



FAQ for British visitors in Sri Lanka

We strongly advise British visitors to leave Sri Lanka whilst commercial flights are still operating [28 March 2020]

See full details on our Travel Advice page:

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/sri-lanka/coronavirus>

Are flights departing from Colombo? Is the International Airport still open? How long will commercial/outbound flights operate?

Yes, the airport is open for outbound flights, and some airlines are still operating one-way flights. We don't know how long flights will continue to operate, so you should make arrangements to travel back to the UK as soon as possible.

SriLankan Airlines have confirmed that they are operating flights and have confirmed good seat availability on 29 and 30 March, and 4 and 7 April. They have not confirmed their plans beyond that point, so do not delay in making your booking. Please contact them directly on 1979. They are also available on twitter to answer enquiries: @flysrilankan.

Qatar tell us that they are offering a 10% discount on one-way flights. However, they have already reduced the frequency of flights, and it is not clear how long they will continue to operate. They have provided the following contact details: Tel: 00974 4023 0000 (Doha call centre); 0115570000 (local); 00974 4023 0000 (for Platinum or Gold, WhatsApp); cmb.resv@lk.qatarairways.com (email).

Since the start of the global crisis a number of airlines have cancelled flights at short notice, so please stay in touch with the airline.

I'm unable to connect with the Travel Agent/Airline. Phone lines are constantly engaged.

Please do keep trying – they are best placed to help you. You can contact SriLankan Airlines and Qatar Airways on the contacts above.

Flights are too expensive, I can't afford to rebook a new flight.

We have been working closely with airlines to ensure as many people as possible can get commercial flights home in this unprecedented and rapidly changing situation. Prices are a commercial decision for the airline or travel company.

If you are having to rebook on a different airline, limited availability is having an impact on ticket costs, sometimes because no seats are available in economy (although that it not currently the case with the Sri Lankan Airlines route to London). Your travel insurer will be able to advise you on whether you will be able to reclaim any difference in price from your original ticket.

Is Sri Lanka no longer safe?

Our advice to British visitors in Sri Lanka is to leave now, while commercial options are available. In some countries we have seen borders shut and hotels closed at little notice. If you decide not to travel now, you may not be able to return later if flights are suspended. Lots of airlines have closed operations, and the options are becoming increasingly limited.

This is an unprecedented, and fast-moving situation. Not leaving Sri Lanka means you may be stuck here for a considerable period. A serious outbreak of coronavirus in Sri Lanka will place significant strain on the healthcare system, and may impact on the availability of consular services. Private hospitals are not currently permitted to offer treatment for coronavirus.

What if I choose not to return to the UK for family, business or employment reasons?

A serious outbreak of coronavirus in Sri Lanka will place significant strain on the healthcare system, and may impact on the availability of consular services. Private hospitals are not currently permitted to offer treatment for coronavirus. The government have instituted wide ranging measures in order to control the spread of the virus. Make sure you have adequate accommodation, funds and insurance.

Find our latest Travel Advice below. Keep up to date by signing up to email alerts on Travel Advice: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/sri-lanka/coronavirus>