



Is a lack of sleep shortening your life?

Plus the £2,000-a-session tattooist the A-list love

Weekend

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The things women don't tell men (and why)

*Oh no! He's
booked a romantic
mini-break
without the kids*



Best places to
stay in Sri Lanka



Boutique luxury
on the beach



A chic eco-lodge
in a national park



Bolt holes on the
coast and inland

Travel

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'Midday and we're wading through a swirling river in the Grand Canyon of Jordan'

Jane Knight on an Arabian adventure



20 coolest hotels in Sri Lanka

From romantic escapes in the hill country to luxury tents by the beach, **James Ellis** picks the best boutique places to stay

West Coast and Galle

1 Kumu Beach Balapitiya

Overlooking the boulder-strewn Balapitiya beach, this newly opened hotel has ten rooms and suites, all with Indian Ocean panoramas and many with private gardens or terraces. The rooms are spacious, with open-plan layouts and neutral colour palettes enhanced by colour splashes from the batik cushions and vibrant works of modern local art. Gardens include sweeping lawns, a timber sundeck and an infinity pool.

Details B&B double rooms cost from £140 a night (07786 237594, srilankacollection.com)

2 Amanwella Tangalle

Aman's second Sri Lankan resort, Amanwella, lies in a mature coconut grove on one of Sri Lanka's most picturesque beaches, that's great for surfing. There are 30 suites on a hillside just above the sand, each with floor-to-ceiling glass walls that open out on to a private courtyard with a plunge pool. There's also a 47m infinity pool with a terrace overlooking the ocean. The restaurant and beach club serve freshly caught fish and dinner can also be enjoyed on the beach.

Details B&B doubles cost from £500 a night (amanwella.com)

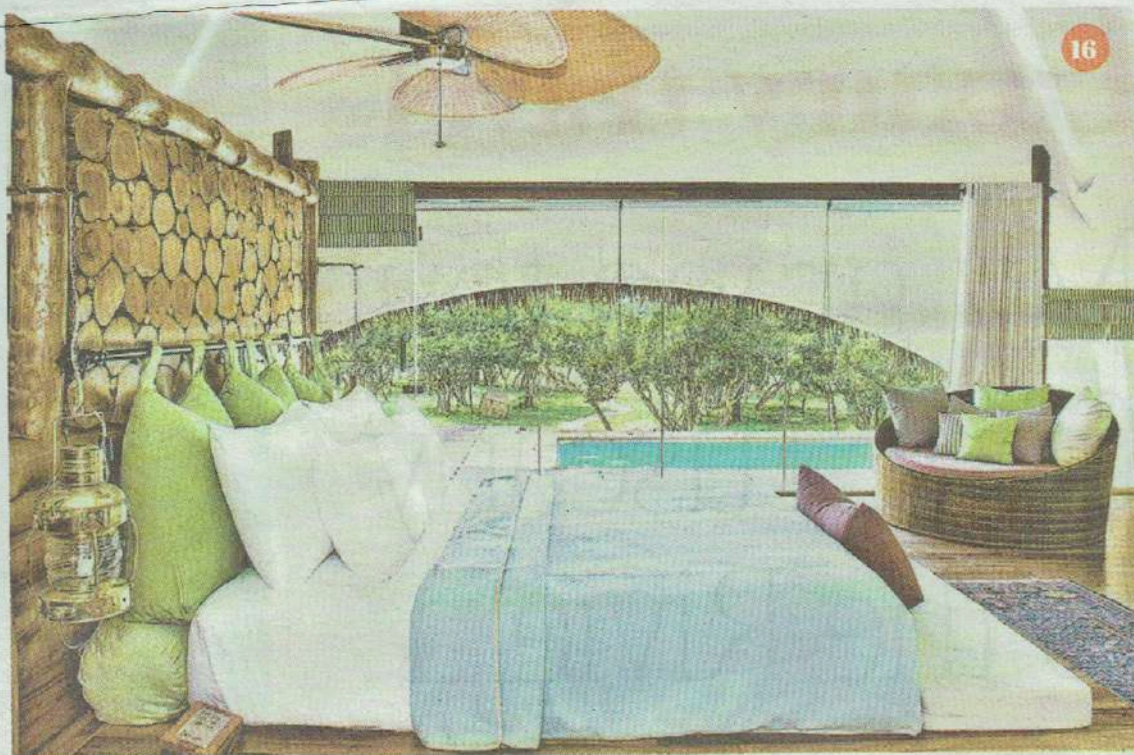
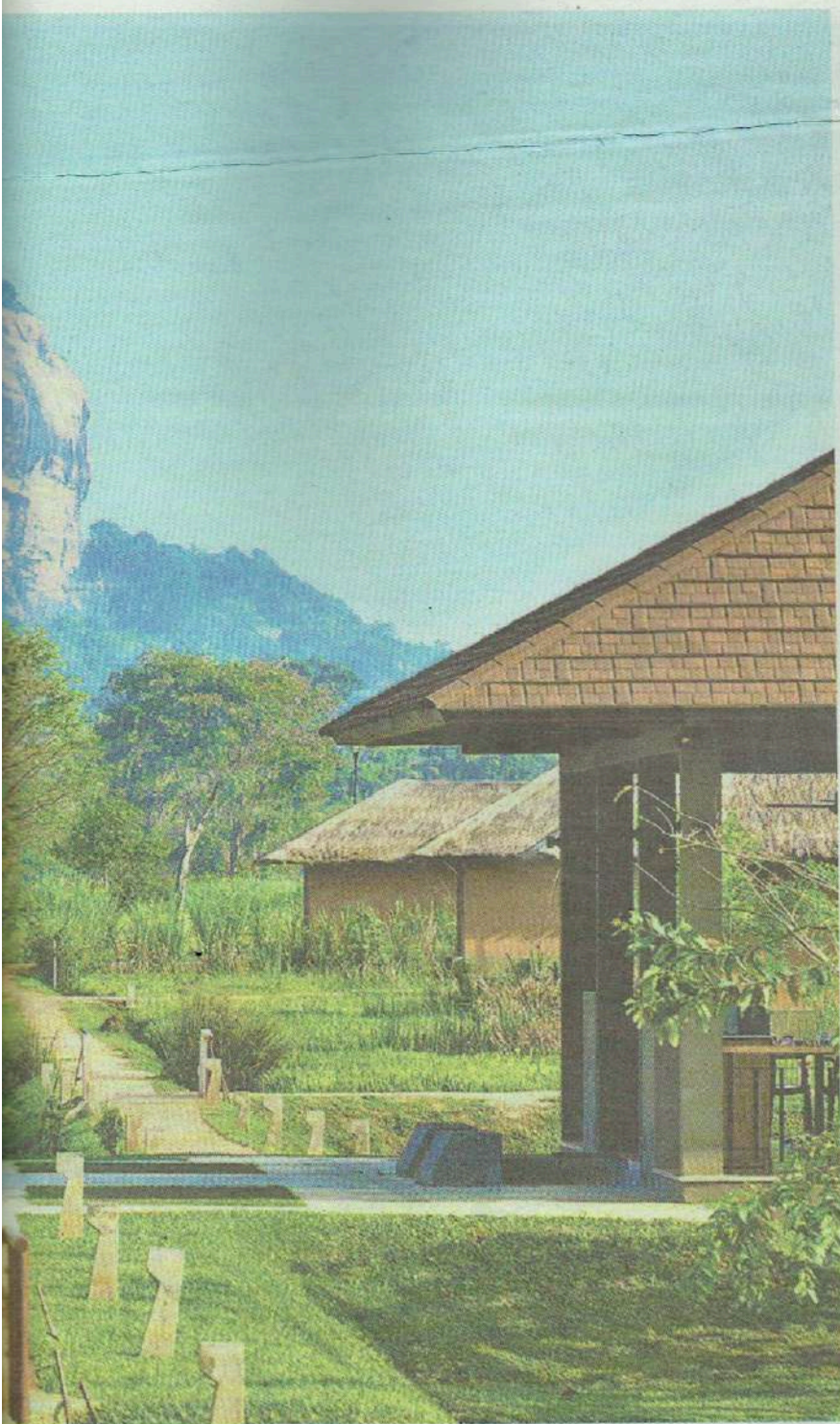


3 Why House Talpe

Set five miles from Galle Fort, this boutique hotel sits in three acres of landscaped gardens, with tropical plants, fruit and spice trees.

The hotel has eight elegant rooms, three in the main house (a classic Sinhalese villa), three in a garden villa and two in individual cottages. The atmosphere is one of a cosy private home, albeit with gorgeous food, an Ayurvedic spa and a pool. Dalawella beach, a lagoon created by a protective reef, is a tuk-tuk ride away.

Details B&B doubles cost from £345 a night (whyhousesrilanka.com) ▶



protégé of Sri Lanka's legendary architect Sir Geoffrey Bawa, the resort has 30 stilted water villas tucked into lush, green landscape. Most of them have private plunge pools. The split-level bar has sunset views over the rock itself.

Details Seven nights' half-board costs from £1,900pp, including flights (020 7819 9770, ampersandtravel.com)

12 Ulagalla Resort Anuradhapura

Surrounded by 58 acres of grounds, including paddy fields, a forest and a lake, this plush hideaway centres on a 150-year-old colonial mansion house with a colonnaded façade. There are 20 purpose-built villas with private plunge pools and canopy beds. Sri Lanka's ancient capital, Anuradhapura, is close by.

Details Eight-nights' B&B, including four at Ulagalla and four at the Kandy House, costs from £3,000pp, including flights and the services of a chauffeur/guide (020 7426 9888, blacktomato.com)

13 Diyabubula Dambulla

Dambulla has long been famed for its ancient cave paintings and proximity to the Lion Rock in Sigiriya, and this is the place to stay when you see them. Diyabubula consists of five rustic villas designed by one of the country's greatest living artists, Laki Senanayake. The resort surrounds Laki's studio,

where guests can draw and paint. Meals are vegetarian and no alcohol is served.

Details Half-board doubles cost from £160 a night (diyabubula.com)

National parks

14 Gal Oya Lodge Gal Oya

On the island's eastern side, the remote Gal Oya National Park provides a less crowded alternative to Yala, and when it comes to where to stay, there are really no alternatives to this eco-lodge. Set in a 20-acre private forest, it features 11 rustic bungalows and villas with floor-to-ceiling windows. All the food is from local fishermen and farmers, and herbs are grown on site.

Details B&B doubles cost from £169 (0330 1003180, mrandmrsmith.com)

15 Wild Coast Tented Lodge Yala

Set to open in November, this new lodge sits between the leopard and elephant hotspot Yala National Park and a beautiful beach. It will feature 28 luxurious tented cocoon suites with copper bathtubs and private pools. Families will be able to book cocoons

with adjoining "urchins", smaller tented suites perfect for little ones.

Details All-inclusive doubles cost from £680, including two game drives a day (resplendentceylon.com)

16 Chena Huts Yala

With the Indian Ocean on one side and Yala National Park on the other, Chena Huts has 14 luxury wooden cabins, each with its own plunge pool and a huge comfy bed inside. Expect daily game drives in the park, spotting elephants, leopards and tropical birds. There is a traditional

Sri Lankan menu, as well as an international one, at the beachside restaurant.

Details Doubles cost from £432 a night (mrandmrsmith.com)

South coast

17 Villa don Hendrick Tangalle

Near the fishing town of Tangalle, and just inland from the coast, Villa don Hendrick is somewhere between a hotel and a B&B. The original colonial bungalow has a living room and a library, with rooms in three bungalows.

Details B&B doubles cost from £95 a night (i-escape.com)

18 Tri Lake Koggala

For the ultimate in romance, opt to arrive at Tri by old-fashioned fishing boat, sailing across the waters of Lake Koggala. Choose from treehouse-style rooms or lakeside villas with plunge pools, and dine on a six-course dinner.

Details Half-board doubles cost from £243 a night (mrandmrsmith.com)

East coast

19 Anantaya Passikudah

This hotel may be on the large side, but it is one of the best on the east coast thanks to rustic-chic styling and its location on a fabulous stretch of beach. Rooms have large picture windows and Thai and Balinese styling. There are two restaurants, including a signature seafood offering, the Blue Coral.

Details Half-board doubles cost from £146 (01306 747008, kuoni.co.uk)

20 Jungle Beach Trincomalee

Ever since the civil war ended eight years ago, people have been talking about Sri Lanka's beautiful east coast opening up. With three types of room, guests can choose to overlook the beach, a lagoon or the jungle. There's also a spa and a pool.

Details B&B doubles cost from £157 a night (ugaescapes.com)



Uppuveli beach near the Jungle Beach resort