



This program is specially designed for a TEA & SPICE tour of Sri Lanka and South India with Liz Light departing on Wednesday 17 February 2016

Sri Lanka & Kerala in India: tea and spice

Explore the misty tea plantations of mountainous Sri Lanka, the spice bazaars of Kochi in Kerala, the spice gardens of the Cardamom Hills and enjoy the delicious food and British heritage that comes with tea and spice.

Cost per person twin share:

18 days including return airfares from Auckland = \$7,890.00

Single room supplement = \$2360.00

Introducing your escort:

Liz Light is an award winning writer and photographer who has been in love with India and Sri Lanka for decades. She has visited both countries many times and delights in the warm welcome, spicy food, exotic bazaars and good humor of these countries. www.lizlight.co.nz

Program: Colombo – Pinnewala – Habarana – Sigiriya – Kandy – Nuwera Eliya – Waikkal – Cochin – Munnar – Periyar – Houseboat Cruise – Kovalam

Day 01.....Wed, 17 Feb Auckland – Singapore – Colombo

Please arrive at Auckland International Airport at least 3 hours prior to the scheduled departure of your flight and check-in at Singapore Airlines counter for your flight to Singapore. Liz will meet you at the airport, after check-in.

1:30 pm Depart from Auckland by flight SQ 286
7:05 pm Arrive in Singapore

On arrival at Singapore Airport, please proceed in transit to connect your onward flight to Mumbai.

11:10 pm Depart from Singapore by flight SQ 468

Day 02.....Thu, 18 Feb Colombo (B)

12.30 am Arrive at Colombo Airport

After completion of arrival formalities at Colombo Airport, you will be met by our local representative and transferred to your Hotel.

*Your accommodation in Colombo is in **Hotel Cinnamon Lakeside** for 2 nights including breakfast (first night is arrival night)*

Enjoy a city and shopping tour of Colombo. Like many capital cities, in developing countries, the city is fast changing. Skyscrapers arise from where old buildings once stood, yet in some parts, the old world charm is retained. There is a 100-year-old clock tower and several British-built colonial buildings. Other places of interest are the Pettah Bazaar where one can shop for bargains, a Hindu and a Buddhist temple, residential areas with stately homes.

Day 03.....Fri, 18 Feb Colombo – Pinnewala – Dambulla - Habarana (B/D)

After breakfast commence journey from Colombo to Pinnawala.

The Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage allows visitors to see many elephants at close range. The orphanage was established in 1975 with seven orphaned elephants. Today some of these elephants enjoy seeing their calves born in the same location. Assisted by local and foreign experts, Pinnawala has had a successful breeding program since 1984. It is good to visit at feeding time to see the baby elephants being bottle-fed and the entire herd taken for a bath to the nearby river.



Continue the journey from Pinnawala to Dambulla.

The Dambulla rock temple was built by King Walagambahu in the 1st century B.C. and is a World Heritage Site. It is the most impressive of Sri Lanka's cave temples with a complex of five caves. It has over 2000 sq. metres of painted walls and ceilings and is the largest area of paintings in the world. It contains over 150 images of the Buddha the largest being a colossal Buddha, spanning 14 metres, carved out of rock.

Continue on to Habarana and check into hotel.

*Your accommodation in Habarana is for two nights in **Chaaya Village** including breakfast and dinner*

Day 4.....Sat, 19 Feb**Habarana - Sigiriya – Minneriya – Habarana****(B/D)**

After breakfast, you will be picked up from your hotel and take a trip to Sigiriya.

Climb the 5th century Sigiriya rock fortress, a world heritage site, built by King Kashyapa (477-495 AD). The *Lion Rock* is a citadel of unusual beauty rising 200 metres from the scrub jungle. A moat, rampart, and extensive gardens ring the base of the rock. Visit the world-renowned frescoes of the '*Heavenly Maidens*' of Sigiriya.

In the afternoon enjoy a jeep safari of the Minneriya National Park. The Park is 8,889 hectares, dry-zone plant and animal species are common and elephants are in plenty. Unlike in other national parks, elephants can be spotted at close range. About 160 species of birds, 9 amphibians, 25 reptile species, 26 fish species and more than 78 butterfly species have been found in this area. There are also rare bamboo trees in this park which are not found in other parks.



Return to hotel.

Day 5.....Sun, 20 Feb**Kandalama – Spice Garden – Kandy****(B/D)**

This morning, proceed from Kandalama to Kandy via Matale. Visit a spice garden in Matale to see the growing of the different spices for which Sri Lanka is famous. Watch a cookery demonstration.

Proceed from Matale to Kandy. Kandy was the last capital of the Sri Lankan kings and is a World Heritage Site. The name Kandy conjures visions of splendor and magnificence. Many of the legends, traditions and folklore are still lovingly kept alive. Visit the Kandy town and bazaar, the arts and crafts centre, a gem museum and a lapidary.

In the evening visit the Temple of The Sacred Tooth Relic of The Buddha and also pay a visit to the Cultural Center to witness a show of colorful traditional dances of Sri Lanka.

*Your accommodation in Kandy is for two nights in **Hotel Cinnamon Citadel** including breakfast & dinner*

Day 6.....Mon, 21 Feb**Kandy****(B/D)**

In the morning, visit the Royal Botanical Gardens in Peradeniya. The gardens date back to the 14th Century as the pleasure gardens of Kandyan Kings. In the 20th century it served as the Allied Command Centre of Lord Louis Mountbatton during the Second World War. It covers an area of 147 acres and provides an amazing variety of trees, plants and flowers.

In the afternoon, visit the Kandy Tea Museum

Day 7.....Tue, 22 Feb**Kandy – Nuwara Eliya****(B/D)**

After breakfast proceed to Nuwara Eliya, enroute visiting Ramboda Tea Factory and plantation, where the best tea in the world is produced. Here you can observe all about the process of

manufacturing tea. You can also see how tea is graded. Taste a cup of pure Ceylon tea in the factory.

Continue to Nuwara Eliya. Its invigorating mountain climate and scenery, makes it Sri Lanka's most popular hill resort. Nuwara Eliya is also the heart of Sri Lanka's tea country, producing a significant share of the world's best tea. Sri Lanka's highest mountain Pidurutalagala (8282 feet) is located here.



*Your accommodation in Nuwara Eliya is for two nights in **Hotel Grand** including breakfast and dinner*

Day 8.....Wed, 23 Feb	Nuwara Eliya	(B/L/D)
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Spend the morning in tea estate and see the plucking of tea leaves and how the tea plantation is maintained.

Return to the Hotel for lunch and then you will have afternoon free to explore the area.

Day 9.....Thu, 24 Feb	Nuwara Eliya – Negombo – Waikkal	(B/D)
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After breakfast leave Nuwara Eliya for Negombo. Negombo town has several buildings dating back to the Dutch and Portuguese colonial days with sea and fishermen as a backdrop. The lagoon is famous for lobsters, crabs and prawns and the fish auctions on the beach are worth a visit. Also visit the Dutch Fort and a Catholic Church.

Transfer from Negombo to Waikkal.

*Your accommodation in Waikkal is for one night in **Hotel Dolphine** including breakfast*

Day 10.....Fri, 25 Feb	Waikkal - Colombo – Cochin	(B)
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Today you will be transferred to the airport to connect your onward flight to Cochin

TBA	Depart from Colombo by flight
TBA	Arrive in Cochin

After completion of arrival formalities at Cochin Airport, you will be met by our local Representative and transferred to your Hotel

In the evening visit the famous dance drama of Kerala, the "Kathakali". This dance can be characterized by grotesque gesticulations, amazing costumes and very extensive make-up. The stories are mostly taken from the epics Mahabharatha and Ramayana.



*Your accommodation in Cochin is for two nights in **Hotel Le Meridien** including breakfast*

Day 11.....Sat, 26 Feb	Cochin	(B)
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This morning, proceed on a sightseeing tour of Cochin by visiting "the Jewish Synagogue" at the heart of what is locally called the Jew Town, "the St. Francis Church", the oldest European Church in India, "the Santa Cruz Basilica" originally built in 1557 by the Portuguese, the Dutch Palace and Spice market in narrow streets. Also visit the "Chinese fishing nets" huge cantilevered fishing nets believed to have been brought to Kochi by Chinese traders.

Rest of the afternoon is at leisure to explore the city on your own. There is wonderful shopping for magnificent Indian arts, crafts and hand loomed textiles and superb restaurants in delightful colonial villas.

Day 12.....Sun, 27 Feb**Cochin – Munnar****(B)**

This morning, embark on your drive to Munnar, one of the most popular hill resorts of south India. British rulers called Munnar *Switzerland of India* for its natural surroundings and cool climate. The entire area is occupied by thick forests and tea estates.

Upon arrival in Munnar, check in to your hotel.

High up in the Cardamom Hills, the town is surrounded by rolling tea plantations, the highest in the world at 6000ft. There are planters' bungalows and grand old churches from the Raj era.



*Your accommodation in Munnar is for two nights in **Hotel Windermere** including breakfast*

Day 13.....Mon, 28 Feb**Munnar****(B)**

This morning, visit a local tea plantation and the Tata Tea Museum to learn about the cultivation and processing of a variety of Indian teas. Also visit a tea factory to see how they classify tea leaves according to their quality, processing tea leaves and packaging of the final product.

Rest of the afternoon is at leisure to explore the city on your own. There are many interesting walks around the plantations and hills. Trek through cardamom forests and landscaped tea shrubs. Take picnics besides scenic waterfalls or hill-tops with panoramic views.

**Day 14.....Tue, 29 Feb****Munnar – Periyar****(B)**

After breakfast, embark on a scenic drive to Periyar, the wildlife and spice plantation hub of Kerala. This afternoon, take a spice plantation tour and learn about the mystery and history of Indian spices. You also get the opportunity to shop for fragrant spices at a local market.

This evening, you will visit Periyar Wildlife sanctuary, one of the finest elephant reserves of south India. Enjoy a nature walk in the park, spotting migratory birds and local wildlife around the lake.

*Your accommodation in Periyar is in **Hotel Spice Village** for 1 night including breakfast*

Day 15.....Wed, 01 Mar**Periyar – Alleppey – Kettuvalam****(B/L/D)**

After breakfast, board your houseboat to cruise through the backwaters of Kerala. Kerala backwaters consist of a complex network of lagoons, lakes, & canals and are best experienced while slowly rowing down the labyrinth of canals in a traditional thatch-roofed houseboat, known as 'Kettuvallam'. See life on the banks, lush green rice fields, and coconut groves with the occasional temple or church as you cruise through the canals. Enjoy the special Kerala style meals prepared by your chef on board.

Overnight stay is on houseboat.

Day 16.....Thu, 02 Mar

Kettuvalam – Alleppey – Kovalam

(B)

After a leisurely breakfast on board disembark at Alleppey jetty, which is also known as “Venice of the East” because of the narrow canals and backwaters. Drive to Kovalam beach for a rejuvenating stay at an Ayurvedic Village.

*Your accommodation in Kovalam is in **Hotel Travancore Heritage** for 1 night including breakfast*



Day 17.....Fri, 03 Mar

Kovalam – Trivandrum

(B)

Day at your leisure. You will have room till 6pm today.

You will be transferred to Trivandrum airport to connect your onward flight

10.45 pm Depart from Trivandrum on flight SQ5491

Day 18....Sat, 04 Mar

Singapore – Auckland

5.45 am Arrive in Singapore

On arrival at Singapore Airport, please proceed in transit to connect your onward flight to Auckland.

8.50 am Depart from Singapore by flight SQ 4281

11:45 pm Arrive in Auckland

***** *End of an Exotic program* *****

Meals mentioned above: B=Breakfast; L=Lunch; D=Dinner

All flight times mentioned above are local, subject to change by airlines without prior intimation. It is advisable to check the scheduled flight departure time at least 3 days prior to your travel. Please check with our ground operators locally to reconfirm your return travel schedule well in advance.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Important:

Costs above are based on current rates of exchange (**USD 0.69 for Sri Lanka** and **INR 44 per NZD for India portion**) and the final Invoice will have the costs based rate of exchange current at that time, after all adjustments. You may settle all the costs earlier than the due date and freeze the rate of exchange – the costs will not be changed after the file is paid in full unless there is a change in government tax structure.

We will need a minimum of 10 persons to operate the Group program – final information on the status of this Group will be communicated at least 60 days prior to departure and full refund will be given if we have to withdraw this Group from operation due to lack of numbers.

INCLUSIONS

- Economy class international flights on sectors Auckland –Singapore – Colombo – Cochin // Kovalam – Singapore – Auckland, including all taxes
- Accommodation in Hotels including breakfast as per the details mentioned in the enclosed itinerary
- Other meals as specified in the program
- Services of regional English speaking guides in each city as per the sightseeing mentioned in the program
- All ground services using private air-conditioned vehicles
- All entrance fees (as per sightseeing programs in the itinerary) and currently applicable taxes

EXCLUSIONS

Visas, travel insurance, airport taxes, meals not mentioned in the itinerary, beverages during included meals, excess baggage on flights, gratuities and other expenses of personal nature.

PAYMENT TERMS

Deposit: We will need a non-refundable deposit of NZD500 per person, along with a copy of their passport, to be able to confirm space on the program

Final Payment: We would require the balance amount to be paid to us latest by 70 days prior to start of services.

CANCELLATION TERMS

In case of any cancellation or reduction of services, following cancellation terms will apply:

Cancellation in booked arrangements till 61 days prior to start of services	: Loss of deposit
Cancellation in booked arrangements from 60 days 31 days prior to start of services	: 50% charge
Cancellation in booked arrangements from 30 days till start of services	:100 % charge

No refund is due for any arrangement once the tour has commenced. Flights and train journeys, once booked and ticketed, are liable for 100% penalty in case of cancellation and correction or change in name.