

Tropical Getaway at the Ayu Spa in Galle



A spa session in sunny Sri Lanka is the perfect tropical experience for relaxing, rejuvenating, and resting in nature.

Words | Bindu Gopal Rao

The Balinese Ayu Spa concept at Jetwing Lighthouse is built upon a holistic approach to wellness. It seamlessly blends ancient Balinese healing traditions with modern spa techniques to provide a truly rejuvenating experience.

Located in Galle, the Jetwing Lighthouse is a luxurious property that has been designed by the legendary Geoffrey Bawa. The property is located at the edge of a rocky cliff overlooking the Indian Ocean and offers a beautiful view from all parts of the property. The calmness of the ocean is an unmissable part of the property, and the sound of water and waves is almost soothing when you are here. Naturally, the spa here embodies all these virtues and more.

The decor is tastefully done. It features wooden furniture, handmade decorations, and traditional items like oil lamps, lending an authentic local touch. The earthy colour palette of browns, yellows, and creams further enhances the peaceful environment.

The Design

The Spa design emphasises natural elements to create a serene and welcoming atmosphere. “We predominantly use

wood and stone throughout the space. Wooden ceilings and floors provide a warm and calming ambience, while stone or tile floors in other areas maintain a cool, natural feel. Our lighting scheme is designed to be soft and relaxing, incorporating a mix of natural light filtered through bamboo blinds and warm wall lights,” says **Indika Gamage, Head of Galle Hotels**, Jetwing Lighthouse, Jetwing Kurulubedda, Hotel J Unawatuna, and Hotel J Ambalangoda.

The spa rooms are thoughtfully arranged to avoid clutter, ensuring ample space and a sense of openness that contributes to the relaxing vibe. Every detail, from fresh towels adorned with flowers to comfortable massage tables and cosy chairs, reflects the team’s commitment to guest comfort and care.

Focus on Training

The spa focuses extensively on staff training and development. “Our staff undergoes rigorous and comprehensive training to ensure exceptional service. As part of the initial training, new therapists receive eight months of intensive training in Bali. On-the-job experience follows this. After Bali, they are required to work at the spa for a minimum of one year before being considered for international assignments,” says Gamage.



Ongoing development is also on the cards for all therapists. “Subsequently, they complete an additional minimum of six months of training in Sri Lanka to further refine their skills and stay updated with our service standards,” says Gamage. Looking ahead, the team plans to increase the spa capture ratio up to 25% and to be the best spa in the region.

The Treatment

The spa offers a Balinese massage, a traditional Asian full-body massage that uses palm pressure and long, gentle strokes with a unique blend of natural essential oils. It's designed to stimulate blood circulation, improve energy flow, and release tension. The Signature Massage is a profoundly relaxing combination of four distinct massage techniques. “We utilise high-quality products to ensure the best possible experience for our guests. As far as the aromatherapy oils are concerned, we only use bio natural products; specifically, we use Biokos for facials. As far as scrubs are concerned, our selection includes Green Tea, Natural Coconut, Himalayan Salt, and Chocolate scrubs,” says Gamage.

I chose the 90-minute Signature Massage that incorporates Balinese massage techniques with a hot stone massage. My therapist, Tata, is from Bali and shows me to my room. The session starts with a dry massage where she activates the muscles by pressing the feet and back with a towel. Starting with the back, the therapist applies oil and then uses long strokes for a deep skin massage. This is then followed with a massage on the legs, using strokes that feel deeply relaxing, using pressure from the fingers and knuckles as she works her way through the stressed muscles.

This is done for 30 minutes, and then there is a 10-minute shiatsu session. After this, she does a warm stone massage on my back, shoulders, neck, and arms for about 20 minutes to release the tension of my stressed muscles. The session ends with a 30-minute reflexology and an invigorating head massage that leaves me feeling extremely relaxed, perfect after a jet-lagged day. **SS**

Name of The Spa: Ayu Spa
Established: 1997
Founders: Jetwing Hotels
Architect: Geoffrey Bawa
Area/Size: 500 SQM
Treatment Rooms: 2 Single, 5 Couple, 1 Manicure & Pedicure, 1 Steam Room
Number of Estheticians: 3
Signature Treatments: Balinese Massage & Signature Massage
Timings: 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM daily

