Sri Lanka End to End Road Cycle Tour

Trip Code: SEMB

Version:

CYCLE	GUIDED GROUP	CHALLENGING
		7



HIGHLIGHTS

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

AT A GLANCE

- 9 days biking
- 760 kilometres
- 100% road - 100% vehicle supported
- Max. Altitude 1500 metres
- Join at Negombo

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

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

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

Is this holiday for you?

ROAD CYCLING. The first 5 cycling days of this tropical tour are on primarily flat terrain where we average around 90 kilometres per day. We then split the day's ride to the 'hill capital' of Kandy, where we have a rest day. A couple of cooler and hillier days follow, as we cross the central highlands and swoop down to the island's south coast. In total, we cycle just over 760 kilometres in 9 days of riding, with a total of around 7000 metres of ascent and descent. The trip is fully supported and our guide's expert knowledge of the area and terrain means that you'll always know what's coming up in terms of distance and difficulty. This makes a tremendous difference, as does the constant supply of cold drinks and fresh fruit. This trip is on paved roads that are in good condition, though there maybe occasional short rough sections. To get the most out of this road cycling tour you need to have a good level of physical fitness. However, the bus is always close at hand for those who need to take a break. BIKE HIRE AVAILABLE LOCALLY

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

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

What's not Included

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

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the hotel in Negombo.

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

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

Meal Plan

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

Special Diets

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

Food & Water

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

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

Accommodation

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

Group Leader & Support Staff

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

Altitude

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

Spending Money

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

Guidance on Tipping

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

Your Bike

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

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

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

Bike Hire

Bike hire is available locally on this holiday. Our local agent can provide good quality carbon-framed Sunpeed Invincible bikes. These bikes have Shimano 105 components, compact (50/34) cranksets and disc brakes. Spare parts (tubes, tyre, chains etc.) are included in the price of the bike rental and will be available in the support vehicle along with a tool kit and track pump. The guide will also carry some spares and tools for fixing punctures etc. Each bike comes with a single bottle cage and a Spice Roads water bottle that is yours to keep. If you want to bring a second bottle cage, we can fit it. The bikes are equipped with flat pedals and strap-style toe cages can be supplied if requested. If you prefer to use SPD or clip-in pedals, you will need to bring these with you, along with your regular cycling shoes. Another item which you might choose to take with you on the holiday is your saddle. The hire bikes have standard saddles and anyone requiring more comfort, or a women-specific saddle, should consider taking their own. Bike hire cost is $450 (prices subject to change). You should take your own EN1078 compliant cycling helmet, as the locally available helmets do not necessarily meet this standard - which we require. Payment must be made before travel directly with the local agent via the following payment link www.spiceroads.com/pay. You must first notify KE of your preferred bike option along with your height and we will make the reservation on your behalf. Once the reservation is confirmed, we will email to you a unique reference code which you need to use when making your payment. Your payment for bike hire does not cover you if you lose the bike or damage it beyond 'fair wear and tear'. We must stress that your hire contract will be with the local hire company and that KE cannot be held responsible for any issues arising from bike hire.

Travelling With Your Bike

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

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

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

Vehicle Support

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

Baggage Allowance

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

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

Group Size & Holiday Status

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

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

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

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

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

All visitors to Sri Lanka must obtain an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) before travelling. You can apply online at the official government website www.eta.gov.lk

The ETA is now free as of 25th May 2026. This should be completed a few days before departure to allow time for processing. Once approved, you will receive a confirmation email which must be shown on arrival. Immigration will then stamp your passport with a 30-day tourist visa.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Currency

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

Preparing for your Holiday

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

Climate

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

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

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

Single Use Plastic

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

Books

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

Maps

Sri Lanka.. Nelles Guides & Maps

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

Private Groups Information

Make this KE cycling holiday your own!

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

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

Independence with Security

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

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

Travel Insurance

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

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

Explore International

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

Equipment Information

Equipment List

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

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

Bike Wear

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

Other Stuff

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

Spares

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

Repairs

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

Hydration and Energy Snacks

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

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

Land Only Information

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

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

Land Only Information

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

Flight Inclusive Information

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

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

Flight Inclusive Information

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

Why Choose KE

Why KE

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

Please Note This document was downloaded on 11/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change