

One month of volunteering

Well, our month in Sri Lanka was actually the most wonderful, impressive and exciting time we could have. We explored as much as possible from this beautiful country, traveled around with the shaky bus and with Tuk Tuks, living the local lifestyle (with a lot of rice and curry of course), tried traditional dishes, spices and fruits, drank coconut water and enjoyed every single minute of this journey. Especially the beautiful beaches everywhere! We've never seen such incredible sunsets. The room we stayed were really nice, especially the little balcony where you can see little monkeys playing around! In Sri Lanka all the people were so friendly and welcoming and we met a lot of new people.

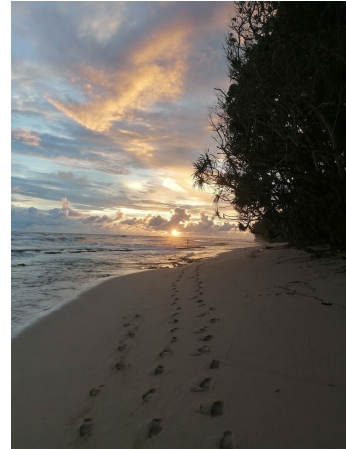
And we really enjoyed helping in the preschool. The children were so lovely and always so happy to see and play with us. Also the "teacher's day", which was celebrated with a lot of candy, cake and flowers, was really amazing.

We tried to support the teachers and staff in their daily work, we helped the children aged 3 to 6 in their tasks and exercises, prepared materials for the following day and held arts and crafts session with them. During computer lessons, we helped to improve the teachers' and pupils' computer skills in programs like Microsoft Paint and Word and after school we taught English to the teachers to facilitate communication for the future.



The room is just 4 minutes far away from the beach, where you can have a swim or enjoy the beautiful sunsets. You won't find many tourists there, so it's the best place to relax in silence.

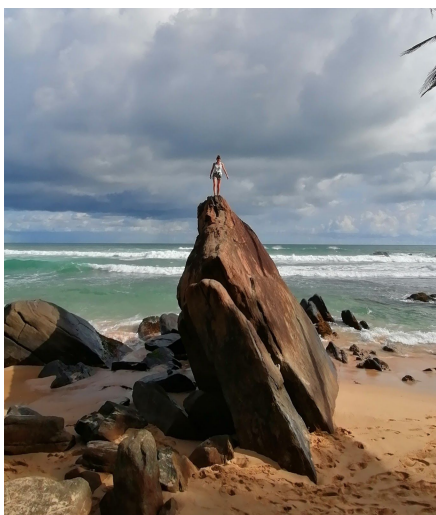
During the weeks we did many trips and explored the surroundings during the afternoons because after school we were free to do whatever we want.



For example we went for a boat trip on the Koggala lake and visited the different islands or we experienced the turtle sanctuary in Habaraduwa.



One our favorite beaches is Dalawella beach with this beautiful rock you can climb. Right next to it you can find the restaurant "Shanthi". It was one of the best restaurants so far. Try rice with curry!



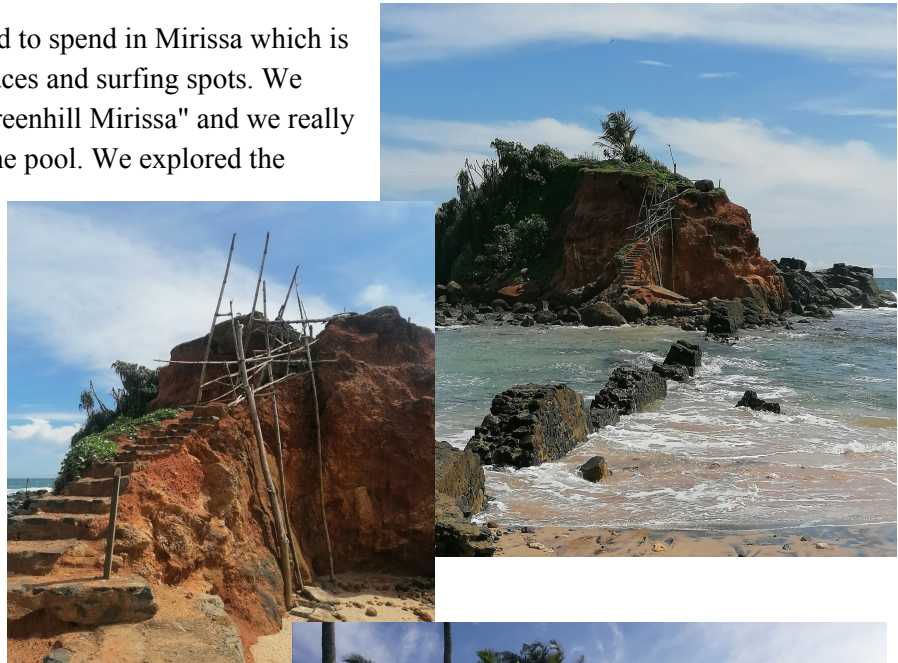
Just some minutes more by bus you will arrive Unawatuna. Next to the wonderful beach you will see one special temple, it's called "Unawatuna Devol Devalaya". But the best thing is not the temple itself, it is the spot behind. There you can climb the rocks and watch the most beautiful sunset we've ever seen.



Our first weekend we decided to spend in Mirissa which is famous for some exciting places and surfing spots. We stayed in the Guesthouse "Greenhill Mirissa" and we really enjoyed it there, especially the pool. We explored the "parrot rock" which is a small rock island you can climb during low tide.

After that we visited the "coconut hill". It is just a few minutes to walk along the beach but much more tourism than the parrot rock.

The next morning we also tried surfing for the first time. We woke up early because in the mornings there are the best waves, especially for beginners. And it was really easy and cheap!



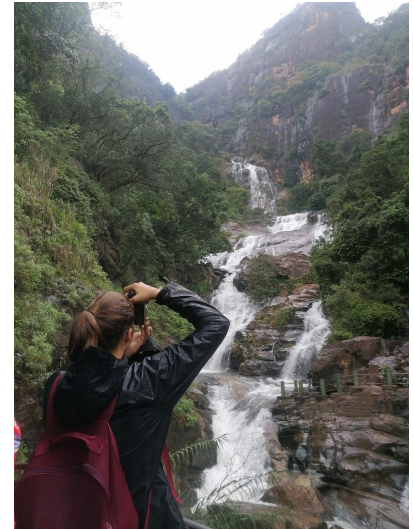
The second weekend we spend in the small town of Ella. We took the bus from Galle to Ella very early in the morning and drove through the beautiful landscape of the inland of Sri Lanka. Ella is very different to the villages in the south but we really recommend it, because we spend four exciting days there. It might be a little bit rainy due to mountain clima but still warm.

On the first day we visited the "Ravana waterfall" where you can get in a few minutes by bus.

Bring a rain jacket!

Nearby you can hike the "Ravana hill top" where you can climb into the "Ravana cave". You have to pay 150 Rp. entrance fee per person, but it's definitely worth it.

On the way you have a beautiful view of the landscape and the hole town.



The next day we started very early. We woke up at 4am and started to hike the Little Adam's peak to see the sunrise.



It's just a around one hour walk (don't worry, it's an easy hike) and you will get rewarded with a breathtaking view over Sri Lanka.

On the way down we could even see the Ella rock and some beautiful tea plantations. Back in the town we took a stop in the "Ella spice garden" which was really interesting.

After that we visited the "Nine arch bridge" which you can also reach over the train rails from Ella's train station.



The third weekend we spend in Dickwella which is a bigger city than Mirissa or Ella in the south of the country. We stayed in the Hotel "360 sands" which was located directly at the beach. There we visited the "Hummanaya blowhole" which is very impressive and definitely worth it. Right next to it you have a wonderful view over the sea. After that we walked to the "Mawalla lagoon" where you can also rent Kajaks.



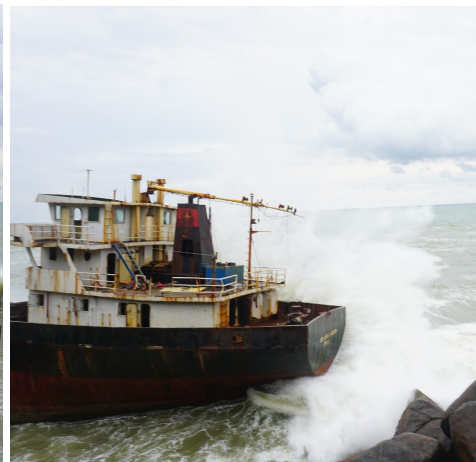
The last weekend we spend in Galle which is a big city only some minutes away from our room. It's different to the other villages and a little bit more expensive, but it is so beautiful, especially the Fort Galle. It's also famous for the amazing Lighthouse at the top of the Fort. We decided to come here because of "Diwali", the "Festival of Light", which is a hinduism celebration day. We stayed there in the "Seagreen Guesthouse" located in the Fort which was the best and cutest accommodation of our whole journey.





On the next day we explored the "jungle beach" which is a small hidden beach in the jungle. From there you can climb over the rocks along the coast until the forefront.

There you can see big waves crashing on the coastline. If you look further you can even find a 3-months-old shipwreck which is really impressive.



In the evening there was a special Diwali parade where people were walking all around the Fort wearing special clothes and dancing to eject bad spirits. The whole city was lighted and decorated with the special colours of Diwali.



In the last week of volunteering we started a project on our own after school. It included designing a wall in the school ground with different coloured motives and the childrens' and teachers' handprints. In the end, the project worked out amazingly well and we had a lot of fun creating a huge painting of an underwater world on one wall together.



Thank you so much for having us, the time was incredible! We will definitely come back!

Johanna & Johanna



Germany, 6.12.2019