



Explore Six Sri Lankan UNESCO World Heritage Sites with our Sri Lanka Historical Tour – Galle's Old City, Kandy, Dambulla, Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura, and Sigiriya with its Exquisite Paintings

Sri Lanka boasts a captivating history that extends over three millennia. Originally known as Lanka, the 'resplendent land' in the ancient Indian epic the Ramayana, written around 500 BC, the island has been celebrated for its natural beauty by many throughout the centuries.

Its strategic deep-water harbors have nurtured great civilizations, making it a prime destination for historical and educational tours. Today, Sri Lanka is a vibrant mosaic of languages, religions, and cultures, ideal for exploring its deep heritage and contributions to global culture. Sri Lanka's weather, influenced by two monsoons, offers a window in July and August for exploring its UNESCO World Heritage Sites and experiencing the rich tapestry of its history and natural beauty.

Join Far Horizons on a 17-day exploration that includes six UNESCO World Heritage Sites — enjoy the culture, history, and matchless natural landscapes of this enchanting land with a small group of only 14 people.

Are you still deciding on the destination of your next adventure? Explore our full <u>Calendar of International Archaeology Tours</u>.

*** NOTE: The dates of the Esala Perahera Festival in Kandy are variable each year and dependent on the lunar calendar. They are not normally set until the beginning of each calendar year. If our trip dates coincide with the festival, we will make sure to include it in our itinerary.



Day 1

Arrive in Sri Lanka

Arrive in Sri Lanka, transfer to the Jetwing Beach Hotel in Negombo and overnight for one night.

Day 2

Travel to Anuradhapura, Light of the Ruwanweliseya Dagoba

Today we head north to Anuradhapura. In the evening, witness the ceremonial lighting of the Ruwanweliseya Dagoba, a domed stupa that literally glows under the night sky. Our home for the next three nights is The Sanctuary at Tissawewa in Anuradhapura, a small refurbished colonial hotel built in the time of British Governor Henry Arthur Blake. (B/L/D)

Day 3

Anuradhapura, Bodhi Tree

Enjoy a full day exploring the <u>UNESCO World</u>
<u>Heritage Site of Anuradhapura</u>. Founded at least as early as the 5th century BC, Anuradhapura quickly became both the capital of Ceylon and the sacred city of Buddhism on the island.
Spread throughout the site are remarkable monuments, particularly the Dagobas of colossal size, placed on circular foundations and surrounded by a ring of monolithic columns.

Day 3 Cont.

Hidden in dense jungle for centuries, there is now much to view here, including eight major palaces, monasteries, and monuments as well as the sacred Bodhi tree. A cutting from the fig tree of Buddha, it was brought here in the 3rd century BC and flourished; today, the tree spreads out over the center of the complex. The relics of Buddha Siddhartha have also shaped the religious features of Anuradhapura, as witnessed by the Dagoba Thuparama. King Tissa built this shrine in the 3rd century BC to house the clavicle of Buddha, an important religious relic presented by Ashoka, one of India's greatest rulers. (B/L/D)



Day 4

Mihintale, Hatthikuchchi Viharaya, Nillakgama Bodhigaraya

This morning, travel east to the mountain peak of Mihintale. This site is believed to be the meeting place of the Buddhist monk Mahinda, son of the Emperor Ashoka of India, and King Devanampiyatissa. Mihintale is therefore widely regarded as the location where Buddhism was introduced into Sri Lanka and is currently a sacred place of pilgrimage.

Next, head to one of the oldest Buddhist temple complexes in Sri Lanka, Hatthikuchchi Viharaya, which translates to "Elephant Belly Temple". The source of this name is a large rock which resembles a kneeling elephant within the complex. Construction of the temple is attributed to King Devanampiyatissa in the 3rd century BC. The complex is perhaps most well-known, however, as the place where the exiled, 3rd century King Sirisangabo sacrificed himself for a peasant who was in desperate need of the bounty on the former ruler's head.

Conclude the day at Nillakgama Bodhigaraya. Built in the 8th or the 9th century, this site is the best-preserved bodhigara (a temple enshrining a tree) in the country and remains an impressive testament to the Sinhalese monastic architectural tradition. (B/L/D)

Day 5

Dambulla, Minneriya Nature Reserve - The Gathering

Today, visit <u>Dambulla</u>, the largest cave complex in Sri Lanka. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the temple rises 600 feet above the plains and dates back to the 1st century BC. The complex is composed of five caves converted into shrine rooms, each decorated with paintings and statues of the Buddha.

Day 5 Cont.

Continue on to the Minneriya Nature Reserve. As the sun sets on the horizon, the water of the reservoir sparkles in the remaining light, and the open plains begin to cool, watch as matriarch elephants followed by their herds slowly emerge from the surrounding brush. Soon, over a hundred elephants are eating, drinking, bathing, and playing. This moment of congregation, known as "The Gathering," highlights the wonder of nature. Overnight for three nights at the Heritance Kandalama in Dambulla. This architectural masterpiece by renowned architect Geoffrey Bawa is a seamless extension of the mountainside combining modern minimalist sensibilities with the surrounding vegetation and wildlife. (B/L/D)



Day 6

Polonnaruwa

Enjoy the day at the medieval capital of Polonnaruwa, designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Declared the first city of the land in the 11th century by Vijayabahu I, the king who united the country, it is the heart of the second most ancient of Sri Lanka's kingdoms. Today, the monumental ruins of this fabulous garden city testify to the discipline and creativity of the kingdom's first rulers. Built on the shores of a large artificial lake and within a rectangle of fortification walls, the site includes a profusion of palaces and sanctuaries. (B/L/D)

Day 7 Sigiriya

An early morning climb takes us to the top of <u>Sigiriya</u>, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here, a fortified palace covers the summit of a nearly 600-foot-tall granite peak that dominates the surrounding forested countryside. A series of galleries and staircases emerging from the mouth of a gigantic lion constructed of bricks and plaster provide access to the site. The upper palace is perched on the flat top of the rock and contains artificial cisterns that still retain water. The mid-level terrace includes extraordinary frescoes and the impressive Lion Gate. The lower palace clings to the slopes below with exquisitely beautiful moats, walls and gardens encircling the base of the rock. (B/L/D)

Day 8

Nalanda Gedige, Aluvihara, Travel to Kandy

TaBegin this morning at the peaceful sanctuary of Nalanda Gedige. Originally constructed as a Hindu temple, it was later converted into a Buddhist shrine, creating an architectural fusion underscoring the island's diverse cultural influences.

Continue on to the rock monastery of Aluvihara, one of the most important cultural sites in Sri Lanka. It was here, in the 1st century BC, that the Buddhist doctrines – comprising the Tripitaka or "three baskets of the law" – were first transcribed after having been handed down orally for several centuries.

Arrive late this afternoon in Kandy, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This city was the last capital of the Sinhalese Kings from 1469 until the occupation of Sri Lanka by the British in 1818. It remains the religious capital of Buddhism and a sacred city for millions of believers. Overnight in the Hotel Suisse for two nights. This colonial mansion was the residence of the Chief Minister of the Royal Granary in the 17th century. Later, the structure passed into the hands of the British and eventually was acquired by a Swiss woman who turned it into a guest house. Dinner is on our own this evening. (B/L)



Day 9

Kandy: Royal Palace, Temple of the Sacred Tooth, Esala Perahera Festival

Spend today exploring Kandy. Located on the northern shores of an artificial lake, the ancient area includes the remains of the Royal Palace with the great Audience Hall. Nearby, view the tooth relic housed in the 17th century Sri Dalada Maligawa, or The Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic. Next, visit the closeby Hindu shrines dedicated to Vishnu, Natha, and the goddess Patthini. Wander through a local market, admiring the colorful chaos. (B/L/D)

**** Depending on if our trip dates coincide correctly with the full moon calendar, tonight we may witness the Esala Perahera Festival, the most dazzling religious extravaganza in Asia. During this spirited Buddhist torchlight parade, whip-cracking porters clear the way through the throngs of pilgrims, followed by fire dancers, jugglers, musicians, stilt walkers, members of noble families in traditional Ceylonese attire, and as many as 100 wildly adorned elephants progress through the streets. One of these goliaths will be carrying the sacred tooth relic of Buddha enshrined in a series of nested jeweled reliquaries.

Day 10

Gadaladeniya Vihara, Lankatilaka Viharaya, Embekke Devale, Glenloch Tea Estate

Kandy's suburbs have a host of medieval religious buildings. This morning will be spent visiting three of them. Gadaladeniya Vihara was built in the 14th century in South Indian design and is renowned for its beautiful carvings. It was originally built to house an image of the Buddha, but when the worship of Vishnu became popular, devotees began to pay homage to that god, turning the temple into a fusion of Buddhism and Hinduism.



Day 10 Cont.

Nearby Lankatilaka Viharaya, completed in 1334, is a fine example of Sinhalese temple architecture. The interior walls and ceiling are ornately decorated with floral designs and the inner sanctum contains a huge statue of the seated Buddha. Built completely of wood, Embekke Devale is adorned with more than 500 graceful carvings. The roof of the entrance porch, or vahalkada, is supported by 16 intricately carved timber pillars that UNESCO has identified as the finest woodcarvings to be found in any part of the world. The roof of the shrine has no central beam. Instead, the 26 rafters are held together by a giant pin, an exceptional example of medieval carpentry.

In the afternoon, leave Kandy and head south into the mountains. Along the way, enjoy a stop at Glenloch Tea Estate which was established in 1917. Enjoy a cup of their classic Ceylon tea and take in the extensive verdant grounds. Overnight for one night at the Heritage Grand Hotel. (B/L/D)

Day 11

Dowa Raja Maha Viharaya, Buduruwagala Temple, Puja Ceremony

Start the day in the hill town of Bandarawela and visit Dowa Raja Maha Viharaya en route to Kataragama. Thought to have been created in the first century BC, this temple is home to a massive 38-foot-tall Buddha Statue carved in granite. The complex consists of an image house built inside a cave made up of three chambers. Early legends say that this cave was a secret hiding place for the king during enemy attacks. The outermost chamber is filled with lively murals from the Kandyan Era. The entrance to the second chamber is decorated with an elaborate Makara Thorana, a mythical figure dating back to pre-Christian times. In the third space, built more recently, a prominent Buddha statue surrounded by wall paintings takes your breath away.

Move on to the 10th-century Buduruwagala Temple, where seven colossal figures are carved into a high rock face – the Buddha with three deities and attendants standing on both sides. The gigantic Buddha statue still bears traces of its original stucco and paint on the robe. This evening, attend the puja ceremony of offerings at Kataragama. Overnight at the Mandara Rosen for one night. (B/L/D)



Day 12

Mulkirigala, Dondra Devalaya, Star Fort

This morning, depart for Mulkirigala. During the second century BC, a series of temples were carved out of the face of a huge rock outcrop standing more than 650 feet high and overlooking the surrounding plains. The walls are decorated with a mixture of religious and secular paintings and three of the Heavenly Kings are displayed in one of the rooms. Also to be seen are several reclining Buddhas, including one stretching 50 feet in length.

In the afternoon, move on to Dondra Devalaya, dedicated to the deity Vishnu, who is said to be the guardian god of Buddhism. According to legend, Devundara was a flourishing city in the time of King Rawana and is connected to the Indian Epic the Ramayana. At the height of its splendor, in the 13th-15th centuries, the city of Devundara was a busy seaport and a most renowned place of pilgrimage and worship. The 16th century, white domed stupa or dondra speaks of the structure's religious importance. Continue along the south coast and see the Dondra Lighthouse with sweeping vistas overlooking the sea.

Next, move on to Matara to view the Star Fort of Galle, a construction so named for its shape, a six-pointed star. Founded in the 16th century by the Portuguese, its earliest history can be traced back to 125 AD. Galle is the best example of a fortified city built by Europeans in South and Southeast Asia. In the 17th century, the Dutch created a defense wall with 14 towers that still encloses the rocky peninsula on which the town sits.

Overnight for two nights in the Jetwing Lighthouse which rests atop a magnificent hillock that looks over the Indian Ocean. Tonight, dinner is on our own. (B/L)

Day 13

Dutch Fort, Dutch Reformed Church, Meera Mosque

This morning, walk the ramparts of the Dutch Fort of Galle and then go inside the old city to see the Dutch Reformed Church built in 1755.

Next, see the Meera Mosque built during the Dutch Period in 1904. Despite its concentration of interesting sights, the real charm of Old Galle lies in the quiet back streets and alleyways of the historic fort, which have changed little since colonial times. Many of the streets are lined with formerly opulent buildings characterized by large rooms, arched verandas, and windows protected by heavy, wooden-louvered shutters.

After lunch, the afternoon is free to enjoy this historic town. Dinner is on our own. (B/L)

Day 14

Home and Gardens of Geoffrey Bawa, Transfer to Colombo

Enjoy the beautiful home and extensive gardens of the late architect Geoffrey Bawa, one of the most important and influential Asian architects of the 20th century. His influence was reiterated by his receipt of the Aga Khan Award in 2001. He is the third architect and the first non-Muslim to be so honored since the award's inception.

This afternoon, transfer to Colombo and enjoy time to explore the city. Overnight at the seafront Galle Face Hotel for three nights. Built in 1864, this colonial hotel maintains the grandeur of a bygone era while incorporating modern comforts. Dinner is on our own. (B/L)

Day 15

Colombo: National Museum, Wolvendaal Church, Jami-ul-Alfar Mosque

Spend the day exploring Colombo. Established in 1877, the National Museum is the oldest and largest museum in the country and is the custodian of Sri Lanka's cultural heritage. Housed in a fine colonial-era building, its collection spans several centuries and a range of (remove extra space) cultures, from the Sinhala kingdoms through to the British era. Found here isa vast collection of Sinhalese artworks, half a million books, more than 4000 archaic palm leaf manuscripts, a rare collection of traditional masks including antique demon masks; wood and ivory carvings; temple frescoes; bronze brassware, and royal weapons and ancient royal regalia of Sri Lankan kings.

Close by is Wolvendaal Church. Constructed in 1749, this structure was built in the form of a Greek cross, with walls 5 feet thick. The Dutch governors had a special pew made with elegant carved ebony chairs. The workmanship in the wooden pulpit, baptismal font and lectern is just as breathtakingly intricate. Even the stone floor includes the elaborate tombstones of five Dutch governors.

Next view Jami-Ul-Alfar Mosque. Built in 1909, it is one of the oldest mosques in Colombo and is noted for its striking red-and-white striped brick exterior.

This afternoon, enjoy time to admire and acquire local goods ranging from bright printed fabrics to footwear and handbags, not to mention scrumptious produce. Gather this evening for our Farewell Dinner. (B/L/D)



Day 16

Gangaramaya Temple, Independence Square

This morning, continue touring Colombo with a visit to the eclectic Gangaramaya Temple, built in a unique mix of Sri Lankan, Thai, Indian, and Chinese architecture. Continue on to the impressive Independence Square. The afternoon is free to rest or shop. Dinner is on our own. After a late checkout, transfer to the airport for our return flights home. (B/L)

Day 17

Arrive Home

Arrive home.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a sample itinerary that is typical of our trip offerings. In general, you can expect a very similar program, though days may be swapped depending on availability, opening hours, and other affecting factors.

Pre and Post Trip Extensions

Far Horizons offers pre or post extensions for many of our trips. We can also arrange extra nights at the arrival and departure hotel should you wish to arrive early or depart later. Please contact us for details.



Why Take This Tour?

Travel with awardwinning lecturer, Professor Eric Tagliacozzo

Tour six UNESCO World
Heritage Sites on the
island of Sri Lanka
Tour UNESCO World
Heritage Sites in
Turkmenistan:
Merv, Nisa,
and Kunya-Urgench

Private tour of the home and gardens of the fabled architect Geoffrey Bawa Spend a full day in the old walled city of Khiva

Witness 'The Gathering'
where massive herds of
elephants come to
bathe as the sun sets
over the nearby
mountains

Join Hindu pilgrims for puja in Kataragama

Limited to a maximum of 14 participants

Tour Information

Pricing

For current pricing, please vist farhorizons.com and navigate to our trip page.

Inclusions

Price based on double occupancy and includes:

- Internal flights during the trip (if applicable/unless otherwise noted)
- The accompaniment of your scholar throughout the entire trip
- Local English-speaking guide
- Hotel accommodations (3 or 4 stars; or best available based in the area)
- Ground transportation
- Airport transfers for arrivals and departures
- Most meals as noted in the itinerary
- Entry fees to all included sites and museums
- Gratuities to guides, drivers, and restaurant and hotel staff
- Coordination for any private presentations or tours

Trip prices are based on a minimum number of participants. If this minimum number is not met, trip prices are subject to change. Should the prices need to change, Far Horizons will reach out to registered guests to discuss directly.

Single Supplement

Should a roommate be requested and one not be available, the single supplement will be charged.

Exclusions

- International round trip airfare
- A separate donation check of \$150.00 per person to a designated donation project
- Passport or visa fees
- Required vaccines or tests
- Airport or departure taxes
- Alcoholic drinks, beverages or food not included on set menus
- Excess baggage charges
- Personal tips and hotel incidental expenses
- Laundry or other items of a personal nature

Donation Checks

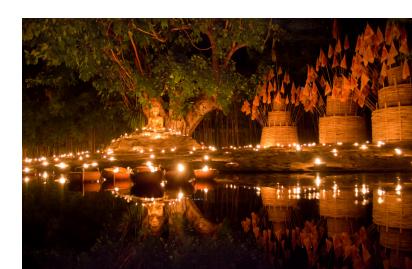
As a tour company that benefits from the cultural and natural riches of our destinations, we have a policy of donating to the scientific and cultural sites and projects which we visit. This has created a bond between Far Horizons and the academic and local communities that has helped us establish an extensive list of lecturers and contacts in each of our destinations. We ask that each participant donate to the noteworthy project we designate. The donation amount is \$150.00 per person. Note that the donation is required as part of your registration for the trip and that it is non-refundable.

Exchange Rate Fluctuations

Prices are based on currency exchange rates keeping below a projected level. While it is unlikely, if the exchange rates should change substantially, Far Horizons reserves the right to charge an additional amount to the trip cost.

Registration

A deposit of \$1000 per person is required along with your registration & health forms, which will be linked in the email confirmation you receive once you pay your deposit on our booking platform. Final payment is due 120 days before departure. Prior to departure, you will be sent a reading list and a tour bulletin containing travel information.



Tour Information (cont'd)

Cancellation

Cancellations received in writing at least 120 days before departure will receive a refund less a \$500 per person administrative fee.

Cancellations received less than 120 days before the departure date will not receive a refund. If for any reason you are unable to complete the trip, Far Horizons will not reimburse any fees.

Upon registering for the tour, the purchase of travel protection with both trip cancellation and emergency evacuation is strongly advised. Links to recommended insurance policies will be included in the email you receive confirming receipt of your deposit.

Expectations During Travel

Our trips are designed for flexible, energetic people who like to be active, have a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude. We have designed this trip to be as comfortable as possible, while also aiming to visit some remote or unique sites that other companies do not attempt to include in their itineraries. There may be days where we have very long drives and the conditions of the roads may vary. Hotels and transportation in some remote areas may not be up to western standards. There may be times when no bellhops are available; please pack with the understanding that you need to be able to handle your own luggage at times. Sometimes we may be walking over uneven trails for a mile or more; hiking boots are strongly recommended. Not every meal will be haute cuisine and several lunches may be picnics or box lunches. By maintaining a flexible attitude we will soon be captivated by the beauty of the natural scenery, the hospitality of the local people, and the fascinating sites we will see. Your flexibility and patience will be appreciated.

Air Ticketing

International round trip flights are not included in the cost of the trip. If Far Horizons must change the trip dates or cancel the trip for any reason, Far Horizons is not responsible for any air ticket you may have purchased. Please send your complete air schedule as soon as you have it. NOTE: Please contact Far Horizons if you would like for us to handle your air ticketing.

Private Tours and Talks

The private tours of archaeological sites and talks by specialists are scheduled in advance and include a donation to each. Specialists working at these sites are excited about showing their work to interested enthusiasts. However, please be aware that there may be times when the director or a member of the staff may not be on site when our groups arrive due to other commitments.

Walking and Standing

Far Horizons expects all participants to be physically active and able to walk and climb independently throughout the full touring days. This includes walking over uneven terrain (uphill and downhill) for 2 miles or more at each site. You should expect to be on your feet for much of each day, averaging as much as 5 miles of walking per day. As such, each participant should be able to walk unaided at a pace of 3 miles per hour for at least an hour at a time, and to stand unsupported for at least 60 minutes.

Bearing this in mind, we suggest that, if you have not already done so, you begin walking several miles every day, ideally including stairs and hills. If you have questions about your ability to keep up with the group or the strenuous nature of this trip, please contact the Far Horizons staff.



Tour Information (cont'd)

Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that you consider purchasing travel insurance. Should illness or an unforeseen event force you to cancel your travel plans after your final payment or during your trip, it would be doubly unfortunate to incur a significant financial loss. Trip cancellation protection will enable you to be reimbursed for the loss of your payment if you are unable to travel for any of the covered reasons in the "Outline of Coverage" section, or should you have an accident or suffer from any medical conditions during the trip.

Far Horizons offers customized protection plans through Travel Insured International (a Crum & Forster Company) with the following benefits:

- Trip Cancellation and Trip Interruption for covered reasons
- Trip Delay
- Baggage Loss and Baggage Delay
- Emergency Medical Expenses and Emergency Medical Evacuation
- 24-Hour Accidental Death & Dismemberment
- 24-Hour Travel Assistance & Concierge Services
- Option to upgrade to 'Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR)'

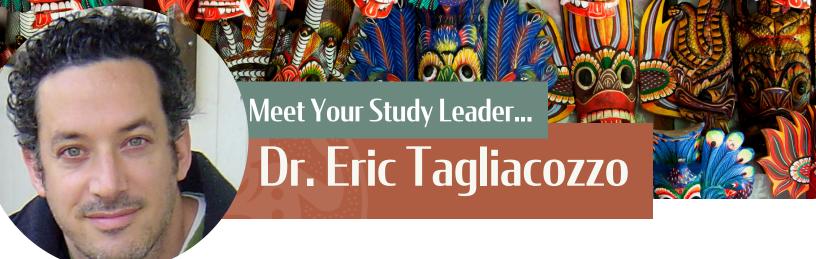
We recommend reviewing the language in detail so you are aware of specific parameters; Depending on the policy, to waive the Pre-Existing Medical Condition Exclusion or to upgrade to CFAR coverage, the plan must be purchased within 14 to 21 days of the initial trip deposit, full trip cost must be insured, and traveler is medically fit at time of plan purchase. Otherwise, coverage may be purchased at any time prior to departure.

To obtain a personalized quote and/or purchase a plan through Far Horizons/Travel Insured International, simply click <u>HERE</u>. For specific questions regarding the Worldwide Protector Plan, please contact Travel Insured International's Customer Care Center at 1-800-243-3174 or by email at <u>customercare@travelinsured.com</u>, and refer to Far Horizons' account number: 54070.

Itinerary Changes

Changes in our itinerary, accommodations, and transportation schedules may occur while traveling. While we are committed to keeping as close to the published details as possible, sometimes it is simply not possible. Weather events, government affairs, or other factors out of our control sometimes come into play. A good book to read as well as patience, flexible attitude, and a sense of humor are essential.



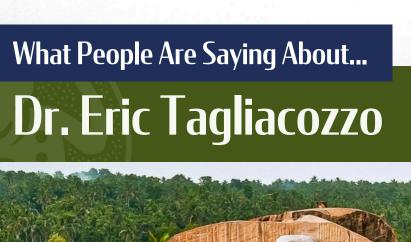


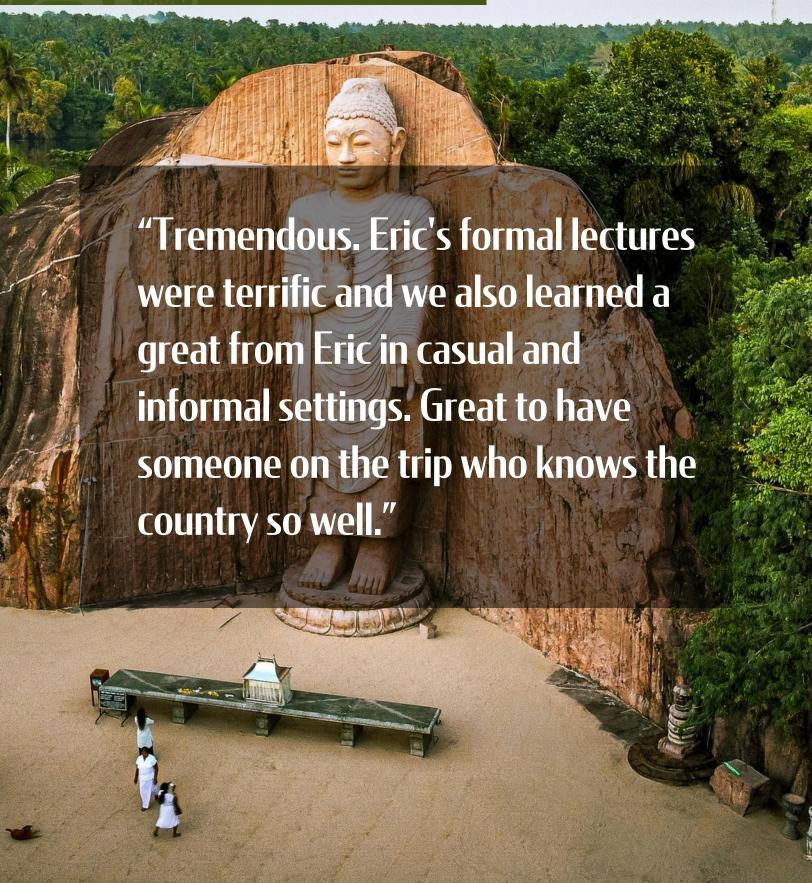
Eric Tagliacozzo received his B.A. from Haverford College, his Ph.D. (with Distinction) from Yale University, and is currently the John Stambaugh Professor of History at Cornell University.

Dr. Taliacozzo was the recipient of the Stephen and Margery Russell Teaching Prize and was cited as one of the top 10 professors at Cornell (out of more than 2,000) in an article in Business Insider. He was the recipient of both a doctoral Fulbright Fellowship and a Faculty Fulbright for work in Southeast Asia.

Professor Tagliacozzo is the author or editor of a dozen books including The Indonesia Reader: History, Culture, Politics; The Longest Journey: Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca; and Secret Trades, Porous Borders, the latter awarded the prestigious Harry J. Benda Prize by the Association for Asian Studies. He is the director of Cornell's Comparative Muslim Societies Program, the director of the Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, and the editor-inchief of the journal Indonesia. Dr. Tagliacozzo knows both the Indonesian and Dutch languages. His enthusiasm, humor, and knowledge of Indonesia makes him an exceptional study leader and entertaining traveling companion.







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Our 40+ years of archaeological exploration and support for preservation have fostered a deeply personal relationship with our guests, resulting in an exceptionally high return rate that speaks to our individualized attention, and the lasting connections we create with each member of our travel family.









READY TO TRAVEL TO SRILANKA

WITH DR. ERIC TAGLIACOZZO

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