



Senevi with cinnamon peelers

Halgolla Plantation Home

Accommodation of a different kind
– July 2014 –

June has been a month of constantly changing weather or should one say “irrational fluctuations between sporadic rain and dry conditions”, more of the latter than the former!

We have had a mango season without equal, the fruit at various stages of maturity over a period so long that no one around here can remember anything like it. In fact, we still have some fruit on pretty well all the trees around the house, though the monkeys and giant squirrels have also woken up to the fact that the HPH (food) oasis is around!

The trees in and around HPH appear to be intent on proving how much foliage they are capable of carrying and, in fact, the combined weight of leaf and fruit on our *Ambalavi* mango tree at the back resulted in a large limb cracking, pouring sap and having to be pruned! Another occurrence without precedent in our annals!

As I write this, we have begun harvesting our first cinnamon crop with the assistance of two men who are Senevi's village neighbours. The photo on top shows Senevi with the two cinnamon peelers; the other two photos show the first day's harvesting and drying of what will be the first cinnamon ever produced on this land. An opportunity for some (justified) excitement, you'll agree!



First cut of the cinnamon



Cinnamon sticks air-drying

Natta, our Heinz 57, is back to normal after her horrendous goring on the 1st of May and that's been a source of more than satisfaction to all of us. However, she seems to think she's entitled to even more petting than before after her recovery!

Incidentally, the vanilla flowers that were successfully pollinated by Mallika are maturing, though it will be some months yet before they are ready to be separated from the vines and brought in for the (labourious) curing process. However, this is yet another event to look forward to and everyone “on board” is waiting for that next step!

Warm regards,
Arlene & Emil

**For each booking in the month of July
a pack of Special HPH-grown and -roasted coffee
and the complimentary
“Surprise Basket” of HPH “goodies”
which has become a trademark
of HPH hospitality**

Daytrips from HPH

In the March 2014 newsletter, we wrote of two *Ambalama* that are suggested day trips from HPH.

Since it was close to their “turf,” cousin George (Dr. Michael) van der Poorten and his wife Nancy whose skills and good taste drives this newsletter, took us to the Karagahagedera *Ambalama* (resting place) of which a couple of pictures appear here.

This building is about 600 years old and, in the days when the citizenry moved around on foot, served as a resting (sometimes, sleeping) place for the weary traveler. It is delightfully located on a slab of rock sloping into verdant paddy fields and on the evening when we visited, a lovely breeze made it difficult for us to decide to go home! It seemed that a poor man with no home to go to sometimes sleeps there and he patiently awaited our departure prior to preparing for the night, exhibiting commendable patience with these intruders from the hills!



Karagahagedera Ambalama

This building, apart from being truly enchanting is a testament to the skills of those carpenters of a long-past time, with its massive interlocking beams and other features

of construction that one doesn't encounter in modern times. No nails were used in the original construction and the photo below shows the massive single logs used.



Corner boulder of the Karagahagedera Ambalama

We promised ourselves another visit to this site as well as to the Panavitiya *Ambalama* in the neighbourhood which also has, we are informed, a charm of its own.

If a guest is interested, we could arrange for a daytrip to both these *Ambalamas* along with a picnic lunch.

Halgolla Plantation Home

- rated as [Best Home Stay](#) in Sri Lanka 2013
- recommended in the [Bradt Travel Guide for Sri Lanka](#) 5th edition, 2014

HPH is highly recommended on Trip Advisor.
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Sri Lanka – rated as a top tourist destination for 2011, 2012 & 2013.

[The Lonely Planet](#)
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