



SRI LANKA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

REGISTRATION GUIDELINES FOR HOMESTAYS

Supported by



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Standards and Quality Assurance (S&QA) Division of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) developed these guidelines with the technical and financial assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) under TA9881-SRI: Supporting Tourism Resilience.

We sincerely acknowledge the valuable contributions of the following stakeholders:

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We also extend our gratitude to the senior management of ADB's Sri Lanka Resident Mission.

Special thanks go to the homestay owners in the Sri Lankan tourism sector for their contributions and support in drafting and formulating the revised guidelines.

The authors are solely responsible for the document's content, which does not necessarily reflect the ADB's views.

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Introduction to Homestays in Sri Lanka

The Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) plays a crucial role in shaping the country's tourism landscape, fostering an authentic and immersive experience for travellers. Homestays, managed by local families, offer a unique opportunity for visitors to connect with Sri Lanka's rich culture and traditions in a more personal and intimate setting.

Homestays are an integral part of the Sri Lankan tourism ecosystem. A homestay is defined as "a house occupied by a family with guest rooms that are ready to accommodate and provide services to paying guests, where the guest and host family interact with each other, immersing themselves in Sri Lankan culture and experiencing authentic Sri Lankan hospitality." These accommodation establishments are considered micro or small enterprises, actively engaging local families in hosting and catering to tourists.

The homestay concept for tourism was initiated by the SLTDA in support of the government's 'Divi Naguma' program (2011), aimed at empowering rural communities with a sound economic base. The objective was to enhance the involvement of rural communities in tourism, a sector that has significantly contributed to Sri Lanka's economy.

As an integral part of community-based tourism, the homestay concept provides a platform for local communities to become active stakeholders and beneficiaries in the tourism sector. Homestays offer an unparalleled opportunity for travellers to interact closely with their hosts, gaining insights into local customs, cuisines, and ways of life. This aligns well with the growing trend of responsible and sustainable tourism, where visitors seek to forge genuine connections and leave positive impacts on the communities they visit.

The rising popularity of homestays complements the current investment flow to increase room inventory in Sri Lanka, aiming to meet the growing demand for supplementary accommodation in tourist destinations across the island, especially in more urban areas.

At the time of publication, there are 1080 homestays registered with the SLTDA, spread across Sri Lanka, showcasing the nation's diverse landscapes and cultures. From the misty hills of the central highlands to the golden beaches along the coastline, and from the historic cities in the Cultural Triangle to the lush greenery of rural villages, homestays are present in a wide array of locations.

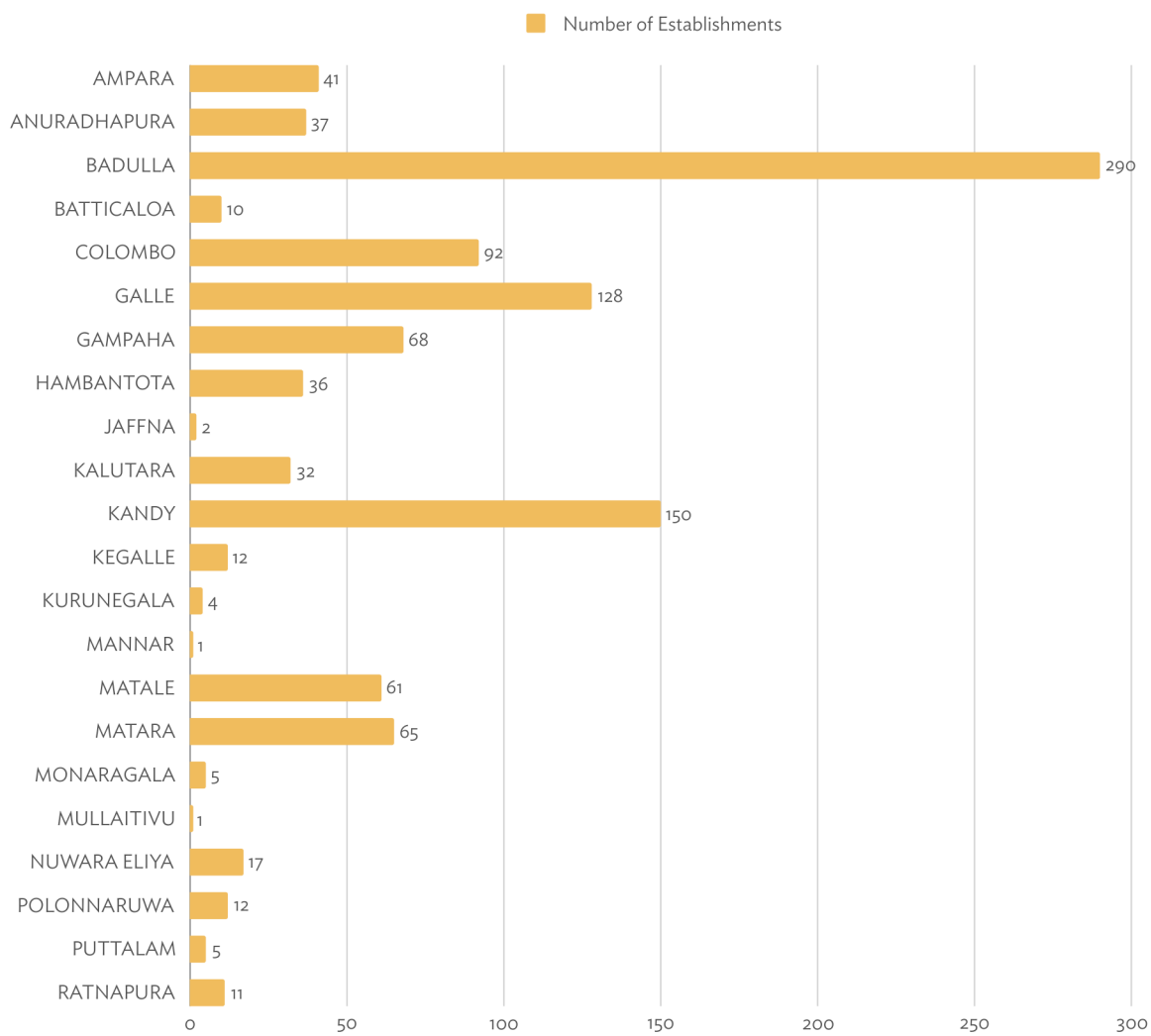


Figure 1: Geographical Distribution of Registered Homestays as of 15th November 2023

The largest concentrations are found in the Badulla and Kandy districts (Uva and Central Province), followed by Galle on the Southern coast and Colombo. This distribution not only enhances tourism experiences but also contributes to community development and empowerment, as local families are actively involved in hosting and catering to tourists.

As an essential component of Sri Lanka's tourism industry, homestays registered under SLTDA foster a harmonious blend of cultural exchange and economic development. Their geographical dispersion ensures that travellers can explore the nation's hidden gems while supporting local communities, aligning perfectly with Sri Lanka's commitment to offering meaningful and memorable travel experiences.

The Basic Requirements that Owners of Homestays shall meet

1. The owner of every homestay shall be a Sri Lankan by birth, shall be registered with the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) and shall maintain the homestay according to its relevant criteria.
2. As instructed by the SLTDA, the owner of the homestay must constantly maintain high standards of cleanliness, safety, hygiene, and food quality.
3. The homestay shall be maintained according to the instructed standards of the SLTDA, avoiding unhealthy conditions, bad behaviour and immorality. Failure to maintain such standards or receipt of a complaint of such, after giving an owner sufficient time to correct it without progress, will result in the de-registration of the homestay by the Director General of the SLTDA.
4. The registration certificate of SLTDA should be displayed in the homestay for the awareness of tourists.



Essential factors determining eligibility for registration as a Homestay

It is essential to meet the following requirements to be eligible for registration as a homestay with the SLTDA.



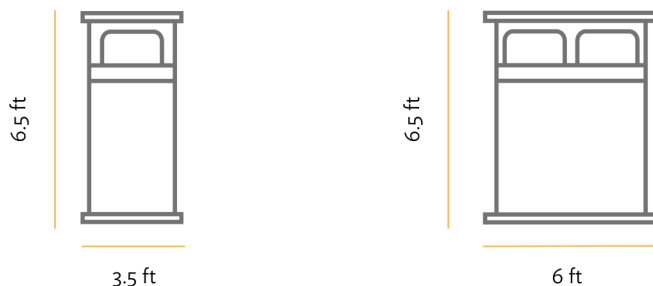
1.0 House

- 1.1. The relevant Homestay shall be in habitable condition.



2.0 Bedrooms

- 2.1. There should be a minimum of one or a maximum of 4 rooms.
- 2.2. The size of a single bedroom should be at least 100 sq ft and the size of a double bedroom should not be less than 120 sq ft.
- 2.3. Every door in use should be equipped with reliable locks and keys. Guests should have the ability to lock doors from both inside or outside if required.
- 2.4. All windows should be able to be locked securely and closed tightly.
- 2.5. The room should have air conditioning facilities or room heating facilities or electric fans.
- 2.6. There should be a cupboard or a wall cupboard or other facilities (e.g. hangers) sufficient to hang clothes.
- 2.7. The size of a single bed should be at least 1.07m×2m (3.5×6.5 ft) and the size of a double bed should be 1.83m×2m (6×6.5 ft). If it is a traditional bed, it should have sleeping facilities in a way that preserves its identity.



- 2.8. Comfortable mattresses should be provided with a minimum thickness of 10 cm. Traditional tourist accommodation units should have facilities in a way that preserves its identity.



3.0 Bathroom facility

- 3.1. Separate clean bathroom facilities should be available for guests.
- 3.2. Bathrooms should be at least 24 sq ft. A traditional homestay may have bathroom facilities in a way that preserves its identity.
- 3.3. The walls and floor of the bathroom should be made of a non-slip material that does not absorb water.
- 3.4. The bathroom access door should have the ability to be locked and closed securely from the inside.



4.0 Kitchen

- 4.1. Homestays shall maintain a very high standard of cleanliness and food hygiene.
- 4.2. The kitchen floor should be made of easy-to-clean materials that do not absorb water. A traditional kitchen may preserve its identity while ensuring excellent food hygiene standards.
- 4.3. Food should be stored properly preventing spoilage due to contamination.
- 4.4. Precautionary measures should be taken to prevent possible fires in the kitchen. If gas cylinders are used, they should be located outside the kitchen.
- 4.5. In or around the kitchen, there should be a sink with running water for washing dishes and glassware cleanly, and there should also be facilities for washing those items with hot water.



5.0 General

- 5.1. A bill book with the property name printed or rubber stamped, along with a book copy should be maintained for the issuance of bills to travellers.
- 5.2. It is a statutory requirement to maintain a Guest Registration Book with the following details of the guests to whom the accommodation facilities are provided:
 - Name
 - Address
 - Passport Number/ National Identity Card Number
 - Date and time of arrival and departure
 - Next destination
- 5.3. The homestay can have its own suitable check-in and check-out times for guests, but all necessary information should be communicated to guests prior to arrival.



Other factors determining eligibility for registration as a Homestay



6.0 Location

- 6.1. The area and environment concerned should be suitable for maintaining a homestay.



7.0 Access

- 7.1. There should be a suitable road that is accessible to reach the Homestay.



8.0 House Yard/ Garden

- 8.1. The house yard or garden should be arranged and maintained in a suitable manner.



9.0 Maintenance

- 9.1. The exterior & interior of the homestay along with furniture, equipment, etc. should be properly maintained on a regular basis.



10.0 Parking of vehicles

- 10.1. 10.1. There should be sufficient and secured space for parking vehicles.



11.0 House

- 11.1. The tourist accommodation should be kept clean and well-ventilated with adequate natural or artificial light.



12.0 Bedrooms

- 12.1. All windows should have suitable curtains that can be closed.
- 12.2. There should be a mirror to suit the size of the bedroom.
- 12.3. There should be a reasonable stock of clean, high-quality pillows, pillowcases, sheets, duvets, and comforters. A proper system should be in place to change linen (i.e. once in three days / four days). A traditional tourist accommodation should have the above facilities in a way that preserves its identity.



13.0 Bathroom facility

13.1. The following requirements shall be met with, to maintain adequate hygienic conditions in bathrooms:

13.1.1. A shower

13.1.2. Water closets or squatting toilets with clean toilet seats

13.1.3. A sanitary bin

13.1.4. A toilet brush

13.1.5. A wash basin

13.1.6. A face mirror

13.1.7. A shelf or hooks to hang towels/clothes

13.1.8. Soap, toilet paper

13.1.9. Cold and hot water facility

13.2. There should be an adequate supply of good quality absorbent towels and a proper system of changing them. (i.e. once in three days / four days).



14.0 Dining room or food serving area

14.1. Adequate seating facilities should be available.

14.2. Adequate stocks of clean, good-quality cutlery, knives, plates, cups/glasses, tablecloths, and kitchen utensils should be available for serving food. If it is a traditional homestay, there should be catering facilities in a way that preserves its identity.



15.0 Kitchen

15.1. The kitchen should have adequate facilities and equipment to prepare traditional or basic meals.

15.2. The kitchen should be free from all kinds of insects, rats and other pests.

15.3. All open areas inside the kitchen should be covered with mesh to prevent entry of flies/insects.

15.4. Cupboards that store groceries and perishables should have mesh doors for ventilation.



16.0 General

- 16.1. The cleanliness of the homestay should be maintained at all times. Daily cleaning should be done during the guest's stay.
- 16.2. The interior of the house should be well-lit and have sufficient space.
- 16.3. Inside and outside of the house should be well-lit and there should be enough space to provide the traveller with a safe and habitable environment.
- 16.4. All furniture must be of good quality and in a usable state.
- 16.5. A food & beverage list with up-to-date prices should be maintained for the types of food and beverages served.
- 16.6. Valid receipts should be issued for every transaction and proper records should be kept. If the relevant receipts are generated through an online booking system, such records must be maintained properly.
- 16.7. Residents should be properly trained to provide first aid facilities in case of an emergency and a first aid kit with minimum essential first aid medicines should be available.
- 16.8. Information necessary for the safety of visitors should be displayed in waterfront, coastal areas and swimming pools.
- 16.9. Facilities should be provided to wash guest's clothes etc.
- 16.10. Laundry facilities should be provided where necessary.
- 16.11. A proper sewage system should be maintained.
- 16.12. Garbage should be sorted in lidded bins until they are removed regularly. Degradable and recyclable waste should be disposed of separately in a proper manner.

- 16.13. Arrangements should be made to provide taxi service facilities for visitors to travel to places of their interest.
- 16.14. It should be possible to facilitate access to the services of a medical officer in case of an illness and the homestay should maintain the contact details of the relevant medical officer.
- 16.15. If necessary, facilities are provided for differently abled persons, those facilities should be in accordance with the relevant laws.
- 16.16. The use of plastic and polythene should be minimised whenever possible. The use of single-use plastic water bottles and other bottles should be avoided.
- 16.17. Efforts should be made to use cashless (digital/electronic) transaction methods whenever possible.
- 16.18. There should be a “Do Not Disturb” notice available, to be displayed on the room door when necessary.
- 16.19. Every room in the house with an electricity supply should have a safe and standard plug socket.
- 16.20. Efforts should be made to use renewable alternative energy sources and equipment.
- 16.21. Visitors' comments and suggestions (online/written) should be analysed and used to improve the standards of the homestay unit.
- 16.22. Secure lock & key facilities to keep guests' valuables should be available.

