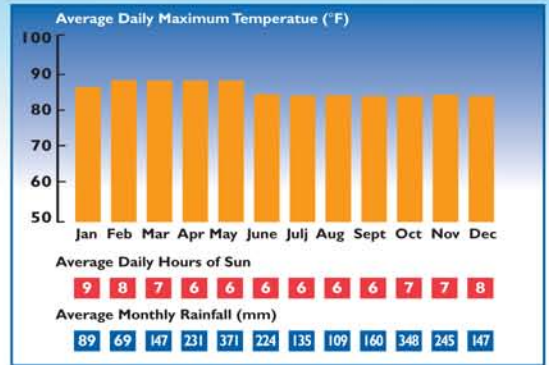


# Sri Lanka at a Glance



- Capital:** Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte
- Commercial centre:** Colombo
- Area:** 65,606 sq kms (25,322 sq miles)
- Population:** 19.4 million
- Languages:** Sinhala, Tamil and English are the main languages, English is widely used and understood in tourist areas.
- Religion:** Buddhism (69%), Hinduism (16%), Islam (8%), Christianity (7%),
- Time:** GMT + 6 hrs ( Winter Time), BST + 5 hours (Summer time)
- International airport:** Bandaranaike International Airport, Katunayake (34 km north of Colombo)
- Entry regulations:** Free 30-day visa on arrival for most nationalities. 60-day extension on request (variable fee) at the Department of Immigration and Emigration
- Currency:** Sri Lankan Rupee (One Rupee = 100 cents)
- Exchange rate:** Approx Sri Lanka Rs 150 = £1

- Banks:** Generally open 0900-1300 or 1500 Mon to Fri; 24-hr facilities at the airport. ATMs accepting Visa, Mastercard and Cirrus are widely available in cities and towns.
- Credit Cards:** Most international Credit Cards are accepted in major establishments within and outside Colombo including almost all major hotels.
- Climate:** Warm and sunny year-round, with an average of 27°C in Colombo. Hill country districts are generally around 10°C cooler. The best time to visit the west, south and Central Highlands is October to March, after the southwest monsoon, while the East Coast is best between May and September.

**What to wear:** Lightweight cotton or linen clothing. Higher reaches of the hill country can get chilly at night so a sweater is recommended.

**Electricity:** 220 – 240V 50 Cycles A/C. Round three-pin sockets

**Transport:** Island-wide, inexpensive railway and public and private bus service. A/c or non a/c car rental with or without driver. Luxury vehicles, radio-controlled cabs and three-wheeler auto-rickshaws also available. Air transport is through private helicopters and fixed wing aircraft are available on request (mainly Colombo-Jaffna route).

**Tipping:** Generally expected for most services

**Medical services:** State owned hospitals in all parts of the country provide free medical and surgical attention. The principal hospital of the city of Colombo is the National Hospital, Colombo 8. Telephone 0094112/269 3510 Ambulance 2422222

**Holidays:** Saturday, Sunday and every Full Moon Day (called Poya Day) are holidays in Sri Lanka. On Poya Days all Public places of entertainment are closed and selling of alcohol is prohibited. However hotels make special arrangements for their in-house guests.

**Important Websites:**

- Ministry of Tourism [www.slmts.slt.lk](http://www.slmts.slt.lk)
- Sri Lanka High Commission in the UK [www.slhclondon.org](http://www.slhclondon.org)
- Central Cultural Fund [www.lanka.net/ccf](http://www.lanka.net/ccf)
- Sri Lanka Board of Investment [www.boi.lk](http://www.boi.lk)
- Sri Lanka Tea Board [www.pureceylontea.com](http://www.pureceylontea.com)
- Buddhist Temple [www.kelaniyatemple.com](http://www.kelaniyatemple.com)
- Sri Dalada Maligawa (Temple of the Tooth Relic) [www.sridaladamaligawa.lk](http://www.sridaladamaligawa.lk)
- Sri Lanka Cricket [www.srilankacricet.lk](http://www.srilankacricet.lk)
- Wildlife Department [www.dwlc.lk/](http://www.dwlc.lk/)
- Currency Exchange Rates [www.lanka.net/centralbank/](http://www.lanka.net/centralbank/)
- Weather [www.meteo.slt.lk/](http://www.meteo.slt.lk/)

