

# Volunteering Singharaja Garden

Updated from January 2023

Dear Volunteers,

In the following guide we have compiled a lot of useful information so that you can enjoy a carefree volunteer time with us in Singharaja Garden. At the same time, we have also tried to answer the most frequently asked questions. Of course, you are welcome to contact us personally with further questions, which we will be happy to answer.

## **Before applying:**

Before you apply for a voluntary service / sabbatical with us in Singharaja Garden, you should first be able to identify with our concept. You should also be clear about the possible length of your volunteer time and the resulting costs.

For your volunteer period of up to 30 days and longer, please only ever apply for the chargeable ETA-Holiday-Visa for 50 US dollars online. You can find the link in our blog under "Entry". For a longer stay (up to a maximum of three months), you must apply for a corresponding holiday/tourist visa (70 US dollars) in Sri Lanka. This means that you first enter the country with your 30-day visa and later have to go to the Emigration Office in Colombo again. Unfortunately, we don't understand why this is not possible online.

We also recommend low-cost travel/foreign health insurance.

A normal health insurance policy with a validity of about 6 weeks per year costs about 15 EUR. Each additional day is charged at around 2 EUR. The best way to compare the different offers and prices is online.

The cost of return flights ranges from EUR 750 to EUR 1,200, depending on the season.

The costs for accommodation in a single room with full board in our lodge are only 900 EUR per month. All optional activities such as yoga, jungle hiking, mountain biking and kayak tours are free of charge and can be used by arrangement. On guest facultatives like Galle-Fort, Udawalawe-Safari and Bentota-Beach we give you a 20% discount. For the airport transfer we charge 90 EUR per trip. It is cheaper with UBER. The social and environmental tasks are voluntary and can be done by arrangement. Maximum 10 hours per week. These may also be divided into a few days in order to have even more free time for travelling or also any online jobs.

The tropical climate here in Singharaja Garden depends on the east or west monsoon. The rainiest months are May / June and October / November. The hottest season is from March to May and can be very demanding. Otherwise, the average temperatures are around 29 degrees during the day and 23 degrees at night.

There is a pleasant wind all year round, from December to April from the south-east and from May to November from the north-west. Nevertheless, you will certainly find the climate humid and tropical, especially in the first few days.

***In the months of April to June inclusive, we are often not at the lodge and do not offer volunteering for that period.***

For your application, we only need a meaningful letter of motivation and a CV with photo. We recommend that you first enquire whether a volunteer position is still available for your desired period. Teamwork and adaptability, a good attitude towards order and cleanliness, as well as English language skills are required for your voluntary work. Learning a few words of Sinhala in our lodge is also very desirable.

**The preparation time until departure:**

The time has come, your application is confirmed and your volunteer time with us at Singharaja Garden is set. Now you can arrange the flights, any insurance and then have the necessary ETA visa issued online.

No special vaccinations are required for our region, but all standard vaccinations should be available and refreshed if necessary. You should have an international vaccination certificate. Despite the few mosquitoes, we ask you to wear adequate mosquito repellent to prevent possible allergic reactions. This includes long, airy clothing for the evenings. **There is no danger of malaria in Sri Lanka!**

**What belongs in / not in the suitcase / backpack is probably the most frequently asked question.**

Technical devices such as notebooks/laptops and smartphones should have a certain level of tropicalisation. Many smartphones, for example, are IP68 certified. Hairdryers, curling irons and straighteners should be left at home to minimise power consumption. We offer WiFi and a work space in our restaurant, but if you want to be independent, you can buy your own SIM card with data package at the airport from 12 US dollars. Summer clothes, a pair of sturdy shoes and trekking trousers for possible jungle hikes and a thin jumper are sufficient for cool evenings or possible three-wheeler rides; swimming trunks / swimming costume / bikini for the beach and lodge pool. All clothing should be robust and insensitive. It is better to avoid white clothes. Meanwhile, shorter clothing and tank tops are perfectly OK in Sri Lanka. A small backpack for hiking, beach towel, sun hat, glasses and cream with a high sun protection factor also belong in your luggage. People who wear glasses should remember to bring a spare pair. A torch and first-aid kit are also useful. Our washing machine is available twice a week.

Large amounts of cash are not necessary. You can exchange about 100 EUR at a good exchange rate right at Colombo airport. Credit cards are also accepted at the ATM in our village.

**ATTENTION: The possession and importation of drugs in Sri Lanka is punishable by very high penalties, in special cases even the death penalty.**

**Arrival:**

You will be picked up personally by us at the airport. Ajith, our driver, will be waiting for you in the large arrivals hall. Here you also have the opportunity to exchange money and buy sim cards. The transfer time from the airport to our lodge is about 2 hours. After your arrival in Singharaja Garden, you have the first few days to acclimatise and get to know the lodge.

**Stay:**

The centre of your life during your time as a volunteer is our AGRO ECO-Lodge. You are responsible for cleaning your room, which includes daily sweeping and basic cleaning once a week. A high level of cleanliness is urgently needed in the tropics. Why? We will explain this in detail when you arrive. The towels and bed linen provided should be washed according to your own needs and are part of the basic equipment of each room. The basic rule is to keep the rooms in such a way that everyone feels comfortable in them.

We expect you to be involved in kitchen work (preparing breakfast, lunch and dinner). Upon request, we will also be happy to issue you with a volunteer confirmation / certificate. After receiving your volunteer report, we will send you the corresponding volunteer certificate.

All in all, we keep your stay as flexible as possible and love the relaxed atmosphere.

We look forward to a varied and adventurous time with you,

*Eduard und Alfons*