

Shipping from China to Galle

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South Asia

China → Galle · via CMB air / Colombo sea · clearance by Sri Lanka Customs



Cargo handling on the China–Galle lane.

Galle is southern coastal city, and it is served through CMB air / Colombo sea. That combination is what actually sets your delivery date on this lane — allow +1 day for the inland leg on top of clearance.

On the destination side, Sri Lanka Customs handles clearance; budget 3–7 days of dwell before the cargo is released.

Duty, tax and clearance into Galle

Sri Lanka Customs assesses duty and tax on cargo arriving for Galle consignees. Current regime: VAT 18%; customs duty plus PAL (ports and airports levy) 10% and CESS on selected goods, with a de-minimis position of No practical de-minimis.

Conformity is the part most first-time importers underestimate: SLSI conformity for regulated goods; import control license for restricted categories. Getting this wrong is expensive because it usually cannot be fixed after the cargo has landed.

Restrictions and known friction points for Sri Lanka: Import control licenses apply to a shifting list of non-essential goods. CESS and PAL can add materially to the landed cost on consumer items. Confirm the current license position for your HS code before shipping.

How this lane actually runs

Colombo is one of the best-connected transshipment ports in the Indian Ocean, so direct South China sailings are frequent and reliable. Import control licensing has been used repeatedly as a foreign-exchange management tool, so the restricted list should be checked at the time of booking rather than assumed.

Air gateways used	CMB (Colombo Bandaranaike)
Air transit, China to gateway	3-5 business days
Sea gateways used	Colombo, Hambantota, Trincomalee
Sea transit, China to gateway	10-16 calendar days
Gateway serving Galle	CMB air / Colombo sea
Inland leg to Galle	+1 day from the gateway
Typical clearance / dwell	3-7 days
Peak season to plan around	Sep-Nov



Handling on the CMB air / Colombo sea routing serving Galle.

Before you book: Galle checklist

- Get the conformity paperwork moving early: SLSI conformity for regulated goods; import control license for restricted categories.
- Put the Galle delivery address, contact name and phone number on the invoice, not just the packing list.
- Confirm the consignee in Galle can act as importer of record — Sri Lanka Customs will not release cargo to an unregistered party.
- Book earlier than the transit time suggests during Sep–Nov, when space on this lane tightens.
- Photograph carton markings and seal numbers before departure — it makes any claim far easier to settle.
- Use ISPM-15 treated pallets. Untreated wood is the most common reason otherwise-clean cargo gets held.

Air, sea or overland into Galle?

Mode	Transit to gateway	Best suited to
→ Air Freight	3–5 business days	time-critical, high-value and low-volume cargo
☐ Sea Freight	10–16 calendar days	volume cargo where cost per kilo matters more than speed

Transit shown is China departure to the Sri Lanka gateway and excludes the +1 day inland leg to Galle and 3–7 days of clearance.

Mode guides for Galle

- [➔ Air Freight to Galle](#)
- [🚢 Sea Freight to Galle](#)

Frequently asked questions

How long does shipping from China to Galle take?

China to the Sri Lanka gateway is 3-5 business days by air, 10-16 calendar days by sea. On top of that, allow 3-7 days of clearance with Sri Lanka Customs and a +1 day inland leg to Galle.

What duty and tax will I pay importing into Galle?

Sri Lanka Customs applies: VAT 18%; customs duty plus PAL (ports and airports levy) 10% and CESS on selected goods. The de-minimis position is No practical de-minimis. Under a DDP arrangement these are pre-paid, so nothing is collected on arrival in Galle.

Can you ship batteries or sensitive cargo to Galle?

Yes. Battery cargo by air follows IATA PI 965-970 depending on how the cells are packed, and moves on certified channels via CMB (Colombo Bandaranaike). Surcharges apply and the declaration has to be made before booking.

Is sea freight cheaper than air freight into Galle?

Per kilo, yes — usually by a wide margin. The trade-off is time: 10-16 calendar days by sea versus 3-5 business days by air to the Sri Lanka gateway, before clearance and the +1 day inland leg. The crossover point is normally somewhere between 100 and 300 kg depending on the density of your cargo.

Which port or airport does cargo for Galle clear through?

Cargo for Galle is routed via CMB air / Colombo sea. Sea gateways for Sri Lanka are Colombo, Hambantota, Trincomalee; air gateways are CMB (Colombo Bandaranaike). We pick whichever gives the shortest total door time for your address.

Can you deliver door-to-door in Galle?

Yes. Delivery to a Galle address is quoted as one figure covering freight, duty and tax owed to Sri Lanka Customs, and the +1 day inland leg. Confirm whether your consignee wants the goods at a warehouse, a marketplace fulfillment center or a shop front, because the last-mile requirement differs.

Other delivery cities in Sri Lanka

- [China to Colombo](#)
- [China to Gampaha](#)
- [China to Kandy](#)
- [China to Negombo](#)
- [China to Jaffna](#)
- [China to Hambantota](#)

[All Sri Lanka freight information →](#)

References & official sources

Duty rates, thresholds and conformity requirements for Sri Lanka change by ministerial decision, sometimes mid-year. The figures on this page are buyer-planning references, not a customs ruling — confirm the current position for your own HS code with Sri Lanka Customs or your broker before you ship.

- [Sri Lanka Customs](#)
- [WTO — Tariff Profiles \(applied MFN duty by country\)](#)
- [IPPC — ISPM 15 wood packaging standard](#)
- [WCO — Harmonized System nomenclature](#)
- [IMO — IMDG Code for dangerous goods by sea](#)

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Shipping by industry

This page covers the route and clearance picture for the destination. Packing, classification and the compliance step that actually holds a shipment depend on what you are sending — these guides cover that by commodity.

- [Agricultural Drones Agriculture & Livestock Equipment](#)
- [Wire & Cable New Energy, Power & Electrical](#)
- [Automotive Lighting Automotive & Vehicles](#)
- [Flooring Building Materials & Construction Products](#)
- [Cartons Wood, Bamboo & Paper Products](#)
- [Flexible Packaging Plastics, Rubber & Packaging](#)
- [Capacitors Electronic Components & Semiconductors](#)
- [Smart Home Products Consumer Electronics & Smart Devices](#)
- [Refrigeration Equipment Home Appliances, HVAC & Commercial](#)
- [Tableware Furniture & Home Products](#)
- [Apparel Textiles, Apparel, Footwear & Leather](#)
- [Hospital Equipment Medical, Laboratory & Precision Instruments](#)

[All 139 industry guides →](#)

Checking the Sri Lanka duty position yourself

Duty and tax figures on this page are planning estimates. The binding assessment is made by Sri Lanka Customs against your declared HS code at the time of entry; where the amount is material, verify the current rate through [ITC Market Access Map](#) before

committing to an order.

Most landed-cost surprises trace back to classification rather than freight. [the WCO Harmonized System](#) defines the heading structure every customs administration builds on, and [ITC Market Access Map](#) will show you the duty a given heading attracts in this destination.

For ocean cargo, restricted commodities move under [the IMO's IMDG Code](#), and the container has to be declared and stowed accordingly. Batteries, flammables and corrosives all have a compliant ocean path; what causes rolled bookings is finding out about them after the container is packed.

For a wider view of how importing into Sri Lanka actually works — documentation norms, inspection behavior, the paperwork that tends to hold shipments — the [U.S. ITA guide to Sri Lanka customs regulations](#) is a useful independent read alongside our own lane notes.

Watch: the process behind this route

This guide covers routing and clearance for Galle. The video below covers the wider shipping process that sits around it.

FCL vs LCL Shipping: When to Switch (Break-Even Point Explained) — Max Antonov. Published on YouTube by a third party; we link it because it explains the process well, not because we produced it or endorse the provider.

Get a rate for Galle

This lane is quoted per shipment rather than from a published rate card, because the landed cost depends on the commodity, its density, the conformity requirements above and the delivery point. Send the cargo details and we will come back with a full DDP figure.

[Request a quote](#) → [See the Sri Lanka route page](#) →

Freight Rates to Sri Lanka

⚙ Cargo Weight (KG)

☐ Enter the actual gross weight of your shipment in kilograms. If you're unsure, fill in the volume fields below and we'll calculate it for you.

☐ Or enter volume (cm) — volumetric weight ÷ 6000

× ×

Non-integers rounded up. Larger of actual vs volumetric is used.

☐ Number of Boxes

Total chargeable weight = weight per box × number of boxes.

⚠ When you have not filled in the volume information, our prices may be inaccurate.

Galle, Sri Lanka Import Freight: Gateway, Duty & Time

What it takes to land cargo in Galle, Sri Lanka — CMB air / Colombo sea gateway, Sri Lanka Customs clearance, +1 day onward.

Sea and air both covered.

Get a Quote

Send the cargo details and we respond within one business day with a full DDP figure for Galle.

[WhatsApp Us Send Inquiry →](#)

Galle by Mode

- [All modes — Galle](#)
- [✈ Air Freight](#)
- [🚢 Sea Freight](#)

Other Cities in Sri Lanka

- [China to Colombo](#)
- [China to Gampaha](#)
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Other South Asia Destinations

- [Shipping to Bangladesh](#)
- [Shipping to India](#)
- [Shipping to Maldives](#)
- [Shipping to Nepal](#)
- [Shipping to Pakistan](#)

Route Page

- [Sri Lanka DDP route details →](#)
- [All freight destinations →](#)

Customs clearance in Sri Lanka

Duty and tax position, certification, typical port dwell and what actually holds shipments at this border — plus who files the entry.

[Sri Lanka clearance requirements →](#)

Priced routes to Sri Lanka

- [Shekou to Colombo FCL Ocean Freight Rates | 20GP & 40HQ](#)
- [Ship Shanghai to Colombo — FCL Container Cost from China](#)