

## Sri Lanka: Leopards & Tea Country

DAY 1

### ARRIVE COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

Arrive at Bandaranaike International Airport. After clearing customs and immigration, you are met and transferred to your hotel in nearby Kotugoda.

DAY 2

### CULTURAL TRIANGLE | ANCIENT CAPITAL

After breakfast, drive approximately five hours overland to Thirappane, the heart of Sri Lanka's monument-rich Cultural Triangle region. Spend the remainder of the evening at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3

### CULTURAL TRIANGLE | SACRED CITY

Today, explore the sacred city of Anuradhapura, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This ancient city is believed to have sprouted from a cutting of the Buddha's tree of enlightenment brought here in the third century BC by Sanghamitta, founder of an order of Buddhist nuns. This Ceylonese political and religious capital, which flourished for 1,300 years, was abandoned after it was invaded in 993. Hidden in dense jungle for many years, the site's palaces, monasteries and monuments are revealed to you today. Continue on to Mihintale, the cradle of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. Return to your hotel and spend the rest of the day at leisure enjoying the amenities of your resort.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4

### CULTURAL TRIANGLE | "LION'S ROCK"

This morning, discover Sigiriya Rock Fortress ("Lion's Rock"), a UNESCO World Heritage Site built in the fifth century AD. Rising over 600 feet from the scrub jungle, it was once the innermost stronghold of the fortified town. Standing tall over the surrounding plains, the rock is actually a solidified magma plug from a long-eroded, extinct volcano. On its summit are the remains of a palace. Hidden in caves around the citadel are some of the

most magnificent frescoes in South Asia. Continue on to tour the ruins of Polonnaruwa, a former royal city dating back to the fifth century. Take in the archaeological site's vast reservoir, temple, palace and royal baths. Return to your hotel for an evening at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5

### **KANDY | SACRED TEMPLES**

Depart overland for Kandy, stopping at the impressive Dambulla Cave Temples, some of the most stunning in all of Sri Lanka. Also, visit the workshop of a local batik maker to learn about the artisan tradition of making designs on fabric.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6

### **KANDY | MAGNIFICENT FLORA**

This morning, explore Kandy city with a drive around Kandy Lake. Visit the bazaar, gem museum and lapidary. Return in the evening to visit the Temple of the Tooth Relic during evening prayer services. It is here that — according to tradition — a sacred tooth of Lord Buddha is kept enshrined. As you explore, see how its two-story inner shrine is fronted by two large elephant tusks.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7

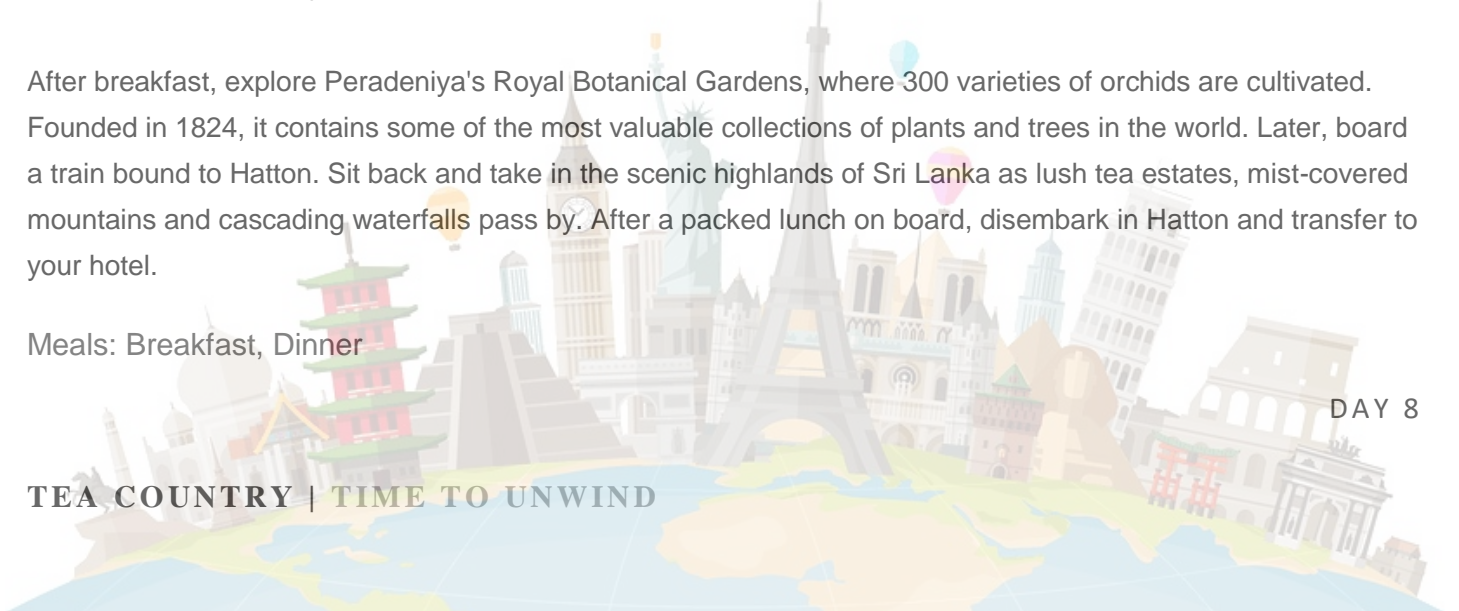
### **TEA COUNTRY | SCENIC HIGHLANDS BY RAIL**

After breakfast, explore Peradeniya's Royal Botanical Gardens, where 300 varieties of orchids are cultivated. Founded in 1824, it contains some of the most valuable collections of plants and trees in the world. Later, board a train bound to Hatton. Sit back and take in the scenic highlands of Sri Lanka as lush tea estates, mist-covered mountains and cascading waterfalls pass by. After a packed lunch on board, disembark in Hatton and transfer to your hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 8

### **TEA COUNTRY | TIME TO UNWIND**



After breakfast, take in a special hotel tea service featuring handpicked Ceylon tea leaves. Enjoy the remainder of the day at your own pace, perhaps unwinding with a spa treatment or setting out on a bicycle ride through the surrounding tea plantations.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9

## YALA NATIONAL PARK | INTO THE WILD

This morning, transfer to your boutique accommodations just outside of Yala National Park. A vast ecosystem of dry woodlands and open grasslands that stretch on for miles, the park is home to a stunning array of wildlife, including abundant herds of Asiatic elephants. After check-in, gather for an evening safari through the park with an expert naturalist, keeping your eyes peeled for the endangered Sri Lankan leopard. After your safari, return to your boutique accommodations to freshen up for the evening.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 10

## YALA NATIONAL PARK | THRILLING GAME DRIVES

Get a jump on the wildlife with an early morning safari through Yala National Park. Your guide leads the way as you track leopards, elephants, wild buffalo, musk deer, mongooses, pangolins, sloth bears, black bears, macaques, jackals and 215 species of birds. Return to your eco-friendly accommodations for a Champagne brunch. Later, set out on an afternoon safari, followed by dinner.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 11

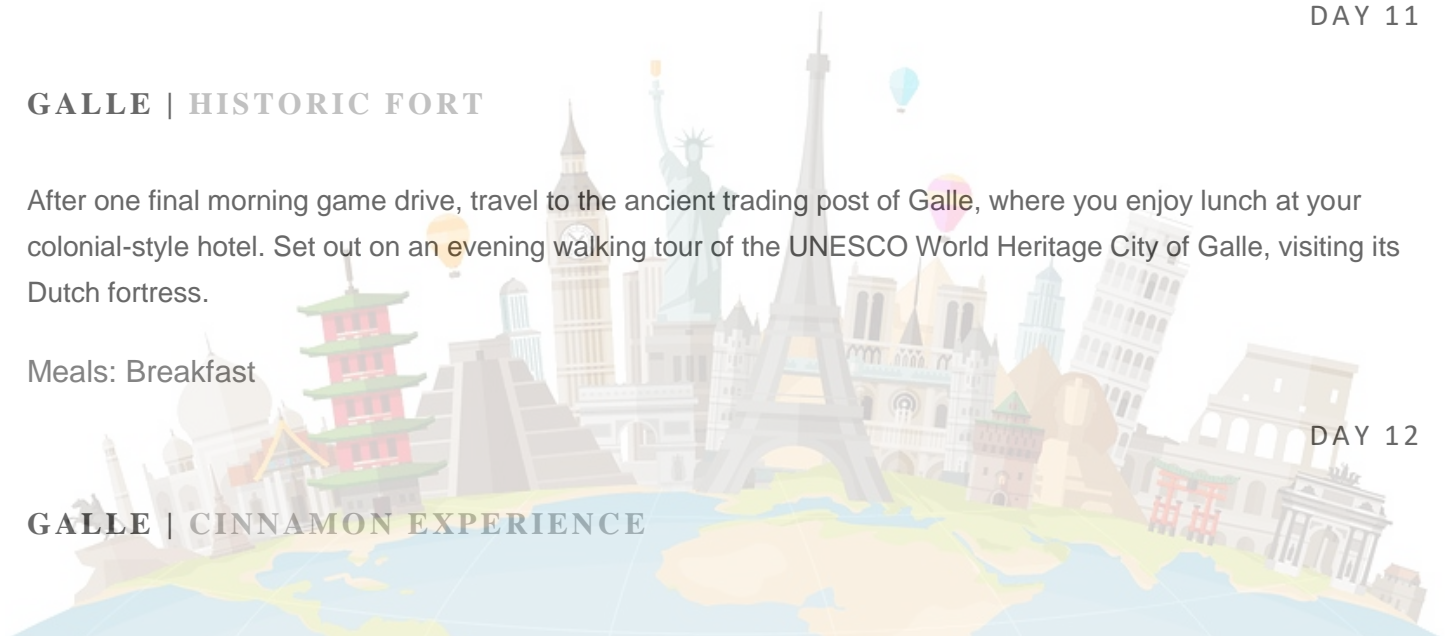
## GALLE | HISTORIC FORT

After one final morning game drive, travel to the ancient trading post of Galle, where you enjoy lunch at your colonial-style hotel. Set out on an evening walking tour of the UNESCO World Heritage City of Galle, visiting its Dutch fortress.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 12

## GALLE | CINNAMON EXPERIENCE



This morning, you see the famous stilt fishermen, who use an age-old fishing method to bring in their daily catch. Perched several feet above the water's surface on wooden masts embedded in the sea floor, these patient fishermen cast their lines for herring and mackerel just as they have for centuries. Learn the secrets of Virgin White Tea, a variety widely regarded as the world's purest tea at a nearby plantation. Continue on to nearby Villa Mayurana for lunch and a cinnamon experience on the lush grounds of the property's fragrant spice plantation. On your tour, learn how this versatile spice is processed and packaged, and why Sri Lanka produces the best cinnamon in the world. Return to Galle for an evening at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 13

## COLOMBO | EXPLORING ON FOOT

Return to Colombo today. In the afternoon, embark on a historic walking tour with a Colombo native. Experience Pettah Bazaar, and visit the Old Dutch Museum, former home to Count August Carl Van Ranzow.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 14

## DEPART COLOMBO

Transfer to the airport and board your departure flight.

Meals: Breakfast

