

Tour of the Ancient Irrigation Systems and Capital Cities of Sri Lanka - Jan 8, 9 and 10, 2010

Overview	<p>This tour covers some of the most prominent ancient irrigation systems and historical sites located in and around two ancient capital cities of Sri Lanka, namely Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa were capital cities of ancient Sri Lanka from circa 437 BC-845 AD and 846 AD – 1302 AD, respectively. These ancient civilizations were famous for their highly advanced and unique irrigation practices and infrastructure. The tour will be conducted by trained guides as well as staff from the Central Engineering Consultancy Bureau (CECB) of Sri Lanka.</p>
Organizer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tour is organized by Diethelm Travel (www.diethelmtravel.com) in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Please contact Ms. Thiru Thillainathan (thiru.t@lk.diethelmtravel.com) (Direct phone: + 94 11 470 4625, +94 11 2313125, Mobile: + 94 77 727 8959) for more information regarding this tour. You need to contact them directly for making airline reservations and this tour package in Sri Lanka. A English speaking tour guide, who is certified by Ministry of Tourism, will accompany the tour. • The technical portion of the tour will be assisted by the Central Engineering Consultancy Bureau of Sri Lanka in collaboration with the Mahaweli Authority. The tour includes a presentation by local engineers belonging to these two agencies.
Cost (excluding airfare)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early-bird rate (before 12/5/09): 200 USD (two hundred US dollars) per person (see Notes 1-4 below) The tour detailed schedule is shown on page 2. • After 12/5/09: 250 US Dollars per person (see Notes 1-4 below) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The above rates include hotel room charges (double-occupancy rate), as well as all transportation and meal charges for the entire duration of the tour. It does not include airfare. 2. The round-trip airline cost from Chennai to Colombo is approx. 100 USD (one hundred US dollars). These prices are subject to change. So early travel bookings are highly recommended. 3. All cancellations are subject to a 25 USD cancellation fee between 12/5/09 and 12/31/09. No refunds will be issued after 12/31/09. 4. The above rates have been calculated assuming a double-room occupancy rate. Other occupancy requests are subject to the following supplements or reductions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single room supplement: 75 USD per person - Triple room reductions: 10 USD per person <p>For example, the early bird rate for guests planning to request single and triple occupancy rooms is 275 and 190 USD per person, respectively.</p>
Visa	<p>No prior visa is needed. A 30-day tourist visa will be issued upon arrival at the Bandaranaike International Airport in Sri Lanka. For more information on visas, please visit: http://www.immigration.gov.lk/html/visa/fees.html.</p>

Tour Highlights

KALA WEWA RESERVOIR AND THE JAYA GANGA WATERWAY

The Kala Wewa reservoir was built during the reign of King Dhatusena (455-473 AD). It is one of the most magnificent reservoirs of the ancient world. This reservoir has a circumference of 40 miles and has a total area of seven square miles at full capacity. The ancient spill (pitawana) is measured to be 216 feet in width and 170 ft in length. For comparison, the width of the spill is more than three quarters length of a soccer field! The spill was built using hammered Granite, with each block of Granite shaped precisely to fit its neighbor. The whole structure eventually acts like one huge rock. The embankment of Kalawewa is 60 to 80 feet high with a base of more than 200 ft and a length of 3 miles. The Kala Wewa - Jaya Ganga irrigation scheme built under the tutelage of King Dhatusena with a fifty four mile long canal and a reservoir of 40 mile circumference can be considered as one of the best engineering irrigation schemes and feats of the ancient world.

CITY OF ANURADHAPURA

For over 1,200 years Sinhalese Kings with occasional South Indian interlopers ruled ancient Sri Lanka from the great city of Anuradhapura. It is the most extensive and important of the Sri Lanka's ancient cities. Anuradhapura was founded in the 4th century BC and is famous for its Dagobas (Temples), Reservoirs, and beautifully landscaped gardens, the ruins of which still remain to this day. The sacred Bo Tree (the world's oldest tree on record), "Jayasri Maha Bodhi" and the "Ruwanwali Maha Seya" Temple which are two of Sri Lanka's most sacred places are found in Anuradhapura. In addition to these, there are many other historical and religious sites found in Anuradhapura as well.

MINNERIYA RESERVOIR

The Minneriya reservoir was constructed during the reign of King Mahasena (275 AD – 301 AD), as a non-tidal water retention reservoir. It was built primarily for irrigation purposes. The reservoir falls within the Mahaweli River Basin and is of historical importance, having been built in the third century AD with a catchment area of 24,000 ha. The reservoir and surrounding areas have been declared a National Park. Minneriya receives Mahaweli water through the Elahera Giant Canal. There were respective rehabilitation work carried out in 1903 and 1953 to increase the capacity to the tank. The area surrounding the Minneriya reservoir is an ideal location to watch wild life (including wild elephants, spotted deer, leopards, etc.). Consequently, the Minneriya reservoir has been included in the list of Asian Wetlands of international importance.

CITY OF POLONNARUWA

The city of Polonnaruwa, situated 218 kilometers from Colombo is yet another well planned medieval city defended by enclosed walls, graced by palaces, shrines, monasteries, pavilions, parks, ponds and irrigation lakes. A dominant feature of the city is the vast irrigation lake of 5,940 acres aptly named the "Parakrama Samudraya" or the sea of Parakrama after its royal builder King Parakramabahu (1153-1186 AD).

Detailed Trip Itinerary

DAY 1: AIRPORT / DAMBULLA		
Jan. 8, 2010 (Friday)	4:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Pick up guests at the Arrival Lounge of the Bandaranaike International Airport in Colombo . A tour organizer will be at the Airport's Arrival Lounge to meet and greet. Guests can also go to the Taj Airport Hotel directly by taking hotel shuttle bus. <u>Dinner at Taj Airport Hotel.</u>
	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Coffee/Tea at the Taj Airport Hotel. Pick up all guests at the main lobby of the Hotel.
	8:00 PM	Depart to the Amaya Lake Hotel in Dambulla.
DAY 2: DAMBULLA /ANURADHAPURA / DAMBULLA		
Jan. 9, 2010 (Saturday)	6:00 AM – 7:00 AM	Breakfast at the Amaya Lake Hotel in Dambulla
	Approx. 7:30 AM	Depart to the ancient city of Anuradhapura
	Morning Tour	Visit the historic Kala Wewa reservoir, Yodha Ela canal, and the associated irrigation system en route to Anuradhapura
	12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Lunch at the Palm Garden Village hotel in Anuradahapura
	Approx. 1:15 PM	Depart to the CECB Office in Anuradhapura
	1:30 PM – 2:30 PM	Presentation on the “Ancient irrigation system of Sri Lanka” by the engineering staff at the CECB Office in Anuradhapura
	Afternoon Tour	Sightseeing tour of the ancient city of Anuradhapura. The tour will include visits to ancient irrigation canals/reservoirs, temples, stupas, monasteries, giant bathing ponds, etc.
	Approx. 6:30 PM	Depart to the Amaya Lake Hotel in Dambulla. Dinner and overnight stay at the hotel.

DAY 3: DAMBULLA / POLONNARUWA / HABARANA / AIRPORT		
Jan. 10, 2010 (Sunday)	6:00 AM – 7:00 AM	Breakfast at the Amaya Lake Hotel in Dambulla
	Approx. 7:30 AM	Depart to the ancient city of Polonnaruwa
	Morning tour	Visit Minneriya and Parakrama Samudra reservoirs and the associated irrigation systems, monasteries, palaces, pavilions, parks, temples, etc. (as time permits)
	12:30 PM – 1:30 PM	Lunch at the Chaaya Village Hotel in Habarana
	Approx. 2:00 PM	Depart to the airport (a refreshment and restroom stop will be made enroute to the airport)
	Approx. 6:00 PM	Drop-off guests at the Taj Airport Garden Hotel in Katunayake.
	Approx. 7:00 PM	Drop-off remaining guests at the Bandaranaike International Airport in Katunayake..

The photographs below show an ancient spillway in Polonnaruwa (left) & a pond in Anuradhapura (right).

