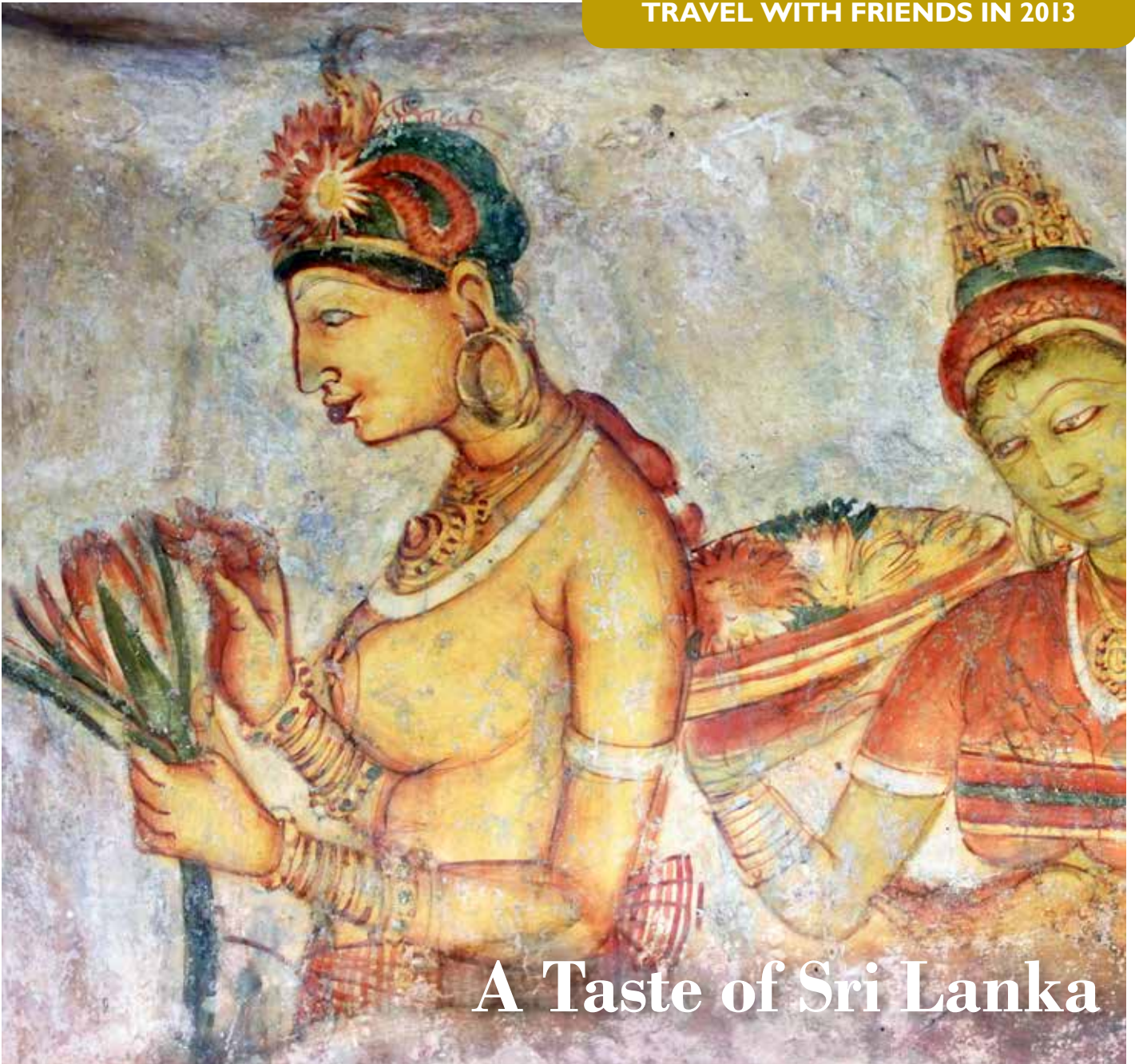


TRAVEL WITH FRIENDS IN 2013



A Taste of Sri Lanka

NEGOMBO – CULTURAL TRIANGLE – KANDY –
NUWARA ELIYA – YALA N.P. – GALLE – MT LAVINIA

with Paul van Reyk
2–17 September 2013 (16 days)

R
Renaissance
Tours



Tour leader



Sri Lankan born **Paul van Reyk** has been passionate about food since his ayah gave him his first ball of rice when he was a year old. For the past ten years he has been sharing his passion through catering, cooking classes, a website with recipes and conducting food tours in Sri Lanka.

Paul has a Masters in Gastronomy from Adelaide University and Cordon Bleu and is a reviewer for the Good Food Guide and Sydney Eats. Paul also featured in the SBS Food Lovers' Guide episode on Sri Lankan food.



A Taste of Sri Lanka

Discover the incredible depth of flavours, smells, history and culture Sri Lanka has to offer visiting World Heritage listed sites, bustling cities, the highlands and a National Park.

Be amongst the first to rediscover this island paradise, renowned for its palm-fringed beaches, misty mountain landscapes, extraordinary wildlife, exotic cuisine and cultural diversity.

Sri Lanka is also steeped in heritage. With a history that dates back over 2,000 years, the island is home to some of Asia's best preserved monuments and to no fewer than eight UNESCO World Heritage sites. Thanks to its colonial history (Portuguese, Dutch and British), interaction with Arab, Chinese and Malay merchants over the centuries, and the prevailing religions of Buddhism and Hinduism, Sri Lanka is a land rich in traditions, continual festivities and an exciting, exotic cuisine which you will see being prepared and of course taste!

At a glance

- Join Paul van Reyk and Sri Lankan chefs for cooking demonstrations
- Visit the World Heritage listed sites of Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya and Dambulla
- Scenic train ride from Kandy to Nuwara Eliya
- Visit Geoffrey Bawa's Lunuganga Estate and Bevis Bawa's Brief Garden
- Stay in the Geoffrey Bawa designed Lighthouse Hotel in Galle



Itinerary

Mon 2 Sep 2013

Sydney – Colombo

Depart Australia on Singapore Airlines flights via Singapore. Arrive Colombo at midnight. Transfer to your hotel located in the resort town of Negombo, rich in history and culture.

Tue 3 Sep

Negombo

Rise early if you wish to join Paul for a visit to the Negombo fish markets to buy the fish for today's lunch. On return to the hotel join Paul for a cooking demonstration followed by lunch. Afternoon at leisure before a welcome briefing and reception. **B L R**

Wed 4 Sep

Negombo – Sigiriya

After a leisurely start depart Negombo in the late morning for the Cultural Triangle situated in the centre of the island. It covers an area which includes the Ancient Cities of Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya and Dambulla and the Sacred City of Kandy.

Dating back to the 1st century BC, the Golden Temple of Dambulla has been the centre of pilgrimage for Buddhists and Hindus alike for 22 centuries. The cave monastery, home to Buddhist monks, is covered with exquisite 2,000 year-old murals depicting the life and times of the Lord Buddha. The shrines also house a collection of 157 statues of Buddha in various sizes and poses, including a 15 metre long reclining Buddha and vividly coloured frescoes on the walls and ceiling, making this the largest antique painted surface in the world. Dinner at the hotel. **B D**

Thu 5 Sep

Sigiriya

Morning visit to the World Heritage site of Polonnaruwa, the second capital of Sri Lanka built in the 11th and 12th centuries AD. Under King Parakramabahu, who ruled in the late 11th century, Polonnaruwa became a magnificent walled city. The remains of a royal palace, the Buddhist Quadrangle, with a bodhi tree shrine and a dagoba (stupa) survive.

Return to the hotel for a cooking demonstration and lunch.

In the afternoon explore Sigiriya, or Lion Rock, which was built by an obsessed monarch in the 5th century and is an astonishing feat of engineering and construction.

The most striking portion of Sigiriya, a terracotta and grey core of rock, rises a sheer 200 metres above a forested plain, its flattened summit sloping gently. A series of moats, ramparts and water garden - remnants of an ancient city - spread out on two sides of the rock, with the remains of a pair of giant stone lions' paws still guarding the staircase that leads to the summit, once occupied by a royal palace. **B L**

Fri 6 Sep

Sigiriya – Kandy

After breakfast travel from Sigiriya to Kandy. En route visit the Matale Heritage Centre, which draws on the rich craft traditions of the area, producing quality batik, embroidery, carpentry and brasswork. It occupies a sprawling compound of bungalows, workshops and gardens.

Arrive in Kandy in the afternoon. Kandy, nestled in the hills at an altitude of 488 metres, was the last capital of the Sri Lankan kings. The name Kandy conjures visions of a storied past, splendour, legend, folklore, mystery and traditions lovingly kept alive for countless years.

In the afternoon visit the Botanical Gardens in Peradeniya, which was originally the pleasure garden of the royalty. Nearly 4,000 species of plants are found in this garden and it is encircled by the Mahaweli River.

Sri Lankan cuisine

Sri Lankan cuisine is one of the most complex cuisines of Asia. Due to its proximity to South India, the cuisine of Sri Lanka shows some influence, yet is in many ways quite distinct. As a major trade hub, it draws influence from colonial powers that were involved in Sri Lanka and by foreign traders. Rice, which is consumed daily, can be found at any occasion, while spicy curries are favourite dishes for lunch and dinner. Some of the Sri Lankan dishes have striking resemblance to Kerala cuisine, which could be due to the similar geographic and agricultural features with Kerala.



The Polonnaruwa ruins



Sigiriya

Tonight attend a Kandyan dance performance. Dances include the cobra dance, mask dance and the Ginisila, showing power over fire. The entire frenetic and colourful spectacle climaxes with the amazing fire-walking act. **B D**

Sat 7 Sep

Kandy

After breakfast embark on the Three Temples tour visiting temples in the environs of Kandy that display the excellent artistry and skills of the island's Medieval craftsmen.

Gadaladeniya Temple (1344 AD) is set in a beautiful hilltop location surrounded by rice fields. Lankatilaka Temple (1340 AD) has a 2 storied building containing some rare and well-preserved frescoes. The Embekke Temple stands in a lovely rural setting and is famous for its hall of intricately carved wooded pillars.

After lunch visit the sacred Temple of the Tooth, which houses one of Buddhism's most sacred relics and attracts followers of the Buddhist faith from all over the world. The Royal Complex situated around the Temple of the Tooth and Kandy Lake – comprising the King's Palace, the Queen's Palace, the Audience Hall, the Royal Boathouse and the Royal Summer House, represent the zenith of ancient Sri Lankan architecture. **B L**

Sun 8 Sep

Kandy – Nuwara Eliya

Depart Kandy in the morning and travel by train to Nuwara Eliya, situated at around 2,000 metres above sea level. The town was founded by Samuel Baker as a hill retreat for the British during the colonial era, where typical English pastimes including fox hunting, polo and cricket were played. Several buildings and parks here retain features from the colonial period.

Arrive in Nuwara Eliya early in the afternoon. Enjoy high tea at the Hill Club (dress code applies), which was founded in 1876 by a British coffee planter, as a home away from home, and is today a privately operated club and hotel.

Visit the vegetable garden of the St Andrew's Hotel, where you will be staying. Together with the chef choose your veggies for tonight's dinner. **B HT D**



Kandy

Mon 9 Sep

Nuwara Eliya – Yala National Park

Sri Lanka is one of the world's largest exporters of tea. Since the introduction of tea to Sri Lanka in mid 19th century, Nuwara Eliya has been the capital of the tea industry. The rolling mountains in the highlands are carpeted by green tea plantations. Visit the Mlesna Tea Centre in Bandarawela for a tasting and observe the process of manufacturing tea.

Continue to Yala National Park, one of Sri Lanka's oldest and most popular wildlife reserves, is famous for one of the world's highest densities of leopard - and some of its largest and most visible individuals. On morning and evening safaris you may also see elephant, sloth bear, sambar, chital, wild boar, stripednecked, brown and ruddy mongoose, black-naped hare, marsh mugger crocodile and several civet species. Yala National Park is also a popular bird watching destination. **B L D**

Tue 10 Sep

Yala National Park

Day at leisure. A wide range of activities are available ranging from half- and full-day jeep safaris, nature tracks, bird watching trails, night safaris etc. (additional cost applies).

At dusk, embark on a jeep safari before returning to the hotel for dinner. **B L D**

Wed 11 Sep

Yala National Park – Galle

After breakfast depart Yala National Park and travel to Galle, an ancient Dutch outpost located on the south western coast of Sri Lanka. The minimalistic, stately and elegant Lighthouse Hotel, your home for the next two nights, was designed by the famous Sri Lankan architect Geoffrey Bawa. Dinner at the hotel. **B D**

Thu 12 Sep

Galle

Morning visit to Lunuganga estate, the former country home of Geoffrey Bawa. Started in 1947, the garden led Bawa, a lawyer called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in 1940, to decide to become an architect. The garden at Lunuganga estate remained his first muse and experimental laboratory for new ideas.

After lunch at Lunuganga, return to Galle. Afternoon at leisure to explore Galle Fort. **B L**



Indian Elephants, Yala National Park

Typical dishes and spices

Sri Lanka has long been renowned for its spices. Since ancient times, traders from all over the world who came to Sri Lanka brought their native cuisines to the island, resulting in a rich diversity of cooking styles and techniques.

The island nation's cuisine mainly consists of boiled or steamed rice served with curry. This usually consists of a 'main curry' of fish, chicken, pork or mutton (typically goat), as well as several other curries made with vegetables, lentils and even fruit curries.

Side-dishes include pickles, chutneys and 'sambols'. The most famous of these is the coconut sambol, made of ground coconut mixed with chilli peppers, dried Maldive fish and lime juice. This is ground to a paste and eaten with rice, as it gives zest to the meal and is believed to increase appetite.

Another well-known rice dish is kiribath, meaning 'milk rice'. In addition to sambols, Sri Lankans eat 'mallung', chopped leaves mixed with grated coconut and red onions. Coconut milk is found in most Sri Lankan dishes to give the cuisine its unique flavour.

Sri Lankan people use spices liberally in their dishes and typically do not follow an exact recipe: thus, every cook's curry will taste slightly different. Furthermore, people from different regions of the island (for instance, hill-country dwellers versus coastal dwellers) traditionally cook in different ways while people of different ethnic and religious groups tend to prepare dishes according to their customs. Although Sri Lankan food appears similar to South Indian cuisine in its use of chilli, cardamom, cumin, coriander and other spices, it has a distinctive taste, and uses ingredients like dried Maldive fish which are local to the area.



Sri Lankan spices

Fri 13 Sep

Galle

In the morning visit to a cinnamon plantation and the moonstone gem mine in Meetiayagoda.

On the return to the hotel, join Paul for a cooking demonstration and lunch. Remainder of the day at leisure. **B L**

Sat 14 Sep

Galle – Colombo / Mt Lavinia

Today journey from Galle to Colombo. En route visit Brief Garden, the former house and garden of landscape architect Bevis Bawa, a brother of Geoffrey Bawa. Started in 1929, it is a hillside garden overlooking a former rubber plantation. It contains sculptures by Bevis himself and his many artist friends, including Donald Friend, who went for a weekend and stayed six years. The house is also open to view and contains many wonderful artworks including a magnificent mural of Sri Lankan life by Donald Friend in the style of Chagall.

After lunch at the Geoffrey Bawa designed Bentota Beach Hotel, continue to Mt Lavinia where you will stay at the historic Mount Lavinia hotel, one of the oldest and most famous hotels in Sri Lanka. **B L**

Sun 15 Sep

Colombo / Mt Lavinia

Morning tour of Colombo. See the commercial area of Fort, so named because both the Portuguese and Dutch had a fort at this point. Drive past Pettah, a noisy Oriental bazaar with a mix of humanity, ancient vehicles and bargains. Continue past Hindu and Buddhist temples and the Jumi Ul Alfar Jumma Mosque as well as the Wolfendhal Dutch Church, Hulftsdorp Law Courts and Independence Square. Finish with a visit to the Geoffrey Bawa designed Sri Lankan Parliament building.

After lunch at the Cricket Club Café, established in 1996 by James & Gabrielle Whight from Melbourne, visit the National Museum. Its collection spans from the Sinhala kingdoms through to the British era including some superb stone sculptures, Hindu bronzes and wooden carvings.

Tonight enjoy a seafood BBQ dinner on the beach by Publis, the oldest of the great chefs working in Sri Lanka. **B L D**



Galle Fort Light House

Mon 16 Sep

Depart Colombo

In the morning explore Colombo's contemporary art scene. Visit some galleries such as Red Spot Gallery, Barefoot Gallery and the Sapumal Foundation.

Afternoon at leisure. Late afternoon check-out (6 pm) from the Mount Lavinia hotel and transfer to the Gallery Café for a farewell dinner. Situated within the former office of Sri Lanka's renowned architect, Geoffrey Bawa, the restaurant is a feast for the eyes and palette, especially at night when the whole restaurant is transformed into a candlelit magical space.

At the conclusion of dinner, transfer to the airport for the late night departure on Singapore Airlines to Australia via Singapore. **B D**

Tue 17 Sep

Arrive Australia

Evening arrival in Australia.



Leopard, Yala National Park

Tour Prices

Per person, twin-share incl. airfares	AUD 7,250
Single supplement*	AUD 1,500
Reduction without airfare	- AUD 1,200
Business class surcharge	On request
Deposit	AUD 500 per person
Final payment	4 July 2013

Tour code

AGSI309

Visas

Australian and New Zealand citizens require a visa for Sri Lanka. An Electronic Travel Application has to be lodged online prior to departure from Australia. Cost for single entry tourist visa is currently USD 20 per person.

Tour prices include

- Fourteen nights accommodation in centrally located four star hotels with daily breakfast **(B)**. Late check-out (6pm) on the 16 September
- Meals as per itinerary (**L**=Lunch, **D**=Dinner) including welcome and farewell meals
- Wine with dinners
- Return economy class flights on Singapore Airlines including taxes as at 1 October. (23kg luggage allowance)
- Transfers on arrival and departure if travelling on group flights
- Jeep safari at dusk in Yala National Park
- Comfortable air-conditioned coach transport throughout
- Comprehensive sightseeing including entrance fees as per itinerary
- Cooking demonstrations and talks with Paul van Reyk throughout
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers
- Hotel portorage (one piece per person).

Tour price does not include

- Airport transfers if not travelling on group flights
- Items of a personal nature, including telephone, laundry, room service etc.
- Travel insurance
- Sri Lankan visa
- Airport portorage

Your hotels ★ ★ ★ ★

Negombo - Jetwing Blue Hotel

Sigiriya - Jetwing Vil Uvana Hotel

Kandy - Amaya Hills Hotel

Nuwara Eliya - St Andrew's Hotel

Galle - Jetwing Lighthouse Hotel

Colombo - Mt Lavinia Hotel

N.B. Hotels of a similar standard may be substituted

Terms & Conditions

How to Book

Complete, sign and return the Booking Form available from Renaissance Tours with your deposit and page one of your passport.

Deposit / Final Payments

Your deposit is due at the time of booking and is used to pay hotel, airline, performance tickets and/or other deposits. It is non-refundable in the event of your cancellation.

Final payment is due 60 days before departure. Failure to make the final payment by the due date may result in cancellation of your booking and loss of deposit.

Payments are accepted in cash and by cheque, bank transfer, American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa. A 3% service charge applies for payment by American Express and Diners Club.

Cancellation & Refunds

a) Cancellation by You - Cancellation charges will be applied as shown below, calculated from the day written notification is received by Renaissance Tours. In addition to cancellation fees for tours operated by Renaissance Tours as shown below, airlines, hotels and other third parties may impose up to 100% cancellation charges.

60 days or more	Forfeit of deposit
59 – 45 days	25% of tour cost
44 – 31 days	50% of tour cost
30 – 15 days	75% of tour cost
Less than 15 days	100% of tour cost

The above cancellation charges include applicable GST.

In addition to the above, cancellation charges may apply for additional arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours, such as air tickets, hotels and travel insurance premium. If the reason for cancellation is covered by the insurance policy, you may be able to reclaim these charges.

b) Cancellation by Us - We reserve the right to cancel a tour for any reason (such as failure to reach minimum tour participant numbers). Except for force majeure, we will not cancel a tour less than 60 days before departure. No further compensation will be paid in the event of cancellation by Renaissance Tours. A full refund of monies paid for tour costs will be the full extent of our liability.

Cancellation and/or amendment fees may apply for additional travel arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours.

Passports, Visas and Vaccinations

All travellers must be in a possession of a valid passport – most countries require a 6-month validity from your date of entry or exit. For some countries (e.g. China, Vietnam, India, Russia), visas are included in the tour cost and will be arranged by Renaissance Tours prior to travel. For other countries, it is your responsibility to ensure you have the appropriate visa(s).

You are also responsible for obtaining all necessary inoculations and preventative medicines as may be required for the duration of the tour.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of travel that you are covered by comprehensive travel insurance for international tours. Your travel insurance can be arranged by Renaissance Tours.

Fitness and Participation

For the overall benefit of the group, all tour members must possess a moderate level of mobility, including the ability to:

- negotiate airports and railway stations without wheelchair assistance
- use combined shower/bath facilities (it is impossible to guarantee walk-in shower facilities)
- undertake walking tour of 2-3 hours duration, including using stairs, walking over cobblestones and other uneven surfaces
- stand for long periods in museums and other sites
- embark / disembark coaches, trains and other methods of transportation without assistance
- handle your own luggage

If you (or we) have any doubts about your ability to participate in your chosen tour, you may be required to have a doctor's appraisal. This would require a doctor to read the itinerary of your chosen tour and provide you with a written confirmation of your ability to participate.

Terms & Conditions

You can find the full terms & conditions on the Renaissance Tours booking form. They can also be found at www.renaissancetours.com.au or we would be happy to post you a copy on request.

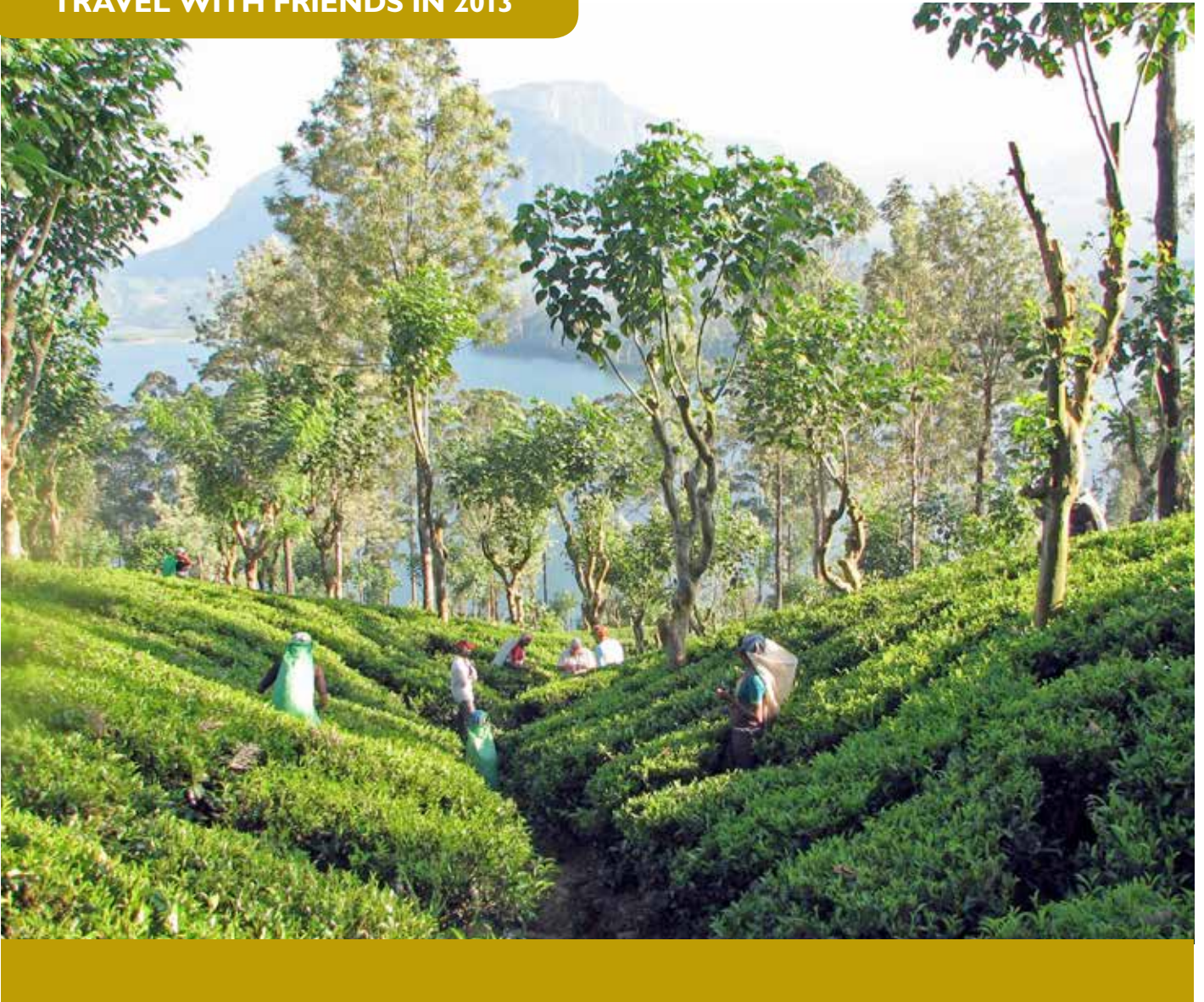


Fruit market in Kandy



Dambulla lying buddha

TRAVEL WITH FRIENDS IN 2013



Front cover: Ancient Rock Fortress of Siginya
Back cover: Srilankan tea plantation near Nuwara Eliya

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