

Amangalla

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The stately grande dame of Galle Fort on Sri Lanka's south coast, Amangalla boasts all the period charm of a bygone era. Combining the Sanskrit-derived word for 'peace' with *galla*, Sinhalese for the town of Galle, the hotel stands at the junction of Church and Middle Streets with commanding views of the harbour and the Fort's ramparts.

With its chandeliers and soaring *fin de siècle* ceilings, being welcomed into Amangalla's *Zaal*, or Great Hall, is like stepping into the past. It houses the elegant Dining Room at one end and a bar at the other, with a welcoming lounge area in-between – ideal for enjoying a cup of Ceylon tea or an evening cocktail to the accompaniment of the grand piano. Upstairs, the Sunset Balcony is a picturesque spot for sundowners with views across Galle and the Indian Ocean.

An intimate setting with a colonial feel, the Dining Room serves Sri Lankan and Western cuisines. Guests can also dine on the veranda, which faces the tree-lined street, or enjoy alfresco breakfasts and lunches under the flamboyant tree with views of the hotel's 21-metre swimming pool.

A wander through Amangalla's 200-year-old gardens reveals the Baths, the hotel's tranquil spa facility. Massage therapies drawing on Ayurvedic healing traditions can be enjoyed in five softly-lit treatment rooms. The Baths' wet areas include hydrotherapy pools, and there is also a Barbershop, a Salon and a yoga pavilion in the gardens.

Another peaceful retreat is the Library, which houses an extensive range of reference books, novels and games. It also features an eclectic collection of memorabilia that offers insight into the history of the hotel, the Fort and the town of Galle.

Amangalla offers accommodation in 27 Bedrooms, Chambers and Suites, the two-bedroom Amangalla Suite and the two-storey Garden House, which is situated in the lush gardens near the swimming pool.

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Amangalla offers accommodation in 27 Bedrooms, Chambers and Suites, the two-bedroom Amangalla Suite and the two-storey Garden House, which is situated in the 200-year-old gardens near the swimming pool. Views and layouts vary, but each room offers a spacious ensuite bathroom as well as a four-poster king-size bed, writing desk, dining table, planter's chair, wardrobe and pettagama chest set on the original 300-year-old wooden floors. Most furniture pieces are either original antiques from the New Oriental Hotel or careful reproductions. There are also twin rooms available in each category featuring the original four-poster beds.

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Antique tables and chairs, crisp linen and vintage silverware contribute to the colonial feel of the intimate Dining Room, which serves Sri Lankan and Western cuisines for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Guests can also dine on the veranda, which faces the tree-lined street, or enjoy alfresco breakfasts and lunches under the flamboyant tree with pool views. Upstairs, the Sunset Balcony provides a picturesque spot for sundowners with views across Galle and the Indian Ocean.

Outdoors, lush gardens border Amangalla's 21-metre swimming pool. Palm-shaded sun loungers run the length of one side, while on the other are five *ambalamas* (rest pavilions).

A wander through the gardens reveals the entrance to the Baths. The hotel's tranquil spa facility offers five softly-lit treatment rooms and extensive hydrotherapy areas. Massage therapies draw on Ayurvedic healing traditions and personalised Ayurvedic programmes can be arranged. The Baths' wet area features hydrotherapy pools and individual facilities for men and women. The Barbershop provides men with a traditional shave and the Salon offers manicures and pedicures. There is also a yoga pavilion in the gardens.

Another peaceful retreat is the Library, which houses an extensive range of reference books, novels and games. It also features an eclectic collection of memorabilia from the archives of the New Oriental Hotel, offering insight into the history of the hotel, the Fort – a Unesco World Heritage Site – and the town of Galle.