

Ayubowan!

A warm welcome to the Island of Sri Lanka! The following is a compilation of general information that you will find useful while on your tour.

Chauffeur Guide

Your chauffeur guide will be with you throughout your tour except during your beach stay, unless specifically requested, and he may not be assigned for your departure transfer.

All our chauffeur guides are well experienced, fully qualified and certified by the Sri Lanka Tourism authority. Outlined below are a few points to note with regards to what you may or may not expect from your chauffeur guide and what you can do to ensure your holiday is simply perfect!

Working hours

Your chauffeur guide is expected to be on duty from the scheduled start of the days' activities until the time you are dropped back to your hotel. Times may vary each day and he will discuss this with you the day before.

On leisure days, you may request your chauffeur guide to drive you around the area up to a maximum of 80 km per day. If this is exceeded you may make payment for the extra mileage to him directly.

Guiding and Interaction

Your chauffeur guide will give you information about Sri Lanka and guide you during your sightseeing. He will also often share stories about Sri Lankan life and customs. He may not often initiate conversation and this is mainly to enable you to enjoy your privacy. However do feel free to ask questions and encourage more conversation if you wish.

Lunch, Dinner and Drinks

All meals are provided for your guide. Lunch is traditionally the main meal for most Sri Lankans and consists of rice and curry. You may invite your guide to join you for lunch but in most cases he will be happy to enjoy it by himself or with fellow guides. In case you prefer a snack or light lunch, please ensure that your guide has sufficient time to have a break and a quick lunch.

Our guides are not permitted to have any alcohol during the day. However if you wish to invite them to have a drink with you in the evening, please check with your hotel first as some small boutique hotels do not allow chauffeur guides into the property in order to maintain the privacy of other clients.

In order to ensure your safety on the roads, our chauffeur guides are not allowed to drive you unless they have a minimum of 7 hours sleep each day. They also need time to attend to their daily vehicle checks and organize activities for the next day. If you require your chauffeur guide to take you out for dinner, please ensure that you give him sufficient time to rest and prepare for the next day's touring.

Walks and Safaris

Wherever possible your guide will accompany you on your walks and safaris. There may be instances however, like parking problems or long hours of driving, where he may request the services of a local guide to accompany you. This will be organised and paid for by your chauffeur guide.

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, it is not advisable to drink tap water. As our commitment to reducing single use plastic, water bottles are given to all clients on arrival. Most of the hotels that we work with have safe drinking water available and we encourage you to refill water at the hotels. If you need to purchase additional water, it is preferable to buy the larger bottles and refill your bottle. 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 (Poya) is a holiday. Being a multicultural society, important days for Buddhists, Hindus, Christians and Muslims are also public holidays. It is important to note that on public holidays alcohol will not be served in public areas including restaurants and bars. However you may order alcoholic beverages to your room if your hotel offers room service.

Alcohol

Many of the small boutique hotels do not have an alcohol license but may have arrangements in place to purchase on your behalf. You may also purchase your alcohol from Supermarkets prior to checking in to your hotel. Your guide will be able to advise you if you need to purchase any alcohol in advance in case your hotel does not have a liquor license.

Please note that the sale of Alcohol is strictly forbidden on most religious & public holidays and including all Poya (Full Moon) days. The government has from time to time also decreed additional days when Alcohol sales are restricted.

Currency and cash.

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.

Cultural norms

Sri Lanka is known as a country small in size yet with a vast and rich cultural diversity made up of several ethnic groups such as Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, Burgers and various other subcultures living in harmony. This ethnic diversity is naturally reflected in the religious beliefs, customs and rituals, which date back more than 2000 years. Sri Lankan culture is reflected in local art, architecture, sculpture and even food. Although Sri Lankans respect and understand others privacy, natural curiosity is usually expressed in the form of endless questions, most often "What is your name?" "What is your country?" etc., Apart from this, it is a prominent characteristic that Sri Lankans are known for their helpfulness and hospitality which may come across as 'being too friendly' for the travellers. The knowledge and understanding of this would be of great help in enjoying a memorable stay in this island.

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.

Visiting Temples

Visitors are expected to have their shoulders covered and clothing below the knees when visiting temples. Where footwear needs to be removed, there are caretakers that will look after your footwear while you visit.

Protection of Flora, Fauna and Cultural heritage

We firmly believe in the preservation of our invaluable resources and the cultural and heritage sites that have been well protected and safe guarded by our ancestors. The preservation of these resources has guaranteed Sri Lanka's uniqueness among other tourist destinations and has survived over time. It is the aim of the responsible bodies in the tourism industry to safe guard all aspects of Sri Lankan culture, heritage and nature and it is important for the travelers to refrain from harming the natural surroundings, while enjoying wild life, and all aspects of nature and understanding the importance of the preservation of the cultural sites, flora, fauna and wild life.

Initiatives to be supported

As a developing country, community development is largely practiced in a bid to reach out to those living under poverty conditions. With this in mind, there are local initiatives that operate to educate women and children as well as to empower them and reach out to families living in poverty stricken conditions.

Some of these initiatives are accessible to foreign travellers and you can take part in them during your stay in Sri Lanka. We work closely with some of these initiatives and therefore, we can provide you further information according to your interest in engaging in helping local communities, local school or contribute to a recognized charitable agency working in the area during the course of your holiday in Sri Lanka.

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 them. For your chauffeur guide, we recommend a tip of approx. Rs.5000 per day.

If you are not happy with aspects of your holiday....

Issues with Your Accommodation

Your tour has been organized with great care and concern to ensure you have an amazing holiday. However there may be instances where your expectations are not met or there has been a genuine failure in the service you expected.

Your chauffeur guide will assist you with your hotel check in wherever necessary. If you have any further problems with your hotel, please inform the hotel immediately. If the hotel is unable to assist you please inform your chauffeur guide and if he is unable to help resolve the issue please call us.

Issues with your Chauffeur Guide

Our chauffeur guides are among the best in the country and are well trained and experienced. If however you do have a problem with your chauffeur guide, please call us on the numbers listed below. Please note that as responsible employers, we will not penalize the chauffeur guides in any way without an enquiry and other procedures we have in place to ensure they maintain their service levels.

It is important that you inform the hotel, chauffeur guide or the local office of your dissatisfaction as soon as possible so that measures can be taken to correct the problem.

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 9.00 am – 5.30 pm excluding public holidays)