

Best beach resorts in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is home to many fantastic beaches, from the horseshoe-shaped Unawatuna, to the picture-perfect Mirissa, to the sleepy Uppuveli. But what are Sri Lanka's best beach resorts?



Posted by Tom Fleming
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Fortress Resort and Spa



Pool at Fortress Resort & Spa. Photo: Press release

Located on the southern tip of the island, near the port of Galle, is the chic Fortress Resort and Spa. The resort sits on Koggala Beach, near the town of Koggala, which is located on the edge of a Design-wise, the resort with more contemporary elements, including open-plan bathrooms and state-of-the-art entertainment systems. Guests can make use of 3 on-site restaurants and a luxury spa and treatment centre, which offers Ayurvedic therapies. Sri Lanka's world-famous stilt fishermen can be seen in the waters in front of the hotel. See them for yourself: a stay at the Fortress Resort and Spa is included in Insight Guides' Sri Lanka Family Adventure trip.

Eraeliya Villas and Gardens

Set amongst 1 acre of colourful tropical gardens, the Eraeliya Villas and Gardens are also located on the southern tip of Sri Lanka, near the picture-perfect Weligama Island. You may have seen Weligama Island on a postcard – it's that picturesque. Boasting access to a private beach and a fantastic sea-facing infinity pool, accommodation at Eraeliya is set in 5 freestanding villas of varying sizes. The villas incorporate elements of Balinese and colonial design, and are furnished with local antiques, giving them an authentic Sri Lankan feel. The gardens – which gradually slope down toward the sea – are manicured to perfection, creating the perfect environment for relaxing; they are doubtless one of Eraeliya's most appealing features.



Eraeliya Villas & Gardens room. Photo: Press release

Amanwella Resort



Amanwella Beach Club. Photo: Press release

Inspired (and designed) by Geoffrey Bawa, the famous Sri Lankan architect, the hillside Amanwella Resort is nestled amongst a picturesque coconut grove. To access the resort, you must travel along a gravel road, through lush vegetation. The resort stretches along a softly curving idyllic beach, near the fishing village of Tangalle. There are 30 suites in total, all of which open up onto private terraces and feature a plunge pool. The suites are dotted throughout the resort's hilly grounds, with some sitting up in the hills, and some closer to the beach. There are several dining options, and many of the delicious meals served in the restaurant are made using ingredients grown in the resort's organic garden.

Kumu Beach

This intimate, contemporary 10-room resort is due to open in September 2017. Kumu occupies an elevated strip of land overlooking the boulder-strewn Balapitiya Beach on Sri Lanka's southwest coast. All rooms are ocean facing, and boast fantastic views. Upgrade to a suite for a private balcony and terrace. Rooms are spacious – with an open-plan layout – and feature batik fabrics. Colours are neutral, and vibrant modern art adorns the walls. The design of the resort is contemporary, with an emphasis on symmetry: sweeping lawns meet at the 23-metre infinity pool. The restaurant specialises in local cuisine, and serves delicious seafood dishes.



Kumu Beach Room. Photo: Press release

Reef Villa & Spa



Main House Suite at Reef Villa & Spa. Photo: Press release

With just seven private suites, and set amongst 3 acres of landscaped tropical gardens, the atmosphere at Reef Villa & Spa is very personal and intimate. The gardens are dotted with lily ponds and even feature an aviary for rescue birds, where Basil the Exclectus parrot rules the roost. The gardens lead to a quiet, palm-fringed beach. Inside, the suites are furnished in Indo-colonial style, with stunning 150-year-old four-poster beds. The Reefresh Spa offers a range of unique treatments, including pineapple and papaya facials; whilst the resort restaurant, Summer Breeze, serves dishes made with fresh seafood, local produce and hand-made bread.

Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort

Set by a secluded paradise beach on Sri Lanka's south coast, the Anantara Tangalle features 120 guest rooms and 32 villas, with the latter featuring private swimming pools. Anantara Tangalle is set amidst a picturesque 21-acre coconut plantation. The restaurant offers a stunning cliff edge location with sweeping ocean views, and serves a range of local and international dishes. Also for guests' use is a spa, which offers specialist Ayurvedic and reflexology treatments. Yoga and meditation classes are also offered by the resort, and can be enjoyed either in the resort grounds or on the beach itself.



Room at Anantara. Photo: Press release

Palagama Beach Resort



Palagama Beach Resort pool and ocean view. Photo: Press release

Palagama Beach Resort has been designed to replicate a Sri Lankan coastal village. It sits on the lesser-visited northwest coast of the island, which is a great place to spot dolphins from. Traditional construction techniques used have been specifically to minimize any impact on the surrounding landscape. Internationally acclaimed designer Cecil Balmond designed the resort; it blends modern comforts together with a more traditional, immersive experience. Accommodation is provided in beach cabanas, villas, or garden cabanas. Rooms are tastefully decorated. There also is a spectacular infinity swimming pool and indulgent spa treatment centre for guests to enjoy. Yoga classes are available.

Uga Bay

Uga Bay is a charming mixture of Sri Lankan and Mediterranean architectural styles. The u-shaped resort features 46 rooms, all of which come with either a view of the sea or the well-manicured tropical gardens. Owned and run by Uga Escapes, the Uga Bay Resort is famous for its excellent food, idyllic setting, warm hospitality and stunning infinity pool. Sitting on the west coast of Sri Lanka, Uga Bay is particularly popular with divers and snorkelers due to the nearby coral reef. Slightly further out at sea are several World War 2 wrecks, which are also popular dive spots.



Uga Bay beach. Photo: Press release

Sri Villas

Situated just outside the town of Bentota, Sri Villas sit at the head of an idyllic stretch of sand that extends for over 500 metres. The beach is practically deserted for most of the year, apart from when turtles come to nest and lay their eggs. The rest of the year it is perfect for sunset walks. Accommodation is provided in 3 unique 2-storey villas, with a total of 9 rooms. Yoga lessons are also available, for an extra charge.



Evening at Sri Villas .Photo: Press release