



# HIGHLIGHTS OF SRI LANKA

Classic Tour | 16 Days | Physical Level 2

Negombo – Sigiriya – Kandy – Nuwara Eliya – Yala– Galle - Colombo

Marvel at magnificent temples, see the World Heritage Rock Fortress at Sigiriya, search for elephants and other wild animals at Yala National Park, discover the fascinating caves at Dambulla and explore the ruined cities of Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura.

- Climb the spectacular Sigiriya rock fortress
- Explore the ruins of medieval Polonnaruwa
- Visit Kandy's sacred temple
- Safari in the national park
- Wander the historic city of Colombo
- Immerse yourself in the colonial history of Galle Fort

## TOUR MAP

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## HIGHLIGHTS OF SRI LANKA TOUR INCLUSIONS:

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- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escorts (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- Sri Lanka visa fees for New Zealand passport holders (please see visa section below for further information)
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides
- Safe and secure with IATA

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

## CLASSIC TOURS:

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These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of Sri Lanka on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully inclusive basis, so you'll travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escort/Local Guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

## PHYSICAL LEVEL 2:

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All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights. 'Highlights of Sri Lanka' is rated 2 on the physical level scale. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it's more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You'll be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time
- Sightseeing at nearly all the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing several steps, often without handrails
- You will be required to get on and off various sizes of boats and rickshaws throughout the tour

Of course, our National Escorts and Local Guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. If you require any more information about the pace of our tours, please contact our Reservations team who will be happy to answer your questions.

## JOINING YOUR TOUR:

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The tour is 16 days in duration including international flight. Please note that flight from New Zealand arrives very late on day 1 of the tour, so you might consider adding an additional night prior to the tour starting. The departure flight from Colombo to New Zealand leaves in the very early hours of day 16, so you will be transferred to the airport on day 15 after dinner.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only', the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to Reservations so we can arrange your transfers accordingly.

Join the tour on Day 2 in Colombo and end the tour on Day 16 also in Colombo. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.



## DETAILED ITINERARY

### Day 1-2 Arrive Negombo

Meals: D

Arrive in Colombo where you are greeted by your Local Guide from Wendy Wu Tours, to be transferred 45 minutes, to your hotel. You have the rest of the day to relax or explore as you wish.

Early check-in is not included. Additional nights' before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.



#### Destination Information

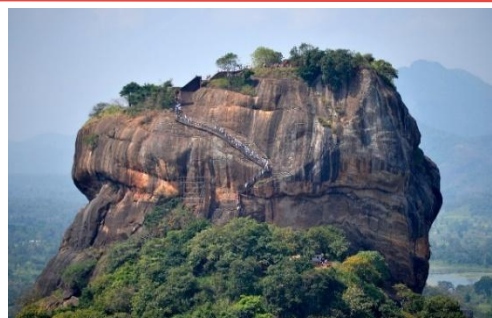
**Negombo** - Negombo was once an important commercial trade centre, well known for offering the best cinnamon in the world. Negombo was one of the first towns taken by the Portuguese, only to be captured by the Dutch in 1640 and then recaptured by the Portuguese some months later. The British eventually took control of the town in 1796.

### Day 3: Sigiriya Rock Fortress

Meals: B, L, D

Following breakfast, embark on a 4-hour journey to reach Sigiriya.

Upon arrival, explore the renowned Rock Fortress, also known as Lion Rock. The ascent involves climbing many steps, most of which have railings, leading to the top of the Rock Fortress. This climb is quite steep, demanding extra caution. Remember to carry an ample water supply and wear a sun hat for protection.



Plan to spend roughly three hours here, which includes the ascent of Lion Rock and a tour of the adjacent gardens. *Please be mindful of local individuals offering assistance, as they may request a fee.*

#### Destination Information

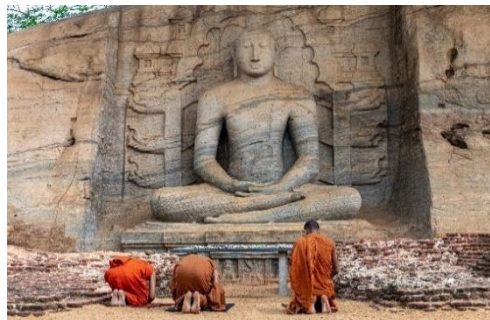
**Sigiriya** - The ancient city of Sigiriya lies at the 180m summit of the granite peak known as the 'Lion's Rock'. One of the most dramatic sites in Sri Lanka, it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1982.

**Rock Fortress** - Built by King Kashyapa, the rock fortress is also known as the 'Lion Rock' because a massive lion carved out of the rock once sat at the entrance to the palace. Today only the lion's paws remain. On the summit are the foundations of the Royal Palace built for King Kashyapa, along with a pool, sunrise-facing throne constructed from solid rock and panoramic views of the town below. You will also see the three distinct landscaped gardens, the Water Gardens, Boulder Gardens and Terrace Gardens.

**Day 4: Polonnaruwa**

Meals: B, L, D

Embark on a 2-hour drive to uncover the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Polonnaruwa site this morning. Enjoy a leisurely exploration on foot, delving into the palaces and temples - please refer to the "Appropriate Dress" section below. Subsequently, head back to your hotel for some leisure time, and later journey 1 hour to Minneriya National Park for an exciting jeep safari.

**Destination Information**

**Polonnaruwa** - Polonnaruwa was the capital of Sri Lanka from the 11th to the 13th centuries and is a well-preserved city of stupas, frescoes and statues. Visit the ruins of the Royal Palace, Audience Hall and the Bathing Pool in the Royal Palace group, along with the Thivanka Image House, which possesses the best frescoes from the Polonnaruwa period. Also tour Gal Vihara, a magnificent group of rock temples consisting of four separate statues; a meditating Buddha, a smaller Buddha said to be visiting heaven, a standing Buddha and the reclining Buddha entering Nirvana, which is 14 metres long.

**Minneriya National Park** - Well known for its large population of elephants in herds of 100 to 150 roaming in the jungle and seen in the catchment area of the lake. Other wildlife that can be sighted include wild buffaloes, wild boar, spotted deer, sloth bear, Sāmbhar, leopards, crocodiles, jackals, and numerous species of amphibians, reptiles, birds, fish and butterflies.

**Day 5: Anuradhapura**

Meals: B, L, D

Travel for 2 hours to Anuradhapura and immerse yourself in the grandeur of this ancient city. Expect about 4 hours of exploration on foot as you uncover its historical treasures. Make a point to visit the revered Bo Tree before making your way back to Sigiriya. The rest of the afternoon is yours to enjoy at your leisure.

**Destination Information**

**Anuradhapura** - One of Sri Lanka's most ancient cities. The city's greatest treasures are its dagobas; domes enshrining sacred relics. The most notable is the Ruvanveliseya Dagoba, dating back to the 2nd century BC. Also, visit the Jetavanaramaya, the largest dagoba in the world, and the Thuparamaya, said to contain the collarbone of Buddha, and the first dagoba built in Sri Lanka.

**Bo Tree** - The most renowned Buddhist relic is the sacred Bo Tree. It is said that Emperor Asoka's daughter brought Anuradhapura a branch of this tree, under which Buddha is said to have gained enlightenment. Planted over 2,250 years ago, it is the oldest surviving historical tree in the world.

**Day 6: Kandy**

Meals: B, L, D

Today you will depart for Kandy, but first there is a stop at the Dambulla Rock Temple. Comprising five adorned caves and featuring two primary viewing sections, the temple entails ascending around 800 steps. Continue your drive for 3 hours and along the way, take a pause to visit a spice garden in Matale, relishing lunch and engaging in a cooking demonstration to deepen your knowledge of Sri Lankan spices.

**Destination Information**

**Dambulla Rock Temple** - Dating back to the 1st century BC, the famous Dambulla Rock Temple is made up of five caves that have been converted into shrine rooms containing around 150 Buddha statues and colourful frescoes. In the first cave you will see the 14m statue of Buddha cut out of the rock. At the Buddha's feet are Ananda, the most loyal disciple, as well as other seated Buddhas nearby. The second cave is the largest, also known as the Cave of the Great Kings, where there are 16 standing and 40 seated statues of Buddha. The frescoes on the ceiling depict scenes from Buddha's life and important events from the country's history. Inside the cave is a spring created from the drips from the ceiling, which is said to have healing powers and is used in sacred rituals.

**Spice Garden** - Sri Lanka is famous for its spices, and today you will visit a spice garden where cinnamon, cardamom, pepper creepers and other spice trees are planted.

**Kandy** - Kandy is situated 500m above sea level and is known for its culture and beauty. It is a sacred Buddhist city, famous for the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic, Dalada Maligawa. Each year the tooth relic is honoured in Esala Perahera, a religious parade with elephants, drummers and dancers performing in the streets.

**Day 7: Explore Kandy**

Meals: B, L, D

Set out on a 1 hour drive to reach the expansive Peradeniya Royal Botanical Gardens, renowned as Sri Lanka's largest botanical haven. After ample time to wander through the picturesque grounds, enjoy a picnic lunch served within the premises.



Following this, embark on a city tour of Kandy that encompasses roughly two hours of sightseeing. Pay a visit to the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic, and then proceed to the remnants of the Royal Palace. Do note that the temple can be bustling during daily prayer sessions. As evening descends, indulge in a cultural dance performance.



### Destination Information

**Peradeniya Royal Botanical Gardens** - The largest botanical gardens in Sri Lanka. Here you will see a collection of ornamental plants used to produce spices.

**Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic** - The temple houses an important Buddhist Relic, a tooth of the Buddha.

Stolen at his funeral, the tooth was smuggled into Sri Lanka hidden in the hair of a princess who fled from India. The relic of the tooth is kept in a two-storey shrine fronted by large elephant trunks.

**Remains of the Royal Palace** - Now the National Museum, the primary exhibits are in the Palle Vahala, the former Queen's Palace, and consist of weapons, jewellery, tools and other artefacts.

### Day 8: Travel to Nuwara Eliya

Meals: B, L, D

Bid farewell to Kandy and embark on a captivating scenic train journey that spans around 4 hours, transporting you to Nuwara Eliya. Upon reaching your destination, check in at the hotel and spend the rest of the day at leisure.



### Destination Information

**Nuwara Eliya** - Situated at 2,000m above sea level, Nuwara Eliya is the main hill station of Sri Lanka and is known as 'Little England', as it resembles an English country town. It is considered to be an excellent location for tea production due to the cool climate, which creates tea with a unique flavour.

### Day 9: Tea Plantation Visit

Meals: B, L, D

This morning explores a tea plantation and factory, gaining insight into the tea manufacturing process. Later in the day, take a leisurely stroll through the city center, where you will encounter colonial edifices, the racecourse, learn about the interesting history of Hill Club Hotel, Gregory Lake, and visit the Hindu Temple of Seetha Amman Kovil.



### Destination Information

**Tea Factory and Tea Plantation** - During your visit you will observe the process of manufacturing tea and learn how tea is graded. You will have the opportunity to taste a cup of pure Ceylon tea.

**Hill Club Hotel** - Founded in 1876 by a British Coffee Planter, as a "Home" Away from home, and today a privately operated club.

It is one of the few remaining monuments that remind you of the colonial occupation of Sri Lanka. Over a Century old, this cozy, comfortable holiday home once catered only to the British on the island and has an interesting history behind it. It has seen the good time and bad, war and peace, grandeur and simplicity. Today's it reflects a combination of exclusivity in style and class and modern service, and utopian admixture of the old and the new.

**Gregory Lake** - Lake Gregory was constructed during the period of British Governor Sir William Gregory in 1873.

**Seetha Amman Kovil** - This is the only Seetha Amman Kovil in the world and is built according to South Indian architecture. Legend has it that Seetha was held captive and hidden in this spot by king Rama to protect her from the demon king Ravana according to the Epic Ramayana.

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**Day 10: Yala National Park**

Meals: B, L, D

Depart from the verdant hills of Nuwara Eliya and travel 4.5 hours to reach Udawalawe, home to the Elephant Transit Home. Immerse yourself in learning about the nurturing of orphaned and abandoned baby elephants.

Subsequently, continue your drive for a further 2 hours arriving at Yala National Park, where you'll check in for the following two nights. Please note that the road leading into the park is quite rugged, with numerous potholes. This evening offers you free time to enjoy at your leisure.

**Destination Information**

**The Elephant Transit Home** - The home cares for abandoned and orphaned baby elephants, providing them with food, shelter and medical care before they are released into the Udawalawe National Park.

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**Day 11: Yala National Park**

Meals: B, L, D

Today, there will be a morning and evening jeep safari through Yala National Park, Sri Lanka's most famous national park. Each safari is approximately 3 hours in length. Please note, there are no toilets available during the park excursions.

*Please note: Your passports are required in order to gain entry into national parks, so please ensure you bring them with you today.*





### Destination Information

**Yala National Park** - Yala is the largest national park in Sri Lanka and is most famous for its herds of elephants. It is also home to a large number of other wild animals, including boars, buffalos, leopards, bears, dears and crocodiles.

### Day 12: Travel to Galle

Meals: B, L, D

Leave Yala behind as you set forth on a roughly 3 hour drive to Galle. En route, make captivating stops at the Hummanaya Blowhole, the Mulkirigala Rock Temple, and the Dikwella Wewurukannala Temple.

Following a satisfying lunch, continue your journey to Weligama, renowned for its iconic stilt fishermen. Upon your arrival in Galle, complete the check-in process at your hotel, where you'll be staying for two nights.



### Destination Information

**Hummanaya Blowhole** - The second largest of the six large blowholes in the world, located at the top of a fissured cliff about 20m above sea level.

**Mulkirigala Rock Temple** - This cave temple contains Buddha figures surrounded by wall paintings depicting scenes from the life of Buddha.

**Dikwella Wewurukannala Temple** - One of the most remarkable Buddhist temples in Sri Lanka. The temple is dominated by the largest Buddha statue in the country, which stands at 160ft high.

**Weligama** - Stop to view the iconic stilt fishermen of Sri Lanka. A tradition kept alive by only 500 families, the fishermen balance 2m above the water on a cross bar tied to a vertical pole, planted underwater. With one hand, they hold the stilt and with the other their fishing rod. A truly remarkable sight!

### Day 13: Galle

Meals: B, L, D

Take advantage of the morning to relax at your leisure before setting off on a captivating walking tour of this intriguing city. Explore notable landmarks like Galle Fort, the lighthouse, the Dutch Museum, and the Dutch Reformed Church.

Your day will encompass leisurely sightseeing within the Old Town and Dutch Fort, involving approximately two hours of exploration on foot.



### Destination Information

**Galle Fort** - Built by the Portuguese in 1588, it was fortified by the Dutch during the 17th century. Covering 36 hectares, the fort contains an amazing number of buildings from over the years. Considered one of the best examples of a fortified city built by Europeans in Asia, it was recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage listed site in 1988.

**Galle Lighthouse** - Stunningly located on the edge of Galle Fort, the lighthouse is one of 14 left in Sri Lanka and is considered the oldest.

**The Dutch Reformed Church** - Originally founded in 1640, the present building dates from 1752 to 1755. The floor of the church is covered with granite tombstones and there is a small graveyard on the premises.

### Day 14: Colombo

Meals: B, L, D

Indulge in a leisurely morning before embarking on a drive of approximately 2.5 hours to reach Colombo. Along the way, make a stop to visit a Turtle Hatchery in Kosgoda, adding an enriching experience to your journey. Once you arrive in Colombo, complete your check-in at the hotel where you will be spending the night.



### Destination Information

**Kosgoda Turtle Hatchery** - Home to Sri Lanka's pioneering sea turtle conservation, established in 1981.

**Colombo** - The formal capital city and the business and commercial centre of Sri Lanka. Originally a small seaport, Colombo became prominent in the 15th century with the arrival of the Portuguese. The Dutch later arrived in the 16th century, but it wasn't until the British arrived in the late 18th century that Colombo developed into a major city.

### Day 15: Colombo City

Meals: B, L, D

Explore the dynamic city of Colombo today. Immerse yourself in the Fort District, take a leisurely stroll through the bustling Pettah Market, and pay a visit to the historic Dutch Church of Wolvendaal. Additionally, delve into the cultural richness of the Kelaniya Buddhist Temple, as well as the Colombo and Natural History Museums. This morning's activities will involve relaxed sightseeing, spanning approximately three hours.



The rest of the day is yours to enjoy at your own pace.

After dinner transfer to Colombo airport to check in for your flight which departs in the early hours next day

#### Destination Information

**Fort District** - Having been ruled by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British, the Fort District is a treasure trove of grand old colonial architecture. Now, the city's cosmopolitan central business district, the Fort District was the centre of both the British and the Dutch administrations of Sri Lanka. Many of the grand old buildings built during these times are dotted throughout the area and are still in use as government buildings today.

**Pettah Market** - A colourful series of open-air markets and bazaars located in the Pettah district, selling everything from fruit, vegetables, and fabrics to household goods.

**Dutch Church of Wolfendhaal** - Built in 1749, the Dutch Church is one of the most important Dutch Colonial era buildings in Sri Lanka. The church is in the form of a cross, with walls 1.5m thick and the floor includes intricate tombstones to Dutch colonists.

**Kelaniya Buddhist Temple** - A major pilgrimage site for Buddhist devotees, who believe that the Lord Buddha visited this site on the 8th year of enlightenment.

**Colombo and Natural History Museums** - Located closely together, the Colombo National Museum tells the story of ancient Sri Lanka, with collections including the regalia of Sri Lanka. The Natural History Museum displays the natural history of Sri Lanka.

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#### Day 16: Depart Colombo

Meals: B

If your flight is scheduled for later today, this morning is free to spend at leisure before your transfer to the airport for your return flight.

Please note: Only breakfast is included today. Late check-out is not included in our Highlights of Sri Lanka tour.

If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day in Colombo, please contact our reservations department who can confirm the additional price and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.





## SRI LANKA - TRAVEL INFORMATION

### VISAS:

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Entry visas are required by all visitors to Sri Lanka and Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back in New Zealand. For further information or to apply online please visit: [https://www.immigration.gov.lk/index\\_e.php](https://www.immigration.gov.lk/index_e.php)

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate; Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa. Your travel consultant will inform you if any changes are applicable prior to your departure.

### INSURANCE:

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We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original

### GROUP SIZE:

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Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a national escort. There will usually be no more than 28 travellers in a group, although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides only.

### EATING IN SRI LANKA:

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Sri Lanka is home to a melting pot of cuisine. Throughout years of colonisation and influence from other countries and a history of spice trading, Sri Lanka has adapted its own distinct flavour. While travelling in Asia, it is important to keep an open mind and be adventurous. Meals as outlined in the itinerary (excluding drinks) are included in our Highlights of Sri Lanka tour. Please be aware that dishes selected for your meals reflect the cooking styles and signature dishes of the local area you are in.

Dishes served in restaurants on our group tours are varied. Some will be vegetable-based with meat mixed in, and a few will be meat-based.

Our restaurants are well aware of the western palate – there are plenty of non-spiced options. When eating meals on group tours, you will usually be seated around a large table with other tour members. Dishes will be served in the traditional ‘family style’; meaning that various dishes will be laid out in the centre of the table. These dishes are intended to be shared amongst the group – there is always more than enough to feed everybody.

We recommend that when it comes to Sri Lankan food, you stay open minded and try to be adventurous!

**PLEASE INFORM US OF ANY ALLERGIES AND/OR SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS  
AT TIME OF BOOKING**

### **ACCOMMODATION:**

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Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from business hotel in one city to a family-run guesthouse in a smaller town or a heritage-type hotel. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality may exist between New Zealand and Sri Lanka. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities and air conditioning where needed. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort.

Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

### **TIPPING POLICY:**

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Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and Sri Lanka is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. In order to avoid any inconvenience Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your national escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed amongst your main service providers (for example local guides and drivers) throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the national escort. Any other tipping, such as tips for bathroom attendants or hotel porters that are taking luggage to your room, is at your discretion based on satisfaction of services received, as are gratuities for additional requested special services.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy, but we do recognise that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour, we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

### PORTAGE:

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Please be aware that portage is not included on our tours in Sri Lanka. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

### SOUVENIRS:

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We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs, so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions that demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone, so we aim to take you to places that hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

### TRANSPORT:

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**Coaches:** Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary.

Main and inner-city roads in Sri Lanka have a reputation for being very congested. For this reason, it may not always be possible to return to your hotel after sightseeing to freshen up before going to the restaurant for dinner.

Roads in Sri Lanka have generally been improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the sections above are approximations only.

### LUGGAGE:

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All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each: a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20 kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

### APPROPRIATE DRESS:

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When visiting temples or mosques, both men and women should dress in conservative, non-revealing clothing. Full-length trousers with a shirt or t-shirt for men; and trousers or skirts well below the knee with a top that covers the shoulders and upper arms for women. Women might also consider carrying a 'modesty shawl' in their daypack – this could be a sarong or light scarf – which they can wear over their shoulders and heads to feel more comfortable while sightseeing at mosques. When visiting Jain temples, you must not wear or take in any leather items such as belts, watches, camera straps, purses and shoes.



Religious sites and homes throughout Sri Lanka – for Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Muslims or Buddhists to name a few – require all visitors to remove their shoes to enter. Even if you then need to walk outdoors, over hot or rough ground, you will not be allowed to wear shoes.

You will often find shoe storage rooms near the entrance of a site where it is customary to leave your shoes near the entrance. Occasionally there are 'shoe minders' who will offer to keep your shoes safe for a 'tip' – this is not compulsory so each customer can choose to tip for this service or not. If you do not want to remove your shoes, you will have to remain outside.

We recommend shoes that easily slip on and off, and carry a pair of thick, old socks in your daypack, which you can wear to protect your feet from any rough or hot surfaces.

### CLIMBING STEPS:

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Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defense against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside.

The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Hindu and Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

### EXCHANGING CASH:

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US Dollars can be easily exchanged in Sri Lanka, provided notes are new and undamaged.

We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Try and keep some small notes and coins on you, as on street stalls and in small shops they may not have the change to break up a high denomination note. If you decide to use US dollars, make sure they are in a good state (not ripped, etc.) or they will not be accepted. ATMs are common across Sri Lanka and we recommend using an ATM inside a bank where possible. Most major credit cards are widely accepted across the continent, though please bear in mind the charges of your provider. Debit cards are also widely accepted but may have a limit to the amount of cash you can withdraw – consult your bank about this before travelling.

### PERSONAL EXPENSES AND OPTIONAL TOURINGS:

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Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you.

Optional Tours - May be offered in each city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available.

Please ensure you have additional funds available if you feel you may wish to participate in any extra activities. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

#### **VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:**

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We recommend that you contact either your doctor or Health centre for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Safetravel has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful [www.safetravel.govt.nz](http://www.safetravel.govt.nz)

#### **BEFORE YOU LEAVE:**

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We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with [www.safetravel.govt.nz](http://www.safetravel.govt.nz) as in the event of an emergency, New Zealand Consular assistance will be more readily available.

Up until the day you travel, it is vital you keep up to date and familiarised with the entry requirements as these can change at short notice. You are personally responsible for completing any entry forms, conducting any covid tests (if necessary), etc and adhering to countries' specific entry requirements.

You can also access the New Zealand Government's travel advisory service for up-to-date information about your destination on the same website.

#### **AFTER YOUR BOOKING:**

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Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation along with a link to our website where you can find your visa information (if applicable) and other important information. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

#### **ITINERARY CHANGES:**

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It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

Updated: May 2025