

## Guests who have agreed to being quoted in the HPH literature!

**Names:** Aadil & Nada Kazi

**Adults & children over 12:** -2- **Children under 12:** -0-

**Mailing address:** E-Mail: UK **Tel: No.(s):**

**Email address:** [us@aadilnada.com](mailto:us@aadilnada.com)

**Passport No.(s) or National Identity Card No.(s):**

**Stayed From:** Walkabout & Planter's lunch on January 10<sup>th</sup> 2018

### Comments:

Thank you so much for your hospitality and time with us today! You are both so warm and friendly we have really enjoyed our stay here.

The food was absolutely spectacular!

Wish you all the best and looking forward to coming back in the future.

Thanks again

**CHECK HERE IF YOU DON'T OBJECT TO OUR QUOTING YOUR COMMENTS ON OUR**

**WEBSITE X**

**Names:** Alain Charron& Pierre-Yves Bonnot

**Adults & children over 12:** -0-

**Mailing address:** Les Herbivores 61400 Saint Mard De Reno, France

**E-Mail:** [contact@lamaisondhector.com](mailto:contact@lamaisondhector.com) , [PHARMDHECTOR@gmail.com](mailto:PHARMDHECTOR@gmail.com)

**Tel: No.(s):**

**Passport No.(s) or National Identity Card No.(s):**

**Stayed From:** 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> January 2018

**Comments:**

We don't know whether paradise exists .....but we've discovered a wonderfull and peacefull place on this earth!! Please don't change anything! No huge hotel, no swimming pool in your wild beautiful garden! Thanks a lot for the Sri Lankan meals. They were the best as we've eaten in Sri Lanka in six weeks!!!

It was a real pleasure to stay at your family home with you. It should be a delicate, charming moment that we'll keep in our hearts. Thank you again for your kindness.

Regards, Pierre-Yves and Alain

**CHECK HERE IF YOU DON'T OBJECT TO OUR QUOTING YOUR COMMENTS ON OUR**

**WEBSITE X**

Name(s) Rachel Yas & Michael Borter	
Adults and children over 12 years of age: 2	
From: Los Angeles. CA.	
Stayed From: January 5 <sup>th</sup> To: January 9 <sup>th</sup> 2018	
<p><b>Comments:</b> Cher Arlene et Emil, where do we begin! This experience has been life-changing – one never to be forgotten. We feel so lucky to have had both of you to ourselves, able to learn the flora and fauna, explore the Soaking Pool, rock hunting etc. We love you both so much! I did not realize there truly was sanctuary on earth – Halgolla House is it – Arlene &amp; Emil we will be back (maybe Rachel sooner than you think!)</p>	
Food	*****
Service	****
Accommodation	****
Company	*****
<p>Here's Mike: Wonderful experience, we wanted to see Sri Lanka and as it turned out we didn't need to leave the plantation. Thanks for the tremendous hospitality.</p>	

Name(s) Karen Chua, Joe, Maija, Bella and Matteo Fiorante	
Adults and children over 12 years of age: 4 Children under 12 Years of Age: 1	
From: Vancouver. BC. Canada	
Stayed From: August 7 <sup>th</sup> To: August 10 <sup>th</sup> 2014	
<p><b>Comments:</b> Dear Arlene &amp; Emil,  Words cannot express how touched we are by your hospitality and kindness. We have had 3 beautiful restful days in your home enjoying the most delicious meals – the best we have had in our travels in Sri Lanka.  We arrived as strangers and are leaving as friends. We will be back – Until then, we will keep in touch.</p>	

Name(s) Claire Louvard, Caroline Marie & David Volpi

Paris. France

Stayed From: 24<sup>th</sup> To:26<sup>th</sup> August 2014

**Comments:**

Leave this place is definitely like leave heaven! We feel just like at home, in family with Arlene & Emil. We have memories for life like the walk in this wonderful plantation or diners with everybody in a warm full atmosphere, learning the history of the house, the place, Arlene and Emil... It's one of the first time in Sri Lanka that we're really sad to leave! Thanks for everything, we will miss you.

Caroline, Claire and David.

Name(s) Renee Archer & Nicole McDougall

Victoria, Australia

Stayed From: Aug. 30<sup>th</sup> To: Sep. 1<sup>st</sup>

**Comments:**

Many, many thanks to Arlene & Emil for their entertaining hospitality and care for us. We had a relaxing 2 nights and loved the various conversations of personal and country history – comparing politicians! Sitting on the porch with that phenomenal view was wonderful. And thank you for the delicious food – best we've had in Sri Lanka. We wish you best of luck and lots of health and happiness for the future

Warm thanks, Nicole and Renee

Name(s) Dr. Beverley Howson & Dr. Donald Goodwin

Derbyshire. United Kingdom

Stayed From: 13<sup>th</sup> To: 16<sup>th</sup> September 2014

**Comments:** Dear Arlene & Emil, Thank you for our wonderful stay. We had a wonderfully relaxing stay. We loved the food throughout the day! The forest walk was utterly fascinating and certainly has the beating of the Eden Project. We took a day trip to Kandy which went very smoothly, the botanical gardens were particularly worth seeing. Most of all I enjoyed the view from the verandah through the begonias and huge trees and of course the conversation. Thank you. Donald and Beverley

Name(s) Neil & Anne Murray

Sutton. Surrey. U.K

Stayed From: 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov. 2014 To: 6<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2014

**Comments:** One of the most idyllic stays of my life, anywhere. Marvellous setting, fabulous hospitality, exceptional food and grounds to die for. Unforgettable experience and one we will want to repeat. Thank you for your hospitality. This has been a wonderful stay.

Name(s) Kor Ting

Singapore

Stayed From: Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 To: Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014

**Comments:** Awesome is an understatement! Very warm hospitality and very delicious Sri Lankan cuisine! The gardens are amazing! Hope to be back soon.

Name(s) Roger Humphreys

Caernarfon. UK

Stayed From: 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014 To: 5<sup>th</sup> December 2014

**Comments:** My second visit. The best of Sri Lankan hospitality and food. Thank you very much, Arlene and Emil

Name(s) Michelle Morton & John Yungclas

Denver. Colorado. USA

Stayed From: 19<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2014 To: 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2014

**Comments:** Lucky us to have time, space, conversation, meals and laughs with Emil, Arlene and their wonderful household staff! We loved our stay here in this relaxing and welcoming home. Our first 24 hours here was pouring rain – but we made the best of it together, and I was happy to slow down and just “be.” Loved our tour of the plantation with Emil! Better than a Botanical Gardens visit!

Name(s) Angelica, Ulf, Filip and Hector Knuts

Stavanger, Norway

Stayed From: 19<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2014 To: 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec. 2014

**Comments:** What a wonderful stay! We felt so much at home (but with much better service than at home!) Although it was raining heavily a lot of the time when we were here we still had a great time! Absolutely lovely food (a great way to spend the time – eating! Thank you so much Emil & Arlene and all the lovely personell for taking such good care of us and making our holiday so great!

Name(s) Allison & Lisa Corley

New York. NY. USA

Stayed From: Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> 2014 To: Dec. 27<sup>th</sup> 2014

**Comments:**

Despite flooding, washed out roads, and being “stuck” at home for a few days (or rather because of it!) I know that our stay will be by far the most memorable part of our trip. We both felt truly welcomed into your home, and are leaving with memories of delicious food (that we would have thought to have tried) and entertaining stories from Emil. We are so glad we were here for Christmas, as staying here was quite like visiting relations!

Name(s) Lison, Mina, Sophie and Guy Dentan

Nosy LE Roi France

Stayed From: Dec. 26<sup>th</sup> 2014 To: Dec. 28<sup>th</sup> 2014

**Comments:**

(Merci pour cette etape inorhiable dans notre voyage Emil, notre bain deboue restera en miconte et nous prvous rire de cette veram...de .... – Guy) Emil, Arlene this is paradise on earth! Thank you so much for your warm welcoming and sharing and kind attention and... and.. Sophie

(More in French)

Name(s) Clarissa Reikersdorfer and Markus Rhomberg

Bregens . Austria

Stayed From: Dec. 28<sup>th</sup> 2014 To: Dec 30<sup>th</sup> 2014

**Comments:**

Dear Arlene, dear Emil,

Thank you for an unforgettable stay in your home. Would were so kind and helpful to us and we learnt as much from your stories on .. your herbs and flowers as well as Sri Lankan history.

Name(s) Nick & Colleen Hillman

London, United Kingdom

Stayed From: Dec. 28<sup>th</sup> 2014 To: Dec. 30<sup>th</sup> 2014

**Comments:**

It has rained constantly but that has not dampened our enthusiasm for Halolla and the wonderful hospitality of Emil & Arlene. We have spent many hours chatting and our knowledge of the island has greatly increased even though we have visited Sri Lanka many times. Thank you for your warm welcome.

**Name(s):** Christine, Till & Clemens Kruse

Munchen, Germany:

**Stayed From:** 28<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2014 To: 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. 2015

**Comments:**

Dear Arlene & Emil:

Thank you for the great time in your house included all the interesting background stories about the island, politics, food, history. Our 2 year son Clemens loved it, too!

What a wonderful place! Thanks for your hospitality, lunchers and making us feel like being home

**Name(s)** Suzanne and Matt Groves

**Stayed From:** 30<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2014 To: 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan. 2015

**Comments:**

Thank you for a wonderful stay at your home. I was able to read and enjoy the sun and copious amounts of tea while Matt constantly toured the grounds – lovely. And the food!

We are taking with us extra pounds as well as fond memories of our time here. Thank you for being so welcoming!!

**Name(s)** Kristin Bahri & Lars Hugo

Stockholm. Sweden

**Stayed From:** Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 To: Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> 2015

**Comments:**

The warmth and generosity of Arlene, Emil, Mallika and the rest of the staff, good talks on various interesting topics, entertaining and instructive walks in Emil's company, the beautiful and cosy house and absolutely fabulous meals have given us memories for life. We have traveled quite a lot in several countries but have never experienced such a unique and personal guest house.

Name(s) Gnosall

Stafford, ST20 0DT, England

Stayed From: 15<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2015 To: 18<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2015

**Comments:**

We think we have died and gone to heaven.

From the minute we arrived we were treated as part of the family. It has been a privelege to share this fantastic home with you. The setting is truly magnificent. This is our fourth trip around Sri Lanka and the food here surpasses everything we have had before. Thanks to Emil, Arlene and the indefatigable Malleka.

Name(s) Richard & Julia Arme

Melbourne. York. UK

Stayed From: 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan. 2015 To: 26<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2015

**Comments:**

BEAUTIFUL! I loved ever minute and wanted to stay longer. The honeymoos has been such an experience so far and Hagalon has set the standard for our other accommodations in Sri Lanka. Emil @ Arlene are so friendly and welcoming, its mor than just a guest house, its like an extended family. The soaking pool was a hidden gem and we really enjoyed he walk around the grounds. The only vey small criticism was that we are not used to such hard beds. Thank you for allowing us to stay at your wonderful place.

**Name(s):** Tom & Camilla Cross (nee Hollands-Hurst)

London, UK

**Stayed From:** 25<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2015 **To** 27<sup>th</sup> Jan 2015

**Comments:**

The best introduction to Sri Lanka we could he wished for! We immediately felt at home with your warm hospitality. We loved the walk around the grounds and learning the plantation. The food was out of this world and we so enjoyed chatting about your country and the history of Halgolla and the area. We wished we could have stayed longer and hope to come back. Thank you so much, Emil & Arlene!

Name(s) Sally Middleton, Emma Gillett, & Gus Dove

Liverpool. UK

Stayed From: 28<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2015 To: 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. 2015

**Comments:**

Thank you Emil and Arlene for a wonderful stay! HPH is in such a beautiful setting – so peaceful. We felt very well looked after and especially enjoyed the delicious Sri Lankan food. We also loved hearing all of Emil and Arlene’s stories about Sri Lankan politics, their families, etc. Thanks again to Arlene, Emil, Mallaka, Padma and Garmini. Also thanks Nata for helping Emma and Gus when lost!

Name(s) Tracy & Barrie Hancock

NSW. Australia

Stayed From: 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. 2015 To: 4<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2015

**Comments:**

From our initial email contact we immediately knew that our stay at HPH was going to be something unique and wonderful. Sublime cuisine, personal insights into Sri Lankan culture and politics plus botanical enlightenment all combined to make our stay memorable. Thank you so much Emil, Arlene and your wonderful staff. Trace and Barrie  
xxx

Name(s) Gina Cunningham, Julie Brumlik

Miami Beach FL, USA

Stayed From: 19<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2015 To: 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb. 2015

**Comments:**

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Researching sacred trees and finding such a wonderful place!

A very special homestay with warmth, wit and a fine world view. Emil gave both an introduction to Sri Lanka and to history, rumour, sly insights like we were getting the real scoop. Emil and Arlene are wise and with the meals were exceptional for fine food and genuine camaraderie

Name(s) Christy Herman Elesemore/Jan Clark

Leros, Greece : 4940 Slickruk Dr. Colorado Springs. Colorado 80923 U.S.A.

Stayed From: Feb 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015 To: Feb. 24<sup>th</sup> 2015

**Comments:**

Jan: Thank you so very much for sharing your home and your history with me. You both are extremely interesting & wonderful people. A fabulous way to be introduced to the Sri Lankan culture. Thank you again.

Christy: Could not have been more wonderful and restful. Thank you for sharing your home with us

Name(s) Loise & Sange de Silva

Ottawa. ON. Canada

Stayed From: Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> 2015 To: Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> 2015

**Comments:**

Thank you Arlene and Emil for allowing us to experience a delightfully unique holiday at your welcoming home. You pampered us with breathtaking scenery, delicious food and unparalleled hospitality. Emil's vast knowledge of history and storytelling skills delighted us. Thank you Arlene for accommodating our ever changing demands and your tasteful choice of music. We enjoyed every moment!

Name(s) Bronwen & Colin Thompson

Twickenham. UK

Stayed From: March 6<sup>th</sup> 2015 To: March 8<sup>th</sup> 2015

**Comments:**

We are delighted that Nick Hillman recommended we stay @ HPH. We feel we have had a great introduction to the life of plantation owners, both now and in the past. Lots of stories from Malcolm and Maneka added to our experience and we leave knowing much more about spice cultivation than when we arrived! Thank you for a great stay. Amazing food – thanks to the kitchen team

**Name(s):** Michael Crouch & Victoria Holt

Brighton. U.K.

**Stayed From:** March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015      **To:** March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**Comments:**

A glorious homestay experience: great informed company in a curious and wonderful home, surrounded by a lush green halo of jungle and cultivation. A perfect location to explore the wonders of the region, with a charm all of its own, that more than matched the sights we came to see, and offered us a perfect retreat from the world. I would highly recommend this sanctuary.

**Name(s)** Emily Corkhill & Yasser Alsaadi

Greenacre, NSW. Australia

**Stayed From:** 24.3. 15    **To:** 26.3.15

**Comments:**

Firstly, it's a shame our stay was so short. Having travelled for a month through Vietnam and Cambodia, this stay has been the highlight of our trip. This was our first few days in Sri Lanka and we're worried the rest of the country can't match the love and care provided by Arlene, Emil and the staff. The food was brilliant and we could sit for days listening to Emil's stories – a temple of knowledge. Please ask them for any advice about travelling through the country. We not only recommend this place, you should make it an obligation to stay.

**Name(s)** Christine Paludan-Müller, Jens Skytte Sørensen, Katinka (15), Sophus (10), Pauline (8)

Frederiksberg C, Denmark

**Stayed From:** 30<sup>th</sup> March 2015      **To:** 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015

**Comments:**

Dear Arlene & Emil. Thank you so much for a wonderful stay at HPH. You have been so sweet and welcoming to all of us! It has been very inspiring to be in your very special and beautiful home. We enjoyed the garden walk and to learn about all the plants and not at least to bring home nutmegs directly from the tree! The children loved Natta and were so pleased with their presents. We will never forget you – it has made our trip to Sri Lanka an even greater experience. Thank you again. We wish you all the best. Take care.

PS: The food was the best we have had

**Name(s)** Ashlea Halpern & Andrew Parks

Brooklyn, NY. USA

**Stayed From:** April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015      **To:** April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**Comments:**

Dear Arlene & Emil – We have had the most wonderful three days here, “40 or 50 minutes” outside Kandy town. Thank you for inviting us into your home, for treating us like family, for preparing meal after delicious meal, for tell us so much about Sri Lankan culture and politics, for taking us on a hike around the property and for gifting us with the most beautiful souvenirs. We’ve been on the road 4½ months now and this has truly, truly been a highlight we shall never forget. We will miss you and your staff and will patiently await our invitation to the Xmas party.

<b>Name(s):</b> Chris Wells & Christine Janssen
Victoria Road, London. UK
<b>Stayed From:</b> April 4 <sup>th</sup> 2015 <b>To:</b> April 7 <sup>th</sup> 2015
<b>Comments:</b> Dear Emil & Arlene, thanks a million for the lovely stay. It was a great way to spend Easter away from home. We really enjoyed all Emil's stories, him sharing his knowledge about the plantations with us and there are no words to describe Arlene's cooking. Whenever you decide to write your stories and recipes down, consider 1 copy of the book sold!

<b>Name(s)</b> Lynda Nichols & Janet Thomas
<b>Adults and children over 12 years of age:</b> -2- <b>Children under 12 Years of Age:</b> -0-
<b>E-mail address:</b> <a href="mailto:Nichols.lynda@viss.ae">Nichols.lynda@viss.ae</a> , <a href="mailto:thomas.janet@viss.ae">thomas.janet@viss.ae</a> <b>Tel. No.:</b> 097 1569512805
<b>Mailing Address:</b> Box 68600, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates
<b>Stayed From:</b> 6 <sup>th</sup> April <b>To:</b> 10 <sup>th</sup> April 2015
<b>Comments:</b> Dear Emil & Arlene, Thank you for all your hospitality and attention given to creating a genuine Plantation Home' experience. We have enjoyed learning about the intricate Sri Lankan political 'minefield,' while eating carefully chosen local dishes. What you offer is unique in a time when package holidays are the norm. We are leaving refreshed and look forward to returning one day soon.

<b>Name(s)</b> Yvonne Chiu & Mike Lam
Edmonton. AB. Canada
<b>Stayed From:</b> April 6 <sup>th</sup> 2015 <b>To:</b> April 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2015
<b>Comments:</b> Dearest Emil and Arlene. You brought such joy to Mike and I during our stay at HPH. Everything about our experience here is nurturing is from the delicious food, to the conversations during meal time and the walk through the forest at sunset time... We will forever remember our time with you both at HPH

**Name(s):** Robert Collingwood and Lucy Trench

Strand on the Green, London. UK

**Stayed From:** 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015 **To:** 19<sup>th</sup> April 2015

**Comments:**

Thank you very much for your perfect hospitality, wonderful food and so many memorable conversation in this perfect setting.

As well as enjoying the hospitality and delicious food, we learned so much – about history, politics, spices, wildlife. All fascinating.

**Name(s)** Lily & Henry Davis

London. U.K

**Stayed From:** June 10<sup>th</sup> 2015 **To:** June 12<sup>th</sup> 2015

**Comments:**

What a wonderful couple of days at Halgolla! Thank you very much for sharing your home, knowledge, stories an (last but not least!) delicious food with us. It has been a highlight of our trip to Sri Lanka – we are reluctant to leave! We will never forget this insight in to van der Poorten history. Many thanks again for your warmest hospitality. All the best. L & H.

P.S. Expect a postcard from the Yukon!

**Name(s):** Hannah Short, Rosie Stahl, Emma Astaire

Sharnbrook, Bedford. UK

**Stayed From:** 18<sup>th</sup> July 2015 **To:** 19<sup>th</sup> July 2015

**Comments:**

Thank you so much for all your time and hospitality. We have had the most wonderful time and never want to leave!!You have shared so much knowledge with us about the Sri Lankan culture, family stories and your plantation. The food was delicious! We have never tried so many new foods or flavours in 24 hours, all from your back garden. We look forward to attempting to make them back in England. We look forward to meeting again!

**Name(s):** Vincent and Roline van Zeijst and Eleanore (20), Daniel (17) and Floris (15)

Voorburg, The Netherlands

**Stayed From:** 21/07/15 **To:** 23/07/15

**Comments:**

We have really enjoyed staying at this beautiful and special place where we arrived after a seemingly interminable drive from Nuwara Eliya. We have felt like honoured guests and have enjoyed the beautiful scenery, the great array of unknown home-cooked new dishes and all the stories and information about old and present day Sri Lanka! Thank you very much and hope to visit again

**Name(s):** Isabella Mayer and Nikolous Pont

Munich. Germany

**Stayed From:** 30<sup>th</sup> July 2015 **To:** 1<sup>st</sup> August 2015

**Comments:**

Having followed the recommendation of a friend who, as Emil found out (had never stayed overnight himself!) we were so lucky to spend 2 nights at HPH. Not only because of the breathtaking jungle surrounding which Emil walked us through, revealing stunning views, not only because of the airy, relaxing, inspiring house with its welcoming atmosphere and unbelievable history also not only because of the spectacular cooking of your extremely nice staff. No. The main reason for this to be kept in memory as an absolute highlight of our SL trip, is the encounter with you, with your ideals, your wisdom, your open eardrums. Although we did not meet Arlene (get better soon!!), I am sure we felt her welcoming spirit around. But Emil hosted us wonderfully and we could have talked all night!

Thanks and love, Nikolaus and Isabella

**Name(s):** Flaviana Nervo (Dr. F. Benedetti)

Ivanhoe. Vic. Australia

**Stayed From:** 17/09/2015 **To:** 19/09/2015

**Comments:**

Dear Arlene and Emil,

What a wonderful relaxed time I've had. I'm sure our serene environment makes blood pressure drop by few notches. Your meals were by far the best I've had in Sri Lanka and will inspire me to try Sri Lankan cooking at home (especially with the spices you gave me to take home). Also thank you for the ice pack and balm for my sprained ankle

Best wishes. Flaviana

**Name(s):** Layla Gonaduwa (with Menika van der Poorten)

Kynsey Road, Colombo 7. Sri Lanka

**Stayed From:** 14<sup>th</sup> Dec. **To:** 16<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2015

**Comments:**

To dearest Aunty Arlene & Uncle Emil:

I have been transformed in the nicest possible way. A few days, I know, but it has done so much good to my soul. I'm so thankful for Shehan invited me over and you and Uncle Emil made me feel so welcome and embraced me to your folds. The food, the surroundings, Uncle Emil's non stop chatter full of nuggets of information and wisdom, your warmth & graciousness, and above all – laughter and love, and friendship stays with me forever. I shall carry this forward. It will give me new energy, stronger spirit that will translate in my art. Thank you. Love. Layla

**Name(s):** Michael Sanderson, Katarzyna Tomczyk  
Warsaw, Poland

**Stayed From:** 19<sup>th</sup> **To:** 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015

**Comments:**

We had a thoroughly enjoyable stay, with very high quality food, much dinner-table banter. Everything so careful and fully thought through to make our stay comfortable. We're already planning a return to Sri Lanka and it wouldn't be complete without a repeat visit here. Thank you for your many kindnesses and the warmth of your welcome.  
(Michael)

I will miss you and your lovely house :) (Katya)

**Name(s):** Theone & Rob Snow  
Ferntree Gully, Victoria 3156. Australia.

**Stayed From:** 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> December 2015 **To:**

**Comments:**

What a delightful stay we have enjoyed at Halgolla! Arlene & Emil are perfect hosts, attending to the smallest details which ensure a perfect stay for guests. We are taking away some wonderful memories of our chats with our hosts and other guests, comfortable accommodation and last but not least, we enjoyed the most delicious Sri Lankan food delicacies we have ever eaten!! It was with great anticipation that we wondered each day, what delicious foods would be presented for us on the generous buffet table. "Thank you" doesn't seem adequate

**Name(s):** Errol & Camelia Fernando (and Sean Van Dort)

Wheelers Hill, Vic. Australia

**Stayed From:** 26th

**To:** 30th Dec. 2015

**Comments:**

Words cannot express our beautiful stay at Halgolla Estate. Hosts Emil, Arlene and their domestics, wonderful family, keep up the good work. Will always think of you, great food and laughter. May God Bless you and this great home, hope to see you again.

Thank you

E & C

**Name(s):** Colin & Cathy Kelly

Antrim. N. Ireland.

**Stayed From:** 30/12/2015

**To:** 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. 2016

**Comments:**

A huge thank you to Emil & Arlene for a truly wonderful stay in their beautiful home. This was our first (but not last) visit to Sri Lanka. We thoroughly enjoyed the company of our hosts – who told us such wonderful stories of their lives, the local history and lots more!! Many thanks for making our stay so enjoyable and memorable. It has been a lovely experience.

Cathy & Colin

P.S

It was also a special bonus to meet Michael & Nancy too!

**Name(s):** Peter & Elias Middleton & Jodi Fleming

Marrickville, NSW . Australia

**Stayed From:** 30/12/2015

**To:** 03/01/2016

**Comments:**

This is the best place we have stayed in Sri Lanka so far. It has wonderful food, wonderful drinks and wonderful people..” Elias (7)

Thank you for providing such a charming and unique retreat. It has been an absolute pleasure and we look forward to returning one day – Jodi

We leave here richer and refreshed from the time, the people, the space and experiences at Halgolla – Peter

Natty is very nice – Elias.

**Name(s):** Bruno & Nanlaeven Mattelaer

**Stayed From:** 6<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2015 to 8<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2015

**Comments:**

Dear Emil & Arlene:

Great stay at lovely place! The melancholy of my grandmother’s clock, every quarter. The great stories and political discussions with Emil gave insight in Sri Lanka society. The friendliness of Arlene, the great cooking of Mallika, a lot of things to remember, once back in normal working live in Belgium. Thanks so much for your hospitality.

Nan & Bruno

**Name(s):** Theresa Wong & Matthew Schalcher

Singapore 530159

**Stayed From:** 9<sup>th</sup> Feb.

**To:** 12<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2016

**Comments:**

Dear Emil – this has been my dream getaway: a cozy homestay, a compressed education in Sri Lankan politics, culture, and food, and botany. Chatting about books, art and all in between; the wonderful staff, watching Padma work her magic, meditative hikes. The unforgettable meals. I couldn't ask for more. Wishing you and Arlene lots of health and happiness for the (Lunar) New Year – Theresa

Dear Emil, thank you for an unforgettable homestay – one I will most certainly treasure. Have enjoyed waking up in such serene and beautiful environs and enjoying your fantastic conversation and delicious food. Wishing yourself, Arlene and Family all the best in 2016 – Matt.

**Name(s):** Vera Ivanova

Singapore

**Stayed From:** 10<sup>th</sup>      **To:** 12<sup>th</sup> February 2016

**Comments:**

Dear Emil, the stay at Halgolla Plantation house was a blessing. It gave me the much wanted time for reflection and relaxation but also woke up my curiosity for the past, the history of this wonderful country, of the people and culture that shaped it. It was an honour to be in the company of such a great storyteller as yourself bring up the character, subtlety and richness of Sri Lanka to life in vivid and joyful tales. Your love of life and energy is infectious. Thank you for your care and great hospitality. Hope the health improves for both you and Arlene.

Thanks also to Malika and Padma for all the loving care and truly amazing food!

**Name(s):** MEYER Eric, MARTARELLI Catherine, SABOT Louis, SABOT Anne Marie

**Adults & children over 12:**

**Children under 12:**

**Mailing address:** 3bis rue Severo 75014 Paris, France

**E-Mail:** [emeyer@free.fr](mailto:emeyer@free.fr), [aml.ssabot@wandoo.fr](mailto:aml.ssabot@wandoo.fr)

**Tel: No.(s)** +33 6 75 93 34 34

**Passport No.(s)** 15CR83655 (France) **or National Identity Card No.(s)**

**Duration of Stay:**     **From** 18th     **To** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2016

**Comments:**

Food for thought and food for life. HPH is the best place in Sri Lanka for both. Emil is one of the most knowledgeable persons in Sri Lanka, he knows everything and every body. Mallika's cuisine is incredibly various, inventive and tasty. And the place up the hill is nature at its best. We only missed Arlene and we wish her a prompt recovery so that we can meet and know her during our next visit to Sri Lanka. Meanwhile we keep in touch with Emil. This just the beginning of a new friendship between people in their 70s. Thank you again and warm wishes.

**Name(s):** John & Edwina Smart

**Adults & children over 12:**

-2-

**Children under 12:**

**Mailing address:** Delfan, New Park Terrace, Trelforest, Pontyrridd, Wales U.K.

**E-Mail:**     **Tel: No.(s)**

**Passport No.(s) or National Identity Card No.(s)**

**Stayed From:**     13<sup>th</sup> March to 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016

**Comments:**

Fascinating insight into a bygone age of a work estate as relayed to us by our interesting host, Emil. We should really have seen more of the area for ourselves, maybe another time.  
Our talks revealed that we have many common friends and connection, both in Sri Lanka and elsewhere.  
Thanks for your hospitality.

**Name(s):** Jamila Kassam & Talha Khan  
Beckenham, Kent. UK

**Stayed From:** 25<sup>th</sup> **To:** 26<sup>th</sup> March 2016

**Comments:**

Jamila:

Thank you Emil for a wonderful stay. I loved talking to you and learning about the different plants was fascinating. This place is a real gem – a total oasis of calm and beauty. It felt as though being here has been like staying with family (the amazing home cooked meals are a bonus!) Great to have an insight into how life was for those coming over and to hear about how Sri Lanka has changed. Would love to visit again and spend some more time in your beautiful plantation.

Thank you so much for your hospitality.

Talha:

Thank you for extending such a warm welcome to my wife and I. It was an honour to take a step into a home with so much history and meaning. Emil's knowledge, nay wisdom, that he was so kind to share with us was a special treat. It really did feel like one had the best of Sri Lankan hospitality.

I will cherish our stay forever

Warm regards

Talha.

**Name(s) ): Vince Dean**

Fish Hoek 7975, RSA

**Stayed From:** Tuesday April 26th 2016 **To:** Tuesday May 10, 2016

**Comments:**

Is it possible to imagine a better haven of tranquility, secure in the upper reaches of the jungle yet with the quality of the hospitality meted out in truckloads by Arlene & Emil. The idyllic surroundings of Plantation House make it a superb getaway from the madding crowds and not even the unseasonal high temperatures and accompanying high humidities could spoil the overall experience.

Thank you both and your excellent staff for a lovely stay at HPH.

**Name(s):** Flora Davies & Lily Thomas  
**Bristol. UK**

**Stayed From:** 9<sup>th</sup> June **To:** 11<sup>th</sup> June 2016

**Comments:**

Thank you so much for a wonderfully peaceful two days here at the Halgolla plantation home. It has been such a treat staying in your beautiful and idyllic family home and eating some of the most delicious and wonderful food – the mango curry and the nutmeg felly in particular! We have learnt so much about all of your amazing fruits and spices on our walks with Emil, hopefully we can remember everything! You have been so helpful and welcoming (especially with our money troubles. We really hope we can come back soon!! Lily & Flora

**Name(s):** Yasmin Raza and David King  
Canary Wharf, London. U. K

**Stayed From:** 26<sup>th</sup> **To:** 28<sup>th</sup> June 2016

**Comments:**

The train from Colombo to Kandy was spectacular, but Kandy itself was not much of a destination. However, our disappointment soon subsided as Naushad supplied us with both coconut water and navigated us through winding roads to the hidden oasis of Halgolla.

For two days we filled our belly's with daal, prawns curry, stewed aubergine and mango steen our newly discovered favourite fruit of the Gods. The days were filled with fantastic stories (the best being the lightening bolt through the house, Nata attacking a cobra, + local politics), exploration of the grounds, fireflies, reading on the porch and lazy days.

Thank you!

David & Yasmin

**Name(s):** MRS HELENA HENNEVELD & FAMILY

Utrecht. The Netherlands

**Stayed From:** 15<sup>th</sup>      **To:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2016

**Comments:**

We really enjoyed our stay here. You have a beautiful home and you and your staff are wonderful people, and you have very cute dogs. We loved all the interesting stories you told us.

It's wonderful to see you together in the house that you love (and it is a wonderful house).

I wish you many more good years, lots and lots of love

Thank you

xxx Laura, Jasper and Helena Henneveld

**Name(s):** Iwona Lisztwan, Bart, Bogdan Sweens

Brussels. Belgium

**Stayed From:** 17<sup>th</sup>      **To:** 21<sup>st</sup> July

**Comments:**

Thank you to Arlene & Emil for warm welcome. It's seldom a rare place to share lives and thoughts and living in a historic house. The place is great, very private. Arlene has given us her utmost attention. Emil's been in hospital and we hope he recovers swiftly.

Bogdan has most enjoyed Malika's kitchen and coconut grater. We all loved the food.

We have chosen to stay in Halgolla for 4 nights in the beginning of our trip and we fully enjoyed it. PEOPLE FOOD HUMAN SCALE. THANK YOU

**Names:** Catherine Fernando, Darragh O'Donovan & Piper O'Donovan  
Ripponlea, Vic 3185, Australia;

**Stayed From:** 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> August 2016

**Comments:**

We can't thank you enough for your kindness, helpful advice and the best food ever! Emil we hope you recover quickly from your operation. I couldn't get enough of your view out the front. We loved our walk to the soaking pool and had a quick dip. We learned a lot about fruit and spices and enjoyed our long chats with Emil and Arlene with all their stories and local knowledge. Maybe we can come again sometime, hopefully with Dad.

**Adults & children over 12:** Rouna Ali & Ranmal Seneviratne

**Stayed From:** August 21<sup>st</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016

**Comments:**

Dear Aunty and uncle, Thank you both so much for letting me stay in your hilltop paradise for a few days. The views I will keep in my mind forever. Your tea is the best I've ever had and the food was great. I am a very lucky person to have got to know you and your wonderful family which is worthy of a film or 2!!

Take care and with very best wishes from Rouna (Ranmal's friend)

**Name(s):** Esme Stronach & Adam Wallis  
49 Kingsgate Road, London. UK.

**Stayed From:** October 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> 2016

**Comments:**

We'd like to thank Emil & Arlene for such a memorable time here at HPH. We have thoroughly enjoyed their company and hospitality and feel completely relaxed at the beginning of our holiday! It has been a pleasure returning to this authentic guesthouse for a second time to be able to experience 'a taste of Sri Lanka!' the perfect start to our holiday – you and your workers have made us feel right at home. We are so proud to not only be your guests but also your relatives. Love & hugs from us both. Esme & Adam

**Names:** Luduvine Bellot & Anne-Marie Breude

**Stayed From:** October 16th to 18th 2016

**Comments:**

Beautiful days in a “havre de paix,” We discovered cingalais life style, culture, the spice passion this calm and isolated place. The food was amazing!!

Thank you to all the Halgolla Plantation team, it’s a nice way to discover the country.

A bientot

Anne-Marie & Ludivine

**Names:** Elaine Golin & David Bryan

Brooklyn NY USA: NY NY. USA

**Stayed From:** Jan. 30th 2016 - A Planter’s Lunch and Walk About

**Comments:**

A wonderful walk through a paradise like garden with Emil and an amazing lunch with the whole family.

Great food, great company, great stories, great walk. Thank you for everything, Emil & Arlene. Thank you and Happy New Year

Elaine

Dear Arlene and Emil,

Thank you so much for your wonderful company, for sharing a relaxing and joyous day for the great tour and walk around your beautiful gardens and property/plantation. The entire experience was *bohoma hondai*, the elaborate lunch was *hari rasai* and in other words, everything was *niyamai!!!*

*Bohoma Sthoothi* and much affection

David

**Names:** Ms Trisha Suresh  
Cityplaza, Hong Kong 0000, Hong Kong

**Stayed From:** 30<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2016      **To:** 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. 2017

**Comments:**

Dear Emil, Arlene, Shehan & Pinky,  
Thank you for a fantastic two-night stay. It was an utmost pleasure to be in your warm company. I don't know if I would feel this full in my heart and belly. Your home is beautiful and I hope many more get to experience your warmth and love! If you are ever in Singapore or Hong Kong, please get in touch. Meanwhile, I will spread the word of Halgolla Plantation Home. All my best for 2017 and beyond. I hope to be back again soon.  
All my love  
Trisha

**Names:** Angelika Salvisberg  
Zurich. Switzerland

**Stayed From:** 6<sup>th</sup> January      **To:** 8<sup>th</sup> January 2017

**Comments:**

After a long journey to arrive at this wonderful place in Sri Lanka is a really heavenly. You both and your staff gave me a deep insight in the hospitality, history and kitchen of this marvelous country. I am very thankful and will take the first opportunity to come back! And I very much hope to find the house and its owners in good shape and health. Good luck to you and your wonderful homestay.

**Names:** Trisha Suresh

**Adults & children over 12:** -1- **Children under 12:** -0-

**Mailing address:** E-Mail: TRISHASC@gmail.com **Tel: No.(s):**

**Passport No.(s) or National Identity Card No.(s):**

**Stayed From:** 30<sup>th</sup> December 2016 **To:** 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017

**Comments:**

Dear Emil, Arlene, Shehan & Pinky,

Thank you for a fantastic two-night stay. It was an utmost pleasure to be in your warm company – I don't know if I would feel this full in my heart and belly. Your home is beautiful and I hope many more get to experience your warmth and love! If you are ever in Singapore or Hong Kong, please get in touch. Meanwhile I will spread the word of Halgolla Plantation Home. All my best for 2017 and beyond. I hope to be back again soon.

All my love

Trisha

**Names:** Renate & Gabrielle Mittrucker

Wattenheim 67319, Germany; Am Brunnen 3, 78465 KONSTANZ Deutschland **E-Mail:**

[renate.mittrucker@googlemail.com](mailto:renate.mittrucker@googlemail.com) , [gabi@scheu-am-see.de](mailto:gabi@scheu-am-see.de)

**Tel: No.(s):**

004963561871

**Passport No.(s) or National Identity Card No.(s):** C30M429P3

**Stayed From:** 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2017

**Comments:**

5 stars for EMIL & ARLENE/Halgolla

\* for interesting, entertaining, attentive and caring hosts with a rich treasure of stories and wide spreaded knowledge

\* for informative walks with Emil through the plantation on well kept and marked paths

\* for a wonderful house, very well maintained in its plantage grower tradition, perfectly situated with breathtaking view.

\* for the delicious food – unbeatable varieties of Sri Lankan specialties (Thank you, Mallika!!) and well tasting spring water

\* for informative walks with Emil through the plantation on well kept and marked paths

\* for the nice staff who allowed us to be part of the nutmeg-harvest-team.

We'll keep a warm souvenir of our stay in Halgolla in our mind, thank you and esthuthi

Arlene & Emil

Renate and Gabi

**Names:** Ms Desiree Xu & Mr. Etienne Kasperczyk  
Singapore

**Stayed From:** 17<sup>th</sup> to 19th Feb 2017

**Comments:**

All good things come to an end and sadly for us, our time at HPH has after only two days. HPH couldn't be further removed from the hustle and bustle of Singapore (where we come from) and got the feeling of home was unmistakable when we stepped in and greeted by Emil and his staff.

So we thank you very much for the warm welcome and the incredible stay we had your place, for all the knowledge and stories you shared with us and for helping us fall even more in love with Sri Lanka.

**Names:** Zeena Al Taher & Maysoon Khalifeh  
Jordan

**Stayed From:** Dec. 7th 2017

**Comments:**

We had a great time. Starting with a beautiful walk around the plantation and learned so much about the different plant and trees; a truly unique of teaching. We really appreciate the conservation and preservation aspects focused on. We felt so welcomed in a warm family atmosphere. The food was amazingly cooked and presented. We were happy to share a meal with other guests. We left with a cute little gift bag of spices which was a very sentimental gesture of kindness and generosity. The whole experience is absolutely unique and enriching.