

EXPLORE!

TRIP NOTES



Sri Lanka and Family Maldives Adventure (FSL 2017)



TRIPDURATION
15
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Moderate

Tour Type: Small Groups
Accommodation Grade: Standard

Trip Code: FSL

Trip Highlights - Sri Lanka and Family Maldives Adventure

- ✓ Maldives - cruise around the islands with crystal clear waters
- ✓ Polonnaruwa - Explore this deserted ancient city and see the huge reclining Buddha
- ✓ Sigiriya - climb to the top of Lions Rock for incredible views
- ✓ Wildlife - search for groups of wild elephants, buffalo and leopard in Minnerriya Kaudulla National Park
- ✓ Anamaduwa - stay in a 'mud-house' eco-lodge with kayaking, cycling and nature trails all included

Trip Essentials

Accommodation: 7 nights Standard Hotel
2 nights Standard Hut
1 night Standard Camping
4 nights Simple Boat

Included Meals: 14 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 8 dinners

Start Point: Join trip: Negombo
End Point: Trip ends: Male Airport

Transport: 4WD, Rickshaw, Bus, Train, Boat, Flight, Bicycle, Tuk Tuk

Countries: Maldives, Sri Lanka
Minimum Age: From 5 years

Sri Lankan and Maldives Family Adventure

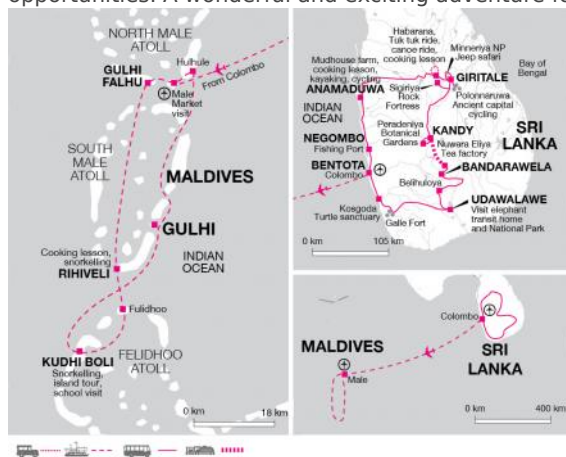
This exciting journey across Sri Lanka and the Maldives is the ultimate family holiday destination! We explore dense jungles, discover Buddhist relics and enjoy a fun-filled few days on a traditional dhoni cruise in the Maldives, offering the chance to swim and snorkel in the crystal clear waters of the Indian Ocean. Animal safaris, tractor tours, nature trails, cookery lessons and exploring ancient temple sites on mountain bikes are all part of the adventure in this tropical paradise known as Buddha's Island.

TRIPLE ROOMS

This trip allows the option for triple rooms to be included within the booking on a selected number of night stops within the holiday. If you would like this option, a discount may be applicable on the cost of the trip - please ask our Sales team for further information.

Why Book this trip

This holiday is for families who want to enjoy cultural highlights of a country and sail around another !. Our time in Sri Lanka includes staying in a 'mud hut' eco-lodge, exploring ancient cities, climbing Lions Rock and viewing wildlife which is complemented by a cruise around the Maldives with swimming and snorkelling opportunities. A wonderful and exciting adventure for all the family.



Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Accommodation Grade: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Moderate

These moderately paced tours provide some busy days with plenty of experiences to enjoy, as well as time to relax along the way.



Your trip itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced Tour Leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join tour Negombo

Check-in at our hotel in Negombo (situated close to Colombo airport). The afternoon is free to relax after the flight.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**


Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** None

DAY 2 Drive to Anamaduwa and stay in a Mud House

After breakfast in Negombo, we drive to Anamaduwa in time for lunch. Our accommodation today is an eco-friendly Mud House which is a unique property where accommodation is in a series of well designed huts - all have outdoor showers, indoor bathrooms, a dining and lounge area and hammocks where you can relax. There is no electricity on site thus lighting is provided by candles and lanterns. When arriving at the Mudhouse, we have a walking tour of the property and farm area, have lunch and then cycle to Paramakanda Temple in the afternoon which is a rocky outcrop with spectacular 360 degree views of the surrounding area before returning for dinner at The Mud House.


Overnight: **Standard Hut**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3 Activities at the Mud House

We spend the whole day at the Mud House with the opportunity to participate in a range of activities including bird watching before breakfast to view the 100 species of migratory and endemic birds that reside in the area, kayaking and swimming at Uriyawa (which we get to by either cycle or tuk tuk), a cooking lesson after lunch and then time to relax in a hammock or enjoy the numerous nature trails that have been designed to explore the various different habitats in and around the surrounding area. One trail identifies the different species of trees and plants along the pathway and looks in more depth at the overall concept and landscaping on the area. Dinner is by the campfire this evening where you can reminisce about the day's events.

Overnight: **Standard Hut**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 Travel by tuk-tuk, try a canoe ride and have a cooking lesson before travelling onto Giritale

Boarding our minibus, we drive inland to Habarana where we take a short tuk-tuk and bullock cart ride to a nearby village. We then board our canoes and visit a local farm and return back to the village to meet a local family for lunch and a cooking demonstration. We continue to Giritale after our adventure.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 5 In Giritale; explore the nearby countryside and villages

In the morning we use the most common and versatile mode of transport used by the villagers of nearby farming communities, a 'Land Master' (a two wheeled tractor with a trailer). We visit a nearby village to experience the day to day life of a typical rural Sri Lankan. This afternoon, we explore the ancient city of Polonnaruwa by bike (with the option to travel in our bus). The site has many interesting and spectacular buildings and monuments including the Royal Palace Group with its audience hall, bathing pool and quadrangle which is a very compact collection of ruins. Close by is the Circular Relic House, a curious round structure with a beautifully preserved 'moonstone' carved at the foot of a flight of steps. Another famous feature of the deserted city is the group of

carved images of the Buddha known as Galvihara. Here there are four colossal figures, all of which are hewn out of solid granite. The Reclining Buddha is no less than 14m long!

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 6 Drive to Sigiriya; visit Sky Fortress

We drive to Sigiriya for a morning climb up to the Sky Fortress. The ruins of this 5th century fortress are one of Sri Lanka's major attractions, a stupendous sight to behold and a feat of consummate engineering skill. A switchback series of steps (sometimes very steep) ascends to the top. Halfway up, tucked beneath a sheltering overhang of rock, are the famous frescoes - the Sigiriya Damsels, their colours still glowing. Magnificent views can be enjoyed from the summit of the rock palace (200m high). On our descent we board the bus for a short drive to Giritale. In the afternoon we visit nearby Minneriya or Kaudulla National park where we take a jeep safari on the look-out for wild elephants in their natural habitat.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 7 Drive to Kandy via the botanical gardens at Peradeniya. Walking tour of lake side town of Kandy

Leaving Giritale in the morning we drive to Kandy via Peradeniya which is located just outside the city. We wander through the lush Royal Botanical Gardens which boasts more than 4000 species of plants, including orchids, medicinal plants and palm trees. Afterwards, we travel by rickshaws to the University complex before joining our tour leader for a walking tour of Kandy which will include visiting the town's narrow streets lined with old buildings and colourful and interesting markets. You may wish to continue shopping at the Kandyan Art Association's workshops, which has plenty of brassware, batik, lacquer work and other craft items which make excellent souvenirs or presents. The town was captured by the British in 1815, and is known more for its cultural and spiritual importance rather than its history. Buddhists from all over the world come to this delightful old highland town specifically to visit the Temple of the Tooth, the Dalada Maligawa. We transfer to our hotel located just outside the city centre.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 8 Visit a tea factory in Nuwara Eliya and catch a train to Bandarawela

This morning we head off across the highlands visiting a working tea factory en-route to the hill station of Nuwara Eliya. We take a look around this little town, known as 'Little England', which is famous for its lake, golf and race course and well-manicured gardens. We then take a train through the mountains and around green rolling hills covered in tea plantations arriving in the late afternoon at the bustling market town of Bandarawela.


Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 9 Visit Elephant sanctuary and game drive in Udawalawe National Park

We journey to the lowlands, offering fantastic views of the plains and the mountains above us, to Belihuloya which is a picturesque hamlet situated about 160km east of Colombo. The area experiences a specific climate linking the wet and dry zones with the hill country and the low country, all combining to make this an area of the country with a wide range of bio-diversity. We explore the surrounding villages on foot (a very easy walk), travelling through paddy fields and down to the nearby lake. On return to Belihuloya we may have time to bathe in the natural rock pool and have lunch. This is a unique place where the Belihuloya and Galagamaoya streams meet which creates a natural swimming area with clear unpolluted water. We leave in the early afternoon and drive to our camp on the Eastern border of the Udawalawe National Park stopping on the way to visit the orphaned elephants at the Elephant Transit Home. Designated a national park in 1972, Udawalawe covers some 31,800 hectares and is surrounded by mountains, a mix of rolling grasslands, teak plantations, rainforest and scrub. Renowned for its large herd of elephants (this is in fact one of the best places in Sri Lanka to see them), the park is also home to deer, wild boar, buffalo, jackal and even the odd leopard. The resident bird population is also second to none, including a magnificent collection of birds of prey, chief amongst them being the impressive white bellied sea eagle. This afternoon we will drive into the National Park to take a game drive by jeep. Whilst it cannot be guaranteed, we hope to see some of the animals which can be found here including, of course, elephants. We finish off the day with a relaxing BBQ and campfire under the stars.

Overnight: **Standard Camping**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 10 Visit Turtle Hatchery; drive to Hikkaduwa

Today we drive along the scenic southern coastal road until arriving at Galle. Here we explore an ancient Dutch Fort, which is a World Heritage site, complete with its well preserved ramparts that were built during the 1800s. We then proceed to Hikkaduwa where we stop for the night. In the evening we will visit a turtle hatchery in nearby Kosgoda to see the breeding process of the endangered sea turtles. It may be possible to even release some little baby turtles in to the sea. If you are lucky you might get a chance to see the mother turtles coming on to the beach to lay eggs later in the evening. Our hotel is located on the beach in Hikkaduwa, which is famous for it's marine sanctuary, and if we're lucky we may get to see turtles and other marine life just off the beach.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 11 Fly to the Maldives and join our Dhoni cruise boat

Today we leave Sri Lanka and drive back to Negombo for an early afternoon flight to the Maldives. Transferring to our traditional Dhoni boat, we will travel along the remote atolls of the Maldives for the next four days. After settling into the cabins, the crew goes through the safety brief before cruising for a few hours to Gulhi, an island in the South Male Atoll. Dinner is served on-board.


Overnight: **Simple Boat**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 12 Cruise to Kudhi Boli, snorkel and visit to local school

The boat departs early in the morning to cruise for a few hours to Kudhi Boli with a traditional Maldivian breakfast being served on-board. Kudhi Boli literally means small shells and is famed for its very beautiful reef with a small strip of beach emerging with each low tide. We then take our first snorkelling lesson in the clear turquoise waters with the chance to view the marine life of the Maldives or you can sunbath and relax on the white sandy beaches of the island. The rest of the day is free to relax and enjoy with a light lunch being served on board. We visit the Island of Fulidhoo this afternoon where we have a tour and call in on a school which gives the opportunity to meet the local children. Dinner is served on-board and we are entertained tonight by locals who perform on the famous Boduberu (traditional big drums).


Overnight: **Simple Boat**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 13 Cruise to Rihiveli, cooking lesson and beach BBQ

After breakfast we cruise to Rihiveli with the chance to prepare a traditional Maldivian dish taught by the boat cook. Further snorkelling opportunities are available throughout the day over the beautiful coral reefs and we also have time on the beach. Lunch is on-board our boat with further time in the afternoon for more snorkelling, swimming, fishing or to become acquainted with some local board games. The day will end with a wonderful beach barbecue if weather permits.


Overnight: **Simple Boat**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 14 Cruise to Gulhi Falhu with visits to Male's markets

We cruise to Villingili this morning where we get the chance to swim and snorkel. Lunch is served on board with a visit to the capital, Male, in the afternoon including a stop at the fish market, fruit and vegetable market and museum before heading back to the boat where dinner is served. We anchor tonight close by at Gulhi Falhu.

Overnight: **Simple Boat**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 15 Tour ends in Male

Our tour ends this morning after breakfast.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

Ability to swim required

An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Notes

Standard - Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

There are normally two Dhoni cruise boats that travel together on this tour with a capacity of around ten per boat. The cabins have either double or bunk beds and there are a number of toilets with showers on board. There is a bar and dining room with a sundeck to relax and sunbath throughout the day plus a TV and DVD player on board. Provided equipment includes; snorkelling gear, fishing equipment, various board games, life jackets and first aid kit.

Traditional Sri Lankan cuisine is excellent, and although it can be very spicy there are many dishes that feature cooling coconut milk or have a spicy sambar on the side to allow you to adjust the meal to your taste. There isn't a culture of eating out in Sri Lanka, most locals will eat at home, and as such there are very few restaurants around, and those that exist tend to be in hotels. As tourism develops a few independent restaurants are beginning to appear, mainly in Colombo but also in Kandy, Galle and in the coastal resorts. During the tour we will endeavour to eat out at local restaurants wherever possible but for many nights, at this point in time, the hotel restaurants are the only option available.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 14 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 8 dinners included in the price of this trip. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Maldives

Lunch £: 7.50

Dinner £: 12.00

Sri Lanka

Lunch £: 4.00

Dinner £: 8.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Maldives

Bottle of Beer £: 3.5

Water £: 1.70

Sri Lanka

Bottle of Beer £: 2.00

Water £: 0.50

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.



Optional Excursions

Kandy - Cultural Show £5.00.

Diving can be available for around \$100 in Alimatha or Dhiggiri which is in the Vaavu Atoll, and in Fun Island, Rihivel or Fihalhohi resort in the South Male Atoll

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

In this area, tipping is a recognised part of life. Although Explore pays most gratuities for the smooth operation of the tour, some local staff will still look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided.

Accordingly, you should allow £35 for tipping. Your tour leader will account to you for any organised tipping.

Foreign Exchange

Maldives

ATM Availability: No Access

Credit Card Acceptance: Not accepted

Travellers Cheques: Not accepted

Local Currency: Rufiyaa.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: US Dollars are widely accepted in the Maldives and are the best currency for exchange.

Sri Lanka

ATM Availability: Yes, usually in major towns.

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards can usually be used in most large shops and restaurants. Please note that Foreign Office advice warns about the problem of credit card fraud in Sri Lanka so please consider this when deciding if to pay by card while on tour.

Travellers Cheques: Are not easy to change and where they can be changed the exchange rates can be poor.

Local Currency: Sri Lankan Rupee.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: US\$ and UK£ are equally good

Where to Exchange: In most major towns.

Joining your Trip

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

EXPLORE!
The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE



Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Travel Aware

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting cr@explore.co.uk or 01252 379438.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

Sri Lanka: All foreign nationals who intend to visit Sri Lanka for a short stay of up to six months, including transit passengers, must apply for travel authorization online prior to travel to the country. To obtain an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) you must visit <http://www.eta.gov.lk> to apply for it prior to travel. It is strongly recommended that you print and bring a copy of the ETA approval notice with you. The Sri Lankan authorities require that your passport must be valid for at least 6 months after departure from Sri Lanka.

Maldives: Citizens of the UK, Australia, New Zealand, US and Canada are given a free 30 day permit on arrival. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on **0208 5431846**.

Lone Parents

Maldives

Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the Maldives embassy for further information on exactly what may be required.

Sri Lanka

Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the Sri Lankan embassy for further information on exactly what may be required.

Vaccinations & Protection

Maldives

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, typhoid, tetanus, infectious hepatitis & polio. Travellers may wish to immunise themselves against meningitis. Please consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Sri Lanka

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A plus Polio and diphtheria. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. We strongly recommend the wearing long sleeved shirts and the liberal application of insect repellents containing DEET as a precautionary measure to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. These precautions should be taken at all times as the mosquitoes are also active during daylight hours. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Preparing for your Trip

Climate

Maldives

Day time temperatures are remarkably consistent throughout the year ranging from 30°C to 32°C dropping to between 25°C and 26°C at night. Although rain is heaviest in June, July and August, heavy rain can fall at any time of year – even in February and March when statistically only 50mm usually falls during those months combined. The south-west monsoon lasts from May to November and not only brings the rains but also stronger winds and storms, although the transitional periods of early May and late November are supposed to be calm with exceptionally clear water.

Sri Lanka

Year round high temperatures in coastal regions: Colombo averages 27°C. It is much cooler in the hills with Kandy averaging 20°C and Nuwara Eliya down to 16°C. Springlike temperatures in the hill country, but chilly evenings. Two monsoon periods: Apr-Sep when rain is confined to the southwest; and Oct-Mar when it falls in the northeast.

Clothing

Select your clothes carefully, bearing in mind that the climate in Sri Lanka is tropical and that upland areas are cooler and more temperate. Lightweight rainwear is also essential, and warmer clothing for the highland walks and chilly night temperatures in the mountains. Local people in Male and in villages on the islands find western styles of dress offensive. Brief shorts, tight fitting clothing etc. should be avoided by both men and women.

When visiting religious sites you will need to dress respectfully by covering your knees and shoulders, and taking off your shoes and hats. (You may benefit from taking along a pair of socks for temple visits as the ground can get very hot!). You will need to bring long trousers, or buy a sarong locally.

Equipment

A water bottle and a torch. Whilst camping all bed linen is supplied on our overnight camp - there is no need to bring any extra equipment or sleeping bags. You may like to bring your own snorkel and mask although they will be provided on the Dhonis. Bring a torch. Also high factor sun protection and a hat. We recommend Factor 30 plus for snorkelling as the water intensifies the sun's strength. Both bath and beach towels are provided on the Dhoni.

Footwear

Lightweight shoes and sandals

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Maldives

Population: 313,920

Size of Country: 298 km sq
Major Language: Dhivehi, English
Religion: Islam
Time Difference to GMT: +5

Sri Lanka

Population: 20,238,000
Size of Country: 65,610 sq km
Major Language: Sinhala, Tamil
Religion: Buddhism
Time Difference to GMT: +6

Electric Supply & Plugs

Maldives

3 Pin Flat

Sri Lanka

3 Pin Round

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to - and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group (www.tourismconcern.org.uk) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association

of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

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