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Boracay Sun

MONTHLY NEWSPAPER & ISLAND GUIDE
Est. April 2008

FREE



APRIL 2025 • VOL. 23 NO. 151

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LOVE BORACAY 2025

BIGGER AND STRONGER THAN EVER



The Pinta Layag parade along White Beach
kicks off the “Love Boracay” festivities
(Photo by Freida Dario-Santiago)

BY JUN N. AGUIRRE

The Malay-Boracay Tourism Office promises a more colorful celebration for this year’s “Love Boracay” festival.

“Love Boracay,” the annual beach party event is a reinvention of the original “LaBoracay,” a series of beach parties that culminated on Labor Day (May 1).

In 2019, after the island reopened to tourism following a six-month rehabilitation

closure, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) suggested the name change to “Love Boracay,” emphasizing environmental conservation on the island.

This year’s highly anticipated event will run from April 25 to May 2, along the stretch of world-famous White Beach, with outgoing Malay municipal Councilor Daligdig “Datu” Yap Sumndad, Committee Chair on Sports and Tourism at the helm of preparations.

He met with AirAsia representatives on February 12, 2025, to discuss the beach

events and parties. SB Sumndad is known in Boracay as an event organizer and a sports champion. As of this writing, the airline representative told the *Boracay Sun News* that they are still finalizing the details of their commitment to this year’s Love Boracay event.

The Malay Tourism Office organized a series of sea sports activities, the Obreros Festival (mainland Malay), the Miss Malay beauty pageant, an appreciation event for tourism frontliners, and an environmental

tourism campaign, among others.

Normeth Parzhuber, also a sea sports organizer in Boracay, said that they are introducing the first Love Boracay Pickle Ball tournament from April 25 to 27.

Engr. Roger Esto, who heads the Aklan provincial planning and development team, said that the Love Boracay festival coincides with the Aklan Foundation Day. Aklan province was established on April 25, 1956,

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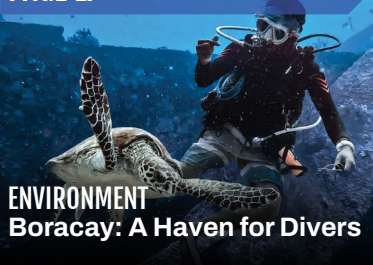
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ISLAND CALENDAR
Love Boracay Schedule of Events

PERCY

“Best
seafood”
Esquire

Seaworthy Boracay, Station 1 Beachfront
in front of Willy’s Rock





White Beach, Boracay Island
circa 1977
(Photo by Dieter Schrottman)

One of many trips to Boracay in the 90s



Boracay Fever

The annual “Love Boracay” festival is our pilgrimage to this very special place that holds so much meaning for each one of us and is so sacred in so many ways. Our devotion to her is as boundless as her significance in our lives—as our place of refuge, the place where we fell in love and built a family, a career or business, a place where we had grown and learned to care for others and the world around us, a safe space to explore and push life to the limits, a place that holds our most fervent hopes and dreams for a bright and beautiful future for our children and theirs, and a place that gives life and endless joy.

And so, we pour our hearts out unapologetically, with a love so feverish and infectious, there’s no denying that we’re like a bunch of love-struck teenagers on a tiny paradise island in the Philippines!

The Face of Beauty

We leave the comforts of home and travel to far-off places to behold the beauty of God’s creation. We set our sights on seeing otherworldly scenes that are unforgettable, and yet they remind us of the beauty of life and God’s creation.

Boracay is one such place. Many, if not all of us who are here, have moved here for the same reason, and that is, the beach (or beaches) and the charmed island life it offers. We fell in love with the same thing you are falling in love with right now: the blinding white sand that is so fine, one can’t find the words nor believe how sand could feel like clouds or pillows and feel so cool even on a hot day.

MAGIC

We love it because it’s magical. It is a dream come true, and a part of us starts to believe that anything is possible—that our wishes and all our hopes—true love, peace and happiness can also be ours.

One thing every visitor to Boracay can agree on is having that inexpressible feeling and an indelible memory one cannot put into words of when your feet first touch the powdery fine white sand and the disbelief at seeing your toes as you wade waist-deep in the crystalline waters.

If only we could bottle that indescribable moment when one sees Boracay Island for the very first time, which evades even the greatest photographers and filmmakers!

For lack of a better word, some might call it “magic” but however you choose to sum it up, you can be sure that this moment

will remain with you as a postcard moment to cherish forever.

Whether or not you have been to the idyllic destination before, the big reveal will surely leave you breathless each and every time.

Authentic.

From the moment I first laid my eyes on Boracay and set foot on her talcum powder sand 36 years ago in May 1989, I was hopelessly smitten. It had become my favorite place on Earth, and it still is. Boracay is not “one of” a list of favorite places. She takes the crown and can never be dethroned.

Just like everyone before me, with tears streaking down my face, I swore to return, because my soul needed her—if only to touch the sand, to feel the grains between my toes, to walk on its pillowlike clouds of gleaming sand that’s inexplicable cool no matter the sweltering heat of the sun (in what world does this happen?), to swim with its fish in the shallows, and bake in the sun like seaweed and to be rejuvenated by its crystalline waters that are perfectly warm or cold, as you needed it to be. And to be constantly mesmerized and in awe of the intoxicating beauty that unfolds before your ever-teary eyes, then and now, and even through the worst of times.

There’s no turning back or unseeing Boracay, and she will haunt you for the rest of your life! This is why I and others have moved here, from all over the world and from all walks of life.

Boracay Island is a many-splendored thing.

Boracay is a magical wonder that just keeps on giving.

The best part about living in Boracay (aside from the obvious), is the privilege of sharing each other’s truths. Somehow, the island has a soothing way of allowing you to be who you are/true to yourself and to others with a transparency that fools no one, not even yourself.

Self-help author and motivational speaker Dr. Wayne Dyer said, “Change the way you look at things and the things you look at will change.” Boracay has that effect on you, and I need not say more. #IYKYK

Balm for the soul.

Boracay is eternal. Her magic never wanes.

So long as you see her and love her for what she is—a giver of life, perfect yet fragile. Before us—any of us—Boracay was alive and radiant, immaculate and whole. She



Boracay Sun
MONTHLY NEWSPAPER & ISLAND GUIDE
Est. April 2008

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sustained herself and nurtured all that came for refuge.

But at some point, we ravaged her and took too much for ourselves without giving anything back to her to replenish and sustain her for years to come. And then we called her names—a “cesspool” was just one of them, imagine that!

And yet here she remains, resilient and steadfast, and still, the gift that keeps on giving, to us—her devotees and children; to big business—her captors; and to the world that continues to come to her and lay their eyes on the face of beauty.

So, like many before me, I left a life, time marked as “the before Boracay (BB) years” and never looked back. Boracay life is my destiny, and I embrace every moment with purpose, and hopefully, I am able to reciprocate the love and devotion I’ve felt every single day for the last 22 years.

And that includes defending her and daring to say NO when development takes precedence over sustainability and preservation. We should ask ourselves and our leaders more often: “How will this affect and change the Boracay Island we know and love? Have you weighed the environmental

impact, and will Boracay’s environment and ecosystem survive such a huge development and disturbance of nature? Are progress and convenience reason enough to possibly destroy Boracay as we know it, or will the island’s natural beauty remain the same?”

Why the undying devotion?

Because here, one becomes one with nature and becomes a spiritual being having a human experience. And we only wish to sustain and share that indelible experience with the world and with future generations.

We hope that this “Love Boracay” special issue gives us all pause, to STOP, look around, and listen to nature, to Boracay’s hushed voice that speaks to our hearts and reverberates through our shared love for her.

Thank you Boracay, *mahal na mahal kita!*

To all our valued visitors, welcome to Boracay Island and thank you for choosing Boracay among the countless beautiful islands in the Philippines! Right on, and please spread the word! 🌿

Vibe high, dive deep!
Peace and good vibes,

Freida
Editor-In-Chief
Email me at fvdts@boracaysunnews@gmail.com.

For a daily dose of Boracay Sun News, visit any of our social media channels and be the first to know what’s hot & happening in and around Boracay—the crown jewel of Philippine tourism!

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continued from front page

when it became an independent province from Capiz. The province was inaugurated on November 8, 1956.

Last year, the provincial government celebrated its foundation day by holding a Provincial Agri-Aqua Trade Fair at the Wetland Park No. 4 (Laketown) alongside the Love Boracay Food Bazaar with food kiosks celebrating Malay municipality’s culinary specialties and Aklan-made souvenir items lining the main road which was closed to traffic, and throughout the promenade. This event was supported by the Provincial Agriculture Office and the Provincial Agriculture and Fisheries Council.

Past Love Boracay events

Past Love Boracay celebrations evolved from a mainland Malay feast to a multi-day

event featuring a wide range of activities. These have included parades, sports competitions (volleyball, soccer, Frisbee), a *paraw* regatta (native boat race), beach parties, music and arts festivals, and the Obreros Festival dance showdown. The event typically runs for several days in April and May.

Boracay’s tourism boom

Boracay’s tourism sector is experiencing a significant surge. In the first two months of 2025 alone, tourist arrivals exceeded those of the same period in 2024 by over 600. This growth is fueled by both domestic and international tourists, with South Korea remaining a key international market. The appointment of a new South Korean celebrity tourism ambassador is expected to further boost tourist arrivals. 🌴

SUN TOONS Lightening up the day with a perky dose of humor



“Lumot” by Sigmund Torre

The Journey from LaBoracay to Love Boracay

BY FREIDA DARIO-SANTIAGO

The journey from the infamous Labor Day weekend parties called “LaBoracay” to today’s much-loved “Love Boracay” festival began in 2019 when the Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Management Group (BIARMG)–the ruling government body at the time, announced its support for a weeklong initiative to celebrate the rehabilitation efforts of Boracay Island.

Boracay Island underwent a six-month closure for environmental rehabilitation back on April 26, 2018, by virtue of Proclamation No. 475 by President Rodrigo R. Duterte.

The BIARMG task force, composed of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) canceled the annual weeklong Labor Day beach party formerly dubbed as “LaBoracay” (pronounced as \‘ley-bo-‘ra-kay\)-a term coined from combining “Labor Day” and “Boracay” that was notorious for no-holds-barred island-wide events marked by big stage performances by local and international DJs and artists along world-famous White Beach, that drew tens of thousands of revelers and with it, their garbage in the aftermath resulting in a bad rap and eventually, a permanent ban.

The following year (2019), in strict adherence to environmental preservation,

the task force ordered the banning of parties and drinking and smoking in Boracay, which was implemented when the island was reopened to tourists in October 2018. Then-Tourism Sec. Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said, “*Bawal po ang LaBoracay.* (LaBoracay is prohibited.) No drinking, no smoking in public places.”

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, festivities were cancelled in 2020 and 2021, but Love Boracay made a return in 2022 with eco-conscious activities like clean-up drives and music festivals.

Consequently, the local government unit of Malay (LGU-Malay) proposed a novel approach to the Labor Day celebrations: a focus on advocating tourism sustainability, wellness and the arts. The task force announced its support for the initiative to celebrate rehabilitation efforts in the world-famous tourist spot, likewise commemorating the first anniversary of the island’s closure.

In 2023, the event made its comeback with a weeklong “Love Boracay 2023” celebration dubbed “Love Boracay: Celebrate, Rehabilitate,” with environment-friendly activities celebrating the rehabilitation of the island. The biggest summer event of the season saw a revival of the festive (and a much more subdued) island party vibe.

Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia

Frasco made her first-ever public appearance on Boracay Island, the “Crown Jewel of Philippine Tourism,” since assuming her post as DOT chief, gracing the “Love Boracay” 2023 festival’s opening ceremony at the beachfront of Epic Boracay along White Beach. Leading the festivities were Aklan Governor Jose Miraflores, Mayor Floribar Bautista, DOT Region 6 Director Crisanta Rodriguez and other officials.

In her speech, the tourism chief said, “Boracay has always seen us through despite all of the difficulties and challenges faced by the tourism industry and it continues to be the beacon of hope for tourism destinations all over the Philippines. Salamat Boracay, congratulations.”

Boracay has always seen us through despite all of the difficulties and challenges faced by the tourism industry and it continues to be the beacon of hope for tourism destinations all over the Philippines. Salamat Boracay, congratulations.”

Grit & Glory at the Love Boracay 2024 Games

Last year’s event was a celebration of sportsmanship and teamwork, with local and international sporting events highlighting the first three days (April 26

to 28) of the weeklong event, held along the 4-kilometer stretch of Boracay’s pristine playground, the world-famous White Beach.

“Love Boracay” has since symbolized and commemorated how the island’s residents, stakeholders and local leaders have made sustainable tourism a top priority. 🌴



Love Boracay 2023: DOT Sec. Frasco taking a selfie with Mayor Bautista and Gov. Miraflores at the Pinta Layag paraw sailboat parade along White Beach, Boracay Island
(Courtesy of the DOT)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

My #18DaysInBoracay Experience

Dear Editor,

This is the longest that I have stayed in Boracay. It was so relaxing that I even thought about retiring here for a portion of the year by buying a condo unit. But because of the distance, I was having second thoughts until today when I swam on the beach and found my new calling: to help clean the beaches of Boracay and be an environmental advocate.

Here are a few of my discoveries:

- Straws are still being used on the island.
- Plastic is still

- being used in dry goods and *pasalubong* stores and the only one compliant that I’ve seen is BudgetMart which uses paper bags.
- There are lots of plastic littering the sand and some are being blown away by the waves to the shore.

On the positive side, I saw the progress in Boracay in the last 12 years:

- The e-trikes are a positive development. There is less noise and less pollution.
- Roads are clear and not used for parking of private vehicles. However, there are still diesel-run cars and commuter vans. These should be banned.

- Boracay Newcoast’s recycling and solar-powered lights are a big plus for the island.
- There is plenty of fresh food like fish, vegetables and fruits.
- Very polite people.

Overall, Boracay is my number one beach destination and foresee it as the next Honolulu in terms of development. When I saw the recent developments of hotels and condos in Boracay, I was reminded of the pristine beaches of Honolulu, Hawaii. Despite the modernization and rising cost of condominium units, the beaches were preserved.

Australia’s

Bondi Beach in Sydney was like that too. Boracay can follow that model of development as long as progress is planned.

Double up on cleanliness and make it a first-class tourist destination!

Thank you for your reply. I got my copy of *Boracay Sun News* from BudgetMart. Looking forward to coming back in December or early January. 🌴

Yours,

Mary Ann Guilatco



DIGITAL LIFE Get with the program!

Digital Apps for Boracay Travelers

BY JUN N. AGUIRRE



Tourists to Boracay Island can now enjoy a seamless travel experience, thanks to some recently introduced technology applications.

On February 18, 2025, executives of the Cebu-based Topline Hi-Tech and Synergy Corporation signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) at the Aklan Provincial Capitol with Governor Jose Enrique Miraflores and Atty. Selwyn Ibaretta, the provincial administrator.

Also present in the MOA signing were Topline President Eugene Erick Lim, Vice President and CEO Atty. Constance Marie Lim, and Senior Vice President and COO

Bridgette Carmel Lim.

According to Miraflores, Topline will install its digital facilities at the Caticlan Jetty Port this month (April).

“Department of Tourism (DOT) Secretary Christina Frasco introduced us to the Topline executives,” Miraflores said.

According to Lim, “The purpose of the app is to improve the Boracay experience, streamlining travel planning and enhancing on-island adventures, with a travel guide, specialized tools for navigation, translation and itinerary management.”

On the other hand, PisoPay’s Boracay iPass web app ticketing system was

introduced in December 2024. Finally, the payment of terminal and environmental fees and boat fare to and from Boracay Island was made possible in a single tourist-friendly app.

Both apps promise to improve their user-friendly interfaces to include reserving tours and activities, accepting various international payment methods, and even assigning a personal tour guide for a seamless experience.

According to Caticlan Jetty Port administrator Esel Flores, the provincial government has set conditions for the different app companies to develop one super app where all related services will be merged into one.

The apps are currently optional for both tourists and residents. Topline and the Boracay iPass both charge PhP75 for services.

Here are other helpful applications that can enhance the travel experience:

The Philippine Flight App assists by comparing flight options based on price, schedule and airline which are crucial for planning one’s arrival and departure.

For foreign tourists, language translation apps come in handy. Google Translate and iTranslate (to the English language) break down language barriers by providing instant translations for text, speech and even images. These apps are invaluable for communicating with locals, understanding signs and ordering food.

For currency conversion, apps like XE Currency and Trail Wallet help tourists manage their finances by providing real-time exchange rates and tracking expenses. This allows travelers to stay within their budget and avoid unnecessary fees.

The use of Viber, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and Telegram also enables tourists to stay connected with friends and family back home through messaging, voice and video chats. These apps are essential for sharing travel experiences and staying updated on important information.

Finally, Google Maps can assist in finding specific locations of hotels, restaurants or sea sports services in Boracay.

Travelers are increasingly embracing technology apps to make their travel experience more convenient, efficient and pleasurable. These apps offer a wide range of features that address various needs, from planning and booking to navigating unfamiliar areas, communicating with locals and even enhancing the sightseeing experience. 🌴

NEWS

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE TO DECIDE ON MALAY LGU FEES

BY JUN N. AGUIRRE

The Local Government Unit (LGU) of Malay will let the Department of Finance (DOF) central office decide whether to scrap or continue the controversial fees charged to tourists visiting Boracay Island.

In a phone interview last March 4, 2025, Malay Mayor Frolibar Bautista told the **Boracay Sun News (BSN)** that the LGU-Malay had just completed a workshop initiated by the DOF-Bureau of Local Finance (BLGF). The workshop was held on March 3-4 at the Sangguniang Bayan (SB) office in Poblacion, Malay.

The workshop was attended by the Municipal Environment and Natural Resources office, the Treasurer’s office, the Municipal Accounting office, and the SB departments of the local government.

According to Bautista, the required documents would be submitted to the Bureau by March 7.

“The DOF will then determine if the fees the LGU collects are justifiable or not. We

will abide by whatever they recommend,” Bautista said.

The accounting of the controversial fees developed after Department of Tourism (DOT) Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco, in a Manila Prince Hotel media forum on January 22, was asked by a journalist about alleged complaints from hotel and restaurant owners and operators that Boracay was not being promoted enough by the DOT, which was causing low occupancy rates.

Frasco denied these claims and bared that members of the Philippine Hotel Owners Association (PHOA) and the Tourism Congress of the Philippines confided in her about the challenges they have been facing.

“Both organizations are unanimous in their report to us that the challenges they face in Boracay emanate from excessive fees that are being implemented as far as tourist activities are concerned,” she said during the media forum.

Frasco then explained that the DOT is not responsible for these fees, which are instead enforced by the LGU. Instead, the

DOT has asked the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) to intervene and hold a dialogue with the LGU on these concerns.

On February 17, 2025, the DILG, together with the DOT and LGU Malay and the province of Aklan officials met at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City to discuss the fees being charged by the Malay LGU.

Aklan Governor Jose Enrique Miraflores told the **BSN** on February 18, 2025, that he attended the said meeting. “The DILG has officially asked the Malay LGU to study the fees being collected and possibly reduce it. The province leads in the collection of the terminal fees in Boracay and has shares in the environmental fees. It is hoped that the reduction of fees will lure more foreign and local tourists that come to Boracay,” he said.

Also in a statement to the **BSN**, the Boracay MICE Alliance (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibits) said that they welcome the dialogue among the LGU, the DOT and the DILG.

“We would like to wait for further developments to fall into place for us to gauge what options will be best for our guests. As an organization, we continuously welcome a dialogue with the LGU to strengthen their efforts in coming up with a decision and directive that benefits all stakeholders including the service providers and guests all in all,” the statement reads.

Other private Boracay Island stakeholder groups in attendance at the PICC forum were representatives of the Boracay Foundation, Inc. and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce-Boracay. 🌴



Among the fees considered excessive is a snorkeling fee of PhP100 per person
Photo courtesy of My Boracay Guide



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AKELCO Board President Virgilio Sacdalan re-elected for a second term

KALIBO, Aklan – The management of the Aklan Electric Cooperative (AKELCO) recently announced a power rate hike expected to be felt by April 2025.

This, after the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) in Metro Manila had approved the application of the National Transmission Corporation (TransCo) for the so-called Feed-in Tariff Allowance (FIT-ALL) for 2024 under ERC Case number 2023-096 on February 19, 2025.

With this approval, the FIT-ALL Rate will increase from P0.0838 per kWh to P0.1189 per kWh, which takes effect starting with the March 2025 billing. The March bill will be paid in April.

The feed-in tariff (FIT) in the Philippines is a policy that guarantees a price for renewable energy producers, which helps develop renewable energy sources. It was established in 2010 to promote investments in renewable energy (RE) by providing eligible developers with a fixed, above-market rate for the electricity they generate. This initiative aims to encourage the growth of green energy sources such as solar, wind, hydro, and biomass which reduce carbon emissions and ensure environmental sustainability.

AKELCO said in a statement: “As an electric cooperative, AKELCO has no control over the determination or

NEWS

AKELCO ANNOUNCES POWER RATE HIKE BY APRIL 2025

BY JUN N. AGUIRRE

adjustments of the FIT-All rate. The cooperative’s responsibility is solely to collect the charges from its member-consumers and promptly remit them to TransCo, which administers the fund. Since this is a pass-through charge, AKELCO neither retains portions of the collected amount nor derives any financial benefit from it.”

AKELCO Terminates Pole Contracts to Eliminate Spaghetti Wires

Power cooperative AKELCO announced that it had terminated all expiring contracts of telecommunication companies that are attached to their electric poles this year.

Atty. Ariel Gepty, acting general manager of AKELCO in an episode of *Kapihan sa Aklan*, said that the termination of contracts was needed to get rid of all the unnecessary wires that are attached to the electric poles.

Kapihan sa Aklan is a talk show produced by the Kalibo Cable TV Network Inc. in cooperation with the Aklan Press Club.

“Only 10 telecoms are allowed to place their lines on our poles anywhere in our jurisdiction. But there are too many poles, especially in Kalibo and Boracay,” Atty Gepty said.

These telecom distribution lines affect the electric poles causing spaghetti wires. The spaghetti wires cause hazards to AKELCO linemen when repairing their distribution lines and also cause public disturbances.

Among the telecom companies that now have to come

up with their own poles or wait for AKELCO to renew the contracts were Kalibo Cable TV, Converge, PANTELCO, Paradise Cable TV, Globe and Smart among others.

“Based on our estimates, the number of telecom companies in Aklan do not reach 10. So, who are the rest?

We will never know. We will wait until the end of this year before we remove all the attached lines,” Gepty said.

As such, telecom companies could not expand their operations and services because of their already limited capacity to connect.

According to Gepty, AKLECO will probably renew the contracts once their poles have been cleared of excess distribution lines.

The electric cooperative also announced the re-election of Virgilio Sacdalan as board director president for Boracay Island, serving his second term unopposed. Elections were held last March 1, at the Balabag Elementary School.

“The AKELCO thanked District 10 Election Committee (DECOM) members Ma. Ninfa Desiree Segovia, Lilanir Jebulan and Michelle Jumoad, and AKELCO personnel who assisted in the district elections,” the power cooperative said.



NEWS

Malay CCTV Council Formed

BY JUN N. AGUIRRE

To ensure the safety, surveillance and security of residents, businesses and travelers not only in Boracay but also in the entire Malay municipality, the Local Government Unit (LGU) has formed a Malay CCTV Council.

According to the Malay Municipal Disaster Risks Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO-Malay), the concept of creating the council started in 2023. This is also the first council of its kind in the Western Visayas region.

The council is chaired by Malay Mayor Frolibar Bautista together with the Malay MDRRMO, the Malay Municipal Police Station (Malay-MPS), and the Sanguniang Bayan, among others.

Malay Councilor Maria Victoria “Vicky” Aguirre

introduced the said ordinance.

Councilor Aguirre said that the council will soon mandate for business establishments in Boracay to install their own CCTVs. These will then be followed in Malay, Aklan.

Also to be given priority are crime- or incident-prone areas which are to be identified by the Malay MPS.

The council conducted its first meeting last March 7, 2025, which included a demonstration of the minimum recommended specifications for CCTV cameras in business establishments, government offices, and public areas outlined in the DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2022-060. This ensures high-quality footage that can be used for crime prevention, disaster response, and emergency management.



The council encourages businesses in the Malay municipality to comply with the ordinance and install their own operational CCTV based on the prescribed standards for their own safety.



Courtesy of HelloDoctor.com

The Local Government Unit of Malay has expressed alarm over the rise in teenage pregnancies in the municipality, especially in Boracay.

On March 6, 2025, the Sangguniang Bayan indicated in its agenda for discussion the proposed ordinance (legislation) providing for prevention programs to address the increasing incidence of adolescent pregnancies within the territorial jurisdiction of Malay and providing funds thereof.

Based on the records of the Provincial Population and Gender Office, the Malay Rural Health Unit (RHU) recorded 122 adolescent pregnancy cases in 2023. The youngest was 15 years old.

However, in 2024, the RHU recorded another 133 cases with two cases as young as below 14 years old, registered in Boracay Island.

NEWS

Teenage Pregnancy Rising

BY JUN N. AGUIRRE

According to the World Health Organization on its website, adolescent pregnancy is a global phenomenon with clearly known causes and serious health, social and economic consequences.

Globally, the adolescent birth rate (ABR) has decreased, but rates of change have been uneven across regions. There are also enormous variations in levels between and within countries. Adolescent pregnancy tends to be higher among those with less education or of low economic status.

In the Philippines, the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) has sounded the alarm over the rising incidence of adolescent pregnancies, particularly those under 15 years old.

In a news release by the *Philippines News Agency*, CPD Undersecretary Lisa Grace Bersales said that the alarming trend demands immediate action, highlighting the need for comprehensive, age-sensitive sexuality education to address the issue.

“Our emphasis is on protection from abuse and equipping adolescents with life skills to make informed decisions,” she said.

Citing Philippine Statistics Authority data, Bersales noted that live births among girls aged 10 to 14 rose from 2,411 in 2019 to 3,343 in 2023, a 6.6 percent increase.

More troubling, she added, 38 girls under 15 experienced multiple pregnancies in 2023, and 17 women under 20 had given birth five or more times.

According to the National Library of Medicine, pregnancy in adolescence is a health problem worldwide. Teenagers themselves are a high-risk group in need of high-priority interventions.

In general, most pregnancies in adolescence are extra-marital and unintended. Psychological immaturity is common among adolescent mothers. Because they do not understand the value of family planning, they often engage in risky sexual behavior and become pregnant while still in school and still living with their parents.

This study confirms that teenage mothers are significantly more likely to have a low level of education.

Adolescent girls often drop out of school due to pregnancy or childbirth. Sometimes problems at school and poor school performance appear even before pregnancy. Some teenage girls who are not doing well in school may find motherhood an attractive option.

Early pregnancies are significantly reduced by education; the more years of education, the lower the rate of early pregnancies.

BUSINESS NEWS

Sampaguita: The Lucky Charm of Boracay Newcoast

BY JUN N. AGUIRRE

The national flower of the Philippines known as the Sampaguita (scientific name: *Jasminum sambac*) is a small shrub or vine, widely cultivated for its attractive and sweetly fragrant flowers. The flowers are usually strung into leis and the garlands are commonly sold by vendors outside churches and on the streets, as these are used as a form of veneration by adorning religious images with them.

Sampaguitas also hold a place of honor as garlands offered to dignitaries and visitors.

Nico Ivan Velasquez, group director of public relations for Megaworld Hotels & Resorts told the *Boracay Sun News* that the humble Sampaguita had become the lucky charm behind their success. “The flower symbolizes purity, fidelity, and hope,” he added.

Velasquez said that what started as a project two years ago called the “Sampaguita Project” as a brand of hospitality and service for Belmont Hotel Boracay was adopted by the rest of the MHR hotels in Manila and Cebu to pay homage to our national flower.

Boracay Newcoast is a 150-hectare integrated tourism estate located on the northeastern side of Boracay Island. Developed by the Megaworld Hotels and Resorts (MHRI) and Global Estate Resorts Inc. (GERI), Newcoast Boracay



has two operational hotels to date: the Belmont and the Savoy.

Velasquez shares that the Sampaguita Project is delivered in many ways, to appeal to the five senses. Sight: Sampaguita flowers are prominently displayed throughout the hotels and featured in artwork and décor to showcase Filipino culture.

Smell: A signature “Cool Sampaguita” scent, a blend of Sampaguita oil, eucalyptus, peppermint and other essential oils is diffused in high-traffic areas.

Touch: Guests receive cold towels infused with the calming scent of Sampaguita and can enjoy rejuvenating massages using Sampaguita massage oils.

Hearing: Original Filipino music is played in public areas, celebrating local talent and the rich musical heritage of the Philippines. Guests are also greeted by name, adding a personal touch.

Taste: Select signature dishes, artisanal breads, jams, entrees and tea concoctions that incorporate the essence of sampaguita, offering a unique culinary experience.

“The company is working to increase the popularity and use of the sampaguita flower, partnering with local governments and supporting farmers. This initiative aims to promote sustainable practices and create livelihood opportunities,” Velasquez added.

The best part is, they grow their own Sampaguita to fulfill their unparalleled commitment to sustainability. 🌿

BUSINESS NEWS

BUSINESS PERMIT APPLICATION MADE EASY

The Business Permits and Licensing Office (BPLO) in Malay is making it easier for residents to apply for business permits and licenses by offering all necessary forms available online.

Residents can now download forms directly to their devices making it quick, easy, and convenient. This allows for pre-completion of forms before visiting the BPLO office.

- ✓ Save time by completing the forms in advance before visiting our office.
- ✓ Access the forms anytime, anywhere.



The following forms are now available online:

- Unified Application Form (UAF)
- Authority to Operate (ATO) Application Form
- Working Permit Application Form
- Statement of Capital Investment Form
- Sworn Statement Form (Gross Sales)
- Master List of Employees Form
- Business Retirement Form

Visit the BPLO Facebook page at / BPLOMalay.Page for the corresponding links per form. 🌿

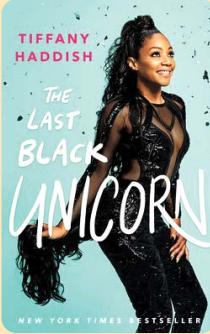
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BOOK REVIEW

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

BY PAULINE REITZER



“THE LAST BLACK UNICORN” BY TIFFANY HADDISH

I first heard about Tiffany Haddish when a friend here in Boracay lent me the book *The Last Black Unicorn*. I had no idea who she was until then. I discovered the comedian through her raw, hilarious, and moving storytelling that showcases her comedic genius. Haddish tells her life story with brutal honesty and laugh-out-loud humor, recounting her turbulent childhood, struggles with poverty, and rise to fame. She doesn't shy away from painful topics like foster care, abuse and homelessness, but her infectious optimism shines through at all times. The book feels like a conversation with a friend, unfiltered and real. Her resilience is inspiring, and her comedy is gold. If you love a mix of wild stories and heart, this one's worth picking up. 🌿

NEWS

HOW TO RETIRE IN BORACAY

BY JUN N. AGUIRRE



| Courtesy of SCMP.com

For many, Boracay is considered a paradise with its pristine white sand beaches, picture-perfect sunsets, safety and security, fresh air and friendly people.

Boracay is also considered one of the best places to retire. Despite this, according to the Philippine Retirement Authority (PRA), there are not many foreign retirees residing in Boracay.

According to Melvin Magbuhat, program

development and marketing division chief, they have included Boracay and the province of Aklan in their promotional campaigns as a haven for retirees.

He admitted, however, that despite being globally renowned as a paradise destination, Boracay needs to boost its capabilities as a retirement destination such as international standard healthcare, a stable internet, water and electrical supply.

“Boracay also has a reputation of being an expensive destination, not just for daily living but also for business,” Magbuhat said.

Nevertheless, the PRA is keen on promoting Boracay as a potential retirement haven for foreigners, expats or balikbayans.

The PRA has pegged the cost of living and other financial considerations for a comfortable retirement in the Philippines between US\$800 to 1,200 per month.

According to Magubat, the Philippines, particularly Boracay appeals to retirees because of its natural beauty friendly, hospitable Filipino traits, and government support.

One may apply for a government-issued Special Resident Retiree's Visa (SRRV). To qualify, one must be 50 years old and above and have a pension of at least US\$800 per month (or US\$1,000 for couples). You'll also need to deposit US\$10,000 to a Philippine bank.

While land ownership for expats and foreigners is strictly prohibited, retirees are allowed to purchase condominiums and townhouses.

The requirements include a valid passport to the Philippines, a PRA application form, a medical certificate, a bank certificate of deposit and proof of pension.

To get the application form or for any inquiries, one can email a request on their website at www.pra.gov.ph. 🌿

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ISLAND LIFE Island Girl Chronicles

No Man is an AI-land

BY ABIGAIL LEI



We used to book vacations, plan trips, map out itineraries and connect with fellow travelers the good old-fashioned way—making phone calls, asking advice from people, or simply winging it and trying out new places or adventures firsthand. By word of mouth, we learned all we needed to know about new spots, and in real-time.

In today's AI era, we heavily depend on our devices to tell us where to go, what to do, which restaurants to try, who to acquaint ourselves with, and even which establishments to support. We even argue with our friends who tend to disagree with what's seen online.

Let's talk about how far we have come in our dependence on AI and how it truly affects one's way of life, from a tourist's or business owner's perspective.

Online Battleground

Businesses that were thriving before the information age seem to be struggling to rake in customers, while those that are swimming with the tides of Meta, social media visibility, and engagement have no sweat at all. Daily posts, stories, reels and responsiveness to messaging platforms are now the go-to weapon of choice, so to speak. The battle is now on social media and the World Wide Web.

A few have called on influencers to up their online presence. A notable number also collaborates with other pages and creators to gain traction wherever they need it.

While a reliance on social media or ratings is understandable, it can also be a huge misstep. Here are a few reasons why:

Expectation Vs. Reality

With the emergence of photo and video-enhancing AI apps, tourists can be misled into choosing businesses that they believe are the best match for what they're looking for. Location, accessibility, amenities and even add-on services can be tweaked simply for marketing purposes and may not necessarily be available when on the actual trip.

Imagine your surprise upon arriving in your "room with a balcony" and finding that it faces a building wall. What about getting stranded at your point of entry because there is no pickup service, as opposed to what was advertised?

Unfortunately, a lot of places resort to these tactics just for the buck.

Time Factor

A bad customer experience a few weeks, months, or even years back may be read on a post or low rating that continues to discourage potential new customers, despite the old concerns having been already addressed and resolved, and yet the damage done still lingers.

On the flip side, great reviews in the past may not be significant anymore if there is

an inconsistency or a decline in the service.

The problem is that most people rely solely on ratings and on finding bad reviews.

Organic or Solicited

Trip surveys on locations, restaurants, businesses, etc. are often dubious, in light of solicited guest reviews in exchange for discounts, rewards, upgrades or freebies. Some even hold online competitions to increase page views and follows.

This makes us question which reviews were made by a truly happy customer as opposed to those who embellish their reviews for personal gain. It isn't a bad business practice, but it can be misleading.

Reliability Issues

Also worth noting is the reliability of these ratings or reviews. Naturally, a business would prefer more positive feedback on their pages, sites or social media platforms, hence the need for a Content Moderator. They will most likely choose the best reviews to be seen or pinned on top, pushing back the negative ones or obstructing them from viewability.

Not all customers are tech-savvy. Only a small percent of tourists leave ratings for businesses they have tried, even when asked to. We do not and will not truly know the honest verdict of all customers of each business.

AI Plus Human Connection

The internet, apps and AI are all great tools for everyday life, business and travel, but as always, there should be responsibility alongside our use of it. So how do we make better choices using these tools?

Let us bring back the human connection. Nowadays, people are so much more accessible through the internet, yet no one would like to make or pick up calls. We would rather click, swipe or tap, avoiding human interaction which would otherwise better equip us in making decisions for our trips, among other life choices. Why are we so scared or shy to talk to each other, to book that room, to call the front desk and confirm packages or amenities, as advertised?

Have a business? Improve service and train staff to gain the best organic reviews on a personal level with your customers that no online platform can take from you.

Scammed into a bad activity package? Talk to peers over lunch or drinks and let them guide you as to where the best and most reliable services are.

Make friends at the bar. Don't just swipe right, say "hi!"

It all boils down to the human connection, which is irreplaceable, no matter how advanced technology can get. So, try putting down the gadgets and have more person-to-person interaction, especially if you want the best trip you can ever have!

Remember, no man is an island. 🌴

10 Reasons Why Filipinos Make Great Tourists

BY RICA VELASCO

Summer is in full swing, and that means one thing: Filipinos will be flocking to tourist destinations in droves. Whether it's to cool off in the ocean or to escape to cooler climates, expect to see them making the most of the sunny season. And we should be grateful for it! Why? Because Filipinos make fantastic tourists!

Here are 10 reasons why Filipinos make great tourists:



A personal note from the team at Discovery Boracay. (Photo by Kathy Amurao-Herrera)

around with restaurant servers, or making new friends on a group tour, they have a way of making people feel comfortable and valued. Their warm and engaging nature often turns simple interactions into lasting connections.

4. They are Generous and Thoughtful

Filipino travelers have a habit of looking out for others. They'll check if the tour guide has eaten, buy food for their driver, or share snacks with new friends. They enjoy making sure everyone is comfortable, which adds to the sense of community on any trip.

5. They Bring Their Own Brand of Hospitality

Filipinos are naturally warm and welcoming, and they carry this hospitality wherever they go. Whether it's offering food to strangers, helping fellow tourists, or simply greeting people with a smile, they make travel experiences more enjoyable for everyone around them.

6. They Keep It Simple and Easygoing

Filipino guests aren't usually into extreme modifications when ordering food or requesting services. You won't often hear them asking for complicated changes—except, of course, for extra rice! They're also generally understanding when it comes to minor service hiccups. As long as they feel the effort is there, they're happy to go with the flow and enjoy the experience.

7. They are Respectful Travelers

Filipinos are raised to be polite and respectful. They address elders with honorifics like “po” and “opo,” follow house rules and treat service staff with kindness. Their good manners make them easy to accommodate, and they leave a positive impression wherever they go. Filipinos never forget to say “thank you.” Whether it's to hotel staff, tour guides or restaurant servers, they show appreciation with a smile and a kind word. This simple act of gratitude leaves a positive impression wherever they go.

8. They are Easily Excited and Easy to Please

Filipinos don't need much to have a great time. Whether it's a beautiful sunset, shopping for souvenir items, or photo op spots, they get genuinely excited over simple things. Their joy is infectious, making interactions more enjoyable for everyone around them.



Selfie at the Boracay sign (Photo by Vanessa Burac)

10. They Travel with Family and Friends

For Filipinos, traveling is often a shared experience. They bring their loved ones along, creating special memories together. You can often see them in groups, be it a family reunion, a co-worker trip or a barkada getaway. This makes for a great and jolly atmosphere and is also good business for the destinations and establishments they patronize.

In essence, the combination of their warmth, generosity and zest for life makes Filipinos exceptional guests and tourists. Their presence not only enriches their own travel experiences but also positively impacts the people and places they encounter along the way. 🌴

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A TESTAMENT TO TIMELESS BEAUTY

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Holistic Holy Week

Your essential guide to balancing fun and wellbeing throughout the Holy Week festivities

BY SEEMA MANOHAR

Boracay is infamous for its Holy Week festivities and makes for a fun holiday break with endless social activities. While enjoying the sun, beach and parties, here are some tips and suggestions to balance out a hectic social schedule and Holy Week observance, and return home rejuvenated.

Wellbeing Tips for Enjoying Parties

• Pre-party Preparation

Hydrate well during the day. Water is great but nothing beats the natural electrolytes of buko juice or coconut water that can be drank straight from the coconut!

Also, nothing screams “vacation” louder than sipping coconuts while on the beach and drinking plenty of fluids throughout the day helps process alcohol faster and prevents dehydration.

Also plan to eat balanced meals throughout the day with protein, healthy fats and fiber as this will help to stabilize blood sugar. Do avoid alcohol on an empty stomach! As part of your pre-party preparation, grab some fresh lemons, oranges and mint, along with some ginger at the local talipapa or fresh produce market because you can trust that Vitamin C will feel great the day after when you need to

hydrate and recover from a long night out.

• During the Party

Have fun, dance and keep moving to burn those calories and keep up your metabolism! Try to alternate drinking water with alcoholic drinks and avoid late meals of fried and processed food. While this may feel like exactly what you want at that time of the night, your body will pay the price the next day by being sluggish and tired from digesting all the sugar and fried food.

• After the Party

Hydrate again: lemon water with mint, more buko, herbal teas, calamansi juice, and ginger with hot water are all good ways

to replenish lost electrolytes and flush out toxins. Try to avoid caffeine as this will further dehydrate the body. While you may be drawn towards high-carb and fried foods, consuming proteins, vegetables and fruits will make recovery faster and rid away the post-party sluggish pace.

Alcohol and dehydration disturb restful sleep and sleep is the best remedy, So, unplug from those devices and indulge in sleeping in, catching up with an extra hour and taking short naps.



Inspired by healthy living, PRESSED is a new, made-in-Boracay venture, offering the juicing lifestyle with powerful tonics and antioxidant shots made from freshly squeezed juices using locally available fruits, vegetables and herbs. Juices are pressed every day and are intended for same-day consumption to ensure maximum freshness. Instagram: @pressedboracay

Get Moving

Exercising will also help to flush out those toxins and here are a variety of options on the island that will help boost your circulation and make you feel both rested and energized:

• Yoga

There is no shortage of yoga options in Boracay, ranging from the traditional yoga practices of Ashtanga and Hatha yoga to varied forms of vinyasa, aerial flow, yin or restorative yoga. Yoga is offered daily for both beginners and experienced practitioners at Lanterna Hotel and Happiness Hostel, both located in Bulabog.

• Sauna

Despite the summer heat, nothing beats a good sauna session to cleanse and detoxify the body. Both Mandala Spa & Resort Villas (located along the main road in Manocmanoc) and DC Fitness and Gym (located in Station 1) offer personalized, deluxe and hygienic sauna sessions. At Mandala, you can opt to combine a sauna session with one of their iconic massages and at DC Fitness and Gym, the sauna can also be used with a gym pass

if lifting weights and running the treadmill is your calorie burn of choice.

• Ice Baths

If you want to go the opposite route to sweating in a sauna, the ice-plunge ritual is also available at Happiness Hostel. Ice baths are known to help ease muscle fatigue, decrease inflammation, stimulate circulation, boost moods and improve energy levels. Plunging into an ice bath after a yoga session may be the ultimate flex.

• Hiking

To venture off the beaten path and get a glimpse of the slow, peaceful way of life in Boracay, a hike up Mount Luho—a steep uphill climb to the highest point in Boracay will not disappoint. Mount Luho offers a stunning 180-degree view of beautiful Boracay and is a peaceful place to take in the views, meditate and enjoy some quiet time. It’s always best to take walks and hikes as a group, and only during the good part of the day.

Social gatherings and fun-filled parties during the holidays are an entertaining way to connect with friends, meet new people, enjoy great music and make wonderful memories. While having fun, these healthy tips will ensure you don’t compromise your health, helping you end the holidays feeling rested and refreshed.

Your Holy Week vacation can also be a pilgrimage to your best self by finding holistic ways to enjoy a rejuvenating Boracay experience, a solo trip, or a detox getaway. Either way, the island offers it all and Boracay will never disappoint. 🌿

“Me-Time” Getaway!

Holy Week holidays can also be perfect for a solo sojourn and “me-time” to recharge, as an alternative to a week of socializing. Here are some book recommendations to spark your inner, reflective journey:

Ikigai by Hector Garcia & Francesc Miralles • *The Prophet* by Khalil Gibran
The Four Agreements by Don Miguel Ruiz • *All for Love* by Matt Kahn



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SPECIAL FEATURE

WE ♥ BORACAY

COMPILED BY THE BORACAY SUN NEWS TEAM

A collection of love notes to our beloved island

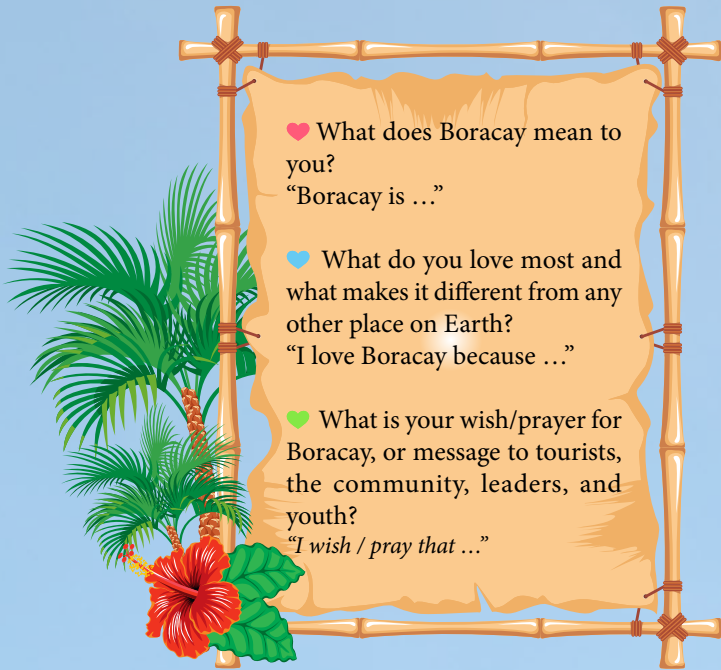

To commemorate the “Love Boracay” festival, we asked members of the community (Boracay fanatics all!) to share love notes to Boracay Island, our island home, and express their love and commitment, and to tell the world why we absolutely, unconditionally, madly and deeply love (and are obsessed with) this island.

As a result, we received an outpouring of love, which we have compiled in what the French call a *billet-doux*, or

a love letter.

We hope that this “Love Boracay” special issue gives us all pause, to STOP, look around, and listen to nature, to Boracay’s hushed voice that speaks to our hearts, and reverberates through our shared loved for her.

Thank you Boracay, *mahal na mahal ka namin!*





Department of Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco

Tourism Secretary Frasco, in her speech during the inaugural “Love Boracay 2023” festival, described the country’s beach capital of Boracay Island as “The gem of the Philippines” and “one of the greatest places in the world.”

“Today we celebrate Love Boracay, and I cannot help but look to my favorite verse in the Bible that says: ‘Love bears all things, hopes all things, believes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.’ The love that you have for this island, for each other, for each and every single tourist that has come through these shores, has sustained you amidst all of the difficulties and challenges that you have faced.

Thank you so much, Boracay, for continuing to inspire us and for reminding us of the hope that despite all of the difficulties that we have faced, love never fails.”



Former Aklan Governor Florencio “Joeben” Miraflores

“OUR BORACAY is and always will be a gem of the Philippines.

It has and will always start with Boracaynons and all Aklanons. The warm reception and hospitality to match the island’s stunning beaches and vibrant culture. Let’s continue to give our guests the unforgettable first impression that they seek in the island and in the Philippines.”



RAdm. Leonard A. Tirol

Owner, White House Beach Resort Boracay has been the family’s summer place since birth but it has been our home since 1996.

♥ Boracay is ‘home’ for our family. It is our ‘Happy Place.’

♥ Boracay to us is waking up to a serene environment, walking in the powdery white sand that does not get hot. For me, Boracay means watching my grandchildren growing up and enjoying the crystal-clear water and playing beach volleyball, tennis and Frisbee. The uniqueness of the sand in Boracay makes it a destination worth going to.

♥ My hope is that all residents/travelers take care of our paradise island by being conscious of the cleanliness of the environment and being mindful of trash disposal. I pray that our local government will address the issue of stray cats and dogs on the beaches.



Diony Salme


Owner, Mayas, Jony’s Beach Resort, The Pig Out Bistro
Former Boracay Foundation Inc. president
Resident since March 1975

♥ Boracay is more than a destination; it is a piece of my soul.

This paradise is my home, it means everything to me. This island has been a sanctuary of joy and prosperity, a place where I’ve watched my dreams flourish. The golden sands and crystal-clear waters have cradled countless memories—from the laughter of my children to the playful splashes of my grandchildren.

♥ Beyond its breathtaking beauty, what truly captivates me is the wonderful community here—people I can truly count on. This island is a treasure I cherish, a testament to my life, and a legacy I hope to share with future generations.

♥ It is my prayer that our community supports the government’s initiatives aimed at protecting the environment and fostering sustainable development. Boracay is truly a precious gift from God, deserving of our unwavering commitment to protect, cherish, and celebrate it for generations to come.”



Bong Tirol

Bong is a scion of one of the founding families of Boracay, and is into real estate and hospitality. His wife Amanda is a successful weddings and events planner.

♥ Boracay is more than just a place—it’s home. It’s where our hearts feel at peace, where memories are made, and where we truly belong.

♥ Boracay has always held a special place in our hearts. I’ve been coming here since I was a child, and every corner of the island holds a cherished memory. It’s where I got married and started my family, and it continues to be a place where we create new memories together. The island has become a symbol of love, family and the moments that make life truly meaningful.

♥ My heartfelt wish for Boracay is that we all take extra care in preserving its beauty and magic. The island has a way of giving back to those who respect it, and by protecting it, we ensure that its incredible spirit continues to thrive for generations to come. Let’s cherish and honor this paradise as it has so much more to offer in return.



Datu & Claire Sumndad


Councilor for LGU Malay; Owners of DC Fitness, Fly Money Changers and Siomai King; and parents of 3 children.
Datu was born and raised in Boracay, Claire has lived here since September 2000.

♥ Dear Boracay,

You are a little piece of Heaven on Earth, and we are so blessed to call you home. You bring us endless magical sunsets. One step on the powdery white sand and all stress vanishes and we are filled with so much love, happiness and gratefulness.

♥ We love to play beach basketball with our kids or join Frisbee games to stay healthy. We love to take time out on Sundays and visit Puka Shell Beach, where we enjoy sipping *buko* juice and eating the most delicious barbeque, and snorkeling in the beautiful crystal-clear waters. We love finding hidden coral gardens that our family loves to explore. Boracay also brings our family together as we love to eat out and enjoy fresh seafood that can be cooked right in front of you.

♥ Our wish for Boracay is for the sustainability and preservation of the environment, its waters and beaches, that will encourage even more international tourists to come and experience the magic of Boracay, while keeping it a beautiful home for ourselves and the local community.



Paul Henares


CEO, JT’s Manukan Grille
Resident since 2004

♥ Boracay will always be home for me.

♥ I love Boracay because it is where I have a community of friends I have chosen to be family.

We share a special bond all its own with the island, something few discover but many treasure. I travel to a lot of beaches around Southeast Asia, and very few of them come close to the beauty of our island.

♥ My wish is for the island to heal, for the environment around it to flourish, for tourists to treat it gently, and for everyone to love it as we do. There is only one Boracay, and this is our home.



Jack Jarilla

Photographer

♥ Loving the island is a responsibility, a commitment and a connection that binds everyone to make Boracay our refuge and our paradise.

♥ I hope that all our honorable elected local executives will stand for what is right and just and that their narratives are for their constituents and the love of Boracay.




Joel Andrada

Digital creator & marketing manager
Resident since April 2019

♥ Boracay is home.

♥ I love Boracay because it has that perfect mix of everything—breathtaking white sand beaches, crystal-clear waters and stunning sunsets that never get old. Whether you’re into relaxing by the shore, trying out thrilling water activities, or enjoying the island’s vibrant nightlife, it has something for everyone. The island’s charm isn’t just about its beauty; it’s also the warm hospitality of the locals and the laidback yet lively atmosphere. Plus, there’s nothing quite like walking along White Beach with the softest sand under your feet.

♥ I wish for Boracay to stay beautiful and vibrant for future generations. I hope for sustainable tourism, where visitors can enjoy the island without harming its natural beauty. I also wish for the local communities to thrive, with better opportunities for businesses and workers who make the island special.




Dindo Salazar

AVP, Boracay Resort Operations, Henann Group of Resorts
Chairman, Boracay Foundation, Inc.
Resident since June 2021

♥ Boracay is more than just home. For more than two decades, it has given me a career, led me to my wife, and blessed me with a family. It’s a place where I not only work but truly belong, and I hope to retire here someday.

♥ I love Boracay because of its people. Whether it’s the guests who come to experience its magic, the locals who pour their hearts into preserving its charm, or my colleagues who make every day fulfilling, everyone here shares a deep love for the island. That passion is what keeps everything running smoothly and makes Boracay a place where happiness is effortless.

♥ May visitors not only enjoy its beauty but also respect and protect it. May the local community and employees continue to thrive. And may our leaders once again champion policies that balance environmental preservation with sustainable business growth, ensuring that Boracay flourishes for generations to come.



Peter Montemayor

Executive chef/CEO, True Home Hotel & Bistro
Resident since August 2003

♥ Boracay means home to me.

♥ What I love most about Boracay is the people who are more like family to me already.

♥ I wish Boracay could regain all of its glory and be less chaotic for everyone.



Sarah Labrooy

Owner/partner, Lemoni Café and DiniBeach Bar & Restaurant
Boracay resident since 1999

♥ Boracay is my happy place.
 ♡ I love Boracay because of our community. Our sense of community. I'm only a teeny tiny part of it, but I feel it every day. I know

that no matter what the future of the Island's tourism may be, we will all still be here.

♥ I wish/pray that we can quickly resolve our issues and restore our reputation as the premier tourist destination of the Philippines and that all of us focus on the positive.



Ophel Tabanera

General Manager, PCTV
Resident since May 2004

Dear Boracay, you are a home where our footprints may be washed away from the shore, but our love as deep as the ocean will continue to stay.

♥ Boracay is my home, built by memories.

♡ I love Boracay because its beauty never fades, the pristine white sand, crystal clear waters, and most especially the beauty of the people who live here and their advocacy in loving the island. I am a worker who knew no one at first but continued to live here for 21 years and fell in love with how beautiful the island is, especially the sunsets that remind me that there are no sad endings, only beautiful ones. Now, living with my daughter, I found friends that I can call family, mentors and a community that allowed me to be an instrument in helping to preserve and protect the island and the people who live here.

♥ I pray for more local businesses to advocate for preserving the island's beauty and for everyone to be responsible for the island we call home.



Olivier Stassen

Owner, Bistro des Amis
Resident since June 2017

♥ To me, Boracay is a dream destination where you can meet new friends every day and enjoy good times in the gentle rustle of palm trees swaying

in the breeze, the melodic crash of waves upon the shore, and the warm smiles of the locals who make you feel like you belong.

♡ It is a place where time slows down. Boracay is an adventure, whether it's exploring the vibrant marine life beneath the waves, gliding through the water while kitesurfing, or simply enjoying a tranquil sunset with some great *Biere Des Amis*. It is a culinary delight where you can find food from around the world. In essence, Boracay is a unique blend of natural beauty, cultural richness, adventure, and relaxation.

♥ I wish that Boracay continues to be a beacon of natural beauty, cultural richness, and a vibrant community spirit.

To the tourists who visit Boracay: I wish you find peace, adventure and unforgettable memories on this island. Please tread lightly and respect the natural wonders and the local culture so that Boracay can remain a sanctuary for all who come after you. To the local community: I wish you continued prosperity and happiness. Your warmth and hospitality are what make Boracay truly special. To the leaders: May you guide Boracay with a vision that balances development with sustainability, ensuring that the island's natural beauty and cultural heritage are safeguarded for generations to come.



Robert Morado

General Manager, Epic Boracay
Boracay resident since September 2011

♥ Boracay is paradise on earth.

♡ I love Boracay because of its powdery white sand fringed by palm trees and calm turquoise waters. It also has a fantastic nightlife scene, so there's something to enjoy at any hour of the day or night.

♥ I pray for responsible tourism, the key to preserving this island paradise for future generations.



Julia Lervik

Owner/partner, Lemoni Café and DiniBeach Bar & Restaurant,
DiniView Villa Resort
Boracay resident since January 1990

♥ Boracay is home to me and my family.

♡ I love Boracay because from the first day I stepped foot here, the warmth and happiness of the Filipino spirit always surrounded me, and the mixture and diversity of people made it such an interesting place to live. The community supports and helps one another, and everyone is always up for a good and happy time.

♥ It is the island's amazing natural environment that brings tourists back to Boracay year after year, and I hope that the closure in 2018 was not in vain but serves as a reminder that it is in everybody's interest to care for, protect and preserve it.

Let's put more effort into protecting what makes Boracay unique! The coral reefs surrounding the island that create the amazing underwater world to see and which are also the reason our beaches are so white; and Puka Shell Beach and the surrounding coral reefs should be protected and declared as a CRITICAL HABITAT, as it is the last remaining pristine beach and home to a variety of endemic wildlife!



Dianne Naces

Dining Supervisor, Epic Boracay
Boracay resident since April 2007

♥ Boracay is a Home in Paradise.

♡ I love Boracay because of the laidback environment and energetic souls engaging in various sports.

♥ I wish that the support for the youth will go beyond the Love Boracay Week, especially in sports.



Erwin Lopez

General Manager, Discovery Boracay
Boracay resident since 2007

♥ Boracay feels like paradise on Earth. The powdery white sand, crystal-clear waters, and breathtaking sunsets create a picture-perfect escape. But beyond its

beauty, the island has a special charm—the warmth of the locals, the relaxed atmosphere, and the unique blend of tranquility and energy.

♡ What I love most is the island's sense of calm—there's no traffic, no rush, and no road rage! Just pure island bliss, where every visit feels like coming home. Our guests often tell us that they can't wait to return because for them, Boracay is a very special place. It's where they celebrate the big moments in their lives, and the island and its beaches are truly amazing and never get tired!



Jesus Catarata

Ice Cream Vendor
Working in Boracay since 1997
(travels daily from Ibabay)

♥ Boracay is the best beach, attracting countless visitors, including tourists from cruise ships.

♡ I love Boracay because it provides the livelihood that supports my family. This is where I earn money for essentials like rice, especially with a child still in school. We must take care of our visitors to ensure they have a great experience and keep coming back.

♥ I pray that the Boracay Bridge project doesn't push through because it will destroy the island. Those who will suffer most are the small-scale workers just trying to make a living.



Nuckie Sacapano-Fernando

Owner, Happy Bongalaw Bar, event organizer

♥ Boracay is my island home.

♡ I love Boracay because the water is so clear, the sand is not too hot and the people are very kind. The beaches are great for water and beach sports and where you can experience the best night life. There's no other beach as perfect as Boracay. Everything is here, a total package.

♥ I hope everyone will take good care and love the island, resist any form of abuse to its nature and that everyone will work to maintain its beauty and special ambiance.



Djila Winebrenner

Innkeeper, Lazy Dog Bed and Breakfast
President, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry-Boracay
Boracay resident since December 2004

♥ Boracay is home, where I grew into myself.

♡ Becoming part of a close-knit community brought together by a mutual respect for nature and an appreciation for simple living.

♥ May we walk gently upon this island, honoring the land, the sea and the skies that have nurtured life long before us. Let our progress be guided by wisdom, ensuring that every step forward is in harmony with nature's rhythm. May we honor this island with wisdom—preserving its beauty, and nurturing its spirit, so future generations may walk its shores with gratitude and grace.



Jigs Aguirre

Beach Butler, Discovery Boracay
Boracay resident since 2007

♥ Working as a beach butler for years, I've had the privilege of seeing guests fall in love with Boracay's charm. Some come for adventure, others for relaxation, but they all leave with happiness.

♡ What makes Boracay special isn't just its beauty but the way it makes you feel. It's a place where you can be adventurous, try new things, and still find peace in the simple joys of island life. Whether it's the friendly smiles of the locals, the delicious food, or the sound of waves at night, Boracay has a way of capturing your heart and making you want to stay just a little longer.



Joel "Dodo" Ofianga

Musician, event organizer
Resident since 1999

♥ Boracay is more than just a tourist destination—it's home. For me, it's the place where memories are made, and where the simple joys of island life are deeply felt. It's about community—

the fishermen, vendors and families who keep the island's heart beating. Boracay isn't just a vacation spot; it's a way of life. It's the pride of locals who cherish its beauty and work hard to protect it despite the challenges of tourism and modernization.

♡ What I love most about Boracay is the feeling of freedom and serenity it gives me. Whether it's the powdery, flour-like sand and the way it stays cool underfoot even on the hottest days, it is something you won't find just anywhere. Boracay sunsets are magical too. The warmth of the people, the lively yet laidback atmosphere, and the mix of adventure and relaxation make it feel like home, even if you're just visiting.

♥ I hope Boracay remains as beautiful and vibrant as ever. May we all do our part in protecting its natural beauty, respecting its culture, and ensuring that future generations can experience its magic. Boracay is a gift that we all share.

To tourists, may you cherish and respect this paradise, leaving only footprints and taking only memories. To the local community, your warmth and resilience make Boracay special. To leaders, may you prioritize sustainable growth, ensuring that progress never comes at the cost of nature. To the youth, the future of Boracay is in your hands—love it, care for it, and keep its spirit alive for generations to come.



Armand Tajanlangit

Singer, songwriter, performing artist
Resident since May 2005

♥ Boracay is one never-ending lucid dream.

♡ I love Boracay because I can live in the present moment and be in awe of all its breathtaking views. The connections and the memories I share with the thousands of world travelers I cross paths with are priceless and timeless. The Island seems like an unreal fantasy island. I'm yet to find another beach on the planet that has powder-white soft sand from the shores stretching out into the waters.

♥ I hope that Boracay will retain its unique soul and energy for future generations. I pray that everyone becomes proactive in safeguarding our little paradise home.



Vesta Hsiao

Owner, Ice Flakes Boracay
Resident since October 2007

♥ Boracay is our home.

This is the place where I grew up to become a mother. We've written many life stories together on the white sand, but they've never been washed away by the waves.

♥ I love Boracay because there are many wonderful beaches on the island. The gods have blessed this island with the best weather throughout the year. There are chefs and restaurants from all over the world, as well as supermarkets to cater to everyday needs.

♥ I have always believed that only by keeping the beaches clean can we attract more tourists. Just like how I often take my daughter to pick up trash underwater and bury seaweed during *lumot* season, our efforts may be small, but will surely make Boracay better.



Ryan Molina

Entrepreneur/Business Consultant,
DIY Travel Philippines, Arkipelago,
Viajeros Hostel, Pares Hilton, and more
Resident since December 2011

♥ Undeniably, Boracay is a magical place where dreams come to life, offering a fresh perspective and new direction in everyday living.

♥ As someone who travels a lot, I've seen many beaches, and I can confidently say that Boracay stands out as a unique gem and a place like no other! One thing that I love most about Boracay is that it's where I can enjoy Mondays just like weekends.

♥ I sincerely hope and pray that Boracay continues to preserve its beauty, supported by both locals and tourists in efforts to ensure its sustainability. I remain optimistic that our island will soon be acknowledged as a pet-friendly destination.



Criselda Arcan

Head Bartender, Hello Sailor
Resident since February 2010

♥ Boracay is often viewed as a beautiful paradise Island known for its powdery white sand. To many, it means relaxation, but for someone like me, Boracay is a home of peace and opportunities where I can work while enjoying breathtaking views.

♥ I love Boracay because you can enjoy serenity and adventure in one spot. Simply walking along White Beach, feeling the sand between your toes, and taking in the majestic sunsets matched with the iconic Willy's Rock every day sets Boracay apart from other places.

♥ I wish that the leaders, community and youth of Boracay would work hand-in-hand to continue prioritizing the wellbeing of the environment while balancing its tourism growth to ensure that future generations can enjoy its unique charm.



Maria Carmela Cuachon

Restaurant Manager, Jammers Beach Shack
Resident since 2009

♥ Boracay is a paradise on earth where people can live and thrive. People from different nations come here to celebrate life and nature.

♥ I love Boracay because it is a magical experience for everyone. The dazzling white sand energizes me, while the sight of the sunset on the horizon soothes my spirit. Even when work becomes stressful, the gentle breeze eases it all away.

♥ I pray that Boracay remains to be a place where we can live peacefully while enjoying all it has to offer. I hope it stays clean and continues to thrive economically while preserving its natural beauty.

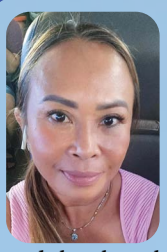


Andre & Carmille Garcia

Entrepreneurs and restaurateurs
Residents since 2014 with their two young children

We love Boracay not only for its beautiful beaches but because of the community. Here, the people around you are warm, approachable and welcoming.

The support and hospitality are things we truly treasure and appreciate.



Normeth Preglo-Parzhuber

Philippine Mermaid Swimming Academy,
Hangin Kite Center & Resort, Searena Realty (2022)
Resident since November 1989.

♥ Boracay means everything to me.

It's not just a beautiful destination; it's my home. The island embodies my family and the cherished memories we've built together. I have learned so many things here that I have not learned in school. This island is my university by meeting different people from around the world.

♥ What I love most about Boracay is the people. They are incredibly welcoming, and you become their instant family the moment you get to know them. Secondly, there's the sense of freedom. There's no need to plan your weekend, the weekend plans for you.

♥ My prayer for Boracay is for all of us to take care of our environment, both on land and underwater. Let us commit to observing cleanliness and saying no to single-use plastics, which harm our oceans. There will be no other Boracay in our lifetime, so let's cherish this beautiful island for future generations.



Michelle Vargas Caspe

Home-based food business owner,
Michelle's Food Party
Resident since birth

♥ Boracay Island is an island home and paradise, a gem we should take good care of. It is a "therapy island" for it offers natural healing for a stressed mind and sometimes a broken heart.

♥ The beauty of the island is incomparable. I love how it's blessed with a long stretch of powdery white sand, crystal clear waters and stunning sunsets. I love the ease of getting around. Living here is a lifetime vacation. I love that the island has the perfect blend of relaxation, adventure, and business opportunities.

♥ My prayer is for both residents and tourists to continue to take good care, protect and preserve its natural beauty and charm. To our local leaders, thank you for all your efforts in the sustainability of our tourism industry, good leadership and dedication to our beloved Boracay.



Kate Tagua & Janna Lejano

Kate owns Meninas Oven and was born & raised on Boracay.
Janna is a freelance videographer.

Kate: Boracay is my home, the place where I was born and raised. After coming back from college and spending the pandemic here, I fell even more deeply in love with the island. Without the crowds, I saw her more clearly—I felt her rhythm, her beauty, her quiet strength. She gave me space to listen, to breathe, to belong. I treasure the gifts she offers—the warmth of the sun, the whisper of the wind, the endless embrace of the sea. But beyond her beauty, Boracay is a magical place where everyone learns life. If you hold onto it with precious care, she offers you so much more—lessons in patience, presence, and deep connection. Most of all, I cherish the people who make this home—those who welcome, hold, and share in this life with.

Jana: I am deeply rooted in this island now. I am just happy, grateful and really lucky to be calling this island my home.



Pauline Reitzer

Online freelance, Boracay Sun,
Happiness Hostel
Boracay resident since 2007

♥ Boracay is my home, the place where I spent all my adult life, the place I miss when I am away, and a place I will never take for granted.

♥ I love Boracay because of its community and the amazing lifestyle we can enjoy here. We can walk out of our home and meet friends easily, enjoy breathtaking sunsets most of the year, and bond with our children and friends around sports without spending money and time in traffic. The balance between work, social life and staying healthy by walking on the beach and working out is much easier to keep because everything is within easy access.

♥ I wish that you always see the magic that Boracay and its community hold and that you keep on taking care of it in every small way you can.



Abe Lamida

Abe Blind Massage
Boracay resident since 1997

♥ Boracay is good because people are friendly. I'm blind so it's a good place to live and I can work more easily with massages. There are no jeepneys, no traffic, no pollution.

♥ I love Boracay because I can just walk along the beach for work and walk back to my house on my own. Before 1995, I worked in Iloilo and every day, I had to ride a car to work. In the city, it's so hard to navigate for blind people while here, I can move on my own. The environment is familiar.

♥ I wish that Boracay improves and that more tourists come again. I pray that massages would be allowed again on the beachfront so we can have more clients.



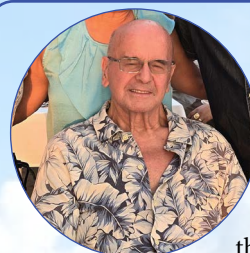
Simone Bartmann

Yoga teacher and water sports enthusiast
Resident since January 2015

♥ Boracay is like me, a tridoshic balance of Vata, Pitta, and Kapha energies. Boracay holds space for adventure, transformation and deep rest. Its breezy shores and endless skies reflect Vata's creativity and freedom. The fiery sunsets and vibrant energy mirror Pitta's passion and intensity. Its soft sands and healing waters embody Kapha's grounding and nourishment.

♥ I love Boracay because it is not just a destination; it's a home for the soul.

♥ I pray that Boracay's natural beauty remains unspoiled by plastic waste. I wish that tourists, local communities, leaders, and youth embrace sustainable practices, protecting our pristine beaches and crystal-clear waters for generations to come.



Matthew Lawrence Osit

Non-profit freelancer/consultant
Resident since April 2003

♥ Boracay holds a special place in my heart, shaping many of my most cherished childhood memories. It's more than just a destination—it's home, a place I wouldn't trade for anything.

♥ Beyond its world-class beaches, what I love most about Boracay is its vibrant local community. No other place has given me as many "pinch me, this can't be real" moments—its beauty feels almost surreal. It's not just the scenery but the energy and warmth of the people that make it truly one of a kind.

♥ I hope tourists treat Boracay with the care and respect it deserves, preserving its beauty for future generations. I hope local leaders make decisions that serve the greater good of the community. And I hope the youth are empowered to dream big, knowing they have the potential to shape a brighter future for Boracay.



Cristian Gelito

SB Member, Alumni President,
Boracay National and Manocmanoc National High School
Executive Assistant, PCCI-Boracay
Born and raised in Boracay since June 1988

Boracay, It's not just your paradise. It's our HOME. As a true-blooded Boracaynon, born and raised on the island, Boracay is an island that has offered me an abundance of joy and memories.

I grew up in an environment where there was no electricity, no gadgets, and no modern technology. Our days were spent mostly in the sand and the water, with school being one of the few interruptions. I learned to connect with the beauty of nature and I'm grateful for the peace and joy it continues to bring to my life.

What makes Boracay truly special to me is that it is home to my family. It's not just the island's physical beauty that sets it apart from any other place on Earth but also the people who call it home. When faced with the most challenging situations, we stand together, never losing hope because our home will always be number one.

I wish that Boracay will be seen for its unique culture and heritage, one that is slowly fading away. Boracay is not only a paradise in its natural beauty but also a place rich in traditions and stories that have shaped us over generations.

I have always dreamed that our locals, leaders, tourists, and youth would unite as one, working together to ensure a future where Boracay remains a haven for everyone.



Joan Delgado
Teacher, Boracay European International School (BEIS)
Resident since September 2016

♥ Boracay is our island home and a place of self-discovery for me.

💙 I love Boracay because of the beautiful beaches, which are calming and soothing. I love walking and watching the fabulous sunsets, which are vibrant and never the same each time. I love Boracay because the people are mostly kindhearted, warm and friendly, especially the BEIS community.

💚 I wish that the stakeholders, leaders, residents and visitors take good care of the island and continue to strive for sustainable practices to protect the island.



Antonio "Tinton" and Dr. Kate Larrauri
Tinton is a contractor, resident since November 2012
Kate is a pediatrician, resident since June 2020.

♥ Boracay is home. For Tinton, what was meant to be a few months, he's still here after 12 years. It was the warm welcome from vagabonds and locals alike that made him feel at home. For me, I saw the need for proper healthcare specialists, so it was a no-brainer for me to move. It is indeed a play between work and life. But the best decision we made was raising our Sabina here, where she gets to free play and enjoy what life is really all about.

💙 We love Boracay because it's always been very inclusive. No pretensions, no judgements—just being accepting of one another. And what's not to love about the sunsets? We're often asked if we get tired of the island life. How can we? We'll have the worst day but the sight of the sea and its clear waters gives hope that the next day will be a better one.

💚 I wish and pray that greed doesn't take over decision-making by the people in power. We wish that people would stop pulling each other down, as every other island in the Philippines has its unique charms. We don't have to put one place down to promote another.



Marion Salaver-Bassig, M.D., FPSOHNS
Medical Doctor, Salaver Clinic
Boracay resident since childhood

♥ Boracay provides the perfect balance between work and life.

💙 I love Boracay because Boracay loves everyone from all walks of life for all occasions. Boracay is love. Like feeling the sea's arms hugging you, and the wind that blows away your sorrows.

💚 I wish for Boracay to be stronger and to thrive, and always continue to be beautiful from sand to water to people and culture so that future generations will experience the life that is, Boracay.



Maria Cristina Teotico, M.D.
Physician and Medical Director, MedExpress Medical and Diagnostic Center
Resident since October 1999

Boracay is more than a beach or a postcard-perfect destination; it's home. It's where I have built a family and a life. It was my sanctuary when I faced the biggest challenge of my life: Cancer. And it has remained my source of strength and peace. It's irreplaceable to me. Boracay will always be a place of love, joy and hope.

I love Boracay because of the people. Whether you're a first-time visitor or a long-time resident, there's a sense of community that makes you feel welcome and to me, this is what makes Boracay special.

There is magic in the sand, the sky and the sunset that makes you want to keep coming back. Boracay teaches us to slow down and appreciate the simple joys—watching the waves, feeling the sea breeze, and witnessing the sky burst into color at sunset. It's truly unforgettable.

I pray that Boracay continues to thrive as a sustainable paradise so that future generations can experience the same untouched beauty that we are fortunate enough to enjoy today. And that every traveler respects this island, treating it with the love and care it deserves.



Tina Occhionero
Hotel Manager, Bianca's Garden Apartments
Resident since 1991

♥ Boracay is home. Cliché but it's home *talaga*!

💙 I love Boracay because of the people—the community is the core ingredient of what makes Boracay so special. Our beautiful powdery white sand beaches and amazing sunsets are what make Boracay a very unique place.

💚 My wish is that we take care of Boracay and invest in our communities, our environment and our ecosystem so we can continue to live in a place that we can always be proud of.



Rachel Louise Grant de Longueuil, a.k.a. Rachel Grant
English-Filipino actress, known for her role in the James Bond film Die Another Day

"I love Boracay because the moment you arrive, it feels like stepping into a dream—where time slows, worries fade, and the world is painted in shades of turquoise and gold. It's a place where mornings begin with footprints in the softest sand, afternoons drift by in the rhythm of the waves, and evenings glow under a sky that feels too perfect to be real. For adventure, Boracay never disappoints. I love island hopping—sailing to hidden beaches, snorkeling in crystal-clear waters, and feeling the thrill of discovering a world beneath the surface. There's nothing like diving into the ocean, then feasting on freshly grilled seafood at a secluded shore, with the scent of salt and coconut in the air. But what truly makes Boracay special isn't just its beauty—it's the feeling it leaves you with. The island welcomes you with open arms, its warmth and energy wrapping around you like an old friend. It's not just a place to visit; it's a place to belong. And no matter how many times I go, it never stops feeling like a little piece of paradise."



Jiggy Manicad, Jr.
TV 5 News Anchor

Simply put, Boracay Island shows how beautiful the Philippines is—not only in nature but in the people and culture. Boracay symbolizes what is in us, being at the core of international attention.



Garth Garcia Balasico
Filipino-American singer, producer, and actor based in Los Angeles, California.

"I love Boracay because it's like a paradise on earth. I definitely have a lot of good memories there. I would love to come back every year if possible! Enjoy Boracay, but also remember to take care of it and respect nature and the locals who live there."

BORACAY POSTCARD



"BORACAY SUNSET" BY JACK JARILLA

ENVIRONMENTAL REMINDER



| Photo courtesy of the DOT

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. No spitting.** Most eco-travelers take this one step further by picking up pieces of trash from the beach and disposing of them in proper segregation receptacles. Beach guards patrol the beaches, with stiff penalties and fines for violators.
- ✔ **Do your business in the right place.** Relieve yourself at the nearest restroom. If you smoke, find the nearest designated smoking area. Walking around with alcoholic beverages & bottles is prohibited on the beaches.
- ✔ **Earth Day's official theme for 2025, "Our power, our planet,"** underscores the urgent need for us commit to renewable energy NOW!
- ✔ **Be kind to others.**

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CHIT CHAT

BSN chit chats with some of the community’s pillars and the folks you all want to get to know a little better.

When Stefan Becker moved to Boracay in September 2018, he quickly noticed a major issue: Logistics on the island weren’t keeping up with its fast-growing business scene. As CEO of SRB Cargo, he saw both a challenge and an opportunity: to expand the company, which had been around since 2004, and bring better logistics to the island. Many businesses were struggling with slow, unreliable services that made daily operations harder than they should be. Seeing this firsthand, he set out to change it. In this interview, he shares his journey, insights on island logistics, and his vision for Boracay’s business future.

Why did you pursue a career in logistics? How did your business begin?

I’ve always enjoyed the idea of moving things efficiently from Point A to Point B and seeing how logistics plays a crucial role in people’s lives. Ninety-nine percent of the time, people are happy to receive their cargo, and being part of that process is fulfilling. Logistics is also incredibly diverse—from handling different cargo sizes, weights and special requirements to optimizing routes and efficiency. The complexity excites me, especially in a challenging environment like the Philippines, where logistics is crucial for both businesses and individuals. SRB Cargo had already been operating on the mainland for years, but when I looked into Boracay’s logistics, I saw a major gap. The island had five-star businesses, but logistics services

What major challenges have you encountered so far?

The biggest challenge has been change management. It’s shifting the mindset from just “getting things done” to growth, innovation, and structured efficiency. I joined SRB Cargo six years ago; stepping into a well-established company and reshaping processes while maintaining stability was tough. The pandemic was another turning point. Like many businesses, we took a hit, but we used that time to go digital, improve internal processes, and optimize our operations. That period allowed us to rethink logistics on an island like Boracay, making it more efficient, modern, and reliable. How did we overcome these challenges? An open mindset, tackling the biggest problem, and continuous learning. I spent a lot of time reading, watching industry videos, and talking to experts and customers. It’s all about trial and error until you find the right solution.

What made you decide to live on Boracay? What do you love most about it?

My family roots are in Aklan (Batan), and my parents have lived here for years. We visited Boracay before it had electricity, coming one to three times a year. I moved here for both business and lifestyle reasons. After spending years in Manila, I knew that city life wasn’t for me. I also lived on a smaller island for two years, so I understood the balance of island life and business challenges. Boracay is perfect—it has an island feel but with a solid infrastructure. What do I love most? The people. I’ve met incredible individuals here. People who inspire me and whom I deeply respect. Boracay’s community is special, and I’ve built friendships here that will last a lifetime.

Why did you choose to expand SRB Cargo to Boracay?

We’ve been serving Kalibo for 21 years and Roxas City since 2009, and Boracay was naturally “on the way.” This gave us a unique advantage to offer faster and more frequent deliveries. The biggest logistics issues I noticed on Boracay were speed, reliability, and professionalism. Many businesses struggled with delays and inconsistent service, which hurt their operations. We wanted to change that. Another aspect we focus on is presentation. When logistics look professional, businesses look professional too. Our goal is to be a trusted, efficient partner for businesses on Boracay.

What are your biggest business achievements so far?

One of our most exciting milestones is launching Cold Chain Logistics. Since this year, we’ve been running weekly chilled and frozen shipments from Manila to Boracay, which opens up huge opportunities for food and beverage businesses. SRB Cargo is now one of the biggest logistics providers on the island, working with key industry players. Businesses trust us with high-value items, time-sensitive deliveries, and temperature-controlled shipments—all crucial for their success.

What keeps you preoccupied outside of work? Outside of work, I spend my time with family and friends, traveling and enjoying great food. I’m also passionate about sports and diving whenever I get the chance. And, of course, my girlfriend, Gene, is a big part of my life—she’s an incredible support system and constantly challenges me to be better.

What most people don’t know about you?

I played the drums in a band for six years. Music has always been a huge passion of

Stefan Becker

mine, and while I don’t play as much now, I still love listening to pop, alternative, funk, and synth music. I also love problem-solving. I enjoy breaking things down and optimizing efficiency in business or daily life. I guess that’s why I thrive in logistics.

What is Boracay’s most bankable feature for businesses? How should businesses support sustainability?

Boracay’s global reputation makes it a strong business hub—not just for tourism but for logistics, retail, and services. However, businesses must also contribute to sustainability. At SRB Cargo, we focus on better route planning and cold chain logistics to reduce food waste. Every business, big or small, can take steps to protect Boracay’s future.

What is your message to the Boracay community, leaders, and youth?

To the community: Strive for better service, better infrastructure, and a stronger economy. To leaders: Balance growth and sustainability. The island’s long-term success depends on responsible decision-making. To the youth: Be curious, take risks, and keep learning. Boracay’s future depends on your creativity and ambition—there are opportunities beyond traditional tourism.

What are your business goals this year and in five years?

This year, we focus on expanding Cold Chain Logistics and making SRB Cargo even more efficient and reliable. We are also actively exploring a greener future and using modern technology to enhance logistics while minimizing environmental impact. Looking ahead, we want to strengthen our B2B services and help businesses “look better” by providing logistics that align with their high standards.



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ENVIRONMENT

Boracay Island is a Haven for Divers

Find out where to dive!

TEXT & PHOTOS BY DOMINIC NAPAT



Did you know that Boracay is home to a plethora of marine animals, from anemone fish, titan trigger fish, sea turtles, long horn cowfish, porcupine pufferfish, white tip reef sharks, and marbled rays?

A fishing village situated in the Sibuyan and Sulu Sea, Boracay is a fantastic island to dive every day of the year as it is not restricted by seasonal wind changes. All levels of divers can enjoy the many dive sites that Boracay has to offer. From March to October, divers can enjoy the shallow reef patches like Friday's Rock or deep wrecks like Camia II. From October to March, the wind shifts and divers can have a high chance to encounter nesting sea turtles in Laguna or giant frogfish in Crocodile Island.

What is there to see?

Divers at the beginner level, Open Water Divers (OWD), can usually encounter reef fish like parrot fish and trumpet fish at shallow dive sites at 18 meters maximum. More experienced divers like Advanced Open Water Divers (AOWD) to Master Scuba Divers (MSD) at 40 meters maximum, have a higher chance to encounter migratory and pelagic marine species in the deep blue like sea turtles, white tip reef sharks, eagle rays,

and if they are extremely lucky, thresher sharks, manta rays and whale sharks!

REAL Big Fish

Bigger pelagic species in Boracay find safe refuge from fishermen in deeper dive sites like Yapak, Punta Bunga, Virgin Drop, Camia II, and Tribird. The most common pelagic species are white tip reef sharks, eagle rays, and yellow finned tuna.

Last January, divers spotted an adult whale shark at Camia II! Whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*) are the largest fish in the world and a migratory species that are rarely spotted in Boracay. Previously, a juvenile whale shark was spotted two years ago. Whale sharks feed off smaller fish and Camia II is a perfect stop for these filter feeders. No one knows when these giant creatures will be spotted again here, but thanks to the efforts of the Bohol LGU to preserve this species' migratory habits, hopefully, soon.

The suspension of whale shark viewing is due to the increasing interference on feeding whale sharks which creates an unnatural dependence on humans and disrupts their migratory routines. Big changes are necessary to protect these big fish!

Understanding the Need for a Hyperbaric Decompression Chamber

A hyperbaric decompression chamber is currently being installed at the Ciriacao S. Tirol Hospital, funded by the Department of Tourism.

Divers from around the world flock to Boracay to explore its waters. For this reason, it is logical to provide emergency care for diving-related injuries. All diving guests and students are instructed on the skills to be a safe diver like assembling gear properly, underwater navigation, and being aware of inherent risks and constant variabilities of the ocean.

The scuba tank contains compressed air which is 21% oxygen and 79% nitrogen and other trace gases. On every scuba dive, the human body becomes saturated with nitrogen and every diver is taught to decompress at depth to release the nitrogen molecules from the body before surfacing.

If a diver rapidly ascends to the surface from depth, overstay the decompression limits at depth, or boards a commercial flight after their dive on the same day, then the partial pressure of nitrogen can oversaturate body tissue and create bubbles that can block vital blood flow. This is called decompression sickness (DCS), also known as "the bends." Common symptoms after rapid ascent or violating no-decompression-limits can manifest

between one to six hours after surfacing from a dive. These symptoms include pain in the joints, numbness, tingling, extreme fatigue, skin rashes and chest pain.

The majority of divers recover quickly from DCS, but some need to be administered oxygen or hyperbaric chamber therapy. A hyperbaric chamber is used to help divers decompress by simulating the pressure at depth so the body can safely release levels of nitrogen to normal levels. At present, the closest fully functioning hyperbaric chambers to Boracay Island in operation are in Batangas and Cebu.

What does the local diving community think?

"The best news because it will provide added safety not only for guests but especially for the dive professionals that go diving multiple times every day." – Darwin T. (dive instructor)

"It will make the divers more comfortable and confident about diving here." – Gen M. (dive master)

"It's important and good to have because there are many divers and diving schools on Boracay." – Peter V. from Switzerland

ENVIRONMENT

LET'S MAKE EARTH DAY COUNT

Mark the date: April 22, 2025

BY FREIDA DARIO-SANTIAGO

Earth Day is an annual event on April 22 to demonstrate support for environmental protection. First held on April 22, 1970, it now includes a wide range of events coordinated globally by EARTHDAY.ORG.

This year marks its 55th year in raising awareness!

Earth Day Theme 2025: Our Power, Our Planet

For 55 years, Earth Day has led the world in raising awareness and taking action on critically important environmental issues, advocating for the health of the planet, air, oceans, soil, eco-systems, wildlife, and human health.

This year, 192 countries and over one billion people around the globe expected to participate. This demonstrates how the diverse Earth Day movement remains as dedicated today as it was back in 1970 to bringing everyone together for a better future.

Grassroots people-power has always been at the heart of Earth Day and it is the catalyst for paradigm-shifting change because when individuals unite with a common purpose, they can overcome even the most entrenched systems and industries.

As we approach this milestone, we celebrate a transformative reality: we already possess the solutions we need to create clean, inexpensive, and unlimited energy for the entire planet through renewable solar, wind and other technologies.

This Earth Day 2025, let us commit to harnessing renewable energy to build

a healthy, sustainable, equitable and prosperous future for us all, let us commit to renewable energy NOW!

Renewable energy is a powerful unifying force, bringing together diverse countries, regions, states and communities that are often polar opposites, politically and economically. Clean energy transcends ideological boundaries, showcasing the universal appeal of affordable energy.

Engage in the Earth Day Movement

The strength of this movement lies in its grassroots nature, and our power as individuals. It's the collective voice of concerned citizens that pushes governments and corporations to make bold commitments and take decisive action. By engaging in community initiatives, participating in local and national elections with renewable energy in mind, and making sustainable choices in daily life, individuals are the catalysts for change. This people-powered revolution demonstrates that when we unite our voices and actions, we can overcome even the most recalcitrant systems and create a cleaner, more equitable energy future for all.

This Earth Day 2025, let us commit to harnessing renewable energy to build a healthy, sustainable, equitable and prosperous future for us all. Support and adopt the rapid transition to renewable energy sources now, be it solar, wind, hydro-electric, tidal or geothermal.

From governments to global industry and local businesses, from unions, to schools, religious leaders, to civil society, families and individuals. Whether you are a town mayor, a trade union boss, a CEO, a banker, an artist, farmer, fisherman, teacher, or firefighter—the true power of this revolution lies in the hands of individuals like you. People power is the driving force behind this transformation. (Source: [Earthday.org](#))



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 ISLAND GUIDE

BSN's Guide to Day Passes for Residents and Tourists

BY GENE LOVES ACOSTA



Day Pass Rate: PhP2,000 per adult, PhP1,000 per child (7 to 12 years old), free for kids six and below (max of 2 kids, additional child: PhP1,000)
Available: Daily, 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Reservations: Walk-ins are welcome but booking ahead is recommended.
Tel: (+ 63 36) 288 2256

Slip into vacation mode with a day at Mövenpick Resort & Spa Boracay. Your pass unlocks access to the island's largest multi-level pool and a quiet stretch of Punta Bunga Cove. Lounge on a sunbed or cool off with a dip before exploring the resort's live entertainment and cultural activities. You'll also get consumable credits (PhP1,600 for adults and PhP800 for kids) to use at the resort's dining outlets. For the perfect ending, head to Sol Marina Beach Club for happy hour from 4-6 p.m. and catch the sunset painting the sky over the water.

Tip: If you love Mövenpick's dining scene, look into the Accor Plus Explorer membership (PhP9,900/year). It gets you up to 50% off dining, a complimentary hotel night, and exclusive room rates.



Day Pass Rate: PhP2,500 net (adults), PhP1,250 net (kids 12 & below)
Available: Saturdays only
Reservations: Required
Mobile: (+63 998) 596 4632

Saturdays at Crimson Resort & Spa Boracay are made for sun, sea and a splash of excitement. Your pass grants you full access to the resort's

main pool, kids' pool and a prime stretch of beachfront, complete with sunbeds, towels, outdoor showers and public restrooms for a comfortable day by the water. Amp up the fun with beach volleyball, soccer, kayaking and stand-up paddleboarding, or kick back and indulge in PhP1,500 consumable credits (PhP750 for kids) at Azure Beach Club's à la carte menu. The real scene-stealer? The resort's exclusive Foam Party, a weekend highlight that brings extra energy to your island escape.

Tip: Pack light, but bring a waterproof phone pouch. Between pool time, beach activities and the Foam Party, you'll want to capture the fun without worrying about splashes.



Day Pass Rate: PhP899 per person, PhP100 per child (7 & below, max two kids)
Available: Daily, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Reservations: Walk-ins are welcome
Mobile: (+63 998) 596 4632

A day pass at this vibrant social hotspot includes pool access, a reserved daybed for one, and

PhP800 consumable credits for food and drinks at La-Ud Restaurant and Flamingo Social Bar. Stay entertained with access to games and activities like beer pong, chess and more in the lively Station X activity area. Wi-Fi is included, so you can stay connected while unwinding.

Tip: The new pool bar is a must-visit, serving refreshing cocktails that perfectly match the island's easygoing vibe.



Day Pass Rate: PhP1,000 per person
Available: Saturdays only, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Reservations: Required
Mobile: (+63 917) 871 6154

The Foam-Tastic Day Pass gives you all-day access to the Beach Pool and Main Pool, plus a delicious set meal featuring crowd favorites like pizza, burgers, buffalo wings and more. Pool towels and cabanas are included, so all that's left to do is sit back, sip and soak it all in.

Tip: Arrive early to snag the best poolside cabana and make the most of the sun.



Day Pass Rate: PhP850 per person
Available: Daily, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Reservations: Walk-ins are welcome
Mobile: (+ 63 917) 867 3019

Escape to a quieter side of Boracay with Belmont's day pass, which includes access to a 300-meter stretch of white sand beach that's far less crowded than White Beach. You'll also get PhP500 consumable

credits to use at Belmont Café, Zabana Pool Bar or Newcoast Beach Bar, plus access to the pool and fitness gym. It's a great pick if you're after a laidback beach day with superb food and drink options.

Tip: After a relaxing beach day, take a short scenic walk to the famous natural rock formation often referred to as the "Boracay Keyhole" at Lapus Lapus Beach, that's one of Boracay Newcoast's hidden gems. It's a perfect spot for photos, especially during the golden hour.



Day Pass Rate: PhP800 (adults), PhP500 (kids 6-12), free for kids 5 & below
Available: Daily, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Reservation: Required
Mobile: (+639 95) 026 5428
Tel: (+ 63 36) 288 3424

Enjoy access to the rooftop pool where you can take a refreshing dip or lounge in a laidback setting with a

view. Stay active with full use of the hotel gym, then freshen up in the shower and changing facilities. Your pass also comes with complimentary refreshments and a choice between a breakfast buffet or a set menu, so you can start your day on a delicious note. Plus, with Wi-Fi access throughout the hotel, you can stay connected while unwinding in style.

Tip: After your day pass, head to the beachfront at Station 2 for live fire dance performances and vibrant island nightlife, or explore the shops and cafés in D'Mall for some last-minute finds.

Day pass details and inclusions are subject to change. Contact the hotel directly for the most up-to-date information. 🌴



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ISLAND EVENTS

PCCI-Boracay Celebrates its 20th Anniversary



PCCI-Boracay's 2025 Board of Directors: (Front row): Ryan Alba, VP Mark Santiago, President Djila Winebrenner; (Back row): Stefan Becker, Nowie Potenciano, Wesley van der Voort and Michael Sweeney

and Director Michael Sweeney, who presented a comprehensive report on the chamber's challenges, goals, and unwavering commitment to fostering positive change within the business community.



PCCI-Boracay President Djila Winebrenner enthusiastically introduces the officers.

income and expenditures from the previous year up to February 2025.

An AVP presentation entitled "PCCI-Boracay's Journey in Business: Thriving Through Change" highlighted video messages from key government officials. Department of Tourism (DOT) Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco emphasized the importance of sustainable tourism for Boracay, while Aklan Governor Jose Enrique Miraflores reaffirmed his support

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry-Boracay (PCCI-Boracay) celebrated its 20th Anniversary and Annual General Membership Meeting (AGMM) on February 26, 2025, at Crimson Resort & Spa Boracay. The prestigious event was well-attended by over 50 members and sponsored by Haig & Lee, 2GO Travel, Virginia Food Inc., and Yanolja Cloud Solutions.

The event commenced at 4 p.m., with Vice President and Corporate Secretary Mark Santiago delivering the welcome remarks. He then introduced former President

A highlight of the event was the introduction of the newly elected President for 2025, Gisella "Djila" Winebrenner, who likewise presented the new officers. Winebrenner emphasized the significance of collaboration and urged members to take an active role in strengthening the chamber's initiatives for the province.

Director and Treasurer Stefan Becker presented the financial report, detailing the chamber's

for PCCI-Boracay's initiatives. Malay Municipal Mayor Frolibar Bautista praised the collaboration between tourism and business stakeholders in enhancing Boracay's economic landscape.

PCCI-Boracay also highlighted and acknowledged its long-standing members who have been with the chamber for more than 10 years with Certificates of Appreciation.



(Front row, from left) Michael Sweeney, Francis John Chua of 2GO Travel, former PCCI-president Elena Brugger, PCCI-Boracay Pres. Djila Winebrenner, Nowie Potenciano, Mayor Frolibar Bautista, Port Administrator Esel Flores, Ryan Alba, VP Mark Santiago, and Cristian Gelito



Binngoy Remedios, Mayor Bautista, Ariel Abriam, and Pres. Djila Winebrenner during the socials.

awarding prizes to lucky attendees. This milestone event reaffirmed PCCI-Boracay's dedication to fostering business growth, community development, and sustainable economic practices. With a new leadership team in place, the chamber is poised to embrace future challenges and continue its mission of driving progress for Boracay and the province of Aklan.

The couch talk session, hosted by PCCI-Boracay's Executive Assistant Cristian Gelito, featured sponsor representatives Alvin Lim, general manager of Haig & Lee, and Francis John Chua, business unit head of 2GO Travel. They shared insights into business sustainability and the unique opportunities and challenges of operating on Boracay Island.

An exhibit featured booths from sponsors Haig & Lee, Virginia Food Inc., 2GO Travel, Yanolja Cloud Solutions, and the Small Players Association Boracay, which showcased local products and services.

Attendees were treated to live performances, including an acoustic set by The Customs and a cultural dance presentation by Boracay National High School, which showcased the locally researched "Panginhas" dance, symbolizing the traditional shell-gathering livelihood of Boracay's past generations.

The evening concluded with an exciting fundraiser raffle,

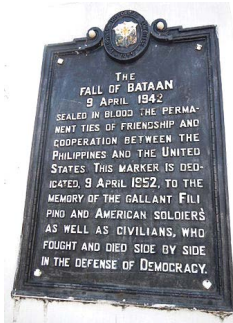
ISLAND CALENDAR **Special dates this month**

April Holidays and Fiestas

BY RICA VELASCO

April is a month rich in historical significance and religious observance. From honoring war heroes to celebrating the resurrection of Christ, these holidays unite Filipinos in remembrance, faith and festivity.

April 9: Araw ng Kagitingan (Day of Valor)



This day is dedicated to commemorating the heroism of Filipino and American soldiers during World War II, particularly those who fought in the Battle of Bataan. It serves as a reminder of their bravery and sacrifice in defending the country against invading forces.

April 17: Maundy Thursday (Huwebes Santo)

This day marks the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with his disciples. Many Filipinos observe this by attending church services, participating in Visita Iglesia (church visits), and engaging in acts of reflection and penance.

April 18: Good Friday (Biyernes Santo)

This is one of the most solemn days in the Catholic faith commemorating the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ. Filipinos observe this through religious processions, re-enactments of the Passion of Christ and abstinence from meat.

April 19: Black Saturday (Sabado de Gloria)

This day signifies the time when Christ lay in the tomb before his resurrection. It is often observed as a day of quiet reflection and prayer, with many Filipinos preparing for the Easter celebrations ahead.

April 20: Easter Sunday (Linggo ng Pagkabuhay)

This day is a joyous celebration marking the resurrection of Jesus Christ, symbolizing hope and renewal. Many families gather for Easter Mass, feasts and activities such as Easter egg hunts, making it a festive and meaningful occasion across the country.

Love Boracay 2025: A Celebration of Island Life and Sustainability

Boracay's most anticipated annual event, Love Boracay 2025 promises a lineup of activities celebrating the island's beauty, culture and commitment to sustainable tourism. Formerly known as "LaBoracay," this festival was rebranded in 2019 by the Department of Environment and Natural

Resources (DENR) to shift the focus from mass tourism to responsible travel and environmental conservation.

This year's festival promises a mix of sports competitions, community activities and cultural events, all designed to enhance the island experience while promoting sustainability.

Schedule of Events

April 24-27

World Pickleball Series Boracay at CityMall Boracay: A fun and competitive event for all skill levels, bringing together enthusiasts of this fast-growing sport.

April 25

- 9 a.m.: Opening Program in front of Epic Boracay
- Opening Program: Dragon Boat Race: A ceremonial start to the thrilling boat races
- Boracay Sandcastle Making: Witness stunning and creative sand sculptures take shape
- Paraw Regatta (*Pinta Layag*): Traditional sailboat display showcasing vibrant designs
- World Pickleball Tournament at Manocmanoc Plaza

April 26

- Acoustic and Live Bands Night: A night of great music in front of the old Bombom Bar

April 26-27

- International Dragon Boat Race: From Discovery Shores to Henann Prime
- Football Tournament at the Pearl of the Pacific beachfront
- Beach Volleyball at the Fridays Boracay beachfront
- Frisbee Tournament at the Pearl of the Pacific beachfront
- World Pickleball Tournament at Manocmanoc Plaza
- ABS-CBN's Summer for Reel 2025: A special entertainment event

April 28-29

- Boracay Beach Basketball at The Sunny Side Café beachfront, Station 1

April 28-30

- Beach Tennis Tournament at the Pearl of the Pacific beachfront

May 1

- AirAsia Boracay Beach Party at the Red Coconut Boracay beachfront

May 2-3

- Hydro Boracay: A massive beach event with DJs and entertainment along White Beach by Willy's Rock



Beach volleyball & dragonboat races on April 26-27 (Photos by Jack Jarilla)



Disclaimer: As of this writing, these are the confirmed events and venues for Love Boracay 2025. More events may be added, and information is subject to change. Please check the official schedules closer to or on the day of the events for the most updated details.

SPORTS

Love Boracay International Dragon Boat Festival 2025

BY AZENITH RESURRECCION



Photo by Fred Delos Santos

PHOTOGRAPHY by Fred de los Reyes

After a successful international dragon boat festival last year, the Local Government of Malay once again welcomes over a thousand athletes for this year's races from April 25 to 27, 2025, along Boracay Island's famous White Beach. This will be the second time that the Boracay Dragon Boat Association will organize an event of this magnitude, with 2,100 registered participants last year—the

most number of paddlers in the history of the Boracay dragon boat racing events. Technically supported by the Philippine Dragon Boat Federation, the competition will include the following categories: 200m Open Standard 200m Mixed Standard 200m Women Small Boat 200m Senior Mixed Small Boat At this year's competitions, 34 teams are confirmed, with participating teams from the Philippines, the Singapore Barbarians, Liechtenstein Princely Navy and teams from Japan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Australia and more.

Race Schedule

April 25:
8 a.m. Opening Ceremony for Love Boracay Sports Festival with Paraw Regatta and Sand Castle-Making contest
4 p.m. International Dragon Boat Festival: Parade of teams

April 26-27: 200-meter races with finals

April 27:
7 p.m. Awarding Ceremony

LOVE BORACAY INTERNATIONAL DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

April 25-27, 2025

Categories:
200 Meters
Open Standard
Mixed Standard
Mixed Master's Small Boat
Women's Small Boat



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World Pickleball Series Boracay



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XPRESS BEACH TENNIS CUP 2025

BT10 BT50

APRIL 24-27 MEN'S & WOMEN'S DOUBLES

WHITE HOUSE BEACH RESORT STATION 1

Presented by WHITE HOUSE INDIOS BRAVOS

XPRESS BEACH TENNIS CUP 2025: April 24-27

Don't miss the Xpress Beach Tennis Cup 2025 from April 24 to 27, 2025, at the beachfront of White House Beach Resort. Hosted by the Boracay Racquet Sports Club PH together with the Philippine Tennis Association, this will be the third International Tennis Federation (ITF) Beach Tennis Tournament.

Successful 2ND ITF Beach Tennis Tournament

BY THEO DY



The second International Tennis Federation (ITF) Beach Tennis Tournament, organized by the Boracay Racquets Sports Club PH (BRSCPH), concluded with great success on February 2, 2025. The four-day event was held from January 30 to February 2 at White House Beach Resort in Station 1. We had players from 13 different countries, some were National Team players from Japan, Thailand, Portugal and Slovakia who participated at the ITF Beach Tennis World Cup in Brazil last December, showcasing the growing popularity of Beach Tennis worldwide. This prestigious tournament is the second ITF-sanctioned event hosted by the BRSCPH and the Philippine Tennis Association here in Boracay Island, and it further solidifies the club's commitment to expanding the sport of Beach Tennis in the Philippines. The event not only aimed to bring together world-class athletes but also to cultivate the development of competitive Filipino players. According to Maggie Tirol of the BRSCPH, "We hope to inspire and develop local talent who will elevate the Philippines' presence on the international beach tennis stage. In addition, the tournament successfully promoted Boracay as a prime tourist destination, attracting spectators and participants from across the globe. The tournament's seamless blend of sports and tourism underscores the Philippines' potential as a hub for international sporting events, encouraging global tourism through world-class athletic events. The success of the tournament marks a significant milestone in the development of Beach Tennis in the region, and the BRSCPH is already looking ahead to future events aimed at further promoting the sport in the country.

SPORTS

Strengthening Water Safety Regulations for Kiteboarding and Windsurfing

BY PAULINE REITZER



In light of the accidental death of a Korean kiteboarder on January 28, 2025, concerns have been raised about the safety measures in place for water sports enthusiasts. The incident, which involved a health-related emergency, has prompted discussions on improving regulations to ensure the wellbeing of kiteboarders and windsurfers.

Boracay Sun News asked Nenette Graf, president of the Kiteboard Association, to share insights on the current safety protocols and potential improvements.

Registration for Kiteboarders

One of the key suggestions is the implementation of a kiteboarding registration policy, potentially under the Boracay Water Sports Association (BWSA) or a dedicated kiteboard association. According to Nenette, there have been efforts to encourage resorts offering kiteboarding rentals to enroll and register their guests at local kite shops. This initiative aims to educate independent kiteboarders on safety protocols and ensure they understand the rules before engaging in the sport.

Existing Safety Regulations

Safety is a top priority in kiteboarding and windsurfing. Before graduating, students are trained on essential safety regulations, including right-of-way rules, maintaining a safe distance of at least 50 meters from the shore when jumping, and giving way to beginners and students who are wearing helmets. Additionally, visitors are warned about potential hazards like sea urchins to minimize accidents.

Safety Signage and Warnings

Currently, Bulabog Beach lacks official safety reminder signage. Instead, it is expected that kiteboarding schools provide safety briefings and reminders to visiting riders. During the *Habagat* season, White Beach has designated areas for kiteboarding in the northern and southern portions of White Beach where there are no swimming tourists.

Lifeguard Presence and Emergency Response

While lifeguard towers exist on Bulabog Beach, they are not actively staffed. However,

kiteboarding instructors and schools are well-trained in first aid as part of their certification. The community operates on a mutual watch system, ensuring that if any kiter is in distress, others can step in to help. This collaborative effort has minimized incidents in the area, aside from rare cases involving medical emergencies unrelated to the sport.

Safety Flags and Weather Warnings

Unlike on White Beach, Bulabog Beach does not have safety flags. Instead, kiteboarding schools communicate about hazardous conditions, advising riders against going out when the wind is too strong. Additionally, the Coast Guard has the authority to suspend kiteboarding activities if conditions become unsafe.

Registration and Certification for Independent Kiteboarders

Although independent kiteboarders are not required to register with a school, resort owners are encouraged to inform their guests about signing up at local kite shops for free. While registration is not mandatory, it allows schools to monitor new riders and assess their skill levels before they fully engage in the sport.

Health Certificates and Waivers

Currently, independent kiteboarders and windsurfers are not required to present a health certificate or sign a health waiver. Given the recent incident, there may be merit in implementing such requirements to ensure that individuals participating in these physically demanding sports are in good health.

Moving Forward

While the kiteboarding community has a strong support system in place, additional steps—such as mandatory registration, clear safety signage, and health certification—could further enhance protection for all water sports enthusiasts. Stakeholders, including kiteboarding schools, resort operators and regulatory bodies, must work together to create a safer environment for everyone enjoying these exhilarating sports.

Safety flag and lifeguard tower along White Beach
Photos by Freida Dario-Santiago



TOURISM NEWS

FINANCIAL & TRAINING ASSISTANCE FOR TOURISM WORKERS



The Department of Tourism (DOT) announced on January 23, 2025, that tourism workers can now avail of financial and training assistance from the DOT and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

This was after Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco and DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian formally sealed the agreement on the Bayanihan sa Bukas na may Pag-asa sa Turismo (BBMT) program last January 23.

According to the agreement, qualified tourism frontliners may now avail of the DSWD's existing cash assistance programs, including the Emergency Cash Transfers (ECT) and Cash for Work, while simultaneously receiving the DOT interventions on alternative livelihood training programs like basic *hilot*, candle making, beads and artwork training, basic bread and pastry making, detergent making, fun farm tour product development, tourism awareness and tourist reception seminar, community-based *kulinarya* and the Filipino brand of service excellence (FBSE), if their usual sources of livelihood

have been disrupted by calamities and emergencies, including the recent eruption of Mt. Kanlaon in Negros Occidental.

The partnership seeks potential program participants who can be disaster-qualified tourism workers listed under the Listahanan 3; other qualified household beneficiaries under a standardized/unified targeting system used by the DSWD; other criteria prescribed in other disaster risk reduction guidelines that will be promulgated in the future; resident workers in tourism destinations or attractions; members of a community-based tourism organization or beneficiaries jointly approved by the DSWD and DOT; or may be affected by calamities or emergencies that disrupted their livelihood as tourism service providers.

Last May 27, 2024, both department secretaries attended the pilot run of the BBMT to give financial and training assistance to the victims of widespread flooding in several areas of the Davao Region and Agusan Del Sur in the Caraga region in early February 2024. The ceremony was held in Mati City, Davao Oriental.



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

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ISLAND LIFE

Summer Classes and Activities for All Ages

BY JAZ MARA

Tap into Your Artistic Side

Nature-Inspired Painting Lessons at Crimson Resort and Spa

Photo courtesy of Crimson Resort & Spa



Looking for ways to unleash your creativity this summer? Join these painting classes offered by Crimson Resort and Spa's resident artist, Ai Bajarias. Whether you're picking up a paintbrush for the first time or looking for experiences that will help you refine your skills, these classes are perfect opportunities to express yourself, learn new techniques and turn a few hours of your time a bit more colorful than usual. They offer classes for children and adults focusing on sunset skies, gorgeous flowers and serene seascapes. These classes are an opportunity for bonding with friends or a perfect "me time" break from the usual island activities. The best part is, you leave the class with a beautiful souvenir worthy to be treasured.

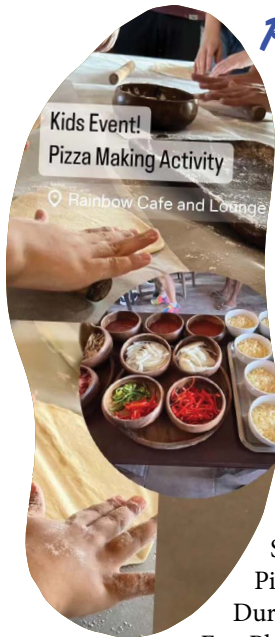
Schedule: Wednesdays to Sundays
Kids: 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Adults: 2 to 4 p.m.

Fee:
Kids: PhP1,600
Adults: PhP1,900

Special Art Classes for Kids at Rainbow Cafe & Lounge

Blending colors, creating silhouettes and expressing themselves in painting or even still life, kids ages 6-10 years old are welcome to join art classes at the Rainbow Café & Lounge. These classes are by reservation. The specific activity will be determined according to the age of the participants. Materials and tools such as paint, paint brushes, canvasses and disposable aprons will be provided. Snacks and drinks are included as well. Stay tuned for announcements on their social media pages on Facebook and Instagram.

Schedule: Upon request | Class duration: 1.5 hours | Fee: PhP1,300 per participant



Pizza-Making and Food Decorating for Kids at Rainbow Cafe and Lounge

From making the dough to selecting and layering toppings of their choice, then patiently waiting for their pizza to be ready, Rainbow Café and Lounge offers children the opportunity to be pizza chefs for a day! This is a great way for children to learn new skills using their hands and exposing them to food preparation in an enjoyable way. What's more, they also offer cupcake decorating classes. Each participant will be given six cupcakes to decorate and bring home. All ingredients and take-home containers will be provided for each activity. The classes are upon request and should be booked in advance. At the end of the class, the whole family has pizzas and treats to devour together.

Schedule: Upon request
Pizza-making:
Duration: 2 hours
Fee: PhP600 per participant

Food Decorating:
Duration: 1.5 hours
Fee: PhP750 per participant

Figurine Painting at Pick Me DIY



If you haven't tried painting ceramic figurines, then this summer might be a good time to do it! A perfect family activity that involves playing with colors, customers choose their figurine which range from palm-sized ones to almost 10-inch figures. Acrylic paint and brushes are provided. There is no limit to the paint to be used nor the hours to finish painting. It's another enjoyable activity that comes with a cute memento.

Schedule: Daily, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Fee: Figurines for painting range from PhP150 to 1,188 (paint and brush included)

| Photos courtesy of Pick Me DIY

Get Your Culinary Arts Juices Going



Happiness Hostel found a way to enrich food experiences on the island and immerse curious foodies in well-loved Filipino dishes by offering fun cooking classes every Tuesday. It's a great way to improve one's culinary skills, get more familiar with the Philippines' food culture and meet new people, with vegetarian options also available.

Schedule: Every Tuesday at 7 p.m.
Fee: PhP800 per participant

Learn New Skills: Explore Your Musical Side and Learn to Swim



Guitar Lessons and Voice Lessons with Ragga Marv

For Mahesh a.k.a. Ragga Marv, an acoustic singer based in Boracay since 1997, each day is an opportunity to create good vibes through music. A songwriter, producer and arranger, Mahesh has been sharing his knowledge and love for music by offering guitar lessons since 2004. This summer, he offers one-hour guitar and voice lessons for all ages—an interesting activity for the musically inclined.

Schedule: Upon request | Duration: 1 hour | Fee: PhP500 per session

Swimming Lessons by Boracay Swimming Club



| Photos courtesy of Mark Cabrera

What better way to learn or improve your swimming skills than to do it in paradise? The Boracay Swimming Club offers private lessons with customized programs for all ages and levels: beginner, intermediate, competitive and even open water survival. They also arrange swim camps, an eight-day structured swimming program that requires at least five enrollees. Classes are held at partner hotel and resort establishments, making them accessible and convenient for students. One of the coaches, Mark Cabrera used to coach the Ateneo Swim Team, which won several competitions. His vast experience includes training athletes for open-water swimming and lifeguards for water safety. With experienced and professional coaches such are Mark, students of any age level are in good hands.

Private Lessons:
Schedule: Upon request
Fee: PhP1,000 per session

8-day Swim Camps
Schedule: Upon request
Fee: PhP5,000 per student (minimum of 5 students)

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C5, C6 Island Chicken Inasal
C5 Jammers Beach Shack
C5, D3 JT's Manukan Grille
C5 Kelana
C5 Lemoni Cafe
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C5, C6 Coco Mama
C5 Mango Mama
C6, D4 The Sunny Side Cafe
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Visit Villa Caemilla Restaurant, open daily from 6 am to 12 midnight, and delight in a tantalizing menu of international cuisine. Indulge in a variety of savory options including fresh salads, sandwiches, steaks, pasta, and seafood. Our restaurant is the perfect setting for families and friends to enjoy shared meals. Make sure to join us for our daily happy hour from 4 pm to 6 pm!

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