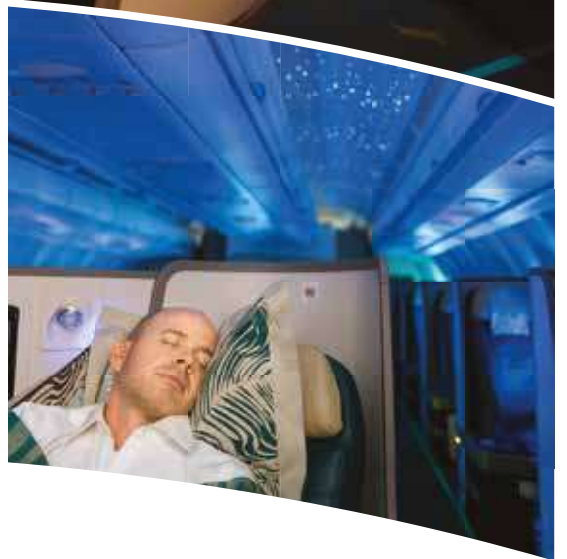


# TRAVELTALK

## ASIA

#1 IN CIRCULATION & READERSHIP - SRI LANKA'S ONLY TRAVEL TRADE MONTHLY

VOL 24 NO 03 2025 44 PGS



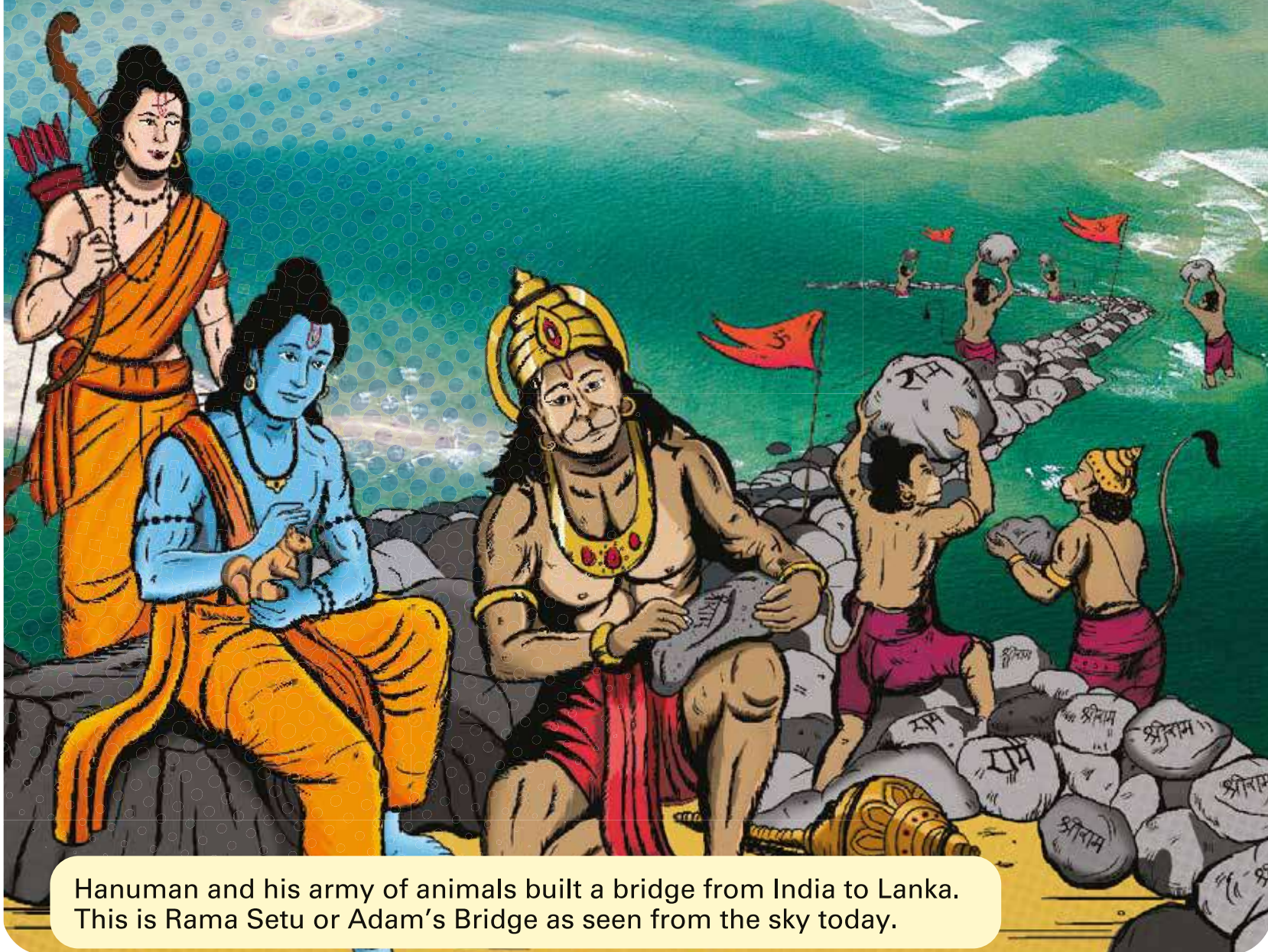
## We make it a journey to remember.

Fly SriLankan Airlines and experience the pleasure of our services.



Relive the epic of

# THE RAMAYANA TRAIL



Hanuman and his army of animals built a bridge from India to Lanka. This is Rama Setu or Adam's Bridge as seen from the sky today.



Book this once-in-a-lifetime experience today!  
[www.ramayanaabsrilankan.com](http://www.ramayanaabsrilankan.com)

 **SriLankan Holidays**  
A world of memories





# TRAVEL TALK

## ASIA

#1 IN CIRCULATION & READERSHIP - SRI LANKA'S ONLY TRAVEL TRADE MONTHLY

VOL 24 NO 03 2025 44 PGS



## Sri Lanka's First-Ever Conference Ambassador Programme: A Game Changer for MICE Tourism

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Sri Lanka has taken a bold step in cementing its position as a global hub for business events with the successful launch of the Sri Lanka Conference Ambassador Programme (SLCAP). This groundbreaking initiative, driven by a strategic collaboration between Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (SLCB), and SriLankan Airlines, is set to redefine the country's Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) landscape.

The launch event, attended by key industry figures, saw the participation of Chief Guest, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism, Honourary Vijitha Herath, and Guest of Honour, Senthil Gopinath, CEO of the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA). The presence of these industry leaders underscored the importance of the programme in Sri Lanka's tourism and economic development strategies.

SLCAP represents a unique multi-stakeholder approach, bringing together expertise from hospitality, aviation, and business event management. The programme aims to identify and empower local professionals and association leaders to act as ambassadors, promoting Sri Lanka as a preferred destination for global conferences. With 25 ambassadors already onboarded, the initiative is expected to create a ripple effect, attracting international events, boosting local industries, and driving knowledge exchange.

Mikael Svensson, CEO of Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, highlighted the programme's transformative impact: "As a hospitality leader deeply embedded in Sri Lanka's tourism fabric, Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is proud to champion this initiative. With Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams Sri Lanka set to host up to 5,000 delegates under one roof, we are actively strengthening the country's MICE capabilities. The Conference Ambassador Programme is a dynamic step towards positioning Sri Lanka as the



region's go-to hub for business events."

Dheera Hettiarachchi, Chairman of the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau, emphasized the strategic importance of the programme: "SLCAP is a visionary initiative that mobilizes Sri Lanka's intellectual capital to secure international conferences. By equipping and motivating local leaders to bid for global events, we are generating long-term economic and social benefits for the country."

Richard Nuttall, CEO of SriLankan Airlines, reinforced the airline's commitment: "Connectivity plays a vital role in the success of international conferences. Through SLCAP, SriLankan Airlines is proud to facilitate the movement of global delegates and enhance Sri Lanka's accessibility as a business events destination."

Beyond just attracting international conferences, the programme is designed to integrate sustainability, environmental responsibility, and social inclusivity into the MICE sector. Ambassadors will play a pivotal role in bid preparation, conference promotion, and fostering industry knowledge exchange. Additionally, SLCAP sets the stage for long-term growth by establishing a network of leaders dedicated to expanding Sri Lanka's business events potential.

As a result of this initiative, Sri Lanka is poised to see a significant increase in MICE-related arrivals, strengthening its tourism sector and broader economy. The country's ability to host world-class conferences will not only enhance its global reputation but also generate substantial revenue for allied industries such as hospitality, transport, and professional services.

Cont on Pg 2

## Radisson Collection Debuts in Southeast Asia with Landmark opening in Sri Lanka

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Radisson Collection has made its grand entrance into Southeast Asia with the opening of Radisson Collection Resort, Galle—a luxurious beachfront property set along Sri Lanka's stunning southern coastline. This marks not only Radisson Hotel Group's fourth hotel in Sri Lanka and second in Galle but also the first-ever Radisson Collection hotel in the entire Southeast Asia & Pacific (SEAP) region, underscoring the brand's expansion into key global destinations.

The highly anticipated opening was attended by Hon. Minister Vijitha Herath, Minister of Tourism, along with Buddika Hewawasam, Chairman of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority; Punarjeeva Karunanayake, Owner of the resort; Xavier Masson, General Manager of Radisson Collection Resort, Galle; and Rob Collier, Managing Director for the Middle East, Africa & Southeast Asia Pacific, Radisson Hotel Group. Notably, this milestone event also marked the 100th hotel opening under Mr. Collier's leadership, further cementing its significance within the brand's expansion strategy.

Positioned at the heart of Sri Lanka's southern coast, Galle offers an idyllic setting for Radisson Collection's signature blend of luxury, culture, and experience-driven hospitality. The city's 17th-century Galle Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, its palm-fringed beaches, and diverse marine life create an irresistible backdrop for the resort. Whether exploring the region's rich colonial history, indulging in exhilarating water sports, or experiencing Sri Lanka's famed wellness retreats, the resort caters to the modern traveler's pursuit of both relaxation and adventure.

The Radisson Collection Resort, Galle is a haven of indulgence, offering 70 contemporary guest rooms and 36 luxury suites, all boasting panoramic ocean views and high-end amenities. The resort's Grand Penthouse, spanning 1,200 square meters, stands out as one of Sri Lanka's most opulent accommodations,



featuring five bedrooms, a spiral staircase, and a breathtaking infinity pool overlooking the Indian Ocean.

Catering to all generations, the property also features a dedicated Kids' Club with interactive play zones and 24-hour nanny services, ensuring a family-friendly retreat without compromising on sophistication.

The resort's signature Taboo Beach Club introduces a vibrant new social scene to Galle, with chic sun lounges, exclusive bottle service, and a beachfront poolside atmosphere, poised to become a hotspot for both locals and in-house guests.

Radisson Collection Resort, Galle, is set to become the city's most sought-after dining destination, with an array of culinary experiences designed to captivate global travelers.

Catch Restaurant & Lounge: An interactive seafood dining experience where guests personalize their meals—from selecting the freshest seafood to choosing their preferred cooking method and flavor profile. As the day turns to night, Catch Lounge transforms into an exclusive entertainment venue with live DJ sets, creative mixology, and sophisticated ambiance.

Namikaze Restaurant & Bar: A bold Asian-Japanese fusion concept that blends traditional flavors with contemporary innovation, ensuring an unforgettable dining experience. Also the Namikaze All-Day Dining offers à la carte breakfast, lunch, and dinner with indoor and scenic poolside seating, catering to guests at any time of the day.

Cont on Pg 2



As the world's largest travel trade show, ITB Berlin serves as a crucial platform for Sri Lanka to strengthen its presence in the German market. This year, a robust delegation of Sri Lankan tourism stakeholders will present the country's diverse offerings, from pristine beaches and lush tea country to cultural heritage and authentic wellness experiences. More importantly, Sri Lanka aims to showcase its commitment to sustainable tourism, ensuring long-term value for both travelers and the industry.

Sri Lanka entered 2025 on a strong note, welcoming a record number of visitors in January. However, volume alone is not the objective—the focus must shift towards quality-driven tourism that enhances visitor yield and promotes value-added experiences. By highlighting lesser-known destinations, immersive cultural interactions, and niche tourism products such as wellness retreats, adventure tourism, and culinary experiences, Sri Lanka can attract high-yield travelers who seek authentic, meaningful journeys.

The global travel industry is witnessing a resurgence in long-haul travel, with European travelers seeking extended stays in destinations that offer unique and sustainable experiences. This trend presents an opportunity for Sri Lanka to position itself as a premium destination, particularly for travelers from Germany, who have traditionally shown a keen interest in nature, adventure, and Ayurveda-based wellness tourism.

Sri Lanka continues to garner global recognition through positive media exposure and prestigious accolades, reinforcing its desirability on the world stage. However, this momentum must be capitalized on through a structured, results-driven marketing strategy. In an increasingly competitive digital landscape, investing in digital consumer marketing is no longer optional—it is imperative. To remain competitive, Sri Lanka must accelerate its digital marketing efforts, enhance its brand presence, and engage directly with potential travelers, or risk being overshadowed by other destinations.

At ITB Berlin 2025, Sri Lanka will reaffirm its position as a destination that goes beyond numbers—offering exceptional experiences, sustainable tourism initiatives, and an unparalleled value proposition for German travelers.



*Dinushka*

**Dinushka Chandrasena**  
Editor

**DoubleDee**  
PUBLICATIONS

**Editor / Managing Director**  
Dinushka Chandrasena

**Directors**  
Firoze Munzeer  
Dinesh Chandrasena

**Head of Marketing**  
Anoj Tillekeratne

**Digital Marketing & Communication**  
Lakshini Wanigesinghe

**Lead Designer**  
Eshan Perera

**Digital/ Website Associate**  
Navodh Jayasundara

**Website Design**  
Antyra Hospitality

**Printing/ Publishing**  
Printage (Pvt) Ltd

Traveltalk Asia is a Monthly publication  
of DoubleDee Publications Private Limited

15A, Swarna Road, Colombo 6, Sri Lanka  
Phone / Fax: +94-115345346  
Mobile: +94-777756726,  
+94-777756762,  
E-mail: Dinushka@doubledee.lk  
Anoj@doubledee.lk  
Web: www.traveltalkasia.com

Travel Talk Asia is a publication of DoubleDee Publications. All information in Travel Talk Asia is derived from sources, which we consider reliable and a sincere effort is made to report accurate information. It is passed on to our readers without any responsibility on our part. Similarly, opinions/views expressed by third parties in abstract and/or in interviews are not necessarily shared by Travel Talk Asia. However, we wish to advise our readers that one or more recognized authorities may hold different views than those reported. Material used in this publication is intended for information purpose only. Content of this publication are protected by copyrights laws. Material appearing in Travel Talk Asia cannot be reproduced whole or in part without prior permission. The same rule applies when there is a copyright or the article is taken from another publication. Publications reproducing material either in part or in whole, without permission could face legal action. The publisher assumes no responsibility for returning unsolicited material nor is she responsible for material lost or damaged in transit. This publication is not meant to be an endorsement of any specific product or service offered. The publisher reserves the right to refuse, withdraw or amend or otherwise deal with all advertisements without explanation. All advertisements must comply with the Sri Lankan and International Advertisement Code. The publisher will not be liable for any damage or loss caused by delayed publication, error or failure of an advertisement to appear.

## NEWS

Cont. from Pg 03

### Sri Lanka's First-Ever Conference....

With the combined efforts of Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, SLCB, and SriLankan Airlines, SLCAP is set to become a defining force in Sri Lanka's MICE industry. By leveraging the expertise of its ambassadors and offering world-class infrastructure, Sri Lanka is well on its way to becoming a preferred choice for international conferences and business events.



Cont. from Pg 03

### Radisson Collection Debuts....

Radisson Collection's Vision for Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia

With this debut in Southeast Asia, Radisson Collection continues its commitment to expanding into iconic and culturally rich destinations worldwide. Tim Cordon, Chief Operating Officer for the Middle East, Africa & Southeast Asia Pacific, Radisson Hotel Group, expressed enthusiasm about this landmark launch:



### The Sri Lankan Experience: More Than Just a Holiday

The President of The Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL) M. Shanthikumar shares his thoughts

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka continues to make significant strides in tourism, with visitor arrivals steadily increasing. Recognized as a "must-visit" destination by leading print and digital media, the island has maintained its appeal over the past three years. First-time travelers consistently express their intent to return, contributing to Sri Lanka's strong base of repeat visitors.



M. Shanthikumar

Post-pandemic, Sri Lanka's hospitality sector has rebounded strongly, with island-wide occupancy rates reaching 70–80%. With new properties set to open in the next three years, the government is prioritizing tourism as a key foreign exchange earner, implementing strategic development and marketing initiatives. The "Clean Sri Lanka" program is part of this vision, ensuring a sustainable and pristine environment for future visitors.

Beyond its renowned tourist sites, Sri Lanka offers an immersive journey throughout the island. Spanning just over 65,000 square kilometers, the country boasts diverse climates—from sun-drenched beaches to cool hill stations—within a short travel distance. A drive through Sri Lanka unveils breathtaking landscapes, including lush paddy fields, rivers, picturesque countryside, bustling towns, scenic mountains, waterfalls, and tea plantations. Along the way, visitors often cherish spontaneous moments—stopping at roadside boutiques for local snacks, engaging with fruit vendors, or enjoying conversations with friendly locals.

Sri Lanka's tourism experience is further amplified by its diverse accommodation offerings. From internationally recognized hotel chains and boutique properties to luxury villas, eco-lodges, homestays, and themed resorts, there is a stay option to suit every traveler's preference and budget. Iconic properties, including heritage hotels designed by world-renowned architects like Geoffrey Bawa, provide a unique blend of history and luxury.

Beyond its famed golden beaches, Sri Lanka offers diverse attractions, including wildlife safaris, cultural heritage sites, wellness retreats, and adventure experiences. Most resorts are located outside Colombo, offering easy access from international airports. The capital itself boasts a vibrant mix of luxury hotels, high-end dining, business facilities, and entertainment options, catering to corporate travelers, MICE tourism, and gaming industry visitors. Colombo's sightseeing offerings—ranging from guided city walks to tuk-tuk and jeep tours—allow guests to explore historic temples, art streets, colonial-era landmarks, and trendy restaurants.

At The Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL), we warmly invite you to experience the island's unparalleled hospitality. Whether you are a first-time visitor or returning to explore new regions, Sri Lanka promises a journey filled with unique experiences and the warmth of our people.

### Travelex extends 31-year partnership with Frankfurt Airport

TTA BULLETIN

Travelex has signed a new six-year contract extension with Fraport, the operator of Frankfurt Airport, further extending a 31-year partnership between the leading foreign exchange company and Germany's busiest airport.

Travelex currently owns 25 ATMs and 13 stores across Terminal 1 at Frankfurt Airport (FRA), including stores at arrivals and departures (both airside and landside).

Passengers can use Travelex's stores to purchase over 50 different currencies on the day of travel or to collect cash

at the airport which they have pre-ordered on the Travelex website. Travelex also operates tax refund services at the terminal.

Having opened its first German store at Frankfurt Airport in 1993, Travelex now runs 25 stores across airports in Frankfurt, Berlin, Hamburg, and Cologne, as well as more than 50 ATMs at these locations. Most recently, the company won the tender to operate at Munich Airport, meaning it will have a presence in each of Germany's six busiest airports.





## THE EPITOME OF HERITAGE LUXURY



Hidden under the canopy of a coconut plantation in Rambukkana, Jetwing Wahawa Walauwa stands as a testament to its storied past. Lovingly restored beyond its former glory, our boutique mansion now features six spacious suites, a swimming pool for a lap of relaxation, a large communal dining hall opening up to the expansive garden and a personal butler to care for your every need. Beyond the luxuries of our walauwa, lesser-known hikes, trails and historic wonders await to be explored.

Here, every moment is crafted with care and every detail is designed to be remarkable, inviting you to rediscover the epitome of heritage luxury.



For bookings and enquiries, please contact:  
+94 11 470 9400  
[resv.villas@jetwinghotels.com](mailto:resv.villas@jetwinghotels.com)

[f](#) jetwingwahawawalauwa  
[@](#) jetwing.wahawa

**Jetwing**  
**WAHAWA WALAUWA**  
RAMBUKKANA • SRI LANKA

YOUR HOME OF LEGENDARY SRI LANKAN HOSPITALITY



## Aitken Spence Travels Expands Horizons with New Jaffna Branch

TTA BULLETIN

Aitken Spence Travels recently opened its doors in Jaffna, marking a significant milestone in its efforts to expand its outbound travel services and bring world-class travel solutions to the people of north.



As a leading travel agent and being one of the oldest IATA agencies (International Air Transport Association) in the country, the company is delighted to expand its operations covering Jaffna.

The opening of the new branch was graced by the presence of the senior management of Aitken Spence Travels, alongside an esteemed gathering of distinguished invitees. Among the attendees were prominent business leaders, influential community representatives, and respected local dignitaries from Jaffna.

The Jaffna branch is conveniently located at No. 10A, Point Pedro Road, Jaffna, providing a central and easily accessible location for anyone seeking world-class travel services. The office will be dedicated for any travel related services including air tickets, overseas hotel bookings and excursions, visa services, pilgrim tours, sports tours, musical tours or MICE services (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions). Be it a business or leisure trip experts of Aitken Spence Travels are ready to serve the increasing demands of the Jaffna market.

“Aitken Spence Travels aspires to cater to

the growing inbound clientele from India, becoming a bridge that opens doors to the wonders Sri Lanka has to offer. This new branch reflects our dedication to making international travel more accessible across the island while delivering the exceptional service and expertise that Aitken Spence Travels is renowned for”, commented, Stasshani Jayawardena, Joint Deputy Chairperson and Joint Managing Director of Aitken Spence PLC and Head of the Group’s Tourism Sector.

Further expressing enthusiasm about the expansion, Nalin Jayasundera, Managing Director of Aitken Spence Travels commended, “We are delighted to expand our operations to Jaffna, a strategic location with immense potential and a vibrant community eager to explore the world. Our experienced travel consultants are equipped to provide expert advice, personalised itineraries, and end-to-end travel solutions. Customers can expect a hassle-free experience, from booking flights and accommodation to securing visas and travel insurance, all under one roof”.

Jaffna serves as a crucial hub, connecting Sri Lanka to India with daily flights.

## BIA Arrival Lobby to Undergo Redesign for Enhanced Passenger Experience

TTA BULLETIN

Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA) is set to undergo a significant redesign of its Arrival Lobby to enhance the passenger experience, particularly for the increasing number of tourists visiting Sri Lanka. The initiative, spearheaded by Airport and Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) Limited (AASL), aims to create a more efficient and welcoming environment for travelers.

Air Chief Marshal (Retd.) Harsha Abeywickrema, Chairman of Airport and Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) (Private) Limited (AASL), emphasized the importance of these changes in response to rising tourist arrivals:

“We have observed a significant increase in tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka, particularly in the last quarter of 2024, with the momentum continuing into 2025. In January 2025, daily tourist arrivals averaged around 8,150, reflecting a 23% increase compared to the 6,700 daily arrivals recorded in January 2024.

However, the current Arrival Lobby layout has led to congestion, partly due to insufficient ATM machines and limited space. Following a visit by Hon. Bimal Rathnayake, Minister of Transport, Highways,

Ports, and Civil Aviation, to BIA, we decided to redesign and expand the Arrival Lobby to better accommodate the growing number of passengers.

The redesign will include an increase in the number of ATM machines to reduce waiting times and the relocation of the Sri Lanka Tourism Travel Information Counter to a central location, ensuring tourists are warmly welcomed and assisted upon arrival.”

These enhancements align with AASL’s broader strategy to improve the passenger experience and manage the increasing volume of travelers at BIA until the completion of Terminal 2 in March 2028. The planned improvements reflect Sri Lanka’s commitment to strengthening its position as a leading travel destination and ensuring a seamless airport experience for all visitors.



## Sri Lanka Showcases Tourism Potential at FITUR 2025

TTA BULLETIN



Sri Lanka made a strong impression at FITUR 2025, one of the world’s leading travel trade fairs held in Madrid, with a delegation of 28 companies representing the country’s vibrant tourism sector. The event, which attracted a record-breaking 255,000 attendees, provided an excellent platform for Sri Lanka to engage with key stakeholders, strengthen partnerships, and promote the destination’s diverse offerings to a global audience.

In addition to active participation in FITUR, Sri Lanka Tourism officials

attended the UN Tourism Committee Meeting on Tourism Competitiveness, where Sri Lanka holds the position of Vice Chair. Representatives from the Sri Lankan Embassy in Paris also took part in the discussions.

As the global tourism industry continues to recover and expand, Sri Lanka remains focused on leveraging international platforms like FITUR to enhance its presence in key markets, attract high-value travelers, and reinforce its position as a premier travel destination.

## Intrepid To Host Global Summit 2025 In Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

Intrepid Travel, the world’s largest adventure travel company, has chosen Colombo, Sri Lanka, as the host city for its annual Global Summit 2025. This marks only the second time the company has hosted the annual event outside its headquarters in Melbourne, Australia – underscoring Sri Lanka’s vital role within Intrepid’s global operations.

Intrepid established an office in Colombo in 2012 and has gone from strength to strength since then. With both a capability center and a country office managing trips across the island, Sri Lanka has become a key operational center for the company, supporting technology, revenue management, human resources, product services, finance and customer service. The size and impact of Intrepid’s local team with 276 office based staff and 45 Local Tour Leaders, coupled with the destination’s strong performance, made it a natural choice for this prestigious event.

Scheduled to take place from February 24 to 27, 2025, Intrepid’s Global Summit will bring together over 200 international participants over 50 nationalities across its 40 plus offices, including Intrepid’s board, co-founders, and core management team, alongside 300 local team members.

The four-day summit will feature strategy discussions, leadership workshops, local community engagements and familiarization trips to its people around the world. This initiative aligns with Intrepid’s broader mission to foster a strong, inclusive company culture where team members play a role in shaping the business. Bringing together key stakeholders in Sri Lanka signals a firm commitment to strengthening global teams and reinforcing the company’s presence in Asia.

It is also fitting that Sri Lanka has been selected to host the event, with Intrepid having been named Best Destination

Loyal Partner at the recent Sri Lanka National Tourism Awards 2024, as well as being shortlisted as a finalist in Best Sustainable Practices.



“Our team in Sri Lanka are such an important part of our company and our customers also love visiting this incredible and vibrant country,” said James Thornton CEO of Intrepid Travel. “Our vision for Sri Lanka extends beyond tourism; it’s about driving sustainable growth and creating meaningful, lasting impact. The growing number of Intrepid travelers choosing Sri Lanka highlights its immense potential, and we remain committed to ensuring local communities share in the benefits of this success. I’m delighted that we will be able to share in the culture of Sri Lanka, while supporting local businesses and communities,” Thornton added.

In 2024, Intrepid achieved remarkable growth, welcoming over 4,000 travelers to Sri Lanka, a 206% increase from 2023, surpassing pre-COVID-19 levels. The company has ambitious plans to welcome over 15,000 travelers to Sri Lanka by 2030, contributing significantly to Sri Lanka’s tourism and growth further driving economic benefits for local communities, tour leaders, and small businesses.

“We are excited to welcome our Global leadership and colleagues around the world to Colombo. This is a remarkable privilege and a great opportunity to showcase Sri Lanka’s incredible offerings as a destination, share our vibrant culture, and celebrate our biggest people event in our Company’s Calander right here in my home country,” said Poornaka Delpachitra, Intrepid’s Country General Manager for Sri Lanka.





From luxurious resorts to urban retreats,  
there's an Aitken Spence Hotel as unique as the reason you travel

*Aitken Spence* Hotels



ADAARAN  
MALDIVES

*turyaa*

T : +94 112 308 408 | [ashmres@aitkenspence.lk](mailto:ashmres@aitkenspence.lk) | [www.aitkenspencehotels.com](http://www.aitkenspencehotels.com)



## Arabian Travel Market 2025's Travel Tech exhibitors increase 25% year-on-year as value of global travel technology market hits \$10.7 billion

TTA BULLETIN

With the global travel technology market currently valued at \$10.7 billion, leaders and innovators from around the world are preparing to steer the future of the tourism industry at the 32nd edition of Arabian Travel Market (ATM), which will take place at Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) from 28 April to 1 May 2025.

ATM 2025's extensive conference programme and exhibition reflect this year's theme, 'Global Travel: Developing Tomorrow's Tourism Through Enhanced Connectivity'. With Travel Tech exhibitors experiencing year-on-year growth of 25% and the segment's exhibition space expanding by 22%, this year's event will explore how technology is transforming the tourism sector, presenting new growth opportunities for enterprising start-ups and established multinationals alike.

The Future Stage at ATM 2025 will host a range of expert speakers, who will explore how advances in fields such as analytics and machine learning, workplace collaboration, blockchain, next-gen mobility and augmented reality are driving our sector forward. This year's event represents an unparalleled opportunity for exhibitors to showcase their innovations in front of an international audience of senior decision-makers and purchase influencers.

Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market, said: "ATM Travel Tech draws together the best and brightest from across our industry, creating an unrivalled forum for discovery, debate and deal-making. Now more than ever, opportunities related to connectivity and integration are at the forefront of our minds, and they will take centre stage at ATM 2025."

According to IMARC Group, the global market for travel technology is on course to hit \$18.6 billion in the next eight years, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.05% predicted during the period 2025-33. ATM 2025's Future Stage will host a range of presentations designed to highlight opportunities within this exciting and lucrative space. This year's sessions will feature topics such as: 'Generational Trends Influencing Hyper-personalisation in Luxury'; 'Travel Technology: Get Ahead or Get Left Behind'; 'AI: Everywhere All At Once'; and 'Data-Driven Travel: The Next Frontier of Destination Transformations', among others.

Tourism has consistently been an early adopter of emerging technologies, and digitalisation continues to drive seamless, frictionless travel. Looking ahead, the development of smart travel facilitation, smart destinations and new employment opportunities is set to contribute to economic, social and environmental sustainability across our sector.

While the Middle East and Africa's (MEA) travel tech market is facing stiff

competition from Asia-Pacific nations, countries like the UAE and Saudi Arabia are responding effectively to increased demand from tech-savvy consumers, leveraging the latest innovations to enhance their appeal as global travel destinations.

"I can't think of a better host city for ATM Travel Tech than Dubai, which continues to raise aspirations both regionally and globally with its commitment to the Smart Dubai strategy," said Curtis. "Smart travel, transport, artificial intelligence (AI) and urban planning initiatives are driving increased innovation and connectivity across the emirate, making it the ideal meeting point for leaders and disruptors from other markets."

Smart technologies, mobile applications, contactless solutions and similar cutting-edge innovations will be on show at ATM 2025's Travel Tech exhibition, which will showcase a dynamic lineup of new and returning exhibitors including Amadeus, Huawei, Sabre, Expedia, Travelport, Dida Travel, Hotelbeds, WebBeds and Moonline Travel, among others.

ATM 2025 will bring together professionals and industry leaders from the leisure, luxury, travel tech, corporate, and meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) travel sectors, providing a platform for networking, knowledge sharing and business opportunities. In addition to the exhibition, international and regional experts will take to ATM's Global, Future and brand-new Business Events stages throughout the event to deliver an extensive conference programme.

Held in conjunction with Dubai World Trade Centre, ATM 2025's strategic partners include Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism (DET), Destination Partner; Emirates, Official Airline Partner; IHG Hotels & Resorts, Official Hotel Partner; and Al Rais Travel, Official DMC Partner.

Arabian Travel Week is a week-long festival of events from 28 April to 4 May, alongside Arabian Travel Market 2025. Providing a renewed focus for the Middle East's travel and tourism sector, it includes Start-Up Competition, Influencers' Event, GBTA Business Travel Forums, and ATM Travel Tech. The event also features ATM Buyer Networking and a series of country forums.



## Leynbaan Art House Opens Its Doors in Galle Fort with a Captivating Inaugural Exhibition

TTA BULLETIN

A new artistic beacon illuminated the historic heart of Galle Fort last weekend. Leynbaan Art House, a dynamic and multifunctional artspace, officially welcomed its first guests for an exclusive pre-opening event on February 8, 2025. This much-anticipated gathering introduced a select audience to the gallery's mission of fostering contemporary Sri Lankan art and cultural dialogue.



Leynbaan Art House is the brainchild of cultural curator Atheeq Ifthikar and historian Fenna Visser, a Sri Lankan-Dutch duo dedicated to creating a space that seamlessly blends art, culture, and history. Designed to serve as a hub for artistic expression and societal engagement, the gallery features diverse exhibitions, interactive workshops, and thought-provoking conversations that bridge local and global perspectives.

The pre-opening event also unveiled the gallery's first exhibition, How Can I Help You, by acclaimed Sri Lankan digital artist

Project de Marco. With a strong presence on DeviantArt and Tumblr, Project de Marco is renowned for introspective digital compositions that delve into the nuances of human relationships and peaceful existence. How Can I Help You was a powerful exploration of service, kindness, and human connection, inviting viewers to reflect on the role of generosity in their own lives.

Following the exclusive pre-opening, Leynbaan Art House officially opened to the public from Wednesday to Sunday, 10 AM to 6 PM, throughout February 2025.

## Malaysia Tourism launch Sales Mission in Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN



Tourism Malaysia is proud to announce the launch of its Sales Mission to Colombo, Sri Lanka, aimed at rejuvenating its presence and strengthening ties with the Sri Lankan tourism market. This strategic initiative follows a remarkable rise in tourism statistics, with 58,015 Sri Lankans visiting Malaysia in 2024. This is a substantial increase of 122% compared to pre-pandemic numbers in 2019, when only 26,058 Sri Lankans travelled to Malaysia.

The mission highlights Malaysia's potential as a key destination for Sri Lankan travellers. With 30 flights per week from Colombo and a total seat capacity of 4,990, the mission underlines the enhanced connectivity between the two nations, making travel to Malaysia more accessible than ever.

Mr. Hishamuddin Mustafa, Director, Tourism Malaysia Chennai (South India & Sri Lanka) commented, "Our presence here for this sales mission is to reconnect with the local tourism industry players, express our appreciation for their unwavering support, and to foster further collaborations. This initiative also brings 45 Malaysian sellers to Colombo for the first-ever largest group delegation. Their participation is a clear indication of our commitment to strengthening Malaysia's

position in the Sri Lankan market and exploring new opportunities for cooperation with Sri Lankan tourism professionals." With the upcoming Visit Malaysia Year 2026 (VMY2026), we are targeting 100,000 Sri Lankan travellers.

Malaysia an attractive destination for travellers seeking a diverse range of experiences. Whether it's for MICE, a dream wedding, or a family vacation, Malaysia has something for everyone. With Visit Malaysia Year 2026 on the horizon, we are excited to showcase all the new destinations, cultural experiences, and world-class venues Malaysia has to offer."

This mission is a key step towards not only boosting tourism exchanges but also ensuring a sustained, vibrant relationship between Malaysia and Sri Lanka. The delegation of 45 Malaysian sellers is poised to explore partnership opportunities, share insights, and solidify the Malaysia-Sri Lanka travel connection.

The Sales Mission is expected to be a significant milestone in bringing more Sri Lankans to Malaysia, fostering cultural exchanges, and creating long-term economic benefits for both countries' tourism sectors.



# citrus

Resorts & Hotels



Step into a world crafted by Citrus, where every bite, sip, and moment embodies the warmth of Sri Lankan hospitality. Blending culinary artistry with unforgettable stays, Citrus creates experiences that harmonize tradition, charm, and the essence of everything this beautiful island offers.

## citrus

Waskaduwa

**Escape to Tranquility**

- 37km from the Commercial Capital of Colombo
- 78km from the Bandaranaike International Airport

Tel: +94 77 570 0427

No. 427, Samanthara Road, Waskaduwa, Sri Lanka.

## citrus

Hikkaduwa

**Where the Waves Meet Adventure**

- 100km from the Commercial Capital of Colombo
- 140km from the Bandaranaike International Airport

Tel: +94 77 404 9241

No. 400, Galle Road, Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka.



[citrusleisure.com](http://citrusleisure.com)



## Stasshani Jayawardene Appointed as Chairman of Aitken Spence PLC

TTA BULLETIN

Aitken Spence PLC has announced the appointment of Stasshani Jayawardene as the Chairman of the Group, following the passing of her father Deshamanya D H S Jayawardene, whose visionary leadership played a pivotal role in shaping the company's growth and success.



Stasshani Jayawardene

A seasoned professional with extensive experience, Jayawardene has been an integral part of Aitken Spence, holding key leadership roles over the years. Her appointment underscores the Group's commitment to sustainable growth, diversification, and global expansion.

As Chairman, she is set to drive Aitken

Spence forward, leveraging the Group's strong foundations across multiple sectors including tourism, logistics, and strategic investments to navigate emerging opportunities. Under her leadership, the company is poised to continue its contribution to Sri Lanka's economic development while maintaining its position as a regional leader in multiple sectors.

Aitken Spence PLC, one of Sri Lanka's most diversified conglomerates, with operations extending across several continents. Jayawardene's vision aligns with the Group's long-standing ethos of innovation, sustainability, and excellence.

## Barista Celebrates 50th Outlet: A Milestone in Brewing Happiness

across Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

Barista, Sri Lanka's largest café chain, opens its 50th outlet, Barista Nawam Mawatha, marking a significant milestone in the company's journey of brewing happiness across the island. This achievement highlights Barista's commitment to delivering the finest coffee and exceptional customer service to communities nationwide.



CEO of Barista Sri Lanka.

The chain's success is attributed to its unwavering commitment to quality. The skillful and qualified baristas consistently deliver expertly crafted beverages, ensuring a memorable experience for every customer. Using only the finest beans and state-of-the-art equipment, Barista brings a true taste of coffee to Sri Lanka. Whether it is a rich espresso or a creamy cappuccino, the café's diverse menu caters to every coffee lover's preference, ensuring an enjoyable experience with every visit.

Barista's appeal goes beyond just serving great coffee. The company places a strong focus on delivering exceptional customer service, believing that the overall experience from the warm greeting to the inviting atmosphere is what truly makes a visit special. With spacious seating, cozy corners, and modern interiors, every outlet is designed as a place where customers can unwind, recharge, and connect with others or reconnect with themselves. Whether it is a casual catch-up with friends or a quiet space to work, Barista creates the perfect setting for relaxation and focus. Additionally, Barista's outlets offer free Wi-Fi, charging facilities, ample parking, and a range of amenities, ensuring a convenient and enjoyable visit. With friendly and attentive staff, Barista ensures every guest feels welcomed, turning every visit into a memorable experience.

Barista is deeply grateful to its loyal customers and dedicated staff, whose support has been instrumental in the company's growth and success

Barista's journey began in 2002 with its first outlet at the World Trade Center in Colombo, when coffee culture was still emerging in Sri Lanka, a country traditionally known for tea. With a vision to introduce authentic Italian coffee, Barista created a space for people to enjoy expertly brewed coffee in a warm, inviting atmosphere. What began as a single outlet in Colombo has now expanded to locations ranging from the bustling streets of the capital to the serene hills of Kandy, and to diverse regions including Jaffna in the north, Nuwara Eliya in the central highlands, and Matara in the south. Barista's presence in these key areas reflects its commitment to bringing premium coffee and exceptional service to every corner of Sri Lanka.

"As we celebrate the opening of our 50th outlet, we remain committed to serving customers from all walks of life, ensuring that everyone enjoys a personalized, high-quality coffee experience. Our focus has always been on delivering the finest coffee, unparalleled customer service, and building strong brand equity, which sets us apart in the competitive market. We are not only dedicated to providing exceptional value to our customers but also to fostering sustainable practices that benefit both the environment and the community. With every new outlet we open, we bring the joy of expertly brewed coffee to more Sri Lankans, solidifying Barista's role as a beloved and integral part of local communities" said Dilupa Pathirana,

## SriLankan Airlines Appoints Dimuthu Tennakoon as Head of Commercial

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Airlines has appointed Dimuthu Tennakoon as Head of Commercial, effective 15th February 2025. Tennakoon, who served as the Head of Worldwide Sales & Distribution, will now oversee the airline's Worldwide Sales & Distribution, Revenue Management & Planning, and Marketing Divisions, reporting directly to the Chief Executive Officer



Dimuthu Tennakoon

ing global aviation landscape.

CEO Richard Nuttall extended his congratulations, "Dimuthu Tennakoon has been an integral part of SriLankan

Airlines' commercial success. His leadership and expertise will be invaluable as we continue strengthening our commercial strategies and reinforcing our position as the airline of choice for travelers seeking an authentic Sri Lankan experience."

SriLankan Airlines continues its commitment to excellence, innovation, and sustainable growth, with this strategic leadership appointment marking another step towards achieving its long-term objectives.

With extensive experience in the aviation and commercial sectors, Tennakoon has played a pivotal role in driving strategic sales initiatives and revenue growth for SriLankan Airlines. In his new role, he will spearhead the airline's commercial operations, focusing on enhancing market positioning, revenue strategies, and customer engagement in a rapidly evol-

## NaviSavi appoints Sam Lindner as Head of Growth and Product

TTA BULLETIN

NaviSavi, the world's first B2B platform dedicated to vertical, travel-only UGC short form videos, has appointed Sam Lindner as Head of Growth and Product. This comes as the company gets ready to expand its content pipeline to improve monetization strategies and position itself as a category-defining travel content marketplace.

Lindner brings over 20 years of leadership experience across travel, digital media and emerging technologies in different countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, Southeast Asia and Germany.

His background spans senior roles in travel metasearch, trip planning and social travel apps, international hotel groups, global retail travel brands, as well as strategic leisure property projects. NaviSavi's new executive member is also an expert on using AI and Web3 as tools to reshape user experiences and content ecosystems in the travel industry.

"Having Sam join our team brings a level of expertise in the travel industry that is essential for accelerating our growth strategy and scaling our offerings," said Sally Bunnell, Founder and CEO of NaviSavi. "We're incredibly excited about what's ahead in 2025 as we expand our services and partnerships, leveraging content that not only inspires but converts."

"I'm thrilled to be joining NaviSavi at such a pivotal moment in their growth trajectory. NaviSavi has set out to revolutionize how travellers, brands, and now

even AI platforms, utilise authentic travel video content as one of their primary means of influencing purchasing intent and bookings" – says Sam Lindner. "I look forward to helping the team drive key growth initiatives that will scale this platform globally and to fulfil their vision of redefining the way travel is discovered and booked, as well as how UGC video content can be acquired at scale and monetized globally for those content creators".



Sam Lindner

Founded in 2019, NaviSavi has evolved from a consumer travel app into a B2B2C marketplace for travel content. The platform enables travellers to discover authentic experiences, allows content creators to monetize their videos, and provides travel brands with high-impact user-generated content (UGC) for marketing and direct sales conversion. Today, NaviSavi hosts 125,000+ geolocated short-form videos from over 180 countries, contributed by 5,000 creators.

The company has already partnered with 15 travel clients, including tour operators, OTAs, cruise lines, tourism boards, and airlines, offering them a seamless way to access and license engaging travel content. NaviSavi's innovative approach has earned it top industry accolades, including Startup of the Year at the 2024 World Aviation Festival and Touristech Startup Fest 2024 at the Tourism Innovation Summit (TIS). To fuel its next phase of expansion, NaviSavi has announced a new fundraising round to raise \$1.25M USD, supporting its continued growth and market expansion.



# Unwind in Paradise...

*Experience Authentic Sri Lankan Hospitality in Unmatched Comfort*

Experience pure coastal luxury, where soft sands meet the endless blue of the ocean.



## **Mandara Resort**

416A, Mirissa, Weligama,  
Sri Lanka  
Tel : +94 41 225 3993/4

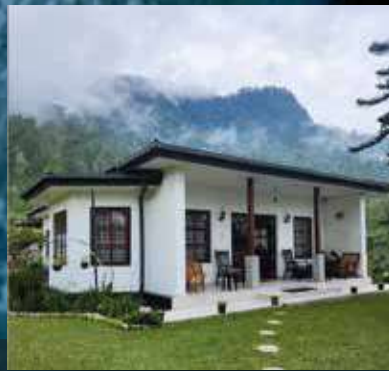
Embrace luxury in the heart of nature, where lush greenery meets the call of the wild.



## **Mandara Rosen**

No 57, Yala, Kataragama,  
Sri Lanka  
Tel : +94 47 2236030-3

Find peace and stunning vistas nestled in the serene, misty hills of Haputale.



## **Mandara Ridge**

Royal Estate, Haldumulla,  
Haputale, Sri Lanka  
Tel : +94 71 869 9524



[www.mandarahotels.com](http://www.mandarahotels.com)



## eMarketingEye Celebrates 18 Years of Digital Excellence with Prestigious Presidential Export Awards Win

TTA BULLETIN

As eMarketingEye marks its 18th anniversary, the agency reflects on its remarkable journey from its inception to becoming a leader in digital marketing, specializing in the travel and hospitality industry. Since its founding in 2007, eMarketingEye has consistently been at the forefront of digital marketing innovation, empowering hospitality brands worldwide to achieve their growth objectives through cutting-edge, data-driven strategies.

This milestone comes at a significant moment for the agency, as it is honored with the prestigious ‘Best SME Exporter of the Year’ award at the 26th Presidential Export Awards 2023/24. Presented by the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (EDB), the award recognizes eMarketingEye’s exceptional contribution to Sri Lanka’s export economy, solidifying its position as a key player in the global digital marketing landscape.

The Presidential Export Awards are among Sri Lanka’s highest accolades for exporters, and eMarketingEye is proud to be the first and only digital marketing agency to receive this distinction. This recognition highlights the agency’s ongoing commitment to excellence, innovation, and global impact.

As the undisputed leader in hospitality marketing across the Asia Pacific region, eMarketingEye has set the benchmark for digital excellence, empowering hotels and resorts globally to elevate their online presence, drive direct bookings, and maximize revenue. With a diverse clientele spanning 45+ countries and having worked with over 1,200 hospitality brands, the company has led the industry as a thought leader with innovative strategies, shaping the future of digital marketing and redefining standards for the hospitality industry.

Rajitha Dahanayake, CEO of eMarketingEye, commented on the award, saying, “Winning the ‘Best SME Exporter of the Year’ award is a proud moment for our team. As the first and only digital marketing agency to receive this honor, we are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to Sri Lanka’s growing global presence. Over the past 18 years, we’ve partnered with some of the world’s most respected hospitality brands, helping them navigate the ever-evolving digital landscape. This award is a testament to our dedication to pushing the boundaries of digital marketing innovation.”

eMarketingEye’s journey has been driven by its passion for innovation. From Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Pay-Per-Click (PPC) advertising to Social Media Marketing and Website Development, the agency has consistently raised the bar for excellence in digital marketing. Furthermore, its proprietary

solutions—such as BookingEye, GiftsEye, and PaymentsEye—have revolutionized the way hospitality brands engage with customers and generate incremental revenue.

As digital marketing continues to evolve, eMarketingEye remains committed to delivering cutting-edge solutions that help its clients stay ahead of the competition. With strategic partnerships with industry leaders like Google, Microsoft, Meta, and Yandex, the agency is well-positioned to shape the future of digital marketing for the global travel and hospitality sectors.

As eMarketingEye celebrates its 18th anniversary, this award serves as both a reflection of its past achievements and a milestone in its journey toward continued growth, innovation, and transformation in the digital marketing landscape for the global hospitality industry.







## An Award-Winning Digital Marketing Agency For the Travel & Hospitality Industry

We empower global hospitality brands with innovative solutions to strengthen digital presence, drive direct bookings, and maximise revenue.

**18+**  
Years of  
Excellence

**285+**  
Awards

**1200+**  
Hotels

**45+**  
Countries



**WEBSITE**  
[www.emarketingeye.com](http://www.emarketingeye.com)

**CONTACT NO**  
+94 112 151200

**SALES / INQUIRIES**  
[sales@emarketingeye.com](mailto:sales@emarketingeye.com)



DOWNLOAD  
CASE STUDIES

## Digital

- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- Pay Per Click (PPC) Marketing
- Social Media Marketing
- Metasearch Marketing
- Web Analytics
- Digital Consultancy

## Web

- Web Development
- Blog Development
- Web Applications

## Products

- BookingEye
- PaymentsEye
- RestaurantsEye
- GiftsEye

## Reporting and Monitoring

- Google Analytics
- Tag Manager
- Looker Studio



## BIT Milan 2025 Wraps Up on a High Note, Setting the Stage for the Future of Travel

TTA BULLETIN

With an impressive influx of professional operators and travellers, the 45th edition of BIT - International Tourism Exchange closed with an extremely positive result, confirming its strategic role as a reference point in Italy for innovation and development of the tourism product.

An event that continues to be the most effective sounding board for the industry, thanks to the large number of press from all over the world.

BIT 2025, which took place in its new location at Fiera Milano, saw the participation of over 1,000 exhibitors from 64 countries, with a wide and diversified offer able to provide operators with effective tools and ideas to move confidently in a constantly evolving sector and to meet the needs of increasingly informed travellers in search of authentic and original experiences.

The presence of thousands of international buyers confirmed BIT 2025's role as a global reference event. Buyers' attention was focused on finding new destinations and innovative, high quality travel offerings, with a particular emphasis on unique, hyper-personalised experiences.

Completing the networking between supply and demand, the Bringing Innovation Into

Travel programme featured more than 40 presentations, attended by hundreds of delegates, on some of the most topical issues of the day: from artificial intelligence, big data and other challenges of digitalisation, to solutions to overcome overtourism, to new consumer trends driven by emotion, passion, motivation and lifestyle.

In a sector characterised by strong technological innovation, expertise and valuable relationships, the BIT4Job event area, organised in collaboration with Lavoro Turismo and Welcome Travel Group, was an excellent opportunity to promote the match between labour supply and demand, with a particular focus on the new skills and competences required by the market. One of the strengths of BIT4Job has been its ability to combine tourism and business events, showing young people the attractiveness of the sector and reducing the gap between school and the world of work.

Adriano Apicella, CEO of WTG, said, "The sector is evolving towards a hybrid model. Human expertise in this area is integrating with new technologies, including AI, to deliver tailored experiences, as direct knowledge of destinations remains an added value."

The tourism sector is evolving with increas-

ingly themed, sustainable and personalised experiences. According to the UNWTO, international tourism will increase by between 3% and 5% in 2025, while in Italy the additional income generated by the Milan-Cortina Olympic Games will be between 2.3 and 3 billion euros.

Among the new trends, tourism linked to natural phenomena stands out, with noctourism and astrotourism on the rise. Some 61% of travellers are willing to travel to see the Northern Lights, while 60% look for areas with low light pollution to view the stars. Wellness tourism is also developing, with a focus on longevity itineraries, innovative therapies and immersive sensory journeys.

The ISNART data presented at BIT 2025 - based on more than 39,000 interviews with operators and travellers, as well as objective measurements - estimate around 880 million visitors for 2024, with an economic impact on the regions of more than 108 billion euros. Of particular interest is the increase in foreign tourists, up 2.3% compared to 2023 and even +18% compared to the pre-pandemic highs of 2019.

More importantly, employment in the accommodation sector will increase by 17 percentage points to around 68% compared



to 51% in 2023. Of particular interest are also the changes in the profile of visitors who choose Italy: the share of those with medium to high or very high status has risen from 34% in 2023 to 43% in 2024. Last year, culture was the main reason for travelling to Italy (seventh in 2023), while value for money rose from sixth to fourth.

A change that is also reflected in the growing interest in experience tourism, among which food and wine tourism continues to stand out. The new report on Italian food and wine tourism, promoted by the Italian Food and Wine Tourism Association, was presented at BIT 2025.

Bit was visited by thousands of buyers from around the world, including a selection of high-profile hosted buyers from 49 countries. Of these, 45% come from Europe, including Italy; 27% from the Americas; 18% from Asia (including CIS countries) and Oceania; 10% from the Middle East and Africa.

## Hilton Colombo Residence Celebrates Balinese Cuisine with an Exclusive Culinary Affair

Hilton Colombo Residence recently transported guests on a flavorful journey to Indonesia with its exclusive Balinese Affair, a culinary festival that brought the rich and diverse flavors of Bali to Sri Lanka. Hosted at Flow, the hotel's signature dining venue, the festival featured an authentic selection of Balinese specialties, prepared by expert chefs from Hilton Bali.

The highlight of the festival was a special evening hosted by Karim Schadlou, General Manager of Hilton Colombo Residence, who welcomed the Indonesian Ambassador, distinguished guests, and members of the media for an immersive dining experience. The event showcased the artistry behind Balinese cuisine, allowing guests to interact with the visiting chefs and savor the vibrant flavors of Indonesia.

Diners indulged in a thoughtfully curated selection of traditional Balinese dishes, crafted using time-honored techniques and the finest ingredients. From fragrant satays to richly spiced curries, each dish was a testament to Bali's deep-rooted culinary heritage.





# A TOUCH OF *Romance*



Experience an enchanting and magical evening at Occidental Eden Beruwala, where the moonlit ocean meets soft sandy shores. Dine under the star-studded skies at an exclusive candlelit setup by the beach, serenaded by the sounds of the gently crashing waves. Indulge in a specially curated gourmet menu, crafted to ignite love and delight the senses.

Occidental Eden Beruwala, creating memories to last a lifetime.

☎ 0344 888 888 ✉ eden@brownshotels.com

**Occidental**  
Eden Beruwala

  
🌐 brownshotels.com

  
**Browns**  
HOTELS & RESORTS



## EGYPTAIR Named Official Partner Airline of ITB China 2025

TTA BULLETIN

ITB China is excited to announce EGYPTAIR as the Official Partner Airline of ITB China 2025, taking place from May 27–29 in Shanghai. This partnership aims to boost Egypt's visibility as a prestigious travel destination and strengthen its presence in the Chinese outbound travel market, with EGYPTAIR facilitating seamless connectivity for Chinese travelers.



Capt. Mohamed Elyan

Partner Airline of this year's event. China represents a key market for us, given its large population and high passenger volume. Expanding our presence in China remains a top priority for EGYPTAIR. We are dedicated to accelerating our growth in China, fostering stronger cooperation, and promoting deeper cultural exchanges between Egypt and China." Capt. Mohamed Elyan, CEO EGYPTAIR AIRLINES.

As part of its strategic collaboration with ITB China 2025, EGYPTAIR will showcase Egypt's tourism potential and its growing air connectivity to the Chinese market. These efforts align with Egypt's broader goal of strengthening economic ties, trade and tourism exchange with China, supporting the recovery of both the tourism sector and business travel.

The airline currently operates approximately 18 weekly flights connecting Egypt to major Chinese cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Hangzhou. In response to the increasing demand, EGYPTAIR is working to expand direct flights to key city hubs and improve service quality, ensuring a comfortable travel experience for Chinese passengers.

Egypt is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, iconic landmarks, and stunning natural attractions, such as the Red Sea and Sinai beaches, which attract many Chinese travelers seeking unique cultural experiences. As part of its growing efforts to strengthen its bonds with the Chinese market, EGYPTAIR is expanding its network to meet the rising demand for travel between Egypt and China.

The EGYPTAIR stand will showcase the airline's strong presence in the market. In collaboration with Chinese travel agencies, EGYPTAIR aims to promote Egypt as a prestigious travel destination, providing a unique opportunity for domestic tourism experts to connect and explore growing travel options between Egypt and China. EGYPTAIR will also feature a lucky draw and presentations, showcasing Egypt's rich history, cultural diversity, and its expanded services to key Chinese cities.

"This is our third participation at ITB China, and we are delighted to return and announce EGYPTAIR's role as an Official

## FITUR Surpasses Expectations in a Year of Record Numbers

TTA BULLETIN

The 45th International Tourism Fair, organized by IFEMA MADRID, closes its doors with outstanding participation and attendance figures. FITUR has exceeded expectations, reaching a first estimate of nearly 255,000 visitors, with significant growth in its first three days, which welcomed 155,000 professionals.

These figures reflect the strong recovery of the global tourism industry in 2024, with 1.4 billion international tourist arrivals, according to UNWTO, as well as record numbers for both Spain and Madrid, which saw 94 million and 16 million visitors, respectively. Furthermore, these FITUR figures anticipate the forecast that, in 2025, both travelers and tourism spending will continue to grow, driven by strong demand. Worldwide, tourism-related revenues have reached 1.9 trillion US dollars, with Spain and Madrid following this trend. Tourist spending figures have risen to 126 billion euros nationally and 16 billion euros in the Madrid region. Moreover, these figures from FITUR anticipate that by 2025 both traveler numbers and tourism spending will continue to grow, driven by strong demand.

Alongside these outstanding attendance figures, and with a total of nine halls, FITUR 2025 consolidates its leadership in participation, hosting more than 9,500 companies across 884 stands. This year, FITUR has brought together 156 countries from around the world, with 101 of them participating with official

delegations. This influx also has an economic impact of 445 million euros on Madrid.

Under the theme "Proud. We Are Tourism," FITUR has celebrated an edition in which all stakeholders have advocated for sustainability criteria to ensure balanced and viable global growth in the medium and long term for both the planet and local communities. Additionally, experts have emphasized how diversification, seasonality reduction, and the integration of new technological tools are driving an inclusive and competitive tourism model that ensures a more sustainable future for all. This model is promoting different types of tourism that contribute to this development, including sports, film, and language tourism.

Progress toward this sustainable tourism model is also essential to preserve the right to travel for future generations, ensuring that travel remains an accessible and enriching reality.

With Brazil as the Partner Country, the Fair was inaugurated on January 22 by Their Majesties, the King and Queen of Spain. The event saw the participation of all stakeholders in the tourism industry's value chain, who presented the latest trends, showcased the sector's dynamism through numerous business transactions, and exchanged knowledge and best practices to continue shaping the sustainable development of the industry.

## The Grand Opening of Radisson Collection Resort, Galle

The Radisson Collection Resort, Galle, recently celebrated its grand opening with a themed event, "Southern Riviera". The event was graced by the presence of Hon. Minister Vijitha Herath, Minister of Tourism, Buddika Hewawasam, Chairman of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, Punarjeeva Karunanayake, Owner of the resort, Xavier Masson, General Manager at Radisson Collection Resort Galle

and Rob Collier, Managing Director Middle East, Africa & Southeast Asia Pacific of the Radisson Hotel Group.

The ceremony commenced with traditional formalities, led by Hon. Minister Herath, Punarjeeva Karunanayake, and representatives from Radisson Hotel Group. The rituals highlighted the cultural significance and grandeur of the event.

Following the inauguration, guests were immersed in the "Southern Riviera" theme, enjoying an enchanting evening featuring captivating live performances, an exquisite dinner showcasing culinary excellence, and engaging entertainment. The celebration embodied the resort's commitment to delivering unparalleled luxury and hospitality experiences.







# Stay Ahead

## STAY WITH US

Our newly redesigned rooms blend modern elegance with thoughtful amenities, creating the perfect space for business and beyond. Whether you're sealing the next big deal or unwinding after a productive day, enjoy smart spaces, modern comforts, and a seamless stay—right in the heart of the city.



Connecting bridge to the World Trade Center



Varied dining and entertainment establishments



17 Flexible meeting and event spaces



Picturesque views of the Colombo Harbor, Port City Colombo, and the Indian ocean



40-Minute drive from the Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA)

For reservations or more information, call +94 11 2 492 492 or email [COLHI\\_Res@hilton.com](mailto:COLHI_Res@hilton.com)





# INDUSTRY LEADERS

## Strengthening Sri Lanka's Tourism: Industry Experts Discuss the German Market's Importance and the Path to Competitiveness

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Germany has long been one of Sri Lanka's key inbound tourism markets, with visitor numbers steadily increasing as confidence in the destination grows. In 2024 alone, 136,084 German travelers chose Sri Lanka, drawn by its diverse landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and immersive experiences. Industry leaders remain optimistic about further growth, forecasting a 30% increase in arrivals in 2025.

As Sri Lanka works to strengthen its presence in the German market, travel patterns and preferences are evolving. From extended round tours to wellness retreats, German travelers prioritize sustainable, experience-driven tourism. However, to remain competitive against other destinations, Sri Lanka's tourism industry must focus on key areas such as improving air connectivity from Europe, enhancing digital marketing efforts, and fostering stronger partnerships with German tour operators.

This feature explores the perspectives of leading tourism stakeholders on how Sri Lanka can refine its market positioning, tap into the growing demand for unique experiences, and implement strategies that ensure long-term success in attracting German travelers.



"Sri Lanka's accommodation sector, a vital part of the tourism supply chain, is as diverse as the destination itself. From international

and local hotel chains to independent properties, the country offers a wide range of lodging options, including star class hotels and resorts, boutique hotels, villas, themed resorts, bungalows, lodges, camps, and homestays. Most establishments are government-registered, ensuring quality standards in accommodation, dining, and services based on their classification. Whether catering to budget travelers or luxury seekers, options are available across the island, each offering a distinct experience shaped by its unique surroundings. This diversity is truly remarkable" said M Shanthikumar, President THASL (The Hotels Association of Sri Lanka)

He went on to say "We believe Sri Lanka has fully recovered from the post covid saga and today records a mature occupancy of 70% to 80% across the island. More new accommodation is expected to be in operation in the next 3 years. The new Government is committed to take Tourism to the number one foreign exchange earner in the coming years and is fully focused on development and promotions to attract the discerning traveller"

Commenting on this market, Nalin Jayasundera, President SLAITO and Managing Director Aitken Spence Travels said



2024. Aitken Spence Travels (ASTL) handled 13,000 of these arrivals. Demand remains strong for beach stays, round tours, and wellness experiences, particularly among middle aged travelers who seek relaxation and cultural enrichment.

German travelers are increasingly drawn to experiential tourism, favouring activities such as culinary tours, wildlife safaris, and heritage site visits. Sustainability is also a priority, with eco-friendly and responsible travel practices influencing decisions. Additionally, German tourists plan well in advance and prefer extended stays for deeper exploration.

Jayasundera highlighted strategies to attract German travelers saying "We have introduced experiential elements in round tours, alongside special promotions, agent incentives, and influencer collaborations to enhance destination awareness. A price-focused summer strategy is key to maintaining year-round visitor flow, particularly for group travel."

He went on to mention that air connectivity remains crucial, with increased direct flights from Germany essential to attracting high-end travelers. "Competitive pricing, seasonal discounts, and bundled packages covering flights, accommodation, and experiences will further drive demand.

Destination-level marketing has been strengthened through digital campaigns, German influencer collaborations, and participation in European travel fairs. Strengthening partnerships with German operators ensures tailored itineraries while maintaining high health, safety, and service standards to reinforce traveler confidence"



most valuable inbound markets. Our focus remains on curating meaningful, high-quality experiences that align with evolving traveler expectations while showcasing Sri Lanka's diverse offering beyond the well-known coastal retreats typically known as Sun, Sea and Sand. With the right marketing strategies, we are confident in strengthening this market further and attracting more visitors from Germany and the Benelux region.

"The German market remains a key driver of tourism to Sri Lanka, and of the 136,084 visitors in

To remain competitive on the global stage, Sri Lanka must adopt a structured and sustained approach to marketing and policy development. While our destination enjoys strong brand recognition in markets like Germany, consistent and strategic communication of our offerings—supported by a well-funded, long-term global marketing campaign—is essential to maintaining visibility and demand.

At Jetwing Travels, we are committed to working closely with industry stakeholders to drive Sri Lanka's tourism growth. A unified approach between the private and public sectors, with clear policies on destination marketing, infrastructure development, and product innovation, will be crucial in ensuring that Sri Lanka remains a preferred choice for travelers amid increasing global competition"



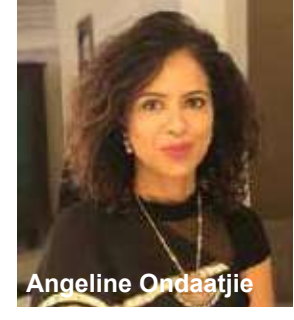
Travel for decades, fostering a loyal following and sustaining us through challenges. While repeat visitors remain strong, we now see a shift toward younger travelers seeking immersive, sustainable experiences. They prioritize cultural engagement, community-driven tourism, and culinary exploration, alongside light adventure activities like cycling tours and tea plantation hikes. With offerings like the Pekoe Trail, Sri Lanka is well-positioned to cater to this demand"

"At DTH, we differentiate our offerings through unique experiences," said De Fonseka. "For example, beyond visiting tea plantations, we share the lesser-known story of Sri Lankan coffee, the island's original crop making a comeback. Instead of standard cultural shows, our travelers engage with traditional dance families, learning firsthand about upcountry dance traditions.

We also highlight Sri Lanka's cultural diversity. Guests can spend time with an Indian Tamil family in the plantations, learning about the life of a tea plucker over a simple meal of vadaai and tea. Additionally, we promote less-visited destinations like Jaffna, which have been well-received by travelers."

He concluded by saying "Sri Lanka's charm lies in its authenticity. However, to preserve this, we need regulations to manage over-tourism, such as limiting visitor numbers at Yala while promoting other national parks. Beyond sun, sand, and traditional round trips, we must focus on new product development to showcase Sri Lanka's full potential—this should be a national effort."

Angeline Ondaatjie – Managing Director



Tangerine Tours shared her views saying "The German market has long been a cornerstone of Sri Lanka's tourism

industry, with a history dating back to the early days of air travel. German travelers have stood by us as an organization and by Sri Lanka as a destination through numerous challenges such as the civil war and the tsunami; while being instrumental in shaping the development of our 3 to 5-star beach properties. Today, we see a significant shift, with visitors increasingly opting for boutique hotels, stand alone villas and off-the-beaten-path accommodations. However, traditional tour operators continue to play a significant role in tourism development, especially in relation to the South Coast of Sri Lanka where competitive pricing is a key element.

She went on to say that "Sri Lanka must proactively put into gear a destination marketing strategy to strengthen its market position and secure a larger share of inbound tourism. Competing primarily on price is unsustainable, especially during the summer months when higher operational costs put pressure on hotels. To remain competitive, we need to showcase our unique value proposition beyond pricing and position Sri Lanka as a premier travel destination."



contribution of the German market and continue to enhance our offerings to meet the requirements of this market segment. With a portfolio of properties ranging from beach escapes to the cultural triangle and the hill country, we are equipped to cater to this market and its diverse requirements.

Browns Investments partnership in the Port City Marina development is yet another testament to our commitment to strengthening and expanding Sri Lanka's tourism landscape, ensuring long-term growth and global competitiveness."

Devindre Senaratne, Managing Director JourneyScapes Pvt Ltd and a pioneer in the German market said "The German market remains one of Sri Lanka's most significant tourism sources, with an average stay exceeding 12 nights. Over 20% of arrivals are repeat visitors, reflecting strong destination loyalty. Despite limited structured marketing,





# Your Tropical Summer Retreat Awaits

Discover the heart of Sri Lanka at Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle.  
From lush greenery to world-class dining and serene luxury,  
every moment is crafted for perfection.

Your dream summer vacation starts here.



ANANTARA

PEACE HAVEN • TANGALLE  
RESORT



Cont. from Pg 18



Devindre Seneviratne

German arrivals have grown year-on-year post-COVID and are expected to surpass 2018's peak by 2025.

Previously centered on mass tourism, the market has shifted toward high-end travelers following the collapse of two major tour operators. These affluent visitors prefer cultural and wildlife tours, exploring Sigiriya, Polonnaruwa, Dambulla, Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, and Yala before concluding with a beach stay.

Experiential travel's rising appeal has boosted Sri Lanka's Authentic Classical Tour, now actively promoted by leading operators. German-speaking staff in hotels and guides enhance the experience, and familiarity with Sri Lanka's cuisine further strengthens its appeal.

However, a structured global marketing and communication campaign is urgently needed to capitalize on this demand. A well-executed promotional plan before August 2025 could push German arrivals to over 350,000 by 2026—a 100% increase. Given the strong interest in Sri Lanka and the market's existing awareness, this target is well within reach.

Commenting on traveler preferences and



Hashan Cooray

the overall wellness tourism offering, Hashan Cooray Director Jetwing Hotels said "Germany has long been one of Sri Lanka's key source markets, with German travelers appreciating the island's diverse landscapes. Over time, we've seen a shift toward immersive experiences, eco-conscious stays, and longer holidays that allow for deeper exploration. Wellness tourism has gained significant popularity, with many German guests seeking authentic Ayurvedic retreats for physical and mental rejuvenation.

At Jetwing Hotels, we focus on delivering authentic Sri Lankan experiences that align with the values of German travelers, who prioritize sustainability, high-quality service, and meaningful cultural interactions. Our properties integrate eco-friendly practices, from solar power and waste management to locally sourced cuisine and community-driven tourism. One of our most sought-after offerings is Jetwing Ayurveda Pavilions, a wellness retreat offering personalized Ayurvedic treatments, guided wellness programs, and authentic Sri Lankan healing rituals. We've seen a growing demand for holistic well-being, and we remain committed to providing an authentic, science-backed, and deeply rejuvenating experience"

Adding on the importance for Sri Lanka to stay competitive he said "with competition intensifying from other destinations, Sri Lanka must adopt a well-defined strategy to remain competitive. Key areas of focus should include consistent and effective destination marketing, improved air connectivity with direct flights from Germany, and simplified visa processes. Reinforcing Sri Lanka's reputation as a safe, sustainable, and year-round destination through strategic collaborations will be essential. Investing in experiential tourism, particularly in areas like heritage tourism, nature-based activities, and Ayurveda-driven wellness tourism, will further differentiate Sri Lanka. The unique combination of centuries-old wellness traditions and luxury hospitality makes Sri Lanka an attractive choice for German travelers who value both exploration and well-being"

Darell De Cruze, Vice President – Sales & Marketing Aitken Spence Hotel Managements Pvt Ltd commenting on the significance of the German market said "Germany is consistently one of Sri Lanka's top five source markets, primarily driven by leisure travel, with a strong preference for beach destinations. Recently, we've seen a shift, particularly among Millennials and Gen Z, who prioritize experiential travel. Social media heavily influences their decisions, leading to a rising demand for cultural and nature-based experiences. This has resulted in more German travelers extending their stays to explore Sri Lanka's cultural and ecological diversity, beyond



Darell De Cruze

just the beaches.

In November 2024, Aitken Spence Hotels strengthened its presence in Germany by partnering

with the 'Sentido' brand under Dertour, one of Germany's largest tour operators. This partnership enhances visibility and bookings for Sri Lanka, with Heritage Negombo rebranded as Sentido Heritage Negombo. Additionally, our collaboration with TUI ensures exposure for key properties like Heritage Ahungalla. We differentiate ourselves through authentic Sri Lankan hospitality combined with internationally recognized quality standards, offering a unique experience for German travelers"

Lastly when touching on Sri Lanka's competitiveness he said "To remain competitive, Sri Lanka should focus on consistent destination marketing in Germany, using both digital and traditional channels. Streamlining visa policies, particularly extending visa-free access for markets like Germany, will encourage travel. Consistent policies are essential to avoid creating uncertainty. Additionally, Sri Lanka should prioritize eco-tourism, adventure, and sustainable travel initiatives to cater to the growing demand for responsible tourism among German travelers"

## Positioning Sri Lanka as a Luxury Destination: The Gold Route Advantage

TTA BULLETIN

The global luxury travel market is expanding rapidly, fueled by a rising demand for personalized services, high-end accommodations, and seamless transportation. Forecasted to reach an impressive \$3.3 trillion by 2032, the industry is seeing substantial growth, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, which leads with a projected compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.1%.

As luxury travel trends evolve, the demand for exclusive, personalized, and experiential services is at an all-time high. Recognizing this opportunity, Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA) introduced the Gold Route Service in 2022, catering specifically to the needs of high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) and premium travelers. Implemented by Airport and Aviation Services Sri Lanka, this premier airport service was designed to offer professionalism, comfort, and ultra-luxury, ensuring a seamless experience for affluent travelers from arrival to departure.

"The Gold Route Service at the airport is a key contributor in elevating Sri Lanka's positioning as a luxury travel destination. By offering world-class, personalized airport services, we not only cater to high-yield travelers but also contribute significantly to the country's foreign income and economic growth," stated Dr. Sumith De Silva, Head of Marketing

Communications at Airport and Aviation Services Sri Lanka

"Since its inception in August 2022, the service has generated significant foreign income for Sri Lanka, recording an impressive LKR 94.9 million in revenue in 2024 alone—a 37% year-on-year growth driven by the influx of luxury travelers. With nearly 3,000 affluent tourists utilizing the service, Airport and Aviation Services Sri Lanka has brought in LKR 175 million (approximately \$191,446 USD) for the nation since August 2022.

The Gold Route Service provides passengers the privilege of completing all airport formalities within an exclusive luxury lounge, offering VIP treatment in a refined, tranquil environment. This initiative has positioned Sri Lanka as a destination that values the comfort and exclusivity sought by discerning travelers, reinforcing its appeal as a high-end tourism hotspot.

As Sri Lanka aims to welcome three million tourists in 2024, a greater emphasis is being placed on developing the luxury travel segment. The nation's



ability to offer a unique blend of authenticity and high-end experiences sets it apart, and customized services such as the Gold Route are expected to play a crucial role in attracting more HNWIs. By ensuring a seamless, hassle-free airport experience, Sri Lanka is strengthening its competitiveness on the global luxury tourism stage and enhancing its reputation as a premier travel destination.

With a strategic focus on destination marketing, infrastructure development, and product innovation, Sri Lanka is well-positioned to compete with top-tier luxury travel destinations. The continued expansion and refinement of services like the Gold Route will be instrumental in securing the country's place as a sought-after choice for elite travelers worldwide.



ENJOY THE  
BREATHTAKING  
VIEWS OF THIS  
TROPICAL  
PARADISE!



At the Pegasus Reef Hotel, breathtaking views set the perfect backdrop for cherished moments by the beachfront. Immerse yourself in tropical bliss and experience the beauty of this island like never before.

Visit: [www.pegasusreefhotel.com](http://www.pegasusreefhotel.com)

[www.facebook.com/Pegasusreefwattala](https://www.facebook.com/Pegasusreefwattala) [www.instagram.com/pegasusreef\\_wattala](https://www.instagram.com/pegasusreef_wattala)





# Our Collection



Oak Ray Tea Bush - Ramboda



Oak Ray Wild Yala - Tissamaharama



Fresco Water Villa - Sigiriya



Liyya Water Villas - Dambulla



Pelwehera Village - Dambulla



Oak Ray Elephant Lake - Habarana



Oak Ray Ella Gap - Ella



Oak Ray La Ella Breeze - Ella



Oak Ray City Hotel - Kandy



Senani Hotel - Kandy



Oak Ray Regency - Kandy



Oak Ray Serene Garden - Kandy



Oak Ray Heritage - Kandy



Oak Ray Summer Hill Breeze - Nuwara Eliya



Rain Tree by Oak Ray - Tissamaharama

Hotline - +94 76 460 0564  
[www.oakrayhotels.com](http://www.oakrayhotels.com)





OAK RAY

Hotels & Resorts

OAK RAY HOTELS & RESORTS

*Collection*



## Seven Angels: A Sanctuary of Boutique Luxury in Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka's boutique hospitality landscape is renowned for offering travelers an intimate, luxurious experience immersed in the country's rich heritage and breathtaking landscapes. The Seven Angels Collection, a distinguished group of boutique hotels, exemplifies this ethos by blending world-class luxury, authentic Sri Lankan charm, and exceptional service across its diverse range of properties. From heritage bungalows in Kandy to wellness retreats in the misty highlands of Haputale, Seven Angels offers a curated selection of boutique properties that cater to discerning travelers seeking comfort, privacy, and personalized experiences.

The story of Seven Angels is deeply connected to the city of Kandy, a place of cultural and historical significance for its founders, Sujeewa and Michelle Palliyaguruge. Their passion for boutique hospitality is reflected in each property, ensuring that guests receive an authentic yet sophisticated Sri Lankan experience. Among the collection's most iconic stays is Castle Hill Bungalow in Kandy, a heritage property that provides easy access to the city's most revered landmarks, including the Sacred Temple of the Tooth, Kandy Lake, and the ancient temples on the outskirts. Meanwhile, Liyya Water Villas in Dambulla, located in Sri Lanka's Cultural Triangle, offers an idyllic retreat within reach of world-famous historical and natural attractions, such as Sigiriya Rock, Dambulla Cave Temple, and the wildlife-rich Minneriya and Kaudulla National Parks. The collection also includes Heritage Boutique Kandy, Clodagh Manor House in Riverston, and Leopard Reach Yala, each offering an experience that combines modern luxury with Sri Lanka's natural and cultural beauty.

Mount Frenion Manor in Nelligala serves as an exclusive hilltop retreat, while the upcoming Grand Bungalow in Nuwara Eliya is set to redefine colonial luxury in the heart of Sri Lanka's Little England. Adding to this portfolio is Graystone Wellness Resort in Haputale, a 150-year-old colonial retreat dedicated to traditional Ayurveda, wellness, and relaxation, alongside the soon-to-be-launched Ceylon Tea Bungalow in Mandaram Nuwara, a sanctuary nestled amidst Sri Lanka's famed tea plantations.

At the core of the Seven Angels experience



Michelle & Sujeewa Palliyaguruge

is an unwavering commitment to personalized service and world-class hospitality. Guests can enjoy private butler service, curated excursions, and immersive cultural experiences, from heritage site visits to tea estate tours. For those seeking rejuvenation, select properties offer bespoke wellness programs incorporating Ayurveda, spa therapies, and yoga, allowing travelers to unwind in absolute tranquility.

Luxury today extends beyond opulent interiors—it is about well-being, balance, and rejuvenation. Many properties also incorporate Ayurvedic healing therapies, blending ancient Sri Lankan wellness traditions with modern spa techniques to offer a transformative experience.

Seven Angels properties, with menus crafted to highlight Sri Lanka's finest flavors alongside international cuisine, ensuring that each dining experience complements the unique character of its setting. Whether indulging in a traditional Sri Lankan rice and curry feast, an elegant high tea in the hills of Nuwara Eliya, or a seafood-inspired dining experience on the southern coast, each meal is designed to elevate the overall luxury experience.

With an emphasis on luxury, service, and authenticity, Seven Angels is redefining boutique hospitality in Sri Lanka, offering visitors an unparalleled collection of stays that seamlessly blend history, nature, and indulgence. As the brand expands with the upcoming launches of The Grand Bungalow in Nuwara Eliya and Ceylon Tea Bungalow in Mandaram Nuwara, Seven Angels is set to further enhance Sri Lanka's reputation as a premier boutique travel destination. For those in search of a one-of-a-kind escape, Seven Angels delivers not just a stay, but an experience—where luxury meets authenticity in the heart of Sri Lanka.



## Anantara's Banana Island: Where Exquisite Hospitality Meets Unforgettable Adventure

TTA BULLETIN

Banana Island Resort by Anantara has long been synonymous with exclusivity, tranquility, and world-class hospitality. Now, with the launch of its highly anticipated Adventure Park, the resort is elevating its guest experience to new heights. General Manager Roberto Simone shares insights into this exciting new addition, the resort's holistic luxury offerings, and the evolving landscape of high-end travel in the Middle East.



Roberto Simone

The resort has also maintained its reputation as a top choice for families, thanks to its kid-friendly experiences, private cinema, and educational activities. The Adventure Park now adds an extra layer of excitement, providing a space where children and parents can bond over high-energy challenges.

For years, Banana Island has been a haven for those seeking unparalleled relaxation and indulgence. But as modern travelers crave more than just leisure, the resort has embraced a new dimension—adventure. With the unveiling of the newly opened Adventure Park, guests can now enjoy an adrenaline-fueled experience in the heart of a serene island retreat.

"We recognized that today's luxury traveler seeks more than just a beautiful escape," says Roberto Simone, General Manager of Banana Island Resort by Anantara. "They want excitement, discovery, and immersive experiences that create lasting memories. Our Adventure Park is a game-changer—offering guests the perfect balance between thrill and tranquility."

The new Adventure Park boasts a zipline, rock-climbing walls, rope courses, and high-energy activities that cater to both families and adventure seekers. The park seamlessly integrates with the island's existing world-class water sports facilities including the surf pool, Dive center and kids splash pools allowing guests to transition from high-flying thrills to jet skiing, kayaking, or paddleboarding.

"What makes our Adventure Park unique is how it complements our overall luxury experience," Simone explains. "You can spend your morning indulging in a customized 'Dining by Design' breakfast by the ocean, then challenge yourself on the zipline in the afternoon, and end the day with a sunset spa treatment."

While the Adventure Park is a key addition, Banana Island remains an unrivaled culinary and family-friendly destination. With an extensive portfolio of restaurants, the resort offers gourmet experiences that range from authentic Middle Eastern delicacies to international fine dining.

"Our culinary philosophy is simple: every meal should be an experience," says Simone. "Whether it's a romantic beachfront dinner curated by our chefs, a family feast with interactive elements, or a wellness-focused menu for those looking to recharge, we ensure that dining at Banana Island is as memorable as our scenic views."

"We've always been a destination where families reconnect," Simone notes. "Now, with the Adventure Park, we offer a dynamic mix of relaxation, adventure, and togetherness. Parents can unwind at our award-winning spa while their children embark on thrilling outdoor adventures in a safe, supervised environment."

Beyond adventure and indulgence, Banana Island remains deeply committed to sustainability. The Adventure Park was designed ensuring that it blends harmoniously with the island's natural beauty.

"Sustainability is at the core of our philosophy," Simone states. "We take great care to preserve the environment, from using renewable resources in construction to implementing conservation initiatives that educate our guests on protecting marine life."

With over 25 years of experience in hospitality management across multiple regions, Simone brings a unique leadership approach to Banana Island. His expertise in asset and operational management ensures that the resort not only maintains its high service standards but continues to innovate.

"Luxury hospitality today is about personalization, consistency, and innovation," Simone emphasizes. "My focus is always on crafting an experience where every guest, whether a first-time visitor or a loyal returning traveler, feels a deep connection to our resort."

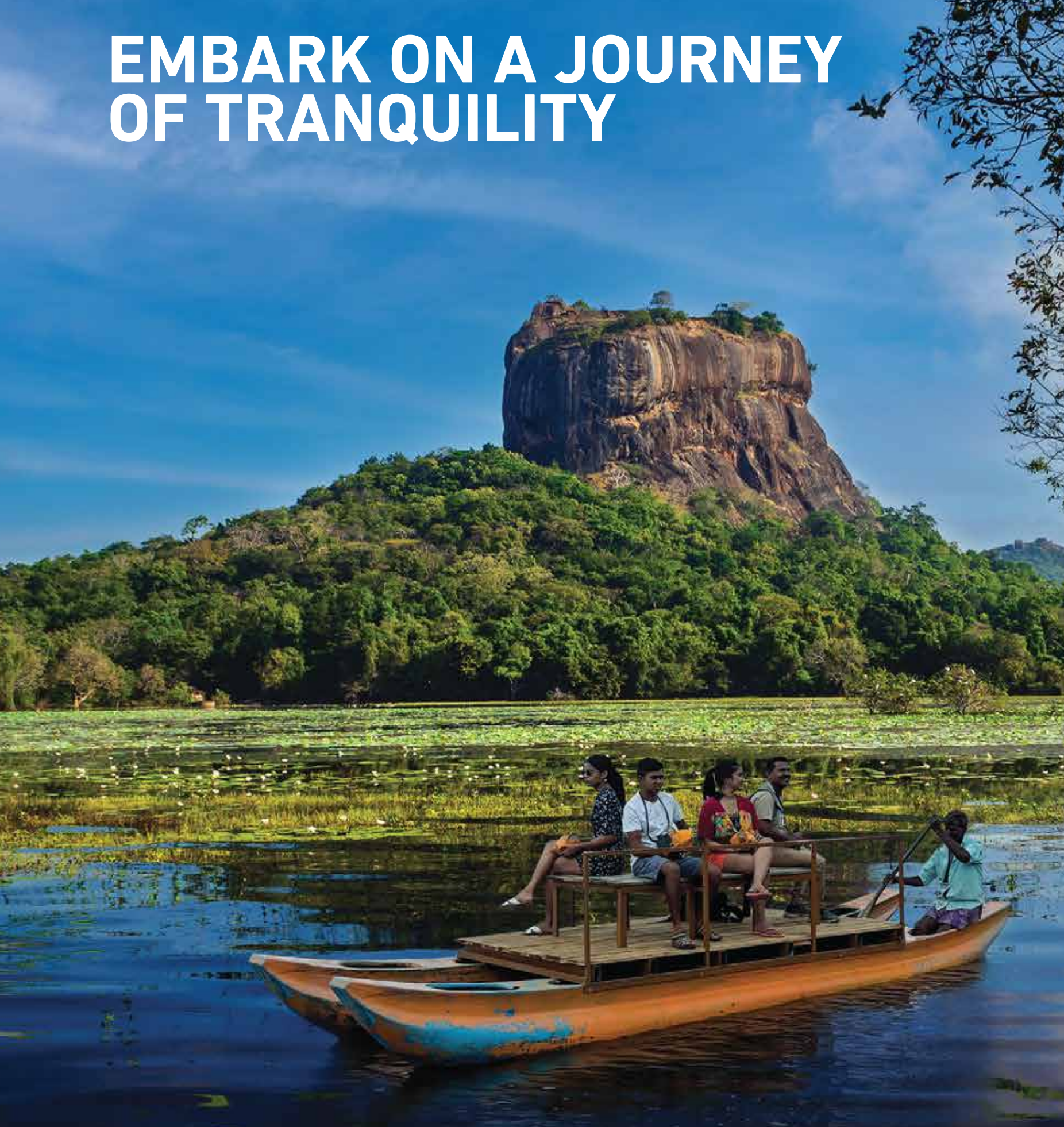
The Middle East continues to evolve as a global tourism powerhouse, with experiential travel, digital personalization, and wellness tourism driving new trends. Simone is confident that Banana Island will remain at the forefront of this evolution.

"Travelers today want more than just opulence—they want meaning. They seek destinations that offer adventure, wellness, cultural connection, and sustainability," he says. "Our vision for Banana Island is clear: to be a sanctuary where every guest can craft their own extraordinary journey, whether it's through adventure, gastronomy, or mindful relaxation."

As Banana Island Resort by Anantara steps into this exciting new era, one thing is certain—the blend of adventure, luxury, and heartfelt hospitality will continue to define its identity as one of the region's most sought-after destinations.



# EMBARK ON A JOURNEY OF TRANQUILITY



At Occidental Paradise Dambulla, we create unique connections where lush, green foliage and ancient mystical wonders meet. Explore the legendary Sigiriya Rock Fortress steeped in ancient history or find solace by the serene waters of the Kalu Diya Pokuna. Immerse yourself in local culture with guided village tours or witness the mesmerising sight of a thousand migratory birds.

Welcome to a realm of breathtaking natural beauty where Occidental Paradise Dambulla's world-class hospitality awaits.

☎ 0662 286 300 ✉ [fom.paradise@brownshotels.com](mailto:fom.paradise@brownshotels.com)

**Occidental**  
Paradise Dambulla

[f](#) [@](#) [X](#) [d](#) [in](#) [v](#)  
🌐 [brownshotels.com](http://brownshotels.com)

  
**Brown's**  
HOTELS & RESORTS



## 71st Annual General Meeting of Skäl International Colombo

Skäl International Colombo successfully hosted its 71st Annual General Meeting, bringing together key leaders and professionals from the travel and tourism industry. The event featured Hon. Hanif Yusoof, Governor of the Western Province, as the distinguished guest speaker, sharing insights on the future of the tourism sector and regional development.

Ahintha Amarasinghe continues his tenure as President for 2025/2026, alongside the newly appointed Executive Committee, reaffirming Skäl Colombo's commitment to fostering strong industry partnerships and driving tourism growth in Sri Lanka.

The AGM also marked the induction of four new members, further strengthening Skäl's dynamic network

of professionals dedicated to advancing responsible tourism. A key highlight of the evening was the focus on the upcoming Skäl Asia Congress, set to take place in Sri Lanka in June this year. The prestigious event is expected to attract international delegates from Skäl Clubs across Asia, providing a platform to showcase Sri Lanka's diverse offerings and reinforce its position as a leading travel destination.







# CINNAMON LIFE: REDEFINING COLOMBO'S MICE LANDSCAPE



CUMULUS

Colombo's hospitality and business landscape have undergone a remarkable transformation with the introduction of Cinnamon Life, an integrated development that has redefined the city's offerings for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE). Positioned as Sri Lanka's premier lifestyle destination, Cinnamon Life is a game-changer in the region's events industry, offering state-of-the-art venues, luxurious accommodations, and an unparalleled selection of dining and entertainment experiences—all within a single integrated space.

Designed to cater to large-scale international conferences, corporate summits, and lavish social gatherings, Cinnamon Life boasts some of the most advanced MICE facilities in South Asia. The jewel in its crown is the Lumina Ballroom, one of Colombo's largest event spaces, capable of hosting over 1,300 guests in a banquet setting and over 1,800 in a theatre setup. Complemented by cutting-edge audiovisual technology, LED walls, and high-speed connectivity, the venue is equipped to handle world-class events with seamless execution.

Adding to its impressive lineup of venues, Cinnamon Life introduces The Forum, located on Level 08, a standout space spanning 10,771 sq. ft. with a soaring 21 ft. ceiling. It features Sri Lanka's first soundproof electronic dropdown partitions, which allow the space to be divided into two sections. It also boasts two pre-function areas: one on Level 08 spanning 6,340 sq. ft. with a 13 ft. ceiling, and another on Level 07, offering 3,246 sq. ft. with a unique ceiling height ranging from 9.8 to 15 ft. For versatile event setups, The Studio on Level 08 provides 6,201 sq. ft. of uninterrupted space with a 12.5 ft. ceiling, offering unobstructed views and adaptable configurations. The Studio Pre-Function area further extends its capability with an additional 3,641 sq. ft. of space, perfect for receptions and networking events.



LUMINA BALLROOM

Catering to intimate gatherings, the Boardrooms on Level 08 is ideal for breakout sessions and high-profile meetings. These rooms can be divided into six sections with electronic partitions and are outfitted with advanced audiovisual setups.

For a truly unique setting, the Cumulus and Celestine Ballrooms on Level 22 redefine luxury event experiences. These are Sri Lanka's first cantilever ballrooms, suspended over 300 ft. above ground, offering breathtaking 270° panoramic views of the Indian Ocean, Beira Lake, and Colombo city skyline. The Cumulus Ballroom spans 9,157 sq. ft. with a soaring 32 ft. ceiling, featuring natural daylight, a custom cloud chandelier, and advanced audiovisual technology. The Celestine Ballroom, offers interchangeable ceiling light beams for a customizable ambiance. Both ballrooms share the elegant Sky Pavilion pre-function area making them perfect for high-profile corporate events and gala receptions.



FORUM LOWER



CELESTINE



CELESTINE

Cinnamon Life extends its MICE offerings beyond indoor venues with some of the most impressive outdoor event spaces in Colombo. The Podium on Level 07 is a sprawling 25,783 sq. ft. open-air venue, ideal for large-scale outdoor events with easy access from the entrance ramp and parking lot. For more exclusive gatherings, the Sky Lounge on Level 24 offers an open-air space with breathtaking 270° panoramic views of the city. Additionally, the Garden Terrace on Level 09 offers a lush setting for cocktail receptions, fashion shows, and corporate networking events.

To round off its impressive selection, the Pool Lounge and Infinity Pool Deck provide a luxurious setting for intimate soirées, product launches, and VIP events, combining Colombo's tropical charm with the sophistication of a five-star venue.

Beyond Cinnamon Life, Colombo itself is a vibrant and dynamic city that serves as a perfect backdrop for MICE tourism. With its well-developed infrastructure, international connectivity, and an exciting blend of culture, history, and modern attractions, the city continues to attract global business travelers. Colombo's growing portfolio of luxury hotels, fine dining establishments, and high-end retail options complement its MICE offerings, providing delegates with world-class experiences both inside and outside event venues.

The city's strategic location as a gateway to South Asia, combined with its warm hospitality and year-round tropical climate, make it an ideal choice for conferences, exhibitions, and incentive travel. From the scenic Galle Face Green to the bustling Pettah Market, Colombo offers a mix of leisure and business attractions that ensure a memorable stay for visiting delegates.

Cinnamon Life is more than just a development—it is a statement of Sri Lanka's potential as a global MICE powerhouse. By offering unparalleled facilities, seamless services, and an ideal location in the heart of Colombo, it has set new standards for event hosting in South Asia.

As Sri Lanka continues to position itself as a preferred destination for international business events, Cinnamon Life stands at the forefront, ready to welcome the world.



# HOTELS / FAMILY ALBUM

## New Fine Dining Experiences at Jetwing Hotels

TTA BULLETIN

Embark on a culinary journey like no other at Jetwing Hotels, where luxury and Sri Lankan hospitality converge to offer an unforgettable fine dining experience. The renowned Thambapanni at Jetwing Yala, known for its exquisite dining amid coastal wilderness, has been joined by two exceptional restaurants that were recently relaunched: Black Coral at Jetwing Beach and The Cinnamon Room at Jetwing Lighthouse. These dining establishments offer distinct and memorable culinary journeys for both in-house guests and visitors.

Perched elegantly by the ocean, Black Coral at Jetwing Beach is a haven for those seeking a fine dining experience in Negombo; exuding contemporary chic with sleek lines and modern décor that creates an atmosphere of sophistication. The restaurant features a thoughtfully curated menu with vegan and vegetarian choices, fresh, locally sourced seafood like lobster and yellowfin tuna, and carefully selected prime cuts of both local and imported meats, including Australian Angus beef and lamb rack. Whether you're

in the mood for familiar favorites or eager to explore new tastes, Black Coral ensures a dining escapade steeped in absolute beachfront luxury.

In the heritage city of Galle, The Cinnamon Room at Jetwing Lighthouse offers a truly remarkable ambiance. Inspired by the exotic spice that has drawn travelers to Sri Lanka for centuries, this enchanting restaurant occupies a spacious area with an adjoining terrace on the second floor. The restaurant whispers tales of Sri Lanka's colonial past. From the meticulously chosen furniture and the soft glow of antique lighting to the gleaming cutlery and elegant crockery, every detail evokes a sense of timeless elegance and warmth. Open exclusively for dinner, The Cinnamon Room features an à la carte menu, daily specials, and an incredible collection of fine wines that are bound to tantalize your taste buds. With a selection of signature seafood delicacies sourced from the southern seas and fresh produce handpicked from local markets, each dish is a celebration of the region's bounty, making this restaurant an essential stop on

your holiday in Galle.

Overlooking the adventurous terrains and the azure waves of the Indian Ocean, Thambapanni at Jetwing Yala offers an incredible fine dining experience you cannot miss during your stay in the deep south. The à la carte menu features dishes crafted from the highest quality local seafood and prime cuts sourced from beyond our shores. The restaurant's interior design pays homage to its name, which translates to "copper-coloured Earth" in the native tongue. With copper-hued place settings and earth-toned furniture, the ambiance seamlessly blends natural elements, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere that enhances the overall dining experience.

All three resorts offer guests booked on a half board and full board basis the option of dining at the respective fine dining outlets. Whether one chooses the wild-coastal setting of Thambapanni, the beachfront charm of Black Coral or the historical elegance of The Cinnamon



Room, Jetwing Hotels aims to create a truly unforgettable dining experience. At Jetwing Hotels, dining is more than just a meal; it's an opportunity to connect with the rich culinary heritage of Sri Lanka and experience the genuine warmth of its legendary hospitality.

## Oak Ray Golden Travel Partners Night 2025

Oak Ray Hotels recently hosted an appreciation evening for their partners titled "Gold, Gratitude and Glamour" at Cinnamon Grand Hotel in Colombo.







AYUBOWAN FROM

ayugiri

AYURVEDA WELLNESS RESORT SIGIRIYA

Tucked away in the serenity of Sri Lanka's cultural heartland, Ayugiri unfolds as a sanctuary of healing and renewal - Sri Lanka's first-of-its-kind luxury Ayurveda wellness retreat.

Rooted in the ancient wisdom of Ayurveda, this retreat offers the care of expert doctors and therapists, with bespoke healing journeys crafted just for you to cleanse, rejuvenate, and revitalise body, mind, and spirit.

Beneath the timeless gaze of the Sigiriya Fortress, Ayugiri offers 22 private suites, each with its own plunge pool, a state-of-the-art Ayurveda centre, a Yoga Shala, and meditation spaces carved into nature that invite deep relaxation and holistic living.


**Embrace the art of living in full - experience Ayugiri.**




**Browns**

HOTELS & RESORTS

 Ayugiri Ayurveda Wellness Resort, Kimbissa, Sigiriya, Sri Lanka.

 +94 664960900

 [brownshotels.com](http://brownshotels.com)



## Sri Lanka Tourism at OTM Mumbai 2025

Sri Lanka tourism made waves at the recently concluded OTM Mumbai together with 1,600+ exhibitors and 40,000+ travel trade visitors from across the globe over a period of three days of networking, learning, and collaboration.

With India being Sri Lanka's top tourism source market, Sri Lanka Tourism was well represented, attracting strong interest from key industry players..







W15  
COLLECTION

# Weavers of Magic!

Step into any W15 property and prepare to be mesmerized. The initial glimpse of one of their stunning properties will pull you in and present you with the near-impossible feat of tearing your eyes away from the breathtaking surroundings. Once you have enjoyed the warmest of welcomes, W15's signature impeccable service, and indulged in one of their delectable meals, and ended the day with the sound of birdsong or breaking waves while you sink into the sensual softness and comfort of their beds—you would not want to leave. This is the magic that is the W15 Collection.

W15 Collection was born with the launch of W15 Weligama in 2015, bringing about the unique name of the collection. The tagline of their properties is “Moments to Memories”, and their six boutique hotels—scattered for now across the Central Highlands and the Southern Coast—promise to deliver on this assurance.

Whether you embrace island life where sun, sea, and sand are constant blessings, or find solace in the cool verdant hills that breathe life into tired souls, W15 Collection has been mindful of Sri Lanka's best when selecting locations for their properties. From the pristine beaches of Weligama and Ahangama to the picturesque hills of Hanthana, Ambuluwawa, and Nuwara Eliya, W15 properties offer world-class service with Sri Lankan warmth, impeccable cuisine, and the most stunning of environs.

## W15 Weligama

The initial link to this wonderful chain of boutique hotels, W15 Weligama epitomizes lively and vibrant island life, where days blend into each other in a riot of colour- sun kissed white beaches, azure skies, ochre sunsets and the colours of the rainbow in your food and cocktails, weaving a tapestry that encapsulates beauty and bliss. W15 Weligama is all about adventure, of living a few days of your life by the alluring promise of the ocean and the excitement of the waves and fun to be had and the amazing experiences within the walls of an eclectic hotel comprising 10 exclusive and individually themed rooms. This whimsical beach club in the sun is made unique by its cutting-edge architecture and design and offers its guests opportunities to surf, watch frolicking dolphins and majestic whales, tantalize their tastebuds with their scrumptious cuisine and signature cocktails and party the evenings away to live music. Located under a 2-hour drive from Colombo, W15 Weligama is also the place to say “I do” amidst magical surroundings, celebrate another year around the sun or host stylish corporate events where the W15 team of professionals will tailor each experience to align with guests' expectations.

In this small island paradise, we take pride in our warmth, hospitality, passion, creativity, and exquisite cuisine, all set against the mesmerizing beauty of our land. At W15 Weligama, you can immerse yourself in this essence and so much more.



## W15 Lake Gregory - Nuwara Eliya

When the mountains call your name, W15 Lake Gregory offers glorious living amidst a green clad land, crisp fresh air and the soothing blue of Lake Gregory. This colonial inspired luxury boutique bungalow invites guests to a sublime world of peace, invigoration and quiet solitude. One could make the best of many worlds here, curl up with a good book and a hot chocolate besides the warmth of a fireplace, walk until your legs protest or heed the call of excitement on the lake with adrenaline pumping jet ski rides or a quiet and romantic boat ride. Mystical Nuwara Eliya and Lake Gregory also offer discerning guests opportunities to discover cascading waterfalls, trek or hike in the adjoining Galway National park and enjoy bird watching, cycling and golf.

Indulgence becomes the norm at mealtimes at Lake Gregory as the talented chefs create masterpieces of culinary delights with the fresh local produce and finest ingredients. Whether you crave a typically Sri Lankan spread or international cuisine, the chefs will elevate every dining experience keeping to their conventions of “Dine by Design” where attention is paid to detail to ensure that the result is divine to say the least. Evenings are for traditional and delightful high tea, for the mystery of twilight, to wine and dine within the warmth of the bungalow or the unconfined coolness of the verandah. W15 Lake Gregory is an escape to a world of quiet relaxation and beauty where one's senses are captivated and indulged with world-class service, pampering of whims, exquisite cuisine and magnificent views.

## W15 Ambuluwawa

The latest addition to the W15 Collection of hotels is W15 Ambuluwawa, a little piece of heaven perched atop an outcrop of land in Gampola, providing 360-degree views that are not only breathtaking but at times surreal. Sunsets at Ambuluwawa are moments of pure magic as the sky paints herself with hues of pink, orange and purple while the earth stills and the soft breeze caresses. W15 Ambuluwawa is ingeniously designed to offer vistas of magnificent surroundings from every space through floor-to-ceiling windows providing an experience akin to stepping into a magical painting. Not just satisfied with offering its customers a beautiful hotel with a sublime view, W15Collection aims to ensure the highest levels of service standards with professional service staff and personal butlers and elevated Italian inspired dining experiences. The innovative design of this wonderful hotel encompasses a sky deck offering 360-degree views, an infinity pool that aligns perfectly with the sunrise and a patio to enjoy a sundowner as the colourful world around you quiets. For guests who can tear themselves away from the transcending peace within these white walls, thrills and fun beckon a few kilometers away at an adventure park with its monster swings and boat rides on a man-made lake. Having opened her doors last November, this little piece of heaven awaits, to envelop you with peace, exceptional service and beauty that will steal your breath away.



## W15 Hanthana Estate - Kandy

The brightest gem of the glittering necklace that is the W15 Collection is their iconic, award-winning property, resplendent W15 Hanthana Estate where time stands still amidst the misty hills of Hanthana. A pristine white colonial bungalow surrounded by verdant foliage and manicured sprawling lawns, Hanthana Estate is a face from another time, invoking bygone charm and splendor. The main bungalow unfolds like a tapestry of sepia and cream where six exclusive suites reside, with four more situated a few steps beyond. It is clearly an understatement to say that Hanthana Estate caters to every whim and fancy of its discerning guest. This magical escape offers outstanding service standards with a personal butler just a call away, scrumptious cuisine that is an exquisitely crafted gift, a sensual indulgence of comfort within your room and ephemeral and magnificent views. The staff here raise the quintessential bar to levels where they cater to expectations that you never thought you had when they offer a warm shawl on a chilly evening, slide a hot water bottle under your duvet during the turn down service and place cushy slippers beside your bed—small gestures that go a long way. W15 Hanthana Estate is much more an escape to a sublime world, it is a place that envelops you with its warmth, quiet charm and tugs at your heartstrings, it is a place like home.

Come experience the magic that is the W15 Collection of Sri Lanka.



# HOTELS

## Islander opens its doors at ITC

### Ratnadipa

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka is abundantly blessed with its stunning beaches and rich maritime history, with Colombo's seafood scene being exciting and varied. In keeping with the love for seafood, ITC Ratnadipa launches "Islander" –

a true testament to the deep-rooted connecting to the crystal blue Indian Ocean. The Islander honors the ancient fishing traditions, and celebrates the island spirit.

Located at Colombo's most enviable location on the 37th floor, the décor is immediately welcoming with hues of blues. The vibe is all about high-energy, where the bar on the terrace crafts artisanal signature cocktails. Its circular structure allows guests to capture the view of the night skies and balmy oceans. Your attention will soon focus on the inspiring menu curated, featuring fresh catches that are transformed into mouthwatering dishes. The culinary line-up features cold plates of Lagoon Oysters, Miso marinated salmon and Yellow Fin Tuna Tartare while the Crisped selection offers Kochchi Chili squid, Lagoon prawns and rainbow scallops to name a few. The pan-cooked Cuttlefish or Flamed Lobster with Teriyaki Sauce is guaranteed to take you on a culinary while the Prawn coconut curry pays homage to the island's beaches.

The exceptional seafood offerings continue with its flamed scampi, Grouper, Salmon and Barramundi whilst pairing



these delights with Vanilla pandan garlic butter bread, rice pancakes and even rice pots where culinary iterations are contemplated in a variety of cooking techniques.

Vegetarians too can indulge in a range of dishes, full of heft and crunch with cold plates featuring three mushrooms with pennywort, spiced vegetable mosaic fritters, morel and miso edamame rice and more, whilst the meat lovers can opt for a generous hunk of sirloin steak oozing all the meaty juices or Lamb chop and even a Tomahawk Steak.

Finish off your meal at Islander with astounding desserts ranging from Home churned sorbets, Pandan Crème Brulee or even an Arak Misu and taste your way through the finest sweets.

ITC Ratnadipa invites you to this Oceanic Odyssey where tales from the Tides and beneath the blue, unveil Coastal charms, from shores of serenity and whispers of the waves team with Seashell stories, highlighting the best locally-sourced ingredients, exquisitely prepared.

Islander takes you on seafood heights daily during dinner from 6.30 pm – 11.00 pm, while the terrace bar invites you for sundowners daily from 5.00 pm onwards as the sun dips below the ocean waves while you catch a glimpse of fiery red skies and the Indian Ocean.

## Cinnamon Lodge Habarana Unveils Sri Lanka's First Sigiriya Virtual Reality Experience

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Lodge Habarana proudly announces its collaboration with Sigiriya VR, marking a significant milestone as the first resort in Sri Lanka to introduce a Virtual Reality (VR) experience centred on the history of the iconic Sigiriya Rock Fortress. This innovative experience provides guests with a unique opportunity to explore the historical grandeur of Sigiriya as it stood in the 5th century during the reign of King Kashyapa.

Adding to its prestige, Sigiriya was recently crowned as the 'World's Most Welcoming City for 2025' by Booking.com, based on over 360 million verified customer reviews. This global recognition reaffirms Sigiriya's status as a must-visit destination, drawing travellers eager to experience its cultural and historical significance.

The launch event for this groundbreaking experience was held at The Verandah, the newly unveiled restaurant at Cinnamon Lodge Habarana, which boasts panoramic views of the surrounding natural beauty. Situated in close proximity to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Sigiriya, the resort remains a preferred destination for travellers eager to explore this cultural landmark. The introduction of the Sigiriya VR experience



further reinforces Cinnamon Lodge Habarana's commitment to enhancing guest experiences by seamlessly blending modern technology with Sri Lanka's rich historical heritage

Johan Aschan, Area Vice President, Sri Lanka Resorts of Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, commenting on the partnership: "At Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, we continuously seek innovative ways to elevate guest experiences beyond traditional tourism, and our collaboration with Sigiriya VR is a testament to that vision. By blending heritage with cutting-edge technology, we offer our guests at Cinnamon Lodge Habarana, a new way to engage with Sigiriya's rich history—one that goes beyond a traditional visit. This immersive experience allows visitors to step back in time and witness the ancient grandeur of Sigiriya like never before, creating a deeper, more meaningful connection to Sri Lanka's cultural legacy."

## Heritage Hotels and Resorts Partners with Galle Literary Festival as Exclusive Opening Night Sponsor

TTA BULLETIN

Heritage Hotels and Resorts, the flagship brand of Aitken Spence Hotels, proudly announces its continued collaboration with the Galle Literary Festival (GLF) 2025.

This year, Heritage Hotels and Resorts will serve as the exclusive sponsor of the festival's opening night on 5 February.

Rooted in a legacy of cultural preservation and authentic experiences, Heritage Hotels and Resorts shares a natural synergy with the ethos of GLF, which celebrates creativity, intellectual discovery, and Sri Lanka's rich artistic heritage. This collaboration highlights Heritage's unwavering commitment to fostering creativity and promoting cultural sustainability while delivering unparalleled hospitality.

The festival's Opening Night will set the tone for the festival, offering guests an immersive experience that bridges tradition and innovation - hallmarks of the Heritage brand. The event will bring together an inspiring guest list, including renowned authors, literary figures, and thought leaders, offering guests an evening enriched with artistry, conversation, and a vibrant celebration of Sri Lankan culture with some of the most influential voices in the world of literature. The evening will also feature a thoughtful-



ly curated culinary experience by Heritage Ahungalla, showcasing fusion cuisine inspired by traditional Sri Lankan roots, blending flavors and heritage in every

bite.

"For Heritage Hotels and Resorts, this collaboration is more than just sponsorship; it's a continuation of a shared journey toward cultural sustainability," remarked Stasshani Jayawardena, Joint Deputy Chairperson and Joint Managing Director of Aitken Spence Hotel Holdings. "The Galle Literary Festival provides a platform for diverse voices, intellectual exploration, and the celebration of both contemporary and classical art forms, values that are integral to the Heritage Hotels and Resorts brand. Together with GLF, Heritage Hotels and Resorts continues to showcase its belief in the transformative power of literature to connect communities, preserve heritage, and inspire future generations."

Heritage Hotels and Resorts welcomes festival attendees to an evening of inspiration and dialogue - where stories come alive, creativity flourishes, and connections are forged in the heart of Galle. This partnership further solidifies Heritage's role as a proud champion of Sri Lanka's artistic and cultural legacy.

## Ceylon Curry Club: A Celebration of Sri Lankan Spices and Flavours

TTA BULLETIN

For centuries, Sri Lanka's spices have captivated the world. It was sought after by traders and explorers, for their bold aromas, depth of flavour, and rich history. From fiery pepper to fragrant cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, and cardamom, these treasured ingredients shaped the island's culinary identity, making Sri Lankan cuisine a vibrant fusion of tradition and spice. Ceylon Curry Club pays homage to this legacy, crafting dishes that celebrate the island's most iconic flavours with creativity and flair.

Nestled in the heart of Colombo's historic Dutch Hospital precinct, Ceylon Curry Club invites guests on an immersive culinary journey through Sri Lanka's vibrant flavours and rich heritage. With a menu that celebrates authentic Sri Lankan spices, every dish is thoughtfully crafted to deliver a bold yet refined dining experience.

The menu is designed to take diners on a gastronomic adventure, divided into creatively curated sections such as Tasty Tidbits (Bites), Appetite Arousers (Starters), Punchy Mains, A Taste of Tradition, Authentic Ceylon Curry, and Final Flourish (Desserts). Signature dishes include the indulgent Negombo Lagoon Crab Cart, a fresh take on Sri Lanka's



famed seafood, the uniquely crafted Pot Lamprais wrapped in a banana leaf, and the flavourful Mutton Kottu, a street food favourite elevated to gourmet status.

Other standout offerings include the Duo Soup, an exquisite combination of Dandila and Bulath flavours, spicy Kochchi Chicken Skewers, and the succulent River King Prawn, each dish meticulously prepared to highlight the essence of Sri Lankan spices.

To complement the rich flavours, the restaurant's cocktail menu brings a taste of Ceylonese mixology with innovative drinks such as the Arrack Mojito, Ceylon Colada, Barak Anaana, Saima Cut Wela, Karapincha, Dola Duka, and the intriguingly named Lankan Orgasm. These unique blends, inspired by local ingredients and traditional infusions, elevate the dining experience, making each visit a sensory delight.





# A summer to remember

Step into a world of relaxation.

Enjoy the gentle ocean breeze, treat yourself to rejuvenating spa rituals,  
and delight in the beauty of Sri Lanka's coastline.





## Pegasus Reef - A Legacy of Hospitality on the Coast

TTA BULLETIN

As Sri Lanka continues to reassert its position as a leading tourism destination, Pegasus Reef Hotel stands out as a unique offering for travelers seeking a resort experience with the convenience of city proximity. With direct beach access and easy connectivity to Colombo and Bandaranaike International Airport, the hotel has positioned itself as a strategic hub for both leisure and business travelers.



Renuke Coswatte

Ahead of ITB Berlin, TTA sat down with Renuke Coswatte, General Manager Pegasus Reef Hotel about its appeal to visitors with emphasis on the German traveler and how it aligns with evolving travel trends.

Pegasus Reef Hotel has been a pioneer in Sri Lanka's hospitality landscape since 1971, having the distinction of being the country's first five-star hotel. "We have upgraded our rooms to a premium category, ensuring that both local and international travelers experience luxury, comfort, and world-class amenities. What sets us apart is not only our beachfront location but also our curated experiences and a dedicated team committed to providing exceptional hospitality," commented Coswatte

Beyond the beach, Pegasus Reef offers a unique retreat named 'Kurulu Kale'—a two-acre sanctuary dedicated to nature conservation. Home to over 22 species of birds, butterflies, and other wildlife, this tranquil space is ideal for yoga, meditation, reading, or a leisurely walk along designated 'high calorie' or 'low calorie' paths.

German travelers have long been known for their preference for authenticity, sustainability, and immersive cultural experiences. Pegasus Reef is committed to delivering on these expectations through a combination of nature, cuisine, and responsible tourism practices.

"Kurulu Kale exemplifies our commitment to sustainability, offering guests a serene environment immersed in nature. Additionally, we provide authentic Sri Lankan culinary experiences, ensuring travelers get a taste of local flavors through curated dining options," he explains.

Environmental responsibility is also a core focus. "We continue to invest in water conservation initiatives and sustainable sourcing practices. Our hotel is ISO-certified in both food hygiene and environmental sustainability, ensuring that we maintain the highest standards in responsible tourism."



Germany has been a crucial feeder market for Pegasus Reef Hotel since its inception, consistently ranking among the top five source markets.

To attract more German tourists, Pegasus Reef is focusing on strengthening relationships with German tour operators and local travel agents. "A strong presence at ITB Berlin is crucial for us. We are actively engaging with key stakeholders and leveraging every opportunity to build lasting business relationships"

Sri Lanka itself remains an ideal year-round destination, rich in cultural heritage, diverse landscapes, and warm hospitality. "German travelers have supported Sri Lanka for generations. Our message is to continue strengthening this bond by focusing on Sri Lanka's people, culture, food, and sustainability. Our close proximity to the city, the airport, and major highways ensures seamless connectivity to the rest of Sri Lanka."

As Sri Lanka's tourism sector recovers, Coswatte sees several opportunities for growth. "Our wellness offering is an attractive offering for the European market, specifically Sri Lanka's traditional 'Hela Wedakama' (indigenous medicine). There is also significant potential in structured MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) tourism, as well as targeting younger German travelers who prioritize experiential and sustainable travel."

However, challenges remain. Internally, there is a need to improve human resource capabilities, particularly in language skills, as well as enhance road and rail networks to support seamless travel.

"Externally, Sri Lanka must adopt a more focused tourism strategy to compete effectively with similar destinations. This includes setting clear arrival targets from German-speaking markets, increasing the average spend per traveler, and developing a structured approach for long-term stays and remote working opportunities."

With a rich heritage, a strategic location, and a commitment to sustainability, Pegasus Reef Hotel is well-positioned to attract German travelers seeking authentic, high-quality experiences in Sri Lanka. As the hotel showcases its offerings at ITB Berlin, the focus remains on building lasting relationships, enhancing Sri Lanka's global appeal, and strengthening the bond between German travelers and the island's hospitality industry.



## Citrus Leisure: Elevating Sri Lanka's Hospitality on the Global Stage

TTA BULLETIN

As global travel trends continue to shift towards immersive experiences, Sri Lanka remains a destination of choice for discerning travelers seeking both relaxation and adventure. Citrus Leisure, with its flagship properties Citrus Waskaduwa and Citrus Hikkaduwa, stands at the forefront, offering a unique blend of luxury, comfort, and authentic Sri Lankan hospitality.



Citrus Waskaduwa is ideally located along the serene western coast of Sri Lanka, and is an idyllic escape for travelers seeking relaxation, tranquility, and rejuvenation. Just 37 km from Colombo and 78 km from Bandaranaike International Airport, this oceanfront retreat is conveniently accessible yet offers a peaceful respite from the hustle and bustle.

Featuring 140 elegantly designed superior rooms, 7 suites, an executive suite, and a luxurious presidential suite, Citrus Waskaduwa promises unparalleled comfort with private balconies overlooking the breathtaking Indian Ocean.

Guests can indulge in exquisite dining experiences at Lemon Sun Restaurant, enjoy signature cocktails at Pomelo Hi Bar, or unwind at Aqua Peel Pool Bar and Pips n Sips Coffee Shop. The Asian-inspired Citron Senses Spa provides an oasis of calm, offering a range of therapeutic treatments by skilled Balinese therapists. The resort also caters to newlyweds with its dedicated honeymoon packages, making it a sought-after romantic getaway.

Beyond its indulgent offerings, the resort boasts a swimming pool, gymnasium, billiard and snooker table, 24-hour room service, concierge services, and foreign currency exchange facilities, ensuring an effortless stay for all visitors.

Citrus Hikkaduwa is a Gateway to Sri Lanka's Southern Adventure. For those looking to immerse themselves in Sri Lanka's vibrant beach culture, Citrus Hikkaduwa is the perfect destination. Offering a blend of adventure, relaxation, and cultural exploration, this resort captures the essence of the laid-back southern coast.

With 90 stylish rooms, ranging from Deluxe, Superior, and Standard categories, Citrus Hikkaduwa ensures a comfortable and contemporary stay. Culinary delights await at the Lemon Fish Restaurant, which serves an eclectic mix of Sri Lankan and international dishes, while the Summer Salt Bar offers a vibrant atmosphere for cocktails and fine spirits.



Adventure seekers will find plenty to explore with excursions and water sports, including scuba diving, wreck diving, snorkeling, deep-sea fishing, night fishing, jet skiing, and surfing lessons to master the region's famous waves. Guests can also embark on unforgettable experiences with several excursions that can be organized by the hotel on request.

- The Madu River Boat Safari – A scenic journey through lush mangroves is ideal for
- Galle City Tour – A walk through the historic Galle Fort.
- Turtle Hatchery Visits – An opportunity to witness conservation efforts firsthand.
- Seenigama Muhudu Viharaya – A cultural landmark enriching the travel experience.

Additionally, the resort features a swimming pool, room service, laundry facilities, and foreign currency exchange services for a seamless guest experience.

With the rise in demand for long-haul vacations and authentic travel experiences, Sri Lanka is poised to capture the attention of global travelers. Citrus Leisure Hotels continues to play a pivotal role in this effort, providing value-driven tourism while promoting lesser-known yet equally captivating destinations in Sri Lanka.

As the country marks a record-breaking number of arrivals in January, the focus is not just on numbers but on attracting high-quality travelers who seek rich, immersive experiences. Sri Lanka's growing recognition on the global travel stage, fueled by positive media coverage and numerous accolades, underscores the importance of a robust marketing strategy. A strong digital consumer marketing approach is essential to remain competitive in an increasingly digital landscape. Without swift action, Sri Lanka risks falling behind in the global tourism race.

As Citrus Leisure Hotels takes center stage at ITB Berlin, it reinforces its commitment to offering world-class hospitality that seamlessly blends relaxation, adventure, and cultural discovery. With increasing

bookings, expanding brand recognition, and a growing presence in global travel conversations, Citrus Waskaduwa and Citrus Hikkaduwa are set to welcome travelers seeking the best of Sri Lanka.





# SEVEN ANGELS COLLECTION

KANDY | YALA | RIVERSTON | NUWARA ELIYA | HAPUTALE | MANDARAM NUWARA



Heritage Boutique - Kandy



Castle Hill - Kandy



Leopard Reach Yala



Clodagh Manor House - Riverston



Mount Frenion Manor - Nelligala



Graystone Wellness Resort - Haputale



Grand Bungalow - Nuwara Eliya



Ceylon Tea Bungalow - Mandaram Nuwara

HOTLINE - +94 77 788 4448 | [WWW.SEVENANGELS.LK](http://WWW.SEVENANGELS.LK)



## Dragon Fli: A Contemporary Modern Asian Culinary Experience in the Heart of Colombo

TTA BULLETIN

Dragon Fli, the latest addition to Colombo's vibrant dining scene, is redefining modern Asian cuisine with bold innovation and world-class expertise. Located in the heart of Colombo 7, this contemporary dining destination is helmed by celebrated Chef Malin de Silva, whose illustrious culinary journey spans over two decades in the UK.



Malin De Silva

A MasterChef UK: The Professionals 2019 Semi-Finalist, Chef Malin brings his remarkable experience from some of the UK's finest kitchens. His career includes roles as Senior Sous Chef at The River Restaurant by Gordon Ramsay at The Savoy Hotel, London; Head Chef at Paradise Soho, London, and Kolamba, London; and Second Chef at Restaurant Fraiche by Marc Wilkinson, a Michelin-starred and 4 Rosette-awarded establishment. His innovative approach to combining refined techniques with bold Asian flavors is the essence of Dragon Fli's menu.

Diners can expect an elevated culinary experience with signature dishes like delicate tuna crudo and premium steaks

paired with wasabi mash, which is already earning accolades as one of Colombo's best.

The restaurant's sophisticated interior, designed by renowned designer Stefan Joachim, is a blend of urban chic and Sri Lankan artistry.

With sleek décor, intimate lighting, and dynamic design elements, Dragon Fli provides an ambiance that's both luxurious and welcoming, making it perfect for corporate gatherings, celebrations, or intimate dinners.

Behind this visionary dining concept are Natalie Jayasuriya and Sheran de Fonseka, the managing partners who have seamlessly combined exceptional cuisine, artistry, and hospitality. Adding an element of intrigue is Kura Bar, a hidden speakeasy where expert mixologists craft innovative cocktails, making it a must-visit destination for cocktail connoisseurs.

Dragon Fli is poised to become a game-changer in Colombo's dining landscape, offering a unique fusion of contemporary Asian flavors, world-class design, and an exclusive dining experience.

## Hawar Resort by Mantis Officially Opens

TTA BULLETIN

Hawar Resort by Mantis has officially opened its doors, welcoming guests to an extraordinary island escape set on Bahrain's UNESCO-recognised Hawar Island. Located just 20 kilometres from Bahrain's mainland, this beachfront resort is designed as a haven for eco-conscious travellers blending luxury and sustainability. Hawar's pristine environment has been virtually untouched, resulting in a vibrant ecosystem that will appeal to nature lovers and adventure seekers.

Guests begin their journey at the Durrat Al Bahrain Pavilion, the resort's dedicated arrival hub, where they are greeted with warm hospitality and a seamless check-in experience. From there, a short 25-minute boat ride takes them directly to the resort.

The resort has 104 stylish accommodations, including guest rooms, two tented suites, beach villas and overwater villas – many with private pools and direct access to the beach. The resort caters to a wide range of guest preferences, from families and couples to solo adventurers.

Commenting on the opening, Andre Erasmus, General Manager of Hawar Resort by Mantis, said: "We are thrilled to open the doors of Hawar Resort by Mantis and invite guests to experience the unmatched beauty of Hawar Island. This resort reflects a deep respect for the environment and Bahrain's cultural heritage, offering an island retreat that is

both luxurious and sustainable."

On Hawar Island guests can immerse themselves in a variety of land-based activities, such as camel and horseback riding, and watching the graceful Socotra cormorant birds in their natural habitat. For those with an interest in local culture, the resort also offers captivating falconry. Water sports enthusiasts will also be able to enjoy kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, paddle surfboarding, jet skiing, house reef snorkelling, and at a later stage scuba diving in the clear turquoise waters surrounding the island.

For a more relaxing experience, guests can unwind at the resort's luxurious spa, offering an array of soothing therapies, or bask in the sunshine by the seafront pool. A state-of-the-art gym is available for those looking to maintain their fitness routines, while younger guests can enjoy the dedicated kids' and teens' clubs.

Guests can choose from five distinctive dining venues, savouring culinary highlights of the region and freshly caught fish from the Gulf at the all-day dining restaurant Bahri, or enjoy refreshing cocktails at the Beach Lounge. The resort's signature restaurant, C-Salt, showcases an innovative dining concept that promises seasonal pop-ups and celebrity chef appearances, ensuring that every visit offers something new and exciting.

## Pongal Uthsawam at Pegasus Reef Hotel: A Glimpse into Tamil Heritage and Culture

TTA BULLETIN

Pegasus Reef Hotel in Colombo recently hosted a spectacular Pongal Uthsawam, from January 12th to 14th, 2025. The event was a true celebration of Tamil heritage, providing a rich cultural experience for all who attended. The evenings, which began at 6:30 PM, immersed guests in the vibrant traditions of the Tamil community, with a special focus on the customs and culinary delights of Jaffna.

The Pongal Uthsawam provided an authentic representation of Tamil culture, beautifully showcasing the traditions of Jaffna. The venue was thoughtfully designed with thematic décor inspired by a traditional Jaffna village, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere that transported attendees into the heart of Tamil customs.

The heart of the event was undoubtedly the grand buffet, which featured a wide array of traditional Jaffna dishes. Guests were treated to a feast of flavors, with each dish prepared using authentic recipes passed down through generations. It was a true culinary journey for those looking to explore the rich flavors of Tamil cuisine.

No cultural event is complete without entertainment, and Pongal Uthsawam certainly delivered. Guests enjoyed live Tamil music performances, creating an energetic and festive mood. Cultural dance performances added to the celebration, offering a glimpse into the beautiful traditions of the Tamil community. There was something for everyone, with entertainment designed to engage guests of all ages.

The hospitality at Pegasus Reef Hotel was nothing short of exceptional. Guests were welcomed with the warmth and generosity that is characteristic of Tamil culture, ensuring that every attendee felt like part of the celebration. The hotel's staff went above and beyond to create a memorable experience, making the Pongal Uthsawam an event to remember.

In all, the Pongal Uthsawam at Pegasus Reef Hotel was a resounding success. The event not only highlighted the beauty of Tamil heritage and Jaffna traditions but also provided a fantastic opportunity for the community to come together and celebrate the spirit of Pongal.

## Anantara Thailand Resorts Named as Official Filming Locations Ahead of HBO Original 'The White Lotus' Season 3 Debut

TTA BULLETIN

In anticipation of the highly awaited third instalment of the HBO® Original series The White Lotus, created by Mike White, three Anantara Thailand resorts have been officially announced as filming locations for the Emmy®-winning series.

In a media release shared by Warner Bros. Discovery, three Anantara resorts — Anantara Lawana Koh Samui Resort, Anantara Mai Khao Phuket Villas, and Anantara Bophut Koh Samui Resort — were included as key settings for the fictional The White Lotus Thailand.

Set along the pristine shores of Bophut Beach, Anantara Bophut Koh Samui Resort is one of the island's most iconic resorts. Multiple locations within the property are featured as The White Lotus Thailand, including the signature Thai-style lobby, security station and lush, tree-lined resort entrance, the employee parking lot and resort's jewellery store.

Occupying a lush site that was once a coconut plantation, the resort's spectacular landscaping — including lotus ponds and a spa garden — was designed by renowned architect Bill Bensley. With architecture inspired by Southern Thai heritage, the resort offers an authentic experience of true Thai hospitality on the island.

Situated on a peaceful stretch of private beach in Chaweng, Anantara Lawana Koh Samui Resort masterfully blends modern



luxury with Samui's rich cultural history. One of the most distinctive settings in The White Lotus Season 3 is the resort's Singing Bird Lounge, a breathtaking treehouse-style bar nestled within the branches of a 120-year-old tree. Announced as a key filming location for the bar scene, the lounge offers panoramic ocean views and draws inspiration from the island's famous bird-singing contests, a tradition that attracts thousands of spectators. As guests sip handcrafted cocktails at sunset, the melodies of Samui's avian performers create an unforgettable atmosphere.

Also featured in Season 3, Anantara Mai Khao Phuket Villas has been designated as the setting for The Wellness Sanctuary, Spa, and Belinda's Room. Nestled along the untouched shores of Mai Khao Beach in Phuket, this tranquil hideaway is renowned for its seclusion and luxury.

With 183 villas and suites and an exclusive beachfront location, Anantara Mai Khao Phuket offers a setting of unparalleled privacy and sophistication—an idyllic backdrop for the unfolding drama of The White Lotus.





THE  
HABITAT

## Tropical beach and Sri Lankan hospitality

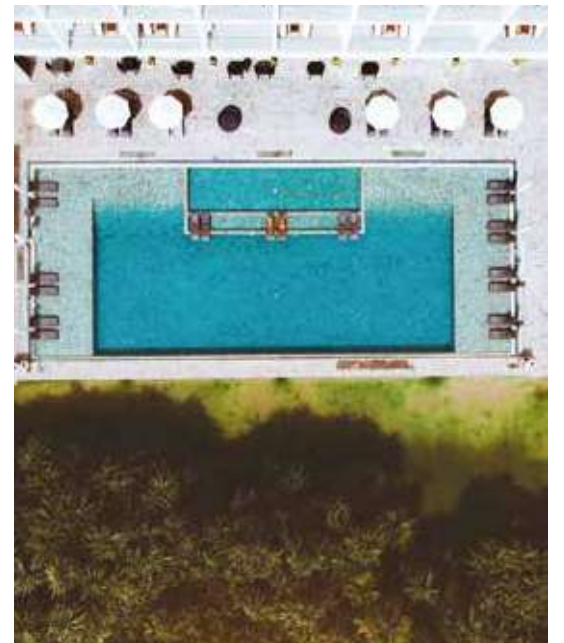
A renowned Sri Lankan welcome, our relaxed comfort and true islander spirit will seep in. Sounds of waves, feisty beach vibes, aroma of spicy cuisine; days of sunny smiles and tranquil nights.

Our sole purpose is living up to our name, The Habitat, the tropical beach home.



## Food & beverages

Our familiarly traditional dishes are served warmly, as from a Sri Lankan hearth. An indoor and pool bar serve tropical cocktails to keep smiles cheerily on the rocks.



## Fun & frolic

Never a dull day. A large pool for water polo or a lazy swim. Perfectly located with a 360° surround of marine life, botanical gardens, history, archaeology, beach sports, traditional artisans and lapidaries.

## Contact us

Reservations : 6th Floor, No 46/46,  
Greenlanka Towers, Nawam Mawatha,  
Colombo 02, Sri Lanka  
Hot Line : +94 704909500  
Email : reservations@asialeisure.lk  
Website : thehabitat.lk

facebook.com/habitatkosgoda  
instagram.com/habitatkosgoda

THE  
HABITAT  
KOSGODA BY ASIA LEISURE



## Etihad Airways increases frequency to Milan

TTA BULLETIN

Etihad Airways announced a significant expansion of its Italian network with the addition of a third daily flight to Milan, starting 1 November 2025. The new frequency delivers greater choice and flexibility between Abu Dhabi and Italy's style capital, responding to increasing customer demand.

"With our morning, afternoon and evening departures from Abu Dhabi and sensational value fares, our triple-daily Milan flights serve up perfect timings for guests travelling in both directions," said Arik De, Chief Revenue and Commercial Officer at Etihad Airways. "This enhanced schedule gives travellers more options to explore Abu Dhabi and connect to our growing global network, while strengthening vital links between two dynamic cities."

The combined triple-daily service will see Etihad offer 12,600 seats per week between Abu Dhabi and Milan, representing a year-on-year capacity increase of almost 115 per cent. The schedule is carefully designed to maximise convenience for both business and leisure travellers.

The services will operate on Boeing 777-300 and Airbus A321LR aircraft from Etihad's modern fleet. The A321LR, Etihad's latest fleet addition, offers a premium boutique experience with its



innovative cabin design and latest comfort features. All guests enjoy award-winning service with complimentary Wi-Fly chat packages for Etihad Guest members, and the option to purchase full Surf packages with unlimited data for the duration of their flight.

To celebrate the expansion, Etihad is launching a three-day sale from 27-29 January, with special Economy return fares from Abu Dhabi to Milan. For travel between 01 June and 30 November 2025, fares start from AED 398 one-way as part of a return journey, available at etihad.com.

Milan captivates visitors with its perfect blend of historic grandeur and contemporary innovation. From the magnificent Duomo cathedral to the cutting-edge design districts, from high-end fashion boutiques to artisanal workshops, the city offers endless discoveries. World-class shopping at the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II, avant-garde art exhibitions, and the city's renowned culinary scene make every visit memorable.

## SriLankan Airlines Wraps Up Maintenance Work for Salam Air A321neo

TTA BULLETIN

The Engineering team of SriLankan Airlines successfully wrapped up base heavy maintenance on an A321neo aircraft for long-term repeat customer, Salam Air, ahead of the scheduled completion date. The work involved replacing a right-hand main landing gear seal on the aircraft.

SriLankan Engineering has been forging a path as a reliable provider of base maintenance services in the region for third parties, with a steady stream of both repeat and new customers. For more information on SriLankan Engineering, visit [www.srilankanengineering.com](http://www.srilankanengineering.com)



## Enhancing Guest Engagement: Kurulu Kaleh at Pegasus Reef

TTA BULLETIN

Valentine's Day 2025 was a night that guests at Pegasus Reef will never forget. For the very first time, the team at Pegasus Reef hosted an exclusive and intimate celebration at Kurulu Kaleh, a hidden nature reserve nestled amidst the tranquility of seashore. The evening was a perfect blend of romance, serenity, and luxurious indulgence, creating an unforgettable experience for over 50 couples who joined us for a magical night under the stars.

The atmosphere at Kurulu Kaleh was unlike any other venue—its cool, jungle-inspired ambiance, surrounded by lush greenery and the gentle hum of the sea, created a peaceful haven far from the bustle of everyday life. As the night unfolded, the space transformed into a captivating oasis, with a red floral archway greeting guests as they arrived. The warm lighting and elegant decorations added to the romantic charm, creating an atmosphere of comfort and intimacy. Soft candlelight flickered on tables, casting a gentle glow over the buffet, where our guests indulged in a delicious array of

gourmet dishes specially prepared for the evening. From savory bites to decadent desserts, every element of the buffet was designed to delight the senses, ensuring every moment was truly unforgettable.

Couples embraced the serene surroundings as they savored their meal under the stars, surrounded by the calming sounds of nature. The private dining experience, paired with the breathtaking beauty of Kurulu Kaleh, truly captured the essence of romance. The atmosphere was further elevated by the delicate strains of violin music, which played throughout the evening, adding a layer of sophistication and emotion to the night. The melodies, expertly performed by our talented violinist, created a romantic soundtrack that perfectly complemented the peaceful ambiance, enhancing the experience for every couple.

The night was a celebration of love, nature, and the art of unforgettable moments, leaving everyone with cherished memories that will last a lifetime







# SUN, SEA & ADVENTURE

Dive into action-packed water sports, unwind with rejuvenating spa treatments, and soak up relaxing beach vibes at Avani Kalutara. Your ultimate summer escape starts here!

**AVANI**  
Kalutara Resort



# AIRLINES

## Emirates Skywards and ALL - Accor's Loyalty Programme elevate partnership, offering more rewards for members

Introducing two-way points conversion and exciting redemption opportunities for members worldwide

TTA BULLETIN



Emirates Skywards, the award-winning loyalty programme of Emirates and flydubai, and ALL - Accor's award-winning loyalty programme and booking platform, have taken their partnership to new heights, offering members additional benefits and opportunities to maximize their rewards through seamless conversions.

Through this enhanced collaboration, Emirates Skywards members who are also members of ALL can now convert their Skywards Miles into ALL Reward Points, unlocking extraordinary experiences across Accor's extensive network of over 5,600 hotels across more than 45 Accor brands and 5,000 Limitless Experiences.

For every 4,000 Skywards Miles, members will receive 1,000 ALL Reward Points, which can be redeemed for stays, exceptional dining experiences, or exclusive Limitless Experiences available on ALL.com.

In an exciting development, the partnership introduces seamless two-way conversions between the two loyalty programmes. This feature empowers members to maximize their rewards and enjoy unparalleled lifestyle and travel experiences with both brands.

ALL Members can also convert their ALL Reward Points into Skywards Miles, with 4,000 ALL Reward Points equating to 2,000 Skywards Miles. Skywards Miles can be redeemed for an extensive range of rewards, including flight tickets on Emirates and partner airlines, flight upgrades, gift cards, hotel stays, hospitality at sporting and cultural events, tours, and money can't buy experiences.

Dr. Nejb Ben Khedher, Divisional Senior Vice President Emirates Skywards, said: "At Emirates Skywards, we're constantly exploring new ways to help our members maximise the value of every Skywards

Mile earned and redeemed. And our enhanced partnership with ALL - Accor's loyalty programme will offer exactly that. Emirates Skywards members can now convert Skywards Miles to ALL Reward Points, and access exceptional hotel stays at more than 45 Accor brands worldwide, enjoy limitless experiences and more.

ALL loyalty members can also convert ALL Reward Points to Skywards Miles, and enjoy fantastic benefits Emirates Skywards is renowned for – including flight rewards to more than 140 destinations across Emirates' extensive network. We're delighted to expand our partnership and work together to offer our members the most rewarding travel experiences in the air, and on the ground."

Mehdi Hemici, Chief Loyalty and E-commerce Officer at Accor, said: "We are thrilled to strengthen our partnership with Emirates Skywards, marking a significant milestone in our commitment to enriching our programme with industry leading partners. Our members will have the ability to easily earn and redeem their Points and Miles, unlocking an exciting range of opportunities in new destinations where Emirates operates. Both Emirates Skywards and ALL have made member experiences a cornerstone of their value propositions and share the same passion for experiential travel. This partnership will take membership to the next level."

From iconic destinations such as Dubai, Paris, and the Maldives to hotspots like Riyadh and Bali, members can now seamlessly combine exceptional hotel stays with world-class air travel, ensuring unforgettable journeys every step of the way.

With this strengthened alliance, ALL and Emirates Skywards are offering members unparalleled flexibility, value, and exclusive rewards.

## Qatar Airways Expands Global Network with New Destinations in South America: Bogotá and Caracas

TTA BULLETIN

The World's Best Airline welcomes Bogotá and Caracas as its 15th and 16th destinations in the Americas, launching its second longest flight to the Americas

DOHA, Qatar — Qatar Airways proudly announces its latest expansion into the Americas with the launch of two new weekly flights on Wednesdays and Sundays, starting early summer 2025. These flights will connect Hamad International Airport (DOH) in Doha to Bogotá El Dorado International Airport (BOG) in Colombia, and then continue to Caracas Simon Bolivar International Airport (CCS) in Venezuela. The return flight from Caracas will operate non-stop to Doha.

This new service makes Qatar Airways the first and only airline to offer non-stop flights from the Middle East to Colombia and the only Middle Eastern carrier operating in Venezuela. With the addition of Bogotá and Caracas, Qatar Airways expands its Americas network to a total of 16 destinations, joining major cities like Dallas, Miami, New York City, São Paulo, and Toronto.

Operated by Boeing 777-200LR aircraft equipped with 42 Business Class seats and 234 Economy Class seats, the new Bogotá and Caracas services will provide travellers from two of South America's busiest cities with convenient access to the Middle

East and beyond, owing to Qatar Airways' strong global network reaching over 170 destinations.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Officer, Engr. Badr Mohammed Al-Meer, said: "The launch of flights to Bogotá and Caracas marks a transformative moment for Qatar Airways and for travellers to South America. As the first airline to offer nonstop service from the Middle East to Colombia and the only Middle Eastern carrier flying to Venezuela, we are creating new opportunities to connect people, cultures, and commerce.

"Passengers can look forward to experiencing Qatar Airways' world-class in-flight hospitality as we continue to reach new heights in long-haul travel with our second longest flight into the Americas. These routes embody our commitment to pioneering travel experiences and redefining global connectivity with our award-winning service."

The World's Best Airline, as voted for an unprecedented eighth time by Skytrax in 2024, is as committed as ever to bringing its award-winning service to new markets. By expanding to Colombia and Venezuela, Qatar Airways aims to amplify its presence in South America, providing travellers across the region with exceptional connectivity, comfort, and service.

## Singapore Airlines Commits to Four More Years As Title Sponsor of Formula 1® Singapore Grand Prix

TTA BULLETIN

Singapore Airlines (SIA) has renewed its title sponsorship of the Formula 1 Singapore Grand Prix for another four years, continuing its long-standing partnership with one of the most anticipated events in the F1 calendar.



The Airline has been the title sponsor of the event for 11 years, beginning with the 2014 edition of this iconic race. This latest extension will cover the event, which will continue to be called the FORMULA 1 SINGAPORE AIRLINES SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX, from this year's race, which is scheduled for 3 to 5 October 2025 at the Marina Bay Street Circuit, through to the 2028 edition.

Renowned as one of F1's premier events, the Singapore Grand Prix features drivers racing through the city streets against the spectacular backdrop of its night-time skyline. The event has bolstered Singapore's reputation as a business and tourism hub, with numerous international events and meetings organised to coincide with the race, complementing SIA's global network.

Mr Lee Lik Hsin, Chief Commercial Officer, Singapore Airlines, said: "The Singapore Grand Prix is an important

event in Singapore's sporting and tourism calendar. It has become iconic not just for showcasing our beautiful skyline, but also for highlighting Singapore's position as a key global hub. This extension underscores Singapore Airlines' long-standing commitment to supporting the development of sports and tourism in Singapore."

Ms Emily Prazer, Chief Commercial Officer, Formula 1, said: "We are delighted that Singapore Airlines will continue as the Title Sponsor of the FORMULA 1 SINGAPORE AIRLINES SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX. Singapore has become one of the most revered Grands Prix on the calendar, and it is through the hard work and dedication of partners such as Singapore Airlines that we can continue to deliver such a strong event. We look forward to continuing to work with them to further elevate this event for years to come."





We create  
memories  
with class  
and quality.



**BLUE LANKA TOURS**  
The Way To Travel



## Emirates and Air Peace sign interline agreement, expanding travel choices to 13 cities in Nigeria

TTA BULLETIN

Emirates, the world's largest international airline, has signed an interline agreement with West Africa's largest airline, Air Peace, enhancing connectivity for passengers travelling to and from Nigeria. The partnership expands Emirates' footprint to 13 new cities in Nigeria with frictionless single-ticket travel and simplified baggage throughput.

Travellers booked on flights from Dubai to Lagos can access more of Nigeria, with onward connections to Asaba, Akure, Benin City, Calabar, Enugu, Ilorin, Kaduna and Owerri. The interline agreement will also benefit corporate travellers, connecting to additional cities in one of Africa's major economic hubs, including its capital city Abuja, Kano, Uyo, Port Harcourt and Warri, further supporting the strong bilateral trade relationship between Nigeria and the UAE.

Adnan Kazim, Emirates' Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer said, "Emirates is a steadfast partner of Nigeria's tourism, trade and aviation sectors. This partnership with Air Peace is the next step on this journey, bolstering our connectivity and introducing more travel options for corporate leisure, and travellers visiting friends and family to and from Nigeria. We look forward to deepening our strategic partnership with Air Peace in the future to enhance the benefits for our mutual customers."

Oluwatoyin Olajide, Chief Operating Officer, Air Peace said, "We are excited about this strategic interline partnership between Air Peace and Emirates, which is

a significant step towards enhancing global connectivity for Nigerian travellers. It aligns with our mission to provide seamless, world-class travel experiences while expanding our route network and international reach. This collaboration not only expands Air Peace's international reach but also offers Nigerians arriving from Dubai seamless access to key domestic destinations, including Asaba, Akure, Benin City, Calabar, Enugu, Ilorin, Kaduna, and Owerri. By improving ease of travel, we are boosting business, tourism, and trade opportunities, further strengthening economic ties between Nigeria and the UAE. This partnership also reinforces Nigeria's aviation sector by enhancing connectivity, efficiency and positioning our country as a critical hub for regional and global travel. At Air Peace, we remain committed to providing greater connectivity, convenience, and world-class service for our passengers."

Emirates' Dubai-Lagos route is operated with a Boeing 777-300ER, offering the best experience in the sky. Passengers can dine on regionally inspired multi-course menus and a wide selection of premium beverages, while enjoying over 6,500 channels of global entertainment, including 23 Nigerian movies, in addition to series and other content on ice, Emirates' award-winning inflight entertainment system. As one of only two airlines operating First Class into Lagos, the partnership enables more travellers from Nigeria to experience Emirates' unrivalled experience with luxurious touches, defined by comfort and privacy.

## Discover Qatar Stopover Programme Achieves Record-Breaking Growth, Amplifying Qatar's Appeal as a Premier Tourism Destination

TTA BULLETIN

Discover Qatar, the destination management arm of Qatar Airways Group, has achieved a significant milestone, welcoming over 10,000 stopover visitors in a single month for the first time since the Qatar Stopover Programme's relaunch in August 2021. This achievement reflects Qatar's growing appeal as a world-class destination and the programme's growing popularity.



as a leading global destination, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030. By leveraging Qatar Airways' extensive network of over 170 destinations and the outstanding travel experiences we offer, we have firmly established Qatar as a must-visit destination. At Discover Qatar, we are committed to delivering tailored packages that combine cultural discovery, world-class hospitality, and unforgettable experiences for travellers from around the world."

In January 2025, the programme recorded more than 10,500 visitors, compared to 6,651 in January 2024. The number of visitors in the stopover programme increased an impressive 165% from April 2024 to January 2025 – as compared to the same timeframe in the previous year.

The programme has also driven exceptional growth in hotel bookings, with over 100,000 room nights sold so far this year – doubling the figures from the previous year. Qatar Airways Holidays is driving this success as the largest contributor to the programme's sales, delivering over a third of all bookings, leveraging the marketing strength of Qatar Airways around the globe.

Stopover is proving incredibly popular with Qatar Airways frequent flyers too, with 20% of customers using the popular loyalty currency Avios to pay for their bookings, with logged in Privilege Club members earning Avios and Qpoints with every transaction.

Discover Qatar Senior Vice President, Mr. Steven Reynolds, said: "Qatar Stopover Programme is central to positioning Qatar

The growth of the Stopover programme has been attributed to a combination of financial support from Visit Qatar coupled with strong demand from key source markets, driven by strong marketing campaigns from the Qatar Airways teams in Doha and in outstations across the globe. Leading global source markets include the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, and the Netherlands. The stop over programme has also received significant support from the travel trade, with particularly strong contributions coming from Australia, South Africa, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and New Zealand, showcasing its wide-ranging appeal to both leisure and business travellers.

This accomplishment also highlights the world-class transit experience at Hamad International Airport, recognised as the World's Best Airport by Skytrax in 2024. Together, these elements enhance Qatar's position as a premier destination, offering a seamless blend of cultural heritage and modern luxury.

## Growth Trajectory of Sri Lanka's Aviation Industry

TTA BULLETIN

In a significant milestone for Sri Lanka, the country's airports, including the main gateway, Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA), Jaffna International Airport (JIA), and Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport (MRIA), have recorded an increase in passenger arrival and departure movements in 2024, surpassing the 8.8 million mark. This achievement highlights the vital role that Sri Lanka's aviation infrastructure plays in connecting the region and facilitating travel, trade, and commerce.

The healthy increase in passenger traffic is attributed to several factors, including the expansion of airline services and strategic initiatives aimed at boosting tourism. The improved connectivity has not only benefited travelers but also contributed significantly to the nation's economy by increasing tourists.

BIA served more than 30 airlines in 2024, including major international carriers such as Emirates, Qatar Airways, Singapore Airlines, Etihad Airways, Air India, IndiGo, Turkish Airlines, etc in addition, to the

national carrier, Sri Lankan Airlines. According to Skytrax's rankings, six of Skytrax's World's Top 10 airlines in 2024 operated flights to Sri Lanka: Qatar Airways, Singapore Airlines, Emirates, Cathay Pacific Airways, Turkish Airlines, and Swiss International Air Lines (Source: World's Top 100 Airlines 2024 | SKYTRAX ).

It was observed that several airlines such as Etihad Airways, Qatar Airways, IndiGo, Turkish Airlines, Air China, etc. increased their frequencies to Sri Lanka. In addition, Thai Airways, Chongqing Airlines, Aeroflot, Cathay Pacific Airways etc. resumed scheduled passenger flights to Colombo in 2024 while several seasonal charter airlines such as Enter Air, Edelweiss, Azur Air, Sky-up, Air Astana, etc. resumed seasonal charter flight operations to Sri Lanka bringing more tourists to the country. Further, Jetstar Asia commenced scheduled flights from Singapore in November 2024. Red-Wings Airline resumed flight operations to Mattala in October 2024. Centrum Air, an Uzbeki-

stan-based carrier, and Sky Up commenced seasonal flight operations at MRJA in December 2024. IndiGo commenced international scheduled flight operations to Jaffna on the 01st of September 2024.

The Airport and Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) Limited has been diligently working with the airline partners and other stakeholders to provide top-notch services and maintain high standards of safety & efficiency to ensure a seamless travel experience for millions of passengers.

Air Chief Marshal (Retd.) Harsha Abeywickrema, Chairman of Airport and Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) (Private) Limited (AASL), stated: "Sri Lanka continues to position itself as a key aviation hub in the Asia-Pacific region. These milestones showcase the immense potential for future growth and development in the country's aviation industry. Achieving over 8 million passenger move-



ments is a testament to the strength and resilience of Sri Lanka's aviation sector and serves as a promising indicator of continued progress toward achieving the government's tourism targets. We are delighted by the contributions of our valued international airline partners, tourism partners, and all other stakeholders to Sri Lanka's aviation and tourism landscape. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to them for their exceptional support. AASL remains firmly committed to developing aviation infrastructure to meet the future growth potential of the industry. We have already called for tenders for the reconstruction of Terminal 2 and plan to commence its construction in September 2025, with completion targeted by March 2028."



**RAMADA**  
BY WYNDHAM  
COLOMBO

# *A 360° Experience*



Mastering the culinary magic and the art of hospitality, Ramada by Wyndham Colombo offers star-class luxury in the heart of Colombo. Catering to business and leisure travelers alike, Ramada Colombo truly offers a 360 experience.



Scan for more information

**WYNDHAM**  
HOTELS & RESORTS

[www.ramadacolombo.com](http://www.ramadacolombo.com) | +94 (11) 2422 001





# Amba Yaalu

K A N D A L A M A

The first women-led hotel in Sri Lanka



Tucked away amidst a stunning mango plantation with 457 TJC mango trees, Amba Yaalu Kandalama rests peacefully on the serene banks of Kandalama Lake, offering panoramic views of the majestic Sleeping Soldier Mountains. Drawing inspiration from the novel Amba Yaluwo (Mango Friends) and the golden era of Sri Lankan cinema, this unique property is proud to be Sri Lanka's first hotel entirely managed and staffed by women.

**We are honored to be among the nine organizations shortlisted worldwide for the Gender Equality Champion of the Year Award 2025 at ITB Berlin**



[www.themacollection.com](http://www.themacollection.com)

Different Themes, Authentic Experiences

