

# Topdeck

## DELVE DEEP: SRI LANKA



TRIP CODE:  
TSLNN3



## 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



Download app



Meals

# Thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

Ready for the time of your LIFE?

The countdown's on...

## ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – from where to meet your Topdeck fam to what we suggest you bring.

Read them on the train, in the supermarket queue or on the loo – we don't mind, just look through them carefully so you know what to expect on your trip. We recommend you download this document so it's with you when you travel (and give a copy to your MVPs so they know what you're up to).

**IMPORTANT:** please refresh this doc as close to your departure as possible. This means you'll have the most up-to-date info 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 - LKR

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 beautiful 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 special 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

# OTHER INFORMATION

## TOPDECK APP

Feeling appy? Download the Topdeck app and get PUMPED for the adventure ahead. Best bit is: from 45 days before departure you'll be able to chat with your soon-to-be tripmates.

Plus, get your itinerary at your fingertips – so you know where you'll be going and what you'll be doing on each day of your trip. Nice!

Links:

Apple <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/topdeck/id994727866>

Android <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FlexiTechSolutions.TopDeck&hl=en>



## YOUR SAFETY

### NIGHTS OUT

We love a good night out – experiencing the nightlife and entertainment places have to offer is a big part of travelling. But alongside the fun it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety.

When you're out late, 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 so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. Make sure you have your 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.

### DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Customers 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 immediately. 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 do you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if they are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you don'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.

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 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 (fact!)

## TRAVEL SINCE COVID-19

Travel looks a bit different since COVID-19. That's why we've put some new procedures in place to help keep you safe on the road.

What remains the same? Your Topdeck trip will be run hygienically, responsibly, and with your safety at the forefront of everything we do. End of.

Here's the info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/travel-safely>

## 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.

Head to our FAQ for more info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/faqs-0>

Got more Qs? Chat with our Customer Service team: <https://www.topdeck.travel/about-us/contact>

## 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's 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. Check out our handy interactive map showing global visa requirements:

<https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/latest-border-restrictions>

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.

## TIPPING

Basically: it's not necessary.

Your Trip Leader and Driver don't expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. Meaning? More dollar to spend on optional activities (and a souvenir for your nan).



# 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!).

Off to Japan? Your luggage must be no bigger than 160cm in total (height x width x length). So maybe leave the hairdryer at home.

Psst: this is a packing list for Topdeck trips in general. Obv you'd look silly splashing around the Greek islands in a snowsuit.

- 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 warm jacket + 1 rainproof jacket
- Underwear and socks + swimwear
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Hat and sunscreen
- Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- Adaptor plug
- Reusable water bottle
- Snow gear



## THAT'S IT!