



Northern Sri Lanka Explorer

Go Beyond Tour | 10 Days | Physical Level 1

Colombo – Negombo – Anuradhapura – Jaffna –

Trincomalee – Kandy – Colombo

Discover the wonders of Northern & Eastern Sri Lanka. After experiencing unforgettable wildlife sightings, the east coast introduces you to the tranquil harbour and fine beaches. Travelling inland you will experience temples, history, heritage and arts and crafts at local bazaars.

- Explore Wilpattu National Park
- Visit World Heritage sites
- Enjoy the hot springs of Keerimalai
- Discover Trincomalee's harbour
- Visit Kandy's sacred temple
- Discover the delights of Colombo

To book call **1300 727 998** or visit your local travel agent

Visit wendywutours.com.au



Northern Sri Lanka Explorer tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All Meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English-speaking national escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers)
- Visa fees for Australian passport holders
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in and other items not specified on the itinerary.

Go Beyond Tours:

Venture off the beaten track to explore fascinating destinations away from the tourist trail. You will discover the local culture in depth and see sights rarely witnessed by other travellers. These tours take you away from the comforts of home but will reward you with the experiences of a lifetime.

- Walking through classic sites
- Unique cultural experiences and encounters
- Off the beaten track destinations
- More evenings at leisure for independent exploration

Physical Level 1:

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. 'Northern Sri Lanka Explorer' is rated 1 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 will be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

Of course, our National Escorts and local 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.

Country Profile: Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is a beautiful island, with a 2,500m high mountainous range, stunning waterfalls, endless tropical beaches and national parks full of amazing wildlife. Explore ancient cities, temples, monuments and architecture that reveal evidence of the former presence of the British Raj.

Joining Your Tour

The tour is 10 days in duration including international flights. Due to flight schedules you may arrive/depart on Day 2.

Travellers booked on a 'Land Only' package, the price includes visa fees and your arrival/ departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to reservations. Join the tour on Day 1 in Negombo and end the tour on Day 10 in Colombo. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

Itinerary Changes

It is our intention 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 maintaining the integrity of your trip.

Itinerary – Northern Sri Lanka Explorer

Days 1: Arrive Negombo

Fly to Colombo. Upon arrival, your Local Guide from Wendy Wu Tours will meet you at the airport and transfer you to Negombo where the rest of the day is at leisure.



Destination Information

Negombo – A modest beach town situated on the west coast of Sri Lanka. In the past it served as an important trading port for the Dutch and the Portuguese.

Day 2: Negombo to Anuradhapura

After breakfast depart for Anuradhapura. The drive will take three and a half hours to Wilpattu National Park, where you will be stopping en-route to enjoy a jeep safari. The park is named from “Willus” – natural lakes found throughout the park. It records a vast number of Sri Lankan Leopards and is well known for a healthy population of elephant, sloth bear and water buffalo. You will continue the 45-minute drive to Anuradhapura.



Destination Information

Anuradhapura – The first capital and grandest city of the ancient Ceylon. There are many historical and archaeological places of interest and is famous for the well-preserved ruins of an ancient Sinhala civilization. Hidden away in dense jungle for many years, the palaces, monasteries and monuments are now accessible to tourists.

Day 3: Anuradhapura

Today will be spent exploring the city. You will be visiting Sri Maha Bodhi (Sacred Bo-Tree) the oldest historically documented tree in the world, Brazen Palace and Abhayagiriya monasteries, Thuparamaya Temple, the first 1st Buddhist Temple in Sri Lanka as well as the Samadhi Buddha statue and Isurumuniya rock temple and Kuttam Pokuna.



Destination Information

Sri Maha Bodhi – A sampling of the tree under which Prince Siddhartha attained enlightenment and is over 2,200 years old.

Abhayagiriya monastery - A Buddhist monastery and one of the most extensive ruins in the world and most sacred Buddhist pilgrimage city of the nation.

Kuttam Pokuna – Known as the twin pools, were built by the Sinhalese and are considered as one of the most significant achievements in the field of hydrological engineering and artistic creations.

Day 4: Anuradhapura to Jaffna

Proceed to Jaffna this morning where, after the 4 hour drive, you will check into your hotel. This afternoon your sightseeing will be a city tour covering the Naguleswaram Temple, the Hot springs of Keeramalai and the ruins of the Kantharodai Buddhist Temple.



Destination Information

Keeramalai Hot Springs – This mineral water spring is believed to have healing powers. There are two pools with separate entrances for male and females. While the men's pool is open to the skies, the women's remains enclosed.

Kantharodai Buddhist Temple – One of the oldest Buddhist archaeological sites, consisting of small stupas marking the burial sites of Tamil monks.

Day 5: Jaffna

After breakfast you will continue to explore the city taking in Nallur Kandaswamy Kaval. Located on the outskirts, it is considered the most prominent Hindu religious attraction in the area. Continue to Jaffna Fort, which is constructed with black coral, and the bustling Jaffna Market where you can sample various local delicacies. From palmyrah flour to peanut candy and sacks of mor milagai (buttermilk chillies), all can be found in small quantities made from local ingredients. You will also visit the Old Palace, a reminder of an Ancient Jaffna Kingdom.



Please note: Nallur Temple - Gentlemen will be requested to enter the temple without their shirts as a Hindu custom.

Destination Information

Nallur Kandaswamy Kovil – The initial temple was built in 948 with development done in 13th century. It was then renovated by prince Sapumal. Later the Portuguese captured this area and demolished it. The current kovil was built in 1734.

Jaffna Fort – This fort covers an area of 22 acres, being the 2nd largest fort in Sri Lanka. It was constructed by the Portuguese but later captured by the Dutch, to then come under British rule in 1795. The fort went through major renovations during Dutch ruling and hence is still mentioned as a Dutch Fort.

Day 6: Jaffna to Trincomalee

After breakfast you will travel 4 hours to Trincomalee. On arrival you will check into your hotel where you have the next 2 days at your leisure to explore this port city. Why not take an excursion to Pigeon Island, or take a dolphin and whale-watching cruise? There are temples, Fort Frederick and the harbour to explore or simply relax at your hotel.



Destination Information

Trincomalee – A port city on the northeast coast of Sri Lanka, and one of the world's finest natural harbours. This town has plenty of history, with both Buddhist and Hindu sites of historical importance. Most of the Tamils and Sinhalese believe it is sacred and they are the indigenous people of the area.

Day 7: Trincomalee

Another day at leisure for you to sit back and relax or explore.

Day 8: Trincomalee to Kandy

Check-out this morning and drive 4 hours to Kandy where on arrival you will be taken on a tour of the city. Kandy offers an array of culture, history and heritage. Walking through town you will come across bazaars, an arts & craft centre, a gem museum and local produce in the Kandy market. Discover the Kandyan legacy around the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic of Lord Buddha.



This evening you will enjoy a cultural show

Destination Information

Kandy – A large city in central Sri Lanka, set on a plateau and surrounded by mountains. Famed for its Buddhist sites, this the 2nd largest city of Sri Lanka, has a fascinating history, rich culture and spectacular beauty. Each year the tooth relic is honoured in Esala Perahera, a religious parade with elephants, drummers and dancers performing in the streets.

Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic - The temple houses an important Buddhist Relic, a tooth of the Buddha. Stolen at his funeral, the tooth was smuggled into Sri Lanka hidden in the hair of a princess who fled from India. The relic of the tooth is kept in a two-storey shrine fronted by large elephant trunks

Day 9-10: Kandy to Colombo

Depart Kandy early and enjoy the changing scenery driving through the heart of Sri Lanka to Colombo. After lunch you will embark on a 3-4 hour walk around the city with photographer Mark Forbes or one of his associates. This tour will include Galle Face Green, Old Parliament, Main street, Independence Square and Cinnamon Garden. You will be taken through alleyways, passageways to churches and old buildings. Tonight, enjoy a farewell meal with the group before being transferred to the airport to board your late-night flight to Australia arriving home the following day. (A late check out is included until 18:00).



Destination Information

Colombo – The de-facto capital city and the business and commercial centre of Sri Lanka. Originally a small sea port, Colombo became prominent in the 15th century with the arrival of the Portuguese. The Dutch later arrived in the 16th century, but it wasn't until the British arrived in the late 18th century that Colombo developed into a major city.

Northern Sri Lanka Explorer Travel Information

Visas

Entry visas are required by all visitors to Sri Lanka and Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it from when you arrive back into Australia.

For the latest information on visa procedures, processing times and requirements, please kindly refer to our website <https://www.wendywutours.com.au/help-and-advice/passports-and-visas/>

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 acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa.

Wendy Wu Tours does not accept responsibility for lost or undelivered items.

All information with regards to visas will be updated regularly on our website as we find visas processes are changing on regular basis.

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. Meals as outlined in the itinerary (excluding drinks) are included in our tour. Please be aware that dishes selected for your meals reflect the cooking styles and signature dishes of the local area you are in.

Those with dietary requirements will be well catered for - just make sure to inform your booking agent of any specific requirements well in advance of your trip.

All the restaurants we visit will be researched and inspected regularly to ensure that they follow the strictest health, cleanliness, and safety guidelines. All waiting staff will wear face masks and gloves and self-service buffets will be avoided in favour of à la carte dining, waiter-served meals, or waiter-assisted buffets. Hand sanitiser will be provided to the group before and after every food and beverage service.

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

Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local 3 to 4-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between Australia and Sri Lanka. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV 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/Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs. Please note that double bed requests can be made at time of booking but cannot be guaranteed.

Porterage

Please be aware that porterage is not included on our tours in Sri Lanka. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

Transport

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Main and inner-city roads in Sri Lanka have a reputation for being very congested. For this reason, it may not always be possible to return to your hotel after sightseeing to freshen up before going to the restaurant for dinner. Roads in Sri Lanka have generally been improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of 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. Please be aware that there are heightened security measures being carried out on vehicles entering hotels, tourist sights and airports.

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 Australia. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in Australia; for example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade. All of 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.

Public Holidays in Sri Lanka

If you are travelling within the below Sri Lankan Public Holidays please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses will be closed and coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open but may be crowded. Vesaka Full Moon Poya (Birth of Buddha) on the 29 May, Kandy Esala Perahera Festival from the 14 - 21 August 2021 and the Diwali Festival is on 4 November 2021.

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.

Group Size

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a National Escort. There will usually be no more than 28 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with Local Guides.

Tipping Policy

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and Sri Lanka is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. In order to avoid any inconvenience Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your national escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed to himself, local guides and drivers throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people.

If you are travelling in a smaller group with local guides only, then tipping is paid in each destination. To be fair to the guides we ask for slightly higher amounts per traveller with small groups.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy, but we do recognize that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour, we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

Packing list and Climate

You will find a complete packing list and a helpful climate chart in the 'Suggested Packing List', which will be included in the pre-departure information link sent within your deposit documentation. Seasonal weather patterns can be quite unpredictable. Up to the minute information on worldwide weather can be found on www.weather.com

Luggage

Travelers are limited to two items of luggage each; a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of 5kg. It is essential that your luggage is lockable.

Exchanging Cash

Australian Dollars can be easily exchanged in Sri Lanka, provided notes are new and undamaged. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Your National Escort will remind you to do this before departure.

It is highly recommended that extra care and attention is paid when exchanging money when travelling outside major cities in Sri Lanka. US Dollars are easily exchanged throughout Sri Lanka however other currencies such as Australian Dollars can generally be exchanged in hotels and airports provided notes are new and undamaged. We suggest for your convenience that you ensure your US Dollars are from the new series (2003 onwards) to avoid any difficulties exchanging money during your trip. Old series notes can be difficult to exchange.

We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Your National Escort will remind you to do this before departure.

Personal Expenses & Optional Tours

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AU\$350.00 per person, per week should be sufficient; however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional tours may be offered in each city you visit during your tour at an additional cost. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide.

Climbing Steps

Sightseeing at most of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defense against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

Cultural Difference

Sri Lanka has many religions, cultures and histories. Please be considerate of the local beliefs and customs and dress with consideration.

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.

Religious sites and homes throughout Sri Lanka – for Hindus, Muslims or Buddhists to name a few – 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 the entrance of a site where it is customary to leave your shoes near the entrance. Occasionally there are 'shoe minders' who will offer to keep your shoes safe for a 'tip' – this is not compulsory, so each customer 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 socks in your daypack, which you can wear to protect your feet from any rough or hot surfaces. The above itinerary will indicate when you need to consider this.

Vaccinations and Your Health

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.travelvax.com.au

Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.smartraveller.gov.au as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian 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 followed by deposit documentation, which includes 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.

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