



# Sri Lanka

## Bikes, Buddha, and Boats

**26 Days**

Join us on this 26-day expedition to Sri Lanka and experience many of the highlights of this remarkable island. With influences from Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam, European traders and colonial powers, ancient kingdoms and, of course, cricket, Sri Lanka offers a warm welcome, dramatic scenery, and a laid-back easy-going nature. We will travel to the North to the South, East and head West! We will work with a responsible, ethical project in the North, trek in the Central highlands and enjoy the beaches in the South. We have the chance to climb Sigiriya rock, undertake wildlife safaris and visit temples. What better way to get to know the true Sri Lanka?



[Learn more about our  
Carbon Labels](#)



# Your Recommended Expedition Itinerary

<b>Days 1 - 2</b>	<b>Depart UK, arrive Sri Lanka &amp; transfer to Negombo</b> Overnight flight to Sri Lanka. We arrive at Bandaranayake International Airport and are met before being transferred to Negombo. NEGOMBO town is a historically interesting place strongly influenced by the Catholic Church. The narrow strip of land between the lagoon & the sea and the many canals makes for good exploring. The Dutch captured the town from the Portuguese in 1640, lost it again in the same year, and then captured it again in 1644. The British then took it from them in 1796 without a struggle. Negombo was one of the most important sources of cinnamon during the Dutch era, and there are still reminders of the European days.	LD
<b>Days 3 - 4</b>	<b>The Mud House</b> As we start to acclimatise, a couple of days at The Mud House is ideal! Far from the beaten track and largely untouched by tourists, there are plenty of opportunities to meet the locals and work on the site's organic farm. We can explore the local area by bike, kayak or simply walk between the lakes and paddies or clamber on the unusual rock formations. You won't want to drag yourself away.	BLD
<b>Days 5 - 6</b>	<b>Anuradhapura. Wilpattu Mannar Island</b> After a transfer to and tour of in Anuradhapura. We will get the opportunity to visit one of Sri Lanka's oldest wildlife reserves and enjoy an afternoon safari. We then drive to Mannar Island visiting the Thantirimale Temple and the catholic shrine of Our Lady of Madhu. After a night on the island, we get to do some sightseeing around Mannar Island.	BLD
<b>Days 7 - 14</b>	<b>Homestay in Poonakaray - Appe Lanka</b> This morning we will enjoy a drive further North to the village of Poonakaray where we will stay with local families. The next few days will be spent working on a variety of projects aimed at providing basic social and infrastructure services to communities, mainly Tamil, ravaged by decades of civil war. This will be an eye opening and highly rewarding project for both the local community and for the students too.	BLD
<b>Days 15 - 16</b>	<b>Jaffna and Delft Islands</b> Early this morning we'll drive to Jaffna, Sri Lanka's northern most city and spend a day visiting a huge Hindu Temple, the colourful gopuram tower as well as the colonial star shaped fort. These two days are a great opportunity to relax after the hard work on the previous week.	BLD
<b>Days 17 - 18</b>	<b>Anuradhapura Dambulla Sigiriya. Polonnaruwa</b> Today we head south with an early morning train ride back to Anuradhapura and then a two hour drive to the famous Dambulla Caves. In the late afternoon, we'll enjoy a tour of the amazing Cave Temple. During the temple tour, we make our way through five caves, containing over 150 images of Buddha going back to 1st century BC when King Valagambahu took refuge here. The second cave, the most elaborate and most spectacular of the five, is the largest - 170ft long, 75ft broad and 21ft high. There is a large reclining Buddha statue and statues of two kings.	BLD



On the following day we visit Sigiriya. Rising nearly 700 feet above one of Asia's most well-preserved ancient, landscaped gardens, the rock fortress of Sigiriya, a giant granite monolith, is an unforgettable site. First thing this morning we take the dramatic footpath which zigzags its way up, past the famous Mirror Wall and to the top of the rock fortress. At the top, we spend time with the local monkeys enjoying the vast panoramic views and exploring the fortress, including the swimming pool that the King would relax by with his concubines. Even after all this there is still time to explore the stunning Polonnaruwa by bike!

**Days 19 - 22**

**Trekking Adams Peak and the Knuckles Range**

BLD

We have a number of options for trekking in the stunning central Highlands. We can take in the sacred Adams Peak, trek in the Knuckles Range or visit Nuwara Eliya and Horton National Park. Adam's Peak (2243m), known locally as 'Sri Pada', is a pilgrimage site and at peak season can be very busy with throngs of pilgrim ascending the lit staircase.

A depression at the top of the peak is said to be Buddha's footprint (or that of Shiva to Hindus and Adam to Christians and Muslims) and, each year during the period between the December and May full moon, hundreds of thousands of pilgrims climb to the top for sunrise. The trekking is simply stunning through the Tea plantations. Tea production is one Sri Lanka's main sources of foreign exchange, and the country is the world's fourth largest producer of tea. The humidity, cool temperatures and rainfall of the Central Highlands all combine to produce a very high-quality tea. We trek through the wet and dry zones, in the hill country and the low country, semi-evergreen forest and grasslands and lowland evergreen virgin rainforest.

The flora and fauna is simply breathtaking with a wide variety of insects, reptiles and amphibians. There are also a small number of leopards, although these are very rarely seen due to the dense foliage.

**Days 23 - 24**

**Galle / city tour / free evening**

BLD

After long 3 weeks trekking, traveling and working with the villagers in the North we will finally have time to relax and enjoy the south coast. We will have time to chill out on the beach as well as visit the Turtle Hatchery at Habaraduwa. Our night stop will be in the ancient port of Galle, also known as being Sri Lanka's first international commerce and trade centre. Today Galle is the bustling provincial capital and administrative centre of the south. It is famous for its beautiful Unawatuna Bay, where the sea is protected by the reef, making swimming safe. After a city tour, we have a free afternoon and evening to explore and perhaps pick up some gifts for our family at home.

**Days 25 - 26**

**Transfer to airport for flight home**

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After breakfast, we'll be transferred to the airport for our flight back to London. This is normally an overnight arriving back the following day.





## Look what's included:

- International flights
- All accommodation, transportation and activities
- All food as described above
- Local, bi-lingual, first-aid qualified STC leader
- Parent and student trip launch presentation
- Pre-travel training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for school staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Emergency Medical & Repatriation Insurance

- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Donations to two carbon & conservation charities
- Free Fairtrade t-shirt for every participant and teacher
- Free travel guide book to your destination

## What's not included:

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations or Covid tests

- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters (ask for guidance)
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Personal effects and cancellation insurance



## A word about Responsible Tourism

On our expeditions and educational journeys, we strive to connect teachers and students with the people they meet, nurture the cultures they experience and protect the beautiful environments they are lucky enough to explore.

Many companies talk the talk, few truly walk the walk. We are far from perfect, but we are leading the way in sustainability in the school travel sector. In 2018 we were the first UK travel company to become **Travelife Certified** – a verified sustainability certificate formally recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.



Trees for Life

This is our passion, and we'd love to tell you more about it in due course. In the meantime, for more information on some of the steps we take as a company to make our operations more sustainable, please visit:

<https://www.thestc.co.uk/travel/what-do-we-do/>



## Physical Rating for this trip: Grade 2



Some low level physical activities included in your trip, including walking on uneven terrain, maybe a morning/afternoon trek of two to four hours. That said, no physical preparation is required to make the most of the tour. High humidity and temperatures can occur at certain times of the year.

## Cultural Rating for this trip: Grade 3



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



## Travel Safety & Other Expedition Training

Preparing students and teachers for their upcoming adventure is an opportunity to teach important life skills and a vital part of our overall approach to safety management. Please ask for your quote for the training schedule specific to your expedition. Topics covered will include:

### Responsible Tourism workshop

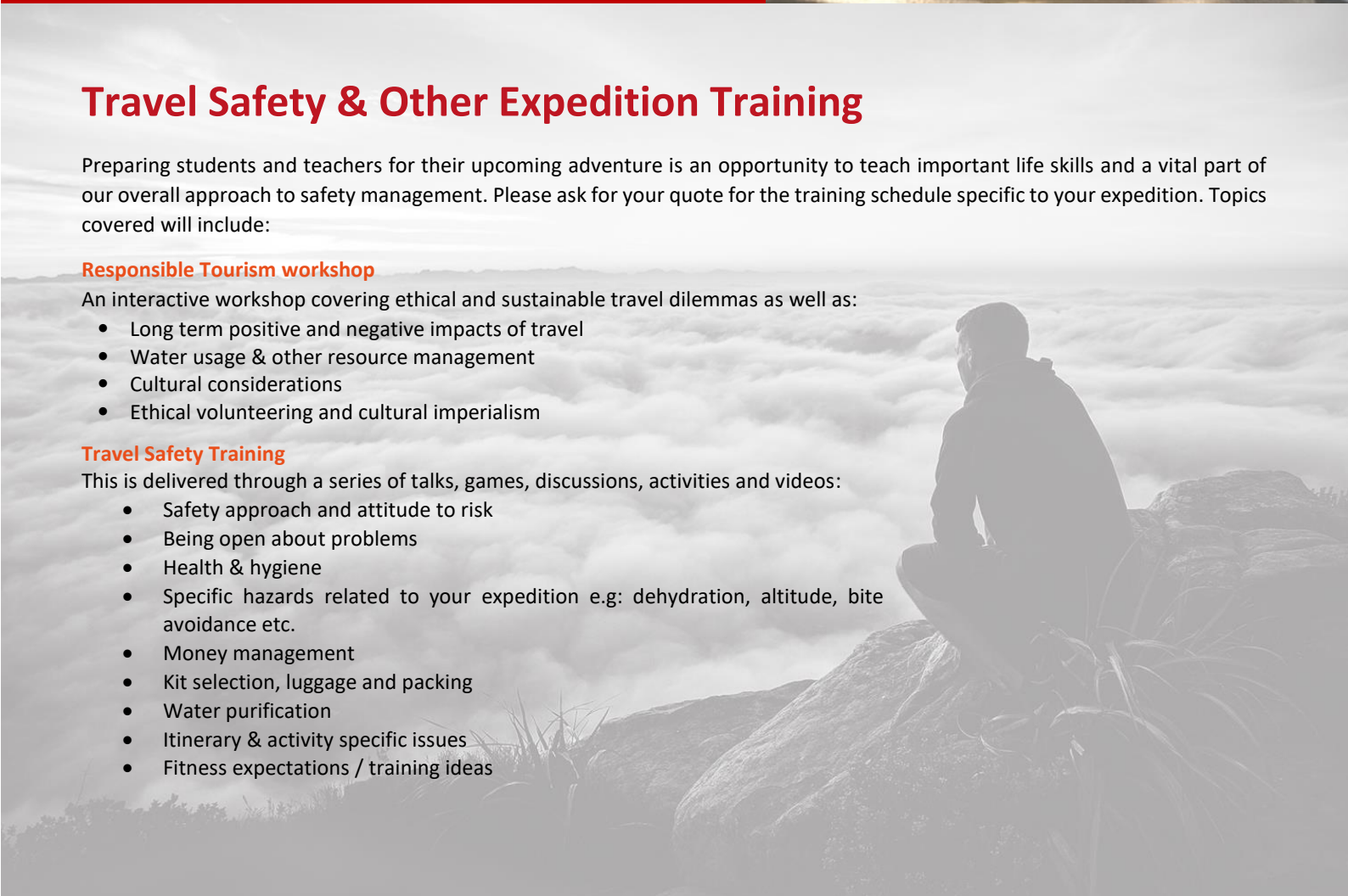
An interactive workshop covering ethical and sustainable travel dilemmas as well as:

- Long term positive and negative impacts of travel
- Water usage & other resource management
- Cultural considerations
- Ethical volunteering and cultural imperialism

### Travel Safety Training

This is delivered through a series of talks, games, discussions, activities and videos:

- Safety approach and attitude to risk
- Being open about problems
- Health & hygiene
- Specific hazards related to your expedition e.g: dehydration, altitude, bite avoidance etc.
- Money management
- Kit selection, luggage and packing
- Water purification
- Itinerary & activity specific issues
- Fitness expectations / training ideas





# A journey of 1,000 miles...

**Starts with a single step...** Contact us now to start your expedition journey

## 1 Ask for your personalised quote & further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an adventure that's just right for you and your students. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

## 2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk and threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your Pre-Booking Information Pack too.

## 3 Arrange an expedition launch evening

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening covering the itinerary, safety management, the build-up to the trip and lots more. There is also plenty of opportunity for questions.



The home of the modern, innovative school expedition, where a sustainable, ethical approach guarantees unique experiences and a life enhancing adventure.



Our school trips and educational tours are all about maximising the learning opportunities of travel. It's all here, the humble school tour has just come of age.



Adventures, holidays and cultural journeys for teachers looking to 'Escape the Classroom' and discover more about our amazing world, its people and places.



*"I am being completely serious when I say that I won't ever run a school trip without you guys. I trust you and your team completely - and the in-country staff that you carefully cultivate and train are a cut above the rest."*

**Teacher feedback, King's High Warwick**

## Contact Us:

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