

SCUBAVERSE

PHILIPPINES

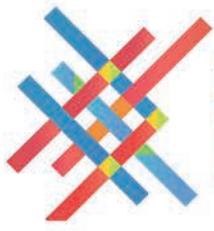
Dive Adventures



*Pure
Escapism*

Your guide to the **best diving**
destinations in the Philippines

ANILAO ■ BOHOL ■ CEBU ■ DAUIN ■ PUERTO GALERA ■ TUBBATAHA *and much more...*



IT'S MORE FUN IN THE
PHILIPPINES



**BE PART
OF THE FUN...**

www.itsmorefuninthephilippines.co.uk



Welcome...

Ask any avid diver what it's like to dive the Philippines and you will probably get this response: **“The Philippines has it all!”**

The Philippines is situated in the heart of the magnificent Coral Triangle – the “Amazon of the Ocean” - a region in the Indo-Pacific known as the global centre of marine biodiversity. Marine biologists have identified the Philippines as the centre of this “Oceanic Amazon.” These warm, tropical waters attract some of the most sought-after creatures in the world, and are home to 600 coral species, 2,000 reef fish species, and six out of the world's seven species of marine turtles. Whether you are a beginner diver looking to drift through coral reef gardens with schools of colourful fish, or an experienced diver searching for adventure, you'll find that the Philippines will always have something for you.

Over 600 dive resorts and dive centres offering a wide variety of facilities and amenities are scattered all over the Philippines' 7,641 islands. Our world class destinations and facilities, complemented by the exceptional Filipino brand of service of warm hospitality and smiles, makes any visit to the Philippines a truly unforgettable experience.

We welcome you to the Philippines,
the World's Leading Dive Destination!

THE PEOPLE BEHIND OUR STORIES...



MIKE BARTICK

Underwater photographer, professional diver, writer, and public speaker.
[@DiveCbr](#)



TOBIAS FRIEDRICH

Tobias is a full-time underwater photographer who has won over 30 first places in photo contests.
[@_below_surface_](#)



UWE JACOBS

Passionate shark lover, paying tax in Denmark. The seven seas are his home.
[@uwe_jacobs_marine_photography](#)



BO MANCAO

Content creator specialising in underwater imagery and PADI Ambassador to the Philippines.
[@bomancao](#)



ANDREW MARRIOTT

Diver, photographer, and writer. Andrew started with a point and shoot film camera and has not looked back.
[www.fata-morgana.net](#)



ANDREJ OBLAK

Slovenian cave and technical diver. Computer engineer with a passion for underwater photography.
[@andrejoblakphoto](#)



WOLFGANG POELZER

The Austrian photo-journalist and marine biologist has travelled the world for more than 25 years now.
[@wolfgang_poelzer](#)



FROGFISH PHOTOGRAPHY

Award-winning photo-journalists and underwater photographers working in the dive industry.
[@frogfishphotos](#)



FRANK SCHNEIDER

Frank is a full-time travel journalist and author of several diving books.
[www.divingurope.de](#)



DRALEX TATTERSALL

Purveyor of shiny underwater photo equipment and a self-confessed Philippines underwater macro nutter.
[@alexatatters](#)



SCOTT 'GUTSY' TUASON

Gutsy is a diver, conservationist and award-winning nature photographer who is based in Manila.
[@gutsytuason](#)



RAM YORO

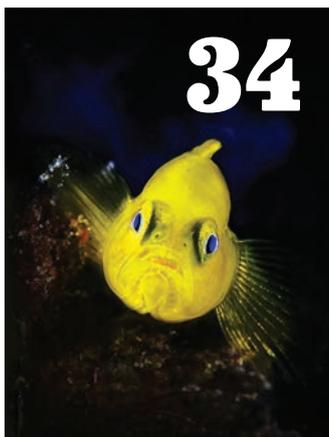
Ram is an underwater photographer, author, and underwater explorer from the Philippines.
[@ramyoro](#)

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Coron Bay

Coron Bay and Coron Island in Palawan promise divers an enticing combination of world class wreck diving and stunning scenery.



Key to Dive Destinations

Here is a key to the specialist diver experiences in each location:



WRECK – This area has many wrecks to attract Wreck Divers.



TEC – There are dive centres here that can cater for Technical Divers.



CRITTER – This area is famous for Macro Photography/Diving.



FREEDIVING – There are centres that offer Freediving Training.



PELAGICS – Encounters with big marine life are common e.g. Whale Sharks, Sharks, Mantas etc.



LIVEABOARD – This dive destination is visited by Liveaboards.

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Moalboal, Mactan Island & Malapascua CEBU

THE PROVINCE OF Cebu lies in the heart of the Philippine archipelago in the Central Visayas, and consists of a main island and 167 surrounding islands and islets. Its capital, Cebu City, "the Queen City of the South", is the oldest city and first capital of the Philippines.

This region is endowed with a wealth of inviting, natural attractions including white sand beaches, verdant mountains, mysterious caves and challenging trails. Divers to Cebu are attracted by its many dive resorts, pristine waters and rich marine life.



Marvellous Moalboal

WORDS & IMAGES: **FROGFISH PHOTOGRAPHY**

Approaching Moalboal from Cebu Airport is an adventure in itself, as lush mountains give way to bustling market towns before arriving at your beachside accommodation overlooking pure white sand and azure blue waves. It is a slice of heaven above the water, but we have come to explore beneath the surface and this area has much to offer divers. While many other destinations in the Philippines are well-known for their macro critters, and Moalboal is no exception, it has plenty more to get even the most experienced diver excited.

One of the most famous dives (or snorkels) in the region is to experience the 'Sardine Run', where a huge school of millions of fish shoal in the shallows, glinting in the sun as they dart back and forth trying to avoid predators. On that day, we dropped down a little way from the main attraction and made our way along the reef wall, before stopping to marvel at a squid displaying in the sunlight. Suddenly the sea around us went dark, and we looked up to see a wall of silver



FROGFISH PHOTOGRAPHY

Nick and Caroline Robertson-Brown form Frogfish Photography.

Both have degrees in environmental biology, with Caroline also having a Masters in animal behaviour. Nick is a fellow of the Royal Photographic Society in underwater wildlife photography and he also has a Masters in teaching. They are passionate about marine conservation and hope that their images can inspire people to look after the world's seas and oceans.



fish swimming above us, so dense they almost completely blocked out the light. A turtle lazily swam past, oblivious to both us and the schooling fish. That day, we spent well over an hour simply marvelling at this natural phenomenon.

Our itinerary also had a day trip to the small resort of Oslob to see the famous aggregation of Whale Sharks, and we were lucky enough to have a permit to dive as well as snorkel with them. Our excitement started to build as we wound our way along the coast from our resort. There are strict rules to be adhered to at this site, and once briefed we made our way into the water. Soon we had five or six Whale Sharks swimming around us.

Above, boats carried snorkellers eager to experience the biggest fish in the sea. The Whale Sharks gather to be fed in what is a local fishing tradition that keeps the fish away from their nets and now has grown to be a huge tourism industry. →

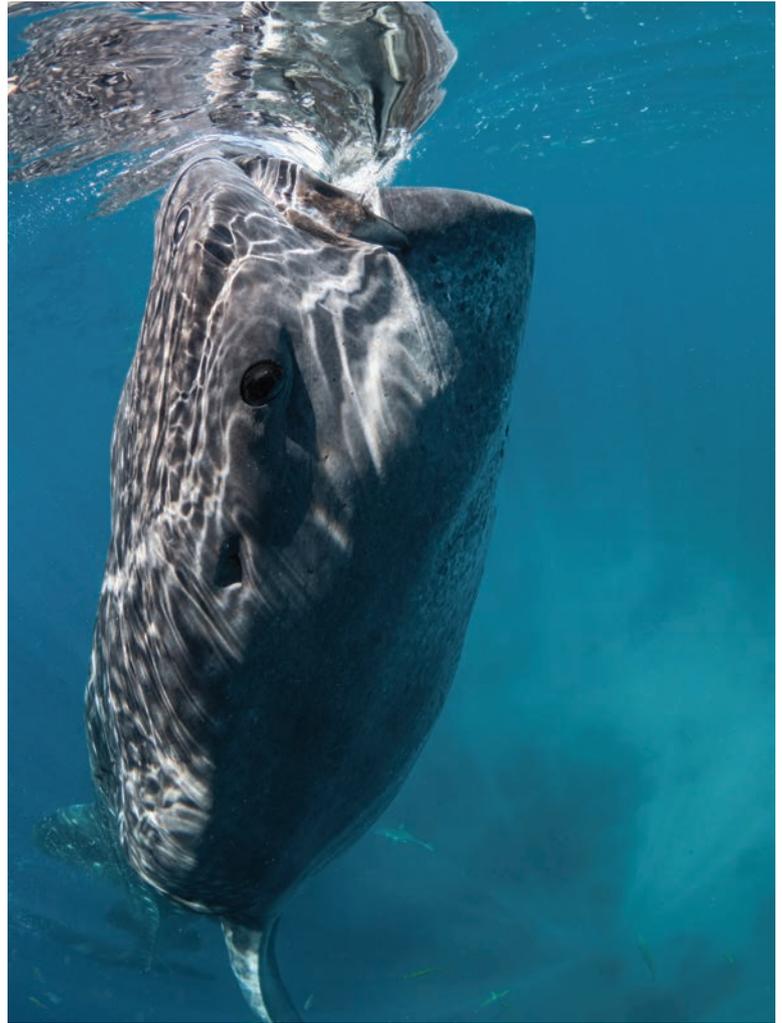


Despite our initial reservations, this day trip offered us some of the best Whale Shark encounters we have ever experienced.

Pescador Island is another famous site just offshore. Walls covered in brightly coloured corals drop down steeply into the dark blue depths. Currents allow you to drift along admiring the beautiful reef with no effort at all, in the knowledge that the dive boat above is following and will pick you up wherever the ride finishes. A cave system, resembling a skull, allows divers to explore further if their air supply allows.

On top of these enviable attractions, the local dive sites are packed with the famous marine life that makes the Philippines such a popular destination for divers from all over the world. Nudibranchs, crustaceans, seahorses, octopus, turtles, and the amazing Mandarinfish can all be found just a few minutes' boat ride from shore. Moalboal really does have something for everyone. ■

*Turn over for Mactan
Island and Malapascua* ➔





—
*Walls covered in
brightly coloured
corals drop down
steeply into the dark
blue depths at nearby
Pescador Island.*
—



UWE JACOBS

Uwe Jacobs is a passionate marine life photographer from Hanover, Germany, living in Copenhagen, Denmark. Changing people's perspective about sharks is his mission. Sharks are shy, gentle guardians of the oceans and not easy subjects for close up pictures. The trick is to be extremely calm with a heart rate of 45bpm!

Malapascua Thresher time!

WORDS & IMAGES: **UWE JACOBS**

There is one reason why divers visit Malapascua: Thresher Sharks. This island is the only known place on the planet where you can observe Thresher Sharks on a daily basis. You have to be an early bird to catch the worm though, as you need to wake up around 4am! On an early Sunday morning, you will still hear some music playing from one of the fiestas on your way to your dive centre.

As you make your way along the Bounty Beach walkway, you pass several diving centres. It's still totally dark, but there is bright light in the dive centres with a lot of people running around. It looks like moths circling a lightbulb.

Everybody is busy, and as you follow your dive guide to the boat, at that moment you start to see the first orange glimpse on the horizon... It's a 45 minute ride to the east to Monad Shoal. The journey is the perfect time to observe the most beautiful sunrise on the planet.

Just a few minutes after the sun is in the sky, it's time to jump into the water, following the mooring line down to about 20m depth. Your guide decides which way to go: the right side has a white sandy



slope, the left side a dark wall. A good guide is essential to ensure you get the sacred encounter of this elegant shark with a tail as long as its body.

The Thresher Sharks come to Monad Shoal, which is designated as a Marine Park to protect them, to get their skin rinsed of parasites by local schools of cleaner fishes. These sharks are experts at avoiding bright daylight. You will only see them in low light conditions, so a tip... Never book a double dive trip to Monad Shoal!

Even with Nitrox 32% your bottom time



Mactan Island



“The stunning **Thresher Sharks** are obviously a major draw for divers visiting Malapascua. But, like most sharks, their worldwide populations are being seriously impacted by continued overfishing. To **safeguard these sharks for the future**, we have to keep pushing for an international commitment to **sustainable management of fisheries.**”

PAUL COX
Managing Director | The Shark Trust

Mactan Island is a coral island 15 minutes away from Cebu City. It is a famous resort island with many beach resorts offering easy access to a wide array of underwater experiences. It is also the home of the Mactan-Cebu International Airport, the main airport gateway to the region, making it the perfect place to start your diving adventures in the Philippines.

Mactan Island is one of the most popular dive destinations in the Philippines. The marine life, especially in the marine sanctuaries, is so colourful and diverse that it keeps divers coming back for more and more. Mactan and the surrounding islands offer excellent shore-based diving and a rich variety of dive sites: drop-offs, deep walls, steep slopes, coral mounts and plateaus, seagrass beds, caves and caverns, and a number of wrecks.

The waters surrounding Mactan are teeming with rich biodiversity that makes for a memorable experience. Freediving is also popular here, and so you can enjoy the incredible marine life whilst experiencing the calm and serenity of seeing the underwater world on a single breath. There are six marine sanctuaries established in the region: Talima, Baring, San Vicente, Shangri-la, Gilutongan Island, and Nalusuan Island. All of these sites are blessed with a huge array of fish and corals. ■





TOPSIDE ACTIVITIES



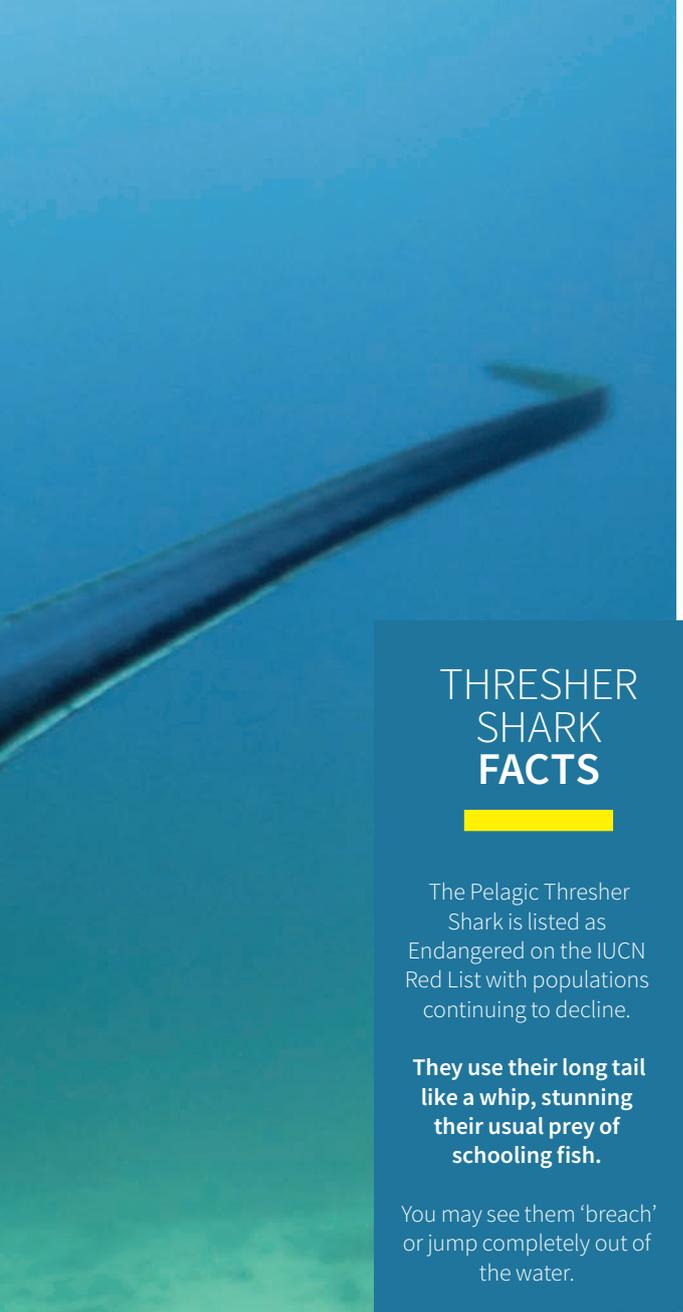
©Cris Tagupa

Visiting local markets

Hiking and visiting
waterfalls such as
Kawasan Falls

**BBQ on the beach or a
sunset cruise**





THRESHER SHARK FACTS

The Pelagic Thresher Shark is listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List with populations continuing to decline.

They use their long tail like a whip, stunning their usual prey of schooling fish.

You may see them 'breach' or jump completely out of the water.

is limited to around 20 minutes at 30m. Now everything has to be perfectly synchronized. You have to be at the right spot at the right time to get the encounter of a lifetime. Once you get the opportunity to stare this torpedo-shaped shark with big black eyes directly in the face, it's a moment you will never forget.

Honestly, you have to be a lucky diver to experience this kind of encounter. But you can push your luck by going out every morning. Last time I went 14 days in a row, and we had Thresher Sharks on 13 dives, two with perfect conditions. My Facebook observations show me that the peak season for the most beautiful images of Threshers is February and March.

Besides the magnificent Thresher Sharks, there are other good reasons to visit Malapascua. It's the home of the best Italian restaurant in the Philippines: Angelina's! You should definitely visit Capitancillo, a small coral island with a lighthouse that has pristine reefs and plenty of undiscovered dive sites. Plus, nearby Gato Island offers virtually guaranteed encounters with Whitetip and Blacktip Reef Sharks. Malapascua is also macro heaven with blue ringed octopuses and flamboyant cuttlefishes common all around. ■

TAKE ME THERE

Moalboal, Mactan Island and Malapascua



Getting There

Direct flights to Cebu are available from a host of international airports.



Best time to dive

You can dive in the Central Visayas all year round!



Air Temperature

24°C - 32°C.



Water Temperature

26°C - 29°C.



Hyperbaric Chamber

PCSSD Hyperbaric Chamber, Mandaue City, Cebu



Dive Centres & Liveaboards

Moalboal

Kasai Village Dive Resort
www.kasaivillage.com

Magic Island Dive Resort

www.magicresorts.online

Mactan Island

Fun & Sun Dive & Travel

www.funsundivetravel.com



Malapascua

Evolution Diving

www.evolution.com.ph

Sea Explorers

www.sea-explorers.com

Thresher Shark Divers

www.malapascua-diving.com

Liveaboards

Atlantis Azores

www.atlantishotel.com

Discovery Fleet

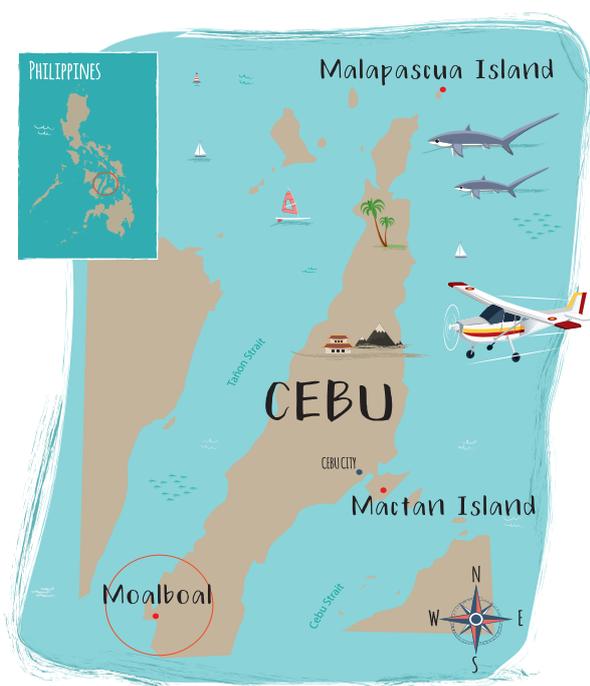
www.discoveryfleet.com

Philippine Siren

www.sirenfleet.com

Solitude One

www.solitude-one.com



Apo Reef
MINDORO



Apo Reef

MINDORO

APO REEF IS the largest coral reef in the Philippines. It spreads over an area of 34 square kilometres, making it the second largest connecting coral reef in the world. Apo Reef is also considered the second largest atoll-like reef in the Philippines as it comprises two isolated coral reefs that are disconnected by a 30 metre deep channel. The clear blue waters of the channel are teeming with 285 species of colourful marine life.

It is one of the best dive spots in the world, attracting flocks of divers all the year round. The soft white sand and patches of fine corals, clearly visible through the crystal blue waters, are truly an entrancing sight to behold. Apo Reef and the expansive waters around are protected areas in the Philippines, administered as the Apo Reef Natural Park (ARNP).

Mabuhay! Welcome to Paradise...

WORDS & IMAGES: **TOBIAS FRIEDRICH**

THE ISLAND OF Mindoro lies like a crescent moon about 150 kilometres south of Manila on Luzon, and northeast of Palawan. It is separated in the middle by an impressive mountain range that divides its two provinces, Occidental Mindoro in the west and Oriental Mindoro in the east. On the slopes of these mountains, which are up to 2500 metres high, a largely untouched cloud forest grows down to the river valleys. The underwater world of Mindoro is no less spectacular. The diversity of species and the crystal-clear water attracts many diving tourists to the coasts of this, the seventh largest island in the Philippines every year.



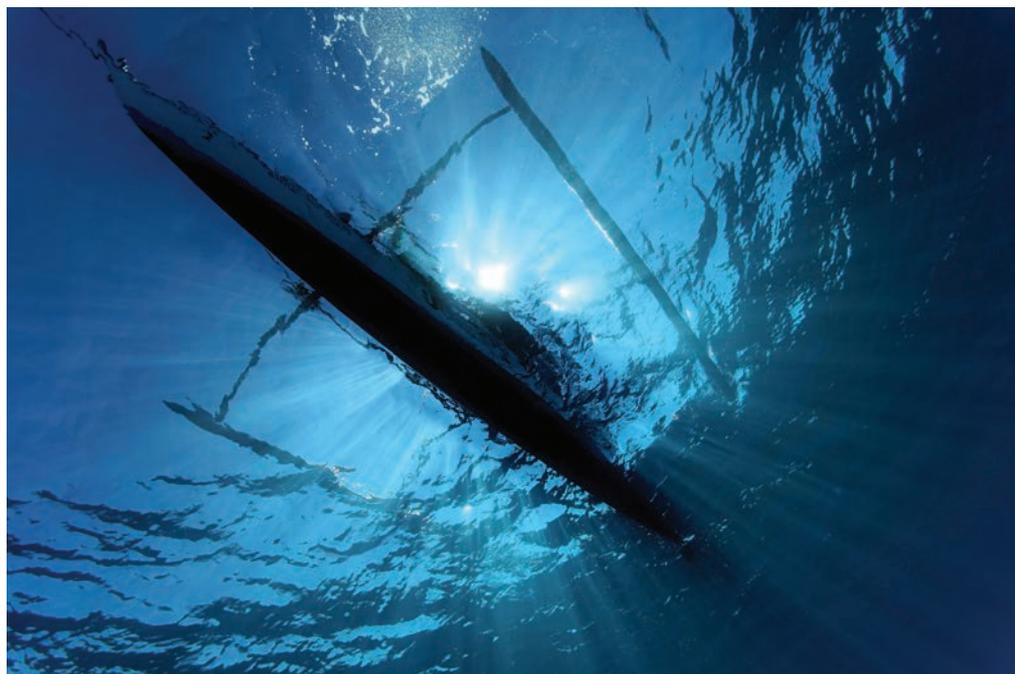
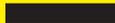
The small town of San Jose is the starting point for many excursions to the west coast of Mindoro and, in addition to the many small Tuktuks that are used here as the means of transport, also offers a wonderful market that is worth getting up in the morning for. The many different scents from all corners and the already wide awake, very cheerful Filipinos, let the curious tourist dive ever deeper into this bazaar of the senses.

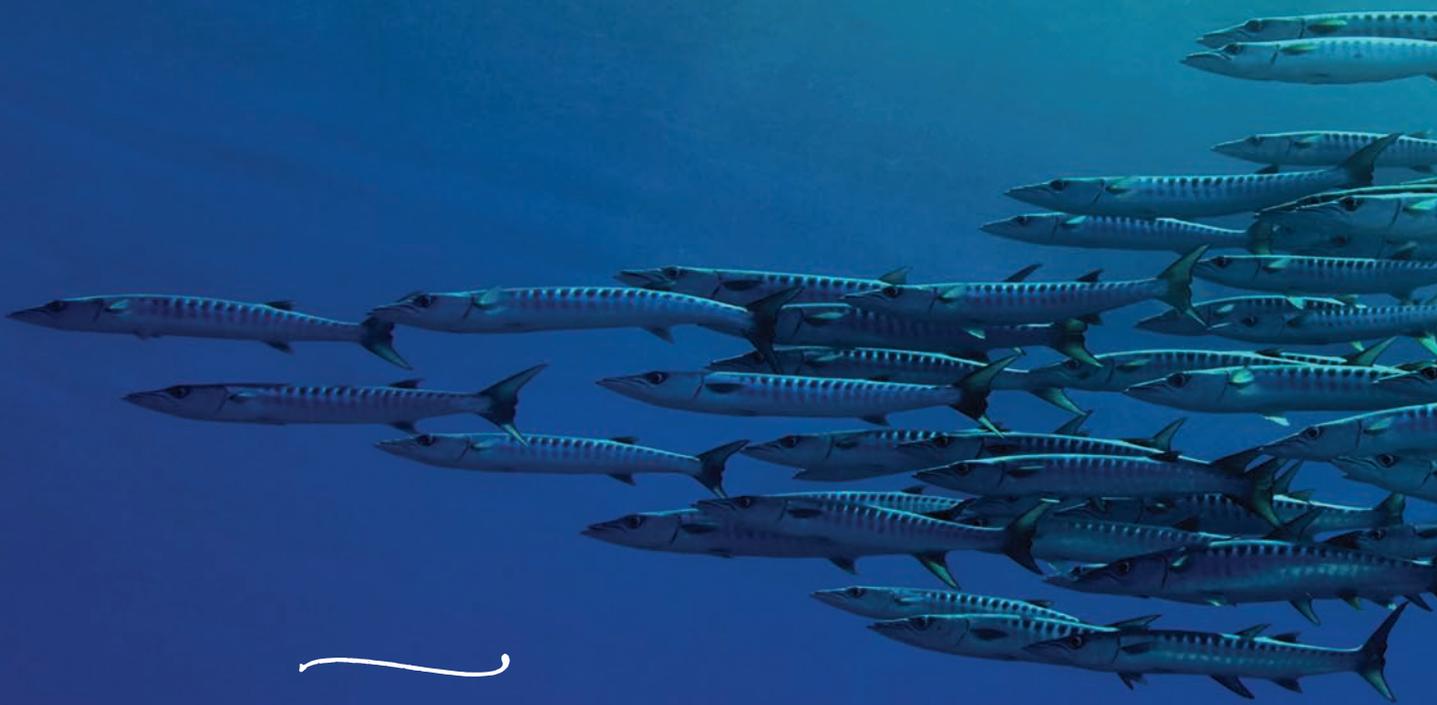
There is a total of about six different dive spots that can be reached directly on the west coast of Mindoro, near the Apo Reef Club. They are all relatively close and not particularly deep, which makes them great for beginners. Unfortunately, the adjacent rivers also flush a lot of sediment into the ocean, which has an impact on the visibility when diving near the coast. Brown mud stretches across many areas of stony ground and also partially covers the corals. It is a bizarre impression when a beautiful nudibranch is suddenly discovered in this supposedly desolate area, shimmering in its wildest colours. The coastal dives are not particularly spectacular, but very interesting in →



TOBIAS FRIEDRICH

Tobias Friedrich lives in Germany and started taking pictures with a DSLR underwater in 2007. Since then his images have been published all over the world. Several underwater photographic competitions have honoured his work, resulting in over 50 awards with nearly 30 first places. He was named "Underwater Photographer of the Year 2018" in the prestigious UPY London competition and "German Photographer of the Year 2019" in Germany. He uses SEACAM and Canon equipment and leads expeditions and workshops worldwide that anyone can join.





The many impressions and fantastic dives allow divers to fall asleep on the sun deck of the ship, surrounded by a sea of stars, before continuing on the next day at sunrise.

their own way. The night dive on the nearby wreck should not be missed. Countless small shrimp are magically attracted by the light of the torches and divers can no longer see their own hand in front of their eyes, there are so many.

Of course, the resort's main attraction is not the coastline but Apo Reef itself. The trip with the 21 metre outrigger boat or "Banca", as it is called in the Philippines, takes about 2.5 hours, and an overnight stay on the boat is planned, directly at the reef. The narrow boat offers space for about 10-12 divers, who are well catered for by the accompanying cook. On the leisurely trip to the reef, it is not uncommon for the tour group to be accompanied by a dolphin school. Recently it has also been possible to take a day trip with a speedboat from the Apo Reef Club - 30 minutes' ride to one of the most beautiful dive sites in the Philippines - that's great!

Around 30 dive sites await divers at Apo Reef. The whole thing is almost exclusive: no other diving vessel can be seen here. "Once in five years we met divers underwater, otherwise there are usually only one or two other boats





TOPSIDE ACTIVITIES



Purnaga Cave

Breathtaking views of the jungle and inside the cave, huge stalagmites and stalactites, as well as bats.

Hanging Bridge at Mt. Iglit

Set in one of the heritage parks of the Philippines this is a great place to experience the unique wildlife of the region.



here," reports Michael Roos, owner of Apo Reef Club, underlining the insider tip status that this reef currently enjoys. Where else in the world are there reefs of this quality that are not overrun by anchored safari boats? And this reef really proves its quality: spectacular coral gardens, steeply sloping cliffs, beautiful nudibranchs, and a visibility range of up to 30 metres make diving here a real pleasure.

Due to the large number of dive sites, it is not possible to explore everything in the short time of two days. Should you choose the shallow dives, where you can bob around and look behind every coral in peace? Or would you prefer the drift on the steep wall, where Whitetip or Grey Reef Sharks can be seen more often? Apo Reef offers such a large variety of life that it is not exhausted even on a second or third visit.

Between the dives one can walk on one of the three islands located in the Natural Park. The beautiful, white sandy beach leads to the interior of the island, past lush mangrove forests, which are spawning grounds for many native sea animals and breeding grounds for birds. At the end of the walk there is a small lighthouse which visitors are invited to climb to enjoy a breathtaking view of the island and the fringing reef.

If you want to enjoy more than diving, you can also explore the country from here and get to know the very friendly Filipino people. For example, the Mountain Tour is highly recommended, as it leads



inland to a small river where you can have a picnic. The village of the "Mangyans" is also interesting, as the indigenous people of this mountain world are called, who still live in close contact with nature in their original way of life. If you prefer to explore the country on your own, you can also rent a small motorbike. This is no problem because there is not much happening on the streets of Mindoro and there is gasoline on every corner - bottled in cola bottles!



A canoe tour through the rivers close to the Club, past the rampant roots of the mangroves, is highly recommended, during which the great biodiversity of the birds living there can be admired. During rice planting season, a detour on foot is also worthwhile to observe the locals at work in the fields. Europeans are warmly welcomed here in the country and since almost every Filipino also understands and speaks a few chunks of English, there is often even a small conversation to enjoy. ■

TAKE ME THERE

Apo Reef - Mindoro



Getting There

You can fly from Manila to San Jose and then take a taxi to the resorts. It is also possible to take a bus and ferry for those with a sense of adventure – this trip from Manila takes about 12 hours. Apo Reef is also a popular dive site on many liveboard itineraries.



Best time to dive

The tropical climate in the Philippines consists of three typical periods: the rainy season from June to November, the cool season with occasional rains from December to February, and the hot dry summer from March to May. The best time for travel is mid-December until mid-May.



Air Temperature

25°C-38°C.



Water Temperature

25° - 29°C.



Hyperbaric Chamber

St. Patrick's Hospital Medical Center, Batangas City



LCP Hyperbaric Medicine Center and Wound Care Facility, Quezon City

Advance Hyperbaric Life Support, Inc. - Quezon City & Mandaluyong City



Dive Centres & Liveboards

Apo Reef Club
www.aporeefclub.com

Atlantis Azores
www.atlantishotel.com

Discovery Fleet
www.discoveryfleet.com

Philippine Siren
www.sirenfleet.com





Dauin, Dumaguete & Apo Island

NEGROS ORIENTAL



NEGROS ORIENTAL, also called Oriental Negros or Eastern Negros, is a province located in the region of the Central Visayas. It occupies the south-eastern half of the large island of Negros, and borders Negros

Occidental, which comprises the north-western half of the island.

Dauin and Dumaguete lie about 10 miles apart on the east coast. Apo Island lies just a little south of both and offshore, about a 30-minute boat ride away. Scuba diving is the principle industry here with divers flocking to dive the pristine reefs of the marine reserve around Apo Island, as well as to marvel at the muck diving marine life found in coastal waters.

Dumaguete is a vibrant university city, with plenty of bars, restaurants and cafes to provide the visitor with lively nightlife. Dauin is a little quieter, but boasts beautiful volcanic beaches fringed with palm trees that offer a little shade from the ever-present sunshine. Whichever you chose, excellent diving is only a few minutes away. →



APO ISLAND - HAVEN FOR TURTLES

The reef around Apo Island is a marine reserve, protected by the National Integrated Protected Area Act (NIPA) and under the jurisdiction of the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB).

Apo Island is a popular dive and snorkelling spot, and the island is home to over 650 documented species of fish and over 400 species of corals. The shallow reefs are absolutely brimming with turtles, and the island also offers some of the best wall diving in the region.

There are two resorts on Apo Island, each with a dive centre, and it is within easy reach via boat from Dauin and Dumaguete.



—
*Shh... there
are secret coves
to dive in
all over the
Philippines*
—





©Charles Beluio

Best of two worlds

WORDS & IMAGES: **FROGFISH PHOTOGRAPHY**

DIVING FROM DAUIN or Dumaguete offers divers the best of two worlds, with wonderful coral reefs and world-class muck diving all on your doorstep. Apo Island was to be our first dive. It is one of the actively managed marine parks in the Philippines where you need to get permits to dive before heading out on the half-hour boat ride. Once there, even just looking over the side of our traditional Filipino boat, we could see that this was going to be an incredible dive. The corals in the shallows are healthy and cover the substrate completely. Numerous pastel shades of pink, yellow and orange glint in the sunshine and, if you are lucky, you might even see a turtle casually swim by.

The area is popular with both snorkellers and divers and so there are usually several



FROGFISH PHOTOGRAPHY

Frogfish Photography are husband and wife team Nick and Caroline Robertson-Brown. Underwater Photography Editor and Deputy Editor at Scubaverse and Dive Travel Adventures respectively; photo-journalists that hope to inspire others to love and protect the oceans.

boats moored up, but numbers are limited to ensure the protection of the reef and the quality of the experience.

Soon we are geared up, cameras in hand, raring to go. We are part of a small group of just four divers plus our local guide and, as we dip our heads below the surface, a magical new world comes into focus. A turtle lazily raises its head as we descend a metre or so to be alongside it. The turtle has seen it all before and goes back to sleep in its comfortable soft coral bed. As we descend deeper, we reach the edge of the wall that plunges into the deep. We look out into the blue azure water every now and then, as it is here that we might be lucky and catch a glimpse of pelagic species such as sharks, tuna and hunting jacks.

Along the wall, huge Magnificent



Anemones sit proudly on outcrops on the reef. As they ball up, they show off their bright pink and purple skirts and their resident anemonefish dart back and forth through the stinging tentacles before racing out to challenge any diver that gets too close. I hear a call and look down to see a Banded Sea Krait (a poisonous – but harmless to divers – sea snake) swim up through my equipment as it makes its way to the surface to breathe. The diving here is wonderful, with clear blue and warm seas full of marine life. It is the perfect start to our adventure.

Our following days are taken up with some serious muck diving. This area is one of very few in the world that can offer top class critter hunting, where the rarest and most extraordinary – and sometimes very small – creatures can be found if you have a guide with a good set of eyes. Never have we seen so many different species and colourations of frogfish, one of our favourite finds. There is even a Frogfish Specialty on offer here! Tiny crustaceans try to hide in the soft corals; nudibranchs roam over the reef; elusive mimic and blue octopus, as well as flamboyant cuttlefish, move across the volcanic seabed; seahorses cling to vegetation whilst swaying with the current. →

This area is one of very few in the world to offer **top class critter diving.**



TREASURE ISLAND



Dauin is one of the world's top muck diving spots, offering macro photographers and those who love to find unusual and sometimes tiny marine creatures hours of fun!

Muck Diving got its name as many muck diving sites are also known for the litter, but this area is different, in that the marine life is here, but the pollution is not. Underwater photographers flock here for the amazing marine life, expert spotter guides, and many photo workshops.

Frogfish, nudibranchs, seahorses, crustaceans, octopus and Mandarinfish are just some of the marine creatures that can be found in all their glory. Some are so well camouflaged that they can be nearly impossible to spot, taking time and patience - and a skilled guide - to find. Others are smaller than a grain of rice. All give a diver immense pleasure when they are discovered.

TOPSIDE ACTIVITIES



Visit the Hot Springs and Pulang Bato waterfall

Wander through
Malatapay Market

The Rush Zipline Adventure

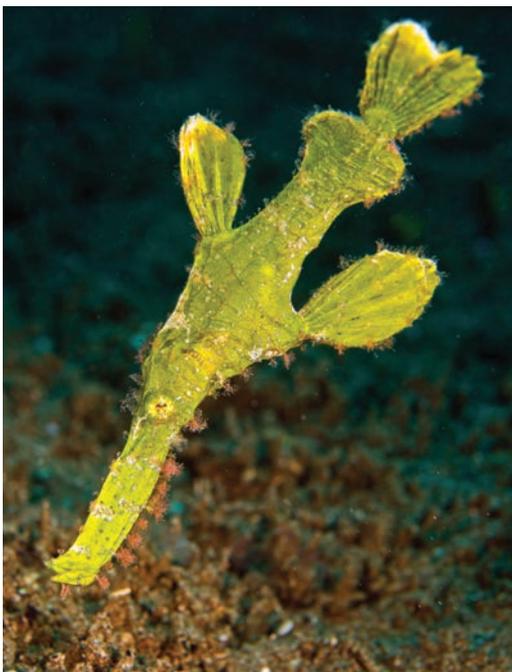
Dolphin Watching



Blackwater diving is popular here, and at night, the animals become bolder, moving out into the open to give you a better chance of seeing the more reclusive species. And there is another special treat for those that like diving in the dark. Mating Mandarinfish put on a spectacular display when the conditions are just right. These most beautiful of fish that are only about an inch long, dart amongst piles of dead hard corals, offering a brief glimpse of their stunning colouration, until a male and female pair up. The peak of their ritual, which lasts but a moment, sees them join together and dart upwards into the dark water, releasing eggs and sperm in the final act of their dance. It is all over in a flash – and incredibly hard to photograph – but it is an absolute joy to watch!

Diving done, we venture out on some local transport to see a little of the countryside around us and to try out some local eateries. Our driver takes us out on his tuk tuk and recommends that we head into Dauin itself. Once there, we find a bar that sells craft ale and serves excellent food, and so our trip ends on a further high. ■





TAKE ME THERE

Dauin, Dumaguete & Apo Island - Negros Oriental



Getting There

Dumaguete Airport:

Local flights from Cebu or Manila
International Airports.

Dumaguete Ferry Terminal: Ferries
run from Cebu, Siquijor or Tagbilaran
on Bohol Island.

Transfers to Dauin: Short taxi ride
from Dumaguete; most dive centres
provide free transfers.



Best time to dive

Dry season is from December
to May; wet season is from June to
November. It's possible to dive all
year round here.



Air Temperature

23°C - 34°C.



Water Temperature

27°C - 30°C.



Hyperbaric Chamber

PCSSD Hyperbaric Chamber,
Mandaue City, Cebu.



Dive Centres & Liveaboards

Atlantis Dive Resorts / Atlantis Azores
www.atlantishotel.com

Atmosphere Resorts and Spa
www.atmosphereresorts.com



Azure Dive Resort
www.azurediver.com

Discovery Fleet
www.discoveryfleet.com

Fish Unlimited Beach and Dive Resorts
www.dive-dumaguete.com

Fun & Sun Dive & Travel
www.funanddivetravel.com

Philippine Siren
www.sirenfleet.com

Salaya Beach Houses
www.salayabeachhouses.com

Sea Explorers
www.sea-explorers.com

Solitude One
www.solitude-one.com



Ticao Island
MASBATE

Ticao Island

MASBATE





TICAO ISLAND is one of three major islands in the Masbate province of the Philippines. While this island is gaining notoriety precisely because of the diversity and abundance found here, Ticao is still a mostly unknown and unblemished gem. It is also an important area for Manta Ray conservation.

Manta Bowl is a small seamount located 7km offshore from the island of Ticao. This extraordinary habitat hosts an enormous diversity of large marine vertebrates including Reef Manta Rays, Oceanic Manta Rays, Thresher Sharks, Whale Sharks, Hammerhead and Whitetip Reef Sharks, as well as dolphins and whales, and many species of marine turtles.



Pelagic Magic

WORDS: **ANDREW MARRIOTT** IMAGES: **SCOTT 'GUTSY' TUASON & ANDREW MARRIOTT**



ANDREW MARRIOTT

Andrew is a long time diver, photographer and writer. His work has been published in a wide variety of media around the world, but his true love is writing books. He is the managing partner of Fata Morgana Media, a business dedicated to producing high-quality media content for the dive and travel industry.

A TYPICAL DIVER'S bucket list will have a few big animals right at the top – Mantas, Thresher Sharks, and Whale Sharks. Add to that weird and bizarre macro critters for the photographer types, and you have an excellent start to a dream vacation. White sand beaches and coconut trees? Sure! Amazing and hospitable people who live by the rhythm of the ocean? Yep, that too!

Of course, we will also want lush tropical reefs teeming with vibrant soft corals and swarms of colourful fish. We all know places that have all this come with a catch, usually swarms of visitors packing every dive site! Now, what if I told you that there is a place where there is no catch... Meet the island of Ticao in the Philippines!

Ticao is so far off the beaten path that Google has barely found it. Don't believe me? Try and find it, and your search will probably come up with only a few results. Even by Philippine standards, Ticao is about as far off the path as you can get. Ticao sits between the islands of Masbate and Luzon. Getting to Ticao is not easy, but isn't that the whole point of going there?

Within 20 minutes of arriving you won't even remember the journey. On your first morning you will awake to the sound of gentle waves just outside your beachside bungalow and, after breakfast, it's time to get on the dive boat and you are in for a treat. Beneath the surface is the wild side of Ticao. Diving in the →



SCOTT 'GUTSY' TUASON

Gutsy Tuason is a diver and nature photographer who started taking underwater photographs 35 years ago. His books have won numerous awards including the P'Alme d'Or at Antibes, and Book of the Year 2017 in the Underwater Photographer of the Year Competition. When he's not out diving, Gutsy runs Squires Bingham Sports in Manila.



Ticao Island MASBATE

waters around this island has something for everyone, so don't be afraid to take the plunge even if you are a beginner. Diving can be done just offshore, or you can head further out to destinations like Manta Bowl Shoal and San Miguel Island. Neither of these is more than a 45-minute boat ride away, and they offer an impressive array of dive sites.

If you are after the superstar attractions found in Ticao's inviting waters, you need to time your trip correctly. The narrow channel formed between Ticao and Luzon creates strong tidal currents and the water is rich with nutrients from run-off. All this creates a wonderful feeding environment for krill, and with the krill come Whale Sharks. Visiting between November and June gives the best chance of catching these gentle giants. During that time of year, the water is at its coolest, but donning a 5mm wetsuit is not much of a nuisance to those from more frigid climes.

Ticao is excellent for several other species of big sharks and July to October is the time of year to sight the legendary Thresher Sharks. Although these reclusive animals are typically associated with Malapascua, they can also be →



MARINE LIFE HIGHLIGHTS



If sharks aren't your cup of tea, or if you get unlucky in spotting one, there is a lot more on offer. Ticao has loads of other dive sites that always offer up a memorable experience no matter what time of year you visit. You'll find thrilling drifts over lush, healthy reefs that explode with a spectrum of colours when you shine a light on them. Soft corals, thronging masses of colourful anthias and other reef fish, occasional turtles, and plenty of other big fish abound. If you are looking for simple, easy, and low-stress dives, there are plenty of those too. Throw in some big animal encounters and you'll be telling sea stories about Ticao long after you return home.





“The Manta Bowl sits 7kms off the coast of Ticao Island within the Philippine’s second-largest National Integrated Protected Area System. Both Reef and Oceanic Manta species are present, and it hosts the largest known aggregation of Manta in the country with over 270 individuals.

The Manta Bowl is also an important habitat for other large marine vertebrates with frequent encounters of Whale Sharks and known sightings of other mobula species and several protected shark species.”

MARTINA SPAKOSKI

Manta Ray Research Project Leader

Large Marine Invertebrates Research Institute Philippines

www.lamave.org

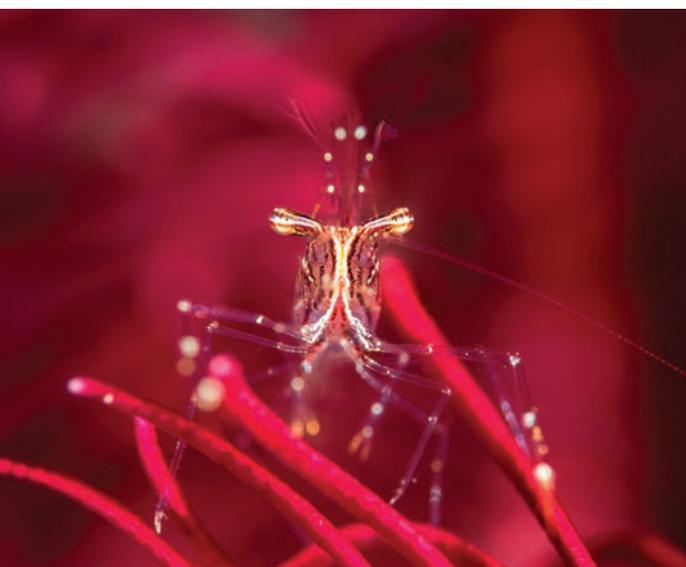
TOPSIDE
ACTIVITIES



Firefly River Tour

Snorkel with Whale Sharks
in Donsol

Horse Riding



found around Ticao during the summer monsoon season. For many divers and photographers, the Thresher is the holy grail of sharks, and just having an opportunity to see one will keep you on your toes during every dive. Sightings are far from guaranteed but don't worry, there are also occasional Tiger Sharks and even Hammerheads!

Not everybody is into big animals or pretty reefs; some of us like to get in the sand and muck to look for bizarre critters. There are a variety of macro sites – from broken, current-swept rubble, to open sandy expanses – that appear lifeless but are far from it. The key to an excellent macro dive is a knowledgeable spotter, so make sure you talk with your guide about what you want to see, and Ticao will deliver it in spades.

Ticao is still off the diving radar, but that will change. If you are looking for the chance to be a trailblazer and try something exciting and new, pack your bags for Manila, hop in a van for a few hours, make friends on a ferry, and then prepare to have one of your best dive trips ever when you step onto the shores of this magical island. ■

TAKE ME THERE

Ticao Island - Masbate



Getting There

The easiest way to get to Ticao Island is by plane and boat. You can fly into Masbate City, and from the port take a boat across to Ticao Island (about 30 minutes transfer).



Best time to dive

If you are looking for the best weather, calm seas and the best diving conditions, visit from March to October. Visiting from November to January/February will mean that you don't get the best weather or the calmest seas, but these months are part of the Whale Shark season.



Air Temperature

27°C – 32°C.



Water Temperature

From 26°C in January to around 30°C in July.



Hyperbaric Chamber

LCP Hyperbaric Medicine Center and Wound Care Facility, Quezon City



Advance Hyperbaric Life Support, Inc.
- Quezon City and Mandaluyong City

PCSSD Hyperbaric Chamber, Mandaue City, Cebu



Dive Centres & Liveboards

Discovery Fleet

www.discoveryfleet.com

Solitude One

www.solitude-one.com

Ticao Island Resort

www.ticao-island-resort.com



Puerto Galera
MINDORO



Puerto Galera

MINDORO



PUERTO GALERA, 'THE Port of Galleons', was historically a safe haven from storms and typhoons for Spanish trading galleons travelling to and from the capital. Its location at the northern tip of the island of Mindoro puts this uniquely vibrant town within easy reach of metropolitan Manila.

Now well developed as a resort town for Filipino and international travellers, Puerto Galera sits in a natural harbour on the Verde Island Passage, which scientists have called "the centre of the world's marine biodiversity." The resort also has the highest number of dive schools in the entire Philippines and is a popular choice for diver training at all levels. Puerto Galera is justifiably famous for its splendid beaches, coral reefs teeming with marine life and exquisite dive sites.

A Diver's Delight...

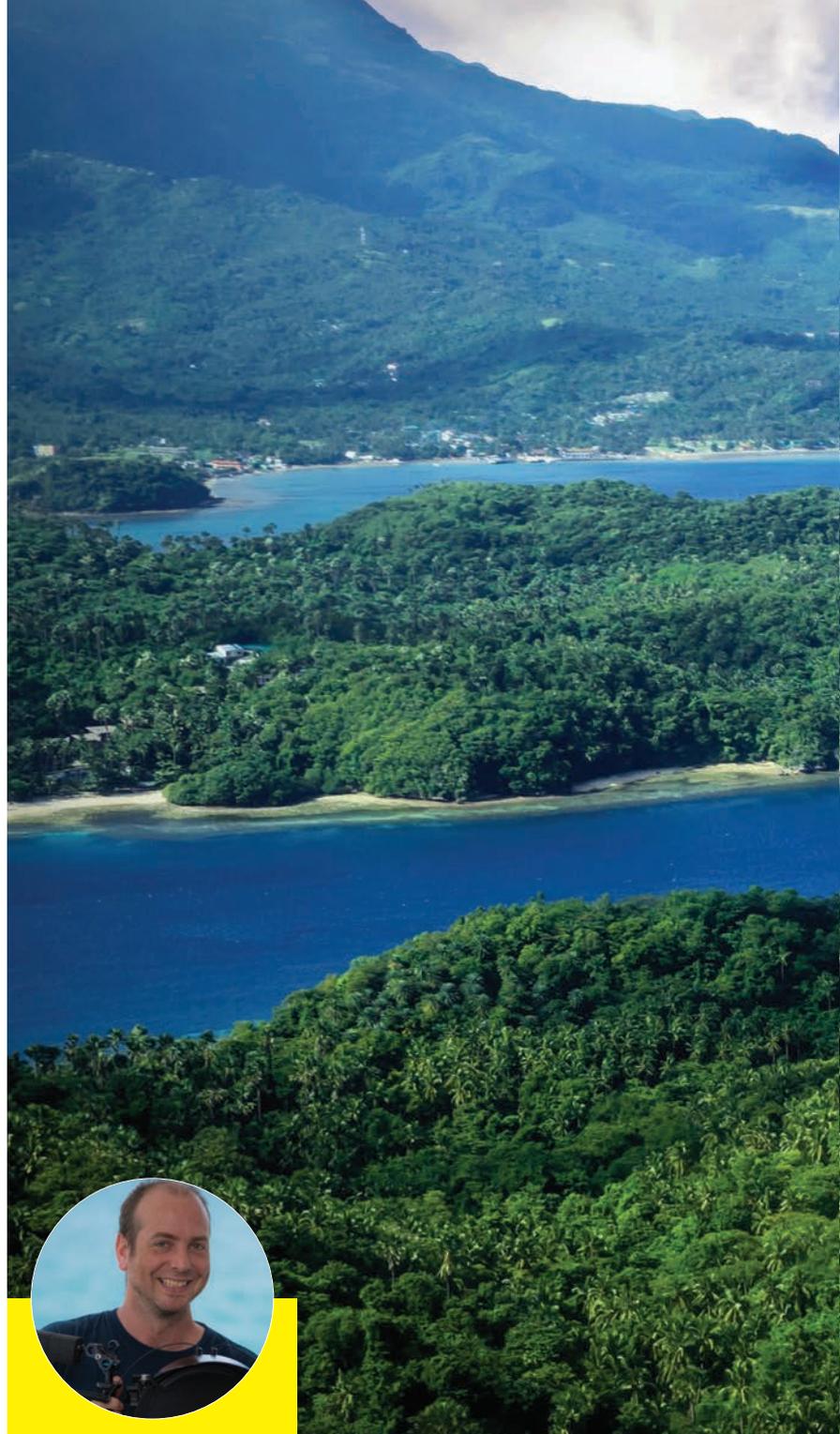
WORDS & IMAGES: **DR ALEX TATTERSALL**

THE POPULARITY OF this region for divers of all nationalities and diving preferences is apparent as soon as one steps foot onto the arrival pier; the rumble of air compressors, the dive certification agency flags and banners waving in the warm breeze, and the happy, relaxed looking, wetsuit-clad divers moving around through the town all contribute to the promise of exotic and unforgettable days ahead.

The area surrounding Puerto Galera was designated a Man and Biosphere Reserve of UNESCO in 1973 and offers some of the most diverse coral reef diving in Asia. On top of this enviable accolade, day trips out of town can take the nature lover to lush mountains, stunning waterfalls and indigenous wildlife encounters, all wrapped up with the welcoming smiles, warm hospitality and genuine, kind curiosity of the local residents.

My frequent return visits to Puerto Galera reflect the degree to which my heart has been captured by this town, and each experience is as rewarding and memorable as the next. Puerto Galera is firmly on my itinerary of preferred photo workshop destinations, and I have brought many groups of keen dive photographers to share in this rewarding and varied experience over the last several years.

Our journey from Manila to Puerto Galera (usually after an overnight stop and a shopping visit to the enormous Mall of Asia) begins early with →



DRALEX TATTERSALL

Dr Alex Tattersall is a very active underwater photographer in the UK and overseas and the founder of Underwater Visions, the importer and distributor of the Nauticam range of underwater products for the UK, France and Eire.

His enthusiasm for creatively capturing the underwater world and sharing these ideas and techniques with others has led to his passion for teaching UWP workshops around the world. He has become a leading and vocal proponent for marine animal welfare in the growing world of underwater photography.





The area surrounding Puerto Galera was designated a **Man and Biosphere Reserve of UNESCO** in 1973 and offers some of the most diverse coral reef diving in Asia.





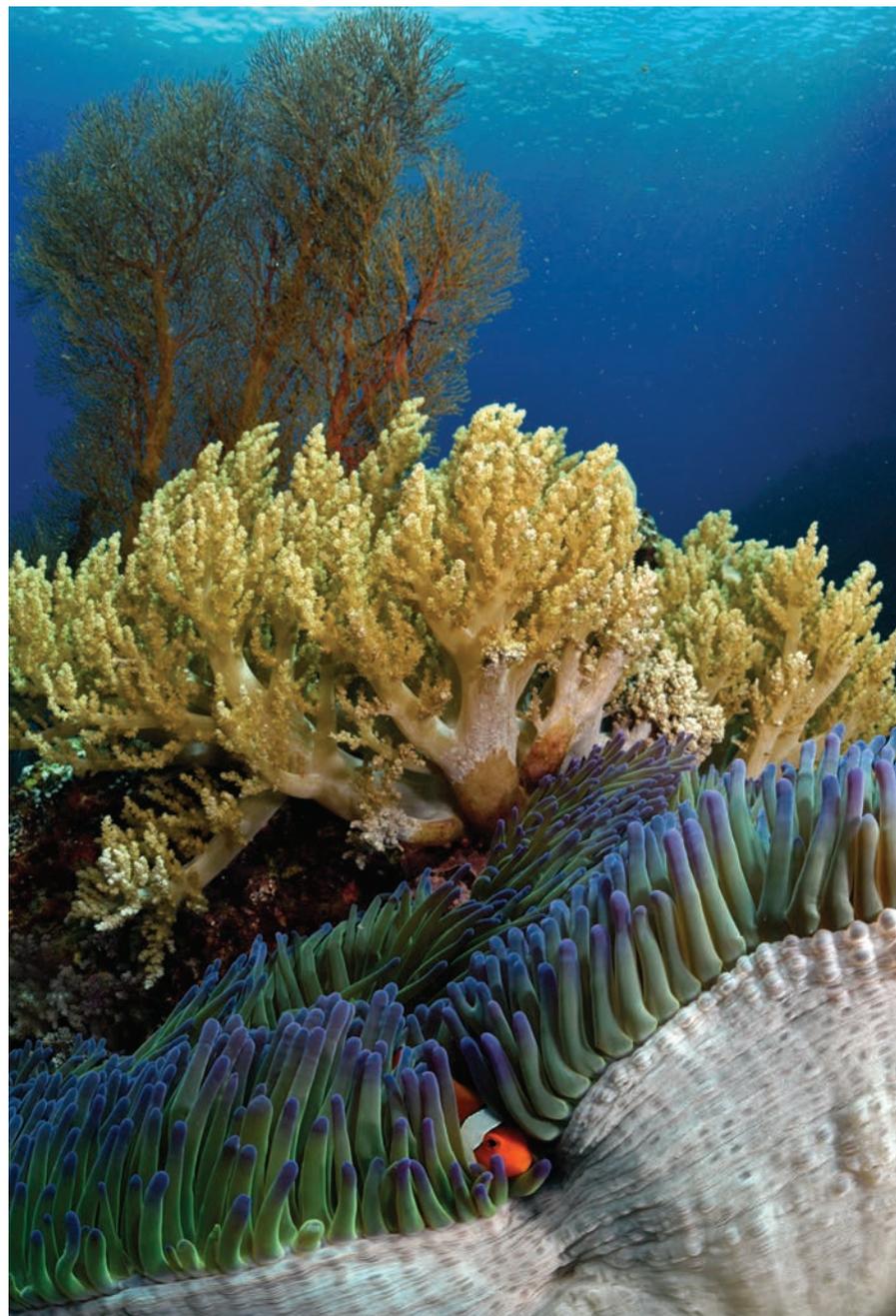
“If you want to see the most **diverse marine life** on the planet, in the heart of the **Verde Island Passage, Puerto Galera** is the destination for you.”

TERRENCE GOSLINER, PH.D
Senior Curator, Dept of Invertebrate Zoology,
California Academy of Sciences

an overland transit through the seemingly endless metropolitan sprawl, onto the southern highway, and then through the winding jungle dirt tracks to the coastal city of Batangas. Here, many macro dive photographers will head on overland to the macro mecca of Anilao, but our journey to Puerto Galera requires us to make a short one-hour crossing from the island of Luzon to the smaller island of Mindoro, heading south.

Little can prepare us for the excitement of boarding our ‘banca’ outrigger boat at Batangas Pier, jet-lag momentarily forgotten as we embark from the jetty. As warm and humid air circulates around our discombobulated heads, and soft sprays of warm saltwater catch our tired faces, we know our long journey is coming to an end. Once installed in our rooms, cocktails in hand, we can start thinking about our diving options, which are plentiful, varied and - quite literally - out of this world.

In spite of the proximity of Puerto Galera to Manila, the multitude of dive operations and the human traffic visiting the dive sites, the health of the reefs and the density of marine flora and fauna are consistently spectacular. This has much to do with the water movement in the area, which during certain moon cycles and at certain exposed dive sites can be ‘exhilarating’, as an understatement.



For thrill seekers, the local site of the Canyons and Hole in the Wall are a well-known signature dive wherein divers are dropped at Hole in the Wall and are then ‘encouraged’ by the current into the lee of three canyons at 22m, 26m and 30m. Sheltering in each canyon, the diver will find the soft and hard coral reefs teeming with buzzing resident anthias, large schools of Oriental Sweetlips, Yellow-striped Goatfish... the list is endless. A good look into the exposed, current-washed waters will treat the diver to behavioural displays as schools of Giant Trevally and barracuda seemingly effortlessly hunt for prey. Timing these dives on slack water and different moon cycles can present a very different and relaxing ‘fishbowl’ experience, offering excellent but less adrenaline-charged photographic opportunities for the more measured wide-angle photographer. →





TOPSIDE ACTIVITIES



Day Trip to Verde Island

Tamaraw Falls - a 423-foot waterfall situated alongside the road

The Excavation Museum in PG houses collections of Chinese and Siamese pottery from the 15th century

Mt. Halcon is the country's third highest peak and is great for nature hiking and mountain climbing

Lake Naujan - freshwater lake surrounded by hot springs

Currents galore!

Staying with the theme of currents, most divers visiting Puerto Galera will want to add a day or two of their stay to experience and explore Verde Island, situated in the channel between Luzon and Mindoro islands. Verde Island offers dive sites consistently featuring in the top ten Philippines dive sites in most, if not all, dive site reviews of the Philippines. A visit to Verde Island should be on the itinerary of all dive orientated visitors to the region, however the timing of the visit needs to be considered.

The two most famous sites, The Drop Off and The Washing Machine, whilst stunningly vibrant with soft corals and fish schools, experience extremely strong currents during full moon cycles, most dive centres counter-indicating diving during these times. These strong currents bring nutrient rich water to the flora and fauna of the island, feeding corals, fish life, and critters alike. It can also bring through crystal clear rich blue waters, with 30 metre plus visibility as currents and lunar positions move through their respective cycles.

For myself however, and the groups

of visitors I usually accompany on international dive trips, we tend to be motivated more by the photographic side of diving, meaning we look towards long, shallow dives, plentiful with photogenic and accommodating subjects.

Puerto Galera's rich offering of varied dive sites takes our requirements in its stride in offering shallow 'muck' dives (Ghost Town/Ship Town) with unending encounters with strange and wonderful critters (on white sand substrate making it stand out from other muck diving, 'black sand' destinations); shallow wreck dives (Sabang Wrecks in particular) absolutely littered with frogfish, nudibranchs, cardinalfish brooding eggs in their mouths, schools of Striped Catfish and Convict Blennies; and coral wall/slope dives (Sinandigan Wall) offering pygmy seahorses, whip and soft coral critters, species on species of nudibranchs, and so much more. Most of these dive sites are within 5-10 minutes of the concentration of dive centres in the bay of Puerto Galera so we tend to return to the more productive photographic sites frequently within our trips. ■



©Jerome Kim

TAKE ME THERE

Puerto Galera - Mindoro



Getting There

Accessible from Manila or any part of Luzon by van to Batangas (approximately two hours from Manila) and then boat to Puerto Galera (approximately one hour).



Best time to dive

This area can be dived all year round although the period between March and August seems to offer the best visibility and conditions generally.



Air Temperature

Ranging from 21°C-33°C.



Water Temperature

A very pleasant 26°C-29°C.



Hyperbaric Chamber

St. Patrick's Hospital Medical Center, Batangas City

LCP Hyperbaric Medicine Center and Wound Care Facility, Quezon City

Advance Hyperbaric Life Support, Inc. - Quezon City & Mandaluyong City



Dive Centres & Liveboards

Asia Divers
www.asiadivers.com

Atlantis Dive Resorts/Atlantis Azores
www.atlantishotel.com

Discovery Fleet
www.discoveryfleet.com

Frontier Scuba
www.frontierscuba.com

Philippine Siren
www.sirenfleet.com

Scandi Divers
www.scandivers.com



Sogod Bay

Leyte Island

SOGOD BAY IS a large bay in the southern part of Leyte Island. An extension of the Bohol Sea, the bay is surrounded by the province of Southern Leyte. It is famous for being the place where General Douglas MacArthur strode up the beach in the reconquest of the Philippines from the Japanese in World War II.

Sogod Bay is an amazing body of water, only twelve kilometres across but over one kilometre deep at its deepest point. It enjoys some of the highest diversity of marine life seen anywhere in the world. A remote location with extensive protected marine park areas means this destination is growing in popularity with divers around the world.





**DR ALEX TATTERSALL**

Dr Alex Tattersall is a very active underwater photographer in the UK and overseas and the founder of Underwater Visions, the importer and distributor of the Nauticam range of underwater products for the UK, France and Eire.

His enthusiasm for creatively capturing the underwater world and sharing these ideas and techniques with others has led to his passion for teaching UWP workshops around the world. He has become a leading and vocal proponent for marine animal welfare in the growing world of underwater photography.



So far, So Good - Off the beaten track in the Philippines

WORDS & IMAGES: **DR ALEX TATTERSALL**

SOUTHERN LEYTE AND specifically the small town of Padre Burgos at the southernmost tip of Sogod Bay has not been on the diving map for long but is fast establishing itself as a must-visit destination for divers travelling in and around the Philippines.

Although it is a little more off the tourist beaten track, the southern province and the reefs surrounding the horseshoe shaped Sogod Bay attract many hardened dive tourists. The reefs have become regarded as some of the most pristine in the country, as dive resorts and dive operations are limited to just a handful centred around the Padre Burgos area.

Padre Burgos has demonstrated that it is a town committed to an investment in sustainable dive tourism activity looking towards the long-term future. Its council is working with the dive resorts and specifically the British NGO, Coral Cay Conservation, to secure numerous Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), wherein fishing practices are banned and boat activity limited,

thus giving the reef and its inhabitants a chance to grow and flourish. It is also home to an active pier which despite its precarious entry and exit route is recognised as one of the best night critter dives in the region. Offering shallow water and an outstanding richness of subjects, it is an underwater macro photographer's paradise.

Sogod Bay is particularly interesting in that the region has an assortment of different dive sites. Generally, the sites facing southwest are predominantly covered in hard corals due to exposure to the strong summer winds and waves of the 'Habagat' season. Inside the bay the reefs have a higher cover of soft corals, sponges and other organisms that cannot tolerate the increased wave action. Furthermore, coral expert, Dr. Douglas Fenner, wrote that the reefs around Southern Leyte housed vertebrate and invertebrate species numbering far above average for the Philippines' surveys he had conducted.

Southern Leyte is not just for those divers looking for an array of coral colours but is also →



“The pristine and complex reefs of **Sogod Bay** are home to diverse ecological communities and provide an excellent example of successful local management. With such a **rich abundance of marine life** and diverse diving locations, this area offers an exceptional opportunity to experience **the wonders of coral reefs.**”

THOMAS DALLISON MSC
Head of Science - Coral Cay Conservation



DIVE HIGHLIGHTS



The bay offers 20+ dive sites but here I have listed four which photographically are among the most outstanding:

NAPANTAO MPA

Site: Wall/Drift

Depth: 30m

Highlights: Soft coral fans and abundant fish life.

This dive site, for good reason, is seen as the jewel in Southern Leyte's crown. It is one of the longest established MPAs in the province and its clever and strict policy of no fishing rules have allowed this area to truly flourish.

PADRE BURGOS PIER

Site: Muck dive

Depth: 10m

Highlights: Hugely rich in macro subjects.

For the macro photographer, this site is quite simply outstanding.

LIMASAWA ISLAND

Site: Wall Diving

Depth: 20m+

Highlights: Diving Limasawa Island you are

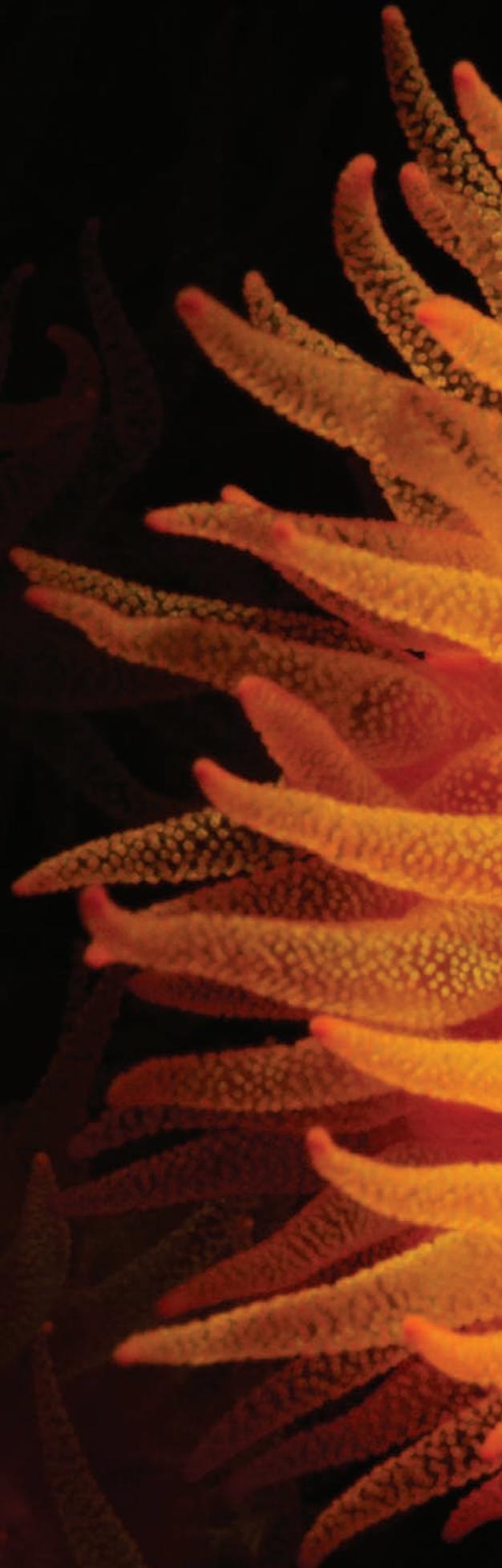
surrounded by amazing underwater scenery with steep walls covered in coral, overhangs and small caves. There are several regularly dived sites on the island, the most visited being Zach's Cove and Adrian's Cove, now part of the largest sanctuary in Southern Leyte.

MAX CLIMAX AT LUNGSODA'AN MPA

Site: Sloping wall

Depth: 18m

Highlights: Pygmy seahorses, hard corals and anemonefish.





*The strict no
fishing policy
has allowed this
area to truly
flourish*

TOPSIDE ACTIVITIES



Cagnituan Falls
and Lagoon

Spelunking at Cambaro Caves

Relaxing on the pristine
white sands of Tangkaan
Beach

See the monkeys at
Hindang Caves Park

great for those looking for exceptional macro life. Ranging from the tiny Pygmy Seahorse, *Hippocampus bargibanti*, to nudibranchs, which scatter the bay in weird and wonderful variations, small, curious critters at newly discovered sites are just waiting to be spotted by the keen macro eye. From the tiny to the enormous: the largest fish in the sea, the Whale Shark - *Rhincodon typus* - visits Sogod Bay, arriving in numbers in December as sea temperatures drop, staying feeding on the numerous plankton blooms, through to April when they move on north towards Taiwan.

This period, December through April, is considered the 'high season' as tourists come to see the Whale Sharks, however, the weather at this time is not always favourable, with 'Amihan' season bringing rains from the northeast. The visibility increases up to 30m or more over the spring as temperatures rise and plankton decreases, with April to June offering near perfect diving conditions. The 'Habagat' season runs through August and September, with occasional strong south-westerly winds when diving is confined to the inner, calmer waters of Sogod Bay. The Autumn months of October and November can offer some lovely, sunny conditions for diving with moderate sea temperatures. ■



TAKE ME THERE

Sogod Bay – Leyte Island



Getting There

Travelling from Europe makes for a long journey. First a night stopover in Manila followed by a one-hour internal flight to Tacloban airport in Northern Leyte. This is followed by a 3-hour scenic drive to the southern tip of the island. An alternative route is to arrive in Cebu and take a ferry to Maasin, 30 minutes drive from the town of Padre Burgos.



Best time to dive

This area can be dived all year although March to July has the best visibility and conditions generally. For Whale Shark encounters, visit from December to April.



Air Temperature

Ranging from 24°C-31°C.



Water Temperature

From 27°C - 29°C year-round.



Hyperbaric Chamber

PCSSD Hyperbaric Chamber, Mandaue City, Cebu



Dive Centres & Liveaboards

Atlantis Azores
www.atlantishotel.com

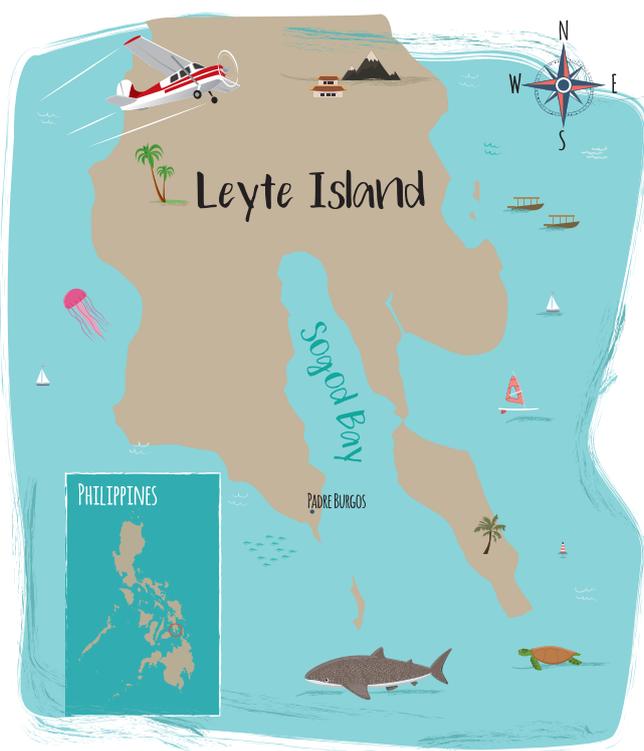
Discovery Fleet
www.discoveryfleet.com

Peter's Dive Resort
www.petersdiveresortph.com

Philippine Siren
www.sirenfleet.com

Sogod Bay Scuba Resort
www.sogodbayscubaresort.com

Solitude One
www.solitude-one.com

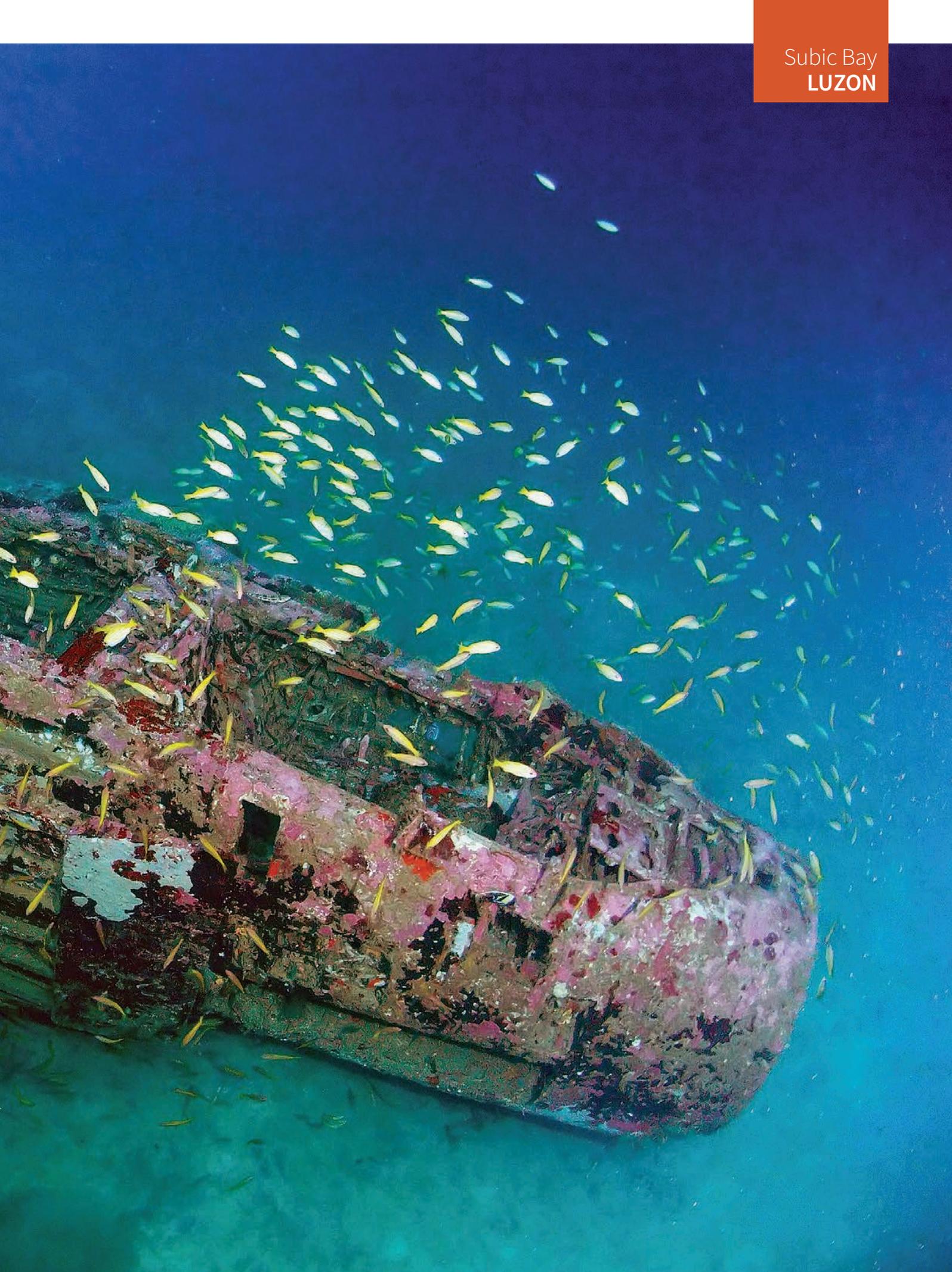


Subic Bay
LUZON



Subic Bay

LUZON



Subic Bay, on the west coast of Luzon, is an extension of the South China Sea. Bordered on three sides by mountainous peaks, the Bay combines tropical waters with lush tropical rainforest. Once the home base of the US naval forces in the Pacific, it is now a hotspot for eco-tourism.

Subic Bay is world famous for its fascinating historical wreck diving, and many of the 20+ wrecks here are within recreational dive limits. Subic Bay also offers a host of shallow water reefs and diverse marine life, which makes this location ideal for divers and photographers of all kinds.



**FRANK
SCHNEIDER**

After his Sport Diver certification in 1982, Frank was invited to write an article for Tauchen a year later, which became the starting point for an 'accidental career' as a travel journalist. Subsequent articles have been published in many countries including Italy, Spain, the UK, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Russia, Turkey and Croatia.

Diving the Subic Way

WORDS & IMAGES: **FRANK SCHNEIDER**



WITHOUT A DOUBT, the Philippines is one of the best diving areas worldwide but many divers are still unfamiliar with the underwater treasures of Subic Bay.

Well known as the home of the once biggest US Naval Base in Asia, Subic Bay was previously under the control of the Spanish Crown for around 350 years. During that time, many warships came to Subic Bay, which lies in the shadow of the active volcano Mount Pinatubo. This volcano is responsible for covering many of the wrecks in a crust of ashes. Does that make the dive experience less attractive? Not at all – it is all the more interesting for it!

Over 20 wrecks await divers in different corners

of the Bay; how many there are exactly is still not known. One of the more famous ships is the USS New York. Launched in 1893, she later became the USS Saratoga, and finally, the USS Rochester. By 1933 she was out of service and scuttled in Subic Bay in 1941. Since that day, the battleship rests in a good condition on her port side between the Alava pier and the airport in just 27 metres depth. Her powerful canons are still very impressive. Unfortunately, due to her position close to the pier, diving on the ex-USS New York is allowed only at certain times.

One of the wrecks that is quite easy to dive is known as "LST". In military jargon, LST stands for Landing Ship, Tank. With wide open bow →



gates, through which vehicles could be set down, the wreck stands upright, and she is easy to enter. The LST is considered the wreck with the most fish in the entire bay. Lionfish hover around in many places between small superstructures and there are also larger mackerel to be seen. The wide range of food options keeps barracuda here, and even sometimes one or two Bull Sharks on a flying visit. The mooring line on the LST is fixed at 24 metres on the port side of the aft quarter. From here you can dive on deck up to the bow with its big winches. The holds are accessible from above and offer more experienced divers an exit through the open bow gates.

Besides all the shipwrecks from different eras and wars, there is another highlight from more recent times. It is a fighter plane: F-4 Phantom. Sunk for training purposes for the US Navy Seals far outside of the Bay, the plane is now grounded at about 45 metres and so out of reach for anyone other than deep or technical divers. The dive in the far out open water is visited only when the sea is calm and begins along a line and leads into the blue. Here outside the Bay, the sea is so clear that the wreck can be seen from at least 20 metres depth. A small

Many of the wrecks are **covered in a crust of ashes.** Does that make the dive experience less attractive? **Not at all – it is all the more interesting for it!**

swarm of fish constantly romps around the fuselage with its stubby wings. The good thing is that there is almost no current around.

There are more deep wrecks for technical divers including the Japanese IJU Banshu Maru, a 37 metres long minesweeper, and a Japanese class 10 submarine hunter by the name of IJN Kyo Maru. This former whaling vessel was attacked by the US Air Force and sunk on March 2nd 1942 by a P-40 Warhawk. Now lying at 69 metres she is definitely out of range for recreational divers. →



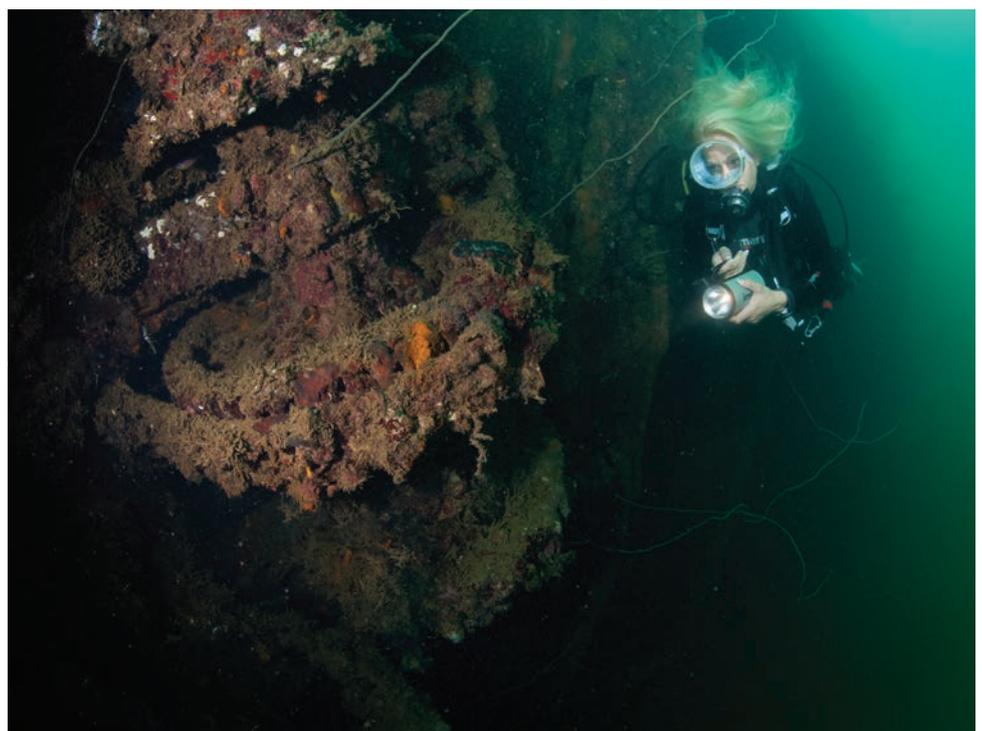
WRECK HIGHLIGHTS

SS EL CAPITAN

A WWII cargo ship, hit by a Japanese torpedo and later towed to Subic Bay, she sank in a storm after the war. Built in 1919 as the USS Meriden, she became the SS El Capitan in 1946. She lies in shallow water between 5-20 metres depth and is home to prolific marine life and some beautiful soft corals.

SAN QUINTIN

170 years ago, this beautiful gunboat was built in Scotland by Cunard Lines as the SS Andes, before being sold to Spain and re-named. In 1898, she was allegedly sacrificed to form an underwater blockade in the Spanish-American War. Broken apart decades ago, she lies at a max depth of 20 metres with usually excellent visibility and rich with marine life.



TOPSIDE ACTIVITIES



Trekking Capones Islands

Jungle Environment
Survival Training

Watersports such as jet- skiing and parasailing

Nightlife! Subic Bay is
known for its lively bars,
restaurants and clubs.



TAKE ME THERE

Subic Bay - Luzon



Getting There

Subic Bay is 2-3 hour's drive by bus from Manila and Clark Airport is less than an hour from Subic Bay.



Best time to dive

You can dive in Subic Bay at any time. However, it's best to visit during the dry season which lasts from November to May. During this time, you can expect better visibility and less currents.



Air Temperature

Ranging from 23°C - 33°C.



Water Temperature

A fairly constant 27°C - 30°C.



Hyperbaric Chamber

LCP Hyperbaric Medicine Center and Wound Care Facility, Quezon City



Advance Hyperbaric Life Support, Inc.,
Quezon City and Mandaluyong City



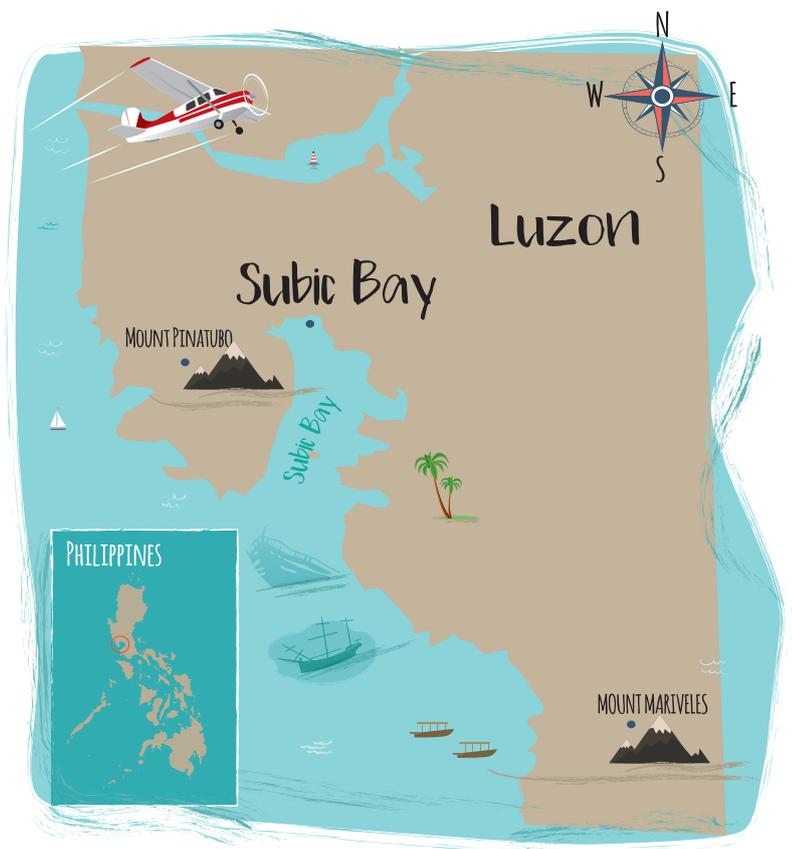
Dive Centres

Camayan Divers

www.camayandivers.com

Johan's Beach and Dive Resort

www.subicdive.com



Exactly the opposite – but interesting for any wreck aficionado – is the easy dive at one of the Landing Craft, Utilities. These LCUs were smaller than the LSTs, but nevertheless able to transport vehicles and small tanks. This particular example is found in a sheltered corner of the Bay and was probably sunk in a storm. It stands upright from 9 to 22 metres and is in good shape. Several lionfish have made her their home and jackfish pass by frequently.

With the El Capitan, two Japanese patrol boats, several other landing craft boats and even more wrecks of ships, planes and vehicles that were either scuttled or damaged in battle, Subic Bay offers all kinds of 'scrap iron' for wreck fans. The fact that the visibility in the Bay is not always as perfect as tropical reefs is something divers are usually happy to accept as a trade-off for the incredible history. The wreck adventure the 'Subic Way' is simply too interesting to miss. ■

Tubbataha Reefs
PALAWAN

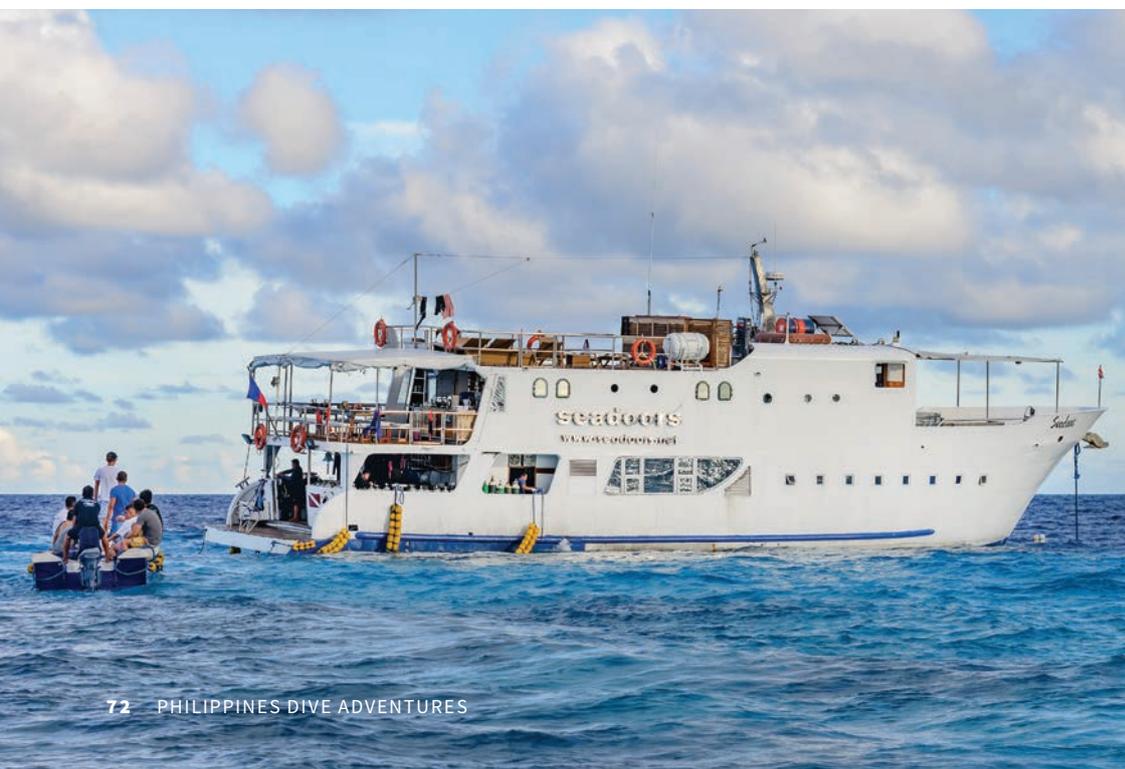


©Beth Watson

Tubbataha Reefs

PALAWAN

Tubbataha Reefs
PALAWAN





Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park (TRNP) is a protected area covering almost 100,000 hectares of pristine reef located in the middle of the Sulu Sea. This marine and bird sanctuary consists of two huge atolls - North and South Atoll - and the smaller Jessie Beazley Reef.

The Park earned designation in 1993 as a UNESCO World Heritage Site as a unique example of an atoll reef with a very high density of marine species. Accessible only by liveaboards, Tubbataha Reefs offer spectacular wall diving, extensive lagoons and two tiny coral cays that are home to nesting turtles and birds.

Tubbataha Safari



WOLFGANG POELZER

Wolfgang is an Austrian underwater photographer with a degree in marine biology, who has worked for over 20 years as a freelance journalist for diving, travel and nature magazines. He is not bothered about water temperature or whether he dives in the sea or freshwater. He is equally happy when taking photos of whales in tropical waters or babies in Austrian pools!

WORDS & IMAGES: **WOLFGANG POLZER**

Go down, take a deep breath and be amazed. The reef, which drops vertically under our fins, loses itself spectacularly in the deep blue of the sensationally clear water. The current gently pushes us past expansive stone corals, brightly coloured rampant soft corals, gigantic sponges and huge bushes of gorgonians. A never-ending train of fusiliers glistening in the sunlight combs the wall for food, while a group of handsome sweet lips stoically remains in the current.

Countless Whitetip Reef Sharks, some Grey Reef Sharks and even a Silvertip Shark a few metres away are the reward for the high nitrogen content in our veins. The other group will later even tell about Hammerhead and Tiger Sharks – admittedly at a great distance.

Unclear audible cries of joy bring me back to reality. Victoria, a lively, pretty Spanish woman, points excitedly upwards. A Whale Shark passes →

—
The time suddenly seems to stand still when a 10 metre long Whale Shark glides gently through our group. It is almost as if she wants to reach out to us.
—







a few metres above our heads! We quickly ascend and can hardly believe our luck when the giant animal actually turns and heads towards us quite comfortably. Is it curiosity or the desire to bask in the bubbles of the divers? We can't be sure, but we just revel in the sight of the world's largest fish with its characteristic white-spotted back.

The time suddenly seems to stand still when the Whale Shark, which is at least 10 metres long, glides gently through our group. Almost as if she wants to reach out to us. Massive and yet so agile, she makes her way, dodges a little at the last moment, and scrapes past me with her protruding pectoral fin almost gently and completely unmoved. Anyone who believes that the spectacle has ended at this point is mistaken. The huge female turns almost in slow motion and comes back, watching us with her eyes wide open as she swims by at arm's length. Only now do I notice the countless red-brown spots that cover the bulky body like an irregular rash. Back, belly, fins, even the lips are affected. Probably old injuries that are now affected by a lot of skin parasites!

It is not for nothing that Tubbataha is considered one of the ultimate diving areas in the Philippines. The reefs are far away and unprotected from wind and waves, within the heart of the Sulu Sea where the southwest and northeast monsoons shake hands and the sea is calm for just three months a year. These unique reefs were declared the first marine national park in the Philippines in 1988 and five years later a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Actual reef protection has only existed since 2000 with →





Scientific counts
have shown **over
600 species of fish
and 360 different
corals**, as well as
around **100 bird
species...**



©www.atlantishotel.com



©www.solitude-one.com



©www.discoveryfeet.com



the establishment of a permanent ranger station consisting of a team of 10 to 12 members from the military, coastguard and national park staff who undertake daily patrol trips. Today, the total area of about 970 square kilometres is the largest marine reserve in the Philippines.

Scientific counts have shown over 600 species of fish and 360 different corals, as well as around 100 bird species which use the two flat sandy islands for laying eggs, alongside Hawksbill and Green Sea Turtles. Only a dozen or so liveaboards receive the licence to enter the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park each year. Often a lot of sharks, especially Whale Sharks, sometimes Manta Rays, are the reward for the 10-hour journey from Puerto Princesa on the island of Palawan, which is about 170 kilometres away.

During the surface break, we move on to Tubbataha North Atoll, which is approximately 20 kilometres from Jessie Beazley Reef, and jump into the water at the “Malayan Wreck”. Here there is also a similar topography with breathtaking steep walls that almost step down from the surface to about 1000 metres! While the first narrow step encircles the atoll at around 60 metres, the seabed

These unique reefs were declared the **first marine national park** in the Philippines in 1988, and five years later a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.

is already a few kilometres further in the 2200 metre deep Sulu deep sea trench.

After an expectant jump into the water, the current is on our side this time and moves us comfortably over the reef top to the eponymous steel remains of a small wreck directly on the reef edge in the 5 metre area. The steep wall is similarly beautifully overgrown, but unfortunately the Whale Shark luck does not last for us this time. We are compensated, however, with eagle rays and Hammerhead Sharks at a good distance, but above all a school of surgeonfish and a large shoal of barbed mackerel. Die-hard macro fans will even spot a Pygmy Seahorse - but most of us are only focused on big fish and blue water.



For the next few days we dive almost exclusively in the Tubbataha South Atoll, which is only about half the size of the North Atoll, and we have at least one Whale Shark encounter every dive! The late afternoon dives bring us an impressive sunset spirit, while we are floating along the reef edge with its overgrown stone corals in all different colours. No matter whether we encounter Whale Sharks, tuna, a huge shoal of mackerel or barracudas, there is always a highlight. Finally, on one of the last days, a young Whale Shark 'takes the biscuit' in front of the diving spot "Shark Airport" at the North Atoll. The five metre long male seems to fall in love with our group, so much that it swims curiously from one to every other diver for over a quarter of an hour to take a close look at everyone.

Lots of Whale Sharks - so the conclusion of the tour! But also, a lot of fish life, countless other sharks and, not to forget, the magnificent coral growth. Tubbataha is a great diving area that you can best enjoy if you love currents and like to go a little deeper. If you are lucky, you can see Mantas, Hammerhead and Tiger Sharks in addition to Whale Sharks and a lot of schooling fish on truly impressive steep walls. ■

TAKE ME THERE

Tubbataha Reefs - Palawan



Getting There

By air to Manila, followed by a one hour flight to Puerto Princesa on Palawan. The bus transfer to the port takes only 30 minutes. Tubbataha can only be dived from a liveboard.



Best time to dive

The Tubbataha diving season is limited to March through to June.



Air Temperature

Between 27°C - 30°C.



Water Temperature

28°C+. A 3 to 5mm wetsuit is ideal but the temperature can fluctuate sometimes due to plankton.



Good to know!

Gloves, current hooks and sticks are prohibited in the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park.



Hyperbaric Chamber

Ospital ng Palawan, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan



Liveboards

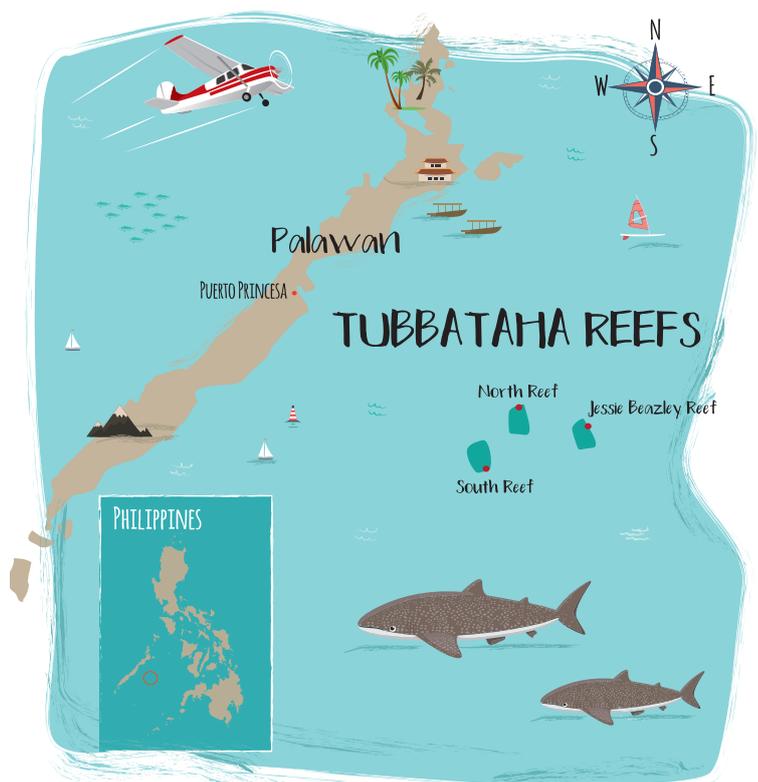
Atlantis Azores
www.atlantishotel.com

Discovery Fleet
www.discoveryfleet.com

Philippine Siren
www.sirenfleet.com

Seadoors Liveboard
www.seadoors.net

Solitude One
www.solitude-one.com

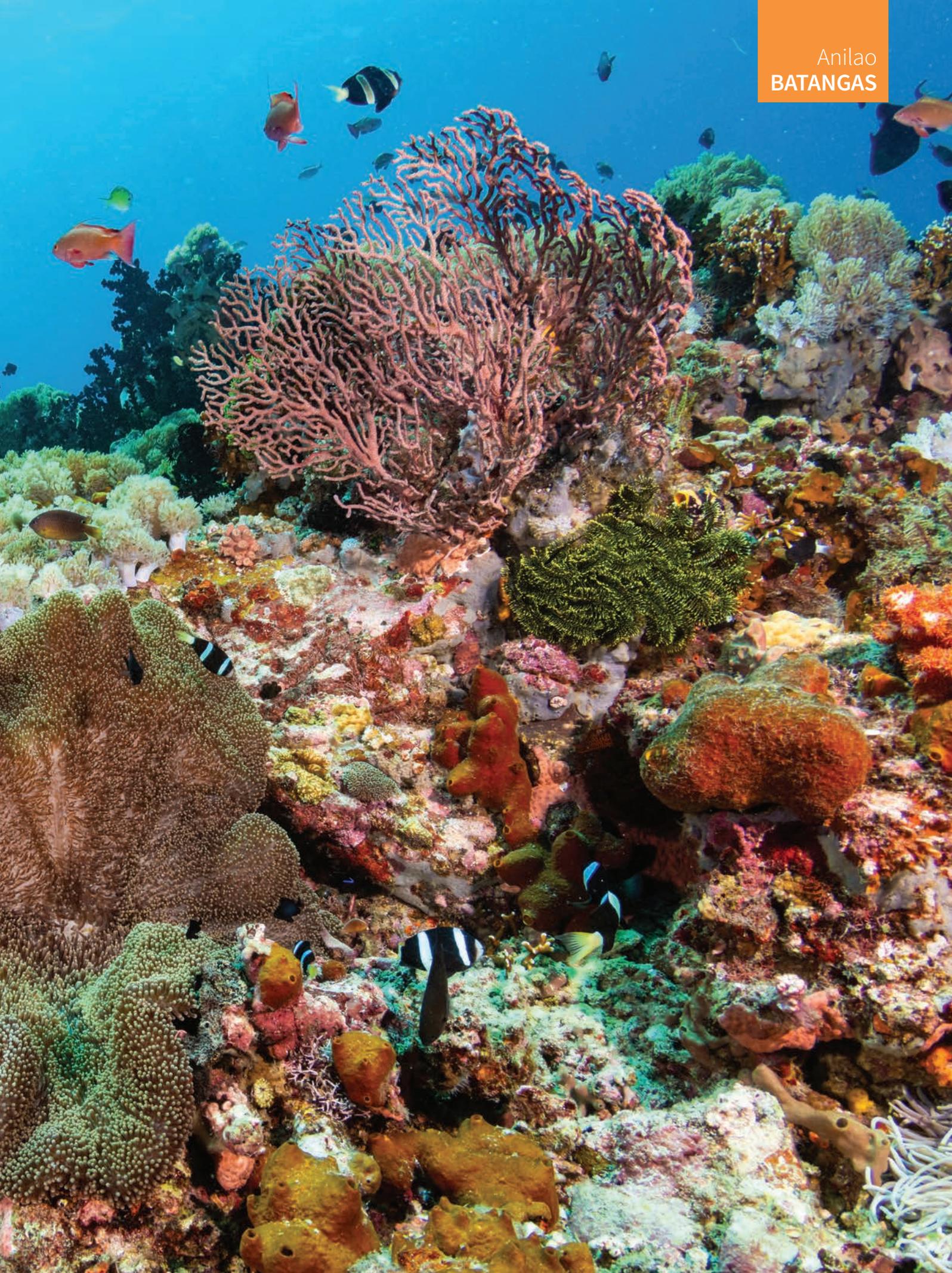


Anilao
BATANGAS



Anilao

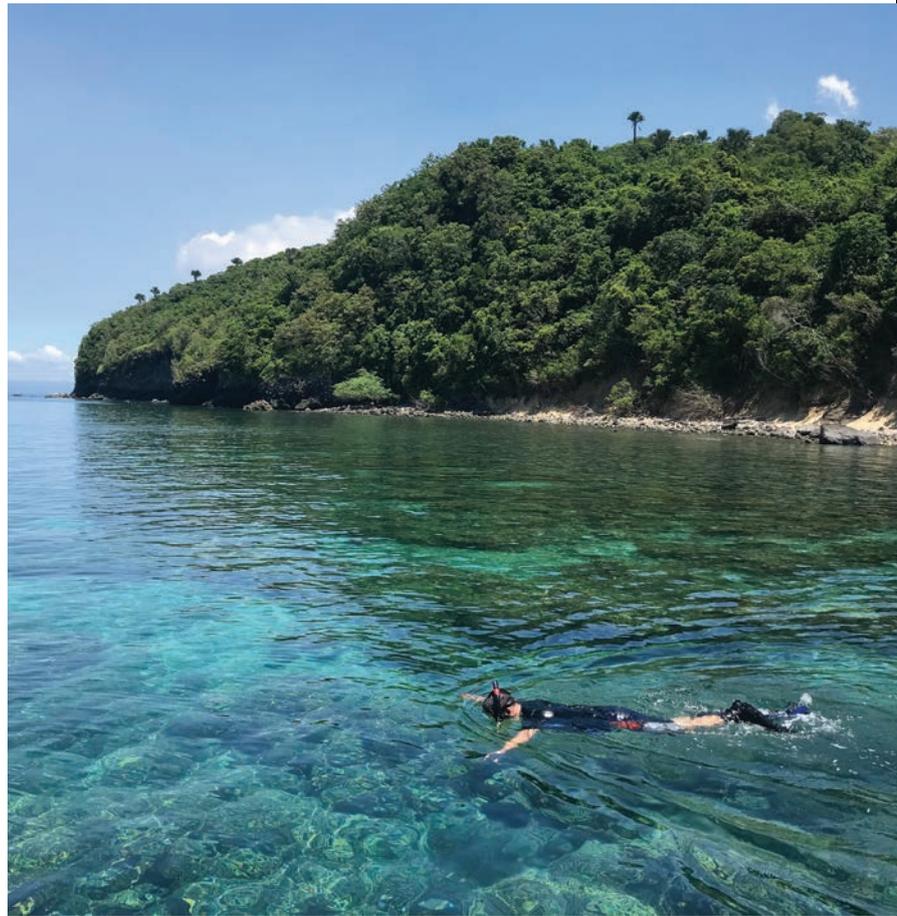
BATANGAS



THE NAME ANILAO comes from the small township or Barangay of the same name that is easily passed through without notice. In the “old days”, Anilao was where people from Manila would go to escape for the weekend to relax or learn how to dive.

It is still popular as a weekend destination, but over time the road extended further out along the peninsula and the area expanded. Anilao now covers all of the dive sites within reach of Balayan Bay, Batangas Bay and Maricaban Island.

Located south of Manila on the large island of Luzon, Anilao is considered the birthplace of scuba diving in the Philippines. It has gained an international reputation for muck diving and underwater macro photography with world class competitions and workshops organised each year. →





With the added element of stunning reef systems and now Blackwater Diving, Anilao is truly an underwater photographer's playground.

The Allure of Anilao

WORDS & IMAGES: MIKE BARTICK

THE ALLURE OF discovering new animal life is what brought me to Anilao to start with and has kept me here ever since. In late 2006, when I came to this tiny peninsula for the first time, it was to search for nudibranchs. I soon discovered there was so much more. At that time very few people knew of Anilao outside of the Philippines, information was scarce and communication even harder. Those that did know about Anilao agreed that while the diving was exceptional, the logistics made it nearly impossible to find a reliable operation to book with. Coincidentally when I brought this up at a dive club meeting, I caught the ear of someone in the know. He suggested that I should contact a guy with an unforgettable name, Boy Venus. To my surprise he answered my email, soon things began to fall into place and, before I knew it, I was on my way!

That first trip to Anilao was quite an experience which introduced me to a wild and secreted dive destination that was comfortably off the grid but still had Wi-Fi. The dives were long, the nights were longer, and the mornings came quickly. The critter hunting was non-stop and kept us busier than ever imagined. In fact, each night when I finally closed my eyes, I would see a dancing Wunderpuss or a nudibranch on the inside of my eyelids. Happily afflicted with a case of critterhead, I knew this bug was going to spread very quickly.



MIKE BARTICK

Mike is an avid diver and working underwater photographer who resides in Anilao, Philippines where he is also the photo-pro at Crystal Blue Resort. Mike conducts workshops on creative photo techniques, lighting and also hosts Blackwater Diving safaris.

Anilao is now well known for its **macro diving** and has risen in the ranks to be one of the **best macro dive destinations on the globe.**

Anilao is now well known for its macro diving and has risen in the ranks to be one of the best macro dive destinations on the globe. With the added element of stunning reef systems and now Blackwater Diving, Anilao is truly an underwater photographer's playground.

There are more than 45 dive sites in Anilao that range from featureless, flat and sandy to sloped classic critter dives. There are pinnacles, walls, coral gardens and even a small wreck to explore. Several Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) that allow diving have added to some of the success of the area with restrictions on fishing for more than 15 years. The diving throughout the area is regarded as easy overall, which makes it inviting for new divers and those wanting to experience extra-long critter dives.

The two bays (Balayan and Batangas) are deep



TOPSIDE ACTIVITIES



©radobj5-pixabay

Snorkelling

Visit Lake Taal and Taal Volcano (subject to volcanic activity!)

Kayaking

Sightseeing in Manila

set and fed a constant supply of nutrient rich water from the Verde Island Pass. Verde Island proper is designated as the centre of biodiversity within the coral triangle, and is located just upstream. The two bays act as an estuary for larval and juvenile subjects to settle and for nudibranchs to thrive. Over 1,000 nudis have been described from this peninsula and fill the pages of countless ID books.

With over 300 species of corals and an abundance of reef fish, there is always something new to see and photograph. Exotic subjects such as Ambon Scorpionfish, Hairy Frogfish, and even the king of all macro subjects, the Rhinopias, can be found here, while colourful fish dance above the reefs. Three kinds of flasher wrasse and fairy wrasse, interesting shrimp gobies, slugs that look like string, and some so big that you'll need a wide-angle lens to shoot them. Watching the dive sites come to life each season is comparable to watching a pasture of wildflowers in springtime, with each dive site coming alive with its own cast of interesting characters.

Diving in Anilao is seasonal with heavy rainfalls from July to September. The diving is still okay during this time but visitors can expect non-stop rains and the possibility of typhoons. The dive →



©Avei Chuklanov

“Anilao is the equal of anywhere as an **all-round critter destination** and probably the best place on Earth to see nudibranchs. The dive sites are close and there is **real diversity of types of habitat** - the longer you stay the more you will see!”

DR ALEXANDER MUSTARD MBE
Underwater Photographer - Marine Biologist

season begins in October and lasts through to mid-June, with April and May designated as the high season. Local schools are out, the water is warm, and the sun is shining. My favourite time to dive here though happens to be during the cooler period when the winds can be blustery. December-March the water temps can get as low as 24° C so be prepared if you're travelling here during this time by bringing a 5mm wetsuit, a hooded vest, a windbreaker and plenty of sunscreen.

I've always thought of Anilao as a giant onion with multiple layers, hidden and stacked on one another. Each season is different, and each season a layer of that onion is peeled back with a new star subject to be found. Recently this theory has proven to be true once again with Blackwater Diving. In 2012, my guide pointed out the first Larval Wunderpuss to me. The Larval Wunderpuss has now become one of the must-see subjects and a signature subject for Anilao. That find, plus some relentless inspiration from another friend of mine interested in this style of diving, pushed us to explore further and further offshore, and eventually led us to developing Blackwater Diving in Anilao.

For diving, ease of travel, value and experience, Anilao is very hard to beat. Add in the warm hospitality of the Filipino community and the professionalism of the local dive guides and you have one heck of a world class dive destination! →







Blackwater Diving

Blackwater Diving was introduced in 2017 after several years of exploring and looking for the most reliable locations. Simultaneously the equipment and safety procedures were developed, as well as training guides on how to conduct Blackwater dives.

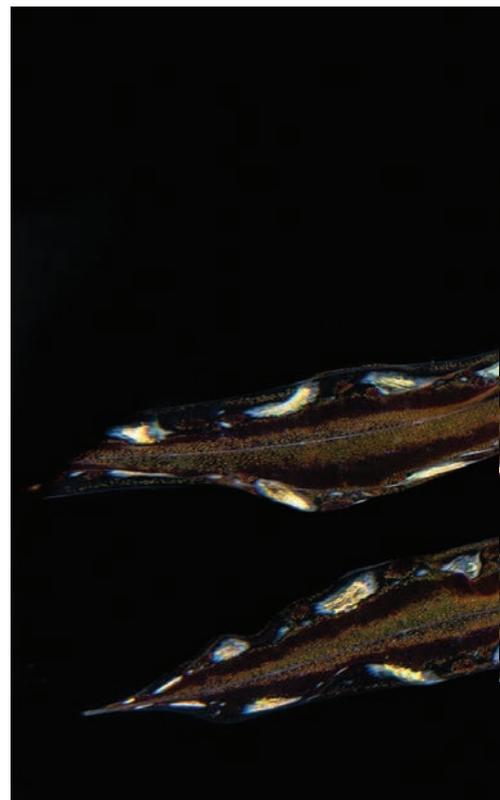
Unlike your standard dive site where you can revisit a subject, Blackwater is done well offshore and in open water; it's an ever dynamic, three-dimensional world where anything can show up at any time. This is truly the ultimate in photo ops for unique subject matter and will push the skills of any serious photographer to the edge.

Blackwater Diving in Anilao has exploded onto the dive scene with seasonal sightings of some very special visitors. After sundown, a migration of subjects begins to push upwards towards the shallow surface seeking food and hunting under the cover of darkness. Within this biomass, larval subjects,

crustaceans and cephalopods intersect with drifting planktonic subjects pushed by tidal flow horizontally and through deep water upwellings. Divers use a downline and lights to attract the planktons and the predatory subjects like the Wunderpuss and other cephalopods as they come in to feed.

Divers drift along freely with the downline and have the chance to see a different side of nature working at its greatest. Pelagic subjects like the Paper Nautilus have helped to push Anilao into the limelight, but the Blanket Octopus sightings also sealed the deal.

There is a definite season for Blackwater Diving that includes spawning for the Paper Nautilus, as well as a Blanket Octopus season. In addition, many other subjects can be found nearly anytime during the regular dive season that includes jellyfish, larval fish, cephalopods, crustaceans and even larval nudibranchs. ■



WUNDERPUSS OCTOPUS



The Wunderpus Octopus, *Wunderpus photogenicus*, is a small-bodied species of octopus with distinct white and rusty brown colouration. Wunderpus comes from the German “wunder” meaning marvel or wonder.

The Wunderpus Octopus was not discovered until the 1980s and was only officially described in detail in 2006.

It is a prized subject for underwater photographers.



TAKE ME THERE

Anilao, Batangas



Getting There

Visiting Anilao is easy to do with flights arriving at Manila’s NAIA airport daily. From there, it’s a three-hour drive, so be ready to dive the same day you arrive! No more flights, no ferries, no stress!



Best time to dive

October to early June is the main diving season in Anilao. The best months are November / December and April / May, with the latter being the most crowded months at the resorts.



Air Temperature

The average annual temperature is 27°C.



Water Temperature

Water temperature is about 28°C but in January and February this can drop to around 25°C.



Hyperbaric Chamber

St. Patrick’s Hospital Medical Center, Batangas City



Dive Centres

Aiyanar Beach and Dive Resort
www.aiyanar.com

Buceo Anilao Beach and Dive Resort
www.buceoanilao.com

Casa Escondida Anilao Resort and Dive Center
www.casaescondidaanilao.com

Crystal Blue Resort
www.divecbr.com

Pier Uno Dive Resort
www.pierunoresort.ph







Siquijor Island

CENTRAL VISAYAS

Siquijor, pronounced See-Kee-Hor, is a tiny island province located in the Central Visayas region. During the Spanish colonial period it was known as the Isla del Fuego (Island of Fire).

The island is famous for its mountain-dwelling *mangkukulam* (healers) and mystical traditions that still attract tourists to rituals and festivals today.



**ANDREJ
OBLAK**

Andrej Oblak is a computer engineer by profession in his native Slovenia, but scuba diving and underwater photography are his greatest passions. He enjoys mostly cave and deep technical dives. If the opportunity arises, he likes to take his camera with him to capture the beauty of a world that is inaccessible to most people.

Enchanted Isle

WORDS & IMAGES: **ANDREJ OBLAK**

The Philippines was a destination which was long on our to-do list and when a friend opened a diving centre on the small island of Siquijor, we jumped at the chance to visit.

In the chaos of the Dumaguete ferry port, as we waited to transfer to the island, we had our first experience of the amazing hospitality of the Filipino people. A group of local women, who were visiting relatives on Siquijor, noticed that we needed assistance and selflessly helped guide us through the ticket process and the labyrinth of rooms. Asking for nothing in return, they just took about 30 selfies with us during the entire process. We felt like rock stars for the first time in our lives.

When we finally arrived at Siquijor, our friend was waiting for us and soon we were started on our long-awaited underwater adventure. Our first dive was on Tori's Backpackers home reef in the city of San Juan on the east side of the island. Usually you don't expect much from a house reef, but this one is something special. First though,

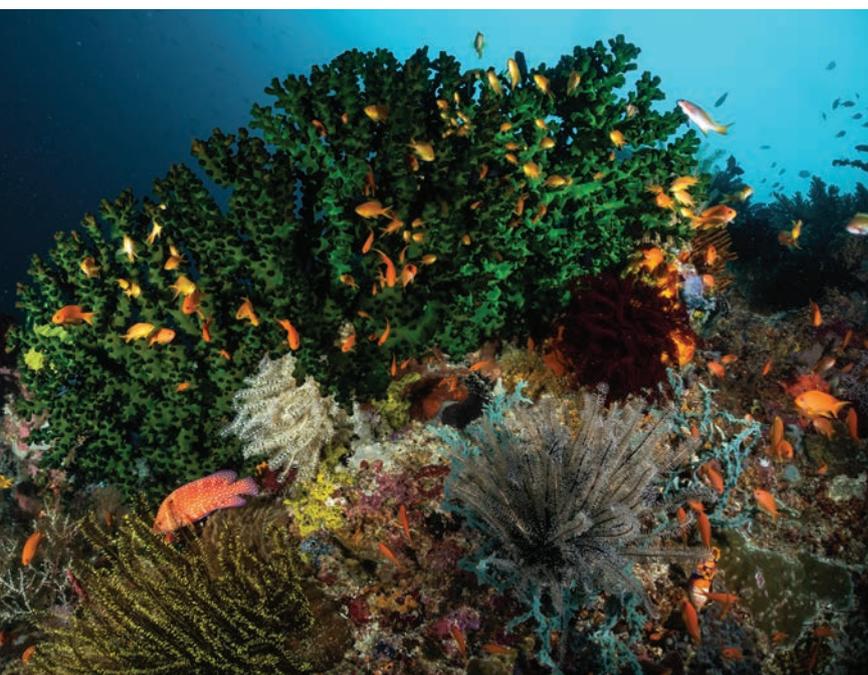


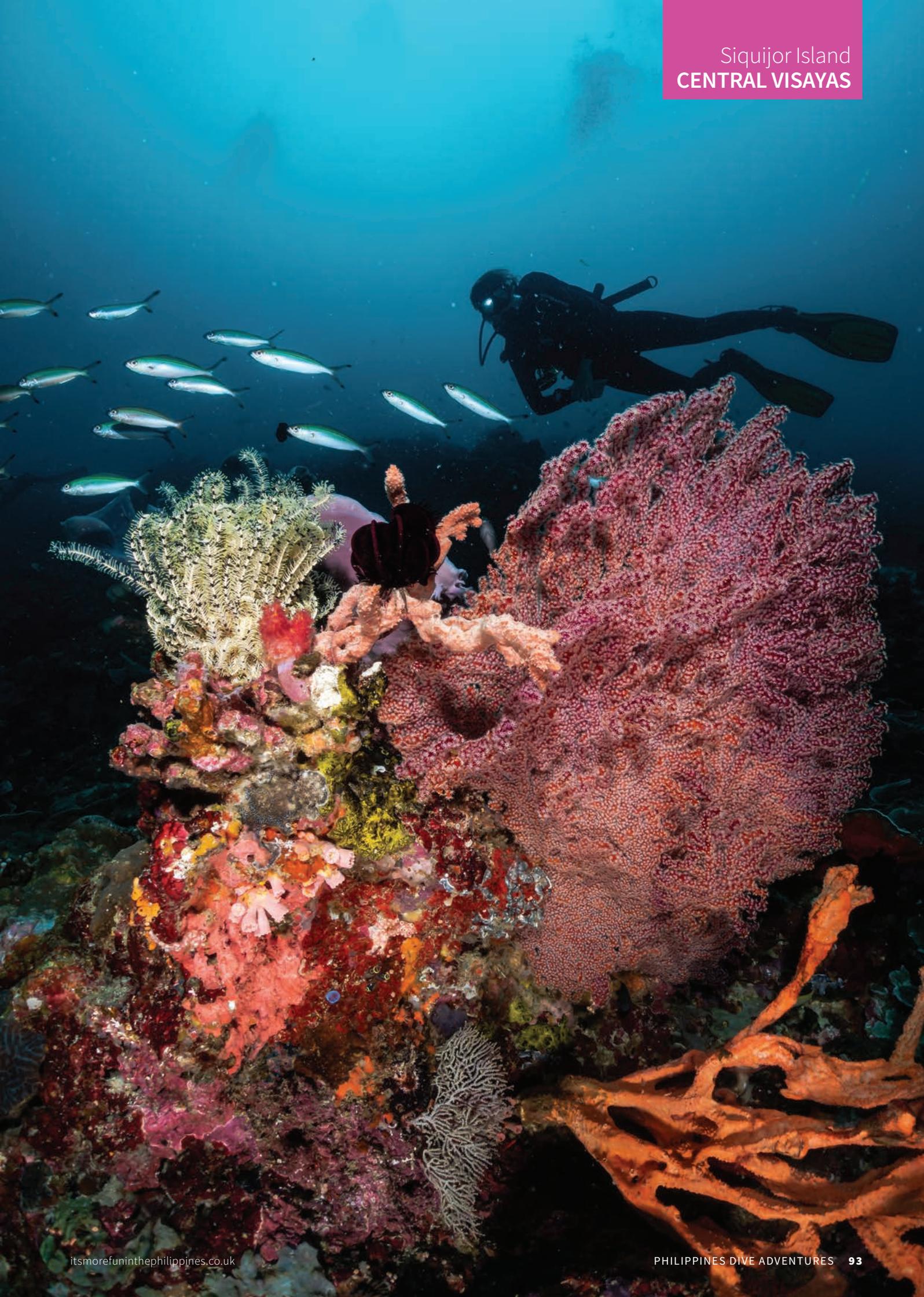
we had to walk about 100 metres in waist deep water under the scorching sun. How I wished I had worn some head protection! When we finally submerged, we were greeted with a vast coral garden, spanning all sides and slowly descending towards the deeper water.

This was a true underwater photographer's paradise, from colourful wide angle scenes, to tight macro shots. There were turtles swimming off in the distance, blue Ribbon Eels sticking out from the sand, mantis shrimps threatening to break my lens if I dared to come too close, territorial clownfish protecting their anemones, and frogfishes patiently waiting for me to adjust my strobes. But not just macro... some of my most beautiful soft coral wide angle shots were taken exactly in this location. We visited this site multiple times during our stay and were amazed each time.

Siquijor is known for its multiple marine sanctuaries, most of which are accessible from the shore. This means that the dives here are very relaxed. And maybe just the best thing is that we saw literally no other divers; each time we had an entire dive site just for ourselves.

Each of these marine sanctuary sites is special in some way. Caticugan is a wall dive with a mild current that pulled us along a path that was crossed by a school of Moonlight Snappers several times. When we ascended to the platform at the end of the wall, it was like entering a beautiful alien world, full of soft corals shaped like trees, with bubbles, glassy ferns, and a shy school of Golden Spadefish circling around us at a safe distance. →





TOPSIDE ACTIVITIES



Visit the ancient Balete Tree in Lazi for the fish foot spa

Scale the island's highest peak, Mount Bandilaan

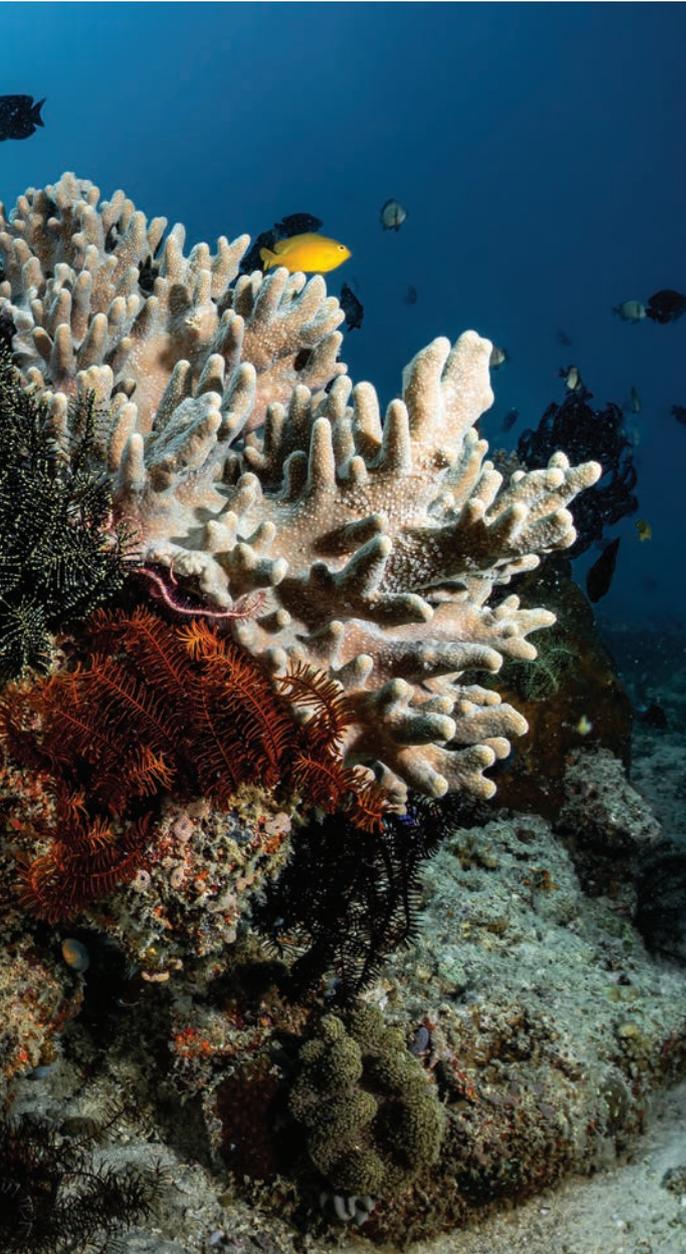
102 km of white sand beach ring the entire island

Revel in the beauty of Cambugahay Falls



Tulapos marine sanctuary was truly a paradise. The white sandy beach had crystal clear water and a long shallow part with local children playing in it. We rented a small boat, which transported our scuba equipment to the dive site but unfortunately not us, so we trailed behind on foot. Strong winds the previous day meant that the visibility here was not ideal, but it was still good enough to see a huge school of barracuda drifting totally relaxed past us.

The best two dives were saved for last. Paliton wall and Paliton marine sanctuary are accessible only by boat. It's not a long ride though; the shore is just within swimming distance. We enjoyed a drift along Paliton wall, the current sweeping us along, revealing huge colourful sea fans and gorgonians. This was the deepest dive that we did on Siquijor, reaching just shy of 32 metres. Paliton marine sanctuary was so rich with life. From small colourful fish hiding in the safety of hard



TAKE ME THERE

Siquijor Island - Central Visayas



Getting There

Fly into Manila or Cebu and transit to Dumaguete by local flight or bus. From Dumaguete, catch a local ferry to Siquijor. Alternatively, catch the fast ferry from Cebu to Siquijor.



Best time to dive

Diving in Siquijor is largely available year round due to the fact that the island is unaffected by the extreme monsoons found elsewhere in much of the Philippines.



Air Temperature

24°C – 33°C.



Water Temperature

Fairly constant at 26 - 30°C.



Hyperbaric Chamber

PCSSD Hyperbaric Chamber, Mandaue City, Cebu



Dive Centres & Liveboards

Atlantis Azores
www.atlantishotel.com



Coco Grove Beach Resort
www.cocogrovebeachresort.com

Discovery Fleet
www.discoveryfleet.com

Philippine Siren
www.sirenfleet.com

Salamangka Beach and Dive Resort
www.salamangkaresort.com

Solitude One
www.solitude-one.com

corals, a lone barracuda swimming in the blue, to a mother of all turtles, as big as a dining table.

The last day before our flight home was a no-diving day. We rented a scooter and went to explore nature. We stopped by the Old Balete Tree, where you sit underneath it on the edge of a pool and small fish clean your feet. Not recommended for the ticklish!

We were feeling a bit adventurous, so we turned off the main road to discover Cambugahay Falls, where we took a refreshing dip in the cool fresh water. We climbed the highest hill and enjoyed plenty of scenic views along our way. And everywhere we went, we were greeted by the smiling and warm faces of local people. Sunset slowly forced us to return to our home base even though we had managed to explore just a tiny fragment of this beautiful island. The decision was made that evening. This was our first trip to Siquijor, but definitely not the last. ■





An underwater photograph of a vibrant coral reef. The foreground is dominated by large, rounded, yellowish-orange coral structures. The background shows a deeper blue water column with more diverse coral species and small fish swimming. Two horizontal yellow bars are positioned above and below the main title text.

Bohol

CENTRAL VISAYAS



BOHOL IS SITUATED in the Central Visayas Region and consists of the island itself and some 75 smaller islands surrounding it. To the west of Bohol is Cebu, to the northeast is the island of Leyte, and to the south, across the Bohol Sea, is Mindanao.

Bohol is a popular tourist destination famous for its Chocolate Hills, named after the brown, limestone mounds that can be seen from the air. This region is also home to one of the Philippines' most charismatic and diminutive primates – the Tarsier. Bohol – with its popular dive resorts east and west – is regularly named as one of the best diving destinations in the world.



Bohol is home to up to 1800 dome shaped Chocolate Hills.



©Eduardo Gorostiaga

Panglao, Balicasag & Cabilao



Much of Bohol diving is concentrated around the southwestern end of the Bohol mainland. The islands of Panglao, Balicasag, Pamilacan and Cabilao are all synonymous with excellent diving year-round. Panglao is a great place to base yourself, but resorts are also available in the outlying islands. Whichever suits your taste, diving is close to shore and very accessible.

Panglao Island is a small coralline island located near the southwestern tip of Bohol. The reef is thickly covered with hard and soft corals and schools of tuna, mackerel and surgeonfish swim by. Go deeper and you may find big snappers, groupers, and occasional Blacktip Sharks. On the boat ride to the dive sites you may be accompanied by schools of dolphins and pilot whales. The coral gardens near the surface are great for snorkelling, and the island also boasts steep walls with caves.

Balicasag Island is home to a spectacular Marine Sanctuary of healthy corals with plenty of pelagic visitors. It is characterized by vertical walls over deep waters with strong currents. A dive in December or January gives you the chance to see Hammerhead Sharks and sometimes also Whale Sharks. The top of the submarine cliffs is covered with hard coral while lower levels are home to stunning sponges and gorgonians. A thriving fish community is found around the cliff area.

Cabilao Island is southwest of Pangangan Island across the Bohol Strait. Diving in the area is centred in front of the lighthouse and has some of the best dive sites in the Philippines. It is particularly noted for Hammerhead Sharks in the deeper waters off its northwest point. ■

Diving Anda

WORDS & IMAGES: FROGFISH PHOTOGRAPHY



FROGFISH PHOTOGRAPHY

Frogfish Photography are husband and wife team Nick and Caroline Robertson-Brown. Underwater Photography Editor and Deputy Editor at ScubaVerse and Dive Travel Adventures respectively; photo-journalists that hope to inspire others to love and protect the oceans.

EXCITEMENT IS ALWAYS high when we visit a new area to dive but this morning was to be extra special. We knew that Anda, on the eastern shores of Bohol, was exceptional for macro or critter diving, but our guide had just told us that he would be able to point out a tiny sea slug we had never seen before! We eagerly awaited our first encounter with ‘Shaun the Sheep’ on our very first dive.

Our cameras were ready and so were we. Within moments of slipping below the surface our guide was beckoning us over. We had only just had time to give each other the OK sign when he had found not one but two tiny nudibranchs that look strikingly like their eponymous cartoon character. We were amazed at just how small these famous sea slugs are and struggled to see them, let alone get a good shot. We had barely managed to focus when he had found the next exciting critter for us to see and photograph.

Whilst Anda is incredible for those that love the tiny and unusual marine life, the



coral reef here is also pristine. Bright soft corals hang off the reef walls and hard, pastel-coloured corals cover the tops of the reef, often with turtles resting on them in a semi-slumber, watching the divers drift past. Every few metres we would encounter another turtle and sometimes we could see up to four or five in a single reef vista. The shallows here are a special place with clear blue water and sunshine that creates ever moving patterns shimmering on the corals, sand patches and turtle shells.

The guides in this area are very talented, their eagle-eyes able to spot the tiniest seahorses, nudibranchs, crustaceans and frogfish as you fin gently along the reef. Some of the animals, such as the pygmy seahorses and frogfish are well-camouflaged, perfectly matching the pink corals and sponges that they hide on, avoiding predators and waiting for unsuspecting prey. The nudibranchs, or sea slugs, on the other hand, show off vivid colours, warning potential predators →



We had only just had time to **give each other the OK** sign when our guide had found not one but **two tiny nudibranchs** that look strikingly like their eponymous cartoon character.







TOPSIDE ACTIVITIES



©Hitoshi Namura

Visiting the Chocolate Hills and the Tarsiers - spend the day touring around the island to visit all the sights

Zip lining across the Loboc River

Can-Umantad Waterfalls

Explore Lamanok Island, dubbed Bohol's "cradle of civilization"



that they are not good to eat. The dives here led to us finding critters on the sandy seabed, in seagrass, on the reef and whilst drifting along reef walls. The diversity of marine species is incredible.

Night dives in places of high diversity like this are usually well worth it, so we jumped at the chance to add one on our itinerary. As the sun started to lower to the horizon, a small group of divers strolled down the jetty to where our gear had already been stowed on the traditional Filipino boat. This night dive turned out to be something very special indeed. As soon as we were in the water, divers were trying to attract each other's attention to point out what they had found. The weird and wonderful crustaceans and cephalopods come out at night and soon a Mimic Octopus had been spotted. Then, a creature close to our hearts was discovered – the Hairy Frogfish! The hour we spent underwater just flew by, with never a dull moment and a host of amazing creatures enjoyed by all. It was truly one of the best night dives we have ever experienced.

This is a stunning destination with lush forests that sweep down to golden beaches fringed with palm trees. The people are warm and welcoming, and with culture and countryside to explore on non-diving days, this a fantastic place for the whole family. Whether you want to relax in beautiful surroundings or be more active, there is something for everyone. But the highlight of the region is the incredible marine life found beneath the calm seas that gently lap onto the shores.

Bohol is truly a diver's paradise. The diving is done at a relaxed pace and yet offers a huge diversity of marine life to discover on every single dive. We fulfilled a dream of seeing one particular species that had alluded us over the decades we have been diving, but Bohol offered so much more than that and we wished we could have stayed longer, or perhaps even forever! ■

TAKE ME THERE

Bohol, Central Visayas



Getting There

Take an international flight to Cebu followed by a fast ferry ride (two hours) to Bohol.



Best time to dive

Between January and May the climate is generally dry with only occasional rain showers. Bohol can be dived all year round.



Air Temperature

25°C – 33°C.



Water Temperature

26°C – 29°C.



Hyperbaric Chamber

PCSSD Hyperbaric Chamber, Mandaue City, Cebu



Dive Centres & Liveaboard

Amun ini Beach Resort & Spa
www.amunini.com

Atlantis Azores
www.atlantishotel.com

Balicasag Island Dive Resort
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Bohol Beach Club
www.boholbeachclub.com.ph

Discovery Fleet
www.discoveryfleet.com

Dive Thru Resorts
www.divethruresorts.com

Magic Oceans Dive Resort
www.magicresorts.online

Philippine Siren
www.sirenfleet.com

Sea Explorers
www.sea-explorers.com

Seaquest Dive Centers
www.seaquestdivecenter.com



Camiguin Island



CRITTER



FREEDIVING



PELAGICS



LIVEABOARD



Camiguin Island

The island province of Camiguin is a pear-shaped volcanic island at the northern tip of Mindanao. Dubbed as the “Island Born of Fire” because of its predominantly volcanic makeup, the 238km² island is popular for bravely hosting four strato-volcanoes with twelve major vents.

Despite its geologically apt moniker, there is much more to this beautiful island than its rugged volcanic features. Like anything forged in fire, the centuries of eruptions have carved Camiguin into a unique, pristine and jewel-like island that wows visitors below the water just as much as above.

Camiguin: A Pristine Paradise

WORDS & IMAGES: **RAM YORO & BO MANCAO**

With Mother Nature's penchant for poetic justice, the presence of violent volcanoes within this tiny island is certainly not without reward. Camiguin is endowed with towering mountains that host a plethora of fauna living off a forest of flora endlessly being fertilized by rich volcanic soil. Ancient settlement ruins from eruptions in the medieval colonial period afford the island a distinctly nostalgic look and feel. But perhaps the greatest gift from hosting the volcanoes are the rich underwater reefs and incredible shoals that sprang around the island from the volcanic earth-moving and mineral-vomiting events it endured.

Consequently, it can be said that Mother Nature's tough love has fortuitously moulded Camiguin into



RAM YORO

Ram is a scuba instructor, tech diver, and UW photographer from the Philippines where he is also a pioneer of the Bonfire Diving method for shooting plankton. Aside from being a contributor to the Black is the New Blue Vol 2 book, he is also co-author of the Guide to Anilao book and the Philippine Wrecks book. Outside exploration and publication projects, Ram spends his leisure time conducting photo workshops and scuba lessons out of his homebase in Anilao.



a paradise island. Tourists from all quarters looking for different flavours can enjoy Camiguin from sea to summit with a dash of nostalgic trips to historical sites in between. Interestingly though, because of previously limited transportation to this lonesome haven in the expansive Bohol Sea, the island's allure has remained largely untold and untouched in past decades. Only locals in the know basked in its raw beauty, while the rest of us marvelled at mesmerizing stories from those who were able to glimpse it. In recent times however this has changed and Camiguin's treasures are now available to all. Today, the island can be conveniently accessed via the less-than-an-hour direct flights from Manila and Cebu, and the less-than-two-hour ferry trips from nearby Bohol and Cagayan de Oro City.

Leading the influx of tourists, not surprisingly, are the ocean lovers from all over the world. Beach enthusiasts and island-hoppers come to enjoy the fine white sands of the adjacent Mantigue Island and the unique White Beach Sandbar, while those content to just dip in clear warm waters enjoy the endless line of black beaches along Camiguin's →



BO MANCAO

Combining the deepest appreciation for scuba, imagery, and sustainable tourism, Bo is iconic in the South East Asian dive industry. He is a multi award winning underwater photographer and a marine cinematographer. He regularly represents The Philippines and serves as Commissioner for the Philippine Commission on Sports Scuba diving. Bo is also a keen advocate for conservation and sits on the board of Project Sharklink. He is the only Fujifilm Digital Influencer specialising in marine imagery, and PADI Ambassador to the Philippines.



TOPSIDE ACTIVITIES



Climb a volcano

Camiguin's volcanic landscape is beautifully scenic for hiking adventures

Ardent Hot Springs

Take a dip at the foot of Hibok-Hibok Volcano

Visit White Island

A picture-postcard pristine white sandbar located just off the coast



volcanic-flavoured coasts. Scuba divers flock to the growing list of more than 30 dive sites, all of which are easily accessible via shore entry or just a few minutes boat ride from the coast. On the menu for the bubble makers is a wide assortment that includes dense shallow reefs, steep wall dives, long lively drop-offs, exciting shoals, critter-filled muck sites, and even rich planktonic Bonfire and Blackwater dives.

Freedivers have a special affinity with the island and many of them have established base locally, becoming part of contemporary culture. The main allure for these breath holders are the abundant colourful drops by the shore that serve as their personal underwater playground.

Notably as of late, underwater photographers – hobbyists and professionals alike – have also taken notice of Camiguin's irresistible buffet of pristine wide-angle seascapes. Unlike other frequented dive destinations, Camiguin's long isolation and exemplary local stewardship preserved its underwater reefs to perfection. Seascapes that feature colourful corals and plenty of fish in clear waters is a typical takeaway of visiting underwater photographers.

Among the popular dive sites is Jigdup Shoal and divers can easily do three dives in Jigdup featuring soft coral filled walls. A similar sized shoal just a few minutes away is another favourite, Burias. The shallow apex of Burias Shoal is home to thousands of anthias swarming over hard corals, and its



sloping edges display an exaggerated collection of colours from soft corals. Further, but not far from Burias, is the amazing islet of Mantigue. The islet's adjacent reef is a long wall crowned with hard corals and home to various schooling fish such as batfish, anthias, juvenile barracudas, Yellow Snappers and more. The Mantigue wall also harbours solitary marine life like the Marbled Grouper and turtles.

Wide angle seascapes easily stand out when diving in Camiguin, but a close inspection of their black muck sites reveals plenty of macro critters as well. The island offers world-class muck diving to macro photography lovers. Frogfish, lionfish,

TAKE ME THERE

Camiguin Island



Getting There

The easiest way to travel to Camiguin is by plane from Cebu.



Best time to dive

Diving is good all year round. The rainy season is mid- to late December through to mid- to late March.



Air Temperature

Daytime temperatures range from 28°C – 33°C. It can drop as low as 21°C at night.



Water Temperature

27°C - 30°C



Hyperbaric Chamber

PCSSD Hyperbaric Chamber, Mandaue City, Cebu



Dive Centres & Liveboards

Ajis Dive and Aqua Sports
www.facebook.com/ajisdivecamiguin

Camiguin Volcan Beach Eco Retreat and Dive Resort
www.camiguinvolcanbeach.com

Discovery Fleet
www.discoveryfleet.com

Scuba de Oro
www.scubadeoro.com



nudibranchs, sea snakes, gobies, clownfish, and scorpionfishes among others litter the black sand and coral patches. With more dives and a good spotter from one of the local dive shops, more subjects will reveal themselves no doubt.

With the constant stream of tourists to Camiguin, especially underwater photographers, word about this pristine paradise will go around at a faster rate than ever before. And just as we were smitten by stories and images of its uninhibited beauty in the past, the world will also irresistibly find itself knocking on the island's door in no time. Camiguin Island is definitely a paradise on the rise and the time to visit it is now! ■

Coron Bay
PALAWAN





Coron Bay

PALAWAN

PALAWAN HAS BEEN named, more than once, as the most beautiful island in the world. Stunning blue water mixes with emerald green, jungle-filled mountains that appear to rise up from the ocean, and small fishing villages dot the island. Coron Bay and Coron Island are situated in the province of Palawan and boast an enticing combination of world class wreck diving and jaw-dropping scenery.



**ANDREW
MARRIOTT**

Andrew is a long time diver, photographer and writer. His work has been published in a wide variety of media around the world, but his true love is writing books. He is the managing partner of Fata Morgana Media, a business dedicated to producing high-quality media content for the dive and travel industry.

Coron uncovered

WORDS: **ANDREW MARRIOTT** IMAGES: **ANDREW MARRIOTT & RAM YORO**

Wreck diving gets a bad rap – often considered to be too deep, cold, rusty, dangerous, you name it and you will find heaps of excuses made by divers over the years about why they won't try it. However, there are a select few places that will inflame the passions of serious wreck divers while, at the same time, making those people looking for that 'Insta-perfect' beach shot drool in anticipation.

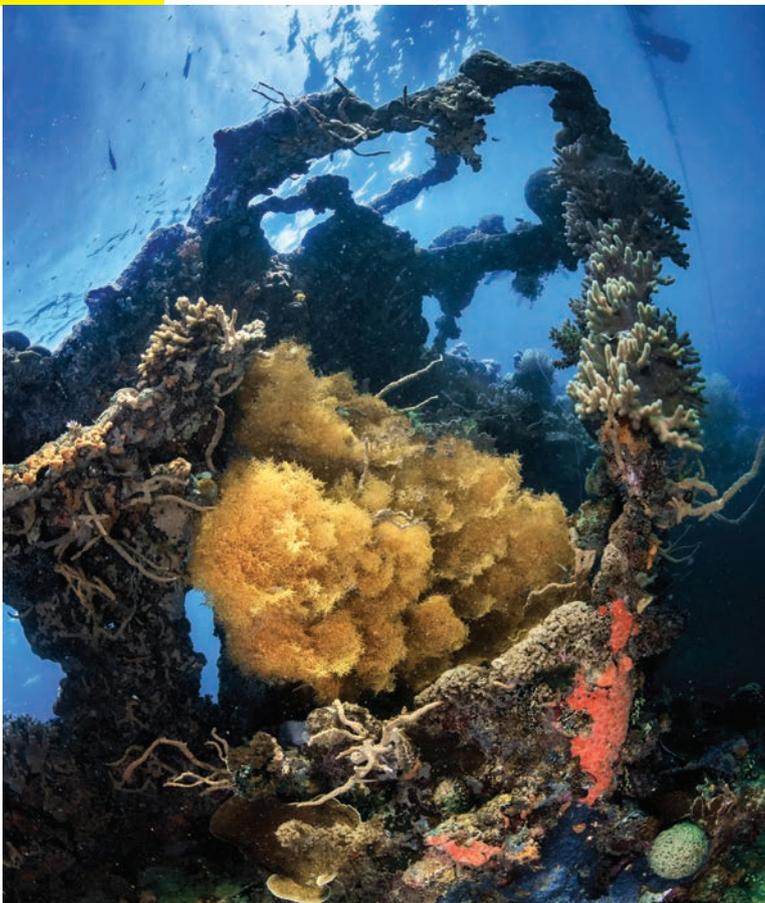
What if I told you there was a place well off the beaten path in the heart of the Coral Triangle that has one of the best concentrations of big World War Two shipwrecks; alongside a natural beauty that is so stunning it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site? This magical place is Coron, part of the Calamian Islands in the province of Palawan.

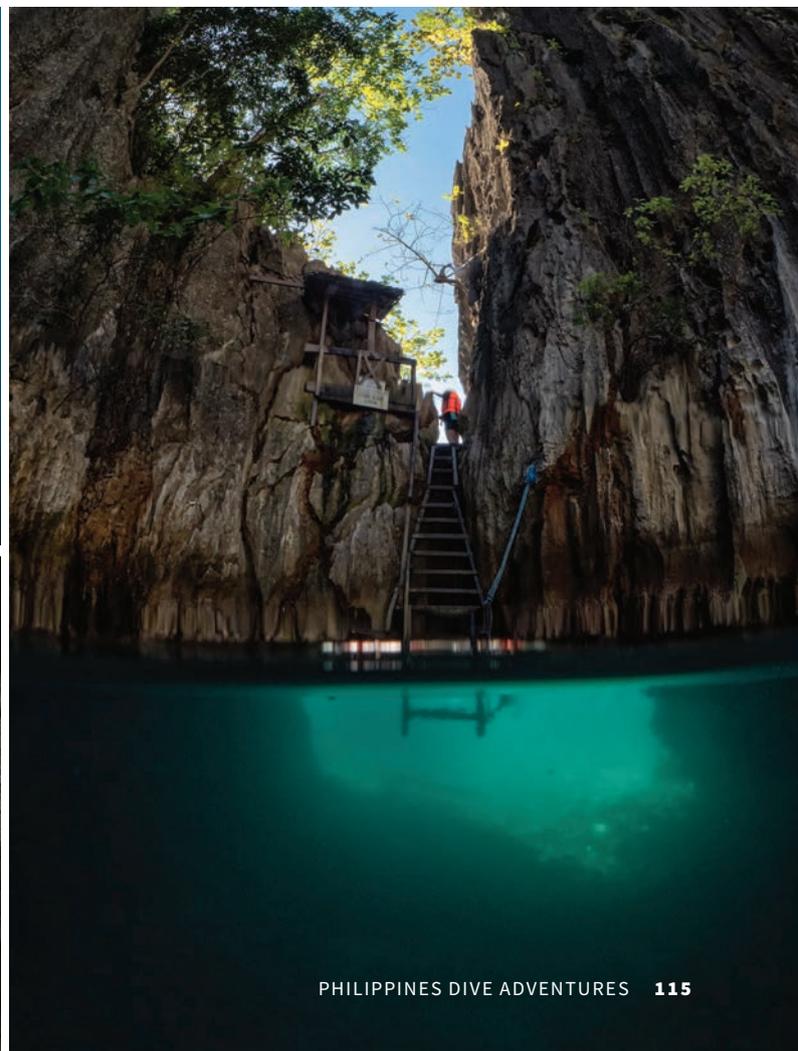
Let's get this out of the way first – you don't come all this way to reef dive, **Coron is all about getting rusty!**

Try booking a plane ticket to Coron and nothing will come up. The reason is that you will fly to Busuanga (USU), which is the larger island next door to Coron. The flight from Manila is about an hour, and there are a couple of flights per day on Philippine Air, Cebu Pacific, and a few other local budget carriers. Don't expect spacious accommodations; these flights are all operated on small commuter prop planes. A word to the wise for divers – be very cognisant of your weight. If you can rent it and don't need it, then think about leaving it at home. Just to make things a little more confusing, the town of Coron is on Busuanga Island, while Coron Island is next door.

Landing on the single small runway and simply collecting your checked bags off the tarmac drives home the point that you are no longer on the main tourist routes. The ride into town is about 30 minutes and that is where you will find most of the accommodation and diving facilities. There are a few resorts on the other side of the island (north side – where there are dugongs!), and they work well if you want to drop off the map for a week or two. There are a variety of places to stay, eat and dive in Coron Town and you'll undoubtedly find something to suit your taste and budget.

Let's get this out of the way first – you don't come all this way to reef dive, Coron is all about getting rusty! While there are some excellent reef dives in the area, consider doing that somewhere else in the Philippines before or after your visit to Coron. There are enough wrecks here for a full week of diving, and that doesn't count →

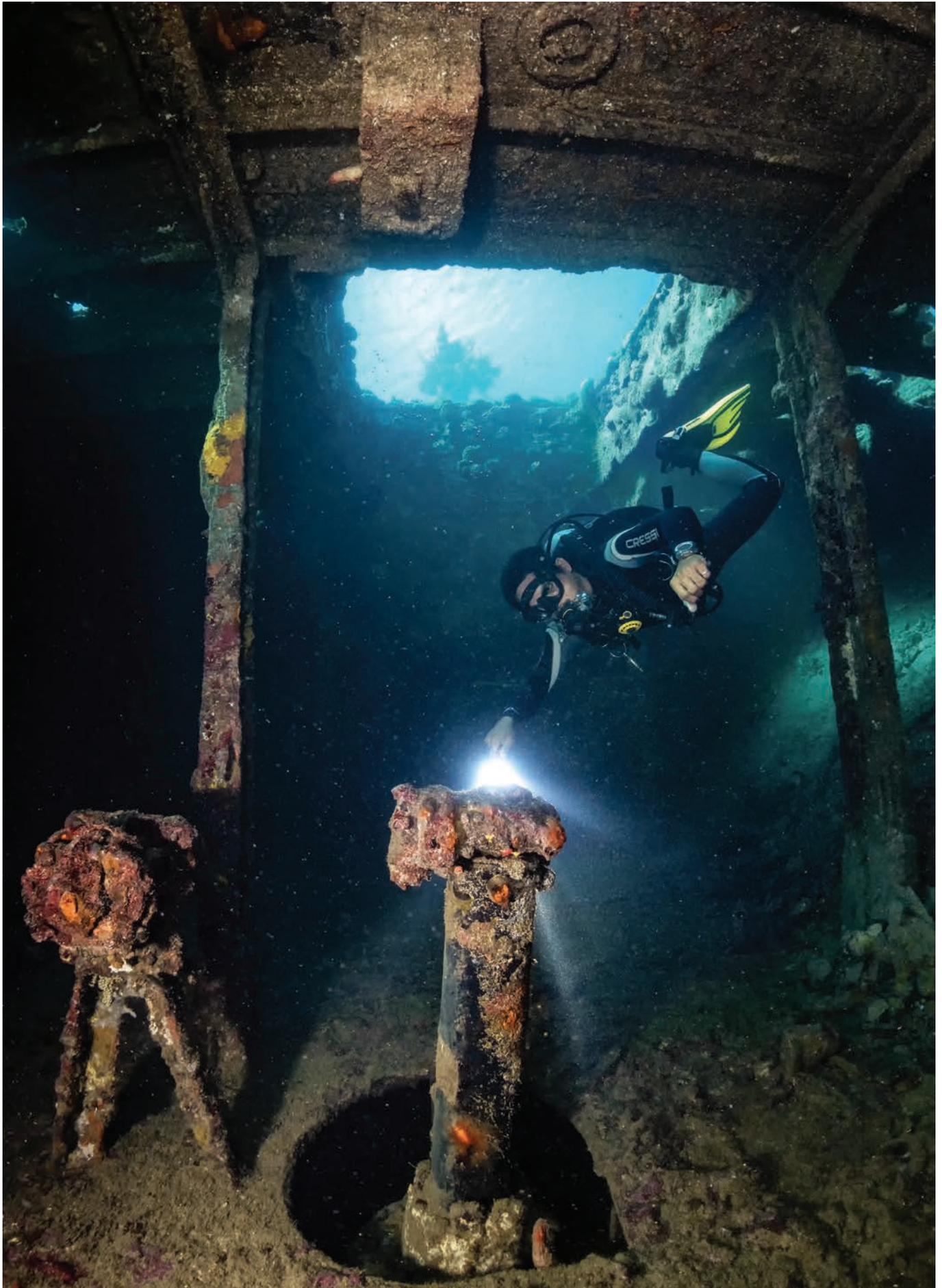






“How this place isn’t busier is a bit of a mystery. When you start to look at what Coron has to offer as a destination you soon get to realise **this is a very special place.”**

PHILIPPINEDIVEHOLIDAYS.COM



The **variety of ships** sunk in Coron makes for an environment where **every dive is quite different.**



A PIECE OF HISTORY

Why are all these ships here? They were trying to hide. In preparation for the upcoming invasion of the Philippines, the US Navy launched airstrikes across the southern and central Philippines. To escape these attacks, the Japanese Navy fled to Manila Bay, but that too was soon hit. The surviving ships from that raid fled in the night to the small bays and inlets around Busuanga and tried to hide. The Americans had broken the Japanese Navy codes, and they knew exactly where to go next. On the morning of September 24, 1944, the dark blue planes roared out of the sky, and a short but fierce battle raged in this tropical paradise that sank 11 Japanese ships just offshore.

any second or repeat dives on the same ship. The depth of all the vessels is within the range of experienced recreational divers. Technical divers will have a wonderful time exploring inside the deeper wrecks, as that is where all the best artefacts are.

The variety of ships sunk in Coron makes for an environment where every dive is quite different. Two of the more exciting dives for serious wreck divers are the Akitsushima and Irako. The Akitsushima is a real warship: a light cruiser converted into a heavily armed seaplane tender. On the wreck you can find anti-aircraft guns, an interesting penetration into the undamaged areas, and the massive crane used to hoist seaplanes out of the water for service. The Irako was less glamorous, basically a floating refrigerator with various anti-aircraft guns mounted on the deck. What makes Irako such a great dive is the unusual artefacts still inside. The best of these are in the machine shop amidships →



TOPSIDE ACTIVITIES



©Ehmir Bautista

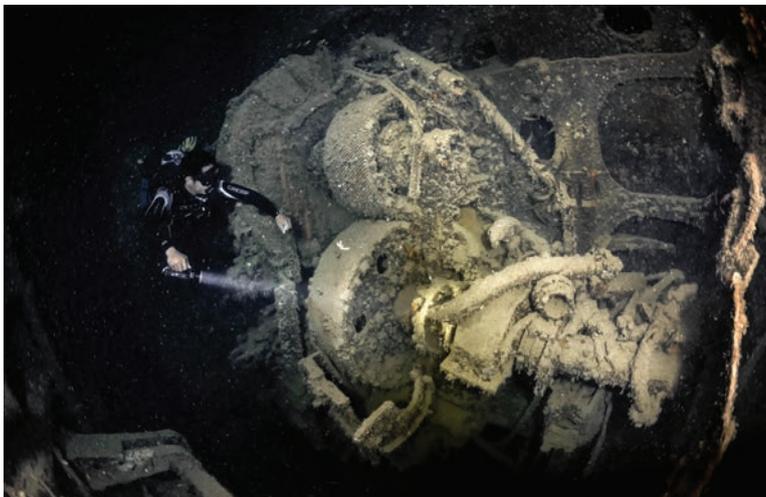
Swimming and snorkelling at Barracuda Lake and Kayangan Lake

Island Hopping

Sangat Island Hot Springs

Kayaking and bird watching in the mangroves

Hiking up Mount Tapyas



and buried in the bow.

On the other end of the spectrum are two patrol boats that were sunk in shallow water. These are known as the Tangat and Lusong gunboats, and both are great for divers and snorkellers alike. The Tangat wreck is sunk right off a lovely sandy beach in an area that is most people's idea of paradise. You can snorkel the wreck, relax on the beach, and then grab a BBQ before your next dive. Try to arrive here very early as it is extremely popular. The other unique dive in this area is on Coron Island proper, and it is called Barracuda Lake.

Barracuda Lake is a freshwater (actually slightly brackish) body of water set in a small karst valley in Coron Island. The entire island is one of the prettiest places on Earth, and dives are possible in a variety of locations. Honestly, it is just as

TAKE ME THERE

Coron Bay - Palawan



Getting There

Flight to Manila and then a connection on to Francisco B. Reyes Airport (USU), formerly known as Busuanga Airport. There are numerous options for ferry travel from different islands to Coron too.



Best time to dive

The best time to dive Coron is between the months of October through to June, during the dry season in the Philippines.



Air Temperature

25°C - 33°C.



Water Temperature

27°C - 30°C.



Hyperbaric Chamber

Sea Dive Resort Hyperbaric Chamber, Coron, Palawan



Dive Centres & Liveboards

Asia Grand View Hotel
www.asiagrandview.com

Atlantis Azores
www.atlantishotel.com



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Busuanga Bay Lodge
www.busuangabaylodge.com

Club Paradise
www.clubparadisepalawan.com

Discovery Fleet
www.discoveryfleet.com

El Rio Y Mar / Dugong Dive Center
www.dugongdivecenter.com

Philippine Siren
www.sirenfleet.com

Solitude One
www.solitude-one.com



fun to snorkel, and Coron Island makes a perfect adventure for your last no-fly day before heading back to Manila. The underwater rock formations, combined with the sublime above water beauty, make this one of the most memorable non-diving days ever! There are a few other incredible snorkelling lakes and inlets on Coron, and you could happily spend many days diving and swimming here.

The Coron/Busuanga area is one of the most laid back and chilled places you will find, but it also packs several unique dives that any level of diver can enjoy. This is the kind of place you can bring your whole family, and nobody will be disappointed if you go and dive wrecks all day and leave them to explore the other wonders of the Calamian Islands. ■

DIVE CENTRES

Aiyanar Beach and Dive Resort

Anilao
www.aiyanar.com

Ajis Dive and Aqua Sports

Camiguin
www.facebook.com/ajisdivecamiguin

Amunini Beach Resort & Spa

Anda, Bohol
www.amunini.com

Apo Reef Club

Apo Reef
www.aporeefclub.com

Asia Divers

Puerto Galera
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Asia Grand View Hotel

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www.asiagrandview.com

Atlantis Dive Resorts

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Atmosphere Resorts and Spa

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www.atmosphereresorts.com

Azure Dive Resort

Dauin & Dumaguete
www.azuredive.com

Balicasag Island Dive Resort

Panglao, Bohol
www.balicasagislanddiveresort.com

Bohol Beach Club

Panglao, Bohol
www.boholbeachclub.com.ph

Buceo Anilao Beach and Dive Resort

Anilao
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Busuanga Bay Lodge

Coron
www.busuangabaylodge.com

Camayan Divers

Subic Bay
www.camayandivers.com

Camiguin Volcan Beach Eco Retreat and Dive Resort

Camiguin
www.camiguinvolcanbeach.com

Casa Escondida Anilao Resort and Dive Center

Anilao
www.casaescondidaanilao.com

Club Paradise

Coron
www.clubparadisepalawan.com

Coco Grove Beach Resort

Siquijor
www.cocogrovebeachresort.com

Crystal Blue Resort

Anilao
www.divecbr.com

Dive Thru Resorts

Panglao, Bohol
www.divethruresorts.com

El Rio Y Mar / Dugong Dive Center

Coron
www.dugongdivecenter.com

Evolution Diving

Malapascua
www.evolution.com.ph

Fish Unlimited Beach and Dive Resorts

Dauin & Dumaguete
www.dive-dumaguete.com

Fun & Sun Dive & Travel

Dauin & Dumaguete | Mactan, Cebu | Malapascua
www.funsundivetravel.com

Frontier Scuba

Puerto Galera
www.frontierscuba.com

Johan's Beach and Dive Resort

Subic Bay
www.subicdive.com

Kasai Village Dive Resort

Moalboal
www.kasaivillage.com

Magic Resorts

Anda, Bohol | Moalboal
www.magicresorts.online

Peter's Dive Resort

Sogod Bay
www.petersdiveresortph.com

Pier Uno Dive Resort

Anilao
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Salamangka Beach and Dive Resort

Siquijor
www.salamangkaresort.com

Salaya Beach Houses

Dauin & Dumaguete
www.salayabeachhouses.com

Scandi Divers

Puerto Galera
www.scandidivers.com

Scuba de Oro

Camiguin
www.scubadeoro.com

Sea Explorers

Dauin & Dumaguete | Malapascua | Panglao, Bohol
www.sea-explorers.com

Seaquest Dive Centers

Moalboal | Panglao, Bohol
www.seaquestdivecenter.com

Sogod Bay Scuba Resort

Sogod Bay
www.sogodbayscubaresort.com

Thresher Shark Divers

Malapascua
www.malapascua-diving.com

Ticao Island Resort

Ticao
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Discovery Fleet

www.discoveryfleet.com

Philippine Siren

www.sirenfleet.com

Seadoors Liveaboard

www.seadoors.net

Solitude One

www.solitude-one.com

HYPERBARIC CHAMBERS

LCP Hyperbaric Medicine Center and Wound Care Facility

Lung Center of the Philippines, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City

PCSSD Hyperbaric Chamber

TIEZA Office Building, P. Burgos Street, Mandaue City, Cebu

Opstital ng Palawan

220 Malvar Street, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan

St. Patrick's Hospital Medical Center

Lopez Jaena Street, Batangas City

Advance Hyperbaric Life Support, Inc.

11 Tagdalit Street, Brgy. Manresa, Quezon City
G/F High Pointe Medical Hub, 241 Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City

Sea Dive Resort Hyperbaric Chamber

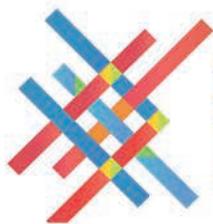
Coron Town Proper, Coron, Palawan

Southern Philippines Medical Center (SPMC)

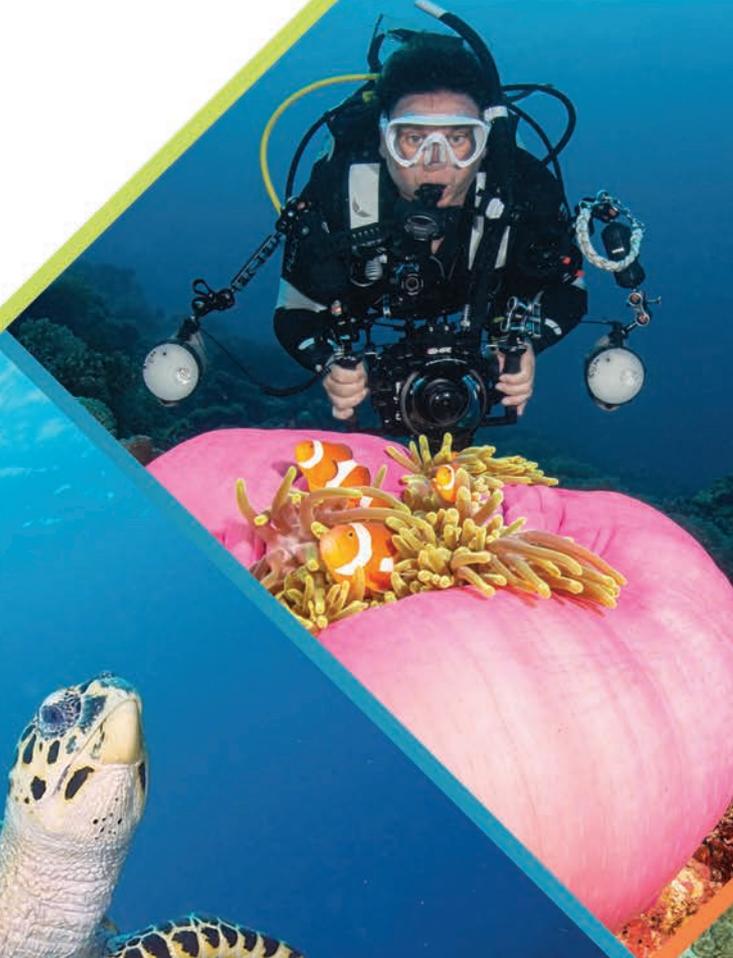
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