

San Juanico Bridge
connecting Leyte and Samar

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

Linked by the iconic **San Juanico Bridge**, these islands in **Eastern Visayas** are mainly visited for their coastlines, beaches and islands. Indeed, the coastal roads that ring them make for epic road trips. Both islands have a rich history, including substantial roles in World War II, but it's their natural beauty, landscapes, seascapes and potential for outdoor activities that truly shine out.

GETTING TO AND AROUND

In **Leyte**, **Tacloban City**, the regional hub, has daily flights from Manila (1hr), Clark (1hr 20mins) and Cebu City (30mins) or you can take a fast craft to **Ormoc City** from Cebu City (3hrs). From these points of entry, you can hire a car or van to explore **Leyte**, **Biliran** and **Samar**, or you can get between the islands' major cities and towns by bus, mini- vans, jeepneys and tricycle taxis.

WHERE TO STAY

The region's largest hotels are situated in Tacloban and Ormoc in Leyte and **Calbayog** in Samar. But all over the islands, other cities and towns offer accommodation of various kinds and classifications including beach and dive resorts in the **Sogod Bay** dive sites in southern Leyte, boutique hotels and tourist inns and speciality resorts like the one in **Calicoan Island** in Guiuan, eastern Samar, with its surf camps.

LEYTE & SAMAR



CLIMATE

There is no pronounced wet and dry season in Eastern Visayas. Rain is evenly distributed throughout the year with August to December the heaviest.

Regional Office
Department of Tourism, Brgy. 25 Kanhuraw Hill, Magsaysay Blvd.,
6500 Tacloban City, Tel: +63 998 888 9715, dot8@tourism.gov.ph

For more information please
scan the QR-code below



Follow us for more
information on Philippine
tourism destinations

f @PhilippinesinUK
@Philippines_UK
@Philippines_UK

#itsmorefuninthephilippines
#bepartofthefun
#morefunforever

Download our
Visit Philippines app from
your mobile app store



TPB
PHILIPPINES

Department of Tourism
Embassy of the Philippines
2nd Floor, 10 Suffolk Street
London SW1Y 4HG
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)20 7321 0668

info@itsmorefuninthephilippines.co.uk
www.itsmorefuninthephilippines.co.uk

LEYTE & SAMAR

Kalanggaman Island, Palompon, Leyte



WELCOME TO LEYTE & SAMAR

Samar, with its waves, caves and stunning rock formations, and **Leyte** – especially **Sogod Bay** with its vast coral gardens and the exotic **Kalanggaman Island** and other nature-based fun activities including mountain trekking, birding and glamping in the region's protected landscapes and seascapes – are the main attractions in the Eastern Visayas. Expect world-class white-sand beaches and water sports such as diving and surfing, as well as other outdoors fun including mountain trekking.

"Home to dazzling white-sand beaches and astonishing coral walls, the world's smallest mammal and its biggest fish, Eastern Visayas are the aqua heart of an island-nation."

– Lonely Planet



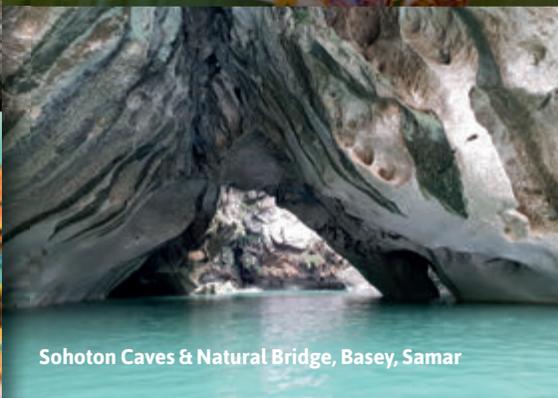
Bulad (sun dried fish)



Tarangban Falls, Calbayog, Samar



Pintados Festival, Tacloban City



Sohoton Caves & Natural Bridge, Basey, Samar

WHY IT'S MORE FUN IN LEYTE & SAMAR

Ecologically minded tourists love this region for the various environmental initiatives that have been introduced to preserve its incredible bio-system – resources that together make this the perfect natural playground for those who love wildlife encounters, water sports and walking amidst stunning scenery ranging from volcanic lakes to reforested mangroves. About a third of **Samar** is preserved and included in the Samar Island Natural Park, while its twin-island of **Leyte** has more than its fair share of surprises with its remote and pristine islands.

CULTURE AND FOOD

The rich history of the Eastern Visayas, including periods of Spanish and American colonisation, mean there is so much culture to be enjoyed, from architecture to traditional regional dances seen at local celebrations, bringing together Roman Catholicism with Hindu-Buddhist-Animist folklore.

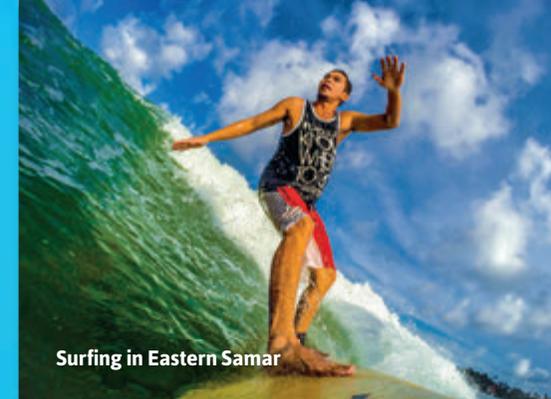
Tacloban – the educational, cultural and commercial centre of the Eastern Visayas – is a hub for local festivities, but small festivals take place in every town annually. Don't miss Tacloban's Santo Niño Shrine and Heritage Museum with its bas-relief of the legend of *Malakas* and *Maganda* (the first Filipino man and woman) and its painting of the 14 stations of the cross by Filipino artists.

Many people in Samar and eastern Leyte are *Waray*, a largely rural people who have retained many beliefs and much of their folklore from pre-Christian times, and who are famed for their strong and very beautiful women.

Don't miss a taste of the local delicacy of *binagol* (a half-coconut shell filled with mashed taro with condensed milk, coconut milk and egg yolks, sold at pavement stalls), *Abuyog's moron* (ground sticky rice cooked in coconut milk flavoured with cocoa) and *tuba* (coconut wine). Local seafood, fresh or salted, features highly on menus. The culinary tradition of Leyte and Samar blends the local with Chinese, Continental European and American flavours.



Marine life and coral reef in Sogod Bay, Southern Leyte



Surfing in Eastern Samar



Rock formation, Biri Island
Gerry Ruiz



MacArthur Landing Memorial National Park



Lake Danao Natural Park, Ormoc City

TOP 10 ACTIVITIES

- Drive the scenic coastal highways of **Leyte** and **Samar**.
- Discover **Kalanggaman Island** in **Palompon**, a remote model of sustainability, or head off to the tiny tropical **Cuatro Islas**.
- Dig into history at the **MacArthur Landing Memorial National Park** at **Red Beach, Palo**, on **Leyte**, where the US general came ashore in WWII.
- Head to **Mahagnao Volcano Natural Park** in **Burauen** and **La Paz**, **Leyte**, with craters, hot springs and lakes.
- Take a dip in the violin-shaped lake in **Lake Danao Natural Park** in **Ormoc City** and simply laze in the lush rainforest.

- Go diving/snorkeling on the coral reefs around Southern **Leyte's Sogod Bay** dive sites and interact with whale sharks in **Pintuyan** with a bonus trip to historic **Limasawa Island**.
- Explore **Samar Island Natural Park**, the Philippines' biggest protected terrestrial wonder, which includes the **Panhulugan** show cave in **Sohoton Caves and Natural Bridge** and the **Calbiga Caves**, world's 4th-biggest karst cave system.
- Shoot the rapids of **Ulot River** in **Paranas**, **Samar** via a motorised dugout canoe.
- See the magnificent rock formations on the island of **Biri**, Northern **Samar**.
- Catch some waves in **Calicoan Island, Guiuan**, Eastern **Samar** with its surf camps.

TOP EVENTS & FESTIVALS

- **Fiesta del Sr. Sto. Niño de Tacloban, June** – including region's oldest Pintados Festival.
- **Buyogan Festival, Aug** – a dance of *buyog* or honeybees.
- **Manaragat Festival of Catbalogan, Aug** – tribute to the local fisherfolk.
- **Padul-ong Festival of Borongan, Sept** – honouring Our Lady of the Nativity.
- **Karatong Festival of Dulag, Leyte, Sept** – remembers the Moro Raids.
- **Leyte Gulf Landings Commemorations, Oct**
- **OkTuba Festival, Oct** – coconut wine celebration.
- **Lawig Festival of Palompon, Leyte, Dec** – depicting the story of St Francis Xavier.