

# The best hotels and resorts in the world: The Gold List 2023



*Courtesy Ceylon Tea Trails*

## **Ceylon Tea Trails – Hatton, Sri Lanka**

It's hard not to catch your breath at the beauty of Bogawantalawa Valley's emerald-green hills, a four-hour drive from Colombo. This is real tea country – and home to Tea Trail's five beautifully restored tea planter bungalows. Part of Resplendent Ceylon, owned by [Sri Lanka's](#) much-loved tea brand Dilmah, its 26 rooms are scattered across the colonial-era bungalows. It's like stepping back in time – all antique furniture, four-poster beds, chintz armchairs, and clawfoot baths. Each residence has its own distinctive features. (Infinity pool? Pick lakeside Dunkeld. Epic garden? Go for Tientsin. Best views?

Choose Norwood.) However, they all have this make-yourself-at-home ease, readily helped by the super-efficient and friendly staff. The bungalows' resident chefs will propose dishes and cook what you want. Feast on an incredible array, from traditional rice and curry to exquisitely crafted, often tea-infused dishes such as slow-roasted pork filet, with Medawatta tea, apple, and prunes purée, butter vegetable, and orange mustard sauce. Days are spent making full use of the surroundings. Explore the estate with veteran tea planter Bernard, past colourfully attired tea pickers who show you their craft. Ramble along one of the bungalow trails – or challenge yourself with a trek up nearby Adam's Peak. Back at base, play croquet, kayak to another bungalow for afternoon tea, or curl up on one of the cosy fireside sofas in the panelled library. But really this is a place to relax and reflect – particularly in one of the cane chaises, on the terrace, perhaps with a G&T in hand. *From about £753. Harriet Compston*



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