

Aman Sri Lanka

365 Days of Island Idyll



Finding Paradise in Every Day

Sri Lanka's palm edged coast promises the extraordinary in both nature and culture. The most powerful experiences are the ones that make a difference which lasts long after they are over. Whether we are venturing into the wild to contribute to conservation projects, supporting local communities, or simply opening ourselves up to new narratives, histories and perspectives, the memories we make are richer and more precious when they have sense of purpose behind them.

Every day is a perfect time for explorations of the island's many facets - from the wondrously warm water worlds brought by the "winter" months of December to March, the Sri Lankan summer from April to July when the island is at its wildest to the months of August until November when elephants gather in spectacular large herds and occasional rains turn the entire country into a lush, emerald teardrop-shaped gem, the island is a year-round delight.



January



January 2023

January is a great month to travel to Sri Lanka, with the sunshine beaming along the southern coast beaches.

National Parks of Yala and Udawalawe will be hot and dry, making January a good month for wildlife sightings as the animals gather around water holes. These parks are just a few hours away from our Aman homes in Sri Lanka. It is also the perfect time to spot the Blue Whales and spinner dolphins.

International New Year – 1 January

A celebration marked by revelry the night before, catching the first sunrise of the year by the Galle Fort bastions or the first sunset by the infinity pool in Amanwella are worthwhile milestones.

Thaipongal – January 14 to 17

Celebrated for 3 days starting from the first day of Thai (the 10th month in Tamil calendar), this is one of the important harvest festivals in Sri Lanka, where families pay tribute to the sun god for a bountiful harvest.

The festivities begin by drawing kolams (rangoli) with rice paste in the front yard of houses and boiling milk mixed with rice, jaggery, and spices. The entire family participates in the festivities to pay gratitude to Surya as well as the cattle which play an important role in bringing a good harvest.

There is a plethora of Hindu temples in Sri Lanka, and you can easily become a part of celebrations at any one of them.



February



February 2023

The good weather continues across Sri Lanka throughout February. The south coast basks in sunshine and enjoys a high temperature averaging 30°C and minimal rainfall throughout the month.

As with January, dry conditions in Udawalawe and Yala National Parks are good for wildlife spotting as the animals gather around water holes. There's also the chance of spotting leopard basking in the sun at Yala National Park. It's also the optimum time to spot the gigantic Blue Whales.

International Valentine's Day - 14 February

For couples staying at Amangalla or Amanwella, special romantic dinners can be arranged in the gardens of Amangalla and on the beach of Amanwella.

For guests seeking to reaffirm their union, blessing ceremonies and renewal of vows can be done in the different cultural sites in the fort of Galle or in the locality of the southern coast of Sri Lanka.



March



March 2023

Arguably the best overall month for optimum weather conditions throughout Sri Lanka, March is expected to showcase the very best of Sri Lanka across every region.

A predominantly dry month throughout the country, temperatures continue to rise along the southern coast, pushing averages up towards the mid-30°C, with little rainfall expected in the later stages of the month.

As March radiates with beautiful sunshine, it is also one of the optimum times to harvest tea. In the southern coast where one of the world's lowest lying tea estates are found, March presents a perfect season for harvesting the prized buds of the *Camelia sinensis* plant.

Visits to the tea estate to uncover its prized Virgin White Tea blends can be arranged from both Amangalla and Amanwella.



April



April 2023

April is certainly amongst the best months for travel in Sri Lanka, when considering the overall country-wide picture. As May approaches the southern coasts will begin to experience some light showers and occasional rains, showering the landscapes with a much-needed quenching.

Throughout April the beaches in Sri Lanka's south still enjoys plenty of sunshine, with temperatures remaining up in the mid-30°C's.

April also sees the last of the migratory birds in the island as they slowly make their way back up to the north for spring. Be sure to experience an Amanwella sunset cruise at the Mawella Lagoon, where birds rule over the waters, the land and the skies. Catch them gliding through the waters on a floating lounge while sipping on champagne and enjoying canapes as the sun slowly settles on the horizon.

Sinhala and Tamil New Year- April 13 to 14

Marking the end of the harvest season, Sri Lanka celebrates its new year also known as Aluth Avurudda. In preparation for Avurudu, the 13th and 14th of April is a national holiday. For the locals this is a definite 2-day holiday however, in most cases the following few days leading up to the auspicious day to reconvene work are holidays for the locals. The weeklong celebration gives travellers a unique opportunity to witness Sri Lanka's colourful cultural traditions and take part in the celebrations at our resorts to mark the dawn of the new year.

Both Sinhalese and Tamil community have their rituals such as the playing of a Raban (a drum) by women, participating in new year games, preparing Kiribath also known as milk rice (rice prepared with coconut milk), sweetmeats such as Kavum, Kokis and more. The date of the auspicious new year gains its significance through astrological calculations.



May



May 2023

As the monsoon winds start blowing from the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal, rain is brought to the south coast of Sri Lanka: Galle and the southern beaches yet, plenty of sunshine punctuates the short, sharp showers, especially during the first half of May.

Birth Anniversary of Nesta Brohier – 7 May

Born in one of the rooms of the New Oriental Hotel in 1905, Nesta inherited the hotel from her grandfather, Arthur Richard Ephraums who bought it from its British owners in 1898. Since then, she singlehandedly steered the hotel to its heydays and historic milestones and facilitating its new phase of history when it was reborn as Amangalla. The hotel remembers her to this day, commemorating her birth and moments as a grand dame in one of Asia's iconic grand old dames.

Vesak Full Moon Poya Day – 5 to 6 May

Vesak is considered a religious and cultural festival in Sri Lanka. It is celebrated on the day of the full moon in May. This year the 15th of May marks the Vesak Full Moon Poya Day, which is a national holiday and is followed by another national holiday soon after. This festival marks the birth, enlightenment and passing away into Nirvana of the Lord Buddha. The weeklong celebration gives travellers a unique opportunity to witness Sri Lanka's colourful religious and cultural traditions.

Other than the exclusive religious rituals of the festival, together with the Buddhist, those of other faith join the celebration by decorating their houses and public places with colourful lanterns called Vesak koodu. The communities also come together to decorate streets and even host competitions to select the best Vesak kooduwa. Electrically lit pandols called Toranas are put up in various parts of the country mainly in Colombo, Kandy and Galle to display the Jataka tales which are native to South Asia, concerning the previous births of Lord Buddha in both human and animal form.

Food stalls are set up by Buddhist devotees called Dansalas provide free food and drinks to people passing by. There are some fantastic mime and street theatre performances, staged on tall platforms throughout the cities and towns that also narrate Jataka tales.



June



June 2023

The southern coastal area of Sri Lanka, remain under the influence of the summer monsoon in June, which is blowing in from the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal.

Despite the monsoon, it is not unusual to go a few days without any rain or just the odd tropical downpour in the afternoons, making beach days still very much a possibility during June.

June brings the island to its greenest and lushest state - making visits to the cinnamon and tea estates as well as rainforest explorations at its prime.

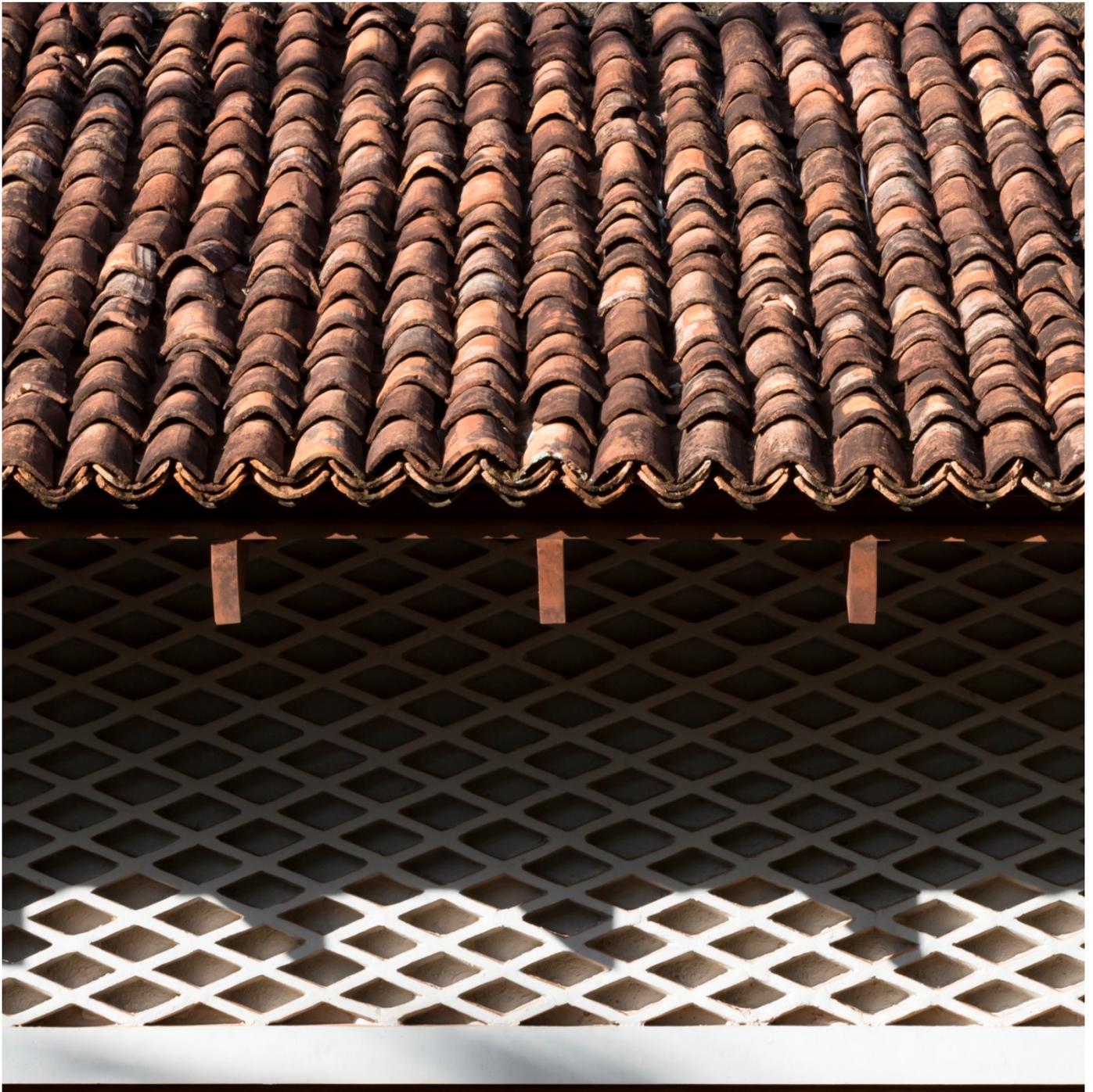
Poson Full Moon Poya – 3 June

Poson Poya is second in importance to Vesak and commemorates the introduction of Buddhism to Sri Lanka by the Buddhist missionary monk Mahinda in the 3rd century B.C. Although Poson is celebrated across Sri Lanka, the main event is a mass pilgrimage to Anuradhapura, while thousands of white-robed pilgrims climb to the summit of Mihintale to the spot where Mahinda gave his first sermon.

Like the Vesak celebration, the communities come together to decorate streets and host competitions to select the best Vesak kooduwa. Electrically lit pandols called Toranas are put up in various parts of the country mainly in Colombo, Kandy and Galle that display the Jataka tales which are native to South Asia.



July



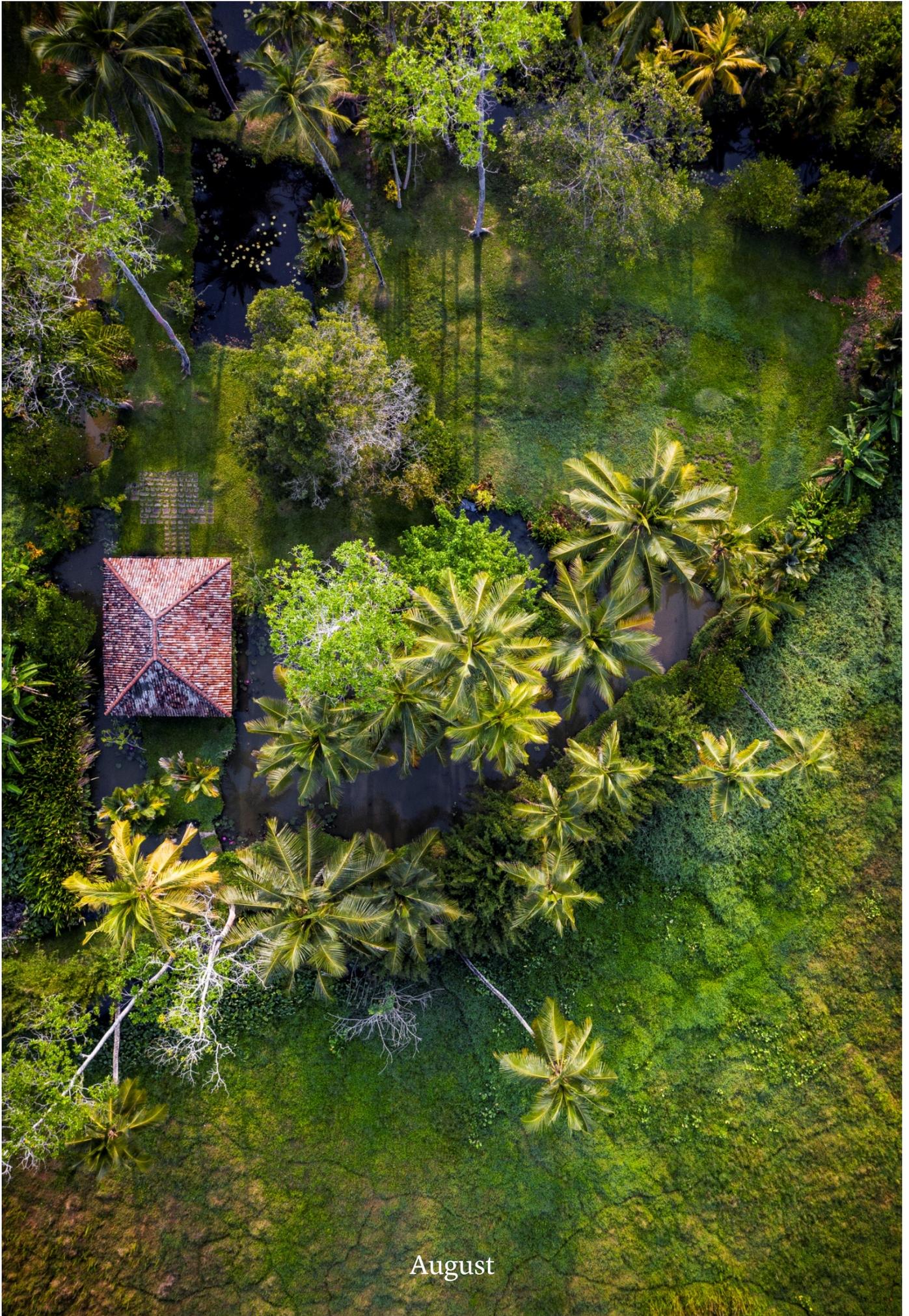
July 2023

July sees an improvement in weather conditions in the south of Sri Lanka as the summer monsoon eases off, especially as the month progresses. The north and east coast continues to enjoy plenty of sunshine with temperatures in the mid-30's.

Whilst it's difficult to predict the end of the monsoon rains, the south and west of Sri Lanka sees less rainfall and clearer skies as July progresses, although short, sharp showers should still be expected.

Geoffrey Bawa's 104th Birth Anniversary – 23 July

In 1919, Sri Lanka gifted the world with one of its beloved modernist architects when Geoffrey Manning Bawa was born in the island who would eventually grow up to shape and influence an entire design movement. A visit to the architect's legendary home and estate along with his most popular architectural works in the south is a great way to commemorate his contributions during his birth anniversary (Amangalla can arrange this visit). A stay at Amanwella, where Geoffrey Bawa's design legacy is still widely used and inspired on, honours his legacy.



August



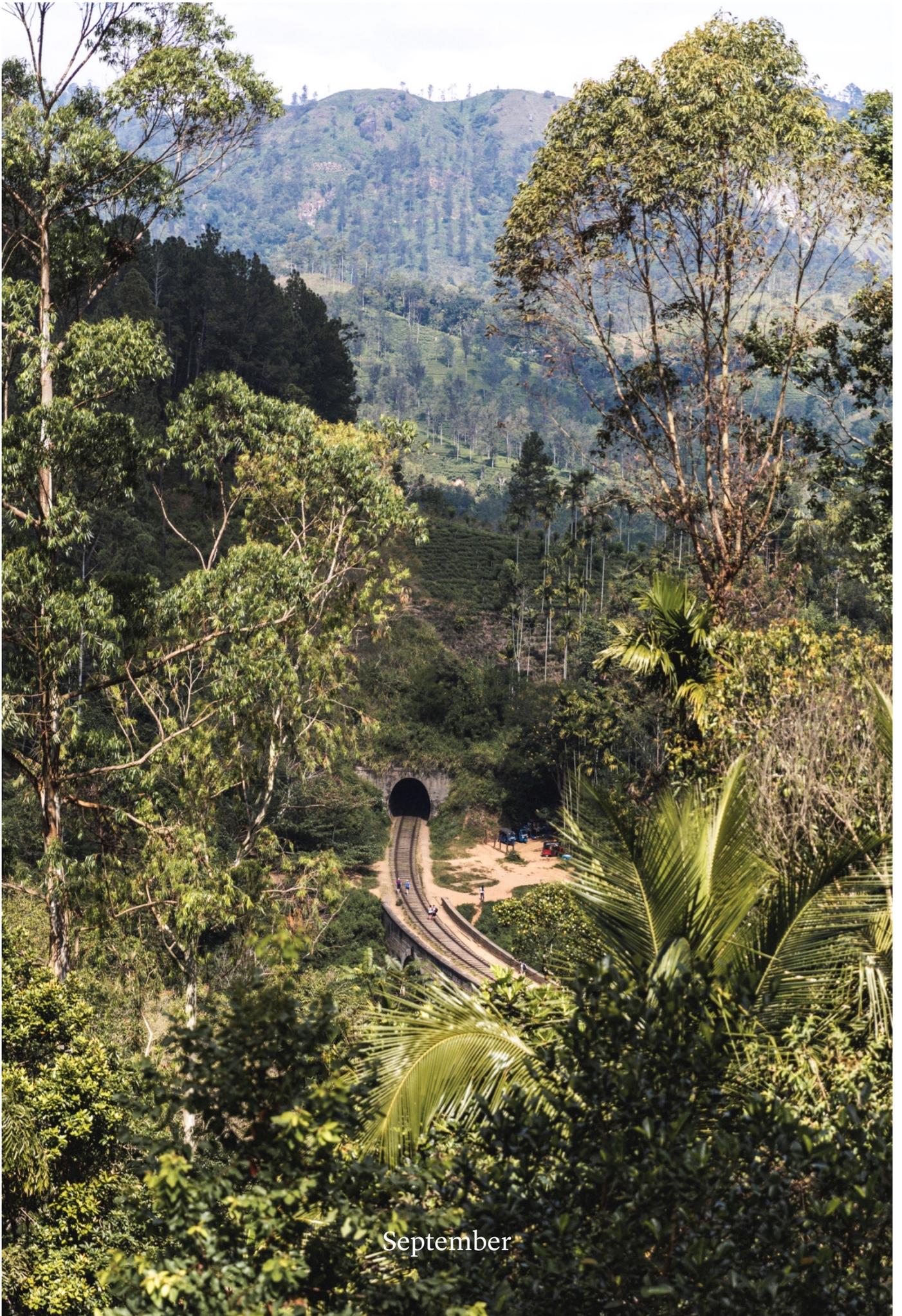
August 2023

Despite the summer monsoon still blowing in from the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal, Sri Lanka's south coast usually experience a significant dip in rainfall during August.

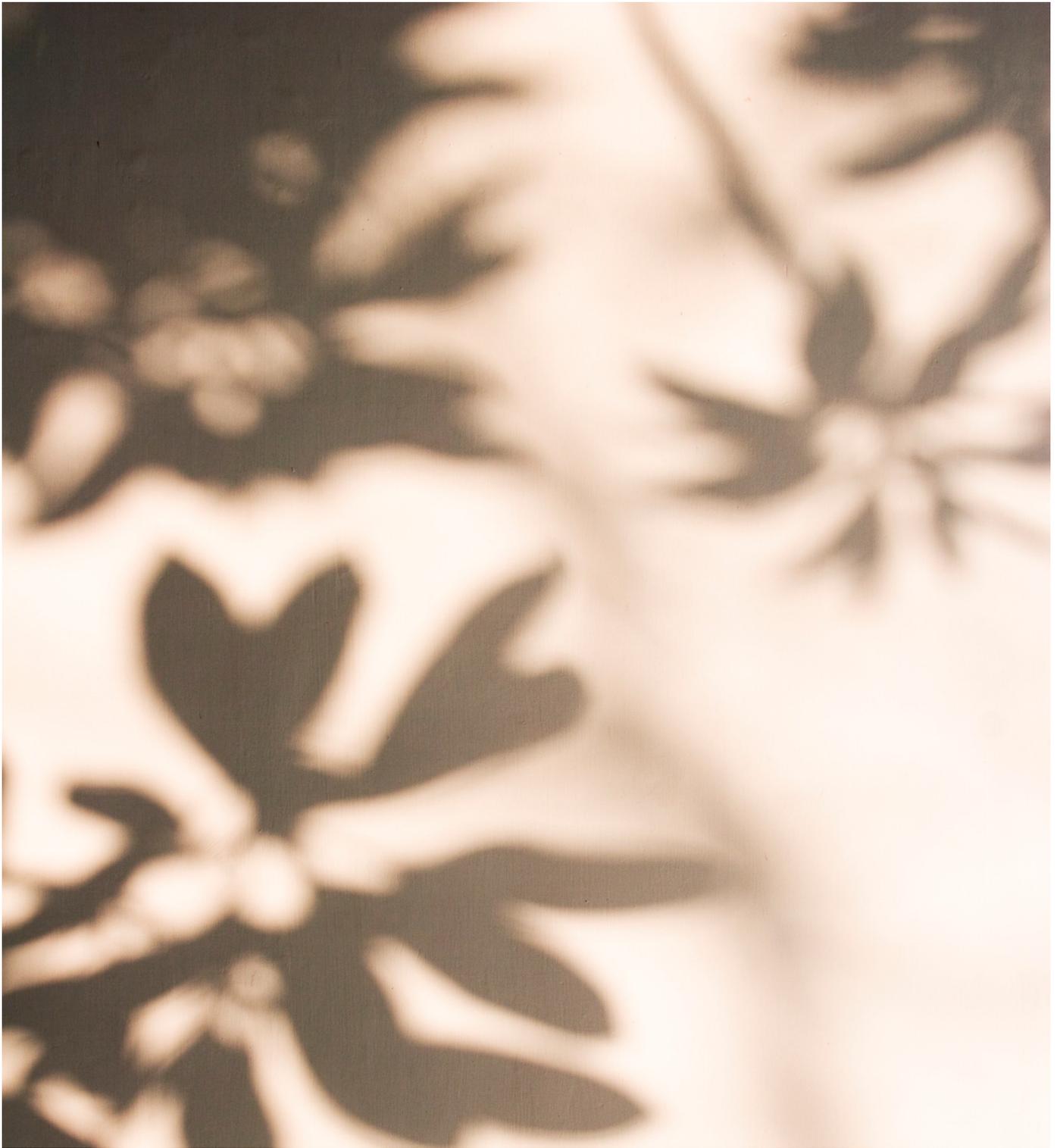
The charm of August is an incredible harvest season for most local produce, reaching its peak. Markets are alive with colours and freshly harvested crops and in Amangalla's own paddy island, a cooking class and experience featuring freshly harvested blessings from the gardens is unmissable.

Kandy Esala Perahera– August 13 to 23

Another important religious festival in Sri Lanka, the Festival of the Tooth pays homage to the sacred tooth relic of Buddha enshrined at the famous temple in Kandy. The grand celebrations include a spectacular procession of traditional dancers, drummers, and elephants dressed up in rich finery through the streets of the city every day for a week. The excitement, passion and festivities on the last night must be seen to be believed. It is recommended to book a seat in advance through local agencies to enjoy this majestic event in its full glory. Our Aman Sri Lanka team can assist in arranging journeys to Kandy.



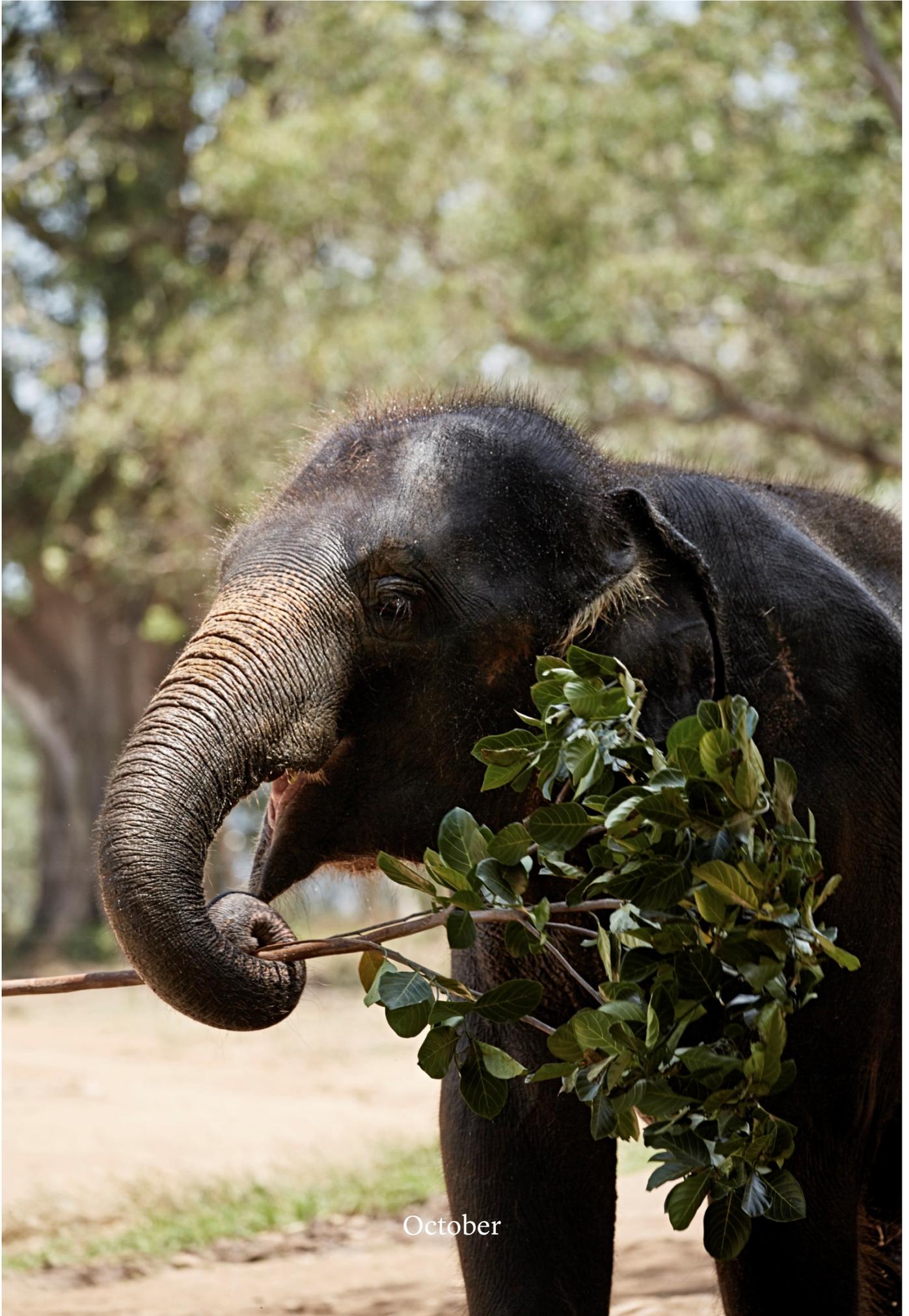
September



September 2023

September is a mixed bag in terms of weather. Sri Lanka's interior remains hot and humid, with a high chance of rainfall, although downpours are typically short and intense. During this period of dry, arid weather conditions Yala National Park typically closes for the whole month to allow animals to roam freely in search of water.

September is a quiet transition month right before the busy months come in full force. For those seeking ultimate escapes and destinations devoid of crowds, this month is the perfect respite. Due to the fast-changing weather patterns, many visitors opt to travel around the island by train - taking in the lush landscapes in the comfort of the rail.



October



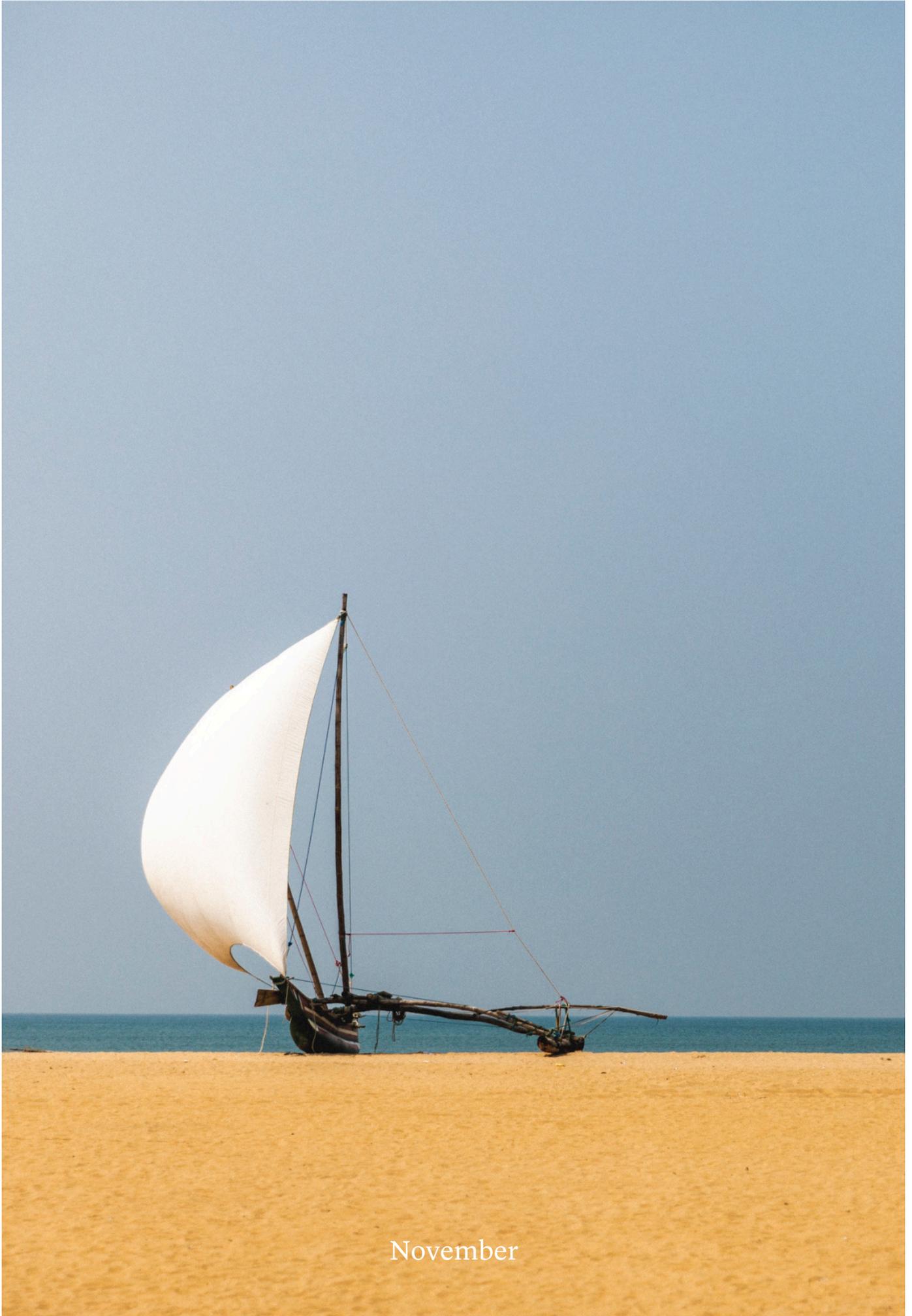
October 2023

October is a month of change across Sri Lanka: as the south monsoon starts to fade, especially towards the end of the month.

Some rainfall remains on Sri Lanka's southern & western coast during October, with temperatures below their annual peak but by no means chilly.

One of October's most prominent event is the natural phenomenon called "**The Great Elephant Gathering**" wherein hundreds of elephants gather in very large herds in a spectacular search for water.

Although it begins in July, the gathering reaches its peak in October, making visits to Minneriya and nearby Udawalawe National Parks a treat for nature enthusiasts and safari goers.



November



November 2023

November is a transitional month as the south monsoon finally blows out. Weather conditions improve and by the end of the month the southern beaches will experience plenty of sunshine averaging a temperature of 29 °C. Good beach conditions return, especially towards the end of the month.

The whale watching season begins and gets better in the next couple of months leading to March.

Surfing and Ocean Safari Season

By November, the waters of Southern Sri Lanka become the hotspots for ocean-based activities and adventures that goes on for almost half a year.

With the perfect currents, breeze and curls, the south's surfing season begins in November, and waves offer range of expertise depending on specific areas - from beginners to serious surfers. Amanwella is the perfect base to explore your surfing interests.

Deepavali – 12 November

Another traditional festival wonderfully celebrated in Sri Lanka, is Deepavali also known as Diwali, the festival of lights. An eminent Hindu festival, Diwali is celebrated throughout the country just as it is in most parts of the Indian sub-continent and the festivities are worth witnessing. Deepavali, the literal meaning of which in Sanskrit is 'a row of lamps'. Filling little clay lamps with oil and wick and lighting them in rows all over the house is a tradition that is popular amongst those celebrating in the country, it is the festival symbolizing victory of good over evil, light over darkness, and knowledge over ignorance.

Houses and business premises are decorated, entrances are made colorful with lovely traditional motifs of Rangoli designs to welcome Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth and prosperity. To indicate her long-awaited arrival, small footprints are drawn with rice flour and vermilion powder all over the houses. Lamps are kept burning all through the night, believing this day to be auspicious women purchase some gold or silver or at least one or two new utensils.



December



December 2023

December is an excellent time of year to visit Sri Lanka's southern coast. As the recent unsettled weather fades away, plenty of sunshine and dry days can be expected as peak beach conditions return averaging a temperature of 30°C. The south coast is your best beach destination if you are looking for a Christmas holiday in Sri Lanka. Among the many experiences available, spotting of Whales from nearby Mirissa harbour is a highlight.

Amangalla's 339th Year Anniversary – 15 December

Commemorating more than three centuries of the original Grand Dame of the Galle Fort and the 19th anniversary of its rebirth, the hotel was unveiled as Amangalla on December 15, 2004, with an opening ceremony presided by the previous governor of the Southern Province, Kingsley T. Wickramaratne.

Aman Sri Lanka Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Celebrations – 24 to 25 December

Experience a tropical Christmas in comfortable weather and hearty feasts at our Aman homes in Sri Lanka. Indulge in delicacies to celebrate. Our dishes pair well with a range of wines available on our wine menu.

Aman Sri Lanka New Year's Eve Celebrations – 31 December

Focused on recollections of the year and looking forward to a new year, let Amangalla or Amanwella be your home as you embark on a journey for the new year where we will organize blessing ceremonies, a feast of flavours and a deeply enriching celebration for blessed beginnings.

Some festival and cultural event dates stated in this calendar are not final and are subject to changes by the festival organisers, religious bodies and the respective offices of the government of Sri Lanka.

Reconfirmation with our Aman Reservations team at least a month before your holiday to the island coinciding with specific festivals and events you wish to see and experience is essential.

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