

Arugam Bay Surf Resort: Enjoy The Waves!

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The beach front of Arugam Bay Surf Resort

Nestled amidst the enchanting clutter of Arugam Bay is the Arugam Bay Surf Resort, one of the oldest resorts in the area boasting of a vantage point, awesome food and comforts that tempt travellers to remain or at least visit the area numerous times over.

Words Krishani Peiris **Photographs** Menaka Aravinda and Indika De Silva

“The beginning of the Arugam Bay Surf Resort could be traced back to the 1980s, when Haneefa, my father started a small restaurant with some cabanas and facilities,” said M H A Raheem, proprietor of Arugam Bay Surf Resort reflecting on the humble beginnings of the hotel. Initially named The Honey Rotti Shop, the restaurant later changed its name to Arugam Bay Hilton with the help of an Australian traveller who showed Haneefa the ropes of running a hotel that appealed to tourists. “When my father passed away in 2003, I took the full responsibility along with my brother’s help,” revealed Raheem.

Through challenges faced over the years, including having to rebuild from scratch after the hotel was completely destroyed in the 2004 Tsunami, the Arugam Bay Surf Resort is now moving forward. Refining step by step, the hotel seeks to entice travellers with its attention to improving facilities, lifestyle and the quality of the comforts offered.

“Arugam Bay used to be a place that was famous for cheap accommodation and was popular among the laid-back tourists,” remarked Raheem. However, with the recent developments, the crowd coming to Arugam Bay has changed and now not only lone surfers but families seek the adventures of Arugam Bay and more are on the lookout for luxury and comfort. “Therefore, we have been renovating and remodelling,” asserted Raheem.

Deriving inspiration from his journeys abroad, Raheem is slowly and steadily improving the facilities at Arugam Bay Surf Resort. A space that was once filled with just cabanas and normal rooms now encompasses eight air conditioned rooms out of which four are arrayed with numerous amenities that allow a guest to revel in bliss in a cosy retreat. For those who still look for the old world charm of the low-key lifestyle of Arugam Bay, the Resort has three normal rooms and four cabanas. The beach side restaurant offers a variety of mouthwatering cuisines such as scrumptious Mexican delights, burgers, good old rice and curry, a taste of Eastern and Western dishes, fresh seafood platters, pizzas and much more leaving the guests at a loss as to which dish should be savoured first. A range of equally delectable beverages that includes juices made out of fresh fruits along with plenty more completes the gastronomical journey at the restaurant.

The newly extended garden on the beach allows the guests to carry on their rendezvous in discrete seating arrangements scattered around in the shade of coconut trees. For those who wishes to engage in activities apart from surfing, the Resort has a taxi service that provides day trips to the Pottuvil Lagoon followed by the experience of breakfasting with a local family, visiting cultural and archaeological sites around the area and topping off with a journey to the Kumana and Lahugala national parks.

As the sun set and dusk pervades the area, Arugam Bay comes to life with every nook and corner teeming with people enjoying the evening after a hard days surfing and thrills. An air of excitement mingled with the laid-back feeling that is ever present fills the area permeating to the Arugam Bay Surf Resort as well. Travellers trickle in as the beach glows golden due to the bonfires kindled while the soft sound of the crashing waves presents a captivating and relaxing space... an ideal ending for another perfect day!

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