

SRI LANKA *fact file*

Called "the finest island of its size in the world..." by Marco Polo, teardrop-shaped Sri Lanka nestles at the foot of India. in the balmy, blue-green waters of the Indian Ocean.

FACTS & FIGURES

- Official Name	Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
- National Holiday	Independence Day, 04 February (1948)
- Size	65525 sq km
- Geographic Coordinates	6-10 N, 80-82 E
- Location	Island off the Southeastern shores of India, 800km north of equator
- Coastline	1340 km
- Capital	Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte
- Commercial capital	Colombo
- Population (May 2005)	20 million
- Languages	Sinhala, Tamil & English. English is widely spoken throughout Sri Lanka, with the exception of remote villages.
- Ethnic Mix	Majority are Sinhalese, minorities Tamil & Moor
- Religions	mostly Buddhist, then Hindu, Christian & Muslim
- Major Exports	Textiles & garments, tea, diamonds, gems, rubber & coconut products
- Highest peak	Pidurutalagala (Mt. Pedro) At 2524m, Adam's peak (Sri Pada), holy to believers of all religions, ranks 4 th at 2,243m.

Walkers Tours Limited

P.O. Box 1048, 130, Glennie Street, Colombo 02, Sri Lanka
Web Site: www.walkerstours.com e-mail: info@walkerstours.com

ESSENTIALS

- Time Zone	Five and a half hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT+5 ½). Daylight Saving Time is not observed.
- Voltage requirement	230/240 volts AC, 50Hz. Round tree-pin plugs are usual, with bayonet lamp fittings.
- Currency	Sri Lanka Rupee (Rs). 100 cents = 1 Rs.
- Travelers Cheques	widely accepted in banks and money exchanges, a 1% stamp duty is payable, plus a small commission.
- Credit Cards	Increasingly accepted in the main areas, but don't expect your local shop keeper to take one. ATMs: Common in larger towns. Tipping: A service charge of 10% is added to all restaurant and hotel bills. A small tip (no more than 10%) above this is appreciated. Drivers expect a tip if you've bargained well.
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- Working week	Monday to Friday
- Medical Facilities	The professional standards of doctors and surgeons are excellent with specialist, hospitals including Eye, Children's, Ayurvedic and Maternity. For emergencies call: Fire and Ambulance Tel: 2422222 Police Tel: 2433333. Tuk-tuk and taxi drivers will know of the nearest hospital.
- GSM Network	900

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TRANSPORT

- Taxi	Radio cars can be called by telephone and are very good value. The minimum charge is Rs30 per kilometer. Other taxis are available, but are not metered, so it is wise to agree on the fare. Cabs from the airport taxi counter at Bandaranaike International Airport cost from Rs 1,000 – 1,500 for the journey into Colombo. Other taxi counters may charge more. Always ask.
- Hire Cars	Self-drive hire cars are readily available, but if it's your first time here, consider hiring a car and driver from the counters at the airport or from your hotel. Drivers offer excellent insight into the island and great flexibility, staying in dedicated drivers' rooms at the same hotel(s) as you.
- Tuk-tuks	You've not been to Sri Lanka if you've not travelled in a tuk-tuk. Rs20-30 per km. Bargain for the best prices.
- Trains	Many places of interest are served by trains from Colombo Fort station.
- Buses	A comprehensive network covering the island with express services between principal towns. Can get crowded.

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