Ocean… Beach… Jungle A stroll along the bay of Kuchchaveli

Posted on

The rocky terrain of the Kuchchaveli beach stretch

It was six in the morning and the sun had already begun its ascent. My friend and I were alone on the beach with no one in sight. It was quiet, except for the soothing sounds of the waves breaking… The breeze was cooling as it swept across the beach towards land. What enhanced our beachside stroll was the green jungle shrubs that were still and quiet, except for the sudden flight of birds that indicated that we were not alone…

Words Udeshi Amarasinghe **Photographs** Menaka Aravinda

The previous evening we had seen a lone elephant quenching its thirst and cooling itself on the other side of the shrub jungle on the main road side. Therefore, it was apparent that the jungle shrubs adjoining the beach itself would have wild animals residing there. But, as always if you do not startle them or disturb them no animal would hurt you. As such our walk along the beach that morning was uneventful, which was a good thing because we were looking for calm and quiet.

A vast stretch of peace and solitude, except for one property, Along the entire length of the beach

A vast stretch of peace and solitude, except for one property, which is very well hidden, there is no other building for the entire length of the beach. We started walking towards one end, we could say towards Trincomalee. “Swish and crash”, the lulling sound of the waves continued. I was lost in my own thoughts with all the soothing songs playing in my head. I looked up and spread my hands to feel the sea breeze that was so calming for my city wearied mind.

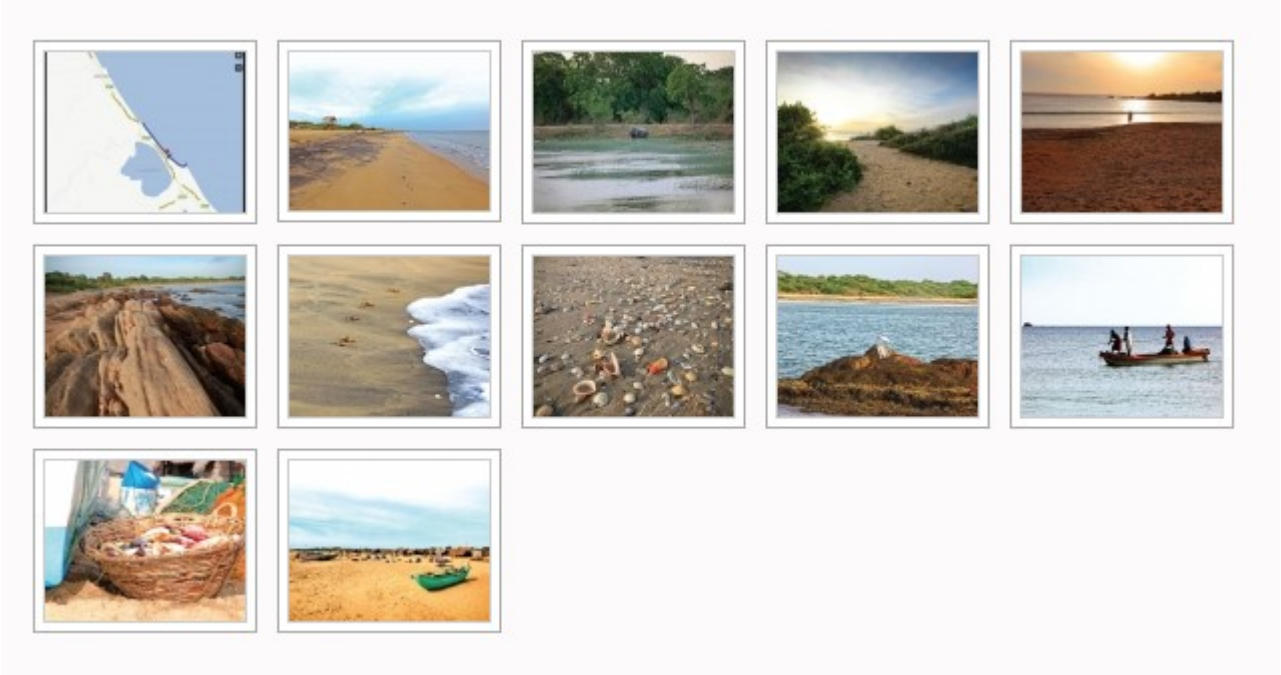
Nowhere in Sri Lanka can you find such a beach, where not even a fishing boat disturbs the tranquillity of the prevailing calm

Pretty designs of sea shells and motifs made by waves breaking on the beach as well as little crustaceans proved that mother nature is the greatest designer of all. A multitude of crabs were scurrying towards the sea, at times in groups of three or more. The ocean was a calming blue, which changed shades as the sun rose further into the sky. At times I was way ahead of my friend, lost in thought… on and on we walked not feeling tired or hot. We came across two others (separately), each in solitude, also enjoying a morning stroll. No one disturbed the other.

Soon we reached some rocky outcrops that had weathered constant contact with the sea waters, to create beautiful shapes and designs. It was apparent that during high tide, these rocks too would be covered by the sea. Aquatic birds fluttered and perched on the rocks, while seeking their morning feed. As we proceeded, we came to an area where there was hardly any sand, but pieces of coral. This proved to be a bit difficult to walk upon, but we soon found a solution by stepping on rock that created an alternative path. I was tracking our walk on my iPad and at one moment it showed that we were actually in the sea, walking on water (not)!

The seaside foliage was breathtaking and continued unabated along the stretch

By this time, we saw a lone fishing boat moving towards land, but it was to the other side of the beach, farther away from us. We decided to turn back and walk towards the other corner of the beach. On and on we walked, I did not feel tired but energised. My friend who is usually very vocal about everything and anything was also calm and quiet – pensive, I think he needed a dose of good healthy sea breeze as well! So, now we were walking in the direction of Pulmoddai. We felt as if there was a slope as the walk became slightly difficult. The greenery of the seaside foliage was breathtaking and it continued unabated along the stretch.

As we reached towards the end, signs of human habitation was apparent. There was a small temporary fishing village, where fisherman from as far as Chilaw had made this their home for the season. A fresh catch of coloured fish was being sorted by one of the women. Here too, a large rock outcrop with a smoothened surface signified the end of the bay. I climbed on top to drink in the entire view.

We walked back to where we were staying – and I checked my iPad – we had walked a distance of 8.95km over a time frame of three hours, which includes the time we took to take photographs and experience the true meaning of a quiet stroll.