

A M A N G A L L A

Experience Guide





There is an ancient Sri Lankan proverb which beautifully encompasses the island's enriching journey: "Wisdom can be found travelling."

Gently cusped at the confluence of the Palk Strait, Gulf of Mannar, Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka's fate and history have always been betrothed in the hands of water – its culture and identity as a nation forever shaped by the flow of currents and the ebbs of the waves.

Amangalla, set on the heart of the UNESCO world heritage-listed Galle Fort stands as a living testament to this journey entwined in water where one can wander through the annals of time exploring the island's layers of history and storied past.





Revisit the Past

Galle Fort

The fort is best seen on foot. This can be a private walk with our Amangalla fort map, a historical tour with your butler, or a ramparts stroll at sunset. Exploring the fort on bicycle is also a pleasant way to explore this UNESCO world heritage site.

The Fort was established by the Portuguese in 1505 when a small foreign trading post started operations. In 1640, the Dutch captured Galle, and by 1663 had constructed great ramparts and massive bastions to protect their interests. Within these ramparts, narrow streets are lined with houses displaying their Dutch and English heritage. Flanked by pillared verandas, these colonial homes and government offices remain in use today.

Around the Fort

Amangalla is a leisurely stroll away from the Groote Kerk (Dutch Reform Church), the Governor's House, vast spice warehouses, the Court Square, the Old Dutch Hospital, the lighthouse and Meera Jumma mosque. Further around the ramparts are the Dagoba at the Buddhist temple and the District Judge's house, now the Army Camp, with its fragrant frangipani trees. Panoramic views of Galle and St. Mary's Cathedral may be enjoyed from the three highest bastions of the fort named the Sun, Moon and Star.

In the late afternoon the fort community take their daily passeggiata and gather on the ramparts to take in the sunset and catch up on the gossip of the day.

Start from the lighthouse and walk clockwise round to the temple to be a part of this lovely daily ritual.

Including a private guide and beverages.



The Town of Galle

Just outside the fort's ancient gate is the town of Galle, best explored by tuk tuk or by foot. Its fruit and fish markets, the bustle of the Main Street bazaar and a commercial port are in sharp contrast to the historical calm of the fort.

Take a hotel car or a tuk tuk into town and then wander Main Street and be prepared to haggle the best prices.





Cultural Insight

Sri Lanka claims the world's second-oldest continuous written history – one that chronicles the Indo-Aryan Sinhalese or 'People of the Lion', who arrived from northern India around 500 BC to establish magnificent Buddhist kingdoms on the central plains, and the Tamils of Dravidian stock, who arrived a few centuries later from southern India. Colonised by the Portuguese, the Dutch and finally the British, the island gained independence in 1948. Amangalla delights in offering insight into the rich cultural heritage of this fascinating country and its many influences.



Temple Tour

Many serene temples abound on this blessed island. Three of our favorites are Yatagala, Rhummasala and Nawamunisaya, all are within 30 minutes' drive of the Galle Fort.

Yatagala Temple is one of the oldest in the region and set in a beautiful valley of rice paddies and jungle. At the top of 120 steps, Yatagala is a 1,200-year-old rock temple with a beautiful image room. A 1,000-year-old Bo tree and a sacred meditation cave are some of the most serene spots on the island. We can also arrange a Buddhist blessing for you by the local monks at Yatagala if you wish.

Rhummasala is a newer temple, built by the Japanese after the 2004 Tsunami on the magical head land across the bay from the Fort. It is a stunning location for sunsets with breathtaking views back to Galle. The stupa is of beautiful Zen simplicity on a huge scale.

Nawamunisaya (*Nawa* meaning 9 and *Saya* is Sanskrit for stupa) is the simplest of all the three temples, located in a small village close by the sea and it has a very special story. Built by a woman who lived a life with no children, a Brahmin fortune teller advised her to make an offering to ensure she would be blessed with children in next life. Determined to be a mother, she proceeded to build a temple composed of one large and eight smaller stupas, to represent the children of her next life. There is a small preschool located within the grounds, should you like to visit during the morning and meet the children, just let us know.

Tip when entering temples: please remove your shoes and ensure you have a shawl to cover your shoulders. If you are lucky to be here on a *pooya* day, full moon, then save your temple visit until late afternoon and join the local population in their *puja* offerings of fresh flower blooms and incense. When visiting two of the three temples with a blessing, kindly allow around 3 hours.



Market Visits

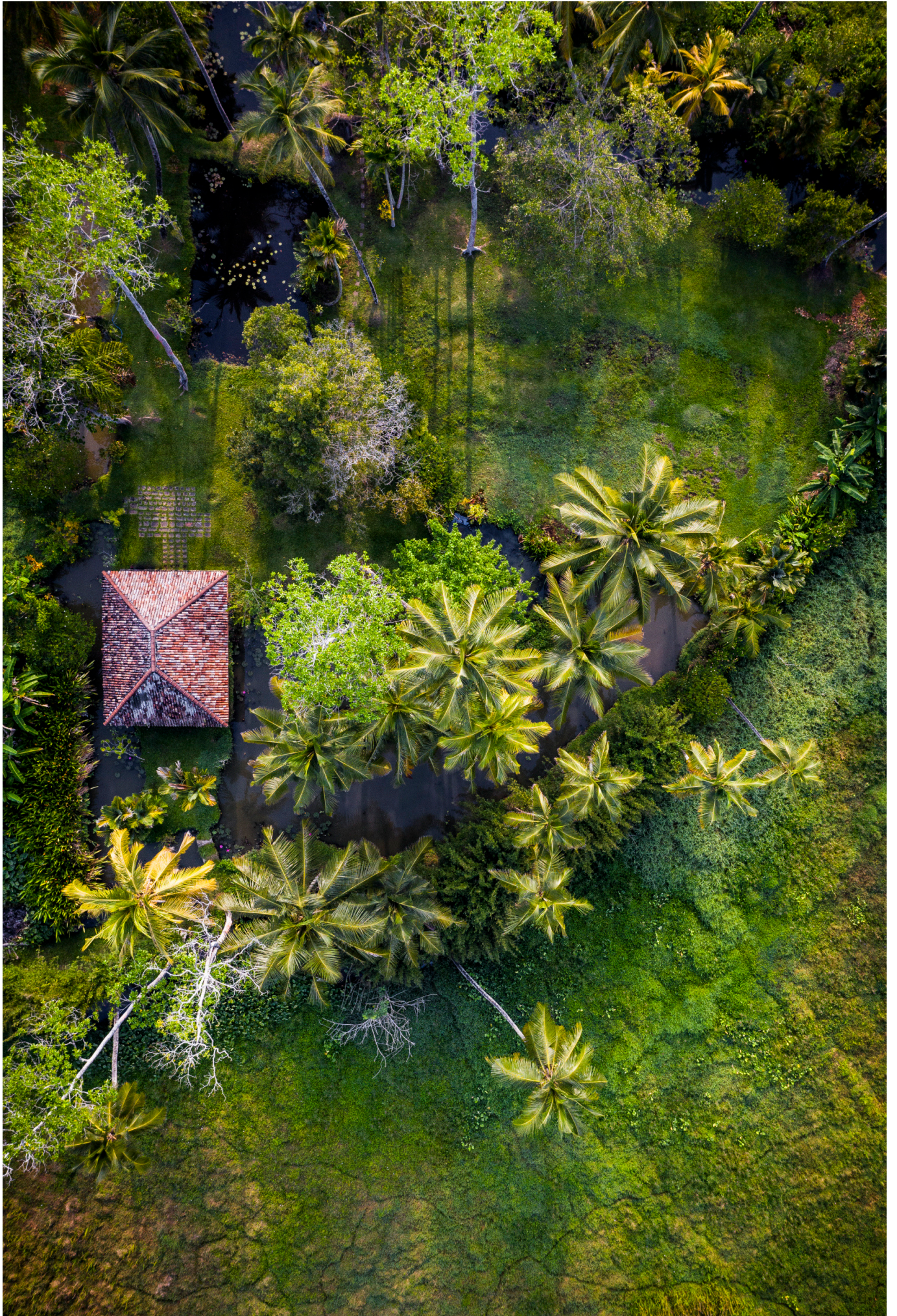
The markets on the fringes of Galle Fort are home to an explosion of colours and aromas from the tropical harvests of its lush island soil and the rich bounty of the sea. Here, produce from local farms, home gardens and estates as well as the day's freshest catch converge into a medley of flavours and textures that shape the seasonal fare of Amangalla and each island home.



Mask Face Painting

A traditional craft cherished in the islands for generations, the art of mask-making and painting is an intrinsic cultural facet in Sri Lanka.

A local artisan makes these hand carved masks from wood and teaches guests how to paint them through a lively and colourful class upon request.





Adventures On Land

The Geoffrey Bawa Tour

One of our most beloved excursion takes you away from Amangalla and immerses you in the world of Geoffrey Bawa. Sri Lanka's most influential and prolific architect and South Asia's leading guru of tropical architecture, Geoffrey Bawa almost singlehandedly shaped modern Sri Lanka with an oeuvre spanning almost 70 years encompassing a wide range of work, most notably in southwest Sri Lanka.

An hour drive to Bentota takes you to the heart of his buildings and home. Visit hotels, private houses and train stations. Lunaganga was his personal house and garden created from an abandoned rubber estate. This project occupied him for fifty years, and he used it as a test bed for his emerging ideas. The result is a series of outdoor rooms conceived with an exquisite sense of theatre as a civilised wilderness on a quiet backwater in the greater garden of Sri Lanka.



Handunugoda Tea Plantation

Handunugoda is a 40-minute drive to the south of Galle and is one of the lowest lying tea estates in Sri Lanka. As well as tea, they also have rubber and cinnamon plantations. Walk through the rolling hills of the tea estate and take a step back in time with tea and cakes on the verandah of the planters' bungalow, accompanied by the elegant stories of the planter himself.

A tour of the old workings of the factory follows, where they still use the original English machines from over 100 years ago. Finally, to the tasting room, to try a myriad of teas, including the unique 'White Tea', they are the only tea plantation producing white teas in Sri Lanka.



Cinnamon Estate

Discover a private cinnamon estate situated in the belt of Koggala Lake in Southern Sri Lanka. Known since the dawn of exploration as the finest in the Orient, Sri Lanka's *Cinnamomum verum* variety is known as the "true cinnamon" and the island's trading history is strongly tied to the spice that one Dutch captain once claimed, "When one is downwind in the island, once can still smell the cinnamon eight leagues out to sea."

Amangalla is proud to introduce to its resident guests with a complete tour at the cinnamon plantation, followed by a class on how to harvest it, a private guided tour at their factory ending by a unique and exclusive picnic lunch or sunset drinks at a paddy island overlooking rice fields.



Shopping

The fort is home to some eclectic shopping from indigenous gemstones, to wonderful jewelled kaftans, local Sri Lankan sarongs, colonial antiques, painted boxes to a pot of jam. Please ask your Butler for our Amangalla map and our shopping recommendations; it is easiest to walk around the fort for shopping.

Jewellers

The fort is also home to some of the best jewellers on the island, with many old family businesses creating bespoke designs, as well their own inspired creations. Sri Lankan sapphires are some of the best in the world, as well as semi precious stones: aquamarines, tourmalines, topaz and moonstones are in abundance.

We can arrange a private audience with some of the top jewellers to view their best stones; you can even design your own unique creation.

Galle Town

The hustle and bustle of Main Street is filled with shops selling colourful textiles, and every bit of kitsch and cooking utensil you could possibly need. The fruit and fish markets are on the esplanade, with the spice shops adjacent, and the vegetable market is tucked off Main Street.

Antiques

If you are searching for antiques, similar to the beautiful pieces here in the hotel, there are several shops dotted up and down the coast. Here in the fort, we have one, and additional two within 20 minutes to the south of Galle and a whole town full, 45 minutes to the north. Collections range from wooden statuary, furniture, ceramics and heritage pieces from Sri Lanka's colourful colonial history.

Local artisans reproducing replicas of antique pieces as well as tropical modern furnishings and accessories also abound nearby.





Ocean-based Adventures

With an uninterrupted embrace of the Indian Ocean marking its shores all the way to Antarctica, the waters of Southern Sri Lanka teems with a myriad of creatures big and small, all calling it home or making their journeys to the vast open expanse of the oceans and setting the stage for adventures and explorations borne out of the water.



Whale and Dolphin Watching

Sri Lanka is considered one of the best places in the world to see Blue Whales, and sometimes Sperm Whales. Additionally, large pods of spinner dolphins frolic in the calm waters of the continental shelf south of Dondra Head. Mirissa harbor is only 40 minutes drive to the south of Galle and 75 minutes from Tangalle.

To see the whales, you must start early and travel to the edge of the continental shelf, 6 km from Dondra Head, the most southerly point of Sri Lanka. A Butler is sent along with you, taking you to private beaches and spotless snorkeling areas followed by picnic lunch, golden sunset sessions accompanied by canapés and champagne. This is generally possible from late November to early April, though it can sometimes be done at other times of year if the sea is calm enough.

The Lain

The Lain is an 8.5 metre fibreglass speedboat with a three hundred horsepower, four strokes Mercury engine. Its advantage is that it can get out to the whales in less than thirty minutes.



Sailing Experience

Catering locally made Catamarans of 48 and 53' size designed to accommodate up to 6 guests plus a captain, chef, butler and crew members. The outdoor living room and fully equipped kitchen provide everything a chef needs to prepare a 5-star meal at sea. The view from the upper deck is stunning. It's the preferred spot for observing whales and dolphins taking in the sunset.

Sailing Cruises

Sunset cruise departing from Mirissa Harbor at 3:00pm, includes 2 cocktails per person and canapés. Please allow 3 hours for this experience.

Half day cruise departing from Mirissa Harbor at 10:00am, includes 2 cocktails per person and picnic lunch, please allow 4 hours for this experience. This journey includes snorkeling, surfing depending on guests and lunch served on the boat.

Full day whale watching cruise departing from Mirissa port at 07:00am, includes morning tea, picnic lunch and afternoon tea, please allow 7 hours for this experience. This journey includes paddle boarding, surfing, whale watching and lunch onboard overlooking Weligama depending on guests.



Culinary Experiences

Shaped by spices and honed by history, the culinary experiences in Sri Lanka is as mesmerising as it is diverse. From authentic Sri Lankan dishes and regional culinary traditions found only in the southern shores of the island to the best of European cuisine intrinsic to the fabric of flavours of this ancient trading crossroads, every palate of Ceylon's historic and cultural layers are a discovery worth every spoonful in Amangalla.



Afternoon Tea

Few experiences offer the nostalgic appeal of Amangalla's illustrious past and the golden age of travel than the iconic afternoon tea at the hotel – a must for any traveler coming to Galle Fort.

Afternoon tea is served every day from 3.00pm to 5.30pm. There is the finest Ceylon tea accompanied by homemade scones, whipped cream and jam. Have it served on the Library Veranda, in The Zaal, at the poolside or in your room.

Sunset Cocktails

Before dusk sets, head to the Sunset Balcony Bar on the topmost floor of the main hall for a handcrafted martini or a tropical cocktail while watching the sun turn golden as it slowly dips into the terra cotta roofs of the surrounding structures at the fort and into the breathtaking horizon where the sky meets the edge of the Indian Ocean.



Traditional Roti Dinner in the Rice Paddy

As one of our guests' favourite experience and we do not want to give too much away...after all, who doesn't like a surprise? How does the sound of a traditional Sri Lankan roti dinner on an island surrounded by rice paddy, lit by endless candles and flaming torches, the orange hues of the waning sun setting over the emerald rice fields as you sip Arrack sours grab you?

A dinner of roti (traditional Sri Lankan street food) follows...and for those of you who do not like spicy food, it is one of the best venues we know of for a private dining experience, whatever the cuisine.



Cooking Class

After breakfast, Chef will take you to the various markets in Galle town to see where locals buy their eclectic and colourful array of spices and ingredients. Continue inland by vehicle, weaving your way amongst the ubiquitous coconut palms, unspoilt villages and rice paddies to the small village of Yatagala. Cook traditional rice and curry in clay pots with Lalitha, who is from Yatagala, in the traditional kitchen that we have built for you on a stunning island, surrounded by paddy fields. Enjoy your culinary creation in the 'omlo/omo', a thatched or tiled pavilion supported by wooden pillars, the cornucopia of smells and tastes complementing the sublime rice paddy views.



Wellness in Amangalla

Steeped in history and colonial style, Amangalla languishes in the heart of Galle fort. The Baths is our unique spa, which recaptures memories of a bygone era of "Taking the waters", restoring the body and soothing the mind.

Five serene treatment rooms offer a variety of treatments unashamedly simple yet holding a sophistication that makes them a uniquely personal experience. Choose from signature massages, Ayurvedic massage, facials, Asian pressure point therapy, scrubs & wraps.



The Baths

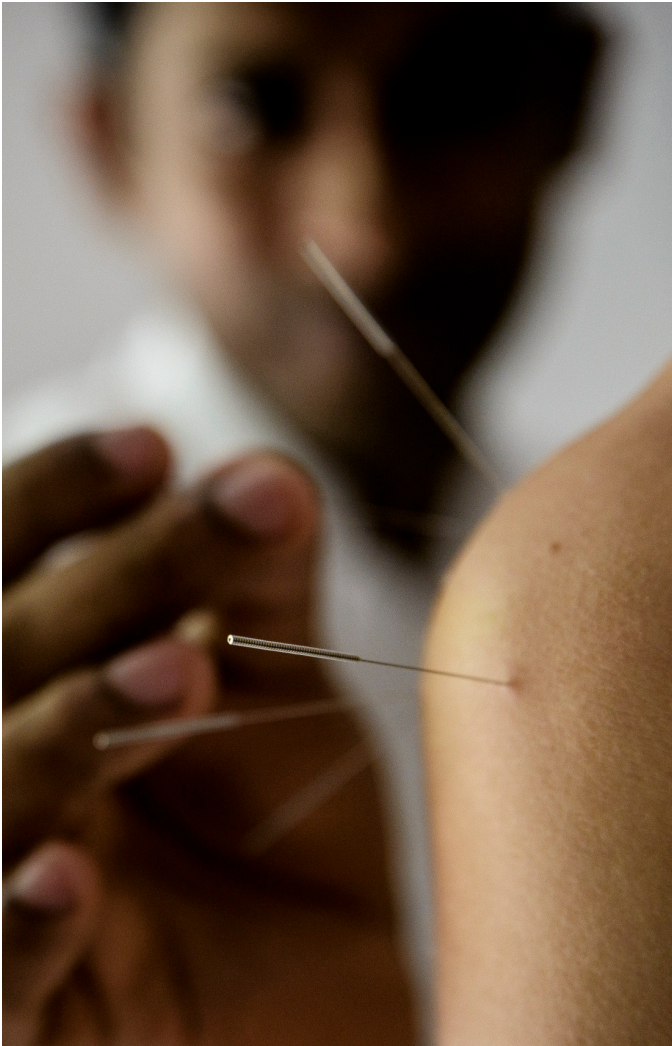
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Hydrotherapy

Our Hydrotherapy pools are a unique extension of the relaxing experience known as The Baths. With candlelit recesses, tall ceilings and traditional archways the two private hydrotherapy pools are an overwhelming experience in ancient indulgences.

Whether hopping from the intense heat of the Sauna to the icy cold plunge pool for an invigorating health hit or from the massage pools to the shadowy steam room for a soothing rejuvenation, our Hydrotherapy experience is as deeply relaxing and calming as it is stimulating and revitalizing.



Spa Programs

We believe that a spa should unfold as a holistic pathway, which opens up the channels to nurture one's life force. Amangalla Spa embraces a deep understanding of the mind, body, and spirit and the individual needs and interdependences of these three vital elements of human life. We are pleased to invite you on a Half or Full Day Program that will lead you along a path of rewarding body movement, revitalizing spa treatments, and meaningful rituals, which will gently bring you to a destination of peace and wellbeing.

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Ayurveda

Ayurveda is a science of life (Ayur = life, Veda = science or knowledge). It is an ancient system of healing that sees health as our birthright. We are made of five elements that create health & wellness. However due to imbalanced of these elements we have different kinds of body issues, internally or externally. Ayurveda's goal is to help ourselves get re balanced and restore health

At Amangalla, Ayurveda forms an essential part of the wellness for the guests. The Ayurveda experience has been designed for every individual's desire to heal, relax and revitalize.

Salon and Barber Shop

The traditionally styled salon offers manicure, pedicures and a third-generation barber shop, which provides haircuts and old fashion wet shave.



Guided Meditation

For those seeking to find their centre and be grounded in Sri Lanka's enriching grounds, guided meditation sessions are offered within Amangalla's lush 200-year-old gardens.

Private Yoga

Wake with the sun and join your personal yoga instructor on the fort lighthouse, the pavilion or in the lush hotel grounds.

Sessions are tailored to suit individual needs, goals and fitness levels and promise that rejuvenating endorphin rush brought on by exercising in nature.

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Amangalla
10 Church Street, Galle Fort, Galle, Sri Lanka
Tel: (94) 91 223 3388 Fax: (94) 91 223 3355 Email: amangalla@aman.com

aman.com