



—Sri Lanka—  
**Day Tours**

## **Richmond Castle**

**“Time travel to the castle of love and grandeur  
in the 1900s”**

SLDT/1908/Ex38



### **Why should you book this trip?**

- Hear the legendary and mysterious life story of a Sri Lankan who lived almost a provincial king's life.
- Richmond Castle is a two-storey mansion with 16 rooms, 99 doors and 34 windows, built in the 20th century and bears a strong resemblance to a 19th century British noble residence.
- Wander through opulent history and architectural splendour of a mansion built on 42 acres of land in the early 1900s, by Nanayakkara Rajawasala Appuhamilage Don Arthur De Silva Wijeyesinghe Siriwardena – the Mudaliyar of Kalutara District.
- Dance through ghostly banquet halls which once threw lavish parties for dignitaries, both foreign and Sri Lankan, outfitted with an in-mansion troupe of 50 entertainers and performers.
- Unravel the story of 32 years of love, wealth and heartbreak, fiercely guarded by history.
- Discover why 7 mysterious statues of children in the garden can be seen from the balcony.
- Richmond Castle is one of the main attractions in the Kalutara district, located in a rural area called Thekkawatta, about 3km east of Kalutara town. It's a 'must-do' in Kalutara.

## Quick Facts

- Availability: All year round
- Starting time: Anytime between 8:30am and 4:00pm.
- Meeting Point: Kalutara Clock Tower, or at the castle itself.
- Arrival and departure transport to any location could be arranged on request for an additional fee.
- Duration: 2 hours

## Tour in brief

- To meet your guide for a journey into the past, travel to the Clock Tower at Kalutara town. You'll be taken to Richmond Castle from there, which is about 3km from Kalutara town. Upon entering the castle, explore the main hall and learn how one of the world's first and most natural 'air conditioners' worked from a river 'power source' and 'cooling system'. You will also discover the ingenuity of the world's oldest soundproofing system! The castle showcases a large collection of photographs documenting the special occasions which took place within the walls and beyond, transporting you back in time to life in the castle and around ancient Sri Lanka. Continue to wander through the castle and get lost in a flood of old memories that now seem like your own!

## Important

- The history of Richmond Castle is an intriguing saga of events running parallel to that of its owner, Mudaliyar Nanayakkara Rajawasala Appuhamilage Don Arthur De Silva Wijeyesinghe Siriwardena, in the early decades of the 1900s. Young Siriwardena was born on November 12th 1889, to Paulis De Silva Siriwardena, who was a wealthy businessman hailing from Baddegama in the South. He owned vast estates of coconut, tea and rubber, which helped curry favour with the British administration enough to have young Siriwardena enrolled for schooling in Britain. After his education, he was bestowed the title of Mudaliyar by the King, and returned to his home country to take up rank.
- On returning home to Ceylon, the Mudaliyar was inspired by the luxurious palace belonging to his schoolyard chum, the Maharaja of Ramnad in India. Falling in love with the palace, he requested a copy of the building plans but was refused, with the advice that Ceylonese were not capable of undertaking such a large and complex architectural project. This made the Mudaliyar even more determined, and building plans were drawn in secret. Richmond Castle was born, and became a two-storey mansion with sixteen rooms, 99 doors and 34 windows, designed in the style of Roman Dutch and Greek architecture. All essential supplies for the building were sourced from abroad, including floor tiles from Italy, teak from Burma (used to construct the main staircase), window panes (decorated with glass depicting grape vines) from Scotland, plus iron stairs and bathroom fittings from Britain.
- The Mudaliyar moved into Richmond Castle with his new bride – a young beauty of noble rank – Clarice Matilda Maude Suriyabandara, in 1910. The marriage lasted 32 years, and even though the couple was blessed with every happiness and comfort in life, they lacked one of the greatest – that of a son or daughter. The couple heartbreakingly separated later in life, and the Mudaliyar bequeathed his properties to the Public Trustee, with the request that the castle was converted into a children's home so that the laughter of children may finally fill it. He regressed into becoming a hermit, and never returned to Richmond Castle again. After his death on 8th

July 1947, Richmond Castle was taken care of by the Public Trustee Department of Sri Lanka, with part of the mansion becoming a home for underprivileged children.

## Included in the price

- Relevant authorisation / permits necessary for the trip
- A well-trained, professional and knowledgeable guide
- Entrance tickets
- Service charges and all applicable government taxes

## Exclusions

- Transportation cost
- Staff tips
- Anything else not mentioned as 'included'