



Why should you book this trip?

- One of the main reasons for tourists to visit the Kalpitiya area from November to March/April is dolphins. You may see pods of up to 1000 dolphins.
- Kalpitiya is perfect for dolphin and whale watching, because you do not have to head out too deep into the ocean to catch a glimpse of them. The continental shelf is much closer than reported in admiralty charts the shelf actually runs near and alongside the shoreline. This means you can see many species of marine life just a short boat ride away from the shore.
- You will be led by trained guides who speak English. They will brief you on everything you need to know about the dolphins/whales you encounter.
- Watching dolphins swimming alongside you and under your boat while they leap out of the ocean is truly an unforgettable experience.
- The sea will not be as rough during this period as it is during the monsoon season and it will be easier to spot dolphins as a result.

- Pods that have hundreds of dolphins are spotted often in Kalpitiya, especially near the Bar Reef, which is just a one-hour boat ride away. Sightings are almost guaranteed during this period. The excursions will ideally commence at sunrise, and last about 2-3 hours.
- The extremely amusing long snouted or spinner dolphins are very common in the northern waters of Sri Lanka. They are playful and acrobatic and get their name from the spins that they have become famous for performing while leaping out of the water. Their repertoire of tricks also includes tail or head slaps, flips, and salmon jumps.

Responsible: We run our whale watching trips as per the guidelines given by international whaling commissions <https://iwc.int/wwguidelines>

Details of boat

- Category – Fibreglass boat with a canopy
- Engine capacity – 40 hp outboard engine
- Length – 19.5 feet
- Width – 6 feet

Quick Facts

- Meeting point – Kalpitiya Sri Lanka Day Tours/Eco Team, whale and dolphin watching operations centre
- Meeting time: Morning – 7.30 a.m. (most preferred)
- Duration of tour: Max. 3 to 4 hours
- Best period for dolphin watching in Kalpitiya – Daily departures from November until end of April/early May
- Children 6 to 12 years of age will be charged 50%
- Maximum 6 passengers in a boat
- Kalpitiya is home to a variety of dolphins that can be found in close proximity to the coast – the spinner dolphin being the most common. Other dolphins that can be spotted here include Bottlenose, Rissos, Indo-Pacific, Humpback Dolphins, etc.
- Please take precautionary measures recommended by your doctor if you are prone to seasickness.
- This Kalpitiya dolphin watching excursion could be coupled with accommodation and many other excursions available in the Kalpitiya peninsula of Sri Lanka

Included in the price

- Services of a local boatman/ skipper
- Boat Fees
- Entrance fees
- Life jackets
- Bottled water

Exclusions

- Transportation to/from location. Could be arranged on request
- Optional activity costs
- Any personal effects not mentioned here
- Tips for the staff

Tour in brief

You would be met at 7.30 a.m. at our centre and be ushered to the boat. After a briefing, we depart to the sea.

Kalpitiya is a relatively new destination in Sri Lanka gaining prominence as late as 2005 when large pods of Spinner dolphins were spotted off its coast. They were mainly seen in a belt that ran parallel to the Kalpitiya peninsula which was commonly known as the Dolphin Line. Kalpitiya is now one of the main attractions in Sri Lanka especially amongst tourists looking for water-based adventures.

The best time to go dolphin watching in Kalpitiya is from the period between November and March/April. Conditions are perfect during this time to catch a glimpse at a number of different sea mammals as the waters remain relatively calm. The calmer ocean also allows you to spot dolphins from further away as visibility improves.

Spinner Dolphins are amongst some of the most commonly spotted dolphin species while Bottlenose, Risso's, Indo-Pacific and Humpback Dolphins are seen regularly

Important

- Personal effects for windy, rainy, and warm weather conditions should be considered
- Insect repellents, sun protection creams etc., are highly recommended
- Suitable casual clothing/footwear for outdoor activities
- Emphasis on importance of safety standards we provide
- Passengers according to the number of seats and not more
- Lifejackets to each and every client
- Obey all safety rules given by the crew
- Dolphin sightings: There is a 90 to 95% high probability to see whales during our tours. We are doing our best to find them for you on every single dolphin watching excursion. However, on some days, even with our best efforts, it is impossible for us to show you the dolphins. It's important that we are aware that it's wildlife we are going to see in the blue ocean.

- Getting seasick: There is always at least a light swell in the not-so-calm Indian Ocean. If it's the first time for you on a boat in the Indian Ocean or if you tend to get seasick, we advise you to take seasickness medication recommended by your doctor, Avomine and it's freely available in any pharmacy.
- Do not feed any wild animals (Yes, they are wild animals). Swimming near your boat doesn't mean they want your food
- Do not compel your guide/boatman to take the boat too close to them

Dolphins in Sri Lanka

Thought of as the most intelligent beings in the water, dolphins are friendly and playful. Many varieties of dolphins gather in large schools off the Kalpitiya coast. Once hunted for their meat, all dolphins are now protected species in Sri Lanka, so their numbers have improved. The clean warm waters in the area are the perfect habitat for these playful, friendly creatures.

November to April is generally the best period for dolphin watching, as they migrate from colder waters during the winter months. Among the types of dolphins that you will be able to see are common dolphins, bottlenose dolphins, spinner dolphins, Risso's dolphins and humpback dolphins.

Sri Lanka Day Tours will take you on a boat to the best spots for dolphin watching. See the different species of dolphin leaping out of the water or just coming up for a breath of fresh air. Hear them communicate with each other and frolic in the rich waters.

The waters around Kalpitiya are also known for a few species of whales – mostly sperm whales – visible during this period. More elusive than the generally playful dolphins, you can consider yourself very lucky if you manage to spot one of these magnificent giants.

Spinner dolphins are encountered quite frequently during the dolphin watching in Sri Lanka. These dolphins are the entertainers of the ocean and have long, slender snouts and grow up to 2 metres. They are most commonly known for their acrobatic skills and their famous spins through the air as they leap out of the water. Their performance of beautifully synchronised somersaults and flips is truly a sight to behold. These dolphins are extremely sociable and have been known to travel in very large pods that number as many as a thousand dolphins. Super pods have known to have as many as 2000 dolphins. On extremely clear days, the spinner dolphins can even be spotted from the shore.

Apart from the spinner dolphin, the humpback and bottlenose types also inhabit the coast of Kalpitiya. The humpback species has a noticeable hump on its back and is often seen close to the shore while the bottlenose dolphin is known for its unmistakable snout. The bottlenose is also highly intelligent, and uses high-pitches squeaks to communicate.

Risso's dolphins can also be spotted in these waters and are noted for their characteristically square heads and their long dorsal fins. While being able to grow up to 4 metres, these dolphins often have scars on their bodies from their playful fighting.

Whale Watching in Kalpitiya

If you are into whale watching, you should visit Kalpitiya in March or April when many sperm whales are nearby. The sperm whale is the largest of all predators (that have teeth). This whale species is currently on the endangered list. In fact, many of the sperm whale species are now extinct, due to many years of whaling. You can easily spot one of these mammoth creatures by their enormous heads, and they have the largest brains of any animal on the planet.

The sperm whale gets its name from the unusual fluid inside of its head. It is believed to help the large mammal stay afloat, but science does not really understand its purpose. The fluid turns to a waxy substance in cold waters. You will often see these huge creatures in pods of about seven whales. However, 15 or 20 is not uncommon, and pods as large as 50 have been spotted.

Where you see sperm whales you may also see pelagic seabirds. These birds live out on the sea and hunt for fish. They may come ashore for mating purposes, but you will need to be out to sea to observe them.