



SRI LANKAN SPLENDOUR

2024 - Private Tour | 18 Days | Physical Level 2

Colombo – Kotugoda - Anuradhapura – Sigiriya - Kandy - Gal Oya - Nuwara Eliya - Yala
National Park - Tangalle - Colombo

This unforgettable journey takes you through the captivating landscapes and rich heritage of the beautiful island of Sri Lanka, with every stop offering something exciting and unique. From the quaint village of Kotugoda, delve into the ancient wonders of Anuradhapura. Traverse the untamed wilderness of Wilpattu National Park, and ascend the legendary Sigiriya Rock. Witness the wildlife of Minneriya National Park as you step back in time at Polonnaruwa. These are but a few adventures that await you on this unforgettably diverse and immersive tour.

- Wildlife safari in Wilpattu National Park
- Experience breathtaking views from Sigiriya Rock Fortress
- Visit the well-preserved Dambulla Cave Temple
- Stealth walk through the jungle on a night hike
- Picnic in the serene surroundings of Gal Oya National Park
- Observe many species of birdlife along the way

To book call **0800 936 3998** or visit your local travel agent

Visit wendywutours.co.nz

TOUR MAP



SRI LANKAN SPLENDOUR PRIVATE TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- All accommodation
- Meals as stated (B – Breakfast / L – Lunch / D – Dinner)
- Sightseeing and entrance fees as per itinerary
- Transportation and transfers as per itinerary
- English speaking Local Guides
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR: international flights, visas, drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, meals not included early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

PRIVATE TOURS:

These tours are designed for those who want some independence and flexibility. They offer the choice to explore local cuisine, leisure time for optional activities or excursions, and travel when it suits you. Our Private Tours offer excellent value holidays alongside the assurance that most of your arrangements are taken care of. You will also be accompanied by a dedicated and professional guide whose knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 2:

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. 'Sri Lankan Splendour' 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 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 of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite 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 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.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It is our intention is 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.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrive Kotugoda

Meals: n/a

Upon arrival in Colombo, a representative from Wendy Wu Tours will meet you at the airport in the Arrivals Hall and transfer you to your hotel in Kotugoda, which takes around 30-45 minutes. The rest of the day is at leisure.



Destination Information

Kotugoda – Located north of Colombo, this city is conveniently located close to several UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Day 2: Kotugoda to Anuradhapura

Meals: B

After breakfast proceed to Anuradhapura, which will take around 3.5 hours. Relax before heading out to Anuradhapura.



Destination Information

Anuradhapura – The inaugural ancient kingdom and original capital of Sri Lanka, Anuradhapura holds a distinguished position as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Amongst its treasures are the awe-inspiring 13-meter-high statue of Lord Buddha and the relic of the Bodhi Tree, under which Buddha attained enlightenment.

Day 3: Wilpattu & Nachchaduwa

Meals: B

After savouring an early cup of tea, embark on an exhilarating Wilpattu National Park safari. The transfer will take approximately 2.5 hours. Keep your eyes peeled for local wildlife including spotted deer, sambar and barking deer. After a few hours of downtime, this evening you will embark on a magical off-road sunset drive in Nachchaduwa.

**Destination Information**

Wilpattu National Park – This vast park, covering 131,694 hectares, was granted National Park status back in 1938. It boasts a diverse array of wildlife and bird species that frequent the numerous Villus (Lakes) within its boundaries.

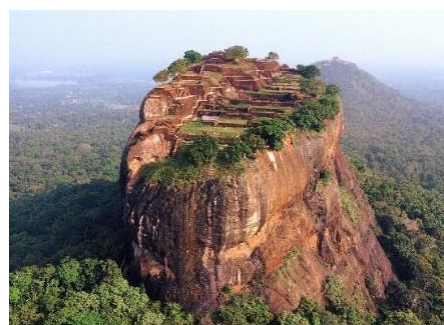
Nachchaduwa – Often associated with Nachchaduwa Lake, which is a vast reservoir surrounded by beautiful scenery, including dense pockets of forest and distant hills. The area is known for its rural countryside dominated by rice paddies, offering a serene and picturesque setting.

Day 4: Sigiriya & Minneriya National Park

Meals: B

Enjoy an early breakfast before transferring one hour to Sigiriya. Enjoy the rest of the morning at leisure.

This afternoon you visit Minneriya National Park, a 40-minute drive away. While the elephants are a highlight, a variety of other animal species can also be observed. Look out for the rare bamboo trees.

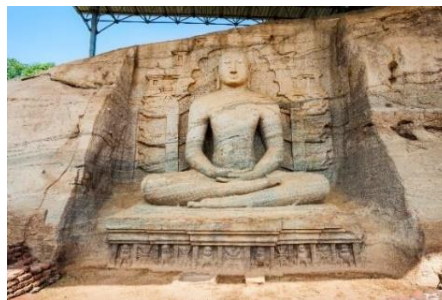
**Destination Information**

Minneriya National Park - This enchanting sanctuary is known for its magnificent elephant herds, however it also boasts a rich biodiversity with various species of birds, reptiles and mammals thriving in its lush vegetation.

Day 5: Sigiriya Rock Fortress & Polonnaruwa

Meals: B

Today is an action packed day, beginning with a visit to the magnificent Sigiriya Rock Fortress, also known as 'Lion Rock'. Explore this awe-inspiring UNESCO World Heritage site before continuing 1.5 hours to the ancient kingdom of Polonnaruwa. Later this evening you will take part in a loris night trail walk. Join an expert naturalist as you search for these adorable yet elusive creatures.

**Destination Information**

Sigiriya Rock Fortress – The majestic Lion Rock that rises 200 meters above the ground, with remnants of an ancient royal palace at the top. The name 'Lion Rock' comes from the enormous lion-shaped gateway that once guarded the palace, however only the paws remain today.

Polonnaruwa – Kings ruled the central plains of Sri Lanka from Polonnaruwa 800 years ago, when it was a thriving commercial and religious centre. The glories of that age can be found in the archaeological treasures that offer an excellent insight into the city's golden era.

Day 6: Dambulla & Kandy

Meals: B

After breakfast depart for Kandy. This journey will take around three hours with a stop at the Dambulla Cave Temple enroute. You have time to relax before an evening visit to the Temple of the Tooth Relic, known locally as 'Dalada Maligawa'. You will end the day with enjoy a cultural dance show.

**Destination Information**

Dambulla Cave Temple - Dating back to the 1st century BC, the famous Dambulla Cave Temple consists of five caves converted into shrine rooms. The caves are home to around 150 Buddha statues and colourful frescoes. In the first cave, observe the 14m statue of Buddha cut out of the rock. At the Buddha's feet are Ananda, the most loyal disciples, and more seated Buddhas nearby. The second cave is the largest, also known as the Cave of the Great Kings, with 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 its roof, which is said to have healing powers and is used in sacred rituals.

Kandy – Kandy is 500m above sea level and 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 the Esala Perahera - a religious parade with elephants, drummers and dancers performing in the streets.

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Day 7: Kandy

Meals: B

Start today exploring the enchanting Peradeniya Botanical Gardens. This transfer will take approximately 50 minutes. After your garden escapade, you'll have time to relax until the evening when you'll embark on a delightful Kandy 'Night Food Walk'. Sample the local Arrack and appetizers before savoring delicious treats like egg rotis, fresh hoppers, and the best Kothu in town.

**Destination Information**

Peradeniya Botanical Garden - This is stunning garden originally served as a pleasure retreat for a Sinhala king and later expanded by the British. Spanning approximately 147 acres, it is a haven for leisurely strolls, featuring well-maintained lawns, charming pavilions, an octagon conservatory, a delightful fernery, a majestic Javan fig tree, and a multitude of colorful flower beds. Among its many highlights is the enchanting Orchid House, where you can marvel at more than 1000 orchid plants in all their splendor.

Day 8: Kandy to Gal Oya

Meals: B

This morning's transfer to Gal Oya will take approximately 3.5 hours. Upon reaching Gal Oya, you'll check in and have time to relax until later in the evening when you'll head off on an exciting jungle night walk. Accompanied by the resident naturalist, you'll explore the forests surrounding the lodge. Armed with a red-light torch, you'll be on the lookout for the forest's nocturnal animals.



Please note: This is a rural area and therefore the facilities at the hotel are limited. There is no mobile signal, wi-fi, TV or air-con. Enjoy this true safari experience with no modern-day interference.

Destination Information

Gal Oya National Park – Renowned for its diverse wildlife and one of the few places where you can take a boat safari to observe animals, this expansive park is home to a plethora of wildlife including leopards, sloth bears, water buffaloes and many species of bird.

Day 9: Gal Oya National Park

Meals: B

Starting early in the morning you will embark on a 'Jungle Drive and Walk' with a packed breakfast to energise you during the adventure. Begin with a jeep ride into the lesser-explored Nilgala section guided by expert naturalists, after which you will be treated to a delightful picnic beside the river. The rest of the day is at leisure.

**Day 10: Nuwara Eliya & Hatton**

Meals: B,D

After breakfast, your 3.5 hour drive will take you to Nuwara Eliya (Nanu Oya). On arrival you'll board the local train - reminiscent of the way the British used to travel during the colonial times in the late 1800s – heading to Hatton. This journey will take 1,5 hours. You have the rest of the day at leisure.

It is important to note that there could be delays on the train journeys. Tickets are issued 30 days in advance of travel. In the unlikely event a ticket(s) cannot be obtained you will travel by road.

**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 an excellent location for tea production due to the cool climate, which creates tea with a unique flavour.

Hatton – This picturesque town located in the central highlands, is at an altitude of approximately 1,271 meters (4,170 feet) above sea level. It offers breathtaking views of lush tea plantations, rolling hills, and scenic landscapes.

Day 11: Hatton

Meals: B,L,D

Get ready for an immersive experience at a guided tea factory tour just 30 minutes from your hotel. During your visit, you will delve into the intricacies of the tea production process with your knowledgeable host. Lunch will be a delicious afternoon picnic by a scenic waterfall. You will have the afternoon at your leisure.



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Day 12: Hatton

Meals: B,L,D

An early breakfast to start your day before an exciting birdwatching experience at Camellia Hills. The garden is a haven for bird enthusiasts, boasting a diverse range of over 20 bird species. Among the unique endemic birds that can be sighted are the yellow fronted barbet, Ceylon scimitar babbler, and the Sri Lankan hanging parakeet.

**Destination Information:**

Camilla Hills - Nestled amidst lush tea plantations in Dickoya and offering stunning panoramic views, this region is a birdwatcher's paradise. Home to over 20 bird species, many of its feathered residents are endemic to the area. Join guided birdwatching walks as you take in the surrounding serene natural beauty.

Day 13: Udawalawe & Yala

Meals: B

After breakfast transfer from Hatton to Yala via Udawalawe Elephant Transit Home. The entire journey will take approximately 6 hours. Your visit to elephant home will coincide with feeding time - a heart-warming spectacle. Learn how the elephants at the home are cared for and prepared for their eventual return to the wild. Continue to Yala, where you can relax for the rest of the day.

**Destination Information**

Udawalawe Elephant Transit Home – Here you will learn about the inspiring initiative that provides care for injured elephants from all over Sri Lanka. With support from the Born Free Foundation, this facility serves as a halfway house for orphaned elephants. The home's residents receive rehabilitation and nurturing before eventually being released back into the wild.

Day 14: Yala National Park

Meals: B

As the early morning light graces the day, you'll be taken on an exhilarating journey to Yala National Park. Famous for its leopard population, its big cats are just the beginning. Keep your eyes peeled for elephants, bears, wild boars, buffalos, deer, crocodiles and a myriad of bird species.

NOTE: You will receive a snack basket from the hotel for your safari, and scrumptious breakfast will be waiting for you on your return.



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Destination Information:

Yala National Park - Situated approximately 24 kilometres Northeast of Tissamaharama, this park is renowned for its leopard population. The varied vegetation here ranges from open parkland to dense jungle, providing diverse habitats for a variety of wildlife.

Day 15: Yala to Tangalle

Meals: B

After breakfast, proceed to Tangalle, the last stop on the journey. The transfer will take approximately 2.5 hours. After check in the day is yours to explore your beautiful surroundings.

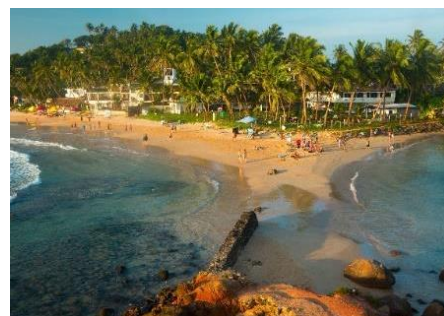
**Destination Information:**

Tangalle - A serene coastal town in southern Sri Lanka known for its beautiful beaches, floating turtles and peaceful oceanside retreats. Visitors can enjoy sunbathing, birdwatching and water sports in this tropical paradise.

Day 16: Mirissa

Meals: B

After an early start you will board your luxury catamaran for a thrilling cruise. Your transfer to the harbour will take approximately one hour. Upon arrival you will be greeted by your naturalist guide before setting sail in search of marine life, including majestic blue whales, sperm whales, and orca (killer whales). Your next stop is Galle Fort, which is one hour away. Visit the old District Judge's house, surrounded by fragrant frangipani trees. Spend the rest of the day at your leisure.

**Destination Information:**

Mirissa - This coastal town is known for its stunning beaches, whale watching, surfing and abundant marine life. It offers the perfect blend of relaxation and adventure for beach lovers and water sports enthusiasts.

Galle Fort – Built by the Portuguese in the 16th century, later fortified by the Dutch in the 17th century, and further enhanced by the British, Galle Fort is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The fort is a testament to the diverse cultural influences that have shaped Sri Lanka over the centuries. Today Galle Fort is a vibrant cultural hub with art galleries, boutique hotels, restaurants, and shops that offer local crafts and souvenirs.

Day 17: Tangalle

Meals: B

You have the full to explore your surroundings, or simply relax at the hotel.



Day 18: Depart Colombo

Meals: B

Today your journey will come to an end, as you are transferred to Colombo airport for your onward flight.



SRI LANKAN SPLENDOUR PRIVATE TOUR TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISAS:

New Zealand passport holders currently do require a visa to enter Sri Lanka. Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. Your passport needs to be valid for at least six months beyond your intended return date to New Zealand.

Please note: The Sri Lanka Visa cost is not included in our Private Tours pricing. Please contact our reservations team if you would like the Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department to assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. Full details will be advised by Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department.

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:

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.

EATING IN SRI LANKA:

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 cultivated its own distinct flavour.

Dishes served in restaurants are varied. Some will be vegetable-based and some meat-based. Many restaurants are aware of the western palate – there are plenty of non-spiced options. Meals as outlined in the itinerary are included (excluding drinks) are included in this tour, and there are plenty of options for you to choose from when it comes to other meals that are not included.

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

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

DEVELOPMENT IN SRI LANKA:

Although Sri Lanka is developing quickly, it still lacks the international standards of civil infrastructure and tourist facilities.

Concepts of personal responsibility are also different to those in New Zealand. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in New Zealand; for example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade. All our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday, so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense, refer to notices and follow advice from your guide.

ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation has been selected for convenience of location, comfort, or character, and can range from a restored colonial house in one city to a boutique hotel in a smaller town, or an eco-lodge in national parks. Hotels are generally rated as local four to five-star standard but do please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between New Zealand and Sri Lanka. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards are met.

All hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, swimming pool, restaurant, and a telephone. 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 or Local Guide.

SOUVENIRS:

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.

TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world with Sri Lanka being no exception. Please see our tipping guide lines below:

Restaurants and Cafes: In restaurants and cafes, a service charge is often included in the bill, ranging from 5% to 10%. However, if the service charge is not included, leaving a tip of around 5% to 10% of the total bill is customary. If you receive exceptional service, consider leaving a higher tip.

Hotels and Resorts: Tipping is common in hotels and resorts, especially for hotel staff who provide direct services. It is customary to tip hotel staff who assist with carrying luggage, room cleaning, and other personal services. A tip of around 50 to 100 Sri Lankan rupees per bag is common for porters.

Tour Guides and Drivers: When taking guided tours or using the services of drivers, it is common to tip them as a show of appreciation for their services.

For tour guides, a tip of around 500 to 1000 Sri Lankan Rupees per day per person is standard practice. A tip of around 500 to 1000 Sri Lankan rupees per day is typical for drivers.

Spa and Wellness Services: If you receive spa or wellness services, the therapists or attendants appreciate tipping around 10% to 15% of the service cost.

Miscellaneous Services: Tipping is also customary for other services, such as in local markets or when receiving assistance from locals. A small tip of a few Sri Lankan rupees or rounding up the bill can be a polite gesture of appreciation. It's essential to consider the level of service provided and the local customs when determining the appropriate tip amount. Tipping in a foreign currency is not customary. Using the local currency (Sri Lankan Rupees) for tipping is best. Remember that while tipping is appreciated, it should not be a financial burden and is entirely at your discretion.

TRANSPORT:

Vehicles: Vehicles with air conditioning are used for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Road conditions in Sri Lanka have improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of the 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:

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:

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 pants 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.

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Religious sites and homes throughout Sri Lanka 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 a site's entrance where it is customary to leave your shoes near the threshold. Occasionally there are 'shoe minders' who will offer to keep your shoes safe for a 'tip' – this is not compulsory; you 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.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

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

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with 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:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice including a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

Updated: May 2024