

# Touring Holidays in Sri Lanka

*Expressions*



## Sri Lanka Colonial Heritage Touring Holiday



[www.expressionsholidays.co.uk](http://www.expressionsholidays.co.uk)  
01392 441224

## Sri Lanka Colonial Heritage

8 NIGHTS / 9 DAYS

Negombo

Ambewala

Galle

Colombo



Galle Fort

Experience the colonial heritage of seaside Negombo, the life of a tea planter in the tea-clad valleys of the highlands, the old Dutch fortress city of Galle, and bustling Colombo, as well as picturesque mountain scenery, coastlines, tropical forests and plantations, a turtle hatchery, and much more besides. The rich and diverse island of Sri Lanka combines the regal colonial heritage cultivated by the Dutch and the British with a strong cultural identity, which can be found in the unique hotels, the memorable service, and the religious and historic monuments. Stay at our selection of four Sri Lankan hotels to experience each of these important aspects.

### ABOUT THIS TOUR

This tour takes you first from London to Bandaranaike International Airport. Here, your English-speaking chauffeur-guide collects you and takes you towards the coast and the historic fishing city of Negombo. Spend one night at Jetwing Beach. On Day Two, continue on to Ambewela in Tea Country, and spend three nights at Jetwing Warwick Gardens. Your two days here allow time to explore Tea Country, with a visit to a tea factory, the Botanical Gardens, and a walk through the plantations, as well as a trip to Horton Plains National Park. On your fifth day, travel south to the Dutch Fort of Galle, and spend two nights at the Jetwing Lighthouse Hotel, which was designed by Geoffrey Bawa. Spend your one full day here exploring the old streets of the fort. Then, on Day Seven, drive north via the coast of the south-west to Colombo for your final night. Stay the Regency at the Galle Face Hotel, and enjoy a city tour as well as a relaxing evening. Return home on Day Nine.

### PRICES

**From £2,270 per person**

Based on double occupancy in hotels mentioned in the back of this document, with flights to and from Colombo, and private chauffeur-guide.

### DATES

This holiday can be arranged throughout the year. Timings can vary depending on the month and day of the week.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Flights with Sri Lankan Airways from London Heathrow to Bandaranaike International Airport and back
- Entrance fees to the sites and monuments listed in the itinerary (optional excursions are charged at a supplement)
- Private English-speaking chauffeur-guide in an air-conditioned Japanese car for duration
- 1 night's bed and breakfast in Negombo
- 3 nights' bed and breakfast in Ambewela in Tea Country
- 2 nights' bed and breakfast in Galle
- 1 night's bed and breakfast in Colombo

### WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Visa
- Meals and drinks, unless specified
- Personal travel insurance
- Additional nights in any destination



# DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

## Negombo - Ambewela - Galle - Colombo

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### Day one: Arrive in Colombo and continue to Negombo

You will be met on arrival and driven by your English-speaking chauffeur guide who will accompany you throughout your tour of Sri Lanka. Drive to the chic and contemporary Jetwing Beach for one night in Negombo (approximately 20 minutes drive). Negombo is an important fishing town and shows its interesting colonial heritage through its many historic buildings reminiscent mainly of the Dutch and British. Although it was the Portuguese who had brought the dominating influence of the Catholic Church, giving rise to the nickname 'Little Rome'. The Dutch legacy is seen in the remains of the grand Dutch Fort and the Dutch canal, now called Hamilton Canal.

### Day two: Negombo to Ambewela

After breakfast head off inland towards the hills and to Nuwara Eliya in the high tea country (approximately 6 hours drive). Pause a while in this curious hill town known as Little England with its racecourse, golf course, lake and British colonial buildings. Then continue to Jetwing Warwick Gardens, near Ambewela. Rejuvenate your spirit in the heart of the magical world of Ceylon tea, a place for solitude and picturesque surroundings wherever the eye can see.

### Day three: Tea experience in the Highlands

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast as the sun burns through the morning mist. This 118-year-old English planter's house is picturesquely tucked within the Ambewela mountain range overlooking a deep tea-clad valley, located on 30 acres of its own farm and tea plantation. Walk through the tea plantations and visit a tea factory to see how tea is manufactured. Attractions such as Nuwara Eliya, Hakgala Botanical Gardens and Horton Plains are nearby.

### Day four: Horton Plains or a scenic drive

An early morning drive will take you to Horton Plains National Park, a world apart from the rest of Sri Lanka, a misty and a rain-swept landscape that has fostered the growth of a unique ecosystem. Follow a circular walking trail that leads you to World's End, a sheer drop of 1,000 metres down to the valley below, and to Bakers Waterfalls, straight out of a picture postcard. Alternatively, go on a scenic drive, or maybe a train journey, around the highlands instead.



Tea Country

### Day five: Ambewela to Galle

Today after an early breakfast, you will be driven through mountain scenery and down to the lush tropical forests and plantations of Sri Lanka's south-west (approximately 6 hours drive). Visit a turtle hatchery en route. Stay just outside historic Galle, on the coast, for two nights at the Jetwing Lighthouse Hotel, an architectural masterpiece created by the late Geoffrey Bawa, Sri Lanka's iconic architect.

### Day six: Galle

After breakfast, head off to explore Galle at leisure, taking in the rich heritage, culture and architecture of this historic fortress town and port. Galle Fort, constructed by the Dutch East India Company as a fortified town, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is still intact and has a thriving community living and working within its walls. Walk along the ramparts with the sea on one side and the famous Galle cricket ground on the other. The myriad narrow streets within the Fort are fascinating for their architecture and are lined with official buildings, shops and town houses, some of which have been converted to stylish villas and boutique hotels.

### Day seven: Galle to Colombo

Head towards Colombo, Sri Lanka's commercial capital (approximately 3 hours drive) a hectic mix of old and new, colonial architecture sitting alongside modern glass. Enjoy a short city tour and indulge in some shopping. Check-in to The Regency at the Galle Face Hotel and, in the evening, sip sunset cocktails on the chequer board of the Galle Face Hotel before exploring Colombo by night.

### Day eight: Colombo

A day to explore Colombo's sights and do some shopping or just relax at the hotel, by the swimming pool, on the terrace or in the Regency Spa.

### Day nine: Departure from Colombo

Transfer to the airport (approximately 1 hour's drive) for your flight home.

### OPTIONAL

It is possible to add extra nights in the Cultural Triangle before visiting Tea Country, or in a beach resort in the south west.

## HOTELS

Our selection of hotels in Negombo, Ambewela, Galle, and Colombo are described below.

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### NEGOMBO

#### Jetwing Beach

Nestling between palm trees along a charming stretch of beach on Sri Lanka's west coast, Jetwing Beach was the first hotel in Negombo to become a member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World. The cool, contemporary architecture of Jetwing Beach complements the natural environment whilst allowing guests to relax in luxury, with minimalist interiors in the bedrooms and suites creating bright and unfussy surroundings. Originally designed by Geoffrey Bawa, the Jetwing Beach was renovated entirely in 2004. Large glass doors open onto a private balcony or terrace that overlooks the sea, an attractive feature of each room, and the suites benefit from butler service. Set in lush tropical gardens, Jetwing Beach hotel also has tennis courts and an outdoor swimming pool. A professional water sports centre, scuba diving and windsurfing are available nearby and safaris and game drives can be organised on request. The spa at Jetwing Beach has two treatment rooms and a steam room, and there is an Ayurvedic centre with a selection of traditional treatment programmes at its sister hotel, Ayurveda Pavilions. International and local cuisine is served in the Sands Restaurant, which is open 24 hours and is partly open air. Alternatively, the fine dining restaurant, Black Coral, is open in the evenings. After dinner, relax with a cocktail or a glass of wine at the Terrace Bar, overlooking the hotel's grounds. Jetwing Beach is in an excellent location for exploring the surrounding area: the fishing town of Negombo with its churches, temples and mosques, Dutch fort and colourful local shops, the nearby Murhurajawala marshlands and the Dutch Canal. [read more](#)



Jetwing Beach, Negombo



Jetwing Warwick Gardens, Ambewela

### AMBEWELA, TEA COUNTRY

#### Jetwing Warwick Gardens

Jetwing Warwick Gardens lies 5,782 feet above sea level amidst simply stunning majestic mountains and tea-clad slopes. Set in 29 acres of grounds, with its own organic farm and tea estate, this unique Edwardian style Estate 'bungalow' (actually with an upstairs and downstairs) was once the dwelling of a Scottish tea planter. Beautifully restored a few years ago to reflect its original charm, Warwick Gardens has five bedrooms, a library, TV snugery, dining room, kitchen and a magnificent drawing room/lounge, leading out into the garden and perfectly manicured lawn. Rich interiors are filled with silky soft rugs and chandeliers, wooden floorboards, old oak furniture and wood-burning fireplaces; there is even a baby grand piano in the lounge. All the bedrooms are spacious and have luxuriously fitted en-suite bathrooms, the Master bedroom offering extra space and an amazing view to Uva Gap. The staff make full use of the wholesome, organic foods that they

produce on the estate and fresh milk comes daily from Daisy, the bungalow cow. Culinary experiences range from a romantic Garden BBQ for a couple or small group to a typical English breakfast in bed or on the lawn with fresh eggs from the farm and delicious fresh guava jam. In the peaceful haven of Warwick Gardens, you can play croquet on the lawn and take a walk around the estate, pick your own vegetables for dinner and relax with a pot of fine high grown tea on the terrace. Spend your day exploring this beautiful mountainous region, with its tea estates and tea factories, hilltop villages, waterfalls, monasteries, the unique Horton Plains or Hakgala Botanical Gardens, returning to flop into a sumptuous sofa by the warm open fire in the Warwick Gardens lounge, back 'home'. In this micro-climate, expect daytime temperatures up to 26 degrees Celsius, dropping in the night time to 14-16 degrees, early morning mists and frequent afternoon rains. [read more](#)



Jetwing Beach, Negombo



Jetwing Warwick Gardens, Ambewela



## HOTELS

Our selection of hotels in Negombo, Ambewela, Galle, and Colombo are described below.

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### GALLE

#### Jetwing Lighthouse

Jetwing Lighthouse sits atop a small rocky promontory commanding superb views across the blue waters of the Indian Ocean just two kilometres from the town of Galle, whose historic Dutch fort was the inspiration for the architecture of the hotel. This architectural triumph of Sri Lankan architect, Geoffrey Bawa, is minimalist and elegant, dramatic and entirely captivating. The long walls and tall colonnades, in whitewash and 'Samara' yellow, give the Jetwing Lighthouse a pleasant coolness, in contrast to the tropical heat outdoors. A magnificent spiral stairway rises around the rotunda of the building and along the length of its railing is a sweeping tableau in brass and copper recalling ancient local history. Outside the Jetwing Lighthouse hotel, an angular swimming pool dominates an upper patio bordered by the poolside bar and café. From here, steps lead down to an expansive lawn strewn with loungers and parasols and another inviting deep blue swimming pool, looking onto a palm-fringed sandy beach. A heavenly Spa nestles in a corner by the beach, catching the sea breeze. In the evening, the restful atmosphere of the Coat of Arms bar with its splendid batik ceiling beckons for an aperitif, followed by dinner in the Cinnamon Room or Cardamon Café. Seafood and fondues are amongst the Head Chef's specialities and for ultimate romance you can dine amongst the rocks. The 60 deluxe bedrooms at Jetwing Lighthouse are spacious and elegant, with enormous wooden-framed beds and soft linen sheets. Teak writing desks are positioned underneath picture windows which frame a view of the Indian Ocean. For unique décor and extra space, go for one of the three themed Suites – revealing Bawa's take on Arabic, Chinese or Dutch style. Daytimes at the Jetwing Lighthouse can be spent relaxing by the pool or beach, exercising in the gym, enjoying a massage at the tranquil Spa or exploring historic Galle Fort and the nearby beaches and countryside. [read more](#)



Jetwing Lighthouse, Galle

### COLOMBO

#### The Regency at the Galle Face Hotel

The Galle Face Hotel, Sri Lanka's first purpose-built hotel, dates back to 1864 and has been owned and run by the Gardiner family (father and now son) for over 60 years. A little museum by the tea room houses hotel memorabilia including a vintage car once owned by Prince Philip. Its position facing the Indian Ocean on one side and Galle Face Green park on another gives this magnificent colonial hotel an airy, resort feel although it is right in the centre of Colombo. The Galle Face hotel continues to feature prominently in Colombo life and is still one of the hotspots for socialising and eating. A high tea on the verandah or cocktails on the chess-board terrace at sunset are on the 'must-do' list for any first-timer to Colombo. There are nine places to eat, including a tea room, seafood restaurant and a pub. The seawater swimming pool and the Regency Spa are ideal for relaxing after sightseeing and shopping in the humid city air. The south wing of the

Galle Face hotel was painstakingly restored between 2002 and 2004 and opened as The Regency at the Galle Face Hotel, adding 80 luxurious bedrooms and a Spa to this pillar of Sri Lankan hospitality. The bedrooms in The Regency are luxuriously fitted with elegant furniture, marble bathrooms, air-conditioning and modern amenities, whilst still retaining original features such as polished wooden floors, high ceilings and whitewashed walls. The Oceanic suites look directly onto the sea. [read more](#)



The Regency at the Galle Face Hotel, Colombo



The Regency at the Galle Face Hotel, Colombo



Jetwing Lighthouse, Galle

## MAP OF COLONIAL HERITAGE OF SRI LANKA TOURING HOLIDAY

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The map below illustrates the route outlined in this touring itinerary, with overnight stops and places of interest highlighted.



## GENERAL INFORMATION

This touring holiday is one of several suggested holidays we can offer you exactly as it is but also with any alterations you might want, including extra nights in one or more places or adding in extra places. All our tours can be extended so that you can include a longer stay in one location too, perhaps at the end of the itinerary. Do call to discuss the options with our travel consultants.

The logo for Expressions Holidays, featuring the word "Expressions" in a white, elegant script font on a dark blue rectangular background.

### OUR TOURS

**Our touring holidays are for individuals travelling on their own or in their own family group. You do not join a group, but are escorted by your own private English-speaking chauffeur-guide.**

### FLEXIBLE ARRANGEMENTS

Our arrangements are very flexible in that you choose to travel on any day you want, subject to availability of flights and hotels. As mentioned above, additional nights can be added at any point.

### FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

Sri Lankan Airways operates daily flights to Colombo from London Heathrow. Most flights leave London in the afternoon or evening. Flight time is about 11 hours. There is economy and a business class cabin. In recent years, the business class cabins have been upgraded to fully reclining flat-beds. From Colombo you can also take the Sri Lankan air taxi to regional centres throughout the country. Sri Lankan Airways also operates flights to the Maldives via Colombo, making Sri Lanka and the Maldives a perfect two-centre combination.

### TRAVEL WITHIN SRI LANKA

We include private transfers with all our holidays to Sri Lanka, and a personal chauffeur with all our touring holidays. Your English-speaking chauffeur-guide will meet you on arrival at Colombo airport, then accompany you on your journey around the island. All our holidays are for individuals, so you travel as your own party and do not join a group. It is also possible to hire a car in Sri Lanka, which can be arranged locally or in advance. A more popular option is to hire a car with driver for day trips or excursions, which, again, can be arranged by us in advance or by the hotel locally.

### TOURING HOLIDAYS

A touring holiday of Sri Lanka is at the heart of what many of our clients want to experience from this fascinating country, and it is where we excel at using our personal knowledge and experience to tailor a holiday that is a perfect match for you. Stay in several different locations around Sri Lanka, allowing time to explore and relax in each. Combine a few nights on the beach with stays in the Kandy Hills, in the Cultural Triangle, on a high tea estate or in a national wildlife park, in Galle, Negombo, or Colombo. It makes sense to factor in a night or two in Colombo, Negombo, Wadduwa, or at the Wallawwa near the airport, at the beginning and/or end of your holiday to coincide with flight times.

### REGIONS OF SRI LANKA

Roughly only half the size of England, yet packed with a whole continent's worth of temples, ruins, wildlife reserves, and luxury beach resorts, Sri Lanka is a beautiful, bite-sized slice of paradise offering a whole world of diverse escapes. Littered with elegant colonial hotels and enchanting boutique lodges, Sri Lanka also offers luxury at a relative snip. Young or old, family or couple, beach-bound or culture-vulture – a visit to Sri Lanka satisfies everyone. Formerly an Arab trading port, the commercial capital Colombo is a bustling, colourful town, with a fabulous bazaar, colonial churches, and craft markets. To the north of Colombo lies Negombo and the beaches of the west coast, whilst to the south Wadduwa is the start of a string of fabulous beaches running all the way down and around Sri Lanka's southwest coast, with a collection of intimate, exquisite beach resorts. Further southward lies historic Galle, a reminder of the Dutch presence on the island. Inviting as Sri Lanka's coastline is, however, the island's interior is worth the airfare alone, with forest parks sheltering leopards and wild Asian elephants, a verdant hill country carpeted in tea plantations with lovely boutique planter's house hotels, and no visitor to Sri Lanka should be allowed to miss the Cultural Triangle, boasting five UNESCO World Heritage Sites in an area no bigger than Kent. New to tourism is the north and north east of Sri Lanka, strewn with Hindu temples, colonial gems and long white beaches offering spectacular snorkelling.

### THINGS TO SEE IN SRI LANKA

Cricket is a national sport, played on every dusty maidan and patch of grass from Jaffna to Galle. A real highlight of any trip to the south is Galle Fort, where you can wander round the ancient ramparts at sunset, watching cricket games below, or stroll along the narrow streets in search of antiques in tiny, friendly shops. Local festivals such as Vesak full moon in May and Poson full moon in July, as well as the famous Esala Festival in Kandy in July and August, when Buddha's tooth is taken out from the temple and paraded through the streets. Visiting national parks, sheltering an abundance of wildlife including leopards, elephants, bears and hundreds of species of birds. Buying tea, gems, jewellery, spices for a local bazaar. Fantastic spicy local cuisine, specialising in fish dishes, and delicious 'egg hoppers.' Tea-tasting in the hill country. Sigiriya Rock Fortress. The Cave temples of Dambulla. The medieval capital and ruins of Polonnaruwa. The sacred city of Anuradhapura. The west coast beaches flanked by palm trees, including Negombo, Beruwela, Bentota and Galle. The elephant orphanage at Pinnawela. The tea plantations near Nuwara Eliya, a region known locally as Little England. Ayurvedic massage. A warm welcome wherever you go.

## OUR PRICES

The sample prices mentioned in this leaflet are generally a 'from' price based on the cheapest season of travel. However, flight and hotel rates can change (up and down depending on offers), so we give you an accurate price for your holiday when we provide you with a quotation. Our sample prices should be used as an indication of how much a particular combination will cost and to show the differences on average between the hotel categories on offer.

## PRICE INFORMATION IN MORE DETAIL

Scheduled return flights from London Heathrow to Bandaranaike International Airport with Sri Lanka Airways and accommodation at Jetwing Beach, Jetwing Warwick Gardens, Jetwing Lighthouse, and the Regency at the Galle Face Hotel.

**From £2,2700 per person.**

## BOOKING CONDITIONS

Our booking conditions apply to all holidays. A copy can be found on our website and a copy is also sent to you with a written quotation and when you make a booking.

## FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Expressions Holidays offers full financial protection for all holidays you book with us. If your holiday includes a flight, the ATOL (3076) covers the costs of the holiday. If the holiday does not include a flight, it is the ABTOT bond that protects the cost of the holiday. We are also members of AITO (the Association of Independent Tour Operators) and ABTA.



Expressions Holidays

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## HOW TO BOOK

To make a booking, just phone us on

**01392 441224**

and we can take you through the details we need and start the booking process. A deposit is required to confirm the arrangements and this can be paid by debit or credit card over the phone. No handling fee is charged on deposits up to £1000. The level of the deposit will be confirmed at the point of booking and will depend on the ticketing deadlines involved in your booking.