

Join this 'Footprints Tour' for a unique luxury experience.

"In Sri Lanka, a pearl of the Indian Ocean, lies a land where the perfume of frangipani mingles with temple incense, where the cry of peacocks echoes through ancient ruins, and where every sunset paints the sky in shades that poets spend lifetimes trying to capture in words."

Paul Theroux

'Spice & Stone' - Sublime Sri Lanka from Buddha to Bawa

This tour is crafted around three defining aspects of this 'Resplendent Isle'

- the artfully created buildings of famous Sri Lankan architect Geoffrey Bawa. His hotels and other buildings all respond to the environment in a truly splendid way. We stay in several of his remarkable hotels and visit his significant buildings.
- the sacred history and timeless beauty of Buddhist culture will be around us every day, grounding us to this place.
- through the native spices of this land, we will indulge in the rich flavours and joys of Sri Lankan cuisine.

The Tour & Us

The Footprints brand embraces slow and thoughtful travel. This tour has been personally curated by me, Rebeccah Curtis, and I will be joined by my husband Mikaere.

Each of us has a great love for Sri Lanka, and I have a particular passion for the architectural work of Geoffrey Bawa. I can't wait to share his vistas, sense of space and masterful style with the Group. And as an avid foodie I'm really excited about the food experiences we will have. We look forward to visiting well-known destinations and exploring new things with you, too. We hope you can join us on this adventure.

No adventure should be rushed and on 'Spice and Stone' we will take our time.

Colombo - 3 nights

Anuradhapura - 2 nights

Kandalama - 3 nights

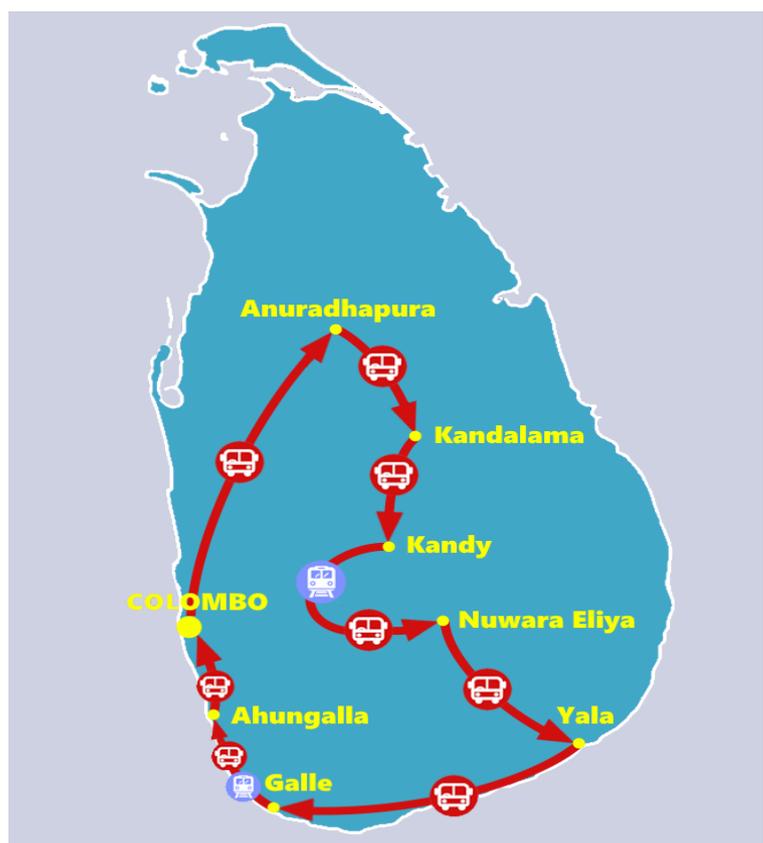
Kandy - 3 nights

Nuwara Eliya - 2 nights

Yala - 3 nights

Galle - 2 nights

Ahungalla - 2 nights



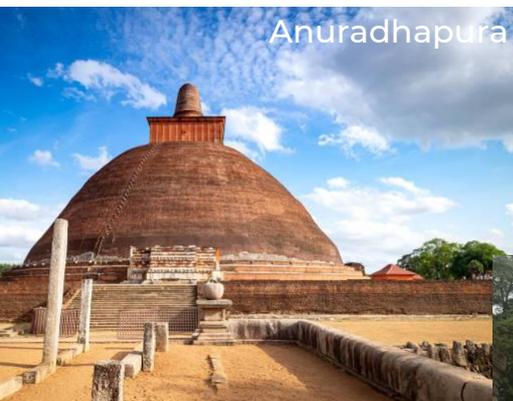
We journey through Sri Lanka's varied landscapes from the wild western coast to the volcanic hills of the central tea country, then we travel through the forests and plains back to the coastal mangrove wetlands and beautiful beaches.



And yes, we will go on two trains!

Buddhism

Buddha's presence is woven into the very fabric of this country. Our itinerary includes six UNESCO World Heritage sites; including ancient Buddhist temples and ruins, where you can experience the tranquility and profound beauty of these sacred places.

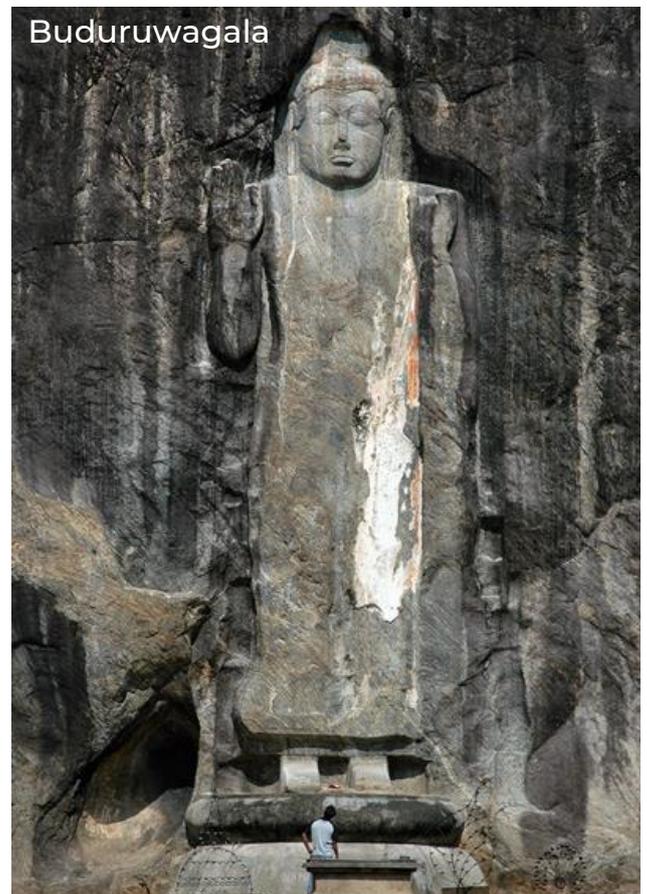


Anuradhapura

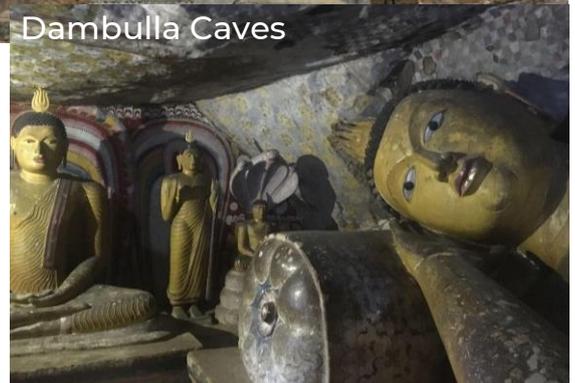


Mikaere at Polonnaruwa

Polonnaruwa



Buduruwagala



Dambulla Caves

Adventures

For those brave of heart, you can climb the 180 metres to the ancient royal fortress of Sigiriya. You can see Mikaere, in the photo on the left, descending the stairs. The next morning, we will join the sunrise for a hot air balloon trip over the idyllic countryside of the Golden Triangle.



Despite being less than half the size of New Zealand's South Island, with a population of twenty-two million, wild elephants still roam the highways of Sri Lanka's national parks. Our tour will take us through safari parks, lakes and rivers to see these majestic elephants, deer, monkeys, birds, the giant water monitor and lots of other wildlife. If someone is lucky, they might see a leopard in the wild!



Yala National Park

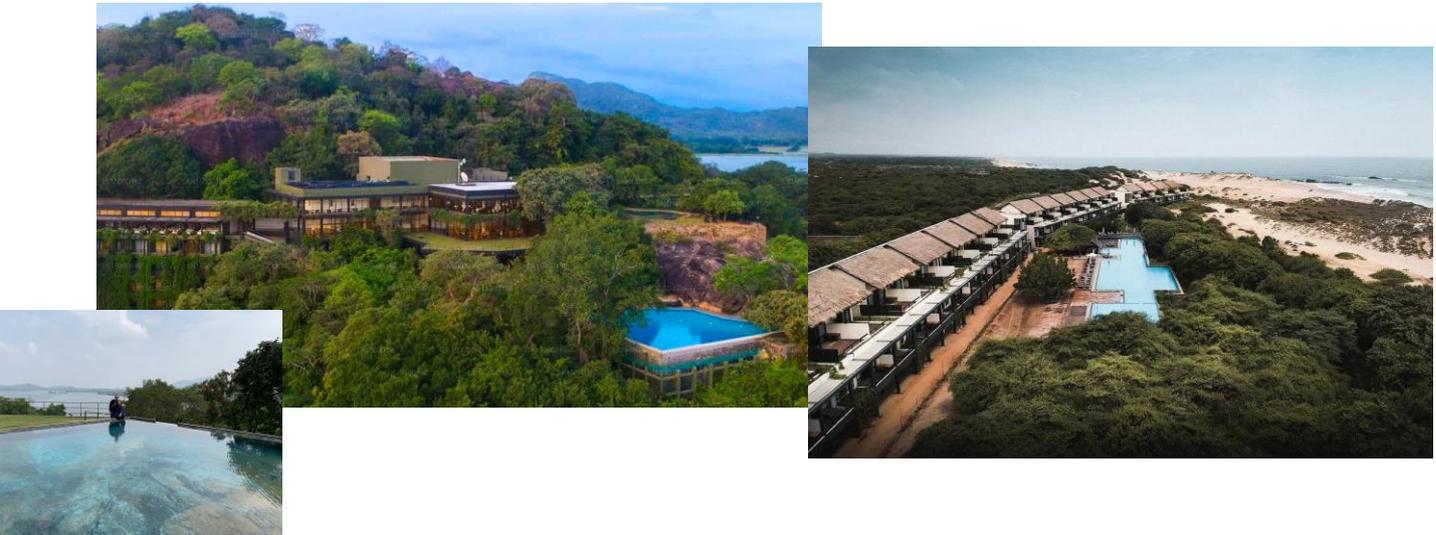


Minneriya National Park

Architecture

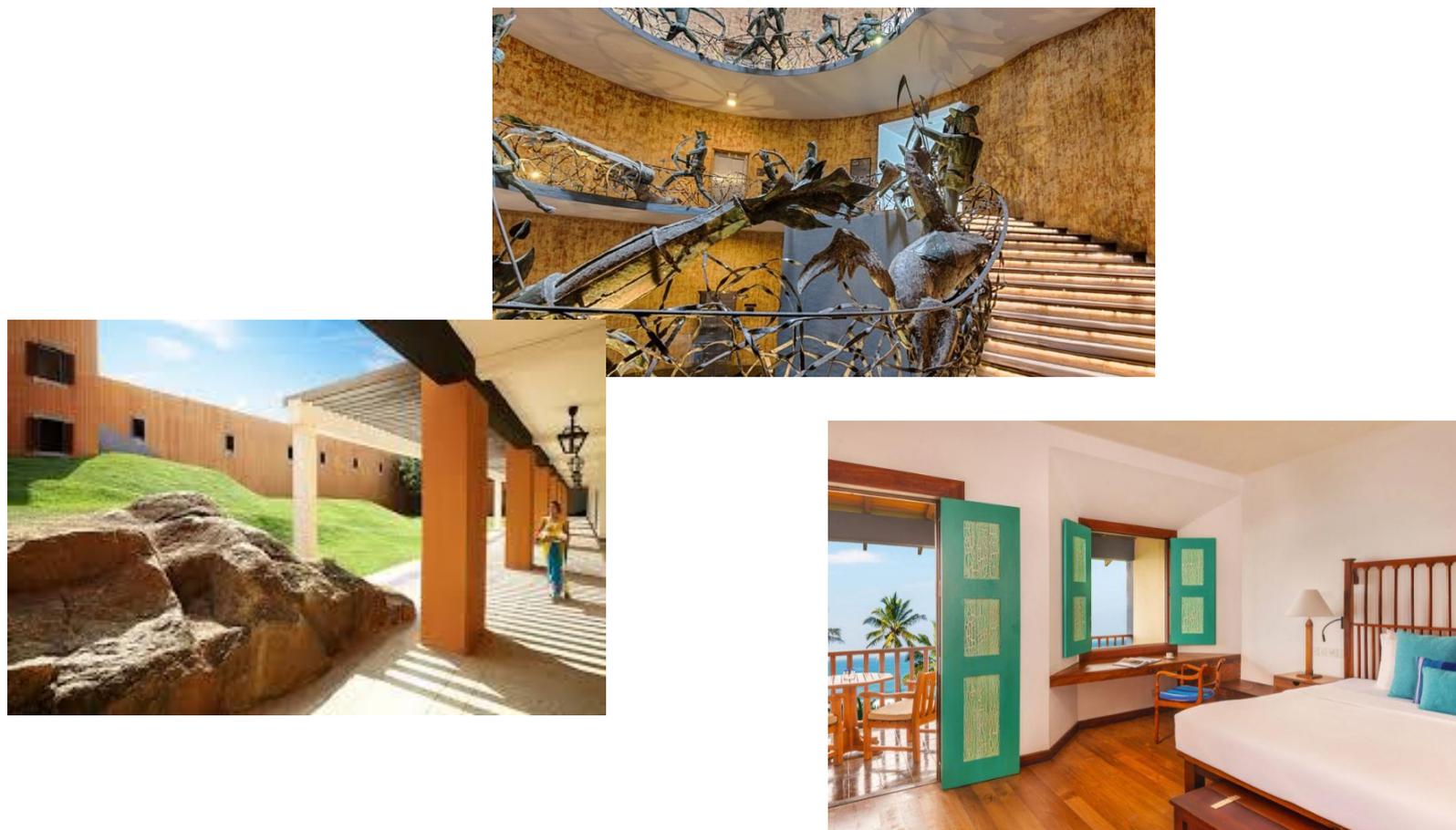
Our trip is very focused on the stunning architecture of Geoffrey Bawa - a renowned architect building mostly from the 1960s to the 1980s. He is referred to as the leader of the Tropical Modernist movement.

We will stay in four of his fantastic hotels. The iconic Heritance Kandalama embraces the cliffside overlooking a huge ancient reservoir. Later, on the southern coast we go to the Jetwing Yala, our base for exploring the Yala National Park.



Mikaere and I beside the Kandalama Pool, created from the natural rock.

After Yala we'll travel along the coast to the historic cinnamon trading post of Galle and indulge in the stunning ambience of the Jetwing Lighthouse.



To finish our adventure we go to the beach at Bawa's Heritage Ahungalla, the first 5-star beach hotel in Sri Lanka.

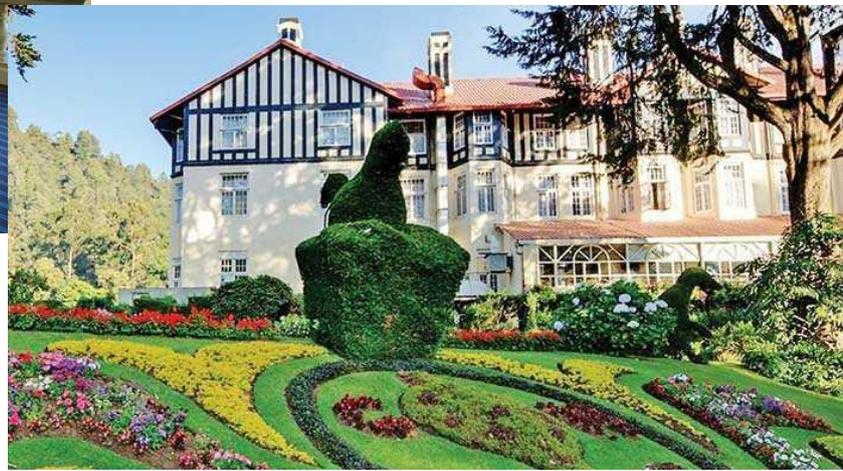


We will lunch in three of Geoffery Bawa's other establishments and visit his country estate, Lunuganga, for a tour and lunch. Also we get the opportunity to visit the gardens designed by his brother, Bevis Bawa, a noted botanist.



We visit some of Bawa's other buildings of significance and hope to tour the parliament buildings he designed (if parliament is not in session at that time).

In Colombo we'll savor the coastal colonial elegance, at the Galle Face Hotel. And at the Grand Hotel in the highlands of Nuwara Eliya we will be hosted in the style of the early British tea planters.



Food



The other focus of our tour is not bricks & mortar, but the food of Sri Lanka.

I'm excited to say there are some real dining highlights on this tour. On our first full night in Colombo we walk the streets of the Fort area and dine from the stalls with the locals.

The next night at sunset we will have drinks overlooking the Indian Ocean, before a seafood focused feast at 'The Ocean' restaurant. (photo on the left)



Mikaere, myself and our friends on a 50th Birthday trip to Sri Lanka, at the Kingsbury Hotel roof terrace.



On New Years Eve we will attend a local Gala dinner at our Hotel in Anuradhapura. The Hotel looks across the Thissa Wewa Lake to the UNESCO site of Isurumuniya Temple.

Home cooks who have been frustrated by weeks of hotel living can satisfy their kitchen talent by cooking your own Sri Lankan feast on the banks of the Mahaweli River.



Several nights are spent dining in the beautiful outdoor environments that Sri Lanka has to offer including some live fire cooking on a couple of occasions.



A visit to a cinnamon plantation will be followed by a cinnamon infused lunch.



On our last full night in Sri Lanka, we have the opportunity to 'Dine with the Chef' in his kitchen, at Bawa's Heritage Ahungalla beach resort hotel.

Craft

Crafts in Sri Lanka will not be overlooked. As we travel the countryside you will be able to see many of the artisans at work and to also purchase their wares, including beautiful homewares, batik fabrics and brass and bronze works.



On the southern coast we see the 800-year-old tradition of Beeralu lace being created and the Ariyapala mask makers at work, here you can put your own painting skills to the test.



What's included?

- All travel within Sri Lanka
- In vehicle (air-conditioned coach) wifi and amenities
- Personalised insulated stainless steel water bottle
- All tours, admissions and activities
- Domestic guide and driver
- Twin-share accommodation
- All hotels with breakfast
- All meals (except for one dinner in Galle)
- Tips & gratuities at hotels, restaurants and for the guides and experiences

What's NOT included?

- International airfares to join and leave the tour.
- Travel insurance; by taking insurance you protect yourself against any unexpected cancellation or event.
- One dinner in Galle. Nice time for a date or to just do your own thing.
- Sri Lankan Visa: US\$50 (We will send information at a later date on how to do this online)
- Personal Items – such as laundry, snacks, spa treatments
- Alcohol - unless specifically stated

For your information:

Tour Begins: Colombo, Sunday 27th December 2026 (arriving late evening)

You are welcome to take whatever flight suits you to join the tour.

The following airlines do connecting flights from NZ to Colombo:

- Air New Zealand
- Singapore Airlines
- Malaysian Airlines (but not on the return sector)
- Cathay Pacific
- Sri Lankan Airlines
- Qantas

Most flights depart between 10:10am and 15:15pm

From Auckland International Airport

Arriving in Colombo between 21:10pm and 23.35pm

So, everyone would arrive at the Hotel late evening on Sunday 27th Dec

Footprints will transfer you to our Hotel.

Tour Ends: Ahungalla, 16th Saturday January 2027

(Transfer to Colombo Bandaranaike International Airport, that evening is provided)

The above airlines do similar routes back to NZ.

It is important to note that the flights depart between 00:05am and 01:20am, this is early am on

Sunday 17th January 2027 (not Saturday 16th).

Arriving in Auckland between 23:00pm on Sunday 17th and 09:45am on Monday 18th, depending on your stopover time and route.

Bookings for flights are not yet open for December next year, but we will let you know when they are.

Our Agent is:

Brendon Maguire

Email: brendonm@hot.co.nz

Phone: (03) 546 8780

He is familiar with Footprints and is based in Nelson. I have known him for many years, and he is up to speed on the trip. Feel free to get in touch with him about your booking requirements or make your own arrangements.

How many people?

Footprints wants you to have an intimate experience, so bookings have been made for a maximum of eighteen people (including Mikaere and myself).

Cost

The cost for the 21 day/3 week tour is: **NZ\$16,850** Colombo to Colombo

Note: this is the 'Land Only' cost. It does not include international airfares.

Single Supplement: NZ\$3,650

To secure your spot a **Deposit of \$1,700** is required now.

Or you can put in an expression of interest, and you will go on our list and be updated if the trip is filling up.

Please email footprints.beccah@gmail.com

Final Payment of the remaining balance is required by 27th July 2026.

Please pay into:

ASCENDENT SOLUTIONS LIMITED

12-3077-0439904-50

With your name and S&S26 as reference

Refund Policy

- Your deposit is fully refundable until we have a minimum number of 12 pax.
- Once we have 12pax or more, we will notify you. From that point your deposit is non-refundable.
- If the trip is full and you want to withdraw and we have a waiting list that allows you to be replaced – we will offer you a full refund.

Timeline for Footprints Spice & Stone Tour 2026 (S&S26)

Now	Please express your interest or pay a deposit. footprints.beccah@gmail.com
When you have paid your deposit	We will send you the detailed itinerary
In the next couple of months	Our website will be live and we'll let you know when it is.
January 2026	We will let you know when international flight schedules are available for booking and will send you some suggested routes.
Early June 2026	We will send out 'what's owing' on your invoice
Early July 2026	I will send out notes on preparing to travel to Sri Lanka
27th July 2026	Final Payment due
September 2026	Will send out details on how to apply for your Visa online
October 2026	Detailed daily notes will be sent out
27th December 2026	Off we go
17th January 2027	Back

E rere te huata, kapohia!

(When the spear flies, grab it!)

Seize this opportunity and come join us.
Ngā mihi,

Rebecca and Mikaere

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