NAVIRA CEYLON

SRI LANKA DESTINATION GUIDE

A visual field guide for private tours, sightseeing and guest experiences



CULTURE • HILL COUNTRY • BEACHES • WILDLIFE • ADVENTURE

Prepared as a practical reference for NAVIRA CEYLON drivers and tour planners. Distances and timings are planning estimates, not live navigation data.

WELCOME TO SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka is a compact island with remarkable variety: ancient capitals, sacred places, tea-covered mountains, rainforests, wildlife parks, surf beaches and lively coastal towns. This guide helps a tour host turn a transfer into a meaningful local experience.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

• **Distances:** approximate road distances between the named hub and attraction; actual routes can vary with road choice, traffic, weather and access.

• **Visit times:** suggested time on site, excluding the drive unless stated.

• **Photography:** recommended viewpoints and moments; always follow site rules and respect worshippers.

• **Experiences:** optional activities to discuss with guests and confirm with a responsible local operator.

• **One-day plans:** practical sample sequences. Do not promise every stop if traffic, weather or guest pace makes the day too tight.

TRAVEL-HOST CHECKLIST

• Confirm guest interests, mobility, dietary needs and preferred pace before departure.

• Check opening days, weather, road conditions, park rules, train times and boat availability on the day.

• At religious sites, advise modest clothing and removal of shoes/headwear where required; never photograph people praying without consent.

• For wildlife, keep a safe distance, never feed animals and follow the park guide's instructions.

• Allow hydration, shade breaks and restroom stops, especially on climbs and long drives.

REGIONAL CONTENTS

1. Negombo & Airport Gateway • 2. Colombo City • 3. Cultural Triangle: Sigiriya, Dambulla & Habarana • 4. Polonnaruwa & Minneriya • 5. Anuradhapura & Mihintale • 6. Kandy & Central Heritage • 7. Nuwara Eliya & Horton Plains • 8. Ella, Haputale & Bandarawela • 9. Galle, Unawatuna & Hikkaduwa • 10. Bentota, Beruwala & Madu River • 11. Mirissa, Weligama & Tangalle • 12. Yala, Bundala & Kataragama • 13. Udawalawe & Ratnapura • 14. Trincomalee & Nilaveli • 15. Pasikudah, Batticaloa & Arugam Bay • 16. Jaffna & Delft Island • 17. Mannar & Wilpattu • 18. Adventure & Nature Extensions

1. NEGOMBO & AIRPORT GATEWAY

Western Province • Ideal first or final night near Bandaranaike International Airport



Illustrative destination visual

Negombo is a practical arrival point where visitors can recover from a flight while discovering a working fishing town, lagoon life, canals and coastal churches. It is a strong introductory stop for guests who want an easy first day.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Negombo Beach / beach road	Town centre; 1–3 km	45–90 min
St. Mary's Church	About 1–2 km from beach area	20–40 min
Dutch Fort ruins & waterfront	About 1 km from fish market	20–30 min
Negombo Fish Market (Lellama)	About 1–2 km from fort	30–45 min
Dutch Canal / Hamilton Canal	Access points around town	45–90 min
Negombo Lagoon boat trip	Boat jetties vary; short local transfer	1.5–2.5 hr
Angurukaramulla Temple	About 3–4 km from beach	30–45 min
Muthurajawela Wetland	About 10–15 km south of central Negombo	2–3 hr

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Sunset along Negombo Beach; colourful fishing boats near Lellama in the morning; lagoon reflections and mangrove channels; church architecture.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Lagoon boat ride with local naturalist; visit a fish auction respectfully; taste Sri Lankan seafood; canal-side walk; observe traditional fishing craft.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
07:00	Visit Lellama fish market while activity is underway; explain the local fishing economy.
08:30	Breakfast and short visit to St. Mary's Church.
10:00	Explore Dutch Fort remains and the canal-side area.
12:00	Lunch featuring Sri Lankan seafood or rice and curry.
14:00	Lagoon and mangrove boat experience, subject to conditions.
16:30	Relax on Negombo Beach and finish with sunset photography.

Host notes: Fish-market activity is strongest early. Ask permission before photographing vendors or workers. Boat operators should follow wetland and wildlife guidance.

2. COLOMBO CITY

Western Province • Urban heritage, food, shopping and modern skyline



Illustrative destination visual

Colombo offers a layered city experience: colonial-era streets, Buddhist and Hindu temples, markets, museums, waterfront promenades and modern architecture. Plan by cluster because city traffic can make short distances slow.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Gangaramaya Temple / Seema Malaka	Central Colombo; 1–2 km between sites	60–90 min combined
Galle Face Green	About 2–3 km from Gangaramaya	30–60 min
Old Dutch Hospital	Fort area; about 2 km from Galle Face	30–45 min
Pettah Market & Red Mosque	About 2–3 km from Fort	60–90 min
National Museum	About 3–4 km from Fort	1.5–2 hr
Independence Square	About 2 km from National Museum	30–45 min
Lotus Tower	Fort / Beira Lake area	45–75 min
Viharamahadevi Park	Near National Museum	30–45 min

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Galle Face at sunset; Red Mosque exterior from a respectful public viewpoint; Beira Lake and Seema Malaka; Independence Memorial Hall; Fort architecture.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Guided heritage walk; street-food tasting; market exploration; museum visit; sunset promenade; rooftop or skyline viewing where available.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
08:30	Gangaramaya Temple and Seema Malaka.
10:00	National Museum or Independence Square, depending on guest interest.
12:00	Lunch in central Colombo.
13:30	Pettah Market and Red Mosque exterior.
15:30	Old Dutch Hospital and Fort heritage walk.
17:00	Galle Face Green sunset; optional Lotus Tower visit if time allows.

Host notes: Do not leave valuables visible in crowded markets. Dress modestly for temples and ask before photographing people.

3. CULTURAL TRIANGLE: SIGIRIYA, DAMBULLA & HABARANA

Central Province / North Central Province • Ancient engineering, cave art and village life



Illustrative destination visual

Sigiriya and Dambulla are among Sri Lanka's signature heritage experiences. The area is best explored with an early start, shade breaks and enough time for the climb. The official tourism site describes Sigiriya as a fifth-century rock citadel with landscaped gardens and a World Heritage listing. [1]

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Sigiriya Rock Fortress	Sigiriya hub	2.5–4 hr
Pidurangala Rock	About 1–2 km from Sigiriya entrance area	1.5–2.5 hr
Sigiriya Museum	Near main entrance	45–60 min
Hiriwadunna village / lake experience	About 8–12 km from Sigiriya	2–3 hr
Dambulla Cave Temple	About 17 km from Sigiriya	1.5–2 hr
Ibbankatuwa Megalithic Tombs	About 20–22 km from Sigiriya	30–45 min
Ritigala forest monastery	About 25–30 km from Habarana area	1.5–2.5 hr
Minneriya / Kaudulla safari entry areas	Roughly 10–25 km depending on park gate	3–4 hr

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Pidurangala summit at sunrise for the classic Sigiriya profile; water gardens from ground level; Lion's Paw Terrace; Dambulla cave interiors where photography is permitted; village lake at golden hour.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Climb Sigiriya; sunrise hike at Pidurangala; village tuk-tuk / bullock-cart and boat experience; local cooking demonstration; guided history walk; seasonal elephant safari.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
06:00	Optional Pidurangala sunrise walk; only for fit guests and safe conditions.
08:00	Breakfast and visit Sigiriya Rock Fortress.
11:30	Lunch and rest in the shade.
13:30	Drive to Dambulla Cave Temple and explore the cave complex.
16:00	Optional local village experience or relaxed return to hotel.

Host notes: Do not schedule Sigiriya, Dambulla, a safari and Pidurangala all in one day unless guests explicitly want a very intensive day. Respect no-photo areas and wildlife rules.

4. POLONNARUWA & MINNERIYA

North Central Province • Medieval capital and elephant country



Illustrative destination visual

Polonnaruwa is an extensive archaeological landscape best explored with a guide, bicycle or vehicle. Combine the ancient city with a late-afternoon safari only if the season, park access and guest energy allow.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Polonnaruwa Archaeological Museum	At the ancient-city approach	45–60 min
Royal Palace Group	Within the ancient city zone	30–45 min
Quadrangle / Vatadage	About 1–2 km within site circuit	45–60 min
Gal Vihara	About 2–3 km from Quadrangle	30–45 min
Rankoth Vehera	About 1–2 km from Gal Vihara	20–30 min
Parakrama Samudraya	About 2–5 km from town / site zones	30–60 min
Minneriya National Park	Approx. 25–35 km from Polonnaruwa town; gate varies	3–4 hr safari
Kaudulla National Park	Approx. 35–45 km; gate varies	3–4 hr safari

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Gal Vihara Buddha statues; Vatadage stonework; Parakrama Samudraya embankment at sunset; elephants at a respectful distance during safari.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Cycle the ancient city; guided archaeology walk; reservoir sunset; jeep safari with a responsible operator; learn about ancient irrigation systems.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
07:30	Begin at the Archaeological Museum.
08:30	Explore the Royal Palace Group and Quadrangle.
10:30	Continue to Gal Vihara and Rankoth Vehera.
12:00	Lunch and rest.
14:00	Visit Parakrama Samudraya or return to hotel.
15:00	Optional afternoon safari at Minneriya or Kaudulla, subject to seasonal wildlife movement.

Host notes: Elephant gathering locations shift seasonally between Minneriya, Kaudulla and nearby ecosystems. Do not guarantee sightings.

5. ANURADHAPURA & MIHINTALE

North Central Province • Sacred city, stupas and Buddhist heritage



Illustrative destination visual

Anuradhapura was one of Sri Lanka's ancient capitals and is an important living pilgrimage centre. The sacred city is spread over a wide area; modest clothing and respectful behaviour are essential.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Sri Maha Bodhi	Sacred city core	45–60 min
Ruwanwelisaya	About 1–2 km from Sri Maha Bodhi	30–45 min
Thuparamaya	About 1 km from Ruwanwelisaya	20–30 min
Jetavanaramaya	About 1–2 km from Thuparamaya	30–45 min
Abhayagiri Monastery complex	About 2–3 km from Jetavanaramaya	1–1.5 hr
Isurumuniya Temple	About 3–4 km from Ruwanwelisaya	30–45 min
Kuttam Pokuna Twin Ponds	Within Abhayagiri zone	20–30 min
Mihintale	About 13 km east of Anuradhapura	1.5–2.5 hr

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Ruwanwelisaya from the forecourt; sacred Bodhi tree surroundings; moonstone and guardstone details; Mihintale stairway and panoramic summit views.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Guided sacred-city tour; Buddhist history introduction; bicycle circuit; sunset at a reservoir; visit Mihintale for its historical and spiritual significance.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
07:00	Begin at Sri Maha Bodhi; observe pilgrim rituals respectfully.
08:00	Visit Ruwanwelisaya and Thuparamaya.
10:00	Explore Jetavanaramaya and Abhayagiri complex.
12:30	Lunch and rest.
14:00	Visit Isurumuniya and nearby sites.
16:00	If energy and daylight allow, drive to Mihintale for a late-afternoon visit.

Host notes: Anuradhapura is extensive; group stops geographically. Remove shoes at sacred areas and avoid posing with one's back to Buddha statues.

6. KANDY & CENTRAL HERITAGE

Central Province • Sacred temple, royal history, gardens and performing arts



Illustrative destination visual

Kandy is the cultural capital of the central highlands. The Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic, lake, gardens and traditional arts make it one of the island's strongest culture-focused stops.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic	Kandy city centre	1–1.5 hr
Kandy Lake walk	Beside the temple	30–45 min
Bahirawakanda Buddha viewpoint	About 2–3 km from lake	30–45 min
Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya	About 6 km west of Kandy centre	1.5–2.5 hr
Udawattakele Forest Reserve	Near Temple of the Tooth	1.5–2 hr
Embekka Devalaya	About 13–15 km from Kandy	30–45 min
Gadaladeniya Temple	About 12–14 km from Kandy	30–45 min
Lankatilaka Temple	About 12–15 km from Kandy	30–45 min
Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage	About 40 km from Kandy	1.5–2 hr

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Kandy Lake with temple backdrop; temple courtyard and traditional architecture; botanical garden avenues; Bahirawakanda viewpoint; carved timber at Embekka.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Temple visit with cultural explanation; Kandyan dance performance; botanical garden walk; spice garden visit; traditional lunch; heritage temple circuit.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
08:00	Visit the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic.
09:30	Walk around Kandy Lake and visit a city viewpoint.
11:00	Explore Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya.
13:00	Lunch.
14:30	Visit one or two of the Embekka–Gadaladeniya–Lankatilaka temple group.
17:30	Optional Kandyan cultural dance performance, subject to schedule.

Host notes: Temple ceremony times and performance schedules vary. Check the day's programme. Cover shoulders and knees at religious sites.

7. NUWARA ELIYA & HORTON PLAINS

Central Highlands • Tea estates, cool climate and highland scenery



Illustrative destination visual

Nuwara Eliya is known for its cool climate, colonial-era townscape, tea estates and highland landscapes. Horton Plains is a separate early-start excursion and should not be rushed.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Gregory Lake	Nuwara Eliya centre	45–90 min
Victoria Park	Town centre	30–60 min
Pedro Tea Estate	About 3–4 km from town	1–1.5 hr
Hakgala Botanical Garden	About 10–12 km from town	1–1.5 hr
Seetha Amman Temple	About 5–6 km from town	30–45 min
Ambewela highland farms	About 15–20 km from town	45–75 min
Horton Plains / World's End trailhead	About 30–35 km from town	3–4 hr walk
Ramboda Falls viewpoint	About 25–30 km north of town	20–40 min

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Tea rows in early light; Gregory Lake shoreline; Ramboda Falls viewpoint; mist over highland roads; World's End only when visibility is clear.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Tea plucking and factory tour; highland farm visit; boat or lakeside activity; scenic drive; Horton Plains hike; tasting Ceylon tea.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
05:30	For Horton Plains day: depart early and complete the World's End–Baker's Falls circuit.
11:00	Return towards Nuwara Eliya and have lunch.
13:00	Visit a tea estate and learn about tea production.
14:30	Explore Seetha Amman Temple or Hakgala Botanical Garden.
16:00	Relax at Gregory Lake and enjoy the town.

Host notes: World's End views can disappear in cloud by late morning. For a relaxed town day, skip Horton Plains and visit the lake, gardens and tea estate.

8. ELLA, HAPUTALE & BANDARAWELA

Uva Province • Railway scenery, hikes, waterfalls and tea viewpoints



Illustrative destination visual

Ella is a compact hill-country base with well-known hikes and railway scenery. The region rewards flexible timing: cloud, rain and train movements can change the best viewpoint conditions.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Nine Arch Bridge	About 2–3 km from Ella town; final approach on foot	45–90 min
Little Adam's Peak	About 2 km from town; trail walk	1.5–2 hr
Ella Rock trail	Trail begins near Ella; allow for navigation	3–4 hr
Ravana Falls	About 6 km from Ella	20–40 min
Demodara Railway Loop	About 5–7 km from Ella	30–45 min
Diyaluma Falls	About 30–35 km from Ella	2–3 hr
Lipton's Seat	About 25–30 km from Ella via Haputale	1–2 hr
Adisham Bungalow	About 25–30 km from Ella	45–75 min
Dowa Rock Temple	About 10–15 km from Ella	30–45 min

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Nine Arch Bridge from the tea slope viewpoint; Little Adam's Peak ridge; Ella Gap at sunset; Lipton's Seat on a clear morning; Diyaluma upper pools only with safe local guidance.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Short mountain hike; scenic train journey; tea plantation visit; zipline/adventure park; waterfall stop; village food experience; sunrise photography.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
06:30	Walk to Nine Arch Bridge before the busiest period; check train timing locally.
08:30	Breakfast in Ella.
09:30	Hike Little Adam's Peak.
12:00	Lunch and rest.
13:30	Visit Ravana Falls and Dowa Rock Temple, or choose a longer Diyaluma excursion.
16:30	Enjoy Ella Gap viewpoint and sunset if weather permits.

Host notes: Do not walk on railway tracks for photographs. Train schedules are subject to change. Ella Rock and Diyaluma require more time and suitable footwear.

9. GALLE, UNAWATUNA & HIKKADUWA

Southern Province • Fort heritage, beaches and marine experiences



Illustrative destination visual

Galle combines a UNESCO-listed fortified town with nearby beaches and coastal villages. Explore the fort on foot and use a separate vehicle transfer for beaches outside the walls.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Galle Fort ramparts and streets	Galle centre	1.5–2.5 hr
Galle Lighthouse	Inside Fort; short walk	15–25 min
Maritime Museum	Inside Fort	45–60 min
Unawatuna Beach	About 5–6 km from Galle Fort	1–2 hr
Japanese Peace Pagoda / Rumassala	About 6–7 km from Fort	30–60 min
Jungle Beach	About 7–8 km from Fort; walk/boat access varies	1–2 hr
Dalawella Beach	About 8–10 km from Fort	30–60 min
Hikkaduwa Beach & coral area	About 17–20 km from Galle	1.5–2.5 hr
Koggala Lake	About 15–18 km from Galle	1.5–2 hr

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Galle Lighthouse and ramparts at golden hour; narrow colonial streets; Unawatuna bay; Rumassala viewpoint; beach palms around Dalawella.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Guided fort heritage walk; café stop; beach swimming where safe; snorkelling with responsible operators; Koggala boat ride; local cinnamon or craft experience.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
08:30	Walk Galle Fort, lighthouse, ramparts and historic streets.
11:00	Visit Maritime Museum or enjoy a café break.
12:30	Lunch in Galle.
14:00	Transfer to Unawatuna and Rumassala viewpoint.
15:30	Optional beach time at Dalawella or Hikkaduwa.
17:30	Return to Galle or continue to the next coastal hotel.

Host notes: Sea conditions affect swimming and snorkelling. Avoid touching coral or feeding marine wildlife. The fort is best explored on foot.

10. BENTOTA, BERUWALA & MADU RIVER

Western / Southern Coast • River, garden, beach and water-based experiences



Illustrative destination visual

This coastal corridor suits relaxed beach days and short nature experiences. Madu River is near Balapitiya, north of Bentota, so plan the order to avoid unnecessary backtracking.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Bentota Beach	Bentota town	1–2 hr
Bentota River boat safari	Boat jetties around Bentota	1.5–2.5 hr
Lunuganga Estate	About 8–10 km from Bentota	1–1.5 hr
Brief Garden	About 10–12 km from Bentota	1–1.5 hr
Kande Viharaya	About 8–10 km from Bentota	30–45 min
Beruwala Lighthouse / coast	About 8–12 km from Bentota	30–45 min
Kosgoda turtle conservation sites	About 10–15 km south of Bentota	45–75 min
Madu River boat safari, Balapitiya	About 20–25 km south of Bentota	1.5–2.5 hr

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Bentota river mangroves; beach at sunrise; garden architecture at Lunuganga and Brief Garden; river islands and mangrove tunnels.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• River safari; beach relaxation; water sports with licensed operators; garden and architecture tour; learn about cinnamon and coastal ecology.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
08:00	Bentota Beach walk and breakfast.
09:30	Bentota River boat experience.
11:30	Visit Lunuganga or Brief Garden; confirm visiting arrangements.
13:00	Lunch.
14:30	Visit Kande Viharaya or Kosgoda conservation project.
16:00	Optional Madu River boat trip if not already done; otherwise sunset by the coast.

Host notes: Check boat conditions and conservation-centre practices before recommending a visit. Prefer observation and education over animal handling.

11. MIRISSA, WELIGAMA & TANGALLE

Southern Province • Surf bays, whale watching and palm-lined beaches



Illustrative destination visual

The south coast offers a mix of surfing, relaxed bays, coastal viewpoints and marine excursions. Whale-watching is seasonal and never guaranteed; select operators that follow responsible wildlife practices.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Weligama Bay	Weligama town	1–2 hr
Stilt-fishing viewpoints	Coastal stretches near Weligama / Ahangama	15–30 min
Mirissa Beach	About 10–12 km from Weligama	1–2 hr
Coconut Tree Hill	Mirissa; short local transfer / walk	20–40 min
Parrot Rock	Mirissa Beach	20–30 min
Whale-watching harbour	Mirissa harbour	3–5 hr excursion
Polhena Beach	About 25–30 km east of Mirissa	1–2 hr
Hiriketiya Beach	About 45–55 km east of Mirissa	1–2 hr
Dondra Lighthouse	About 35–40 km from Mirissa	20–40 min
Mulkirigala Rock Temple	About 50–60 km inland from Tangalle	1.5–2 hr

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Coconut Tree Hill at early morning; Weligama bay from the headland; sunset on Mirissa Beach; Hiriketiya curve from the upper path; Dondra lighthouse exterior.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Surf lesson; seasonal whale-watching; beach cafés; coastal cycling; local seafood; snorkelling only when sea conditions and operators are suitable.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
07:00	Optional whale-watching excursion; check sea conditions and operator practices in advance.
11:30	Late breakfast / early lunch and beach rest.
13:00	Explore Mirissa Beach, Parrot Rock and Coconut Tree Hill.
15:00	Drive to Weligama or Ahangama for surf culture and coastal viewpoints.
17:00	Enjoy sunset and continue to the overnight base.

Host notes: Whale trips can be long and rough. Offer a land-based alternative. Never promise a whale sighting.

12. YALA, BUNDALA & KATARAGAMA

Southern / Uva region • Safari landscapes, birds and pilgrimage



Illustrative destination visual

Yala is one of Sri Lanka's best-known wildlife destinations. Tissamaharama is a common base. Bundala is particularly valuable for birdlife, while Kataragama adds a multi-faith cultural dimension.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Yala National Park safari gate	Approx. 20–30 km from Tissamaharama; gate varies	3–4 hr safari
Tissamaharama Raja Maha Vihara	Tissamaharama town	30–45 min
Kataragama sacred area	About 20–25 km from Tissamaharama	1–1.5 hr
Kirinda Temple and coast	About 15–20 km from Tissamaharama	30–60 min
Sithulpawwa Rock Temple	Inside Yala landscape; access conditions vary	1–2 hr
Bundala National Park	About 15–25 km from Hambantota / Tissa depending on gate	3–4 hr safari
Lunugamvehera National Park	Further inland; route-dependent	3–4 hr safari

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Yala scrub and lagoons; wildlife from the jeep at safe distance; Bundala wetlands and flamingos when present; Kirinda coastal rock and temple.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Early-morning or afternoon safari; birdwatching; local pilgrimage walk; wildlife photography; conservation-focused interpretation.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
05:00	Depart for an early Yala safari with a registered jeep and park guide.
09:30	Breakfast and rest.
11:00	Visit Tissamaharama Raja Maha Vihara.
12:30	Lunch.
14:00	Visit Kataragama sacred area or Kirinda coast.
16:00	Optional Bundala birding only if timing, gate and guest energy allow.

Host notes: Wildlife sightings are never guaranteed. Keep quiet, stay in the vehicle where instructed, and never pressure drivers to approach animals.

13. UDAWALAWE & RATNAPURA

Sabaragamuwa / Uva • Elephant country, gems and foothill nature



Illustrative destination visual

Udawalawe is a strong choice for elephant viewing in open grassland. Ratnapura is associated with Sri Lanka's gem heritage and is also a gateway to rainforest and mountain routes.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Udawalawe National Park	Udawalawe town / hotel base; gate varies	3–4 hr safari
Elephant Transit Home	Near Udawalawe park area	45–75 min
Udawalawe Reservoir viewpoints	Near park area	20–40 min
Ratnapura Gem Museum / gem trade area	Ratnapura town	45–90 min
Bopath Ella Falls	About 15–20 km from Ratnapura	30–60 min
Sinharaja access (Deniyaya / Kudawa side)	Long transfer; access point dependent	Half/full day trek
Saman Devalaya	Near Ratnapura town	30–45 min

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Elephants against Udawalawe grassland; reservoir light; Bopath Ella waterfall; gem-cutting demonstrations where permitted.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Jeep safari; conservation learning at the transit-home visitor area; gem heritage introduction; waterfall visit; guided rainforest walk.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
05:30	Early safari at Udawalawe National Park.
09:30	Breakfast and optional Elephant Transit Home visit; follow its visitor schedule.
11:30	Drive towards Ratnapura or continue to next destination.
13:00	Lunch.
14:30	Explore Ratnapura gem heritage or visit Bopath Ella.
16:30	Return to accommodation; avoid adding a long rainforest trek late in the day.

Host notes: Sinharaja is a separate nature-focused excursion requiring a guide and several hours. Do not combine it casually with a safari day.

14. TRINCOMALEE & NILAVELI

Eastern Province • Beaches, temples, harbour and marine life



Illustrative destination visual

Trincomalee combines a natural harbour, historic religious sites and long beaches. Nilaveli is the usual base for Pigeon Island trips; marine conditions and park rules determine what activities are possible.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Koneswaram Temple	Fort Frederick promontory, Trincomalee	45–75 min
Fort Frederick	Trincomalee town	30–45 min
Trincomalee harbour viewpoints	Town / fort area	20–40 min
Uppuveli Beach	About 5–7 km north of town	1–2 hr
Nilaveli Beach	About 15–17 km north of town	1–2 hr
Pigeon Island National Park	Boat from Nilaveli; sea conditions apply	2–4 hr
Kanniya Hot Water Springs	About 7–10 km from town	30–45 min
Marble Beach	About 15–20 km south of town	1–2 hr

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Koneswaram cliff-edge ocean views; Nilaveli beach at sunrise; Pigeon Island reef scenery from permitted zones; harbour panorama.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Snorkelling with approved operators; beach relaxation; temple and fort history; harbour interpretation; hot-spring visit; seasonal marine excursions.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
08:00	Visit Fort Frederick and Koneswaram Temple.
10:00	Explore harbour viewpoints and Kanniya Hot Water Springs.
12:00	Lunch in Trincomalee or Nilaveli.
13:30	Beach time at Nilaveli or Uppuveli.
15:00	Optional Pigeon Island boat and snorkelling trip if sea conditions and schedule permit.
17:30	Sunset by the beach.

Host notes: Do not promise Pigeon Island access in rough seas. Use reef-safe behaviour: no standing on coral, no collecting shells and no touching turtles.

15. PASIKUDAH, BATTICALOA & ARUGAM BAY

Eastern Province • Shallow bays, lagoon culture and surf



Illustrative destination visual

The east coast is highly seasonal. Pasikudah is known for a shallow bay; Batticaloa adds lagoon and colonial history; Arugam Bay is a major surf destination with wildlife and cultural extensions inland.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Pasikudah Beach	Pasikudah resort area	1–2 hr
Kalkudah Beach	About 3–5 km from Pasikudah	45–90 min
Batticaloa Dutch Fort	About 35–40 km from Pasikudah	45–60 min
Batticaloa Lagoon / Kallady Bridge	Batticaloa town	45–75 min
Arugam Bay surf beach	About 100–120 km south of Batticaloa	1–2 hr
Muhudu Maha Viharaya	Near Pottuvil / Arugam Bay	30–45 min
Elephant Rock	About 4–6 km from Arugam Bay; access varies	1–1.5 hr
Kumana National Park	About 25–35 km from Arugam Bay; gate/route varies	3–4 hr safari
Kudumbigala Monastery	Inland from Panama; route conditions vary	1–2 hr

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Pasikudah curve from the shore; Batticaloa lighthouse and lagoon; Arugam Bay surf line; Elephant Rock viewpoint; Kumana wetlands.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Beginner surf lesson; lagoon boat trip; beach swimming where safe; birdwatching; cultural temple visit; responsible safari.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
08:00	Enjoy Pasikudah or Kalkudah beach.
10:30	Drive to Batticaloa; visit Dutch Fort and lagoon viewpoints.
12:30	Lunch in Batticaloa.
14:00	For guests based in Arugam Bay, visit Muhudu Maha Viharaya and the bay area; this is a separate longer transfer.
16:00	Optional surf lesson or sunset at Arugam Bay.

Host notes: Pasikudah and Arugam Bay are far apart for a relaxed same-day circuit. Treat them as separate overnight bases rather than promising all stops in one day.

16. JAFFNA & DELFT ISLAND

Northern Province • Tamil heritage, island landscapes and distinctive cuisine



Illustrative destination visual

Jaffna offers a distinctive cultural experience shaped by Tamil heritage, temples, colonial history, island communities and regional cuisine. Island excursions require advance checks for ferry schedules and weather.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Nallur Kandaswamy Temple	Jaffna town	45–75 min
Jaffna Fort	Town centre / waterfront	45–60 min
Jaffna Public Library	Town centre	20–40 min
Jaffna Market	Town centre	30–60 min
Casuarina Beach	About 20–25 km from Jaffna	1–2 hr
Keerimalai Springs	About 20–25 km from Jaffna	30–60 min
Dambakola Patuna	About 20–25 km from Jaffna	30–45 min
Point Pedro	About 30–35 km from Jaffna	30–60 min
Delft Island	Ferry from Kurikadduwan; crossing time varies	Half/full day

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Nallur temple gopuram; Jaffna Fort ramparts; Casuarina Beach; northern coastal roads; Delft's wild horses and coral-stone walls.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Jaffna food trail; temple and fort heritage; local market visit; island excursion; palmyrah products and traditional crafts; coastal cycling.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
08:00	Visit Nallur Kandaswamy Temple and learn about local traditions.
09:30	Explore Jaffna Fort and Public Library.
11:00	Visit the market and sample local snacks.
12:30	Lunch featuring Jaffna cuisine.
14:00	Drive to Keerimalai Springs or Casuarina Beach.
16:30	Return to Jaffna for sunset and dinner.

Host notes: Delft Island requires a separate full-day plan. Check ferry departure and return times before leaving; do not rely on an unverified schedule.

17. MANNAR & WILPATTU

North-western Sri Lanka • Island history, birdlife and wilderness



Illustrative destination visual

Mannar is known for its baobab tree, fort, coastal landscape and migratory birdlife. Wilpattu is a large national park with forest, scrub and natural lakes known as villus.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Mannar Fort	Mannar town	30–45 min
Baobab Tree	Mannar town area	15–25 min
Talaimannar / Adam's Bridge viewpoint area	About 25–35 km from Mannar town	45–75 min
Vankalai Bird Sanctuary	About 10–20 km from Mannar town; access varies	1–2 hr
Madhu Church	Inland; route-dependent, roughly 40–60 km	45–75 min
Wilpattu National Park entrance	From Anuradhapura or Puttalam side; gate-dependent	4–5 hr safari
Puttalam / Kalpitiya coastal extension	Route-dependent; separate overnight recommended	Half/full day

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• Mannar Fort walls; baobab tree; Talaimannar coast; Vankalai wetlands at birding hours; Wilpattu villus and wildlife from the jeep.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• Birdwatching; island history walk; coastal photography; guided Wilpattu safari; local seafood and northern food culture.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
07:30	Explore Mannar Fort and Baobab Tree.
09:30	Drive towards Talaimannar for coastal scenery.
11:30	Lunch in Mannar.
13:00	Visit Vankalai bird area or Madhu Church depending on guest interests.
16:00	Return to Mannar and enjoy the island's quiet coastal atmosphere.

Host notes: Wilpattu is not a quick add-on to a Mannar town tour; plan it as a dedicated safari day from a suitable overnight base.

18. ADVENTURE & NATURE EXTENSIONS

Special-interest routes • Rainforest, mountains, rafting and pilgrimage



Illustrative destination visual

These destinations are best sold as specialist experiences. Confirm local guides, trail conditions, weather, fitness requirements and safe transport arrangements.

ATTRACTIONS, DISTANCES & VISIT TIME

Attraction / stop	Approx. distance from hub or previous stop	Suggested visit
Kitulgala rafting base	Near Kitulgala town	Half day
Belilena Cave	About 5–8 km from Kitulgala; local access guidance needed	1–2 hr
Knuckles trailheads	From Kandy / Matale; access varies by trail	Half/full day
Riverston viewpoint	About 30–40 km from Matale town	45–90 min
Sinharaja access points	Deniyaya or Kudawa side; route dependent	Half/full day
Adam's Peak trailhead (Nallathanniya)	From Hatton; road transfer varies	6–10 hr climb
Horton Plains	From Nuwara Eliya about 30–35 km	3–4 hr walk
Bambarakanda Falls	From Haputale / Kalupahana; route dependent	45–90 min

BEST PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

• River rapids and forest around Kitulgala; cloud forest at Horton Plains; mountain ridges in Knuckles; rainforest canopy and streams at Sinharaja; sunrise from Adam's Peak.

EXPERIENCES TO RECOMMEND

• White-water rafting with qualified operators; guided rainforest birding; mountain trekking; waterfall photography; night-sky and sunrise experiences; village stays.

SUGGESTED ONE-DAY SIGHTSEEING PLAN

Time	Suggested activity
06:00	Start early from the nearest overnight base.
07:00	Meet the registered guide/operator and safety briefing.
08:00	Complete the main trek, rafting session or nature walk.
12:00	Lunch and recovery break.
13:30	Add one nearby low-intensity viewpoint or cultural stop.
16:00	Return before dark where possible.

Host notes: These are not interchangeable half-day stops. Choose one main activity per day and match it to the guests' fitness and weather conditions.

TOUR ROUTE PLANNING

The following circuits are useful starting points for private-tour proposals. Adjust them to guest interests, arrival/departure times, season, road conditions and realistic daily driving limits.

Trip length	Suggested route
3–4 days	Negombo – Sigiriya – Dambulla – Kandy – Colombo / airport
5–6 days	Negombo – Sigiriya – Dambulla – Kandy – Nuwara Eliya – Ella
7–8 days	Negombo – Cultural Triangle – Kandy – Hill Country – Ella – Yala
8–10 days	Negombo – Sigiriya – Kandy – Nuwara Eliya – Ella – Yala – Galle
10–12 days	Negombo – Anuradhapura – Sigiriya – Kandy – Ella – Yala – Mirissa – Galle
12–14 days	Negombo – Anuradhapura – Jaffna or Trincomalee – Cultural Triangle – Kandy – Hill Country – South Coast
14+ days	Add east coast, Mannar, Wilpattu, Sinharaja or specialist adventure days

DISTANCE & TIME GUIDANCE

• The kilometres in each regional table are approximate local road distances, not guaranteed driving times.

• In hill country, winding roads make journey times longer than the map distance suggests.

• Urban Colombo and Negombo traffic can significantly affect short transfers.

• Park safaris, hikes, boat rides and train journeys need separate time buffers.

• For a guest-friendly itinerary, plan fewer stops with quality time rather than rushing through a long checklist.

GUEST EXPERIENCE STANDARDS

• Give a short, engaging introduction before each attraction: what it is, why it matters and what to look for.

• Offer choices: culture, nature, photography, food, adventure or relaxed time.

• Keep drinking water, umbrellas, tissues and a basic first-aid kit in the vehicle.

• Confirm all third-party activities directly with the operator and explain any safety requirements.

• Respect local communities and protected environments; leave no litter.

PHOTO CREDITS & IMPORTANT NOTES

The destination photographs in this edition are AI-generated illustrative visuals, created for layout and destination mood. They are not documentary photographs and should not be used as proof of current site conditions, exact architecture or wildlife sightings.

OFFICIAL DESTINATION REFERENCE SOURCES

1. Sri Lanka Tourism – Tourist Attractions: srilanka.travel/tourist-attractions
2. Sri Lanka Tourism – Top Attractions: srilanka.travel/top-attractions
3. Sri Lanka Tourism – Cultural Heritage: srilanka.travel/cultural_heritage
4. Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority – Tourist Attractions: sltda.gov.lk/en/tourist-attractions
5. UNESCO World Heritage Centre – Sigiriya: whc.unesco.org

DISTANCES, OPENING TIMES & SITE ACCESS

All distances and visit durations in this guide are approximate planning estimates. They may differ according to the selected entrance, trail, ferry point, road works, weather and guest mobility. This edition intentionally contains no ticket prices or other prices. Confirm access, opening hours, rules, seasonal conditions and transport arrangements with official site operators before departure.

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