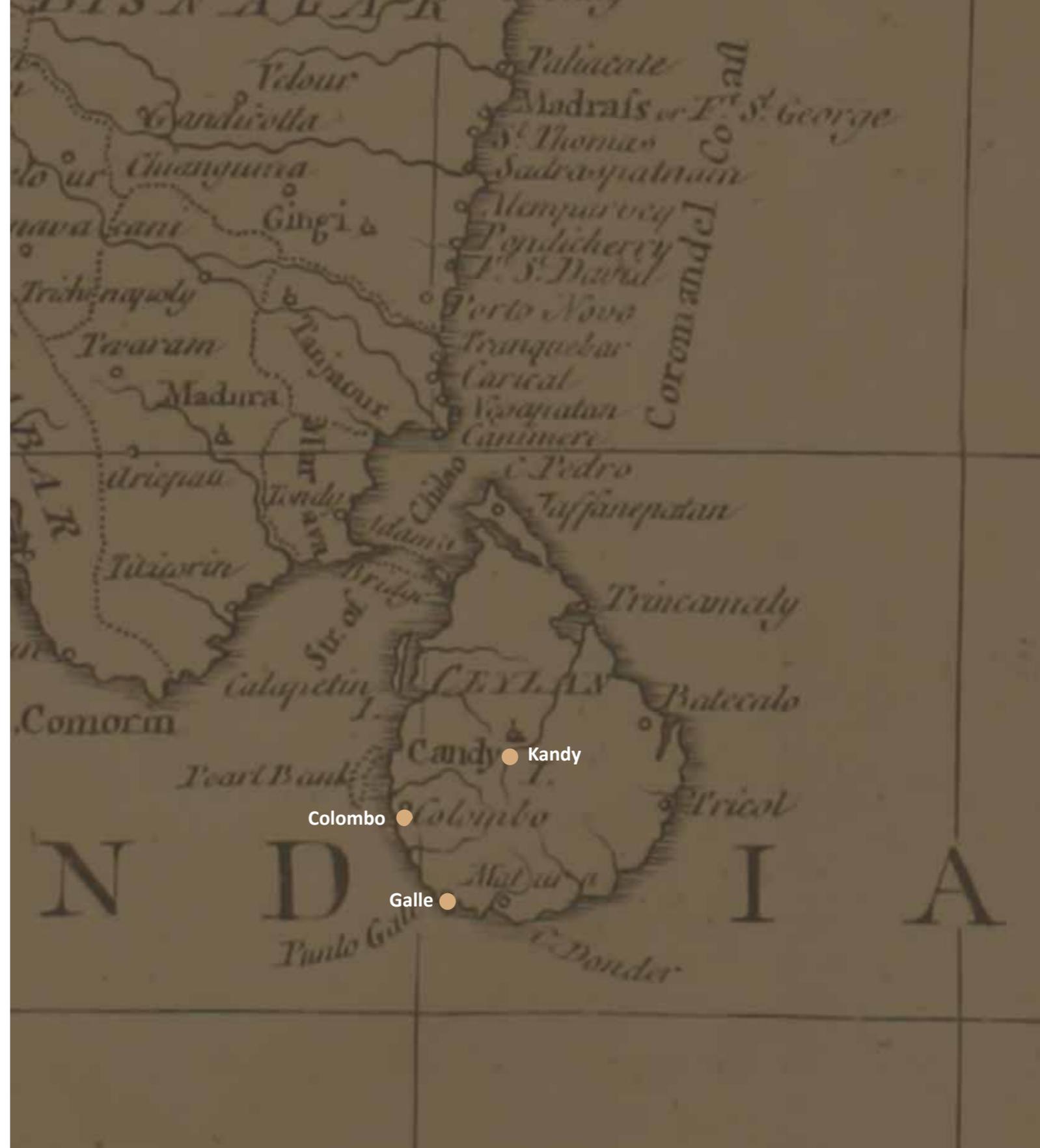


PEPPER

*A handpicked collection of experiences
to season your trip in Sri Lanka*





Every leisured taste can be gratified – whether it be antiquarian, aesthetic, ethnological, entomological, botanical or sporting; and when it is considered that the gratification of such tastes can be accomplished in such an agreeable climate and during a period where the very opposite conditions prevail in Europe, it is almost a wonder that any that can avail themselves of these opportunities fail to do so



Henry Cave, The Book Of Ceylon, 1908

With more than a decade spent exploring the island of Sri Lanka, our intrepid team at Pepper understands that travel is about really connecting with a destination through the extraordinary and life-enriching experiences you encounter on the way.

Guided by Sri Lanka’s leading experiential travel experts, Pepper’s exceptional on the ground knowledge and impassioned specialists, have scoured the island in search of a collection of curated experiences which offer an insightful perspective for visitors. Our intentions are simple: to showcase Sri Lankan diversity and provide

travellers with the opportunity to engage in meaningful and authentic encounters with local people, whilst creating life-long memories and promoting the conservation of the island.

Discover the country’s many hidden corners, intriguing past and sensational dishes, as a variety of experts, authors, artists and historians draw you into a world of creativity and storytelling. Allow us to Pepper your journey with tailor-made and innovative experiences found away from the well-trodden tourist trail and transform your trip.



www.pepper.life
 experiences@pepper.life
 +94 77 008 8877
 facebook.com/peppersrilanka
 instagram.com/peppersrilanka

Contents

Colombo

- 12 **URBANATOMY**
- 13 Colombo’s Backstreets
- 13 Hidden History
- 15 Colombo after Dark by Bicycle
- 15 Colonial Colombo
- 16 **A TASTE OF CULTURE**
- 17 Sensory Sri Lanka
- 17 Cooking by Colour
- 18 Artisanal Tea Tasting

Galle and the South Coast

- 24 **WITH THE KIDS**
- 25 Galle Fort Treasure Hunt
- 25 Surf School
- 26 Mask Making with a Master Craftsman
- 26 Art on the Ramparts
- 27 **WALK THE FORT**
- 28 The Lesser-Known Fort
- 28 A Walk through Time
- 29 Fort Architecture
- 29 Fort Photography

30 EPICURIOUS

- 31 Bespoke Dining
- 31 Roti in a Rice Paddy
- 32 I Do, Take Two
- 32 Lunuganga
- 33 Myths and Legends

34 MARKET TO MOUTH

- 35 Paddy Island Cooking
- 35 Why not Cook?
- 36 Food for the Soul
- 36 Curry at Kikili
- 37 A Taste of the East

38 HOMEGROWN

- 39 Tea Tasting
- 39 The Scent of Cinnamon

40 EXPLORE BY BIKE

- 41 Paddies and Plantations
- 41 A Village Ride

42 INTO THE BLUE

- 43 Giants of the Ocean
- 43 Sail Away
- 44 Ocean Safari with a Marine Biologist

45 MIND, BODY AND SOUL

- 46 Quantum Yoga
- 46 A Southern Sanctuary
- 47 Work Out with Mr Sri Lanka

Kandy and Tea Country

52 INTO THE HILLS

- 53 Trekking the Knuckles Range
- 53 Over the River Kwai
- 54 Sri Pada

55 KANDY’S CANVAS

- 56 Gods, Kings and Men
- 56 Art and Philosophy
- 57 Drums and Fire
- 57 Batik and Lunch at Ena de Silva’s Workshop

58 CEYLON TEA

- 59 Sri Lanka’s Tea Train
- 59 A Tale of Tea

60 BOTANY

- 61 The Secret Garden
- 61 The Heart of Paradise (Botanical Gardens with an Expert)

“The island of Ceylon is a small universe; it contains as many variations of culture, scenery and climate as some countries a dozen times its size”

– Arthur C Clarke



Sri Lanka's Six Stories

Broadly speaking, Sri Lanka can be explored from six different perspectives. You might want to focus on or connect with some of these defining cultural aspects with more intensity than others.

THE TEA EXPERIENCE – Sri Lanka is home to the best tea in the world: learn about the industry, taste the many varieties, meet planters, walk in tea plantations, learn about the plucking and making of tea and stay in colonial tea planters' bungalows.

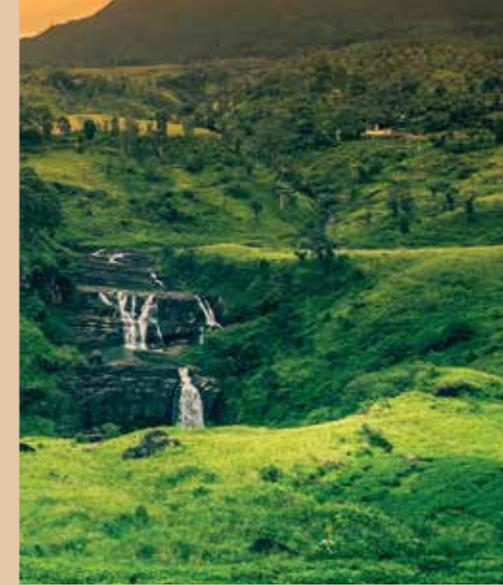
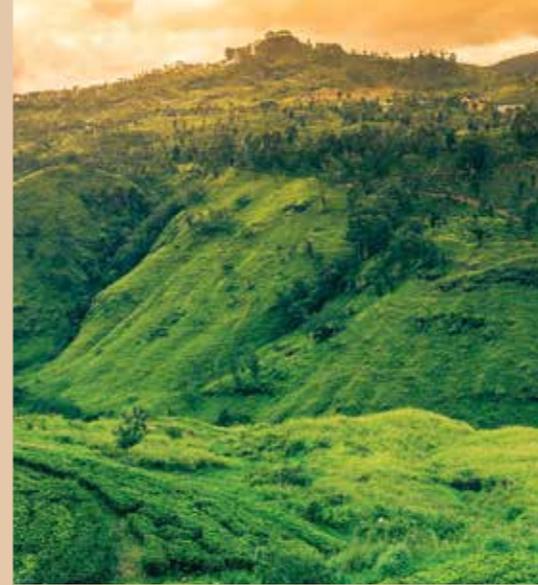
BUDDHISM – Sri Lanka is a mainly Buddhist nation. Observe monks in robes, temples and sacred trees, aralias and lotus flowers, reclining Buddha, banyan trees, chanting, art and iconography depicting scenes of the Ramayana. A journey around Sri Lanka is an opportunity to learn and connect with Buddhism.

SRI LANKA'S ANCIENT CITIES – Sri Lanka is full of ancient ruins which lie amidst jungle. Discover folklore, legends of great battles and stories of kingdoms from a bygone era.

WILDLIFE – Amongst the most biodiverse countries in the world, Sri Lanka boasts its own big five: the blue whale, sperm whale, leopard, elephant and sloth bear. See the largest mammal on land and in the sea within just a few hour's drive of each other.

SRI LANKA'S COLONIAL HERITAGE – 500 years of colonisation by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British has visibly left its mark upon Sri Lanka. The remains of beautiful colonial architecture and period furniture can be found across the country. Take a look a little deeper and influences are also evident in customs, language and food. A journey around Sri Lanka is an opportunity to connect with the development of a country that for the past 500 years has been a major port of call in the spice trade and an important colonial establishment.

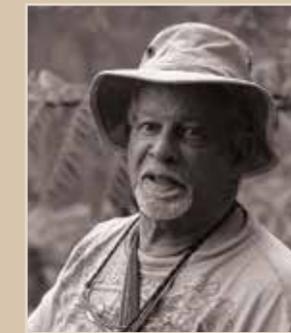
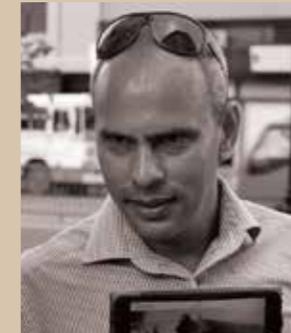
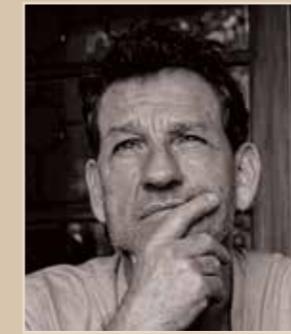
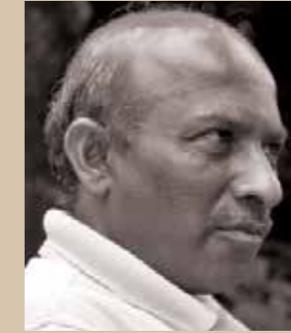
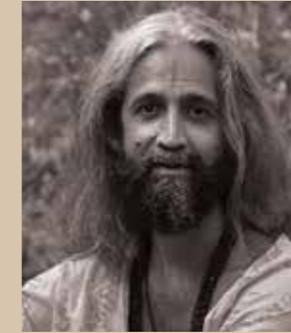
BAWA – This is the architect you want to learn about and understand. Geoffrey Bawa was an extraordinary man and his legacy is very much alive in Sri Lanka, but to understand Bawa one needs to read a little about his early years: his sources of inspiration, his challenges in life and his amazing travels. Then, of course, visiting and staying in some of the places he designed is a must.



Hosted Experiences

“ The magic of travel is about the people you meet along the way ”

Our hosted experiences allow you privileged access to some of Sri Lanka's most unique and thought-provoking personalities, allowing you to get a feel for the country's character and make some unforgettable connections. Take the time to explore the backstreets of the city with a resident historian, taste tea with the experts, cook with expert chefs and spot whales with a marine biologist. Our exclusive hosts, many of whom are notoriously private people, are in a range of different fields, working as artists, chefs, businessmen, local states people, historians, architects and many more. Our hosted experiences are authentic and distinctive, drawing you into a story of local life in Sri Lanka and helping you to scratch underneath the surface of the island.





Colombo

“ This colorful city on the Indian Ocean, with its laid-back island ambience, palm trees, decaying colonial buildings and smattering of modern office blocks, is the perfect place to get a sense of where Sri Lanka is going ”

36 Hours in Colombo, Nel Mcshane Wulfhart for the New York Times, 2013



Colombo has a contagious energy. On an island where life moves at a laid-back pace, Colombo really is the driving force behind the ideas and innovation that are pulsing through the country. Development can be seen in every aspect of life in Colombo, but with it has emerged a sensitivity to the environment, a movement towards sustainable and healthy living, and a willingness to protect and nurture the history and culture that underpins the country as a whole.

But Colombo is also a city of contradiction where the air is either hot and flavoured with spices or fresh and fragrant with the salty sea breeze. It is a place teeming with chaos, but tranquillity can still be found. Retreat to the broad tree-lined streets of Cinnamon Gardens or in the many serene temples (Hindu and Buddhist), which hide shyly down the streets. It's a city where modern design is contrasted with ancient architecture, and where the avant-garde almost always comes served with a slice of history. In Colombo you can eat crab in the 16th century Dutch Hospital, drink a cocktail in an 18th century asylum or sleep in a 200-year-old mansion that once belonged to one of the richest trading families on the island.



Urbanatomy

“Colombo has transformed itself. Once a shabby sprawl, to be skirted briskly en route to the beaches of the south, it’s become a confident, cosmopolitan, culture-rich hub.”

Rupert Mellor, The Wall Street Journal, 2014



Colombo's Backstreets

Colombo is a city which can be fascinatingly contradictory. The bustling area of Slave Island, in particular, can be somewhat illogical and overwhelming to visitors and you could be forgiven for not wanting to brave it alone, but if you take the time to visit you'll quickly discover that it is one of the most interesting areas of the city. Named, literally, because of its association with African slaves housed in the area during Portuguese rule, this now bustling commercial thoroughfare by the recently replenished Beira Lake was once surrounded by crocodile-filled canals that give the impression of an island. The slaves were released long ago and the crocodiles were cleared out over time, but Slave Island is still awash with remnants of the past. Walk through this historic district with a distinguished conservationist whose narrative will bring Slave Island's captivating chronicles to life.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 4:00pm – 6:00pm
- **INCLUDES:** A guide, water, umbrellas
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Not for small children, but a walk tailored to suit the interests of children can be organized
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing and a cap



Hidden History

Colombo is Sri Lanka's multifaceted commercial capital; a city with an intriguing mix of history, colonial buildings, ruins, modern developments and a vibrant yet chaotic nature that often confuses first-time visitors. The Fort area of the city is often overlooked by modern-day travellers, but having once been the initial landing place for colonial powers it has a long and colourful history. For many years the secrets of bygone eras stood locked in time within this region as it was partially cordoned off during the rule of the last government. At the start of 2015, these forgotten parts of the Fort area were opened up and some of Colombo's oldest buildings were once again revealed. This walk lets you explore Colombo's most historical area with a charming historian. Starting in the Fort and finishing up in Pettah, you'll quickly discover that his passion for the city is infectious.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 4:00pm – 6:00pm
- **INCLUDES:** A guide, water, umbrellas
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Not for small children, but a walk tailored to suit the interests of children can be organized
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing and a cap
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** The walk is not recommended on Sundays and Poya days (full moon). Although the host will conduct the walks on these days, they are not the best days, as the markets are closed

If you would like to enquire or book this experience call us on +94 77 00 888 77 or email us on experiences@pepper.life

Pepper

Colombo

14-15



Colombo after Dark by Bicycle

By day, Colombo is an all-engulfing sprawl of dizzying traffic, bustling markets, high-rise hotels, tiny corner shops, temples and street hawkers. By night, the city is transformed. Beautifully illuminated monuments and a warm evening breeze lend the city an air of grace. This tour gives you a great introduction to Colombo, covering a large area and offering unique insight into an often overlooked part of the country. Cycling through the chaos of traffic might sound a little intimidating at first but this carefully constructed route allows you to bypass much of the traffic allowing you a relatively easy passage. Your host will also equip you with everything you need for a comfortable and practical night cycling experience, from a reflective safety jacket and helmet through to glow stick wrist-bands! Finish up with a beer or the option of dinner by Galle Face Green and the Indian Ocean.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 5:30pm – 9:30pm
- **INCLUDES:** A local host, water, bikes, helmets, additional safety gear, snacks and drinks along the way, and a beer at the end. Dinner is not included unless specified by your consultant
- **DIFFICULTY:** Moderate. We rank this as moderate because you will need some skill in cycling and the traffic can be quite heavy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Suitable for children over the age of 12, providing that they can cycle
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Light comfortable clothing and trainers or shoes that you feel comfortable cycling in



Colonial Colombo

Once a sleepy sea port, Colombo's history took a dramatic change in the 16th century when it was seized by the Portuguese and developments began. By the 17th Century, the Portuguese were superseded by the Dutch, whose decadent churches and architectural influence remain present in Colombo today. By the end of the 18th Century, Colombo succumbed to the British, who capitalized and expanded upon many of the existing Dutch structures. They developed the Fort as their administrative base. These days, the many British-built buildings within the Fort are still very much in use as part of the central business district. In recent years Colombo has seen a revival of its colonial structures, with the government organizing sensitive restorations of many of the city's most impressive buildings. Take a tour of the city in a vintage car to re-live the glory days of Colombo's grandiose colonial history with an expert historian as your guide.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 7:00pm – 9:00pm
- **INCLUDES:** A local host, chauffeur driven vintage car, water, snacks and drinks along the way
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, older children but not families as there are only two seats in the car
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Dress the part! Colonial fashion from any era is all part of the fun!

If you would like to enquire or book this experience call us on +94 77 00 888 77 or email us on experiences@pepper.life

Pepper

Colombo

16-17

A Taste of Culture

“ All the food, whether coconut sambol made from coconut plucked from a nearby tree and served as part of a rice and curry, or a shrimp vadai (fritter) purchased from a vendor through a train window and wrapped in his children’s old schoolwork, bears marks of Sri Lanka’s geography and culture. ”

Naomi Tomky, Serious Eats, 2014



Sensory Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is a country which dances to its own rhythm, with a pace of life that can be as slow and steady as the beat of a Kandyan drum or somewhat chaotic like a film on fast-forward. Visitors to the island often find themselves facing an assault on the senses, which can be lessened by practising the art of mindfulness. Closely linked with traditional methods of meditation which have existed in Sri Lanka for thousands of years, mindfulness is thought to promote relaxation and general well-being. This approach links the mind and the body and involves paying attention to your breath, feelings, thoughts and sensations that occur within the body. Visit a beautiful suburban house in Colombo for a morning or afternoon spent exploring a sensory connection to your travels through a mixture of breathing, exercise, meditation, relaxation and an immersion of all five senses.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Lasts approximately 2-2.5 hours, preferably early morning or late afternoon (times flexible)
- **INCLUDES:** A host, all food and drinks served during the experience, a Sri Lankan-based mindfulness booklet to take away with you
- **DIFFICULTY:** Medium – We generally class this as medium because some people may find certain exercises a little more difficult. That being said, everything can be modified to suit each person. Your host could offer a beginners or a medium experience
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** This experience can be adapted for families with children aged 6+. Your host also has a small child
- **WHAT TO WEAR/BRING ALONG:** Comfortable lightweight clothing that you can move in
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Your host can also offer this experience in French



Cooking by Colour

A brilliant way get to know the culinary flavours of the country is to join our charming host at her home to participate in her acclaimed cooking experience Cooking by Colour. Drawing inspiration from her Malay heritage and the rich traditions of her Sinhalese and Tamil friends and neighbours, she has devised a repertoire of rice, curries, sambols and salads that differ in taste, aroma, colour and flavour. This professional cooking class takes place in the suburbs of Colombo and the demonstration takes place on the terrace where your host will cook and show you how to prepare a range of delicious Sri Lankan dishes. Your tutor’s no-fuss approach means that the art of curry making is made simple and easy to replicate at home. After cooking you will sit down to enjoy lunch together. The program includes fresh fruit juice, lunch and a recipe leaflet to take home.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 10:00am – 2:00pm
- **INCLUDES:** Cooking class, all food and refreshments given during the experience and lunch
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Not for small children
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Light, cool clothing
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Alcoholic beverages are not served during the experience. Please inform us of any dietary requirements ahead of time

If you would like to enquire or book this experience call us on +94 77 00 888 77 or email us on experiences@pepper.life

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Between 9:30am and 4:30pm
- **DURATION:** Approximately 1.5 hours
- **INCLUDES:** A host, the tea tasting and snacks
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Small children may not follow
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing



Artisanal Tea Tasting

Sri Lanka has been growing and producing some of the world's finest tea for over 100 years. Planted first by Scottish planter James Taylor during the time of British rule in Sri Lanka, tea has become an iconic part of Sri Lankan heritage. Join the founder of Sri Lanka's first designer tea brand, to learn more about the history, culture and customs of tea making. You will meet your host in the tea room at Bayleaf Restaurant where he will take you through the processes of Ceylon tea's journey from the producers to the buyers at Colombo's famed Tea Auction, right down to the sippers of this ancient beverage. You'll taste a combination of many teas, including black, green, white and herbal teas. Your host will also show you the art of pouring the perfect cup of tea. Finish up with a slice of cake and a few extra nibbles alongside your favourite blend of tea.



Pepper

Colombo

18-19





Galle and the South Coast

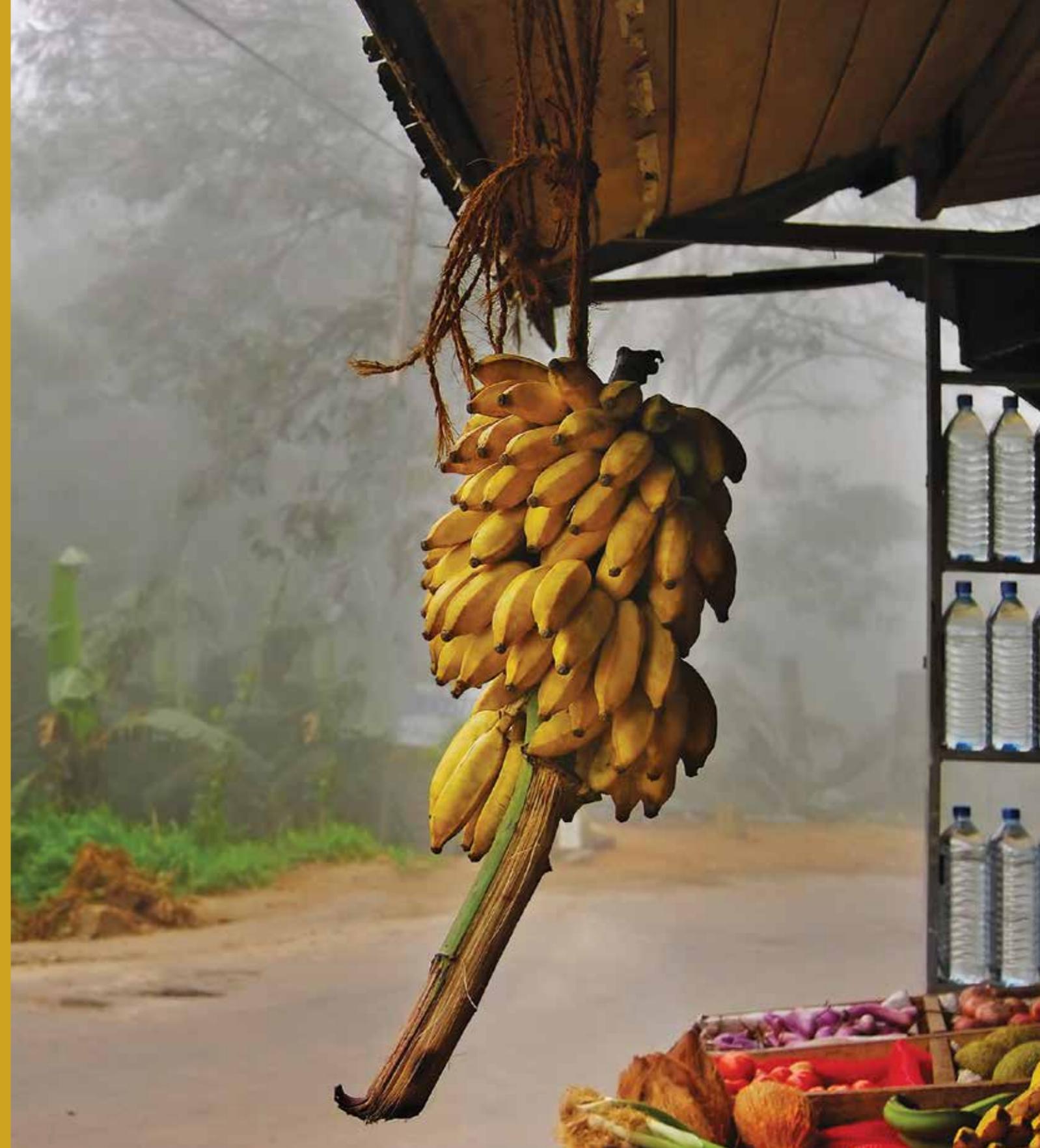
“ For centuries, merchants have come from all over the world to trade with Sri Lanka and many of them, dazzled by the island’s magnificent beauty, decided to settle in Galle. These gem, gold and silver traders came from Portugal, Morocco, Arabia, Malaya, China and Southern India, each leaving their mark, which you can see in the current mix of people living in the Fort ”

– Juliet Coombe,
Around The Fort In 80 Lives



Galle is the country's oldest living city and is sure to capture your interest, with its historic sites and its unique fusion of European and Arabic cultural and architectural influences. Old Galle is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a must-see for any visitors to the island. Jutting out into the centre of the town is the renowned Dutch Fort, boasting a bustling community within the great ramparts, massive bastions and pepper pot towers. Narrow streets display its Dutch heritage with beckoning pillared verandas and fretwork facades. Walking around is best so you can peep through frangipani filled courtyards at houses, galleries or shops selling antiques, spices, pictures, nouveau-boule and hand-woven sarongs. The "New Galle" is a far more dynamic place, an enthralling hive of daily activity.

The early traders got blown into Serendib's ancient port by the 'Trade Winds'. Roman, Greek, Arab and Chinese seafarers, came, saw and conquered prizes of 'gold, silver, ivory, apes and peacocks'. Today's traveller can use those very same winds to surf, deep-sea fish, dive and trek to rainforests. See Buddhist temples and explore eco-villages which make time stand still or simply stroll on the fort's majestic, 20 meter thick stone ramparts.



With the Kids

“...the perfect introduction to an Asian country for children. It's safe, extremely friendly and children are welcomed with open arms. What's not to love as a child - seeing elephants in the wild, riding in tuk tuks, learning to surf, picnics in the hills, exploring forts, biking through paddy fields, tropical seas and interesting new foods.”

Mrs Milner, The Sri Lanka Collection, April 2017



Galle Fort Treasure Hunt

The UNESCO World Heritage Site, Galle Fort is one of Sri Lanka's most evocative monuments. Originally built by the Portuguese and then refortified by the Dutch in the 17th Century, the fort was once the centre for trade in the South and has a multi-ethnic and multi-religious population that is reflective of this international history. Surrounded by grassy ramparts that meet the Indian Ocean on one side and overlook the famous Galle cricket stadium on the other, the labyrinth of cobbled streets are alive with colour, history and intrigue. One could spend days exploring the many boutique shops, heritage buildings and courtyard restaurants that hide within the fort. This immersive treasure hunt is hosted by one of Galle's most fun-loving hosts, who will guide you and your family through the adventure, allowing you to personally interact with the fort's unique history, people and places. This is a unique way to both explore and connect with Galle's must-see attraction.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Flexible
- **INCLUDES:** A take-home treasure hunt goodie bag with a map, water and of course your host
- **DIFFICULTY:** There is a considerable amount of walking here, but if you or younger children would prefer not to walk so much this can be modified and done by tuk tuk to make things easier!
- **SUITABLE FOR YOUNG CHILDREN:** Absolutely! Children will love this interactive and educational way to explore the fort. Your host is also great with kids
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** A hat, light comfortable clothing, sunscreen, a camera and a sense of adventure!



Surf School

Hikkaduwa, with its reliable beach breaks and small swells provides great surfing conditions for beginners. This unique introduction to surfing takes place right on Hikkaduwa beach and is designed to suit all ages and all levels of fitness. Spend the day with a local surf champion who will provide you with comprehensive one-on-one training allowing you to safely surf Hikkaduwa's waves. You'll be taught how to choose the right board for your body and skill level and learn about basic board maintenance. You'll also be taught how to keep your body and board safe in the water, how to paddle, 'pop up', ride a wave (land-based), catch a wave in the water (assisted) and get pointers on perfecting your balance while riding.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 8:00am – 12:30pm
- **INCLUDES:** Morning tea/coffee and fresh fruit, fresh water all day long and a take-home rash guard
- **DIFFICULTY:** This depends on your surf skill level. The experience can be tailor-made for beginners and for seasoned surfers
- **SUITABLE FOR YOUNG CHILDREN:** Yes, your Coach is extremely good with children and the experience is suitable for children from the ages of 4 years and above
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Swimsuit, sunscreen, towel if you would like and a change of clothes
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Does not include insurance

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 9:00am – 11:30am
- **INCLUDES:** All materials and tools, a dedicated master craftsman, refreshments, your own mask
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Light, cool clothing. It can get humid during the day
- **IMPORTANT INFORMATION:** Your host is particularly sensitive to being eco-friendly and using traditional material. The shop uses a lot of recycled paper and draws from materials like mahogany, kithul (treacle), kurundu (cinnamon) etc. He uses clay and waste material such as broken tiles and bees wax and cow dung



Mask Making with a Master Craftsman

Masks have been used in Sri Lanka for generations, originating from rituals in village settings that followed ancient beliefs, and also used for curing illness. It is believed that masks have healing and protective powers. Today, masks are used in dramas and dance performances, but in rural areas they are still used in traditional rituals. This hands-on workshop in Kolam is hosted by an artisan craftsman who will take you through the stages of the age-old tradition of mask carving from start to finish. Kolam masks are mainly made from a light wood known as 'kaduru', which helps in easy carving and ensures durability and lightness. Your master craftsman will draw outlines and demonstrate carving techniques. He's always by your side from start to finish in the event you are unsure of angles or pressure to place on the tools.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMINGS:** 4:00pm
- **DURATION:** 1.5 - 2 hours
- **INCLUDES:** All art lesson material, and refreshments
- **WHAT TO WEAR/BRING ALONG:** Light, cool clothing, a cap and sunscreen
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** The experience is only possible during the late afternoons and on weekends



Art on the Ramparts

Hosted on the rolling green grass of the ramparts of Galle Fort (UNESCO World Heritage Site), this arts and crafts session is designed to stimulate creativity and imagination in children of all ages. Hosted by a local teenager and her mother, Art on the Ramparts is fun for holidaying children, whilst allowing parents some much needed time off! Your hosts will meet your kids at your hotel or villa and accompany them to the ramparts at 4:00pm where they will share their love of creativity. The experience takes place in a cool shaded area of the ramparts on a woven mat with all arts and crafts material provided. This includes coloring pencils, markers, crayons, glue and other arts and craft materials. For ages starting as young as 4 years old, the experience offers up to a 2.5 hour drop-off class in drawing and painting, card making and more.

If you would like to enquire or book this experience call us on +94 77 00 888 77 or email us on experiences@pepper.life

Pepper

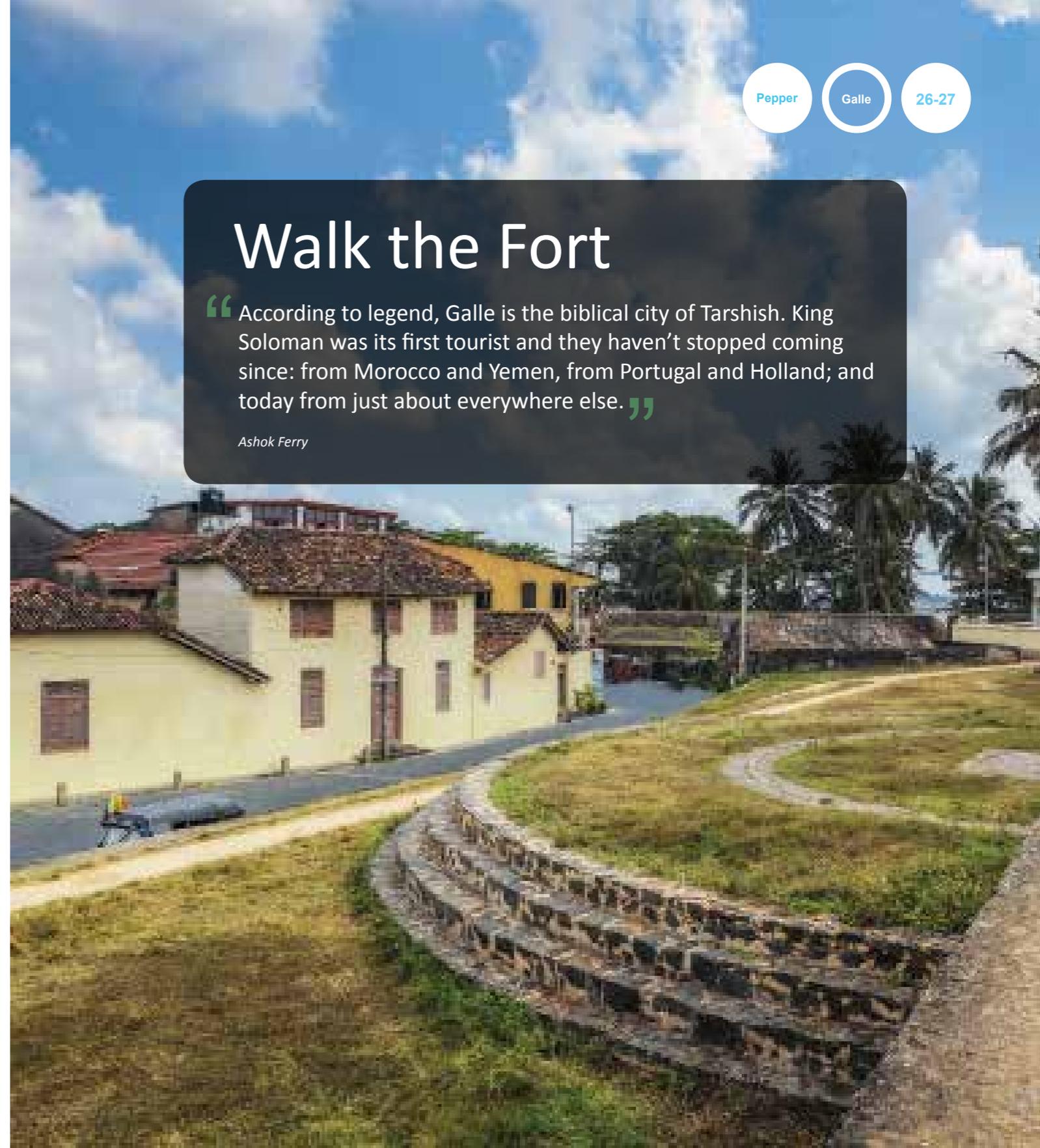
Galle

26-27

Walk the Fort

“According to legend, Galle is the biblical city of Tarshish. King Solomon was its first tourist and they haven't stopped coming since: from Morocco and Yemen, from Portugal and Holland; and today from just about everywhere else.”

Ashok Ferry



QUICK FACTS

- **INCLUDES:** Your host, water and a king coconut
- **TIMES:** 9:00am – 4:00pm
- **DURATION:** 2 hours
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, the host can customize the walk for children
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing and a camera

If you would like to enquire or book this experience call us on +94 77 00 888 77 or email us on experiences@pepper.life



The Lesser-Known Fort

The UNESCO World heritage Galle Fort is central to trade within the South and was frequented by merchants for hundreds of years. Built by the Dutch in the 17th Century, its web of little cobbled streets is home to a vibrant mix of boutique shops, art galleries, courtyard restaurants and colonial architecture set against the dramatic backdrop of the Indian Ocean. These days, the fort residents are an international fusion of the successors of Arab traders, Malay settlers, Dutch Burghers, Sinhalese, Tamils and more recently, creative Europeans who were drawn to the fort's bustling art scene. On this walk you will spend a few hours to learn more about the intricacies that make Galle Fort less of a citadel and more of a home for many of its residents. Learn about the cultures that mingle seamlessly within the fort's confines and get to know the stories of the people living within its walls.



Fort Architecture

The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Galle Fort has a long and colourful history. With the onset of colonial rule in the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka was occupied by several major empires. These colonists built western-style forts, mostly on and around the coast of the island. The first to build colonial forts in Sri Lanka were the Portuguese, later to be captured and expanded by the Dutch. The British then occupied these Dutch forts during the Napoleonic wars and it became a central trading point, attracting merchants from across the world who came to settle within its walls. Reflecting this international blend of history, the Galle Fort is a fascinating heritage monument with streets of low-slung colonial villas protected by massive coral bastions and the gentle crash of breaking waves just beyond. Spend an afternoon uncovering the fascinating history of the Galle Fort as you walk around the ramparts with a researcher and building archaeologist.

QUICK FACTS

- **DURATION:** 2 hours
- **INCLUDES:** Host and water
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, your host will customize the walk for children
- **TIMES:** 4:00pm – 5:30pm
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG?** Cool, light clothing and a camera!
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Your host will only do the walk if at least one other female is present, for cultural reasons



A Walk through Time

First built in 1588 by the Portuguese, the Galle Fort was extensively fortified by the Dutch from 1649 onwards. Once a busy trading port, the Galle Fort is a historical, archaeological and architectural heritage monument. Wander across the ramparts of this UNESCO World Heritage site with a colourful history and a multi-ethnic and multi-religious population. Your host is a 4th generation fort resident, whose Moorish ancestors first arrived on the shores of Galle in the mid-17th century in one of the earliest waves of spice traders and gem merchants. Her walk takes you through the past and present, from the spot where the first Portuguese boats landed to where the English departed. Interspersed with tales from legendary battles for the fort, on this walk you will learn about alliances that were forged and destroyed. Gain an insider knowledge of the fort's unique background, a melting pot of culture, styles and traditions spanning over three centuries.



Fort Photography

There is no place in Sri Lanka as impressive, vibrant and photogenic as the UNESCO World heritage Galle Fort. Frequented by merchants and traders from across the globe for centuries, the fort's web of cobbled streets radiate charm and are home to a mix of boutique shops, art galleries, courtyard restaurants and heritage architecture set against the dramatic backdrop of the Indian Ocean. Take a photography walk of the fort with one of Sri Lanka's most up and coming young travel photographers, for a unique opportunity to hone your camera skills and walk away with some great snaps. The photographer's instructional guidance is suitable for anyone with an interest in photography, offering you insider access to the people and places within the fort.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Afternoon: 4:00pm – 6:00pm
- **DURATION:** 2 hours
- **INCLUDES:** A host, and water
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Small children may not follow, but they will love exploring the ramparts
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing and a camera!

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 4:00pm – 6:00pm
- **INCLUDES:** A host, and water
- **DURATION:** 2 hours
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Small children may not follow, but they will love exploring the ramparts
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing and your camera!

If you would like to enquire or book this experience call us on +94 77 00 888 77 or email us on experiences@pepper.life

Pepper

Galle

30-31

Epicurious

“Visitors are spoiled for choice in a country bursting with exotic flavours.”

Peter Kuruvita, Where To Eat Out In Sri Lanka, 2016



Bespoke Dining

Fringed by white sandy beaches and carpeted in palm trees, frangipani, and tropical foliage, Galle is the perfect location for a family or group get-together, romantic dinner for two, or special celebration. For a truly exclusive experience, savour a unique alfresco dinner party hosted by two of Galle's cutting edge chefs. Pioneering the social dining scene in the Galle area, our two chefs are full of creativity and can bring their kitchen right to your villa. They'll design a menu with you and then cook it wherever you want it, using the freshest ingredients from artisan suppliers and local markets. The chefs are keen on experimenting with unique flavours and this will likely be some of the most creative cooking you'll find this side of the island. To top it all off, they'll bring everything that you need to make it a special night, from candles and romantic lighting through to the champagne glasses and table décor!

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Times are flexible
- **INCLUDES:** All refreshments (alcohol will be charged as extra)
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Casual attire, mosquito repellent
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** All dietary requirements can be catered for, but this information needs to be provided in advance



Roti in a Rice Paddy

Prepare to have your breath taken away as you dine amidst verdant green rice paddies in a garden lit by hundreds of candles and torches. A scattering of flower petals will guide your way to the pavilion where you will be greeted by your private butler who will serve you arrack sours and soft drinks. Make your way over to the kitchen if you wish see how this thin flatbread is made. Alternatively you may just wish to sip your drink and watch the sunset, the space is yours to enjoy and its charm is made only more stunning by the abundance of candles and torches lighting the entire place. When the food is ready, sit down for a roti dinner. This is a unique chance to try a traditional Sri Lankan street food in an intimate and romantic setting.

QUICK FACTS

- **IMPORTANT INFORMATION:** All dietary requirements can be catered for, but this information needs to be provided in advance
- **STARTING TIME:** 5:30pm
- **DURATION:** 3-4 hours
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Light, cool, long clothing

If you would like to enquire or book this experience call us on +94 77 00 888 77 or email us on experiences@pepper.life

QUICK FACTS

- **INCLUDES:** Refreshments, non-professional photos (although professional photos can also be arranged), a host and a certificate
- **DURATION:** 2 hours
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Children will enjoy joining in on the celebrations
- **TIMINGS:** Flexible
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** If you would like to dress up in something special then bring it along



I Do, Take Two

Galle is undoubtedly one of the most romantic settings in Sri Lanka. Fringed by a golden ribbon of sand and tempered by a salty sea breeze, it is not uncommon to see newlyweds taking bridal snaps on the beach or on the fort ramparts. So we've got the perfect solution if all that love in the air is making you a little nostalgic: a unique vow renewal ceremony hosted by a local resident. This fun and funky experience comes served with a large dose of humour, fun and good vibes! Our fun-loving host will get you dressed up and back down the aisle for an unforgettable afternoon that is as wildly eccentric as it is special. A great gift for an anniversary, this theatrical vow renewal comes complete with photography and a beautiful tropical setting. If you're looking for something a little more classical, a traditional Sri Lankan Buddhist blessing can also be arranged.



Myths and Legends

Across Sri Lanka, ancient traditions exist that date back to the times of prehistoric cave drawings. Folklore, archaeological findings and the accounts of travellers from bygone eras paint a picture of a land visited and inhabited by extraordinary entities. So widespread is the belief that Sri Lanka is haunted by anything from witches to extra-terrestrials and deities to dark angels, that the country still has a ministry solely dedicated to casting out demons! It is an honour to witness some of Sri Lanka's oldest ceremonies that are still performed today and woven into its history for centuries. Sharing time with those from families where generations have concealed their rituals will captivate open-minded travellers and charm children. Spend a couple of hours either in the morning or the evening learning about some of the country's most enchanting secrets.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 8.30am to 10:30am or 5:30pm– 7:30pm
- **INCLUDES:** A guide, water and a traditional drink
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, children may find the stories fascinating
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Walking shoes, Sun hat, sun cream, mosquito repellent for the night walks and clothes covering the knees and elbows for going as we may go into religious buildings
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** The walk will not be run on some religious holidays

QUICK FACTS

- **INCLUDES:** Entrance tickets and a guide
- **DURATION:** 1 hour
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Small children may not follow the explanations and the experience is designed for those with a keen interest in Bawa and architecture. That said they may enjoy the walk around the garden
- **TIMINGS:** Flexible
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing. We'd recommend wearing a pair of trainers as some sections of the lawn tend to be muddy. You might also like to bring an umbrella along in case it rains or to protect yourself from the sun
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Lunch needs to be reserved in advance (traditional rice and curry)



Lunuganga

Geoffrey Bawa is Sri Lanka's most prolific and influential architect. His work has had a tremendous impact upon architecture throughout Asia and is unanimously acclaimed by connoisseurs of architecture worldwide. Lunuganga was his country home, one of his most famous works and built in 1947 close to the beach town of Bentota. These days Lunuganga is a fully-functioning hotel and as such some areas of the main house are off-limits, but one can still explore the gardens and public areas. Every turn in the house and extensive surrounding gardens is an interesting experience – with many exotic plants, trees and views to take in. The house itself is sparse but beautiful, full of impressive paintings and photographs of a bygone age. You will be guided through this tropical modernist countryside home by a guide from the Bawa Trust. You have the option of finishing up with a delicious Sri Lankan style lunch amidst the gardens.



Market to Mouth

“The country in the vicinity is very fertile and highly cultivated, and the markets are well supplied with fruit, vegetables, game, and poultry. Though the soil is flat, the sensation of weariness or monotony is prevented by the varied luxuriance of vegetable life which it displays.”

Philalethes, A. M. Oxon, The History Of Ceylon, 2003



Paddy Island Cooking

Sri Lanka has a distinct and unique cuisine. As a major trade hub for hundreds of years, the island is influenced by many other places. Foreign merchants and colonial settlers all brought their own recipes and ingredients with them and many were incorporated into the dishes seen today. Rice, which is consumed daily, can be found at any occasion, while spicy curries are favourite dishes for lunch and dinner. There are many different ethnic groups living within Sri Lanka, each with their own individual take on Lankan cuisine. Sinhalese cooking techniques are most prevalent in the south of the island and, broadly speaking, the cuisine relies heavily on the core ingredients of coconut, vegetables, rice, fresh chillies, spices, and curry leaves, all of which grow in abundance on this part of the island. Spend the day learning how to cook a traditional Sinhalese meal at a beautiful private paddy island just north of Galle.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 10:00am to 2:00pm
- **INCLUDES:** Lunch, water, soft drinks, cool towels, live cooking demonstration, apron, and recipe booklet
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** This is suitable for children, whether they have an interest or not in cooking, the garden presents a fantastic natural playground
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Alcoholic beverages are not served during the experience. Any dietary requirements/restrictions should be provided prior to booking this experience



Why not Cook?

The hopper, a bowl-shaped dinnertime favourite in Sri Lanka, has gained a good deal of international recognition over the last few years and has become iconic to Sri Lankan cuisine. Always a crowd-pleaser, these bowl-shaped pancakes are made from fermented rice flour cooked over an open flame in small concave pans. Hoppers often have an egg cracked right into the centre of them and usually served accompanied by a range of chutneys, sambols, and curries. The result is crispy on the edges and soft on the bottom with plenty of room inside the hopper to pile in all the side dishes. Learn to make this popular dish in the beautiful setting of the Why House gardens. Let the head chef guide you through the process of making the hoppers so you can learn the tricks of the trade for yourself and then sit down in the al fresco restaurant for a delicious meal which you will be able to re-create at home.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 11:00am – 1:00pm
- **INCLUDES:** Water, lunch, cooking class, a recipe book and a goodie bag to take home
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, older children will very much enjoy both the setting and the activities
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool light clothing and a camera
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Dietary restrictions should be provided in advance

If you would like to enquire or book this experience call us on +94 77 00 888 77 or email us on experiences@pepper.life

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 8:00am – 2:00pm
- **INCLUDES:** Water, market visit, welcome drink, cooking class and lunch
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, children will very much enjoy both the setting and the activities
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Lightweight clothing that can get a bit dirty – aprons are not included in the cooking class
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** The chef is an expert on Sri Lankan cooking but his English skills are a little more basic. He can converse easily but extremely complex questions might need to be phrased in more simple terms. A little patience and understanding will go a long way dietary restrictions should be given to us in advance



Food for the Soul

Sri Lankan cuisine is vastly underrated: its larger neighbours usually steal the stage. Many visitors to the island come with few expectations and leave pleasantly surprised. Rice and curry – Sri Lanka's national dish – is simplified in language but complex in execution. The 'curry' that accompanies rice in Sri Lanka is actually an array of dishes made up of different vegetables that might be sautéed in spices, boiled in coconut milk, tempered, deep fried, caramelized and even served raw with grated coconut. The ingredients themselves may also be things you are unfamiliar with: lotus root for example or banana blossom. Visit a local market to see the wide array of tropical fruit and vegetables on offer, then get a hands-on cooking experience in the traditional setting of a wattle and daub mud hut. The end product is a feast of eight unique dishes served in a lotus leaf which you can eat local-style with your fingers if you are up for the challenge!



A Taste of the East

Once a popular trading hub for Arab merchants, Galle became a popular base for Muslim settlers, who brought with them, amongst other things, a distinctive cuisine which is now enjoyed island-wide. The most iconic of these dishes is Biryani, which is native to the Indian subcontinent and consists of spiced rice served with meat and vegetable side dishes such as curried peas, Malay pickle, cashew curry and raita, often served at family celebrations. Learn the secrets of this rich cuisine in the home of a local family for an experience that is as cultural and authentic as it is delicious. With the assistance of her three daughters, your host will take you through the basics of cooking Biryani, allowing you to take a hands-on role in the cooking process. After lunch expect some entertainment in the form of singing and dancing. Don't feel shy, this is very normal in Sri Lanka and is all part of the fun!

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 11:00am–2:00pm
- **INCLUDES:** A host, lunch, refreshments
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Light, cool clothing
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Dietary restrictions should be informed to us in advance. Aprons will be provided
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN?** Small children may not follow but they will be made to feel like part of the family and given plenty of attention!

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 11:00am – 2:00pm
- **INCLUDES:** Water, market visit, cooking class and lunch
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Not recommended for younger children as there is restricted space, but fine for older children
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing and a camera
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** The chef is an expert on Sri Lankan cuisine but his English skills are a little more basic. Dietary restrictions should be given to us in advance



Curry at Kikili

Take a hands-on cooking class in the bright surroundings of Kikili House, a cosy, colourful property just five minutes from Galle Fort. After meeting your host, the chef, who will be demonstrating how to cook various traditional Sri Lankan curries, you will leave the cheerfully-decorated Kikili and take a short tuk tuk ride to the Galle market. Here you will see rice and spices tumbling out of woven sacks, vibrant, unusual vegetables stacked high on stalls, and sample some of the many delicious tropical fruits on offer. Your host will select the ingredients needed for the cooking class, describing the taste of anything you have not seen before and explaining how it is used in local dishes. After exploring the market, head back to Kikili House and join your host in preparing a wide range of Sri Lankan curries. Finally, sit down and enjoy your delicious lunch. Why not try to eat with your hand like the locals do?



Homegrown

“Cinnamon was the Helen which drew the ships of the Dutch to the East”

Carl Muller, Colombo, 1995



Tea Tasting

Sri Lanka is one of the world's largest exporters of tea with a roaring tea industry that was first introduced to the country by British tea planter James Taylor in 1867. The production of tea involves a labour-intensive procedure of plucking the fast-growing tea leaves and then using heavy and mostly antique machines to wither, roll, oxidize and dry the tea until you get the final product. Teas in Sri Lanka are grown at different elevations which produces variations in flavour, aroma and colour. Generally speaking, lower grown teas have a stronger taste and produce a darker liquid. Visit a low-grown tea plantation on the south coast of Sri Lanka to try plucking tea for yourself. After this you will have a chance to visit the factory to learn about the process of making the tea. Finish up with a traditional tea tasting.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Flexible. The full tour takes roughly 1.5 hours
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **INCLUDES:** Entrance and a guided visit to the tea plantation and factory, tea, refreshments
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Light, cool clothing, a hat, sunscreen and a camera
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN?** Small children may not follow but they will enjoy seeing the machines in action

If you would like to enquire or book this experience call us on +94 77 00 888 77 or email us on experiences@pepper.life



The Scent of Cinnamon

The gentle coastal hills of southern Sri Lanka are especially suited to the growth of cinnamon. The Portuguese were led to this part of the world in search of cinnamon, cutting out the Arab middlemen. In those days it was gathered from wild trees, but as the Dutch succeeded them, the first plantations were attempted, which then flourished. Cinnamon remains a major export of Sri Lanka, and its use in both cooking and medicine are being increasingly appreciated. Praised in poetry from the Song of Solomon to Michael Ondaatje, it has become the subject of romance more than any other spice. Even now the aroma of cinnamon being peeled to create the “quills” induces a feeling of well-being. Visit a working cinnamon plantation to see cinnamon peeling in action. You have the option of finishing off with a cinnamon-infused lunch overlooking the cinnamon plantations.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Flexible. The tour and lunch takes approximately 2.5 hours
- **INCLUDES:** A guided visit and water
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Small children won't follow, but they can play in the garden which is very safe and the local staff will keep an eye on them
- **DIETARY:** If you have any specific dietary requirements please let us know in advance. The optional meal is set and not gluten free
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing, hat, sunscreen

Explore By Bike

“You will think I write a lot about the scenery, but if you saw it you would not think I said too much”

James Taylor



Paddies and Plantations

Galle's surrounding countryside is best explored by bike. Lush green paddy fields interlace with sweet-scented cinnamon fields. Electric blue kingfishers and brilliant white egrets fly between tree branches and fragrant fog from incense sticks unfurls from temples. Peddling across cracked clay paths, you'll pass pepper plants, jaggery and coconut palm, pineapple plantations, tea bushes, banana trees, and water lily. The cycle trail lengths are flexible, starting from 12km and extending up to 30km or more. Depending on the length of the trail, you'll stop to drink a fresh coconut or take a full sit down lunch at the decidedly decadent hotel Kahanda Kanda which offers superb views over tea and cinnamon plantations just north of Koggala Lake.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Times are flexible. Morning and late afternoon is recommended
- **INCLUDES:** A guide, helmets and water
- **DIFFICULTY:** Moderate. There are no hills though it may get hot – drink plenty of water
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, there are children's bikes and child seats available and a support tuk tuk can be provided if needed
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing



A Village Ride

Experience the diversity and raw beauty of rural Galle. This experience brings to life nature, wildlife, rural communities and all through a boat and bike ride. You will be accompanied on the boat by a local naturalist, whose wealth of knowledge on the local bird and reptile life is as impressive as it is humorous. Sit back, and enjoy a boat ride as you pass along river banks, through canals, under bridges and by local villages. The ride passes through rubber and cinnamon plantations and even a few low bushes of tea can be spotted from the backyards as you float by. From here you will mount your bike and begin a 9km breath-taking ride through rural Galle and the heart of the south. Pedal by paddy fields and through small villages, past humble markets where the villagers trade and end up at a cool mud hut for refreshing herbal teas and traditional fresh hoppers straight from the fire.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 7:00am – 10:30am or 3:00pm – 6:30pm
- **INCLUDES:** Bottled water, refreshments, boat ride, lightweight mountain bike, helmet, traditional hopper meal
- **DIFFICULTY:** Moderate
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** This would be suitable for older children, and smaller bikes for children are available on request
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Light cool clothing, sunscreen, a hat and shades, insect repellent
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Longer bike rides are available for keen cyclists on request

If you would like to enquire or book this experience call us on +94 77 00 888 77 or email us on experiences@pepper.life

Into The Blue

“...They are the largest animals to ever live on our planet, yet we know next to nothing about them. They are mammals just like us but they are so different. They have all these incredible adaptations for surviving in an aquatic environment that we don't quite get. I think our innate curiosity for things we just don't understand draws us to different species, such as whales.”

Asha De Vos, Mission Blue, 2012



Giants of the Ocean

Sri Lanka enjoys a unique position in the Indian Ocean allowing for unparalleled sightings of blue whales. The shoreline is unusually close to the continental shelf, the deep point at which larger marine life is able to thrive whilst still feeding off the nutrients that flow from shore. This means that the deep waters that provide a habitat for whales can be easily reached by boat, and conditions for whales – particularly sperm and blue whales – are excellent. This whale watching trip presents a private and exclusive opportunity to see blue whales along with sperm whales, false orcas, playful spinner and bottlenose dolphins and turtles in their natural environment. Small yet incredibly powerful boats allow you to get out into the ocean quickly, beating the crowds to get the best views of these amazing marine animals. Large groups of whales swim so regularly in these waters that during the peak season sightings are usually extremely reliable.



Sail Away

During the whale-watching season there is almost a 90% chance of sighting blue whales in Sri Lanka. Set sail on a stunning and modern catamaran complete with a professional crew, all safety equipment and a well-equipped kitchen where the chef will whip you up a delicious full breakfast and a three course lunch. As soon as the guide spots whales, you'll be invited up to the top deck or front of the boat to get the best views of the whales. Afterwards you'll head back towards Weligama Bay, for the chance to jump into the water and try some stand up paddle boarding or snorkelling. At around midday, the chef will serve up lunch to eat on board as you sail back. This luxurious catamaran is also available for alternate sailing adventures and private rental of the boat is perfect for parties and celebrations.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 6:30am – 10:00am
- **INCLUDES:** Boat ride, experienced crew, skipper and water
- **DIFFICULTY:** We categorize this as moderate because of the heat and occasionally rough seas which may cause sea sickness at certain times of year
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, children will love it
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing, a cap, sunscreen and your camera, sea sickness tablets to be taken 1.5 hours ahead of time
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Although sightings of blue whales are common, sightings are not guaranteed. The season for whale watching is late November to early April

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 6:30am – 1:30pm
- **INCLUDES:** Boat ride, experienced crew and skipper, snorkelling gear, stand up paddle board, canoes, freshly prepared breakfast, three course lunch, water
- **DIFFICULTY:** We categorize this as moderate because of the heat and occasionally rough seas which may cause sea sickness at certain times of year
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, children will love it
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing, a cap, sunscreen and your camera, sea sickness tablets to be taken 1.5 hours ahead of time
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Although sightings of blue whales are common, sightings are not guaranteed

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 6:30am – 1:30pm
- **INCLUDES:** Host, boat ride, experienced crew and skipper, snorkelling gear, stand up paddle board, canoes, freshly prepared breakfast, three course lunch, water
- **DIFFICULTY:** Moderate. We categorize this as moderate because of the heat and occasionally rough seas which may cause sea sickness at certain times of year
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, children will love it
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing, a cap, sunscreen and your camera, sea sickness tablets to be taken 1.5 hours ahead of time
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Although sightings of blue whales are common, sightings are not guaranteed



Ocean Safari with a Marine Biologist

Sri Lanka's unique location just underneath a giant continent and touching three different oceans (the Bay of Bengal, the Indian Ocean, and the Arabian Sea) means that many migratory marine species can be found in the waters surrounding the island. Sri Lanka's waters are filled with a diverse array of fascinating animals such as dugongs, whale sharks and rare species of marine turtle. But on a whale watching trip you can expect to see something a little larger: blue whales, Bryde's whales, Eden's whales, sperm whales and spinner dolphins are all common sights and if you are lucky, you might even see an orca whale. Getting out onto the ocean to spot these majestic creatures is the stuff that dreams are made of. On this expedition you will set out with Sri Lanka's leading marine biologist on a luxury catamaran for an exclusive opportunity to get up close and personal with the giants of the ocean.



Mind, Body and Soul

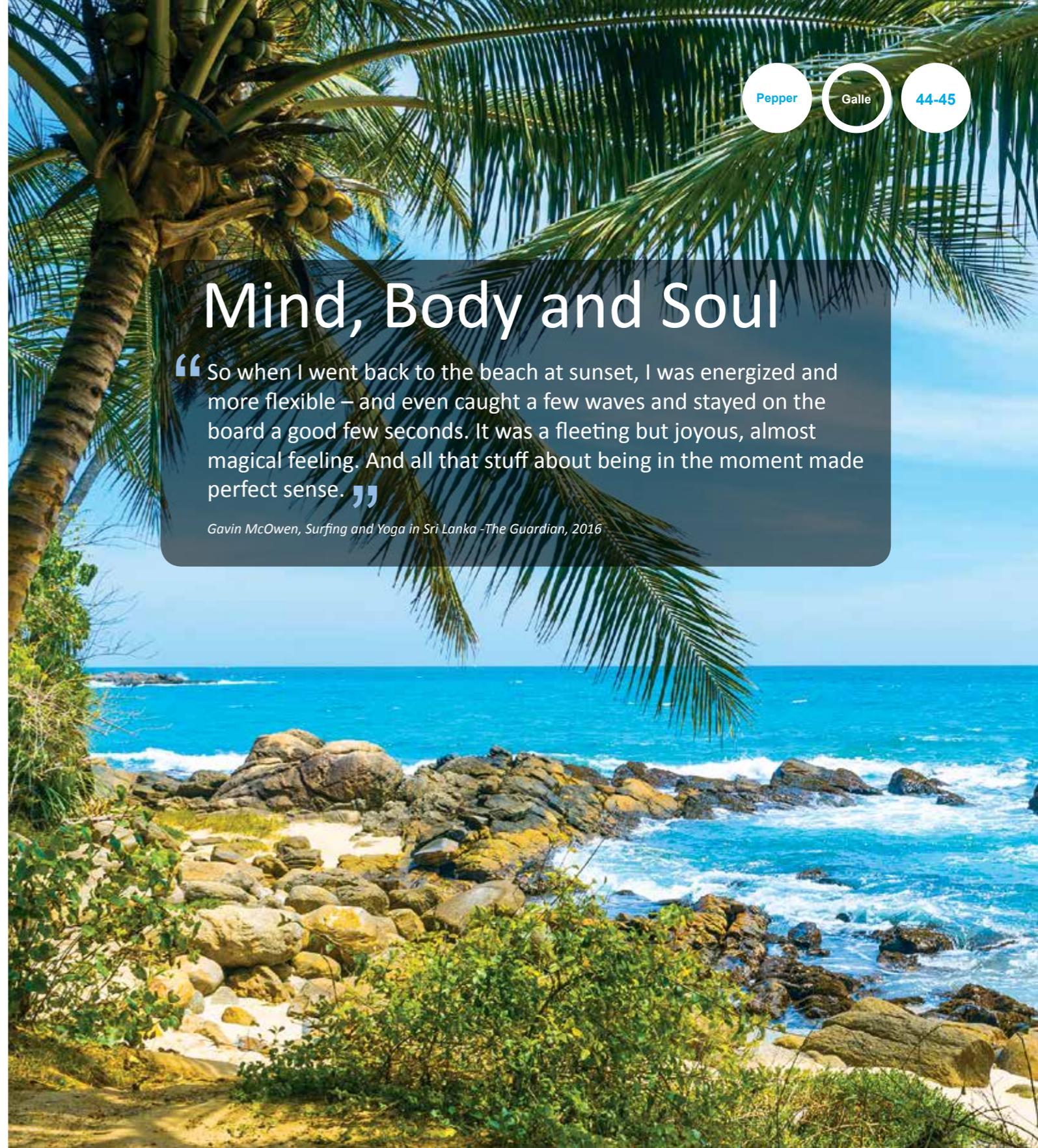
“So when I went back to the beach at sunset, I was energized and more flexible – and even caught a few waves and stayed on the board a good few seconds. It was a fleeting but joyous, almost magical feeling. And all that stuff about being in the moment made perfect sense.”

Gavin McOwen, Surfing and Yoga in Sri Lanka -The Guardian, 2016

Pepper

Galle

44-45



QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Flexible
- **INCLUDES:** Use of showers and pool (if at yoga studio), yoga mat, fresh towels and water
- **DIFFICULTY:** Your instructor will tailor-make the session depending on your fitness and requirements
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Your instructor has a small child as well, arrangements can be made for kids if you let us know in advance
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing that you can move in
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Your instructor can also conduct the yoga lesson in the privacy of your own villa



Quantum Yoga

Whether you are a beginner or more advanced, this private class with the creator of Quantum Yoga and the most recognized and accomplished contemporary yoga practitioner in the region is a great way to get deeper into yoga, both physically and spiritually. It is also ideal for anyone with injuries, specific goals or concerns to learn how to adapt postures with the full attention and guidance of an instructor. This one-on-one session is taught in a dynamic, flowing form that integrates the holistic approach of the ancient healing science of Ayurveda, as well as the modern insights of quantum physics. Drawing from her many teachers, including Sri Pattabhi Jois and BKS Iyengar, your host practices a style of yoga that she has successfully developed herself in an endeavour to give individuals the skill to spontaneously construct dynamic sequences ideally suited to their present physical, mental and emotional requirements.



Work Out with Mr Sri Lanka

Back in the early 90s you couldn't help but escape the influence of fitness icons such as Arnold Schwarzenegger, even if you were in Sri Lanka! American-influenced body building competitions gained a cult following in Galle. With no protein powders and only skeleton gyms available at the time, many of the contestants built up their bodies on a diet of locally caught fish. If you haven't quite been able to stick to this restrictive diet on your holiday, grab your spandex and Lycra and get ready for an old school work out in this unforgettable personal training session with champion bodybuilder, Mr Sri Lanka of '93! With no equipment needed except your jazziest sportswear, Mr Sri Lanka will come to your hotel or villa for a killer workout that will take you straight back to the 90s. Mr Sri Lanka can also offer aqua-aerobics in your pool, which is perfect for hotter times of the day.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Flexible
- **INCLUDES:** Instructor and 1 hour fitness class
- **DIFFICULTY:** Your instructor will tailor-make the session depending on your fitness and requirements
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Fine for older children with an interest in fitness
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Cool, light clothing that you can move in
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Your instructor can either conduct the class in the privacy of your own villa, in the pool at your villa (aqua-aerobics), or on the Galle Fort ramparts
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** It's best to start early morning or late in the evening if you are doing this outside. Sri Lanka is hot during the day!

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Private sessions and treatments are flexible. Join-in classes run on a monthly schedule. Check with us for the most recent schedule
- **INCLUDES:** 2 join-in classes, 1 massage, 1 private class, use of showers and pool, yoga mat and all yoga props, fresh towels and water
- **DIFFICULTY:** Classes suit all levels of fitness. Do as much as you can and rest when you need to
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Not for young children. Teenagers with an interest in fitness may enjoy this.
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** clothing that you can move in
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** All sessions take place at Sri Yoga Shala (approx. 8km from the fort)



A Southern Sanctuary

The lush landscape and laid-back ambiance of Galle have earned it a reputation as one of Sri Lanka's best wellness destinations. The beautiful Sri Yoga Shala, nestled away in the tropical oasis of Galle's landscape, is THE place to practice yoga in the south. With a large custom-made open air studio, a health food café, a range of treatment rooms and a saltwater pool perfect for a post-yoga dip, the shala offers a wide range of daily classes, intensives, treatments, and workshops all taught by internationally accredited teachers. This exclusive and flexible package includes two join-in classes, one private session and a treatment of your choice and is ideal for those wanting an immersive introduction into yoga. Daily join-in classes are taught in a range of yoga styles, allowing you to get a feel for the many types of yoga on offer, before perfecting and honing your skills in a personalized private class with a senior teacher.





Kandy and Tea Country

“ “The real joy of Kandy is the illusion that – at least in spirit – a great kingdom survives.” ”

-John Gimlette, In The Kingdom Of Kandy, 2013



Kandy – the Sinhala word meaning hill – was an impenetrable fortress for the Sinhala monarchs buried deep in the jungle with rivers and sheer rock faces of Sri Lanka. It withstood the onslaught of three colonial powers long after the rest of the island had been ransacked for cinnamon, sapphires and other native treasures. The Kandyans are a proud people, possessive about culinary finesse and incredible hosts, which is why many hotels are still family owned. Travelling up along hairpin bends you soon realize why the British needed to build trains to ease the strain!

The Kew of Kandy is The Botanical Gardens in Peradeniya which started out as a royal pleasure park in 1747. This was once Mountbatten's headquarters but today the stunning pavilions, summerhouses and footpaths attract tourists, families and couples instead.

There is hardly a Buddhist in Sri Lanka who has not paid homage to The Relic of the Tooth. Folded around a man-made lake, Kandy is a Buddhist version of the Vatican City where white-clad, barefoot pilgrims put their hands together in prayer whenever they pass the octagonal gilded palladium which houses the tooth. Buddhist monks from around the world in every hue of orange, maroon and rust robes, old and very young, are wherever you turn.



Into the Hills

“ is conspicuous for a distance of three days. As it was the place where Adam was banished from paradise, I had the curiosity to ascend to its summit and solace myself with a view of its indescribable marvels. Here are found rubies and many precious things, and rare plants grow abundantly, with spice trees and cocoa palms. ”

Sindbad In Serendib: "The Sixth Voyage" Richard Boyle



Trekking the Knuckles Range

Sri Lanka's most hauntingly beautiful nature trail can be found in the Hill Country. Studied by scientists and anthropologists alike for its high range of biodiversity and inhabitant native tribes, the area is home to 40 rural villages and a plethora of endemic wildlife. Bordering both the dry and wet zones, the rugged terrain is almost always cloaked with a thick fog that hangs spectre-like around the peaks. With its volatile climate and regular heavy rainfall, the Knuckles presents some difficult trekking conditions. But do not let this put you off! This is one of those wonderful parts of the island that is still off-the-beaten track with views and remote scenery that make a hike extremely rewarding. Spend half a day trekking in the Knuckles with our guide, an outdoors enthusiast and knowledgeable naturalist, you are unlikely to see another soul along the way, it'll just be you and nature.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 6:00am is the best time to start. You'll finish at around midday
- **INCLUDES:** Water, a guide, lunch, porters, leech socks and snacks
- **DIFFICULTY:** Strenuous. We categorize this as strenuous due to leeches in the area. The trek, can be shortened or indeed lengthened
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** The trek is suitable for intrepid children who enjoy being outdoors
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Light, comfortable clothing, a good pair of trainers or hiking boots, a raincoat, swimwear if you want to take a dip in the waterfall
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** March –April and June – August are the best months weather-wise. The naturalist is an expert trekker but his English skills are basic



Over the River Kwai

The Kelani River in Kitulgala is well-known for being the filming site of *The Bridge over the River Kwai*. What is less well-known is that the river also provides excellent conditions for white water rafting, with grade 2 and 3 rapids. There are calm stretches of the river when you just glide along and look at the scenery around – dramatic forested hills and the remains of the bridge that was blown up during the filming of the movie. At the end of the rapids, you'll reach an area of canyons through which water flows down into the main river. These canyons create an amazing playground for the adventurous. Large potholes make giant plunge pools perfect for jumping into and there are even some 'waterslides' along the way. Combine two of Sri Lanka's most adventurous activities - canyoning and white water rafting. Finish up with a hearty lunch overlooking the river (optional).

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 9.30am and 1:30pm
- **INCLUDES:** Bottled water, rafting and safety gear, trained and professional rafting guides and fresh towels
- **DIFFICULTY:** Moderate
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** The experience is great for all ages and we find that children are normally braver than the adults!
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Light cool clothing, enclosed shoes (a pair of trainers that you don't mind getting wet will suffice), sunscreen, a hat and shades and insect repellent
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Ideal times are from May to December, although there are no "bad" times. The river is dam controlled. Therefore, water levels can be low in April, but can also be quite high during the monsoon season

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** 2:00am - 9:00am is recommended
- **INCLUDES:** Water, a guide
- **DIFFICULTY:** Strenuous. The last section of the summit is very steep
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** The climb is too strenuous for small children. However suitable for children around the ages of 12
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** a raincoat as it sometimes rains, a jumper as it can get cold at the summit, and a cap to keep your ears warm
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** If it rains, there will be leeches. When climbing in the season, between December to April, there could be crowds of pilgrims and the climb can sometimes be slow. There are restrooms at each Ambalama but they are very basic



Sri Pada

Few mountains in the world are more steeped in mythology than Adam's Peak. Bearing a giant footprint shape at the top of its conical peak, the 2,224m tall elevation got its name because Muslims believed that it bares the footprint of Adam. Buddhists on the other hand named the mountain Sri Pada (The Sacred Foot), claiming that the footprint belonged to Buddha as he stepped into paradise. Christian settlers had another idea: they insisted that the footprint was that of St Thomas the apostle. But the Hindu population of Sri Lanka challenged this, declaring the mark to be the footprint of Lord Shiva, the god of destruction. Whatever you believe, climbing Adam's Peak is a physically exhilarating experience. It is customary to climb at night in order to reach the summit by sunrise. The ascent takes approximately 3.5 hours and during peak season it is lit up by oil lamps and dotted with stalls selling local hot drinks and snacks.



Pepper

Kandy

54-55

Kandy's Canvas

“ I love colour and vibrancy. People say you can't match this colour with that colour, this texture with that texture. Fiddlesticks! ”

Ena De Silva, The Sunday Times, 2011

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Flexible, but early morning or late afternoon are best to avoid the heat
- **INCLUDES:** Water and umbrella if necessary
- **DIFFICULTY:** Moderate – we rank it moderate as there are many uneven steps and it can be very crowded and sweaty
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** A camera for sure. Light clothes. Leave your valuables in the safe. Bring a little money. Note this is not the place to buy antiques or gems



Gods, Kings and Men

This inspiring guided walk through Kandy's city centre takes you to the iconic UNESCO awarded Temple of the Tooth and continues through the town into the central market. One of the most interesting aspects of this walk is the contrast of people, religions and ethnicities you encounter in Kandy, all living in a chaotic harmony. A church sits in the vicinity of the Temple of the Tooth, side by side with a Kovil (Hindu temple) and the great Red Mosque. The market itself is full of weird and wonderful vegetables, fruits and spices and is an adventure for the senses! The early morning is the best time to visit when the fish, vegetables and other goods are fresh and the morning sun shines through the stalls. Appreciate the hustle and bustle as your guide helps to make sense of it all for you. The walk will finish up with a cup of tea at the historic Queen's Hotel.



Drums and Fire

According to legend, the origin of Kandyan dance lies in an exorcism ritual which was originally performed by Indian shamans who came to the island, from which the locals adopted the dance. These days, Kandyan dance is wildly popular across Sri Lanka and it is common for Kandyan dancers to perform at local weddings, festivals, and celebrations. This exclusive experience takes place in the privacy of your hotel restaurant over dinner, allowing a unique chance to see these dances with no crowds and optimal photo opportunities. The dancers wear elaborate costumes including a headdress, their chests only covered by a decorative beaded net and the finale features an amazing fire-walking act! The Kandyan Dance is traditionally performed to percussion only, with distinctive drumming, unique to the dance style. The drummers also have lyrics that are sung in tune with the movements of the dancer. This is a must-see performance for visitors to Kandy.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Flexible, but we suggest after sunset to fully appreciate the fire display
- **INCLUDES:** The dance performance
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, children will love the dance and drumming
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** A camera

If you would like to enquire or book this experience call us on +94 77 00 888 77 or email us on experiences@pepper.life

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Flexible
- **INCLUDES:** Refreshments are provided
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes
- **TIME:** 5:00pm
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** A camera, photography of the artists and their works are permitted
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Feel no pressure to buy art – the experience was conceived as a way of granting you private access into an artist's home and life in Sri Lanka. Your host is also an avid musician, and will be happy to demonstrate and elaborate upon his interests in Indian music. Feel free to ask!



Art and Philosophy

Kandy is a city of arts, in many creative forms. From batiks and dance performances to extraordinary frescoes hidden within temples and places of worship, there is art around every corner in Kandy. With such a strong pull towards the arts, the city tends to both attract and produce an eccentric bunch of artisans, who draw inspiration from the lush greenery of the surrounding Kandyan hills and have been producing some of the best art in the country for hundreds of years. Spend an hour or two at the studio home of two of Sri Lanka's most eminent and reclusive artists, to talk art, philosophy and music. The work of both painters may be viewed at leisure. This unique visit ends back on the veranda with a chat over a cup of tea.



Batik and Lunch at Ena De Silva's Workshop

Ena De Silva was a prominent Sri Lankan artist, widely acclaimed for having re-established the batik industry in Sri Lanka. Her distinctive palette of bold and dramatic colours in unique geometric designs became widely popular island-wide and Ena's prints are still much in use today. She developed the Matala Heritage Centre in the mid-1960s, employing local women to work there and using this as her main workshop, which she decorated lavishly in the impulsive and expressive style she was famed for. Ena's employees continue to work at the centre after her death and the workshop (still in use) offers a fascinating glimpse into the life of this notable Sri Lankan artist. Take a guided walk around the workshop to learn about Ena and the ancient art of batik before sitting down for the most sumptuous meal you will likely eat on your trip: a 26 dish rice and curry served al fresco and cooked by local village women.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Flexible
- **INCLUDES:** Lunch, and water. Any soft drinks served are extra
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Definitely! what to wear or bring along: Light, cool clothing
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** We'd recommend you have a light breakfast this morning in order to try a little bit of everything on the table! If you would like to witness the village ammas preparing your lunch, you would have to arrive by midday

Ceylon Tea

“To the tea aficionado, the prefix ‘Ceylon’ on the tea box is still a sign of tradition and quality.”

Roland Wenzlhuemer, Coffee to Tea Cultivation In Ceylon, 2008



Sri Lanka's Tea Train

One of the world's most scenic train rides can be found on the railway lines that stretch out across Sri Lanka's hills. Originally built to transport coffee across the island's most treacherous terrain, the coffee blight and the birth of the tea cultivation in Sri Lanka meant the system became entwined with the tea industry, facilitating the transportation of both labor and produce across these mountainous regions. The railway system remains much the same today, with one main line running right the way from Colombo through major destinations such as Kandy, Hatton, Nuwara Eliya, Ella and finally Badulla. Teetering on the top of tea-clad mountains, the daily scheduled trains weave their way slowly through some of Sri Lanka's finest landscape, offering breath-taking views that you won't see from the road. From vintage carriages replicating the glory days of the British Raj to standard second class, we can tailor a train journey to suit your needs.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Timings depend on which leg of the journey you decide to take
- **INCLUDES:** Train tickets
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, absolutely!
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** Trains can often be delayed in Sri Lanka, so it's best to be aware that you might not always arrive on time
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** A camera and a bottle of water

If you would like to enquire or book this experience call us on +94 77 00 888 77 or email us on experiences@pepper.life



A Tale of Tea

The success story of Ceylon tea is well-known worldwide. Sri Lanka is the fourth largest producer of tea globally and the history of this industry spans right back to the beginnings of the British Raj. Sri Lanka's tea industry prospered, for the most part, because of its ideal climate conditions, the emergence of the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain and as a by-product of the coffee blight. In particular, the introduction of steam locomotives allowed for tea to be easily transported across previously hard-to-reach regions of the island. A visit to a tea factory has become a staple of every Sri Lanka travel itinerary and for good reason! The epic tale of the tea industry is a central theme to the story of not only Sri Lanka, but also the post-industrialized world.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMINGS:** Visit times are flexible. Tea factories are usually open from 10:00am – 5:00pm
- **INCLUDES:** Entrance to tea factory and any teas offered in the visit
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Very young children probably won't follow the descriptions of how tea is processed but they will enjoy seeing the machines in action
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** It can be noisy and dusty inside the factory and most tea factories are usually closed on Sundays
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** A camera

Pepper

Kandy

60-61

Botany

“ If Ceylon is a paradise for every botanist and lover of flowers, then Peradeniya deserves to be called the very heart of paradise. ”

Ernst Heinrich Philipp August Haeckel, A visit to Ceylon, 1883



The Secret Garden

The natural beauty of Kandy and its surroundings have been passionately documented for over a millennia. The thickly forested mountains of the Hill Country offer ideal conditions for growing tropical fruits, vegetables and exotic flowers. Take a walk through a 45 acre plantation with a notable journalist, for a more off-the-beaten-track botanical experience than the usual visit to the gardens in Kandy. The lush vegetation and mild climate attract many forest animals including wild boar, macaque monkeys, barking deer, porcupines and giant squirrels – some of which you may see along the way. The walk ends back at the host's ancestral home, where you will have refreshments before sitting down to a typical planter's lunch with your host and his partner in their cozy dining room. The spread of Sri Lankan cuisine is of exceptional quality, prepared on an open (wood-fired) hearth. Finish up with a gin and tonic if you wish and proceed onwards to Kandy!

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** It is highly recommended to arrive early to avoid the midday heat, 9:00am is ideal. Alternatively, you could visit at around 4:30pm and enjoy dinner post-walk
- **INCLUDES:** A guide, refreshments, the walk, and lunch or dinner
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy. The walk can be adapted in length to suit your needs
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** There is ample space for small children to run around and they will like interacting with nature
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Light, cool clothing, a hat and wearing a pair of trainers and using insect repellent while on the walk are recommended. Bring a camera along too!



The Heart of Paradise (Botanical Gardens with an Expert)

The Peradeniya Royal Botanical Gardens are one of the largest and undoubtedly the finest of their kind in Asia. Once exclusive pleasure gardens reserved for Kandyan Kings, the extensive gardens are now open to the public and are one of Kandy's most popular attractions, drawing a medley of tourists, couples and families through their big brass gates. Visit the Botanical Gardens with our resident host, an expert in botany. It's a leisurely circular walk around the gardens, which include an impressive collection of orchids and a wide variety of plants, flowers and trees that hail from across the globe, some of them famously imported from Kew Gardens in London. Our expert botanist is a walking encyclopaedia. Even if you have very little interest in botany, he makes the visit interesting and insightful with plenty of quirks and side stories. For many this has been the highlight of their trip to Sri Lanka.

QUICK FACTS

- **TIMES:** Recommended start time is 9:00am to avoid the mid-day heat. The walk takes around 1.5 hours
- **INCLUDES:** We provide a host, entrance tickets and water
- **DIFFICULTY:** Easy
- **SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN:** Yes, the wide open spaces are great for kids who love to explore
- **WHAT TO WEAR OR BRING ALONG:** Light, cool clothing, sunscreen or a hat are recommended. You may need to take an umbrella to either protect you from the sun, or the rain. Bring a camera along too!
- **IMPORTANT TO KNOW:** There are toilets and a cafeteria inside the gardens

Your experience with us...

“One of the highlights of the whole trip”

TL, Canada

“Fabulous – an amazing experience which removes you from the standard tourist trips”

Mary Pratt, The Caviar Spoon

“The insight and organisation of this group was excellent. They knew their stuff inside and out, far more than most companies I’ve interacted with around the world”

Danae Mercer - Luxury and travel journalist

“The cooking class was wonderful! We loved that it was in her home, she teaches well and the food was delicious! I wouldn’t change anything and would recommend it. The small group size made it very personal”

Dr Janakie Singham, Canada

“Wonderful stories, superb company, and local history made for an unforgettable and truly *niyama dawasak* (great day)!”

David Bryan and Elaine Golin, UK

“The general vibe was relaxed and very welcoming – I felt I could ask questions about any aspect of what was happening”

Claire Rourke, Ireland

“One of the major plus points of the whole Pepper ethos is the inherent flexibility that sees the various experiences included on the itinerary tailored and tweaked to suit the guest or group”

Karl Cushing, Freelance travel journalist

“Great service all round. Made it easy by being able to pay online”

Shelly Dago, UK



PEPPER

www.pepper.life