Colombo: Five Star Value for Money

Posted on

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Hotel Ceylon Intercontinental, Colombo

When it comes to competitive pricing of hotels, there seems to be little to compare in South Asia, with what is now available in Colombo. Here, some of the best international names in hotels offer a wide range of facilities and services, at what are certainly gaining recognition as unbeatable prices. What makes the prices of Colombo hotels all the more attractive is the range of attractions, which Colombo is the gateway. The city, apart from being a busy business centre today, lets you in to some of the finest beaches in the western and southern coasts, the hill capital of Kandy, with its medieval charm, and the ancient cities of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Sigiriya, to name just a few of the attractions. But let’s talk here of the Colombo hotels, and their super-competitive prices. Be ready for very pleasant surprises.

Did you know that you can get a room inclusive of all modern amenities such as

A/C, colour TV with in house movies, radio, IDD facilities, a refrigerator, a mini-bar, bath, shower and a 24 hour room service from anything from US$50 to 100. Talk of value for money! The rates at the Intercontinental, the first 5-star hotel in the island are very flexible. When this was written in mid-August you could get yourself a room at$30-35 for a single, $40-45 for a double and$120-260 _for a suite, with prices even lower for groups. The Inter-Continental's sea food restaurant the Pearl Sea Food has a reputation for good fresh fare from the sea and provides lively Calypso music too. There is also the Pizzeria which is a Pizza lovers dream and the 100 Piper's Pub where you can spend an evening drinking your cares away in a typical English Pub atmosphere, with the added pleasure of live jazz music.

The food too is well priced with American breakfast costing $5 Continental breakfast at $4, lunch at $7 and dinner at $9. With it's emphasis on friendly personalised service, and a very experienced staff, it is a frequently sought. out place to conduct business in, with all the facilities for the very busy traveller right within easy reach. The Holiday Inn is a good place if you are looking forward to a quiet leisurely stay in the city. The rooms are very economically priced at $54-64 for single, $60-70 for double and $100 for suites, with children in their teens given free accommodation provided they share a room with their parents. Meals are priced at $5 for American brunch, $8 for lunch and a grand dinner for $9. The Alhambra Moghul speciality restaurant is often referred to as the best of the kind in Colombo, serving moghul cuisine! giving you the pick of meat or vegetable delicacies with the flavour of oriental spices as well as Chinese and Sri Lankan specialities. The Holiday Inn provides facilities for meetings . and group travel for business travellers on a tight schedule and also offers a wide range of secretarial facilities for the businessman.

The newest in the 5-star chain the Hilton International which prides itself on being a "hotel within a hotel" offers you 387 spacious rooms at $50–70 for single, $60–80 for double and from $90–240 for suites inclusive of breakfast. Compared to other Hilton Hotels the Colombo's Hilton is situated in what is regarded as Hilton's best property in the South East Asian region, in the very heart of the busy metropolis yet close to the sea. Hiltons standards in food and service are already the talk of the travel trade. A speciality here is a restaurant which serves authentic Japanese cuisine laid out in traditional Japanese decor in a setting overlooking a beautiful Japanese garden – the Ginza Hohsen, and if you are looking for some good vintage wine, the ideal place is the wine bar at the Gables Restaurant which also provides the ultimate in creative and classical French cuisine, an open grill concept, with superb buffet section in addition to an a la carte menu.

The Sports and Fitness Centre here which is run under the direction of the Clark Hatch Fitness Centres is connected to the hotel by an overhead pedestrian walkaway and is fully equipped to cater to the health conscious guest with poly lawn turf tennis courts, with floodlighting, a swimming pool and a kiddie's wading pool. If you want to end your day the direction of the Clark Hatch Fitness Centres is connected to the hotel by an overhead pedestrian walkaway and is fully equipped to cater to the health conscious guest with poly lawn turf tennis courts, with floodlighting, a swimming pool and a kiddie's wading pool. If you want to end your day with some good entertainment then the right place is the Blue Elephant in a setting and decor reminiscent of the colonial age, the biggest discotheque and one of the most popular in town, already. The Ramada Renaissance, is situated at one of the best city properties, overlooking the only natural lake in the city – the Beira Lake. Room rates here are $30 for single, $35 for double, and $75-120 for suites, with no charge for Children under 18's sharing a room with their parents. Rooms on the Renaissance Club floors are prired at $48 for single and $52 forduable providing VIP treatment, a complimentary breakfast, liquor, and evening snacks from 5.30–7.30 p.m. If the food prices are somewhat higher than most other hotels, so is the quality and standard of service. The Hotel has four each of restaurants and bars with the Ibn Batuta Spicy Corner serving the savoury splendour of exotic specialities of the East and Long Feng setting a standard in Chinese food, with its special Businessman's lunch and a la carte dining daily. The Sports Centre here, has the largest pool with a well stocked unique swim up bar.

Among its recreation facilities are boating, and fishing on the Beira, a gymnasium, a tennis and squash courts and a superbly appointed Health Club and musical entertainment on Sunday. Le Galadari Meridien offers you large spacious and comfortable and fully equipped rooms at $55 for single, $65 for double and $80-200 for special suites all facing the ocean and city. The Hotel also provides one of the best laundry services in the city. Where food is concerned there is little to match the Meridien cuisine, providing the best of two worlds – East and West with La Palme d'ore specialising in French gourmet cuisine. Le Meridien offers the businessman the facilities of its large and spacious conference rooms and also the services of the ultra-sophisticated international reservation net-work, the Alpha 3 system. To finish off a tired day you can relax at the Health Centre or try out the Colombo 2000, which has plenty of justification to be called the popular night spot in town with live music provided by the very best of Sri Lankan talent, and.often visiting artistes too.

The Taj Samudra which describes itself as the only resort hotel in the city with a picturesque location facing the sweep of the Galle Face Green and the Indian Ocean provides rooms at $55 for single, $65 for double and $70-110 for suites, with an added feature providing Indian Dura Darshan TV transmissions in rooms. The Taj says its rates are about 30% cheaper than most other hotels, so whats wrong in doing a little checking?

Meals are priced at $3.50 for continental breakfast, $5 for American breakfast, $7 for lunch and $10 for dinner. The range of food varies from Tandoori specialities at the drive in Bar-be-que, Chinese Schezwan cuisine at the golden Dragon the first Chinese hotel in a city five star hotel in Colombo to a mixture of South East Asian delicacies at the Ports of Call. The hotel also has a special kiddies corner to keep children safe and entertained.

At the Lanka Oberoi the rooms are priced at $72 for a single room and $80 for a double. Meals are priced at $5 for American breakfast $7.50 for lunch, and $10 for dinner. Aside from all this you can treat your self to the Apple and Pear festival at the Supper Club. London Grill serves a la carte specialities. The Ranmalu Restaurant specialises in Oriental Buffet – Sri Lankan, Chinese, Indian, serves a daily buffet lunch. The Garden Restaurant Araliya has a varied cuisine ranging from – Thai and Tandoori specialities to continental. The hotel also has a mini zoo and kiddies park and also an art gallery which is being run by famed Sri Lankan artist Senaka Senanayake, decorated entirely with orchids. The Coffee Shop has been named Purple Orchid – orchids being synonymous with the Oberoi.

The Lobby Lounge opens from 10 p.m. and is the only place in Colombo where you can relax to Philharmonic Music by the Colombo Orchestra from 6.30-8.30 p.m. daily. The lobby bar serves discounted beverages during Happy Hour (5.30-7 p.m.) and keyboard artistes play rhythm and blues. In contrast to all this is the only purely Sri Lankan hotel, the 123 year “young” Galle Face Hotel which still retains some of the splendour of the colonial days reflecting as it were, more than a little bit of old world, overlooks the Galle Face Green on one side and the sea on the other. One of the oldest hotels in Asia it boasts of one of the largest suites in the whole world – the King Emperor Suite. The large and spacious rooms here are priced at $25-35 for single, $30-35 for double and $60-120 for the suites with service both impeccable and unobtrusive. An English American and Sri Lankan buffet is very economically priced at $3 and lunch at $4 and dinner at $5 all with 10% service charge. The Seaspray Verandah and Bar overlooks the ocean, and the only sea water swimming pool in Colombo. It has been listed in Newsweek among the best bars in Asia. Little

has changed at the Galle Face since its inception from the beautifully carved antique furniture to the Sri Lankan hospitality living up to its theme of yesterdays charm and tomorrows comfort.

All these hotels in Colombo are within close proximity to the various banks airline offices. shopping arcades and other tourist attractions of the city, the National Museum. Art Gallery. Vihara Maha Devi Park, Galle Face Green, Theatres, Handlooms Emporium. Golf and Rowing Clubs, Casinos, Night Clubs to name just a few. So whatever you are looking for at whatever price, Colombo gives you more than your money’s worth in a standard of service and hospitality that is hard to match. (Note: all rates quoted are in US Dollars at time of writing in mid August 1987).



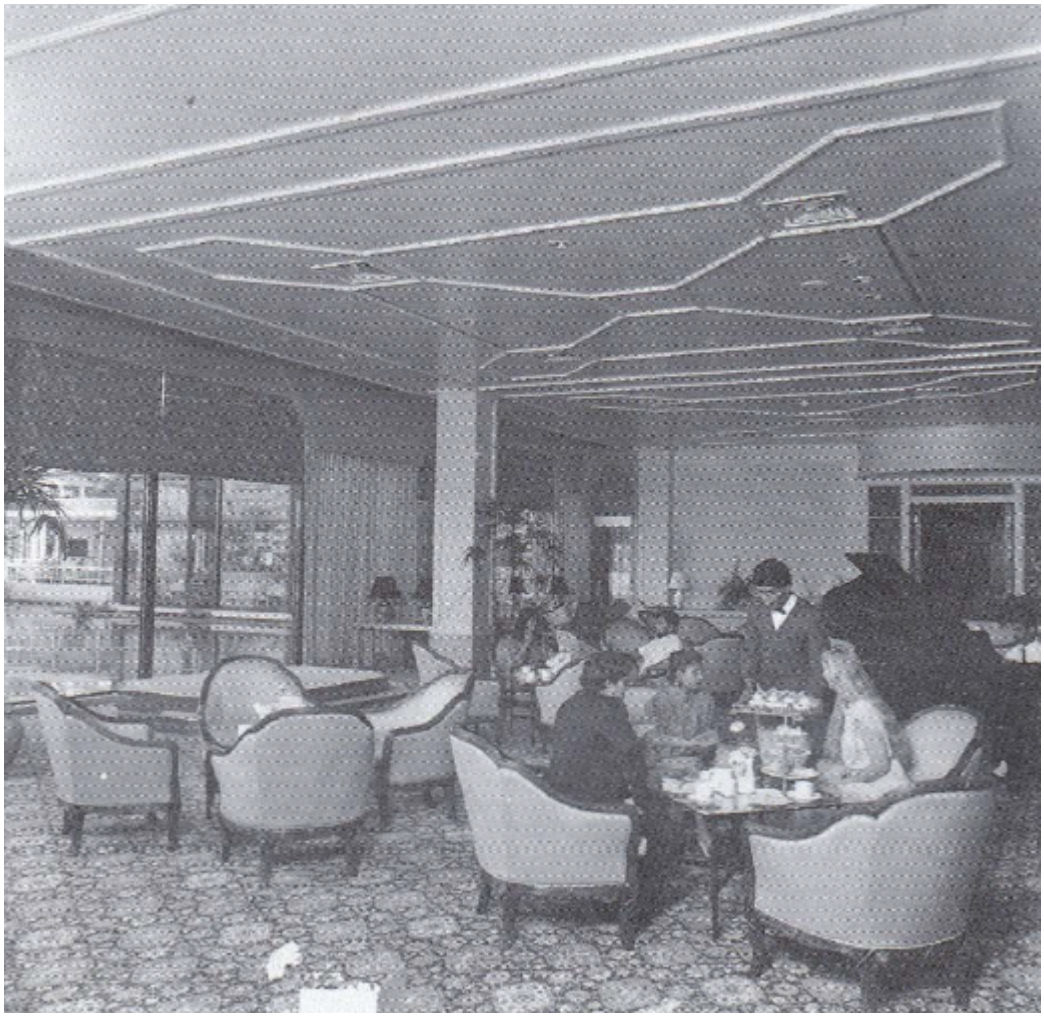
A view of the Taj Samudra at Galle Face.



The Galadari Meridien at Lotus Road



Hilton International, adding to Colombo’s skyline.



Thorana, the Hilton’s waterfront lobby lounge bar.