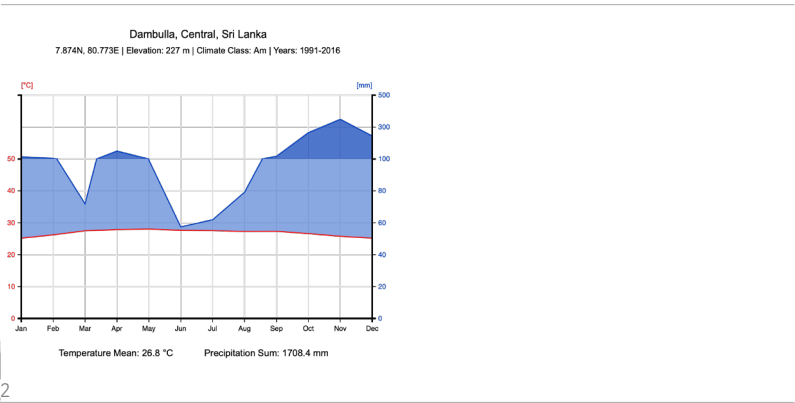
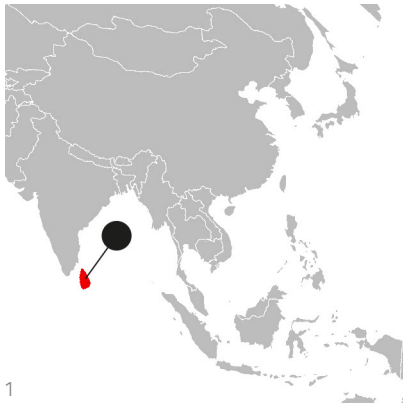


Kandalama Hotel

Dambulla | Sri Lanka

1



Climate | Geography | Vegetation

Sri Lanka has a tropical climate which consists of distinct wet and dry seasons. The coastal areas of the country enjoy temperatures averaging 28°C. The upland areas are cooler and more temperate, with a yearly average around 16-20°C.

Sri Lanka, island country lying in the Indian Ocean. It has a maximum length of 432 km and a maximum width of 224 km. The natural vegetation covers about one-third of the total land area. In the Wet Zone, tropical wet forest dominates in the lowlands, and submontane and montane forests prevail in the highlands. The Dry Zone has a climax vegetation of dry evergreen forest and moist deciduous forest, with forests giving way to a stunted, shrubby, xerophytic vegetation in its driest parts.





5- © Jürgen Reichardt



5- © Jürgen Reichardt

Building techniques

This site with its natural features proved a design challenge so the impact of construction had to be minimized. That means no earth-moving machines were used and all the sizable rock formations were kept, so that they became an important element in the final design. Special about the design was its siting along the existing ridges, exterior walkways along the cliff face of the hotel wings, and wood trellises with climbing vegetation. These elements help to blend the building into the site, create a relationship to its surroundings through exterior space, and blur the distinction between the natural and man-made, respectively.

Design elements

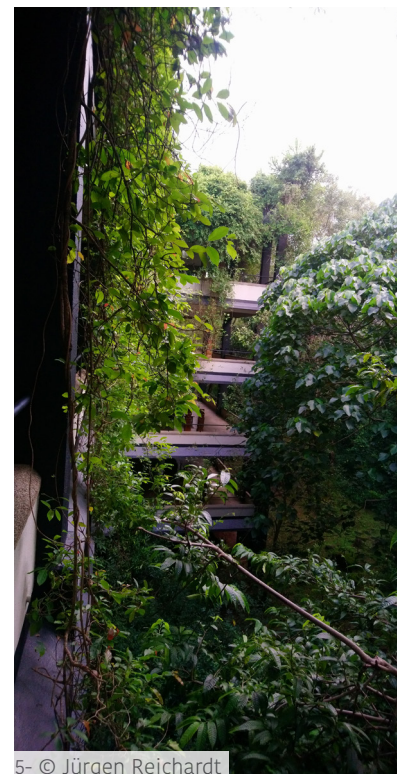
From the beginning Bawa was interested in developing a spatial and visual sequence of entry that culminated in the revelation of the distant view of the monument of Sigiriya only after entry to the hotel lobby. One of the most beautiful elements is the large, cave-like „porte cochère“ abutting the western side of the cliff around which the hotel surrounded. The visitor walks through the tight tunnel-like passage, complete with a wall lined by boulders, suddenly discovering the panoramic view northward over the Kandalama Tank.

Material | Sustainability

In contrast to many of Bawa's other buildings on humid ocean-front sites, this design must adapt to a different climate. While pitched roofs are a necessity in coastal areas that receive heavy rain, the flat roofs at Kandalama function well in a dry climate and are less material-intensive. The detailing of the architecture itself is harmoniously articulated in neutral tones and natural materials, including white concrete walls, black painted concrete columns, and wood or iron railings and millwork.

History

The Kandalama Hotel in Sri Lanka was designed by the Sri Lankan architect Geoffrey Bawa. His career was marked by sensitive approach to the environment and a unique balance between the modern and the vernacular. One of this indicative architecture is environmental sensitivity and contemporary/ traditional balance is the Kandalama Hotel, completed in 1995.



5- © Jürgen Reichardt

Delina Oster

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