

Know before you go . . .

Key Facts

Commercial capital	- Colombo
Currency	- Sri Lankan Rupee
Time Zone	- GMT + 5 ½ hours
Airport	- Bandaranaike International Airport

Visa and Passport requirements

All visitors to Sri Lanka must apply for a mandatory visa prior to arrival in Sri Lanka. This can be done online at <http://www.eta.gov.lk/slvisa>. Current charges are US \$20 per person or US \$ 10 per person for visitors from SAARC countries. Visitor visas can also be obtained on arrival at a surcharge.

Passports must be valid for a minimum of 6 months from the date of proposed travel. There may be other criteria for granting of visas and it is advisable to check the information at <http://www.eta.gov.lk> or the Sri Lanka mission in your country.

Currency and cash

Sri Lanka Rupee notes come in the following denominations 5000, 2000, 1000, 500, 100, 50 and 20. Cash in USD, GBP, AUD, EUR can be encashed to Sri Lankan Rupees at the airport on arrival, at selected local banks or at your hotel.

Credit cards such as Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted in hotels and shops.

Cash withdrawals in Sri Lankan Rupees can be made from ATMs that are available in larger towns throughout the island. Please contact your bank to find out if your cards will be valid for use in Sri Lanka prior to arrival.

Note that Travellers cheques and credit cards cannot be used for cash encashment.

Luggage

Your vehicle is equipped to carry 1 piece of check in luggage (standard size 80 cms x 55 cms x 25 cms) + 1 piece of cabin luggage per person. Please advise if you are travelling business class, or doing multiple country trips or carrying oversized luggage for any other purpose eg. Sports equipment etc. so that we can then ensure that we allocate larger vehicles.

Packing essentials

Sun protection aids such as sunscreen, hat and sunglasses, Insect repellent.

Most hotels have either rectangular plugs (UK - Type G) or round pin plugs (India - Type D).

If you have other plugs, such as the two slanted pins (Type I), please bring along an adaptor.

Clothing

Being a tropical country, light cotton clothing is recommended for travel throughout the year. Modest clothing is required when visiting temples – sleeveless tops and shorts are not appropriate. Socks to wear when visiting temples is recommended as you have to remove your footwear and walk barefoot often on hot surfaces.

Good walking shoes or trainers are recommended especially if your itinerary involves long walks. If visiting the hill country eg. Nuwara Eliya, Ella or Bandarawela a shawl or light cardigan is recommended as temperatures can drop in the evenings.

When dining in the evening, some hotels require men to wear long trousers, collared shirts and closed shoes. For women similarly elegant clothing is recommended.

Arrival information

On arrival at the airport, please collect your luggage and proceed to the arrivals lobby. Our Airport representative will be waiting for you and he will be holding a board with your name on it. He will then introduce you to your chauffeur guide.

Chauffeur Guide

Your chauffeur guide will generally stay with you throughout your tour. They hold a guide licence issued by the tourism authority and will guide you at all the historic sites on your tour. They are given an allowance for meals and their overnight accommodation is taken care of. Lunch is often the main meal for Sri Lankans and it is advisable to ensure that while your tour itinerary is flexible, sufficient time is allowed for meals and rest for your guide during the tour. Your chauffeur guide may not be with you during your beach stay (unless specifically requested)

Vouchers and Tickets

Your hotel reservations have all been pre booked and you don't need any vouchers for checking in to the hotels. If you have booked train, internal air transport or tickets for special events, your chauffeur guide will have the relevant tickets and will hand them over to you. All included excursions will be co-ordinated by your chauffeur guide including the purchase of tickets.

Water

It is advisable to drink plenty of water while on tour as the climate is often hot and humid. Whilst tap water in Sri Lanka is good enough to use for brushing your teeth etc. it is not advisable to drink tap water. Bottled water is freely available throughout the country. Ensure that the seal is not damaged before you purchase your bottled water.

Public Holidays

Sri Lanka enjoys many public holidays during the year. Each month, the day of the full moon is a holiday. Apart from this, important days for Buddhists, Hindus, Christians and Muslims are also declared as public holidays. It is important to note that on public holidays alcohol will not be served in public areas including restaurants, bars etc. However you may order alcoholic beverages to your room if your hotel offers room service.

Sea Bathing

While the sea may look very inviting, sometimes there are undercurrents that can be dangerous. Most beaches have a flag indicating the safety of the sea. Do not go sea bathing alone or if there isn't anyone else in the sea.

Tipping

Although not compulsory, tipping is customary in Sri Lanka. Hotel staff, caretakers at temples, jeep drivers and others you may encounter during your excursions would expect a tip if you have been satisfied with their services. Your chauffeur guide will give you an indication of the amount to tip. For your chauffeur guide we recommend a tip of approx. Rs. 5000/= per day

Emergency contact numbers

In case you need to contact us please use the following emergency contact numbers

Airport Rep

Joy + 97 777 320 551

Operations

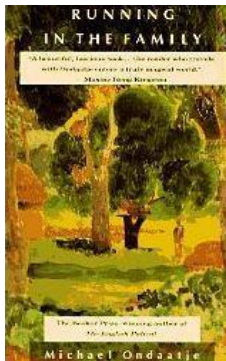
+ 94 777 896 146

+ 94 777 320 551

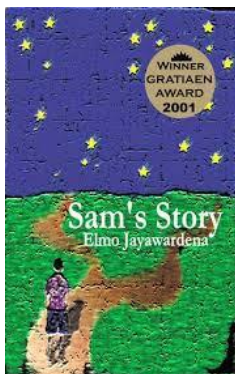
Local office + 94 114 518 888

(Mon-Fri 8.30 am – 5.30 pm excluding public holidays)

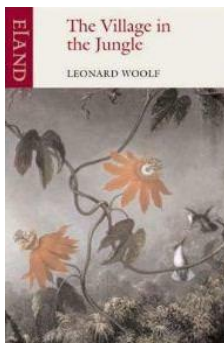
On a lighter note to get you in the mood – Sri Lanka travel books to read before you go



Running in the Family by Michael Ondaatje recounts a return to Sri Lanka in the 1970s after growing up here in the '40s and '50s, and captures many of the little oddities that make up life in Sri Lanka.



Elmo Jayawardena picked up literary prizes with Sam's Story, the tale of an illiterate village boy working in Colombo. It's a simple, often lighthearted read that deftly deals with the wider problems of society.



Village In the Jungle by Leonard Woolf is a sombre account of local life in Hambantota. First published in 1913, it is in the same vein as George Orwell's Burmese Days.