



A Taste of Sri Lanka

THE COAST, CULTURAL TRIANGLE AND THE HIGHLANDS

5%
Price Reduction
see inside

with Paul van Reyk
07–21 September 2015 (15 days)



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THE COAST, CULTURAL TRIANGLE AND THE HIGHLANDS



TOUR LEADER

Paul van Reyk

Sri Lankan born Paul van Reyk has been passionate about food since his ayah gave him his first ball of rice when he was a year old. For the past 10 years he has been sharing his passion through catering, cooking classes, a website with recipes and conducting food tours in Sri Lanka. Paul has a Masters in Gastronomy from Adelaide University & Cordon Bleu and is a reviewer for the *Good Food Guide* and *Sydney Eats*. Paul also featured in the *SBS Food Lovers' Guide* episode on Sri Lankan food.

Discover the incredible depth of flavours, smells, history and culture Sri Lanka has to offer visiting World Heritage listed sites, bustling cities, the highlands and a National Park.

Sri Lanka is also steeped in heritage. With a history that dates back over 2,000 years, the island is home to some of Asia's best preserved monuments and to no fewer than 8 UNESCO World Heritage sites. Thanks to its colonial history (Portuguese, Dutch and British), interaction with Arab, Chinese and Malay merchants over the centuries, and the prevailing religions of Buddhism and Hinduism, Sri Lanka is a land rich in traditions, continual festivities and an exciting, exotic cuisine which you will see being prepared and of course, taste! Be amongst the first to rediscover this island paradise.

At a glance...

- Join Paul van Reyk and Sri Lankan chefs for cooking demonstrations
- Visit the World Heritage listed sites of Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya and Dambulla
- Scenic train ride from Kandy to Nuwara Eliya
- Visit Geoffrey Bawa's Lunuganga Estate and Bevis Bawa's Brief Garden
- Stay in the Geoffrey Bawa designed Lighthouse Hotel in Galle



Itinerary

Mon 07 Sep 2015

Sydney – Colombo

Depart Australia on Singapore Airlines flights via Singapore. Arrive Colombo at midnight. Transfer to your hotel located in the resort town of Negombo, rich in history and culture.

Tue 08 Sep

Negombo

Mid-morning join Paul for a visit to the Negombo fish markets to purchase the fish for this evening's dinner. This afternoon join Paul for a cooking demonstration followed by a welcome briefing and dinner. **B D**

Wed 09 Sep

Negombo – Sigiriya

Depart Negombo for the Cultural Triangle situated in the centre of the island. It covers an area which includes the Ancient Cities of Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya and Dambulla and the Sacred City of Kandy.

Dating back to the 1st century BC, the Golden Temple of Dambulla has been the centre of pilgrimage for Buddhists and Hindus alike for 22 centuries. The cave monastery, home to Buddhist monks, is covered with exquisite 2,000 year-old murals depicting the life and times of the Lord Buddha. The shrines also house a collection of 157 statues of Buddha in various sizes and poses, including a 15 metre long reclining Buddha and vividly coloured frescoes on the walls and ceiling, making this the largest antique painted surface in the world. Dinner at the hotel. **B D**

Thu 10 Sep

Sigiriya

Full day excursion to the World Heritage site of Polonnaruwa, the second capital of Sri Lanka built in the 11th and 12th centuries AD. Under King Parakramabahu, who ruled in the late 11th century, Polonnaruwa became a magnificent walled city. The remains of a royal palace, the Buddhist Quadrangle, with a bodhi tree shrine and a dagoba (stupa) survive.

Early afternoon enjoy a cooking demonstration followed by late lunch in a paddy field. **B L**

Fri 11 Sep

Sigiriya

In the afternoon explore Sigiriya, or Lion Rock, which was built by an obsessed monarch in the 5th century and is an astonishing feat of engineering and construction. The most striking portion of Sigiriya, a terracotta and grey core of rock, rises a sheer 200 metres above a forested plain, its flattened summit sloping gently. A series of moats, ramparts and water garden – remnants of an ancient city – spread out on two sides of the rock, with the remains of a pair of giant stone lions' paws still guarding the staircase that leads to the summit, once occupied by a royal palace. **B D**

Sat 12 Sep

Sigiriya – Kandy

After breakfast travel from Sigiriya to Kandy stopping en route to visit a coconut rope maker and lunch at the spice garden.

Arrive in Kandy in the afternoon. Kandy, nestled in the hills at an altitude of 488 metres, was the last capital of the Sri Lankan kings. The name Kandy conjures visions of a storied past, splendour, legend, folklore, mystery and traditions lovingly kept alive for countless years. **B L D**

Sri Lankan cuisine

Sri Lankan cuisine is one of the most complex cuisines of Asia. Due to its proximity to South India, the cuisine of Sri Lanka shows some influence, yet is in many ways quite distinct. As a major trade hub, it draws influence from colonial powers that were involved in Sri Lanka and by foreign traders. Rice, which is consumed daily, can be found at any occasion, while spicy curries are favourite dishes for lunch and dinner. Some of the Sri Lankan dishes have striking resemblance to Kerala cuisine, which could be due to the similar geographic and agricultural features with Kerala.



Sun 13 Sep

Kandy

After breakfast embark on the Three Temples tour visiting temples in the environs of Kandy that display the excellent artistry and skills of the island's Medieval craftsmen.

Gadaladeniya Temple (1344 AD) is set in a beautiful hilltop location surrounded by rice fields. Lankatilaka Temple (1340 AD) has a 2 storied building containing some rare and well-preserved frescoes. The Embekke Temple stands in a lovely rural setting and is famous for its hall of intricately carved wooded pillars.

This evening visit the sacred Temple of the Tooth, which houses one of Buddhism's most sacred relics and attracts followers of the Buddhist faith from all over the world. The Royal Complex situated around the Temple of the Tooth and Kandy Lake comprising the King's Palace, the Queen's Palace, the Audience Hall, the Royal Boathouse and the Royal Summer House, represent the zenith of ancient Sri Lankan architecture. **B L**

Mon 14 Sep

Kandy – Nuwara Eliya

This morning visit the Botanical Gardens in Peradeniya, which was originally the pleasure garden of the royalty. Nearly 4,000 species of plants are found in this garden and it is encircled by the Mahaweli River. Depart Kandy and travel by train to Nuwara Eliya, situated at around 2,000 metres above sea level. The town was founded by Samuel Baker as a hill retreat for the British during the colonial era, where typical English pastimes including fox hunting, polo and cricket were played. Several buildings and parks here retain features from the colonial period.

Arrive in Nuwara Eliya early in the afternoon.

Sri Lanka is one of the world's largest exporters of tea. Since the introduction of tea to Sri Lanka in mid 19th century, Nuwara Eliya has been the capital of the tea industry where rolling mountains in the highlands are carpeted by green tea plantations. Enjoy high tea at the Hill Club (dress code applies), which was founded in 1876 by a British coffee planter, as a home away from home, and is today a privately operated club and hotel. **B High Tea D**



Tue 15 Sep

Nuwara Eliya – National Park

This morning heading south continue to Udawalawe one of Sri Lanka's National Parks. On morning and evening safaris you may see the elusive leopard, elephant, sloth bear, sambar, chital, wild boar, tripod-necked, brown and ruddy mongoose, black-naped hare, marsh mugger crocodile and several civet species. The National Parks are also a popular bird watching destination. **B L D**

Wed 16 Sep

National Park

Day at leisure. A wide range of activities are available ranging from half- and full-day jeep safaris, nature tracks, bird watching trails, night safaris etc. At dusk, embark on a jeep safari before returning to the hotel for dinner. **B L D**

Thu 17 Sep

National Park – Galle

After breakfast travel to Galle, an ancient Dutch outpost located on the south western coast of Sri Lanka. The minimalistic, stately and elegant Lighthouse Hotel, your home for the next two nights, was designed by the famous Sri Lankan architect Geoffrey Bawa. Dinner at the hotel. **B D**

Fri 18 Sep

Galle

Morning visit to Lunuganga estate, the former country home of Geoffrey Bawa. Started in 1947, the garden led Bawa, a lawyer called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in 1940, to decide to become an architect. The garden at Lunuganga estate remained his first muse and experimental laboratory for new ideas. After lunch at Lunuganga, return to Galle. Afternoon at leisure to explore Galle Fort. **B L**

Sat 19 Sep

Galle

In the morning visit to a cinnamon plantation and the moonstone gem mine in Meetiya-goda.

On the return to the hotel, join Paul for a cooking demonstration and lunch. Remainder of the day at leisure. **B L**



Sun 20 Sep

Galle – Colombo

Today journey from Galle to Colombo. En route visit Brief Garden, the former house and garden of landscape architect Bevis Bawa, a brother of Geoffrey Bawa. Started in 1929, it is a hillside garden overlooking a former rubber plantation. It contains sculptures by Bevis himself and his many artist friends, including Donald Friend, who went for a weekend and stayed six years. The house is also open to view and contains many wonderful artworks including a magnificent mural of Sri Lankan life by Donald Friend in the style of Chagall. **B D**

Mon 21 Sep

Depart Colombo

Morning tour of Colombo. See the commercial area of Fort, so named because both the Portuguese and Dutch had a fort at this point. Drive past Pettah, a noisy Oriental bazaar with a mix of humanity, ancient vehicles and bargains. Continue past Hindu and Buddhist temples and the Jumi Ul Alfar Jumma Mosque as well as the Wolfendhal Dutch Church, Hulftsdorp Law Courts and Independence Square.

Enjoy a farewell lunch at the Gallery Café situated within the former office of Sri Lanka's renowned architect, Geoffrey Bawa.

Late check-out, transfer to the airport for the late night departure on Singapore Airlines to Australia via Singapore. **B L**

Tue 22 Sep

Arrive Australia

Evening arrival in Australia.

Typical dishes and spices

Sri Lanka has long been renowned for its spices. Since ancient times, traders from all over the world who came to Sri Lanka brought their native cuisines to the island, resulting in a rich diversity of cooking styles and techniques.

The island nation's cuisine mainly consists of boiled or steamed rice served with curry. This usually consists of a 'main curry' of fish, chicken, pork or mutton (typically goat), as well as several other curries made with vegetables, lentils and even fruit curries.

Side-dishes include pickles, chutneys and 'sambols'. The most famous of these is the coconut sambol, made of ground coconut mixed with chilli peppers, dried Maldive fish and lime juice. This is ground to a paste and eaten with rice, as it gives zest to the meal and is believed to increase appetite.

Another well-known rice dish is kiribath, meaning 'milk rice'. In addition to sambols, Sri Lankans eat 'mallung', chopped leaves mixed with grated coconut and red onions. Coconut milk is found in most Sri Lankan dishes to give the cuisine its unique flavour.

Sri Lankan people use spices liberally in their dishes and typically do not follow an exact recipe: thus, every cook's curry will taste slightly different. Furthermore, people from different regions of the island (for instance, hill-country dwellers versus coastal dwellers) traditionally cook in different ways while people of different ethnic and religious groups tend to prepare dishes according to their customs. Although Sri Lankan food appears similar to South Indian cuisine in its use of chilli, cardamom, cumin, coriander and other spices, it has a distinctive taste, and uses ingredients like dried Maldive fish which are local to the area.



Yala National Park © Bianca - via flickr.com/photos/bianca_franz



Fresh Produce Market © Sujeewa de Silva via flickr.com/photos/14299598@N03

Your hotels★★★★+

Negombo – Jetwing Blue Hotel

Sigiriya – Jetwing Vil Uyana Hotel

Kandy – Cinnamon Citadel Kandy

Nuwara Eliya – St Andrew's Hotel

Udawalawe National Park – Grand Udawalawe Safari Resort

Galle – Jetwing Lighthouse Hotel

Colombo – Cinnamon Grand Colombo



Sigiriya – Jetwing Vil Uyana Hotel

Situated in Sri Lanka's Cultural Triangle and built in a village setting, Jetwing Vil Uyana is just five kilometres from Sigiriya Rock Fortress. Leisure facilities feature massages at the spa, indoor swimming pool and a fitness centre.

Nuwara Eliya – St Andrew's Hotel

Set 6182 feet above sea level, in the hill country of Nuwara Eliya, Jetwing St. Andrew's Hotel offers 54 rooms, five kilometres from the city centre and 12 kilometres from Hakgala Nature Reserve. Leisure facilities include strolls amidst the gardens, and a snooker room – complete with a 117-year old table.



Galle – Jetwing Lighthouse Hotel

Located on a hilltop, two kilometres from Galle's centre, Jetwing Lighthouse hotel is easily accessible from attractions such as Galle Fort and the local markets. The Coats of Arm Bar features a pool table and library, as well as sweeping ocean views. Leisure facilities feature two outdoor swimming pools and a spa.

Kandy – Cinnamon Citadel Kandy

Located 500 metres above sea level and 20 minutes drive from the site of the Sacred Tooth Relic of Lord Buddha, the Cinnamon Citadel Kandy is surrounded by sweeping green hills and Sri Lanka's longest river, the Mahaweli. Leisure facilities feature an outdoor pool.

NB. Hotels of a similar standard may be substituted

Tour prices

Per person, twin share	AUD 8,250 AUD 7,850
Single supplement*	AUD 1,700 AUD 1,600
Deposit per person	AUD 500
Final payment due	07 July 2015

*Single travellers may request to share. Please advise at time of booking.

Tour code AGI513

Fitness level Above average

Please see booking conditions for fitness level definitions.

Suggested airline Singapore Airlines

Please contact Renaissance Tours for current airfares and flight reservations. Business Class upgrade on request.

Visas

Australian and New Zealand citizens require a visa for Sri Lanka. An Electronic Travel Application has to be lodged online prior to departure from Australia. Cost for single entry tourist visa is currently USD20 p.p.

Tour price includes

- Return economy class flights on Singapore Airlines including taxes as at 01 Dec 14. (23 kg luggage allowance)
- Accommodation in centrally located hotels with daily breakfast (B)
- Late check-out (6pm) on the 21 September
- Meals as per itinerary (L=Lunch, D=Dinner) including welcome and farewell meals
- Transfers on arrival and departure if travelling on group flights
- Jeep safari at dusk in National Park
- Comfortable air-conditioned coach transport throughout
- Comprehensive sightseeing including entrance fees as per itinerary
- Cooking demonstrations and talks with Paul van Reyk throughout
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers
- Hotel portage (one piece per person).

Tour price does not include

- Airport transfers if not travelling on group flights
- Items of a personal nature, including telephone, laundry, room service etc.
- Travel insurance
- Sri Lankan visa
- Airport portage

Terms & Conditions

How to Book

Complete, sign and return the Booking Form available from Renaissance Tours with your deposit and page one of your passport.

Deposit / Final Payments

Your deposit is due at the time of booking and is used to pay hotel, airline, performance tickets and/or other deposits. It is non-refundable in the event of your cancellation.

Final payment is due 60 days before departure. Failure to make the final payment by the due date may result in cancellation of your booking and loss of deposit.

Payment by cash, cheque, direct deposit, American Express, MasterCard and Visa is accepted. 1.5% service charge applies to payment made by MasterCard and Visa. 3% service charge applies to payment made by American Express.

Payments for some international airfares can be made by credit card without a service fee. Please check for details.

Cancellation & Refunds

a) Cancellation by You – Cancellation charges will be applied as shown below, calculated from the day written notification is received by Renaissance Tours. In addition to cancellation fees for tours operated by Renaissance Tours as shown below, airlines, hotels and other third parties may impose up to 100% cancellation charges.

60 days or more	Forfeit of deposit
59 – 45 days	25% of tour cost
44 – 31 days	50% of tour cost
30 – 15 days	75% of tour cost
Less than 15 days	100% of tour cost

The above cancellation charges include applicable GST.

In addition to the above, cancellation charges may apply for additional arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours, such as air tickets, hotels and travel insurance premium. If the reason for cancellation is covered by the insurance policy, you may be able to reclaim these charges.

b) Cancellation by Us – We reserve the right to cancel a tour for any reason (such as failure to reach minimum tour participant numbers). Except for force majeure, we will not cancel a tour less than 60 days before departure. No further compensation will be paid in the event of cancellation by Renaissance Tours. A full refund of monies paid for tour costs will be the full extent of our liability.

Cancellation and/or amendment fees may apply for additional travel arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours.

Passports, Visas and Vaccinations

All travellers must be in a possession of a valid passport – most countries require a 6-month validity from your date of entry or exit. For some countries (e.g. China, Vietnam, India, Russia), visas are included in the tour cost and will be arranged by Renaissance Tours prior to travel. For other countries, it is your responsibility to ensure you have the appropriate visa(s).

You are also responsible for obtaining all necessary inoculations and preventative medicines as may be required for the duration of the tour.

Tour Prices

Prices quoted in our tour information are based on exchange rates, cost of services and applicable taxes at the time of publication. Prices may be subject to change in the event of significant currency fluctuations or the introduction of new taxes, up until final payment is received.

In the event of a price increase, whether because of a currency fluctuation, increase in taxes or a correction in advertised prices, we will advise you and you have the option of accepting the amended prices, inclusions and booking conditions or withdrawing from the tour and receiving a full refund of all monies paid.

Once final payment is received, all prices will be guaranteed and no surcharges will apply.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of travel that you are covered by comprehensive travel insurance for international tours. Your travel insurance can be arranged by Renaissance Tours.

Fitness and Participation

Most of our tours require a MODERATE level of fitness.

However, in certain destinations (e.g. Silk Road, Central Asia, Outback Australia, tropical destinations) or in certain seasons (e.g. mid-winter, mid-summer) or because of the nature of travel (e.g. remote rail), certain tours will require an ABOVE AVERAGE or CHALLENGING level of fitness.

If you (or we) have any doubts about your level of fitness, you may be required to have a doctor's appraisal. This would require your doctor to read the itinerary of your chosen tour, including the fitness level, and provide you (and us) with a written confirmation of your ability to participate.

MODERATE

For the overall benefit of the group, all tour members must possess a moderate level of mobility, including the ability to:

- negotiate airports and railway stations without wheelchair assistance
- use combined shower/bath facilities (it is impossible to guarantee walk-in shower facilities)
- undertake walking tour of 1–2 hours duration, including using stairs, walking over cobblestones and other uneven surfaces
- stand for long periods in museums and other sites
- embark / disembark coaches, trains and other methods of transportation without assistance
- handle your own luggage

ABOVE AVERAGE

In addition to the above, tour members must also be able to:

- undertake walking tours of 2–3 hours
- climb staircases of 100 or more steps

CHALLENGING

In addition to the above, tour members must also be able to:

- handle extremes of temperature (e.g. below 0 or above 35 degrees)
- handle extremes of altitudes (e.g. 4000 metres and above).

You can find the full terms & conditions at www.renaissancecetours.com.au/booking-conditions or we would be happy to post you a copy on request.

Dancers welcome guests at Jetwing Lighthouse Hotel in Galle © Michael Musgrave



Renaissance Tours

1300 727 095 (AU)

0800 403 621 (NZ)

call (+61 2) 9299 5801

fax (+61 2) 9299 5805

email info@renaissancetours.com.au

visit www.renaissancetours.com.au

Level 4, 47 York Street, Sydney NSW 2000

GPO Box 5068, Sydney NSW 2001

ABN 14 069 591 448

Your travel agent is