

THE FAIRY PRINCESS OF GUNUNG LEDANG

The *Gunung Ledang* (Mount Ophir) legend tells the tale of the vain Sultan Mansur Shah of Malacca, who wished to marry a woman superior to the wives of any other prince in the world. Obsessed with this notion the Sultan decided to ask for the hand of the fairy princess of Gunung Ledang.

The Fairy Princess of Gunung Ledang was a stunningly beautiful being with graceful movements that accentuated every curve of her body. Adorned with silk and gold, this legendary beauty resided in a cave at the summit of Gunung Ledang.

The princess's guardian Dang Raya Rani, one of the four beautiful fairies and a princess herself, was not happy with the Sultan's proposal. In order to dissuade the Sultan, she set impossible stipulations as a dowry. The Sultan was given the task of acquiring a betrothal gift of seven trays of mosquito hearts; seven trays of the hearts of mites; a vat of water from dried areca nuts; a vat of tears from virgin maidens; a bridge made of the purest gold from Malacca to the peak of Gunung Ledang and a bowl of his young prince's blood.

The cruel and impulsive Sultan agreed to the dowry and severely oppressed his people for his own pursuit. Not even the sacred relationship between father and his only heir could stop his madness. He was willing to kill his only son in order to fulfil his selfish desires.

Just as he was about to plunge the blade of his knife or *keris* into his child the Fairy Princess appeared. She swore that she would never marry a man who was so cruel and capable of murdering his own son.

The Fairy Princess eventually wed Nakhoda Ragam, a renowned seafarer. Unfortunately, that joyful union would too end in tragedy. One day, as the princess was sewing, her husband surprised her by tickling her ribs. Startled, she accidentally stabbed him with the needle, killing him immediately. Heart-broken, she made a solemn decision to return to Gunung Ledang and vowed never to set eyes on another man again.

Straddling the Johor-Malacca border, Gunung Ledang is the highest mountain in these southern states and can be accessed via the Malacca or Johor route. The mountains plateau-like summit peaks at 1,276 metres above sea level, and offers a panoramic view of the Straits of Malacca and the Sumatra coastline on a clear day. Nestled among the verdant mountain is a refreshing waterfall that delightfully cascades from the top to the foot of the mountain. Gunung Ledang is ideally suited for picnickers, nature lovers, birdwatchers, rock-climbers, jungle trekkers and those who seek nature's raw splendour.



View from
Gunung Ledang

