



GETTING TO AND AROUND

CALABARZON has good road links with neighbouring provinces and is well served by buses from Metro Manila and elsewhere (there's no major airport). From Manila to Antipolo City in Rizal, by road is 30mins (20km), to Tagaytay City in Cavite 1hr 20mins (60km) and to Lucena City in Quezon 3hrs (138km). Jeepneys and cars are the most popular means of getting around the region.

WHERE TO STAY

Accommodation in Batangas, including the beach resorts in **Nasugbu**, **San Juan**, **Calatagan** and **Mabini**, is mostly simple, comfortable and affordable. The same goes for **Tagaytay** in Cavite and in Laguna province. However, there are a few more upmarket options dotted around. **The Farm at San Benito** is a world-class health and wellness haven in Lipa, Batangas. Sustainable hotels are on the rise in CALABARZON.

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

The most populous region in the Philippines (with a large section considered part of the Greater Manila Area), CALABARZON to the south of Manila on the Philippines' largest island, Luzon, comprises five provinces – **Cavite**, **Laguna**, **Batangas**, **Rizal** and **Quezon** – plus the highly urbanised city of **Lucena** and the very popular **Tagaytay City**.

CALABARZON



CLIMATE

Tropical, with a November to April dry season and most rainfall in August. Temperatures range between about 24°C in January and February and 34°C in April and May.

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CALABARZON

Mount Pico de Loro, Batangas



WELCOME TO CALABARZON

Most visitors to **CALABARZON** head for **Batangas** province with its heritage towns and world-class dive sites: highlights are the world's smallest volcano, **Taal**, the Fortune Island with its beach houses, and hiking up **Mount Pico de Loro** and **Mount Batulao**. Also popular is inland **Laguna** province with its hot springs and historic towns.

In Quezon, the **Borawan** and **Cagbalete** islands promise a perfect tropical getaway. A must-see in Quezon is the **Villa Escudero** working coconut plantation and resort. The city of **Lucena** attracts visitors with a mix of religious monuments and natural attractions including a botanical garden and a country farm.

The province of **Cavite** is one of the country's fastest growing, centred on the popular holiday town of **Tagaytay** and offering day trips to the peaceful **Corregidor Island** with its gorgeous beaches and hiking destinations. Its city of **Dasmariñas** is popular both in itself (don't miss scenic Daño Street with its holiday bazaars, and the *Promenade Des Dasmariñas* urban garden park) and as a stopover en route from Metro Manila to Tagaytay and Batangas, and from western Cavite to Laguna.

Lastly, **Rizal** with its capital **Antipolo City** (a popular pilgrimage site for the Virgin of Antipolo in its cathedral) is best visited for the **Masungí Georeserve** conservation area with its caves and its panoramic viewing platform with suspended netting above the karst, and for **Mount Daraitan** and the **Tinipak River** with their sunset views, rapids and cave swimming.

WHY IT'S MORE FUN IN CALABARZON

The need to preserve the region's incredible natural resources has transformed **CALABARZON** into a burgeoning ecotourism destination overflowing with fantastic outdoors activities both on the water and on land as well as offering a growing array of sustainable nature resorts. And when you get the urge to kick back and relax, there's a lot of scope for that too, whether on fabulous **white-sand beaches** or in the famous **hot springs** of the Laguna province. Note that there are numerous itineraries that offer a combination of some or all of the following: **Taal hiking**, **heritage towns**, **Pagsanjan Falls** and **Villa Escudero**. For underwater photographers, **Anilao** in Batangas is world renowned for muck and macro diving.

CULTURE AND FOOD

Historically inhabited by the Tagalogs, whose cultural heritage remains strong, this liberal region has a diverse population made up of folk from around the Philippines and includes some of the country's most densely populated provinces. It's in **CALABARZON** that Philippine Independence from Spain was first declared in 1898, and this was also the birthplace of national heroes including **Jose Rizal**. Despite its proximity to the country's capital, its rich history lives on in the form of churches, shrines, monuments and cultural traditions, including wood carving and *taka* (papier-mâché).

CALABARZON's staple food, the coconut, has shaped the cuisines of its various provinces in dishes including *buko pie* (coconut and custard on a flaky crust). There's even a local coconut vodka, *lambanog*, that features heavily in the region's celebrations. The Tagalog recipe of *lechon kawali* (deep-fried pork belly) is also popular here as elsewhere in the country.



Traditional crispy pork – **Lechon Kawali**



Gigantes Festival, Angono
Caloy Llamas



Coral reef, **Anilao**



Emilio Aguinaldo Shrine, Kawit



Pagsanjan Falls, Laguna Province



Taal Basilica, Taal
Marc Go



Hinulugan Taktak Falls



Balesin Island, Polillo



Pahiyas Festival, Lucban
Caloy Llamas

TOP 10 ACTIVITIES

- Go scuba diving and snorkelling in **Anilao**.
- Enjoy the resort city of **Tagaytay** with its mild climate, tasty mushroom burgers, tropical fruits, world-class golf courses, and health and wellness treats, especially at the **Nurture Wellness Village**, a resort offering a distinctly Filipino-branded spa menu.
- Frolic on Batangas' famous stretch of white sand beach and travel back in time at **Taal Heritage Village** and marvel at the well-preserved ancestral houses.
- Head for the pristine islands of **Polillo** and **Cagbalete** off Quezon's Pacific coast.

- Tour mountainous **Rizal** province including its protected **Hinulugan Taktak** waterfalls.
- Appreciate nature by hiking along the trails of **Mount Makiling** or soak in the hot springs at **Los Baños** or **Calamba City** in Laguna.
- Shoot the rapids of Laguna's **Pagsanjan Falls**, navigating your wooden canoe past trees and local wildlife.
- Relive the age-old tradition of embroidery in **Lumban**, wood carving at **Paete**, footwear making in **Liliw** and visual arts of **Angono**.
- Check out **Nuvali** eco-resort with its mountain-bike trails, zip-line, aerial walk and more.
- Seek out cultural sights including **Antipolo Cathedral** in Rizal and **Dr. Jose Rizal Museum** in Laguna.

TOP EVENTS & FESTIVALS

- **Coconut Festival, San Pablo City, January** – a showcase of the 'tree of life' and its products, held during the celebration of the city's patron saint, St Paul the First Hermit.
- **Pahiyas Festival, Lucban, Quezon, May** – a colourful harvest festival dating back to the 15th century, with a prize for the most creatively decorated house, other contests, cultural shows and parades.
- **Gigantes Festival, Angono, November** – a fiesta in honour of San Clemente, patron saint of fishermen, with papier-mâché giants and a river procession.