



Enjoy nature from on high in the hills just north of Kandy, retreat to the Cyclades' unspoilt corner, venture inland to the Algarve's citrus groves, delve into Girona's history or bed down in one of Devon's most alluring coastal spots

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AARUNYA NATURE
RESORT, SRI LANKA

AARUNYA NATURE RESORT

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Ten villas dotted across the foothills of **SRI LANKA**'s Knuckles Mountains, amid working gardens of tea, cinnamon and cocoa, blur the boundary between indoors and out, making a serene setting for nature lovers



In Sri Lanka's cultural heartland, between the emerald ridges of the Unesco-listed Knuckles Mountain Range and the cultural capital Kandy, Aarunya Nature Resort climbs the rugged foothills above the village of Alawatugoda.

The resort is a love letter to Sri Lanka: four hectares of working gardens grow tea, cinnamon, vanilla and cocoa with soil health and biodiversity in mind, while the ten villas dotted across the sprawling estate were built by local carpenters using natural materials. From the forest-floor Habitat villas and the Sky Pavilion and tented villas above the tree canopy, to the new Sol Sanctuary

inspired by the sacred geometry of Sri Yantra, all are designed to blur the boundary between indoors and out. Rattan, polished wood and hand-carved stone sit alongside floor-to-ceiling sliding doors, framing views of the mountains beyond private plunge pools. The surrounding greenery, alive with birdsong, ensures each villa is serene and secluded.

National parks, waterfalls and historic temples are all within reach, but there's plenty to do on-site. Join a bird-watching tour with the in-house naturalist, spotting anything from herons to crested hawk-eagles among 50 recorded species, or take your place alongside environmentalists

to help map habitats, reforestation and biodiversity. An amble through spice-scented gardens leads to the Aarogya spa – offering Ayurveda and aromatherapy – and all-day Verandah Restaurant. The pièce de résistance, however, is Aahaara: a communal, fine-dining option in a traditional mud house. Chefs source ingredients from local farm, the kitchen garden and dedicated rice paddy. Expect local favourites, from robust sambols to fresh crab curries, and a nine-course tasting menu served alongside traditional music. Wash it down with a smoky-sweet arrack cocktail. **CH.** Villas from £288 (sleeps 3), including breakfast. +94 663 127040, aarunyaresort.com

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