

SRI LANKA

Beauty, Culture & Inspired Design



TRAVELLING *Divas*
BOUTIQUE TRAVEL FOR WOMEN



Essence of Sri Lanka

Beauty, Culture & Inspired Design | 30 Mar 2027 – 12 April 2027

"The island of Sri Lanka is a small universe..." wrote Arthur C. Clarke – and it truly is. Within this jewel-shaped island lies a breathtaking tapestry of culture, climate and scenery that rivals countries many times its size. It is little wonder Sri Lanka is often described as a small miracle.

This is a country that lingers – not only for its lush landscapes, ancient temples and golden light, but for the warmth of its people and the quiet grace with which life is lived. There is a softness here, a gentler rhythm that invites you to slow down, look a little closer, and truly savour where you are.

Woven throughout this journey is the influence of Sri Lanka's most celebrated architect, Geoffrey Bawa, whose vision reshaped the way the island lives with its landscape. His spaces are not simply designed, they are felt – open to the sky, framed by gardens, alive with light and air. Along the way, we will both stay in and visit some of his most beautiful creations, experiencing firsthand the calm, elegance and sense of place that define his work.

Designed especially for women who seek more than simply passing through a destination, this journey offers a deeper connection to Sri Lanka – its culture, its landscapes and, most importantly, its people. Time spent with local women, shared stories and glimpses into everyday life create moments that feel personal, generous and quietly moving. Nature reveals itself in layers here. From misty tea country

to palm-fringed coastlines, from wildlife roaming freely to the scent of spice gardens carried on warm air, Sri Lanka is vibrant, textured and endlessly captivating.

And because you are on holiday, we have chosen a beautiful blend of accommodation – from elegant five-star hotels to a serene retreat experience nestled within nature, offering space to pause, exhale and simply enjoy where you are. Each stay has been selected not only for comfort, but for its sense of place and the way it reflects the island itself.

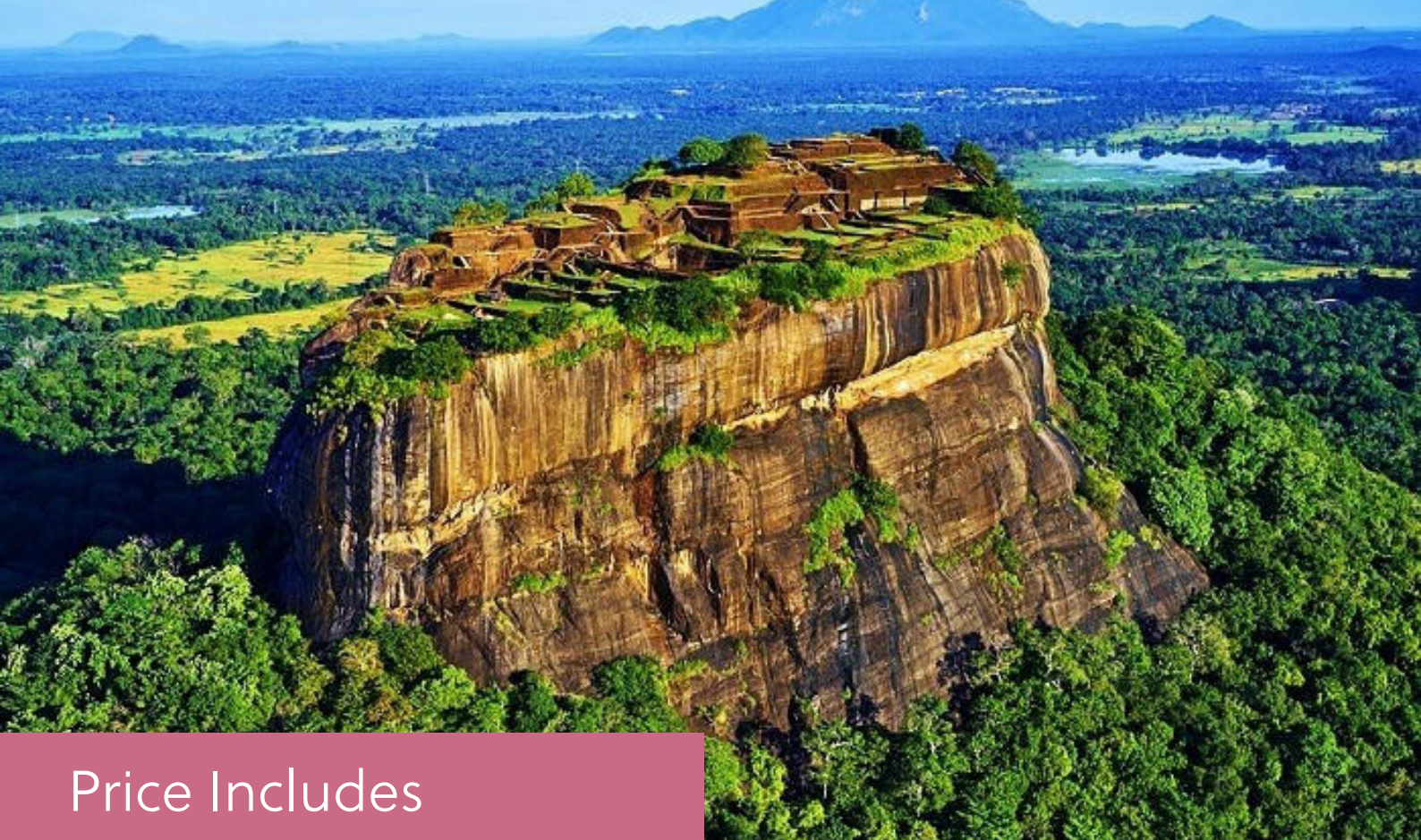
This journey has been thoughtfully crafted in collaboration with Zoe Thomas, whose deep personal connection to Sri Lanka brings an insider's perspective, and is led alongside Donna Hipgrave, whose passion for design and love of the island add another layer of richness to the experience.

As with all Travelling Divas journeys, this is a women-only experience, thoughtfully paced and beautifully considered. No rushing, no unnecessary complication – simply the freedom to enjoy, connect and experience Sri Lanka in a way that feels both enriching and wonderfully easy.

Sri Lanka has a way of finding its way into your heart. And once it does, it rarely lets go.

Getting there

There are regular flights to Colombo on Singapore Airlines or Qantas in combination with Sri Lankan Airlines.



Price Includes

Fully escorted fro Colombo by Donna Hipgrave, our Sri Lanka Expert

Luxury Accommodation:

- 3 nights’ colonial style accommodation at the Galle Face hotel, Colombo,
- 3 nights’ 5-star accommodation at iconic Heritance Kandalama
- 2 nights’ 5-star accommodation at wellness retreat, Santani
- 3 nights’ 5-star accommodation of Jetwing Lighthouse, Galle
- 2 nights’ 5 star accommodation at the Bentota Beach Hotel, Bentota
- 3 x day use shared rooms in 5-star accommodation at the Wallawwa Hotel (on day of departure)

Transfer airport-hotel including assistance on arrival

Breakfast daily; main meals as per itinerary; a mix of lunches and dinners

Accompanied throughout with a local Sri Lanka Guide

Air-conditioned private luxury transport throughout with bottled water

All entrance fees for UNESCO sites and those other activities listed

Tips for local guides & drivers; Tips for included meals; Local SIM card per person; Service charges and taxes

Included Experiences:

- Private Mark Forbes Colombo City Walking tour
- Private visit to the Saskia Fernando Art Gallery
- Private visit to No.11, Bawa’s former residence
- Guided visit to Sigiriya Rock Fortress including refreshments
- Guided visit to Anuradhapura
- Guided jeep safari to Minneriya National Park or Echo park (depending on where the herds are located on the day)
- Guided visit to Dambulla Cave Temples
- Guided morning visit to the Temple of the Tooth
- Cocktails, canapés with local Sri Lankan and expat ladies
- Private tour with Herman Guneratne’s team at the Virgin white tea estate
- Private walking tour in Galle with a local Fort guide
- Cooking lesson at Why House
- Sari-tying demonstration workshop

Group transfer on departure from hotel to airport

NOT INCLUDED: Optional guided visit to Botanical Gardens Kandy, with botanist Palipana. Airfares; transfers unless stated in the itinerary; items of a personal nature; phone calls; passport and visas; laundry unless stated or tips at meals and bars not included. Personal transport; excess baggage; security and additional government taxes; travel insurance. Meals not specifically mentioned in the itinerary; beverages unless specifically described. Optional excursions or activities that may be offered but not included in the tour price.



Itinerary

Colombo to Colombo

30 March – 12 April 2027

Twin share from AUD\$16,995 per person.

Private room from AUD\$19,990 per person

Please see full booking terms and conditions at www.travellingdivas.com/terms-and-conditions

Day 1 | Tue 30: Welcome to Sri Lanka – Ayubowan

Upon arrival you will be warmly met and transferred to the magnificent Galle Face Hotel, Colombo's grand colonial dame overlooking the Indian Ocean. Pre-check-in will already be arranged, so after a refreshing welcome drink you can settle in and exhale. Stroll the seaside promenade, dip into the saltwater pool or indulge in the spa. Tonight, we gather for a beautiful Welcome Dinner – your first taste of Sri Lanka and your first evening together.

Stay: Galle Face Hotel

Meals: Welcome Dinner

Day 2 | Wed 31: Colombo's Creative Soul

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before meeting your wonderful tour leader Donna for your tour welcome and briefing. Today we explore Colombo's vibrant art scene, including the Saskia Fernando Gallery and the Sapumal Foundation, discovering the influential 43 Group artists who shaped modern Sri Lankan art and inspired Geoffrey Bawa. Lunch at Barefoot (own account) offers shopping and textiles in

one elegant stop. This afternoon, a private walking tour with historian Mark Forbes reveals Colombo's colonial layers – Dutch, British and beyond. Dinner tonight is at the iconic Ministry of Crab (own account).

Stay: Galle Face Hotel

Meals: Breakfast

Day 3 | Thu 01: The Bawa Connection

This morning we enjoy an exclusive private visit to No.11 – Geoffrey Bawa's former Colombo residence. Lunch is hosted with architect Anjalendran at a private property, offering rare insight into Sri Lanka's architectural evolution. This evening we will have drinks with the Gratian trust ladies on the checker board and then we will head by tuk-tuk to the Gallery Café (own account) which was Geoffrey's office in Colombo.

Stay: Galle Face Hotel

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 4 | Fri 02: Sigiriya – Harmony with Nature

This morning we journey into the heart of Sri Lanka's Cultural Triangle, where ancient kingdoms and visionary architecture sit side by side. Along the way, we pause at the Selyn Textile workshops, a beautiful fair-trade initiative empowering rural women through handloom artistry. Over tea, we observe delicate craftsmanship and the quiet rhythm of the looms before continuing to the inspiring women-led Amba Yalu hotel for a relaxed and uplifting lunch conversation. By afternoon we arrive at the breathtaking Heritance Kandalama, Geoffrey Bawa's jungle-clad masterpiece carved into rock and overlooking



Diva Moments...

- Begin your journey in Colombo with an exclusive visit to Bawa’s former residence, No. 11
- Stay at the architectural icon Heritance Kandalama, seamlessly carved into jungle cliffs
- Climb the UNESCO-listed Sigiriya Rock Fortress
- Witness morning pooja at the Temple of the Tooth
- Travel Sri Lanka’s iconic railway through tea country
- Visit Lunuganga, Bawa’s lifelong garden masterpiece
- Stay at Jetwing Lighthouse and Cinnamon Bentota Beach, both Bawa-designed
- Indulge in a 2-night wellness immersion at Santani Wellness Resort & Spa
- Safari in Minneriya National Park
- Private art gallery visits and architect-hosted lunches
- Sari-tying workshop & Sri Lankan cooking class
- Cocktails with inspiring Sri Lankan women
- And much, much more...

an ancient reservoir. After time to settle in, we have the optional guided venture to the iconic Sigiriya Rock Fortress, climbing through water gardens and frescoes to the dramatic summit palace ruins. As the sun softens over jungle and lake, the views feel almost otherworldly. We return to Kandalama for a unique dining experience and a deeply atmospheric evening.

Stay: Heritance Kandalama
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5 | Sat 03: Art, Elephants & Nature

Wake slowly to birdsong and mist rising from the lake. This morning is yours to enjoy Kandalama’s infinity pools, lush rooftop gardens or a quiet coffee overlooking the jungle canopy. For those interested, a behind-the-scenes architectural walk offers deeper insight into Bawa’s genius – how light, shadow and landscape merge seamlessly. Late morning we visit artist Laki Senanayake’s studio, where sculpture and landscape intertwine in organic harmony. After lunch, we head out in 4WD jeeps for a safari through Minneriya National Park. Elephants gather at the reservoir’s edge, moving gracefully across golden plains – a moment both powerful and tender. Evening is at leisure back at the hotel.

Stay: Heritance Kandalama
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 6 | Sun 04: Sacred Cities & Slow Living

Today we explore the ancient capital of Anuradhapura, once the spiritual and political heart of Sri Lanka. Sacred dagobas rise from tree-lined avenues, centuries-old monasteries whisper stories of devotion, and the sacred



Bodhi tree stands as a symbol of continuity and faith. At lunchtime we enjoy a relaxed cooking demonstration in a forest lodge setting – fragrant spices, coconut, and time to savour. The afternoon invites rest and reflection back at Kandalama before another tranquil evening.

Stay: Heritance Kandalama

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 7 | Mon 05: Cave Temples & Wellness Arrival

This morning we will visit the extraordinary Dambulla Cave Temples, a UNESCO World Heritage site, where golden Buddhas and vivid frescoes glow softly within ancient rock chambers. It is a serene and deeply atmospheric experience. The site dates back to the 1st century BC when hermit monks established a monastery here. It is one of the most impressive in Asia. Inside the caves the art work is breathtaking! After check out we travel to the city of Kandy known for its mild climate and colonial architecture. We will visit a batik workshop with a group of local ladies who will demonstrate their artistic techniques and let us have a go too. Our journey finishes when we check in at the prestigious wellness resort Santani, with time for lunch and the rest of the afternoon at leisure to explore. Dinner is nourishing and beautifully prepared.

Stay: Santani

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, plus unlimited fresh juices and herbal teas

Day 8 | Tue 06: Restoration & Ritual

Your morning begins gently – an optional guided nature walk through misty hills then Hatha yoga overlooking the valley. Each day here includes a personalised 90-minute wellness treatment, thoughtfully curated cuisine, and

time to truly exhale. The remainder of the day unfolds slowly – spa rituals, reading by the infinity pool, or an optional visit to the botanical gardens. Santani is about balance, beauty and intentional living.

This is your pause within the journey – your moment to reset before we travel south.

Stay: Santani

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, plus unlimited fresh juices and herbal teas

Day 9 | Wed 07: Sacred Rituals & Journey South

This morning we rise early and make our way into the spiritual heart of Kandy to visit the revered Temple of the Tooth. As drums echo softly and incense curls through the air, we witness morning pooja at one of Sri Lanka's most sacred Buddhist sites. The golden-roofed shrine houses a relic believed to be the tooth of Lord Buddha – and the devotion here is deeply moving. It is a moment of stillness, colour and reverence.

Afterwards, we pause for coffee at the charming Empire Café before boarding a local train for a scenic journey through rural Sri Lanka. Open windows frame rice paddies, village homes and lush countryside – a beautiful contrast to the ancient temples of the morning. A packed lunch is enjoyed on board as we watch everyday life unfold. Continuing by coach, we travel south to the coastal city of Galle and check into the striking Jetwing Lighthouse, Geoffrey Bawa's dramatic oceanside creation. Designed to capture sea breeze and horizon light, this hotel feels expansive yet intimate. Dinner is served overlooking the water as waves roll gently below.

Stay: Jetwing Lighthouse

Meals: Breakfast, Packed Lunch, Dinner



Day 10 | Thu 08: Galle Fort – Colonial Elegance & Creative Spirit

This morning begins with a guided architectural exploration of Jetwing Lighthouse, Geoffrey Bawa's spectacular coastal masterpiece. Discover the design elements that make this hotel so iconic – from the dramatic spiral staircase adorned with intricate brass and copper reliefs to the subtle batik details and sweeping ocean views that reflect Bawa's unmistakable style.

Late morning we enter the UNESCO-listed Galle Fort, a captivating maze of cobbled streets, hidden courtyards and beautifully preserved 18th-century merchant houses. Learn the fascinating story of this once-thriving trading port and the dramatic four-day battle in 1640 when the Dutch captured the Fort from the Portuguese.

During our time here we will also visit the studio of renowned Sri Lankan artist Muhanned Cader, offering a glimpse into the island's contemporary creative scene.

Lunch is at leisure within the Fort, where boutique cafés, shady verandas and seaside restaurants invite you to linger. The afternoon is yours to explore – browse artisan boutiques, visit galleries or simply soak up the charm of this historic enclave.

Donna will happily share her favourite spots to help you make the most of your time here.

This evening we are welcomed to the elegant Why House for a special cultural experience.

Enjoy a traditional performance followed by a delightful Sri Lankan sari-tying workshop, before sharing a hosted dinner with inspiring local women who will join us to

share their stories. It promises to be an evening of colour, culture and connection.

Stay: Jetwing Lighthouse

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 11 | Fri 09: Tea Heritage & Golden Hour

Sri Lanka's identity is inseparable from its tea, and this morning we journey to Herman Guneratne's virgin white tea estate nestled in gentle countryside. Here, delicate hand-plucking techniques are demonstrated and the subtleties of white tea are explained – a refined and fascinating agricultural tradition.

Those wishing for a slower morning may remain at the hotel to read, swim or journal. Later, we gather at Why House for a beautifully curated cooking experience with Henrietta and her chef team. Fragrant curries, coconut sambols and vibrant spices come together in a relaxed and joyful culinary session – followed by a shared lunch.

The late afternoon is yours to unwind or explore Galle further. As evening approaches, we head into the Fort for optional sunset cocktails at Charlie's Bar. From the rooftop, the sky blushes pink over the Indian Ocean – an effortlessly glamorous close to the day.

Stay: Jetwing Lighthouse

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 12 | Sat 10: Lunuganga – Bawa's Living Masterpiece

After breakfast we travel along palm-fringed coastline toward Bentota, pausing at a memorial of the 2004 tsunami – a quiet moment of reflection.



We then arrive at Lunuganga, Geoffrey Bawa's private estate and lifelong creative sanctuary. Over four decades he transformed this former cinnamon plantation into a series of choreographed garden rooms, reflective water features and perfectly framed vistas. Walking through Lunuganga feels like stepping inside his mind – where architecture dissolves into landscape and every pathway reveals a new perspective.

A relaxed Sri Lankan lunch will be served on the verandah.

By late afternoon we check into the beachfront Cinnamon Bentota Beach, another Bawa design softened by sea breeze and light. The remainder of the day is yours – beach walks, poolside relaxation or sunset watching.

Stay: Bentota Beach Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 13 | Sunday 11: Coastal Calm & Farewell Celebration

This final full day unfolds gently. Perhaps a morning swim in the Indian Ocean, a beachside coffee or an optional visit to a local antique store for one last treasure. The pace slows, allowing time to reflect on the journey – ancient cities, sacred rituals, architectural brilliance and shared laughter. Optional lunch today at Villa Mohotti, a Bawa-designed property.

Today we visit Brief Garden, created by Bawa's brother Bevis – a more theatrical and whimsical expression of art and garden design. Tonight, we gather for a memorable Farewell Dinner overlooking the sea. Toasts are made, friendships strengthened and the spirit of Sri Lanka celebrated one final time under tropical skies.

Stay: Bentota Beach Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 14 | Mon 12: Sunrise, Gratitude & Safe Travels

After breakfast, a group transfer will be arranged to Colombo Airport for onward flights if leaving during the day. As some of you have late evening or after-midnight departures, we have arranged access to a number of private day rooms so you can relax, freshen up and enjoy a little extra comfort before your journey home. Later this evening another group transfer to the airport.

We say farewell not just to Sri Lanka, but to a journey rich in culture, beauty and connection – and to the wonderful friendships and memories created along the way. Thank you for joining us. Bon voyage and safe travels.

Meals: Breakfast



Accommodation



COLOMBO | Galle Face Hotel

The iconic Galle Face Hotel has graced Colombo's oceanfront since 1864, standing as a timeless symbol of colonial elegance and Sri Lankan hospitality. Overlooking the Indian Ocean along the historic Galle Face Green, this grand dame blends old-world charm with refined modern comfort. Think high ceilings, polished teak floors, sweeping verandas and sea-breeze afternoons by the saltwater pool. Once welcoming royalty, writers and dignitaries, the hotel retains a sense of occasion – sunset on the terrace here is something truly special. Staying at Galle Face is not simply about accommodation; it is about stepping into a living piece of history, where tradition, romance and coastal glamour meet.



DAMBULLA | Heritance Kandalama Luxury Hotel

Set dramatically against a granite cliff in the Cultural Triangle, Heritance Kandalama in Dambulla is widely regarded as one of Geoffrey Bawa's greatest architectural achievements. Seamlessly blending into jungle and rock, the hotel appears to emerge organically from the landscape, its green roofs and long corridors framing lake and forest views. Designed to dissolve the boundaries between indoors and outdoors, Kandalama invites nature in at every turn – monkeys in the trees, mist rising over the reservoir, birdsong at dawn. Staying here is not simply about luxury; it is about experiencing Tropical Modernism in its purest form, where architecture becomes part of the earth itself.



KANDY | Santani Wellness Resort Best Wellness Retreat In The World

Perched high in the misty hills near Kandy, Santani Wellness Resort & Spa is a sanctuary of stillness and refined simplicity. Elevated above lush valleys, its minimalist mountain-view chalets are designed to calm the senses and encourage deep rest.

Here, wellness is not an indulgence but a philosophy – personalised treatments, nourishing cuisine, yoga overlooking the forest canopy and quiet moments that feel restorative and intentional. Cool mountain air, filtered light and panoramic views create an atmosphere of serene luxury. Santani offers the gift of pause – a gentle reset in the heart of Sri Lanka's highlands.

GALLE | Jetwing Lighthouse Galle

Overlooking the Indian Ocean in Galle, Jetwing Lighthouse is a dramatic coastal masterpiece by Geoffrey Bawa. Designed to capture light, sea breeze and horizon views, the hotel feels expansive yet intimate, with sweeping staircases, artistic detailing and open spaces that frame the ocean beyond.

Waves crash below as palms sway gently above, creating an atmosphere of relaxed coastal elegance. Its design blends modern comfort with subtle historical references to Galle's maritime past. Sunset here is pure theatre – golden light over endless water – making every evening feel quietly glamorous.





BENTOTA | Cinnamon Bentota Beach

Located on Sri Lanka's sun-kissed south coast, Cinnamon Bentota Beach in Bentota is another Bawa-designed gem, softened by sea breeze and tropical gardens.

Recently restored, the property retains its architectural integrity while offering contemporary coastal comfort.

Open courtyards, shaded walkways and sculptural details echo Bawa's signature style, while the beach stretches endlessly beyond.

Days unfold slowly here – morning swims in the Indian Ocean, afternoons by the pool and balmy evenings under palm trees. It is the perfect seaside finale, where design, relaxation and barefoot luxury come together effortlessly.



COLOMBO | Wallawwa

Ease into or out of your Sri Lankan holiday in style.

Nestled within seven acres of tropical gardens just 20 minutes from the international airport, our intimate 18-room boutique hotel offers the perfect space to relax and recharge.

Unwind by the jungle-fringed swimming pool, enjoy long, leisurely meals in the alfresco restaurant, and indulge in a rejuvenating massage at our heavenly spa – long-haul flights and jet lag will be a distant memory.

We have 3 share rooms here to ensure an easy departure after a relaxing afternoon and a cheeky gin and tonic prior to your late evening flight.



Testimonials

I have enjoyed each and everyone of your trips I have taken.

The local ones (Hiddenvale and Hobart) and more exotic locations (India x 3, magical Morocco and divine South Africa) have all delivered on expectations and all show your stamp of picking the eyes out of the most delightful locations to rest our heads, and also extraordinarily well critiqued sites, restaurants and artisan workshops to visit.

I am really looking forward to Sicily in September. Best wishes and many thanks for the joyful travels I have immensely enjoyed.

Lisa, 2025

I wanted to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude for organising what has been the most amazing holiday I have ever experienced.

From the start, everything was well-coordinated, and the attention to detail was impeccable. However, the absolute highlight of the trip was the safari experience. It completely exceeded my expectations – the breathtaking landscapes, the abundance of wildlife, and the knowledgeable guides made it unforgettable. The excitement and awe of seeing such majestic animals up close was a dream come true, and it's an experience I will cherish for a lifetime.

Thank you once again for providing such a seamless, exhilarating, and memorable adventure. I'll definitely be recommending your services to friends and family, and I look forward to traveling with you again in the future.

Deirdre, 2024

Andrea makes dreams come true ! With wonderful surprises along the way, Portugal was definitely exquisite, guided by our Zoe ever so helpful on many occasions ensuring my dream came true. I've had the most wonderful time, meeting and sharing the trip with amazing Divas.

Linda, 2025

This was my second trip with Travelling Divas and I cannot recommend them enough. They have been seamless, the accommodation is always exceptional as is the food & wine throughout the journey.

However it is the company and the laughs that has stayed with me, not only on this trip but on my previous trip to Estonia & Finland. It was the tonic that was needed after our long travel hiatus, thank you so much for what was truly a Journey of a Lifetime (the Northern Lights twice was an added and unexpected bonus... thanks for organising that for us!)

Yvonne – Diva Iconic

Best holiday experience ever. Loved everything! I would not have changed a thing.

Jenny



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