



✦ my favourite street

Cinnamon Gardens, Colombo

Colombo's ritzy residential district Cinnamon Gardens is an attractive enclave of shady boulevards flanked by stately homes, art galleries, cafés, and historic buildings. Words by Emma Boyle

This upscale neighbourhood was formerly a cinnamon plantation, yet it's the ancient trees lining wide boulevards that provide an insight into its more recent past. Colombo in the 1920s was known as the 'Garden City of the East' thanks to the landscaping prowess of the British colonialists, and nowhere in the city reflects this more than leafy Cinnamon Gardens.

"My gallery is located in Cinnamon Gardens," Saskia Fernando explains, "and the four main roads that run parallel to each other here feature some great little spots to eat and shop."

PR, a clothing boutique on Horton Place, is popular with local stylistas and sells an eclectic mix of local and international brands, including her sister's acclaimed Maus clothing line. Health-conscious **Milk & Honey Café** just opposite "has a fantastic mix of children's games and books", and

serves nutritious salads, wraps, and juices. **Coco Veranda** on nearby Ward Place is a small yet very popular local coffee chain brewing the city's "best takeaway coffee".

"The brilliant **Sapumal Foundation** on Barnes Place houses the largest collection of Sri Lankan modern art in the former home of artist Harry Peiris who was 'the founder of the modern artists' collective the '43 Group'."

Viharamahadevi Park, the city's largest green space, is also located in Cinnamon Gardens. Sandwiched between the **National Museum** and the white-domed **Town Hall**, the centrepiece of this extensive park – still home to a few cinnamon bushes – is a large seated central Buddha statue.

Along Rosmead Place lies historic **Paradise Road Tintagel Colombo**, a statuesque mansion that was formerly the residence of the Bandaranaike



SASKIA FERNANDO

Saskia Fernando is a gallerist and jewellery designer. The Saskia Fernando Gallery launched in 2009 and showcases contemporary Sri Lankan art. Her most recent project, artspacesilanka.com, aims to enable more local artists to display their work internationally. Her jewellery line, Papillon du thé, focuses on minimalist designs using Sri Lankan materials and craftspeople. saskiafernandogallery.com

family and three of Sri Lanka's past rulers. Now a 10-room boutique hotel that has welcomed the likes of Charles and Camilla, it boasts the city's largest private art collection and a popular restaurant. "The courtyard is a lovely place to enjoy a meal," comments Saskia.

At the newly renovated Arcade-Independence Square on Baudhaloka Mawatha, a "mish-mash of high street brands and restaurants." Saskia recommends the maki selection at **Tsukiji Uoichi**. "Try their spicy tuna maki or crispy prawn maki with a lemon iced tea." ✦

✦ FLIGHT FREQUENCY

Qatar Airways has three flights a day from Doha to Colombo