



Buddhapath/Eleven Directions

TRAVEL FACTS

PILGRIMAGE REGISTRATION INFORMATION & TRAVEL FACTS

CURRENCY EXCHANGE, ACCEPTANCE OF CREDIT CARDS & TIPPING

The local currency is the Sri Lankan Rupee, divided into 100 cents (you rarely come across cents today). Currency notes are Rs.5000, Rs.2000, Rs.1000, Rs.500, Rs.100, Rs.50, Rs.20 and Rs.10. Beware of mistaking the Rs.500 note for the somewhat similar Rs100 one. To check whether notes are genuine when not given at a bank, look for a lion watermark. Coins, should you have received them, will be in denominations up to Rs.10.

Banks are open from 0900 hrs to 1300 hours Monday to Friday. Some city banks close at 1500 hrs, while some are open on Saturday mornings. It is easy to withdraw money across the island at ATMs using international credit cards or debit cards. Most hotels, restaurants and shopping centers accept credit cards. Some establishments may try to add a surcharge, which is illegal.

Sri Lanka Standard Time is five and a half hours ahead of GMT. (Allowance should be made for summer-time changes in Europe.)

Electricity: 230-240 volts, 50 cycles AC.

Travelers often have questions about **tipping**. In the last few years, Shantum has developed a system where he does all the tipping/donations during the pilgrimage and keeps a running tab of it. At the end, the amount is divided among the pilgrims and repaid to him (contributing is optional). Thus far, this has worked well. It usually works out to \$5 per day, but this figure could vary.

We suggest that you pick up a **local SIM card** for your mobile phone on your arrival in Sri Lanka if you want connectivity at a low cost.

WEATHER & CLOTHING NEEDS

It is pleasant weather in Sri Lanka in January, with day temperatures ranging from 18°C to 29°C. The evenings are cooler with temperatures going down to 10°C. There is a small possibility of rain so please come equipped with wind-cheater, umbrella and warm clothes. We would also recommend you to carry ample protection from the sun in the form of a sunscreen lotion, sunglasses and hat/cap for the day.

There is no need to bring formal clothing.

Cotton clothes are useful at any time of the year but you will need light woolens for the hills and waterproof clothing or an umbrella. Modest dress for men and women is advisable especially off the beach and when visiting religious sites. Please bring comfortable sneakers or sandals (which you can wear with socks if it gets cold). We will do some trekking (optional). We also visit a number of temples where you will need to remove your shoes, so it is helpful to bring a pair of socks (the airline slip-ons are very convenient). It is always useful to have a hat or cap to protect you from the sun. The free baggage allowance is 20 kilos (44 lbs.) check-in baggage. Your cabin baggage limit is 5kgs, so we recommend that you travel light. Laundry facilities are available at all the places we stay, and laundry is usually returned within 24 hours.



Buddhapath/Eleven Directions

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEMPLES:

Clothing: Temples and Cultural Sites are considered sacred. Visitors are not allowed to wear the following when entering. See through clothes, Sleeveless shirts, Sportswear, Tights/ Leggings, Shorts, Short Skirts, Three-quarter length trousers and Swimwear/Beachwear

While taking **photographs** in cultural sites, please refrain from standing in front of the historical icons, showing your back to the religious statues, monuments, etc or posing in any other inappropriate manner (or dressed inappropriately) which is considered disrespectful to the Sri Lankan culture & its many religions. These guidelines are strictly enforced in Sri Lanka.

HEALTH CONCERNS

We stay in clean, safe places, and the food in the places we stay will be clean, fresh and prepared to suit a delicate digestive system. You will be provided bottled mineral water for drinking.

The regulations around COVID are changing all the time, so we will follow whatever are the latest instructions.

If you are coming from Africa or some parts of Latin America, a certificate of yellow fever inoculation is required by the Sri Lanka authorities. There is no other medical restriction upon your entry into Sri Lanka. We recommend a Typhoid shot and a Tetanus shot. If you prefer to be more careful, then please speak to your physician.

We do carry a first-aid kit with us, but many people prefer to bring their own supply of medicines. We would recommend you get an insect/mosquito repellent and also a stomach medicine for both diarrhea and constipation as one's stomach has its own way of adjusting to different foods.

If you have any special diet needs or medical needs, please do let us know.

ADDITIONAL TRAVEL SERVICES (e.g. shuttle buses, taxis)

We provide all the transport services during the pilgrimage, including having you met on arrival in Colombo. There is no extra charge for meeting people at the airport.