



surrounding plains. On its summit are the remains of a 5th-century palace. Hidden in a cave along the citadel are some of the most magnificent ancient frescoes in South Asia. It is a one-hour hike to the top. If you prefer, you can remain at the base and explore the forest lowlands. En route to Kandy, visit a spice garden in Matale. *Hotel Topaz, Kandy.*

**Day 6 Peradeniya Royal Botanical Gardens Nuwara Eliya**

This morning, we will drive to Peradeniya for a special tour of the Royal Botanical Gardens, founded in 1824 and containing a valuable collection of plants and trees. It is renowned for its orchids. Among other highlights are the avenue of palms, planted in 1905, and large colonies of fruit bats, roosting and hanging upside down from the trees.

Depart for Nuwara Eliya, at the foot of Sri Lanka's tallest mountain, once called Little England. It is at 6,100 feet elevation and has some of the finest tea plantations in the world. Its cool temperatures are a pleasant contrast to tropical weather elsewhere on the island. Visit the Petro Estate and see the

workings of a tea factory. See the process of making the finest Ceylon tea and sample different blends. *Grand Hotel (2 nights).*

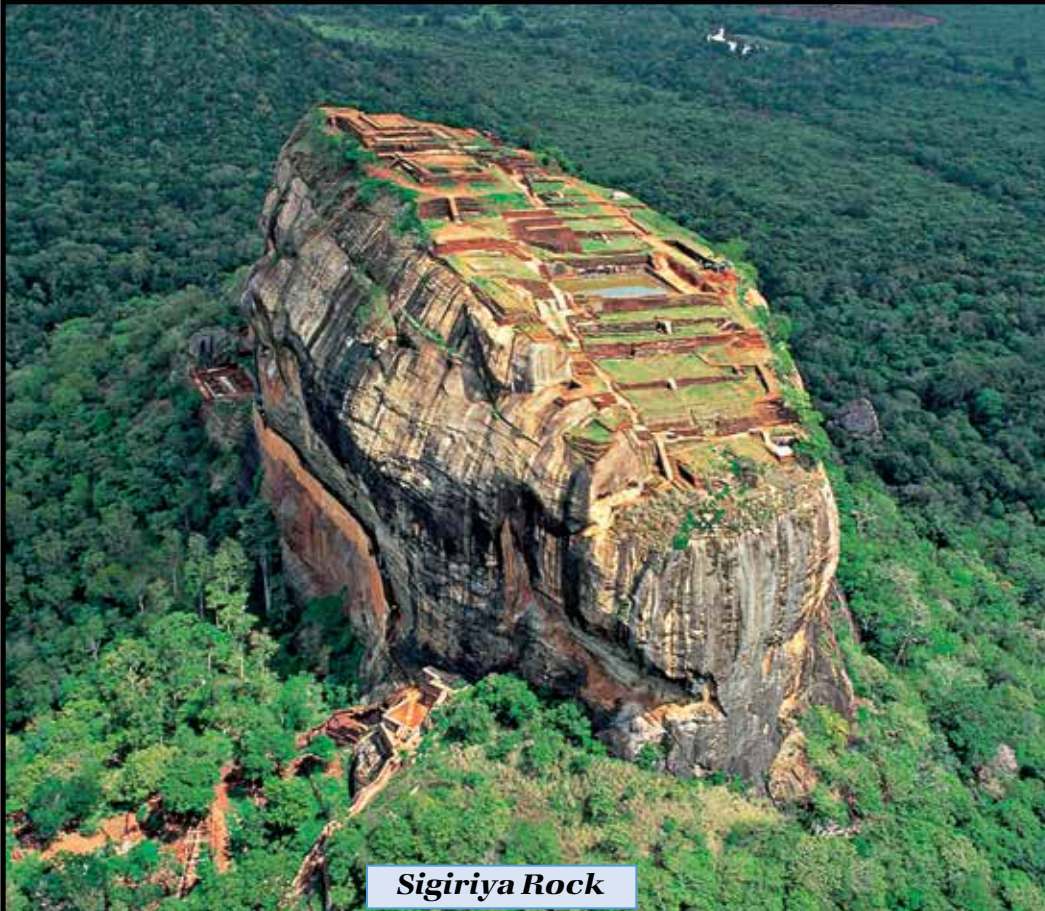
**Day 7 Horton Plains National Park**

Leave for the Horton Plains National Park this morning, two hours from Nuwara Eliya. Perched on the edge of the central hills, Horton Plains is a wild stretch of bleak, high-altitude moorland with peaks up to 7,500 feet. The sheer precipice of World's End and Baker's Falls are among the attractions of the park. Montane evergreen forests also cover the park.

Feel the cool, wet climate which has fostered growth of a distinctive range of flora, including rhododendrons, bamboos, tree ferns, and many endemic species of plants, thus making the Plains an area of great biological value. It is populated by sambhur and bear-faced monkeys, plus such endemic birds as the dull-blue fly-catcher, bush warbler, whistling thrush, and orange minarets.



*Explore the Jewel of the Indian Ocean!*  
**SRI LANKA**  
*Natural Heritage & Cultural Wonders*  
**January 25 - February 7, 2019**



**Sigiriya Rock**



*We invite you to join this botanical and cultural adventure of discovery to the lush tropical isle of Sri Lanka (formerly called Ceylon), situated like a tear drop in the Indian Ocean, just south of India!*

*Explore this fascinating jewel of a country, led by Dr. Neela de Zoysa, an outstanding botanist and naturalist from Sri Lanka.*

*Discover many of the scenic, natural and botanic wonders of Sri Lanka, including:*

- Sigiriya, the dramatic rock fortress and World Heritage Site, renowned worldwide!*
- Peradeniya Royal Botanical Gardens, with a splendid avenue of palms and renowned for its orchids and fruit bats.*
- Sinharaja World Heritage Site, a global biodiversity hotspot with virgin rainforest and an abundance of endemic flora, birds, and butterflies.*

*– Yala and Horton Plains National Parks, with a profusion of elephants and possibly a leopard strolling along the track!*

*Delight in the lush slopes covered with tea plantations as you traverse the cool mountainous highlands.*

*Also learn about the rich cultural heritage of this land of serendipity, from early Buddhist times to its Portuguese, Dutch, and British influences!*

*Join us for a delightful adventure to the Jewel of the Indian Ocean!*

*Best Regards,*

*Margaret*

**Margaret M Betchart**  
President  
Betchart Expeditions Inc.  
for AAAS, Sigma Xi & ACS