



## SERENDIPITOUS SRI LANKA

Welcome to Sri Lanka, an island of lush jungle and paddy fields, tea plantations and rock temples.

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Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries



Indian Subcontinent, Sri Lanka



13 days from AU\$9,930 pp



Private

## Journey Overview

Welcome to Sri Lanka, an island of lush jungle and paddy fields, tea plantations and rock temples. Embark on your discovery starting in the idyllic capital Colombo, the Garden City of the East. Climb the magnificent rock-top fortress of Sigiriya, visit the Temple of the Sacred Tooth and marvel at the spiritual caves of Dambulla. Taste a whirl of local flavours. Find your home-from-home in a colonial-style tea planter's bungalow in the leafy highlands. And seek out leopards and sloth bears in the wilds of Wilpattu National Park. These are the jewels of Sri Lanka.

### Journey Highlights

- Marvel at the spiritual temple caves of Dambulla
- Witness an auspicious offering to the Sacred Tooth Relic
- Pedal through the ancient city of Anuradhapura
- Embark on a mouth-watering foodie tour in Colombo
- Roam through the ancient citadel of Sigiriya Rock Fortress
- See rare wildlife on a game drive through Wilpattu National Park
- Explore historic Galle Fort and its historic surrounds
- Gain an in-depth understanding of the country as you are accompanied by a National Guide.



# Itinerary

## **Day 1: Arrive Colombo**

Ayubowan and welcome to Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka and the Garden City of the East. Be welcomed by your A&K representative who will whisk you to your private transfer for your journey to your luxury boutique accommodation.

Dating back over 600 years, Colombo was a trading hub for sea merchants and colonial rulers. With the rest of the day as your own, spend time in the secluded peace and quiet or step outside and discover a wide array of Buddhist and Hindu temples, mosques and churches reflecting the various beliefs. Admire the beautiful facades of the old, colonial buildings or head to Galle Face Green with the locals and relax and enjoy the open space.

### ***Uga Residence***

## **Day 2: Colombo**

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before you head out to uncover an architectural wonder at Colombo Residence No. 11. Hidden at the end of a quiet street, this compact villa was the home of the renowned Sri Lankan architect Geoffrey Bawa. Discover his sophisticated sense of style and artistic flair as you wander through the home.

Meet with a curator at one of Sri Lanka's largest contemporary art galleries featuring works by leading and emerging artists and learn how the gallery collaborates on exhibitions internationally. Continue to Barefoot Gallery which serves as a platform for artists, musicians, poets, and filmmakers, exploring the important contribution that the owner Babara Sansoni has made to art and fabric design.

This evening, embark on a journey of culinary discovery through Sri Lankan cuisine. Join your expert, learn about the various influences and sample a unique fusion of Indian, Malay, Dutch and Portuguese flavours. Devour thambili (sweet king coconut) from a street vendor and dare to sample a shot of arrack, a local spirit.

### ***Uga Residence | Meals: B***

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### **Day 3: Colombo - Dambulla - Anuradhapura**

Drive north to heritage listed Anuradhapura, the heart of the Cultural Triangle. Pause at Dambulla, Sri Lanka's greatest cave-temple complex, dating back to the first century BC and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Marvel at the walls and ceiling of this important Buddhist site, resplendent with frescoes and seek out some of the hundreds of statues of Buddha, Hindu kings and deities housed within the caves. Continue to Anuradhapura, and check into your luxury eco-resort.

***Ulagalla Resort / Meals: BL***

### **Day 4: Anuradhapura**

Influenced by Buddhism, Anuradhapura was once the capital of the ancient Sinhalese kingdoms. According to the ancient Sinhalese Chronicle, the kingdom was founded in the fifth century BC and was abandoned due to an Indian invasion in the 10th century. Explore this extraordinary site by bike visiting the brilliant Ruwanweliseya and Jethawanarama monuments. Admire the Samadhi Statue of Buddha, a true masterpiece of sculpture. Along the way, sample tropical fruits and receive a blessing at the sacred Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi, the oldest recorded tree planted by man in the world. Return to your hotel with an afternoon to relax and enjoy your surroundings at your own pace.

***Ulagalla Resort / Meals: B***

### **Day 5: Anuradhapura**

Following a morning at leisure, venture to the largest of the wildlife parks in Sri Lanka, Wilpattu National Park. Embark on a game drive around the 'willu', or rainwater-filled ponds, which attract a huge range of wildlife. Keep your camera handy for elephant, spotted deer, barking deer, wild boar, buffalo, and an array of wetland birds. If you're lucky, you'll spot sloth bears as they feast on the berries of the Palu trees, or even the elusive Sri Lankan leopard.

Later, enjoy sundowners with a view across the ancient water tank, Tissa Wewa. This ancient irrigation system, built between 250-210BC, was also used in rituals by the ruling kings.

***Ulagalla Resort / Meals: B***

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## **Day 6: Anuradhapura - Sigiriya - Kandy**

Rise early for your journey to the magnificent rock-top fortress of Sigiriya, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Wander through picturesque water and boulder gardens, past the pools and fountains and climb past the ancient and colossal Lion's Paws to a steep winding 200-metre high staircase. Legend has it that the entry to the fortress was through the mouth of the lion, however over time this collapsed leaving only the paws. Pause during your ascent to admire the mirror wall and the famous Sigiriya frescoes. Upon reaching the summit you'll admire 360-degree breathtaking views of the surrounding jungle and hills.

Later, experience true Sri Lankan hospitality in a farmer's home, over a wonderful home-cooked lunch with your host.

Continue to the last capital of the Sri Lankan kings, Kandy, nestled in the highlands. Resisting the colonial forces for longer than other parts of the country had been conquered, Kandy managed to retain its unique customs and artistic traditions and as such is considered the country's most significant cultural and religious centre. After dropping your bags at your luxury accommodation, marvel at the famous Temple of the Sacred Tooth, said to house one of Buddha's teeth. Stay to witness an auspicious offering to the Sacred Tooth Relic – an unforgettable ritual of drums, incense and chanting.

***Kings Pavilion | Meals: BL***

## **Day 7: Kandy**

After a leisurely morning, take a city tour of heritage listed Kandy, the last Kingdom of Sri Lanka. Highlights include the historic Kandy Lake, and the bustling Kandy markets. Be on the look out for the silverware, brassware and gem-studded jewellery, carefully carved and designed by the Kandyan craftsman, who are known to be the most skilled in the country. Enjoy the afternoon at leisure.

Revel in the tranquillity of your luxury retreat surrounded by mountains and greenery, take a dip in the secluded infinity pool, or walk to Kandy to continue exploring by foot. Perhaps discover the unique collection of more than 4000 plants from orchids to medicinal plants at the wonderful Royal Botanical Gardens, or explore Udawattakale Forest Reserve (additional charge).

Be entertained this evening by unique music and traditional dance at a Kandyan Cultural Show and meet the dancers backstage for a photo.

***Kings Pavilion | Meals: B***

**Day 8: Kandy - Hatton - Hill Country (Dickoya)**

Ride one of the most scenic railways through the Sri Lankan highlands to the hill station of Hatton. Roll past the emerald tea estates that blanket the mountains and breathe in the unmistakable aroma of pure Ceylon tea. Find your home at Ceylon Tea Trails, a cluster of colonial-era planters' bungalows packed with period furnishings. With your own housekeeper, chef and butlers, you'll certainly feel like an honoured guest.

***Ceylon Tea Trails | Meals: BD*****Day 9: Hill Country (Dickoya)**

Enter the wonderful world of tea on a morning tour through tea country. Learn about the tea making process from the fields to the factory and sample some prized beverages during a special high tea.

Spend the rest of the day at leisure wandering the scenic trails between bungalows. Or venture further afield up sacred Adam's Peak, atop which one of Buddha's footprints is said to exist (additional charge).

***Ceylon Tea Trails | Meals: BLD*****Day 10: Hill Country (Dickoya)**

Spend the day at leisure enjoying the surroundings and facilities of your luxury accommodation in true Relais & Châteaux comfort. Alternatively explore more of the tea estate by bicycle or trek between the hotel's bungalows for jaw-dropping views of lakes, mountains and tea-strewn slopes.

***Ceylon Tea Trails | Meals: BLD*****Day 11: Hill Country (Dickoya) - Galle**

Leave the tea plantations behind as you journey to the south coast and the old Portuguese trading fort of Galle.

***Taru Villas - Rampart Street | Meals: B***

**Day 12: Galle**

Morning tour of the historic city. Discover a unique blend of the exotic and colonial in this UNESCO World Heritage listed locale, uncovering the fascinating architectural legacies of Portuguese and Dutch settlers alongside traditional Sri Lankan structures. Stroll through the Galle Fort and learn about the Dutch East India Company that operated from within, visit the Maritime Museum, the Old Dutch Reformed Church, Sun and Moon bastions, and more.

Afternoon at leisure.

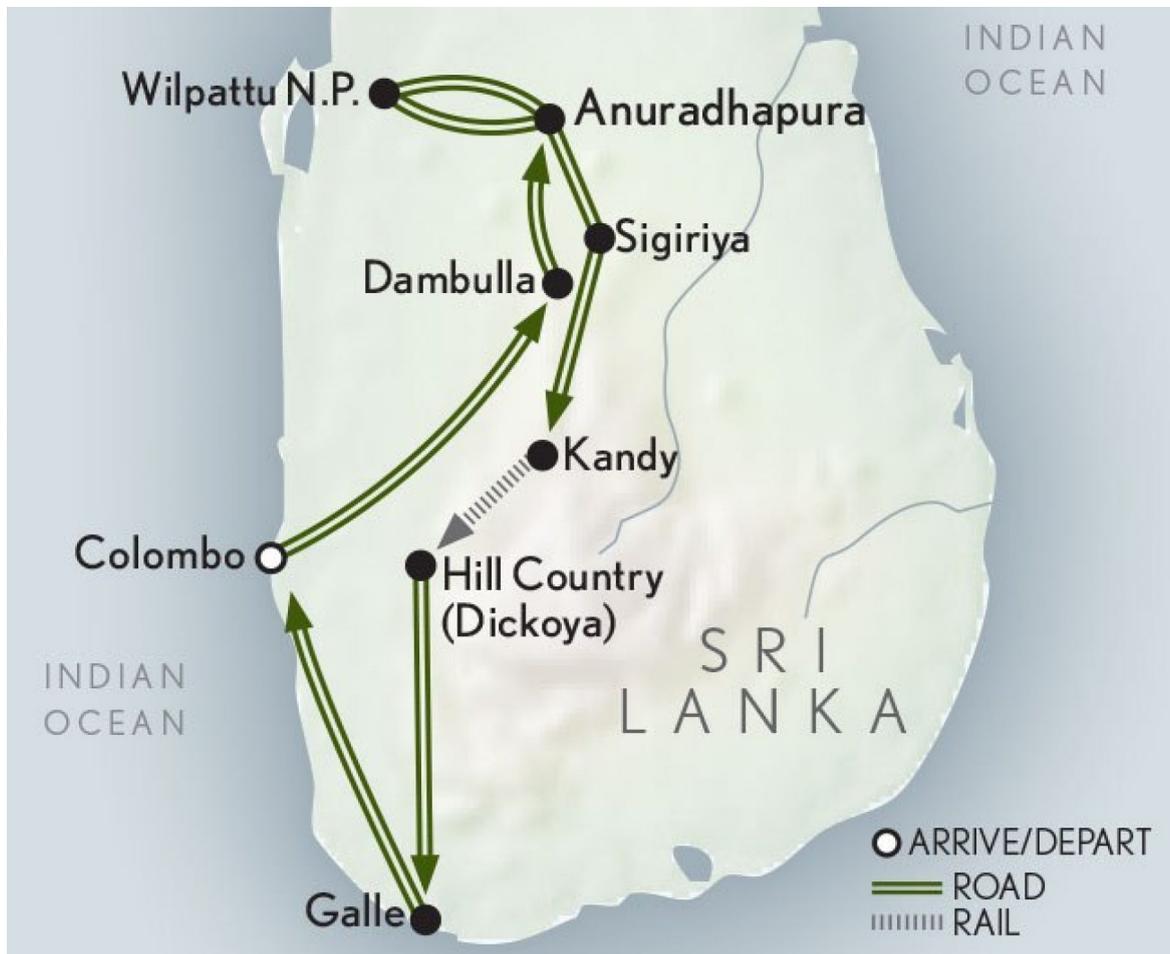
***Taru Villas - Rampart Street | Meals: B***

**Day 13: Galle - Depart Colombo**

With your Sri Lankan adventure at an end, enjoy a private transfer to the airport for your onward journey.

***Meals: B***

# Map



## Accommodation

### Uga Residence, Colombo



For a slice of cosmopolitan city living The Residence offers a sophisticated slice of luxury in a leafy region of Colombo, nestled close to one of the city's principal Buddhist shrines. The 11 suites offer centrally located luxury yet secluded peace and quiet. The Park suites are outfitted in opulent style with warm light and ornate furnishings. The Residence Suite is a palatial apartment with a spacious private garden and whirlpool tub.

With its spacious, leafy gardens and private courtyards, its gourmet restaurant, swimming pool, gym, bar and 'great room' for private functions, the Residence is a more refined choice for long or short stays in Colombo, as well as the ideal place to meet, relax or celebrate. Be sure to try the high tea with a vast selection of Ceylon teas to accompany delicious cakes and savouries.

#### Why we like it

- Former Victorian residence
- Charming boutique property with just 11 suites
- Spacious stylishly designed rooms

## Ulagalla Resort



Set within 58 acres of private grounds, Ulagalla Resort promises tranquillity, luxury and wilderness within easy reach of the many attractions of Sri Lanka's Cultural Triangle. Expect to see monkeys, peacocks and elephants roaming around the superb eco-friendly hotel, as you enjoy the open-air spa, ravishing dining and serene villas.

The chalets are all built from local materials to harmonise with their surroundings. Comfort is maximised with air-conditioning, four-poster king-sized beds, en suite bathrooms with shower, and a separate lounge with a TV and dining table. All rooms come with a private plunge pool, except for two which have an in-room Jacuzzi.

At the heart of the resort is a century-old manor house, once the most important noble seat of the region. Home to the lobby, restaurant and bar, the beautifully renovated building overlooks the large pool and gardens. The grounds feature an organic garden, manicured beds and lawn and reclaimed paddy fields, which border two reservoirs dotted with lotus flowers and kumbuk trees – the hotel provides each villa with bicycles making it easy to explore. There's also an open-air day spa, riding stables with resident horses, and an archery field.

### Why we like it

- 20 chalets - all but two have private plunge pools
- Immersed in a private 58-acre estate
- Explore the grounds on bicycles, which are provided in each villa
- Restored century-old manor house houses the restaurant and bar
- Serene open-air spa, riding stables and outdoor pool

## Kings Pavilion Kandy



Set within a tropical haven, Kings Pavilion Kandy offers ultimate relaxation. Explore great stretches of scenery on gentle afternoon hikes or sit back and enjoy them from the spectacular infinity pool. You can also find inner harmony at the private spa and sauna.

Enchanting views abound throughout the hotel. All bedrooms showcase traditional styles combined with modern luxuries. Many even have 360-degree vistas and private Jacuzzis. Spacious balconies and teak interiors exude style and tranquillity, and your butler ensures round-the-clock pampering. Inviting designs, great flavours and mountain views accompany your dining experiences here. Taste traditional dishes like kollu and navaratne curry and enjoy international favourites too.

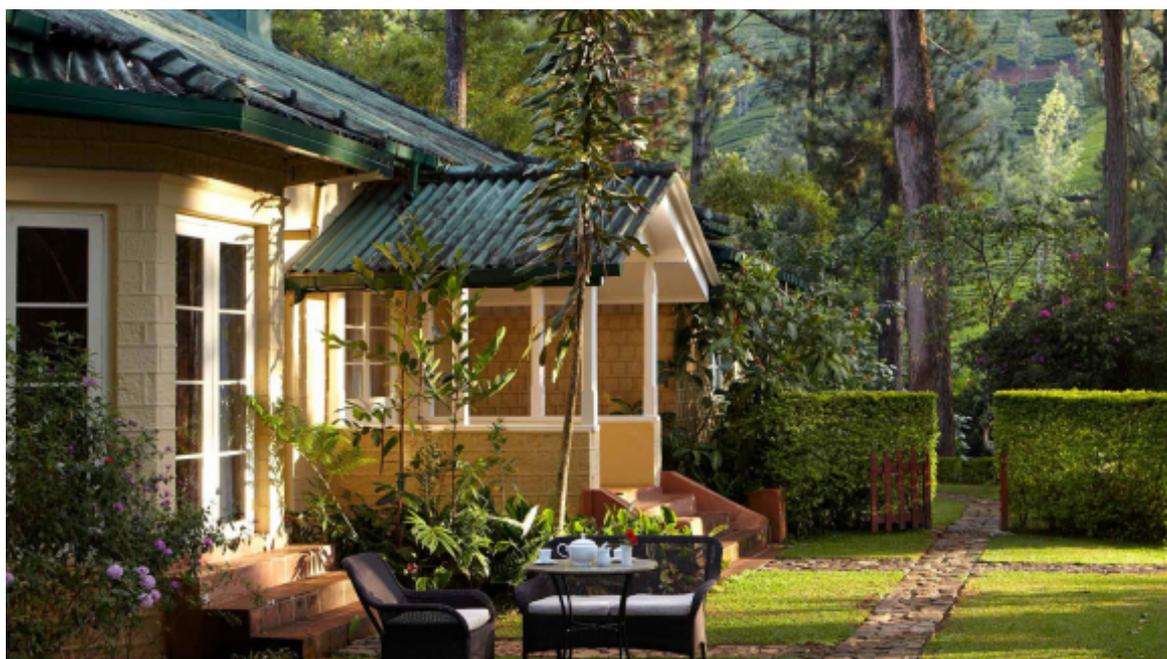
Despite your location in the heart of nature, you're close to the historic city of Kandy. Here, you can enjoy an incredible range of exciting activities. Check out local markets and eateries to experience Kandyan culture like a local. Discover the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic, a nearby UNESCO World Heritage Site not to be missed. Budding naturalist will flock to see Peradeniya Botanical Gardens' 4,000 plant species. Meanwhile, nearby Udawatta Kele Sanctuary houses abundant rainforest mammals and many endemic birds.

### Why we like it

- Located on a hillside, overlooking the misty Hunnasgiriya Mountains
- Unwind at the spa and sauna with an array of soothing treatments
- Close to Sri Lanka's best natural and city-based attractions
- Enjoy authentic Sri Lankan dishes at the hotel restaurant, as well as international favourites



## Ceylon Tea Trails, Hatton



Ceylon Tea Trails comprises of five restored colonial era tea planter residences, perched at an altitude of 1250 metres in Sri Lanka's panoramic Ceylon tea region. Combining classical and contemporary style and a taste of gracious living, each residence is unique and offers guests the non-hotel, private house ambiance that is the hallmark of the award-winning Tea Trails experience. Features including period furnishings, gracious butler service, and gourmet cuisine create an ambiance that has made Tea Trails the gold standard for luxury in Sri Lanka.

Summerville has the air of a country cottage, Castlereagh boasts an eclectic style of its own, the high colonial Tientsin was one of the first planter's residences to be built in Ceylon and there is the more modern Norwood and Dunkeld.

Each bungalow comes with its own manager, chef, butler and house staff with between four and six rooms each, a separate sitting room, sweeping lawns, swimming pools and English gardens. Rooms are named after past tea planter occupants. It is possible to walk between each bungalow to appreciate the beautiful scenery.

This is the ideal setting for trekking and biking against the breathtaking backdrop of mountains, lakes, winding roads and waterfalls. If you prefer to unwind, observe life on a working tea estate while being pampered by your butler, enjoy a spa treatment, croquet on the lawn or sunbathe alongside the pool. Or explore the lush tea fields & visit a century old factory for a gentle education in the art of Ceylon Tea.

### **Why we like it**

- Butler service and authentic period furnishings in a private house ambience
- Sri Lanka's first Relais & Châteaux resort
- Delight in time-honoured planters' traditions
- Experience tea-based spa treatments
- Learn from the resident tea planter of the journey from two leaves and a bud to cup

## Dates & Pricing

From \$9,930 per person twin share (low season) and from \$12,165 per person twin share (high season). Solo travellers on request.

As this Tailor Made Journey can be personalised to your specific requirements, it is not available for online booking. Depending on your preferred dates and arrangements, final pricing will vary.

Please call A&K on 1300 851 800, send us a **booking enquiry** to book this journey or contact your travel advisor.

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