

Sri Lanka Family Holiday

8 Days | Starts/Ends: Colombo



FAMILY TOUR TO SRI LANKA.
Perfect for families with children aged 5 years and over. Take your family on a Sri Lankan adventure! Discover the Dambulla cave temples and the ancient Sigiriya rock fortress; spot elephants on a jeep safari through Minneriya National Park, before exploring Kandy the last capital of the Sri Lankan Kings with an evening visit to the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic! This enchanting Island offers experiences for all ages.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Minneriya National Park - Go in search of wildlife on a jeep safari
- Dambulla - Spectacular ornate rock temple
- Kandy - City tour including Tuk Tuk ride, Temple of the Tooth and cultural performance
- Giragama Tea Factory - A working tea factory with a long history
- Sigiriya - Remarkable 5th century fortress ruins
- Colombo - The Fort area, Galle Face Green and Gangaramaya Temple

- Polonnaruwa - The ancient capital city of Ceylon
- Matale - Spice gardens

What's Included

- Breakfast daily
- 7 nights 3-4 star hotels
- Guided sightseeing - Dambulla, Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya, Nuwara Eliya, Gem Mine and Colombo
- Scenic tuk tuk tour in Kandy
- Escorted by an English speaking national guide
- Airport arrival and departure transfer on days 1 and 8
- All relevant transfers and transportation in private air-conditioned tourism vehicles

What's Not Included

- Tipping Kitty: USD\$45-\$55pp, paid in local currency. No tip kitty for children
- Entrance Fees: USD\$120-\$130pp, paid in local currency
- International flights and visa
- Tip for your tour guide. We recommend you allow USD\$3-7 per day, per adult. Tipping your guide is an entirely personal gesture

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Negombo

Welcome to Sri Lanka! You will be met upon arrival at the airport and transferred to your hotel in the city of Negombo. Here you will have the rest of the afternoon to settle in and explore the highlights at your own leisure.

Overnight - Negombo

Day 2 : Dambulla

Negombo- Dambulla. After breakfast we bid farewell to Negombo and set off for the town of Dambulla, home of the famous Dambulla cave temples and Sigiriya ancient rock fortress. Spend the rest of the afternoon getting better acquainted with this lovely town. Sit back, relax and try some of the local traditional foods including pittu. **Overnight - Dambulla (B)**

Day 3 : Sigiriya Rock Fortress

Sigiriya Rock & Village. Our first stop this morning is to the ancient Sigiriya rock fortress of the 5th Century King Kasyapa, undoubtedly one of the most iconic sights of Sri Lanka. Let the kids' burn off some energy with the climb up to the ruins of the palace and penthouse. Once we reach the ruins we have time to wander through some of the oldest landscape multi-tiered gardens in the world, and revel in the breathtaking landscape of the surrounding jungles.

After descending from the ruins we make our way along the village path to a typical village

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Sri Lanka Family Holiday

lake, known as a “Wewa”, passing by homes surrounded by green woods and watch huts which the locals use at night to keep a lookout for wild elephants and boar. Here we cross the lake by canoe arriving at a local farm where we meet the owners and spend some time watching them share the secrets of Sri Lankan cuisine before we sit down to enjoy the delicious meal which has been prepared using a traditional hearth. Upon our return to Dambulla we have the evening at leisure to spend however we wish.

Overnight - Dambulla (B)

Day 4 : Minneriya National Park

Polonnaruwa - Minneriya. After breakfast we make our way to the medieval capital of Sri Lanka, Polonnaruwa. Here we take time to wander along the shimmering waters of the man-made lake, the Parakrama Samudra and uncover intricately carved lotus pillars, meditative halls, ceremonial towers, as well as magnificent royal baths and palace ruins before stopping at the famous Gal Vihara Temple.

This afternoon we head to Minneriya National Park where we search for wildlife by Jeep Safari. Despite its relatively small size there is an unusually wide range of habitat types, from dry tropical forest to wetlands and grasslands found here which is home to Elephants, sambar, spotted deer, macaque and purple-faced langur monkeys, sloth bears and if we are incredibly lucky we may spot a leopard on our game drive. An adventure for all ages!

Overnight - Dambulla (B)

Day 5 : Dambulla Rock Temple

Dambulla - Kandy. This morning we discover the famous Golden Cave Temple; one of the most impressive of Sri Lanka’s cave temples. Dating back to the 1st Century BC, this stunning complex of 5 caves contains over 150 images of Buddha including an impressive 14 metre statue carved out of the cave rock.

The afternoon finds us at a local spice garden where we can wander through the fields and learn about the countries famous spices.

Overnight - Kandy (B)

Day 6 : Kandy

Kandy, the last capital of the Sri Lankan kings is ours to unravel today. We start our tour with a tuk tuk ride around the scenic artificial lake made by the last king of Kandy and the Bazaar. This afternoon we find ourselves at a local tea plantation and factory in Giragama to learn about the secrets of making one of the worlds’ most famous hot drinks. After freshening up at the hotel we end our day with a visit to the Temple of the Tooth Relic, to watch some traditional Sri Lankan dancing – a highlight for the whole family! **Overnight - Kandy (B)**

Day 7 : Train to Colombo

Kandy-Colombo. All aboard the train to Colombo this morning where we continue our day with a sightseeing tour of the capital stopping at some of the cities highlights including the 100 year old clock tower, Pettah bazaar and the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall – a gift to Sri Lanka from the people of China. After checking into our hotel the rest of the day is at leisure to take a stroll along the beach or Paradise Road for some souvenir shopping.

Overnight - Colombo (B)

Day 8 : Colombo

This morning we check out of our hotel and make our way to the airport to head home. We hope you enjoyed your holiday! **Overnight - Colombo (B)**

HOTELS

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

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

Arie Lagoon

Conveniently located close to Colombo International Airport, the Arie Lagoon boasts a spectacular location on the waterfront between the Indian Ocean and a serene lagoon. Each air-conditioned room is

equipped with a flat screen TV and cable channels, free slippers and toiletries. Guests can unwind in one of the two swimming pools at the hotel, with a relaxing massage in the wellness spa or dine in one of the three speciality restaurants on site with an exclusive wine bar.



The Paradise Resort & Spa

Enveloped by lush vegetation within the ancient city of Dambulla, the Paradise Resort and Spa offers 67 luxurious eco-villas to suit all budgets. Tastefully designed with modern amenities, the rooms feature teak furniture and free WiFi. Guests can dine at the pizzeria, home to a traditional stone oven, or the Salt & Pepper restaurant that offers an A La Carte menu. The property also offers a Thai spa as well as an Ayurveda centre alongside an outdoor pool.



Hotel Topaz

Hotel Topaz is a charming hotel with a stunning roof top view. The elegant rooms are spacious and accentuated with splashes of vibrant colour with private balconies and good facilities. The large outdoor pool is a lovely spot to unwind with far-reaching views of the surrounding hills. Buffet meals can be enjoyed at the hotel's restaurant with theme nights that include Chinese and Mexican cuisine. Guests can also relax in the spa or the TV lounge which stocks a large collection of DVDs.

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Sri Lanka Family Holiday



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.



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Entrance fees

Entrance fees are not included within the cost of our Group Tours and needs to be paid locally in Sri Lankan Rupees (LKR). 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 LKR.

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 of 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.

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

After booking your holiday, please provide us with your passport details as soon as possible so that we can proceed to book your tour services.

Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours. Please also ensure that

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Sri Lanka Family Holiday

your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from Sri Lanka. All nationalities require a visa to enter Sri Lanka. Your visa application must be submitted to the Ministry of Emigration and Immigration via the online ETA (Electronic Travel Authorisation) prior to departure.

To apply for your ETA visit www.eta.gov.lk

This is a very simple process and requires no additional documents. You must fill in the required information and once the visa is approved, you will be notified with an ETA approval notice promptly. All passenger travelling to Sri Lanka will be required to make a payment of USD\$50 per person following the same ETA process. The Visa issued will be a Double-Entry Tourists Visa applicable for 30 days from the date of arrival to Sri Lanka.

Visa Fee Exemption:

The Government of Sri Lanka have introduced a visa fee exemption scheme for citizens of 48 countries, effective from 1 August 2019 when the Government will review the progress of the project and potentially continue to offer this for a further months. For a full list of visa fee exempt countries please visit: <https://mailchi.mp/544266114c42/sri-lanka-visa-fee-exemption-for-selected-countries?e=a5522c85f4>

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 to get an idea of what the weather will be like on your tour.

- Suitcase or frameless backpack/rucksack if preferred

- Small day bag for your camera, water, sunglasses, i-Pod etc.
- Please see the heading 'Etiquette' 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 adapter for your phone etc
- Your Tour Voucher, two spare passport photos and a photocopy of your passport in case of loss or theft
- 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 cat's-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.

Etiquette

Despite the inevitable ups and downs of travelling abroad, you will generally be shown great hospitality in Sri Lanka. In return, please demonstrate sensitivity and respect for the local customs. Sri Lanka is a conservative country, so care should be taken to dress respectfully in large cities and towns, for example when at markets or public places.

- Don't try to sneak into temples and mosques that forbid non-Hindus or non-Muslims
- Never touch a carving or statue of a deity within a temple
- Do not touch locals on the head or point the soles of your feet at a person, religious shrine or image of a deity. This is very disrespectful
- Take care to dress conservatively and ensure that limbs are covered when entering any place of religion. Please also ensure footwear and headwear is removed if entering any Buddhist, Hindu or Muslim place of worship
- Both ladies and gentlemen will need to dress conservatively and cover all shoulders and knees when visiting any sacred site in Sri Lanka including Dambulla, Kandy Temple of the Tooth, Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura
- Ladies should avoid wearing 'clingy, tight or suggestive attire, and stick to cool, flowing cottons in busy city areas and markets. T-shirts are fine
- Beach attire is fine on beaches, in a resort or by a hotel pool and at tourist sites only
- Nudity and topless bathing are prohibited. Heavy fines can be imposed
- Displays of intimacy are not considered suitable in public
- Ex-military style clothing should not be worn
- It is polite to ask permission before taking photos of people
- Use your right hand for giving, taking, eating or shaking hands as the left is considered to be unclean

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Sri Lanka Family Holiday

- Don't be surprised if you are frequently the centre of attention when travelling around the country. Staring unabashedly is not a social taboo
- Do carry toilet paper with you (or adjust to the Sri Lankan way of using water instead), but don't throw it down the toilet without first checking to see if there's a basket to put it in (narrow pipes clog easily)
- Don't be surprised to see men defecating or urinating in public when restrooms are not available. Women, in the same circumstance, tend to use cover of darkness and huddle in groups
- Mosques are open to non-Muslims but cannot be visited during prayer time, particularly noon on Friday
- Photography is prohibited in certain sections of sacred sites. Do not attempt to be photographed with Buddhist bhikkus (monks) or to pose for photos with statues of Buddha or other deities or paintings
- Do be open and friendly in conversations with locals. Sri Lankans can be quite talkative

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