

AMANGALLA

ACCOMMODATION

Due to the age and nature of this glorious colonial building, the five categories of accommodation at Amangalla have varied views and room arrangements. All the rooms are appointed with a four poster king-size bed, writing desk, dining table, planters chair, wardrobe and pettagama chest, all set on the original 300-year-old polished teak or jack wood floors. Most pieces of furniture are either original antiques from the original New Oriental Hotel or careful reproductions. Spacious bathrooms feature a free-standing tub, twin vanities and a separate shower and toilet. There are twin rooms in each room category featuring the original antique four-poster beds.

Bedrooms: The nine Bedrooms feature a separate bedroom and bathroom. Six Bedrooms are located adjacent to Amangalla's reception, on the ground level of the Middle Street Wing. Views are either overlooking the garden or the nearby historic Groote Kerk (Great Church). Three Bedrooms are set within the property's gardens. French windows and doors open onto the garden entrance of each room.

Chambers: The ten Chambers feature a separate bedroom, bathroom and living area. Six Chambers are located within the Church Street Wing and face the Fort ramparts, with views through the ancient Para rubber trees, over the Fort and out to sea. There are four Garden Wing Chambers, three with balconies and one with a twin porch, all overlooking the treetops of the resort garden.

Suites: Seven Suites include a separate bedroom, bathroom and spacious living room. There are six Suites located in the Church Street Wing with views onto Para rubber trees, the ramparts of the Fort and the harbour. The Suite in the historical Middle Street Wing looks out over the mature tropical gardens of the hotel.

Amangalla Suite: This two-bedroomed Suite features a large sitting room and hallway. Situated at the end of the Middle Street Wing, it offers views over the resort's gardens.

Garden House: Situated within the resort gardens and with a romantic history all of its own, this two-storey house features a private terrace and balcony offering leafy treetop views. The original



antique furniture has been restored. The Garden House is serviced by a 24-hour private butler.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Dining: The Great Hall or 'Zaal' as it was known in colonial Dutch times is the entry point to the hotel and has a wonderful old-world ambience with high ceilings, overhead fans and chandeliers. There is relaxed seating within as well as on the

veranda facing the tree-lined street. The menu provides light meals, snacks and afternoon tea served daily. The veranda is an ideal place to escape the heat of the day and relax with a tall, cool drink, watching the daily comings and goings of the Fort.

Adjacent to the Great Hall, the Dining Room provides an intimate setting with a colonial accent. Furnished with period chairs and tables, crisp white linen and antique silverware, many of the hotel's original pieces have been returned to their rightful place in this room. The Dining Room serves breakfast, lunch and dinner, and provides a choice of Sri Lankan curries and home-cooked dishes.

Guests can also enjoy al fresco breakfast and lunch under the Flamboyant tree overlooking the pool. Candlelit celebration dinners under the palms in the Pool Courtyard are arranged on a regular basis.

Library: Located beyond the reception hall is the Library which features an extensive range of reference books on the history, arts, culture and communities of Sri Lanka. It also offers a selection of novels, magazines, newspapers, audio CDs and board games. A computer is provided for guests to access the Internet, as well as Wifi service for those with their own laptops. There is also an eclectic collection of memorabilia from the archives of the New Oriental Hotel which offers insight into the history of the buildings, the Fort and the town of Galle.

Swimming Pool: Centred within the resort's gardens is the Pool Courtyard. The swimming pool measures 21m by 10.5m and is overlooked by five shaded ambalams (rest pavilions). On the other side of the pool a line of palm trees shade a number of sun loungers. Poolside service is provided and a variety of light meals and snacks is available. This is also a romantic venue for private dinners.

ACTIVITIES & EXPERIENCES

AMANGALLA is an integral part of the 400-year old Galle Fort. Here, narrow streets lined with old houses display their Dutch heritage with pillared verandas and subtle screens. Government offices from the Dutch and English period remain in use and the community within the Fort bustles with daily village life. Alongside the bullock carts and bicycles, the three-wheelers and food carts, people socialise and shop, collect their children from school and stop to eat. Laughter, chatter, gossip and smiles abound within the rampart walls.

WALKING THE FORT

The most enjoyable way to experience the Fort is on foot. A leisurely stroll leads past the old Dutch Church, the Governor's house, spice warehouses, Court Square, Kacheri (the town hall), the lighthouse and then on to the sea wall and ramparts. Visit the mosque and meander down streets leading to cricket fields, the temple and the old District Judge's house surrounded by ancient frangipani trees. Climb higher to enjoy views across Galle – St. Aloysius Cathedral, the Galle International Cricket pitch and the Port. The Clock Tower faithfully marks the hour as you return to sit on Amangalla's veranda and enjoy a cool drink, watching another day in the Fort draw to a close.

GALLE

Leaving the Fort brings into view the town of Galle, best explored by three-wheeler. It is a sprawling town, both friendly and interesting to visitors. The colourful fruit market offers an exotic array of produce, while the bustle of the main street is well worth experiencing.

RHUMMASSALA

On the southern side of the bay is a magical headland steeped in legend as part of the Ramayana story. It is also home to rare and wonderful plants and over 60 species of local birds, including the Asian Palm Swift and the Black Bittern. Amangalla offers the Rhummasala Trek which takes in all the natural beauty of the headland, as well as the graceful Peace Pagoda, the newest temple in the region finished in 2004 by the Japanese.

TEMPLES

Buddhism permeates every aspect of Sri Lanka and temples are on nearly every corner. They are generally accessible and there are many to choose from. At Yatagala, a 2,000 year old temple is

accessed by climbing to the top of 200 steps. Surrounded by old Bo trees and caves, it is considered a very special and spiritual place. On Poya (a Buddhist public holiday), hundreds of pilgrims come to perform a religious ritual called puja.

Somewhat further away is Unawatuna where a famous stupa sits high on a headland above one of the world's most beautiful beaches. A popular temple, it is worth a visit at sunset for the views out across the ocean. Closer to Amangalla is Fort Temple, small and nestled under the rampart walls. It has a lovely stupa, colourful image house and a Bo tree with a magical shrine in its roots.

TEA

Sri Lanka is world renowned for its tea, and the low-lying tea country begins within a 10-minute drive of Galle. There are various tea plantations carpeting the rolling hills through which visitors may wander before viewing the working factories. Here teams of smiling Tamil women work through the process of drying and producing tea. The ideal way to conclude a visit is to enjoy a freshly-brewed cup or two.

RAINFOREST

A 35-minute drive north of Galle is the Hiyare Bio-Diversity Reserve – the ideal location for a picnic. This virgin rainforest surrounds a beautiful reservoir that is home to countless plant and animal species, including a number of new discoveries made in recent years. Guides are research fellows working within the reserve.

VILLAGE LIFE

Villages in Sri Lanka have changed very little over the centuries and most communities follow a simple and traditional way of life. While the main road from Galle to Colombo can be noisy and busy, only minutes away from traffic, the landscape unfolds to reveal beautiful tropical sights of rice paddies and coconut islands as far as the eye can see. Amangalla recommends exploring the countryside and villages on bicycle.

WHALE WATCHING

From November to April visitors to Sri Lanka's south coast have the rare opportunity to witness blue whales basking and playing offshore. This chance to see the world's largest living creature is one of Amangalla's most popular excursions.



GALLE FORT

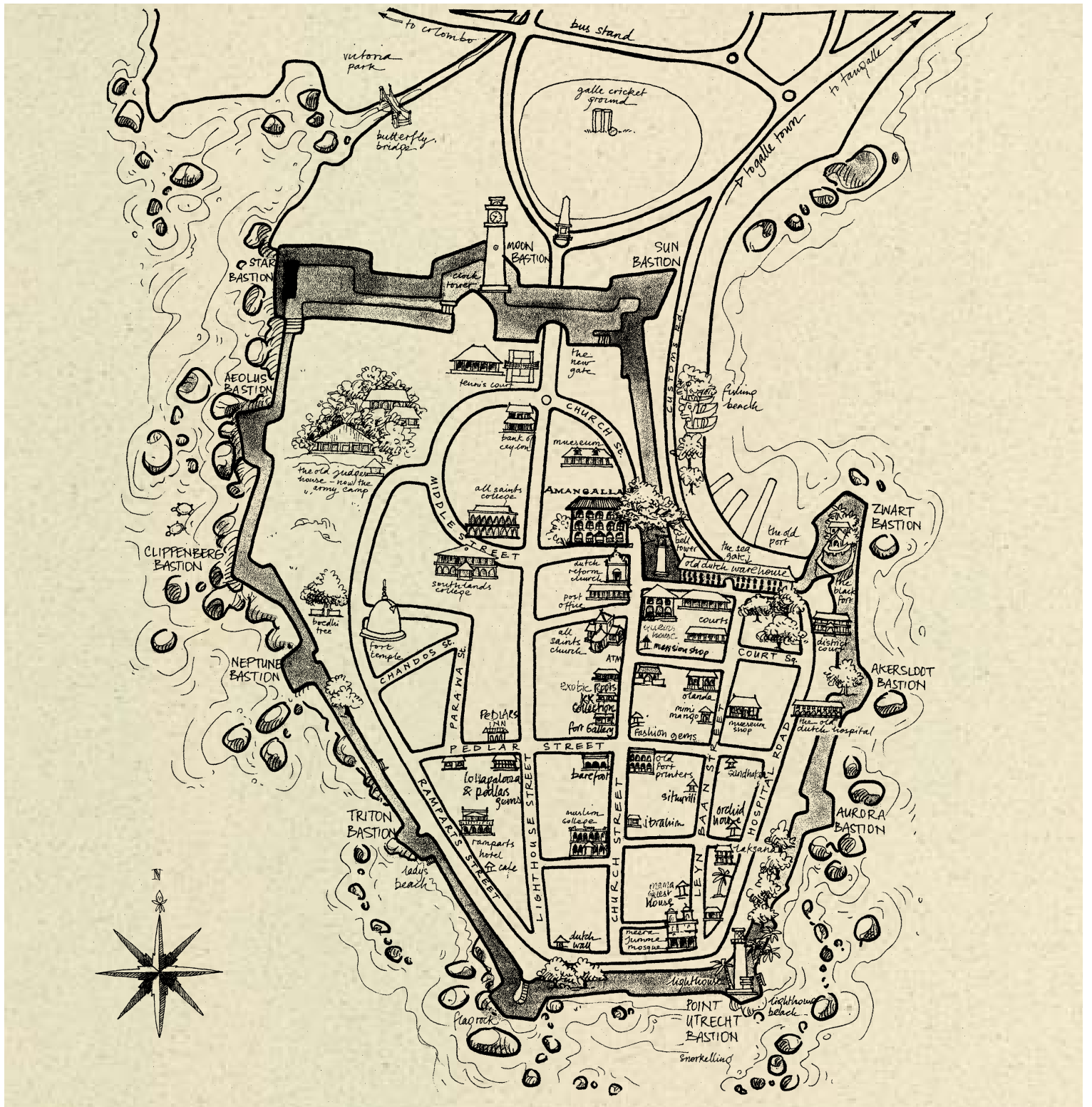
Strolling the ramparts of Galle Fort one looks out over the turquoise waters of the Indian Ocean on one side, and on the other into the living environs of Galle Fort – a maze of narrow streets lined with centuries-old houses, shopfronts and buildings originally built for the Colonial Dutch and then the British to oversee this southern enclave of their Sri Lankan domain. The red rooftops of Galle Fort glow in the sunlight, punctuated by the white towers of the Fort's mosque, regal church spires and at its highest point – the clock tower. While the Fort is in one regard a breathing museum with an air of timelessness about its historic lanes, in another respect it is a bustling hub of daily life, where children attend school, accountants and lawyers go about their business and young men play cricket in the market square. In the evenings the Fort is particularly charming, when locals gather to bathe at the picturesque beach below the lighthouse, take the Sri Lankan version of *la passeggiata* along the ramparts as the sun sets, fly homemade kites or simply chat to a neighbour from their front verandahs.

The Fort had its origins in the Portuguese fortifications finished in 1625, but it was the Dutch who established the Fort as we know it today. Between 1658 and 1796 the Dutch developed Galle Fort into the largest and most secured fortress in Sri Lanka – or Ceylon as it was known at the time. Designed as a stronghold of power, very

similar to fortified cities in Europe, it accommodated all sectors of the population who were loyal to the Dutch. It soon became *the* town in Ceylon, and was home to all the most influential colonists. Dutch period buildings still survive today in the Fort, including 'De Groote Kerk' (the Great Church) and numerous old-style Dutch residential houses. Many have been painstakingly restored and it is very easy to picture the 18th-century Dutch *Burghers* going about their everyday business.

The British conquest of Ceylon occurred in 1796. In the afternoon of 23rd February, the keys to the gates of Galle Fort were placed on a silver platter and officially handed over. The British were to hold sway in Ceylon for more than 150 years before Sri Lanka's declaration of independence in 1948.

Much has changed in Sri Lanka since its colonial days, but despite the introduction of electricity and motorized transport, Galle Fort remains as charming today as it no doubt was in the 18th-century. Its combination of historical, archaeological and architectural sites inspired UNESCO to award Galle Fort the status of World Heritage Site in 1988. Today, it offers travellers a unique insight into Sri Lanka's fabled past, as well as superb dining opportunities and excellent shopping for silver, gemstones and homewares.



THE BATHS

Amangalla's spa is known as 'The Baths' and evokes a bygone era of 'taking the waters'. Five softly-lit treatment chambers lead off a gently descending arched hallway. Two hydrotherapy chambers each offer a hydrotherapy pool, sauna, steam room, cold plunge pool and dressing room. With candlelit recesses, tall ceilings and traditional archways, the hydrotherapy area is an experience in ancient indulgences.

The traditions of the past continue in the Salon and Barber Shop where manicures, pedicures and gentlemen's shaves are offered in original planter chairs. Quiet contemplation and peace can be found in daily yoga and meditation sessions led in the Garden Pavilion, overlooking the hotel's 200-year-old gardens.

A stylish old-world elegance complements a simple yet thoughtful healing approach focusing on individualized treatments that are relaxing yet powerful. Traditional Ayurvedic therapies are a specialty of The Baths.

AYURVEDA

A Sanskrit word meaning 'the science of life', Ayurveda is an ancient philosophy based on a deep understanding of the human body, mind and spirit.

The Baths combines the ancient traditions of Ayurveda with the serenity of Aman, providing a unique and beneficial experience with the services of an experienced Ayurvedic doctor. Ayurveda has an armoury of physical treatments ranging from medication to massage, and also recommends yoga, meditation and a vegetarian diet. A basic tenet is that a steady routine, early nights and a healthy diet result in a happy mind and body.

Personalised Ayurvedic programs, tailored to your needs, can be arranged whether you are staying 3 nights or 2 weeks. Every Ayurvedic treatment or program will begin with a thorough consultation with Amangalla's consulting Ayurvedic doctor.

AYURVEDIC CONSULTATION

Diagnosis is a vital aspect of Ayurvedic treatment. According to Ayurveda all bodily structures are controlled by three *doshas* or 'humours': *pitta*, *vata* and *kapha*, which are with us from conception. Each one of us has a unique natural balance of these three

principles, and if that balance is maintained in our everyday lives, we are healthy and happy. If the balance is disturbed, then a lack of ease – disease – may develop. Ayurveda shows us how to identify our own natural balance with regard to the three doshas, and then how to keep them in balance.

Ayurveda treats according to the constitution of an individual and is known as a highly accurate and personalised method of analysing diseases. All ailments are caused by aggravation of the three doshas. The identification of each distinct type in every individual gives the doctor important clues in how to bring the body back to its original harmony.



During the initial consultation, Amangalla's consulting doctor uses several Ayurvedic techniques to determine an individual's current condition as well as any imbalances in his or her doshas. These techniques include assessing the pulse, tongue, face and eyes, and are used to augment the answers to questions he asks during the consultation to determine the individual's dosha type. Enquiries into the individual's diet, lifestyle, work, family life and medical history provide supporting information in determining any imbalances.

After the first consultation Amangalla's consulting doctor prepares a personalised treatment program and prescribes ayurvedic remedies if necessary. Follow up consultations confirm progress.

AYURVEDIC HEALTH FOOD

Nutritious food is an important part of the Ayurvedic experience at Amangalla. Whatever is consumed into the body affects its performance, and the focus of Ayurvedic nutrition is to enhance digestion, detoxify and rejuvenate.

Amangalla's kitchens are skilled in serving up personalised Ayurvedic meals as each individual's recommended diet will include different therapeutic and medicinal properties.

Our Ayurvedic health food incorporates a wide variety of fresh herbs and spices including ginger, garlic, lemongrass, cumin and cardamom. Dishes are mainly vegetarian, and each menu includes foods with the six Ayurvedic tastes: sweet, salty, pungent, spicy, bitter and astringent.

DESTINATION

GEOGRAPHY

Sri Lanka's position approximately 6° north of the equator endows the country with a warm climate moderated by ocean winds and considerable moisture. The mean temperature ranges from a low of 15.8°C in Nuwara Eliya in the Central Highlands (where frost may occur for several days in the winter) to a high of 29°C in Trincomalee on the northeast coast (where temperatures may reach 37°C). The average yearly temperature for the country as a whole ranges from 26°C to 28°C. Day and night temperatures may vary by 4 to 7 degrees. Humidity is typically higher in the southwest and mountainous areas and depends on the seasonal patterns of rainfall.

Extensive faulting and erosion over time have produced a wide range of topographic features making Sri Lanka one of the most scenic places in the world. Three zones are distinguishable by elevation: the Central Highlands; the plains; and the coastal belt. The south-central part of Sri Lanka – the rugged Central Highlands – is the heart of the country. The core of this area is a high plateau running north-south for approximately 65km, home to some of Sri Lanka's highest mountains. Most of the island's surface consists of plains between 30m and 200m above sea level. A coastal belt about 30m above sea level surrounds the island. Much of the coast consists of scenic sandy beaches indented by coastal lagoons. In the Jaffna Peninsula, limestone beds are exposed to the waves as low-lying cliffs in a few places. In the northeast and the southwest, where the coast cuts across the stratification of crystalline rocks, rocky cliffs, bays and offshore islands can be found; these conditions have created one of the world's best natural harbours at Trincomalee on the northeast coast, and a smaller rock harbour at Galle on the southwestern coast.

Forests at one time covered nearly the entire island, but by the late 20th century lands classified as forests and forest reserves covered only one-fifth of the island. The south-western interior contains the only large remnants of the original forests of the wet zone. The government has attempted to preserve sanctuaries for natural vegetation and animal life. Uda Walawe and Ruhunu National Park (Yala) in the southeast protect herds of elephant, deer and peacocks, while Bundala and Wilpattu National Parks in the northwest preserve the habitats of many water birds such as storks, pelicans, ibis and spoonbills. During the Mahaweli Ganga Programme of the 1970s and 1980s in northern Sri Lanka, the government set aside four areas of land totalling 190,000 hectares as national parks.

HISTORY

Sri Lanka's historical and cultural heritage covers more than 2,000



years. Known as Lanka – the 'resplendent land' – in the ancient Indian epic Ramayana, the island has numerous other references that testify to the region's natural beauty and wealth. Islamic folklore maintains that Adam and Eve were offered refuge on the island as solace for their expulsion from the Garden of Eden. Asian poets, noting Sri Lanka's geographical location and lauding its beauty, called it the 'pearl upon the brow of India'. Globetrotters, traders, colonisers and missionaries have referred to it by many names: Ceylon, Taprobane, Serendib.

Sri Lanka claims the world's second-oldest continuous written history – one that chronicles the Indo-Aryan Sinhalese or 'People of the Lion', who arrived from northern India around 500 BC to establish magnificent Buddhist kingdoms on the north-central plains; and the Tamils of Dravidian stock, who arrived a few centuries later from southern India.

In the 16th century, the island was colonised by the Portuguese, later to be followed by the Dutch, and finally, and most significantly, the British in the late 18th century. The British succeeded in uniting the island which they called Ceylon. They established and then broadened a colonial education system centred in British liberalism and democratic values which would eventually groom a generation of native leaders who successfully lobbied for independence. This was ultimately attained in 1948.

In 1972 the nation became a republic under a new constitution and Buddhism was accorded special status.

TRAVEL TIPS

Amanresorts in Sri Lanka: Amanresorts recommends travellers combine stays at both Amangalla and its southeastern complement, Amanwella, near Tangalle. Approximately 100km south of Colombo, Amangalla is the ideal starting point for a visit to Sri Lanka and a stay of between two and four nights provides ample time to discover the history of Galle Fort and the scenic and cultural attractions of the region. From Amangalla, a two-hour drive east brings you to the contemporary beach resort of Amanwella where a stay of three nights or longer is recommended. All 30 suites provide private pools and ocean or beach views in a tranquil setting with an abundance of swimming and sunbathing opportunities. This restful environment can also be combined with daytrips to nearby wildlife reserves and ancient rock temples.

Getting There: Located about 30km north of the city, Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA) is Sri Lanka's sole international airport. Travel time between the airport and the city centre is between 45 minutes and one hour. Car transfers to Amangalla from BIA and Colombo have benefitted from the opening of the new inland highway. The car journey from the airport to Amangalla is now estimated to take between 1.5 hours (at night) and 3 hours (during the day). The journey from Colombo's city centre to Amangalla is now estimated to take between 1 hour (at night) and 2 hours (during the day).

Another option is to take a seaplane transfer. Sri Lankan Airlines is now offering daily scheduled flights between Colombo, Koggala and Dickwella with complimentary transfers between the domestic landing strip and Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA) in Colombo. Amangalla is a 25-minute drive from Koggala and Amanwella is a 15-minute drive from Dickwella. Aman guests enjoy complimentary Aman transfers to and from the respective airports. Deccan Aviation's helicopter flights from BIA to Galle take one hour, while the helicopter flight from BIA to Tangalle is 1¼ hours. The helicopter takes a maximum of four passengers with a baggage allowance of 15kg per person.

Climate: Sri Lanka enjoys a warm, tropical climate year-round. The finest weather in southwest Sri Lanka coincides with the calmest oceans off the coast, and runs from November through April. During this time days are warm with temperatures rising to a daily maximum of 30°C. The rainy season is traditionally from May to July, though the sun is rarely out of sight for long. August and September are drier months, with rainshowers returning in October and November. In December the cooler, drier winds also herald the start of the winter season's calm seas and turquoise waters. The year-round average temperature is 27°C.

Language: Sri Lanka has two national languages: Sinhala and Tamil, although English is widely spoken.

Currency: The national currency is the rupee. It is divided into 100 cents. Traveller's cheques are easy to cash and ATMs are easily located. The closest to Amangalla is a mere 200 metres from the hotel's entrance.

Immigration Requirements: From 1st January 2012, all visitors to Sri Lanka must apply for a mandatory visa prior to arrival in Sri Lanka. This can be done online at www.eta.gov.lk. The cost is US\$10 for visitors from SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) countries with application before arrival, or US\$15 with application on arrival at the airport. For all non-SAARC countries, fees are US\$20 and \$25 respectively. There is no charge for children under 12 or for visitors from Singapore and the Maldives. Visas can also be obtained from Sri Lanka Overseas missions. For enquiries please contact your nearest Sri Lankan Embassy. All prices and schedules are current at time of print and subject to change without notice.

Health: The closest medical facility is in nearby Galle, while more extensive medical facilities are available in Colombo. Reasonable precautions should be taken against hepatitis A, malaria, cholera and typhoid. Drinking bottled water is usually an adequate precaution against water-borne illnesses. Guests should consult their doctor and arrange travel insurance prior to departure.

Electricity: 230-240 volts / 50 cycles.

Time Zone: Sri Lanka is 5½ hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

Dress: During the winter months of December and January a light pullover may be required in the hills, particularly in the mornings and evenings. During the hot summer months when the mercury can approach 35°C, it is recommended that guests wear light yet conservative attire. Guests should at all times travel with comfortable walking shoes and a wide-brimmed hat and drink plenty of bottled water during the hotter times of the day.

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