

Gaming Adventure: Exploring Colombo's Casino World

Posted on



For the majority of tourists coming through Colombo, casinos are likely to be an afterthought. Mostly tourists come to Sri Lanka for a sunny holiday on the seemingly endless stretches of pristine beaches and to enjoy a variety of water sports. While in Colombo the average tourist might venture out in the evening to eat, out more probably will stay within the confines of his or her hotel to dine-and that's about it before turning in for the night.

But if one goes in search of nightlife in Colombo, sooner or later you'll end up at a casino, for Colombo sports a number of gaming establishments within its precincts ranging from the seedy to the swank, the cramped to the spacious. From among these, one stands out as being uniquely different: The Palm Beach Club Casino on Janadhipathi Mawatha, centrally located in Fort in the heart of the city. Fairly inconspicuous as it is on its third floor perch, noticeable only by a single brightly lit signboard near the entrance to the building and a few rows of multicoloured lights strung along its balcony, you might miss it-but don't, because it's definitely worth a visit.

A casino can be an intimidating place if you've never been in one before, but not so at the Palm Beach Club, where everything is designed to make you feel at ease, combining traditional elegance with an informal and relaxed atmosphere. Whether you are a so-called "high-roller" or a novice player, you'll find the Palm Beach is a great setting for gaming. It's a favourite among locals and visitors alike and you only have to look around to see why.

A convenient lift transports you aloft into the club's softly lit and handsomely decorated reception area where a warm welcome awaits you as you sign in the guest register. All ladies automatically receive Rs. 250 in free play coupons (valid for play at Blackjack, Baccarat and Roulette), as do all tourists each night they visit the club. Congenial personnel will immediately guide you to the gaming area and are at your service throughout the evening.

To enter the spacious main gaming area, you first pass by the Poker tables where a lively game is usually in progress. Under there if you like by all means and join in a few hands yourself-a minimum of one hour's play will reward you with an extra windfall of ten chances to participate in the nightly Lotto Draws in which you could win lucrative amounts of cash as well as other prizes. And if you come to the club on a Friday or Saturday evening, at 8.30 p.m. you could elect to take part in a Flush or Poker Tournament on these respective nights. There are considerable cash prizes for the top-placed participants as well as loads of fun and excitement to be had.



One of the Palm Beach's Poker tables where tournaments are held every Saturday and games nightly.



Lady guest receives a warm welcome at Reception and Rs. 250 in free-play coupons.

With free play coupons in hand or not make your way towards the central pit area and take a tour of the tables. There are six comfortable card tables featuring Blackjack and Baccarat along with three Roulette wheels which carry only one zero making the odds much more favourable for you. The Blackjack tables have what are undoubtedly the most advantageous rules in Sri Lanka.

These offer you such options as being able to surrender on any number of cards, resplit aces any number of times, receive automatic full payment on six cards even against an ace and late surrender against an ace if the dealer doesn't have a Blackjack. Moreover, the dealer will hit on 7 or 17 (i.e. soft 17) thereby greatly increasing his chances of going over 21. And on fourdeck games, you get bonus payments for winning combinations: three Ts of the same suit pays 6 to 1 and three Ts of any suit pays 3 to 1; a combination of 6, 7, 8 of the same suit pays 3 to 1 and the same combination of cards of a suit of the same colour pays 3 to 2. Also an exclusive attraction at the Palm Beach Club is their single deck Blackjack game, and on all winning Blackjacks you get Lotto tickets to pick your lucky numbers in the night's draws.

Moving on to the Baccarat tables, you have the option of choosing to play a special no commission game: no commission is charged on the banker's winning bets, although the banker wins half payment on 6. Here again, you will receive Lotto tickets if you win on a tie or a natural 9. The two Lotto Draws held nightly add an extra element of excitement to an

evening spent at the Palm Beach. The nightly cash prizes total a minimum of Rs. 10,000 with each draw's grand prize increasing by Rs.3,000 every time there is no winner, so the grand prize can rapidly accumulate to a huge sum. Other prizes are also to be won even if only one or two of your numbers match the numbers drawn, and the general air of electrifying anticipation just before each draw is quite infectious among the guests who anxiously await the outcome of the draw, eagerly scanning their Lotto slips for the winning numbers. When visiting the Palm Beach, a sure winner is the great fcxxi and drink.

Complimentary refreshments from the club s kitchen and well-stocked bar are served while you play. You can select from an extensive drinks list featuring fine wines, internationally known cocktails and other quality drinks accompanied by a variety of savoury snacks to enjoy at your leisure. Even a delicious buffet is served nightly to guests taking a break from their gaming activities. An integral part of the Palm Beach's undeniable appeal is their friendly personnel. It adds so much to your enjoyment to be attended by efficient, cheerful, experienced staff-whether it's the croupier at the Roulette wheel, the dealer who deals you a winning hand, or the unobtrusive but ever-present stewards and stewardesses who serve you your choice of refreshments.

The Palm Beach has some of the best and most well-trained people you could find in any casino in Colombo: they are friendly, they smile, they enjoy their work, and this positive attitude is apparent in the top-flight service you receive from the beginning to the end of your evening. To make it all the more convenient and comfortable for you to visit the Palm Beach, the club will provide you with complimentary transportation back to any of the major hotels in Colombo whenever you want to leave.

There are lots of casinos in Colombo, but what you'll find at the Palm Beach Club is a high-quality operation with probably the best-managed tables in the city. It's what a casino should look and feel like a fun place to be with excellent opportunities to win some money. So come along any day of the week from 2 p.m. onwards and let the Palm Beach Club work its enchantment on you.