Whimsical Passekudah

Posted on

The spellbinding beauty and calm of Passekudah Bay

Glance at a map and you may wonder where Passekudah Bay resides. Diminished between two large bays, Kalkudah and Vandaloos, this little indent on the eastern coast speaks for itself on sight.

Words Prasadini Nanayakkara **Photographs** Indika De Silva and Damith Wickramasinghe

Our wandering feet arrived at the southernmost limit of the Passekudah Bay around 5.30 in the evening. The 14 resorts and hotels pan out across the sandy arch and this time around visitors both tourists and locals had arrived in enthusiastic numbers to relish the prized seclusion that can be had here. It seemed all too recently that the Bay had once been a spot of complete isolation with no signs of life or disturbance along its entire length.

Yet, to say that there remains a beauty here that is spellbinding is no exaggeration. The iridescent blues and greens of the Bay's waters, melding with the soar of the sky and the unblemished beach stretch are the ingredients of a potent lulling effect. You won't find threatening or tumultuous waves that crash on to the shore, but a mellow ripple. The Bay waters are all the more arresting as light penetrates through to the seabed revealing remnants of coral and other life forms.

Despite the increased number of visitors, the placid calm of Passekudah remains all-pervading

Strolling along the coral strewn beach it is easy to be cast into a reverie of your own making. This may be why that despite the increased number of visitors, the placid calm of Passekudah remains all-pervading. Jet skiis circled the Bay while a good many soaked in the shallow depths of the water. Adults and children milled about ashore as did we, making the most of our surroundings along the sandy stretch. It was hard not to miss the heightened number of tourists this season. It would seem Passekudah Bay, a once hidden treasure, is making its presence known at long last.

Soft powdery sand contrasts with the varying intensities of the ocean

The walk along the beach evolved. Dead coral, skittering crabs and their burrows are prevalent along the first stretch. As the arch widens the sodden sand transformed to a soft powdery texture to contrast with the varying intensities of the ocean. Our gazes rested easily on the mesmerising ebb and flow of the tide. Aside from meditative reflection, observing the small marine critters that emerge now and then is among the little pleasures that can be had here. We stumbled upon a curious little hermit crab which occupied the centre of our attention for a few moments as it scuttled about in its oversized shell.

Immersed in a special enchantment, we reached the farthest end of the Bay, a distance of approximately three kilometres from one end to the other. And by this time the sweltering sun had relented and clouds began to gather in the distant horizon. We were suddenly cast in a vastly changed atmosphere brought on by the impending rains. The grey darkness that fell across the bay failed to deter any of the visitors however and the bathers continued with their playful ablutions. With no trace of the balmy evening, we had now stepped into an altogether surreal world.

Awakened from our silent reveries we now found ourselves at a new pastime – capturing lightning. Cameras at the ready we waited with abated breath for the

next shot of lightning to appear in the distant horizon. It proved both exciting and exasperating to be at the mercy of nature's most unpredictable displays. Following a few exhilarating moments of 'chasing lightening', we were forced to make a hurried exit as finally the clouds unleashed a light drizzle. With a few prized captures we left behind Passekudah in its stormy whimsical mood.

Would it be possible to be both exhilarated and soothed? At Passekudah Bay… yes. There may not be any strong winds and currents to leave you breathless, nevertheless this little Bay is sure to take your breath away…

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