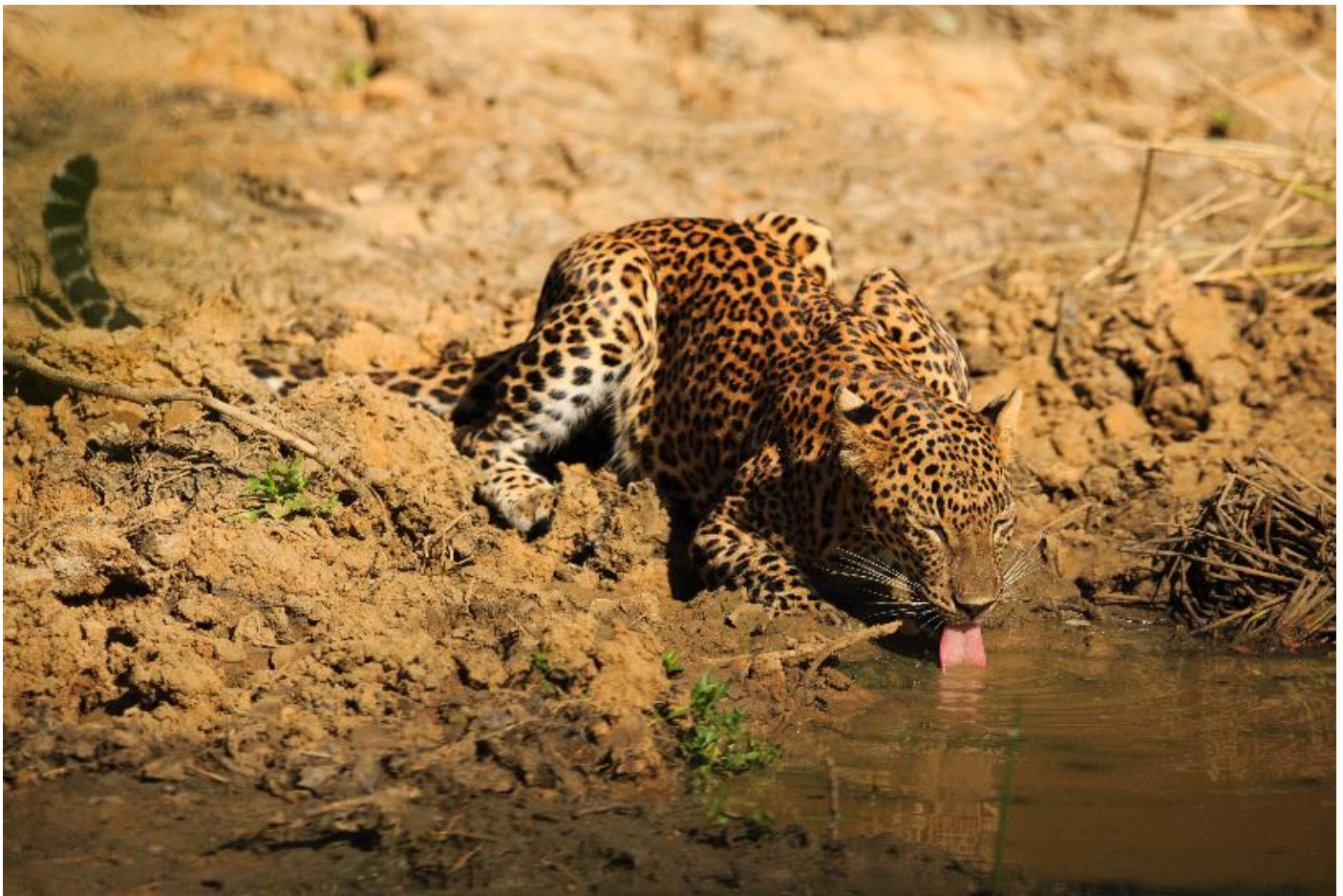


TRACKS SAFARIS

WE GET YOU CLOSER



11 NIGHTS – LUXURY SRI LANKA WILDLIFE



Highlights of the Itinerary:

- Explore the ruins in the ancient city of Polonnaruwa
- Climb the world-famous rock fortress in Sigiriya
- Park drives at Gal Oya and Yala national parks
- Visit Hurulu forest reserve in search for wild Asian elephants
- Whale and dolphin watching tour off Mirissa Sea
- Guided walk inside the Dutch fort in Galle

Day 1

On arrival into Colombo's Bandaranayake International Airport, Katunayake you will be welcomed on arrival by Tracks Safaris representative and transferred to your hotel in Kotugoda (approx. 30 minutes' drive). Arrive and check-in to The Wallawwa.

Spend one night at The Wallawwa Resort in a Garden Suite and your stay is on bed and breakfast basis

The Wallawwa, Kotugoda

Nestled amongst three acres of magnificent manicured gardens, The Wallawwa is an old colonial manor house which has been lovingly restored to a luxury private hideaway.

The Wallawwa boutique hotel offers colonial charm and exceptional service within five acres of tropical landscaped gardens. 17 tastefully furnished bedrooms and suites, spa, a la carte restaurant and a dedicated team of butlers ensures your every wish is catered for. The proximity to Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport, only 30 minutes away, makes The Wallawwa an excellent choice for those who wish to have a relaxing stopover at the beginning of their holiday after their long inbound flight. Sit back and indulge in sumptuous cuisine, revitalising spa treatments, a leisurely swim and a superb night's sleep.



Day 2

Enjoy your breakfast at The Wallawwa. After wards meet your chauffeur guide and then proceed to Sigiriya (approximately 3 ½ hours' drive). On arrival check-in to Jetwing Vil Uyana in time for lunch and spend the afternoon at leisure.

Jetwing Vil Uyana, Sigiriya

A member of the Small Luxury Hotels of the World, this property consists of 30 tastefully constructed dwellings that are built in and over water, paddy field, forest, marsh and garden surroundings. Inspired by the local, rural traditions the buildings blend into the landscape.

The challenge of introducing a wetland system on reclaimed agricultural lands provides the unique backdrop for this exciting property. A strong 'back to nature' theme pervades and the uniqueness of the experience is unforgettable. The property is possibly the first hotel in Sri Lanka to construct a private nature reserve comprising man-made lakes, wetlands and forests in a neglected area of land which was once used for disruptive slash and burn farming.



In the late evening, go on a Loris watching walk with the resort naturalist within the Vil Uyana premises.

Loris Night Trail:

Slender lorises are small, nocturnal primates found in India, Sri Lanka, and Southeast Asia. These enchanting primates are small and have enormous eyes. They are carnivorous, feeding on small animals and moving slowly through the trees. Recent research carried out in Sri Lanka has revealed that there are two species: the grey slender loris and the red slender loris. Each of these species also has subspecies. Before the tour begins, your host will brief you about the tour and you will also be given a red-light emitting head torch which will help you to spot lorises during the tour. Afterwards, the resident naturalist will lead you on an hour-long tour along a beautifully carved nature trail that is located on the hotel premises itself. The path runs through a forest filled with a wide range of vegetation. You will find yourself crossing simple, yet beautiful bamboo bridges, passing over streams that preserve the natural appearance of the forest. The loris watching tour boasts an astounding 90% success rate for loris sightings. Along with this small nocturnal primate, you may also see other species occasionally such as the fishing cat, collared scops owl, Indian civet and the golden palm civet.



Spend two nights at Jetwing Vil Uyana Resort in a Paddy with pool dwelling and your stay is on half board basis

Day 3

After an early breakfast visit the ancient city of Polonnaruwa and seek out the endemic toque macaques and other primates with your expert guide. (Approximately 1 hour drive).

Walk with a primate researcher to observe the longest running mammal study in the world

Polonnaruwa is widely regarded to be among the top locations in the country for watching primates. All three species of monkey- the toque macaque and the canopy dwelling purple-faced leaf monkey (both endemics) and the grey langur can be observed here. Polonnaruwa's 'Temple Troop of Toque Macaques' have been featured in numerous natural history documentaries are a part of the world's longest running study on primates which begun in 1968. The monkeys here are habituated to the presence of humans enabling excellent opportunities to observe their social interactions at close-range. Whether play fighting, feeding or grooming each other there is never a dull moment when watching monkeys. Walk with a primatologist amongst the ruins in Polonnaruwa to observe the antics of the langurs and macaques and get to meet some of the characters within the troops who the researchers know personally.

Afterwards explore the ancient City of Polonnaruwa

The Ancient City of Polonnaruwa

The ruins of the ancient city of Polonnaruwa are rather refreshing, better preserved and spread in a smaller area compared to Anuradhapura. Remains of the ruin city are compact enough to offer an impressive and delightful image of the medieval Sri Lanka for its visitors within a short period of time. In its heyday, the city was encircled by strong walls and inhabited by hundreds of people. At the centre of the city is the royal palace complex. The monuments around the terrace north to the palace complex are some of the most important religious buildings. It includes one of best-preserved example of a shelter house (Vatadage) in the country. It regarded as one the finest and advance architectural designs in this era. This historical city consists of over 30 remarkable ancient buildings. The royal shrine (Gal Viharaya), is the most fascinating monument. It contains numerous works of arts which represent the Sinhalese Buddhist art at its finest, and their mastery of rock sculpture. There are statues which displays in reclining, sitting and standing postures of the Buddha. The reclining posture represents the ultimate break from the endless cycle of life and rebirth by an enlightened soul, before attaining release or nirvana.

Thereafter, have your lunch at a local restaurant in Polonnaruwa, which serves many varieties of traditional Sri Lankan cuisine, cooked over stone and wood fires. It's a family run restaurant with large mud huts for seating.

After lunch enjoy a Jeep Safari at Minneriya National Park or Hurulu forest reserve to look for Asian elephant, with your specialist guide. Overnight at Jetwing Vil Uyana Resort

Your guide will be knowledgeable on where the elephants are encountered which is dependent on the monsoon. During the wet season, the herds disperse from Minneriya and Kaudulla, moving towards nearby Hurullu forest reserve and are scattered amongst the tall grasses and scrub jungle vegetation.

Each afternoon, many individual elephants come out of the forest into the open to graze on the fresh green pasture by the water's edge at Minneriya and Kaudulla national parks. You have excellent opportunities here to observe the social dynamics of the Asian Elephant as the large bulls in musth compete among each other and seek the females within the herd, while young calves with carefree abandon get up to their mischievous antics often to the displeasure of its alert mothers within the herd Other large animals found here include Jackal, Spotted Deer, Grey Langur and Toque Macaque, while flocks of Painted Stork, Spot-billed Pelican,

Asian Openbill and Indian Cormorant are found at the water's edge by the tanks. Grey-headed Fishing Eagle and White-bellied Sea Eagle soar above the tanks preying on fish and other small animals.

During the wet season, the herds disperse from Minneriya and Kaudulla, moving towards nearby Hurullu Forest Reserve and are scattered amongst the tall grasses and scrub jungle vegetation. A variety of birds found in the dry-zone including Indian Roller, Sri Lanka Jungle fowl, Indian Peafowl, Blue-tailed and Green Bee-eaters along with raptors such as Changeable Hawk Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle and Shikra may also be seen. Your guide will be knowledgeable on where the elephants are encountered which is dependent on the rains



Day 4

Today, leave early morning to climb one of the island's most spectacular sights - the 5th century rock fortress of Sigiriya (approximately 10 minutes' drive). Afterwards return to Jetwing Vil Uyana for a late breakfast.

Sigiriya Rock Fortress

Referred to as 'The Lion Rock' by locals, Sigiriya became the capital during the reign of King Kashyapa in the 5th century CE. After slaying his own father, King Dhatu-sena of Anuradhapura to take the throne and fearing a retaliatory attack from the rightful heir Moggallana who fled to neighbouring India, the new King constructed his royal palace on the summit of this 200-metre-high rock within a fortress for his own protection. Walk through the meticulously landscaped Royal Gardens and ascend towards the summit where only ruins of the royal palace now remain. A visit to the fresco gallery with its ancient paintings of the King's maids in waiting and the Mirror Wall with ancient inscriptions that closely match the modern-day Sinhalese language. In 495 CE, Moggallana returned from his exile, defeated the usurping King, and reinstated Anuradhapura as the capital. Sigiriya was then used as a Buddhist monastery until the 14th century prior to being mysteriously abandoned.



After breakfast drive from Sigiriya to Galoya (approximately 3 ½ hours' drive). On arrival check-in and relax at the beautifully located Gal Oya Lodge.

Gal Oya Lodge, Gal Oya

Discover an ancient land untouched by time; a haven of serenity in which to reconnect with the rhythms of the earth. Immerse yourself in nature. Soak yourself in local culture. Explore the rich wildlife of Gal Oya, one of Sri Lanka's most remote and least visited wilderness areas. Gal Oya Lodge is a unique Sri Lankan Eco lodge spread across 20 acres of private jungle. Take your time enjoying this natural paradise through the experiences Gal Oya Lodge offer.



Later in the afternoon enjoy a boat ride and look for elephants, possibly swimming in the reservoir (approximately 1 hour drive).

Spend two nights at Gal Oya Lodge in a Bungalow. Your stay is on full board basis

The Gal Oya National Park serves as the main catchment area for Senanayake Samudraya, which is the largest reservoir in Sri Lanka from where you go on a boat safari to explore the area's wildlife. The landscapes are stunning and comprise of grasslands and rocky escarpments on the banks of the reservoir with panoramic views of the Danigala, Nilgala, and Ulpotha mountains in the backdrop. The sightings of elephants peak in the late afternoons as the sun begins to descend over the horizon.

Day 5

After breakfast, walk into the forest and meet the indigenous people of Sri Lanka – the Veddas. It's about a 4 km walk to meet the people. (Approximately 1½ hour's walking).

Sri Lanka's indigenous inhabitants, the Veddas ('forest-dwellers') preserve a direct line of descent from the island's original Neolithic community dating from at least 16,000 BCE.. Chief of Sri Lanka's indigenous Vedda tribe will take you on a walk through the jungles of his ancestors. Enjoy nature as he brings the forest alive by explaining his tribes' uses of medicinal plants, ancient hunting grounds.

Enjoy a cooked lunch next to the Gal Oya River, a waterfall or overlooking one of the park's many scenic look out points. Swim and relax, a delicious picnic lunch can be prepared on site by the hotel's chef. Later in the afternoon go on a Jeep safari at Gal Oya National park in search for herds of elephants and birds.

Gal Oya National Park that comprises of tall grasses, scrub jungle with some rocky outcrops, wines and some very large trees such as Aralu, Bulu, Belli, Waa, and Kahata. Nilgala also contains some important indigenous medicinal plant species which are found in the grassland habitats.



Elephants are the highlight here where small herds may be encountered particularly in the afternoons. Other mammal species seen here include Spotted Deer, Barking Deer, Giant Squirrel, Toque Macaques and Grey

Langur. Gal Oya is also abundant in birdlife with a variety of forest and dry-zone species encountered with the highlight for birders being the presence of rarities such as the Painted Francolin, Yellow-footed Green Pigeon and the Blue-eared Kingfisher.

After an exciting day, relax the evening by the pool at your lovely lodge. Overnight at Gal Oya Lodge.

Day 6

Enjoy your breakfast at Galoya Lodge. You will then take a scenic drive to Yala (approximately 3 ½ hour drive). On arrival you will Check in to Wild Coast Tented Lodge and have lunch.

Wild Coast, Yala

Wild Coast is a luxurious tented lodge sits on a deserted beach on the edge of Yala National Park, the Leopard hot spot in south eastern Sri Lanka. 28 vaulted “Cocoon” tents offer the comfort of a luxury hotel with the excitement of a safari-style wilderness experience. The air-conditioned Cocoons measure a generous 55m2 and are furnished to the highest specification. Some have their own plunge pools. They are dotted around five watering holes designed to attract a variety of birdlife and amphibians, which can be viewed from each Cocoon’s outdoor viewing deck.

A bamboo-clad bar and restaurant serves creative daily changing menus, whilst a delicious picnic tea forms part of the safari drive experience. The lodge boasts a Sanctuary Spa offering a range of natural treatments developed in-house. The library doubles up as an educational centre where guests learn about the wildlife in the park and watch documentaries, further explained by the lodge’s expert guides.

In the evening enjoy delicious, authentic Sri Lankan cuisine in the Dining Pavilion, and sip colourful cocktails in the Ten Tuskers bar at Wild Coast Tented Lodge.

Spend three nights at Wild Coast Tented Lodge, Yala in a Cocoon Pool Suite and your stay is on all Inclusive Basis



Day 7

Spend the full day exploring the Yala National Park. You have two park drives included – one in the morning and one in the afternoon - with your naturalist in a private jeep. The morning park drive begins at around 0530 hours. Your afternoon game drive begins at around 1430 hours, returning at sunset.

Yala National Park

Yala National Park is located in the south-east corner of Sri Lanka and is the most popular destination for wildlife viewing. Leopards are the star attraction at Yala and Block I is believed to have one of the highest concentrations of these big cats in the world. Asian elephant, sloth bear, jackal, sambar, spotted deer, buffalo, wild boar and the grey langur are among the other larger mammals that may be seen.

During the dry season which spans from June to September, large concentrations of mugger crocodile can be seen in the dwindling waterholes. Yala is also an excellent birding destination with close to 300 avian species recorded; Indian peafowl and Sri Lanka jungle fowl, changeable hawk eagle, painted stork, Malabar pied hornbills, chestnut, green and blue-tailed bee-eaters are among the species seen regularly in Yala. The varied landscapes from lagoons, beaches to rocky outcrops immersed among the scrub jungle are also a treat to the eye as you search out the park's wildlife.

Overnight at Wild Coast Tented Lodge, Yala



Day 8

Leave early morning for another game drive at Yala National Park in a private jeep with your naturalist. Return to your lodge for a late breakfast and spend the rest of the morning at leisure. In the afternoon explore a nearby fishing village on bicycles with the guidance of an in-house ranger.

Explore the charming rural vibe of two villages sandwiched between two national parks - Kirinda and Bundala – on a bike tour, guided by a Wild Coast Lodge ranger who is familiar with the local area. A bicycle ride

through the village offers a non-intrusive, immersive and authentic perspective to the charm, and scenic beauty of Sri Lankan rural life. The perfect tour explores the nuances of the village, from the little corner-store, to subsistence rural farming, to unique points of interest such as the village temple and overhead tree huts that are a look out for elephants.

Overnight at Wild Coast Tented Lodge, Yala



Day 9

After breakfast you will be met and driven from Yala to Weligama (approximately 2 ½ hour drive).

The Cape Weligama, Weligama

Cape Weligama is a luxurious resort, home to a gorgeous collection of 40 free-standing villas and suites. Infinite 270-degree panoramas of the Indian Ocean and rugged coastline are celebrated from every curvaceous corner of this meticulously landscaped property, perched on a cliff top rising up to 36 meters above sea level.

There are two adjacent public beaches. West Beach is accessed via a specially built cliff staircase while East Beach is next to the Dive Centre, a 5-minute walk from the resort. A reef provides safe swimming conditions and with no large resorts nearby, the beaches are not busy. The Beach Club and Dive Centre is staffed by professionals and is the embarkation point for all land and water-based activities. Offering first-rate PADI dive courses and exciting dives, other activities include private cruises, big game fishing, seasonal whale and dolphin watching trips and banana boating.

Spend three nights at Cape Weligama Resort, Weligama in a Master Suite and your stay is on Bed and Breakfast basis.



Day 10

Early morning you will go whale watching off Mirissa seas on a privately chartered vessel (approximately 4-hour experience – depends on sightings). After your whale watching return to Cape Weligama .

Whale Watching

Sri Lanka is also one of the best places in the world to see blue whales. The island enjoys a unique position in the Indian Ocean, with the shoreline unusually close to the continental shelf, the point of deepening marine life, while yet supplying nutrients from the coast. Therefore, the deep seas, which provides a habitat for whales easier to reach by boat, are good conditions for whales, especially sperm and blue whales. Almost 90 per cent of whales are guaranteed during the whale watching season.

Start early morning for the greatest conditions for whale watching and the calm waters. You will sail towards the Indian Ocean by boarding a modern catamaran off Mirissa with a professional team, safety equipment, a well-equipped kitchen where the chef serves a delicious full breakfast and a 3-course lunch. Once the guide spots the whales, you are invited to acquire the greatest views of the whales up to the top deck or front of the boat. After the whale watching, you'll head back towards shore, anchoring on the way for the chance to jump into the water and try some stand-up paddle boarding or snorkelling. In the middle of the day, the chef will start serving a snack on board as you sail back.

In the late afternoon, go on a guided walk in the 17th to 18th century Galle Fort with an expert guide

Dutch Fort Galle

Upon meeting your host at the new entrance of Galle Fort, stroll along with three of the 14 bastions, all with mountain canons to protect it from outside invasions. The moon bastion showcases 19 canons, the biggest number in the fort and the Black Fort which is said to have been the home of firearms and gun powder. Each bastion has its unique characteristics. Take a walk along cobblestone pathways and navigate the cafes, hotels and charming old houses owned by Galle families to gain insights into their history, culture and lifestyle. After paying attention to many fascinating myths and stories about the intriguing history of the fort, your host will explain the tsunami in 2004 and how much it impacted the modern Galle fort culture before finishing a tour on this iconic lighthouse overlooking a resting Japanese Peace Pagoda.

Overnight at Cape Weligama Resort, Weligama



Day 11

Days at leisure for independent activities. Overnight at Cape Weligama Resort.



Day 12

Transfer from Hotel to Bandaranaike International Airport for your departure flight home (approximately 2 ½ hour drive).



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