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Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams Receives Prestigious Five-Star Certification from SLTDA

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams has been officially awarded the esteemed Five-Star Certification by the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA), underscoring its status as a landmark in Sri Lanka's hospitality landscape and a benchmark for excellence in the region.



As South Asia's largest and first fully integrated resort, Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams represents a transformative investment in Sri Lanka's tourism and leisure economy. Developed by John Keells Holdings PLC with a historic USD 1.2 billion investment – the largest private development in the country – the resort has reshaped Colombo into a premier destination for luxury travel, entertainment, world-class events, and international business.

A hallmark of the property is its extensive event and convention infrastructure, featuring over 160,000 sq. ft. of versatile, high-spec event space. With five signature ballrooms, cutting-edge technology, and three exceptional outdoor venues offering panoramic views of the ocean and the Colombo skyline, Cinnamon Life has established itself as an unrivalled hub for global conferences, high-profile celebrations, and corporate gatherings for both local and international travellers.

"We are deeply honoured to receive this Five-Star Certification from the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority," said Sanjiv Hulugalle, CEO and General Manager of Cinnamon Life at City of

Dreams. "This recognition reflects our unwavering commitment to world-class service, guest centric innovation, and the elevated experiences that define Cinnamon Life. Our aspiration is to set new standards for luxury, leisure, and MICE tourism in the region, while supporting Sri Lanka's positioning on the global stage."

The Five-Star Certification further cements Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams as one of Sri Lanka's foremost luxury destinations. With its two luxury hotels, curated signature dining concepts, immersive entertainment arenas, and a vibrant retail and lifestyle precinct, the resort offers an unparalleled blend of hospitality, lifestyle, and experiences under one iconic address.

The certification was presented at Cinnamon Life, attended by senior leadership from SLTDA and Cinnamon Life, members of the hospitality industry, and media representatives. The event celebrated this milestone achievement and marked a significant step forward in elevating Sri Lanka's luxury hospitality offering.

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Sri Lanka Remains Open For Travel As Recovery Progresses After Cyclone Ditwah

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

Sri Lanka's tourism sector has issued an update confirming that the island remains open, safe, and operational for travellers, as recovery efforts advance steadily following Tropical Cyclone Ditwah. While the cyclone brought severe yet highly localised impacts to parts of the country on 28 November, many parts of the country including all major tourism hubs continues to welcome visitors without disruption.

The nation is grieving the lives and homes lost in the affected districts, but the spirit of resilience has been immediate and unwavering. Relief and restoration efforts are progressing rapidly, supported by government authorities, local communities, and private-sector partners across the tourism industry.

As Sri Lanka continues its recovery with remarkable speed and unity, travellers are encouraged not to rush into cancellations. The tourism sector remains committed to providing factual, transparent updates, enabling visitors to make informed decisions.

According to the latest update from the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA), island-wide tourism operations remain stable. Hotels, resorts, tour operators, and travel services across the west, south, cultural heartland, and much of the east are functioning as normal, with guests continuing their itineraries uninterrupted.

Sri Lanka's major coastal destinations including the west and south coasts and



most of the east were not impacted by the cyclone and continue to experience strong visitor activity.

Tourism continues to be one of Sri Lanka's most vital economic drivers, and early indicators for December are encouraging. The country welcomed over 50,000 visitors within the first week of December, signalling strong traveller confidence and the continued appeal of the destination even amid recent weather disruptions.

Both the Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL) and the Sri Lanka Inbound Tour Operators Association (SLAITO) have confirmed that cancellations remain minimal. Most travellers are going ahead with their plans, and many who had pre-booked flights and non-refundable stays are choosing to continue with their itineraries. However, the primary concern now lies in managing forward bookings, as some key markets are experiencing a momentary "wait-and-see" sentiment due to negative international news coverage.

Given this, clear and consistent communication is essential. Sri Lanka must proactively keep travellers, travel trade partners,

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Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams....

City of Dreams is Sri Lanka's largest and most ambitious integrated resort, redefining Colombo's skyline as a symbol of modern luxury and innovation. Designed as a "city within a city," the destination offers 800 luxury rooms and suites, with 687 at Cinnamon Life and 113 at NUWA, complemented by a diverse selection of 13 restaurants and bars that showcase global cuisines alongside Sri Lanka's

rich culinary heritage. Adding to its appeal is a vibrant mix of high-end retail, Sri Lanka's premier entertainment arena, a shopping mall, office towers, and luxury residences. This integrated ecosystem enables delegates to stay, work, meet, dine, shop, and celebrate seamlessly under one roof, delivering unmatched convenience and engagement.

Cont on Pg 2

Sri Lanka Remains Open For....

and global media informed of the ground situation, ongoing recovery efforts, and the operational status of tourist sites across the island. To support this need, the Sri Lanka Tourism Alliance has set up a dedicated updates page providing credible, real-time information on the country's status. This serves as a reliable reference point for visitors and travel professionals, helping mitigate unnecessary concerns and prevent potential cancellations.

Sri Lanka remains safe, open, and warmly welcoming visitors, and continued tourism inflows are crucial for supporting livelihoods and sustaining recovery. With enhanced communication, transparent updates, and the industry working together, the country is firmly on track to return to full normalcy and deliver a positive experience for all travellers this season.

Sri Lanka Outlines ambitious Economic and development plans for 2026 at WTM London

TTA BULLETIN

Following its recent economic recovery, Sri Lanka is poised for significant progress in 2026, driven by a projected economic growth of up to 6%, key infrastructure projects, and a renewed focus on sustainable tourism. The government's strategic initiatives, supported by foreign investment and ongoing economic reforms, signal a new chapter of stability and growth for the nation.



"This blueprint for 2026 is a testament to our resilience and forward-looking vision," said Buddhika Hewawasam, Chairman of Sri Lanka Tourism, during the Sri Lanka Tourism press conference at WTM. "We have put the challenges of the past behind us and are focused on building a prosperous and sustainable future for all Sri Lankans. Our strategic investments in tourism and infrastructure are designed to create long-term economic value and strengthen our position on the global stage."

Key infrastructure projects are also moving ahead. The Colombo-Kandy Expressway has resumed construction with a new \$500 million loan from China, signaling a renewed partnership. Plans for Sri Lanka's first high-speed rail line, connecting Colombo and Kandy, are advancing, while upgrades at Bandaranaike International Airport are underway.

Based on the country's economic recovery, the government is targeting growth of up to 6% in 2026, underpinned by an 8% increase in capital expenditure. A steady inflow of remittances from expatriate workers continues to be a major contributor to Sri Lanka's economic stability and recovery.

To boost tourism, a new 30-day visa facility has been introduced for 35 countries, including the UK, positioning Sri Lanka as a hassle-free destination for global travelers. Additionally, the government highlighted several sustainable tourism initiatives, technological advancements, and the introduction of the Marine Tourism Roadmap. Focus is also being placed on new product development, including opportunities in the Northern and Eastern provinces.

Antyra Solutions Wins Two Titles at the 16th Web Excellence Awards

TTA BULLETIN

Antyra Solutions has been recognised as a winner at the 16th Web Excellence Awards, taking home two honours for its work on the Teardrop Hotels and Port City Colombo websites. The wins, in the Hotel and Lodging and Real Estate categories, spotlight Antyra's expertise in crafting engaging, high-performance digital experiences for leading brands.



"This recognition reflects the strength of our team and the partnerships we've built with clients who trust us to innovate on their behalf," added Naveen. "We're proud to see Sri Lankan talent continue to stand out on the world stage".

"Receiving international recognition for our work is an incredible honour," said Naveen Marasinghe, Director and COO of Antyra Solutions. "Every website we build is an opportunity to merge strategy, design, and technology into a seamless experience. These awards affirm the creative thinking and technical precision that our team brings to every project."

The double win reinforces Antyra's position as a leading digital agency in the region, known for delivering world-class solutions across web design, digital marketing, and technology.

The Web Excellence Awards celebrate outstanding achievement in web design, development, and digital innovation across the globe. Now in its 16th year, the competition honours creative agencies and professionals setting new standards of excellence in the digital space.

Founded in 2015, Antyra Solutions is an integrated digital agency offering end-to-end solutions in strategy, creative design, technology, and performance marketing. With offices in Sri Lanka, Singapore and New York, Antyra partners with local and international brands to craft impactful digital experiences that drive measurable business growth. The company's expertise spans diverse industries including hospitality, real estate, healthcare, and finance.

In the wake of Cyclone Ditwah, Sri Lanka has once again demonstrated its remarkable resilience. While the cyclone brought challenging weather and temporary disruptions, the country's unified response—from national authorities to provincial teams and private-sector partners—has been swift, coordinated, and deeply human. As relief assistance continues across the affected regions, the nation is already moving steadily back to normalcy.

For travellers, the message is clear: Sri Lanka remains safe, open, and ready to welcome visitors. Key tourism sites, hotels, wildlife parks, and transport networks are operating, with only limited and isolated areas undergoing restoration. Airports and major roadways are fully functional. T

Industry associations and government agencies continue to issue timely updates while ensuring that visitor experiences remain uninterrupted.

Importantly, the private sector reports a strong continuation of travel plans and while cancellations remain low, there is a need to communicate that almost 70% of tourist zones have not been affected. The greater concern lies in a potential slowdown in new bookings—not because of actual on-ground challenges, but due to hesitation and misinformation. This is why the coming weeks are critical.

Tourism is not just an industry for Sri Lanka; it is a lifeline that supports millions of families. Every traveller who chooses Sri Lanka contributes directly to the country's recovery, community upliftment, and economic stability. By visiting now, guests become part of the nation's rebuilding journey—experiencing its warmth, culture, and natural beauty while helping sustain the communities that make Sri Lanka extraordinary.

Sri Lanka has weathered storms before, and it will weather this one too—with strength, unity, and its signature spirit of hospitality. As the island moves forward, the world is invited to do what it has always done: discover, explore, and stand with Sri Lanka.



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India–Sri Lanka Tourism Connect 2025 Marks Strong Step Toward Deeper Bilateral Tourism Collaboration

TTA BULLETIN

The High Commission of India in Colombo successfully hosted “India–Sri Lanka Tourism Connect: From the Ganges to the Kelani – A Voyage of Friendship & Discovery” on 19th November 2025, bringing together leaders from both nations to strengthen tourism cooperation, enhance connectivity, and explore the future of travel through data, branding, and technology.

Hon. Vijitha Herath, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism, Government of Sri Lanka, and H.E. Santosh Jha, High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka, graced the event. Designed to foster stronger tourism linkages, the forum brought together Sri Lanka’s tourism ecosystem—including leading outbound and inbound tour operators, hospitality leaders, and media—alongside prominent Indian experts in branding, analytics, and technology.

A keynote address by Mr. Harikishore S., Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, highlighted the diversity of India’s tourism landscape, the country’s evolving global branding strategy, and a range of new opportunities for Sri Lankan travellers—from luxury



experiences to affordable and culturally rich journeys across India.

A special focus was placed on Madhya Pradesh, showcased as a promising destination for Sri Lankan travellers. A high-level delegation led by Dr. Ilayaraja T., Managing Director, Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation, travelled to Colombo for the event. Parallel engagements included meetings with leading hospitality companies, representatives of the Mahabodhi Society, and a roundtable with Ramayana artists and storytellers.

Key contributors to India’s digital and travel ecosystem—MakeMyTrip and Paytm—shared insights on traveller behaviour, digital payment solutions, and emerging consumer trends shaping regional tourism flows. IIT Madras demonstrated its Augmented and Virtual Reality (VR) innovations, offering attendees an immersive look into India’s iconic destinations and the future of experiential travel.

Capacity Building Training Programme for Hotel Housekeeping Professionals Held in Coimbatore

TTA BULLETIN

In line with the Ministry of Tourism’s approach and directions to reposition India Tourism Offices as Catalysts for Convergence—facilitating State–Industry collaboration—and Visitor Experience Enhancers; the Southern Regional Office has initiated capacity-building interventions to strengthen tourism promotion and stakeholder engagement across the region.

As part of this renewed strategy, the Southern Regional Office, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, jointly with the Tamil Nadu Tourism Department, Coimbatore office and SKAL International Coimbatore Chapter, organised a Capacity Building Training Programme for Hotel Housekeeping Staff at Hotel IKON by Annapoorna, Coimbatore, on 25th November 2025 under the theme “Best Practices in Housekeeping.”

The programme witnessed participation from 75 hotel housekeeping professionals representing 25 hotels across Coimbatore, Valparai and Pollachi. The event aimed to empower hospitality teams to enhance guest experience, raise service quality benchmarks, improve operational efficiency, and strengthen professional housekeeping standards.



Shri D. Venkatesan, Regional Director (South), Ministry of Tourism, addressed the participants and highlighted the significance of sustainable housekeeping practices, elevating guest satisfaction and emerging industry trends driving today’s hospitality environment.

Dr Eugene, Lecturer, Institute of Hotel Management (IHM) Chennai, delivered an expert session on Best Practices in Housekeeping with focus on innovative techniques, practical demonstrations and global operational standards. The session was interactive and well received by attendees.

Delivering the Vote of Thanks, Smt. T. Jegatheswari, District Tourist Officer, Government of Tamil Nadu, emphasized the pivotal role of service quality in shaping a destination’s image, reinforcing that guest experience excellence directly influences tourism growth and brand perception.

Participants appreciated the relevance and effectiveness of the training and expressed interest in further such programmes. Indiatourism Chennai plans to conduct similar hospitality-focused workshops in other Southern cities in collaboration with industry bodies and academic institutions.

ATM 2026 to explore new frontiers of ultra-luxury travel, driven by technology, authenticity and hyper-personalised experiences

TTA BULLETIN

Advanced technology, cultural authenticity and hyper-personalisation are coming together to create experiences that transcend traditional definitions of luxury. Once synonymous with comfort and exclusivity, today’s ultra-luxury offers transformation through access and meaningful experiences, blending technology, privacy and sustainability.

This evolution will be explored in detail at Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2026, taking place at the Dubai World Trade Centre from 4–7 May. Under the theme ‘Travel 2040: Driving New Frontiers Through Innovation and Technology’, the event will explore how innovation and individuality are redefining the global ultra-luxury travel landscape. Central to this conversation will be the debut of the ATM Ultra Luxury Lounge, an exclusive space that will connect buyers that focus on ultra-high-net-worth travellers with prestigious, world-class travel brands.

Research from Fortune Business Insights indicates that the value of the global luxury travel market, characterised by premium and tailor-made experiences focused on exclusivity, luxurious comfort, personalised service, and enhanced privacy – trademarks of ultra-luxury travel – will grow from US\$2.7 trillion in 2025 to US\$4.8 trillion by 2032.

Reflecting these trends, the ATM Ultra Luxury Lounge marks the beginning of a multi-year focus on the evolving intersection between ultra luxury, technology, and sustainability. It will bring together leading global brands and specialists in high-end travel, including bespoke tour designers, private jet operators – a market expected to top US\$943 million by 2029 according to advisory firm Creative Zone.

The dedicated space will serve as a showcase for ultra-luxury experiences, enabling suppliers to meet qualified luxury travel buyers through an exclusive appointments programme.

Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market, said: “While luxury travel remains one of ATM’s strongest growth pillars, ultra-luxury is emerging as the next frontier, reflecting the region’s maturing market and high-spending audience. To meet this growing demand, we have created the ATM Ultra Luxury Lounge, an exclusive space designed to connect ultra-luxury brands with buyers serving high-net-worth travellers, elevating their ATM experience through curated, high-value networking and collaboration opportunities.

“Ambitious projects such as Saudi Arabia’s Red Sea developments, the forthcoming Cheval Blanc in Dubai, which will be located on Naïa Island, and the private island-based Bvlgari Resort &

Mansions in Abu Dhabi, combined with increasing interest in private jet purchases and rentals in the region, all underscore the demand within this sector.”

In addition to a keen focus on the ultra-luxury segment, ATM 2026 will continue to shine a light on luxury hospitality brands such as Mandarin Oriental, Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts, Jumeirah International, and One & Only, as well as some of the world’s top-rated luxury destinations, such as the Maldives and Mauritius, who have become a prominent part of the growing segment amongst the hospitality brands on showcase at ATM.

According to the ATM Travel Trends Report 2025, developed in partnership with Tourism Economics, luxury travel remains robust, with high-end and experiential segments outperforming global growth. Outbound regional luxury travel is rising at twice the global average, while Tourism Economics’ datasets show that travellers from the Middle East spend 50% more per trip than the global average, reinforcing the region’s position as both a key luxury destination and source market.

The trends that are positively impacting the sector have been outlined by luxury DMC, Experium, in their Top 10 Luxury Travel Trends Transforming the Middle East in 2025. At the core of this is sustainability, wellness, and tech-enhanced luxury, which are all reshaping the definition and consumption of luxury. Today’s travellers are moving beyond opulence to seek purpose-driven, conscious luxury that connects them with destinations, communities, and personal wellbeing.

“Luxury travel is no longer defined by opulence alone, but by purpose, connection, and transformation. Today’s discerning travellers are seeking experiences that are not only exclusive but also meaningful, journeys that enrich their wellbeing, reflect their values, and deepen their connection with the world around them. As this evolution continues, the Middle East stands at the forefront of this shift, shaping a new era of luxury that balances innovation, authenticity, and conscious design,” added Curtis.

As the region continues to elevate global travel standards, the 33rd edition of Arabian Travel Market will reinforce Dubai’s position as a hub for innovation, collaboration and investment in the future of tourism. Through features such as the Ultra Luxury Lounge, IBTM@ATM and ATM Travel Tech with its new Tech and Innovation hub, ATM 2026 will showcase how the industry is evolving to meet the needs of new traveller segments, while strengthening connections between destinations, buyers and brands that are shaping the next chapter of global travel.



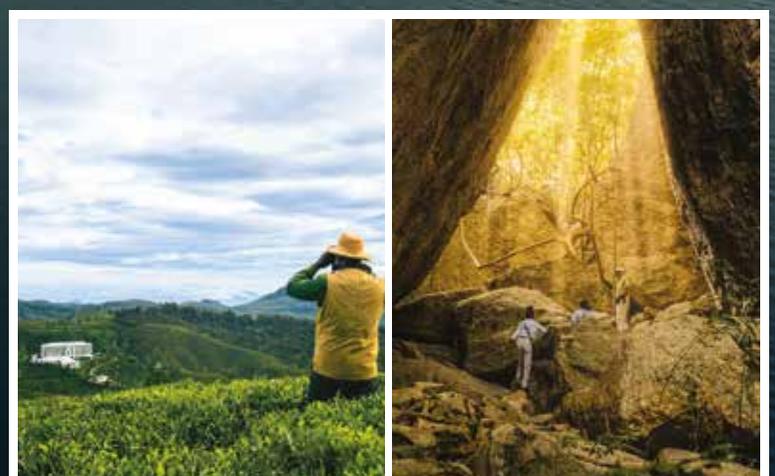


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IBTM World 2025 breaks records and redefines the business events landscape

TTA BULLETIN

IBTM World 2025 closed last week on an extraordinary high, delivering the most innovative, immersive, and commercially impactful edition in its history. The show floor saw nearly 12,000 participants from around the world come together for three days of breakthrough ideas, experiential activations, and a record 79,000+ pre-scheduled meetings, an 8% rise on 2024.



showcased the trailblazers set to shape the next decade of events.

Meanwhile, the show unveiled the Future Stage, home to rapid-fire innovation talks from emerging leaders, and the BEFuture Pavilion, where investors and creators came together to fuel the industry breakthroughs of tomorrow.

This year's edition set new benchmarks across the board:

- Almost 2,500 exhibitors – one of the highest exhibitor turnouts ever.
- 12% rise in returning participants, reflecting the value for buyers and suppliers.
- 49% of Hosted Buyers attending from outside Europe, signalling IBTM's growing global impact.

Elva Yañez, MICE Manager, Promperu, said: "As a brand we have come back to IBTM World after 10 years and this is my first time personally attending. It is one of our most successful events of the year, with lots of great meetings with suppliers and buyers. I thought I would meet mainly people from Spain, which is one of our primary markets, but I have also made great connections with people from across Europe, Asia and Latin America which I didn't expect. I am looking forward to coming back to IBTM World in 2026."

This year IBTM World lived up to its People. Power. Potential theme, debuting IBTM Ignite, a bold new platform connecting over 80 start-ups with investors, advisors, and industry leaders. From AI-driven engagement tools to sustainability-focused tech, IBTM Ignite

Returning by popular demand, Exceptional Experiences once again drew in-house planners and marketers eager to learn from world-leading brands such as WeTransfer, Canva, Shutterstock, Amazon and UTA. The result was a packed theatre and a wealth of practical, creative strategies for designing unforgettable experiences.

IBTM World 2025 also welcomed back its most successful features from 2024, including The Hotel Pavilion - a dedicated space for independent and small group hotels to showcase their offering.

The Forum for Advocacy, in partnership with The Business of Events, cemented IBTM World as the epicentre for global conversation, collaboration, and change in the meetings and events industry. Advocacy leaders and policymakers emphasised the urgency of unified messaging and storytelling to unlock the full societal value of business events.

This year's Association Leaders Forum, sponsored by Excel London and designed in partnership with ESAE (European Society of Association Executives), examined the role of Association events in building strong communities.

FITUR Woman will project the future of tourism based on investment and economic empowerment

TTA BULLETIN

FITUR Woman, the space that promotes the visibility and leadership of women in the tourism industry, will be holding a new edition during the International Tourism Trade Fair from 21 to 25 January 2026 at IFEMA MADRID. Organised by FITUR in collaboration with Women Leading Tourism (WLT) and with the support of the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, the section will focus on investment and economic empowerment as key factors for inclusive and sustainable growth in the industry, as well as the role of tourism as a driver of social and economic transformation.



that creates real opportunities for women and contributes to a more inclusive development. From a social, economic and professional sustainability perspective, we

believe in a tourism industry capable of promoting female talent and generating a positive impact on our environment".

The FITUR Woman programme will be offering a full day of debate and reflection divided into thematic blocks, as well as the section's awards ceremony, recognising the industry's most inspiring initiatives. In this regard, the international conference Investment, Climate Action and Women's Empowerment: Global Road Map 2030 will be opening the programme in this space.

After that, the first block: Tourism as an engine of empowerment, will be addressing financial inclusion, access to education and technical, digital and business training as tools to improve job opportunities and female entrepreneurship. It will also be analysing work-life balance policies and programmes that promote the presence of women in leadership positions.

Challenges and barriers. How the industry can accelerate the agenda will be the theme of the second block, which will examine the main challenges that still limit equality, such as job insecurity, the gender pay gap and the lack of female representation in decision-making. The impact of global crises and transformations on women's employment and participation will also be discussed.

The event, which is taking place on Wednesday 21 January in Hall 10, will bring together institutional, business and academic representatives to discuss the conditions for moving towards a more equitable tourism. Within this framework, the axis "Empowerment as a priority in global development: the role of investment and economic empowerment in tourism" will be addressed, which will develop how education, training or access to resources are necessary to strengthen women's leadership and the development of the industry.

The Puerto Rico Tourism Company and its country brand 'Descubre Puerto Rico' (Discover Puerto Rico) is participating in this edition of FITUR Woman as an example of a destination that promotes female leadership in the evolution of the tourism industry. "With our presence in the section we want to reflect the commitment at public policy level to achieve tourism

Sri Lanka Named One of Travel + Leisure's 50 Best Places to Travel in 2026

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka has once again captured the world's attention, earning a coveted spot on Travel + Leisure's prestigious list of The 50 Best Places to Travel in 2026—an accolade that reinforces the island's growing reputation as a world-class destination with extraordinary diversity and depth.

For this year's list, Travel + Leisure editors evaluated more than 100 global nominees, looking closely at accessibility, new experiences, and the elements that make a destination truly worth visiting in the year ahead. Sri Lanka rose confidently to the top, celebrated for its rich cultural tapestry, natural wonders, and a tourism offering that continues to expand and evolve.

According to T+L A-List advisor and founder of Immersion Journeys, Rumit Mehta, the island's allure begins well beyond the familiar. "If you're an adventurous traveler, you want to start in the north, in Jaffna," he says. The region—long considered one of the country's most culturally distinct areas—is opening up with renewed energy, offering

travellers access to untouched coastlines, centuries-old Hindu temples, vibrant culinary traditions, and a sense of authenticity that is increasingly rare in global tourism.



From there, adventure-seekers can journey into Sri Lanka's cooling highlands, where hiking trails weave through mist-draped landscapes such as Horton Plains and the sprawling tea estates that have shaped the island's identity for more than a century. It's a world where cloud forests meet rolling emerald hills, offering some of South Asia's most dramatic scenic experiences.

The southern coast continues to strengthen its reputation as a hub for marine adventure and coastal relaxation. Travel + Leisure highlights sailing expeditions with G Adventures that chart serene routes from

Mirissa to remote beaches and the fishing village of Kudawella—offering travellers intimate encounters with coastal life and untamed seascapes.

For those who prefer land-based exploration, Butterfield & Robinson's biking and walking tours open up a different perspective of the south's charm, allowing visitors to meander through laid-back surf towns, cinnamon plantations, wildlife-rich wetlands, and historic coastal enclaves.

Sri Lanka's global appeal is also being fuelled by an influx of brand-new tour itineraries by major international operators. Insight Vacations is set to introduce a 13-day tour covering nine cities, beginning with a vibrant tuk-tuk ride through Colombo—an immersive entry point that captures the capital's dynamic soul, its colonial echoes, and its evolving modernity.

For 2026, Trafalgar will launch its first-ever Sri Lanka programme, giving guests the chance to traverse iconic tea fields by train, spot elusive leopards in Yala National Park, and explore the island through curated cultural encounters.

Safari lovers are in for an elevated experience with the opening of Kotiyagala Luxury Villas, a new retreat featuring 12 private villas—each with its own pool—set among ecosystems home to 44 species of mammals and 215 species of birds. It's a world where luxury meets wilderness, redefining the modern Sri Lankan safari experience.

Sri Lanka's recognition by Travel + Leisure is more than an accolade—it's a testament to the island's remarkable ability to stand proudly on its own as a holistic, diverse, and culturally layered destination.

Mehta notes that Sri Lanka has fully emerged as a "stand-alone destination," celebrated not just for its eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites, but also for its multicultural roots shaped by Portuguese,



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Asoka Hettigoda Elected President of THASL at the 2025 Annual General Meeting

TTA BULLETIN

The Tourist Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL) held its Annual General Meeting for 2025 at Cinnamon Life – City of Dreams, where industry leader Asoka Hettigoda was elected as the new President of the Association. The event brought together the top leadership of the tourism and aviation sectors, including the Honourable Minister of Tourism, the Deputy Minister, Chairmen of SLTDA, SLTPB, and the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau, as well as the CEO of Sri Lankan Airlines, foreign mission representatives, and senior members of the hospitality industry.



to realise its true tourism potential.

In his inaugural address, President-elect

Asoka Hettigoda expressed gratitude for the confidence placed in him and outlined several key priorities for his first year in office. Central to his vision is the establishment of a Unified Industry Committee, bringing together all major tourism associations under one collaborative platform.

Outgoing President M. Shanthikumar delivered a compelling address, reflecting on the achievements of the past year while highlighting the challenges that continue to hinder the industry's full recovery and long-term sustainability.

He highlighted the immediate need for a strategic, well-funded global marketing campaign to position Sri Lanka competitively and attract high-value travellers—crucial for increasing overall tourism spend and strengthening industry resilience. He emphasised that despite an increase in arrivals, Sri Lanka must act swiftly to ensure destination visibility in a fiercely competitive environment.

Shanthikumar urged the government to support the tourism sector without delay, stressing that collaborative planning, policy consistency, and a strong national brand identity are essential if Sri Lanka is

He noted that the fragmentation of industry voices has long diluted the power of advocacy and strategic planning. “A unified approach is essential,” he stated. “By bringing all associations together with a common goal, we can speak with one voice, drive meaningful policy reform, and collaborate more effectively with the government on long-term tourism development.”

Hettigoda also highlighted the need for stronger public-private partnerships, industry capacity building, innovation-led service delivery, and sustainable growth frameworks tailored to the evolving preferences of global travellers.

The AGM drew an impressive cross-section of national and international stakeholders, reflecting the importance of THASL's leadership role in shaping the future of Sri Lanka's tourism sector.

Connaissance de Ceylan Champions Sustainable Tourism with Medical Insurance for Its Long-Standing Guides

TTA BULLETIN

In a bold step that reinforces its leadership in Sri Lanka's tourism sector, Connaissance de Ceylan has introduced a medical insurance coverage for its long-standing guides who work exclusively with the company. This initiative is more than a corporate benefit—it is a testament to Connaissance's belief that the future of tourism must be built on respect, dignity, and genuine investment in people.



stand with them. This is the essence of sustainable tourism.”

In an industry where freelance and field-based roles often lack social protection, Connaissance's decision sets a new standard. The medical insurance plan ensures guides have access to quality healthcare and essential financial security—critical pillars for long-term wellbeing.

This move forms part of Connaissance's wider mission of sustainable tourism development, which champions not only environmental and economic balance but also people-centered progress. The company has long believed that sustainability must begin with those who carry the industry on their shoulders.

By formalizing this support, Connaissance aims to inspire others within the tourism

For decades, Connaissance's guides have been the face and spirit of the company. They are the first to greet our guests, the storytellers who interpret our culture, and the steady voices who carry Sri Lanka's heritage across continents. Their knowledge, loyalty, and passion have shaped unforgettable journeys for thousands of travellers.

Now, the company is giving back with a commitment that goes far beyond words. “With this initiative, we're not just offering insurance—we're safeguarding the people who safeguard our country's story,” stated the leadership at Connaissance de Ceylan. “Our guides stand with us every day, and it's our responsibility to

Frella Wellness and The Pekoe Trail Organization Announce Collaboration to Launch Specialist International Wellness Products for Hikers

TTA BULLETIN

Frella International (Pvt) Ltd., a leading Sri Lankan wellness brand and four time Global Luxury Awards Continent Winner for Best Beauty Product in Asia (2022–2025), has partnered with The Pekoe Trail Organization (TPTO) to introduce a bespoke range of wellness and protection products designed especially for hikers on Sri Lanka's world-renowned Pekoe Trail.



Over the past decade, Frella has earned the trust of some of the world's most respected luxury hospitality brands. Its formulations are used across leading international hotel groups, including Anantara, Four Seasons, and Six Senses, reflecting the brand's reputation for premium quality, rigorous safety standards, and globally benchmarked wellness innovation. This longstanding presence in luxury wellness environments underscores Frella's capability to deliver world class products now thoughtfully tailored for hikers on The Pekoe Trail.

The Pekoe Trail, Sri Lanka's first 300 km long distance walking trail has gained notable international attention since its launch, earning multiple accolades and global features highlighting its contribution to sustainable tourism, community empowerment, and the preservation of the island's natural and cultural landscapes. These recognitions underscore the trail's growing status as a flagship Sri Lankan tourism product.

A Wellness Collection Crafted for the Trail the Frella - TPTO range blends traditional Sri Lankan wellness heritage with modern science.

Tailored for the needs of hikers, the collection includes:

- Natural Leech Repellent Spray
A plant-powered formula enriched with citronella, camphor, and eucalyptus—an essential for forested sections of the trail.
- Natural Mosquito Repellent Spray
A gentle yet effective blend of lemongrass, organic virgin coconut, eucalyptus, and citronella to keep hikers protected.
- King Coconut Body Custard
A silky, lightweight aloe-based hydrator infused with pure Ceylon King Coconut Oil for deep moisture and skin recovery.
- Natural Beeswax Lip Balm
A nourishing balm made with beeswax, coconut oil, and vitamin E to protect and restore lips exposed to the elements.
- Natural Sleep-Enhancing Balm
A calming blend of lavender, frankincense, and clary sage to help hikers unwind and recover after long days on the trail.

All developed naturally with certified ingredients with international formulation carrying ISO / USDA / Peta Bunny & GMP standards ensuring the traveler gets a world class product for use during the hike.

In keeping with TPTO's non-profit mandate, proceeds from this product range will directly support the continued development, maintenance, and community impact programs of The Pekoe Trail. Pramudith Thenabadu, Executive Director, The Pekoe Trail Organization, commented: “This collaboration with Frella brings together two distinctly Sri Lankan brands committed to wellness, nature, and community. These products add real value to the hiking experience while allowing us to reinvest in the trail and uplift the local communities who form its backbone.”

The collaboration also carries personal meaning for Frella's leadership. Sudath Horadagoda, Managing Director and Founder of Frella International, shared: “I'm originally from Hali-Ela, and the Pekoe Trail passes close to the estates I used to run around in as a child.

To now support a trail that uplifts the very communities I grew up with is deeply fulfilling. This partnership allows us to contribute to a product that is not only iconic for Sri Lanka, but also meaningful to my own roots.”

Available through Trail Partners & Tourism Networks TPTO will work with accommodation providers along the trail, tour operators, and Destination Management Companies selling Pekoe Trail itineraries to promote and distribute the Frella range. This ensures local tourism businesses benefit while giving hikers easy access to essential wellness products.

The collection will be available for purchase on The Pekoe Trail's official online shop (www.thepekoetrail.org), and will also be available through the Frella online store (www.frellawellness.lk), making it accessible to hikers and wellness enthusiasts across Sri Lanka.

This collaboration marks a meaningful step forward in enhancing the hiking experience on Sri Lanka's most celebrated long-distance trail while strengthening the connection between wellness, tourism, and community impact.

By bringing together Frella's award-winning formulations and TPTO's commitment to sustainable development, the partnership sets a new benchmark for responsible travel experiences in the region. Both organizations look forward to deepening this collaboration and continuing to uplift the communities, landscapes, and heritage that make The Pekoe Trail truly exceptional.



Browns

HOTELS & RESORTS

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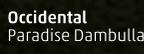
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Sri Lanka's magic flows without pause

Across our island, the skies are clear, the rhythm is calm, and the stories are waiting. From the first golden light that touches Sigiriya to the soft salt breeze along our southern shores, Sri Lanka is ready to welcome every traveller back to the heart of its magic. Browns Hotels & Resorts stands at the centre of these stories. From the Cultural Triangle's legendary landscapes to the coastal escapes made for unwinding, our properties offer spaces where hospitality feels personal, restorative, and real. Places where time slows down, comfort feels effortless, and the island's beauty becomes part of your everyday. And as the island reveals itself—its heritage, its flavours, its healing landscapes, you discover more than a holiday. You discover a story you'll want to return to.



www.browshotels.com



HOTELS

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts Prioritises Guest Safety, Colleague Support, and Community Recovery as Affected Properties Resume Full Operations

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts stands united with our communities during this period of adversity and remains committed to supporting recovery efforts while ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our guests and employees.



Adverse weather linked to Cyclone Ditwah temporarily affected operations at several of our properties. At a time when many of our communities continue to feel the impact of the floods, our thoughts are with everyone affected. Throughout this period, our priority has remained the safety and wellbeing of our teams, our communities, and the guests in our care.

All guest safety protocols were upheld, in house guests remained safe, and timely updates were shared with our travel partners and stakeholders to ensure clarity and continuity. Thanks to the swift response and dedication of our teams, we are pleased to confirm that all affected resorts Cinnamon Lodge Habarana, Habarana Village by Cinnamon, Cinnamon Citadel Kandy, Kandy Myst by Cinnamon, and Trinco Blu by Cinnamon have now resumed welcoming guests.

As of 1st December 2025, all Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts properties are fully operational. Resorts' operations are

functioning as normal. Importantly, business continues uninterrupted across our entire portfolio, with guests arriving, staying, and departing as scheduled. All bookings, arrivals, and planned activities continue as scheduled across our portfolio.

As part of our commitment to supporting communities during this time, Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts together with the John Keells Group and the John Keells Foundation continues to assist those affected. As a leading hospitality brand, our priority is to support the nation's recovery while ensuring the continued comfort and safety of all who stay with us or live around us. We extend our sincere appreciation to our dedicated teams, local authorities, partners and most of all our guests, for their understanding and cooperation during these times.

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts will continue to provide updates as needed and stands firmly with the people of Sri Lanka as we collectively move towards recovery.

Unwrap Your Holiday Story at Occidental Paradise Dambulla

TTA BULLETIN

There's a moment when busy families realise they need a pause from the everyday — a chance to laugh without schedules, to wake up without alarms, and finally to say yes to quality time. At Occidental Paradise Dambulla, by Browns Hotels & Resorts, those precious moments unfold naturally. While it's a favourite among families, the resort is just as perfect for couples seeking peaceful escapes and friends looking for a relaxing, nature-filled getaway in Sri Lanka.



Days at Occidental Paradise flow exactly the way holidays should. Splashing in the shimmering pool turns into an activity of its own, while water aerobics adds a refreshing burst of fun for

Nestled within a lush wilderness in the heart of the cultural triangle, the resort invites guests to step away from the city and settle into a world where nature entertains, comforts, and inspires.

The Duplex Rooms at Occidental Paradise are designed exactly for this kind of joy. Spread across two spacious floors, they offer the perfect blend of togetherness and freedom — where kids can turn the upper floor into their own adventure zone, complete with board games that make lazy afternoons feel extra fun, while parents can unwind downstairs with a warm cup of tea. Every window frames a lively display of cheeky monkeys, colour-changing chameleons, peacocks on parade, and butterflies that seem to pose for photos. It feels like living inside a nature documentary.

For those wanting more room to stretch, the Suite Garden View offers an airy layout and a private terrace, ideal for slow mornings, relaxed conversations, and watching the forest slip quietly into dusk.

the whole family. The Adventure Zone brings pure excitement — zip lining through the trees, wall climbing, the Burma bridge, and abseiling all spark the thrill of discovery. For deeper relaxation, the Ayuwasa Ayurveda Spa offers a soothing pause to your day — a space where warm oils, gentle rituals, and quiet moments help you reset completely. And when night falls, the open grounds of the resort — even tucked beneath the trees — create the perfect setting for stargazing, making the night sky feel impossibly close.

Dining is woven to the experience too. Orchid, the main restaurant of Occidental Paradise, serves an extensive East-and-West spread, with a breakfast buffet worth waking up early for. Across the property, the newly revamped à la carte menus bring Instagram-worthy dishes that are as memorable as they are delicious. From the resort's famous wood-fired pizza to dinners beneath softly glowing trees, time slows down beautifully. All of it is delivered with the signature Browns Hotels & Resorts hospitality that makes every guest feel genuinely cared for.

Beyond the resort, the wonders of the cultural triangle of Sri Lanka unfold — the majestic Sigiriya Rock Fortress, the ancient Dambulla Cave Temples, sunrise treks at Pidurangala, and the serene trails of Kaludiya Pokuna, where birdwatching and

Cinnamon Grand Colombo's Two Decade Journey and Its Place in Sri Lanka's Hospitality Story

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Grand Colombo, one of Sri Lanka's most distinctive hospitality landmarks, commemorates its 20th anniversary under the Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts' brand, celebrating two decades of service while holding firm to its Sri Lankan identity.

First opened in 1975 as Hotel Lanka Oberoi, the Oberoi Group's first foray outside India the hotel has undergone multiple reinventions, from its Colombo Plaza era to its transformation into Cinnamon Grand Colombo under John Keells Holdings in 2005. Each chapter expanded its scale, sharpened its brand, and embedded it deeper into the cultural and corporate fabric of the city.

Today, Cinnamon Grand Colombo stands as a rare constant in Colombo's evolving hospitality landscape. Even as global brands intensified competition through distribution power and loyalty ecosystems, Cinnamon Grand remains as a leading preference and continues to stand out as a classic in a fiercely competitive environment.

"In a market increasingly defined by global standardisation, Cinnamon Grand Colombo's strength lies in offering our hospitality without sacrificing its Sri Lankan soul", said Kamal Munasinghe, Chief Operating Officer, Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts.

Over the last two decades, Cinnamon Grand Colombo refined a strategy that targets Colombo's most lucrative segments, high spending leisure travellers and the city's corporate elite. The hotel presents a narrative of contemporary hospitality shaped by Sri Lankan cultural texture from its award winning, recently renovated Nuga Gama restaurant offering village style dining to wellness to city exploration. The property evolved into a cornerstone of Colombo's event and business infrastructure, consistently hosting diplomatic delegations, multinational boards, sporting events and marquee gala events. Cinnamon Grand's meeting and events portfolio remains one of the prime choices for guests and corporates in Colombo, headlined by The Oak Room often selected for high profile launches, international conferences, and national gatherings. The Atrium Lobby and its

network of modular breakout rooms allow the property to support simultaneous events across scales, a competitive advantage as Colombo continues to court the regional MICE market.

As Cinnamon Grand Colombo celebrates its 20th anniversary under the Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts brand, its impact extends beyond hospitality. The property is also home to the Cinnamon Hospitality Academy, established in partnership with SHMA and VET by EHL, which is redefining hospitality education in Sri Lanka. The Academy, which marked its first anniversary this year, celebrated this milestone within the very walls of Cinnamon Grand Colombo.

"For two decades we have been a part of stories of many who has visited the city, be it a celebration, a union a gathering, this milestone is an accumulations of countless stories and milestones of celebrations of our guests over the years, its truly something extraordinary for a brand to



experience this level of love and loyalty that has stood the test of time", said Kamal Munasinghe.

Cinnamon Grand Colombo is a generational landmark one that has shaped the city, its events, culture, its diplomatic engagements, and its definition of Sri Lankan hospitality.

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts is a diverse chain of hotels spanning Sri Lanka and the Maldives and a member of John Keells Holdings PLC, one of the largest listed conglomerates in Sri Lanka, with diverse interests in sectors ranging from Leisure, Transportation, Property, Consumer Food & Retail, Financial Services, Information Technology, Business Process Operations to Plantations.

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“Ramada by Wyndham Colombo combines culinary excellence with the art of hospitality, offering four-star luxury in the heart of Colombo. The hotel features spacious, modern rooms equipped with every essential amenity to meet the needs of both business and leisure travelers. Guests can also enjoy a diverse selection of restaurants and lounge bars, serving an array of flavors from around the world.”



WYNDHAM
HOTELS & RESORTS

HOTELS

ONYX Hospitality Group Celebrates Amari Colombo's Win as "Sri Lanka's Leading Business Hotel 2025" at the World Travel Awards

TTA BULLETIN

ONYX Hospitality Group, a leading regional player in Southeast Asian hospitality, is proud to announce that Amari Colombo has been named Sri Lanka's Leading Business Hotel 2025 at the prestigious World Travel Awards (WTA) Asia and Oceania Gala Ceremony, held in Hong Kong this October.



Situated in the heart of Colombo's vibrant business district, Amari Colombo reflects ONYX Hospitality Group's dedication to crafting contemporary spaces infused with the warmth of Thai-inspired service. The hotel offers 167 rooms and suites that combine contemporary comfort with traditional Sri Lankan charm, alongside world-class amenities, elegant meeting and event facilities, and curated experiences that cater to both productivity and relaxation.

Amari Colombo offers a range of versatile venues for meetings and events. Its 175 sqm ballroom can accommodate up to 250 guests, while more intimate spaces are ideal for 30-100 attendees. Each venue is designed to combine style and functionality, supporting both formal business functions and smaller gatherings, ensuring events are productive, seamless, and memorable.

"We are truly delighted and honoured to be recognised as Sri Lanka's Leading Business Hotel," said Monty Ariyaratne, General Manager of Amari Colombo. "This award is a testament to our team's unwavering commitment to delivering warm, personalised service and creating an inspiring environment for both business and leisure travellers. We share this achievement with our valued guests and dedicated team members who make the Amari experience so special."

CLUB SEEN Koh Samui Relaunches as the Island's Defining Beach Club

TTA BULLETIN

CLUB SEEN Koh Samui enters a new chapter with a confident relaunch, an elevated day-to-night concept and a December to January programme led by international headliners. Defected and Glitterbox set the tone alongside ARTBAT, Nina Kraviz, Folamour and DJEFF, signalling CLUB SEEN's most ambitious season yet.



Romera and Melvo Baptiste with live entertainment, feasting and fireworks to welcome 2026.

January opens with a month-long takeover of global talent. 1 January: DJEFF in UNSEEN with deep Afro-house rhythms. 2 January: Defected Records on the main stage with Eats Everything, Sam Divine and TSHA. 3 January: a double bill with ARTBAT and Plastik Funk. Joseph Capriati hits the decks on 10 January, followed by Nina Kraviz on 15 January and Aiwaika in UNSEEN on 16 January and Folamour on 17 January with his signature house and funk uplift. Low Steppa lands in UNSEEN on 23 January, while Lost Miracle takes over the same room on 30 January with a melodic, progressive journey.

Every Sunday in January, CLUB SEEN hosts O BEACH IBIZA x CLUB SEEN Koh Samui, marking the Ibiza brand's first appearance on the island on 4, 11, 18 and 25 January. Performers, aerial shows and guest DJs bring the O Beach spirit to Chaweng. The month culminates on 31

At the centre of the refresh is SEEN Eatery, a relaxed yet refined seaside dining space that blends Tokyo-inspired urban flair with Latin heat in a menu built for sharing and socialising. Bright flavours, easy pacing and long afternoons with coastline views define the experience.

After dark, the focus shifts to UNSEEN Club Room, an intimate after-dark playground. Sleek, immersive and built for discovery, it fuses cutting-edge sound with sculptural lighting, hosting exclusive parties, deeper late-night sets and international artists in a high-intensity, close-knit space.

The festive relaunch builds from 20 December with Afrodisse, followed on 25 December by Christmas Brunch at SEEN Eatery and an exclusive UNSEEN night headlined by Lovra. The week continues with Miss Monique on 26 December and Kölsch on 27 December, leading into a New Year's Eve celebration featuring Tony

Heritage Kandalama Awarded Silver at the 2025 ICRT Global Responsible Tourism Awards

TTA BULLETIN

Heritage Kandalama has once again brought pride to Sri Lanka's hospitality industry, being recognised on the world stage at the 2025 International Centre for Responsible Tourism (ICRT) Global Responsible Tourism Awards. The iconic property, and the only Sri Lankan hotel to receive an award this year, was honoured with a Silver Global Responsible Tourism Award for Climate Adaptation and Resilience, joining a set of distinguished organisations from across the world celebrated for their pioneering contributions to sustainable and responsible travel.

The Global Responsible Tourism Awards, sponsored by Sabre, honour businesses and destinations that demonstrate measurable, innovative, and scalable solutions to today's tourism challenges.

Winners are selected from regional gold awardees across Africa, Latin America, Europe, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Subcontinent, representing the very best in global practice.

Emeritus Professor Harold Goodwin, Chair of the judging panel and Founder of ICRT Global, shared: "Responsible tourism is about making better places for people to live in and visit. As is clear from the 2022 Responsible Tourism Charter there is a wide variety of ways that businesses and destination managers can take responsibility. It is critically important that organisations support any statement of impact with facts. Our sector is still plagued with extravagant claims, we hope that national and EU mis-selling regulations will reduce this over time. All of the Global Responsible Tourism Award winners have explained how they decided what to take responsibility for, what they did and with what impact. Congratulations to them all and we hope they will inspire other organisations to follow in their footsteps".

Commenting on this achievement, Stasshani Jayawardena, Chairperson Aitken Spence Hotel Holdings PLC said, "This recognition stands as yet another milestone in our sustainability journey, reaffirming our place among the world's foremost champions of regenerative, resilient, and responsible hospitality".

Part of the Heritage Hotels and Resorts portfolio, Heritage Kandalama continues to lead by example, demonstrating that sustainability and sophistication can coexist seamlessly.

Designed by Deshamanya Geoffrey Bawa, Heritage Kandalama stands as a masterpiece of tropical modernism, a hotel that lives in harmony with its landscape. Overlooking the tranquil Kandalama Lake



and surrounded by the forested hills of Dambulla within Sri Lanka's famed Cultural Triangle, the property has long embodied a powerful balance between architecture, nature, and sustainability.

Heritage Kandalama's recognition for Climate Adaptation and Resilience underscores its long-term, science-based approach to sustainability. The resort operates on a holistic environmental model that is both measurable and deeply rooted in local ecology and community engagement. Over 200 acres of land are maintained as a biodiversity conservation forest, nurturing more than 170 bird species and a rich diversity of flora and fauna.

The hotel holds Sri Lanka's longest continually certified Environmental Management System (ISO 14001) since 1996 and is a Travelife Gold Certified property recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). These achievements reaffirm Heritage Kandalama's commitment to climate-conscious design, biodiversity protection, and community empowerment, principles that have made it a benchmark for eco-exclusivity across the region.

Heritage Hotels and Resorts is the flagship brand of Aitken Spence Hotels, a part of Aitken Spence PLC, a leading Sri Lankan blue-chip conglomerate. Aitken Spence Hotels oversees a diverse collection of 18 hotels and resorts across Sri Lanka, Maldives, Oman and India through its diverse collection of brands Heritage Hotels and Resorts, Adaaran Hotels & Resorts, and Turyaa. Heritage Hotels & Resorts stands as the custodian of the largest portfolio of Bawa designed hotels in Sri Lanka, adding a touch of architectural distinction to its rich offerings.

Take time out to *breathe...*



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Reveal The Collection invites you for soulful stays in Mirissa

TTA BULLETIN

Mirissa stands as one of Sri Lanka's most striking coastal destinations — a vibrant stretch of southern shoreline known for its sweeping beaches, clear turquoise waters, and an atmosphere that balances energy with natural beauty.

Reveal The Collection, a luxury boutique offering, presents a curated selection of four beachfront villas that together redefine coastal luxury. These include Lantern Boutique Villa, The Beach House, and the two Ubuntu Beach Villas, all positioned along Mirissa's most scenic shoreline. Across 28 well-appointed rooms and suites, the Collection blends contemporary design with thoughtful comfort, creating spaces that are elegant, modern, and perfectly aligned with the rhythm of the Indian Ocean.

Each villa brings a distinct expression of coastal living. Lantern offers six contemporary ocean-facing rooms with open, light-filled interiors. Guests can also enjoy 71 Lantern Bistro & Bar, where fresh seafood sourced from the local market and regional ingredients are elevated into dishes that reflect bold flavours and culinary heritage. The Beach House features stylish suites tucked behind tropical greenery, balancing privacy with ocean views. The two Ubuntu Beach Villas, just 300 metres apart, offer modern tropical design with floor-to-ceiling windows framing the coastline, giving guests direct access to the beach and uninterrupted sea views.

Days at the Collection unfold with ease and elegance. Mornings begin with floating breakfasts in private pools, pause midday for high tea by the waves, and close with sundown cocktails as the sky deepens into colour. Destination dinners,



curated for truly memorable experiences, are also available to enrich the stay.

Mirissa offers countless ways to explore its coastline — sunrise whale-watching excursions, surfing breaks for intermediate and skilled beginners, scenic walks to the globally recognised, Instagrammable Coconut Tree Hill, and panoramic views from Parrot Rock. Guests staying two nights or more can enjoy complimentary experiences, including a guided kayaking excursion along calm waters and a Galle city tour that showcases the area's rich history and architecture.

One of the most meaningful elements within the Collection is the on-site turtle hatchery, a conservation initiative that allows guests to witness hatchlings making their first journey to the ocean — an experience that adds purpose and depth to a coastal escape.

This holiday season, Reveal The Collection invites families and couples to enjoy the best rates for soulful escapes. Throughout each villa, personalised service stands at the forefront — from curated excursions to thoughtful in-villa touches, every stay is shaped around comfort, attentiveness, and genuine hospitality, offering unforgettable experiences along one of Sri Lanka's most captivating coastlines.

A New Wave Awaits: Pegasus Reef's Beach Bar Opens February 2026

TTA BULLETIN

Something special is coming to Pegasus Reef Hotel. This February 2026, we're unveiling our newest destination—a beach bar where the ocean meets unforgettable experiences.



Nestled along our pristine shoreline, this new venue will celebrate the art of the cocktail. Our skilled mixologists are crafting a signature menu that captures the spirit of coastal living, blending timeless classics with bold new creations. Each drink will be a carefully crafted escape, designed for those perfect moments by the sea.

Picture yourself sinking into comfortable



seating as the sun dips below the horizon, painting the sky in brilliant colours. The atmosphere will pulse with energy while honouring the natural beauty that surrounds us—a space where celebration meets relaxation, where every visit feels like a mini-vacation.

Whether you're toasting to life's victories, catching up with old friends, or simply savouring a quiet moment with a perfectly mixed drink in hand, this beach bar will become your new favourite destination.

We'll be sharing more details as opening day approaches. Mark your calendars—February 2026 is going to be extraordinary.

Festive Tree Lighting at NH Collection Colombo: Illuminating the Season with Style and Spirit

TTA BULLETIN

NH Collection Colombo marked the start of the festive season with its elegant Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, celebrated on 3rd December 2025, bringing a touch of warmth and seasonal charm to the heart of the city. This year, the event embraced a meaningful new approach, reflecting not only the joy of the season but also a message of confidence, resilience, and renewed positivity for Sri Lanka. The lobby transformed into a festive gathering space as guests, team members, and well-wishers came together to witness the first illumination of the Christmas tree.



celebration continued as guests enjoyed the warm, festive atmosphere.

Speaking at the event, Yann Decaix, General Manager of NH Collection Colombo, said: "At NH Collection Colombo, we have curated a bundle of offerings for the festive season, designed to bring people together and create uplifting moments throughout

December. This tree-lighting ceremony marks the beginning of a series of celebrations that reflect our commitment to extraordinary and memorable hospitality in the heart of the city."

This year's tree, beautifully decorated in traditional Christmas colours, stood as the centrepiece of the celebration, symbolising joy, togetherness, and the timeless spirit of Christmas. By lighting our tree here at NH Collection Colombo, we are sending a message to the world — that Sri Lanka remains a warm, welcoming, and safe destination to travel. Our land of paradise is once again inviting tourists back with warmth and confidence, and our hotels continue to operate with the same passion, hospitality, and spirit we are known for. Soft carols, sung by our team members, enhanced the atmosphere as the lights came to life, creating a moment filled with festive cheer and an extraordinary sense of seasonal magic.

To complement the ceremony, NH Collection Colombo has unveiled a thoughtfully curated festive programme throughout December. Guests can look forward to a range of seasonal experiences, including the Christmas Eve Buffet at AYU, joyful Christmas Day celebrations, a flavourful Thai-inspired Christmas Night feast at Thai Rasa, and multiple New Year's Eve events such as the grand Masquerade Gala Dinner in the Ballroom, the vibrant Rooftop NYE celebration at Vistas, and a family-friendly Kids' NYE Programme at Adityaa. Each event is designed to deliver memorable dining, live entertainment, and uplifting festive moments for guests of all ages.

Guests were welcomed with a selection of festive delights, including cocktails, mulled wine, hot chocolate, and an array of hot and cold canapés complemented by mini mince pies. A graceful solo music performance added to the charm of the evening, building anticipation for the ceremonial lighting. Once illuminated, the

The full festive programme can be explored via the brochure here: <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/707707998/6/> The Christmas Tree Lighting served as a delightful prelude to the hotel's festive programme, setting the tone for a season filled with refined experiences, heartfelt celebrations, and the signature warmth of NH Collection hospitality.

SriLankan Airlines Riyadh Showcases the Warmth of Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Airlines Riyadh recently hosted a special familiarisation tour,



extending warm island hospitality to a selected group of leading leisure agents. Under the theme "Ahlan Wa Sahlan," the programme reflected the true essence of Sri Lankan hospitality inviting guests to feel at home. The delegation, comprising nine members from leading leisure agencies, experienced the best of Sri Lanka from the ancient grandeur of Sigiriya and the serenity of Habarana, to the cultural richness of Kandy, the misty charm of Nuwara Eliya, the golden beaches of Weligama and the vibrant energy of Colombo.

With Walkers Tours as the trusted ground handling partner, every detail of the journey was seamlessly executed. The trip concluded with a productive engagement with the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotions Bureau and SriLankan Holidays, the leisure arm of SriLankan Airlines, at the Cinnamon Life Hotel in Colombo. The experience resonated deeply with the participants, sparking excitement and dedication to share the beauty and warmth of Sri Lanka with future travellers.

Tourist Hotels Association Sri Lanka Annual General Meeting 2025

The Tourist Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL) held its Annual General Meeting for 2025 at Cinnamon Life – City of Dreams, where industry leader Asoka Hettigoda was elected as the new President of the Association. The event brought together the top leadership of the tourism and aviation sectors, including the Honourable Minister of Tourism, the Deputy Minister, Chairmen of SLTDA, SLTPB, and the Sri Lanka Convention Bureau, as well as the CEO of SriLankan Airlines, foreign mission representatives, and senior members of the hospitality industry.



AIRLINES / AGENTS

Emirates orders 65 additional Boeing 777X aircraft, worth US\$ 38 billion at Dubai Airshow 2025

TTA BULLETIN

Emirates, the world's largest international airline, has announced orders for 65 additional Boeing 777-9 aircraft, powered by GE 9X engines, worth US\$ 38 billion at list prices, on the opening day of Dubai Airshow 2025.



and GE, and to US aerospace.

This takes the airline's total orderbook with Boeing to 315 widebody aircraft, comprising 270 Boeing 777Xs, 10 Boeing 777 freighters, and 35 Boeing 787s; and its orderbook with GE Aerospace for GE9X engines to a total of 540 units including the 130 additional units signed today. This is a massive long-term commitment to US aerospace manufacturing, generating support for hundreds of thousands of high value manufacturing jobs in the US over the life of the programmes.

Emirates' latest agreement with Boeing also provides strong backing for Boeing's feasibility study to develop the 777-10, a larger variant of its 777X family, with the airline signing up for options to convert its latest 777-9 order into the 777-10 or the 777-8.

HH Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive, Emirates Airline and Group said: "Emirates is already the world's largest Boeing 777 operator and we are expanding our commitment to the programme today with additional orders worth US\$ 38 billion for 65 Boeing 777-9s, and 130 GE9X engines. This is a long-term commitment and testament to our partnership with Boeing

"Each of our aircraft on order has been carefully factored into Emirates' expansion plan, which is aligned to Dubai's growth plans. Flying a young and modern fleet with innovative cabin products has always been a cornerstone of Emirates' strategy, and we look forward to continue working closely with Boeing to receive delivery of our first 777-9s from Q2 of 2027, and to equip our latest aircraft with state-of-the-art, industry-leading onboard products."

Commenting on the 777-10 study, HH Sheikh Ahmed said: "Emirates has been open about the fact that we are keen for manufacturers to build larger capacity aircraft, which are more efficient to operate especially with projected air traffic growth and increasing constraints at airports. We fully support Boeing's feasibility study to develop the 777-10 and have options to convert our latest 777-9 order to the 777-10 or the 777-8."

Stephanie Pope, President and CEO of Boeing Commercial Airplanes said: "We are deeply honoured that Emirates has once again selected the Boeing 777X to power its future as the airline refreshes its world-class fleet and expands its vaunted

Red Apple Travel Sri Lanka and Sister Company Serene Travels Launch First-Ever Independently-Operated Charter Series from Iran

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka's tourism sector enters a powerful new chapter as Red Apple Travel Sri Lanka, together with its sister company Serene Travels, proudly launch their first independently-planned and managed charter flight series from Iran. This landmark initiative strengthens Sri Lanka's positioning as a must-visit destination and reflects renewed global confidence in the country's tourism potential.



high-potential markets. Together, their successful move into independently-operated charter services marks a transformational milestone in their shared growth journey and in the evolution of Sri Lanka's inbound tourism landscape.

Operating from 20 November 2025 to 10 April 2026, the charter series will carry 165 passengers on each flight, ensuring a steady and high-volume flow of Iranian visitors throughout the winter season. Travellers will be hosted across multiple regions in Sri Lanka, directly supporting hotels, transport providers, and a wide network of tourism stakeholders.

Industry stakeholders have warmly welcomed the launch, recognising it as a timely and impactful contribution to the continued resurgence of Sri Lanka's tourism sector.

Commenting on this milestone, Mr. Nipuna Lokuhetty, Managing Director of Red Apple Travel Sri Lanka and Serene Travels, said: "This charter series is more than an operational achievement; it is a clear statement of intent. By independently planning and managing this entire operation from Iran, our teams at Red Apple Travel Sri Lanka and Serene

With 14 years of experience, Red Apple Travel Sri Lanka has built a solid reputation for professionalism and innovation, while Serene Travels has emerged as a dynamic brand driving growth in new and

SriLankan Airlines Bags APEX Best In Food and Beverage in Central/Southern Asia

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Airlines has won the 2026 APEX Best In Food and Beverage Award for Central/Southern Asia, celebrating the vibrant medley of flavours that define its onboard menu, from international culinary delights to homegrown recipes that awaken every sense. The airline also retained its Four Star Major Airline status at the recently concluded 2026 APEX Awards, considered among the most prestigious in the global aviation industry, which recognise excellence based on over one million verified passenger votes from TripAdvisor by Concur, the world's leading travel-organising app. The awards evaluate over 600 airlines globally to determine the best in each region, as well as in seat comfort, cabin service, food and beverage, entertainment and Wi-Fi.



palates of the regions it serves. Each route features a destination-inspired local speciality, capturing the vibrant textures, colours and flavours defining its culinary identity, seamlessly blended with Sri Lankan hospitality through the meal service.

Equally appetising is the array of dishes prepared with ingredients sourced from trusted local suppliers, ensuring that every bite oozes the zest of Sri Lankan dining, typified by the aroma of spices, fresh herbs and chillies, creamy coconut, tangy sambols and traditional relishes. Highlights include the passenger-favourite, traditional staple Kiribath with accompaniments, beloved street-food Kottu and classic Rice and Curry. These are complemented by an assortment of mouthwatering Sri Lankan sweets, such as milk toffee, coconut toffee, sesame balls and bibikan, as well as other locally sourced specialties including brewed beer. The Sri Lankan fare served onboard is bound to transport travellers to the comforting warmth of home.

Maria Sathasivam, Manager Product Development at SriLankan Airlines, commented on the latest win, stating, "To be honoured with this distinction twice is a true testament to the deep culinary bond that we have fostered with our passengers. There's no greater reward than knowing our passengers look forward to that one special dish on every flight. Each menu we craft is more than a collection of dishes. They are curated to tell a story and reflect the spirit of our island and the cuisine that bring people together. We are deeply grateful to every traveller who continues to share this journey with us, inspiring us to serve food that nourishes, delights and feels like home."

The onboard dining experience is simply an extension of SriLankan Airlines' renowned service. The airline offers seamless connectivity across a global network spanning 120 destinations in 61 countries through direct and codeshare operations. Its route map links major cities in Europe, Australia, the Middle East, the Indian Subcontinent, Southeast Asia, and the Far East. SriLankan operates a modern all-Airbus fleet comprising A330-200/300 and A320/321 aircraft. For more information and the best fares, visit www.srilankan.com

SriLankan Airlines' bespoke onboard menu is expertly made to suit the diverse

Qatar Airways Group Appoints Mr. Hamad Ali Al-Khater as Group Chief Executive Officer

TTA BULLETIN

Qatar Airways Group announced the appointment of Mr. Hamad Ali Al-Khater as Group Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Al-Khater succeeds Engr. Badr Mohammed Al-Meer.



Mr. Al-Khater joins Qatar Airways Group from Hamad International Airport, where he has served as Chief Operating Officer. In that role, he was responsible for ensuring the safety and reliability of airport operations, while leading its strategic direction, operational excellence, infrastructure expansion, and the continuous enhancement of passenger experience.

Prior to his tenure at Hamad International Airport, Mr. Al-Khater held senior roles across QatarEnergy, driving business

development, deal execution, and leading large-scale strategic and operational initiatives.

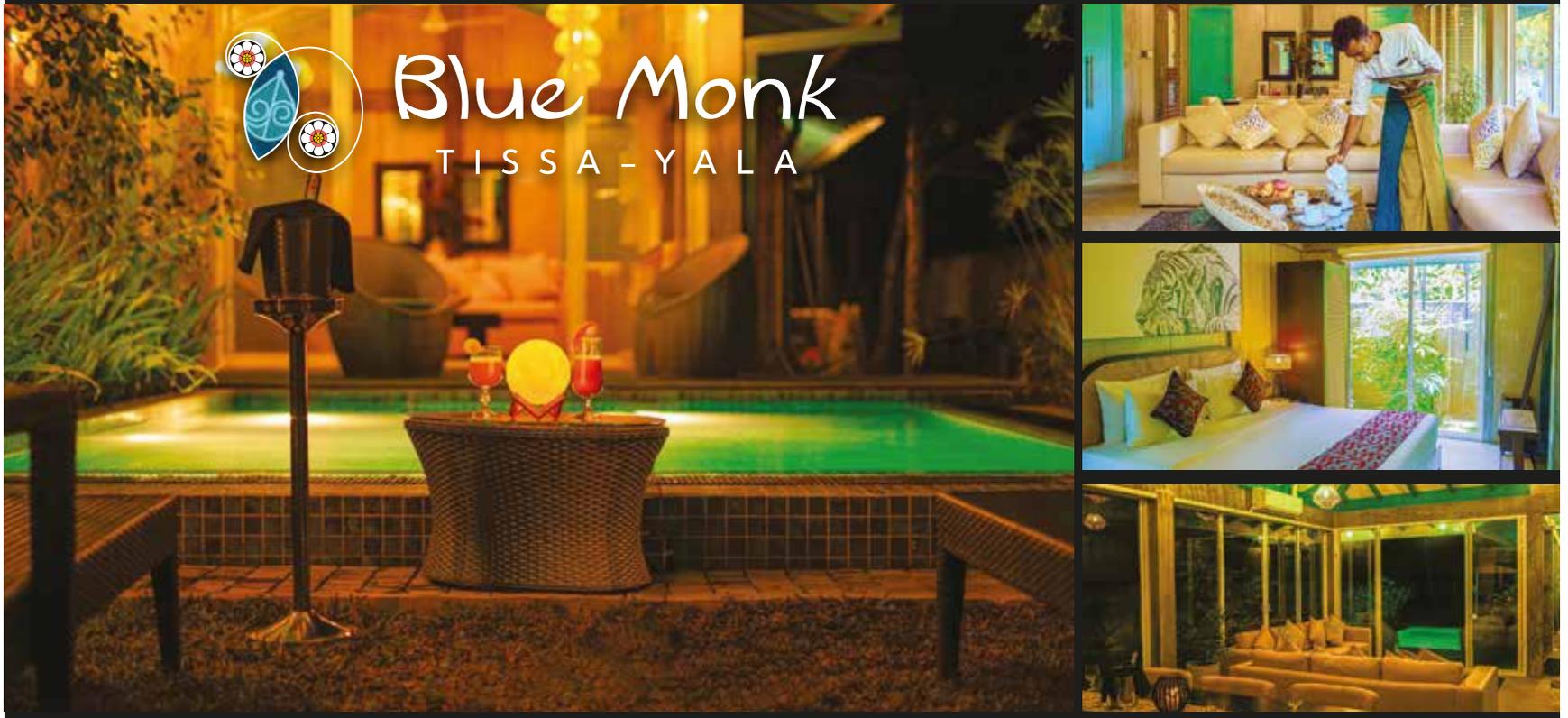
Qatar Airways Group Board of Directors Chairman, His Excellency Mr. Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi, said: "Qatar Airways Group extends its appreciation to Engr. Badr Mohammed

Al-Meer for his service. As we welcome Mr. Hamad Ali Al-Khater, we look forward to building on the strong foundations and expansive global network of Qatar Airways, anchored by our exceptional team in Qatar and around the world. With this leadership transition, Qatar Airways Group reaffirms its commitment to delivering world-class experiences, reliability, and innovation to travellers around the globe."

Welcoming Villa Blue Monk and Hikka House to the Thema Collection Family!

We're delighted to welcome Villa Blue Monk - Tissamaharama - Thissa-Yala and Hikka House - Hikkaduwa to the Thema Collection family.

Each property brings its own distinctive charm -Villa Blue Monk reflects the deep cultural spirit of Katharagama and the serene beauty of the Yala region, while Hikka House embodies the vibrant energy and coastal lifestyle of Hikkaduwa. Together, they enrich our journey of offering meaningful, thematic, and sustainable experiences across Sri Lanka.



Blue Monk

TISSA - YALA



Hikka House

HIKKADUWA



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Amba Yaalu
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Waraka
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Wild Glamping
GAL OYA



Hikka House
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