Mandaram Nuwara: The Misty Hamlet

Posted on



A leisurely walk to the hills unveils serendipitous encounters hidden beneath its cloak of mist

Enveloped by a veil of mist, the blissful hamlet of Mandaram Nuwara brings to mind images of a distant land.

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The magnificent Kolapathana ella falls

In a cold morning, we journeyed through the Nuwara Eliya town, and then onto the

High Forest road. The stark rays of sun bathed the area blanketed by a lush green carpet as we made our way through a narrow road, bumping and swaying at times. Peering through the window of the vehicle, we witnessed a scenery that conjured pictures straight out of a fairytale.

As we journeyed uphill, we were soon amidst a remote charm surrounded by mist glazed mountains and the striking shades of neatly pruned tea fields. Diligent tea pluckers dressed in vibrant colours, deftly filled their sacks while tea factories emerged from within the verdant landscape. Dazzling wild blooms painted in deep lilac and bold yellow adorned the waysides, creating a transfixing scene.

Driving along the serene countryside of High Forest that climbs up to meet the rural foothills of the tallest massif of the island; Piduruthalagala is a truly delightful experience. A feeling of stillness embraced us upon entering the misty hamlet that is occasionally disturbed by the subtle sweep of the wind.

With the morning’s ethereal mist and nature’s seamless presence, Mandaram Nuwara seems to nestle amidst a quaint land unconcerned with time. Folklore as well as legends weave through this hamlet that lay at the foothills of Piduruthalagala. According to legend, the village was once known as ‘Mandaram Pura’ and used to be a hideout during the grand Kandyan era.

Blessed by the splendour of nature, the rich soil of the village is known for its fertility. Neatly laid green patches of leeks and carrots caught our attention as we explored the village. We made our way down the rugged paths and dainty butterflies whizzed pass us chasing each other across the plains. As we moved ahead, every now and then, the call of birds resonated from above, though none were in sight.

The hilly terrain of Mandaram Nuwara is interspersed with many streams that gurgle down sandy beds strewn with massive rocks. The overwhelming temptation to swim in the purest of waters and immerse in the serenity of nature is undeniable.

Although tiring, the walk upwards was indeed rewarding. Huffing and puffing we climbed as there was no place to stop and rest. But, just when we thought the climb would never end, there stood the magnificently beautiful waterfall, Kolapathana Ella.



A scenic trail falls across the rhythmic streams

Its water cascades from above through a narrow point that then expands to form a curtain of milky white froth. This is one of the magical falls that gushes through this mystical terrain, and also the first to be encountered after a two-kilometre hike through the thickets.

We dipped our feet in a little rock pool where the icy cold water from the waterfall accumulated. We did not realise the time passing as we sat there mesmerised in the spellbinding beauty of the surroundings. From there onwards an arduous walk of six hours through the dense forest invites you to discover the depths of the terrain and beauty of its exotic inhabitants. One must also be cautious of leeches and other reptiles.

We reluctantly traced our way back, taking with us from Mandaram Nuwara only the colourful memories that we would always cherish.





