

EXPLORE

## Check in: the five star Sri-Lankan organic estate

TRAVELLING

CHECK IN

25 October 2016

Set on 58 acres, Ulagalla, one of UGA Escapes (a homegrown eco-hotel brand) has an old world colonial meets organic farm feel. Arrive at the 100 year old former chieftain's mansion complete with a cooling courtyard pool and languid fans and take part in a ringing the bell and lighting a candle ceremony to mark your arrival.

### The rooms

There are just 20 eco-chalets on the whole estate, set in a rough 1.6 kilometre circle. Each comes with a large living room and bedroom (with a locally made four poster) and while it looks luxe the walls are made from compressed paddy straw that is recyclable. Your main priority? Getting in the private pool that puts you front and centre in the Sri Lankan jungle.

### The views

Sitting on stilts the large villas put you at eye level with the surrounding treetops, perfect for monkey spotting.



Watch monkeys leap from the trees and listen to the sounds of the jungle from your own infinity pool

### **The service**

Big smiles abound on the estate, whether you're passing someone on a bike or being shown how to cook with clay pots on open fires.

### **The menu**

Beautifully presented curries and fish from the nearby lake come with amazing side orders of veggies and salad (from wild aubergines to passionfruit), all grown on site in the garden. The estate also has 17 acres of rice paddies so you can order whole meals grown metres away from you.

### **The bar**

The main house serves drinks. Sit on the candlelit veranda after dinner, relax in the colonial style open air library and games room or order a cocktail poolside.



The hotel's organic garden provides all its veggies but is regularly trampled by elephants

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### **The spa**

Hideaway in a lush underground cavern, where a gentle waterfall disappears into a lake of water lilies.

### **The sustainable bit**

The hotel's solar farm provides around 50% of its energy, it harvests rainwater for irrigation and its waste system is all environmentally friendly. Huge efforts have been put in to make almost everything either recyclable or biodegradable and the resort is LEED certified.

### **3 reasons to book**

With 90 species of birds, 100 species of trees, wild elephants (who love to eat in the organic garden) and wildlife reserves nearby this is the jungle, Sri Lankan style.

Ulagalla is in the middle of Sri Lanka's cultural triangle, with Anuradhapura, Dambulla and Mihintale (the birthplace of Buddhism in Sri Lanka) all within reasonable drives.

There are no cars, no stress and healthy delicious food - switch the phone off and have a digital detox.



The hotel can set up private meals for you anywhere on the jungle estate

### **Where is Ulagalla in Sri Lanka?**

Four hours from the airport Ulagalla sits half an hour away from the ancient city of Anuradhapura in the northwest of the teardrop shaped island.

Free Wifi? Yes.

Dog friendly? No.

Child friendly? Yes.