

Sigiriya Explorer

4 Day Extension – 4V, 5V or Boutique

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Sigiriya Extension • Perfect tour for first time visitors • Sigiriya Rock Fortress • Minneriya National Park safari
- Dambulla Cave Temple • Add to your beach stay • 4V, 5V or Boutique hotel options available

ITINERARY

Day 1: Depart Colombo

After an early breakfast depart for Habarana by road (approximately 4–5 hours from Negombo/Colombo), upon arrival enjoy the rest of the day at leisure. Commonly referred to as the 'Cultural Triangle', the central plains area boasts of temple ruins and ancient cities combined with national parks and glistening reservoirs. UNESCO World Heritage Sites include the striking rock fortress of Sigiriya, Dambulla's Royal Rock Temple and crumbling archaeological treasures of Polonnaruwa. Habarana is a popular tourist destination for safari lovers as it is the starting point for safaris in the nearby Minneriya sanctuary, heavily populated by elephants. This makes the area an enthralling visit for wildlife and cultural lovers alike. Enjoy 3 nights at the **Habarana Village by Cinnamon or similar (4V option), Cinnamon Lodge or similar (5V option) or Jetwing Vil Uyana or similar (boutique option)**. (B/D)

Day 2: Sigiriya and Minneriya

In the morning, visit the magnificent site of Sigiriya Rock. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is one of Sri Lanka's major attractions; highlights include the water gardens, the mirror wall with ancient graffiti, the lion platform and the summit of 1.6 hectares, which was completely covered by buildings during the period of Sigiriya's glory. In the afternoon you will drive to the Minneriya National Park (depending on the elephant movement, we may visit the nearby Kaudulla National Park or Eco Park instead). The 8,890 hectares of Minneriya National Park consists of mixed evergreen forest and scrub areas and is home to favourites, such as elephants and sambar deer. The central feature of the park is the ancient Minneriya Tank (built in 3rd century AD by King Mahasena). During the dry season (June to September), this tank is an incredible place to observe the elephants who come to bathe and graze, as well as the huge flocks of birds that come to fish in the waters. (B/D)

Day 3: Dambulla Cave Temples

This morning visit the Dambulla Cave Temples, one of the largest and best preserved cave temple complexes in Sri Lanka. Located in the north central province, this UNESCO World Heritage Site dates back to the 1st century BC, and is an amazing complex of 5 caves. These caves were first used as a refuge by an ancient king who on regaining his throne commissioned magnificent carved images within the living rock. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure. (B/D)

Day 4: Depart to the beach

Today we return to Negombo/Colombo by road (approximately 4–5 hours) or by light aircraft with Cinnamon Air (approximately 1 hour). (B)

Meals: B=Breakfast, D=Dinner

This is a set tour itinerary, if you have booked any pre/post or optional tour arrangements please refer to your separate vouchers and final documents.

TOUR NOTES

Pre/Post Tour Options

This Sigiriya Explorer is a 3 night extension designed to fit in-between your stay in your chosen beach hotel. As the Cultural Triangle region is in the central north of Sri Lanka we recommend staying in the Negombo area either side as the southern beaches will add an extra 4-5 hours of driving time.

Time difference

GMT +5 ½ hours (summer) +6 ½ hours (winter)

Tour inclusions

- Air-conditioned transport with private driver/guide
- Sightseeing as detailed including entrance fees and still camera fees
- Accommodation and meal inclusions as mentioned
- Road taxes, parking fees, fuel surcharges and portorage at airports

Tour exclusions

- International flight, including all UK and overseas airport taxes and applicable fuel surcharges
- Flight upgrades and airport transfers in the UK
- Insurance
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, laundry, tips & gratuities, video camera fees at monuments
- Anything not detailed on the itinerary

Accommodation

Occasionally due to availability or other circumstances we may need to substitute one or more of the hotels with that of a similar standard

Journey times

Sri Lankan roads are windy and there are few highways so journey times between destinations can be very long, those listed in the itinerary are approximate. If optional excursions are added or ad hoc visits are required this may add extra time on the roads. This tour have been designed by our destination experts so we have tried to build in free time to relax and added internal flights where we think cutting journey times may improve guest's experience.

In some instances you may want to add an internal flight to cut transfer times, for the Sigiriya Explorer you can add the Colombo to Sigiriya flight for an additional cost, please ask your Virgin Holidays agent.

Language

English is widely spoken in Sri Lanka

Visa requirements

Holders of UK Passports will require a visa to visit Sri Lanka. This must be obtained in advance for US\$30.00 and can be completed at:

<http://www.eta.gov.lk/slvisa>

Currency

The Currency in Sri Lanka is the Sri Lankan Rupee. There are plenty of banks and ATMs, but you see less once you head out of the cities, so make sure you have enough to cover your drinks and ad-hoc item bills. You may want to carry small amounts of local currency for tips and to buy souvenirs from vendors too! Please note that not all smaller hotels and shops can accept credit cards

Electricity

The electricity supply in Sri Lanka is 230 volts, as the sockets vary, an 'International traveller's adapter set' is recommended

Tipping

It is customary to tip in Sri Lanka. 10% is usual in restaurants (this is often included in the bill as a service charge) and a guide for your driver/guide would be \$5 per traveller per day.

What to pack

- Lightweight, cotton clothes, smart casual is acceptable
- A light sweater or fleece for early mornings and evenings and air-conditioning can be cool in restaurants
- Comfortable, enclosed and sturdy footwear for walking and game-drives
- Casual clothing and sandals for dinner and relaxing at your hotel/lodge
- Sun cream, sunglasses and hat
- Camera and/or video camera with spare batteries and memory cards
- Swimming attire for an occasional swim
- Binoculars
- Mosquito repellent and spray
- Handy wipes, antiseptic hand gel and bottled water where possible
- For visits to religious monuments and buildings clothing rules may apply, for example covering shoulders or removing footwear, your local guide can advise where necessary
- Low denominations of local currency - handy for ad-hoc tipping!

What to expect

A tour in Sri Lanka is an adventure where anything can happen. We recommend you are of a reasonable fitness as touring often involves long walks and uneven surfaces, this tour is not suitable for those who require special assistance. Sites such as Sigiriya and Dambulla involve climbing many steps.

Recommended vaccinations

We advise you to discuss your individual requirements for Sri Lanka with your GP at least 6-8 weeks prior to travel.