

Mulkirigala Temple Excursion

Visit The Fascinating Mulkirigala Rock Temple, Nestled Among The Green Forests

SLDT/1702/Ex08



Why should you book this trip?

- You will be led by enthusiastic local guides.
- Get fascinated by ancient cave paintings and Buddha statues spread over 7 caves in a temple complex that is over 2000 years old.
- Excellent photo opportunities.
- Exciting encounters with members of the local community
- A face to face encounter with a Samanera [a novice monk]
- Beautiful temple architecture spanning over 2000 years.
- Amazing panoramic views all the way to the top, including an amazing sunset.
- Meet and greet the troupe of monkeys living in the area [no feeding is allowed as monkeys can get aggressive]
- No Tips and No tickets – what you pay is what it takes.
- This is an excellent community-based tour where you get maximum benefit for what you pay.

Quick Facts

- Starts at 3:00pm from your hotel in Tangalle.
- Finishes at 7:00pm to 7:30pm at your hotel in Tangalle.
- Return transfers could be arranged at any other hotel upon request.
- Only suitable for adults and children who are 6 years or above

You will meet



Gamage

Among the few interesting locals you will meet and interact with, Gamage is a key person. He is a native of Mulkirigala village itself and is a proud father and grandfather. After working as a farmer for more than 30 years, he now volunteers at the temple as a caretaker. Although he may not be able to communicate well in your own language, his pleasant demeanour and genuine hospitality will add a lot of flavour to this excursion.

Included in the price

- A local guide
- Transport to and from your hotel
- Unlimited water
- Refreshments at the summit
- Local Fruits
- Tips and Donations to the communities

Exclusions

- Anything not mentioned in the above section

Tour in brief

The Mulkirigala Temple Excursion is an experience that joins history with nature and provides it a real local touch.

You will leave the hotel around 3:00pm and will be transported through the beautiful countryside via Beliatta to reach the foothills of the rock temple at 3.45 pm. At this point, you will meet the local guide who is a native from the village of Mulkirigala. He has lost track of the number of times he has climbed the Mulkirigala rock over the last 15 years, and you will be hard pressed to find anyone better to go along on this journey with.

With your guide, you will ascend the mountain one step at a time, exploring each of the seven caves to be in time for the sunset at the summit. Believed to have been originally built in the third century by King Saddhatissa, King Dathusena in the fifth century and King Kirthi Sri Rajasinghe in the 18th Century are said to have contributed to the construction of the various temples in the site. Most structures visible today date from the 18th century.

At the top you will be greeted by Gamage, a devotee of the temple who will serve you some home-made sweetmeats made in the traditional manner and herbal tea.

After witnessing an amazing sunset, you will carefully descend the rock with the help of the guide.

Before you get to the vehicle to start your return journey, you will get a chance to meet and speak with a little samanera (a novice monk) from the temple and make a small donation that would help to pursue his studies. (this is included in your price)

You will reach your hotel in Tangalle by around 7:00pm – 7:30pm. For other hotels, times may vary depending on the location.

Mulkirigala Temple – A Short History

It is believed that the site in which the Mulkirigala Temple is located has had some kind of shrine or temple in it for the past 2000 years. Developed as one of the most important sacred sites in the country by several kings who all contributed to its establishment, the Mulkirigala temple complex today stands as a testament of how history and culture intertwine with nature in this tropical paradise island.

The temple has been known by many names in the past, and to this day, is referred to as Mulgirigala, Muvathitigala, Muhudungiri and Dakkhina Vihara for various reasons. It is believed that in the Anuradhapura era (377 BC to 1017 AD) that one of 32 saplings produced by the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi tree in the capital was planted on this location, at the time known as Giriba Viharaya. According to a stone inscription found near a pond, the

temple was known as Samuddagiri Viharaya during the Polonnaruwa Era (1056 AD – 1212 AD). Early European visitors named it Adam's Berg, mistaking it for Adam's Peak (Sri Pada) and believing that Adam and Eve from the Bible were buried in this location.

The temple itself is an elaborate complex of five compounds that contain, in total, seven Viharas and seven prominent Buddha Statues. The temple is also known for its paintings from the Kandy Era.