

	HR POLICY MANUAL		
	CODE OF ETHICS OF A PROFESSIONAL NATURE GUIDE	DOCUMENT No: HR 20	REF No: HR/2024/20
	Effective: 01/February/2024		

1. Our Expectations

Our Nature Guides are experts in leading guests into the wild. They may guide on foot (walking trails, nature walks, beach walks), from a vehicle (game drives, safaris), on horseback, in a boat or kayak, under the water, and in natural areas, including protected areas and national parks.

Our Nature Guides act as intermediaries between the natural surroundings and our guests. They are the hosts and interpreters of our unique experiences and are on hand to inform and educate guests. Our nature guides offer the highest quality service levels and ensure the safety and enjoyment of our guests at all times. They are conservators of the environment and have a passion for sustainable practices. Above all, they work to protect flora and fauna and everything in our natural world.

2. Ethical Practices

A good Nature Guide is an individual who has passion, knowledge, and unwavering respect and commitment for wildlife and the environment. They have a responsibility towards their clients but an equal if not greater responsibility towards the natural environment. No aspect of the environment should be sacrificed to carry out a client's particular request or need. Being an ethical guide means giving our guests the best possible guided nature experience without interfering with, damaging or influencing the natural environment in which we are guiding.

“Observe nature as it occurs naturally and not how it responds to you being there.”

3. Uga Escapes Guiding Principles and Code of Conduct

All Nature Guides at Uga Escapes (Private) Limited are expected to behave appropriately by:

- Respecting the laws, rules, policies, procedures and ethical guidelines within the Uga group
- Complying with Sri Lanka’s laws and regulations
- Obeying the code of conduct of the area of operation
- Being reliable and responsible at all times
- Being punctual, honest, conscientious and tactful at all times
- Avoiding usage substances that could compromise their abilities in any way while on duty and specifically while responsible for a guided experience
- Having adequate skills to follow first aid protocols

- Having an attitude of respect towards all people, cultures and the environment
- Dealing with conflicts in a sensitive and responsible manner
- Providing valuable information
- Avoiding any discriminatory action
- Adhering to a dress code
- Rejecting the practise of touting

4. Ethical Guidelines while conducting a guided experience at Uga

An ethical guided experience focusses on protecting wildlife and the environment, enjoying the wildlife in its natural habitat and leaving the scene without disturbing and leaving anything behind.

“Leave nothing but footprints.”

The following principles and rules should be adhered to while conducting guided experiences at UGA Escapes:

- Respect the speed limits in national parks and protected areas
- Stay on the legal roads and tracks within national parks and protected areas
- Always give animals the right of way
- Never corner an animal
- Avoid positioning a safari vehicle between a mother and her baby (calf, cub, litter....)
- Never position a safari vehicle between the animal and its prey
- Always leave an open escape route for the animal and allow the animal space
- Keep noise levels down in the presence of wildlife
- Never artificially attract animals by offering food
- Refrain from feeding wild animals
- Avoid the use of flashlights while taking pictures
- Never shine a torch or spotlight directly at an animal or into their eyes
- Always use a red filter at night to observe nocturnal animals
- Always use designated toilet facilities
- Avoid smoking and consumption of alcohol in parks and protected areas
- Never remove natural vegetation to give guests a better view (reposition the vehicle/boat/vessel instead)
- Never touch wild animals
- Never remove animals from the wild
- Never remove flowers and other plant material from national parks and protected areas.
- Be generous with wildlife sightings and allow those waiting in line a chance
- Always pay close attention to an animal's behaviour and react accordingly, even if that means that we have to leave the sighting, if the animal is uncomfortable.
- Respect the comfort zones of all living beings
- Never litter – always dispose of rubbish responsibly.