

Treasures of Sri Lanka

Land of Majesty and Mystery

SPECIAL SMALL GROUP
LIMITED TO
28 TRAVELERS



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JUNE 10-24, 2015

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Despite a written history that dates back more than 2,500 years, Sri Lanka remains largely unexplored by tourists. No matter the reason — its remote location or, perhaps, interest in its much larger neighbor, India — Sri Lanka now awaits today's travelers with open arms and unspoiled beauty. This small island, about the size of the United States' West Virginia, overflows with endemic wildlife and fauna, sandy beaches, lush valleys and mountains, exotic food and cultural heritage. Once commonly referred to as the Land of Gems for its precious gemstones, Sri Lanka stands ready to share every type of jewel it has to offer.

| UNESCO |

The ancient cities of Sigiriya and Polonnaruwa; the Golden Temple; the sacred city of Kandy; and the Old Town of Galle and its fortifications are UNESCO World Heritage sites featured on this program.

Above: Buddha statue, Golden Temple | Above right: Tea picker

Program Highlights

- Visit a **tea plantation** to learn about the island's world-famous tea.
- See leopards, bears, boars and more during a **full-day safari**.
- Admire the **Golden Temple** and the **Temple of the Tooth**.
- Spend two nights in **Kandy**, the last royal capital.
- Delight in a **performance of authentic music and dancing**.



Howdy, Ags!

Imagine a single island that is home to exotic wildlife, pristine beaches, mist-covered mountains, verdant valleys and jungles, lush tea plantations and sparkling waterfalls. This is Sri Lanka, an unspoiled treasure ready to share itself with global guests. And while its natural beauty is reason enough to visit, the island's true jewels are its people and unique culture.

Envelop yourself in the rich heritage, based on Sinhalese and Tamil traditions with Dutch and British influences, and admire breathtaking Buddhist temples and colonial architecture. Visit a tea plantation, and enjoy the hospitality of the Sri Lankan people. This lovely island awaits you on a special 12-night small group program, which combines the security, ease and value of group travel with opportunities for independent exploration.

An experienced Travel Director takes care of every detail during your journey, and a dedicated travel staff is committed to ensuring your trip creates many fond memories. Best of all, expert guides lead you on fascinating excursions that offer an in-depth look at the local culture and history of Sri Lanka.

Space on this exclusive program is limited to 28 travelers, and the trip is sure to sell out quickly, so make your reservations today.

Gig 'em!

Jennifer Bohac

Jennifer Bohac '87, Ph.D.
Director, Travel Programs
The Association of Former Students

Travel the World and spread the Spirit of Texas A&M. Join the fun and travel with the Association of Former Students Travel Program.

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Helen Jenswold**

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We've always known Ags are the best. Traveling Ags know how to travel in style. We all felt as though we were pampered the entire trip.

**David '80 &
Dawn Henderson**



Spectacular view
from Sigiriya

Steeped in mystique, Sri Lanka awaits your discovery. A picturesque sunset over the Indian Ocean in Negombo is just the beginning of this remarkable journey. Explore a terra cotta factory in Habarana and learn about Sri Lankan herbal medicine. Climb the steps of the citadel in the ancient city of Sigiriya to witness a view that is well worth the trip, then visit elephant grazing grounds. Tour the ruins in the ancient capital of Polonnaruwa. Witness the splendor of the Golden Temple en route to the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy. Learn more about tea, the country's most famous export, at a tea plantation. In Yala National Park, look for elephants, leopards and other exotic animals during a safari. Tour Galle on a tuk tuk. Enjoy your experience in Colombo, Sri Lanka's bustling capital.

DAY ONE

Depart for Colombo, Sri Lanka.†

†Provided for AHI FlexAir participants.

DAY TWO

IN TRANSIT†

DAY THREE

NEGOMBO

Upon arrival, transfer† to the Jetwing Blue in Negombo.

Educational Focus: *Contemporary Sri Lanka.*

This evening, gather poolside at the hotel with your fellow travelers to witness a memorable sunset over the Indian Ocean during a Welcome Reception. A Welcome Dinner will follow.

DAY FOUR

B I L I D

HABARANA

After breakfast, transfer to Habarana.

Excursion: *Terra Cotta Artisans.* Visit a family-owned terra cotta factory to see how this age-old tradition continues today.

Local Flavor: Enjoy lunch at an organic restaurant.

Educational Focus: *Sri Lankan Herbal Medicine.* Learn about the natural remedies used on the island.

Later, check in to the Cinnamon Lodge Habarana.

DAY FIVE

B I D

HABARANA

Excursion: *Sigiriya.* Rising more than 650 feet (200 meters) above the jungle is the splendid ancient city of Sigiriya. Built as a citadel by a fifth-century king who sought to build an impregnable fortress after executing his father and exiling his brother, the site later became a Buddhist monastery. It's a difficult walk to the top, but a magnificent view awaits those who are up to the task.

Excursion: *Sri Lanka's Elephants.* Visit elephant grazing grounds at Minneriya National Park. Other inhabitants of the park include deer, monkeys and leopards.

DAY SIX

B I L I D

HABARANA

Local Flavor: Discover the secrets of Sri Lankan cuisine at a cooking demonstration followed by a delicious lunch.

Excursion: *Polonnaruwa.* This ancient city, the second capital of Sri Lanka, was deserted long ago, but it still is possible to imagine the city at its prime. Among the elegant ruins are towering



Temple of the Tooth



Above: Tea plantation | Right: Leopard, Yala National Park



statues and stupas, verdant gardens and sparkling pools.

DAY SEVEN

B I L I D

DAMBULLA | KANDY

After breakfast, transfer to Kandy. En route, enjoy a stop in Dambulla.

Excursion: *The Golden Temple of Dambulla.* For more than 2,200 years, pilgrims have ventured to this Buddhist cave monastery, which has more than 22,000 square feet of elaborate murals, one of the oldest, largest painted sites in the world. The site, which has been occupied since the third century, also contains 157 statues of Buddha. It's a long walk to the summit, but it offers views of Sigiriya and the surrounding area.

Local Flavor: Savor local specialties at a restaurant.

Continue to Kandy and check in at the Cinnamon Citadel Kandy.

Independent Exploration: Spend the rest of the day at leisure in Kandy, a picturesque city nestled by green hills set beside a beautiful lake. The last royal capital of Sri Lanka stands as a testament to the fortitude of the Sri Lankan people.

DAY EIGHT

B I L I D

KANDY

Excursion: *Kandy.* Begin with a visit to the Temple of the Tooth, which guards a tooth of Buddha that, according to legend, was taken as Buddha lay on his funeral pyre, and then was smuggled into Sri Lanka. The temple is one of the most treasured pilgrimage sites in Buddhism. Later, explore the Peradeniya Botanical Garden, which occupies about 150 acres and boasts an impressive collection of palms and orchids, among other fauna.

Local Flavor: Savor lunch at a local restaurant.

Cultural Experience: Enjoy a performance of traditional Sri Lankan music and dance.

DAY NINE

B

KANDY | NUWARA ELIYA

After breakfast, spend the morning at leisure in Kandy. This afternoon, transfer to Nuwara Eliya.

Excursion: *The Story of Tea.* Visit a tea plantation to learn about Sri Lanka's most famous export. Learn about how tea is harvested and processed, then enjoy a tasting. This evening, check in to the Grand Hotel and spend the rest of the evening at leisure.



On Safari in Yala

Don't be fooled by Sri Lanka's size. This small island country boasts an impressive number of endemic animals. More than 90 species of mammals can be found in Sri Lanka, including Asian elephants, sloth bears, leopards and the endangered toque macaque.

Yala National Park, located in the southern-most region of the island, is renowned for its leopard population and has earned a reputation for being one of the best places to see and photograph the animal. Spanning more than 370 square miles (970 square kilometers), the park has focused on conservation since 1900, when it first was designated as a wildlife sanctuary.

Experienced drivers and guides provide detailed information about the endemic animals as they lead travelers through the park in Jeeps, which easily navigate the rough and varied terrain, and give passengers an up-close look at the vast wildlife.

DAY TEN B I L I D

NUWARA ELIYA | YALA

This morning, transfer to Yala. En route, stop for lunch in Ella at 98 Acres Resort and Spa, named for its location on a lush 98-acre tea plantation.

Later, check in to the Cinnamon Wild Yala.

DAY ELEVEN B I D

YALA

Excursion: *On Safari.* Early this morning, climb in a safari vehicle and head out on a game drive in Yala National Park, the second largest in Sri Lanka. Keep an eye out for elephants, leopards, bears, macaques, jackals and more.

Independent Exploration: After breakfast, spend time at leisure.

Excursion: *Afternoon Safari.* Enjoy a second game drive today.

DAY TWELVE B I L

YALA | GALLE

This morning, transfer to Galle.

Local Flavor: En route, enjoy lunch at a restaurant in Tangalle.

This afternoon, check in to the Jetwing Lighthouse.

Independent Exploration. Relax in your room, enjoy the hotel facilities or take advantage of free time to explore Galle, whose old city is a UNESCO World Heritage site. Galle boasts a rich colonial past, evident in its narrow streets and cloistered courtyards.

DAY THIRTEEN B I L I D

GALLE | COLOMBO

Excursion: *Dutch Fort.* Take a tuk tuk to visit the Dutch Fort, the best-preserved sea fortress in South Asia. The fort is reminiscent of those found along the coast of Portugal. Continue on a tour of Galle, a city built by Portuguese explorers in the 16th century.

Local Flavor: Enjoy lunch at a restaurant in Galle.

This afternoon, transfer to Colombo and check in to the Cinnamon Grand Hotel.

In the evening, join your fellow travelers for a Farewell Reception and Dinner with wine in a local restaurant.

DAY FOURTEEN B

COLOMBO

Excursion: *Colombo.* Explore the vibrant Sri Lankan capital. Visit the local bazaar; a temple; historic Wolvendaal Church, the oldest Protestant church in use in Sri Lanka; and the largest museum in the country, the Colombo National Museum, which houses an impressive collection of historic treasures.

Independent Exploration: Take advantage of your last evening in Sri Lanka to pursue individual interests.

DAY FIFTEEN B

IN TRANSIT

Early this morning, transfer[†] to Bandaranaike International Airport for the return flight to your gateway city.

NOTE: Itinerary sequence and/or scheduled events may change. Some included sightseeing itineraries can be strenuous, therefore a reasonable level of fitness is recommended. Included meals indicated each day as B | L | D = Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner.

Agriculture

Farming makes up a significant portion not only of Sri Lanka’s heritage but also its economy. Famous for its spices and, of course, tea, the country long has relied on agriculture, which accounts for more than 30 percent of Sri Lanka’s employment rate, for internal use and the income from exports.

Three distinct climate zones allow for varied cultivation. In the higher elevations near Nuwara Eliya, significant rainfall helps explain why tea plantations dot the area, but the region doesn’t lend itself well to cattle grazing. The dry lowlands allow for free grazing, and cattle and buffalo are critical for the farmers here. The wet lowlands offer ideal conditions for paddy fields and coconut plantations.

A lesser-known aspect of agriculture, at least to Western visitors, is that related to Sri Lanka’s indigenous system of medicine.

About 1,500 medicinal plant species are used on a national level. The government has established five herb gardens, and two holistic hospitals operate on the island. The history of indigenous medicine dates from the 10th century, and herbal treatments have been used to treat ailments ranging from headaches and indigestion to snake bites and hepatitis.



JETWING BLUE

NEGOMBO

Unwind on a pristine beach in this secluded Sri Lankan resort, which offers magnificent views of the waterfront. Jetwing Blue has two swimming pools, a fitness center, a spa and more. The hotel offers WiFi for your convenience.

ACCOMMODATIONS



GRAND HOTEL

NUWARA ELIYA

Surrounded by Sri Lanka’s famous tea plantations, the Grand Hotel was built in the late 1800s during the British colonial period and served as a residence for a colonial governor. Enjoy the grandeur of a former age and all the modern comforts. The hotel offers WiFi for your convenience.



CINNAMON WILD YALA

YALA

The Cinnamon Wild Yala, which sits next to Yala National Park and offers sweeping views of the jungle or the Indian Ocean, is a world-class game lodge. Enjoy international cuisine and comfortable accommodations. The hotel offers WiFi for your convenience.



CINNAMON LODGE HABARANA

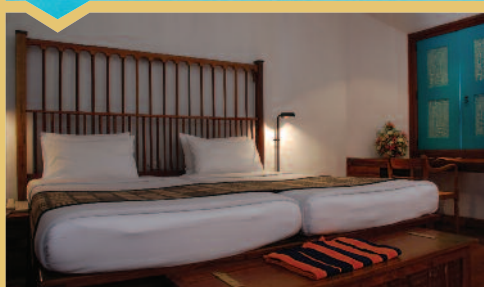
HABARANA

The Cinnamon Lodge Habarana has walking trails through the lush forest — with more than 2,000 trees — an organic farm that supplies the hotel's restaurants, a spa, swimming pool and tennis and badminton courts. The hotel offers WiFi for your convenience.

CINNAMON CITADEL KANDY

KANDY

Enjoy a relaxing retreat in the heart of Sri Lanka's hill country. The Cinnamon Citadel Kandy offers a harmonious mixture of heritage and modern style. Unwind by the pool and enjoy the cuisine at the fine-dining restaurant. The hotel offers WiFi for your convenience.



JETWING LIGHTHOUSE

GALLE

Revel in the luxury of this beach resort, which offers old-world charm and modern elegance on the beautiful southwestern coast. Enjoy fine dining, a spa, two swimming pools and many other amenities. The hotel offers WiFi for your convenience.

CINNAMON GRAND COLOMBO

COLOMBO

Cinnamon Grand Colombo is just a short stroll from restaurants, shopping and more. Enjoy a spa, fitness center and an array of restaurants and lounges. The hotel also boasts two pools, one on the rooftop. The hotel offers WiFi for your convenience.

Reserve your trip to Sri Lanka, today!

Trip #:8-21837W

Send to: The Association of Former Students
Attn: Traveling Aggies
505 George Bush Drive
College Station, TX 77840-2918
Phone: **979-845-7514** Fax: **979-845-9263**
Toll Free: **800-633-7514**

Full Legal Name (exactly as it appears on passport)

Guest 1: _____
Title First Middle Last Date of Birth

Email: _____

Guest 2: _____
Title First Middle Last Date of Birth

Email: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ ZIP: _____

Home: (_____) Cell: (_____)

Sharing room with _____ (Form sent separately.)

Name(s) you would like on your name badge(s):

(1) _____ (2) _____
Class Year Class Year

I/we authorize you to make my/our reservations as follows:

Land and AHI FlexAir Program

I/we reserve the Land Program and request the round trip AHI FlexAir to and from Colombo, Sri Lanka, to depart from:

Departure City

Please send me information on upgrading my flights.

*Please note: Air prices will be sent to you with your Reservation Confirmation and an air schedule will be sent at 90 days before departure. International flight arrangements can be canceled with **no obligation up to 75 days before departure.***

Land Only Program

- I/we will make my/our own air arrangements and transfers.
- I prefer single accommodations at an additional \$1,095 (limited availability).
- I request assistance in securing a roommate but will accept a single, if one is available at this time, and pay the single supplement. Should a roommate be found, I understand the supplement will no longer apply.

Reservations are subject to availability and are processed on a first come, first served basis. Reservations to be paid in full by March 27, 2015 (75 days prior to departure). Reservations received after this date must be accompanied by payment in full. Final payment may be made by personal check, MasterCard, Visa or Discover. Make checks payable to AHI International.

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Enclosed is a deposit of _____ (\$600 per person required) to reserve _____ place(s).

Accept my check made payable to **AHI International**.

Charge my: MasterCard Visa Discover Expires _____/_____/_____

Card # _____

(Signature as it appears on credit card)

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LAND PROGRAM

June 12-24, 2015

Full Price

\$4,145

Special Savings

\$250

Special Price*

\$3,895*

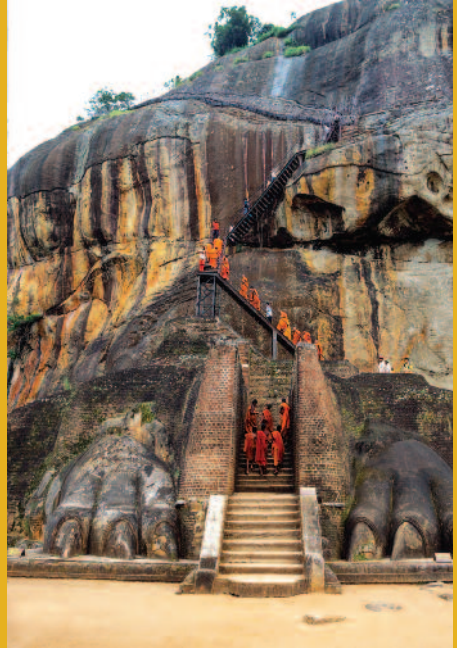
*Special Price valid if booked by the date found on the back-page address panel.
VAT is an additional \$395 per person.

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Single accommodations are an additional \$1,095 (limited availability).

AHI FLEXAIR

June 10-24, 2015

Our personalized air program allows you to select your flights, routing, class of service and dates of travel in consultation with one of our experienced Passenger Service Representatives. Airfares will vary, depending on airline, routing and class of service. In most cases, transfers between the airport and hotel/cruise ship will be included on arrival and departure days. Your Passenger Service Representative will provide you with all of the details you need to guarantee your transfer. Book your air with us to ensure assistance in the case of schedule changes or delays that may impact your air travel plans.



Top: Ascending the large rock formation to access the ancient city of Sigiriya

Lower: Colorful ancient frescos from the 5th century, Sigiriya

Left: Polonnaruwa



| INCLUDED FEATURES |

FIRST-CLASS ACCOMMODATIONS

- One night in Negombo, Sri Lanka, at the Jetwing Blue Hotel.
- Three nights in Habarana at the Cinnamon Lodge Habarana.
- Two nights in Kandy at the Cinnamon Citadel Kandy.
- One night in Nuwara Eliya at the Grand Hotel.
- Two nights in Yala at the Cinnamon Wild Yala.
- One night in Galle at the Jetwing Lighthouse.
- Two nights in Colombo at the Cinnamon Grand Colombo.

TRANSPORTATION

- All deluxe motor coach and train transfers in the Land Program itinerary and baggage handling on these transfers are included.

MEALS

- Enjoy an **extensive meal program**, featuring 12 breakfasts, seven lunches and nine dinners; tea or coffee with all meals, plus wine with dinner.
- Sample authentic regional specialties during select meals at featured local restaurants.
- Take advantages of leisure time to try the local cuisine independently.
- Attend special Welcome and Farewell Receptions and Dinners.

YOUR EXCITING TRAVEL PROGRAM

(For full details, see the day-by-day itinerary.)

- **Informative educational programs** by local experts.
- **Personal VOX listening devices** allow you to hear every word from your expert English-speaking guides.
- **All excursions:**
 - Discover a family-owned terra cotta factory.
 - Explore ancient Sigiriya, a fifth-century citadel later used as a Buddhist monastery.
 - Visit elephant grazing grounds.
 - Tour the ancient capital of Polonnaruwa and its ruins.
 - Go inside the Golden Temple.
 - Experience the Temple of the Tooth, which guards a tooth of Buddha.
 - Admire the talent of the local people during a traditional music and dance performance.

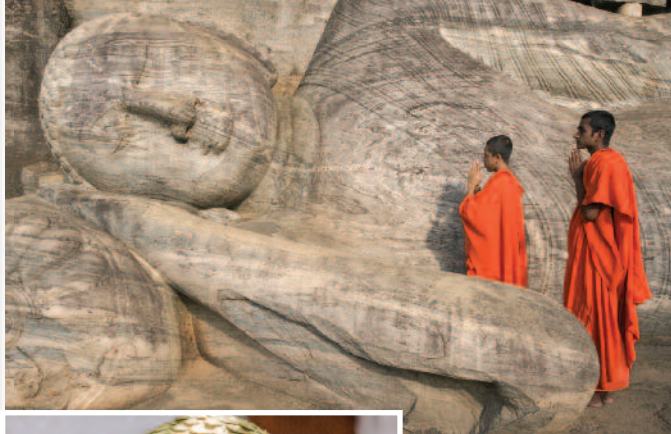


Temple of the Tooth, Kandy

- Journey to a tea plantation to learn about this famous export.
- Go on safari in Yala National Park.
- Take a tuk tuk tour of Galle
- Explore Colombo, Sri Lanka's capital.

MANY INCLUDED EXTRAS

- Consultation services of a dedicated **Passenger Service Representative**.
- Services of an experienced **Travel Director** throughout your stay.
- **Tipping** of guides and drivers.
- Detailed travel and destination information to assist in planning.
- Complimentary travel wallet.



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Top to bottom:
Polonnaruwa
Local girl
Colombo
Clock tower, Dutch fort, Galle
Cover photos (clockwise):
Sri Lankan dancer
Temple of the Tooth, Kandy
Elephant herd



A word about your Tour Operator

AHI Travel is the premier operator of deluxe travel programs sponsored by alumni associations. Their experienced, professional staff has offered the highest level of service in **innovative travel programs since 1962.**

In AHI Travel's care, you can rely on:

- **An exceptional travel value.** It would be impossible for an independent traveler to arrange all these unique experiences, inclusions and services at a comparable price.
- **Unique access to local sites.** Take advantage of more than 50 years of travel experience to gain preferred entrance to popular sites and to uncover the region's hidden treasures.
- **Experienced Travel Directors** who attend to every detail of your journey.
- **Expertise of local guides** who possess authoritative knowledge of the region and offer personal insight into local culture.
- **Flexibility and customization.** Free time during the trip allows you to pursue your own interests. They will also help you tailor your dream trip with add-ons and extensions.
- **Safety and security.** In a country where you might not know the language or culture, their professional staff is on hand to ease your way and get you any help you need.



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