



Tamarind Gardens Homestay Announces Traditional Thai Pongal Harvest Festival Celebrations

January 15, 2026

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Tamarind Gardens Homestay, a farmstay and cultural retreat in the Central Province of Sri Lanka, has announced that it will host traditional Thai Pongal harvest festival ceremonies in January 2025, inviting guests to participate in authentic rituals that have been observed for over a thousand years.

The celebrations will take place on January 15, 2025, marking the ancient Tamil harvest festival that celebrates the sun's northward journey and the end of the winter solstice. Thai Pongal holds particular significance among Tamil communities in Sri Lanka and is observed as a national holiday, representing gratitude for nature's abundance and the importance of community bonds.

The festival derives its name from the Tamil word meaning "to boil over," referring to the ceremonial dish of rice cooked with milk and jaggery until it overflows from the pot, symbolizing abundance and prosperity. At Tamarind Gardens Homestay, the ceremonies will follow traditional practices that have been preserved across generations by local community members.

Guests participating in the Pongal ceremony will experience the preparation of Sakkarai Pongal in clay pots,

the creation of kolam floor patterns using rice flour, and the ceremonial lighting of lamps. Each ritual carries deep cultural significance, which local community members will share with visitors, providing insight into these ancient traditions.

"Thai Pongal represents more than just a harvest celebration; it embodies the gratitude we feel toward nature and the bonds that unite our community," said Ayesha Perera, co-founder of Tamarind Gardens Homestay. "By opening our celebrations to visitors, we create opportunities for meaningful cultural exchange while preserving traditions that have shaped our identity for centuries."

The farmstay, which overlooks the Victoria Reservoir in Digana village, operates an on-site dairy farm that will provide fresh milk for the traditional Pongal preparation. The celebration will incorporate farm-fresh ingredients grown on the property and sourced from neighboring farmers, maintaining the authentic connection between the festival and agricultural abundance.

The announcement comes as experiential and culturally authentic travel continues to gain momentum among international visitors to Sri Lanka. Thai Pongal coincides with similar harvest celebrations observed across South Asia, including Makar Sankranti in India, making January a significant period for cultural tourism in the region.

Tamarind Gardens Homestay has built its reputation on immersive cultural experiences that connect travelers with village life in Sri Lanka. The property offers accommodation in private chalets and programming that includes cooking classes, craft workshops, and village tours, all delivered in partnership with local families and artisans.

The homestay's commitment to social responsibility extends beyond cultural preservation. Through initiatives such as the Liya Diriya Women's Society, the property supports community development while offering guests authentic insights into Sri Lankan village life.

Tamarind Gardens Homestay has operated as a cultural retreat for several years, focusing on experiences that allow guests to live like locals, from milking cows and learning traditional spice blends to folding betel leaves and exploring bustling markets. The Thai Pongal celebrations represent a continuation of this philosophy, providing visitors with direct participation in living traditions rather than passive observation.

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For more information about Tamarind Gardens Homestay, contact the company here: Tamarind Gardens Homestay Ayesha Perera +94779071777 Ayesha55555@gmail.com Tamarind Gardens Homestay Tamarind Gardens Aluthgangapitiya, Aluthwatte Digana 20180 Sri Lanka

Tamarind Gardens Homestay

Authentic Sri Lankan farm-stay in Digana with Victoria Reservoir views. Cultural immersion experiences, farm-to-table dining, dairy farming, traditional crafts. Cozy chalets, village hospitality.

Website: <https://tamarindgardens.com/>

Email: Ayesha5555@gmail.com

Phone: +94779071777

