

Anuradhapura Ancient City



Anuradhapura Ancient City is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. Anuradhapura was considered as the capital of Sri Lanka from 4th Century BC to the beginning of 11th Century AD.

According to the great chronicle 'The Mahawansa' which documented the history of Sri Lanka and other historical documents, Buddhism was first introduced to Sri Lanka in Anuradhapura during 3rd Century BC, at a rock peak of a mountainous range called 'Mihintale', to King Devanampiyatissa - the ruler of Anuradhapura, by Ariyaratne Mahinda Thera - the son of Great Emperor Asoka of India. Therefore, the sacred city of Anuradhapura is considered as the cradle of Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

The city's greatest treasures include:

- **Sri Maha Bodhiya:** The original Southern branch (right wing branch) of historical Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi (sacred fig tree) at Bodhgaya under which Lord Buddha attained Enlightenment. Brought by Ven. Ariyaratne Sangamitta therani (the daughter of the Emperor Asoka of India) in the year 288 BC (3rd Century BC) and planted in Anuradhapura holy city. Sri Maha Bodhi in Anuradhapura is considered and venerated as one of the most precious and sacred relics, by Buddhists all over the world and is the oldest living human-planted tree in the world.



- **Ruwanwalisaya** is also known as the Maha Stupa (or the Great Stupa) is one the most prominent Buddhist Stupas in Sri Lanka. Built by King Dutugemunu in 140 BC to enshrines a large portion of Relics of Lord Buddha. Ruwanwelisaya stupa is considered as one of the world's tallest monuments, standing at around 103 m (338 ft) and with a circumference of 290 m (951 ft).
- **Tuparamaya:** Considered as the first Buddhist Stupa in Sri Lanka, built by King Devanmpiya-Tissa (247-207 BC), in 3rd Century BC in which enshrines the sacred Right Collar Bone of Lord Buddha. The Stupa was built in the shape of a bell and the compound was paved with granite.
- **Jethawanaramaya:** Built in Anuradhapura by King Mahasena (273–301). With a high of 122 metres (400 ft) with a base-area of 233,000 m² (2,508,000 sq ft). This is an ancient engineering marvel and approximately 93.3 million bricks were used in the construction. It is believed to be the world's tallest stupa and perhaps one of the tallest structures in the Ancient world. Associated monasteries and structures within the compound said to be housed approximately 10,000 Buddhist Monks. and This stupa represents a period of Buddhist History of Sri Lanka as it represents the tension between two Buddhist schools i.e. Theravad and Mahayana sects.
- **Abhyagiriya:** Built in Anuradhapura by King Valagamba during the period of his second reign, from 89-77 BC. This was the stupa for a monastery complex for Mahayana and Theravada Buddhist schools. Abhyagiriya site was one of the most extensive Archaeological sites in the world with ruins of a complex of great monasteries considered as an international teaching institute for Buddhism by 1st Century AD, which attracted many international scholars from all over the world.
- **Isurumuniya:** Built by King Devanmpiya Tissa. This site is houses very famous carvings 'isurumuniya lovers', 'Elephant Pond', and 'the Royal Family'



Other significant sites and attracts in Anuradhpura includes the world famous 'Samadhi Budhha Stautue', 'Kuttam Pokuna' or the twin ponds, 'Mirisavatiya stupa', Lankarama Viharaya etc.

Note: attraction involves walking and climbing of steps to reach upper levels/heights.

Disclaimer: contents displayed in this document are from third party information sources and CHARIKA TRAVELS (Celink Australia Pty Ltd) is NOT LIABLE for any claims, losses. CHARIKA TRAVELS cannot be held liable for accuracy of contents displayed here in.