Go in search of herds of elephants, Sri Lankan sloth bears and elusive leopards, explore Dambulla's incredible cave temple, visit the Veddhas and more, in nine captivating days.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Wilpattu National Park – Experience a tented safari in Sri Lanka's largest national park, which is renowned for its leopards
- Dambulla Rock Temples – Visit the largest, best-preserved cave-temple complex in Sri Lanka
- Mahiyanganaya – Visit the Veddhas, one of Sri Lanka's indigenous tribes
- Yala National Park – Game drive in Yala which is home to Sri Lanka's highest population density of leopards
- Udawalawe National Park – Go in search of the nation's largest herds of Asian Elephants

- Colombo – Enjoy a guided tour of the city including the Old Fort area and impressive Gangaramaya Temple
- Gal Oya National Park – Spot wildlife on a boat safari and game drive in one of the island's best preserved and least visited national parks
- Galle – Explore the impressive Galle Dutch Fortress

What's Included

- Breakfast daily, 1 lunch and 5 dinners
- 4 nights 4–5 star hotels, 3 nights lodges and 1 night safari camp
- Guided sightseeing – Dambulla Rock Temple, Galle and Colombo
- All national park entrance fees (included, valued at USD\$350)
- Boat safari in Gal Oya
- Game drives in Wilpattu, Wasgamuwa, Gal Oya, Udawalawe and Yala National Parks
- Escorted by an English speaking national guide for groups of 6 or more (professional chauffeur guide for groups of 5 or less)
- Airport arrival and departure transfer on days 1 and 9
- All relevant transfers and transportation in private air-conditioned tourism vehicles

What's Not Included

- International flights and visa

- Tip for your tour guide. We recommend you allow USD\$3–7 per day, per traveller. Tipping your guide is an entirely personal gesture

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Colombo

Colombo – Negombo. Welcome to Sri Lanka! Upon arrival at Colombo Airport you will be met and transferred to our start hotel in Negombo. After you have checked in the remainder of the day is at your leisure. This evening meet your guide and the rest of the group at the tour briefing. **Overnight – Negombo**

Day 2 : Wilpattu National Park



Negombo – Wilpattu. After breakfast, we drive along Sri Lanka's picturesque coast to Wilpattu National Park. Located on the west coast of Sri Lanka, Wilpattu is Sri Lanka's largest national park, covering 1085 sq kms and extending

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inland towards the ancient city of Anuradhapura. The lakes and dense woodland of Wilpattu are home to an impressive variety of flora and fauna including sloth bears, spotted deer, wild pigs, crocodiles and leopards - Sri Lanka's top feline predator. This afternoon we go in search of wildlife on our first game drive, by jeep. This evening, we enjoy a tasty BBQ dinner at the camp which is located close to the Southern boundary of Wilpattu National Park, on the edge of a lake surrounded by bush forest.

We spend the night in spacious tents with ensuite facilities, proper beds, electricity and a mosquito net.

Overnight - Wilpattu (tented camp)
(B, L, D)

Day 3 : Dambulla & Wasgamuwa National Park



Wilpattu - Wasgamuwa. After breakfast, we depart for Wasgamuwa, stopping en route to visit Sri Lanka's most impressive cave temples, the Dambulla Rock Temple. This stunning complex of 5 caves contains over 150 images of Buddha including an impressive 14 metre statue carved out of the cave rock. We continue to Wasgamuwa to check into our hotel, before enjoying an afternoon game drive in Wasgamuwa National Park.

The evergreen forest of Wasgamuwa, with its towering trees is home to large herds of elephants. On our game drive we may also spot wild boar, buffalo, purple faced langur monkeys, spotted deer and crocodiles basking in the sun.

Not to mention up to 143 species of birds. **Overnight - Wasgamuwa** (B, D)

Day 4 : Visit the Veddhas

Wasgamuwa - Gal Oya. Today we travel to Gal Oya, stopping en route in Mahiyanganaya to visit the forest dwelling Veddhas - indigenous people of Sri Lanka. We continue to our lodge in Gal Oya National Park where the rest of the day is free to spend at leisure.

Overnight - Gal Oya (B, D)

Day 5 : Gal Oya National Park



Gal Oya is one of the best preserved and least visited national parks in Sri Lanka. It was established in 1954, primarily to protect the catchment area of the vast Senanayake Samudra Reservoir, which is the largest inland body of water in Sri Lanka. Rich in bio diversity and aquatic life, Gal Oya spans 25,000 hectares of dense evergreen forest, mountains, savannah and lake.

This morning, we rise early for breakfast before embarking on a boat safari, the best way to spot Gal Oya's diverse wildlife, and if we're really lucky we might see the Asian elephant swimming in its natural habitat. We return to the hotel for lunch and to freshen up before our afternoon jeep safari.

Overnight - Gal Oya (B, D)

Day 6 : Udawalawe National Park



Gal Oya - Udawalawe. This morning we travel to Udawalawe and check into our hotel before our afternoon jeep safari in Udawalawe National Park. The park is known for its large population of elephants, there are over 400 and herds of up to 50 are commonly sighted. As well as elephants we'll be on the lookout for leopards, toque monkeys, grey langur, wild pig and sambar. Numerous bird species can also be sighted including the white bellied sea eagle and crested serpent eagle. **Overnight - Udawalawe** (B)

Day 7 : Yala National Park



Udawalawe - Yala. Bidding farewell to Gal Oya, we make our way to Yala National Park today. Checking into our hotel late morning, we then enjoy an afternoon jeep safari in the park. Yala is the second largest national park in Sri Lanka and it has the highest concentration of leopards on the island. The park is also home to a large population of Asian elephants, sloth bears, golden palm civets, Sri Lankan krait and crocodiles, while the coastline around the park is visited by leatherback and loggerhead sea turtles. **Overnight - Yala** (B)

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Day 8 : Galle



Yala - Colombo. We travel back to Colombo today, stopping in Galle en route to visit the UNESCO World Heritage Listed Galle Fortress. The fortress was first constructed by the Portuguese in 1588, then expanded and extensively fortified by the Dutch during the 17th century. Arriving into Colombo late this afternoon, we partake in a short tour of the city and this evening we'll enjoy our final dinner together as a group. **Overnight - Colombo** (B, D)

Day 9 : Colombo

Our tour comes to an end after breakfast today, with a transfer to the airport to meet your onward flight. (B)

ACCOMMODATION

Highlighted below are some of the accommodation/ hotels which we frequently use on this tour. We reserve the right to substitute these stays to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel or start point and further arrival information.

Goldi Sands Hotel

The Goldi Sands Hotel is a modern resort style hotel nestled on the golden beaches of Negombo, and just 15 minutes away from the Bandaranaike International airport. Surrounded by colonial Dutch buildings, Negombo also offers a huge fish market, lagoon boat rides and water sports such as windsurfing or water-skiing. Guests can enjoy massages or beauty treatments at the Ayurveda Spa. The guestrooms and suites feature private balconies which overlook the beautiful

Indian Ocean. All rooms are stylishly decorated and well equipped with a variety of amenities. The on-site restaurant serves traditional Sri Lankan dishes and fresh seafood. Drinks and light refreshments can be enjoyed at the bar, and with regular theme nights and beach barbecues there's plenty on offer for evening entertainment.



Big Game Camp

Big Game Camp is ideally located for game drives within Wilpattu National Park. Guests are comfortably accommodated in spacious tents, with en suite facilities, raised beds, fresh bed linen, towels, a fan and electricity. Guests can go in search of the park's resident wildlife by day and spend evenings beside a camp fire, dining on delicious cuisine, surrounded by nature.



FarCry Wasgamuwa

Set amidst the lush expanses of Wasgamuwa, between the majestic Knuckles mountain range and the Mahaweli River, FarCry is a haven for nature lovers, conveniently located 25km from Wasgamuwa National Park. This intimate lodge has 6 air-conditioned guest rooms, equipped with modern comforts. There's an outdoor pool, a restaurant, which serves a wonderful selection of local delights, and a bar offering a tasty selection of signature cocktails.



Gal Oya Lodge

This unique eco lodge is spread across 20 acres of private forest, with 10 spacious and beautifully designed bungalows. Each bungalow has a private living room, bedroom with kind sized bed, and en suite bathroom with indoor and outdoor showers. Spectacular floor to ceiling windows and doors open onto a private veranda, to bring guests closer to nature. The cuisine at the lodge is locally sourced and lovingly prepared, with a choice of delicious Sri Lankan and Western dishes, and the outdoor pool is perfect for a refreshing dip after an exhilarating boat safari or game drive.



Grand Udawalawe Safari Resort

Situated on 7 acres of land, the Grand Udawalawe Safari Resort is the only hotel of its class in the area. Rooms are spacious with beautiful hard wood flooring and artwork depicting the wildlife of Udawalawe. Food here is delicious and plentiful with an extensive breakfast menu. The outdoor pool is a great place to relax by and enjoy a refreshing splash in after a good day on safari. Well located just a few minutes drive from Udawalawe National Park.



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Jetwing Yala

Right next to Yala National Park, Jetwing Yala offers superb accommodation in a spectacular location. Guest rooms are beautifully decorated and all come with private balconies and contemporary en suites. The hotel also benefits from a stunning outdoor pool, a desirable beachside location and a number of excellent restaurants. Choose from elegant dining at the Dining Room or tapas at the Lounge. Perfectly located on the outskirts of Yala National Park.



Fairway Colombo

Situated at the heart of Colombo, the Fairway Hotel is ideally located, close to the iconic World Trade Center and the popular Dutch Hospital complex. With 181 comfortable guest rooms, this modern hotel blends the latest technology with great design. Free high speed Wi-Fi access, motion sensor driven room temperature control, room access through your mobile phone are just a few of the technological conveniences offered. The hotel offers four restaurants, a nightclub, fitness centre and a fantastic rooftop terrace where guests can sip tasty cocktails and enjoy the superb city views.



BEFORE YOU GO

Yala National Park – Possible closure Sep – Oct annually

Yala National Park, though more often only parts of the park close

in September – October each year. Closure occurs when drought is experienced in the area and keeping areas off limits allows animals the maximum space to roam freely. It also gives the Department of Wildlife the opportunity to fill temporary water holes and carry out other strategies to assist wildlife.

Contact us for confirmed closure dates.

Entrance fees

Entrance fees are not included within the cost of our Group Tours and needs to be paid locally in USD. Entrance fees will be collected on day 2 of your tour.

If travelling to India on our Delhi to Colombo tour, entrance fees for the India section of your tour will be collected in INR, then for the Sri Lankan section of your holiday in USD.

Note: Entrance fees are included on our Safari in Sri Lanka tour.

Tip kitty

Tipping is not a natural part of many Western cultures and many of us feel uncomfortable, or unsure about when or how much to tip. However in Sri Lanka tipping makes up a significant part of many people's wages so it's important that we get it right. For this reason we've developed a very simple system on our Group Tours to take the hassle out of tipping.

With our 'tipping made easy' policy, a nominal pre-determined amount is collected from all group tour participants to cover tips en route. This then saves you the hassle of when and how much to tip bellhops, luggage handlers, local guides and other support staff throughout the tour. The tipping kitty amount is noted under 'Exclusions' on the first page of this document.

PLEASE NOTE: The tipping kitty is to be paid in LKR and it will be collected on day 2 of your tour. If travelling to India on our Delhi to Colombo tour, the

tipping kitty for that section of your tour will be collected by your guide in India and payable in India Rupees (INR).

Our 'tipping kitty' doesn't include a tip for your group tour guide. For a job well done, we would suggest for your tour guide: USD\$3-7 per traveller, for each day of sightseeing. Tipping is an entirely personal gesture and ultimately the amount is up to you.

Note: We do not collect a tipping kitty on our Safari in Sri Lanka tour, where you can tip at your own discretion.

Guides & groups

Our longest group tour in Sri Lanka is our *Sri Lanka Northeast Explorer – 12 day tour*. All other group tours that we offer are sectors of this larger tour. As such on your holiday you may have travellers join you part way through your tour or end their holiday when you continue on. You also may have a number of escorting guides throughout your tour, ie one guide escorting days 1-5 then another for the remainder of the holiday.

Whenever there is 6 persons or more on your holiday you will have a tour guide escorting/ travelling along with you. Your guide will conduct the sightseeing arrangements, or accompany you where the local law dictates that a local guide must conduct the sightseeing in this region. Where the group number is less than 6 persons you will travel from place to place with a driver and meet a local guide at each new destination that will conduct your sightseeing arrangements in this location.

If traveling on our family tours, the longest is the *Wild Sri Lanka & Beach for Families – 13 day tour* and the other tours we offer are sectors of this larger tour. As such on your holiday you may have travellers join you part way through your tour or end their holiday when you continue on.

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Sri Lanka Country Guide

Welcome to Sri Lanka - Arrival transfer

A complimentary airport arrival transfer is included. Upon arrival at Colombo Airport you will be met by a representative from On The Go Tours. The prominent sign depicting our company logo easily identifies our representative, please have your Tour Voucher handy and make it available to our representative. Our representative will assist you with your luggage and escort you to our vehicle for your transfer to your hotel.

If, for any reason you have trouble locating our representative (after waiting 20 minutes in the arrival hall) or your flight to Sri Lanka is delayed, please call or send a text message (standard text message, not Messenger or WhatsApp) to the emergency contact number as stated on your Tour Voucher. Please do not leave the airport or go to the hotel on your own. Call our emergency contact number and follow the advice given by our local team.

Pre and post tour accommodation can be arranged upon request, please contact us for rates. If you are arriving early and book pre tour accommodation with us then you will still qualify for our complimentary airport arrival transfer.

Visas & passports

Visa requirements are subject to change and visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from Sri Lanka.

After booking your holiday, please provide us with your passport details as soon as possible so that we can proceed to book all services. Please be advised visa requirements are subject

to change, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel. For information about visas, head to www.onthegotours.com/Sri-Lanka/Visas

Health requirements

You should seek medical advice for vaccinations and about medications before travelling.

Water

As tap water is not safe to drink in Sri Lanka, only drink bottled mineral water which is readily available in hotels, shops and restaurants. You should also avoid salads which may be washed in unhygienic water.

What to pack

Please check local temperatures so you can pack accordingly. Visit www.worldclimate.com

- Suitcase or frameless backpack/rucksack if preferred
- Small day bag for your camera, water, sunglasses, i-Pod etc.
- Please see go to www.onthegotours.com/Sri-Lanka/Travel-tips-and-useful-info for recommendations on what/what not to wear
- Personal first aid kit
- Sunglasses, hat, umbrella, money belt, DEET - based industrial strength mosquito/insect repellent. High factor sunscreen and bathers/swim costume
- Anti-bacterial hand gel/wet wipes and flat pack toilet paper/tissues
- Universal travel adaptor
- Tour Voucher and a copy of your travel insurance policy, spare passport photos and a photocopy of your passport
- Spare camera batteries, memory cards
- Pack as light as possible to leave room for the souvenirs!

Shopping

Sri Lanka is excellent for gemstones especially sapphires, moon-stones

and cats-eye. Other items to look out for include spices, wood carvings and other handicrafts, clothing of types, batik and hand-woven textiles, brassware, handmade lace from Galle and of course tea. Tea varies in quality, so if you're buying in bulk, ask for a tasting! If seeking modern local chic, Colombo offers a selection of department stores and stylish boutiques. Refrain from buying souvenirs made of coral (creation of this sort of tourist that contributes greatly to the destruction of Sri Lanka's reefs), ivory or the hides of endangered animals.

In the tourism industry it's common practice for commission to be offered in exchange for recommending particular shops or suppliers. This can become an issue when clients feel obliged to purchase. We do our best to avoid this by monitoring all shopping experiences offered.

All shopping experiences on your tour have been noted in the itinerary and they have been carefully selected based upon positive feedback from On The Go travellers. You are under no obligation to partake in a listed shopping experience and you are most welcome to wait inside or outside the premises.

Although we only visit reputable retailers, please note that we cannot explicitly guarantee the quality of their products. All purchases made whilst on holiday with us are at your own discretion. Please make sure that you are completely happy with your purchase. On The Go cannot be held responsible for any items that you buy if they fail to meet expectation, or any shipping arrangements. Proceed with caution.

It's not like home & what to expect

Please visit www.onthegotours.com/Sri-Lanka/Travel-tips-and-useful-info for local customs, currency, WiFi

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and other helpful information to prepare you for an enjoyable holiday.

Travel to far - flung corners of the earth involves lifestyles and conditions that are sometimes very different from what you are used to back home. You must come prepared to cope with unusual situations, local inadequacies and unpredictable events as and when they occur. Foreign travel is definitely not suitable for people who expect or demand everything to go exactly as planned. With the greatest respect and in the interest of your ultimate enjoyment you must understand this. Things can and do change in foreign countries.

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