



Stone House Kandy where the facade of olden times has been preserved

Sprawling lawns, a house made of granite shrouded with tall trees set in a secluded backdrop, the perfect setting for a little mystery and adventure... or is it? Step inside and be enraptured by the soothing comforts where an adventure of indulgence and tranquillity awaits!

Words Krishani Peiris **Photographs** Indika De Silva

Nestled on a plateau atop one of the many hillocks in the scenic city of Kandy, Stone House Kandy exudes a charming ambience that reflects its historical roots as well as a touch of modernity that has become part and parcel of its identity. Formerly known as the *Gal Bangalawa*, which literally translates to Stone House, this boutique villa is spread across two acres and is enriched with a history that runs back to the 1940s.

Situated a mere five minutes from the town of Kandy, the villa was recently renovated and reopened. The exterior of the villa has been preserved while the interior has been changed to showcase a luxurious context and an intriguing theme—rice or paddy. Several pieces of art—all dedicated to and based along this theme—created by renowned Sri Lankan artists, deck every nook and cranny, making one feel as if one is taking a journey through a gallery of art. The interior and furniture is embellished with earthy tones punctuated by vibrant colours while small vases containing paddy add a touch of greenery to the decor.

Entering through the front veranda and passing along the narrow passageway lined with a pond and rooms on either side, one comes to the lobby area. Divided into two sections, the lobby opens up to the verdant views of a large garden. And inside the villa guests are treated to intriguing art pieces such as a structure incorporating several piece of equipment used in paddy cultivation and identical wall hangings mimicking the microscopic view of rice. Spacious with ceiling to floor windows and doors, which open up to let the sunshine in, the lobby provides an ideal place to unwind while enjoying the serenity that encircles the villa.

Adjacent to the lobby is the dining area where guests have the option of either dining inside or outside. Serving both western and eastern cuisine, prominence is given to each guest's preference while rice based fusion dishes with a variety of authentic Sri Lankan curries are offered for guests to receive a true Sri Lankan food experience.

Guests also have the option of participating in a cooking session with the chef to learn how

Stone House kandy: An interlude among art

to whip up amazing local recipes. As all food is prepared with fresh ingredients, bought on the day of preparation, with even just one bite guests can taste the wholesomeness as well as the delicious flavour of each dish.

Stone House Kandy has five rooms, three luxury rooms and two luxury suites located on both the ground and upper floors. Named *Sudu*, *Dumburu*, *Ran*, *Thamba* and *Kalu*, each room is the epitome of grace and sophistication with stunning art pieces decorating the walls. Here guests can enjoy a pleasant stay amidst a myriad of amenities. Each of the luxury rooms is arrayed with a multitude of facilities to impart a soothing stay that invokes feelings of happiness in profusion.

Kalu, situated on the upper floor, with its darker tones of black, brown, red and white, is the most exclusive of all the rooms. Complete with an almost palatial like washroom where a figure made out of blades of mammoties and another incredible piece created with the Sinhala alphabet, adds a touch of glamour that is breathtaking. *Kalu* is perfect for some indulgent pampering.

Infused with Kandyan traditions and other cultural elements, Stone House Kandy offers a variety of recreational activities, which includes a pool for a cooling dip. Upon request, three-wheeler (*tuk tuk*) rides to explore the city of Kandy, trips to Hantana, Lankatilake temple and Dalada Maligawa will be arranged by the diligent staff at the villa, who at all times strives to fulfil every request of the guests.

As the sun sets, the whole area takes on a mystic glow. Strolling through the extensive garden or down the lane that leads up to Stone House Kandy as the breeze gently swirls around, one would be hard set to find a more relaxing place to luxuriate in as comfort and serenity prevails... It is a true home away from home.

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