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The Telegraph

Travel | Destinations



Chena Huts

Yala, Sri Lanka
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8 / 10

Telegraph expert rating

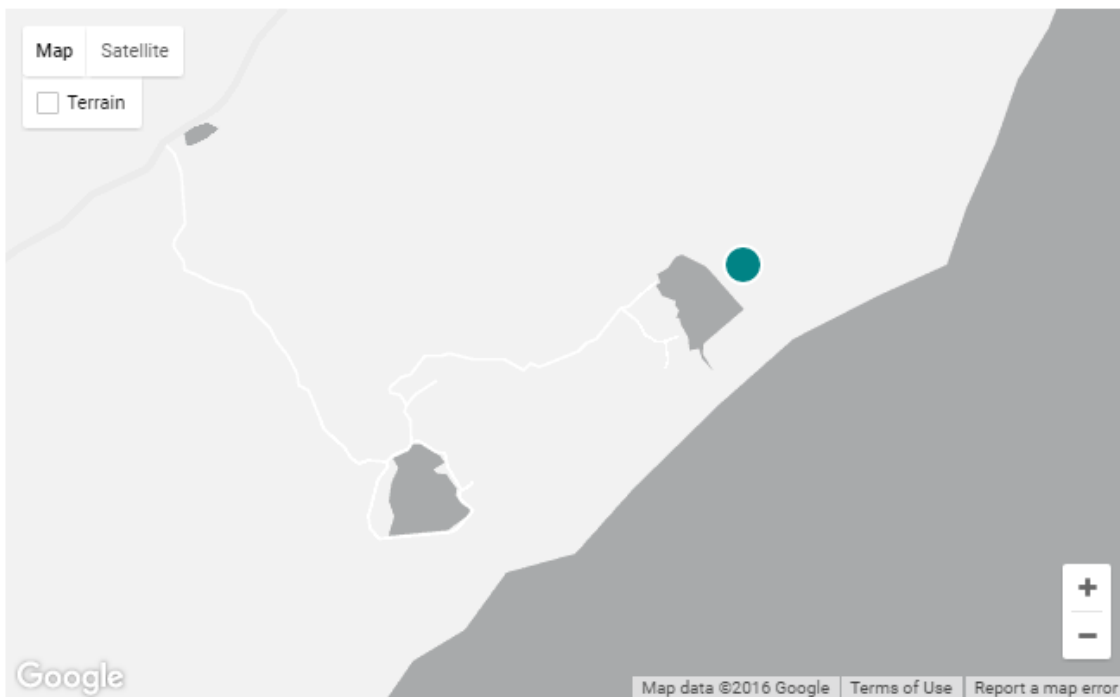
Huts are a rather modest moniker for these ginormous climate controlled residences with private pools nestled into the coastal jungle bordering the leopard-hotspot that is Yala National Park. For creature comfort loving wildlife fans, this ocean-facing jungle haven is hard to beat.

- [Telegraph Review](#)

- [Emma Boyle](#), TRAVEL WRITER
-

8 / 10 Location

The resort rests in arid jungle scrub on the boundary of Yala National Park, Sri Lanka's premier game reserve, and above a sand dune sculpted beach. The park entrance is less than 10-minutes' drive away but wildlife, including wild boar, hares, buffalo and the occasional elephant, don't respect boundaries and are regular visitors to the resort. As such you can't wander the beach unaccompanied nor swim in the (very rough) sea. Yala is one of the world's best spots to sight wild leopards, and sloth bears are another exciting prospect.



9 / 10 Style & character

Chena Huts tread new ground with their unique blend of cathedral-domed, palm-thatched residences, which are inspired by the lofty tree huts of farmers who keep a night watch for wildlife devouring their crops. These stylish huts channel a contemporary mod-safari vibe, are elevated above ground and linked by boardwalks so that nature can move around them. With just 14 spaciouly arranged huts amidst seven acres, privacy is almost guaranteed.

9 / 10 Service & facilities

The smartly dressed staff team are young, enthusiastic and efficient. They take the safety of their guests very seriously and insist on chaperoning them around the resort in case of wild encounters, which adds a little drama. The amiable rangers are experts in their field and receive rave reviews from guests who safari aboard shared six-person jeeps equipped with refreshments. Thoughtfully, tickets are bought in advance to avoid the fume morning queues at Yala's entrance. Huts have private pools, but there's also a delightful jungle pool and spa.

- Bar
- Beach
- Laundry
- Parking
- Pool
- Restaurant
- Spa
- Wi-Fi

9 / 10 Rooms

The squeaky clean huts brandish comfy platform beds, double lounge chairs and dining tables (though there's no room service), and are sure to impress lovers of luxury though the open style bathroom with freestanding tub will suit couples more than friends. Mod cons include satellite TV, Bluetooth sound system, coffee machine, fast Wi-Fi and Minibar, plus air con, a private deck and a plunge pool (bliss after a dusty hot safari). Huts proffer different outlooks – beach, lagoon and bush – but don't come expecting a view; the lagoon is often dry and even the beach huts only spy the sea at a distance, and through fairly dense foliage at that.

8 / 10 Food & drink

The à la carte breakfast menu will appease guests with healthy (porridge, fresh fruits and granola) and indulgent (Sri Lankan milk rice with curries, poached eggs with homemade gravlax) tendencies. Lunch and dinner proffer fine dining set menus with a couple of European-style entree and dessert options. Sri Lankan rice and curry is available on demand. Diners are served quickly, and the nautical-themed restaurant comprises a sea-facing deck (candlelit for dinner) and an air-conned interior. From the sunken bar, sip beer or wine while catching the ocean breeze or spying the Great Basses Lighthouse, a mere 24km out to sea.

7 / 10 Value for money

Double rooms from US\$1,020 (£775) in low season; and from US\$1,250 (£946) in high. Rates include breakfast, lunch and dinner; juices, soft drinks, selected beer, wine and spirits; Wi-Fi; laundry; bush walks; national park entry fees and two game drives per day.

Access for guests with disabilities?

There is one wheelchair-accessible hut.

Family-friendly?

Yes, and the staff really cherish young guests. Cots are provided for free, two huts interconnect (five and six), and the hotel will feel like an adventure for kids of all ages, however note that game drives are dusty, hot and involve pre-dawn starts.

Chena Huts, Tala-Palatupana, Wildlife tourism zone, Yala, Tissamarama 82000, Sri Lanka.

00 94 47 2 267100

ugaescapes.com/chenahuts

Rooms from

£**764** per night

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Rates provided by Booking.com

