**Santa Cruz Area Chamber of Commerce**

**Pacific Harbor Travel**

**Discover Sri Lanka – A National Geographic Journeys Trip**

**March 10 – 24, 2018**

**Day 1: Saturday, March 10 – Santa Cruz – San Francisco Airport**

We leave from the Museum of Art and History in Santa Cruz this morning at 6:30am and travel via our chartered motor coach to the San Francisco Airport where we will board our non-stop flight on Singapore Airlines to Singapore connecting on to Colombo, Sri Lanka.

**Day 2: Sunday, March 11 – Arrive Colombo**

We arrive in Colombo, Sri Lanka at midnight this evening. After clearing passport control and customs, our tour guide will meet us and we will transfer to our hotel. Then it is right to bed.

**Accommodation: The Steuart by Citrus (or similar)**

**Day 3: Monday, March 12 – Colombo**

Sleep in and relax this morning. Enjoy the afternoon at your leisure exploring the area, returning to the hotel for an early evening meeting with our tour director who will go over the details of our trip.

**Accommodation: The Steuart by Citrus (or similar)**

**Meals: Breakfast**

**Day 4: Tuesday, March 13 – Colombo – Wilpattu National Park**

We will depart early this morning and visit a coconut plantation, learning about farming and the importance of the coconut crop to the local people and the country as a major export. Sri Lanka is fortunate that the coconut palm is native to the island and lush plantations cover a large portion of coastal areas. Many local industries are founded in coconut based products using all parts of the fruit including the kernel, shell, husk and fiber. After our plantation visit, we continue north to Wilpattu National park, known for its leopard population. We’ll explore the park by jeep and meet with a local expert to learn about conservation efforts and the issues of human encroachment on wildlife reserves.

**A National Geographic Journeys Exclusive** is a Wilpattu safari and conservation talk. Wilpattu is the oldest National Park in the country and home to Sri Lankan leopards which we will do our best to search out with our local ranger. We’ll enjoy the stunning flora and fauna while keeping an eye out for elephants, wild boar, sloth bear, spotted deer and water buffalo. Our safari camp is located 10 minutes from the southern boundary of the park entrance on the borders of one of the 10 lakes found in the national park and surrounded by bush forest.

**Accommodation:**

**Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

**Day 5: Wednesday, March 14 – Wilpattu National Park – Anuradhapura**

Today we travel to the sacred city of Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka’s fist capital and now a UNESCO World Heritage site. Anuradhapura is a symbol of Sinhalese power and is the nation’s most extensive and important ancient city. We’ll walk through the ruins and discover ancient Buddhist monasteries and temples. This afternoon there will be some free time to wander on your own. You may also choose to get active and enjoy the views of this sacred city by renting a bicycle.

**Accommodation: Palm Garden Village (or similar)**

**Meals: Breakfast**

**Day 6: Thursday, March 15 – Anuradhapura – Dambulla**

After our morning departure from Anuradhapura, we will make a stop at a rural farming village, Habarana, to learn about the daily life of the local farmers. After a lunch of the local specialties, we will have time to visit some shops and venture out into the rice and vegetable fields for a stroll before continuing on to Dambulla for the evening.

**A National Geographic Journeys Exclusive** is a visit to the thriving town of Habarana for a glimpse of authentic rural life in Sri Lanka’s North Central Province. This scenic region is filled with lush vegetable fields and rice paddies, surrounded by a landscape of green jungle and picturesque lakes. We’ll have time to walk through the town and meet some of its residents and gain an understanding of their largely agricultural life.

**Accommodation: Thilanka Resort & Spa (or similar)**

**Meals: Breakfast, Lunch**

**Day 7: Friday, March 16 – Dambulla**

Today we head to Sigiriya (Lion) rock fortress which captivates every visitor with its well laid out gardens, caves, monasteries and palaces adorned with beautiful wall motifs. We start at the water gardens and climb more than 1200 steps to reach the top. We’ll be passing caves with frescoes and boulders to find the ruins of a palace on the flat surface of the old volcanic magma rock.

**Accommodation: Thilanka Resort & Spa**

**Meals: Breakfast**

**Day 8: Saturday, March 17 – Dambulla – Kandy**

Today we tour the very impressive and ancient Dambulla cave temples at one of the most well-preserved temple and cave sites in Sri Lanka. We’ll see Buddhist mural paintings that line the walls of the seventh century caves as well as a collection of hundreds of statues of Buddha in different poses. After our time at the Dambulla Cave Temple we will visit a spice garden in Matale to learn about the therapeutic, medicinal and culinary uses of the local spices. We then continue on to Kandy and enjoy a tour of the Temple of the Tooth which houses an important relic – a tooth of Lord Buddha kept in a well preserved golden casket. This evening we will be swept away as we listen to some traditional music at a local cultural show.

**Accommodation:**

**Meals: Breakfast**

**Day 9: Sunday, March 18 – Kandy**

After breakfast we have a visit to the impressive Royal Botanical Gardens of Peradeniya which maintains 300 varieties of orchids of Sri Lanka as well as a range of other plants. We’ll enjoy a leisurely walk in the lush surroundings, the pavilions, conservancy, orchid house and an opportunity to view the stunning Javan fig tree. Later in the day we will have some free time to walk through the city and around Kandy Lake. During your free time you may opt to visit an Ayurvedic hospital to learn about the history behind Ayurveda and the role it plays in Sri Lankan society and gain an understanding of Ayurvedic oil massage treatments and its various benefits.

**Accommodation:**

**Meals: Breakfast**

**Day 10: Monday, March 19 – Kandy – Nuwara Eliya**

Today we travel through scenic mountains to the tea producing town of Nuwara Eliya which produces the finest Orange Pekoe Ceylon tea and is inhabited mainly by tea planters and plantation workers. We’ll stop at a traditional tea plantation in the central highlands to gain insight into the process of growing tea and its effect on the Ceylon region. We’ll enjoy a cup of perfectly blended pure Ceylon Tea and then continue exploring the English countryside atmosphere (once governed by English and Scottish planters) and walk through the green grass and lanes enjoying stunning views of this countryside hamlet.

**Accommodation: Grand Hotel (or similar)**

**Meals: Breakfast**

**Day 11: Tuesday, March 20 – Nuwara Eliya – Udawalawe**

This morning we get to enjoy a picnic breakfast and a hike through the highlands in Horton Plains National Park. We’ll get close to nature and the stunning scenery while walking through the clouds to discover a majestic drop that provides amazing views over the plains into the sea. Then we continue on to our camp on the border of Udawalawe National Park. This evening we’ll attend a cooking demonstration by the camp chef to learn how local Sri Lankan delicacies are prepared.

**Accommodation: Big Game Camping Lodge (or similar)**

**Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

**Day 12: Wednesday, March 21 – Udawalawe**

This morning we enjoy a wildlife safari drive into the massive nature reserve to observe the elephants that are in abundance here and are often found wandering along the road. Udawalawe is a sanctuary for large herds of elephants and the national park proves to be one of the best places to observe them in their natural habitat. In addition to elephants, keep an eye out for other wildlife such as spotted deer, sambur deer, barking deer, water buffalo and jackal – all of which are found in the park.

**A National Geographic Journeys Exclusive** is a visit to the Elephant Rehabilitation Center. Sri Lanka is home to a significant elephant population – estimated at approximately 4,000. The Udawalawe Elephant Transit Home was established in 1995 by the Sri Lanka Department of Wildlife Conservation to treat and rehabilitate injured elephants that have been found in the area before releasing them back into the wilderness. We have the opportunity to drop by this incredible facility to watch these gentle giants as they feed, play and mingle with each other. We’ll meet one of the center’s conservationists who will talk about the work they do here including its challenges and successes.

**Accommodation: Big Game Camping Lodge (or similar)**

**Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

**Day 13: Thursday, March 22 – Udawalawe – Negombo**

Today we drive to Negombo and enjoy free time to explore the city and check out the beautiful Portuguese and Dutch architecture.

**Accommodation:**

**Meals: Breakfast**

**Day 14: Friday, March 23 – Negombo – Colombo**

Depart from Negombo for the short drive to Colombo for our check in and departure.

**Meals: Breakfast**

**Day 15: Saturday, March 24 – Colombo – San Francisco**

Shortly after midnight we depart from Colombo via Singapore Airlines for Singapore, connecting onward to San Francisco. We arrive in San Francisco this same day at 8:50am. After clearing passport control and customs, our chartered motor coach will take us back to the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History.

**Terms & Conditions:**

**Pricing**

Check $3,677.00

Single Supplement $1,094.00

Price is per person, based on double occupancy including roundtrip airfare from San Francisco. Terms and conditions apply and are available for inspection at Pacific Harbor Travel. Taxes and fuel surcharges are set by the airlines and local jurisdictions and are subject to change prior to departure.

Transfers between Santa Cruz and the airport (at scheduled times) and to all listed lodging and attractions, airfare to and from listed destinations, listed lodging, designated meals and listed attractions including guide services are included. Other expenditures are the responsibility of the traveler. **Hotels are subject to change, but will be equivalent to those mentioned in the itinerary.**

**Important Reservation Information**

Travel Protection Plan

Although our quotation does not include the cost of a Travel Protection Plan, we strongly recommend clients purchase this protection. If passengers would like to purchase the Travel Insured Protection Plan, there will be an additional cost of $242.00 per person payable with the deposit. If you are traveling as a single, the cost will be $319.00

Passports and Visas

It is the responsibility of each tour participant to obtain a valid passport. Your passport must be valid for six months after your date of arrival into Sri Lanka. An Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) is required for entry into Sri Lanka at an additional cost of $35.00. If you are holding a passport issued by a country other than the United States, it is your responsibility to check with the consulate of Sri Lanka for entry requirements.

Payment Schedule

At the time of booking a $500.00 non-refundable deposit plus the Travel Protection Plan (if selected) is required for each participant. The final payment is due by January 11, 2018.

Cancellation Penalties

Cancellations received prior to January 11, 2018 - $500.00 per person + Travel Protection Plan. Cancellations received January 11, 2018 and later – non-refundable. We strongly recommend our Travel Insured Protection Plan.

Change Fees

Pacific Harbor Travel reserves the right to charge a $100.00 per person change fee should any component of the tour be voluntarily changed inside of 90 days prior to departure. Voluntary changes are not permitted within 14 days prior to group departure. Once airline tickets have been issued, the tour participant is responsible for any airline imposed amendment fees for voluntary changes. Dependent on the airline, these fees can be $200.00 per person and higher, and tickets may, at times, be fully non-refundable.

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