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The first "Boracay Beach Party" was held at the beachfront of Aplaya along White Beach (Photo by Joel Jaws Andrada)

BORACAY ISLAND'S BEACH PARTIES ARE BACK

Mayor Bautista Revives Beach Parties on Weekends

By Freida Dario-Santiago

Malay Mayor Frolibar Bautista has officially revived beach parties in cooperation with some beachfront bars along world-famous White Beach on Boracay Island.

In a meeting held at the Red Coconut Resort last March 3, which was attended by *Boracay Sun News* reporter Jun N. Aguirre, he tells us that Bautista reiterated that during the "Full Moon to Sunrise" beach party held

at Greenyard Boracay on Bulabog Beach last February 24, he promised the revival of beach parties on the island. He said,

"The said 'Full Moon to Sunrise' party was a success. To fulfill my promise, we are going to start the front beach parties by March 9."

He added that the year-round beach parties, dubbed the "Boracay Beach Party" (BBP) is an initiative of the local

government unit (LGU) of Malay for the promotion of Boracay Island. The series of parties would be held every weekend at some of the top bars and clubs on a rotational basis. Eight bars were represented at the meeting and welcomed the said move, namely Aplaya Boracay, Club Summer Place, Club Tropicana, Epic Boracay, Exit Bar, Om Boracay, Wave Bar & Lounge and White House Beach Resort.

Also present at the meeting were the Malay Tourism Office and the Malay

Auxiliary Police (MAP). Malay tourism officer Felix Delos Santos was tasked to promote the weekly event. The Korean Residents of Boracay Island (KROB) group also committed to helping with the promotions.

In the said meeting, it was decided that the first venue partner and host would be Aplaya Boracay on March 9 (Saturday). Also discussed was the proposed 30- x 80-meter party staging area that must be within the

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INDULGE
Top Summer Quenchers and Cold Treats

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Life's A Beach

Welcome to the country's summer beach capital, Boracay Island!

If you're visiting Boracay for the first time, lucky you! Not only do you get to experience the quintessential tropical beach, you also get to experience the return of its legendary beach parties, albeit only on weekends.

The ultimate sun-worshiper's guide to Boracay, this edition celebrates why in these parts, you're definitely in for MORE fun in the sun, and we tell you where and how in these pages.



Start off with cool learning experiences you can totally brag about when you get back home: "BSN's Guide to Learning Something New this Summer" (page 9); "Easy-Peasy Swim Fitness Workout" (page 12) shows you some total body drills you can do while playing in the water whether you're in the pool or the sea; "The Crown Jewels' Many Gems" (pages 14-15) is an island guide to Boracay's many beaches—all perfectly good reasons you might want to stay longer; and "It's Getting Hot Out Here!" (pages 24-25) shows you how to beat the heat with the island's most delightful summer quenchers and cold treats!

Welcome shift

A friend who used to call Boracay home recently came for a visit for the first time since the 2018 island closure and had this to say:

"It's been a long time since I visited and there have been many changes: Instead of tour groups in the thousands with ill-mannered visitors, there are tourists from around the world to fill the gap. There are sidewalks you can walk on that are also stroller-friendly, Bulabog Beach's boardwalk is such a pleasure, and one can easily get around the island via e-trikes and the HoHo bus. And above all, the beach has never looked brighter! After undergoing so much in recent years, I'm happy to say that the Boracay I loved is back, and in many ways, even better! Yes, there are many other locations: Siargao, a young man's game, Palawan, etc. But for me, what always made the island special were the memories and people that inhabit it."

Thank you, my friend! He is not the first to share these keen observations, and in fact, tourism data from the Malay-Boracay Municipal Tourism Office confirm that foreign visitors have become quite diversified lately, adding more countries beyond Asia Pacific to the mix.

Quality over quantity

Among the foreign countries with the most arrivals in January, the top 10 are Korea, USA, China, Australia, Russia, UK, Taiwan, Germany, Canada and Italy, definitely adding a rich diversity to the travel market.

With a steady rise in foreign tourist arrivals from 42,489 in December 2023 to 44,599 in January 2024 and 43,710 in February 2024, compared to the same period last year, January 2023 saw 37,939 foreign arrivals compared to the 44,599 last January, and 35,688 in February 2023 versus the 43,710 last February.

More than the numbers, what is more exciting is the fact that more and more people from the far corners of the globe are venturing further and coming our way, to see and experience what you, at this very moment, can't get enough of!

Beyond the numbers

Don't forget, tourism receipts are the name of the game and not just the number of arrivals.

Several reports from restaurant, bar and resort business owners confirm that tourism receipts in February have already exceeded 2019 sales, which has been the barometer or the target, being the highest in Boracay history, thanks to the revenge travel phenomenon after the six-month government-imposed island closure for rehabilitation.

I will never tire of saying this (if it's the last thing I ever say on the subject of tourism): The numbers pale in comparison to the reality on the ground, seeing quality visitors completely immersed in the island's plethora of activities and indulgences and seeing the receipts at the end of the day.

Is the uptick here to stay?

Will it rain tomorrow? Same thing; nobody knows, but as far as fearless forecasts go, if this trend continues, coupled with recent and upcoming changes in store for travelers to Boracay such as the revival of regulated beach parties, the return of beach beds and umbrellas, a unified ticketing system and additional international direct flights, then the island of Boracay is about to enter a renaissance of epic proportions (fingers-crossed)!

However, if the numbers take a dip next month, don't panic. Stop the obsession and remind yourself that it's not about the numbers. It's about the quality of visitor experiences and how this translates into returning visitors who stay longer and happily share their experiences with others.

So, what are you waiting for? Put this paper down and slather on the SPF! It's time to get your feet wet, to quench your thirst, and to get your summer on!

Like I said last issue, my mantra for the year is simple: "Time wasted (at the beach) is time well spent."

Vibe high, dive deep!

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



We caught up with former actor turned chef and restaurateur Marvin Agustin who is a partner at Wolfgang's Steakhouse Grill Philippines during the restaurant's grand launch last February 29, as he enjoyed his copy of **Boracay Sun News**.

A friendly reminder: Respect the environment and be eco-friendly, especially at the beaches.

- As the adage goes:
- 🌴 **Take nothing but pictures** (leave the sand, pebbles and seashells where they belong.)
 - 🌴 **Leave nothing but footprints ...** (leave nothing at the beach, taking everything back with you) ...
 - 🌴 **Kill nothing but time** (respect flora, fauna, wildlife and their natural habitats, and interact ethically with animals and marine life).
 - 🌴 **Do not litter, ever. No spitting.** Most eco-travelers take this one step further by picking up a few pieces of trash we see on the beach and disposing of garbage in proper segregation receptacles. Beach guards in plain clothes are vigilantly patrolling the island's beaches, with stiff penalties and fines for violators.
 - 🌴 **Do your business in the right place.** Relieve yourself at the nearest rest room. If you smoke, find the nearest designated smoking area. Eating and drinking alcohol (or carrying glass bottles) is prohibited on the beaches.
 - 🌴 **Celebrate World Earth Day on April 22.** The official theme for 2024, "Planet vs. Plastics," underscores the urgent need to combat the global plastic problem.

continued from front page

vegetation areas only and that these would be barricaded. Party time was also proposed from 6 p.m. to 4 a.m.

At the said beach party, a foreign general manager of one of the island's big resorts had this to say: "This is nice and is something different. It also gives our guests something to look forward to and it brings everyone together in a large space right on the beach, carefully-executed, as it should be."

A Municipal Incident Management Team coordination meeting was called by Mayor Bautista on March 6 to discuss "preparedness measures and the safety of tourists, responders and the general public during the upcoming events." In attendance were the event organizers and representatives of the venue hosting bars and clubs, Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and

Management Office (MDRRMO) OIC Catherine Fulgencio and representatives of the PNP, PCG, MAP, MTRO, BBG, BFP and PDEA, among others.

Also discussed were the ingress and event setup guidelines as well as the post-event egress and cleanup, among other details. By the end of the meeting, a raffle resulted in Epic Boracay being chosen as the second venue partner and host on March 15-16 (Friday and Saturday).

Follow Boracay Beach Parties on Facebook for event announcements. Tickets may be pre-purchased with a special discounted rate for Boracay residents at PhP300 (Barangay ID required).

The bar owners and the local government are confident that the weekend beach parties will lure millennial tourists from all over the world to visit Boracay Island.



DJ Ron Poe headlining on the first Boracay Beach Party (Photo courtesy of Ron Poe)

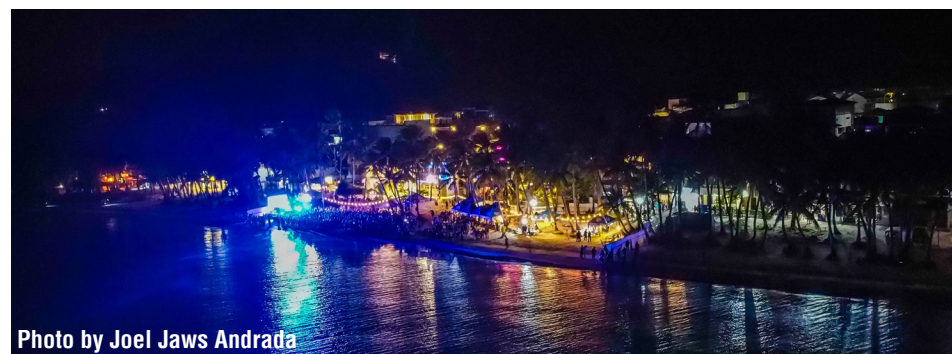


Photo by Joel Jaws Andrada

RELATED NEWS

MONTHLY FULL MOON TO SUNRISE PARTIES

By Freida Dario-Santiago



Photos by John Clement Cheng (left) and Joel Jaws Andrada (right)

Last February 24, from 8:30 p.m. until sunrise, island revelers gathered for the "Full Moon to Sunrise" beach party, that was spearheaded by the local government unit of Malay, and held at the beachfront of Greenyard Boracay, along Bulabog Beach. Despite the occasional downpour, the event was well-supported by a vibrant mix of island residents and tourists, with a huge turnout, some even lasting until sunrise.

Beach parties had been prohibited and confined indoors for the past six years, since the six-month island closure for rehabilitation by the Duterte administration, thanks to the huge environmental impact of the notorious "LaBoracay" events on the island's fragile environment.

Malay Municipal Mayor Frolibar S. Bautista announced at the Boracay-Caticlan Sustainable Development Council meeting which he co-chairs with Aklan Governor Jose Enrique "Joen" Miraflores, held last February 6, hosted by the Boracay Foundation, Inc., and then again at the annual general membership meeting of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce-Boracay last February 21, that the island had already learned the hard lessons and was ready to revive beach parties, but this time around, these would be highly-regulated, including environment protection protocols and safety and security measures, so that the problems of the past would no longer be repeated.

In other words, this is not the beginning of a "free for all" slew of parties on the shores of Boracay, but is a first step towards possibly opening up the island to other such responsibly-regulated parties on its beaches.

With the successful first run, the municipal government of Malay hopes that their "Full Moon to Sunrise" parties will attract the niche market and younger generation of tourists to the island of Boracay.

Having gotten a taste for celebrating and dancing barefoot on the beach once again, islanders and visitors alike will be eagerly anticipating upcoming parties such as this.



Gracing the occasion (from left): BFI Chairman Dindo Salazar, Manocmanoc Barangay Capt. Danilo Delos Santos, SB Apio Casidsid, Vice Mayor Niño Cawaling, Mayor Frolibar Bautista, DOT Regional Director Crisanta "Krisma" Rodriguez and former SB Member Nenette Aguirre-Graf, owner of Greenyard Boracay

NEWS

THEATER DIRECTOR EYES BORACAY PERFORMANCES

By Jun N. Aguirre



A Boracay-based director, producer and scriptwriter is eyeing holding theater performances on Boracay soon.

Arthur Peracullo who served as a marketing director for Fairways & Bluewater Boracay told *Boracay Sun News* that work is underway to establish a theater guild in the resort island.

"Details are still being finalized, but I hope to come up with a theater

performance in Boracay as an added tourism attraction soon," he said.

Earlier, Kalibo Mayor Juris Bautista-Sucro lauded Peracullo and his production team for their re-enactment of the legend of Ati-atihan. The theatrical performance was a highlight of the annual Kalibo Sto. Nino Ati-atihan Festival this year.

Sucro said he supported the revival of the re-enactment known as "Panay 1212" for the younger generation to learn about the legend behind the origins of the Ati-atihan festival.

The two-hour performance was written and directed by Peracullo himself. He also directed emotional re-enactments of the heroism of the 19 martyrs of Aklan.

"The theatrical production highlights the celebration of Ati-atihan which started from a legend on the arrival of 10 Bornean datus (chiefs) in Panay. The huge production included hundreds of staff and cast members from different schools in Kalibo who served as actors and actresses in the theatrical performance. This way, the young people would not only learn about the history but also experience it through theater," Peracullo added.

Since the "Barter of Panay" theatrical performance debut in 1968, it has always been one of the highlights of the Kalibo Santo Niño Ati-Atihan Festival, performed at the Kalibo Pastrana Park. The said re-enactment of the Barter of Panay as a tradition has disappeared from the Ati-atihan revelry in recent years.

The "Barter of Panay" brings to life the story that has been passed on through oral tradition. This story was also documented in Pedro Monteclaro's book entitled *Maragtas sang Panay* published in 1907. Monteclaro was a local leader, writer and historian. Monteclaro acknowledged that legends are important to Visayan heritage. He embarked on a gleaning of stories shared by the elderly in Panay.

The Kalibo Council for Culture and the Arts Performing Arts Guild, featuring the talents of students from Regional Science High School in Western Visayas, Aklan State University (ASU), Garcia College of Technology (GCT) and Northwestern Visayan Colleges (NVC) immortalized an 800-year-old story through the theatrical cultural presentation. It was held at the Magsaysay Park in Kalibo on January 17.

NEWS

THE SECRET TO SOUTH KOREA'S TOURISM SUCCESS REVEALED

By Jun N. Aguirre

South Korea is one of the most successful tourism countries in the world. In 2022, it has generated some 3.2 million inbound tourists.

Reports revealed that in 2021, only about 967,000 foreign tourists ventured into South Korea. However, the numbers nearly tripled to approximately 3.198 million in 2022. The positive trajectory continued into 2023, with an estimated 6.5 million foreign tourists visiting the country from January to August, as per government data.

Most of their tourists come from Japan, China and the United States, among others.

The secret weapon to the success of their cultural and tourism promotions is the Honorary Reporters program initiated by the Korean Culture and Information Service (KOCIS) under the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism.

Currently, there are thousands of honorary reporters or HRs for South Korea, globally. They are everyday people worldwide promoting and spreading positive news about Korean culture, society and history through a variety of content. Participating in the HR program is voluntary and each of them are given certificates officially signed by the Ministry.

Each HR is encouraged to write their own experiences, reflections and admiration of South Korea. If accepted, they will be posted on the HR website www.Korea.net.

The Ministry is responsible for promoting Korea overseas, highlighting cultural exchanges and conveying such news back to Korea through the government portals. The said program was started in 2012.

To become an HR, one must apply and express their intent through an annual campaign for volunteers. The announcement for application usually in March of every year can be found on the Facebook page: HR Echoes.

One of the biggest perks for the HRs is being chosen by the Ministry as an outstanding HR worldwide every year, and being rewarded on a sponsored trip to South Korea. South Korean embassies worldwide likewise invite HRs to events in their area, providing an opportunity to cover and write something about it.

HRs are also encouraged to reach out to other HRs globally to make friends and share their love for South Korea.

One of the HRs is Ace Fox. He was born in Barangay Manocmanoc, on Boracay Island but is now living in Madrid, Spain.

He shares this insight with *Boracay Sun News* in an exclusive interview: "I thought of joining the program this year because I have an interest in South Korea—the beautiful country, its language and culture. The idea of the program gathering people who share the same interests and promoting it to the world encouraged me to join the program. It is amazing to see how many people all over the world share their thoughts and experiences, and everything they love about Korea through this program. It helps people to gain more information about everything related to Korea."

This writer hopes that the Malay LGU could replicate this successful program of South Korea in promoting Boracay Island.

SPORTS

PKA TOUR 2024 FINALS

By Azenith Resurreccion | Photos courtesy of PKA Tour



A fleet of twin tip racers battling to reach the top mark

AQUA Boracay successfully hosted the final leg of the 9th season of competition of the ICTSI Philippine Kiteboarding Tour from March 1 to 3, 2024. After last season's resounding success, the tour's comeback and the finale in Boracay has never been perfectly crafted with the commitment of Aqua Boracay to be the home of the PKA Tour's final leg. The property is truly an idyllic setting for this spectacular sporting event that the famed Bulabog Beach is known for, where wind and water conditions go along well with accessibility and luxury.

About a hundred competitors and participants came to Boracay from as far as Canada, USA, Ireland, Estonia, Belgium, France, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Japan and China with Filipino participants from Cagbalete Island, Manila, Laguna, Puerto Galera, Cebu and Bantayan Island to participate and experience the exceptional Bulabog Beach. It was a package of extremely beautiful sights, perfect weather and a fun atmosphere. Locals and tourists flocked to witness the hangtime and freestyle events on the first day of competitions, with back-to-back twin tip and foil races throughout the competition days.



Overall champion in freestyle men's, 15-year-old Boracay athlete Ben Field learned kiteboarding when he was six and has since been competing against top riders.



Triina Trei of Estonia swept three of the women's categories as overall champion in twin tip racing, freestyle and hangtime.

The three-day competition was broadcast live across social media channels (Aqua Boracay and Philippine Kite Boarding Tour) via PCTV livestream, directed by Arkimagine Sports Media by Zander Servando. An LED screen at the Aqua

Boracay pool area was erected so guests and tourists could watch what was happening right outside while sipping cocktails and sunbathing. Guest commentators such as Tom Soupert of Wakepark Siargao with Leonae Graf and Carolina Morato made the event even more fun, guiding the spectators on what they were witnessing off Bulabog Beach.

The LGU Malay deployed support agencies such as the MRRMDO, PNP, MAP and the Philippine Red Cross to accompany the organization to ensure zero hazards and untoward incidents for the duration of the event. The Philippine Coast Guard on the other hand has been the main agency that supervised the sporting event, particularly the competition proper. Rescue boats were deployed by the Boracay Water Sports Association headed by Russell Cruz and Diamond Watersports for water safety and rescue.

Malay municipal mayor Frolibar Bautista expressed his praises to the PKA organization for the successful execution of the event. "We are very happy to support such a prestigious event here in Boracay and to promote the island as a premier sports tourism destination in the country."

Jay Ortiz, PKA president quipped, "It's a monumental success for the organization, as we cap off our tour here in Boracay Island. We've had an amazing tournament year and we extend our congratulations to all the winners and participants who made this event an unforgettable celebration of the sport, which by far, is the longest-running kiteboarding tournament in Asia."

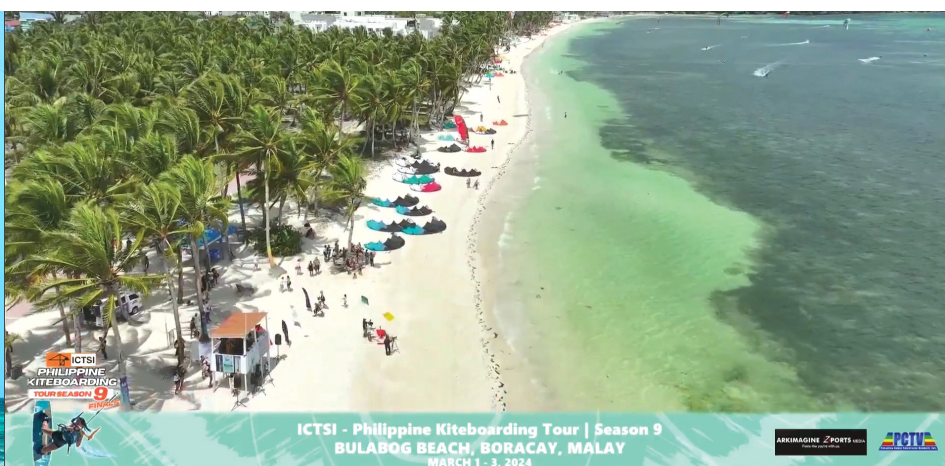
The event featured a variety of disciplines with competitors demonstrating exceptional talent amidst fierce competition. Mars Gersbach, PKA competition director comments about some unexpected turn of results in some categories: "The Boracay Leg brought along local and foreign talents together, that brought a high level of riding in all categories. The winning riders had to overcome tough competition and prevailed over the three days with outstanding performances."

The awards night was hosted by social media personality and a kitesurfing enthusiast, Michael Ver Comaling who serenaded the crowd with his renditions of Filipino pop songs at dinner, followed by an exhilarating fire dance performance by "Boracay's Fire Queen" Rachel Lobangco featuring the Etniko Boracay Fire Dancers and Island Rhythm Force Band that kept the crowd upbeat for the prize-giving ceremony.

For more information about the tour and future events, contact us:

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Instagram: @pkatour 🌴



Streamed and broadcast live



Boracay final leg participants, sponsors, crew and guests at Aqua Boracay



Boracay leg overall winners

WINNERS OF PKA TOUR BORACAY

Twin Tip Racing Grand Masters

- 1st: Warren Vance (Ireland)
- 2nd: Mariel Candava (Puerto Galera)
- 3rd: Ming Juan (Caliraya)

Twin Tip Racing Masters

- 1st: Doque Delos Santos (Caliraya)
- 2nd: Ken Nacor (Boracay)
- 3rd: Louie Fernando

Twin Tip Racing Women Division

- 1st: Mariska Wildenberg (Netherlands)
- 2nd: Irene Lara (Boracay)
- 3rd: Cyril Dacudao (Boracay)

Twin Tip Racing Men

- 1st: Stefan Vance (Ireland)
- 2nd: Warner Janoya (Caliraya)
- 3rd: John Louie (Caliraya)

Foil Racing Women

- 1st: Mariska Wildenberg (Netherlands)
- 2nd: Triina Trei (Estonia)
- 3rd: Cyril Dacudao (Boracay)

Foil Racing Men

- 1st: Stefan Vance (Ireland)
- 2nd: Warner Janoya (Caliraya)
- 3rd: John Louie (Caliraya)
- 4th: Ben Field (Boracay)
- 5th: Ken Nacor (Boracay)

Hangtime Women

- 1st: Triina Trei (Estonia)
- 2nd: Mariska Wildenberg (Netherlands)
- 3rd: Irene Lara (Boracay)

Hangtime Men

- 1st: Dilbert Bayog (Boracay)
- 2nd: Clyde Prado (Boracay)
- 3rd: Ben Field (Boracay)

Freestyle Women

- 1st: Mariska Wildenberg (Netherlands)
- 2nd: Triina Trei (Estonia)
- 3rd: Gretchen Dela Cruz (Boracay)

Freestyle Men

- 1st: Ilhan Aykurt (Turkey)
- 2nd: Ben Field (Boracay)
- 3rd: Stefan Vance (Ireland)

Twin Tip Racing Novice Women

- 1st: Jessica Field (Boracay)
- 2nd: Nikki Alvarez (Boracay)
- 3rd: Isla Finley (Canada)

Twin Tip Racing Novice Men

- 1st: Jerry Cerrera (Boracay)
- 2nd: Bhon Manuel (Boracay)
- 3rd: Dominguito Capispisan (Boracay)



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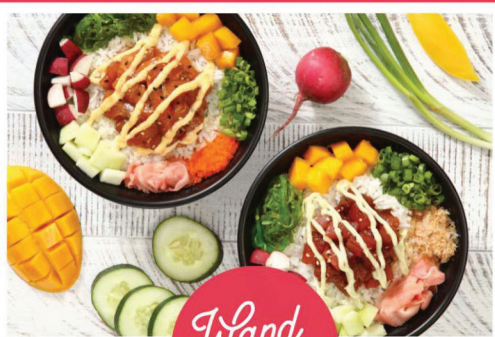


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NEWS BORACAY ATI TAKE LAND OWNERSHIP TO COURT OF APPEALS

By Jun N. Aguirre | Photos courtesy of the Boracay Ati Tribal Community



The Boracay Ati Tribal Organization (BATO) had filed an appeal to the Court of Appeals for their land ownership rights in this resort island.

Delsa Justo, the BATO tribal chief said this developed after the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) in Western Visayas informed them that the Department of Agrarian Reforms

(DAR) has favored the petitioner claiming ownership of the Ati lands now being occupied by the BATO.

"I went to Iloilo City recently to sign the legal documents on behalf of BATO," she said.

As this developed, former Ifugao province governor Teddy Baguilat called on different sectors in Manila to help support the welfare of the Boracay Atis.

"I am working to conduct a documentary viewing in Boracay which will focus on awareness of the plights of the Ati people," he said.

The Ati participated in the Boracay Ati-atihan and Black Nazarene procession carrying with them placards and tarpaulins calling for justice to their plight.



On November 8, 2018 the Duterte administration awarded the tribe with land titles as part of a poverty-alleviation program for IPs. Duterte personally came to this resort island to give five Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) to the Ati leaders representing the 44 families living here.

The CLOAs were received by Justo, Evangeline Tamboon, Maria Tamboon, Susana Bartolome, Loreto Francisco and Guillermo Francisco, all Ati tribe leaders.

"We were told by the NCIP that last December 2023 the regional office of DAR -Western Visayas (DAR-WV) based in Iloilo has favored the complaint filed by the private stakeholders over ownership of the land Duterte has given to us," Justo said adding that the NCIP serves as the legal defense support of the BATO.

According to a previous report, the Ati Indigenous Cultural Community represented by BATO won its legal battle before the Supreme Court (SC) in 2019 for its ancestral claim of the contested two-hectare

land in Barangay Manocmanoc in Boracay Island.

Then private claimants, husband and wife Gregorio and Ma. Lourdes Sanson filed an appeal before the SC, but their petition was denied because of wrong procedure.

"We also called on President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. to help us," added Justo.

In May 2023, the DAR-WV personnel met with the BATO leaders to discuss the updates with the Atis.

Lawyer Geony Licera Gregorio, chief of the Legal Division of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) - Western Visayas, said that protests were filed on the inclusion of several land titles in Barangay Manocmanoc under CARP.

Gregorio said that 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."

BUSINESS

SPR BORACAY REAL ESTATE INC.

An Interview with a long-standing Boracay business

"For almost three decades, SPR Boracay Real Estate Inc. has remained a trusted realty firm not only on the island. We want to bring the same brand of service we started in Boracay to other islands in the Philippines." — Elena Tosco-Brugger, president

Since 1996, SPR Boracay Real Estate Inc. has been a trusted realty firm on the island.

Along with her husband Peter Brugger, founder and managing partner of SPR, the husband and wife team envision themselves the captains of the ship who prefer to steer the vessel and navigate seas of opportunities. Elena says, "We want owning a property on this island or the other parts of the country to be as breezy as the sea wind."

BSN: What did you do before Boracay?

SPR: Before the allure of Boracay beckoned, there was a life filled with travel and discovery. But once the idea of developing holiday homes in Boracay sparked in 1986,

there was no turning back. Swiss national Peter Brugger, while traveling through Asia, found his calling on the rolling hills of Diniwid, and thus, the Tropicana Ocean Villas came into being, sprawling over a generous 5,000 square meters. Meanwhile, a native of Tangalan, Aklan, Elena, started her professional career in sales and later on, saw her potential in the real estate business. With her natural talents in negotiation and business, she became an on-demand real estate professional.

BSN: How do you foresee the success of your business on Boracay years from now?

SPR: Despite the challenges faced by the island in recent years, Boracay remains to be a favorite destination in the country. Given its natural appeal to both local and international travelers, Boracay to be an enticing real estate development and investment opportunity. We are still positive that

despite the challenges, Boracay will always be a paradise.

Given several factors such as environmental sustainability, market trends, government policies and the potential impacts of global economic conditions, it's essential to approach investments in Boracay with a strategic mindset. As with any investment, potential investors should conduct thorough due diligence, consult with local experts, and consider the long-term implications of their investment decisions. And there is no better firm or person to approach than the longtime residents with local knowledge of the island.

BSN: When and where did the business start?

SPR: Back in 1996, South Philippine Resort (SPR) Inc. was initially envisioned as a hotel venture, until the tides turned towards the booming real estate market. By 2010, SPR Boracay Real Estate Inc. was officially incorporated, diving deep into property management, sales and other realty services.

BSN: Why was Boracay chosen for the business?

SPR: Boracay was chosen not just for its

postcard-perfect scenery but for the promise it held beneath its waves. A place that's been nurturing dreams since the company's inception, it's become more than just a location—it's a community where the business has flourished and grown to employ a family of 70 by 2013.

BSN: Any plans to expand the business?

SPR: Always looking towards the horizon, SPR Boracay Real Estate Inc., has plans to expand, carrying the essence of Boracay to new destinations. The company evolved yet again in 2019, establishing Boracay Villas to deliver top-tier services, ensuring a stamp of excellence on every stay and sale.

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

SPR: When it comes to promoting Boracay and supporting local enterprises like SPR, the DOT and LGU can play a pivotal role. By showcasing the island's unique spirit and creating a business-friendly environment, they can help weave a tale of success for everyone involved—locals, investors and visitors alike.



Grand Villa Espada



Grand Villa Espada



Casa Mika



Villa Aloy

SPR BORACAY REAL ESTATE, INC

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BORACAY VILLAS

Mobile: +63 920 901 9629 | Landline: +63 288 5796 | [/SPRboracayvillas](https://www.facebook.com/SPRboracayvillas) | [@boracayvillas](https://www.instagram.com/boracayvillas) | [boracayvillas.biz](https://www.boracayvillas.biz) | Zone 1 Sitio Diniwid Road Boracay Island Malay,

“The suitability to agriculture of the landholding is an essential requisite to determine whether or not it can be covered under CARP,” the DAR lawyer said.

Digna Elizabeth Ventura, another petitioner alleged that landholdings under lot numbers 7637 Cad 704-D, 6517-A, and 6517-B with a total land area of 21,140 square meters are not suitable for agriculture.

The same contention was raised by the Bohol Regal Inc. for lot 6574 Cad 704 D with an area of 8,109 square meters; Jeco Development Corporation for lot number 6359 – A Cad 704-D covering 8,000 square meters, and the Y Investments Philippines Inc. for lot numbers 333 and 334 with an area of 2,700 square meters.

Petitioners submitted to the DAR regional office a certification from the Bureau of Soils and Water Management containing observations, stating among others that the areas covered by CARP do not belong within “the Network of Protected Areas for Agricultural Development and Strategic Agriculture and Fisheries Zones, and no longer viable for agricultural production.”

They are “highly recommended for Eco-Tourism Zone and or Medium Density Tourist Commercial Zone that will conform

with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan of the municipality of Malay,” the certification added.

With the certification, DAR Regional Director Sheila Enciso issued an order in favor of the protesters dated March 15 for Ventura, May 3 for Y Investments Philippines Inc., and April 26 for the two others.

They were also directed to file for the cancellation of CLOAs before the office of the department secretary.

Gregorio added that based on information from the DAR-Aklan, BATO has already developed the areas awarded to them but they are not staying there because they have their own Ati Village.

Rowen Aguirre, former Malay administrator said in a phone interview with Boracay Sun News that he was not surprised by this move of DAR to possibly evict the IPs.

“During my term (as Malay administrator), I already knew that the government was just afraid of former president Duterte and they will just follow whatever it said. Now that we have a new administration, it is high time for DAR to act. I already told the IP community before not to build permanent structures on their property as this may be canceled anytime,” Aguirre said.¹



Regular postings on their Ati Boracay Facebook page show the BATO tribe working the fields and harvesting vegetables and fruits on the contested lands. One caption reads: “Still not suitable for agriculture??? Well, we'll just continue with our #FightWithHonor”

BUSINESS

CHUBBY CRAB: GET READY TO BE CHUBBY!

Ian and Yla Angela Casem, the husband and wife owners share their chubby journey

At Chubby Crab, we focus on the whole dining experience and serving quality seafood. We brought Chubby Crab to Boracay Island for the tourists to experience the quality of seafood the Philippines has to offer. Aside from this, we also want to offer an enjoyable and unique dining experience.

My wife and I are the owners of Chubby Crab Philippines. I'm a Sales Director from Alveo Land Corp., an Ayala Land company. We're pretty optimistic about Boracay. We all know that Boracay has always been popular with locals and foreigners, and we believe that our business will benefit from the recent influx of tourists.

My wife and I have always loved cooking and overindulging ourselves with seafood. During the pandemic, we spent the lockdown in my wife's province of Bataan. Those were not the best of days financially for most of us, so instead of consuming our thoughts with negativity, we thought of how we'd be

able to make the most out of the situation.

We thought, why don't we cook seafood, just boiled like those sold in the US and sell it in Manila? Without hesitation, we returned to our condo in BGC and started our little business, selling seafood trays to our neighbors and friends and on Instagram and Facebook.

It started with just the two of us preparing and delivering the orders. I would wake up at around 4 a.m. to get the freshest supplies I could get since we only serve live seafood. I used to clean the live crabs and my wife cleaned the live shrimps. My wife would take orders and cook and book the deliveries simultaneously while I brought the orders to the delivery men.

We started out serving during weekends only. Those two days turned into a week with just one day of rest. We would sleep past midnight since I still had to clean the condo to get rid of the pungent smell of seafood.

We were very tired but we enjoyed everything and our hard work paid off. We are very thankful to be one of those who thrived during the (and to have strong immune systems)!

From cooking in our one-bedroom condo, we eventually got some relatives to help and work with us in a commissary, but even the commissary wasn't enough to cater to the demand and since the pandemic was about to end, life was gradually getting back to normal and people were starting to go out. Most of our customers were requesting for us to put up a restaurant so we finally decided to open up our first branch in Makati.

We have always loved the azure waters, powdery white sand and of course, the breathtaking sunsets of Boracay. We used to come here almost every other month and every time, we would crave for seafood. Since our business in Makati is pretty stable already, we decided to put up a branch here

and share the experience with the locals and tourists.

The government has done a great job of preserving the beauty of Boracay by imposing some restrictions. The island has greatly benefited from it, but we believe it would be of great help not just for businesses but also the locals if the DOT and LGU would extend a little leniency with the requirements for the visiting tourists.

Bringing the “fun” back to Boracay will also help promote tourism.

Chubby Crab is along Bulabog Road across Laketown near D'Mall.

Mobile: (+ 63 962) 379 8720
Facebook: chubbycrabph boracay
Instagram: @chubbycrabphofficial¹







CHUBBY CrabPh





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Near d'mall

ISLAND LIFE

ISLAND GIRL CHRONICLES: FOOD SPOTTING

By Abigail Lei

Welcome to the island jewel of the Philippines, known for its picturesque stretch of white sand beaches and glorious sunsets. A haven for island-goers craving a quiet respite from the hustle of city or work life, Boracay Island's tourist-friendly beaches offer endless food adventures all within leisurely walking distance or a short ride. Here are a few discoveries worth your time.

Station 1

One of the newest places along White Beach is Smooth Cafe and Lounge, three stories of amazing food, drinks, coffee and music. From their breakfast choices to cocktails, you might find yourself spending the day, enjoying the soothing sax and violin tunes of the "Smooth Operators" (Gerald on sax, Dean on violin) collaborating with Smooth's resident DJ Justine V, and guest DJs Marvin and Darwin. And if you need to do a quick Zoom meeting or put in some work time, its second-floor seats have easy-access outlets for you to plug, play and work. The rooftop lounge called Sky Bar offers shisha (hookah) and pizza, with a stunning view of the world-famous Boracay sunset.

Angol Beach

Some places need to be sought out which adds to their charm. Such is the appeal of Angol at the far end of Station 3 which boasts a few bars and restaurants, creating a world of their own.

Start with your favorite cup of Joe at Everrich, then sample an array of international cuisines such as Filipino at Coco

Loco, Japanese at Nagisa, Mediterranean at Mama Mia and Thai at Conga's) that will surely satisfy your food cravings. Catch pop-ups of live acoustic or DJ sets, too, while in the area, and enjoy a wonderful glimpse of the old Boracay beachside party vibes. Enjoy a lovely nightcap at the classy and chill Villa Caemilla. Other great finds in Angol include Tita Magz Inn and Bistro des Amis, offering a variety of Western and European favorites.

Bulabog Road

To add to your Boracay food map, get away from the crowds and head over to Bulabog Road and look for the corner of Two Brown Boys, which should be on your left, coming from the main road. A few steps away is a place called Eskinita (formerly Secret Garden), a charming new restaurant serving Filipino rice bowls. Must-try are the crispy *palabok*, *binagoongan* pork and *adobo sa puti*. You'll thank me later!

A few steps down is Cheesus Crust, a pizza place that offers more-than-generous servings of mozzarella on a staple of pizza flavors. They also just opened the first-ever soju bar on the island. A confession from your island girl: I can down a whole Cheesus Crust pie by myself! It's that good, I forget I'm on a diet. Oh wait, I'm not.

For a much-needed pick-me-up or to fuel an all-nighter, just across is Totally Bananas, a café offering delectable desserts and pastries, perfect to go with your coffee of choice. My favorites are the San Sebastian cheesecake and the signature *Caffe di Custana* (banana coffee). Oh, and they have really fast internet.

Head back to Two Brown Boys to catch the DJ sessions of some of the best music mixers, and who knows, you might chance upon Crazy Shots Lady who goes around handing out free shots! And it's almost always a fun-loving, uber-friendly hip crowd too.

A bit of a secret place is Happy Bongalaw, just right across, offering Filipino favorites over beer or cocktails, with some live acoustic or drumbeaters. Very easy on the pocket, too!

Bulabog Beach

The back beach has quite a few lovely places to welcome both tourists and locals with a picturesque view of kite sports action and a refreshing breeze during Amihan season, especially.

For coffee lovers, Moksha Café offers all-day Filipino breakfast meals, pizza and pasta, and healthy meal plans for those watching their consumption.

Down the other side, Bulabar offers chill tunes from some of our favorite island DJs, and a mouthwatering seafood *aglio olio*.

Further down is The Monkey Tree Café and Bar at Banana Bay Boracay, priding itself with an "all dishes excellent" review. I recommend their take on a Filipino breakfast classic, *bangus sisig* for any time of the day. I'm already drooling just writing about it.

These are just some places to seek beyond the usual places, and they will not disappoint. Bring an extra sense of adventure when food-spotting on the island, and try new items you haven't had at each place you visit. And my advice: leave the calorie counting at home!



Sesame crusted tuna tataki at Smooth Cafe



Enjoy a nightcap at Villa Caemilla



Just one of the many flavors to try at the neighborhood pizza joint called Cheesus Crust

Kelana Coastal Cuisine is a newly opened Bar and Restaurant located at Station 2 in front beach, serving the best coastal cuisine in the island.

Enjoy our cocktails, have a delicious meals, and kick back to some live music

kelanacoastalcuisineboracay@gmail.com
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D'mall Boracay

BOOK REVIEWS
Finally, the perfect leisure holiday destination where you can read that book!

TIMELESS TREASURES

By Pauline Reitzer

"Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia" by Elizabeth Gilbert

Eat Pray Love is a memoir that chronicles the journey of a woman as she embarks on a transformative quest of self-discovery. The story follows the author, Elizabeth Gilbert, as she travels through three different countries: Italy, India, and Bali. In each location, Gilbert explores different aspects of her life and seeks to find balance, spirituality, and personal fulfillment. Throughout the memoir, Gilbert shares her experiences with food, culture, spirituality, and relationships, feeding us with insights about her personal growth and reflections. It is an easy and light read that will transport you into a search for oneself.

"On the Road" by Jack Kerouac

On the Road is a novel written by Jack Kerouac, published in 1957. It is considered a defining work of the Beat Generation, a literary movement from the 1950s. The novel is mostly autobiographical and follows the travels of the protagonist, Sal Paradise (based on Kerouac himself), and his friend Dean Moriarty (based on Neal Cassady), as they cross America in search of freedom, adventure, and meaning. Kerouac captures the essence of the road trip experience, with great descriptions of landscapes and encounters with different characters. The book explores themes of rebellion, self-discovery, and the pursuit of an authentic existence.

"Into the Wild" by Jon Krakauer

Into the Wild is a non-fiction book written by Jon Krakauer, which tells the captivating and tragic story of Christopher McCandless. The book explores the main character's decision to abandon his conventional life and embark on a solitary journey into the Alaskan wilderness. Krakauer shares McCandless' motivations, drawing from interviews, personal letters, and Christopher's own journal entries. The book makes us think about the pursuit of adventure, the desire for solitude, and the consequences of rejecting societal norms.

ISLAND LIFE

BSN'S GUIDE TO LEARNING SOMETHING NEW THIS SUMMER

The summer season isn't just about beach days, but a time to play, travel and explore new passions and connect with others. This summer, don't spend all your days lazing in the sun! Instead, learn something new—whether it be a hobby, a new skill, or a fun

Art Classes with Eric Eguilada

By Elle Quevedo

Learn from Boracay-based Eric Eguilada, a highly accomplished Filipino visual artist, who celebrates 36 years of artistic excellence and creativity.



Miss Universe 2018 Catriona Gray takes time out from her Boracay vacation for an art class with Eric Eguilada

Art for Adults (Tuesdays) is a creative and expressive outlet that allows individuals to explore their artistic abilities, encompassing a wide range of artistic practices including drawing, painting, mixed media and more.

Art Therapy (Thursdays) offers a way to relax and reduce stress. The act of creating art can be therapeutic, providing a sense of calm and mindfulness. It allows individuals to immerse in the present moment, focusing on the creative process and letting go of worries and distractions.

How to Draw and Paint, an Artful Journey to Advanced Art Studio

This class is about developing natural artistic skills, from learning the basics to intermediate and engaging in the technical process of creating artwork.

These private one-on-one sessions are an hour and a half per session. (PhP8,000 for 10 sessions, art materials not included)

In the Classroom

If you are more at home in a classroom setup and want to learn with others, the artist holds sessions for kids adults alike at the Boracay European International School. Classes are from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Contact Cherry Carino at ccarino@beischool.org for more details. (PhP10,000 for 10 sessions, inclusive of art materials)

Hailing from Angono Rizal, Eguilada's journey began in childhood, immersed in the vibrant art scene to develop his unique talent. Throughout his career, he showcased versatility and mastery across various mediums, highlighted by successful solo exhibits in Manila, Laguna and Boracay, with commissioned mural paintings in Boracay and Bacolod City. His exceptional talent garnered widespread recognition, with works featured in renowned publications and media outlets. He has also shared his expertise at teaching engagements at various art institutions and is currently serving as the resident artist and Arts and Culture ambassador of Crimson Boracay.

For more information and to view Eric's captivating artworks, visit his Instagram page @ericigualada or contact (+ 63 920) 492 1700.

Dive into Creativity with Art Classes at Crimson Boracay

By Gene Loves Acosta

Join Christine Sioco, the artist in residence at Crimson Resort and Spa Boracay, for vibrant art sessions that cater to all ages. Kids aged 7 to 12 can explore their creativity in the morning sessions from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (PhP1,600), while teens and adults can unleash their artistic flair from 2 to 4 p.m. (PhP1,900).



Christine Sioco, artist in residence at Crimson Resort

Held Wednesday through Saturday, these classes offer a refreshing break from the daily grind, fostering confidence and mental wellbeing. Sioco's guidance ensures each lesson bursts with color and imagination, whether you want to learn how to paint pastel skies, dreamy florals, or captivating seascapes. It's beginner-friendly and open until May 31. Reservations are welcome even for non-guests eager to discover their inner artist.

Location: Crimson Resort & Spa Boracay, Punta Bunga Cove, Barangay Yapak
Mobile: (+ 63 998) 596 4632

Paradise English Language School

By Elle Quevedo

Paradise English is a beacon of academic excellence in English language instruction on Boracay Island. Having celebrated its 18th anniversary last November, this Canadian family-owned language school has garnered international recognition for its dedication to providing top-notch language education.

Paradise English distinguishes itself as the sole institution in the Philippines accredited by the German Government for *Bildungsurlaub* (paid educational leave), allowing students to avail themselves of paid educational leave benefits. This accreditation underscores the school's commitment to offering high-quality language programs that meet rigorous international standards.

Under the guidance of a diverse faculty hailing from Canada, the Philippines, the UK and the US, students receive unparalleled instruction in North American English and British English at a fraction of the cost compared to language schools in other English-speaking countries. Students (four years old to adults) come from Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, Spain, France, Germany, Russia, Argentina and Chile.

The Budget English Program is perfect for students wanting to experience both the relaxing beach life on Boracay and improve their English language ability. Students can choose morning or afternoon classes and enjoy off-campus activities with a vibrant

activity for the entire family. We've got you covered from art, language, swimming, frisbee and skateboarding. How fun is that?

international community.

Avail of the Budget Program now and experience it for yourself:

- Three 50-minute classes daily
- 15 lessons every week
- Experienced American, Canadian, British and Filipino teachers
- Prices: 1 week \$276, 2 weeks \$530, 3 weeks \$765, and 4 weeks \$920 (additional week \$230)

There are more programs like the Summer Camp and Winter Camp for kids, and adults can design a program that fits their needs and schedules. Classes are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.



Location: Boracay Private Road (across Asya Premier Road), beside BEIS, Cagban Ibabaw
Tel: (+63 36) 288 4544
Email: info@paradiseenglish.com
Website: www.paradiseenglish.com



Paradise English
Video

Frisbee and Skateboarding Adventures

By Gene Loves Acosta

Get set to soar through the air and shred on the ramps as you embark on this epic journey of fun and skill-building with Ethan Zaki Cabrera! Frisbee rookies aged 6 to 12 are invited to join in, offering a wonderful opportunity to learn the basics and develop skills in this fun-filled activity.

Meanwhile, skateboarders of all ages from seven and up, can experience Ethan's expert guidance. With his infectious enthusiasm and personalized approach, you'll master tricks and make waves in no time.



Empowering Waves

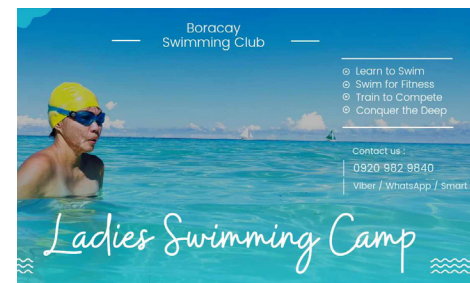
Unleash your potential at the Ladies' Swimming Camp

By Pauline Reitzer

The Boracay Swimming Club (BSC) was established in 2005 by a group of friends who love swimming. Today, the club is led by Mark Andrew Cabrera, a 32-year swimming instructor and coach, Red Cross water safety instructor, and former head of the Red Cross beach lifeguards.

The club offers a Swimming Camp program that caters to different age groups and skill levels. The BSC has produced a talented group of competitive swimmers known as the Boracay Swimming Team, who have participated in various swimming competitions in the swimming pool and open water categories, including triathlon competitions.

The Ladies' Swimming Camp offers a welcoming environment for women of all ages, skill levels and backgrounds to develop their swimming abilities, boost their confidence in the water, engage in fitness-oriented swimming, prepare for competitive events, or even face and overcome deep-water challenges.



In addition to swimming lessons, the women can join **Water Safety Training**, which has produced efficient lifeguards through advanced survival swimming skills, basic first aid, CPR and beach and swimming pool management training. The club also provides **Swimming Fitness Programs** for individuals of all ages, focusing on low-impact, high-cardio and aerobic exercises that offer minimal injury risk and maximum health benefits. Their motto is, "Swim one kilometer a day to keep the virus away."

The swimming and fitness programs are ongoing and open for anyone to join, with flexible schedules according to individual availability. The lessons take place in pools, while application and practice are in the ocean. The ongoing program requires a consumption of eight sessions for PhP4,000.

For more information or enrollment, contact the club at (+ 63 920) 982 9840 or message them on their Facebook page, Boracay Swimming Club.

Swimming Camp for Kids

The Swimming Camp program for kids caters to different skill levels and ages, helping swimmers improve their skills and build stamina.

- **Toddler Swimming** teaches young children how to swim with parental involvement, fostering a special bond between parent and child.
- **Learn to Swim** focuses on teaching basic swimming skills and social skills through games and simple workouts.
- **Intermediate, Advanced and Competitive Swimming** are designed for those who want to take their swimming skills to the next level and learn competitive strokes while building stamina and endurance. These programs are also offered to schools as part of their physical fitness and elective programs.

TRAVEL GUIDE

TRAVELING BY SEACRAFT TO BORACAY ISLAND

By Elle Quevedo



The 2GO vessel docks in Caticlan daily with morning and afternoon arrivals depending on the day of the week. (Photo by Freida Dario-Santiago)

The Philippines is made up of 7,641 islands, and Filipinos typically go from island to island by boat. We call these ships “RoRo” (Roll-on/roll-off) as they are designed to carry wheeled cargo such as cars and passenger buses that would roll onto the lower decks at the pick-up port and then roll out upon arrival at the destination. It is surprising, though, that during the many years of sea traveling between Manila and Boracay Island, I have met very few passengers who had known about boat travel for some time as most were first-timers or had heard about this mode of travel to Boracay only recently.

I understand that taking this route seems laborious considering that you can simply book a flight that takes about an hour. If not reserved far in advance, airline tickets can cost as much as US\$200 per person each way, making them extremely costly.

If you've never heard of taking a boat to Boracay Island, read on because I assure you that you can travel by boat in style. I mean, not in the luxurious sense, but you also do not need to make the experience too stressful either. It is an easy journey if you are well-prepared. I need to disclose that weather conditions could make your trip more than what you have bargained for, so anticipate and check the forecast before making your decision.

At the newly-modernized Batangas port, many shipping lines operate, like Starlite and Montenegro, but I primarily use 2GO Travel boats. Visit their website to book ahead, or just show up at the port an hour before their sailing schedule and buy your ticket there. Various accommodations include Super Value Class, Tourist Class, Cabin for 6 and Cabin for 4, and there are suites on larger boats. Prices range from PhP1,700 to more than PhP3,000, where one meal and

a baggage allowance of 50 kilograms are usually included.

When you book the Tourist Class, you get an assigned upper bed or lower pod that each has an upholstered mattress, a pillow, and an emergency floating device. Note that the air-conditioning is always set to the coolest setting, so it is quite freezing in this accommodation. You could rent a matching blanket and pillowcase, with the option of renting an additional fleece blanket for an additional fee of PhP50. If you are given the bottom pod, I suggest using the complimentary blanket as a curtain to shield your pod from the chilly air-conditioner. Staff at 2GO occasionally allow you to switch beds freely when the trip is carrying fewer people.

I prefer to leave late—at nine or 11 p.m. so that I can go straight to bed, and when I wake up the following morning, the boat will already be docked at the Caticlan Jetty Port. 🌴

* as of February 2, 2021

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DEPARTURE		ARRIVAL	
BATANGAS <small>ATI PASSENGER TERMINAL 2</small>		CATICLAN <small>JETTY PORT CATICLAN</small>	
DAILY	9:00pm	MON, TUE THU, SUN	8:00am
TUE, THU SAT	5:00pm	WED, FRI SUN	3:30am

2GO Batangas-Boracay schedule; It's best to check their website for a more accurate schedule.

These insider tips should help make your trip bearable, if not enjoyable:

- **Pack your preferred snacks & beverages.** For instance, your preferred tea, beverage, crackers, or your favorite snacks or sandwich won't spoil in the container overnight. My grandfather used to pack hard-boiled eggs for our long trips when I was a child; it is still my favorite snack to bring.
- **Bring your own mug.** You can get hot water from the food and grocery kiosk and enjoy your tea, instant coffee, or chocolate drink.
- **Download your favorite shows, movies or music from your streaming services before your trip.** Dead zones may arise while at sea, so having access to offline digital media will come in handy.
- **Bring lots of water to avoid using the tap.** I bring my own water for drinking, washing my face and brushing my teeth because I avoid using the boat's tap water as much as possible. Also, you must not drink from their tap at all. They will also warn you about this.
- **When you pack your toiletries, do not forget to bring wet wipes.** It will be very

useful for your personal use or even to wipe down surfaces. Do a bit of your skincare routine, too. There is the option of taking a shower, but I find it unnecessary.

- **Bring a power bank for your devices.** For additional safety, make sure you have a collection of old and new 5-peso coins for powering up your phones at the coin-operated electronic charging stands around the boat.
- **Check out the bar with live music at the top deck** if traveling with company, or just play some card games before turning in for the night. It is advisable not to make so much noise so as not to disturb other passengers.
- **If you are bringing your pet, be sure to have their papers and that they are in their carriers.** They have a designated area for the animals with the passengers' baggage.

Visit these websites to book your trip to any of the Philippine Island destinations:

2GO: www.travel.2go.com.ph

Starlite: www.starliteferries.com

Montenegro: www.montenegrolines.com.ph/ro-ro 🌴

BUSINESS

GRATITUDE CAFÉ AND COCKTAIL BAR: A CAFÉ SERVING GOOD FOOD AND GOOD VIBES

An Interview with owner Abegale Clariño

Gratitude
CAFE & COCKTAIL BAR

Stop, breathe and be present!

Contact/Delivery No. : +639176293657 D'Mall Station 2 in front of Loop Store, Boracay Island, Malay Aklan
Gratitude Cafe Boracay

“Gratitude Café was built with the inspiration of having a thankful heart. The pandemic taught us to appreciate our blessings and to count even the smallest things. By changing our perspective we unconsciously change our reality as well. Gratitude Café wishes to remind us to celebrate life with the people who matter to us over a cup of coffee or a simple meal. We also make sure our staff knows what service from the heart means. Authentic, sincere and with lots of love. This is the brand of service from Gratitude Café.” — Abegale Clariño, owner

BSN: What did you do before Boracay?

AC: I worked in corporate and am still the director for marketing of a multi-national company.

BSN: How do you foresee the success of your business on Boracay years from now?

AC: Boracay will always have a special place in the hearts of travelers. New places will emerge but Boracay will have a loyal following from new and old visitors.

BSN: When and where did the business start?

AC: It started in Boracay during the pandemic in May 2021.

BSN: Why was Boracay chosen for the business?

AC: It's our home and we wanted to put up something we would be proud of and a sort of extension of our home.

BSN: Any plans to expand the business?

AC: Yes, to Siargao, Bohol and Baguio

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

AC: Encourage tourists to create user-generated content on various niche markets.

Gratitude Café and Cocktail Bar is at D'Mall of Boracay.

Mobile: (+ 63 917) 629 3657

Facebook: [gratitudeboracay](https://www.facebook.com/gratitudeboracay)

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HEALTH & WELLNESS
Your guide to thriving, not just surviving!

HELLO, SUNSHINE

Proper sun protection could make (or break) your summer vacation

By Kate Ng-Larrauri, M.D.



Summertime in the tropics is the most enjoyable season for the entire family, when they get to swim and stay out in the sun for long periods. Summer means more time for outdoor play or exposure, putting everybody at risk for sunburn. Kids especially need to be protected from the sun's burning rays, since most sun damage occurs in childhood. Like other burns, sunburn will leave the skin red, warm and painful. In severe cases, it may cause blistering, fever, chills, headache and make a child feel miserable.

Sun protection for kids and adults is important to prevent skin damage and reduce the risk of skin cancer. The sun emits ultraviolet (UV) rays that can penetrate the skin and cause changes in the DNA of skin cells. These changes can lead to abnormal growths, such as moles, freckles, sun spots and skin cancers. Some people are more sensitive to UV rays than others, depending on their skin type, hair color, eye color and family history. However, everyone should take steps to protect their skin from the sun, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the UV index is the strongest.

The best way to protect your skin from the sun is to avoid direct exposure as much as possible. You can do this by seeking shade and by applying sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15, every two hours or more often if you sweat or swim. Sunscreen should cover all exposed areas of the skin, including the face, ears, neck, hands and feet. You should also avoid using tanning beds or lamps that emit artificial UV rays that can be even more harmful than natural sunlight.

Sun protection for kids and adults is not only a matter of health but also of beauty

and comfort. By protecting your skin from the sun, you can prevent premature aging, wrinkles, sagging and discoloration. You can also avoid sunburns, which can be painful and increase the risk of infection and scarring. Sun protection can also help you enjoy outdoor activities without worrying about the harmful effects of the sun on your skin.



Remember that sun protection is not only for sunny days; UV rays can also reach your skin on cloudy or overcast days, or through windows or glass.

Tips to reduce your exposure to UV rays
Follow these tips to lower your chances of developing skin problems in the future:

- Keep babies younger than 6 months out of direct sunlight. Find shade under a tree, umbrella or the stroller canopy.
- Dress in cool, comfortable clothing that covers the body such as lightweight cotton pants, long-sleeved shirts and hats.
- Opt for protective clothing labeled with

an Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF), if available.

- Wear a hat with an all-around three-inch brim to shield the face, ears and back of the neck.
- Limit your sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Wear sunglasses with at least 99% UV protection. Look for youth-sized sunglasses with UV protection for your child.
- Use sunscreen.

How to use sunscreen effectively

Sunscreen is a product that helps protect your skin from the harmful effects of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays and should be used for sun protection, not as a reason to stay in the sun longer.

- Use sunscreen that says "broad-spectrum" on the label which indicates that it will screen out both UVB and UVA rays.
- Use an adequate sunscreen sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 (up to SPF 50). An SPF of 15 or 30 should be fine for most people.
- If possible, avoid the sunscreen ingredient oxybenzone because of concerns about mild hormonal properties. However, if unavoidable, using any sunscreen is better than not using sunscreen at all.
- For sensitive areas of the body such as the nose, cheeks, top of the ears and shoulders, choose a sunscreen with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. These are well-known mineral ingredients that are generally recognized as safe and effective by the US FDA.
- Apply sunscreen generously and evenly

to all exposed skin at least 15-30 minutes before going outdoors. Don't forget to cover your neck, face, ears, top of your feet and legs. For hard-to-reach areas like your back, ask someone to help you or use a spray sunscreen. If you have thinning hair, apply sunscreen to your scalp or wear a hat.

• Reapply sunscreen every two hours or more often if you are sweating or swimming. Even water-resistant sunscreens can lose their effectiveness after prolonged exposure to water or sweat.

• Use sunscreen with other sun protection measures, such as wearing protective clothing.

• Check the expiration date of your sunscreen and discard it if it is past its date. Also, store your sunscreen in a cool and dry place, away from direct sunlight or heat sources.

Sunburn First Aid

In case one has too much fun under the sun, there are ways to soothe a sunburn. With burns, it is imperative to hydrate well to replace lost fluids and electrolytes. Cool water for bathing could be comforting, as well as some pain medications to relieve the painful sunburns. Medicated lotions should only be used when a physician says it is okay to do so; and lastly, keep out of the sun until the sunburn is fully healed. One's skin is delicate, treat it like a newborn as you will. Slather on that sunscreen, and you are good to go!

Dr. Kate Ng-Larrauri is a Boracay-based pediatrician, a specially trained medical doctor who works with babies, infants, adolescents and young adults.



THE DISTRICT BORACAY
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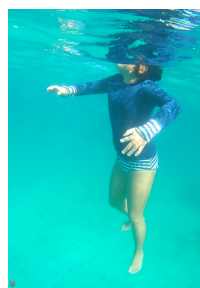
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HEALTH & WELLNESS

EASY-PEASY SWIM FITNESS WORKOUT

By Coach Mark Cabrera



1. Vertical Sculling

Move your arms back and forth while your flat hands are angled like you are spreading butter on bread. Keep your legs straight pointing down to

the floor. Do this for one (1) minute per set, for three (3) sets.

Targets: Shoulders, forearms, core muscles
Variation: You can increase difficulty by doing this in a sitting position. Either keep your legs straight or your knees bent while doing crunches.

Rest: 1-minute rest in between sets while doing at least 10 bubbles



2. Vertical Flutter Kick

Move your straight legs back and forth alternately while pointing your toes to the floor, with your hands above the water. Do this for one (1) minute

per set, for three (3) sets.

Targets: Core muscles, legs, quads, ankles
Variation: You can increase difficulty by raising your elbows above the water. For higher intensity, raise your arms straight up with fingers pointing to the sky. This will automatically increase your kicking intensity.

Rest: 1-minute rest in between sets while doing at least 10 bubbles



3. Egg-Beater Kick

Kick your legs alternately in a stepping motion. Your heels should do the kicking, with your hands above the water. Do this for one (1) minute per

set, for three (3) sets.

Targets: Core muscles, legs, hamstrings
Variation: You can increase difficulty by raising your elbows above the water. For higher intensity, raise your arms straight up with fingers pointing to the sky. This will automatically increase your kicking intensity.

Rest: 1-minute rest in between sets while doing at least 10 bubbles



4. Vertical Dolphin Kick

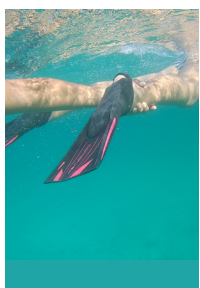
Do a mermaid swim facing the sky with your toes pointing down to the floor, with your hands above the water. The motion should start from your

head all the way to your toes. Do this for one (1) minute per set, for three (3) sets.

Targets: Core muscles, torso, legs, quads, hamstrings

Variation: You can increase difficulty by raising your elbows above the water. For higher intensity, raise your arms straight up with fingers pointing to the sky. This will automatically increase your kicking intensity.

Rest: 1-minute rest in between sets while doing at least 10 bubbles



5. Buddy Tow

Swim free-style with your arms only while towing your buddy who is holding on to your ankles while in a standing position. Do this for one (1) minute

per set, for three (3) sets.

Targets: Shoulders, arms, core muscles
Variation: Your buddy can anchor their feet on the floor instead of being dragged by you. **Rest:** 1-minute rest in between sets while doing at least 10 bubbles. You can switch places with your buddy so that your buddy pulls you while you are resting.

Cool down by doing a starfish float, spreading your arms and legs like a star fish, and float on your back while facing the sky. You can close your eyes if you like. Just be careful not to doze off.

There you have it, an easy-peasy beach workout that can be done in about 30 minutes and is literally no sweat. Once you get out of the water, you'll feel fully recharged. So, if you see me in the middle of the ocean with my head and hands up in the air, feel free to join me. Lezzgo!

Mermaids have long been a popular subject in art and literature, and for good reason: they are considered magical and alluring through and through. No wonder many have dreamed of becoming one. Well, guess what? There's a group that can help you bring that dream to life!

The Philippine Mermaid Swimming Academy (PSMA) was founded in 2012 to introduce mermaid swimming as the newest fitness fad. It's true that flipping your tail on the shoreline is fun (and Instagram-worthy), but it's not just about looking the part. Mastering the moves is no easy feat. Joel "Jaws" Andrada, a merman instructor and managing partner of PSMA, graciously gave us an introductory lesson. It was a delightful experience, so we're here to give you the lowdown on what to expect.

Upon arriving at Kite Asia in D'Mall, you'll be asked to try on your monofin a.k.a. your mermaid tail. It's essential for it to be a perfect fit so you can comfortably move around in the water. They let you carry it—like a surfboard, as we learned—and head to the beach. The lessons take place in calm, shallow water, but like any other form of workout, you'll start with stretching. Then, you'll receive a briefing on various basic movements and breath-hold techniques before diving into some epic photo opportunities with your mermaid tail. A word of advice: trust their guidance with the poses, and the results will be fantastic!

Now comes the exciting part, which is dipping your toes, or rather your mermaid tail, in the water. The sensation is entirely new and may feel odd at first. With your feet strapped together, you are required to be extra aware of how you use your body, particularly engaging your core muscles. Using the fins takes time to master, but the rewards are well worth it! As Jaws shared, "Shake off the tension, feel the water, and just glide with it." He also emphasized moving with a beat. Every time he demonstrated the movements so gracefully, with every smooth swish and swash of the tail, I couldn't help but appreciate it as an art form. Add to that the serene expression and flowing hair, it's quite enchanting to watch.

Overall, it's an activity suitable for anyone and everyone, whether you're seeking a new hobby or aiming to check it off your bucket list. The 90-minute Introductory Course (PhP1,800) is open to all ages and swimming abilities. Want to level up? The Advanced Course (PhP2,000) is ideal for those who fancy exploring the beautiful underwater world. Additionally, assisted photo ops are a great way to celebrate special occasions or to simply embrace your inner mermaid (PhP1,000 for solo participants and PhP800 per person for groups of two or more).

A fair warning for first-timers: It's fun and addictive. You will want to do it again to master the basics and learn some cool backflips, front-flips, bubble rings and more. Are you ready to experience new depths of wonder?

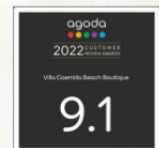
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ISLAND GUIDE | Your Boracay bucket list this summer

THE CROWN JEWEL'S MANY GEMS

Explore Boracay's Other Beaches

By Freida Dario-Santiago

Photo by Den Bersaba of Island in Frames

Boracay's tropical environment is ideal for sun worshippers, with a constant breeze of fresh air. Spending time at the beach is scientifically proven to be healthy, and is proven to leave you feeling happy, relaxed and reenergized. That incredible feeling of peace and calmness that one experiences at the beach is referred to as "blue space" brought about by the soothing smell and sound of water. (Source: www.mysticalraven.com)

The dog bone-shaped island is approximately seven kilometers long with the narrowest portion being less than one kilometer wide. Boracay Island's famed White Beach is but one among over a dozen glorious beaches to discover while on the paradise island, each with its own unique charm.

If you have time to spare, we dare you to venture off the beaten path to explore the smaller and more secluded beaches that offer a bit more privacy away from the tourist

traps. Most beaches on Boracay are gradually sloped and the sparkling turquoise waters are usually calm and flat for swimmers to enjoy.

Wherever your journey takes you, Boracay's beaches will offer you picture-perfect and 'Grammable shots to brag about for a very long time. Boracay Island has once again proven to be one of the greatest places to visit, as it ranked second in Big 7 Travel's survey of the Most Instagrammable Places for 2022. Last year, Boracay ranked 39th in the world, according to the global travel website's annual survey. So, checkout these hidden gems for added bragging rights.

Here are just a handful of beaches to add to your itinerary, start ticking away! You also might want to dog-ear the map on page 27.

1. White Beach



Photo by Freida Dario-Santiago

Boracay's main beach boasts of a flat coastline, padded by the finest world famous and distinct powdery-fine and sugary white cool sand, and gentle sparkling turquoise waters that are usually flat for swimmers to enjoy. Lifeguards are posted throughout the four-kilometer stretch but be sure to keep an eye out for each other and for your children at all times.

White Beach provides excellent conditions for swimming and snorkeling, due to its shallow and mostly calm waters. This is also where water sports activities take place during the *Amihan* season (October to May or June), and where the vast majority of commercial establishments are located.

Take a long and leisurely stroll to get your bearings while allowing the island to welcome you gently. Find the perfect spot to read that book, or to unplug and spend the day pleurably lazing around while getting a fabulous sun-kissed tan (don't forget to slather on the SPF!).

3. Puka Beach



Photos by Anna Faustino

Also referred to as Yapak Beach, Puka Shell Beach or Puka for short, is the second longest beach on Boracay, approximately 800-meters long and situated along the island's northern end, directly facing Carabao Island.

Its name is derived from the humble, porcelain-like *puka* shells that make this beach's terrain incredibly astounding. Relatively secluded and away from the crowds, the vast location gives you a feeling of remoteness, with verdant views of an untouched forested area of the island. Puka Beach is accessible by boat or by land and makes for a scenic trek.

2. Bulabog Beach



Photo by Freida Dario-Santiago

Bulabog Beach (some spell it with an "o" as in Bolabog) a.k.a Back Beach is a 2.5-kilometer beach on the eastern side runs parallel to its celebrity counterpart White Beach, somewhere in the waistline of the island. A 10-minute walk from the Main Road takes you there.

It has long earned the distinction as the "Number One Kiteboarding Beach in Asia," and is the destination of choice for windsurf and kiteboard enthusiasts worldwide, for its flat and shallow reef-protected waters and ample winds. Philippine news channel ANC rightly called Bulabog "the kitesurfing capital of the Philippines." For many wind sport athletes that descend on the island for the annual sporting events (usually in the month of March), Bulabog is the beach they know best. A watersports wonderland during the *Amihan* season, the beach also offers a visual feast for spectators.

Considered the more tranquil beach, Bulabog is a premiere residential address, with its coastline fringed with boutique hotels, condotels and private residences, that have somehow preserved the "old Boracay" character while integrating fresh yet understated modernity.

Thanks to the brick-paved Bulabog Boulevard, strolling down is a breeze. If you're a morning person, catch a glimpse of Boracay's breathtaking sunrise and enjoy a front row seat to a truly cathartic experience. And if you're lucky enough, catch an equally dramatic moonrise.

4. Diniwid Beach



Photo by Charina Santos

The 200-meter long Diniwid Beach is a convenient getaway from the more crowded and active White Beach. Easily accessible through a footpath carved along the rocky cliff at the northernmost tip of White Beach, it is a pleasurable walk. Diniwid has a life of its own, with excellent restaurants and bars that exude the unique vibe and character of the area's laidback residents.



Bulabog Boulevard (Photo by Jack Jarilla)

5. Ilig Iligan Beach



Photo by Den Bersaba of Island in Frames

Located in Barangay Yapak, Ilig Iligan Beach is accessible on foot as you get to the very end of the Main Road, by making a right. This beach is also a top island-hopping destination.

Ilig Iligan Beach beckons as a serene escape, with its soft, white sand and vivid blue waters. 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. – Rica Velasco

6. Balinghai Beach & Punta Bunga Beach



Balinghai (Photo by Freida Dario-Santiago)

Balinghai Beach is a semi-private cove protected by amazing rock formations that seclude it from the rest of the island, making it one of Boracay's hidden gems. Balinghai is best approached from White Beach on a *paraw* particularly at sunset. It is also a popular snorkeling spot with a rich and diverse marine life at the coral reef just a few meters from the shore. A short distance north of Balinghai Beach, **Punta Bunga Beach** is a semi-private beach, accessible through two exclusive resorts in the area, or by going on an island-hopping trip.

7. Lapus Lapus Beach



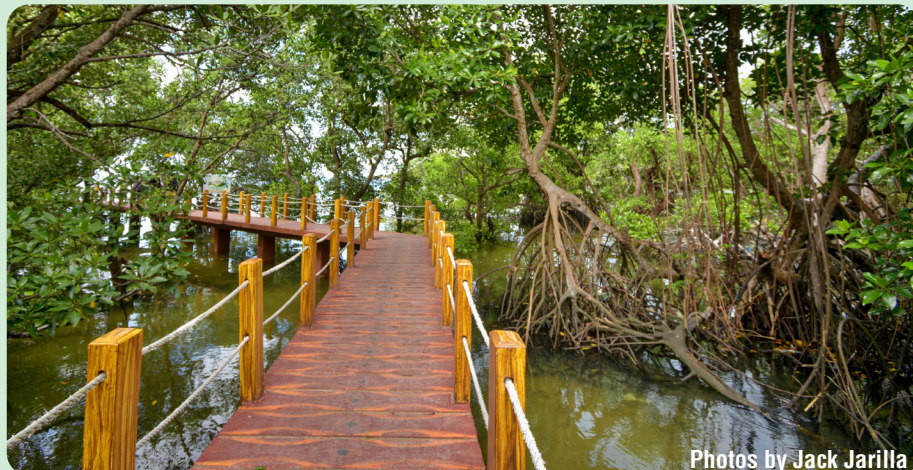
Photo courtesy of Boracay Newcoast



The "Keyhole" rock formation (Photo courtesy of Boracay Informer)

Accessible only through Boracay Newcoast, Lapus Lapus Beach is considered a semi-private beach. The famous rock formation often referred to as "the keyhole" or "tagusan" (pass-through) is an iconic symbol of the island's beauty and cultural heritage. 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. – Rica Velasco

8. Lugutan Beach and Mangrove Park



Photos by Jack Jarilla

At the southernmost tip of Bulabog Beach, Lugutan Beach is a sight to behold with its mangroves and a quaint and romantic boulevard by the corner of Ambulong, which runs parallel to White Beach's Station 3. Lugutan Beach is also the location of the Boracay Ati Tribal Organization's Village and Heritage Center. Drop by for some culture and fresh organic vegetables (in season).

Here's a quick rundown of the other less known beaches that you can explore:

Further down from Lugutan Beach, **Tulubhan** is a small village, with tiny coves and sparsely lined resorts along the shore.

Situated close to Tulubhan Beach, **Sugod Beach** is rocky and isolated, with limited access. If you enjoy a little trekking adventure, you might want to check out this picturesque spot.

At the southernmost tip of the island, **Tambisaan Beach** is situated very close to the famous snorkeling spot called Crocodile Island, and is otherwise known as the alternative port to Cagban during the *Habagat* season.

Situated adjacent to the Cagban Port, **Cagban Beach** is distinguished for its many rock formations, and also serves as a pump boat or banca dock.



Tambisaan Beach (Photo by Den Bersaba of Island in Frames)



Manocmanoc Beach (Photo by Den Bersaba of Island in Frames)

Banyugan Beach boasts of a wide beachfront that is only accessible through the exclusive Shangri-La's Boracay Resort and Spa.

A very small beach situated close to Cagban Beach, **Calirojan Beach** is a regular stop for island-hopping tours, with a restaurant that serves fresh seafood, fresh coconut juice and fruit shakes, that makes the trip well worth it.

Beach-hopping Tips

- Bring a beach towel or blanket, a refillable bottle of water, sunscreen and dry bag for your cellphone and that book. Goggles are a fun addition and having your own is the safe and smart choice.
- Most beaches are easily accessible on foot along the coast, while others require a short ride, taking you to more private, secluded and clandestine (and romantic) hideaways.
- Although these beaches are accessible

by land, weather permitting, sailing on a *paraw*, island-hopping on a banca, or taking a boat cruise or a private boat charter may be a more fun and exhilarating way to go, especially if you are traveling in a group. Always choose licensed operators to ensure your utmost safety. For private boat charters and cruises, ask your hotel or resort concierge for assistance.

Hop-On Hop-Off Shuttle Service

The **Hop-On Hop-Off (HOHO)** Shuttle Service is the newest transport innovation

and the most flexible way to explore the island. You could simply purchase a HOHO tourist pass (available at various HOHO stations on the island), that allows you 24-hour hop-on and -off access to any of HOHO's 15 stops around the island, from the main port of entry all the way to Puka Beach, and then arrive at your desired destination, stress-free. – Amanda Virrey

Guided Land Tours

Another way to get around and see the sights is by booking a guided land tour on an e-trike, with a tour guide. Rates start

at PhP1,500 for four persons (3 hours) plus PhP500 for an additional hour; PhP2,500 with a tour guide. Most drivers and tour guides also offer to take your photos. The usual stops include the Lugutan Mangrove, I ❤️ Boracay sign on Bulabog Beach and the leaning coconut tree, Sinagpa, Lapus Lapus Beach and Puka Beach. You could also request to make other stops and the tour guide would most likely oblige as long as you pay for the hours.

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SPORTS

BEACH TENNIS IS ALL THE RAGE

By Azenith Resurreccion

BRSCP officers at the beachfront of White House Beach Resort (from left): Chairman Nok Sacapaño, Theo Dy, Maggie Tirol, Jeff Dokko, Kevin Mamawal, Davis Allano, Ada Yu, Joy Solona, Ryan and Butchoy

Another activity that tourists can try while on the island is beach tennis which combines elements of volleyball and tennis and is played on the beach or on indoors sand courts. A popular sport in Asia, you can find courts on the beaches of Thailand, Hongkong, India, Singapore and Japan. It is played in over 50 countries with World Cup tournaments held every year.

To play, you will need a beach tennis racket or paddle with a depressurized tennis ball which travels through the air more slowly than a regular tennis ball. The game challenges your hand and eye coordination, and quickness and agility with less impact on the body as it is played on sand. The adrenalin however won't stop you from going for the ball and doing a layout save or a dig and a smash to win every game. Like in any other racquet sport, learning techniques in handling the paddle would take hours or days of practice, but it's all worth it once you begin to enjoy the hyped-up game time.

As of this writing, groups of players on Boracay Island are growing bigger as the sport appears to be very engaging whether one has an athletic background or not. Surprisingly, post-pandemic, there was a sudden craze over it, and beach tennis clubs were formed, namely the Boracay Racquet Sports Club Ph (BRSCP) and the Boracay Beach Tennis Ph (BBTP).

According to Arturo "Meng" Victor,

president of BBTP, they have 100 active members to date. Some newcomers became passionate about the game and decided to settle on the island for good just to keep on playing.

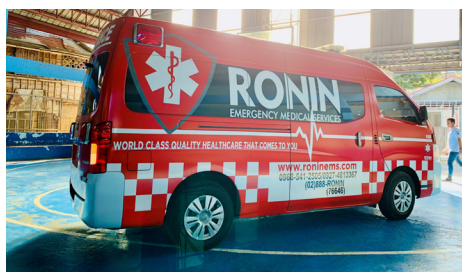
"We have been very active in promoting beach tennis and have done clinics in various nearby towns in Aklan and most recently in Iloilo, all in the past few months. Our club is under the umbrella of the Philippine Beach Tennis Association (PBT) and the International Federation of Beach Tennis (IFBT)," he said.

In October 2023, Victor represented the Philippines together with German expat Thomas Muller at the IFBT Open in Koh Chang, Thailand and took home the gold as champions in the Men's Doubles 40s category.

On the other hand, the BRSCP is comprised of avid tennis players who also play all other racquet sports and disciplines. As a member of the Philippine Tennis Association, all tournaments they organize are sanctioned by this governing body of all racquet sports including tennis, badminton, squash, racquetball, pickleball, paddle and beach tennis.

The Boracay Open Beach Tennis Tournament held from March 13 to 17 was participated by international players from Thailand, Slovakia, France, China and Japan.

RONIN EMS IN BORACAY: Just what the visitors ordered



Boracay Island, known for its pristine beaches and vibrant atmosphere, has always been a magnet for tourists seeking sun, sand, sea and a taste of Filipino hospitality. However, with the influx of visitors comes the need for robust emergency medical services. Ronin EMS, a leading provider of emergency medical care, heard this clamor and will extend its much-needed services in Boracay Island.

The move to begin its service operations in Boracay underscores Ronin EMS's commitment to providing timely and efficient emergency medical response in popular tourist destinations. Composed of a highly trained Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) and Responders (EMR), pool of medical doctors and the latest mobile medical equipment, Ronin EMS aims to apply appropriate medical intervention upon responding to needs both of residents and visitors alike.

A major key advantage of Ronin EMS's presence in Boracay is its ability to provide rapid response in medical emergency situations. Whether it's an incident on the beach or an offshore matter like food poisoning, Ronin EMS is equipped to handle a

wide range of emergencies with precision and expertise. By having a dedicated team stationed on the island, response times are significantly reduced, allowing for quicker access to life-saving medical care.

Furthermore, Ronin EMS's expansion to Boracay brings peace of mind to travelers who may be concerned about medical emergencies while vacationing on the island. Knowing that a reputable emergency medical service is readily available can alleviate worries and allow visitors to fully enjoy their time in this tropical paradise.

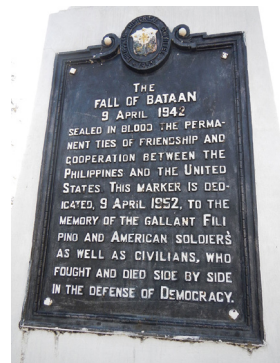
In addition to its emergency response capabilities, Ronin EMS also offers medical transportation services like Inter-facility Transfer or MedEvac, ensuring that patients receive the appropriate care en route to the nearest medical facility.

The opening of Ronin EMS in Boracay Island marks a significant milestone in elevating emergency medical services in the Panay region as they also established a chapter in Iloilo City. With its commitment to excellence and dedication to saving lives, Boracay is assured to be Ronin Ready today and beyond.

WORLD AWARENESS DAY April Holidays and Fiestas

By Rica Velasco

HOLIDAYS IN APRIL



A sign of the fall of Bataan, Bataan Capitolio

April 9: Araw ng Kagitingan

By virtue of Executive Order No. 203, s. 1987, April 9 of every year is Araw ng Kagitingan. Also known as Araw ng Bataan or Araw ng Bataan and Corregidor, the

special observance commemorates the "Fall of Bataan" on April 9, 1942 at the height of World War II. On that historic day, officials in command of Bataan—where Filipino and American forces maintained the main resistance in the war against the Japanese—formally surrendered.

April 5-11: Philippine Veterans Week

In 1989, by virtue of Proclamation No. 466, former President Corazon C. Aquino declared the period of April 5 to 11 of every year as Philippine Veterans Week, "promote, preserve and memorialize the principles, ideals and deeds of the Filipino war veteran as a means to enhance patriotism and love of the land." This week-long observance is an occasion to honor not only the Filipino war veterans who fought during World War II but all those who rendered honorable military service in defending the country in time of war or peace. Since then, annual commemorations are held in shrines that stand as reminders of our courageous past.

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.

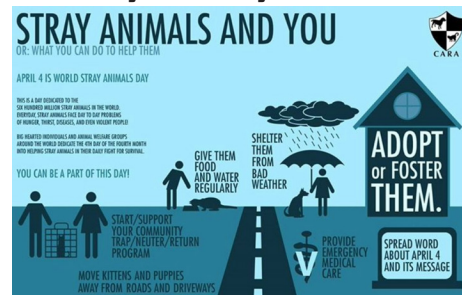


April 2: World Autism Awareness Day

This internationally recognized day is observed annually on April 2 and aims to encourage UN

Member States to raise awareness about individuals with Autism worldwide. Remarkable progress has been achieved in the realm of autism, thanks to advocates and the global acceptance of the neurodiversity paradigm. The shift from focusing on a cure to embracing and supporting individuals with autism is pivotal. This new perspective emphasizes celebrating their unique contributions in various areas, including home, work, the arts and policymaking.

April 4: World Stray Animal Day



<https://www.caraphil.org/april-4-is-world-stray-animals-day/>

This day is dedicated to raising awareness about the millions of stray animals worldwide and recognizing the essential work of organizations that support them. It is a day to show love, attention and compassion to less fortunate animals. Stray animals, either abandoned or lost, face significant challenges, contributing to global pet overpopulation and the euthanasia of millions each year. With approximately 13 million stray cats and dogs in the Philippines alone, organizations like the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) work tirelessly to address the issue. Pet overpopulation results from various factors, including irresponsible ownership, lack of spaying or neutering, and pet abandonment. On this day and beyond, advocating for responsible pet ownership, considering adoption from shelters, and promoting spaying and neutering are vital actions to improve the lives of these animals in need.



April 6: International Day of Sport for Development and Peace

The International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDS DP), established by the UN General Assembly in August 2013 and supported by the International Olympic Committee since April 6, 2014, is an annual celebration acknowledging the transformative power of sports in driving social change, community development, and fostering peace and understanding. The UN aims to underscore the potential contribution of sports to the organization's goals for development and peace. With a global theme for 2024 focusing on "Sport for the Promotion of Peaceful and Inclusive Societies," this day serves as an opportunity to acknowledge the positive impact of sports on communities worldwide.



April 7: World Health Day

Established in 1948 by the WHO, World Health Day is an annual event

celebrated on April 7. Over the years, World Health Day has focused on various themes, encouraging global efforts to address pressing health issues. The day emphasizes the importance of maintaining good health and is instrumental in raising awareness and understanding of global health issues, promoting efforts to address these challenges and sparking discussions on public health policies and individual health-related behaviors.



April 22: World Earth Day

Earth Day, inaugurated on April 22, 1970, as the catalyst for the modern environmental movement, is an

annual event championing environmental protection and global coordination. The official theme for 2024, "Planet vs. Plastics," underscores the urgent need to combat the global plastic problem. The Earth Day organization aims to unite people worldwide to reduce plastic production by 60% by 2040. Beyond environmental concerns, the threat of plastics extends to human health, releasing toxic chemicals as they break down into microplastics, contaminating food, water sources and the air. The plastics industry's explosive growth, surpassing 380 million tons per year, poses a significant challenge that Earth Day endeavors to address through collective action.



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ENTERTAINMENT

SMOOTH CAFÉ BORACAY @ARIEL'S HOUSE

A beachfront haven of culinary excellence and live entertainment By Rica Velasco

Welcome to the ocean-kissed sanctuary of culinary wonders: Smooth Café Boracay @Ariel's House. Nestled in the heart of Station 1, this chic seaside gem isn't just a restaurant; it's a haven where quality food and music meet relaxation at the beach and offers unrivaled sunset views.

Concept

A combination of comfort and class, Smooth Café exudes a welcoming ambiance, with snug interiors, plush seating and tasteful décor. Enhancing the cozy atmosphere is the melodious presence of resident musicians serenading guests with soothing tunes. The Lounge area, a blend of semi-fine dining and laid-back elegance, is perfect for sipping on signature refreshing cocktails while soaking in the beachfront views.

Cuisine

Serving international cuisine essentially comprised of American and European dishes, Smooth Café offers a gastronomic journey that satisfies the palate with delicious and beautifully plated dishes that are a feast for the eyes as well. Whether you crave a hearty breakfast, a sip of exceptional Arabica coffee, or a fine dining extravaganza, Smooth Cafe caters to your every desire.

Indulge in high quality coffee, refreshing shakes, and crafted cocktails while relaxing in the privacy of the lounge on the second floor or the café on the ground floor with the ocean within reach. Feast on standout dishes like Full Breakfast or the Fall-off-the-Bone Baby Back Ribs. Other popular offerings are their seafood and pasta dishes, sweet and savory crepes, and steaks. The homemade

Cocktail Desserts are a must-try, crowned as Boracay's favorites, and another popular drink is the in-house crafted Amaretto Sour.

Smooth Sounds and Smooth Lounge

Expect a distinctly refreshing musical experience with Smooth Café's very own Smooth House Band, Gerald, the resident Saxophonist, accompanied by a violinist and a DJ, expanding the musical repertoire for a captivating Smooth Lounge experience.

Visionaries

Ariel's House proprietor Ariel Abriam, along with his wife Mimie, made a remarkable choice by championing young entrepreneurs instead of going with major investors. Their mission is to nurture a dynamic entrepreneurial spirit on Boracay, allowing budding talents to thrive on the island.

Behind Smooth Cafe are three dedicated individuals shaping its success. Filipino-German Arnold Fernandez Schmidt crafts the overall atmosphere, service, entertainment, events and bar. Canadian Marc Boissy oversees kitchen operations, coffee offerings, inventory management and procurement processes. Their shared passion and pandemic-born friendship led to the birth of Smooth Cafe Boracay @ Ariel's House.

Having just opened in March 2023, Smooth Cafe has already made waves with an impressive 4.9/5 average rating from over 1,300 customer reviews.

Explore the culinary odyssey at Smooth Café, where every moment is a symphony of flavors and every dish is a work of art. They are open daily from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., the bar and lounge are open until 2 a.m.



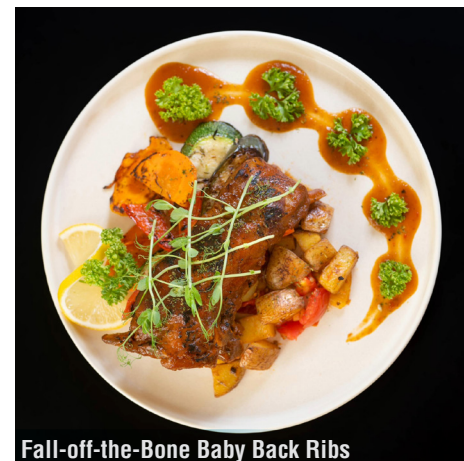
Ariel and Mimie Abriam at Smooth Cafe



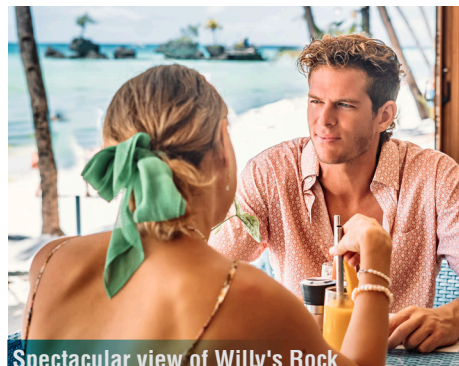
Arnold Fernandez Schmidt and Marc Boissy



Specialty Coffee cocktails



Fall-off-the-Bone Baby Back Ribs



Spectacular view of Willy's Rock



Resident saxophonist Gerald

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NEWS

NO END IN SIGHT IN BORACAY POWER OUTAGES

By Jun N. Aguirre



The National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) has said that the power supply in Western Visayas is still low and could cause occasional power outages depending on the demand.

This, despite that this resort island is returning to its super peak season where both foreign and local tourists flock especially during the summer season.

Already, the NGCP has announced that it will notify the Aklan Electric Cooperative (AKELCO) when they experience low supply and that they would implement Manual Load Dropping (MLD) in their areas of operation which includes Boracay Island.

MLD is the process of manually and deliberately removing preselected loads

from a power system in response to an abnormal condition, to maintain the integrity of the power system.

Based on the power situation outlook of the NGCP for February 2024, Visayas had 2,300 megawatts of available generating capacity, having a system peak of 2,093 megawatts. This meant that the Visayas only had a 237-megawatt operating margin.

Luzon meanwhile had an available generating capacity of 14,123 megawatts with 10,843 system peak demand and a 3,280-megawatts operating margin. Mindanao had a 3,385-megawatt generating capacity with a 2,287-megawatt peak demand and a 1,097-megawatt margin.

The NGCP in November 2022 announced that it had started its

construction of the PhP5.48 billion transmission line project that will support the growing power requirements of this resort island by June this year. The NGCP however has yet to announce the status of this project under the 138 kilovolt (kV) Nabas-Caticlan-Boracay line.

According to the NGCP, Peak Demand increased from 42.91 megawatts in 2012 to 67.85 megawatts in 2019 at a rate of 5.9% due to the influx of tourists, which is being catered by AKELCO. Megawatt Offtake increased from 70,908 megawatts in 2000 to 418,433 megawatts in 2019 at a rate of 9.3%.

The NGCP has yet to release updated data on the outlook of power with the consideration of the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2022.

It could be recalled that Boracay residents and stakeholders suffered a three-day brownout in January, affecting the businesses and livelihood of this resort island. The same also happened in Boracay in April 2023.

The NGCP said that it welcomes new investors to increase the power supply in the Visayas region.

In a report of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ), the Supreme Court petition filed by the NGCP to halt a long-delayed review of its rates could keep power costs high and delay potential refunds to consumers.

NGCP is a private monopoly that operates the country's power transmission lines—the grid—linking power generators to distribution utilities such as AKELCO and other electric cooperatives nationwide. Costs incurred by the NGCP are passed on

to consumers as part of their electric bills, accounting for about 10% of the total bill based on estimates.

The NGCP suffered a setback in November last year when the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), in a preliminary review of its rates from 2016 to 2022, the fourth regulatory period (RP), cut its allowable expenditures by half.

The amount included disallowances worth PhP3.7 billion, which were spent for public relations and advertising costs, among others, that ERC said should not be charged to consumers.

However, the NGCP questioned before the Supreme Court new rules adopted by the ERC when it reviewed the rates of the transmission operator. It sought a temporary restraining order (TRO) on the ERC proceedings.

The PCIJ added that NGCP lawyer Jerome Versoza announced this move in December 2023, as the ERC began proceedings for the fifth RP covering the years 2023 to 2027.

A TRO, if granted, would restrain “the honorable commission from continuing further proceedings with concern to the fourth RP application and the fifth RP application,” the NGCP lawyer said.

The fourth RP, covering 2016 to 2022, is the subject of the November preliminary review, whose final determination is expected in the first quarter of 2024. The fifth RP covers the current period, from 2023 to 2027.

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ENVIRONMENT

BORACAY ISLAND IS EVERYTHING BUT A FISHING DESTINATION

Let's leave the fishing to registered fisherfolk, shall we?

By Franzi Preglo



Photo by Freida Dario-Santiago

The magic of fishing is undeniable. Casting your line into the unknown and patiently waiting for the nibble of glory creates unparalleled anticipation. Aside from the thrill of the catch, the tranquility that nature brings with the gentle lapping of the water and the soothing ocean breeze deliver profound joy and a chance to reflect while immersed in this peaceful yet exciting activity.

It is this dance between peace and chaos, tranquility and excitement that many, especially tourists, are looking for when on vacation. Luckily for tourists visiting Boracay Island, there's a rich array of such unparalleled activities to explore, although recreational fishing is not one of them.

Contrary to popular belief, recreational fishing is prohibited anywhere in or surrounding Boracay Island's waters. In fact, fishing, in general, is only allowed for registered fishermen of Malay, and only in certain areas.

Municipal Ordinance No. 2001-139 approved on September 12, 2001, declares the following reef areas as fish sanctuaries, regulating their utilization and protecting them from exploitation: Angol Point, Tambisaan, Crocodile Island, Tulubhan,

Ilig-Iligan, Baling-Hai, Lapus-Lapus and Sa-Id Point.

It also names 15 dive sites where fishing or exploitation is prohibited. It defines these sites as an area some 1,000 meters perpendicular to the sea from the shoreline, with a distance of 300 meters along the center, from north to south and west to east.

An amendment in 2009 (Municipal Ordinance 271) defines these areas as marine parks and reclassifies them as marine protected areas (MPAs) that allow certain activities such as snorkeling and diving in these areas but still prohibits fishing. Punta Bunga and Bunyugan reefs were also added to the list. The amendment likewise states that any form of fishing is prohibited 300 meters from the shore from Angol (Station 3) to Boracay Terraces (Station 1).

What does this mean for tourists?

There are no accredited fishing operators offering fishing tours (according to my research). In other words, although many operators out there offer fishing activities, their legitimacy is questionable. Blog sites on the internet point out that you can rent a motor banca for a day and go fishing

with your own gear and "at your own risk," if your boat operator allows it. Based on reports, people have been fined and imprisoned for illegally fishing in protected waters. Not exactly a risk one would like to take, isn't it?

Furthermore, it is hard to pinpoint the exact locations of these marine parks or sanctuaries because there are no clear markers or buoys that help identify if fishing is prohibited there (aside from the dive sites with buoys).

According to Municipal Ordinance No. 237 (approved on Jan. 26, 2006), municipal fishing within the territorial waters of Malay "... must be duly registered with the Municipal Agricultural Office of LGU-Malay for monitoring and regulatory purposes."

Boracay Island is not a fishing destination.

It is not famous for sardines such as Moalboal in Cebu or sailfish like in Siargao because its waters are already overexploited and overfished. The closure of Boracay in 2018 and the COVID-19 lockdowns forced many locals and seasonal workers stranded here to scavenge for food and fish which was tolerated by the local government.



Photo by Clark Aliviado Cahilig

Unfortunately, this habit persisted even after international borders were opened again. An army of fishermen navigate the waters of Malay daily for spearfishing; boats docking on the shores at sunset is a common sight and by nightfall, many others scavenge the shorelines for crustaceans, shells and other edible creatures. Needless to say, the biodiversity and fish stocks are in massive decline.

Local fishermen (who wish to stay anonymous) explained that there's an increase in tunas and big fish being caught but this could be because they're forced to fish in

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deeper waters and areas that are harder to access. They also mentioned a massive decrease in fish stocks closer to shore. They blame this decline on the increase of watersports and the increase in non-local fisherfolk from different municipalities that come to Malay for fishing.

Many reports to the Malay Auxiliary Police or LGU on illegal fishing activities are left ignored, according to many concerned citizens and from personal experience.

Additionally, many scuba diving instructors and dive masters who are out on the reef daily, complain that these laws and ordinances are not implemented or enforced and so illegal fishing is rampant at the moment in every form, from net fishing, jigging, trolling and spearfishing).

In an interview with *Boracay Sun News*, a local marine biologist who wishes to remain anonymous lamented that not enough is done to enforce the laws in place. He was, however, pretty stoked about the diving scene: "Boracay is a premier dive destination not just here in the Philippines but around the world."

When we compare local fishing laws to that of places like Hawaii or the Florida Keys it is clear that there are many things missing such as what types of fish you are allowed to catch, the minimum sizes and seasons that prohibit fishing to ensure stability in the ecosystem and maintain the balance of our fish stocks. As such, many fishermen fish anything, big or small, anywhere and everywhere, and any sort of fish they can

catch. Ocean cleanups show evidence of fishing gear, nets, ropes and nylon being left behind on the reefs, leaving our fragile ecosystem distraught.



Fishing debris are not uncommon in the Philippine seas and in other parts of the world. (Photo by Bernd Bond)

Considered one of the top tourist destinations in the world, we, the citizens of Boracay Island must demand change.

If you are still unconvinced and considering fishing with unscrupulous operators, think again!

It is not advisable to look for fishing tours as you risk being fined or even imprisonment for breaking the law. Also, supporting illegal fishing encourages others to break the law by offer fishing tours as a form of livelihood. Last but not least, you will be contributing to the degradation of our already fraught environment and to the decline of the fragile reef ecosystems in the waters of the Municipality of Malay.

Reef Fish are Friends, not Food



These colorful parrotfish species (locally called *loro* or *mol-mol*) are common at fish markets despite their crucial roles in the coral reef ecosystem, as well as being the ultimate sand makers, thanks to their teeth that allow them to pulverize coral into fine sand which they excrete before making their way to the shore. (Photo courtesy of fishmasters.com)

Steer clear of catching or eating these tropical reef fish! They are vulnerable to overfishing and impacting their populations will disrupt the food chain balance and the stability and ecological balance of the reef ecosystem. Overfishing them would lead to unforeseeable consequences in the reef ecosystem.

If preserved, these fish can ensure the health and stability of our reef ecosystem and ensure the delicate balance of species interactions that are essential for our reefs' sustainability.

sustainability.

1. **Parrotfish:** Feeding habits of these bright and colorful fish is vital for controlling algae growth on coral reefs. They also poop out white sand, as much as 450 kilograms per year.
2. **Grouper:** These giants, known locally as "lapu-lapu" are slow to reproduce but can grow to weigh up to 400 kilograms.
3. **Napoleon Wrasse:** Very slow-growing and very much-prized in the live fish trade, these funny-looking and bright-colored fish are important in controlling the population of sea urchins, and their decline can lead to an increase of urchin populations that subsequently damages the coral reef.
4. **Trevallies:** Infamous apex predators, their population decline can disrupt the balance of the food chain. This also affects smaller fish populations.
5. **Snappers and Sweetlips:** These are popular fish and the decline in their population can impact coral reefs.
6. **Moray Eels:** These infamous eels help maintain balance in the reefs by regulating the smaller fish population that they feed upon.

7. **Triggerfish:** Although famous for being aggressive to divers and snorkelers, they contribute to reef health by controlling algae growth and contributing to sediment turnover.
8. **Batfish:** Batfish have a special role in the reef's food web and ecosystem dynamics.
9. **Certain species of Surgeonfish or Tangs:** Some species are in charge of the algae growth on the reef. Their decline can result in overgrown algae that can smother corals and decimate the reef.
10. **Sharks and Stingrays:** Sharks and stingrays contribute significantly to the health and balance of the marine environment. Sharks are also known as apex predators and control the populations of species below them in the food chain, thus making sure the overall health and diversity of the marine ecosystem are in balance. Stingrays eat benthic invertebrates and small fish. A decline in both their populations can affect not just the reef but the entire marine food web. Their role extends beyond their direct impact on maintaining marine populations.

Top 5 Eco-friendly Activities

Why fish when you can fly?! Here are our top five alternative and eco-friendly water activities to satisfy your need for tranquility and thrill:

1. **Kiteboarding.** Powered by the wind, it is a great way to enjoy the ocean and sea breeze without damaging or polluting our waters.
2. **Snorkeling.** Rent or buy a pair of goggles and explore Boracay's beautiful shoreline with a minimal to zero carbon footprint.
3. **Skimboarding.** Skimboarding is a nice and cheap alternative to kiteboarding that is doable anywhere on the beach, especially during the low tide.
4. **Standup Paddle Boarding.** Standup paddle boarding offers a great way to explore Boracay's coastline and hidden coves and get a good workout without even noticing.
5. **Paraw Sailing.** If you're after the waves and wind, sailing is a great carbon footprint-free activity that can be enjoyed by the whole family.

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BORACAY DIARIES

BORACAY THROUGH THE YEARS

By Denise Jesudason Sullivan



Ten years later, I am back on the island in 2023 with my family; with my sister (2nd from right), cousin (to my left) and my two kids Sofia now all grown up (center) and Harvey.



High school graduation trip with friends at Casa Pilar (1999)

As a Filipina who grew up abroad, Boracay holds a special place in my heart as the epitome of paradise. I have so far made five visits to the island, spanning various stages of my life.

My first trip in 1999 was during my teenage years as part of a school excursion upon graduation from high school. Subsequent visits included experiences as a college student from Canada in 2002, a spirited attendee at weddings and social gatherings as a 20-something-year-old in 2008, and as a new mother accompanied by my English husband and a six-month-old baby in 2012. Most recently, I returned in October 2023 as a mother of three children accompanied by extended family.

During my first four trips, Boracay retained a consistent allure characterized by its vibrant nightlife, culinary delights, refreshing beverages and stunning beaches. It possessed an enchanting quality that effortlessly whisked me away from the realities of everyday life. To jest, the legendary “Still Standing after 15” shooter challenge was a noteworthy element capable of erasing any lingering concerns, thankfully in an era before the pervasive influence of social media.

Beyond the humorous anecdotes and experiences like Cocomangas, Boracay served as a gathering place for reunions—be it with family, old school friends, weddings or introducing visitors to the wonders of

the Philippines. The routine of including copious drinks from sunset happy hour to the break of dawn, recuperating from hangovers in the crystalline waters of White Beach with Jonah’s fruit shakes and chori burgers, exploring Talipapa and D’Mall for souvenirs, and enjoying massages or henna tattoos on the beach constituted the essence of my Boracay experience.

This Boracay was raw and undeveloped; devoid of substantial infrastructure; aged tricycles, the absence of prominent resorts like Discovery Shores or Shangri-La, and there was no Epic night club. Cocomangas Shooter Bar reigned supreme, tribal henna tattoos were in vogue, and multi-colored sarongs were the quintessential Boracay *pasalubong*. The cuisine was unpretentious, and the resorts were modest; arriving meant getting one’s feet wet as the boat docked directly in front of your chosen accommodation.

However, the dynamics of experiencing Boracay with a six-month-old baby in 2012 significantly altered the perspective. It rendered me more of an observer of Boracay’s life rather than an active participant. The absence of nightlife during this trip transformed the daytime experience, with a deeper appreciation of its natural beauty. I also noticed a shift. Boracay had evolved into a bustling hub teeming with local and international tourists. I distinctly recall traversing the streets in the evenings, carrying my baby in a carrier amidst the sweltering heat and walking from Station 1 to 3. The island was filled with a myriad of visitors navigating through the vendors, beachfront restaurants, bars and an array of ongoing parties. The atmosphere was decidedly busier compared to my earlier memories. Given my baby’s mixed heritage, she garnered significant attention from locals, with offers to hold her while we dined, requests for photographs, and pestering from vendors as we explored. I suppose the locals have learned how to



Photo shoot with friends on White Beach, Station 1 (2002)



With a childhood friend at Cocomangas’ “Still Standing after 15” wall of fame



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appease overseas tourists for returning business and tips. Nonetheless, we enjoyed the attention and it proved as relaxing as a holiday could be with an infant in tow.

Fast forward to 2023, holidaying in Boracay after the closure revealed a transformed paradise. Introducing the island to my children was a blend of nostalgia and evolution—a harmonious convergence of old and modern Boracay. It was inspiring to see an island renew itself for the better. The vibrant pulse of White Beach remained, but a new essence embraced the air. Roads, transportation, infrastructure and commercial businesses were among the now-organized chaos. The island's pristine shores beckoned with rejuvenating tranquillity yet infused with a contemporary buzz. It was still that bustling scene of tourists but now filled with diverse culinary delights, upscale accommodations and an enhanced nightlife (thankfully no more shooter challenges!).

Yet amid this transformation, the nostalgic essence of Boracay is preserved and an updated or renovated version harmoniously coexists with the new. While reminiscing about its past allure, this new Boracay offered an evolved experience, balancing its authentic essence with a modern cosmopolitan flair. Boracay, I am impressed.



My husband Ben with baby Sofia on White Beach (2012)

COMMUNITY KITCHEN TAKEOVER

By Jaz Mara

Because learning should not be confined within the four walls of the classroom, the Boracay European International School (BEIS) conducts yearly school trips, either on the island or over to the mainland. This school year, the Nursery and Kindergarten 1 students, the youngest of the school community had their school trip at Back Beach Burgers located in Station 1.

The restaurant opened earlier than usual that day to accommodate the energetic little chefs, who excitedly climbed up each step to the third-floor restaurant. The activities started at 9 in the morning. The homeroom teachers, Teacher Nikki and Teacher Grace prepared craft activities for the students, to help them settle into their special “learning space” that day. They made their own chef’s hat and planned how their personalized burger would look.

Wearing their apron and chef’s hat, each student carefully toasted slider-sized buns, using the actual griddle of the restaurant. They also watched how beef patties are cooked and flipped. Since the children had specific preferences, they were given the chance to choose their toppings for both their burgers and their French fries. All of these activities made them aware of what happens in a restaurant and at the same time, used various developmental skills that they usually practice in the classroom, and applied them to the real-life setting.

It was such a sight to see how the students enjoyed each bite of the burgers they proudly made. Free dancing around the restaurant and packing their take-home burger for mom and dad concluded the trip. As it turns out, the students still remember their fun experience at Back Beach Burgers, to this day. Looks like Back Beach Burgers increased their fan base because of this event.

Back Beach Burgers, 3rd floor, Station1 beachfront
Open daily, 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Instagram: @backbeachburgers
Facebook: /backbeachburgers



The students planning their burgers in a craft activity; Teacher Grace giving instructions on how to make their chef’s hat



Little Chefs ready to cook



Lejon and Talia enjoying their burgers



Eleo’s turn to prepare the buns

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INDULGE IT'S GETTING HOT OUT HERE

BSN's Guide to the Island's Top 6 Summer Quenchers

By Rica Velasco

Cool off in the tropical paradise of Boracay with our "Top 6 Summer Quenchers," from iconic shakes to revitalizing drinks that help beat the island heat.

Jony's, known as "Boracay's Original and Famous" fresh fruit shake spot since 1982, offers at least 60 different shake options on the menu. Fruit and milkshake lovers can choose among the classics such as a refreshing mango or watermelon shake, or more adventurous mixes like Bananatella and Mango Spinach.



Jony's Fruit Shakes

White Beach, Station 1
Tel.: (+63 36) 288 6179

Another shake haven is **Jonah's Fruit Shakes**, established in 1983. Likewise at the top of the must-try list especially during the summer season, there are several branches to choose from. Their shake combinations include all-time favorites like the delightful Chocolate-Banana-Peanut and the classic Avocado shakes.



Jonah's Fruit Shakes

White Beach, Station 1 (Astoria alley), Station 2, Bulabog Beach Road
Mobile: (+63 919) 630 8728

The Sunny Side Café, known for its cheery ambiance, fantastic beach views and popular and distinctive all-day breakfast choices, also offers uniquely refreshing signature shakes with the perfect ingredient combinations. Favorites include "All the Way" made with pineapple, lychee, calamansi and smashed mint, and "It's Not You, It's Me" made with mango, pineapple, orange and muddled basil.



All the Way at Sunny Side Cafe

White Beach, Station 1 and Station 3 (Boracay Sands Hotel)
Tel.: (+63 36) 288 2874

A beloved favorite since 2002, **Jammers Beach Shack** is the go-to spot for their famous burgers, chili cheese fries and shakes. After a revamp last year, they still managed to preserve the classic goodness of their delicious milkshakes topped with whipped cream. Choose from strawberry, vanilla or chocolate! Finish off your meal with their homemade Pineapple or Mango Whip for a light and refreshing dessert.



Strawberry milkshake at Jammers Beach Shack

D'Mall, Station 2
Mobile: (+63 917) 145 2788

Kelana Coastal Cuisine, a recently opened restaurant by the beach, offers a diverse menu featuring dishes from various coastlines around the world. A highlight on the menu is the classic Filipino dessert, Halo-halo. This treat is made by blending crushed ice, milk, sweetened beans, fruits, coconut strips, *gulaman*, *pinipig*, taro, flan, wafer sticks, and other ingredients. A scoop of ube ice cream tops off this delightful dessert that is perfect for a summer day.



Halo-halo at Kelana (Photo by Jack Jarilla)

White Beach, Station 2
Mobile: (+63 917) 541 9504

Epic Boracay is centrally located along White Beach and transforms from a family-friendly restaurant during the day to a vibrant party destination at night. Their thirst-quenching drinks are suitable for any time and include the top three best-selling fruit shakes: mango, banana and watermelon. For an extra kick, delve into their fresh fruit bar cocktails, such as the Classic Mojito (white rum, calamansi juice, sprite, sugar syrup, mint leaves) and the Traditional Mojito muddled with Watermelon (white rum, muddled with fresh spearmint leaves, raw sugar and lime).



Classic Mojito at Epic Boracay's Fresh Fruit Bar

D'Mall, Station 2
Mobile: (+63 917) 130 2619

BSN's Guide to the Top Artisanal Ice Cream Shops & Cold Treats

By Elle Quevedo

As the summer season's temperatures soar to a sweltering high, beat the heat by indulging in some creamy and decadent scoops of artisanal ice cream or gelato. With adventurous combinations like Palitaw Mochi, Coco Pandan or Bubble Gum Rosa to be had, this curated list of shops promises to delight your taste buds and provide a cool respite from hot summer days!

Aria Gelato

Aria Gelato has maintained a strong following over the years, known as the best authentic Italian gelato ice cream on Boracay Island. Serving freshly made cold treats daily, they have been using imported ingredients from Italy since 2011. You could have one to three scoops of different flavors like Espresso Gelato and Bubble Gum Rosa in one cup or on a waffle cone. They also have whimsically shaped pre-made popsicles you can choose from. The gelato could also be served on a banana boat, that is with three scoops on top of a banana split with extra goodies or on a plate, which is their Tartufo De Luxe, a cake form gelato that is dipped in liquid chocolate then garnished with nuts, berries, and finished with whipped cream, a drizzle of caramel, and a cherry on top. Cap a perfectly good meal with a sweet ending that will not disappoint!

D'Mall, Station 2 (beside Aria Cucina Italiana) @ariagelatoph Open daily, from 10 a.m to 12 a.m.
Mobile: (+63 969) 149 0059 f/ariagelatoph



Aria gelato and popsicles



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Coco Mama / Ube Mama / Mango Mama

Introducing Coco Mama, Ube Mama, and Mango Mama—delightful dessert havens nestled in various locations across Boracay Island. In 2017, Coco Mama was crowned as the ultimate island dessert by *Esquire Magazine Philippines*. These three shops are part of the Sunny Side Group (Sunny Side Café, Spicebird and Percy Seafood). The experience is nothing short of extraordinary. Their ice cream is vegan-friendly, gluten-free and lactose-free.



From left: Coco Mama, Mango Mama and Ube Mama

Coco Mama offers scoops of coconut-based ice cream that come in two flavors: original coconut or coco pandan in a half coconut shell that bears the marks of the coconut meat strips that are also used as one of the toppings. Some additional toppings of choice, such as cubed ripe fresh mango, heirloom sticky black rice from Banaue (the typical rice from the north of the Philippines that is used for “champorado” chocolate rice pudding), and toasted rice flakes “pinipig” finish the composition.

For Ube Mama, you get two scoops of vegan-friendly ube ice cream, ube pudding, steamed sweet sticky rice dough “palitaw,” sprinkled with some cornflakes, and drizzled with salted coconut cream.

Finally, Mango Mama gives you two delicious flavors to choose from: Mango-Coco or Black Rice ice cream, which is scooped over a warm “suman” glutinous rice cake cooked in coconut milk, and finished with toppings of fresh mango, coconut meat strips, salted coconut cream and crunchy “latik” coconut curds.

Just the thought of these tantalizing combos is enough to whisk you away to a dreamy paradise—which, conveniently, is Boracay Island itself! So why wait? Indulge on these island delights and try all three to decide which of them reigns supreme!

Breaking news: Berry Mama is opening in mid-April in Baguio City, featuring some tasty new treats using the city of Pines’ famous fresh strawberries and other local ingredients.

🕒 Open from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.

📍 Coco Mama – D’Mall Plaza and Seaworthy (White Beach, Station 1)
Ube Mama – D’Mall Market (Station 2) | Mango Mama – D’Mall (beside Cyma)

📌 /cocomamaboracay, /mangomama, /ubemama

📷 @cocomamaboracay, @ubemamaph, @mangomamaboracay

Epic Boracay

Epic Boracay stands as the island’s EPICenter of world-class dining and partying. While renowned for its exquisite culinary offerings, its dessert menu is equally impressive. A staple on their dessert menu, their Artisanal ice cream comes in three flavors, vanilla, chocolate and strawberry, each with a velvety creaminess that will make you scream for ice cream!



Artisanal ice cream, Bread and Butter Pudding and Chocolate Fudge Brownie at Epic Boracay



You can also enjoy these best-selling desserts that are decadently topped with the creamy goodness of the artisanal vanilla ice cream:

Bread and Butter Pudding: Epic’s take on the British classic comfort dessert, with layers of moist buttered bread and rum raisins, with a golden sugar cinnamon crust, served warm and topped with Epic’s artisanal vanilla ice cream, slathered with royal salted caramel—simply divine!

Chocolate Fudge Brownie: Unbelievably fudgy, served a la mode topped with vanilla ice cream

📍 D’Mall, Station 2

📞 Mobile: (+ 63 917) 130 2619

📷 @epicboracay

📌 /epicboracay

🕒 Open daily, from 7 a.m. to 4 a.m.

Dear Happy, a Pinoy Dessert Bar

Dear Happy is part of the Happy Concept Group (Pamana, IluvBackyard BBQ, Hawaiian, Tsokolateria, and Hain). The dessert bar is a new addition to Boracay Island, having just opened last February. The flavors feature gourmet versions of traditional Filipino desserts with a “happy” and modern twist.



Soft-serve ice cream, Halo-halopiness and Ube Overload



The place screams happy vibes and is proud to celebrate Filipino food culture while creating an exciting gastro-twist. Here are some combos to choose from: Bibingka Bingsu: A delightful fusion of the traditional “bibingka” Filipino rice cake with cheese and coconut flakes, and the trendy “bingsu” Korean milk-based shaved ice dessert.

Palitaw Mochi: A sweet and rich coconut ice cream treat enveloped in “palitaw” Filipino sticky rice that has a similar consistency to “mochi” Japanese chewy rice cake, topped with grated coconut meat, sugar, and toasted sesame seeds.

Indulge in a nostalgic journey with every scoop of their soft-serve ice cream flavors, each reminiscent of cherished local dessert delicacies.

📍 D’Mall, Station 2

📷 @dearhappy.dessertbar

INDULGE BORACAY FOOD HUBS

By Amanda Virrey



We take you on a food crawl series to discover Boracay’s smorgasbord of excellent gastronomy, from local to international fare and all within walking distance. Enjoy making new delicious discoveries and get some healthy steps in between.

One Central Boracay

Located along the Main Road by Station 1, One Central Boracay is a relatively new food hub offering a variety of cuisines, just a short walk from the famous Willy’s Rock. Here, you can relax and unwind while sampling the delectable offerings of some of its participating restaurants, as follows:

and big buffets at great promo rates. Some of the food vendors at Tindahan It Boracay are, as follows:

Su-To-Kil (Sugba, Tola, Kilaw) Grill and Resto Bar

Su-To-Kil attracts big groups with their ample food servings that are perfect for sharing at an affordable price. Some of their offerings include Seafood Platters from PhP250 to PhP2,800, an Eat-all-you-can buffet for PhP199 per person (from 6 to 9 p.m., Booodle with unli rice from PhP550 to PhP1,300, buy 1-take 1 Pure Beef Burger for only PhP240, and lots of other dishes. They also offer cooking services when you purchase fresh ingredients from the nearby wet market.

Mobile: (+63 929) 501 7860

RMM Foodhouse

For ready-made food, try RMM Foodhouse. This cozy *carinderia* offers ready-cooked Filipino meals that are perfect for people on the go. Here, you can find Pork Adobo, a traditional eggplant omelet called Tortang Talong, local pork sausage called Longganiza, and more.

Mobile: (+63 918) 605 4807

The Food Hall at Hue Hotel

The Food Hall at Hue Hotel offers a myriad of international cuisines and enticing beverage selections, including reinvented Filipino cuisine at Nonie’s, Singaporean fare at Chan’s Boracay, granola and fruit yogurt jars at Icy Paradise, Korean classics at Bbondal, assorted Takoyaki at Monsta & Crazy Tori, local Aklanon dishes at La-Ud, fresh grilled seafood “paluto” at Plato D’Boracay, and sweet nothings from Meninas Oven during occasional pop-ups.

Open daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Mobile: (+63 931) 009 2143

Tindahan It Boracay

In the southern portion of the Boracay Main Road is another food hub that is more affordable and quite suitable for big groups. Tindahan It Boracay is an al fresco food court in Sitio Tulubhan, which offers traditional Filipino cuisine, ranging from sizzling plates and barbecue to seafood

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ISLAND EVENTS

WOLFGANG'S STEAKHOUSE GRILL ELEVATES THE BORACAY DINING EXPERIENCE

By Freida Dario-Santiago



The new culinary haven introduces a prime steak and culinary experience for discriminate epicureans on Boracay Island, hailed as one of the world's most iconic beach destinations.

Wolfgang's Steakhouse, the globally renowned brand synonymous with unparalleled steak dining experiences, officially opened the doors of its latest venture, Wolfgang's Steakhouse Grill at The Belmont Hotel, Boracay Newcoast with an inaugural event held last February 29.

Graced by esteemed guests including president and co-founder Peter Zwiener, local managing partner Raymund Magdaluyo, national and local media as well as family and friends, it exceeded all expectations and delivered an exceptional dining experience. An award-winning wine collection features small, artisanal and up-and-coming producers alongside iconic winemakers.

Introducing an expanded menu featuring a variety of grill specialties, one should not miss the appetizers such as the Ceviche Sampler and sizzling Kurobuta bacon, salads such as the Burrata, and grill items such as the Charbroiled Flank Steak and Grilled Barbecue Short Ribs as well as other winners such as the Lomo Saltado and Halibut.

The pièce de résistance is the signature dry-aged USDA Prime Black Angus steaks, which, according to Philippine partner Tyrone Corcuera who gave us the lowdown on the meticulous and oh-so dignified 28-day dry-aging process that enhances tenderness and flavor in the beef. He explained that the delicate process creates a greater concentration of beef flavor and taste. And because I'm sure everybody wants to know the price tag of exquisite goodness, the minimum order is a kilogram of Porterhouse which is ideally good for two, at PhP9,376 (or PhP4,688 per 500 grams). So, be sure to bring a date and celebrate the good life, capping it off with a sweet and decadent ending of their authentic New York-style cheesecake!

The 65-seat restaurant which was in phase one of completion at the time, was designed using elements of stone, wood and leather to create a serene ambiance amidst a breathtaking view of powder-white sand and crystal blue waters. Designed to harmonize with the natural beauty and relaxed ambiance of Boracay, Wolfgang's Steakhouse Grill exudes laid-back elegance and coastal charm.

Founded by Wolfgang Zwiener, a trailblazer in the steak business with over



Ribbon cutting (from left): Harold Geronimo (VP Megaworld), Lorence Aurelio (VP Megaworld), Vanessa Vicente (GM Megaworld Lifestyle Malls), Leina Bolinas (WGS PH managing partner), Raymund Magdaluyo (WGS PH managing partner), AJ Violago (WGS PH partner), Peter Zwiener (Wolfgang's Steakhouse president and co-founder), Lydia D' Amato (Wolfgang's Steakhouse vice president of operations), Marvin Agustin (WGS PH partner), Amiro Cruz (Wolfgang's Steakhouse Executive Chef)



Raymund Magdaluyo, Freida Dario-Santiago, Tyrone Corcuera, Ethan Tirol, Peter Zwiener, Bong Tirol, Mark Santiago, Lydia D' Amato



Bong & Ethan Tirol, Ophel Tabanera, RAdm. Leonard Tirol, Peter Tay, Nenette Graf, Paula Maravilla-Trinidad

four decades of expertise, Wolfgang's Steakhouse has garnered acclaim across 34 locations spanning over 20 cities worldwide. Rated as one of the best steakhouses in New York, the Boracay branch—the sixth in the Philippines, and the very first venture outside of Metro Manila—builds upon this legacy and introduces a new concept that extends beyond the classic steakhouse fare, offering a diverse menu of grill favorites to the shores of Boracay.

Wolfgang's Steakhouse Grill promises to redefine the dining experience on the island, offering a fusion of flavors, warm hospitality and stunning surroundings. Whether indulging on a succulent steak or sipping on a signature cocktail, every moment is an invitation to enjoy this exceptional dining destination.



Halibut, USDA Prime Dry-Aged Porterhouse; Dessert platter

Restaurant hours: 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily
Free shuttle service from: E'Mall, Station X, Azalea, D'Mall, 24/7, Astoria 1, Balabag Plaza, Two Seasons

For inquiries and reservations:
Call: (+63) 915 757 2867, (+ 63 36) 286 2560
Facebook: /wolfgangsteakhouseph, /wolfgangsteakhousegrillph
Instagram: @wolfgangsteakhouseph, @wolfgangsteakhousegrill

ISLAND EVENTS

CLUB TROPICANA SHINES

By Freida Dario-Santiago

The newest addition to Boracay Island's exhilarating nightlife scene, Club Tropicana opened its doors last January 26 with a chic all-white party, featuring the country's legendary DJ Manolet Dario, along with Manila-based models, for a truly electrifying vibe, immersing guests in the pulsating House music beats and vibrant energy reminiscent of the legendary 80s Ibiza party scene!

Renowned food and beverage entrepreneur, Mattia Visconti, unveiled his latest

venture, marking a significant addition to his diverse portfolio across Southeast Asia, including notable projects in Bali, Shanghai, and the Philippines. Club Tropicana is an homage to the glamorous and carefree spirit of popular party eras, where every night feels like an adventure waiting to unfold. Step into a realm where funky tunes, frivolous parties, and an electrifying ambiance transport you to the heart of Ibiza's iconic nightlife scene.

When asked what drove him to take his business to the island of Boracay, adding to his notable collection of clubs, he says, "Oh, the Boracay nightlife is a blast! I'm totally feeling the vibes that it's gearing up for a comeback with crazy beach parties and festivals. We're all in on making it unforgettable. Tourists crave spots that are not just average but downright stunning and unique, like Club Tropicana."



Club Tropicana's chic open floorplan



Legendary DJ Manolet Dario kickstarts the grand opening celebrations



DJ Mj Aoki, DJ ELEVN, Freida Dario-Santiago (Boracay Sun News EIC), Dee Dario, Fatima Poblador, DJ model, Ornusa Cadness and a guest model



Club Tropicana owner Mattia Visconti with DJ Manolet Dario and guest Marco Biggiogero

Located above Aplaya Italian restaurant, White Beach pathway, Station 2

Open daily from 5:30 p.m. to 4 a.m.
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- C5** Chubby Crab Ph Boracay
- C5** D'Mall
- C5** Epic Boracay
- C5** Gratitude Cafe
- C5** Hama Japanese
- C5** Hobbit Tavern
- C5** Island Chicken Inasal
- C5** Jardin Mediterranean
- C5** Jammers Beach Shack
- C5** Jeepney Stop
- C5** Kelana
- C5** Lemoni Cafe
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Coral Garden

Tulubhan Beach

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OUR STORY



Slow cooking comfort food since 2008.

"Before we opened Poco Deli, we were making gluten-free, nitrate-free, MSG-free, all meat sausages and bacon out of our home kitchen for our family. Cooking and baking had always been passions we shared. Our families were involved in cattle ranching down south in Bukidnon, which exposed us to butchery and charcuterie-making.

The inspiration for what would later be Poco Deli's signature dishes came to us during our travels to France, New York and Napa Valley. We were

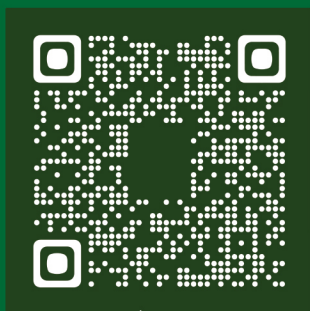
fascinated by the rich history embedded in different cuisines - from the Italian art of curing prosciutto and salami, to the pastrami sandwiches served by the culturally iconic Katz's Deli in New York.

Thus, in October of 2008, we opened the doors to the first Poco Deli restaurant. Our cozy shop tucked in our neighborhood was called "poco" by our Italian suppliers, and somehow the name stuck.

Throughout the years, this identity remained: a quaint neighborhood deli and restaurant, happily serving the community.

Indulge, celebrate, eat healthy!"

- Joy & Sonny de León



Facebook Instagram @pocodeli Motorcycle icon pocodeli.co

BEST SELLERS

TO EAT

Bacon Slab ✂️ **single 480/ double 680**

Our claim to fame. Thick and hearty French pork belly cured, 8 hour wood-smoked & seared to perfection. With rice & 2 eggs.

Smoked BBQ Ribs 590

French smoky and tender ribs glazed to barbecue perfection. Grilled and slow smoked. Served with homemade BBQ sauce.

U.S. Steak Tapa ✂️ 450

Seasoned U.S. beef tapa. Our classic recipe. Marinated in garlic and peppercorns and served with rice and 2 eggs.

Cold Cuts & Cheese Platter **single 950 double 1250**

The finest selection of cold cuts and cheese. The beginning of an incredible meal.

NY Grass-fed Pastrami **solo 450 / full 680**

NY style pastrami brined, seasoned & smoked to perfection. Inspired by Katz's Deli. Served on homemade Batard bread.

Spanish Callos ✂️ 620

Beef tripe, chorizo, pancetta, pork knuckles, chickpeas & olives.

Sausage Sampler ✂️ **single 850 double 1250**

A platter of our handcrafted and slow smoked sausages. Served with sauerkraut & flat bread.

Seafood Chowder ✂️ **Except bread 300**

A creamy Seattle-inspired medley of shrimp, squid & vegetables. Served w/ garlic bread.

Black Truffle Mushroom Pasta ✂️ **G-F available 560**

A luxurious pasta dish infused with the rich aroma of black truffle and mushrooms.

Truffle Oil & Mushroom Pasta ✂️ **G-F available 550**

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Rockefeller Pizza **solo 650/full 1000**

Sumptuous Japanese Hokkaido Oysters on Mozzarella. *Seasonal

Quattro Formaggi Pizza ✂️ **solo 450/full 650**

A heavenly pizza with creamed four kinds of European cheese.

TO DRINK

Citrus Delight ✂️ 250

Our signature sparkling Citrus Delight! A citrus-y masterpiece that dances on your palate.

Red Fruit Iced Tea ✂️ 150

Our house-made iced tea that sparkles with refreshing citrus and the natural sweetness of sun-steeped tea leaves.

Manila Basil Smash Cocktail ✂️ 370

Fresh basil, citrus, and gin; a smashing perfect balance of sweet and herbal flavors sure to invigorate your senses.

FILIPINO FAVORITES

Bistek Tapa 420

Angus beef marinated in soy & calamansi. Served with onion confit, rice and fried egg.

Classic Adobo 420

The quintessential Filipino comfort dish, featuring succulent meat marinated and simmered in a soy-vinegar sauce.

Baguio-Style Longganisa ✂️ 420

A delightful homemade Filipino sausage blending sweet and savory flavors reminiscent of family road trips.

Angus Caldereta ✂️ 420

A hearty Filipino stew, featuring tender Angus beef, vegetables, and a rich tomato-based sauce.

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