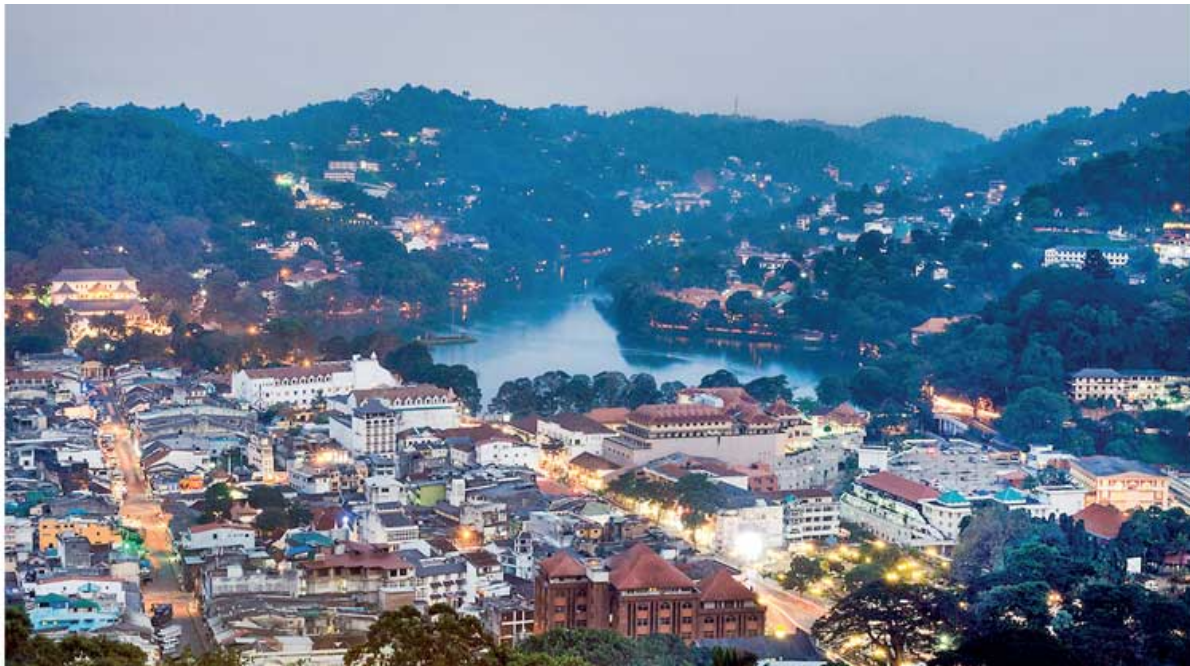


Recommended day excursions From Kandy



Kandy is uniquely placed in the centre of Sri Lanka at an intersection of almost all travel routes within the country. It is also a UNESCO heritage city in Sri Lanka's famed Cultural Triangle, a region packed with sites of cultural and historical significance. Please see below for some recommended day excursions from Kandy which may pique your interest.

Kandy City Tour



The city of Kandy is the capital city of the central hills and home to an eclectic population of close to a million people. It is the last of the kingdoms of historical Sri Lanka, who's people stood against the European invaders before Sri Lanka became a British colony. Remnants of the pre-colonial Kandyan kingdom are still seen today scattered across the old city, with the sacred Temple of the Tooth being the jewel in the crown. Kandyan art and architectural motifs still hold sway even in more contemporary structures in and around the city, giving the city its old world charm.

The Dalada Maligawa or Sacred Temple of the Tooth is a must-see for any visitor, a magnificent edifice adjoining the Kandy lake. It holds a mix of religious and historical significance to all Sri Lankans and is a spectacular site

to visit especially in the evening hours when the Thewawa is held. The Kandy lake is a man made body of water which is unique among all cities and towns in Sri Lanka. It is a delightful 40min walk around the lake particularly at dusk when the lights of the Maligawa illuminate its waters and a cool breeze blows across its surface. The city centre lies adjacent and is more commercial in its feel. A buzzing Central Market is an old building housing hundreds of vendors peddling their wares.



Adjacent to this is a more modern complex which houses the Kandy City Centre mall, with modern amenities and merchandise. The passageway between

these two areas is Dalada Veediya which is skirted on both sides by colonial buildings now converted to business establishments, banks and restaurants. It ends in the famous Queen's Hotel which has a rich history from colonial times



to date. The city blocks commence here leading to relatively narrow streets full of shops, mini markets, whole-sale markets, restaurants, street vendors and much much more.

All this is housed within an area no more than 3 square kilometres, and easily done on foot. A late afternoon start ending up with an early dinner in one of the city restaurants would be ideal for this tour. A more detailed excursion for the more discerning could include a visit to the museum situated behind the



Maligawa and also the St Paul's Cathedral which is in the property adding the Maligawa. The Trinity College Chapel is also a site worth visiting. It is a beautiful open air chapel designed on Kandyan architectural principles with solid stone pillars holding up a masterful roof adorned with design motifs from the the Kandyan kingdom. It also houses murals by the world renowned artist, David Paynter. This chapel is the epitome of the intersection between kandyan heritage and colonial influences.

The Asgiriya international cricket stadium is also within the precincts of the city centre. It is a must visit for any fan of the sport, and is hailed as the most picturesque cricket stadium in the world, now recently challenged by the Pallakele cricket stadium also situated in the outskirts of Kandy.



Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage



The Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage was established to feed, nurse and house young elephants found abandoned due to a variety of reasons, both natural and human inflicted. There are 48 mahouts (handlers) who take care of the elephants. The female and young elephants in Pinnawala roam freely as a herd during the day in an area of a few acres. They are herded twice a day to drink and be bathed in the river.

The orphanage is a 1 hour drive from Kandy along the Colombo-Kandy main road. The drive itself is picturesque, meandering through the Kadugannawa pass offering exceptional views of the valley below and the famed Bible rock.

At the orphanage you will have an opportunity to witness the elephants being herded to the river and being bathed. You will also have the opportunity to feed the baby elephants.

There are many places to have a meal and enjoy a Sri Lankan rice and curry lunch. The excursion time is approximately 3-4 hours, but departure time should be planned in order to coincide with the elephant bathing and feeding times.



The University of Peradeniya and the Royal Botanical Gardens

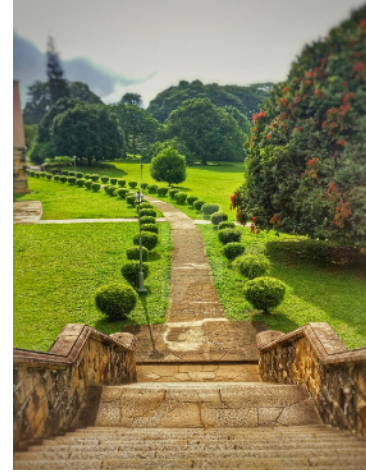
The University of Peradeniya and Botanical Gardens are two key features of the fabric of Kandy. Both are located 4km from Kandy city and occupy the banks of the Mahaweli river.



The University established in 1942 and home to over 20,000 students, is its self- a veritable garden in which academic buildings have been seamlessly introduced and is considered one of the most beautiful campuses in the world.



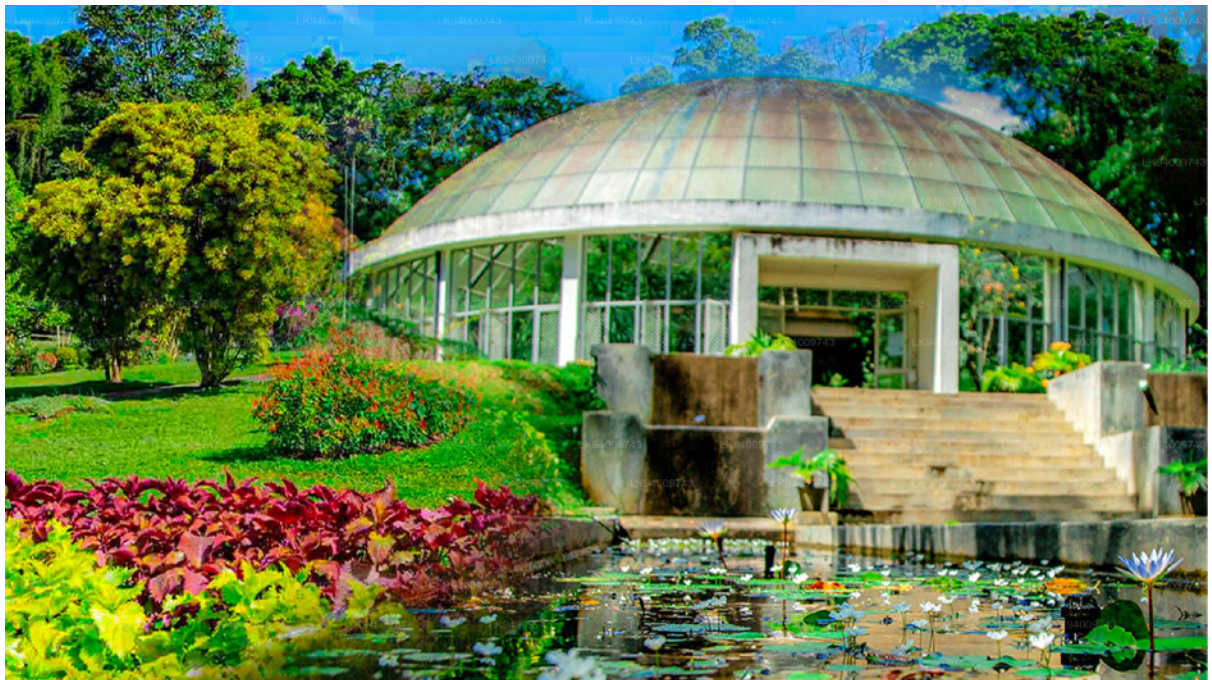
The University of Peradeniya conceptualised by Sir Ivor Jennings is modelled on the residential universities of Oxford and Cambridge, yet reflects the architecture and cultural elements of the Kandyan kingdom. Its nine faculties are spread throughout its expansive 700 hectares, each with its unique styling and architecture, yet all instantly recognisable as inspired by a common idea.



This garden university is flush with areas of unmatched beauty especially in the months where the flowers are in bloom, carpeting the the entire university in a golden yellow.



The Peradeniya Royal Botanic Gardens is one of Sri Lanka's most valued treasures. One can trace its origins back to the time of the Kandyan kings, but evolved into its current form in the colonial times. It is renowned for its collection of orchids, housed in a purpose built orchid house. The garden includes more than 4000 species of plants, including orchids, spices, medicinal plants and palm trees. Attached to it is the National Herbarium of Sri Lanka. The botanical garden is spread over 147 acres, and will easily keep you enthralled for an entire day.



Nuwara Eliya and Tea Plantations



Sri Lankan tea is world renowned as the finest in the world. The British set up the tea industry which led to flourishing plantations in the central hills of Sri Lanka. These high grown tea plantations are the back bone of the industry from which Sri Lanka benefits to this day. The winding drive up to Nuwara Eliya also known as Little England which is nestled in the cool climates, will take you through these scenic tea plantations. You will also be able to sample some of the speciality teas produced from the factories themselves. Nuwara Eliya offers much for its visitors from an abundance of restaurants, colonial plantation bungalows and farm experiences, to water sports on the picturesque Gregory Lake. You will also find the luxurious colonial Grand Hotel Nuwara Eliya in the city centre as well as the Haggla Botanical Gardens a few miles on.

The 75km drive up to Nuwara Eliya which is 6130 feet above sea level, takes approximately 2.5 hours, but takes you through unparalleled views of the tea plantations, water falls and deep valleys below the meandering road.





Sigiriya Rock Fortress



Built by King Kashyapa of ancient Sri Lanka, the fortress atop the Sigiriya rock is considered a wonder of the world. This massive monolithical rock rises almost 600 feet from the surrounding plane, with a near vertical face. Building a fortress on top of this rock would pose massive challenges in the present day, and it is therefore unimaginable as to how it was achieved in the 5th century AD with the technology available at the time. The base of the rock leading to the stairway access up the rock surface is a water garden considered to be an engineering masterpiece. Consisting of fountains functioning off water pressured using gravity, is evidence of the knowledge and technology of the time. Mid way up the climb, are the immense lion paws which form a final gateway up to the fortress. The mirror wall covered with prose and poetry by travellers and visitors from ancient times as well as the exquisite frescoes hidden in rock crevices, is a testament to the artistry and cultural richness of that era.

Sigiriya is 90Km from Kandy with a travel time of 2.5 hours by road.

