Bethany101 An oasis of nostalgia

Posted on
The pool that glistens in the sunlight

An ancestral home conscientiously restored to a dapper state, charm and authenticity unfold at every turn. Within its walls modern day indulgences come wrapped in colonial nostalgia of over 100 years past.

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Nestled quietly beside the Colombo-Puttalam road the white-washed exteriors of Bethany101 exude an aura of elegance and promise. The visitor is not disappointed. Within its gates, a sense of discovery dawns as the trimmings of an idyllic getaway transcend the stark and arid surroundings of the locality.

The garden alone casts the first spell at Bethany101. Morning blossoms heavily lacing the roof, a meticulously trim lawn that compels you to step with restraint, garden benches that offer a welcome respite amidst flowering trees and a pool that glistens in the sunlight, are the stuff of picture postcards. Bethany101 easily imparts a sense of leisureliness ideal for the weary traveller. It was once an ageing ancestral home dating from 1836, until its owners breathed new life and vigour to the property, lovingly restoring it to its present state. While the structures remain

true to their origins, everywhere you turn, select pieces of antiquity furnish the spaces. And nearly everything is 100 years old or more.

There are six rooms at Bethany101 that include a single, double and twin bedrooms and a master bedroom. Each with plush four poster beds of ebony or rosewood, other pieces poised against ivory cement floors, add character as well as aesthetic finesse. The bathrooms too are of the olden day charm although upscale in their amenities and comforts. Similarly the living and dining spaces play host to an array of interesting old antiques, some with a little back story.

A turn about the corridors will render much to observe if the art of antiquities tickles your fancy. Finer touches like an antique camphor box, restored cloth murals and even framed newspaper cuttings of The London Illustrated News from the 1800s can add colour to your stay. There’s something new to discover at every turn. Incidentally, the owners rearrange furniture with substitute pieces of antiques to keep the novelty alive for return guests. But it’s not simply about the antiquity. If leaving the languid comfort of Bethany101 doesn’t appeal to you, the entertainment room with a generous library of DVDs to choose from, offers a good few hours of relaxation.

If you are an outdoor adventure seeker, Bethany101 serves as an ideal base for many excursions. The Wilpattu National Park is 20 minutes away via the Eluwankulama Road, or a morning of dolphin watching at Kalpitiya is also less than an hour away. You can venture out to Anuradhapura to explore the ancient kingdom, which is a mere one hour away. Following each of these excursions you can return to the choicest of comforts at Bethany101.

This holiday getaway also makes available bicycles to explore the surroundings, or kayaks for a spot of cruising along the Puttalam lagoon. Often guests stay for four or five nights while venturing on day trips around the country. The entire premises can also be booked and can comfortably accommodate up to 15 guests.

Service is an integral part of Bethany101 with a staff that’s ready to oblige at any given time. A quick perusal through the guest comment book conveys that while service is widely appreciated cuisine has made quite an impression as well. And a 25-page menu leaves nothing to be desired. With so much to choose from, at the time of booking the menu is emailed to guests for convenience sake so that meals can be pre-ordered. The cuisine on offer spans Western to Eastern including Sri Lankan rice and curry – a popular choice amongst tourists.

Dishes of note including lagoon fish, Muslim buriyani in the true spirit of Puttalam, pillau rice, Beef Wellington and prawn cocktail, are just a taste of what’s on offer. BBQs are another speciality at Bethany101, serving lamb, prawns and other palatable selections. Moreover Bettany101 has earned repute for whipping up the best kottu around. And of course the food is served in antique ceramic ware that came with the house. You can also dine out in the open when theme nights such as outdoor Mongolian, or functions on the lawn can be arranged.

Whether you are looking to hunker down and spend a quiet few days, or for absolute comfort after a long day out, or even for a quick drop in for a cup of tea en route, Bethany101 promises to turn out in its best at all times.

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