

All Things Monthly

A Hodgepodge of Articles from the Interwebs

Vol.1 | April 2013

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TOP 10 BEST VACATION SPOTS IN THE PHILIPPINES

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Top 10 Best Vacation Spots in the Philippines

Written by Myh DS

The Philippines is a great escape to beat your stress. These destinations are best for relaxation and summer adventure. This tropical country is undeniably ideal for summer family getaways. Choose your next vacation from its three main islands, namely Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. To help plan your trip, here is our guide to the top 10 best destinations for a summer vacation in the Philippines. Start exploring!

PALAWAN (LUZON)

Palawan is rated as the best island destination in East and Southeast Asia region by the National Geographic Traveller magazine in 2007. It is also cited as the 13th best island in the world. Be awed at the beautiful natural seascapes and landscapes of Palawan.

Famous Spots: Honda Bay, Coron, Tubbataha Reef, Subterranean National Park, Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center, Calauit Island Wildlife Sanctuary, Tabon Caves

Activities: snorkelling, diving, swimming, island hopping, caving,

Must-Try Food: live mangrove worms, seafood dishes, vegetable dishes, chicken *inasal* (grilled chicken),

Website: www.palawan.gov.ph

BORACAY (VISAYAS)

Boracay is voted as one of the best beaches in the world by BMW Tropical Beach Handbook in 1990. It is also voted as the number one tropical beach by British publication TV Quick in 1996. Enjoy fun activities and beach relaxation with its famous white sandy beaches and crystal clear waters.

Famous Spots: White Sand Beach, Kalibo Aklan, Bulabog Beach, Yapak, Tibiao Whitewater River, Mount Luho, The Bat Caves, Dead Forest

Activities: scuba diving, snorkelling, windsurfing, kite boarding, boardsailing, caving, horse riding, yachting,

Must-Try Food: seafood dishes especially *Kinilaw* (raw fish or shellfish marinated in vinegar and spices), *lumpiang ubod* (vegetables mix with shrimps and pork wrapped in crepe), *pancit molo* (noodles)

Website: www.boracayisland.org

BOHOL (VISAYAS)

Bohol is famous for its beautiful beaches and resorts in the Visayas region. It is also well known for its diving locations. In fact, it is listed as one of the top ten diving locations in the world. Bohol is also the popular home of tarsiers. The native tarsiers are the sec-

ond-smallest primate in the world. It is a must for tourists to check them out!

Famous Spots: Chocolate Hills, Alona Beach, Bolod Beach, Doljo Beach, Balicasag, Loboc River Cruise, Philippine Tarsier Sanctuary, Blood Compact Site, Hinagdanan Cave, Man-made Forest in Bilar

Activities: whale and dolphin watching, swimming, scuba-diving, snorkelling, caving, sightseeing, cable ride, zipline, sky jump, rappelling, trekking, biking, kayaking

Must-Try Food: seafood dishes, *sisig* (hot plate), chicken barbecue

Website: www.bohol.com

BANAUE (LUZON)

Banaue is the home of one of the eight wonders of the world, Banaue Rice Terraces. This is how the locals refer to this amazing creation. The Banaue Rice Terraces has been listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site since 1995. The World Travel and Tour Council also recognized the rice terraces as a green globe destination in the Philippines. So be prepared to witness the impressive man-made mountain stairway.

Famous Spots: Banaue Rice Terraces, Matang-lag Bronze Smiths, Guihod Natural Pool, Poitan Village,

Activities: sightseeing, meeting the Ifugaos (native inhabitants), trekking, mountain biking, mountaineering,

Must-Try Food: fresh vegetables

Website: www.visitbanaue.com

BAGUIO (LUZON)

Baguio is known as the summer capital of the Philippines. It is considered as one of the cleanest and greenest cities in the country. Baguio is a mountain retreat that is visited by thousands of local and foreign tourists alike.

There are numerous of family activities in store for you. The additional breath-taking scenic views will definitely complete your summer vacation in this city.

Famous Spots: Burnham Park, Camp John Hay, Lourdes Grotto, Mines View Park, The Mansion, Ifugao Woodcarvers Village, Kennon Road, Baguio Cathedral, Mummies of Kabayan, Philippine Military Academy, Botanical Garden,

Activities: sightseeing, horseback riding, play golf, boat rides, skating rink, biking,

Must-Try Food: strawberries, peanut brittle, strawberry jam, purple yam, fresh and green vegetables

Website: www.baguio.gov.ph

TAGAYTAY (LUZON)

Tagaytay is a favorite spot for both the locals and foreigners. Its cool climate makes Tagaytay as a refreshing summer destination. It is referred to as the second summer capital of the country. This city also provides the best views of the Taal Volcano, a volcano within the Taal Lake. The scenic views around the city are stress free relievers. That is why Tagaytay is one of the best relaxing vacation spots in the Philippines.

Famous Spots: Taal Volcano and lake, Tagaytay Highlands, Tagaytay Picnic Grove, 41st Division USAFFE Marker, People's Park in the Sky, Filipino-Japanese Friendship Garden, Residence Inn Mini Zoo, Calaruega Church,

Activities: sightseeing, play golf, ziplining, cable car, picnicking,

Must-Try Food: mushroom burger, beef *bulalo* (beef shank stew), fried *tawilis* (small fish)

Website: www.tagaytay.gov.ph

SUBIC (LUZON)

Subic is known for its beach activities most especially sailing and yachting. It has been once a USA military base. Now, it is a commercial Freeport after the Americans left in 1991. There are lots of outdoor activities you can do in this city. Subic is truly another great summer escapade with family and friends.

Famous Spots: Bat Kingdom, Mangrove Graveyard, Subic Bay Ocean Adventure, Subic Beaches, Subic Treetop Adventure, Waterfront Boardwalk, Zobic Safari, El Kabayo Equestrian Center

Activities: sightseeing, beach, trekking, golf, horse back riding, rappelling, canopy ride, go-kart, sailing, yachting, parasailing, jungle environment survival training, camping, kayaking, canoeing, jet ski, scuba diving, car racing, shopping,

Must-Try Food: *Kinilaw na hipon* (cooked with coconut vinegar), exotic delicacies such as fried insects (beetles, locusts, crickets)

Website: www.subic.com

BICOL (LUZON)

Bicol is also a great place to explore the Philippines. One tourist destination you shouldn't miss is the Mount Mayon in Albay. It is famous for its "perfect cone". The almost symmetrical conical shape is amazingly beautiful once you see it in person. It is also a must to try their exquisite spicy *gata* (cooked in coconut milk) dishes.

Famous Spots: Mayon Volcano, Cagsawa Ruins, Calabidongan Caves, Mercedes Group of Islands, Puraran Beach, Mount Bulusan, Bulusan Lake, Butanding (whale sharks) watching in Donsol, Lake Buhi, Tumaguiti Falls, Camarines Sur Water Sports Complex, Catanduanes beaches

Activities: sightseeing, caving, nature exploring (lake, falls, mountains, volcanoes), beach, Butanding whale-watching, scuba diving, water sports,

Must-Try Food: Bicol express (spicy vegetables with meat or fish cooked in coconut milk), *Pinangat* (taro leaves stuffed with shrimp fry), pili nut products,

Website: www.wowbicol.com

CAMIGUIN (MINDANAO)

Camiguin is the second smallest province in the Philippines. But neverthe-



less this paradise has promising destinations you must see. It is referred to as the "Born of Fire". This spectacular island has seven volcanoes and several volcanic domes. Thus it was born out of the volcanic eruptions. It has also clear waters and noted as one of the top 10 dive spots worldwide.

Famous Spots: Katibawasan Falls, Tulasan Falls, Bura Soda Water Swimming Pool, Esperanza Ardent Hot Spring, Sto.Niño Cold Spring, Tangub Hot Spring, Macao Hot Spring, Tanguines Lagoon, Old Vulcan, White Island, Mantigue Island

Activities: Nature exploring (waterfalls, beach, volcanoes, trails, caves), swimming in hot and cold springs, beach, snorkelling, scuba diving, trekking,

It is also where Mount Apo, the tallest mountain in the Philippines is located. Grab the chance to trek its popular nature trails for an unforgettable summer adventure. Davao also has world class fine beaches and dive spots.

Famous Spots: Mt. Apo, Philippine Eagle Center, San Pedro Cathedral, Pearl Farm Island Resort, Crocodile Park, Samal Island, Paradise Island,

Activities: sightseeing, beach, water sports, scuba diving, snorkelling, boat sailing, hiking, trekking, river rafting,

Must-Try Food: durian fruit, durian candies, mangosten fruit, pomelo fruit, fresh seafood,

Website: www.davaotourism.com

These tourist destinations are our personal picks to suggest the best summer vacation spots in the Philippines. Learn more about the destinations and activities you can do with your family and friends. Search each of the destination's websites and plan ahead. Hope this guide can help you plan your next summer escapade! Have a blast this summer! □



Must-Try Food: *Vjandeppastel* buns with various fillings, *piniato* (peanut brittle), *Maestrado Tablea* (chocolate)

Website: www.camiguin.gov.ph

DAVAO (MINDANAO)

Davao is the largest island in Mindanao.

High-SPF Sunscreens: Are They Better?

WebMD discusses the pros and cons of high-SPF sunscreens.

Written by Salynn Boyles

When you've shopped for sunscreen you have probably noticed products with very high sun protection factor (SPF) ratings.

But is a 100+ or a 90+ sunscreen really that much better than one with an SPF of 30?

SPF refers to the ability of a sunscreen to block ultraviolet B (UVB) rays, which cause sunburns, but not UVA rays, which are more closely linked to deeper skin damage. Both UVA and UVB contribute to the risk of skin cancer.

The SPF rating is a measure of the time it would take you to sunburn if you were not wearing sunscreen as opposed to the time it would take with sunscreen on.

"SPF is not a consumer-friendly number," says Florida dermatologist James M. Spencer, MD. "It is logical for someone to think that an SPF of 30 is twice as good as an SPF of 15 and so on. But that is not how it works."

According to Spencer, an SPF 15 product blocks about 94% of UVB rays; an SPF 30 product blocks 97% of UVB rays; and an SPF 45 product blocks about 98% of rays.

"After that, it just gets silly," he says.



Sunscreens with higher SPF ratings block slightly more UVB rays, but none offers 100% protection.

Spencer recommends SPF 30 products to his patients.

Farah Ahmed, who is general counsel for the cosmetics industry group Personal Care Products Council, concedes that the difference in sunburn protection between the medium- and high-SPF sunscreens is not great.

But, she says, the high SPF products may protect better against long-term skin damage and exposure-related skin cancers.

Whatever product you choose, experts recommend using a water-resistant sunscreen applied liberally one half hour before going outdoors. Sunscreen should be reapplied at least every two hours or after swimming, drying off, or sweating.

"The best way make sure you are protected is to reapply sunscreen often," Spencer says. "You just can't put it on in the morning and forget about it. I don't care if it's SPF 800 or the best UVA protection, after a few hours it's gone." □