



Mallika harvesting the first fruit of her labours

Halgolla Plantation Home

Accommodation of a different kind

– September 2014 –

August ended with the arrival of very welcome rains, the lack of which one would never have suspected from the lush vegetation on all the trees and shrubs around HPH up to then.

We harvested the first fruit of Mallika's labours in the vanilla planting and recorded the event for posterity as the picture appearing on this newsletter shows! Padma's brother, Wijeratne, who was Mallika's *guru* in the matter of fertilizing vanilla flowers, was present to "grace the occasion," if you will! A small beginning to what is going to be an interesting and, we hope, profitable initiative at HPH.

Alas, our mango season is over and the hordes of monkeys, squirrels of all three types (flying, giant and palm) first shifted their efforts to the tail end of the mangosteen season and have, now that crop is over, shifted their attention to the Ambarella, guava and Uguessa crops. To add to our problems we've also had an invasion of Flying Foxes, the large fruit bats who were relatively rare around these parts up to now. Oh, well, being the orchard oasis of the neighbourhood brings with it a few concomitant trials and tribulations it seems.

Having made the footpath to the Entada ("*Pus-vel*") vine, we've been grappling with the challenge of providing visitors to the site with as clear a view of the huge "bean pods" as possible while ensuring the integrity of the vegetation at the site. Balancing guests' needs with Mother Nature continues to present not-unexpected challenges, it seems.

The first signs of a positive response to our entreaties and threats to the local municipal authorities in the matter of access to HPH seem to be bearing fruit – piles of aggregate ("road metal") have been dumped on the side of the road, followed, unfortunately, by a hiatus of inactivity! Oh, well we've survived "jeep track access" conditions for so long

that a few more months of the same is not likely to bring about total mental and economic collapse! That said we hope that in the month(s) ahead we are going to be able to report some REAL progress in this matter.



Our (private) spring water supply

With conversations turning, increasingly, to the matter of water availability, given the terrible droughts affecting so much of Sri Lanka, the matter of HPH's private supply comes up from time to time and this newsletter might be the place to talk about it. Suffice it to say that it is **entirely** within our landholding, from where the spring emerges out of the hillside to our storage facilities and down to our home. In addition, all water for drinking and cooking is boiled **and** filtered. Short of the addition of chemicals, it would be hard to envision what else could be done to the water you drink at HPH!

Warm regards,
Arlene & Emil

For each booking in the month of September
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

The following is the seventh of a continuing series on suggested day trips from HPH to lesser-known places of interest.

Godamunne Ambalama, Kandy

The ambalama is a unique structure in Sri Lanka: built as shelters for travellers or as community gathering places, they are believed to be among the oldest wood structures in the country.

Though now in a somewhat dilapidated shape, the Godamunne ambalama near Kandy has “charm and poise”. Of typical structure, four large timber logs form the foundation set atop four large boulders; carved columns at each corner support large beams that support the roof.



Carved wooden column

The story is that the carved wooden columns used in the construction of the ambalama were taken by the villagers from the Hanguranketa palace that had been built by one of the kings of Kandy and destroyed by the Dutch. The ambalama was later used by British soldiers after the rebellion of 1818.



The Godamunne ambalama

No better can be done than to quote from A. Seneviratna and B. Polk—“Placed on a rise overlooking a valley of rice fields near Kandy it is a tranquil, timeless little haven from a tropical downpour”.

If a guest is interested, we could arrange for a daytrip to this ambalama and another site in Kandy along with a picnic lunch.

Information from: Buddhist monastic architecture in Sri Lanka: the woodland shrines by A. Seneviratna & B. Polk. 1992.

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.
See what our previous [guests](#) have had to say!



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We are also on [Facebook](#).

Bookings can be made on [Trip Advisor](#), [Airbnb](#), [HomeStay](#), [Booking.com](#) and [Agoda](#) as well as by contacting us directly.

Sri Lanka – rated as a top tourist destination for 2011, 2012 & 2013.

[The Lonely Planet](#)
[Condé Nast Traveller](#)
[The New York Times](#)
[National Geographic](#)