

BOUTIQUE TOURS THAT INSPIRE

# NICHE TRAVEL



## A Bee Lovers' Tour of Sri Lanka With Bob and Dana

**April 01 to April 13, 2019**



If you are fascinated by the world of bees and beekeeping you must not miss this custom designed cultural tour to Sri Lanka! Join Bob\* and Dana, owners of Tugwell Creek Honey Farm & Meadery, on this fascinating exploration of Sri Lanka. Visit local beekeeping colonies and meet the local experts; visit a coconut plantation, an elephant sanctuary, an amazing rock fortress famous for its giant honey bees, and search for leopards on a jungle safari! Immerse yourself in the world of beekeeping Sri Lankan style!

### Your package includes:

- Accommodation and meals as per the itinerary
- Transfers and sightseeing by private air-conditioned motor coach
- Meals as shown on itinerary
- Entrance fees to monuments and sites mentioned in itinerary
- Group arrival and departure transfers



**Price per person land only \$4,499 USD** based on 2 sharing and a minimum of 11 passengers.  
**Price per person land only \$3,320 USD** based on 2 sharing and a minimum of 20 passengers.  
(Limited to a maximum of 24)

Not included: personal expenses, international airfare and taxes, meals not specified, gratuities, camera fees at sites. Single supplement available, please enquire. Private transfers are available for an additional cost for those not arriving at the same time as the group. Hold your space with a \$1,000 US non-refundable deposit.

### To book contact:

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\* Robert Liptrot became interested in bees at the age of 6. Bob earned a Masters Degree in Entomology and teaches beekeeping at Royal Roads university. Bob and Dana started the first meadery in Western Canada producing award winning mead! A passionate beekeeper, Bob is an active member of apicultural research projects.

**April 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Arrive Colombo**



**AYUBOWAN!** Arrive Colombo International Airport and transfer to our hotel in Negombo. Rest of the day at leisure. (D)

**April 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Negombo**

After breakfast, we begin our day with a presentation on bee keeping in Sri Lanka. Later we travel to Nittambuwa to learn how the locals are self-employed in bee keeping. Visit a workshop belonging to an expert beekeeper and witness the honey making process. Samples from different zones and trees are available for purchase. This evening we return to Negombo. (BLD)

**April 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Dambulla**

Today we drive to Dambulla, stopping on route at a coconut product factory in Mirigama. This is a renowned manufacturer of quality and attractive organic coconut products. A resident coconut planter will guide us around the working coconut plantation and the factory, where you will learn how the coconut is plucked and made into some of the best organic coconut products in the world such as virgin coconut oil, extra virgin coconut oil, coconut butter, creamed coconut, coconut snack, coconut water and coconut flour. The tour ends with a tasting of fresh coconut water. After visiting the coconut factory, we continue to the Millennium Elephant Foundation (MEF) in Pinnawala. There are eight permanent resident elephants at the MEF: Lakshmi, Rani, Ranmenika Pooja, Raja, Kandula, Kavari Raja and Bandara. We are invited to experience washing and feeding the elephants. After visiting the elephants, we continue to Dambulla for the evening. (BD)

**April 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Dambulla**

Drive to Sigiriya to climb the rock fortress. Built by King Kassapa in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the fortress was a Royal Citadel for more than 18 years. The lion rock (A UNESCO world heritage site) is a citadel of unusual beauty, rising 200 metres from the scrub jungle. The base of the rock is ringed by a moat and rampart; the renowned water gardens encircle the outcrop. The majestic Lion's Paw picturesquely guards the stairway of the palace on the summit. See the famous frescoes of the "Heavenly maidens" of Sigiriya in a sheltered pocket of the rock and the 10-foot-high Mirror Wall.

Giant honey bees (*Apis dorsata* aka 'Bambara' in Sinhala) have colonized the rock and are visible during the dry season, relocating to the dense forest below in rainy season. The massive, open honeycombed nests (up to ten feet across) hang from the limbs of large trees and from ceilings of open buildings. Bees select such locations to help thwart destruction by predators such as the sloth bear. Locals have long believed that the bees are reincarnated soldiers of King Kashyapa (AD 477-495), and protect the rock from harm.

Later, we continue to the UNESCO World Heritage City of Polonnaruwa, the Capital of Sri Lanka from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century. This is a well-planned medieval city defended by enclosed walls, graced by



palaces, shrines, monasteries, pavilions, parks, ponds and irrigation lakes. Polonnaruwa is strewn with ruins in a resplendent state of preservation. (BD)

#### **April 5<sup>th</sup> Dambulla**

Today we enjoy a full day visit to the bee keeping colonies in the dry zone. Beekeeping sites can be found in Ritaigala, Habarana, Thirappane. Experience a demonstration on the transfer of a wild hive to a box, honey extraction and dividing a box to make two hives. (BLD)

#### **April 6<sup>th</sup> Kandy**

Today we visit a spice garden in Matale before arriving in Kandy, another UNESCO World Heritage Site. This Hill Capital retains an aura of grandeur from its days as the last stronghold of the Sinhala Kings. Encircled by hills, with a tranquil lake in its centre, it is the site of the renowned temple that enshrines the Tooth Relic of the Buddha and the Royal Botanical gardens – home to one of the world’s best collections of Orchids. Kandy and its satellite villages are the centre of the islands handicraft industry. Visit the revered Temple of the Tooth Relic and Peradeniya Botanical Gardens (BD).

#### **April 7<sup>th</sup> Nuwara Eliya / Ella**

Nuwara Eliya, Sri Lanka's premier hill resort with a cool mountain climate, produces some of the world’s best tea. The mountain slopes and valleys are a carpet of velvety green tea plantations, interspersed with gushing streams and tumbling waterfalls. Red and green roofed plantation bungalows, English country style homes and hotels with lovely flower gardens, an 18-hole golf course and a racecourse, give Nuwara Eliya a decidedly British character. After a visit to the tea plantation, to experience tea plucking, we will enjoy an afternoon of leisure to explore the town. This afternoon we take a city tour of Nuwaraeliya before continuing to the mountain village of Ella. (BLD)

#### **April 8<sup>th</sup> Ella**

Today we visit the Agriculture Department – Bee development unit in Bidunuwewa, Bandarawela. Meet the assistant director of the department and visit the program center. Bindunuwewa is in the Red Gum or Eucalyptus zone where natural hives and domesticated hives can be observed. An explanation on beekeeping techniques, research and equipment used in Sri Lanka will be provided. The remainder of the day is at leisure. (BLD)

**April 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Yala**

Today we tour Bibile, visiting one of the largest bee keeping colonies in Sri Lanka, where a single beekeeper tends to over 200 hives. The officers in charge will walk us through the colonies and explain the details of bee keeping and their success with the bees. (BLD)



**April 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Yala**

Today we set off for an early morning safari in **Yala National Park** in search of Leopards! Sri Lanka's second largest national park is also home to Elephant, Leopard, Bear, Crocodile and Wild Boar. Some claim it has the world's highest concentration of leopard per square kilometer, increasing our chances of sighting one of these graceful elusive animals. Return to hotel for breakfast before returning for another safari in the Yala National Park. (BD)

**April 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Mt. Lavinia**

Today we journey to Mt Lavinia stopping at Dondra Point (Dewundara), a small tropical beach village, to embark on an **optional** whale watching cruise. The warm Indian Ocean is home to Blue whales, Sperm whales, Common dolphins, Bottlenose dolphins, Spinner dolphins, Risso's dolphins and Striped dolphins. After our visit with the whales, we stop in Galle Dutch fort for a tour around the city. (BD)

**April 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Mt. Lavinia**

Today we explore Colombo, the commercial capital of Sri Lanka, by Jeep. Located along the west coast, the city blends cultures, religions and influences of foreign lands into a potpourri of sounds and smells and a kaleidoscope of colour. The original traders and settlers - the Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch and British, have left in their wake churches and monuments, names and religions, costumes and food, and bits of their languages which have been absorbed into the speech of the Sri Lankan. Today, Colombo is a fascinating city - a happy blend of east & west, past & present, with a charm of its own and some of the best shopping opportunities in Asia. (BD)

**April 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Depart Colombo**

Transfer to the Colombo airport to board your onward flight (B)