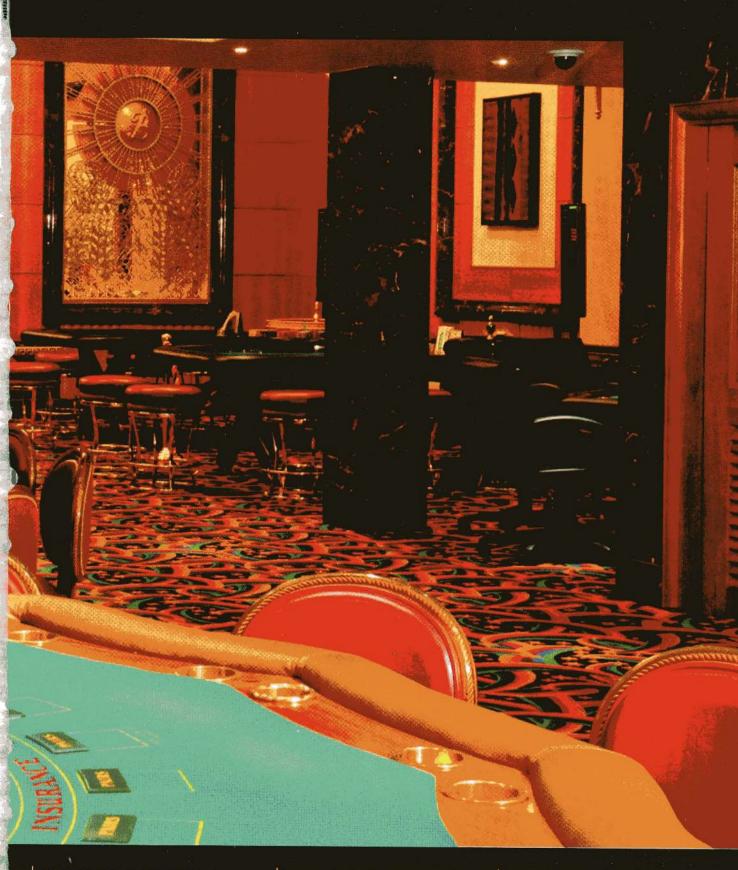




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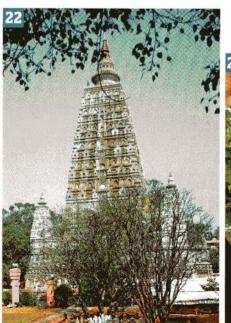
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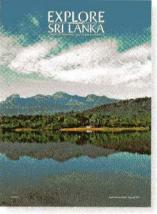
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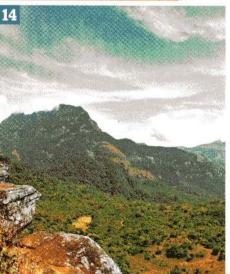






A reflection of resplendent moumains sheltered under a sturning blue sky in Hasalaka Photograph Prabath Chaturanga





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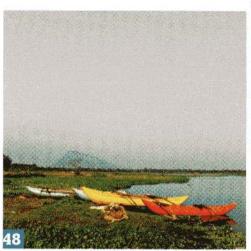
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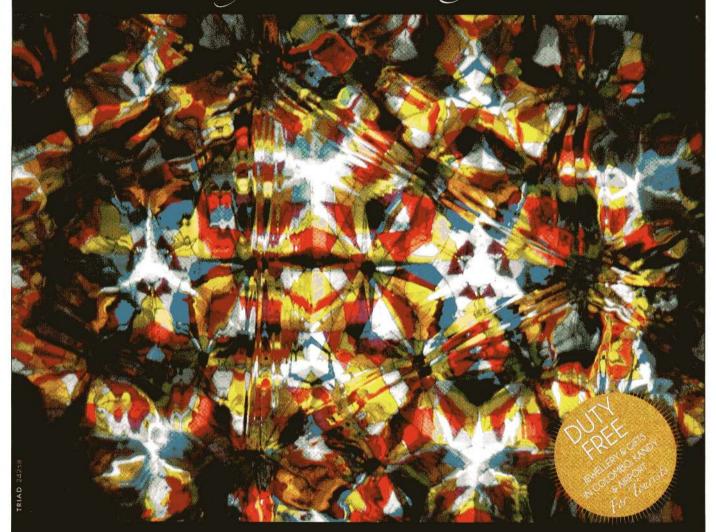
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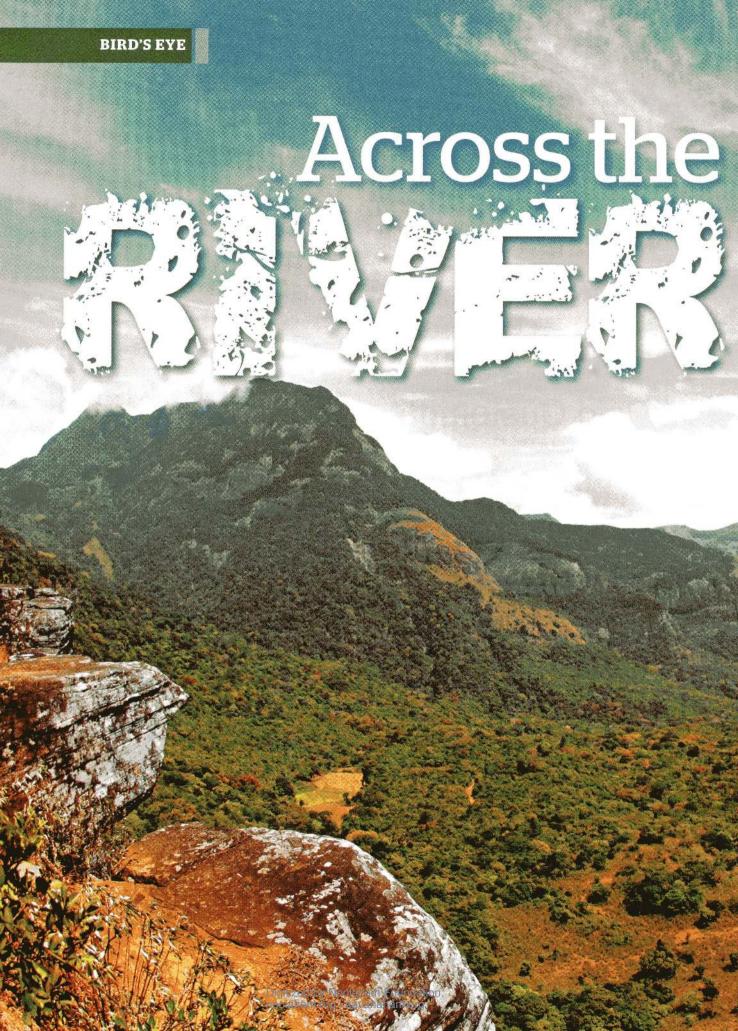
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The air was fresh, the landscape awash with the early morning sunlight, the blue sky was more radiant than usual, cotton white clouds adorning its vacant vastness. Multicoloured butterflies danced like miniature fairies in tune to the incessant birdsong; and as we slowly followed the winding track uphill, nothing prepared us for the enchanting spectacles of nature that awaited...

Words Kamalika Jayathilaka Photographs Prabhath Chathuranga

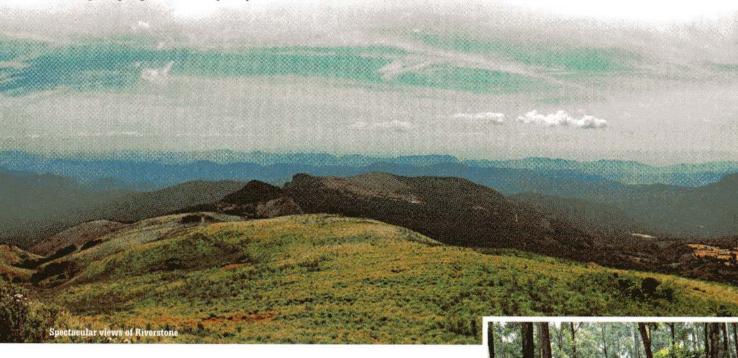
The skies were in steady competition with the beautiful mountains

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Soon after passing the bustling town of Matale high on the central hills, we turned off on a winding road towards Raththota, leaving behind all sights and sounds of city life; and as the houses and little towns got scarcer we adjusted our eyes to the approaching lush greens of the looming trees on one side and the bright light greens of the paddy

fields on the other. The path was a steady climb uphill and gradually the trees got thicker and the air cooler and darker with occasional little streams of natural spring water rushing down the hillsides. We slowly edged forward through these dark snaking corridors of nature in silence drinking in the unspoilt beauty of the Knuckles Forest Reserve.



Through the rolling hills

Suddenly, the trees began to thin, and we came out into the open. Sunlight poured out from all directions. and the skies were in steady competition with the beautiful mountains to capture the attention of the traveller. On our right rose bare hills, some strewn with tea and others with pretty ferns and tall grass, on our left the spectacular views of the mountains left us speechless. Down in the valley were long stretches of paddy fields like a soft green carpet beyond which stood more mountains blue against the glare of the sun behind them. Far back in the horizon beyond the blue mountains and as far as the eyes could see was a dull white haze. If you squinted your eyes and looked hard enough you could see far away reservoirs and tanks resembling large mirrors that reflected the morning sky.

The narrow road wound around the hills taking us from one to another of beautiful Riverstone, and across the whole range, and midway we stopped to stretch our legs and fill our lungs with the purest of air. Captivated by the breathtaking scenery all around we walked forward looking back over our shoulders every now and again mistaking the loud roaring of the ferocious wind for an approaching truck.



Pitawala Patana

The wooden sign said 'Pitawala Patana, World's End' and a footpath led its way seemingly into the sky. Minutes later following the trail we found ourselves walking upwards on a rocky surface. Trees were scarce and the grassy earth was dried up by the scorching sun. Little yellow marks made on the earth showed us in which direction to walk. The ascent was made all the more

difficult by the overpowering strength of the gusty wind pushing us backwards, so that it felt like pushing a weight up the mountain. After 700m of trekking and trying to keep our feet on the ground and not get blown away, we suddenly stumbled upon a doorway of trees to our right and nothing beyond.

The cliff was fierce but the view was worth all the effort. The two rocks at the edge provided good

BELOW WERE LUSH TREETOPS OF VARIOUS SHADES OF GREEN STRETCHING OUT INTO THE SURROUNDING RING OF MOUNTAINS

seating and a means to hold on. Below were lush treetops of various shades of green stretching out into the surrounding ring of mountains. The calls of birds echoed and mingled with the cooing of the wind. It was not only a 'world's end', but also a threshold into another. A few feet away was another precipice, a window to another spectacular view. Resisting the urge to remain spectators to the amazing scenery, we retraced our steps back to the main road and our journey towards Wasgamuwa.





THE RIVER
BELOW,
THE BLUE
MOUNTAINS
AND THE
BEAUTIFUL
BLUE SKIES
MADE THIS
FEEL
MAGICAL...



Nippon Paalama (Bridge)

Henceforth began the descent and passing more twists and turns and bending roads we arrived in Wilgamuwa, a little town sitting at the foot of the mountains in the early afternoon. Back in the valley the scenery switched back to acres and acres of lush paddy, patches of water with solitary trees standing in their midst, herds of buffaloes and busy farmers tending to their fertile fields. Heading towards Hettipola we drove through flat land crossing the Mahaweli River through the Nippon-Wilgamuwa

Bridge which is better known as Nippon Palama. The river below, the blue mountains in the far distance and the beautiful blue skies made this experience through the Japan-Sri Lanka Friendship Bridge exceptionally beautiful, magical and unforgettable.

The beauty that surrounds the bridge

As the afternoon drew to a close and the sun began its journey west, as flocks of tired birds flew in search of nesting trees, we reached our destination, the impression of the picturesque journey across the beautiful mountains of Riverstone still fresh in our minds.



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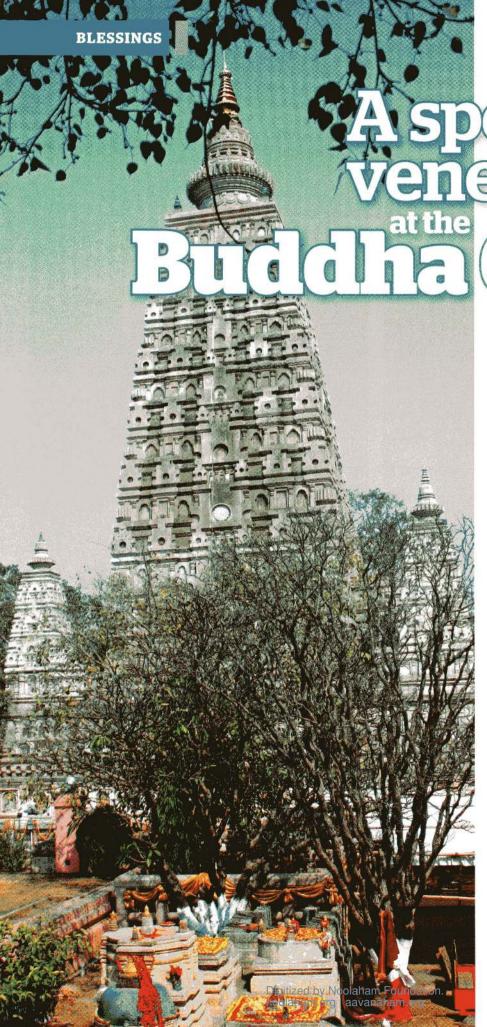
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Words Prasadini Nanayakkara

SITUATED IN THE STATE
OF BIHAR IN INDIA, THE
BUDDHA GAYA IS A PLACE
OF UTMOST RELIGIOUS
SIGNIFICANCE FOR
BUDDHISTS AROUND THE
WORLD.

escribed as a peaceful and idyllic setting in the hallowed texts, the Buddha Gaya sits beyond the Neranjana River and from its banks unfolds the final journey of Prince Siddartha towards enlightenment. Identified as the very attained place where he enlightenment, the vajrasanaya at the Buddha Gaya or the seat of enlightenment from which he vowed to never rise till he attained enlightenment and the Bodhi tree that offered its shelter, remain preserved for worship at the Buddha Gaya to this day.

Adjacently stands the characteristic structure of the Buddha Gaya Viharaya at 170 feet high and which has become a symbolic representation of the Buddha Gaya and shelters an image house, within which is a golden *Samadhi* (seated) Buddha statue. The sacred precincts around

Picture on left: The Buddha Gaya Viharaya beside the Bodhi Tree







The branch stemming from the original sapling at the Sri Maha Bodhi in Anurahdapura

the temple mark locations of significance for pilgrims where the Buddha spent seven weeks following enlightenment. While pilgrims flock to these sites for religious observances, with the Sambuddhatva Jayanthiya commemorated this year to mark 2600 years since this religious incident, the Buddha Gaya holds special significance.

Led by the Ven Uduwe Dhammaloka Thero and Sajin De Vass Gunawardena, MP, preparations are underway to organise a religious programme held over a period of three days at the Buddha Gaya in the month of November. The programme, titled Sambuddhatva Cheevara Suvanda Mangalya would be conducted to evoke blessings for the whole world and will commence with a religious observance known as the Katina Pinkama. This is the offering of a cheevara or robes to the Maha Sanga (Buddhist monks) who have completed a three month period of sojourn during the rainy season. This practice laid down by the Buddha, known as Vas Viseema (rain dwelling), commences with the Esala Poya in the month of July. At its cessation many religious observances are held with the most significant being the Katina Pinkama.

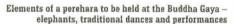
Thus a pilgrimage from Sri Lanka will take place and the *cheevara* will be carried, mounted on an elephant along with an elaborate procession as an offering to the Buddha. This would be followed by an *aloka poojawa* or illumination ceremony and a *suvanda mangalya* – the collective lighting of incense to engulf the Buddha Gaya in pleasant aroma.

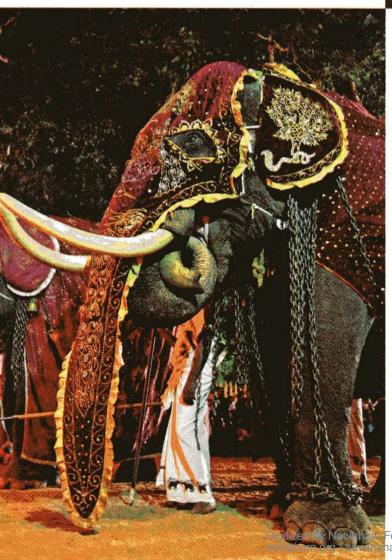
On the following day the planting of a Bo sapling of the Sri Maha Bodhi in Anuradhapura will be conducted. The sapling offered by the President Mahinda Rajapaksa, is in recognition and appreciation of the gift of Buddhism reaching the shores of Sri Lanka from India. While the Bodhi tree in Buddha Gaya preserved today, marks the place where Buddha



Places of worship around the Buddha Gaya where the Buddha spent seven weeks following enlightenment

The programme titled Sambuddhatva Cheevara Suvanda Mangalya would be conducted at the Buddha Gaya to evoke blessings for all and will commence with a religious observance known as the Katina Pinkama - the offering of a cheevara or robes to the Maha Sanga (Buddhist monks) who have completed a three month period of sojourn during the rainy season.









reached enlightenment, although not said to be the original tree. However the Sri Maha Bodhi in Anuradhapura today has been grown from the original tree brought as a sapling to Sri Lanka. during the time of King Asoka. It is a sapling from this tree that will be ceremonially planted at the Buddha Gaya as a part of the religious observances conducted. This would be followed by the chanting of pirith into the night.

The sequence of events held from November 6 - 8, 2011 will conclude with the almsgiving conducted with offerings for 1000 monks on the final day of religious observances. The Sambuddhatva Cheevara Suvanda Mangalya programme thus invites all who wish to take part and engage in the meritorious religious observances and evoke blessings at the Buddha Gava.

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SUMMER

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Sri Lankan history has left its imprints and authenticity in its spicy and aromatic cuisine, while gaining recognition and popularity as being one of the world's finest. Historians say that many of its foods are influenced by the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Malays, the Arabs, and the South Indians, all of whom have left their culinary impression in the island.

While in the countryside, people tend to cook and eat mainly traditional foods, hesitating to try foods characteristic to other cultures, they also have still preserved the more ecologically sensitive practices of ancient communities such as the custom to cook and eat traditional foods in 'disposable', 'degradable' plates and bowls. The most famous of such throwaway plates are banana leaves, kenda leaves and nelum (lotus) leaves which also serve many purposes in Sri Lankan cooking shedding some light on this local serving tradition. While easy to cook with, cleaned banana leaves, which could be disposed of after the meal, were traditionally used as an alternative to plates. Futhermore when hot food is served on these leaves, it would impart a distinct aroma and taste to the food. Banana leaves are still utilised on auspicious and festive occasions but are much less common otherwise. The use of banana leaves as a "biological plate" has gained much popularity in many restaurants in the island as well.

Though its use has declined now, the time when banana leaves came into their own used to be during the paddy planting and harvesting seasons back in the day. During these times, lotus or banana leaves were the ideal container in which to serve meals for the hungry workers who worked outdoors in paddy fields for long hours and in some villages the practice still prevails.

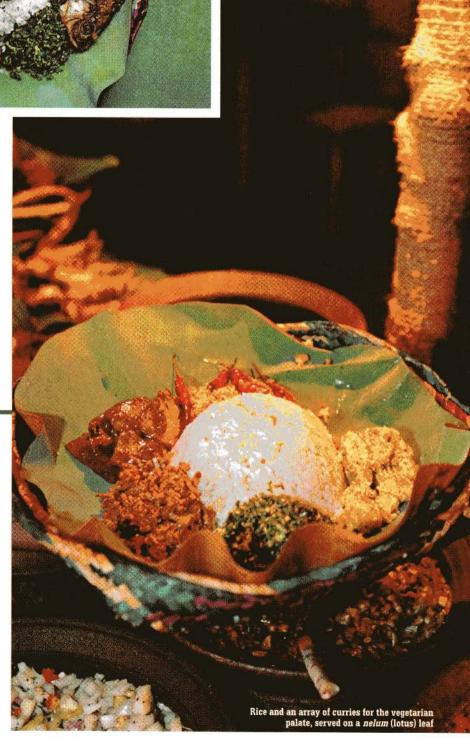


Sri Lankan style rice and curry, complete with fried fish and a selection of tasty curries, served on a *nelum* (lotus) leaf

WHEN HOT
FOOD IS
SERVED ON
THESE LEAVES,
THE LEAVES
ADD AROMA
AND TASTE TO
THE FOOD.

Lamprais, which are parcels of fragrant rice, curries and accompaniments, wrapped in a banana leaf and baked, is a favourite prepared by the burgher community and a popular urban dish. Before using the fresh banana leaf as a wrapping, passing it over a flame to soften and make it flexible will also render a better taste. Alternatively, blanching the leaves in boiling water for a few seconds renders it pliable for easier handling as well.

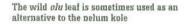
One of the signature dishes in the South is fish baked in banana leaf with *olu* rice, which is technically not rice but seeds of a native lotus















Halapa

Vandu aappa

BANANA AND KENDA LEAVES ARE ALSO SEEN USED AS A WRAPPING FOR GRILLING FOOD AND AS SUCH IT CONTAINS THE JUICES AND PREVENTS THE FOOD FROM GETTING BURNT.

flower. The neutralising gotu kola sambol on the side makes this dish truly Sinhalese.

Another two unusual types of food which are made with the aid of kenda kole are halapa and vandu aappa. Halapa in particular will intrigue anyone who is not used to eating it. It is a flat sweet wrapped in the leaf which must be peeled away to taste the sweet. The unique flavour of the Kenda leaf is infused in to these sweets, which give them a characteristic taste.

There is also a procedure as to what is to be served where and when on an ubiquitous leaf. According to many historians initially this procedure was thought to be for some superstitious reason but it does have a practical purpose. According to the traditions of the Central Province, the broader side of a leaf is to be placed to the right since most of us use our right hands and it would thus be easy to eat from the wider end. The tip of the leaf would be to

the left of the person eating so that the white tender part of the leaf will be outward and slightly green part inward. Generally hot food is served inside and the green part will bear it. Banana leaves impart a subtle sweet flavour when food is served or wrapped in them. Salt, pickle, fruit, parippu (dal/lentils) all have their own places reserved on the banana leaf but the nelum and kenda kole aren't used as such.

Banana and Kenda leaves are also seen used as a wrapping for grilling food and contain the juices and prevent the food from getting burnt whilst at the same time giving off a faint flavour.

Banana leaf, according to historians is hygienic and has medicinal value tested over centuries. Furthermore oil does not stick to the banana leaf as opposed to a plate.

Banana leaves serve many purposes in Asian cooking, from adding flavour to foods cooked within them, to simply being used as a colourful and exotic background for serving-plates and party platters.



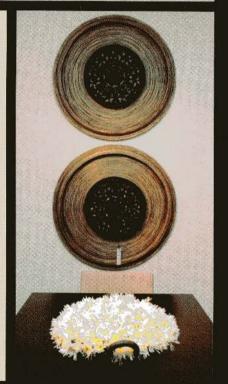


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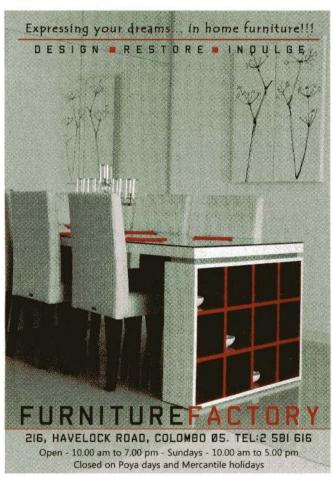


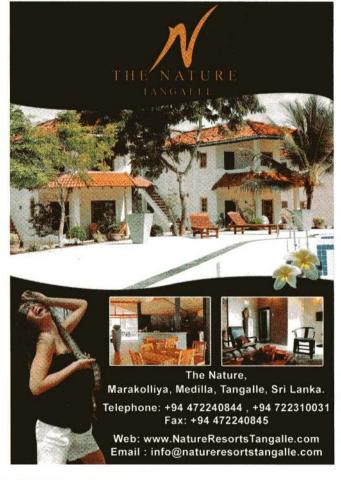


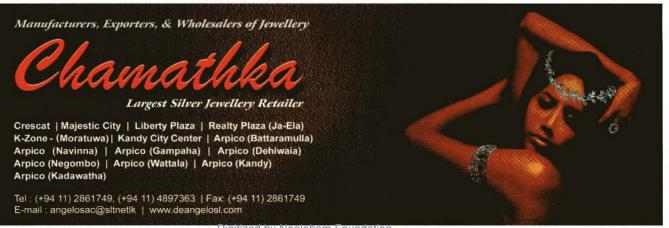












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SIVURA

The Story of the Saffron Robe

The vivid saffron robe of the Buddhist monk is far more than mere attire. It symbolises a monastic life, a life of detachment. To the layman it is a symbol, which in essence represents the Buddhist order of the bygone and present times. The sober shades of browns and deep oranges thus inspire obeisance and a sense of humble veneration amongst people. A Buddhist monk is thus characterised by this symbolic adornment and within its many folds and hems lie preserved, a timeless and stringent practice, since the times of the Buddha.

Words Prasadini Nanayakkara

he offering of the sivura or the monastic robes finds its place in the upper echelons of the many items of alms or Pirikara in the Buddhist practice. Even more so is the Ata Pirikara, a combined offering of eight items including three types of robes, belt, needle and thread, alms bowl, cloth filter and shaving knife, and regarded as the foremost amongst alms items. The practice of

a monk taking on the customary robes arose with it being instated by the Buddha who laid down the many disciplines for its proper use. It would embody the renouncement of all things worldly and accordingly inherited the boundaries for its origin, material, colour and usage.

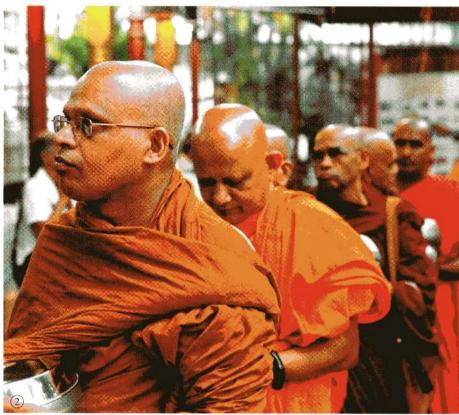
During the Buddha's age – a time where there was a scarcity of clothing material – discarded clothes and

material, particularly the white cloth that was used to cover the dead were obtained by monks for their re-use. This further added to the symbolic nature of the robes in that it represented the impermanence of life – a fundamental teaching of Buddhism. These fabrics were collected and washed and dyed before use. Even to this day a ritual has prevailed stemming from this age-old custom

The many intricacies were followed so that the robe would not inspire any attachment, desire or admiration and would be a thoroughly devalued item.

Captions:

- An alms bowl (patharaya), the three robes (thun sivura) and a shaving knife (deli pihiya)
- 2 Monks' robes display variations of the 'mixed hue'
- 3 Offering Ata Pirikara to a monk





referred to as the *Pansakula*. It is the offering of a length of white material to the monks by the families of the deceased, where the monks in return invoke merit for the departed.

While certain sources to prepare robes were prohibited, for instance, hair, skin, and feathers so too were the use of plain colours such as blue, yellow and black. Instead a 'mixed' hue, was recommended that could

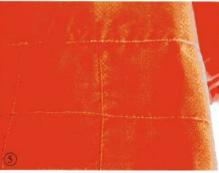
be derived from boiling plant specimens, such as the bark of the Nuga tree, to render kahata – a 'discolour' and the robes were in relation referred to as the kahata wasthraya – discoloured garb. Although forest monks who reside in seclusion still obtain robes prepared in the traditional method and seen adorned in its characteristic brown shade, city monks who are often seen amidst

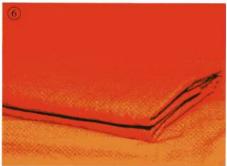
the people and working closely with the community are offered robes prepared in brighter shades of orange though still within the recommended guidelines.

There is however another precept that has been followed unchanged. The many seams that run across the robes are unmistakably present upon the robes of monks from any region. These are as a result of the whole cloth used for the robe being first shredded into parts and then stitched together to appear segmented. This pattern the Buddha himself likened to the paddy fields of the Magadha region of India. All of these many intricacies were followed so that it would not inspire any attachment, desire or admiration towards the 'dress' and would be a thoroughly devalued item that which would not even motivate theft. Aside from these precepts, standards of measurement too were laid down where a monk could measure the required amount of cloth from the breadth of his palm.

The eight items encompassed in the *Ata Pirikara* meets four requisites for the monks - robes, alms, shelter and health (filtered water). It is for this reason that the *Ata Pirikara* is given much importance among Buddhist devotees.







With all these precepts in mind the monk from the moment of his ordination must have in his possession the 'thun sivura', that is three variations of robes; the andanava or inner wear, thanipota sivura or single robe and the depota sivura or the double robe. The double robe was introduced by the Buddha in the latter stages, when the need for better protection from cold and other external elements was recognised during a period of stay in the Seetha Vanaya - cold forest. Consisting of a double layer of cloth, it served not only sufficient cover and protection for the travelling monk, by folding it eight fold it also offered seat for meditation and a sleeping mat when arranged four fold. Additionally, wear and tear as a result of prolonged use and rustic environments, necessitated that a monk should also in his possession, have a needle and thread

so that he could mend his robes to maintain its integrity.

As related in a discourse by Ananda Thero, the Buddha's closest disciple, to King Udeni, the monastic robes of the monk are put to use to such extent that there virtually remains no room for wastage. No longer wearable the lifespan of a robe takes on a course as a floor mat, a carpet, a dust cloth and at long last, embedded in the clay walls of monastic abodes.

Aside from the three robes, a belt for the inner robe (andana kada), the needle and thread, an alms bowl to receive alms for consumption, a cloth filter (perahan kada) to filter water for drinking and shaving knife (deli pihiya), have prevailed as the sole items of the monk's possessions even on his travels and deemed sufficient to meet his every need for a simple existence. These are the eight

Captions:

- 4 Ata Pirikara the three robes, a belt, needle and thread, cloth filter, shaving knife and alms bowl
- 5 Visible seams the whole cloth is shredded and then stitched together
- 6 The inner robe (Andana Kada)

items that have now been encompassed in the ata pirikara that which meets four requisites for the monks – robes, alms, shelter and health (filtered water). It is for this reason that the Ata Pirikara is given much importance among Buddhist devotees, and is often offered at alms givings.

The Sivura, of the Buddhist monk, thus depicts an entire monastic lifestyle, the practice of religious precepts and the humble homage to the teachings of the Buddha. Preserved unchanged for 2600 years it is deemed worthy of worship and remains a distinctive symbol of religious heritage to this day.

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A tantalising aroma of freshly made hoppers drifts out from the little shop tempting passers by. If any of them peeped in, they would be greeted by a scene of feverish activity. A man stands surrounded on three sides by rows of gas cookers. His hands whirr busily between the cookers, 30 in all, mixing, pouring and removing freshly cooked hoppers; he doesn't stop even for an instant. It seems impossible for one human being to manage it all at once, but somehow he does.

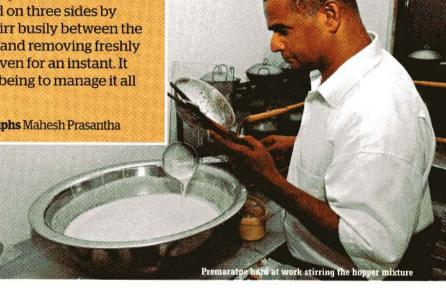
Words Deepal Sooriyaarachchi Photographs Mahesh Prasantha

lthough it's fun to eat hoppers it takes time to prepare them and making hoppers with just the right crispy flavour is not an easy task. But one man has turned hopper making into an art. Premaratne Perera may possibly be the fastest hopper maker in Sri Lanka, and perhaps the world. On the day that we visit his small shop in Dehiwala, he is already hard at work and barely has time to talk as he moves between his array of cookers. In front of him is a huge dish containing the hopper mixture. Using a coconut handle spoon he ladles the mixture into a 'thachchiya' (pan), swirls it around and places it on the cooker. He repeats this in rapid succession for all the cookers, then moves around, checking on the consistency of the hoppers and removing the cooked

ones with a dexterous flick of his wrist. A tempting little mountain of hoppers, their crusts gleaming with a golden sheen, pile up in front of him.

This hopper business is a joint venture for Premaratne and his wife Nilanthi. Together they work as a team to keep it flourishing; she is the 'public face' of their business, talking to customers and taking orders as he makes the hoppers. While he works, she tells us the story behind this special hopper maker.

Premaratne's story is also as interesting as his hoppers. About fifteen years ago Premaratne was trying many small businesses with little or no success. Finally he started a little grocery but that too was not doing well. He then started selling tea and snacks also at the grocery, yet success was not on his side. One day he had the idea of making hoppers. But he did not know how to do that. When he was tossing this idea in his mind he asked an elderly





Whenever a visitor wants to try unique Sri Lankan food items one obvious choice of every host is to offer some hoppers. Hoppers are made with rice flour and coconut milk. A few decades ago hoppers were more a rural food item sold at wayside boutiques. Hoppers are usually eaten for breakfast or at dinner. In the past it was common to call such places "Appa Kade" or hopper boutiques. The preparation was also different. Instead of the common gas cooker of today it was the usual hearth lit mainly with coconut leaves to get a moderate heat. In addition to the pan on which the hopper was done there was another clay pot with some burning coconut husks that was placed on the pan thus the hopper was cooked in between two fires. Hoppers made that way are said to be tastier than the hoppers made in the present way on the gas stove.

woman who dropped into his grocery, how to make hoppers. This lady gave him the recipe.

He and his wife tried to make hoppers according to that recipe for five days and found it was going well. He decided to sell hoppers from the sixth day. As he was just getting ready to cook his hoppers in the evening, the same old woman appeared from nowhere. She was his first customer. She bought two hoppers for two rupees and wished Premaratne all the success and went away. He could not believe his eyes when as the old woman was leaving the grocery there was virtually a line of people to buy hoppers from him. That was the last he heard from that old woman. He does not know where she is now.

The trend continued. He and his wife continued to work hard to produce the quantity while maintaining the quality. A good hopper must

be light, crispy, creamy in taste, presentable and must have the unique hopper aroma. To maintain these qualities there are no short cuts. For instance Premaratne grinds his rice at home so the purity is maintained. If rice is ground at a commercial grinding place there is a chance of rice flour mixing with other batches of rice thus contaminating the flour and resulting in the spoiling of the taste and the quality.

As the demand increased Premaratne found he could not cope and he wanted to make more hoppers faster. He experimented with increasing the number of gas cookers and learnt the finer points of how to work with multiple cookers. Today he uses 30 cookers. It is a treat to see him move from one cooker to another pouring the mixture, checking the progress of another and removing the cooked crispy hoppers. His target is to increase the number to 50. Even

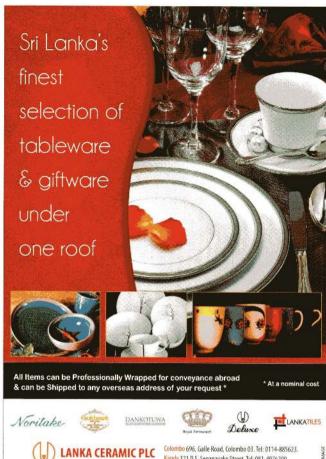
otherwise there is none who matches his productivity in Sri Lanka. He therefore is the fastest hopper maker in Sri Lanka and thus perhaps the fastest hopper maker in the world.

Premaratne attributes his success to the commitment to the quality and consistency of his product. He does his job with passion and he is proud of his product. He is a devoted Buddhist who practices meditation regularly; this, he says is the reason for his happiness and success.

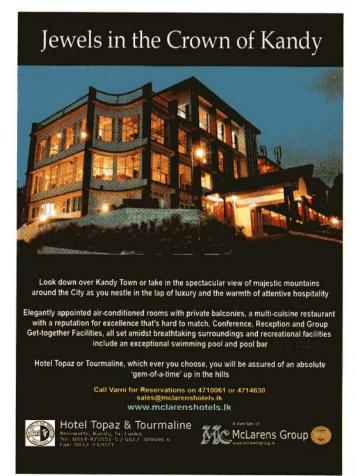
As night falls, a steady stream of customers arrive at the Premaratnes' shop. Small children, working women on their way home - everyone it seems, wants hoppers for dinner. Premaratne's wife hands a customer a bag filled with hot, steaming hoppers, straight from the fire. He breaks off a piece of golden brown crust and nibbles it, an expression of contentment spreading over his face as it melts in his mouth. Perfection indeed.

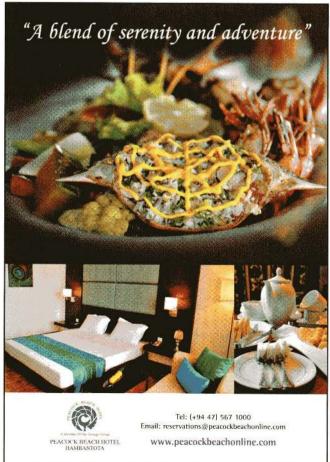






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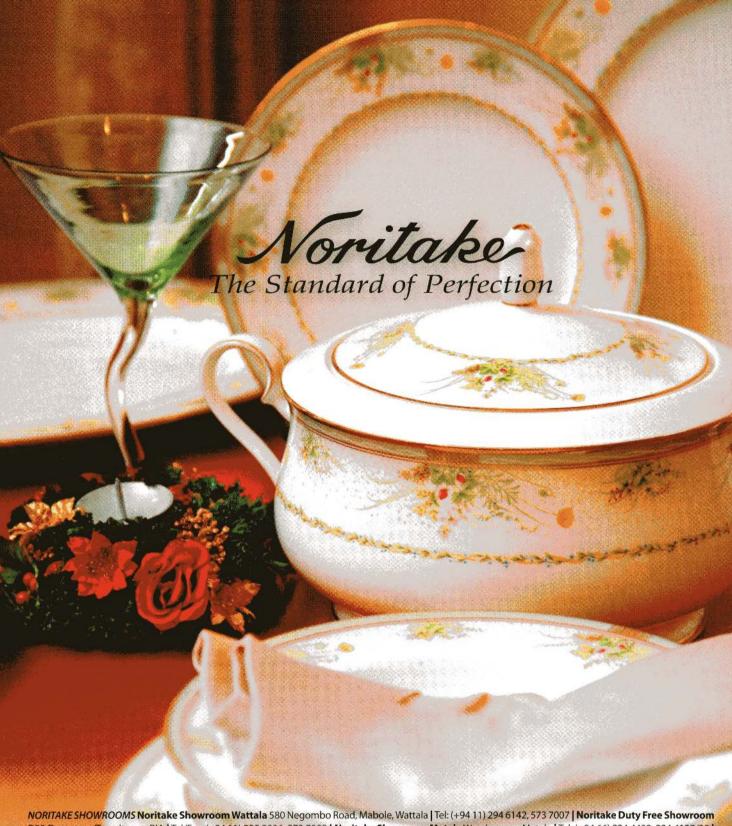
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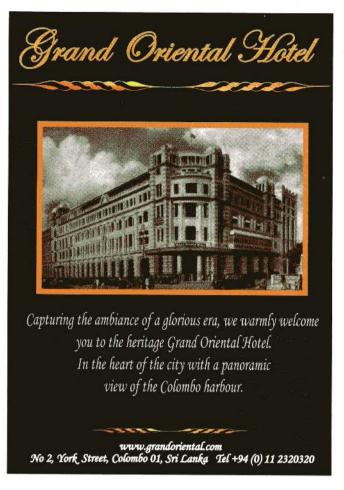
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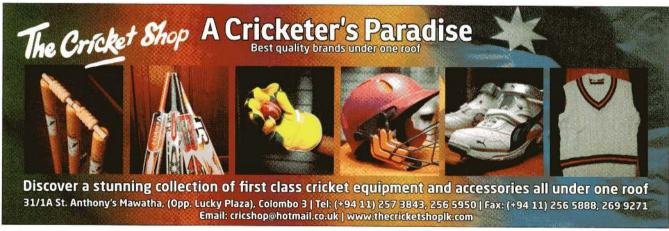
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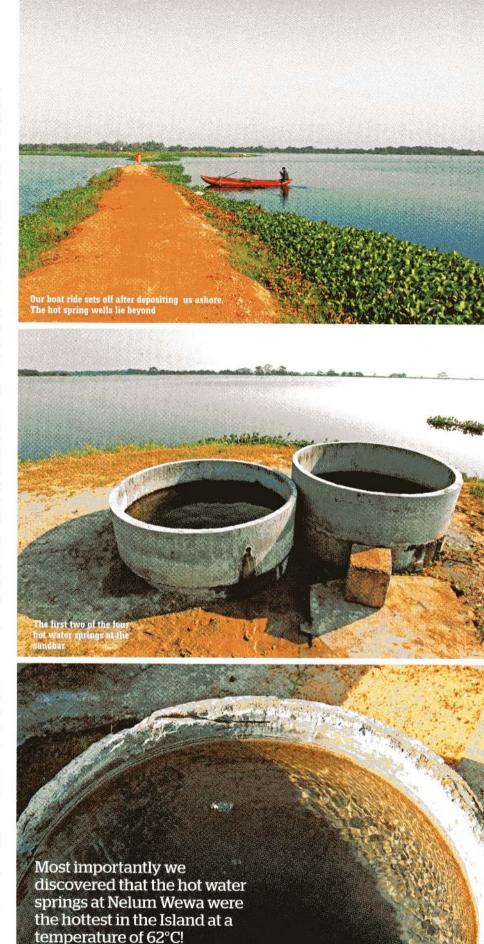
Words Prasadini Nanayakkara Photographs Mahesh Prasantha



🖥 evanapitiya in Polonnaruwa, a discreet town that falls along the A11 route, held a simplistic charm favoured by its restful surroundings. We had our eve open for Nelum Wewa for locals had aroused our curiosity about hot water springs situated in the region. Soon enough a signboard directed us away from the main road and its welcome shade. Our first encounter was a false alarm as the calm waters of Gal Wewa tank first emerged. Travelling along its bund we continued on to reach a second farther up. At its banks fishermen were wrapping up for the day, their boats stationed against a flourish of water hyacinth at its bank.

This was Nelum Wewa or Bora Wewa as its signpost indicated. Judging by its name one would expect to see lotuses in bloom or as Bora Wewa - a muddy pond of water, but neither displayed itself and instead here was a glistening lake that stretched into a horizon of captivating landscape that included the Dimbulagala rock to heighten the beauty of the surroundings. The fishermen pointed us to the hot water wells and they were in fact away from the embankment set along a sandbar amidst the water. which could only be reached by boat.

The boat crept silkily towards the sandbar. Settling ourselves in the narrow confines of a simple three-seater fishing boat with the boatman at the bow, we sat restraining our movements while eagerly trying to drink in the surroundings from an enviable panoramic perspective. The boatman had been a resident of the village for more than two decades and had borne witness to much of the changes over time. During the time his father frequented Nelum Wewa, which was then a marshland. there indeed were lotuses in plentiful, and the existence of hot water wells was knowledge only to the villagers. Curiously, the bubbling



Here was a glistening lake that stretched into a horizon of captivating landscape that included the Dimbulagala rock to heighten the beauty of the surroundings.



springs were discovered beneath the body of water and the sandbar was gradually constructed to make for easy access and isolate the steaming water from the large expanse. While puzzling over this information we had approached our destination.

Two wells sat adjacently to one another, steam unfurling from their surface. We gingerly tested the water within and decided it best to enjoy the warmth from a safe distance. An outflow of hot water trickled back into the lake from the well closest to the tank and offered a spot to soothe our feet with warm water. Thick colonies of water hyacinth grew here as well, stubbornly unaffected by the bubbling water that trickled to its surroundings. Along the sandbar, there were two other wells located farther away from the first two and to the touch, each seemed to be roughly at the same temperature. According to the boatman there had been seven such wells initially, three of which had to be covered. The

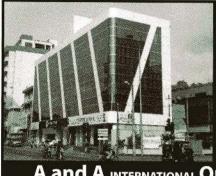
reason being that these hot water springs in fact connect to others in the island such as the hot water springs of Kanniya, Trincomalee and Maha Oya forming a network of springs through the earth's crust and thus to maintain a healthy source of water at other regions the three additional wells were closed off at Nelum Wewa. Intrigued by this natural phenomenon we made our way towards a noticeboard, which illustrated the inner workings and other interesting details on the springs.

Most importantly it revealed that the hot water springs at Nelum Wewa were the hottest in the Island at a temperature of 62°C! Villagers often frequent the wells with pails in tow to draw cool water from the tank and enjoy a refreshing bath at the springs. I was indeed pleasing to see that little had been done to disturb the surroundings and the wells were maintained as unobtrusive simple structures. One could

not tire of the scenic beauty that Nelum Wewa offered. Aside from human trespassers, many varieties of birds such as the Pied Kingfisher arrive here in flocks. What's more, while reluctantly heading back in our sturdy little boat, the boatman kindly informed us of friendlier inhabitants here – crocodiles. And had just missed sight of one who had been basking in the sun earlier in the day. However, the boatman assured, the crocs have long been here and never been a cause for alarm among the villagers.

Safely back on land, only fishing boats remained as their owners would have gradually returned home or to the markets with their bounty. We bade adieu to our obliging tour-guide and stayed a while longer to enjoy the full effect of the panoramic view that lay before us. With all its little surprises and the natural beauty that Nelum Wewa had to offer, we didn't want to miss a thing.

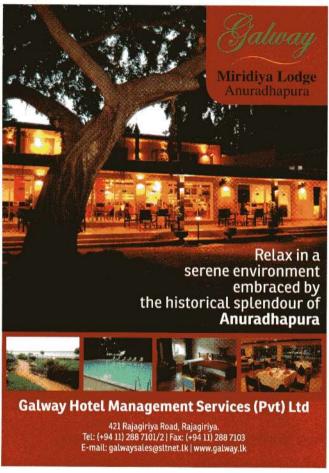


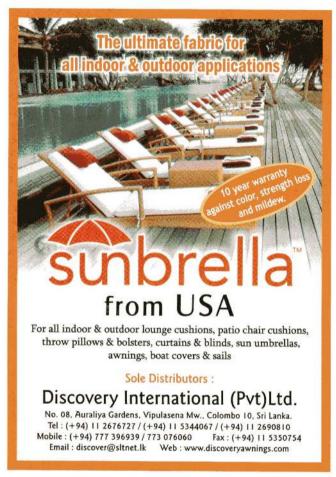


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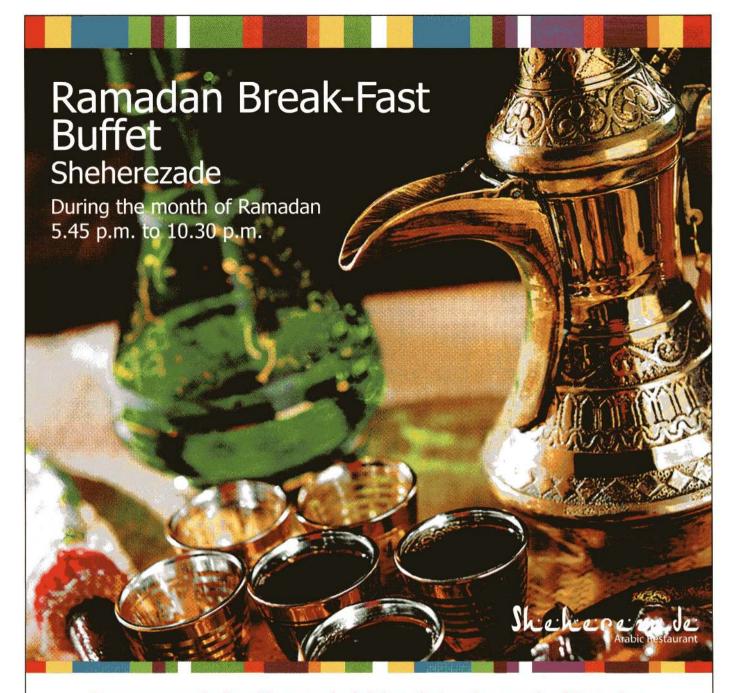
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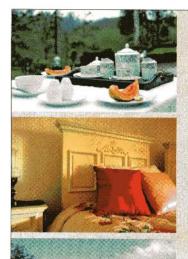
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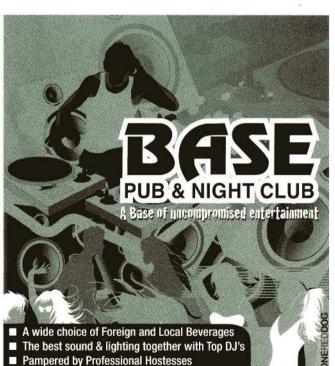


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Sri Lankan Style!

The master of scintillating meals, Koluu presents two recipes; one for kaha bath (yellow rice), and the other for fish mustard curry.

Words Chiranthi Rajapakse Photographs Menaka Aravinda

Kaha bath

aha bath is one of the staple dishes for festive occasions. Without a dish of fragrant, delicately coloured rice garnished with cadju nuts, no party would be complete. Koluu explains the secret of the perfect dish of yellow rice, "It's very important that all the ingredients given in the recipe be used.

Especially the chicken stock and the coconut milk are essential since this gives the rice its richness. After adding the stock and the crushed black pepper it's important to use a lot of nice thick coconut milk."

The distinctive yellow colour of kaha bath is imparted by the use of turmeric, which is commonly used as

a spice and dye in South Asian and Middle Eastern cuisine. Its active ingredient is curcumin. In medieval Europe, turmeric became known as Indian saffron, since it was often used as an alternative to saffron, which was more expensive.

Sri Lankan meals are often elaborate affairs with a rice dish being

(Above) Two delicous dishes of kaha bath and fish mustard curry accompanied by their ingredients



accompanied by a multitude of curries. A guest who doesn't try each and every dish runs the risk of offending his host. Koluu though, has a different outlook. He comments, "To present Sri Lankan food is very difficult, because of the fact that we have so many accompaniments. The beauty of each dish is never shown because of that." He recommends that the yellow rice be eaten plain "The rice itself is such a flavourful rice that it could be eaten on its own." Kaha bath can be garnished with fried cadju nuts, sultanas or straw potatoes.

A dish of piping hot 'kaha bath'

Fish Mustard Curry

Ish mustard curry; a mildly flavoured dish that brings out the flavour of fish. Seer fish has been used for this recipe. "Any proper white fish can be used. Red fish doesn't taste good in a mustard curry and should not be used," says Koluu.

Mustard ground in vinegar is one of the key ingredients of this dish. One of the oldest and the most widely used spices, mustard was used by the Chinese thousands of years ago and its use was well known to the ancient Greeks as well. Mustard is used to add a spicy tone to many dishes. For those who live out of Sri Lanka and are unable to get freshly ground mustard, Koluu recommends the use of mustard grains.

Koluu advises simplicity in the serving, and recommends a few simple dishes to accompany the fish mustard curry. "My recommendation is steamed rice, a nice fresh gotukola sambol and maybe a few fried chillies. That would really set it off nicely. Keep it simple" he says.





Recipe

500g Seer fish or any firm white fish A sprig of curry leaves 2 green chillies chopped 60 grams onions chopped 3 cloves garlic chopped 4 teaspoons of mustard ground in vinegar ¼ teaspoon turmeric 3 cloves 3 cardamoms 2 inch piece of cinnamon 1½ cups of coconut milk Juice of 1 lime Salt Freshly ground pepper

Method

Place all ingredients in a pan except for the sliced fish, mustard and lime juice. Gradually bring the gravy to the boil, then add in the mustard and stir well. Add the slices of fish, cook for a further 5 minutes. Take off fire and add the lime juice.



Koluu is lyrical in his praise of Sri Lankan cuisine. "Sri Lanka has incredible food. The beauty of it is that no two people cook the same way," he points out. "Each one cooks slightly differently. Some people may use an extra bit of curnin or extra curry powder, while others may use their own blend of curry powder. In the North and South of the country for example, there are different styles of cooking. That's the beauty of it." A beauty that perhaps more people will now be able to appreciate by experimenting with these recipes.

Koluu, Executive Chef and Partner, Lemon Bar and Kitchen





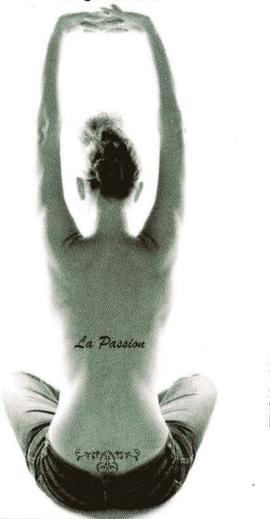


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PARK STREET MEWS

Indulging in a difference

At the threshold of the busy Park Street, 'the Mews' marks its presence with an eclectic charm of its own making Setting foot here is to be transported to a world of your choice with a fusion of flavours to complement

> Words Prasadini Nanayakkara Photographs Mahesh Prasantha

pened in January 2009 the Mews is the first in a block of colourful warehouses aligning a cobblestone alleyway instantly setting it apart from the vicinity. The original warehouse complex built in the 1900s by the Moosajees has evolved into the commercial establishment it is today. Upon entering, the restaurant at once exudes an atmosphere of casual comfort, and hints of a warehouse still remain. The stripped walls to expose brick and the cement polished floors impart a blend of laidback ease and rustic coziness. The Mews caters to all manner of needs whether you choose to plunge into beanbags or plush sofas to lounge for hours with a coffee in hand, or enjoy a meal with family and friends at the table. Aside from its spacious interior, long French windows add to its airy openness with a view of the busy streets. The paved alleyway takes a step further in accommodating alfresco dining along its length

to indulge in a meal at leisure under a stream of twinkling lights. The WiFi facility at the restaurant also allows you to browse internet, catch up on correspondence or engage in business affairs in a quiet niche of your own.

Its offerings for the palate are more so versatile with a fusion twist of continental and tropical dishes. Although breakfast, lunch and dinner menus are available throughout the week, a meal of your choice can be had anytime of the day, be it even a serving of steak at eight in the morning. Among the many favourites are the flavoursome preparations such as Chicken Breast stuffed with egg plant and feta cheese with spinach mash, vegetables and spicy orange sauce, and Parmesan Crusted Chicken Breast gratin with mozarella served with salad and roast potato. Light lunches such as Tortilla wraps or salads such as Caesar Salad with grilled chicken or smoked salmon or prawn and Greek Salad with feta cheese cater to the busy customer looking to grab a quick lunch before heading back to work.

A popular feature is the all day breakfast menu on weekends served up from nine in the morning till seven at night and even includes a Sri Lankan spread of either, pol roti and katta sambol, string hoppers, milk rice or pol pittu to further broaden its variety. Simply leaving nothing to be desired, for those who might tire of the usual menus, specials can be seen chalked on a blackboard throughout the first half of the month while during the latter a monthly themed promotion such as preparations featuring lamb are concurrently on offer with the a la carte menu.

The Mews also brings out its best with rich servings of dessert to complete a meal. Rhubarb Crumble served up since day one, Tiramusu and the staunch favourite Warm Chocolate Fondant with ice cream are among a delectable array. Additionally Park Street Mews also offers a takeaway menu composed

from the many favourites of the a la carte menu to be delivered to your doorstep. Outdoor catering is another service provided for events and functions held either at the restaurant, its event venue 'Warehouse D' at the end of the alleyway, or elsewhere. The Aquarium is another special feature at the Mews for those who wish to enjoy a meal in seclusion. What was originally a bank vault, this interior dining space with air conditioned comfort is frequented by many individual groups for quiet dining in its surreal aqua atmosphere.

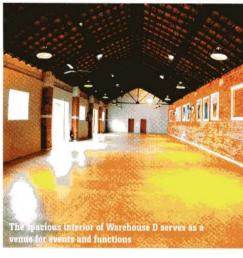
As evening approaches the Mews shows its true character as it transforms before your eyes. As the lights dim its many quirky ornamental lamps are lit to illuminate the interior in a warm glow. Incidentally, many of the curios on display at the Mews can be purchased as well. Outside, the alleyway acquires a festive charm as streams of little lights create a rare dining atmosphere ideal on a clear balmy night. On every second Sunday of the month the quiet evening at the alleyway is brought to life by a DJ with a blend of soul, funk and jazz rhythms as you chill out into the night.

While Warehouse D serves as a venue for functions and events including the newly launched Zumba classes the much desired ambience and cuisine of the Mews itself has struck a chord amongst many. From company functions, staff meetings, product launches to jazz evenings, literary festivals and poetry readings - all find a complementary setting at the Mews. Even the alleyway alone is sought for a touch of uniqueness and hosts a variety of events including weddings with its 200 strong capacity and ample room for parking within the premises.

The novelties of Park Street Mews have drawn many regulars with a penchant for its comfort and special ambience. With the choicest of palatable favourites to delight in, it stands apart for those seeking a dining and relaxing venue with a difference or to simply unwind and feel at home.







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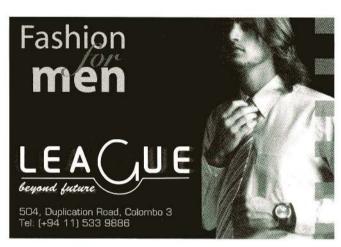
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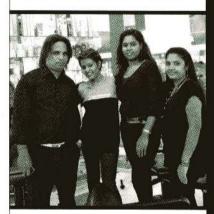








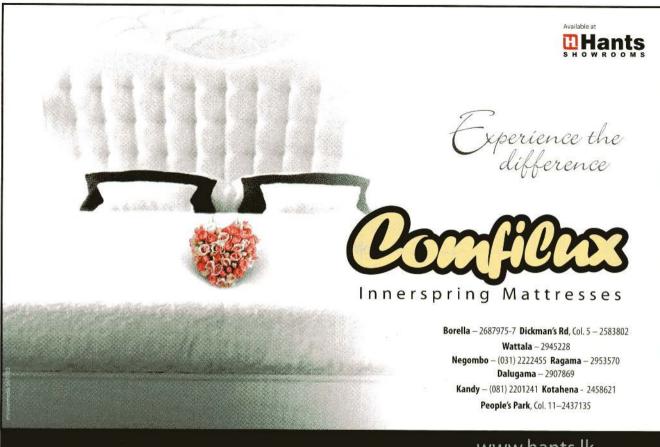
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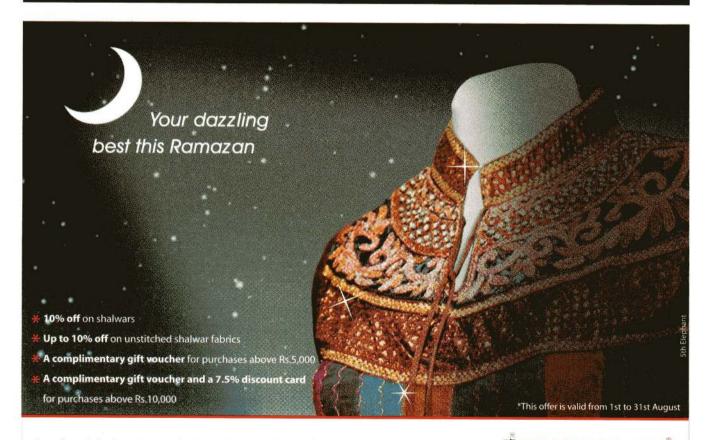
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FASHION BUG



Swiss Residence AN IDYLLIC RETREAT

Beautifully perched like an Eagle's nest on the top of Bahirawakanda, the Swiss Residence Hotel is surrounded by a breathtaking view of the lush greenery of Kandy. It is an ideal haven for those seeking to relax in a tranquil atmosphere in the heart of the city. The sharp, steep climb to the hotel may seem tedious at first, but the reward at the top is truly worth the climb.

Words Shehara de Mei Photographs Menaka Aravinda



pening its doors to the world in 1993, the hotel has an exquisite appeal that is evident not only in its location but in its architectural design. It is a fusion of Swiss and Kandyan architecture thus illustrating one of the many reasons behind its name. The interior is warm and modest yet exudes a feel of elegance. Striking, quaint works of art decorate the walls of the hotel and quietly welcome quests in every area.

The Swiss consists of 42 rooms that are a blend of simplicity with modern comforts. There are 29 standard rooms, 12 deluxe rooms and one royal suite. Each room is furnished with a hot and cold water shower and/or tub, tea/coffee making facilities, mini bar, pipe music, cable television, WiFi facilities,

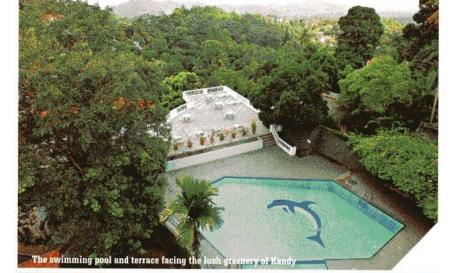
The interior is warm and modest yet exudes a feel of elegance. Striking, quaint works of art decorate the walls of the hotel.

air-conditioning, ceiling fan and a private balcony. The royal suite, situated at the pinnacle of the hotel, is lavishly designed to create a warm, comfortable ambience and offers beautiful vistas of nearby mountains, the Buddha statue atop Bahirawakanda and the Kandy city.

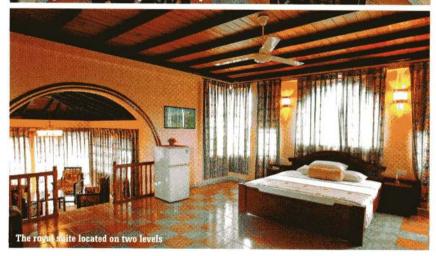
The hotel offers a range of exclusive facilities that are both unique and entertaining. Guests can relax and unwind in the pool located at the front of the hotel and thereafter bask in the tropical sunshine on the pool terrace, which affords an exceptional view. The hotel houses a spa and a discotheque 'blackout', a popular attraction in Kandy at night. Ensuring that quests receive an unparalleled experience, the Swiss provides both western and oriental cuisine at the "Edelweiss" Restaurant. It accommodates an additional restaurant and a well stocked bar thus adding variety to its amenities.

The hotel caters to the needs of the corporate world and provides an open air conference hall and mini hall equipped with facilities such as multimedia and screen.

If you desire to celebrate your wedding amidst the luxurious beauty of the hill country, the Swiss Residence goes a step further and paves the way for this opportunity. The hotel offers attractive wedding packages and contains two reception halls: hall one caters to large wedding receptions and can seat approximately 300 - 350 persons while hall two seats approximately 150 - 165 guests.







Although situated at the top of Bahirawakanda, the hotel is within close proximity to the Kandy town and city centre. Nearby attractions to the Swiss include the Dalada Maligawa (Temple of the Tooth), Hanthana Mountain, Kandy Lake, the Royal Botanical Gardens in Peradeniya. The hotel is an ideal spot to enjoy the evening breeze after an eventful day of adventure.

Located 116km away from Colombo, the Swiss Residence is the perfect setting to absorb the tranquil yet magnificent aura of the hill country.

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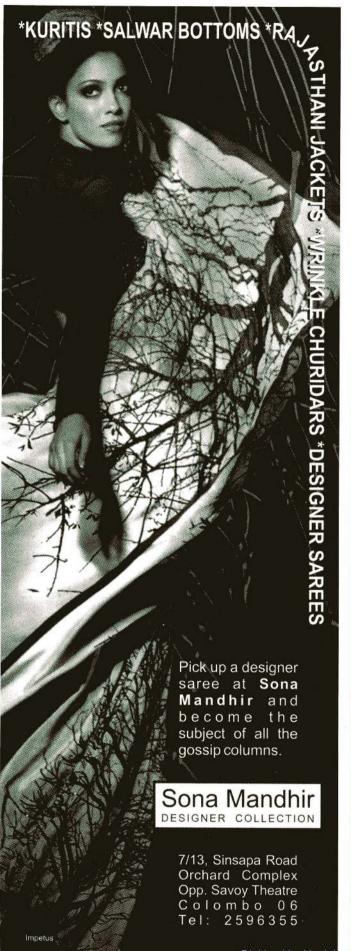
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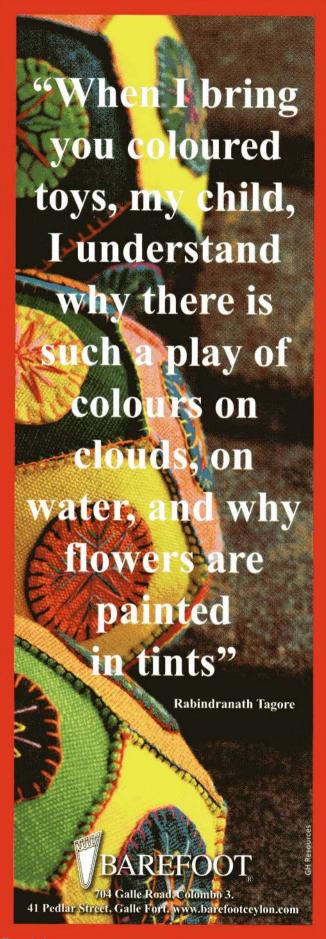
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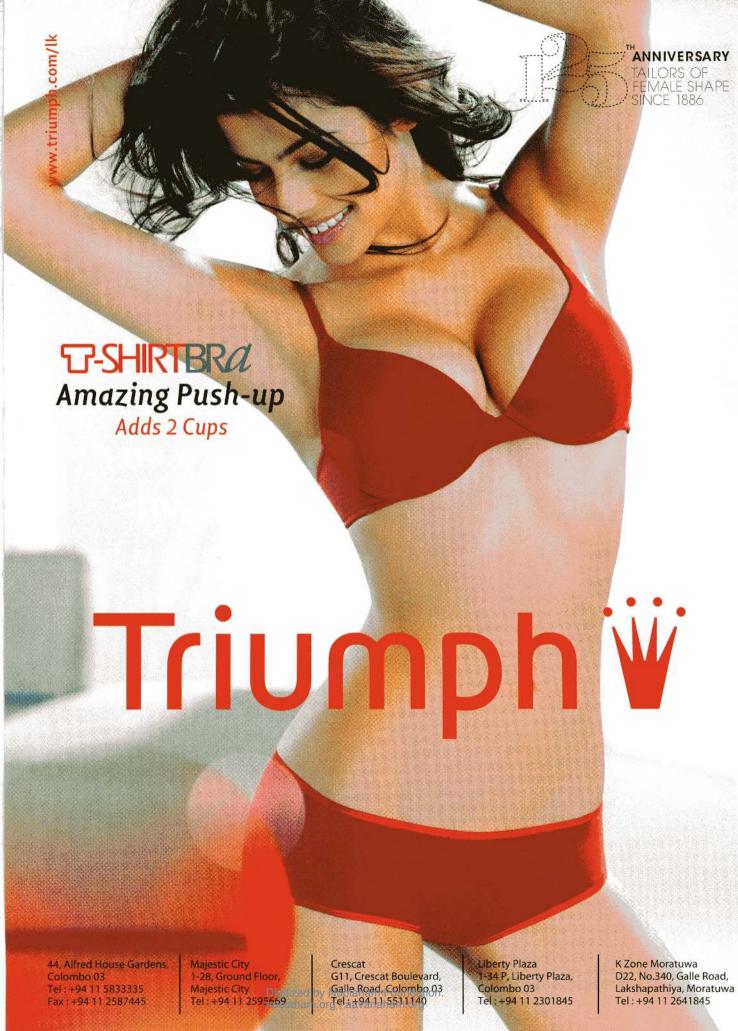
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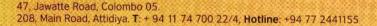
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Kalaya

A fusion of the modern and traditional





The array of items on display at Kalaya

Cement sculptures

Kalaya is the Sinhala word for a clay vessel. Its rounded shape lends it an aesthetic appeal, while it serves the practical purpose of storing water. At Kalaya, almost all the products seem to reflect the name of the store, in that they serve a practical purpose but, at the same time, are beautiful to behold.

Words Haseena Razak Photographs Prabath Chathuranga very article housed at Kalaya's minimalist and spacious store exudes its own unique blend of modern flair with a touch of an ethnic element. Kalaya began in 1993 in the form of temporary sales, then grew to establish stores in Colombo and has culminated in a two-storey designer homestore at Battaramulla.

The first items that the discerning customer sees upon entering Kalava. are statues of the meditating Buddha, fashioned out of cement. They are positioned tastefully amongst other items sculpted out of the same material. Brightly coloured candles stand strikingly against their grey-blue cement stands. The wide, plattershaped vessels sitting at the base of the arrangement are multi-functional and can be used as table centres containing flowers and candles or even as birdbaths. The various textures that the cement takes on and the traditional element

infused into these modern-day items is what makes them unique.

Kalaya is full to the brim with objects, painstakingly designed by the proprietors to ensure this uncommon fusion of modern and traditional. Lampshades created from oxidised iron adorn a bright yellow wall at the back of the store. The design of each, shaped differently, was settled upon only after experimentation with four to five prototypes.

Another feature of the products at Kalaya, is that most of the items are manufactured in Sri Lanka. Once the designs have been completed, Kalaya engages people involved in cottage industries in various parts of the country to manufacture their products. In Kiriella, Ratnapura, the local women create beautiful pieces of coconut-shell jewellery that can be found at Kalaya. This village empowerment project benefits local

people by providing them with an income for producing jewellery out of their daily waste material.

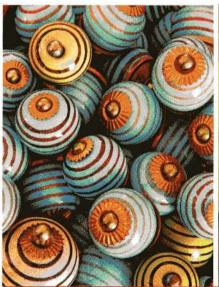
Against a wall of the store, patchwork quilts, wall hangings and bedspreads decorated in batik sway in vivid contrast against shelves stacked with more bedspreads, quilts and shawls folded neatly away. At a glance, they create an artistic collage similar to the applique on some of the quilts and wall hangings themselves. The designs are contemporary in style and are hand-printed, thereby making each piece one of a kind.

Crowding the brilliant orange wall along the stairway are numerous

other paintings at Kalaya, such as representations of ancient temple murals.

Whilst most of the pieces at Kalaya originate in Sri Lanka, there are also objects from other countries. Interspersed between the paintings by Sri Lankan artists are brightly coloured pieces of art from India, several depicting the Hindu gods Rama and Krishna. Some of the glassware, twisted and fashioned into captivating shapes, is from Thailand.

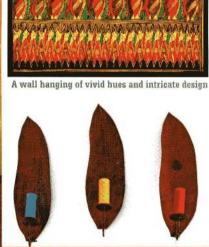
The spacious layout at this outlet radiates a sense of leisure. It allows shoppers to browse at their own pace, piecing together items that



Decorative door knobs



Bed linen and other ornamental adornments for the house

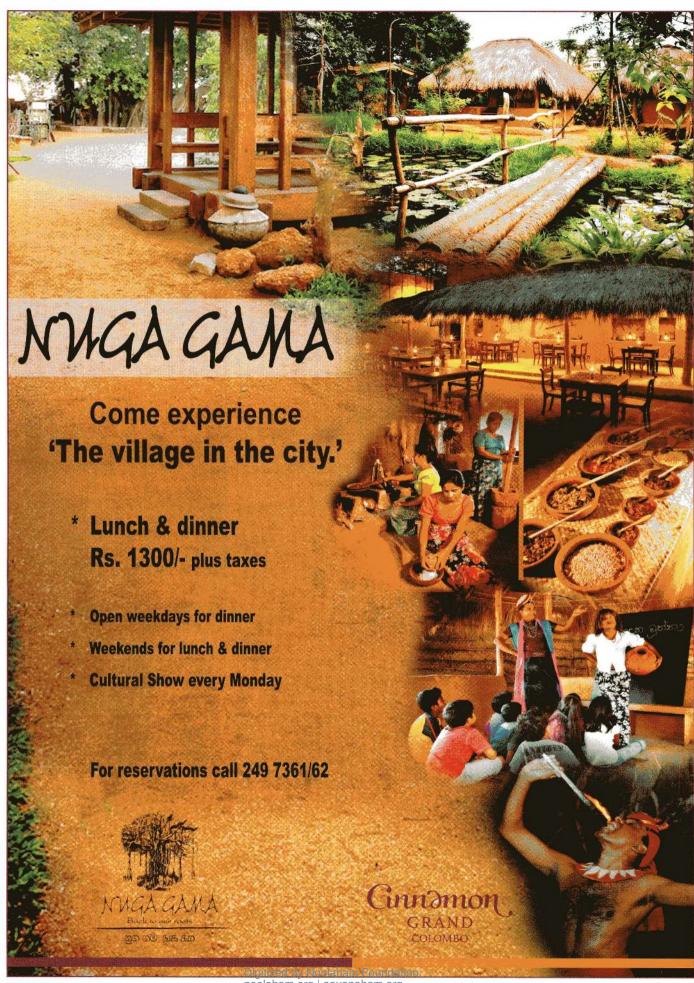


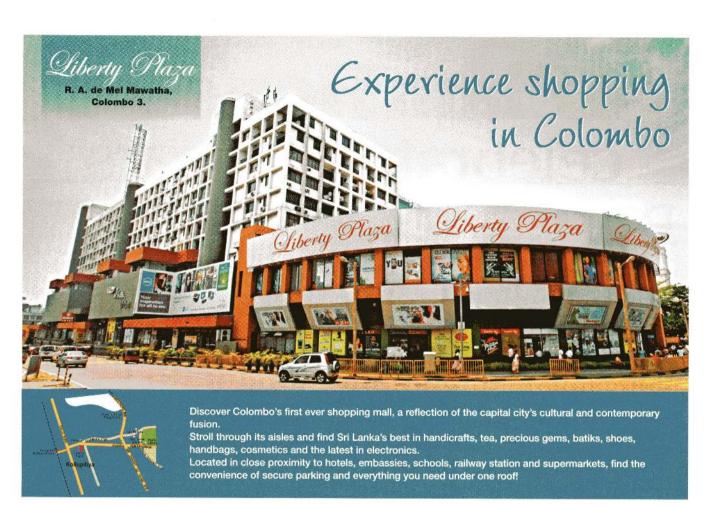
Rustic candle stands

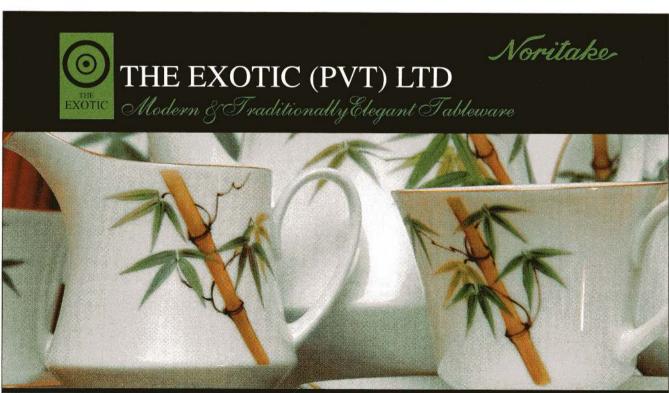
shadowy hued human and animal figures. The black and white images are called block paintings and are created by cutting a design into a block of wood and imprinting it on a white background. Sri Lankan artists produce these and several

would complement each other and their homes. All of the pieces at the store, including the furniture and rugs, can be custom made ensuring customers leave Kalaya with exactly what they want. On a relaxing trip to Kalaya, every item needed for the home, practical and beautiful, can be found and treasured.

Kalaya – Designer Home Store 260/a, Pannipitiya Road, Pelawatte, Battaramulla. Tel: (+94 11) 278 6886 darikae@hotmail.com







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Siam House celebrates 18 years

Pioneers in serving authentic Thai food to Sri Lanka, Siam House celebrated its 18th anniversary recently. As part of its celebrations, it organised an 18-day promotion for customers, which included daily prizes and a raffle draw. Five winners were selected from the grand draw and received their prizes at a special prize giving ceremony held at Siam House. The event was attended by distinguished guests, invitees and the staff of Siam House.

- 1. Siam House
- (L-R): Lionel Fernando, Chairman/MD Siam House, His Excellency Thinakorn Kanasuta, Ambassador of Thailand, Suvit Sakhuma and Suresan
- 3. (L-R): Niluka, Lionel Fernando and Mangala Fernando
- (L-R): Shyamali, Suvit Sakhuma, Lionel Fernando
- (L-R): Karunatilake Amunugama, Secretary to the Ministry of External Affairs, Dilum, Bathiya Jayakody, Lionel Fernando and Santhush Weera man
- Deepika, Lionel Fernando, Lawit Sawadirak and Suvit Sakhuma
- 7 8. Distinguished guests and prizewinners at the cocktail party







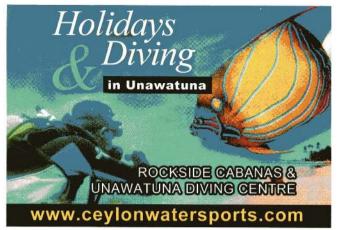




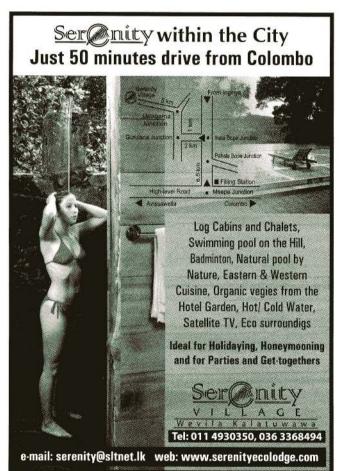


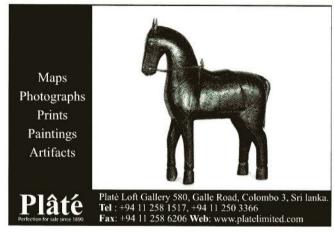














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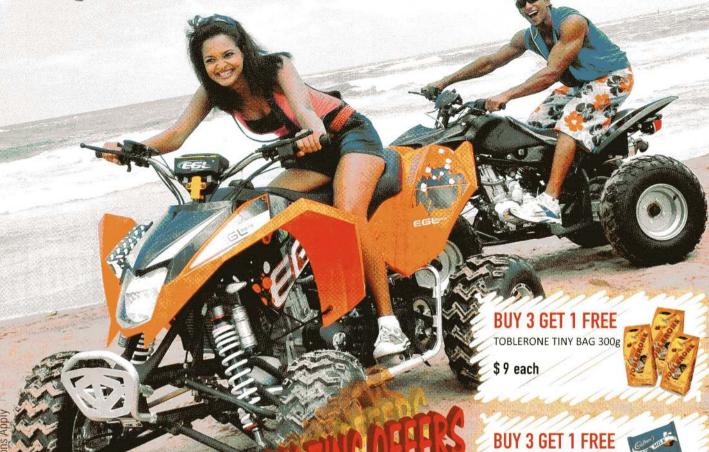
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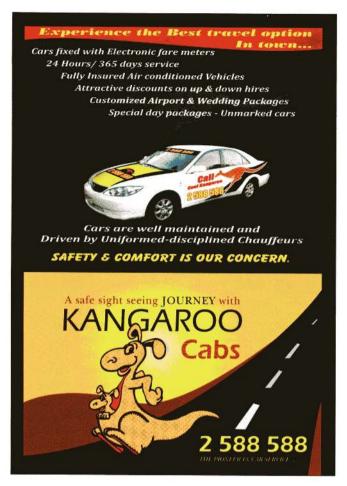
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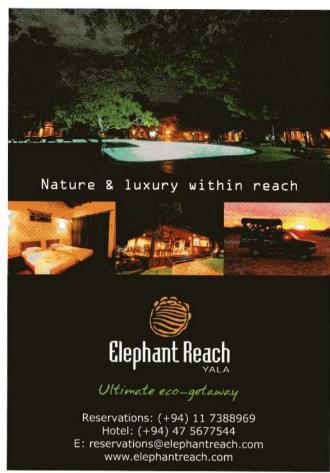


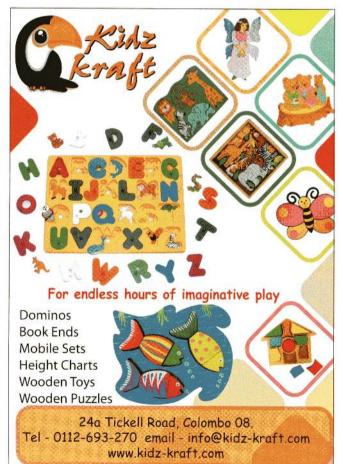


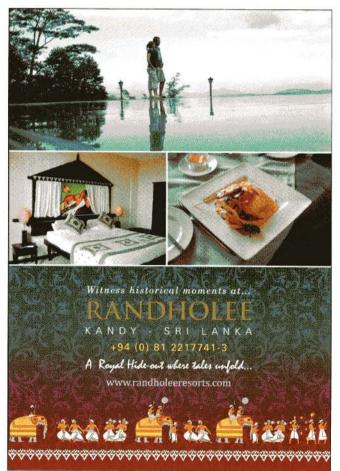
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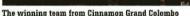




NOTEBOOK

Cinnamon Grand sweeps Marie Brizard Cocktail Competition









R A Thanushi Perera, winner of the Best Classical Cocktail

been able to garner the highest number of entries for the overall competition.

Cinnamon Grand shone in the 'Classical' category by winning the first, second, fourth and fifth positions in the competition. R A Thanushi Perera of the Courtyard Restaurant won the 'Best Classical Cocktail' for her creation of 'Shades of Pink'. M D Sampath

of Chutneys was placed second whilst the fourth and fifth positions went to P Karunarathna of the Tea Lounge and K Nisansala Alwis of the Taprobane.

In the 'Flaring' category, Cinnamon Grand associates E Cheshan Buddhika of Breeze Bar and P P Pradeep K Jayasooriya of Banquets won fourth and fifth place respectively.

'Sybil Nanda' reads at Nuga Gama



Sybil Wettasinghe reads a book to the children

Sixty children got an opportunity to celebrate their love of books, culture and heritage recently, when Cinnamon Grand hosted 'Once upon a book,' a novel storytime session with Sybil Wettasinghe, author and illustrator of children's stories, at Nuga Gama, the village in the city.

The 'Once upon a book' session saw children reconnecting

with the fast disappearing habit of reading and listening. Fondly called 'Sybil Nanda', her session was an interactive one, with children getting an opportunity, to share their views, improve ways of writing and make art that speaks.

During the one-hour session 'Sybil Nanda' read two books and laced her stories with plenty of interesting anecdotes. With over 200 publications to her credit, she attributes her love for children "as the force behind her gift of story telling and writing." There was also art to encourage expression on what they saw and heard, with 'Sybil Nanda' promising to select the best work, "that has been drawn with commitment."

One of the most significant moments at the session was when she handed over a special bookmark created especially for the occasion. The beautifully illustrated bookmark had an environmental message for the children visiting Nuga Gama.

The session included a traditional food buffet in keeping with the Nuga Gama theme, and special prizes and giveaways, to complete an afternoon of learning and celebration of Sri Lanka's culture, heritage and nature.



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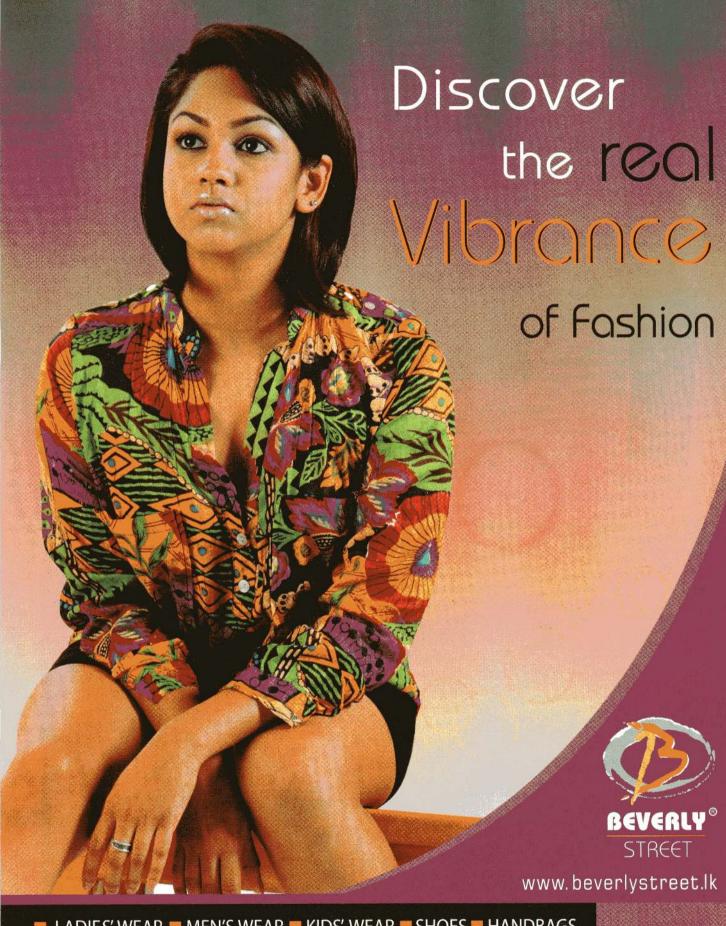












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Emirates Holidays gives Cinnamon Grand top billing in the city



Cinnamon Grand Colombo

Three time Presidential Travel and Tourism award winner and entrant into the Travel and Tourism Hall of Fame Cinnamon Grand Colombo donned yet another grand crown by becoming the only city hotel in Sri Lanka to be presented a five star rating by the prestigious Emirates Holidays. The tour-operating arm of the award winning Emirates Airlines, in its

annual travel publication 'A World of Choice', gave Cinnamon Grand Colombo the coveted top billing in the city. Cinnamon Grand now ranks among the best hotels and resorts in an extensive network of 550, earmarked by Emirates Holidays as the preferred and recommended choice for its clientele, which also features the newest tourist hot spots in the world.

First 'Dine and Fly' winner selected at Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo



(L-R) Azwer Zahir, Sales Manager — Air Arabia, Chandana Talwatte, Director of Sales and Marketing — Cinnamon Lakeside, Lakshani Ranasinghe, Sales Coordinator — Air Arabia, Ruwani Perera, Reservation Manager — Air Arabia, Abdul Rahim Patni, Country Manager — Air Arabia and Nadiyah Akram, Marketing and Communications Manager — Cinnamon Lakeside, select the first winner of the Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo - Air Arabia Dine and Fly promotion

Yoosuf Sulaiman was the first winner to be selected from the 'Dine and Fly' promotion organised by Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo in association with Air Arabia. Beginning July 2011, for a limited period, diners at the hotel's restaurants Royal Thai, Long Feng and The Dining Room are invited to enter the weekly draw where a lucky winner will receive a ticket to Sharjah on Air Arabia.

The host from every table will be eligible to enter the 'Dine and Fly' draw, which will be held every Friday at the hotel to determine the winner. When settling the bill, they are requested to hand a business card to restaurant staff or may request a form to fill in their details for submission.

"We are delighted to collaborate with Air Arabia and offer our diners the chance to visit this "Cultural Capital of the Arab World," says Neroy Marso, General Manager of Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo. Sharjah was given this title by UNESCO in recognition of its commitment and dedication in preserving its rich heritage and culture.



Shevon sends an environmental message with his hand-painted T-shirt



Riyana with her hand-made card congratulating Cinnamon Lakeside

Kiddies' Eco Camp at Cinnamon Lakeside

Cinnamon Lakeside
Colombo's continuing
children's programme took
on an environmentally
friendly theme following
World Environmental Day.
Children learned to make
puppets out of recyclable
material with the guidance of Sulochana Dissanayake who also taught
them to create a story for
their puppets to act out,
complete with sound effects and actions.

With it being the ninth programme conducted by the hotel, the Kiddies' Camp crew and the little Campers have grown close. In a touching gesture three year old Riyana, a regular at Kiddies' Camp, presented the crew with a bouquet of flowers and a giant card she had made to congratulate the hotel on its Best Five Star City Hotel status awarded at the recent Sri Lanka

Tourism Awards. Young Shevon Pillai, crowned Avurudu Kumaraya during the April Kiddies' Camp, made an environmental statement of his own. He wore a hand painted T-shirt he had made with his mother about the poisonous fumes emitted by badly maintained vehicles. Hopefully, his advice will be heeded and all vehicle owners will take responsible action.



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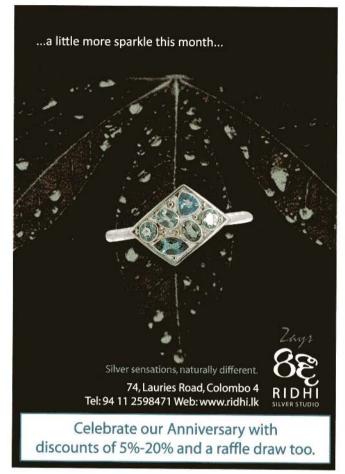
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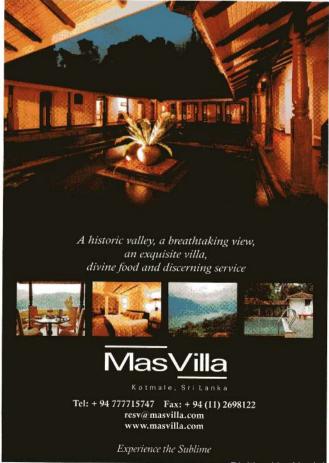
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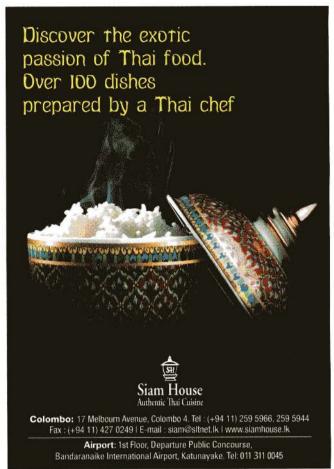














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English High Tea at the Galadari



Some of the treats served at the buffet

Partake in the age-old English tradition of High Tea with delectable delicacies and a spread of pure Ceylon tea at the Galadari Hotel. With hand-made signature scones, delectable pastries and tea sweets prepared in house daily, the hotel's chefs are ready to indulge taste buds to a truly English affair. The tea buffet comes complete with crisp white linens, fine china, and an ambience that spells elegance.

Guests at the hotel's high tea buffet stand a chance of winning a return air ticket to Sharjah with Air Arabia.

The English High Tea Buffet is available from 3.30pm to 6.00pm at the Lobby Bar.

Launch of High Tea at Ramada Hotel

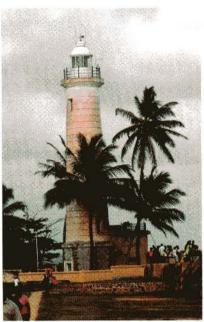


High Tea spread

Ramada Hotel launched its weekend High Tea event recently. The buffet offers a large spread of food items while the setting is complemented with soft, light music. The High Tea spread is ideal for both business gatherings and guests seeking to relax and enjoy the afternoon. Food items range from canapés, short eats, hot food items, tandoori wraps, pizzas, to desserts

such as mousse, mini cakes and other sweet treats. In addition, it provides a variety of vegetarian items. This is accompanied with a choice of tea, coffee, iced coffee or juice. The afternoon event hopes to introduce small lamprais and burgers to the menu to add variety and cater to the customer's taste. High Tea at Ramada is held every Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoon.

Taste of Galle 2011



The lighthouse at Galle Fort

Taste of Galle, a food festival and a street carnival, will be held in Galle city from September 2 to 4, 2011. The event will coincide with the test matches to be played between Australia and Sri Lanka in Galle.

Chefs in the south are preparing to present visitors and tourists with traditional dishes originating in Galle as well as an assortment of other local and international cuisine. There will also be exhibition stalls at the carnival, which will give visitors the opportunity to learn about the various arts and crafts that the people of Galle depend on for their livelihoods. Sightseers will be able to see ladies dressed in traditional long-sleeved blouses weaving Beeralu at some stalls. Beeralu is a type of lace traditionally woven in Galle and these stalls will give visitors the option of having their own designs woven on the spot.

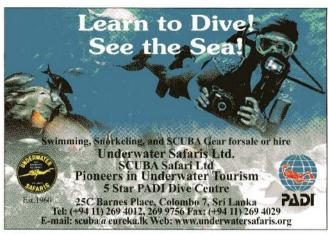
The event will also see traditional dancers performing at street parades. Groups of actors will bring to life the historical story of the city of Galle and characters from Sri Lankan folklore, like Andare and Gajaman Nona.

Fishing Competitions have also been organised as part of the festival. Tourists and visitors are welcome to take part.



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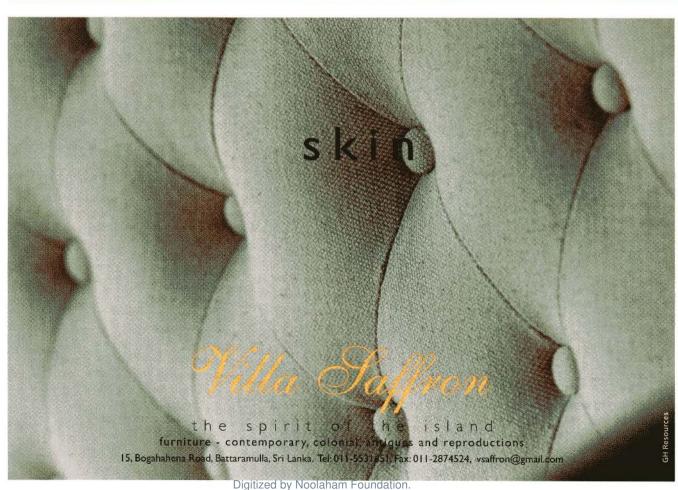


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Jaffna Food Festival at Grand Oriental Hotel



A few guests at the Festival

Grand Oriental Hotel hosted an authentic Jaffna Food Festival recently at the hotel's famous restaurant "The Harbour Room". The festival was the talk of the town and provided an ideal Jaffna experience from the ambience to entertainment. The festival comprised famous Jaffna dishes such as Chicken Kolambu, Odiyal Kool, steaming hot Jaffna Crab Curry, in addition to many other authentic Jaffna dishes.

White House State Dinner at MLH



The team with Chef Walter

The state dinner inspired by Chef Walter Scheib was recently held at Mount Lavinia Hotel at the Empire Ballroom amongst a distinguished gathering. The ambience created by the MLH team was much admired by the guests.

Walter Scheib's forte lies in serving up a taste in stories and recipes of his eleven years as the White House chef under Presidents Bill Clinton and George W Bush. The highlight of the evening was the American cuisine and formal state dinner recipe creations, which dazzled and delighted quests.

Chef Walter's enthusiastic stage presence along with the police band won a place in the audience during the latter part of the evening. The dinner was more of an interaction between the chef and the audience as opposed to a sit down dinner. There were very interesting questions directed at the chef about his unforgettable experience during his time of service to the First Family. The evening comprised of anecdotes, photographs, menus, and special White House recipes revealed by the chef.

Café 64 rejuvenated with a variety of new flavours



Offering specialty cakes, pastries, and exquisite fresh bakery items, the Galadari Hotel's Café 64 is set to introduce a whole new variety of flavours in the most refined combinations of repasts.

With a new line of savouries, bakery items, "homemade" ice

creams, a fabulous mocktail collection and fresh new variety of cakes, Café 64 promises the freshest items. With rich hot chocolate, lathered cappuccino or that shot of espresso for the coffee addict, the Café also promises treats such as croissants and Danish pastries.

Rejuvenating the speciality lunch menu, Café 64 presents a new improved Hyderabad special Biriyani, Chinese mixed rice in seafood, chicken or meat and Singapore style noodles with chopsuey and chili chicken. With an all new "sandwich and submarine" bar that focuses on "custom made" sandwiches, diners can mix and match flavours that suit their fancy.



















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Shisha at the Margarita Blue



The Margarita Blue sets the mood for exotic Shisha, a rich Arabian tradition practiced for centuries halfway around the world. Lounge at the Galadari as you lose yourself in the dim lighting inside the 'Blue', or bathe yourself in sunlight on the garden terrace overlooking the Indian Ocean.

Offering more than "twelve flavours", including double Apple, Strawberry, Mango, Coconut, Banana, Lemon, Peach and more, the Galadari possesses one of the largest assortments of flavoured tobaccos that Colombo has to offer. Whether you come by solo, on a date, or with a large group, the Margarita Blue will keep you enticed in its friendly surroundings and service.

The 'Blue frequently experiments with new flavours and enhances flavours with rose water, cognac and a variety of liqueurs, which adds a novel twist to this ancient Arabic tradition.

Summer Breeze drifts into BIA



As part of the Summer Breeze promotion, those purchasing selected products from the Alpha Orient Lanka Duty Free, Arrivals and Departure Outlets at Bandaranaike International Airport until end September will qualify for daily and monthly prizes, in addition to a grand mega prize.

Eight Daily prizes will be awarded via scratch cards and lucky winners will walk away with Exclusive Branded Caps and Limited Edition Playing Cards. Those who fill in the reverse of the scratch card and drop it in the draw box will be automatically eligible to be a monthly draw winner.

Monthly winners stand the chance to win one of four dynamic Quad Bikes - two 110 CC and two 250 CC All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs). Alpha Orient Lanka extends the opportunity to win even further, when those not lucky at the monthly draw, will also naturally qualify for the grand mega draw where a cool 250CC Madmax Quad Bike with digital displays, is up for grabs.

'Step Inside the Circuit' lucky draw at BIA



(L - R): Mignonne Fernando, Senior Assessor - Western Province Revenue Department, Sisira Fernando, Senior Duty Manager - Alpha Orient Lanka, Dammith Amarasiri, Head of Commercial, Dimantha Kinigama, CEO, Annesley Hettiarachchi, Compliance Manager, Pradeep Wanasinghe, Duty Manager (Operations), and Chaminda Weerathunga, Marketing Manager, at the lucky draw.

Alpha Orient Lanka gave its patrons the chance to feel the powerful and exhilarating experience of the F1 Grand Prix in Singapore this September. On successful completion of the promotion, a lucky draw was held at the arrivals duty free shop with the patronage of Dimantha Kinigama, CEO of Alpha Orient, a few managers of the organisation and a representative of the Western Province – Department of Revenue.

The customers who purchased selected products from the Alpha Orient Lanka duty free arrivals outlet at Bandaranaike International Airport from April to June, qualified for daily and monthly prizes, in addition to a grand mega prize.

Six daily prizes were awarded via scratch cards and the lucky winners walked away with F1 Car Shaped USB Drives (4GB) and F1 T-shirts. Monthly winners and the mega winner were selected through a lucky draw.

The three monthly winners chosen through the lucky draw will receive a Grand Stand F1 pass, return air ticket and hotel stay for two nights. The mega winner will walk away with a silver pass for the F1 Grand Prix, return air ticket and hotels stay.

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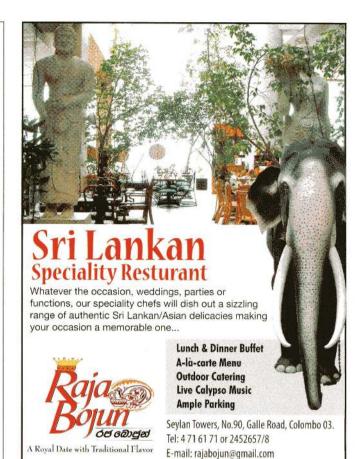


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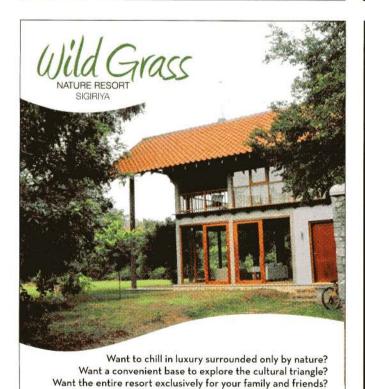
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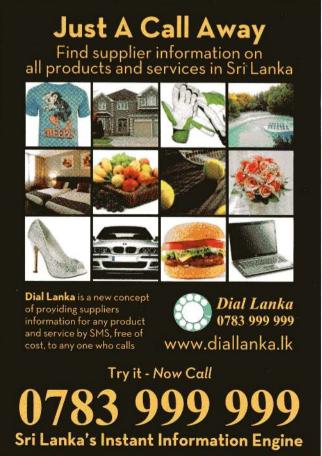
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Spa Ceylon Peace Collection for 'Mother Sri Lanka'



Spa Ceylon Peace Collection

Spa Ceylon has teamed up with 'Mother Sri Lanka' to launch the 'Spa Ceylon Peace Collection' - celebrating the new peace and calm of Sri Lanka.

As a Sri Lankan brand, Spa
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from the sale of all 'Spa Ceylon
Peace Collection' products to the
'Mother Sri Lanka' movement.

'Mother Sri Lanka' is a non-profit movement set up to spread pride and patriotism about being a Sri Lankan. With projects spread all across Sri Lanka, 'Mother Sri Lanka' initiatives aim to rekindle national unity and generate a revolution of faith and optimism in the country.

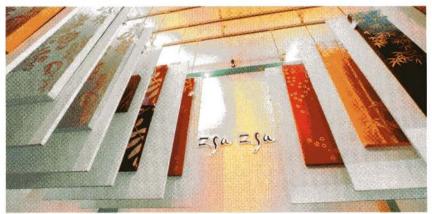
The Spa Ceylon Peace Collection is a unique range of luxurious ayurveda bath and body care products designed, created and made in Sri Lanka, with formulae inspired by

centuries' old Royal well-being rituals performed in the grand palaces of ancient Ceylon.

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The Spa Ceylon Peace Collection consists of Bath and Massage Oil, Bath and Shower Gel, Massage Balm, Hand and Body Lotion, Hand Wash, Relaxing Body Mist, Soothing Balm, Essential Oil Blend, Aromaveda Luxury Candle, Home Aroma Diffuser, Home Spa Sets, Travel Sets and Luxury Gift Sets.

Zsa Zsa Gallery now at Queens Road



The interior of Zsa Zsa Gallery's new location

Zsa Zsa Gallery, Sri Lanka's first wall art concept store has moved to 33, Queens Road, Colombo 3. The Gallery opened up at its new location with an exhibition titled "BAREWAL", which featured lightwood works encompassing a range of sizes, colours, styles,

moods and techniques. These are paneled wooden carvings of art.

Zsa Zsa Gallery houses art suitable for walls of any type of room including in offices and homes. The Gallery also tailormakes art to meet individual client requirements.

Spa Ceylon launches global online store



The homepage of Spa Ceylon's online store

Spa Ceylon Luxury Ayurveda has just launched their fully integrated advanced online store at www.spaceylon.com. Offering international spa connoisseurs more than 300 luxury product options for global delivery via express courier, this online store is Sri Lanka's largest single-brand internet retailer. In addition to international delivery at reasonable rates, the store offers free delivery of all products, gift packs and gift certificates within Sri Lanka.

Their complete range of prestige skin, body, bath, scalp and hair care preparations, oils, balms and potions, home aroma blends, candles, handmade stoneware and spa accessories are now available for instant ordering via this online portal.

The online store will also feature the complete Spa Ceylon gift collection with over 100 assortments in a range of unique packaging options, including ebony hued gift boxes adorned with royal insignia from the Kandyan courts of ancient Ceylon. This adds an exotic island character to the gift collection, making them great gifts from Sri Lanka - ideal for both personal and corporate gift giving. Purchasers are also given the opportunity to add a personalised message that will be printed on to a gift card to be sent along with the gift pack.

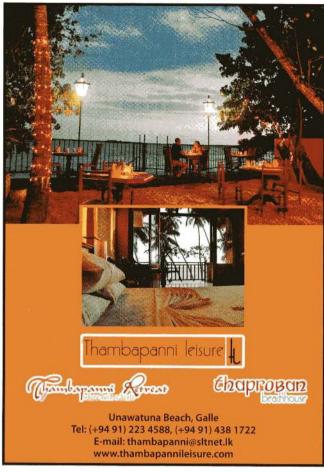


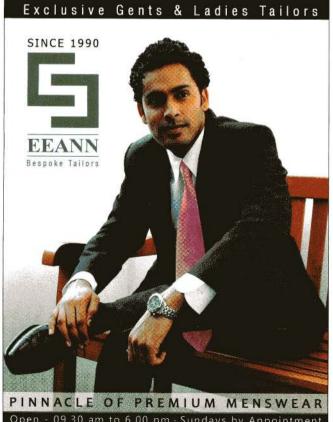
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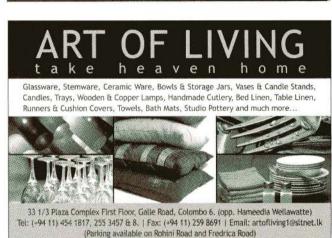
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Nihonbashi celebrates its 16th anniversary

Nihonbashi, which has become synonymous with fine Japanese cuisine not only in Sri Lanka but also across the region, celebrates its 16th anniversary this year. Dharshan Munidasa, the creator and owner of Nihonbashi, was born in Tokyo and having lived his earliest years in Japan, his passion for Japan and its exquisite culinary delights was an early addiction. Dharshan opened Nihonbashi on June 28, 1995 after which he spent time in Tsukiji looking for seasonal seafood while absorbing the finer knowledge of the ingredients from vendors.

Despite many challenges, in 2001 the smallest Nihonbashi outlet was opened at ODEL with the Sushi Bar taking Japanese cuisine to an entirely new target group. 2002 was another remarkable year with the opening of Nihonbashi at Hilton Colombo Residence specialising in Tempura.



Dharshan with the iPad menu and the Nihonbashi team

Dharshan is committed to keeping Nihonbashi ahead of the curve when it comes to restaurant design, creativity in food, and bringing to diners the cultural and gastronomic appeal of Japanese cuisine.

With the launch of the Apple iPad in 2010, Nihonbashi became the first restaurant in the world to introduce iPad menus. In addition, the recently

launched mTouch Menu application enabled the restaurant to transfer an entire picture based menu system to a much more intuitive menu thus, giving an enhanced dining experience. Dharshan himself is always around to meet the guests and talk to them on the food as well as the choice of wines, especially selected by him to compliment the cuisine.

Each visitor at the festival was presented with an elegant Japanese fan or Uchiwa, a custom straight out of the Bon Odori in Japan. The event went further with lucky draws by many sponsors including ARS, Toyota Lanka, Aitken Spence, THAI Airways, Panasonic Softlogic, Il Gelato, Nihonbashi and Culinary Journeys

Bon Odori 2011 in Colombo



Bon dance at the event



Winner of the first prize

The Japanese community in Sri Lanka gathered to celebrate "Bon Odori", the Japanese Summer Festival, bringing a bit of Japan to the heart of Colombo. The festival was attended by a number of Japanese nationals, Sri Lankans and other expatriates in Colombo sharing the excitement in a truly colourful atmosphere.

It was organised by the Japanese Embassy together with the Japanese Solidarity Association of Sri Lanka, and the Japanese Graduates Alumni Association of Sri Lanka, and held at the Mercantile Cricket Association Grounds.

'Bon Odori' is a traditional summer holiday to honour the spirits of one's deceased ancestors and later evolved into a family reunion during which people return to their hometowns and visit their ancestors' graves. Japanese delicacies and cuisine offered by Nihonbashi and Ginza Housen restaurants, added flavour to this outdoor event.

The highlight of the night was the centre stage where the drumming and the dancing took place. The festival was completed with activities for Japanese children playing the traditional games of 'Kingyo Sukui' and 'Yo-Yo Tsuri'. It featured the voluntary efforts of teachers of the Japanese School in Colombo presenting a night filled with the

with Dharshan.

nese heartland.

This year visitors were invited to purchase charity stickers and T-shirts in remembrance of victims of the Tsunami in March.

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力を合わせて がんばろう ニッポン!

Over the last decade and a half, thousands of guests from Japan have walked into our restaurants. We hope and pray that they and their families are safe from the terrible earthquake and tsunamis that hit the Tohoku-Kanto region and we are also saddened by the huge loss of lives.

Japan, We stand with you. You will prevail.

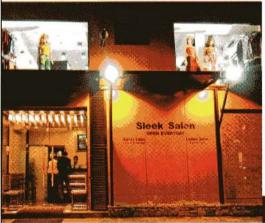


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HNB marks World Environment Day 2011



Rajendra Theagarajah, Managing Director and CEO participating at the tree-planting programme held at the premises of HNB Towers to commemorate World Environment Day

Hatton National Bank has always taken its role as a responsible corporate citizen seriously and has invested considerably for this cause. In incorporating environmental policies into lending, customer and supplier assessment the Bank influences its suppliers and customers to engage in activities that are eco friendly. All HNB employees too have committed to a "Green Pledge" to engage in eco friendly activities.

Rajendra Theagarajah, Managing Director and CEO in a statement said, "Considering that in one year, an average tree inhales 12 kilograms of carbon dioxide and exhales enough oxygen for a family of four for a year, we decided to commemorate World Environment Day in 2011 by engaging in tree planting initiatives. Further, from last year we have been very conscious about the amount of paper that is being used at the Bank and have been engaged in many tree-planting initiatives. We intend to plant nearly 18,300 trees throughout the country through this activity this year."

The programme will be implemented with the assistance of the HNB staff, customers and school children. The Bank will be donating a sapling to each staff, selected customers and 10 saplings each to the 330 schools where the Bank has implemented various CSR programmes such as libraries and computer centres as well as the schools where the Bank has established student savings units.

Dankotuwa Porcelain wins at Presidential Export Awards

Dankotuwa Porcelain received the export award for the Value Added Mineral and Mineral Based Products Sector for the year 2007 and 2008 and a merit award for 2009 at the recent Presidential Export Awards ceremony.

Over its 27 years of existence
Dankotuwa has won many export
awards at the Presidential Export
Awards and at the National Chamber
of Exporters (NCE) Awards. During
the period when the Presidential
Export Awards were not held Dankotuwa received awards at the NCE
Awards and won the topmost award
"Sri Lanka's Most Outstanding Exporter of the Year" on three occasions
in 1996, 1997 and 2004.

At the previous Presidential Export Awards ceremony in 2007 Dankotuwa received the award for the sector and the highest award "Sri Lankan Exporter of the Year - 2005".



Sunil G Wijesinha, Chairman/Managing Director, Dankotuwa Porcelain, accepting the award from President Mahinda Rajapaksa

HNB MD and CEO joins WUSC Board of Directors



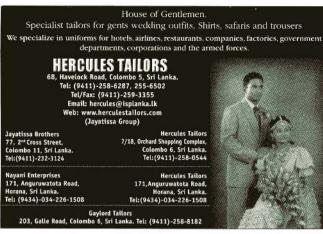
Rajendra Theagarajah, Managing Director and CEO of Hatton National Bank

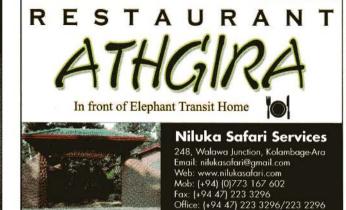
Rajendra Theagarajah, Managing Director and CEO of Hatton National Bank, has joined the Board of Directors of the World University Service of Canada (WUSC). The decision was made at the Ottawa Board of Directors meeting and approved by Maureen O'Neill, the Chair of WUSC.

Theagarajah is the only Asian member of the WUSC Board of Directors. He will provide a much appreciated private sector voice to the Board's deliberations.

WUSC is one of Canada's oldest development organisations and has been active on Canadian university and college campuses to engage young people in issues affecting the world around them. Sri Lanka is one of 22 countries in which WUSC works and has one of the longest established country programmes addressing both training for youth employment and tea plantation socio economic development as well as work on gender.

A past Chairman of the Sri Lanka Bank's Association, Theagarajah was recently elected as the Chairman of the Asian Bankers Association (2011-2012). He is committed to development activities in Sri Lanka at a corporate and personal level. This includes addressing housing issues on tea plantation estates using innovative, environmentally friendly, social impact bonds.











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Some of the trendy jewelry items now on display at Jewel Laurel

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This makes their range of jewelry, the most sought after by consumers around the world. Jewel Laurel always strives to offer their customers a highly professional, efficient and customer friendly service.

First Bridal Air Taxi ride



Danushka Magage with his beautiful bride Piuma

SriLankan Airlines' Air Taxi flew its first bridal couple across the country along the coastal belt from Colombo to Koggala recently. Danushka Magage decided to fly with his beautiful bride Piuma down south, avoiding the hassle of a long drawn road trip to the Fortress Hotel, Koggala. "It was a fantastic ride and we both enjoyed the breathtaking scenery on a clear sunny day and above all being up in the skies all by ourselves on our special day." The SriLankan Airlines

Air Taxi took-off from its Peliyagoda dock and afforded a bird's-eye view of the island's pristine scenery. It landed in the Koggala Lake surrounded by the beautifully landscaped gardens of the Air Force base. In its scheduled service, the air taxi also touches down in the Bentota River, Mawella Lagoon in Dikwella, Polgolla Reservior in Kandy and Lake Gregory in Nuwara Eliya. Charter flights are operated to Castlereagh Reservoir, Tissamaharama and Amparai.

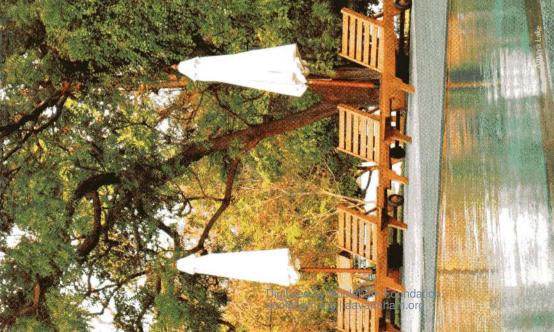
Tony Parker Tissot's new global ambassador



Tony Parker, professional basketball player

French professional basketball player Tony Parker is joining the high profile, multi-discipline Tissot ambassador team. This appointment adds a further highlight to the brand's established passion for the fast-paced, precision-dependent sport. The captain of the French national basketball team and NBA's San Antonio Spurs player scores highly on the international scene for his energy, apparent fearlessness and strong sense of social responsibility. As Official Timekeeper of FIBA (International Basketball Federation), Tissot visibly shares the new ambassador's dedication to performance and looks forward to a winning partnership.

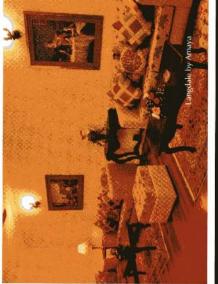
Tony Parker's European roots and international recognition mirror the positioning of the Tissot brand. At the contract signing, Tissot President François Thiébaud commented, "We are honoured to have Tony Parker in the international Tissot ambassador team. His natural talent and focused determination are deeply impressive and our partnership will help spread his inspirational qualities around the world. Who knows? Maybe on one of his trips home to Paris he may find time to pass by and visit our new store on the Champs-Elysées!" It was at this newly opened Tissot boutique that the signing took place.





Amaya Resorts & Spas offers authentic Sri Lankan experiences all over the island. From the fascinating ruins and historical sites of the Cultural Triangle to the hills of Kandy and Nuwara Eliya, Amaya offers a cultural immersion with modern comforts. Whether it is through architecture, art, music, dance, cuisine or history, each resort incorporates aspects of the local setting and culture into the guest's experience.





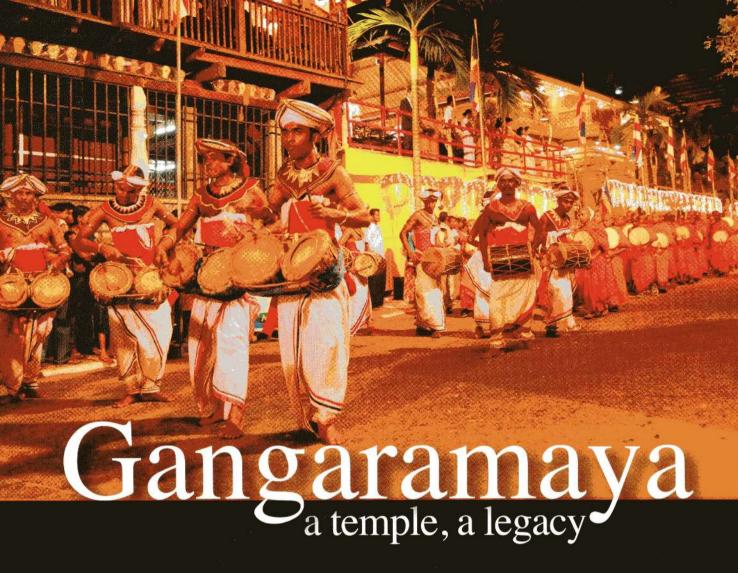
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NAWAM MAHA PERAHERA GANGARAMAYA CULTURAL SHOW TREASURY OF DHAMMA

GANGARAMAYA MUSEUM



The annual prestigious cultural pageant of the Gangaramaya Temple, which displays dance troupes and other traditional performances is held in the month of February.



A colourful display of traditional dance is brought to you every Tuesday from 7.00 pm - 8.00 pm



An extensive collection of books on Buddhism, CDs of pirith and chants, religious statues and souvenirs are available at the Treasury of Dhamma. Opening hours: 8.30 am - 6.00 pm daily



The Gangaramaya Museum showcases a range of ageless treasures from ancient Sri Lanka as well as around the globe, including old coins, vehicles and other relics in a classic display of art, tradition and culture.

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Heritage

Festival of Veneration

If there is a single platform that encompasses the traditional Sri Lankan cultural dances it is none other than the Esala Perahera. The annual pageant of the Temple of the Tooth Relic is an exquisitely elaborate sequence of performances that herald the emergence of the magnificent tusker bearing the Tooth Relic Casket. This year the pageant occurs during the month of August (1st to the 13th), and aside from its religious significance of venerating the Tooth Relic, it is in itself a display of skills, culture and tradition passed down through generations of artisans.





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THE GALLERY CAFÉ



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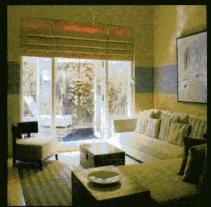


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