

Sri Lanka

History / Background (3 facts)

- Sri Lanka was a key stopping point on the Silk Road where foreigners would restock and buy cinnamon or spices (Created the product cinnamon to sell)
- The island nation became officially independent on February 4, 1948 after India and Pakistan became separate
- The Sri Lankan Civil War broke out in 1983 due to tensions between the Tamil and Sinhalese citizens (lasted until 2009)

Language (2 facts)

- Sinhala is the language of the Sinhalese group which makes up the majority of the population (Spoken by 16 million)
 - Everything from business to schooling is mainly dealt in Sinhala
- Tamil is the second official language - oldest of the Dravidian language family - spoken by Tamil population (Spoken by 4.7 million)

Food (3 facts with pictures)

- Milk Rice
 - Traditional meal of cooking white rice with coconut milk
 - Made for festivals or celebrations
- Uduwel



- Sweet food made for Sinhala and Tamil New Year celebrations
- Fried rice flour dipped in sugar syrup
- Hoppers (“Pancakes” or Appam)
 - Various types of hoppers - milk, egg, string, or honey combinations
 - Mainly eaten as breakfast or snacks



Traditions (4 facts and descriptions for each)

- Dancing
 - Performed for the purpose of expelling natural disasters and sickness
 - Kandyan Dance is regarded as the national dance
 - Dance mimics movement of animals and portrays signs from folktales and epics
 - Costumes are unique with silver and gold jewellery
- Tea
 - Known for Ceylon black tea and Ceylon green tea
 - It's a custom to always give tea visitor in one's household as a sign of respect and blessing them for a healthy life
- Sinhala New Year
 - Celebrated around April 13 or 14th with the sighting of new moon
 - It's customary to restore physical surroundings - repaint houses and old items are discarded

- Women light a hearth in their house and boil milk over it to symbolize prosperity
- Children pay respect to the elders as blessings and neighbours exchange sweets with one another
- Anointing one from head to toe in oil stands for purification of mind and body
- Diwali "Festival of Lights"
 - Signifies warding away shadows of darkness and bringing light into one's life
 - People light small oil lamps to banish spirits and wear new clothes to symbolize a new future
 - Children play with fireworks throughout the night

Interesting Facts (5 facts)

- Nickname: Pearl of the Indian Ocean & Teardrop of India
 - Named pearl due to the island's natural beauty
 - It also resembles the shape of a teardrop
- Sri Lanka gave the word "serendipity" to English
 - Derived from the old name of Sri Lanka "Serendip" which was named by Arabs and Persians
 - Based on Persian fairytale where princes were constantly discovering new things
- National flag is one of the oldest flags in the world
 - Known as the Lion Flag dates back to 162 B.C.
 - Recognizes many religions beliefs - blue leaves for Buddhism, orange for Hinduism, and green for Islam
 - Seems to be the only flag that does this
- Country has the highest literacy rate in South Asia

- Island cares deeply for education and made it a right in their Constitution
- Literacy rate of 92% making it also the highest in Asia
- Volleyball is the national sport of Sri Lanka
 - Most think it is the more commonly played sport cricket yet this assumption is false
 - Volleyball was introduced in 1916 and became very popular in a few years and declared the national sport in 1991

Famous People (2 facts)

- Sirimavo Bandaranaike
 - First female prime minister in the world
 - Leader of Sri Lanka Freedom Party who served three terms
- Chandrika Kumaratunga
 - Daughter of Sirivamo
 - First female president of Sri Lanka

History / Background (3 facts)

<https://www.thoughtco.com/sri-lanka-facts-and-history-195087>

Language (2 facts)

<https://www.commisceo-global.com/resources/country-guides/sri-lanka-guide>

<https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-languages-are-spoken-in-sri-lanka.html>

Food (3 facts with pictures)

<https://lanka.com/about/foods/>

Traditions (4 facts and descriptions for each)

<https://www.srilankatravelandtourism.com/srilanka/culture/culture.php>

<https://www.worktheworld.com.au/blog/new-years-festival-sri-lanka>

<https://rove.me/to/sri-lanka/deepavali-diwali>

<https://lanka.com/about/interests/dance/>

Interesting Facts (5 facts)

<https://www.indiaodysseytours.com/knows/facts-about-sri-lanka.html>

Famous People (2 facts)

<https://www.indiaodysseytours.com/knows/facts-about-sri-lanka.html>