

Even though I was born in Canada, I, like many others, feel a strong sense of pride for the country that my parents came from. That pride, and a desire to learn as much as I could about it, led me to research and do this report on it. The country? The beautiful and exotic island of Sri Lanka.

In this report I will be giving you a brief overview of all the important aspects of Sri Lanka. Trust me, after reading this report, your next travel destination will be the wonderful land of Sri Lanka.

Geographical Sri Lanka

The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, formerly known as Ceylon, is located in the Indian Ocean. It is a very small island and it is located southeast from India (see picture below). Because of it being so small and because of its placement in the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka is often given the nickname "Pearl of the Indian Ocean". Sri Lanka is part of the continent of Asia and is located very close to the Equator, which accounts for the hot weather and summer-like temperatures all year-round.



Sri Lanka has a hot climate for most of the year. However, it is one country in which all four seasons can be found at once.

For example, if you go to a city in Sri Lanka like Jaffna, where it is hot and dry on one day, and visit Kandy (where it is humid and wet), Nuwara Eliya, (where it is wet and a slightly chilly) and go to the top of a mountain, (where it is chilly) on the same day, you will have experienced all of the seasons in one day.

The Sri Lankan Flag

The Sri Lankan flag has many different colours, shapes and symbols, all which symbolize a different and unique thing about Sri Lanka and its people. The colour yellow and the yellow "Bo" leaves



represent the Buddhist people and communities that live in Sri Lanka. The two rectangles and the colours within them represent the minorities within Sri Lanka, the Muslims and the Hindus. The rectangle of green represents the Muslims, while the rectangle of orange represents the Hindus. The centrepiece of the flag, the prestigious golden lion, and the sword in its front-right paw are said to represent the freedom and the bravery of all of the people who live in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan flag is

just like any other flag in shape and size, however, in meaning and interpretation it is very unique.

Anthem

Sri Lanka has a national anthem just like many of the countries in the world. It has been translated into many languages including Sinhala, Tamil and English. Below I have given you the English translation of the national anthem of Sri Lanka:

Mother Lanka - We Salute Thee!

Plenteous in prosperity, Thou,
Beauteous in grace and love,
Laden with corn and luscious fruit
And fragrant flowers of radiant hue,
Giver of life and all good things,
Our land of joy and victory,
Receive our grateful praise sublime,

Lanka! We worship Thee.
Thou gavest us Knowledge and Truth,
Thou art our strength and inward faith,
Our light divine and sentient being,
Breath of life and liberation.
Grant us, bondage free, inspiration.
Inspire us forever.

In wisdom and strength renewed,
Ill-will, hatred, strife all ended,
In love enfolded, a mighty nation
Marching onward, all as one,
Lead us, Mother, to fullest freedom.

Currency

In Sri Lanka, they have coins and bills, just like in Canada. In terms of Sri Lankan money, the equivalent to a dollar would be a rupee and the equivalent to a cent would be a cent. In Sri Lanka the currency value is 100 (Sri Lankan) cents to a rupee.

Sri Lankan coins come in the colours copper and silver. They come in many different shapes and sizes (some are round and some are hexagonal and some are square etc.). They have many interesting and unique designs on them, which makes them hard to copy. They also have Tamil, English and Sinhalese writing on them.



I find Sri Lankan bills very interesting because they are all different sizes, are very colourful and have pictures of things like exotic birds, plants, scenery etc. on them. Usually the symbols on the bill represent Sri Lanka in one way or another. For example, there are pictures of exotic birds on some of the bills, symbolizing the exotic and colourful birds that live in Sri Lanka. They also have the words 'Central Bank of Ceylon' written on them in English, Tamil and Sinhalese as well as the rupee value in numbers (see picture above). Currently, approximately sixty Sri Lankan rupees equal one Canadian dollar.

Government

Sri Lanka has a Republic government. The government of Sri Lanka is similar to that of Canada but with a few differences. In Sri Lanka there is a President, a Prime Minister, members of the parliament, provincial councils and district council members. There is also an Executive (the President), a legislature (the parliament) and the judiciary (the Supreme Court).

The head of state, the President, is like the Governor General of Canada, but he/she is elected by the citizens and has more powers than the Governor General of Canada. The President is also the Head of the Government, and the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. The President is elected by the people and holds office for a period of six years. The President has the right to attend, address and send messages to Parliament at any time. The President is also entitled to all the privileges, immunities and powers of a Member of Parliament other than the right to vote.

The Prime Minister (an elected representative) is the leader of the party in power. The Prime Minister in Sri Lanka is just like the Prime Minister of Canada but with less power. He/she is the head of the parliament and sometimes takes orders from the President.

The Parliament (see picture on right) in Sri Lanka is just like the parliament in Canada. It comes up with and passes bills. Within the Parliament are the members of the Parliament who are elected representatives. Each district sends members to the parliament based on the percentage of votes the party received from that district. For example, let's say that 50% of the votes from a district are received by party "A", and there are 6 seats available in the parliament for that district. Then party "A" is entitled to send 3 of its members to the parliament (so that 50% of the seats allocated to that district are filled by party "A").

A district council is like a municipality and its members are District Council Members.



Religion & Culture

There are four main religions in Sri Lanka, namely Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. There are also three main cultures in Sri Lanka, which are the Tamils (Hindus & Christians), the Muslims (Islam) and the Singhalese (Buddhists & Christians). There are many places of worship in certain designated and holy sites in Sri Lanka for all of these religions. There are temples for the Hindus, pansalas for the Buddhists, mosques for Islamic people, and churches for the Christians. There are also many statues for each religion throughout the country (see left).

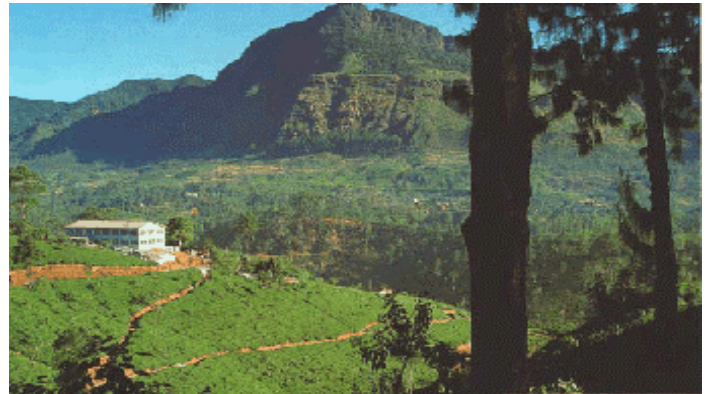


Of all of these religions, the religion that I can talk about the most is the Hindu religion since I myself am Hindu. There are many temples in Sri Lanka for almost all of the Hindu gods. They are placed in sites that are said to be holy for many reasons. Many of the temples are made from real gold and real jewels since Sri Lanka hosts many precious gem mines (and gems!). They often have a statue of the god(s) inside the temple, unlike other cultures that prefer to carve them outside. They provide a very dominant role in the people's lives and often people will go every morning to the temple and pray. Religion is very important to the Sri Lankan people and they take pride in their religion and follow it no matter what religion it is (I certainly do!).

Chief Products of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is famous for its agricultural land. Many fine crops are grown in Sri Lanka and are then exported to different parts of the world including Britain, The United States of America and Canada. Some of the chief products that are grown in Sri Lanka are rubber, cocoa, tea, spices and rice. These are the leading exports and they provide a lot of money for Sri Lanka's economy.

Above others, tea is a very tasty and a very big crop in Sri Lanka. It is grown on tea estates (see picture on right) and is handpicked by hundreds and thousands of workers. It is then taken to a factory where it is



ground and put in tea bags or ground and just put in containers for fresh use. It is then shipped to many other parts of the world for use. Sri Lanka produces one of the finest teas in the world.

Tourism

Sri Lanka offers a wide appeal to tourists, with its ancient culture and historic sites, scenic beauty in its forests and mountains, and a pleasant tropical climate and beaches. Because it is surrounded by the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka hosts some of the most beautiful natural beaches in the world (see left). As well, being surrounded by ocean, Sri Lanka also has many coral reefs with many types of fish and bright real coral (great place to go scuba diving!). Sri Lanka also has very good tourist attractions such as its many ancient ruins that are still standing. One of these



tourist sites that I would recommend, is the Sigiriya rock. The Sigiriya rock is a very big rock, which used to be the kingdom of an ancient king. It has many levels and at the very top are the ruins of the king's palace and gardens. However, on the way up, there are many interesting sites to see. There is the lion's paw, and the head of the lion itself which you must go through in order to get to the top. There are also ancient paintings that date back to the 3rd century called the Sigiriya Frescos (see picture above).



Miscellaneous

In this report I have covered all the basics but there are many more interesting things in Sri Lanka. Below are just a few additional facts about Sri Lanka that you might find interesting:

- Sri Lanka is very famous for its gems. The gemstone that was used on the necklace in the movie Titanic came from Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka also mines many sapphires and red rubies.
- Sri Lanka is sometimes called Teardrop of the Indian Ocean, Island of Dharma, Pearl of the Orient etc.
- Sri Lanka has one of the most beautiful natural harbours in the world.
- Sri Lanka has two beautiful wildlife sanctuaries.

More Images of Sri Lanka

Below are some more images of Sri Lanka, which you might find interesting:

Fact File

In this fact file, I have done a brief summary about everything that I have talked about in this report plus a few "extras".

Name: Sri Lanka

Official Name: Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Capital: Colombo

Climate: Hot and humid, but the mountains and hills are cool. Humidity is lower in the dry zone.

Race: 74% Sinhalese, 18% Tamil, 8% other.

Language: 74% Sinhalese, 18% Tamil. English is commonly used in government and is spoken by about 10% of the population.

Official Languages: Sinhalese and Tamil

Religion: 69% Buddhist, 15% Hindu, 8% Christian, 8% Muslim.

Government: Republic Government

Currency: Sri Lankan rupee

I hope you have enjoyed my report on Sri Lanka. I hope you have gained a wider understanding of the country of Sri Lanka and appreciate it as much as I do. Thank you for taking the time to read this report.

BY: A lover of the beautiful country of Sri Lanka

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Resources I used for my project on Sri Lanka:

- Grade 3 project on Sri Lanka
- <http://members.lycos.co.uk/withanage/> (internet)
- http://www.ceylon-online.com/info_page.html (internet)
- <http://www.flags.net> (internet)
- <http://www.priu.gov.lk/> (internet)
- Parents and other family members.
- The World of People: The Global Village by: Douglas Ashton & Diva Froshell Anderson(book)