



Why should you book this trip?

- This is a non-commercialized, once-in-a-lifetime experience to mingle with the only indigenous, tribal community of the country – “Veddas” – a fast dwindling community.
- Access to the private home of the Chief of the tribe and an opportunity to have a dialogue.
- The possibility to experience their way of life, including the use of the bow and arrow.
- Unique photo opportunities that will be the envy of your friends.
- You are able to book this trip as an excursion from Kandy.
- An excellent community-based tour in which you will indirectly contribute to the welfare of the indigenous community of Veddas

Quick Facts

- Available around the year
- Pick up at 9 a.m. at Dambana School
- Finishes at 2 p.m. at the same location
- Return transfers could be arranged at any hotel/destination upon request
- Recommended for children who are 6 years or above
- Children between 6 and 12, will be charged 50%

You will meet



Uruwarige Wanniyalatto
Chief of the Tribe – Veddas

Wanniyalatto is the eldest son of the previous Chief Thissahami. He is fighting hard to keep the tribe and the traditions together whilst filtering modernisation. He is well-travelled and understands the present global issues and the challenges faced by the other tribal communities worldwide.

Chief Wanni is a very good farmer and father of two sons. His elder son is currently being groomed to be the next chief.

Included in the price

- Our naturalist's and local guide's services
- Charges for the team of Veddas for their services
- Charges for the interpreter for translations
- Donation for the Chief of the Addi Vaasi (Vedda community)
- Bush lunch prepared having some tribal delicacies
- Bottled water throughout the day
- All Government taxes

Exclusions

- Tips for staff
- Anything that is not mentioned above

Tour in brief

You will be picked up and driven to the tribal gathering from the pre-arranged meeting point (Dambana School) at 9 a.m. by our staff. You and your guide/chauffeur will be assisted over the phone to get to the pickup point.

At the gathering, you will be welcomed by the members of the Vedda community and our team leader. They will brief you on the day's activities, including an introduction to the area – Dambana.

Then we move on to the one-on-one meeting with the Chief of the Vedda tribe – Wanniyalatto. A quick stopover at the museums will further enhance your experience.

After the meeting, you will explore the area with a trek through the forest with the veddas and our naturalist. During the trek, you will witness how the veddas find edible yams, the process of finding a bee hive and extracting honey, differentiating animal foot prints, making a “Habaka” –a small animal trap – and of course the use of a bow and arrow.

Around 12.30 p.m. you will arrive at the outdoor bush lunch area. You may rest and enjoy the lunch before departure

Important

- In case you get delayed due to unavoidable circumstances or for help on how to get to the location, please call the contact person early.
- Personal effects for warm, windy, rainy conditions should be carried by clients.
- Insect repellent, sunscreen etc. are recommended.
- Sandals or walking shoes are recommended.
- Please refrain from making casual donations to anyone. If you like to tip, please hand it over to the Team Leader at the camp. He will distribute it amongst the staff.
- Please do not buy any wildlife-related products from anyone as it is illegal and against our sustainable policies.

Dambana Vedda Village and the “Veddas”

Dambana is the home for the Vedda community. Their present situation is even more demanding and arduous. On one hand they are fighting to keep their members from getting commercialised and on the other hand, the authorities blame them for getting commercialised and keep away from looking into their grievances. They are fighting a losing battle. In one recent interview, the Chief Uruwarige Wanniyalatto said that his greatest fear

was that he will not be able to stop the death of the Vedda way of life. Since their livelihood is now changed completely, they depend more and more on earning money to sustain them.

The Veddas preserve a direct line of descent from the island's original Neolithic community dating back from at least 18,000 BC.

Veddas were originally hunter-gatherers, with the women of the tribe staying at home to tend to the family. They used bows and arrows to hunt game, and also gathered wild plants and honey. But now they are being forced to do farming.

The original dwellings of the Veddas consisted of caves and rock shelters. Many elaborate cave paintings have been discovered in Sri Lanka, painted mainly by the womenfolk whilst waiting for their men to return from the hunt.

Joining the Veddas of Sri Lanka in their village gives visitors a unique opportunity to get a firsthand experience of the Vedda culture which remains relatively untarnished by modern technology and commercialization. The Veddas are devoted to their traditions and our guests get to meet with Uruwarige Wanniyalatto, Chief of the Veddas. According to tribe rules, visitors cannot participate in communal activities without his permission. Once it is granted, close observation of Vedda culture is possible, as is participation in some of their activities.

One of their traditional forms of invoking the blessings of the gods is a famous dance called "Kiri Koraha". There are a few other traditional activities that are a part of their lives. The main activity is hunting.