

CHRIS MEAD + SYBIE PAYNE

DRIVER
ACTIVITY MASTER
FIXER } NISSANTHA
COLOMBO

17/1/24 - 31/1/24

AIRPORT
↳ NE/COLOMBO (1 night) → GALLE (4 nights) → KANDALAMA (4 nights) → KANDY (2 nights) → BENTOTA (3 nights) → AIRPORT

1. DRIVING

Nissantha was a remarkably calm driver. No matter how busy the streets or dense the traffic, Nissantha was smooth, ^{safe} efficient and easy in his manner and his driving. Some of the roads were better than others but he was always careful, watchful and took sudden changes in his stride. Indeed even in the thickest traffic of Kandy + the Kandy - Colombo road, we could have been in suburban Melbourne, and was the high quality of Nissantha's driving.

2. ACTIVITIES / PROGRAM

We arrived having done some research into our five towns, ^{tour} but from the very first morning Nissantha had terrific ideas that we'd not even considered. For example, the fish markets in Negombo, or the village tour near Lionrock, or the boat safari down on the Madu River / Lake. What was

also especially gratifying was that Nisantha took²
our sometimes outlandish ideas on-board. We had
thought it worthwhile to visit the Martin Wickramasinghe
Museum / House^{near Galle}, or Helga's Ferry - Kady, or Boris Bawa's
'Brief' near Beetsa. None presented any significant
obstacles. Nisantha was hospitable, responsive and generously good-humoured!

3. FIXER

Having only the most rudimentary Sinhala we relied on
Nisantha entirely to help us negotiate with various locals
relating to our program of activities. He was consistently
amiable and helpful with nothing ever being a bother.
Most remarkably, everywhere we went Nisantha would
strike up a conversation with local folks and was
therefore always well-received and welcomed back.
Our thick Australian accents only sometimes needed
tempering to erode successful results, overall Nisantha
was wonderful company, had great local knowledge and
dove with effortless aplomb.

CHRIS ~~HEAD~~ + Syrie Payne