

Discovery Time

1 Haratua | May 2020



My beautiful teardrop pearl

Kia ora! I am Himani, an educator at Te Manawa. I originally came from a lovely, small country called Sri Lanka. Have you heard about Sri Lanka before? Maybe you, or someone you know, has been to my beautiful home country.

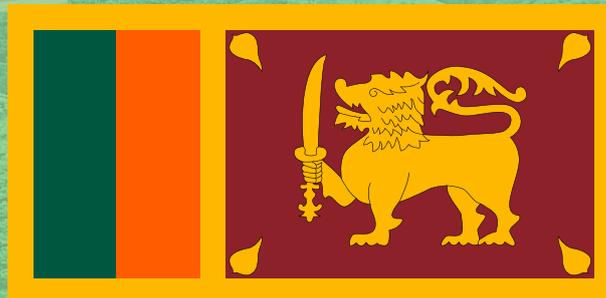


Sri Lanka is sometimes called “the teardrop of the Indian Ocean” or “the pearl of the Indian Ocean” because of its shape and location.

Sri Lanka is surrounded by the beauty of its natural landscape and high biodiversity, rich resources, important history, cultural wealth and friendly people.

The current population of Sri Lanka is nearly 21.4 million people.

Based on language and religion, Sri Lanka has four major ethnic groups: Sinhalese (majority), Tamils, Muslims and Burghers.



Sri Lanka has one of the most unique and colourful flags in the world. The flag is called the “Lion Flag”, or “Sinha Kodiya” in Sinhala, the native language of Sri Lanka. “Sinha” means lion and “Kodiya” means flag.

The Sri Lankan flag was officially adopted on May 22nd, 1972 as the civil and state flag.

The flag has a gold border with a green and saffron rectangle on the left and a maroon rectangle on the right. A golden lion holds a sword inside it.

The flag’s design contains symbolism in every aspect of its design.

This lion symbolizes the bravery of the Sinhalese people. 75 per cent of Sri Lankans are Sinhalese. The lion’s curly mane represents wisdom, meditation and religious observance, while the beard represents purity of words.

The lion is surrounded by four gold-coloured “bo”, the leaves of a sacred fig tree (*Ficus religiosa*) under which Siddhartha Gautama, the spiritual teacher and founder of Buddhism, later known as Gautama Buddha, achieved spiritual enlightenment. These leaves represent the four concepts of Buddhism: loving kindness, compassion, equanimity and sympathetic joy.

The green and saffron stripes represent the main minority groups living in Sri Lanka (saffron for Tamils and green for Muslims).

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is the tiny island located in the continent of Asia, southeast of the tip of the Indian subcontinent. Can you find it on the world map?



Before being called Sri Lanka, my country was known as Ceylon. This is where Ceylon tea comes from. Sri Lanka is the fourth largest tea producer and the second largest exporter of tea in the world!



Children representing different ethnicities of Sri Lanka with the national flag



The historical 'Sigiriya' (Lion's rock) fortress is surrounded by a breath-taking landscape



Ayubowan

The most common way of greeting in Sri Lanka is to say “Ayubowan” with palms joined and folded hands. The meaning of “Ayubowan” is “May you have long life”

May you have a long life

Sinhala and Tamil are the two official languages of Sri Lanka.

Sinhala is the native language of the Sinhalese people. My ethnicity is Sinhalese and my native language is Sinhala.

Sri Lankan Chicken Curry

“Rice and Curry” is the national dish of Sri Lanka. It is a particularly spicy menu that is always presented on the Sri Lankan table with a rice dish accompanied by several hot & spicy dishes called “Curries” in Sinhala.

Here is a recipe for a traditional Sri Lankan Chicken curry. Maybe you can try to make it at home! You can substitute lamb with chicken if you wish.

Ingredients:

- 3 boneless skinless chicken breasts
 - 2 tablespoons white vinegar
 - 1 teaspoon tamarind* (extract juice by adding 1 teaspoon of water to tamarind pods)
 - 1/4 cup curry powder*
 - 3 tablespoons roasted curry powder*
 - 1 tablespoon salt, or to taste
 - 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
 - 2 tablespoons cooking oil
 - 1 red onion, sliced
 - 4 green chillies, halved lengthways
 - 12 curry leaves
 - 1 teaspoon fresh ginger root, crushed
 - 3cm cinnamon stick, broken in half
 - 3 cloves garlic, minced
 - 1/2 cup (125ml) water
 - 1 1/2 tablespoons tomato paste
 - 1 cup (250ml) coconut milk
- * You can buy these items from your local Indian Spice shop.



1. Cut the chicken into bite-sized pieces.

2. Combine the vinegar, tamarind juice, curry powder, salt and pepper in a bowl.

3. Add chicken and toss to coat. Let it marinate for few minutes

4. Heat the cooking oil in a wok or frying pan over medium heat.

5. Add chopped garlic, sliced onion, green chillies, curry leaves, ginger and cinnamon stick to the heated oil and cook until the onion has softened and is nearly see-through (translucent); about 5 minutes.

6. Reduce heat to medium-low and continue cooking and stirring until the onion is very tender and dark brown; perhaps 15 to 20 minutes more.

7. Add the chicken mixture, water and tomato paste. Stir and simmer until the chicken is cooked through; about 10 minutes.

8. Add the roasted curry powder and stir until evenly dispersed.

9. Gradually stir in the coconut milk and simmer for 2-3 more minutes. (Do not overheat or the coconut milk may curdle) Serve with rice and enjoy the full and spicy flavour!



Culture

Many types of Sri Lankan arts and crafts have been inspired by Buddhism, the main religion. About 70% of Sri Lanka's population are followers. I am a Buddhist too, and that means I follow the teachings of Buddha.



Buddhist temple in Sri Lanka

The Sri Lankan handicraft industry has a history that runs back thousands of years. It is essentially a cottage industry, which uses natural raw materials by means of time-tested, age-old techniques.

Sri Lankan brassware is an important handicraft and holds an important place in the country's culture.

Most Sri Lankan families have a collection of traditional brassware which adds a shine to their homes.



Some brass items found in Sri Lankan homes

Tra & Handa Sun and Moon brass ornaments

In Sri Lanka, Sun and Moon wall hangings bring peace and energy to a home, according to commonly held beliefs. Here are some sun and moon brass ornaments inside my second home in New Zealand.

The sun and the moon are not only used as wall hangings. Sri Lankan brides who dress as a traditional "Kandyan" bride usually wear two round ornaments engraved with the sun and moon. These are fixed onto either side of the head and separated by the centre piece called "Nalalpatha".

The Kandyan bride stands like a window into the spirit of Sri Lanka. She represents the traditions, culture and beliefs of Sinhala Buddhists.

The sun and moon are linked to eternity and brides wear images of them in the hope of achieving a satisfying and long-lasting marriage.



As you can see, they are not very big!



These photos are from my wedding! I'm wearing the traditional Sri Lankan women's wedding costume called "osariya" and draped in traditional jewellery. As seen in the picture, I wore the sun and moon ornaments on either side of my head along with the "Nalalpatha", all made from gold.



Talk to your parents or grandparents about their wedding costumes and how they celebrated their special days.

The Sun and Moon



The sun and the moon are such dominant fixtures in the lives of everyone on Earth, so it's not surprising that many cultures around the world have stories about them.

According to Māori mythology, Ranginui (the Sky Father) plays an important role in the birth of Te Rā (the sun), Te Marama (the moon) and all the stars in every constellation. All things that gave light in the sky were collectively known as Te Whānau Mārama (the family of Light).

Māori believe Te Rā is the main god of the heavens. During winter he was known as Te Rā-tūoi (the lean sun) and he spends time with his winter wife Hinetakurua. In the warmer summer months Te Rā becomes Te Rā-kura (the red sun) where he frolics and plays with his summer wife Hineraumati. Hinetakurua is the star otherwise known as Sirius, and Hineraumati is said to inhabit the earth.

Marama, Ahoroa and Māhina are common names for the moon. The moon has important symbolic meaning for Māori and is strongly associated with women. Sometimes the moon is associated with fertility and the cycle of life. The moon was also used as a guide for planting and fishing and is the basis of a calendar system known as Maramataka.

Learn more about Maramataka at teara.govt.nz/en/maramataka-the-lunar-calendar



Rona and the Moon

Rona was the daughter of the sea god Tangaroa. She was the Tide Controller. One night she was carrying a bucket with stream water back home to her children, when Te Marama slipped behind the clouds making it hard to see. As Rona was walking, she hit her foot against a root that was sticking out of the ground. She was so upset that she couldn't see the root, she made some unkind remarks about the Moon.

The Moon heard her remarks and put a curse on the Maori people. The Moon grabbed Rona and her water bucket. Many people today see a woman with a bucket in the Moon. It is said that when Rona upsets her bucket, it rains. This Maori story symbolizes the influence of the Moon on the rain and on the waters of the Earth, and especially on the tides.

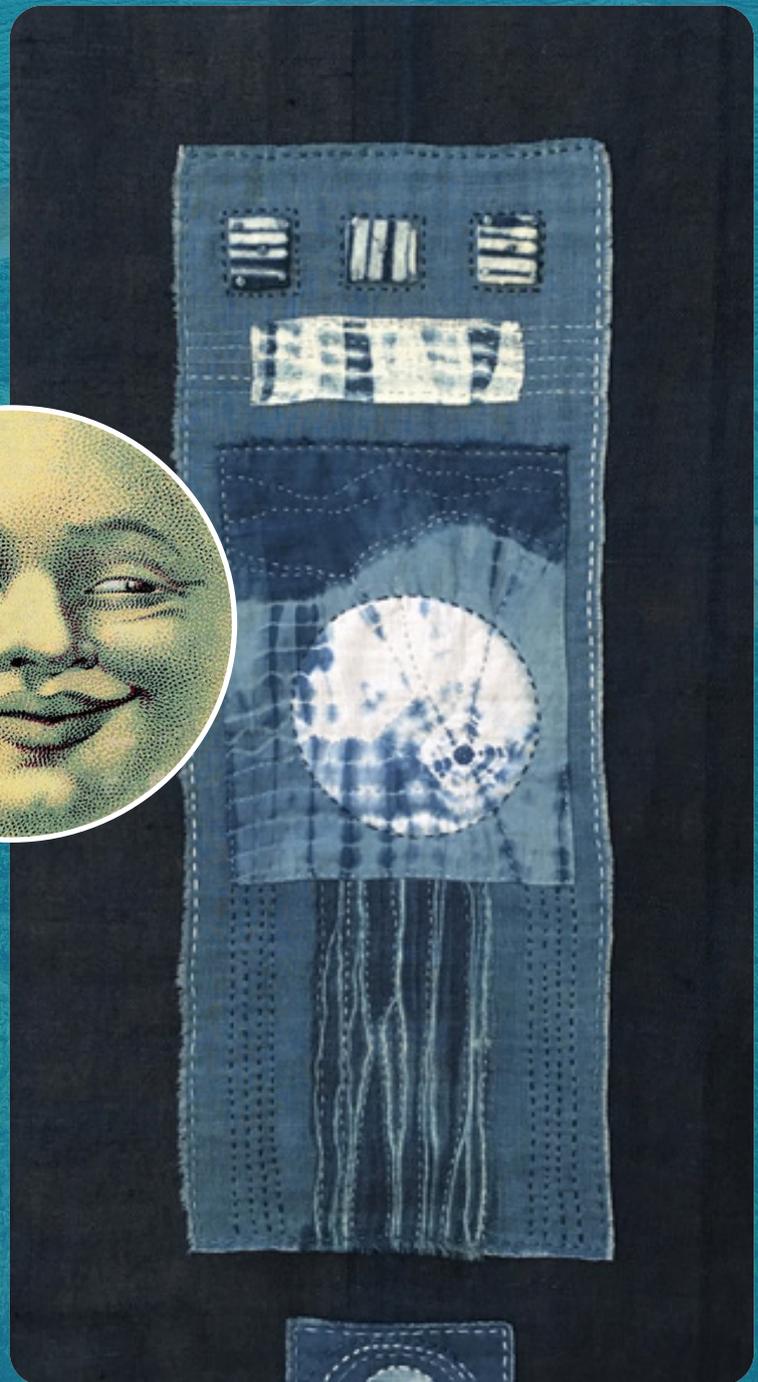
In a separate Maori myth, a man named Rona went to the Moon to find his wife. To this day, the two take turns eating each other. This is how the phases of the Moon were explained.



What do you see in the moon? Look at this art. Maybe it was inspired by the stories of seeing a face in the moon. Can you see one too?



Here's a tutorial about how to make your own face in the moon picture! This example uses a programme called Affinity, but you can probably make one in another programme. See if you can work it out! www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUNxAtdx9aQ



Indigo Moon Cloths by Shibori Girl Studio



How Maui slowed the sun

For Maui and his mother the days were too short, and there was never enough time to accomplish anything in only one day. Maui thought that if the Sun were moving slower across the sky, there would be more hours of light in one day.

So, Maui cut off the sacred tresses of his wife, Hina, to make a rope that would not burn in the Sun. With his rope he caught the Sun as it was rising and beat it with the magic jawbone of his grandmother. The Sun was

so weak after the beating that it could not run but only creep along its course. In this way, sunlight lasted longer, and it was possible to work more during the day.



Do you know any other stories about the sun and the moon? Perhaps you could ask your grandparents or parents if they know any stories or poems about the sun or the moon.

Pol Thel Pahana

Traditional Sri Lankan brass oil lamp

Lighting a brass oil lamp plays an important social, cultural and religious role in the lives of Sri Lankans.

The oil lamp, “Pol Thel Pahana”, is closely linked to the key moments of our lives, both happy and sad. Hence, it is an essential activity for us as Sri Lankans to begin each important event, ceremony or festival by lighting one. It is believed that this brings good luck. The flickering brightness that comes from an oil lamp symbolises wisdom, hope and new beginnings.



Mayor of Palmerston North, Grant Smith lights a rooster-shaped brass lamp at the “Dhansela” free Sri Lankan meal offered at Te Manawa Museum in remembrance of victims of the April 2019 bomb attack in Sri Lanka. This lamp was lit by all the distinguished guests who were present



This photo was taken a few years ago in Sri Lanka. My mother, son and husband are lighting the brass oil lamp to represent prosperity at the dawn of the Sinhala and Tamil New Year and to wish happiness, goodwill and blessings to all.

The Sinhala and Tamil New Year is celebrated yearly in the month of April. In 2020 New Year was celebrated on April 13. It is a festival that brings all the Sri Lankan communities together to live in peace and harmony. It is a time for tradition, sharing and hope.



Poruwa

I got married in Sri Lanka on August 25th, 2000. In this photo my husband and I are lighting a brass oil lamp decorated with flowers, signifying hope and blessing for a favourable future. This was done after we, as newlyweds, descended the [poruwa](#), a decorated wooden platform that represents the house that the couple will share and is symbolic of their marriage and the start of a new life.



"Poruwa" prepared for my wedding.



Exchanging wedding rings on the poruwa



Sanni Yakuma

The traditional Sri Lankan healing ritual

Sri Lankan people have a variety of traditional healing rituals - "thovil" in Sinhala. Among them, Sanni Yakuma is the most extravagant ritual. This healing method relates to the mental or physical equilibrium of a person that gets upset by exposure to disease. Traditionally, it is believed diseases are brought to people in the form of a demon!

Sanni Yakuma is a dance ritual, performed from dusk to dawn by a group of dancers in front of a person affected with one or more diseases.

There are 18 diseases attributed to 18 demons ("yakku" in Sinhala) and the ritual consists of 18 masks that represent each of the demons, with one more mask for the "Maha Kola Sanni Yaka"—the demon chief. So altogether nineteen different masks in total are worn by practised dancers along with the shaman healer ("yakendura" in Sinhala) who conducts the ritual.



Yakku

Below are the 18 demons and the diseases ("sanni" in Sinhala) they're believed to cause.

1. **Deva Sanniya** – causes measles, mumps, smallpox, typhoid fever and cholera.
2. **Vata Sanniya** – causes diseases caused by air in the body, also paralyses.
3. **Pith Sanniya** – causes diseases of the bile.
4. **Amukku Sanniya** – causes stomach pain and vomiting.
5. **Naga Sanniya** – the vision of the demon causes poison like cobra poison in the body blister, swellings.
6. **Ginijala Sanniya** – causes heat similar to fire in the body and a burning sensation.
7. **Selesma Sanniya** – causes headache, overproduction.
8. **Kapala Sanniya** – causes temporary insanity.
9. **Maru Sanniya** – causes death and the fear of death.
10. **Gulma sanniya** – causes stomach diseases related to parasitic worms.



11. **Kora Sanniya** – causes lame limbs, swollen joints.
12. **Buhutu Sanniya** – causes temporary madness.
13. **Kana Sanniya** – causes temporary blindness.
14. **Jala Sanniya** – causes unbearable cold and shivering.
15. **Bihiri Sanniya** – causes temporary deafness.
16. **Golu Sanniya** – causes temporary muteness.
17. **Vevulum Sanniya** – causes shivering and fits.
18. **Gedi Sanniya** – causes furuncles.



TRADITIONAL SINHALESE EXORCISM RITUAL BOOETHA SANNIYA



TRADITIONAL SINHALESE EXORCISM RITUAL ABOOETHA SANNIYA



TRADITIONAL SINHALESE EXORCISM RITUAL



TRADITIONAL SINHALESE EXORCISM RITUAL

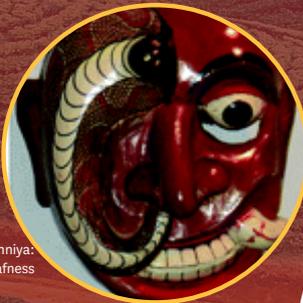
Thovil

Colourful masks are worn by dancers performing at the 'Thovil' healing ceremony. Here are just some of them.

Mask of the "Maha kola Sanniya", the chief of the 18 demons



Gulma Sanniya: Demon of parasitic worms and stomach diseases



Bihiri Sanniya: Demon of deafness



Gedi Sanniya: Demon of boils and skin diseases



Jala Sanniya: Demon of cholera and chills



Golu Sanniya: Demon of muteness



Kora Sanniya: Demon of lameness and paralysis



You can try making or decorating your own colourful mask!

You can watch a video showing Sanni Yakuma - <https://youtu.be/I-OgKYn31So>



The Batik Industry in Sri Lanka

Batik is a method of decorating a piece of fabric by creating a pattern on it with wax and colouring the rest of the piece of cloth using a dye. This resist dye technique creates a vibrant mosaic with coloured and uncoloured areas. Silk is one of the best fabrics for batik because finer waxed lines can be drawn on silk than on any other fabric.

In Sri Lanka, the batik industry has developed into a unique form of textile art. It was introduced to Sri Lanka by the Dutch in the 19th century from Indonesia, where it originated.

Every batik design is colourful and unique. Sri Lankan batik clothes (saree, sarong), curtains, wall pictures, tablecloths, bed covers, cushion covers etc. are very popular with foreigners.



Making batik with glue

You'll need: plain white fabric, PVA or school gel glue, wax paper, acrylic paint, nail brush or scrubbing brush



1. Draw your design on the fabric with glue.
2. Let the fabric dry completely (overnight).
3. Paint over the fabric and dried glue designs with watered-down acrylic paint.
4. Let the paint dry.
5. Soak the glue batik fabric pieces in warm/hot water for one hour to soften the glue.
6. Scrub the softened glue off with a nail brush or scrubbing brush.
7. Dry once again. You can let them air dry or put them in the dryer with an old towel.
8. Iron if you wish.



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