

Relaunch Of Galle Face Hotel



After two years of renovations Galle Face Hotel, one of the first hotels in Asia,

opened its doors again in the presence of President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.

Sanjiv Gardiner, Chairman – Galle Face Hotel

“Your Excellency President Maithripala Sirisena, Honourable Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, Your Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is with great pleasure, pride and humility that my family and I welcome you here tonight.

It is indeed a pleasure to share tonight with so many distinguished guests, many of whom I’m honoured to count as ‘friends’ as well as professional colleagues.

On this occasion, I would like to make a special mention of my father Cyril Gardiner, with deep gratitude and affection. His involvement with the Galle Face Hotel began in the 1950’s and soon became a passion, a passion he passed on to me. I am also grateful to a few others who have moulded my passion in the process of this restoration and enhance my vision for the future of the Galle Face Hotel. I would also like to thank my mother, my wife and children for their support and understanding.

As many of you will already know, the Galle Face Hotel was established in 1864 and since that time the hotel has played a pivotal part in the culture and social life of Colombo and Sri Lanka.

For more than a century and a half we’ve hosted Royalty, world leaders and celebrities, drawn to rest, recuperate, and celebrate here at the Galle Face Hotel.

Over the past three years, we have undertaken a major restoration of much of the hotel, including guest rooms and suites, restaurants and gardens and of course our famous ballrooms.

During this period we have been conscious of restoring the Galle Face hotel to its iconic status as “the best hotel east of the Suez”.

We have also taken the opportunity to renew all of the core support services, fire, life and safety systems, water and electrical provision, and communication infrastructure, without compromising the integrity of the historic nature of the hotel.

We have been guided by our heritage, working with the Archeological Department, to restore the building to its former glory.

We have modelled fixtures and fittings on styles found in our archives.

We have developed services and experiences to complement this work. I would highlight two unique services we have introduced to complement the restoration.

We have engaged a resident historian who takes tours of the hotel for our guests to help them engage with the history of Sri Lanka, Colombo and the Galle Face Hotel.

The hotel has established an ‘expeditions’ office that plans itineraries for island wide excursions or simply half day Colombo shopping sprees.

It is with great pride that I’m able to recognise, now for the first time in over fifty years, that both the South and North Wings of the hotel have been restored.

During its 150 year existence, the Galle Face Hotel has contributed immensely to the image, economy and the development of human resources in hospitality perhaps longer than any other organisation in the industry. At the Galle Face Hotel,

we have been able to provide employment, directly and indirectly to tens of thousands of Sri Lankan families over the years. We are proud that the Galle Face Hotel's philanthropic works have been able to assist others that have not always had the blessings we have.

It is with great humility that we continue to take up the mantel along with our partners in the tourist industry to showcase the beauty and gracious hospitality that Sri Lanka is already famous for.

I thank those who have contributed, often above and beyond the call of normal duty, to the success of our restoration.

We have received guidance from a number of Government and Municipal council bodies, without whose insightful direction the project would not have progressed so well.

We have received support from many contractors and suppliers, many of whom adapted their operations to meet the needs of such a historic undertaking.

In particular I am humbled by the loyalty of the team who work at the Galle Face Hotel (the Galle Face Hotel Family), who have served our visitors and guests during what at times was a trying environment during the restoration with good will and true hospitality.

I look to all my associates and members of the Galle Face Hotel family to draw strength from our history and our heritage. The generations that have been here before you have with great pride contributed to the legacy of the Galle Face Hotel. We are the trustees of that legacy, it is in our consistency, commitment and of course our passion that will enhance that legacy in our future. I have all faith that we will.

May I once again thank Your Excellency President Maithripala Sirisena, Honourable

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, and all other distinguished guests present here for joining us on this historic celebration. We look forward to your continued support. Excellencies, Ladies and gentleman, Welcome to The Galle Face Hotel.




Galle Face
HOTEL

