

**BIRD WATCHING - SRI LANKA WITH ESNA HOLIDAYS
(10 Nights 11 Days)**



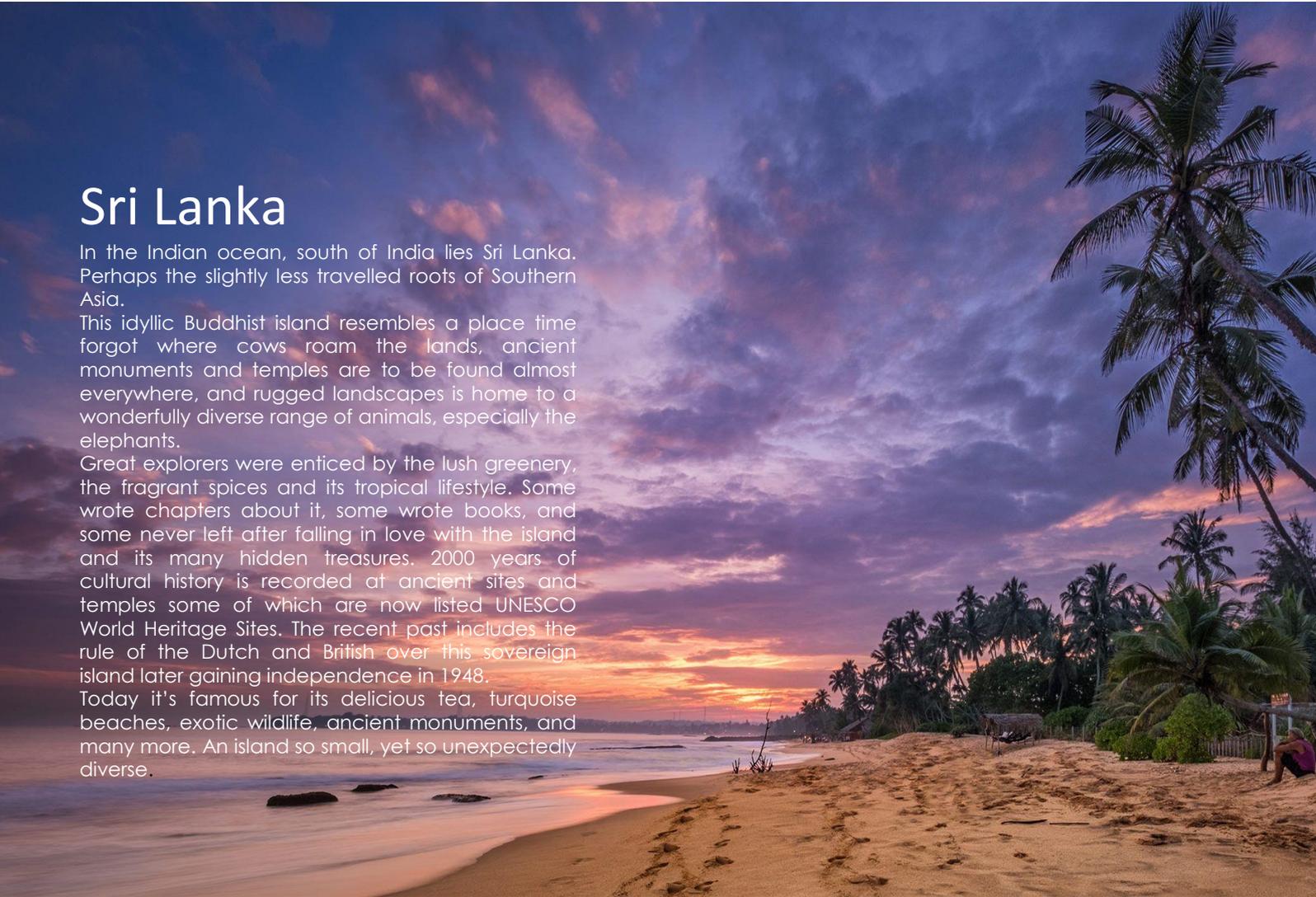
Sri Lanka

In the Indian ocean, south of India lies Sri Lanka. Perhaps the slightly less travelled roots of Southern Asia.

This idyllic Buddhist island resembles a place time forgot where cows roam the lands, ancient monuments and temples are to be found almost everywhere, and rugged landscapes is home to a wonderfully diverse range of animals, especially the elephants.

Great explorers were enticed by the lush greenery, the fragrant spices and its tropical lifestyle. Some wrote chapters about it, some wrote books, and some never left after falling in love with the island and its many hidden treasures. 2000 years of cultural history is recorded at ancient sites and temples some of which are now listed UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The recent past includes the rule of the Dutch and British over this sovereign island later gaining independence in 1948.

Today it's famous for its delicious tea, turquoise beaches, exotic wildlife, ancient monuments, and many more. An island so small, yet so unexpectedly diverse.



EXPLORE

Sri Lanka is an out of this world tropical island which is blessed with an exciting piece of everything possible on earth. Escape to a paradise on earth where you can trot along the golden sands sipping a fresh king-coconut, safari through the lush jungle to see mighty elephants and elusive leopards and perfect your golf swing on a stunning green golf course.

This is an outdoor paradise somewhere to totally escape and fall completely off the grid. Buses, tuk-tuks and mopeds all noisily hurtling along the busy streets. Once known as Ceylon, Sri Lanka was a country that

Sri Lanka is a country whose Buddhist past is as prevalent today as it was thousands of years ago. So, with such a lengthy heritage there's a great array of temples, ancient monasteries and monuments to explore, both in the town and hidden away in the islands' dense forests.

Here you'll find local artists taking their inspiration from Sri Lanka's wildlife. Sri Lankan craftsmanship has a long and vibrant history. Over the centuries the islanders have produced everything from lace work, elaborate metal works & carvings in wood. Buddha's Hindu Gods, traditional Sri Lankan masks and elephants are among the most popular carvings.

The people in Sri Lanka are what makes this wonderful island what it is. The smiles, the ever-so-helpful attitude, the laid-back lifestyle and the rustic architecture all tastefully lingers in your mind every step of the way.

WEATHER & BEST TIME TO VISIT

The weather in Sri Lanka is dictated by two monsoon seasons which bring rain to the west and south-west coasts from May to September; and the east coast and northern region between October and February. The rest of the year is sunny and dry. Temperatures are constant year-round, with coastal regions enjoying average temperatures of 25-30C and the highlands 15-18C on average.

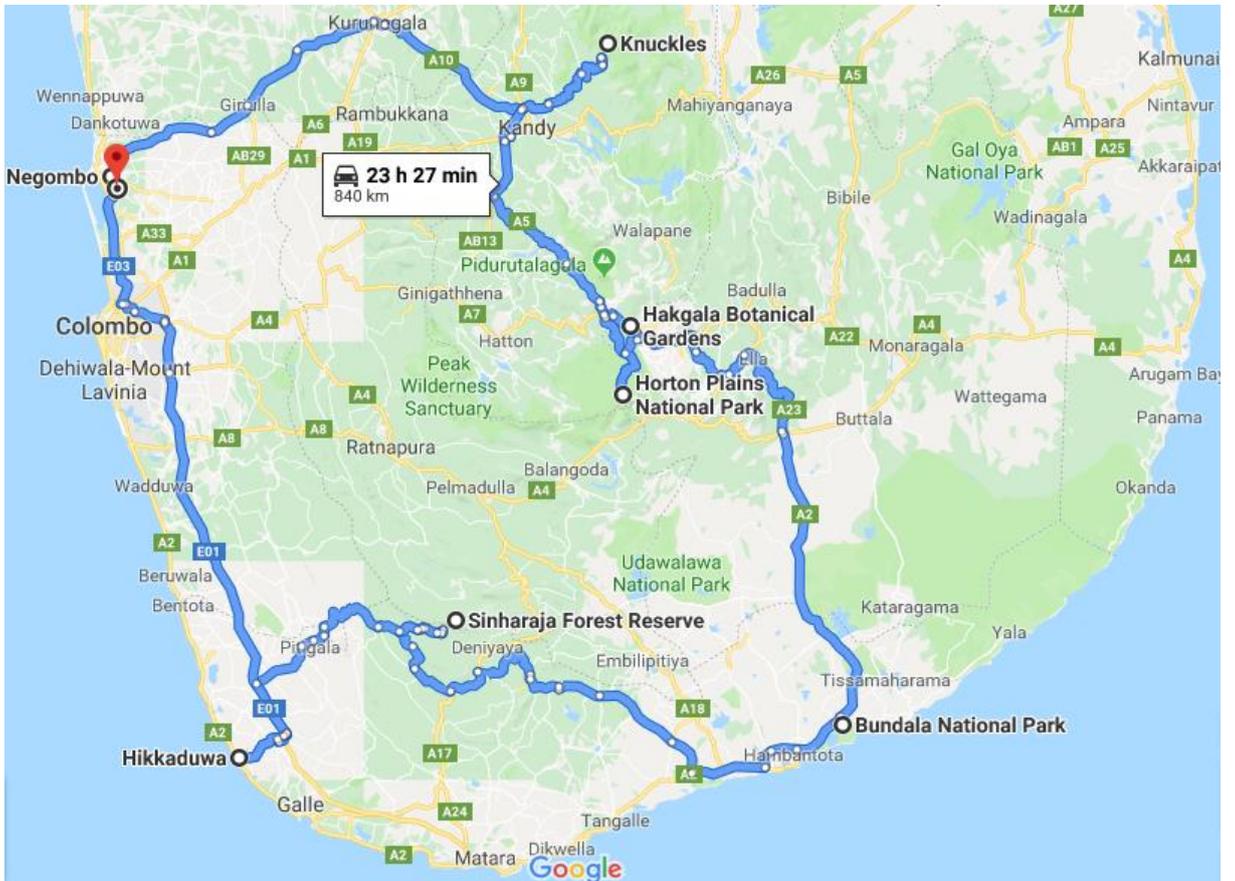
Sri Lanka is a year-round destination since there is something for every discerning traveler. From pilgrim experiences to adventure, culture, honeymoon, or even special interest experiences, there is something you can do in Sri Lanka anytime of the year. With recent weather pattern changes, it is hard to predict when it would rain and when the sun is out, however, making a note that Sri Lanka is a tropical destination and rain is to be expected anytime of the day, any time of the year; always helps.

Our recommended best time of the year to travel is between Novembers to April. However, its best to keep in mind that this period is also quite expensive to travel as the European winters and the festive year end generally attracts a lot of travelers to Sri Lanka.

VISA

VISA can be obtained online via the government e-visa website – www.eta.gov.lk. If you are a citizen of Singapore, Maldives or Seychelles, you are exempt from the requirement of obtaining visa for 1 month. It could take up to 5 working days for a VISA to process depending on where you are from

This birdwatching tour has been planned by experts and comes with a specialist guide. It can be designed to satisfy everyone from the committed twitcher to the amateur enthusiast and takes you to some beautiful parts of rural Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is a birdwatchers' delight and attracts more than 400 species. The best time for birding in Sri Lanka is between November and March when the migrant birds have landed, but two distinct monsoon seasons and a hilly interior means there is plenty to satisfy you all year round.



DAY 01: Airport – Negombo

Arrive to Colombo International Airport. Here, you will be met by a designated chauffer guide from Esna Holidays. After the formalities at the airport you will be escorted to your air-conditioned vehicle and proceed to Negombo. (Travel Time: 30 to 45 minutes).

Check into the hotel and relax.

Overnight stay in Negombo

DAY 02: Negombo – Riverston

Today, after breakfast and a relaxed morning, check-out the hotel and proceed to Riverston. (Travel Time: 3 to 4 hours)

On arriving Riverston, check-in at the hotel and relax.

Knuckles Mountain Range about 30km away from the Matale town, down the Matale – Girandurukotte Road. The secretive windy road, with its sharp hairpin turns, offers some of the best views to the surrounding countryside; to the extent that it is called the Mini World's End. Though it is very popular among locals, the area is comparatively unknown amongst mainstream tourists. Therefore, the area offers up the natural beauty of Sri Lanka; fresh, green and unpolluted by vendors, tourists, garbage and unsightly buildings.

The trek is about two and a half kilometers one way and shouldn't take more than a healthy hour or two at most. It runs a section known as the Pittawala Paththana and leads to the Riverston Peak. The countryside along the trek has views of the terraced paddy fields, unique to some mountainous regions around the world, and that of the beautiful green Central Highlands.

Overnight stay in Matale / Riverston
Meals Include: Breakfast / Dinner

DAY 03: Riverston

Today, after breakfast and a relaxed morning, you will go for Manigala Trekking. (Travelling Time: 30 mins approx.) (Trekking Time Approx. 6 hours)



You will travel down to the knuckles valley and commence the trek from village of Rathkinda situated at the base of the elephant shaped rock "Manigala". The villagers whose descendants were banished from the ancient kingdom of Kandy have traditionally used the shadow of the elephant shaped rock to read the time of the day. In local language "Mani" means time and "gala" means rock. Whilst trekking through the foot paths of the village of Rathkinda and Etanwala you can observe

the serene life style of the villagers whilst going about their day to day activities of farming & animal husbandry. Explore the village and appreciate the simplicity of life enjoyed by its people.

The trek is on rough trails and a few streams need to be forded en-route. A stop for a swim in the cool mountain water of a stream which rushes by the village and a picnic breakfast by the stream or a break for lunch at a village home is welcoming. You leave the village and walk past terraced paddy fields and enter the forest canopy of the valley to the sounds of rushing streams to view the biodiversity of the vegetation, colorful wildflowers, birds & butterflies which are uniquely endemic to the knuckles area. The entire area is characterised by its striking landscapes and in addition to its aesthetic value and the range is of great scientific interest.

The Manigala trek can be done as a long trek with a steep climb to the peak of Manigala. This trek takes you a five-hundred-meter climb up the Manigala mountain range through lush montane forest paths to scrub jungles. The forests will bring you to rich foliage of the Knuckles range with a breathtaking view of the valley down below.

At higher elevations there is a series of isolated forests, harbouring a variety of flora and fauna, some of which cannot be found anywhere else in the world. The range constitutes a significantly higher proportion of the country's biodiversity.

Sights on this trek include a panoramic/unbeatable 360-degree views of the Knuckles mountain range and surrounding paddy and other cultivations.

Overnight stay in Matale / Riverston
Meals Include: Breakfast / Dinner

DAY 04: Riverston - Kandy - Nuwaraeliya

After breakfast proceed to Kandy (Travel Time:1.5 hours). En-route visit Spice garden in Matale.



Spice Garden: See why Sri Lanka became a globally popular country for its herbs and spices. The environment possesses excellent conditions for growing cinnamon, vanilla, nutmeg, peppercorn, and other flavorful delights. Learn about the process of growing these natural products using ecologically friendly methods. At the end of your visit, stop in the souvenir shop to purchase some exotic spices from the source. The attraction offers free transport wherever needed between the city and the estate. Note that the law strictly forbids harming cinnamon trees.

After proceeding to Nuwaraeliya (Travel Time: 3 hours) with visiting a tea factory with tea tasting.

On arrival explore the city of Nuwara Eliya and enjoy dinner at a venue of your choosing. Visit the highland city that was the premium holiday resort town of the British in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Enjoy walking through the streets with their pretty little cottages, quaint villas and beautiful mansions. Make a memory in the old red-bricked post office as you purchase a postcard to take home or send to your friends. Relax at Queen Victoria Park and on the shores of Lake Gregory.

Evening Hakgala Botanical Garden is one of the five botanical gardens in Sri Lanka. It is the second largest garden in Sri Lanka. The garden is contiguous to Hakgala Strict Nature Reserve. The garden was established in 1861, under George Henry Kendrick Thwaites as an experimental cultivation of Cinchona. In 1884 it transformed to a garden. There are over 10,000 species of flora planted here and during the Spring season in Nuwara Eliya thousands of visitors come to see the blooms here. The garden is famous for number of species of Orchids and Roses are planted there.



Overnight stay in Nuwaraeliya
Meals Include: Breakfast / Dinner

DAY 05: Nuwaraeliya – Horton Plains - Nuwaraeliya

Today, with a packed breakfast but after a quick tea/coffee, get on a jeep to arrive at Horton Plains. (Travel Time: 45 mins.)



Horton Plains: Horton Plains is an undulating 2,000m-high plateau just 28km south of Nuwara Eliya. The grassy plains, which are interspersed with small patches of forest, are home to leopards, sambur, deer, bear, monkeys and a rich array of birds, including some endemic species. The most dramatic feature of the national park is 'World's End', where the plateau comes to an abrupt halt and drops nearly 1000m straight down. The park is frequented by Sambar Deer and due to their large numbers, the population of the Leopard also has increased. Wild Boar, the endemic Bear Monkey and Toque Monkey, Slender Loris, Fishing

cat, Otter, Barking deer, Strip-necked Mongoose, Long-tailed Giant Squirrel are some of the other mammals found here.

Overnight stay in Nuwaraeliya
Meals Include: Breakfast / Dinner

DAY 06: Nuwaraeliya – Ella - Thissamaharama (Bundala)

Today, after breakfast, check-out the hotel and go on a small journey to Thissamaharama via Ella.

Stop in Ella to explore. During your time in Ella this morning, explore the amazing Little Adam's peak which is a 30 min hike and then descend to Nine Arch Bridge and the Demodara Railway Station. There after stop for lunch at a place of your choice in Ella and the proceed to Yala. You will also stop at Ravana Falls on the way.

Evening visit Bundala National Park.



Bundala National Park is an internationally important wintering ground for migratory water birds in Sri Lanka. Bundala harbors 197 species of birds, the highlight being the greater flamingo, which migrate in large flocks. Bundala was designated a wildlife sanctuary in 1969 and re-designated to a national park on 4 January 1993. In 1991 Bundala became the first wetland to be declared as a Ramsar site in Sri Lanka. In 2005 the national park was designated as a biosphere reserve by UNESCO, the fourth biosphere reserve in Sri Lanka. The national park is situated 245 kilometres (152 mi) southeast of Colombo.

Overnight stay in Thissamaharama.
Meals Include: Breakfast / Dinner

DAY 07/08: Thissamaharama (Bundala)- Sinharaja

Today, after breakfast, check-out the hotel and proceed to Sinharaja.



Sinharaja Rain Forest (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), the last viable remnant of Sri Lanka's tropical lowland rainforest spanning an area of 18900 acres is located within Sabaragamuwa and Southern provinces of the south-west lowland wet zone of Sri Lanka. Sinharaja is bounded by rivers on three sides. On the north, Sinharaja is bounded by the Napola Dola and Koskulana Ganga. On the south and south-west are the rivers Maha Dola and Gin Ganga. On the west are the river Kalukandawa Ela and river Kudawa Ganga. To the east of Sinharaja is an ancient footpath near Beverley Tea Estate and by the Denuwa Kanda.

Overnight stay in Sinharaja.
Meals Include: Breakfast / Dinner

DAY 09/10: Sinharaja - Mirissa

After breakfast proceed to Mirissa via Galle. (Travel Time: 3 to 3½ hours)



and endless blue waters.

Galle is a historical jewel to Sri Lanka wonderful to explore on foot. Among the endlessly exotic old trading port blessed with imposing Dutch-colonial buildings, ancient mosques and churches, grand mansions and museums the ancient Dutch fort which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site attracts the hearts of tourists. Stroll around the ancient city where you will find a gourmet of fancy restaurants and coffee shop to chill and relax. The beach side is surely a bliss which will make you want to lock yourself up in this sun kissed island and indulge in the sea breeze

En-route you will be stopping by to see Stilt Fishermen at Koggala.



Stilt Fishing is one of the most interesting traditional fishing methods of Sri Lanka. Records indicate that it came into being just after World War II. The beautiful sight of fishermen perched on branched poles as they fish skillfully during dawn, noon and dusk; can now be commonly seen along the southern coast in towns such as Koggala, Kaththaluwa and Ahangama. You will be able to see them fishing and learn how they do it by speaking to one of the fishermen.

Overnight stay in Mirissa
Meals Include: Breakfast / Dinner

DAY 11 : Mirissa – Airport

After breakfast proceed to Airport.

--- END OF SERVICES ---

Hotels

Hotels (3* options)	Website
Beacon beach, Negombo (1 Night)	http://www.beacon.lk/
Sir Jhon's Bungalow, Matale (2 Nights)	https://www.facebook.com/SirJohnsBungalow
Alphine Hotel, Nuwaraeliya (2 Nights)	http://www.alpinehotel.lk/
Oak Ray Wild, Thissamaharama (1 Night)	https://www.oakrayhotels.com/wildyala/
Blue Magpie lodge, Sinharaja (2 Nights)	http://www.bluemagpie.lk/
Mandara, Mirissa (2 Nights)	https://www.mandarahotels.com/mandararesortmirissa/

TOUR Cost

	3 Star Hotels option
2 PAX by car	930 USD Per Person Sharing DBL room on HB basis
4 PAX by van	820 USD Per Person Sharing DBL room on HB basis
6 PAX by van	770 USD Per Person Sharing DBL room on HB basis
	SGL room supplement – 390 USD TPL room discount – 40 USD

Peak supplement (15th December 2019 – 25th January 2020) - 100 USD NETT per person

Above rates are valid until 31st of March 2020

Tour Includes

- Accommodation for 10 nights in hotels as per the itinerary (Subject to availability)
- Meals on Half board Basis – 10 dinners & 10 breakfast
- Transport in an Air-Conditioned well-maintained vehicle with the service of an English-Speaking Chauffeur Guide at your disposal always.
- Entrance Fees to: Riverston, Manigala trek including sight guide, Horton plains National park, Haggala Botanical gardens, Bundala National park, Sinharaja National park, Tea factory visit with tea tasting.
- All Paging, Parking, Fuel Costs & Highway Tolls.
- Guided Visits to all entrance sights.
- All Taxes and Service Charges.

Tour Excludes

- International Flights & VISA (Visit www.eta.gov.lk for VISA)
- Lunch
- Tips and Porterage.
- All beverages.
- Camera & Video Permit Charges if applicable.
- Any other expense not mentioned in the includes section.
- Complimentary
- 1 Liter Bottle of Water Per Person Per Day
- Local SIM Card (On Request)

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- Local SIM Card (On Request)

General Terms & Conditions

www.esnaholidays.com/terms-and-conditions/