



**Wind blew across the Nuwara Wewa (ancient man-made lake) rustling the green foliage that sheltered the garden below. A cluster of iridescent butterflies fluttered about in an artistic disarray, amongst the flowers and shrubs. A few metres away from the fence that separated the garden and the lake, cattle grazed lazily along the banks. The atmosphere was suffused with peace and a sense of serene beauty. Absorbing this beauty, I rambled along the pathways of the garden at the Galway Miridiya.**

***Words Chamindra Warusawitharane Photographs Indika De Silva***

A half an hour drive away from the famous Atamasthana (eight sacred places) in Anuradhapura, the Galway Miridiya lies near the Nuwara Wewa. With 32 years of experience behind its proverbial belt and a newly refurbished wing, the hotel is now ready to receive guests with fresh vigour.

The refurbished wing of the hotel houses 16 spacious rooms equipped with all the ultramodern amenities. During my tour, a cheerful member of the hotel staff ushered me in to one of the rooms which opened on to a private courtyard with an outdoor bathroom. Altogether, there are 40 rooms at the hotel, all of which are well equipped with hot and cold water, telephone with IDD facility/colour TV/mini bar and safety deposit lockers. Doctor on call, a laundry service as well as room service are available to those who require the services. Galway Miridiya offers its guests a mix of Western and authentic Sri Lankan cuisine. Amidst this comfort and ease, Galway Miridiya thus presents a gateway into tranquillity.

As we sauntered through the hotel, pausing to take a peek at the restaurant which faced the garden and the swimming pool, we fell in to conversation about the wonders to be explored in that area. Galway Miridiya can organise tours to Wilpattu, Mihintale and the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi (believed to be the oldest historical tree in the world) as well as bicycle tours in the area, if the guests wish it.

However, I did not have to go that far to encounter wildlife. The shrill call of a black-hooded oriole beckoned me to come out to the garden. Flanked by the Nuwara Wewa, the hotel garden is a haven for indigenous and migratory birds, squirrels and butterflies. As I walked along the garden sheltered by tall trees whispering in the breeze coming from the lake, the sight of a host of butterflies greeted me warmly, sending my heart fluttering along with them in all directions.

[Amidst this comfort and ease, galway miridiya offers a gateway into tranquillity](#)

The garden is laid out in such a way to allow solitary or group meditation. Solitary rocks sheltered by trees and a circular rock formation in a secluded area provide ample space for this purpose. A pathway with a stone hedge frames the meditation area, providing a sense of that much needed privacy.

Separating the tranquil garden from the hotel lies the nine foot deep swimming pool with an extensive sun deck. Guests can enjoy a refreshing drink or a meal and soak up the sun upon the deck, whilst the breeze from the lake chases away the humidity.

After a stroll along the swimming pool, I walked in the direction of the breeze. As I stood near the banks of Nuwara Wewa, listening to the melodious ripples of the lake and the wind, my gaze fell upon a distant hill supporting the weight of the sacred Mihintale chaithya and I let myself be drifted off to a state of bliss, sinking in to the ultimate tranquillity that surrounded the place.

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