

Tree Tops

JUNGLE LODGE

A JOURNEY BACK TO NATURE



Jungle life

Tree Tops is a true jungle experience. Simple and rustic clay huts blend unfenced with beautiful surroundings - virgin forest, rocky hills, and wildlife. The lodge is located near Buttala in Southeast Sri Lanka, in the Weliara wilderness bordering the Northwestern corner of the 1300 km2 Yala National Park. A micro lodge but fully geared with staff, eager to create great experiences for visitors – be it tasty meals, jungle treks, or wild elephant spotting.

Philosophy

The central idea of the lodge is living in harmony with nature, and with a minimum of infrastructure. Life at Tree Tops is a journey back to basics - in huts made from clay and wood found in the forest, there is no electricity, nights are black, bathing is primitive at a freshwater well, and the mainly vegetarian meals are cooked native style on wood fire. The management of the lodge depends on local staff and their knowledge of the jungle. Small scale sustainable tourism can hopefully contribute to reducing the villagers need for hunting and logging in the forest which is habitat for elephants. Saving the forest is one step towards solving the conflict between humans and elephant - the main threat to the endangered Asian elephant.

Landscape

The area of Tree Tops is hidden between a long range of steep mountains and the protected Yala NP, and share flora and fauna with the sanctuary. The uninhabited landscape is a variety of abandoned fields, lakes, and forest. The vegetation consists of thorny scrub jungle and tall dry zone tropical forest with rare trees such as ebony. The jungle has many plants of medicinal value, all used by the natives of the area who know the art of traditional ayurvedic plant medicine.

Nights in elephant country

Nights in the jungle are an experience of darkness and strange sounds. Most prominent of our wild visitors at Tree Tops are the wild elephants passing close by. Usually they are very silent but frequently we hear them breaking branches or trumpeting. If you're lucky you might even hear the 'song of elephants' – herds long distance communicating with sound waves like whales. This is a night phenomena; a most rare experience. Elephants are always on the move and they come and go in the area around Tree Tops. Yala and bordering forests host approximately 500 elephants, making this area of Sri Lanka a most important elephant habitat with a density about one elephant per 2.5 km2.

Birds

With 160 species birding is excellent. A few common birds: Asian Paradise Flycatcher, Green Bee-eater, Baya Weaver, and endemics like Sri Lankan Hanging Parrot, Sri Lankan Jungle Fowl and Grey- and Malabar Pied Hornbill.

Excursions

All excursions are on foot and escorted by a Tree Tops team. An exciting walk late afternoon goes to the Weliara Lake at the border of the national park. Especially during dry periods herds of elephants are attracted to this waterhole.

Ambience

Some visitors prefer just to meditate to the combination of silence and sounds of nature. One doesn't need to walk about, nature comes to us. A most recommended activity is to cool down having a native style bath at the freshwater well. Stay a while in the sun, unite with nature and enjoy the spectacular view of birds and rocky mountains covered by pristine forest.



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