Hiriketiya the new kid on the block

Posted on

Few years ago, Hiriketiya was simply a sleepy, hidden cove in the southern coastal belt. Its existence was shadowed by the popularity of the more famous beach destinations in the island. Apart from the residents in the neighbouring area, travellers exploring alternative destinations off the beaten path were the first to discover it.

However, the surfboards we had observed on the drive to the beach suggested that Hiriketiya is no longer ‘hidden’. Bordered by greenery, the small cove sparkled under the late afternoon sun. As we stepped onto the soft, powdery sand where traditional outriggers were drawn ashore, several surfers were walking towards the waves, eager to catch a good one.

The crashing of the waves against the shore provided a fitting soundtrack as we took a moment to observe the landscape. A narrow entrance widens to form an oval-shaped beach, fringed by coconut trees. The land gradually rises in a gentle slope and forms a protective shield that surrounds the cove. The fine, pale golden sand at the beach gives way to rocky outcroppings at the mouth of the inlet.

We watched spellbound as waves crashed against these rocks, sending plumes of frothy mist into the air. Despite the turbulence at the side of the mouth of the cove, once past the entrance, the waves are gentle and perfect for surfers at the beginner and intermediate levels.

There are two surfing seasons at Hiriketiya and there were several surfers who were already riding the waves when we reached the beach. With three surf points – left, right and middle – surfers have a choice of waves. The milder waves at the middle of the cove are ideal for beginners and intermediate level surfers. Only the experienced and hardy surfers would dare to approach the rougher waves at the edges of the inlet.

Once the season begins, surfers flock to the beach, when the season comes to a close. During these months, the waters of the cove take on a startlingly deep blue hue due to the weather conditions. The vibrant blue colour has led travellers to bestow the name ‘Blue Beach’ to Hiriketiya.

There were several rocks that dotted the edges of the beach, creating a beautiful contrast of black against the blue-green of the waves. However, the clear water let us see the largely sandy seabed.

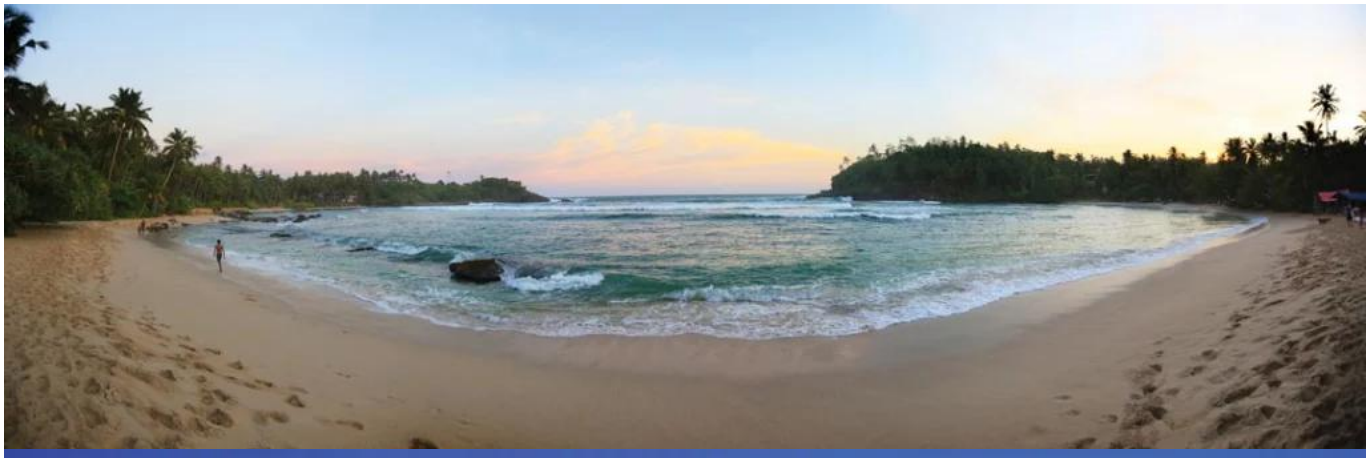
Taking advantage of the setting, there were several families with young children enjoying the cool waters of the ocean.

Only the sound of the waves and the giggling of a small child could be heard as we explored the beach. While there are several restaurants and villas nearby that cater to the guests who come for a coastal retreat, no loud sounds intruded into the stillness.

The vigorous crashing of the waves quietened into a soft murmur, petering out to a gentle sigh as the day wore on. The setting sun painted the sky in soothing pastel

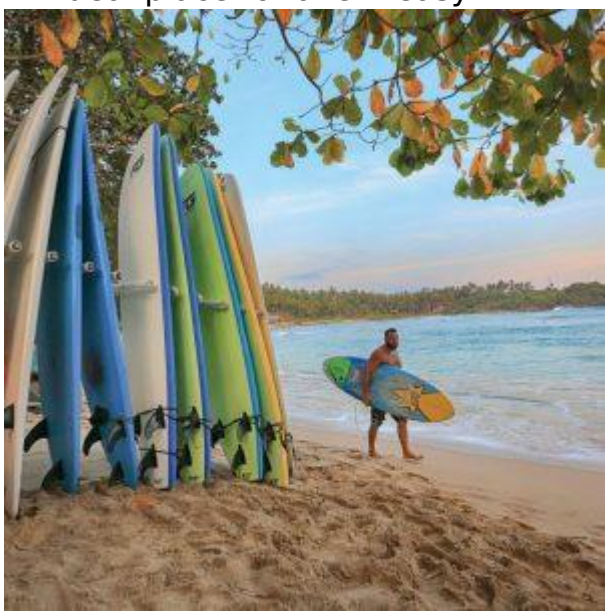
colours, and one by one, the surfers began to paddle ashore. While the sky gradually dark- ened into a velvety deep blue, yellow lights began to glimmer through the trees, illuminating the area.

When the stars began to dot the sky, the beach-goers headed back to their temporary abodes while we began the drive back to Colombo.



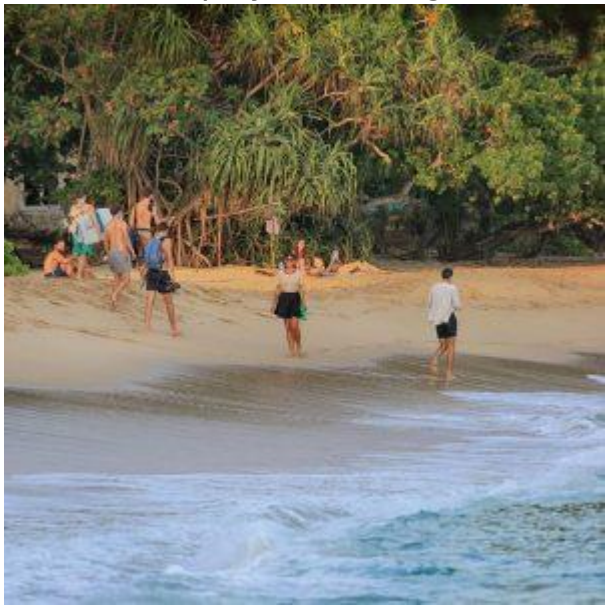
At twilight, the cove transforms into a magical fairyland

An ideal place to take it easy



Grab a board and hit the waves – a perfect surf point for beginners

Kids love to play at the edge of the water



The cove is also perfect to enjoy with friends

A race against the breaking wave

Sri Lankan surfers eagerly awaiting a big wave