

PALAWAN PHILIPPINES

ATTRACTIONS

NATURAL ATTRACTIONS

WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Tubbataha Reef National Marine Park

The Philippines' First inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1993 was the Tubbataha Reef National Marine Park. UNESCO recognized the site primarily for its importance to global biodiversity and as the most outstanding coral reefs in South East Asia. Consisting of two coral atolls covering an area of 33,200 hectares, it contains a very high density of marine species surpassing any reef of the same size anywhere in the world.

Saint Paul Subterranean River National Park

A UNESCO World Heritage Site featuring a spectacular limestone karst landscape alongside the longest traversable underground river in the world. Stretching 8 kilometers, this river leads into an underground cavern/lagoon commonly known as the “Cathedral”, because its huge dimensions.

MARINE AND WILDLIFE RESERVES

El Nido Marine Reserve

Situated in spectacular Bacuit Bay, many travelers have identified this corner of Palawan as the most beautiful place on earth. It is a popular nature spot blessed with extraordinary natural sceneries and ecosystems such as rainforests, mangroves, white sand beaches, coral reefs, and limestone cliffs. You can dive with exotic marine animals, including the rare aquatic mammal, the Dugong. It is accessible by air from Puerto Princesa or Manila.

Palawan Wildlife Reserve & Conservation Centre

More commonly known as the Crocodile Farm, the centre is both a tourist attraction and research facility, with the aim of conducting studies on how best to preserve endangered species of crocodiles. The site sits on 10 hectares of land that also houses a mini-zoo featuring some of Palawan's unique endemic species of animals.

Calauit Island

The island became home to exotic animals from Kenya in response to an appeal by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature to provide a sanctuary for endangered African wildlife. When Calauit was declared a game preserve and wildlife sanctuary in 1976, it initially stocked dozens of African herds.

Today, one finds herds of giraffe, zebra and other African animals living side by side with the local edemics. The surrounding waters are also a refuge for sea turtles, giant clams and dugongs.

Butterfly Garden

Tourists are surrounded by butterflies in this garden of exotic Philippine flowering plants. Occasionally, one can witness the emergence of a young butterfly and other unusual insects such as the praying mantis, stick and leaf insects, giant scorpions, atlas beetles and other jungle insects.

BIRD SANCTUARIES

Stanlake Island Tabon Bird Sanctuary

A bird refuge where a number of endangered species can be found. This bird watcher's paradise requires some travelling by land and sea. Roxas provides the jump-off to this remote island.

Rasa Island Bird Sanctuary

A spectacular island haven, the sanctuary is home to 87 unique bird species, including the Palawan hornbill. Tours also include visits to waterfalls and mangrove forests. Overnight in clean but simple dwellings in the town of Narra possible. Three hours from Puerto Princesa to Narra, followed by a 30-minute boatripe to Rasa Island.

Decala Heron Sanctuary

This shallow cove becomes a busy hotel as it welcomes thousands of white Herons that fly in from every conceivable direction just before sunset. Capture the rare opportunity of seeing these birds roost. This site can be reached from San Vicente.

AQUATIC ATTRACTIONS

Kayangan Lake

Awarded as the cleanest lake in the Philippines it is set among limestone cliffs from the Jurassic era, it is also known as the Blue Lagoon for its breathtaking beauty. Lose yourself in the magnificence of nature, trek along its trails and lake in the splendor of a big picture view when you reach peak.

Honda Bay

Consisting of several islets with shallow reefs, the bay borders fabulous beaches and small resorts. It has become the ideal place within the region to go for swimming, diving, and island hopping for local and foreign tourists alike.

New Agutaya

This beach holds the distinction of being the longest in the country. Enjoy the sun, sand and sea as you pick your spot along its resort dotted 14-km stretch. Ideal for youth and adventure travelers, it is located in San Vicente.

Ursula Island

This oval shaped island is a diving paradise and sanctuary to more than a hundred thousand birds. A huge coral ecosystem larger than Ursula's 17 hectares lies at the south of the island and is a diverse playground for those who have a passion for diving. You can also watch the birds as they congregate and fly before sunset.

CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS

Iwahig Prison & Penal Farm

The world's largest prison without bars secludes minimum-security inmates who live in dormitories with their families. They work on one of many agricultural projects located within the prison farm. Tourists can buy handicrafts produced by the inhabitants.

Vietnamese Village

This village is home to a number of Vietnamese immigrants who were displaced by the Vietnam War. They have since formed a community of their own and have integrated themselves and their way of life into the cultural fabric of the city. The village offers superb Vietnamese cuisine.

Mitra's Ranch

An ideal picnic spot overlooking Honda Bay and the soft breeze is refreshing after an entire day of being under the sun.

Batac Tribal Visit and Jungle Trek

The Batacs are an endangered indigenous mountain-dwelling tribe numbering less than 500. Batac settlement sites are found on the slopes of Cleopatra's needle, Sitio Riandcan in Tagabinet, Langogan and Roxas. En route to this remote places, one treks along virgin forests, untouched for centuries.

Tabon Caves

Known as "The Cradle of Philippine Civilization", the caves have yielded the fossil remains of the 22,000-year-old Tabon man. Of the 200 caves found, only 29 caves were fully explored, and seven open to visitors, including Tabon Cave, which was used for habitation and / or burial sites by ancient peoples. 155 kilometers from Puerto Princesa to Quezon, followed by a 30-minute boat ride to the caves.

Culion Island

The island takes you back to a time when leprosy was incurable and those stricken by the disease were feared and shunned. In the early 20th century, the American Military Government tried to combat the spread of this disease by enacting the Segregation Law on Leprosy. By August 1904, a leper colony was established in the island of Culion, and soon after, thousands of lepers were separated from loved ones and forced to live here in isolation.

Cuyo Fort

It is considered as one of the oldest forts in the Philippines. Completed in 1680, it houses a church and a covenant, and was an important defense structure against raiding Moro pirates during the 15th to 18th centuries. Located in the former provincial capital of Cuyo. One can reach it from Puerto Princesa City via chartered plane or the MV Milagrosa.

Melville Lighthouse

This century-old lighthouse is on Balabac Island on the southern-most tip of Palawan still guides vessels through the Balabac straight.

Plaza Cuartel

A World War II memorial park honoring local heroes and soldiers, which served as a Japanese garrison where 143 American soldiers were burned inside a tunnel.

Festivals

Indulge in the diverse festivals in Palawan all year round. Celebrate with the locals all year round. Partake in the tribal dance rituals of the Tarek and Cuyo festivals to the grand parades of Baragatan commemorating the founding of the civil government of Palawan.

Puerto De Santa Isabel

This former military station was built in 1667-1738 under the Augustinian Recollect Fathers. The historic fort's small chapel and cannon are still intact. The fort is located in the town of Taytay, 215km north of Puerto Princesa City. Also check out the Santa Monica Church, built in the 17th century.

Immaculate Conception Church

In 1872, a Spanish expedition proclaimed the Immaculate Conception of Mary as the patroness of Puerto Princesa. On that same year, the first mass was celebrated in the same place where the present cathedral now stands. It was almost a century later in 1961 under the late Bishop Gregorio Espiga that the cathedral was built. Its angular structure, different from most churches, provides visitors an interesting glimpse of unconventional religious edifice.