

# 72 Hours In Chena Huts by Uga Escapes



Chena Huts by Uga Escapes

## Hotel tested by Travel Editor Patrick

A wonderful place in a breathtaking environment! Chena Huts by Uga Escapes is one of those places you can hardly imagine if you haven't been there yourself, but we'll do our best to describe our stay at this breathtaking resort as detailed as possible. The adventure already started on our way to Chena Huts. Leaving the main road behind, we drove on a small bumpy path and after only 15 minutes, we saw the first signs saying 'elephants crossing'. It was only now that we realized that we were actually entering a very special area – the 'buffer zone' of the Yala National park, one of the oldest and best known nature reserves in Sri Lanka.

When we arrived at the resort we were simply blown away by Chena Huts' unique and fantastic location. What makes it so special is not only the fact, that the hotel was set

up so close to Yala that you can literally feel the proximity of the wild animals, but it also sits right along the coastline and is surrounded by the sea. If you ever had problems getting to sleep, forget about it! The ocean and the beautiful sound of the wild shore breaking around the giant rocks will take good care of you and rock you to sleep!

Arriving at the reception we were warmly welcomed by a very friendly and very openminded staff, who already had some delicious cocktails and hot towels at hand that we could use to swipe off the dust. Afterwards, they showed us around the place and guided us to our room which was the next breathtaking experience.

### ACCOMMODATION

Along a lovely little path and surrounded by pure nature, we got to our accommodation -our private 'Chena Hut'. We were told that for centuries people in Sri Lanka cultivated small clearings in the woods which were called 'Chena' and they built up little huts close to their harvest to ensure protection from wild animals. So from the outside, our bungalow was perfectly inserted into the rest of the environment and it really looked like some kind of wooden hut, which was quite impressing, but the big surprise came when we got inside. The 'rooms' are even bigger than expected from the outside and there is actually nothing missing. We straight away fell in love with the high ceilings, the glass walls, which allow you an exclusive view into the wilderness, the huge and very comfortable bed, the luxurious bathroom and our little mini-bar, which included a coffee machine, which provided us with some excellent coffee- a very rare commodity in Sri Lanka! And if that wasn't enough: we even had a private little plunge pool on our shaded outdoor deck, which was always inviting to take a little dip. From that deck we could also watch the nearby waterhole, which was dried out unfortunately, but if you visit Chena Huts during the rainy season, you will probably be able to spot some elephants, wild boars or water buffalos straight in front of your window.

#### RESTAURANT

The food was not only good, it was excellent! We were asked every single day, what we would like to have for breakfast, lunch and dinner. We usually started our day with a homemade Muesli, that was absolutely delicious and- as we've grown up in Germany- wouldn't say that very often. Well, if you're not the Muesli-type of person in the morning, there are plenty of other things on the menu, that will definitely cheer your heart. Due to the fact, that we had such a sumptuous breakfast most of the time, we unfortunately had to skip the lunch, but we are sure that it is just as brilliant as everything

The dinner, that was served under a starry sky, is normally arranged by menu with a very good mixture of western and local cuisine, but the chef is always around the dining area and very willing to provide whatever is required to make you happy.

#### ACTIVITIES

The two managers –Vangih und Samputh – who would always greet us with a beautiful smile and who overall took great care of us, also selected two activities for us: a game drive into Yala National Park and a bushwalk around the resort. We started off with the bushwalk and had to leave our cosy bed early in the morning to get the chance to see some wild animals. The ranger then took us on a walk along the coast and to some nearby waterholes. Along the way he showed us various tracks belonging to animals, which would frequently 'visit' the resort during the night and apparently a leopard took the same morning route as we did, because we could see some fresh

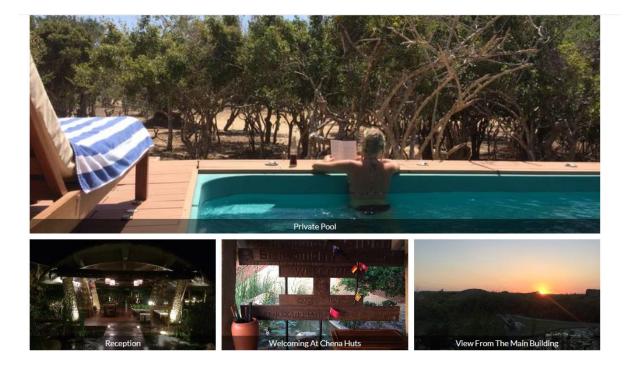
tracks crossing our footprints when we walked back. That was quite an intense feeling and we were more than happy, that we had our ranger with us! The next day we went on our game drive to the Yala National Park, where we were lucky enough to see not only an elephant with its little one, but also some different

types of birds and even a leopard crossed our way – again! But this time we could actually see it. There were quite a few jeeps driving around the park, which seemed a bit disturbing to us, but our ranger knew how to escape the crowd and so we really had the chance to enjoy the tranquility of this beautiful nature reservoir.

#### TO SUM UP

The best part of our stay were the people who run the resort. Their confident, friendly and accommodating nature and the charming ways made our holiday a dream!





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