

Feel colonial, experience The Dutch East Indies: go to beautiful Malang!

Comment on an article in the Dutch East Indian / Indonesian magazine "Moesson" ("Monsoon") called "Herinneringen aan Malang" ("Memories of Malang") by Karel Thomson, July 2006. (This comment and © are protected by pdf.)

I. The overwhelming colonial beauty of Malang, Java, by drs (msc) D. Teeuwen



1. Beauty in beautiful Malang

Malang is a most attractive city with a plantation feel. Malang is situated only 80 kilometers south of Surabaya on the banks of the River Brantas. The city is quiet and relatively cool. Malang is a typical Dutch East Indian town established in 1767. On September 2nd the Dutch mestizo Caspar Lodewijk Troponegro conquered Malang and defeated the rulers Singosari, Karta Negara and Malajoe Kusomo. The causes of fightings were:

- the English attempted to get round the regulations of the Dutch East Indian Company (V.O.C.) regarding the Dutch monopoly cornered in opium via the Hindu-Kingdom of Balambangan on East Java;
- the hinder of the rice-trade from eastern Java to V.O.C.-territories by Balambangan.

After the year of 1800 coffee was first grown as a colonial crop, later locals have grown tobacco and fruit. During the Dutch period Malang was an important garrison town.

Malang, population nowadays 800.000, has main attractions inside as well as outside the city.

1. and 2. Photo's Dirk Teeuwen 2002



2. Malang's hope: central square, alun alun, on a Sunday afternoon



3. A Dutch mansion on Jl Idjen, Malang 2002
Photo Dirk Teeuwen

Not far from the central market, alun alun, one can find excellent Dutch colonial architecture, affectionately restored and well-kept by the Indonesian government. A few examples:

- the former mansions Splendid Inn (just off Jl Tugu Circle) and Wisma Ikip on Jl Majapahit;
- Toko Oen on Jl Rachmat;
- facing Toko Oen is Gereja Katedral Kuno;



4. A colonial dream: Toko Oen, Malang 1990
Photo by Amir Sidartha, Impact Postcards, published by Periplus Editions ©, Singapore

- Hotel Pelangi along the alun alun;
- the town-hall, Hotel Tugu Park and a lot of colonial houses along the very wonderful Tugu Square;
- the Railway Station at the end of Jl Kertanegara;
- Jl Idjen, Hotel Graha Cakra and the colonial quarters in the vicinity;
- the beautiful but simple Indonesian quarters around River Brantas.



5. Malang's Railway Station from 1939, Malang 2002
Photo Dirk Teeuwen



Go to Malang and stay in the Tugu Park Hotel. You will never regret it. Wonderful decorated rooms, a swimming pool, an excellent restaurant with bar and coffee corner. The owners furnished their hotel as a museum with many remains of the Dutch period. The hotel is not cheap, but it is worth every penny. The staff is incredibly friendly!! I stayed there a couple of times and I am looking forward to the next time.

6. A horn from the military band of the garrison in the Dutch period, Tugu Park Hotel, Malang 2002
Photo Dirk Teeuwen

II. Memories of Malang by Karel Thomson in the periodical Moesson, July 2006

Mr Thomson spent his youth in Malang. He recalls the celebrations of the royal feast days with sports and parades, racing at Oro-oro-dowo and the performances of the military band.

One of his most impressive experiences was the following. On top of the front of Malang's railway Station was (and is) a clock. See picture 5. At twelve o'clock, noon, a soldier marched to the station and blew a horn. Every citizen was thus enabled to set his watch. Inside the station building an official had the duty to alert persons to trains. He did so by banging a whip.

It is regrettable that such an interesting article from the readers' section has been published isolated. An accompanying article about colonial Malang to enlarge on that topic is missing.



7. The Town Hal of Malang on Jl Tugu Circle (Former Dutch J. P. Coenplein), Malang 1935
From: K. Thomson, Herinneringen aan Malang, Moesson July 2006, p. 28, © Tjalie Robinson bv The Hague Holland



8. Balai Kota (Town Hall, in Dutch: Gemeentehuis), from 1929, on Jl Tugu Circle, Malang 2002
Photo Dirk Teeuwen

drs (msc) D. Teeuwen

© Rendez-vous Batavia – July 2006 – Teeuwen - Doorn