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Sri Lanka and the Maldives Travel Guide (Berlitz travel guide) by Berlitz Guides. Paperback. Very Good.

Here are our top must-see places in Sri Lanka: The beaches on the South Coast: Unawatuna , Mirissa , and Tangalla. They are the most stunning golden soft beaches you can ever imagine! Of these three beaches, we liked Tangalla Beach the most. Maria is running at the fabulous Tangalla Beach. Galle â€” Wander around the beautiful and charming ancient fort city Galle that has a European vibe to it. The beautiful city Galle. A wild elephant in Yala National Park. Ella â€” Visit the small and sleepy mountain village Ella, surrounded by lush and green tea plantations as far as your eyes can see. Maria is enjoying the fantastic view from our hotel room in Ella. Polonnaruwa â€” Cycling around the ancient ruins of the old capital Polonnaruwa, was a highlight of our trip to Sri Lanka. Cycling through the ancient city of Polonnaruwa. Have a look at our suggested two week Sri Lanka itinerary for more details about where to go and how to get around the island. Hiking in the stunning mountains around Ella , some of them above m, is an absolute must! Climbing the Sigiriya Lion Rock , where on top apparently the royal palace once used to be, is defiantly a must-do! The famous and stunning Sigiriya rock. Surfing â€” The surfing is great in Sri Lanka! Both on the west coast, south, and east coast the waves are fantastic for surfing. Dolphin Safari â€” Once you are in Sri Lanka, going on a dolphin watching trip is almost mandatory. Whale safari â€” We did not go on a whale safari because we have seen so many whales back home in Norway, but Sri Lanka is one of the best places in the world to spot large whales. We went snorkelling outside of Kalpitiya, and loved it! Eating rice and curry â€” The national dish rice and curry is something you get served everywhere, and it is super good! So tasty and full of flavour! The Sri Lankan know how to use spices. Tea Plantations â€” Walking through the tea plantations and visit a tea factory is a must-do. It makes you appreciate your next cup of delicious Sri Lankan tea. A tea picker in Ella. Train ride â€” Taking a train ride through the Hill Country , possibly the most beautiful train trip in the world? Off the beaten tracks It is easy to avoid the herd of tourists. If you head up North for instance to Jaffna or to the East Coast, you will not find many tourists. The lovely people The people of Sri Lanka are great! So lovely, kind and welcoming. Delicious Sri Lankan rice and curry. The perfect climate Sri Lanka has a sub-tropic climate, making it a nice warm country to visit. And many of them you have all to yourself. Wildlife and nature Even though Sri Lanka is a small island, it has a great wildlife. You can spot animals as wild elephants, crocodiles, leopards, sea turtles, whales, dolphins and lots of beautiful birds. Sea turtle at Tangalla Beach. Everything is within a short distance The best of it all, is that Sri Lanka is a small island, which makes it easy to travel around and see a lot within a short time. Increasing prices One thing that is not so good regarding a travellers budget are the increasing prices in Sri Lanka. Just a few years back, the accommodation, transport and entrance fees to sights and temples were much cheaper than today. Sri Lanka is more expensive than other Asian countries we have been to, for instance, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines, and Cambodia. Another thing is that foreigners have to pay much more than the locals to enter sites and temples in Sri Lanka. It can sometimes be frustrating having to pay many times that of the locals, but there is nothing you can do about it. Just be aware that entrance fees eat up much of your budget while traveling in Sri Lanka. The prices are increasing in Sri Lanka, although it is still an affordable country to travel in, and has still not reached European or USA prices. Yep, it feels a bit unfair sometimes. As for rooms, you can find accommodations at all price levels, from luxury boutique hotels to more backpacker-like guest houses. You will have to pay a lot more for the same standard as in Thailand. Some places we stayed, the accommodation also included food breakfast, lunch, and dinner , like the one at Kalpitiya. It all depends on what kind of standard you like; you get what you pay for. Food is still of great value, and is delicious! You can find food in all price ranges. Bare in mind, though, that when ordering rice and curry, it takes a looooooong time to make, so you will have to wait a while maybe an hour or so to get your food. Like one of the restaurant, chefs said to us: Alcohol is very cheap in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is a small island, so traveling around is pretty easy. It is quite well-connected by buses and trains that make for fun transport around the country. Read about the beautiful train trip we took from Ella to Kandy. Taking buses and trains are cheap, even first class on trains is quite inexpensive. Tuk-tuks and taxis are easy to

find and are a quick and comfortable way to get between places, although much more expensive than bus and train. The people of Sri Lanka are genuine, friendly, kind and polite. They are very interested in foreigners, smiling and waving, and as a traveler, it is easy to get in touch with the locals. You feel welcomed by the Sri Lankan people, and it is easy to make friends. One thing about Sri Lankan is that they do this head nod or shake, which made us a little puzzled at the start. Does it mean yes, OK, or no?! It is a lot about this head shake in travel blogs and magazines, so it is apparently well-known, especially in India. Well, the head shake is also in Sri Lanka. And everyone does it, from small kids to grown-ups. I think it is an acknowledgment to what you said or of your presence. The backpackers we met in Sri Lanka were often older and more mature than the typical backpacker you meet in other Asian countries. There are more families with kids and not so many full-moon-party-year-olds as there are in for instance Thailand. Also, the Russians have started to come to Sri Lanka, mainly to the beaches in the South, like Unawatuna. We met quite a few. The 22 million people living in Sri Lanka speak different languages: There is no problem traveling around Sri Lanka speaking only English. Street signs and menus at touristy restaurants are in both Sinhala and English. The online visa is valid for 30 days from the date of arrival and can be extended for up to six months. It is quite easy to get Visa extensions for up to 90 days. Extensions are available at the Department of Immigration ; www. The last payments are received at 3: The department sets the cost in US dollars, but you pay in rupees. You get a visa extension for three months, and you can apply for your extension almost as soon as you arrive in Sri Lanka the day visa given upon entry is included in the three months. You can extend for an additional 3 months after your first extension. So altogether you can get a maximum of six months visa to Sri Lanka. It is very easy and quick to apply for the online visa. There are either no requirements for vaccinations. The only thing you will need when entering Sri Lanka, in addition to the online visa, is at least one blank page in your passport which must be valid for at least six months from the date of entry. There are no significant health concerns or risks when traveling in Sri Lanka. The biggest risk is probably diarrhea, as in most Asian countries, but we did not have any of that during our five weeks eating anything everywhere. There is a slight risk of getting Dengue Fever and Malaria, so wear mosquito repellent and sleep under a mosquito net most guest houses have nets over the beds where there are mosquitoes. Do however bring a small medical kit. I did get a jellyfish sting on my leg in Unawatuna, which was bloody painful, so some gel to put on a jellyfish sting can be a good thing to bring to the beach. And do bring sunscreen! You can buy sun screen in Sri Lanka, but not everywhere, and they might not have the sun protection factor SPF that you want. Travel insurance might seem expensive, but it is nothing compared to what medical help can cost if you need it. We have been using World Nomads on most on our travels, and we have needed it too! Their insurance is flexible, extendable while travelling, and covers a lot of action sports and activities that other companies refuse to cover.

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Here are ten tips and tricks to help first-time visitors. Prepare to go slow Although infrastructure is improving and transport options are plentiful, getting around this modestly sized country, with its tightly winding roads and engine-testing inclines, might feel a little trying at times. The Hill Country is particularly notorious for eating away time – whether travelling by bus, tuk tuk or train, expect to inch from one tea plantation to the next at speeds of around miles per hour. For those with little time or deep pockets, taking a seaplane or hiring a car and driver are good alternatives. Go to relax, not to rave Outside of Colombo , and a few beach resorts, hostels with dorm rooms tend to be thin on the ground. As an emerging honeymoon hotspot, Sri Lanka also attracts a lot of couples. International names such as Aman have already set up shop on the island, and Shangri-La has two new hotels scheduled to open soon. Uga Escapes and Resplendent Ceylon are just two examples of burgeoning local brands that offer more than just copy-and-paste properties. A Tamil Tiger stronghold, it was one of the last areas on the island to reopen to tourists, and has yet to succumb to the same wave of hotels, resorts and other developments – or to receive the same flurry of foreign visitors. However, knowing where and when to find the good stuff may prove a harder task than you anticipated. Rice and curry is a lunchtime affair, while kottu rotti chopped flatbread stir-fried with eggs and vegetables is only available in the evening. Those familiar with Asia will be surprised at the lack of street food stalls; instead, some of the best food can be found in the kitchens of small guesthouses. Consider Colombo With jazz clubs, rooftop bars, boutique stores and internationally acclaimed restaurants, Colombo can no longer be considered a mere gateway city. And though there are a number of sights to see, the capital is also a great place to simply settle in and get a sense of what local life is like. Watch families fly kites on Galle Face Green at sunset; cheer for the national cricket team at the R Premadasa Stadium, or observe grandmothers swathed in vivid saris bargain with stallholders at Pettah Market. Plan around the seasons While the monsoon rains might not dampen your enthusiasm for exploring bear in mind that experiences can vary wildly depending on the season. Cycling holidays are also becoming increasingly popular with a number of international tour operators offering specialist tours. Make the most of your money By western standards Sri Lanka is still a cheap destination, but prices are rising quickly: In the corner shops of smaller cities simply check the packaging, which has the price printed next to the letters "Rs. The pace of life in Sri Lanka feels much less frantic than that of its neighbour, which makes it ideal for those intrigued, yet intimidated, by India. Few locals bat an eyelid at western visitors and while covering up is always appreciated and necessary at places of worship , wearing shorts and vests is unlikely to attract much attention.

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Itinerary Overview Maldives is the ultimate getaway for those looking for an escape to a destination that resembles paradise. Here, you find incredible white-sand beaches, a spectacular marine life and luxurious avenues everywhere you look. Sri Lanka is another destination which lures the tourists with its diverse landscapes, beautiful beaches, ancient Buddhist ruins, shopping avenues and much more. The Maldives and Sri Lanka Tour consisting of 6 nights and 7 days takes you on an exciting ride filled with adventure, surprises and awesome memories. This is just a suggested itinerary indicative of what could be possible. We customize holidays for your specific needs. Contact us if you want modifications so that we could customize a holiday to suit your need for an unforgettable International tour. Arrive at Maldives Arrive at the Male airport early morning and meet the representative who will help you with an assisted transfer to your resort by a speedboat. Complete the check-in formalities at the resort, and then enjoy a hearty breakfast. You have the rest of the day to yourself. Admire the incredible natural beauty of the enormous lagoons scattered everywhere. You also have the option of engaging in various kinds of leisure activities like taking a leisurely stroll on the beach, exploring the various attractions in close proximity and enjoying a dip in the deep blue waters. This is followed by a dinner in the resort and an overnight stay in Maldives. Maldives Enjoy your breakfast. The rest of the day is yours to spend as you like. Enjoy a lazy day whiling your time away on the white sandy beaches of Maldives. Indulge in other activities of your interest. Absorb the natural beauty enveloping you. You could also visit the inhabited islands and explore them. Enjoy your dinner at the resort followed by an overnight stay in the Maldives. Maldives Enjoy an early morning breakfast and then spend the rest of the day at your own leisure. Relax on the beach or try out exciting water sports like snorkeling, water polo, scuba diving and surfing. Check out the underwater coral reefs and marine life. Dinner in the resort is followed by an overnight stay in the Maldives. Maldives - Colombo

Kandy Enjoy your breakfast and then get an assisted speed boat transfer to the airport to catch a flight to Sri Lanka. After arriving in the airport at Colombo, get transferred to Kandy. Visit the Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage en route. Later, in the late evening, enjoy a cultural show in Kandy. This is followed by an overnight stay at a hotel in Kandy. Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage is enveloped by the verdant hills of Kegalle. This orphanage is one of its kind, where the baby elephants weight 60kgs or more. The others occupants are those that have been displaced from their natural environs by development projects or those that were found in a wounded condition. Here, the visitors can watch the baby elephants being fed milk from gigantic feeding bottles or being bathed in the rivers which flow nearby, thereby creating an unforgettable sight and a wonderful experience. This orphanage, established in by the Wildlife Department and National Zoological Gardens, has subsequently developed into a breeding program through which more than twenty five elephants have been born since Stay overnight at a hotel in Kandy. Kandy is a lovely exotic city, and also serves as the hill capital of Sri Lanka. Kandy can be defined as a cultural sanctuary where numerous legends, folklore and traditions are still kept alive. Kandy

Colombo Post breakfast, head out for a city shopping tour of Colombo. This is followed by an overnight stay at a hotel in Colombo. Colombo is the trade and commercial capital of Sri Lanka, and as such, it has served as the traditional gateway to the Orient. All throughout the years, the original settlers and traders like the Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch and British have left behind the imprints of their legacy in the form of churches and monuments, names and religions, costumes and food and smattering of their languages which have been absorbed into the daily lifestyle of the common Sri Lankan. Colombo holds within itself several attractions and is a unique amalgamation of east and west, past and present, and possesses a unique charm of its own. This exciting and happening city also has a superb range of high quality restaurants serving food from all over the world and some of the best shopping opportunities in Asia. Some of the other places of interest are the beautiful Buddhist temples, Hindu temples, mosques, the historic Wolfendhal church, which was built in and residential areas where one comes across the

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majestic homes of the affluent, the Ceramic Corporation which is famous for its well-known brand "Noritake" and ODEL, the famous shopping center. Depart for Colombo After enjoying an early morning breakfast, proceed towards the airport for an early departure.

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