

In the Footsteps of War History in Asia

World War II was the worst war in history and it caused a lot of property damage as well as the death of many people – in Europe as well as Asia. After the war, some countries chose to rebuild over the remains of the war in order to completely erase the memories of the tragic war. Others created memorials to commemorate the tragic events and dead soldiers.



Japan: Hiroshima

Most people know the little town of Hiroshima for only one reason; it was the first town to have an atomic bomb dropped on it. The bomb destroyed almost everything around it. One building that survived the blast was the Genbaku Dome.

Unlike the other ruins it was not demolished but rather it was preserved and Hiroshima was rebuilt around it. Today it is the centre of the city and just next to the Dome, a park was built and named the Hiroshima Peace Memorial. The park, just as its name suggests, symbolizes peace and it also serves as a reminder of the human suffering caused by the atomic bomb to all those who visit it.

Singapore: Changi

The battle of Singapore took place in 1942 and it was after this battle that the Japanese took control of Singapore. The reason this site remains historically significant is because the Japanese troupes were considerably smaller than the British army in Singapore yet they managed to subdue the British. This battle was one of the worst defeats of the British.

In Changi today there are two must see WWII monuments for the enthusiastic war tourist – the Changi Chapel and Museum, and the Johore Battery.

The Changi Chapel and Museum was created only recently in 2001 and it follows the story of prisoners of war during the Japanese invasion. The museum also contains murals of paintings drawn by Stanly Warren who was one of the British prisoners held by the Japanese during the war.



The Johore Battery is a set of three large naval guns installed by British. It is an interesting place because up until 1992 its location was not known until it was rediscovered by Singapore prisons department. It consists of underground tunnels where the British stored their ammunition as well as the guns. Today, although access to the tunnels is not allowed, the layout is outlined on the ground and there is a huge replica of the gun that was used during the war.

Shanghai: Hongkou District

During WWII many Jews running from the persecution in Europe ended up in Chinese Shanghai. At the beginning of the war, they were welcomed and given food and medication but with the Japanese invasion they were huddled up and forced to live in the ghetto.

One thing that Jews are known for is that they are a group of people that tend to thrive no matter where they are. Hongkou District in Shanghai where 20,000 Jews lived during the war is a good example of prosperity the people achieved. There are many Jewish sites in the city that reflect the Jewish culture and tell the story of their lives during the war.

Among the important places are the Ohel Rachel synagogue and the Shanghai Jewish School, the Toeg House as well as the monument in memory of Jewish refugees in Huoshan Park.



Philippines: Bataan

Bataan was the ground for a battle where the Americans made one of their greatest surrenders to the Japanese. Many lives were lost there and thus a number of monuments have been raised there dedicated to the soldiers.

At the end of the battle 76,000 American and Filipino prisoners of war were forced by the Japanese to walk to the capital Balanga. The 128 km long march resulted in the deaths of thousands of soldiers who

were mistreated and others murdered even after surrender. Mariveles Zero Kilometer marks the place where the march started and visitors can follow the track of the soldiers.

India: Red Hill (Lokpaching)

Red Hill is one of the battlefields where the Japanese and the British engaged in a fierce battle. Many lives were lost especially on the Japanese side. After the war the Japanese veterans constructed a monument “India Peace Memorial” in commemoration of those who lost their lives in the battle. Today, it is a top tourist site for the Japanese who make pilgrimage trips to honor the lives of the soldiers who died there.

Date: 2012-06-25

Article link:

<http://www.tourism-review.com/travel-tourism-magazine-wwii-history-in-asia-visit-the-landmarks-article1864>