BELIEVE
ACHIEVE
INSPIRE

THE MOST EXOTIC CHALLENGE
2019
SRI LANKA

Thu 07 Nov - Tue 12 Nov 2019
In aid of British Asian Trust
07 Nov - 12 Nov 2019

6 DAYS | SRI LANKA | CHALLENGING

Be one of the first to sign up to our brand new cycling challenge, an unforgettable bike ride through Sri Lanka’s cultural triangle. You’ll visit Kandy and the hill country before travelling through spice estates and plantations to reach the ruins of Polonnaruwa, soaking up the Sri Lankan way of life as you go. The trip ends in Sigiriya where you will have the option to climb the impressive ‘Lion Rock’ for some of the most picturesque views in Sri Lanka.

- Cycle over 300km surrounded by spectacular scenery
- Ride through the Spice Region and Tea Estates
- Experience everyday life in rural Sri Lanka
- Climb the impressive Lion Rock in Sigiriya
- Explore some of Sri Lanka’s finest temples
YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 Thu 07 Nov

Arrive and transfer to Negombo

After landing at Bandaranayake International Airport, you will transfer (approximately 30 minutes) to a hotel in Negombo. In the afternoon, you will have a bike fitting and a short test ride before sitting down to enjoy your first evening meal in Sri Lanka. You will receive a full trip briefing over dinner, providing you with the perfect opportunity to get to know your cycling team. Be sure to get a good night’s rest before your first day in the saddle! (L,D)

Overnight: Hotel

DAY 2 Fri 08 Nov

Negombo to Alawwa (approx. 72km), transfer to Kandy

After an early breakfast, you will commence your cycle with a relaxed ride along a route of small roads and lanes known as ‘Little Rome’. You will then join the old coast road, riding by the sea and through local fishing communities. After a brief stop at a local fish market, you’ll head inland through coconut plantations and rice fields. The cycling day ends at a local restaurant on the banks of the Maha Oya River where you can enjoy refreshments while the bikes are loaded onto the vehicles for the transfer to Kandy – the capital of the hill country. The rest of the afternoon will be yours to relax before dinner at the hotel. (B,L,D)

Overnight: Hotel

DAY 3 Sat 09 Nov

Kandy to Dambulla (approx. 73 km)

This morning you will climb out of Kandy towards the spice estates of Matale, through clove and pepper plantations. The cycle will offer glimpses of the impressive Knuckles Mountains that surround Kandy. After lunch at a beautiful spot overlooking a scenic lake, you will travel 6km along gravel roads towards Dambulla. You will arrive at your hotel by mid-afternoon, giving you some free time to relax in the spacious grounds and enjoy the colourful birdlife around you. You will also have the option of a 2 hour guided tour of the Dambulla Cave Temples, a World Heritage site consisting of five caves adorned with frescos and statues. After watching the sunset over the caves, you will return to your hotel for your evening meal. (B,L,D)

Overnight: Hotel

DAY 4 Sun 10 Nov

Cycle to Polonnaruwa (approx. 87 km)

Starting from your hotel, you will cross the Kaluduwa hills. This jungle lined road is part of the elephant corridor, linking Wasgomuwa National Park Jungle to Minneriya National Park. You will stop en-route at a village tea shop before continuing your ride surrounded by jungle hills on one side and terraced rice fields on the other. Once you reach Polonnaruwa, Sri Lanka’s medieval capital, you will have time to cycle around the ruins before finishing at a

+44 (0)20 8346 0500
info@charitychallenge.com
www.charitychallenge.com

facebook.com/charitychallenge
twitter.com/charitychall
picturesque lunch spot. Be sure to have your cameras at the ready to snapshots of the large grey langur monkeys foraging around the ruins!

From here, you have the option of cycling the final 17km to the door of your hotel or transferring the final section by vehicle. Your hotel for the night overlooks a picturesque lake, the perfect place to sit back, relax and spot local wildlife. (B,L,D)

Overnight: Hotel

---

**DAY 5 Mon 11 Nov**

- **Mineriva National Park to Amaya Lake (approx. 58 km)**

Your final day in the saddle will begin by cycling along the border of Mineriva National Park. Keep an eye out for wild elephants that occasionally cross the road! Next, you’ll travel along village roads all the way to Sigiriya where the finish line awaits. After freshening up, you will have the opportunity to climb Sigiriya Rock Fortress, otherwise known as ‘Lion Rock’. Starting at the water gardens, you’ll climb up 200m to see the beautiful frescoes painted onto the rock face. The ruins of the summer palace at the top are only surpassed by the magnificent views of the surrounding jungle. Back at the hotel, you will be able to reward yourself at the celebration dinner. (B,L,D)

Overnight: Hotel

---

**DAY 6 Tue 12 Nov**

- **Departure**

It’s time to say goodbye to your team and wave farewell to Sri Lanka as you depart from the hotel at around 9 am. It is a 3.5 hour drive to the hotel in Negombo where we can arrange your immediate transfer to the airport (1 hour) or you are free to have lunch here at your own expense if your flight is later in the day. Individual transfers to the airport are included throughout this afternoon if you provide us with your flight details at least 8 weeks in advance of the trip. Please do not book a flight before 5 pm on this day. If your flight is the following day, or you wish to make your own arrangements after this point, please book and pay for transfers and hotel accommodation directly with the hotel or another local provider. (B)

---

**NB**

B = Breakfast  
L = Lunch  
D = Dinner

The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to factors such as flight changes, unusual weather patterns or the strength of the group. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary; however, we cannot be held responsible for any last-minute changes that might occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.
SELF FUNDER

Pay a registration fee of £495 when you book.

Then a balance of £1,465 (8 weeks before your challenge).

Raise a minimum of £2,500 for British Asian Trust.

SELF FUNDER OPTION

The full cost of this challenge is £1,960.00. You will be required to pay the registration fee of £495.00 at the time of booking and the final balance of £1,465.00 which is due 8 weeks before departure (12/09/2019). You will receive fundraising advice and sponsorship forms and be asked to raise as much as you can for British Asian Trust. As you have covered the full cost of the challenge, 100% of this fundraising will be retained by British Asian Trust.

THIS IS A GROUND ONLY CHALLENGE

This challenge is ground only. This means you will need to organise travel to arrive at the starting point of the itinerary in the host country and to return home at the end of the challenge. You will be provided with details of where and when to arrive and depart but please do budget for the appropriate travel arrangements.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

BEFORE YOU GO

- 15% off Cotswold Outdoor, Cycle Surgery, Snow and Rock, and Runners Need
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules

ON YOUR CHALLENGE

- All internal transfers
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- All ground staff including English speaking guide, drivers, cooks, and porters
- Activity equipment such as bikes, tents and rafts as per the challenge activity
- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies
- Entrance fees to national parks or other places of interest visited on the itinerary

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED?

BEFORE YOU GO

- Visa
- Vaccinations (please check Trip Notes for requirements)
- Travel Insurance (you can buy at time of booking or in your Account Area, or provide your own policy details)

ON YOUR CHALLENGE
- International flights

**THE DETAILS**

**TYPICAL GROUP SIZE**
The typical group size is 18 - 24 participants

**SMALL GROUP SUPPLEMENT**
The costs and sponsorship levels on our website are based on a minimum of 18 participants. We can run this trip with 10 - 17 people, but there will be a small group supplement of £75. This is payable by yourself if you choose the Self Funder option. We will notify you 12 weeks before departure if this is necessary.

**OPTIONAL EXTRAS**
- Extensions at end of trip*
- Single room supplements*

(*subject to availability)

**TRAVEL INSURANCE**
We can provide a comprehensive travel insurance policy for this challenge which provides cover for medical (emergency, evacuation and repatriation), cancellation and curtailment and specifically covers the activities undertaken during the challenge. You can take this out when booking. The cost is **£81.90**.
**Level of Difficulty**

Challenging: A “challenging” trip will test someone who is relatively fit and has a spirit of adventure. You may have had some previous experience, but this is not necessary as long as the correct training is undertaken. A “challenging” trip may involve some altitude, but this will be compensated by easier terrain and trekking conditions.

You can tell your supporters that on your Sri Lanka cycle Challenge you will be:

- Cycling for around 6 hours per day, covering approximately 300kms over 4 days.
- Battling the heat and humidity. Temperatures can reach the 30s.
- Taking on undulating terrain

**Typical Day**

You will wake at around 6am, have breakfast and pack your daypack for the next section of the cycle. You will be given enough water for the day and your packed lunch to carry. The rest of your luggage will be transported for you to the next destination. At around 7.30am you will begin the day’s cycle, stopping for lunch at a scenic spot around midday. You will be cycling throughout the morning to avoid the midday heat and will usually arrive at your destination by mid-afternoon. In the evening, you will have dinner and a briefing around 7.30pm.

**Safety**

Charity Challenge considers the safety of all of our participants and staff to be a top priority, and as such we have set up Challenge Safe, an advanced and thorough safety management system. Challenge Safe formalises our ethos when it comes to safety, and brings together the procedures and risk management strategies that we use to audit all aspects of our challenges, from vehicles to accommodation to the challenge activity itself. Your welfare is absolutely paramount.

In terms of your Sri Lanka challenge, there are a couple of important points that you should be aware of:

- The cycling route is exposed at times, and on sunny days the temperatures can soar. You should ideally be wearing sun cream and a cap with a peak (so it can be worn under a helmet) and be hydrating constantly!
- Your challenge will see you cycling on different terrain and road types, from gravelly back-country tracks to sections of busier roads. The road conditions will vary and you should be aware of loose stones and potholes. Your leader will brief you fully before each day.
- Smoke alarms are not a legal requirement in Sri Lanka, and as such some of the hotels we use do not have them in place. Your leader will explain the emergency fire procedures to you.

**Responsible Tourism**

At Charity Challenge we are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism, and work closely with bodies such as the International Porter Protection Group and Climate Care to ensure that our challenges benefit the local environments and communities in which they take place. We ensure that all rubbish is disposed of responsibly, and following local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect, we aim to limit our impact on the natural environment. In addition to taking these practical steps to ensure that our challenges are sustainable, we also make a contribution each year to a number of local community projects, so as to give something back directly.
to the communities that we visit. Since 2000 we have donated almost £200,000 to such projects, supporting a range of initiatives, including schooling for children in Africa, shelter for street children in Brazil, and Orang-utan conservation in Indonesia. We recommend that any gifts brought over for children are given to the UK challenge leader and distributed where needed by them and our local Ground Agent. If you wish to do more, you should consider buying drinks, postcards and souvenirs from the local vendors. For many, it is their sole source of income. For more information, please visit our Responsible Tourism pages, where you will be able to view a list of the projects that we currently support.

**Flights Not Included**

Flight are not included in this challenge.

2 x airport transfers are provided (individual if required), one on the first day of the itinerary and one on the last day of the itinerary.

Day 1: We would suggest you arrive at Bandaranayake International Airport by mid-afternoon on Day 1 (7 November) of the itinerary.

Day 6: In order to leave enough time to get to the airport, you must not book a flight departing Bandaranayake International Airport before 5 pm on Day 6 (12 November) of the itinerary.

If you book a flight to arrive and/or depart on different days, you will need to book and pay for transfers and hotel accommodation directly with the hotel or another local provider.

*When you book your flights, please email your e-ticket to flights@charitychalelne.com, so that we can organise your airport transfers.*

**Visa**

We will upload a Visa Application Advice document into your account area 3 months prior to your departure. The visa info is per the FCO website where a link will be provided together with a link to the visa office for that country.

The approximate cost of visas for this itinerary is $35.

**Insurance**

It is a condition of travelling with Charity Challenge that you have a suitable travel insurance policy which covers you for your entire challenge. We have a special policy which covers among other things, medical (emergency, evacuation and repatriation) arrangements, cancellation and curtailment of the challenge, and more specifically for the adventurous activities undertaken on this challenge.

If you have your own travel insurance policy, you must ensure that it provides at least the same level of cover as our recommended policy, including protecting the charity in the event of your cancellation 56 days or less prior to departure. If you choose not to purchase our recommended policy when you book we will send you a disclaimer.
which you must complete and return to Charity Challenge prior to travel.

For more travel insurance questions, please refer to our main FAQs page or for any specific queries, please contact us at bookings@charitychallenge.com.

Vaccinations and Medicine

Vaccinations

For up to date vaccination information please check the Travel Health Pro page:
https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/204/sri-lanka

Charity Challenge team are not medical experts and we would encourage you to visit your GP or travel nurse to discuss vaccination requirements. Your GP may ask questions about the specific locations that you are visiting, and as such, it may be useful to take a copy of your itinerary with you.

Medication

- Carry medicines (including those bought over the counter) in their correctly labelled original packaging, as issued by the pharmacist. These should be carried in your hand luggage.
- Consider packing a spare supply of medication in the hold luggage in case of loss of hand luggage
- A letter from the prescriber detailing the medicines with the generic names for the medications can be helpful for border control checks, and in case medicines have to be replaced or medical help is required
- Carry a note from the prescribing physician on letterhead stationery for controlled substances and injection medications
- Take out an appropriate level of travel health insurance including repatriation and specific cover for any pre-existing illnesses

N.B. Some medications are banned abroad so please check. You can find further information at https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-abroad

Climate and Terrain

Climate

The weather in Sri Lanka varies depending on which part of the country you are in. In March, Central (Sigirya) and southern (Galle) Sri Lanka can see temperatures reach the mid-30s. Kandy and the hills of the Tea Country will be a little cooler due to their higher altitude. The monsoon season runs from April to September, but you should still come prepared for showers in March.

The weather in September is more varied and, whilst it is the end of the monsoon season, there is still a chance of showers along the south coast and in the hills of the tea country. Central Sri Lanka usually remains dry, even during the monsoon season, and temperatures will be between 25c and 30c.

Terrain

You will mainly be cycling on B roads with good tarmac with small and short sections on gravel roads. The terrain is mainly flat, but with some undulating sections.
Training

Training is definitely required. It is important that you work specifically on your stamina, leg and joint strength, and balance in order to get as much out of the challenge as possible. Don’t forget that the temperature and climate are different to the UK and that you will be exercising constantly for a number of days – the heat and distance will be your biggest challenge. You need to be able to sustain around 4-6 hours of cycling for 6 continuous days. Replicating this over a weekend would be fantastic training. In your member’s area, you will find more comprehensive Fitness Training Notes.

Training Weekends

We offer superb trekking training weekends across various locations in the UK, from Saturday morning to Sunday afternoon. These training weekends help you become physically prepared for the challenge. Our experienced instructors and leaders will also talk you through your clothing and equipment, health and wellbeing, trekking skills and teamwork. The weekends are great ways for you to get out into the mountains of the UK, while also meeting other Charity Challengers and sharing your experiences. To read more about our training weekends, including dates and prices, check out the information in your online account area.

Luggage Allowance and Valuables

The luggage allowance will depend on the airline you are using for your challenge, but in general, it will be one piece of checked baggage at approximately 20kg.

Each cycling day, your personal kit will be transported to the next stop by a support vehicle. You will carry a daypack for your daily needs such as sun cream, lunch, water, camera and lightweight waterproofs.

We will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions. The general rule is that if you don’t need it, don’t bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Carry your passport with you and make sure you have a photocopy of your documents (travel insurance, passport, visa etc.) in case they get lost or damaged.

We advise that you wear your cycling footwear on the plane and take a set of cycling clothing in your hand luggage. In the unlikely event that your hold bag should go missing, you will be able to begin the challenge until you are reunited with your luggage.

Leadership

There will be a UK leader and local English-speaking support leaders who will be responsible for the logistics and coordination of your challenge. There will also be numerous local support guides and staff to assist them. The challenge leader will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group.

Group Size
Each group is intended to be 18 people minimum in order to run and a maximum of 24 people. We will be able to run this challenge for 10 to 17 people by charging a small group supplement of £75 which will be added to your final balance invoice.

**Bikes, clothing and equipment**

**Bikes**

The bikes are good quality, 27 speed hybrid bikes. They have front suspension, town and country tyres and adjustable stem hydraulic disc brakes. Please indicate your height on your booking form so that we can aim to book the correct size well in advance.

**Clothing and Equipment**

Good quality, durable kit could mean the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. For this challenge, a helmet is compulsory, and comfortable footwear for your cycle will be indispensable, particularly coupled with some good quality padded cycling shorts. The benefits of a comfortable day sack cannot be underestimated, so make sure that you train with this. Other essentials are a high quality, gore-tex waterproof jacket and technical/Dry fit t-shirts rather than cotton shirts. Cycling gloves, and a cotton scarf or buff are also highly recommended to protect you from the dust. A full kit list for this challenge can be found here, and once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners Cycle Surgery, Outdoorhire and Cotswold Outdoor.

**Accommodation and Toilets**

**Accommodation**

The standard of accommodation in Sri Lanka is generally high. All rooms are en-suite and have facilities for charging batteries and wifi connection. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with, please ensure that you note this where appropriate when booking or email challenges@charitychallenge.com

**Toilets**

These range from very basic during the cycling route to normal western standards in the accommodation. There will be en-suite toilet and washing facilities at the hotels. Remember to bring some toilet paper with you as it may be difficult to find during your cycling day.

**Food and Drink**

Food in Sri Lanka is a delight with strong influences from India, Indonesia and it’s Southeast Asian neighbours. The currys are always freshly prepared, accompanied with rice and vegetables and flavoured with Sri Lanka’s famous, locally-produced spices.

Breakfast will usually consist of eggs made to order alongside small local dishes. Lunch will be lighter and usually
consist of roti, fried rice and fruit. In the evenings you will be able to try the local curries with rice or a hotel buffet depending on the accommodation.

Clean drinking water will be provided for you while you cycle and there will be opportunities for you to purchase alcoholic and soft drinks to accompany your dinner.

Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies. You will need to be as flexible as possible with your eating habits when travelling in Southeast Asia, as some diets are hard to cater for!

Money

Currency

The local currency is the Sri Lankan Rupee. Changing money at the airport is strongly recommended and you will often get the best rate here. ATMs are available at the airport and in Kandy, but they do not always accept international bank cards. Credit cards are becoming more widely accepted, but outside main centres you may find cash the only acceptable currency. It also may be difficult to cash travellers’ cheques.

How much to bring

All accommodation and meals are included within the price of the trip, as well as water during the days of your cycling challenge. You will not need to carry a lot of money with you during the challenge, but as there are opportunities to buy soft drinks, alcohol and snacks on the way we would suggest a maximum of about £15 a day. Remember to bring more if you intend to buy souvenirs as there are plenty of places to pick up gifts along the way.

Tipping

Tipping is personal and at your sole discretion. £40 of tips are already included in the cost for the challenge team. This will be distributed amongst the support team, including guides, assistant guides, cooks and porters. You can tip at food and accommodation places.

Phone and Wifi

Most of the accommodation you are in will have limited Wi-Fi which you will be able to use, but please do not rely upon this. You will have phone signal in almost all places on the challenge.

Emergencies

The event is not run as a race and there is always a large discrepancy in people’s cycling abilities. This is allowed for. There will be a staff member at the back of the group at all times to ensure that you are not left behind and can take things at your own pace. In the event of an emergency, all guides and leaders are maintaining contact via radio, and the backup vehicle will not be far away. If somebody is unable to cycle at all, then the guides will arrange evacuation to a vehicle.
Any more questions?

Contact us:
+ 44 (0)20 8346 0500

info@charitychallenge.com
www.charitychallenge.com

facebook.com/charitychallenge
twitter.com/charitychall