



Discovering treasures in Colombo's markets and boutiques feels truly exquisite

Colombo offers a vibrant shopping scene with a variety of items that cater to different tastes.

Here are some popular items you can consider buying while shopping in Colombo:

1. Handicrafts and Souvenirs

- **Batik:** Traditional Sri Lankan cloth with colorful designs, often used for clothing or wall hangings.
 - **Wood Carvings:** Intricately carved wooden masks, statues, and decorative items.
 - **Handwoven Items:** Such as baskets, mats, and rugs made from natural fibers like jute and coconut coir.
 - **Lacquerware:** Items such as boxes and trays decorated with intricate designs using lacquer.

2. Gemstones and Jewelry

- **Ceylon Sapphires:** Renowned for their quality and variety of colors, including blue, yellow, and pink sapphires.
 - **Moonstones:** Sri Lanka produces high-quality moonstones with a unique bluish sheen.
 - **Handcrafted Jewelry:** Rings, earrings, and necklaces made from locally sourced gemstones.

3. Tea

- **Ceylon Tea:** Purchase high-quality loose-leaf tea or beautifully packaged tea blends from reputed brands.
- **Tea-related Souvenirs:** Tea sets, teapots, and ceramic mugs adorned with traditional Sri Lankan designs.

4. Spices and Ayurvedic Products

- **Spices:** Buy fresh and aromatic spices such as cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, and black pepper.
- **Ayurvedic Products:** Herbal oils, skincare products, and medicinal herbs used in traditional Sri Lankan medicine.

5. Clothing and Textiles

- **Traditional Clothing:** Elegant saris, sarongs (known locally as "lungis" or "sarongs"), and traditional men's shirts (like "batik shirts").
- **Designer Wear:** Colombo has boutique stores offering contemporary Sri Lankan fashion brands and designer wear.

6. Handicraft Markets and Boutiques

- **Laksala:** Government-run handicrafts emporium offering a wide range of authentic Sri Lankan handicrafts.
- **Barefoot:** A popular boutique known for its colorful handwoven textiles, home decor items, and clothing.

Tips for Shopping in Colombo:

- **Bargaining:** It's common to negotiate prices at local markets, but fixed prices are standard in most stores and malls.
- **Authenticity:** Purchase gemstones and high-value items from reputable dealers to ensure authenticity.
- **Tax Refunds:** Tourists may be eligible for a VAT refund on purchases made at specified stores, so keep your receipts.

Whether you're exploring bustling markets, boutique shops, or modern shopping malls, Colombo offers a diverse shopping experience that reflects Sri Lanka's rich cultural heritage and craftsmanship.

Here's a 3-day shopping tour itinerary in Colombo, focusing on exploring various markets, boutiques, and shopping centers where you can find a variety of items:

Day 1: Exploration of Local Markets and Handicrafts

Morning:

- **Pettah Market:** Start your day early at Pettah Market, one of Colombo's oldest and busiest markets. Explore the bustling streets filled with vendors selling everything from clothing and electronics to fresh produce and spices.
- **Galle Face Green:** Take a stroll along Galle Face Green, enjoying views of the ocean and local vendors selling snacks like *isso wade* (spicy lentil fritters).

Afternoon:

- **Laksala:** Visit Laksala, a government-run handicrafts emporium, for a wide selection of authentic Sri Lankan handicrafts, including batik clothing, wood carvings, and traditional masks.

- **Barefoot:** Explore Barefoot, a boutique known for its vibrant handwoven textiles, home decor items, and clothing featuring contemporary Sri Lankan designs.

Evening:

- **Dinner:** Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant offering traditional Sri Lankan cuisine.
- **Leisure Time:** Relax at your hotel or explore nearby nightlife options.

Day 2: Shopping at Modern Malls and Boutiques

Morning:

- **Majestic City:** Start your day at Majestic City, a popular shopping mall in Colombo with a range of stores selling clothing, electronics, jewelry, and more.
- **ODEL:** Visit ODEL, a renowned department store known for its trendy fashion, accessories, and home decor items.

Afternoon:

- **House of Fashion:** Explore House of Fashion, a large mall offering a variety of clothing and accessories at discounted prices.
- **Tea and Spices:** Visit a local shop to purchase Ceylon tea, spices, and Ayurvedic products as souvenirs.

Evening:

- **Dinner:** Enjoy dinner at a restaurant of your choice, perhaps trying some seafood specialties.
- **Night Market (Optional):** If interested, visit the night market in Colombo for a lively atmosphere and street food.

Day 3: Gemstones and Jewelry Shopping

Morning:

- **Colombo Jewelry Stores:** Visit reputable jewelry stores in Colombo specializing in Ceylon sapphires, moonstones, and other gemstones. Take your time to browse and shop for unique pieces.

Afternoon:

- **Last-minute Shopping:** Spend the afternoon exploring any remaining shopping interests or revisit favorite spots for last-minute purchases.
- **Relaxation:** Enjoy a leisurely afternoon at a café or park before departing.

Departure:

- **Transfer to Airport:** Head to Bandaranaike International Airport for your departure, with memories and souvenirs from your shopping tour in Colombo.

Additional Tips:

- **Transportation:** Arrange for a private vehicle or use taxis for convenience and ease of travel between shopping destinations.
- **Currency:** Have Sri Lankan rupees ready for shopping, as many smaller vendors and markets may not accept credit cards.
- **Bargaining:** Practice bargaining at local markets, but expect fixed prices at malls and boutiques.

This itinerary allows you to explore the diverse shopping experiences Colombo has to offer, from traditional markets to modern malls and specialty boutiques, ensuring you find unique treasures to take home from your trip to Sri Lanka.