



25 Days

Sri Lanka

Bikes Buddha and Boats

Join us on this 26 day expedition to Sri Lanka and experience many of the highlights of this remarkable island. With influences from Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam, European traders and colonial powers, ancient kingdoms and, of course, cricket, Sri Lanka offers a warm welcome, dramatic scenery, and a laid back easy-going nature. We will travel to the North to the South, East and head West! We will work with a responsible, ethical project in the North, trek in the Central highlands and enjoy the beaches in the South. We have the chance to climb Sigiriya rock, undertake wildlife safaris and visit temples. What better way to get to know the true Sri Lanka?



Recommended expedition itinerary

Day
1-2

Arrive Sri Lanka & transfer to Negombo

Overnight flight to Sri Lanka. We arrive at Bandaranayake International Airport and are met before being transferred to Negombo. **NEGOMBO** town is a historically interesting place strongly influenced by the Catholic Church. The narrow strip of land between the lagoon & the sea and the many canals make for a good exploring. The Dutch captured the town from the Portuguese in 1640, lost it again in the same year, and then captured it again in 1644. The British then took it from them in 1796 without a struggle. Negombo was one of the most important sources of cinnamon during the Dutch era, and there are still reminders of the European days.

Day
3-4

The Mud House

As we start to acclimatise, a couple of days at The Mud House is ideal! Far from the beaten track and largely untouched by tourists, there are plenty of opportunities to meet the locals and work on the site's organic farm. We can explore the local area by bike, kayak or simply walk between the lakes and paddies or clamber on the unusual rock formations. You won't want to drag yourself away.

Day
5-6

Anuradhapura. Wilpattu Mannar Island

After a transfer to and tour of in Anuradhapura. We will get the opportunity to visit one of Sri Lanka's oldest wildlife reserves and enjoy an afternoon safari. We then drive to Mannar Island visiting the Thantirimale Temple and the catholic shrine of Our Lady of Madhu. After a night on the island we get to do some sightseeing around Mannar Island.

Day
7-14

Homestay in Poonakaray - Appe Lanka

This morning we will enjoy a drive further North to the village of Poonakaray where we will stay with local families. The next few days will be spent working on a variety of projects aimed at providing basic social and infrastructure services to communities, mainly Tamil, ravaged by decades of civil war. This will be an eye opening and highly rewarding project for both the local community and for the students too.

Day
15-16

Jaffna and Delft Islands

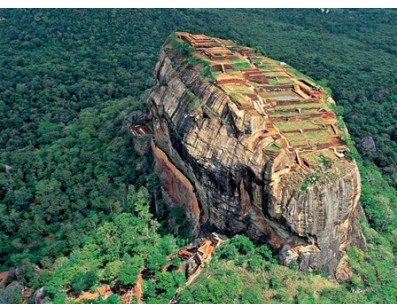
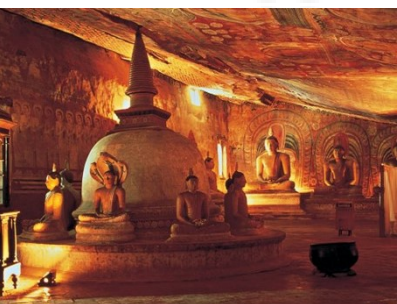
Early this morning we'll drive to Jaffna, Sri Lanka's northern most city and spend a day visiting a huge Hindu Temple, the colourful gopuram tower as well as the Colonial star shaped fort. These two days are a great opportunity to relax after the hard work on the previous week.

Day
17-18

Anuradhapura Dambulla Sigiriya. Polonnaruwa

Today we head south with an early morning train ride back to Anuradhapura and then a two hour drive to the famous Dambulla Caves. In the late afternoon, we'll enjoy a tour of the amazing Cave Temple. During the temple tour, we make our way through five caves, containing over 150 images of Buddha going back to 1st century BC when King Valagambahu took refuge here. The second cave, the most elaborate and most spectacular of the five, is the largest - 170ft long, 75ft broad and 21ft high. There is a large reclining Buddha statue and statues of two kings.

On the following day we visit Sigiriya. Rising nearly 700 feet above one of Asia's most well-preserved ancient landscaped gardens, the rock fortress of Sigiriya, a giant granite monolith, is an unforgettable site. First thing this morning we take the dramatic footpath which zig-zags its way up, past the famous Mirror Wall and to the top of the rock fortress. At the top, we spend time with the local monkeys enjoying the vast panoramic views and exploring the fortress, including the swimming pool that the King would relax by with his concubines. Even after all this there is still time to explore the stunning Polonnaruwa by bike!





Trekking Adams Peak and the Knuckles Range

We have a number of options for trekking in the stunning central Highlands. We can take in the sacred Adams Peak, trek in the Knuckles Range or visit Nuwara Eliya and the Horton National Park. Adam's Peak (2243m), known locally as 'Sri Pada', is a pilgrimage site and at peak season can be very busy with throngs of pilgrim ascending the lit staircase.

Day
19-22

A depression at the top of the peak is said to be Buddha's footprint (or that of Shiva to Hindus and Adam to Christians and Muslims) and, each year during the period between the December and May full moon, hundreds of thousands of pilgrims climb to the top for sunrise. The trekking is simply stunning through the Tea plantations. Tea production is one Sri Lanka's main sources of foreign exchange and the country is the world's fourth largest producer of tea. The humidity, cool temperatures and rainfall of the Central Highlands all combine to produce a very high quality tea. We trek through the wet and dry zones, in the hill country and the low country, semi-evergreen forest and grasslands and lowland evergreen virgin rainforest.

The flora and fauna is simply breathtaking with a wide variety of insects, reptiles and amphibians. There are also a small number of leopards, although these are very rarely seen due to the dense foliage.

Galle / city tour / free evening

After long 3 weeks trekking, traveling and working with the villagers in the North we will finally have time to relax and enjoy the south coast. We will have time to chill out on the beach as well as visit the Turtle Hatchery at Habaraduwa. Our night stop will be in the ancient port of Galle, also known as being Sri Lanka's first international commerce and trade centre. Today Galle is the bustling provincial capital and administrative centre of the south. It is famous for its beautiful Unawatuna Bay, where the sea is protected by the reef, making swimming safe. After a city tour, we have a free afternoon and evening to explore and perhaps pick up some gifts for our family at home.

Day
23-24

Transfer to airport for flight home

After breakfast, we'll be transferred to the airport for our flight back to London. This is normally an overnight arriving back the following day.

Day
25-26

Further information

Look what's included!

- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local expedition leader
- Parent and student expedition launch evening
- Comprehensive pre-expedition training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance

Your expedition timeline



Physical expedition rating:



Some low level physical activities included in your trip, including walking on uneven terrain, maybe a morning/afternoon trek of two to four hours. That said, no physical preparation is required to make the most of the tour. High humidity and temperatures can occur at certain times of the year.

Culture shock rating:



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey



1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

3 Arrange an expedition launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening with opportunity for questions.



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