

# SRI LANKA ABOARD THE 'VICEROY SPECIAL'

- the natural wonders of Sri Lanka aboard your private train -

**Sunday 25 February to Tuesday 19 March 2024**



Sri Lanka is a beautiful tropical island the size of Tasmania, next door to India. Set in the Indian Ocean in South Asia, the tropical island nation of Sri Lanka has a history dating back to the birth of time. It is a place where the original soul of Buddhism still flourishes and where nature's beauty remains abundant and unspoilt. Few places in the world can offer such a remarkable combination of stunning landscapes, pristine beaches, captivating cultural heritage and unique experiences within such a compact location.

Boasting eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites, 1,330 kilometres of coastline, 15 national parks showcasing an abundance of wildlife, nearly 500,000 acres of lush tea estates, 250 acres of botanical gardens, 350 waterfalls, 25,000 water bodies, and a culture that extends back to over 2,500 years. Once known as Serendib, Taprobane, the Pearl of the Indian Ocean, and Ceylon, Sri Lanka was a valued British colony. Its 20 million inhabitants speak English, and the island offers an authentic Indian experience without the crowds.

The island has a wonderful broad gauge colonial-relic railway system still very much as the British left it, none of it electrified. The railway reaches the highest summit anywhere in the world of a 5ft 6in broad gauge railway at an impressive 6228ft. We plan to cover most of the rail network – mostly with our own private "Viceroy" train.

The tour also features cultural highlights and natural wonders, with the amazing bird life and nature reserves boasting elephants and other large animals. A combination of culture, nature and railways. The dates of our tour should see cooler temperatures and the least rain for the island.

Our twenty-three day tour is, we believe, the most comprehensive and comfortable way to explore Sri Lanka - it is designed to enable you to experience the beautiful scenery of the country, immerse yourself in the culture of Sri Lanka, as well as to enjoy the ambience and facilities of the excellent hotels we have selected for our journey. You will leave amazed at the diversity and beauty of the country.

## **Sunday 25 February 2024 (L) – Australia to Singapore**

There is a range of flight options to Sri Lanka, and we'll provide details. The recommended option is a daylight flight to Singapore with Singapore Airlines or Qantas, with an overnight stop at Singapore Changi Airport's very convenient Crowne Plaza Hotel, and onward flight with Sri Lankan Airlines the morning of the following day – two pleasant daylight flights. Overnight Singapore.

## Monday 26 February 2024 (D) – Singapore to Colombo, Sri Lanka

A mid morning flight has you arrive in Colombo late morning. Colombo has been a flourishing sea port for centuries when ancient seafarers traded in pearls, precious stones, elephants, peacocks, cinnamon and other spices. Today Sri Lanka's commercial capital is a fascinating blend of the East & West, the past and present and the old & new.... due to its large harbour and its strategic position along the East-West sea trade routes, the city of Colombo was known to ancient traders 2,000 years ago. Made the capital of the island when Sri Lanka was ceded to the British Empire in 1815, and its status as capital was retained when the nation became independent in 1948. In 1978, when administrative functions were moved to Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte, Colombo was designated as the commercial capital of Sri Lanka. After a welcome at the airport we transfer to our hotel - a classy colonial-style building with a wonderful seafront terrace from which to watch the sun sink into the sea. Enjoy afternoon sightseeing to the administrative and legislative capital building at Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte, then time for a refreshing swim, or stroll along the promenade. Relax in the late afternoon on the edge of the ocean, with cooling drink, before a welcome dinner together. Overnight Galle Face Hotel, Colombo.

## Tuesday 27 February 2024 (B/D) – highlights of Colombo (markets and monuments)

Today we tour Colombo – visit Colombo Fort, step into the main Fort railway station to experience the vibrancy of a busy Sri Lankan station, and then walk through Pettah – Colombo's leading bazaar district. We visit the fresh food markets which will be eye opening, and then to the peaceful Viharamahadevi Park (Victoria Park) and Independence Square. In the mid afternoon we return to the city centre, where you can visit the Colombo Museum housed in a grand colonial building, or explore at leisure, wander the waterfront, or visit nearby shops. At our lovely hotel for a swim overlooking the ocean, a refreshing drink as the sun sets, then dinner is included at the hotel and overnight Colombo.



## Wednesday 28 February 2024 (B/L/D) – Mt Lavinia and by rail to Galle

A mid-morning departure provides for a relaxing breakfast, before we join our coach and head for Mt Lavinia for lunch. Famed for its golden mile of beach, its historic Mt Lavinia Hotel is perched on the edge of the coast with stunning ocean views. A look back at the days of colonial presence, the hotel commands splendid views over the ocean and is a great location for a relaxing luncheon. In the early afternoon we board our private air-conditioned restored T1 Railcar for the journey south to Galle. *(If numbers allow we will commence our journey with the Viceroy Train today.)* Our journey is a lovely ride through the palm-tree plantations south of Colombo, with the sea on our right. On arrival we transfer to our impressive Geoffrey Bawa designed hotel for three nights - the ocean front Jetwing Lighthouse Hotel, Galle. Enjoy a swim, a massage and dinner overlooking the ocean.





## **Thursday 29 February 2024 (B/D) – Galle sightseeing and the UNESCO listed Dutch Fort**

Galle exports rubber, tea, rope, coconut oil, and coconut fibre. The city also has a seaport that was very significant at the beginning of the 16th century when Portuguese were occupying most of Sri Lanka and then under the rule of the Dutch as well. In the 19th century, the British developed the Colombo seaport and the use of the Galle port declined. More than any other aspect of Galle, the history of this beautiful city is the most intriguing. Here you will find untouched ruins from the Portuguese and Dutch eras. The magnificent Dutch fort was declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and is the most visited place by tourists. The history of the town goes to King Solomon's time. It was believed that Galle is the ancient seaport 'Tarshish', from where King Solomon transported ivory and other loot. The history of it holds stories of the times when Persians, Arabs, Greeks, Romans, Malays and Indians did their trading through the Galle port. The ruins that bear evidence to the history of Galle which can be seen around the city today date from 1505 when the first Portuguese ship landed in Galle after a storm. The old buildings around Galle were built in 1597 by the many Portuguese that occupied the coastal towns. In 1640, the Dutch took over from the Portuguese. They perfected the Fort in the year 1663 and it is that fort we will visit today. Luncheon (O) at a local seafood restaurant, and there is also the option for a tuk tuk ride (O) around the historic precinct. Overnight Galle.

## **Friday 1 March 2024 (B/D) – to Matara & Beliatta, to Tangalle, Dondra and sea turtles**

This morning transfer to Galle Station and join our private train for the journey south to Matara and Beliatta - enjoy a cup of tea / coffee served at your seat as we travel along the coast. For many years Matara was the end of the line – though construction begun in 2017 on an extension from Matara to Beliatta and then on to Kataragama. The 26km extension to Beliatta. At Beliatta we join our coach and head to the coast at Tangalle, then follow the coastline back towards Matara through Kudawella and Dondra. Located 6 km east of Matara, Dondra is the southernmost point of Sri Lanka. A 40m high lighthouse was built in 1890 to provide guidance to the shipping route south of Sri Lanka. The sea bordering town of Matara is 160 km from Colombo with the River Nilwala running through the town to meet the sea. Matara's history dates back to the Anuradhapura period. The temple that lies in the middle of town was built by ancient kings and now holds a sacred place among the Buddhists in the area. The 16th and the 18th centuries saw the rule of the Portuguese and Dutch in that order. During the Dutch rule the 'Star Fort' was built and the original structure exists today. Rejoin our air-conditioned private rail car, enjoy a refreshing cup of afternoon tea, and then we visit a sea turtle farm and hatchery at Habaraduwa and learn of the steps being taken to protect these small creatures from extinction. Transfer to our hotel and dinner together overlooking the ocean. Overnight Galle.

## **Saturday 2 March 2024 (B/L/D) – Galle to Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage and to Kandy**

An early start today to rejoin our private train and return to Colombo Fort Station. If we've used the T1 Railcar to Galle, we change to the Viceroy Special for our first of many experiences aboard another of our private train experiences in Sri Lanka. The train has two air-conditioned observation/saloon cars, one on each end, and a non air-conditioned restaurant car in the middle. With plenty of space aboard you can stretch out, change seats, move around the train, and enjoy views from the rear observation car of the countryside through which we are passing. The restaurant car will supply our meals when we are aboard for lunch, and morning and afternoon tea are also provided. A bar provides a range of cool drinks, beer and wine. You can enjoy sitting at the dining car table with the windows open enjoying fresh air as we travel. Once on board we farewell Colombo Fort and enjoy luncheon aboard enroute to Rambukkana. Here we leave the Viceroy to visit the spectacular Elephant Orphanage at Pinnawela - this 24 acre large elephant orphanage is also a breeding place for elephants and has the greatest herd of elephants in captivity in the world. Rejoin the Viceroy and head north-east to the hillside city of Kandy. On leaving Rambukkana, the Kadugannawa Incline begins, where the train climbs 430 metres in 20 kilometres, often on a ledge of rock cut out of the hillside with some dizzy-making views.



Kandy is the hill capital of Sri Lanka, and comes complete with a romantic lake much loved by the British, and has an agreeable climate due to its altitude of 500m. Kandy was the last bastion of the Sinhala kings and is a charming city offering a living record of a magnificent past. Some say Kandy is the only other real 'city' in Sri Lanka, other than Colombo. The easygoing capital offers history, culture, forested hills and a touch of urban buzz. Whilst only 115 km inland from the capital, climatically it is a world away due to its altitude. Kandy fell to the British in 1815 after defying the Portuguese and Dutch for three centuries. Dinner and overnight, Kandy.



**Sunday 3 March 2024 (B/D) – Kandy sightseeing and optional Matale train journey**

After breakfast explore Kandy, including Kandy Lake – a lovely centrepiece to the town created in 1807 by Sri Wickrama Rajasinha, the last ruler of the kingdom of Kandy. Several small-scale local chiefs, who protested because their people objected to labouring on the project, were put to death at stakes in the lake bed. The island in the centre was used as Sri Wickrama Rajasinha's personal harem, to which he crossed on a barge. Later the British used it as an ammunition store and added the fortress style parapet around the perimeter of the lake. Peradeniya Gardens provide spectacles of extraordinary beauty and absorbing interest for any nature lover - dating from 14th century reign of King Vikrama Bahu III, Peradeniya is well known for its large variety of plants, ornaments and creepers. The great lawns highlight huge tropical trees and variety of bamboo, and the Orchid House boasts more than 300 varieties of exquisite orchids. A spice garden gives you a first hand introduction to the trees and plants used for the traditional Ayurvedic medicine. The Dalada Maligawa (Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic) is the most venerated place of worship for Buddhists throughout the world. Built in the 16th century this temple houses the sacred Tooth Relic of the Buddha brought to Sri Lanka from the Kalinga province in ancient India in the 4th century AD. Several buildings have been added to the temple complex by successive rulers, the latest being the Golden Canopy over the inner shrine where the Tooth Relic is placed. There is also the option for an afternoon journey to Matale, a short branch line from Kandy, aboard a regular passenger service. (O) depends on train schedules at the time. Enjoy a refreshing evening swim, dinner and cultural performance and overnight Kandy.

**Monday 4 March 2024 (B/L/D) – from Kandy to Nanu Oya and Nuwara Eliya**

We travel on our special train from Kandy to Nanu Oya, and then transfer the short distance by coach to Nuwara Eliya - "the prettiest village in Sri Lanka". We enjoy lunch aboard as we climb through this very beautiful hill country. Situated at around 2000m above sea level and surrounded by lush tea plantations, Nuwara Eliya is the main hill resort of Sri Lanka and the heart of the tea industry. Once a pleasure retreat of the European planters the town is still very much an English town with many English style bungalows and buildings. The city was founded by Samuel Baker, the discoverer of Lake Albert and the explorer of the Nile in 1846. Many of the buildings retain features from the colonial period such as the Queen's Cottage, General's House, the Grand Hotel, the Hill Club, and the town's Post Office. Overnight at the Grand Hotel, Nuwara Eliya.





## **Tuesday 5 March 2024 (B/L/D) – through picturesque ‘upcountry’ to Badulla**

We enjoy a scenic rail journey to Badulla and back, with luncheon served aboard as we ascend to the highest point on the Sri Lankan railways network. The train ride to the hill country is considered to be amongst the finest train journeys in the world. The rail track ascends from sea level to the summit level of 1900 metres at Pattipola, the highest point reached by a 5' 6" broad gauge main line in the world. A great train journey is all about the subtle shift in geography as the journey progress through narrow passages, mountains and valleys, meadows and forests, and waterfalls. The magnificent railway bridges and tunnels are remarkable feats of engineering in a bygone era. The mainline to Badulla takes a circuitous route in the hills through tea estates, pine forests and misty peaks passing picturesque waterfalls and hair-raising precipices. It is recorded that it was no ordinary task building the upcountry line which traverses 46 tunnels and over towering dressed-stone piers which hold steel bridges that were formed in distant Glasgow and Liverpool. We return in the late afternoon to Nuwara Eliya for dinner and overnight.

## **Wednesday 6 March 2024 (B/L/D) – Nuwara Eliya to Kandy**

We return today through the hill country to Kandy. You have the option to travel on the Viceroy Train, or by coach, with the latter providing the opportunity for a visit to a tea plantation and tea factory enroute. In Kandy we stay in the centre of the town, opposite the great lake, at the Queens hotel, a simpler colonial edifice of much heritage, providing a most convenient location for local shopping and a walk around the lake. Dinner and overnight at the Queens Hotel, Kandy.



## **Thursday 7 March 2024 (B/L/D) – Kandy to Habarana and Sigiriya**

Join our private Viceroy Train and enjoy luncheon aboard as we head to Habarana, where our coach transfers us to our hotel at the base of the famed Sigiriya Rock Fortress. Our base for two nights we visit three major sights – Minneriya Nature Reserve, Sigiriya Rock Fortress, and Dambulla Cave Temple. Overnight Sigiriya Village Hotel.

## **Friday 8 March 2024 (B/D) – Sigiriya Rock Fortress and Minneriya Nature Reserve**

An early rise to visit Sigiriya - an ancient palace of historical and archaeological significance that is dominated by a massive column of rock nearly 200 metres high. As we are located at one of the closest hotels to Sigiriya, we have the opportunity to visit the site and walk to the peak in the cool of the morning, and before many other tourists arrive – the early start will be rewarded with a peaceful beginning and stunning views. According to the ancient Sri Lankan chronicle the Culavamsa, this site was selected by King Kasyapa (477 – 495 CE) for his new capital. He built his palace on the top of this rock and decorated its sides with colourful frescoes. On a small plateau about halfway up the side of this rock he built a gateway in the form of an enormous lion. The capital and the royal palace were abandoned after the king's death, and it was used as a Buddhist monastery until the 14th century. Sigiriya today is a UNESCO listed World Heritage Site. It is one of the best preserved examples of ancient urban planning and is the most visited historic site in Sri Lanka. For those who do not wish to climb Sigiriya, and indeed for those who do as well, we will visit the nearby museum which provides information and displays about the history of this extraordinary site.



This afternoon we visit the Minneriya Nature reserve - a park of 8890 hectares that consists of mixed evergreen forest and scrub areas and is home to Sri Lanka 's favourites such as sambar deer, leopards, monkeys, water birds and elephants. The park is an attraction to large numbers of Sri Lankan animals who are attracted to the grass fields and food and shelter of the parks forests. However the central historic feature of the park is the ancient Minneriya Tank (built in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD by King Mahasena). We explore the park in 4WD vehicles, and travel over unsealed, and at times bumpy, dirt paths. Dinner and overnight at the Sigiriya Village Hotel.

### **Saturday 9 March 2024 (B/L/D) –Dambulla Cave Temple and to Trincomalee**

This morning we visit Dambulla Cave Temple - a sacred pilgrimage site for twenty-two centuries, this cave monastery, with its five sanctuaries, is the largest, best-preserved cave-temple complex in Sri Lanka. The Buddhist mural paintings (covering an area of 2,100 square metres) are of particular importance, as are the 157 statues. The excavated shrine-caves, their painted surfaces and statuary are unique in scale and degree of preservation. The monastery also includes significant masterpieces of 18th century art, in the Sri Lankan school of Kandy. The rock of Dambulla is the centre of a Buddhist cave-temple complex established in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC and occupied continuously until today.



We rejoin our special train at Gal Oya for the short journey to Trincomalee. At Trinco, as it is called, we transfer to our luxury hotel on a secluded beach in Uppuveli, north of Trincomalee for an overnight stay near the water. Uppuveli is known for its soft, white sandy beaches, mixed with mineral-rich black sand unique to this coastal strip on the Indian Ocean. Knee deep warm shallow water spreads out hundreds of metres into the sea. Trincomalee is one of the great natural harbor of the world - the fifth largest and considered the second best, and Admiral Lord Nelson described it as the finest harbour in the world when he visited the island in 1770. During the Second World War, it became the base for the combined East Asian Fleet of the Allied powers. The journey begins at the second largest natural harbor in the world. We explore the harbour mouth across the lagoon, settled amidst fourteen majestic mountains. We visit the Koneswaram Temple dedicated to the Hindu God Shiva, the shrine built by a South Indian King was destroyed by the Portuguese in 1622. The temple of a thousand columns was shoved over the cliff into the deep blue sea. Observe the magnificent view from Swami Rock and the famous Lovers Leap steeped in a romantic folktale. We'll saunter through Fort Fredrick, a well preserved Portuguese gateway constructed with the remnants of the destroyed Koneswaram Temple. Overnight Chaaya Blu Resort, Uppuveli, Trincomalee.

### **Sunday 10 March 2024 (B/L/D) – Trincomalee to Batticaloa**

A relaxing day aboard the Viceroy train, with luncheon aboard, as we travel on an inland circuit from Trincomalee to Gal Oya and on to Batticaloa. We stay two nights at the Passekudah beach resort, near Batticaloa. Passekudah is an exotic beach where you can walk on the wide sandy beaches 30 to 50 metres into the sea. Waves are almost non-existent, making the sea look more like a lagoon. Dinner and overnight Uga Bay Resort, Passekudah.





## Monday 11 March 2024 (B/L/D) – Batticaloa

Historically, Batticaloa is best known as the site of the first landing (in 1602) by the Dutch in Sri Lanka, and as the place where they established their first lasting foothold on the island by seizing the local fort from the resident Portuguese in 1638. As the principal east-coast settlement south of Trincomalee, “Batti” is one of Sri Lanka’s most appealing but least-known larger towns, mainly thanks to its long years of isolation and turbulence during the civil war. Throughout the conflict, the town and surrounding area was a major flashpoint between Tamil Tigers and Sri Lankan Army forces, with the army controlling the town and the Tamil Tigers running their own parallel administration – complete with courts, police force and tax collectors – from the village of Kokkadicholai, a short drive south. As Indian journalist Nirupama Subramanian put it in *Sri Lanka: Voices from a War Zone*: “Technically, Batticaloa town came under the government ... That was by day. By night, the town took orders from the Tigers.” The Tigers are now gone, and intriguing reminders of Batti’s long colonial history can still be seen, while the mercantile hustle and bustle of the main commercial areas suggests a town now increasingly on the mend. The town’s setting is magical, perched on a narrow sliver of land backed by the serpentine Batticaloa Lagoon and surrounded by water on three sides. We return to our resort in the early afternoon for luncheon, and then a relaxing afternoon in and around the resort. Overnight Uga Bay Resort, Passekudah.



## Tuesday 12 March 2024 (B/L/D) – Batticaloa to Polonnaruwa

We rejoin our special Viceroy Train for the journey from Batticaloa to Polonnaruwa. Here we visit the UNESCO world heritage site and the medieval capital of Sri Lanka. The people of Sri Lanka are very proud of Polonnaruwa and the level of civilisation it shows their ancestors had attained. It was the capital of the country from 200 AD until 1300, when it was sacked by Indian invaders – today it is the best preserved of the ruined cities. The Sri Lankans invite you to appreciate the size of the site and what they call their hydraulic civilisation — the city was supplied with water channelled from the still-existing 2500 hectare reservoir known as the Sea of Parakrama. We also visit the Gal Vihara Rock Monastery - the most celebrated site in Polonnaruwa, with its gigantic rock sculptures which “may be placed among the chefs-d’oeuvre of Sinhalese art”. Overnight Deer Park Hotel, Giritale.



### **Wednesday 13 March 2024 (B/L/D) – to Polonnaruwa, and then north to Jaffna**

A relaxing day travelling west through Maho Junction with luncheon served aboard, and north to Anuradhapura. We then head north for three hours to Jaffna - the capital city of the Northern Province of Sri Lanka, and the administrative headquarters of the Jaffna district located on the peninsula of the same name. With a population of 88,138, Jaffna is Sri Lanka's 12th largest city. The area is slowly returning as a bastion of Hindu tradition, art and culture, after decades of war, emigration, embargoes and loss of life and property, that have deeply affected this historic Tamil town. The city is surprisingly green and leafy, with attractive palm-shaded colonial-era suburbs and beautiful temples and churches. We base ourselves for two nights in Jaffna at a one of the cities newest hotels – one of the signs of Jaffna's emergence from the period of isolation. Dinner tonight in the resort. Overnight Jaffna.

### **Thursday 14 March 2024 (B/D) – Jaffna and Kankasanturai sightseeing**

After breakfast we board our coach for a day of sightseeing around Jaffna and Kankasanturai. Kankasanturai is a tongue twister even for Sri Lankans, and so they call it KKS. KKS, like most places in the north of Sri Lanka, has war associated with its identity. The story of displacement is the most poignant in this coastal area towards the northern tip of Sri Lanka, but it is also an ideal base for forays to the idyllic islands just to the west, and trips along the coastline and lagoons of the surrounding peninsula. Overlooking the Jaffna lagoon, sections of the vast complex of Jaffna fort (once one of the greatest Dutch forts in Asia) have been recently restored, though it remains largely in ruins. It was built in 1680 over an earlier Portuguese original, and defensive triangles were added in 1792 to produce the classic Vaubanesque star form. Tellingly, one of the first major buildings to be rebuilt after the 2002 ceasefire was Jaffna's Public Library. The earlier library was burnt down by pro-government mobs (some say forces) in July 1981, a destruction deemed a cultural attack by many Tamils – few acts were more significant in the build-up to civil war. Right next to Keerimalai springs is the Naguleswaran temple. In fact, the springs are a part of this overall temple complex. This temple or kovil as the locals will call it is one of the five sacred spots dedicated to Lord Shiva in Sri Lanka. Today we also visit a local orphanage where one of our SJR travellers is very active in supporting this and other orphanages, as well as funding water treatment plants for visitors – this will be a special opportunity to witness first hand the work being done to assist the local people after the civil war. We'll enjoy a day of sights and return in the mid afternoon to Jaffna for dinner and overnight accommodation.



### **Friday 15 March 2024 (B/L/D) – the ruined city of Anuradhapura**

After breakfast we board our private Viceroy train and head south towards the historic city of Anuradhapura. We plan to visit a local village for lunch before continuing by coach to Anuradhapura - another of the great ruined cities of Sri Lanka, and the capital before Polonnaruwa. Anuradhapura was the first capital of the ancient kingdom of Sri Lanka and founded around the 5th Century BC. The sacred city which spreads through approximately 100 acres (40 hectares) of land area is home to the ruins of huge stupas, monasteries, Buddha images, and colossal man-made lakes and ponds, hospital complexes, storied buildings and stone inscriptions that represent the advanced architectural, civil and hydraulic expertise of ancient Sri Lanka. The Sacred Bo-tree which was planted in 245 BC symbolizes the establishment of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. It is said to have been grown from a cutting taken from the original Bo tree under which Buddha attained enlightenment and is one of the oldest known trees in the world. Dinner and overnight, Anuradhapura.

### **Saturday 16 March 2024 (B/L/D) – to Ragama and Negombo**

Today we enjoy our last journey on our special Viceroy Express train as we travel from Anuradhapura to Ragama, with luncheon aboard. We farewell our Viceroy Express train crew who have looked after us for the past few weeks. We then transfer by coach the short distance to Negombo, for our last two nights in Sri Lanka. Known for its fishing industry and its sandy beaches, we enjoy an afternoon walk or swim on the beach or at the lovely hotel pool, and then dinner overlooking the ocean. Overnight Jetwing Blue Hotel, Negombo.



## **Sunday 17 March 2024 – (B/D) Negombo**

Our final day in Sri Lanka provides an opportunity to relax at the Jetwing Blue Hotel on the edge of the ocean, or for some simple exploration of the nearby city of Negombo. Dotted around the city are a number of monuments that showcase the legacy of the Portuguese and Dutch Empires that once occupied the land. Negombo is also famous for its lagoon and golden sandy beaches, as well as restaurants and some local last minute shopping. We enjoy our final dinner together at the resort. Overnight Negombo.



## **Monday 18 March 2024 (B/) – to Singapore and Australia**

After a relaxing morning we transfer to Colombo Airport (only 7km away) mid morning for flights back to Australia. Transit Singapore for overnight flight to Australia. Alternatively you may wish to overnight at Singapore airport for a daylight flight back to Australia.

## **Tuesday 19 March 2024 – arriving Australia**

Those flying overnight from Singapore arrive Australia early morning, or late afternoon/early evening for those who stayed last night in Singapore.

## **ACCOMMODATION, MEALS AND OPTIONAL EXTRAS**

Accommodation is in 4 - 4 ½ star hotels. In some locations the best available may not be 4 star, and in some locations we have selected superior hotels as part of the experience of the location. Most meals are included as shown – with breakfast included most mornings. Meals included are indicated as (B) Breakfast, (L) Luncheon and (D) Dinner. A few optional extras are available – indicated as (O) in the itinerary – which are not included and may be possible for additional cost if you so desire.

## **PERSONAL SERVICE AND MEETING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS**

SJR prides itself on its personal service and attention to detail. The tour is escorted by the organiser of the itinerary. You are assured of the utmost service and our commitment to your satisfaction. We recognise that each passenger has different interests, and we will aim to provide the opportunity to allow you to rest from the group, explore by yourself or visit special sites you've read about – if you wish. Detailed advice and assistance will be given to help you, and most travel requirements can be made for you.

## FARES AND BOOKING PROCEDURES

The tour is limited in size, with a maximum of 24 participants. Bookings will be confirmed in order of receipt of a deposit of \$3,000 per person. **The tour fare is \$14,765\* per person (twin share) plus airfares from Australia, with a \$2,870\* single supplement for hotels.** The tour fare includes all hotels in Sri Lanka; rail, private train and coach travel in Sri Lanka, all bus, tram, metro and light rail transfers when part of the group; all accommodation on a twin share basis (single accommodation is available on payment of the sole use supplement); sightseeing and entrance fees to sites as indicated, in the brochure, meals as shown in the itinerary for each day, as well as portage at hotels, and gratuities for the Viceroy Train staff, coach drivers and tour guide. The fare does not include airfares to / from Colombo, accommodation enroute, meals not identified, drinks, excess baggage charges, gratuities other than those mentioned above, telephone calls, laundry, any items of a personal nature, travel outside the organised group. Additional or optional activities or entrance fees are not included in the cost. Bookings should be made on the attached form. The deposit of \$3,000 per person should be forwarded by cheque, payable to Scenic Journeys by Rail, along with the booking form, to: SJR, PO Box N400, GROSVENOR PLACE, 1220

You can also pay the deposit by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT):

Account name: Scenic Journeys by Rail  
BSB: 033 364  
Account: 612826  
Reference: Your name and 'Sri Lanka'

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If paying by EFT, include the reference above and your surname, and email to [sjr@digitor.com.au](mailto:sjr@digitor.com.au) to advise you have paid. Please forward the booking form to the postal address above.

## AIR TRAVEL TO/FROM SRI LANKA

A range of flight options exist for travel from Australia to Sri Lanka. Our recommended option is Singapore Airlines or Qantas to/from Singapore, and then Sri Lankan Airlines from Singapore to Colombo and return. On receipt of booking we'll contact you to discuss your flight preferences and with our travel agent Travel Associates, Paddington, we will identify the best airfare to meet your travel needs. Business Class seating is also available on all flights.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Please call us on (02) 9326 9660, 0418 585 838 or email at [sjr@digitor.com.au](mailto:sjr@digitor.com.au) for further details or information.

## BOOKING, CANCELLATION AND TRAVEL CONDITIONS

**Bookings** will be accepted on the attached form. Cancellation fees apply as follows: the initial deposit is non-refundable. After payment of further deposits towards the final tour cost, costs for tickets, accommodation, sightseeing etc made on your behalf will incur cancellation charges equal to the cancellation charges incurred to us, imposed by suppliers/operators, plus a fee to cover administrative costs – more than three months prior to departure, \$2,000 per person. No refund will be made from three months prior to departure from Australia. Cancellation fees for hotel, rail, coach and other travel components apply in accordance with the terms and conditions of the providers. (Note conditions relating to COVID-19 below.) All cancellation or administration charges imposed by the suppliers/operators of components of this tour must be borne by you, the passenger. **Responsibility** - St James' Rail acts as the organiser of the tour. Some transportation, accommodation and other tour arrangements are made by licensed travel agent, Travel Associates, Paddington. On acceptance of tickets and travel documents for this tour, which may be evidenced in writing by a ticket, voucher, letter, or other document, you accept that neither St James' Rail nor representatives from any other firm supplying services in conjunction with this tour programme, shall be liable in contract or in tort (actionable wrong) for any injury, loss, damage, accident, sickness, delay or additional expense to you or your possessions arising directly or indirectly by force majeure or other events which are beyond our control, or which are not preventable by reasonable diligence on our part, including, but not limited to, civil disturbance, fire, floods, acts of God, acts of Governments or other authorities, changes in itinerary, weather, strikes, war, transportation disruption, failure of machinery or equipment, industrial action, pandemic, quarantine or any other cause. Where travel is by scheduled carrier, or charter service, that carrier's responsibility is limited in accordance with their conditions of carriage. Similarly, all luggage is your responsibility, and we cannot be held liable for any loss or delay however caused. The care of your travel documents are your own responsibility. All expenses incurred by loss must be borne by you. Airline regulations and conditions are written on the airline tickets and are issued to passengers subject to their acceptance of these conditions. Changes in exchange rates, taxes and any land arrangements costs may alter the price of the tour, and St James' Rail reserves the right to change, amend or cancel this tour and/or itinerary if necessary. We reserve the right to amend the itinerary en route to account for unforeseen changes or conditions, or to improve the tour experience for the majority, as determined by the tour leader.



Passports and visas – a valid passport with six months validity from the end of the tour is required. St James' Rail cannot accept responsibility for any losses or expenses incurred as a result of a passenger not holding valid and necessary passport or visa documents. Full details of terms and conditions: if you would like a copy of the full terms and conditions applicable to all SJR tours please contact us and we will forward a copy to you. ***Special conditions relating to Government imposed restrictions*** – if the tour is unable to proceed due to Government restrictions, SJR may at our election: postpone your travel arrangements to a future date, in which case we will issue you with a credit note equal to amounts paid at the time of postponement; or cancel your travel arrangements, in which case our contract with you will terminate. If we cancel your travel arrangements and our contract terminates, neither of us will have any claim for damages against the other. However, we will refund payments made by you less unrecoverable third-party costs and less fair compensation for work undertaken by us up until the time of termination and in connection with the processing of any refund. SJR will refund payments it is able to recover or not incur from the various suppliers of services to this tour. Refunds will be made when the funds have been received by SJR from third party suppliers. **Full details of terms and conditions:** if you would like a copy of the full terms and conditions applicable to all SJR tours please contact us and we will forward a copy to you.

## VISA

A visa is required for entry to Sri Lanka and we will advise on arrangements for organising the visa.

## INSURANCE

Travel insurance is highly recommended to protect yourself against cancellation fees, health and other travel risks. An insurance policy can be sent to you from our travel agent, Travel Associates, Paddington, for your consideration. Obtaining insurance cover for the tour is your responsibility.

# SRI LANKA ABOARD THE VICEROY SPECIAL

## Sunday 25 February to Monday 18 March 2024

### Booking Form

#### YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

Name: .....

Address: ..... Suburb: ..... Postcode: .....

Home tel: ..... Work tel: ..... Mobile: .....

#### BOOKING DETAILS (Full passenger names as shown on your passport)

Passenger 1 Name: .....

Date of Birth: ..... Passport No: ..... Expiry Date: .....

Passenger 2 Name: .....

Date of Birth: ..... Passport No: ..... Expiry Date: .....

Passenger 3 Name: .....

Date of Birth: ..... Passport No: ..... Expiry Date: .....

Passenger 4 Name: .....

Date of Birth: ..... Passport No: ..... Expiry Date: .....

#### PAYMENT

..... I have enclosed \$ ..... as deposit (\$3,000 per person) for the above booking. Please make cheques payable to Scenic Journeys by Rail.

..... I have paid by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) as described previously. Please email SJR to advise and send this form.

Account name: Scenic Journeys by Rail  
BSB: 033 364  
Account: 612826  
Reference: Your name and 'Sri Lanka'

A letter will be sent acknowledging receipt of your deposit and providing further details.

#### AIR TRAVEL TO/FROM SRI LANKA (WE WILL CALL TO DISCUSS AND CONFIRM ARRANGEMENTS)

..... Please book me/us to travel to and from Sri Lanka with the recommended flights and advise me of the best airfare.

..... Economy class air travel ..... Business class air travel

..... Please book us in the Singapore Changi Airport hotel on the night of 25 February 2024

..... Please call me to discuss air travel options.

..... I will make my/our own air travel arrangements and meet you in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 26 February 2024.

#### HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

Single rooms: ..... Double rooms: ..... Twin (two bedded) rooms: .....

A single supplement is payable for sole use of rooms in hotels.



## SPECIAL REQUESTS

Please indicate any dietary or any other sort of special request : .....

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## INSURANCE

..... Please send an insurance policy from Travel Associates, Paddington.

## YOUR SIGNATURE

I have read the reservation conditions outlined above and accept them on behalf of myself and my party by whom I am authorised to make this agreement.

Signature of person making reservation: ..... Date: .....

Cancellation charges will apply as advised in this itinerary. An insurance policy can be forwarded from our travel agent at Travel Associates, Level 1, 209 Glenmore Road, Paddington 2021, Tel: 02 9388 2900

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Telephone 02 9326 9660  
Email [sjr@digitor.com.au](mailto:sjr@digitor.com.au)

Mobile 0418 585 838  
Web [www.stjamesrail.org](http://www.stjamesrail.org)

March 2023

# RAILWAY NETWORK OF SRI LANKA

