Explore the Jewel of the Indian Ocean!

SRI LANKA
Natural Heritage & Cultural Wonders
February 8-22, 2018

We invite you to join this botanical and cultural adventure to discover one of the lesser-known, unexplored parts of Sri Lanka (formerly called Ceylon), situated like a teardrop in the Indian Ocean, just south of India! Explore this fascinating jewel of a country, led by Neera de Zoysa, an outstanding botanist and naturalist from Sri Lanka who has been a popular instructor for the Society since 2011. Discover many of the scenic, natural and botanical wonders of Sri Lanka, including:

– Sigiriya Rock, the ancient rock fortress
– Dambulla Caves, the Dambulla World Heritage Site
– Yala and Horton Plains National Parks, with a profusion of elephants and possibly a leopards!
– The Sigiriya and Dambulla rock temples
– Beautiful gardens and estates, including the Peradeniya Royal Botanical Gardens, with its splendid array of palms
– The Ella rock and waterfall

Also learn about the rich cultural heritage of this land of serendipity, from the Oxford Forestry Institute. Most recently Neela has been affiliated with the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan Forest Department and Harvard University’s Arnold Arboretum. She has a BS from the University of Colombo and Masters from Oxford University. Most recently Neela has been the Chief Scientist for the Department of wildlife Conservation of Sri Lanka under the auspices of the United Nations.

Sri Lanka looks forward to this botanical and ecological exploration of Sri Lanka, and will also share the country’s rich cultural history with recent European influences from the Portuguese, Dutch and British.

LEADERSHIP
Leading this expedition is Sri Lankan native Neera de Zoysa, a renowned botanist and instructor at New England Wild Flower Society since 2011. Neera provides more than decades of research in the Sinharaja Rain Forest, an authority on local palms and fauna, and familiar with the diverse ecosystems, flora and fauna of the Island. She has been affiliated with the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan Forest Department and Harvard University’s Arnold Arboretum. She has a BS from the University of Colombo and Masters from Oxford University. Most recently Neela has been the Chief Scientist for the Department of Wildlife Conservation of Sri Lanka under the auspices of the United Nations.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Boston to Colombo, Sri Lanka


Day 2 Muturajalana Marshes to Habarana & Dambulla World Heritage Site

Our adventure in Sri Lanka will begin as we explore the Muturajalana Marshes on a boat tour through the wetland and bird sanctuary on Negombo Lagoon. Look for painted storks, lesser whistling ducks, and other waterbirds. The wetlands have nearly 200 species of flora to seven major vegetation types. Next we will have a half-day drive northeast to Habarana. En route we will visit the World Heritage Dambulla site, known for its richly painted cave temples. We will also see the colossal figure of the recumbent Buddha. Village by Cinnamon (2 nights).

Day 5 Ritigala National Reserve

Today we will go to Ritigala to explore the range of mountain flora that make up one of the three major nature reserves in Sri Lanka. Ritigala is the highest peak in the range. The unusual climate at the higher elevations at Ritigala has allowed a vigorous and plentiful flora, with many unique plant and medicinal herbs. Ritigala Strict Nature Reserve is one of the biodiversity hot spots in the Dry Zone of Sri Lanka.

Day 6 Sigirya Rock Fortress

World Heritage Site

Today we embark on a drive to Sigirya, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1982. This rock fortress stands over 200m above the

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Reservations, Deposits, & Payments: Please mail a deposit of $1,000 per person with the completed reservation form to Betchart Expeditions Inc., 17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-6435. The balance is due 60 days before departure.

Cancellations & Refunds:
The initial deposit is refundable up to 60 days before departure. There is a $100 per person handling fee if cancellations occur between 60 and 30 days before departure. From 29 to 0 days before departure, there is a 75% cancellation fee. There is no refund if cancellations occur within 0 days. For a full refund, please mail your cancellation notice to Betchart Expeditions Inc., 17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-6435. The balance is due 60 days before departure.

Questions: Please call (408) 252 1444 or (800) 252 4910. Email: Taunya@betchartexpeditions.com

COSTS & CONDITIONS

The trip is $1,295 per person with twin share and $1,395 per person with single accommodations. Limited single accommodations are available for an additional $995. Accommodations are in comfortable lodges and hotels, about group flights from Boston.

Expedition Fee Includes:

– Land transport; group airport transfers; some meals; gratuity to local guides and drivers; baggage handling; leadership, naturalist and botanist. The whole adventure is a rich natural history education.

Expedition Fee Does Not Include:

– Air fare (quoted separately); independent transfers; some meals; tips to local guides and drivers; baggage handling; personal insurance or passport.

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What to Expect:
– Explore this fascinating jewel of the country, led by Neera de Zoysa, an outstanding botanist and naturalist from Sri Lanka who has been a popular instructor for the Society since 2011.
– Study the remarkable flora and fauna of the Island. She has been affiliated with the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan Forest Department and Harvard University’s Arnold Arboretum. She has a BS from the University of Colombo and Masters from Oxford University. Most recently Neela has been the Chief Scientist for the Department of Wildlife Conservation of Sri Lanka under the auspices of the United Nations.

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Explore the Jewel of the Indian Ocean! SRI LANKA — Natural Heritage & Cultural Wonders February 8-22, 2018

We invite you to join this botanical and cultural adventure of discovery to Sri Lanka, led by Neela de Zoysa, an outstanding botanist and naturalist for the Society since 2011. Explore this fascinating jewel of a country and its Portuguese, Dutch, and British influences! We invite you to join this botanical and cultural adventure of discovery to Sri Lanka, led by Neela de Zoysa, an outstanding botanist and naturalist for the Society since 2011. Explore this fascinating jewel of a country and its Portuguese, Dutch, and British influences!

ITINERARY

Day 1: Welcome dinner and trip orientation.
Day 3: Transfer to Dambulla World Heritage Site.
Day 4: Sigiriya Rock.
Day 5: Dambulla Cave Temple.
Day 6: Yala and Horton Plains National Parks.
Day 7: Sigiriya Rock Fortress.
Day 8: Tour through this wetland and bird sanctuary. Explore the Muthurajawela Marshes on a boat tour.

Discover many of the scenic, natural and botanic wonders of Sri Lanka, including:
– Sigiriya, the dramatic rock fortress and World Heritage Site, remodeled worldwide!
– Dambulla World Heritage Site, a profusion of elephants and possibly a leopard strolling along the track.
– Yala and Horton Plains National Parks, with splendid views of tea plantations as you traverse the cool mountainous highlands.
– Matale Spice Garden—Kandy
– Botanical Garden of Peradeniya University.

Also learn about the rich cultural heritage of this land of serendipity, from early Buddhist times to the Portuguese, Dutch and British.

LEADERSHIP

Leading this expedition will be Sri Lankan botanist Neela de Zoysa, a professor-instructor at New England Wild Flower Society since 2011. Neela has more than a decade of research in the Sinharaja Rain Forest, an authority on the local palms and fruits, and is familiar with the diverse ecosystem. She is also affiliated with the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan Forest Department and Harvard University’s Arnold Arboretum. She has studied in the University of Columbus and Masters Oxfam Poverty Institute. Most recently Neela has done more than a decade of research in the Sinharaja Rain Forest, a biodiversity hotspot with virgin rainforest and endangered species, including the largest orchids and fruit bats.

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surrounding plains. On its summit are the remains of a 7th-century palace. Hidden in a cave along the cliffs are some of the most magnificent ancient inscriptions in South Asia. It is a one-hour hike to the top. If you prefer, you can remain at the base and explore the forest lowlands. En route to Kandy, visit a spice garden in Matale.

Day 7 Peradeniya Royal Botanical Gardens Nuwara Eliya

This morning, we will drive to Peradeniya for a special tour of the Royal Botanical Gardens, founded in 1843 and containing a valuable collection of plants and trees. It is renowned for its orchids. Among other highlights are the avenue of palms, planted in 1905, and large collections of ferns, flowering plants, and rhododendrons, bamboos, tree ferns, and many endemic species of plants, thus making the park an area of great biological value. It is populated by sambar and barking deer, plus such endemic birds as the sulphur-bellied flycatcher, bush warbler, whistling thrush, and orange minivet.

About 400 wild elephants inhabit the park, as well as wild buffalo, musk deer, sambhur, and bear-faced monkeys, plus such endemic birds as the dull-blue flycatcher, bush warbler, whistling thrush, and orange minivet.

The Resplendent Land of Serendipity

The banyan forest of Ceylon has a long history. It is the only tree species whose population is called "Lanka," after the classical name of the island. The first Europeans to explore the island called it "Ceylon." The first European to describe the "Lanka" tree in the 17th century was Dr. Robert Knox, botanist to the British. "Lanka" is derived from the Sanskrit word "vandana," which means "veneration" or "worship."

Today Sri Lanka is a wonderful mixture of ancient heritage, aromatic spices, and scenic landscapes, to make it truly a "resplendent land of serendipity."

This evening visit Hapugala Botanical Garden founded in 1860. This is the site where experiments occurred with cinchona, whose bark yielded quinine, widely used at that time as a remedy for malaria.

Days 9/10 Nuwara Eliya to Yala National Park

Today we will drive to Yala and check in at midday. Afternoon at leisure. On Day 9, we will explore Yala National Park, whose varied landscapes include rock estuaries, scrub jungle, lagoons, and beaches. It is one of the few places in the world where it is relatively easy to see leopards hiding beside the track or draped elegantly in a tree.

About 400 wild elephants inhabit the park, plus wild buffalo, haze deer, macaques, jackals, and many birds. The dense, tall forest has many flowering trees and rare tropical trees such as the protected shy tree. Many plants are of great medicinal value. The Safar Hotel (2 nights)

Day 11 Yala - Sinharaja UNESCO World Heritage Site

We will drive about five hours to Sinharaja Forest Reserve today. This is a global biodiversity hotspot, the island's last extensive reach of virgin rainforest. More than 500 of the tree species are endemic, and most of them are rare. There is an abundance of endemic wildlife from birds to mammals, butterflies and insects.

A special feature is its mixed flock of feeding birds, where more than 42 species feed together, making it the world's largest. Of the 26 endemic bird species found in Sri Lanka, all 20 rainforest species are found in Sinharaja.

On Day 12 we will explore this magnificent park. Rain Forest Eco Lodge (2 nights)

Day 13 Galle Fort UNESCO World Heritage Site

Today we will drive about three hours to Galle on the coast. In the evening, we will explore the city with a Galle Fort resident and author, who will help us discover the rich heritage of this site. Learn about the bloody battle in 1658 between the Dutch and Portuguese, and about the rural paths of the historic Galle Fort. Lunch at The Reef by Cinnamon Hotel.

Days 14 Galle to Colombo & USA

Today we will transfer to the airport for our return flights to the USA. Arrive Boston on Day 15. 

RESPONSIBILITY

Betchart Expeditions Inc., AAAS Travels, ACS and Sigma Xi act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and arrangements. Betchart Expeditions Inc. reserves the right to substitute another service or product if necessary. Any airplane, ship, or any conveyance. Any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their plane or ship is not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their plane or ship.

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Day 7
Route to Kandy, visit a spice garden in Matale.

The citadel are some of the most magnificent of a 5th-century palace. Hidden in a cave along the P
elsewhere on the island. Visit contrast to tropical weather

temperatures are a pleasant
distinctive First World's End and Baker's Falls are among the attractions of the park. Monteiro evergreen forests also cover the park.

Feel the cool, wet climate which has fostered growth of a distinctive range of flora, including rhododendrons, bamboos, tree ferns, and many endemic species of plants, thus making the plains an area of great biological value. It is populated by sambar and barking deer, plus such endemic birds as the dull-blue flycatcher, bush warbler, whistling thrush, and orange minivets.

This evening visit Hakgala Botanical Garden, founded in 1833. This site was the site of experiments occurred with cinchona, whose bark yielded quinine, widely used at that time as a remedy for malaria.

Day 8
Horton Plains National Park

Leave for the Horton Plains National Park this morning, two hours from Nuwara Eliya. Perched on the edge of the central hills, Horton Plains is a wild stretch of bleak, high-altitude moorland about 1000 feet. The sheer precipice of World's End and Baker's Falls are among the attractions of the park. Monteiro evergreen forests also cover the park.

On its summit are the remains of a 5th-century palace. Hidden in a cave along the P...
surrounding plains. On its summit are the remains of a 7th-century palace. Hidden in a cave along the cliff is one of the most magnificent sacred treasures in South Asia. It is a one-hour hike to the top. If you prefer, you can remain at the base and explore the forested landcapes. En route to Kandy, visit a spice garden in Matale. Hotel: Grand Hotel (2 nights).

Day 8: Horton Plains National Park

Leave for the Horton Plains National Park this morning, two hours from Nuwara Eliya. Perched on the edge of the central hills, Horton Plains is a wild stretch of high, high-altitude moorland with peaks up to 7,500 feet above sea level. The alp-like vegetation of World's End and Baker's Falls are among the attractions of the park. Monteiro evergreen forests also cover the park. Feel the cool, wet climate which has fostered growth of a distinctive range of flora, including rhododendrons, bamboos, tree ferns, and many endemic species of plants, thus making the plains an area of great biological value. It is populated by sambar and bharal deer, plus such endemic birds as the skylark, goshawk, warbler, whistling-thrush, and orange minivet.

The Resplendent Land

The Resplendent Land of Sinharaja

The shelter of Sinharaja is in its ancient tree climbing culture. The roots of ancient trees climb up the tree trunks and create thick mats. This morning visit Hikka Tranz by Cinnamon Hotel. This is the site of experiments occurred with cinchona, the bark yielded quinine, widely used at that time for malaria.

Days 9/10: Nuwara Eliya to Yala National Park

Today we will drive to Yala and check in at Tranz by Cinnamon Hotel. This idyllic country of Sri Lanka has a long history. It is named 'Lanka' by the people who occupied the northern part of the island and called that part 'Lanka.' The island is called 'Sri Lanka' in its Sanskrit name 'Sudra.' The origin of the word 'sudra' which describes the lowest Hindu caste. The Portuguese gave it the name 'Colombo' from the name of the people from whom the island's name was taken. The British, when they ruled the island, it was called Colombo. In 1972 they returned to the original name 'Lanka,' and added 'Sri,' which means 'resplendent' or 'auspicious' in their language.

Today Sinharaja is a wonderful mixture of ancient heritage, aromatic spices, and scenic landscapes, to make it truly a "resplendent land of nature's breadbasket." This evening visit Hikka Tranz by Cinnamon Hotel. This is the site of experiments occurred with cinchona, the bark yielded quinine, widely used at that time for malaria.

Days 11/12: Yala - Sinharaja UNESCO World Heritage Site

We will drive about five hours to Sinharaja Forest Reserve today. This is a global biodiversity hotspot, the island's last extensive reach of virgin rainforest. More than 90% of the trees change color, and most of them are rare. There is an abundance of endemic wildlife from birds to mammals, butterflies and insects. A special feature is the mixed flock of feeding birds, where more than 42 species feed together, making it the world's largest. Of the 26 endemic birds found in Sri Lanka, all 20 rainforest species are found in Sinharaja. On Day 13 we will explore this magnificent park. Rain Forest Eco Lodge (2 nights).

Day 13: Galle Fort UNESCO World Heritage Site

Today we will drive about three hours to Galle on the coast. In the evening, we will explore the city with a Galle Fort resident and author, who will help us discover the rich heritage of this site. Learn about the bloody battle in 1640 between the Dutch and Portuguese, and about the naval battles of the Galle Fort, too! Tranz by Cinnamon Hotel.

Days 14/15: Galle to Colombo & USA

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The Safari Hotel (2 nights)

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COSTS & CONDITIONS
The base price of $3,495 per person is based on a twin share of $1,747.50 per person. This price includes:
- Accommodations: are in comfortable lodges and hotels, about group flights from Boston.
- Air Fare & Airline Ticketing: Taunya at national parks, and historic sites of this fascinating country.
- Accommodation twin share with a private bath. Limited single accommodations are available for a supplement of $995.
- Accommodations twin share; meals as indicated; one free day in Colombo. Visit to local gardens and drives, baggage handling, leadership, and tours.

Expedition Fee Includes:
- Expedition Fee Does Not Include:
- Expedition Fee Does Not Include: Air fare (quoted separately); independent transfers; some meals; gratuity to local guides and drivers; baggage handling; leadership, and other expedition features.

Expedition Fee Does Not Include:
- Expedition Fee Includes:
- Expedition Fee Includes: $1,295 per person from Boston to Sri Lanka, round trip.
- Expedition Fee Includes: Taunya as an instructor for the Society since 2011.

COSTS & CONDITIONS
- Expedition Fee Does Not Include: Personal insurance or passport.
- Expedition Fee Does Not Include: Cancellations & Refunds:
- Expedition Fee Does Not Include: Insurance is recommended.

Questions:
Betchart Expeditions Inc.
17050 Montebello Road
Cupertino, CA 95014-5435
(408) 252 1444
(408) 252 491
(800) 252 491

ICELAND

ITINERARY

Days 1-3 Boston to Colombo, Sri Lanka

Day 4 Mihuravajala Marshes to Habarana & Dambulla World Heritage Site
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Day 5 Sigiriya Rock Fortress
- Welcome dinner and trip orientation.
- Sigiriya Rock—Kandy
- Days 1/3

Day 6 Sigiriya Rock Fortress
- Today we will go to Sigiriya to explore the range of mountains that make up one of the three xeric nature reserves in Sri Lanka. Sigiriya is the highest peak in the range. The arid climate at the higher elevations at Sigiriya has allowed a vigorous and plentiful flora, with many unusual plants and medicinal herbs. Sigiriya Strict Nature Reserve is one of the biodiversity hot spots in the Dry Zone of Sri Lanka.

Day 7 Sigiriya Rock Fortress, Malase Spice Garden—Kandy
- Leading this expedition will be Sri Lankan botanist Neela de Zoysa, an outstanding botanist and instructor for the Society since 2011.

Sigiriya Rock
- We invite you to join this botanical and cultural adventure of discover SRI LANKA. Led by Neela de Zoysa, this expedition will offer a comprehensive experience for participants with diverse interests. Sigiriya Rock (formerly called Ceylon), situated like a tear drop in the Indian Ocean, just south of India!

Of the recumbent Buddha.
- Day 5

We will visit a number of the recumbent Buddha.
- Day 5

Matale Spice Garden—Kandy
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