



Sri Lanka MICE Expo 2025 Kicks Off with Strong International and Local Interest

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

The much-anticipated Sri Lanka-MICE Expo 2025, organized by the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (SLCB)—the national tourism organization under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment, and Tourism—officially kicked off at Cinnamon Grand Colombo with a pre-opening welcome dinner, setting the stage for five days of networking, collaboration, and business opportunities.

The highlight of the evening was a thought-provoking panel discussion under the theme “The Future of Sri Lanka MICE Tourism in a Changing World.” Moderated by Dileep Mudadeniya, Chairman of the Tourism Advisory Committee, the panel featured Dheera Hettiarachchi, Chairman of SLCB; Buddhika Hewawasam, Chairman of SLTDA and SLTPB; Saminda Perera, Head of Marketing SriLankan Airlines; and Bobby Jordan Hansen, Vice President of SLAITO. The discussion underscored the opportunities and challenges ahead in positioning Sri Lanka as a competitive MICE destination.

The evening brought together international buyers, industry leaders, and local stakeholders in a warm and engaging atmosphere that highlighted Sri Lanka’s renowned hospitality. Guests enjoyed an immersive cultural and culinary showcase that reflected the island’s vibrant traditions and world-class service standards.

Interest in this year’s edition has been remarkable, with SLCB receiving over 500 applications from international



Prime Minister Dr. Mahinda Amarasinghe

SLCB Chairman/Chief Executive Officer

MICE operators, travel agents, and media representatives from more than 45 countries. From these, 100 foreign agents and 15 media representatives representing 30 countries have been selected to participate.

On the local front, SLCB has already registered over 110 vendors from Sri Lanka’s travel and tourism industry to connect with visiting international delegates, creating opportunities to network, showcase, and expand their global reach.

The opening ceremony on 23rd September will be followed by the SL-MICE Expo 2025 a five-day immersive program featuring a dynamic business forum, opening plenary, tailored B2B meetings and a themed gala dinner blending networking with bleisure experiences, and exclusive familiarization tours to Kandy and Nuwara Eliya, showcasing Sri Lanka’s cultural and natural heritage.

Since its inception in 2021, the MICE Expo has grown into a cornerstone event in Sri Lanka’s Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions calendar. From virtual beginnings to vibrant physical gatherings, it has consistently attracted a diverse range of global stakeholders, reinforcing Sri Lanka’s unique potential as a leading MICE destination in Asia.

RX launches WTM Spotlight with inaugural event in Saudi Arabia

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

RX, a global leader in events and exhibitions and organiser of Arabian Travel Market (ATM), World Travel Market (WTM), and WTM events in Cape Town and Sao Paulo, has officially announced the launch of WTM Spotlight in Saudi Arabia. The inaugural event is scheduled to take place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 29 September to 1 October 2026 at the Riyadh Front Exhibition & Convention Centre (RFECC).

WTM Spotlight is a new brand and launch within the WTM portfolio, designed to focus on a specific market and create invaluable opportunities for regional and international exhibitors and visitors. Participants can engage in a mix of inbound and outbound conversations, forging meaningful connections with industry leaders and travel professionals while immersing themselves in the destination’s culture.

Commenting on the announcement, Vasyl Zhygalo, Managing Director, Middle East and Emerging Markets, RX, said: “WTM Spotlight in Saudi Arabia represents an exciting new chapter for the WTM portfolio. By creating events that delve deeper into a specific market, we offer regional and international stakeholders, as well as travel professionals, an unparalleled opportunity to build essential relationships, gain richer insights, uncover future travel trends and discover innovative new ways to connect the world. Ultimately, these shared experiences and cultural insights lay the foundation for long-lasting, mutually



beneficial relationships.

“Saudi Arabia is the perfect location to launch this concept – its tourism sector is one of the most ambitious and fastest-growing in the world, and WTM Spotlight will play a pivotal role in supporting its development as a destination by connecting the world to Saudi, and Saudi to the world.”

Saudi Arabia has undergone a significant transformation in tourism under Vision 2030, demonstrating the Kingdom’s ambitious plan to diversify its economy and position itself as a leading global tourist destination. Tourism is a key element of this strategy, with a national target for the sector to contribute 10% to GDP by 2030 – an increase from just 3.8% in 2019.

As such, the Ministry of Tourism has set ambitious goals for the tourism sector to attract 150 million visitors annually by 2030, which, according to research, could see the tourism market increase in value from US\$53.87 billion in 2024 to US\$100.23 billion by 2030, a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10.90%

To support this growth, the government has committed billions of dollars in investment, including mega-projects such as NEOM, the Red Sea Project, Qiddiya, Diriyah, and Roshn, along with extensive expansion in aviation, such as the launch of Riyadh Air and a strategy to triple annual passenger capacity to 330 million by 2030.

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Sri Lanka's tourism industry is showing strong signs of revival with a series of developments that highlight both progress and untapped potential. The recently concluded Sri Lanka MICE Expo 2025 brought together over 300 international delegates and 40 foreign media representatives, firmly positioning Colombo as a serious contender in the meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) sector. This comes at a critical juncture, as the city's hospitality landscape has been significantly strengthened by the addition of new room inventory, particularly with the much-anticipated opening of Cinnamon Life Integrated Resort.

Encouragingly, long-standing tourism associations—many with over five decades of history—are undergoing a shift in leadership, with women being appointed to top positions. This is more than symbolic; it represents a positive step toward greater gender inclusion in an industry where female participation has remained disproportionately low. If nurtured, this trend could bring fresh perspectives and help meet the broader mandate of increasing women's involvement across the tourism value chain.

On the connectivity front, Sri Lanka is set to welcome the return of a European airline with Edelweiss Air commencing twice-weekly operations to Zurich. This direct link will be a timely boost ahead of the winter season, enhancing access for European travelers and strengthening the island's positioning as a year-round destination.

Yet, amid these achievements, a critical gap remains: the lack of a comprehensive destination marketing campaign. While Sri Lanka continues to receive international attention through events, new air links, and leadership changes, the absence of a cohesive global marketing strategy risks limiting the full impact of these gains.

The momentum is there, the opportunities are clear, but the industry now looks to decisive action in branding and promotion to secure Sri Lanka's rightful place on the global travel map.



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

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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

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RX launches WTM Spotlight....

The inaugural WTM Spotlight in Saudi Arabia spans three days in a dynamic B2B2C format, featuring over 450 exhibitors and attracting 6,500 regional and international visitors. More than 150 carefully curated international hosted buyers, selected for their keen interest in the Saudi market, will drive meaningful engagement. This approach not only ensures maximum commercial benefit for regional exhibitors but also opens new outbound avenues, empowering destinations to extend their reach in this promising and lucrative market.

Visitors and buyers will have access to a range of opportunities, including new regional and international products and build partnerships that help them create world-class travel experiences. International buyers will have the opportunity to explore Saudi Arabia's tourism landscape and how to incorporate its destinations into their portfolios. At the same time, Saudi consumers will be able to connect directly with regional and global travel brands and destinations, allowing them to plan personalised journeys.

Alongside the exhibition, a conference programme featuring regional and global thought leaders will examine the opportunities shaping Saudi Arabia's tourism future, from connectivity and mega-projects to innovation and the evolving consumer preferences across the GCC. Powered

by RX's Smart Event tools, exhibitors, visitors and buyers will also benefit from generating valuable leads, connections and data-driven insights throughout the event.

“WTM Spotlight in Saudi Arabia will showcase the best elements of our events – curated business connections, authentic cultural experiences, thought-leading content, and direct consumer engagement – all within one of the world's most dynamic and rapidly developing tourism markets,” added Zhygalo.

“Bringing together global travel leaders, Saudi stakeholders and high-value consumers, the event will not only unlock commercial opportunities but also foster meaningful exchanges that will shape the future of travel both within the Kingdom and across the broader region,” he concluded.

WTM Spotlight in Saudi Arabia will complement the broader WTM portfolio, including Arabian Travel Market (ATM), by focusing specifically on Saudi Arabia's high-growth market. The event will play a crucial role in strengthening regional collaboration, positioning the Kingdom as a hub for inbound visitors, while connecting Saudi Arabia's rapidly expanding outbound travellers with destinations across the GCC and beyond.

Exhibition World Bahrain Launches "EWB Students Programme" to Inspire Next Generation of MICE and Business Event Professionals

TTA BULLETIN

Exhibition World Bahrain (EWB) has officially launched the EWB Students Programme, an educational initiative designed to introduce young adults to the dynamic Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) industry and business events and inspire them to explore it as a promising career path.

With its hands-on approach and expert guidance, the EWB Students Programme marks an important milestone in raising awareness among Bahrain's youth about the strategic significance of the MICE sector and business events and its wide range of exciting career opportunities.

The programme was rolled out across five leading schools in Bahrain – St Christopher School, American School of Bahrain, British School of Bahrain, Bahrain Bayan School, and Ibn Khuldoon National School – reaching nearly 100 students aged 15 to 18 years (Grades 9-12).

Through interactive lectures and engaging activities, the programme highlighted the MICE industry and business events' critical role in advancing Bahrain's economy, supporting the Kingdom's Tourism Strategy 2022-2026, and contributing to regional economic diversification. The initiative also served as a meaningful platform to highlight



the growing importance of business tourism in driving sustainable economic growth and fostering innovation.

The lectures covered a wide spectrum of topics, including: The significance of the MICE sector and business events in Bahrain and the region, tourism mega-projects and MICE infrastructure, the event life cycle and event management in practice, key industry stakeholders and ecosystems, international trends, and career opportunities and pathways within the tourism, MICE and business events sectors.

Adding a creative dimension to the learning experience, students participated in the “EWB Game of Life”, an interactive board-game-style activity designed by EWB to stimulate real-world decision-making in tourism and business events. Students worked in teams to navigate strategic and creative challenges, testing their problem-solving skills while competing to win.

The winning team from each school will be awarded a special behind-the-scenes tour of EWB during a major live event, offering them first-hand exposure to client interactions, event setup, and venue operations.

UFTAA Director Represents Travel Agents at IATA PAPGJC Meeting in Singapore

TTA BULLETIN

The Passenger Agency Programme Global Joint Council (PAPGJC) convened in Singapore on 14–15 September 2024, bringing together global aviation leaders and travel agency representatives to address critical issues shaping the future of air travel.

Representing PAPGJC in his capacity as UFTAA Director, Duminda Kuruwitaarachchi contributed to discussions on strengthening industry collaboration, advancing sustainability, and redefining the role of travel agents in a rapidly evolving aviation landscape.

For Sri Lanka, participation at this global forum has been limited in the past, making this an important opportunity to provide a strong voice on behalf of the country's travel

industry.

Key highlights from the IATA PAPGJC meeting included:

- Enhanced cooperation between airlines, travel agents, and industry stakeholders.
- A renewed focus on sustainability initiatives within aviation.
- Emerging innovations in airline distribution models and digital technologies.
- Stronger advocacy for fairer ticketing systems and streamlined processes to support travel agents.

The dialogue reaffirmed the shared commitment of airlines, travel agents, and industry leaders to building a more inclusive, innovative, and sustainable future for global aviation.



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Tour Blue Named Best Destination Management Company for Sri Lanka at Global Tourism Awards 2025 – Jury’s Award

TTA BULLETIN

Tour Blue Holdings (Pvt) Ltd, one of Sri Lanka’s most dynamic Destination Management Companies, has been honoured with the Jury’s Award for Best Destination Management Company – Sri Lanka at the Global Tourism Awards 2025 held on 30th September in New Delhi



The accolade, presented at a glittering gala ceremony, was received by Darshana Cabraal, Joint Managing Director of Tour Blue Holdings, amidst applause from global tourism leaders, industry experts, and dignitaries. This recognition reflects Tour Blue’s unwavering commitment to excellence, sustainability, and innovation in the travel and tourism sector.

Founded 12 years ago, Tour Blue has grown from humble beginnings into one of Sri Lanka’s most recognized medium-scale tour operators. Renowned for delivering personalized, hassle-free travel experiences, the company has earned a reputation for creating journeys that leave lasting impressions.

Over the past year, Tour Blue has achieved significant milestones, including the Good Travel Seal and recognition as a Travelife Engaged Partner—awards that highlight its dedication to fair, responsible, and sustainable tourism practices. The company has also extended its presence to the North and East of Sri Lanka with a dedicated branch office in Jaffna, further enhancing its ability to serve diverse markets and regional tourism development. This latest honor in India further underscores Tour Blue’s strategic focus on the South Asian market, particularly

catering to Indian travelers, who represent a major share of inbound visitors to Sri Lanka.

“This award is not just a recognition of our work, but a celebration of Sri Lanka’s potential as a world-class destination,” said Mr. Cabraal in his acceptance speech. “We dedicate this achievement to our team, our valuable business partners, our clients, our representatives in India and our beautiful island home—Sri Lanka.”

The esteemed jury of the Global Tourism Awards 2025, comprising eleven distinguished leaders from India’s tourism, aviation, and business sectors, praised Tour Blue for its seamless service delivery, innovative tour packages, and consistent focus on sustainable and culturally immersive travel experiences.

As the global tourism industry continues to recover and evolve in the post-pandemic era, companies like Tour Blue are playing a pivotal role in redefining travel with authenticity, sustainability, and heartfelt Sri Lankan hospitality.

This recognition marks a milestone not only for Tour Blue Holdings but also for the entire Sri Lankan tourism industry, reaffirming the nation’s place on the global travel map.

The Mall At Port City Colombo Celebrates Its First Anniversary

TTA BULLETIN



The Mall at Port City Colombo, Sri Lanka’s pioneering downtown duty free retail concept, commemorated its first anniversary of operations on 4th September 2025, with an exclusive gathering of its most valued retail partners, and representatives from China Duty Free, One World Duty Free, the Colombo Port City Economic Commission, and CHEC Port City Colombo (Pvt) Ltd. The Mall’s milestone celebration marked a year of remarkable growth and affirmed its role as a catalyst in transforming Colombo into a sought-after luxury travel retail and tourist destination in South Asia.

Since its formal inauguration in September 2024, the Mall at Port City Colombo has established itself as a vibrant travel retail and lifestyle hotspot, adding to Colombo’s buzzing scene of diversity where a contemporary skyline meets hidden cultural treasures. China Duty Free and One World Duty Free, both globally acclaimed travel retail giants, currently spearhead the Mall’s duty free operations with their curated assortment of luxury retail, whilst attracting international tourists and returning Sri Lankans and foreign residents alike.

Further bolstered by Sri Lanka welcoming over 1.6 million tourists as of date, China Duty Free, in particular, has serviced over 100,000 passengers in its first year of operations as an anchor mall tenant. Across its complete retail and dining operations, the Mall at Port City Colombo has also recorded positive month-by-month growth in revenue driven by both tourist and local consumer demand.

The Mall is also home to Sri Lanka’s iconic Japanese restaurant, Nihonbashi by Dharshan, and other cultural retail and dining offerings, including Spa Ceylon, Café Chill, Lakarcarde, Basilur Tea, and so forth. These duty-paid offerings perfectly complement the Mall’s travel retail brands, providing its patrons a truly immersive and unforgettable shopping experience.

‘The Mall’s first year has been a strong reaffirmation of Port City Colombo’s strategic vision to reinvent Sri Lanka into a regional destination for business, investments, and lifestyle. As we look ahead, our focus remains on expanding offerings, attracting world-class brands, and ensuring that the Mall becomes synonymous with premium shopping and tourism experiences in South Asia,’ said Xiong Hongfeng, Managing Director, CHEC Port City Colombo (Pvt) Ltd.

In just twelve months, The Mall at Port City Colombo has welcomed thousands of shoppers and tourists, generated significant economic value, and positioned Colombo alongside global downtown duty free destinations such as Singapore, Australia, and South Korea. The anniversary event paid tribute to the invaluable partnerships that have driven this success, while also underscoring the Mall’s continued commitment to innovation and excellence in the years ahead.

For more information, please visit <https://www.portcitycolombo.lk/featured-developments/the-mall/> or follow The Mall at Port City Colombo on Instagram (@themall_portcitycolombo).

Sri Lanka Tourism Job Fair & Career Expo 2025: Discover Your Future in Tourism

TTA BULLETIN

In celebration of UN World Tourism Day, the Sri Lanka Tourism Job Fair & Career Expo 2025 took place on 28 September 2025 at One Galle Face Mall. Recognised as the country’s largest career and networking platform dedicated to tourism and hospitality, the Expo enters its third consecutive year as a prestigious event that bridges aspiring professionals with leading employers, educators, and industry stakeholders.

What sets the Expo apart is the way it captures the energy of an industry built on people. From students seeking their first opportunity, to professionals ready for their next chapter, to recruiters looking for tomorrow’s leaders — the event is a meeting point of ambition and experience.

This year’s Expo brings together 50

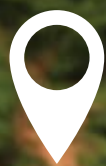
dedicated stalls and a distinguished portfolio of participants, including Shangri-La Colombo & Hambantota, Galle Face Group, Cinnamon Life, Marriott Weligama, Taru Villas, Walkers Tours, The Serendipity Collection, MAI Globe, Olanka Travels, BCD Travels, and more. Academic institutions such as the University of Colombo, Aspire College of Higher Education, and the Universal College of Learning took part, alongside an international collaboration with Capilano University, ensuring education and industry stand side by side.

Organised by the Alumni Association of Tourism Economics and Hospitality Management (Alumni ATEHM) together with the Sustainable Tourism Unit of the University of Colombo, and supported by the Ministry of Tourism, SLTDA,



SLITHM, and SLAITO, the Expo reflects a shared vision: to empower the next generation, connect talent with opportunity, and strengthen the future of Sri Lanka’s hospitality sector.

More than a career fair, the Sri Lanka Tourism Job Fair & Career Expo 2025 is a journey. It is where careers begin, where futures take shape, and where the story of Sri Lanka’s tourism industry continues to be written — one connection at a time.



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Thailand Underscores Readiness to Host Gastech 2026

TTA BULLETIN



Thailand underscores its readiness to host Gastech 2026, the world's largest energy exhibition and conference returning after 18 years. At Gastech 2025 in Milan, the Thai team for the upcoming Bangkok edition extends an invitation to the global energy community, showcasing world-class MICE infrastructure, state-of-the-art venues, seamless connectivity, and Thailand's internationally renowned hospitality with its distinctive Thai touch, illustrating the country as a premier hub for large-scale international business events.

As the country prepares to welcome global leaders, policymakers, and innovators in gas, LNG, hydrogen, climate technologies, and AI in energy at Gastech 2026, the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (Public Organization) or TCEB joins the Ministry of Energy at Gastech 2025 in Milan from 9–12 September to reaffirm Thailand's commitment to driving the success of the event and advancing the nation's strategic role in the global energy landscape. The event is expected to attract more than 50,000 attendees from 150 countries, 1,000 exhibiting companies, and 1,000 expert speakers to unite in powering a sustainable energy future.

Dr. Pasu Loharjun, Chairman of the Board, TCEB, said that “Thailand's successful bid to host Gastech 2026, secured by TCEB, a national bidder, and the Ministry of Energy, acting as a host organization, along with multiple supporting organisations, is a significant milestone. It not only showcases our country's robust MICE ecosystem but also underscores our commitment to leveraging business events as a platform to advance the growth of industries that hold the key to the future, with energy being a prime example. Thailand has been an exhibition hub in the Southeast Asian region, with TCEB supporting a number of regional energy trade shows each year, making it a promising source of participants for global energy events.

Gastech 2026 will feature a comprehensive conference program, an extensive exhibition, and a premier platform for business engagement and knowledge exchange with leading energy stakeholders from around the world. The event will allow Thailand to welcome energy ministers from multiple countries, strengthen the nation's global standing, and generate

substantial economic benefits through tourism, employment, and domestic expenditure. Overall, Gastech 2026 is projected to deliver an economic impact of approximately 385 million Euro, including 198 million Euro in national revenue, 38 million Euro in tax contributions, and the creation of 4,700 jobs.”

Supporting Thailand's commitment to advancing its energy sector, Bangkok provides the ideal setting for Gastech 2026. As a world-class destination for global events, the city offers seamless connectivity through Suvarnabhumi Airport, one of the world's most connected airports, served by 113 international airlines.

The Bangkok International Trade and Exhibition Centre (BITEC), where Gastech 2026 will take place, provides 70,000 sqm of versatile event space, including 10 expansive exhibition halls, six grand convention halls, and 28 break-out meeting rooms, all designed for events of international magnitude. With direct BTS Skytrain access to BITEC and over 50 hotels along the BTS line, delegates can enjoy convenient mobility and accommodation.

“Looking ahead to Gastech 2026, Thailand is ready to welcome the global energy community. With world-class facilities, rich culture, warm hospitality, and a strong focus on future industries, the event will foster collaboration and inspire progress in shaping the future of energy solutions,” added Dr. Pasu.

For more information, contact TCEB at: pr@tceb.or.th

Established in 2004, Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (Public Organization) or TCEB – the government agency under the supervision of the Prime Minister – has been assigned a role to promote, support and develop business events industry – corporate meetings, incentive trips, conventions, exhibitions, mega events and world festivals. Serving as a strategic partner, TCEB helps deliver creative ideas and solutions to bring success and fulfill the requirements of business events. The overarching goal is to drive Thailand to become a global MICE and mega events destination that can drive the country's strategic industries and national economy.

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GEORGE COOPER ELEVATING SRI LANKA'S LUXURY HOSPITALITY LANDSCAPE

“SRI LANKA IS NOT A SEASONAL DESTINATION, WITH CHANGING WEATHER PATTERNS, OUR CLIMATE REMAINS TEMPERATE YEAR-ROUND. IT'S TIME WE POSITIONED OURSELVES AS A 12-MONTH DESTINATION.”



George Cooper, Founder of KK Collection, has long been synonymous with refined elegance and understated luxury in Sri Lanka's boutique hospitality scene. His passion for design, attention to detail, and unwavering belief in Sri Lanka's potential as a premium travel destination have shaped a portfolio that continues to redefine experiential travel.

The latest chapter in his journey is the Chatham Collection a curated ensemble of four individual villas founded by Judy Green. George collaborated closely with Judy on the interiors, bringing his signature sense of style and sophistication to the villas.

While KK Collection oversees the management and maintenance, Chatham Collection serves as a natural complement a partnership that blends the intimacy of private villas with the world-class standards of a five-star hotel brand. “They're five-star homes, designed to feel luxurious yet deeply personal,” says George. “Together, KK and Chatham represent two sides of the same experience hotels and villas that seamlessly complement one another.”

Yet, Cooper notes that despite Sri Lanka's remarkable offerings, there's still work to be done in repositioning the island. “Sri Lanka has a fantastic upmarket product, but it's still perceived as a low-budget destination,” he explains. “We need to shift focus from volume to value attracting discerning travelers who contribute meaningfully to the economy. The private sector is already collaborating, but stronger support from the public sector would amplify our message.”

Addressing misconceptions about seasonality, George champions the idea of the “Green Season” a time when the island's landscapes are lush, attractions quieter, and travel more affordable. “Sri Lanka is not a seasonal destination,” he emphasizes. “With changing weather patterns, our climate remains temperate year-round. It's time we positioned ourselves as a 12-month destination.”

He also points to evolving travel trends and market dynamics. Post-pandemic airfares may have risen, but Sri Lanka still offers strong value for long-haul travelers from Europe and enormous potential remains in nearby markets such as India and the Middle East. “We're on travelers' minds, but we need a more focused and consistent global marketing effort. That's the missed opportunity.”

At Kahanda Kanda, one of KK Collection's crown jewels, George continues to innovate. Spread across 14 acres with 12 villas and five new pool villas underway the property is expanding its focus on privacy, wellness, and holistic well-being. A new spa, designed in collaboration with an international wellness consultant, will further enhance the resort's “WellLeisure” philosophy nurturing body, mind, and soul. “We want guests to unwind, relax, and enjoy a proper holiday,” he says.

“Maintaining exceptional service, quality cuisine, and introducing Starlink connectivity are all part of our commitment to providing the very best.”

From his earliest design projects to the evolution of KK Collection and now Chatham Collection, George Cooper's journey is one of passion and persistence and a belief that Sri Lanka's true luxury lies in its authenticity, warmth, and timeless beauty.

“WE NEED TO SHIFT FOCUS FROM VOLUME TO VALUE ATTRACTING DISCERNING TRAVELERS WHO CONTRIBUTE MEANINGFULLY TO THE ECONOMY.”



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Mr. Priyantha Rathnayake Appointed Chairman of BOC Travels (Pvt) Ltd

TTA BULLETIN

BOC Travels (Pvt) Ltd is proud to announce the appointment of Mr. R. M. P. (Priyantha) Rathnayake as its new Chairman. He currently serves on the Board of the Bank of Ceylon (BOC) as a Director, bringing with him a wealth of experience and leadership in the fields of finance, governance, and public administration.

Mr. Rathnayake is a seasoned professional with over 25 years of distinguished service in the public sector, culminating in his tenure as Deputy Secretary to the Treasury. He holds an MSc in Agriculture from the Agricultural University of Norway and a BSc in Agricultural Economics from the University of Peradeniya, reflecting his strong academic background.

Throughout his illustrious career, Mr. Rathnayake has played a pivotal role in shaping Sri Lanka's economic and financial landscape. His expertise in multilateral and bilateral development banking has been instrumental in mobilizing foreign funding for national development projects and fostering productive relationships with international development partners.

His leadership has extended across many prestigious institutions. He has served as Chairman of the National Savings Bank, Chairman of the National Credit Guarantee Institution, Acting Chairman of Colom-



bo Lotus Tower Management Company (Pvt) Ltd, and as a Director of People's Bank. Internationally, he represented Sri Lanka as a Director of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), contributing to the Bank's strategies, policies, and oversight mechanisms.

In addition, he has held directorial and governance roles in several key institutions, including the Securities and Exchange Commission of Sri Lanka, the Civil Aviation Authority, the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management, and the National Medicinal Drug Regulatory Authority. His contributions to the State Pharmaceuticals Corporation and the Insurance Regulatory Commission have further underscored his commitment to national development.

At the Bank of Ceylon, he chaired the Integrated Risk Management Committee, ensuring effective risk mitigation strategies to strengthen the institution's resilience. His leadership across diverse sectors has always been marked by a deep dedication to public service, accountability, and sustainable growth.

With his extensive experience, vision, and proven track record, Mr. Priyantha Rathnayake is set to provide strong strategic direction to BOC Travels, guiding the company to new heights in Sri Lanka's travel and tourism industry.



ITT Future You Forum lined up for WTM London 2025

TTA BULLETIN

World Travel Market London, organised by RX, is delighted to announce that the ITT Future You Forum will take place at this year's event, continuing a partnership that has been in place since 2009.

ITT Future You is an initiative founded by the Institute of Travel and Tourism to inspire the next generation of aviation, travel, tourism and hospitality professionals. It acts as a bridge between the education sector and industry and has been developing a portfolio of collaborations focused on helping travel and tourism students find jobs, introduce them to mentors and offer networking opportunities with peers and industry leaders.

The forum has taken place at WTM London every year since 2009. It regularly attracts more than 500 students and graduates, making it one of the most attended sessions over the three days.

WTM London 2025 returns to ExCeL London from 4-6 November, with this year's Future You Forum taking place on Thursday in the Orange Theatre, from 10:45am to 12:00pm, followed by a 30-minute student networking session. Under the theme 'Reimagining Travel in a Changing World', the forum will explore how evolving global policies and shifting traveller behaviours are reshaping the industry. As Gen Z seek careers that align with their values—particularly around sustainability, cultural connection, and social impact—they are redefining what it means to build a career in travel, pushing the industry to adapt and innovate.

The line-up for ITT Future You is currently being finalised, with a number of high-profile executives already confirmed, includ-



ing Kate Irwin, managing director EMEA at travel intelligence media company Skift, as well as a panel of this year's TTG 30 under 30 Tomorrow's Travel Leader's.

Last year's forum was one of the most successful ever, with speakers including Jo Ryzmowska, best known for her leadership roles at Royal Caribbean Group across two decades and recent recipient of an MBE for her commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the travel and tourism sectors.

As well as the annual forum at WTM London, ITT Future You is active year-round. It's "On the Road" initiative is the branding for a series of events it runs for tourism students at UK universities. It is also building a global presence, running ITT Future You events in Brazil and Kenya in partnership with the Global Travel and Tourism Partnership, as well as a series of online industry-led masterclasses.

Claire Steiner, Chair of Education and Training at the Institute of Travel and Tourism and ITT Future You co-founder comments: "Our longstanding relationship with WTM London has helped ITT Future You to cement its role as the leading industry led student initiative helping inspire and deliver more value for tourism students and recent graduates."

Chris Carter-Chapman, Event Director at WTM London, comments: "ITT Future

Sri Lanka Hospitality Graduates' Association Appoints First-Ever Woman President, Dr. Gitanjali Chakravarth

TTA BULLETIN

The Sri Lanka Hospitality Graduates' Association (SLHGA), the country's largest body of professional hoteliers, has reached a historic milestone with the appointment of its first-ever woman President, Dr. Gitanjali Chakravarth.

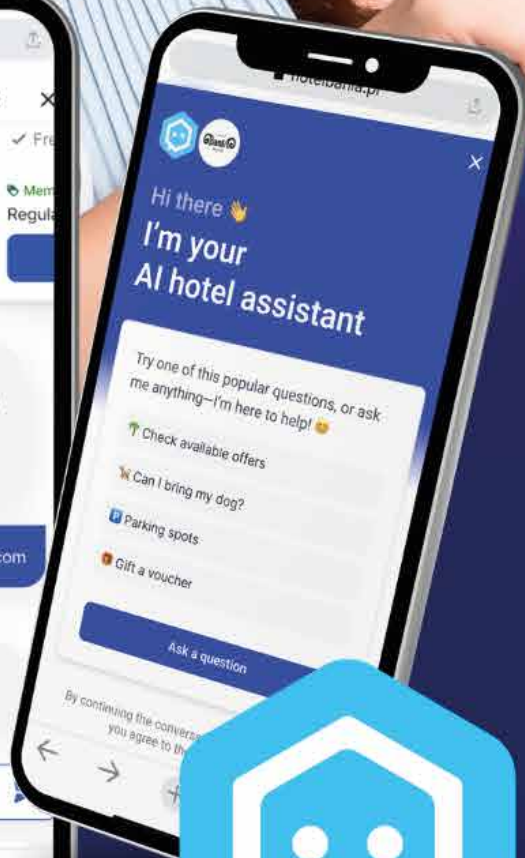
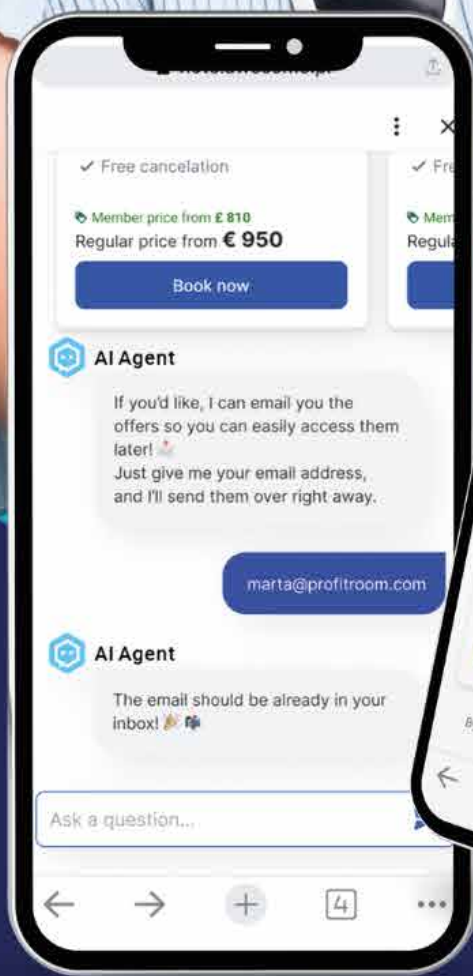


A trailblazer in Sri Lanka's hospitality sector, Dr. Chakravarth brings decades of experience that span academia, hotel operations, and global industry expertise. Beginning her career as a Senior Lecturer at the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism & Hotel Management, she went on to lead some of the country's finest properties, including Hilton Yala Resort and Uga Ulagalla, combining academic depth with operational excellence and strategic vision.

Her international exposure with COMO Hotels & Resorts, coupled with her expertise in procurement and performance management, has positioned her as a

thought leader and innovator in the field. Recognized globally, Dr. Chakravarth has been honored with the Global Woman Leader Award at the World Women Leadership Congress, the Global CEO Top Business Women Award, and has been listed among Sri Lanka's Top 50 Career Women. Properties under her stewardship have also received multiple accolades, including the Connie Award, Tripadvisor Traveler's Choice Award, and several World Luxury Hotel Awards.

As the first woman to lead SLHGA, Dr. Chakravarth's appointment is a landmark moment for the association and the wider tourism and hospitality industry in Sri Lanka. Her leadership philosophy—anchored in trust, collaboration, and empowerment—continues to inspire a new generation of hospitality professionals, while reinforcing Sri Lanka's reputation as a destination driven by service innovation and talent.



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Hayleys Leisure Appoints Rajitha Amarasinghe as Director of Operations - Amaya Resorts & Spas

TTA BULLETIN

Hayleys Leisure is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Rajitha Amarasinghe as Director of Operations – Amaya Resorts & Spas. In his new role, Rajitha will oversee the operations of Amaya Resorts & Spas and the Boutique Collec-



An alumnus of the International Management Institute (IMI), Switzerland, Rajitha holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Hospitality Management, specialising in Hospitality Administration and Management.

On his appointment,

Rajitha shared: “It is a great honour to step into the role of Director of Operations at Amaya Resorts & Spas. I am excited to work with our incredible team to elevate hospitality to the next level by creating memorable guest experiences and fostering sustainable growth. My focus will be on enhancing operational excellence and empowering our people to deliver the highest standards of service.”

Mr. Rohan Karr, Managing Director of Hayleys Leisure, commented: “Rajitha has been an integral part of our team, consistently demonstrating exemplary management skills, operational expertise and a deep commitment to delivering excellence. We are confident that under his guidance, Amaya Resorts & Spas will become the most preferred hospitality brand in Sri Lanka.”

Amaya Resorts & Spas looks forward to Rajitha’s leadership in strengthening its position as a hallmark of authentic Sri Lankan hospitality.

With over two decades of experience in the hospitality industry, Rajitha brings a wealth of operational and leadership expertise. He began his career with Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, where he served for 13 years, rising to the position of Manager – Compliance, Health and Safety. He later joined Amaya Resorts & Spas, assuming key leadership roles, including Head of Operations and Head of Health, Safety, and Compliance. Throughout his career, he has demonstrated a strong ability to balance service excellence with people development, shaping operational standards that have enhanced both guest satisfaction and organisational performance.

Hayleys Leisure Appoints Shane Hallock as Chief Commercial Officer

TTA BULLETIN

Hayleys Leisure PLC is pleased to announce the appointment of Shane Hallock as Chief Commercial Officer (CCO). In this capacity, Shane will lead the sector’s overall commercial direction, focusing on sustainable revenue growth, profitability and market leadership in



marks in hospitality excellence.”

With over 15 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Shane brings extensive expertise in strategic sales management, revenue growth, and client relationship building. Since joining Hayleys Leisure in 2019, he

has played a pivotal role in driving performance, expanding partnerships, and securing long-term corporate and leisure business across The Kingsbury Colombo, Amaya Resorts & Spas, and The Boutique Collection by Amaya.

Sri Lanka’s competitive hospitality landscape. In addition to continuing his leadership of the Sales division, he will expand his remit to oversee commercial strategy across rooms and MICE, digital marketing, market positioning, and business development & expansion. This appointment highlights Hayleys Leisure’s commitment to strengthening its market presence and delivering exceptional value to guests and stakeholders alike.

Shane Hallock commented: “I am excited to take on this role and further develop the commercial strategy for Hayleys Leisure. Expansion and future market positioning will be key areas of focus, and I look forward to collaborating with our talented team to achieve these goals.”

Mr. Rohan Karr, Managing Director of Hayleys Leisure, added: “Shane has been a driving force behind our sales growth and commercial success over the past years. His deep industry knowledge and expertise make him the ideal choice to lead our commercial initiatives, ensuring that Hayleys Leisure continues to set bench-

marks in hospitality excellence.”

Shane’s career highlights include senior leadership roles at Taj Samudra Colombo and Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, where he successfully expanded corporate partnerships and led business development across multiple market segments. His strengths encompass strategic sales planning, revenue optimisation, market trend analysis, and team leadership, complemented by professional development at the Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management in Dubai and the MICE Professional Development Programme in Sri Lanka.

Hayleys Leisure is confident that under Shane’s leadership as Chief Commercial Officer, the sector will continue its trajectory of growth, delivering world-class hospitality experiences across its diverse portfolio.

Anantara Riverside Bangkok Resort Welcomes Michael Parker as General Manager

TTA BULLETIN

Anantara Riverside Bangkok Resort, a luxury resort operated by global hospitality group Minor Hotels, announces the appointment of Michael Parker as its new General Manager, effective 2 September 2025.

Michael brings over 20 years of leadership experience in luxury hospitality to his new role in Bangkok, including high-profile positions across the UK, China, Cambodia, and the Maldives. He joined Minor Hotels in 2023 as Complex General Manager, overseeing three of the group’s resorts in the Maldives: Anantara Dhigu Maldives Resort, Anantara Veli Maldives Resort, and Naladhu Private Island Maldives. During his tenure, Michael led the USD 50 million transformation of the resorts, elevating operations, guest satisfaction, and service delivery. His leadership in the Maldives earned him the distinction of ‘General Manager of the Year – Asia award’ at the 2025 Minor Awards of Excellence.

At Anantara Riverside Bangkok Resort, Michael will guide the next chapter of the resort, enhancing its reputation as a destination for immersive luxury and

holistic wellness.

Michael will lead a comprehensive renovation of its food and beverage outlets, including Sala Lakorn, Spice Market, and Brio. These signature restaurants will be reimagined to deliver a vibrant culinary experience within one of Bangkok’s only urban resorts.

In addition to culinary innovation, Michael is committed to expanding the resort’s wellness offerings through enhancements to the Anantara Wellness programme. Guests will discover bespoke wellness journeys that blend time-honoured rituals with advanced medical therapies to restore balance and vitality. Whether through tailored detox plans, elevated fitness regimens, or rejuvenating medical spa therapies, Anantara Wellness empowers guests to embrace optimal health and leave feeling renewed and inspired.

Nicholas Smith, Vice President of Operations for Asia at Minor Hotels, commented on Michael’s appointment, “Michael has proven himself to be a dynamic and inspiring leader, with an exceptional ability to



bring out the best in his teams and deliver meaningful results. His success in the Maldives and deep international experience make him the ideal candidate to lead one of our flagship properties in Bangkok. We are confident that under his leadership, Anantara Riverside will continue to set new benchmarks for excellence in urban resort hospitality.”

Michael added, “It is a privilege to lead Anantara Riverside Bangkok Resort. This property holds a special place in Bangkok’s

hospitality landscape, and I look forward to working alongside the talented team to continue crafting transformative experiences and building on the resort’s legacy of excellence.”

Anantara Riverside Bangkok Resort is nestled on 11 acres of tropical gardens along the west bank of the Chao Phraya River. The resort offers its guests a unique blend of cultural immersion and luxury, providing unforgettable experiences in Thailand’s capital city.

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MOVEMENTS / HOTELS

TAASL Appoints First Female President at Landmark 50th AGM

TTA BULLETIN

The Travel Agents Association of Sri Lanka (TAASL), the official voice of the country's travel agents, has made history with the appointment of Sonali Ranasinghe as its new President at the Association's 50th Annual General Meeting, held on 8th September 2025.



future for all our members."

During her tenure, Ranasinghe has outlined three key priorities for TAASL:

Training & Development – Introducing practical, hands-on training programs to upskill members in digital tools, regulatory

compliance, and service excellence. Stronger Collaboration with Airlines – Building transparent, solution-oriented partnerships with airline partners to address operational challenges and improve efficiency.

Diplomatic & Government Relations – Enhancing engagement with embassies and consulates to streamline visa processes and provide timely updates for members.

Founded over 50 years ago, TAASL continues to play a pivotal role in representing Sri Lanka's travel agents, acting as the bridge between members, government authorities, airlines, and the international travel community.

Ranasinghe pledged to lead TAASL with integrity, transparency, and accountability, building on the Association's proud legacy while steering it towards innovation and growth in a rapidly evolving global travel landscape.

Ranasinghe becomes the first woman to hold the presidency of TAASL, marking a milestone not only for the Association but also for the Sri Lankan travel and tourism industry as a whole.

With over three decades of experience in the airline and travel industry, Ranasinghe brings deep expertise, strong industry relationships, and a proven track record of leadership. In her inaugural address, she expressed gratitude to the TAASL Executive Council, industry mentors, and colleagues for their support, while dedicating this achievement to the many women whose contributions have strengthened the travel trade over the years.

"As the first female President of TAASL, this moment is both a personal honour and a collective achievement," said Ranasinghe. "Our industry has been shaped by countless women who work with strength, purpose, and resilience. It is my commitment to represent their voices while working towards a stronger, more united

A Festival of Color in the Skies

TTA BULLETIN

The annual Kite Festival at Pegasus Reef Hotel was a celebration that blended tradition, creativity, and community spirit. Guests and visitors gathered along the golden shoreline to witness a stunning display of kites in every shape, size, and shade imaginable. The skies danced with giant creations, artistic designs, and playful kites flown by children experiencing the thrill for the first time.

Beyond the spectacle in the air, the festival was filled with laughter, friendly competi-

tions, and shared joy, creating a warm sense of togetherness. Families enjoyed beachside activities, while travelers had the chance to connect with local culture and savor authentic Sri Lankan hospitality.

This vibrant event not only highlighted the beauty of the coastal breeze but also left lasting memories for everyone who joined—a true reminder that in Sri Lanka, every celebration is as colorful and uplifting as the kites that soar above its shores.



Celebrating World Tourism Day with Sri Lankan Heritage

TTA BULLETIN

On World Tourism Day, Pegasus Reef Hotel delighted its valued guests with an enchanting Sri Lankan cultural show. The evening came alive with traditional music, graceful Kandyan dances, and vibrant performances that reflected the island's rich heritage. Guests experienced the beauty of local artistry and hospitality, immersing themselves in a celebration that honored the spirit of Sri Lanka. It was a memorable night of culture, rhythm, and togetherness—an unforgettable highlight for our international visitors.



Prestigious Recognition for W15 Hanthana Estate at South Asian Travel Awards 2025

TTA BULLETIN



W15 Hanthana Estate has been recognized with the prestigious Silver Award in the Boutique Hotel category at the 9th edition of the South Asian Travel Awards (SATA) 2025, held recently at Cinnamon Grand, Colombo.

This accolade affirms W15 Hanthana Estate's commitment to offering discerning travelers an intimate and luxurious escape amidst the scenic beauty of Sri Lanka's hill country.

Located in the heart of Kandy's lush Hanthana mountain range, W15 Hanthana Estate blends heritage charm with contemporary comfort. The property features elegantly restored colonial architecture, expansive suites, curated fine dining experiences, and personalized service that captures the essence of boutique hospitality. Guests are also treated to a host of curated experiences ranging from walking tea trails and hiking on the famed Pekoe trail to cultural immersions in the historic city of Kandy.

Commenting on the recognition, Hardy Jamaldeen, Chairman of the W15 Collec-

tion said: "We are deeply honoured to receive this recognition at SATA 2025. The Silver Award is a reflection of the dedication and passion of our team in creating memorable experiences for our guests. At W15 Hanthana Estate, we strive to blend the unique heritage of the Hanthana region with the warmth of Sri Lankan hospitality, and this award reaffirms our journey."

The South Asian Travel Awards (SATA), established in 2016, has become the most prestigious platform in the region to recognize and celebrate excellence in the hospitality and travel sector. The 9th edition brought together leading hoteliers, travel professionals, and tourism stakeholders from across South Asia, spotlighting the region's dynamic and diverse tourism offering.

This recognition places W15 Hanthana Estate among the top boutique properties in South Asia, reinforcing its reputation as a distinguished choice for travelers seeking exclusivity, authenticity, and a refined luxury experience in Sri Lanka.

The logo for 'Mitt' is displayed in a bold, dark blue sans-serif font. A thick red horizontal line is positioned directly beneath the letters 'i' and 't'.

11-13 March, 2026
Crocus Expo Moscow

A large, crowded exhibition hall with various booths and displays. The image is overlaid with a dark blue gradient, making the text stand out.

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HOTELS

Browns Hotels & Resorts Shines with Dual Victories at the South Asian Travel Awards 2025

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka’s hospitality landscape received a remarkable spotlight this year as Browns Hotels & Resorts secured two of the most coveted titles at the South Asian Travel Awards (SATA) 2025, South Asia’s foremost platform celebrating excellence in travel and tourism.

At the gala night held in Colombo on 20th September, Club Hotel Dolphin, Waikkal, was honoured as South Asia’s Leading All-Inclusive Resort, while Occidental Eden Beruwala was crowned South Asia’s Leading Luxury Beach Resort. This dual recognition marked another milestone for Browns Hotels & Resorts, showcasing the diversity and strength of its portfolio, which spans from vibrant family resorts to tranquil beachside retreats.

Located just 20 minutes from Bandaranaike International Airport, Club Hotel Dolphin has become synonymous with all-inclusive holidaying in Sri Lanka and celebrated its second consecutive win as the region’s best all-inclusive resort. The property is home to the country’s largest swimming pool, a pristine stretch of beachfront, and a renowned animation team whose lively entertainment programme has made the resort a favourite among families, couples, and friends. Guests can enjoy expansive buffet spreads, intimate beachfront dining, or creative cocktails crafted by award-winning mixologists. One of the resort’s most cherished hallmarks is its deep connection with guests. Many loyal visitors from around the world have returned over 30 or even 40 times, drawn back by the thoughtful touches of a team that remembers favourite meals and celebrates family milestones. Accepting the award at the gala night, Manoj Perera, Resident Manager of Club Hotel Dolphin, represented the passion and spirit that make the property the island’s largest and most celebrated all-inclusive resort.

On Sri Lanka’s Golden Mile coastline, Occidental Eden Beruwala has long stood as an icon of beachfront luxury. With one of Beruwala’s most expansive stretches of beach, Eden has become a sanctuary for travellers seeking timeless serenity by the sea. The resort brings together world-class dining, thrilling watersports, and holistic spa and wellness experiences, all designed to capture the essence of coastal living while delivering personalised luxury.

Accepting the award on behalf of the property, Rohan Gamage, General Manager of Occidental Eden Beruwala, acknowledged the dedication of his team in curating experiences that have made Eden one of the island’s most sought-after escapes.

Reflecting on the achievement, Eksath Wijeratne, CEO of Browns Hotels & Resorts, said: “These dual wins are a celebration of our people and our guests. Eden and Dolphin each tell a different story—one of timeless coastal elegance, the other of vibrant all-inclusive energy—but both carry the soul of Sri Lankan hospitality. At Browns Hotels & Resorts, we take pride in creating resorts that are not only celebrated locally but recognised on an international stage for their standards of service, innovation, and guest experience.”

Browns Hotels & Resorts, the leisure arm of Browns Investments under the LOLC Group, continues to stand as a driving force in the region’s hospitality sector. Its portfolio also includes Thaala Bentota, The Calm Resort & Spa Pasikuda, Hotel Sigiriya, Dickwella Resort & Spa, Ayugiri Ayurveda Wellness Resort Sigiriya, Occidental Paradise Dambulla, and luxury boutique villas under the Reveal the Collection brand, along with associate hotel Sheraton Kosgoda.



Pegasus Reef Hotel at the Colombo Wedding Show

TTA BULLETIN

Pegasus Reef Hotel proudly showcased its wedding expertise at the Colombo Wedding Show, highlighting our stunning beachfront venues, elegant ballrooms, and bespoke packages. Visitors discovered inspiring décor concepts, curated menus, and exclusive honeymoon offers, while meeting our dedicated team of wedding specialists. With timeless charm and authentic Sri Lankan hospitality, Pegasus Reef continues to be the perfect choice for couples seeking an unforgettable celebration by the sea.



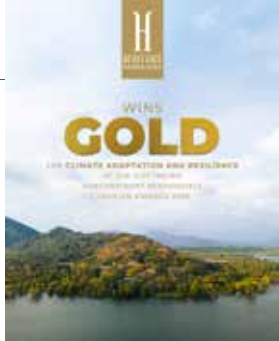
Heritage Kandalama Wins Gold under the Climate Adaptation and Resilience category at ICRT Indian Subcontinent Responsible Tourism Awards 2025

TTA BULLETIN

Heritage Kandalama has been awarded Gold under the Climate Adaptation and Resilience category at the ICRT Indian Subcontinent Responsible Tourism Awards 2025, held in New Delhi. This was in recognition of its outstanding contributions to responsible tourism through proactive, innovative, and scalable steps to both reduce their carbon footprint and protect tourism infrastructure, communities, and ecosystems from climate-related risks. The prestigious accolade highlights the resort’s pioneering achievements in sustainable hospitality and reinforces its leadership role in shaping the future of tourism in Sri Lanka and the wider region.

The International Centre for Responsible Tourism (ICRT) Awards are regarded as one of the region’s foremost platforms for recognising excellence in sustainable practices. Each year, they honour organisations that demonstrate innovation, accountability, and long-term commitment to responsible tourism. Winning the Gold Award under the Climate Adaptation and Resilience category places Heritage Kandalama among the foremost champions of sustainability in the Indian subcontinent and, as a Gold recipient, the resort is eligible to stand at the Global Responsible Tourism Awards, further elevating its influence on an international stage.

Heritage Kandalama has long been celebrated as a benchmark for eco-conscious tourism. Designed by the renowned architect Geoffrey Bawa, the hotel is



integrated seamlessly into its natural surroundings, embodying the principle that nature and design should complement each other. Since its inception, the property has introduced innovative sustainability initiatives ranging from advanced waste management and renewable energy use to biodiversity preservation and water conservation.

Stasshani Jayawardena, Chairperson of Aitken Spence Hotel Holdings PLC stated: “Receiving the prestigious Gold Award is a powerful affirmation of our ethos; that sustainability is not an obligation, but a profound responsibility. This recognition, granted for our measurable progress in decarbonising tourism and developing adaptive solutions – confirms that we are on the right path and reaffirms our resolve, as we continue to shape the future of accountable tourism.”

Over the decades, Heritage Kandalama has been admired for its environmental commitment. The resort is home to Sri Lanka’s longest continually certified ISO 14001 environmental management system, affirming its ongoing commitment to preserving the environment through the highest adherence produce to international standards. In addition to a multitude of awards and certifications, it holds the esteemed Travelife Gold Certification for Accommodation, recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC).

Sheraton Kosgoda Turtle Beach Resort Ushers in the Festive Season with Traditional Christmas Cake Mixing Ceremony

Sheraton Kosgoda Turtle Beach Resort officially kicked off the festive season with its annual Christmas Cake Mixing Ceremony, a joyous tradition that brought together in-house guests, media friends, the leadership team, and associates. Adding to the vibrancy, the event was graced by guests representing an impressive 31 nationalities, creating a true spirit of unity and celebration.

The ceremony was inaugurated by General Manager Mano Gunasekera, who warmly welcomed guests to join in the mixing of rich ingredients that will soon transform into decadent Christmas cakes. The highlight of the event

was the culinary artistry of Executive Chef Ramesh Kularatnam and his brigade, who crafted a magnificent display featuring a jolly Santa Claus on his sleigh, capturing the magic of the season.

As the air filled with the aroma of spices, nuts, and spirits, the atmosphere was further elevated with enchanting Christmas carols performed by a live saxophonist, spreading festive cheer throughout the resort. Guests immersed themselves in the merriment, marking the official start of the holiday season at Sheraton Kosgoda Turtle Beach Resort.

“Christmas is a time of togetherness, joy, and celebration. This event truly reflects the warmth and inclusivity of the season, and we are delighted to share it with our guests, colleagues, and community,” said Mano Gunasekera, General Manager of Sheraton Kosgoda Turtle Beach Resort.

The resort now looks forward to a brilliant Christmas season, filled with festive offerings, culinary delights, and memorable experiences for all who visit.



HOTELS

ONYX Hospitality Group Spotlights Shama Serviced Apartments: Redefining Urban Living Across Asia

TTA BULLETIN

As urban professionals increasingly turn to serviced apartments for a better balance of work, family, and lifestyle, ONYX Hospitality Group is spotlighting its Shama brand — a growing collection of residences in Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and China. Designed to meet the needs of today’s new generation of city dwellers, Shama offers the flexibility, convenience, and community that redefine the modern urban home.

Shama: A New Way of Living
Shama is designed for executives, professionals, and families who require both short- and long-term accommodation. It offers spacious residences with functional layouts - complete with kitchens and living areas - alongside amenities for everyday life. All of this is complemented by hotel-standard services to ensure comfort and ease.

More than just providing a place to live, Shama reimagines the home experience by blending the warmth of home with the conveniences of a hotel. This approach resonates with modern city dwellers who value quality of life and flexibility over traditional property ownership. It is why Shama stands as a pioneer of the New Urban Living Mindset, making the idea of a “second home” a reality for today’s urbanites.

Shama is more than just a place to stay; it is a new way of living. Offering flexibility, convenience, and a better quality of life, Shama is redefining the modern home for city dwellers across Asia.

Why Serviced Apartments?
For the new generation, a home is more than just a house or a condominium. It is about quality of life, convenience, and a sense of community. Today’s urban dwellers, especially executives and office professionals, are seeking a place that genuinely enhances their lives. They want more than simply a bed for the night or a permanent suburban address; they aspire to a space that seamlessly balances work, relaxation, and family life.

For professionals advancing their careers, a home close to their workplace, with convenient transport links and comprehensive services, is a critical advantage. It enables them to focus fully on their work, safe in the knowledge that when they return, they can unwind and recharge both physically and mentally without worrying about everyday details. For parents with children studying in the city, a “home” means a safe and accessible environment with services and communities that ensure a high quality of life - an environment where their children can thrive.

The Serviced Apartment Advantage
Serviced apartments have therefore emerged as the ideal solution for modern city living. They present a superior alternative to renting a condominium, which can often mean limited space and



few services, or staying in a hotel, which is rarely practical for longer-term stays. Unlike purchasing a home, which carries the burden of maintenance and the challenge of relocating as circumstances change, serviced apartments provide a flexible, convenient option.

With features perfectly suited to the urban lifestyle, serviced apartments provide spacious living areas complete with fully equipped kitchens, living rooms, and dedicated workspaces, as well as shared spaces for unwinding. Hotel-standard services take care of everyday essentials, while prime locations close to business districts, schools, and leading hospitals offer both convenience and peace of mind. Above all, serviced apartments foster a sense of community that enhances overall quality of life. And when the time comes to move on, residents can do so with ease - free from the burden of resale or letting.

This is why serviced apartments are becoming the new “second home” for today’s urban professionals. More than simply meeting residential needs, they combine flexibility, convenience, and quality of life for a truly fulfilling lifestyle.

Discover Shama across a range of locations, each designed to suit different lifestyles:

- **Shama Yen-Akat Bangkok**
A tranquil retreat in the Silom-Sathorn business district, surrounded by shops and restaurants. Ideal for pet owners and fitness enthusiasts, with Lumpini Park just minutes away.
- **Shama Ekamai Bangkok**
Situated in the vibrant Ekkamai-Thonglor area, surrounded by community malls, cafés, and restaurants. With spacious residences perfect for long stays, it offers convenient access to Bangkok’s key business districts.
- **Shama Lakeview Asoke Bangkok**
In the heart of Asoke, overlooking Benjakitti Park and close to major shopping, dining, and entertainment venues.
- **Shama Petchburi 47 Bangkok**
Nestled in a quiet yet central location adjacent to Bangkok Hospital, and close to wellness centres, spas, and leisure facilities, making it ideal for extended stays.
- **Shama Sukhumvit Bangkok**
A unique blend of greenery and modern conveniences in central Sukhumvit, with spacious residences and family-friendly amenities, just minutes from Bumrungrad Hospital.
- **Shama Rayong (Opening 2027)**

RAW Indulgence Elevated: Virticle by Jetwing Introduces a 6-Chapter Tasting Menu

TTA BULLETIN

At Virticle by Jetwing, dining has always been more than a meal—it is an exploration of creativity, sustainability, and bold culinary expression. The restaurant raises the bar once again with the launch of its RAW 6-Chapter Tasting Menu, a journey through six courses (or rather, six “chapters”) that reimagine familiar flavors with flair and finesse. Available to diners at a very special introductory price, the experience requires just 24 hours’ notice to reserve, ensuring each menu is curated with the utmost care.

There are dining experiences, and then there are journeys—those that unfold slowly, course by course, weaving together flavors, textures, and stories. The Elementally Raw is curated to capture both artistry and indulgence. Each course is composed with a painter’s eye for detail and instinct for balance—where vibrant seasonal produce meets carefully sourced proteins, and traditional techniques are reimagined for a contemporary palate while keeping is all RAW.

Elementally Raw was born from a simple moment of inspiration by the culinary maestro, Chef Pathum, Cluster Executive Chef of Jetwing Hotels. With the vision of keeping each element as close as possible to its purest form, the menu moves away from the use of fire, instead relying on techniques such as curing, dehydrating and sun drying.

The evening begins with Chapter One, a redefined Falafel made not from chickpeas but from pumpkin seed, paired with marinated carrot, cumin, coriander, and a sesame dressing—elevated further with a playful tamarind and bee honey shooter.

Chapter Two brings freshness to the fore with a Kottamba See and Ambarella Salad, a vibrant plate that artfully balances star fruit and avocado.

For many, the star of the menu is Chapter Three—a silky cold Gazpacho crafted from young coconut, peanut, chili oil, and



lime zest. Light yet deeply layered, it is a dish that lingers long after the last spoonful.

Chapter Four is perhaps the most intriguing—a witty reinterpretation of pizza. Here, a dehydrated avocado and pineapple purée crust becomes the base for A-grade yellowfin tuna, cherry tomatoes, and citrus aioli, creating a delightful play on textures and taste.

As mains, diners are spoiled for choice. The Cured Seer Fish, marinated with beetroot and curry leaf, arrives accompanied by avocado, pomegranate, tomato, and coriander salsa—a dish that is both elegant and deeply satisfying. Alternatives include Beef Three Ways, offering a robust carnivorous indulgence, or a Traditional Taste of Sri Lanka, featuring cauliflower rice, avocado curry, agunakola sambol, and wood apple sambol—an inventive nod to local heritage through a RAW lens.

Finally, dessert—Chapter Six—brings the menu to a close on a refreshing note. Marinated mango with passionfruit glaze is paired with a delicately balanced lemongrass sorbet, a sweet yet restrained finale that highlights the natural vibrancy of its ingredients.

For those seeking a new wave of fine dining in Sri Lanka, Virticle by Jetwing’s 6-Chapter RAW Tasting Menu offers an evocative, upmarket experience with a distinctly modern edge.

Beauty Icon Shweta Sharda Lights up City of Dreams, Showcasing Sri Lanka’s Luxury Appeal

TTA BULLETIN

Global beauty icon Shweta Sharda brought glamour and excitement to Sri Lanka during her visit, staying at the ultra-luxury Nüwa and delivering a dazzling performance at City of Dreams Colombo. Her presence elevated the resort’s entertainment appeal while highlighting Sri Lanka’s ambitious 2025 tourism vision to attract high-end travellers. With City of Dreams redefining Colombo as a hub for luxury, lifestyle, and world-class experiences, Sri



Lanka is poised to enter a new era of premium tourism.

The City Where Everyone Belongs

TTA BULLETIN

In the heart of Colombo, behind tall gates shaded by trees, stands Ishq Colombo — once a stately family home, now reimagined as a sanctuary of understated luxury. With four thoughtfully designed suites — two expansive master suites, a light-filled corner suite, and a serene pool suite — the villa offers both privacy and intimacy, making every stay feel like a homecoming. It is a place



where guests are welcomed not as visitors but as part of the city's living story. Within its walls, meals are unhurried and gatherings intimate — from a long breakfast in the dining room that seats fourteen, to a traditional English high tea with scones and fine teas, or a private celebration where the villa transforms into a setting for family and friends. Every detail reflects the Ishq philosophy: that true luxury lies not in spectacle, but in intimacy, generosity, and connection.

That same philosophy extends beyond the villa gates. To stay at Ishq Colombo is not only to rest in comfort but to step into the city's layered soul. For here, difference does not live in districts but side by side: a mosque shares its wall with a temple; the bell of a church carries into the call to prayer; spices, languages, and songs cross paths as naturally as the sea breeze. Rather than offering guided tours, Ishq invites guests to experience this spirit through time, stories, and tuk tuks.

At Ishq Colombo, we believe the true luxury of this city is not only in its skyline or its history, but in this quiet, effortless acceptance. Our villa was created to share that feeling with guests, not through spectacle, but through intimacy. To step inside Ishq is to step into a home that celebrates Colombo's soul: layered, generous, and quietly extraordinary.

Here, the city is woven into the experiences we curate. Guests are invited to explore it not as outsiders, but as participants. Each experience is designed to slow the pace, open space for stories, and invite connection.

The Tuk Tuk Journeys

Colombo is best understood from the backseat of a tuk tuk, where streets spill open in colour, conversation, and contrast. Our trio of privately guided tuk tuk journeys are not tours, but living encounters, crafted to let you glimpse the city as its residents do. Hosted by storytellers and local companions, every stop is more than a landmark: it's a memory in the making.

- **A Path for Everyone:** A walk through the city's many faiths, pausing not only at temples and churches but to listen to the stories behind them.

- **Old Market Trail:** Through the backstreets of Pettah, guests follow the scent of spices, pass colourful heritage stalls, stop at gem traders, and hear how trade, conversation, and coexistence have shaped generations.

- **From Hand to Hearth:** Beginning at dawn, this journey moves from the fish market to the spice stall to Ishq's own kitchen, where the guest helps prepare a traditional seafood meal alongside the chef, learning that food, too, is a language of inclusion.

"We're not perfect," says a retired postmaster in Pettah, sipping sweet tea from a glass that's seen generations. "But we're close. Because we know how to live near each other, without needing to agree on everything."

In many cities, difference has been pushed into tidy districts, Little Italys, Chinatowns, designated quarters. In Colombo, that never really happened. Here, difference lives next door. Above, below, across the corridor.

A wealthy home might share its back wall with a row of modest rented rooms. A spice seller might pray three times a day while his apprentice lights oil for the Full Moon. At New Year, firecrackers go off in every language.

Even its streets reflect this layered beauty: names drawn from Dutch, Portuguese, Tamil, Arabic, or Sinhala. A language stew, spoken with ease. "This isn't planned," says a literature teacher in Bambalapitiya. "It's just how we've always done it. From childhood, you learn how to lean in, without stepping over."

Acceptance is not an Attraction. It's Colombo's Quiet Strength.

Colombo has always been a port, but more than that, it has always been a threshold. It didn't just receive goods; it received people.

Malay soldiers. Arab pearl merchants. European explorers. They came for trade, for war, for prayer, for shelter. They stayed. They merged. They layered.

And so the city became something different, not a melting pot that dissolves identity, but a garden where difference grows side by side.

Even during periods of deep national pain, Colombo showed a stubborn will to stay mixed, to stay soft at the edges. Not untouched by conflict, but never entirely hardened by it either.

"There was a time when people were afraid," says Ananda, now 63, who lived through the 1983 riots. "But even then, my Muslim neighbour passed me sugar. And I gave his son my Vesak lantern. We don't forget things like that."

Shared Meals, Shared Streets

You taste Colombo's values before you hear them.

In its kitchens, in its shops, in its markets. A Tamil shopkeeper will add jaggery to your tea while playing old baila. A Muslim

Goldi Sands and Suriya Resort set to broaden horizons

TTA BULLETIN



Two iconic and popular properties on Sri Lanka's North Western coastline, Goldi Sands Hotel Negombo and Suriya Resort Waikkal set sight on a new era this September with the opening of their very first head office in Colombo, and the appointment of industry veteran Mr. Bazeer Uvais as their Director Sales & Marketing.

Much sought after by both local and international visitors, Goldi Sands has been a stalwart presence on the Negombo resort stretch for over 50 years, and is also one of the oldest hotels in the region. Maximising its strategic position - being just 15 minutes from Bandaranaike International Airport and 32km from Colombo, this 4-Star beach resort has progressed greatly over the years, and at present features 131 air-conditioned rooms (including 57 Standard and 59 Deluxe Sea View, 5 Junior Suites, 2 Duplex Suites, and 8 Economy Rooms), two pools, a wellness centre and excellent banquet and MICE facilities with 2 conference halls.

Situated in Waikkal on a peninsula between the Indian Ocean and the Ging Oya river, and surrounded by 11 acres of natural beauty, Suriya Resort is a 4-Star beachfront luxury property featuring 42 Deluxe rooms, 12 Superior Suites and 5 Private Water Chalets. Its extensive facilities include an outdoor pool, restaurants and bars serving local and international cuisine, a fitness center, and spa. The hotel is renowned for its secluded, scenic location and exceptional MICE facilities with two large banquet halls - seating 550 and 250 pax respectively - which are much in demand for destination weddings and events. Commencing operations in 2014, Suriya Resort has steadily gained popularity, attracting both foreign and local guests.

The two properties are family owned and managed, and their journey of success, to date, is attributed to the determination and

innovative vision of Chairman Eric Suriyasena - a renowned artist and entrepreneur who pioneered batik art in Sri Lanka, counting 75 years as an artist, 60 years in the batik industry, and 55 years of dedication to Sri Lanka's tourism sector. He is ably supported by his sons - Directors Nilan and Ninesh Suriyasena, Goldi Sands Hotel Managing Director Suresh Weerasuriya, and the dedication of their teams of staff to achieve objectives and exceed expectations. The new head office is located next to the recently opened Eric Suriyasena Showroom & Art Gallery at Laurie's Road, Colombo 04.

With the aim of furthering this progress, industry specialist Bazeer Uvais joined the team in September as Director Sales & Marketing. One of the leading professionals in the leisure and hospitality sector in Sri Lanka with a demonstrated history of being a 'change maker' playing pivotal roles at senior management level, Bazeer counts over 40 years in the field with more than 30 years in Sales & Marketing, tour operator contracting and F&B operations. He held strategic responsibility for creating and building renowned travel and hotel brands as well as nurturing and maintaining strong, lasting relationships with diverse stakeholders both locally and globally. He also has over 30 years experience in representing and promoting Sri Lanka and local leisure brands overseas, and strengthening partnerships with global tour operators and clientele.

One of the most respected individuals in the Sri Lankan hospitality sector today, Bazeer's passionate work ethic and highly resilient character has gained him a proven history of rising above adverse market conditions to achieve performance objectives and record success. Under his strategic guidance Goldi Sands Hotel and Suriya Resort are set to broaden their sales and marketing scope; strengthen their positions further and aim higher with renewed vision.

HOTELS

Weddings in the Sky: Cinnamon Life Opens Its Doors to Romance

TTA BULLETIN

High above the heart of Colombo, where the skyline meets the horizon, love finds its perfect stage. Cinnamon Life, City of Dreams, is set to host its much-anticipated Weddings Open Day – an experience designed for couples who believe their wedding should be nothing less than extraordinary.

Fresh from the success of Weddings in the Sky earlier this year and The Wedding Show at BMICH, Cinnamon Life is once again redefining the art of celebration. On September 27th and 28th, 2025, the Event Showcase Studio on Level 24 will be transformed into a canvas of inspiration, offering couples a rare glimpse into what their dream day could become.

From sweeping city views to exquisitely styled décor, every detail speaks of elegance and romance. Guests will be welcomed into a warm, intimate setting where Cinnamon Life’s seasoned wedding planners will bring visions to life, curating



everything from bespoke dining menus to unforgettable themes that reflect each couple’s unique love story.

The highlight? Couples who secure their big day at the Open Day will enjoy a special celebratory offer of Rs. 9,900+ per person, making the dream of a sky-high wedding more accessible than ever. And with no pre-registration required, lovers are free to walk in and step closer to the beginning of their forever.

Because at Cinnamon Life, a wedding is not just an event. It’s the opening chapter of a story written in the sky!

Fox Jaffna Wins Silver for Leading Heritage Hotel/Resort at South Asian Travel Awards for the Fourth Consecutive Year

TTA BULLETIN

Fox Jaffna by Fox Resorts has been honored with the Silver Award for Leading Heritage Hotel/Resort at the prestigious South Asian Travel Awards (SATA) 2025. This marks the fourth consecutive year that the boutique property has received regional recognition, cementing its position as a premier heritage hospitality destination in Sri Lanka.



ship have been prioritized throughout the hotel’s design and operations, supporting the regional economy and preserving artisanal heritage. This holistic approach ensures that Fox Jaffna not only honors the past but also safeguards the future of Jaffna’s community and environment.

“Receiving the South Asian Travel Award for the fourth year running is a tremendous honor,” said Chris Quyn, CEO of Fox Resorts. “This recognition reflects the hard work and passion of our team, who strive to create authentic and meaningful guest experiences rooted in the rich history of Jaffna. Our goal is to offer more than just accommodation — we aim to share the unique story of this region with travelers from around the world.”

The South Asian Travel Awards is the region’s most respected hospitality and tourism event, celebrating excellence, innovation, and leadership across South Asia. Fox Jaffna’s continued success highlights its role as a leader in heritage hospitality, combining cultural preservation, sustainable practices, and genuine hospitality to inspire travelers worldwide.

Fox Resorts, a subsidiary of The Capital Maharaja Group, manages a portfolio of boutique hotels across Sri Lanka, each designed to showcase the country’s diverse culture, heritage, and natural

Located in the culturally rich city of Jaffna, Fox Jaffna offers guests a unique blend of heritage and contemporary comfort. The hotel is housed in a carefully restored historic compound, where the original architectural features have been preserved to maintain the site’s deep cultural significance. One of the standout features of Fox Jaffna is its innovative reuse of the underground bunkers, which have been thoughtfully transformed into a captivating art gallery and history museum. This initiative reflects Fox Jaffna’s commitment to giving back to the community by preserving and promoting the rich cultural heritage of the region. These spaces offer guests a tangible connection to Jaffna’s complex history, showcasing local artistry and telling the stories that define the cultural tapestry of the Northern Province. Through this thoughtful curation, Fox Jaffna not only educates visitors but also celebrates and supports the vibrant community that shapes the identity and future of Jaffna.

Fox Jaffna’s commitment to heritage preservation goes hand-in-hand with its dedication to sustainable tourism. The property incorporates eco-friendly initiatives such as energy-efficient systems, water conservation practices, and waste reduction measures. Furthermore, local materials and traditional craftsman-

Browns Hotels & Resorts Welcomes Malaysia’s Top Chefs for Flavour-Packed Festival

TTA BULLETIN



Browns Hotels & Resorts recently hosted a vibrant 7-day Malaysian Food Festival, celebrating the rich flavours and traditions of Malaysia across three of its signature properties – Occidental Eden Beruwala, Thaala Bentota, and Club Hotel Dolphin, Negombo.

The festival featured two acclaimed chefs from Le Méridien Putrajaya, a five-star property in Malaysia – Chef Ezri Shahizam and Executive Chef Liou Chong Yaw, who showcased authentic recipes, spices, and culinary artistry.

The festivities commenced in grand style at Occidental Eden Beruwala, where guests were welcomed with traditional Malaysian dances, cultural songs, and a lively ambience. The opening night was graced by the presence of H.E. Badli Hisham Adam, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Sri Lanka, alongside members of the Malaysian community in Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan Malay community, and a mix of local and international guests.

Guests embarked on a culinary journey that highlighted Malaysia’s diverse heritage, with signature dishes such as Sotong Sumbat Kalio (tender squid simmered in kalio sauce), Gulai Udang Dan Nenas (prawns in coconut milk with pineapple), Ayam Masak Hitam (chicken slow-cooked in dark soy and local herbs), and Kambing Bakar Percik (roasted lamb with fragrant spices). The dining experience concluded with traditional sweets including Bubur Jagung Dan Sagu.

To complement the menu, the festival

introduced Malaysian-inspired cocktails and mocktails that blended tropical fruits, aromatic herbs, and local flavours – adding a creative twist to the evening.

Speaking at the launch, Eksath Wijeratne, CEO of Browns Hotels & Resorts, said: “Food is a powerful way to connect with culture, and our Malaysian Food Festival allows guests to experience Malaysia’s rich culinary traditions right here in Sri Lanka. From vibrant performances to extraordinary dishes and creative cocktails, each of our properties have created a multisensory celebration of Malaysian heritage. We are delighted to bring this festival to our hotels and warmly invite everyone to taste, experience, and celebrate Malaysia with us. I would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to H.E. Badli Hisham Adam, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Sri Lanka, for his invaluable support and coordination in making this cultural affair a truly immersive and memorable experience.”

Following the launch in Beruwala on the 22nd, the festival continued at Thaala Bentota on 26th & 27th August, before concluding at Club Hotel Dolphin, Negombo on 29th, 30th & 31st August.

With its combination of authentic flavours, cultural showcases, and Malaysian-inspired beverages, the 7-day festival by Browns Hotels & Resorts offered guests an unforgettable immersion into Malaysia’s culinary and cultural heritage.

Dusit Thani College signs MOU to become Thailand’s first certified testing centre for Japanese hospitality skills

TTA BULLETIN



Dusit Thani College, Thailand’s leading institute for hospitality education under Dusit International, has been officially certified to administer Japan’s Accommodation Industry Proficiency Test in Thailand, creating direct pathways for Thai and ASEAN talent to secure skilled positions in Japan’s hospitality sector.

The milestone follows the signing of an agreement on 2 September 2025 between Dusit Thani College, the General Incorporated Association Center for Accommodation Industry Proficiency Test, and the All Japan Ryokan Hotel Association, with support from the Kyoto Convention & Visitors Bureau and Jeducation language school in Bangkok.

As Thailand’s first certified testing centre, Dusit Thani College can now recruit and train Thai and ASEAN candidates through its renowned hospitality and culinary arts programmes and facilitate their official skills certification locally. Successful graduates will qualify for employment in Japan via the government’s Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) visa, introduced in 2019 to help address labour shortages in

industries such as hospitality and food and beverage.

Aligned with Dusit Thani College’s fast-track Talent Opportunity Programme (TOP), which prepares participants for entry-level roles in just six months, the new pathway gives aspiring professionals a unique opportunity to train, gain certification, and access employment in Japan.

The All Japan Ryokan Hotel Association, representing more than 15,000 traditional inns and hotels across Japan, will help promote certified candidates to member employers via dedicated job fairs hosted in Bangkok. Dusit Hotels and Resorts will also welcome graduates to its own properties in Japan, including Dusit Thani Kyoto and ASAI Kyoto Shijo, further strengthening opportunities for international placement.

Casino Night Dazzles at Travel Trade Sports Club Annual Ball 2025

The Travel Trade Sports Club (TTSC) brought sparkle and glamour to Colombo on 13 September 2025, hosting its much-anticipated Annual Travel Trade Ball at the Hilton Colombo. This year's theme, Casino Night, transformed the ballroom into a lively hub of music, laughter, and celebration, drawing enthusiastic participation from across the travel trade.



HOTELS

Live the Dream: A Getaway without Going Away

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams is rolling out an irresistible resident offer that transforms the familiar city stay into a luxurious new adventure. Think soaring skyline views, unforgettable dining experiences, indulgent comforts, and a vibrant world of entertainment—all just steps away. For Sri Lankans craving more than just another night out, this is an invitation to immerse yourself in Colombo like never before.

A true “city within a city,” City of Dreams has quickly redefined Colombo’s skyline with 800 luxurious rooms and suites—687 at Cinnamon Life and 113 at NÜWA. Guests are spoiled for choice with more than a dozen restaurants and bars that bring together international flavors and Sri Lanka’s rich culinary heritage. The destination also boasts a dynamic blend of high-end retail, wellness sanctuaries, curated art, and a pulse of live entertainment that keeps the energy alive around every corner.

No matter which corner of the island you come from, Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams welcomes all Sri Lankans to discover a side of Colombo that feels refreshingly new. Families can stretch out



in spacious suites, enjoy child-friendly pools and kids’ clubs, and wander through “The Shoppes” for retail therapy. Food lovers can journey through flavors from across the globe, while wellness seekers can retreat to the Kurundu Wellness Centre for naturally inspired treatments. Fitness enthusiasts will find state-of-the-art gym facilities, and art admirers can explore striking installations woven into the property. And for those seeking a touch of excitement, the nightlife and entertainment experiences ensure every evening ends on a high note.

From 10 September to 31 October 2025, Sri Lankan residents can enjoy exclusive rates starting at just Rs. 15,050 per person, based on double occupancy. Whether it’s a weekend escape, a midweek refresh, or a milestone celebration, Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams makes it feel like you’ve truly gotten away—without ever leaving home.

Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams Redefines Corporate Events with Exclusive Rates

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams is redefining the way businesses meet and connect, with an exclusive weekday corporate package starting at just Rs. 9,000++ per person. Designed for companies looking to make the most of their Monday–Thursday schedules, this special MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) offer combines premium facilities, customizable experiences, and exceptional value—available throughout the month of October.

Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams is South Asia’s first fully integrated resort that offers more than just venues. A city within a city, it blends business, leisure and luxury seamlessly to create the ultimate destination for world-class corporate meetings and events.

Here at Cinnamon Life, your meeting and event options are limitless. With over 160,000 sq.ft. of adaptable space, discover exceptional locations and customize your requirements to ensure a flexible and rewarding experience.

Cinnamon Life presents five exquisitely

designed ballrooms that redefine event spaces—offering elegance and sophistication far beyond the standard conference room experience. Each ballroom is crafted to elevate every occasion, ensuring an atmosphere of distinction and style.

For those seeking to break free from convention, The Podium offers a stunning alternative. This expansive 25,000-square-foot open-air venue boasts breathtaking views of the Indian Ocean, creating an unforgettable backdrop for product launches, cocktail receptions, or networking events under the stars. Truly one-of-a-kind in the region, The Podium delivers an exceptional experience that transforms every gathering into something extraordinary.

Whether hosting a high-profile corporate gathering or an intimate networking session, clients can expect exceptional service, world-class facilities, and a truly unforgettable experience. Now is the perfect time to take advantage of these exclusive offers and elevate your next event to new heights.

Jetwing Hotels Partners with Make-A-Wish Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

Jetwing Hotels has partnered with the Make-A-Wish Sri Lanka, aimed at supporting children with critical illnesses, marking a significant step in promoting social wellbeing. The partnership was formalised through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), reinforcing Jetwing Hotels’ commitment to community wellbeing and compassionate hospitality.

Through this collaboration, Jetwing Hotels will help make wishes come true by offering complimentary stays at selected properties across the island for ‘wish children’ and their families. These experiences will be thoughtfully curated to create joyful, lasting memories, offering not just a getaway but a moment of healing, comfort, and hope.

This initiative is part of the broader mission of Make-A-Wish Sri Lanka, which was launched on 29th April 2025, commemo-

rating World Wish Day, as a licensed affiliate of Make-A-Wish International. Marking the 24th programme under the Indira Cancer Trust, Make A Wish Sri Lanka grants life-changing wishes to children facing critical illnesses, between the ages of 3 and 17, helping them build strength, resilience, and optimism during their treatment journey.

“We are deeply honoured to support this initiative,” said Hiran Cooray, Chairman of Jetwing Symphony PLC. “At Jetwing, we believe that hospitality is not just about service, it’s about creating moments that matter. For children facing critical illnesses, a wish fulfilled is more than a dream; it’s a reminder that they are seen, valued, and loved”.

The Trust was founded in 2016 by Hon. Karu Jayasuriya, former Speaker of Parliament, in memory of his beloved daughter

Indira, who passed away from breast cancer. In the face of unimaginable personal loss, he made a quiet promise: to create a space where others would not have to walk the journey of illness alone. Today, Indira Cancer Trust is one of the country’s leading centres of cancer support, offering over 20 free services ranging from medical and transport assistance to nutrition, counseling, livelihood support, palliative care—and now, wish granting.

Launched in 2025 under the administration of Indira Cancer Trust, Make-A-Wish Sri Lanka is part of the global Make-A-Wish International network, present in over 50 countries. The foundation grants heartfelt wishes to children with critical illnesses, offering moments of joy and emotional strength that complement medical treatment. Since the launch, Make A Wish Sri Lanka has granted over 50 heartfelt wishes.

For families navigating the difficult journey, the launch represents a new source of light, a promise that while they cannot control their medical circumstances, they can still experience moments of pure joy and fulfillment of dreams that transcend their daily struggles.

With a legacy spanning over half a century in the tourism industry, Jetwing Hotels has established itself as a pioneer in curating unique experiences and offering legendary Sri Lankan hospitality. As a family-owned brand, Jetwing continues to be a leading advocate for sustainability and responsible tourism, with ongoing initiatives focused on community upliftment, environment conservation, and resource efficiency. The brand's diverse portfolio includes a range of hotels, each offering a unique perspective on Sri Lanka's rich cultural heritage and natural beauty.



SriLankan Airlines: Driving Stability, Sustainability and Growth

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Airlines has chartered a fresh course with the roll-out of its new five-year strategic plan, aligning commercial ambitions with operational excellence, stakeholder engagement and environmental stewardship. Under its current leadership, the airline has made powerful strides over the past year, from optimising fleet management and driving revenue growth to enhancing customer experience, talent development, advancing sustainability, cost rationalisation and restructuring debt.



third set to join operations early next year. In June, the airline inducted a leased Airbus A330-200 wide-body aircraft, marking its first wide-body fleet addition in seven years and enabling the expansion of operations and services.

Over the past year, SriLankan Airlines has streamlined its network through route rationalisation, demand-synchronised schedules and enhanced digital sales platforms, leading to revenue growth. Key initiatives include revised timings on Indian routes, particularly Bangalore, Kochi and Hyderabad, to better serve the growing Indian leisure market. From July 2025, the airline introduced double daily services to Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok, alongside four additional flights to Dubai. SriLankan is also adopting new strategies, including a differentiated product offering, to deliver value-for-money services in short-haul markets. SriLankan also implemented dynamic capacity management, ensuring aircraft deployment on short and medium-haul routes in line with demand. As a result of these initiatives, during the first five months of the 2025/26 financial

SriLankan Airlines has improved its on-time performance to 74% this year, up from 69% in 2024, driven by agile fleet management despite global engine and spare parts shortages and performance challenges. Supported by cutting-edge fleet management software, new measures have enabled faster fleet maintenance turnarounds, proactive scheduling, maintenance staggering and precise spare parts stocking, while new in-house facilities for calibration, testing and inspections have strengthened the airline's autonomy. Throughout these efforts, SriLankan has never lost sight of its foremost priority – the safety of its customers and crew.

Additionally, two aircraft grounded for an extended period due to engine unavailability have now returned to service, with a

Emirates to extend Premium Economy to all A380 services to New York

TTA BULLETIN

Emirates, the world's largest international airline, has announced that its A380 services to New York JFK will all feature four cabin classes, including the award-winning Premium Economy cabin.



um Economy and Economy Class, providing expanded options for customers to choose from, whether travelling for business or leisure.

The direct flights EK201/202, which serve the daily Dubai/ New York JFK service, are scheduled to operate with Premium Economy from 1 December.

In addition, Emirates' other daily services via Milan, operating as EK205/206, will feature the signature Premium Economy experience from 10 November. Customers travelling between Dubai and Milan will now have the freedom to select Premium Economy seats from two daily flights, including its other service on EK091/092. The new upgrades to Emirates' Dubai – New York service will complement flights EK203/204, which already serve customers daily with the Premium Economy cabin, promising exceptional levels of comfort on long-haul journeys.

Tickets in Premium Economy can be booked immediately on emirates.com, the Emirates App, or via both online and offline travel agents as well as at Emirates retail stores.

The re-configured A380 aircraft to operate as EK201/202 and EK205/206 will offer seats in First Class, Business Class, Premi-

These additions will expand Emirates' network of destinations offering Premium Economy on its fleet of A380s, B777s and A350 aircraft to 68 global points by March 2026, underscoring the airline's commitment to investing in the very best customer experience in the sky and adding more premium cabin options, consistency and choice across geographies.

Emirates' latest cabin features onboard the four-class A380 are available on key routes to Australasia and Asia including Sydney, Singapore, Osaka, Mumbai, Bangalore, and more.

On a four-class Emirates A380, the Premium Economy cabin is located at the front of the main deck with 56 seats laid out in a 2-4-2 configuration. Each seat offers generous pitch and width for working and relaxing, as well as customised features like in-seat charging points and a side cocktail table. The onboard experience is rounded off with meticulously selected in-flight amenities, a curated menu, and extensive beverage options, including the Chandon Vintage Brut 2016, a global exclusive to Emirates Premium Economy

Qatar Airways Becomes First Ever Presenting Partner of the Ballon d'Or® Award Ceremony

TTA BULLETIN

Qatar Airways will make history this year as the first ever Presenting Partner of the world's most prestigious award ceremony in football, Ballon d'Or®, reinforcing the airline's deep commitment to global sport and excellence. The landmark 69 edition of the Ballon d'Or® will take place on 22 September 2025 at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, France.



will further our mission to connect dreams, cultures and the passion for football across continents."

UEFA President Aleksander Čeferin, said: "The Ballon d'Or is more than an award - it's a celebration of inspirational talents who define football and its history. We are honoured to welcome Qatar Airways as the first presenting partner of this iconic ceremony.

For over six decades, the Ballon d'Or has crowned the greatest players in football, celebrating talent, dedication, and achievement on the world stage. This new partnership unites the World's Best Airline with the world's best players, and marks a milestone in Qatar Airways' ongoing support of the global sporting community. As the airline that connects fans, players, and cultures across the globe, Qatar Airways' role as the 69 Balon d'Or Ceremony Presenting Partner underscores its purpose-driven ambition – to bring the world together through the universal language of sport.

the legends who inspire generations. This partnership is a testament to our unwavering commitment to excellence, and by aligning Qatar Airways, the World's Best Airline with the World's Best Footballers, we are reinforcing our brand's dedication to being the very best in every arena we enter. Just as we connect people and places through our extensive network and award-winning service, this partnership

Together, we celebrate not only a passion for the beautiful game and excellence without borders, but also the profound value of bringing the world closer together."

The Ballon d'Or® is awarded annually by France Football magazine, honouring the world's best players across the Men's and Women's game. The full set of nominees for the 2025 Ballon d'Or can be found here.

This partnership marks another chapter in Qatar Airways' portfolio of high-profile global sports partnerships, including the likes of FIFA, UEFA Champions League and National Team Competitions, Formula 1®, Paris-Saint Germain (PSG), FC Internazionale Milano, AFC, Tennis Legend – Novak Djokovic, The Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB), MotoGP, the IRONMAN Triathlon Series, French Rugby Team – Section Paloise, The Brooklyn Nets

Hahnair Celebrates Travel Agents Worldwide and Launches a New TikTok Channel

TTA BULLETIN

Hahnair celebrates Hahnair Day 2025, a global celebration dedicated to its travel agent



partners. The annual event, held on September 16th to reflect Hahnair's Billing Code 169, serves as an occasion to recognise the trust, dedication, and partnership of travel consultants around the world.

This year, Hahnair is bringing the celebration online and in person. Travel agents can take part in a fun digital competition at www.hahnair.com, where they can spin a virtual slot machine featuring the code HR-169. Five lucky agencies will each win 1,000 EUR in a lucky draw to host their own office party and celebrate with their teams.

Meanwhile, Hahnair's Regional VPs Agency Distribution are hosting local events across four continents, connecting with agents and celebrating the vital role they play in Hahnair's success.

Adding to the celebration, Hahnair is launching its official TikTok channel at tiktok.com/@hahn_air. The platform will provide travel agents with behind-the-scenes insights, updates about new partners and the Hahnair ticketing solutions, and a glimpse into the people and technology that make Hahnair a leader in travel distribution.

"Hahnair Day is all about saying thank you to the people who make our business thrive," says Kimberley Long, Vice President Agency Distribution. "From local events to our online game to our new TikTok channel, we want to bring travel agents closer to Hahnair, make learning about our services engaging, and show them how much we value their partnership."

SriLankan Airlines Toastmasters Celebrates 23 Years of Empowering People

TTA BULLETIN

The SriLankan Airlines Toastmasters Club recently celebrated 23 years of empowering its members with persuasive leadership and communication skills to excel in today's competitive corporate world, at its Annual Officer Installation Ceremony held at the SriLankan Aviation College in Katunayake. The new executive committee's next mission is to achieve the Golden Gavel, the most prestigious award in the Toastmasters community. The 23rd Installation Ceremony was attended by Chief Guest and



founder of the SriLankan Airlines Toastmasters Club, Sunil Dissanayake; Division Director of Area H, District 82, Harshana Fernando; Area Director of Area H4, Nipun Edirisinghe; members of airline's senior management team; presidents and members of neighbouring Toastmasters clubs; and the full membership of the SriLankan Airlines Toastmasters Club.

SriLankan Airlines Introduces UnionPay for Seamless Online Payments

TTA BULLETIN



SriLankan Airlines, in collaboration with UnionPay International and Bank of Ceylon, has introduced UnionPay as a payment option on its official website, expanding its online payment ecosystem and offering greater convenience to the growing number of Chinese travellers. This addition not only enhances the airline's range of payment options, which already includes Visa, MasterCard, Amex, Diners, Discover, UATP, Alipay and WeChat Pay, but also reinforces SriLankan Airlines' position in the rapidly growing digital travel market.

Dimuthu Tennakoon, Head of Commercial at SriLankan Airlines stated, "As the national carrier of Sri Lanka, we strive to enhance the travel experience for our customers, from flight booking to completing their journeys. By enabling UnionPay card acceptance, we provide a more inclusive and seamless payment experience, making it easier for international travellers to book their flights conveniently."

"UnionPay is delighted to collaborate with Bank of Ceylon and SriLankan Airlines to enhance payment accessibility for our cardholders. This partnership aligns with our broader expansion strategy in Sri Lanka, providing domestic UnionPay cardholders and international travellers with a seamless payment experience. As a key merchant, Sri Lankan Airlines plays an essential role in supporting our issuance business and driving greater adoption of UnionPay in the market," said Mr. Crispin Wijesekera, Country Manager of Sri Lanka & Maldives, UnionPay International.

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Y A Jayathilake, Acting General Manager/ Chief Executive Officer Bank of Ceylon added, "We are excited to enable UnionPay's online acceptance for SriLankan Airlines. This initiative not only improves the airline's payment options but also strengthens Sri Lanka's payment infrastructure, fostering digital transactions and aligning with our vision of a cashless economy."

To celebrate this launch, SriLankan Airlines and UnionPay are in discussions to introduce a special promotional campaign for UnionPay cardholders. For more information on using UnionPay cards for online bookings, visit SriLankan Airlines' website at <https://www.srilankan.com/payops>

SriLankan Airlines, the national carrier of Sri Lanka and a member of the oneworld alliance, is an award-winning airline with a firm reputation as a global leader in service, comfort, safety and reliability. Launched in 1979, the airline's hub is located at Bandaranaike International Airport in Colombo, providing convenient connections across its global network (including codeshare partners) of 113 destinations in 57 countries around the world. Its direct route map covers major cities across Europe, Australia, the Middle East, the Indian Subcontinent, Southeast Asia and the Far East. The airline operates an all-Airbus fleet, comprising state-of-the-art A330-200/300 and A320/321 aircraft fleet. For more information, visit www.srilankan.com

Qatar Airways Celebrates a Season of Global Events with Qatar as the Centre Stage

TTA BULLETIN

Qatar Airways is proud to reaffirm its role as the airline of choice for connecting fans, professionals and visitors from across the globe to Qatar's remarkable line-up of international events. With the country once again at the forefront of sport, culture, and innovation, the airline is set to welcome the world to an unparalleled season of experiences.



Senior Vice President Qatar Airways Holidays & Discover Qatar, Steven Reynolds, said: "Qatar

has established itself as a trusted destination for the world's most prestigious events. At Qatar Airways Holidays, we are proud to play our part in welcoming the global community - from football fans and motorsport enthusiasts to business leaders and innovators. This season of events represents not only Qatar's ambition, but also our commitment to delivering excellence both in the skies and on the ground. At the same time, Qatar continues to be recognised as a premier destination for travellers and families, offering a wealth of activities and experiences that perfectly complement these world-class events."

From November 3 – 27, Qatar will host the FIFA U-17 World Cup, now expanded to 48 teams in a new annual format that delivers 104 matches across the group and knockout stages. The second edition of The FIFA Arab Cup™ will commence on 1 December, with the final taking place on Qatar National Day – 18 December, where 16 nations from across the Arab world will compete for glory. Fans and football enthusiasts can secure their spots by booking packages including tickets at qatarairways.com/fifaarabcup25.

Through the airline's leisure arm Qatar Airways Holidays, packages that include all major event tickets are available. Beyond unmatched access to these events, Qatar Airways Holidays also ensures that Qatar is experienced as a premier destination for families and travellers alike, offering a wide range of activities and value adds when booking a Flight + Hotel package, including exclusive perks for Qatar Airways Privilege Club members.

Etihad Airways Continues to Soar Across Southeast Asia - Only Airline Directly Connecting the GCC to Sumatra and Phnom Penh

TTA BULLETIN

Etihad Airways, the national carrier of the United Arab Emirates, celebrated the launch of two new routes into Southeast Asia, bringing the airline's global network to 83 destinations. On 2 October, the airline operated its first-ever flight to Medan in Sumatra, Indonesia, followed by the launch of flights to Phnom Penh, the capital of the Kingdom of Cambodia, on 3 October.



These new routes strengthen the airline's commitment to enhancing global connectivity and enriching cultural exchange and economic connections between Southeast Asia and markets across the Middle East, Europe and Africa.

"We're proud to expand our network in Southeast Asia, inviting more guests across the region to explore our home with a convenient and direct route to Abu Dhabi, creating new connections for commerce and tourism between Abu Dhabi and the region. We're also pleased to encourage and inspire travel to these two new culturally rich and diverse places, both Sumatra and Phnom Penh are extraordinary destinations with both natural and man-made wonders to offer and explore," said, Antonoaldo Neves, Chief Executive Officer at Etihad Airways.

Etihad's inaugural flight to Medan unlocks a gateway to one of Southeast Asia's best-kept secrets and one of Indonesia's most captivating yet lesser-known regions. Sumatra is home to lush rainforests, ancient cultures, and spectacular natural landmarks such as Lake Toba, the world's largest volcanic lake and a UNESCO Global Geopark.

Travellers can explore the region's distinctive Batak culture, wander through misty highlands, or encounter critically endangered orangutans in their natural habitat. Medan itself offers a rich urban tapestry of colonial architecture, stunning temples, and vibrant markets filled with traditional Sumatran cuisine.

Beyond tourism, Medan is a thriving economic hub, making the new route a valuable conduit for business and trade between Indonesia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa. Phnom Penh: Etihad Spreads its Wings in Cambodia

Celebrating Etihad's entry into Cambodia, the airline has introduced four weekly flights that link the Kingdom with Abu



Balance Your Mind, Body and Spirit in a Place of
Healing - Ayurveda Hotel in Sri Lanka.



Set against the captivating beauty of Sri Lanka's remarkable Cultural Triangle, Ayurvie Sigiriya is an Ayurveda Hotel in Sigiriya, Sri Lanka, nestled near Sigiriya Rock, where it embraces the splendor of its natural surroundings. Our retreat promises to rejuvenate your mind, body, and soul through Sri Lanka's ancient healing practices and Ayurvedic treatments. With personalized diagnostics from our doctors, traditional Ayurveda therapies, yoga sessions, and nourishing vegetarian food made from organic, locally sourced ingredients tailored to your unique needs and "Doshas" we offer a transformative journey at one of Sri Lanka's finest Ayurveda retreats.



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