



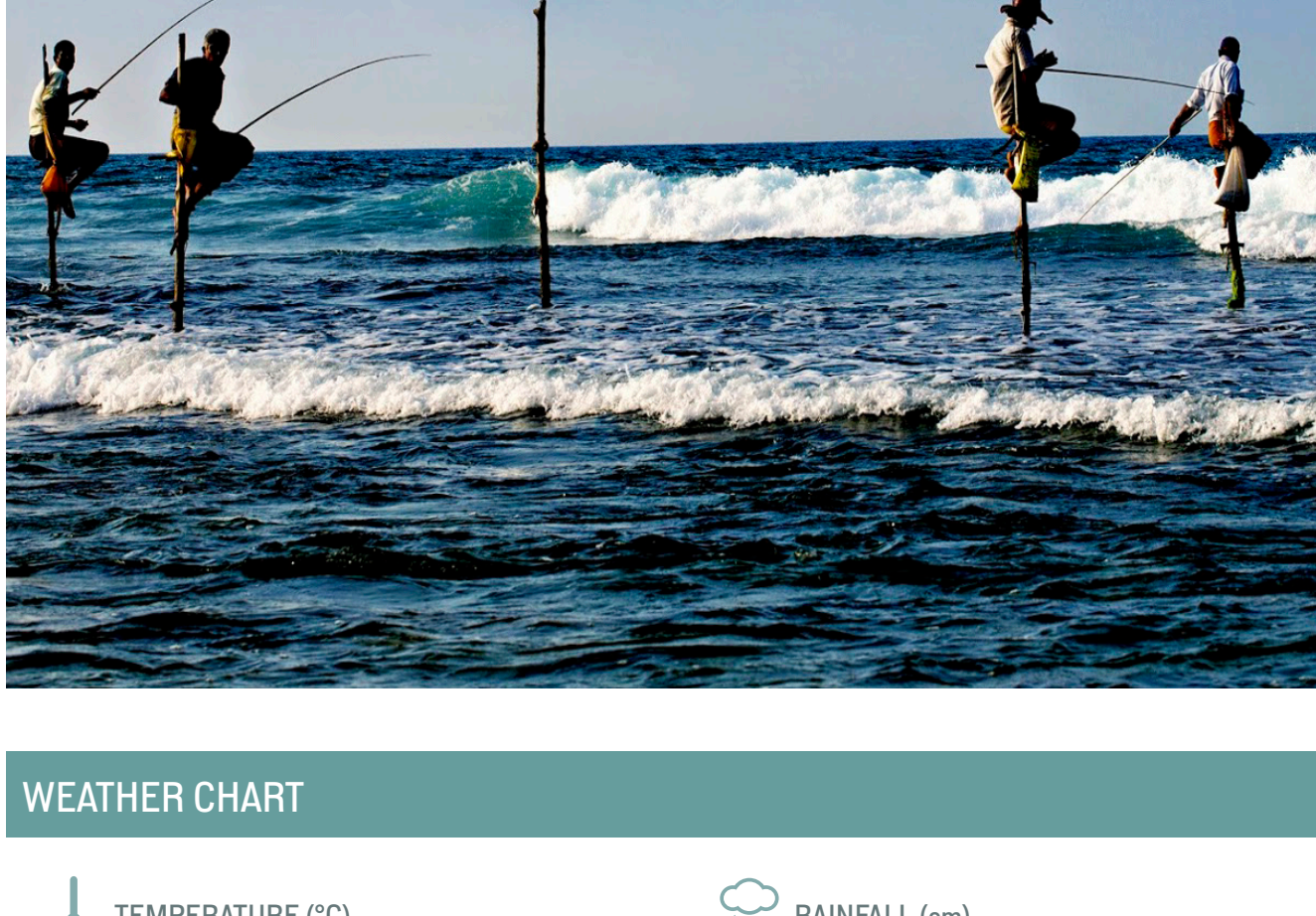
SRI LANKA WEATHER E-BOOK

To understand the weather in Sri Lanka one must first understand the two monsoon seasons, known locally as *Yala* and *Maha*. The wet season brought by the Yala monsoon winds lasts from May to July and affects the south-western half of the country. The Maha monsoon wind brings rains to the north-eastern half from October to January. Summer storms can occur in the middle period between the monsoons (August and September), though they are often short and sharp with really hot and dry weather in the north so still great for families

travelling in the school holidays.

The mountainous middle is mostly cooler, and the hottest part of the country in the north-east has an average temperature of 30°C. The capital city Colombo will generally hover around 27-29°C year-round.

The weather doesn't run like clockwork here, and we can always be surprised by the weather in Sri Lanka! However, there will never be weather too dramatic that will stand in the way of a brilliant holiday with plenty of warm weather and sunshine.



WEATHER CHART



TEMPERATURE (°C)



RAINFALL (cm)



North-East South-West

North-East South-West

FESTIVALS

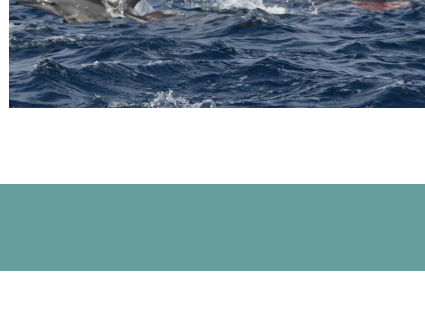
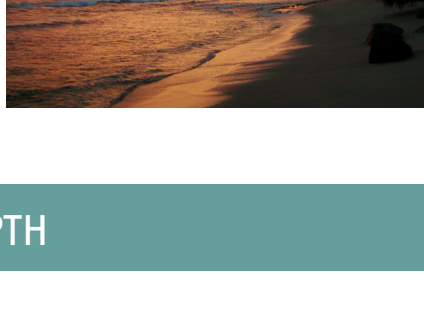
JANUARY	Duruthu Full Moon Poya Day – Lord Buddha's first visit to Sri Lanka
FEBRUARY	National Day – Sri Lanka's independence from colonial rule in 1948
APRIL	Sinhala and Tamil New Year
MAY	Vesak – birth, enlightenment and death of Buddha
JUNE	Poson – celebrates Buddhism coming to Sri Lanka from India
JULY	Esala – grand procession in Kandy to pay homage to the Sacred Tooth Relic of Buddha
OCTOBER	Deepawali (Diwali) – ancient Hindu festival (Festival of Lights) to celebrate good over evil

WILDLIFE

DECEMBER – APRIL	Bundala National Park – birds
NOVEMBER – APRIL	Kalpitya – dolphins
JULY – SEPTEMBER	The Cultural Triangle – The Gathering of the Elephants
JANUARY – APRIL	Mirissa – whales
AUGUST – OCTOBER	Nationwide – migratory birds

WEATHER TOP TIPS

May and June can be a great time to travel even though the south and west are wet - the central and eastern parts of the country are very dry and there is a huge amount of stuff to see and do at that time. As well as some fantastic deals to be had!



MONTH BY MONTH IN-DEPTH

January

A fantastic month for travel across the country, Sri Lanka is basking in sunshine and dry all over throughout January. The north-east monsoon is well and truly finished, and temperatures are lovely and warm at around 24°C average, and a little cooler up in the hills and tea country. From tip to tip and coast to coast, a great month for weather.

February

February brings more dry and warm weather, making it an ideal month to travel. Beaches across the country will be sun-drenched and there is very small chance of rain as Sri Lanka is now well into the dry season. The highlands are slightly cooler in the evenings, but still dry and warm with good trekking conditions. Temperatures across the country will increase to around 28°C average.

March

The good news continues with plenty of sunshine and hot temperatures across the country in March. Temperatures continue to rise into the 30s and the likelihood of rain is very low. This is one of the best months to visit tea country and the hills as the weather really warms up, taking the chill off the early mornings and evenings. Beaches on both sides of the island are dry, hot and sunny.



April

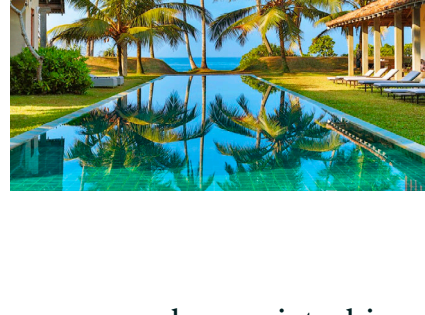
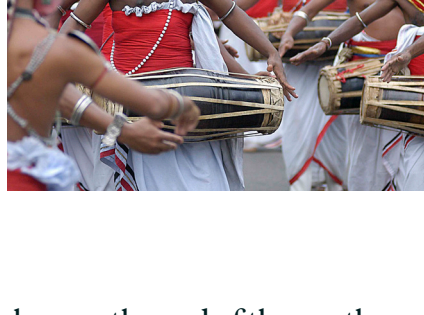
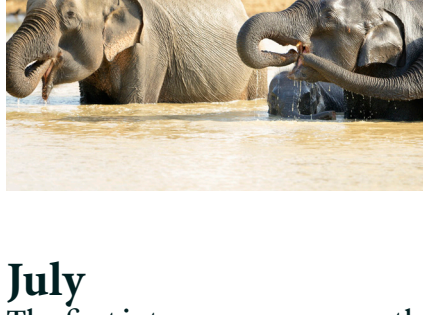
Arguably the driest and hottest month of the year, April starts to get very hot (too hot for some), especially in the central and Cultural Triangle regions, with temperatures at least in the mid-30s. It's a great month to head to the beach, with clear skies and long, sunny days. Make sure to avoid the hottest hours of the day (11am-3pm) when sightseeing during April.

May

The south-west monsoon starts blowing in May, but as the name suggests it only affects the south-west quarter of the country, such as Colombo and Galle. It is also the more gentle of the two monsoons that Sri Lanka experiences, with mainly short and sharp showers that tend to pass quite quickly. The east coast, Cultural Triangle and Kandy regions are still great to visit at this time of year.

June

June continues to see the south-west coast affected by the monsoon, and whilst it won't rain all day every day you should expect to see some showers. The east coast, Cultural Triangle and Kandy continue to avoid most of the rain, and the beaches along the east coast are still lively at this time. A well-crafted itinerary will mean that you won't even know a monsoon is taking place!



July

The first inter-monsoon month, July, sees the end of the south-east monsoon and moves into drier weather. Over the years the monsoons have been known to come early or run late, so sometimes July can catch the tail end of the rains. To be safe, travel towards the middle and end of July where there is less chance of short, sharp showers. The east coast is the driest at this time of year, but the south is still good with lots of sunshine days and only a small chance of the odd shower.

August

August is still inter-monsoon season, meaning that, sparing the odd shower, the weather is great at this time of year. Temperatures remain high across the country at around 29°C average and the beaches are hot and dry. All in all, a great month to travel.

September

As the inter-monsoon period continues, expect nice dry weather and warm temperatures across Sri Lanka. The likelihood of rain is low and with temperatures firmly around 29°C, it's a great time to visit. The larger north-east monsoon is just around the corner, and in the past has been known to arrive earlier in September, so the tail end of the month can sometimes experience a slightly increased amount of rain.



October

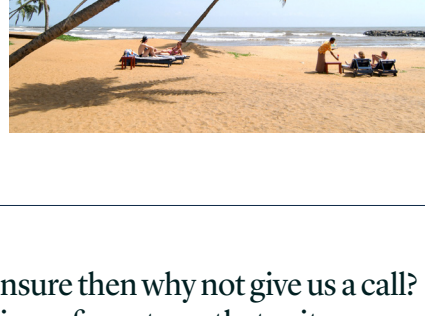
The north-east monsoon arrives in October, and it is the heavier of the two monsoons that Sri Lanka experiences. Whilst the name may derive from the north-east, this monsoon does in fact affect the whole country, and it has been known to rain quite heavily nationwide. As with the rest of Sri Lanka's weather, the monsoon can be unpredictable – it can be stronger, lighter or more sporadic than past years, and sometimes it never comes at all! But on the whole, expect rain and strong winds across the country in October.

November

November usually sees the north-east monsoon in full swing, which means that most of the country will see some rain. The amount and timing of the rains tends to change year on year, with pockets of nice weather here and there. You will minimize your chances of seeing rain if you stick to the south of the country, with the beaches there not as likely to see rain, but on the whole it is a changeable and wet month to go to Sri Lanka.

December

The weather in December generally depends on when the north-east monsoon ends. It can be a great month to travel if the rains tail off at the end of November, with nice, hot and dry weather across the island. The rains will also have helped thicken out the lush green landscapes, making it an exceptionally beautiful time to enjoy the rural parts of Sri Lanka. Traditionally it's not monsoon time, but very occasionally the rains will continue into December, with a few showers here and there. On the whole, it's still a good time to travel.



We know the weather in Sri Lanka can be confusing, so if you are still unsure then why not give us a call? Our experts will tell you exactly how it is and help you decide the best time of year to go that suits you.

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