

Ambalangoda Sri Lanka Travel & Accommodation Guide

Ambalangoda is located on the South-West Coast of Sri Lanka between Bentota and Hikkaduwa. Still a "hidden treasure" when it comes to main stream tourism this town offers a lot when especially for families and those who want to experience the "real" Sri Lanka.








White, un-crowded beaches are only a fraction of what Ambalangoda has to offer. As the centre of traditional mask and puppet carving you can see many workshops still specialised in this trade. Families of local puppeteers still travel the country with their shows. An art handed down over generations. We certainly recommend a visit to the Mask Museum.



Ambalangoda offers many ECO and adventure experiences ranging from turtle hatcheries to guided nature tours and scenic river safaris. There are some very experienced operators blending natural show trails with environmental friendly concepts and by preserving natural skills.

As a traditional market town Ambalangoda offers everything from small local shops to bigger supermarket franchises. The fishing harbour is certainly worth a visit as well as the many antique stores that offer real antique or excellent reproductions ranging back to the Dutch colonial time.

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Ambalangoda, Sri Lanka is 90 km from Sri Lanka's international airport and 60 km from Colombo.

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Ambalangoda - Sri Lanka Activities

Ambalangoda's convenient location makes it easy to engage in many different activities ranging from sightseeing, professional water sports, historical and cultural places to true ECO experiences.



River Safaris

The Maadu river offers very popular boat trips down the river where you can arrange to visit temples, cinnamon estates and other nature resorts. This area is a preserved wild life sanctuary.

Excursions

Excursions from Ambalangoda should include the still active moonstone mine, the giant sleeping Buddha, the Tsunami monument half-way to Hikkaduwa (donated by the people of Thailand this standing Buddha is blessing all who pass by) and certainly the historical Galle Fort, a UNESCO heritage site.



Water Sports

While Ambalangoda is great for swimming, snorkeling and fishing trips the lovers of more demanding sports can find one of the best surf spots of the world in nearby Hikkaduwa (9 km to the south) or professional wind surfing and jet skiing in Bentota (12 km to the north).



Shopping

offers many possibilities to buy hand-made local handicrafts (further explained in the shopping section) as well as fresh produce offered at the many local markets.

Ambalangoda - Sri Lanka Shopping

Ambalangoda is a great place for shopping for traditional crafts.. Especially hadn-carved masks & puppets as well as batiks of the highest quality. The town itself offers everything for your daily needs including major, well stocked supermarkets.



traditional Masks

The art of mask carving in Sri Lanka and especially Ambalangoda goes back centuries. Masks have been used in the many rituals performed to propitiate the gods or demons or to cure some illnesses said to be caused by demons. Among these rituals, the Sanni Yakuma is quite important and all demons called into this ritual in order to be re-quested to heal the patients arrive wearing masks. In this there are eighteen masks, each one representing one or more ailments. Masks are still produced in the traditional manner and are available in all sizes.



hand-made Puppets

The tradition of puppetry in Sri Lanka goes back 250-300 years. The early puppets were about 1/2 feet tall. The puppets today are up to 3 and 1/2 feet tall. In old days they were used to bring news, politics, excitement and romantic to the rural areas. After the Tsunami in 2004 the last five remaining families of puppeteers became reactivated to play in the many refugee camps to the delight of young and old. A visit to the Ambalangoda Puppet Museum might give you an idea which puppet is the right one for you.



Sri Lankan Batiks

Batik is very often considered a craft like ceramic, pottery or even needlework. Although it is a household word all over the world, batik is still overlooked by art critics who do not consider it an art form. There are several countries known for their batik creations, starting with India where it originated. After that it moved to Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the West. While Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand are known for their block printing (tjab) method to create batik on a large scale, in Sri Lanka batik is still made by hand. Sri Lankan batik is less intricate and more suited to modern times. Batik Shops and Factories can be found in and around Ambalangoda.

