

# The Great Sri Lankan Expedition

## 12 night's tour

*“Embark on the adventure of a life time as you explore the pearl of the Indian Ocean! “*

Sri Lanka has long since been a destination full of allure to the eager explorer. The island is a treasure trove of amazing landscapes, culture, wildlife and history all accessible within a day's ride. On this trip you will have the unique opportunity of riding from the northern most point to the southern region of the island and experience everything in between!



### **Trip Summary:**

- **Duration:** 14 / 15 days, Negombo to Negombo
- **Distance covered:** 1,260 miles (2,000 kms) approx
- **Roads:** grades A, B and gravel
- **Eligibility:** At least one year experience of riding a motorcycle. Valid International Riders License

## Day 01

On arrival at International Airport you will receive a warm Sri Lankan welcome. Thereafter you will be transferred to the hotel in Katunayake.

Negombo is a major city in Sri Lanka, located on the west coast of the island and at the mouth of the Negombo Lagoon. It is the second largest city in Western province after Colombo. It is one of the major commercial hubs in Sri Lanka of about 128,000 inhabitants in the city limits, approximately 37 km north of Colombo city. Negombo is known for its huge and old fishing industry with busy fish markets and sandy beaches.

Once you have checked in and rested briefly, meet outside and get acquainted with your Motor Bike. Once you are comfortable with your bike you are free to ride your bike and get accustomed to riding on the left side of the road with the support of an experienced guide rider.

Once you are confident with the arrangement you could make your way back to the hotel for some rest before the big day!

Standard: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Golden Star Hotel, Negombo or similar (2 Star+)

Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Goldi Sands Hotel, Negombo or similar (3 Star)



## Day 02

Approximate riding Distance 140 km

After Breakfast make your way to the lobby in your riding gear along with your luggage which will be transferred direct to the next hotel. You may use a small day bag to store your necessities which you could have on your person and access whilst on the days ride.

\*(Note: This will be the morning schedule for the days to come.)

Fire up your engines, toot your horns and roar away along the coastal road to Kalpitiya! Riding will be on 'A' roads with occasional use of 'B' roads.

En route you will have the opportunity to stop at the Anawilundawa wetland which is a small bird sanctuary protected by the RAMSAR treaty. Proceed to Kalpitiya which is a peninsula extending 40 Km off mainland Sri Lanka and home to a large lagoon. Check-in to your hotel and rest.

In the afternoon you could ride to the furthest point of the peninsula where you will find a sleepy town which is home to a historic Dutch church.

Rich in natural beauty, Kalpitiya's history is no less interesting. Records going far back reveal that the peninsula was associated with maritime trade and smuggling escapades since ancient times. It was first colonised by the Portuguese in early 17th Century. The arrival of the Dutch eventually resulted in the ousting of the Portuguese from here and elsewhere in the island. Historical records show that during the Dutch period of the island's colonial history, the northern end of the peninsula was used as a strategic base for a military garrison and naval outpost to monopolise trade supplies to the mainland.

Standard & Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Palagama Beach, Kalpitiya or similar



## Day 03

Approximate riding Distance 180 km

Wake up to the sound of the ocean and have breakfast at your leisure and commence riding north to the coastal town of Mannar. The days riding will mostly be on a road that runs through the Wilpattu National park. This is an experience to look forward to.

The unique feature of this park is the existence of "Willus" (Natural lakes) - Natural, sand-rimmed water basins or depressions that fill with rainwater. Wilpattu is among the top national parks world renowned for its Leopard (*Panthera pardus kotiya*) population.

(\*Note: rainfall could cause swelling of a river that crosses the Wilpattu jungle road and in case this event does occur the route will be altered and a main road running through Anuradhapura will be used.)

After clearing the Wilpattu stretch ride on to the Shrine of Our Lady of Madhu is a Roman Catholic Marian shrine in Mannar district of Sri Lanka. With a history of over 400 years, this shrine acts as a center for pilgrimage and worship for Sri Lankan Catholics.

Ride into Mannar and take in the beauty of this coastal town.

Mannar, is a big town, and it's the main town of Mannar District, Northern Province, Sri Lanka, governed by an Urban Council. It is located on Mannar Island overlooking the Gulf of Mannar. It is home to the historic Ketheeswaram temple.

Mannar is known for its baobab trees and for its fort, built by the Portuguese in 1560 and taken by the Dutch in 1658 and rebuilt; its ramparts and bastions are intact, though the interior is largely destroyed. Formerly the town was renowned as a center of pearl fishing. Visually, the modern town is dominated by its Hindu temples, mosques and churches.

Standard & Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accom at Palmyrah House, Mannar or similar (Guesthouse)



## Day 04

Approximate riding Distance 120 km

After breakfast commence riding to Jaffna.

For over 3 decades Jaffna has been the center stage of Sri Lanka's civil crisis. Much has changed but the iconic landscape still welcomes visitors. You will notice that the coconut trees that were predominant in the south have almost vanished and been replaced completely by Palmyra tree.

Upon reaching Jaffna set out exploring this culturally rich town. A few key land marks to look out for are the Nallur Kovil (Hindu Temple) and the famous Rio Ice Cream Parlor which is a welcome treat in the sizzling Jaffna heat.

The majority of the city's population are Sri Lankan Tamils. Most Sri Lankan Tamils are Hindus followed by Christians, Muslims and a small Buddhist minority. The city is home to number of educational institutions established during the colonial and post-colonial period. It also has number of commercial institutions, minor industrial units, banks, hotels and other government institutions such as the hospital. It is home to the famous Jaffna library. The city is anchored by the Jaffna fort.

In the evening ride to Cashurina beach and cool off before returning to the hotel.

Standard: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Tilco Hotel, Jaffna or similar (2 Star)

Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Expo Pavillion, Jaffna or similar (Guest House)



## Day 05

Approximate riding Distance 100 km

In the morning ride along the vast Jaffna lagoon to a jetty from which you can catch a ferry to Delft island. This is a small island named by the Dutch surrounded by shallow beaches. It is home to a small population of people and also home to a population of wild ponies abandoned by the Dutch settlers.

(Note: The ferry is a form of public transport for the residents of the island and could get crowded. Bikes will need to be left behind and island exploration will need to be done on foot.)

Once returning to the mainland ride on point Pedro which is the northern most point of Sri Lanka.

Return to hotel for relaxation.

Standard: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Tilco Hotel, Jaffna or similar (2 Star)

Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Expo Pavillion, Jaffna or similar (Unclassified)



## Day 06

Approximate riding Distance 200 km

After Breakfast ride on to Anuradhapura on the A9 highway. This is the main artery that connects Jaffna to the rest of the island. It was closed and guarded on both sides for many years inhibiting free movement and is now a testament to the lasting peace in the island.

Anuradhapura was Sri Lanka's first capital established over two millennia ago is a testament to the grand civilization that existed in the time.

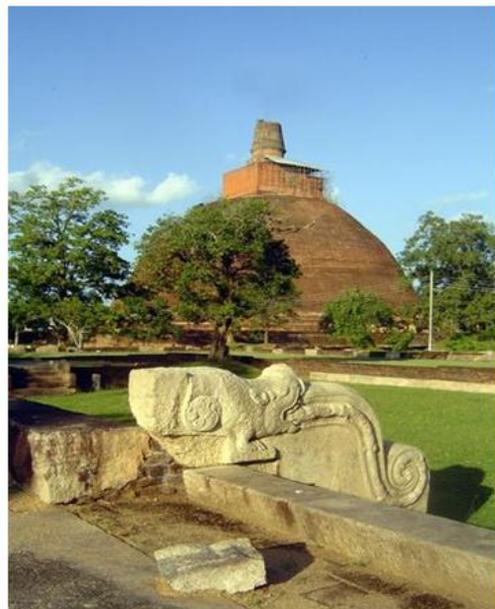
The city, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was the center of Theravada Buddhism for many centuries. The city lies 205 km north of the current capital Colombo in Sri Lanka's North Central Province, on the banks of the historic Malvathu Oya. It is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world and one of the eight World Heritage Sites of Sri Lanka.

It is believed that from the 4th century BC, it was the capital of the Sinhalese until the beginning of the 11th century AD. During this period it remained one of the most stable and durable centers of political power and urban life in South Asia. The ancient city, considered sacred to the Buddhist world, is today surrounded by monasteries covering an area of over sixteen square miles (40 km<sup>2</sup>).

(Optional sight-seeing in Anuradhapura.)

Standard: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Rajarata Hotel, Anuradhapura or similar (3 Star)

Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommod at Palm Garden Village Hotel, A'pura or similar (3 Star +)



## Day 07

Approximate riding Distance 120 km

After breakfast leave for Trincomalee the famous coastal town of the east coast. You will ride through scenic lowland countryside and depending on the time of the year you will have the opportunity to witness the local farmers hard at work either planting or harvesting in their paddy fields. You will also pass by a few man made reservoirs used to irrigate the surrounding farm land.

Explore this coastal town famous for its natural harbor and the Koneswaram Kovil located on a vantage point overlooking the bay. If the group is interested a few other points of interest are the hot water wells in Kanniya and the Commonwealth War Graves.

Make your way to the hotel in Trincomalee and check-in for a well-earned night of rest.

Standard: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Sea Lotus park, Trincomalee or similar (2 Star)

Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Chhaya Blu, Trincomalee or similar (3 Star +)



## Day 08

Approximate riding Distance 145 km

After breakfast head on to Habarana via Muttur and Kantale. Make a brief stop at the Kantale reservoir and witness the majesty of this man made reservoir.

Kantale Tank is an ancient reservoir built by King Aggabodhi II (604-614 AD) covering an extent of 3,750 hectares. Constructed for the irrigation of crops in this arid region, its source of water is the Mahaweli River, the longest in the island, which flows out to the sea at Trincomalee.

The Kantale tank supports a thriving inland fishing industry and has been designated an Important Bird Area (IBA) by Birdlife International in recognition of the large populations of water birds and birds of prey it supports. Large herds of elephants also visit the shores of the tank to cool off and have a drink in the evening from the surrounding jungle.

Optional Afternoon Safari of the Minneriya National park famous for the Gathering of Elephants that takes place between July and October.

Large numbers of Sri Lankan elephants are attracted to grass fields on the edges of the reservoir during the dry season. The Minneriya tank contributes to sustain a large herd of elephants. Individuals of elephants gathered here is numbering around 150-200. Some reports account number of elephants to as high as 700. They migrate here from Wasgamuwa National Park and benefited from food and shelter of the park's forest. Tourists visit Minneriya largely because of elephants, especially in dry season.

Standard: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Kassapa Lions Rock, Habarana or similar (3 Star)

Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Chhaya Village, Habarana or similar (4 Star)



## *Day 09*

Approximate riding Distance 140 km

Wake up afresh and get excited! You will see some drastic changes today as you leave the flat land behind you and ascent to the central hills.

Ride past the towns of Minneriya and Giritale and head on to Rattota which is a stark contrast to the areas you have been riding in before. This montane forested region offers some breath taking views. After spending some time in Rattota descend to Wasgamuwa.

Standard & Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Willys Safari, Wasgamuwa or similar (2 Star +)



## Day 10

Approximate riding Distance 160 km

After Breakfast ride to Hasalaka and head on to Kandy through the scenic 18 bend road for a test of your cornering capabilities which you will need in the days to come.

Kandy was the last capital of the ancient kings' era of Sri Lanka. The city lies in the midst of hills in the Kandy plateau, which crosses an area of tropical plantations, mainly tea. Kandy is both an administrative and religious city and is also the capital of the Central Province. Kandy is the home of The Temple of the Tooth Relic (Sri Dalada Maligawa), one of the most sacred places of worship in the Buddhist world. It was declared a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1988.

Explore the historic city of Kandy.

Standard: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Senani Hotel, Kandy or similar (3 Star)

Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Cinnamon Citadel, Kandy or similar (4 Star)



## Day 11

Approximate riding Distance 160 km

After Breakfast leave Kandy and head on to Nuwara Eliya. Get ready for some interesting trails as you ride through narrow roads that wind through tea plantations. Clear the busy Kandy town and head towards the cool hills. En route stop over at a tea factory and witness how the raw green leaf is processed into the finished product.

Nuwara Eliya it is located at an altitude of 1,868 m (6,128 ft) and is considered to be the most important location for Tea production in Sri Lanka. The city is overlooked by Pidurutalagala, the tallest mountain in Sri Lanka. You will need to have a raincoat handy and the weather could be unpredictable.

The city was founded by Samuel Baker, the discoverer of Lake Albert and the explorer of the Nile in 1846. Nuwara Eliya's climate lent itself to becoming the prime sanctuary of the British civil servants and planters in Ceylon. Nuwara Eliya, called Little England then, was also a hill country retreat where the British colonialists could immerse in their pastimes such as fox hunting, deer hunting, elephant hunting, polo, golf and cricket.

Although the town was founded in the 19th century by the British, the whole district is today visited by native travelers, specially during the month of April, the season of flowers, pony races, go cart races and auto rally.

Many of the buildings retain features from the colonial period such as the Queen's Cottage, General's House, Grand Hotel, Hill Club, Town Post Office and even new hotels are often built and furnished in the colonial style. Anyone who visits the city can wallow in its nostalgia of bygone days by visiting these landmark buildings. Many private homes still maintain their old English-style lawns and gardens.

Upon reaching the hill station of Nuwara Eliya, check - in to the hotel refresh yourself and explore the town of Nuwara Eliya.

Standard & Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Galway Forest Hotel, Nuwara Eliya or similar (3 Star)



## Day 12

Approximate riding Distance 197 km

After breakfast bid farewell to the hill country and head on to the southern lowlands of the island. Ride through the small town of Ella and witness the breath taking Ella GAP and the Rawana waterfall as you descend to Wellawaya and head on to Tissamaharama.

The sleepy village is nestled in a valley peering straight through Ella Gap to the plain nearly 1000m below, and across to the coast where, on a clear night, you can see the Great Basses lighthouse. And as if the views weren't enough, Ella is surrounded by hills perfect for walks through tea plantations to temples and waterfalls. Ella only received electricity in 1984.

The Ravana Falls (popularly known as Ravana Ella in Sinhala) is a popular sightseeing attraction in Sri Lanka. It currently ranks as one of the widest falls in the country. This waterfall measures approximately 25 m (82 ft) in height and cascades from an oval-shaped concave rock outcrop. During the local wet season, the waterfall turns into what is said to resemble an areca flower with withering petals. But this is not the case in the dry season, where the flow of water reduces dramatically.

Optional evening safari of the Yala National Park.

Yala National Park has a variety of ecosystems including moist monsoon forests, dry monsoon forests, semi deciduous forests, thorn forests, grasslands, fresh water and marine wetlands, and sandy beaches. Including Sri Lankan Elephant, 44 species of mammals are resident in Yala National Park, and it has one of the highest leopard densities in the world. 25 individual leopards are estimated to roam in Block I.

Standard: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Chandrika Hotel, Tissamaharama or similar (3 Star)

Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Willa Safari, Weerawila or similar (2 Star +)



## Day 13

Approximate riding Distance 220 km

In the morning depart for Galle. The ride will be through scenic countryside. You will ride along the bund of the Udawalawe reservoir and ascend the hills of Deniyaya finally making your way to the city of Galle.

Standard: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Koggala Beach, Koggala or similar (3 Star)

Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Long Beach, Koggala or similar (4 Star)



## Day 14

Approximate riding Distance 160 km

Depart for Negombo. En Route visit the Galle fort which was built first in 1588 by the Portuguese, then extensively fortified by the Dutch during the 17th century from 1649 onwards. It is a historical, archaeological and architectural heritage monument, which even after more than 423 years maintains a polished appearance, due to extensive reconstruction work done by Archaeological Department of Sri Lanka

Brace yourself for some traffic as you ride through the commercial Capital Colombo which is the most developed city in Sri Lanka. For the final leg of the journey ride along the Hamilton Canal to Negombo where a cool beer awaits you at the hotel. There will be many stories to share as you bid farewell to your trusty motorbikes and retire to the hotel for some rest and relaxation.

Standard: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Golden Star Hotel, Negombo or similar (2 Star+)

Superior: Dinner and Overnight Accommodation at Goldi Sands Hotel, Negombo or similar (3 Star)



## Day 15

Transfer to the airport for Departure.