

# Buddha and Beach

12 days | Starts/Ends: Colombo



Explore Dambulla Rock Temple, discover the ancient city of Polonnaruwa and visit iconic Sigiriya Rock. Sip on refreshing Ceylon tea and see Sri Lanka's famous wildlife on a jeep safari in Udawalawe National Park before heading to the idyllic beaches of Bentota for some sun, sea and relaxation.

## HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

### Trip Highlights

- Beruwala/Bentota - Enjoy four days of R&R on the idyllic palm fringed beaches of Sri Lanka's West Coast
- Colombo – Enjoy a guided tour of the city including the Old Fort area and impressive Gangaramaya Temple
- Polonnaruwa - Explore the remarkable ruins of the ancient capital city of Ceylon
- Sigiriya - Climb to the top of the iconic 5th century Lion Rock fortress and see the Heavenly Maidens
- Dambulla - Discover over 150 images of Buddha in the incredible complex of caves at Dambulla Rock Temple
- Kayanwala Village - Canoe to the village and help cook a delicious traditional lunch with a Sri Lankan family

- Matale - Learn all about Sri Lanka's herbs and spices at the spice gardens in Matale
- Kandy - Take in the highlights of Kandy including the famous Temple of the Tooth, enjoy a tuk tuk ride and watch a cultural performance
- Nuwara Eliya - Spend a night in this highland community, referred to as 'Little England', surrounded by Central Sri Lanka's picturesque tea country hills
- Ratnapura - Visit the heart of the nation's gem mining industry
- Take a scenic train ride from Kandy to Nuwara Eliya, passing waterfalls and lush tea plantations en route
- Udawalawe National Park - Go in search of wildlife on a game drive in Udawalawe, home to the nation's largest herd of Asian Elephants
- Giragama Tea Factory - Take a tour of a working tea factory with a long history

### What's Included

- Breakfast daily and 1 lunch
- 11 nights 4-5 star hotels and heritage properties
- Guided sightseeing - Dambulla, Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya, Nuwara Eliya, Udawalawe NP and Colombo
- Scenic train journey from Kandy to Nuwara Eliya, canoe and Tuk Tuk trips
- Jeep safari/game drive in Udawalawe National Park

- 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 12
- All relevant transfers and transportation in private air-conditioned tourism vehicles

### What's Not Included

- Tipping Kitty: USD\$50-\$60pp, paid in local currency
- Entrance Fees: USD\$120-\$140pp, paid in local currency
- International flights and visas
- Tip for your tour guide. We recommend you allow USD\$3-7 per day, per traveller. Tipping your guide is an entirely personal gesture

## COVID SAFE GUIDE

## DETAILED ITINERARY

### Day 1 : Colombo - your way

Saturday. Welcome to Sri Lanka! Airport arrival transfer and the remainder of today is at leisure. Our hotel is located on the seafront and is a short walk from Galle Road and many of the city highlights. Choose to head out and independently explore, take a dip in the pool

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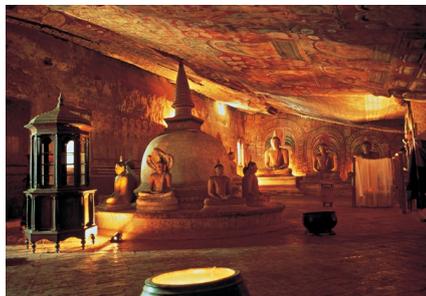
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or enjoy a cocktail whilst you watch the sunset over the Laccodive Sea. **Overnight - Colombo**

## Day 2 : Dambulla & Polonnaruwa



Colombo - Dambulla - Polonnaruwa - Dambulla. Bidding farewell to Colombo this morning we drive inland to Dambulla, stopping en route at a fruit and vegetable market in Naramwela Town. Dambulla Rock Temple is an incredible ancient complex of caves which dates back to the 1st Century BC. The five caves contain over 150 images of Buddha including an impressive 14 metre carved statue.

After exploring this ancient site, we continue to Polonnaruwa. This fascinating 11th century city is home to many interesting ruins and famous monuments including the Royal Palace and the Gal Vihara. Polonnaruwa was once the capital and is also the second most ancient city in Sri Lanka. It is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This evening, we return to Dambulla for an evening at leisure.

**Overnight - Dambulla (B)**

## Day 3 : Sigiriya



Dambulla - Sigiriya - Kandy. This morning we explore Sigiriya and the famous 'Lion Rock' fortress. Built over 1500 years ago, this beautiful citadel stands 200 meters high in the

middle of verdant jungle and was an important stronghold of the 70 hectare fortified town. It can be viewed from miles around and is definitely one of Sri Lanka's most iconic and famous sites. You'll be able to view the world famous paintings of the Heavenly Maidens which stand in a sheltered pocket of the rock approached by a spiral stairway.

From Sigiriya, we take a bullock cart ride and short canoe trip to the village of Kayanwala. Here, at Kayanwala Village we take part in a cookery demonstration in a mud brick home of a local woman and enjoy a freshly prepared lunch of curry, dahl, spiced rice, pickle and more. En route to Kandy we stop at a spice garden in Matale to see the different herbs and spices, which Sri Lanka is famous for. You will be introduced to different spices and shown how some of these spices are grown and processed.

**Overnight - Kandy (B, L)**

## Day 4 : Temple of the Tooth

This morning we take a sightseeing tour of Kandy - the last capital of the Sri Lankan kings. The name Kandy conjures visions of splendour and magnificence. Many of the legends, traditions and folklore are still lovingly kept alive. Our first stop will be the Temple of the Tooth Relic. Legend has it that one of Buddha's teeth was taken from him as he lay on his funeral pyre. It was then smuggled into Sri Lanka in 313AD and it now attracts daily pilgrims who come bearing lotus flowers and frangipani. After driving around Kandy Lake - built by the last Sinhala king Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe in 1798, we visit the local bazaar and a gem museum before we take a Tuk Tuk ride up into the hills to look down upon the city.

This afternoon, we visit a working tea factory at Geragama en route. Geragama Tea Factory is located in close proximity to the city of Kandy and was established in the year 1903, manufacturing 'Low Grown' and 'Long Leaf' tea. This evening, we watch a cultural performance of traditional Sri Lankan music and dance.

**Overnight - Kandy (B)**

## Day 5 : Nuwara Eliya & tea plantation



Kandy - Nuwara Eliya. This morning offers free time, before transferring to the railway station for a scenic train journey passing kilometre upon kilometre of verdant tea plantations hugging the winding mountain passes, waterfalls, suspension bridges up to Nuwara Eliya - Sri Lanka's most popular hill resort. Nuwara Eliya is also the heart of Sri Lanka's tea country producing a significant share of the world's best tea. Sri Lanka's highest mountain, Pidurutalagala is located here and can be seen on the journey.

This afternoon we take a beautiful drive through Nuwara Eliya - an area known locally as 'Little England'.

**Overnight - Nuwara Eliya (B)**

## Day 6 : Udawalawe National Park jeep safari

Nuwara Eliya - Udawalawe National Park. Today we head south to Embilipitiya, our base for exploring Udawalawe National Park. Udawalawe is probably one of the best places to spot the famous Sri Lankan elephant, the biggest of all the Asian elephants in the wild. It is thought that there are around 400 elephants here. The park is also home to the elusive leopard, the Sri Lankan sloth bear, the cheeky langur monkey and various types of deer. We enjoy an afternoon game drive here before returning to our hotel. **Overnight - Udawalawe National Park (B)**

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## Day 7 : Gem mine & Colombo city tour



Udawalawe National Park - Colombo. We travel back to Colombo this morning with a visit to the Gem Mine and Museum at Ratnapura. Sri Lanka is famous for its gem industry and is home to 40 out of the 85 types of gems that exist in the world.

Arriving to Colombo, we commence a city tour seeing the Fort area in the north of the city which is famous for its government buildings and interesting shops. Taking a stroll along Galle Face Green we'll see kite flying and informal games of cricket being played before heading over to the somewhat unique Gangarama Temple. Colombo has many beautiful temples which are all intricately-carved and it's also a great place to shop. Fashion, both branded and unbranded is widely available in the capital, as are souvenirs, books, arts and crafts and electronics.

**Overnight - Colombo (B)**

## Day 8 : Lazy days by the beach

Colombo - Beruwala/Bentota. After breakfast, we head south along Sri Lanka's idyllic West Coast to spend the final four nights relaxing by the beach in the popular holiday resort of Beruwala or neighbouring Bentota. **Overnight - Beruwala/Bentota (B)**

## Days 9-11 : Beach, pool & sunset cocktails



Sri Lanka's beautiful palm fringed beaches are without a doubt its biggest draw cards, and once you set eyes on them you'll understand why. Nestled on the Indian Ocean coast with warm crystal clear waters, Beruwala and the neighbouring town of Bentota offer travellers a whole host of water sports from snorkelling and scuba diving, to water skiing and surfing – the choice is yours. Indulge in a glass of Toddy – a local coconut flavoured tippie, head to the spa and opt for an Ayurveda treatment which the area is famous for, or simply while away the days on the beach with a cocktail in hand.

**Overnight - Beruwala/Bentota (B:3)**

## Day 12 : Colombo

Wednesday. Beruwala/Bentota - Colombo. Today our tropical island adventure comes to an end. Departure transfer to Colombo Airport for your onward international flight.(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.**

### OZO Colombo

OZO Colombo is a modern and stylish hotel, with sweeping Indian Ocean views from its rooftop infinity pool and many of its rooms. There's free WIFI access throughout the hotel and the guestrooms are bright and airy with all modern amenities. To top it off, there's also a fantastic fitness center and a restaurant serving delicious, authentic Sri Lankan cuisine. OZO is centrally located on

Marine Drive, near Galle Road and just a 10 minute drive from the city centre.



### Jetwing Lake

The Jetwing Lake hotel is a brand new property with spacious and comfortable rooms that enjoy a contemporary design blended with splashes of Eastern influenced decor. The ensuite facilities are magnificent and in keeping with the luxurious feel of the property as a whole. Each room also comes with a balcony, from which guests can get some fresh air and enjoy the spectacular views. Within the complex there is a pool, spa and fitness centre, where guests can while away their free time. There is also a restaurant, which serves sumptuous meals.



### OZO Kandy Hotel

The stylish OZO Kandy prides itself on its smart facilities and stunning mountain surrounds. Its highlight being the rooftop pool and BOMMU Bar where you can soak up panoramic views over Kandy whilst enjoying a cocktail or two. The hotel's all-day dining restaurant serves a tasty array of Asian and international cuisine using only fresh and handpicked produce. Other amenities include a fitness centre and complimentary WiFi, with guestrooms boasting signature soft beds and rain showers.



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## Jetwing St Andrew's

Jetwing St. Andrew's is a unique colonial retreat set in a former country house and surrounded by landscaped gardens. All the spacious rooms are classically furnished with elegant wood and offer free WiFi and flat-screen TVs. The grounds of the hotel give a great feel of colonial splendour and guests can wake up to a typical English breakfast and enjoy a stiff brandy at the bar later in the day. Fine dining is offered at the Old Course Restaurant and the hotel also boasts an antique snooker table, which is the oldest in Sri Lanka.



## 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.



## Occidental Eden Beruwala

Set along the shore of the Indian Ocean, in the popular holiday resort of Beruwala, this luxury hotel offers an oasis of tranquility. Comfort is guaranteed in the spacious, elegantly appointed rooms and the Ayurvedic Spa is the perfect place for a spot of pampering. There's also a beauty centre, hair salon and fitness centre onsite. Relax on a sun lounge beachside or by the

large outdoor pool, which is surrounded by palm trees and features a hot tub and swim-up bar. Enjoy sunset walks along the long stretch of golden sandy beach, sip cocktails at 7th Heaven Lounge Bar and head out to explore Beruwala and neighbouring Bentota. When it comes to dining there's no shortage of options, with a range of eateries on site, ranging from a 24 hour cafe and buffet restaurant, to seafood restaurants and fine dining.



## 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.

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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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.onthegotours.com/Sri-Lanka/Travel-tips-and-useful-info) for local customs, currency, WiFi 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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