

PRIVATE Clubs



Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort offers 152 rooms, as well as one- and two-bedroom villas, on a former coconut plantation on Sri Lanka's southern coast.

Sri Lanka's Resurgence

Luxe hotel openings on the south coast help island nation move beyond its troubled past

BY ANDREW SESSA

Seven years after Sri Lanka's decades-long civil war ended, and 12 after a tsunami devastated its shoreline, a wave of high-end hospitality has crested in the country. Nowhere is this more true than on its beautiful Indian Ocean south coast, a region largely spared the tumult of the war and now benefiting from better connectivity to the country's largest city, Colombo - new multilane highways have cut down on transit time and flights to the 3-year-old Hambantota airport are finally ramping up. More importantly, in the last year, the region has welcomed several alluring luxury hotels, opening up its palm-filled golden beaches, turquoise waters, lush jungles, historic temples, and deliciously spiced cuisine to the most sophisticated of travelers. Here, five new stays putting this on-the-rise coast on the map.

CHENA HUTS

Bringing to the country the sort of upmarket safari experience found in Africa, this boutique property launched in December 2015 amid the beach dunes skirting Yala National Park, a wildlife reserve known for leopards. Daily naturalist-led game drives attract guests in pursuit of big cats, spotted deer, sloth bears, elephants, and bird life. Back at the lodge, cross-vaulted, thatch-roofed domed suites cosset with air conditioning, plush contemporary furnishings, bathtubs, large decks, and plunge pools. From \$970. 011-94-11-233-1322; ugaescapes.com/chenahuts