

Sri Lanka is the only country in Asia that has a historical record traced to the 5th century BC. Its ancient cities narrate endless stories to the modern day visitors.

Anuradhapura “the city of Ninety kings” was founded in 5th century BC. The medieval capital of Polonnaruwa was founded in the 13th century. Sigiriya “The Lion Rock” in its natural setting is an architectural marvel. The painted images of the heavenly maidens that are 1500 years old arouse the passions and curiosity of even the sages and savants who see them.

The mirror wall that leads to the frescoes hold some 650 inscriptions where the visitors of old have expressed their fascination, appreciation and fantasies evoked by the voluptuous maidens plastered to the rock surface.

“ ..The golden skinned maiden seduced my mind and my eyes

Her lovely breasts reminded me of Swans drunk with nectar.

How does her heart behave, the one with fawn eyes.....”

(Sigiri Graffiti)

Want to read more of these ballads of love, and laughter? If you do, then visit Sigiriya. Behold the beauty of the fawn eyes of these maidens. Your guide will tell you more of the haunting lyrics on the Mirror Wall.

History is embedded in every pebble and grain that makes up the miles of golden sandy beaches. The Plains that hold the ancient cities with giant reservoirs and temples and shrines narrate the story of a flourishing ancient kingdoms. Sri Lanka is a country of diverse peoples with a quaint cosmopolitanism that makes it a microcosm of South Asia.

The littoral areas of the island were controlled by the Portuguese in the 16th century and by the Dutch in the 17th century. The Dutch occupied region of the island was ceded to the British in the Treaty of Amiens in 1796, following the Napoleonic wars.

It became a crown colony in 1802, and was united under British rule when, the last Sinhala Kingdom that repulsed successive European incursions for three centuries was ceded to the British Crown in 1815 by the Sinhala Chieftains of the Hill kingdom.

The Island became independent in 1948 as Ceylon. Its name was changed to Sri Lanka in 1972 with the adoption of a Republican Constitution. A protracted Civil Conflict that tortured this island ended with the total defeat of the terrorist movement in 2009.

You now arrive in a country that is at peace with itself with a diversity in its composition that include Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers with Portuguese, Dutch and British ancestry. This evolving story is narrated by archeological finds preserved or restored. Buddhist Temples, Hindu Shrines, Churches, Cathedrals and Mosques testify to the zeal of proselytizing missionaries, enterprise of traders, the pride of a pastoral people and the resilience of a nation to endure the past and grasp the future in heavenly harmony and the nonchalance, natural to a people to whom nirvana is a state of mind..

“The people of Sri Lanka” said Bernard Shaw are”in the cradle of the human race because everyone there looks an original”.