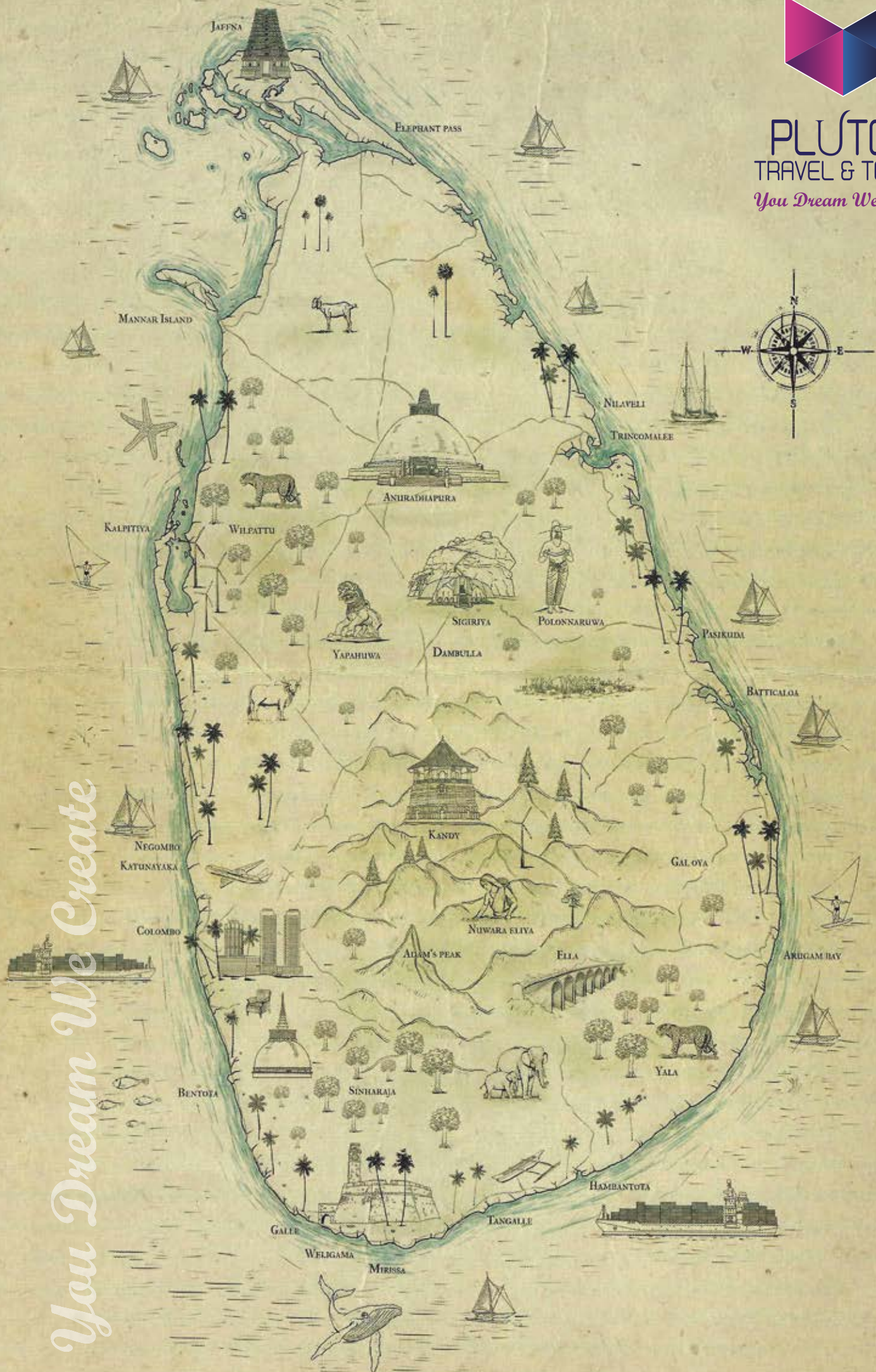


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KEY DESTINATIONS**COLOMBO**

Sri Lanka is a treasure trove of bliss for any traveller and its commercial capital Colombo is a worthwhile find. The dappled boulevards of Colombo hide treasures of many kinds starting from monumental architecture from the country's colonial era, the miscellaneous market in Pettah, the cosmopolitan restaurants, malls and chic cafes to the beautiful stretch of Galle Face green facing the turquoise Indian Ocean. A day spent in Colombo will take you on a journey of sophisticated yet uncomplicated charm amidst an ever-changing landscape of its own signature flavour.

GALLE

Galle is a destination meant for the eager observer to savour and discern. Walk along the Galle Fort where colonial architecture and a salty sensual breeze set the tone to hop from charming cafes to museums to vibrant curio shops. Visit the beautiful Kanneliya forest where an exhilarating range of greenery makes you closer to nature. Roam the laid-back marketplaces and spot the picturesque homes scattered inside the fort. Have a rendezvous with history and nature.

KANDY

Ascend towards cooler climes and a lush landscape, dotted with exquisite architectural marvels and a unique culture formed by thousands of years of legends, stories and eventful periods. Kandy was the last of Sri Lanka's royal capitals before English colonials struck a deal with its aristocratic leaders who looked to thwart a usurping monarch. The beautiful Kandy Lake and the nearby Temple of the Tooth set the tone for this city's pulsating energy. Now, a bustling town of commercial importance and cultural diversity, Kandy still retains traces of its royal past and is home to an abundance of trees and forest covers. Visitors can easily get blissfully lost in the cloud of foliage in the Udawattekele forest reserve or explore distinct flora in the Peradeniya Botanical gardens. Those who wish to absorb the day-to-day beauty of the city can wander the shady streets of Kandy and stumble upon ancient temples with refined adornments or witness the vibrant ongoing of Kandy in all its picturesque inimitability.

CULTURAL TRIANGLE

In the olden days, the cultural triangle was known as the 'Rajarata' (loosely translated as the King's country) and those were the glory days of ancient Ceylon when powerful Kings and even a handful of Queens built a prosperous hydraulic civilization which had ample space for grand architecture, art, and poetry. In the heart of the Cultural triangle are Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, the two largest capitals of Ceylon of a bygone era. In these two dry yet fertile lands you will find remnants of majestic temples, palaces and still functioning artificial reservoirs that pay tribute to the engineering prowess of ancient Ceylon. Dambulla too was once an ancient capital where once a Rapunzel-like beautiful princess was imprisoned to protect her many brothers from suffering at the hand of her unborn son (the prediction came true). Sigiriya Fortress is a mysterious palatial rock resident which served as a luxurious palace/fortress for the ingenious yet reclusive King Kashyapa who lived there surrounded by his nymph-like entourage, artistic frescoes and a still-functioning plumbing system which still provides water to the fountains and ponds on top of the rock.

NUWARA ELIYA

Nuwara Eliya and Hatton provide a welcome escape to a chilly clime with vast expanses of green foliage, lush valley, interesting gorges, waterfalls and tea plantations. The picturesque valleys where sambar deer and stealthy leopards abide amidst the murmuring brooks and waterfalls offer a different glimpse of Sri Lanka's ecological heritage. Sri Lanka's thriving tea trade has given birth to a unique and colourful culture of tea plantations in these areas. When in Nuwara Eliya you are destined to dine on fresh vegetables, strawberries, tea, and ambrosia of a lavish kind.

BENTOTA

In spite of its popularity amongst tourists from around the globe, Bentota still retains its sublime appeal. The gold-tinged coastal stretch in Bentota overlooks a vivid turquoise ocean while the fertile and serene swiipe of the Bentota river beckons visitors to ski its waters and explore the rich ecosystem. Over the years, a lineup of luxurious beach resorts, Ayurvedic spas, chic cafes and a constant rotation of beach events have sprung up in the vicinity of Bentota.

MIRISSA

Mirissa is a serene beach town flanked by the blue-green waters of the Indian ocean and a pristine stretch of silky sand. The warm and relatively still waters of the Indian Ocean during November and April beckon a multitude of whales and dolphins to abide the ocean surrounding Mirissa for a while. While this period is popular for dolphin and whale watching, Mirissa welcomes visitors all year round with its gentle nature and the beautiful coastline, ideal for a leisurely holiday filled with momentous moments of bliss. You can sail the seas, eat seafood, visit nearby sites and relax on a hammock with a tropical drink.

**NEGOMBO**

Negombo is for the night owls who love to party along the beach and for the beach lovers who love to explore the intricacies of a fishing village that has become a place for all-night jives and leisurely drinks on the beach with succulent and fresh seafood in plenty. The Dutch, Portuguese and British colonials operated some of their trade from Negombo leaving behind a cultural legacy that has coloured the area's heritage for good.

JAFFNA

Situated at the northern tip of Sri Lanka, the Jaffna peninsula is steeped in history. Explore Jaffna town and surrounding areas or visit one of the seven inhabited remote islands. The landscape is dotted with Palmyra Palms and lagoons where flamingos flock after the rains. Jaffna has undergone much hardship due to a civil war but since 2009, the people of Jaffna are rebuilding their lives with renewed hope. An enriching experience for the adventurous traveller.

TRINCOMALEE & EAST COAST

Trincomalee, referred to as 'Trinco', is blessed with the world's deepest and largest natural harbours. Colonial powers battled for this strategic port beginning with the Portuguese in the 17th Century, followed by the Dutch and the British. During World War II, Trincomalee was a British naval base and still continues to be used by the Sri Lankan Navy.

Sri Lanka's picturesque East Coast is enjoying a renaissance. The sun-kissed beaches and exotic marine life of Trincomalee; the world-renowned surfing beaches in Arugam Bay; Batticaloa's tranquil lagoons and waterways; the wild elephants of Gal Oya National Park in Ampara; and a vibrant multi-ethnic cultural heritage all make this a fascinating region which has come alive again for tourists. The best East coast weather is from March to September, although out-of-season also has its rewards. Surfing season in Arugam Bay is from about June to August.

WEATHER & BEST TIME TO VISIT

The weather in Sri Lanka is dictated by two monsoon seasons which bring rain to the west and south-west coasts from May to September; and the east coast and northern region between October and February. The rest of the year is sunny and dry. Temperatures are constant year-round, with coastal regions enjoying average temperatures of 25-30°C and the highlands 15-18°C on average.

Sri Lanka is a year-round destination since there is something for every discerning traveller. From pilgrim experiences to adventure, culture, honeymoon, or even special interest experiences, there is something you can do in Sri Lanka any time of the year. With recent weather pattern changes, it is hard to predict when it would rain and when the sun is out, however, making a note that Sri Lanka is a tropical destination and rain is to be expected any time of the day, any time of the year; always helps.

Our recommended best time of the year to travel is between November to April. However, it's best to keep in mind that this period is also quite expensive to travel as the European winters and the festive year-end generally attract a lot of travellers to Sri Lanka,

VISA

VISA can be obtained online via the government e-visa website - www.eta.eov.lk. If you are a citizen of Singapore, Maldives, or Seychelles, you are exempted from the requirement of obtaining a visa for 1 month. It could take up to 5 working days for a Visa to process depending on where you are from.

FACTS & FIGURES

Official Name	Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
National Holiday	Independence Day, 04 February 1948
Size	64,630 sq KM
Coastline	1,340 km
Capital	Sri Jayawadenapura Kotte
Commercial Capital	Colombo
Population	22 Million
Languages	Sinhala, Tamil & English
Ethnic Mix	Majority are Sinhalese, Minorities Tamil & Moor
Religion	Majority are Buddhist, then Hindu, Christian & Muslim
Highest Peak	Pidurutalagala (Mt. Pedro) at 2524m