



Sri Lanka Food & Photo Adventure with Alan Benson



trip highlights

- Photograph Sri Lanka guided by acclaimed food and travel photographer Alan Benson
- Ride the legendary hill train through misty tea terraces to Nuwara Eliya
- Spot elephants, leopards and vibrant birdlife on safari in Yala National Park
- Explore Sri Lanka's through food from dawn fish markets to cinnamon plantations



Trip Duration	11 days	Trip Code: CCAB
Grade	Adventure touring	
Activities	Photography, Cultural Touring	
Summary	10 nights 4 & 5 star hotels	

welcome to World Expeditions

For over 50 years, we've been creating high-quality, expedition-style adventures for active travellers with a curious spirit. From our very first trek in the mountains of Nepal to pioneering remote routes across all seven continents, our journeys are built for those who want to truly explore – not just visit.

At the heart of what we do is a simple philosophy: take the paths less travelled.

This means travelling with care, supporting local communities, minimising our impact, and unlocking experiences that most travellers will never have.

If you're ready to go further and dig deeper, we invite you to join us on the Sri Lanka Food & Photo Adventure with Alan Benson, a journey that captures the essence of a unique adventure.



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the trip

From early morning fish markets to misty tea fields, this one of a kind photography journey through Sri Lanka invites you to see, taste and frame the island. Led by acclaimed food and travel photographer Alan Benson, you'll travel from coastal Negombo to the hill country plantations, capturing daily life, landscapes, wildlife, and it's famously warm people. Wander street markets at dawn, share tea with cinnamon farmers, photograph iconic stilt fishermen, and ride the legendary scenic train through rolling tea terraces. Along the way, Alan will guide you in developing your photographic skills through relaxed mentoring, informal sessions, and hands-on opportunities to explore techniques like lighting, composition, night photography, and capturing people and food.

Whether you're an enthusiastic beginner, a traveller looking to see Sri Lanka through a more creative lens, or simply someone curious about photography, this trip is open to all. DSLR, mirrorless, or smartphone - whatever camera you have, you're welcome. With Alan's encouragement and practical advice, you'll return home with a deeper confidence in your abilities, and a collection of compelling images.

about your leader/escort

Alan Benson is a highly experienced, James Beard-nominated travel and food photographer with more than 25 years working professionally in Australia and overseas. A former London-trained chef, he made the move from commercial kitchens to photography in the late 1990s and has since built a respected career shooting food, travel, people and places for a wide range of publications. Endlessly curious and highly regarded for his skill, Alan is known for his ability to work comfortably in fast-moving, real-world environments - from street markets, restaurants and remote locations to creating stunning still lifes and portraiture.

As a tour leader and mentor, Alan brings a clear, practical teaching style. He works easily with photographers of all levels, offering hands-on guidance around camera settings, composition, working with natural light, and photographing people and places with confidence and respect. In Sri Lanka, Alan will guide you through a wide range of shooting opportunities, including landscapes, daily life, food culture and portraiture, while sharing professional insights drawn from decades in the field. Expect constructive feedback and real-time problem solving, with plenty of humour and encouragement along the way.

at a glance

DAY 1	JOIN NEGOMBO
DAY 2	IN NEGOMBO
DAY 3	TO COLOMBO
DAY 4	IN COLOMBO
DAY 5	TO GALLE
DAY 6	IN GALLE
DAY 7	TO TISSAMAHARAMA
DAY 8	MORNING SAFARI AND AFTERNOON TEMPLE
DAY 9	A SCENIC TRAIN JOURNEY IN TEA COUNTRY
DAY 10	THE STORY OF CEYLON TEA
DAY 11	FINAL DAY

what's included

- Hosted by travel and food photographer Alan Benson
- 10 nights 4 & 5 star hotels on a twin share basis
- 10 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 8 dinners and a high tea
- Market tours in Colombo, Galle and Kandy

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trip dates

2026 13 Sep - 24 Sep

fast facts

Countries Visited:
Sri Lanka

Visas:

Please check visa requirements with your reservations consultant*

Vaccinations:

Please consult a travel vaccination specialist for up to date information

Singles:

Single travellers who are unable to be matched with another single traveller of the same gender, must pay a single supplement on this trip.

Leader:

Expert Local Leader & Escort

thoughtful travel

Our World Expeditions adventures are grounded in a deep commitment to regenerative travel, going beyond minimising harm to actively restoring and enriching the places we visit. We partner closely with local communities, ensuring that our trips support cultural preservation, fair livelihoods, and community-led initiatives. Each expedition is designed to protect and regenerate natural ecosystems through low-impact practices, climate action, and education that fosters respect for biodiversity. We prioritise meaningful connections between travellers and place, encouraging a sense of stewardship that lasts well beyond the journey. By embedding sustainability into every layer of our operations, we aim not only to explore the world responsibly but also to leave it healthier, more resilient, and more vibrant for future generations.

- Jeep safari at Yala National Park
- Scenic train journey Ella to Nanu Oya
- Cooking class in Galle
- Entrance fees for Kataragama Temple and Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic
- Private tours of cinnamon and tea estates
- Expert local guide
- Private air conditioned bus transport
- Arrival and departure transfers on Day 1 and 11

what's not included

- International flights
- Travel insurance
- Visa
- Single supplement - when staying in your own room
- Drinks
- Meals not noted as included
- Tips

detailed itinerary

DAY 1 Join Negombo

Welcome to Sri Lanka, a land of vivid colour, lush landscapes and endlessly photogenic scenes. On arrival at Colombo Bandaranaike International Airport, you'll be met by your guide and transferred to your hotel.

NOTE: Many flights arrive very late at night there are no planned activities today.

Overnight: Goldi Sands Hotel, Negombo

meals: NIL

DAY 2 In Negombo

A morning to relax and settle in. After lunch you'll meet with your host Alan Benson and group members to talk about the trip ahead and goals for the photography sessions. In the afternoon, travel to Negombo Lagoon, where quiet waters open into a network of mangroves, mudflats, and local fishing communities. Boarding a traditional boat, we'll glide past, stilted huts and shrimp traps, as the golden hour stretches across the lagoon. Dinner is at Dutch Trails, a locally loved seafood restaurant nestled near the lagoon.

Overnight: Goldi Sands Hotel, Negombo

meals: B,D

DAY 3 To Colombo

We travel to one of Sri Lanka's most revered Buddhist temples, golden roofed and surrounded by sculpted gardens, with an interior of bold murals. As monks chant softly in the background, pilgrims light oil lamps and make offerings of bright lotus flowers. In Colombo Fort, old colonial buildings meet the energy of a modern city. Dive into the heart of the city at the Main Manning Market, a labyrinth of fruit stalls, spice vendors, and rickety handcarts stacked with watermelon, pineapples, and bunches of curry leaves. The rest of the day is yours to wander - or better yet,

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important note

By its very nature adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected. The itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control.

To get the most out of your adventure it is important that you are flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise.

photograph - the streets of Colombo where Buddhist temples, Hindu kovils, Islamic mosques and Christian churches all sit within walking distance. Each neighbourhood, street stall or shrine tells a story.

Overnight: Cinnamon Lakeside Hotel, Colombo

meals: B,L,D

DAY 4 In Colombo

It's a pre dawn start, but worth it for the shot. We're bound for the Night Farmers' Market, where produce arrives straight from village fields under the cover of darkness. This is unfiltered Sri Lanka where commerce, community, and colour collide. From there, we continue to St. John's Fish Market in Paliyagoda, one of the country's largest seafood hubs. A late morning return to the hotel to take breakfast and relax. Later in the day, we head to Diyatha Uyana, a peaceful lakeside promenade where families stroll and vendors prepare fragrant local snacks on the roadside grills, a street photographer's playground. As evening settles, we gather at the elegant Dilmah Tea Lounge for a tea inspired menu.

Overnight: Cinnamon Lakeside, Colombo

meals: B,D

DAY 5 To Galle

We head inland and take 4x4 jeeps along winding jungle roads to a working cinnamon estate, the perfect setting to photograph the textures and tones of Sri Lanka's most iconic spice. Watch as skilled hands slice, peel and roll the delicate bark into fragrant curls.

From spice to sea, we continue south toward Galle, one of Sri Lanka's most photogenic towns. Once a vital port, Galle is best known for its beautifully preserved Dutch Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Inside the ramparts, cobbled streets wind between colonial villas, pastel walls, and verandas draped in bougainvillea.

Overnight: Yara Fort Hotel, Galle

meals: B,L

DAY 6 In Galle

Today kicks off with a market visit and cooking class. You'll photograph and prepare an authentic Sri Lankan lunch. Later we head to the sands of Habaraduwa Beach, to photograph Sri Lanka's iconic stilt fishermen, perched on wooden poles as they've done for generations, casting simple rods to catch small reef fish like mackerel and spotted herring. In the evening explore the Maha Galle night markets, with stalls of sizzling snacks and colourful street life.

Overnight: Yara Fort Hotel, Galle

meals: B,L,D

DAY 7 To Tissamaharama

Today we journey into Sri Lanka's southern heartland, pausing for photo stops at rice paddies and working farms. As we approach Tissamaharama, gateway to Yala National Park, the scenery becomes more tropical. Our resort offers a quiet and scenic stay with views that stretch to distant hills. Here we are well positioned for tomorrow's early departure to Yala for a wildlife safari into one of Sri Lanka's most biodiverse regions.

Overnight: Kithala Resort, Tissamaharama

meals: B,D

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DAY 8 Morning safari and afternoon temple

Rise early and ready your cameras for a dawn safari in Yala National Park. The terrain of dry thorn scrub, lagoons and dense forest create a dramatic backdrop for wildlife photography. We hope to capture leopards, elephants, crocodiles, jackals, sloth bears, and Yala's abundant birdlife. A picnic breakfast is served in the park. After a break back at the resort, we'll visit a nearby family run home dairy, where you'll photograph and taste buffalo curd, traditionally set in terracotta pots, and the rich local sweet kalu dodol, made with coconut milk and jaggery.

As the sun goes down we'll visit Kataragama Temple, one of the island's most sacred pilgrimage sites. Revered by both Buddhists and Hindus, the temple comes alive at dusk with drumming, chanting, and flame offerings during the evening pooja. It's a visually rich and spiritually charged experience.

Overnight: Kithala Resort, Tissamaharama
meals: B,D

DAY 9 A scenic train journey in tea country

This morning we travel to Ella Railway Station, to board the train for a journey considered among the most scenic rail rides in the world. The train curves through misty tea covered hills, across old stone bridges, and past villages perched on the ridgelines. Disembarking at Nanu Oya, we continue by road to Nuwara Eliya, a town nicknamed "Little England" for its cool climate, colonial architecture, and rose gardens, once a hill station for British tea planters. We stop at the Municipal Market, where you can capture portraits of traders and colourful displays of vegetables, flowers and spices.

Then, a classic High Tea at the Grand Hotel, a colonial era landmark steeped in charm. Your accommodation tonight is set within the rolling Somerset Tea Gardens, with sweeping valley views and tranquil surrounds. After freshening up, we gather for a five course silver service dinner, rounding off a truly elegant day in the heart of tea country.

Overnight: Amaya Langdale Hotel, Nuwara Eliya
meals: B,D

DAY 10 The story of Ceylon tea

We step into the tea fields at sunrise as mist lifts off the emerald hills. At the Somerset Tea Factory, you'll gain an insight into the journey of Ceylon tea. Walk among rows of women in vivid saris as they pluck tea by hand, their woven baskets offering beautiful photo opportunities. Then, step inside the factory to capture the transformation of fresh leaves into fragrant blends of tea.

We continue on to Kandy, the spiritual heart of Sri Lanka. After lunch, we visit the revered Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic, set beside the lake, with time to photograph its golden roof, carved pillars and lotus filled pools.

By late afternoon, we journey back to Colombo, arriving in time for a celebratory final dinner, a chance to reflect on the images, flavours and stories gathered over the past 10 days.

Overnight: Cinnamon Lakeside, Colombo
meals: B,D

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DAY 11 Final day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast at the hotel before your transfer to the airport for your onward flight. We farewell the unforgettable island of Sri Lanka.

NOTE: Many flights depart late at night, check out is midday, it is however possible to keep your room longer, at an additional cost.

meals: B

This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

country information

Sri Lanka, officially the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and known as Ceylon until 1972, is an island nation in the Indian Ocean off the southeastern coast of India. The island is separated from India by the Palk Strait and the Gulf of Mannar, and between them lies a chain of small islands known as Adam's Bridge (also called Ram Setu).

The administrative capital is Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte, while Colombo is the commercial capital and largest city. Sri Lanka's western, southern and southeastern coasts are palm-fringed and dotted with lagoons and inlets, while the more rugged northeastern coastline shelters Trincomalee Harbour, one of the finest natural harbours in the world.

The population is around 22 million, with most people living in rural areas and roughly a quarter residing in cities. About 74 percent of Sri Lankans are of Sinhalese heritage. The largest minority groups are Sri Lankan Tamils and Indian Tamils, together making up about 18 percent of the population. Other long-established communities include Sri Lankan Moors, Burghers (of mixed European descent), Malays, and Veddas, the island's Indigenous people.

Buddhism, introduced in the 3rd century BC, remains the dominant religion, practiced by about 69 percent of the population. Hinduism (15 percent), Islam (8 percent) and Christianity (8 percent) are also followed, and religious life plays an important role in Sri Lankan society. Many public holidays coincide with religious festivals, and the annual Kandy Esala Perahera, a grand torchlight procession featuring dancers and caparisoned elephants, is among the most celebrated.

The official languages are Sinhala and Tamil, with English widely used in government, education and tourism.

climate

September is an excellent time to explore Sri Lanka, with warm days and lush, green landscapes outside of the monsoon rains. Average daytime temperatures range from around 27C (80F) on the coast to 20C (68F) in the hill country, with cooler evenings in higher regions sometimes as low as 10-15C (50-59F) at night. While showers are possible, particularly in the afternoons, they are usually brief. Light, breathable clothing is ideal for the coast, with a warm layer for the cooler hill regions.

dietary requirements

We hope you can enjoy many of the local ingredients and speciality dishes on the tour, so please let us know any dietary needs. We are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip, and therefore, we strongly encourage that travellers with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Group members must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

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accommodation on the trip



The tour stays in 4 and 5 star hotels. We have noted our intended accommodations but are subject to change in which case an alternative of equal charm and quality will be provided.

visas

Travellers from AU, NZ, CA, US and UK can get and pay for a Sri Lanka 'Electronic Travel Authorisation' (ETA) online, a few days before you arrive. You should get your approval notice within 24 hours, and you can use this to enter Sri Lanka. You can apply here at the official website of the Department of Immigration and Emigration www.eta.gov.lk.

It is also possible for travellers from AU, NZ, CA, US and UK to apply for a 30-day tourist visa on arrival if you land at Bandaranaike International Airport in Colombo. However, the Department for Immigration strongly advise visitors to apply for an ETA before entry to Sri Lanka, as the approval of an arrival visa cannot be guaranteed. A visa on arrival costs 60 US dollars, which is 10 US dollars more than the ETA.

Travellers from AU, NZ, CA, US and UK can complete an online arrival form 3 days before arriving in Sri Lanka. The service is free and may save time when you arrive. If you want to stay for more than 30 days, up to 180 days, you need to apply online as you cannot apply on arrival.

Please ensure that your passport has an expiry date of greater than 6 months during your visit to Sri Lanka.

Please bear in mind that visas may be required for countries you are visiting en route or transiting through on the way to your destination. It is important that you check the requirements of all countries you will visit. Visa costs and requirements do change regularly so we suggest you check with your travel agent or World Expeditions reservations consultant. It is your responsibility to obtain all necessary visas.

how to book

To book a trip, you will need to complete a Booking Form (online or request a PDF) and pay a non-refundable deposit.

The tour requires a minimum of 6 participants to be guaranteed and hence operational. We recommend not booking any non refundable or non changeable travel arrangement, to suit this tour, until we advise the departure is guaranteed. In the unlikely event that the tour does not reach the minimum numbers required to operate, your deposit will be refunded in full.

Our maximum group size for this hands on photography tour is 12.

We are very happy to quote on airfares, along with additional hotel nights and travel insurance.