

# Thehoneycombers.com – Villa Pooja Kanda, The Ambassador’s House : Galle Fort, Saffron & Blue

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The screenshot shows the Honeycombers website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Singapore, Bali, Jakarta, Hong Kong, Kids, and Brides. A search bar is located on the right side of the header. Below the navigation bar, the Honeycombers logo is displayed on the left, and a search bar with the placeholder text "FIND Restaurants in your neighbourhood?" is on the right. A secondary navigation bar includes links for "WHAT'S ON", "EAT", "DRINK", "STYLE", "WELLBEING", "CONNECT", "TRAVEL", "SG GUIDE", and "SIGN UP". On the right side of this bar are icons for "SUBSCRIBE", "CALENDAR", and "VIDEO".

The main content area features an article titled "Luxe Sri Lanka villas for a perfect hideaway in the hinterlands, Galle Fort and by the beach" by Selina Altomonte. The article is accompanied by a large photograph of a two-story white villa with a traditional tiled roof and a wide veranda, set in a lush green landscape. To the right of the article title are social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Below the article, there are three promotional banners. The first banner shows a resort pool area with a thatched roof and palm trees, with the text "ISLAND SUMMER SAVINGS STAY AT 50% OFF". The second banner is titled "EDITOR'S PICKS" and features a photograph of a Formula 1 race car on a track, with the text "What's on this weekend Top 10 things to do this weekend in Singapore: 15-16 September 2018". The third banner is for "THE SHOPS at MARINA BAY Sands SINGAPORE".

# Luxe Sri Lanka villas for a perfect hideaway in the hinterlands, Galle Fort and by the beach

Published September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018

By Selina Altomonte



*Pooja Kanda Villa is the colonial mansion fantasy stay. Photography: courtesy of Elite Havens*

We review three amazing villas for an epic stay across Sri Lanka's South: Villa Pooja Kanda, The Ambassador's House and Saffron & Blue...

Ah, Sri Lanka: almost unanimously the favourite travel spot from Singapore. Hell, it's just three and a half hours away, and so gloriously different from our day-to-day. Wild experiences, epic feasts, heartbreakingly beautiful beaches and some serious history. Now that we've finally been here, we want to go back again and again. On this jaunt, we hit the South Coast of Sri Lanka to

experience three stunning villas with completely unique vibes. Bring your crew, bring the fambam: these amazing properties by [Elite Havens](#) are made for a crowd – but of course, you can keep these hideaways all to yourself...

### **Villa Pooja Kanda: Habaraduwa-Koggala**

For a colonial mansion with sweeping views from a hilltop



*That wraparound balcony delivers the views. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

Our taste of the hinterlands, a rumbly couple of minutes inland from Habaraduwa and up a flagstone drive that would defy anyone else's parking skills. This stunner is your colonial mansion fantasy come true.



***Pooja Kanda Villa was made for spreading out. Photography: Selina Altomonte***

It's a five-bedroom villa (three up, two down), built around a 100-year-old property with a helluva lot of character, from the collected seashells and books, to the daybeds aplenty. It feels like a place built for lounging, dining, and more lounging. The front porch is made for sitting back and sipping tea and reading books all day, balconies for taking in that view.



*Characterful decor and corners for relaxing. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

The real joys here? The staff are seriously the loveliest souls. And they're more than happy to stuff you stupid. Hoppers for breakfast; multi-curry spreads for lunch; seafood barbecues for dinner. Of course chef Sundanda will give you a lesson you if you need to learn the secret to his homemade curry paste. We didn't leave Pooja Kanda for a single meal and we'd go back for the comfort feasts alone.



*The master bedroom is in the original 100-year-old property, which has been extended to create this spectacular villa. Photography: courtesy of Elite Havens*

More indulgences: massages on the back porch and mani-pedis can be arranged by the staff. Yes, you should do it. There's an infinity pool that spills down the hillside; deck chairs for more lounging beside a wall of greenery. Bringing kids? There's a serious stash of toys and the grounds are great for games, rollicking, and gazing at papaya trees. And here's one magic moment: we witnessed the resident pea hen's eggs hatch one morning. Told you this place was special.



*Take a dip: Pooja Kanda Villa feels gloriously secluded. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

Yes it's close to Galle Fort (20-30 minutes away), but we're saving that for later. Short ride to the epic Wijaya beach. This is the one you've probably heard your friends rave about. Swing on a rope over the water, take a dip in the rock pools or chill in the seaside restaurant sipping on coconuts (but word t the wise: visit at low tide). You can also go cycling in the hinterland, scuba diving and whale watching (November to April is the season for the latter).



*One of the world's special places is just a short drive away: Wijaya beach. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

But really, it's tempting to stay in your sprawling mansion all day, every day.

*Villa Pooja Kanda, Meepe Hospital Road, Habaraduwa-Koggala, South Coast, Sri Lanka*

## The Ambassador's House: Galle Fort

*When you want to stay in a jewel box in the heart of Galle Fort*



*The next-level living room at Ambassador's House, right in the heart of Galle Fort. Photography: courtesy of Elite Havens*

On to Galle Fort and The Ambassador's House on Lighthouse Street: a swoonworthy stay in a heritage property (we're talking 17th century) that was a favourite of the Sri Lankan Ambassador to Pakistan, Iraq and Bangladesh. There's more history than you can poke a stick at right here, and it's not just history on your doorstep – the doorstep itself is historic. It's extraordinary to have so much lounging, sunning and sundowner space, right in the heart of the old town. (Consider it the ultimate indulgence to be in a villa where one can't even hear one's child tantruming at the other side.)



*Every corner of this grand old villa is divine. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

This is another five-bedroom stay (two up, three down), with a lounge area populated by the most enormous sofa I've encountered, a dining room that fits a crowd and a great little plunge pool for cooling off after exploring the fort. The decor – massive mirrors, tiny antique boxes – is evocative and authentic. There's an upstairs alfresco area you need to spend some serious time in – all whitewashed walls and sky blue cushions, this space was made for sipping Campari-sodas at sunset.



*We think we've just found the perfect spot for a sundowner. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

What do we love about Galle Fort? The people, for one, are so chill. No pushiness here. It's ridiculously easy to navigate: we tried to get lost, and all roads seem to lead back to Lighthouse Street... and this villa. Hit the lighthouse first – it IS at the end of the street, after all, have a drink with a view at the Old Dutch Hospital, and walk the walls of the Fort. It's amazing.



*So this is literally down the road from your villa. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

And if you've been itching to go shopping since you landed in Sri Lanka, this is your moment. From beautiful textiles at Barefoot, to unique homewares, jewellery and enormous raw gemstones, this town is made for walking... and shopping.



*Just your average lunch at Ambassador's House, whipped up by the private chef  
Photography: Selina Altomonte*

Now here's a tricky situation for you: the food being whipped up in your villa is divine, but you've spotted so many gorgeous restaurants a short stroll away. Our strategy? String hoppers for breakfast and all the amazing curries at home for lunch; dinners out. Heads up: there's a trend in town for modern Middle-Eastern menus... but we didn't come all this way for anything other than Sri Lankan. DO head over to Church Street Social for a memorable meal, and to ogle Galle Fort Hotel.



*Hit the plunge pool after exploring the old town in Galle Fort. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

Need a little day trip? Get on a tuktuk and check out Unawatuna Beach – it’s sleepier than Wijaya, but that might be just what you’re after...

*Ambassador’s House, 60 Lighthouse St, Galle 80000, Sri Lanka*

## Saffron & Blue

The modern pad by the beach



*Saffron & Blue villa is one for architect and interior decor lovers. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

And finally: the beach stay, and one for architecture and interior decor obsessives. The most modern of the three villas, the aesthetic and atmosphere here provide a cool contrast to Villa Pooja Kanda and Ambassador's House. A striking exercise in modern concrete, this place is all about texture, bold colour and proportion. There are four bedrooms here (one downstairs, three upstairs). The Emerald and the Gold rooms have outdoor jacuzzis. Nice.



*Concrete doesn't get any cooler than this. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

There's a sunken dining room with an enormous table that doesn't exactly encourage intimacy, but there's an intriguing mass of candles that brings on the mood at night. And the lounge area? We want to haul the whole scene back to Singapore: the shell necklaces, the wooden mangoes, that enormous jute rug, the massive pots with tropical leaves. You think they'd notice?



*We so want to steal this style. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

We need to talk about that pool for a moment. It's stunning, no? But do tear yourself away from that sun lounger, because Saffron & Blue is a moment's walk to Thambapanni Beach. And we do mean a moment: you can hear the ocean at night. Travelling with kids or sandcastle-architects? This is high-quality engineering sand. There's a turtle hatchery on the beach, too.



*One inviting scene on a sunny day. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

This place is all about beach, eat, pool, repeat. As with each of these villas, the in-house chefs can whip up all of your meals; you just need to pay for the supplies, which they'll buy fresh from the market. The local dishes here were spectacular, but truth be told, the kids' menu needs a little work.



*Thambapanni Beach is so close to the villa, you can hear the sea at night. Photography: Selina Altomonte*

*Saffron and Blue, Sri Gnanawimala Mawatha Hiddaruwa, Kosgoda, Sri Lanka*

**Hot tip:**

We used [this Sri Lanka online visa service](#) – at the airport, you can head straight over to the foreigners arrivals desks and present your passport; they'll have an electronic record of the visa (we took printouts just in case) and it's all pretty painless.

And one last word of advice for nailing the villa stay: pick up your preferred tipples at duty free on the way in. You don't want to be faced with all that lounging without your signature drink...

Link : <https://thehoneycombers.com/singapore/luxury-sri-lanka-villas-review-galle-fort-south-province/>