



one world foundation guesthouse & resort

EXCURSIONS

Ahungalla

This is where one world foundation runs the school with classrooms for more than 1,000 students, a sports ground and the Women's Cooperation. The small village has a hair dresser and a few small shops selling flip flops, biscuits and the like. Stray dogs and grazing cows go after their daily business undisturbed.

Distance: 5 min.

Katuwila

This village is the home of our pre-school unit with approximately 50 pupils between 4 and 5 years of age who love having visitors (from 8:30 – 11:30 am). Here, the children are prepared for their future schooling at the big school in Ahungalla.

Distance: 15 min.

Balapitiya

The nearby village of Balapitiya is the starting point for the Madu-Ganga boat safaris which will take you on an interesting trip around the widely ramified lagoon. It is a paradise for the slightly larger examples of the local goanna species and a sanctuary for birds and fish and crocodiles. One of the 66 smaller and larger islands of the lagoon houses a Buddhist temple you shouldn't miss.

Distance: 10 Min.

Lagoon: appr. 3 hours.

Ambalangoda

A medium-sized town and home of the famous mask carvers, a museum, a lively market and a beautiful fishing port, it is renowned and appreciated for its craftsmanship, particularly from wood. Also worth seeing are the traditional dance performances such as the authentic devil's dance including the expulsion of evil spirits.

Distance: 25 min.

Meetiya goda

To the South of Ambalangoda and a bit further inland you can visit an old moonstone mine which exports these semi-precious stone all over the world. The old and slightly remote mine has brought great wealth to its owner.

Distance: 45 min.



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Karandeniya

A stretched out village a bit further inland and along the Colombo-Galle expressway which was opened in 2011. On a nearby hill there is a temple with a large reclining Buddha and a great view of the surrounding landscape.

Distance: 45 min.

Elpitiya

Also a bit further inland, the land is used for many larger and smaller plantations growing tea, cinnamon and rubber. They are always open for visitors. Prices are moderate and it is possible to taste the tea cultivated in the lowlands.

Distance: 60 min.

Kosgoda

This is a stretch of coastland along the Galle Road to Colombo which was particularly hard hit by the Tsunami. Kosgoda is famous for its turtle farms housing the most diverse species of all ages and worth a visit for animal lovers. With your entry fee you support the future of these projects. The nearby Sannuwardhamaya temple is also worth a visit.

Distance: 15 min.

Induruwa

An unusual village stretched out along the coast where life is still more relaxed than elsewhere on the Western coast. It's a sleepy but very restful place with a beautiful beach which is perfect if you want to go for a walk or just hang out and daydream. The beach of Induruwa is protected by a rocky bay and therefore a safe spot for swimming in the sea. A visit to the nearby Medagoda temple is highly recommended.

Distance: 20 min.

Bentota / Aluthgama

The beach of Bentota is said to be the most beautiful on the West coast with excellent options for swimming, surfing and sailing. Also for those in search of culinary delights, Bentota has a lot to offer: shell fish, crabs, lobsters and oysters to name only a few. The Galapota temple in Bentota is from the 12th century. The village of Aluthgama across the bridge welcomes the visitor with an authentic fish market. The colours, smells and voices are bound to alert all your senses to the different world around you. But besides that the large village also offers a variety of shops for daily life requirements. For those who always wanted to go on a nostalgic train trip around legendary Ceylon, the local train station of Aluthgama is the ideal starting point.

Distance: 30 min.



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Lunuganga

Via Bentota you can reach the tropical gardens designed by Geoffrey Bawa, Sri Lanka's star architect and landscape designer. This idyllic estate is a must for all architects and those interested in landscape design and art. Today, this lovingly designed nature park which has developed over the decades is a charming place full of magic. Within the estate you can visit a number of most diverse buildings with exhibitions of the master's ideas and the artefacts collected by him. Due to the estate's considerable size and the efforts going into its upkeep, the slightly higher entrance fee of Rs. 1,250 is justified. We recommend enjoying your afternoon tea on the unique terrace.

Distance: 45 min.

Brief Garden

About 10 km from Aluthgama you can visit the mansion and magnificent garden of Bevis Bawa, the brother of Geoffrey Bawa. The elegant mansion was built in 19th century Dutch style. Inside the house there is a small art collection while the garden is a wealth of unimagined treasures in the form of unusual sculptures, artistic arrangements and colourful flowers. During Bawa's lifetime Brief Garden was a popular meeting and exchange point for artists, writers and travellers from all over the world. The inspiring force of this magical place can be felt until this day. With a bit of luck, your guide will be a former employee of Bevis Bawa who likes to talk about the kindness and hospitality of his former employer.

Distance: 45 min.

Beruwala

The name of Beruwala is derived from the Sinhalese word "Baeruala" which means "place where the sails were lowered". It was here where the first Mauritians settled about 1,000 years ago. Hence, for Sri Lanka's Muslim population Beruwala is of great importance. The Kitchimalai mosque not far from the centre of town is considered the oldest mosque on the island and should not be missed. The city is marked by Muslim architecture and culture. The end of Ramadan is celebrated all over the city.

Distance: 40 min.

Hikkaduwa

On the way to Galle, the classic tourist destination of Hikkaduwa offers everything the sun searching tourist desires: Sunbathing on the beaches, coffee breaks in one of the many beach bars, surfing and snorkelling along the coast. The coral reefs near the coast, however, are in part severely damaged by the many glass bottomed boats, the day snorkellers and the Tsunami. At night the place is bustling with shops and restaurants. For scuba diving enthusiasts the coral reefs further out offer interesting insights into the underwater world. For those who prefer to stay above the water, there are boat trips to a small island with a lighthouse which since the Tsunami is said to have special powers. As a particular experience we recommend a morning tour on one of the fishing boats.

Distance: 45 min.



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Galle

In the old centre of Galle, a fort originally built by the Dutch on a peninsula, the visitor is rewarded with the myths surrounding the colonial period. Today, not surprisingly, the fort is part of the UNESCO world heritage. The view from Flag Rock along the fortification wall out to the sea and the town is truly spectacular. From here you can also see the lighthouse and a lily white mosque. Historical Mansion, a former Dutch mansion, houses a museum with an exhibition about the history of Sri Lanka as well as the art collection of M. H. A. Gaffar. The old town's tiny streets with their old buildings and shops are interesting for art lovers and treasure hunters. In addition to shops offering textiles, furniture accessories, jewellery and antiques, you will also find beautiful restaurants and bistros. We recommend having tea on the veranda of the majestic Amangalla Hotel where it is served in the most refined china along with silver jugs and bowls. The hotel once served the Dutch Administration and was fully restored and reopened in 2006. On request you can see the luxurious colonial style rooms, the original safe and the library.

Distance: 60 min.

Matara

Matara is a pulsating harbour town on the mouth of the river Nilawela Ganga. It is known for its small fort in the form of a star. The "Star" Fort was built in the 18th century and is entered through a beautiful gate featuring the coat of arms of its builder. The town's second fort, the Matara Fort, is larger. A stroll through the old centre leads through small winding streets and alleys in an altogether very pleasant atmosphere. Matara is also proud of its intellectual importance. One of the country's best universities (Ruhuna University) is located just outside the town. After a visit to Matara, the meaning of the city's name – Maha- Tota- "the great ferry" – is perhaps better understood. There is also a very large statue of Buddha.

Distance: appr. 2 hours.

Kalutara

In former times, the town of Kalutara on the road from Galle to Colombo was considered the centre of the spice trade. Today it is known for its delicious mangosteens. The sandy beaches along the coast are mostly pristine. At the head of the bridge crossing the Kalu Ganga, you will find the fascinating temple grounds of Gangatilaka Vihara. You can walk along the Dagoba (stupa) which depicts the life of the Buddha. In front of it, on the road side, the drivers along Galle Road make small donations and perform a short prayer to ask for a safe journey.

Distance: 60 min.



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Colombo

Sri Lanka's bustling metropolis has many faces. Some find it attractive, others think of it as plain and boring and still others believe it only consists of the famous "Galle Face" Hotel. In any case, Colombo features a lot of sights worth a visit: the bazaar area of Pettah, the historical fort, the Galle Face Green near the shore, traditional York Street and a great number of temples, churches and mosques. And if that's not enough, there are the many museums and galleries with their different and very interesting collections and exhibitions. The best souvenirs can be bought at the compartment store Odel, at Paradise Road or Barefoot. There are many wonderful cafés and restaurants. You can easily get around in this city of 2 million in a Tuk Tuk (three-wheeler).

Distance: appr. 2 hours.

Kandy

The former Kingdom of Kandy in the highlands came to an end with Sri Wickrama Rajasingha in 1815 and went to the British who had to promise that they would keep alive the traditional culture and maintain its laws and institutions. The agreement can be seen at the National Museum along with depictions of Singhalese life before the arrival of the Europeans. By building the railway between Colombo and Kandy (4 hours) the British succeeded in connecting Kandy to world trade. The Kandy style with its famous dances and architecture was developed in 1747. The legendary tooth relic of the Buddha is kept in Sri Lanka's most important temple, the Temple of the Tooth, located on an artificial lake. Buddha's tooth was brought there in the 16th century under adventurous circumstances and has been worshipped ever since. In July/ August Sri Lanka's largest and most important procession, Esala Perahera, takes place in honour of the tooth relic and includes adorned elephants, dancers and drummers. The festivity lasts for 10 days and ends with the full moon. The most beautiful accommodations can be found above the city, in the many small streets hidden in the hills. The traditional dances are performed daily. For those who love to meditate, Kandy with its many centres is considered the best place to do so. Together with Kandy we also recommend trips to the elephant orphanage in Pinnewala, the botanical gardens or a visit to one of the various spice gardens.

Distance: appr. 5 hours.

Texts by Michael Machnik, one of the volunteer teachers of the free education unit, 2008

There are current price lists available in the guest rooms of one world foundation.