



Travelling over the Nine Arch Bridge in Ella on the Kandy-Ella train route, often referred to as the most scenic train ride in the world

What To Do & Where to Stay

Alvin Jacobs, CEO Taru Villas

Fondly known as the Pearl of the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka is an exotic tropical paradise with numerous opportunities for adventure and exploration. Rich in historical and cultural significance, bio-diversity, breathtaking landscapes, and a wide variety of gastronomic delights, Sri Lanka offers a memorable getaway for all types of travellers. As you plan your next vacation to this island paradise, I wish to highlight a few of the hidden gems our island offers so you can get the best out of your stay.

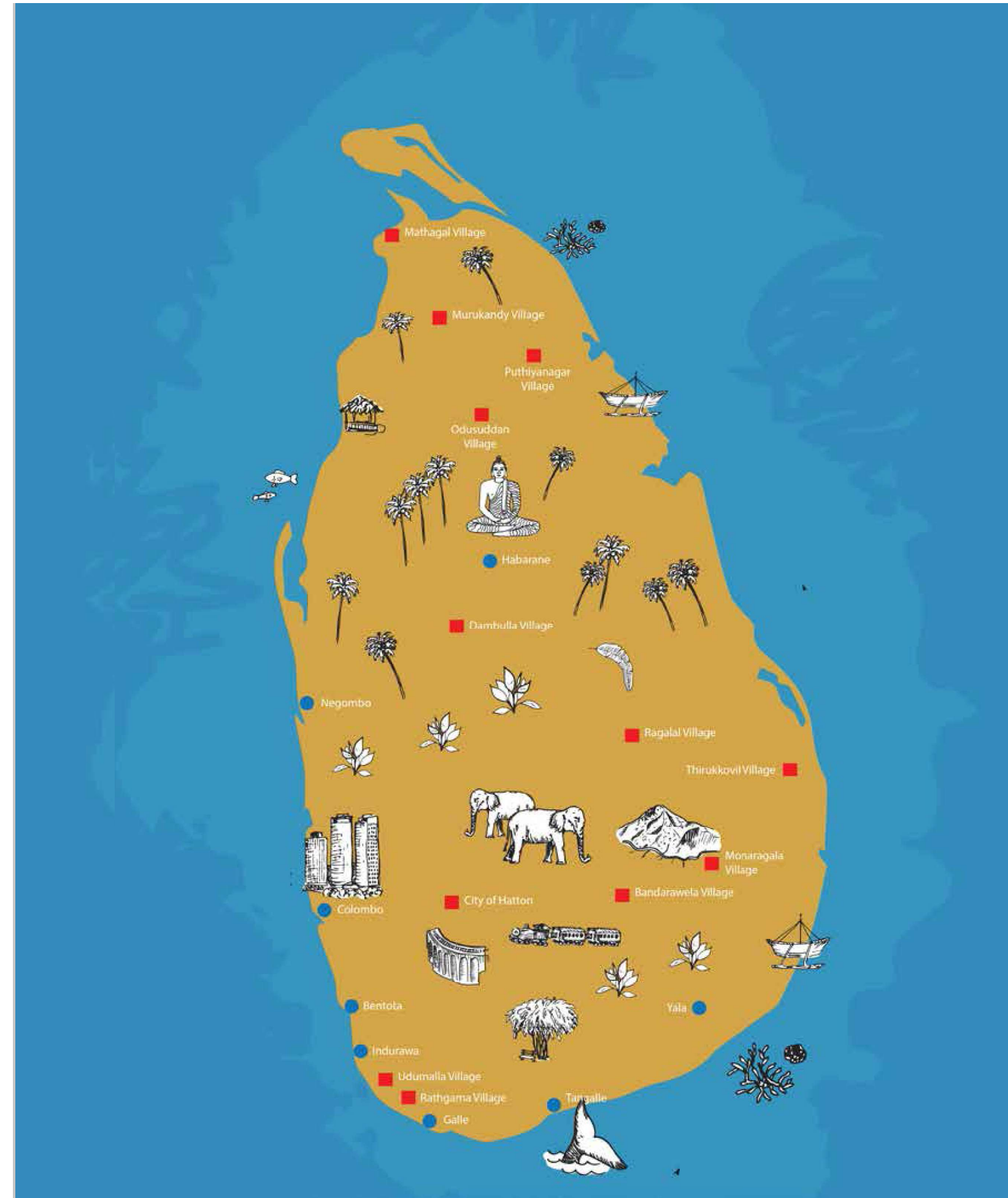
For the wildlife enthusiast, Sri Lanka is home to diverse animal life, with numerous National Parks and wildlife sanctuaries. In 2019, Forbes described Sri Lanka as the best safari destination outside Africa. Justifiably so. The Minneriya National Park is a 'Wildlife Spectacle' for 'The Gathering' of 300+ Asian elephants, according to Lonely Planet. The Yala National Park is renowned for the highest density of leopards in the world. Similarly, some of the best sightings of blue whales and sperm whales can be witnessed in Mirissa, Trincolamee and Kalpitiya. One way to guarantee an all-encompassing wildlife experience in Sri Lanka is to stay at hotels and villas with a unique focus on nature and wildlife elements such as Taru Villas Maia. A Luxury boutique hotel located in the heart of the cultural triangle in Habarana within 30 minutes of Minneriya National Park, Kaudulla National Park, and Eco Park.

To explore Sri Lanka from a higher altitude, travellers can visit the hill country of Sri Lanka and be inspired as they witness picturesque views of magnificent waterfalls and tea bushes amidst misty mountains and hiking trails. Some must-see locations are Sinharaja Forest for a relaxing hike (recommended for bird watchers), The Horton Plains and World's End for their unforgettable views, and Adam's Peak, a fairly strenuous yet spiritual hike taken by many locals.

For a taste of our history and culture, tour our cultural triangle for the ancient and historical monuments of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Kandy – three key cities that have played a pivotal role in Sri Lankan history covering the royal monarchy and colonial era. As a country with one of the oldest civilizations in the world and rich in history, it comes as no surprise that Sri Lanka has six cultural sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list, including the 'Ancient City of Sigiriya' and the 'Old town of Galle and its fortifications'. A great way to experience our history is to stay in these cities' well-preserved, traditional homes and villas. For example, Taru Villas Rampart Street offers a magical perspective of colonial living within the Galle fort, offering a stay at an old merchant's bungalow with a view of the historic 17th-century ramparts.

Considering that we are an island famed for some of the world's best beaches, a beach vacation is a must. Lonely Planet highlights Bentota, Hikkaduwa, Mawella, Unawatuna, Mirissa and Hiriketiya among the Top Ten Beaches in Sri Lanka, and each offers a unique experience for beach lovers. Bentota beach attracts adrenaline junkies with a wide range of water sports, including paragliding at sunset to enjoy breathtaking views of the ocean and land as you soar up in the sky. Arugam Bay attracts budget-conscious sun-seekers looking for surf, and Mawella Beach is a pristine private beach similar to the Maldives, a well-kept secret in Sri Lanka.

This island nation has much to offer to satisfy every traveller's needs, which is why it is such a unique destination and must-visit. Whether you are looking for an adrenaline-pumped adventurous getaway, a relaxing and rejuvenating one away from a hectic lifestyle, or a mix of both, our country offers it all. A seamlessly magical merging of the wild, the hills, the beaches, and our cultural majesty. We look forward to hosting you for a truly unforgettable stay in Sri Lanka!



Sri Lanka's Goodness Getaways

Unforgettable experiences that give back to the local community in picturesque Seenigama

SRI LANKA'S GOODNESS GETAWAYS

Unforgettable experiences that give back to the local community in picturesque Seenigama.

Get off the beaten track and discover a unique coastal village while contributing meaningfully towards enriching the lives of the local community. You can enrich your life and the lives of others through discovery in a unique coastal village experience by the Foundation of Goodness. Explore Sri Lanka in new and unique ways. Volunteer your time, dive in the ocean, share in a friendly game of cricket with your club team, or join a cooking class to learn how to prepare authentic Sri Lankan meals.

100% of the proceeds are reinvested into the Foundation of Goodness for the sustainability of its community development programs and ensure a brighter future for rural individuals and families in the villages we support.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO WHEN YOU VISIT THE SEENIGAMA VILLAGE:

VISIT THE FOUNDATION OF GOODNESS

Visit the Foundation of Goodness (FoG) and discover how the organisation has worked tirelessly to rebuild a village decimated by the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami to be stronger and better than before. You will also witness how Tsunami funding has been used to create Sri Lanka's holistic, one-of-a-kind development model.

PLATES OF GOODNESS

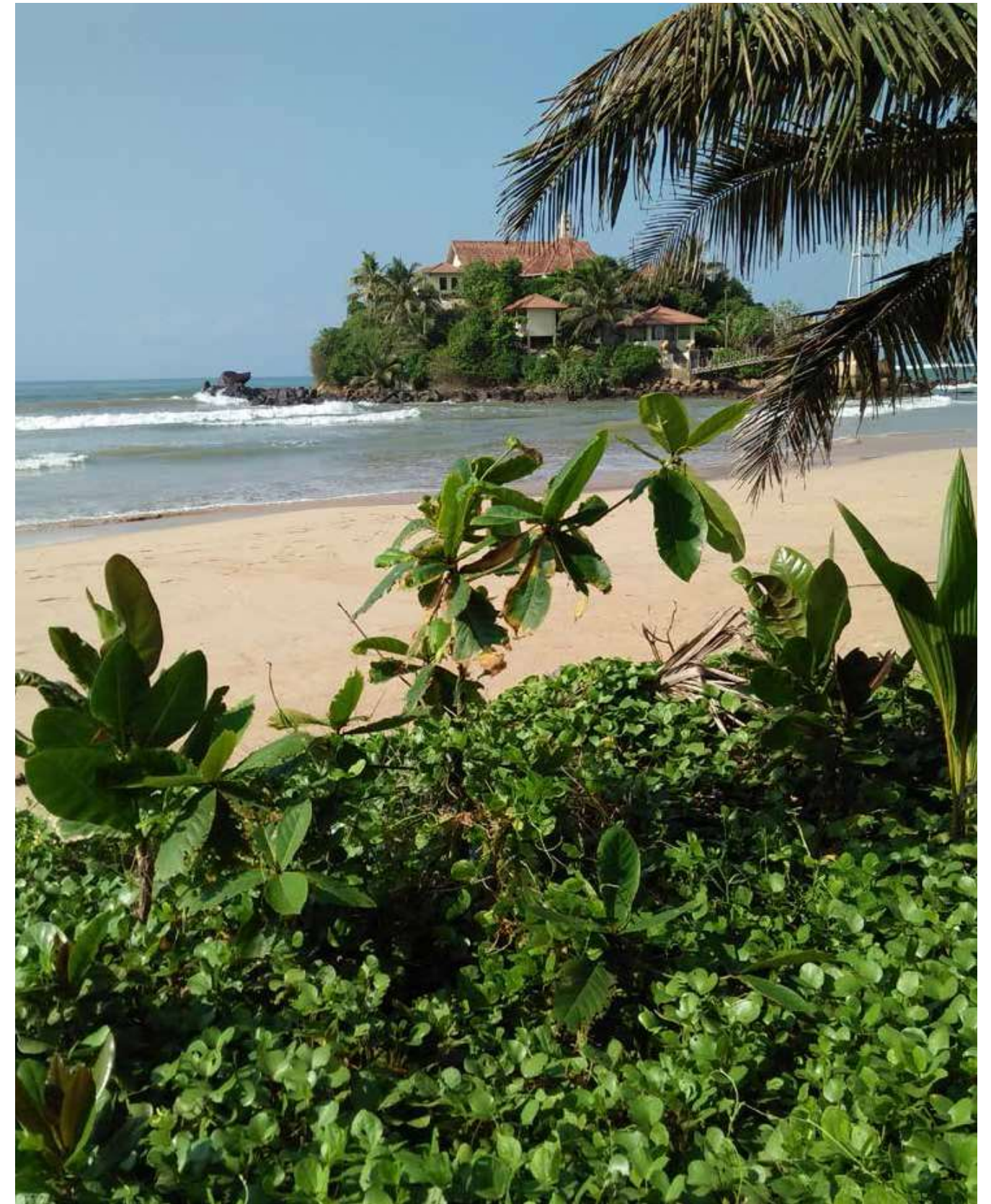
Rated as #1 on "Things to Do" in Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka, the Plates of Goodness (PoG) social impact experience is led by two sisters who will teach you how to cook an authentic, healthy Sri Lankan meal. You have the option to get assistance in preparing the dishes, or you can sit back and enjoy the lessons.

VISITING SRI LANKA? VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Whether you are a student, retiree, tourist, school, corporate group, guide or scout, who wishes to give back to a community through a cause you are passionate about, FoG can put together a volunteering program based on your duration of stay. Our experienced staff will ensure that each program is catered to the specific needs of the individual or group, be it environment management or women's empowerment. Share your stories and experiences to motivate our students!

DIVE FOR GOOD

Enjoy a dive while making a difference in our community by taking part in our Ocean Care Initiatives! Ocean Care seeks to rid the oceans of pollutants such as plastic, fabric, polythene, rubber, fishing nets, etc. You can also join us for scuba diving adventures for beginners, intermediate and professional divers, with specialty courses.





GOODNESS NATURE CRUISE

Explore the local culture and environment around the Hikkaduwa Lake. This guided boat safari is ideal for nature lovers and bird watchers, with views of the natural flora and fauna of the region, including mangroves, and sightings of different species of monitor lizards and endemic species of birds.

RIDE FOR GOOD

Visit six key locations in a private and authentic Sri Lankan way! This one-day tour by Tuk Tuk will take you to six locations along the beautiful Southern coast of Sri Lanka. This includes immersive experiences at the turtle hatchery, a moonstone mine and a forest monastery.

TUK TUK TOURS

See Sri Lanka the best way possible by taking in the scenery from the driver's seat of an authentic Sri Lankan Tuk Tuk. You can personalise your trip by choosing your preferred route in the Eastern, Southern or Northern part of Sri Lanka. Whichever route you take, be sure to visit one of FoG's Village Heartbeat Empowerment Centres.

GOOD LIFE INSTITUTE

Sign up for a 1-, 2- or 3-day enrichment program - Better-Than-I-Used-To-Be, led by Kushil Gunasekera, Founder of FoG. This program incorporates FoG's philosophy based on good leadership, life experiences, inner beauty and the art of kindness. This program is complemented by restful and inner growth activities geared towards peace of mind.

SPORTS TOURS

1-Day or Multi-Day Community Aid Sports Tours organised for international teams in men's cricket and women's cricket & netball. On a non-match day, visiting teams can take part in special community outreach activities such as beach cleaning, visiting elders' homes, teaching English, painting classrooms and various other activities.



Dive For Good



Goodness Nature Cruise
Hikkaduwa Lake



Taru Villas Riva

Negombo



Setup on a charming 180-year restored manor house amidst a two-hectare coconut plantation, Taru Villas Riva offers a refined and luxurious stay in Negombo, coupled with unmatched personalised service and comfort.

Located just 25 minutes from the Colombo International Airport and 10 minutes from Negombo town, Taru Villas Riva is an ideal retreat to shake off your jet lag before embarking on your exploratory journey of the island or end your island adventures. The tranquillity of the villa's lush garden and inviting pool is sure to soothe your mind, body and soul, providing an opportunity to relax and rejuvenate.

The villa holds seven spacious and well-appointed rooms with luxury amenities that create superior comfort to ensure one has a perfectly relaxed and peaceful getaway. The rooms are chic, elegantly designed, and decorated with restored furniture, matching olden-day charm with contemporary art.

The talented in-house chefs are geared to cater to your taste buds promising a unique and sensory experience as you relish each bite. One of Negombo's only fine dining restaurants, Taru Villas Riva offers a fusion of local island flavours and continental cuisine. Enjoy personalised service as you dine in the open-air restaurant by the pool or in the comfort of your room. Savour your meal or sip on an island cocktail before you retire for the day.

The vast beaches of the western coast in Negombo are just 10 minutes away from this property, whilst there are many other



excursions such as birdwatching, water sports or a tour along the lagoon should you wish to explore Negombo.

Approximately an hour's drive from Taru Villas Riva, visit the Muthurajawela Wetlands for a birdwatching excursion. It was declared a nature reserve in 1996 and has been a tourist attraction ever since. Home to numerous flora and fauna, including birds and reptiles, your cruise along the Hamilton Canal will leave you mesmerised at the beauty of this hidden gem aptly named 'Muthurajawela', which, when translated, means 'Swamp of royal treasure'. Several species of animals, 40 species of fish, 14 species of reptiles, 102 species of birds, 22 species of mammals and 14 species of amphibians are believed to reside here. Watch out for crocodiles and water monitors along the way. Speak to the hotel staff if you need assistance arranging a private transfer service.

The Negombo lagoon tour is also ideal to spot rare species of flora and fauna. Observe the lives of the local fishing community as they prepare for their catch. Purchase some fresh local seafood and bring it to the villa, and the chefs will be delighted to prepare it to your preference.

Negombo is also popular for its water sports. Have some fun and get your adrenaline pumping as you engage in refreshing water sports, from jet skiing and windsurfing along the sea or an exciting ride on a banana boat on the Negombo Lagoon. Have fun with friends and family as you enjoy the excitement and thrills of water sports. Speak to the hotel staff if you require assistance in arranging a water sports excursion.





Fishermen landing their catch in the lagoon in Negombo

Taru Villas Maia

Habarana



The launch of Taru Villas Maia in Habarana in 2022 extended the Taru Villas' footprint to service the cultural triangle and the wild adventures in the North Central province of Sri Lanka. This 10-room luxury boutique villa is set at the edge of the bio-diverse Habarana Lake on a 1.8-hectare scrub forest, a stream and views of the panoramic paddy fields. Conceptualised by renowned architect, Palinda Kanangara, the property is positioned as a nature-centric space for wellness for the restoration of the mind, body and soul. Using extracted, raw materials from the region, the property is designed to exhibit contemporary luxury and sophistication. A central meditative pathway leads to water harvesting ponds embracing an open concept with light pavilions creating a relaxing and calming ambience perfect for meditation and rejuvenation. In recognition of the resort's unique architecture, the architect won the coveted Extraordinaries Award in the Hospitality category at the Kohler Bold Design Awards 2022.

Surrender yourself in one of the most refined and tasteful luxury accommodations in Habarana. The spacious rooms offer seclusion, comfort and all the intricate services you desire. Merging minimalism, openness and rustic elegance, complemented by contemporary art, the interior spaces provide a distinct ambience making you feel at home away from home. Complete with eight superior rooms and two premier chalets, you are invited to unwind in the plush rooms and enjoy a mix of natural beauty and cultural heritage.

Indulge in the most exquisite Sri Lankan fine dining experiences in Habarana. The team of expert chefs are geared to host you to an array of mouth-watering local and international cuisines curated to your preference and taste. Enjoy your meals in the privacy of your room or an open-air



dining salon with the relaxing environs of the Habarana Lake or sip on a tropical cocktail by the pool and witness the stunning sunset over the paddy fields.

Located in the heart of the cultural triangle in Habarana, Maia is an ideal base to explore the majestic beauty of the Sigiriya rock fortress and the ancient cities of Kandy, Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, which is home to the ancient ruins of historic Sri Lanka containing many UNESCO world heritage sites such as temples, stupas and palaces dating back over 2,000 years.

The property is also the ideal base to visit the Minneriya and Kaudulla National Parks. Renowned as the sixth greatest animal spectacle in the world, and among the Top 10 Wildlife Spectacles of the World by Lonely Planet, 'The Gathering' of 300+ Asian elephants takes place annually through August- September at the Minneriya and Kaudulla National Parks.

Considered to be the eighth wonder of the world, Sigiriya is of significant archaeological importance and attracts thousands of tourists every year. The Sigiriya rock fortress is set up on a 600-foot rock which houses the palace of King Kasyapa. Take a hike past the moats and water fountains and witness many other fascinating features that continue to excite modern-day visitors such as the frescoes and the mirror wall. The summit above the lion paws provides a panoramic view of the vicinity making it one of the most visited tourist destinations in Sri Lanka.

Located about 30 minutes away from Sigiriya, the Dambulla Cave Temple was built in about the 80BC. Known to be one of the largest and best-preserved cave temples in Sri Lanka, it contains 153 Buddha statues in varied poses, three statues of ancient kings and four other statues including those of Vishnu and Ganesh. The ceiling and walls contain a mix of imagery including those of royalty.





Sigiriya – The ruins of the capital city built by King Kassapa I (477–95) lie on the steep slopes and at the summit of a granite peak standing some 180m high

Taru Villas Mawella

Tangalle



Awarded the Silver award as the leading private villa/island at the South Asian Travel Awards 2022, Taru Villas Mawella is located 35km east of Matara in Tangalle, a coastal town south of Sri Lanka. The island's largest bays and beautiful pristine beaches with great opportunities for swimming and diving await guests residing at this property. It is a beachfront property comprising four secluded villas with 11 rooms in total, each with lounges, separate dining spaces and three shared pools. Adorned with open living spaces, the villas are equipped with colonial-style antique furnishing and an expansive garden against coconut trees and a sunny golden bay. Stay in the four-bedroom main house, pool house, or private Kurumba house, and enjoy an exclusive service team for a bespoke, at-home experience.

Enjoy a variety of culinary delights especially curated to satisfy your senses. Savour in-house favourites and chef's specials complemented by an authentic dining experience at the open dining room or indulge in a seafood BBQ by the beach. Sip on a tropical cocktail or fresh juice by the beach, pool or in the garden whilst enjoying the fresh breeze and sun, with views of the magnificent ocean.



Listed as one of the Top 10 Beaches of Sri Lanka, Taru Villas Mawella is surrounded by a pristine, private beach with gentle shallow waters similar to the Maldives. Embark on a kayaking adventure or a boat cruise along the Mawella Lagoon to witness rare, endemic flora and fauna, including many bird species.

Visit the Hummanaya Blow Hole, a popular and intriguing attraction in Tangalle. A 30-minute drive from the private villas, the blow hole is a huge fountain of water resulting from the pressure build-up in the gorge, which is located in a small fishing village known as Kudawella.

Another popular excursion in the area is a visit to the Mulkirigala Rock Temple. A 40-minute drive will take you through the beautiful countryside of Beliatta to the foothills of the temple. Founded on a rock, it is a monastery with seven cave temples, five terraces, granite paths and steps leading up to stunning views.

A premier surf destination, Hiriketiya Beach, is located just eight minutes away from the property and is the perfect spot to learn to ride the waves and harness your surfing skills. Located on a horseshoe-shaped bay with rolling waves throughout the year, Hiriketiya Beach provides a unique surfing experience for all grades of surfers.





Mawella's Paradise Beach

Taru Villas Rampart Street

Galle



Stay in this luxurious old merchant's bungalow and you'll enjoy uncompromised privacy and colonial charm. The Galle Fort is renowned as an exotic ancient trading port surrounded by Dutch colonial buildings, museums, ancient churches and mosques. Taru Villas Rampart Street lies within this UNESCO world heritage site with a view of the historic 17th-century ramparts.

Take a stroll down the bustling laneways of the fort and enjoy the ambience of stylish cafes, boutique souvenir shops and restored spaces, which unfold tales of ancient Ceylon.

The villa consists of four well-appointed rooms with stunning views of the historic fort, complete with luxury amenities to create a relaxing and memorable getaway. Paying tribute to its locale, the villa is adorned with antique furnishing with a unique and elegant touch. It is also one of the few properties with a pool within the Galle Fort.

Enjoy the best in island dining as you savour specially curated dining of international flavours with a local twist. Enjoy a signature Sri Lankan meal made with exotic spices and unique island flavours, a scrumptious seafood feast prepared by our chefs or a sweet treat to complete your feast.

There is much to explore in this colonial town. The Galle fort, built in 1588 by the Portuguese, and fortified by the Dutch in 1649, offers a promontory surrounded by the Indian Ocean.



Visit the Galle Fort on foot and experience a place of history, romance and beauty, where travellers are welcome to unravel the tales of this world heritage site. With elements of its colonial glory still preserved, a stroll along the ramparts will allow you to witness the Galle lighthouse, clocktower and the Groote Kerk. Walk through the back roads of the iconic fort, and visit charming structures, museums, and ancient buildings.

Renowned to produce the world's best cinnamon, visit the Cinnamon factory to experience the process of producing cinnamon utilising age-old skills and modern technology to manufacture cinnamon sticks, essential oils and much more.

Guests can also visit Sri Lanka's rare moonstone mine, renowned for its precious gems and moonstones. A 45-minute drive from the property, learn the fascinating process of mining moonstones by visiting Meetiya Goda, one of the few locations where moonstones are found in such high concentrations. Learn the fascinating process of mining moonstones and witness the finest and rarest moonstones in Sri Lanka.





Galle Fort

Taru Villas 906

Hikkaduwa



Taru Villas 906 is located at Hikkaduwa, a beach location along the southern coastline of Sri Lanka. The beach is known as the island's second-best surfing spot and the town enjoys a vibrant night-life.

The private two-bedroom villa is ranked among the best beach villas in Sri Lanka, offering guests seclusion, sunshine and exploration. Enjoy the serene view of the Indian Ocean from the comfort of the plush rooms or enjoy some adventure as you engage in surfing, snorkelling, or whale watching. You could also party hard, vibing to the electric Hikka night-life.

Taru Villas 906 offer the ultimate antidote to a hectic lifestyle, offering absolute seclusion and relaxation. Immerse in the liberating luxury of your own private plunge pool or soak up the sun and feel the salty breeze against your skin and hair as you gaze into the endless horizon.

The two luxury bedrooms are adorned with elegant décor inspired by fine works of art, with plush furnishings that are designed to soothe the mind, body and soul. With direct beach and pool access, enjoy a tropical getaway with friends or family whilst enjoying traditional Sri Lankan hospitality on the southern coast of Hikkaduwa.

Embark on a gastronomic journey of Western favourites with a Taru twist as you enjoy curated dining under the stars by the beach or in the comfort of the dining room. Enjoy



ocean-to-table dining with a fusion of exotic flavours and spices and mouthwatering local delicacies and sweet treats prepared to suit your taste preference.

The comfort of the villa beckons visitors to stay in and relax, however, should you wish to explore the environs beyond the villa, multiple excursions could be arranged featuring heritage, nature and adventure.

Visit the Tsunami Museum to view a collection of photography and archives, which reveal the devastating effects of the natural disaster in 2004, and tell the inspiring story of the resilient communities of this island.

The more adventurous could engage in stand-up paddling, canoeing and kayaking on the lagoon and experience the best of nature Hikkaduwa has to offer.

Witness the magnificent beauty of the underwater ecosystem as you engage in snorkelling, one of the most enjoyable adventure sports. Hikkaduwa is renowned for the best snorkelling due to its spectacular coral reef, marine life and clear waters. The Hikkaduwa lagoon is considered the safest place for beginners to snorkel and explore the coral reef whilst stumbling on some reef fish.

The Hikkaduwa surf attracts thousands of tourists during the surfing season between November and March each year, with a mix of shore breaks and reefs for all levels.





Beach Bars in Hikkaduwa