

# SRI LANKA – MAIN TOURIST DESTINATIONS

## Negombo : Gateway to Sri Lanka



Negombo has a rich history, from a fishing village with its peerless mangrove lagoon and Dutch Canal to a leading west-coast beach resort. Close to the international airport, it is the perfect place to start your Sri Lankan holiday.

## Kalpitiya: Marine sanctuary



Kalpitiya's diversity of eco-habitats—reefs, coastal plains, mangroves, salt marshes and vast sand dune beaches—is a nursery for many species of fish and crustaceans and home to dolphins, whales and sea turtles. Sea and lagoon kite surfing also thrive.

## Wilpattu: Wildlife haven



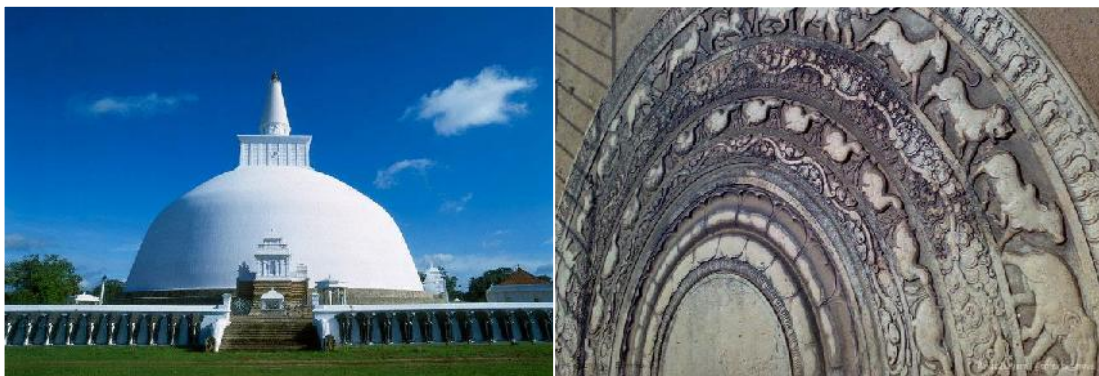
Wilpattu National Park is a wildlife Paradise. Lakes and dense woodland create natural habitats for Sri Lanka's amazing biodiversity, including elephants, leopards, sloth bears, spotted deer, crocodiles and myriad exotic birds. Legend has it that Prince Vijaya landed here in 543BC before founding the Sinhalese race and building the ancient Kuweni Palace at Wilpattu

### **Yala National Park: Leopard sanctuary**



Yala National Park on the south-east coast is the second largest and most visited wildlife reserve in Sri Lanka. Covering 979sq kms (378sq miles), it has the biggest population of leopards on the island, as well as elephants and sloth bears.

### **Anuradhapura: UNESCO Place of kings**



Anuradhapura's spectacular ruins combine the ancient centre of Sri Lanka's former kings with our 2,500-year-old Buddhist roots. It is a magnificent cultural treasure and a renowned UNESCO World Heritage Site of rare distinction.

### **Adam's Peak: Sacred mountain**





This conical mountain in central Sri Lanka is famed for the Sri Pada, which Buddhists believe is the footprint of the Buddha, Hindus that of Shiva, and Muslims and Christians that of Adam or St Thomas. Tens of thousands make the pilgrimage to the summit every year.

### **Polonnaruwa: Buddhist heritage**



Polonnaruwa is second only to Anuradhapura among our sites of cultural and Buddhist heritage. Another UNESCO World Heritage Site, its revered archaeology—temples, tombs, stupas and statues—holds the keys to Sri Lanka’s past.

### **Trincomallee: Sun, Sea, Sand**



Trincomallee’s Swami Rock is one of the world’s best vantage points for watching blue whales as they navigate their ancient ocean highways. The ancient port and Shiva temple have attracted seafarers, traders and pilgrims since ancient times, while Nilaveli beach is a favourite sun, sea and sand destination.

### **Pasikuda: Famed beach**



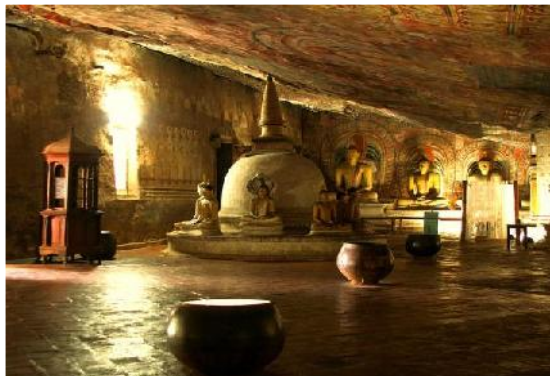
Pasikudah is famed for one of the longest stretches of shallow coastline in the world, where you can walk kilometers out to sea from its popular sandy beach. It and neighboring Kalkudha are in the forefront of tourism on the east coast.

### **Arugam Bay: Sun, surfing and seafood**



Arugam Bay has one of the best-known—and laid-back—‘sun, surfing and seafood’ beaches in the country, and is also perfect for exploring Sri Lanka’s amazing east-coast landscapes and biodiversity, including the nearby Yala National Park.

### **Dambula: Buddhism’s heart and soul**



Dambula’s famed Royal Rock Temple has been called ‘the heart and soul of Buddhism in Sri Lanka’. Its amazing paintings and 153 statues of Buddha make this towering 520ft rock the largest and best preserved cave-temple complex in Sri Lanka.

### **Kandy: Last royal kingdom**





Kandy's Temple of the Tooth holds Sri Lanka's most sacred Buddhist relic, and is the epicenter of the annual Esala Perahera, a grand religious festival celebrated with a procession of traditional dancers and up to 100 lavishly caparisoned elephants.

### **Nuwara Eliya: Tea up, tee off**



Renowned for its tea estates and championship golf course, Nuwara Eliya was founded by colonial tea planters as a summer retreat. It is still the focal point of British cultural influence in Sri Lanka, with even the weather conspiring—often misty, drizzly and chilly. Wrap up warm!

### **Ella: City in the valley**



The Ella to Kandy train journey has been hailed as one of the most spectacular in the world, with magnificently scenic views of the region's mountains and verdant valleys as it wends its way through Ella Gap and the best of the Hill Country.

### **Mirissa: Tropical Paradise**





Mirissa is everyone's idea of a tropical Paradise, its idyllic beaches and romantic sunsets the perfect setting for surfing, communing with nature, reef diving and watching whales and dolphins as they pass the southern tip of Sri Lanka's south coast.

### **Galle: UNESCO walled fortress**



Galle Fort is another UNESCO World Heritage Site, a perfectly preserved 17th Century Dutch fortified city full of historic architectural gems as well as boutique hotels and shops to appeal to the most discerning visitor.

### **Bentota: Sunniest and sandiest**



Apart from being one of the sunniest and sandiest of Sri Lanka's family beach resorts, Bentota is home to the famed Kosgoda Turtle Hatchery and Brief Garden, created by Bevis Bawa, elder brother of Geoffrey, the world-renowned 'father of tropical architecture'.

### **Colombo: Capital metropolis**



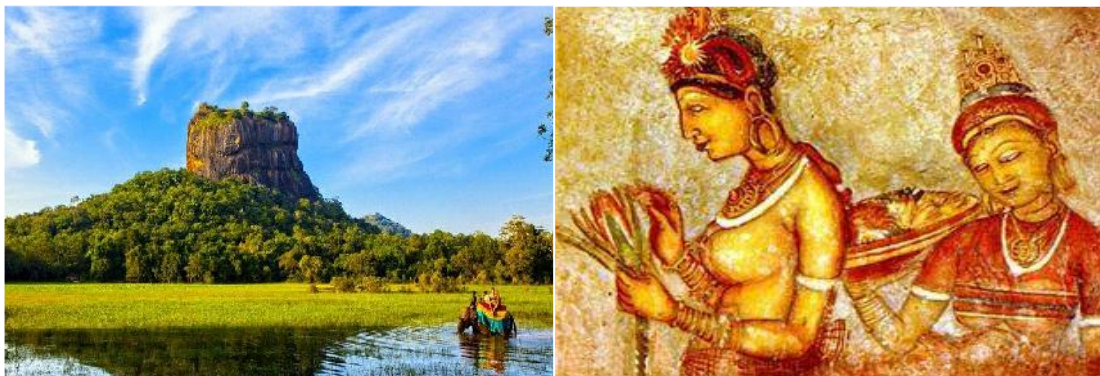
Colombo, Sri Lanka's commercial capital, is rapidly emerging as one of the world's favoured tropical destinations. A centre of contemporary cultural excellence, including art, design, music and drama, it is also home to outstanding five-star shops and hotels, plus sushi and multi-ethnic restaurants.

### **Pinnawella Elephant Orphanage: Care and share**



Pinnawella Elephant Orphanage is unique. Nowhere else in the world will you see so many of these magnificent animals interacting so closely with their human carers and well-wishing visitors in their natural environment.

### **Sigiriya: the Lion Rock, our famed and fabulous UNESCO Heritage Site**



The story of Sigiriya is one of vision, grandeur, beauty and tragedy unparalleled in Sri Lankan history. Built 1,600 years ago, it burst briefly into pre-eminence with breathtaking architecture and art and then quickly faded away into oblivion and was soon forgotten. Few historic sites in the world have such an interesting tale to tell as that of Sigiriya.

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