

SRI LANKA HOLIDAY: MEETING WITH GIANTS

APRIL 2-12 2017

TOUR LEADERS~ CINDI LARAIA & SCOTT DAVIS

10 Nights / 11 Days

This expedition is for the wildlife enthusiast!



Join us for this once in a life time extravaganza to free dive with Blue Whales in the clear, blue, warm waters of Sri Lanka!

Then on safari with Leopard, Asian Elephant, Sloth Bear, Jackal and Mugger Crocodile as well as a number of dry-zone bird species.

BLUE WHALES are the largest creatures on Earth, they are resident here and can be seen on most mornings. At this time of year Sri Lanka is home to one of the largest concentrations of pygmy blue whales on earth. They are a sub species of the Blue Whale, approximately 10 feet shorter 79-80ft long.

Sperm Whales, Spinner Dolphin, Orca and Bryde's Whale are also seen intermittently.

We will be here for the best chance to encounter migrating Sperm Whale pods, a wonderful bonus to add to the mix.

Welcome to Sri Lanka

The tear drop shaped island of Sri Lanka lies in the Indian Ocean just off the southern tip of India. With its golden sandy beaches, azure blue waters and warm tropical climate, Sri Lanka is a year round destination for holidaymakers seeking sun, sand and sea.

The island has a rich cultural heritage that dates back over 2,000 years which is linked to the origins of Buddhism in the country with magnificently constructed stupas and the ruins of ancient kingdoms. Controlled from the 16th century onwards by the Portuguese, Dutch and finally the British prior to gaining full independence in 1948, the influences of colonial powers remain visible in architecture and a number of forts across the country.

Sri Lanka is recognised as a global biodiversity hotspot with a rich variety of endemic flora and fauna, and incredibly for a small island, can boast of large iconic animals such as the Asian Elephant, Leopard and the largest animal to have inhabited our planet, the Blue Whale. From palm fringed beaches to scrub jungles and numerous man-made lakes in the lowlands to tropical rainforests, cloud forests and highlands laden with waterfalls at its centre, this resplendent isle is abundant in natural beauty.

A WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE IN SRI LANKA		
DATE	SERVICE	ACCOMMODATION
DAY 01 [2 Apr]	On arrival at Bandaranaike International Airport, transfer to Mosvold Villa, Ahangama (3 hour drive) *Our lovely 4 star villa home overlooks the water and near to the harbour for our early mornings start with the whales*	
	Spend 06 nights at Mosvold Villa, Ahangama	Deluxe Room - H/B
DAYS 02-06 [3 - 7 Apr]	5 Mornings - Whale and dolphin watching from Mirissa for in-water experiences with Blue Whales, Sperm Whales and Spinner Dolphins Afternoon at leisure	
	Overnight at Mosvold Villa, Ahangama	Deluxe Room - H/B
DAY 07 [8 Apr]	Morning, leave for Cinnamon Wild in Yala (4 hour drive) *Our lovely rustic- luxurious Jungle Chalet is minutes from the park, offering wildlife at our front door!*	
	Afternoon safari at Yala National Park in search of Asian Elephant, Sloth Bear, Leopard, Mugger Crocodile and other wildlife	
	Spend 03 nights at Cinnamon Wild, Yala	Jungle Chalet- H/B
DAYS 08-09 [9-10 Apr]	Early morning and late afternoon safaris at Yala National Park for wildlife viewing	Jungle Chalet- H/B
	Overnight at Cinnamon Wild, Yala	
DAY 10	Early morning, one last safari at Yala National Park	

DETAILED ITINERARY:

DAY 1: 2ND APRIL

You will be met on arrival by a representative of &Beyond and transferred to Mosvold Villa in Ahangama (approx. 3 hour drive). Remainder of the day at leisure.

Mosvold Villa:

Located right by a pure stretch of beach, Mosvold Villa has six en-suite rooms, all of which have ocean views and feature elegant décor and essential modern fittings. The Villa's cool neutral pallet is offset by lively accents in the form of vibrant paintings and exquisite antique furniture. Dotted along the open plan verandah are sun beds, armchairs and loveseats to lounge on. Also yours to indulge in are the bright and breezy pool, bar and deck where champagne and fresh seafood barbeques are served.

During your stay at Mosvold Villa, we also suggest the following activities which can be included on any of the days:

Galle Fort:

Spend a half day to explore the Galle Fort UNESCO World Heritage Site taking a leisurely stroll along the Ramparts with its panoramic views. The once sleepy Galle Fort is now a vibrant and bustling area with a distinctively Mediterranean feel to it and is abuzz with activity. You can explore its narrow streets and laneways bustling with jewellery shops, numerous cafes, restaurants and luxurious villas. The Galle Fort Mosque, the Lighthouse, the Anglican and Dutch-reformed Churches and the Maritime Museum are must-see sites.

Stilt Fishermen:

From Galle, travel briefly along Sri Lanka's palm-fringed beaches along the Southern coast towards the town of Ahangama, to see the stilt fishermen at work. This ancient technique of fishing unique to this region is still practiced to date by fishermen hailing from the towns bordering Koggala to Weligama. The fishermen are precariously perched on stilts with one hand holding on to the fishing rod and balancing themselves on the poles itself with the other. Seated at an elevation of 2 metres above the water to minimize the disturbance to the fish, they hold on patiently for hours to get their catch and the fish once caught are stored in a plastic bag tied around their waist or the pole itself.

Spend 06 nights at Mosvold Villa, Ahangama. Accommodation is in a Deluxe Room. Your stay is on a Half Board basis.



Mosvold Villa, Ahangama



Stilt Fishermen at Ahangama

DAYS 2-6: 3RD - 7TH APRIL

Early morning, take a packed breakfast and travel to Mirissa Fisheries Harbour and head out to sea in a privately chartered speed boat in search of in-water experiences with the largest animal that has ever lived, the Blue Whale. Mirissa is regarded as the world's top location for watching Blue Whales with sightings occurring on most mornings during the season which spans from mid. November through to mid. April. The Blue Whales are resident to the Indian Ocean and live year-round in these waters and encounters of mother and calves, pairs of males and females are recorded every season. Pods of Spinner Dolphin are seen on most mornings while Sperm Whales are occasionally seen. Bryde's Whale, Orca, Risso's Dolphin, Bottlenose Dolphin and Striped Dolphin are among the other species of cetaceans which are seen a few times each season. Excursions typically average around 5 - 7 hours in duration and the boats usually return back to the harbour in the afternoons when the winds pickup. Guests need to be good swimmers in order to be able to get into the water with the whales. Please also do note that while sightings do occur regularly on almost a daily basis, the whales encountered are free roaming wild animals and encounters can never be guaranteed.

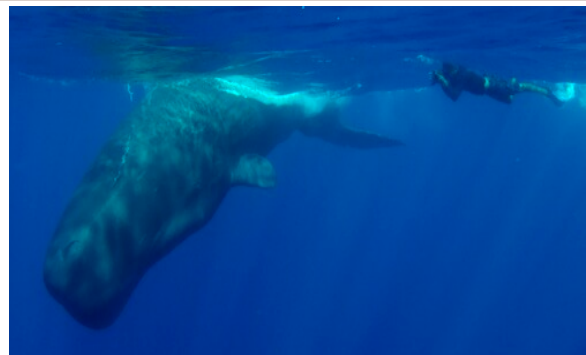
We will be using speed boats with on-board toilets and fast engines based on the mainland to get access to where the whales are sighted. The boats are registered with the local authorities to carry out whale watching and for in-water experiences and have a team which knows how to manoeuvre the boats around the animals when encountered.

You will return to your hotel in the afternoon where you can spend the remainder of the day at leisure.

Overnight at the Mosvold Villa, Ahangama. Accommodation is in a Deluxe Room. Your stay is on a Half Board basis.



Blue Whale mother and calf off Mirissa



Sperm Whale, Mirissa

Photo Credits: Joshua Barton

DAY 7: 8TH APRIL

After breakfast, leave towards Yala on the south-east corner of the island and check-in at the Cinnamon Wild in the outskirts of Yala National Park. (Approx 5 ½ hour drive excluding stopovers)

Cinnamon Wild:

Named as a tribute to the surrounding milieu of the Yala National Park, Cinnamon Wild sits adjacent to the park boundary and could very rightfully be positioned as an extension of the park. A property that was first established in 2002 as an eco-friendly resort for wildlife enthusiasts visiting the Yala National Park, Cinnamon Wild Yala opened its doors after an extensive re-construction and refurbishment as a world-class game lodge, conceptualizing the unique architectural features of the 'Wild' into its rustic exteriors and luxurious interiors. Designed to four star accommodation standards, the chalets are spacious and enjoy views of the scrub jungle, located well away from the public spaces to give ample privacy but nevertheless in close proximity for fellowship and gatherings if needed.

Late afternoon safari at Yala National Park, where you have the use of a spacious and comfortable 4WD safari vehicle for your game viewing. Leopards are the star attraction here and research has shown that Block I of Yala National Park has the highest concentration of these big cats in the world. Asian Elephant, Sloth Bear, Jackal, Mugger Crocodile, Sambar, Spotted Deer, Asiatic Buffalo, Wildboar, Grey Langur, Toque Macaque and Black-naped Hare are among a variety of larger animals that may be encountered. Yala is also an excellent location for birding with close to 300 recorded species - Indian Peafowl (Peacock) and the Sri Lanka Junglefowl are plentiful; White-bellied Sea Eagles, Crested Serpent Eagles, Grey-headed Fishing Eagle, Changeable Hawk Eagles, Brown Fish Owl and Brahminy Kites are among the most widely seen species of raptors. A dazzling array of waders & water birds (Greater Sand Plover, Painted Storks, Asian Open-bill, Eurasian Spoonbill and the endangered Black-necked Stork) and other dry-zone species including winter migrants (Sirkeer and Blue-faced Malkohas, Malabar-pied Hornbills, Chestnut, Green and Blue-tailed Bee-eaters, Barns Swallow) may also be observed.

Spend 03 nights at Cinnamon Wild in Yala. Accommodation is in a Jungle Chalet and your stay is on a half board basis.



Cinnamon Wild, Yala

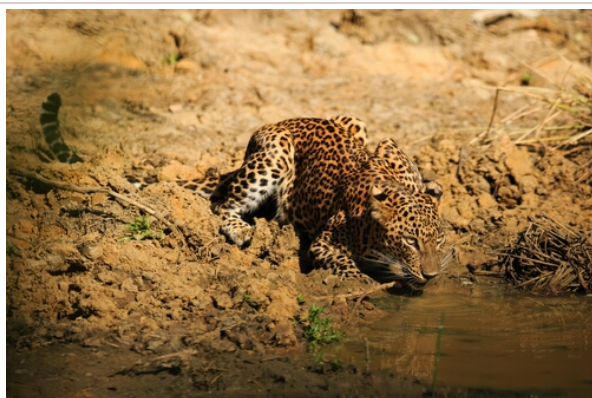


Cinnamon Wild, Yala

DAYS 08-09: 9TH - 10TH APRIL

Early morning and late afternoon safaris in Yala National Park in search of leopard, Asian Elephant, Sloth Bear and a multitude of avian species and other mega fauna. The varied landscapes from lagoons to rocky outcrops among the scrub jungle are a treat to the eye as you seek out the park's wildlife.

Overnight at Cinnamon Wild in Yala. Accommodation is in a Jungle Chalet and your stay is on a half board basis.



Leopard, Yala National Park



Asian Elephant, Yala National Park



Sloth Bear, Yala National Park

DAY 10: 11TH APRIL

Early morning, one last game drive at Yala National Park in search of Leopard and other wildlife.

After breakfast, leave for Jetwing Lagoon Negombo (5 ½ hour drive). Remainder of the day at leisure.

Jetwing Lagoon:

Spend the remainder of the day at leisure. Overlooking the tranquil Negombo lagoon lies Jetwing Lagoon, which offers a blend of rejuvenation and relaxation with a unique restaurant called Geoffrey's by the Lagoon, offering some of renown architect Geoffrey Bawa's favourites. Boasting the longest pool in the west coast complimented by a spa and sporting activities in the lagoon, this is the ideal location to rest, relax, and energize in the privacy of your spacious individual villas. It is without doubt the finest spa resort by the Negombo Lagoon.

Remainder of the day at leisure.

Spend 01 night at Jetwing Lagoon, Negombo. Accommodation is in a Bawa Room with en-suite facilities. Your stay is on a half board basis.



Jetwing Lagoon, Negombo



Jetwing Lagoon, Negombo

DAY 11: 12TH APRIL

Transfer to Bandaranaike International Airport (Colombo) for your departure flight (30 min drive). Please be at the airport 3 hours prior to departure of flight.

***** End of Services *****

ACCOMMODATION				
DAYS	HOTEL NAME	ROOM TYPE	NIGHTS	MEAL PLAN
Days 1-6 [2-8 Apr]	Mosvold Villa, Ahangama	Deluxe Room	6	Half Board
Days 6-9 [8-11 Apr]	Cinnamon Wild , Yala	Jungle Chalet	3	Half Board
Days 10-11 [11-12 Apr]	Jetwing Lagoon, Negombo	Bawa Room	1	Half Board

Cost per person based on an air conditioned Mini-coach with an English speaking local guide throughout the tour, the services of Cindi LaRaia from Dive Discovery Travel along with Scott Davis/wildlife Biologist professional photographer, will lead the in-water experiences with whales on above mentioned excursions, accommodation and meal plan.

USD \$8775.00 per person

Single Supplement: \$1815.00 Per Person

WHAT YOU GET...

- Accommodation at the Hotels and as per the meal plans mentioned above.
- All transport services using 01 Air-conditioned Microvan / Mini-coach with an English speaking naturalist guide.
- All sightseeing and related entrance charges as mentioned in the itinerary including the permit charges for obtaining in-water experiences with whales.
- Bottled water during sightseeing tours and when on the boat.
- All presently applicable government taxes.

....AND WHAT YOU DON'T

- Sri Lankan Visa
- Lunch unless stated otherwise
- Beverages, unless stated otherwise
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, phone calls etc.
- Any Insurance
- International and domestic airfare.

- Tips to guides, airport and hotel porters and restaurants. (Tipping is expected!)
- Any change in tax structure resulting from the hike in published tariff.
- Any other item not explicitly mentioned under included price.

About the tour leaders:



Cindi LaRaia has been designing and crafting high quality travel experiences for guests for over 30 years. She is a true wild child traveling with friends and family since she was 16 years old, planning all the travel, logistics and tours.

With an unquenchable thirst for adventure, she followed her passion and founded Dive Discovery Travel in 1991 specializing in only the finest scuba diving around the world, while also offering unique and special land adventure and culture excursions to compliment the diving. She then expanded her focus and founded Africa Discovery Travel 5 years later.

Cindi has travelled extensively to all 7 continents, and 15 African countries several times over escorting her guests, always in pursuit of the perfect holiday. Her greatest joy is to spend time with guests exploring far flung places that touch the soul! Asia and Africa are among her favourites.

With camera in hand, Cindi is an avid photographer striving to create and capture the perfect image, be it wildlife in all its myriad and beautiful forms or the subtle nuanced landscapes that often reveal themselves in the far off remote corners off the planet.

As an expedition guide, Cindi's smile and easy going manner help to smooth the way traveling around the world. When traveling to 'off the beaten path countries', you never know what situation you will be confronted with. Rest assured, Cindi's 30 years of professional travel experience coupled with a "whatever it takes" attitude and perceptive eye for detail will help insure each unique adventure goes off without a hitch and with minimal surprises.

When back in the home saddle Cindi resides in Tiburon CA, creating and designing amazing adventures! www.DiveDiscovery.com and www.Africa-Discovery.com



Scott Davis is a wildlife researcher, international photography expedition leader, and professional assignment photographer specializing in wildlife, travel, documentary and editorial imagery. Originally trained as a wildlife and marine biologist, Scott's research, photo assignments and expeditions have repeatedly taken him to the far remote corners of the globe and all seven continents.

Scott is a National Geographic Society Grant recipient and has co-authored and published several peer reviewed scientific articles investigating aspects of animal behavior. He has worked with and consulted for National Geographic, BBC, and Animal Planet Series. He has stringed for Reuters News Service in Africa. His

photographic work has appeared in ad campaigns for Fortune 500 companies as well as commercial websites, prestigious stock agencies, national and international magazines and newspapers including the San Francisco Chronicle, The New York Times, Microsoft, Sport Diver, Conde Nast, AFAR, Focus, and Men's Journal. He has also worked as a commercial photographer for several national and international ad campaigns including Barclays Global Investments, The Cayman Islands Bureau of Tourism, Atlantis Resorts, USA Aid, Rainforest Connection, California Bureau of Tourism and the World Wildlife Fund to name a few.

As an expedition guide and tour leader, Scott's easy going style coupled with a passion for all things photography is contagious. He finds great satisfaction sharing his unique insight, experience and knowledge with others, be they aspiring or already established photographers.

When not hopping a plane, train or automobile in search of his next subject, Scott currently makes his residence in Monterey, California. www.scottdavisimages.com