

21 Day Journey Through India & Sri Lanka

Delhi
Agra
Jaipur
Ranthambore
Colombo
Sigiriya
Kandy
Nuwara Eliya
Yala National Park
Galle
Kochi
Munnar
Kumarakom
Alleppey
Kerala Backwaters

INSPIRING
VACATIONS

www.inspiringvacations.com.au

From
\$4,999

pp twin share

Book Now

Departure Dates

9 February 2019
23 February 2019
9 March 2019
23 March 2019
6 April 2019
4 May 2019
1 June 2019
5 October 2019
19 October 2019
2 November 2019
16 November 2019
30 November 2019



Day 1

Australia ✈️ Delhi

Today, board your international flight for Delhi. Arrival at Indira Gandhi International Airport with a meet and greet by our representative who will assist by transferring you to your hotel.

Hotel: 5★ Radisson Blu, Paschim Vihar or similar

Day 2

Delhi

After breakfast, enjoy a sightseeing tour of Old Delhi and a photo stop at the Red Fort, which rise a daunting 33 metres (108 ft) above the bustle of Old Delhi as a reminder of the magnificent power of former emperors. Near the fort is the 17th-century Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in India. Walk through the famous bazaars of Old Delhi, to experience the hustle and bustle of a crowded bazaar. Visit Raj Ghat, the Mahatma Gandhi memorial, a simple black marble platform that marks the spot of his cremation. In New Delhi, visit the India Gate, the memorial of the First World War and the road that leads from there to the President House, flanked by the houses of Parliament, the Secretariat building, the Birla Temple and Lotus Temple.

Hotel: 5★ Radisson Blu, Paschim Vihar or similar

Meals: Breakfast

Day 3

Delhi  Agra

Today, we make our way to Agra. Agra rose to fame in the 17th century as the capital of the Mughal Empire and was beautified with gardens, waterfalls, bathhouses and canals. In modern times, the city houses a thriving crafts industry, including marble inlay work and carpets. In the afternoon, enjoy a sightseeing tour of Agra which includes many peoples highlight, visiting the awe-inspiring Taj Mahal. Built in the mid-17th century by Shah Jahan following the death of his queen, this mausoleum is an eternal love poem written in stone. During the visit, you can admire the intricacy of the work of the 20,000 craftsmen who were brought from Persia, Turkey, France and Italy to build this astonishing monument.

Hotel: 5★ Crystal Sarovar Premiere or similar

Meals: Breakfast

Day 4

Agra  Bharatpur  Sawai Madhopur
(Ranthambore National Park)

After breakfast at the hotel, depart by road to Bharatpur to board the Jan Shatabdi Express train to Sawai Madhopur, the gateway to the famous Ranthambore National Park. Forget the over crowded pictures of train travel you have seen on social media. Long distance train travel in India is civilised air-conditioned, reserved seating. On arrival, transfer to your hotel for check-in. Ranthambore National Park is a prime example of the Project Tiger conservation project's success, as it is renowned for its tiger population.

Hotel: 4★ The Tiger Den or similar

Meals: Breakfast

Day 5

Ranthambore National Park

Today, explore Ranthambore National Park on safari after breakfast at the hotel. Ranthambore is located in what was originally the private hunting ground of the maharajas of Jaipur. The park features a varied geography of forested hills, sweeping grasslands and lakes, all under the shadow of the ruins of the hilltop Ranthambore Fort, more than 200 metres above the surrounding plain. The park's Bengal tigers are renowned for being fearless and roaming the park during the day.




Day 5(cont.)

Other residents include leopards, striped Hyenas, sambar and chital deer, jackals, sloth bears, wild boars and more. Break for lunch and return to the park in the afternoon for yet more animal sightings. After, return to the hotel.

Hotel: 4★ The Tiger Den or similar

Meals: Breakfast

Day 6

Sawai Madhopur  Jaipur

After breakfast at the hotel, we depart Agra and head to Jaipur, arriving in the 'Pink City' in the afternoon. Check-in on arrival with the remainder of the day at leisure.

Hotel: 5 ★ Indana Jaipur or similar

Meals: Breakfast

*“A traveler without observation
is a bird without wings.”
Moslih Eddin Saadi*



Day 7



Jaipur

After enjoying breakfast at the hotel we head out for a tour of the Amber Fort. Located on a spur overlooking a lake, Amber Fort's robust, time-ravaged walls appear imposing from the outside but they hide an interior packed with beautifully decorated palaces and temples, and landscaped gardens. Be dazzled by the Sheesh Mahal, a room with its four walls and ceiling completely embedded with glittering mirror pieces. Return to the old city to visit the City Palace and the beautiful palaces within such as the Chandra Mahal and Mubarak Mahal and the intricately decorated Peacock Gate. After, make a stop at the spellbinding Hawa Mahal or Palace of the Winds and the famous Johari bazaar famous for its jewels and saris, the Tripolia bazaar with bronzes, sculptures and lacquerware, the Bapu bazaar renowned for its perfumes and textiles, and Chandpol bazaar for pottery and bracelets.

Hotel: 5 ★ Indana Jaipur or similar

Meals: Breakfast

Day 8

Jaipur  Delhi  Colombo

After a leisurely breakfast, drive back to Delhi and transfer to the airport to board your flight to Sri Lanka. A warm welcome awaits you at the arrival lounge of the Bandaranaike International Airport. You will be met and transferred to your hotel.

Hotel: 5★ The Gateway Hotel or similar

Meals: Breakfast

Day 9

Colombo  Sigiriya

Today enjoy a relaxing late start. We'll leave the hotel around 9:30-10am bound for Sigiriya. This afternoon set on an exclusively private jeep safari at the Minneriya (or Kauduala) National Park to witness the unique phenomenon of elephant gathering. During the dry season, from June to September, hundreds of elephants gather around the Minneriya Tank for water. Such a large number of elephants could not be sighted at one place, anywhere else in the world! Outside of these month and depending on the elephant migration patterns the safari will be conducted in one of the surrounding parks.



Day 9 (cont.)

This evening enjoy some sundowner pre-dinner Arrack (a local cocktail) or something else to suit your tastes.

Hotel: 5★ Sigiriya Jungles or similar
Meals: Breakfast, dinner

Day 10

Sigiriya 🚌 Lion Rock 🚌 Sigiriya

This morning we climb the Sigiriya Rock Fortress (Lion's Rock), one of the most extraordinary artistic complexes of its time (477 - 498 AD). Declared as an UNESCO heritage site in 1982, this magnificent citadel allures artistic and architectural curiosity from around the globe. For lunch today, take part in a Cooking Demonstration of Sri Lankan rice and curry preparation (5-6 curries) and enjoy the typical Sri Lankan lunch overlooking the paddy fields. In the afternoon enjoy a sightseeing tour of the Medieval Capital City of Polonnaruwa. This was declared as an UNESCO heritage site in 1982. After the demise of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa became the middle historic capital of Sri Lanka (1017 - 1235 AD). This evening enjoy another round of sundowner pre-dinner Arrack (a local cocktail) or something else to suit your tastes.

Hotel: 5★ Sigiriya Jungles or similar
Meals: Breakfast, dinner

Day 11

Sigiriya 🚌 Kandy

Leaving the hotel this morning we make our way to Kandy. Enroute, visit the Matale Spice Garden to learn about an important agriculture iconic to Sri Lanka. We then continue on to Kandy, the Hill Capital (1514 - 1815 AD). Originally known as Senkadagala, the city eventually came to know as Kandy. Kandy was declared an UNESCO heritage site in 1988. The style and character of the Sri Lankan civilization at the time is well articulated in the heart of the city itself, with its lake, the temples including the Temple of the Tooth Relic and the well preserved ruins of the royal palaces. On arrival in Kandy the afternoon is at leisure. This afternoon visit the Temple of Tooth, with its guardian elephants is a deeply significant Buddhist site that contains a tooth of Buddha collected from his funeral pyre and this draws thousands of pilgrims from across the world.

Hotel: 5★ Earl's Regency or similar

Meals: Breakfast, dinner

Day 12

Kandy 🚆 Nuwara Eliya

After breakfast we leave for the hill country town of Nuwara Eliya. Journey on the famous train journey which is supposed to be one of the most scenic and beautiful journeys in the world. Apart from the breathtaking sceneries of the tea country and picturesque waterfalls, it is a chance for you to mingle with the local people.



Day 12 (cont.)

Nuwara Eliya, often referred to as 'Little England', this genteel highland community does have a rose-tinted, vaguely British-country-village feel to it, with its colonial-era bungalows.

Please note: It is not possible to confirm the train ticket reservation due to the fact that Sri Lanka Railway has a manual system for reservations. Tickets can only be booked 30 days prior to departure. The 1st and 2nd class is basic but has air-conditioning. On the rare occasion the train is fully booked we'll conduct the route by road.

Hotel: 4★ Black Pool Hotel or similar

Meals: Breakfast, dinner

Day 13

Nuwara Eliya 🚌 Yala/Tissamaharama

Today, leave for Yala/Tissamaharama. On the way we visit the Buduruwagala Temple, an ancient Buddhist temple in Sri Lanka. The complex consists of seven statues and belongs to the Mahayana school of thought. The statues date back to the 10th century. The gigantic Buddha statue still bears traces of its original stuccoed robe and a long streak of orange suggests it was once brightly painted.

After checking in to our hotel spend your afternoon on a guided game drive exploring the dynamic wildlife and the most luxuriant plant life in Yala National Park. Being one of the largest parks in Sri Lanka, it is the ideal place to sight the rare leopard!



Day 13 (cont.)

Please note: Sections of Yala National Park closes due to conservation efforts each year between September and October. The closure dates are advised by the Sri Lankan government 1-2 months prior and differ each year. As Yala National Park is made up of multiple sections, if one section is closed due to conservation works we will visit one of the open sections.

Hotel: 4★ Mandara Rosen or similar

Meals: Breakfast, dinner

Day 14

Yala 🚌 Galle 🚌 Colombo

This morning we leave for Colombo. Enroute we explore the Galle Fort and its Fortifications. This is a city that exudes an essence with a perfect blend of past and present. Declared as an UNESCO heritage site in 1988, the presence of Portuguese, Dutch and English is very evident in the fascinating architectural styles of the Galle Fort. Along the way we visit a Turtle Hatchery. There are only seven species of marine turtles in the world and five are found in the warm, clear waters off Sri Lanka's coast. The five species are Hawksbill turtle, Loggerhead turtle, Green turtle, Leatherback turtle and the Olive Ridley turtle and so you will get to see the variety of turtle Sri Lanka has to offer.

Hotel: 5★ Galle Face Hotel or similar

Meals: Breakfast, dinner

Day 15

Colombo ✈️ Kochi

Today, farewell your Sri Lankan guide and get ready for the next leg of your journey as we fly to Southern India. On arrival in Kochi, your Indian guide will welcome you on arrival and transfer you to your hotel.

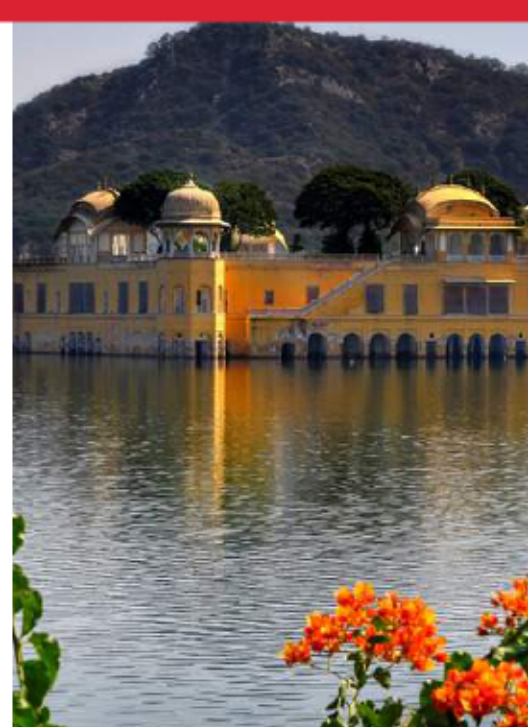
This afternoon, your guide will take you on a walk through the historic districts of town. The walking tour will allow you to see the different cultural sides of Kochi, from the Jewish area including the Pardesi Synagogue to the Mattancherry Palace, known as the Dutch Palace to the locals. We see Fort Kochi which is reminiscent of European streets and the famous Chinese Fishing Nets, used by the locals for hundreds of years. This evening, enjoy a Kathakali dance show, a traditional dance and costume show from the Kerala region.

Hotel: 5★ Crowne Plaza or similar

Meals: Breakfast

"The whole object of travel is not to set foot on foreign land; it is, at last, to set foot on one's own country as a foreign land."

G.K. Chesterton



Day 16

Kochi  Munnar

After breakfast, we drive inland to the hill town of Munnar, some 1,600m above sea level in the Western Ghats Mountains. The landscape becomes progressively more beautiful as we climb higher. Enroute, we stop at the Athirapally Waterfalls on the River Chalakudy. The waterfall drops from the height of 25m. In the monsoon season, the falls are known as the "Niagara of India" due to the force and volume of water flowing down. From here we can also admire the view of the Sholayar hills before continuing on the Munnar.

Hotel: 5★ Fragrant Nature Resort or similar

Meals: Breakfast

Day 17

Munnar

This morning enjoy a sightseeing tour of Munnar. The heart of a massive tea industry today, Munnar was a cool summer retreat for the British during colonial days. The hinterland around Munnar is dotted with English cottages amongst rolling hills and untouched forests. Visit the Tea Museum in the Nallathanni Estate to learn about the process of making tea and the old world machinery used in the 1800's. We visit a local church built by the British before enjoy the afternoon at leisure or a stroll in the quiet pathways crisscrossing the endless tea plantations.

Hotel: 5★ Fragrant Nature Resort or similar

Meals: Breakfast

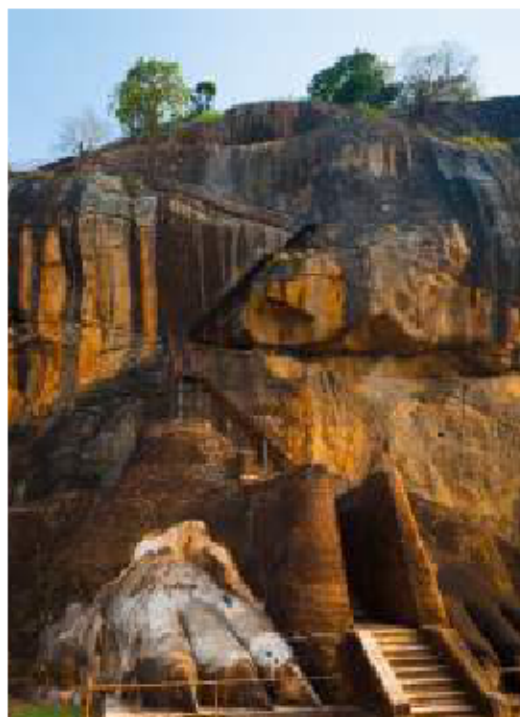
Day 18

Munnar  Kumarakom





Enjoy a leisurely breakfast at the hotel before driving to Kumarakom on the shore of Lake Vembanad, laced with majestic canals and streams. Kumarakom is a beautiful backwater fishing village and a local bird paradise offering exotic sights. On arrival, check in and enjoy time at leisure.

Hotel: 5★ Vasundhara Sarovar Portico or similar

Meals: Breakfast



Day 19

Kumarakom  Alleppey
 Backwater cruise  Alleppey 
Kumarakom

This morning we drive to Alleppey to board a houseboat for a scenic cruise through the famed backwaters. The houseboat is an adaptation of a kettuvallams boat which have been used for generations to transport rice and spices. Amazingly, not a single nail is used to hold the traditional boats together. The serene natural beauty and simple charm of the backwaters surprises at every turn. Enjoy sailing leisurely through canals which crisscross paddy fields and lagoons.

Hotel: 5★ Vasundhara Sarovar Portico or similar
Meals: Breakfast

Day 20

Kumarakom  Kochi  Australia

At the appropriate time you will be driven from Kumarakom to Kochi to board your homeward flight.

Meals: Breakfast

Day 21

Australia

Arrive home today.

*"The best way to find
yourself is to lose yourself in
the service of others."
Mahatma Gandhi*

