


John Lewis

FREE

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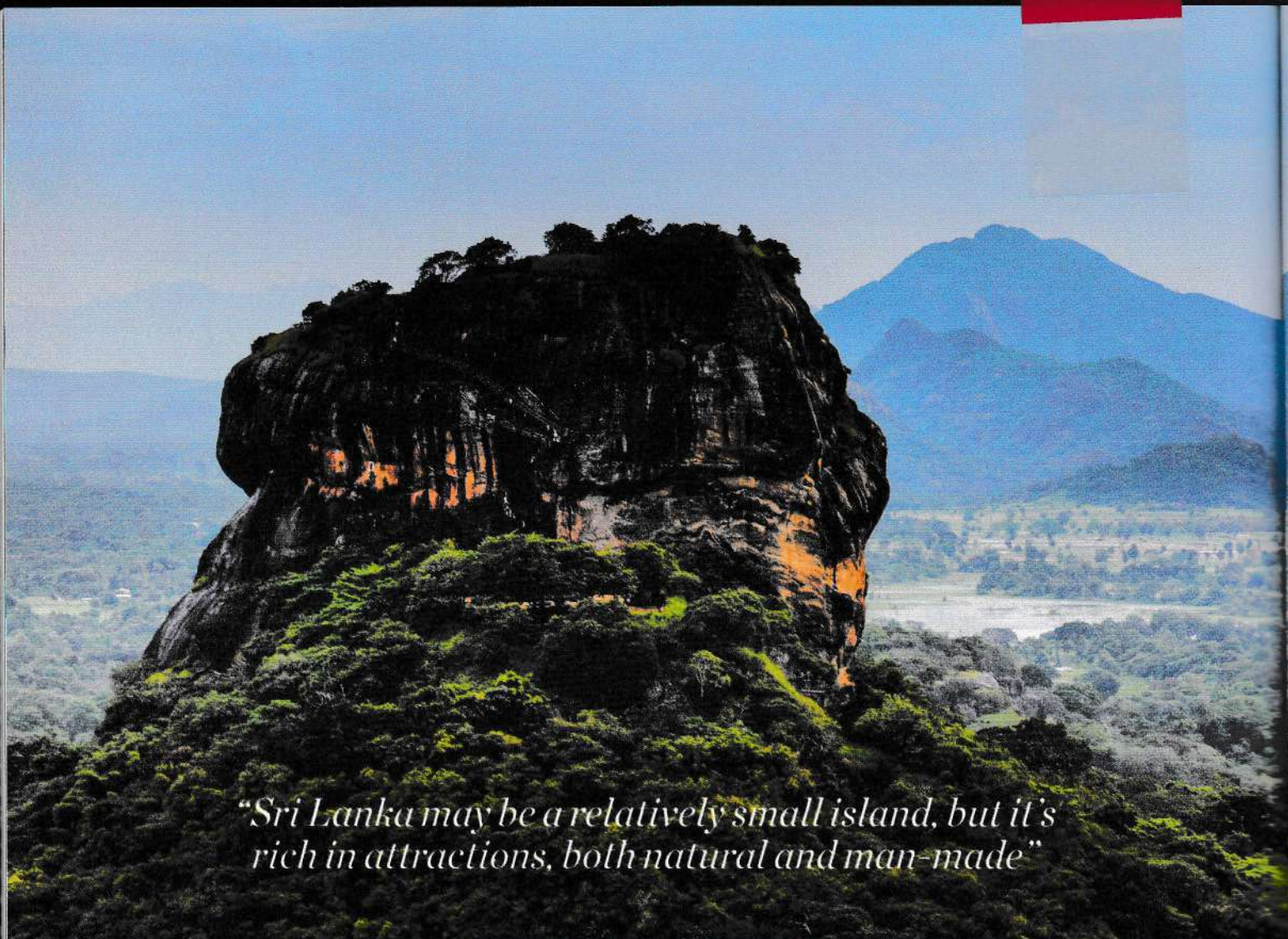
AUTUMN ISSUE

SHOPPING INTELLIGENCE

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a black and white plaid coat, stands on a modern staircase with black railings. She is looking back over her shoulder towards the camera. The background is a light-colored wall.

AUTUMN EXCLUSIVES

*Unique brands, design collaborations and
original pieces only here at John Lewis*



"Sri Lanka may be a relatively small island, but it's rich in attractions, both natural and man-made"

LONG HAUL: SRI LANKA

It's no secret that Sri Lanka has become one of the hottest long-haul destinations of recent years. And no surprise, either: this may be a relatively small island, but it's rich in attractions, both natural and man-made. There are steamy jungles filled with wild animals, peacocks wandering paddy fields and lush hillsides covered in tea bushes. Culture lovers can discover ancient ruins and abandoned cities that bear testament to a fascinating history; sun-worshippers will love the glorious sandy beaches, where coconut palms dip down to sparkling seas; and foodies can salivate over richly spiced curries and tropical fruit on roadside stalls.

What's more, a host of new boutique hotels have opened, and recently improved transport options make it easier than ever to get around. All you have to do is decide between discovering Sri Lanka at your own pace or joining an exclusive guided tour.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: UNESCO World Heritage Site Sigiriya Rock Fortress; the villas and infinity pool at Ulagalla; the staff are happy to organise private dining at the resort

RELAX AND UNWIND

Sri Lanka has a legacy of old colonial mansions and plantation houses, many of which have now been transformed into desirable places to stay. Take Ulagalla Resort, which sits within the Cultural Triangle, an area of the northern plains that's rich in temples and ruins, and home to many of the island's eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

This beautifully restored historic estate now houses 20 peaceful villas, each with its own private plunge pool. It makes an idyllic place to retreat to after a day's intensive sightseeing, or simply to relax for a few days, basking in the infinity pool and spa and soaking up the beauty of the 58-acre grounds – all easy to explore by bike, on horseback or on a guided nature walk. The rooms are luxurious, the welcome warm and the food excellent – especially the delicious egg hoppers, a Sri Lankan speciality that consists of a crispy pancake bowl filled with a fried egg.

Seven nights at Ulagalla Resort costs from £1,745pp, including breakfast, flights from London Heathrow and transfers.

cultural intelligence

WHAT TO PACK

Slip these into your suitcase for sightseeing with style



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: Lumix DMC-TZ93 camera, £479.95, **Panasonic** 2-year guarantee included. 2 years' Added Care available for £25. Exclusive to John Lewis. Rucksack, £49; shirt, £69; both **Kin by John Lewis**. Sunglasses, £20, **John Lewis**

TAKE A TOUR

If you want to experience the different faces of Sri Lanka, a guided tour is the easiest way to do it, especially if it's your first visit, or time is limited. Kuoni offers a week-long Essential Sri Lanka trip that takes you from the coast to the cultural heart of the island and back again.

En route you'll visit local markets, spice gardens and tea plantations; see wild elephants in Minneriya National Park; and (if you're undeterred by the prospect of around 1,200 steps) tackle the climb to the summit of Sigiriya, an extraordinary granite outcrop topped with the remains of a 5th-century palace. After all that, you'll have earned time on the beach, so it's well worth adding on a few days of unabashed laziness at one of the beautiful seafront resorts.

A seven-night tour costs from £1,695pp, including most meals, flights from London Heathrow and transfers.

