



THALASSA



INTRODUCTION

In the absence of international estate agents opening yet in Colombo, it seems best to tell the wider world about the sale of our house through Breese friends and contacts worldwide by email.

We have visited Sri Lanka often for the last 15 years and toured the island many times and we love the place. Our grandchildren are far flung, which is our only reason to leave. We built Thalassa nine years ago with the good guidance of a Sri Lankan architect and have spent six months a year there ever since. Our beach was carefully chosen to be removed from traffic noise, wide and more than a mile long for walking, running and safe swimming - it remains quite unspoiled.

It now takes two and a half hours to three hours from Colombo airport, and when the last section of the Colombo ring road is complete, then it will be quicker still.

Our family and friends have poured into Thalassa to relax and chat, or to read, write and paint, and we have had many adventures with leopards and elephants at the nature reserves, Yala and Ude Walawe; candlelit seafood suppers on secret beaches; raft trips on antediluvian lagoons to see the birds and the sunset, wild swimming in huge rivers and many another magical outing. Galle is now an hour away and we are equidistant between Dikwella and Tangalle.

The house itself is 8,500 square feet of covered space, and our ground measures one and a quarter acres. We created our own long driveway, so the sense and reality of privacy coincide. When the gates of Thalassa shut, it is a haven and retreat. Our lovely hard-working staff are enormously responsible for the peace and harmony there, because of their willingness to help and quiet focus on every guest's needs. Nandi, our housekeeper, has been rightly acclaimed one of the best cooks on the island, and is constantly experimenting with new dishes.

Finally, do please ask us any questions about Thalassa via my email breese.charlotte@gmail.com, and come and see it any time...and look at the website www.thalassasilanka.com.



"One of the best 25 family villas on the Indian Ocean"

- The Times



THE HOUSE

Our own road leads you into a circular drive around a huge tree hung with vines. There is a profusion of flowering shrubs...the scent of which is overwhelming.

You enter the house via a wide **PORCH** (25' x 13') with antique light and ancient Dutch chests, and local art to a long view through the blue pillars of an arcade, which runs into an outside sitting room and through the palm grove to the sea.

The **SWIMMING POOL** to your right (43'5" x 19'4") has a jacuzzi and imported glass yellow, green and blue tiles. It has kind shallow rough stone steps down into the water. At the far end, it is ten feet deep, and there is a wide stone platform for diving and sitting under a high bamboo screen with bounteous flowering climbers and vines.



The **DINING ROOM** (49'11" x 15'2") seats 16 comfortably at a wide Sri Lankan modern single plank table on triangular iron struts. To the right is a huge hatch, which serves as a sideboard also, to the **KITCHEN** (29'3" x 12') with a fridge, a cooker, a sink, a long range of cupboards for crockery and cutlery, and windows to its own small garden at the back.

The big, cool walk-in **LARDER/STORE ROOM** (13'5" x 12'4"), piled high with fruit and vegetables on market days, is just off the kitchen, and houses another fridge and a big freezer and pots, jars, tins, big baskets and the biggest pans. Behind it, down one step, are some **STAFF QUARTERS** – a small sitting room/dining room/kitchen, and a double bedroom and bathroom. The barbecue lives in the staff garden, where there is also a papaya and a banana tree, and a forest of basil.



Off the dining room, overlooking the pool, is the **STUDY/TV ROOM**, entered through ancient Jaffna doors. An Italian diplomat friend sold us the big glass cupboards either side, which house books and DVDs. There is a TV and DVD player, a carrom board on a low square table and a big sofa, and chairs and a pile of big cushions. The floor is Burmese teak. There is the only A/C, which we rarely use; the sea breezes and fans, and cool water of the pool do the job for us.

On the other side of the pool lies the **OUTSIDE SITTING ROOM** (63'4" x 36'4"), where everyone naturally congregates. The floor is old stone, and there are sofas, chairs and a big chandelier, and views through the palms to the sea. A white sand path leads to a crooked cinnamon-stick gate and down to the beach.



To the right lies the big inside **SITTING ROOM** (38'2" x 22') with a high ceiling and old wooden windows, which hinge in the middle, on the sea side of this impressive room, and doors towards the pool. There are white sofas and planters' chairs, a big day bed (and screen for extra guests) and an upright piano. The floor is of Burmese teak, recovered from a derelict ballroom in Nuwara Eliya, and it has been specially sprung for dancing. Just off it is a large coloured concrete **BATHROOM** (handy for bathers) with a shower and WC, and antique cupboard.

From the outside sitting room, there is a stone clad path to two big bedrooms and bathrooms – the first is the **GUEST BEDROOM** (20'1" x 12'8") and the second the **MASTER BEDROOM** (21'6" x 20'5"). The latter has a 7 foot wide bed and big doors out to the garden, as well as an enormous indoor/outdoor bathroom, with a ceiling to the sky, and windows to the palm garden and the beach. Both bedrooms have Burmese teak floors, and great views of the sea and the rising sun.

Upstairs, there is another sitting room overlooking the gardens, and then a long concrete terrace with trompe l'oeil painted rugs, and four more **BEDROOMS** and en suite bathrooms. The beds are all 5 feet wide and the bathrooms are all painted concrete, each with a big view of the sea through shutters. Also upstairs is the capacious dark blue **LINEN ROOM** (12' x 7'9").

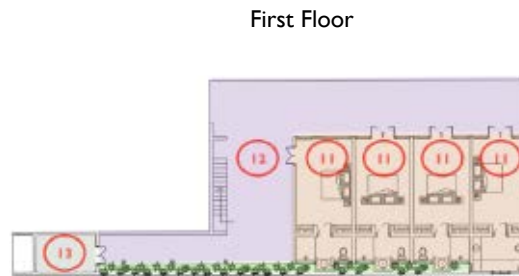
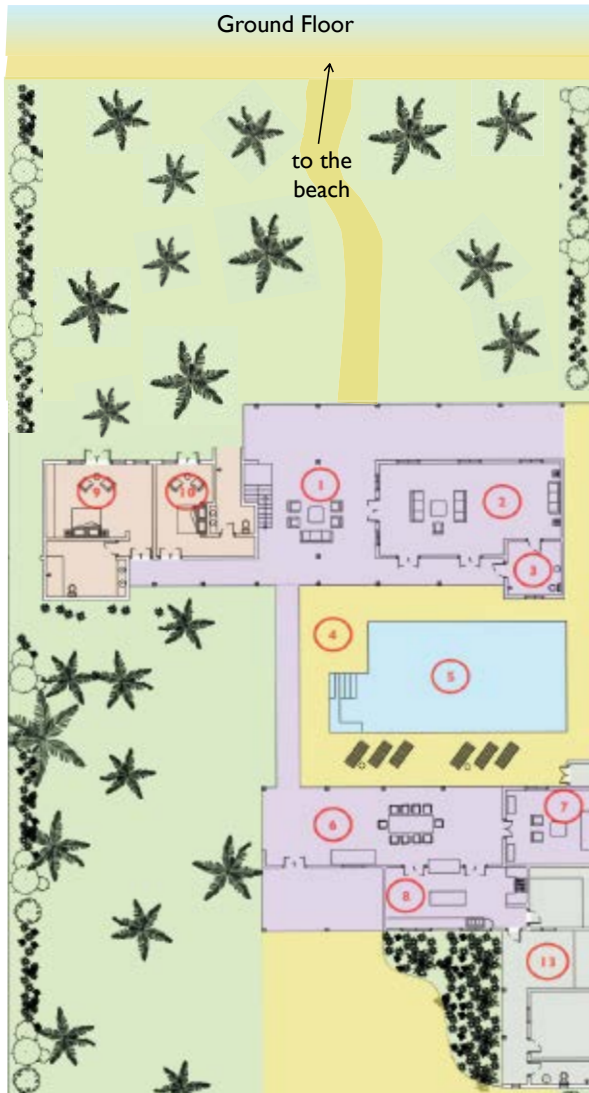
As you come downstairs again, you may turn right through the central courtyard garden and find the **MASSAGE TEMPLE** (22' x 10'7") at the end of another sand path. On the other side of the driveway, you will see the hen palace and their fenced area, which they occupy only at night and are otherwise free range. There are five dogs and two cats also, much loved by family and staff alike. In nine years, we have not had a single security problem. Next door, there are more staff quarters – another double bedroom and bathroom, and a washing line.

THE STAFF

We have known Nandi for 25 years now, as she was my husband's family's employee previously. She is honest, intelligent and helpful, and a remarkable and inventive cook and manager. Jayantha is her right hand man, serves at table and works in the garden. Samantha has a tuktuk in the driveway, which is a great convenience, and he helps Jayantha. Sumana and Neetha do the food preparation for Nandi and the room service. They get along well with each other and with us. As a result of weekly English lessons with Madam Minerva, their comprehension is good. Verena is our careful manager, who inspects and sorts out problems and pays bills in our absence.

After so long, we have lots of occasional help: massage people - our favourites are Mrs Navaratne for ayurvedic, and Matthew for Thai; drivers who are courteous, family friendly and speak English; and babysitters and extra help for big parties are readily recruited along the beach.

Thalassa, Mahawella Beach, Tangalla



		area (sq.m.)
1	Sitting Area / Verandah	159
2	Living Room	66
3	Washroom	13
4	Terrace / Deck	137
5	Swimming Pool	100
6	Dining Terrace	79
7	TV / Study	27
8	Kitchen	35
9	Bedroom / en suite 1	54
10	Bedroom / en suite 2	36
11	Bedroom / en suite	28
12	Balcony	129
13	Staff / Storage	137
	TOTAL	1,000
	Total Plot Area	5150

Note that the plan, dimensions and areas are indicative only

THE GARDENS

There are three separate gardens – the one between the front gates and front door is the most experimental, with plants from all over the island that grow happily there, free from the salty air.

The inner courtyard garden has some unusual plants in it, especially many varieties of hibiscus and frangipani, the high neem trees and bamboo with bougainvillea growing fifty feet high in them, and the renowned cannon ball tree which has yet to flower, but is growing fast.

The seaside garden is bordered by stone walls with small indentations for lamps, and there are long concrete loungers with gaudy hand loomed cushions outside the length of the sitting room. There are some 25 palm trees and hammocks beneath them, and only one King Coconut, which we deplete as fast as it produces. We built a Gabion wall to shore up our land where it reaches the beach, so monsoon waves don't wash away the croquet lawn.

THE BEACH AND NEIGHBOURS

There is a mixture of folk dotted along our splendid sandy beach - local fishermen predominate, and are friendly and come to the gate with their catch. The Last House, at the left-hand end by the rocks, which provide fresh oysters, is a famous Bawa design owned by an English hotelier. Our immediate neighbours consist of an Englishman, who visits for a fortnight annually and does not intend to build, and a small guest house with cabanas, which rarely makes any noise at all. An Australian, another Brit, an Egyptian, a Frenchman and an Italian also live quietly, occasionally, nearby. There is a new beach shack about 50 yards from our gate that is rather good at seafood.

FINANCES

We are asking £1.3 million. The land on our beach is now worth 400,000 rupees per perch (or around £2,000) and we have 206 perches; the construction of the house, planting the garden, architect's fees and the Gabion wall now cost three times what we paid nine years ago, as material and labour have greatly increased in price...we are indeed told that Thalassa is under-priced by several local agents.

Annual utility and staff bills cost us less than £20,000. We will happily pay anyone who introduces a buyer 5% of the sale price.





THALASSA

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