Eerie, not abandoned – Malinta Tunnel, Corregidor Island

As the first line of defence for Manila (Luzon Island), Corregidor was of strategic importance during WW-II. Additionally, it was an important WW-II base for the US Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE).
Malinta Tunnel entrance

Besides other ruins that tell the WW-II story of Far East, Malinta Tunnel bored as a shaft under Malinta Hill, is an important landmark here. Interestingly, sparse resources were used to build this tunnel. These included expired TNT, obsolete equipment, convicted labour, and Japanese cement. Its construction finished in 1932.
Architecturally, the general layout of the tunnel comprises the main artery (similar to a petiole of a leaf) with numerous laterals branching out as the veins of a leaf would. Overall, despite an all-pervading eeriness of this tunnel, it has not been abandoned given its historical significance. Instead, the Philippines government has accorded it the status of a national historical treasure.
A diorama of a 1000-bed hospital created inside Malinta Tunnel

While the tunnel was constructed as a bombproof shelter for the army personnel and ordnance, it was used as a **1000-bed hospital during the heightened action of WW-II**. Here, many soldiers died before the Japanese army forced the US and Filipino soldiers to surrender on May 6, 1942.

**How fierce was the Battle of Corregidor?**

Very. The WW-II records show that **in a single 5-hour stretch, 1.8 million pounds of explosives rained on the island**. And an estimate of the loss of life here during this battle? **Over 900 Japanese soldiers and over 800 US and Filipino soldiers.**
Drinks and cards – non-war routine of the soldiers

Subsequently, the island was retaken by the US forces on the night of February 23, 1945, by blocking off the tunnel exit through continuous gunfire. As a result, over 3000 Japanese soldiers committed mass suicide by detonating explosives inside the tunnel – one of the largest instances of a mass suicide. Till today, the Philippines government has not excavated the laterals damaged by these detonations.
Radio communication equipment from WW-II

**Attention! Ghosts Ahoy!**

Today, legend has it that ghosts haunt the tunnel – thanks to many traumatised people having died here. In fact, Corregidor Island features amongst many ‘**top 10’ lists of haunted islands**.'
Life of the forces in the tunnel

Today, Malinta Tunnel is the venue of a Sound & Light show that recreates the events of WW-II. For this purpose, many permanent dioramas have been placed here. These depict the routine life of soldiers in the tunnel, their pastimes, the important events that happened on this battle stage, the conversion of the tunnel into a 1000-bed hospital, etc.
A mute testimony to the events of WW-II
These days, only Sun Cruises can organise a trip to Corregidor Island. They conduct a day/overnight trip to the island. Cost-wise, the day trip is **PHP 2100** approx. while the overnight trip sets you back an additional **PHP 1500**.

Traveller friends, if you are fond of exploring the WW-II sites or are fascinated by the paranormal, do visit Corregidor Island. After all, It is just a stone’s throw away from Manila!

Ref: [https://www.travelure.in/eerie-not-abandoned-malinta-tunnel-corregidor-island-philippines/](https://www.travelure.in/eerie-not-abandoned-malinta-tunnel-corregidor-island-philippines/)

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