

## Sri Lanka Classical Tour 07 Nights / 08 Days

### Day 01 - Airport-Dambulla or Habarana

Up on arrival you will be met by our tour guide and company representative and offer assistance. Thereafter will travel directly to **SIGIRIYA** (Standard Program) or **HABRANA** (Deluxe Program)

**Travel time:** Approximately 3 hrs.

**HABARANA** - Habarana is the central point of Sri Lanka's cultural and historic triangle and the most convenient base for excursions to the Ancient historical cities. Located in the north central part of the island, Habarana is a part of Sri Lanka's dry zone. Thanks to the genius of our ancient kings dating as far as the 05th Century AD, the Sri Lankan dry zone is anything but dry, with hundreds of lakes and reservoirs which are connected by an elaborate network of canals making up an old but great irrigation system. Aside from the benefit for agriculture and industry, the waterworks of the dry zone provide some of the most breathtakingly beautiful scenery and fertile habitat for the islands incredible bio-diversity.

**PM:** At leisure, OR **optional Elephant Back safari** through the jungles of Habarana

Dinner & Overnight in Dambulla (Standard Program) or in Habarana (Deluxe Program)

### Day 02 - Dambulla or Habarana - Anuradhapura - Optional Jeep Safari

Breakfast at the hotel. Thereafter, precede to **ANURADHAPURA** the 1<sup>st</sup> Capital of ancient Sri Lanka.

**Travel time:** Approximately 1 & half hr

**ANURADHAPURA** - a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in the north central part of the Island was the first capital (5th century BC - 9th century AD), the centre of the island's Buddhist civilization and undoubtedly the grandest city of ancient Sri Lanka. In antiquity and the interest, it is the equal of any ancient 'buried city' in the world. The oldest historically documented tree on earth (over 2,200 years old) - The Sri Maha Bodhi, brought as a sampling of the tree under which the Buddha attained enlightenment, and the island's oldest Buddhist shrines - some dating back to the 3rd century BC, impressive white 'dagabas' (relic chambers) and monuments embellished with handsome stone carvings or sculpture, pleasure gardens, beautifully executed stone baths and ponds and a superb irrigation system of reservoirs and canals are the main attractions of Anuradhapura.

**PM:** At leisure, OR **Optional Jeep safari to Minneriya National Park** to witness the Wild Elephants.

**MINNERIYA NATIONAL PARK** - Minneriya National Park. Sitting in the centre of the cultural triangle, Minneriya is a good alternative to the busier parks in the south and it's easy to weave in a day here between visiting the ancient cities. The dry season, preferably from June to September, is the best time to visit the 8,890 hectare park when the ancient tank, the lake that dominates the area, dries out and the grasses and shoots push through. During this time it is possible to see herds of up to 150 elephants feeding and washing, as well as toque macaques, Sāmbhar deer and leopards. The hungry bird flocks include cormorants and painted storks. Minneriya, closest by car to the ancient city Polonnaruwa, was upgraded from a nature reserve to a national park because of the increased number of tourists coming to see the elephants.

Dinner & Overnight in Dambulla (Standard Program) or in Habarana (Deluxe Program)

### Day 03 - Dambulla or Habarana - Polonnaruwa - Sigiriya

After breakfast, engage in an exciting excursion to **POLONNARUWA** which is the 2nd and medieval Capital of ancient Sri Lanka.

**Travel time:** Approximately 1 hr

**POLONNARUWA** - Polonnaruwa a UNESCO World Heritage site, rose to fame as the capital after the decline of Anuradhapura. Its period of greatness was from the 10th - 12th centuries AD. The entire landscape of the region is punctuated by huge man-made reservoirs, veritable inland seas the most famous of which is the Parakrama Samudra or the Sea of Parakrama, larger in size than the Colombo harbor. The monuments of this medieval city are relatively well preserved and give clear evidence of the glory of Sri Lanka's past. See the Royal Palace complex, the Quadrangle with its concentration of ancient heritage and the spectacular Gal Vihare complex of four massive images of the Buddha, cut from a single slab of granite - a highlight of ancient Sri Lankan rock carving.

**PM:** The group after a break, will enjoy the evening excursion to **SIGIRIYA**

**SIGIRIYA** - This UNESCO World Heritage site, a spectacular Rock Fortress, is one of Sri Lanka's major attractions. The most impressive facets of the unique complex are the Water Gardens, the Frescoes of beautiful maidens, the Mirror Wall with ancient graffiti, the Lion platform and the Summit of 1.6 hectares, which was completely covered by buildings during the period of Sigiriya's glory.

Return back to the hotel

Dinner & Overnight in Dambulla (Standard Program) or in Habarana (Deluxe Program)

#### Day 04 - **Dambulla or Habarana - Matale Spice Garden - Kandy**

After breakfast, the group will leave to **KANDY** via visiting the popular **DAMBULLA** cave temple in the morning

**Travel time:** Approximately 45 mts

**DAMBULLA CAVE TEMPLES** - Dating back to the 01st century BC, this complex of 5 caves was used as refuge by an ancient king who on regaining his throne, commissioned magnificent carved images within the living rock. Later kings made further improvements and most of the paintings are from the early 19th century - A UNESCO World Heritage site.

Thereafter, the proceed to **KANDY** via visiting the Spice Garden in **MATALE**

**Travel time:** Approximately 2 hrs

**SPICE GARDEN AT MATALE** and see the luscious Cinnamons, Cardamoms, Pepper plants etc. You can also purchase your requirements of spices. Clients will have the opportunity to learn different spices and its significance to the local cuisine as Sri Lanka is famous for its rice and curries prepared using several spices.

**PM:** Arrive in **KANDY**

**KANDY** - a lovely exotic city, the Hill Capital and last stronghold of the Sinhala Kings is a UNESCO World Heritage Site which retains an aura of grandeur, time has not affected. Encircled by hills, with a tranquil lake in its centre, it is the site of the renowned temple that enshrines the Tooth Relic of the Buddha and the Royal Botanical gardens – home to one of the world's best collections of Orchids. A cultural sanctuary where many legends, traditions and folklore are still lovingly kept alive, Kandy and its satellite villages are the centre of the islands handicraft industry (items of wood, brass & silver) exquisite silver or gold jewelry and precious gems of many varieties including the world's best blue and star sapphires.

In Kandy, the group will travel via the upper lake drive, check into the hotel and relax by the pool side

Thereafter, the group will enjoy the Cultural show and later visit the **Temple of the Tooth** popularly known as the "**Dalada Maligawa**"

**TEMPLE OF THE TOOTH RELIC** - The famous Dalada Maligawa or the Temple of the sacred Tooth Relic in Kandy is the most venerated place of worship for Buddhists throughout the world. Built in the 16th century, this temple houses the sacred Tooth Relic of the Buddha brought to Sri Lanka from the Kalinga province in ancient India in the 4th century AD. Several buildings have been added to the temple complex by successive rulers, the latest being the Golden Canopy over the inner shrine where the Tooth Relic is placed. Originally the Temple was within the King's palace complex as it was the symbol of Royal Authority.

Dinner & overnight in Kandy

Day 05 - Kandy - Royal Botanical Gardens - Pinnawela - Kandy

Early, breakfast at the hotel. Thereafter, the group will leave the hotel in the morning and leave to the **ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS** in **PERADENIYA**

**Travel time:** Approximately 15 mts

**ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS** - Believed to be one of the most beautiful gardens in South Asia and begun as a pleasure garden by a Sinhala King. Every variety tropical and temperate tree and flower is cultivated here and special houses with orchids and cacti are too beautiful to be true. Special features are the Orchid House which displays a fine collection of Sri Lankan orchids, the fernery, spice garden, and the trees planted by distinguished visitors to the Island.

Thereafter, you will visit the **PINNAWELA ELEPHANT ORPHANAGE**

**Travel time:** Approximately 45 mts

**ELEPHANT ORPHANAGE AT PINNAWELA** - Pinnawela orphanage is situated northwest of the town Kegalle, halfway between the present capital of Colombo and the ancient royal residence Kandy in the hills of central Sri Lanka. It was established in 1975 by the Sri Lanka Wildlife department. This 24 acres large elephant orphanage is also a breeding place for elephants, more than twenty elephants were born since 1984, and it has the greatest herd of elephants in captivity in the world.

**PM:** Return to Kandy and indulge in a city tour and visit a popular gem mining factory together with visits to the popular market places where vegetables and fruits from other parts of the country are distributed.

Dinner & Overnight in Kandy

Day 06 - Kandy - Nuwara Eliya

Breakfast at the hotel. Later, check out on time and proceed to the **NUWARA ELIYA**

**Travel time:** Approximately 2 hrs

**NUWARA ELIYA** - Sri Lanka's premier hill resort with a fine bracing mountain climate, Nuwara Eliya is also the heart of Sri Lanka's tea country, producing some of the world's best tea. The mountain slopes and valleys are a carpet of velvety green tea plantations, interspersed with gushing streams and tumbling waterfalls. Red or green roofed plantation bungalows, English country style homes and hotels with lovely flower gardens, a fine 18-hole golf course and a racecourse gives Nuwara Eliya a decidedly British character.

**PM:** Enjoy an evening walk in the city of **NUWARA ELIYA**

### Dinner & Overnight in Nuwara Eliya

Day 07 - Nuwara Eliya - Kitulgala - Colombo

Breakfast at the hotel. Later, check out on time and precede to **COLOMBO OR NEGOMBO** a hotel close to the Airport.

**Travel time:** Approximately 2 hrs, 30mts

**KITULGALA** - the location where the film location of David Lean's Oscar winning masterpiece "The Bridge on the River Kwai" was filmed.

Thereafter transfer to **COLOMBO** (DELUXE PROGRAMME) OR a nearby hotel close to the Airport in **NEGOMBO** (STANDARD PROGRAMME)

**Travel time:** Approximately 2 hrs, 30mts

Dinner & Overnight in Negombo (STD Program) or Colombo (deluxe Program)

Day 08 - Negombo or Colombo - **Departure**

Breakfast at the hotel and later check out on time and leave to the **AIRPORT** on time for the **DEPARTURE**

**Travel time:** approximately 1 hour

End of the tour program

Tour package can be customized as per your choices and hotels can be chosen with your preferences.

Please write to us personally; we will organize your own Sri Lankan Wild Life Retreat as you wish.

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