

Quarterly Tours



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NATIONAL TRUST – SRI LANKA

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The Tour

The First Quarterly tour of the year 2015 is organized to give the participants an overview on Heritage Monuments located along Galle Road (upto Dodanduwa) that can be experienced, appreciated and enjoyed in a day trip starting from Colombo.

places to be visited:

Commencing from
PGIAR -Colombo 7
along the Galle Road
up to Dodanduwa

Sumitharama Vihara

Kalutara North

Sapugoda Sri Maha Vihara

Beruwala

Ganegodella Purana Vihara

Kosgoda

Wijayarama Purana Vihara

Ambalangoda

Sunandarama Maha Vihara

Ambalangoda

Ancient harbour site

Dodanduwa

Sri Shailabimbarama Vihara

Dodanduwa

Totagamuwa Ranpath vihara

Telwatta

Lunch at Hikkaduwa



Sumitharama Vihara Kalutara North

constructed. This has resulted in creating some kind of confusion in the present layout.

This beautiful temple complex is located in Kalutara-north to the left of new Galle road. The temple has undergone many changes during the construction of this road. As a result the priests' residence which had been there from ancient times was demolished and a new one was

The image house is decorated with a highly detailed masonry pandol. The pandol is a unique feature in most of the temples constructed during the period before independence and generally these temples carry architectural features influenced by Kandyan period temples.



sculptors. The pedestal is also different. The image house has an inner chamber and an ambulatory outer area. But this part does not contain any wall paintings like other similar image houses. The paintings inside the image house belong to the period between 1930 and 1940 A.D.. The sculpture techniques are softly related to Kandyan style but differ. These sculptures express the fine detailing skills of the sculptors of the period.

It is sad to note that the leaves of the Bo-tree fall premature due to a fungal attack, which was not properly addressed or informed to suitable experts for proper treatment or advice.



These temples have been renovated before independence with the patronage of wealthy villagers of the area to mark Buddhist revival.

The image house contains a large seated Buddha image depicting “*Boommisparsha mudra*” (posture of touching the floor), which was not a common feature of traditional Sri Lankan

Sri Sailabimbarama Vihara Dodanduva

This ancient temple is located close to 103 km post along the Galle – Colombo main road near the Dodanduva Railway Station.

Considered as the base for Sri Kalyanawamsa Chapter, this temple was built in the early 19th century. Around A.D. 1819 a small Image House was built, then added a “Sanghavasa (Priests’ residence)” and offered the temple to Ven Kataluve Gunarathana Thero, who obtained higher ordination in Myanmar in A.D. 1808.

The stone seated Buddha Statue presently at the temple was brought from Kaveri, South India in A.D. 1839. Present Image House was built after A.D. 1837 and completed with mural paintings in A.D. 1877. The Image House has very special place in the temple layout and built according to Dutch style. Front Verandah has large arches and there are three doorways to enter the inner chamber. Both interior and outside walls of the inner chamber are covered with exquisitely painted wall paintings, which include the arrival of Theri Sangamitta with the Sacred Bo- Tree.

Credits:

Amazinglanka.com
World Wide Web

Totagamuwa Ranpath Vihara Telwatta

Totagamuwa Rajamaha Vihara or Ranpath Vihara situated in Telwatta is believed to be at the same location of the ancient Vijayaba Parivena of Totagamuva (5th century famous religious educational institution which link with Most Venerable Totagamuwa Sri Rahula Thero). The history of the temple runs back to Kotte period. This illustrious institution was destroyed with the arrival of the Portuguese and the site was abandoned until Ven. Pallattara Punnasara Thero discovered and reestablished a temple in the same location in the year of A.D.1765.. King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe of Kandy gifted elephants as a mark of appreciation of the dedication paid by the Priest for bringing this place into life.

The large image house was said to be completed in A.D. 1805 with its sculptures and wall paintings. The main features for a visitor to the temple are the Purana Vihara or the old shrine, the Aluth Vihara or the new shrine, the stupa, the bo-tree, seven stone pillars, the belfry, Devala buildings dedicated to Gods, and the Preaching hall.

The exclusive sculpture of God of Love at the entrance to the shrine is a highly attractive and unique feature in this temple.

Ancient harbour site Dodanduva

Sri Lanka was an important centre of international commerce and trade from ancient times. Ship building had also been a lucrative venture of ancient Sinhalese and one scholarly view in this regard is that Dodanduva was the base for the trade. This trade attracted many seafarers at the time with Dodanduva ancient harbour serving as the hub for ship-building. Dodanduva had also been a leading yatra port mainly to the Maldives, southern India and Malacca using “*Maha Oru*”. It had served about 40 yatras in the 1930's, and had a dockyard where they built yatras. (*Vitarana p 65-66, Devendra 2004 p 132*)



Sapugoda Sri Maha Vihara Beruwala

This ancient temple is accessible from Galle road by turning to the right at Ocean-grand hotel in Beruwala.

The temple complex is set on four beautiful terraces accessible from both lower terrace and also from the top most terrace by road. The lower terrace contains the priests' residence and related functions and those buildings are contemporary in style. When climbing up the second terrace contains a small stupa and well proportioned small building. The next climb is to the third terrace which houses the large image house bearing kandyan characteristics. The

date inscribed on the wall is A.D. 1901. This is probably a period when major renovations were carried out. The temple is believed to be originally constructed during the time of King Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe of Kandy. The paintings in the image house hint the structures of Kandyan period temples and paintings. It is said that the temple was revitalized by the Reverend Sapugoda Anandha Thero who was fascinated by the temple landscape. Hence the temple earned the name Sapugoda Vihara after the Thero who brought this temple to life.

The Kandyan art and architecture are further illustrated by “*Makara Thorana*”



that contains the state symbol, the crown and two figures of the lion. The *Vahaikada*, the dilapidated laterite wall and other architectural features must not be missed out by any visitor to the temple complex.

The top most terrace is reserved for the large stupa as the climax.



Sunandarama Maha Vihara Ambalangoda

This temple is popular among the people as “*maha pansala*” or great temple of Ambalangoda. The entry to the complex is through a large pandol with rich masonry decorations. This pandol is unique and it has steps to climb up and down both sides like a bridge over the entrance gate way.

The entry to the main image house is through a highly decorated masonry pandol. Although most of the paintings and sculpture were subjected to repainting, there are few left untouched and they express Kandyan influences to a greater extent. The image house

has two parts as inner chamber and the ambulatory area around the central portion. There are paintings on the wall of this circumambulatory part of the image house depicting *Jataka* stories and religious incidents.



In addition to that the museum of timber carvings displays various famous and infamous postures of Lord Buddha in timber carvings. This is also an attractive place for the visitors. There is also a large timber carved Buddha statue in this temple placed for veneration.



Ganegodella Purana Vihara Kosgoda

Ganegodella Purana Vihara was believed to be built by Minister Devapathiraja on the orders of King Parakramabahu the second in the 12th century B.C. during Dambadeniya period. The *Mahavamsa*, the great chronicle, says that the temple was constructed in three stories. The Portuguese and the Dutch who invaded and captured the Maritime Provinces had attacked the temple and destroyed it. The temple was re-constructed again in the Kandyan period. The Kandyan influences are seen especially in sculptures and wall paintings.

The octagonal building houses a statue of

the Buddha in marble. The marble statue of the Buddha was gifted to the temple by King of Thailand (then Siam). The small stupa is believed to be constructed in Kandyan period.

A large stone on which a Buddha's footprint is carved has been discovered recently and now placed in a special shed for veneration. This carving is said to be older than 2000 years. According to experts, this could be the oldest of this kind of carving ever found in the area.

The ola-leaf library, relic chamber, large Siamese Buddha statue and the recently built large image house are significant features in this temple complex.



Wijayarama Purana Vihara Ambalangoda

Though the temple is named as Purana Vihara, most of the features you will see in this complex are contemporary constructions.

Beginning from priests' residence, all the buildings are decorated with traditional carvings and modern art works done in different materials varying from

terracotta, timber, stone, bronze and cement. It expresses rich carving skills of the contemporary craftsmen even to handle any kind of material to reproduce traditional arts and crafts.

The Bo-tree was encircled with a begging bowl shape prakara decorated with bronze and copper carvings to look like keeping the Bo-tree in a large begging bowl. This is one of the attractive features in the temple.