

Sri Lanka End to End Road Cycle Tour

Trip Code: SEMB

Version: SEMB Sri Lanka End to End Road Cycle Tour



CYCLE



GUIDED GROUP



CHALLENGING



HIGHLIGHTS

- This is the ultimate Sri Lanka road cycling holiday
- From Jaffna to Dondra Lighthouse - experience the many wonders of this paradise island
- Rice paddies, tea plantations forest-cloaked mountains and Indian Ocean beaches
- Visit Anuradhapura, Sigiriya, Dambulla and the 'hill capital' of Kandy

AT A GLANCE

- 9 days biking
- 842 kilometres
- 100% road - 100% vehicle supported
- Max. Altitude 1403 metres
- Join at Negombo

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 11 Breakfasts
- 9 Lunches
- 10 Dinners
- 8 nights Hotel with swimming pool
- 2 nights Hotel
- 1 nights Guesthouse

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

Suspended like a teardrop at the southern tip of the Indian Subcontinent, tropical Sri Lanka is one of the most vibrant and colourful of travel destinations and the perfect place for a very different kind of [road cycling holiday](#). This unique and exciting cycle tour crosses the island from north to south, end to end, and takes in many of the country's finest historical sites, whilst traversing many of the diverse landscapes which make Sri Lanka so special.

After a rural introductory ride from Negombo to Maho on Day 2, we transfer north to Jaffna and on the next day ride a loop around the Jaffna Peninsula and surrounding islands where there is a unique mixture of colonial charm and vibrant Tamil culture. Then, after dipping our tires in the Indian Ocean, we ride south across the northern plains, stopping off at little-visited Mannar Island. Heading inland and cycling through the flatlands of Sri Lanka's rice bowl, we pass a breath-taking mix of temples, monasteries and other highlights, such as the 5th century citadel at Sigiriya. A rest day in Kandy, during which we can visit the Temple of the Sacred Tooth, allows us to prepare for the hills. For the next 2 days we cross an area dominated by tea production, climbing on winding roads through the central highlands. What goes up must come down and we descend to end our journey at the southernmost tip of Sri Lanka at Dondra Point where we can commemorate the occasion with another dip of our tires in the Indian Ocean. Combining 9 days of road cycling on surprisingly good roads, with fantastic cultural and natural insights and delicious local cuisine, this is one of the best ways to experience Sri Lanka.

Is this holiday for you?

ROAD CYCLING. The first 5 cycling days of this tropical tour are on primarily flat terrain where we average almost 100 kilometres per day. Then, on the following day, we split the cycling into 2 sections, as we approach the 'hill capital' of Kandy, where we have a rest day. A couple of cooler and hillier days follow, as we cross the central highlands and swoop down to the island's south coast. In total, we cycle just over 840 kilometres in 9 days of riding, with a total of 7500 metres of ascent and descent. The trip is fully supported and our guide's expert knowledge of the area and terrain means that you'll always know what's coming up in terms of distance and difficulty. This makes a tremendous difference, as does the constant supply of cold drinks and fresh fruit. This trip is on paved roads that are in good condition, though there maybe occasional short rough sections. To get the most out of this road cycling tour you need to have a good level of physical fitness. However, the bus is always close at hand for those who

need to take a break. BIKE HIRE AVAILABLE LOCALLY

Itinerary

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DAY 1

Meet at the group hotel in the coastal resort town of Negombo.

Your holiday starts at the hotel in the resort town of Negombo which sits beside the coastal lagoon of the same name. Airport transfers are not provided on arrival. Taxis from Colombo Airport are low cost and the journey time is 30 minutes. Depending on your arrival time, you may have some time to relax, take a stroll along the beach or make use of the hotel pool. You should make sure that you reassemble your bike today. At 5pm the guide will meet the group in the lobby of the hotel and will brief the group on the days ahead before sitting down to dinner.

Meals: **D**



Accommodation

Hotel with swimming pool

DAY 2

Cycle from Negombo to Maho, then transfer to the northern tip of the island at Jaffna.

Today, we head north to the tip of the island, starting out with a great introductory ride. After breakfast at the hotel and final adjustments to our bikes, we cycle directly from our hotel, heading inland on minor roads at a relaxed pace, as we shake the travel out of our legs and fine tune the fit of the hire bikes (for those who have chosen this option). This part of the island is known as 'Little Rome' thanks to the large number of Catholic churches that we will see. Soon, we find ourselves cycling via paddy fields and coconut plantations and we stop regularly (sometimes at tea shops and sometimes at a suitable pull-in for the support vehicle) to regroup, snack and top up our water. The level, winding village roads are a joy to cycle on and give us a great insight into rural Sri Lanka that most tourists seldom see. The simplicity of everyday life and the friendly smiles of the local people are highlights of this ride. The last 20 kilometre stretch to our lunch stop at a small restaurant is along a straight road and here we have the chance to give our legs a bit of a workout. After lunch in the vicinity of the small town of Maho, we rack up the bikes and transfer for 5 hours to Jaffna stopping to stretch our legs at Killinochi, the former headquarters of the Tamil Tigers. Jaffna is Sri Lanka's 12th largest city and sits on the south side of the Jaffna Peninsula. Dinner and overnight at our Jaffna hotel.

Meals: **B L D**

 Accommodation Hotel	 Ascent 650M	 Descent 570M	 Time 5 - 6 hrs cycling	 Distance 102KM
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DAY 3

Peninsula and islands loop ride from Jaffna.

We ride through Jaffna town with its lively markets, and small fishing port, passing the old Star Fort built by the Portuguese in 1618 to defend the Peninsula. Crossing the causeway to Kyats Island we head north along a straight road, ride as fast or as slow as you like! There are plenty of colourful water birds to see or even photograph, such as painted storks and red-wattled lapwings. Regrouping at the ferry, we cross to Karaingar Island and continue northwards to Casuarina Beach at the tip of the island. Here, we stop for a picnic lunch and a swim in the warm waters of the Palk Strait which separates Sri Lanka from India. We can also take the opportunity to dip our rear tyres in the sea, as a symbolic start to our journey to the southernmost point of Sri Lanka. We then ride back to our hotel in Jaffna on a mix of good and bad roads. In the evening we walk to a local restaurant for a tasty Masala Dosai, a crispy rice flour pancake with a spicy filling. Other authentic Tamil dishes are available as well. We spend a second night at our Jaffna hotel.

Meals: **BLD**






 Accommodation Hotel	 Ascent 260M	 Descent 260M	 Time 4 hrs cycling	 Distance 71KM
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DAY 4

Starting our southward journey across the island, we cycle from Jaffna to Mannar.

Cycling directly from the hotel, we head south to Pooneryn, crossing a causeway over the Jaffna lagoon. The road sees little or no traffic now, but there were some major battles here during the conflict era and the jungle encroaching on the road in places hides the scars of war, while this area is gradually being resettled. We stop for lunch at Iluppaikkadavai, where the road first returns to the coast. The coastal waters around here are inhabited by rare sea mammals called dugongs (sea cows). Once thought to be mermaids they can sometimes be seen in the shallow waters around the bay. We continue our ride, again crossing a body of water, this time on the 2 kilometre-long bridge to Mannar Island. We end our ride at the 700 year-old Baobab tree, brought here by Arabian traders. The massive trunk is almost 20 metres in circumference and its thick grey bark gives it the nickname elephant tree. There's not much else to see on the island except for lots of white sand and palm trees, gulls and terns, wild donkeys, little lanes and fishing boats. At the tip of the island is Adams Bridge, a series of reefs, sandbanks and islets that nearly link Sri Lanka to India. On a clear day you can see the Rameshwaram Tower in India, 26 kilometres away. This evening our hotel is close to the sea and you can enjoy a swim in the India Ocean before a well-earned post-ride beer.

Meals: **BLD**






	Accommodation Hotel with swimming pool		Ascent 280M		Descent 280M		Time 6 hrs cycling
	Distance 117KM						

DAY 5

Cycle inland to Anuradhapura. Afternoon sightseeing in this former Sinhalese capital.

After an early breakfast at our resort-style hotel, we cycle back across the causeway and then head inland through an area known as the Giant's Tank Sanctuary, which surrounds a large freshwater lake built by King Dhatusena (459-477) and now part of a wetland habitat reserve. The lake's water irrigates the surrounding rice fields which are tended by the traditional farming communities, some still using water buffalo to plough the fields. We have some distance to cover today, but very modest amounts of ascent, and we will aim to reach our hotel in time for a late lunch. This will give us a couple of hours to rest, before heading out for an early evening exploration of the ancient city of Anuradhapura. Dating from the 4th century BC, Anuradhapura was the capital of the Sinhalese Kingdom until the beginning of the 11th century AD and has some of the oldest and largest Buddhist monuments in Asia. During this period it remained one of the most stable and durable centres of political power and urban life in Asia. We will visit the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi, a sacred fig tree reputed to be 2000 years old. Just after sunset, when pilgrims light 'pahannas,' little clay lamps and incense sticks, this religious shrine has a heady atmosphere. For dinner we will visit the 'Bus Stand' area to sample some street food. Try the 'kottu rotti' served with spicy gravy.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Hotel with swimming pool		Ascent 580M		Descent 490M		Time 6 hrs cycling
	Distance 119KM						





DAY 6

Ride from Anuradhapura to Sigiriya. Afternoon hike to the top of the Lion Rock.

A shorter cycling day today and still without a lot of climbing. We start with a relaxed ride through the ancient city region on the 'Old Kings Route' which is dotted with temples and stupas. Then, leaving the city outskirts, we cycle on a busier road, before turning off towards the Ritigala Strict Natural Reserve. The centre of this reserve is a rocky massif rising to 766 metres, the high point of Sri Lanka's north-central plains. Legend has it that this massif is a part of the Himalaya's dropped here by the monkey god Hanuman. The ride takes us through a mix of forest and farmed land where we can see the Sri Lankan people and their buffalo working in the fields. We end the morning ride at our Sigiriya hotel where we'll

have lunch. In the late afternoon we'll climb up Sigiriya Rock, a 5th Century Citadel built by King Kashyapa (477-495 AD). The rock fortress is approached through the royal gardens, and then a natural boulder entrance before ascending 220 metres to the Lions Paws entrance. The ruins of the palace on the summit are only surpassed by the magnificent views of the surrounding countryside. We return to our hotel for dinner.

Meals: **B L D**






	Accommodation Hotel with swimming pool		Ascent 520M		Descent 420M		Time 4 hrs cycling
	Distance 78KM						

DAY 7

Cycle to Dambulla and visit the Golden Temple. Then transfer to Melsiripura and cycle to Kandy.

We cycle on quiet country roads directly from the hotel past Kandalama Lake to the world-famous cave temple at Dambulla. Dating from the 2nd century BC, this is the largest cave temple complex in Sri Lanka and is adorned with thousands of frescos depicting the life of Lord Buddha. We will have time for a quick visit to this important site, as our local team rack-up the bikes onto the support vehicle. From here, we will make a 1-hour transfer to avoid a particularly busy and bumpy stretch of road. Then, at Melsiripura, it's back on the bikes to ride on quiet back roads through one of Sri Lanka's most important spice growing regions, surrounded by plantations of nutmeg, cloves and pepper. We'll take the opportunity to stop at one of the spice gardens, to take a short tour and to see the various plants and learn about their medicinal uses. We then cycle through Matale (very busy) and start climbing up the Wattegama Valley amongst terraced paddy fields and jungle-covered hills. We will start to see the first tea plantations in this area, too. Now that we are back on minor roads, we can really enjoy the first significant ascent of the holiday so far. We'll take a break at Madawela Bakery, a typical village eatery where we can get an energy top-up in the form of 'wadas', little cakes dipped in coconut and mango chutney. They are delicious! Overnight in Kandy.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Hotel with swimming pool		Ascent 1400M		Descent 1050M		Time 5 - 6 hrs cycling
	Distance 86KM						

DAY 8

A rest day in Kandy, with the chance to visit the Temple of the Tooth.

Encircled by hills, with a tranquil lake at its centre, Kandy is a bustling town known as Sri Lanka's 'Hill Capital'. It was an important religious centre of the Sinhalese and is a place of pilgrimage for Buddhists. We spend a rest day here and have the chance to explore the town old shops, antique and gem specialists and colourful market streets. An absolute must-see is the 'Temple of the Tooth' an UNESCO World Heritage Site, where Buddha's tooth, known simply as 'the relic' is kept. Today we can make our own decisions about where to take lunch and dinner and pay for these meals directly. We spend a second night at our Kandy hotel.

Meals: **B**



Accommodation

Hotel with swimming pool

DAY 9

A great day of cycling, through the heart of 'tea country' to Hatton.

We are now cycling into the rather hillier southern part of Sri Lanka. This part of the country is characterised by emerald-green tea plantations and steep-sided peaks cloaked in montane forest. For the first part of today's ride, we weave our way amongst the plantations, with photographic opportunities at almost every bend in the road. We then follow the Mahaweli River and after 30 kilometres, begin a 2-stage ascent up to Hatton (1271m) where some of the earliest tea plantations in the country were set up. We stay overnight at an old colonial residence that was home to planters in the days of British rule. Here the staff can tell us about the origins of tea and possibly take us to visit a nearby tea factory. In the afternoon there's time to take it easy or to go out to meet the people of Hatton, either cycling or on foot.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation

Guesthouse



Ascent

1540M



Descent

835M



Time

5 - 6 hrs cycling



Distance

83KM






DAY 10

Continue our journey southwards from Hatton to the Udawalawe National Park.

Setting off from Hatton in the morning, the first 10 kilometres trends gently downhill and we can look across to the striking, conical Adam's Peak (2243m) Sri Lanka's holy mountain. A pilgrimage route leads to the top of this peak where there is a rock formation regarded by Buddhists to be Buddha's footprint. The road then climbs steadily, with a few rough sections of tarmac, up through the tea estates and on to a remote pass within a wilderness forest reserve which is home to the shy purple-faced langur. We are more likely to hear this monkey than see it. This pass at 1403 metres is the high point of our journey across the island. We then begin our long descent, stopping at a lookout point with fine views across the

southern part of the island. If it is clear, we may even get a glimpse of the sea. Continuing on back roads we reach our lunch stop overlooking a small stream which you are welcome to jump in for a cool off. The last 20 kilometres of the day's ride is on a good straight flat road and ends at our safari resort accommodation on the edge of the Udawalawe National Park.

Meals: **B L D**






	Accommodation Hotel with swimming pool		Ascent 1475M		Descent 2600M		Time 5 - 6 hrs cycling
	Distance 106KM						

DAY 11

Cycle out to the island's southern tip at Dondra Lighthouse. Overnight at Mirissa.

The Udawalawe National Park is well-known for its herds of elephants, crocodiles and many species of exotic birds. There is the option for early risers to take a safari drive into the park with a naturalist guide - this is optional and not included in the holiday price. If you want to do this, it will have to be reserved and paid for the evening before. The tour guide will help to arrange this. Those not involved in the game drive can have a leisurely breakfast and a couple of hours free time. Then, in the late morning we set off to complete our journey along good roads, cycling amongst vast expanses of green paddy fields. The simplicity of rural life is showcased as we cycle towards Dondra Lighthouse the most southerly point of the island. Here, with a ceremonial dip of our front tyres in the India Ocean, we have conclude our road ride from north to south. We then transfer just 20 kilometres along the busy coastal road to our finishing point and resort-style hotel near Mirissa, where we have a celebratory dinner.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Hotel with swimming pool		Ascent 850M		Descent 910M		Time 5 hrs cycling
	Distance 80KM						

DAY 12

Your holiday ends after breakfast. A single group transfer to Colombo Airport is provided.

Your holiday ends after breakfast. A single group transfer to Colombo Airport is provided, timed to arrive at the airport around midday.

Meals: **B**

Holiday Information

What's Included

- An experienced local English-speaking cycling guide
- A single group transfer from Mirissa to Colombo Airport on Day 12
- Support vehicle and driver
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as per the Meal Plan
- All activities as described

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Visa (if applicable)
- Colombo Airport transfer on Day 1
- Tips for local crew and drivers
- Some meals as per the Meal Plan
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc
- Optional morning game drive at Udawalawe on Day 11
- Bike Carriage on the flights - please check with your carrier for charges

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the hotel in Negombo.

Airport transfers from Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport are not provided on the day of arrival. Taxis are readily available and low cost. A transfer back to this airport from Mirissa is provided on the final day of the Land Only itinerary, leaving Mirissa after breakfast and arriving at the airport at midday.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All meals are included in the trip cost, with the exception of lunch and dinner on the free day we spend at Kandy on Day 8.

Food & Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. You should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a [Water-To-Go bottle](#)) to treat your water. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

Sri Lanka's rich history includes several periods of colonisation which has created an exotic cuisine with influences from Indian, Portuguese, Dutch, Malay and a host of other world food traditions. The staple food of Sri Lanka is rice, which is boiled or steamed and served with a variety of curries ranging from very mild to very fiery. A typical Sri Lankan meal would consist of a main curry of fish, beef, chicken or mutton, accompanied by several other side dishes made with vegetables or lentils, pickles, chutneys and 'sambols' - a spicy condiment made of ground coconut or onions mixed with chilli, dried fish and lime juice. Other Sri Lankan foods include Hoppers - rice pancakes commonly eaten for breakfast and lunch, and lamprais - a dish of Indonesian / Dutch origin comprising of rice cooked in a meat stock and slowly baked in a banana leaf with a variety of meat and vegetable sides. In the majority of tourist hotels including the ones we shall be using for this holiday it is also usual to find several Western dishes offered on the menu.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Accommodation

Throughout the holiday we will stay in a variety of very good and comfortable 3-star and above tourist hotels. Some of these hotels are resort-style, some have individual twin-share cabin accommodation, most have pools and some are actually on the beach. There is one night, at Hatton, where we stay in guesthouse accommodation in a converted tea plantation residence. All accommodation is in twin-share rooms with en-suite facilities. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. Depending on availability it may be possible to book a single room for some of the hotel nights. For additional hotel prices and single supplement costs please refer to the dates and prices page of the trip on our website.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be accompanied throughout by a professional English-speaking local biking leader. Groups of 8 persons or more will have a second biking leader. There will also be a support vehicle and driver.

Altitude

This holiday does not involve any significant ascent to altitude and we would not expect any altitude issues with this trip.

Spending Money

A total of about £200 should cover your taxi transfer on arrival (approx £10), the 2 non-included meals, the £40 you might reasonably pay for tips to local staff, as well as miscellaneous personal expenses including your bar bills. If you are intending to buy expensive souvenirs, you should budget accordingly (credit cards can be useful in this respect). Also, if you expect to buy considerable quantities of soft drinks or beer, you should make an allowance for this. Allow a further £50 if you intend to take the optional morning safari in Udawalawe National Park. It is not necessary to obtain local currency (the Sri Lankan Rupee) prior to departure. Sterling, US Dollars and Euros are equally acceptable for exchange. You can also obtain cash using ATM's at the airport on arrival and in all major towns. When changing your travel money you should try to obtain a quantity of small bills for tips to hotel staff.

Guidance on Tipping

Tips are the accepted way of saying 'thank you' to your local support staff. For your guide and driver we recommend that you give a tip if you feel that their services have met your satisfaction. We suggest that tips to local staff are presented from the group as a whole and suggest a contribution of approximately £40 in equivalent local currency will provide a sufficient pool to provide good tips to your local staff plus incidental tips to hotel staff etc. As a rough guide, tips to other people who do you a service should range from Rs 10 to someone who minds your shoes when visiting a temple to Rs 20 for a the hotel porter who carries your bag to the room.

Your Bike

We recommend that your bike is fitted with suitably low gearing and suggest that you fit reasonably high volume tyres (28mm for instance) which will provide a bit more comfort on the variable road surfaces typically found on our **Road Cycling** holidays.

Since you are depending on your bike to transport you throughout your holiday, it's important to ensure it is in good working order. If you are not mechanically minded, get your local bicycle dealer to service it for you.

Please contact us if you are unsure about the suitability of your bike.

Bike Hire

Bike hire is available locally on this holiday but there is not a full range of sizes in any one make and model of bike. There is a small number of Specialized Diverge Elite bikes which are aluminium framed with carbon forks. They have Shimano (and Praxis) components, compact (50/34) cranksets and 10-speed (11/36) cassettes. There is also a mix of carbon framed bikes available from manufacturers including Sunspeed, Specialized, Java and Wilier. The size of bike you require will determine which bike is allocated to you. These bikes have Shimano components, compact (50/34) cranksets and either 10 or 11-speed (11/32) cassettes. Spare parts (tubes, tyre, chains etc.) are included in the price of the bike rental and will be available in the support vehicle along with a tool kit and track pump. The guide will also carry some spares and tools for fixing punctures etc. Each bike comes with a single bottle cage and a Spice Roads water bottle that is yours to keep. If you want to bring a second bottle cage, we can fit it. The bikes are equipped with flat pedals and strap-style toe cages can be supplied if requested. If you prefer to use SPD or clip-in pedals, you will need to bring these with you, along with your regular cycling shoes. Another item which you might choose to take with you on the holiday is your saddle. The hire bikes have standard saddles and anyone requiring more comfort, or a women-specific saddle, should consider taking their own. Hire costs are: \$350 for the Specialized Diverge Elite bikes and \$450 for the carbon framed bikes (prices subject to change). You should take your own EN1078 compliant cycling helmet, as the locally available helmets do not necessarily meet this standard - which we require. If you want to hire a bike, please contact the KE office and we will pass on your request to the local agent. Payment must be made before travel and should be made directly with the local agent via the following payment link www.spiceroads.com/pay. You must first notify KE of your preferred bike option along with your height and we will make the reservation on your behalf. Once the reservation is confirmed, we will email to you a unique reference code which you need to use when making your payment. Your payment for bike hire does not cover you if you lose the bike or damage it beyond 'fair wear and tear'. We must stress that your hire contract will be with the local hire company and that KE cannot be held responsible for any issues arising from bike hire.

Travelling With Your Bike

Airlines require that you pack your bike properly for travel and for this holiday we recommend that you use a purpose-made soft bike bag. These can be relatively inexpensive. They are also light in weight, easy to handle and, most importantly, can be packed into a small space to allow easy transportation in the support vehicle. You will need to partially dismantle your bike to pack it in your bag.

PLEASE DO NOT USE a purpose-made rigid bike box for this holiday. We do not have the space in the support vehicle to transport these bulky items.

Please contact us if you have any questions regarding travelling with your bike.

Vehicle Support

Throughout this trip we have the back up of an air-conditioned minibus, specially modified for cycle touring. On those days when we are moving to a different hotel (every day except one), the group's baggage will be loaded onto the support vehicle which will follow the group on the day's ride. The biking leader and the support vehicle driver will watch over the group and they will communicate with each other and you can communicate with them by mobile phone. Group members will naturally cycle at different speeds and regular stops will be set to allow the group to reform. The support vehicle will carry water, soft drinks and fruit and will pick up any group members who wish to take a break from cycling at any time.

Baggage Allowance

Apart from your bike in its bag (if you are taking your own bike), you should travel with one main item of luggage, such as a KE Trek Bag or similar holdall, and a small day pack. The day pack can be used to carry valuable items such as cameras and GPS devices whilst travelling, but will also be useful to separate out items you might want to pick up from the support vehicle during the rides, like additional clothing.

Your baggage allowance on the flights will depend on your airline. When choosing your flights, whether booking them directly or through KE, you will need to consider the cost of carrying your bike. These costs are your responsibility.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel.

The Sri Lanka visa on arrival costs \$60. This fee must be paid in US dollars in good condition, along with a recent passport photo.

An online e-visa is also now available for \$50, although this has been withdrawn without notice in the past.

If you would prefer to get an e-visa in advance, to take advantage of the discount available and to limit time spent in the airport on arrival, then you can visit the official website: www.eta.gov.lk

Health & Vaccinations

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

VACCINATIONS

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you specifically require any vaccinations or other preventive measures. You should be up to date with routine courses and boosters as recommended in the UK e.g. diphtheria-tetanus-polio and measles-mumps-rubella), along with hepatitis A and typhoid. A certificate of yellow fever vaccination is required if travelling from countries with risk of yellow fever transmission and for travellers having transited for more than 12 hrs through an airport of a country with risk of yellow fever transmission. On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dentist check up. A good online resource is [Travel Health Pro](#).

Dengue fever is a known risk in places visited. It is a tropical viral disease spread by daytime biting mosquitoes. There is currently no vaccine or prophylaxis available and therefore the best form of prevention is to avoid being bitten. We recommend you [take precautions to avoid mosquito bites](#).

Currency

The unit of currency in Sri Lanka is the Sri Lankan Rupee.

Preparing for your Holiday

The better conditioned you are the more you will enjoy your trip. We suggest that you adopt a sensible weekly exercise regime and fit in a number of long cycle rides in hilly country to ensure you are physically capable of taking part in this trip - this will also provide you with an opportunity to make sure all your riding kit is tried and tested before you travel. Cycling is obviously the best activity to prepare for this trip, however, running and swimming are also good for developing aerobic fitness and stamina.

Climate

Sri Lanka has a typically tropical climate with average daytime temperature throughout the year of between 25 and 30°C at sea-level. In the 'hill country' it is cooler. Average daytime temperatures at Hatton vary between 18 and 22°C. Night time temperatures can be as much as 10°C below these figures. Because of its location, Sri Lanka is subject to two monsoonal influences which affect different parts of the country at different times. The south-west monsoon can bring rain from May to July to the western, southern and central regions, while the north-east monsoon can bring rain to the northern and eastern regions in December and January. However these monsoons are not as pronounced as the Indian Monsoon and bright, sunny, warm days are common even during the height of a 'monsoon' season. From the point of view of the visitor, Sri Lanka has no 'off season'.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- Sri Lanka. Lonely Planet Guide.
- Footprint Sri Lanka. Footprint Guides.
- Sri Lanka: The Bradt Travel Guide.

Maps

Sri Lanka.. Nelles Guides & Maps

Featuring a new style cover and easy fold system, this map has been revised with the help of local correspondents. It is marked with tourist attractions and public transport systems, and includes inset maps of major cities. The scale of this map 1:450,000 and it includes city maps of Colombo, Anuradhapura, Kandy and Galle.

Private Groups Information

Make this KE cycling holiday your own!

- Do our normal group departure dates not fit?
- Are you wanting to travel with just your friends or family?
- Are you looking to organise a trip for your local cycling club?

We are experts in creating holidays for groups of friends, families, charities, and cycling clubs. Our personal service means you'll be fully involved as we make the arrangements for your perfect adventure holiday.

Independence with Security

Travelling as a KE Private Group allows you more flexibility and choice, but still with the peace of mind that everything is pre-planned and arranged for your group by a reputable adventure travel company.

To take your first step to an amazing adventure with your friends and family complete the private group enquiry form, or call our **Sales Experts on: 017687 73966**

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Explore International

This holiday is part of our Explore International range. Participants on these trips can book through KE or through one of our international partners. This helps us to gather together sufficient numbers of like-minded adventurers to get your holiday up and running quickly. Led by an English-speaking guide, the cosmopolitan nature of these groups can be an important part of the experience!

Equipment Information

Equipment List

For this holiday you will need your usual cycling clothing, including shoes, cycling gloves and helmet (which must be worn at all times when cycling).

Whether you are hiring a bike or taking your own, we recommend that you take the usual day-ride essentials of: mobile phone, multi-tool, mini-pump, tyre levers, spare tubes and puncture repair kit.

Bike Wear

- Cycling helmet (the EN1078 safety standard is a requirement)
- Cycling shoes
- Waterproof overshoes
- Padded cycling shorts
- Cycling tights or leg warmers
- Lycra arm warmers
- Base-layer - short sleeve cycling tops
- Long sleeved cycling top
- Lightweight windproof gilet
- Lightweight waterproof jacket
- Regular biking gloves
- Buff
- Sunglasses
- Sun cream (inc. total bloc for lips/nose)
- Camera

Other Stuff

- Travel and off-the-bike clothing and footwear
- Wash bag, towel, toiletries
- Swimwear
- Basic First Aid kit and personal medication
- Chamois Cream (e.g. Assos or Ozone)
- Water purification tablets
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Spares

If you are hiring a bike you do not need to bring any spares. The hire bikes are provided in good condition and a supply of spares is carried. You may be asked to pay directly for any spares used, especially in the case of crash damage or damage by mis-use. If you are taking your own bike, you should consider taking a minimum of spares, including a couple of spare spokes (for each wheel if they are different), spare brake blocks (or brake disc pads), chain links/chain connector, rear derailleur hanger and any non-standard parts specific to your bike.

Repairs

Whilst not essential, it is a good idea that you familiarise yourself with how to carry out at least some basic repairs to your bike e.g. changing an inner tube and fixing a puncture. Your bike guide will be happy to help with repairs and general maintenance, but being able to carry out a simple repair yourself could save the inconvenience of having to wait for assistance.

Hydration and Energy Snacks

You should take 2 standard water bottles (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic) and also consider taking a small supply of the gels, power bars or sports drink mix that you would normally use on a ride at home.

Please contact us if you have any questions about your equipment.

Cotswold Outdoor

Many of the equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive a 12.5% discount with Cotswold Outdoor, Snow+Rock and Runners Need. The discount code can be downloaded from your MyKE account and you can use this code at the checkout, either in store or online.

Land Only Information

Please refer to the 'Joining Arrangements & Transfers' within Holiday Information for further details.

Flights and other transport to your destination should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary starting at the hotel in Negombo. Transfers from Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport are not provided on arrival. A group transfer is provided back to this airport from Mirissa on the final day of the Land Only itinerary.

Flight Inclusive Information

Limited seats are available at the advertised flight price, please book as early as you can. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures and/or upgrades, we will provide you with an alternative quote. It is likely that flight payment will be in advance of your final holiday balance. Booking a flight inclusive package means you will benefit from full financial protection, eases your holiday planning, and leaves us to deal with airlines and schedule changes. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will [offset the carbon of your flight](#).

Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Colombo. Outbound flights will usually depart from the UK in the afternoon, arriving in the morning of the following day (Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary). Return flights will depart in the evening of the final day of the Land Only itinerary and arrive in the UK early on the following day.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Itinerary unique to KE! Small and perfectly formed, with an amazing assortment of colourful highlights, Sri Lanka provides the setting for a brilliant and very achievable end-to-end road cycling challenge. And... KE is the only tour operator offering this amazing holiday. The itinerary we have worked out has both coastal and inland cycling and a nice balance between level roads and some hillier rides. Enjoy !

Please Note This document was downloaded on 18/03/2025 and the trip is subject to change