

# Stand by Sri Lanka now, urges Flemingo Duty Free



Jan Simonson Hoefnagels from Canada and Marine Bemelmans from Belgium, who work for travel retail brand Blue Stork, embark on a two-week tour round Sri Lanka driving a tuk-tuk

Flemingo Duty Free, the Sri Lankan duty free operator, is urging the travel retail world to support a pair of industry stalwarts traveling around Sri Lanka to raise awareness of tourism in the country following the Easter Sunday bombings, which killed more than 300 people.

Despite the tragedy, Jan Simonson Hoefnagels from Canada and Marine Bemelmans from Belgium, who work for travel retail brand Blue Stork, recently started a two-week tour round Sri Lanka driving a tuk-tuk.

Flemingo said: "It is great to see the two travelers supporting the country, demonstrating their passion to see the island and drive their tuk-tuk themselves.

"Marco Polo said 'Ceylon [Sri Lanka] is undoubtedly the finest island of its size in all the world'. Fast-forward to the 21st century and you will find many who agree with him. We recommend you follow in the footsteps of Marine and Jan and come to test Polo's assertion."

Their journey started at Flemingo Duty Free's Arrivals store at Bandaranaike International Airport. They headed towards the tourist town of Negombo in the north, where they met up with The

Whinging Pome and Thimmayya of Flemingo Duty Free for briefing and support.

“Negombo was the first real modern tourist town dating back to the 1960s, and is a land of beautiful beaches, lots of great hotels and street bars – but sadly the city is now devoid of people,” Flemingo said.

After a morning spent learning how to drive a tuk-tuk in Negombo, the duo drove to Sigiriya to spend the next two days exploring the cultural triangle.

Sri Lanka was ranked the number one destination to visit in 2019 by the Lonely Planet guide, Flemingo noted. “Sadly, many tourists and travelers have canceled their plans to come, but not Marine and Jan. While they cannot compensate for the slowdown in tourism, they understand that every little bit goes a long way. Several countries including India and China have relaxed the travel restriction against Sri Lanka this week.

“So, go out there and give them a wave, a clap, a shout of ‘well done’ as their branded tuk goes rolling down the highways. The country needs more of them coming here. And no, you don't have to drive a tuk-tuk. Just come and enjoy what is on offer, we promise you won't be disappointed,” Flemingo concluded.