

The Day I became A Bird for Seven Minutes

Posted on



Feeling Gooooood! – Dilani with her instructor, Henry.

Life is all about collecting experiences. Some stay with us forever, while others fade with time. Then there are those that give you goosebumps every time you relive them. Skydiving had been on my bucket list for years. This is the story of the day I finally became a bird for seven minutes.

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Photography: Skydive Sri Lanka and Trips Lanka.

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I don't exactly remember when I got the idea to skydive, but it had been on my bucket list for a few years before I filled my pockets! Luckily, I have an amazing friend who is married to traveling and trying out new things.

When he posted that he was going to jump from the sky, I didn't take a second to think; I immediately confirmed my participation.



Sameera and Russ: just after jumping from the aircraft.

It is said that we enjoy a trip the most while planning it. That's absolutely true, and when it comes to signing up for something you've always wanted to do, the pleasure, gratitude, and excitement are something worth experiencing.

I wanted to control myself and focus on my work. But suddenly, in the middle of something important, I would be like, "Yayyyy girl, you are going to jump from an aircraft!" I kept reminding myself to stay calm, but I still remember the smile on my face every time that thought crossed my mind.



Dilani is posing and enjoying the view with instructor Henry.

It was November 8, 2025, and the day had finally arrived. We started our journey from Colombo by van. Even though seven of us had confirmed, three of them planned to come directly to the hotel in Bentota, where we would start the documentation process. So, four of us left Colombo, praying for Mother Nature to bless us with sunshine.

I won't say Mother Nature didn't bless us. She gave us the sunny day we had hoped for. But it was so windy that even one of our friends who had arrived earlier couldn't take off because the aircraft's approval wasn't granted due to the weather.

On the outside, we looked chilled. Inside, we were all thinking, "What if...?"

To distract ourselves, we started playing UNO with the hope that everything would be fine. If I remember correctly, that was probably the day we checked the sky the most. Every five minutes, one of us was looking up.

When lunchtime arrived, we ate and then received the most awaited message: the first two had taken off.

Here's how it worked. There were two instructors, and two of us were taken to Katukurunda Air Force Camp by them in a vehicle. From there, we boarded the aircraft, climbed to 13,000 feet, jumped, and landed on Bentota Beach. Our eyes

were shining with hope when the first two returned to the hotel premises. One of them was our friend who had delivered a baby just a few months earlier. Hats off to her courage!



Tharanee, not forgetting to pose during freefall with her instructor, Russ.

Finally, my turn arrived. Tharanee and I were supposed to go together with Henry and Russ, two supportive and friendly instructors. We reached the Katukurunda camp, geared up, and listened carefully to all the instructions. The instructors secured their parachute packs while helping us into our equipment. Before getting into the aircraft, they filmed a short video and asked, “What do you want to tell your parents and loved ones?” That question suddenly made me think, “What if I die?” Then I reminded myself that we’re all going to die someday anyway, and I ended up recording what was probably the longest pre-jump video among our group, saying everything that came to my mind.

Then we got into the aircraft and sat on the floor next to the instructor I was jumping with.

I had always wanted to fly like a bird, so I spread my arms like wings. It lasted only about eight to ten seconds, but it felt like a lifetime. I honestly

don't remember whether I even breathed during those moments.

Slowly, we took off, and the sound of the aircraft was, well, like a tractor (just kidding). Flying with the aircraft doors open was a next-level experience. For a moment, I thought, "What if I fall?" Then I reminded myself, "You're going to jump anyway."

By the time we reached 13,000 feet, it was incredibly windy and cold. Henry connected my harness to his, and that was the moment I realized it was happening.

While he was busy checking the gear, I took a moment to admire the breathtaking view before me. Henry asked me to move closer to the open door and stretch out my hand. My God, the skin on my hand was dancing in the wind.

Then I heard, "Are you ready?" I nodded. Holding onto my straps, with my legs bent backward as instructed... We jumped!

Words will never be enough to explain the freefall. It was probably a mix of astonishment, fear, excitement, and something I still can't quite describe.

As I fell toward the earth, I could feel the skin on my face being pushed upward. I was falling through the clouds like something out of a fairytale. A few moments later, Henry signaled that I could relax my hands. I had always wanted to fly like a bird, so I spread my arms like wings. It lasted only about eight to ten seconds, but it felt like a lifetime. I honestly don't remember whether I even breathed during those moments. Then the parachute opened... And the real show began.

Skydiving is an extreme sport where you jump from an aircraft, free-fall until the parachute opens, float through the sky like a bird, take in breathtaking views, and finally land safely.

Just imagine hanging beneath a parachute between the blue sky and the blue sea. For a moment, I truly felt how tiny I was.



Dinesh and Russ during the free-fall.

The Bentota coastline put on its best show. Looking around, I spotted the Kalutara Pagoda and the Aluthgama Buddha statue. In the distance, I could see mountains, paddy fields, and forests.

By then, the wind had become so gentle. It felt like comforting music, adding even more beauty to the scenery unfolding before my eyes.

Meanwhile, my mind kept whispering, “Girl, you did it!”

After floating through the sky, it was finally time to land. Before we landed, Henry taught me how to steer and make turns, but by then my energy was almost gone. Still, he made a few turns that sent my adrenaline soaring. Landing itself was easy. All I had to do was lift my legs out of the stirrups using my hands.



Getting ready for landing.

Seven minutes after jumping from the aircraft, we landed safely on Bentota Beach.

Someone handed me a bottle of water immediately after landing. Only then did I realize how thirsty I actually was. I was overwhelmed by the unforgettable experience I had just lived. My friend was waiting for us on the beach. We then returned to the hotel by boat, where it was finally time to share our experiences with everyone else.

All of us were able to complete our jumps without any interruptions, and that's something I still feel grateful for.



Shameera and Henry: Landing safely.

I've flown several times before and after, and I've always loved looking at the clouds from above. But this was something extraordinary. Just imagine falling through the clouds and then floating between the blue sky, the blue sea, and my beautiful motherland, Sri Lanka. Even today, I get goosebumps whenever I think about that moment.

Sri Lanka is a magical country, as everyone knows.

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Skydiving is an extreme sport where you jump from an aircraft, free-fall until the parachute opens, float through the sky like a bird, take in breathtaking views, and finally land safely. Now imagine experiencing all of that in the skies of Sri Lanka!



Dilani, Tharanee, Russ, Henry, Dinesh and Shameera.