

Sigiriya at sunrise

Palliative Care in Sri Lanka

28 February – 14 March 2027

Post Tour Extension to Wadduwa

14 –17 March 2027

CATO
Council of Australian Tour Operators
ACCREDITED

JON BAINES TOURS

Level 3
MODERATE



Traditional stilt fishermen

A fascinating new study tour, offering an in-depth exploration of palliative care in the small, treasure-filled island of Sri Lanka. Led by David Praill, the Managing Editor of ehospice.com and an experienced tour leader, this itinerary brings together professional engagement, cultural context, and experiential travel.

Thanks to evolving government policies, collaboration with healthcare professionals in India and charitable initiatives, the landscape of palliative care in Sri Lanka has improved significantly over the past decade. Access to essential medications has expanded, and the establishment of the College of Palliative Medicine of Sri Lanka in 2021 reflects a growing commitment to strengthening palliative care services across the country.

However, palliative care in Sri Lanka remains in its nascent stages. With increased efforts needed to scale these developments to meet current and growing need, this is an exciting time to see its progress first-hand.

Through site visits to major facilities, including the National Cancer Institute and Suwa Arana Hospice, as well as expert discussions with specialist cohorts, key individuals and communities, the tour offers a holistic view of palliative care. It explores health policy, service provision, access to medication, research, education, and the empowerment of individuals and communities.

The full and varied cultural programme features iconic attractions, local visits and experiences. Enjoy mouthwatering cuisine and stay in some lovely hotels with ample free time to relax, join optional activities, or explore independently.

THIS TOUR IS CLASSED AS:

Level 3 | Moderate

Regular walking at destinations, extended standing and /or increased travel distances. Good fitness is required.

Tour Leader



In 2015 David retired from a long career in hospice care - though he continues to be actively engaged as Managing Editor of ehospice.com. A graduate of York and Durham universities, David moved from being a mathematics student to Episcopal Parish Priest to Course Director of St George's College, Jerusalem. He founded the travel company "Wind, Sand & Stars" and was the founding director of the McCabe Educational Trust, before joining St. Luke's Hospice (Harrow & Brent) in 1991.

David became the chief executive of Help the Hospices (now Hospice UK) in 1996, where he led the organization through a period of significant growth and change – firmly positioning it as the leadership organisation for UK hospices and the national voice for hospice care. David led the development of the Worldwide Hospice Palliative Care Alliance where he was founding co-chair. At various times he has been on the advisory panel of the Hospice Palliative Care Association of South Africa, an international observer on the board of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization in the USA and on the board of The Indian Association of Palliative Care.

David is also the founder of ehospice, through which he continues to engage with hospice and palliative care organisations around the world.

"David had an enormous amount of particular knowledge in this field, wisdom with it and a sweet sense of fun that we all enjoyed."

Jeanette Macdonald, *Palliative and End of Life Care in England and Scotland*, September 2025



Galle Fort

Itinerary 28 February – 14 March 2027

B = Breakfast L = Lunch D = Dinner

3 nights Colombo - 3 nights Galle - 2 nights Amba Estate - 2 nights Kandy
- 3 nights Sigiriya – 1 night Negombo



Day 1: Colombo (Sun, 28 Feb) D

Am: Arrive in Colombo and check in to the Radisson Hotel.

Pm: Enjoy a welcome dinner at the hotel.

Day 2: Colombo (Mon, 1 Mar) B D

Am: Talk from local professionals about the history and evolution of palliative care services in Sri Lanka.

Pm: Tour of Colombo, including the vibrant Pettah Market. Once an industrial canal area, it has been transformed into a lively waterfront district with cafés, food vendors, and shops.

Day 3: Colombo (Tues, 2 Mar) B D

Am: Proceed to the National Cancer Institute of Sri Lanka, the nation's leading tertiary care centre for oncology and palliative care. Learn about the Hopeful Comfort Project and meet with Sister Dona Samindra, who trained in Kerala with Pallium India.

Pm: Visit Suwa Arana Hospice, Sri Lanka's first dedicated paediatric palliative care centre. Recently opened near the National Cancer Institute of Sri Lanka, it is run by the Indira Cancer Trust, founded by Dr Lanka Dissanayake in memory of her sister, who died of cancer.

Eve: Visit Prof. Samadhi's residence for drinks and return to the hotel for dinner.

Day 4: Colombo / Galle (Wed, 3 Mar) B D

Am: Drive to Kahathuduwa and visit Olaboduwe Weda Medura, a traditional Sri Lankan medical practice run by a local practitioner. Explore natural herbs and remedies, learn about the ailments they treat and discover Indigenous healing methods passed down through generations.

Pm: Continue to Galle, arrive and check in to the Radisson Blu Resort.

Day 5: Galle (Thurs, 4 Mar) B D

Am: Drive to Matara and meet with Dr Samadhi Rajapaksa of the Institute of Palliative Medicine to learn about their community-based work. Meet with the team of volunteers, comprising a medical doctor, a nurse, and trained palliative care practitioners from Cancer Care Association of Sri Lanka.

Pm: Return to the hotel, at leisure.

Day 6: Galle (Fri, 5 Mar) B D

Am: At leisure. OR take an optional early-morning excursion to Mirissa for a deep-sea safari.

Pm: Tour of Galle Fort, a historic coastal stronghold founded by the Portuguese in the 16th century and developed in the 18th century under Dutch colonial rule. Enjoy dinner in the charming old town.

Day 7: Galle / Amba (Sat, 6 Mar) B D

Am /Pm: Scenic drive to Bandarawela. Check in to the Amba Estate, a micro-scale tea factory, organic farm, guesthouse and social enterprise set in the Uva Mountains. At leisure.



Elephants in Habarana

Day 8: Amba (Sun, 7 Mar) B L D

Am: Take part in a walking waterfall loop (option for a dip). Explore the farm and learn of their organic methods for cultivating tea, coffee, cinnamon and a range of herbs and spices, fruits and vegetables.

Pm: Take part in an artisanal tea and coffee production tour, including plucking and rolling your own batch of tea. Meet with a local community health worker and learn of community health provision in a remote area.

Day 9: Amba / Kandy (Mon, 8 Mar) B D

Am: Drive to Nuwara Eliya and explore this scenic hill station. Known as "Little England" for its cool climate and colonial history, it was a key centre of Sri Lanka's tea industry.

Pm: Continue to Kandy and check in to Kandy Myst Hotel.

Day 10: Kandy (Tues, 9 Mar) B D

Am: Drive to Peradeniya and explore the Royal Botanic Gardens, where you can see crops such as coffee, tea, nutmeg, rubber, and quinine, along with the orchid collection and medicinal plant section. Continue to the University of Peradeniya, Faculty of Allied Health, to learn about their education programmes and the use of music therapy in palliative care with Prof. Damayanthi Dassanayake.

Pm: Visit the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic, which houses one of Buddhism's most sacred relics — a tooth of the Buddha, believed to have been retrieved from his funeral pyre. Witness the blessing ceremony, where brightly robed monks perform rituals accompanied by drums and trumpets.

"There is not enough room to write about how enjoyable the hospice visits were, it was very well organised we were welcomed everywhere. David Praill was second to none based on how we were welcomed."

Jennifer Smith, *Palliative and End of Life Care in England and Scotland*, September 25



Sigiriya gardens

Day 11: Kandy / Sigiriya (Wed, 10 Mar) B L D

Am: Drive to Sri Lanka's Cultural Triangle, stopping en route in Matale to visit a spice plantation. Learn about native spices such as Ceylon cinnamon, pepper, cloves, and cinchona. Lunch at the plantation is a delicious spread of Sri Lankan rice and curries.

Pm: Continue to Dambulla and visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site Cave Temples; a stunning complex of rock temples containing over 150 Buddha statues and vibrant murals. Arrive Sigiriya and check in to the Sigiriya Village Hotel.

Day 12: Sigiriya (Thurs, 11 Mar) B D

Am: Drive to Anuradhapura. Visit the Cancer Care Association of Sri Lanka hospice facility in Kurundankulama, which provides home-based care for cancer patients. If possible, accompany doctors and caregivers on home visits to observe the delivery care in the community.

Pm: At leisure in the hotel.

Day 13: Sigiriya (Fri, 12 Mar) B D

Am: Rise early to climb the legendary sky citadel of Sigiriya, possibly the most spectacular site in Sri Lanka. Built in the 5th century on top of a vast 200m granite rock, the rock fortress is famous for its 'Lion Rock' and its 'Celestial Maidens'. Return to the hotel and at leisure.

Pm: See large herds of wild elephants, sambhur deer and huge flocks of birds in Minneriya National Park.

Day 14: Sigiriya / Negombo (Sat, 13 Mar) B D

Am: Wrap up session at the hotel to reflect on lessons learned. Depart the hotel and drive to Negombo.

Pm: Arrive and check in to the Jetwing Blue Hotel with the rest of the day at leisure before a farewell dinner.

Day 15: Negombo (Sun, 14 Mar) B

Am: Depart the hotel after breakfast. Transfer to the airport OR take the extension to Wadduwa.

"Wonderful trip and a group of passionate people. I love the JBT palliative care tours."

Phillip Roxburgh, *Palliative Care in North India*, March 2026

Post Tour Extension to Wadduwa

14 –17 March 2027

Day 15: Negombo / Wadduwa (Sun, 14 Mar) B D

Am: Depart the hotel and proceed to the Blue Water Hotel in Wadduwa, a relaxed coastal town known for its golden sands and palm-fringed beaches.

Pm: Arrive and check in to the hotel.

Day 16: Wadduwa (Mon,15 Mar) B D

Am: At leisure by the sea.

Day 17: Wadduwa (Tues, 16 Mar) B D

Am: At leisure by the sea.

Day 18: Wadduwa / Airport (Wed, 17 Mar) B

Am: Pick up from the hotel and proceed to the airport in time for the departure flight.



Blue Water Hotel, Wadduwa

Blue Water Hotel, Wadduwa

This luxury beach resort and spa was designed by world-renowned architect Geoffrey Bawa and is nestled among Wadduwa's wild coconut groves. With breathtaking views of the Indian Ocean, stylish design and exquisite facilities, it is a relaxing way to extend your time in Sri Lanka.

Cost of extension sharing a double or twin room is AUD $812

OR AUD $1,316 with a room to yourself

The cost includes:

- Three nights' accommodation in a first-class hotel
- Transfers to the resort and to the airport
- Breakfast and dinner daily

Extension cost excludes:

- Meals not mentioned
- Drinks with meals
- Any optional excursions, tours or sightseeing



Blue Water Hotel suite



Jetwing Blue, Negombo

Hotels

Radisson Hotel, Colombo
Centrally located on the oceanfront, the Radisson is known for efficient and friendly service. The hotel has a restaurant, a stylish rooftop lounge and bar, an infinity pool, and a spa.

Radisson Blu Resort, Galle
A luxury beachfront hotel in a seaside setting, featuring bright, spacious interiors and a large outdoor swimming pool overlooking the beach. The resort offers a pool bar, beach bar, rooftop bar, and two à la carte restaurants, along with a fitness and wellness centre.

Amba Estate, Amba
Built 100 years ago as a tea estate, Amba exudes rustic charm and cosy character. Today it is a guesthouse that, although simple, rates as one of the best in Sri Lanka, thanks to the stunning scenery, delicious food and the genuine warmth of the staff, who all come from the local community. Guests will stay in a variety of accommodation, including the farmhouse and cottages.

Kandy Myst, Kandy
Surrounded by sweeping green hills, and towering above the heart of the city, this modern hotel has a spa, rooftop infinity pool and bar, as well a restaurant and superb views.

Sigiriya Village Hotel, Sigiriya
This peaceful retreat is set against the backdrop of Sigiriya Rock Fortress. The village-themed hotel, with a beautiful pool, offers a comfortable haven within the surrounding forest, where you can experience the genuine warmth of rural Sri Lankan hospitality.

Jetwing Blue, Negombo
A stylish beachfront hotel with a pool, sun loungers, and wellness facilities. Rooms are bright and tastefully designed. The restaurant offers an al fresco feel, complemented by sweeping ocean views.

Amba Estate, Amba





Celestial Maidens frescos, Sigiriya



A sperm whale off the coast of Galle

Optional deep-sea safari

On day six of the tour, Friday 5 March, transfer to Mirissa Fisheries Harbour early in the morning for a marine mammal watching excursion. Explore the extraordinary marine wildlife of the Indian Ocean with the opportunity to see whales and dolphins.

Leave the hotel at 4.30 am in order to board the deep-sea safari boat at 6.00 am and return to the shore in the late morning or early afternoon.

The additional cost is available on request.

The cost of the tour sharing a double or twin room is AUD $5,754

The cost of the tour with a room to yourself is AUD $6,900

The cost includes:

- 14 nights' accommodation in twin-bedded rooms in first class, medium grade hotels and the Amba Estate Cottages
- The services of a tour leader, David Praill]]
- The services of an English-speaking national guide throughout the tour
- A full programme of professional visits, meetings and talks as per the itinerary
- A full programme of cultural tours and visits as detailed in the itinerary
- Breakfast and dinner daily and two lunches
- All transport in modern air-conditioned coach
- Comprehensive briefing notes
- All admission fees, tips and taxes

The cost excludes

- International flights and airport transfers
- Meals not mentioned
- Drinks with meals
- All optional excursions, tours and visits; all personal extras such as porterage, laundry and inoculation fees; travel insurance and visas

NB: All itineraries are subject to change according to local conditions.

About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. We also ensure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to.

From the sublime to the humble, we provide a variety of experiences in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun!

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Golden buddhas Dambulla Caves, Kandy (top); Tea Plantation, Amba; Mother and child in market; Beach and Sun, Galle (above)

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