Feel at Home at The Thinnai

Posted on



The Thinnai is mesmerising and tranquil

Cocooned within the precincts of homely Jaffna where one feels the Northern peninsula's heartbeat is The Thinnai. Calming and beautiful, it is a place to rest, relax and reunite; it is a place that feels like home.

Words Keshini de Silva | **Photographs** Menaka Aravinda and Vishwathan Tharmakulasingham

Ornately embellished dancers, bursts of bight colour amidst contemporary architecture and the delicately decorated *kolam*; The Thinnai teases with glimpses of Northern culture upon entrance.

'Thinnai', in Tamil, denotes the central courtyard in the traditional Jaffna homes or the '*Mada Midula*'; a place of tranquillity, bonding and recreational conversation. These are characteristics embodied throughout the all suite boutique hotel.

In total there are six categories of spacious suites. They are classified as either one

bedroom or two-bedroom. The concept is unique, with the suites all equipped with a private living area and access to a *thinnai* (or verandah) or a balcony. Thereby, the element of spaciousness makes the rooms great for families. The lush Nelli Suites are equipped with a kitchenette while in the grand Mallihai Presidential Suites guests can relish a soak in the private plunge pool. As they are designed in the terraced UK townhouse manner with a touch of traditional Northern architecture, walking up to your suite has a comforting and homely feel to it.

One of the distinct concepts of the hotel is ‘I Love Green’, where the focus is on the careful use of water, a precious resource in the northern peninsula. Guests who sign up for it are rewarded with vouchers that can be reimbursed at the hotel.



The lobby with welcoming bursts of Jaffna culture and the kolam

In terms of cuisine, The Thinnai strives to offer you a complete Jaffna experience while also serving familiar fare. Thus, the Thulaa Restaurant and Café serves

international cuisine in an elegant yet cosy environment. Breathe in the aromatic legacy of Jaffna as the traditional Jaffna Kool is served and savour this unique flavour as you sip the delightfully spicy seafood soup –your taste buds will tingle at the hints of spices, crab and odiyal (palmyrah tuber flour). A delightful Jaffna Tiffin, is served with either sweet or savoury delicacies of the Tamil culture and the customary spirit-lifting sukku coffee – a preparation of roasted and grounded coffee, coriander seeds and dry ginger. At Saraal Pub one can enjoy delicious nibbles and sprightly beverages in a laid back ambience. As guests escape the hot climate in the cool waters of the cosy swimming pool, they have a choice range of energizing refreshment to relish in. Guests will also be able to feast on an expansive menu of Jaffna fare coupled with Indian and traditional Sri Lankan delights at the Amudham restaurant.

As you dine, the affable chef will always go the extra mile to ensure you are looked after. Your pampered experience at The Thinnai is in fact defined by the pleasant staff who are forthcoming with their assistance and ready to hear your queries with a pleasant smile.

Harvested from their own farms in Jaffna, The Thinnai further offers the option of dining on organic fruits and vegetables as well as free-range poultry and dairy. The guests are also welcome to tour their organic farms and soon their yoga classes too will be held amidst this green and quaint backdrop. Farmhouses as well as an experience centre are in the pipeline for in a few months, Thinnai guests will be able to choose to spend a few nights at the farm. Here they discover organic as well as free-range farming hands-on.

“The Thinnai is designed to offer guests the ultimate Jaffna experience in an absolutely relaxing setting. We find that our guests enjoy the concept immensely as many of them extend their stay”, says Jeyaseelan Gnanam, Managing Director, Thinnaveli Property Developers.

Indeed, tranquillity is the hotel’s hallmark. This is exemplified in the subtle radiance of the night, as you sit at the lounge or *thinnai* in your lavish room enjoying the harmonious trickle of the calming water feature at the courtyard. As envisaged by the owners, The Thinnai is truly “a home away from home”.

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