

Tour of Sri Lanka with Air Lanka

Day 01 (17 June)

Arrival at Colombo Airport

Leave for Kandy. Once you leave the bustle of the city you will be driving into the vastness of farming country where coconut and paddy feature prominently and upon passing the city of Kegalla, the vegetation changes rapidly from lush crops to a more dry and deciduous forest cover which is the unique landscape in Sri Lanka that is much sought after by visitors. As you climb the vistas of valleys begin to appear on your right.

En-route visit the Elephant Orphanage and a Spice Garden

ELEPHANT ORPHANAGE



The elephant orphanage is a major attraction where over 95 elephants, orphaned from natural disasters in the dry zone jungles of Sri Lanka are housed, cared and rehabilitated by a cool flowing river in a breath-taking setting. A highlight is when the animals are put in to the water for their daily bath, where they can be seen playing with each other and even, at times, chasing one another in the aquamarine waters

SPICE GARDEN



The Island had been famous for its spices since medieval times and is considered as one of the main reasons for the European conquest of the Island and for Arab trade from the 14th century onwards. Here is the opportunity to identify the actual plants of spices one is familiar with in everyday life. A qualified guide will do a conducted tour of the garden and a presentation of its products.

Upon arrival in Kandy, check into Cinnamon Citadel Resort, Kandy. The resort is built on a hillock overlooking the flowing Mahaweli River in an absolutely picturesque setting. The opposite banks are very lush with flourishing foliage.

KANDY



During your stay you can explore the timelessness that is Kandy, with its history as the last Sri Lankan Kingdom. Here is the temple of the sacred tooth relic, a very important place of worship for Buddhists world-over. If the timing is right, you might get to participate in a colourful ceremony to the tune of the Eastern tom toms.

You'll also visit the Upper Lake area to catch a bird's eye view of this fascinating lake city and the great temple cluster that is declared as a world heritage site now. The Royal Botanic Gardens of Peradeniya is found just outside Kandy. Being the pleasure gardens of the Queen once and found hugging a shaded river, you can stroll in the shade of great trees for hours passing manicured lawns and lovely flowering shrubs in an absolute tranquil setting. A visit to the famous orchid house is a must for orchid lovers.

Kandy being the last Kingdom, offers valuable souvenirs in handicraft and gems.

Dinner and overnight at Cinnamon Citadel resort, Kandy.

Day 02 (18 June)



Leave for Nuwara Eliya; the capital of tea country in Sri Lanka, after a leisurely breakfast. The drive is one of the most scenic in the island and the road winds as you ascend to an elevation of 6,500 feet above sea level. During the 3 hour drive you will be passing some great tea plantations, mist shrouded mountain peaks, gushing waterfalls cascading into limpid rock pools, lush rain forests in which run into pellucid brooks and a vast man-made reservoir found in a deep valley that produces hydro-electricity for the Islanders. En route you can stop at the La Bookellie Tea Factory where you will get to learn about the process of drying tea leaves. An aroma-filled walk among the tea bushes systematically laid on mountain slopes is an experience to enjoy.

Upon arrival, check into the 100-year old colonial Grand Hotel for your stay. Its yesteryear grandeur coupled with modern-day luxuries will allow you to enjoy a relaxing holiday in this famous holiday resort. The immaculately maintained flower garden has attracted many a flower and camera enthusiast.

NUWARA ELIYA



Nuwara Eliya, the capital of the tea country, resembles a small Scottish town with its classic Victorian and Tudor style buildings and its salubrious climate. The British built this town less than two hundred years ago as an entertainment spot for planters and their families, with a great 18-hole golf course, a grand horse racing track, irresistible club houses with wooden dancing floors, sprawling tennis courts, lovely little villas and a beautiful lake in the middle of all that was stocked with trout. During your stay, you may be able to identify several hill country birds

Dinner and overnight at Grand Hotel, Nuwara Eliya.

Day 03 (19 June)

Leave for the Bentota beach, which is the foremost beach colony in Sri Lanka. The route is via the rain forests of Kithulgala. This is the scenic spot where the famous block-buster movie “Bridge on the River Kwai” was made. Whilst the main road to Colombo hugs the right bank of the twisting river all along, the left bank is the very edge of the tropical rain forests, home for exotic native birds and treasured flora.

BENTOTA

Upon arrival, check into Bentota Beach Hotel. This is one of the most beautiful beach hotels in the Island. It was designed by the famous architect, Geoffrey Bawa in the 70’s and stands as one of his most outstanding creations. The resort is sandwiched between the Indian Ocean and the alluring lagoon and its vast and immaculately maintained garden opens out to the pristine beach of Bentota. Also, this is the beach that has best water sports facilities on the West coast. The hotel pool is carved out of natural rock and a foot-path from it leads one either to the beach or to the stretch of sand separating the sea from the lagoon.

Dinner and overnight at Bentota Beach Resort.



Day 04 (20 June)

River Cruise – Bentota

At Bentota in the morning, you can do a fascinating river cruise to not only to enjoy the unparalleled scenic beauty upstream but study the simple life style of rural Sri Lankan folk. You will be propelled many miles along the lovely winding river into the areas where mangroves and tropical rain forests hug the evergreen river bank. The untouched solitude is full with a variety of chirping birds and other interesting creatures of the wilds. You will also see how the inhabitants of relatively inaccessible territories manage their day-to-day activities grappling with the flowing river which is their only mode of transport.



Toddy Tapping

Visit toddy tapping country and study the art of extracting nectar from the coconut flower by skillful men walking on lines drawn between trees at great heights, and how nectar is collected in little clay pots and then transferred to vats before they are sent to distilleries for the making of the national drink Arrack.

Turtle hatchery



You can also visit a turtle hatchery to study how well turtles are preserved in Sri Lanka. Hatchery owners not only protect the four rare species in an unimaginable way but also fervently educate the Sri Lankan public on the importance of their task. A small fee will be charged.

Leave for Colombo at leisure in the afternoon. En route watch the panoramic sun-set over high tea at the colonial Mount Lavinia Hotel, and then have a sumptuous sea food dinner at Lung Tao sea-food restaurant right on the beach at Mount Lavinia. The atmosphere of the beach with beach bound Sri Lankans and tourists thronging to the vibrancy of illuminated restaurants and little pubs dressing the beach with fascinating charm will remind you of a miniature Copacabana!

Mount Lavinia Hotel, built during the British occupied era, stands tall on a hillock that hugs the placid Mount bay. It has gone through several phases of development since it was used as the official residence of the British Naval commander Lord Mountbatten during World War Two. What takes pride of the property is the magical terrace that is built overlooking the vast ocean that surrounds it. As the evenings deepen at the Mount, enveloping everything else in an orange tint, one can watch from the terrace the city lights of Colombo twinkle, one by one, at a distance.

Upon arrival in Colombo, check into Cinnamon Grand Hotel. The charming hotel stands as the pride of the city of Colombo and is found located in the plush downtown where most of the best hotels, ritzy restaurants and classic pubs are situated. There are ample sauntering opportunities in the vicinity with the enticingly beautiful coast and the harbour in front while there is a fascinating lake with paved and well lit walking paths around it, right behind.

Dinner and overnight at the hotel

Day 05 (21 June)

Whole day free for Colombo sightseeing and shopping.

COLOMBO



Explore the city of Colombo visiting the lovely Galle Face Green; the great British-built lawn overlooking the waterfront of the Indian Ocean, classic old Parliament building and the present sky-line of the city integrating old and new.

Colombo is a city where great colonial era buildings are still left intact and are immaculately maintained to stand side by side with the modern in the most elegant manner. This outlook in fact is not seen so prominently in any other city in Asia. It no doubt speaks volumes of the glorious past attached to the city of Colombo from the 15th century onwards when the ownership of the city changed hands from the King to the Portuguese and then to the Dutch and to the English later, until the Island became a sovereign state once again in 1948. You will get to visit the 17th century Dutch Wolfendhal church, The Museum, the Town Hall and The Victoria Park built by the British, a lovely temple of Buddha in a lake setting and a colorful Hindu shrine. The latest attraction is the tastefully salvaged 400 year old Dutch Hospital in Colombo Fort which is now renovated to its former glory. You will find lively pubs, ritzy restaurants offering choice cuisines, coffee and tea houses, up-market spas and even ample shopping, all within the unparalleled charm of the vast hospital complex. The area with classic court yards and a maze of pretty terraces with seating resembles European thoroughfares of the colonial times.

Dinner at the Cinnamon Grand Hotel and afterwards leave for the Airport for the departure to Singapore.