

HOT NEWS FLASH

DESTINATION NEWS

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

GETTING TO KNOW US



TOUR SRI LANKA

HOT NEW FLASH

■ SPECIAL NEWS

- Sri Lanka And Russia
 – Direct Flights to Tie Stronger Knots between Russia and Sri Lanka



Sri Lankan Airlines, the aviation pioneers of the nation, have once again taken the initiative to explore new terrains of opportunities, linking Sri Lanka with Russia through a direct flight. The direct flight service kick-started on Saturday, bringing welcome news for all travellers who detest the hustle and bustle of transit lounges.

The inaugural flight, UL 531, which took off from Moscow, arrived in Sri Lanka on Sunday at 5.55am with a Russian delegation onboard. Russian tour operators, stakeholders of Russian tourism industry and a media group took the inaugural direct flight to Sri Lanka. The group is scheduled to visit tourist hotspots such as Kandy, Negambo, Dambulla, Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya and Pinnawala, during their seven day visit to Sri Lanka.

The tour of the Russian delegation would certainly be a boost to the already booming tourism industry of our island nation, as they would be part and parcel of the ongoing marketing campaign to promote Sri Lanka as a leading tourist destination abroad, specially in Russia, which has become one of the most stable emerging-market economies with healthy trade and budget surpluses.

Russia, as the largest European country with a population of 140 million, presents a lucrative market to which Sri Lanka can tap in. More than 19 million Russians are travelling abroad every year and they are keen in travelling and are looking for sandy beaches and more exotic and compact tour destinations which offer diverse experiences within one tour. With its expansive coastal belt and varied natural attractions, heritage sites and adventure getaways, Sri Lanka can be successfully marketed to Russian travellers as the ultimate tour destination.

Compared with last year, Sri Lankan tourism industry has already witnessed a growth of 28% in Russian tourist arrivals in 2011. Promoting Sri Lanka abroad and facilitating convenient travelling would provide the necessary incentive to further stimulate Russian tourists' growing interest in Sri Lanka. The direct flight between Moscow and Colombo, which would be scheduled twice a week, would certainly be a well-timed encouragement for those who seek convenient traveling to an all-fulfilling vacation spot.

Source: <http://srilanka.travel/index.php>

- New Sewage Plant
 – Passikudah Resort gets a Central Sewage Plant



The Passikudah Tourism Development Zone consists of 156 acres of land in total and out of that, 118 perches of land has been given to the installment of the new sewage plant. The agreement was reached as a result of the new approach proposed by the Ministry of

Economic Development to involve investors and service providers in the infrastructure requirements which should also be considered as investments. Thus, Veolia and Puritas (Pvt) Ltd. and Hotel owners will work together to recover the total investment of US\$196 million in 20 years on terms of mutual consent, allowing the Government to redirect her investments to other essential development areas that the Private Sector cannot currently get engaged in.

On the direction of the Ministry of Economic Development, "the infrastructure requirements in Tourism Resorts are now reckoned as investments opportunities paving way for potential investors and service providers to work on a common platform", says the Sri Lanka Tourism official. Tourism Authorities will continue to play the role of facilitator between the parties as in the case of Veolia and Puritas Agreement.

The new sewage plant will comply with the guidelines of EIA - (Environmental Impact Assessment) and the purified water will be supplied to the hotels for gardening purposes. Currently there are 13 investors in Passekudah who have signed agreements and are investing nearly 6.5 billion to develop holiday resorts in the once war-torn East coast of Sri Lanka.

One Boutique hotel has already commenced operation with the completion of public facilities in common areas. The Water Supply scheme from Valachchenai, costing Rs87 million is also nearing completion together with Sri Lanka Tourism Resort office to service the area. The public area in Passekudah will consist of car park, open air theatre, two shopping arcades and two restaurants. The access road is built by the Sri Lanka Army.

Source: <http://srilanka.travel/index.php?route=event/travelnews&news=25>

TOUR SRI LANKA

DESTINATION NEWS

SPECIAL AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

• Vap Full Moon Poya Day

11 October 2011

The significant events commemorated during this month are: the conclusion of The Buddha's preaching of the Abhidhamma for three months to his mother in the Heavenly realm (Devaloka), King Devanampiyatissa of Sri Lanka sending envoys to King Asoka requesting him to send his daughter Arahat Sanghamitta Theri to Sri Lanka to establish the Bhikkhuni Sasana.



• III Full Moon Poya Day

10 November 2011

Celebrates the obtaining of Vivarana (the assurance of becoming a Buddha) by the Bodhisatta Maitriya and the commissioning of 60 disciples by The Buddha to disperse his teachings. Also the conclusion of the three month retreat.

• Unduvap Full Moon Poya Day

10 December 2011

Arrival of the Bo-tree sapling. This was brought to Sri Lanka from India by Buddhist Theri Sanghamitta, and it is this very tree that is venerated by Buddhists in Anuradhapura. It is also the oldest documented tree in the world. Sanghamitta Theri established the Bhikkhuni Sasana (the Order of Nuns).



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

LOCAL EVENTS

• Sri Lankan Airlines Golf Classic in Kandy

October 2011
The beautiful Victoria Golf & Country Resort's accolades speak for themselves: 'Best Course in Asia 2005' Asian Golf monthly ranked in 'Top 100 Most Beautiful courses in the World', by Golfers Digest. Set in the spectacular Kandyan hill country, this Donald Steel designed course is a true test of all your golfing ability. The much anticipated annual Sri Lankan Airlines Golf Classic is held in October at this picturesque golf course.

• World Spice Festival

November 2011
World Spice Festival in Colombo 2011
November Sponsored by the Sri Lanka



Tourism Development Authority, the sixth annual World Food & Spice Festival will be held in Colombo in November this year.

Colombo's leading hotels and restaurants come together for a week long celebration of cuisine from different parts of the world. Participating hotels and restaurants include the Cinnamon Grand, Taj Samudra, Galle Face Hotel, Hilton Colombo, Mount Lavinia Hotel, Regina Magharita, Nihon Bashi, Mango Tree and Raja Bojun to name a few. World-class chefs are flown in for this event.

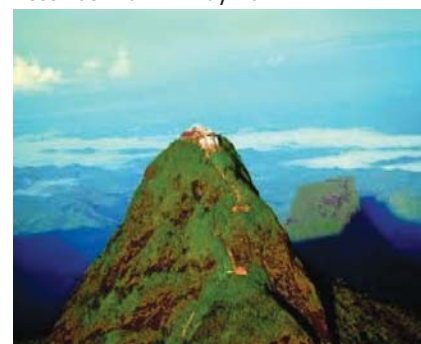
• Sri Lanka Design Festival 2011

November 2011
The inaugural 'Sri Lanka Design Festival 2009' attracted a global audience and offered plenty of creative inspiration for those interested in creative design.



Conceptualised by the Academy of Design in Colombo and sponsored by the Government of Sri Lanka, a host of private sector companies and the British Council.

• Adam's Peak Pilgrimage



December 2011 – May 2012
The Sri Pada pilgrimage is a seasonal event that takes place between the months of December to May each year, where thousands flock to pay homage to sacred footprint atop the Adam's Peak. Few mountains the world over might have attracted as many pilgrims as this one which soars 7,000 feet above sea level and is situated off Ratnapura, the city of gems.

The pilgrimage converges the nation's four religious faiths. The sacred footprint is, according to the Buddhists, that of Buddha who visited the peak at the invitation of its guardian deity. To the Hindus it is that of Shiva, the great Hindu God of Destruction. To the Christians it is that of St Thomas, whilst to the Muslims it is that of Adam who, post-expulsion from the Garden of Eden, took refuge on this mountain.



The Sri Pada pilgrims follow a number of traditions customs. At a certain point during the climb, pilgrims pause en route to throw a threaded needle into the bushes, commemorating the legend that Lord Buddha paused to mend a tear in his robe during his climb. When crossing the Seetha Gangula, a stream about half-way to the summit, pilgrims cleanse themselves with the icy water, which helps refresh them for the final climb. It would be considered crass and certainly lacking in religious devotion to ask how much longer it will take to reach the summit. Instead, passers-by exchange the greeting "Karunavai" or Peace. Many devotees recite religious poems as they climb to help them on their arduous journey.



Shortly before the summit, where the steps become an almost vertical stairway, during the height of the season, pilgrims may have to wait in line for as long as half an hour before proceeding to the small platform on top. After completing their worship, pilgrims ring a bell, once for every visit. It is not unusual to hear the bell rung a dozen times or more by devout pilgrims who have made repeated voyages to the holy site.



Victoria Golf & Country Resort