



# AYUBOWAN

## WELCOME TO SRI LANKA!

Sri Lanka is a diverse destination with an amazing range of experiences for a relatively small island. The recorded history of the island dates back 2,500 years, when an exiled prince from northern India drifted onto the shores of Sri Lanka to establish the first known civilization here. It boasts a varied range of landscapes from golden beaches to rolling hills, forests and lush tea plantations. Sri Lanka was formerly known as “Serendib”, which means ‘wondrous surprise’ – and indeed it is! A beautiful island, the country was once referred to as “the fairest isle” by Marco Polo. Geographically, Sri Lanka lies like a teardrop in the Indian Ocean off the southeast coast of India. The country has a 90% literacy rate and a very friendly local population, which has enhanced its popularity as a tourist destination.







# GEOGRAPHY

Sri Lanka is a southern Asian island country in the Indian Ocean, situated between the Laccadive Sea and the Bay of Bengal. It is located 31 km off the southeastern coast of India, and features diverse landscapes that range from rainforest and arid plains to highlands and sandy beaches.

Away from the pristine coastline in the center of the island is “The Cultural Triangle”. This region comprises a succession of ancient capitals and Buddhist sites where intricate carvings and towering stone monuments are scattered throughout the forests.

Huge man-made lakes (water tanks) have kept the central area irrigated for millennia and continue to provide water for paddy fields and thirsty elephants that regularly leave the shelter of the jungle to come and drink.

The busy lakeside city of Kandy attracts thousands of devotees to the Temple of the Tooth, while the island’s rich colonial legacy can be seen in Nuwara Eliya – the hill country where tea is grown. It is also home to a stunning golf course that has been challenging players for over a century. Meanwhile the fortified town of Galle is where the Portuguese walls defended Dutch churches and the former homes of British merchants.

Until 1972 Sri Lanka was known as Ceylon, the country’s British Colonial name. Although Ceylon gained independence from Britain in 1948, the name wasn’t changed until the country became a republic in 1972.

## FAST FACTS

### OFFICIAL NAME

Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

### CAPITAL CITY

Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte  
(a suburb of the commercial capital and largest city, Colombo)

### BOUNDARIES

Being an island nation there are none, but the closest neighbor is India.

### CURRENCY

Sri Lanka Rupee (LKR)

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Sinhala

### POPULATION

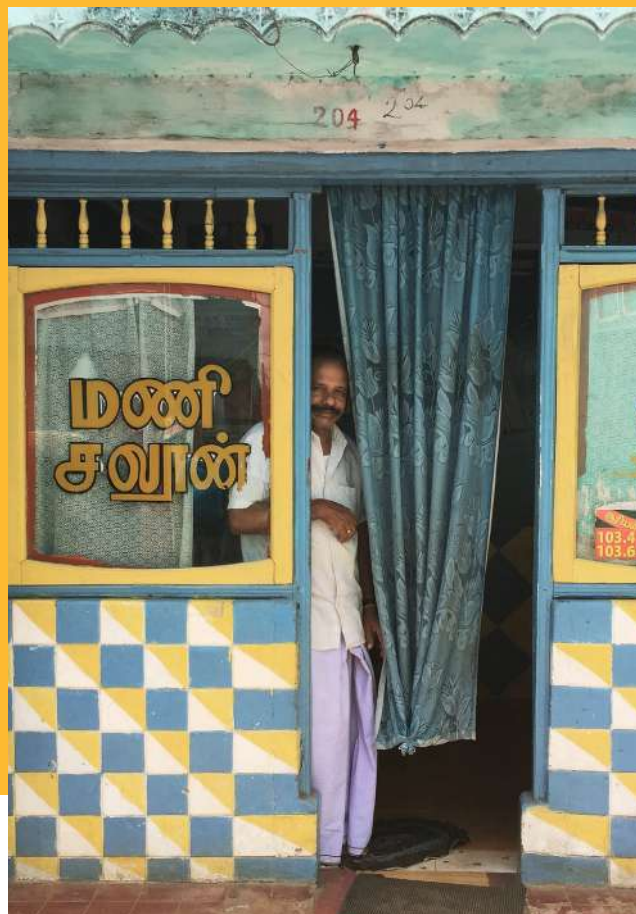
21.4 million

### TOTAL AREA

65,610 km<sup>2</sup>

# SRI LANKA DESTINATIONS

While Sri Lanka is incredibly diverse in its destinations, let us introduce a couple of highlights that define an exciting Sri Lankan holiday. Of course, the list doesn't end here and there's much more to explore if you are ready to tread a bit off the beaten path.



## COLOMBO

Colombo, the commercial capital, has often been avoided by visitors for a misunderstood reputation of being yet another busy city. We are ready to change that perception with a great choice of exciting activities that allow visitors to discover Colombo at its best. Prepare for some traffic, but once you have passed the busy avenues, you are in for a treat!

Tuk Tuks are the best mode of travelling within the city as you explore the street food joints at Galle Face Green and the bustling markets at Pettah, and if you want to dwell deeper into the inner suburbs, a visit to Slave Island area won't disappoint you.

Arrack is a local spirit not to be missed while in Colombo. It can be a premium Ceylon arrack at the famous travelers bar at Galle Face Hotel, or if you are more adventurous, a shot of Extra Special arrack (as the locals call it) at one of the city's famous "Dodgy Bars" will be an experience in itself.



## KANDY

Situated in the central highlands amongst rainforest-clad hills, Kandy – known as the last Kingdom – still retains some of its touches of colonial history. The city's biggest pride, The Sacred Temple of the Tooth Relic, remains a must visit site; pack some white clothes to wear to the temple so you blend in well with the locals.

Don't forget to visit some forgotten places like the British Garrison cemetery and meet the caretaker, who will unveil some interesting stories behind the tombstones!

When you head towards the suburbs, you could still find the three temples loop of Gadaladeniya, Embekke and Lankatilake, which can also be done as a trek through the villages.





# GALLE

Famous for its Galle Fort, the experiences are endless in and around Galle.

Cobbled streets that have seen four hundred years of history from Arab merchants, adventurous Portuguese and the industrious Dutch; colonial homes complete with red tiled roofs; and an impressive rampart surrounding a small peninsula jutting out to the Indian Ocean; that's Galle Fort summed up for you!

Perhaps one of the most remarkable things about the Fort is that it is a living monument; families that have lived here for generations continue to inhabit the fortified streets. In the afternoon, you might stop for some thambili from a local vendor or some crispy vaddais or meet local spice merchants and learn about the curry mixes that go into creating your favorite Sri Lankan curries. Galle is about meeting people and discovering the friendly faces of this town!



## INSIDER'S PICK

"There is no country in the world that has attracted the attention of authors in so many distant ages and of so many different countries as Ceylon... its aspects, its religion, its antiquities, and productions, have been described as well by the classic Greeks, by the Romans; by the writers of China, Burma, India and Kashmir; by the geographers of Arabia and Persia; by the mediaeval voyagers of Italy and France; by the annalist of Portugal and Spain; by the merchant adventures of Holland, and by the travelers and topographers of Great Britain.

Ceylon – now Sri Lanka – from whatever direction is approached, unfolds a scene of loveliness and grandeur unsurpassed, if it be rivaled, by any land in the universe".

## CULTURAL TRIANGLE

The Cultural Triangle is rich in its history, with must-see World Heritage cultural sites include the Sacred City of Anuradhapura, the Ancient City of Polonnaruwa, the Ancient City of Sigiriya, the Ancient City of Dambulla and the Sacred City of Kandy.

Beyond these must-see sites, if you dig deeper you can unveil some of the less visited – yet interesting – historical and archeologically valuable sites.

A walk of discovery among the Ritigala ancient monastery complex takes you along meditational pathways that open into the thick jungle and large stone-lined reservoirs; the perfect place to connect to with nature.

Next to Sigiriya is Pidurangala, yet another lesser-known rock formation; a climb to the top allows visitors to discover some amazing views of the Cultural Triangle!



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