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EXCLUSIVE PRIVATE CULTURAL TOUR IN
SRI LANKA



ABOUT THE CULTURAL TOUR

Our exclusive cultural tour in Sri Lanka has been specially designed for travellers seeking more than just a sightseeing tour. It is perfect for those who wish to engage with local people, experience their daily lives, and gain a deeper understanding of Sri Lanka's rich culture and traditions. This is not a traditional guided tour where a guide spends the entire day explaining historical facts at every attraction. Instead, your tour is led by an experienced Sri Lankan travel photographer who will introduce you to the authentic side of Sri Lanka. Along the way, you will have the opportunity to meet friendly local people, observe their daily lives, and experience traditional culture. You will also have the opportunity to capture amazing photographs of local people with your tour guide, who is a travel photographer. If you are interested, you can also learn the basics of photography, including camera settings, composition, and low light photography, helping you get the most out of your camera. In addition, your tour guide will take professional quality photographs of you throughout the journey and provide them to you at the end of the tour, giving you beautiful memories of your holiday in Sri Lanka.



ABOUT THE TOUR GUIDE

Saman Weeratunga is a professional travel photographer and videographer based in Kandy, Sri Lanka. He guides photography tours in Sri Lanka for beginners, enthusiasts, and professionals. He specializes in people photography in Sri Lanka, cultural photography tours, and travel photography experiences across the island, helping photographers capture authentic moments of local life and traditions. With international travel experience across Switzerland, Austria, France, Germany, Poland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Kenya, Czech Republic, Singapore, and Malaysia, he brings strong creative insight and global photography knowledge to every Sri Lanka photography tour. Saman has deep local knowledge and strong connections with local communities in Sri Lanka, allowing him to guide you around the country and help you experience the real lifestyle, culture, and daily life of local people. If you are interested in photography, he will also guide you step by step in camera settings, composition, lighting techniques, and creative storytelling. He can also take beautiful photos of you with local people, cultural attractions, scenic location across the country.



HASSLE FREE DRONE CLEARANCE

We handle all the hassle of obtaining official clearance for drone flights in Sri Lanka, making the entire process simple and stress free. Drone usage in Sri Lanka requires approvals from several authorities, and all communication is managed on behalf of clients. This includes the civil aviation authority, the central cultural fund, and the department of archaeology, each of which has its own set of rules and procedures that must be followed carefully. Obtaining drone permissions can be even more challenging when it comes to protected archaeological and heritage sites such as Sigiriya and Polonnaruwa. These locations are strictly regulated to preserve their cultural and historical value, so special approvals are required before any drone activity can take place. Understanding and managing these requirements can be time-consuming and complicated for visitors. That is why full responsibility is taken for the entire process, including preparing documents, submitting applications, and coordinating with relevant authorities. By handling everything from start to finish, the stress and confusion are removed, ensuring a smooth and well managed approval process.



TRAVEL AGENT COLLABORATION

The cost details provided in this itinerary cover only our service charges, giving full flexibility for partners or tour operators to add their own profit margin and offer the tour to their clients at a price that best suits their market. This structure is designed to make collaboration simple and transparent, while allowing complete control over final pricing. Payments can be collected directly from guests, with only the agreed service cost required to be transferred to us, ensuring a smooth and efficient financial process. Please note that the tour cost does not include hotel accommodation, which allows full freedom for partners to select and book hotels independently based on their clients' preferences. However, we are happy to provide suitable hotel recommendations based on budget, comfort level, and proximity to key photography locations to make planning easier. Similarly, meals and beverages are not included in the tour package, as dining preferences can vary widely among travelers. Guests are free to choose their own food options throughout the journey and make payments directly at restaurants, ensuring maximum flexibility and a personalized travel experience.



MODE OF TRANSPORT – A PRIVATE COACH

Travel comfortably in our modern, clean, and well maintained air conditioned bus. The coach features comfortable reclining seats, spacious legroom, and a large luggage storage compartment. An experienced driver ensures a safe, smooth, travel experience throughout your Sri Lanka tour.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

TRADITIONAL DANCERS IN POLONNARUWA

This is an organized private session with a few traditional dancers at a rocky area during sunset, away from tourist areas. There are three main traditional dance styles in Sri Lanka: Kandyan dancing from the hill country, known for energetic movements and drumming with royal traditions; Low Country dancing from the southern coastal areas, famous for mask and ritual dances with healing ceremonies; and Sabaragamuwa dancing from the Sabaragamuwa Province region, blending graceful movements and cultural influences. These styles are deeply rooted in tradition.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

STILT FISHERMEN IN HABARADUWA

This is an organized private session with a few stilt fishermen at sunrise or sunset, away from the tourist beach areas. Stilt fishermen are traditional Sri Lankan fishermen who balance on wooden poles planted in shallow coastal waters while fishing with simple rods. This unique and iconic practice, mainly seen along the southern coast, is a traditional method of fishing known as stilt fishing, where fishermen sit on crossbars fixed to wooden poles above the sea. It is a skill that requires great balance and patience, often practiced during calm early mornings daily.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

ANGAMPORA WARRIORS IN KURUNEGALA

Angampora is the ancient martial art of Sri Lanka and is deeply connected to the island's royal heritage, warrior traditions, and spiritual culture. Angampora combines hand to hand combat techniques, grappling, locks, strikes, and pressure point attacks with traditional weapons such as swords, spears, and staffs. More than just a fighting system, Angampora is a disciplined way of life that emphasises physical strength, agility, mental focus, and self control. Although Angampora was banned during British colonial rule, it has been preserved by dedicated Angampora schools.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

INDIGENOUS VEDDA PEOPLE IN DAMBANA

This is an organized private session with a few indigenous Vedda early in the morning at a remote area away from the main tourist village. The Vedda are the indigenous people of Sri Lanka, known for their deep connection to nature and their way of life. Traditionally living in forested areas, they follow customs, rituals, and hunting practices that have been passed down through generations. They have their own unique language and spiritual beliefs closely connected to the forest environment, preserving ancient traditions and knowledge through generations today.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

TEA VILLAGE SCHOOL STUDENTS IN HAPUTALE

This is an organized private session with young children in a small classroom at a school in a rural tea village. Many rural villages in Sri Lanka have small schools with limited facilities and resources, especially in remote tea estate areas. As a result, many children attending these schools come from families with limited financial means. You may have the opportunity to spend time with children at a rural tea estate village school, interact with them, and perhaps conduct an English lesson with fun activities. Please note that school visits are not available on weekends or public holidays.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

TRADITIONAL CLAY POTTERY FAMILY IN MENIKHINNA

This is an organized private session with a small traditional clay pottery making family in a suburban village near Kandy. Local potters traditionally collect and prepare natural clay before shaping it into different forms using simple tools, hand techniques, and pottery wheels. Clay has been used to create a wide range of everyday items, including cooking pots, water containers, storage vessels, plates, cups, oil lamps, flower pots, and other household objects. You may also have the opportunity to try making a traditional Sri Lankan clay pottery item under the guidance of the local potter.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

WOODEN MASK MAKERS IN AMBALANGODA

This is an organized private session with a few wooden mask makers in an area famous for its long standing tradition of mask making. For generations, skilled artisans have carved masks by hand from locally available wood, using traditional tools and techniques passed down from one generation to the next. Each mask has its own character and meaning, representing figures such as kings, villagers, spirits, demons, animals, and other characters from traditional stories and beliefs. You may also have the opportunity to personally try making a traditional Sri Lankan wooden mask.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

BUDDHIST MONKS WITH RUINS IN POLONNARUWA

This is an organized private session with a few Buddhist monks brought from a nearby temple. The session is arranged with special permission from the department of archaeology to access the ruins at sunrise, when no tourists are allowed. The ancient city of Polonnaruwa in Sri Lanka is a historic site that was once the capital of the country during the 11th to 13th centuries. After the fall of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa became the second capital of the island under King Vijayabahu 1, and it later reached its golden age during the reign of King Parakramabahu 1, the powerful ruler.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

ELEPHANT CARE EXPERIENCE IN PINNAWALA

This is an organized private session with an elephant and its handler in a rural village area. The bond between a domesticated elephant and its handler is built through years of daily care, trust, and close interaction. Handlers play an important role in feeding, bathing, grooming, and caring for the elephants, creating a unique connection between the two. Elephant handling knowledge and traditions are often passed down from father to son through generations. You may also have the opportunity to help feed and bathe the elephant and spend some thrilling time with the animal.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

SRI LANKAN COOKING LESSON IN HAPUTALE

This is an organized private session with an expert in Sri Lankan cuisine. Sri Lankan traditional food is rich, flavorful, and strongly influenced by spices and coconut based cooking. Sri Lankan rice and curry is the most popular everyday meal in the country. It consists of steamed rice served with a variety of curries such as vegetables, dhal, fish, chicken, or seafood, enjoyed across all regions. Each curry is prepared using spices like curry leaves, cinnamon, turmeric, chili, and coconut milk, creating a mix of spicy, aromatic, and creamy flavors, loved by many people worldwide alike.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

TEA PLUCKERS ON TEA FIELDS IN HAPUTALE

Sri Lanka's tea pluckers are an essential part of the country's world famous tea industry, especially in the central highlands. Early in the morning, tea pluckers begin their work as they move carefully through the plantations, hand picking the youngest tea leaves and buds that produce high quality Ceylon tea. Most of them are skilled women who have inherited this traditional occupation through generations, working with precision and speed while maintaining strict quality standards. They carry woven baskets on their backs or shoulders, gradually filling them with freshly plucked leaves.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

MINNERIYA NATIONAL PARK IN MINNERIYA

The Minneriya park is best known for "the gathering," one of the world's greatest wildlife spectacles, when hundreds of wild Asian elephants migrate from the surrounding forests to feed on the lush grasslands around the reservoir. At its peak, more than 200 elephants can be seen together, including large tuskers, family herds, playful calves, and young males. In addition to elephants, Minneriya national park is home to sambar deer, spotted deer, toque macaques, wild boar, water buffalo, crocodiles, monitor lizards, and occasionally the elusive Sri Lankan leopard.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

TUK TUK RIDE THROUGH GREEN VALLEY IN HAPUTALE

This is an amazing journey in a vibrant three wheeler, where you can enjoy spectacular views of the mountains and tea fields. This small, open vehicle lets you truly see and feel the beautiful landscapes, from misty mountain peaks to endless green tea plantations. As the three wheeler winds its way through narrow village roads, you can breathe in the fresh mountain air, catch the aroma of freshly plucked tea leaves, and hear the gentle rhythm of daily village life around you. This kind of experience and fresh air is something you cannot enjoy when traveling by car or bus.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

TRAIN JOURNEY FROM DEMODARA TO NANUOYA VIA ELLA

The train journey is a relatively short but scenic ride through Sri Lanka's hill country. Along the way, stunning views of tea plantations, misty mountains, small villages, waterfalls, and forest covered hills can be experienced. Throughout the journey, smiling passengers, families travelling together, children curiously looking through the windows, vendors moving through the carriages, and locals enjoying their daily commute can be photographed. The changing light, colourful clothing, open windows, and lively interactions create an ever changing environment that is ideal for storytelling.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

GIRAGAMA TEA FACTORY IN PILIMATHALAWA

Visiting a tea factory, the visitors can learn the full tea manufacturing process, starting from freshly plucked green leaves brought from nearby plantations to the final graded product ready for export. The process typically includes withering, rolling, oxidation, drying, and sorting, each stage carefully controlled to develop the tea's flavor and aroma. This guided tour is led by knowledgeable staff, followed by a tea tasting session where guests can sample freshly brewed Ceylon tea and also have the opportunity to buy fresh factory made Ceylon tea directly from the tea factory.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

SEEMA MALAKAYA TEMPLE IN COLOMBO

Seema malakaya temple is one of Colombo's most peaceful and picturesque Buddhist temples, gracefully situated on the tranquil waters of Beira lake in the heart of the city. The temple consists of several beautifully designed pavilions connected by wooden walkways over the lake, creating a serene atmosphere enhanced by the gentle movement of the water. One of the most striking features of the temple is its impressive collection of Buddha statues. The temple houses beautifully crafted Buddha statues in different sizes and postures, which were donated by Buddhist countries.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

DAMBULLA CAVE TEMPLE IN DAMBULLA

The Dambulla cave temple is one of Sri Lanka's remarkable historical and cultural sites, known for its ancient rock caves filled with Buddhist murals and statues. The complex features five main caves, each adorned with preserved murals covering the ceilings and walls, along with over a hundred Buddha statues in various poses. The site houses more than 150 statues, including reclining Buddha figures and finely detailed seated and standing statues, all arranged in a harmonious and atmospheric setting. Its elevated location offers stunning panoramic views of the countryside.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

HISTORIC GALLE DUTCH FORT IN GALLE

The fort was originally built by the Portuguese in 1588 to protect their trading interests along the southern coast. Later, in 1640, the Dutch captured Galle and extensively rebuilt and expanded the fort, strengthening its ramparts, gates, and bastions to create a powerful coastal defense system. The design of the fort reflects classic Dutch military architecture, carefully planned to withstand attacks from both land and sea. Today, the fort is a living heritage site where colonial buildings, old churches and narrow cobblestone streets still preserve its historic charm beautifully intact.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

WEHERAHENA TEMPLE IN MATARA

Weherahena temple is a remarkable Buddhist temple in southern Sri Lanka, famous for its enormous seated Buddha statue and beautifully painted underground temple. The temple's giant seated Buddha statue rises approximately 39 metres, making it one of the tallest seated Buddha statues in Sri Lanka. Beneath the statue lies the temple's underground shrine, whose walls and ceilings are covered with vibrant murals depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha, important events in Buddhist history, and stories from Jataka tales, which recount the Buddha's previous lives.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

SIGIRIYA ROCK FORTRESS IN SIGIRIYA

Sigiriya is an ancient rock fortress and palace complex in Sri Lanka dating back to the 5th century AD, built by King Kashyapa as his royal residence and stronghold after he seized the throne. It functioned as a royal palace and fortress, and later became a Buddhist monastery after the king's death. To reach the summit, visitors climb approximately 1,200 steps, passing through gardens and terraces. At the site, visitors can see fresco paintings, mirror wall graffiti, lion's paw entrance, summit palace ruins, ancient stairways, water gardens and panoramic views of the surrounding landscape.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

PIDURANGALA ROCK IN SIGIRIYA

Pidurangala rock is one of the best viewpoints, offering a breathtaking panoramic view of Sigiriya rock fortress rising above the surrounding forests and plains. Pidurangala has deep historical and spiritual significance, once serving as an ancient Buddhist monastery where monks meditated in its caves. Today, it is a popular hiking spot with stunning sunrise and sunset views. The trail passes through forest paths and stone steps, ending near a large reclining Buddha statue. From the summit, visitors enjoy one of Sri Lanka's most iconic views, especially the perfect sight of Sigiriya rock.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

TEMPLE OF THE SACRED TOOTH RELIC IN KANDY

The temple of the tooth is one of the most sacred Buddhist sites in Sri Lanka, housing the tooth relic of Gautama Buddha. The history of the temple dates back to the 4th century AD, when the relic was brought to Sri Lanka from India and became a symbol of authority, as it was believed that whoever possessed the relic had the right to rule. Today, it remains an active place of worship, where daily rituals are performed, and it is also the focal point of the Esala Perahera, a procession that honors the sacred tooth relic with traditional dancers, drummers, decorated elephants, whip crackers.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

LIPTON'S SEAT VIEWPOINT IN HAPUTALE

Lipton's seat is one of the most scenic viewpoints in Sri Lanka. The location was named after Sir Thomas Lipton, the Scottish tea planter who used to sit here and admire his vast tea estates during the colonial era. On clear days, you can see parts of the Hambantota district, Monaragala district, Ampara district, and Matara district from the viewpoint. The area is often covered with cool mist and moving clouds, creating a peaceful and scenic atmosphere, especially during the early morning hours, offering breathtaking views and fresh mountain air all around, truly unforgettable experience.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

RAVANA ELLA WATERFALL IN ELLA

Ravana Ella Waterfall is one of the most famous and easily accessible waterfalls in Sri Lanka. The waterfall is about 25 meters high and is especially powerful during the rainy season when the water flow increases significantly. The waterfall flows down from rocky cliffs surrounded by dense forest and green hills. Beyond its natural beauty, Ravana Falls is also deeply connected to Sri Lanka's ancient history and mythology. According to the legendary Ramayana epic, it is believed that King Ravana once hid Princess Sita in the caves behind or near this waterfall, during his reign in Lanka.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

A TRAIN PASSING OVER THE NINE ARCHES BRIDGE IN ELLA

The bridge was built during the British colonial period entirely out of stone, brick, and cement, without the use of steel, and stands as a remarkable example of early railway engineering and local craftsmanship. The area around the bridge is popular with travelers who come to enjoy scenic walks along the railway tracks. One of the best experiences at the nine arch bridge is watching a train slowly pass over its nine elegant arches. As the train curves gently along the track, framed by thick greenery and rolling hills, it creates a perfect, postcard like moment with breathtaking views.



TOUR EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

LEISURE TIME AT THE BEACH IN MIRISSA

Sri Lanka is blessed with a stunning coastline stretching around the island, offering a wide variety of beautiful tropical beaches, from peaceful sandy bays and palm fringed shores to lively coastal towns and secluded beaches. The warm Indian ocean, golden sands, swaying coconut palms, and beautiful sunsets make Sri Lanka's beaches ideal for swimming, relaxing, photography, and enjoying the coastal atmosphere. Many beaches also offer activities such as snorkeling, surfing, diving, paddleboarding, kayaking, and boat rides depending on the beach and sea conditions.

TOUR COST DETAILS FOR 15 DAYS

STANDARD PRICE FOR REGULAR TRAVELERS

Total cost for the exclusive cultural tour US\$ **940** per person
(Minimum **10** participants required for the tour)

DISCOUNTED PRICE FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Total cost for the exclusive cultural tour US\$ **550** per person
(Minimum **20** college or university students required for the tour)

INCLUDES

Air Conditioned Private Coach
Angampora Warriors Private Session Fee
Traditional Stilt Fishermen Private Session Fee
Traditional Dancers Private Session Fee
Vedda Community Private Session Fee
Tea Pluckers Private Session Fee
Cooking Private Session Fee
Temple Donations For Monk Portraits
Entrance Fee For The Attractions
Minneriya National Park Entrance Fee
Minneriya Safari Jeep Charges
Second Class Train Tickets From Demodara To Nanu Oya
Tuk Tuk Charges From Haputale To Dambethenna And Return
Photography Tour Guide Service Fee

EXCLUDES

Hotel Accommodation
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Beverages
Air Tickets And Visa Charges
Drone Security Clearance (If Any)
Tips & Other Similar Charges (If Any)

FOODS AND BEVERAGE COST

Our tour cost does not include hotel accommodation, breakfast, lunch, dinner, beverages, or any other meals. We will recommend quality hotels to suit your budget that are conveniently located near the places you will visit, and you can book them directly. Meal costs are not included, as they may vary, giving you the freedom to choose where and what you would like to eat according to your own preferences.

PAYMENT METHOD

ADVANCE DEPOSIT

To confirm your reservation, a deposit of **US\$ 100** is kindly required for each participant. This deposit secures your booking and ensures your place on the tour.

BALANCE PAYMENT 01

Fifty percent (50%) of the total tour cost for each participant is kindly requested to be settled within three (02) days after arrival.

BALANCE PAYMENT 02

The remaining balance payment for each participant is kindly requested to be settled within eight (08) days after arrival.

REFUND POLICY

If any session is canceled during the tour for any reason, the cost of entrance tickets or any related expenses (excluding transport costs) will be refunded. Please note that this does not apply to tickets that have been purchased in advance, if applicable. Kindly be advised that advance deposits are non refundable in the event that a participant is unable to join the tour due to personal reasons.

PAYMENT MEDIUM

Kindly note that payments are accepted in cash only, in USD / EUR / GBP

PASSPORT INFORMATION SUBMISSION

It is necessary to provide the passport details of travelers in order to obtain special permission from the archaeological department for the sunrise sessions in Polonnaruwa. Passport details are also required when booking train tickets. Therefore, please submit an image of the bio page of your passport. Your passport information will be stored securely and will be permanently deleted once the tour has ended. This is required for smooth coordination and official approvals.

TIPS FOR SRI LANKA THAT MIGHT HELP

Flying drones is prohibited in national parks and metropolitan areas like Colombo, Kandy. Special permission is required from the civil aviation authority, department of archaeology, central cultural fund, and Sri Lanka police for flying drones at archaeological sites like Sigiriya, Polonnaruwa, Galle.

When visiting Buddhist or Hindu temples, cover your legs and shoulders, and remove your shoes and hats. Thick socks can help protect your feet from hot sand. Never pose with your back to Buddha statues when taking photos, as it is considered highly disrespectful in Sri Lankan culture. Always face the statue respectfully.

The tropical sun can be very strong, protect your skin and eyes by applying sunscreen, wearing a hat, and using sunglasses. In the hill country, temperatures can be cooler, so it's a good idea to bring a light jacket or sweater.

Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted, but American Express may not be accepted everywhere. Small shops may not accept credit cards, so keep some Sri Lankan rupees on hand for small purchases and local restaurants. The standard voltage in Sri Lanka is 230 V with a frequency of 50 Hz. Plug types used are D and G, so you may need a plug adapter.

Sri Lanka has relatively few mosquitoes, mainly in the evenings, so use insect repellent and wearing light, long sleeved clothing is recommended for protection. Public restrooms may lack toilet paper or soap, so carry tissues and hand sanitizer.

Buy a SIM card at the airport for easy connectivity. Dialog and Mobitel offer the best coverage across the island. eSIMs are also available for purchase at the airport. Buying a local SIM or eSIM is recommended because hotel Wi-Fi is often very slow.

When traveling in rural areas, you may encounter many poor children who gather around you. Bringing small, inexpensive chocolates or sweets can make them very happy, as they love receiving something from foreigners. Stationery or educational materials are less practical, as there are often many children, but small packets of sweets are easy to distribute fairly among them.

