Pioneering Venture: Shangri-La In Sri Lanka



Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts marks its presence in Sri Lanka

In a pioneering move, Hong Kong-based Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts, extends its presence to Sri Lanka with the launch of two new ventures in Colombo and Hambantota. Heralding a new phase in the hospitality industry of Sri Lanka, Colombo hosts the latest venue for the new Shangri-La Hotel while Hambantota serves as the second prime location for Shangri-La's Resort and Spa.

With 72 hotels to its name Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts boasts of a room inventory of 30,000 while establishing its trademark 'hospitality from the heart' during a period of over four decades. Among its many other expansion programmes earmarked for the near future Shangri-La Hotel, Colombo along with Shangri-La's Hambantota Resort and Spa stands to bridge its development ventures in the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.

Shangri-La Hotel, Colombo

Shangri-La Hotel, Colombo to be opened in the year 2015 will be located between the Galle Face Green promenade and the Beira Lake, to afford a generous view-span of the Indian Ocean. Upon ten acres of land procured from the government in 2011, the Hotel will be constructed in compliance with sustainability guidelines and accommodated with 661 rooms providing some of the largest in the city and will include 43 suites as well. Notable amongst a surplus of facilities for both business and recreation are one of the largest meeting facilities, restaurant concepts from sushi bar to sky lounge and health club and spa to name a few.

The venture intends to incorporate the local community from its onset yielding employment opportunities and infrastructural support. As direct impact to the community the Hotel's presence would serve an enabling environment for tourism talent employing the majority of the workforce locally and the commencement of a "Hospitality Traineeship Programme." Skilled candidates would also be afforded the opportunity to be employed in Shangri-La hotels globally. In a broader perspective the group will adopt Embrace, Shangri-La's Care for People Project, to enable long-term programmes on health and education with children's organisations.

Shangri-La Hotel, Colombo: Groundbreaking Ceremony

The commencement of the Shangri-La Hotel, Colombo was auspiciously inaugurated with the groundbreaking ceremony held at the site. A distinguished gathering of guests that attended the landmark event comprised of Minister of Economic Development Basil Rajapaksa, Mayor of Colombo A J M Muzammil, and Deputy Minister of Economic Development Lakshman Yapa Abeywardena. Delegates from Shangri-La group included Kuok Khoon Ean, Chairman – Shangri-La Asia, Madhu Ramachandra Rao, Executive Director – Shangri-La Asia and George Yong-Boon Yeo, Vice Chairman – Kerry Group.

"There is no greater hospitality than to embrace a stranger as one's own."
Madhu Ramachandra Rao, Executive Director – Shangri-La Asia

Ayubowan

Hon Basil Rajapaksa, Minister for Economic Development, His Worship, A J M Muzammil, Mayor of Colombo, Mr Lakshman Yapa Abeywardena, Deputy Minister of Economic â€¨Development, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning to each of you and a warm welcome once again on the occasion of this groundbreaking â€¨ceremony of Shangri-La Hotel in â€¨Colombo. By way of a brief introduction, the Shangri-La group is now into its 41st year of operation, and traces its origins to the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore which commenced business in 1971 and has come to be regarded as one of the finest hotels in our city-state. Over these past four decades we have grown considerably and currently we own and operate 73 hotels and resorts with an inventory of over 30,000 rooms and around 40,000 â€¨employees. Our hotels currently operate in 17 countries around the world and are generally regarded as ranking among the top two or three hotels in their competitive sphere. Our development plans over the next four years envisages growing to around 120 â€¨hotels with an inventory of about 50,000 rooms.

While traditionally the group has focused its efforts in Southeast Asia, in recent years it has opened hotels and resorts in India, the Maldives, the Middle East and Europe. As we are planning to open more hotels in these geographies, we are also commencing a new development in Ghana, â€¨West Africa, thereby extending its global footprint.

To support its operations, it has a network of marketing offices in key cities across the world, and also sales agents in several markets that are important feeder markets to Asia.

Shangri-La’s operating and service philosophy is based on traditional Asian family values of care, respect, humility, helpfulness and sincerity. â€¨Its service philosophy is aptly encapsulated in the statement “there is no greater hospitality than to embrace a stranger as one’s own.” This is in our nature and is the underlying message in its brand advertising campaign. â€¨We are very excited about our development plans for Sri Lanka, a country that is blessed with natural beauty, a rich cultural heritage and genuinely warm and friendly people – all of which make for a successful tourism destination.

Given the enormous potential for tourism in the country and the multiplier effects that tourism investment has on the economy, the government is keen to quickly add to and improve the existing tourism infrastructure. â€¨It is indeed our privilege to be here today and we are very grateful for the opportunity given to us to play a small role in the country’s endeavours to improve its tourism infrastructure. Shangri-La’s reputation as a very successful and significant hotel brand is not only established in Southeast Asia where it has its roots, but it has also spread to South Asia, the Middle East, Europe, North America and Australia.

With our entry into Sri Lanka, we expect to market our hotels in this country to our global customers through our marketing network and trade affiliations and thereby supplement the government’s own marketing efforts for Sri Lanka as a tourism destination. Over these past four decades, the Shangri-La group has played a very useful role as a catalyst for economic development in several cities, provinces and countries where it has opened its hotels. We are confident that our entry into Sri Lanka will contribute to the economic development of the cities we will be investing in.

We also believe that we can redefine the standards of hospitality and experience at the luxury end of the market, both in terms of product and service, and raise the bar for the â€¨ultimate benefit of the tourism sector in the country.

The Shangri-La, Colombo will feature 661 guest rooms and suites, several food and beverage options and will also feature a 2,000 square metre ballroom. The development will also have two towers of luxury residences for sale and on lease, and will also include 25,000 square metres of high-end shopping space.

Before closing, on behalf of â€¨our group, I’d like to extend our sincere thanks to His Excellency President Mahinda Rajapaksa, His Excellency Basil Rajapaksa, Prof G L Peiris, â€¨Minister of External Affairs, Mr Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Dr P B Jayasundera, and several government officials who invited us to invest in Sri Lanka, and for the excellent support and cooperation they and all levels of government extended to us. We applaud the cooperation and the coordination efforts of various ministries and government institutions which made the investment approval process a smooth and efficient one.

We look forward to working with the people of Sri Lanka, of this great country, and to share in their success and happiness. Thank you once again for sparing your time this morning and for gracing this important event by your presence.

Bohoma Sthuthi








SHANGRI-LA
HOTELS and RESORTS


SHANGRI-LA
HOTELS and RESORTS



