

## BEST OF SRI LANKA

Jan 29 to Feb 13, 2026

### PRE-TOUR ITINERARY

**PRIOR TO  
29 JAN, 2026** **EARLY ARRIVALS**

Some of our guests as well as our tour leader have chosen to arrive earlier than the start day of 29 January.

Each of us will be met at the airport as we arrive and will be transferred to the hotel.

Overnight accommodation for each night during this pre-tour period has been pre-arranged at Jetwing Blue Hotel.

### FULL TOUR ITINERARY

**THURSDAY  
29 JAN, 2026** **NEGOMBO, SRI LANKA – GUEST ARRIVALS (D)**

Today is set aside for arrival of our guests.

Regardless of the date and time of your arrival, you will be met at the airport and transferred to the starting hotel.

The tour leader will meet you in the lobby and will assist with the check-in process.

Since no tour activities are planned today, most of the day is totally free for any guests who may have chosen to arrive in Sri Lanka earlier. Breakfast is available this morning at your convenience. Enjoy the day as you wish and you will have time to prepare for your departure from the hotel tomorrow morning.

At an appropriate time today, guests are invited to join the tour leader for a quick 'Orientation to Sri Lanka'. This session will cover important items related to the entire trip including personal security, health, money matters, daily activities, day packs, food and beverages, transportation and more.

Dinner and overnight at the Jetwing Blue Hotel.

**FRIDAY  
30 JAN** **NEGOMBO TO THE CULTURAL TRIANGLE (B, L, D)**

Breakfast at the hotel.

After breakfast, we begin our drive northward to the Cultural Triangle, an area which connects the ancient kingdom of Anuradhapura, the extensive ruins of Polonnaruwa, the magnificent Sigiriya Rock Fortress and the intriguing Dambulla Cave Temple; four archaeological masterpieces and UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Upon arrival, we check in for a two-night stay at the Uga Ulagalla Resort, a superb place to relax and to use as a base for our exploration of the cultural triangle.

The resort tastefully blends a previous era with the modern. Located on a sprawling 58-acre estate, it's a luxurious retreat nestled among sparkling reservoirs, lush green paddy lands and lily ponds. The centerpiece of the resort is a meticulously restored country house which was once the grand ancestral home of local chieftains. It now houses the reception area, main restaurant, bar and underground wine cellar. The 25 villas, each over 80 square meters in size, all offer glass-walled panoramic views of the scenic, unspoiled, natural paradise filled with bird and animal life.

Lunch will be served.

In the late afternoon, we'll explore the ruins of Anuradhapura, an ancient city of great historical and cultural significance. It was the first ancient capital of Sri Lanka and it contains well-preserved ruins of an ancient Sinhala civilization. Anuradhapura is not only an archaeological treasure trove but also a living heritage site, continuously attracting pilgrims and tourists from around the world.

We return to the resort in time for a happy hour and dinner at the resort.

Dinner and overnight at Uga Ulagalla.

**SATURDAY**    **CULTURAL TRIANGLE (B, L, D)**  
**31 JAN**

This morning, we depart early by four-wheel drive through lesser-known cultural, natural, and historical sites including remote villages, local wildlife, an ancient reservoir, rustic farmland, indigenous forest and vast lakes where majestic elephants and many more wild species can be seen. Our picnic breakfast will be arranged with amazing views of Nachchaduwa Lake.

When we return to the hotel we can enjoy lunch.

This afternoon is free to enjoy swimming, cycling, sunning or simply relaxing.

The resort also offers optional activities (at extra cost) including horseback riding, kayaking, special nature walks and spa facilities.

In the evening, we'll enjoy a special dining experience, the "Kamatha Dinner", an interesting culinary experience that gives a good insight into Sri Lanka's delicious array of flavors. On this epicurean adventure you will sample traditional dishes reflected in the myriads of fragrant spices and seasonings. You'll also learn about the utensils still in use after 2000 years and the preparation of food in hand-made clay pots and open wood fires, offering a whole different taste.

Overnight at Uga Ulagalla.

**SUNDAY**    **CULTURAL TRIANGLE (B, L, D)**  
**1 FEB**

Breakfast at the resort.

Today we check out and drive southward to Habarana to start a village tour by bicycles or tuk-tuks which will offer us an opportunity to get a good insight into authentic village life, to meet the villagers and discover the countryside and the local craftsmen's community.

We may explore how to make broomsticks with coconut fiber, learn all about the art of drumming, interact with a local brickmaker using the traditional methods, get an opportunity to observe and learn the traditional method of extracting Ayurvedic Medicinal Oil and meet a young woman in the village who teaches the art of dancing to children.

At the end of the village tour, we will be taken to a typical Sri Lankan village home where we can enhance our cooking skills as we take part in creating traditional Sri Lankan dishes under the guidance of the lady of the house.

Afterwards, we'll sit back and take part in a good chat as we enjoy the delicious village lunch that we helped to prepare.

From here, we then proceed to check in to our hotel, the Water Garden Sigiriya resort nestled near the iconic Sigiriya Rock Fortress. Designed with lush water gardens and tranquil pools, it combines modern comforts with a nod to ancient Sri Lankan water engineering. The resort offers a serene retreat for nature lovers and history enthusiasts alike.

Later this afternoon, we head out for a visit to the famous Sigiriya Rock Fortress. Known as "The Lion Rock," Sigiriya became the capital during King Kashyapa's reign in the 5th century CE after he seized the throne by killing his father. Fearing revenge from the rightful heir, he built a fortress and royal palace atop the 200-meter-high rock. After Kashyapa's defeat in 495 CE, Sigiriya served as a Buddhist monastery until the 14th century before being abandoned.

Visitors are free to explore the rock in whatever way they choose. Some may choose to spend time in the lower level Royal Gardens, some may head up to see the fresco gallery of maidens and the Mirror Wall with ancient inscriptions and some may continue upward to visit the fortress at the top of the rock. The climb is not really as strenuous as it looks and you can certainly take it slow and easy.

We then return to the hotel.

Dinner and overnight at Water Garden.

**MONDAY**    **CULTURAL TRIANGLE (B, L, D)**  
**2 FEB**

Breakfast at the resort.

After breakfast, we depart for the Ancient City of Polonnaruwa, the second capital of Sri Lanka after the destruction of Anuradhapura in 993. It comprises not only the Brahmanic monuments built by the Cholas but also the monumental ruins of the fabulous garden-city created by Parakramabahu I in the 12th century.

Our lunch will be at a local restaurant near the rice paddies.

After lunch, we venture out on a Jeep Safari in the area of the three National Parks (Minneriya / Kaudulla / Hurulu) to look for wild Asian elephants. The parks offer a mix of forests, grasslands, and wetlands providing a stunning backdrop for observation of these majestic creatures in their natural habitat. In addition to elephants, the parks are home to a variety of wildlife, including leopards, deer and a rich diversity of bird species.

We then return to the hotel.

Dinner and overnight at Water Garden.

**TUESDAY CULTURAL TRIANGLE TO KANDY (B, L, D)**

**3 FEB**

Breakfast at the resort.

Today we leave the Cultural Triangle and head south toward the city of Kandy.

En-route, we'll visit the Golden Temple of Dambulla, another UNESCO World-heritage site, dating from the first century B.C. This cave monastery, a sacred pilgrimage site for 22 centuries, has five sanctuaries and is the largest, best-preserved cave-temple complex in Sri Lanka. The site contains 157 statues and Buddhist mural paintings which cover an area of 2,100 square meters.

We then continue the journey towards Kandy and will stop in the town of Matale to visit an exotic Spice Garden where we'll take a garden tour and explore the taste and aroma of world-famous spices. We'll learn about many of the healing properties of the herbs and ayurvedic medicinal plants grown in the garden.

We will also enjoy lunch in the spice region of the island.

We then continue the drive southward to Kandy, another UNESCO World-heritage site and a former stronghold of the Sinhala Kings. It was the last Royal Kingdom to resist the British until it fell in 1815. The city lies almost 500 meters above sea level, so it is cooler than the cultural triangle.

We then check in to our hotel.

Happy hour, dinner and overnight at the Kings Pavilion.

**WEDNESDAY KANDY (B, L, D)**

**4 FEB**

Breakfast at the hotel.

Kandy is an attractive city, developed around two open spaces: an elongated square at the end of which are the administration buildings of the old capital; and, an artificial lake that is quadrangular in form. A public park adds to the attractiveness.

Our guide will help us determine which sites to visit today depending on our interests.

Garden lovers will have an opportunity to spend some time in the Royal Botanical Gardens. Its treasures of tropical flora include fine collections of orchids, aromatic spices, medicinal herbs, palms and rare or endangered plant species. These gardens were the naturally-camouflaged operations headquarters of Supreme Allied Commander Lord Louis Mountbatten during World War II.

Lunch at a local restaurant.

We will then visit the famous Temple of the Tooth, a 17th-century structure believed to house the left upper canine tooth of the Lord Buddha himself. This precious relic attracts white-clad pilgrims bearing lotus blossoms and frangipani each day. The temple is built on a base of granite that was inspired by the temples of Sri Lanka's former capital city, Anuradhapura. An array of limestone, marble, sculpted wood and ivory contribute to the richness of the inside of the temple.

Dinner and overnight at the Kings Pavilion.

**THURSDAY KANDY TO TEA COUNTRY (B, L, D)**

**5 FEB**

Breakfast at the hotel.

This morning, we drive about three hours southward to our bungalows situated in beautiful tea plantations at 1250 metres altitude in the hills of central Sri Lanka.

Built between 1888 and 1950, the bungalows offer a taste of gracious living thanks to the butler

service and period furnishings, accompanied by gourmet meals.

We arrive in time for a superb lunch at the bungalow.

The rest of the afternoon is at leisure. You may wish to put on your walking shoes and stride out into the picturesque tea plantations right at the doorstep. Choose anything from a simple twenty-minute walk to a longer and more energetic hike. The choice is yours. Alternatively, you can simply relax at the bungalow.

Afternoon tea, happy hour, dinner and overnight at Ceylon Tea Trails.

**FRIDAY  
6 FEB**

**TEA COUNTRY (B, L, D)**

Breakfast at the bungalow.

After breakfast, go on a Tea Experience tour led by a Resident Tea Planter who will show you firsthand the age-old tea making process.

First, we follow the trail of the planters of old Ceylon as they trekked through the dense jungle looking for the best slopes on which to plant tea. Then on to watch the tea pluckers pick two leaves and a bud with deft hands. Then, to the factory, where the all-important conversion to "black tea" happens.

The machinery used is of very traditional British design, some as old as 100 years. The process is a very artisanal one, unchanged for a century. The tour ends with a tasting of different grades of this great brew.

Lunch at the bungalow.

Afternoon free. If you wish, you can certainly walk or bike through the countryside.

Later in the afternoon we have tea, a happy hour then dinner.

Overnight at Ceylon Tea Trails.

**SATURDAY  
7 FEB**

**DRIVE TO YALA (B, L, D)**

Breakfast at the bungalow.

This morning, we reluctantly leave tea country and begin our long, five-hour drive toward the south coast and Yala National Park. Our route will take us through rolling tea country with steep-sloped plantations perched above the rivers and valleys far below.

As we drive, we will descend towards the plains through heavily-wooded valleys and eventually hit flat land again.

We'll arrive at our hotel, Uga Chena Huts, likely in time for a late lunch.

The hotel is nestled between semi-protected jungle and the Indian Ocean. The area, known for rustic farming villages and ancient chena clearings, is next to Yala National Park, the country's oldest and second-largest wildlife reserve.

The detached, private pavilions provide beautiful comfort while overlooking the wilderness, blending natural beauty with refined hospitality.

In the afternoon, we'll explore Yala National Park with our ranger in open jeeps.

Leopards are the star attraction at Yala and parts of the park are believed to have the highest concentration of these big cats in the world. Leopards, however, are elusive by nature and it can take a few outings to offer the best opportunities for a good encounter.

Among other animals to be seen are Asian Elephant, Sloth Bear, Jackal, Sambar, Spotted Deer, Buffalo, Wild boar, Grey Langur, Crocodile, Mongoose, Monkeys and an incredible selection of birds.

Dinner and overnight at Chena Huts.

**SUNDAY  
8 FEB**

**YALA (B, L, D)**

We leave the hotel early in the morning for a game drive. This is when wildlife sightings are at their best.

Afterwards, we'll return to the camp for a leisurely breakfast or brunch.

We can then relax in these incredible surroundings or take a stroll in the area.

This afternoon, enjoy a secret sundowner outing.

Dinner and overnight at Chena Huts.

**MONDAY YALA TO GALLE (B, L, D)**

**9 FEB**

We'll enjoy another morning game drive early this morning.

We then return to the camp for breakfast.

Afterwards we reluctantly leave Yala and start our drive westward toward the city of Galle.

En-route, we'll visit a cinnamon estate where we'll explore the process of making Ceylon cinnamon, a vital role in Sri Lanka's economy. We also visit the cinnamon museum.

Lunch along the way.

We then continue the journey to Galle.

Founded in the 16th century by the Portuguese, Galle reached the height of its development in the 18th century, before the arrival of the British. It is the best example of a fortified city built by Europeans in South Asia, showing the interaction between European architectural styles and South Asian traditions.

Galle Fort has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1988. The huge stone ramparts separate the fortified, sleepy colonial town from the busy, modern town of Galle. The Fort provides its visitors with many happy hours of wandering and discovery.

Dinner and overnight at Fort Bazaar Hotel.

**TUESDAY GALLE (B, L, D)**

**10 FEB**

Breakfast at the hotel.

At least part of today will be spent with our guide as we take a walking tour through the narrow streets of the fort. We'll visit the magnificent Dutch reformed church. As is the case in other historic Dutch churches, there are a large number of tombstones on the walls and floors. The earliest tablet on the floor of the church dates from 1662.

We'll also likely stop in at the Mansion Museum, a privately-owned museum situated in a colonial Dutch house inside the fort. The museum displays thousands of household articles collected by the owner's family over the years including stationary, tablecloths, antiques, gems and jewelry, Chinese Porcelain plates, tea cups, phonographs and so on.

Lunch at a local restaurant in Galle.

The rest of the afternoon is at leisure. Grab your camera and head out for a stroll through the fortified town. There is a lot to discover in Galle and it is best to do it on foot.

Dinner this evening is planned at the famous Lighthouse Hotel.

Overnight at Fort Bazaar.

**WEDNESDAY GALLE TO COLOMBO (B, L, D)**

**11 FEB**

Breakfast at the hotel.

This morning, we check out and begin our drive north towards Colombo. On our way, we'll stop at the Tsunami monument which was erected to remind us of the tsunami that hit the Indian Ocean countries on December 26, 2004.

Colombo is Sri Lanka's vibrant capital and is a dynamic blend of colonial charm and modern energy. As the country's commercial and cultural hub, it boasts a mix of historic landmarks, bustling markets, excellent hotels and a thriving food scene.

We'll enjoy lunch and will check in to our beautiful hotel located right on the ocean.

Some free time this afternoon to enjoy the hotel.

Join us for happy hour and dinner at the hotel this evening.

Overnight at Galle Face Hotel.

**THURSDAY COLOMBO (B, L, D)**

**12 FEB**

Breakfast at the hotel.

This morning we embark on a full-day tour of Colombo with our guide. The exact order of events will be determined locally depending on traffic patterns at the time we set out.

The program will likely include a few of the following:

- Gangaramaya Buddhist Temple & Simamalaka Shrine (a spiritual end to our trip)
- The Barefoot Book Shop
- Colombo National Museum and/or Dutch Museum
- Town Hall & Independence Square
- Old Parliament House
- Sri Kailwasanthan Swami Devasthanam – the oldest Hindu Kovil in Colombo

We'll also have lunch today in Colombo at the Gallery Café or similar.

In the afternoon we return to the hotel.

Enjoy some free time to get organized and rest up for your departure. Some guests may be departing for home after midnight and others will be leaving tomorrow.

This evening we'll have a final happy hour and a farewell dinner at the hotel.

Overnight at Galle Face Hotel.

**FRIDAY DEPART COLOMBO (B)**

**13 FEB**

For those still here this morning, breakfast is available at the hotel.

All departing guests will be transferred to the airport at the appropriate time. Our representative will meet all guests and will escort them to the terminal. Have a great flight home!