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“THERE’S MORE” TO BORACAY TOURISM

Boracay Trade and Tourism Week Raises the Bar for 2024



story on
page 22

By Jun N. Aguirre

The recently concluded Boracay Trade and Tourism Week held last September 21 to 23 was the response of the Malay Tourism Office to the World Tourism Day celebration. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, this year’s theme is “Tourism and Green Investments.”

As Boracay culminated the Tourism Week celebrations, both the local government of Malay and the stakeholders agreed:

There is more that Boracay could offer in 2024.

During the Frontliners’ Night gathering held last September 21 at the Balabag Wetland Park Number 4, Malay Mayor Floribar Bautista emphasized the Malaynons’ good fortune because they have such a treasure as Boracay Island.

“Because of our good fortune, I then urged everyone to unite and comply with the government’s policies, especially on the environment. We also hope to provide better services to our foreign and local tourists,”

Bautista said.

He urged frontliners to be friendly and courteous.

He added that among the new things to be appreciated by tourists to Boracay Island were the motorcycle taxis and the revival of the sand castles at the beach.

Demple Pagsuguiron, president of the newly organized Boracay Sand Castle Makers association told the Boracay Sun News that they are thankful to the local government of Malay for the opportunity to bring back one of the island’s most valued

attractions, restoring the livelihood of so many families.

The Frontliners’ Night aimed to recognize the efforts of every stakeholder in their respective roles in promoting Boracay as a premier beach tourism destination.

Aside from the usual beach and sea sports activities, Tourism Week also featured Malaynon foods and delicacies which the local government hopes to become the next tourism attraction. Earlier, Bautista

continued on page 3

PAGE 6

SPORTS
Boracay Dragonforce Dedicates their Victory to the “Fallen 7”

PAGE 8

PEOPLE
Freddie the Flyer

PAGE 11

FUN FACTS
Why We Should Protect Our Coral Reefs Now

PAGE 23

ISLAND GUIDE
BSN's Guide to Island Day Trips

PAGE 25

TAGAY
Malay Municipal Police Joins Coast Guard Coastal Cleanup

**Ube
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FROM THE MAKERS OF
COCOMAMA



“ALREADY HAS US
DREAMING OF
COMING BACK
TO THE ISLAND”
Esquire

AT D’MALL
PALENGKE



EDITORIAL

Editor's Note

Take a breather

After the action-packed month of October, November comes as a welcome respite—a much-needed pause before the holiday sleigh comes crashing into our lives like a runaway train come December!

As of this writing, TV stations have begun counting down the days until Christmas. Lucky for us Boracay islanders, the malls over here are not piping out Christmas songs that could drive one up the wall.

Last month, I took a short trip to Manila, and just about everybody I came across was already strutting around wide-eyed like headless chickens on the verge of a nervous caffeine-intoxicated, traffic- and stress-induced, Christmas carol-activated breakdown/meltdown/frenzy.

Many have been traveling abroad to escape their hectic city lives and leave their cares behind for some R&R, only to return tired and still wanting a “real vacation.” To their chagrin, I shrug and say, “You should’ve just gone to Boracay.”

And so, to all of our fortunate friends who are on the island on this blessed November day, rejoice in the beauty of God’s creation, and breathe it all in! In this issue, *Boracay Sun News*’ ultimate guide to the “**Top 8 ‘Grammable Photo Op Spots in Boracay**” by Rica Velasco (page 22), and our ultimate “**Guide to Island Day Trips**” by Amanda Virrey (page 23) are your compass to see all that there is to see, to take those amazing money shots, and even to take a holiday from your holiday and discover the less traveled natural wonders around and beyond Boracay.

Should you prefer to travel solo (which is actually the best way to meet other single people traveling solo!), read “**Exploring the Wonders of Solo Traveling in Boracay**” by Pauline R. (page 26) for great ideas on activities that might interest you and connect you with fellow travelers from around the world.

Tipping point

Not all news is good news. Once in a while, there comes a need for a wakeup call, or a responsibility to expose potential dangers. When it comes to the environment, most especially, when certain issues reach a tipping point (or a point of no return), it is our duty to say something before it is too late and we find ourselves reporting a catastrophic event that could have been avoided or an unfortunate occurrence, after-the-fact.

In this issue are must-read environment-related articles that are interconnected, just as how our actions (and inaction) directly affect the island, its sustainable future, and our daily lives. Take the time to read “**Habagat Reveals Signs of Global Coastal Erosion**” by Franzi Pregio and “**Why We Should Protect Our Coral Reefs Now**” by yours truly.



We salute you

Speaking of coastal erosion, we salute the Malay Municipal Police’s community spirit, under Lt. Col. Dainis Ortega Amuguis’s leadership, who joined in the Annual International Clean Up initiated by the Phil. Coast Guard Auxiliary Squadron 609 headed by Cmdr. Claire Ang, along with

Capt. Desiree Segovia. Maraming Salamat po!

The people of Boracay Island are a different breed, indeed! This issue is a salute to the indomitable spirit, firstly, of Freddie Elizalde who was the first person to swim from Caticlan to Carabao Island, and he did so using the Butterfly stroke! Mark Cabrera, who was part of the support team, tells us about the amazing journey of “**Freddie the Flyer**” (page 8).



A quick “**AHOO!**” to the Boracay Dragonforce team for their victory at the Kagay-an International Dragon Boat Race! Read about it in Azenith Ressorreccion’s “**Boracay Dragonforce Dedicates ...**” (page 6). To the families of the “**Fallen 7,**” may they never be forgotten. We salute you for your strength, and may you find peace with every year that passes. Your Boracay Island family’s hearts go out to you, beating as one with a drumbeat to each of the fallen’s names:

- Mark Vincent Navarrete
- Comar R. Acob
- Richel Montuya
- John Vincent Natividad
- Antonette Supranes
- Maricel Tan
- Johann Tan

And last but not least, Teddy Montelibano takes us on a walk down memory lane—I’m not talking five years ago, or 10, but 26 years ago when Binggoy Remedios’ famed Dos Mestizos was born. “**The Institution that Remedios Built**” (page 20) is a triumphant story of the indefatigable Remedios’ passion and how the legendary Spanish-Filipino restaurant withstood the test of time and Boracay Island’s colorful history.



Take it easy and be kind everyone!

Peace and good vibes,

Freida

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BORACAY SUN NEWS READER SIGHTINGS

Boracay Island’s much-loved community newspaper continues to make its rounds, beachcombing and blazing a trail all over the island! We thank you for making us a part of your day ☀️



RS Francisco

We caught up with RS Francisco, the multi-awarded theater and movie actor, entrepreneur and president of FRONTROW Enterprise Philippines, Inc. at the poolside of Aqua Boracay while holidaying with over 100 of their team members.



Den Den Abesamis and Jing Monis

We also caught up with BFFs commercial model Den Den Abesamis and celebrity stylist Jing Monis at Discovery Shores Boracay doing some poolside reading with their cocktails. Why not? – **FVDS**

continued from front page



announced that his goal is for Boracay to be the sports tourism capital of the Philippines. For his part, Dindo Salazar, chairman of the Boracay Foundation Inc., reminds stakeholders that for Boracay to remain on top, everyone should serve as the guardians of this resort island.

Among the various tourism week activities were a food exhibition that showcased the region's specialties such as the exotic Dinuguan at puto (blood pudding with rice cakes) and locally harvested fruits among others, Poi and Led Dance Competition, Project Pristine and "Tapat Ko Linis Ko" Coastal & Underwater Clean Up Drive, Tourism Quiz Bee Competition, Tour Guiding Competition, a Music Festival and Project LNOB (Leave No One Behind).

Project LNOB was introduced by the United Nations Sustainable Development Group to provide universal access to basic services and opportunities, irrespective of a person's age, sex, ethnicity, wealth, or place of residence.

The Malay LGU implements Project LNOB by providing livelihood opportunities for the poor through the Tinda Turismo initiative.

BREAKING NEWS

SP AKLAN REQUESTS PRESIDENT MARCOS TO INTERVENE AND DEFEND THE INTEGRITY OF THE CLOA ISSUED TO BORACAY ATI FAMILIES

By Nicolas Evan G. Fuentes

On its 58th Regular Session, the 19th Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Aklan, under the stewardship of its Regular Presiding Officer and Vice Governor, Atty. Reynaldo M. Quimpo, passed a resolution, entitled: "A Resolution Requesting His Excellency President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., To Intervene And Defend The Integrity Of The Certificate Of Land Ownership Awards (CLOA) Issued By Then President Rodrigo R. Duterte To The Forty-Four Beneficiaries Belonging To The Ati Tribal Community In Boracay Island, Malay, Aklan."

On November 8, 2018, then President Rodrigo R. Duterte led the distribution of Certificates of Land Ownership Awards (CLOA) to 44 individuals belonging to the Aklan's indigenous people of Boracay Island at Barangay Manoc Manoc Covered Court, Boracay Island, Malay, Aklan.

A CLOA is a tenurial instrument showing ownership of the land granted or awarded to the beneficiary by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR). It prohibits the sale or lease of the land for at least ten (10) years. A CLOA is distributed to the occupants of a land by virtue of the land reform law.

During the August 7, 2023 Regular Session of the 19th SP Aklan, Hon. Jay E. Tejada, Chairman of the Committee on Senior Citizens, Persons with Disabilities and Indigenous People, proposed a legislative inquiry to look into the veracity of a report relative to the impending cancellation of Certificates of Land Ownership Awards (CLOA) previously granted to forty-four (44) individuals belonging to the Aklan's indigenous people in the Island of Boracay. The proposal was subsequently referred by the plenary to the Committee on Senior Citizens, Persons with Disabilities and Indigenous People, the Committee on Laws, Rules and Ordinances, the Committee on Agriculture and Aquatic Resources, and the Committee on Tourism, Arts and Culture.

On September 5, 2023, the aforementioned committees conducted a joint legislative inquiry attended by representatives from the regional, provincial and municipal offices of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), representatives of the Ati tribal families in Boracay, and other stakeholders.

During the legislative inquiry, DAR Regional Office VI Director Atty. Sheila B. Enciso apprised the committees that her office had received protests from claimants of Lot Nos. 6574, 6359-A, 6546, 7637, and

7161 against the awarding of the CLOA to the Ati tribal beneficiaries.

The protest filed by the claimant of Lot No. 7161 was denied by the DARRO VI and the claimant had subsequently appealed to the DAR Central Office for possible reversal of the denial of the petition at the regional office while the protests in relation to Lot Nos. 6574, 6359-A, 6546, and 7637 were granted by the DARRO VI after the claimants presented certification from the Department of Agriculture Central Office - Bureau of Soils and Water Management (DA-BSWM) indicating that the soil in the aforementioned four lots are not suitable for agriculture.

During the same legislative inquiry, members of the Ati Tribal beneficiary manifested that they have successfully cultivated the land and has produced vegetables and other crops which they are selling to hotels, contrary to the certification of the DA-BSWM. Subsequent Motions for Reconsiderations by the Ati tribal beneficiaries were denied by the DARRO VI, elevating the issue to the DAR Central Office for disposition.

The 19th Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Aklan expressed its position that national government agencies, DAR particularly, are duty bound to protect the integrity and sanctity of the CLOA issued to the landless beneficiaries and that DAR must provide the legal services to the Ati beneficiaries. It also pointed out that there is a need for the national government to intervene and defend the integrity of the CLOA because a favorable resolution towards the claimants of the awarded lands will set a precedent and open the other awarded CLOA to protests and petition, putting the viability of the program at risk.

The 19th Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Aklan also conveyed its position that it is one with the national government in ensuring the survival and sustainability of agrarian reform special programs, like the CLOA, intended for the benefit of the underprivileged members of the society.

The committee hearing/legislative inquiry was attended by Atty Shielia B. Enciso, Regional Director of Department of Agrarian Reform Regional Office VI (DARRO VI); Atty. Geony P. Licera, Attorney V of DARRO VI; Ms. Ma. Teresa C. Valencia, OIC-PARPO II of DAR Provincial Office Aklan (DARPO Aklan); Mr. John V. Bustamante, MARPO of DAR Municipal Office (DARMO) Cluster 4 - Ibajay; Ms. Hyacinth G. Obsequio, ARPO II of DARRO VI; Atty. Jose Rowell Declaro, Attorney V of DARPO Aklan; Mr. Dominador M. Briones, SARPO of DARPO Aklan; Ms. Gemma Teresa P. Mateo.

ISLAND LIFE

ARE WE OUT OF THE WOODS YET?

By Abigail Lei

We've had the 2018 closure, the 2019 typhoon Ursula, and the lockdowns from 2020-2022, and now we are here, seemingly 'back on track', as most would like to believe.

Businesses are back, people have jobs again, tourists are flocking back, albeit a little slower than what the island was used to. There is food on the table, we can enjoy the things in life that we were deprived of during the Covid-19 outbreak, and we can also spare our friends and family extra cash if they need it. So yes, when you look at it from the outside, it does look like we are doing better. But are we, really?

I dare say, it can still be better, but the worst is indeed over, and that's what keeps the people going.

I find myself fortunate enough to be juggling a few jobs here and there, and this sustains the cost of island living in Boracay which is quite a feat to take on. Rent and utilities take the most of the income, especially that I need a clean, comfortable, and warm place for me, my son, and our pets. Food can be reasonably budgeted between cash ins and outs, and it's important to know where and when to do groceries. Other essentials still need to be spaced and I am still paying off debts incurred during the pandemic.

Others aren't so lucky. They live from paycheck to paycheck, housed in poor living spaces, some scrambling to eat three times a day. Even some of the employed would depend on one staff meal provided during their duty hours. Loan sharks are also taking advantage of the needs of these workers as they struggle to support themselves here, while still sending financial help back to their families.

Some businesses likewise remain in this situation, covering losses while trying to have positive cash flow. Some which had to close in the last couple of years have never even resumed, and a lot more have packed up, sold everything, and still at a deficit.

Although it has already been a habit of mine since university days, today I crunch numbers for every single expense versus every income, and I've been doing this daily now, rather than my usual bi-monthly. Personally, this is my gauge that we aren't in the clear yet, especially with inflation and a general distrust with current policies in place.

The common Filipino is still clamoring for better life and finances, in reality. To say that we are out of the woods is proof that there is a huge disconnect, perhaps a need for those in power to immerse in the communities, before making any statements.

NEWS

Editor's Note:

In the September 2023 issue of Boracay Sun News, we learned from Jun N. Aguirre's article entitled "CBCP Urged: Respect the IP's Lands on Boracay Island" that the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) was threatening to evict the Indigenous People (IP) called the Boracay Ati from the same lands that the department had awarded to them in 2018. Here are the facts:

- In 2018, the Duterte administration awarded the Boracay Ati Tribal Organization (BATO) tribe with land titles or Certificate of Land Ownership Awards (CLOAs) as part of a poverty-alleviation program for IPs.
- The BATO who are agrarian reform beneficiaries face the risk of losing the lands awarded to them over claims by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and private developers on the famous tourist island that these are unsuitable for agriculture.
- The Ati community has been tilling the land and producing agricultural crops that are the source of their sustenance and livelihood.
- Under Section 4 of Republic Act 6557 or the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988, an area can be covered by the program if it is an "alienable and disposable land of the public domain, provided these are devoted to or suitable to agriculture."
- BATO leader Maria Tamboon had a face-to-face dialogue with DAR officials at the department headquarters in Manila, where they were demanded to show evidence to defend their motion for reconsideration. She expressed the tribe's plea for President Marcos, Jr. to intervene and protect the rights of indigenous people.

BORACAY ATI CLAIM THEIR LAND IS AGRICULTURALLY-PRODUCTIVE

By Jun N. Aguirre

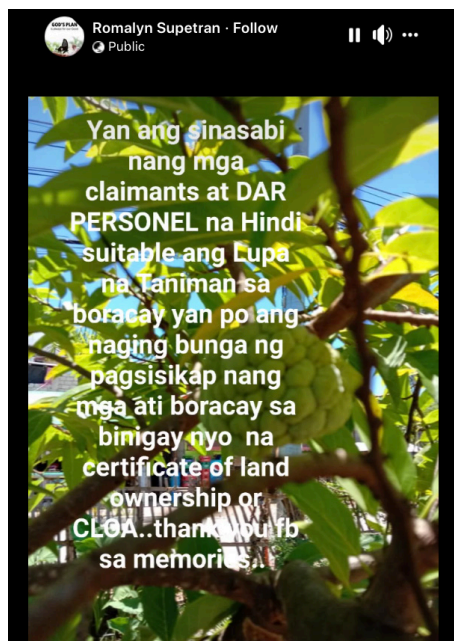


A Boracay Ati tribe member works the fertile Boracay agricultural land said to be unsuitable. (Photo courtesy of Boracay Ati Facebook page)

WHILE awaiting the final verdict of the court, the Boracay Ati Tribal Organization (BATO) has been insisting that the land is productive, contrary to the claims of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) that the land they are occupying is not an agricultural area.

A recent Facebook reel posted on their official Boracay Ati page shows a slideshow of images of the various vegetables planted on their property such as eggplant, lettuce and even cacao production.

"These are what the claimants and the DAR personnel are saying are not fit for agriculture. These are the fruits of the Boracay Ati's labor after we have been given the CLOA," the post said.



Earlier, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR)-Western Visayas informed the BATO that the 4,800 square meters of land awarded to the 44 Ati tribal families were unsuitable for agricultural production.

It could be recalled that President Rodrigo Duterte in 2018 ordered the Certificate of Land Ownership (CLOA) to be given to the Ati community as a source of livelihood. The beneficiaries were the Boracay Tumandok Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries and the Boracay Ati Tribal Organization.

The Sanguniang Panlalawigan (SP) of Aklan conducted a legislative inquiry last September 5 to discuss the said matter.

Provincial board member Jay Tejada told the Boracay Sun News that as of September 10, they had yet to come up with a committee report on the said legislative inquiry.

BATO leader Maria Tamboon told a local radio station based in Kalibo that they hoped the SP would be able to help them in their fight to secure the lot President Duterte promised to them.

Tamboon has called on President Ferdinand Bongbong Marcos to intervene. President Marcos is yet to publicly announce his stand on the said issue.

It was gathered that for this year, three separate resolutions were issued by DAR-6 Regional Director Sheila Enciso siding with Digna Elizabeth Ventura. These were Bohol Regal, Inc. (April 26), Jeco Development Corporation (April 26), and Y Investment Philippines, Inc. (May 3).

Ventura has been the President of Anchor Land since 2011, according to the company's website.

All DAR resolutions cited a certification on soil testing conducted by the Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM) and Highlight of Accomplishments by the bureau's Agricultural Land Management and Evaluation Division (ALMED). These

two bureaus are both under the Department of Agriculture.

In the three recent resolutions, Enciso emphasized the following points from the BWSM's certification:

- The area is characterized by excessively drained very shallow sandy clay textured soils derived from high limestone hills belonging to Faraon series presence of common to many stones and gravels size coralline limestone and exposed coralline limestone bedrock and rock outcrops subject to severe erosion. In general, the slope is 18-30% characterized by rolling to moderately steep terrain[.] Due to biophysical constraints that hamper cultivation. The applied area is marginally and not suitable for agricultural production;
- The elevation of the area ranges from 11-29 Meters Above Sea Level (MASL) surrounded by built up and at present is dominantly underutilized and idled covered with shrubs and very few patches of unproductive low-elevation vegetables;
- The area belongs to Climatic type III and is not irrigated land, not irrigable land and not covered by irrigation projects with firm funding commitments;
- The area is outside the Network of Protected Areas for Agricultural and Agro-industrial Development (NAPAAAD) and Strategic Agriculture and Fisheries Development Zones (SAFDZ) (see annex 4&5), and no longer viable for agricultural production; and
- The area is highly recommended for Eco-Tourism Zone and or Medium Density Tourist Commercial that will conform to the comprehensive land use plan and zoning map of the municipality of Malay, Aklan Province.

The resolution directed the protestors to file an application for the cancellation of the CLOA over the lands which are the subject of the case.

Atty. Geony Licera-Gregorio, head of DAR-6's Legal Assistance Division, said that the resolutions did not automatically cancel the CLOAs, but merely referred to the coverage of the land in question under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

Gregorio said the next step is for the developers to seek the cancellation of the land grant. If a protestor does not file for the cancellation of the CLOA, ownership of a property under the said certification remains with the awardee of the land or the Atis.

Under Republic Act 9700, only the DAR secretary can approve or cancel CLOAs. The DAR secretary was appointed by President Marcos.

A recent cacao tree planting activity at the Ati Boracay farmland was organized by Buseo Inc., and participated by the Explosive Ordinance Disposal & Canine Unit-Aklan (PECU-Aklan) headed by PLT Benjamin Repedro and Malay PNP.

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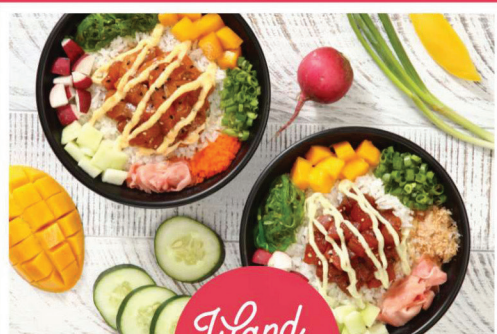


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SPORTS

BORACAY DRAGONFORCE DEDICATES THEIR VICTORY TO THE “FALLEN 7”

Plans are underway for the 13th Boracay International Dragon Boat Festival

By Azenith Resurreccion



The Boracay Dragonforce team takes home the bronze medal in the first Kagay-an International Dragon Boat Race 2023, and dedicates this win to the “Fallen 7,” our comrades who were casualties in the dragon boat accident on September 25, 2019.

As a member of the team, I would like to applaud the Mindanaoans for hosting the remarkable event last August 18 to 20 at the Cagayan De Oro City River. The Kagay-an International Dragon Boat Race was the first international race in Mindanao that was packed with U24 (under 24 years) teams who are highly competitive, considering that the sport only became very popular in Mindanao in the past five to seven years. Some major cities or provinces have been hosting competitions to promote the sport and develop young athletes in the universities as well as the sports tourism programs in their locality.

Participated by 19 teams with over 600 athletes from Visayas, Mindanao, Malaysia and Hong Kong, the event was organized by the LGU of Cagayan De Oro and officiated by a team headed by Priscilla Pinky Castillo and Edwin Hou who is an IDBF (International Dragon Boat Federation) international race official (IRO) along with other IROs from Singapore and Hong Kong.

The highlight of the competition was the 2,000-meter race, dubbed the “King of the Cagayan De Oro River” for the premier mixed team category. Boracay Dragonforce mixed team (five pairs of women and five pairs of men paddlers) ranked third runner-up in the time trial two-kilometer race, milliseconds behind the top three teams in Mindanao: RMMC Bluefins of Gensan, UZ Wildcat of Zamboanga and Samal Dragons of Davao.

The other race distances were 200 meters and 400 meters for premier mixed, open and U24 and were predominated by teams from Cagayan De Oro (CDO), General Santos, Zamboanga, Davao City, Siargao, Iligan and Negros Oriental.

Boracay International Dragon Boat Festival

Boracay Island has been the host of the grandest international race in the Philippines: the Boracay International Dragonboat Festival or BIDBF which commenced in 2007 with annual events until 2018, organized by the Boracay Island Paddlers Association (BIPA) headed by BIPA president Nenet Aguirre-Graf, Maria

“Tootsie” Ronnholm, Gigi Piit and Carolina De Tagle in partnership with the Malay LGU and the Province of Aklan. IDBF standard races were first officiated by the PDBF (Philippine Dragon Boat Federation) and later by the PCKF (Philippine Canoe and Kayak Federation).

Based on community feedback, the BIDBF continues to be regarded as the most prestigious international sporting event on the island, and the most highly-anticipated every summer season. For 12 years, during the last weekend of April, the island would be jam-packed with over a thousand athletes representing local club teams from all over the Philippines and international teams from Hong Kong, Macau, Malaysia, Singapore, Dubai, Qatar, Liechtenstein, Germany, Canada, Australia and the USA. The festival exhibited exciting vibrations all over the island with various events and festivities. In recent years, the organizers had to decline last-minute registrations because of venue capacity limits.

The six-month closure of Boracay in 2018 had changed the traction of the BIDBF and dragon boat enthusiasts are left wondering when Boracay Island would play host to this vibrant event again.

According to Graf, the 13th Boracay International is set to be back after a long hiatus this coming April 2024, as many international and local teams have been inquiring about the Boracay race after the pandemic was lifted.

“The biggest challenge would be on how to raise the budget since it’s like starting from scratch,” she told the *Boracay Sun News*.

Brief History of Dragon Boat Racing in Boracay

Dragonboat racing became the most popular sport on the island starting in 2001 when the first race was held at Angol Beach. At the time, the newly-formed Bugsay Boracay Team composed of a group of outdoor enthusiasts, artists, and mainstays of a certain establishment raced against all visiting teams from Manila and won medals.

Since then, other islanders, locals, workers, business owners, and expats would come together at the beginning of the summer season to train and get fit. Many were attracted to the sport and more teams were formed such as the Boracay Sun Paddlers, Boracay Guardians, and the Nami Ati Team which is composed of members of the Ati Tribe.

The community eventually grew and became formidable contenders not only to the visiting teams but also in the races they joined abroad. With the help of the local establishments and sponsors, certain teams made a name for themselves, bringing Boracay Island’s good name to the international scene such as at the prestigious Hong Kong International Races in Shatin River, Stanley Beach, Victoria Harbor and Macau.

In the first decade of the sport’s inception, teams regrouped and multiplied to form more teams like the award-winning Boracay Allstars, Boracay Bum Shells, Boracay Airforce, Shangri-La Flying Foxes, Boracay Sea Dragons (of Iglesia Ni Cristo), Boracay Dragonflies and Boracay Dragonforce. Aside from the races joined in other parts of the country, these teams have raced in Penang and Kota Kinabalu in Malaysia, South Korea, Taiwan, and so on, while some Boracay athletes represented the country at the World Cup and the Sea Games.

Boracay Dragonforce

Team Boracay Dragonforce was formed in 2014 as a masters team with 10 members aged 40 years old and above. Thomas Mueller, the team’s founder and manager was determined to lead and develop a competitive team as he welcomed aspirants, even those with no athletic backgrounds. The small boat team joined the BIDBF and won medals so in the following years, the team grew to 60 individuals who are tourism industry workers, tour guides, freelancers and lifeguards. With the merging of team Dragonflies, the award-winning all-women team, they have competed in all categories in both “standard” (with 20 people on the boat) and small boat open/men, women, mixed and masters in all the races joined.

When asked about the team’s success, Mueller points out that hard work, quality training and commitment are the key principles that resulted in winning performances in almost every race category joined in competitions in the Philippines, as well as several international events. The team’s reputation has also resulted in invitations to attend festivals across Asia.

The attendance of the Boracay Dragonforce in the recent race in Cagayan De Oro was to help encourage its members as well as all dragon boat enthusiasts on the island to get back on track. After three years of no boat training and competitions, it was difficult to gather old members as most have directed their focus on work and family, while some of the original members moved elsewhere.

“We are slowly getting back to our usual routine as we were unable to compete in high-level national or international events during the past three years.

“We hope that people will be interested in joining us

and that the sport will grow big again in Boracay,” Mueller added.

He also thanks all the supporters and sponsors who have helped the team travel to CDO and represent Boracay.

As mentioned earlier, the team dedicates the win to the “Fallen 7,” who we tragically lost four years ago. Though the whole team is still suffering and carrying the burden of the loss, each member continues to hope and pray for complete healing for each of the members and most especially for the bereaved families and loved ones.

How to Become a Dragon Boat Paddler

Becoming a member of a dragon boat team could be a good decision any new islander may adopt since it is a sport where there is no particular requirement to be able to join. Athletic or not, regardless of age, status, body type, nationality or gender, every aspirant can choose which team they can go along with. The best attribute of this team sport is how it exhibits overall fitness with less impact; promotes upper body strength and cardiovascular health, at the

same time being one of at least 20 individuals on a boat and striving to row the boat forward and be in sync with one another.

In competing, no one can become a star player since everyone is equal. The drummer is the command while the helm is the “steering wheel.” Paddlers have to be equally powerful physically and mentally to do what it takes to be the first to reach the finish line. A certain race would take only seconds to a few minutes to finish but to win a competition would take rigorous training and sacrifices. One can achieve better overall fitness and win lasting friendships along with it.

Here are the requirements for becoming a paddler:

- Anyone willing to learn and attend set training schedules
- Pass the 100-meter swim test (non-confident swimmers undergo swimming lessons conducted by the team)
- No serious illness and can undergo strenuous exercises
- Brings positive vibes

Dragon Boat Team Recruitment Details

Boracay Dragonforce welcomes everyone to train with them from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. daily except Sundays. The time of training is conducive for those who have a regular eight-hour job. Trainings include calisthenics and stretches, gym workouts for added strengthening, boat training and other fitness activities such as running and swimming. Venue: Bulabog Beach, near Levantin and White Beach, Station 1 starting October. Flooom!

Facebook page: boracaydragonforce

Boracay Allstars welcomes newbies, old paddlers or anyone who just wants to try dragon boating to join and train with them. Training schedule will depend on the tides in Bulabog Beach, usually around 7:30 a.m. or 3:30 p.m. Training schedules are posted on the Boracay Allstars Facebook page: BoracayALLSTARSDDBTEAM

Boracay Bumshells is an all-women team who are in for fitness and having fun. Join their morning trainings that start at 7 a.m. in October, in front of Kasbar Boracay, White beach, Station 1.

Facebook page: bumshells2013

IN MEMORIAM REMEMBERING THE BORACAY DRAGONFORCE “FALLEN 7”

MARK VINCENT NAVARRETE

COMAR R. ACOB

MARICEL TAN

JOHANN TAN

RICHEL MONTUYA

ANTONETTE SUPRANES

JOHN VINCENT NATIVIDAD

Last September 25, members of Boracay Dragonforce team gathered on Bulabog Beach to solemnly commemorate the fourth year since that fateful day. The tragic accident took the lives of seven paddlers when a squall capsized the dragon boat during a morning training session.

For the first time after four years, the team members along with a few survivors braved facing their trauma and visited the accident site on board the same dragon boat, to offer prayers, flowers, and candles near Lingganay Resort. Some of the survivors admit that despite the pain and psychological distress, this memorial brought them some comfort and release, simply by being there for the first time and in full force, supporting one another, and one step forward on the long journey of recovery.

The Boracay dragon boat community asks that we continue offering prayers for their dearly departed comrades and also for the bereaved families and friends, so that they may carry on in peace, acceptance and healing.

BUSINESS

RICH - ROYAL INDIAN CURRY HOUSE

By Charlie Greene

Last week, after all the heavy rain and winds we have been having, I decided to walk along White Beach and see what the weather had done to the surrounding area.

The LGU along with a lot of private effort had cleared away most of the debris and everywhere was looking pretty good - great job everyone...

Walking always makes me hungry, so upon deciding that something nice and hot would satisfy my hunger, I popped into the RICH Indian restaurant, ideally situated right on the beachfront. I'd been here several times before and knew the food and service was excellent.

Everywhere is pretty quiet at this time of year, so when I entered I saw Richard Verna sitting at one of the tables. Richard is one of the owners of this lovely restaurant and asked if I would like to join him for lunch.

We shared a large helping of Butter Chicken complemented perfectly with some garlic naan bread. This truly was what I had been looking for - thank you...

Just chatting over how business and life was - the conversation drifted into more of an interview (I couldn't help myself; apologies Richard).

And it went like this:

BSN: What did you do before becoming a restaurant owner?

RV: I was in the corporate world for almost 25 years. It was very different.

BSN: What is your position in the business?

RV: There are four of us and I'm one of the stakeholders.

BSN: When and where did the business start?

RV: ROYAL INDIAN CURRY HOUSE a.k.a RICH started its first restaurant in the year 2015 in Makati City, Manila. Since then, we've opened branches in Manila Pasay City called RICH By The Bay, Tandoor By RICH inside SM Mall of Asia Pasay City, Royal Indian Curry House Angeles City and RICH Boracay which opened in December of 2022

BSN: Why was Boracay chosen for the business?

RV: Boracay is one of the top islands in the world visited by tourists from around the globe. We felt that the island was the right place for us to offer authentic North Indian cuisine to seasoned travelers who are well versed with it as well as introduce it to customers who are relatively new to Indian cuisine. There couldn't be a better place than Boracay to open our latest branch.

BSN: What is your view looking forward on how Boracay will be good for you/business?

RV: Boracay is a popular tourist destination in the Philippines, and as a result of that, it benefits businesses in the tourism and hospitality industry. The island's popularity attracts many local and foreign tourists and works as a leverage to bring in new and repeat customers to our restaurant. As seen by our 4.6 star rating, customers have been very appreciative of the quality of our food and the service we offer. We would now like to focus on bringing in more customers during the off peak season by offering more attractive deals.

BSN: Any future plans to expand the

business?

RV: We have plans and hope to expand further in 2024.

BSN: What do you think the DOT and LGU could do to help promote Boracay and possibly help local businesses like yours?

RV: The DOT and LGU play a crucial role in improving business conditions by creating a conducive environment for economic growth and sustainability. Improved infrastructure such as roads, airports and transportation services can benefit businesses as this will help in easier access for tourists. They can collaborate with business associations and community organizations to address challenges and identify opportunities for growth.

Marketing and advertising businesses more effectively at different places around the island will help a lot.

It is important to note that responsible and sustainable development is essential to preserve Boracay's natural beauty. This is something that we all need to collectively support.

Richard went on to say:

"I'm proud to share that we have been recognized by the Philippines Top Choice Awards as the Top Choice Premier Indian Restaurant, Elite Business and Leadership Award as Premier Authentic Indian Cuisine Specialty Restaurant, Netizens Award for gaining the Netizen's Trust through its responsible way of using the Internet, Philippines Social Media Star Brand Awards and World Class Philippines Council honored us for our success and achievements in the field of Indian Cuisine

Specialty Restaurant.

Our focus is to continue to serve our Filipino community with the most authentic Indian cuisine and provide a world class dining experience with exceptional service."

~ Thanks Richard. Both for the chat, and the delicious lunch. 🌿





Address: Royal Indian Curry House, Station 1
Lot 483 PT B Beach Front, Balabag, Boracay
(Next to Army Navy)

Tel.: 0917 775 0102
rich.dnjrboracay@gmail.com









PEOPLE

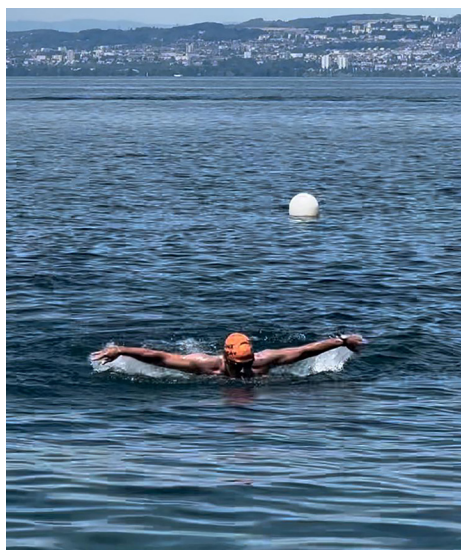
FREDDIE THE FLYER

The first man to swim from Caticlan to Carabao Island

By Mark Cabrera



Freddie Elizalde swims along the famous Boracay rock formation often referred to as “the keyhole.” (Photo by Mark Cabrera)



Freddie Elizalde takes flight in the waters of Boracay, Philippines (left) and Lake Geneva, Switzerland (right)

During my sunset beach swimming sessions, I usually swim alongside swimmers I know. Sometimes I would surprise the lifeguards who are doing their compulsory swimming exercises by swimming beside them unannounced.

During one of my daily sunset swims last year, a distinct swimmer caught my attention. This guy was wearing a full body-suit. What's more interesting is that he was using the Butterfly stroke (a swimming stroke swum on the chest, with both arms moving symmetrically, accompanied by the Butterfly kick along with the movement of the hips). Considered one of the more difficult strokes, swimmers usually use Freestyle or Breaststroke in the ocean. I sometimes use the one-arm Butterfly drill. But this guy was doing the full butterfly stroke consistently. I noticed this when he was still about 300 meters away from me. I swam towards him and joined him from a distance so I wouldn't bother him. I stopped after swimming with him for about a hundred meters and this guy kept going all the way to Angol Beach.

That was my first swimming encounter with Freddie, the 53-year-old long-distance swimmer who recently set a record as the first person to swim Butterfly stroke from

Lausanne in Switzerland to Evian les Bains in France. He was the first person I saw to swim from Station 1 to Station 3 using the Butterfly stroke. I later found out that he was the father of three of my swimming students.

A Family of Flyers

In the swimming community, a swimmer is sometimes called a “flyer” because their specialty or swimming events are the Butterfly stroke.

Apparently, swimming is in Freddie's blood. He hails from a Filipino-Spanish family of swimmers. His father, **Fred J. Elizalde, Sr.** is an Olympic swimmer. Fred Elizalde, Sr. was a swimmer who competed in the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome, and the Asian Games in Tokyo in 1958.

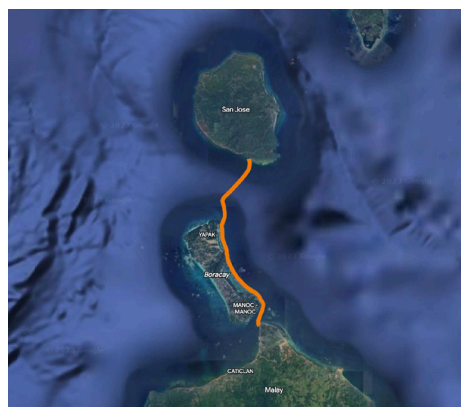
Federico L. Elizalde, Jr., referred to as Freddie by his family and friends, was also a member of the Sea Horse Swim Club and his school swim team in his youth. Furthermore, two of his three kids are currently in the swimming program at their school, and are excelling in the Butterfly stroke like their father and grandfather. So, in the swimming community, they are fit to be called a “Family of Flyers.”



Federico “Freddie” Jr. just before swimming from Boracay to Carabao Island (left) and his father Federico “Fred” Sr. who placed 6th for the Philippines at the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome (right)

Caticlan to Carabao Island Swim

September 16, 2023
6:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Over 12 kilometers
5 hours and 25 minutes
2 channels (Caticlan to Boracay and Boracay to Carabao Island)
0 stops (except for quick snack and water breaks)



It was 9 p.m. on September 15, 2023, when Freddie called me. He invited me for an open water swim. He said the weather was perfect for a swim the next morning. He has been waiting the whole week for the Habagat weather to subside. He was following the weather through his weather apps eagerly waiting for good weather conditions that are suitable for an open water swim. Finally, there was a window at 6 a.m. of September 16, and Freddie quickly invited me to join.

He briefed me about the tides and the directions of the current. I was familiar with the Caticlan-Boracay cross-channel swim conditions, having done it numerous times but the Boracay-Carabao Island cross-channel swim was new to me. This is Freddie's second time swimming across the five-kilometer Boracay-Carabao Island channel. This time, he plans to swim the two channels simultaneously in one swim. I badly needed a workout, so I accepted this challenge.

On September 16, at 5:30 a.m., I met up with Freddie and we had a quick breakfast. Shortly after, we met his support team and headed to Caticlan in Freddie's rubber boat. I joined the support team as the (occasional) swim buddy/documenter/lifeguard and the boat captain manning the rubber boat. The banka team consisted of a team in charge of security and supplies. Then we embarked on this swim adventure at 6:30 a.m.

The Game Plan:

Using science to up the swimming game
Swimming 12 kilometers straight over deep open waters is no joke. It may also be dangerous and crazy if this is not well-thought-out. But this is doable if enough preparation and safety precautions are in place. Again, safety is always a priority.

To start things off, Freddie made sure that the weather and swimming conditions were suitable for an open-water swim.

He was monitoring the weather, the tides and the current on a weather app. He has been studying the charts before deriving waypoints for the swim.



The team prepares the support boat before the swim.

Considering the many crucial factors, Freddie determined that judging by the speed that he swims Butterfly, he needs to start the swim by 6.30 a.m. because the current in the Caticlan channel would be flowing east with the rising tide. He also needs to be in Ilig Iligan by 10 a.m. to begin the Boracay Carabao channel crossing before the tide flow switches west after the high tide at 11:38 am. By this time, he needs to be halfway across the channel between Boracay and Carabao Island before the strong current flowing west begins. Hence, you must “catch the Carabao,” he said, before the current pulls you out to the Sulu Sea.

Nutrition-wise, Freddie will have a snack and a drink of water every hour to sustain his body and stay hydrated. This was our game plan for the open-water swim.

Aside from using the weather app to identify good swimming conditions, Freddie also wore a special HECS (Human Electronic Concealment System) suit during the swim. All living animals emit a faint electromagnetic signal that sea animals like sharks and rays can detect through electroreception. The beating of a heart or contracting of a muscle sends a spontaneous electrical signal. But this new wetsuit blocks the electrical signals, making you invisible to these sea creatures. It's like wearing an invisible suit in the water. This way, you avoid attracting unwanted attention from aquatic predators.

1st Leg: Caticlan-Boracay channel

Due to the quick flowing current in the Boracay-Caticlan Channel, Freddie was the fastest person I know to swim across the almost one kilometer distance between the mainland and Boracay Island. He accomplished this in 15 minutes using the Butterfly stroke. My fastest swim using assorted swim strokes with a group of swimmers in the same channel was 45 minutes. Freddie's fantastic speed was due to the rising tide and the precise timing of the swim, he was able to catch the strong current that was heading north-east to Tambisaan Beach, but he eventually had to swim at an angle aiming west towards the shoreline of Boracay to avoid getting swept east and out to the Sibuyan Sea by the powerful flow of the tidal current. Caticlan-Boracay channel, check!

2nd Leg: 7K Boracay Island stretch

The next step was to swim across the seven-kilometer length of the East Coast of Boracay Island, using the island to block the flowing tide and swim near the shoreline where the tidal currents ebb and move slower in different directions. After Tambisaan Beach, he swam near the fringing reef of Bulabog Beach to avoid boat traffic. The swim at this point was kind of easy as the current was calm up until the start of Nieva's Cove.



Bulabog obstacle course

continued on next page

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There were also spots infested with plankton-sized jellyfish. “I had stings on my body and my face, so I had to get up on the rubber boat occasionally,” he recounts. Freddie would get stung only on his face, hands and feet as they were the only places uncovered by the HECS suit and hood. He just shrugged the stings away, swimming through the discomfort and keeping his Butterfly swim pace. He says that he worries about encountering highly toxic jellyfish such as Box jellyfish, or Bluebottle jellyfish, which can cause fatalities.

However, the milder pain from the sting of less toxic and more common jellyfish tends to wake him up like caffeine and cause him to swim quicker. It is as if the jellyfish stings are a form of energy exchange that the sea provides to a swimmer pushing him to swim faster and further. Unfortunately, even these mild jellyfish stings later cause annoying itchy skin irritations that last for days afterwards, and usually require the application of vinegar or Clobetasol lotion, as well as the consumption of antihistamine, “and possibly beer,” he adds.

The current gradually got stronger along the coast of Bulabog Beach. This would be Freddie’s longest swimming leg as he was swimming against the current. Moreover, this was the busiest section with dangerous boat traffic and ongoing water activities operating throughout the stretch. Speed boats, banana boats, shuttle boats and parked yachts were among the obstacles.

Each passing boat would cause ripples of waves that affected Freddie’s Butterfly stroke. His arms would hit the waves at an uneven pattern and would occasionally disrupt his pace and hydrodynamic glide. This kept the support team busy, as the two boats would make a perimeter around Freddie protecting him from the other passing boats, as the two boats would make a perimeter around Freddie protecting him from the other passing boats, as getting struck by a boat or propeller could result in a fatality. This went on until he passed the Newcoast Beach.

Our next challenge was Freddie’s snack supply, and the rubber boat gasoline was running low, so the bangka backup team had to go to shore to restock. This left me and the rubber boat captain with Freddie. I would occasionally go back in the water to swim with Freddie and to check the water conditions. Freddie was able to conquer swimming against the strong current in Ilig Iligan Beach and the bangka was able to regroup with us at the edge of Boracay Island in Yapak. Swim across Boracay Island, check!

Final leg: 5K Boracay-Carabao Island channel

His final challenge was to swim Butterfly across over five-kilometer Boracay-Carabao Island channel. Although this was his second time swimming across the channel, it was his first time swimming to Carabao Island coming from Caticlan. In fact, it was the first time anyone had ever swam the 12.5-kilometer distance from Caticlan on Panay Island all the way to Carabao Island.

The Boracay to Carabao Island Channel portion of the swim turned out to be the smoothest leg, because there was no boat traffic or boat wakes to obstruct the swim. Freddie was finally able to get a more consistent and smoother Butterfly swim rhythm. He looked like he was slowly galloping the entire stretch that took him two hours to cross. He left Ilig Iligan Beach at 10 a.m. and landed in Carabao Island at exactly 12:02 p.m. Freddie started his swim from Caticlan in Mainland Malay, Aklan, and finished his swim in Carabao Island, San Jose, Romblon in five hours and 25 minutes.



Smooth strides

Bubbly Kelana finish

As Freddie landed in Carabao Island, he did the traditional “Kelana Double Chug Challenge” that consists of drinking two bottles of beer at the same time, bottoms up. He’s made it his trademark, having done the same as the first person to swim Butterfly stroke across the 13-kilometer width of Lake Geneva and completed the International Classique Swim from Lausanne in Switzerland to Evian in France in six hours and 44 minutes last July 14, 2023.



Freddie’s trademark “Kelana Double Chug Challenge”

After his Aquaman-like long swim in the morning, Freddie switched back into his businessman alter ego. Freddie is active with the Kelana Food Corporation that currently encompasses five remarkable Boracay restaurants namely: Kelana Coastal Cuisine, Hobbit Tavern, Jeepney Stop, Thai Basil and the Super Submarine Sandwich Shop.

When he’s not conquering the sea or at the office, Freddie the artist is usually conquering the canvass at his studio. You can see samples of his art at Kelana Coastal Cuisine (Station 2 below Real Coffee) and at Hobbit Tavern at D’Mall. Go check them out!

Catch Freddie on his next open-water challenge as he joins the upcoming “Swim Junkie Challenge” in Caramoan on October 8, 2023. He will be swimming the 15-kilometer Butterfly distance in this leg.

If you want to join an open water swim in or around Boracay Island, you may contact the Boracay Swimming Club at (+63 920) 982 9840. Cheers! 🍻

WHAT A GUY!

Masterful strokes, baffling speed

A normal person can swim fast at a short distance. After that, the swimmer gets tired quickly. A short-distance swimming competition usually has 50-meter, 100-meter and 200-meter Butterfly events. In all these competitive swimming events, the swimmers are usually exhausted because their heart rate goes very high after swimming Butterfly at a very fast pace.

So, you’re probably wondering (as I did): How did Freddie swim Butterfly at a constant pace during the 12-kilometer swim?

Freddie can swim Butterfly for a very long period because he uses certain energy

conservation techniques. He uses gravity and kinetic energy, diving forward with gravity and pivoting back and forth maximizing kinetic energy in motion with a slow aquatic gallop similar to the motion of a galloping horse. He tries to do this as relaxed and least tense as possible, making every stroke a meditative breathing exercise in order to develop what he calls a walking/resting pace. He says that this technique literally makes swimming Butterfly 300 times easier to swim than sprinting conventional Butterfly stroke. When he sprints one 50-meter lap at full speed in Butterfly stroke he is exhausted, and he finds it easier to swim 300 laps at a walking/resting pace.



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ENVIRONMENT

HABAGAT REVEALS SIGNS OF GLOBAL COASTAL EROSION

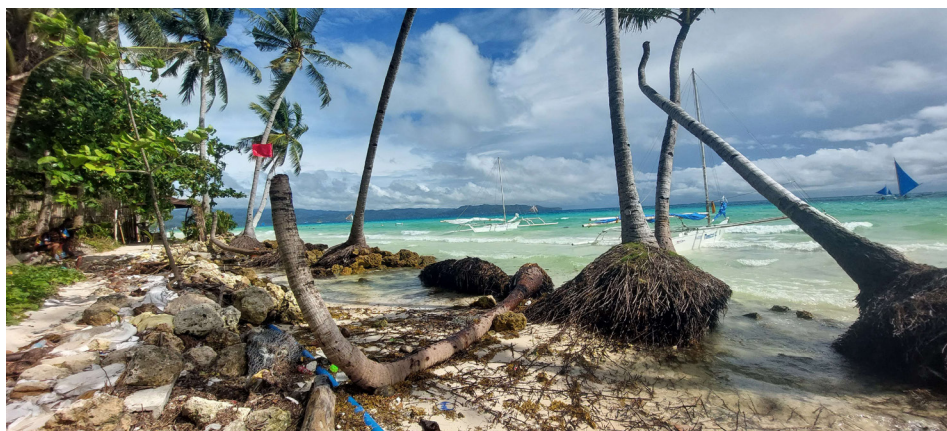
By Franzi Pregio

It is a fact that Boracay has beautiful white sandy beaches that are famous worldwide. It is the main reason why people all around the world flock to these shores so they can have a beautiful memory with a million-dollar backdrop. It is one of the main cogs that drive the tourist industry in Visayas and the whole Philippines.

Boracay is not famous for extraordinary wildlife, waterfalls, or cultural sites. Our main attraction is the beach.



Picture-perfect postcard photograph of Boracay Island's famed White Beach during the summer season (Photo by Jack Jarilla)



Strong winds and currents reveal the state of sand erosion on White Beach during the Habagat season (Photo by Franzi Pregio)

Sadly, it is also a fact that Boracay's beaches are losing tons of sand to erosion every year.

According to the website ScienceDirect.com, coastal erosion is a natural process that continually reshapes shorelines through ocean currents, tidal movements, and wind and wave action. The peer-reviewed journal website says, "Coastal erosion is a global occurrence a result of human activities and natural environment changes making the coastal dynamic action (wave, current, wind) lose balance in the coastal process, and the long-term loss of sediments of coastal zone results in the destruction process of coastline retreat and beach erosion."

According to scientists of the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission, 13 percent of the Earth's coastlines will have eroded by 2050. They predict that another 25 percent could wash away further by the second half of the century. This was identified by studying coastlines from satellite images.

Sand erosion could potentially inflict a killing blow to our ever-weakening environment and furthermore threaten our tourist industry, which most of the Boracay residents and businesses depend on.

Buildings near the beaches will have no buffer zones to protect them from monsoon surges or rising sea levels. Add to that, measures to mitigate against the damage by the private sector and government, both local and national have proven to be expensive and in some cases, unsustainable.

Humans are not the only ones directly affected by this global coastal hazard.

Reports from local marine biologist, Haron Deo Vargas, state that Boracay is

home to three types of endangered sea turtle species, the Green Sea Turtle, the Hawksbill Sea Turtle, and the Olive Ridley Sea Turtle, all of which lay eggs on the fine sandy beaches of Boracay.



One small step for this green sea turtle hatchling, one giant leap for Mother Earth.

Already threatened with extinction, these sea turtles are protected under the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act (Republic Act No. 9147) and could potentially lose nesting sites for future generations. Sea turtles are known to nest as adults in the same place as where they hatch. It is a type of natural GPS system that guides them through their life cycle.

Needless to say, there's a lot at stake for the future of Boracay when it comes to its beaches. As Alexa Brockamp identifies in her socioeconomic analysis on global economic impacts of shoreline degradation (2014):

"Localities that rely on tourism as a large part of their GDP, and as a means of generating employment and foreign exchange, stand to face a devastating economic loss due to degradation of shoreline quality."

Where has the sand gone, and why is Boracay Island's white fine sand disappearing so fast?

The sand we see along the shoreline is just the tip of the "sand-berg." It is a giant body of sand that encompasses our beloved island. This body of sand shifts with the seasons receding and growing yearly, like a lung breathing in and out.

It has come to the attention of many longtime residents and locals, including myself, that the sand has been receding to alarming levels. The bases of the coconut trees now tower above you showing their intricate root structures. Submerged infrastructure flash their industrial colors at tourists enjoying the Habagat season. Sand banks form on the low tides which is a sign of beach leveling.



Telltale signs of severe sand erosion are more evident during the Habagat season such as on these photos: (Left) Exposed coconut tree roots along the coastline; (Right) Exposed cliff bases at Puka Shell Beach in Yapak (Photos by Franzi Pregio)



Sandy-turned-rocky West Cove Beach photos taken only six months apart. Every year, so much more sand recedes during the Habagat season, and when the Amihan season comes around, the displaced sand that returns to this beautiful cove seems to be less each year. (Photos by Franzi Pregio)

According to Dr. Ken Rubin, assistant professor at the Department of Geology and Geophysics of the University of Hawaii, Honolulu,

"Ultimately, a beach erodes because the supply of sand to the beach cannot keep up with the loss of sand to the sea."

It is almost certain that rising sea levels, over-development, pollution, over-exploitation of natural resources, mismanagement of urban planning, decades of negligence and degradation of our natural areas, coral reefs, wetlands and forest areas, are reasons that amplify sand erosion.

Many of these factors are, as Scott Campbell characterizes the inherent tradeoffs in planning for sustainable development (1996): "Global Economic Impacts of Shoreline Degradation: A Socioeconomic Analysis 4":

"In short, the planner must ... 'grow' the economy, distribute this growth fairly, and in the process not degrade the ecosystem. ... The "jobs versus environment" dichotomy ... crudely collapses under the 'economy' banner the often differing interests of workers, corporations, community members, and the national public." (Campbell, 1996, p. 2)

Or in layman's terms the "hanap buhay" rhetoric. Yet even with 32 million pesos generated from tourists alone in 2022, according to the Department of

Tourism Region 6, the army of spear fishers, fishing boats, coastline scavengers and coastline fishermen still continue exploiting the island's natural resources on a nightly basis, raiding nesting grounds and disrupting natural food chains. More and more new buildings and establishments are being developed with no urban planning towards environment-disrupting natural wind and water movements. Not to mention the hundreds of boat anchors bombarding the reef on a daily basis.

Furthermore it seems that many decision-making entities resort to costly outdated projects as stated by Campbell:

"But, when the encroaching sea comes against people's property, the tendency is for people to try and stop the encroaching sea. They armor the shoreline with seawalls, revetments, jetties, etc. These have a negative effect on beaches because once sea water reaches them, it "bounces" off them with more energy than a wave washing back off a normal sand beach. More sand is carried offshore, promoting beach loss. Additionally, jetties are placed perpendicular to the beach, disrupting along-beach currents and causing sand loss downstream of the jetty." (Campbell 1996)

But what are ways we can help our beloved beaches? How can one make an impact?

continued on next page



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(Beside Jollibee)



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Many private sector, non-government organizations and government bodies are already doing their part by protecting mangroves, planting trees, and preservation projects on wet and forest lands. Coral planting, coastal cleanups and buoy placement and maintenance initiatives have been undertaken by the likes of BBASS (Boracay Businesses Association of Scuba Schools), BFI (Boracay Foundation Inc.) and FFF (Friends of the Flying Foxes), not to mention the countless other projects, associations and members involved. These entities constantly welcome motivated individuals and volunteers to help in their efforts.

There are many other ways of helping to preserve what we still have.

- Plant beach-friendly vegetation. Trees can help mitigate the excess water runoffs due to the high density of concrete buildings emerging in Boracay. Mangrove trees act as natural barriers for coastlines against strong waves and monsoons.

- Spread awareness. Help inform the community about the importance of our natural resources, for example the Parrot Fish (Scaridae) that is in charge of creating our white sand, or the coral reefs that protect our beaches from strong waves.

- Be vigilant and proactive. Even one plastic bag off the beach is one plastic bag less in the ocean. Pick up concrete and glass instead of seashells.

Many also are hesitant to speak out but find the courage for those who can't.

- Be a local leader. Lead by example and demand initiative from government entities such as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and LGU Malay by writing them or visiting your local representatives. Hold people in power responsible for their decisions. Remember, governments are accountable.

- Inform yourself. Informing yourself of what projects are currently ongoing and by which association, or finding a suitable place

for you to contribute in the fight against our environmental woes.

It is clear that Boracay's increasing sand erosion is very concerning. It is also something we cannot halt fully.

Yes, projects such as deep water dredging can help re-nourish the island's sand but these are temporary and short-term solutions. I understand many will argue that seawalls, breakwaters, groins (rigid structures built out from a shore to protect the shore from erosion, to trap sand, or to direct a current for scouring a channel) and the likes are effective methods to mitigate sand erosion, but honestly is that the long-term solution? Pouring more cement on our beaches?

The majority of our tourists come from urbanized areas seeking adventure in nature and pristine locations. And there lies the solution: nature. Nature can provide the long-lasting solutions to our sandy woes. Only a healthy reef, healthy forest areas, biodiversity, and balanced ecosystem can slow down sand erosion, while also helping to regrow the beaches and fight off rising sea levels.

Former President Duterte and former DENR Sec. Cimatu started initiatives in 2016 but there is so much still left undone.

Where are the natural sanctuaries that were promised? Why is there no implementation of the laws regarding Marine Protected Areas and other critical habitats?

How many more tourists will come if all we have to offer is a leaning tree and a hole in a cliff?†

Sources:
www.reefbites.com
www.digitalcommons.tacoma.uw.edu
www.theguardian.com
www.fisheries.noaa.gov
www.worldatlas.com

Born in Cebu but raised on Boracay Island, Franzi Preglo is a scuba diving instructor and an environmentalist who actively volunteers and devotes much of his time to caring for Boracay's environment and marine life. His favorite dive spots around the island include Balinghai and Santosan by Yapak which are rich with marine life such as turtles, seahorses and manta rays. The best visibility for diving are during the Habagat months of May and June.

FUN FACTS

WHY WE SHOULD PROTECT OUR CORAL REEFS NOW

By Freida Dario-Santiago

Underwater photography by Franzi Preglo

We just learned from the article "Habagat Reveals Signs of Global Coastal Erosion" by Franzi Pregio that the best long-term solution to coastal erosion is nature. He said, "Only a healthy reef, healthy forest areas, biodiversity, and balanced ecosystem can slow down sand erosion, while also helping to regrow the beaches and fight off rising sea levels."



Clown fish a.k.a. Nemo sighting in their anemone home in Balinghai Reef, around 8 meters deep (2017)

What is a Coral Reef?

A coral reef is an underwater ecosystem characterized by reef-building corals. Reefs are formed of colonies of coral polyps held together by calcium carbonate. Most coral reefs are built from stony corals, whose polyps cluster in groups. (www.wikipedia.com)

According to National Geographic, "Coral can be found in tropical ocean waters around the world. But how much do you know about reefs and the tiny animals—polyps—that build them? Learn all about coral and why warming waters threaten the future of the reef ecosystem."

You can skip this article altogether and type this link on your device, and watch this 3.5-minute video: www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/invertebrates/facts/staghorn-coral

Still here? Good!

Often referred to as the "rainforests of the sea," coral reefs support approximately 25 percent of all known marine species. Reefs provide homes for more than 4,000 species of fish, 700 species of coral, and thousands of other plants and animals. The architects of coral reefs are hard corals. (www.noaa.gov)

The Coral Triangle

The Coral Triangle is a marine area located in the western Pacific Ocean. It includes the waters of the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste and Solomon Islands. According to the WWF, "Named for its staggering number of corals (nearly 600 different species of reef-building corals alone), the region nurtures six of the world's seven marine turtle species and more than 2000 species of reef fish."

Aside from supporting large populations of commercially important tuna, over 120 million people (yes, including us!) live in the Coral Triangle and rely on its coral reefs for food, income and protection from storms.

At the heart of the Coral Triangle, more than 500 species of coral and 2,000 species of fish live in the waters of the Philippine islands. (www.coraltrianglecenter.org)

Why are Coral Reefs so Important?

Coral reefs are important ocean habitats
continued on next page

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and offer a compelling case of the risks of climate change. Reefs provide a large fraction of Earth's biodiversity—thus, “the rain forests of the seas,” making them one of the most diverse habitats in the world.



This baby hawksbill turtle named Bruce lives in the Balinghai Reef. He was injured and nursed back to health, and was released in a known turtle sanctuary.

Paulo Maurin, education and fellowship coordinator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program, says the reefs are invaluable to our planet's biodiversity.

“They act as productive nurseries to many fish species, giving the small fish a home and a chance to grow,” he says.

Reefs provide a variety of economic benefits, including recreational activities, tourism, coastal protection, habitat for commercial fisheries, and preservation of marine ecosystems.

“Corals are important to us for many reasons,” Maurin says. “From a practical point of view, they can help protect coastlines from storm events, for instance, and help maintain fisheries that are essential to a lot of people. And complex compounds found in coral reefs hold promises in modern medicine. These are what we call ecosystem services that would be very difficult and expensive to replace.

“They also have a unique ability to inspire us to explore and visit the ocean. Can you think of any other invertebrate that people would come from afar just to see?” (education.nationalgeographic.org)

Staghorn Coral and Why they are Valuable

Like its name suggests, staghorn coral is a species of coral that looks a bit like the antlers of a male deer.



Staghorn coral in the Balinghai Reef around 5-meters deep (2017).

It is well known that staghorn coral creates important habitat for fish by forming branchy thickets. However, current populations of staghorn coral contain fewer and possibly poorer-quality thickets than when the species was abundant. (www.fisheries.noaa.gov)

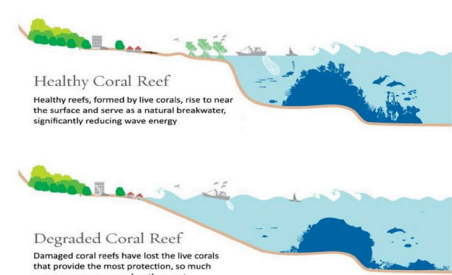
Local diver, dive instructor and photographer Franz Preglo who took the underwater photos in this article told us, “Staghorn corals are best known for its fast-growing properties and are usually a candidate for coral planting.”

Don't Touch!

Corals are fragile animals. Be careful not to touch, kick or stand on the corals you see in the water because this may damage or even kill them. (www.coralreef.noaa.gov)

Healthy vs. Damaged Coral Reefs and How they Affect Us

Healthy corals show a variety of colors from the different algal symbionts. Unhealthy corals show fewer colors, more algal colonization, more breakage and often are bleached white. Remember, algae are some of the key markers of an unhealthy reef. (www.e-education.psu.edu)



A healthy coral reef and a damaged coral reef directly impact coastal communities.

Climate Change and other Threats to Coral Reefs

Climate change is the greatest global threat to corals. Scientific evidence now clearly indicates that the Earth's atmosphere and oceans are warming, and that these changes are primarily due to greenhouse gases derived from human activities.

As temperatures rise, mass coral bleaching events and infectious disease outbreaks are becoming more frequent.

Climate change is one of the biggest threats facing all coral species today, and staghorn corals are no exception.

Higher than normal water temperatures cause coral to evict their symbiotic algae, which affects how much energy they can create. Removal of algae also turns corals white, a phenomenon commonly known as bleaching. While the coral remains alive in this ghostly state, bleaching renders it more susceptible to stress and disease.

Localized threats include invasive species, development, pollution, agricultural runoff, dynamite fishing, and tourism.

Coral Bleaching and Signs of an Unhealthy Coral Reef

Increased ocean temperature caused by climate change is the leading cause of coral bleaching.

When corals are stressed by changes in conditions such as temperature, light, or nutrients, they expel the symbiotic algae living in their tissues, causing them to turn completely white. This whitening indicates a dying coral due to increased water temperature due to climate change.



Signs of coral bleaching in the Balinghai Reef (right in front of Shangri-La's Resort & Spa). This photo was taken around 8-meters deep (2017).

When a coral bleaches, it is not dead. Corals can survive a bleaching event, but they are under more stress and are subject to mortality. If the stress-caused bleaching

is not severe, coral have been known to recover. If the algae loss is prolonged and the stress continues, coral eventually dies.

Maurin believes there are several ways people can help preserve these valuable resources.

“Over the long term, we need to reduce the amount of CO2 that is up in the atmosphere that is causing both increased bleaching and acidification,” he says. “But in the more immediate time, there are other ways to help. By understanding that bleaching and acidification stress corals, we can help by building up what we call ‘reef resiliency.’ That is, making sure that reefs have this capacity to bounce back.

“For instance, ensuring that there is less pollution entering the ocean can help far-away corals. Also, people can help by making sure that the seafood consumed is sustainable and not contributing to a depletion of fish species that keep algae in check, following fishing regulations when fishing, as well as supporting marine protected areas in key conservation sites.”

What can we Do to Protect Coral Reefs?

Coral reefs play a vital role in sustaining the health of our oceans and our economy. Even if you live far from coral reefs, **you can have an impact** on reef health and conservation.

There are also many things you can do to ensure that you are environmentally conscious when you visit coral reefs or coastal areas. These include things such as hiring local guides to support the economy, removing all trash from an area, never touching or harassing wildlife in reef areas, and avoiding dropping your boat anchor or chain nearby a coral reef.

Finally, stay informed and spread the word! Educate yourself about why healthy coral reefs are valuable to the people, fish, plants, and animals that depend on them. Your excitement will help others get involved.†

10 ways to protect CORAL REEFS

- Corals are already a gift. Don't give them as presents.** It takes corals decades or longer to create reef structures, so leave them on the reef.
- Long-lasting light bulbs - ARE A - BRIGHT IDEA** Energy efficient light bulbs reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change is one of the leading threats to coral reef survival.
- CHECK SUNSCREEN ACTIVE INGREDIENTS.** Seek shade between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., use Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF) swimwear, and choose sunscreens with chemicals that don't harm marine life. For more information, visit oceanservice.noaa.gov/sunscreen.
- Choose sustainable seafood.** Learn how to make smart seafood choices at www.FishWatch.gov.
- IF YOU DIVE DON'T TOUCH.** Coral reefs are alive. Stirred-up sediment can smother corals.
- BE A MARINE DEBRIS CRUSADER.** In addition to picking up your own trash, carry away the trash that others have left behind.
- CONSERVE WATER** The less water you use, the less runoff and wastewater that eventually find their ways back into the ocean.
- Volunteer!** Volunteer in local beach or reef cleanups. If you don't live near the coast, get involved in protecting your watershed.
- Don't send chemicals into our waterways.** Nutrients from excess fertilizer increases algae growth that blocks sunlight to corals.
- Practice safe boating.** Anchor in sandy areas away from coral and sea grasses so that the anchor and chain do not drag on nearby corals.

Infographic courtesy of www.oceanservice.noaa.gov

CORAL ETIQUETTE 101

Whether you are snorkeling or Scuba diving, enjoy coral areas responsibly by taking a few simple actions during your time in the water and on land.

Corals and other marine habitats are a must-see if you live in or are visiting one of the many places that are home to these magnificent underwater resources. However, corals and the marine life they support are often threatened or damaged by the same visitors who come to admire them.

Luckily, a little marine etiquette goes a long way in preventing damage to these amazing resources. Here are five simple things you can do to enjoy corals and other marine habitats responsibly.

Leave Corals and Shells in their Place

Don't take corals and seashells home for souvenirs. Corals are alive and seashells are home for many animals. Both also play an important role in creating beautiful, sandy beaches. In many coastal states and territories collecting corals as souvenirs is prohibited, including on Boracay Island. Admire them in their natural habitats.

Observe Corals from a Safe Distance

Don't touch! Corals are fragile animals. Be careful not to touch, kick or stand on the corals you see in the water because this may damage or even kill them.

Don't Litter

Dispose of your waste properly, and recycle whenever possible. Anything left on the beach ends up in the ocean. Litter, like plastic bags and bottles, can become entangled on corals. Marine life also often mistake our trash for food.

Be a Cautious Boater

Ask about the locations of mooring buoys so you can safely tie off your boat without damaging it or any surrounding marine life. Additionally, always anchor your boat in areas with a sandy bottom. Anchoring on corals or in a seagrass bed will cause damage.

Be Reef Smart

Learning more about the corals and marine life you encounter on vacation is easy and fun. A quick visit to a local dive shop, marine park center or aquarium will put you in touch with knowledgeable experts with more information about corals, the marine life they support and how you can help conserve them. Your hotel or cruise may also have additional resources. (Source: www.coralreef.noaa.gov)

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BUSINESS

A GALAXY OF FUN

By Charlie Greene



Nightlife and Boracay have always gone hand in hand.

And the nightlife and club scene at Galaxy fits the bill perfectly. Partygoers continue to flock to the Island in search of our beautiful beaches and fun-filled nights.

The nightclub is a hive of activity, partying, fun, light shows and much, much more. Nightly performances by some of the best DJs in town and visiting artists keep the crowds rocking seven nights a week.

The decor, sound systems and well-trained staff - plus just about everything else, is what you would expect from a class establishment like this. And it ensures that partygoers keep going back again and again.

Last month BSN sat down with Mr Kyungsu Jeoy the general manager of Club Galaxy Boracay to find out a little more about the people running it and the business.

BSN: What did you do before Boracay?

KJ: I was a tour guide in 2010 to 2011

and began working in the club industry in 2013.

BSN: Looking forward, what are your views on how Boracay will be good for Club Galaxy's business?

KJ: I think we need more international direct flight to Caticlan. Domestic tourism has sustained many Boracay businesses since reopening after Covid lockdowns. But international tourists need to be aware that Boracay is open again and easy to get to.

BSN: When did the business begin operations?

KJ: Club Galaxy had its soft opening on December 16, 2016. We have been here through the good and the hard times and feel like part of the Boracay community now.

BSN: Why was Boracay chosen for the business?

KJ: Our market research shows that wherever there's a high volume of tourists going, there's a need for businesses like ours.

BSN: Does Club Galaxy have any future plans to expand the business?

KJ: Yes. The company is very forward looking and progressive. We plan to put up another branch of Club Galaxy in Bohol or in Cebu, maybe both. Future growth is important.

BSN: What do you think the DOT or LGU could do to help promote Boracay and possibly help local businesses like yours?

KJ: I think that a concerted focus on helping the establishments here in Boracay to grow so that we can give more jobs to people.

BSN: We've seen a lot of good targeted marketing efforts from you over the past six months. Has it worked for you?

KJ: Yes. Definitely. People need to know where you are, what you have on offer, is it fun, a whole multitude of things that good marketing can help them with. We promote Club Galaxy to tourists both when and before they arrive on Boracay.

~ Thanks KJ. Great talking to you. 🌴



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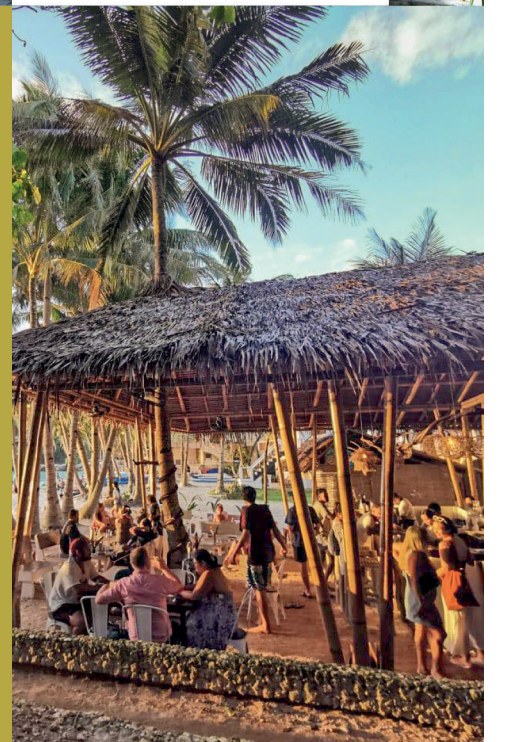
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SPORTS & FITNESS

WALK THE TALK
Steps to Getting in Shape

By Mark Cabrera



I was talking to a friend at a party one day. He was also a swimmer when he was young and like myself, he's played other sports like basketball, football and volleyball to name a few. We agreed that these days, it takes longer to recover after playing these contact sports. It takes me two to three days to recover after a basketball game, which I used to play daily in college. I asked him how he stays in shape nowadays, and guess what fitness regimen we both have in common? Walking.

Aside from my home sport which is swimming, walking is the most beneficial fitness regimen that's readily available to humankind. Walking is one of the best forms of physical activity for people of all ages and fitness levels. It can help you burn calories, strengthen your muscles and bones, lower your blood pressure and cholesterol, reduce your risk of chronic diseases, and boost your mental wellbeing. Plus, it's free, easy and fun!

Here are some tips on starting a walking regimen. Whether you want to walk for weight loss, stress relief, or just for pleasure, these steps will help you find the motivation and inspiration you need to get moving and keep walking!

Step #1: Set a SMART Goal

Before you lace up your shoes and hit the road, it's important to have a clear and realistic goal in mind. A good goal should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

For example, instead of saying "I want to walk more," you could say "I want to walk 30 minutes a day, five days a week, for the

next four weeks." This way, you will have a concrete target to aim for and a way to track your progress and success.

You can also download and use a fitness app on your phone to guide you. I'm using Huawei's Health app. I use it for my biking and walking activities. In your chosen app, you can log in your current statistics such as weight, height, body fat, etc., and also set your SMART fitness goals. The fitness app will give you activity and status reports related to your fitness goals. It's rewarding when the app congratulates you every time you reach a specific goal.

Step #2: Choose a suitable time and place

Another key factor in starting a walking regimen is finding a time and place that works for you. Some people prefer to walk in the morning to start their day with a burst of energy and positivity. Others like to walk in the evening to unwind after a long day and relax their mind and body. You can also walk during your lunch break, or whenever you have some free time during the day. Sunset walks along the beach are a popular choice for obvious reasons.

The important thing is to make walking a part of your daily routine and stick to it. I usually walk in the morning before 7 a.m. and finish in an hour. There are times when we do "Maritess Walks" that may last for three hours, as we end up catching up with friends and checking out new shops and restaurants along the way.

As for the place, you can walk anywhere that is safe, convenient and enjoyable. You can walk around your neighborhood, in a park, on a trail, or even on a treadmill. You can also explore new places and routes to

keep things interesting and challenging. The more you like where you walk, the more likely you are to keep doing it.

For us, our quick "Sundot Walks" are usually along the Bulabog brick road. It's a four-kilometer round trip walk from our home to the foot of Mt. Luho. This usually takes us around 45 minutes at a leisurely pace where my walking buddy and I can still talk to each other. Plus, the view is amazing as it's by the shoreline and there's greenery everywhere.

Step #3: Start slow and build up gradually

If you are new to walking or have been inactive for a while, don't try to do too much too soon. Start with a 10-minute moderately-paced short and easy walk. Then gradually increase the duration, intensity and frequency of your walks as your fitness level improves.

You can also add some variety to your walks by changing the speed, terrain or direction. For example, you can walk faster for short intervals, walk uphill or downhill, or walk backward or sideways. These variations will challenge your muscles and cardiovascular system in different ways and prevent boredom.

Step #4: Find a walking buddy or join a walking group

Walking with someone else can make your walks more fun and social. You can chat with your walking buddy or group members, share your experiences and goals, motivate each other, and hold each other accountable. You can also learn from each other and get new ideas for your walks. Walking with someone else can also make you feel safer and more confident. An example of great ideas usually discussed during our walks are where to eat or have coffee after our walk!

You can walk with a friend, family member, co-worker, neighbor, pet dog, or anyone who shares your interest in walking. You can also join a walking group or

club in your area or online. There are many walking groups and clubs that cater to different ages, abilities and interests. You can find them through local organizations, websites, apps or social media platforms. In Boracay, there's a group of moms who walk regularly. They even walk all the way to the Lapus Lapus rock formation at Newcoast. I usually walk with my wife and end with a coffee date. Feel free to contact me and join our walks.



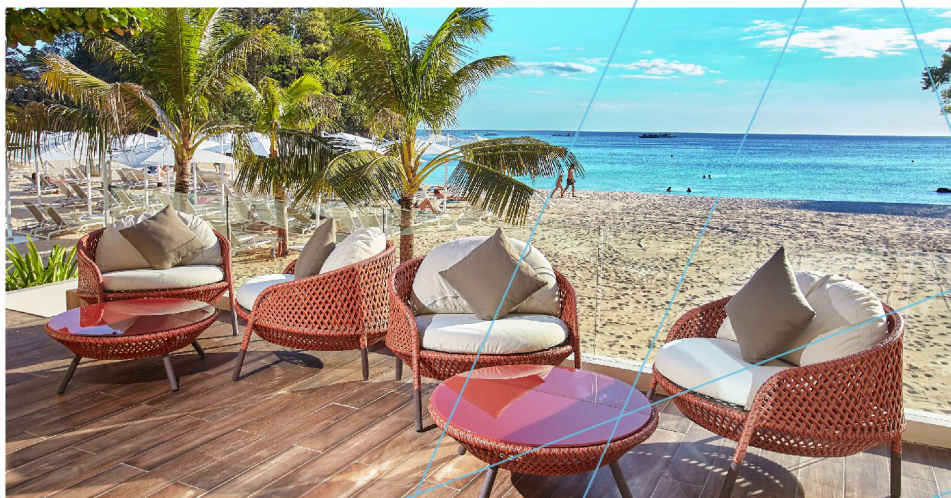
Dog walking is another good way to start.

Step #5: Reward yourself

One of the best ways to stay motivated and committed to your walking regimen is to reward yourself for your efforts and achievements. You can reward yourself in different ways depending on what makes you happy and satisfied.

For example, you can treat yourself to something nice like a massage, a movie ticket, or a new pair of shoes. You can also celebrate your milestones by sharing them with others or posting them on social media. You can also reward yourself by simply acknowledging how far you've come and how good you feel.

Walking is more than just a physical activity. Walking is also a lifestyle choice that can enhance every aspect of your life. So, what are you waiting for? Put this newspaper down for a while and start your walking adventure ... one step at a time. 🌿

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WORLD AWARENESS DAY NOVEMBER HOLIDAYS AND FIESTAS

By Rica Velasco

HOLIDAYS IN NOVEMBER

In the Philippines, November is a month with holidays deeply rooted in cultural heritage and national pride, a month full of tradition and togetherness. Moreover, it is a time when the Philippines joins the global community in observing some UNESCO days that shed light on vital issues.

November 1 All Saints' Day



Continuing from what was written in last month's issue, All Saints' Day, locally known as "Undas" or "Araw ng mga Patay" is a poignant and cherished occasion in the Philippines. It pays homage not only to saints but also to departed loved ones. The entire country takes on a solemn and contemplative atmosphere as families make their way collectively to cemeteries nationwide.

Armed with candles, flowers and food, they lovingly clean and adorn the graves of their ancestors and relatives, transforming burial grounds into a sea of flickering lights and lively reunions. This remembrance goes beyond religious significance; it symbolizes the enduring bond between the living and the

deceased, fostering a sense of unity and continuity in Filipino culture. It is a day of reflection, prayer and togetherness as families share stories and celebrate the enduring spirit of their dearly departed.

November 30 Bonifacio Day



Filipinos celebrate Bonifacio Day every year to pay tribute to the courageous spirit of Andres Bonifacio, a leader of the Katipunan movement who played a vital role in the Philippines' fight for independence. This day serves as a reminder of his bravery and determination in dreaming of a free and sovereign nation. It is a time for Filipinos to commemorate his legacy and the sacrifices he made for the country's freedom.

UNESCO WATCH

UNESCO is a specialized agency of the United Nations that serves as a global platform to promote peace, sustainable development, and intercultural understanding. UNESCO commemorates specific days throughout the year to raise awareness and promote global action on critical issues within its mandate. Here's a rundown of the celebrated days this month.

November 2 International Day Against Violence and Bullying at School Including Cyberbullying



Observed on the first Thursday of November, the focus of this day is on the issue of school violence and bullying, including cyberbullying, which affects numerous children and adolescents around the world. The day calls for unity among students, parents, educational communities, authorities, and tech industry players to prevent online violence and ensure the safety of young people. UNESCO recognizes that such violence infringes upon children's rights to education and wellbeing and can leave lasting emotional and psychological scars.

The "Anti-Bullying Act of 2013" (Republic Act No. 10627) in the Philippines requires all elementary and secondary schools to establish a Child Protection Committee (CPC) responsible for creating an anti-bullying policy. Recent data shows that almost half of adolescents aged 13 to 17 in the country are affected by cyberviolence, making it a significant issue. A third of individuals experience verbal abuse online or via mobile phone, while a quarter of cases involve sexual messages. Females receive more sexual messages, while twice as many males report having their intimate images shared online.

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) has called for urgent action, including national helplines, teacher and parent training, improved data collection, and enhanced ethical standards by social media companies, to safeguard minors and adolescents in both online and offline environments.

If you need help against bullying or cyberbullying, Bantay Bata Helpline (+632) 163 offers free and confidential support over the phone, daily from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

November 25: International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women



UNESCO marks November 25 as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, underscoring the need to prioritize the central role of women in fostering change and ending violence.

In the Philippines, the 18-Day Campaign to End Violence against Women is observed from November 25 to December 12, aiming to combat a persistent and serious issue. Violence against women is a human rights violation that stems from gender inequality. It affects women and girls from different backgrounds. According to the National Demographic Health Survey 2017, one in four Filipino women aged 15 to 49 has experienced physical, emotional, or sexual violence from

their husbands or partners. This campaign is a crucial step towards addressing this pervasive issue, emphasizing the urgent need to combat VAW as a public health concern and a violation of human rights.


In 2013, the highest reported cases nationwide were in the Western Visayas at 4,833, accounting for 20.3 percent of the total reported cases in the country.

Orange is a powerful symbol of hope and a violence-free future. It represents the campaign against violence against women, aiming to capture the public's curiosity and offer a compelling opportunity for advocacy. You can show your support by adopting orange hues for your social media profile picture during this campaign period, using the hashtag #VAWfreePH, or by incorporating orange decorations into a real-life landmark or workplace.

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(+63 917) 867 1907

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Aleng Pulis Hotline: (+63 919) 777 7377

For Legal Assistance:
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ISLAND LIFE

WHO OWNS BORACAY?

Boracaynon vs. Tumandok (Part 2)

By Azenith Resurreccion

Editor's Note: In part 1 of this 2-part series, we promised to dig deeper into the roots of the Boracay people's sense of identity—the importance of distinguishing oneself as one of the “originals,” the rationalities behind the sense of entitlement, and we will make our best attempt try to answer the question: “Who owns Boracay?”

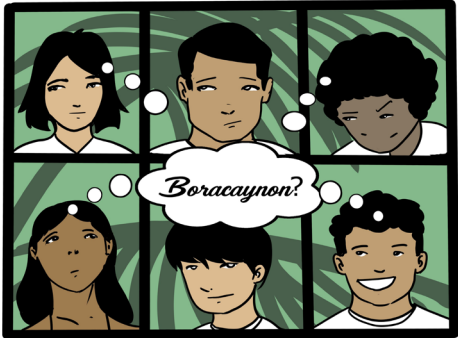


Illustration by Sigmund Torre

It is no wonder why residents of world-famous Boracay Island, old and new, want to be associated with the island's beauty, and be labeled or branded as a citizen of this popular tropical destination, hailed one of the best beaches in the world. For the island community, the island lifestyle, one's sense of belonging and the ability to enjoy the fruits of one's labor while immersed in nature are of utmost importance.

With boundless business and investment opportunities, the thriving tourism destination has attracted visitors to partake in the thriving economic dynamism, whether in the hospitality workforce or simply as long-staying guests. Eventually, these long-staying visitors become migrants or residents when, through the years, they start to build a business or enterprise, accumulate properties, possess resident IDs, voting certificates, or permanent employment on the island. As years go by, these migrants start to call themselves Boracaynons to the chagrin of disapproving natives that opt to call themselves Tumandok, if only to distinguish themselves from the “new” residents.

As established in “Part 1” of this series, the term “Tumandok” is used to identify the original and “true” Boracaynons or the descendants of the original inhabitants of the island, distinguishing them from the self-declared Boracaynons.

Disparate culturally and dialectically, the island community is very welcoming and warm and the differences hardly matter in daily life and one can easily find his or her own “tribe” on the island, which is another draw for tourists-turned-migrants. It is only when one scratches beneath the surface and starts a discussion on serious matters and situations that the Tumandoks tend to become clannish to protect their own interests and unite as the original people of the island.

For the Tumandok families, to be distinguished as the “original” settlers of Boracay is a matter of respect for their humble beginnings and cultural heritage, and it comes with a deep sense of pride. This recognition also endeavors to honor them as the first stewards of the island, especially now that Boracay no longer belongs just to them but to many other settlers in recent decades.

Everybody Wants a Piece of the Island

“Owning a piece of Boracay has been both a blessing and a curse,” is the catchy introductory phrase in the profile of the Natives of Boracay and Business Stakeholders, Inc. or NABBSI, that quite accurately reflects the status of land ownership on Boracay Island.

Formed in 2021 as a non-stock, non-profit non-government organization, NABBSI is an all-Boracaynon organization that advocates the vested land rights and residency of the island's original settlers, present residents and business stakeholders (mostly SMEs) with 7,000 members and counting.

Some of the Tumandok families' inherited properties were sold to newcomers. In the early stage of the tourism boom the selling of properties somehow alleviated the lives of many natives and elevated their status as land owners, establishing their significance in the business dynamics.

It will be recalled that we have also established that Tumandoks are the members of families whose history and residence on the island can be traced to decades before the 1900s. The Tumandoks are clans of Sacapaño, Gelito, Coching, followed by the clans of Flores, Maming, Sastre, Mariano, Tupas, Tapuz, Umambong, Pelayo, Licerio, Vargas, Delos Santos, Delos Reyes, Taunan and Sualog, just to name a few. Their ancestors owned parcels of land just by planting and cultivating land for food and trade. These families grew and intermarried and made up the network now known as the true-blooded Boracaynons or the Tumandok.

The rapid escalation of real property value pushed the locals to sell and lease their properties even in the absence of proper documents like Certificate of Land Titles and using only tax declarations as proof of ownership, believing that the legalities of such transactions and land ownership could

be “fixed” since the local government allows or enables these transactions.

According to NABBSI, the locals have been fighting for land rights for decades because there have been contradicting laws (or the absence thereof) that prevent them to secure their properties through titling. In 1991, when 40 percent of the island was classified as forest land for environmental protection purposes, this disregarded the vested land rights of the original residents in the classified areas, causing displacement of hundreds of real Boracay locals who face the threat of losing properties they inherited from their ancestors.

When the island was bound for closure for rehabilitation in 2018, the residents were reminded of the classification and land owners had to deal with the 25+5 beach line easement, road or alley widening easements, the reestablishment of forest land and wet land areas by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) further reclassified as non-build zones, and most of the remaining undeveloped areas as agricultural land.

These Supreme Court rulings left the Boracaynons in peril of being stripped of their rights and ownership without due process and compensation. Some of the Tumandok families have not claimed their land legally even after living on the island for 100 years as they didn't have enough means to process their land titles or tax declarations.

The Struggle is Real

With these land issues in mind, NABBSI was formed to voice out the local mass struggle of Boracaynons and to seek justice, demand accountability, insist on responsible governance and fight for inclusion. They have identified relevant timelines of presidential proclamations and developments that compounded these burdens, as well as the big threats to land ownership. The group also heeded the need for action and has initiated dialogues with relevant offices, as well as helping to provide legal assistance and advice to help vulnerable communities. They advocate inclusive and sustainable growth and responsible governance and to be present in consultations on formulating and implementing policies and programs.

NABBSI is led mostly by young bonafide residents whose families are among the early settlers of the island as well as new residents who are actively participating in the cause.



Cris Cahilig, one of the founders of NABBSI gives a talk about land rights during a landowners meeting;



NABBSI Feeding program at Caghan Ibabaw (Photos courtesy of NABBSI)

To answer the question of “Who owns Boracay,” sad to say, it is quite appalling that many Boracaynons hesitate to give a confident answer because of the many issues that are still unresolved, from local governance, and most especially the security of their properties.

Boracay has been home to many other migrants, the Koreans, the Chinese and all other foreign nationals who invested heavily on the island in the hopes of making it good financially. Many of these investments rose and failed, properties are bound for reselling, making the value of some properties increase exponentially just to cover losses. These failures are attributed to the irregularities of the law and the local ordinances that are supposed to regulate fair enterprise and encourage economic growth for all including the marginalized Boracaynons.

In closing, and to put a lid on this self-labeling issue and bickering about the “ownership” of the island, speaking for myself (a self-confessed Boracaynon myself and a Boracay resident since 2005 and a frequent visitor since 1995), I would discourage residents from discriminating “original” from “dayo” (migrant), which clan is more distinguished than another (or who owns the piece of the island).

Boracay, however, technically belongs to no one, not even to the Philippine government (not wholly). The world that comes to play on its shores, and the people safeguarding the island—from the Tumandok families and Boracaynons to the newcomers committed to the preservation of this precious island paradise—we are Boracay's stewards, its keepers.

Having said that, we should continue to regard her as “our” home, and with this deep sense of ownership comes responsibility, that supersedes any sense of entitlement, as each resident gives his or her time, talent, efforts, heart and mind (and taxes,) to contribute to its socio-economic progress and sustainability.

Let's hope that organizations like NABBSI can pave the way in the titling of lands so that residents can legally call Boracay as their own.



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ISLAND LIFE

SPECIAL FEATURE PET GALLERY

Compiled by Rica Velasco and Freida Dario-Santiago

Continued from last issue's Pet-Friendly Boracay special Pet Gallery, these four-legged lookers represent Boracay Island's sweethearts – the pups that get all the love and attention from their parents and from the admiring eyes of island tourists. To all the fur parents who took the time for the very professional photo shoots, a ruff of applause to you all for a woof-derful job!

PAW STARS



SOLE (1), Marco and Cookie's Maltese loves to swim, ride dad's bike and play with his yellow toy duck.



CHASE (3), Eva and Ariel Benedicto's Shih Tzu loves the wind on his face and lying on the beach.



BAMBOO (4), Acos Nuqui's Aspin-Terrier loves to beg for food!



LEO (11MO), Molly Langley's Dachshund loves to annoy his brother Val.

SIBLINGS



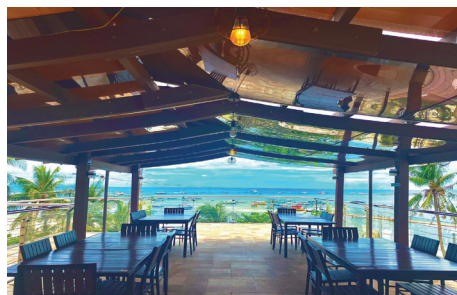
MAYA (2) AND PABLO (4) are Tinton and Kate Larrauri's American Bullies. Maya loves to dive into the ocean, sunbathe and sleep, and loves Jollibee spaghetti. Pablo loves being silly like going inside cabinets and imitating his sister, and loves Quezo Real ice cream. They love to cuddle. That's Pablo with his copy of BSN, and playing "house" at his engineer dad's construction project.

To be continued next month

BUSINESS

AIRA BORACAY: LOVING BULABOG...

By Charlie Greene



When the winds are blowing and rainy days are upon White Beach, tourists and residents alike flock over to the other side of Boracay and enjoy the many attractions and chilled-out vibe of Bulldog Beach.

AIRA Boracay Hotel is nicely situated along the main road at Bulabog Beach and has lots to offer tourists looking for quality accommodation and service at a reasonable cost. Transport is easy to find along the main road, and lots of water sports and restaurants are all very close by.

I arranged a meeting the hotel general manager, Sam Villaflor, so that he could tell us a bit more about how this lovely little hotel came about and what they have to offer:

- BSN:** What part of the business would you prefer to focus on?
- SV:** We would like to focus on our accommodations, most especially to be known as the "go-to" hotel along Bulabog Beach for Kitesurfers and Windsurfers alike.
- BSN:** What is your position in the business?
- SV:** General Manager
- BSN:** What did you do before Boracay?
- SV:** Worked as operations manager for the family business.
- BSN:** What is your view looking forward on how Boracay will be good for your business?
- SV:** Together with the rest of businesses and locals on the island, we also look forward that the number of tourists go back to the pre-pandemic levels

in the coming months.

BSN: When and where did the business start?

SV: The property along Bulabog was acquired back in 2014, construction started shortly after. However, construction was interrupted on numerous occasions, due to fraudulent contractors, the DENR closure which resulted in the demolition of the frontage of the building, and lastly the pandemic. Thus we were only able to soft launch on October of 2022.

BSN: Why was Boracay chosen for the business?

SV: Back in 1992 my parents chose Boracay as their honeymoon destination. Since then they grew fond of going back again and again. So when they were presented with an opportunity to acquire a piece of land in front of a beach in Boracay, they grabbed it. Seeing the scarcity of hotel rooms back then, they decided to build one themselves. The project originally started with 44 rooms, an AI-fresco restaurant overlooking the beach, and a convenience store, but the government then made that impossible to turn into reality.

BSN: Any future plans to expand the business?

SV: If there's an opportunity and if the original hotel generates surplus funds, maybe the brand could expand to other locations on the island.

BSN: What do you think the DOT or LGU could do to promote Boracay and possibly help local business like yours?

SV: Boracay is already well-known around the world for its beautiful beach and its nightlife, aside from partying, the DOT could launch a campaign ad featuring the other activities that tourists can do on the island such as windsurfing and scuba diving. Currently, these activities are dominated by foreign owned business, thus these activities are mostly advertised in their own language. It would be nice if the DOT took an initiative in promoting these activities locally so that people will know they exist. For the LGU, we would like to request for street lamps along Bulabog. Many of our guests have pointed out, the Bulabog road is extremely dark during night time, making it a real concern for their safety. As one of the local businesses, we also want our visitors to feel safe and secure during their vacation.

~ Thanks Sam. It was a pleasure speaking with you. We hope you get the streets lights - they're much need over at Bulabog. 🌿



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ISLAND EVENTS

TRIBU OUTDOORS NOW OPEN AT SHOPPES AT STATION B

By Freida Dario-Santiago



The TRIBU Outdoors story began when founder Jason Luengco came to Boracay in the early 90s and sold TRIBU sandals on White Beach, by the Bamboo Bridge at Creek Bar, and displayed them on driftwood. Some of you may still remember him with his very curly long hair. This story comes full circle with Tribu Outdoors' grand opening last June 8, 2023, at the vibrant new mall, The Shoppes at Station B.

Boracay Island's outdoor enthusiasts and fashion-conscious residents and visitors flocked to the multi-brand store that offers a wide range of outdoor wear products and an impressive array of brands spanning from outdoor footwear to stylish shades.

Captivating visitors with its vast collection, the 30-year-old proudly Filipino brand, known for its durability and design, Tribu footwear and outdoor wear prides itself on its commitment to quality, functionality and style. The store features an extensive range of TRIBU footwear, from rugged hiking sandals to comfortable flip-flops designed to navigate the island's sandy terrain.

The store also showcases a diverse selection of other exemplary Filipino brands such as the Headware neck scarves, Kokoon the ultimate travel buddy, Fluid Surf surf-life-style clothing, Reef Side beachwear, Daily Grind streetwear, and Boracay's very own tropical hats, ensuring that customers can find the perfect products for their preferred activities, whether it be hiking, beach strolls, or lounging under the sun. Additionally, they offer a striking variety of ZIV sunglasses that effortlessly blend fashion and functionality. ZIV's minimal metal construction makes it the ideal shades for island living. No more rusty and corroded shades.

The grand opening immersed guests in the spirit of adventure and island living. A surge of nostalgia filled the air when old friends and new friends came to see the new outlet. The rhythmic pounding of the percussions and Djembe drums reverberated through the cold space, creating an infectious and warm atmosphere reminiscent of the old Boracay culture, even for just a few hours.

"We are thrilled to introduce Tribu Outdoors to the Boracay community and its visitors," expressed Jason Luengco, the visionary behind the store. "Our goal is to provide outdoor enthusiasts with access to high-quality footwear, hats, bags and clothing from various trusted Filipino brands under one roof. Boracay Island offers a multitude of breathtaking landscapes, and we believe that having the right outfit enhances the overall experience. We want our customers to be fully prepared to explore and embrace the beauty of the Philippines' magnificent islands."

Poised to become the go-to destination for adventurers seeking high-quality footwear and clothing perfectly suited for the island lifestyle, make your way to the lifestyle shop that inspires the spirit of outdoor exploration, as soon as you enter its doors. Tribu Outdoors is located at the Shoppes at Station B, main road, Sitio Sinagpa, Balabag.



Founder Jason Luengco (center) flanked by island friends on opening day:

(From left) Azy Resurreccion and Ryan Cahilig with son Max, Abby Clarino, Jeff Galindez, Jason Luengco, Jastwan dela China, Roldan Astronaut, Chinggay Sacapaño, Hazel Gomez, Jeena Llamas and Prime Dizon



Boracay Island kiteboarding champs MJ Cahilig, Christian Tio and Ryan Cahilig



New Boracay transplants: Peach Resurrection, Mae Carl Perdon, Con Tan Pacuelin and Zo Aguila



(From left) Tribu founder Jason Luengco, Able Signs proprietor and artist Neo Miranda, Store Designers Elivir Dublin and Mayee Tolentino, Tribu partner Jeena Llamas and Tribu Operations Manager Alvi Ricacho

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BORACAY ISLAND, PHILIPPINES

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ISLAND EVENTS

THE INSTITUTION THAT REMEDIOS BUILT

Aged to perfection, Boracay's culinary padrino continues to delight patrons with genuine good taste and sheer quality

By Teddy Montelibano

Jose Carlos “Binggoy” Remedios’ famed Dos Mestizos is celebrating its 26th year in business this year—not an inconsequential feat in an industry where restaurants are considered extremely lucky if they are able to reach three or five years, and are still in the black.



Jose Carlos “Binggoy” Remedios for Rogue Magazine (April 2008 issue)

Remedios started with a tiny three, four-table operation, with—if I remember correctly—a staff of three, including him, in the kitchen. It was a more than rustic place situated beside Canadian émigré John Munro’s popular raucous Cocomangas Shooters Bar, and across the street from Andree Abriam’s storied Beachcomber Bar & Disco which was one of the first nightlife

landmarks on the island.

When I first stepped foot on Boracay’s flour-like silken white limestone sands in the early 1980s, eating was a pretty rudimentary affair comprised mostly of whatever food is cooked at home by the locals, or fish caught fresh and grilled for what seemed like forever, on coal fire. That, to someone whose first, middle, and last name is IMPATIENT, was the biggest turn-off. Food just took so long to come to the table. And also, fresh fish cooked steamed or grilled is good, if familiar. But it’s not the kind of fare that would make your eyeballs pop out from their sockets.

I was in Boracay more often in the early 1980s, particularly because by that point in time, two good friends of mine growing up in Iloilo—Leonard Tirol and Steve Tajanglangit, had built their resort homes on the island. Also by then, I had started living in Manila and it was just really easy to hop on board a small plane (remember Pacific Air, Seair and Asian Spirit?) and be in Boracay within an hour and a half. Infinitely less pain than if you were to drive hours on dusty roads from Iloilo.

There was a period, though, when I stopped going to the island. I remember it distinctly. It must’ve been close to the mid-1980s, we were having beers at Steve’s Boracay Terraces and contemplating, amid smokes, why the stars in the sky were so damn close to our faces; we were rolling on the sand, laughing like asses because we thought it was hilarious. Suddenly, from somewhere down the beach, we heard the droning of a switched-on generator and the WORST music—noise was more like it—jarring the stillness. Power had come to the island, and with it, hideous electronic

music blaring from Bazurra Bar’s loud-speakers. My Boracay was gone, cheapened by boomboomtinnyyboom “jumping-up-and-down-like-chimpanzees” music and I stopped going to the island for a long while.

I found myself back in Boracay in 1999. On that trip, I discovered where a friend from way back when she studied at the Assumption in Iloilo—Karen Villarica—had disappeared to all these years, in an aerie up in the hills overlooking Angol Point down below and her Floating Bar a few meters offshore. She told me, “Come back next year, I’m going to open the first real spa in the country.”

And so I did. The year 2000, for various reasons, was a milestone year for Boracay. Karen had opened Mandala Spa, a stunning wellness and spa resort in a lush setting where she introduced such highly specialized, rejuvenating and even life-changing wellness therapies as Watsu (short for Water Shiatsu). There wasn’t anything like it in the country when she opened Mandala.

Also, Station 2, heretofore considered plebeian (by Station 1 habitués) had started to effect a certain classy jive, with Jude Lee and Louise Ravelo’s Hey Jude being the epicenter of coolness and hip music (finally AN ALTERNATIVE to boomtinnyyboom EDM) in that part of Boracay, nay, the entire island. I was beginning to feel a new, much more agreeable mood enveloping the island. And then I discovered Binggoy Remedios’ cooking at Dos Mestizos.

A Culinary First

Remedios was part of this group that hung around Doc Orlando Sacay’s Waling-Waling, one of the new beachfront resorts along Station 1 which catered to an upmarket clientele. I was a writer/editor for the inflight magazine of Asian Spirit, the airline servicing Manila-Boracay-Manila owned by friends Archie and Jack Po, and in 2000, I was writing about new things popping up on the island and the people – mostly emigres – responsible for giving Boracay a fresh sheen.

Even then, at that time, Doc Sacay and

other such friends like SeaWind resort owner Joebert Cocjin and resort manager Jimmy Coscolluela were already buzzing about Remedios and his tiny place. And finally one night, I came around and sat with the man in Dos Mestizos, which then was this minute taberna-like dining place with white sand as flooring. Remedios is quite the raconteur and every now and then, as we talked about the island lifestyle, Boracay issues, and common friends we know, he would stand up to go to the kitchen and check on his cooking.

Finally, the food came. It was mostly tapas, small plates of chipirones, and such mestizo staples as callos, gambas, salpicao, and the like, but the cooking and the quality and taste of everything he put on the table was a veritable knockout. This was food I’d never tasted in Boracay before; it was akin to, and even surpassed fare that I was familiar with in some of my dining haunts in Manila!

I knew then that things had turned a new leaf in Boracay; I had a keen sense that with food like this, Boracay would, henceforth, not only draw people for its gleaming white sands and clear aquamarine-hued waters but also be a place where people could eat very well indeed.

I was correct. Remedios’ Dos Mestizos could be said to be the first, or the one dining establishment on the island that has made people regard Boracay as a culinary destination. Many a visitor who’ve come to dine in the restaurant would become regular patrons whose trip to the island wouldn’t be complete without dining at least once, or twice, in Dos Mestizos.

The consistency in the quality and taste of the dishes in Dos Mestizos’ Heritage Spanish-Filipino (thus mestizo) menu, primarily as a result of Remedios’ insistence on using the finest ingredients possible has given the restaurant its exceptional reputation as the best place, non-pareil, to dine on the island.

continued on next page

Mandala
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GET IN TOUCH
MANDALA SPA AND RESORT VILLAS

continued from previous page

Dos por Dos (Two by Dos)

From its little spot in Station 1, Dos Mestizos moved to Asya, the boutique hotel built by Choy Cojuangco along Tourist Road on Station 2 in 2005. For a short while, Dos served as Asya's restaurant, but in less than a year, Remedios decided to build his own place in a site a stone's throw down the road from Asya, beside the police station and close to the Tourist Center fronting the beach.

Dos Mestizos' new home had a substantially bigger floor space than the original branch, with a high ceiling, a "bodega" for private dining, and a bar section featuring live music.

Before long Dos Mestizos became a prime venue for many dinner parties and other festivities. The Halloween party held there yearly in late October coincided with the restaurant's anniversary and became a major event in people's social calendars, with locals, expats and other visitors putting on the most creatively thought-out, the most fantastic, the most ghoulish of costumes.

Locals and visitors to the island also looked forward each week to Saturday Tapas Nights to dine on tapas and pintxos, cold cuts, pates, fine bread and cheeses laid out buffet style, and downing along with those, jugs of the house's famed sangria. On regular nights through the week, people would go to Dos for cocktails before dinner, followed by more drinks at the bar after dining while listening and dancing to live music. Then by midnight, people would go out to the beach and party on, mostly at Hey Jude for more serious drinking and jiving to sounds spun by the house's regular DJs.

Not long after it moved into its own place along Tourist Road (which he later renamed "Calle Remedios"), Remedios added a deli and bakery in a section in Dos Mestizos separate from the bar and main dining hall. Named Gusto y Gustos de Dos Mestizos, the deli area served as a popular breakfast place where patrons—mostly expats—could partake of grilled gourmet sandwiches, French toast, imported hams, sausages and cheeses with sourdough, multi-grain, whole wheat, baguette and other specialty breads, along with house specialties like Eggs Benedict, omelets and such.

Through the years, except for two particular instances when the going got rough, Lady Luck has generally shined on Remedios' Dos Mestizos. The chef patron of the establishment was able to navigate his restaurant through Boracay's closure for six months in 2018 when former President Rodrigo Duterte ordered the entire island cleaned, spruced up with roadwork from one end to the other, had the sewage system fixed and thoroughly rehabilitated environmentally.

The more critical time was when all operations on the island ground to a halt and Boracay was shut off from the outside world starting in March 2020 when the Covid-19 viral pandemic hit the country

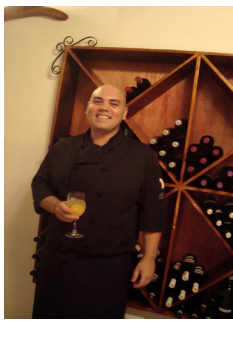


Always the indefatigable host, Remedios loved to entertain friends at the bodega's long dining table, followed by musical entertainment at the bar (Photos taken during Binggoy's birthday in 2009 by his good friend, the late Abet Jimenez)



Remedios (rightmost) gamely dons a Padre Damaso costume with his children Andre Garcia and Monique Yrezabal Escalona, who ran the restaurant as operations manager and head chef, while their father called the shots as the executive chef; A Boracay family tradition, Halloween party guests of all ages in costume, year after year. (Photos by Jack Jarilla)

Halloween/Anniversary 2021 at the new Station 1 branch: Operations manager Andre Garcia dressed as a hippie with his father Binggoy dressed as Harry Potter, flanked by their Dos Mestizos team



Dos Mestizos' Saturday Tapas Nights; Gusto y Gusto ham and cheese buffets; Remedios' nephew Chef Andrew Malarky, head chef at the Calle Remedios branch for a few years, during the grand opening of Gusto y Gusto (2010); The cheerful kitchen staff at the Calle Remedios branch

and the rest of the world. For about a year and a half of terrible uncertainty, nothing moved in Boracay. The pandemic eased off towards the end of 2021, but until it did, people on the island—operators of resorts and other tourism-oriented establishments were at their wit's end with no visitors, no work, nothing.

Full Circle at 26

You have to give it to the guy, for Remedios, through all the hazy precariousness of the pandemic period did not only keep ALL of his staff together, but incredibly, went for broke and poured whatever savings he had from past earnings into building an entirely new branch of Dos Mestizos from the ground up, in a choice lot by the road on a particular upmarket section of the island's Station 1 where most of the ultra-luxe resorts in Boracay are located.

That decision to transfer Dos Mestizos' operations back to an area where it started 26 years ago was one of the best moves Remedios ever made. His intrepid decision paid off, because when the pandemic had receded to a point where tourists, especially the usual patrons of Dos Mestizos who are booked in posh beachfront accommodations

on Station 1 started to return to the island, Dos Mestizos was extremely well-positioned to welcome them back.

So today, Dos Mestizos, from the nipa-roofed, sand-for-flooring, three-man taberna-like operation that it was when it started over a quarter of a century ago, has metamorphosed into a fine restaurant manned by over 30 well-trained kitchen and wait staff servicing what, from all angles, could arguably be the best-run dining operation on the island.

The restaurant's location may have changed various times, but the one constant that has remained unchanged is the taste and quality of food that Remedios' kitchen puts on the table. The food savored here, as regular patrons of Dos Mestizos know well by now, is food that Remedios grew up with, that is, culinary fare reminiscent of times when days were less harried, when señoras and kusineras would spend time in kitchens, concocting dishes from recipes that would become family heirlooms handed down from one generation to the next.

Among mestizo circles in Davao and Cebu—places where the chef-patron grew up—the Remedioses were known for their

particularity, in terms of taste and preparation, with the food they dined on. These would basically be familiar staples found on dining tables of Filipino families of Castilian origin such as bacalao, albondigas, callos, salpicao de vaca, tortilla de patata, paellas, ostras Española, cochinito, and the like.

All those and more are reincarnated in authentic Castilian fashion on the menu, food meticulously prepared by Remedios in the small kitchen of his taberna then, and in the more well-appointed dining room today, are just as delightful and pleasing to the palate of patrons now, as it had been to Remedios' dining guests 26 years ago. ¡Salud! 🍷

Currently associate business editor for The Daily Tribune, Teddy Montelibano was bitten by the journalism/writing bug in 1978 and 45 years later, is still at it, chronicling events, scribbling words, thoughts, and just about anything that prods him to put words on paper. He has built steadfast friendships and strong ties with the Boracay Island community, and was a temporary island resident during the pandemic lockdown from December 2020 until the first quarter of 2022, often seen manning the Dos Mestizos fort with his good friend Binggoy.



The blessing of the newest branch in 2021 (From left): Leonard Tirol, Cavaliere Marco Biggiogero, Binggoy Remedios and Sheryl Cham



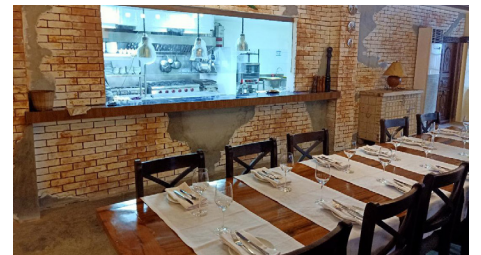
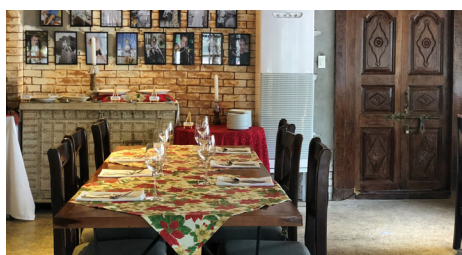
Jean and Nico Fronzoni, Cavaliere Marco Biggiogero, Niña Bustamante, and the writer, Teddy Montelibano



Dos Mestizos operations manager and Remedios' son Andre Garcia and his wife Carmille



Andre Garcia (center) with the Dos Mestizos team



Dos Mestizos' new location along the main road across SeaWind, Station 1

ISLAND GUIDE

BSN'S TOP 8 'GRAMMABLE PHOTO OP SPOTS IN BORACAY

By Rica Velasco

In today's digital age, pursuing the perfect photo opportunity has become integral to our travel experiences. From striking landscapes to unique architectural wonders, we're constantly looking for places that are irresistibly 'Grammable. These are the spots that capture the essence of a destination and offer visually captivating backgrounds that make our social media feeds come alive.

In this article, we'll explore the most popular spots that are unique to the island of Boracay, apart from the renowned White Beach, which is already a four-kilometer photo op on its own. We've picked the tourist spots which not only boast of stunning views, but those that showcase the island's distinct charm and identity.

Whether you're a seasoned traveler or looking for inspiration for your next Boracay adventure, these iconic locations will not only promise memorable island experiences but will surely get your followers instantly engaged with the unmistakable "take me back there" Boracay sites and hit that "like" button.



1. Puka Shell Beach Sign

Puka Shell Beach, a mesmerizing tourist attraction named after the porcelain-like puka shells that make this beach's terrain incredibly astounding, boasts an 800-meter stretch of white sand shore adorned with scattered coral fragments, earning its reputation as Boracay's second longest beach. While its sand may be slightly coarser than the silky grains of White Beach, Puka Beach compensates with its pristine natural allure. Tall coconut trees adorn its shoreline, while a lush tropical forest graces its horizon. However, the pièce de résistance awaits as the entire beach unfolds before your eyes. The Puka Beach sign, crafted from driftwood, shells, corals, and local treasures, emerges as a captivating backdrop, inviting visitors to capture their moments in this coastal haven without obstructing the turquoise sea views.



Photo by Jack Jarilla

2. Willy's Rock

Standing proudly as the only visible landmark along world-famous White Beach, the iconic rock formation is the star attraction and the most recognizable symbol of the island, featured prominently on Philippine Airlines' ads promoting tourism. In the 1970s, the indigenous couple Willy and Rebecca pioneered accommodations on the island with their two-story home, Willy's Place. Locals and tourists sought their help for various needs, and were always directed to Willy's Place that so happened to be located near the

rock, and later became known as "Willy's Rock." Today, a great number of tourists ascend the rock for photo ops beside the grotto, especially during sunset time, or with the rock as a scenic backdrop for their pictures.



Photo courtesy of Benandvien travel blog

3. Leaning Coconut Tree along Bulabog Beach

Coconut trees line the entire stretch of Bulabog Beach, but there's one that truly steals the show. The renowned leaning coconut tree is a veritable superstar, arguably one of the most photographed attractions in all of Boracay, and the reason is plain to see. This unique tree stretches horizontally, reaching out over the beach, for people to climb for that stunning shot. In fact, it's so popular that it has become a vital part of day tours, with enthusiasts often queue up to capture a moment with this iconic landmark, also known as the "7Stones coconut tree"



Photo courtesy of Boracay Informer

4. Lapus Lapus Rock Formation

Nestled along Boracay's pristine coastline, the famous rock formation on Lapus Lapus Beach which is often referred to as "the keyhole" pays homage to the island's rich history, with a name that translates to "tagusan" or "pass-through" in Tagalog, reflecting ancestral wisdom. With its natural arch sculpted by wind and water, this remarkable rock formation serves as a majestic gateway to a breathtaking view of captivating vistas. During the 1970s, residents living in the northern part of the island utilized the opening to reach Bulabog, either for collecting shells or sandworms for food. The Lapus Lapus rock formation is an iconic symbol of the island's beauty and cultural heritage. Tourists from all corners of the island flock to this natural wonder, eager to catch a glimpse and capture memorable moments with photographs.



5. Boracay's Sunsets

Not technically a "spot" but hands down, the most photographed of all Boracay sceneries and one of the most popular attractions is the Boracay sunset. A natural wonder, each sunset is unique and the sheer anticipation of them while awaiting the perfect moment for that shot, alone is a thrill in itself. With no two sunsets alike, one will never tire of reveling in the stunning palette of fiery oranges and reds, bright pinks, royal blues and deep purples, as the sun dips on the horizon. These colors create a captivating and ever-changing backdrop for photographers, casting a warm and enchanting glow over the island's pristine waters and shores. Whether capturing this spectacle from bustling White Beach or the more serene corners of the island, Boracay's sunsets offer photographers a magical moment showcasing the splendor of nature, resulting in unforgettable snapshots that perfectly encapsulate the beauty of this tropical paradise.



6. Pulo-Pulo in Ilig Iligan Beach

Tucked away from Boracay's bustling tourist spots, Ilig Iligan Beach beckons as a serene escape, offering solace from the frenetic pace of the outside world. It's a glimpse of Boracay's original charm, unspoiled by rampant development, showcasing its pristine beauty catering to those searching for exclusivity. Despite its seclusion, Ilig Iligan Beach boasts the hallmark of soft, white sands and vivid blue waters that define the island's allure. Yet, its crowning glory is the cluster of miniature islands gracing the horizon called Pulo-Pulo. This sight never fails to evoke awe. These iconic islands serve as a backdrop recognizable from countless photos, making them a must-capture moment for tourists who instantly associate them with Boracay's allure.



Cagban Jetty Port

7. Boracay Signages: Wetland Park No. 4 (Laketown), Bulabog Beach and Cagban Jetty Port

What better way to flaunt your presence on the island than by snapping real photos beside oversized, vibrant, beach-themed letters that spell B-O-R-A-C-A-Y? In recent years, these eye-catching signs have popped up in prominent tourist locations, notably at the Cagban Jetty Port which serves as a warm welcome for newly arrived tourists, at Wetland Park Number 4 (a.k.a Laketown) right across from D'Mall of Boracay where shoppers can't miss it, and on the Bulabog Beach Boulevard with the breathtaking beach in the background.



Wetland Park No. 4



Bulabog Beach Boulevard

Photos by Jack Jarilla

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ISLAND GUIDE

and more importantly, bring some of that magic home with you. **8. Boracay Sandcastles**

Sandcastles in Boracay are among the island's top attractions, often featuring the date as a cherished memory marker for visitors to capture in photographs. These three-dimensional works of art are crafted from loose materials like grains of rock or coral, using rudimentary items such as wood, slippers, pails and cones. Skilled artists, typically island residents seeking donations for their craft, create these sandcastles. As you explore Boracay, you'll undoubtedly encounter these captivating temporary sculptures so be sure to snap a photo each time, as both their designs and the carved dates evolve on a daily basis, creating a delightful visual chronicle of your stay on this enchanting island. These uniquely Boracay photo op island souvenirs are available at eight designated locations

along the beach from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at Boracay Ocean Club in Angol Beach, VHub Station 3, La Carmela Boracay in Station 2, Aria D'Mall Boracay in Station 2, Estacio Uno in Station 1, Fridays Boracay Station 1, Freestyle Academy in Bulabog Beach, and Tambisaan Beach. 🌴



Photo by Dannie Solidum

BORACAY SANDCASTLES ARE BACK!

The sandcastles on White Beach are iconic island structures and popular photo souvenirs.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has approved the reinstatement of this practice, having been banned for over four years, after the six-month island rehabilitation closure back in 2018.

The Sandcastle Makers Association consists of a skilled team of 28 members from the Tumandok and Aklanon communities, who have honed their sandcastle and underground lantern crafting skills since childhood. The group underwent training sessions that covered topics such as sand erosion, tourism management, and beach conservation efforts.

All revenue generated from these captivating tourist attractions is pooled and distributed among the team. We encourage visitors to demonstrate their support for these skilled local artists by taking photos with the sandcastles in the designated areas, for a small fee.

Newly established regulations are now in place for building sandcastles, which include:

1. Sandcastle builders must obtain a permit from the Malay LGU.
2. No minors can engage in sandcastle building on school days.
3. For proper identification and training, sandcastle builders must be registered with the Boracay Sandcastle Makers Association.
4. Sandcastle creators are required to wear appropriate identification and uniforms.
5. Sandcastle construction is confined to designated areas along the beachfront.
6. Sandcastles must not exceed a maximum area of five meters and a height of 1.524 meters.
7. Using chemicals, cement, or any binding agents to enhance sandcastle stability is prohibited, except for seawater.
8. Transferring sand from one area to another for sandcastle-building purposes is prohibited.
9. Kerosene gas lamps, candles, or any other decorations/colorations that could contaminate the sand are prohibited.
10. The sandcastle area must be cleared and restored to its original state after the designated time frame.
11. Sandcastle construction outside the designated areas during special occasions necessitates clearance from the Malay LGU.

ISLAND GUIDE

BORACAY BUCKET LIST: BSN's Guide to Island Day Trips

By Amanda Virrey

Do you ever find yourself wondering about other things to do in Boracay aside from sunbathing on its powdery white sand, swimming in the turquoise sea, dining and partying galore? Well, there's so much more in store on the island besides its white beaches and entrancing nightlife. You can enlist in guided tours that will not only show you the entire island, but also the neighboring islands, which are fun and fascinating to explore.



Nabaoy River

Soak in Boracay's spring water source flowing along Nabaoy River on the Mainland and retreat in its cool waters and unique rain-forest. You may stop at the nearest picnic area from the main road, called Mama's for a rustic river adventure or head toward the end of Nabaoy Road at Narra for a more tranquil soak in its flatter and wider riverbed. Both places provide picnic tables where you can eat your own meals or sample their food offerings of freshly caught river shrimps, either cooked as a tamarind stew called Sinigang, or with coconut milk and ginger.

While Nabaoy River runs long, you could hike further toward the foothills about an hour away from Narra and find a spot on its long riverbank where you can have privacy and tranquility.



Motag Living Museum

Motag Living Museum takes visitors back to the era when people were utilizing Mother Nature's bounties for their comfort and nourishment. A self-sustainable livelihood for the villagers of Barangay Motag near Nabaoy River, this interactive simulation begins with a warm welcome from the villagers to express their pleasure in sharing their home and livelihood with their visitors. Visitors are then shown the old ways in which they used the toilet, how they employed the parts of a coconut for washing their hair and body, which leaves they used to substitute modern toilet paper, how they build fires, and the entire process of harvesting wheat all the way to cooking the rice and making them into a traditional dessert that can be sampled.

After just half a day's interactive experience in this local living museum in Malay town, visitors get to bring home a wealth of history and learning that is authentic.



Hinugtan Beach Tour

Embark on a paradise getaway on the mainland to a pristine beach cove, called Hinugtan. Located along the coast of Buruanga, this quaint beach presents a private location for a group of friends or family of 15 people maximum, who seek a private beach getaway all to themselves for a full day. Guests booking through Isla Hinugtan Tours can access the cove via a 45-minute private boat ride from Station 1, White Beach, as well as use the fully-equipped Hinugtan bamboo bungalow during the day. Food and beverages may either be brought along or may be arranged by Isla Hinugtan Tours for an additional fee. To learn more about this private paradise getaway, contact Isla Hinugtan Tours at (+63) 917 524 8787.



Crystal Cove and Magic Island

Get on an island-hopping boat tour to explore Crystal Cove and go cliff-jumping at Magic Island. Crystal Cove offers a distinct landscape highlighted by underwater caves, turquoise pools and crystalline coral coves that are perfect for snorkeling and spelunking. It also has a small restaurant in the midst of towering coconut trees and coral sand, as well as a shell gallery of those that are endemic in Panay.

Adjacent to Crystal Cove is Magic Island, a small island that is often visited for its jump-off points, at three to 10 meters high. You will feel triumphant after jumping off from a height that is quite extraordinary. However, if you simply want to hang out and stay dry, you will find the picnic tables offer a relaxing place to admire the scenery.



Kawa Bath in Parameter Tabon Beach

The Kawa Bath at Parameter Tabon Beach offers a relaxing break from the island-hopping boat trips. During the trip's lunch break, guests are invited to step into the big cauldron to briefly immerse in the hot water and have a

continued on next page



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ISLAND GUIDE

continued from previous page

photo-op. While the hot bath is said to have therapeutic benefits such as improving blood circulation and relieving body aches, guests who come out of the Kawa claim that they end up feeling relaxed and having a good night's sleep. This traditional bath is certainly a must-try.



Guided Bicycle Tour

Explore the hidden gems of Boracay on a guided bicycle tour by Unisikad. Sign up for a four- or eight-hour bike rental and pedal your way to your chosen points of interest, which may be anywhere from your agreed meet-up point to Bulabog Beach, Mount Luho, Diniwid Beach, Boracay Newcoast, Puka Beach, Ilig Iligan Beach, Tambisaan Beach, Cagban, Tablas Island, Carabao Island, and more.

Added value for this trip are the fun facts you will learn about the island, the exercise and health boost you will reap, as well as the photos and videos you could capture during this eco-friendly tour



Discover Scuba Diving

Discover the rich marine life of Boracay through an Introductory Scuba Dive with your chosen scuba diving center. With no PADI license required, you can sign up for an introductory diving course where you will learn basic safety guidelines and key skills. Under the supervision of a PADI instructor, you will learn to dive beginning at the shallow waters and then to the open water via a boat ride, up

to 12 meters deep within Coral Garden or Angol Point where you will be able to dive into lush corals and observe the fascinating life underwater.



Paraw Sailing

Get on a Paraw sailboat and allow your skillful captain to take you on a thrilling ride on the high seas of Boracay. Take off at either Boat Station 1 or 3, and relax on the netted outrigger of your chosen paraw for a sailing adventure, be it a 30-minute sunset sail or a couple of hours trip to Balinghai Cove for a rejuvenating swim and snorkeling.



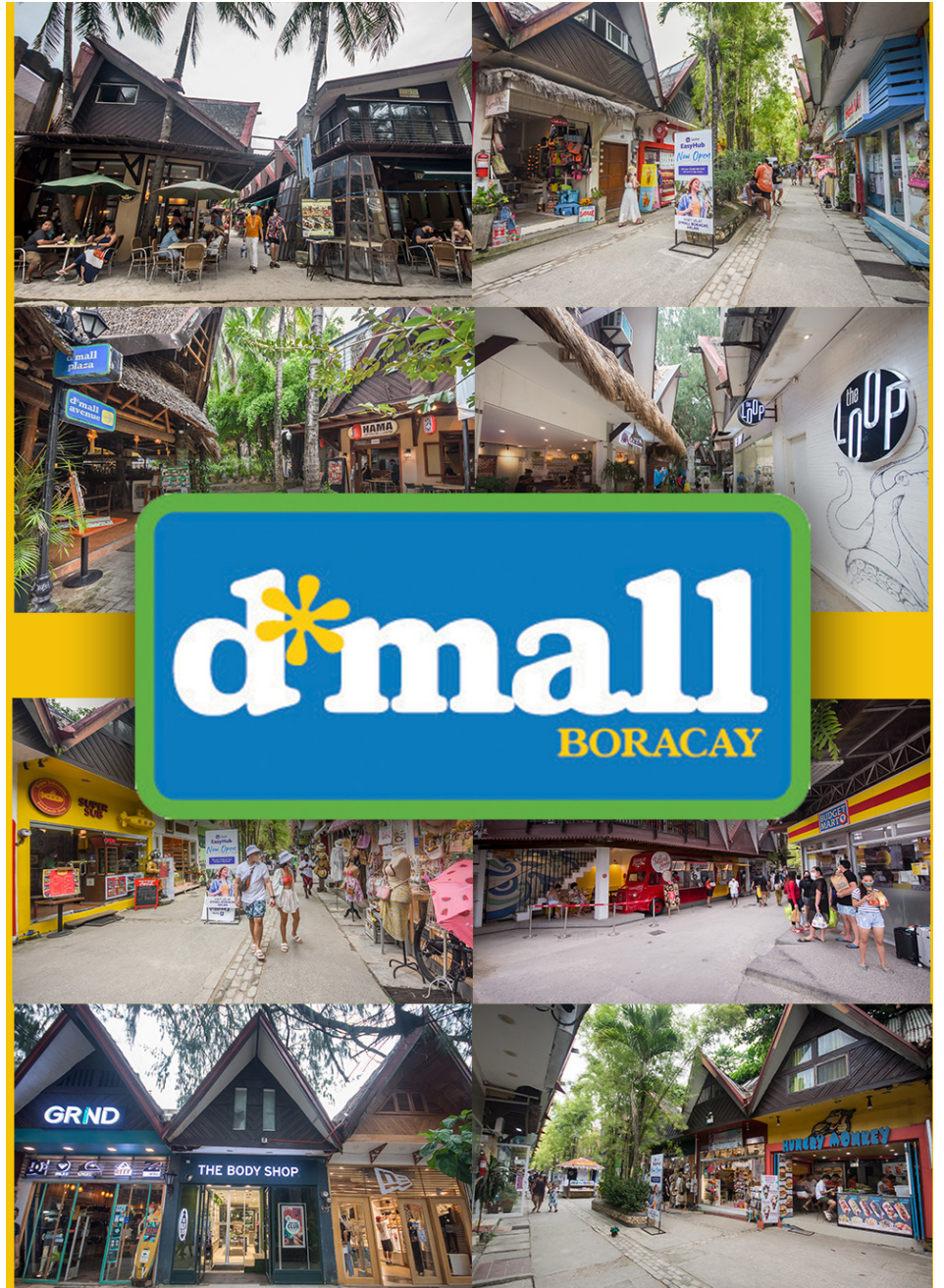
Carabao Island

Dedicate a full day's adventure on Carabao Island. Traverse the channel to this grand island and engage in adrenaline-high activities like cliff jumping off Kading-Kading Point, snorkeling or scuba diving in subterranean pools and caves underneath picturesque limestone formations to glimpse seahorses and various fishes, and delight in seafood grills with thirst-quenching coconut juice, freshly picked from its flourishing line of palm trees.

Experience this adventure via tour agencies like Traveloka or go on an independent trip by chartering a private boat or by getting on a public boat bound for Hambil.

Cathedral Cliff on Carabao Island

Several tour operators like Isla Hinugtan Tours and Parameter Tours offer full-day boating tours that include some of these itineraries to accommodate your schedule and budget. But if you are with a big group and want to customize your day trip, it would be better to charter a boat for the day so you could enjoy exploring the island's amazing sights at your own pace and time.



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TAGAY

Our way of saying “Cheers,” Tagay salutes the island’s unsung heroes and achievements.

MALAY MUNICIPAL POLICE JOINS COAST GUARD COASTAL CLEANUP



The Malay PNP under the leadership of Lt. Col. Dainis Ortega Amuguis, Officer-In-Charge, remains steadfast in its core value of “makakalikasan” (environment-friendly) centered on respect for private/public properties and protection and conservation of the environment to maintain ecological balance.

On Sept. 21, 2023, the Malay PNP joined in the Annual International Clean Up or ICC 2023 with the theme “Clean Seas for Healthy Fisheries” initiated by the Phil. Coast Guard Auxiliary Squadron 609 headed by Cmdr. Claire Ang, along with Capt. Desiree Segovia.

The activity aims to promote waste reduction and create public awareness of waste management and environmental concerns as well as to improve outdoor recreational activities of the community which is in line with the PNP’s Environmental Projects.

The cleanup covered the front beach area of White Beach from Willy’s Rock to D’Mall and was also participated by personnel from CBTMPC, other stakeholders and volunteers.

NEWS

IPS AND “SINGLE” TAXI DRIVERS TO RULE THE ACCESS ROADS IN BORACAY

By Jun N. Aguirre



Soon, the Indigenous People (IP) of Boracay known as the Boracay Ati, together with “single” or “habal-habal” motorcycle taxi drivers will rule the access roads on Boracay Island.

This, after the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Aklan has approved the local ordinance for the issuance of an Authority to Operate (ATO) using a motorbike unit as a common service carrier.

Malay Ordinance No. 527, Series of 2023, entitled “An Ordinance Regulating The Operation Of Single Motorbikes In Boracay Island As A Common Service Carrier And Means Of Livelihood In Boracay Island, Malay, Aklan And Providing Penalties For Violation Thereof” was co-authored by Councilors Alan Palma Sr. and Dante Pagsuguiron.

According to Councilor Palma Sr., the ordinance hopes to support indigents and provide them the privilege of gaining a means to provide for their families while serving the local community by way of providing transportation along side streets or access roads.

“Ito ay mag-regulate sa single motorbike na papasada na magbibigay din ng livelihood sa mga habal-habal drivers sa secondary roads at interiors sa isla ng

Boracay. Hiling ng mga Board Members na dapat ang mga indigents na walang trabaho ang makakatanggap ng pribilheyo na ito at may angkop na dami lang para maayos pa rin ang sistema ng transportasyon sa isla. Tuloy ang trabaho at serbisyo sa masa,” he said on social media.

“The enactment will take effect in November this year. But the local government unit may implement it early next year,” Palma told the Boracay Sun News in an interview.

Under the ordinance, each applicant is entitled to apply for the ATO to operate a motorbike for public transport.

Under the said ordinance, it is mandated for the accredited members to avail an accident insurance covering both the driver and the passenger. Wearing protective gear is also mandatory.

Palma said, that the motorbike operators must follow their prescribed parking areas during the daytime in Yapak, Balaban, Manocmanoc.

They are discouraged from using the main road from 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

Palma said the applicant must secure an IP certificate from the Municipal Social Welfare office as part of the requirements.

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HEALTH & WELLNESS

EXPLORING THE WONDERS OF SOLO TRAVELING IN BORACAY

By Pauline R.

Boracay has long been renowned for its pristine white sand beaches, crystal-clear waters, and vibrant nightlife. While it is often associated with group vacations and romantic getaways, embarking on a solo adventure to Boracay can be an enriching experience.



Traveling solo in Boracay offers a unique opportunity for self-discovery and personal growth. With no set itinerary or obligations, you have the freedom to explore the island at your own pace, indulge in activities that interest you, and connect with fellow travelers from around the world.

Activities and Adventures

Boracay offers a plethora of activities to suit every traveler's interests. If you feel like doing some beach activities and meeting new faces, you can choose from different fun water sports like snorkeling or parasailing. Take the opportunity to go scuba diving in open water or start your kiteboarding journey, or go island-hopping. You will be able to make new friends while enjoying the beautiful waters of Boracay. Engaging in island activities is a great way to meet locals and integrate into the community while learning a skill that will allow you to travel to even more places later on. Do not hesitate to ask your resort for help to book your activities.

Pathways to Self-discovery

If you are looking for some "me time" to rest and self-reflect, there is something for everyone. Choose among different yoga and meditation classes or healing sessions with some local teachers/healers. Take advantage of the island's natural beauty by exploring its hidden coves, hiking trails and breathtaking viewpoints by walking from Station 3 to Diniwid Beach which is accessible from White Beach. You can also start from the foot of Mount Luho along Bulabog Beach and follow the road of Kingfisher to reach Station 3 on White Beach if you want to take a longer walk.

Boracay is also known for its many award-winning spas. Some well-deserved pampering could be beneficial to your wellbeing. Feel rejuvenated after a relaxing afternoon.

Take a Culinary Journey

Discover the local Filipino cuisine by immersing yourself in the flavors of traditional Filipino dishes. Try classics like adobo (marinated meat) or sinigang (sour soup). Local eateries and food stalls known as carinderias offer authentic and affordable Filipino meals. Be adventurous and try local favorites as well like "balut" (boiled fertilized duck egg), "isaw" (grilled chicken intestines), "banana cue" (fried banana skewers), and "turon" (fried banana spring rolls).

These affordable and flavorful snacks can easily be found in street stalls. Being an island destination, Boracay is renowned for its fresh seafood. Visit D'Talipapa, a seafood market where you can choose your seafood and have it cooked to your preference at nearby restaurants. But you also can find many restaurants serving international cuisines. Your taste buds will never cease to be amazed!

Meet New Friends

One of the most rewarding aspects of solo travel is the opportunity to immerse yourself in the local culture. Boracay boasts numerous cafés, co-working spaces, a vibrant nightlife and warm hospitality. Engage with the locals by talking to the café owners or managers, going to Exit Bar for good music and cold beers, then continuing to one of many Boracay clubs to dance the night away. If you want to meet other travelers, don't be shy and book your stay in a hostel where you will get to know many new faces, and maybe start great friendships!

Safety and Security

While solo travel can be exhilarating, it is essential to prioritize safety. Boracay is generally considered a safe destination, but it is always wise to take precautions. Stay in reputable accommodations, inform someone of your travel plans, and be mindful of your surroundings. Additionally, familiarize yourself with local customs and laws to ensure a smooth and hassle-free experience.

With its beautiful beaches, vibrant activities, and welcoming locals, the island offers a safe environment for solo travelers. Embrace the freedom, engage with the local culture, and seize the opportunity to create unforgettable memories. If you are here already reading this article, be sure to tick the above suggestions and allow Boracay's beauty and it people to captivate your soul. 🌴

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Boracay Info

FREE INFORMATION

ON WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO DO, WHAT THE COSTS SHOULD BE; BOOKINGS, RESERVATIONS, TOURIST ADVICE & ASSISTANCE, MONEY CHANGER, AND JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING ELSE YOU NEED & WANT TO KNOW WHILE ENJOYING YOUR BORACAY HOLIDAY



Drop by to see what we offer and how we can assist you - **FREE!**

NEXT TO NIGI-NIGI, STATION 2

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