

# Philippines

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Fathom Asia

**PHILIPPINES**

so much. so near



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# Fathom Asia. The Philippines

**The Philippines** is an archipelago of 7,107 islands situated in Southeast Asia and in the tropical region of the Pacific Ocean. The Philippines geography is very diverse and includes, mountains, rainforests, some of the best beaches in the world, volcanoes, and excellent river systems. With more than 500 species of birds, 800 species of orchids, 8,500 species of flowering plants and 2000 species of fish, the Philippines is a country you cannot afford to miss out on.

**The Philippines**, is a new holiday destination to try out and offers almost anything to satisfy your taste and pocket. The dollar goes along way for travel, shopping, food and general holiday expenses. It is also the 3rd largest English speaking country, so no problems with language.

**The Diversity of The Philippines** is absolutely enormous. From the bustle of Manila with its history and culture to the island experience, where you can relax on one of the thousands of beaches, sample some of the best diving in the world, mix with the crowds, get away from the crowds, climb mountains, meet the helpful and friendly locals and eat great food.....and its all affordable. What more can you want!

**The Culinary Culture of The Philippines:** The variety of Filipino food mix includes a vast assortment of tastes and styles with the influence of Malay, Chinese, American, Spanish and Arab to satisfy your palate. Today other countries such as Japan, Vietnam, Mexico and Thailand have introduced their food into the Philippine islands. All meals can be had at a reasonable price so a good night out in this country can be had without worrying about cost.

**Festivals:** The fiesta in the Philippines is very important for the fun loving Filipino with a fiesta going on somewhere in the country almost all of the time. Check it out, they are great fun to be part of on your holiday.

**Adventure:** The Philippines is an adventurer's paradise with so many activities to please the soft and hard core adventure person. Activities such as fantastic, world class diving on the reef or in the many wrecks, snorkeling, surfing, white water rafting, boating, river kayaking or canoeing, (including underground), hiking, mountain climbing, flora and fauna photography, experiencing the arts and food.



## Some of the Great Secrets of the Philippines:

**Tubbataha:** Tubbataha Reef is a marvelous marine wilderness and a special ecosystem renowned for its beauty.

**Ifugao Rice Terraces:** These terraces were inscribed in the World Heritage List as such "because of its great beauty that expresses conquered and conserved harmony between humankind and the environment."

**The Ifgeo Epic (Hudhud):** The Hudhud, once chanted, will go on for two to three days. The epic is chanted by Ifugao women, usually at harvest time, funeral wakes, and wedding time. Again selected by World Heritage.

**Vigan Heritage Village:** And yet another World Heritage site. The historic town of Vigan was inscribed in the World Heritage List in November 1999 because of its outstanding development in architecture, urban planning, and landscape design.

**The Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park:** The World Heritage List again? Absolutely! This is Palawan's most popular attraction and covers 5,349 hectares of lush forest, dark mountains, caves, and white beaches. Paddle through eight kilometers of a snaking, underground river leading to a clear lagoon. Walk on the Monkey Trail, a series of wooden paths that wind into the forest, amidst tropical flora and fauna.

**ATMs and Credit Cards:** Most foreign cards are accepted 24 hours a day with ATMs found in all major districts.

Most restaurants, hotels and shops accept credit cards. Not always taken at small restaurants or markets, so always carry some local pesos.

**Tipping:** Tipping is expected for many services. The standard practice is 10% of the total bill. Tipping is optional on bills that already include a 10% service charge.

**Departure Tax and Domestic airport tax:** P550 (approx NZ\$22) for international departure and P100 (approx NZ\$5) for local island departures, which must be paid in Philippine pesos only.

**Getting Around: Flights:** are regular to all the major islands.

Air passes are available prior to departure from your own country. **Bus:** Jeepneys and buses are inexpensive ways of getting around most places. Tricycles on most of the islands.

**Language:** English and Filipino (Tagalog).

**Entry Visa:** Visitors may enter the country without visas and may stay for 21 days.

**What to Wear:** Light, casual clothes are recommended. Warmer garments are needed for mountain regions. When visiting churches and temples, propriety dictates that shorts and scanty clothing be avoided.



## Half and Full Day Tours

### Lake Taal & Tagaytay: Day Tour.

Tagaytay, at 2,500 feet above sea level and views of Taal Lake and Volcano. Take a half hour boat ride to the volcano itself, and walk up to the volcano's rim with its magnificent views. Visit the town of Taal, with its wealth of shopping available from factories, as well as embroidery shops that boast of artistic, hand embroidered fabrics, table linen and clothing accessories.

### Pagsanjan Falls: Day Tour.

Southeast of Manila lies the town of Pagsanjan and its world-famous falls. We ride a dugout canoe manned by two expert boatmen upstream to the elevated falls. Experience the rushing water on a bamboo raft ride that goes right under the falls, before "shooting the rapids" on the way back down to the calm Pagsanjan river.

### Manila City Tour: 3 to 4 hours.

Visiting the American Cemetery, Rizal Park, named in honor of the country's national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, the Walled City of Intramuros and the remnants of Spain's conquistadores. On to San Agustin Church, the country's oldest stone church, and Casa Manila, a reproduction of a 19th century house. The tour ends up at Fort Santiago, the country's foremost cultural relic where moments in Philippine history occurred.

### Evening Tour with Dinner and Show (Fiesta Filipina)

Drive through cobbled streets to Intramuros, passing buildings and churches of Hispanic architecture, Arrive at the Filipino restaurant for dinner and show. The show is a production of Filipino creativity and artistic expression of tradition and culture.

### Mount Pinatubo: Day Tour.

When Mt. Pinatubo awoke from centuries of slumber with a cataclysmic eruption in 1991, it displayed a fury rarely seen by modern man, shooting mushroom clouds miles into the atmosphere and noticeably changing the weather patterns globally. When the rains came after the millions of tons of dust had settled, an ensuing mudflow (lahar) rampaged down its slopes, obliterating everything in its path and significantly changing the landscape. A decade and a half later, the trek through Pinatubo's explosive paths are at once sobering, and inspiring. Ruins of make shift dams and half buried edifices attest to the power of mother nature.

### Hidden Valley Springs Tour: Day Tour.

It is a 44-hectare resort of flora and fauna dotted by spring-fed pools.



### Corregidor Island Tour: Day Tour.

This is a ride down memory lane and is a must for history buffs and veterans. This island fortress is a symbol of determined resistance of its Filipino and American defenders who fought a heroic battle against invading forces. It has a landscape strewn with rusty gun batteries and battle-scarred buildings. The highlight of the tour is a Light and Sound Show where moments of the war are shown within the dark confines of Malinta Tunnel.

### Villa Escudero: Day Tour.

Villa Escudero, is an 800-hectare, Spanish era coconut plantation. There is a private museum with an absorbing collection of historic, religious and cultural artifacts spanning pre-Spanish times to WWII years. A tour aboard a cart driven by a carabao (water buffalo) shows the stages of coconut cultivation.

### Art and Heritage Tour: Day Tour.

The town of Angono is nestled between the hills of Antipolo and the famous Laguna de Bay. We visit the Angono Caves where ancient petroglyphs dating back to 3000 B.C. can be seen. This pre-historic Filipino work of art offers a glimpse into the ancient Filipinos. We stop at the Nemiranda Arthouse, an art gallery operated by renowned painter Nemi Miranda, the Tiamzon Gallery, the Blanco Museum, and the residence of the late artist Carlos "Botong" Francisco.

### China Town Tour:

As early as the 10th Century, trading has existed between merchants from the China Sea and the riverbank dwellers of the Pasig River. Today, with its maze of narrow streets, storehouses, bazaars, restaurants and business houses, Binondo seems hardly changed after centuries, and offers authentic oriental cuisine and bargains.

### Other Day Tours from Manila.

There are numerous possibilities for day excursions in and around Manila. Some of the more popular ones include:

- \* Adventure activities in Subic Bay and Clark.
- \* Seaplane / helicopter tours of Luzon.
- \* Scuba diving in Anilao.
- \* Golf at any of the numerous golf courses near Manila.
- \* WWII historical tours in Bataan.
- \* Water sports along the coast of Batangas.
- \* Agricultural tours.
- \* Walking tours of Old Manila.

### Day tours within other islands

Day tours can be organised in and from Cebu, Borocay, Bohol, Palawan and other less known islands. Don't forget there are more than 7000 islands!

## Tours in the Philippines. There is a huge selection. These are just a few ideas.

### 4 Day 3 Night North Luzon. (Departs Thursdays)

This tour includes breakfast only. All other meals at own expense. Combine this tour with other island tours.

**Day 1:** Depart Manila for Banaue (342kml). On arrival check into hotel.

**Day 2:** Board a local jeepney for the tour of the rice terraces and its villages. Banga-an Village is a traditional village nestled in a panoramic valley of rice terraces. A 20-minute walk down a descending trail through the rice paddies permits a closer look at the fascinating Ifugao world. Stop at the viewpoint of the oldest Rice Terraces, often known as the "8th Wonder of the World," estimated to be more than 2,000 years old.

**Day 3:** Visit the picturesque town of Sagada (subject to road and weather conditions). Stop and see their ancient burial caves. Visit the Bontoc Museum along the way. Founded by Belgian nuns, this museum houses a collection of authentic tribal artefacts and photos of the various mountain tribes.

**Day 4:** Return trip to Manila arriving late afternoon.

**Please note:** Day 3 may be replaced with a journey to Hapao and Hungduan due to weather conditions on the road.

### 4 Day 3 Night Cruise in Northern Palawan.

**Day 1:** Upon arrival, you will be transferred by Jeepney to Coron Town via the rustic scenery of Busuanga. At the pier, you will be met by your cruise director. Sail to Tropical Island for swimming and snorkelling before dinner and overnight.

**Day 2:** Welcome sunrise with breakfast while we take you to an island town. Walk around town with stops at the ancient stone church at the market. Try fresh juices before heading back to the boat for lunch and to a secluded island of fine white sand, perfect for sunbathing and exploring marine life.

**Day 3:** After breakfast we cruise towards the Dicabaito Channel. Appreciate the spectacular beauty of the island's sandy beach and crystal waters. After lunch, take a dip at Maquinit Hot Spring, noted for its therapeutic mineral-rich waters. Cross the channel to Sico Cove and enjoy the beauty of Coron's awe-inspiring limestone cliffs and rock formations along the island's coastline. Farewell dinner on the vessel's sundeck.

**Day 4:** Breakfast while cruising back to Coron. The crew will bid you a heartfelt farewell providing a perfect send off for your transfer to the airport and the flight to Manila.



### 3 day to 14 day packages to various islands.

**Boracay:** Boracay is a small tropical pacific island paradise surrounded by coral. It is renowned for one of the best beaches in the world called 'white sand beach'. About 45 minutes flight from Manila brings you to Caticlan then a short 20 minute boat ride and you are on Borocay. Resorts are available for all tastes and budgets, with good shopping, bars and great restaurants.

**Palawan:** The London Times rated Palawan as one of the 20 best winter destinations in the world. It's bountiful resources, abundant wildlife and extraordinary natural beauty is fantastic. It is still unspoilt. A great place to relax but also for it's diving and underground river system.

**Bohol:** A land of geological formations, lush forests, rare species of flora and fauna, and idyllic seaside towns. Outlying islands are marine sanctuaries with a wealth of coral reefs harboring a colourful world of tropical marine life.

**Cebu:** Is the countries oldest city and has a rich history. It has more than 167 islets in the group, again with fantastic beaches and warm water. Diving, kayaking or lazing around.

**Davao:** Davao offers much for the visitor including, beaches, island resorts, wonderful artwork and crafts and is home to the pearl farm at Samal Island.

### 7 Day 6 Night Manila/Bohol/Cebu.

**Day 1:** Meet and welcome at the Manila International Airport and transfer to hotel.

**Day 2:** Morning tour of Manila.(see day tours). Afternoon Free time to shop.

**Day 3:** Fly to Tagbilaran and Bohol Beach Resort. Afternoon short tour of Tagbilaran.

**Day 4:** Full day tour of Bohol countryside visiting the centuries old Baclayon Church, the man-made forest of Bilar, a traditonal blacksmith shop, and the famous Chocolate Hills. Onto Loboc and cruise down the Loay River.

**Day 5:** Free day to relax at the resort or take an optional tour.

**Day 6:** Transfer to the city pier to take a one and half hour ferry boat ride to Cebu. After checking into the accommodation we will take a tour of Cebu, visiting the monument to the Filipino chieftain, Lapu-Lapu, the Basilica of the 400-year old image of the Child Jesus, the shrine of the Cross of Magellan, the Spanish Fort of San Pedro, the fully-restored 17th century mansion called Casa Gorordo, the Taoist Temple, and the Carbon Public Market.

**Day 7:** Fly back to Manila and the end of the tour.

# The Philippines Adventure Tours

## 4 Day 3 Night Palawan.

Underground River and Islands.

**Day 1:** Arrival in Puerto Princesa, welcomed at the airport and transferred to your hotel. In the afternoon tour the sights of the city including the State College museum, the crocodile farm, the pineapple fiber weavers, the market and the Iwahig Penal Colony. Known as the "prison without walls", this is a village where prisoners on good behaviour live with their families and work on the farms.

**Day 2:** We visit Saint Paul Subterranean Park where you paddle 8klms in an underground river cavern of fluted columns and piped walls. The river is long but the boat ride is limited only to that part which has already been explored. The paddle boats are handled by English speaking guides who will describe this natural wonder.

**Day 3:** Full day island-hopping to several islands and islets at Honda Bay. Includes Bat Island, Snake Island (so named because of its shape), Pandan, Starfish, and Luli. Enjoy snorkelling, swimming and relaxing and a picnic lunch on one of the islands before returning back to the mainland.

**Day 4:** Enjoy your stay until the flight back to Manila.

## 2 Day to 14 Night Adventures.

Adventures in the Philippines are very broad and offer almost any interest or activity including diving, hiking, sailing, kayaking, surfing, golf, horse riding, caving, climbing, canyoning, 4WD and so on. With more than 7000 islands to choose from, we can organise your holiday to suit your interests and passions.

### A few suggestions:

**Diving:** Some of the best diving in Asia, whether it be from a resort or with specialist diving operations.

**4WD:** 6 day tours to Manila-Baguio-Sagada-Bontoc-Banaue-Manila

**Mountain Biking:** 2 or 3 days biking on a budget in Sagada.

**Hiking and Whitewater Rafting:** Boracay for 3 days. Manila-Tibiao River (near Boracay)-Manila.

**Team Building:** The Philippines offer great opportunities for team building at all levels and experience. Ideas and themes are unlimited and the imagination can run wild.



## Tubbataha Reef. Liveboard Diving.

Situated in the Sulu Sea, Tubbataha Reef is one of the world's largest marine ecosystems, approximately 180km from Puerto Princessa, Palawan. Comprising more than 95,000 hectares of marine area, Tubbataha, meaning 'a long exposed reef', is perhaps the best diving in the Philippines and ranks up there with the best diving in the world.

Divers come here for the wonderful corals, huge schools of fish and the chance to see the big fish like sharks and manta rays.

5 day/4 nights dive trips are normal on liveboard boats. If you have the time or organise a group, longer would be fantastic.

All the liveboard boats depart from and return to Puerto Princessa. Our packages include air fare from Manila with optional accommodation pre and post diving expedition.

The reef is a national park and as such, diving is from March to June each year. Because of this, reservations for the liveboard boats are heavy so you will need to book early.

## Motor Cycle Adventure Tours. (Cebu/Bohol)

**8 days and 6 days.** Ride a trip of a lifetime. Travel through some of the most beautiful places in the Philippines, with tropical forests, crystal clear diving reefs, caves to explore, rivers, magnificent mountains, volcanoes and exotic beaches. You will experience the local culture and hospitality. This will be like no other adventure tour you will experience. Accommodation on the tour ranges from some of the best beachside bungalows in the Philippines, to exotic hotel stays.

### Kayaking Safaris in the Philippines.

**1 day to 14 days.** We can offer a number of great kayaking tours from just a day up to a couple of weeks, to some of the most amazing places to explore and experience. Tagbanua of the Calamian Islands in the Western Philippines have been kayaking for centuries. Paddle a tropical sea paradise, described by the late Jacques Cousteau as "the last frontier". Other areas such as El Nido and Bacuit Bay area in Palawan are perfect for photography with it's unique flora and fauna. Discover unexplored islands. Kayaking is the perfect way to experience the serenity of these fantastic islands.

## Conditions and Contacts

### Responsibilities and Conditions:

Fathom Asia acts only as agents for accommodation, airlines, coach or car companies, owners or contractor providing accommodation, transportation, or other services and all tickets, vouchers, coupons, travel orders and receipts are issued subject to any and all tariffs, terms and conditions under which any accommodation, transportation or any other services whatsoever are provided by such accommodation, airlines, coach and car companies or owners or contractors.

Fathom Asia shall not be liable or responsible for death or injury to any person or loss or damage to any property (including baggage) whether due to its servants, agents or employees negligence or otherwise arising out of or in conjunction with any accommodation, transportation, or any other service such as dangers incident to the sea, fire, breakdown in machinery or equipment, acts of government or other authorities, strikes, thefts, pilferage, epidemics, quarantines, medical or customs regulations, delays or cancellations of or changes in itinerary or schedules or from any causes beyond its control, or for any loss or damage resulting in from improper or insufficient passports, visas or other documents, and nor shall Fathom Asia nor its servants, agents or employees be or become liable or responsible for any additional expense or liability sustained or incurred by the tour members as a result of any of the foregoing causes.

All prices quoted are subject to change without notice having regard to unforeseen circumstances, foreign exchange fluctuations and variations in airline operating costs. No refund or exchange can be made for unused services. Fathom Asia reserves the right to cancel the tour and/or modify the itineraries in any way it thinks desirable and further reserves the right to decline to accept any person on any tour and may substitute accommodation where necessary. The issue and acceptance of receipts, tickets, vouchers, coupons or travel orders shall be deemed consent to the above conditions.

This tour brochure is issued on the sole responsibility of Fathom Asia and is not issued on behalf of, nor does it commit any airline or organisation whose services are used during the tour.

Every effort has been made to see that content of the brochure is accurate at the time of printing and as far as is known, no false or misleading statement is included. Fathom Asia has the right to change or substitute tour itineraries and or accommodations due to any fluctuations in local conditions or providers of services.

Photographs in the brochure show places in the geographic areas, but are not necessarily related to the tour described.

### How to book:

*Please ensure the brochure has the price insert attached. If it does not, please consult your travel agent or contact us.*

#### Deposits and final payments:

A deposit of 20% per person is payable on confirmation. Final payments are to reach Fathom Asia no later than 45 days prior to departure. If for any reason your balance payment is not received by us by the due date, we reserve the right to treat your booking as cancelled and to apply the appropriate cancellation charges.

#### Cancellations:

Are subject to a charge to cover the estimated costs and the scale of charges, per person, in the event of cancellation or failure to travel without formal cancellation, is as follows:

#### Land arrangements:

Cancellations prior to 14 days before departure. 20%  
Cancellations within 14 days of departure. 20% plus any charges levied by hotels and ground operators up to 100% of the cost of land arrangements.

#### Air arrangements:

Cancellations within 14 days of departure. 25% of the airfare or any other amount as required by Airline Tariff.  
Cancellations after ticketing as required by the Airline

#### Refunds:

No refund is available for cancellations after the tour has commenced or in respect of any tours, accommodation, meals or any other services not utilised.

#### Prices:

Prices are detailed on the attached price insert. Please check that the price list is the current issue. Prices are subject to change. Please check with your Travel Agent or Fathom Asia.

#### Booking arrangements:

Fathom Asia communications will be sent to your Travel Agent for all booking arrangements made through your Travel Agent. Your Travel Agent shall, on the receipt of any tour monies, hold such monies for each and every person named in the booking until that booking is confirmed, at which time those monies shall be promptly remitted by your Agent to Fathom Asia. Tickets and/or vouchers shall be forwarded on receipt of full payment to Fathom Asia. Tickets and/or vouchers may be provided as e-tickets or hard-copy.

### Travel insurance:

We strongly recommend that, at the time of your reservation, you purchase a comprehensive travel insurance policy of your choice.

We suggest that the policy should include, but not be limited to the following features:

Loss of deposit through cancellation. Personal baggage and loss of money. Medical expenses in case of illness or accident.

Additional expenses to cover hotel accommodation and repatriation costs should the tour need to be extended or curtailed due to illness while overseas, or due to the needs to return to your country because of unexpected death or illness. This feature should also cover cancellation of transport services due to industrial action.



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### Your Travel Agent's Contact