

Topdeck

DELVE DEEP: SRI LANKA



TRIP CODE:
TSLNN2

TOPDECKER, meet Asia (TD)

TRIP VIBE = iconic sights and in-depth adventures with a local Trip Leader. If you've ever Googled 'beach holidays' chances are Sri Lanka made the list. And yep, the beaches are pretty bloody good. But trust us, there's a sh*t load more going on in this South Asian country than just surf, sand and sunburn. From ancient rock fortresses to Dutch colonial cities. Elephant safaris in lush national parks to whale watching off the coast. Scenic train rides through tea plantations to awe-inspiring hikes at sunrise. This Delve Deep trip uncovers the side to Sri Lanka you didn't know existed.

WORTH NOTING...

A Sector trip is part of a larger journey, meaning your new friends might continue on or after you leave, or you might be joining a trip already in progress.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Delve Deep



Nights



Android/iPhone
app download
info



This is a sector
trip.

Hi, and thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

You can rest assured that we'll pull out all the stops to make your trip unforgettable.

Now it's time to get excited about your holiday...

ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – including where to meet and what to bring. We recommend that you read these notes thoroughly so you know what to expect on your trip of a lifetime. Also, you can easily download and print this document off so you can bring it with you when you travel.

Please bear in mind that some points should be taken as a guide only – after all, everyone's different! For example, daily spending money and clothing lists can vary from one person to the next, so don't be alarmed if you don't expect to spend (or even wear) so much!

PLEASE NOTE: We strongly urge you to refresh this document as close to the time of your departure as possible to ensure you have the most up-to-date accommodation list and information available.

ON THE BUCKET LIST (INCLUDED)

- + Hike up Pidurangala Rock
- + Visit Sigiriya rock fortress
- + Visit Dambulla Cave Temple
- + Visit the Temple of the Tooth
- + Tuk-tuk tour around Kandy
- + Tea plantation visit and tea-tasting experience
- + Scenic train ride from Nuwara Eliya to Ella
- + Hike Little Adam's Peak
- + Visit the Nine Arch Bridge
- + Cooking class at a local home
- + Udawalawe National Park jeep safari
- + Overnight stay at Udawalawe Big Game Camp
- + Village bike tour in Galle
- + Evening Galle Fort walk

MORE INCLUSIONS

- + Airport transfer
- + Hike up Pidurangala Rock
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- + Overnight stay at Udawalawe Big Game Camp
- + Village bike tour
- + Visit Galle Dutch Fort

YOUR TRIP WILL
START

PICK UP:

YOUR TRIP WILL
FINISH

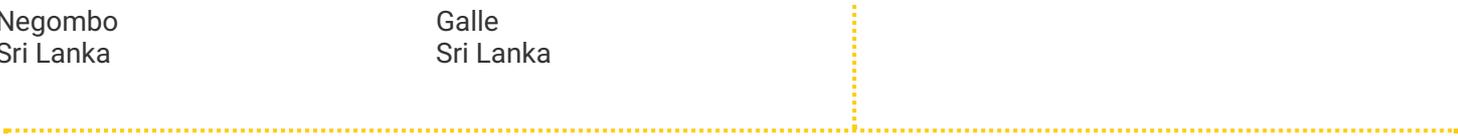
DROP OFF:

TRIP CURRENCIES

- + Sri Lanka -

Negombo
Sri Lanka

Galle
Sri Lanka



YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 | NEGOMBO (SRI LANKA)

Touch down at Bandaranaike Airport, scan the crowd for your airport transfer (they'll be holding the sign with your name, obv) and take a load off – this is the start of 11 days' in-depth, flavour-filled fun. Catch some coastal vibes with an optional visit to the local fish market. Watch the locals paddle their fishy oruvas (canoes) into the lagoon and tuck into some fresh AF seafood while you're at it. If you've got time, give any jet lag the flick with a cycle around the Dutch-style canals and Buddhist temples. And tonight? Time to meet your fellow explorers over an included dinner. Cheers to that.



MEALS:

+ Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Airport transfer



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

+ Visit the local fish market (no additional cost)

DAY 2 | NEGOMBO – SIGIRIYA

Down your breakfast and wave goodbye to the sea (for now) – we're headed to Sigiriya: the ancient rock star of Sri Lanka. FACT: this place was built by the short-lived King Kasyapa over 1600 years ago. Lace up your Nikes and prep yourself for a climb as we tackle Pidurangala Rock. A popular spot for sunrise and sunset, the top of this baby sports 360-degree views of the surrounding valleys and Sigiriya Rock – so the trek is 100% worth it. BTW you don't have to choose between the two – we've penciled in enough time to catch the sunset and a sick sunrise tomorrow too. Thank us later.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Hike up Pidurangala Rock

DAY 3 | SIGIRIYA

Step away from the snooze button – today's early start is worth it. Promise. We'll try to beat the heat and head up the dramatic rocky outcrop of Sigiriya for sunrise. It's a decent climb, but this is the stuff you came for, right? Tuck into breakfast at the top and take some time to explore the magnificent rock fortress and views of the surrounding plains. Then, we'll discover Dambulla Cave Temple – a World Heritage-listed monastery that's been a pilgrimage site for over 2000 years. Later: there's an optional jeep safari through Minneriya National Park on the cards – aka a wildlife lovers' wet dream.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Visit Sigiriya rock fortress
+ Visit Dambulla Cave Temple



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

+ Minneriya jeep safari: from 30 USD

DAY 4 | SIGIRIYA – KANDY

You want Kandy? That's lucky, we're off to the second largest city in Sri Lanka this morning. In the arvo, we'll head to Dalada Maligawa – that's Temple of the Tooth to you and me. Tooth Temple got you WTF-ing? Well you read right, this temple houses a relic of Buddha's tooth so it's kinda important. Then: jump on board a tuk-tuk for a (nail-biting) ride around the city and picturesque lake. And tonight? Time to spice up your life and get sampling the best curries E-V-E-R. Hot tip: opt for some pol sambol (coconut relish) and wambatu moju (pickled eggplant). BTW when we said hot tip, we meant literally.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Visit the Temple of the Tooth
+ Tuk-tuk tour around Kandy

DAY 5 | KANDY – NUWARA ELIYA – ELLA

Today's letter is T. We'll stop in at Nuwara Eliya en route to Ella to check out a working tea plantation and immerse ourselves in the sweet aromas of Sri Lankan tea culture. Soak up some beaut views of the lush rolling hills, and try a cup or two of the world-famous Ceylon. Then, it's all aboard a scenic train ride to Ella. Forgot your camera? You're going to regret that.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast
+ Lunch



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Tea plantation visit and tea-tasting experience
+ Scenic train ride from Nuwara Eliya to Ella

DAY 6 | ELLA

Get your feed of pani pol (Sri Lankan pancakes) at breakfast because we've got a day of hiking mapped out for you. Walk through tea plantations and rocky mountain paths along Little Adam's Peak – you'll be rewarded for all your hard work with some pretty spesh views. Grab a quick snap of the famous Nine Arch Bridge before heading back to the hotel. Then: lunchtime! We'll be welcomed into a local home for a masterclass in cooking traditional Sri Lankan curries and desserts from the pros. Afterwards, spend the afternoon walking off the deliciousness with a jaunt around town. Need recs? Your expert Trip Leader's got 'em.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast
+ Lunch



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Hike Little Adam's Peak
+ Photo stop at Nine Arch Bridge
+ Cooking class at a local home

DAY 7 | ELLA – UDAWALAWE

Been practising your best David Attenborough impersonation? We hope so. Today, we're headed to Udawalawe National Park for more wildlife than you can point a camera lens at. On our jeep safari you'll have plenty of time to search for lounging leopards, creepy-looking crocs, sloth bears, and wild elephants grazing across the savanna. If birds are more your thing, there's a heap of them too. We're spending tonight under the stars at an awesome-AF big game camp (Google it, trust us). Tuck into dinner with the crew and share holy sh*t moments of the day around a crackling campfire.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Udawalawe National Park jeep safari
- + Overnight stay at Udawalawe Big Game Camp

DAY 8 | UDAWALAWE – MIRISSA

Enjoy a sleep in this morning before we make our way to the coastal town of Mirissa (see, told you we'd be back). This is your chance to sit back and lap up all the palm-fringed, white-sand vibes – so crack open a fresh coconut, find yourself a hammock and let the island life soak in. You could build up an appetite with an optional surfing lesson along Mirissa Beach or lap up the sunset views from the coconut farm up the road. Either way, make sure you hunt down some hoppers for dinner this eve – bowl-shaped pancakes filled with egg or veggies. Dad joke alert: you'll be hopping mad if you miss out.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Surfing lesson or board hire: prices available locally

DAY 9 | MIRISSA

Oh what's that? A whole free day to get your explore on? Awesome. If you're here between November and April, we recommend jumping on an optional whale watching tour to spot the migrating blue whales off the shore. Largest animal in the world, you know. Otherwise: throw some shakas at Weligama. Visit Coconut Island (watch your head). Or top up the tan along Marissa Beach. Tonight, pull up a pew at a candlelit beach bar and take it all in. This is what you came for.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Whale watching tour (Nov – Apr): from 115 USD

DAY 10 | MIRISSA – GALLE

Get up early for a sunrise stroll on the beach before we move on to the historic city of Galle. We'll swap six wheels for two as we cycle around the surrounding local villages – taking in the green fields, peaceful lakes, and meeting some of the locals getting on with their day-to-day. With over 400 years of rich history, exploring the perfectly preserved colonial township of Galle is a must. Later, it's off to Galle Dutch Fort for an evening walk around this UNESCO Heritage-listed site before we say farewell over one last supper with the gang.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Village bike tour
- + Visit Galle Dutch Fort

DAY 11 | GALLE – NEGOMBO

You tried the food. You met the locals. You said yes to culture. Yes to history. Yes to the new and the exotic. But now our Sri Lankan adventure has drawn to a close. Sad face. If you're heading off after breakfast, we've got your airport transfer sorted. Caught the travel bug bad? Check out our other Delve Deep trips around Asia. You know you want to...



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Airport transfer

TIPPING

NO TIP NECESSARY

Your Topdeck Trip Leaders and Drivers never expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. We also know how much tipping can cost you. So go ahead – spoil yourself with the money you save traveling with us (just don't forget Mum's souvenir).

TOPDECK TRAVEL APP

Our app is available to download before you travel. With a range of cool features including a currency converter, budget planner, check-in tool and group chat, it'll help you plan your trip like a pro. Think of it as your very own Topdeck Trip Leader in the palm of your hand.

TRIP GROUP CHAT

Connect with your fellow Topdeckers before you depart and begin your magical friendship in the flash of a winking face emoji.

ITINERARY VIEWER

Get the lowdown on where you'll be going and what activities you'll be doing on each day of your trip with this handy little tool.

CHECK-IN

Plug in all your vital deets and we'll keep them safe for when you really need them. Making your life easier, one swipe at a time.

BUDGET TRACKER

Keep an eye on your holiday spending, leaving you with more FUN-ds to play with. Think: elaborate Spanish feasts (not questionable supermarket sandwiches).

MAPS

Navigate your way to meeting points and lesser-known local gems using pins dropped by your Trip Leader, seek out your own bucket list sites and take to the streets like a pro.

Once the trip is over, you'll need the app to give us feedback about your trip experience. We love to hear what you thought about your trip, as it helps to give us an idea of the things we're doing well and the things we could be doing

better.

PLEASE NOTE: The Topdeck Travel App should only be downloaded once you have booked your trip. You will not be able to log in unless you have a Topdeck booking reference number.

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[GET IT FOR ANDROID](#)



PASSENGER SAFETY

NIGHTS OUT

One of the best parts of travelling is experiencing the nightlife and entertainment each city has to offer. However, amidst the fun and excitement, it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety as well. Before you hit the road with us, be sure to familiarise yourself with the following safety information.

When you're on a night out, remember to avoid walking alone, particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation details so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. It's also a good idea to get your Topdeck trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking, and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

RESPECTING FELLOW PASSENGERS

Here at Topdeck, we're all about inclusivity. We want to make sure that everyone has a great time on our trips, and that everyone feels like they're part of one happy Topdeck family.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong – that's just not what families do. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow passengers. The golden rules? Always remember to respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation and treat others how you'd wish to be treated yourself. Easy!

DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Passengers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana, even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

REMEMBER – if you are found in possession of drugs, not only could you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if drugs are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you wouldn't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up again.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- + Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- + Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!

- + Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink, you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations
- + Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home, too – so they're sure to know of some tried-and-tested ways to beat the blues
- + Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (trust us).

HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome holiday AND have a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- + Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your hotel towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- + Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- + Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets and book tours and activities run by local guides
- + Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- + Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

OTHER INFORMATION

INSURANCE

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.

World Nomads provides comprehensive travel insurance for people from over 140 countries. For more information, visit www.topdeck.travel/travel-insurance.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling.

PLEASE NOTE: Some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it (as long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is!)

Heading on our Namaste India trip? Your luggage is capped at 15kg, so maybe leave the hairdryer at home.

- + 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes
- + 1 pair of smart casual shoes
- + 1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
- + 2 pairs of jeans/trousers
- + 2 pairs of shorts/skirts
- + 4 shirts/T-shirts
- + 2 sweaters/jumpers
- + Smart casual evening wear
- + 1 rainproof jacket
- + 1 warm jacket
- + Underwear and socks
- + Swimwear
- + Towel
- + Toiletries
- + Hat and sunscreen
- + Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- + Insect repellent
- + Conversion plug
- + Reusable water bottle
- + Snow gear



THAT'S IT!