

# buddhist pilgrimage tour to sri lanka



# Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is an island nation in the Indian Ocean, separated from India by the Palk Strait. It is "almost" linked to India by a mostly underwater atoll called Adam's Bridge. It is a very lush, tropical island setting just north of the equator.

Theravada Buddhism is the religion of the majority of Sri Lanka practiced by 70.2% of Sri Lanka's population. Practitioners of Buddhism can be found amongst the Sinhalese population as well as the Tamil population.

Throughout most of its history, Sri Lankan kings have played a major role in the maintenance and revival of the Buddhist institutions of the island. During the 19th century, a modern Buddhist revival took place on the island which promoted Buddhist education and learning.

## Tour Highlights

- ❖ Sri Lanka's Cultural Triangle:- Sacred City of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa UNESCO World Heritage site and one of the world's major archaeological sites.
- ❖ 3 Sacred Sights of Lord Buddha Visited – Mahiyanganaya Temple / Foot Print of Lord Buddha (SRI PADAYA) / Kelaniya
- ❖ Lion Rock Fortress in Sigiriya
- ❖ Hill Capital of Sri Lanka :-The Temple of the Tooth Relic, or The Dalada Maligawa, which holds the Sacred Tooth Relic of the Buddha
- ❖ Tea Planation :- Sri Lanka World's Finest Tea Maker

Endless beaches, timeless ruins, welcoming people, oodles of elephants, rolling surf, cheap prices, fun trains, famous tea and flavorful food describe Sri Lanka.

## 6 NIGHTS PACKAGE

### Day 01 Airport – Negombo / Colombo

On arrival at the Bandaranayke International Airport, you will be blessed to get your first taste of warm Sri Lankan hospitality; A Representative from Island Leisure Lanka will welcome you at the Airport & proceed to Negombo / Colombo.

Check – in to the Hotel

Dinner & overnight stay at a Hotel in Negombo or Colombo

### Day 02 Colombo / Negombo – Anuradhapura

Breakfast at the Hotel

Check-out from the hotel & proceed to Anuradhapura  
Approx. Travel Time: 4 Hrs

Anuradhapura - The ancient capital of Sri Lanka dating back to 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.



From stunning rock carvings and temples to giant stone pillars, history lovers are in for a rare treat at Anuradhapura, the first capital of ancient Sri Lanka. Located 206 km from Colombo, Anuradhapura is a UNESCO World Heritage site and one of the world's major archaeological sites. Perfectly landscaped pleasure gardens, vast irrigation lakes and places of religious worship are a plenty here and Anuradhapura also features the spectacular Ruwanweli Seya dagoba and the sacred Sri Maha Bhodi is the oldest documented tree in the world. It is a sapling of the very tree under which the lords Buddha attend enlightenment in Buddhagaya India. Other attractions include the "Isurumuniya Lovers" rock carvings, Thuparamaya, Lovamahapaya, Abhayagiri Dagaba, Jetavanarama, Mirisaveti Stupa and Lankarama. They are situated in Anuradhapura, the capital of the ancient Anuradhapura Kingdom.

Lunch - Own arrangement by the guest

In the afternoon visit Mihintale

Mihintale is a mountain peak near Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka. It is believed by Sri Lankans to be the site of a meeting between the Buddhist monk Mahinda and King Devanampiyatissa which inaugurated the presence of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. It is now a pilgrimage site, and the site of several religious.

Dinner & Overnight stay at a Hotel in Anuradhapura

Day 03 Anuradhapura - Avukana- Polonnaruwa - Sigiriya

Breakfast at the Hotel

Check-out from the hotel & proceed to Avukana



Avukana was built during the reign of King Dhatusena in the 5th Century. Standing over 40 feet high, Avukana is the tallest of the ancient Buddha statues in the country.

Proceed to Polonnaruwa (UNESCO World Heritage site)

Polonnaruwa - The ancient capital of Sri Lanka dating back to 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.



Polonnaruwa is Sri Lanka's second oldest kingdom and features a plethora of ruins and places of religious worship. Ancient Sinhala architecture combined with the South Indian architectural characteristics is what sets Polonnaruwa apart from Anuradhapura. Some of the many interesting places to visit in Polonnaruwa include the Gal Viharaya (Stone temple), Lankathilake Buddhist shrine, the Tivanka Image House, the Nissanka Latha Mandapaya and of course the famous Moonstones - the unique rock carvings found at the entrances or at the bottom of stairways to temples, shrines, dagobas, and other important buildings.

**Lunch - Own arrangement by the guest**

**Proceed to Sigiriya & visit surrounding**



Sigiriya is a magnificent rock fortress built in the 5th century A.D. This majestic Citadel in the sky was the refuge of King Kasyapa who murdered his father and stole the throne from his elder brother - the rightful heir to the throne. Kasyapa built his fortress on this 182 meter high rock to protect himself from his enemies. Sigiriya is world-renowned for its 'Mirror Wall', which consists of poems and paragraphs carved by some of the thousands of visitors who visited the rock many years ago, and of course for its magnificent frescoes, similar to the Ajantha frescoes of India. Sigiriya is in fact, the best-preserved city Centre in Asia from the first millennium and has been named as a world heritage site.

**Dinner & Overnight stay at a Hotel in Sigiriya**

**Day 04 Sigiriya – Dambulla – Matale - Kandy**

Breakfast at the Hotel

Check-out from the hotel & board to your vehicle, You will be transferred to Kandy

En route visit Dambulla Cave Temple



The Dambulla Temple is located on a gigantic rock towering more than 160 m above the surrounding area. The caves on this rock were the refuge of King Walagamba when he was in exile for 14 years. After his return to the throne in the 1st century BC, King Walagamba had this magnificent rock temple built at Dambulla. The caves feature a mixture of religious and worldly paintings and sculptures. Several reclining Buddha's which includes the 15 m long sculpture of the dying Buddha. The famous Dambulla frescoes on the walls and ceiling dates back to the 15th-18th centuries.

Heading to

Heading to Matale

Sri Lanka is famous for its spices and spice gardens. During early historical times Sri Lanka Known as Taprobane, was world renowned for its quality spices. Since the ancient times the Greeks, Romans and the Arabic maintained their links with Sri Lanka through the spice trade.

Thereafter visit Aluvihare in Matale

It is crowded with relics from many periods of history: from Third Century BC to the present day. It ranks among the very first temples in Sri Lanka, founded by Devanampiyatissa, the first Buddhist king.

Yet, Aluvihare is best known because within its caves took place a landmark event of Buddhist history. In the 1st century BC, a huge number of monks in the country fell victim to a 12 year-long famine. At this time, all the Buddha's teachings were still transmitted orally from generation to generation by monks; therefore, the doctrine was threatened with extinction. After the famine, one of the first priorities was to commit the doctrine into writing. It is in the caves of Aluvihare that this landmark event took place.

Proceed to Kandy

**Lunch - Own arrangement by the guest**

Visit Kandy Temple



The hill capital of Kandy, the last stronghold of Sinhala kings against the British Empire, lies picturesquely surrounded by mountains and rivers just 120 km away from Colombo. Kandy features the most sacred of all Buddhist shrines - the temple of the tooth or The Dalada Maligawa, which holds the Sacred Tooth Relic of the Buddha. The temple is surrounded by the charming Bogambara Lake, adding tranquility into the hearts and souls of the thousands of devotees that flock the city of Kandy each day.

#### City tour & shopping in Kandy

When in city tour you will have the time to do some shopping in Kandy, where you could fetch souvenirs in wood, copper, silver, brass, ebony, bronze, ceramics, lacquer work, handlooms, batiks, jewelry and reed-ware at bargain prices!!

#### Dinner & Overnight stay at a Hotel in Kandy

### Day 05 – Kandy – Mahiyanganaya – Ramboda - Nuwara Eliya

Breakfast at the Hotel

Check-out from the hotel & proceed to Mahiyanganaya

Visit Mahiyanganaya Raja maha Viharaya

Mahiyangana Raja Maha Vihara is an ancient Buddhist temple in Mahiyangana, Sri Lanka. It is believed to be the site of Gautama Buddha's **first** visit to the country, and is one of the Solosmasthanas, the 16 sacred religious locations in Sri Lanka. Currently this temple has been declared as one of archaeological site in Sri Lanka.



On the 8th year after attaining the Enlightenment, the Lord Buddha made His **3rd** visit to Kelaniya on the invitation by a king of Naga people named Maniakkitha. During this visit, a local chieftain named Indaka invited Lord Buddha to visit his place in Badulla. At the end of sermons made by Lord Buddha there, Indaka had wanted something to worship in memory of Lord Buddha's visit. The Lord Buddha is said to have given him a few of His hairs and a few drops of sweat that turned into pearls. Indaka had enshrined these sacred hair and pearls in a stupa, believed to be the stupa here. Indaka, the chieftain of then Deva people is now regarded as a deity, reigning the Namunukula mountain range and Muthiyangana Raja Maha Viharaya.

**Lunch – Own arrangement by the guest**

## Heading to Ramboda to visit Tea Plantation & Tea Factory



Sri Lanka is renowned for being one of the finest tea makers in the world, today you can experience the making and the taste of best tea produced to satisfy the hearts of millions across the globe.

### Proceed to Nuwara Eliya

“Nuwara Eliya” also known as “Little England”, the scenic town of Nuwara Eliya lies nestled in a valley more than 2500 m above sea level and is surrounded by misty mountain ranges covered in pine forests and tea cultivations. Nuwara Eliya has a much cooler climate, which is in stark contrast to the tropical climate experienced in other parts of the island. The mountains surrounding Nuwara Eliya is covered with a carpet of tea bushes and the whole process of tea manufacturing, from green leaf to the fragrant contents of a packet of Ceylon Tea, can be watched at many of the tea factories in the area. Also close by is the Hakgala Botanical Gardens.

### Dinner & Overnight stay at a Hotel in Nuwara Eliya

## Day 06 – Nuwara Eliya - Hatton – Kelaniya - Colombo

Breakfast at the Hotel

Check-out from the hotel & proceed to Hatton & visit surrounding of Sri Pada (Sacred foot print of Lord Buddha)

It is well known for the Sri Pada i.e., "sacred footprint", a 1.8 m (5 ft 11 in) rock formation near the summit, which in Buddhist tradition is held to be the footprint of the Buddha, The pilgrims' season to Sri Pada traditionally starts on the full moon of December and ends on the full moon of April. During the first half of the season the night ascent isn't crowded.

Proceed to Kelaniya

**Lunch – Own arrangement by the guest**





## Visit Kelaniya Raja Maha Viharaya

Being just seven miles from Colombo, Kelaniya Raja Maha Viharaya is the most sought after Temple for the Buddhists in and around Colombo. On the Eighth year after the Enlightenment, the Lord Buddha has visited this sacred site, which had been the Third and the last visit to Sri Lanka by the Gauthama Buddha. Situated on the banks of Kelani River, which is originating from Sri Pada, makes this Temple surroundings attractive for the devotees who come to worship this hallowed land.



## Dinner & Overnight stay at a Hotel in Colombo

### Day 07 – Colombo – Airport

After breakfast you will be transferred to the Airport according to your flight schedule

TBN: You should be at the airport 3 hours prior to the time of departure