

A CEYLON
PRESS TINY
GUIDE

A
CHECKLIST
OF THE 14
CORE
MINERALS
MINED IN
SRI LANKA

MINERALS



1 APATITE

A rock phosphate, Apatite is commercially used as a fertilizer and is mined in Sri Lanka at Eppawala, near Anuradhapura.

2 CALCITE

Calcite is used in producing lime, fertilizer, paint, PVC, and latex and is mined largely around Rathnapura, with smaller mines existing in Digana, Polonnaruwa, and Badulla.

3 CLAY

Clay deposits are found throughout Sri Lanka and mined especially in Nattandiya, Dediawela, Boralesgamuwa, and Meetiya goda. It is used widely in its ceramics industries, so much so that it is increasingly becoming a scarce resource.

Kaolin - or China clay has been mined almost to exhaustion in Sri Lanka, especially as Boralesgamuwa. The main component in porcelain, it is also used in medicine, cosmetics, and toothpaste.

4 DOLOMITE

An industrial mineral found in Sri Lanka, dolomite is widely mined and used in the island's ceramic, glass, paint, rubber, and fertilizer industries and in local lime manufacturing plants. It is scattered across the island in such areas as Anuradhapura, Habarana, Matale, Kandy, Ratnapura, Balangoda, Badulla, Ambilipitiya, and Hambantota. Calcite, a related mineral, is often found in the same deposits, and is used in construction.

5 FELDSPAR

A silicate mineral, feldspar is used in many industries including glass and ceramics, and as fillers in paints, plastics, and rubber.

Deposits of it, and accompanying mines, occur in many areas of Sri Lanka - including Rattota, Namaloya, Koslanda, and Balangoda.

6 GARNET SAND

A mineral sand increasingly in demand, garnet sand is used widely across many industries as an abrasive. Although commercially relevant deposits of it exist in such areas in the south as Dondra and Hambantota, it remains little exploited in Sri Lanka.

7 GRAPHITE

Graphite, also known as Plumbago, has long been a major mineral export for Sri Lanka, thanks largely to its exceptional purity. It is a key ingredient in lubricants, and lithium batteries and with the explosion of electric cars and electronics has seen demand growing exponentially. It is, of course, also used in pencils - as Sarvesh Murthi observed: "It is always better to write your feeling in GRAPHITE than in INK, as it's much easier to erase them and start fresh."

8

ILMENITE

Ilmenite, extracted from 'black gold' mineral sand is a major industrial mineral produced in Sri Lanka for export. Its deposits also contain relevant amounts of Rutile and Zircon – all ingredients used to make Titanium Dioxide, a raw material required for the productions of paints, plastic, and paper industries; and titanium metal. It is extracted from beach sand mined at Pulmoddai.

9 KAOLIN

Used to make ceramics and sanitary ware, paint, cosmetics and in paper, rubber, and fibreglass production, kaolin deposits, are found around Meetiya goda but so little is actually mined that most Sri Lankan manufacturing companies have to import the mineral.

10 MICA

Mica mineral deposits are mined in such areas as Matale, Badulla, Haldummulla, and Balangoda. Its ability to withstand high temperatures makes it a favourite raw material in electrical and electronic industries; as a lubricant; and for heat and electrical insulating purposes.

11 RARE EARTH ELEMENTS

The group of 15 rare earth elements known in the periodic table as the Lanthanide series – have become ever more in demand as they are used in high technology devices: smart phones, digital cameras, computer hard disks, LED lights, and flat screen televisions.

Of the very few found in Sri Lanka, Thorianite and Thorite are also increasingly in demand to provide environmentally safe, lasting energy. Deposits exist in Bambarabotuwa, Balangoda; Monazite in Matara, Nuwara Eliya, and Balangoda.

12 SALT

Despite a history going back to the earliest periods of recorded time, and a beaches that excel in the hot, dry climate perfect for large-scale solar evaporation, the island's salt industry is, at best, struggling in almost all measurable areas; and the country still has to import over 50% of its salt from abroad.

Focused largely around Puttalam, Hambantota, and Manar, the industry remains reliant on the old methods of manually harvested salt from dried pans into which seawater is driven and left to evaporate. Automation and all its attendant efficiencies have yet to make much impact on production or profits.

13

SILICA SAND

Silica sand is found in Sri Lanka's rivers and – in accumulations – on its beaches and in its shallow seas. It is used in glass, ceramics and in construction especially for concrete since it does not contain cause corrosion of any reinforced steel placed within the concrete. High purity deposits are mined in Marawila, Nattandiya, and Madampe, near Puttalam

14 VEIN QUARTZ

High purity vein quartz deposits are found in many areas of Sri Lanka, including Galaha, Rattota, Balangoda, Pelmadulla, Embilipitiya, and Ratnapura. It is a major ingredient in the manufacturing of computer chips and in the ceramic industry.

DISCOVER MORE

A HISTORY LIKE NO OTHER

Contrary & creative, Sri Lanka built a tropical Versailles as the West constructed in wattle & daub. When the Cold War ebbed, its own began. The Ceylon Press *History of Sri Lanka* - in eBook and Podcast - unpicks its serpentine history.

BEHIND EACH GREAT STORY

Island Stories: The Sri Lanka Podcast and the Press's *Complete Audio Books* explore the things that make Sri Lanka, Sri Lankan.

OFF PISTE

The Ceylon Press' *Alternative Guides* concern themselves with subjects and places without crowds; forgotten as they are by most academics, historians, and modern travellers.

LESS IS MORE

The Ceylon Press' *Tiny Guides* fillet the essentials of their subject from nature to history, culture to travel.

INSTANT OVERVIEWS

With their short, and readable introductions, The Ceylon Press' *Pocket Professor Very Short Introductions* illuminate Sri Lankan subjects from ancient dynasties to endemic mammals.

COMPANIONABLE LOOK-UPS

The Ceylon Press's subject *Companions to Sri Lanka* makes visible the whole island – from its arts, wildlife, & landmarks to religion, food, & history.

A LITTLE LIGHT RELIEF

And least it gets too serious, enjoy the off-grid *Jungle Diaries* blog & Podcast; and *Archaeologies*, the blank verse diaries of an occasional hermit.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Swarbrick is a publisher, planter, hotelier, hermit, and writer.

He was born in Colombo and raised, with few concessions to modernity, in India, Singapore, and the Middle East. Cornish, he gained his degrees on the Celtic fringe: at the Universities of Wales, and Stirling, prolonging an introduction to accepted working hours for as long as was decently possible.

Having worked at News Corp's HarperCollins UK as board director for various otherwise homeless departments including sales, art and marketing; and HarperCollins India, he ran Hachette's consumer learning division. Prior to this, he launched Oxford University Press's first commercial online business, Oxford Reference Online.

When the doubtful charms of boardroom bawls, bottom lines, and divas diminished, he returned to Sri Lanka, the land of his birth hundreds of years earlier, to rescue a spice plantation and set of art deco buildings that had gone feral in the jungle.

Today, as The Flame Tree Estate & Hotel, it has become one of the country's top ten boutique hotels, run by the kindest and most professional of hospitality teams; and overseen by several small schnauzers.

It also helps fund The Ceylon Press, set up to make Sri Lanka's rich and complicated story, a mystery to many, and a secret to most, more accessible. The Press' books, companions, podcasts, blogs, and guides are freely available at theceylonpress.com. The Press also publishes Poetry from the Jungle, a podcast that recasts the orthodox view of the world's best poets and poems.

ABOUT THE FLAME TREE ESTATE & HOTEL

"It's absolute paradise," wrote one guest recently; "I would fly back to Sri Lanka simply to stay in this place for a couple more days."

Centered on a 25-acre organic spice and timber plantation, The Flame Tree Estate & Hotel has been renovated and furnished with art & antiques; its healthy menus fusing street food with fine dining.

Its 1,000 high rocky hills stalled the Dutch army in 1765; and until the civil war the estate stretched over 100 acres with 3 working elephants.

Today its restored plantations grow cardamom, turmeric, ginger, cloves, pepper, cocoa; rubber, coffee, vanilla; cinnamon, coconuts - and scores of trees from ebony to sapu – best enjoyed from the vantage point of the hotel's infinity pool. Visit www.flametreeestate.com.

It also houses and funds The Ceylon Press whose books, companions, podcasts, blogs, and guides are freely available at theceylonpress.com.

A GIFT FOR READERS

As a reader of this book, you naturally qualify for special treatment should your holiday ever bring you to Sri Lanka and The Flame Tree Estate & Hotel. Simply drop the general manager a note to tell him how you came across us and to make arrangements to best suit your time and budget:

GeneralManager@flametreeestate.com