

MESMERIZING
Malabar

THE
KALARIS
OF NORTH MALABAR



SMITHIES THAT MOULD VALOUR

The kalaris of north Malabar are sites where stories of the systems of law and justice as well as strategies of defence and counter-attack, practised by erstwhile native chieftains and kings of Kerala, are inextricably interwoven. In the tales of those times, the heroes are often depicted as trained warriors and men of unsurpassed valour. The ballads of north Malabar still carry the fragrance of those historical times, and a journey through them is sure to transport you to that era. The kalaris which grew to become one of the most important institutions in the Middle Ages came to be celebrated as the birthplace of Kerala's indigenous martial art form, with all the local varieties adding to its grandeur.

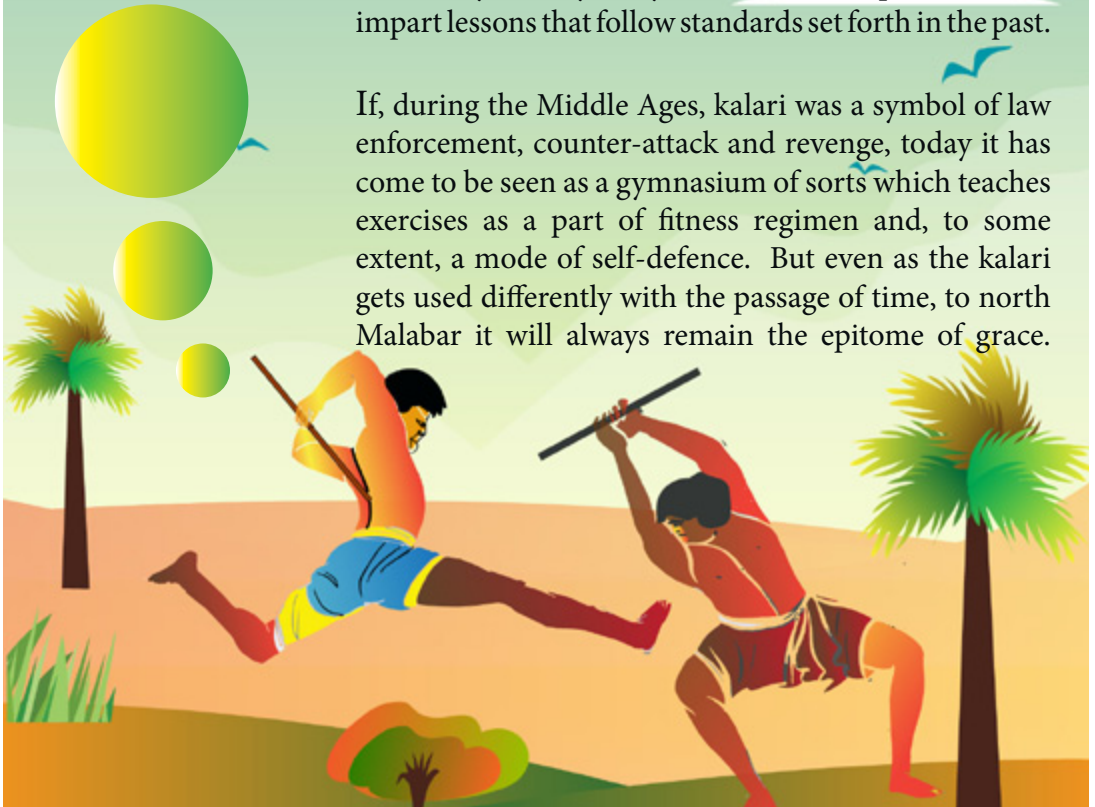


The Lokanarkkavu near Kozhikode in Kerala and the legends that swirl around it are very well-known. The kalaris of Malabar have to be seen in the context of the history of those times. The northern ballads sung by pananaars or the wandering minstrels are comparable to the thottampattu that croon about the kalaris of Tulu Nadu and celebrate the warrior spirit of Malabar. The kalari songs of Tulu Nadu like Odangara, Madangara, Karinthalam and Kummanar were orally transmitted through the centuries, from one generation to the next.



In the olden times, north Malabar was the most popular seat of learning among those who wished to gain proficiency in and understand the complexity of the strategies of kalari. Precisely for this reason, those who learnt it from elsewhere flocked to north Malabar in order to chisel their skills to perfection. The land continues to revere and maintain the lofty heritage of the martial culture. Even now when new kalaris are built, they strictly obey the traditional patterns, and impart lessons that follow standards set forth in the past.

If, during the Middle Ages, kalari was a symbol of law enforcement, counter-attack and revenge, today it has come to be seen as a gymnasium of sorts which teaches exercises as a part of fitness regimen and, to some extent, a mode of self-defence. But even as the kalari gets used differently with the passage of time, to north Malabar it will always remain the epitome of grace.



Nearby attractions

- CVN Kalari, Kozhikode
- Eleri Cave
- Ranipuram
- Bandadukka Forest
- Kundamkuzhi Fort



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CVN Kalari Kozhikode

This immaculate martial art form can be witnessed at its finest, bearing all traditional and orthodox techniques and systems of treatment, at the C.V.N. Kalari at Edakkad in Kozhikode.



Eleri Cave

A rock cut cave famous for ancient excavations



Ranipuram

This is one of the largest hills in all of North Kerala and is popularly considered as Kerala's answer to Ooty. Nature lovers throng to this site in large numbers throughout the year.



Bandadukka Forest

Historical relevance, a massive array of wildlife and spectacular butterfly displays make this an enchanting place to visit.



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Kundamkuzhi Fort

Among the oldest forts in Kasaragod district, it is a quaint destination that is ideal for a family picnic.



