

# The Philippines Compendium

A Compilation of Guidebook References and Cruising Reports



**IMPORTANT:** USE ALL INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT AT YOUR OWN RISK!!

Rev 2024.2 – 24 Dec 2024

We welcome updates to this guide!  
(especially for places we have no cruiser information on)

Email Soggy Paws at sherry –at- svsoggypaws –dot- com.  
You can also contact us on Sailmail at WDI5677

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## Revision Log

Many thanks to all who have contributed over the years!!

Rev	Date	Notes
2024.2	24-Dec-2024	Updates on some new regs on port-to-port clearances
2024.1	20-Jan-2024	Puerto Princesa clearance report, updates on pre-arrival requirements.
2023.4	05-Oct-2023	New moorings in Busuanga / Pearl Bay
2023.3	3-Sep-2023	Comments on Puerto Princesa Check-in, updates on shipping stuff in to the Philippines.
2023.2	30-Jun-2023	More details on Arrival Procedures
2023.1	04-Jun-2023	Important update on Arrival Procedures.
2021.3	24-Dec-2021	Subic Bay paperwork rant from Screensaver NW Mindanao Typhoon hole 120 nm S of Carmen.
2021.2	20-Nov-2021	Various updates from cruising central Philippines in 2021
2020.1	Feb 22, 2020	Info on diving in the Davao area. Check in to Philippines from Port Barton, Palawan. Visa extensions in various places. Updated Phone contact at Holiday Oceanview Marina, Samal Island.
2019.02	Sep 20, 2019	Important updates to Holiday Oceanview Marina (Samal Island, Davao) info.
2019.01	Feb 21, 2019	Various updates
2018.03	Aug 31, 2018	Filled out the Recommended Reading Section. More info on PG, and heading W and S from PG to Palawan. Info on getting around in Manila. Anchorages Cebu to PG in SW winds by Changing Spots. Updated shipping options to Samal/Oceanview Marina. Anchorages PG to N Palawan in SW winds, and our trip across to Negros, then to Surigao, and out to Siargo and Bucas Grande, and back down the coast of Mindanao.
2018.02	29-May-2018	Soggy Paws' stops from Hinatuan Passage through Southern Leyte (diving) to Port Carmen and then to Puerto Galera. Incorporated info from Solita's document on the Visayas. Also info on Tubbataha. Rearranged chapters to put North first and South last, so the entire document reads north to south (sorta).

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# 1 Introduction

The original Compendium for the Tuamotus in French Polynesia started out as a way for s/v Soggy Paws and a few friends to organize notes and various internet sources on the Tuamotus, prior to our cruise there in Spring of 2010. Later, it became a way for us to pass on what we've learned while cruising the Tuamotus in 2010 and 2011. Now the idea has migrated with Soggy Paws, from the Tuamotus, to the Marquesas, to the Societies, Hawaii, the Cooks and Samoas, Tonga, Fiji, the islands between Fiji and the Marshall Islands, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia and now the Philippines.

If you haven't yet found our other 'Compendiums', they're available online at <http://svsoggypaws.com/files/>

This is not intended to replace the guidebooks or charts, but to supplement out-of-date guides with recent cruiser first-hand reports, and fill in places that the guides don't cover.

To compile this 'compendium', we have used all sources at our disposal, including websites, blogs, emails, SSB reports, and our own experience. We always try to indicate the source of our information, and the approximate time frame.

If your information is included in this guide, and you object to its inclusion, please just email us, and we'll remove it. But this is a non-commercial venture mainly to help cruisers from all of our collective experiences.

## 1.1 Organization of the Guide

This guide is loosely organized from East to West and North to South in the Philippines. (ie from the perspective of people coming from Palau toward the Philippines.

## 1.2 Overview of the Area

From Noonsite.com: <http://www.noonsite.com/Countries/Philippines>

The Philippines is an archipelago of over 7000 islands lying between the Pacific Ocean and the South China Sea. They are divided into three regions: Luzon to the north, the Visayas in the centre, and Mindanao in the south.

The Philippines has been a popular cruising destination for many years. Day- sailing through the archipelago is undoubtedly the best way to visit this vast area and one can find a good anchorage every night. This also avoids the danger of running into one of the many unlit fishing boats, as well as their nets or traps. Cebu and the surrounding islands have some of the most attractive anchorages and places such as Romblon and Puerto Galera should not be missed.

Although the government is trying to stamp out corruption and also to standardize the entry and exit charges applied to yachts, the situation is confused. On the positive side, however, the Philippines have a lot to offer the cruising sailor and in spite of such inherent difficulties, it remains a country well worth visiting.

There are small boatyards in various islands and the Filipinos are skilled workers, particularly in wood. Teak is still widely available, but while its price is steadily increasing, its quality is deteriorating.

General repair facilities, such as engine or electrical repair, are also available in most centres, the widest range being concentrated in and around Manila. Most marine supplies have to be imported, but local nautical charts are available both in Manila and Cebu.

The majority of Filipinos speak good English as a second language and almost all newspapers are published in English.

### **1.2.1 Security Issues**

Long a shunned cruising destination, the Philippines have opened up to cruising in the last few years. However, there are several reported incidences of "security" problems in the Philippines.

**2018 Update:** Though anything can happen anywhere in this tumultuous world, the accepted no-go zones in the Philippines are southern Palawan, anywhere near the north coast of Borneo, and the SW area of Mindanao, especially the Jolo Peninsular and Sulu Islands that string towards Borneo from Zamboanga. A few brave cruisers have transited the area quickly and quietly without stopping, but prudent cruisers take the long way around.

**September 2015 – Samal Island:** The last incident in Samal island was around 2001. About 11:30 pm, a banca with 11 men pulled up to the rock jetty surrounding Holiday Oceanview Marina at the north end of Samal Island and sent two teams—one for each pier—to kidnap people from one boat each. They ended up with 4 victims and escaped in the banca before the yachties could reach any authorities. As of early 2016, these kidnap victims have not been released (a large ransom has been demanded). The marina has subsequently added guard towers on both ends of the rock jetty, which are manned 24x7 by armed personnel.

**Feb 2013:** The anchorage is just around the North Western tip of Mindoro in Paluan Bay. Way point 13.21.560 - 120.28.013 opposite Gamtas Point. On 21st Feb at about 9.30 pm a local banca (boat) came along side in the pitch black with a person saying they had run out of fuel and could we help. As we came into the cockpit from below we noted 6 people in the banca. As we offered them our petrol jug 4 of them came on board. 1 had a gun and we were forced to kneel down while they tied our hands behind our backs.

<http://www.noonsite.com/Countries/Philippines/philippines-mindoro-paluan-bay-armed-boarding-robbery>

Note that inquiries in 2018 at nearby Puerto Galera Yacht Club indicate that this was an isolated incident.

**Sep 12, 2013 - From the NY Times,:** The conflict in Zamboanga City (SW Mindanao) began Monday when several hundred heavily armed men tried to march to the city hall to raise a flag and declare independence from the national government, according to the police. The rebels claim it was a peaceful march and that they were attacked by the military.

The group has demanded that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation or the United Nations be brought in to facilitate negotiations, according to Mr. Climaco. The national government has countered that the standoff is a domestic matter.

The Moro National Liberation Front signed a peace deal with the Philippine government in 1996, but its leaders were angered when a separate agreement was forged with the rival Moro Islamic Liberation Front last year that some leaders said would encroach on the original deal.

The Abu Sayyaf Group and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom fighters did not participate in peace talks and advocate an armed struggle to establish an Islamic state in the southern Philippines. Security analysts say the Abu Sayyaf has lost much of its ideological underpinnings and operates primarily as a kidnap-for-ransom gang.

**April 2014** - Kidnapping of a German Couple of their boat in Palawan. There are conflicting reports as to whether cruisers were actually targeted, or whether the Germans themselves were targeted due to their activities in the Philippines. Here's Noonsite's report. [Click here](#)

**June 11, 2014** - Leader of Abu Sayyef captured. From Reuters: "Philippine security forces captured on Wednesday a top al Qaeda-linked Islamist wanted by the United States and involved in the kidnapping of Western tourists, and hailed the arrest as a major blow to his militant network.

The Christian-majority Philippines has a Muslim minority largely based in its resource-rich southern islands where Muslim rebels have been fighting for autonomy for years."

[Link to full article](#)

**Kidnappings in Northern Borneo** – There have been a number of kidnappings in Northern Borneo perpetrated by the same rebel groups listed above, incidents in June and July 2014, and one prominent one from a restaurant in Sandakan in May of 2015.

**Insurance Exclusions:** American Insurance Agencies tend to exclude ALL of the Philippines. Lloyds of London excludes only the northern coast of Borneo and the Sulu Archipelago (the string of islands that hangs down from Zamboanga on the SW corner of Mindanao, towards Borneo). Google Lloyds Joint War Committee and you'll probably find the latest PDF file with the specific exclusions. All of these exclude coverage ONLY for Piracy or War, they will still cover you if you put your boat on the rocks.

### **1.2.2 Navigational Challenges**

Though the Philippines have been fairly well charted, you will not enjoy navigating in the reef-strewn waters unless you have good satellite charts.

A good place to start is this web page, where you can download anchoring waypoints, uncharted power lines, and satellite charts for use with OpenCPN:

<http://svsoggypaws.com/terrystopics.htm>

Bottom line is, do not rely on conventional navigational charts (even newly updated copies of Navionics or Garmin charts).

Most cruisers in the Philippines are using [OpenCPN](#), and Terry Sargent's waypoints and KAP/mbtiles files. (see above link).

An alternative if you a devoted iPad user is Guru Maps Pro or Zulu Waterways Offshore. (OpenCPN runs on many platforms but not iPads or iPhones).

### **1.3 Time Zone**

The entire Philippines is on time zone +8. This is the same time zone as Singapore and Perth. The Philippines do not observe Daylight Savings Time.

The sun rises early (about 5:30) and sets early (about 5:30).

## **1.4 Weather In This Area**

### **1.4.1 General Weather Conditions**

**From the Puerto Galera Yacht Club:** The Philippine islands experience two distinct 'seasons' of weather: the NE monsoon, from November through April; and, the SW monsoon from May through October. The NE monsoon brings the 'Amihan' winds, which typically range from five and 20 knots, under mostly clear skies. The SW monsoon brings the 'Habagat' winds, which range from 10 to 25 knots, under variable skies. It is the SW monsoon season that drives most of the cyclonic storm systems -- Tropical Depressions that may turn into Typhoons (a.k.a. Hurricanes, Cyclones) in as little as 24 hours.

Ahead of and behind a cyclonic storm system you can expect winds to be light or very light, and variable, for 24 hours or more.

Typhoons can occur at any time of the year and it is recommended that you obtain weather bulletins at least once every two days, whatever the season.

**Ellen – s/v Wiskun - 2012:** Typhoon season in this area officially starts late June to about November.

Typhoons have been known to hit Philippines as early as May and as late as early December.

The Southern Philippines (Davao Gulf area) is considered typhoon free, but the top part of the main island of Mindanao can still be hit, especially if the typhoon tracks to the central part of the Philippines.

The Dumaguete area can be hit by typhoons as it is part of the Central islands of Visayas. If you plan to sail your boat there, then my suggestion is to sail straight to Visayas from Micronesia (i.e. Palau). If you want to store your boat in a typhoon free area and fly to Dumaguete instead, then Davao Gulf is the best bet for you.

### **1.4.2 Weather Sources**

**Soggy Paws - May 2014:** So far, here are the weather sources I've found most useful for getting a quick overview of the current weather situation in the Philippines.

<http://www.typhoon2000.ph/t2kgraphsat.gif>

<http://www.goes.noaa.gov/sohemi/sohemiloops/shirgmscolw.html>

<https://www.windyty.com/?7.100,125.100,4>

Typhoons approach from the east, and can occur any time of the year, so it is always prudent to keep an eye on the Joint Typhoon Warning Center. The best low-bandwidth summary is this one:

<http://www.usno.navy.mil/NOOC/nmfc-ph/RSS/jtwc/ab/abpwweb.txt>

**Sail Samal - November 2008:** Determining the best departure times for your route planning, the following links will provide weather conditions and forecasts in this area:

**Philippines**

Pagasa station - <http://www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph/>

Tides – Davao gulf - <http://www.mobilegeographics.com:81/calendar/year/1502.html>

### **Japan to Philippines, Pacific Northwest**

Analysis chart - <http://www.jma.go.jp/en/q3/>

- <http://www.oceanweather.com/data/>

Wave chart - [http://www.data.kishou.go.jp/kaiyou/db/wave/chart/awpn\\_e.html](http://www.data.kishou.go.jp/kaiyou/db/wave/chart/awpn_e.html)

Severe weather info centre - <http://severe.worldweather.wmo.int/tc/wnp/>

### **Singapore, Indonesia, Malacca Strait, Philippines**

Surface wind chart - <http://www.weather.gov.sg/weather-marine-surface-wind>

Wave chart - <http://www.weather.gov.sg/weather-marine-waves-height>

Marine Warnings - <http://www.weather.gov.sg/weather-marine-shipping-bulletin>

### **Asia**

Australia weatherzone - link here

Wetterzentrale (German) - <http://www.wetterzentrale.de/topkarten/fsavnsas.html>

**Lifelines - 2008:** We use the internet rather than HF radio. This isn't just because we are HF troglodytes. It is also because there is so much more and better information available on the internet. Here in the Philippines, where 3G or GPRS mobile phone signal is cheap and available everywhere (by prepaid card from SMART), using your phone as a modem is the way to go.

The website everyone keeps an eye on here is "Typhoon 2000" (a Philippines site). We look at this first. Typhoon 2000: <http://www.maybagyo.com/>

If this site shows something brewing, we then check out the "Joint Typhoon Warning Centre" site (U.S.A.) for more detailed information about predicted track etc.

Joint Typhoon Warning Center: <http://www.usno.navy.mil/JTWC/>

If no-one is showing a typhoon, we still don't believe there isn't one just around the corner. So we check the Australian weather bureau site - Darwin MSLP - to see if there is a low over Papua New Guinea that's getting lower and might turn into something. Philip has picked up a number of typhoons before they formed by observing these lows. Unfortunately the site is 24hours behind, so you need to keep an eye on this one regularly to look for trends.

Australian Bureau of Meteorology - Darwin MSLP:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/cgi-bin/nmoc/latest.pl?IDCODE=IDD80100>

If no bad weather is brewing, we may then have a look for general weather predictions: the Singapore weather bureau site for the South China Sea isobars and their satellite images; the GRIB files to see what wind is predicted here; and sometimes the NOAA Significant Wave Height site for this area.

Singapore weather: <http://www.weather.gov.sg/wip/web/Marine>



GRIB: <http://www.grib.us/GribData/tabid/53/Default.aspx>

NOAA Significant Wave Height South China Sea:

<https://oceanography.navy.mil/legacy/web/cgi-bin/graphic.pl/metoc/357/21/0-0-1/0>

### **Soggy Paws - 2014: The Mother of All Weather Websites**

This site is focused on Guam, but also covers the Philippines.

<http://weather.jeffspiratescove.com/>

This site is somewhat bandwidth-heavy, but a good place to start, and you can bookmark individual links if you are normally bandwidth-stressed.

In our transit through this area, what we used most of the time for watching the weather were these files (via the free service Saildocs):

Text forecasts ():

```
send tbd
```

A spot forecast for the location we were in—every 6 hours for 10 days

```
send spot:07.1N,171.3E|10,6|PRMSL,WIND,WAVES,RAIN,LFTX
```

A 'local' GRIB file that gave a fairly detailed forecast for a reasonably small area for about 5 days, and included sea state information

```
send GFS:6N,10N,173E,165E|.5,.5|0,6..144|PRMSL,WIND,HTSGW,WVDIR,RAIN
```

A 'wide range' GRIB that watched conditions approaching us. The area we request while in transit was a pretty wide area on a 3x3 grid, for the next 10 days. This is about a 25K GRIB file. This provided a decent long range forecast.

```
send GFS:0N,30N,160E,175W|3,3|0,12..240|PRMSL,WIND,RAIN
```

During times of tropical activity, we also found these sources useful for additional perspective

### **RCC Pilotage Foundation - Nov 2008: Weatherfaxes...**

Australia broadcasts on 5100.0kHz, 11030.0kHz, 13920.0kHz, 20469.0kHz, 5755.0kHz, 7535.0kHz, 10555.0kHz, 15615.0kHz, 18060.0kHz and Japan on 3622.5kHz, 7305.0kHz, 13597.0kHz, 18220.0kHz.

### **1.4.3 Weather Sources – Voice**

#### **Sail Samal - November 2009:**

##### **Brunei Bay Radio**

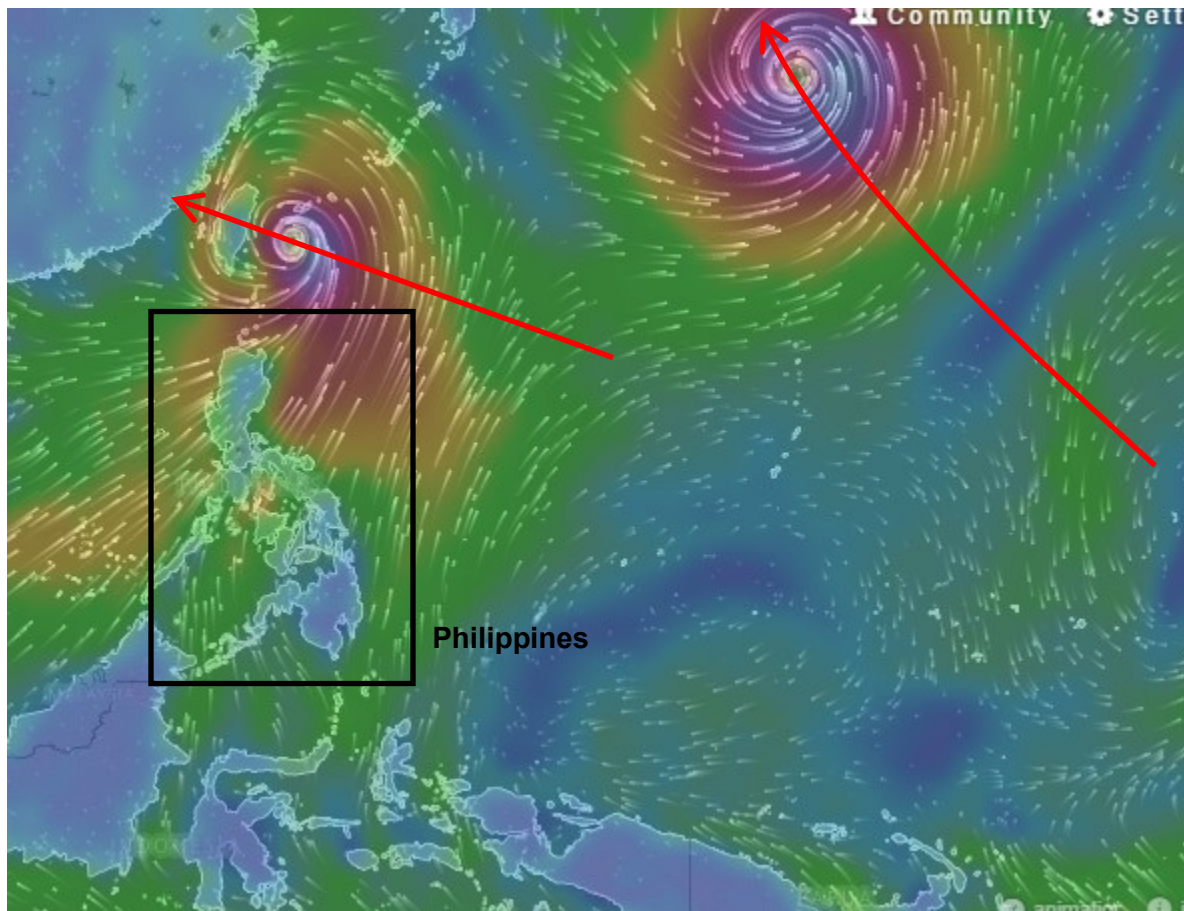
Allan Riches has spent years promoting the southern South China Sea/Sulu area for tourism and alternative cruising area other than the usual route from Darwin to Bali to Singapore to Phuket. Brunei Bay Radio is the regional gateway for the Sailmail network.

It provides the following services:

- Low cost HF SSB radio e-mail service for recreational vessels - This service is suited to cruisers who need more daily connection time than a standard SailMail subscription, i.e. children's long distance education or running a business while cruising. It is also for commercial vessels and for remote land sites.
- Voice services - For schedules and frequency of voice services.
- Cruising notes - If you want to send or receive cruising notes on west Borneo, southern Philippines and a route from Davao to Makassar, email Allan directly at [radio@bruneibay.net](mailto:radio@bruneibay.net)
- <http://www.bruneibay.net/bbradio/>

#### 1.4.4 Typhoons

In general, the southern Philippines consider themselves typhoon free, as most typhoons form in the Caroline islands (FSM) around 7-10 N. The spinning of the earth usually causes them to curve northwestward, usually sparing the southern Philippines. Davao and Port Bonbonon have been listed as "typhoon safe".



**A "Typical" August in the Western Pacific**

**US Sailing Directions:** Typhoons occur on the average of five times a month in the western North Pacific during the month of September. July, August, and October have almost as many. Two-thirds of all typhoons of this area occur during these four months. Typhoons are least frequent during the month of February. They average about one per month for the entire western North Pacific Ocean.

It appears that most of the typhoons of the western North Pacific form to the W of 150°E longitude. An occasional typhoon occurs farther to the E.



#### **Track of Super-Typhoon Haiyan Nov 2013**

*Originated near Chuuk, passed over Palau, and went straight to the Philippines.*

The Joint Typhoon Warning Center is the best source of typhoon forecasting in the area.

<http://www.usno.navy.mil/JTWC/>

This site aggregates inputs from the various surrounding weather offices (primarily NOAA, the US Navy, and Japan) and produces a consolidated forecast.

### **1.5 Customs & Immigration**

The most frequently used ports for yachts entering the Philippines, for clearance, are the following:

From the south – Davao, Mindanao in the east, Puerto Princesa, Palawan in the west.

From the east – Davao, Cebu, Surigao, N Mindanao, Subic

From the north - Subic

Other Places may be possible (according to Immigration documentation from website, almost every Immigration office, and there are a lot of them, have “Boarding” as a possible function)

Details on entry and exit experiences by various people are included below, or in the respective subsections for the major ports.

<https://www.noonsite.com/place/philippines/view/clearance/>

**Screensaver – March 2017:** After having come in from Malaysia/Borneo (via Palawan and exiting south from Davao... here are my thoughts and experiences with Customs and Immigration in the Philippines.

Many will enter via Palawan and Puerto Princessa where not all the formalities are completed to the liking of all the offices. I do vaguely recall the staff there telling me something they didn't do 100% but I guess I let it go at the time. If you are coming in, it's probably better to pay more intention to that side comment, if you get it.

The rules and the practices around checking in and out are the subject of much debate online and among cruisers. The head offices to most of these bodies are located in Manila and if you take the time to contact them I believe you will be told that you need only do the full Immigration, customs, harbour master check-in when you enter and leave the country, plus at any of the Free Port Zones you must see Harbour Master of which there are 3 or 4 around. Your boat can stay seemingly indefinitely without a skipper or crew.

The administration of the rules for moving around within Philippines in reference to checking in and out are a little blurry. Davao & Subic (or specifically the Subic Yacht Club) & free port Zones were the only ones I came across trying to do the check-in checkout process even though you are not leaving the country

Once the entry procedures have been completed, foreign pleasure yachts are allowed to stay in the Philippine waters indefinitely without incurring import duty and tariffs provided they are not sold while in the Philippines.

### **1.5.1 Visa in Advance**

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2018 – Visa on Arrival vs Visa in Advance:** Citizens of most first world countries can get a tourist visa on arrival, by boat or by air. The normal tourist visa is 30 days, and is easily extendable. However, the cost of extending the tourist visa is approximately \$50-60 USD for the first month, and then about \$75 for another two month extension. It is easy to extend for up to 6 months in 2 month increments.

However, another cruiser told us they got a 1 year multiple entry visa in Guam for \$90 USD per person (and a second cruiser arranged theirs in Palau). However, the outcome of this visa is that you get 60 days on arrival, and still have to do renewals after that. Here is the Philippine Embassy in the US's web page on visas:

<http://www.philippineembassy-usa.org/philippines-dc/consular-services-dc/faq-dc/#nonimmigrant>

And the list of Philippine Consulates and Embassies world wide.

### **1.5.2 Pre-Arrival**

Pre arrival registration is now required for all arriving passengers & crew. Go on the Immigration website to get a pre-arrival QR code: <https://etravel.gov.ph/>

eTravel registration/update is absolutely free of charge, hence, it does not collect or require any form of online payment. Beware of fake, fraudulent, or scam websites/entities which require payment upon registration/updating.

Take a screenshot or download your QR code before closing or exiting the eTravel website or application. You will be required to show said QR code to officials on arrival.

A green QR code is issued when your submission of required information is proper and complete. On the other hand, the red QR code is issued when the data submitted is incomplete/incorrect, and/or if for the past 30 days, you are sick or have a history of exposure to a person who is sick or known to have communicable/infectious disease prior to travel.

If you have already registered in the eTravel before then you may just update your details every time you travel (required categories stated under item 3). Passengers may update their status/e-Travel record under the “Edit Registration” tab of the e-travel, while crewmembers under the “Registered Crew”.

More here: <https://etravel.gov.ph/frequently-asked-questions>

**Emailing Pre-arrival Notifications:** In addition, you should email pre-arrival notifications to each office (Customs, Immigration, Quarantine), if arriving by boat. Note that the email addresses are specific to each port, and the older reports below may have changed recently. Wherever you send your pre-arrival notices, be SURE to save that sent email (print to PDF is a good way to save it or screen shot) so you can prove that you TRIED to send to the correct office. I can find no place on the immigration website that provides email addresses for each immigration office.

The Customs website has a “directory” and you may find the correct address for your port of entry there: <https://customs.gov.ph/directory-of-the-bureau-of-customs/>

**Sail SE Asia – Jan 2024:** Pre-arrival notification email addresses for Palawan/Puerto Princesa:

Customs: [p04a\\_puertoprincesa@customs.gov.ph](mailto:p04a_puertoprincesa@customs.gov.ph)

Quarantine: [bogpalawan.icv@gmail.com](mailto:bogpalawan.icv@gmail.com)

Immigration: [puerto.princesa@immigration.gov.ph](mailto:puerto.princesa@immigration.gov.ph)

**Furthur – June 2023:** Similar process for Subic Bay. AIS is now required by the Port Authority, and liability insurance is as well.

**Sail the Philippines FB Group – June 2023 – Palawan Advance Notice:** Advance notification of at least 48 to 72 hours prior to arrival. For PPC, the following 3 ways can be done.

1) Contact the Abanico Yacht Club who will inform the department on your behalf (suggested);

a) +639669037315 (Globe)

b) +639983049566 (Smart)

Cissy at Abanico YC (Whatsapp): +639479302696

2) Roland (The Trike driver), Can relay information to Yacht Club as he will carry out immigration on your behalf.

a) +639201305760

3) Contact the PPC departments yourself (I can verify these numbers work 06/2023);

a) Quarantine: +639178495781

b) Customs: +639175462081



c) Immigration: +639174741575

**Entice – June 2023:** Clearing into Puerto Princessa, the rules have change a bit and now you have got to give them notice of your arrival. The best way to do this is to send an email or Whatsapp to Cissy who runs the Abanico Yacht Club and she will ring on your behalf to notify the appropriate departments. **(See full check-in update in [Palawan Clearance](#) section)**

Cissy's email is [cissydesting@yahoo.com](mailto:cissydesting@yahoo.com) Whatsapp: +639479302696

**Sail the Philippines FB Group – January 2023:** A boat that cleared in OK in Tacloban on Dec 22, 2022 was told by Immigration in January that they should have sent a Notice of Arrival to Immigration 24 Hours in advance (which they did not). There was talk of a 5,000 PHP fine.

Checking Noonsite.com—they had a link to a new announcement put out in October 2021 that says “Marine vessels should submit a Notice of Arrival 24 hours prior to arrival in Manila and 48 hours prior to arrival in other ports of entry, by e-mail to [bi.bss.noa@gmail.com](mailto:bi.bss.noa@gmail.com) “

Noonsite.com also says: “Yachts with animals on board, are expected to contact the quarantine medical officer 24 hours before arrival, but the authorities are aware of the impracticality of this requirement and may waive it, provided the yacht proceeds to an official port of entry.”

The notice should give vessel details (name, flag, callsign, MMSI, L,W,D, captain's name)

Arrival details (approx when and what port).

Crew Details (name, nationality, passport number, date of birth, pp expiration)

What port you left from.

For going directly to a marina like Holiday Oceanview in Samal, PGYC, or Subic, I would state that your intention is to go directly to the marina and report in to officials according to that marina's practices. Note that I checked the websites of the other yacht clubs in the area (PGYC and Subic and Manila) and all indicate to contact them directly and they will forward information to the officials.

<http://www.cfo.gov.ph/links/philippine-embassies-and-consulates-abroad.html>

**Soggy Paws – August 2017:** When we checked in to Immigration in Davao this time, the officer in charge of “incoming ships” told us that we should have sent in a notice of arrival. Here are the email addresses they gave us:

[bss\\_mnla@gmail.com](mailto:bss_mnla@gmail.com)

[biseaportsops@gmail.com](mailto:biseaportsops@gmail.com)

[bidavaosos@gmail.com](mailto:bidavaosos@gmail.com) (note that this one is Davao-specific)

The notice should give vessel details (name, flag, callsign, MMSI, L,W,D, captain's name)

Arrival details (approx when and what port).

Crew Details (name, nationality, passport number, date of birth, pp expiration)

What port you left from.

For going directly to a marina like Holiday Oceanview in Samal, PGYC, or Subic, I would state that your intention is to go directly to the marina and report in to officials according to that marina's practices. Note that I checked the websites of the other yacht clubs in the area (PGYC

and Subic and Manila) and all indicate to contact them directly and they will forward information to the officials.

We have been in and out of the Philippines about 4 times in the last 3 years, and this is the first I've heard of this.

“BI” in the email addresses I think means Bureau of Immigration, but I don't know what BSS is, maybe Bureau of Ships and Seaports. Tried googling with no luck.

### **1.5.3 Initial Clearance**

<https://immigration.gov.ph/>

Procedures for check-in vary widely by location.

For details on checking in at Puerto Princessa Palawan, jump to [this section](#).

### **1.5.4 Immigration – Visas & Visa Renewals**

<https://immigration.gov.ph/>

There is a map showing all the immigration offices here:

<https://immigration.gov.ph/information/directory-of-transactions>

See the Immigration FAQ here <https://immigration.gov.ph/faqs/extensionofstay>

See next page for locations of Immigration offices throughout the Philippines.





**Soggy Paws – January 2020 – 6 month extensions:** Places where other cruisers have reported being able to get a 6 month, vs 2 month extension (after the first 59 days), are:

Davao (but only occasionally, with some begging/justification)

Batangas

Cebu (on the Island at the Gaisano Mall)

Dumagete (Negros)

*The rules and enforcement of the rules change often, and it sometimes depends on who you get for the immigration officer.*

**Sail SE Asia FB Group – January 2020 – 6 Mo Extension by Mail Manila:** I decided to use an agent in Manila to apply for a 6 month extension while in El Nido. I sent my passport to Manila with courier LBC to processing agent. The agent charges an extra 3000 for services and and extra 1000 for the Immigration officer! But when I costed out 5 or 6 hr each way mini bus from El Nido to Puerto Princesa, and thought I would need hotel 1 night and various meals it did not seem too much more. LBC took 4 working days. Agent took 4 days to process and get back to LBC. 3 weekends were involved so allow around 18 days for full turnaround. Costs were:

6-months extension fee + iCard = 10,310.00

Express Processing fee = 3,000.00

Professional fee = 3,000.00 (for agent)

Total = 16,310.00 + 250 to send to Manila

This was using: vanie at austhai.net Agency in Manila

**Amarula – December 2019 - Davao:** I did my 2nd visa extension in Davao after the initial 59 days. They were very vague and initially told me I could get 2, 3 or 6 months. I asked about cost and was told about 7k for 2 months or 10k for 6 months.

A friend had been recently & got a 6 month extension and paid just over 10k, so I figured I'd apply for 6 months. I also had to get my photo ID card, and asked how much that was. They said it's included in the fee. The man processing my application then told me I could only get 6 months in special circumstances. I said we'll be sailing in some remote places maybe far away from immigration offices and they sent me to see the head of alien registration who gave me the 6 months because I told her I was going to be celebrating my 60th birthday here (so I am old). She approved it and when I asked about the ID card they told me you can only collect it from the office where you apply. I said, but we'll be far away from Davao by then. Again I was sent to see the head lady who gave me her card and said she'll let me know when it arrives and she'll forward it to me. She was very helpful.

BTW I was actually charged 13,400pesos, which was presumably extra for the alien card.

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2018:** We got our first visa extension (of 29 days) in the Davao office “while we waited” today. The receipt for that extension shows a 2130 Php charge for the extension itself, and 1000 Php for “Express Lane Fee”. Presumably you could drop your passport off and tell them you are not in a hurry, and avoid that fee??

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2016, updated Nov 2016:** Now that we have stayed in the Philippines long enough to be required to extend our visa, I can comment clearly on the process. We are American, so this applies to all foreigners who do not require a visa in advance.

First, when you enter the country by boat or by air, you are given a 30-day Temporary Visitors Visa. In Davao we paid a fee at Immigration at check-in by boat, but not by air (however, this fee may be buried in the cost of your airline ticket). We were given a receipt for all fees we paid on boat check-in. (in Nov 2016, it was 720 PHP in Davao, for Immigration fees)

After your initial 30 days, you must first apply for one Tourist Visa Waiver, for 29 days. This costs 3,115 pesos apiece. There is a form you fill out, and you need a copy of a passport photo and a copy of your entry stamp in your passport.

Once your 30 + 29 days are up, you may apply for a longer extension to your Tourist Visa. The extension can be applied for in 1-month, 2-month, or 6-month increments. The cost per month is 500 pesos, plus about 4,000 pesos in paperwork fees for every extension application. Also once your first 59 days are up, you must (one time) apply for an [ACR Identity card](#), which costs about \$50 US per person. The total cost for two of us to renew for 2 more months, plus pay for our Identity Cards (good for a year) was about \$250 USD. At this kind of price, buying a cheap fare on Cebu-Pacific, Air Asia, or Philippine Airlines to go visit somewhere else in SE Asia to reset your immigration, might look pretty attractive. *(2020 Update: Tough to get more than a 2 month extension)*

For a couple or a family, only one person needs to make the trip to do the visa extension, as long as the other has filled out a “special power of attorney”, giving the other person authorization to act for him/her. This form is available from the Immigration website. *(2020 Update: Only needed if you are trying to process a visa extension for someone who is not a family member)*

In Davao it used to be a half day process to get the visa extension, but as of late 2016, it only took me about a half hour one day.

Using these extensions, a non-visa required foreigner may extend their stay up to thirty six (36) months while visa required foreigner may extend their stay up to twenty four (24) months.

**Solita - August 2013:** You need to visit an Immigration office to apply for and extend visas.

The options to renew your visa from places in the Philippines with no Immigration office is to fly or ferry somewhere else (Manila, Cebu, Davao, Puerto Galera, Puerto Princessa, etc)

If you overstay your visa, it will cost you 1,010 pesos to have it reinstated as well as any due visa costs.

Visa information: You can obtain Philippines visa information by logging on to: [www.immigration.gov.ph](http://www.immigration.gov.ph)

### **1.5.5 Immigration – Checking Out or Departing by Air**

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2018 – Leaving with Filipinas:** I have never done this myself, but am aware that it can be difficult to leave the Philippines, by boat or by air, with a Filipina. Because of documented cases of human trafficking and Filipinas being essentially held hostage, the Immigration department is keen to make sure that no women are being exploited. Make sure

you ask around the marina and find out exactly what is needed, at the airport, or at yacht checkout to leave with a Filipina.

**Soggy Paws – February 2016 – EXIT CLEARANCE - Leaving after more than 6 months in the Philippines:** Note that if you have been in the PI for more than 6 months, when you go to leave, there is an extra step you must do AHEAD OF TIME. I don't know exactly what it is called, but it is a piece of paper with your picture and fingerprints that vouches that you have not left with open arrest warrants or unresolved debts. You must have this piece of paper with you to check out, whether flying out, or checking out to leave by boat. Make sure you go to Immigration about a week in advance and get this piece of paper. You can't leave without it, even if you have an airplane ticket (they will make you miss your flight!). And it costs money.

Note: One discussion online in 2016 indicated the "more than 6 months" has been changed to "more than 59 days". Check with your Immigration office!!

### **1.5.6 Customs**

<https://customs.gov.ph/>

**Soggy Paws – November 2016:** We again had an easy and free check in with Customs in Davao. The boat is now good "forever" (?? We have never heard of any issues in the Philippines about "duty" being due on the boat if it is kept in the Philippines for an extended period, like many other countries).

**Soggy Paws – September 2014:** On our first entry into Davao, based on the prior comments I'd heard, we did NOT check into Customs in Davao. No one ever knew or seemed to care. However, after having been scolded by another cruiser about clean wakes and following proper procedures, we did check OUT with Customs, and we also checked in with Customs when we returned. In 2014, anyway, Davao Customs was easy and there were no "extra fees" required.

**Solita - August 2013:** We have discussed with many cruising folk whether, as a private non-commercial vessel, we need to visit Customs in the Philippines. Many people do not declare themselves and don't seem to have had a problem. On our 2011 visit (to Palawan area) we did not declare ourselves to Customs as we only intended to cruise the Palawan Island area for 2 months. We re-entered Malaysia in the company of two other yachts who had cleared in and out of the Philippines Customs, and we were all treated equally by Malaysian Customs and Immigration.

In 2012 we declared ourselves to Customs in Puerto Princessa. It was quite an effort to find the Customs building and they certainly were not aware of what vessels were in the harbour. They told us that we do need to clear in and out of major ports as we travelled through the Philippines. They gave us a clearance to Cebu, our next major port, and charged us 200 pesos to clear in.

Two months later, we arrived in Cebu. We spent 4 months on our boat refit before visiting Customs in Cebu City, to clear in and out on the one day. They were fine with this, charged us 150 pesos for the paperwork, and cleared us out to Palawan, even though we wouldn't be arriving there for many months. They also inferred that cruising boats should clear through major ports in the Philippines, but they didn't seem too rigid about this.

We cleared into Puerto Princessa, and then out of the country with the PP Customs Office, for a cost of 115 pesos for each clearance (a total of 230 pesos). They were helpful and courteous.

Note: If clearing in or out with Customs, visit Immigration first, as they need to sight your current visa or Immigration Clearance to leave the country.

Note: We found having a Customs Clearance form declaring the boat's entry into the Philippines very useful when we flew out of the country then re - entered. The airlines will ask that you have a return or on - going ticket when you enter the Philippines, but we were able to prove that we were returning to our boat, which had been cleared into the country, and would exit the Philippines in it.

### **1.5.7 Health**

**Soggy Paws – 2022 – Davao:** Since COVID, neither Immigration nor Customs would issue a clearance out without having first cleared with Quarantine. The office is in downtown Davao.

**Soggy Paws – 2018:** There is a quarantine office in Davao, but to my knowledge, no yacht ever checked in or out with Quarantine. I don't know about other ports.

### **1.5.8 Pets**

Note: Checking in at Davao, with the boat at Samal Island, no one ever does any pet paperwork.

#### **Noonsite – Latest info online as of Dec 2022:**

Yachts with animals on board must get an import permit from the Philippine Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) in Manila.

E-mail [nvgsonline@bai.da.gov.ph](mailto:nvgsonline@bai.da.gov.ph) or [baiquarantineph@gmail.com](mailto:baiquarantineph@gmail.com) with the following information:

- a. species & breed of animal
- b. sex, age and number of animals
- c. expected date of arrival
- d. country of origin
- e. address, phone, email address & contact details of importer

Website: [www.bai.da.gov.ph](http://www.bai.da.gov.ph)

A health certificate is also required for each pet from a duly licensed veterinarian, dated within 30 days before your date of arrival in the Philippines. The health certificate should certify that the animal is free from, and has not been recently exposed to, any dangerous or communicable disease, and that it has been given anti-rabies and other required inoculations.

Yachts, especially those with animals on board, are expected to contact the quarantine medical officer at the port of entry 24 hours before arrival, but the authorities are aware of the impracticality of this requirement and may waive it, provided the yacht proceeds to an official port of entry.

Both the health certificate and BAI approval should be presented on arrival.

The yacht will be inspected and a fee charged.

**Soggy Paws - 2014:** Pets are not a problem checking in to Davao. You leave your boat at the marina in Samal, and take a ferry in to check in first with Immigration, and then Customs. To my knowledge no one even asked about pets on board.

#### ***1.5.9 Stopping at Outer Places Before Officially Clearing In***

**Soggy Paws – 2018:** It seems to be an accepted practice to check in with the Police or Coast Guard at the first stop, and tell them your intentions to make your way to a port with clearance facilities. Also, the Philippine Coast Guard has monitoring stations at key points where ships normally pass. We encountered them at both southern tips of the Gulf of Davao, and in going through the Hinatuan Passage. If you have AIS, they will call you on VHF 16 by name and take you off 16 and ask a few questions (destination, eta, crew, cargo, master's name) ... once they called us by MMSI only!

**Soggy Paws - 2014:** Based on what I've read from other cruisers, this seems not to be a problem. A number of boats wait to clear into Cebu or Puerto Galera or Puerto Princesa, having cruised their way into the port of entry over a week or two.

We ourselves made an overnight stop on our first entry to the Gulf of Davao from Palau, but we purposely selected a somewhat remote anchorage.

On the second entry, coming from Indonesia, we stopped overnight at the Sarangani Islands (just south of the Gulf of Davao), and were visited by a Coast Guard boat, who did not seem bothered by the fact that we were stopping for a couple of days, before heading up to Davao to clear in. They were interested in who we were, where we were coming from, and where we were going, but were not concerned with clearance procedures.

However, when we did finally check into Immigration, we accidentally let slip that we had waited a day (in the marina in Samal) before going in to check in at the Immigration office. The Immigration official was pretty upset with this. So don't be too casual about your official procedures.

#### ***1.5.10 Inter-Country Clearances***

**Sail the Philippines FB Group – December 2024 – Davao Arrival:** Heads up, domestic clearance in Davao. You now have to clear into Davao, sending pre arrival emails to quarantine, immigration and customs. We are staying at the Ocean View marina and had to confirm this morning that we had sent pre arrival before they would open the gate. The marina did say that they will be fined if boats don't send pre clear emails.

Quarantine will ask for your free pratique from your original port of entry (or last port). If you email it, you don't have to visit their office. Immigration will ask for your last clearance, they were ok when we said that Puerto Princesa didn't issue one. Customs were more difficult when we couldn't provide clearance from PP (we pointed out that PP told us that domestic clearance isn't required etc) and won't issue the paper work to us until they have talked to PP directly. They got a little ansty when we said we left PP three months ago and needed an explanation why it had taken us so long to get to Davao... They are also coming in the morning to inspect the boat. Only charge (apart from transport costs....) was 130 pesos for the paperwork at Customs.

Responses from others:

- The official requirements are:
  - all yachts should check out with Customs upon departing domestic ports based on Department of Transportation 2024-020 (but most ports do not require this);
  - according to Quarantine regulations all boats must check in with them upon arrival in Philippines but some Quarantine offices (esp. Cebu) require check in even for domestic-to-domestic port travel although the regulation is not specific on this point and it is IMHO a misinterpretation of the regulation.
  - The new customs regulation for check out at every port is in response to a recent incident where a significant Person of Interest escaped the country on a boat to Singapore in order to evade arrest

**Sail the Philippines FB Group – December 2024 – Cebu Arrival:** We just anchored in front of Cebu Yacht Club and I spoke to them on the telephone. They say we need to visit Quarantine before we are allowed to leave our dinghy at the Yacht Club. We already checked into the country 1 month ago and cleared Quarantine Customs and Immigration.

I called the head Quarantine officer in Cebu. He confirmed that we need to check in to every port we visit in the Philippines also if we just anchor in Cebu area. The price in Cebu for Quarantine papers are 6000 peso every time we go to a new port.

He also informed us we need to visit Immigration and Customs at every port. And we need to advise all of them before we arrive.

Responses from others:

- There is no rule that requires a pleasure boat engaged in personal tourism and recreation to check in at every port. There is such a rule that does apply to commercial boats of any size. Having said that, Cebu authorities do not appear to have read the rule in detail and I am aware of a number of instances where Cebu Coast Guard etc. have demanded inspection at check in. Finally, there is a new rule from Coast Guard that requires ALL boats to CHECK OUT of every port (see attached) although this is usually only enforced at the final port before exiting the country.
- (From a guy retired from Philippines Coast Guard) Quarantine inspection (together with immigration and customs inspections) is done only at the first port of entry (or the first port where you will enter coming from a foreign port). Vessels cleared and issued free pratique by the bureau of Quarantine are deemed cleared for all domestic ports within the Ph. Quarantine, Customs and Immigration clearances are only needed from the last port prior departure for a foreign port. This is written in the Dept of Health's Admin Order 186 or Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9271 - <https://elibrary.judiciary.gov.ph/thebo.../showdocs/10/40669>  
Unfortunately, the guys at the Cebu quarantine gave you the wrong info or they were quoting a procedure which was previously implemented when the country was under COVID (said procedure was already rescinded).

**Soggy Paws – May 2021 – Leaving Samal for points north:** We were advised by another cruiser that it would be a good idea when leaving Samal (Davao area) to stop in at the Coast

Guard office on Samal and get a clearance out. This took about 10 minutes, cost nothing, and we ended up with an official piece of paper that said the Coast Guard was happy with us leaving. As this was just as Covid was winding up, other ports (except Port Carmen) DID want us to take Covid tests, or prove Covid vaccination as we cruised around. Bohol wouldn't even let us in at all. We never went to any large ports—just cruised around stopping in small towns/anchorage.

**Soggy Paws – April 2018:** Based on other cruiser's experiences in the last couple of years, we did not clear out of Davao for our next port (Cebu/Port Carmen and then Puerto Galera).

**Solita - August 2013:** In 2012 we were told by Customs in Puerto Princessa that we do need to clear in and out of major ports as we travelled through the Philippines. They gave us a clearance to Cebu, our next major port, and charged us 200 pesos to clear in.

Two months later, we arrived in Cebu. We spent 4 months on our boat refit before visiting Customs in Cebu City, to clear in and out on the one day. They were fine with this, charged us 150 pesos for the paperwork, and cleared us out to Palawan, even though we wouldn't be arriving there for many months. They also inferred that cruising boats should clear through major ports in the Philippines, but they didn't seem too rigid about this.

When we arrived in Puerto Princessa, we cleared into Puerto Princessa, and then out of the country with the PP Customs Office, for a cost of 115 pesos for each clearance (a total of 230 pesos). They were helpful and courteous.

## **1.6 Local Information and Customs**

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** Filipinos consider their children to be more worthy than themselves in almost all aspects of life. While you are anchored in a secluded spot, if a fishing boat should come along side with a child or two on board, giving a gift for the children is taken as a friendly sign and an acceptable gesture -- superior to offering a gift to the parents themselves. Tip: Before entering Philippines waters, buy a few writing books, pencils and ball pens (school supplies) as gifts for children – if fish are offered in return for your gift it is impolite to refuse, but accept only enough for one meal.

Rum, gin and beer are very inexpensive in the Philippines (In a store: US\$2+ for a bottle of rum, US\$4+ for a bottle of gin, US\$.75+ for a bottle of beer) so do not stock up on these items before you arrive; stock up on these items before you leave the Philippines.

Whiskey and Brandy are considered expensive items in the Philippines – having a couple of spare bottles on board when you arrive will give you a currency tradable for favours and assistance. However, do not encourage people to drink to excess on board your boat – most Filipino's, by virtue of their religion, do not drink regularly and some have been reported to become intoxicated quickly.

### **1.6.1 Holidays in the Philippines**

**Soggy Paws – Dec 2024: Source:**

<https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/philippines/2025>

The following is a list of public holidays for the country as a whole for 2025. Each region will also have a few additional holidays to celebrate local feast days/festivals.

## Holidays and Observances in Philippines in 2025

Date		Name	Type
<b>Jan 1</b>	Wednesday	New Year's Day	Regular Holiday
<b>Jan 23</b>	Thursday	First Philippine Republic Day	Special Working Day
<b>Jan 27</b>	Monday	Lailatul Isra Wal Mi Raj (Tentative Date)	Common Local Holiday
<b>Jan 29</b>	Wednesday	Lunar New Year's Day	Special Non-working Holiday
<b>Feb 25</b>	Tuesday	People Power Anniversary	Observance
<b>Mar 1</b>	Saturday	Ramadan Start (Tentative Date)	Observance
<b>Mar 20</b>	Thursday	March Equinox	Season
<b>Mar 31</b>	Monday	Eidul-Fitar (Tentative Date)	Regular Holiday
<b>Apr 9</b>	Wednesday	The Day of Valor	Regular Holiday
<b>Apr 17</b>	Thursday	Maundy Thursday	Regular Holiday
<b>Apr 18</b>	Friday	Good Friday	Regular Holiday
<b>Apr 19</b>	Saturday	Black Saturday	Special Non-working Holiday
<b>Apr 20</b>	Sunday	Easter Sunday	Observance
<b>May 1</b>	Thursday	Labor Day	Regular Holiday
<b>Jun 7</b>	Saturday	Eid al-Adha (Feast of the Sacrifice) (Tentative Date)	Regular Holiday
<b>Jun 8</b>	Sunday	Eid al-Adha Day 2 (Tentative Date)	Common Local Holiday
<b>Jun 12</b>	Thursday	Independence Day	Regular Holiday
<b>Jun 21</b>	Saturday	June Solstice	Season
<b>Jun 27</b>	Friday	Amun Jadid (Tentative Date)	Muslim, Common Local Holiday
<b>Aug 21</b>	Thursday	Ninoy Aquino Day	Special Non-working Holiday



Date		Name	Type
<b>Aug 25</b>	Monday	National Heroes Day	Regular Holiday
<b>Sep 3</b>	Wednesday	Yamashita Surrender Day	Special Working Day
<b>Sep 5</b>	Friday	Maulid un-Nabi (Tentative Date)	Common Local Holiday
<b>Sep 8</b>	Monday	Feast of the Nativity of Mary	Special Working Day
<b>Sep 23</b>	Tuesday	September Equinox	Season
<b>Nov 1</b>	Saturday	All Saints' Day	Special Non-working Holiday
<b>Nov 2</b>	Sunday	All Souls' Day	Observance
<b>Nov 30</b>	Sunday	Bonifacio Day	Regular Holiday
<b>Dec 8</b>	Monday	Feast of the Immaculate Conception	Special Non-working Holiday
<b>Dec 21</b>	Sunday	December Solstice	Season
<b>Dec 24</b>	Wednesday	Christmas Eve	Special Non-working Holiday
<b>Dec 25</b>	Thursday	Christmas Day	Regular Holiday
<b>Dec 30</b>	Tuesday	Rizal Day	Regular Holiday
<b>Dec 31</b>	Wednesday	New Year's Eve	Special Non-working Holiday

## 1.7 Yachtsmen's Services - Overview

### 1.7.1 Money

**Soggy Paws – 2024:** The Philippines currency is the Philippine Piso (pronounced peso by everyone). In June 2018, the exchange rate was about 58 pesos per US Dollar. The Philippines have a good ATM network, and it's not hard to get cash from ATMS in the larger cities. Some Europeans and Australians have had trouble occasionally with their credit cards at ATM machines, but usually this is resolved by calling the home banking institution.

We found some smaller cities only have one or two ATM's and if those ATM's are down or out of cash, (frequently) you may be out of luck. So when you find a convenient ATM, load up on cash.

The biggest challenge with money in the Philippines is that every ATM charges a 250 PHP ATM fee. And most banks limit withdrawals to 10,000 PHP. So finding a bank that will let you withdraw 20,000 PHP cuts your ATM fee effectively in half. So far, BPI (Bank of Philippine Islands) is the one I have had the most success with. Occasionally I find another ATM/bank that will let me withdraw 20K PHP, but not often. And some ATMs in small towns will only let you withdraw 5,000 PHP.

Credit Cards are accepted in the big cities in the larger establishments, but often a 3-5% surcharge is added. But cash is the norm in most of the country, and in the small stores and services everywhere.

**Transferring Cash from Australia:** One friend who's credit card would not work in the ATM's in Puerto Galera, found it impossible to request a cash transfer from their home bank in Australia. They tried several online cash transfer mechanisms, but each time, when it was discovered that they were out of Australia, the transaction was cancelled. They finally had to have a relative initiate the transfer.

### **1.7.2 Diesel and Gasoline**

**Soggy Paws – 2024:** Buying fuel in the Philippines is not a problem like it is in Indonesia. The only problem is, actual fuel docks are few and far between. There are nice gas stations in most areas, and you can hire a trike to take you and your jugs to the closest gas station.

### **1.7.3 Propane (Cooking Gas)**

**Soggy Paws – 2024:** For safety reasons, the Philippines prohibit propane tank refills. They have a "swap your tank" system. If you are planning to stay in the Philippines for awhile, it would be worth buying a local tank.

### **1.7.4 Groceries**

Everyone eats in the Philippines, just like the rest of the world. However, Western Food (things like cheese, wine, good crackers, good beef, boneless chicken, etc) are not readily available, except in the big cities. Every little village has a small store (colloquially called a sari sari store) where you can buy the basics. In the big cities (Davao, Cebu, Manila) there are a few stores that carry western goods, and a couple of Costco-like stores called S&R.

### **1.7.5 Water**

See comments in the various sections.

### **1.7.6 Haulout, Storage, and Repair Facilities**

Here is an overview of haulout facilities in the northern PI. More details on these facilities, and other facilities, are covered in their respective sections below.

**Puerto Galera Yacht Club – 2015:** The travel lift closest to Puerto Galera is located at **Papaya Yacht Charter & Services**, at Brgy. Papaya, Nasugbu, using the ex-Team New Zealand travel hoist (previously located Maya Maya Yacht Club). Approximate GPS location is: 14.176N 120.606E. Services offered are: haul out, below-waterline repairs and maintenance, engine overhaul and yacht storage. Contact: +63 920 925-9023 <http://pycsi.com/>

The next nearest travel lift is located at the **Watercraft Venture** in Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Olongapo, Zambales. <http://www.watercraftventure.ph/>

The next nearest Philippine travel lift is located at the **Manila Yacht Club**, where welcome is reserved mostly for club members and reciprocal club members.

Also, in Subic Bay, there is a haul-out facility using a crane. Especially popular with wide catamarans and maxi yachts because the costs and working arrangements are reported to be more flexible, compared to Watercraft Venture. Contact Translift Port and Equipment Services, telephone +63 918 366-4663 or +63 908 894-0622

The nearest public dry dock is located in Subic Bay Freeport (see page top photograph), owned and operated by Subic Dry Dock Corporation, a long day-sail North of Puerto Galera, where almost any size of private or luxury yacht can be accommodated in one of two dry dock vessels.

South of Puerto Galera there is a dry dock at Jasaan, Cagayan de Oro city, operated by PICMW. Recent reports from yachts using the Jasaan dry dock are favourable both from a yacht-friendly stand point and also the cost was considered low compared to alternative dry dock facilities outside of the Philippines around Asia.

#### **1.7.6.1 RRYD Shipyard, Bataan**

No cruiser I know has been to this facility, and PGYC's info doesn't mention them, but they emailed me this: Hi, this is the head of sales for RRYD shipyard here in Bataan. And we do accept new built fiberglass, aluminium and mild steel boat. We do supply any kind of boat and our shipyard specialized in yacht, sail boat, dive boat, speed boat and etc. Kindly contact us only on our email, [sales.rryd@gmail.com](mailto:sales.rryd@gmail.com) or text/call at 09272239774.

#### **1.7.6.2 Watercraft Ventures (in Subic Bay)**

**Dream Away – April 2016:** We arrived with a reservation at Watercraft Venture Marina. No VHF contact, so no-one to help with lines, or tell us where to berth. We had booked, but maybe we should have been more proactive and phoned or emailed the day before our arrival.

Watercraft Venture Corporation:

Bldg. 1031 Rizal Hi-Way,

Subic Bay Freeport Zone,

Olongapo City, Kalaklan, Zambales.

Tel: +63 47 252 1739 / 1740 Fax: +63 47 252 1738

Email: Cindy Kathleen Dela Cruz (known as Kath) at [Watercraftventure@gmail.com](mailto:Watercraftventure@gmail.com)

Her mobile is +63 932 865 6849.

Technical Operation Manager Jared Leong. Mobile: +63 922 837 3658 or +63 917 596 0231.

The marina would have been happy to complete our check-in (\$\$). They were quoting \$50US EACH for Quarantine, Customs and Immigration, \$100US to coordinate the procedure, and 1,500Php for Port Authority. (The fees quoted are per boat so total is \$US 250 + Port Authority) As we had previously checked in in Tacloban, we only had to pay the Port Authority fee, for which we never received a receipt. Best advice is to check in elsewhere before arriving in Subic.

We docked into a vacant slip and went to talk to the marina office staff. All was well; we were expected and told we could stay in our current berth for a week before the owner returned. We

organised a lift out date for the following month and agreed to move to another slip at the end of the week. So far all has gone as planned and we are happy with our decision to come here. Work is being scheduled during our absence and more urgent jobs are currently being dealt with at a very reasonable cost. We have encountered no security issues and are comfortable walking outside the marina at night.



The lift at Watercraft Venture

**Noonsite – Oct 2015 – Watercraft Venture:** Watercraft Ventures, next to Subic Bay Yacht Club marina, has a limited number of pontoon spaces, best booked in advance, at reasonable cost. The yard is well managed by Jared Leong, and it does good work and well priced. Get full quotes first. Jared and his engineer, Ryan, drove 4 hours up the coast to collect a raw water pump from us - it had already been 'repaired' at Subic through them. It was returned, properly mended, and fitted within 2 days, all under warranty. Excellent service.

**Windchimes – June 2014 – Watercraft Venture (from Noonsite):** We arrived in Subic Bay late May 2013 with the idea of hauling out and having some repairs done. The only places where we could haul were Kudat and Subic Bay - we decided to head for Subic Bay. Having heard all the stories of woe and the negative comments about Subic Bay and in particular Watercraft Venture Corporation, we decided to be our own judge.

Making contact by e-mail and asking lots of questions, it became clear that they would be up to the task of hauling us out. The yard sent a list of charges and what work that could be done, so from there on we knew what to expect.

On arrival we spent a week at their small marina so as to ready the boat for haul out (we had to make shore arrangements for accommodation as you are not allowed to live on board whilst on the hard).

The day of haul out went very well, 2 swimmers in the water so as to position the slings, 2 yard people on board as line handlers....Time to lift.....the haulout crew did an excellent job and at no time was the boat in any danger...from the lift out point to the hard stand went smoothly and positioning the boat even better..in all, the operation went very well.

Watercraft have the sole right to below the water line in regards to scraping and sanding and applying your brand of antifoul (they quoted on this and outlined what was to be done) so you knew before what it would cost. We had a sanding back to primer coat and as we had International as our paint system they applied a 2 pack primer/ bond coat and 20 litres of Interswift 655 antifoul and boot top cut in.

We also had problems with a very noisy shaft so I decided to modify the stern tube, have the shaft checked and add an inboard end cutlass bearing, at the same time replacing the water end cutlass bearing.

Working in conjunction with Mr Jared Leong the Technical Operation Manager and a very competent person we added an extension to the stern tube, fitted a PSS seal, new bearings in the thrust block and all went back OK (this job was quoted on for work done by the yard as I did a lot of work myself as well).

I had the topsides sanded back and primer coat and 2-3 coats of finish looks good (once again job quoted).

Back again in the water, the lift and splashing were carried out with great care and as we had a berth in the small marina there were yard people on board as well as on the dock. We spent all our time at Watercrafts small marina and in the event of a typhoon or strong winds we were shifted over to the Subic Bay Yacht Club onto one of their vacant berths. Watercraft have an arrangement with SBYC for this, all you pay is for water and electricity. By the way 220volts AC is AT 60 Hz - so be careful with your AC power useage, some things will not be happy running on 60 cycles.

My overall experience with Subic Bay, and in particular Watercraft, was a good one. Make sure you know what you are getting (Quoted work) as you would anywhere else, ask questions, be pleasant & happy, treat people with respect and the jobs go to plan...remember they have seen it all before.

**Before - Mar-June 2013:** We pulled into Subic in front of the yard (Watercraft Ventures) and they had us in the slings and on the hard inside an hour. Very careful crew on the Travel lift, even put a guy in the water to place the slings. Once they propped the boat up they welded all the supports together with re-bar, very secure method.

We were not allowed to stay on the boat while in the yard, didn't really want to it's a terribly dirty, dusty place, so stayed in a small hotel a 25 min walk away, major downside was Kazi (the dog) was not allowed so she guarded the boat from 7 to 7. Once things were settled began the process to drop the rudder for a look, the yard guys(3) began hand sanding the hull prior paint and filled the rather deep coral gouges in the keel from our fun in Yap. As the guys were sanding I began digging a pit to allow the rudder to drop free, about 3 1/2 ft deep by 3'x2', whenever the supervisor went away the guys took my tools away and dug, glad they did, has to be some benefit to geaserhood. Rigged both tackles from the running backstays under the rudder to slow its descent, glad I had the look, was better than had thought, minimal electrolysis and wear on the post, redoing the the stuffing box was a major pain but was able to re-secure it to the hull and hope fully cure that leak point. Got it all back together with lots of grease and elbow-grease. It all works with just two fingers to steer again.

Finished the bottom painting and back in the water for a 5 min putt to a slip in the **Subic Bay Yacht Club**.

### **Yard Details:**

Costs: In and out P400 x LOA

Laydays: P30 x LOA

Utilities: water and electricity (220) metered, and garbage charges

I will be happy if we get out for \$3,000 US.

Higher fees if you use outside workers, plus royalty fees. All underwater work must be done by WCV employees.

For security reasons as of 3/1 you can not stay onboard. This was a real hit for the local caretakers, but thieving has been a problem. We have been warned many times to lockup and don't leave anything unattended.

Barefoot Dave set his bag down to photograph someone's launching and lost P12,000. Guard at gate and one roaming 24 hours. So they are making a serious effort to control problem. Still some local worker/caretaker liveaboards.

We didn't plan on staying onboard, (shoot me first), but we had no reservations and after a frustrating afternoon of looking, nothing was available, Holy Week!! Didn't you know. Easter is a week and a half off.

The yard was not much help, they were unprepared for this problem. They did let us stay the first night, and the second day, with the help of a taxi driver, I found a nice place. He was adamant that I not look in Olongapo, (sp?) due to security risks. Mango Valley #3 (047) 2502063/2064 is clean, quiet, simple, safe, 20 minute walk to boat, close to lots of groceries, restaurants and fast food, the BIG mall, ATM's, and beach. P1,600 and up. No cooking or refrigerators, but they may have them available after Holy Week, (watch me genuflect). Everywhere else sold out until after Easter.

Let the yard know at least a day ahead of your arrival, so they can prepare an entry/exit permit.

Strangely, the only place without cell phone service was our last night stop (14 44 493N / 120 16 069E) a 10 mile sail to Subic Bay. Nobody shot at us, but perhaps that was because we followed a US Navy ship in.

All and all we are very satisfied with the workmanship, (better than what I would do). We anchored in front of the ways and they immediately had us out of the water. Very safe, 6 guys with a diver in the water for final positioning of straps before elevation. By 2:00 we were in place with stands welded in place with rebar.

In 2 days the boats was prepped, and first coat of paint on. 5 guys working on it and very helpful to R as he dropped the rudder and also had to dig a hole. The negatives: Very dirty, dusty, pathetic cats and NO credit cards.

He says we will be out in 10 days, he has many boats coming in. We were lucky for our spot, since they had just launched 4 boats.

### **1.7.6.3 Papaya Yacht Services (near PGYC & Subic)**

**Screensaver – 2016 - Papaya Yacht Services (Near PGYC & Subic):** Slipping a yacht in Philippines with 7ft draft can be challenging as places like Port Carmen and Davao can only get

you out and in at specific high tides due to depth issues. These problems do not exist at Watercraft Ventures in Subic, or Papaya, where you can haul out at any time.

My haulout date was set a few days away, so I decided to head up to Subic and pick up the paint, Ocean Master Kruiser 3. Typically this is very similar to International's Micron 66 and comes at a similar pricing ( expensive) But it has done me well and the timing was right with significant discounts.

Watercraft Ventures are a little too regimented and little more expensive, plus you can not stay on your boat, whereas Papaya were more flexible and willing to work with you. Rohonson from Papaya was very helpful in my case. If you go to Papaya, you need to make sure you have everything between yourself and Papaya as there is no way you can just duck down to the hardware or to any marine shop, there is virtually nothing here.

That said I did have some stuff shipped in, and other than Fedx being a painful rip off, if you used UPS all went well and Rohonson was also very helpful with receiving these items before I arrived.

I got a quote from Papaya and other than items I changed he stuck to his quote. In my case approximately 67000 (\$1800 Ozy) for everything excluding the paint. This included about 22000 (600 Ozy) in polishing, plus some minor damage, power water etc. So in all, while this was not the cheapest I believe it was very reasonable.

The travel lift is more than big enough for Screensaver and it has the height as well so there were no issues hauling me out. Probably 50% of the yards here won't let you do your own Antifouling as I guess they want the revenue. I was however allowed to do my own water blasting, so as soon as her keel was on the ground, away I(we) went.

All did not quite go to plan though. My water blaster is 230v 50hz whereas the power here is 220v 60hz and my water blaster wasn't that keen on that. It ran for about 8 min then stopped for 3 minutes, ran for 8 and so on. I hadn't had issues with the difference between Australia and Philippines power before this, so I was a little surprised. In the end PYCS wheeled out there's with couple of guys and we each did a side.

The wind had begun to get up and Screensaver was standing broadside on approaching gale force winds, and I was getting nervous. I asked if we could put the travel lift back just for a bit of extra peace of mind, as Screensaver began quiver in the wind. No problem--they did everything I asked, and I was very glad as the wind peaked at 48knots over the next two days and I stayed with the travel lift and stands all supporting Screensaver.

Sanding was under way and I usually get the top sides polished whenever I haul out in the vain hope that this will help the Gel coat and retain some value in Screensaver for Mr Gucci in many years. While the Polishing process was a taking longer than I liked and anticipated they were doing a far better job than I have had for many years, and possibly the best job.

#### **1.7.6.4 Manila Bay Yacht Club**

**Puerto Galera Yacht Club website – 2015:** There is a travel lift is located at the **Manila Yacht Club**, where welcome is reserved mostly for club members and reciprocal club members



#### **1.7.6.5 Holiday Oceanview Marina (Samal Island, near Davao, Mindanao)**

**Soggy Paws – 2024:** I have seen FB posts from people at HOV who have been hauled and launched in 2024. But whether they will do it for long term work, or long term storage, or whether their lift mechanism is working, is unknown. Best to join and ask the question here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/OceanviewSamalCruisers>

**Soggy Paws – September 2019:** As of this month, the marina is no longer accepting haulout reservations. The marina is still operating, but their adjacent condotel has been completed and they are trying to establish a more resort-like atmosphere. We were able to get a short haul onto the ramp to fix a saildrive issue.

**Soggy Paws – 2015:** Holiday Ocean View Marina at the north end of Samal Island in the Gulf of Davao has a good solid railway and boat storage facility. They can handle catamarans up to about 50 feet in length, and monohulls up to about 6 ft draft (7 ft possible, but can haul/launch only on extreme tides). Deeper draft vessels will need to schedule their haulout around the higher tides. We hauled and launched our 5.5 ft mono at a 1.5m tide (using WXTide32's tide table for Davao). There is a good selection of skilled and unskilled workers available at the boat yard. Almost everything (repair parts and supplies) can be found in Davao, or shipped in from Manila or Cebu. The marina is a nice one, with floating concrete docks and a nice clubhouse with good cruiser amenities. The city of Davao has lots of parts, etc. There is a marina shuttle that runs (free) 3 times a day to the ferry dock for Davao. There is great shopping/provisioning plus big malls in Davao.

Make sure you contact the marina ahead of time to schedule your haulout. There is usually a queue, and you can't just pop in and get hauled tomorrow. However, they will try to accommodate boats with an emergency situation.

See [this section](#) for contact info.

#### **1.7.6.6 Port Carmen Boatyards**

There are two boatyards in Port Carmen, Zeke's (aka Pinoy Boat Services) and Pepe's.

[http://www.noonsite.com/Noonsite/PDF\\_Files/PortCarmen](http://www.noonsite.com/Noonsite/PDF_Files/PortCarmen)

##### **Zeke's (Pinoy Boat Services)**

Email: [pinoyboatservices@gmail.com](mailto:pinoyboatservices@gmail.com)

Zeke's Mobile Number: 0917 542 9700 (confirmed 2021)

Nelson's Mobile Number: 0955 277 9896 (Zeke's foreman/accountant)

Full-service yacht storage, maintenance, and repair facility with slips for rent (electricity and water) and a large modern clubhouse with bar, restaurant, WiFi and toilets. Armed security.

##### **Pepe's (H and M Boat Services)**

Cell: 09169249068

Email: [pepe2hermosilla@gmail.com](mailto:pepe2hermosilla@gmail.com)

Also known as H and M Boat Services, run by Pepe Hermosilla. Whilst this is principally a repair facility, there are 16 slips for rent. This yard/marina is accessed through Zeke's yard and is at



the end of the Southern arm of Pt. Carmen. The yard is fairly primitive, with rickety docks, limited workspace undercover, no running water, and no showers/toilets, however, it has received very good reports from cruisers, particularly for woodwork and fibreglass repairs.

**Soggy Paws - June 2021 – Zeke’s New Catamaran Haulout:** We had a saildrive problem and on short notice, Zeke put us on his new “catamaran haulout” spot. This is a new area just behind the clubhouse—it used to be mangroves and they dug it out and concreted a ramp. It was very economical and pretty painless to essentially careen there for a few days to fix the saildrive issue.

Docking Fee: P1,000 (one time fee covers their time getting us in/out)

Mooring Fee: P300/day

Labor: P860/day (billed in 2 hour increments)

They blocked us and tied us in at high tide and we worked during low tide in a brown sandy bottom (not too gooey). The only downside was the mangroves (where our ropes were tied) were full of very fast black ants. Within one hour of tying up we found them moving aboard en masse. We sprayed one congregation and all the lines but still ended up find 4-5 other nests (with eggs) in various places on deck a few days after we launched. We were only there 4 days. Mozzies weren’t too bad.

The workers are good and work hard.

If you want to haul all the way up (ie for a paint job, etc) here are the additional fees:

Trailer Up/Down: P12,000 including trailer but no labor

Loader Up/Down: P7,000 including loader but no labor

Daily Fee: P300/day

Labor: P860/day per person

Zeke also hauled a big 62 foot catamaran on a ramp just south of Zeke’s actual marina, on the same high tide. There are a few other boats (monos) hauled out there. So the “only one boat at a time” comment in Noonsite is no longer true.

**Camile - January 2014 (from Noonsite):** Camille is an early Catana catamaran that has done a lot of miles. We came into Zeke’s yard at Pt Carmen in March 2013 to investigate some persistent brown stains coming through the deck paint. In fact our investigations opened up a whole can of worms.

To shorten a very long story, we had to remove many many layers of top coat and non skid deck paint and filler to get to the top layer of fibre glass on our foam cored boat. Maybe 200 to 300 small cracks were ground out, epoxy filled and sanded down. The whole top of the boat was then given 2 layers of epoxy glass, faired smooth and painted with primer, top coat and non skid. Now the boat looks better than new and we have started on the top sides and under the bridge deck. We have also had paintwork and extensive woodwork and varnishing done inside the boat and stainless steel fabrication outside.

All the above has been done to a very high standard by Zeke’s on-site workforce. We are very pleased with it and all at a cost that would be much more expensive elsewhere.

We sheltered here during the super typhoon Haiyan that devastated nearby Leyte and Samar last November. There was no damage to any of the yachts, and Zeke and some of his men

were on hand to see the yachts were kept safe. The bar here is a joy to use and would not be out of place in a posh yacht club. It is a major asset in a boat yard.

A word of caution: many of the workers are highly skilled in their chosen occupations, but some are not. It is up to you to monitor your jobs and weed out any that are not performing well.

While we have been here there have been some issues over paint jobs on a couple of yachts. In my opinion the problem could have been dealt with more sympathetically by the management here, and as a result, one of those yacht owners has been very vocal in his condemnation of the boatyard. The painter who did both those jobs now no longer works here.

You won't get a quote for the job here – everything is material costs plus labour for the day. However, you do get weekly bills so you can monitor ongoing costs quite effectively.

In conclusion, don't believe everything you hear. Come on in and talk to the other yachties, look the place over and then make your decision.

**Solita - January 2014 (from Noonsite):** Solita has just completed a 3 months refit at Pepe's boat yard, Republic Drydock, Pt Carmen, Cebu, the Philippines. We have had an amazing amount of interior and some exterior work done here, and we are very pleased with the results. The workers we used are good at their job, lovely to deal with and professional in their care of the boats they work with. Pepe is also very easy to deal with, and all his bills are transparent and fair. The costs for all of our boat work, yard fees and electricity was very reasonable and probably far less than in any other country.

This is our second refit at Pepe's – we spent 5 months here last year having a lot of exterior timber, fiberglass and paint work done. Pepe even created a shallow-draft careening grid for us so we could anti-foul here. We were so happy with last year's experience that we knew we would return this year.

It should be acknowledged that facilities here are "third world" and that future customers should come prepared to live and work in conditions not as luxurious as those in Australian, American or British boat yards. The finished job may not always be to everyone's very high standards. Having stated that, the camaraderie between cruisers, the opportunity to share a cold beer at Zeke's bar at the end of the day and the knowledge that you are achieving great results at a reasonable cost makes it all worthwhile.

There have been some negative comments about the boat yards this past year, and while it is imperative that all opinions should be aired in the public domain, it should be remembered that these are the opinions of individuals, and that they can have serious consequences if taken generally. Unfortunately these recent comments have created some legal and business issues for the yard owners, and this has cascaded down to the workers and other people who earn their living by providing services to the boat owners.

Our experiences here at the Pt Carmen boat yards have generally been positive ones, so we would just like to add our comments into the mix.

**Flow - April 2013:** We had hoped to have a haul out at Zeke's marina, but he has only one cradle and that had been occupied for months by one boat. What he can offer is to secure alongside his jetty and wait for a tide that is low enough so you can do some work.

**Kelaerin - December 2011:** The entrance to Port Carmen is guarded by a reef. There is a channel through it at 10°34.59'N, 124°02.28'E and then you carefully follow the sticks in the water to **Zeke's** place a mile south of the entrance. We entered at low tide and never had less than 6ft under our keel.

Zeke is an expat American who has lived in the Philippines for 20 years. He has expanded his boat basin over the years and is known for getting good wood work done there and some engine work as well. He can use the slipway that belongs to the shipyard in between his two basins. There is no hardstand. Zeke built a small clubhouse, which serves good food, beer and wine at good prices. He charges the same price for moorage no matter what size the boat is, 250 pesos a day, which includes water and electricity. The boats are Med-moored on both sides of the ditch, so passing other boats to get farther in can be tricky. Zeke was chock-a-block full when we arrived, yet he managed to wiggle some things around and we had a unique tie up on the outside of a catamaran until we could move in when someone else left.

It is an easy walk to the main highway to catch a bus into Cebu, where the shopping is best. There is not much in Port Carmen itself other than a market and small stores. Danao is the closest town with a few local fast food restaurants, laundry services, department store and market. The Allied Bank is the only ATM that would work for us and the line to use it wraps around the block, especially on Fridays. Danao is known for its gun factory.

**Valhalla - May 2003:** From July 2002 through May 2003, VALHALLA was berthed at [Pinoy Boat Services](#) located in the 'Drydock' area between Danao and Carmen, Cebu Island, Philippines.

The boatyard is located within Port Carmen as shown below and is an excellent place to have minor or major repairs completed. It's convenient for access to Cebu City (1 hr bus ride) where just about anything can be obtained. Propane is available locally (Lilia's Store, 'Drydock City' - they will get your tank filled) and fuel in Danao or Carmen. Danao has a large department store and supermarket and good local market. Carmen has the best Internet Cafes in the area and small local market.

Anchoring is available in Port Carmen, northwest of the entrance.

**Pinoy Boat Services Website:** Pinoy Boat Services is a full service yacht storage, maintenance and repair facility in Port Carmen, Cebu, Philippines. You can stay here while you are in the Cebu area, or we can keep your boat safely here while you are away; and we can work on your boat. We can also deliver vessels of any size to anywhere in the world.

We specialize in fiberglass work, woodwork, and cabinet work on private yachts. We are capable of work on any scale, from repairing a single drawer to complete renovation of a bare hull. Hardwoods are easily and inexpensively available here in the Philippines, and our craftsmen are experts in their use

Our reputation for high quality & dependable service has helped us earn a loyal following and the distinction of being recognized as a premier repair facility. Offering full repair and maintenance services, we can meet almost any need.

Pinoy Boats services of Danao is a family,owned business with over 20 years experience in boats and repairs. From the outset, we have been committed to the highest standards of customer service for the boating community. Quality, professionalism and value has made

Pinoy Boats services of Danao the Philippines number one boat Repair centre, and a firm favourite with loyal customers throughout the country and the world.. Friendly professional advice We pride ourselves on providing our customers with a friendly and efficient service in all aspects of boating. You'll be dealing with professionals in sales, finance and service who really understand boats and the boating community. Together, they can help you with any query and ensure you get the boat, the deal and the service that's best for you.

You are more than welcome to live aboard your yacht in our dock while you are enjoying the delights of the Cebu area. Our yard is situated within a compound guarded by armed security personnel, and is convenient to Port Carmen and Danao City. Transport to Cebu, is easy, frequent and cheap.

You can leave your yacht here in our keeping indefinitely with complete confidence, and at most reasonable rates. We are positioned at ten and a half degrees north latitude on the east coast of Cebu island, about 20 nautical miles north of Cebu City. At this latitude destructive winds are very infrequent, and our yard is laid out so as to enjoy excellent typhoon protection. All vessels are moored fore and aft to heavily built jetties. Your boat will be kept here in cossetted safety under Zeke's watchful eye!

#### ***1.7.6.7 Porter's Marina Near Cebu City***

**2021:** Porter Marina is a yacht club located in Barangay Calero at the mouth of the Mactan Channel.

They have aluminum fabrication capabilities. I think they can haul out, but not positive. See this FB account (with a Whatsapp contact button):

<https://www.facebook.com/aluportergroup/>

and website:

<https://www.aluportergroup.com/>

Their website lists the following major services:

- Outboard engine servicing
- Fiberglass repair
- Boat painting
- Accessory installation
- Upholstery
- Boat maintenance

**Hamamas – Nov 2008:** We had arrived safe and sound at Porter Marina and Shipyard on Monday and that afternoon the divers came and measured up as they need to make a special cradle for each boat they slip. Tuesday the boys welded the cradle and Wednesday they inched us up. There were 8 men, a truck, a tracker, the Boss and 2 divers! The divers were using air straight from an ordinary compressor via a long hose, as they went under the boat to place the wedges on top of the struts to hold us steady. It was a bit near racking but they did an amazing job even though there was a lot of jabbering. Once we were steady on the cradle the tractor slowly pulled us out. Phew! I'd rather come out on a travel lift but these guys did very well.

They spent 17 days on the slipway, getting their rudder repaired.

<http://svhamamas.blogspot.com/2010/08/postcard-1-from-porter-marina-cebu-is.html>

#### **1.7.6.8 Kudat, Malaysia**

**Fellow Traveler - 2012:** Many boats in the Philippines go to **Kudat**, which is in Sabah, East Malaysia (Borneo) only a short sail across the Balabac straits from S. Palawan. It is about 400 miles from Bonbonon in Southern Negros. Big yard, huge travel lift, not the perfect boat yard, but a real one. It draws yachts from all over SE Asia. I will go there when I finally bite the bullet and haul my boat.

#### **1.7.7 Yacht Clubs and Marinas**

This section copied from Puerto Galera Marina website

Philippine yacht clubs, marinas and sailing clubs are few and far between when one considers that the Philippines comprises 7107 islands, with a vast expanse of safe sailing waters available in and around the Philippine archipelago. The Philippine yacht clubs, marinas and sailing clubs that do exist are generally determined to make every visitor feel as welcome as possible. Some also have the capability to offer short, medium & long term hardstand boat storage.

In this directory we have listed all the active Philippine yacht clubs, sailing clubs and marinas, starting with the one closest to Puerto Galera. Beyond Philippine yacht clubs, sailing clubs and marinas, don't forget to check out the Yacht Friendly Moorings section for information about other places to tie up or drop the hook, and to make friends in the Philippines after crossing the West Pacific, West Philippine Sea or the South China Sea

##### **1.7.7.1 Punta Fuego Yacht Club & Marina, Nasugbu, Batangas**

GPS Location: N14°07.79' E120°35.39'

Marina Facilities: Boat launching ramp, marina, showers, restaurant, Internet and fuel

Accepts visitors; short-stay marina berth (subject to availability), club membership absolutely required for medium & long-stay berthing.

Marine VHF: 72

Tel: +63 43 729-0182 & +63 917 511-1616

Email: [marina@clubpuntafuego.com](mailto:marina@clubpuntafuego.com)

www: <http://clubpuntafuego.com.ph>

**Screensaver – March 2017:** Probably the nicest and newest marina facility in the Philippines. Also charges at western prices. Clean tidy, small--around 25 berths, and 4 moorings, with another 4 going in.

I would not go here in a Typhoon unless I was sure of the wind direction. It could get sea action. There is a small café/restaurant/bar. Access beyond the marina is a little restricted as you are in a closed estate.

No Hardstand or haul out. It does however have a fuel dock that I have used twice.

**Kelaerin – Nov 2011:** Our first stop after leaving Subic was Punta Fuego, (14°07.7'N, 120°35.4'E), a private marina in a cove beneath the very exclusive community on the hills above for the very wealthiest of the Philippine families. There was room at the marina and they accept guests, but we comfortably anchored just outside. We had heard there was a restaurant on the hill and when we went to the bistro at the dock we were told that the shuttle bus was for residents only. The man standing next to her, obviously a resident and yacht owner, gently reprimanded the young lady, telling her they must be welcoming to other yachts and then sponsored us for the duration. When we went to pay our lunch bill we discovered he had picked up the tab. A nice beginning to our cruise.

#### **1.7.7.2 Taal Lake Yacht Club, Talisay, Batangas**

GPS Location: N14.083° E120.994°

(Note: no longer accessible from the sea)

Club Facilities: Launching ramp, showers, restaurant, accommodation (adjacent) and Internet

Accepts visitors on daily membership basis; full club membership required for regular use of the facilities.

Marine VHF: n/a

Tel: +63 917 838-3726

Email: [peter@tlyc.com](mailto:peter@tlyc.com)

<http://tlyc.com>

#### **1.7.7.3 Romblon Yacht Club, Romblon, Romblon**

GPS Location: N12°35.37' E122°16.42'

Considered Typhoon Safe

Club Facilities: Moorings, anchorage, boat launching ramp, sail training (dinghy); fuel and water (by arrangement). Clubhouse under construction, more facilities to be added in 2013/14

Accepts visitors; offers short, medium & long stay moorings.

Marine VHF: n/a

Tel: +63 918 247-9941

Email: [info@romblonyachtclub.com](mailto:info@romblonyachtclub.com)

<http://romblonyachtclub.com>

#### **1.7.7.4 Busuanga Yacht Club, Busuanga, Palawan**

GPS Location: N12°01.59' E119°59.00'

Considered Typhoon Safe

Club Facilities: Moorings. Showers, accommodation and restaurant, water, Internet, fuel and mechanic at adjacent Puerto Del Sol Resort

Accepts visitors; offers short, medium & long stay mooring.

Marine VHF: n/a

Tel: +63 977 201-2223

Email: [office@puertodelsolresort.com](mailto:office@puertodelsolresort.com)

<http://busuangayachtclub.com>

#### **1.7.7.5 Manila Yacht Club & Marina, Manila City, Metro Manila**

GPS Location: N14°33.66' E120°58.95'

Marina Facilities: Launching ramp, marina, moorings, travel hoist, showers, restaurant, Internet and fuel. Note: the marina is frequently at capacity but there is an anchorage outside the breakwater

Accepts visitors who arrive by boat only; club membership absolutely required for medium & long-stay berthing. ONLY open to club members and reciprocal club members.

Marine VHF: n/a

Tel: +63 2 523-6926

Email: [admin@manilayachtclub.org](mailto:admin@manilayachtclub.org)

<http://manilayachtclub.org>

**Screensaver - March 2017:** Expensive, they want a US \$ Deposit and you better have deep pockets. In spite of what some say it has a very nice bar and restaurant, and the Marina itself seems in pretty good condition. You may have heard rumours about a curfew which is partly true. To clear that up, locals (i.e. Filipinos) may not enter after 8:00pm (wives excluded).

They have moorings there, but if you have 2m draft or more, you will likely run into one of their mooring blocks as I did. I would not stay on one of their moorings in a Typhoon, they are way too close, but the marina itself, I think would be ok. The pollution in the water is heavy and it does smell specifically at the lower tides. No hard stand or haul out. But excluding the price I would go back there and stay, as it is very handy to see Manila and the waterfront is nice part of Manila

#### **1.7.7.6 Watercraft Venture Marina, Subic Bay Freeport, Zambales**

GPS Location: N14°49.25' E120°17.50'

Marina Facilities: Marina, hardstand storage, travel hoist, haul-out ramp, water & power and fuel

Accepts visitors; offers short, medium & long-stay berthing or hardstand boat storage

Note: visiting yachts are required to obtain entry/exit permit; Watercraft will handle this for a fee.

Marine VHF: n/a

Tel: +63 47 252-1739

Email: [wvcmarina@yahoo.com](mailto:wvcmarina@yahoo.com)

**Screensaver – March 2017:** Primarily Watercraft is for haul out and boats going up and coming down from the hard stand, or where Watercraft are doing work on your boat.

If they have a free berth you might be able to get in. This is definitely not Typhoon rated and far from it, but they have a deal with Subic Yacht Club whereby in the event of a Typhoon Subic Yacht Club will find places for those in Watercraft. These guys are one of two that I know of that have a travel lift. Easy access to Chandlery (Broadwater Marine)

**Dream Away – April 2016:** We arrived with a reservation at Watercraft Venture Marina. No VHF contact, so no-one to help with lines, or tell us where to berth. We had booked, but maybe we should have been more proactive and phoned or emailed the day before our arrival.

Watercraft Venture Corporation:

Bldg. 1031 Rizal Hi-Way,

Subic Bay Freeport Zone,

Olongapo City, Kalaklan, Zambales.

Tel: +63 47 252 1739 / 1740 Fax: +63 47 252 1738

Email: Cindy Kathleen Dela Cruz (known as Kath) at [Watercraftventure@gmail.com](mailto:Watercraftventure@gmail.com)

Her mobile is +63 932 865 6849.

Technical Operation Manager Jared Leong. Mobile: +63 922 837 3658 or +63 917 596 0231.

The marina would have been happy to complete our check-in (\$\$). They were quoting \$50US EACH for Quarantine, Customs and Immigration, \$100US to coordinate the procedure, and 1,500Php for Port Authority. (The fees quoted are per boat so total is \$US 250 + Port Authority) As we had previously checked in in Tacloban, we only had to pay the Port Authority fee, for which we never received a receipt. Best advice is to check in elsewhere before arriving in Subic.

We docked into a vacant slip and went to talk to the marina office staff. All was well; we were expected and told we could stay in our current berth for a week before the owner returned. We organised a lift out date for the following month and agreed to move to another slip at the end of the week. So far all has gone as planned and we are happy with our decision to come here. Work is being scheduled during our absence and more urgent jobs are currently being dealt with at a very reasonable cost. We have encountered no security issues and are comfortable walking outside the marina at night.

#### **1.7.7.7 Subic Bay Yacht Club & Marina, Subic Bay Freeport, Zambales**

GPS Location: N14°49.20' E120°17.45'

Considered Typhoon Safe

Marina Facilities: Marina, water & power, haul-out/travel hoist (by arrangement with Watercraft Venture), showers, accommodation, restaurant, swimming pool, Internet and fuel (by arrangement)

Accepts visitors; club membership suggested for medium & long-stay berthing.

Note: visiting yachts are required to follow entry/exit procedures (see yacht club website)

Marine VHF: 72

Tel: +63 47 252-5211

Email: [marina@sbyc.com.ph](mailto:marina@sbyc.com.ph)

<http://subicbayyachtclub.ph>



**Sail SE Asia FB Group – May 2019 – Subic Bay Yacht Club:** Subic Bay Yacht Club membership and berthing update: now offering "Term Membership" non transferable non voting members, pay 100,000 PP (\$2000 usd) yearly fee and get member berthing rates and privileges. Member rate for 50ft berth is 15000pp a month, ( \$300 usd) non member 3x that. this also give you access to the pools, gym and other facilities.

**Sail SE Asia FB Group – April 2019 – Subic Bay Formalities:** We have been checked into the Philippines legally since December. We entered Subic bay, Philippines today intending to anchor in the North quiet part of the bay. We contacted port control and they informed us we must do a domestic checkin of some sort and asked us if we would like to hire an agent for it. I hear marinas do this for you if you check in to a marina. Generally once checked into the Philippines, repetitive, convoluted checkins are not required. It must have something to do with this being a duty free port. Does anyone know what hoops they intend for us to jump through tomorrow and the approximate costs?

Final analysis. I added this part the day after posting this question- Port control via ch 16 informed me I could do (domestic, redundant) checkin myself without an agent. Watercraft Marina also informed me I could check-in by myself. I got to see office lady at port control after waiting for one hour to see her. She very rudely and abruptly told me under no circumstances could I check myself in (some vague reasoning regarding safety concerns??!)

Yachties MUST use agent. Even though radio operator in her own office told the entire Subic Bay on Channel 16 that I could do it myself! So in the end it cost 3000 pesos (~\$60 USD) to complete an agent-only (domestic, redundant) check-in and out. Never mind the wasted trip and time to have the displeasure of being talked to like an insolent child that doesnt understand obvious safety concerns of yachties trying to complete their own check-ins. Just to rent a buoy is P15,000, so it cost me P18,000 all in.

Cuisers on a budget should STAY AWAY FROM SUBIC BAY!

**Screensaver – March 2017:** Would have been a grand place in its day, and the pool still is. They are giving the place a face lift and I believe have a few other things in the plan, but it would take a lot to restore it to its former glory. That said, it does have all modern conveniences, not just power and water, it also has cable, phone, TV, etc., although much of it is not working.

As a visitor it is also western pricing, but as a long term share holder owner, the pricing is pretty good and if I intended to base myself in the Philippines, it would be here. The Yacht Club is said to be Typhoon rated and my guess is they are living on past credentials but this would, and in fact was, my pick for any Typhoon hiding if I were going to stay in a Marina.

No Hardstand or haul out, but Watercraft is next door, easy access to Chandlery (Broadwater Marine), shops about 1k down the road. This is in the free port zone so as a visitor you will need to be cleared in and out, and a charge will be applied.

#### **1.7.7.8 Saturday Afternoon Gentlemen Sailors (SAGS), Subic Bay Freeport, Zambales**

GPS Location: N14°49.28' E120°16.31'

Club Facilities: The informal, fun SAGS sailing club in Subic Bay uses the Boathouse of the Subic Bay Yacht Club and The Lighthouse Marina Resort Hotel by kind permission

Accepts visitors; has no berths or moorings or hardstand boat storage to offer in Subic Bay.

Marine VHF: n/a

Tel: +63 926 639-8531

Email: [zedavecilla@lighthousesubic.com](mailto:zedavecilla@lighthousesubic.com)

#### **1.7.7.9 Iloilo Sailing Club, Arevelo, Iloilo City, Iloilo**

GPS Location: N10°41.3' E122°28.2'

Club Facilities: Beach launching, dinghy storage, beach bar / restaurant, sailing courses

Accepts visitors; club membership recommended for medium & long-stay mooring.

Marine VHF: n/a

Tel: +63 33 336-1728

Email: [iloilosailing@gmail.com](mailto:iloilosailing@gmail.com)

<http://iloilosailing.webs.com>

#### **1.7.7.10 Cebu Yacht Club & Marina, Mactan Island, Cebu**

GPS Location: N10°18.98' E123°57.51'

Marina Facilities: Marina, moorings, anchorage, restaurant, accommodation, Internet and fuel

Accepts visitors; club membership absolutely recommended for short, medium & long-stay berthing.

Marine VHF: n/a

Tel: +63 32 340-2939

Email: [evosmena@yahoo.com](mailto:evosmena@yahoo.com)

<http://cebuyachtclub.com>

**Wind Hog – September 2021:** We got a berth at Cebu Yacht Club, thinking it would be the best place to provision and get diesel. We were astounded to find out that while berthed there, not only did they want a 5% surcharge for the diesel we bought elsewhere and carried in ourselves, they also wanted to charge us 5% for the groceries/provisions we bought in Cebu. Crazy way to do business!

**Screensaver – March 2017:** Cebu Yacht Club is probably the smallest of all of the marinas at maybe 12 berths. Costs more than western pricing at a little over \$2k and for Screensaver PM... Needless to say, I went there only by land. It is subject to swell from passing ferries, but quite handy to Cebu CBD, and Broadwater plus a few other handy places are right there.

Restaurant and bar at the marina, plus it is only a 2 min walk to many other choices.

#### **1.7.7.11 Bohol Yacht Club, Tagbilaran City, Bohol**

GPS Location: N9°38.97' E123°50.84'

Marina Facilities: Marina, anchorage, water & fuel (nearby), no clubhouse

Accepts visitors; offers short, medium & long-stay berthing.

Marine VHF: n/a

Tel, Email n/a

**1.7.7.12 Abanico Yacht Club, Puerto Princesa, Palawan**

GPS Location: N9.764094° E118.733764°

Club Facilities: Anchorage, moorings, dinghy-dock, pub-grub (except Tuesdays). Call VHF or Tel# on approach (daylight) for guide to moorings /anchorage

Accepts visitors; club membership recommended for short, medium & long-stay berthing.

Note: getting an email reply is a challenge, best to telephone

Marine VHF: 72

Tel: +63 908 888-4497

Email: [abanicoyachtclub@yahoo.com.ph](mailto:abanicoyachtclub@yahoo.com.ph)

**1.7.7.13 Davao Boat & Leisure Club, Lanang, Davao City, Davao del Sur**

GPS Location: N7.104000° E125.650333°

Club Facilities: Boat retrieval (tractor/trailer), boat/trailer hardstand storage, maintenance; showers, power, water. Restaurant at adjacent beach resorts

Accepts visitors; offers short, medium & long-stay hardstand boat storage.

Marine VHF: n/a

Tel: +63 919 402-7765

**1.7.7.14 Holiday Oceanview Marina, Samal Island, Davao Del Norte**

GPS Location: N7.198170° E125.710195°

Considered Typhoon Safe

Marina Facilities: Marina; showers, laundry, power, water, Internet

Accepts visitors; offers short, medium & long-stay berthing.

Marine VHF: n/a

Tel: +63 943 507 9051

[holidaygroup.oceanviewmarina@gmail.com](mailto:holidaygroup.oceanviewmarina@gmail.com)

**Soggy Paws – September 2019:** As of this month, the marina is no longer accepting haulout reservations. The marina is still operating, but their adjacent condotel has been completed and they are trying to establish a more resort-like atmosphere.

**Screensaver – March 2017:** Oceanview Marina is definitely the best value for money in spite of the erratic power and location. Plenty of free space when I was there (Jan 2017).

Security has been increased since the kidnappings from the marina in September 2015.

The marina offers some free shuttle and shopping services, plus free ferry from Samal to Davao.

The yard can haul out both Mono (to 7ft draft, but must have spring tide) and Cats (to about 50 ft). Internet is next to useless, especially on weekends. There is no bar, food, or restaurant anywhere near, except the marina offers an “honor bar” carrying beer, soda, and water. Cruisers do a Friday night potluck, and there are several opportunities a week to get a lift from a cruiser into the nearby small town for dinner. Broadwater chandlery is down the road.

### **1.7.8 Boat Parts & Repairs**

**DO NOT SHIP STUFF INTO THE PHILIPPINES WITHOUT RESEARCHING THE OPTIONS.** In spite of what Fed Ex and DHL say, using them will be problematic for you. Stuff coming in via DHL/FedEx gets stopped in Manila for “customs clearance” and it could take weeks and lots of money to get to you.

See [this section](#) on various options / problems cruisers have had shipping stuff into the Philippines.

**Soggy Paws – January 2018 - Broadwater Marine:** Broadwater marine is a marine store with stores in Subic and Cebu. They opened one briefly in Samal, but have moved the store to Davao. They stock a lot of stuff, and will ship within the Philippines. However, their stock largely comes from Australia, at high Australian prices, and then Philippine customs duty is added. Fairly large markup over other sources outside the country, if you can figure out how to get it into the country directly. See the section on Shipping Stuff In. If you need it, and they have it, it's nice to just be able to buy it.

**Soggy Paws – January 2018 – Yanmar Dealer Update:** The Yanmar dealer in Cebu is not operating any more. When we tried to get gaskets and saildrive parts from Azumi in Subic, they took forever to give us a quote, and then the quote was very high. It was cheaper to order them in the US at [MarineDieselDirect.com](http://MarineDieselDirect.com) and pay Johnny Air to ship them to us (approx. 2 week delivery from their consolidator in NY). If you really needed them, flying to Singapore might be a good option, if S'pore has them in stock. The US dealer didn't have what we needed in stock, so we still had to wait to get it shipped from Japan to the US. Silly system Yanmar has.

**Soggy Paws – December 2016 – Yanmar Dealer:** There is no Yanmar dealer in Davao, but there is one in Cebu and in Subic. The one in Subic told us they were the dealer for the Philippines, and other places get their parts from them. We priced their parts and they were approximately 30-40% less than US prices, but charge a customs fee (net ends up still way less than U.S.).

The parts come from Singapore, and unless they have them in stock, will take about 20 days to get to them in Subic, and then they will ship them to wherever you want in the Philippines.

Azumi Corporation  
The Venue Annex Building, Units 201-205  
Rizal Highway Corner Brillian St.  
Subic Bay Freeport Zone  
Philippines 2222

Telephone No. (047) 250-0806

**Soggy Paws – December 2016 – Custom Freezer Box Materials:** We had a brand new front-loading 8 cu ft custom refrigerator box built by the carpenters at Holiday Oceanview in Samal.

We wanted a big box, well-insulated, that wasn't too heavy. So we used Expanded PVC for the interior walls. We managed to source the Expanded PVC and the Extruded Polystyrene (blue board) insulation in Manila.

**Expanded PVC** (Lightweight White Building Material that we used for interior of our refer box)

Cady Marketing in Manila. It's about \$50 per 4'x8' 12mm sheet, plus shipping. They cut them into 4'x4' squares and shipped them via 2GO to Davao. Paid ahead at a BDO bank account.

**Foam "Blueboard"** for Refer Insulation (aka Extruded Polystyrene)

This is 2" thick extruded polystyrene foam sold in 2'x4' panels, and are used in the PH for building insulation, but it is essentially the same stuff as sold in the US for fridge/freezer insulation. This is what we used for our fridge insulation. We found them at a construction company (Concrete Solution Builders & Supply in Manila) The panels cost 1050 php per panel, and they shipped them from Manila via some shipping company, and we had to go into Davao to pick them up. It took about 2 weeks to get to Davao. Freight was an additional 7000 php.

The heavy duty hinges and the heavy door latch were shipped in via LBC Air (with help from a friend in California) from the US, sourced from <http://O-Reps.com>

The **Frigoboat compressor** and evaporator plate were purchased in Singapore from Wilson Tsing [wilttsing@singnet.com.sg](mailto:wilttsing@singnet.com.sg) doing business as CT-Tech Marine Air-con Engineering. (we picked it up ourselves on our way through Singapore in 2015, but you might be able to ship it in via LBC?)

**Soggy Paws – December 2016 – Balikbayan Boxes:** Change in Balikbayan Box Policy. In mid-December 2016 the PH Customs department announced a new policy that Balikbayan boxes would no longer be "duty free" unless you are a Philippine Citizen and can prove it. There is paperwork to file before the box arrives in the Philippines. This is supposed to take effect Dec 25, 2016. We have one box enroute already via LBC, we will see how this shakes out.

**Soggy Paws – April 2016 - Shipping:** Shipping stuff from the US, we have used both "Balikbayan Boxes" via LBC ([lbcexpress.com](http://lbcexpress.com)) and Johnny Air ([johnnyairplus.com](http://johnnyairplus.com)). We sent 2 large boxes and one irregular parcel (a 96" tube) from Florida to the marina address, and all arrived intact around 3 months later (as promised). We were able to track the progress of our stuff through the LBC website. They go Sea Freight, and the cost was a modest \$60-70US per box.

We sent 1 small electronics repair part (a radar display head) to Johnny Air's New York address, and about 7 days later it was available for pickup at the Johnny Air office in downtown Davao (near S&R). Shipping Cost was about 1900 php (~\$50 USD). Both of these companies handled whatever paperwork was required for import, and no extra duty needed to be paid (unlike DHL or FedEx). We had Johnny Air ship to the Davao office (near S&R) and picked it up there.

You can also have small parcels sent via the postal service. Make sure you get the international tracking number option. It will be held for your pickup at the main post office. Only a few of these have gone astray ☺.

Also, make friends with the people around you in the marina. Because of the problems shipping stuff in, most people flying back from whatever country they are coming from, are willing to hand carry small stuff in their luggage. In spite of 2 trips with humongous luggage, we have never had a problem bringing anything in in the checked luggage.

There is more info on this in the Communication section.

**Puerta Galera Yacht Club – 2015 – Sail Repair:** For simple sail repairs you may ask the Puerto Galera Yacht Club to make arrangements with a local repairer who has a sewing machine and thread designed for the task.

For more involved sail repairs, replacing a boltrope, re-cutting sails (and for new, replacement sails in a variety of exotic and conventional materials) you should contact Hyde Sails in Mactan (Cebu). Hyde Sails in Mactan is one of the main sail lofts of Hyde Sails UK and manufactures for export a wide range of racing sails and cruising sails for many production yachts. Hyde sails have set up a special email address to handle sail repair in the Philippines. Contact Hyde Sails using: [repairs@hydesails.com.ph](mailto:repairs@hydesails.com.ph)

**Puerta Galera Yacht Club – 2015 – Marine Supplies:** The most comprehensive range of yacht chandlery in the Philippines may be found at Broadwater Marine Yacht Chandlery outlets in Manila Bay, Subic Bay Freeport, Cebu Yacht Club, Boracay, and Samal Island. Broadwater Marine also offers yacht chandlery by courier to anywhere a courier will travel in the Philippines. If you can't find what you are looking for there then you might try Al's Marine (Philippine Yamaha distributor) in Makati City or go rummaging in hardware shops of Quiapo, Manila City, many of which provide commercial-fishing-boat quality materials.

When it comes to yacht chandlery, the Philippines has it all but sometimes it is hard to find..

**Sloepmouche - 2013: Import Duties for Parts:** There can be big import taxes when you purchase items from abroad as, surprisingly, they do not have a "yacht in transit" status here ... BUT there are ways around this.

Anything coming from the USA by USPS has only a flat import fee of 1.25\$ ! And you can get big boxes of stuff sent from many places around the world at no import tax at all .. check "Balikbayan box" on the internet when you have a chance. We recently got lots of stuff from Belgium as well as from the US :)

**Fellow Traveler - 2012: Bottom Paint:** it's available, and I think reasonable. Most is ship or commercial boat paint, not aimed at yachts, so is cheaper. If you find a place to buy it in a 5-gallon bucket it would be even cheaper. Is it any good? Well, to be honest, no bottom paint works these days.... Well, ok, a few years ago I put Micron 66 on a boat and that worked for a year of the boat sitting (I sold it and new owner just used it as floating home). But it is \$250 a gallon....it SHOULD work. I think you can find something here a lot cheaper that would be ok.... might need scrubbing occasionally as yachts move slower and less often than ships, but ship paint can usually handle scrubbing for the same reasons: can't be TOO soft or it would not last.

**Woodwork:** I am sure there are good woodworkers all over the Philippines. Most use pretty rudimentary tools and would cost about \$6-8 a day. Finding good hard wood is, I think, a bit more difficult, but I have not really looked. I gather you can get teak in Kudat. I've heard workers in Kudat are not as good and cost more than Filipinos (I'm talking grunt labor, not craftsmen) so some take their workers with them....but you can get stuff done there.

**Metal work:** Philippines has welders out the wazoo. Everywhere. Not many will be experienced with boat work, but if you can be very clear about what you want, you can get it done. If aluminum, I know less about the locals for that. Also, there is a French guy here in Dumaguete who is a very experienced welder, having built boats in steel and aluminum. He charges about \$6/hour. One friend refuses to hire him since he is SO DAMN EXPENSIVE! I think she is crazy.... Yeah, locals work for \$6 a day...but I would not and do not blame him for not doing so. You would have to pay me that much to do ANYTHING. He can sail for Oz or New Caledonia anytime he wants and get work in a yard at \$20/hour or more.

I would try to get him if you need much fancy welding. He usually won't take simple, dull jobs, says the locals can do it. I think you could get the welding done anywhere, but finding materials would be easiest either in Cebu or Manila area. My Aussie friend who is rebuilding a 52-foot aluminum tri says he gets stuff sent down from Cebu regularly, so you can do it here in Dumaguete as we are not far from Cebu - a few hours - with ferries, buses, etc running regularly between. I have a small pick-up and there are ways to transport other items as well. I know a good welder/"machine shop" (very basic) in Dumaguete that cruisers go to regularly. All of this work would be dirt cheap.

Be aware, with all of this, this is not a yachting center.... Philippines makes Panama seem like a paradise, with small chandleries and easy shipment from US.

**Shipping stuff into the Philippines** you do not get customs/duty waived as a yachtie, so getting anything fast is a huge problem and expense....often duty is 100%. There is a means to get stuff shipped without duty, called a "balikbayan box". This started with Filipinos from US bringing or sending presents home. They are exempt from duty except small amount on electronics. But, they come via ship: 1 month to Manila, 6 weeks to Dumaguete. Even finding a decent selection of stainless steel bolts is very difficult here in Dumaguete.

In the end, I'd suggest doing what you can in the water either here in Tambobo or in Port Carmen, perhaps using part of the storm season to do so, then head for Kudat for your haul and anything you could not do here. Or maybe start there and buy teak, then come back here. They get lots of small work boats, fishing boats, etc plus most yachts in the region and I think are better set up for repairs. Also, KK (Kota Kinabalu) is nearby and I gather you can get almost anything there.

### **1.7.9 Medical**

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2016:** Medical and Dental care is usually reasonable quality and at a very good price compared to the U.S. Ask around in the local expat community for recommendations in your area.

There is a first-class heart facility at one of the Manila area hospitals.

### **1.7.10 Laundry**

**Soggy Paws – Feb 2016:** I can only speak for Davao, but there are many wash-dry-fold places in Davao. With a labor rate for semi-skilled workers at about \$12 US per day, getting your laundry done should be easy and inexpensive. The Holiday Oceanview Marina on Samal also has DIY laundry machines (wash only, with a clothesline out back) for 100 pesos a load. But we can send out our laundry to be wash-dried-folded for almost the same price.

## **1.8 News Sources**

Below is a list of URL's that provide (mostly) English-language access to Philippine news.

Manila Bulletin: <http://www.mb.com.ph/>

Manila Times: <http://www.manilatimes.net/>

ABS – CBN: <http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/>

CNN Philippines: <http://cnnphilippines.com/>

Interaksyon (TV 5 News): <http://www.interaksyon.com/>

Rappler: <http://www.rappler.com/>

SunStar: <http://www.sunstar.com.ph/> (local news by area)

GMA Network: <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/>

## **1.9 Embassies and Consulates**

There is a US Embassy in Manila (and most other countries also have some presence in Manila). There is no permanent representation at all in Davao from the US. However, occasionally the Embassy will fly some people in and hold a day at a local hotel where you can conduct Embassy business. Nearest permanent presence for US Embassy business is Cebu.

## **1.10 Getting Visitors In and Out**

### **1.10.1 Passing Through Manila**

Most flights go through Manila, and it's sometimes hard to make it through in one day. If booking a hotel, be forewarned that downtown Manila and Makati can be far away (due to traffic) from the airport.

Terry on Valhalla recommends the Nichols Airport Hotel for short in-transit stopovers in Manila. Rooms for 2 people start at about \$35-40 USD and go up with amenities.

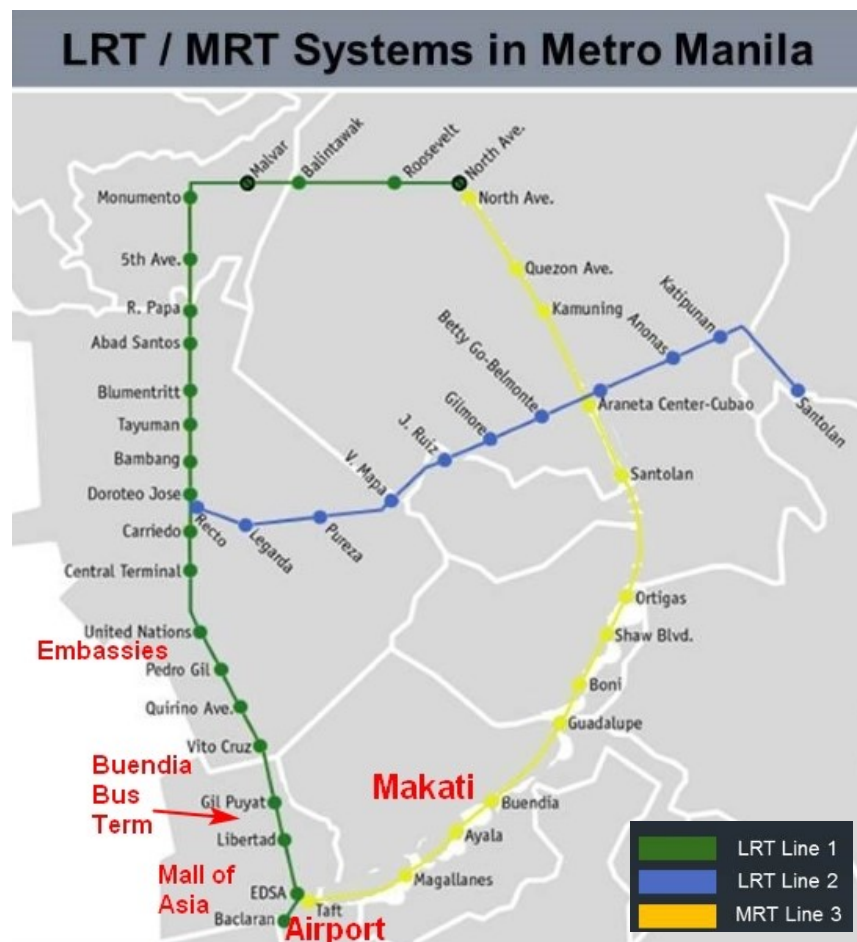
<http://www.nicholsairporthotel.com.ph/>

**Soggy Paws – 2018 – Getting Around in Manila:** When in Puerto Galera, we made several side trips to Manila (to find repair parts, etc). This is when we discovered the LRT and MRT (rail transport) and figured out how to use them (easy and cheap and faster than a taxi). We also discovered that what visitors call “Manila” is actually 4-5 different cities or metropolitan areas, and it's helpful to know what area you are trying to get to.

So now we choose a hotel that's near the rail line, and then use the rail to get as close to where we are going, and then walk, trike, or taxi to our ultimate destination. LRT1 runs north and south through Manila, approximately every 10 minutes. The MRT runs east and west along the south side of Manila (from Mall of Asia, I think, out toward Makati). Cars can get VERY full during morning and evening rush hour, but in the middle of the day, it's not too bad. We never had any problems ourselves, but we've been told to guard your wallet and your stuff carefully while on a jammed LRT. And we never were out riding around after dark.



At the major LRT stops, there are usually Jeepney routes going out in different directions. Problem is, the Jeepney routes written on the side of the Jeepneys are unintelligible to non-locals not familiar with local place names.



Again, having internet access on your phone, with Google Maps (and we also use Maps.Me), helps immensely in getting around.

<http://primer.com.ph/tips-guides/2016/09/19/expats-guide-lrt1-stations/>

**Paying for the ride:** We used single-use tickets, bought from the booth at each station. You need to know where you are going, and you buy a 1-time ticket for that stop. You wave the ticket over a reader at the inlet to the station, and put the ticket in the slot at the outlet on your destination station. They are very cheap.

**Soggy Paws 2014 – Sightseeing Manila:** We spent a week in Manila on our way out of the Philippines by plane. We booked a hotel downtown called the Palm Plaza Hotel on Pedro Gil street for \$53 USD a night, for a private room with bath. It was air conditioned, had cable TV, clean, and fairly spacious. It is located almost right across the street from a block-long mall, which makes it convenient for shopping and eating out. This is the older part of town, (Makati is newer and more upscale), but it is close to all the “old Manila” sights. We could either walk or take a very cheap short taxi ride to anywhere we wanted to. There are a number of hotels in this area—all looked about the same price and quality.

We visited Corregidor (an island in Manila Harbor that was the last holdout of General MacArthur before he escaped the Japanese advance in 1942). We took a long daytrip by private taxi to Taal Lake, south of Manila. We had planned a side-trip to the Baguio area (mountainous area north of Manila), but a stomach flu and lack of time caused us to drop that idea. There are also some interesting parks and monuments within walking distance downtown—a few remnants of Spanish Manila. Plus the US Embassy is within walking distance also.

### ***1.10.2 Getting to/from Puerto Galera from Manila***

**Soggy Paws – June 2018:** This seemed like an endlessly daunting problem when I first researched it, but now that we've done it a few times, here's the scoop.

First, I HIGHLY recommend that travelers in the Philippines get a local sim card (I recommend Globe) and know how to use Google Maps. We have found ourselves in taxis several times in Manila where the taxi driver doesn't speak much English and has no idea where we're trying to go. It's always helpful to know where you are going!! Instead of Uber, the Philippines uses Grab.

**Flying:** There is no airport at Puerto Galera, but there is a Float Plane that flies a route between “near Manila airport” to Puerto Galera. Check out Air Juan. When the weather is bad, the float plane was NOT flying.

#### **From the Airport by Bus / Ferry (entire trip 3-4 hours):**

1. **Take a taxi from the airport to Buendia.** (use the metered taxis, not the ridiculously expensive ones just as you exit the airport) to “Jam Liner Buendia Bus Terminal”. There are several bus lines at Buendia (this is an area, not exactly a bus terminal) that go to Batangas. Jam is one—they are fairly reliable and leave every half hour for Batangas, and go all the way to Batangas Pier (with a short stop at Batangas Central Terminal).
2. **Take a Bus from Buendia to Batangas Pier.** The buses charge approximately P160 for the one-way fare on a clean nice aircon bus all the way to Batangas Pier. You cannot book them in advance, and there is no reserved seating. The bus trip takes about two hours. The Jam bus does not stop, and there is no bathroom on the bus, so go before you leave Buendia.
3. **Take a Ferry from Batangas to Puerto Galera (1 hour).** The PG ferries all depart from Terminal 3 at the Batangas Pier, it's the furthest one away from where the bus will drop you off. Just keep walking and asking for Terminal 3 Puerto Galera. There are 3 or 4 ferry companies running between Batangas to PG. The LAST FERRY leaves about 5pm (they can only run in daylight). They leave 5-6 times per day. Most are large open bangkas, but one, the Genesis I, is an airconditioned enclosed ferry. It costs about P25 more than the open ferries. In rough weather, the open bangkas can be quite wet, but otherwise, they are kind of fun.
4. **There are 3 primary destinations in Puerto Galera...** Sabang, Puerto Galera “Muelle” (most pronounce this moo-lay, but it is of Spanish derivative and is properly pronounced mwell-yay) and White Beach. Be sure you know which of the 3 you are going to, as it will save you time to get the right ferry. You can get from one to the other by tricycle or small ferry, but it's easier to get to the right destination directly. If you are

meeting a cruising boat, most likely you want to go to Muelle. The ferry will cost P250-300. You can't make reservations. Ferries only run during daylight and when the weather is not too bad.

5. **If the Puerto Galera Ferries aren't Running...** If you get stuck in Batangas with bad weather, it is possible to take a larger ferry from Batangas (one of the other terminals in the same complex) to Calapan, a fairly big city on Mindoro. From there, it's about a 1-2 hour bus ride (Express Van or Jeepney) from Calapan to Puerto Galera/Sabang/White Beach.

#### **From the Airport by Private Taxi/Van (2-3 Hours):**

It is possible to get a taxi or direct shuttle van from the airport to Batangas Ferry. I haven't done it, but I'm sure the cost will be around \$80-\$100 USD one way for a van load (6-8 people with luggage). If you are coming into a hotel in the PG area, they will usually help arrange the shuttle van. From Batangas, see step 3 above.

#### **Going back to Airport/Manila from Puerto Galera:**

1. All ferries go to Batangas terminal, but some stop to pick up passengers at another location. If you're in a hurry, make sure you get one that's going direct.
2. When you get to Batangas, there are one or more buses waiting there to take passengers to Manila. If you are going to the airport, you want buses going to Buendia. However, I am told that the bus waits there until it fills up, which may be quite some time. (Jam says their buses leave the pier every half hour, so if you see a Jam bus, this may be the way to go). Otherwise, you can take a trike or jeepney into the Batangas Central Bus terminal—follow the bulk of the people leaving the ferry through a couple of buildings and out front, and start asking for a trike to the Central Bus Terminal. You can get a trike for as little as P100 (for 2 people and luggage), but the trikes can't actually go into the bus terminal. Make sure they drop you near the Jollibee (a fast food place) in front of the terminal. One shady trike driver dropped us nearly a half a mile away. And it's a long hot walk dragging luggage, especially if you don't know exactly where you are going. The bus terminal is approximately behind the Jollibee. There are no taxis in Batangas—who knows why?
3. Several bus lines go from Batangas Central Bus Terminal into Manila, and they go different places. So when you get to the Central Bus Terminal, keep asking for Buendia (if you're going to the airport). From Buendia Bus area, it's a fairly short taxi ride to the airport.

#### **1.10.3 Flying In with No Return Ticket**

**FB April 2018:** Re Non Nationals or Residents Flying into Philippines without an onward ticket, we pass on the following:

Thank you for writing to AirAsia.

In response to your email, kindly bring the necessary documents needed to prove that you are returning to your yacht such as proof of ownership and the customs clearance stating where the yacht is docked and when it entered in the Philippines. If you are a passenger or a crew, passenger manifest of the yacht is needed to present with a confirmed date of departure or a

general declaration. Holding these proof of documents together with your passport, our check in counter officer may allow you to board the flight under booking number VGRBTY even without holding a return ticket.

Note this policy is not the case with Cebu Pacific who have a Policy of fly in must fly out, not ship out. FYI the cheapest ticket out is AirAsia from Manila to Kota Kinabalu (1580 php).

**Soggy Paws – January 2016:** When we checked in for our flight from LAX to Singapore to Davao, the Singapore Airlines agent would not issue us a boarding pass, because we had no onward ticket from the Philippines to elsewhere. We DID have a letter from the marina, and our incoming Immigration form (which was all that the Davao Immigration office would give us). We talked with a supervisor and argued for at least 45 minutes. We showed them the picture of the Davao Immigration officer who said that we wouldn't need anything else. While I was on my smartphone trying to book a cheap flight out of the Philippines, Dave kept arguing. What finally worked was showing them our Captain's Licenses, and they reluctantly processed through as "arriving ship's crew". The supervisor told us that if our letter from the marina stated a specific departure date, it would have been more acceptable. As it was, we didn't know when exactly we would be departing, so our letter on marina letter-head said that our boat was at their marina and we would be departing the Philippines on our boat. So make sure your "marina letter" is more specific (even if you don't know for sure, it should state a plausible date not too far in the future).

**Soggy Paws – August 2015:** We have now flown in and out of the Philippines a number of times from various locations on various airlines. Every time was a little bit of hassle, but every time the paperwork we got from the Marina, along with our boat papers, Immigration check-in paper, and a piece of paper with the picture and name and phone number of the Philippine Immigration Officer in Davao who assured us that was all we needed to come in without an onward ticket, was all we needed. One trip on Air Asia it was nip and tuck, and they held us at the departure gate in Singapore until everyone else had boarded, trying to get in touch with Manila Immigration Officials. They finally had a gate supervisor look over all our paperwork a third time and they let us on the plane.

We tried to take a piece of paper down to Immigration for their stamp before we left... a "to whom it may concern", but they refused to issue us anything. So I took a picture of the head Immigration person, with "Immigration" and her name clearly on the picture, and have used that successfully several times. She said "If anyone gives you any problems, here is my phone number, have them call me."

**From various cruisers on Noonsite - April/May 2013:** American Airlines now require an onward reservation when returning to the Philippines even if you have documents supporting the fact your boat is berthed there.

Returning to the Philippines from the United States had a new twist recently. I was using the return portion of my Manila-San Francisco-Manila ticket. I was prepared with documents supporting my yacht being in the Philippines as was often useful in the past. United Airlines indicated that the policy had been tightened and an onward ticket was definitely required. The ticket agent apparently needed to enter the onward reservation number into the system. To solve the problem I purchased a full fare one way Manila-Guam ticket as I knew United served that route. That's all I needed. Immigration in Manila did not ask to see the onward ticket. Nor

did I need it for a visa extension. It was simple get a full refund to my credit card when I cancelled the ticket, online, a few weeks after arriving in the Philippines.

With reference to the above topic we had the exact same problem flying with Air Asia, and were denied boarding at the gate. Fortunately I work for an airline and managed to purchase a ticket on line there and then and once they had a ticket number we were allowed on board! Oddly enough a few weeks later with Dragonair they weren't the slightest bit bothered!

(Editor's note: other cruisers have reported that as long as they carried their Customs Clearance papers with them, these were sufficient to prove that they would be exiting the Philippines on their yacht.)

## **1.11 Communications**

### **1.11.1 VHF**

**General VHF Advice that applies to all areas:** Be aware that on high power, a good VHF will transmit 25 miles line of sight. So if you are only doing within-anchorage communications, switch to low power. On the flip side, if you are trying to call across island, or to the next island, use high power, and turn your squelch down. Make sure you are aware which channels are automatic low power (ie 17, 67 on some radios), and stay away from the low-power channels for long distance conversations.

Though widely spaced in channel number, channels 16, 68, and 18 are very close to each other in frequency. Most VHF antennas are 'tuned' for channel 16, so long distance communications will work best on 16, 18 or 68. Conversely, in a crowded anchorage, transmission on high power on channel 18 or 68 may 'bleed' over to channel 16 (and almost any other channel, if you're close enough). You don't need high power to talk to the boat next to you, so turn your radio to Low Power!!

Also be aware that some channels that Americans use frequently are 'duplex' channels in International mode. So, for example, you may have trouble communicating with a European boat, or an American boat whose radio is in International mode, on Channel 18. (see any VHF guide for the full list of international and US channels and frequencies, but any US channel designated 'a', like 18a, 22a, etc will cause trouble with VHF's in international mode).

Make sure you ask in each port what the local channels are--both so you know how to reach someone ashore and so you know not to use those channels for your off-channel conversations.

### **1.11.2 SSB Radio Frequencies and Nets**

**Soggy Paws – 2021:** We discovered a local Filipino Emergency Ham Net that runs for check-ins 7,095 at 7AM, 5PM and 7PM local PH time.

**Soggy Paws / Carina - 2014:** Carina started a Marine SSB net back in 2012 call the Shellback net, to communicate with the small handful of boats that were headed north for Southern Cyclone Season, instead of south. This net was carried west across Micronesia as the bulk of the boats moved west, changing time zones as necessary for the convenience of the boats headed west. It is now (July 2014) operating on 8110 USB at 0730 Palau time and 0630 Philippines time. It will likely be bumped back an hour when the rest of the boats finally leave

Palau for the Philippines. Whether this net will persist when all the boats are in harbor is hard to say.

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** there is an excellent HAM radio station at 14.323 MHz, on-air everyday at 00:00 Z/GMT/UTC. The South East Asian Maritime Net (formerly known as Rowdy's Net) is a friendly participation service where yachts cruising around the South China Sea and beyond can keep up to date on who, what and where. Richard is the facilitator on-air and all are welcome.

### ***1.11.3 Telephones & Cell Phones***

The Philippine Islands country code is 63. If you have a Filipino number that starts with "0" (0917 326-1158, for example), to dial this phone with the international calling code, you would dial +63 917 326 1158. If you are dialing locally (with no country code), dial 0917 326-1158

There are two major carriers in the Philippines and several other auxiliary carriers. The advice I got on arriving was that Smart is best for phones and Globe best for data. I am not positive that is true, but a sim card from either one would work fine in most populated places. Since the sim cards are only 40 PHP (only about \$1 USD), I carry both and have swapped one for the other if I'm in an area of no coverage on the other. The cell phone dealers all sell dual sim phones—they are useful to have!!

Like many other prepaid cell countries, in the Philippines, getting a data plan is a 2-step process... adding credit to the account (called "load" in the Philippines), and then buying a package of just data, or a combo package that includes text, phone minutes, and data.

Load in the Philippines can be added by paying cash at many small businesses, for them to add load to your account, from some bank ATM's, sometimes via credit card, or a 3<sup>rd</sup> party service like Ding.com or Recharge.com. Until 2020, it was impossible to buy load direct from Globe or Smart from a non-Philippines credit card, but I finally got it to work in 2020. Ding has a very convenient app and you can link it to a Paypal account for very quick and easy recharge, but there is a fee.

Both Smart and Globe also sell scratch-off cards that can be bought in malls and phone stores. Be careful, the cards DO expire eventually!

### ***1.11.4 Internet Access***

**Soggy Paws – August 2020:** In mid-2020, I acquired a Globe At Home Modem for ~P1500, this modem is a wifi hotspot and router which includes a Globe sim card. You want to get the Globe at Home device that has little antennas sticking up, as this significantly improves reception. Once activated, you get 10GB free, and then you can buy special Globe at Home plans. The current plan I use is HomeSurf999, which gives something like 60 GB for 30 days, including 1GB daily for Youtube and a few other video providers.

If you make sure to renew your plan before your 30 days runs out, any unused GB roll over to the next month. The Globe at Home is 220v powered, but the device actually runs on 12v, so you can cut off the wall plug and plug it into boat power.

In the same location, the external antennas at least doubled my browsing speed.

**Soggy Paws – March 2017:** Internet in the Philippines seems to be 3G and 4G data. Smart and Globe. See the section above on Telephones & Cell Phones.

After having done some cruising and traveling in a number of places in the Philippines, if you really need internet access, get BOTH Smart and Globe. We had Smart in our phones and Globe in a hotspot device. Globe seemed to have wider coverage, but there were definitely places where I could not get Globe, but could get Smart. If you only want one carrier, Globe seems more widely distributed.

Both are adding 4G data, available only in the bigger cities.

**Screensaver – March 2017:** Sims available in most minor and major cities and towns. I used Globe which definitely seemed to have better coverage than Smart. Burias had the worst coverage and most of it had no Globe or Smart. Philippines internet is worse than Malaysia, Thailand or Indonesia, mostly I expect do to overloading. As with most of Asia, don't leave credit on your phone or one way or another the ISP will take it with many small tricks. I used an unlimited plan (\$24au pm), and by that they mean they will throttle you back if you use too much (>1GB pd or 5GB/month), but won't cut you off. Coverage was mostly 3G. If you call a lot of local Mobiles or talk for long periods you can get some very cheap Promo's that are definitely cost effective.

To check your phone credit add credit ("load") to your phone, and select internet plans, you use \*143# to access the Globe menu, and follow the prompts.

#### ***1.11.5 Mail & Shipping Stuff In***

**DO NOT SHIP STUFF INTO THE PHILIPPINES WITHOUT RESEARCHING THE OPTIONS.**

**In spite of what Fed Ex and DHL say, using them will be problematic for you. Stuff coming in via DHL/FedEx gets stopped in Manila for "customs clearance" and it could take weeks and lots of money to finally get to you. REALLY!!**

**Specific incidents:** (1) Changing Spots tried to ship a drone in from Hong Kong (via a shipping company). Drone got stopped in Customs in Manila and took about \$300 in duties and fees to get it broken loose. (2) Mystic Rhythms ordered an AIS from China and had it shipped direct via DHL. It was held up in Customs for duties. In spite of trying to conform to paperwork for a "yacht in transit" / repair parts, Mystic Rhythms ultimately abandoned the AIS unit, still in Customs hands, as the fees to clear it were ridiculously high. (3) Sidewinder shipped a refrigeration unit in via DHL, paying big bucks for express shipping. It got to Manila very quickly, where it stalled in Customs for 5 weeks, while they wrangled with the Customs duties. They paid something like another \$500 in duties and fees before they could get their parcel forwarded on to Davao. (4) 2021 Java ordered a sail from overseas and it was shipped via UPS. It took 6 months and quite a large sum of money before Java had that sail in hand.

**Sail the Philippines FB Group – August 2023: (Tom VanDyke) My mistake to use ImportAnything to deliver a new RIB from China.** Their import price was 30% higher than CargoBoss. I used their website to get a quote for same dimensions and weight and from same port in China and got a quote for 30k pesos. ImportAnything had originally quoted 39k and ended up costing 44k. They're kind of infamous for mysterious rate structure and surprises like this. Next time, CargoBoss. <https://www.cargoboss.ph/>

**Sail the Philippines FB Group – Aug 2023 – ShippingCart.com:** Several reports of both good and bad experiences recently with ShippingCart for consolidating and shipping stuff from

USA online shopping to the Philippines. A couple of people recommended My Shopping Box instead. <https://my-shoppingbox.com/ph>

**Sail the Philippines FB Group – November 2021:** (Ron Carlson) I have had good success with BuyandShip who have a US tax free warehouse in Portland & for the Philippines consolidate your shipments in HK before onforwarding to PH. I shipped carburetor parts & Lewmar hatch hinges no issues. Rates are competitive. So that might be better for importing rigging as if purchased in AU 12.5% VAT is included if shipped to an AU address irrespective that it will be onshipped overseas.

**Soggy Paws – May 2021 – Shipping Batteries from China – ImportAnything.ph:** We used Import Anything to ship a replacement lithium cell in from China, and had no problems, low cost, and reasonable transit thru Manila Customs. Highly recommend their service. Be SURE to CONTACT THEM IN ADVANCE OF ORDERING! And make sure your shipper complies with their instructions. Import Anything receive the battery in Manila, cleared Customs, and then shipped it to us Freight Collect via AP Cargo. Delivered to us at Zeke's in Carmen about a week later.

**Changing Spots – October 2020 – Shipping Batteries from China:** Most of us are aware of the risks of shipping to the Philippines. I have found a mechanism that worked for me to ship lithium batteries from China into the Philippines.

Batteries are probably the most difficult (legal!) items to ship. Many shippers could or would not ship batteries to Manila, especially not lithium LifePO4 batteries.

Dino, from the Abanico Yacht Club in Puerto Princesa, recommended the logistics company, Importanything. (Thanks Dino) <https://importanything.ph/>

I contacted them and they took over the shipment. They did it easily and inexpensively. The weight and cost of my shipment is probably not very different from shipping a dinghy, so it might be worth a try for other large items too. Their cost per unit goes down with the more units. I don't know about sharing a shipment.

Your factory or warehouse **must** be willing to prepare your packages to their instructions, and deliver them to one of the local importanything warehouses.

They let you know when your package(s) are picked up, and again when they are thru customs and ready to pick up. After a few days there they charge a daily storage fee. (If isn't need to pay it.)

ImportAnything does not ship to Puerto Princesa, but arranged with AP Cargo to deliver there.

In a chat with AP Cargo, they said delivery would take 25-30 days, no sooner. But when I tracked, the cargo was at their warehouse in PP in 8 days. I picked it up 3 days later, and they helped me load the car. I thought the shipment cost from Manila to Puerto Princesa was very reasonable (3789.30 pesos).

Shipping Agent: importanything <https://importanything.ph/>

#### **Details:**

You need the dimensions and weights before you can get any info or an estimate from them. If the actual dimensions differ, no problem, their cost will differ from the estimate. My actual cost was the same as the estimate.



The items MUST be packaged per the details provided by the shipper, Import Anything. They want photos to prove it.

The order left the factory in Shenzhen China on August 20, and was ready to pick up at Manila, finished with customs, and at the shippers warehouse on Sept 21. Usually, the time to get thru customs averages 2 weeks.

TOTAL cost: 18,667 pesos to Manila and cleared through Manila Customs.

Payment is made once finished with customs, but there are not many payment options. I managed a bank transfer using one of the local pawnshops.

For comparison:

total: 7 boxes, Lifepo4 batteries from RJ in China.

3 boxes, each size: 55\*28\*25cm, each weight: 37KG.

3 boxes, each size: 45\*19\*26cm, each weight: 19KG.

1 box, size: 45\*19\*26cm, weight: 5KG.

Value: \$3,830USD

**Soggy Paws – July 2020 – Mail Order to the Philippines:** I have successfully ordered stuff on **Lazada.com.ph** and **Shopee.ph** for delivery direct to the Oceanview Marina, and also to Zeke's in Port Carmen. It's useful to check both sites if you are looking for something specific, as even the same store has different stuff listed in one vs the other. Neither one's search function works very well—I find it better to use Google instead.

Some of the goods are already in the Philippines, and so arrive within 7-10 days, all the way out at our marina only accessible by ferry from Davao. Other goods are shipped from China and take more like 3-4 weeks. I found Shopee to be consistently faster into Samal where we are, because their local shipper (JRMT/JST) delivers faster than Lazada's (LBC).

Both have an option to ship COD, or you can use a "cash in" feature that lets you go to local businesses (7-11 is one) to put cash in your account. If you are lucky, you may be able to link a credit card or bank account, but I have yet to succeed in doing this. In 2021 I was finally able to get a GCASH account set up, funded by Transferwise direct transfer from my US bank account, and GCash is easy to buy stuff on Lazada/Shopee (Lazada has a P40K limit on direct GCash payments, but I was able to transfer what I needed in pieces from GCash to Lazada Wallet and then pay with Lazada Wallet).

The product reviews on both sites are crap. I often go to Amazon.com and look for the same product and read the reviews there. But I do pay attention to whether a store on the Philippines sites has shipped that product and gotten any feedback, and favor ones with reviews.

Some of our cruiser friends here actually ships (some stuff) directly from Amazon to the marina, so if you can find a seller that will ship to the Philippines, that is an option too. To determine whether a seller will ship directly to the Philippines, you need to change your destination to the Philippines (vs your normal home address). We prefer to use Johnny Air or Shipping Cart for Amazon stuff in the USA.

**Good News – June 2020 – Lazada (for Holiday Oceanview Marina):** here is the address that we have been using for our LAZADA COD orders.

Last Name – Yacht Name  
Holiday Oceanview Marina  
Barangay Camudmud, Ilihan, Babak District  
Island Garden City of Samal  
Davao del Norte 8119  
Philippines

Make sure though that you change/delete the address that you have used before because it seems that LAZADA automatically will use the address you have provided in the past.

**Soggy Paws – July 2020 – ShippingCart.com:** During the pandemic I had a terrible experience shipping with Shipping Cart on my first and only venture with them—it took something like 4 weeks for them to get my stuff out the door of their warehouse once I said “ship it” (and paid for it). Hopefully this was just an aberration.

Also note that Shipping Cart is MUCH more picky about what they’ll ship. They open your item and photograph it (a nice touch), but then they decide whether to ship it or not. I had one item rejected as being “dangerous goods” (Griptex - plastic flakes to mix in paint for deck non-skid). I had to pay a \$10 return fee to ShippingCart and also pay to have it either shipped back to the sender or somewhere else (I used a USPS prepaid label for that).

Another item (a Lewmar footswitch) they deemed “Hazardous” and I had to pay extra to ship it. One hazardous item makes the whole shipment go “hazardous” at a higher rate per pound. Johnny Air doesn’t open the package (and really doesn’t want to know what’s inside).

**Ocelot – May 2020 – ShippingCart.com:** Ordering stuff from the USA is dead easy. Go to [www.ShippingCart.com](http://www.ShippingCart.com), open an account, & they’ll give you an account number & 2 addresses, one in Hayward California & one in the UK. Ship it to the California address (with your acct # in your address) & when it arrives they’ll unpack it, photograph it, & post the photos on your acct. When enough junk accumulates, you can give them an address & they’ll forward it to ANYWHERE in the Philippines OR Malaysia for \$7/lb, no customs duty payments necessary. Takes about 10 days (OK, a bit longer during the pandemic). They’ll apparently ship door to door, but we usually just have stuff sent to the closest LBC office, as they use the LBC network in the Philippines. And yes, they’re still running.

**Soggy Paws – March 2020 – LBC from USA:** LBC came through again, shipping 2 large (heavy) LBC standard-sized boxes plus one long skinny box (Sailrite box with 3 rolls of fabric in it). Each box cost ~\$100 USD, shipping from Jacksonville, FL to Davao. In Florida, there is a weekly truck that runs from Miami to Jacksonville, picking up shipments. Similarly we were told by a small home-based LBC operation in Atlanta that there is a similar truck run from Atlanta down through Georgia to Jacksonville. Containers go out by surface shipment every 2 weeks. Shipping time was almost exactly 2 months, Jacksonville to Davao. LBC handles clearance in Manila, and in 4 years of doing several boxes a year, none of our boxes have ever been opened in transit.

**Soggy Paws – June 2020 – Johnny Air:** After a 2 month shutdown due to the Covid-19 virus, Johnny Air is back in operation, shipping parcels by air to several locations in the Philippines (Manila, Davao, Cebu). Again, Johnny Air handles whatever required paperwork there is, and none of our parcels have been opened, or gone missing, enroute.

**Soggy Paws – March 2018:** Another rules change on Balikbayan boxes declared in late 2017 was rescinded soon after it was issued, and we were able to ship Balikbayan boxes from Atlanta, Georgia to Davao for around \$80-90 USD. (Large LBC boxes). They took about 2 months to get to Davao. We also again shipped several smaller parcels via JohnnyAirPlus.com. All arrived within about 2 weeks of being received at their NY facility. They will consolidate shipments in NY, but you have to sign up for their program in advance, register your packages with them, and they have to be received within 2 weeks of each other.

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 – ShippingCart.com:** We shipped some boat parts coming from the U.S. via [www.shippingcart.com](http://www.shippingcart.com). You register with them (free) and they give you their consolidator's address in Hayward, California. You order anything online (only a few obviously prohibited goods) and Shipping Cart will keep it for up to 30 days with no storage fees. Once they receive an item for you, they take a photo of it and email it to you so you can decide to accept or refuse the parcel. You can order the forwarding of your packages online with instant quotes for air freight (10 days) or sea freight (6 weeks). The price quotes include insurance up to 500USD (extra for a fee) and any Customs duties (quite low in this special case!). They called us to let us know that the first parcel arrived and to ask us to pick it up within seven days. Surprisingly, the parcel arrived about 10 days before the ETA so that was good, but we could not dillydally to get to Coron.

**Soggy Paws – March 2017:** After another few months in the marina working on upgrades and repairs, we have several additional comments on shipping stuff in... specifically from the U.S. We have used both JohnnyAirPlus (from NY) and LBC (from San Diego) for air shipments in 2017. Both arrived in 10-15 days and were processed through to us with no Customs duty or agent fees at all (beyond what you paid for shipment). 2 small LBC shipments of small light parts were shipped for \$35 for each box.

In spite of what was a widely distributed "rules change" on Balikbayan boxes declared in Dec 2016, we were still able to receive large Balikbayan boxes, shipped by a friend from San Diego via LBC, with no duties paid or agent fees, shipped by surface ship. In December 2016, LBC charged us \$90 per box, and the shipping took 6-8 weeks, including transshipment to Davao.

LBC and Johnny Air now both offer a "shipment consolidation" services. Another friend used an independent service called FilOutlet ([filoutlet.com](http://filoutlet.com)) in San Diego for consolidating various online purchases into Balikbayan boxes.

Though the Balikbayan box mechanism is meant for repatriating Filipino Overseas Workers, we have used it ourselves for several years, and have paid zero duty and zero agent fees for approximately 4-5 large boxes of various boat parts, personal items, and food items.

Though we only talk about our own experiences shipping from the U.S., we do know that there are Filipino shipping companies all over the world. We know for sure it's possible from Australia and the UK, as other friends have shipped from those locations. Just find a local Filipino store and ask them about it...

**Soggy Paws – April 2016:** We had a small electronics repair part (a radar display head) to Johnny Air's New York address, and about 7 days later it was available for pickup at the Johnny Air office in downtown Davao (near S&R). Cost was about 1900 php (~\$45 USD). Johnny Air handled whatever paperwork was required for import, and no extra duty needed to be paid (unlike DHL or FedEx). <http://JohnnyAirPlus.com>

If you want to read numerous accounts of this issue from Filipinos...

<https://elizavictoria.com/2012/08/28/the-bureau-of-customs-is-out-to-get-you/>

**Shanghaied – Feb 2016:** A friend discovered this service

<https://lbcshippingcart.ph>

When you are registered they provide a US address so makes use of the free shipping within the US. You can then either air or sea freight and to date my friend has paid no duty/customs.

And another similar service here <https://www.shipito.com/> and they have office in Europe too but I do not know if they require duty etc.

**Soggy Paws – Jan 2016:** We had 4 boxes/parcels shipped from the U.S. as Balikbayan boxes. 3 were by surface freight via LBC Express (<http://lbcexpress.com>) and one was by air via LBC. Since we were in the U.S., we packed and delivered them ourselves to LBC drop-off points. We googled a little and asked around in our locality. In San Diego we used LBC Express from an office there. In Florida, we found a Philippine Ice Cream Shop in Cocoa Beach who had LBC stop by about once a week. And to connect with the air connection, we dropped our two sections of roller furler track off at an LBC drop point in Jacksonville.

The Air Freight stuff was delivered in about 2-3 weeks. The shipped stuff took 2-3 months. In all cases, it took a week or two for the stuff we had dropped off to show up in LBC's online tracking (so don't panic). So far, 2 out of 4 parcels have made their way to us, with no damage, no pilferage, and no duty.

Another friend used <http://www.filoutlet.com/> to consolidate parcels from Amazon.com, and was very happy with their service. It costs a little more than shipping a box yourself, but is very handy if you are here and trying to order stuff from the U.S. They are a little picky, however, that what you ship conforms to the Balikbayan box regulations.

**From SSCA Forum Feb 2014:** If you need to import anything into the Philippines then sending it in a "Balikbayan" box may be possible.

A Balikbayan box is normally used by OFWs (Overseas Foreign Workers - Filipinos working overseas) to send "goods" to their family and friends. There must be tens of thousands of these sent every week. Most are packed into containers but there is an airfreight service.

The boxes are made by "specialized import/export" agents and "given" out by Filipino shops all over the world. If you cannot get a recommendation as to a reliable agent then there are lists published on the web of scam agents - best to check. Possibly search under "balikbayan blacklist".

The Philippine government site [dti.gov.ph](http://dti.gov.ph) has more information under "Balikbayan Boxes".

Sea containers take a few months but I understand that airfreight is much much faster.

They are mostly sent in specially sized (to pack into a container) and marked boxes sealed with a few miles of transparent packing tape. Once this is done one is indistinguishable from another.

Most seem to come in through Manila and are then distributed throughout the country possibly by inter island ferry. Anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that boxes coming into some other ports may get very close customs inspection.

So if you have a friend/relative who can get to a Filipino shop and ask for a balikbayan box it can be an effective way of bringing goods into the Philippines.

Most boxes contain biscuits, sweets, old clothes and household items so if looking to pad out a box use whatever you have lying around. It all gets used. After Yolanda/Haiyan old solar panels may be particularly prized.

If you want to bring in an odd sized item or need airfreight it would be best to ask the pickup shop for the contact phone number of the agent and to discuss the matter with them. Any concerns about paying the appropriate amount of customs duty should be raised with the forwarding agent.

**Or ask any Filipino!**

#### **1.11.6 News**

<http://www.philstar.com/>

#### **1.12 Diving**

Here is a great diving resource for the Philippines (and a lot of other places in SE Asia):

<https://www.starfish.ch/dive/Philippines.html> and

<https://www.starfish.ch/dive/info/Visayas-info.html>

**Soggy Paws – 2018:** We spent 6 months cruising in the Philippines, mainly to dive. Here are the places we did most of our diving:

- South Leyte – Southern Leyte Divers – Great operation and great diving. Best in NE Monsoon season (Nov-May). More in the [South Leyte](#) section  
  
Note: on our way to South Leyte, we anchored overnight in a bay directly east of South Leyte called Sonok Point
- Romblon – Dove on our own – so-so (in the harbor area). Supposedly some very good diving there, but we didn't have time, and the local dive operation was "busy" with staying guests (so, contact them well ahead of time). More in the [Romblon](#) section.
- Puerto Galera & Sabang (Mindoro) – Bad Ladz – Great value, good guides, great macro and (Verde Island) some good pelagic dives. Bad Ladz is in the harbor at Puerto Galera and will pick you off the boat. All the other (Sabang) dive shops cost more and are much less convenient for yachties. See more info in the [Diving Puerto Galera](#) section.
- Anilao (Southern Luzon, Batangas area) – We did a dive photography seminar booked through Blue Water Photo in California. Anilao is a great macro area and there are a zillion resorts to dive from, and they all go to the same places. Next to our high-dollar upscale resort was Arthur's Place, which seemed more budget oriented. See more comments in the [Diving Anilao](#) section.
- Busuanga & Coron (North Coast, and Wrecks on the Southwest Coast). Lots of wrecks, but not as good diving as in Truk. Some coral reefs, etc as well. See [Busuanga/Coron](#) section.

- Tubbataha Reef. We opted to dive Tubbataha Reef on a liveaboard operating out of Puerto Princesa, as the logistics of doing it on your own boat are difficult (but not impossible). Only open to diving from January to May, and must purchase permit in Puerto Princesa first. Very strictly controlled. See [Tubbataha](#) section.
- Dauin (SE Negros) and Apo Island – We parked our boat in Port Bonbonnon at the southern end of Negros, on a mooring, and got a lift to Dauin, which is on the way to Dumaguette. We spent 4-5 days diving here at a small resort. Big attraction for us was macro, but there is also some nice diving out at Apo Island off Negros. See [Negros East Coast](#) section.
- Moalboal (SW Cebu Island) – Our friends had visited the Moalboal area by sailboat but found anchoring almost impossible (too deep/too shallow). So we decided to do this while our boat was safe in Bonbonnon. After diving at Dauin, we took public transport to the ferry connecting southern Cebu with Negros, and then another bus up to Moalboal. This area would also be easily accessible from Cebu City or Port Carmen, by bus. For cruising info, see [West Coast of Cebu](#).

Where we didn't dive, but probably should have (popular destinations in the Philippines):

- Malapascua, an island off the northern tip of Cebu, known for Thresher Sharks. We anchored here overnight. It's a cute little island absolutely overrun with divers. The dive is at dawn. We weren't interested, but others have said it was a great experience seeing the Thresher Sharks. See the [Malapascua](#) section.
- Oslob, on the east coast of Cebu, known for the Whale Shark diving. We'd already seen whale sharks in several places, and this is known for being a real tourist situation. See [Oslob](#) section.

### **1.13 Tsunami Information**

**Soggy Paws - March 2014:** The entire Pacific Basin is subject to tsunamis. Since we have been in the Pacific (5 years), there have been 3 significant tsunamis which have affected cruising locations (American Samoa and Tonga in 2009, South America, Galapagos & Panama in 2010, Hawaii & Mexico in 2011).

The tsunamis originate in various locations, but the worst origination locations were Japan and Chile, however, many 'tremors' happen in these locations that do not cause widespread tsunamis.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center website is located here:

<http://ptwc.weather.gov/>

If you have onboard email, it is a good idea to subscribe to tsunami warning emails while you are in the Pacific, which you can do on this website. It might be useful to first subscribe from your internet email for a little while, to understand what messages might be coming your way, and how often, before you chance clogging up your onboard email.

### **1.14 Cruising Information Sources**

We are indebted to the people and organizations below for documenting their experiences and sharing them with us. We hope they don't mind that we've gathered their comments into this document to share with other cruisers who don't have internet

A few details about the boats are included, where we know them, so you can assess what 'a foot under the keel' means, for example.

Where it's important, we've annotated the contributions. But every section is a mix of several sources.

#### **1.14.1 Websites & Facebook Groups**

Here are some websites you should visit when you are looking for information on cruising this area:

<https://web.facebook.com/groups/850891615499415> (Sail the Philippines Group)

<http://pgyc.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SailSEAsiaGroup/>

[Women Who Sail SE Asia](#) (facebook group)

[http://svocelot.com/Cruise\\_Info/Pacific/Cruising\\_Philippines.htm](http://svocelot.com/Cruise_Info/Pacific/Cruising_Philippines.htm)

If you are a diver, you might be interested in this Facebook Group:

<https://web.facebook.com/groups/PhilippineParadiseDivers/>

or this website:

<http://starfish.ch/dive/Philippines.html>

Satellite Charts and Waypoints for Philippine Anchorages can be found here:

<http://svsoggypaws.com/terrystopics.htm>

#### **1.14.2 Cruiser Reports**

For most of the earlier sources, we have gleaned the information off the internet (cruiser's websites, blogs, and online forum postings) or out of an SSCA bulletin. For the sources reported below as 2013-2017, much of the info has come directly from our cruising friends, helping to round out the information in our various Compendiums.

**Good News (2020-??)** – Lonnie and Bona arrived in Davao from the Western Pacific in 2020 and finished a full refit on their boat at Oceanview Marina on Samal Island in early 2021. They are now cruising through the Philippines.

**Ocelot (2019-2021)** – Jon and Sue arrived in Davao late 2019, after years of cruising other parts of SE Asia and the W Pacific. In early 2020, they made their way from Davao to Palawan, and remained in Palawan during the COVID lockdown. They do a great job of documenting their anchorages and dive spots on their website. Ocelot is a catamaran with a 1.4m draft.

[http://svocelot.com/Cruise\\_Info/Pacific/Cruising\\_Philippines.htm](http://svocelot.com/Cruise_Info/Pacific/Cruising_Philippines.htm)



**Mokisha (2016-2017)** – Colleen and Tom, 42 ft Monohull. Did a refit on Mokisha in 2016 in Samal and then spent 2017 and 2018 cruising in the Philippines.

**Soggy Paws (2014-2021)** - Dave and Sherry on Soggy Paws.

Soggy Paws arrived as a CSY 44, a 44 foot monohull with a 5.5' draft. But Dave and Sherry sold Soggy Paws while at Oceanview Marina on Samal Island, Davao, Mindanao. The new Soggy Paws is a St. Francis 44 Mk II, a 44 ft catamaran, 1.1m draft.

While in the Philippines, Dave and Sherry made 4 trips in and out of the Davao area—to Sangihe, Indonesia in 2014 (a short trip). From Malaysia to Davao in summer 2015, and from Davao to Raja Ampat, Indonesia starting in May 2016 and then to Palau and back to Davao in November 2016. In 2017, they went down into SE Indonesia from March to August.

And in 2018, they spent 6 months cruising and diving from Davao to Mindoro (Puerto Galera) and down to Palawan, then back to Davao.

Soggy Paws' blog is here:

<http://svsoggypaws.blogspot.com>

and a presentation on cruising the Philippines is here:

<http://www.svsoggypaws.com/presentations.htm#cruising>

After making a trip from Davao to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands in 2019, they were stuck in the Davao area with COVID for 2020 and early 2021.

**Sloepmouche (2013 – 2018)**: 46 ft trimaran. Feel free to watch any of our new videos about these areas, and the puppies' adventures there, on [www.YouTube.com/sloepmouche](http://www.YouTube.com/sloepmouche)

**MV Moken (2012-2018)**: Sandra and Chris

<https://moken.ca/blog-posts/>

**Screensaver (2016-2017, 2020-2021)**: <https://screensaver49.wordpress.com/> Blogged frequently and cruised all over Philippines, but didn't put his anchor spots in the blog. However, his satellite position feed is posted on his blog in a side bar. Load that into Google Earth and you can deduce where he anchored.

**Freebird (2015)** – Simon on Freebird, an Australian vessel. Reported some of his anchorages on his way out of Cebu on Noonsite.

**Valhalla (2014)** - Valhalla has been hanging around in the Philippines for years. Terry maintains a prolific website with lots of up to date information. <http://yachtvalhalla.net/> Among other things, you will find downloadable Google Earth charts, waypoint lists in GPX format, and other really useful information.

**MV Solita (2014)** - Solita has been cruising in the Philippines for years. They have done a great job of publishing mini-cruising reports of their trips through various parts of the Philippines on Noonsite. We have picked from these to add highlights, but refer you to Noonsite to download their guides directly (see section below on "Online Sources")

**Elizabeth Jane II (2014)** – EJ2 is a Peterson 44. <http://meridiansahoy.blogspot.com/>

**Carina (2014)** - Philip and Leslie on Carina. <http://sv-carina.org>



**Westward II (2014)** - Westward II left Palau in mid-2014, headed for the Philippines. They have a website <http://westward.steddy.com.au> , but most of the information in this guide attributed to Westward II was gained by verbal communications over the HF radio.

**Brick House (2014)** - Rebecca and Patrick arrived at Oceanview Marina in summer 2014 and left in the fall, headed south for Indonesia.

<http://www.sailblogs.com/member/brickhouse/>

**La Gitana (2014)**: Volker & Michaela. La Gitana hauled in 2014 and stored in the marina hardstand through 2021.

<http://www.seezigeuner.de> (in German)

**Kokomo (2014)** - Peter and Donna on Kokomo arrived in the Philippines from Palau in May 2014. They spent a year or so refitting their 50' Prout Catamaran, before continuing on through SE Asia.

<http://www.sailblogs.com/member/svkokomo>

**Downtime (2013)** - <http://downtimecat.blogspot.com> Downtime is a big catamaran with a large RIB dinghy. They went from Palau to Davao in mid-2013.

**Fellow Traveler (2010-2014)**: Doug on Fellow Traveler hung out for a few years at a place called Port Bonbonon (near Dumaguete) at the south end of Negros Island. He has fed us info in response to our questions on a lot of subjects regarding the Philippines.

**Savannah (2013)** - We are indebted to Monica from s/v Savannah for collecting and collating information as they passed through the Philippines. Her guides are posted on their blog, plus additional information available in their various blog posts:

<http://savannahsails.blogspot.com/>

Savannah is a 40 ft Owen Easton Catamaran.

**Zephyr (2013)** - Bill and Tracy Hudson on Zephyr spent a few weeks in Davao in 2013. They have a Shin Fa 458 (monohull).

Their blog is located here:

<http://www.sailblogs.com/member/svzephyr>

**Sloepmouche (2013-2016)** - Sloepmouche is a trimaran. They spent a year on the hard in Davao in 2013-2014.

**Wiskun - 2013 and before**: The cruising community suffered a great loss at the recent unexpected passing of Ellen Lee Kwen, who, along with her sailing partner, Kjartan Sekkingstad, (s/v Wiskun) were managing couple for the Holiday Ocean View Marina in the Davao area of Mindanao in the Philippines.

Ellen collapsed suddenly on 17 April, 2013, when a blood vessel broke in the lower area behind the brain. She remained in a coma until her death on 19 June.

Ellen had been a driving force in developing and promoting awareness of Samal Island and the Davao area of Mindanao as a safe and secure, typhoon-free cruising destination for sailing and

motor yachts, especially after the recent completion of the Holiday Ocean View Marina, the only marina and haul-out facility in the area for yachts of this category.

She and Kjartan were Cruising Station hosts because of their welcome, their responsiveness, their new yard and clubhouse facilities featuring very reasonable prices, and most of all for the uniquely close community spirit they created among all who arrive here. They truly fostered the spirit of camaraderie.

Wiskun is still at Holiday Oceanview Marina on Samal Island (near Davao) as of 2021.

**Arnak (2010)** – Arnak came up from Kudat and made a circuit of Palawan and the islands north of Palawan. Arnak is a Spray 13.5m monohull.

**Puerto Galera Yacht Club:** PGYC has put out a number of "cruising guides" in PDF format to help their members and visiting yachtsmen enjoy cruising the Philippines.

#### **1.14.3 Noonsite**

Originally started by Jimmy Cornell, this site is a great repository of information for all those out-of-the-way places. Made possible by YOUR contributions.

<http://www.noonsite.com>

#### **1.14.4 Seven Seas Cruising Association**

The SSCA is a world-wide organization for cruisers whose primary function is to exchange information about cruising destinations. They have a monthly publication that is mostly letters from cruisers about the areas they are cruising. They also have a good website and a well-attended bulletin board. Membership is reasonable, and the monthly publication is available electronically every month. Indexed back issues are also available electronically.

<http://www.ssca.org>

#### **1.14.5 Ocean Cruising Club**

The OCC is a world-wide organization for cruisers whose primary function is to exchange information about cruising destinations. They have a website and bi-annual publication that is mostly letters from cruisers about the areas they are cruising. Membership is reasonable, and the publication is available electronically. Indexed back issues are also available electronically.

<http://oceancruisingclub.org>

#### **1.14.6 Online Cruising Guides and Info**

Download the never-published Cruising Guide to the Philippines by Conant Webb. He has given us permission to put his work-in-progress cruising guide on our website. It's a 2Mb PDF file.

<http://svsoggypaws.com/files/index.htm#se-asia>

Also, download these great writeups by MV Solita:

[Cruising Palawan and the Calamian Islands](#)

[Cruising the Visayas](#)

## [Port Carmen Boatyards](#)

And Terry's Sargent / Yacht Valhalla's Waypoint & Chart Downloads page:

<http://yachtvalhalla.net/navigation/terrystopics.htm>

## **1.15 Printed Sources**

### **1.15.1 Cruising Guides**

We are consciously NOT duplicating any printed, copyrighted information here. It takes a lot of effort AND money to publish a cruising guide, and we firmly believe that if it is still in print, you should BUY it, not steal it (in electronic form).

Combing the Coral Carpet-Sailing Tales and the Cruising Guide to the Philippine Islands.

According to author Bruce Curran, the 1st edition can be found at the major yacht clubs in the Philippines, all copies have sold out but the 2nd edition is due out in the first half of 2015 (*still not out in early 2016*)

### **1.15.2 Recommended Reading**

These books we have found to be useful for understanding the history and culture of the Philippines.

[Escape from Davao](#) (WWII era Philippines)

[The Battle for Leyte Gulf](#) (WWII era Philippines)

[The Moro War](#) (1890's US Occupation of Philippines)

[In the Presence of my Enemies](#) (American captives of the Abu Sayyaf)

[472 Days Captive of the Abu Sayyaf](#) (Poorly written, Abu Sayyaf)

## 2 Passage Reports

### 2.1 *Sailing Here from Elsewhere*

**Fellow Traveler - 2012:** You can go back and forth fairly easily between Philippines and Singapore/Thailand/W. Malaysia by using the monsoons. It can be done as almost all day hops, or maybe an overnight here and there.

#### 2.1.1 *From the North*

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** PGYC has a nice "Arriving from the North" PDF file describing the recommended anchorages when arriving from the north. These have been edited into the Luzon section of the guide. Below is the into to that document.

Entering the Philippines from the North and North East means you are following in the wake of Chinese, Japanese, British, Portuguese and Dutch pirates and merchantmen who have sailed these waters between the Philippines and what are known today as Vietnam, China and Japan for at least eight hundred years and probably longer. As a result the areas around landfalls and in particular the natural typhoon shelters are steeped in history and folklore. One of the most famous accounts of an early scholar visiting the islands describes Princess Urduja who commanded an army comprising mostly women who would ride into battle with their breasts bare and bronzed, astride stallions. The army was invincible while the Princess lived and its influence is said to have drawn together all of the northern tribes of Luzon Island into a largely peaceful era of shared prosperity. The Princess was not only a warrior but also a great linguist and diplomat and it is said that the Emperors of China would pay tributes to her for free passage through the waters off Northern Luzon.

Fishing boats are the main challenge when arriving off Northern Luzon, as they are throughout the coastal waters of the archipelago. In the daylight you can see them and they can see you – no problem.

Arriving after dark, many of them are carrying no lights (except for the squid boats, which are so well lit as to appear to be a town on the horizon when first approached) and so they are obstacles that must be avoided. Also, day or night, even small fishing boats may be running a trawl line or net, so you should be observant of signals given by the boat's crew if passing close across the stern of a fishing boat – they will let you know if you are about to destroy the source of family income.

Rule of thumb, if you must sail after dark stay at least five miles offshore and keep a lookout.

A second and increasing hazard, particularly off the northwest coast, are Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs), which range from simple floating bundles of bamboos poles to large steel cylinders. FADs can be found up to 100 miles off-shore and in 1,000 metres of water. They are visible in light to moderate conditions but are not easy to spot in rough weather. The steel cylinder type will give a radar return of sorts but there is no substitute for a dedicated look-out.

The Government department theoretically responsible for the registration of such devices is currently considering how to record and publish details of their deployment but this is a work in progress. So in the meantime keep your eyes peeled.

Navigation lights marked on charts are occasionally out-of-service, especially the secondary or least important ones.

Unattended fishing nets are typically not used away from very shallow water so you should not find these to be a hazard throughout much of the Philippines. However, around South-East Asia in general they are sometimes used up to two miles offshore.

### **2.1.2 From Palau**

**Kokomo - May 2014 - To Cebu:** We left Palau with a light trade wind forecast for the next 5 days. Our strategy was to sail NNW to take advantage of better wind conditions @ 10 North.

Unfortunately, the wind did not increase and stayed for the entire trip between 4-6 kn. coming from the East. Not using our engines we averaged 100 NM/day.

The ship traffic was light and we encountered only 6 freighters and 2 unidentified objects with a light on it, at night.

We did not notice any major current going North or South getting closer to the Philippines.

We entered the huge mouth of the Surigao Strait @ N 10 31' 80 and E 125 35'85 with an ingoing tide early in the morning. We went through lots of whirlpools on our way in.

We stayed east of Hibuson Isl. @ N 10 26'11 and E 125 31.09. The plan was to motor sail until the tide would turn against us. At that time we had 2 knots flowing with us.

The Puerto Galera Yacht club Information sheet we have suggested several anchorages on the west coast of Dinagat Island.

N 10 25'60 E 125 28'60 Hibusan Isl, (not verified)

N 10 21'20 E 125 33'00 Tabujon Bay/ Lisub Cove, (not verified)

N 10 16'80 E 125 32'00 Lagauan Bay, too deep to anchor and many fish traps.

We decided to keep going and continued to Melgar Bay. There were several options to anchor.

We anchored @

N 10 03'62 E 125 35'80 Tagabak Cove in 20 ft of water in mud.

Nice small fishing village with a ferry dock. Stay south of the dock to give enough room for the local ferries/supply boats.

Our next stop was Limasawa Isl. @ N 09 55'503 and E 125 04'268

We dropped anchor in 25 ft of water in sandy bottom. Very nice fishing village at the beach.

Our next stop was Maasin N 10 07'782 and E 124 50'644 where we wanted to check in with Immigration. (we had been told by another cruiser there was an Immigration office there).

Maasin has a commercial harbor with two concrete piers sticking out. We anchored on the east side of the east pier in 20 ft of coral/sand. Do not anchor on the west side between the west pier and the small beach. It will dry out at low tide.

We called port control but did not get an answer. Instead the Philippino Coast guard called us and asked for our intentions. They asked for permission to come on board. 30 minutes later a

small fishing canoe came with 3 coast guard officials. Very friendly visit, no problem at all. They informed us that Maasin does not have a Immigration Office.

Later when we went ashore we checked around and every one gave us the same Information, no Immigration in Maasin.

There is not a good landing area for dinghies. On the left of the west pier is a very small beach with a couple of fishing boats. A family lives there and does not mind when you keep your dinghy there.

In town we bought two "Smart" SIM-cards for PS 40/each. The other option is to go with "Global". At the Re-Load places, which are all over town you can buy minutes for your phone. For example: P500 gives you 500 minutes of airtime plus 83min. of text messages and that is valid for 120 days.

Next day we left for Bulacan on Leyte Island.

We anchored @ N 10 28'359 E 124 43'434 in 20ft. of water in sand.

Do not anchor close to shore. It gets very shallow very fast.

Next day we motor sailed across the Camotes Sea heading for Port Carmen.

**Brick House - May 2014 - To Davao:** We left Palau via the West passage - we did it very late in the day and just used waypoints from google earth images.

The pass is wide and deep. There are a number of poles marking the edges in the northern half bit even in bad light they are visible and agreed with or Navionic charts and OpenCPN charts. The inner and outer pass in the Palau guide are correct. I didn't compare or use any of the others. Everything is deep the entire way. We had a cargo ship pass us on the way out - lots of room for everyone. Visibility is advisable, but we made it with poor visibility the entire way out and had no heart attacks so it is possible with good advance planning.

We chose, only because the weather forecast showed more wind for a longer time, to go up to 8N and sail across at 8N all the way to 130 East. We were also told that anything south of Koror would have lots of squalls. We were also that we could make landfall anywhere on the Mindanao coast because there would be lots of current going south once we got there.

We charted all possible anchorages along the eastern coast of Mindanao, and all the way to Davao since we were also told it was best not to travel at night close to the coast due to FADs and unlit fishing boats.

Once we got to 130 East we headed for Pajada Bay - the bay to the northeast of Davao Gulf, both due to a bunch of known FADS just to the northwest of 130E, and because the wind would be best if we headed southwest at that point. Once we got about about 85 miles out from that bay, we saw on the chart that there is a strong counter current close to the eastern Mindanao shore so we decided not to go in to that bay since we didn't want to have to come way out to catch the good current going southerly.

So about 50 miles out we started towards Davao Gulf - St Augustine Cape. Note we started seeing a very strong helping SSW current at 07 12N/127 00 E - in excess of 2.5 knots and remained with us until the coast of Mindanao and to Cape St Augustine! Makes for a very fast last 1/3 of or trip to Davao!

We noted some FADS that we saw. These positions are very accurate - though its possible for them to move.

07 10.851N / 127 58.305E 10 foot long orange canister lading on its side, probably not very radar reflective. Lots of current.

07 08.892 / 127/44.323E FAD showed up very small on radar, and is lit with flashing red,green and white light.

Small black and white FADS (or moorings?) on the west coast of the peninsula (eastern waters of Gulf) inside of Davao Gulf approximately 1-3 miles offshore, every 2 miles or less until about 7 north, then they seem to go away. Not lit, probably OK to hit- made of styrofoam, rope and small bike tires. Soooo many small bangkas...

We had warnings of unlit fishing boats and FADS 150 miles and more offshore - but everything we saw besides the one broken FAD was lit and we were watching pretty carefully. But we aren't great watchers either. That said - there were at least a dozen boats on AIS, and there were 3 or 4 lit fishing boats 150 miles out from Mindanao.

As you approach the Davao Gulf, there are tons of fishing boats off of St Augustine Cape. I would not want to approach at night - who knows if they are lit or not. We saw at least 8 of them during the day. Little ones, big ones...from everywhere. They go and come back at all times of day and night. AT least there are noisy motors on them.

The reef on the south tip of St Augustne Cape is really there even if it doesn't look like it and no waves are breaking on it. We went over the edge of the 13 foot deep area to see if it would really shallow - and it did. We only risked it to 35 feet since we couldn't see much. No fish caught there.

Its nice here in the Gulf - calm water, lots of wind right on the nose but motorsailable. There isnt a lot to hit at least that we saw, as far as reefs. There were FADS though as noted above, and lots of small boat traffic. The anchorage we are at is flat in 18 knots of wind from the north. except a little roll at high tide. It is noticably cooler than Palau here.

The first night we anchored at Tagbanao Cove, about 7 miles up the inside coast inside Davao Gulf. coordinates: 06 22.2980 N/126 09.8207 E There are no obstructions coming in. We think we are anchored in mud.

Its a picturesque village of several hundred people, and were greeted with polite teenagers. They welcomed us to their village and to the Philippines, but mostly wanted to see the beautiful 'yachte'. They say there was a boat here last yar - who were also "foreigners". Most of the kids English is minimal but if you speak slowly with a bit of Spanish, it gets you by. The few adlt men we saw spoke no English and did not come close to the boat. There are a couple of teenagers who speak very good English and are super polite calling me "maam" all the time. The were very careful and skillful at not hitting the boat with their outriggers. We noticed none of them ever went in the water - I forgot to ask why.

We are anchored in about 30 feet, hanging in about 50 feet. The water is not clear. We have already seen 2 brown sea snakes. There are little 'bangkas' everywhere motorized and paddled, leaving and arriving day and night. There are no obstructions coming in. The village along the waterfront is made up of straw huts, very traditional looking and colorful. There are a couple of very modern looking houses amongst them all as well. I do not think we will be putting

the dinghy in the water to go ashore - probably will leave first thing in the morning, the minute we can see objects in the water, and head to Davao or however far towards Davao we can get. We are definitely in these people's front yard and should go ashore...but we should really carry on and get legal before making any friends. No one else has approached the boat - day or night that we are aware of but there was activity ashore and in the anchorage all night long...its not quiet here. School is out for the summer and they are in preparation now for a fiesta, where they will eat an entire cow, on Wednesday. One of the older teenagers wanted to be sure we knew that Mindano is peaceful now - that there are no wars and it is very safe for foreigners, sort of an odd thing to tell us...but he also said the last foreigner he knew that came here died in the Philippines later on - he didn't know of what, but assured me he wasn't murdered!

The second day we motored for about 35 miles north to Mapagbo Creek at 06 59.0367 N/125 58.8106 E, but it was too rough to stay. We continued on to find a makeshift anchorage and dropped anchor at 2 miles north on the side of a reef, at 07 01.0103 N/125 58.7879 E. Not the ideal anchorage, but a good enough alternative in a north wind. Dropped in 30 feet, coral :( Drifted back in to 50 feet. LOTS of Bangkas and fish traps. Big village set back some. On the reef if wind shifts from WNW-S. Good N-SE, would be on the reef if wind shifts from WNW-S.

**Zephyr - July 2013: Day 3:** We're surrounded by rain clouds again. Yesterday was the same with winds coming from everywhere constantly changing directions. No big winds but anywhere from 7 to 10 knots at times. Right now it's about 2.5 knots of winds. We have all the sails out and are moving slowly but at least in the right direction. We are forced to use the engine about 50% of the time as the wind just keeps going to zero.

Last night it felt like we were back in the ITCZ again. It looked like we were in the middle of an upside down bowl. We had blue skies over us, but really ugly black clouds around the edge of the bowl surrounding us. They were either raining or threatening to do so for hours. We did finally get that torrential rain that leaked through every zipper in the bimini and dodger.

**Day 4:** We were visited by a mother whale and her calf yesterday in the late afternoon. Again coming to the surface off the starboard side several times before heading down. Mom didn't appear to be as big as the whale from the day before and that's just fine with us though I'm sure she would be quite protective of her child. They were both gone in a minute or two but gave us some excitement.

The wind died off during the afternoon and on came the engine and it ran much of the night. The winds, where there were of them showed up just after 0600 so up went the sails and off went the motor. By noon, the winds had died again and again, on came the engine. It's not going to be cheap when we pull up the the fuel depot in Davao but so far, all is well on board.

We have seen several fishing boats, both big Mother Ships and smaller boats during the last two days. We were visited by three men each in a small wooden dinghy with an outboard motor earlier this morning. Great design. Narrow sides and with tiller control like an oriental jet ski. They could move very fast through the water. Big enough for just one person. They went through the waves effortlessly. Bright colors were the name of the game when it comes to these fishing boats. Yellows and reds all over them. The three men passed about a hundred yards off our port side checking us out. Not sure they see that many sailboats here. They were full of waves and smiles as they watched us move along under sail.



**Day 5:** About 1000, we entered the Bay of Davao on almost calm water. We've had to run the engine through the night as the winds had died out again. We did get to turn it off early this AM when we had some winds but they quickly died off. As I said before, it's going to be expensive at the diesel pump when we get in. We've covered 558 miles in the last 5 days and over 120 yesterday due to our engine.

We can't make it all the way into the marina today, so we will stop somewhere overnight tonight (Siagaboy)

Last night was another rainy night with lots of fishing boats, both big and small, most with a Mother Ship nearby to drop off what they caught. We had one Mother Ship to our port side and 5 smaller boats to our starboard during the night. As a unit, the five smaller boats slowly made their way in a line ahead of us and past our bow blocking a safe passage. I had to slow down the engine and turn sharply to starboard to avoid them. Not knowing what kind of fishing they were doing. We don't want to run over a big fishing net and get it stuck in the prop.

**Hamamas - May 2008 - to Cebu:** On 29 May 2008 as our 3rd Visa was running out we sadly said our final good byes to our yachting friends and our wonderful family at Sam's Tours and motored to the Customs Wharf ready to clear out.

By 10.45am we were finally underway and motoring through the Palau Lagoon towards the Philippines 546nm away. There were many rain showers and variable wind and sea conditions on the 5 day passage to our first anchorage in the Philippines. We had to continually raise and lower the sails and the motor was turned on and off many times. Our top speed was about 5.9kts while motor sailing, 4.6kts while just sailing and the lowest sailing speed was 2.1kts! It was definitely not an exhilarating sail.

The trip was not entirely unpleasant as we saw many fabulous seabirds out fishing, heaps of flying fish, shooting stars, brilliant golden sunsets and the magnificent Milky Way. Also we passed over the Mindanao Trench which is the deepest part of the Pacific Ocean where the Pacific and Philippine plates collide as in Plate Tectonics theory. Other than being the inky, inky blue of the deep waters we didn't notice anything different as we had had our depth sounder turned off for days. As we came closer to the Philippines and neared the Trench we began to see many fishing vessels.

On the last night we travelled via the Hinatuan Passage towards our first anchorage while Fran was on watch. No shipping was sighted but in the early hours of the morning when Tom came on watch he became puzzled by what he described as a "a solid mass on the radar." Daylight revealed that it was actually hundreds of small fishing vessels without lights and known in the Philippines as bancas. Welcome to the Philippines!

We had finally arrived in Philippines at 8.30am on 3 June 2008 after 5 days and nights of easy sailing and lots of motor sailing. We spent the next couple of days anchored at picturesque **Lapinigan Island** so that we could rest, send emails and clean up of course. We were visited by lots of locals in motorised outriggers but only one lot without a motor have asked for money they just seem curious about the boat.

When the tides were right we made our way from Lapinigan Island to Ipil Island. Where we anchored at pretty **Punta Bilar** on Ipil Is after an exciting motor ride as we had to work the tides and ride the whirlpools because of the way the tide screams through the Passage. At some

stages we were steering many degrees off course just to make headway in a sideways crab style! It really was very funny.

We anchored off a small village that had at least 23 bancas on the lovely little beach and we could see a larger village further south.

The weather was overcast as we weighed anchor the next morning ready for our "ride on tidal stream and the whirlpools" as we motored our way out of the Passage heading for Leyte Is.

We spent the night in Maasin on the island of Leyte.

On the last day of our 674nm journey from Palau to the Philippines we were a tad excited as we weighed anchor at 9.15am and set sail for Port Carmen on Cebu Island. The scenery on route was picturesque and we were fascinated to see a substantial village and a Resort build on huge reef and over the water at the Danajon Banks. At first we thought they were islands.

During this part of trip we also encountered many fisherman with their nets strung out between the FADS (fishing aid devices). These are just a stick on a float in the middle of nowhere with a flag on top and the nets with floats are strung out usually right on the track you want to take! If the fishermen think you haven't seen them or the nets they stand up in their bancas and wave the oar about to indicate which way to go around them.

The entrance to Port Carmen was fairly tricky but we were safely anchored in a post card setting by 4.45pm.

**Wiskun - December 2007 - to Davao:** We waited in Palau until late December to head to Davao. By this time, the ITCZ has moved south of the equator and the NE winds have set in. We had a fast and boisterous sail. If I remembered right, that year was also a La Nina year. Frankly, I didn't see any difference then compared to now. Except we really had a dry season from late Jan to June with El Nino this year.

### **2.1.3 From Borneo**

**Song Bird – April 2018:** We went up the east coast of Palawan from north of Borneo. We spent an overnight at Balabac Island, (anchored in front of the police station), and then went straight up to Puerto Princessa, (overnighter). We traveled alone, and did not have any problems at all.

Our friends went up west coast same time, and had a rougher (weather) trip. Again, they never felt threatened at all.

People up here are very friendly and keep telling us how safe it is on the west side of the Philippines.

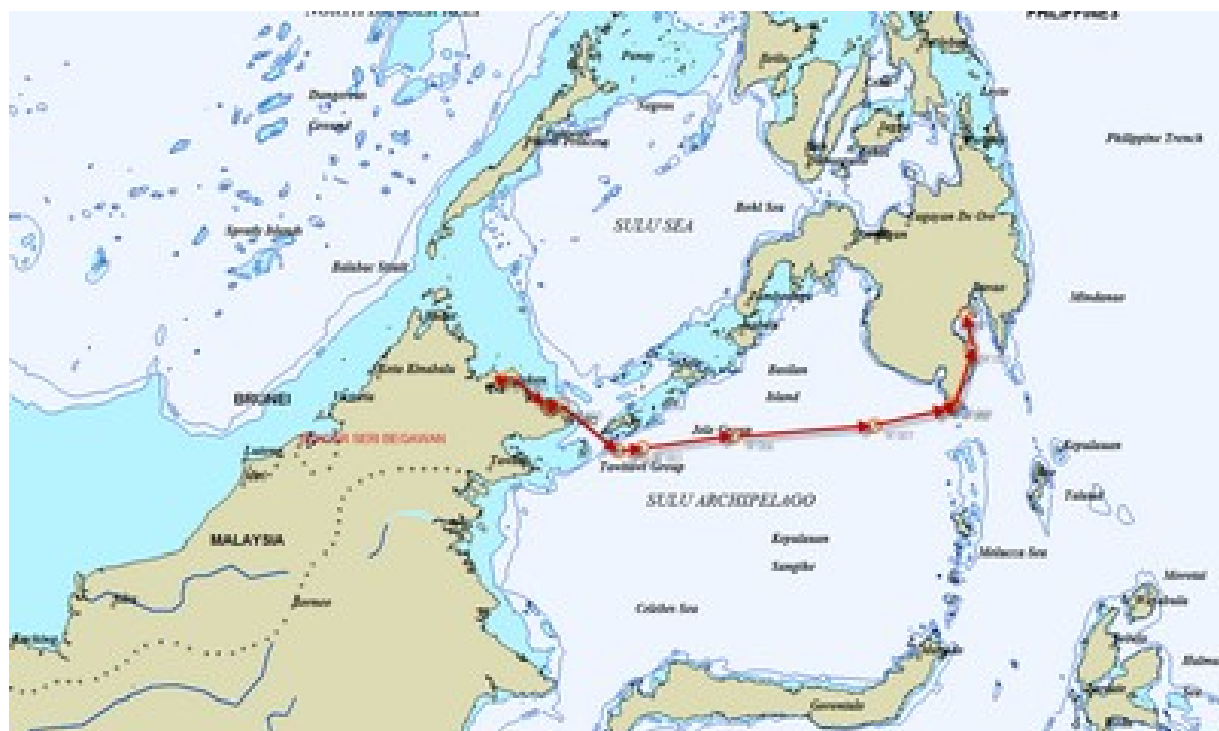
**Stella – November 2015 (from Noonsite):** Normally I would travel between NW Palawan and Kudat at least 70 miles offshore, and mostly don't travel with lights at night. As we were close to shore (8 miles west of Balabac) on our return trip and there was a lot of traffic, I put on our stern light to appear as just a local boat. We were tracked and eventually approached by either a Philippine navy boat or coast guard. They flashed us with flood lights and left westwards when they realised we were just a sailboat. This happened again 4 hours later with another official boat, so the Navy and Coast Guard are patrolling this area for our protection and of course trying to stop some smuggling. It was a reassuring thing for me.

In early November we were on passage from Kudat to northwest Palawan and we stopped for one night at Tagbita Bay. We knew no one there, nor were there any other yachts present. A local man came close to us in his banka and I invited him on board for coffee. I asked him about crocodiles and he said yes, there were two and they had taken two young teenagers. I then asked him about Abu Sayaf and he told me they had created a training camp nearby and were recruiting young boys aged 15 to 18 years old. He said they were paying 12000 pesos to their families and he had seen them out training.

We spent the night locked inside Stella and left at first light. Our next stop was about 15 miles south of Quezon town, Malampakun Island. We had caught a fish that day and as our fridge still was not working we decided to visit one family on the island and share this lovely mackerel with them. We spoke with them about what the man from Tagbita Bay had told us, they confirmed every detail to be true and said they had been recruiting in their area too.

Next stop was Quezon town where the marine police have a small house by the main wharf. I parked my dinghy there and chatted with them about what had been conveyed re. Tagbita Bay. They said they knew nothing of these things.

**Salulami - 2009 - Sandakan to Davao:** From sailsamal.com: Sailing Yacht Salulami was kind enough to share his waypoints and his experiences with me. He has agreed to have it posted here.



05°51.34 N : 118°08.54 E - at anchor. Waited 3 days at Pulau Berhala for weather to clear.

05°54.84 N ; 118°18.48 E - We left this morning Sandakan for Dewhurst Bay at the river mouth from Kinatangan river

05°25.22 N ; 118°56.53 E - at anchor - we had good conditions so we made it to Marowop River (63NM) where we anchored for the night. There is a village and a police station close by.

05°27.14 N ; 119°08.87 E - at anchor - we moved to Tambisan Island (20Nm). Village and police station close by. Day trips only because the 2 rivers bring in several big logs.

04°43.47 N ; 120°01.84 E - We left yesterday 1pm LT to enter Celebes through Sibutu Passage. Current with us at the beginning, very light winds, smooth sea. Crossed cargo route at 04°43 N. 6 ships in a range of 6 NM then nothing more. At this time we are motor sailing

04°45.909 N; 120°25.53 E - we passed a fishing boat at anchor with 5 small power driven pirogue's around him. (Wiskun's note: There are Fish Attraction Devices around Philippines, moored in very deep waters, and some attached to huge drums that are unlit at nights. Fishing vessels - the mother ships, tie up to these devices, with several smaller vessels out to haul fish). Two of them came towards us, and from far offered us fish. We denied, continuing on our course 084°T. After we passed them, I put the engine on to increase speed to put distance between them, actual speed 5.2 knts over the ground.

04°57.14 N ; 121°54.45 E - We had a nice sailing day yesterday. We made 101 NM. Still 343 NM to go. Every thing ended fine with the fishing boat story. That was the emotion of the day.

05°07.76 N ; 124°10.09 E - We had a nice sailing day again. We made 130 NM. Still 208 NM to go. The wind is nice constant from N to NW but sea is building up, about 2m

05°26.28 N ; 125°23.46 E - At anchor. Friday 13th we made 119 NM in 23 hours but the wind lost in strength and turned WSW at the end of the day. In the morning, a little cargo (looking naughty) approached us from behind. Sea was rough, and the captain of the cargo, calling on Channel 16 "hello my friend" offered us fish he had on board, cigarettes and asking for details of the yacht, speed, how many on board. I denied his offer telling him that sea was too rough to board, and giving no answer on how many we were on board. He was insisting on that one. Finally I told him that we were as many on the yacht as they were on the cargo. He didn't insist any longer and slowly past on our side. The transmission chain from my autopilot broke just before midnight and we anchored north of Balut Island. There are no details on the electronic chart, so we approached the island from far outside 90° to the coastline until a sounding of 10 meters to drop anchor. We stopped at 11.00 UTC North of Sarangani Island. We came in with a squall.

05-29.14 N ; 125-26.19 E - Yesterday we had the visit from a Official of Balut Island Ayob Aynan. Since my transmission chain from the auto pilot was broken, I could give a good and true reason of my presence there. He was very friendly offering us a escort because they are on red alert from treasure hunter. (no no I don't smoke dacha). This morning we were boarded by officials from the coast guard station Sarangani, and got an official paper of inspection. They were very friendly too. We left at 23.00 UTC.

06°21.33 N ; 125°43.10 E

06°53.97 N ; 125°38.40 E - We have 10Nm to go and a ETA 02.00 UTC, I will call Port control and if no answer Pilot station.

7°04.50 N; 125°37.70 E - Sta. Ana Wharf - Quarantine check-in

We had an overnight trip of 100NM up the Davao Gulf. This was the part of the trip that needed most attention. Plenty of little fishing boat with small lights all around the place. Radar does not pick them up. Monday 10.00 local time we anchored at the quarantine place and had the visit of the officials. Guys! Pirates are not on the sea, they are on land. Quarantine officer charged us

2000P with receipt, Custom and Immigration 3000P each with no receipts. I was asked to give something to the pilot boat that brought these people on board. No comment! The trip was 610NM and we sailed 7 days.

I have to thank Allan Riches from Brunei Bay Radio. I had HF contact with him every morning. Also thanks to Ellen and Kjartan from Wiskun, Canadian Yacht. They are involved in a marina project NE of Samal Island.

Wiskun's note: According to Noonsite.com, the Philippines' entry ports have irregular port of entry fees, some classified as "Special Services Fees". We did not encounter such fees when we arrived Davao, and it was unfortunate that SY Salulami did. The Holiday Oceanview Marina has intentions of having this clarified with the officials. If there are fees to be charged, in accordance with the Immigration, Customs and Quarantine regulations, they hope to get this in writing to be posted in their website.

*Latest info is that you go straight to the Marina, and do your clearance in the city of Davao by ferry/taxi, etc. See Davao section and the [sailsamal.com](http://sailsamal.com) website for latest info.*

## **2.2 Between Islands in the Philippines**

### **2.2.1 Dayhopping Along the East Coast of Mindanao**

**Soggy Paws – March & August 2018 – Day Hopping Against the Wind:** We went up the coast against the NE winds in late March, and back down in late August against the southerlies. Going up, we waited in the Pujada Bay for a few days for a mild wind period, and then did long day hops. In August the wind was light pretty much the whole time. Definitely need to get going early every day if you don't want to be bashing, and prefer to motorsail in light winds. Delay your start a bit if you are a true sailor and want wind. The wind starts shifting on sunny days by 10am and picks up a lot in the afternoon, from the NE-E during northerly season and SE-E during southerly season.

We found that staying in close along the shore, when we were headed north, we stayed out of the worst of the southbound current, and sometimes had a positive counter-current. Passing the points, however, especially in the afternoons against the wind, was difficult (but not terrible).

Coming south, we stayed out a bit further and in the middle of Mindanao, had a full day of 2-2.5 kt helping current. However, when the S wind picked up in the afternoon, the wind-against-current waves got to be a bit uncomfortable. Edge in to get smoother water, but you will lose most of the current.

Pretty much every anchorage (see the [East Coast of Mindanao](#) section below) has some habitation, from big towns to small fishing huts. Every point you pass has fishermen, often with nets out. If you see a boat with one guy in it, he's probably hand-lining. If you see a boat with multiple people in it, they may be laying nets. A boat approaching you with an oar in the air, is indicating that you are approaching a net and you should go the way the oar points to go around the end of the net.

Sometimes fishermen will make eating or drinking signals with their hands—they are looking for a handout. We kept a case of water bottles and some packs of cookies or crackers handy to pass out. They always offer fish, but the fish they are offering are always small.

We never felt threatened in any way by anyone along this coast. However, fishermen often wear head wraps (t-shirts, whatever) to keep the sun off. They are not pirates!

**Sloepmouche – February 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** After being based at Samal Island since 2013, which was a great place to do some boatyard work and later explore eastern Indonesia and Palau, we finally started exploring the Visayas.

*Ed note: Details of individual anchorages are included in the appropriate sections below.*

One of the drawbacks of leaving southern Mindanao to go north in the Philippines is that you have to choose between two difficult ways! Either you round the SW corner of Mindanao and then enter in the Sulu Sea with its pirates and hostage abductors, or you go along the east coast of Mindanao against currents and, in the NE wind season, unfavorable winds! Some friends went via the Sulu Seas, only stopping once next to a Coast Guard cutter for the night—not really a leisurely cruise, which is OK if you want to quickly go to Malaysia without cruising Indonesia. We decided to take our time and go along the east side of Mindanao, waiting for favorable weather windows.

The safest season, typhoon-wise, to cruise the Visayas is January-March, but that is also when the winds are from the NE, pretty much where you will need to head. Currents seems to run southerly pretty much all year long and going up with SE winds (July-October) can create pretty rough seas with wind against current—not a great situation either!

After we finished our last boat projects in January, we headed out on February 4. Our goal was to get to Bonbonon, a safe typhoon hole in Southern Negros. It would be a base to do some traveling and some minor boat repairs.

It is very important to stay very close to the coast, where the current may be less, or you even may find a countercurrent helping push you north. Give yourself plenty of time so you can pick mild weather windows and tuck into reasonable anchorages to wait for the next window. Except for a few overnight sails, when the wind was mild and we chose to keep going, we did mostly day-sails of only 20-30 miles, giving us plenty of time, even if against current, to arrive in daylight. We had moderately mild conditions, and even so there were areas of rough water due to currents and winds, especially when rounding points or crossing mouths of large bays. For us they were just annoying and uncomfortable, but we could imagine these areas becoming quite dangerous in 20+kn wind and current conditions.

**Leg 1 – Samal to Pujada Bay (100 nm):** We ended up motor-sailing most of the way in fairly calm seas. We left midmorning from Holiday Oceanview Marina and motor-sailed in light wind from the NE and later in the afternoon against land southerly breeze. We timed our arrival to be at Point San Agustin just at daylight. We drifted, engine off, the last two hours of night and at 5:30 a.m. headed to the point. The weather predictions gave around 10kn from NNE and so the seas were very moderate. We had no rough seas at the point and were able to easily round the cape and start heading our way north along the coast of Mindanao.

It is only a mere 35nm to get to [Pujada Bay](#), but with currents against you (reported as fast as 5kn) your speed will vary considerably. At first we did about 3kn and then for hours we had 2kn or less and in the mid-afternoon we were at 3.5-4kn (we would have been motoring at 4-5kn if no current).

By noon, we were expecting to arrive late at night, but with the welcome breeze (15kn) we were able to sail close-hauled and arrived just after dark. We are thankful to fellow cruisers, especially Terry on Valhalla who does a terrific job of creating Philippines satellite chart overlays for Open CPN, and other cruisers who've reported their previous anchorages, so I studied the possibilities to make a safe anchoring at night.

After almost one week in Pujada Bay, waiting for calm winds to head up north, we left early morning to continue our trip against wind and current.

**Leg 2: Pujada Bay to Bislig Bay (100nm):** We left Pujada Bay with wind in our sails (going SE!) to end up close to the wind once on our way. By luck we could fall off to the port, going north into the next bay. I saw on the charts that in the north corner of that bay, there might be a shoal to anchor should you need an anchorage ([Flaca Point](#)). Was it foresight? Because we did need an emergency anchorage in calmer water to make an emergency plug to cover the hole left by one of our portholes that blew out in the rough waters that whipped up when the day wind piped up to 25kn apparent with gusts to 28kn!

So after a night of some relative rest, we sailed closed-hauled again in a NE direction until [Caraga Bay](#) then in a northerly direction, overnight, then NNW to [Bislig Bay](#). There are some possible anchorages on the way, but they did not look too protected and since the current was not against us for long periods (and at times even seemed to be with us) we decided to take advantage of the mild weather to motorsail. GRIB files were predicting worse weather soon.

**Leg 3: Bislig Bay – Buca Grande (100nm):** From Bislig Bay on, we decided to do day trips as the weather predicted was OK. We left Bislig Bay in calm weather, motor-sailing easily to [Port Lamon](#). It's a scenic anchorage with a small community of fishermen and sponge farms, and Globe Internet. We did not go ashore as our dinghy was stowed for rough passages, but we were tempted!

From Port Lamon we intended to motorsail to Cagwait Bay, but current against us and 20kn from the NW forced us to tack out of Port Lamon, then into the bay. Looking at the chart, we decided to check a possible anchorage. Good call: [San Agustin Bay](#) offered us a nice shelter in 20' with good sand. It was super calm when blowing 20-25kn from NNE in bay. There is a coconut plantation and a small community ashore. Globe Internet: good.

From there we motor-sailed to [Cagwait Bay](#) and anchored in a surprisingly calm anchorage in 10-20' of good sand/mud. Good Globe Internet access from here.

Next day, we motored the last 25nm to the NE point of Mindanao and anchored in [Cortes Bay](#). When you enter this cloverleaf-shaped anchorage area, it is not obvious how to get in that inner anchorage, but it becomes clear and easy as you get to the channel that corresponds quite well at the CM93 location. Good Globe Internet access from here, too.

The next day, we made the next leap, to [Buca Grande](#), finally getting away from Mindanao!

**Leg 4: Buca Grande through Hinatuan Passage:** This leg covers the [Hinatuan Passage](#) with its very strong tidal currents. Since you might get 5 or even up to 11kn current, it makes serious sense to plan your passages to have currents in your favor! In the WxTide32 program there is a reference station on Boca Grande – Sohutan Bay. On the days we went through, flood tide was starting mid-morning, so we left Dahakit around 11 a.m. and had favorable current with us to [Talavera](#), where we anchored overnight.

What an easy fun time we had going through the dreaded **Hinatuan Passage**. We even zoomed through the channel on the north side of Rasa with nary a trace of whirlpools or overfalls. We had beautiful sailing in light wind with favorable current from Talavera to [Kantiasay Bay](#).

**Wiskun - 2013:** From Davao Gulf, you cannot go straight to Dumaguete. You still have to sail out of the gulf to the south, and northwards from there to enter the central islands. You can either choose the east coast or the west coast of Mindanao. This is the tricky part. The east coast is safe, but you will be fighting the predominantly south setting current. The west coast is easier, but you will be going through what other sailors fear as a piracy prone area.

### **2.2.2 Hinatuan Passage**

See more here: [Hinatuan Passage](#)

### **2.2.3 Hinatuan Passage to Bonbonnon**

**Sloepmouche – March 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** After spending a little time at Ipil / Punta Bilar, we moved on toward Bohol, on our way ultimately to Port Bonbonnon.

Our first stop was to **Sonok Point** (SW side of [Panaon Island](#)), and then we sailed the 8nm to anchor at **Ilijan Point** near San Francisco village, also on on Panaon Island.

We then motored in no wind to [Padre Burgos](#), at the southern tip of Leyte Island.

Our next passage of 38nm took us to the [SE corner of Bohol](#) in **Guindulman Bay**, and we spent another night in **Loay**, a little further along the same coast.

Our last stop before Bonbonnon was [Tagbilaran](#), on the SW corner of Bohol.

From Bohol we went to [Bonbonon](#), in the south of Negros, one of the favorite typhoon holes in the Philippines, but that will be part of our next letter later this year.

### **2.2.4 Bonbonon to Puerto Princesa (Sulu Sea)**

**Hamamas - March 2009:** While in [Port Bonbonon](#), we met up with a few other yachties and watched the weather as we needed 2-3 good sailing days to cross the Sulu Sea to [Puerta Princesa](#) (PP) on Palawan Is 254 nm away.

Once we had our weather window, we set sail on 26 March for Puerta Princesa .The sailing was variable as sometimes we rocked and rolled along in the confused seas or we wallowed for a while, then ghosted along but we also had a lot of great sailing and motor sailing.

There was some shipping and we saw some fishermen in small banacas in the middle of the Sulu Sea! The stars were brilliant and we enjoyed some glorious sunsets and sunrises and as usual hundreds of flying fish performed for us .

We found the entrance to PP a bit tricky as the charts were not correct but the people from the Abanico Yacht Cub were very helpful and came out to show us the way in. Later we learned we had to pay for this service!

We were anchored by 11.45am on 28 March.



### **2.2.5 Port Bonbonon to Palawan and Back**

**Valhalla - 20 Oct-7 Nov 2004:** We left our mooring in Port Bonbonon, Negros, at 0800 on 20 Oct and motored to Siaton Point where we found some light WNW winds .. on the nose, of course! Our intended destination was the island of Culion, some 256NM to the Northwest.

The wind had other ideas as it veered to the north and settled in the NW at 6-8 Kts. As we closed the west coast of Negros it was time for a new destination and we chose an old friend, Cagayan Island. The winds continued throughout the night giving us a close reach over calm seas ... sometimes motor sailing in the lulls.

**21 Oct:** At sunrise we were greeted by a large ship which, after an exchange on VHF, altered course to avoid us.

We entered Cagayan lagoon via the north pass but weren't happy with anchoring there in the choppy seas so we took refuge behind a small island near the south pass ... actually on the outer reef .. and anchored at 1050 in 15 ft over sand.

**22 Oct:** The next morning we departed at 0805 with NE winds at 10 kts and decided to head for Cabulauan Island, 127 NM to the NNW. We cleared the south end of Cagayan island and set a NW'ly course. Again, the wind had other ideas. By 1230 it had backed to the N so we set a course for Dumarán Island on the NE side of Palawan. By 1300 it had backed into the NW so we picked Tagauayan Island, to the NNE in the Cuyo Islands as a new destination. Nope .. by 1400 the wind was back to the NE so it was back to Calasag Bay, Dumarán Island as a destination.

The winds built to 12-14 knots but the seas were inordinately large for the light winds ... a precursor to the stronger NE winds that developed before sundown. Through the night we were beam reaching in 22-25 knot winds with the seas on the beam at 2 to 3 meters. A VERY uncomfortable sail .. rocking and rolling while the dinghy, which we were foolishly(?) towing, was leaping from wave to wave behind us.

**23 Oct:** We slowed the boat in the early morning to avoid a landfall in the dark. We entered Calasag Bay at 0720 with 14-18 knots of NE wind and found the anchorage to be untenable in those conditions. We searched several locations along the south shore before deciding on a very calm place against the west side of Dumarán Island where we anchored in 20 ft over sand and coral.

**24 Oct:** The next day, with 10 knots of NE breeze we had a nice sail through the reefs, which were easy to discern thanks to the sunny conditions. Our destination became a bit less than intended since, as we entered Taytay Bay, Rose spotted another sailboat which turned out to be Andrew and Robin on NEREUS. They were heading for Apulit Island and we agreed to join them.

On the southwest side of the Apulit Island is Club Noah. This very upmarket resort provides free moorings which we've determined is to prevent yachts from anchoring in the bay and 'spoiling the view of the guests'.

**25 Oct:** We dropped the mooring at 0800 and set sail for Cabulauan Island (once more with feeling), 40 NM to the NE. The northerly winds did it again ... veered to the NE so we decided to go north through the pearl farms and see where the boat wanted to go ... hoping to get around the north side of Palawan and visit the El Nido area. Naturally, as we got further north

the wind backed to the NNW so Colaylayan Bay on Linapacan Island became the new destination.

**27 Oct:** Underway at 0615. Our original destination was Ditaytayan Island, 30 NM away on the east side of Culion Island, but now we began to expect to change any destination we had in mind and this day was no exception. Five miles closer was Halsey Harbor and the prospect of plenty of fresh water, according to the cruising guides. We spent 2 nights here.

**29 Oct:** Weighed anchor at 0650 and sailed up the west side of Culion Island in freshening winds which became ENE at 18-22 knots. But without any fetch because of the island we had smooth sailing until we turned the corner at the top and had it right on the nose. We motored the last few of the 20 NM to the Coral Bay Resort on Popototan Island.

**30 Oct:** Anchor up at 0810 and, with no wind or seas we began motoring to Calauit Island on the NW tip of Busuanga Island, just 20 NM away. We motor sailed in light winds to Illultuk Bay, Calauit Island.

**31 Oct:** Early morning Safari Tour. We were back aboard and underway by 0815 with no wind and smooth seas. By 0945 we had motored around the north side of Calauit Island and had just enough light wind to fly the jib but were hard on it the rest of the way. At 1230 the engine began to slow (low on fuel) so we tacked away from shore, put in 20 liters of fuel and motored on into Port Caltom. Picked up a mooring 1424 after 25NM.

**4 Nov:** Dropped the mooring at 0815 bound for Port Bonbonon. Motored and motor sailed until 1800 when the wind settled in from NE at 12 knots, building to 22-25 knots before midnight. Close reaching with jib and mizzen we had the best sail in ages!

**5 Nov:** The wind continued NE at 22-25 knots until mid-day then moderated to 10-15 knots ENE .. by noon we had EVERYTHING up, including some washing, and sailed nicely at 4-6 knots. The wind increased steadily through the evening and we ripped along.

**6 Nov:** From midnight to 0400 we honked along on a close reach in 15-18 knots, ENE, with slight seas. Perfect! Only problem was that we had made such good time we would be entering port in the dark .. something I'm prepared to do if necessary but this time it wasn't.

At 0745 we dropped the anchor in Catmon Bay on the west side of Negros.

Spent the day resting here until 1630 when we left, just after a tropical downpour which washed all the salt off the boat.

**7 Nov:** With light winds, NE 4-6 knots, we sailed slowly to ensure a morning arrival. At 0615 we picked up our mooring in Port Bonbonon.

The trip from Port Caltom was 274 NM and the overall cruise was 681 NM. Overall average speed was 4.5 knots ... no complaints. GECKO, the dinghy, was towed the entire way. No fish on the line which was always out during the day ... and getting snagged by grass and trash. Engineering casualties ... one broken shifting cable that was 10 years old.

### **2.2.6 Bonbonnon to the Palawan, Slowly**

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** We left the serenity of Bonbonon in early March to start a seven-month cruise in the Visayas and Palawan.

Note: March is the end of the NE trade wind season and we hoped that the going north in the lee of west Negros would not be too hard against strong winds and seas. At the same time, we hoped to get some NE to help us going west towards Palawan.

With just a little patience and weather planning, we did quite well actually! We did a lot of motor-sailing, but the sea conditions were not bad at all so the timing was right!

We started out by sailing up the west side of Negros Island.

For the first 10nm, we sailed with the wind behind (wrapping effect), then motorsailed close-hauled. Our first stop was the **Taboo Twoo** anchorage.

There's usually a light onshore breeze during northerly wind season; small swell.

From there we had about 10nm of motor-sailing in very light wind followed by 10nm of beautiful sailing with the NE winds coming from the bay we were passing across. Our second stop was **Cansilan Point**, protected from NE wind waves behind a sandbar. It was roly with afternoon wind from the SW.

We then motored in light wind to **Catmon Point**. It was calm with no swell. We went by dinghy to nearby beaches and Ubong cave on the west side of Catmon Point.

We sailed into nearby **Nabulao Bay** to check the anchorages we had heard about, but were not inspired by the bay, so we went just a little farther north to anchor in **Campomanes Bay** in front of a nice beach. The bay is so far back that no swell came in. There is a marine park at the north end of the bay entrance and two small floating fish parks inside the bay.

After two nice calm nights, we motored the 6nm to a little bay that looked quite beautiful on the GE photo, what we named **Perth Paradise lagoon** (no name on the chart, and locals couldn't give us a name), which is well protected from all directions by reefs and rocky islets.

After going just 5nm north, we found **Cartagena Bay** to be ideal to explore the 2nm coast south by dinghy with hidden caves and pristine beaches! From this bay, it is fairly easy to take a bus to the town of Sipalay, about 7 km away.

We took advantage of a two-day break in the strong NE winds to get north and NE. Our first 10nm leg took us to **Sojoton Bay** where we were protected from the light southerly breeze. We anchored with a shallow area on the west side and fishing traps on the shallow part extending quite a way from the beach. It was right next to the highway, so an easy place to get on a bus to go to a big town to repair anything.

The next day, we took advantage of a 36-hour break in the NE monsoon due to some depressions in the area to motor sail in very light wind to **Guimaras Island** (where we would not even consider going if against strong NE winds!). We anchored in well-protected **St. Ana Bay** in front of a small fishing village and stone pier leading to the road system.

We took a half hour habal-habal (moto-taxi) to Jordan (pronounced Hor-dan) to buy some fresh food at the Sunday morning market. If you need a big city for repairs or mall shopping or supermarkets, you can take a ferry from the Jordan Wharf to Iloilo.

After a few days in this protected bay, we motor-sailed back south in light wind to the **Taklong Lagoon**, which is well protected from all sides.

With the trade winds blowing well again, we had a nice sail (after such a long time!) with wind aft of the beam and then behind all the way to **Siraan Point** ([Naso Point](#)) on the SW tip of [Panay Island](#).

We were now ready to go west to explore one of the most touted places in the Philippines, **Palawan**. Our first leg was 65nm long so we left before dawn to make sure we could reach [Cuyo Harbor](#) before sunset. The NE trade winds were forecast at 15-20kn, but there is a big wind shadow behind Panay that might give us some light wind for the first part of the passage. Windytv.com was right on! We had to motor sail the first part of the trip with very light wind and some adverse current, but then about noon, we started to get more and more wind on the beam and we ended up pure sailing at 8kn+ with 25-30kn winds. Only in the last two miles to Cuyo Island anchorage did we have the wind on the nose.

Passing between Cuyo and Bisucay Island, we had to avoid numerous sticks marking shallow areas—glad we had good light and a fast last half of the trip to arrive before sunset to avoid those sticks and some unmarked shallows on the way into the harbor.

### **2.2.7 Puerto Galera to Busuanga/Coron/Palawan**

**Soggy Paws – June 2018:** We did a similar trip as Mokisha did, in June, after waiting out an early low pressure area that sat NW of Mindoro for about a week, bringing blustery weather to the whole western Philippines.

We did two nights at an anchorage on the NW coast of Mindoro, waiting for the seas and winds to finish calming down. This leg was a bit exciting as every valley had strong winds (to 35 knots) as we crossed the bay.

Then we had a long 1-day motorsail to Pandan Island, with almost no wind. We spend the night on a Pandan mooring (we had emailed ahead to make sure they had one). Their water visibility was pretty bad, because of all the rain associated with the tropical depression (2-3 rivers empty out into their bay).

It was an easy motor to Apo Reef, where we anchored behind the western reef. Though weather was calm with just a swell coming in from the west, we had a 35 knot squall that switched the wind from West to almost North (where we weren't so protected). However, we had a good anchor set and plenty of scope in a nice flat spot (no coral to worry about), so it was no big deal. After an hour of wind and rain, it calmed down again.

The next day it was an easy motor to Port Caltom on the N coast of Busuanga.

If we hadn't wanted to see Pandan Island and Apo Reef, it's only 90 miles (a short overnighiter or very long day) from the NW coast of Mindoro to Port Caltom, Busuanga.

**Soggy Paws (Mokisha) – March 2018:** Here is the route our friends on Mokisha took from Puerto Galera to Palawan and back to PG, during NE season, all day hops:

1. West from PG around the NW tip and anchored on the east side of Paluan Bay (see Valhalla's anchor waypoint Maslud Gravel Pit)
2. From Maslud to Pandan Island, where they spent an enjoyable few days doing a little diving. Pandan Island Resort had a mooring they could use part of the time. They also took a day long dive trip to Apo Reef with Pandan.

3. Once they'd scouted Apo Reef in the resort bangka, they spent a couple of nights in settled weather at Apo Reef, and then headed down to Busuanga, going westward around Busuanga (stopping several places). After a provisioning trip in Coron, they worked their way south, and then headed down the west side of Palawan as far as Port Barton.
4. Day-hopping north along the W Palawan coast, they worked their way down the NE coast of Palawan as far south as Green Island Bay, and then headed east for the islands in the middle of the north Sulu Sea.
5. Island hopping north, they ended up at the southern tip of Mindoro, and from their hopped their way back to PG via South Tablas, Romblon Island, Maestro de Campo, Calapan, and then into PG.

The entire circuit took about 2 months (from mid-March to mid May) and was mostly done in the pleasant, cool, dry season.

## **2.3 Sailing from Philippines to Elsewhere**

### **2.3.1 To Australia**

Few people make this in one jump—most cruise through Indonesia and then make the jump.

**Skedaddle – Mar 2016 – Davao to Darwin Direct:** March 16, 2016 - Arrived Darwin to be told that there is a Cyclone expected to develop over the next few days in the Gulf of Carpentaria. What a pain in the arse! I may be turning around and heading straight back North!

I had favourable Breeze all the way down to Timor Sea and it was as hot as Hades. Maybe no wind but I never did I have a contrary wind, Timor Sea included. You will note, Breeze because it sure did not qualify as wind. Very flat seas and some of the nicest sailing nights I can remember. Into the Timor Sea it was not anywhere so nice. I have flown over the Timor Sea, Darwin to Dili (E Timor) and VV more than 100 times, and this was typical Wet Season. My Theory is that when there is a Monsoon trough shown across the top of Aust it drags the wind down from from up North. GRIBS show 17Kn but it actually generates continual Squalls. When I had time to look, the best I saw was 39 Knots across the boat with the Boat doing 7 Knots plus going DD Wind and white out buckets of rain. Flooded my helm Station Plotter that's now Kaput.

I also had good Currents all the way to Sangihe. After that it was all a bit patchy.

I had to pay A\$280 for Aust Quarantine Inspection but, I had mostly Aust food products left onboard so it was Cheap?

### **2.3.2 To PNG**

**Splinters Apprentice - July 2000:** We left Surigao late July and had very light winds mainly from the SW, so we took 17 days with a lot of motoring.

Initially the current was south going before we picked up the equatorial counter current but south of the equator we ran into strong adverse current which we then battled all the way to the Hermit Isles and, in fact all the way to New Ireland.

If we did the trip again we would seriously consider staying north of the equator in the counter current until north of Kavieng, New Ireland then dropping down. We found the wind, swell and

current combination meant we could make southing fairly easily but easting was a real problem. Boats following later in August had better wind from the SW but still found the same easting problems as they approached PNG.

Once south of the equator we experienced frequent heavy squalls with tremendous thunderstorms.

One boat, which went via Palau, then took 17 days to get from Palau to Mandang, however they sailed due to gearbox failure.

### **2.3.3 To Indonesia**

#### **Catamini – July 2013 – Anchorages Between Davao and Sangihe**

We adapted the location of the anchorages considering wind directions. Mornings good sailing and favourable currents, but afternoons rain and roly seas this time of the year. So we always left at 5am and dropped the hook around 3pm :

- Davao to Mapagbo Cr.- 9kt wind NE; calm anchorage N06.59'249/E125.58'754 in 7m sand/mud
  - Mapagbo to Kanikian Pt - 8kt wind NE - anchorage N06.19'664/E126.10'983 in 11m sand/coral
- As the wind changed late evening to SW, the anchorage became roly.
- Kanikian Pt to Quality Pt - morning 20kt wind SW; calm anchorage N05.48'393/E125.33'936 in 10m sand
  - Quality Pt to East Balut Isl -morning 13kt wind SW; calm anchorage N05.24'286/E125.25'764 in 14m mud

Here we got a welcome to Indonesia on VHF 16 by the coastguard. They saw us on the AIS or radar.

- Balut Isl to East Kawio - morning 15kt wind SW; calm anchorage N04.40'018/E125.26'393 in 7m sand/coral
- Kawio to NW Sangihe - morning 22kt wind SW; calm anchorage N03.43'336/E125.24'573 in 8m black sand
- NW Sangihe to Tahuna Harbour – morning no wind; N03,36'467/E125.29'564 in 22m mud

Five officials from the Tourist Department were welcoming us. Mr Tommy TIWA, Kabid Pemasaran Pariwisata Sangihe, and his English speaking collegae Mrs Ice (pronounce Itche), drove us to Immigration and took care of all the clearance. Only the Customs Officer came on board. We asked them to build a floating dinghy pontoon for the rally Sail Derawan. Some Internet cafés in the centre but it's easier to buy a "Wifi Internet Voucher", which you can use on your boat. Only Rp100,000 for 250Mb, valid 30 days. We will extend our visit here as there is so much to see and people so nice.

**Soggy Paws – September 2014 – Davao to Sangihe:** We left Davao with moderate southerlies in the 5 day forecast. Had we not been going with a rally, we probably would have waited a few days for the stronger winds to die off.

### **2.3.4 To Malaysia**

**Hamamas - April 2009 - Palawan to Borneo:** On 6 April 2009 we weighed anchor and left the lovely anchorage of Puerto Princesa and headed south on our 306 nm journey to Sabah Malaysia. There was very little traffic on the first leg, in fact an extract from Hamamas Log shows "no shipping, no fishing, no dolphins!" After a 2 night sail we anchored at pretty Clarendon Bay on Balabac Is at the foot of Palawan Is. We spent 2 nights there as it was to be our last stop in the Philippines. There were 2 other yachts, Remora and Seafari, although we didn't launch the dinghy to go say hello.

On 9 April we finally left the Philippines and sailed towards the Tip of Borneo and onto Sabah Malaysia where we lowered the Philippine Flag and raised the Malaysian Flag. We were a tad excited about this as we had spent such a long time in the crazy, chaotic Philippines that we wondered what Malaysia would be like.

## **3 Northern Philippines**

### **3.1 West Coast of Luzon**

#### **3.1.1 Laoag (18-10N / 120-30E) (Port of Entry)**

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** This northerly provincial capitol port is probably the best place to make your first port of call as it has road and air transport connections to the rest of the country and is a good place to restock the larder. Anchorage near 18-10.5' N / 120-30.5' E

Laoag is a Port of Entry.

#### **3.1.2 Vigan (17-31N / 120-22E)**

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** Anchorage near 17-31.5' N, 120-22' E This picturesque and historic town has some of the best preserved Spanish architecture in the whole country. Well worth a few days ashore for exploration and camera work.

#### **3.1.3 Candon (17-12N / 120-25E)**

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** Anchorage 17-12' N, 120-24.75' E There is not much here to see but it is a safe anchorage in a NE monsoon and the Filipino's ashore are reported to be very welcoming to visiting sailing yachts.

#### **3.1.4 San Fernando (16-37N / 120-17E) (Port of Entry)**

**Bulldog - SSCA Bulletin Nov 2006:** The commercial harbor has no available docks, and poor holding. The beach area to the south is only a little better. Corruption is king here. Customs, Quarantine and Immigration all tried to charge us \$40USD each.

We told them, we had talked to the Philippine counsel in Seoul, and he had told us there was no charge for pleasure boats. Then they changed their tune. It may have helped that the Customs chief was hauled off to jail a few days before, over some hanky panky with customs duties.

San Fernando has a small foreigner population, mostly German, some night life and tourist attractions, and very low prices.

I should mention Orlando. He is the self appointed president of self-proclaimed "Tourist Boatmens' Association." He is knowledgeable about the town and helpful. But be warned; he has set up a bit of a scam, which is to go to suppliers and have them sharply increase prices, and kickback the difference to him. Fortunately some local people told me of his scheme and in some cases even the amount of the overcharge.

When Orlando asked for his pay, I explained that he had already taken it and then some. At first he was angry, and then he smiled, no doubt comforting himself with his graft.

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** Referred to as "Poro Point" in the PGYC doc. Anchorage 16-37' N / 120-18' E Formerly a Spanish trading port, then an American naval base then Japanese then Filipino. With such a long maritime history you can imagine that this port has all of the infrastructure to satisfy a visiting seafarer . . . with patience and a little ingenuity this is true. After stocking up perhaps sail around the Point to Bauang Beach.

### **3.1.5 Bauang Beach (16-34N / 120-19E)**

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** Anchorage 16-34' N, 120-18.75' E (enter reef from SW at high tide or ask a local fisherman to guide you in)

This beach used to be the playground of U.S. Servicemen and their families from Clark Airbase before the U.S. Forces departed the country near the end of the last century. It still lives for that era although the volume of tourists today only supports a handful of resorts.

Take a short ride South by road to Agoo – one of the prettiest historic towns in the area.

### **3.1.6 Bolinao (16-23N / 119-55E)**

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** Anchorage near 16-23' N, 119-55' E (must use chart for leading light bearing for WNW approach; do not attempt to enter from East of Santiago Island)

Such a beautiful location and a typhoon shelter.

Bolinao was once the major port of entry to Northern Philippines for goods to and from Hong Kong and Macau. Legends of pirates and princesses lie in the shadows of every old building and the spirits of seafarers and maidens are caught in bird song under every tree.

Take a trip South by road to the old, but still working, Bolinao lighthouse for one of those 'big-sky' sunset vistas.

**OCC:** This is not a port of Entry but the coast guard will come to check papers etc. Entrance is as shown on chart - no facilities.

Very sheltered anchorage off Riripayou Point or further south. In settled weather anchor just off the small boat harbour (do not try to enter). Interesting market town, old cathedral. Post Office. Hotel A & E friendly, welcoming (try the Tree House).

From Bolinao, if you have an outboard, you can either follow the river south and come out opposite the Hundred Islands - watch out for shallows & fishing nets - a very interesting trip it is too, or sail round the outside to the islands.

From Bolinao you can catch bus to Alarivos then take the ferry from Locap.



### **3.1.7 Hundred Isles (16-13N / 120-02E)**

**OCC - 2009:** Deep water exposed anchorage, many coral heads but a beautiful place to lie for a short while - absolutely no facilities - no water either - there is however a small bar on Quezan Island.

### **3.1.8 Caiman Cove (15-55N / 119-47E)**

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** Anchorage near 15-55.5' N, 119-47' E This anchorage is quiet and remote except for a few fishermen. Take care when entering and leaving the area because there the coral outcrops are not in exactly the same position as they appear on the charts.

### **3.1.9 Palauig Bay (15-27N / 119-54E)**

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** Anchorage near 15-27' N, 119-54' E Another peaceful anchorage with the same coral hazards as Caiman Cove but a little closer to civilization.

### **3.1.10 Subic Bay / Olongapo (Port of Entry)**

**Screensaver – October 2021 – Paperwork and Costs for Entry into Subic:** There has been a lot of talk about some of the charges being applied when you visit Subic Bay by pleasure craft. In essence in spite of various attempts it is still one of the most costly over regulated and bureaucratic place's I have been. Entry and exit formalities would be comparable to my Andaman Islands visit, which was archaic but not costly. That said if you're going into Subic Bay Yacht Club Marina then much of the process is done for you, and if you're a member, the entry and exit costs come down. But don't go away.

Sadly SBMA operate as a law unto themselves primarily because they are a free port and have yet to realize that the potential revenue from encouraging more pleasure craft, rather than rapping the few that dare to visit, would be much more beneficial to the area.

So the first bizarre process is that you are supposed to call and stop outside of Grande Island and the harbor master will call you back and advise you where to anchor for clearing in. For a pleasure craft, anchoring outside Subic Bay is madness.

However if they are not too busy, you will be quite quickly sent to a clearing-in Anchorage very nicely exposed to the wind and the swell with any south in it and directly open to the west. This too is madness, and when I tried to change it or suggest an alternative, even after explaining the remnants of the just-passed Typhoon swell is still there, it made no difference to them. So I simply told them as Captain I deem that anchorage grossly unsafe for the night and I will be anchoring just South of Boton River in front of Asia Marine.

So as a private vessel following the rules, you can't actually process the entry yourself. I stress, IF you're following the rules. The whole problem is you need a special form, it's not online, and it seems no one has a softcopy to email it for you. Of course you can't just go ashore and get it. Plus each entry requires a meeting and sign-off and the form must move. Watercraft would do it for us because we are hauling out there. SBYC would also do it if you were a member or taking a casual berth. If you weren't doing that then technically you can't actually enter because you not allowed off the boat to go to the office and get the form. This applies to all vessels, even if you have been in Philippines for some years. What's even more bizzare is this was applied to a Philippines registered vessel.

So then of course there is the Covid PCR test. Well in our case we had PCR test as required before we left Puerto Galera, but our intentions changed due to two Typhoons and they were no longer 72 hours old hence not valid.

But hang on--existing IATF & DOH Policies where you can travel from one area to another without a PCR test as long as you're not going through another higher risk area. So for example Manilans could travel by road to SBMA no PCR required. But of course SBMA have their own rules only applicable to boats.

So not only did we have sticks stuck up our nose, we also had to have the swab test. So basically 2 tests for each of us, 4 tests in total, more madness. These tests we could have got for roughly 3000php, not the 9000 they charged.

Anyway the process went on and in total the Charges, Pilotage in Php 2496, Yep we are super tanker, we need a pilot, WTF! SVCS 609, Harbor cleaning 5243.58 really I never saw where any of that money went, a new SUV perhaps, Inward/outward clearance 5000, Covid for 2 9000, Total 22348 Php \$605aud

Honestly the revenue they make from us like this is no way anywhere near what would be brought into Subic Bay if they got rid of the bulk of these charges. Not only that, no one tells you beforehand so you can easily run up a good size bill (if you call up and notify them) just anchoring at say Barretto.

The Marina fees at SBYC seem quite reasonable for stays of 3 months or more, but if you just want to duck in get some fuel, wash the boat, treat your better half to endless water and power or a nice dinner out, resupply etc then forget it unless you have a good sized budget.

My first visits to Subic went without any of the above problems or fees, partly because I didn't know I had to call up, and the fact that on my chart, the port-controlled area does not include Barretto, where I typically anchor. So I never bothered to call them as I would have done (yes I would if I knew) if had I known.

So the next time I go that way... Oh so sorry officer, I did not realize please forgive the dumb foreigner.

**Sail SE Asia FB Group – May 2019 – Subic Bay Yacht Club:** Subic Bay Yacht Club membership and berthing update: now offering "Term Membership" non transferable non voting members, pay 100,000 PP (\$2000 usd) yearly fee and get member berthing rates and privileges. Member rate for 50ft berth is 15000pp a month, ( \$300 usd) non member 3x that. this also give you access to the pools, gym and other facilities.

**Doctor Recommendation in Subic – April 2018:** Go to Bay Point Hospital..easy deal..i saw a specialist within 10 minutes..10 bucks...don't be thrown by the huge crowd in the waiting area..the entire family goes if one is ill.

**Dream Away – April 2016 – Watercraft Venture:** We arrived with a reservation at Watercraft Venture Marina. No VHF contact, so no-one to help with lines, or tell us where to berth. We had booked, but maybe we should have been more proactive and phoned or emailed the day before our arrival.

Watercraft Venture Corporation:  
Bldg. 1031 Rizal Hi-Way,

Subic Bay Freeport Zone,  
Olongapo City, Kalaklan, Zambales.

Tel: +63 47 252 1739 / 1740 Fax: +63 47 252 1738

Email: Cindy Kathleen Dela Cruz (known as Kath) at [Watercraftventure@gmail.com](mailto:Watercraftventure@gmail.com)

Her mobile is +63 932 865 6849.

Technical Operation Manager Jared Leong. Mobile: +63 922 837 3658 or +63 917 596 0231.

The marina would have been happy to complete our check-in (\$\$). They were quoting \$50US EACH for Quarantine, Customs and Immigration, \$100US to coordinate the procedure, and 1,500Php for Port Authority. (The fees quoted are per boat so total is \$US 250 + Port Authority) As we had previously checked in in Tacloban, we only had to pay the Port Authority fee, for which we never received a receipt. Best advice is to check in elsewhere before arriving in Subic.

We docked into a vacant slip and went to talk to the marina office staff. All was well; we were expected and told we could stay in our current berth for a week before the owner returned. We organised a lift out date for the following month and agreed to move to another slip at the end of the week. So far all has gone as planned and we are happy with our decision to come here. Work is being scheduled during our absence and more urgent jobs are currently being dealt with at a very reasonable cost. We have encountered no security issues and are comfortable walking outside the marina at night.

**Visa Waiver extension after first 30 days:** The Olongapo Immigration Field Office has moved to: 111A Gordon Avenue, New Kalalake, Olongapo. Tel: +63 47 224 2766. We paid 3,130Php each to extend our Visa Waiver for a further 29 days. We were given receipts for the full amount, which added up as follows: Visa Waiver 500, Visa Waiver sticker (in passport) 100, Visa Waiver Application fee 1000, Certificate Fee 500, Legal Research Fee 30, Express Lane Fee 500, express Lane Certification 500. We needed to show our Immigration Port Clearance (form BI 2014-10-018 Rev 0) from Tacloban. The process was fast, polite with no issues and friendly helpful officials.

**Hotels:** Nearest we have found is a ten minute walk east: RK Hotel, just before the traffic lights on the N side of the dual carriageway. They advertise rates from 1,600Php, but said they have no standard rooms available for when we want to stay. A Superior Room is 3,000Php, but they'll discount it 30%, so it is 2,100Php. Includes breakfast. Linked to Chopsticks, an eat-as-much-as-you-like buffet for 350Php, where the carbs are there for the taking and the protein you cook for yourself at the table. As we were ignorant foreigners, Josie, our waitress did all the fetching and carrying, and also all the cooking!

**Restaurants:** Several around the area just beyond the RK Hotel – Gourmet Garage, Korean, Japanese, Burgers, Pizzas etc. If you turn W out of the yard, then there are several on the N side of the road towards Harbour Point Mall (a 20-minute walk) – Urban Deli is closest; Magic Lagoon (where you can catch your own fish for dinner) is behind the Total service station; Behind the Petron service station is Pizza Hut and a small popular local, where you buy your drinks from Treats next door. Subic Bay YC also has a restaurant, which is open – even though almost all the other facilities (except the swimming pool) are currently closed for renovations.

**Supermarkets:** East there's a Pure Gold behind the BP Service Station, and a huge Royal on Palm Street. West there's a Pure Gold at the E end of Harbour Point Mall, SM just over the river, and a small Royal on Manila Avenue. Harbour Point Mall is open 10:00-21:00.

**Laundry:** None in the Freeport zone, but lots as soon as you cross the river into Olongapo. We have been using Blue Lagoon at the corner of Rizel & 2nd Street. Open 08:00-20:00 7 days a week. Service wash only, takes 24 hours, 25Php/kilo (clothes), 55Php/kilo (bedding & furnishings). "same day service" is available at approx. double the price.

**Transport:** Tritaxis and Jeepneys are not allowed in the Freeport zone, so it's got to be taxi. The taxis are not metered. Outside the Mall there is a list of prices starting as low as 50Php. Anne on Temerarius told us a taxi should be 100 (or 150 if you book it) to most places we go. Seatbelts in the front (even taxis) are compulsory in the zone (don't know about elsewhere), and motorcyclists must wear helmets and proper shoes (obviously only in the zone).

**Chandlery:** Broadwater Marine.

Lot 14 Magellan's Landing Compound, Argonaut Hi-way, SBFZ.

Telefax: +63 47 252 5468

Email: [subic@broadwatermarine.com](mailto:subic@broadwatermarine.com)

www: [www.broadwatermarine.com](http://www.broadwatermarine.com)

**Noonsite – Oct 2015 – Watercraft Venture:** Watercraft Ventures, next to Subic Bay Yacht Club marina, has a limited number of pontoon spaces, best booked in advance, at reasonable cost. The yard is well managed by Jared Leong, and it does good work and well priced. Get full quotes first. Jared and his engineer, Ryan, drove 4 hours up the coast to collect a raw water pump from us - it had already been 'repaired' at Subic through them. It was returned, properly mended, and fitted within 2 days, all under warranty. Excellent service.

**Windchimes – June 2014 – Watercraft Venture (from Noonsite):** We arrived in Subic Bay late May 2013 with the idea of hauling out and having some repairs done. The only places where we could haul were Kudat and Subic Bay - we decided to head for Subic Bay. Having heard all the stories of woe and the negative comments about Subic Bay and in particular Watercraft Venture Corporation, we decided to be our own judge.

Making contact by e-mail and asking lots of questions, it became clear that they would be up to the task of hauling us out. The yard sent a list of charges and what work that could be done, so from there on we knew what to expect.

On arrival we spent a week at their small marina so as to ready the boat for haul out (we had to make shore arrangements for accommodation as you are not allowed to live on board whilst on the hard).

The day of haul out went very well, 2 swimmers in the water so as to position the slings, 2 yard people on board as line handlers....Time to lift.....the haulout crew did an excellent job and at no time was the boat in any danger...from the lift out point to the hard stand went smoothly and positioning the boat even better..in all, the operation went very well.

Watercraft have the sole right to below the water line in regards to scraping and sanding and applying your brand of antifoul (they quoted on this and outlined what was to be done) so you knew before what it would cost. We had a sanding back to primer coat and as we had International as our paint system they applied a 2 pack primer/ bond coat and 20 litres of Interswift 655 antifoul and boot top cut in.

We also had problems with a very noisy shaft so I decided to modify the stern tube, have the shaft checked and add an inboard end cutlass bearing, at the same time replacing the water end cutlass bearing.

Working in conjunction with Mr Jared Leong the Technical Operation Manager and a very competent person we added an extension to the stern tube, fitted a PSS seal, new bearings in the thrust block and all went back OK (this job was quoted on for work done by the yard as I did a lot of work myself as well).

I had the topsides sanded back and primer coat and 2-3 coats of finish looks good (once again job quoted).

Back again in the water, the lift and splashing were carried out with great care and as we had a berth in the small marina there were yard people on board as well as on the dock. We spent all our time at Watercrafts small marina and in the event of a typhoon or strong winds we were shifted over to the Subic Bay Yacht Club onto one of their vacant berths. Watercraft have an arrangement with SBYC for this, all you pay is for water and electricity. By the way 220volts AC is AT 60 Hz - so be careful with your AC power useage, some things will not be happy running on 60 cycles.

My overall experience with Subic Bay, and in particular Watercraft, was a good one. Make sure you know what you are getting (Quoted work) as you would anywhere else, ask questions, be pleasant & happy, treat people with respect and the jobs go to plan...remember they have seen it all before.

#### **Windchimes – June 2014 – Subic Bay Yacht Club (from Noonsite):**

Will have to agree with other reports that the marina is in a run down state, they still have most of the pontoon in service but there is a lack of power and water on some fingers. They are doing some repairs but there is a long way to go. The marina charges are still high even though the state of the marina is below standard.. you can anchor out or pick a mooring at Blue Rock Resort. Noonsite has a listing on the Subic Bay page.

Apart from some minor inconveniences about the Marina, Subic Bay / Olongapo is still a good place to visit. ATMs are everywhere, although some will only give out 10,000 Pesos a day.

On the subject of clearing in, it is best to clear in somewhere else. If coming from the south, Puerto Princessa is good ...no asking for money to clear in (April 2013), where as the clearing in at Subic Bay Yacht Club will cost, and the officials aren't backward in asking for at least US\$50 per service for the 3 services - no getting away from it....you just have to pay up. Best advice is to pay up and shut up or otherwise they will tell you that you have to go to MANILA, then you will notice how the system works against you with long delays and long distances between the various offices etc.

Don't forget you only get a 30 day visa on arrival, visas can be renewed in Olongapo at their new office. Paperwork can be filled out in the office, you will need passport copies, copies of your visa and a passport photo which has to be 2 inches square. Take cash as there is no card service.

**Taxi Driver:** Your best friend during your stay will be your regular taxi driver (ours was Ronnie, 09087103285, has good English and has a good idea where places are). Work out a fare structure with the driver in advance.

**Broadwater Marine:** Broadwater Marine (Australian owns the show) can get almost any parts you want from Australia, West marine etc. You will pay a bit more but they will save you a lot of agony. They are at 14 Magellan's Landing, Argonaut Highway, and while you are there follow the path down to Vascos - good eats, beer and a pleasant outlook (run by another Australian, Brian).

**Subic Bay Yacht Services:** Dirk van Straalen of Subic Bay Yacht Services is a worthwhile contact. He will help (for a fee) with importing parts, which are subject to a 45% tax if you do it yourself. Ring Dirk and he will tell you what to do. Dirks office is in the same building as Vascos (see above).

**Eastern Machinery** in Olongapo can handle any machining jobs.

Francis of **Francis Refrigeration** is the best in town, contact him on 09399395148.

**Goodyear Hardware** just down the road (Gordon Street/Ave/??) from SM supermarket has most of what you need in the line of hardware.

**Ador Tan** will fabricate any thing you want in stainless, he is hard to get on the phone 09476285649, but Ronnie the taxi driver knows where the stainless shop is.

**Shore Services:** There are 4 large supermarkets in town, Royal being better. Pure Gold near Royal has the best selection of wines etc. in town. There plenty of good eats in town just go look for them. Sunday baked dinners at Palm Trees out in Berreto on all day.

**Transport:** Victory Linner coaches run to Manila on the hour (trip takes 4-5 hours depending on traffic). End of the line at Pasay is near the airport. A private car or taxi will cost about 5000 pesos, 3-4 hours, will also pick you up at airport and bring you back - this is a no hassle way to do it.

The year we spent in Subic Bay was an experience and an adventure, we met some great people. Make up your own mind about places.

**Before - Mar-June 2013 – Subic Bay Yacht Club:** We pulled into Subic in front of the yard and they had us in the slings and on the hard inside an hour. Very careful crew on the Travel lift, even put a guy in the water to place the slings. Once they propped the boat up they welded all the supports together with re-bar, very secure method.

We were not allowed to stay on the boat while in the yard, didn't really want to it's a terribly dirty, dusty place, so stayed in a small hotel a 25 min walk away, major downside was Kazi was not allowed so she guarded the boat from 7 to 7. Once things were settled began the process to drop the rudder for a look, the yard guys(3) began hand sanding the hull prior paint and filled the rather deep coral gouges in the keel from our fun in Yap. As the guys were sanding I began digging a pit to allow the rudder to drop free, about 3 1/2 ft deep by 3'x2', whenever the supervisor went away the guys took my tools away and dug, glad they did, has to be some benefit to geaserhood . Rigged both tackles from the running backstays under the rudder to slow its descent, glad I had the look, was better than had thought, minimal electrolysis and wear on the post, redoing the the stuffing box was a major pain but was able to re-secure it to the hull and hope fully cure that leak point. Got it all back together with lots of grease and elbow-grease. It all works with just two fingers to steer again.

Finished the bottom painting and back in the water for a 5 min putt to a slip in the **Subic Bay Yacht Club**. Google this place, they have many 80' boats plus lots of 40' to 60' and have seen maybe 8, 250 -300' ft boats, move through. The dock stringers are rotten, the floats shift as you walk on them, the fingers are breaking away from the pilings, the only way to secure the boat is to the piles . A real shame this is a very well sheltered marina from all wind and sea directions but a storm surge will tear it apart, so not a place for Typhoon, but it is the only game in town so here we are for a bit more.

So lots of cleaning to remove all the dirt & dust from the yard and put stuff away and have a look around us. Subic Bay Freeport Zone is the former US Naval Base for the 7th Fleet, it's Huge, were told it has 14,000 hectares( 35,000 acres) within the fences. They are trying with, fair success, to build a modern city, work,shop and resort with a lot of open ground, especially around the old naval magazines, most of this area has never been logged, the old growth is stunning and harbors a monkey population along with a few hundred fruit bats in the tree tops.

One benefit of the old Naval presence is the medical community, they now have a new private hospital with many of the board members having done their training at the USN hospital. So with this availability we have done all our medical,dental and optical, took about 3 weeks for all of it with test results. We are fine standard old stuff, no surprises.

**Yard Details:** Spanky Perez (manager) 09175653405 Off Ph 472521739/1740 e-mail

[wvcsales@subictel.com](mailto:wvcsales@subictel.com)

Costs: In and out P400 x LOA

Laydays: P30 x LOA

Utilities: water and electricity (220) metered, and garbage charges

I will be happy if we get out for \$3,000 US.

Higher fees if you use outside workers, plus royalty fees. All underwater work must be done by WCV employees.

For security reasons as of 3/1 you can not stay onboard. This was a real hit for the local caretakers, but thieving has been a problem. We have been warned many times to lockup and don't leave anything unattended.

Barefoot Dave set his bag down to photograph someone's launching and lost P12,000. Guard at gate and one roaming 24 hours. So they are making a serious effort to control problem. Still some local worker/caretaker liveaboards.

We didn't plan on staying onboard, (shoot me first), but we had no reservations and after a frustrating afternoon of looking, nothing was available, Holy Week!! Didn't you know. Easter is a week and a half off.

The yard was not much help, they were unprepared for this problem. They did let us stay the first night, and the second day, with the help of a taxi driver, I found a nice place. He was adamant that I not look in Olongapo, (sp?) due to security risks. Mango Valley #3 (047) 2502063/2064 is clean, quiet, simple, safe, 20 minute walk to boat, close to lots of groceries, restuarants and fast food, the BIG mall, ATM's, and beach. P1,600 and up. No cooking or refrigerators, but they may have them available after Holy Week, (watch me genuflect). Everywhere else sold out until after Easter.

Let the yard know at least a day ahead of your arrival, so they can prepare an entry/exit permit.

Strangely, the only place without cell phone service was our last night stop (14 44 493N / 120 16 069E) a 10 mile sail to Subic Bay. Nobody shot at us, but perhaps that was because we followed a US Navy ship in.

All and all we are very satisfied with the workmanship, (better than what I would do). We anchored in front of the ways and they immediately had us out of the water. Very safe, 6 guys with a diver in the water for final positioning of straps before elevation. By 2:00 we were in place with stands welded in place with rebar.

In 2 days the boats was prepped, and first coat of paint on. 5 guys working on it and very helpful to R as he dropped the rudder and also had to dig a hole. The negatives: Very dirty, dusty, pathetic cats and NO credit cards.

He says we will be out in 10 days, he has many boats coming in. We were lucky for our spot, since they had just launched 4 boats.

**Quetzlcoatl - January 2013 - Obtaining a Visa Extension:** When our initial 21 day visa was about to expire, we decided to try getting our extensions from the local immigration office in Olongapo rather than going to Manila. Olongapo is the town adjoining Subic Bay. Information on Noonsite led us to believe we would have to go to Manila. Wanting to avoid the long hot bus rides, expensive taxis and a waste of a day or two we took our passports and went to the local immigration office.

The immigration office is located in the Veteran's Bank building on Rizal Avenue. It is on the yellow jeepney run between the two roundabouts. There is a sign that says "Immigration" above the door. To enter you must walk through a large entrance that looks like a parking garage. You will find the air conditioned office at the end of the garage.

When we entered the office, a man behind a desk asked if we were there for visa extensions. We said yes and he gave us forms to fill out. Two other agents helped us to complete the forms. We then submitted the paperwork, paid our fees and left. The entire process took less than half an hour.

We received 39 day extensions.

We went to Immigration two days early, incase we would have to go to Manila after all, and we received credit for those two days.

**Kalearin - 2011 - Haulout in Subic Bay – Watercraft Venture:** We left our boat on the hard in Subic Bay at Watercraft Venture (WV) for an extended period, while we made trips back to the U.S. and to China.

When we returned to Subic Bay in June of 2011, we hit the projects big time. Jim removed the rudder and had Allen Hyde, who is an expert in fiberglass repair and construction, fill the void in the rudder and reshape it. Jim also changed out all the bolts, as the originals were still in and not in good shape after 30 years and he had new pins fabricated.

We hired a carpenter from Allen Hyde's crew who enlarged some locker doors and made new shelves for us behind the settee cushions, something that has been on the to-do list for years.

The best thing we did while there was hire Ed Campong, a freelance boat worker. Ed is the brother of Romil, whom we had hired to clean the boat and do a few varnishing projects while



we were gone. When we returned to the boat it was clean and all the projects were complete so we asked him to work for us. However, he was already committed to another boat and that is when he introduced his brother, Ed, to us.

These guys work six days a week and get only \$5 or \$6 USD a day. We agreed to pay Ed \$8 USD a day and he was worth every cent and much more. (Believe it or not, some yachties would argue we were paying too much and ruining it for the rest of them.) Ed would jump right on an assigned task and when finished would pop his head into the companionway and say, "All finished, boss, what next?" He was a great extra pair of hands for Jim.

But best of all, he was very good at painting and varnishing and so we kept him working for us for four months while we spruced up the boat. I hated to have to let him go when we left but we gave him a letter of reference and a week's severance pay.

After two months on the hard working, we finally launched the boat and kept her at the docks at WV. The price had gone up a bit, now \$8 USD/day instead of \$7. The docks are a real ramshackle affair, mostly held together by chains and ropes tied off to the bridge. There are no pilings.

In October we were hit by the edges of a typhoon and all the boats were shuffled over to the yacht club next door. WV has a deal with them that during typhoons they could move the boats there for the duration, as their own docks would not hold up with boats on them. In fact, while we watched from our boat, the WV docks broke completely apart. So now there was no marina to go back to and we were allowed to stay at the yacht club which, even with their own maintenance failings, was something of an improvement over WV, especially the showers.

In November we left to continue cruising. The plan was to sail through the Visayas, exit the Philippine Islands through the Surigao Straits and get to Palau in time for Christmas.

**Bulldog - SSCA Bulletin Nov 2006:** The former location of the Subic Bay U.S. Naval Base. The Yacht Club is very nice. The quoted rates were apparently set extremely high, so members could be offered a 90% discount.

I explained to the manager that he was losing business from cruisers who didn't come because of the high rates, and suggested a third rate for short stays. He agreed and put it into effect. You can now stay for about \$10 a day.

To make up for the loss of the naval base, the government established a **duty free zone**. You can buy a bottle of scotch for \$3USD, a brand you never heard of, but not bad. You can find local bus excursions to see ancient Spanish cities, and a vacation city in the mountains built by Americans about a hundred years ago to escape the summer heat in Manila.

There's a shipyard next to the Yacht Club that is reasonable, and competent.

### **3.1.11 Port Binanga (14-44N / 120-16E)**

Dream Away – April 2016: 14 44.497 N / 120 16.397 E Anchored in 7.5m. Afternoon SW sea breeze bringing some chop in. S side of the bay littered with boats, buoys & fish traps. Big fish trap in the middle of the bay. Disco/Kareoke music ALL night.

Both Navionics & CM93(2010) good.

### **3.1.12 Manila**

**Dream Away – April 2016 – Crossing Manila Bay:** Crossing the shipping lanes was “interesting”. On the S of the bay, a few coasters heading in, keeping just out of the lane, but fishing boats seem oblivious, and there were plenty of them about. One started waving as we passed them some distance away, and we realized we were about to go between them and a flagged buoy, so quickly came out of gear, and drifted out of danger.

The AIS started going haywire as we neared the peninsula guarding the N entrance to the bay. Numerous large ships were heading S down the coast, AIS thought they were on a collision course, but they all turned with the coast & round into the port.

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** Unless you are a history buff then you can choose to pass Subic Bay (probably) and Manila Bay (almost certainly) and continue to head southerly. If you do choose to drop into Subic Bay then leave Grande Island to starboard upon entry to avoid becoming yet another scuba diving destination. If you want just a smattering of World War II history then anchor in the mouth of Manila Bay at Mariveles Port and take a day tour of the adjacent fortress island of Corregidor, the scene of some of the bloodiest exchanges between Japanese and American troops, as the former ousted the latter at the beginning of the war and the latter ousted the former two years later.

**Bulldog - SSCA Bulletin Nov 2006:** At the entrance to Manila Bay is Corregidor, the legendary island of WWII fame. There are guided tours through the underground tunnel network, with lots of added material explaining the history. It was the last stand of the U.S. Army at the beginning of WWII. Unfortunately MacArthur had not thought to provide anti-tank weapons, and when the Japanese brought in tanks, the fight was over. The captured prisoners were ferried to the mainland, and the infamous Bataan death march to a POW camp followed.

Land on the north side docks, and ask to join the tour.

An unsavory smell greeted us as we came closer to Manila. When it rains, all kinds of garbage gets washed into the bay, although the yacht club is nice.

You can find haul-out and repairs here, but you have to find your own contractors, though in practice, they will find you.

Manila has a short subway line, but for the most part, just traffic jams. About three miles north of the club, is the old Spanish walled city, government buildings, and Chinatown (the place to go for marine supplies). About three miles south is the newer business district, most of it built on the former sugar plantation of one very rich landowner.

### **3.1.13 Sightseeing Northern Luzon**

**Mokisha – Feb 2018 – Sightseeing North of Subic:** Before we set out for our cruise to Palawan, we decided to see a little bit of northern Luzon. We rented a car in Subic and spent 5 days driving in a clockwise circle around the northern end of Luzon. We didn’t make arrangements in advance, just sketched out a plan on a map (below) and set off.



**Day 2 Feb 10th - Unian Island, Cocos Beach?** 2nd day on the road. Slow going though. We're used to the tricycles but never going 100's of miles - we found out how slow they are. Take 50 miles & double it by 1 1/2! Beautiful coastline too. Cocos Beach Sign had this ph# 0939-389-6741

**Day 3 Feb 11 – Vigan:** Built in 1572 by the Spaniards - Vigan is the best preserved city in the Philippines. It's charming with cobble stone streets, cathedrals, an old bldgs. Arrived Vigan today - really cool hotel built in 1800's (Gordian Hotel)

**Day 3 Feb 13 - Pudanpug:** Lucked out again- last night's stay in Pudandpug @ Palm Grove Beach Resort. Had prawns as big as small lobsters 😊. Awesome hotel & food.

The weather is pretty cool about 75 - 78 degrees, I was wearing a jacket at night.

Northern Luzon - windswept & wild. It was blowing 50 knots yesterday (weak cyclone passing by well to south). As we got towards the top, the mountains became higher & drizzle set in. The 100 or so wind turbines were making electricity. Beautiful!

**Day 5 Feb 15 – Santa Ana:** Tom's style of traveling is if it's out of the way & difficult to get to, he wants to go. So.....4 hrs out to Santa Ana, the closest point to Taiwan we go!

**Day 6-8 Feb 16 – Sagada:** Drove the Cordillera mountains yesterday to get to Sagada. Twisty, turning roads but spectacular. We got to Sagada after dark and spent 2 days here

Sagada - home of the hanging coffins. We did a 3 hr hike with Aaron our tour guide. He was really great. The idea of hanging the coffins is to allow the spirit to go free. They put them under overhangs so they don't get wet. See the chairs? For the old people to enjoy hanging off the cliff! They still practice this today, but most people are buried in above ground tombs. Fascinating. Voodoo & karma is also very big in this region. Reminds me of Peru.

It's a pretty dry environment so apparently not. Our guide says it's usually 3 days before putting the coffins on the side of the cliff. During that time a lot of fluids are lost.

### **3.2 SW Coast of Luzon – Batangas & Anilao Area**

Batangas is a province in the Philippines located in southern end of the island of Luzon. Its capital is the city of Batangas and is bordered by the provinces of Cavite and Laguna to the north and Quezon to the east. Across the Verde Island Passages to the south is the island of Mindoro and to the west lies the South China Sea.

Batangas is one of the most popular tourist destinations near Metro Manila. It is home to the famous Taal Volcano, one of the Decade Volcanoes, and Taal Heritage town, a small picturesque town that has ancestral houses and structures dating back to the 19th century.

The province also has many excellent beaches and diving spots including Anilao in Mabini, Sombrero Island in Tingloy, Ligpo Island in Bauan, Matabungkay in Lian, Punta Fuego in Nasugbu, Calatagan and Laiya in San Juan.

Batangas City has the second largest international seaport in the Philippines after Metro Manila.



#### **3.2.1 Hamilo Cove (14-11N / 120-35E)**

**Screensaver – April 2016:** Anchorage in 6m, 3G cell coverage, This is a reasonably flash resort in a harbour so it is quite well protected. Security came to visit and while they did not ask me to leave it seemed to be on the tip of their tongue. However they were polite enough and it was certainly peaceful night.

When it comes to resorts, private beaches, or Islands I tend to not ask for permission to go onto the beach they might think it is theirs. To go for a walk or swim, if you ask and they say no, where do go from there, back to the boat..... himm. So if they say this is a private beach and I'm not fussed I will simply apologize and say I will be gone after my swim or walk thanks. However if they are insistent, then it's worth knowing that like in many countries, they don't actually own the beach.

There are some quite nice surrounding beaches offering protection for most directions and also a very basic haul out facility probably only suitable for less than 40ft. (note, later Screensaver hauled at Papaya Yacht Services, see account in Chapter 1 under [Haulout Facilities](#).)

**Dream Away – April 2016:** Papaya Yacht Charters & Services, Inc. [www.pycsi.com](http://www.pycsi.com) Tel: +63 920 925 9023 or PYCSI office +63 917 685 9372.

Email: [spanky.perez0962@yahoo.com](mailto:spanky.perez0962@yahoo.com).

Spanky was manager at Watercraft Venture until Feb 2015. 50 ton travel lift, the boats are shored up along the long concrete pier that sticks out into the bay. There are toilets and showers, and living aboard is allowed.

There is a small village, but any supplies are in town, a 30 minute tri-taxi ride away. Add 12% tax to all prices quoted.

Navionics far better here, CM93(2010) isn't even drawn the right shape, and has a peninsula as an island. The bay is very shallow all around the edge but good shelter can be found from any wind direction.

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** Anchorage near 14-10.8' N, 120-35.5' E and there is a buoy on the left side of the channel that is maintained by the landowner; if it is available then tie up. Further inside the Cove there is pretty good holding in a typhoon. It is shallow muddy sand on the North and East shores. The local fishermen in the village are reasonably friendly.

### **3.2.2 Punta Fuego (14-08N / 120-35E)**

**Dream Away – April 2016:** Punta Fuego Yacht Club has 30 marina berths of various sizes with power & water. Hard standing only for small trailer boats. Fuel Pumps, bar/snack bar, showers. Visitors Fee 30Php/ft/night. LOA includes any bowsprit/pulpit & aft platform.

Useful place to pick up fuel, but generally expensive for food and drink.

Either in the marina or further up the river should provide good protection in a blow.

Email: [ipoybentir@yahoo.com](mailto:ipoybentir@yahoo.com) Tel: +63 917 511 1616 VHF: 72.

Navionics put us on land N, CM93 (2010) put us on land S.

There are a couple of buoys, looks like they are still using system B. Just off the entrance to the marina are several buoys, which looked like mooring buoys to us, but the staff we met denied all knowledge. If we'd gone to the main office we may have got a different story.

Navionics continued to put us on land as we headed out, too.

**Screensaver – April 2016:** For me this place is an ideal pit stop. The washing machine ran flat-out before I arrived, and I was also setup to give Screensaver a quick bath. It is an ideal place to pick up diesel and water, simply because it's so easy, and the only place I have been where you can take on fuel and water directly into the boat. Having done all the laundry, fresh water was low,. So with fuel and water topped up, Screensaver bathed, in all at a quite good price and my anchorage was 15 min away making the whole stop very worthwhile.

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** 14-08.25' N, 120-35' E a sheltered anchorage but not considered typhoon safe.

The all new Punta Fuego Yacht Club has recently opened a marina pontoon facility on South side of the peninsular that is currently free for visiting yachts. Worth a visit but don't expect to find too many people around because it is really only for club members who own land upon Punta Fuego itself . . . but if you ask nicely then you may get a round of golf in.

**Kalearin - November 2011:** Our first stop after leaving Subic was **Punta Fuego**, (14°07.7'N, 120°35.4'E), a private marina in a cove beneath the very exclusive community on the hills above

for the very wealthiest of the Philippine families. There was room at the marina and they accept guests, but we comfortably anchored just outside.

We had heard there was a restaurant on the hill and when we went to the bistro at the dock we were told that the shuttle bus was for residents only. The man standing next to her, obviously a resident and yacht owner, gently reprimanded the young lady, telling her they must be welcoming to other yachts and then sponsored us for the duration. When we went to pay our lunch bill we discovered he had picked up the tab. A nice beginning to our cruise.

### **3.2.3 Maya Maya (14-07N / 120-37E)**

**Dream Away – April 2016:** 14 06.92 N / 120 36.81 E Anchored in 8m. Quite a violent chop from afternoon sea breeze, but it died down. The resort was taken over in 2014, and there are plans afoot to build a whole new resort. The small marina will remain, but the travel lift has already been sold on to Papaya Yachts Services in Hamilo Cove.

The marina entrance is approx. 40ft wide, and 9ft deep. Marina depth 12ft, but we think we saw some shallower patches. Currently there is one cruising yacht, 2 larger motor boats, and half a dozen small motor boats.

Tel: 0918 909 7167 and talk to Elma or email: [elma619@yahoo.com](mailto:elma619@yahoo.com)

Navionics not good here, CM93(2010) much more believable.

**PGYC - 2010 PDF:** Anchor near 14-06.87' N, 120-37' E although there are mooring buoys sometimes available.

Very hospitable to visiting yachts especially if you use the bar and restaurant facilities of the resort. Nothing much to do here except to chill-out and maybe relax in the Spa. The adjacent marina is considered typhoon safe and has fuel and a 50 ton travel hoist. Prices are a little higher here than in most resort areas.

### **3.2.4 Balayan Bay**

**Screensaver – April 2016:** This was essentially just another pit stop on the journey south. The Southerly's are now in place as I am later than planned and to some extent paying the price for tacking or battling with head on winds often approaching 30knts apparent (in the afternoons). This stretch of water between Balayan Batangas and Puerto Galera seems to attract a wind tunnel.

The beach was certainly nothing much but it was home to windsurfers which are rarely seen here and a number of dive resorts heading out beyond Puerto Galera.

### **3.2.5 Solana Resort Moorings**

**Soggy Paws – May 2018:** We didn't come here by boat, but did dive with a resort nearby, and passed the Solana Resort nearly every day on our way to dive sites. There was one smallish yacht on a mooring near where we could see the Solana Resort sign ashore, on a mooring. There was another yacht that came in on our last day. There are a number of moorings along this coast—they are usually there either for dive boats to hang off during the day for diving, or at night for storage. So if you pick one up, make sure you inquire ashore whether it's OK to stay, and be SURE to check it to make sure it is in good repair and sized for a yacht. A mooring



made for an hour stop by an attended dive boat can be much smaller than one intended to hold a yacht in all weather. We did see some anchorable spots along the shore with a sand bottom less than 60 ft deep.

**PGYC – 2006:** while searching for Yacht Friendly Moorings along the Batangas coast, we have discovered one nice resort on the tip of the Mabini Peninsula. Punch these coordinates into your GPS and take time out to enjoy a little known sanctuary that will surely charm mind, body and soul.

The outer mooring is located near: N 13deg 42.20' E 120deg 52.62'.

There are three moorings located off the foreshore of Solana Resort, Mabini / Anilao, managed by Joel Uichico. The outer mooring (orange spherical buoy) lies in approximately 18 metres of water while the one to the East (orange spherical buoy) offers eight metres or more; the third mooring (black spherical buoy) is in about three metres and suitable for shallower draft vessels. Sailing yachts should be cautious when circling the shallowest buoy as there is a rocky outcrop immediately North.

From Cape Santiago take a heading of approximately 87 degrees M and this will take you direct the outer mooring with no hazards. If passing between Maricaban Island and Sombrero Island take a heading of 75 degrees M for a clear run to the mooring. If arriving from the East through the passage between Maricaban Island and the Batangas coast then make your turn when the outer mooring position is on a bearing of 330 degrees M and you will be clear of all known hazards.

The moorings are sheltered from weather from the North, South and East, but are somewhat exposed to a westerly wave set.

Upon arrival during daylight (recommended) you can hail the resort and they will provide water transport to the shore. If you have your own dinghy then you can land it on the adjacent (East) sandy beach. The moorings are intended to be used by yachtsmen and visitors.

Solana Resort is a first class boutique resort nestled in the Batangas hillside, with an ambiance designed to suit its mixed and varied clientele.

The welcome is warm and generous from all of the staff and whether you are there simply landing for lunch and afternoon tea or, to take a few days of rest and relaxation the level of service is comparable to a fine hotel in Manila.

The beer is cold and the water warm and inviting. Kayaks and various pedal driven watercraft are at your disposal and there is an adequate dive shop with dive master, equipment for rent and a service for refilling of tanks. Sitting in the heart of the Anilao's scuba diving Mecca there are 35 dive sites within easy reach for both the novice and experienced diver. Corals and fish are in abundance within a few feet of the resort but once ashore, after a day of chasing sweetlips and groupa, you may wish to do nothing more than enjoy a relaxing massage and soak up the remaining rays.

The sun sets over Cape Santiago out to the West and, as the heavens migrate their hues from rich oranges and turquoise towards dusk, the forested hills that rise steeply behind the Solana Resort are filled to overflowing with the sweet scent of frangipani and sound of a thousand birds finding their perches and partners for the night.

An overnight stay at the Solana Resort, inclusive of all meals (including wine at dinner), is approximately US\$100 per person; an air-conditioned casita room designed for the day-sailor is approximately US\$40, with tasteful buffet meals charged separately. Crew bunkrooms and meals are also available.

For those with a fulltime crew aboard you can also reach Solana Resort by road and have your yacht meet you at the resort. Travelling from Manila you can either, drive towards Batangas, take the diversion road to Batangas Port and then turn right to Anilao via Bauan or, you can follow the roadside signs to Solana Resort, which require you to turn right off the Batangas road about three kilometers after exiting the Star Tollway -- this is the picturesque zig-zag route to Bauan. Once in Anilao town turn left and follow the Solana Resort signs all the way to enchantment. Travel time by road from Manila is between two and three hours.

If you live further North than Manila then you could alternatively charter the Subic Seaplane, which can deliver you to the resort within 40 minutes in all fair weather conditions except a strong westerly.

For more information call Joel on +63 917 300 1086, email [solanabezo@gmail.com](mailto:solanabezo@gmail.com) or visit [www.divesolana.com](http://www.divesolana.com)

### **3.2.6 Diving Analao**

**Lone Wolf (from FB) – April 2018:** When Soggy Paws asked around on FB for where people anchor their cruising boats to dive Anilao, Lone Wolf gave us this waypoint: 13 46.44 N / 120 55.47 E This looks like a reasonable anchoring area in Easterlies, but is nowhere near the main dive spots touted by the “macro” dive centers.

**Soggy Paws – April 2018:** We did a macro photography workshop at Crystal Blue Resort in Analao. It is about a quarter of a mile west along the coast from the Solana Resort moorings. We left our boat on a secure mooring in Puerto Galera and took the ferry across to Batangas and were picked up by a resort-arranged van (\$80 US for the van that holds at least 6 pax and dive gear). There are no taxis in Batangas, only jeepneys and tricycles, so those are your choices if you want to get around. Other friends who dove out of Arthur's, a few doors down from Crystal Blue, hired a jeepney from the Batangas ferry area to take them all the way to the resort. They negotiated P1800. It was possible, but expensive, to arrange a direct banca from Puerto Galera direct to the resort (we were quoted P5000 or P6000 and so didn't pursue it).

Crystal Blue Resort was a pretty upscale resort with a full buffet for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Mike, the manager and resident camera guru was a great teacher of photography techniques, and he has authored a book about Anilao creatures. Arthurs Place, about 2 doors down, is a more budget operation.

As in other places, all the dive centers go to the same dive spots. Anilao is known as a macro dive center, so if you are looking for reefs and fish, this is not the best place for you to be diving. But the macro was pretty spectacular. Our favorite dive spots were Secret Bay and Manit Corner. These seemed to be out of the current so it would be possible to dive these out of your dinghy.

Looking at the chart, the “Solana Moorings” (which may or may not be there) look like they are fairly exposed to the prevailing wind, which funnels along the shore (the wind in the slot is from



the SE, even in NE season). However, there's enough lee that this shoreline was a pretty protected spot. Just need to get in close enough to shore to get out of the current, as having a wind-against-current situation with a couple of knots of current against 15 knots of wind would be a wild ride at anchor. There were places we saw while diving, that you could anchor, just make sure you avoid dropping in any coral, and try not to hit a hairy frogfish over the head with your anchor (they hang out in the sand areas).

**Mokisha - March 2018:** We left our boat on a PGYC mooring and did several dive trips to nearby popular dive spots. Our first was to Anilao, where we stayed at Arthur's place.

### **Arthur's Place (Dive Resort)**

So we stayed at Arthur's Place. It's 2 doors down from Crystal.

You're kinda out in the middle of nowhere with only the resorts around you so take batteries, money & everything you need. Nearest ATM is about 30-40 min away. It's nice though & we enjoyed it.

I think Crystal is definitely more a full service dive center. Ours was ok.

We are not that much into muck diving but there was another diver there when we got there & he was, so the first day was muck diving with only sand & not much else except lots of other divers. The other diver really wanted us to do a night dive so we said we would not realizing we were going back to the same muck diving site that we were at in the afternoon. We weren't all that happy about that & it was really our fault for not asking more questions. Except for 2 octopuses, we didn't really see anything great.

The 2nd day went across to Macbam Island where we dived a wreck. I know Dave loves wrecks & again, not my favorite thing on top my list. The thing was, I asked Lito, our divemaster the night before about Sombrero & doing only coral & wall dives - he said yes, that's what we were going to do.

Lo and behold if he didn't tell us when we almost got there that we were doing a wreck dive! It really kind of pissed me off but in the end it was ok. Nice coral on the wreck. A large school of Bat fish who didn't care if they were photographed. I wouldn't say the wreck was spectacular although it was supposed to be from WWII. Vis about 25-30 ft.

2nd dive was Sombrero finally - a wall dive! Tons of nice coral, lots of fish, many, many nudis, turtle - could have done it several times. So that's our extent of Anilao. I can't say it's any better than what we dove last year in the Visayas.

### **Crystal Blue Dive Resort**

We went to Crystal's a few times for drinks & delicious coconut shrimp. We met the manager, Mike who is American. Nice guy. They have a super camera room. There's basically no stores around so take your wine if you want it because none of the resorts have wine. Even the bars are limited & Crystal probably was the best. I think you might have a package deal but if you don't, dinner is P750 a night at Crystal's. Arthur's food isn't bad but kind of basic.

### **Bahia Dive Resort**

2 doors down from us was Bahia where I used their infinity pool for P200 an afternoon. They are P7,000 a night & only had beer & no food!

### **3.3 Extreme Southern Luzon**

#### **3.3.1 Donsol (12-54N / 123-35E)**

**Arnak – 2010:** 12°54.893N 123°34.710 anchor off the beach. This is where you can swim with the whale sharks but you must go with a local boat. Well worth the experience and not expensive. Catch a jeepney into the town/village for supplies. A few tourists.

#### **3.3.2 Bulan Town (12-40N / 123-52E)**

**Arnak – 2010:** 12°39.733N 123°52.264E Boatbuilding ashore with a small town on top of the hill. Good supplies and friendly people. Anchored off town jetty.

### **3.4 Mindoro**

Warning: See Noonsite report: <http://www.noonsite.com/Countries/Philippines/philippines-mindoro-paluan-bay-armed-boarding-robbery> (or below in Paluan Bay section)

#### **3.4.1 Puerto Galera (Port of Entry)**

**PGYC - Arriving from the North:** After Maya Maya there is little to distract you until you reach Puerto Galera. It is approximately 42 miles or a good day-sail – night-sail is not recommended here because of the large numbers of fishermen using long nets strung perpendicular to the coast, if you want to night-sail from here then stay at least eight miles off-shore. Before you reach Cape Santiago stay at least two miles off-shore because the Calatagan Reef is very shallow and extends further today than when the charts were drawn. The last 22 miles up the Verde Passage is a beat in the NE Monsoon or a run in the SW monsoon. If you are beating then stay as high as you can on the port tack from Cape Santiago; you will get knocked towards Mindoro at some point; take the knock and then tack up the Mindoro coast until you can enter the Manila (West) Channel into Puerto Galera.

**PGYC - Approach and Arrival:** We strongly recommend a daylight entry into Puerto Galera, especially if this is your first visit. If you arrive off Puerto Galera in the dark then we recommend that you anchor outside the bay until dawn.

A good place to anchor is near 13° 31.20'N, 120° 56.60'E – you can safely anchor within 100 meters of the shore.

**NOTE:** AS OF 2018, THERE IS A VERY DIFFICULT-TO-SEE POWER LINE CROSSING THE EAST (BATANGAS CHANNEL), SAILBOATS SHOULD NOT USE THIS CHANNEL.

The west, or Manila, channel is the best entry for first time visitors because it is consistently deep and wide; the north, or Batangas, channel is narrower and has a shallow coral outcrop at its inner end – even Club boats occasionally nudge this one. There are a number of coral reefs within the bay itself, with navigable channels separating them. If you have not already done so then check-out the modified Admiralty chart (A3559) on the More Info page of the PGYC website for a greater understanding of the inner bays.

Enter the Manila channel (near 13° 31.50'N, 120° 56.75'E) and stay in the center until you can clearly see the two, large white mooring buoys in Boquete Bay to your right – at this point you will also see the town of Muelle due, south of your position, with the Club moorings visible to the left of the town pier.

DO NOT head straight for the Club moorings. Instead, turn to starboard and head for the two, large white mooring buoys in Boquete Bay. When you are approximately two boat lengths from the first, large white buoy turn to port and head directly for the closest Club mooring buoy. You can pick up any of the vacant Club buoys while you wait for the service boat to direct you to the most appropriate one for your yacht.

DO NOT pick up on either of the two, large white mooring buoys in Boquete Bay except in an absolute emergency.

Note: the Club can be contacted by radio on Marine VHF Channel 68. However, because of the geography of the area, your broadcast may not be heard by the Club immediately unless you are within the bay. If you are inside the bay and still can't obtain a response from the Club then try calling the "service boat" by name, on the same VHF Channel 68 – the service boat is usually somewhere in or around the mooring area and has a better line of sight to the Manila Channel entrance.

If you have cellular or satellite telephone then contact the Club using +63 (0)43 4420136.

The Club hours of operation are currently from 08:30 hrs to 22:00 hrs daily.

**Soggy Paws – April-June 2018 – PGYC Moorings:** We contacted PGYC approximately 3 months ahead of arrival to have them put us on the mooring list, and once a month after that to make sure we were still on the list. They could not guarantee us a mooring until a couple of weeks before our actual arrival, but at that time, we were at the top of the list. As we got closer to PGYC, we updated the manager (Alma) every couple of days to refine our arrival date. We wanted to leave our boat unattended on a PGYC mooring for a couple of weeks while we went off diving, so it was important that we get a mooring. As it turned out, they gave us a mooring in the inner bay (off Muelle town) when we were aboard, but as we left the boat, they moved us to Dumaran Bay for storage. The "service boat" only does normal runs between town (aka "Muelle"), PGYC, and boats on the inner moorings. We had to arrange a special run with Alma to get picked up and dropped off on our remote mooring. But the mooring looked good, and the bay was MUCH quieter than being the mooring field, with the service boat and bankas, ferrys, etc running back and forth at all hours.

After we came back from our two dive trips elsewhere, we moved back onto the outer mooring (B0) at the inner mooring field. This was a nice spot, because we got more breeze than the boats in the inner mooring field, but it was terrible because of banka traffic.

In June, the "redevelopment" of the PG waterfront started, and they moved all the little bankas from the west end of the muelle to the east end, and totally blocked off the west end. That meant that all the local bankas came right through the mooring field, usually passing close one side or the other of us, many still at full speed. It also increased the confusion and traffic for the big ferries, so, running late, they often accelerated to max wake speed just before they passed us. I was very happy to get off that mooring (after spending a month there!). We complained at the yacht club, and got sympathy but no action. It was too dangerous to swim off the boats in the mooring field, because of the traffic. And the first noisy banka roared pass close to us at about 5am. We made sure we kept 3-4 lights on deck to ensure no one ran into us in the dark.

Globe was good here, but Smart was nearly completely unusable—in spite of always having 4 bars (never figured out why, but don't count on Smart for data inside the PG bay).

**Sloepmouche – July 2017:** 13 30.5944 N / 120 56.9851 E 10m hard bottom, not far from the PG Yacht Club mooring area. Very wide area available to anchor with only a few unattended boats; several other coves in the bay to anchor but you are further away from town and Puerto Galera Yacht Club. Be aware of seaplane landing and taxiing to the beach.

If you anchor in the bay we did, anchor off the buoyed area marking a small marine protected area. Short dinghy ride to PGYC moorings (350-450P/night with free shore shuttle, VHF68) and from there to PGYC dock. You can also tie up your dinghy in front of town to walk to market (best not leave dinghy there after dark).

PGYC is very welcoming and has a newly finished restaurant & bar. Curry night is every Wed at 289P/pers and BBQ night every Friday; hot/cold shower; book exchange. The PGYC personnel are very cordial and helpful! Restaurant is closed on Mondays but the office is open.

We got packages delivered c/o PGYC, no problem :)

Patrick de Backere, a friendly Belgian sells Victron Energy equipment including solar panels at good prices. He is installed just the other side of the tourism center right where you put your dinghy.

Is the bay a good typhoon hole? Probably not the best due to many local boats here, the PGYC moorings quite close to each other, and some good fetch. Globe internet: good; Smart mobile: good.

**Dream Away – April 2016:** Anchored at 13 30.525 N / 120 56.987 E We called the yacht club, as per the instructions on their website, only to be told they have no available buoys.

We anchored in the outer bay in 7m, rocky, a bit near the reef, but with a dozen other boats in the bay already, we couldn't really choose. Would not want to be there in a strong NE but there are plenty of other anchorages available.

The club has other moorings but these are a long dinghy ride from the club and town.

The “service boat” only services the boats on the moorings. Take care going in to the yacht club in your dinghy - the inner bay is shallow & full of bommies. Spot the white channel markers on the S side, and use them.

CM93(2010) had us going over land again, Navionics probably pretty accurate.

The town is good for restocking, it's friendly and easy, but very touristy. The biggest supermarket we found has a tiny entrance – very easy to miss. It was on the right just after the traffic lights.

**MV Moken – Feb 2013:** The harbour is accessed through one of two channels, the Batangas Channel (north channel) or the Manila Channel (west channel). The Manila Channel is the recommended entrance for tall boats, as the Batangas Channel has a low hanging power line crossing from Mindoro to Medio Island and shallow reefs to be navigated.

Dutifully advised, we entered through the Manila Channel and anchored in Boquete Bay near the sand bar. Smaller boats can take advantage of moorings at the Puerto Galera Yacht Club in Muelle Bay and the club's service boat, but given the weight of MOKEN, these were not for us. You can reach the yacht club on Marine VHF Channel 68. Their web site has great information on navigating the area and things to do once you arrive.

**Provisioning** in PG isn't too challenging. Fresh drinking water is available right at the yacht club dock, which is also where we'd leave our tender for the day and take advantage of the club's service boat when going into town.

The public market is about a 10 minute walk and a good place to stock up on reasonably priced fresh fruit, vegetables, meat and seafood. Of course, you have to shop around as some vendors will overprice for foreigners. There is also a good supermarket near the market and an excellent, if overpriced, European deli in the same area.

Closer to Muelle Pier are two excellent mini markets for non-perishables and another deli that specializes in German imports and has a good selection of frozen meats. Gasoline is available at the Shell station about a 10 minute walk out of town or a 20 peso ride in a trike.

**Things to Do:** With our supplies replenished, it was time to have some fun. Diving is what we came for and is mostly what we did. But it isn't the only thing to do in PG.

This was Chris' fourth visit to PG and my second and all our diving has been with **South Sea Divers**. There are an overwhelming variety of dive shops to choose from, but we always stick with this shop. We'll tell you more about the diving in a separate post.

With all the coves and bays in the area, beaches and watersports are the two major draws. Aside from diving, there is sailing, kayaking, windsurfing, jetskiing and banana boating. Being a major resort destination, there's also a nine-hole golf course, as well as paintball and a shooting range. Or you can rent off-road buggies or explore the area by motorcycle. White Beach, Tamaraw Falls and Tukuran Falls are some of the favorite destinations. After a hard day, there are plenty of spas to choose from or you can have a massage right on the beach before a night on the town.

**Dining** options seem to be centered on three main areas: Muelle Pier, Sabang Beach (including neighbouring Big and Little LaLaguna beaches), and White Beach. We only tried a few places and can recommend the Puerto Galera Yacht Club (try their kinilaw), Le Bistro, the Hang Out Bar (for breakfast), Badladz, Tamarind and Toko's. Always a treat are the street foods. My new favourite sweet is turon, a banana wrapped in pastry and deep fried. How could that not be good?

**Getting Around:** It's super easy to get around and no shortage of people trying to get you as a customer. There are three main options to get between Muelle Pier and Sabang. Most expensive is a trike at about 150-200 pesos for up to four people. Quickest is a ride on the back of a motorbike for 50 pesos. And cheapest and most comfortable by far is a ride in a jeepney for 20 pesos. As always, with trikes and motorbikes it's important to negotiate the price before you get in.

**Internet:** Also important for us were the availability (or lack thereof) of some of the other services we have come to depend on. Wifi is now available in most restaurants but Internet cafes are getting harder to find. Loads for mobile phones are widely available but fax machines are not.

**Money:** Credit cards are not widely accepted except at larger businesses and even when they are, they are subject to additional fees and outages caused by brown outs or the Internet being down. The same goes for bank machines. There are only two banks, one in Sabang and one in PG. And the one day we tried to get money, one was down and the other wouldn't take our

card. Changing money is pretty easy but rates vary. I've heard the rates given for traveller's cheques are not great and they are not widely accepted.

**Medical:** Unfortunately, we had to make use of medical services during our stay in PG. First when our friend Richard took a spill off his scooter and then when I couldn't shake a sinus infection. There is a rural hospital in PG with basic services and a medical clinic in Sabang with better care, but the nearest major medical centres are in Calapan, a two-hour drive south, or via banca to Batangas. It's also not easy to find many of the medications we take for granted in Canada. There are a couple of pharmacies but the selection is underwhelming. So bring along any you might need.

**Before - November 2013 –Typhoon Haiyan & PG Moorings:** Haiyan is expected to pass about 115 nm south of us, sparing Puerto Galera but giving the misery to everyone south. Very glad that we have not yet begun heading toward Puerto Princessa, there is a reward for indolence.

Biggest wind expected for us should be 50kts in the gusts. We have excellent shelter to the East, South and West, but open to the North with a 3/4 mile fetch. There are ~15 anchored ferries and RoRos, but they are outside the reef just north of us that might slow a big guy dragging.

We are on a PGYC mooring with 5/8" chain through a substantial concrete block, 4 new lines above and below the float, main lashed, head sail in the aft cabin, dingy rolled up lashed on deck, solar panels lashed down and cold beer in the fridge. As ready as can be.

Afterward: Quite the ride last night, biggest wind came from the East, could hear it big coming over the ridge line and developing into conflicting williwaw's for us. All the boats in the mooring field were hanging and spinning in different directions, seas were small, some rain, heavy at times but not a huge bother. The wind on the surface maybe 15-20, our wind speed at the mast head (60ft), was reading 8kts one second, then zero, then 20kts, then 5kts, as the boat was pushed or heeled over or spun. Of course this was after dark. It was a constant entertainment watching the ferries and ships drag and try to re-anchor. The winds for them must have been 50kts or so, and everything was well lit with all their spotlights. The spume and spray looked like fast moving ground fog. At first light four ships-ferries were hard aground on a falling tide. One, a 250ft 4 deck ferry, is lying abeam high on the beach of a very slick resort, but it missed the pier. Another 200ft landing craft is on the reef just to the north of us, the other two are east of it.

**Before - June 2013:** We had a very good sail up from Palau to The San Bernadino Strait, 15-20 on the Stb'd quarter, got lucky with tide and day light to enter the Strait, no major overfalls or turbulence while making 11kts over the ground.

Found a harbor for the night then began 5 day trips to **Puerto Galera**. We only move with daylight here as there are scads of fishing boats from 1 man canoes to 100 ft. Along with the boats are hundreds of fish attracting devices (FADS)--usually a pole type float tethered to the bottom. Some have flags, but most are hard to spot until way too close. So cruising here is not a "kick back set the auto/pilot with an eye for boats"--you have to really pay attention. That said it's quite beautiful, very rugged hills studded with volcano cones that create their mini weather systems.

Checked in to the Philippines in Puerto Galera a beautiful all weather bay and great yacht club with cheap beer and good food, stayed a week, and then moved on to Subic Bay, to haul the boat, day sailing again.

**Kelaerin - November 2011:** Our next stop was a re-visit to **Puerto Galera**, (12°30.2'N, 120°57.2'E), which I still think is one of the prettiest bays in the Philippines. This time we picked up one of their moorings for a few nights at 300 pesos a day and enjoyed a couple of meals at the yacht club.

I had admired the baskets made by the local Iraya tribes and decided to take a trip out to Talinapan, a village that is a project of the family of Don Jaime de Ayala, one of the seven families that “owns” the Philippines. They build traditional grass and bamboo homes for families who come down from the mountains to settle. Here the families practice their craft and have a very nice show room for their baskets.

**Bulldog - SSCA Bulletin Nov 2006:** The bay is considered the best hurricane shelter in the islands. If you stay through the summer you can expect about two direct hits, but no major damage to the boats moored at the yacht club. Some of the anchored boats have usual dragging problems.

The yacht club here is mostly European, but very friendly and helpful. The town has a tourist industry, with a lot of Australians, Europeans, and a few Americans. Activities included beach volleyball, group hikes in the mountains, and we were inducted into the Hash House Harriers, (a running club) and an endless supply of beer. We almost stopped the cruise here!

### **3.4.2 Getting To/From Manila from PG**

**Mokisha – March 2018:** 1 1/2 hrs from PG to Batangas on the ferry @ \$250 pp. 7:30 am is the 1st ferry of the day. Last is 4:15. Takes 2 1/2 - 3 hrs to Manila depending on traffic.

**Sloepmouche – July 2017:** Air Juan is a seaplane service based in Puerto Galera. Best to book a flight on Air Juan via Alona 0917-824-3551 if you need to fly to Manila (20min flight from the small beach facing the PGYC anchorage. I had to go to Subic Bay to do a survey and flew with Air Juan to Subic Bay via Manila (7,000P one way); it took only a little over 1 hour versus the 8h journey via ferry and 2 busses. They also fly to Borocay and other locations.

**Bad Ladz PG Website – 2018:** First take a ferry to Batangas from Muelle Pier. The fare will be around 250 – 300PHP. There is only one booth here so you don't have to worry about getting in to the wrong gate.

From the pier go ahead and get your ticket at the ticket booth and all you have to do is wait for the next scheduled banca boat trip.

Your options are Minolo Shipping Lines (MSL) and Father and Son Shipping Lines (FSL). We recommend MSL as they're faster, bigger and will go straight to Batangas. FSL may go to White Beach or Sabang if their boat is not full.

The banca boat will take you to Batangas Pier within 1 to 1.5 hours. Once you arrive in Batangas, the next step is to get a bus, a taxi or a van that goes to Manila. Just follow the people that go out of the pier.

If you want to take a taxi or a van you can get them at the parking lot of the Batangas Pier. Prices for these are more expensive.

If you want to take a bus, it's cheaper. The bus is safe, comfortable and very affordable.

There are buses at the parking lot of the pier that are available for you but I don't really recommend them if you're short on time. Buses here don't seem to have a time schedule. You might sit in the bus for 30 minutes to a couple of hours before they leave.

The best option for you to get a bus is to go to the Batangas City Bus terminal, the bus here leaves every 30 minutes. To get here you will need to take a trike from the pier. There are two types of trike there, you can get a trike with other passengers for 50PHP or you can charter your own trike for 100 PHP going to Batangas bus terminal.

Once you arrive in the terminal, look for your bus that is going to the Manila Bus Terminal. This bus will take you to Manila with in 1 to 1.5 hours. You can get off at DelaRosa Street which has Buendia Train Station or at the Bus Terminal. From there the next step is to get a taxi to the airport.

Now we are close to our destination, if you get off at DelaRosa you can get a metered taxi there that can take you to the airport.

Find the taxi you will use by asking them if they will use their meter. If they won't, shut their door and go to the next one. If they agree, make sure they turn on their meter before you they leave. Sometimes they will start talking to you so you forget and they conveniently forget.

Once you get your taxi just let them know what terminal you are going so they can get you a fastest route to the airport.

### **3.4.3 Visa Renewals in PG**

**Soggy Paws – April 2018:** Because we were already passing through Batangas on our way back from Manila, it was easy to stop in at Immigration and do our extensions at the Batangas Immigration office. The office is tucked away on a side road halfway between the Port and then Central Bus terminal. Easiest to reach going FROM the Port to the Bus Terminal.

**Yvonne Otero (FB) – March 2018:** They do visa extensions in Puerto Galera on Tuesdays (and maybe Thursdays). The Immigration Office is in Calapan but they do have a field office in PG about a 5 minute walk from the yacht club/ferry dock. It is only open on Tuesday but they can't do a visa in one day. They take the passports to Calapan and bring it back the following Tuesday. We ended up renting a motorbike and driving to Calapan and back. We didn't have a week to wait.

**Mokisha – March 2018:** We got our tourist visas renewed in Batangas. They were really nice in that office and we even talked them into giving us 3 months instead of the normal 2, as we told them we were going to Palawan.

### **3.4.4 Diving Out of Puerto Galera**

**Source - Dive Blog - 2013:** From oceanrealimages.com. Stayed at Puerto Galera Resort. Over the five dive days I had in Puerto Galera we did a wide variety of dives from muck dives in not-so-Secret Bay, to sloping reefs in Sabang Bay, the wreck of the Alma Jane and visited the stunning pinnacles of Verde Island. The dives at Verde Island were definitely worth the trip, I've never in my life seen so many Anthias! There were currents, but we avoided anything too strong and they were very gentle and beautiful dives. The reefs and muck of Puerto Galera



were equally rich and we saw an abundance of interesting critters. Several flamboyant cuttlefish, Bargibant's pygmy seahorses (as well as their full-sized cousins), rare nudibranchs and even hairy frogfish made appearances. Although I'm not usually a great fan of wrecks, the Alma Jane was nice for wide-angle photography too.

#### **3.4.4.1 Dive Operations in Puerto Galera Muelle Area**

**Soggy Paws – April 2018 – Bad Ladz:** We walked in and checked out Bad Ladz, right on the waterfront in PG. They quoted us P1150 per dive if we did over 6 dives with them, with our own gear. In addition to the normal dive spots, they can arrange trips to Verde Island, with a P5000 surcharge that is split with all the divers on the trip.

We ended up diving with them for several weeks on and off during our stay in PG. It's a no-frills operation, but the boats and the dive spots are pretty much the same as everyone else's. And their guides were good. The convenience of being right there near the mooring field was fantastic.

#### **3.4.4.2 Anilao**

See [Diving Anilao](#) section for details on diving.

**Soggy Paws – April 2018 – Getting to Anilao from PG:** The resort we were going to would arrange a van from Batangas Pier to the resort for \$80 USD for the van (up to 6 pax and gear) one way. With that as our baseline, we asked around about a direct banka from PG to the resort at Anilao, but kept coming up with prices like P6,000 for the banka. Apparently they have to take a big banka across the strait, so the dime-a-dozen little bankas wouldn't suffice. We had resigned ourselves to the shuttle van (arranged by Crystal Blue for incoming divers), but found one of our group staying at a posh resort in Sabang had already chartered a banka from Sabang (cost unknown—arranged by Bluewater Photo and Travel). So we were able to hitch a ride with them for the price of a bottle of wine.

Coming back, we shared a shuttle van with another couple of divers, and it dropped us right at Batangas Pier.

**Mokisha – March 2018 – Getting to Anilao from PG:** 1 1/2 hrs from PG to Batangas on the ferry @ P250 pp. 7:30 am is the 1st ferry of the day. Last is 4:15.

There are NO taxis, car rental or motorcycle rentals anywhere in Batangas, and we didn't want to take a trike. Anyway, we lucked out & hired a jeepney to take us to our resort in Anilao for \$1,500. Note that the best dive resorts are a little ways down from Anilao town and pier, so make sure your driver factors that in.

Anyway, if the resort picks you up for \$1,500-2,000 it's worth it. It's about 1 1/2 hrs from the ferry terminal by jeepney & trike, you will die by the time you get there. Plus in a trike, you can't see anything. It's twisty roads & Tom even gave our jeepney guy \$2,000 by the time we got there.

#### **3.4.4.3 Sabang & Verde Island**

**Soggy Paws – April 2018 – Verde Island:** We dove Verde 3-4 times with Badladz right out of the Muelle area. Basically, Badladz wants you to dive with them at least one dive (so they know you are competent for the advanced conditions at Verde Island), and then when they have a

group going to Verde, you all split the P5000 extra trip cost. Badladz' trip was barebones—no picnic (and barely any water) provided, but we dove the same reef, and their guides are pretty good.

**Soggy Paws – April 2018 – Sabang:** We didn't stay in Sabang or dive out of Sabang, but stopped at the Bikini Bar (just off the beach) for surface intervals frequently. We also took a jeepney over one day and poked around. It is chock-a-block resorts (fancy and not), restaurants and bars, and divers. Not really our style and we were happy diving with Badladz, as it was so much more convenient.

**Mokisha – March 2018:** Verde Island is in the strait between PG and Batangas

It's a 15 min ferry ride to Sabang (or you can take a jeepney from downtown PG). We stayed at Sabang Inn Beach Resort 1,500 a night. Right on the beach. Pretty nice place & good food at the restaurant. We actually planned to dive with them but weren't all that impressed with the dive shop. They didn't really want to answer our questions. Found **Dive Dojo** while walking around & everything just clicked. Also Dojo is just a dive shop & not a resort.

We dove with Diving Dojo. Paul is Aussie & owns the shop. Ron is Dutch & is manager. He's also a famous deep water diver. The staff is awesome—every one of them. Verde was 100+ vis. There's so much to see that my head was whipping around trying to take in everything. Really amazing.

We went out for 2 dives & barbecue, and it was P4,000 ea with all equipment. The barbecue lunch was incredible— the best we've ever had. Both Paul & Ron came out diving for that trip so it was fun getting to know them. Bhond is the dive master & really good.

**Sloepmouche – July 2017:** We were happy to spend over 2 weeks in the area, doing some **scuba diving** with Capt Gregg's (Sabang) and touring the local attractions.

### **3.4.5 North Coast of Mindoro**

#### **3.4.5.1 Calapan**

#### **3.4.6 Heading W from PG**

**Soggy Paws – June 2018:** Mokisha did this trip in March with northeasterlies, and had a nice sail along the coast, and did not stop along the N coast. In June, with SW winds, we thought this would be a nice sail in calm seas and light winds. Boy were we wrong! The forecast was for 15 Kts SW, and in the valleys between the mountains we saw winds to 40 kts. Yes, it was offshore, but strong enough to build up a pretty good chop. We motorsailed and stayed as close in as we dared, hoping that our chosen anchorage would be good in these strong winds.

We finally stopped a little short of Sloepmouche's spot, in a nice deep bay with a tiny village and a large flat sandy area to anchor in. We dropped motored around with our fishfinder on and found no coral, and a wide gently sloping area. We finally dropped our anchor at 13-30.373N / 120-28.484E in 20-25 ft sand (turned out to be grey volcanic sand—might make a good macro dive spot!), and spent the whole next day waiting for the weather to calm down further, before we left to go around the west tip of Mindoro. It was a beautiful anchorage after the hectic pace of Puerto Galera.

Don't go in too far, as the guys living on the beach put out a net in the bay at night. (There were 2 small floats, they use them to anchor one end of their net, and put the other end offshore).

There was quite a bit of small banka traffic back and forth between the fishing (and logging/gravel) villages in this area. All smiled and waved. One guy stopped by as we were up on deck at sunset, and gave us 4 coconuts, and asked (almost no English) for some wine. Dave told him to come back tomorrow and we'd give him a few things, but he never came back.

**Sloepmouche – July 2017 – East of Del Monte Point:** 13 31.327 N / 120 26.659 E We anchored in light winds here in 5m hard shoal with coral boulders about 2m. This area is just 30nm from Puerto Galera and was thus a nice overnight stop.

### **3.4.7 West Coast of Mindoro**

#### **3.4.7.1 Paluan Bay (NW Tip)**

**Mokisha – March 2018:** We left Puerto Galera to head for Palawan, with a first stop on the NW coast of Mindoro. Had 20-30 kts behind us. As we rounded the headland the seas & wind dropped but we still sailed but ended up motoring the last 5 mi or so.

We dropped the hook in 15 ft - in front of a sand/gravel quarry which is easy to spot. All sand below us. Open to the west only & very comfortable. Thankfully no issues & we were on high alert! Lots of bancas on the horizon at night - looked like a city. Globe is for 4G.

Anchorage: 13-19.94N, 120-28.73E.

Headed to Pandan Island today where there's a resort. They think they'll have a mooring for us (free). They go to Apo Reef. The island is a marina sanctuary & snorkeling is supposed to be incredible.

**Pelangi - 2013 - Armed Boarding Here** We thought we should tell people about an awful experience we had recently in Mindoro, Philippines.

Take note of the anchorage and way point and if you are cruising in this area or on your way to Puerto Galera don't go there!

The anchorage is just around the North Western tip of Mindoro in Paluan Bay. Way point 13-21.560N / 120-28.013 E, opposite Gamtas Point.

We had spent 2 lovely days there on our way up to PG in Dec so thought it was a safe place to rest.

On 21st Feb at about 9.30 pm a local banka (boat) came along side in the pitch black with a person saying they had run out of fuel and could we help. As we came into the cockpit from below we noted 6 people in the banka. As we offered them our petrol jug 4 of them came on board. 1 had a gun and we were forced to kneel down while they tied our hands behind our backs.

Gareth was forced to stay in the cockpit while I was told to go below and show them where our money was. 3 came below with me and I showed them where we keep our money. They then went through the boat and helped themselves to most of our electronic equipment, VHF radio, mobile phones, camera etc. and all the money we had. Fortunately, we persuaded them to let us keep the laptops as they have all our charts and without them we would be completely stuck.

They then left us tied up and told us to stay on the floor till they'd gone. These guys were amateurs and we're not sure if the gun was real, but it was a traumatic ordeal and not one that we'd want anyone else to go through.

After they'd gone, we slipped anchor and got out of there.

This is our 2nd visit to the Philippines and we must emphasize that we have had some wonderful and humbling experiences cruising many islands and visiting local villages across all regions. The local people have always been welcoming, friendly and helpful. Until that night we have never felt unsafe here. We think this was a group of uneducated opportunists and we were just in the wrong place at the wrong time.

In reporting this incident we hope not to scare people, or put them off coming here just be wary of people around your boat at night and stay out of that bay.

*Note: As of 2018, PGYC reports that this was an isolated incident. No other similar incidents have been reported on this coast since this one.*

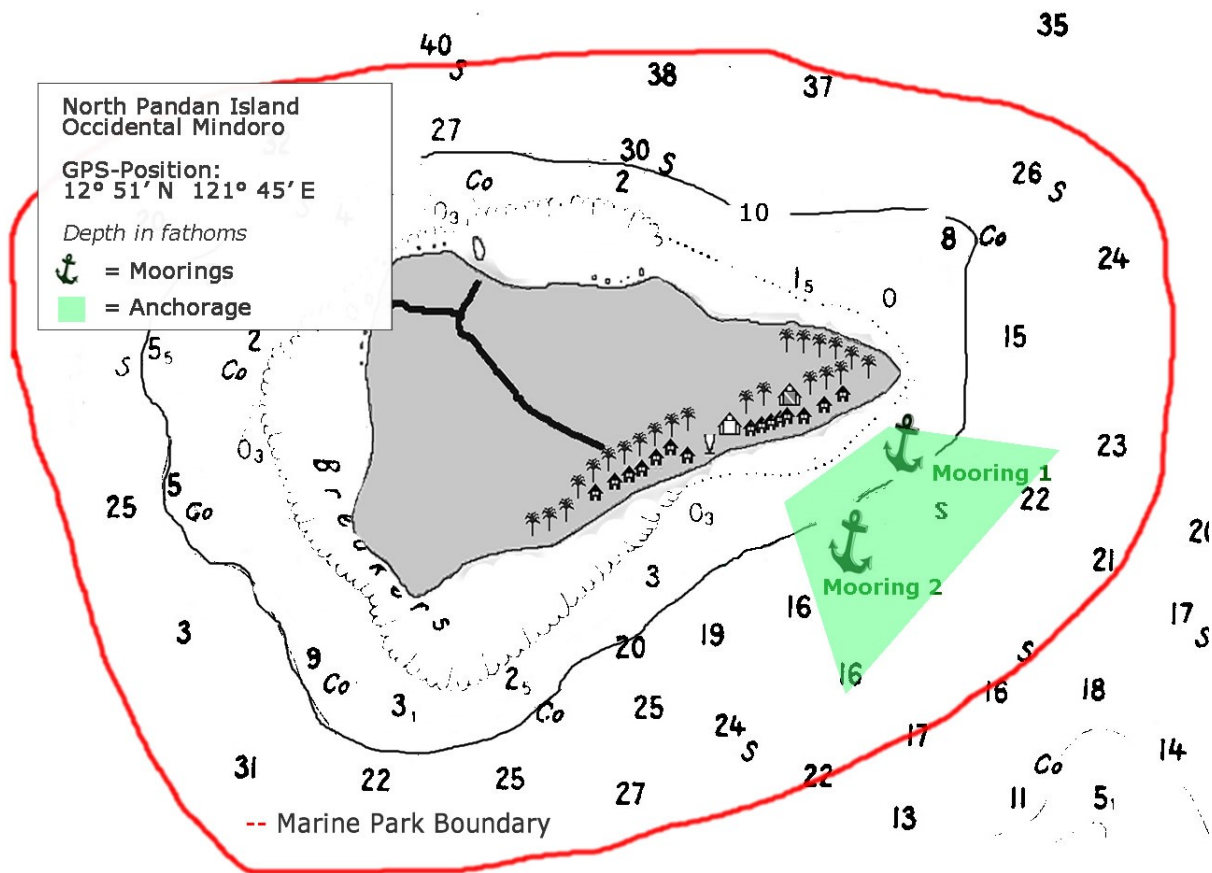
#### **3.4.7.2 Igsoso Bay (West Side)\**

**MV Matariki – Undated:** Anchor spot here noted at 13 15.24 N / 120 30.99 E

#### **3.4.7.3 Pandan Islands & Sablayan**

Pandan Island Resort website:

<https://www.pandan.com/travelinfo/getting-there/#yacht>



Mooring 1: 12° 51.331 N 120° 45.266 E depth: around 20 metres

Mooring 2: 12° 51.406 N 120° 45.304 E depth: around 4 metres

“Pandan Island offers fairly good anchorage for all sizes of vessels SE to S of the beach, in fair and medium weather conditions. For vessels with less than 2 metre draft there is a plateau, a sandy area 3-5 metres deep, between and slightly SE of above mentioned moorings. vessels with more draft need to anchor further offshore in about 22-30 metres of water (good holding in sand/mud). N.B. Avoid dropping your anchor between the two areas as the steep slope may cause your anchor to drag in NE winds.”

“Nearest Typhoon shelter:

San Jose harbour, GPS Position: 12° 20' N 121.0° E;

40NM distance from Pandan Island”

**Mokisha – March 2018:** Currently, we are anchored at Pandan @ 12-51.422N, 120-45.346E, until a mooring is available. It's all sand & we dropped in about 12-15 ft in all sand & sea grass. If there is a mooring available, you can use their mooring.

Pandan responds on VHF 10. The dive shop is who really coordinates if there is a mooring open or not. The place is owned by 3 or 4 partners, all expats from various countries. They are planning to put in another mooring or two for yachts....but it isn't happening as fast as thought it would.

This is a great place - very friendly & the dive shop is great. Diving around Pandan is good but after Verde & Apo it pales in comparison. You can tell it's a marine reserve though as there's lots of pelagics, turtles, ect. Nice corals too. No fresh water shower at the dive shop but there is on the banca.

Pandan Resort welcomes cruisers. They have a restaurant with basic meals, and a bar. No fresh water readily available, trash might be an imposition. You can hitch a ride on one of their bankas for P500 pp round trip to Sablayan.

There's a breakfast & lunch menu at the resort which we can order off of. Dinner is buffet & is P460 pp. We ate one night & it was pretty good. Lunch we've had a few times & it isn't bad either. Massage is P650 for 1 1/2 hrs. (haven't tried it). Bungalows are cute & everything is well maintained. The staff very friendly.

Apo Reef dayboat takes 2 hours but is very comfortable with mattresses, CR, and fresh water showers(they have a watermaker onboard, bring towel). Excursion price depends on number of people going; 2 people P14660 pp, 4 people P12490pp, for 3 dives and a stop at Apo I. P2940 for park fees pp is included and paid thru Pandan Resort . The max number of people is 8.

Per dive around Pandan island P1650 with their equipment. P1300 if you bring your own gear.

For the day trip we scheduled at a time when we could use their mooring. Mooring very adequate.

**Diving Apo Reef with the Resort:** From here, using the dive shop banca, it's about a 2 hr ride to Apo Reef. We did 3 dives. All 3 had pretty good currents so it would be pretty hard to do just yourselves without someone picking you up.

We also talked to the rangers at the island. The fees for the park are: 780 for the boat, 780 for snorkeling & 2,940 for diving. Since we dove with the resort, the 2,970 is including in the diving. If there are just 2 of you, the cost for diving Apo Reef is 11,900 a pp. They take up to 6, and adding extra people significantly reduces the price. Prices are on their website.

The rangers were very nice & said it was no problem bringing our boat out. We could take any free mooring. The fees are good for 48 hrs.

**PGYC – 2015:** Pandan Island is on the West coast of Mindoro, a good day sail or, more likely, an overnigher from Puerto Galera.

Pandan Island is a small, private, eco-tourism resort with 17 bungalows/rooms and a PADI dive center; the rest of the island is uninhabited. Apart from a designated mooring/anchorage area the whole reef around the island is a protected marine park. <http://www.pandan.com/>

Pandan Island is the only resort on the West coast of Mindoro and is the gateway to Apo Reef. For cruising yachts from Puerto Galera en route to Coron, Busuanga it is the perfect midpoint, being 90NM from both the Puerto Galera Yacht Club and Coron town.

### **3.4.8 Southern End of Mindoro**

**Arnak – 2012 - Bulalacao Town:** Internet 3G good. 12°19.131N / 121°20.663E In 9m mud off town jetty. Moved to a position off the lovely white sand beach to the east. Shoals gradually and good protection in NE. The town is small with a small market and vehicle access to the rest of Mindoro.

**Arnak – Jan 2013 – Tamaran Island:** Internet 3G weak 12°16.061N 121°22.510E in 12m sand sitting in 20m.

A lovely anchorage off a small resort and protected in NE.

**Arnak – Jan 2013 – San Jose:** Internet 3G good. 12°20.157N 121°04.250E in 7m sand.

Anchored off black sand beach just south of the main town. An easy walk to town or trike for php 10. Excellent markets and shops. A good size town.

A northerly swell can work down the coast in fresh NE conditions. There are some lovely anchorages on the south coast on the way from Bulalacao to San Jose. Also a good anchorage behind Aslom island in the W side of Bulalacao bay and around Alibug on the south coast. I explored these areas but did not stop.

We jumped off from here to Coron across the Mindoro Straits.

## 4 Central Philippines

### 4.1 Arrival Via the Surigao Strait

One source of tide information for the Surigao Strait is:

[UK Hydrographic Office Easy Tide Online](#)

Or you can download a copy of WXTide32, which is a worldwide tide program.

<http://Wxtide32.com>

**PGYC Document – Inbound Surigao Strait – Downloaded 2016:** This is the same route taken by Magellan when he first entered this vast archipelago, in 1521, and claimed it for the King of Spain. The islands have ever since been known as ‘the Philippines’, in honour of the King. The Strait itself is deep and free from dangers, with the shorelines steep too.

The only challenge is the tidal flow – up to 8 knots in places, when in full flood.

**HAZARDS** - Fishing boats are the main challenge when arriving off the Surigao Strait, as they are throughout the coastal waters of the archipelago. In the daylight you can see them and they can see you – no problem.

Arriving after dark, many of them are carrying no lights (except for the squid boats, which are so well lit as to appear to be a town on the horizon when first approached) and so they are obstacles that must be avoided. Also, day or night, even small fishing boats may be running a trawl line or net, so you should be observant of signals given by the boat’s crew if passing close across the stern of a fishing boat – they will let you know if you are about to destroy the source of family income. Rule of thumb, if you must sail after dark stay five miles offshore and keep a lookout.

Navigation lights marked on charts are occasionally out-of-service, especially the secondary or least important ones.

An innocuous piece of bamboo sticking vertically out of the water, sometimes miles offshore, is probably a Fish Aggregating Device (“FAD”), anchored to the seabed by strong fishing line. Recently however, more elaborate FADs have been deployed by local fishermen in some areas,

in the form of oil drums anchored to the seabed by chains. There are no reports of lines being strung between FADs, so it is considered safe to pass close to and between them.

Unattended fishing nets are typically not used away from very shallow water so you should not find these to be a hazard throughout much of the Philippines. However, around South-east Asia in general they are sometimes used up to two miles offshore. The general rule is: if the net floatation devices stand vertically at the surface then it is usually safe to pass between them; but, if the net floatation devices lie flat on the surface then it is almost always unsafe to pass between them. Best advice: stay clear. Last year while racing, our yacht was caught by an unmarked / unattended net one at night, about a mile and a half offshore, that had floatation devices standing vertically at the surface.

**ARRIVAL IN THE DARK:** In the area of the Surigao Strait, there are two suggested 'first stops' to choose from at night. Both are located on the east of Dinagat Island, both are very sheltered inlets and both are safe to enter at any time of day or night.

Malinao Inlet near 10° 15'N 125° 38'E

Gaas Inlet near 10° 11'N 125° 39'E

The choice of onward routing around Dinagat Island would depend upon the tides because you would only want to take the southern rounding if you were expecting to be in the area between Kabo Island and Bayagnan Island at slack water – if you arrive at that area when the tide is in full flow there may be as much as 8 knots of tide with you or against you. Plus, the volumes of fast moving water here generate whirlpools.

The Suluan Island navigation light is a useful guide when entering the Surigao Strait because it is almost always working and can be seen from up to 28 miles out. There is an anchorage marked there on most charts (near 10° 45.60'N, 125° 56.30'E) but we have no knowledge of anyone using it. It may be a good first stop during the NE monsoon, but the island's small size suggests that if there is any significant weather around then the anchorage may not offer a good night's sleep, despite good holding.

**ARRIVAL IN DAYLIGHT:** In the area of the Surigao Strait, the suggested 'first stop' would be one of the following:

Hibuson Is. near 10° 25.60'N, 125° 28.60'E (sheltered, coral and mangroves at shore)

Tabujon Bay/Lisub Cove near 10° 21.20'N, 125° 33'E (sheltered, near a town)

Layauan Bay near 10° 16.80'N, 125° 32'E (sheltered, mangroves on shore)

See also Suluan Island mentioned above, under 'arrival in the dark'.

## ***4.2 San Juanico Strait between Leyte and Samar***

**Sail SE Asia FB Group – May 2018:** Here's an update on the San Juanico Strait between Leyte & Samar. We departed Tacloban northbound 4.5hrs after LW Tacloban and carried up to 3 kts of favourable current, sometimes up to 3 kts, all the way through the strait. The Strait is well marked with new Cardinal marks. The least charted overhead obstruction are the power cables at Pangabaton Is. at 26.2m.(Navionics) The 2 sets of cables are about 500m apart. Good depths throughout.



**Dream Away – April 2016:** The tides were at neaps, we caught the last of the ebb and the first of the flood. There was a light breeze, so we motored our way through scenic countryside. A pleasant easy trip with good depth the whole way.

The 2 sets of overhead power cables at Pangabaion Is (approx. 11 23.28 N 124 58.88 E) are reported as 25m above the water, so no problem. We plotted our route using the Navionics chart, and it was pretty spot on, although it doesn't show the overhead cables – and we went much closer to the S of Santa Rita Is than either chart shows.

CM93(2010) was not detailed enough or accurate enough – it even has 2 quite large phantom islands between Guintiguian Point and Turi Island (approx. 11 24.3 N 124 59 E).

We saw none of the buoys or marks, not even the leading marks at Sanputan Point (approx. 11 25.35 N 124 54.5 E).

All the community edits on the Navionics charts are a work of fiction. Whoever added them must be in his own parallel universe.

**PGYC – Inbound through the Surigao Strait – Document downloaded 2016:** The San Juanico Strait (near 11° 15'N, 125° 04'E), is between the islands of Leyte and Samar. This strait holds the record for being the narrowest, navigable – maximum draft 4.8 metres (15.5 feet) -- strait in the world, but it is recommended that navigation should only be attempted in DAYLIGHT.

It is possible to hire a local 'pilot' for between Php500-1,000 (negotiable) per passage, and the deeper your draft the more we would recommend this option. Alternatively, follow a larger vessel (of which there are usually many) through the strait because they almost certainly have a pilot on board.

NOTE: there is a bridge within the strait that is considered yacht-friendly -- 30.75 metres (101 feet) clearance at high water – as confirmed by the Tacloban Pilots Association (January 2004).

It is possible to check-in to the Philippines at Tacloban City (near the southern entrance to the strait) without too much hassle. However, if you are planning to sail directly to Puerto Galera, this is not absolutely necessary -- immigration formalities can be accomplished here in the town, with the Club available to assist if requested.

Upon exiting the Strait, be careful not to take the west passage, past Biliran Island. There is a bridge between Biliran and Leyte that does not appear on most charts. The bridge IS NOT considered yacht-friendly, although the crew of a sailing yacht – a Choy Lee 36 (11 metres LOA) -- has reported safe passage, but only after anchoring, going ashore and checking the clearance with a line (actual clearance not recorded).

Upon exiting the Strait it is recommended that you leave Biliran Island to port.

Onward routing to PGYC could be west or east of Masbate Island. In a strong NE monsoon we would recommend passing west of Masbate.

### **4.3 Samar East Coast**

**Solita – 2012:** Samar Island, the most easterly of the Visayan Islands, stretches from the south of Southern Luzon to the northern reaches of Mindanao, and is virtually connected to Leyte by the San Juanico Strait channel on its southwestern coastline. It is one of the poorer and least

developed provinces in the Visayas, with a rugged and heavily forested interior. Like Leyte, it was heavily involved in bitter fighting during WW2.

The island has very little tourist development but its mountainous scenery, caves, forest, subterranean rivers and hiking opportunities are attracting increasing numbers of visitors. There are also beaches with good surf and some diving possibilities on its east coast.

#### **4.3.1 Guian**

Guian appears to be at the southern tip of Samar

**From a 2007 Cruising World Article** by Tere Batham on Sea Quest, recounting cruising the Philippines in 2003: We used the busy market town of Guian as a base from which to explore Suluan and Homonhon Islands in the Gulf of Leyte. We found former Yapese fishermen who had drifted to Suluan. Suluan also has historic limestone caverns that were used as the last Japanese hideout at the end of World War II. Homonhon is where Ferdinand Magellan first stepped ashore in the Philippines in March 1521.

In Guian, we anchored near the Tanghai View Lodge.

Guian has a historic church with doors so ornately carved that Imelda Marcos had reportedly offered 1 million pesos for them.

For our security at each new village, we asked to meet the local *barangay* captain, the elected head of his community. On his say-so, we knew that our dinghy would be safe on the beach and our boat would remain undisturbed at anchor.

#### **4.4 Samar West Coast**

**Solita – 2012:** Catarman, on the north coast, and Calbayog and Catbalogan, on the west coast, are small towns with airports, banks, internet cafes and good shopping options, but Tacloban on Leyte tends to function as Samar's capital city.

##### **4.4.1 Daram Island**

**Dream Away – April 2016 – Sua Bay:** 11 33.9980 N 124 47.7565 E Anchored in 8m between 2 villages, near the cemetery. Greeted within 15 minutes of arrival, told we were welcome in the village if we would like to visit - and told it was a good job we didn't go further into the bay - it's shallow & there is a fish trap there. We visited the next morning, had an escort of children all the way round the village, and were greeted in a very friendly manner by everyone. Managed to "load" our Globe SIM – the lady had to stand on the end of the pier to get a signal. Had a chat with one of the officials who had come out to greet us the day before. The village was neat, with concrete streets, and even though it was a Sunday, groups of men were busy mending some holes. Both Navionics & CM93(2010) good enough to keep us out of trouble.

**Arnak – 2010 – Daram town:** 11°38.06N 124°47.94E Main town with reasonable shopping and market etc.

**Arnak – 2010 –Summhit Bay:** Pos 11°42.66N 124°43.63E anchor off small sand beach. Lovely spot.

**Arnak – 2010 – Bungul Bay:** 11°40.28N 124°43.86E Nice sheltered anchorage with village at head of bay. Very pretty area.

**Arnak – 2010 –Batubaruy Bay:** 11°38.86N 124°44.79E very attractive bay with excellent shelter and village with millions of children.

**Arnak – 2010 – Homangad Island:** 11°35.36N 124°52.61E behind small island in 17m. Lovely spot.

When passing around the bottom of Daram Island beware of the **power lines** at Pos 11°32.34N 124°49.90E. This is where I passed under and my mast height is 20m. I had several meters clearance at half tide.

**Bakhaw: Approx Posn (found by googling):** 11.6000° N, 124.7500 E, *Halfway up the west coast of Daram Island*

**From a 2007 Cruising World Article** by Tere Batham on Sea Quest, recounting cruising the Philippines in 2003: Only at Bakhaw did we have any troubles while cruising Samar. A town official accompanied by an armed policeman climbed aboard to extort wharfage fee. When we pointed out that we were anchored, he stated that he was a Customs official and would now inspect our boat. As he wore no uniform, nor offered us ID, we not only refused but immediately began to crank in the anchor. "We suggest you get off the boat now, otherwise you will have to accompany us to Guiuan, and there we can discuss your problem with the local police." He and his officer quickly disembarked.

#### **4.4.2 Guintarcan Island**

**Arnak – 2010:** 11°35.36N 124°50.58E Lovely deserted bay. Be aware of power lines at the bottom of Daram Island mentioned above. Also power lines between Guintarcan Island and Samar at the south end of the island (low)

*Ed note: Guintarcan Island appears to be the island west of this waypoint. Wpt may be out of place.*

#### **4.4.3 Buad Island**

**Arnak – 2010 - Zumarrage:** 11°37.74N 124°50.58E nice anchorage

**Arnak – 2010 – San Isidro:** Pos 11°40.92N 124°49.42E Nice anchorage off the village on the side of the bay.

#### **4.4.4 Basiao Island**

**Arnak – 2010:** 11°41.50N 124°54.28E reasonably sheltered from easterly winds and secluded anchorage.

When proceeding north towards Samar and Catbalogan be aware of **power lines** between Darajuay island and Samar and Darajuay Island and Little Darajuay island. I did not check the height but they looked low so do not pass between Darajuay is and Samar but you can pass safely between Little Darajuay and Waray Banwa reef.

#### **4.4.5 Catbalogan Town & Buri Island**

**Soggy Paws – Aug 2021:** We spent about a week here anchored off Buri Island Beach on the W side of Buri Island about 7 km N of Catbalogan town. We anchored at 11-48.025n / 124-49.698 E in about 12 ft of water at mid tide. Good sand and reasonable protection.

We met a resident who has a couple of AirBNB's on the beach (green roof, N end of the beach). Gerry speaks great English and was very helpful in pointing us in the right direction, no matter what question we asked.

**Transportation** to town was easy using trikes. Walk to the N end of the beach until you see the path, 5 minutes to the road. We met a trike driver named Tito, who lives close by, is very reliable, and has a 4 person trike 0935-110-5540. He is usually hanging out at the beach entrance at the main paved road about a 5 minute walk from the beach.

The beach is set up for beachgoers so is quite busy on the weekends with, food, kayaks, sometimes jet skis and karaoke. But the large anchorage is well protected from all but the west and has a gently sloping bottom of good firm sand with little coral.

We were sad to hear booming occasionally—the local fishermen seem to be dynamite fishing.

Catbalogan has all the normal amenities for a medium sized town with good restaurants including our favorite **Secret Café** on Del Rosario street several blocks S of midtown, and there is a reasonable good fresh food market on the waterfront.

If anchoring off the town wharf, anchor just south and west of the twin pier wharf away from ship maneuvering areas. We were told by the port authority that we could dock our dinghy inside the port, but there is a P92 peso landing fee (per landing, not per person).

**Activities: JiaBong Caves trip** - Joni Bonifacio Trexplore.com 0919-294-3865. He is a very experienced and well organized cave master. He provides an all-inclusive caving trip to all caves in the area including a 3 day trip inside the largest known cave in the Philippines. Included are transportation, good lunch, water, porters, helmet and light, clothing recommendations, and a fully stocked outdoor adventure store. He also includes free photo documentation of your caving experience. He has been in business since early 2000s and hosted several international caving teams to explore some of the more remote cave systems on Samar. This is not a trip for out of shape cruisers. We left at 0700 and did not get back until 1700. Our trip consisted of probably 4 miles of hiking up and down hills, in stream beds and in two large caves. There was lots of swimming inside the caves and several strenuous boulder climbs. But the scenery inside the caves was stunning and included thousands of small bats. The trip is well worth the effort if you like caves and are in reasonable hiking shape.

On another day, we did a day-long "Canyoning Adventure" with Trexplorers. We hiked up a path to the top end of a river, rappelled down into the river, and then waded/hiked down the river, rappelling or jumping down 9 different waterfalls. Joni supplied all the gear (harnesses, helmets, life vests, and high tech mountaineering ropes) plus arranged for 2 porters to carry the gear and help rig lines for the rappelling. They gave us a little rappelling tutorial before the first time. It was a total adventure.

We also had Joni organize a 3 day trip to take us around tourism sites in the southern end of Samar, including Torpedo Boating (essentially whitewater rafting down a river but in a motorized banka, and then back up the river, so cool), Malilau Spring, caving through Talugabnon Cave, Blue Lagoon, the Ballinginga Bells, Sohuton Park (caving and kayaking) and some former World War II sites. This was a great trip—a bit higher on the cost scale than we normally do, but we fit an incredible amount of things into a 3 day trip.

**Arnak – 2010:** 11°46.54N 124°52.45E Catbalogan is the capitol of Samar with supermarket and markets etc. Also Immigration can do extensions and clearance etc here. Very friendly town (caution see above)

#### **4.4.6 Timpasan Island**

**Arnak – 2010:** 11°48.60N 124°41.44E Beautiful anchorage. Anchored in 5m mud and just south of the typhoon anchorage at Port Aguirre which is surrounded by islands with 2 small villages.

#### **4.4.7 Libucan Island**

**Dream Away – April 2016:** 11 54.473 N / 124 38.118 E Saw no fireflies - arrived at dusk just as a squall went through, the wind turned S, and we were pitching quite violently for the next 3 hours until the tide turned. Anchored in 8m mud but it looked rocky further inshore. Both Navionics & CM93(2010) good enough to keep us out of trouble.

**Arnak – 2010:** 11°54.43N 124°38.13E Beautiful anchorage with fire flies in trees at night. Anchored in 8m.

#### **4.4.8 Calbayog Town**

**Arnak – 2010:** 12°03.46N 124°35.84E now the biggest town with Immigration and good shopping etc.

#### **4.4.9 Binalio Pt**

**Arnak – 2010:** 12°08.18N 124°27.28E Good overnight anchorage in NE.

#### **4.4.10 Caagiitan**

**Arnak – 2010:** 12°22.38N 124°20.136E A good sheltered anchorage in NE with Boatbuilding yards and good market and supplies on the main road. Had a possible typhoon warning so headed south Batun.

#### **4.4.11 Batun Area - Typhoon Anchorage**

**Arnak – 2010:** 11°54.41N 124°46.90E in excellent shelter but be aware of power lines just to the East of the anchorage. My calculations showed we could pass under at the northern end by staying very close to the shore but you need to sound the coast line first and possibly mark the route with bouys if you want to go right up into the inlet which would be a perfect typhoon anchorage. Sounding showed minimum depth of 2.2m all the way up to the tire wall about 3nm further upstream. Watch out for the mussel farms which you can pass between and are easy to see.

### **4.5 Islands in Samar Sea (West of Samar)**

#### **4.5.1 Cabonga Island (Magabook Pt)**

**Arnak – 2010:** 11°53.72N 124°24.82E Anchored in 6m sand

#### **4.5.2 Medio Islands (12-22N / 124-02E)**

The Medio Islands are a group of 5 small islands just west of the San Bernadino Straits.

**Soggy Paws – September 2021:** There are a number of easy anchorages in 20-30 ft mostly sand. It is highly recommended you have satellite pictures to choose anchorages. Both Globe and Smart are very weak here—sometimes we can get a usable signal for internet, and sometimes not.

We did a dive on the SE side of Escarpada Island. On the first dive, we jumped in at 25 ft and set out to find the drop-off, towing the dinghy. We never found it, the sand sloped to 95 feet and by then we were in MAJOR current, pushing us offshore and south (the tide was falling). We ascended in the middle of a ferocious whirlpool, clinging to the dinghy line. Our bubbles were sometimes going down vs up, and swirling around. This was crazy fun, but also could have been very dangerous. The next dive we stayed in close to the shore and explored among the prolific live coral. No wall, but very vibrant coral.

##### **Anchorage:**

Escarpada Island, Budog Bay: 12°21.918 N / 124°04.773 E 25 ft sand, scattered coral, light W wind.

Darsena Island, Pink Beach: 12°21.561 N / 124°02.078 E 20 ft sand among coral, no wind

Darsena Island, Crystal Sands Beach 12°21.321 N / 124°02.078 15 ft sand, little coral (Karl's House). Light SW wind.

**Dream Away – April 2016:** 12 22.600 N / 124 02.222 E Lots of rock amongst the sand. Need good vis to find a suitable spot. Anchored in 6m. Neither Navionics nor CM93 (2010) were detailed enough.

When we left we exited between Maragati Is & Rasa Is. If you have our track you will know that we weren't paying enough attention to the chart, and had to make a sharp turn when we started getting shallow! Both Navionics & CM93(2010) were correct here. We also hadn't really thought about the tide – luckily it was going our way, and we shot through the pass at 8 knots!

**Arnak – 2010:** 12°22.572N 124°02.219E A lovely spot with a few huts and boats.

#### **4.5.3 Ticao Island**

**Dream Away – April 2016 – San Jacinto:** 12 34.60 N 123 43.74 E CM93 out, Navionics better. Had no GE, so anchored when hit 5m.

Breezy night, constant (small) swell coming in, may have been able to tuck further in, or may actually have been better staying off the town in the shelter of the pier. We had anchored there in the daytime to visit ashore where we found very good fresh fruit and veg and most basics available somewhere. On the S shore CM93 (2010) had us on land, Navionics seemed pretty accurate here.

Just N of San Jacinto, just off Taclogan Bay (which has a resort which welcomes yachts) we encountered overfalls and tide rip. The seabed drops dramatically at that point. Tide going our way, and we zoomed. Our CM93(2010) has no detail for Ticao island, apart from San Jacinto. Navionics was probably pretty accurate.

#### **4.5.4 San Miguel Island**

**Arnak – 2010:**12°42.799N 123°35.487E good anchorage in NE

#### **4.5.5 Burias Island**

**Dream Away – April 2016 – Ilog Bay** 12 59.561 N /123 03.656 E Anchored towards head of the bay where the river exits in 6.5m mud. A wide open bay with good shelter from N thro E to S. N shore very shallow in front of the village. S shore has clusters of huts behind the trees. Neither chart program had the detail we might like, but both were safe.

**Arnak – 2010:**12°46.931N 123°18.046E A lovely anchorage protected by reef with white sand beach.

### **4.6 Islands in Leyte Gulf**

#### **4.6.1 Suluan Island**

**Fellow Traveler - 2011:** I made landfall (from Yap) at Suluan island. Note: it is mislabeled on Google Earth, which calls another island (Hibuson) “Suluan,” and calls Suluan “Homonhon” (which is the larger island just West).

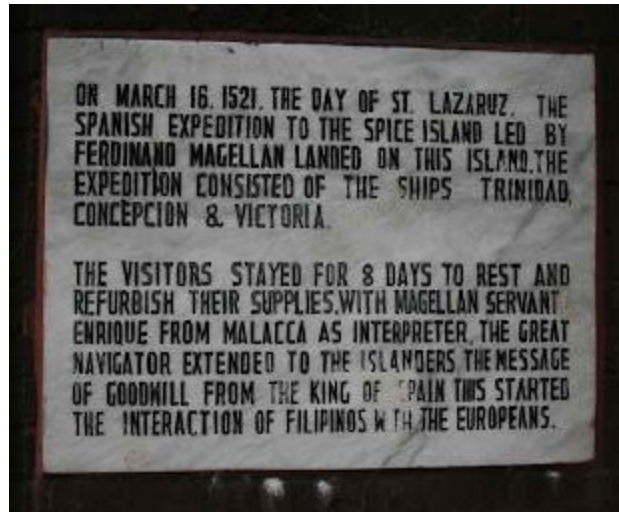
Suluan is a beautiful, friendly island with an excellent anchorage during the NE monsoon. It also is a logical stop if coming from Yap, or any other points to the NE of Yap. It might not be an easy stop coming from Palau, depending on wind direction/strength. If conditions allow one to hold course easily for Suluan, I would recommend approaching the Philippines from that direction, as the Hinatuan passage, following the E. coast of Mindanao, is notoriously tough due to strong currents.

Google Earth images for Suluan are at least as useful as the C-maps charts due to a lack of info on C-maps. Entrance is fairly easy, although it could be rather choppy and rough until in the lee of the island if the trades are blowing strong. I anchored at **10° 45.72 N / 125° 56.68 E** in 30-35 feet, sand. There were large local craft to the N and E of my position. Further West was mostly rock/coral.

There is no customs or immigration in Suluan, I did not check in with any authorities, and none bothered me. I had heard that the locals are glad for yachts to stop, and realize that many have not officially cleared into the country yet.

#### **4.6.2 Homonhon Island**

This island was Magellan’s first landing spot in the Philippines, March 16, 1521.



**Dream Away – April 2016 - NW of Kanaoayong Pt:** 10 44.1 N 125 41.5 E (PA) . Looks like it could be a good bay to anchor in when the wind is strong from the NE. Didn't go in. There is a long-standing quarrying operation loading barges in the SW corner of the bay, which then transfer the ore to a large ship tethered to a substantial mooring pile offshore.

**Dream Away – April 2016 - Inapulangan & Montoconan Islet:** 10 46.566 N 125 39.235 E  
Anchored in 14m mud close to a line of buoys, some with green flags. They stretch all across the bay, and may well be a net. Later... a small boat came & asked if we'd like to be escorted through the minefield, further into the bay as it's quite breezy out here. It seems there is a gap in the middle opposite the village. Some slight swell all the time. Navionics probably slightly better than CM93(2010)

#### **4.6.3 Hibuson Island**

#### **4.6.4 Dinagat Island**

**PGYC – From “Inbound Surigao Strait” – 2016:** In the area of the Surigao Strait, there are two suggested ‘first stops’ to choose from at night. Both are located on the east of Dinagat Island, both are very sheltered inlets and both are safe to enter at any time of day or night.

Malinao Inlet near 10° 15'N 125° 38'E

Gaas Inlet near 10° 11'N 125° 39'E

**Kokomo - 2014:** (making landfall, coming from Palau). The Puerto Galera Yacht club Information sheet we have suggested several anchorages on the west coast of Dinagat Island.

N 10 25'60 E 125 28'60 Hibuson Isl, (not verified)

N 10 21'20 E 125 33'00 Tabujon Bay/ Lisub Cove (not verified)

N 10 16'80 E 125 32'00 Lagauan Bay, too deep to anchor and many fish traps.

We decided to keep going and continued to Melgar Bay. There were several options to anchor.



#### **4.6.5 Surigao Island**

#### **4.7 SE Leyte (09-58N / 125-13E) (Panaon Island)**

**Good News – Feb 2021 – Sonok and Ilijon Point and Whale Sharks:** We went to the main town of Pintuyan yesterday and was warmly welcomed by Engr. Edilberto Alapag, the current municipal tourism officer of Pintuyan. He is the one in-charge of arranging a schedule for anyone who is interested to do whale shark... Thus, we made the appointment to do this tomorrow, Friday at 10am -1pm (the best time for whale sharks... according to Engr. Alapag). The cost: P600 for two watchers in their paddled bancas, P350 for the guide who will be with us in our dinghy to drive the dinghy when we get in the water and P500 (250/pax) for the Environmental Fee/share for the municipal/tourism. Total cost for us/two pax = P1,450 (US\$ 29).

We had a good walk in town and was able to buy some veggies (tomatoes, squash, eggplants) and apples plus a frozen whole chicken.

No COVID issue in the island, but wearing of face mask is implemented (P500 penalty if caught not wearing mask when walking in town).

Sonok where we are anchored is one of the 23 barangays of Pintuyan Municipality.

Excellent Globe signal here.

On our whale shark encounter, we saw two whale sharks! It was so awesome to swim with them, We got so close to them that we can actually touch them, but the rule is NO TOUCHING. I got tired just following them, so I got on the paddled banca of one of our two spotters and when the shark was nearby I jumped in the water.

Yesterday a fisherman said he saw six. We were happy enough to see two. One is about 25 feet and the other one is about 35-40 feet. They are so huge, yet so gentle. I felt like I was about to be swallowed when its mouth opened and I was looking straight at its mouth!


The next day, we rented a motorcycle (P500/day) and we drove all the way to Sogod Municipality and went to see the Agas - Agas Bridge ( the highest bridge in the Philippines) plus to check on the zip line and bungee jumping which are on the same site ( the activity site has been closed since the start of COVID LOCKDOWN).

Sogod is a big town with banks, decent size Gaisano and Puregold malls/grocery stores, Shakeys Pizza, good market to get fresh produce. No McDonald's.

We also went to the View Park (I forgot the name) in Barangay Buenavista about 6 km from the main town of Pintuyan which is a nice park overlooking the bay.


We then moved nearby to the Ilijan Point in San Francisco Municipality. We dropped the anchor in 30 feet mud bottom ( nearby the river mouth). Waypoint is N 10-03.434' E 125-09.001'

This is nearer to the Pantanao Marine Sanctuary.

**Soggy Paws – April 2018 – Sonok - Whale Sharks!:** We anchored near Sloepmouche's waypoint late on Easter Sunday. A couple of villagers came out and asked if we wanted to see whale sharks tomorrow! So, the deal ended up being, the village charges a modest  "access fee" for swimming with the sharks. You can also hire a couple of men in bankas to be "spotters". The whole deal ended up costing us about P1600 (about \$30), using our dinghy,

with a guide in the dinghy and 2 spotters, including the access fee. The “guide” handled our dinghy when we jumped in to snorkel with the shark (and also helped spot).

The dive shops at South Leyte charge about \$50 pp for this, and their whale shark dives are right in this bay with the same sharks. If you have time, try to wait for a day when there is no dive boat coming! When we did it, there were two dive bankas with around 10-15 people each, plus us. When they would sight a whale shark, 30 people would converge on the spot! Might be possible to do it on your own, as we thought we might have seen a whale shark nearby when we were drinking coffee, but expect the village to ask for their per-person “access fee”. Everyone pays it. We saw 2 different whale sharks (at least). Whale shark season generally ends around May.

 We did two dives at **Napantau Sanctuary** with [South Leyte Divers](#) (see SW Leyte section) 10 03.96 N / 125 08.035 E. That’s a great spot. Also charges an “access fee” of around P100 per person (there’s a guy in a little house there to collect it). The orange buoys there surround the sanctuary. They did look substantial enough for a dinghy, but not for the big boat. Sloepmouche talks about a yacht mooring there. We did see one mooring with a dive banka on it, very close into shore. Because the one mooring was occupied, our banka went just a little SE around Ilijan Point and threw out a lunch hook in the sand. OK in light winds.

We had almost no current when we were diving there, but our dive guide said that sometimes the current can be really running (too strong to swim against), so have caution if dinghy diving.

**Sloepmouche – March 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** We anchored at **Sonok Point** (SW side of **Panaon Island**) at 09°57.778’N, 125°13.896’E in 30’ over coral and sand patches.

We dinghied to the main settlement closer to the South Point and went on a moto (5 minute ride) and then a 10 minute walk to a nice **little waterfall and pool** (09°57.02’N, 125°15.62’E). Globe Internet was fair. Some friends reported nice snorkeling at the point near the anchorage. Sometimes whale sharks can be seen in the area.

Then we sailed 8nm to anchor at **Ilijan Point** near San Francisco village, also on on Panaon Island. We anchored at 10°03.37’N, 125°08.47’E in 25’ over coral with small sand patches. Not recommended if you don’t have buoys to keep your last third of your rode from getting caught in the coral. Nearby is Napantao Sanctuary around the point to the north. We went by dinghy and **scuba dived** on the wall. Globe Internet was fast!

Our friends took the one yacht mooring in the **Napantao Sanctuary** at 10°03.95’N, 125°08.03’E. There’s a great wall dive just opposite of the rocks awash close to the south point of the small bay. It can have strong currents, so time your dive; ask at the Research Station, which you’ll find ashore. Location of the wall is right in front of a small observation post built ashore.

Dive profile: start your dive to 25-40m and work your way back and forth along the short wall at different depth levels until you make your safety stops in 20’ all the way to the surface next to the rocks awash. The water was quite cold and visibility not the best, but the corals (hard and soft), as well as the fish life were abundant and interesting. A+ dive. There is a 100P park fee per diver. Best to do a drift dive if current is too strong. Globe Internet was poor.

## 4.8 Southwest Leyte

**Solita – 2012:** Southern Leyte is a well-known diving destination – whale sharks are prevalent around Liloan Bay and Sogod (best times are between February and June, and sometimes in November), and Limawasa and Panoan Islands offer good diving and beaches.

We found the west coast of northern Leyte very attractive, with a mountainous background and several deep bays that offer good anchorages. This coastline makes an easy passage between Masbate and the Camotes Islands or Cebu

### 4.8.1 Limasawa Island

This is a tiny island just off the SW tip of Leyte Island

**Soggy Paws – April 2018:** Southern Leyte Divers took us to two dive spots on the east side of Limasawa Island. Both were pretty good. There was a P100 pp access fee for diving here, paid at the guard house (little block house on shore about 1/3 the way down).

**Kokomo - May 2014:** Our next stop was Limasawa Isl. @ N 09 55'503 and E 125 04'268

We dropped anchor in 25 ft of water in sandy bottom. Very nice fishing village at the beach.

**Savannah - January 2014:** We anchored at 09.55.962N / 125.04.071E in a sandy spot, fairly shallow at low tide. I think we had 6 feet under us (a catamaran) when we woke up.

Did not go ashore, just anchored overnight and did some snorkeling. Lots of anemones and different species of anemone fish.

According to Lonely Planet, you can occasionally see whale sharks, whales and dolphins around here and in Sogod Bay, but we weren't so lucky. (See Padre Burgos for diving options in the area).


### 4.8.2 Padre Burgos / San Roque

**Good News – March 2021:** We anchored in Soggy Paws spot, and visited the resort, which is still being run by Gunter and his family, though business is way off with no foreign tourists.

**Note:** Though the CM93 chart says “Padre Burgos”, the area at the tip is actually more correctly called San Roque.

We went to Maasin City one day via multi-cab ride (this is the term the locals use for their small jeepney-like transportation). Maasin City is about 25 km from San Roque (P50/pax fare). We were not able to go in the Metro Mall (this is Gaisano) because we don't have the Maasin QR Code Card. So we just walked around then went to the public market to buy some veggies and fruits. Nothing much to see really; just a typical small city. There is Jolibee here.

**Soggy Paws – April 2018:** 10°01.481N / 125°00.410 in a nice 35 ft sand spot. Beautiful anchorage and good protection from NNW through ESE. Good Globe and so-so Smart.

 We had nice clear weather and NE winds 5-15 kts while here, and spent 4 days diving with Southern Leyte Divers. <http://leyte-divers.com> The owner, Gunter, was responsive to both email and text messages ([g\\_mosch@yahoo.com](mailto:g_mosch@yahoo.com) +63 921-663-1592), to arrange diving and dinner at the resort. The cuisine was Euro-Filipino, and they had a full bar. The diving on Limasawa Island was very good, as was the trip across the bay to Napantau Sanctuary, and if

you're a macro diver, up to the macro site inside Sogod Bay. We did 9 dives apiece and got a 10% discount off the published rates (but there are small surcharges for the longer trips, and for "access fees" on some sites). We averaged about \$27 USD per person per dive.

**Dinghy Access:** From the anchorage wpt, if it is high tide, you can probably go direct to the resort, which is the long white wall on shore at approx 10-01.85N / 125-00.39 E. If it is low tide, you have to weave your way in toward the dive bankas. There should be two white buoys, you need to go N of the first (N) buoy and S of the second (S) buoy. If it's good light, it's no problem avoiding the bommies. After we'd done it a few times, we could shortcut and go (almost) direct to the 2-3 big dive bankas anchored close to the beach. Take care on approaching the dive bankas because they have long floating lines fore and aft. Once in at the bankas, go in about 50 mtrs to the slightly deeper sand close to shore, and from there you might be able to work your way toward the resort. If it's really low tide, you'll have to park the dinghy there and walk to the resort from there, as there's a big sand bank that dries at very low tides.

Gunter says they operate year round, though from late May to early Nov, it's considered "low season", because SW winds may cause problems. In that case, you can anchor on the east side (see Mokisha's spot below).

**Mokisha – Late May 2017:** 10 02.0546 N / 125 01.3014 E. In 7m mostly sandy bottom. Drops off somewhat quickly. 11' under keel when shoreside and 35' when swung offshore but good holding. Slight problem landing dinghy due to minimal beach area and a barrier reef. Town wharf a possibility but can be busy and the concrete is rough on an inflatable. Wharf has stairs so we anchored off in low tide & waded to the stairs (note, the local dive shops do night dives Mon, Wed, Fri from 6-9pm). When tide was right, we took dinghy to beach landing N past Peters dive shop 1.6km. Winds mostly from NE 6kts.

Diving very good at Limasawa I, Napanto and E-W sides of Padre Burgos I. Nightdive at the wharf is fantastic. A quiet village with no nightlife. Peter's Dive Shop reported to be the best restaurant & it was good. Diesel in town. 4G- 5 bars, Globe. Stayed 3 nights. SV MOKISHA

**Sloepmouche – March 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** We anchored on the west side at 10°00.85'N, 125°00.83'E in 20' over sand and isolated corals in front of a coconut plantation. Globe Internet was OK.

**Savannah - 2014:** We anchored at 10-01.471N / 125.00.350E

No real great place to anchor. We anchored in sand and coral at the front of the channel leaving plenty of room for the dive boats to get by.

There's a marker at the beginning of the channel and you can see the large dive boats anchored close to shore.

We went ashore to Southern Leyte Dive Resort. We anchored our dinghy in front of the dive boats and walked in through the beach (while we were ashore, our anchor came loose and a local saved the dinghy for us....honest people was our experience).

Mica, at the resort showed us the road to town. If you go up to the main road, you can catch jeepneys, motorbikes or buses to any of the other towns. We opted to just walk around a bit. There were very small stores, a couple of eateries, and that was about it.

**Internet:** There was an internet café directly across the road from the turnoff for the dive resort. It did not however, have wifi. We found a signal from the boat called DUDZ, but needed a code. We couldn't find "DUDZ" in town...maybe you'll have better luck. The dive resort has free wifi, but we could not get a signal from the boat.

**Food:** We ate at the restaurant at the dive resort, Alona's. The food was excellent, but the beers were pricey (for the PI). San Miguel was 70 pesos, and Andy had a German beer for 190 pesos.

**Diving:** People were nice, not much to do. There are reportedly a few more dive resorts, but we didn't venture out as this was just a quick stop over for us. There is supposed to be good diving here, however we weren't able to find any of it on our own. The dive resort's website quoted 1300 pesos/dive but there wasn't anyone there for us to speak to when we went ashore.

#### **4.8.3 Ichon**

**Hawkeye - March 2014:** Our next stop was **Ichon** on the sw side of Leyte island N10 06.293 E 124 53.782. There was lots of small fishing boat traffic all night.

#### **4.8.4 Maasin**

**Kokomo - June 2014:** (continued from Passage Notes from Palau). Our next stop was Maasin N 10 07'782 and E 124 50'644 where we wanted to check in with Immigration. (we had been told by another cruiser there was an Immigration office there).

Maasin has a commercial harbor with two concrete piers sticking out. We anchored on the east side of the east pier in 20 ft of coral/sand. Do not anchor on the west side between the west pier and the small beach. It will dry out at low tide.

We called port control but did not get an answer. Instead the Filipino Coast Guard called us and asked for our intentions. They asked for permission to come on board. 30 minutes later a small fishing canoe came with 3 coast guard officials. Very friendly visit, no problem at all. They informed us that Maasin does not have an Immigration Office.

Later when we went ashore we checked around and every one gave us the same Information, no Immigration in Maasin.

There is not a good landing area for dinghies. On the left of the west pier is a very small beach with a couple of fishing boats. A family lives there and does not mind when you keep your dinghy there.

In town we bought two "Smart" SIM-cards for P40/each. The other option is to go with "Globe"

At the Reload places, which are all over town you can buy minutes for your phone. For example: P500 gives you 500 minutes of airtime plus 83min. of text messages and that is valid for 120 days.

The small town is very busy, lots of people and loud. After many months of stillness this was a shock for us and we fled back to the boat.

Next day we left for Bulacan on Leyte Island.

**Hawkeye - March 2014:** After our stop at Ichon, the next morning we motored over to **Maasin** and anchored off the reef on the north side 10-07.678N / 124 50.437E. Here, we found we

could buy "loads" which is a cellular-based internet dongle like in Fiji. 995P (\$25) for the "load" and 30 days unlimited time can be bought for 1000P (\$25).

ATM's, produce market behind large grocery store on left when looking at Maasin from the sea. Friendly people. Would suggest spending night here rather than Ichon as there were more people but not as many fishing boats going in and out at night but we were there on Saturday night so don't know what it is like the rest of the week.

**Savannah - Jan 2014:** We anchored at 10-07.661N / 124-50.434E in front of the main town in a rocky bottom.

You can catch a jeepney from Padre Burgos to the town of Maasin, but we needed some groceries so we thought it would be easier to transport if we just took the boat up there...it's only about 12 miles north.

We anchored just north of the large pier, in front of town. There is a beach you can pull your dinghy up on, a set of stairs by the pier, or a set of stairs in between the two. We opted for the middle set of stairs and tied our painter through some rocks. The tricky part with any option is finding somewhere to tie up to. The other downside is that all the stairs appear to be where the men relieve themselves, so take some hand sanitizer.

We had quite an audience tying up, but no one bothered our dinghy over several hours (and it didn't look like anyone peed in it either).

If you're facing the pier from your boat, there is a large shopping center to the left. This is the Metro. It's kind of like a Super Walmart. It had everything we needed from a grocery perspective. A fair selection of wine and liquors can be had. We heard wine was expensive here, but we saw several bottles in the \$6-\$8 range (not sure the quality yet - mostly French and Spanish). Good selection of pork, beef - not so much, chicken looked good, small selection of fish, all inexpensive. Produce was decent with a large variety, and cheap.

We bought 9 bottles of wine, 3 rum, 1 vodka, plus about a week's worth of veggies and meat, plus juice and soda for under \$120 US.

Andy went back the next day and found out if you go to the last building, you'll find the "local" stuff....tons of meat and seafood stalls, veggies and fruit. The prices looked very close to the main store, but the selection was much greater.

There are tons of small stores all over town.

**Food:** We ate at Kinamot, at the Villa Romana Hotel. You can see it from the water, it's on the opposite side of the pier (south), in a pink 3 story building. Very good food, nice atmosphere and service, overlooked the water, and pretty inexpensive.

There are cheaper options around town in the form of food stalls, fast food (at the Metro), and small restaurants.

**Internet:** We always seem to forget about internet. When we got back to the boat, we saw several good wifi signals, but they all require a code, so check on it if you need it in town. The hotel had a free signal, but it was too weak to work on the boat.

**Banks:** There are multiple banks all over town as well as money changer (The Metro had 2 ATMS outside and a money changer inside). Various banks (all with armed guards).

**Hardware:** There is a hardware store across the street from the big BOSS store on the main road perpendicular to the waterfront.

According to Lonely Planet, there are some good hikes here, but we are just passing through so didn't check any out.

Overall, very nice people, clean enough, pretty landscape from the water....nice medium size town.

#### **4.8.5 *Guadelupe***

**Kelaerin - Dec 2011:** On our way from Cebu to Surigao we anchored off Leyte Island (10°10.1'N, 124°45.0'E) for the night. Again, the reef in front of the village was not on our chart. As we were preparing to anchor, a local fisherman came by and offered to direct us in around the reef, but we decided to stay where we were as the weather was calm and it was only 30ft deep.

#### **4.8.6 *Lavis Point / Bulacan***

**Kokomo - June 2014:** We anchored at N 10 28'359 E / 124 43'434 in 20ft. of water in sand.

Do not anchor close to shore. It gets very shallow very fast.

**Savannah - Jan 2014:** 10-28.3587N / 124-43.4372E

We anchored in 15 feet of water in front of a mangrove-y beach and small village.

We didn't go ashore, just waved and smiled to the curious fisherman. We did see some GIANT jellyfish in these waters.

#### **4.9 *Eastern Leyte***

**Solita – 2012:** Leyte is a large island to the east of Cebu. It was where much of the fiercest fighting in WW2 took place and its capital, Tacloban, was the site of MacArthur's famous "return". It is separated from Samar Island by a narrow channel – the San Juanico Strait - and Tacloban is situated near this channel on Leyte's northeast coast.

##### **4.9.1 *Tacloban (Port of Entry)***

**Dream Away – April 2016 – Arriving from Palau:** Near Capines Point (approx. 11 03 N 125 14 E) we got our first taste of FAD poles, lots of them. We saw the tower on Marikitdaquit Is, but none of the other marks were there. However, as we neared Tacloban, we did see buoyage, which our AIS kept beeping about, and gave us the following information:

Buoy A – Cardinal East - 11 13.8780 N 125 03.7220 E

Buoy B – Cardinal East – off position according to AIS - 11 14.9602 N 125 03.7955 E

Buoy C – Cardinal North - 11 15.3180 N 125 03.0350 E

Buoy D - Cardinal North - 11 15.3180 N 125 02.1110 E

Buoy E – Cardinal North - 11 15.3160 N 125 01.2410 E

Buoy F – Topmark Danger - 11 15.6890 N 125 01.7650 E

CM93 (2010) had us crossing land going into Talcoban Port, so Navionics much better.

We arrived at 16:00, having been calling Port Control on VHF for the previous hour. We mooched around the harbour area, still calling, and were eventually called by the Pilot service and told that Port Control do not have a radio. They told us where to anchor in the bay, good location in 8m mud. Glad we took the advice as there is a lot of traffic in and out and we were clear of the main lanes. We explained we needed Quarantine, they said to contact our agent. We told them yachts don't need an agent, and until we are allowed ashore, we have no phone SIM to be able to phone anyone, so they kindly phoned Quarantine for us, then had to come out to the yacht to tell us what was happening, as for some reason we no longer heard them on VHF. At 1800 the Quarantine officer called on VHF, first to tell us he was coming out, then to ask if we could pick him up (yes, in about an hour, once we get the dinghy off the deck), then again to say the Pilot boat was bringing him out. He arrived at 1900 & sat in the cockpit filling out forms in quintuplicate, whilst the 4 men on the pilot boat kept their engine running, and fended off the sides of Dream Away. Then he asked for payment. We asked how much, only to be told "it's up to you". G offered \$20, as the guy had been dragged out after office hours, and been waiting around for ages. Our QO told us small craft are usually charged \$100. We agreed on \$30, so he had something to give the guys on the Pilot Boat. The next day we went ashore, got money from an ATM, and hopped on to a tri-taxi to Immigration which is quite a long way (8 Php each). The man on the desk started the process, then his boss decided that it needed to be done on the yacht. We agreed to meet where we had left the dinghy (filthy, mud & rock beach by a smelly drain outfall, next to the Coastguard building) in an hour. We got another tri-taxi to Customs, near the harbour, and were seen by the Acting Chief, who completed all the paperwork. He was chatty, and there was no mention of money.

Back at the Coastguard station, the Immigration lady had decided not to come out to the yacht, and she and her scribe took over an office in the Coastguard station to process us. She sat there refreshing her makeup & perfume & combing her hair, whilst the minion did the work. Her contribution was to stamp our passports, and we nearly got exit stamps by mistake. No-one mentioned payment.

Bureau of Immigration: Kanhuraw Hill, Magsaysay Blvd, Tacloban City. Tel: (053) 325-6004

Customs: Paulino K Cabello Jr, Acting Chief, Port Ovemation Div, Bureau of Customs, Trece Martinez St, Tacloban. Tel: 09175077951

Quarantine: Dept of Health, Bureau of Quarantine.

A very good mall lies adjacent to the port side far corner of the inner harbour. Tie up to the wall amongst the ferries, we asked a young lady operating one of the small food stalls to keep an eye on the dinghy, and it's a few steps to restock heaven. Everyone was friendly, there were no issues, it was a good place to check in.

**Solita – 2012:** 2-3 M Anchor off restaurant on pier, NW corner. Poor protection from winds. Good city with all services – Immigration, shopping, banks, good markets.

This is a busy cosmopolitan city providing commercial services for both Leyte and Samar. Most government agencies are represented here, including Immigration and Customs. Shopping at the markets and local stores is very good. There is a fair anchorage – not well protected – off the wharf, but watch for fish traps within the harbour.



**PGYC – Document “Inbound through the Surigao Strait” – Downloaded 2016:** It is possible to check-in to the Philippines at Tacloban City (near the southern entrance to the strait) without too much hassle. However, if you are planning to sail directly to Puerto Galera, this is not absolutely necessary -- immigration formalities can be accomplished here in the town, with the Club available to assist if requested.

**Sea Quest - November 2003 (from Cruising World article):** Busy Tacloban, a medium sized city on Leyte's east coast, was our port of entry. Nearby is the famous Red Beach, General Douglas MacArthur's landing place in 1944, where a fabulous larger than life sculpture memorializes the event.

From Tacloban, a hired canoe took us across the shallow Leyte Gulf to Samar, an island of steep mountain ranges, water spilling from an impenetrable interior, and the scene of long-forgotten bloody skirmishes during America's experiment with colonialism in the late 1800's.

#### **4.10 Northwest Leyte**

##### **4.10.1 Liog Pt SE**

**Arnak – 2010:** 11°17.38N 124°22.70E Excellent sheltered anchorage in secluded bay.

##### **4.10.2 Villaba Town**

**Arnak – 2010:** 11°12.70N 124°23.27E stopped for lunch at an excellent restaurant on the waterfront then moved to Liog Pt SE.

##### **4.10.3 Palompon**

**Arnak – 2012:** 11°02.71N 124°22.85E anchor off small town behind island. Excellent protection and nice town. C Map accurate here. Good market and eateries.

##### **4.10.4 Matlang**

**Savannah - Jan 2014:** 10-53.1758N / 124-27.3369E

We anchored in front of a small village by the nickel plant, just for the night. This village looks like it was hit by the super typhoon. We had several kids yelling at us from the beach “Americano! Americano!” We decided this would be a good place to drop of some of the books, clothes and toys Jake had decided to give away. We went to shore and were met with some very appreciative folks. A few hours later some other kids were yelling to us. We gave a bag of candy to a fisherman to take to the kids....the “Americano!” chant turned into “Thank you!” Anything you have herewould be appreciated.

If you're willing to go the extra 10 miles or so, Lonely Planet promises a culinary treat at the town of Ormoc. It's set back in the bay and supposed to have a few WWII wrecks scattered around, with no real tourism for divers. The wrecks were marked on our charts, so it appears to be pretty easy to find if you have your own equipment. The waterfront is supposed to be a pleasant place to grab a beer and meal to enjoy the sunset.

#### **4.11 Bohol Island**

**Solita – 2012:** This island of 4,117 square kms lies to the east of Cebu. It has the third largest population of the Visayan Islands with 1,102,000 people living in rural areas, 48 towns and one city.

The capital, Tagbilaran, is situated on the south-western coast and is protected from the south by a smaller island, Panglao. This island is connected to Bohol by two long bridges and has many tourist attractions, resorts, hotels and restaurants.

Bohol's "claim to fame" is the Chocolate Hills, a huge collection of over 1200 similar looking hills which turn a deep brown in the dry season. These are situated in the centre of the island, and can be easily reached by jeepney or motorcycle.

The other icon of the island is the tarsier, a tiny but cute endangered primate only found in this part of the Philippines. These can be seen at several private "zoos" around the island, but more responsibly, you can view them at the Tarsier Visitors Centre at Corella, about 10 kms NE of Tagbilaran. An excellent way to see Bohol's "interior" is to take a local bus. From Talibon to Tagbilaran it is a 3 to 4 hour trip, costing 80 – 100 pesos, depending on the bus and the route.

##### **4.11.1 Bohol's North Coast**

**Solita – 2012:** The north coast of Bohol is a maze of reefs, sand cays and islands but with careful navigation you can explore the area easily. We used the Middle Passage to enter through the outer reef and had depths of at least 5M through the passage. Once through, there are deeper channels between the islands. This area offers many varied anchorages to shelter from any wind.

There are several large towns along the north coast – Talibon, Ubay, Buenavista and Tubigon – with large public markets and stores, and they are all connected to Tagbilaran by road. Talibon is a clean and friendly town with a busy market, well-stocked supermarket and specialty stores, including a laundry. We found a small dive resort, Bien Unido, just east 20 of Talibon and opposite Jau Island, which has limited accommodation, a pool and serves drinks and good meals. They hope to put in a boardwalk with moorings for visiting yachts in the future. There are many fishermen and fishtraps along the north coast.

**Soggy Paws – April 2018:** With light winds and settled conditions, we anchored just south of the reef, just east of Northeast passage, at 10-16.347N 124-31.202E in about 32 ft. The fishfinder indicated it was a flat bottom (though there were some corally spots nearby). We didn't have very good light, so didn't try to go in any further. We were surprised at how many structures (fishing houses) were on the reef. Lots of fishing bankas going back and forth.

**PGYC – From PDF Downloaded 2016:** Note: It is not recommended to sail at night around northern Bohol because there are many reefs; in daylight the reefs are easy to navigate.

**Arnak – Jan 2013 - Pandanon Island:** 10°10.59N 124°05.07 Sand patch in 3.8m. Nice small island but heavily populated like all the islands in the area. The eastern end of the island was cleared for visiting day tourists. Very friendly locals.

**Arnak – Jan 2013 - Handayan Island:** 10.09.46N 124°09.92E In 10m mud and moved further NW to get away from loud videoke. Nice island and very protected. Early January and raining almost every day reducing visibility and restricting exploring.

**Shangaied – 2013 – Handayan Island:** 10 08.925 N / 124 10.55 E 13 m mud good holding protected from SW

**Arnak – Jan 2013 - Talibon town:** 10°09.59N 124°19.87E in 2.2m mud off pier. Supplies and market ashore and local eateries etc. A ferry stop so quite busy.

**Arnak – Jan 2013 - Jao Island:** 10°09.83N 124°21.17E in 4.5m mud. Anchor anywhere along the beach. Lovely spot and sheltered.

**Arnak – Jan 2013 - Bilangbilangan Island:** 10°14.24N 124°27.71E just off the fringing reef with good shelter in NE winds and close to the NE entrance from reef complex heading north.

**Shangaied – 2013 - Pitogo off Lapinin Is:** 10 07.977 N / 124 32.8384 E 3m sand good protection all around.

#### **4.11.2 Bohol's West Coast**

**Solita – 2012:** There are several other large islands off Bohol's west and south coasts, many of which host developing dive areas. Balicasag Island, about 5kms SW of Panglao, is a small round island with excellent reef for diving, and has been declared a marine sanctuary. Because the island is quite steep-to, cruising yachts are encouraged to use the provided orange buoys to moor to, which cost 300 pesos per night. Cabilao Island, on the SW coast near Loon, is another popular resort island.

**Kelaerin - November 2011 - Panglao:** On the way from Bonbonon to Cebu we stopped for one night at Panglao, Bohol (Maribojoc town) (09°43.2'N, 123°55.4'E) (*Ed note: This waypoint doesn't plot right*) *Pilot says: 09 44.1000 N 123 50.2000 E*

**Unknown Author - Andy Smith Boatworks, Panglao**

[info@andy-smith-boatworks.com](mailto:info@andy-smith-boatworks.com) - bad references. see websites

Andy Smith Boatworks  
Tipolo, Bolod, Panglao Island  
Bohol 6340, Philippines

#### **4.11.3 Bohol's East and South Coast**

**Sloepmouche – March 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** We anchored in the SE corner of Bohol in **Guindulman Bay**. We anchored at 09°45.49'N, 124°29.71'E in 20' over good sand with a gentle slope. Watch out to not go in the shallow reef areas west of the small float with flag. You will pass over it with your dinghy if you go to the main wall and buildings at the head of the bay. You can tie your dinghy next to the stairs of the concrete dock that leads into the public market and the city center. There's a nice fresh market. Globe Internet was good.

We did an OK **scuba dive** on one of the walls on the east side of the bay (there are more dive sites around the corner).

Our next passage along the south coast of Bohol started by motor-sailing in the early morning light winds and turned out to be a nice sail downwind in 10-15 easterlies. Our friends on s/v Shangaied found a small fishing harbor in **Loay** on a river at 09°35.92'N, 124°00.50'E in 10' over mud in a small harbor. You might need a stern anchor to keep away from the main channel

as the river current does not let the boat face the wind. Calm water in this good sheltered harbor. Globe Internet was good.

**Splinters Apprentice - July 2000 - Cogton Bay:** Lat 09°50'98 long 124°33'35 Large bay open to the east but with some protection from reefs. Need good light to get in as reef both sides is not easily seen and is a long way out. A course of 290T on the south end of the island in the bay leads clear of both reefs with least depth of 25ms.

Anchor to the sw of the island clear of the fish traps in 5-10ms, mud. Holding excellent.

#### **4.11.4 Tagbilaran (Provisioning)**

**Sloepmouche – March 2016 (SSCA Bulletin): Tagbilaran Harbor,** is the main city on Bohol Island. We anchored at 09°38.74'N, 123°50.85'E in 10' over sand (?) in a wide anchorage only open to the west and SW (farther than the ferry docks). Globe Internet was good.

In order to have a shorter dinghy access at the Tagbilaran marina, we moved and anchored at 09°39.06'N, 123°50.79'E in 8' over sand, just north of the old fuel valve structure and tied to it by a stern line to avoid swinging west in the ferry channel and to swing east in the shallower areas. There is dinghy access for a daily fee at the marina and it's possible to get water. Globe Internet was good.

We stayed here five days to visit our friend and take advantage of the town to replenish our water and diesel tanks, as well as do grocery shopping. Bohol is a very touristy island and there are many land and sea activities to do here.

The **provisioning** is good at two supermarkets, and there is a great healthy food restaurant called Buzz Café that makes tacos with cassava shells, and they make delicious coconut cream ice cream with fresh fruits, and cassava cones! Many restaurants abound from every category of food and prices. We made a daytrip to Cebu on one of the numerous fast ferries to get our engine freshwater pump repaired (no such luck!) and some other things.

**Solita – 2012:** Tagbilaran - the capital city of Bohol - is situated on its SW corner and is protected from the south by Panglao Island. Most government agencies, an airport, several shopping malls and most other supplies and services needed by cruisers can be found here. The harbour has several deep holes amongst the shallows to anchor in at least 3-4 M over sand, and there is a “marina” tucked into the inner harbour – 4 pens created by very light floating dock material, offering power and water, for 600 pesos per day. They will let you leave your dinghy here for 100 pesos per day.

**Valhalla - July 2000 – Land Trip:** The Sandugo Festival commemorates a blood compact between Spanish Conquistador Legaspi and a local native chieftain Sikatuna. This bond of friendship was the first to be sealed in the Philippines. Unlike the usual religious festivals the emphasis is on this significant event, though the pagentry that evolves during the festival almost always has some religious aspect and almost always includes a bit of black magic or witchcraft in the portrayals ... certainly a carryover from the legends of the area. The monument shown here depicts the blood compact ceremony. It is in Bool, near Tagbilaran, the major city in Bohol province.

On Friday, we took our mountain bikes to Bohol via ferry from Dumaguete, Negros, (a 1 hr 15 minute ride). The 40 km ride from VALHALLA to Dumaguete the previous day was just a bit more training for the next few days.

We spent the afternoon riding around Tagbilaran and the nearby island of Panglao (home to the majority of the diving resorts on Bohol). Saturday afternoon was the day for the Street Dancing Competition and a parade through the main street of Tagbilaran. Here's a panorama of the nine groups awaiting the competition in the SCG Stadium. A parade within the stadium kicked off the program, which was followed by each group (80 dancers and 15 musicians) performing a pagent-style program lasting about 15 minutes each.

The next day, Saturday, we set off early for a 55 km ride to the CHOCOLATE HILLS. We followed the coast east to Loay then began climbing into the mountains ... one uphill stretch of grueling 20 kilometers until reaching the plateau and the chocolate hills (most of which are green at this time of year). We stayed at the Chocolate Hills Resort (very basic, inexpensive and comfortable). Here's another panorama ... this one of the 'chocolate' hills captured just after sunrise the following morning.

The day we arrived at the resort we discovered that we had passed, about 25 kms back down the mountain, a place where we could view the world's smallest monkey .. the tarsier. So we hired a motorcycle (habal-habal) and rode for over an hour back on our track to see this amazing creature. It's eyes cannot move in their sockets so, like an owl, it can rotate it's head 180 degrees in either direction. It can also leap horizontally about three meters distance!

For our return to Tagbilaran we chose a longer route to see more of the island. Though tempting to ride back down that mountain we labored so hard to ride up, we continued on to Carmen then headed west to the coast at Clarin, where we then followed the coast south. We thought at first that we would go part of the way and spend the night but we made such good time we pressed on.

## ***4.12 Islands Between Cebu and Leyte***

### ***4.12.1 Camotes Islands***

**Solita – 2012:** This small group of three islands lies approximately 20 miles to the east of Cebu. The larger island, Pacijan, has some beautiful white sandy beaches, short limestone cliffs and rocky islets on its western coast, and most of the accommodation and resorts are sited here. The main town, San Francisco, is on its northern shore close to the causeway connecting this island with Poro Island. Poro has no beaches but appears to be more forested, with opportunities for hiking and caving. The third island, Ponson Island, to the north-east of Poro, is more remote, with no resorts or other tourist development. The waters around these islands are a beautiful clear blue.

These islands are much less populated than nearby Cebu, and can be described as “clean and green”. The islands have a well-established garbage management system which seems to be working well. You will see very little rubbish around. The islands are lush and green, from the good rainfall they receive and because there are gardens and plantings everywhere. Most houses, schools and government buildings have colourful gardens and even the streets have shrubs planted at their edges.

To see the interior of the islands you can hire a bike, with or without driver/guide, for about 500 pesos for a day. Be sure to visit the Danao Lakes, the Timburo Cave for a swim in its fresh underwater river, Mangodlong Beach for its limestone islets and crystal clear water, the white sandy beach of Santiago Bay.

There is a good anchorage between the NW corner of Pacijan Island and Tulang Island, though it can be open to NE winds. The channel between the islands is deep but off the sandspit of Tulang there is a large patch of sand and sea grass at depths of 6-9M. This relatively level sandy/grassy bottom continues along the north coast of Pacijan to San Francisco. In calm weather you can also anchor off Esperanza beach, the Consuela wharf and Mangodlong Beach, and during the northerly season, off Santiago Bay.

#### **4.12.1.1 Pacijan Island**

Arnak – 2012: 10°35.10N 124°18.10E off a local beach and resort and another anchorage in a bay between the two islands but watch for reef fringe. You can hire a bike here to explore the islands.

#### **4.12.1.2 Poro Island**

**Arnak – Jan 2013 - Camotes islands (Poro):** 10°37.79N 124°23.65E close to fringing reef but protected from swell.

#### **4.12.2 Kalanggaman (Calangaman)**

**Taack - August 2021:** This is a beautiful stop between Carmen and Malapascua. But the user fees have gotten ridiculous. 750p to use a mooring. 500p per head to step onto island! A worker came sprinting down the beach to intercept me before I landed my dinghy. I'm glad, as I was still able to say thank you but NO thank you, and leave, My dog Roxy saw fit to jump off the dinghy as we got close to the sand, and she sprinted off to explore. I'm glad she responded to my whistle promptly and came back- Dogs are now NOT permitted. 6 months ago I went there and was welcomed and charged only 100p per head and pointed to a good strong mooring - and Roxy was welcome to explore beside me. My how fast things change!

#### **4.12.3 Himuquitan Island**

**Hawkeye - March 2014:** Our next anchorage was a mistake. We decided to anchor off the island **Himuquitan**. The wind had been from the north northwest all day, very consistent. We anchored around 1 p.m. and the wind held all afternoon until it was dark and then it changed and came from all directions throughout the night. We ended up wrapped around coral heads and on a lee shore for some of the night. An anchor watch went on all night and at first daylight, 6 a.m., Matt jumped in the water and told us which way to steer the boat to untangle ourselves and then we were off to Port Carmen.

#### **4.12.4 Reefs north of Bohol**

See the [North Bohol](#) section

#### **4.13 Cebu Island**

**Solita - November 2013 - Recap from Typhoon Haiyan (from Noonsite):** Tuesday 12th November, and 4 days since Typhoon Haiyan roared across the Philippines.

According to the local news reports, there are massive relief operations under way in the worst hit areas and the reports of casualties and damage to property and the environment are of tragic proportions.

The typhoon made landfall on the eastern coast of Samar. Samar and Leyte seem to have sustained the worst damage and this is where there are the most casualties. However, clear reports in English are difficult to obtain at the moment.

The northern end of the island of Cebu was also in the path of the typhoon and apparently sustained serious damage. We haven't travelled north of Pt Carmen, so can't report firsthand about that, but one of the yachtees from Carmen rode up to Bogoto Town 2 days ago. He said that there were a lot of damaged buildings there, with many trees and power lines down along the way.

One news report also said that Malapascua Island was in ruins. We have been hearing the ambulance sirens travelling down from north, heading for Cebu City, ever since Saturday afternoon.

Further south on Cebu there has been only slight damage overall. Around Carmen and Danao there have been big trees blown down and it seems all the banana trees have been pushed over. Some of the smaller foliage has been stripped and battered, but generally it looks like it will recover quickly. There have been some poorly built huts and buildings destroyed and roofs blown off, signs blown down and power poles pushed over, but no major structural damage sustained.

The boatyards of Pt Carmen have also just had some light damage. One shed lost half its roof, which ended up on our dock, just 20 ft off the back of Solita. Pepe's workshop tarp roof is in tatters but the corrugated roof is intact. We are staying at Pepe's. All is good at Zekes - no damage there at all, as far as we can see.

There were no yachts in either boatyard damaged. We think several factors made this possible in the face of such a severe storm:

- The yachts were all tied down very well, with many warps across to both sides of the inlet and to other boats. Some boats had their anchors ashore and dug into the ground. Owners generally stripped off all awnings, sails, etc, and everyone worked together in a very supportive manner. The yard workers helped us tirelessly to secure all the boats.
- The geographical layout of the inlet provided a lot of shelter. The inlet is very narrow and is surrounded by levy banks. Between the inlet and the sea are several low lying barrier islands and reefs. The nearby hills to the west also protect the area from wind.
- The typhoon crossed this area in daylight, during a low neaps tide, and there was no storm surge here.

Although we were only 35-40 miles south of the eye of the storm, we would have had much stronger winds if we had been in the northern quadrant.

The storm was travelling so fast and moved on within a couple of hours so it did not batter the area for long.

We realise we have been very lucky to have escaped serious damage in this typhoon, but it has been reassuring to note that with good preparation, this inlet does provide a very secure anchorage.

This area lost power from mid Friday and it was reconnected to the towns by Sunday and to the boatyards by Monday. Water has also been reconnected. We have had good internet connection throughout the whole drama.

One problem for us, and probably for many others, was that all the ATM's were down. I had to travel to Metro Pacific yesterday – 20 miles away by bus - to get some cash. Hopefully the ATMs in Danao will be operating today or tomorrow.

The airport in Cebu City was only closed for a short time on Friday. We have been seeing helicopters going up and down the coast often during the day since Saturday.

The typhoon moved across the Visayas and onto Mindoro. We heard reports before the typhoon arrived that many tourists were stuck at Borocay and at the nearby Cataclan Airport, but haven't heard how they fared. **Puerto Galera** on Mindoro, received a lot of wind and rain, but all boats on the yacht club moorings are safe and we haven't heard of any major damage or casualties there. A friend on their yacht on one of the moorings emailed:

"All the boats in the mooring field were hanging and spinning in different directions, seas were small, some rain, heavy at times but not a huge bother. The wind on the surface maybe 15-20, our wind speed at the mast head (60ft), was reading 8kts one second then zero then 20kts then 5kts, as the boat was pushed or heeled over or spun. Of course this was after dark. It was a constant entertainment watching the ferries and ships drag and try to re-anchor. The winds for them must have been 50kts or so, and everything was well lit with all their spotlights.

The spume and spray looked like fast moving ground fog. At first light four ships-ferries were hard aground on a falling tide. One, a 250ft 4 deck ferry, is lying abeam high on the beach of a very slick resort, but it missed the pier. Another 200ft landing craft is on the reef just to the north of us, the other two are east of it."

Further west, **Busuanga Island** was also badly hit by the typhoon. Coron Town seemed to have sustained a lot of damage. Two friends emailed some comments:

"We are fine, an exciting night watching every tree around the resort shredded and demolished, followed by the ceiling and roof collapsing on our heads - not your usual hotel stay."

"There are only 2 internet providers here in Coron, the Smart tower has fallen over, so with only one provider for the whole island, the internet and mobile phone system is jammed."

"Went to Coron Town yesterday, and the devastation is awful - there are massive 100 year old trees lying everywhere, and not a standing tree still has foliage. The lush green countryside is lush no more."

"There were 2 yachts and dozens of local bangkas up on the shore here, or sunk."

"There is significant damage but is fixable. All your friends are safe. Yellow n black Pirate ship and another yacht grounded, many bangkas lost and 2 dead on boats in front of resort."



The severity of this typhoon has certainly caused massive damage on a wide scale throughout the Philippines. The locals here at Pt Carmen are surprisingly accepting of the situation. They started their clean-ups immediately and are all getting on with things as best they can. We have no idea how those in the more devastated areas are coping. We just hope that humanitarian aid comes quickly and effectively.

#### 4.13.1 Cebu City and Mactan Island

**Kundalini – September 2021:** We often went to Cebu in our boat (from Carmen) just to save the expense and hassle of going by bus/car.



You can anchor off the Cebu Yacht Club, and take your dinghy into the docks there, for P200 per day. We would either go up the river if we want to go downtown, or directly on shore for Lapulapu. Both are free.

**PGYC – 2016:** Approaching Cebu City from the north, you will find two bridges linking Cebu Island to Mactan Island – these are yacht-friendly and should pose no problem for your mast.

**Freebird – June 2015 – Anchorages Near Cebu Yacht Club:** Either side of the Cebu Yacht Club is good holding. There are many warnings about theft on the south side, we took reasonable precautions and had no trouble, likewise the other boats that were there. The north side has moorings, but they are very light and a bit of reverse thrust has you dragging them around. When I commented on this at the office the girl, who had recommended I go there, said "oh yes, they're very small". The heavily encrusted half inch rope should have been a warning to me. The north side is under the watch of shore based security, you're told.

**Flow - April 2013 - Checking In:** The day we arrived the Cebu Yacht Club, the lady called the officials. We paid Customs 1230+ 115Php and Quarantine 2500Php. Both showed up at the Yacht Club. I do not think it is correct that we should pay this much. A friend from another boat called the customs office and they were very eager to get the name of the officer that came to the yacht club. The impression was that they did not know anything about this fee. We had to go

to the immigration office ourselves, and there we had to pay 2500 Php. We were two boats and the other boat asked for a receipt. Later we checked the receipt and saw they had charged us for inspection of the boat with transport and meals and everything. We later checked with our embassy, and they said it is no fees for the first visa. It is only when you want to stay longer you need to pay. When we cleared out we were able to get 2000 Php back after a long quarrel where we threatened with the lawyer at the embassy. We talked to the chief of Immigration, and it was obvious that this was corruption and that everyone was involved. My guess is that we could have reduced at least the customs fee also if we had more patience left.

**Flow - April 2013 - Cebu Yacht Club & Facilities:** We anchored outside Cebu Yacht Club in pos 10:19.73N 123:68.44E. We had to pay dinghy landing fee 200 Php a day. You find Wifi and simple shower at the yacht club restaurant. We also bought a SIM-card and loaded it with Gigabytes so we could be online with our ipad. We found the mobile phone company in a big shopping mall in Lapu Lapu. The smaller places that sell SIM cards and airtime usually do not know how to load gigabytes.

**Upholstery:** First of all we did upholstery of mattresses and cushions in the boat. I just found contact details to one upholstery firm on the internet and used them. The work was OK but not excellent. It was very cheap. My contact was Ken [+639228549496](tel:+639228549496).

I remember the Norwegian Captain Hansen, that has his office above the chandlery close to the yacht club, had a recommendation for a firm they always used in Mandaue city. They might be better. The upholstery men do not hold any samples/swatches of fabrics. Ask the upholstery men where to go. We went to a part of Cebu City where you find all these shops. Remember this is an area where you should not wear jewelry or anything that could be stolen. One shop that Ken mentioned was called Sun Gold. We found what we needed in a shop about 500 meters from Sun Gold. The name was Progress Marketing. The address on the cash slip: Borromeo & P. Lopez Sts., Kalubihan, Cebu City. Tels: 2553497, 2560893, 2560889 and 4123274. Tel/Fax: 2554906.

We also made new mattresses for the master's cabin. There is a shop in Mandaue that cuts mattresses as you like them. You could choose between firm and soft and two more combinations. I am sorry I forgot the name of the shop, but it was new, quite big and shiny. I think the name was Uratex foam. The name and address on the invoice: Multimax Industries Corp. Plaridel Street, Umapad Mandaue city. Tel 032-268-6868, 032-236-0222 and 032-236-2039. UCC hotline 888-6800. The prices were not so cheap but OK.

**Deck Covers:** Then we found a man with a sewing machine. He made us new cushions for the cockpit, new covers for the winches and loud speakers and he made a copy of our old bag for the dinghy. He did a beautiful piece of work for almost nothing. He does not know anything about boats, so we made the design, made drawings and explained very thoroughly and in every detail how this should look. He speaks English at some extent and pay attention to what you say. As he does not have any fabrics you need to provide this your selves. We bought canvas, web band, cushions, buckles, Velcro and everything we needed at Hyde sails in Lapu Lapu (Cebu Yacht Club is also situated in Lapu Lapu). The Sunpoly awning fabric grey was 275 Php. ½ sheet PVC NBR (enough for 9 cushions) was Php 2675. The Sauleda fabrics (Chinese Sunbrella copy) was Php 490/mtr. They also have mesh if you want to make sun shades for the cockpit. My contact there was Raymund [+63 906 774 5236](tel:+639067745236). The man with the sewing machine is named Ronnel. His phone number is [+63 908 758 2163](tel:+639087582163). To find his shop you must walk from

the Yacht Club up to the main road. Take right and walk about 800 meters. You will pass a hotel on the right hand side. Before you come to the walk over bridge you will find a small shop with two men and their sewing machines on the right hand side.

**Hardware:** We found a good hardware store in Mandaue City, Belmont Hardware. Address: M.C. Briones Hi-Way Maguikay, Mandaue City. Phone 3461262/3461163/3471514.

**Arnak – 2012 - Cebu Town Reach:** 10°19.07N 123°56.28E anchor in 9m mud. This is a ships designated anchoring area so you should get permission from the harbour master. However if you anchor as close to the shore as possible you probably won't be bothered. It is a fairly quite anchorage in the NE winds. Do not go any further NE from here as there is a large storm drain emptying into the harbour and the smell is unbelievable.

**Arnak – 2012 – Off Cebu Yacht Club:** 10°19.73N 123°58.42E Anchor off yacht club marina in 9m mud but very rolly with ferries passing and commercial traffic etc. Private marina offers 10 days at reasonable rate then becomes very expensive. Fuel available with the longest fuel hose ever reaching all boats in the marina. Tie to side piles and back in to pontoon. Locals will help. Difficult with cross wind but much better than anchoring out. Local supermarkets on island and cheap taxis etc into Cebu City. All things available here if you can find them.

**Kelaerin - December 2011:** We decided to stop at Hyde Sails on Mactan Island across from Cebu to get a new staysail made to help us with the easterlies we would be sailing against for the next 4,000 or so miles. This would be our undoing as far as our plans were concerned as the sail took two weeks to complete and our weather window for getting to Palau closed up solid after that.

We anchored just off the **Cebu Yacht Club** (10°19.7'N, 123°58.4'E). They charge 4,000 pesos for the first ten days whether or not you stay the full ten, and then 5,000 for the next seven days. Since we weren't sure how long it would take to get the sail made we anchored off and used the dinghy to get into their dock. They charged us 200 pesos each day for that, but let us use their shower.

The seafood restaurant next door has a dock and supposedly would let you use it to get ashore; however, we noticed that kids from the water village adjacent would use the dock as a diving platform during high tide and you would not be able to move the dinghy at low tide. So the yacht club was the better deal, more secure, and it was convenient as there was a good grocery store just off the main street, a laundry a couple of blocks away (past the skyway) and it was easy to get transportation for Cebu, either by jeepney or taxi. There is also a small marine store on the premises.

We ordered the sail and now just had to wait for it, so we decided to go to Port Carmen. The anchorage off the yacht club was filthy and the inlets were getting clogged with plastic bags and such. Before we left, we visited the Mactan guitar factory and went into Cebu to see Magellan's cross (it's actually a replica) and the cathedrals.

Hyde Sails delivered our sail to Zeke's right on schedule and we gifted our old staysail to a young Belgian couple who were just starting out and working their way around the world.

We went back to Cebu and anchored in front of the yacht club again to complete our **exit procedures**. We had heard the Cebu authorities were corrupt and wanted to avoid this, but we were very close to the end of our visas and did not want to pay for another extension.

We went to the Customs office at the airport on Mactan Island and sure enough the Customs officer looked at us and said, "Let's see, what should I charge you?" He asked for 1,500 pesos, stuffed 1,000 pesos into his desk drawer, got an assistant to take the rest to a window and the assistant came back with change, which the Customs officer put into his pocket. The actual charge for the Customs clearance was 150 pesos! Then it was off to Immigration where we got the same sort of reception. By now, even though we knew this was coming, I was getting perturbed and asked what the fee was (there should have been no charge for this).

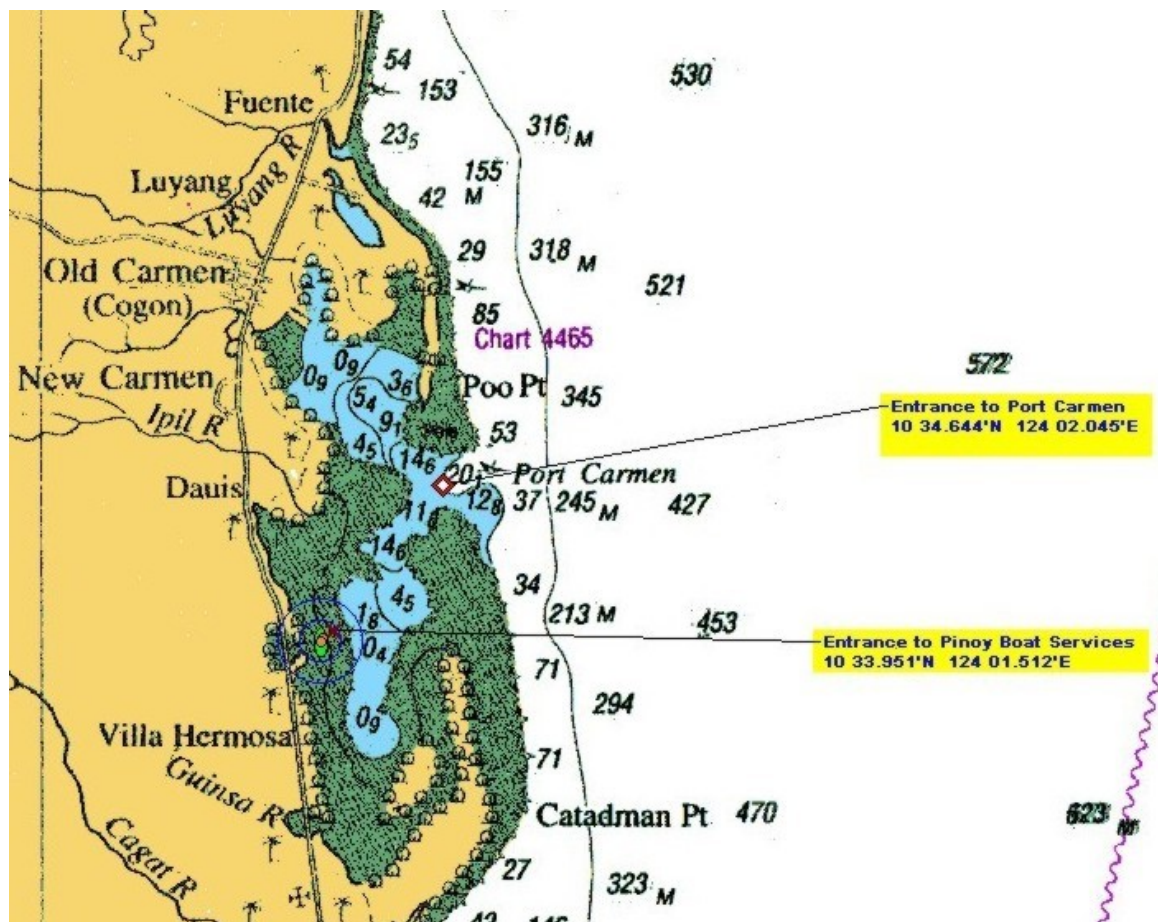
The officer looked at me and said, "How much do you have?" He then asked for 3,000 pesos and I scoffed. I was trying hard not to get angry at this blatant corruption as he could make life hard for us by sending us all over the place (friends were sent to quarantine where they were charged another whopping fee). I said I needed money for the taxi to get home and offered him 1,500 pesos which he accepted and then stamped our passports.

On the way out, we observed a nun escorting a lay worker around to get her visas straightened out and they looked like they were about to cry. (News flash: Just spoke with another cruising couple who came through the Philippines after we did and they had a much better experience in Cebu. It seems the government has put some pressure on the authorities in Cebu and they have had to clean up their act.)

**Hamamas - November 2008:** The next night after another very long day we decided to anchor in Cebu Port, only to find that when we awoke the next morning our **RIB and 15HP motor were stolen**. Believe it or not the RIB, with motor chained on, was lowered from the davits and the lines cut while we were asleep in the aft cabin within centimetres! (*It was never recovered*)

#### **4.13.2 Port Carmen (10 34.6N / 124 02.0E)**

Chartlet courtesy Valhalla



### Good News – March 2021 – Pepe's Boatyard & Other Services

**Emergency Repairs:** Our boat was hauled out last night at 10:30 and was done by 12 midnight. we have been quite impressed how efficient Kuya Pepe and his workers are. They don't waste time! Kuya Pepe is on top of everything!

**Engine Work:** Pepe also has a diesel engine mechanic on call, and right away Marlon, the mechanic, came and fixed the leak in our engine as well as the leak in the water pump. Pepe and the workers and the mechanic start working at 7am. They also have their own tools

**Activities:** We rented Kuya Pepe's son-in-law's nice vehicle with A/C (P2K) plus Erwin, the son-in-law, as driver/ "tour guide" yesterday ( 9am - 5pm); we went to various places (Liloan, Mandaue and Cebu City) to buy boat stuff plus had our propeller fixed. We were quite satisfied to be able to accomplished lots of things yesterday with Erwin's helped for only P2K pesos.

**Propane:** If you have a Philippines EC Gas tank (they will only swap tanks, not refill)... We were able to get EC Gas from Mandaue outlet, delivered to us to the boatyard for Php 945 (this includes the delivery fee (by motorcycle)).

Contact Number: EC Gas Mandaue outlet, MS. LAARNI, Cell: 0956-539-3363

**Freebird – June 2015:** The outer anchorage at the south arm of Port Carmen (near Zeke's) has good holding and reasonable depth, but the entrance is tricky. Open CPN/Google earth is very accurate in this area though and can be used with confidence.



**Kokomo - June 2014:** The port coordinates are:

N 10 34'646 E 124 02'614

We were in touch with Pepe by phone, who sent us 3 guys in a dinghy to meet us at the entrance to lead us in. There are sticks lined up but difficult to identify so we were happy to have local knowledge on board.

This is how you get in:

N 10 34'622 E 124 02'084

N 10 34'569 E 124 02'003

N 10 34'421 E 124 01'865

N 10 34'161 E 124 01'691

N 10 34'006 E 124 01'546

First you are passing thru Zeke's boat yard (on Stbd). The channel is very narrow and the boats are stern to the pier. Next is Pepe's yard on Port.

**Clearing Immigration in Pt. Carmen:** We took the bus from Pepe's yard to Cebu, Pacific Mall (40 Pesos/Person in a nice bus)

Then took a taxi (80 Pesos) to the J-Mall. The Immigration office is on the 2nd floor in the mall. The original location in Cebu is under renovation and nobody knows when Immigration will be moving back. At the front desk ask for Melanie. She speaks very good English, is friendly, efficient and will not ask for bribes. We were done in 10 minutes at no cost.

The first time you get 30 days (free) If you like to stay longer you have to go back and you can get another 29 days for 7,000 Pesos. After the first 59 days you can apply for a 2 month or 6 month visa. This is new and we could not find out how much it would cost. No customs required. You also can go to Immigration on Mactan Island

This is how it is right now. It could be different when you get here

**Hawkeye - March 2014:** We arrived at the entrance to **Port Carmen** (entrance waypoint N10 34.64 E 124 02.05) with no tracks and headed in. Russ of Hyglieg (sp) got on the radio as we were trying to call the yacht club and gave us directions to get in.

His directions were not very clear to us and we ended up in the northern bay and then had to head back out and enter the southern bay where the marinas are, such as they are.

We ran aground in the shallow channel (soft landing) floated off and continued to the entrance to **Nimoy (Pinoy?) Boat Services** N 10 33.95 E 124 01.51). This was marked by the club house, a 2-story building with a "widow's walk on the roof. There we dropped anchor temporarily and dinghied in to the dock where Russ was waiting.

John and Matt went off in the dinghy and after about 1/2 hr. Matt called on the VHF and said come in for a beer, I will come get you. As the boat had been there for over 1 hour, we felt it safe. No sooner had I taken one sip of a cold beer and someone yelled that Hawkeye was dragging. Matt and I scurried down to the dinghy and got aboard Hawkeye just 20 feet from a huge barge. We got the motor started and the anchor up. Stuck to the anchor, was a T-shirt.

That is why we dragged! We reset the anchor and shortly thereafter, John returned and we were able to get the boat into the marina and safely tied up.

**Camile - January 2014 (from Noonsite):** Camile is an early Catana catamaran that has done a lot of miles. We came into Zeke's yard at Pt Carmen in March 2013 to investigate some persistent brown stains coming through the deck paint. In fact our investigations opened up a whole can of worms.

To shorten a very long story, we had to remove many many layers of top coat and non skid deck paint and filler to get to the top layer of fibre glass on our foam cored boat. Maybe 200 to 300 small cracks were ground out, epoxy filled and sanded down. The whole top of the boat was then given 2 layers of epoxy glass, faired smooth and painted with primer, top coat and non skid. Now the boat looks better than new and we have started on the top sides and under the bridge deck. We have also had paintwork and extensive woodwork and varnishing done inside the boat and stainless steel fabrication outside.

All the above has been done to a very high standard by Zeke's on-site workforce. We are very pleased with it and all at a cost that would be much more expensive elsewhere.

We sheltered here during the super typhoon Haiyan that devastated nearby Leyte and Samar last November. There was no damage to any of the yachts, and Zeke and some of his men were on hand to see the yachts were kept safe. The bar here is a joy to use and would not be out of place in a posh yacht club. It is a major asset in a boat yard.

A word of caution: many of the workers are highly skilled in their chosen occupations, but some are not. It is up to you to monitor your jobs and weed out any that are not performing well.

While we have been here there have been some issues over paint jobs on a couple of yachts. In my opinion the problem could have been dealt with more sympathetically by the management here, and as a result, one of those yacht owners has been very vocal in his condemnation of the boatyard. The painter who did both those jobs now no longer works here.

You won't get a quote for the job here – everything is material costs plus labour for the day. However, you do get weekly bills so you can monitor ongoing costs quite effectively.

In conclusion, don't believe everything you hear. Come on in and talk to the other yachties, look the place over and then make your decision.

**Solita - January 2014 (from Noonsite):** Solita has just completed a 3 months refit at Pepe's boat yard, Republic Drydock, Pt Carmen, Cebu, the Philippines. We have had an amazing amount of interior and some exterior work done here, and we are very pleased with the results. The workers we used are good at their job, lovely to deal with and professional in their care of the boats they work with. Pepe is also very easy to deal with, and all his bills are transparent and fair. The costs for all of our boat work, yard fees and electricity was very reasonable and probably far less than in any other country.

This is our second refit at Pepe's – we spent 5 months here last year having a lot of exterior timber, fiberglass and paint work done. Pepe even created a shallow-draft careening grid for us so we could anti-foul here. We were so happy with last year's experience that we knew we would return this year.

It should be acknowledged that facilities here are “third world” and that future customers should come prepared to live and work in conditions not as luxurious as those in Australian, American or British boat yards. The finished job may not always be to everyone’s very high standards. Having stated that, the comraderie between cruisers, the opportunity to share a cold beer at Zeke’s bar at the end of the day and the knowledge that you are achieving great results at a reasonable cost makes it all worthwhile.

There have been some negative comments about the boat yards this past year, and while it is imperative that all opinions should be aired in the public domain, it should be remembered that these are the opinions of individuals, and that they can have serious consequences if taken generally. Unfortunately these recent comments have created some legal and business issues for the yard owners, and this has cascaded down to the workers and other people who earn their living by providing services to the boat owners.

Our experiences here at the Pt Carmen boat yards have generally been positive ones, so we would just like to add our comments into the mix.

**Solita - November 2013 (from Noonsite) - Typhoon Haiyan:** The northern end of the island of Cebu was in the path of the typhoon and apparently sustained serious damage. We haven't travelled north of Pt Carmen, so can't report firsthand about that, but one of the yachties from Carmen rode up to Bogo Town 2 days ago. He said that there were a lot of damaged buildings there, with many trees and power lines down along the way. One news report also said that Malapascua Island was in ruins. We have been hearing the ambulance sirens travelling down from north, heading for Cebu City, ever since Saturday afternoon.

Further south on Cebu there has been only slight damage overall. Around Carmen and Danao there have been big trees blown down and it seems all the banana trees have been pushed over. Some of the smaller foliage has been stripped and battered, but generally it looks like it will recover quickly. There have been some poorly built huts and buildings destroyed and roofs blown off, signs blown down and power poles pushed over, but no major structural damage sustained.

The boatyards of Pt Carmen have also just had some light damage. One shed lost half its roof, which ended up on our dock, just 20 ft off the back of Solita. Pepe's workshop tarp roof is in tatters but the corrugated roof is intact. We are staying at Pepe's. All is good at Zekes - no damage there at all, as far as we can see.

There were no yachts in either boatyard damaged. We think several factors made this possible in the face of such a severe storm:

- The yachts were all tied down very well, with many warps across to both sides of the inlet and to other boats. Some boats had their anchors ashore and dug into the ground. Owners generally stripped off all awnings, sails, etc, and everyone worked together in a very supportive manner. The yard workers helped us tirelessly to secure all the boats.
- The geographical layout of the inlet provided a lot of shelter. The inlet is very narrow and is surrounded by levy banks. Between the inlet and the sea are several low lying barrier islands and reefs. The nearby hills to the west also protect the area from wind.
- The typhoon crossed this area in daylight, during a low neaps tide, and there was no storm surge here.



- Although we were only 35-40 miles south of the eye of the storm, we would have had much stronger winds if we had been in the northern quadrant.
- The storm was travelling so fast and moved on within a couple of hours so it did not batter the area for long.

We realise we have been very lucky to have escaped serious damage in this typhoon, but it has been reassuring to note that with good preparation, this inlet does provide a very secure anchorage.

This area lost power from mid Friday and it was reconnected to the towns by Sunday and to the boatyards by Monday. Water has also been reconnected. We have had good internet connection throughout the whole drama. One problem for us, and probably for many others, was that all the ATM's were down. I had to travel to Metro Pacific yesterday – 20 miles away by bus - to get some cash. Hopefully the ATMs in Danao will be operating today or tomorrow.

The airport in Cebu City was only closed for a short time on Friday. We have been seeing helicopters going up and down the coast often during the day since Saturday.

**Flow - April 2013:** We had hoped to have a haul out at Zeke's marina, but he has only one cradle and that had been occupied for months by one boat. What he can offer is to secure alongside his jetty and wait for a tide that is low enough so you can do some work.

**Arnak – 2012:** Pos 10°34.03N 124°01.82E inside lagoon close to yacht club. Must use Google Earth to enter as water is discoloured and you cannot see the entrance or just anchor close to the YC. **Typhoon anchorage.** Very nice YC with bar and meals and a short walk to the main road for transport into the local town or down to Cebu city. No haulout facilities here just careening on the tide at the slip area. Very friendly YC and a nice stop

**Kelaerin - December 2011:** The entrance to Port Carmen is guarded by a reef. There is a channel through it at 10°34.59'N, 124°02.28'E and then you carefully follow the sticks in the water to **Zeke's** place a mile south of the entrance. We entered at low tide and never had less than 6ft under our keel.

Zeke is an expat American who has lived in the Philippines for 20 years. He has expanded his boat basin over the years and is known for getting good wood work done there and some engine work as well. He can use the slipway that belongs to the shipyard in between his two basins. There is no hardstand. Zeke built a small clubhouse, which serves good food, beer and wine at good prices. He charges the same price for moorage no matter what size the boat is, 250 pesos a day, which includes water and electricity. The boats are Med-moored on both sides of the ditch, so passing other boats to get farther in can be tricky. Zeke was chock-a-block full when we arrived, yet he managed to wiggle some things around and we had a unique tie up on the outside of a catamaran until we could move in when someone else left.

It is an easy walk to the main highway to catch a bus into Cebu, where the shopping is best. There is not much in Port Carmen itself other than a market and small stores. Danao is the closest town with a few local fast food restaurants, laundry services, department store and market. The Allied Bank is the only ATM that would work for us and the line to use it wraps around the block, especially on Fridays. Danao is known for its gun factory.

**Valhalla - May 2003:** From July 2002 through May 2003, VALHALLA was berthed at [Pinoy Boat Services](#) located in the 'Drydock' area between Danao and Carmen, Cebu Island, Philippines.

The boatyard is located within Port Carmen as shown below and is an excellent place to have minor or major repairs completed. It's convenient for access to Cebu City (1 hr bus ride) where just about anything can be obtained. Propane is available locally (Lilia's Store, 'Drydock City' - they will get your tank filled) and fuel in Danao or Carmen. Danao has a large department store and supermarket and good local market. Carmen has the best Internet Cafes in the area and small local market.

Anchoring is available in Port Carmen, northwest of the entrance.

**Pinoy Boat Services Website:** Pinoy Boat Services is a full service yacht storage, maintenance and repair facility in Port Carmen, Cebu, Philippines. You can stay here while you are in the Cebu area, or we can keep your boat safely here while you are away; and we can work on your boat. We can also deliver vessels of any size to anywhere in the world.

We specialize in fiberglass work, woodwork, and cabinet work on private yachts. We are capable of work on any scale, from repairing a single drawer to complete renovation of a bare hull. Hardwoods are easily and inexpensively available here in the Philippines, and our craftsmen are experts in their use

Our reputation for high quality & dependable service has helped us earn a loyal following and the distinction of being recognized as a premier repair facility. Offering full repair and maintenance services, we can meet almost any need.

Pinoy Boats services of Danao is a family,owned business with over 20 years experience in boats and repairs. From the outset, we have been committed to the highest standards of customer service for the boating community. Quality, professionalism and value has made Pinoy Boats services of Danao the Philippines number one boat Repair centre, and a firm favourite with loyal customers throughout the country and the world.. Friendly professional advice We pride ourselves on providing our customers with a friendly and efficient service in all aspects of boating. You'll be dealing with professionals in sales, finance and service who really understand boats and the boating community. Together, they can help you with any query and ensure you get the boat, the deal and the service that's best for you.

You are more than welcome to live aboard your yacht in our dock while you are enjoying the delights of the Cebu area. Our yard is situated within a compound guarded by armed security personnel, and is convenient to Port Carmen and Danao City. Transport to Cebu, is easy, frequent and cheap.

You can leave your yacht here in our keeping indefinitely with complete confidence, and at most reasonable rates. We are positioned at ten and a half degrees north latitude on the east coast of Cebu island, about 20 nautical miles north of Cebu City. At this latitude destructive winds are very infrequent, and our yard is laid out so as to enjoy excellent typhoon protection. All vessels are moored fore and aft to heavily built jetties. Your boat will be kept here in cossetted safety under Zeke's watchful eye!

#### **4.13.3 *Bogo (11-05N / 124-01E)***

**Katie Lee - December 2011:** Bogo has a narrow branching channel into the ferry dock. Thinking there may not be room near the dock, we took a side branch that looked wide enough. Maybe 6 boat lengths in 40 feet of water, then only 2 feet over the coral reef. We anchored in the widest spot and I put out the chain to the first mark, which I thought was 100 feet (but turned out to be only 50).

Just before dark a rain squall came with 25 to 30 kts of wind and we dragged over toward the coral. We had the anchor alarm and the depth alarm set so we noticed in time. We managed to re-anchor about where we were before. All seemed OK so we finished supper. About 2 hours later the alarms started going again. This time it was dark, but not raining too hard to see some. We leave the GPS track showing, so we used the previous tracks to find what I thought was further upwind than before and anchored again. About 2 AM another squall came with more wind! It was raining so hard I couldn't see the bow but I could feel the rudder in the mud next to the reef. Again we used the GPS tracks to get back in the middle. I put out a little more chain this time. One of us stayed up all night watching the alarms and the depth.

I had asked the guys at the marina to mark my chain at 100, 150, and 200 feet, and it turned out that they put the first mark at 50 feet.

#### **4.13.4 *Oslob (Whale Sharks)***

**Flow - April 2013:** We anchored in position 09: 25.98N 123: 22.74E. Every morning they feed the whale sharks outside the beach with all the flags in different colors. It is very touristy and they charge as much as 1000 php for a 30 min swim. But it was worth it to see these fantastic gentle giants. The whale sharks visited our yacht as well for free a few times.

#### **4.13.5 *West Coast of Cebu***

**Freebird – June 2015 – Tuburan Bay:** Heading down Tañon Strait from Bantayan Island, on the Cebu coast, I anchored next on the north side of Tuburan Bay about 50m off the reef at approximately 10-44.7 N / 123-49.7 E. Good holding, clean mud in around 6 mts. There was another boat here and conditions seem the same right along this side of the bay.

**Freebird – June 2015 – Tajao Point:** Next up was south of Tajao Point in behind the reef of the same name. The water in this area is deep but I was guided by a local to a spot near 10-18.1 N / 123-34.8 E. This is on a line between 2 large bamboo fish traps and slightly towards the northern one. It shoals fast towards the shore but I found good holding in mud in about 8m. I was told by the fisherman that it is a rocky bottom to the south of where I was.

**Freebird – June 2015 – Copton Bay:** North of Moalboal, Copton Bay near the town of Rhonda has possibilities in southerly weather. The charts show a curving line of reef at the head of the bay, but there are large sand banks visible outside this line, deposited by floods in recent years I was told by locals. I was alone, on a falling tide with a malfunctioning sounder, so didn't dare motor onto one to check it's depth. However, at the time a quick check from the dinghy would reveal all.

**Mokisha - July 2017 – Badian Bay:** 40', NW 4kts. Globe 4g x 3-4bar. Marginal anchorage due to reef rising quickly to S. We dropped in 40' and drifted over 30' area. We wanted to go to

Moalboal but a long dinghy ride to concrete jetty. Stopover only. Next time we'll try to negotiate a mooring near dive shops to N.

**Freebird – June 2015 - Moalboal / Tomonoy:** Badian Bay south of Moalboal is too deep in most places for most small boats, but there is a small area of 13m off the baranguay of Tomonoy at 9-54.8 N / 123-23.61. Again it is just off the reef and between 2 floating fish farms. Holding is good mud. As an aid to finding it, look for 2 large western style houses adjacent to it. One is circular with a brown roof, the other has a green roof. The lagoon in behind Badian Island looks tempting, but the access channel is blocked by reef.

#### **4.14 Islands off Northern Cebu**

##### **4.14.1 Carnasa Island**

**Solita – 2012:** This quite small island is situated just 10 miles north of Malapascua, 11 miles from the Leyte coast and 13 miles from the southern tip of Masbate. It is subject to the winds, currents and tides that flush through this area and this keeps the water clarity almost pristine, though seas around the island can be confused at times. It is probably best visited in fair weather.

Most of the island's population lives on the western side, and the main village of Carnaza is on the southwest corner of the island. There are some concrete and dirt roads for motorbikes and pedestrians linking the island's villages. There seems to be limited electricity and no internet reception. Daily flights to Cebu leave from the very small airfield.

There seem to be many children on the island, which has its own elementary, intermediate and high schools.

It is a stunningly beautiful island, with many small coves, white sandy beaches, crystal clear water, small limestone islets along its coast and verdant green trees and other vegetation behind the shore. Some of these coves are large enough to provide good anchorages, especially on the western side of the island. You can circumnavigate the island by dinghy in under an hour. There are many limestone pillars, caves and arches to be found along the coast and one islet has a canal to its centre that can easily accommodate a dinghy at half tide. We found the snorkeling good, especially the soft and hard corals and interesting rock formations.

The locals seem very friendly and several offered us some shells for sale (at a very good price!).

##### **4.14.2 Malapascua (Thresher Sharks)**

**Changing Spots – June 2018:** This small island, north of Cebu island, is renowned for its diving. It is a frequent stop for cruisers, who have more praise for the pizza than the diving. Most western tastes don't appreciate the sweet tomato sauces in Philippines versions of Italian food.

The anchor spots I had from other cruisers were on the south and NE coasts. But the wind was from the south, with breaking seas along those coasts. Just around the NE corner we found a good size sandy spot (hard to find) in 25 ft with excellent holding. (Good Globe)

But that night the wind shifted to the west, and it was the most uncomfortable night I have experienced at anchor (or mooring).

Next day, with winds from the south and whitecaps to the east and west, we sought more shelter. We found a small sandy spot, well tucked into the bay (poor Globe). Very hard sand at 15', so make sure you carefully set and check your anchor.

Malapascua N: 11-20.861N, 124-06.841E Small space, hard sand, poor Globe

Malapascua NE: 11-20.986N, 124-06.501E (approx) 24' sand, good holding, ok Globe – exposed

A day or so later: At this point I don't think I will highly recommend Malapascua during the SW monsoons. All afternoon we have been sheltered behind the island for the beautiful cooling S wind. BUT the whitecaps we can see both east and west, roll in giving beam seas in stereo. A catamaran's nemesis: the sudden short elevator ride up, then drop.

Now another westerly squall is hitting (20-25kts). At least these bigger seas are on the bow, (until the wind shifts back to the south), so comfortable.

After rebooting the phone, the internet at this more sheltered anchor spot is acceptable.

**Soggy Paws – April 2018:** We anchored just inside where Sloepmouche and Mokisha anchored, in what looked like a sand spot. We dropped in sand but ended up near a fairly big bommie. We moved the chain by hand to clear the bommie. Choppy all night due to current through the anchorage. In NE winds it would have been better just around the corner on the west side of the island. But when we dropped anchor, we had NW winds. Counted 50 or so dive bankas anchored off the S side of the island after the afternoon dives, and 2/3 of them were gone for the morning thresher shark dives. Did not go ashore.

**Mokisha – June 2017:** 11 19.330 N / 124 07.062 E Anchored in 30 ft outside the banka anchorage. 3 days here, variable winds 1-8kts. Globe 4g x 4 bars. Dove with Sea Explorers where we landed the dinghy--ok in all tides. Great little place, people, good bars, restaurants and quiet at night. Diving was \$1850 pesos per dive, plus gear 800 pesos and sanctuary fees of 300.

**Sloepmouche – August 2017:** 11 19.327 N / 124 06.924 E 4m hard bottom with sand patches. Many diving center diving everywhere in the area (up to 15nm!). Many small resorts, restaurants. Malapascua is cleaner than other popular places. Globe internet: ok; Smart mobile ok.

**Freebird – June 2015:** I anchored off the south end of Malapascua Island, adjacent to the resorts. The bottom here is thin sand over rock and not good holding, the sand has more depth in the seagrass beds, in some spots at least, but isn't great for the seagrass of course.

**Savannah - Jan 2014:** This place is known for the Thresher Sharks...touristy, but nice. This is what all of your friends think you do every day.

We anchored right in front of the beach, slightly behind the dive boats, in about 20 feet of water at high tide. We had northerly winds when we pulled in. Unfortunately, at bedtime, they turned east (and the tide decided to go out contrary to winds) and made for an extremely uncomfortable evening.

We pulled our dinghy up on the east side of the beach where you see most of the local boats. We tied an extra-long painter to a coconut tree. No one bothered the dinghy in the two days we were there.

There are no roads, only small paths that you walk through the island. The main path that goes along the beach goes by all the resorts. If you go to the west side of the island and take the path inland, you'll get to the village. You'll find many small stores that contain a fair amount of things you might be out of by now...for us it was beer, soda water and fruit. We found lots of fresh fruit and a variety of beer. We were bamboozled a little by some Filipino math, but I take that as entirely my fault. Just check their calculations.

We definitely got the foreigner prices (and then some – again, my fault).

**Diving:** Andy dove with Evolution Resort. With the park fees, extra nitrox fees, and the dive itself, it came up to 1850 pesos. That was with your own gear. The thresher shark dive is EARLY in the morning. He had to be at the resort at 4:45. Sightings are not guaranteed but he got lucky and saw three huge ones – 8-9 feet.

He said it was truly amazing and well worth the effort.

This resort does four dives a day and you can decide at any time what dives you want to do (the boat comes in after every dive). There are plenty of resorts and dive shops on the island. Most looked like stand up operations. Many European tourists. We were one of a handful of Americans.

Our dive guidebook says there is a wreck off the lighthouse (WWII landing craft) that is easily snorkeled as well as a nice dive. We were going to move our boat up there and explore it as a family, but the winds were too shifty and the anchorage looked uncomfortable. If weather permits, this might be an easy way to dive on your own, as well as easy access to see the lighthouse on shore. There is another site (Lighthouse West) that the book says you can swim to from the wreck. We don't have coordinates, but it said it was best in the afternoon, good for pygmy seahorses as well as mandarin fish.

**Food:** We ate at Angelina's Italian Restaurant for dinner. It was good although not quite what we expected based from what we read in our guides. Fresh seafood and handmade pasta. We both had the risotto, which was a little bland, but the seafood was good. Jake had the gnocchi with a four cheese sauce and it was excellent. Prices were "resort" prices, but we still got out of there for right around \$20US, including a carafe of their house wine (drinkable). You might need to ask directions for getting there as it's not intuitive....off the beaten path.

There is another resort and restaurant right next to Angelina's, although I have no information on what they serve or how it is.

The Craic House at the Evolution Resort was really good. The tuna burger was the best tuna burger I've ever eaten. Spicy and huge. They serve crepes (both savory and sweet), fish and chips, salads, sandwiches – a strange mix of things, but all very tasty. Nice atmosphere.

We checked out a few other menus and they all seem to cover everything from pizza to stir fry to german sausages for about the same prices (250–400 pesos).

A few of the resorts had pools that you could use for 500 pesos/person or 300 pesos if you bought drinks. We thought that was kind of steep considering there was an ocean 50 feet away, but they all looked clean and well kept.

**Internet:** Every resort had internet and would give out the password, but the connection to the island was spotty at best. When asked, they all gave the same answer..."Ummm....our internet

is down right now? Sometimes it's up? You can try." We had the best luck at Ocean Vida. They also have a 2 for 1 happy hour at 4:00 where you sit on the beach in bean bags and lounge around...not a bad deal.

We had no luck at all from the boat. We got signals, but no connections.

**Money:** There is no ATM, however Ocean Vida did change money. The rate was 42 pesos/\$1, where the exchange rate at ATMS ran about 45 pesos.

There is a lot of boat traffic here with all of the diving, but no one seemed to be too interested in us other than just lookie loos. We felt the boat was safe while we were ashore.

**Katie Lee - December 2011:** The first try at anchoring near the lighthouse left us 'not' where I thought I was. There is an old Japanese wreck from WW-II in the bay and I was too close to it. So we re-anchored a little further away.

Malapascua is a tourist resort island. Mostly foreigners come to go diving and swim on the beaches. The resorts are mostly at the opposite end of the 1.5 mile long island. We took the dinghy ashore and started walking through the little village by the lighthouse. It was obvious that few tourists walk through their village. It was mostly the local resort workers and their families. But they did know how to beg. We headed south to the tourist end. Soon a motorcycle came by and offered a ride. I didn't think we'd both fit and wanted to see more anyway, so we kept on walking. The main highway is just a trail wide enough for two motorcycles to pass carefully.

By the time we found the main village and bought a few necessities, it was lunch. The store clerk directed us to Ging-Ging. It turned out to be a dive shop and tour place besides a restaurant. All the other lunch clients seemed to be vacationers. Then back to the little store to ask about vegetables. Trinda was wanting cabbage, carrots, onions, chayote and peppers. Since it is a resort island, the foreigners stay in hotels and eat in cafes. No need to buy food. It took a while to find and buy the veggies from the tiny market.

The primary means of transport here are the motorcycles. The seat is modified for as many as 5 to sit on. They decided Trinda and I needed a bike each. It was 50P each back to the village where we left the dinghy, \$2.50 US. It only took 5 minutes back at break-neck speed for a cow trail highway! Next day we took the dinghy back to the beach just off the veggies store and got more cabbage etc.

**Arnak – 2012:** 11°20.40N 124°06.52E in 12m patchy bottom but nice island.

**Solita – 2012:** This island is just 3 miles off the north-eastern tip of Cebu, and can be reached by bangka-style ferry from Maya. It has many tourist facilities along its southern coastline – resorts, bar/restaurants and dive shops. It is a popular diving destination with locals and international tourists, with its main claim to fame being the thresher sharks found on nearby Monad Shoal. The northern end of the island is occupied by local fishing villages and scattered nipa huts, and the villages of the island are connected by dirt roads just big enough for motor bikes – there are no cars on this island. The main town, on the south-western coast, is small, with several sari-sari stores, a couple of stalls selling fruit and vegetables, a bakery and a large church.

There is a good anchorage for the NE season just in front of the lighthouse on the western side, or over the very shoaling sand and grass of the southern coast. In the SW monsoon you can anchor off the northern beach.

There are excellent snorkeling opportunities here – we found the rocky islets to the north and south of the western coast to be well worth a visit.

#### **4.14.3 Guintican Island**

**Changing Spots – June 2018:** 11-20.254N / 123-54.144E A pretty spot, anchored in 20 ft of sand and small rock. Globe ok. Very sheltered from SW and W wind. This is north of, much prettier than, and a bit more sheltered than the other anchorage.

**Sloepmouche – August 2017:** 11 19.525 N / 123 54.249 E 7m hard bottom, dead corals. Overnight stop. Globe internet: ok; Smart mobile: ok.

#### **4.14.4 Bantayan Island**

**Solita – 2012:** This beautiful island group is situated 9 miles off the north-western tip of Cebu Island. The large main island has some tourist facilities (mainly around Sante Fe and Sugar Beach), a small airport and two large jetties for the frequent ferries from Hagnaya on Cebu to Sante Fe and from Cadiz on Negros to Bantayan Town. There are several small towns about its coast linked by decent roads, and jeepneys travel between all the small towns of the island. The island is very quiet, “low key” and relaxed.

It is much less “touristy” than Malapascua, and is famed for its lovely white sandy beaches and good swimming, rather than snorkeling and diving. It is also said to be the egg-producing region of Cebu.

The town of Sante Fe has some small resorts and bars, grocery shops, bakeries, a hardware store and a public market, but the main town – Bantayan Town, on the island’s west coast – is the administrative centre and has more facilities.

The much smaller Hilantaga-an Island just off the east coast of the main island has a couple of resorts on it, and the tiny island to its north, Virgin Island, is said to be quite undeveloped.

Anchorage during the NE season can be found to the west of Sugar Beach on the south coast, though fringing reef doesn’t allow you to anchor close to shore. Other possible NE anchorages are south of Patao or off Bantayan Town, on the west coast.

SW season anchorage is between Sante Fe jetty on the main island and Hilantaga-an Island.

There is an island/reef chain off Bantayan Island’s southwest corner that could provide some anchorages but no tourist facilities. However, there are developing seaweed farms amongst these small islands, so access can be very limited, and between some of these islands it is very shallow, with scattered bommies.

**PGYC – Document downloaded 2016:** The SE side of Bantayan Island (near 11° 10.80’N, 123° 41.90’E) is a beautiful sandy anchorage. This island is worth a visit and lies to the NW of the long, thin Cebu Island itself.

**Freebird – June 2015:** At Bantayan Island (west of the northern tip of Cebu) I found very good holding in sand in around 7 mts off the south end of Jilantangan Island at 11-11.3 N / 123-48.8 E.

To avoid the longish dinghy ride to Santa Fe, go ashore on Jilantangan and get a bangka across. They go back and forth regularly.



**Elizabeth Jane II – July 2014:** 11° 11.03' N / 123° 47.29' E Anchored in 5.4m next to a fringing reef. Small tourist town at Santa Fe (3nm dingy ride S) with restaurants and small vegetable store. 9km bike ride to the other side of the island where the main town and huge fresh market, wharf and other local restaurants are located. Nice quiet island with very friendly locals.

**Katie Lee - December 2011:** We anchored off the ferry dock by Santa Fe, Bantayan. Friends of ours came to visit us on the noon ferry. It is not so much a resort town as a favorite island for foreigners to buy and build houses.

We rented three motorcycles with drivers for the day for our friends and us. We went to the larger village on the other side. To the bank, market, and saw an old church the Spanish built in 1580. Because we took bikes instead of a tricycle or bus, it rained plenty on us!

We took April and Lina swimming to the tiny Virgin Island 3 miles up the coast. Nice swim off a sand beach. Trinda and April complained of something stinging in the water so we got out and started back. She got little blisters in a circle that are still itching. They came back and spent the night aboard. It was a little roly so April and Lina slept in the cockpit where it was cooler and more comfortable.

Trinda and I caught a jeepney to the village again the next day for more provisions. We were in such a hurry to leave the Drydock that we have very little food aboard. So we did more shopping then caught a tricycle back. We got almost back and he had a flat! We all got off and he pushed it on to a filling station. We got a pedi-cab all the way back to the dinghy, maybe 3 miles. Our cyclist was tired.

## ***4.15 Negros Island – East Coast***

### ***4.15.1 Calagcalag Bay***

**Freebird – June 2015:** Crossing the Strait from Cebu to the Negros side, I went to Calagcalag Bay. There is a curving channel to a small inlet with good holding in mud. It is marked with Filipino beacons (a plastic bag on a stick) and Open CPN is also very accurate here. Indeed, everywhere I've been in the Philippines so far this has been the case - so I will stop mentioning it! I'm not sure of the security here as I only overnighted, but the locals do that odd thing you encounter at times in the Philippines of staring at you but not waving back. I don't have enough experience of the culture to know whether this is unfriendly or not, I will have to ask. I had a friendly, shouted chat with some men ashore from the deck after anchoring though, and had no trouble.

### ***4.15.2 South Bais Bay***

**Freebird - June 2015:** Next was South Bais Bay. Entry is fairly straight forward. The reef that comes off Arboles Pt. to starboard and the shoal just off the point both have bamboo fish traps on them and I just motored up the eastern side of the bay until I found a depth I liked. Good holding mud again. Having a deck wash hose is great in these places.

**Solita – 2012:** 09 34.4'N 123°08.5'E 3-4 M over mud/sand Bay entrance almost closed off at this point. Excellent protection from virtually all directions if you can get close to shore. Small town on nth shore. Good IC. Local yachts often anchor here. Caution – travel between reef off

mangroves on north side of entrance and reef/sandbar in centre, which has fish stakes/traps over it.

#### **4.15.3 Dumaguete**

Also see the [Port Bonbonnon](#) section (next) for description of what's available in Dumaguete. Most people anchor in Bonbonon and take land transport up to Dumaguete.

**Freebird – June 2015:** I anchored off the city of Dumaguete and contrary to one cruising guide the bottom here is actually gently sloping, very good holding sand. I found 5 to 7 mts in a stretch between south of the wharf and the next point, which has many fishing bangkas both moored off and ashore. There are both steps in the seawall and a small beach for dinghy access and in settled weather this would be a great provisioning stop, with fuel and groceries close by. When I anchored the wind was force 3 to 4 from the south (which dropped away shortly afterward) and the plunging was acceptable. There were 3 other yachts there at the time, which is what persuaded me to try anchoring.

**Solita – 2012:** It is a tidy, fairly small town with most of its services and stores within an 8-10 block square. The Silliman University and other colleges are very prominent - geographically, economically and socially - in Dumaguete. There is a large student population and many services for them.

The public markets are on Real St, the main department store and supermarket (Lee Plaza) is on the corner of San Jose St and Perdices St.

The Immigration Office is in an arcade off Dr V Locsin St.

Zenith and Omega are good hardware stores, as well as UMTC (on the corner of Dr Locsin and Perdices Sts).

Just south of town on the main road is a large modern mall, Robinsons, which has an excellent supermarket, department store, cinema and many specialty shops. There is another Lee Plaza hypermarket about 1 km west of Robinson's.

Tricycles anywhere within the town should cost 10 pesos per trip per person, but you may need to pay more if you have a lot of shopping or baggage with you.

There are several bar/restaurants frequented by ex-pats along Rizal Boulevard. The "Casablanca" and "Why Not" Swiss/German restaurants are two popular ones that also have a delicatessen and alcohol section, where they also sell homemade breads, bacon, pastrami and other imported foods and drinks from Germany and other countries.

**Fellow Traveler – 2011:** I anchored in [Port Bonbonnon](#) and went to Dumaguete overland. Dumaguete offers most basic stuff: Euro/American style grocery, mall, hypermart, lots of hardware stores, and is very friendly and safe.

Traffic can be a bit of a pain to people used to 4 knots...but managable. Some OK restaurants. Best food is the cheaper local places.

Things are cheap here. Just around the corner is Apo Island (there are several, but this one is particularly famous for its diving and the first marine sanctuary in the Philippines. Do not confuse with Apo Reef, near Mindoro. Dive shops are everywhere, mostly "dive resorts", and

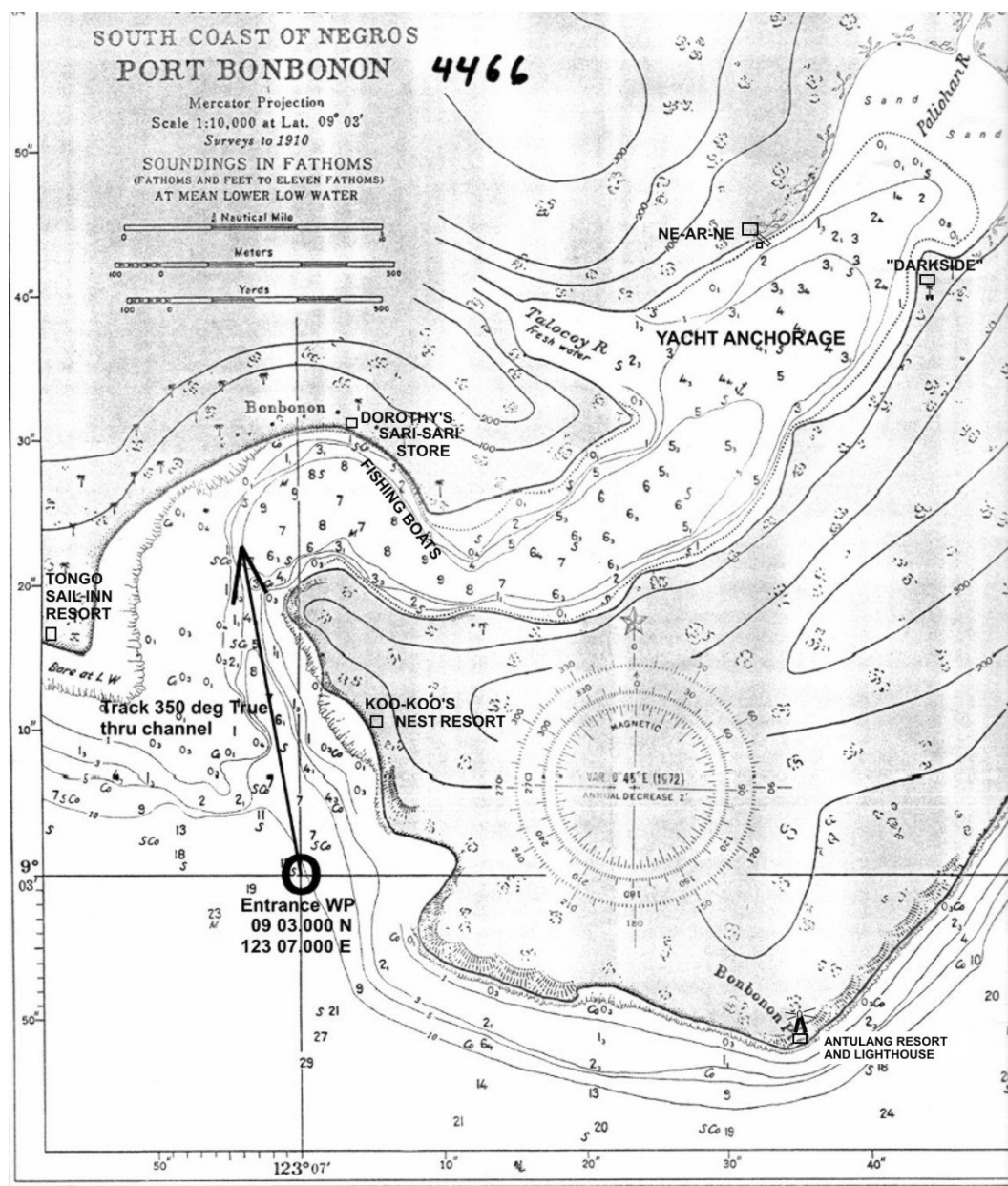
very cheap, around \$25-30 for a dive with equipment. Snorkeling is not bad just outside the harbor.

Crime is much lower than, say, Latin America, which is in other ways somewhat similar. In fact, no one locks dinghies in the harbor, at night on their boat, or ashore. I did have some sandals stolen out of my dinghy when it was left anchored in front of a friend's house while I was in town for a couple of days.... But theft from yachts is vary rare in Tambobo.

The city of Dumaguete is about 1 ½ hours away from Bonbonnon by public transport from the harbor. This involves riding a motorcycle taxi about 20 minutes to the main highway, then catching a bus or jeepney to Dumaguete. Dumaguete is considered a nicer small city than most in the Philippines....but that's like saying someone is less violent than other criminals! While a few areas of Dumaguete could be considered “nice and attractive”, it is mostly a bustling, unattractive 3rd world city. There is none of the charm of say many mexican small towns, or Cartagena, etc. Dumaguete does have a large expat population, mostly Americans and Germans. A surprising number of them seem to be a bit old and decrepid compared to cruisers, yet almost always sport a young and beautiful wife or girlfriend clinging to them as if in fear he might hobble away on his crutches if released!

There are 3 excellent **grocery stores** that stock a good selection of local and import items. The markets offer excellent local produce. Prices are on the whole cheap.... Probably cheaper than Panama. Produce selection is more limited than Panama, at least for the veggies Americans are use to. Fish is cheap and plentiful, but often sold uncleaned and un-iced on roadside stands.... I wonder that scromboid fever is not a more common ailment here! Best bet is a reputable grocery, or direct from the fisherman, or early in the AM at the fishmarket in town, with fish that looks fresh.

#### 4.15.4 Port Bonbonon (09°03N / 123°07E)



Chartlet courtesy of Valhalla

**Sloepmouche – 2016-2018:** We are very happy with our choice of a new permanent base since we left Davao. We made our own strong mooring in this almost landlocked bay, but so far, we have not experienced any typhoons in the area, which are quite rare and mild! We recommend this peaceful and friendly area if you want to leave your vessel unattended or just relax and do some boat projects on your own (no theft reported).

**Freebird – June 2015:** Port Bonbonon is everything that's said about it. Bit of a tricky entrance, long anchor lines from the bangkas in Tombobo Bay, quite lovely and very secure. There is plenty written about the area so I won't bother, except to say that both Spike from Tongo Island Resort on the western point at the entrance and Nigel from the boat works nearby run into

Dumaguete on at least Monday and Friday and will take passengers, space permitting, for 200 peso return. For some reason the habel habel from Tombobo to the highway turnoff is at least twice the price of the ride to Siaton (30 or 40 peso) which is much further. So rather than catch the bus to Dumaguete at the turnoff, it's cheaper to go to Siaton and catch it there. Also the Sunday market in Siaton is well worth going to.

**Solita – 2012:** Tambobo Bay is at the southern tip of Negros Oriental and behind it the cruising folks' haven of Bonbonon. This beautiful deep cove with a "dog's leg" entrance makes it fully enclosed, very comfortable and calm in most weather. The bay is surrounded by mangroves and tall green jungle growth and in the background, the tall peaks of two mountains appear, though they are often covered in cloud. The anchorage is quite large and the end section has an even depth of 8-10M. There are many yachts stored here, some cruising boats with owners aboard, and also many local fishing boats anchored at the entrance and in the first section of the cove.

The approach to the entrance may be difficult to spot (see notes for Bonbonon in "Anchorages" section) but keep closer to the eastern side. In September 2012, the shallow western side was buoyed with white floats and this really helped to define the entrance. 24 There is a small local village at the entrance to the cove and a semi-permanent ex-pat community within the bay. We were surprised to see at least 45 yachts anchored in the cove, but later realised many were uninhabited and obviously stored here. However, there are quite a few live-aboards - some yachtees have been here for 10 or more years. Many are American or German men with Filipino wives. Some of the ex-pats have bought houses here in the bay.

There are several cafes in the cove run by locals that offer weekly buffets. Arlene and Boy open their cafe for a buffet on Friday nights, and provide a great meal for 170 pesos per person. They also offer ala carte meals at other times, some boat services – cleaning, storage of gear, etc, and will organise habble habble transport for you. Their café has a long dock at the NW corner of the bay and they are happy for you to tie your dinghy there if you are going to town. Bruce's home – a local house set in beautifully terraced gardens at the northern end of the bay- is open for a buffet meal on Sunday nights, with "all you can eat" for 200 pesos. He also has a swap library and well water that he is happy for you to access. Emma's café, not far from Arlene and Boy's, on the western side of the bay, is open on Wednesday nights with another excellent buffet for 180 pesos. There are also two small resorts sited at the entrance to the cove. KooKoo's Nest is run by ex-pats and is on the eastern side of the entrance. Tongo Sail Inn, owned and managed by Nigel and Pilar, is on the western side. Both offer meals and drinks.

There is internet reception in Bonbonon – both Globe and Smart have towers around the bay – but reception is frequently very slow and is unable to sustain extensive internet use.

It is safe to leave your dinghy in the water overnight – the local ex-pats told us there is no theft here.

Land transport out of Bonbonon is a little difficult. You need to get a habble-habble (motorcycle) for the 12 kms trip to reach the main road. It is a pretty but at times exciting ride, as the road is not fully sealed. This usually costs between 50 and 70 pesos. At the main road you can get a bus to Dumaguete, for approx. 30 – 40 pesos one way, and it takes about 45-60 minutes. Nigel from Tongo Sail Inn drives into Dumaguete every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and is happy to take passengers for a 200 pesos donation if there is room. There are good public

markets in Saiton, especially on Sundays, and it is just a 25-30 minutes ride by habble-habble, for approx. 100 pesos one way. If you have a long-distance dinghy you can cruise down the coast to the large fishing village, leave your dinghy on the beach and catch a hubble-hubble to the markets – about 5kms and 50 pesos per person.

We were here in September/October, and found that strong winds sometimes race up the bay from the south-west, and occasionally there are storms as spin-off weather from nearby developing typhoons. The locals say that it can also be windy during the north-east monsoon period. However the holding in the bay is very good – lots of thick mud down there to offer good purchase for anchors.

**Kalearin - November 2011:** We arrived at **Bonbonon** (09°03.339'N, 123°07.479'E) just at sunset. The entrance by the reef into the bay is a difficult one for the first time so we turned around and anchored by the cliff face, waving to all the friendly fishermen who were setting out in their bancas for night fishing with big lamps. In the morning they were all gone and the net fishermen were out. We wound our way around them and found the entrance to the channel between the reef and the shore. We used directions in a guide with mud maps done by Tom Bennett and they were spot on as for the GPS positions. You have to chuckle, though, when someone says “turn right when you see the blue catamaran” or “head for the two tall coconut trees on the hill” when those markers change overnight or over time.

There were probably 30 boats either anchored or on moorings within the bay, mostly unoccupied. It is very sheltered, but not bulletproof, as there are strong wind gusts that drop down over the hills. In fact, the typhoon that hit Mindanao in December that caused mudslides that killed over 1,000 people in the town of Cagayan de Oro also caused several boats to break from their moorings in Bonbonon.

When we returned there in January there were a few wrecks on the shore. Debbie and Doug on Suva had been there for several months when we met them ashore and they filled us in on how to get around. Dumaguete is 40km away and requires a bit of logistical management to get there. You can walk around the hill to the town of Bonbonon and hire a hubble hubble to take you to the junction of the main road, which is about 10km or hire a hubble hubble through one of the restaurant/yacht service operations (Emma's or Arlene's) on the west side of the bay.

A hubble hubble is a motorcycle with an extended seat so in theory you can fit a couple of Americans on it behind the driver, or an entire Filipino family will fit seeing as how they are much skinnier than we are. This is fairly expensive, maybe \$10 USD each way. At the junction you can flag down a bus, which is only a couple of dollars to get all the way to Dumaguete. We requested to be dropped off at Robinsons, a mall with a very well-stocked grocery store, and then hired a taxi to take us into town to the Why Not, a German deli/restaurant with good food and a bakery. The bus station is just down the block behind Robinsons and you can climb on any bus headed back and ask to be dropped off at the junction. We called Emma's and our driver was there on time to meet us and take us back. I'm always amazed at how well these things work out. We had a meal at Nigel's resort on the tip of the bay; it's worth it just to meet Nigel who is a real character. We also dinghied around to KooKoo's Nest, a very eco-friendly resort with good food and good snorkeling just off their beach.

**Fellow Traveler - 2011:** I am in Tambobo Bay, aka Bonbonon Bay, which is at the Very SE corner of Negros, in Negros Oriental. It's about 1 hour via scooter from Dumaguete. I now have an apartment in Dumaguete as well as the boat out in the bay....my city pad and shoreside pad!

If you zoom in on that area you will see two deep bays. Tambobo is the one to the West. There are about 15 boats anchored here, but only about 1/3 are occupied. 1/3 belong to people who now live ashore in the area, and 1/3 are off earning cruising chips in the "real" world somewhere.

There are a couple of nice micro-resorts with **restaurants** near the entrance, and inside one small place that is hardly worth mentioning except the owners are nice. There was an active bar/store/restaurant once upon a time, and rumors are there is an investor to revive it. If so, it would be a really cool place. Also there is Bruce's: he is an expat, former Navy Diver (seem to be meeting them everywhere in the Pacific) who has a Filipina wife, and build a nice traditional house at the head of the bay. He owns the 3 mini-tris that he sails and tries to find people to sail with him.

I've yet to find a nice International-style restaurant worth paying the high price of \$4 for the food compared to the \$2-3 at the local places.

[Dumaguete](#) offers most basic stuff: Euro/American style grocery, mall, hypermart, lots of hardware stores, and is very friendly and safe. The city of Dumaguete is about 1 ½ hours away by public transport from the harbor. There are 3 excellent **grocery stores** that stock a good selection of local and import items. The markets offer excellent local produce.

Just around the corner is **Apo Island** (there are several, but this one is particularly famous for it's diving and the first marine sanctuary in the Philippines. Do not confuse with Apo Reef, near Mindoro. Dive shops are everywhere, mostly "dive resorts", and very cheap, around \$25-30 for a dive with equipment. Snorkeling is not bad just outside the harbor.

Crime is much lower than, say, Latin America, which is in other ways somewhat similar. In fact, no one locks dinghies in the harbor, at night on their boat, or ashore. I did have some sandals stolen out of my dinghy when it was left anchored in front of a friend's house while I was in town for a couple of days.... But theft from yachts is vary rare in Tambobo.

**Boat Repairs:** there is very cheap, rough but strong stainless fabrication here. Much can be found in the varous hardware stores if you poke around enough. It can be hard to locate stuff, though, because when you ask in the first store where you might find the item you seek you are invariably met with a blank stare. Similarly, if you do not know the exact name of a product, the person in the store will have no clue what you seek. For example, where I was buying epoxy and fiberglass, I asked about thickening agents, the powder you add to the resin to make it think....silica....microballons.... All were met with a blank stare. Later, I learned it is called Sag Stop. I asked for Stop Sag...again a blank stare.....then got it right..."oh, yes, we have that." They may have microballons too....it goes by a different name here!

**Snorkeling** is pretty good just outside Tambobo harbor. I've yet to find a beach that compares to the endless numbers of them in the San Blas, but then, many other islands I have visited lacked nice beaches. Apo island, about 10 miles out of the harbor is considered excellent snorkeling and diving. I hear great things about other parts of the Philippines, particularly Palawan and the small islands between here and there.

**Approach and anchoring:** Google Earth is probably more useful than C-maps for this anchorage. Note how much further the reef extends in the GE image vs. C-maps. The reef has stakes around it marking the marine preserve. Stay well right of these stakes. There is also a float off the E. point of the entrance. Stay left of it about 10 yards. You can probably aim for sailboat that is anchored furthestest S. in front of the village. This boat does not move, so will probably be there.

Once you are past the floating mark on the E. side, you can begin gradually shaping a curve to the right, around the sand spit on the E., which has deep water just beyond it. All the way in, be very cautious of floating lines, often black, that extend out from the fishing boats that line the shore, sometimes ½ way across the harbor!

Also, note in Google Earth how far the spit that runs from the E. edge of the village due south extends out. There is a large, black floating anchor line from the large fishing boat just beyond this spit that extends very far out....hug the right side.

Bottom in the harbor tends to be a shallow mud shelf near shore that drops off very quickly. Holding is problematic due to mud: use biggest anchor that holds good in soft mud with LOTS OF SCOPE! Be aware that many boats are on moorings, so many swing less than you.

**Valhalla - 2008:** This idyllic, secure anchorage on the southern end of Negros Island is a favorite for many yachties ... some who have returned many times to enjoy the security and seclusion of the area.

Here are waypoints to get in:

PB01	N09°02.9427'	E123°07.0750'
PB02	N09°03.0030'	E123°07.0750'
PB03	N09°03.1630'	E123°07.0217'
PB04	N09°03.3120'	E123°07.0258'
PB05	N09°03.3480'	E123°07.1209'
PB06	N09°03.2520'	E123°07.2733'
PB07	N09°03.2880'	E123°07.3766'
PB08	N09°03.3838'	E123°07.5045'

The area shown as the "Yacht Anchorage" is generally where most yachts initially anchor. Others have spread out around the harbor and some are on moorings. Holding is excellent in mud over sand except at the very northeast end of the harbor where it is mostly mud.

An excellent 'sailing directions' for entry is on the Tongo Sail Inn website, [here](#).

Some places of interest:

"DARKSIDE" Home of Bruce Greschke. Source for sweet well water ... all you can pump is free! Come ashore and introduce yourself to Bruce. Sunday night barbecues.



DOROTHY'S SARI SARI STORE A good place to catch a 'habal-habal' motorcycle at just about any time. Safe place to leave your dinghy. Dorothy and Serio are a wealth of knowledge about the area.

### KOOKOO'S NEST RESORT

### NE-AR-NE

### TONGO SAIL INN BEACH RESORT

**Dive Blog - 2013 - Dumagette Resort:** From oceanrealimages.com. A sloping reef, only minutes by boat from the resort, yielded two blue-ringed octopuses!! Not a bad start! To put this into perspective it had taken eight years and 1000 dives before I saw my first one of these deadly little creatures, but I had just seen two on my first dive!! The diving over the coming days produced many more amazing critters (please follow the link at the bottom of the page to image galleries) including numerous ghost pipefishes, frogfishes and an abundance of different anemonefish species. One of my highlights, since I often get excited by the random fishes in the sea, were the many radial filefish found perfectly camouflaged amongst the beige Xenia coral polyps. These are generally rare but seemed almost abundant here!

The same dive schedule is shared by the two resorts and five dives are offered per day. Two morning dives are available, followed by either two afternoon and a night or one afternoon and a dusk dive with mandarinfish. This many dives per day is almost unheard of for a land-based resort but brilliant if you are a hardcore diver that just wants to be underwater. I can totally relate to this, but I'm not an overly avid night diver so I tended to stick with four dives per day. This is when Nitrox comes into its own!!

One of my favourite sites in the area was Apo Island, only a 45 minute boat ride from the resort. It is a small island surrounded by stunning reefs. Actually, some of the shallow hard coral gardens easily rivalled those of Raja Ampat. We saw a massive school of big eye trevally off the reefs there and apparently it's the time of year they get a little frisky! Pairs were beginning to peel off the larger school ready for mating time. It was nearing new moon at that time too so we had a bit of current on one or two of the dives: nothing unmanageable for most, but just enough to carry us along without having to fin at all. Although, probably my favourite time was spent pottering about in 10 metres or shallower searching among the corals and bommies for critters. We saw a naughty hawksbill turtle tearing the reef apart with his beak, a pair of comet fish in a high-speed pursuit and a large stonefish hidden beneath the sand.

**Splinter's Apprentice - July 2000:** Dumaguete is an excellent typhoon hole. Very beautiful and peaceful.

Entrance is awkward, not to be attempted at night first time. A reef and sand bar extend from the west side of the entrance to leave a narrow entry channel close to the R bank. Keep to within 30m of the R bank. A course of 352T from the entry waypoint above leads clear of danger to the corner where a sweeping turn to the right clears the sandspit arising from the R bank just around the corner. The water is just clear enough to see both sandspits. Favour the right bank as yet a third sandspit extends from the L bank. There are several yachts semi-permanently moored here but plenty of room. Holding is good in 3-8ms sand or mud.

Drinking water is available, no charge.

Nickys yacht services ashore at the jetty will mind boats and Arleen runs the bar and food.

Diesel can be had via Arleen. The cans are taken to Siaton and returned to the jetty for 25pesos a can + cost of diesel.

The journey to Dumaguete city is an experience! First a motorbike to Siaton, an hours trip on dirt tracks, then an hours ride by jeepney or bus. There is fresh veg available in Siaton but other shopping needs to be done in Dumaguete. Getting any volume of stores back to the boat would be fun, I would advise being stocked up before visiting.

Good onward connections from Dumnaguete by plane or ferry. There are e-mail facilities in Dumaguete but it 's very slow.

#### **4.16 Negros Island – West Coast**

##### **4.16.1 Taboo Twoo**

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Our first stop on setting out from [Port Bonbonon](#) was the **Taboo Twoo** anchorage right in front of Ulrich's (a former cruiser we met in Bonbonon) house. Ulrich invites all cruisers to visit him! There is plenty of space in the anchorage, but be careful of the numerous isolated sticks in the general area where small bancas attach themselves, so as to fish at night.

Anchorage: 09°06.54N, 122°55.50E 5m in good sand Globe good/ Smart very poor

There's usually a light onshore breeze during northerly wind season; small swell. It's best to land the dinghy just north of the small rocks lining the beach, then pull the dinghy to high water mark on the beach. We had a nice dinner with Ulrich and his companion. From there we had about 10nm of motor-sailing in very light wind followed by 10nm of beautiful sailing with the NE winds coming from the bay we were passing across.

##### **4.16.2 Cansilan Point**

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Our second stop was **Cansilan Point**, protected from NE wind waves behind a sandbar. It was roly with afternoon wind from the SW. We had a nice dinghy trip up the river.

Anchorage: 09°22.53N, 122°42.92E 4m sand/mud Globe poor/ Smart ok

##### **4.16.3 Catmon Point**

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** We then motored in light wind to **Catmon Point**. It was calm with no swell. We went by dinghy to nearby beaches and Ubong cave on the west side of Catmon Point.

Anchorage: 09°37.22N, 122°26.97E 7-15m coral with sand patches Globe ok/ Smart very good

##### **4.16.4 Campomanes Bay**

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** We sailed into nearby **Nabulao Bay** to check the anchorages we had heard about, but were not inspired by the bay, so we went just a little farther north to anchor in **Campomanes Bay** in front of a nice beach. The bay is so far back that no swell came in. There is a marine park at the north end of the bay entrance and two small floating fish parks inside the bay.

Anchorage: 09°41.98N, 122°25.13E 10m sand Globe ok/ Smart good

We went on a dinghy expedition outside the southern entrance of the bay and explored some hidden beaches and small caverns. What fun our dogs had discovering rock-scrambling, dark caverns, and sensory overload of stinky seaweed, soft digging sand, and splashing in the wavelets on the white-hot beaches.

#### **4.16.5 Perth Paradise Lagoon**

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** After two nice calm nights, we motored the 6nm to a little bay that looked quite beautiful on the GE photo, and that we were told about by a boat that anchored there, but we touched on the way in! (*Note: Sloepmouche is a 46' trimaran!*) The entrance looked very narrow and shallow at one point, but we fortunately got a trace from the cruiser who had been there just a week before. Note: you can get Filipino harbor entrance routes and anchorage waypoints (including all of ours) from Terry Sargent [www.Valhalla.com](http://www.Valhalla.com).

We went in very carefully wishing for sunshine instead of the cloudy sky we had. Going in mid-rising tide, Jackie got a very detailed look at a few coral heads for a couple boat lengths where the coral makes a bar across the deep passage, but we made it in slowly without touching! We anchored in what we named **Perth Paradise lagoon** (no name on the chart, and locals couldn't give us a name), which is well protected from all directions by reefs and rocky islets.

Anchorage: 09°43.95N, 122°23.53E 10m sand/mud Globe ok/ Smart good

This small bay reminded us of Palau with its rocky islets. With its narrow entrance passage and shallow spot, it's better to enter at mid to high tide rising (see harbor entrance route). There are two local resorts: C Resort (northern) and Perth Paradise Resort (southern). Nice infinity pool and good, inexpensive Filipino meals at the PPR, which is hidden from view of the anchorage around the corner.

We took the dinghy to explore the outside of the lagoon and snorkeled in the lagoon pass (and saw the two coral heads that come closest to the surface so we could plan the route to avoid them going out).

#### **4.16.6 Cartagena Bay**

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** After going just 5nm north, we found **Cartagena Bay** to be ideal to explore the 2nm coast south by dinghy with hidden caves and pristine beaches! From this bay, it is fairly easy to take a bus to the town of Sipalay, about 7 km away.

09°48.81N, 122°23.84E 7m good sand Globe ok/ Smart good

We landed the dinghy at a concrete landing to the far right of the beach as you look ashore, but later found out it's much better just to beach land your dink in the middle of the community and walk inland asking for the bus stop. It's only a few 100 yards to the main road where you can catch a big bus to the largest public market in the area.

#### **4.16.7 Sojoton Bay**

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** We took advantage of a two-day break in the strong NE winds to get north and NE. Our first 10nm leg took us to **Sojoton Bay** where we were protected from the light southerly breeze.

Anchorage: 09°57.62N, 122°26.81E 5m good sand Globe ok/ Smart good

We anchored with a shallow area on the west side and fishing traps on the shallow part extending quite a way from the beach. It was right next to the highway, so an easy place to get on a bus to go to a big town to repair anything.

#### **4.16.8 Jinobaan Bay**

**Kelaerin - November 2011:** We had intended to enter **Jinobaan Bay** just south of Catmon Pt. on Negros Island but realized there was a reef, which was not on the charts, blocking nearly the whole entrance to the bay. We could see there were larger fishing boats anchored off the town so we surmised there was a pass to get in, but only the smaller fishing boats were going in and out of the southern end of the reef while we watched, so we anchored again outside of the reef (09°37.03'N, 122°27.28'E).

We were travelling fast to take advantage of the good sailing down the west side of the islands and to make the eastward trek to Bonbonon at the bottom of Negros. As usual we left pretty early, but we were surrounded by fishermen with nets out. There were so many markers in the water it was difficult to tell where the nets began and where they ended.

Usually if you headed for one, a fisherman would begin waving his oars back and forth supposedly in the direction of the net. Since we were sailing, we thought it wouldn't be a problem if we did go over one, but these nets were very fine and fragile and we got tangled up in one. The boy on the boat tried to free the net and then Jim went down and got the net off, but it was shredded. The fisherman looked pretty woeful, holding up his net. We assumed responsibility for it and offered to pay him.

**Valhalla - November 2004 - Catmon Bay:** 09-37.142 N / 122-27.561 E We stopped here to avoid a dark arrival at Port Bonbonon.

### **4.17 Guimaras Island (Between Panay & Negros)**

#### **4.17.1 Santa Ana Bay**

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** The next day, we took advantage of a 36-hour break in the NE monsoon due to some depressions in the area to motor sail in very light wind to **Guimaras Island** (where we would not even consider going if against strong NE winds!). We anchored in well-protected **St. Ana Bay** in front of a small fishing village and stone pier leading to the road system. Several fishing parks are in the bay as well as several resorts with beaches.

Anchorage: 10°32.55N, 122°31.75E 12m sand/mud Globe good/ Smart good

We took a half hour habal-habal (moto-taxi) to Jordan (pronounced Hor-dan) to buy some fresh food at the Sunday morning market. If you need a big city for repairs or mall shopping or supermarkets, you can take a ferry from the Jordan Wharf to Iloilo. We did not need anything, so we cannot report on it.

Guimaras is famous for the sweetest mangoes, but we were just a few weeks too early in the season for the abundance (mid-May they have the Mango Festival). We took an island tour (visit our YouTube channel to see it). From the anchorage, you can do a dinghy expedition, out the bay entrance and to the north, for some snorkeling and visit a marine cavern into which you can drive with the dinghy to find at the end, a swim-through window that takes you out the other side.

**Arnak – 2010:** 10°32.45N 122°31.18E in Santa Anna bay. Lovely spot and excellent exploring in the dinghy around the coast. Guimaras is the mango island.

Moved to Pos 10°32.38N 122°31.74 as a better overnight anchorage. Some western type yachts on moorings in a bay to the south (long term)

#### ***4.17.2 Taklong Lagoon / National Marine Reserve***

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** After a few days in Santa Ana, we motor-sailed back south in light wind to the **Taklong Lagoon**, which is well protected from all sides. After we anchored, I went by dinghy to register with the **Taklong Island National Marine Reserve** office that you see on your port side when entering this typhoon-protected lagoon.

Anchorage 10°24.95N, 122°30.66E 9m good sand/mud Globe none/ Smart none

This was one of the rare anchorages with no mobile or Internet. But Winlink has a new station in Batangas (near Manila) DX1M, with excellent signal on the 40m band (the Cebu Winlink station is off the air).

This is a great area for dinghy exploration of mangroves, rocky cliffs with caverns and snorkeling; ask the friendly park personnel where to go.

The marine reserve is run locally by the people of the communities around the bay. It shows that the people really take an interest in making sure that the area is well-run. We were lucky to be there for their anniversary festivities, and were surprised it's already 27 years in existence. It was well-kept, people are still enthusiastic, and many new buildings and structures have recently been built, so there is ongoing support and interest—something too rare in government or foreign-sponsored projects.

### ***4.18 Islands in the Bohol Sea***

#### ***4.18.1 Siquijor Island***

**Solita – 2012:** Situated to the east of the southern end of Negros and south-west of Bohol, this small but mountainous island appears to be little visited by cruising boats, probably because of the lack of good anchorages. In most places the sea bottom shoals very quickly up to the coast, providing just a thin strip of water of a suitable depth for anchoring.

On the north coast there are several shallow bays but if the SW wind is strong the swell will roll around the western point of the island and along the north coast. There is a small port at Larena, but there is very little room, especially if the daily ferry or barge is in. There is also a wharf and slightly deeper bay at the town of Siquijor, on the western end of the north coast.

During the NE season there are two good-sized bays on the southern coast that should provide good anchorage – Maria Bay and Lazi Bay. 21 The interior of the island is very mountainous but

there are roads crossing the island as well as the coastal road around the island. Siquijor's "claim to fame" is the local faith healers who can provide many potions and elixirs to cure most problems.

**Fellow Traveler - 2011 - Lazi:** I arrived right at sunset, and with failing light, anchored in about 20 feet just off the small, seemingly unused dock. Beyond this, the bottom quickly drops to 100 feet. I was awoken at midnight by a HUGE ferry passing within a foot or so of my bow. They then began pivoting the boat to back to the dock, and my yacht was alternately sucked into and pushed away by the propwash! I used my motor to hold myself as far away as my chain would allow until the ferry was docked, then upped the anchor and departed before the ferry needed to get out!

**Unknown Boat - Feb 2010 - San Juan:** I have tracks for a boat that stopped several times in Feb/Mar timeframe (over several years) and anchored off the town of San Juan. At approx 09-09.5796 N / 123 29.1514 E.

**Splinters Apprentice 2000 (OCC) - Maria Bay:** Large bay, deep until well in then shelves fairly steeply. Anchor in 5-10m sand and coral. Holding fair but lots of isolated low coral heads. Swell tends to creep round the corner, open to the East.

#### ***4.19 Islands in the North Sulu Sea (between Panay & Palawan)***

##### ***4.19.1 Maducang Island***

Mokisha – May 2018: 10 41.62 N / 120 15.93 E We stopped here overnight and thought this was the best anchorage of our whole 3 months of cruising in this area. Snorkeling was fantastic with healthy, vibrant coral & lots of fish! We saw eels, resident turtle & even jacks & tuna. No cell service. Wish we could have stayed several days.....next year! Wide sandy area in 4 meters.

##### ***4.19.2 Calandagan Island***

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Our passage from Cuyo to Calandagan was 48nm, finally real pure sailing with the wind and seas on the aft quarter. There were many fishing vessels anchored here in deeper water. There's a fishing village ashore. It's a good place to spend only a night before the next leg as the anchorage was rolly.

Calandagan Island 10°38.16N, 120°14.80E 10m sand patch amidst coral patches. Globe none/ Smart none

**Arnak – Jan 2013:** 10°38.49N 120°14.69E in 21m sand. A little roll but acceptable in under 20kt winds NE. Another possible anchorage which looked good when exploring in the dinghy was the west side of Anas Island at the bottom of Maduchang island.

##### ***4.19.3 Cuyo Island***

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** We anchored just five minutes after sunset in **Cuyo Harbor** right in front of the beach with 30kn blowing over the low sandy beach—an exciting ending to a long day. It can be very windy during NE monsoon (we had 25-30kn+ for three days), but the sea was calm enough behind the protection of beach strip and reef. Alas Globe Internet is still very poor—you might barely get your emails!

Cuyo Harbor 10°51.21N, 121°00.21E 3m good sand. Globe poor/ Smart good

We stayed put here for a few days, waiting for the reinforced trade winds to pass before continuing on towards Palawan. This is one of the best places in Philippines for kite-surfing and every day we could watch them in front of us in shallow waters.

Thomas (ph: 0919-4084094) rents good **motorbikes** to tour the island and sells home baked bread, pizzas and other special foods. We had a fun day going all around this small island. We had a nice lunch at Anino Retreat, owned by another Ulrich (Swiss-German) and Victoria, on the opposite side of the island, a very nice intimate resort with a great kite-surfing beach, too. Internet is reported very good on this side. We watched an expert kite surfer, in 35kn winds, maneuver his way through a line of incredible breakers that would make even surfers pale. It was amazing, but if he had made one false move and crashed, there would be no way for anyone to offer any help!

Ask for Heidi at the **fresh market**. She is a super nice lady and a friend of sailors. She can tell you how to prepare banana blossoms, and seaweed “noodles” that we had never seen before, and which tasted just like noodles. We got fresh fruit juices, many vegetables and fruits including delicious sapotilla fruits (called chicos in Philippines). All Cuyo-grown produce is organic.

March/April is **cashew nut harvest season**, and the people of Cuyo collect, dry and sell raw cashews to the larger cities for income. Jackie LOVES cashews and was able to buy them for 350p/k, half price!

You might be able to buy the regurgitated bird spit that is used to make the famous Bird's Nest Soup that the Chinese adore, for only 100,000 p/k from the folks that bravely scale the cliffs of the islands to collect this prized product (ask Heidi).

People on the island are quite nice and deserve their peaceful reputation. Many ex-pats are moving here for the kite-surfing season away from the crowds in Boracay, then go home for the typhoon season.

**Arnak – Jan 2013:** 10°51.21N 121°00.19E in 2m sand. Shoals gradually towards the beach and behind the main jetty. Protected by large reef to the north and good in NE. Coast Guard here may check your papers and issue a form. All very friendly and helpful. Good town and markets etc.

**Shanghaied – 2013:** 10 51.18 N / 121 00.14 E 4m sand I think. Globe E so very slow internet. Good to watch passing traffic - Ferry to Puerto Princesa looks dodgy. Many resorts closed for season late May.

## ***4.20 Islands in the Sibuyan Sea***

### ***4.20.1 Marinduque I***

**PGYC – PDF File Downloaded 2016:** Marinduque Island in the Sibuyan Sea is a very interesting visit, with at least 3 natural harbours, which are also typhoon shelters. These are:- **Port Balanacan** on the NW end of the island. **Santa Cruz Harbour** on the NE end of the island. **Salomague Island** covering Masagasai Bay below Santa Cruz on the east coast.

#### **4.20.1.1 Obung Pt / Gasan**

**Savannah - Jan 2014:** 13-20.157N / 121-49.835E

We anchored in about 20 feet in grey sand. We did not go to shore. There was a small village and lots of fisherman and a long night of Kareoke.

Andy went diving under the boat and found tons of little creatures in the sand. He saw a wonderpus, juvenile lion fish, nudi branch, crocodile fish and many other little creatures.

#### **4.20.1.2 Balanacan (Typhoon Hole)**

**Dream Away – April 2016:** At the NW corner of Marinduque Island you have San Andres Island. CM93(2010) has no detail, and it looks like it could be possible to cut inside. DON'T! – Navionics shows the extent of the reef. At Ataa Is, both charts have detail, but CM93(2010) is not accurate at this point – and further in, had us on land a couple of times, but no worries – it is very easy to see where you should be here. Go round past the ferry terminal (we had 2 ferries entering and 2 leaving) & into the inner bay. The (incoming) starboard hand point at the entrance to the inner bay is unmistakable with its giant Virgin Mary statue. Neither CM93(2010) or Navionics correct. We anchored in 7m mud in great shelter from any quarter, a good typhoon hole.

**Kelaerin - November 2011:** We made a day trip to **Balanacan**, Marinduque and tried to anchor where our guide book suggested, but instead nudged a reef. It was also next to a noisy, portable power plant and in the path of the ferries.

So we ventured into the perfectly protected lagoon (with a little heavenly protection from the Virgin Mary statue guarding the entrance) and anchored at 13°32.2'N, 121°51.9'E for a very peaceful night, waking up in the morning to the local fishermen all around us.

#### **4.20.1.3 Masagasai Bay**

**Dream Away – April 2016:** 13 25.304 N / 122 06.767 E Lots of fish traps, but none to avoid in the main channel. Lots of fishing & ferry boat traffic in the evening and early morning. We were there in calm weather, our anchorage would be somewhat open in a strong NE, but there should be better niches. CM93(2010) was much the better chart here. Both charts were good enough going through behind Santa Cruz Is. CM93(2010) has more detail.

#### **4.20.2 Dos Hermanas Islands**

Carlota Island and Isabel Island

#### **4.20.3 Bantan / Banton Island**

**Savannah - Jan 2014:** 12-55.7936N / 122-03.223E

Our charts showed a shallow anchorage here. We found it, but it wasn't near as big as it showed on the chart. We anchored in 15 feet of dead coral. Not the greatest anchorage in the world.

When we left the next morning, it looked like maybe the next bay over might have had a better anchorage, certainly a prettier beach.

There are a series of buoys right at the edge of the shallow spot where we anchored.



We thought it was a net and went around it. After further investigation, it is a bunch of buoys strung together with a long piece of rope. Not sure of the purpose, but if it's still there, you need to go around it.

There is a small village here. It looks like there is a spring or some sort of water catch right in front of where we anchored. People were doing laundry and paddling over to fill water jugs. If you're short on water, this might be an option.

There is supposedly good diving here, but no facilities so you must have your own gear. We couldn't find anyone with the intel on exactly where the "good" diving was. Andy dove around the boat and to the drop off by the anchorage. He found quite a few creatures that were new to him. With some intel, it has some potential.

**Kalearin - November 2011:** Next we motored to Bantan Island and anchored on the east side just off the small town of **Bantan** (12°56.760'N, 122°05.886'E). Very few yachts ever stop here because it is unprotected, but we had settled weather so we stayed for two nights. When we went ashore we were welcomed by the mayor and the police who took our picture. A local gentleman, Raffi, guided us around the town, which was charming. The people here only have electricity a few hours a day and there is no running water. They have to push carts loaded with jugs up the hills to the various wells.

Lawrence, a young man with a motorcycle, offered to take us around the island for a half-day tour and the next morning we met him and his friend, Alnie, for a beautiful ride around the island. The island is laced with narrow, paved roads big enough for a motorcycle or very small truck built on a motorcycle frame. We wove our way up and down hills, through small villages, stopping to visit school kids, shopkeepers, a woman chopping rocks, a man building a tiny banca, visiting the one room museum with its one artifact, a pot found in a cave by local kids about a year ago, and dropping down to the coast every now and again to walk on a pristine beach. A beautiful day.

#### ***4.20.4 Maestro de Campo Island***

**Sloepmouche – August 2017 – Agbatang Bay:** 12 54.25 N / 121 42.397 E. 12m good sand getting shallower gradually. In front of beach & small village. Globe internet: ok; Smart mobile:ok

**From Unknown Track – 2012 – NE Corner:** There are 3 bays in the NE corner of Maestro de Campo island that look anchorable if you have southerly winds. One person anchored at 12 56.82 N / 121 43.015 E though the bays east and west of this actually look like they have more sand (from Google Earth)

#### ***4.20.5 Simara Island***

#### ***4.20.6 Tablas Island***

**Solita – 2012:** Tablas Island is a large hilly island to the west of Romblon and just two small islands north of Boracay. Its north-south orientation means that there are numerous protected bays and anchorages on the leeward side of the island during both NE and SW monsoons. Looc Bay, on the west coast, offers several good secure anchorages that will protect a boat from varying winds.

**PGYC – Document Downloaded 2016 – Looc Bay:** Looc Bay (entrance near 12° 14.50'N, 121° 58'E) on the western coast of Tablas Island. The bay is considered to be a typhoon shelter.

**Arnak – 2012: Tanagan bay.** 12°29.825N 122°00.665E in 3m mud.

Lovely sheltered bay in NE with nice beach, no fringing reef. Depth shoals gradually.

**Mokisha - July 2017 – Kanduyon Point:** 12 24.273 N / 121 57.388 E. 21' sand bottom. SW wind 2-6kts. Quiet place. Clear water until heavy rain and runoff. Reef to E and just further S. Visited by local officials just wanted to fill out paperwork and see the boat. They indicated a shore landing was possible. Globe 4g x 4 bars. SV MOKISHA

**Arnak – 2012: Colasi Hill.** Internet 3G - 12°17.608N 121°56.448E in 4m mud.

Nice protected bay in NE with excellent holding.

**Arnak – 2012: Looc Bay:** 12°14.363N 122°00.434E in 15m mud. (**typhoon anchorage**)

Excellent holding and shelter in NE. We were sheltering from a tropical storm. Small ships and ferries come in and anchor to the south end of the large bay which has good all round protection. You can also anchor directly off the town with gradually shoaling depth and also a good anchorage in the NW corner of the bay off a small resort but watch for reefs in this area.

The town has a good market but no supermarket to speak of. You can hire motorbikes to travel to other areas of Tablas for around php 400 a day.

There is a ferry wreck on the reef at the entrance on the northern side of the bay and a large protected reef in the middle of the bay which is a marine park. You must get a ticket to dive on this reef, available at the end of the long town jetty.

**Arnak – 2012 – Santa Fe:** 12°09.455N 121°59.306E 8m mud off jetty.

Not much here but a good sheltered anchorage in NE

#### **4.20.7 Romblon Island**

**Beyond Outrageous – June 2018:** Recommend a laundry in Romblon – Bright n Bubbly Laundry on Quezon Street. Efficient, friendly, and reasonably priced.

**Soggy Paws - April 2018:** We stopped for 2 nights here on our way past. There are two RYC moorings out in the middle off the yacht club, and one very close in, that is meant to have you tie to the sea wall. We weren't crazy about picking up the close-in one, but looked around for anchoring depths with proper swinging room in under 80 ft and really couldn't find anything that would give you 360 swinging room. We inspected the close-in mooring on scuba (it's in 60 ft) and it looked reasonably substantial. Good for the 5-15 knots NE that are typical now. Reportedly these were put in 2 years ago for a PGYC rally.

We opted not to tie to the seawall because we wanted to point the wind (for breeze aboard), and to sit out away from the YC a bit. There is a constant gaggle of kids hanging out and swimming off the yacht club. They are friendly but sometimes a little annoying. It was initially hard to keep them off the boat and out of the dinghy. Don't encourage them as they won't go away when you want them to!

As there were four cruising boats off the yacht club while we were there, the YC bar was open every day at 4:30pm until late in the evening. They serve a mean plate of nachos, and also have some other food you can order, plus a full bar. It was a nice atmosphere for a sundowner. Dennis, the commodore stopped in for a few minutes every evening. We ran a tab and paid for drinks and our mooring fee (P150 per day) at the bar when we got ready to leave. At least one night there were local Filipinos singing Karaoke at the bar from about 8pm until 10pm, when they are required to stop wailing.

The current Commodore of the yacht club is Dennis Shepherd, and he operates Anchor Bay Water Sports and the Marlin Bar, a little south of town. The Marlin Bar is temporarily closed due to licensing issues.

Dennis can be reached at 0918-247-9941.

**Diving:** We didn't realize that Romblon is a hot Macro diving spot. The reefs looked gorgeous in the Google Earth charts we were using. We did a couple of dives out of our dinghy on our own as the reefs looked nice, but were looking for some guided diving to go further afield. Dennis recommended we contact **The Three P's Dive Resort** to go diving. (easily found on Google). When we called, they said they had no room for us, and passed on contact info for another dive operation, which we could not get a response from. Next time we'll email 3P's ahead. It looked like you could find a reasonable sheltered anchorage near the 3P's resort. Wannadive.net has a whole bunch of dive sites for Romblon.

**Mystic Rhythms – Nov 2016:** We stopped here on our approach to Puerto Galera from Palau, because of approaching typhoons. There are a couple of heavy moorings and so much for the yacht club. There is nobody there and the bar is closed. The town is nice and 17th century with narrow streets and a fort. Marble carving is the main industry.

We did more research and this turns out not to be a typhoon hole! Oops! The latest tracks and predictions show the typhoon hitting north of us and no real winds here so we will sit on the 150 peso a day mooring enjoying fast internet (three cell towers here), until things settle down and the typhoon crosses.

The town has many places to eat and many western style ones for decent prices as in 150 for a meal or 200 for a pizza. Trikes are only 30 a person so way better than Davao.

**Savannah - Jan 2014:** We anchored in 10 feet of water on the northeast side of the island in Romblon Bay, near Romblon town. Due to weather, we chose the north end of the bay. There is a yacht club being formed, putting in some moorings, but the two in the north bay were taken when we arrived.

There may be one other area to anchor for short drafted boats (further into shore between the two moorings), otherwise, this is a very deep anchorage (>100 ft).

There are two other yacht club mooring balls in the south anchorage, south of the white channel marker. They are 100 pesos a night and can be paid for at the Rupublika Bar in town. Dennis Shepard is the founder of the yacht club and as of the time we were there, it was still in its infancy (they do a lot for the local community, but not many yachts coming through as of yet).

In the north bay, you can park the dinghy at the "yacht club" ramp, however, there's not much here to see other than the marble factory. If you do find yourself here after dark and the gate is closed, Dennis told us Leonardo lives across the street and can open it for you.

We took our dinghy into town (about 1 km) and docked it at the wall with the rest of the boats. There are a number of places to park, all were safe. As you go into the south part of the harbor, you'll see a large brick wall jutting out, with blue tarps over some huts. The blue tarps are slaughter houses (you'll smell it as you come in) and the large area is the landfill for the island. We were able to drop our trash off here pretty easily. If you park on this side of the ferry dock, you'll find town by going to the right, over the bridge.

**ATM:** There is one ATM in town, across the street and down a little bit from the Republika Bar. On the weekends, we found it to be without money. We tried to change our US dollars at the "money changer" in town, but they never had a rate from the bank and kept telling us to come back. We found we were able to change our money at the bank (not a quick process, but easy) for only slightly less than the ATM.

**Food:** Romblon Deli – Painted a bright orange and on the corner of the main road overlooking the water, this place is easy to find. We only ate breakfast there (the next day they were remodeling), but it was good and we were able to buy a map here for 90 pesos (a little steep I thought considering we could get two beers for that price, but it was helpful so we splurged). This is said to be the place to get all information on tourism. We met a local Peace Corp volunteer here and ended up getting our info that way.

Republika – just a few doors down from the Romblon Deli. Another ex-pat bar/restaurant and the home of the yacht club. The food tends toward European and the menu seems to change every day. They have fairly decent pizza for 300 pesos. Very friendly service.

JD & G Italian Food – If you kept walking along the main road past the deli, you'll see this restaurant on the left. We had lunch here and really enjoyed it. It's a family owned restaurant (as is most, I'm guessing) and prides themselves on home made pasta. We'll recommend it with one caveat....it's just a little different. We really enjoyed our meal of lasagna and spaghetti carbonara, but couldn't put our finger on why it was "different." They claimed to have mozzarella, but I'm guessing there was some of the velveeta-type processed cheese mixed in there....none the less, it was very good, and pretty good prices as well. We would go back if we were staying any longer and try their pizza (200 pesos). The atmosphere is nice and the service is excellent. We bought an extra lasagna and froze it for our lunch while underway. Worked out great.

Assuming you parked across the bridge, if you turned back toward your dinghy from the deli, you would find a number of restaurants that served more local food. These smelled delicious and seemed to be filled most of the time. We ate some of their grilled meats (kabob type) and really enjoyed them....very cheap. It was always easy to find Jake a snack.

**Provisioning:** There are a number of small stores all through town that sell a little bit of everything. Mostly plastic packages of noodles, snacks and nuts. We found some canned fruit, peanut butter, jam, boxed cheese, etc.

We've had a very hard time finding anything dairy other than milk. If you're a cheese hound, stock up before you get to the PI.

There is a market just north of the police station. You can get everything you need from a meat and veggie standpoint here. It was reminiscent of the markets in mainland Mexico. Fresh meat, fish, veggies....we had fun here.

Veggies: baby bok choy, carrots, cabbage, broccoli, tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, garlic, ginger, pumpkin, cheyote

Fruit: mango, watermelon, apples, grapes (high dollar), oranges  
Beer: There is a place at the corner of the road where you turn to go to the fort. They sell beer by the case. If you have bottles to turn in then you can forgo the deposit. Rum, Gin and Vodka is pretty darn cheap all over. We found most stores to sell it here in Romblon.

**Things to do:** Fort San Andres – Still assuming you parked near the dump, right before you cross the bridge going into town, there is a road that turns left. Go down that road just a small way and you'll see steps on the left. Follow these steps up to Fort San Andres, built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. We didn't find much in the way of historical explanations, but found it a nice walk with lots of mosaic works along the way.

Church - On the main street in town (Rizal), you'll see a church from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The plaques here do more to explain the history behind the church as well as the fort.

Marble – Romblon is known for its marble. You'll find many shops in town in the "Shopping Center" that sell all kinds of carvings for very cheap. You can also take a trike up to the Marble Factories. We were told 100 pesos was more than generous for asking them to take you there, wait for you and bring you back. Don't expect too much in the way of "factory" but it is very interesting to watch how they carve some of these massive structures (as well as crank out small dolphin after dolphin) with no mask or eye protections whatsoever. They have shops up here as well, although I found the stores in town to have more refined pieces and surprisingly, cheaper.

There are a number of beaches around, just a short trike ride away.

There are a few dive shops at the resorts but we didn't check them out.

**Laundry:** I saw a few signs for laundry in town, but did not check into it. But it appears it is possible to get it done here.

**PGYC – PDF Downloaded 2016:** Romblon Island has Romblon town anchorage on its NW tip (near 12° 35'N, 122° 16.20'E), which is where the Spanish founded a stronghold in their heydays in the Philippines. An interesting visit to a harbour that is claimed to be "typhoon proof".

(Note from Soggy Paws... The Yacht Club Moorings area is NOT a typhoon hole!...maybe snuggled down in the southern corner of the town area itself, but I would worry about other boats).

**Arnak – Nov/Dec 2012:** (Internet 3g good) 12°35.447N 122°16.389E in 33m on Romblon Yacht Club mooring.

Check out Romblon YC web site for contact details. They have 5 moorings but when I inspected I could only find 3. In NE monsoon the northern bay is best with easy landing for dinghy at marble factory or new YC landing area (under construction but ramp in place) possible typhoon anchorage on mooring at head of bay.

Romblon is a lovely town with a group of expats who have set up the YC. Good shopping and friendly people. Very deep anchorage. This is the Marble Island where it is quarried and cut etc so lots of shops selling all sorts of marble carvings.

**Solita – 2012:** Romblon Island is well-known domestically for its marble, quarried at various spots around the island, and for its beautiful beaches and scenic interior. The main town of Romblon is quite attractive, with a small but deep harbour nestled between green mountains, a small plaza along the waterfront, two 17th century forts, San Joseph's Cathedral – also built during the early Spanish days, an historic bridge, lively public markets just off the waterfront and many narrow streets heading into the hills behind the town. There are also many small shops selling marble items at the Romblon Shopping Centre, opposite the Plaza.

There is a small permanent ex-pat community here who are very welcoming.

Bob Burgess owns the Republika Bar and Restaurant on Republika St, and David Kershaw owns the Romblon Deli just a couple of doors along. Both restaurants provide excellent meals. There is also a developing sailing club, which has two moorings in the small bay just north of Romblon Harbour. If available they can be rented for 100 pesos per night.

The "club" has also acquired land in this bay and hopes to eventually build a small yacht club there. Information about these moorings can be obtained from Dennis Shepherd on +63 09182479941 or Bob on +63 09212843175. Otherwise there is just enough room to drop an anchor on the slope of the fringing reef at the head of this bay.

There is a coastal road around Romblon Island with 43 kms of mainly sealed road. We hired a motorbike for the day (call Graham on 0905 617 3630) and really enjoyed seeing something of the interior of the island. We found many small marble "factories" just outside Romblon Town, some beautiful views of the coastline and friendly villages where everyone wanted to say hello.

**Kalearin - November 2011:** There are a few international ex-pats who call **Romblon** home. Some have got together and put in moorings for visiting yachts. The harbor area is very deep with not enough swinging room so we were glad to be directed to the mooring (12°34.813'N, 122°15.843'E) by Dennis Shephard who saw us come in and zipped up to us in his dinghy. The restaurant Republika is the de facto yacht club and you can pay your 100 peso a night fee for the mooring there. The money collected is to be used for more moorings. As in most places in the Philippines, Romblon is a very friendly spot. We hired a tricycle taxi to take us for a short tour of the marble carvers roadside shops, met some ex-cruising—now local ex-pat residents who invited us to join them for their evening gathering at the Republika.

Jim used the taxi to get fuel by jerry can. There is one ATM machine in town and it often runs out of cash, so I wouldn't count on it for money. There's a laundry service near the town square and you can buy fresh bread at the two restaurants on Republika Street.

#### **4.20.8 Carabao Island**

#### **4.20.9 Sibuyan Island**

**Changing Spots – June 2018 - Sibuyan SE (SW Winds):** 12-16.626N, 122-37.981E

A beautiful spot behind a sandy beach covered with palm trees, low enough to allow the breeze but eliminating the nasty seas from the west. In 25 feet, good holding grassy sand. Good Globe.

Near a dock and ramp, with buses and roads nearby if you wanted a shore excursion.

**Soggy Paws – April 2018:** 12-20.241 N / 122-33.098 Dropped in 30 ft of sand and hung most of the time out in about 40-50 ft. But we backed toward shore and still had 20 ft underneath us at low tide. We had great winds on the sail up from the Gigantes, and so arrived with time to spare. Opted to bypass Cautit Point and head further north. Wind died almost immediately after making that decision. Ended up anchoring off a nearly deserted beach between San Fernando and Espana. Looked like most of the coast along here would be anchorable in NE winds. Though the wind was 10-15 from the NE, at our anchorage we often had W winds at 5 knots. Swirly and sometimes we'd get a NE bullet. Bottom looked like sand/mud when we pulled the anchor. OK Globe / Poor Smart.

**Savannah - Jan 2014:** 12-17.248N / 122-38.517E We anchored in 20 ft, sandy bottom in front of a very tiny village. We attempted to go to San Fernando, but due to the winds and tides coming from the west, we anchored off the point, a little east in front of a VERY small village. We went ashore and handed out some candy to the kids and make sure it was ok to anchor there.

We were hoping to see some of the island as this is supposed to be the "Galapagos" of the Philippines, meaning many species of animals here (spoken highly of by the inhabitants, some Peace Corp volunteers we later met, as well as our Lonely Planet guide)...but due to weather, we didn't feel it was safe leaving the boat unattended for any extended period of time.

**Arnak – 2013 - Cautit Pt:** Anchored in 4m sand with good shelter in NE.

**Solita – 2012:** Sibuyan Island, to the east of Romblon, is very mountainous and densely forested, and often shrouded in cloud. It is known for its amazing diversity of flora and fauna, and most of the island is a national park – its entrance is at Magdiwang. The park is home to at least five unique mammal species.

Friends of ours made the long trek from their anchorage at San Fernando on the south coast to the national park but were quite disappointed by the lack of information or displays.

The south-western coast of Sibuyan has several good anchoring options during the NE monsoon period. We were caught here while a large tropical storm passed by, and managed quite well in a couple of the more sheltered bays.

**Solita – 2012 – San Fernando:** 12°17.9'N / 122°36.06'E 4-5 M over sand. Good protection from N to E, though wind bullets may come from island. Gently shoaling depth to shore. Watch for bommie in NW corner of bay, 400 M off shore. In front of San Fernando town – very quiet. Jeeps to other parts of island.

**Solita – 2012 – Espana:** 12°22.84'N / 122°29.9'E 5 M over sand. Gently shoaling shore. Good protection from N to E, but increased chances of wind bullets from mountains. In front of Espana Village, near to Olongo River. Road access, local sari-sari stores, good Internet.

#### ***4.21 Panay East Coast (Gigantes Islands to Naso Point)***

**Solita – 2012:** Panay is a large rugged looking island to the west of Negros and south of Romblon. Its capital is Iloilo City, on its south-east coast, but it is probably better known for its famous resort destination of Boracay, on the NW Tip. This small white beached island lays just north-west of Panay and is serviced by ferries and the airport at Cataclan, on the tip of Panay's north coast.

To the north-east of Panay is the Gigantes Island Group. These islands are quite remote and have very few visitors.

Port Batan on the northern coast of Panay offers a very secure anchorage if needed.

#### **4.21.1 Gogo Pass**

Freebird – Dec 2019:

#### **4.21.2 Tago Island**

**Arnak – 2012:** 11°15.04N 123°08.81E between two islands with good shelter in 3m mud.

#### **4.21.3 Tagubanhhan Island**

**Arnak – 2012:** Pos 11°07.14N 123°06.58E Nice anchorage in NE

#### **4.21.4 Iloilo City**

**Arnak – 2010:** 10°41.82N 122°34.53E. The main city and busy waterway with ferries and working boats all day and night. Tied up alongside the Coast Guard patrol boats who were very welcoming and helpful. Good security for the cost of a few bottles of Tanduay Rum. Make sure you are upstream of the ferries and watch the power lines further upstream which go to the flour mill across the waterway. Do not go much past the Coast Guard vessels.

A big town with all facilities including Immigration and Customs etc. Immigration are (flexible), so know your official fees. Had no problem here and people very friendly. Busy place.

### **4.22 Panay N Coast (Gigantes Islands to Boracay)**

#### **4.22.1 Gigantes Islands (NE Tip Panay)**

**Solita – 2012:** Both Nth and Sth Gigantes Islands offer several good anchoring bays with some white sand beaches and islets to explore. We were offered fish, crabs and squid by the local fishermen here and some young women also brought out fruit and vegetables. The locals are very friendly. The Gigantes also offer a good stopping off point if you are travelling east towards Malapascua, Bantayan and Cebu.

**Changing Spots – June 2018:** 11-54.483N / 123-10.576 E Very good holding in 20 ft sand with grass, the dark patches are grass. Even right behind the cliffs, there is no shelter from a westerly wind (20-25 kts) and sea. They channel around the large dramatic cliffs. Saw a sea eagle soaring the southern cliffs. No Globe signal.

Beware of numerous fish floats at or below the surface, depending on the tide. There are near the cliff face, all the way into the bay.

**Soggy Paws – April 2018:** Sadly, S Gigante Island has been “discovered”. There is now a large tourist boat operation that brings banka loads of tourists to the beautiful beaches at S. Gigante Island. We save 5 or 6 bankas there in the late afternoon. We anchored near the pretty beach on the SE tip, but were soon approached by someone collecting an “ecological fee”. They wanted P150 per person plus a P250 anchoring fee. We somewhat rudely told them that we were just stopping for the night and would not pay. We moved deeper into the bay to



near where Mokisha anchored. The northernmost beach in the S bay of S Gigante has a few umbrellas on it, but our eco-fee collector told us the “resort” was not operating. We left at 6am.

**Sloepmouche – August 2017 – S Gigante:** 11 35.246 N / 123 20.768 E 7m good sand. Well protected from both monsoon winds. Caves and beaches to explore nearby. Visited an inner lagoon a little south of here but it was not worth the 20P fee! Much nicer in Palawan. Globe internet: none; Smart mobile: none.

**Mokisha – July 2017 – S Gigante:** 11 35.207 N / 123 20.781 E 30' sand bottom. Snorkeled to the shore & around the bay - sand & sea grass. The bottom gently slopes to shallower depths but you can go in quite a ways with no problems. No Globe service. Wind from NE then NW, W. Slight bounce due to confused seas currently in the area due to active trough but settled down to completely calm seas. An attractive anchorage but plenty of crab traps with floats. A restaurant on shore & locals hangout. We didn't go to shore.

**Savannah - Jan 2014:** 11-33.966N / 123-20.716E. We were headed for South Gigante, off the tip of Panay. When we were almost there, we saw what looked to be a group of lone islands with beautiful beaches, so we anchored in front of one of those (20 ft, sandy bottom, good holding) in hopes of burning some trash and giving Jake a chance to play. It turns out, it's nowhere near uninhabited. There are people living in caves up from the beach. While this was a picturesque setting, it was interrupted by some happy hour dynamite fishing. While appalling, it was fascinating to watch. We took a short dinghy ride to circumnavigate the island and found a small cave to explore. Other than that, due to the private property, we weren't able to partake in the beach (although we didn't try).

**Katie Lee - December 2011:** The only people in the bay were crab fishermen from Bantayan, where we had just left. One came by and gave us 8 small reef fish. It was our first fresh fish in a while--we were afraid to eat them in Pt Carmen because of the pollution all around us there. Afterward, I took a bag of mixed nuts to him. He didn't read or even speak English. One of the other guys asked to open the bag and showed him what they were. He then shared them all around with the other 5 or 6 boats. We tried to talk some but there was no common language.

#### **4.22.2 Dayhagen**

**Elizabeth Jane II – July 2014:** 11 33.5800 N / 123 06.4200 E Quiet beach, slight roll with the change of tide when there is no wind. Small banka boats and fishing men coming past

#### **4.22.3 Roxas City Area**

**Good News – April 2021 – Port Culasi:** We stayed in Port Culasi for several days waiting to get our diesel injection pump worked on. This is a very busy port with lots of fishing boats and commercial traffic. I wouldn't recommend it as an anchorage. We almost got crushed by a barge that a tug lost control of. One night we had a fishing boat anchor too close and swing into us.

**Fuel Injection Pump:** We had our fuel injection pump calibrated.

The service was excellent.

ANCHOR DIESEL CALIBRATION CENTER  
National Road, Km. 2 Lawaan, Roxas City

Owner/Manager: Henry Panes  
cellphone 0998 - 9828 - 369  
0920 - 9667 - 312  
0915 - 0686 - 386  
Landline. (036) 6516 - 190

Genesis, who is the expert in working on fuel injection pump made sure everything was working good.

Kuya Henry is so easy to talk to and wants his customer to be satisfied with their service, thus until the work is done and the customer is satisfied you can call him and he will send his mechanic who worked for you to attend to your concern.

We paid Php 13K calibration, putting it back, and follow up as we found 2 leaks and we just wanted to make sure they check on this.

**Sloepmouche – August 2017 – Roxas Baybay Beach (North Side):** Anchored in 5m sand/mud , shallowing slowly. Dinghy right in front of the renowned fresh seafood restaurants. Globe internet: good; Smart mobile: good.

**Spirit of Sobraon – July 2015:** 11° 36.152' N / 122° 42.621' E Anchored tight against the Southern Wall.

**Spirit of Sobraon – July 2015 - Olutaya Island:** Olutaya Island is about 8 miles ENE of Roxas City on Panay Island. We anchored at 11° 38.155' N / 122° 50.264' E. We were protected here from all but East winds.

#### **4.22.4 Port Batan**

**Good News – April 2021:** We went further west up the New Washington River than the other cruisers did. We anchored at 11°36.729 N / 122°27.688 E. Very calm, lots of bamboo fish pens around us, mangrove on both sides.

**Elizabeth Jane II – July 2014:** Anchored in 7.9m, west of Port Batan. Small town with markets with stilted houses over water. Lots of fishing traps in the river. We will take the dingy 10m north to New Washington and Kalibo to visit the bigger towns and markets there.

**Shanghaied - 2013:** 11 35.316 N / 122 29.235 E 8m very protected River is navigable several mile to a boatyard (small shipyard) with good restaurant. Transport into Kalibo.

**Solita – 2012:** 11 35.5'N 122 28.9'E Entrance marked with 2 bamboo poles with red & green flags – quite tight but not difficult. 8-9 M over mud

Virtually all-round protection though large waterway may cause fetch in windy weather. Large ferry uses wharf here 2 x daily, & turns in anchorage. Travel past wharf & anchor to west of it. Channel dredged to main town.

**Unknown Contributor:** Very well protected and quiet anchorage. Alternating current. Some traffic. The entrance is not recommended for boats with more than 2 meters draught. Be careful to follow the deepest part of the channel and try to enter at high tide.

#### **4.22.5 Sigat Point / Boctonadoc Town**

**Mokisha - July 2017:** 11 48.605 N / 122 12.5731 E 15', flat bottom, sand. Winds E, NE 1-8kts.

Pleasant, small fishing village. Two older gentlemen came out and suggested we move to our present location for better protection and less swell. We were also near a "marine sanctuary" marked by two redish 1 meter balls. Moving further in, we saw water getting to 15' then got deeper to 20'. It was worth the effort to move in. They said a shore landing was possible.

#### **4.22.6 Borocay / Boracay I (NW Tip Panay)**

**Solita – 2012:** Boracay is a very beautiful but busy resort island with many water-based and other activities to engage the tourists, including an active night life.

There is a large anchorage off White Beach on the island's west coast, but it is full of reefs and small boats providing water sports. Yachts do anchor off the beach in about 5 metres over sand, but the wash from the many passing boats is incredible. We lasted only one day, and moved over to Cataclan, where we anchored in a quiet spot off the airport in 6 metres. It was then just a 20 minute dinghy run over to Boracay.

During the south-west monsoon season, boats anchor off the north-east facing beaches of Boracay. Guimaras Island, off Panay's south-east coast and a short ferry trip from Iloilo City, is known as the "mango capital" of the Philippines. It is also reputed to be laid back, friendly, scenic, with many lovely bays and offshore islands for anchoring and exploring. We didn't visit here but friends did and loved it.

**PGYC PDF:** On your way to PGYC, you may wish to drop into the legendary, white-sand paradise of Boracay Island (near 11° 58'N, 121° 55'E).

In a NE monsoon, choose the south or west coast for your anchorage; the east coast in a SW monsoon. There is a deep anchorage at the SSW corner of the island, just outside the reef that protects the west coast / beach. It is possible to access shallow waters inside the reef if you approach from the southern entrance, in daylight – vessels with a draft of 2.5 metres (eight feet) have anchored inside the reef within the past year. However, at some times of the year it is prohibited to take a sailboat inside the reef so if someone tries to stop you entering please listen to him / her.

Note: If you do choose to go to Boracay then the close-reach from there to Puerto Galera may be uncomfortable in a NE monsoon unless the wind has a good southerly component to it -- bringing it onto the beam.

**Sloepmouche – August 2017:** 11°59.1739' N / 121° 55.7211' E 8m good sand in front of multi-story hotels in construction. Docking wall and arch in rocky point just south of anchorage. Zillions of water sports (parasailing, bananas, jet skis, ..) are passing seaward of here during daylight hours. A dinghy ride around the north end of the island rewards you with small deserted beaches, small caves with bats in the trees over the rocky cliffs and some snorkeling spots. Globe internet: good; Smart mobile: good.

**Elizabeth Jane II – July 2014:** 11° 59.135' N / 121° 55.786' E Even in low season Borocay is a hectic place to be even when compared the other well trodden places in the Philippines that we've been. The anchorage on this eastern side has been good so far if not for a strong tidal set.

**Shanghaied - 2013:** 11 59.198 N / 121 55.786 E 12m Good protection from squalls from W.

Access to town either via long dingy ride to beach to south or shorter ride to N then either bargain with bike riders or walk to main road 20 min and jeepney.

**Arnak – 2012:** 11°56.951N 121°55.621E Anchored in 4m sand but can anchor anywhere along the beach off the 3 boating stations. This is a tourist island with about 4km of pure white sand and is well organized with no smoking on the beach and dinghy's must be pulled up out of the way of beach goers etc. Lots of great eateries and good supermarkets for shopping. Lots of tourist things but no hassles with touts. The eastern side (walk) is a para surfing area with good onshore winds in the NE monsoon. Sailing outriggers run up and down the length of the beach with a nice beam reach and are magic to watch at sunset. Less busy at the northern end of the beach and can pass over the reef from about half way down the island with 3m minimum but keep a good watch for the occasional shallow reef.

**Kalearin - November 2011:** We decided to sail to **Boracay**. As touristy spots go, this one is pretty nice. We anchored on the west side of the island and stayed outside of the reef (11°56.5'N, 121°55.4'E) where we watched the tourists fly overhead in the parasails. You can go inside the reef, which is do-able and closer, but that's us; we are always anchored the farthest out.

#### **4.23 Panay West Coast (Boracay to Naso Pt)**

##### **4.23.1 Libertad**

**Free Bird – Dec 2019:** 11°45.9' N / 121°55.1' E Good holding in 6-7 mts. A few floating fish farms and traps, also many buoys. Decent overnight anchorage. Was boarded by Coast Guard to check papers, polite and friendly. Small swell from SE Smart phone 5 bars. Globe internet 3x LTE.

##### **4.23.2 Tibiao**

**Kalearin - November 2011:** Now that we were on the west side of Boracay, of course the easterlies piped up to 20kn. We decided that we would have a rough trip and not many anchorages to choose from that we could fully trust so we sailed down the west side of Panay, stopping at **Tibiao** (11°16.9'N, 122°01.9'E) for the night. We did not go ashore.

##### **4.23.3 San Jose de Buenavista**

**Sloepmouche – April 2018:** 10°44.248' N / 121°56.442' E 4m good sand, protected by port breakwater, and out of the way of cargoes at the dock. Easy docking dinghy at the small banka pier nearby. Fresh market and Robinson mall nearby. Globe internet: poor; Smart mobile: ok.

##### **4.23.4 Naso Pt (Southern Tip Panay) / (Siraan Point)**

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Siraan Point 10°25.30N, 121°56.33E 6m good sand Globe good/ Smart good.

With the trade winds blowing well again, we had a nice sail (after such a long time!) with wind aft of the beam and then behind all the way to **Siraan Point** on the SW tip of **Panay Island**. We anchored in front of Siraan Hot (warm) Springs and Resort, which is as protected as **Naso Point** anchorage in NE winds. It's an easy beach landing to relax in springs facilities (entrance fee of 60P).

**Kalearin - November 2011:** The next night we spent off **Naso Pt.** (10°24.8'N, 121°56.8'E) where fishermen inspected us as they passed by and then we were visited by a family in a small banca. The man asked if we had a sombrero so I gave him an old hat of mine. He was very happy with it and I gave the kids a little candy and a beach ball. They left and about a half hour later came back with more kids and another smaller banca. The man in the small banca wanted to come aboard but I wouldn't let him. Then he demanded more toys, candy, and some money to put in envelopes (they said it was a fundraiser for a playground for their school). Now I wasn't too happy and realized my mistake in being too easy to begin with. I gave the kids some more candy, told the man the kids could all share the beach ball and put a few pesos in the envelopes (they did look official) and sent them on their way.

**Arnak – 2013:** 10°24.71N 121°57.48E In small cove at the bottom of the island. Went ashore to the hot springs and pools a short ride away. Very friendly locals and good anchorage in NE.

#### **4.24 Masbate Island**

**Solita – 2012:** The Masbate island group lies in the centre of the Philippines and along the northern edge of the Visayan Islands. It is said to be relatively unpopulated (Masbate Town, the capital, has a similar population to Talibon, a small town on northern Bohol) and is quite a poor, undeveloped province. Most of the facilities, as well as most of the island's attractive beaches and accommodation, are located along the northern coast and around Masbate Town.

Masbate's orientation and position offers good passage opportunities between Romblon and Mindoro and the eastern islands of the Visaya group. There are anchorages and protection from the SW monsoon along its north coast, while the southern coast can be travelled comfortably during the NE monsoon.

We travelled up the western coast of Masbate in December and found it very attractive with several good anchoring options. Looc Bay and Nin Bay are huge protected bays along this coast with some beautiful beaches, and the town of Mandaon is situated on at the back of Nin Bay. There is also a very secure anchorage at Alas Bay, just 1 km from Mandaon Town.

##### **4.24.1 Pulanduta**

**Changing Spots – June 2018 - Masbate SW:** 11-54.481N, 123-10.577E

No Globe, but there is a tower nearby - Smart?

Seems like good sand holding in 25ft, but couldn't see the anchor. Fairly sheltered from a W wind. We tried to get closer to shore to get more out of the west wind and seas, but found numerous large bommies. There seems to be a sandy strip at about 25ft, just outside the coral strip (16ft), and significant current along the coast.

Not much to say about this spot, but it breaks up a passage.

**Savannah - Jan 2014:** 11-54.483N / 123-10.576E

We anchored in about 16 ft of water on a rocky bottom.

We spent a very rocky night as the wind shifted against the tides, and moved on the next morning. We received several inquiries (even one over the radio) as to "what is the problem with your yacht?" We interpreted that as "Why the hell would you stop here?" and "Is there something we can do for you?"

They were very friendly people, if curious.

#### **4.24.2 Mandaon**

**Arnak – 2010:** 12°13.364N 123°16.721E Anchored in 2.8m. A good sheltered anchorage.

#### **4.25 Apo Reef (no internet)**

Apo Reef, also considered as the second largest atoll-like reef in the Philippines comprises of two isolated coral reefs that are disconnected by a 30-meter deep channel. The clear blue waters of the channel are teeming with 285 species of colourful marine life, including tropical aquarium fish, snappers and the crevice-dwelling moray.

It looks like this is the official website for Apo Reef:

<https://www.apo-reef.com/>

However, the fees have not been updated on the website since 2015, but the general fee structure is below (with recent updates by cruisers, further below).

From the Apo Reef website:

“The Grand Apo Reef, also considered as Apo Reef Natural Park (ARNP) lies 15 miles west of Sablayan in the Occidental Mindoro province. The Reef spans a total of 27,469 hectares within the Sulu Sea (this also includes 11,677 hectare protective buffer zone.

It consists of several islands, including the Apo Island, which is the biggest island, Apo Menor and Cayos del Bajo. Tinangkapaan Island is the smallest isle of the ARNP.

Apo Reef is located at the northern tip of the Coral Triangle, a 5.7 million square-kilometre region that touches the sea of 6 countries, including Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Indonesia, Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands. Abundant in colourful marine life, the Coral Triangle is the home of 2228 types of reef fish and houses about 605 reef building corals. This is the primary reason why renowned coral expert Dr. Charlie Veron hails it as ‘the centre of Earth’s marine diversity.’

The effects of years overfishing, lethal chemical pollution, destructive coral mining, sedimentation and climatic change had been detrimental, resulting in acidification, coral bleaching and ocean warming. Now steps have been taken to protect the Apo Reef. In 1980 the then Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos declared Apo Reef a “Marine Park”. This was followed up 3 years later by the local government of Sablayan that declared the Apo Reef a special “Tourism Zone and Marine Reserve”. In 1996 President Fidel Ramos declared Apo Reef a protected Natural Park. In 2006, the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau of the Philippine Department of Environment and Natural Resources listed the reef for the consideration of UNESCO World Heritage sites.”

#### **Vessel Entry Fee (Valid 2014- 2015)**

3 GT and below 300.00 PHP (per boat per visit)

3.1 GT to 20 GT 540.00 PHP (per boat per visit)

#### **Visitor Entry Fees - NON-Diving:**

Sablayeno 80.00 PHP (per person per visit)

Local Tourist	270.00 PHP
Foreign Tourist	540.00 PHP
Tour Guide	180.00 PHP

### **Visitor Entry Fees - Diving**

Local Tourist	1,650.00 (per person per visit)
Foreign Tourist	2,040.00 PHP
Dive master	180.00 PHP

Per Visit is equivalent to 48 hours or less from arrival to departure.

**Mokisha – March 2018:** We dove Apo Reef with Pandan Island Resort (20 miles to the ENE of Apo Reef), by banka. From Pandan, it's about a 2 hr ride to Apo Reef. We did 3 dives in a long day trip. All 3 had pretty good currents so it would be pretty hard to do just yourselves without someone picking you up.

We also talked to the rangers at the island. The fees for the park are: 780 for the boat, 780 for snorkeling & 2,940 for diving. Since we dove with the resort, the 2,970 is included in Pandan's diving fee for Apo Reef. Pandan's diving fee is based on how many people there are, the more people, the cheaper. Prices are on their website. ([more here](#))

The rangers were very nice & said it was no problem bringing our boat out. We could take any free mooring. The fees are good for 48 hrs.

**Sloepmouche – July 2017:** We motor-sailed in light wind and had a comfortable passage to Apo Island.

We first took a mooring right in front of the park (also a dive site called Barracuda). We checked at the park office. Fees are 650P/snorkeler and 2,450P/diver per 48hours; pretty steep with the majority of dive moorings missing now in July, the low season (in September supposedly they will install new helix-type of moorings?). The guys at Dugong Dive Center told us that every year they raise the fees and rake in the pesos. Not long ago, it was 500p/diver. We then motored to the prescribed anchorage area between the South and North reefs. We tucked in, protected also from the west by the barrier reef. If you use this anchorage, look out for two shallow reefs seen in good light that you'll get behind before anchoring.

Apo Reef Anchorage 12°40.80N, 120°27.10E 15m near 10m seamount none/none

Apo Reef North Reef 12°41.28N, 120°26.88E 15m sand patches with isolated corals none/none

The next morning, we motored back to Apo Island to dive the South and SE points. The weather was so mild that we decided to spend the night on the South Point mooring after checking it. At 1:30 a.m., we had a short rain squall that had us up on watch, but it went through quickly and was not too windy. The next morning, we went by dinghy to dive Ego's Wall (missing moorings): great visibility, but not a lot of fish and only patches of nice coral.

Apo Reef - South Corner 12°39.20N, 120°25.12E day/calm wx mooring in 8m none/none

Apo Reef - Ego Wall 1 12°39.98N, 120°24.63E mooring on park dive site (missing) none/none

Then when we were about to go dinghy diving for an afternoon dive, we saw a big black front approaching and we had the engine running in case the mooring broke. With gusts over 30kn and a very confused sea where we were, we could not bring the dinghy up in the davits nor could we leave the mooring without risking being pushed on the reef behind. After over half-an-hour watch, we were able to leave in 15kn, and we went to the lee of Apo Island to bring the dinghy up and then motored back to the overnight anchorage between the North and South reefs.

The next morning, we dove on **Manta Point**, but saw no mantas or much of anything (must not be the time of year) and then dove **Shark Airport** the next morning. It was Luc's 4,000th dive (since his first open water 42 years ago— does that make him older?) Jackie made a chocolate cake that was shared with the park personnel (not underwater). We anchored again in the channel between the North and South reefs systems, and we decided to make a dive, finally together, around the boat, as nobody ever dove here since we had randomly anchored on a shoal. Poor visibility and nothing special made it a dive not to remember!

Apo Reef - Manta Pt. 12°40.25N, 120°26.05E mooring on park dive site none/none

Apo Reef - Shark Airport 12°39.92N, 120°25.99E mooring on park dive site none/none

So, while Apo Reef is touted as one of the best diving spots in the Philippines, we were quite disappointed by the overall interest of our six dives. Past typhoons have undoubtedly damaged the reefs and perhaps we were not there at the best time for pelagics, but according to the park rangers, the only special seasonal sightings are the Thresher sharks seen normally in January/February. We even followed the dive center's advice and dived the sites when there was current to attract the feeding pelagics, even though that meant we had to dive one at a time towing a float while the other stayed in the dinghy for safety and pick up.

Also, we dove only a few of the 19 dive sites all around the 20-mile circumference. (The Park's GPS points of all the sites are on Vahalla's website now). What was also sad to see is that the park rangers did not have a VHF, which would have been useful to keep contact and in case of emergency. They did not seem to patrol or have any projects going on. They looked like they were there mostly to collect fees. This is quite a different experience than our experience at Helen's Reef in Palau.

## 5 Palawan & SW Philippines

Also see PDF file: M/V Solita's Cruising Notes on Palawan and Calamian Islands dated August 2013. Lots of good detailed info. Download from Noonsite, here:

<http://www.noonsite.com/images/pdfs/philippines-cruising-the-palawan-calamian-islands-august-2013>

Excerpts from this document have been included in the sections below.

**Solita – 2013:** Palawan Island is an island province of the Philippines and is located in the MIMAROPA region. Its capital is Puerto Princessa City. The province is named after its largest island, Palawan Island, which is 450 kms (280 mi) long, and 50 kms (31 mi) wide. Palawan also includes the Cuyo Islands in the Sulu Sea. The disputed Spratly Islands, located a few hundred kilometres to the west, are considered part of Palawan by the Philippines.



In the 2010 census it was noted that the population of Palawan province is 994,340, and the main religion is Catholicism.

There are 52 languages and dialects in the province, with Tagalog being spoken by more than 50 percent of the people. Other languages are Cuyonon (26.27 percent), Palawano (4.0 percent), and Hiligaynon (9.6 percent). Most people speak some English as well.

### **5.1 Checking In at Puerto Princesa**

Cissy at Abanico Yacht Club's Cell Number is Whatsapp: +639479302696

**Sail The Philippines FB Group – May 2024 – Puerto Princesa Palawan:** Just completed it today, but it seems things are still changing. Our experience was Puerto Princesa, but there are differences depending on your location. Failure to give advance notice of arrival can result in a 5000 peso penalty.

It is bit of a catch 22 "situation".

Their site says to notify them within 72 hours, but there are not many places where you can arrive here from within 72 hours. But at least a day in advance seems ok.

Download the eGovPH app and try to navigate thru the maze to let them know of your arrival. It might be easier to find the contact us part of the website: I had lots of problems with both attempts. There are also sites that look official but charge a fee to do the same service.

I paid for roaming with the telco in Malaysia, but it ran out before our arrival. Those with low speed internet might consider getting the contact info in advance so you can send an email, rather than fumble thru their app. Another possibility, except for those lucky folks with Starlink, is to buy an eSIM before departure. They screwed up my delivery of Starlink (3 days so far!), since "Alan" would not sign for it. There is no Alan at the yacht club!

Officials came to the yacht club, and we took quarantine and customs to the boat. They confirmed their visit by photos. (A pleasant visit.)

Back at the yacht club, immigration was also there. Paperwork was completed and most fees were paid.

Quarantine: 2500 pesos

Customs: 2630 pesos

Immigration was paid at their office at Robinson mall: 720 pesos.

And yes, official receipts were given.

Visa is good for 29 days. And 2 weeks before expiry, it can be renewed online.

Overall not a bad experience, but don't whine to the officials that you don't like it. Remember that they have the ability to make your life very miserable. We are guests in THEIR country. It is probably much cheaper, less rigorous, and easier than the country you came from, for foreigners.

**Sail SE Asia FB Group – January 2024 – Puerto Princesa Palawan:** Have heard from various cruisers wildly varying things, here's what I experienced, and none of this seemed negotiable, at the whim of anyone, or under the table:

Notify Customs, Immigration, and Quarantine via email a few days before arrival.

Correct email addresses as of January 2024 are:

Customs: [p04a\\_puertoprincesa@customs.gov.ph](mailto:p04a_puertoprincesa@customs.gov.ph)

Quarantine: [bogpalawan.icv@gmail.com](mailto:bogpalawan.icv@gmail.com)

Immigration: [puerto.princesa@immigration.gov.ph](mailto:puerto.princesa@immigration.gov.ph)

Immigration will ask you get a QR code. Update them with ETA as you get close.

Quarantine is particularly responsive via email and I gave them a few hours' notice and they showed up with Customs within 30 mins of my arriving.

Quarantine and Customs require a trip out to vessel, and each charged ~2300pp for a cursory inspection, their papers and included a receipt. They wanted most of the last port's paperwork, but did not ask for health/quarantine paper from Malaysia (which is good because in Sabah, quarantine doesn't really care to deal with yachts).

Then off to Immigration at the mall with the paperwork and left my passport, came back 2 hours later, paid ~600pp fee for stamp and they told me I could renew not sooner than 2 weeks prior to expire. Roland at the yacht club coordinated all of this, seemed to know the process very well, and drove me around all day for an additional 500pp. Sherry McCampbell for compendium if ya like, and I've got some new updated email addresses and whatsapp numbers too.

**Sail the Philippines FB Group – June 2023 – Puerto Princesa Palawan:** See info in [Pre-Arrival](#) about advance notice requirements.

Upon Arrival to PPC harbor, you are not allowed to disembark except to the Yacht Club to carry out signatures required for Immigration clearance. So you wait on board for Quarantine and Customs to arrive to your boat. You can either pick them up (there were 4 people), or the Yacht club can ferry them to and from your boat for a fee of 300Php. The officers were very courteous and friendly, even offering to remove their shoes without being told. They do ask for your Ships Stamp and will take a quick look around the inside. Quarantine asked no questions and Customs took a photo with no questions.

#### QUARANTINE REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) 1 X Copy of crew list
- 2) 1 x Copy of Port list (a list of ports you visited in the last 20 days with dates)
- 3) 1 x Copy of Ship registration
- 4) 1 x Copy of Passport main page
- 5) 1 x Copy of Passport last stamp page
- 6) 1 x copy of Covid vaccination (If not vaccinated, inform Quarantine during notification of Arrival and they will arrive to your boat with a swab test)
- 7) 1 x Copy of 'Free Pratique' from last port (require this document to be done during checkout at last port. If you arrive without this document, you will get a one-time waiver, but have it for the next time.)

☹ Payment of 2,500Php with receipt for original Free Pratique document they issue to you.

#### CUSTOMS REQUIREMENT

- 1) 1 X Copy of crew list
- 2) 1 x Copy of Ship Registration
- 3) ORIGINAL Copy of last Port Clearance (Make a copy for immigration requirements)
- 4) 1 x Copy of Passport main page
- 5) Payment of 2,500Php with receipt for original Record of Vessel Boarded document issued to you.

#### IMMIGRATION

- 1) 1 x Copy of 'Free Pratique' which you get from Quarantine during onboard formalities
- 2) 2 x Copies of Crew list
- 3) 1 x Copy of Ship Registration
- 4) 1 x Copy of last Port Clearance (note comment under Customs)
- 5) 1 x Copy of Passport main page
- 6) 1 x Copy of Passport last stamp page
- 7) Ignore the Covid Travel Insurance listed on attached photo

☹ Payment of 1000Php for Roland to process passport entry stamps (and whatever else)

Note: If you arrive without Philippine Pesos, they will allow this payment to be made after being fully cleared in IF the Abanico yacht Club is unable to assist. (You will have to visit each department to make the payment)

**Umineko – January 2020 – Palawan Check In:** Here's how it worked to check in at Puerto Princessa after arriving in Port Barton, Palawan, Philippines. Procedures might vary elsewhere in Philippines.

It was all very friendly, straightforward and efficient. We had the benefit of having Brian Tennant of SV Stella and Kiwi Lodge in Port Barton who gave us a very detailed list and directions which we'll share here.

From Port Barton we took an 3.5hr van ride (lv 0600 return 1700h and coat 300 Philippine Pesos) to the terminal in Puerto Princessa. Then to immigration in the Robinson's Mall, a short ride away by jeepney (10p). Tricycle drivers will quote whatever they think they can get away with, but none look like they're getting rich. The most we paid a tricycle was 100p to go across town with our packages from shopping.

There are several stores right near the terminal and a GoLand supermarket too so might be easier to do your shopping there once you're finished with the visa drill.

Immigration required photocopies of your boat registration papers, crew list, copy of bio page and exit visa page from your passport, and two (2) copies of last clearance papers.

Robinson Mall has a lot of coffee shops and upscale shopping and even a place to make copies but we got ours done across the street for very little money.

The visa on arrival was free and is good for 30-days.

Once you finish and get your stamp, get it photocopied for Quarantine and Customs. Be sure to keep the original of your port clearance which immigration issues as it will be requested of you when clearing out. A photocopy presented on clearing out will be a problem.

Next up was Quarantine on Rizal Avenue near the airport. Hard to find so have posted a snapshot of Google Maps and an exterior photo so you won't pass it by like I did at first.

Quarantine requires photocopies of boat registration, crew list and bio page from passport. There's a short form to fill out, a doctor to ask if you're healthy, and a practice issued. The doctor said there was no charge at the moment but maybe in the future.

Customs was on Manalo Street just past Burgos Street. There they required a form to be completed, a copy of boat registration, crew list, copies of bio page and the arrival stamp from immigration and the original of your last port clearance.

We ended up staying overnight so we could get a 29-day extension the next day, which is effectively 59-days total from date of arrival. This extension isn't available same day so we stayed overnight rather than take another 7-hr van ride. Our pensione was Tia Mers which was walking distance from Robinson and also a short walk to Abanico Yacht Club where we had a good time meeting new friends that night. Tiamares was cheap (875p), very comfortable, clean and had a free breakfast.

The cost for visa on arrival was 2,000p plus 1,000p for an "express" processing fee. We got the visa in less than an hour. If you can wait three days, there's no extra fee. Part of the 2,000p fee is a certificate stating you're not wanted by the police or banned from the country. Hang on that!

Word is you can get a six-month visa but must apply for it in Manila only. We decided we'll tailor our itinerary to extend every 30-days at the select immigration office locations around the country. If you have the luxury of affording a trip to Manila, it might be worth it. *(Ed note: after your first 29 day extension, most places will give you a 2 month extension, and most countries' citizens can extend almost indefinitely, 60 days at a time—it just costs money).*

**Several Reports – Aug 2023 – Clearing from Brooke's Point:** We are coming back to the Philippines from Malaysia. We use to clear into PP, but lately they have made it harder to clear with inspection and fees so it is no more free to clear into the Philippines. We have heard that you can clear into Brookes Point 100 mile south of PP now. Anybody have experience ? (each bullet below is an answer from a different person).

- Just talked with the coast guard in Palawan and they said you can make Brooke's Point as your first point of entry. Don't know what they charge there but it is supposed to be free. Ask for official receipt so you would know the charges are official and if not you could tell them you would not pay.
- The last reports are fairly current, standard costs, \$50usd for each of the 3 agencies, same here in Subic Bay, so likely everywhere now.
- We entered in mid July and did our clearance in PP. Every one was friendly and helpful the total coast was around 6000 Pesos.

- Be aware that they will charge you to travel + expenses if you want to clear into Brooke's Point. I am reliably informed some of the Officers from Subic were transferred to Puerto Princesa & brought their Bad Habits with them.

### **Umineko – Jan 2020 – Checking In at Puerto Princesa from Port Barton (West Coast):**

Here's how it worked to check in at Puerto Princessa after arriving in Port Barton, Palawan, Philippines.

It was all very friendly, straightforward and efficient. We had the benefit of having Brian Tennant of SV Stella and Kiwi Lodge in Port Barton who gave us a very detailed list and directions which we'll share here.

If anyone has better information, feel free to share. Procedures might vary elsewhere in Philippines.

From Port Barton we took an 3.5hr van ride (lv 0600 return 1700h and cost 300 Philippine Pesos) to the terminal in Puerto Princessa. Then to immigration in the Robinson's Mall, a short ride away by jeepney (10p). Tricycle drivers will quote whatever they think they can get away with, but none look like they're getting rich. The most we paid a tricycle was 100p to go across town with our packages from shopping.

There are several stores right near the terminal and a GoLand supermarket too so might be easier to do your shopping there once you're finished with the visa drill.

Immigration required photocopies of your boat registration papers, crew list, copy of bio page and exit visa page from your passport, and two (2) copies of last clearance papers.

Robinson Mall has a lot of coffee shops and upscale shopping and even a place to make copies but we got ours done across the street for very little money.

The visa on arrival was free and is good for 30-days.

Once you finish and get your stamp, get it photocopied for Quarantine and Customs. Be sure to keep the original of your port clearance which immigration issues as it will be requested of you when clearing out. A photocopy presented on clearing out will be a problem.

Next up was Quarantine on Rizal Avenue near the airport. Hard to find so have posted a snapshot of Google Maps and an exterior photo so you won't pass it by like I did at first.

Quarantine requires photocopies of boat registration, crew list and bio page from passport. There's a short form to fill out, a doctor to ask if you're healthy, and a practice issued. The doctor said there was no charge at the moment but maybe in the future.

Customs was on Manalo Street just past Burgos Street. There they required a form to be completed, a copy of boat registration, crew list, copies of bio page and the arrival stamp from immigration and the original of your last port clearance.

No big deal if you have all this in advance.

We ended up staying overnight so we could get a 29-day extension which is effectively 59-days total from date of arrival. This extension isn't available same day so we stayed overnight rather than take another 7-hr van ride. Our pensione was Tia Mers which was walking distance from Robinson and also a short walk to Abanico Yacht Club where we had a good time meeting new

friends that night. Tiamares was cheap (875p), very comfortable, clean and had a free breakfast.

The cost for visa on arrival was 2,000p plus 1,000p for an "express" processing fee. We got the visa in less than an hour. If you can wait three days, there's no extra fee. Part of the 2,000p fee is a certificate stating you're not wanted by the police or banned from the country. Hang on to that!

Word is you can get a six-month visa but must apply for it in Manila only. We decided we'll tailor our itinerary to extend every 30-days at the select immigration office locations around the country. If you have the luxury of affording a trip to Manila, it might be worth it.

**Iva Agüero (FB) – Feb 2018 – Check-in Process:** We anchored in Port Barton, everyone is yachtie friendly, no problems to leave our dinghy with resorts or bars. We were asked to register with the local Coast Guard, no fees or anything and they said that they would look after the boat while we went to Puerto Princesa to check in.

Puerto Princesa trip was super smooth. The minivan from Port Barton dropped us right at the door of Robinson's Place, a new and modern mall where the Immigration Office is located. We had been granted a 59 day tourist visa by the Embassy of the Philippines in Malaysia prior to our arrival. The authorities at Puerto Princesa Immigration Office accepted our visa without question and without extra charges. Everything was smooth and easy, the officers were very professional and the office has operating hours from 10am to 6pm with no breaks.

We then took a 15min motor tricycle ride to the Customs Office (less modern but quite charming - pictured). The officials were very friendly and even gave us our Customs Clearance in advance, so that when we decide to leave Palawan we don't have to go see them again. We were charged 220pesos for admin charges and got a receipt for this.

Door to door our trip to Puerto Princesa took 12 hours, 6 hours minivan return trip and 6 hours around the city. Very efficient and hassle free, a wonderful welcome to the Philippines!

## **5.2 *Renewing Your Visa in Palawan or Coron***

More information on Visa Renewals can be found in [Section 1](#).

**Solita – 2013:** You need to visit an Immigration office to apply for and extend visas. The only Immigration office in this area is in Puerto Princessa (on Rizal Ave, near the airport). There is a small Border Office in James Brooke Pt on the lower east coast of Palawan, but this does not deal with visas.

There is no immigration office in the Calamian Islands, though there is some talk of creating one soon.

The options to renew your visa from Coron are:

- Fly to Manila – there are several flights daily.
- Take a local 2GO ferry from Coron to Puerto Princessa – it will take 12 hours, you will need to stay 3 days to visit Immigration then catch the next ferry back to Coron.
- Fly to Cebu – there are direct flights three times weekly, but this also means a 2 night stopover.

- Travel to Calapan or Puerto Galera on Mindoro or Batangas in SE Luzon by yacht – there is no direct flight or ferry.
- LBC your stuff to an agent in Manila. [See an account from 2020 here.](#)

There are 3 commercial airports in the Palawan-Calamian area – Puerto Princessa, El Nido and Coron/Busuanga, all connecting to Manila with direct flights daily.

If you overstay your visa, it will cost you 1,010 pesos to have it reinstated as well as any due visa costs.

### **5.3 Calamian Islands (Busuanga/Coron)**

**Solita – 2013:** The Calamian Islands lie to the north of Palawan and are included in the Palawan province. They consist of over 80 islands and islets, the main ones being Busuanga Island, Coron Island and Culion Island. Busuanga Island hosts the largest town, Coron, as well as the only airport in the Calamian Islands. Some of the finest beaches, islands and tourist spots in the Philippines are found in this island group. It is also well renowned as one of the world's best diving destinations, with beautiful coral reefs and WW2 wreck diving. Other tourist attractions in the Calamians are the Calauit Safari Park, the former leper colony at Culion and the clear water lakes and coves of Coron Island.

#### **5.3.1 Coron Town (3G Internet)**

Coron Town is on Busuanga Island and is the major provisioning point for cruising the Calamian Islands.

**Good News – July 2021 – 2 Cycle Motor Oil:** You can buy 2-cycle oil at Hotel 4:13 (Four Thirteen Suites) in front of the Coron Drugstore. 180 National Highway, Barangay 5, Coron, Palawan. Mobile # 0922-883-7016 or 0917-888-0656.

The hotel is owned by former vice mayor Emil Neri. Yes, you need to go in the hotel's reception to ask if they have stocks of the Havoline 2-cycle oil.

This is the only place where you can buy the 2-cycle oil in Coron.

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** We anchored in front of town among the permanent moorings of tour boats. There's lots of space to anchor in about 10m in this big natural harbor, but watch out for unmarked isolated shallow reefs scattered around in the area!

Coron Town 11°59.66N, 120°11.87E 10m sand/mud Globe good, Smart good

You can tie up your dinghy at La Sirenetta Restaurant or at Sea Dive complex, which are easy to see from the anchorage. Expect quite low water at low tide far from shore, and your outboard might pick up a lot of weeds in your prop near the shore so be prepared to row. The other choice is to go to the floating dock near the left yellow tower (old zipline), on that big reclaimed land (the public market is located on the far end).

Since we arrived mid-May, we had some thunder and rain briefly just about daily: great to fill your water tanks, but makes town and market a bit muddy. The market area could easily be renovated, but the selection is not bad at all. Pretty much everything comes from Manila, as it is very hard to grow things around here, we have been told. But we also heard about small organic farming. Hopefully a growing trend!

There's an LBC office here to receive packages ordered from the U.S. via shippingcart.com and an airport (a half-hour via a shuttle van) with daily flights to Manila.

A nice panorama hike is to walk up to the big cross and the Coron-lighted sign at the top of a hill overlooking the town (no charge).

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 – Dicanituan Bay (Discovery Island Resort):** With Luc flying away for a few days to deliver one of our puppies to her new owners and to do a marine survey in Davao, we wanted a safe anchorage in case of stormy weather and not too far away from Coron. Dicanituan Bay, just near the western edge of Coron town was the perfect place: well protected all around, dinghy dock ashore near main road, Internet coverage. Actually a few local sailboats are moored here permanently! We also met Plong and his assistant at the small marina who was able to **repair our outboard**. Quite lucky for us to find one of the rare outboard mechanics in the Philippines, as most boats are not using outboards, but simple Honda air-cooled engines.

Anchorage at the west end of Coron Harbor 12°00.09N, 120°11.27E 7m mud Globe & Smart ok

**Elizabeth Jane II – June 2014:** 11° 59.612' N / 120° 11.758' E Coming into Coron Harbour we touched the bottom at a reasonable speed. The charts were way off and it just goes to show that you have to be careful about every entry. No serious damage, but it took a fair chip of paint off the front of the keel at about 1.8m. The harbour is a beautiful spot despite the tricky entry. Note: hit the reef at 11 59.250N 120 11.420E at high tide.

**Brigadoon - 2013 -** We came here on 2 trips, once very busy & other not. You need to use Coron town for stocking up on your main supplies. There's small shops tucked away in side streets, that sell western products. A good bakery, for non sweet bread. Markets, not great, produce weary. Can sometimes get butter in the bakeries. Petrol/ diesel/ hardware. Hire tricycle to take you to first 2. We entered via western route. Shallow reef area in front of township. Anchor on the edge of the local bangkas. Great mango shakes in market. 11° 59N 120° 11E

**Arnak – 2013:** We anchored in two spots:

(1) 11°59.770N 120°11.783E in 9m mud. Good holding off town.

(2) 12°00.089N 120°11.292E in 6m mud behind Canitauan island.

The second anchorage gives much more protection in fresh NE/E winds and is quieter, but you need to take your dinghy ¾ nm to town. You can leave your dinghy at the orange 3 story Sea Dive centre next to the market area. WIFI is available free here and meals and drinks are available.

There is also a very cruiser-friendly resort on Canitauan island (Discovery Resort, Allan and Little Mama), where they serve meals and drinks. Recommended. From this anchorage you can take your dinghy to a stone wall directly ashore and walk or trike to town. About ½ hour walk.

Outboard oil and fuel available at Petron fuel station and over the road for oil, on the way in to town on the main road.

**Arnak – February 2010:** 11°59.634N / 120°11.869E Watch out for isolated reef close by, marked by small round buoy. Keep as far south as possible to avoid dust from reclaiming earthworks.



Coron has most supplies and a reasonable market with meat, fish, poultry and fresh fruit and veges which arrive on Friday and Saturday.

Markets open all day but best in the morning when local growers sell. Good bakeries and eateries and free WIFI at Coron divers where you can leave your dinghy in the canal alongside steps under a walk bridge.

Broadband 3G available here.

From here you can visit the lakes on Coron Island by dinghy at 11°57.78N 120°13.45E

Watch out for isolated reefs to SE of anchorage at Coron, marked by small round buoys. The lakes and coastal area are a highlight of the area.

A fee of pp200 a person is charged to visit the lake and you can leave your dinghy tied to the sea wall. A 10 min walk to the lake.

It is also possible to take your boat into the lagoon just behind the island but check depths over the joining reef first. A cat was anchored there during our visit. Spectacular.

**Lifelines – May 2008:** 11°59.65' / 120°11.88' Anchored in 11m. Need to thread way into harbour through coral.



### 5.3.2 Busuanga Island South Coast

#### 5.3.2.1 Coron Island

##### Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA

**Bulletin):** We decided to circumnavigate Coron Island in two legs with an overnight in a very protected anchorage. Our first clockwise leg from Coron was 15nm. On the way, we saw a few very enticing beaches with a possible day anchorage so we had lunch at one very cool beach and a swim and run with our three dogs (only one puppy left) on the eastern point. We anchored in 13m sand area near a series of nice small deserted beaches

with small caves and sea pools.

East Point 11°55.97N, 120°16.67E 13m sand none/none

Afterwards, we motored the last 7nm to **Calis Point Cove**.

Calis Pt. Cove 11°49.42N, 120°15.63E 10m hard bottom with thin sand none/none

This scenic bay ranks with the Bacuit Bay in Palawan! We anchored in 10m on a sand patch between corals. Eyeball your way over the coral bar into this very scenic cove. There's plenty of depth, but you need good light to avoid the one or two very shallow heads. We anchored just inside of the coral bar so as to avoid the many buoys farther in (seaweed farms), and perhaps deeper depths. Excellent protection from all winds except north and then you can probably tuck your way in at the head of the bay and still be protected (although in deeper water or near reefs and buoys). There were several nice beaches around and the Cathedral dive site is very near.

The next day, we explored this beautiful bay by dinghy only leaving our footprints on some of the beaches. We also did a scuba dive in Cathedral Cave in order to film it in video. Abet, the caretaker of the site showed us the black mooring ball about 100' from the cliffs. We went by dinghy from Calis Point anchorage, which was very near and anchored the dinghy in 10m between the mooring and cliffs. The entrance is located under a very orange-colored part of the cliff.

Cathedral Cave 11°49.37N, 120°16.00E black mooring ball/day anchorage none/none

To explore the cathedral in scuba or free diving (if you are very very good!) go to the base of the cliffs (more to the left) and look for a small crevice about 7m depth (it is not obvious that this is the entrance). Pass through it (it is very short, narrow and you will be at 12m deep) and you end up at the bottom of a sand mountain. Follow it up, you will see the daylight, and you arrive in the cathedral! You can surface into the cathedral, as it has a huge chamber with a big opening high up that lets light through. The ceilings offer very nice stalactites and other formations.

If you are an experienced cave diver, you can also explore a second chamber that has no light and very few small air pockets (be careful because the opening is at the bottom and if you kick the silty sand, you might not see any more daylight coming from the cathedral area). This anchorage and cave are so far our choice as the most picturesque area in the Calamians. It rivals with the best areas in the Bacuit Bay! Glad we came here!

**Brigadoon - 2013: Coron Island** - Skeleton wreck and general snorkling. Signs asking for P100pax at each site, but no one around to collect money. We put anchor down not so far away, and used dingy in the area.

**Arnak – 2013 – Coron Island, Twin Lagoons:** 11°56.379N 120°12.423E in 22m mud with stern line to rocks on northern side of lagoon.

Totally surrounded by sheer rock wall formations and a short dinghy ride to the inner lagoon where you can swim through to the inner inner lagoon for a fee of php 100 each. This is again an amazing place with total piece and quiet at night. The rocks are razor sharp so if tying stern to be sure to protect your ropes from chafing. Quite nice snorkeling all around this coast. An excellent place to explore by dinghy around the lovely bays and lagoons which are protected by shallow reef bars.

**Arnak – 2013 – Coron Island, Cagayan Lake:** Pos 11°57.665N 120°13.668E in 20m mud and stern line ashore to rocks. A totally protected anchorage enclosed by sheer rock walls. You must pass over 2 shallow reef bars with minimum 3.5m depth and you cannot get in to the inner lagoon where the tourists boats tie up for the short walk over to the lake. This is postcard stuff, amazing. Php 200 to visit the lake but worth every penny.

**Brigadoon - 2013: Kayangan Cove** - lovely anchorage. Locals wanted P500 for anchoring, but we did not get around to paying them. Went ashore, and paid P200 pax to go to one of the many fresh water lakes. Nice swimming. But hundreds of mosquitos. 11°58N 120°14E

#### **5.3.2.2 Port Lucayan (11-59N / 120-07E)**

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Port Luyucan 11°59.05N, 120°06.77E 12m mud none/weak

**Arnak – 2013:** 11°59.937N 120°06.162 E in 4m mud.

Good all round protection in this bay. We sat out the edge of typhoon Bopha here with thankfully only about 50kt winds with 2 anchors in tandem and chain and nylon rode. Anchors were buried about a meter deep on inspection.

**Lifelines - May 2008:** Port Luyucan: 11°59.01' / 120°06.74' Anchored in 12m mud. Excellent typhoon hole. All around protection.

#### **5.3.2.3 Apo Island**

**Arnak – Feb 2010 – Apo Island:** 11°58.773N / 120°04.883E Anchored here to dive on wreck just north of small beach on Tangat island across the channel. There is a small bouy tied to the wreck and tourist diving boats visit occasionally.

### 5.3.2.4 *Sangat / Tangat Island*

**Sloepmouche – Mary 2017:** Our first stop after Coron was the west side of **Sangat Island** where we attached to a free boat mooring consisting of three cement barrels about 16m deep connected to ~10m navy chain followed by ~25m big blue propylene line with plastic floating barrel and spliced eye pickup line. This mooring put you within dinghy distance from several nearby shipwrecks. Just a little south of this mooring, about the level of a very small boat mooring, right between the rocks ashore are hot springs: at high tide, you can feel the warm water and see the thermocline. Wild monkeys can sometimes be seen on the cliffs ashore. Going north, just after the mangroves begin, if you are here at very low tide you can find your way along the shore to a small walled enclosure around another hot spring river. Relax in fresh warm, not hot, water.

Sangat Island Hot Springs 1 11°58.32N, 120°03.96E big boat mooring in 16m sand none/weak

We did a **dive** on the Olympia Maru, just 1/4nm away among the pearl farm buoys, at around 0815 and were back onboard by the time the tourist boats arrived—a good thing as visibility was not that great to begin with. It is a Japanese freighter/cargo ship, 120m long with a max depth of 25m and a minimum depth of 14m. Pick up the red mooring ball tied to the stern or black mooring ball tied to the bow.

Olympia Maru wreck 11°58.27N, 120°03.68E 2 moorings in ~20m to bow and stern n/a

**Brigadoon - 2013:** Resort, South Bay, Andy Pownall 0920 9544 328. Wreck for snorkling on eastern side.

**Arnak – Feb 2010 – Tangat Island:** 11°59.431N / 120°03.702E anchored behind lip in reef in 17m. You can anchor here during the day inside the extensive pearl farm (buoys everywhere) but need permission from boss (in white hut) to stay the night. Very quiet spot and ideal for diving all the wrecks in the bay by dinghy. No beaches but very sheltered from NE winds.

**Lifelines - May 2008:** East side of Tangat Island: 11°58.54' / 120°04.75' Anchored in 25m. Tangat gunboat wreck in 10m nearby.

**Lifelines - May 2008:** SE corner of Tangat Island: 11°57.6' / 120°05.0' / Anchored in 22m. Good snorkeling.

### 5.3.3 *Busuanga West Coast*

#### 5.3.3.1 *Puerto Del Sol (Pearl Bay)*

**Andy – July 2023 – New Moorings in Outer Pearl Bay:** I bought a bit of land in Busuanga Bay a few years back. I put some moorings in the outer bay here so that we can attract more visiting boats to the area. It is an ideal 'home location' for island hopping and explorations around the Busuanga's many islands and reefs.

I have the moorings free at the minute, but need to start charging soon to save upsetting the local businesses that need to make an income.

I'll be publishing more details on Facebook "Sunset Moorings" and have put a location on Google Maps in the hope to attract more 'random passing cruising boats.' Recently we had a Japanese boat pull up on their non-stop journey to Borneo. I cannot tell you how much of a cultural treat that was!! Made all the effort worthwhile.

Anyway, here are links for our online presence, and let me know if you are passing some time.

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/sunsetmoorings/>

GOOGLE: <https://goo.gl/maps/Jre9PFa2bEejGFTq8>

The current 5 'YACHT' moorings are 1.5 tonnes+ reinforced cement and solid rock; set in 15m water depth, with 37m polyprop line with eye splice each end. Anti-chafe, round turns on connections, and no steel attachments at all. Moorings are separated by a generous 100m, so you won't feel over-crowded.

Our next moorings are going to be 'MEGA' moorings, with extra weight and the really big 2" 8 plait polyprop rope, and these are intended for larger vessels.

There will be space for anchoring at no charge, and all yachties will be welcome at our regular BBQ meetups, without need to pay for a mooring.

**Soggy Paws – June 2018: New Yacht Service Business:** Damien from The Boat Shed has just retired from being an Aircraft Engineer and Diesel Mechanic, and is setting up a “yacht service” shop. He has a full machine shop, MIG and TIG welding, diesel repair, refrigeration, etc... If you have mechanical / electrical issues in the SW Philippines, drop an email to Damien. [damienblyth63@gmail.com](mailto:damienblyth63@gmail.com) +63 917-511-4345 (Globe). He's got good connections in Manila and can get parts flown in, or heavier stuff sent in by surface ship.

Damien also has a provisioning service, where he flies in “good” groceries in from Manila that you can't get in Coron (good beef, cheese, butter, delicacies, etc.). He also has an ice machine and can supply ice.

Damien also said he can take mail delivery, so you can have your stuff shipped to him and he'll hold it for your arrival.

There are also plans for a single boat slipway, designed to handle catamarans up to 45 ft. (not enough draft for monos in the location).

**Transport into Coron:** We were diving with Busuanga Bay Divers, and arranged a dive/town day. We did the Cathedral Cave dive, and then stopped in Coron for a quick stop at the bank and the market.

Busuanga Bay Lodge also has a van that goes into Coron Town, but no idea what the cost of that would be. Might not be too expensive if they would let you join with other guests.

There is also a jeepney-type shared ride van you can catch from the sari-sari store in the inner corner of the bay SE of Puerto del Sol, that will take you into Coron for P150 per person. (Look for the steps up from the water, vans reportedly come by around once an hour).

**Internet & Phone:** Smart flat doesn't work in Pearl Bay—not a glimmer of a signal. Globe phone service and data is spotty in Pearl Bay right now, so be patient if you are trying to contact anyone in Pearl Bay. (BBL says a new Globe 5G tower is supposed to be installed Nov 2018).

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** 12°01.40N, 119°58.98E free moorings in 4m mud none/none

We motored just 8nm from the west end of Sangat Island to **Pearl Bay/Puerto Del Sol Bay** where we expected to find much activity, but it was dead quiet as we arrived. I guess it's low season now! There were a few yachts being stored here on the yacht club moorings. The bay is very beautiful and protected, and shoal yachts can get up even farther into the Cyclone Hole. Even though there are several resorts on the hills surrounding the bay, they all agreed to stick to architectural guidelines that give the bay a beautiful homogeneous look with the striking white buildings against the densely forested green hillsides. It's refreshingly nice compared to the architectural mishmash and kitsch infecting so many of the tourist areas of the Philippines, like El Nido, Coron, and the Sabang area of Puerto Galera.

We took a mooring in 4m mud. Moorings belonging to the Puerto Del Sol Yacht Club are free if you patronize the nearby resorts. Check in with the Puerto Del Sol resort (north of here). Long-term storage is possible.

On the NW side of the bay entrance you have the Busuanga Resort (more high-end, international resort type). On the SE side of the entrance, you have the very friendly Al Faro resort. A dive center is located at Puerto Del Sol resort. Surprisingly and sadly, Globe Internet, none; Smart mobile, none. Internet access with Globe is OK when up at Al Faro bar/restaurant as you then have a line of sight to a faraway Globe cell tower in the north. Both of the other resorts have satellite phone services (it was down at PDSR at this time). There's easy access to the highway (45 minutes to Coron). You can probably book a shuttle to town with a resort.

The bay is well protected except from strong SW. In case of typhoon, it should be possible to sneak into the back part of the bay (<2m depth). While here we dinghied just outside the mouth of the bay to the Okikawa wreck on a red mooring on stern in 10m on deck. Visibility was better on this wreck (lucky day?) and we enjoyed exploring the outside as well as some of the inside.

After a few nice meals and some relaxing in Puerto Del Sol, we decided to go diving.

Okikawa Maru wreck 12°01.05N, 119°58.17E 2 moorings in ~10/15m to bow and stern

Akitsushima wreck 11°59.23N, 119°58.40E 1 mooring ok/ok

Ekkai Maru wreck 11°59.26N, 120°02.22E 2 moorings in 15m to bow and stern ok/ok

Irako wreck 11°58.05N, 120°02.41E 2 moorings in 15m to bow and stern good/good

We tied Sloepmouche to the wreck moorings as these appear sturdy enough to hold a bigger vessel in mild weather conditions, like we have now in this "between season." Our first dive was on the **Akitsushima wreck**, a Japanese navy seaplane tender, which is 113m long. The maximum depth is 38m and the minimum depth is 17m with an average of 26m. We gave a line to a diving banca that was already moored when we arrived (no second mooring here at this time). This one is for experienced divers (deeper penetration, currents at times).

We left for a short 4nm trip to the **Ekkai Maru** where we tied to one of the two moorings. We had lunch and interval time here while several diving bancas arrived and they kept tying to each other on the second mooring. After a dive, this time with very poor visibility but interesting penetrations with better visibility inside, we were visited by two young guys from the nearby settlement— nice guys, who appreciated an older mask we had that was looking for a new face

to fit! (They never asked for anything and only once were we asked for the 50P/diver/dive fee we heard was requested from tourist dive boats.)

With the mild weather, we decided to stay overnight here in order to dive a nearby wreck first thing the next morning, before any diving boats arrived. The next morning, we just moved 1/2nm to the **Irako wreck** for a deeper dive and our only dive of the day. We explored the Irako wreck, a Japanese refrigeration/navy provision store ship (147m long/max depth 43m/deck 28-35m).

**Brigadoon - 2013: Pearl Bay** 119° 58N 12°01E Good mooring buoys. Owned by Mike, of Puerto del Sol resort (NE corner). 09289559994. Al Faro resort wonderful infinity pool. Need to make dinner reservations. (we actually slept in the stairwell of this resort for typhoon Haiyan) Busuanga Bay lodge, new at entrance on left, great views. Ddives operate out of bay for wreck diving. [www.ddivers.com](http://www.ddivers.com)

**Arnak – 2013 - Puerto Del Sol (Pearl Bay): Typhoon moorings** 12°00.959N 119°58.888E in 9m mud.

Excellent shelter in NE and water at head of this outer bay. There are two up market resorts with moorings available for PP 200 a day. Supposedly typhoon suitable. Only open to SW. Water available on hose here or a spring at the head of the first bay.

A marked channel leads in to the bay with moorings (IALA B) Red to starboard entering.

#### **5.3.3.2 Calumbayan & Dicoyan Islands**

**Arnak – February 2010 – Calumbuyan Island:** 12°01.085N 119°56.827E Anchor on clean bottom in 21m. Watch reef running NW from the northern top of Calumbuyan Is in the passage between the islands.

**Shanghaied – Unknown Date:** 12 01.344 N / 119 56.467 E 20m sand I think. Coral quite good but very few fish

**Lifelines - May 2008:** East side of Calumbayan Island: 12°00.75' / 119°56.59' Anchored in 22m. V. protected in W. wind. Fantastic snorkelling. Pretty, friendly day resort.

#### **5.3.3.3 Busuanga Town & Concepcion**

**Lifelines - May 2008: Concepcion town:** 12°02.7' / 119°58.0' Anchored in 13m. Pretty fishing village. Visited the "Pier House"

#### **5.3.3.4 Horse Island Area**

**Arnak – 2013: Malatayoc Island:** 12°02.725N 119°52.852E in 11m sand

A lovely deserted island with good beach access at all tides on the northern end. Good snorkeling and beach combing.

**Lifelines - May 2008:** North Cay: 11°59.7' / 119°51.4' Anchored in 16m. Beautiful reef (dropoff only, reeftop dead) – best snorkeling since Australia. Privately protected.

#### **5.3.3.5 Black Island**

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Continuing north on the west side of Busuanga Island, we took a leisurely cruise near several small islands looking for a safe anchorage near good snorkeling and a nice beach. Due to some overcast weather at some point and lack of

finding a good overnight anchorage, we ended up going the 16nm to picturesque **Black Island** where we knew there was a mooring on another WWII wreck. With the bottom at 90' deep and just 100m from the beach, we were happy to check the mooring and find it was sturdy enough for overnight.

Black Island - Nanshin Maru wreck 12°09.27N, 119°49.19E big boat black mooring in 20m No Globe / Weak Smart

Black Island Caves 12°09.16N, 119°49.09E ashore, well marked

After a good night of sleep, we explored the Nanshin Maru, a Japanese tanker/ oiler, 40-50m long. Stern top lies at 20m facing the shore, bow rests in 30m. It's a small, easy wreck to dive with great visibility due to currents (we dove at slack tide and had no current). It's perfect for leisurely exploration and photos/videos; no dangerous penetrations possible. From the wreck mooring, you dinghy or swim ashore to a nice steep beach. Small palapas are erected for day visitors (also overnights?)

A small community of five people live here. There are caves only a few hundred yards away, kept very clean (no trash or graffiti). Bring some torch lights if you like to explore more fully. Some shallow areas are filled with seawater. You might be asked a 200P/person fee to dive the wreck and explore the caves combined.

**Brigadoon - 2013: Malajon Is/ Black Is** - very pretty, mooring buoy in 60ft, close to land. Snorkling. Caves P150 pax

#### **5.3.3.6 Ilituk Bay / Calauit Island**

**Mokisha – April 2018:** 12 16.220 N / 119 53.597 E 8kts NW, 8m flat bottom. mud. Large anchoring area. No cell service. Park worth going. Friendly staff, nice walk. Reef at N side of channel entrance can be tricky.

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Calauit Island Safari Park 12°16.32N, 119°53.14E 5m mud none/none

Calauit Island has a game park, Calauit Safari Park, established in 1976, with a variety of African and Philippine species. The game park welcomes visitors, for 400P/person fee and a 1,000P jeep fee if you'd like to be driven around for a 1½ hour tour (you won't see much more by jeep, you'll only finish sooner since the road has not been fixed to go farther on the island).

If you have always wanted to hand-feed a giraffe, this may be your big chance. If you have visited other similar parks, you might be disappointed, as this park feels old and is somewhat run-down nowadays, especially since typhoon Yolanda a few years back. Other than giraffes, zebras, calamian deer and some hidden antelopes, there are not many free-range animals to see. A few animals like monkeys, python, small freshwater alligators and wild pigs were in cages. Our tour started at 0700 and we were finished by 0830.

**Brigadoon – 2013:** Home of wildlife park, set up by the Marcos's in the 70's. Now a small area. Zebras, giraffe and deer. P400pax, P50 to feed giraffe & P1000 vehicle use (the rules on vehicle use change - check these, as a very easy and pleasant walk) Not a have to do experience.

Very good anchorage, watch for reef on northern point of entrance to bay. Small sari sari stall on opposite bank to park, dry goods only. 12° 16N 119° 53E



**Valhalla - October 2004:** As we anchored in 18 ft over mud we were greeted by three manta rays, about 2 meters wingspan, playing around the boats. We went ashore and booked a tour of the Safari Park for the next morning at 0800.

While having dinner Saturday night the safari tour folks showed up alongside in a banca and asked if we could do our tour at 0600 since they had a lot of bookings for the 0800 tour. Suited us much better since we wanted to get underway afterward. The tour was EXCELLENT! And the time of day was good ... cool and the animals were all up and about. Saw zebra, giraffe, mountain bear cat, porcupine, mouse deer, impala and horses.

Our anchorage: 12-16.206 N / 119-53.132 E

### 5.3.4 Busuanga Island North & East Coast Area



#### 5.3.4.1 Dibooyan Island

**Brigadoon – 2013:** We found a small shelf for anchoring. Sea turtles welcomed us, and more around the tip of the island. Snorkeling. Property fenced, with 3 guards there. Hopefully they are keeping “bad men” from ruining the coral. 12° 16N 120° 05E

#### 5.3.4.2 Dimaquait Island

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Since we were finished at Calauit by 8:30, we decided to make the 20nm+ sail to the NE side of Busuanga right away.

Be careful rounding the NW point of the island because of large shallower areas.

We had planned to pick up a mooring at the Club Paradise Resort on a small white beach island just off the main island of Busuanga. When we saw a tender approach us, we erroneously thought they were going to indicate a mooring ball, but instead we were chased away by the skiff before we could even think about anchoring! Sailors are NOT welcome anymore (they were in the past). So, we continued another 4nm to a different resort that we were told were welcoming to cruisers. As we neared the point of land, we were engulfed by a rainstorm that lasted until we got near the resort (good timing after an instrument approach!).

Club Paradise Resort 12°13.90N, 120°05.19E no mooring, no anchoring

So, we continued another 4nm to a different resort that we were told were welcoming to cruisers. (Port Caltom)

#### 5.3.4.3 Port Caltom / El Rio y Mar

<http://www.elrioymar.com/>

<http://dugongdivecenter.com/>

**Soggy Paws – June 2018:** We spent 3 nights at El Rio y Mar, diving with Dugong Dive Center. This is an upscale resort, and a bit pricey for a cruiser's budget, but was very welcoming. We texted our arrival ahead of time, and they came out in a launch to greet us, making sure we knew of the charges for the mooring (still P500 per night with a P500 pp per day “use it or lose it” fee. We used our P500 per person to have a nice dinner every night. They have a full bar on the water, and a very nice restaurant, complete with a couple of very nice guitar players who rove around the restaurant and serenade each table. Quite the nice touch.

We did 2 days of diving with Dugong Dive Center, one day on the Japanese shipwreck in the bay (2 dives on the wreck and one on a nearby reef), and one day with the Dugongs (2 reef dives and 1 30 minute dugong dive, no dugongs promised). Both were well organized and this is a top notch dive center (with prices to match). Our bill for 2 people after 2 days was P29,000. The dugong place is currently a 2 hr boat ride away, so there is quite a large per person fee for the boat ride.

Would I do the dugong thing again? Everyone should see one once, but I wouldn't do it again (unless it was on our own or much cheaper). Fortunately for us, our dugong showed up and stayed around, though it got a little agitated when a remora attached itself to its tail, and we had to back off, as the dugong was thrashing around quite a bit trying to detach the remora. We got some decent pictures, so it was worth it in that sense.

If you want to use all the extensive amenities (including the resort pool), there is another fee. We never paid that fee. The dive shop has a pool right in front of it, and we swam in their pool a couple of times after diving.

**Mokisha – March 2018:** The resort/dive shop have pretty much taken up the anchorable area with moorings. When we found a large spot between them and anchored, they objected because scuba divers use the area. Isn't there a law.... P500 per day for a mooring!

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** After we entered **Port Caltom Bay** and neared **El Rio Y Mar Resort** we were welcomed by dinghy and friendly personnel who gave us a "sailor rate and guidelines" print-out.

El Rio Y Mar Resort 12°11.35N, 120°06.08E white mooring balls off resort Good Globe & Smart Mooring fee is 500P per night plus a consumable fee of 500P/person/night that can be used at the bar and at the restaurant. You have to pay an extra 1000P/ person per day for the use of the resort—swimming pools, showers, kayak, standup paddle board, billiards, table tennis, snorkeling, hiking and Wi-Fi.

The Dugong Dive Center is located here on the premises. After, we indulged ourselves in the superior cuisine at their restaurant and went diving on the wreck, as well as looking for dugongs (unfortunately we only saw one and for only a few seconds, unlike guests the previous day).

**Valhalla – Oct 2004: El Rio y Mar Resort:** The El rio y Mar Resort (formerly called Maricaban Bay) is a great place for yachties. There are moorings at P150 per day, yachtie discounts (50% on drinks, 30% on food), and free transportation out to Club Paradise (a resort on Dimaquit Island, about 4NM away), to Coron and the airport. They have fresh veggies delivered from Manila which can be purchased and also have diesel ... which we desperately needed! Approx posn: 12-11.35 N / 120-06.07 E

We spent one day at Club Paradise snorkeling and having a lunch buffet. The next day we took the free transportation to Coron for supplies. With a lot of delays along the way waiting for passengers at the airport, it took six hours of traveling to spend four hours in town!

#### **5.3.4.4 Dicapadiac Island**

**Brigadoon - 2013:** NE corner. Small shelf to anchor in. Men in jetboat took our names, seemed to be minders of the pearl farms further in the bay. 12° 11N 120° 08E

#### **5.3.4.5 Calibauan Island**

**Brigadoon - 2013:** We found it hard to find an anchorage, lots of buoys marking off areas of pearl farms.

#### **5.3.4.6 Tara Island**

**Sloepmouche – June 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** 12 16.5533 N / 120 16.5533 E 13m good sand in nice bay with fishing village ashore. Reported having very nice coral reefs in protected marine area. Globe internet: none; Smart mobile phone: none.

We stopped at **Tara Island**, off the NE coast of Busuanga. Though it's 3nm out of the way on our route to Apo Reef, it offers better protection than Nanga Island. There was a nice sand spit beach about a mile away that our dogs could run on without leash.

**Unknown Boat / Unknown Date:** 12 17.069 N / 120 21.268 E Anchor in around 12 m 300 m off stone pier in village on W side, or a bit further N between a tiny islet and Tara, close to the islet in about 15m in the neighborhood of several bommies with about 2m over them. Nice beaches. No supplies other than fish.

#### **5.3.4.7 Port Borac**

**Brigadoon – 2013 - Port Borac - Village.** Good anchorage, kids came out to boat to sell fish. Fishing stakes in bay. 12° 02N 120°19E

**Unknown Source/Date:** 12 02.538 N / 120 19.200 E 12M mud; watch unmarked N reef, rocks on approach

#### **5.3.4.8 Bocao Point**

Shanghaied – Unknown Date: 22m sand coral rubble. SHANGHAIED

### **5.3.5 Culion Island Area – West Side Anchorages**

#### **5.3.5.1 Halsey Harbor**

**Arnak – 2013 – Halsey Harbor South Arm:** 11°43.259N 119°58.283E in 2m mud at end of channel. **Typhoon anchorage.** Keep pretty much to the centre of the channel all the way up. There is total protection all around all the way up and you can anchor anywhere up to the head of the sound. Enter Halsey Hbr through south channel with plenty of depth and soundings shoal gradually as you go up. This is a very pretty spot and totally protected. The rest of Halsey Hbr is very open and deep.

*Passage from here north through the channel between Culion and Galoc island. The channel through is easy with plenty of depth and only one narrow section at pos 11°58.455N 119°52.024E with shallowest depth of about 5m here.*

**Arnak – February 2010 - Halsey Harbour:** 11°45.713N 119°57.487E Just off two beaches with fringing reefs. Halsey Harbour is quite deep and difficult to find anchoring depths but here was about 18m good holding

Passed between Alava Is and Culion Is with nothing under 20m. A lot of arms and coves to explore.

**Valhalla - October 2008 - Halsey Harbor:** After trying two locations we found an ideal one ... well sheltered and just across the bay from that promised fresh water. Anchored 11 43.955 N / 119 57.614 E. Water source at 11 43.68 N / 119 57.75 E. We also scored some nice prawns that were still alive when we bought them.

**Lifelines - May 2008: Halsey Harbour:** 11°45.5' / 119°57.9' Anchored in 35m. Behind Rhodes Island. Rocky, scrubby shorelines with messy development, where it exists. Calm and protected but very deep, shelving suddenly.

#### **5.3.5.2 Popotan Island / Coral Bay Resort (12-00N / 119-51E)**

**Shanghaied – Unknown Date:** 11 59.68 N / Coral Bay resort Day anchorage. In 16m

Anchor seemed to hold on 3rd attempt using 50m of chain; no mud on anchor. sea flat but windswept in fresh WSW; cannot see any moorings likely to be deep and strong; resort looks almost deserted in June. Did not trust anchorage overnight.

**Lifelines - May 2008:** Popototan Island: 11°59.6' / 119°51.4' Anchored in 16.5m. Beautiful reef near resort – privately protected. Snorkelling fee.

**Valhalla - October 2008:** The next day we motorsailed the 20 miles to Coral Bay Resort on Popototan Island (at the north end of Culion). We anchored at 11-59.686 N / 119-51.392 E. We anchored in this sheltered bay and later learned that the mooring behind us belonged to the resort owner who was away and it was available to visitors.

#### **5.3.6 Culion Island Area – East Side Anchorages**

##### **5.3.6.1 Port Culion (11-53N / 120-02E)**

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** 11°53.11N, 120°01.40E 18m sand/mud Globe good/ Smart good

We visited the small historical leper colony, church and fort. We got a small info sheet from the tourism office showing eight nice waterfalls on Culion Island, but they seemed hard to get to, mostly needing to go by boat. We did not want to circumnavigate the island, as good anchorages don't seem to abound and it would take us too much time, but it's always with regret when we miss visiting any waterfall!

**Brigadoon - 2013: Port Culion** - old leper colony, very laid back. Great for a wander around, can do history tour following the well laid out plaques. Museum 10 -4 pm Mon - Fri. Reasonable supermarket at back of village. Market at waterfront. Can buy fish at port in evening. No diesel. Now the local hospital. Bone 'setter' insitu if needed. 11° 53N 120° 02E

**Lifelines - May 2008:** Culion town: 11°53.24' / 120°1.49' Anchored in 19m in small bay in front of pretty, clean, historical town. Clear water.

##### **5.3.6.2 Dipalian Island (11-41N / 120-02E)**

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** We tried to anchor in Dicabalto Bay, but could not find an anchorage we were comfortable with, so we continued just 4nm more to **Dipalian Island** where we anchored on a shoal in front of a nice beach.

Dipalian Island 11°41.03N, 120°02.16E 5m sand on shoal Globe poor, Smart OK

**Arnak - Passage between Galoc Is & Culion Is:** Easy passage between these islands with good light. A couple of small reefs easily seen. The narrows at 11°58.493N 119°52.053E has a minimum depth of 7m.

#### **5.3.6.3 Dicabaito Island (11-39N / 119-57E)**

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Our next passage brought us near **Culion Island**. We tried to anchor in **Dicabaito Bay** in either the southern or northern bays, but found depths either too deep (70'+) or too shallow! However, it's a very scenic area that we were sorry to leave, being unable to explore due to lack of a secure anchorage. We continued just 4nm more to **Dipalian Island** where we anchored on a shoal in front of a nice beach.

**Shanghaied – Unknown Date:** 11 39.2147 N / 119 57.6257 E 22m flat good shelter but hooked chain around bommie and required dive to free.

**Elizabeth Jane II – June 2014:** 11° 39.113' N / 119° 57.516' E Rocky ground and poor holding. Small local village with kids in canoes. Tried to anchor twice and found rock ground beneath. Eventually we decided to move on however it was an extremely sheltered spot (even in the SW monsoon). *Note: Plotting this waypoint leads me to believe that EJ2 may have had an offset in their waypoint system.*

#### **5.3.6.4 Ditayani Island (11-44N / 120-06E)**

**Elizabeth Jane II – June 2014 - Ditayani Island:** Ditayani Island. Beautiful island that would have been a great place to stay for a few days during the NE monsoon (adequately protected but not fantastic during the SW monsoon). We anchored in 17m meters but blew back over a 7m reef which then slightly fouled our anchor chain.

**Arnak – 2013 – Ditaytayan Island:** 11°43.895N 120°06.097E in 18m sand with small 6m reef patch behind. Lovely protected bay in NE monsoon. White sand beach. Watch out for pearl farm to the west of the island but easy passages through.

#### **5.3.7 Bulalacao Island (11-46N / 120-08E)**

**Brigadoon – 2013:** Bulalacao Is “shooting star” for night. Lots of narrow shelves.

11°46N 120° 09E

**Arnak – 2013:** 11°45.689N 120°08.238E in 20m sand.

A lovely bay with white sand beach and small resort (unused) An excellent anchorage.

**Arnak – Feb 2010:** 11°45.701N / 120°08.242E in Batabuan bay where a new resort is being built. Anchor in about 19m good holding and shelter from the NE.

Explored Bayuan bay on the north end of the island but quite deep until you get well in then mangroves and no beaches.

**Lifelines - May 2008:** Bulalacao Island: 11°46.9' / 120°08.4' Anchored in 30m. Idyllic bay. Need to search for clear patch amongst lots of coral.

### **5.3.8 Binalabag Island (11-35N / 119-56E)**

**Arnak – February 2010:** 11°34.848N 119°56.275E. Lovely spot just outside mooring bouys in 14m. A slight swell wraps around the eastern end of the island but a reef breaks most of it. Good snorkeling on the reef. Lots of small fish and clear water.

**Lifelines - April 2008:** 11°33.8' 119°56.3' Anchored in 18m. Behind reef extending from eastern headland. Snorkelling OK middle of reef.

### **5.3.9 Linapacan Island (11-30N / 119-49E)**

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** After first checking an anchorage NE in the first big bay but finding it uninspiring, we decided to explore a little farther. We almost ran aground on some isolated shoal incorrectly charted on Navionics and not showing on the GE charts. By luck we were on the lookout for that shoal indicated by Navionics so Jackie did eyeball watch and I was motoring slowly... when suddenly the shoal she should have seen safely on our port side, ended up right in our path! We had to actually back out a bit and go port of that shoal.

Our first anchorage was still on the north coast but NE in the last bay east. Before we even anchored we had a banca with a security guard asking where we were going because this area is mostly occupied by a pearl farm. When we indicated that we would anchor away from it, near the village on the beach, he said it was OK.

**Linapacan NW Bay** 11°30.08N, 119°49.44E 4m sand patch within corals ok/ok

Exploring the interesting sea caves by dinghy and snorkeling NW of the anchorage were a couple of the reasons why we chose this anchorage. We did that with our canine crew that afternoon. Turned out that the little non-descript beach was made of millions of pebbles of semi-precious stones, or marble, of myriad colors, purple, pink, amber, green, red, black, blue...polished by the waves and glistening in the waves like jewels. Just magic.

**Arnak – 2013 – Calayanlayan Bay:** 11°26.637N / 119°44.016E in 20m mud.

#### **Typhoon anchorage?**

Excellent all round shelter in this bay. Watch for pearl farm at entrance and to west of bay. Clear channels through. Good internet connection once outside of bay.

**Katie Lee - February 2012:** We spent the night here. No cell phone access, no internet access, and lots of mosquitos.

**Arnak – February 2010:** We stopped in 3 anchorages on Linapacan Island

**South Bay** - 11°23.071N 119°48.532E just west of Sidsid Point at end of small village in 12m Protected from swell. A nice spot. The main bay has a lot of weed farms with buoys.

**W Bay** - Pos 11°26.574N 119°43.371E On tip of island. Deep right in to beach, good lunch stop. Very pretty spot but rubble bottom in about 15m on Eastern tip of island.

**W Bay** - Pos 11°26.555N 119°44.027E at end of bay in 13m. Very protected anchorage.

**Valhalla - October 2008:** We arrived in **Calayanlayan Bay** after a 40 mile trip from the south. We found the bay to be either very deep or very shallow. While backing away from a shallow spot the shifting cable broke leaving the engine in reverse so it was a good time to drop the

hook .. which we did in 54 feet over coral, much to my disfavor. Listening to the chain rode grind on the coral kept both of us awake through the night and the fear of getting snagged wasn't pleasant. Anchor spot - 11-26.955N / 119-44.049 E

**Lifelines - April 2008:** Calayanlayan Bay 11°26.7" / 119°44.0' Anchored in 21m. Western end of island.

### **5.3.10 Cabulauan Island**

**Brigadoon – 2013:** Cabulauan Is - very friendly people, home to 400 families. Wonder how they where in the typhoon. Buy fish. 11°23N 120° 05E

Internet fine if near a tower, just not so many towers. Globe main phone provided. Sun did not work for us. Pearls farms in various locations, move with wind & tide, generally left unattended for you to go through. Most of the islands do not have supplies, only where you see larger settlements. ATMs at Coron town.

Can buy fish from fisherman, but not so many fisherman near the pearl farms.

**Arnak – Feb 2010:** 11°23.094N 120°05.026E in NE protected bay with large sand patches to anchor in about 12m. Rubble bottom elsewhere. Enter over bombies with 7m depth.

**Lifelines - May 2008:** 11°23.4' 120°06.1' Anchored in 10m. Crystal clear water. Corally rubbly bottom. Beautiful island and village. Fresh fish available.

### **5.3.11 Wreck Diving in the Calamain Islands**

Source: [www.starfish.ch/dive/print/Sangat-print.html](http://www.starfish.ch/dive/print/Sangat-print.html) (this is a pdf file with GPS waypoints and dive descriptions for about 10 wrecks). I don't know if they are diveable by dinghy for cruisers, but there are several dive operations nearby in Coron and on Sangat Island.

Located about 170 nautical miles southwest of Manila, Coron Bay allegedly was safe as an assembly area. Some ships actually transfered from Manila after a warning. 12 (or 18?) Japanese freighters and warships were anchoring in Coron bay.

At 6:00 am on 24. September 1944, 80 Grumman H6F Hellcat and Curtis SB2C Helldiver planes took off from carriers commanded by of vice admiral William F. Halsey's 38th Task Force and headed for Coron. At the time this was the longest range for a air attack ever launched from aircraft carriers. They started approx. 340 miles (over 500km) from target, over 120 planes met in midair and then went on to Busuanga. Some planes were airborne for more than 6 hours. Several planes were lost after running out of fuel on the return trip and some shot down by guns from the Japanese fleet and from gun placements on the islands around Coron Bay.

At 9:00 am the planes reached Coron and located the 12 (or 18?) large Japanese vessels and started their attacks. After a 40 minute attack the planes left, leaving a scene of devastation behind. The main concentration of the ships were sunk in the bay in between Sangat island and Lusong, some started to leave and were sunk near Manglet island.

One ship, the Kamoi (an oiler) made it to Hong Kong. The reports show that some ships were sunk by direct hits - others by bombs that breached the hull under water.



There are a number of well-recommended dive resorts that service the wrecks, including the [Sangat Island Resort](#) and the two or three dive resorts in [Pearl Bay/Puerto del Sol](#). You can also probably do a several night “liveaboard” out of Coron town.

Sloepmouche dove the most prominent wrecks on their own, and their accounts are in the two sections linked above.

#### **5.4 Palawan's East Coast (North to South)**

See also PDF file: M/V Solita's Cruising Notes on Palawan and Calamian Islands dated August 2013.

##### **5.4.1 Iloc Island**

**Arnak – 2013:** 11°15.996N / 119°40.008E in 18m sand/mud. Lovely anchorage with white sand beach and small friendly fishing community.

##### **5.4.2 Binulbulan Island (11-14N / 119-37E)**

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Often cruisers in SE Asia complain about too few good sailing days: either no wind or too strong or in the wrong direction. For our day passage to round the top of Palawan, we finally got one day of perfect weather with moderate seas and had a beautiful sail in 10-15kn, close-hauled sailing in between nice islands and islets. In fact, we did not stop at a possible anchorage at Binulbulan Island, 16nm from departure, but continued for another 16nm just on the west side of the north point of Palawan.

**Arnak – 2013:** 11°14.449N / 119°37.119E in 6m large sand patch.

Lovely white sand beach. There is now a new pearl farm being installed just offshore from this anchorage but there is plenty of room inside for access and anchoring. A few small huts have now been erected ashore to service the new pearl farm.

A little roll enters with a fresh NE wind and sea. Beautifully clear water.

Internet strong GPRS.

##### **5.4.3 Casian Island**

**Sloepmouche – March 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** After a passage from Calandagan, rougher for the first two hours, we anchored off **Casian Island**. Be careful of shallow reefs that rise abruptly (some have small fishing huts on them). Looks like mostly fishing villages around both islands.

Casian Island 11°01.81N, 119°42.98E 14m sand Globe none/ Smart none

**Arnak – Feb 2010:** 11°01.783N 119°43.039E in 16m sand behind a reef with a small isolated reef to the south. Medium size village ashore with stone pier. Protected from the NE/E

##### **5.4.4 Apulit Island**

**Valhala - October 2004:** We were headed north from Dumaran Island. As we entered Taytay Bay, Rose spotted another sailboat which turned out to be Andrew and Robin on NEREUS. They were heading for Apulit Island and we agreed to join them.

Situated on the southwest side of the island is Club Noah. This very upmarket resort provides free moorings which we've determined is to prevent yachts from anchoring in the bay and 'spoiling the view of the guests'.

Approx 10 57.2N / 119 36.7E

#### **5.4.5 Passage between Icadambanauan Island and Binulbulan Island**

**Arnak – 2013:** There is now a large pearl farm along the route between these two islands. There is a clear channel from South if you follow these waypoints:

11°01.920N 119°39.001E

11°03.086N 119°39.001E

11°07.290N 119°37.520E

The channel is marked with floating rafts with pearl farm to the east and west of these rafts.

#### **5.4.6 Icadambanauan Island**

Arnak – 2013: 10°48.138N 119°37.660E in 20m mud. An excellent pretty anchorage in a secluded bay. There is a very small and friendly resort (8 guests only) where you can get a nice meal and a local banka to Tay Tay town for supplies if the NE is fresh and blowing in to the town anchorage. Good market at Tay Tay and general stores. Tay Tay is the old capital of Palawan and has an interesting fort and church dating back to 1657.

I explored the other bays on Icadambanauan island and you can certainly anchor in any of them in around 20m mud but not as nice as the first anchorage.

#### **5.4.7 Dumaran Island (Ariciffe Town)**

**Arnak – 2013:** We anchored several places here:

Pos 10°33.35N / 119°58.97E Inside lagoon behind Ariciffe town. **Typhoon anchorage.** Tricky entrance but can be seen on GE clearly with min depth of 2m half way in. Anchored in 7m mud perfect protection in all winds. Good general supplies in town and good eateries. Another excellent anchorage in NE weather is below.

Pos 10°32.70N 120°00.38E A lovely sand patch between two reefs off a small island with excellent protection in NE. Clear water. 4m sand.

**Esfuerzo pt in channel:** (internet gprs)

Pos 10°31.897N 119°43.602E in 14m mud. There are a couple of coral ridges to go over on the way in but nothing under 5.5m was found with deeper patches in between. A lovely protected anchorage in NE. Nice beach and snorkeling. Uninhabited island. There is a large pearl farm on both sides of the channel. The channel is at waypoints: 10°29.25N 119°43.65E

10°30.80N 119°43.58E.... 10°32.71N 119°42.19E....<<< (watch for rouge bouys around this waypoint). 10°33.54N 119°41.66E.... 10°35.54N 119°41.37E... This will clear the pearl farm to the north.

Heading north from here keep well to the west of Paly Island as there is a large pearl farm to the west of it although a channel can be found through.

**Arnak – Feb 2010:** 10°31.930N / 119°43.602E in 16m off small island with lovely sand beach and good snorkeling . Entering on the west side of the island from the north beware of extensive pearl farm with rows running North South. Farm starts at about 10°36N in channel and continues past anchorage. Very protected in N to E winds. No problem running directly from Casian Is inside route using the Raster chart, quite accurate.

Pearl farm security very friendly but ask permission to anchor.

**Lifelines - May 2008:** 10°29.35' / 119°59.45' Anchored in 18m. Open anchorage OK if calm.

**Valhalla - October 2004:** We were headed WNW from Cagayan Island, in NE winds, for the Palawan area. The winds built to 12-14 knots but the seas were inordinately large for the light winds ... a precursor to the stronger NE winds that developed before sundown. Through the night we were beam reaching in 22-25 knot winds with the seas on the beam at 2 to 3 meters. A VERY uncomfortable sail .. rocking and rolling while the dinghy, which we were foolishly(?) towing, was leaping from wave to wave behind us.

We slowed the boat in the early morning to avoid a landfall in the dark. We entered Calasag Bay at 0720 with 14-18 knots of NE wind and found the anchorage to be untenable in those conditions. We searched several locations along the south shore before deciding on a very calm place against the west side of Dumaran Island where we anchored in 20 ft over sand and coral. Anchorage: 10-30.454N / 119-45.448E

#### **5.4.8 Green Bay / Roxas Town**

**Arnak – 2013 – Roxas Town:** 10°18.63N / 119°20.39E in 3m sand off the town. A reasonable town with basic supplies, good market and several eateries. There is a service station right on the waters edge by dinghy beach landing. Transport to PP is regular.

**Arnak – 2013 – Puerco Island:** 10°19.095N 119°28.653E in 20m mud. Lovely private island with jetty. Good snorkeling but get permission to land. Owned by an Austalian.

**Arnak – Feb 2010 - Reef Island:** 10°17.116 N / 119°26.984 E in about 22m sand. Small resort has 2 bouys which you may be able to use but stay south of these bouys as there is a small wreck just north of them or anchor further north along the fringing reef. Small dive shop with compressor for tank filling. You need to book for a meal as they only do package deals for the tourists. A beautiful island with good snorkeling. Only 7nm from Roxas town where you can get fresh supplies etc.

**Arnak – 2013 – Flat Island:** 10°16.51N 119°21.03E just off Roxas and sheltered in NE. Nothing there but good anchorage. A large colony (thousands) of bats fly out every evening at dusk heading for the mainland. Quite a sight.

Arnak – 2013 – Johnson Island: 10°14.64N 119°22.87E 15m sand and a nice anchorage.

#### **5.4.9 North Verde Island (Typhoon Anchorage)**

**Arnak – 2013:** 10°07.252N / 119°13.845E Excellent anchorage (typhoon) in 10m mud off sand beach.

**Typhoon anchorage.** I entered from both ends of the island and worked my way up and down the inside using GE to spot the reefs. Take care of reefs in the passage up, they can be difficult

to see by eye. You can anchor between N and S Verde inside the passage also with plenty of water. C Map & Raster charts way out here.

**Arnak – Feb 2010:** 10°07.252 N / 119°13.845 E in 12m clean bottom behind small outcrop of reef. We entered from the north through the small channel very close to the northern tip of N Verde island where the channel is about 50m wide with 11m minimum depth. There is another channel close to the mainland inside a small sand cay. A very protected anchorage off a small sand point.

You can transit inside N Verde island and exit between S Verde and N Verde. Google Earth has good view of reefs in passage and at exit.

#### **5.4.10 South Verde Island**

**Lifelines - May 2008:** 10°03.31' / 119°12.96' Anchored in 9m. At mouth of river – can go in further if not calm.

#### **5.4.11 Honda Bay**

**Arnak – 2013:** 09°54.36N / 118°49.73E A lovely spot and lots of other islands and sandspits in Honda bay worth exploring C Map charts way out so use Google Earth and Bungee or the vector charts.

**Arnak – Feb 2010 – Arrecife Island:** 09°54.737N 118°52.382E in 14m sand. Up market resort ashore and security advised we needed to anchor 500m from the island and cited one abduction incident in 2001 which happened here. How 300m to 500m would make any difference I don't know.

Lovely anchorage sheltered from N to E. But we moved to Bugias Island.

**Arnak – Feb 2010 – Bugias Island:** Pos 09°55.862N / 118°51.105E in 13m good holding and protected anchorage.

**Arnak – Feb 2010 – Snake Bush Island:** 09°54.508N / 118°49.871E or anywhere along the long sand bar in, between 14 and 20m sand bottom. Beware of a few isolated reefs off shore a little as you enter. Good resolution on Google Earth.

The island and sand bar are visited by day trippers from the resorts and mainland and there are a couple of very small snack stores and small open stalls selling pearl jewelry etc at very reasonable prices. Protected from the NE.

We left for PP down the channel on the West side of Pandan island

Note: The Raster charts are out by about ¼ mile. Stay that distance further east than chart shows.

#### **5.4.12 Puerto Princesa (Port of Entry)**

For account of checking in at Puerto Princesa, [see this section \(Section 5.1\)](#).

**Savannah - April 2014:** We're here at our last stop in Puerto Princessa on the island of Palawan. We're pleasantly surprised with the area, despite the view on the way in. It's a fairly large city complete with a mall. As a matter of fact, we've spent the last few days enjoying the

air conditioning, a western size/style grocery store and a movie complete with popcorn and a soda.

Monday we decided to do the touristy thing and visit the **Subterranean River National Park**, one of the world's largest underground navigable rivers. It goes back at least 8 km, but the tour is only 1.5 km. We organized our tour through the yacht club here and it all seemed very easy... if you bring a lot of patience, that is.

We had a nine hour day. It included 4 hours of heart stopping travel in an air conditioned van of which we felt none, 2 hours of waiting/lunch and 45 minutes of touring and 2 hours wasted somewhere. Was it worth it? We think so. We're glad we went. The cave was like none of us had ever seen before and the scenery was beautiful. Would we do it again. No. Not without a morning shot and a flask of rum to get that patience going.

The cave had several different species of bats as well as swiftlets.

**Kira - March 2014:** After 7 days and 1080 nm sailing we have safely arrived Puerto Princesa on the island of Palawan, a young and busy town, very clean, kindly people and so safe.

We are anchored in front of the little yacht club and good restaurant, \$2 US a day. The only comfortable landing (for dinghy) has shallow patches on the way through the port, but no problem.

To get around, everybody takes a motor powered tricycle for 100 Pesos = 2 US a hour.

Avoid clearing in Cebu! We heard that they try to get extreme extra fees. Immigration around 2300 Pesos, which is only 50 US, but Customs try 500 US Dollar. You get it a little bit down, but here in Palawan we paid nothing at Immigration and 115 Pesos, a little bit more than 2 US for Customs. Similar it should be in Puerto Galera, on the way to there you may pass the famous island of Boracay. Yachts here has reported about the great beaches, but also about plenty of tourists and inhabitants making this place terrible busy and noisy.

Palawan is special, it is a Government ecological conservation project and a new face of the Philippines, more control, more rules, less corruption and more Investigators.

You will find moorings here also, but no yacht facilities. It is a place to be for typhoon season, it is far in the west and not been hit in 6 Years.

All liqueurs costs nothing and same with tobacco. Beer is nearly free and all other you need for living is extreme cheap. Maybe 20 Boats are anchored here and some of them will stay here for awhile.

**Before - December 2013:** We made it to Puerto Princessa, after stopping in Cullion Island to drop off medical and school supplies for the villages. Day hopped between 40 and 65 miles a day, leaving at 0730 and trying to get to an anchorage by 1500 to have light to see the reefs and sand bars, a couple of close calls but didn't hit anything.

The waters here, the Sulu Sea, are filled with fishing boats, unmarked floating nets, pearl farms, seaweed farms, fish attracting devices, not to mention ferries and shipping. Can't just set the autopilot, makes for long days.

So here we are, on a mooring off the Abanico Yacht Club, ( 09-45.8 / N 118-44.03 E).

We got into town, hit the ATM and went to a super market, 2 days before Christmas, how dumb was that, 40 minutes to check out.

The club put on an excellent brunch yesterday with 35 people or so, a couple of folks we knew and lots of new friends, mostly Aussie a couple from Italy and France and some Brits. A fun day gorging and telling lies. Off to a close resort this afternoon for their Dinner.

**Anak – Summer 2013:** Pos 09°45.97N 118°43.83E off the Abanico yacht club (John and Sissie) waypoints to enter are 09°42.84N 118°45.43E - 09°43.69N 118°43.74E - 09°44.62N 118°43.42E - 09° 45.46N 118°43.57E then to anchorage.

A great stop with friendly YC and all facilities in town and industrial areas. Good engineering, supermarkets and hardware shops and good markets. A new Robinsons mall has opened with movie theatres within half an hours walk from the YC. Go up to main road and turn left and look for the Robinsons sign on the right. Free internet here also.

You can also buy pepper spray/tear gas over the counter in PP.

There is excellent **typhoon anchorage** up inside Caramuran Bay. Proceed west of Long pt and E of Cana island with entrance position at 9°46.18N 118°43.31E and proceed right up the channel as far as depth allows. You can certainly go right up around the top corners in complete shelter or up one of the arms to the port or starboard side. There are some small villages up here so allow for local banka movement if tying to mangroves up a creek. GE shows the channel clearly.

**Anak – Feb 2010:** 09°45.939N 118°43.785E in 10m mud off the yacht club. A dinghy from the Club may come out to direct you. The club uses ch 72 vhf.

Waypoints to the anchorage:

09°44.477N 118°43.442N to

09°45.208N 118°43.528E to

09°45.218N 118°43.504E to

09°45.729N 118°43.655E then to anchorage.

Good resolution on Google Earth which shows reefs clearly. Good shopping in the city. NCCC supermarket and store has most things including spray cans of tear gas/pepper. Bruno's has a lot of European food including cheese and meat etc. Good bakeries.

Fresh potable water at the YC jetty pp5 per 20 ltrs.

Fuel by containers or can organize a tanker in town alongside or will deliver to YC to fill containers.

John and Cissy own the YC and are excellent hosts. Excellent book swap and perfect setting for sundowners.

**Hamamas - March/April 2009:** We found the entrance to Puerto Princesa a bit tricky as the charts were not correct but the people from the Abanico Yacht Club were very helpful and came out to show us the way in. Later we learned we had to pay for this service!

After 3 days at sea we were anxious to get ashore to meet new friends and to see the sights so we very quickly launched the dinghy and headed to shore. The Abanico Yacht Club is such a

friendly little place with pleasant staff who immediately started to educate us about the in and outs of PP. That is, how to get to town and back, how much to pay, where to get groceries, the best place to buy bread, how to get fuel etc etc. They also serve drinks and make snacks and have a Sunday night buffet.

There were about 12 yachts in the well protected area and naturally all the yachties came in to the Club for Sundowners and to share cruising knowledge. In addition to offering good protection in the Cyclone season, the anchorage is a meeting place for those who are leaving the Philippines for Sabah in Malaysia and for those arriving from Sabah to cruise the Philippines. So the chances of meeting someone you know are high!

**Lifelines - 2008:** We spent June to October anchored here in 12m Mud. Protected from most directions except SSW. Good long term anchorage. Fast barnacle growth. 9°45.94' / 118°43.78'

#### **5.4.13 Casuarina Point**

**Colombo:** 09 14.810 N / 118 25.467 E

#### **5.4.14 Rasa Island**

**Arnak – 2013:** 09°13.54N 118°25.63E. Excellent shelter in NE and you can go across to the township on the mainland in SW weather.

There's another anchorage at 09°14.471N / 118°26.754E 8m mud. Excellent shelter in strong SW winds. Totally protected inside bay but watch out for scattered reefs.

Waypoints to enter are:

09°14.668N 118°27.278E then straight in to anchorage.

NB enter slowly with a good look out.

**Solita – 2013:** Because of its shape, Rasa Island offers good protection from both NE and SW winds. There are numerous bamboo stakes in the water around here which sometimes mark the edge of a reef or isolated bommie, or are used in very deep water as fish attractors. It can be a challenge to decide why they are there. It is possible to head north from the western side of the island but take care – there is an extensive reef out from the mainland, and another large reef off the NW tip of the island.

**Arnak – March 2010:** 09°12.989N / 118°25.359E in 15m mud. Excellent holding in lee of island. Watch for fixed sticks in the water as you come in and reef protrudes from south end of island for some distance.

#### **5.4.15 Arrecife Island**

**Arnak – Summer 2013:** 09°05.06N / 118°09.20E Good shelter in NE and nice sand beaches.

#### **5.4.16 Gardiner Island**

**Arnak – Summer 2013:** 09°02.898N / 118°06.890E 15m mud.

Lovely anchorage off white sand beach with one family living ashore.

#### **5.4.17 Crawford Bay**

**Arnak – Summer 2013:** 09°02.321N / 118°04.967E 3m mud. Good shelter in SW and NE. Protected from SW swell inside bay.

#### **5.4.18 Brookes Point**

**Arnak – Summer 2013:** 08°46.28N / 117°49.56E Shoals quickly as you go in but good shelter behind the public commercial jetty/wharf. General supplies ashore

**Arnak – March 2010:** 08°46.261N / 117°49.559E in 3m mud. Excellent holding behind breakwater and town wharf. Quite sheltered from NE swell.

Reasonable size town ashore for stores.

#### **5.4.19 Iglesia Point / Rio Tuba (08-30N / 117-26E)**

**WARNING – 2 German Nationals were kidnapped off their boat in this general area in late April 2014. They were held for 6 months by Abu Sayaf. More info/confused details here:**

<http://www.noonsite.com/Countries/Philippines/philippines-palawan-rio-tubbataha-german-couple-abducted-from-yacht-april-2014>

**Savannah - May 2014:** We left Puerto Princessa a few days ago, and now we're anchored in our first ever river. We almost passed it up. We're both tired of the Philippines, but we felt like we should suck it up and get one last cultural experience before we landed in Borneo.

And here we are. There are three girls paddling up to Savannah as I type this. We have spent the afternoon trying to converse with the small children in their canoes. They range anywhere from 3 to 12. It's not like Micronesia....these kids don't want candy (although they'll gladly take it), they want rice, milk, sugar... Their English is broken at best but they're about the cutest things I've ever seen.

Under normal circumstances, we wouldn't just give stuff away. If you do that, and the next boat does that, and the next and so on, then eventually, all you have is a group of people that bombard you all day and night wanting stuff that you don't have to give away.

The conventional cruiser wisdom is that you give something but you ask for something in return. It could be a fish, a banana, or something as little as a coconut, but it's a trade thing, not a 'give me' thing. But for the life of me, I cannot barter with these 6 year olds.... This is the first time EVER that I have been asked for rice in a country that produces rice. I was asked for chicken and eggs... I wanted to tell them to wait until morning when all the roosters were crowing and they could surely find those darn pesky chickens... I know from my grandmother, just a quick ring of their necks and you'll be good for days....

Anyway, it's way past sundown and we just sent the last boat off with some soap and lotion and a few cup fulls of our pasta dinner (I sure hope they're not muslim...that cup was full of ground pork....).

**Arnak 2013:** Pos 08°30.12N 117°25.79E Anchor in mud off the village or further upstream if you like. **Typhoon anchorage.** Excellent shelter and easy entrance using waypoints

08°28.38N 117°25.62E then 08°29.50N 117°26.25E then curve into the centre of the river to anchorage.



Good 3G here. A good stop for provisions. You can get cheaper fuel here (from Malaysia) and also take a trike to the mining compound markets (new town) for fresh veges and meat etc. Also get a Smart Bro broadband modem and SIM for internet hookup. PP 1500 for modem plus 200hrs internet time (1 month) About AUD \$36 so quite cheap and includes the modem.

Take your dinghy to any of the commercial jetties for landing.

**Arnak – March 2010:** Waypoints from M/V Lifeline. We did not anchor here.

From 08°27.829N 117°29.515E to

08°28.600N 117°26.225E to

08°29.736N 117°26.219E to

08°30.137N 117°25.822E to

08°30.561N 117°25.530E.

This stopover breaks the trip down to the Balabac Islands and is very sheltered.

**Unknown Boat:** 08 29 58; 117 25 63. Good at moment swellwise - off fishing village with big outrigger boats. Other boats have stayed just inside point - we looked on Cmap chart and I thought it looked easier to get in to where we stayed but they said it was fine going inside point - saves the extra couple of miles.

**Unknown Boats / Anchorages from tracks** - Inside the river mouth: 08 30.301 N / 117 25.733 E and 08 30.1352 N / 117 25.7819 E

#### **5.4.20 Cabugan Islands**

**Arnak – 2013:** 08°23.515 N / 117°15.411 E Anchored in 16m mud. Good shelter and holding. Excellent snorkeling on reefs around islands. You can also anchor between the islands depending on the wind direction but there is a tidal flow running NE/SW. Waypoints to enter from south are:

08°22.740 N / 117°16.039 E

08° 23.100N / 117°16.033E then straight in to anchorage.

#### **5.4.21 Sumbilingsumbling Bay (Typhoon Anchorage)**

**Arnak 2013:** 08°21.487 N / 117°12.919 E (4m mud.) A lovely protected anchorage in all winds with mangroves all round. **Typhoon anchorage.** Work in to soundings with excellent holding in mud. I explored the other local waterways by dinghy and portable sounder and Bancal bay is also excellent with an interconnecting waterway behind a seaward island. Waypoints to enter from south approach are:

08°20.880N 117°13.550E, 08°21.144N 117°13.415E then straight to anchorage

Internet GPRS

## 5.5 *Palawan's West Coast (North to South)*

See also PDF file: M/V Solita's Cruising Notes on Palawan and Calamian Islands dated August 2013.

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** If you like isolation and mangrove-type anchorages, you will love the Malampaya Sound. If you love very scenic jagged karst island formations with many attractions to visit (but also many day-tourists), you will love Bacuit Bay. It has been compared favorably with Palau and Thailand and we agree that this is one of the nicest cruising grounds in the Philippines.

Our timing was good as far as sunny weather (no rain until May), light winds (southerlies are just weakly showing up at the end of May). Naturally, the disadvantage is that you end up doing a lot of motoring unless you can sail in 5kn of wind.

### 5.5.1 *Daguyan Bay (11-24N / 119-29E)*

**Sloupemouche – April 2017:** We anchored in **Daguyon Bay** in front of a private beach and small communities of fishermen on two other beaches.

Daguyon Bay 11°24.40N, 119°28.55E 6m sand/grass. Globe none/ Smart none

If coming from or going north between the islets and the mainland, watch for shallows extending out far from shore. You may pass over large shallow reef areas only 12-15' deep, but we did not see any isolated reef sticking up as long as you are well away from a rock or shore. From there, we then motor-sailed to **El Nido**.

### 5.5.2 *Lalutaya Island (11-21N / 119-25E)*

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 11°21.014N / 119°24.686E Surprisingly sheltered anchorage in Northerly swell Anchor in 12m sand. 7nm from top of Palawan

### 5.5.3 *Crawford Pt (11-18N / 119-25E)*

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 11°18.429N / 119°24.809E Did not stop here as swell from N rolling in and shoals from this point in with rocky bottom inside this position. Good in light conditions.

### 5.5.4 *Cadlao Island (11-12N / 119-21E)*

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** The first time we went to Miniloc Island we could not find any suitable anchorage so we ended up sailing back north to **Cadlao Island** on the SW corner. We anchored in front of a small beach. We could have anchored closer to the beach but wanted a conservative 360° swing in case of currents or changing winds. It was OK in 12kn SE wind with boat facing the wind and small waves. That puts you very close to the snorkeling area off the east side of **Dulimacad Island**.

Cadlao Island SW 11°12.42N, 119°20.74E 13m sand patch in lots of hard coral. Globe ok/ Smart good

This island, nicknamed **Helicopter Island** also has a renowned **tunnel dive** we enjoyed early morning before any dive boat arrived: nice short and easy scuba dive in a tunnel that is about 30m long at a depth of 12m max. Entrance is at 12m near the north tip of the island, right under the rocky cliffs. Just about the time it gets too dark to see without a light, the tunnel makes a

right turn, and shortly you will see the glow of daylight at the other end of the tunnel. If you continue straight, you'll go into a dead-end chamber with high ceiling in which you can actually surface. Bring a flashlight to see schools of small fish and soft coral on the ceiling at the end. Easy to anchor or tie your dinghy on the cliff and do the tunnel both ways or circle back via the outside.

**Lifelines - April 2008:** 25m off entrance to Cadlao lagoon. V. pretty lagoon. Snorkelling around entrance quite good (regrowth of damaged corals) and fish. Interesting variety of corals. Anchorage: 11.12.3'N 119.20.6'E

### **5.5.5 El Nido (11-11N / 119-23E)**

**Good News – July 2021:** We rode around the town earlier and checked on some resorts with swimming pool. Mostly have been closed.

The Moringa Resort is open and accepts guests to use its swimming pool for 200 pesos/pax; bring your own food/snack and you can bring drinks as well (they have a mini bar). Lonnie wants to relax in a swimming pool, so we will go back later at 5 pm and will just buy roasted chicken for our dinner at poolside.

**Soggy Paws – July 2018: Getting guests in:** There's a new airline serving El Nido. Swift Air now flies daily flights to and from El Nido to/from Puerto Princesa, Manila, Busuanga (Coron), and Cebu. <https://air-swift.com/> The other option from Puerto Princesa is a 5-6 hour van ride or a 6-7 hour bus ride.

**Diving:** We did a number of dives with Submariner's Dive Center on the beach in El Nido. Though the actual dive shop is very small, the dive boats are big comfortable bankas with good crews.

**Sloepmouche – April 2017:** Be careful when approaching the anchorage in front of the town as plenty of shallow areas are quite far from the beach. It's best to first come over to the west side of the bay closer to the high rock islands to find the deep channel before approaching the town.

El Nido Bay 11°11.30N, 119°23.35E 5m good sand. Globe good/ Smart good

What a magnificent setting it is with the high, jagged cliffs towering over the buildings and bay. The town was quite crowded just before Easter with mostly Filipino tourists (foreigners mostly come around Christmas/New Year during their winter).

**Caveat on El Nido:** in the last year, the amount of tourist activity has exploded. New accommodations, restaurants, and most of all, tour companies offering tours and diving out at the islets of Bacuit Bay have sprung up out of control. The shoreline is choked with layers of tour bancas with long lines out fore and aft, and spidery arms out both sides. Sewage facilities are overloaded, and the water at the beach is nasty, gray and oily (although out where we anchored, water was clear again).

From about 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. the beaches and attractions at all Bacuit islets are packed with bancas coming and going. At Small Lagoon, at least 20 bancas at a time are lined up at the entrance like a Walmart parking lot, and inside the lagoon, there were 50 to 100 life-jacketed tourists taking burst shots selfies (maybe capturing a little of the awesome natural scenery).

Luckily, we yachties can get these wondrous natural features to ourselves with a little planning. But it is a shame to see how over trafficked the area is, and the amount of trash left on otherwise idyllic beaches.

The town offers many restaurants and eateries. Many offer Wi-Fi, but it's often slow. We had nice seafood grilled at Maas Grill and Restaurant where you see and choose what you want fresh on the grill. No real supermarket other than a Chinese general store south of town (50P tricycle ride) near the public market of Corong Corong.

**Elizabeth Jane II – June 2014:** 11° 10.98' / 119° 23.13' E After crossing a fringing reef at 3.5m we found a good anchorage in 5m surrounded by local boats and a couple of other cruisers. Good low key tourist atmosphere on the beach with signs of impending over development. *Note: Plotting this waypoint on a Google Earth chart leads me to believe that EJ2 may have had an offset in their waypoint system.*

We were here in low season and during the SW monsoon and had many days with heavy weather wrapping around the NW and SW side of the large granite cliff shielding the western side of the bay. Still a good anchorage and nice place to stay for a week.

**Solita – March 2013:** You can anchor off the beach here in about 4-5 M, but it is very crowded with tourist bangkas. Access past the outlying fringing reef is via a marked buoy on the western edge of the bay. On the western edge of the beach by the wharf is a fuel depot with beach access, selling diesel and petrol. (Diesel cost 55 pesos per litre in March 2013.)

The main beach is lined with small pensions, cottages and bar/restaurants. The town is directly behind them, and is now about 3-4 blocks deep. With the recent growth there are now several large grocery stores, a few stores selling liquor, some boutiques with beachwear and beauty products, a couple of stalls selling crepes, as well as many restaurants and various types of accommodation. Food shopping is surprisingly good here, with a couple of large and many small grocery stores with a reasonable variety of products. Even wine is plentiful and reasonably priced here.

The Tourist Office in the main street has maps of the local area, and the Art Café, a well-known café/restaurant one street back from the water, also has many brochures with local maps and a tour booking service. El Nido's Fiesta is usually held for 3 days in mid March, and includes many local sporting events, a parade, an Opening Ceremony, street markets and food stalls.

Note: We found no ATMs here in March 2013, though it is planned that a bank with ATM will open soon. So bring cash. There are moneychangers but the rates are not great. The Art Café and El Nido Fuel Station may provide cash advances with purchases.

**Lifelines - April 2008:** 11°11.3' / 119°23.2' Anchored in 9m sand outside reef area. Not a bad anchorage in settled conditions. To anchor behind reef in 4m, need to hug stbd point & go betw it and buoy.

#### **5.5.6 Tapuitan Island (11-11N / 119-16E)**

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** 11°11.46N, 119°16.43E made mooring in 11m of coral reef Globe none, Smart none

**Tapiutan Island** is another highlight area in the Bacuit Bay. We made a temporary mooring here in 11m of coral reef in order to go explore the area by dinghy while the boat is safely

moored without damaging the corals around. Used a 20kg float ball on chain underwater to avoid chain breaking corals as the boat swings in different directions.

Note: later, we saw a local mooring ball about 0.8nm north of here, near this island, just past the Matinloc Shrine and after the scenic beach picnic area on the point. Look to the port side. This mooring may be for a dive site. We did not check it.

Not far from the Matinloc Shrine, and still in Tapiutan Bay, is another natural attraction, Secret Beach. Just look in the opposite direction from the Shrine, for bancas all lined up near the rock cliffs. There is a small swim-through where you end up in a hidden cove on the other side of the cliff with a small hidden beach. It's definitely not a secret any more. In the same area are other little caves and swim-throughs.

**Lifelines - April 2008:** 11°11.8' / 119°16.4' Anchored in 32m mud. Ruggedly beautiful. Very protected. Good snorkeling & 20-25m visibility – wall opposite anchorage (Matinloc side). Secret beach worth diving into. Matinloc Shrine interesting.

### **5.5.7 Corong Corong (11-09N / 119-24E)**

**Mokisha – April 2017:** If you're anchored in Corong Corong (other side of El Nido) & you're craving Indian food, I've got the place for you! Walk to the main road, turn right (away from El Nido), walk 5-10 min & on your right side will be **Ghandi's Revenge**, opened 3 months ago by an English guy. Excellent & you can take your own drinks or buy at the store across the street.

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** It was time to go back to the fresh market off El Nido, but this time we anchored on the south side of El Nido peninsula, at **Corong Corong Beach** at the back of moorings of bancas and resident sailboats.

Corong Corong Beach 11°09.92N, 119°23.61E 14m sand/mud Globe good/ Smart good

It is a little difficult to land anywhere on the beach as there are several rows of local bancas anchored fore and aft in the way—not as many as El Nido, but still a hassle. If you land near the left side of the native houses on stilts, you will be near a paved road that leads to the main road. Easy access then to the public market by foot as it is only 200 yards from the beach. There is also a well with hand pump where you could get washing water in jugs.

In the public market at Coron Coron, the best buy of all of the Philippines is the green-edged mussels! At just 45 pesos a kilo, as of this writing, that's less than \$1 for a kilo! We feasted several times on Moules Frites (mussels and fries, a Belgian national dish). They get them fresh all the time from the farms.

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 11°10.045N / 119°23.657E. Good sheltered anchorage. Leave dinghy ashore and 5 min trike ride to El Nido for shopping. Markets in CC on Wed and Sun mornings next to landing area on main road. Good pork and veggies. Lots of eateries in El Nido with free WIFI.

**Lifelines - April 2008:** 11°10.0' / 119°23.6' Anchored in 10m mud. Pretty, protected bay. 10min trike ride into El Nido.

### **5.5.8 Miniloc Island (11-09N / 119-20E)**

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** The first time we went to Miniloc Island we could not find any suitable anchorage so we ended up sailing back north to Cadlao Island on the SW

corner. On our second visit, we decided to try again to find a suitable anchorage around Miniloc and found a small shoal area about 65' deep just west of [Simizu Island](#). This is the only safe anchorage we could find near **Miniloc Island**. It is more than 30m deep around the shoal, but it is quite far from any islets so that you could drag a long time before being in trouble. In calm conditions (and with a stable trimaran) this was a good base to explore the beautiful area by dinghy, all nearby!

We went by dinghy to explore the big lagoon (driving the dinghy inside and touring around like local bancas). Then anchored our dinghy outside the small lagoon and snorkeled in while most people came through the narrow opening by kayaks they rented at the entrance or just swam in. We also **dived** on a **narrow coral ridge** that crosses from South Miniloc to Shimizu Island with some nice corals and schools of fish (yellow snappers). Depth was around 12m. Watch out for currents going one way or the other with the tides and watch out for boat traffic (tour boats). It is best not to surface in the channel or to dive with surface float and tender above.

We also **dove** around one of the **Tres Marias islets**. It was an interesting shallow dive circling the second island in this group of three. There is a banca mooring to use, as you are not supposed to anchor in this marine park area. No diving is allowed off the southern island of the three we were told by a banca of rangers stationed there. Best depth 15m or less.

**Lifelines - April 2008:** 11°09.0' / 119°19.6' Anchored in 35m sand at entrance to Big Lagoon. Stunning Island. Good snorkelling on walls & shallows of Penlugaban Is in pass. Good paddling around island.

#### **5.5.9 Shimizu Island (11-08N / 119-19E)**

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Simizu Island Shoal 11°08.32N, 119°18.75E 17-22m of sand/coral. Globe weak/ Smart good

On our second visit to Miniloc Island, we decided to try again to find a suitable anchorage around Miniloc and found a small shoal area about 65' deep just west of [Simizu Island](#). This is the only safe anchorage we could find near **Miniloc Island**. It is more than 30m deep around the shoal, but it is quite far from any islets so that you could drag a long time before being in trouble. In calm conditions (and with a stable trimaran) this was a good base to explore the beautiful area by dinghy, all nearby!

#### **5.5.10 Guntao Island (11-07N / 119-15E)**

**Sloepmouche – April 2017:** 11°07.08N, 119°15.22E 12m sand patch in lots of hard coral  
Globe none, Smart good

After lunch at Liminancong, we continued to **Guntao Island** to go with our dogs to a nice beach. With the calm weather predicted, we took the chance to anchor in this less-protected area than Liminangcong (but more scenic and with no boat traffic!).

#### **5.5.11 Malapacua Island (11-06N / 119-24E)**

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** From Lagen we motored just 2nm (big passage!) to the SE of **Malapacua Island**. We anchored in front of a beach at end of village. From here you can go by dinghy to the deserted beach on the east side of Lagen Island where nice snorkeling can be found along the drop-off.

Malapacua SE 11°06.01N, 119°24.47E 14m sand/mud. Globe ok/ Smart good

#### **5.5.12 Lagen / Lagen Island (11-05N / 119-24E)**

**Sloupmouche – April 2017:** From Miniloc, we decided to explore some of the Bacuit Bay area where we would be better protected from the changes of wind direction predicted for the coming week. Our first anchorage was at **Lagen Island** in front of the only accessible beach on the south side of Lagen Island (the others have private signs).

Lagen Island 11°04.80N, 119°23.86E 16m sand/mud Globe good/ Smart good

It is less than 1nm dinghy ride to visit the **Cathedral Cave** located at 253° from the anchorage on the west side of a rocky islet. You can enter the impressive high-ceiling, multi-colored cave on Pinasail Islet with your dinghy and snorkel to see the schools of tiny fish seeking the protection of the cave entrance.

Snorkeling is OK around these two rocky islets. A possible anchorage is on the SE end of the island on the wide 10-13m area between the island and the mainland eastwards. You can easily pass between Lagen Island and a visible sand spit, which can be left to starboard. (It was a great place to run the dogs!)

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 11°04.810N / 119°23.933E Between two beaches in about 12m. From here explore Cathedral cave on small island to west by dinghy. Very sheltered in NE.

**Lifelines - April 2008:** 11°05.0' / 119°23.5' Anchored in 18.5m baylet on SW side of island. Good snorkelling along beach dropoff opposite anchorage (swam from boat). Pinsail Is. (Cathedral Cave) 1km? Away. Great. Good anchorage but bullets of wind.

#### **5.5.13 Cudugnon Bay (11-05N / 119-21E)**

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** West from Lagan was Cudugnon Bay, in the middle of the bay.

Cudugnon Bay 11°04.88N, 119°20.97E 17m sand/mud Globe good/ Smart good

Watch out for abrupt shoaling towards the shore and the shallow areas on the south side (easy to see with good light). From here you can dinghy to the Cudugnon Cave and beach where there is a beach bar and picnic palapas. We were not asked an entry fee. We read that tourists pay some kind of nature conservation fee when they arrive in Palawan, but we were never asked and are not sure of the details. The cave entrance is to the left end of the beach where the rock cliffs begin. They can be hard to find as the sea almost gets to the entrance at high tide. You can ask the guy at the bar or banca guides if you cannot find the entrance.

#### **5.5.14 Liminancong (Endeavour Strait) (11-01N / 119-18E)**

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** On our way out of Malampaya back towards Bacuit Bay, we went via the Endeavor Strait to check out prices of fuel and gasoline at the fishing community of Liminangcong. We anchored in front of the fuel depot and found that there is easy access to the dock and it's slightly cheaper than in expensive El Nido (but about 25c USD more per liter than in Taytay!).

**Liminangcong:** 11°00.43N, 119°18.06E 8m sand/mud Globe good, Smart good

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 11°00.561N / 119°18.096E on island side. Anchor in 8m sand. Nice big village, friendly people and good general shopping. Take dinghy to public timber jetty East of Chase Head. Bulk fuel on Tuluran island dock, best to anchor and go stern to.

Lots of kids and dogs. Probably another good typhoon anchorage in the channel.

Good phone reception but no broadband.

**Lifelines - April 2008:** 11°00.6' 119°18.4' Anchored in 12m. Busy, interesting fishing town. Safe anchorage with views to karst islands.

#### **5.5.15 Pirates Hold (Typhoon Anchorage) (10-57N / 119-20E)**

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 10°56.830N / 119°19.541E. (Typhoon Anchorage) Good all round shelter but there are wind bullets. 10m at entrance to <3m at NE end. Mud bottom.

#### **5.5.16 Pirate's Hold (10-56N / 119-19E)**

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 10°56.447N / 119°19.271E in 12m close to beach. Can anchor either side of middle Island. Very quiet and protected in NE. Uninhabited.

#### **5.5.17 Cape Ross (10-56N / 119-14E)**

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 10°56.000N / 119°13.849E lovely spot in 5m sand off beach

#### **5.5.18 Theodore Point / Inlulutoc Bay (10-54N / 119-14E)**

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** 10°54.31N, 119°14.31E 15m sand/mud, no cell.

We anchored in Inlulutoc Bay in front of a beach with a few families living there. This was a sheltered anchorage with several beaches around, but poor snorkeling with reefs in bad shape.

**Lifelines - April 2008:** 10°54.3' / 119°14.3' Anchored in 16m. Very sheltered anchorage. 4-5 families ashore. Requested malaria medicine.

#### **5.5.19 Malampaya Sound (10-56N / 119-14E)**

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 – West Bay:** Our second passage was about 15nm to **Malampaya West Bay**. We checked it out as it was about lunch time and liked what we saw! We anchored in front of a small beach in clear water.

Malampaya West Bay 10°56.00N, 119°13.81E 7m good sand Globe none/ Smart none

We had a swim and a beach training session with our five Schipperkes.

A short 6nm motoring in no wind brought us to **Fowlers Bay** where we anchored in clear water in the middle of a nice bay with three beaches.

Fowlers Bay 10°50.86N, 119°13.26E 7m good sand Globe none/ Smart none

We snorkeled on the point north that we had passed to enter the bay and surprisingly we even saw some fish of an eatable size! We also found a deep cave you can swim or snorkel to via a narrow passage about 50m and we even had the dinghy in midway. We saw some bats and a two-foot lizard on a rock. That tunnel finished by a big chamber without a ledge to climb out.

Alligator Island: 10°50.61N, 119°18.06E 11m sand/mud Globe none, Smart intermittent



We anchored on the south side of **Alligator Island** in front of Peter and Anna's house (looking to sell! John and Sissy own the other house, but haven't lived here full time since 2003). They were cruisers who swallowed the anchor, and in the old days, many sailors would come to visit, but 20 years later, the place and people are tired (but still nice).

The whole passage between Alligator Island and the mainland seems to be around 11m deep so this could be a place to sit out a typhoon. Globe and Smart antennas are on the north side so the island shields from their signal, but perhaps anchoring closer to the extremities of the island would allow line of sight on the antennas?

**Pancol:** 10°52.07N, 119°24.83E 4m sand/mud Globe OK, Smart good

Running low on fresh food, we sailed east across the sound to **Pancol**, only 7nm away. We anchored in front of the very nice new community pier where we left our dinghy to take a 30-minute tricycle (200P/RT) to Taytay **fresh market**. At very low tide, you may have trouble getting back out if you came in close to land.

Taytay is on the east side of Palawan so you do cross the island! The market there doesn't have a big selection of fresh goods, but was adequate for our provisioning until a week later in El Nido. If you need **gas or diesel**, take your jugs with you in the tricycle as you won't get a better price than at the Taytay fuel stations (El Nido and Liminangcong especially are more expensive). Taytay is on the highway running the length of Palawan, so if necessary, you could catch a bus to Puerto Princesa (5-6 hours).

**Sail Cliff Cove:** 10°56.45N, 119°19.29E 12m good sand Globe weak, Smart none

The next day we anchored above **Sail Cliff** in one of the most scenic little coves in Malampaya Sound. We had surprisingly interesting snorkeling around the small islet that separates this cove in two parts (you could also anchor in the other part). It is a little deep and you need to anchor quite close to the shore to find 40' of water.

**Lifelines - April 2008 - Barrio Pancol:** 10°52.0' / 119°24.8' Anchored in 4.5m. Very sheltered anchorage. Malampaya v. beautiful. Bus to P.P. (7hrs). Trike to Tay Tay (half hour). Supplies from Dante's shop.

**Alligator Island:** 10°50.6' / 119°17.9' Anchored in 11m mud. In front of John and Cissy's place. Further from shore for expected typhoon. V. protected.

#### **5.5.20 Bolalo Bay (10-55N / 119-15E)**

**Elizabeth Jane II** - 10° 55.167' N / 119° 15.339' E Anchored around the corner from a small fishing village. Went ashore and was greeted by hundreds of screaming children and some adults who eventually produced a few small fish for us to buy. Good holding in 14m but watch for patch of reef to the NW of our position.

#### **5.5.21 White Bay (10-51N / 119-14E)**

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 10°50.564N / 119°14.441E. just north of White Island 5m sand off beach. Several bays to the north looked good too.

### **5.5.22 Emergency Point (10-46N / 119-18E)**

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** 10°46.29N, 119°18.34E 7m sand good/good

Emergency point has some of the nicest beaches in the area. We anchored in front of the small village, but could not find anyone speaking English.

### **5.5.23 Boayan Island (10-34N / 119-08E)**

**Sloupmouche – April 2017 -** 10°34.26N, 119°08.02E 7m good sand Globe none/ Smart none

We arrived in Arton Beach where we anchored in clear waters in front of nice little deserted beach.

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 - Daplac Cove:** 10°34.46N, 119°10.53E 18m sand/mud. No cell.

We anchored in front of a private property, covering the whole cove, belonging now to a Manila corporation. You will be visited by security watchmen to let you know that you are not welcomed ashore (unless invited). This private place is also dedicated to protecting endangered birds, wild monkeys and lizards, and they created a marine area where reefs are grown and replanted around the bay. But we got permission to anchor in the middle of the cove away from coral rehabilitation areas as long as we didn't discharge anything in the water and ran the dinghy at low speed, as it is a marine conservation area.

This small bay is well protected from all directions (we had light NE wind).

There is a very nice wreck full of fish (lots of lion and scorpion fish) that is marked and part of a marine reserve of the village. You should ask the chief for permission to dive the wreck and offer a small donation. This wreck is a fishing boat that, in 2011, was quickly driven away from the village when the fishing nets caught fire and there was risk of explosion. The vessel sunk to a depth of 25-35m depth. The chief said the name of the boat was Germil.

**Arnak – Jan 2010 – Village Bay:** 10°34.216N / 119°08.014E good shelter from NE, nice anchorage.

### **5.5.24 German Island / Port Barton (10-25N / 119-10E)**

**Iva Agüero (FB) – Feb 2018 – Checking in from Port Barton:** We anchored in Port Barton, everyone is yachting friendly, no problems to leave our dinghy with resorts or bars. We were asked to register with the local Coast Guard, no fees or anything and they said that they would look after the boat while we went to Puerto Princesa to check in.

Puerto Princesa trip was super smooth. The minivan from Port Barton dropped us right at the door of Robinson's Place, a new and modern mall where the Immigration Office is located. We had been granted a 59 day tourist visa by the Embassy of the Philippines in Malaysia prior to our arrival. The authorities at Puerto Princesa Immigration Office accepted our visa without question and without extra charges. Everything was smooth and easy, the officers were very professional and the office has operating hours from 10am to 6pm with no breaks.

We then took a 15min motor tricycle ride to the Customs Office (less modern but quite charming - pictured). The officials were very friendly and even gave us our Customs Clearance in advance, so that when we decide to leave Palawan we don't have to go see them again. We were charged 220pesos for admin charges and got a receipt for this.

Door to door our trip to Puerto Princesa took 12 hours, 6 hours minivan return trip and 6 hours around the city. Very efficient and hassle free, a wonderful welcome to the Philippines!

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Palawan/Port Barton 10°25.07N, 119°10.42E 5m good sand/mud good/good.

Port Barton was recommended by several friends. Indeed, people here are friendly and less shy and the town is as clean and uncrowded as El Nido must have been just 10 years ago! The bay is shallow, so we eased our way in as far as we dared, avoiding the many sticks (but no problem to go in between them).

We anchored in front of the town beach and had only brief spells of swell coming in. You have to land your dinghy on the beach and pull it above high water or anchor out and wade or swim in. We landed in front of the two-story Coast Guard Station/Tourism Office. The gas station is located here, too. The many Tourist bancas usually take up beach space as they load and unload passengers.

Interestingly enough, there is no public market in Port Barton; to our chagrin, since we'd used up our fresh stuff thinking for sure such a popular place would have a market. But there are several stores with at least basic fruits and veggies at not much higher prices than El Nido. If you are lucky, you'll arrive when they just get a new delivery.

There are lots of choices of eateries, coffee shops, ice cream, and two scuba dive centers. No supermarket. You can book a van or a jeepney to Roxas (1 hour) or Puerto Princessa (4 hours) for more sophisticated shopping. There's a limited public market in the uninteresting town of St. Vincente, but it's not worth going with the big boat (lots of unmarked coral reef on the way). Just wait until El Nido to load up again, or if going south wait until Sabang and take the bus to Puerto Princessa (only 2 hours away).

**Things to do:** We did an easy walk (90 minutes) to the Pamuyan waterfall along the principal dirt road; then the last 15 minutes are on forest trail after you pass the Welcome Center. There is a covered area to leave dry gear, and a nice refreshing pool to swim in. You can access a different waterfall (Malau Falls) from the same trail by turning left, crossing the river and following a stream that leads to a multi-level waterfall (about a 10-minute walk). It's smaller but with a pool at the bottom. But beware of small leeches in the pools here! We didn't find out we could visit two waterfalls in the same trip, so ended up doing the 90-minute walk twice!

If you are a waterfall fan, there are two other falls accessible from Port Barton, but involve taking a boat ride first. Ask about Nikko Falls and Bigaho Falls. Meet Brian, the owner of Kiwi Lodge, and share stories with a fellow sailor.

Next we moved 2nm away, to anchor in front of the **Mermaid Resort**, run by a nice couple (Filipino man with a Chinese wife).

Mermaid Paradise 10°26.17N, 119°11.23E 4m sand/mud good/good

We had some meals here and went with Jeffrey and Lossy (Lucy) on an island-hopping tour with snorkeling at Twin Reefs (lots of live hard corals) and near German Island (where we had lunch) to snorkel with turtles at Turtle Point and Lowly island, which is a low sand spit in a shallow area between their resort and Port Barton.

**Elizabeth Jane II – June 2014:** 10° 24.91' N / 119° 10.34' E Anchored in 4.3m in the middle of the bay. Charts were way off on Navionics coming in. Also many fishing apparatus around the bay on either side of our track from Albaguen Is.

**Arnak – Jan 2010 - Passage to Port Barton from South:** We passed between Cacnipa island and the mainland south of middle rock and had 10m minimum depth.

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** There are a few reefs on the way in as you approach the anchorage so waypoints to clear

From 10°27.555N / 119°08.200N to

10°25.374N / 119°10.190E then to anchor at around 10°24.972N 119°10.413E.

This is a big village with fuel and shops with limited fresh food and good eateries.

We found WIFI and internet at resorts. We had no Smart internet access here.

There is a fuel station right on the beach 20m from dinghy.

Locally baked whole meal bread available.

**Lifelines - April 2008:** 10°27.6' / 119°09.1' Anchored in 22m sand near spit of sand/coral. Met caretaker, Tuting, a real gentle man. Ideal island. V. protected. 2nm? to town.

#### **5.5.25 Mayday Bay (10-28N / 119-05E)**

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** 10°27.72N, 119°05.26E 10m sand Globe none/ Smart good

We anchored off the Secret Paradise Resort in **Mayday Bay**. But as the English owner, Mark, was absent, it was nicely implied that we were not welcomed ashore or even to anchor in the small bay.

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 10°26.380N / 119°05.923E Lovely. Several good anchorages here. Lovely spot with small unfinished resort.

#### **5.5.26 Cacbolo Island (10-27N / 119-00E)**

**Sloepmouche – April 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** 10°27.21N, 119°00.09E 7m sand, no cell coverage.

After being uninvited from Mayday Bay, we left and sailed just 4nm away to what looked like a promising anchorage on the GE chartlet, **Cacbolo Island**. We anchored in front of a beach and small well-kept backpacker accommodation. Other than two fishermen, nobody was there (tourists had just left) but we heard roosters and dogs.

#### **5.5.27 Jibboom Bay / Denay Beach**

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Denay Beach 10°21.59N, 119°00.94E 8m good sand, no cell.

Another peaceful anchorage in clear water.

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 10°21.639N / 119°00.979E beautiful protected anchorage. Shoals gradually to beach.

### **5.5.28 Marofinos Bay**

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Marofinos Bay 10°16.25N, 118°57.26E 7m good sand, no cell.

Here we found much less swells and a peaceful place. We also got to go to a small deserted beach with our dogs.

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 10°16.299N / 118° 57.309E beautiful spot with fishing village ashore.

### **5.5.29 Paodat Pt**

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 10°15.317N / 118°56.018E lovely anchorage and protected.

### **5.5.30 St. Paul Bay / Sabang**

**Sloepmouche – May 2017 (SSCA Bulletin):** Sabang 10°11.90N, 118°53.74E 7m good sand  
Globe good/good

Sabang is the home of the famous **Underground River**, the longest navigable in the world and voted one of the New 7 Wonders of Nature! This is as far south as we were planning to sail, as farther south it could be riskier as far as getting kidnapped by terrorists—and we were not ready to sail to Malaysia yet.

We anchored in front of town, near the dock where bancas take off to go to the river. We had to really pull strongly on the anchor for it to really dig well in the very dense sandy bottom. Good thing we did because we experienced a quick rain storm with 20kn of wind coming from the sea twice and thus boats turned 360°. We did not drag and did not get too close to any of the numerous bancas anchored around us for the night.

Landing ashore is tricky at low tide, because the bottom is shallow for a long distance. We attached the dinghy to the floating pier next to the dock where all the bancas load the folks going to/from the Underground River. But when we came back at low tide, the dinghy and “floating” pier were high and dry and on rocks and coral. Luckily conditions were mild with no waves coming ashore so the dinghy gently got left on the rocks without damage. We just had to wait until the tide came back in.

It's best to book ahead for a river tour during tourist season. The vans are found close to the Underground River Tour booking office. The regular underground river tour can be purchased there at the Sabang pier office, but you might have to book a day earlier if the number of tourists has been reached for the day. Regular tours run about 45 minutes, cover 1.5km of navigable river and cost about 750P/person once all the different fees are added. A special 2+ hour tour covering the whole navigable part (4.3km) can be booked, but only at the office in Puerto Princessa.

Cost is about 4,000P for a permit for up to 4 persons + 250P/person environmental fee/person + 1,100P for the banca (up to 6 passengers) to go to the river entrance and back. The best value is to be a group of four to split the various costs. You cannot use your own dinghy to go to the river entrance and you cannot anchor your boat there any more as it is a marine-protected area.

We booked the long tour and asked to take our tour as early as possible in the day. We were picked up at 7 a.m., and actually got to the river base before the employees! It's nice and quiet that early in the morning. We even had time to video some big monitor lizards and some

monkeys. By 8 a.m. we were the first canoe entering the underground river: just the two of us with two guide/paddlers. It was nice to do almost the whole tour without seeing anybody else until close to the end. Bats, birds, nice stalactites and stalagmites—the tunnel is immense inside. There is one large chamber with a 60m high ceiling! No motors are used, so you hear only the sound of the paddles in the water accompanied by bats and swallows navigating. Only our guides had headlamps, but they gave us one to help with filming.

It was difficult to capture the immensity of the whole thing. We would recommend you take a big floodlight to enhance the experience. Despite the sheer number of tourists visiting the site every day, (a friend told us it was the Philippine's biggest money-making attraction) it was a worthwhile experience! (See the video on our Youtube channel).

Another small attraction in Sabang is a **small waterfall** that can be seen from the coast. You can either walk there, 1.5k from the town dock (not sure whether you can swim in a pool at the bottom), or take the dinghy along the rocky coast the opposite direction of all the boats going to the river and in about a km you'll see the small falls on the coast. It's not possible to land the dinghy on the rocky, swelly coast.

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** 10°12.263 N / 118°55.627 E Underground river. Anchor off entrance with tourist boats and take dinghy ashore. Walk to river entrance and pay PP 200 a head for an excellent boat trip underground. Rolly anchorage but good holding, then move to anchorage.

**Lifelines - April 2008:** 10°11.9' / 118°53.7' Anchored in 8.5m sand (Sabang Anchorage). Very exposed to swell. Anchored here for few hours to visit Subterranean River. Fantastic.

Moved to 10°15.1' / 118°56.4' and anchored in 8m in sand patch between rock/reef. Swell much less here than Sabang anchorage.

### **5.5.31 Ulugan Bay**

**Elizabeth Jane II – June 2014:** 10° 01.92' N / 118° 47.32' E Anchored in 15m at the end of a 7nm bay in beautiful serene conditions.

**Arnak – Feb 2010:** Anchorage 10°01.95 N 118°47.31E approx position behind reef with a couple of isolated reefs to watch out for.

You can catch the local bus/jeepny to PP from here for 60 Pesos and about a 1½ hr ride. Much cheaper than Fish Bay but a fair way up the inlet.

A small navy unit is based here too.

### **5.5.32 Fish Bay**

**Arnak – Feb 2010:** Pos 09°58.655N 118°39.623E lovely protected anchorage.

Can get jeepny to PP for clearance. About a 1½ hr trip.

**Lifelines - March 2008:** 9°58.7' / 118°39.6' Anchored in 5.5m sand. Picture postcard bay, teeming with fish, 2hr jeepney to Puerto Princesa. Stayed a week. Rolando Barangay Captain delightful man and village.

### **5.5.33 Apurauan Head**

**Arnak – Feb 2010:** Anchorage 09°37.224N 118°19.950E average anchorage

### **5.5.34 Malanut Bay / Quezon**

**Arnak – Feb 2010:** Anchorage Pos 09°15.375N 117°59.737E Shoals gradually.

Entrance to bay tricky with reefs. Stay on waypoints exactly to clear.

09°20.152N 117° 57.334E

09°19.542N 118°00.884E

09°19.153N 118°01.245E

09°18.041N 118°01.159E

09°17.513N 118°00.798E

09°17.062N 118°00.599E

09°16.659N 118°00.153E then to anchorage around old fishing structures.

Good anchorage with fuel and markets and 2 internet shops etc. Take dinghy to sand patch just to left of blue roof fishing wharf. Watch out for spider boat anchor lines. Walk to town. Local butcher in market will make up special pork garlic and pepper sausages **without** sugar and MSG and with low fat for pp250 a kg. Best we have had.

**Lifelines - March 2008:** 9°15.4' / 117°59.8' Anchored in 4m sand and mud as close to town as we could get (3nm?). Quezon clean, attractive town. Visited Tabon caves with Cedro.

The next day we moved to 9°16.8' / 118°00.2' (Bajallamura Is.) in 8.5m. More protected from slight swell than town anchorage.

### **5.5.35 Malapackin Island**

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** Pos 09°14.467N 117° 51.316E between two islands. Watch reefs either side. Fresh water well ashore. Lovely sheltered spot.

### **5.5.36 Eran Bay / Tagbuala Point**

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** Pos 09°06.987N / 117°45.318E Reasonable shelter

**Lifelines - March 2008:** 9°07.0' / 117°45.3' Anchored in 6.5m, N. baylet of Eran Bay, behind finger of reef. Surprisingly comfortable. Philippines charts OK

### **5.5.37 Tagbita Bay**

**Stella – November 2015:** My wife and I are on SV Stella and we are based in northwest Palawan. In early November we were on passage from Kudat to northwest Palawan and we stopped for one night at Tagbita Bay. We knew no one there, nor were there any other yachts present. A local man came close to us in his banka and I invited him on board for coffee. I asked him about crocodiles and he said yes, there were two and they had taken two young teenagers. I then asked him about Abu Sayaf and he told me they had created a training camp nearby and were recruiting young boys aged 15 to 18 years old. He said they were paying 12000 pesos to

their families and he had seen them out training.

We spent the night locked inside Stella and left at first light. Our next stop was about 15 miles south of Quezon town, Malampakun Island. We had caught a fish that day and as our fridge still was not working we decided to visit one family on the island and share this lovely mackerel with them. We spoke with them about what the man from Tagbita Bay had told us, they confirmed every detail to be true and said they had been recruiting in their area too.

Next stop was Quezon town where the marine police have a small house by the main wharf. I parked my dinghy there and chatted with them about what had been conveyed re. Tagbita Bay. They said they knew nothing of these things.

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** Pos 08° 41.531N 117°19.852E. Well protected, no supplies but pretty spot. Can pass close to headland on way north and head due north leaving shoals to port.

### **5.5.38 Canipan Bay**

**Lifelines - March 2008:** 8°35.8' / 117°15.1' Anchored in 9m, N. end of bay. Protected from NW swell by reef. Pretty beach with coral, coconut palms.

## **5.6 Between Palawan and Balabac**

### **5.6.1 Pandanan Island**

**Arnak – 2013:** Anchored 08°20.28 N / 117°14.23 E. Anchor in sand at north end of island.

This area is a protected no take area and you will be approached by guards from the local Pearl farm. Very friendly and given permission to stay.

Enter around the northern tip of reef and take a direct line to small island SSE of entrance to the other side of reef then after crossing shoal area head directly to anchorage.

Google Earth shows this clearly. C Map charts are out here and shows you on reef. Soundings over sand bar in bay show 4m.

**Arnak – March 2010:** 08°16.329 N / 117°09.832 E Well protected by reef. Could go in further.

### **5.6.2 Patawan Island**

**Arnak – 2013:** 08°13.97N / 117°08.54E on a big sand patch area extending NE. Lovely spot for a stop and snorkel.

## **5.7 Balabac Island**

### **5.7.1 Clarendon Bay**

**Arnak – Jan 2010:** We anchored at 07°49.019N 117°01.304E

**Hamamas - April 2009:** On 6 April 2009 we weighed anchor and left the lovely anchorage of Puerta Princesa and headed south on our 306 nm journey to Sabah Malaysia. There was very little traffic on the first leg, in fact an extract from Hamamas Log shows "no shipping, no fishing, no dolphins!" After a 2 night sail we anchored at pretty Clarendon Bay on Balabac Is at the foot



of Palawan Is. We spent 2 nights there as it was to be our last stop in the Philippines. There were 2 other yachts, Remora and Seafari, although we didn't launch the dinghy to go say hello.

**Splinters Apprentice - July 2000:** 07°48'94N / 117°01'24E A good well sheltered anchorage open only to the SE. Well positioned for crossing the Balabac Strait. There is often a navy presence, very friendly, as there is major smuggling in this area. The entrance is easy. The reef extends each side but is easily seen, watch the N side it extends a long way and at an angle slightly inside the entrance.

No facilities or water available.

Holding good but dig well in, 2 boats with us dragged but all then held in 50knt winds!

### **5.7.2 Dalawan Bay**

**Arnac – Summer 2013: Anchored** in 3.5m sand. Pos 07°53.643N 117°04.239E. North of a drying reef patch marked on chart. Excellent in SW monsoon season with westerly quarter winds. A few huts ashore and friendly locals. Shoals gradually as you go in.

### **5.7.3 Calandorang Bay (Balabac Town)**

**Arnac – Summer 2013:** Anchored in 3m mud. Pos 07°59.44N 117°03.85E. Can land dinghy at concrete public jetty directly in from anchorage. Difficult at low tide. Town has basic supplies, cheap spirits and beer and fresh veges. You can get a phone card here for Smart or Globe. A friendly town.

**Arnac – Jan 2010:** 07°59.504N 117°03.949E Limited supplies and Smart Card for phone and broadband. Internet not available here though.

This is Balabac town.

**Lifelines - March 2008:** 7°59.5' 117°04.2' Anchored in 8.5m mud. Pretty, clean town. Fresh veges and Philippine SIM cards available. CMAP accurate.

**Unknown boat:** We are in Calandorang Bay and a bit of a roll - it is ESE and it is less on southern side of bay - just went and check north side out as well so is probably coming into all these east coast bays. Others have stayed in Coboan Bay to north of this one and said good - beware reef separates bay in 2 - I think does not show on C- map like it is on chart.

### **5.7.4 Candaraman Island**

**Arnac – 2013:** Anchored in 13m sand. Pos 08°04.87N / 117°06.906E. Scattered coral with sand patches. A lovely anchorage and a deserted beach around the N corner of the island to visit by dinghy at half tide and over.

**Arnac - Jan 2010:** 08°04.628N / 117°05.845E Anchor in sand patch, well protected by reef.

### **5.7.5 Gnat Reef**

Arnac – March 2010: 07°50.467 N / 116°58.277 E just off a sand cay.

### **5.7.6 Dalawan Bay**

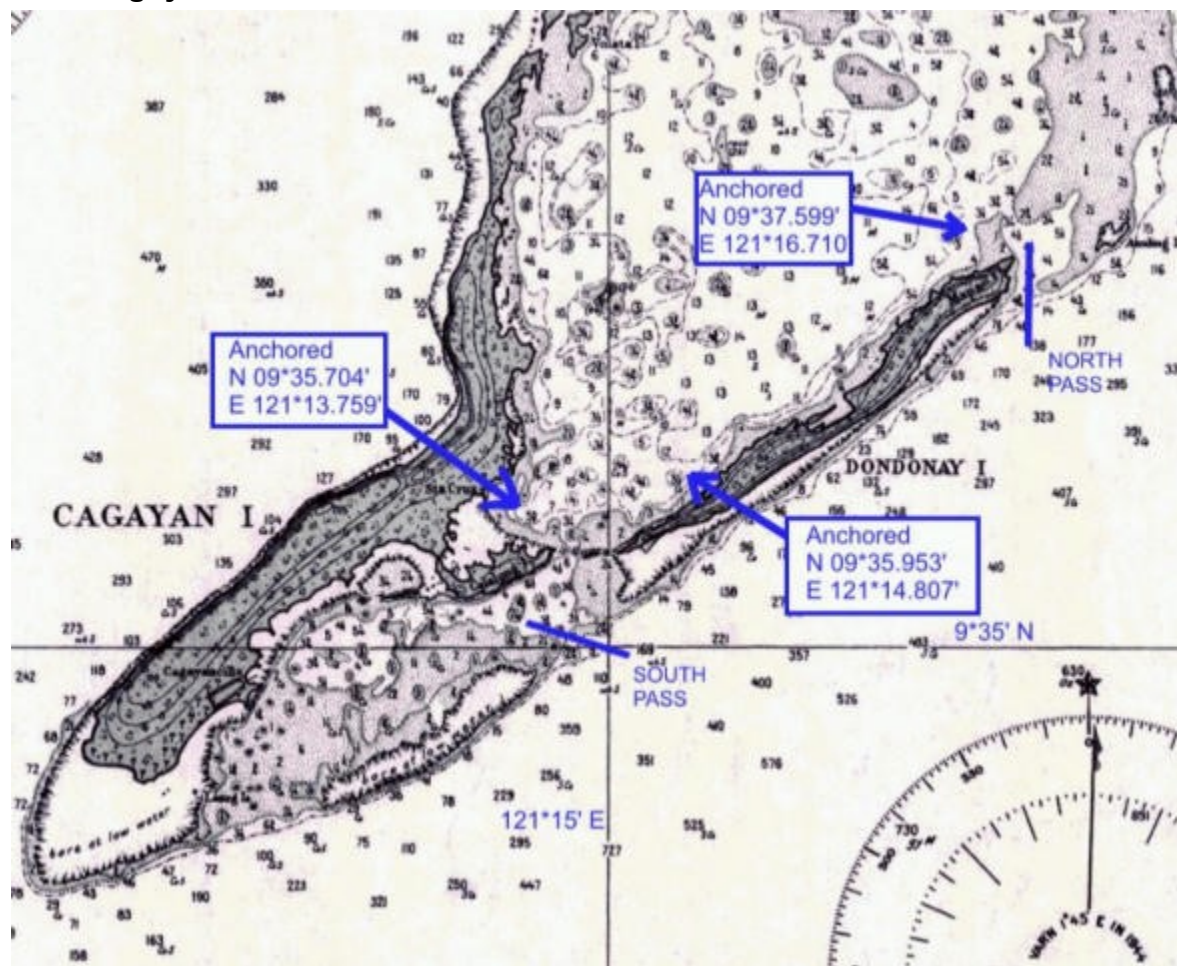
Arnac – March 2010: 07°53.590N 117°04.487E

### 5.7.7 Caboang Bay

Arnak – March 2010: 08°01.008N 117°04.469E

## 6 Islands in the South Sulu Sea

### 6.1 Cagayan Island



Chartlet Courtesy s/v Valhalla

**Valhalla - July 2003:** We departed Port Bonbonon, Negros early in the morning and had very light winds ... enough to motor-sail through the day and most of the night. Here's the sunset that evening. At 0400 we were hit by a squall line that gave us good sailing wind (at times up to 25 knots) and torrential rain. The rain lasted until just before our mid-day entrance through the wide open south pass to the lagoon. Our passage was of 118NM at an average speed of 4.1 knots.

We first anchored to the east side of the lagoon in the position shown on the chartlet above. Checkin with the 'officials' (police and/or coast guard) was encouraged by our 'tour guide' Aurelio and we discovered that mainly it was to give us an opportunity to make a donation to their upcoming fiesta in September.

The first of two caves we visited was a SHORT hike to a LARGE cave.

A planned diving trip on a sunken Spanish galleon was aborted due to a lack of communication concerning the size of banca required to transport all of us and the diving gear. Instead, we used our dinghys to go to a nearby beach on the outside of the island and dive the reef from there. The diving was disappointing but the picnic lunch and frolics in the water was excellent!

After five days we relocated to the west side of the lagoon for a change of scenery.

Our second cave excursion was a LONG hike to a SMALL cave ... requiring some rock climbing at times. The cave is located at the far left side of the island in the first photo below.

The day prior to departure we all relocated to an anchorage near the north pass from the atoll. The light conditions gave VALHALLA a chance to dry out the 'drifter' (formerly a mizzen staysail from a 55' yacht).

**Valhalla - October 2004:** We entered Cagayan lagoon via the north pass but weren't happy with anchoring there in the choppy seas so we took refuge behind a small island near the south pass ... actually on the outer reef .. and anchored at 09-35.428N / 121-14.096E at 1050 in 15 ft over sand.

The next morning we departed at 0805 with NE winds at 10 kts and decided to head for Cabulauan Island, 127 NM to the NNW. We cleared the south end of the island and set a NW'ly course.

## **6.2 Calusa Island**

## **6.3 Cavili & Arena Island**

## **6.4 Tubbataha Reef**

**2018:** In the Sulu Sea, Philippines – at the geographic centre of world marine biodiversity – lies an underwater nature reserve that is considered both a mecca for scuba divers and model for coral reef conservation.

Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park is a 97,030-hectare Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Palawan, the westernmost Philippine province. It is located 150km southeast of Puerto Princesa City, at the heart of the Coral Triangle, the global centre of marine biodiversity.

Tubbataha is composed of two huge coral atolls – the north atoll and the south atoll – and the Jessie Beazley Reef, a smaller coral structure about 20 kilometres north of the atolls.

The reefs of Tubbataha and Jessie Beazley are considered part of Cagayancillo, a remote island municipality roughly 130 kilometers to the northeast, inhabited mainly by fisherfolk.

A permit is required to visit Tubbataha Reef on a private vessel. There are fees and strict rules and regulations. Anchoring is not permitted AT ALL, and use of available moorings must be coordinated with the 30 or so live-aboard dive boats that frequent Tubbataha.

As of May 2018, here are the general application requirements, from the conservation website:

**Payment of Conservation Fees.** Applications for an entry permit must be accurately completed and Conservation Fees paid prior to the issuance of a permit to enter the Park. Fees

must be paid in Philippine currency. The rates of Conservation Fees shall be as indicated below:

Rule 14.1. Vessel Entry. A Vessel Entry Permit must be secured by the boat owner/operator/captain or his/her representative prior to entry. Vessel entry fees are as follows:

100 gross tons and below P3,000.00

101-200 gross tons P4,500.00

201 gross tons and above P6,000.00

Rule 14.2. Visitor Entry. Entrants to the Park must secure a Visitor Entry Permit and pay the corresponding Conservation Fees before entering TRNP. Minors aged 12 years old and below are exempt from the payment of Conservation Fees. Visitors returning within the same year shall be entitled to a 50% discount. Visitor entry fees are as follows:

Visitors P5,000.00/person

Divemaster P250.00/person

Please see the Tubbataha conservation website, here, for up-to-date information, and the process to get a permit. According to the manager we spoke to in May 2018 in Puerto Princesa, it can all be done by email. The initial application forms are downloadable from the website.

<http://tubbatahareefs.org/permit-fees/>

Once your permit is approved, they will email you the current list of moorings.

The Ranger Station at the reef is manned 24x7, 12 months of the year. They have a radar, SSB, and VHF radio. On arrival at the reef you must check in with them via radio, and present your permit in person at a convenient time.

#### **6.4.1 Diving with a Dive Boat**

We booked online with Discovery Palawan. In Dec 2017 the April-June 2018 trip schedule was almost completely filled. Based on our internet research ahead of booking this trip, the Discovery Palawan was the best price/quality choice for us. In the end, we felt we had a very good trip.

Our dive boat was so big that they never hung on a mooring, they just drifted around near the site.

The Rangers told us there are 30 permits out for boats bringing divers to the Tubbataha park. Mostly they are based in Puerto Princesa for the dive season (March to June). We saw 3-4 dive boats near us every day (all doing the dance trying not to interfere with other dive boats).



Here is the diving we did in our 5 days at the reef:

Day 1 – South End of North Atoll (2 dives on Malayian Wreck, 1 at Amos Rock, and 1 near the Ranger Station)

Day 2 – North End of North Atoll (2 dives on Seafan Alley and 2 dives on Shark Airport)

Day 3 – South End of the South Atoll (Delsan Wreck, Triggerfish City, Staghorn Point and SW Wall)

Day 4 – North End of the South Atoll (2 Dives Black Rock, 2 Dive Ko-Ok)

Day 5 – Jessie Beasley Reef (2 Dives, one east side, one west side)

#### 6.4.2 Diving from Your Own Boat

While we were in Puerto Princesa, we stopped in at the park office to talk with the “park manager”. She said that all the information about getting permission to go to Tubbataha was on their website <http://tubbatahareefs.org/>



As best we could tell, the permit (required) costs P3,000 for the boat and P5,000 for each crew. However I notice in the rules that there is a provision for a “divemaster” for P250. You must email all the required documentation to them, pay the fee (by bank transfer?) and they will email you the permit. You must have 2 copies of the permit made—one to give to the rangers when you arrive, and one to keep aboard.

Here is the list of information they want you to email:

- Fully accomplished Vessel Entry Form (from their website)
- Boat Registration
- Last Port Clearance, if originated from foreign country
- Crew list
- Record of Vessel Boarded /Custom Clearance issued by Bureau of Customs
- Payment of Fees

They told us that when the permit is approved, they will email something that has the lat/longs of the mooring buoys. I understood that there may be some management of who is on what mooring done by the rangers.

Note that the rangers take up all the moorings at the end of June, so the park is officially closed from the end of June to around the first of March.

#### **6.4.3 Moorings**

We didn’t inspect all the moorings, but the one or two we saw while diving looked substantial, strong enough in normal weather for any normal cruising boat. There are 2-3 mooring balls in almost every diving area. Theoretically, the Tubbataha visit permit comes with a list of mooring waypoints.

We were told that at the end of June, they Rangers pick up all the moorings, and they are not replaced until the beginning of dive season around 1 March.



#### **6.4.4 Rules and Regs**

This is the first third world park EVER that we have encountered that seems to really be run by the rules. One of the rules is no diving with gloves, “pointers” or tank bangers. No touching ANYTHING.

One diver from another boat was observed with elbows on coral and fins in a sea fan, while taking a picture, and our dive guides were so incensed that they took pictures of the diver and reported them to the rangers.

So make sure you read and strictly adhere to all the rules. (things like locking your fishing poles and spear fishing equipment up). Don’t screw it up for other cruisers by getting caught doing something outside the park rules. Other boats are watching.

#### **6.4.5 Currents**

The week we were at Tubbataha, all the big tides were at night, and smaller tides during the day. The divemasters on the Discovery kept exclaiming about how little current there was. (Generally more current means more fish, so they thought that it was a bad situation and were always looking for more current). Most of the dive briefings indicated that the current could be going either way, and that it was hard to predict. Our guides were REQUIRED to jump in prior to each dive to assess the current situation (and sometimes still got it wrong). Every dive briefing they warned us about possible down currents. We never experienced any, but it definitely happens out there.

In many cases, the current comes together at the corners of the reef, often causing big down currents. These can be very strong. In times of lesser currents, like we had, we could swim around the point and swim up the reef a little.

#### **6.4.6 Weather**

We went on the live-aboard in the middle of May. We were blessed with 5 knots of wind or less the whole trip. It would have been OK in the cruising boat even. I queried our live-aboard's crew about "winter weather" and other than horror stories of the transition cruise weather, no one seemed to think there was a problem with weather. But this boat never hangs on a mooring. By definition they would seek the protected side of the reef and just position the boat to minimize the effect of the weather.

#### **6.4.7 Dive Safety**

Remember when diving at Tubbataha that you are 100 miles from the nearest hospital facility, and there are no rescue boats or helicopters in the Philippines. THERE IS NO CHAMBER in Puerto Princesa. The nearest chamber is in Cebu or Batangas. So DIVE CONSERVATIVELY!!!

It is also a long drift to anywhere. So always dive with surface support AND at least a safety sausage. Our guide from the live-aboard actually had a VHF radio with emergency beacon in a small waterproof container in one of his BC pockets. He said he'd only used it once, when they got blown off the reef by heavy currents, and the chase boat couldn't see them.

### 6.4.8 Waypoints

Before we went, we downloaded waypoints from our favorite dive site location website, wannadive.net, but found that about half the waypoints obtained from Wannadive were grossly out of position. Likely they were submitted by someone working off an inaccurate chart.

We tried to record the tracks in OpenCPN on our cell phone, but somehow the tracks got lost, as did most of the “position approximate” mooring locations we noted. But I did take screenshots of most of the tracks. Bottom line, a satellite photo is accurate, and so is Navionics. I tried correcting the CM93 2007 chartlet based on the satellite picture, but it is misshapen and could not be corrected. Note, not all moorings shown on this picture were observed, and some moorings not shown were observed.

Most of the diving goes on near the points of the island. There are enough dive boats with divers out that you will have no trouble finding the dive sites.

We have approximate positions for the sites that we dove. Unfortunately, the dive boat configuration made it not easy to get ACTUAL waypoints of our put-in point, and the point varied according to the current, so all these waypoints should be considered “position approximate”. If you visit Tubbataha during dive season, there will always be other dive boats putting divers in the water. Just observe and follow.

Jessie Beazley NE	N09°02.95'	E119°48.93'
Jessie Beazley SW	N09°02.62'	E119°48.90'
Terraces	N08°56.89'	E119°58.44'
Sea Fan Alley	N08°56.53'	E120°00.22'
Washing Machine	N08°55.92'	E120°01.07'
Shark Airport	N08°55.52'	E120°00.58'
Malayan Wreck	N08°53.22'	E119°53.50'
Malayan Wall	N08°52.87'	E119°53.34'
Mooring PA	N08°51.68'	E119°52.76'
Amos Rock	N08°51.10'	E119°53.24'
Ranger Station	N08°50.82'	E119°55.13'
Ko Ok	N08°48.19'	E119°50.10'
Black Rock	N08°47.80'	E119°50.22'
Garden Wall	N08°45.22'	E119°48.83'
Delsan Wreck	N08°44.82'	E119°49.82'
Southwest Wall	N08°44.67'	E119°48.66'
Lighthouse	N08°44.40'	E119°49.15'
Staghorn Point	N08°44.29'	E119°48.84'



### 6.5 Moeander Reef (aka Creola Reef)

This reef is affectionately called Creola Reef after a cruising boat named Creola went hard aground. They thought they were a safe 2 miles away and sailed right up on the reef in the middle of the night.

### 6.6 Bancoran Island

### 6.7 Valparaiso Shoal

### 6.8 San Miguel Islands

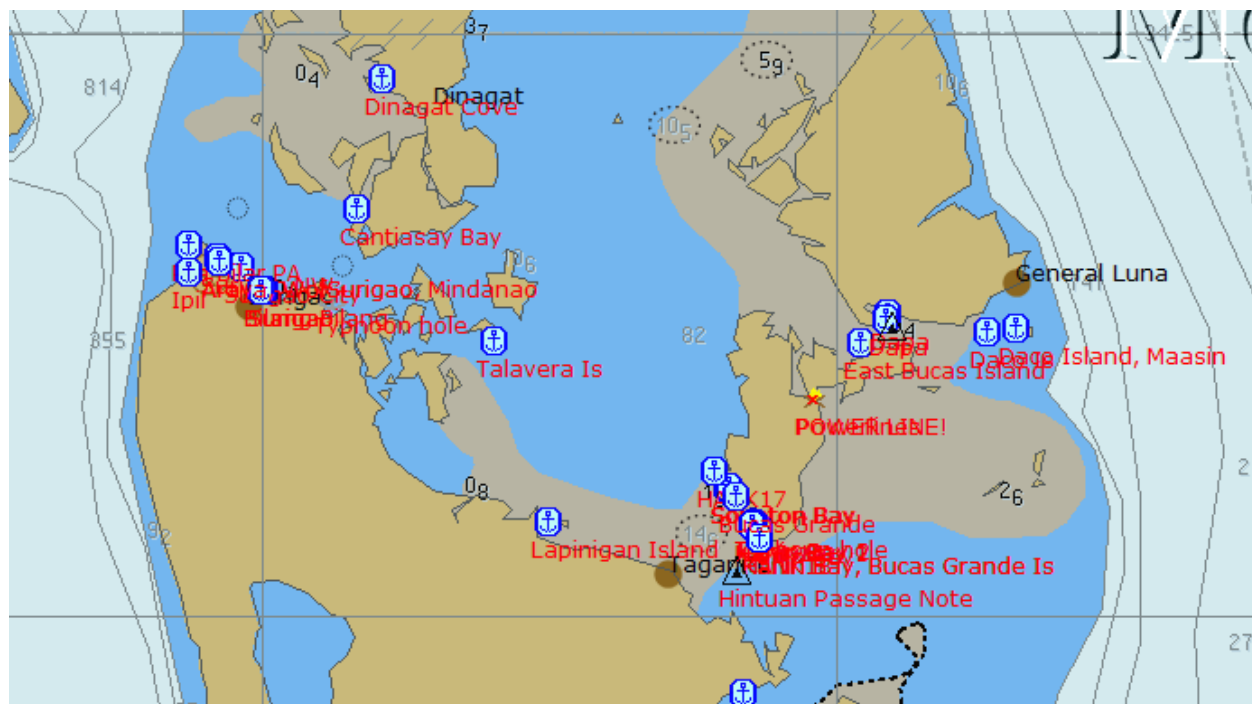
### 6.9 Cagayan Sulu and Related Islands

### 6.10 Islands in the Balabac Strait

## 7 Mindanao & SE Philippines

### 7.1 Northern Mindanao and Approach to Cebu

It is possible to pass through into the central Philippines by going either north or south of Bucas Grande Island, though the most common route is the more open route south of Bucas Grande.



#### 7.1.1 Hinatuan Passage

The Hinatuan Passage is the southernmost of the east-facing passages into the central Philippines. It runs east and west along the north coast of Mindanao. Timing your passage through this narrow stretch, according to tidal flow, is recommended.

**Soggy Paws – August 2018 – West to East:** Coming through from East to West, we followed Tenaya's advice and it worked perfectly. I didn't have as much good info when planning our west-to-east transit in August, but I did have a few friends' tracks. It was a little hard to read, because the tide at the end (Hinatuan Tide station) is already coming back in, when the tide at Surigao is going out.

One boat, in a period of strong tides, entered the worst part of the passage, near Rasa Island, about 1 hour after high tide at Surigao, and at times he was going 9-10 knots.

Another boat, in a period of small tides, when the high was at 3am, entered the passage at 7am and didn't get the big push that the first boat did, but didn't have a big problem. So bottom line is, go as soon after the high tide at Surigao Tide Station as possible, and it's more critical the timing when the moon is new or full, which is the time of higher high tides.

**Soggy Paws – March 2018 – East to West:** We followed Tenaya's advice (below) on the timing of the passage and it worked well for us, though we used a different anchorage at Talavera Island.

**Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** The Hinatuan Passage has very strong tidal currents. Since you might get 5 or even up to 11kn current, it makes serious sense to plan your passages to have currents in your favor! In the WxTide32 program there is a reference station on Boca Grande – Sohutan Bay (*Ed note, I could not find this station in my version of WXTide*). On the days we went through, flood tide was starting mid-morning, so we left Dahakit around 11 a.m. and had favorable current with us to [Talavera](#). We anchored overnight. This is well-protected except from SW. It's a convenient stop to wait for a favorable tide before going west towards Surigao. Weak Globe Internet connection.

What an easy fun time we had going through the dreaded **Hinatuan Passage**. We even zoomed through the channel on the north side of Rasa with nary a trace of whirlpools or overfalls. We had beautiful sailing in light wind with favorable current from Talavera to [Kantiasay Bay](#), on the SW corner of Nonoc Island, just 12nm away.

**Tenaya - May 2014 (from Noonsite) – Going Through from East to West:** The Sailing Directions make it sound scary; "The current attains a velocity of about 7 knots between Kabo Island and Rasa Island. A velocity of 10.5 to 11 knots has been reported... There are heavy rips and swirls at certain stages from Kabo Reef to Hinatuan Island."

We followed this strategy and had a pleasant motor through the Passage:

Approach the Hinatuan Passage from the East, either sailing close to Cautit Point (09° 19'.8 N 126° 13'.0 E) or directly from the East. The only danger (other than small fishing boats) is a rock at 09° 29'.19 N 126° 03'.93 E.

Enter the Hinatuan Passage at 09° 33'.50 N 125° 54'.50 E.

If timing the tides does not allow you to continue, a good anchorage can be found at Lapinnigan Island. Continue on the route 2 miles then turn west to 09° 35'.0 N 125° 48'.60 E. Follow these waypoints to the anchorage:

09° 34'.62 N 125° 47'.70 E

09° 34'.56 N 125° 47'.17 E (pass between Pagbuy Rocks and Bagong Island)

09° 34'.12 N 125° 46'.20 E

09° 34'.29 N 125° 45'.66 E

Anchor at 09° 34'.40 N 125° 45'.64 E

When the timing of the tides allow, continue from 09° 33'.50 N 125° 54'.50 E. to 09° 40'.65 N 125° 44'.45 E. The only danger in this area is Hinatuan Rock at 09° 41'.38 N 125° 46'.03 E. The Banug Strait has less current than the longer route around Hinatuan Island and is deep and clear of dangers.

Continue to the entry point 09° 44'.50 N 125° 43'.30 E and into the Banug Strait between Hinatuan Island and Talavera Island to 09° 45'.72 N 125° 41'.85 E. It is important to time the tides correctly. You should arrive at this point at Mid Flood, 3 to 3 ½ hours before High Water Surigao.

This timing should allow you to reach the narrowest, most critical point, near Rasa Island, just before slack water. High Water here is about 40 minutes before High Water Surigao. The Sailing Directions warn that occasionally this time could vary as much as 40 or 50 minutes.

The flood current flows from the Pacific to the West. Arriving at Rasa Island just before slack water will provide a nice positive current through the rest of the passage.

From the 'Mid Flood' waypoint, 09° 45'.72 N 125° 41'.85 E follow:

09° 48'.30 N 125° 39'.35 E

09° 48'.77 N 125° 37'.60 E

09° 46'.85 N 125° 35'.10 E. This is the narrow section between Lapinig Island and Rasa Island, just south of the Rasa Light.

09° 49'.0 N 125° 32'.50 E. This is the end of the passage and the port of Surigao is a couple of miles to the Southwest.

It was not easy to find information about the best strategy for this route. Many reports detail challenging times in the passage, often motoring against a strong current and making slow headway. I am very grateful to the captains of Matsu and Pelagic for their helpful suggestions.

**Hawkeye - March 2014:** The **Hinatuan Passage** was fine as we timed it right and at times were doing over eight knots under a small jib.

**Savannah - January 2014:** We went through the strait on an incoming tide. We had about a 3 knot current in our favor. Not much traffic, but we did see three FADs. Interesting ferry's and canoes. They like to cut corners.

**Splinters Apprentice - July 2000:** This passage requires care with tides as currents can run up to 6knts at springs with nasty overfalls and tide rips. We went through (west to east) at neaps and had no more than 1.5kts of tide even in the narrow bit round Rasa Island. Easy to navigate but not lit well enough for a night passage. Helps to have the large scale Filipino chart.

### **7.1.2 Lapinnigan Island (09-34N / 125-46E)**

**Hawkeye - March 2014:** The night before we went through the pass, we anchored off a village at **Lapinnigan Island** in 45 feet of water, calm N 09 34.377 E 125 45.647. Very calm and easy to get to and out off.

**Splinters Apprentice - July 2000:** 09°34'50 / 125°44'60 This is a useful anchorage partway through the Hinatuan passage. Anchor in mud 8ms, don't be tempted to try to took in too far the reef comes up quickly and is not seen. There is now an overhead cable from the shore to the island so passage along the inside is no longer possible. The islanders are friendly and will trade. They have a visitor's book for visiting yachts.

### **7.1.3 Bucas Grande Island (09-36N / 125-54E)**

#### **7.1.3.1 Dahakit Point & Kanin Bay Area (S Tip)**

**Mokisha – May 2017:** We dropped in 40' and hung in 30' in an area more free of bombies on the sonar. Wind 5 kts NE. Globe 4g x 4 bar. Nice locals, pretty here.

We looked but could not find a sufficiently large enough, shallow anchorage on the inside of this little bay, just SW of the tiny islet. We had a local come out and try to show us a more inside anchorage but it appeared to us too deep or too strewn with bommies. It is quiet here and away from the village. Beautiful view to the SW and a good view of the open pit mining operation for a twenty mile stretch on Mindanao.

**Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** We heard that anchorages in **Kanin Bay** were quite deep (30-40m) so we decided to check the area just behind the **Dahakit** lighthouse point. CM93 charts shows several areas in blue and not white (meaning not as deep; less than 100').

We found a **20' shoal** on rubble and old coral just in front of a small village at 09°34.010'N, 125°56.229'E.

We visited the Barangay captain (village chief), offered him a symbolic gift, bought some vegetables and had a small visit of the community. No Internet coverage here. There's great dinghy exploration in this karst rocks area reminiscent of Palau or Raja Ampat.

Valhalla Anchorage:

Kanin Bay, Bucas Grande Is	09 34.0358 N	125 56.0394 E
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**Unknown Boat – Dec 2013:** (from a track) 09 33.9820 N / 125 56.1856 E

#### **7.1.3.2 Sohutan Bay Area**

**Soggy Paws – August 2018:** We spent 2 nights in Sohutan Bay. The first night we anchored near Savannah's anchorage, at 09-36.20 N / 125-54.75 E. After carefully surveying the whole area, we dropped in about 65 ft, and backed in toward shore, but did not tie off to anything. The prevailing wind in the afternoon this time of year appears to be NW, and it got quite strong this afternoon, with resulting 2 ft waves bouncing off the rocks. By 5pm it had calmed completely, however. This was a nice anchorage out of the banka traffic in the bay.

The bommie out front of the first anchorage is about 3 ft deep at low tide, at the top, but there is plenty of room to pass either side of this mound on the way in, and the white top shows up easily in decent light. We found nice snorkeling on the SE side of this mound. Look for the 6" long pipefish near the top—usually the slink along the top of coral heads, but we saw them several times, sometimes in pairs, free swimming (feeding) above the coral, hanging vertically almost like seahorses.

The next night we moved out to where our friends anchored, which would not be good in strong winds, but was OK in light southerlies (though afternoon winds were NW). We dropped our anchor at 09-36.167 N / 125-54.243 E, in 80 ft. We circled that area several times trying to find shallower water that we felt we could swing 360 and not be dropping in coral. In the end we decided that sand and deep water was a better choice.

We did the whole tourist thing and enjoyed it. The “Welcome Center” is very visible at the south end of the bay—look for a roof/dock and tons of small bankas. Be wary of taking the big boat down there (if you have a mast) as there is a power line that runs across the two southernmost bays.

For 4 of us going together, the entire tour cost us P600 per person, including P100 pp for the “jellyfish lake”. The jellyfish were a bit of a snore, but since you go into the “lake” for that part of the tour in single person bankas, propelled by paddling (a guy does it), it was a pleasant way to see part of the area without the roar of a motorized banka engine. The other part of the tour was fun, too. 4 of us in a powered banka, zooming around the basal pinnacles, with a driver and a guide. It was a very pretty (but noisy bankas) trip. We swam into one cave and walked into another and jumped off the cliff back into the water. The whole thing, including the jellyfish, took about 2 hrs. Wear a suit and walking sandals (ie Keene’s) We got there right at 8am and beat the tourist traffic. It gets quite busy in the middle of the day. Best to go near low tide, as part of the powered banka tour takes you under a land bridge in the banka, and you would be unable to do this at high tide.

We also pretty much dinghied around the entire bay. There’s a hidden bay in the NE corner, with a cave you can see. P100 pp admission, and they provide flashlight and hardhat.

There is a small resort on the N side of the bay (look for the big white water slide). We went in for dinner one night. You could have anything you wanted to drink as long as it was beer or sprite! P350 pp including the beer. Decent Filipino food.

**Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** The natural curiosity most known on Buca Grande is a visit of the **Soheton tunnel and jellyfish lake**. We went by dinghy from our nice anchorage in Dahakit for the 2.4nm ride to the Soheton Bay. From there you go to the entrance of the system around 09°35.8’N, 125°54.7E. You will see several small day lunch houses and numerous boats for tours. We happened to arrive a little late, so the tours seemed finished for the day. Nobody asked us for any entrance fee or to join a tour and when we asked, we were told that the Soheton tunnel can only be accessed at low water. So we decided to go explore some of the labyrinth of coves and rock formations.

It is by pure chance that we ended up finding the entrance to the tunnel, as there are no outside markers leading to it. The current was swift going in and from where we were, the overhead clearance looked too low. But, to our surprise, we saw a very old man in a coolie hat paddle his banca up to the entrance, smile at us, make a gesture like “go this way,” and disappeared into the tunnel, sucked in by the swift current! So we tied the dinghy on the outside and I let myself drift behind the dinghy tied on to an 80’ line we had on board. While I was able to film the cave with bats while snorkeling, I could pull myself out on my safety line (I could never have swum against the current). But doing that, I saw that the tide was not too high yet for us to pass with our dinghy—so we did! We only spent 10 minutes on the inner lagoon as we did not want to be trapped inside that lagoon, but we were glad to have gotten the chance to see the famous tunnel and have the experience of shooting the current!

Entrance to the tunnel leading to inner lagoon (about 200' long) is at 09°35.80'N, 125°54.710'E.

**Savannah - January 2014:** We anchored at 09°36.181N / 125°54.777E

Google Earth charts were spot on. There are some shallow reefs to look out for on the entrance.

Lots of local boats fishing (small canoe outrigger types). Water is deep. We anchored in 50 feet and dropped our stern hook into the sandy beach to keep from having to put out our rusty chain.

Good dinghy exploring. Take dinghy to the back of bay. There is a resort (using the term loosely). At the time we were there, no English, no wife to cook, so not sure if there is a restaurant or not. Halfway back to the right is a cave that you can take your dinghy through at low tide (Sohoton Cave according to Lonely Planet). Very cool. It's wide and goes back to a lake. There is a tourist outfit that takes folks back there. They tried to wave us down (to pay?) but we just played dumb.

**Carisma – Unknown Date:** 09 36.62 N / 125 54.38 E 20 metres, sand and coral, deep bay, a bit closer to shore 15 meters depth can be found but close to reef slopping up slowly though. Pretty anchorage nicely sheltered, next to Sohoton inland lake that can be visited by dinghy.

#### **7.1.3.3 Mid-West Side of Bucas Grande**

Java – January 2018: Anchored in 26 ft sand close to village off sand beach. Great in NE winds. 09 39.0566 N / 125 54.4534 E

#### **7.1.3.4 Middle And East Bucas – South Side**

##### **Carina – November 2014 - Dangerous High Voltage Wire Near Surigao Strait**

A vessel here at Oceanview Marina (Davao) reports a deadly dangerous drooping power line near the Surigao Straits. The vessel is approximately 40' and they struck the wire at about 2/3 mast height.

The wire is strung from Bucas Grande to Middle Bucas at the entrance to Port Batuecos at approximate location:

09 41.2 N / 125 58.8 E

The Google Earth picture we have of this passage is poor, but there appears a dark shadow at the location the skipper identified. The cm93 database chart is slightly off register here so the location of this waypoint appears to be on the shore when it is in fact mid channel.

The vessel survived hitting the powerline but just barely. All electronics including transducers were blown up. Literally, blown up.

The lone crew was remarkably not injured.

Another vessel we met in Palau earlier this year also reported this wire. They came very close to disaster themselves - but we were not able to get a precise location from them.

#### **7.1.4 Siargao Island, Dapa, General Luna, and Cloud 9 (09-53N / 126-03E)**

Siargao Island is just north of Bucas Grande. There is a famous surf spot on the east side of Siargao Island called Cloud 9. So far as I know, no one has actually anchored at Cloud 9 (good surfing spots = bad cruising anchorages, generally). Some anchor in the protected harbor of Dapa. Some go around from Dapa to the less protected but accessible southeastern reef area, with access to the town of General Luna. From either Dapa or General Luna, you can get cheap transportation to the surf spots.

**Soggy Paws – August 2018:** We used Google Earth charts and a friend's track to get into the narrow western channel at Dapa. We were hesitant, just looking at it on a chart, but it turns out that large ferries whiz through this passage. It is fairly wide and deep. Best to have your AIS on, because most of the bigger ferries also have AIS, and it's nice to be able to make the passage without worrying about being overtaken by a ferry coming in or going out.

We **anchored** west of town in a nice quiet spot, at **09-45.50N / 126-01.78E**. We planned to leave the two boats there in the protected harbor, and take land transportation in to see the rest of the island. However, with SW winds, we could find no place that felt safe to leave the dinghy. The wind was blowing onshore, and we were looking for a resort or someplace "safe", both from theft and playing kids, as well as safe from being beaten up on the shore. Stopped at one resort, but they declined to let us ashore (we were also looking for a restaurant to have dinner at). After an hour of poking around, we could not find either a good dinghy dock or a restaurant.

So, with very nice weather forecast over the next couple of days, plus good satellite imagery, we decided to go in to the anchorage off General Luna. Looking at the satellite images, we were not sure we could get our 2 boats, 1m and 1.5m draft catamarans in all the way. However, the reality was that it was laughably simple, with light winds and clear sunny skies. On our way in to the anchorage off General Luna, we never saw less than 16 ft, and if we'd have studied the sat photo more carefully, we could have avoided the 16 ft spot. We **anchored** in 25 ft sand at **09-46.300N / 126-09.120E**. We did explore a bit further in toward the town. But when you move from the light blue to the dark green (grass, not coral), the water depth drops to about 15 ft and then slowly shallows as you go toward General Luna. Near high tide, with a 1m tide, we turned around when the depth got down to 9 ft.

The only downside to this anchorage is that it is RIGHT on the way to and from General Luna and the offshore attractions—sand beaches, snorkeling, and some of the surf spots. At 6am, the bancas start zooming noisily by, and they provide constant background noise all day and part of the night.

Where to put your dinghy to go into General Luna town is a bit of an issue, especially with SE winds—fortunately one of our two dinghies was light, with wheels, and it was easy to just roll it high up on the beach. There are two piers (an old wooden one and a new concrete one) that would make perfect dinghy landings, but there are no "landings". At most tides, the piers were too high to climb up on from our dinghy, and there are no steps or platforms lower down that would make disembarking possible.

Though the prevailing winds were light SW, the wind switched from SW in the morning to ESE in the afternoon. July and August turns out to be "dry season" here. The rainy monsoon conditions we experienced in Palawan were not to be found here. Someone told us they were

in drought mode—hadn't had any rain in 7 weeks. In general, fresh water is a big issue in Siargo.

**Provisions:** The market is right on the beach between the two large piers. A fish (and maybe meat) market is right on the water, and the fruit and veggies are right next to it. There is probably a proper “store” nearby, but we weren't looking for anything, so didn't look for one.

**Getting around:** In General Luna, there were many places to rent motorbikes, though the most prominent one was out of bikes when we were there. We found a guy renting motorbikes out of his house, and rented his for 300P each for the day. With the motorbikes, we rode all over that part of the island—out to Cloud 9, up to the “pools”, to the caves, and to the salt marsh (mostly dried up). Except on the potholed roads at General Luna, the roads were in pretty good shape. Google Maps was OK for showing routes from one place to another. There are many forms of transportation, from motorbikes and trikes, all the way up to private chartered aircon vans.

As part of our exploring on the bikes, we backtracked to see a little bit of Dapa. It looked as squalid from the back of a motorbike as it did from the dinghy. We stopped and asked for a restaurant, and the guy told us there were none (not sure he knew). We ended up going back to General Luna to find a restaurant (there are many there).

**Restaurants:** We had tips from friends to be sure to eat at Kermits, walking distance from the beach, and to be sure to get there early as there's often a line waiting to get in (note: Kermits only serves bar food in the afternoon, at 5pm they will accept orders for pizza, and at 6pm they start accepting orders for dinner. Food was good, not too expensive, but service was typical lackadasical Filipino). No wonder there's a line at popular eating times! Another place we ate at was Altrove (there is one in El Nido too). It is also an Italian restaurant. Opens at 5pm for dinner and they do a pretty good pizza. Better service than Kermits. In town near the water is a taco stand, unfortunately we didn't get a chance to try it, but there were always people there when we walked by. There are a number of western and Filipino eating places in General Luna, and all along the “Tourism Road” between General Luna and the Cloud 9 area.

**Out on the Reef:** The next day we moved out to anchor behind Daco Island. 09-44.56N / 126-09.07E, where we again found 20-25 ft sand. The Daco island provided some lee from the SE winds. We did a little snorkeling around. The water was delightfully clear, but the underwater scene was so-so—the shallow stuff was pretty pummeled by big waves.

**Bird of Passage – March 2018:** The CMAP and Navionics charts are both off here. There's a coast guard station here, they visited, friendly. No clearance here. Bought Globe and Smart sims, 4G of each here.

**Elizabeth Jane II - July 2014:** We stopped at Dapa, at the south end of Siagao Island, to wait for the right weather to cross to Palau. Anchored at 09 45.283 N / 126 02.684 E.

We anchored in 14m just north and west of the ferry terminal. We were very careful upon entering the channel and anchoring adjacent the town due to large and shallow coral patches. Small sticks with white flags have been placed by the locals to indicate the channel, though there were shallow patches even in the channel.



### **7.1.5 La Janoza and Anahawa Islands**

**Soggy Paws – August 2018:** These two islands are 7 miles SSE from Daco Island, described above. With really nice weather, we detoured to see these islands on our way to S Bucas Grande from Daco, intending only to stop for a snorkel. The beaches were gorgeous and there was a tiny settlement in an area with a nice sand anchorage, which was protected from the easterly swell and the SE breeze. So we decided to spend the night.

Anchorage: 09-38.043 N / 126-10.341 E

This was protected from both the light SE and the SW winds we experienced while there. While we were at General Luna and here, the wind would start SW in the morning, but by noon had swung through S to SE and even ESE later in the afternoon.

We snorkeled in several places, it was mostly so-so. The best snorkeling we found was on the west side of the rocks off the north end of Anahawan Island.

There is a fairly large village at the SE end of La Janoza Island.

### **7.1.6 Talavera Island (09-45N / 125-41E)**

**Soggy Paws – March 2018:** We looked at Shanghied's anchorage and Sloepmouche's anchorage and decided we liked the coconut palm-lined beach better than the enclosed bay with a few houses around, so we went back to Shanghied's spot. One of us jumped over the side to assess the bottom and found several large sand areas with not-too-steep slope. All the "coral" were low dead coral or large patches of seaweed. We had light NW wind, and this was a great anchorage. A little sloppy when the tide was outgoing. (not bad in a cat, might not be great in a rolly mono).

This is right at the start point for the Hinatuan passage, so we don't have to get up at dawn to make our 8am appointment.

**Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** We anchored at 09°44.67'N, 125°41.43'E in 25' sloping down to 80' fairly rapidly. From 25' it goes up quickly to less than 7', but it is only soft muddy sand, so you won't hit anything hard! This is well-protected except from SW. It's a convenient stop to wait for a favorable tide before going west towards Surigao. Weak Globe Internet connection.

**Shanghaied – April 2016:** 09 44.175 N / 125 42.156 E in 7m sand and coral - lunchtime or calm weather. Did stay overnight but hard to find area without grinding dead coral. Observed dynamite fishing here. Dust from Nickel mine operations. Globe E no internet.

### **7.1.7 Nonoc Island (09-51N / 125-35E)**

**Good News – February 2021 – Nonoc Bay:** We anchored overnight at Shanghaied's general location in Kantiasay Bay, but found the area full of fish traps (where anchoring depths would be reasonable), and either too shallow or too deep elsewhere. In the morning we moved south to Nonoc Bay, where we found good protection and reasonable depths for anchoring.

We dropped at Nonoc Bay 09-49.708' N / 125-35.623' E 34 ft mud, flat bottom, good swinging room.

The channel into the bay is well marked (by the locals???). There are some fish pens but they are out of the way, can easily pass by.

There is a small community on the port side of the channel as we go in the end of the bay. But nobody has bothered us where we are anchored.

There is a weak tropical storm heading our way. Wind is currently (N-NE) and getting stronger (25-30 gusting to 32-35 knots), but we are still doing just fine.

### **Shanghaied – April 2016 – Kantiasay Bay: Nonoc Is, Cantiasay Bay**

09 50.963 N / 125 34.989 E 17m appears flat bottom. Long timber walking bridge. Globe 3G but internet variable. Waterfall behind village. Celebrate founding late April. Can leave dinghy near ferry shelter. Ferry departs Cantiasay daily about 7am for Surigao and leaves Surigao 12 mid day P60 each way. Market one block away and Gaisano Mall about 30 mins P10 in Multibus.

**Sloepmouche – March 2016 - Kantiasay Bay:** We anchored at 09°50.99'N, 125°35.06'E in 25' good sand sloping quickly to 80', but we anchored in that small band of 8-15' good sand.

The entrance to this bay is closed by a footbridge connecting both villages on either side of the bay entrance. People cross that rickety bridge daily—quite an experience for old sailors! We visited the village on the east point and found the people very welcoming. We had some kids show us the way to the small waterfall (recently nicely ameliorated with newly-made pools for swimming), so we had nice bathing (20 minute walk). We also got some vegetables and fruits. There is a banka ferry (60P/one way) going every morning at 7 a.m. to **Surigao**, which returns at noon. We took it to do bigger fresh food provisioning and get some common parts for boat repairs. We visited the local tourism office on the central plaza and found out that they had several points of interest to visit nearby in the city.

**Hawkeye - March 2014:** After we got through the pass, we decided to anchor and found a great anchor spot off **Kantiasay** on Nonoc Island (northern island from Surigao) N 09 50.941 E / 125 34.924. There were lots of fish farms but we just went down the middle and had no problem. Anchored in 25 feet of water, calm. Didn't go ashore but would have liked to as there is a 400 mtr foot bridge between the two villages that looked like it would be fun to cross and investigate both villages.

### **7.1.8 Surigao City (09°48 / 125°29) (Provisioning)**

Note that access to the amenities in Surigao City can be had by land or water taxi from a number of other anchorages in the area (see [lpil](#), for example)

**Soggy Paws – August 2018:** We opted to anchor west of the off the town of Araya. It was blowing like stink offshore (20-30 kts from the SW) as we approached Punta Bilar, and still a bit windy in the anchorage, but it was smooth. We dropped anchor just between two fishing traps, at 09-48.406 N / 125-27.594 E, in about 30 ft mud/sand.

We dinghied in to a shoddy looking resort named Seafarers (it's on Google), owned by a nice Filipino who had served in the US Navy, and asked if we could leave our dinghy there. We tied to their NE corner with an anchor out, and it was OK. Out on the road in front of the resort, we could flag down a tricycle and share a ride into Surigao for about P20 pp. Getting back out was

a little more complicated—we took a trike one day, and asked around and found a jeepney that goes out toward the ferry port sometimes (they wait for enough people).

We were looking for The Battle of Surigao Straits Museum that someone had told us about. We found it right downtown on the square near the market, next to the Tourism Center. Entry is free and if you are a WW2 buff, it was worth an hour. The guy who started the museum is now working with Paul Allen and hoping to find more of the sunken ships and other war materiel from that battle. The museum will eventually be moving out near the lighthouse on Punta Bilar.

There is smallish Gaisano Capital Mall out toward the airport. Hop one of the jeepneys that say (something like) “Port to Terminal” on the side and get a cheap ride out. This route ends downtown near the market on one end and out at the Bus Terminal (near the airport) at the other end, and goes right past the mall. There is an Ace Hardware and a semi-well-stocked supermarket (we found broccoli there!)

We talked to the Tourism people about going out to see the caves at

We had dinner one night at the restaurant associated with the Seafarer’s Inn. It was OK, typical Filipino fare for typical prices.

Several bars along the water are booming loud music on the weekends.

**Elizabeth Jane II – July 2014:** Anchored in 16m outside the port of Surigao at 09° 46.68' N / 125° 30.04' E

**Fellow Traveler - 2011:** Anchorage here is difficult. The inner harbor seemed too tight and with local boats, so I stayed just outside this, near the harbor but with enough room for the ferries to come and go, and lit both a masthead anchor light and a cockpit light so they could easily see me. One yacht was tied alongside a tug in along the docks.

I arrived late on Friday, so was unable to clear in Surigao, and was not interested in waiting until Monday, particularly with unsettled weather. I ended up going on to Cagayan de Oro (NW Coast of Mindanao), which is listed as an official yacht clearance port.

**Kelaerin - December 2011:** We motored into **Surigao** at the top of Mindanao Island and dropped the hook in Bilang Bilang Bay (09°46.754'N, 125°99.992'E). Surigao is a nice town with a very active harbor. It has all the usual facilities. The local kids paddle out on anything that floats, kicking with their homemade wood flippers, to meet the ferries that come in and ask the passengers to throw money, which they catch in little nets. They’d come by the boat on their way and hustle us for a few coins and candy, as well.

The bay is very open to the east, however, and we were a bit wary of squalls and indeed dragged our anchor on New Year’s morning when a 35kn blast hit the bay. By the way, the port captain here, Leo, is about as nice a guy as you’ll ever meet. No shenanigans from him and he offers you a Coke while he chats with you.

While the plan was to wait for another weather window to sail to Palau, it was now late December and the NE monsoon was in full swing. To add to the mix, La Nina-enhanced easterlies brought the wind strength up to over 20kn with 3-4m seas and an adverse current. It was evident we would not be making this passage this year. We spent a kind of lonely Christmas and New Year’s there in the bay and discussed our options, which were to sail back to Zeke’s and leave the boat there while we did some land travelling or keep moving with the

boat and sail back to Malaysia and Singapore and then travel west to east through Indonesia. Indonesia won and it would be another 4,000 miles of sailing and six months before we finally reached Palau.

**Splinters Apprentice - July 2000:** This was our last stop before leaving for Palau or PNG. Check out with customs, immigration, and police here.

The anchorage is in the bay to the south of the wharves by the Coast Guard, and customs offices in mud 5-10ms. It is possible to go bow or stern to the wharf anywhere there is room. It is very busy with local traffic.

Fuel in cans from local petrol stations, water from coastguard or buy drinking water from shop outside the port area.

There is a good market and some stores are available but not wide choice. It is a dirty, noisy place.

### **7.1.9 Ipil & Punta Bilar (09-48N / 125-26E)**

**Sloepmouche – March 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** So the next day we sailed downwind with favorable current to the west side of **Punta Bilar**. With NE trades, except for a swell that rounds the point, we were well anchored at 09°47.77'N, 125°26.27'E in 30' over good sand. We had some swell rolling in around the point on the heavy NE winds, but it was very calm when the winds lightened.

We anchored off the CM Cottages resort. There we had a very nice dinner and felt welcome by the owner's whole family. It was easy to land the dinghy on the beach and get transport on the road to Surigao, less than five miles away.

From here, we visited the Silop Caves, the Day-Asan water village and snorkeled in San Isidro marine sanctuary.

WWII buffs should visit the The Battle of Surigao Strait Museum.

We snorkeled around Mabua Pebble Beach and Punta Bilar. Good Globe Internet connection in the anchorage. We also walked the 380 steps at Punta Bilar to get to the snorkeling beach.

**Savannah - January 2014:** We anchored at 09°47.700N / 125°26.200 in about 20 feet in sand and mud.

Not necessarily a sleepy little town... We pulled in on a Sunday and it looked like a poor version of Cabo San Lucas. At least a thousand people on the beach. Tons of fishing canoes. They have inboard motors sounding much like motorcycles without a muffler. We thought we were in the middle of a Harley Davidson rally.

Monday was much quieter. We took the dinghy in and tied to the stairs of one of the abandoned buildings (we locked her up and no one bothered it). It was quite a pull due to the low tide. We went to the Fiesta Surigao Resort and they helped us get a ride to the city to find an ATM. We were hoping for a trike....we got a motorbike. All three of us and our driver raced into town. Jake was sitting on a soccer ball. Not to worry, the driver had a helmet. It cost us 300 pesos round trip.

We were going to stay and shop in **Surigao**, but combined with the motorbike ride, it was a bit overwhelming. It's a dirty city, very busy, and our driver told us Americans should be

careful. Had it not been our first introduction to civilization, we might have explored a bit more. We just used the ATM, got a coke at McDonald's and headed back with our driver.

Ipil has some very small stores. Good for beer, rum, liquor. We found eggs, garlic, tomatoes... think Tuvalu when thinking of what you can get. VERY cheap. We bought 4 bottles of Tanduay (80 pesos), 1 bottle of coconut rum, 1 bottle of gin (220 pesos), 6 liter beers (Red Horse – 65 pesos each) and 8 diet cokes for 1250 pesos (about \$27).

We had lunch at the resort. Very good food...rice dishes, chicken, shrimp, pork, etc.

We had an appetizer, 3 meals, 5 beers, 1 juice for 1260 pesos. It's 100 pesos a person for a room and to use the pool. The pool looked very nice and clean.

Overall, the people were friendly (if not a bit suspicious), but not necessarily a must see. We needed to get some pesos, so it served our purpose. We left the next day.

Sidenote: It rained A LOT.

We were able to find an open internet connection with our antenna. It wasn't fast, but it was free.

#### **7.1.10 Dapitan (08-41N / 123-24E)**

Dapitan is on the northern tip of the western lobe of Mindanao, just 30 miles SE of Port Bonbonon on Negros.

**Valhalla - July 2004:** We made our way from Port Bonbonon (Negros I) into Port Taguilon (NW Mindanao), a few miles north of Dapitan. We anchored at **08-41.719 N / 123-23.968 E** in 30 feet of water over sand. A seaweed farm of bamboo poles and nets prevented access near the shore but we were content with the location.

Our first visit to Dapitan was a delight to find the city clean and nicely maintained. Also, we learned that the annual Senor Santiago Fiesta would be held that weekend.

Hiring a tricycle for a 'Cook's tour' we visited the Rizal Park and Museum. The hero of the Philippine Revolution against the Spanish, José Rizal, was the Filipino patriot whose writings inspired the nationalist movement, was exiled in Dapitan from 1892 to 1896. The dwellings in which he stayed survive and are a well-maintained park and museum. He was later executed and became a martyr ... sparking the foundation of Rizalist cults. Among many peasant cults it is commonly believed that he is still alive and will return to deliver his followers from poverty and oppression. Rizal has been identified as God, as the second, or Filipino, Christ, and as the god of the pre-Spanish Malay religion.

The Dakak resort was well worth visiting for a lengthy lunch and some COLD beer (notice the ice?) It rated a second visit before we left.

A visit to Dipolog by bus (30 minute ride) for shopping and lunch filled one day. We weren't impressed with the city but the lunch at an Italian restaurant was excellent!

When the weather seemed right one morning (30 July) we make a quick decision to get underway for a return to Port Bonbonon. Unlike the sail down, the winds were a bit more boisterous .... 17-18 knots and a bit on the nose, giving a lively close (sometime VERY close) reach and a rocky, wet ride. WONDERFUL SAILING!!!!

### **7.1.11 Dahikan (09-27N / 125-56E)**

**Soggy Paws - Mar 2018:** Screaming in just before sunset in NE winds, we were desperately looking for an anchorage. This isn't perfect but we got the anchor down in less than 100 ft and spent a quiet night. Goes from 60 to 35 in a boatlength. Dropped in 65, hanging in 90. 35 looked very corally on fishfinder, 65 was smooth. Water not clear. Small town ashore. Friendly people. Globe OK, Smart E.

The north side of this area, Dahikan Bay, is a shipping port for a mining operation. Lots of tugs and barges coming and going (we could see on AIS). Don't count on it as an anchorage for southerly winds.

## **7.2 East Coast of Mindanao**

**Soggy Paws – March & August 2018 – Day Hopping Against the Wind:** We went up the coast against the NE winds in late March, and back down in late August against the southerlies. Going up, we waited in the Pujada Bay for a few days for a mild wind period, and then did long day hops. In August the wind was light pretty much the whole time. Definitely need to get going early every day if you don't want to be bashing, and prefer to motorsail in light winds. Delay your start a bit if you are a true sailor and want wind. The wind starts shifting on sunny days by 10am and picks up a lot in the afternoon, from the NE-E during northerly season and SE-E during southerly season.

We found that staying in close along the shore, when we were headed north, we stayed out of the worst of the southbound current, and sometimes had a positive counter-current. Passing points, however, especially in the afternoons against the wind, was difficult (but not terrible).

Coming south, we stayed out a bit further and in the middle of Mindanao, had a full day of 2-2.5 kt helping current. However, when the S wind picked up in the afternoon, the wind-against-current waves got to be a bit uncomfortable. Edge in to get smoother water, but you will lose most of the current.

Pretty much every anchorage has some habitation, from big towns to small fishing huts. Every point you pass has fishermen, often with nets out. If you see a boat with one guy in it, he's probably hand-lining. If you see a boat with multiple people in it, they may be laying nets. A boat approaching you with an oar in the air, is indicating that you are approaching a net and you should go the way the oar points to go around the end of the net.

Sometimes fishermen will make eating or drinking signals with their hands—they are looking for a handout. We kept a case of water bottles and some packs of cookies or crackers handy to pass out. They always offer fish, but the fish they are offering are always small.

We never felt threatened in any way by anyone along this coast. However, fishermen often wear head wraps (t-shirts, whatever) to keep the sun off. They are not pirates!

**Brick House - May 2014 - Approaching from Palau:** We charted all possible anchorages along the eastern coast of Mindanao, and all the way to Davao since we were also told it was best not to travel at night close to the coast due to FADs and unlit fishing boats. (See Valhalla's list below).

Once we got to 130 East we headed for [Pujada Bay](#) - the bay to the northeast of Davao Gulf, both due to a bunch of known FADS just to the northwest of 130E, and because the wind would

be best if we headed southwest at that point. Once we got about about 85 miles out from that bay, we saw on the chart that there is a strong counter current close to the eastern Mindanao shore so we decided not to go in to that bay since we didn't want to have to come way out to catch the good current going southerly.

So about 50 miles out we started towards Davao Gulf - St Augustine Cape. Note we started seeing a very strong helping SSW current at 07 12N/127 00 E - in excess of 2.5 knots and remained with us until the coast of Mindanao and to Cape St Augustine! Makes for a very fast last 1/3 of or trip to Davao!

We noted some FADS that we saw. These positions are very accurate - though it's possible for them to move.

07 10.851N / 127 58.305E 10 foot long orange canister laying on its side, probably not very radar reflective. Lots of current.

07 08.892 / 127 44.323E FAD showed up very small on radar, and is lit with flashing red, green and white light.

We had warnings of unlit fishing boats and FADS 150 miles and more offshore - but everything we saw besides the one broken FAD was lit and we were watching pretty carefully. But we aren't great watchers either. That said - there were at least a dozen boats on AIS, and there were 3 or 4 lit fishing boats 150 miles out from Mindanao.

We did not end up stopping along the East Coast, but hooked around Cape St. Augustine and anchored at [Tagbanao Cove](#).

### **7.2.1 General Island (09-25N / 126-00E)**

**Soggy Paws – March 2018:** We were looking for an anchorage at General Island. We were racing sunset and didn't really have time to poke around. We would like to have checked out the bays on the SE side of the island. They look deep though, and if we couldn't find a reasonable anchorage, we wouldn't have time to get somewhere else. So then we decided to stop in the west bay. Once we got there, we found it chock full of a stick-village fishing village, and bankas. Just didn't look appealing, so we carried on to [Dahikan](#) (where the anchorage was not much better, but we didn't have to share it with other boat, and we had no other option at that point).

### **7.2.2 Cortes Bay (09-17N / 126-12E)**

**Mokisha – May 2017:** 30' sand/mud. Reefs surround except NW. Winds NNW 1-4kts. A lively group came out to meet us along with military and police. They took our garbage and sent another group back with 5 x 5 gallon water jugs. Lots of fun.

Water clarity not great, great view on the coast N & S. A comfortable fair-weather anchorage. Globe 4g x 3-4 bars.

**Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** We anchored in **Cortes Bay** at 09°16.719'N, 126°11.937'E in 22' of sand behind breaking reefs. When you enter this cloverleaf-shaped anchorage area, it is not obvious how to get in that inner anchorage, but it becomes clear and easy as you get to the channel that corresponds quite well at the CM93 location. Good Globe Internet access from here, too.

### **7.2.3 Tandag (09-05N / 126-11E)**

**Soggy Paws – August 2018:** With light and variable southerly winds, we anchored on the north side of Tandag town in about 30 ft sand/mud. (There is a river entrance here).

Approaching the anchorage area, we saw a number of tall stakes, which we believe to be floating bamboo poles marking the beginning of crab trap lines. We could discern no connection between adjacent sticks. Anchorage position: 09-05.12 N / 126-11.025 E.

There is a good sized village ashore to the south. There is an inner harbor accessed by going around the headland to the east. We saw a small freighter in tied up to the dock, as we left in the morning.

### **7.2.4 Caguit Bay (08-56N / 126-18E) (Cagwait)**

**Bird of Passage – March 2018:** Soft bottom about 4m, some fishing buoys here, but room to anchor. Fairly well protected in light NE.

**Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** Surprisingly calm anchorage at 08°55.614'N, 126° 18.062'E in 10-20' of good sand/mud. Good Globe Internet access from here.

Caguit Bay, Mindanao                      08 55.6272 N      126 18.0950 E

### **7.2.5 Bitaugan Bay (08-53N / 126-19E)**

**Shanghaied – March 2016:** 08 52.51 N / 126 19.26 E 18m sand. Current continuous in through north and out past anchorage to SE behind island sanctuary. 0.5 - 1.5 kts

**Sidewinder – April 2016:** 08 52.69 N / 126 19.23 E. A bit rolly at times as the tide goes in and out but really a good place. The town access is hard if the tide is big as it is right now but doable and the people are great

### **7.2.6 Agninan Island (08-47N / 126-18E)**

**Soggy Paws – March 2018:** As we were crossing the big bay in the early afternoon, planning to stop at Bituagan for the night, a big wind came up on our nose. We didn't feel like bashing into it (and the swell and the current) for another 2 hours, so we headed off to Mokisha's anchorage behind Agninan Island.

There is a pretty beach on the island, but the swell was huge and it looked dangerous to go to close in. We checked out Mokisha's anchorage, but it looked awfully close to the resort, and we could already hear karaoke (or a loudspeaker). So we poked around and found a nice bottom just a little south of Mokisha's anchorage. Gently sloping bottom from 35 ft to 45 ft and no bommies. We dropped at **08-46.742 N / 126-17.988 E** in 40 ft.

It was a little sloppy overnight with the huge swell offshore, OK for a cat, but might be a little rolly for a mono in these conditions (there's a typhoon muddling around about 350 nm NE). Surprisingly little swell coming in the gap between the island and the resort on the mainland.

In the morning, we motored out between the gap in the island and the shore—it was pretty consistently 65-75 ft, if you stayed evenly between the breakers/reefs on either side.



There were several “resorts” ashore, and some surfers on the break just inshore of us. We did not go ashore and left at dawn the next morning.

Internet was up and down. Good internet in the early morning.

**Mokisha – May 2017:** 08 46.79 N / 126 18.07 E 28' sand/mud. Original coordinates by Eric Taylor m/v Miss Nomer. It was difficult to find an adequate sandy patch near the island. When we did we got chased off by what we suspect was resort personnel who directed us to a preferred anchorage away from the view of the island from the resort. It was far better holding but at tide change that night we seemed to get rollers from both directions around the island. Open to NE and SE. A fair weather anchorage. Water clarity not great. Globe 4gx3

### **7.2.7 San Augustin Bay (08-44N / 126-13E)**

**Sail SE Asia – Dec 2024:** There is reportedly a cruiser friendly resort in the SW corner of the bay. <https://maps.app.goo.gl/wEvSiLm8XgJniBGf8>

**Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** We anchored at 08-44.242 N / 126 13.710 E and found a nice shelter in 20ft good sand. This anchorage is super calm when blowing 20-25kts from N-NE (now) in bay. There is a coconut plantation and small community ashore. Globe internet: good.

### **7.2.8 Port Lamon (08-27N / 126-23E)**

**Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin): Port Lamon,** 08°27.586'N, 126°22.711'E in 34' over mud. Another rolly anchorage, but it is well protected from everywhere but the east. It's also a very scenic anchorage with a small community of fishermen and sponge farms. We did not go ashore as our dinghy was stowed for rough passages, but we were tempted! Globe Internet OK.

### **7.2.9 Mawes Island (08-18N / 126-26E)**

**Soggy Paws – August 2018:** We had planned to stop at Port Lamon, but our buddy boat wanted to go on in to Bislig. We felt it was too far, and a 6nm trip in in the afternoon and out in the morning. So we looked around for a close alternative that would keep us in VHF range. With the help of great satellite photos (from SASPlanet), we saw that Mawes Island would be fairly protected and be relatively straightforward to get into and out of in the poor light of late afternoon (with clouds) and early morning.

We worked our way in using the chartlet we made using GE2KAP and OpenCPN, as both Navionics and Garmin showed only reef along the north coast of Mawes Island.

Anchored at 08-18.79 N / 126-25.74 E in 33 ft, well protected from the late afternoon SE wind, as well as the SW-W wind (light) that we expected overnight. There was a slight swell at high tide, coming around the point. We could have gone further in. Easy out the next morning by backtracking our course on the way in.

There are a number of deep “bommies” on the way in and out. We stumbled over one as the depth shot up from 45 ft to 18 ft, but thankfully stopped at 18 ft. Don't cut corners on the way out!

Globe Internet and Smart coverage here.

### **7.2.10 Bislig Bay (08-12N / 126-22E)**

**Good News – Feb 2021:** We anchored by the old and no-longer-used wharf. There is no good dinghy landing here (filthy steps, no place to tie the painter), but we made it ashore anyway and got to town. The public market is within walking distance. Possible to buy fuel here if you have jugs.

**Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** We arrived in **Bislig Bay** in confused seas, gusty winds, rain, and even thick fog in the hours before and after sunrise. Watch out for all the blind breakers you can see on the chart of Bislig Bay. There we spent a relaxed day and night protected from the rolling swell by a long breakwater of the fishing port, 08°12.171'N, 126°22.381'E in 30' over mud.

Globe Internet here.

### **7.2.11 Barcelona (08-09N / 126-27E)**

**Soggy Paws – March 2018:** Large NE swell offshore completely broken by outer reef, even at high tide. Friendly villagers but none bugged us too much. We went in a little further N than Mokisha, trying to get away from the huts in the water nearby.

We ended up dropping at 08 09.638 N / 126 26.612 E in 18ft at 4.5 ft high tide. Snorkeling showed good sand bottom. Protection here from ENE all the way around to the S. Moving south (carefully) in the bay might also afford protection from SE winds, getting behind the S reef.

We were amazed at the number of boats just inside the south reef at night. Literally 100 or so boats, with bright lights (probably catching squid?) Looked like 1-2 guys per small banka with 3-4 lights. There until dawn. Not sure if the numbers were because Easter weekend is right around the corner, or whether this is just normal numbers.

Good Globe 3G, no Smart.

**Bird of Passage – March 2018:** Anchored near Mokisha's anchorage. Went ashore and was greeted by the mayor. Villagers told me to land the dinghy on the beach well south of the town. Swell on the beach north of here makes landing a dinghy very difficult. The villagers motioned me to the south end of the beach, where the swell was broken by the offshore island.

**Mokisha – May 2017:** 08 09.481 N / 126 26.623 E 22' sand with some sea grass, occasional small bombies. S side of bay has many fish huts moored to the bottom, lighted at night to attract fish. N of where we anchored the bottom slopes up to the reef. It was a calm anchorage through tide changes. Did not go ashore. Snorkeling was not good. Winds became offshore at night 4 kts.

### **7.2.12 Baganga Bay (07-34N / 126-34E)**

Baganga Bay, Mindanao

07 34.5145 N    126 34.0632 E

**Soggy Paws – August 2018:** With southerly winds, we dropped anchor off the small village on the south side of the bay, at 07-34.46N / 126-34.062 E. Dropped in 30 ft sand, just outside the fishing boats. Lots of coming and going of bankas (noisy), but OK anchorage otherwise.

### **7.2.13 Baculin Bay (07-26N / 126-34E)**

**Soggy Paws – Mar 2018:** Heading North in what was supposed to be light winds, we passed Manay Bay (our chosen anchorage) and carried on, only to find an hour later that we had 2-3 kts of current, even close in, and 20 kts of wind almost on the nose. At one point, rounding Puan Pt, we were making only 1kt VMG in spite of motoring with both engines. Once we rounded the point and tacked back inside Caraga Bay, we got out of the current and could make some progress, but it was obvious that we were going to have the same problem between Baculin Pt and Lakud Point, and we probably wouldn't make Baganga before dark. So we tacked deep into Baculin Bay and looked at our Google Earth charts, and found what looked like adequate protection and anchorable depths.

When we saw 5-6 big fishing banka's we were afraid they would be taking up all the anchorable areas. But as we motored slowly in, we found that they were in over 100 ft deep (it may have been because there was a baby typhoon ENE of here and they wanted plenty of dragging room).

We ended up dropping at **07-26.759N / 126-34.372E** in about 35 ft, right off the cell phone tower. The anchor set well, and after snorkeling around, this is a great spot with deep sand and no coral and plenty of protection from the large NE swell.

Good Globe, so-so Smart.

### **7.2.14 Caraga Bay (07-19N / 126-34E)**

Caraga Bay is mainly an anchorage used when the winds are in a southerly direction.

Caraga Bay N, Mindanao	07 19.2490 N	126 33.7244 E
Caraga Bay, Mindanao	07 17.4042 N	126 34.9598 E

**Soggy Paws – August 2018:** We stopped overnight in Caraga Bay on our way south. Offshore winds were light SW, but in the afternoons along this coast, the inland mountains draw the wind to a brisk SE in the afternoons. We checked out three spots in the south end of the bay. One, off the town of Santiago, was OK at 10m, but we were more interested in beauty. We checked out the tiny east-most bay and found it could be anchored in, the next tiny bay in looked bigger, and we had two boats traveling together.

We dropped in about 50-55 ft at 07-17.366 N / 126-34.970 E in beautiful sand. Our friends dropped a little outside us in about 60-65 ft. The water was absolutely crystal clear—you could see your anchor chain from the surface! At low tide there is a tiny beach ashore, but there were people there, so we didn't go ashore. We snorkled on the little point about a quarter mile east of us—there are huge big boulders covered in coral. There was the usual lack of any fish over 4" long, but the clear water made for a very pleasant snorkel.

Good Globe coverage where we anchored (and pretty much all the way down the Mindanao coast).

### **7.2.15 Manay Bay (07-12N / 126-33E)**

**Mokisha – May 2017:** 07 12.384 N / 126 33.103 E Wind at NNE 5-10kts. Rained at night and winds shifted to W. 32' on sandy bottom. Dark patches are sea grass. Snorkeling not great. Friendly locals. Globe 4g x 4. Did not go ashore.

### **7.2.16 Quinonoan (07-05N / 126-28E)**

**Westward II - Summer 2014:** Stopped here overnight and anchored in 20m. OK protection from SW winds, but some swell wrap-around made the anchorage rolly at times.

Anchorage Position: 07 04.76 N / 126 28.17 E

### **7.2.17 Flaca Point (06-59N / 126-24E) (Emergency Anchorage, North Winds)**

**Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** On our way north from Pujada Bay, we had a porthole blow out, and needed a quiet place to make an emergency repair. Since we were ready for a rest, we decided to stay the night in that very rolly area with currents swirling in different directions than the wind, 06°59.518'N, 126°24.424'E in 25' of sand and broken coral. We would not recommend it as a good overnight anchorage, but it's OK in an emergency.

### **7.2.18 Pujada Bay Near the Entrance (06-48N / 126-17E)**

#### **7.2.18.1 Tagamilao (Eastern Tip of N Coast) (06-48N / 126-19E)**

**Soggy Paws – March 2018:** Staging out near the entrance to the bay, for a very early morning start, we poked around near Dancing on Water's waypoint. We were enticed by the beach and carried on eastward toward the beach, and dropped in a really nice sandy spot in 25 ft, at 06-48.018N / 126-19.254. We are in a time of very high tides, and were worried about overnight swell action on the high tide, but we spent a comfortable night there.

The locals from the town were very (overly) friendly—we had several boats (adults, girl kids, boy kids) come out to visit us. Not wanting to encourage bad behavior, we were friendly but not generous with them. One boat gifted us with some drinking nuts and then asked for a gift of a little money for gasoline.

**Dancing on Water – Pre-2014:** Anchorage (from Terry's collection) at 06 48.074 N / 126 18.990 E

#### **7.2.18.2 Taginilao Point (06-49N / 126-17E)**

**Soggy Paws – March 2018:** We spent several nights anchored off Taginilao Point (on the north side of the bay). The winds in the afternoon get quite strong (up to 20 kts) out of the north, and sometimes out of the NW. There is current here that seems to be always flowing out of the bay. We anchored much closer in to the shore than Sloepmouche, and didn't have a problem with swell.

We first dropped in what looks like sand in 35 ft, but turned out to be "hardpan" (slick white rock). After snorkeling around to check out alternatives, we moved in to a truly sandy area and dropped in 25 ft. It looks like you are too close to the reef ashore, but in reality, the dark blobs are patches of turtle grass, not coral. There is some coral closer in, but dropping in 20-25 ft, we had plenty of swinging room, and good holding. We dropped at 06-49.511N / 126-17.168.

At sunset on Saturday evening, we heard crier from the mosque in the tiny town around the point, but didn't notice this at other times. On Sunday morning (not sure about every day), there was a long procession of noisy banka boats heading into this town.

Crossing from the NW tip of Pujada Island to Sloepmouche's "night" anchorage, we saw several FADS that looked like wooden/bamboo construction, probably unlit.

We had 3G Globe and very weak Smart here.

**Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** Arriving in the Pujada Bay area after dark, due to the murderous southbound currents, we chose to anchor at Taginilao Point. We had NE winds and needed better protection than what was available at Pujada Island.

I studied the possibilities to make a safe anchoring at night using Google Earth chartlets. We decided to anchor in the shallow area off Taginilao Point. 06°49.57'N / 126°17.07'E in 30ft of sand and rubble.

It is very easy to spot the little Uanivan Island to the NW (do not go too near as the shoal extends to the SE).

We had no difficulty approaching slowly and anchor with lots of room all around to swing full circle if necessary.

In the morning, we discovered a few orange buoys in the area—not sure what they are.

**More Magic – (pre 2014):** Anchorage position: 06 47.2014 N / 126 15.7789 E 8m sand. Good holding. Off the sandy beach. This wpt seems a little far inshore, I would offset off the beach 100-200 ft.

### ***7.2.18.3 Pujada Island, Pujada Bay (06-47N / 126-16E)***

**Soggy Paws – March 2018:** On arrival in Pujada Bay, we cruised along the south coast of Pujada Island, there are several spots to anchor in reasonable depths, and by mid-island it was pretty calm in 15 kts NNE winds.

On another day, we motored from the northern tip down the North side of the Island, to about halfway. There are lots of spots in anchorable depths with sand spots surrounded with coral. With a little looking around, in good light, you could find an acceptable anchorage. Terry's waypoint list includes several possibilities.

**Mokisha – May 2017:** Anchorage Position: 06 47.81 N / 126 15.43 E. NNE wind 5kts. Locations drops off fairly fast. Sand bottom, 30', some clumps of coral about. Dark patches are sea grass. Globe cell reception fair. Very calm in these conditions. Fishing fleet to the S.

This is a lovely location with a great beach. Snorkeling is (to the north, just off the boat) is very good with amazing coral gardens, sea grass & tropical fish. Did not go ashore.

**Shanghaied – March 2015 – North side of Pujada:** Anchorage Position: 06 47.883 N / 126 15.997 E 10m Sand and Coral - got hooked up here on the coral overnight and had to cut bridles. Some tidal flow.

### ***7.2.19 Pujada Bay, in Near Mati***

**Soggy Paws – March 2018 – Blue Bless Resort:** We checked out a couple of the anchorages on the way in, but carried on into the Blue Bless Resort. What Sloepmouche neglected to

mention is that the “resort” to the south of BB has a loud karaoke machine. The caterwauling was just terrible—at 3pm on a weekday (kids after school, I think).

We anchored in the black área on the GE chart, just off Sloepmouche’s waypoint, it’s about 45 ft deep. Backing in toward shore, at a very low tide, our mid-boat depthsounder was showing 20 ft deep. Dropped at 06-52.325N / 126-17.314E.

The resort is the large one to the north of the anchor spot. Careful going in to the resort in a dinghy as it’s a roped-off swimming area.

We talked to an American staying at the resort long term. He said it is very “dead” during the week, but gets very busy on weekends. They have 3 pools and a restaurant, and a bunch of different sleeping options, plus “day cabins”. They are working on a “water park” right off the resort dock.

We went in for lunch and found typical Filipino fare at somewhat upscale prices. Service was not great, even though there were several people in resort polo shirts (employees), hanging out in the bar area.

They sometimes have live music on Saturday night.

As it was Friday afternoon, fearing more Karaoke over the weekend, we left and found a more deserted anchorage.

**Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin):** The anchorage at Taglainao Pt is a little exposed to swell so we moved 3nm away to anchor off three local resorts at **06°52.330’N, 126°17.328’E** in 25’ in a sand patch among isolated corals. You can snorkel in the area (not much fish life) as well as walk some beaches at low tide with the dogs.

We had dinner at the Blue Bless Beach Resort—local Filipino food at reasonable prices.

**Provisioning:** We tried to anchor off **Mati town** proper, but did not find any suitable anchorage, so we took a local transport from the BBB resort (100 Pesos/two on a motorbike to go and same on a tricycle to come back after a nice provisioning of fruits and vegetables at the **Mati public market**.

After almost one week here, waiting for calm winds to head up north, we left early morning to continue our trip against wind and current.

**Soggy Paws – March 2018:** We anchored at the Blue Bless Resort. What Sloepmouche neglected to mention is that the “resort” to the south of BB has a loud karaoke machine. The caterwauling is just terrible. This is 3pm on a weekday...

We anchored in the black área on the GE chart, just off Sloepmouche’s waypoint, it’s about 45 ft deep. Backing in toward shore, at a very low tide, our mid-boat depthsounder was showing 20 ft deep.

The winds here were all over the place—we had wind NW for most of the night, then E during the day. Not sure if this is local conditions or the wind switching outside. Not much current or swell in this anchorage.

### 7.3 Gulf of Davao

Note this section just discusses anchorages in the Gulf of Davao, BEFORE you arrive in Davao. Section 3.5 covers Davao and Samal Island, and checking in, etc.

#### 7.3.1 Approaching the Gulf of Davao from the East

**Brick House - May 2014:** See Brick House's passage report on Palau to Mindinao in [Section 2](#).

As you approach the Davao Gulf, there are tons of fishing boats off of St Augustine Cape. I would not want to approach at night - who knows if they are lit or not. We saw at least 8 of them during the day. Little ones, big ones...from everywhere. They go and come back at all times of day and night. AT least there are noisy motors on them.

The reef on the south tip of St Augustine Cape is really there even if it doesn't look like it and no waves are breaking on it. We went over the edge of the 13 foot deep area to see if it would really shallow - and it did. We only risked it to 35 feet since we couldn't see much. No fish caught there.

Its nice here in the Gulf - calm water, lots of wind right on the nose but motorsailable. There isnt a lot to hit at least that we saw, as far as reefs. There were FADS though as noted above, and lots of small boat traffic. The anchorage we are at is flat in 18 knots of wind from the north. except a little roll at high tide. It is noticeably cooler than Palau here.

#### 7.3.2 List of Anchorages in the Gulf of Davao

Courtesy of Valhalla, from a spreadsheet dated 2013. You can download these in spreadsheet form from valhalla.net here: <http://yachtvalhalla.net/harbors/oceanview/oceanview.htm> or in gpx form from here: <http://yachtvalhalla.net/navigation/terrystopics.htm>

Wpt Name	Lat	Long	Source	Type of Boat
Oceanview Marina	07 11.8978 N	07 11.8978 N	Holiday Oceanview	n/a
Big Cruz Island	07 10.6705 N	125 46.6224 E	WALTER	Catamaran
Buquid Point	05 33.6523 N	125 23.7129 E	SHIRALEE	Catamaran
Culaman	05 57.4949 N	125 40.6069 E	SHIRALEE	Catamaran
Dalio	07 00.6100 N	125 30.8500 E	PACEMAKER	Monohull
Digos Bay	06 43.6397 N	125 22.5419 E	SHIRALEE	Catamaran
East Point	07 05.6810 N	125 47.3500 E	CATAMINI	Catamaran
East Point 1	07 05.6670 N	125 47.3130 E	SLOEPMOUCHE	Trimaran
Kanlkian Point	06 19.6710 N	126 10.9970 E	CATAMINI	Catamaran
Kanlkian Point 1	06 19.6650 N	126 11.0080 E	SLOEPMOUCHE	Trimaran
Lima Point	06 18.4200 N	126 11.0500 E	EXPEDITUS	Monohull
Linosutan Point	06 54.2100 N	125 41.2800 E	TEMERARIUS	Monohull
Lupon	06 53.0095 N	126 00.5501 E	WALTER	Catamaran
Malalag Bay	06 34.8100 N	125 26.4400 E	TEMERARIUS	Monohull
Mampising	07 16.1104 N	125 50.1296 E	MORE MAGIC	Monohull
Maximas Resort	07 03.0600 N	125 43.0300 E	PACEMAKER	Monohull
N Padada Point	06 32.6038 N	126 05.0030 E	WALTER	Catamaran
New Argao	06 23.2191 N	125 37.3612 E	SHIRALEE	Catamaran
North Big Cruz Is	07 10.6705 N	125 46.6224 E	WALTER	Catamaran
Pohum Point	07 04.0617 N	125 40.3843 E	SHIRALEE	Catamaran
Port Tubalan	06 30.6933 N	125 34.2480 E	SHIRALEE	Catamaran

Sarangani Is SW	05 25.0711 N	125 27.5559 E	SHIRALEE	Catamaran
S Samal Is	06 53.5600 N	125 45.6600 E	PACEMAKER	Monohull
SE Samal Is	06 55.2400 N	125 46.7600 E	PACEMAKER	Monohull
Sunset Resort	07 07.8200 N	125 40.8100 E	PACEMAKER	Monohull
Taclobo Point	06 55.3100 N	125 44.6700 E	EXPEDITUS	Monohull
Tagbanao Cove	06 22.2980 N	126 09.8207 E	WALTER	Catamaran
Talicut Is SE	06 54.3300 N	125 43.1600 E	TEMERARIUS	Monohull

### **7.3.3 Leaving the Gulf of Davao**

#### **Sloepmouche – Feb 2016 (SSCA Bulletin) - Leaving Davao for East Coast in Winter**

Leg 1: Samal to Pujada Bay - 100nm

We ended up motorsailing most of the way in fairly calm seas.

We left mid-morning from Holiday Oceanview Marina and motorsailed in light wind from the NE and later in the afternoon against land southerly breeze. We timed our arrival to be at Point San Agustin just at daylight. We drifted, engine off, the last 2 hours of night and at 530am headed to pass very close to the point. The wx predictions gave around 10kts from N-NE and so the seas were very moderate. We had no rough seas at the point and were able to easily round the cape and start heading our way up along the coast of Mindanao.

Only a mere 35nm to get to Pujada Bay but with currents against you (reported as fast as 5kts) your speed up will vary considerably. At first we did about 3 kts, then for hours we had 2kts or less and in the mid-afternoon we were at 3.5-4kts (we were motoring at 4-5 kts if no current). By noon, we were expecting to arrive late at night but with the welcome breeze (15kts) we were able to sail close-hauled and arrive just after dark.

Thankfully to fellow cruisers, especially Terry on Valhalla who does a terrific job of creating Philippines satellite charts overlays for OpenCpn and other cruisers reporting their previous anchorages, I studied the possibilities to make a safe anchoring at night. We decided to anchor in the shallow area off Taginilao Point. 06 deg 49.57'N- 126 deg 17.07'E in 30ft of sand and rubbles. It is very easy to spot the little Uanivan Island to the NW (do not go too near as the shoal extends to the SE. We had no difficulty approaching slowly and anchor with lots of room all around to swing full circle if necessary. In the morning, we discovered a few orange mooring balls in the areas . not sure what they are.

#### **Catamini – July 2013 – Leaving Davao for Indonesia in the Summer**

We adapted the location of the anchorages considering wind directions. Mornings good sailing and favourable currents, but afternoons rain and roly seas this time of the year. So we always left at 5am and dropped the hook around 3pm. Our stops were as follows:

Mapagbo – Kanikian Pt – Quality Pt – East Balut Island - East Kawio Island - Sangihe

- Kanikian Pt to Quality Pt - morning 20kt wind SW; calm anchorage N05.48'393/E125.33'936 in 10m sand

- Quality Pt to East Balut Isl -morning 13kt wind SW; calm anchorage N05.24'286/E125.25'764 in 14m mud



Here we got a welcome to Indonesia on VHF 16 by the coastguard. They saw us on the AIS or radar.

#### **7.3.4 Piso Point (East Side) (07-03N / 125-57)**

**Soggy Paws – March 2018:** We got out of Holiday Oceanview Marina late and were just looking for a stopping coast along the east side of the Gulf. There are 3 waypoints in Terry's anchorage list around Piso Point, one on the North side and two on the South side. We ruled out the north side anchorage because, being March, our wind is out of the north.

As usual, we were racing darkness, so didn't have a lot of time nor a lot of light to look around.

We first investigated the waypoint from Our Odyssey, but found it to be a pinnacle, where the bottom zoomed up from 100+ feet to 45ft and back down. Didn't want to anchor there.

Then we slowly coasted in toward Outstripp's anchorage. One of our engines wasn't working, and it's really difficult to do accurate close in maneuvering with one engine on a catamaran, so we did a slow drive-by and confirmed Outstripp's comments that the bottom comes up from 60-75 feet to "eek!" depths in a very short space. The light wasn't good enough to explore more, but we could see coral heads not far away towards shore. We dropped in about 70ft, just a boatlength or so out from Outstripp's waypoint. It looked like fairly flat bottom (and our anchor came up the next morning with sandy mud on it). We backed in toward the reef, indicating 20ft deep in the middle of our boat, at the shallowest (but we didn't back very hard). It was a very calm night with no surprises, so we were OK there. Left before good light in the morning.

Karaoke bar to the east of the resort thankfully shut down about 9pm. (on a weeknight).

**Outstripp – May 2015 – Piso Point S:** Goes from 20 meters to OOPS quite quickly. Anchorage open and there's loud music at times. 07 02.79 N / 125 57.46 E

**Our Odyssey – Unknown Date – Piso Point S:** We went ashore (excellent dinghy landing) and had a coffee. We were made most welcome and were advised that they would welcome Yatchies. It is a nice morning sail from the Marina. . There is also another anchorage on the northern side of the point. 07 02.741 N / 125 57.323 E

**Outstripp – August 2015 – Piso Point N:** Goes from 20 meters to OOPS quite quickly. This anchorage gives quite good protection and a cool breeze comes down off the mountain in the evening. It was about 2°C cooler than the marina at night. 07 03.510 N / 125 57.049 E

#### **7.3.5 Mapagbo Creek (East Side) (06-59N / 125-59E)**

**Brick House - May 2014:** The second day we motored for about 35 miles north to **Mapagbo Creek** at 06 59.0367 N / 125 58.8106 E, but it was **too rough to stay**.

We continued on to find a makeshift anchorage and dropped anchor at **2 miles north** on the side of a reef, at 07 01.0103 N / 125 58.7879 E. Not the ideal anchorage, but a good enough alternative in a north wind. Dropped in 30 feet, coral. Drifted back in to 50 feet. LOTS of Bangkas and fish traps. Big village set back some. On the reef if wind shifts from WNW-S. Good N-SE, would be on the reef if wind shifts from WNW-S. We are only 20 miles from the marina here.

**Catamini – June 2013:** Calm anchorage N06.59'249/E125.58'754 in 7m sand/mud

### Other waypoints from Valhalla's list:

Mapagbo Creek	06 59.2400 N	125 58.7360 E	CATAMINI	Catamaran
Mapagbo Creek 1	06 59.0367 N	125 58.8106 E	WALTER	Catamaran
Mapagbo Creek 2	06 59.2880 N	125 58.7720 E	SLOEPMOUCHE	Trimaran

### 7.3.6 Baksal Cove / Limut Point (East Side) (06-41N / 126-05E)

**Soggy Paws – August 2014:** We found a nice anchorage, good protection at Limut Pt at 06-40.6N 126-04.90. I don't know about internet there though. Much better anchorage (protection-wise) in southerly winds, and a small village vs the bigger town at Sigaboy.

Some other anchorages in this bay, depending on the wind direction are:

Baksal Cove	06 41.4234 N	126 05.3460 E	WALTER	Catamaran
Baksal Cove 1	06 41.4200 N	126 05.3300 E	EXPEDITUS	Monohull
Baksal Cove Reef	06 41.0800 N	126 04.2200 E	EXPEDITUS	Monohull

### 7.3.7 Sigaboy Island (East Side) (06-38N / 126-04E)

**Soggy Paws – August 2014:** Though the morning started out dead calm (as it seems it always does in the Gulf of Davao), by mid-afternoon when we arrived at Sigaboy Island, it was howling out of the SW. Where the anchorage is listed in the list above, did look like a good spot, but seemed totally exposed to the wind and the chop and some of the swell. We trolled around behind Sigaboy trying to find some protection, but where we were protected it was 80ft deep! So we gave up and moved on a few miles north to what looked like another protected place (Limut Point).

**Zephyr - July 2013 - Sigaboy:** We pulled into Sigaboy about 1400, after moving our clocks back another hour. We're now at UTC+8 hours. After the anchor was down, we were greeted by old men, young men, teenagers, and kids alike. No women on board. One teenager spoke quite good English and had lots of questions--Where did you come from? How long did it take you? What islands have you visited? and many more. He even asked if they could row around our boat. Shortly after telling him we were headed for Davao, a much older man asked if we would take him there. We had to explain that we were actually just going farther up the Gulf. They all stayed around us for what seemed like hours looking at all of the equipment on board.

A nice breeze made it's way through the anchorage. We spent the rest of the afternoon resting. About 1700 the town lit it's fires and the bay was quickly covered in smoke. Dense smoke from all their cooking fires. Fishermen came and went throughout the rest of the day and lots during the night. The smoke got so dense we finally put on masks to make breathing easier. Guess they are used to it. Finally a bit of a breeze came through and most of it was gone.

We sat in the cockpit for dinner. While not that many mosquitos, there are small biting bugs that just love Tracy. Don't seem to bother me at all. This being our first time in the Philippines, we have no idea what, or if there is any kind of crime in the islands so we set up a cockpit watch for the night as we sat lazily at anchor. Nothing happened and no one came anywhere near us.

### Various Cruisers Waypoints for Sigaboy:

Sigaboy Is	06 37.6718 N	126 04.3054 E	WALTER	Catamaran
Sigaboy Is 1	06 37.7629 N	126 04.2525 E	VALHALLA	Monohull
Sigaboy Is 2	06 37.7520 N	126 04.2723 E	MORE MAGIC	Monohull

### 7.3.8 Borot Cove (East Side) (06-36N / 126-05E)

**Shanghaied – Feb 2016:** Anchored in 22m among large fishing boats moored fore-aft, and reefs; 2 friendly locals came out to invite us to visit their beautiful Barangay Monserrat.

*Ed Note: No anchorage position specified, but someone else gave a waypoint of 06 35.876 N / 126 05.304 E*

### 7.3.9 Tagbanao Cove (East Side) (06-22N / 126-10E)

**Brick House - May 2014:** The first night we anchored at **Tagbanao Cove**, about 7 miles up the inside coast inside Davao Gulf. coordinates: 06 22.2980 N / 126 09.8207 E There are no obstructions coming in. We think we are anchored in mud.

Its a picturesque village of several hundred people, and were greeted with polite teenagers. They welcomed us to their village and to the Philippines, but mostly wanted to see the beautiful 'yachte'. They say there was a boat here last year - who were also "foreigners". Most of the kids English is minimal but if you speak slowly with a bit of Spanish, it gets you by. The few adult men we saw spoke no English and did not come close to the boat. There are a couple of teenagers who speak very good English and are super polite calling me "ma'am" all the time. They were very careful and skillful at not hitting the boat with their outriggers. We noticed none of them ever went in the water - I forgot to ask why.

We are anchored in about 30 feet, hanging in about 50 feet. The water is not clear. We have already seen 2 brown sea snakes. There are little 'bangkas' everywhere motorized and paddled, leaving and arriving day and night. There are no obstructions coming in. The village along the waterfront is made up of straw huts, very traditional looking and colorful. There are a couple of very modern looking houses amongst them all as well. I do not think we will be putting the dinghy in the water to go ashore - probably will leave first thing in the morning, the minute we can see objects in the water, and head to Davao or however far towards Davao we can get. We are definitely in these people's front yard and should go ashore...but we should really carry on and get legal before making an friends. No one else has approached the boat - day or night that we are aware of but there was activity ashore and in the anchorage all night long...its not quiet here. School is out for the summer and they are in preparation now for a fiesta, where they will eat an entire cow, on Wednesday. One of the older teenagers wanted to be sure we knew that Mindanao is peaceful now - that there are no wars and it is very safe for foreigners, sort of an odd thing to tell us...but he also said the last foreigner he knew that came here died in the Philippines later on - he didn't know of what, but assured me he wasn't murdered!

### 7.3.10 Kanikan Point (East Side) (06-20N / 126-11E)

**Soggy Paws – March 2017:** We anchored on Mokisha's spot just north of the entrance to the fishing bay. A little swelly but not back, and easy in/easy out. Big sand spot. Anchored in 25 ft and hanging (with light NE wind) in about 65 ft. We had weak Smart data signal here.

Just after we anchored, we were called on Channel 16 by the San Augustine watchkeeping station, and asking where from, where to, how many crew, etc.

Quiet night, but tons of small fishing boats zipping about during the dawn hours.

**Mokisha - May 2017:** 06 18.387 N / 126 11.0634 E

Mostly sand bottom 25' depth. Water is clear & can see the bottom. Wind N to NE up to 12kts. No cell phone services.

**Shanghaied – Late March 2016:** 06 18.167 N / 126 11.268 E Anchored midchannel, 8.5m, mud, short scope as the passage is narrow with adjacent coral walls. There are many fishing boats further in.

**Catamini – July 2013:** anchorage N06.19'664/E126.10'983 in 11m sand/coral

As the wind changed late evening to SW, the anchorage became roly.

### **7.3.11 Talulan Bay (West Side)**

**Soggy Paws – September 2014:** Heading south from Samal, this is a good first anchorage on the west side of the Gulf of Davao. So just at sunset, we stopped in Talulan Bay. We had one waypoint on the western side of the bay, but we chose an anchorage in the southern end of the bay--away from the town. The problem in finding an anchorage was--as usual in these parts--it was either over 100 ft deep or 3 feet deep (and the light was fading fast). We managed to find a spot with a little more shelf and dropped our anchor.

We nosed in cautiously with Dave on the bow as lookout, and me on the depth sounder with my hand on "reverse". As soon as we got down to 10 feet on the depth sounder (with the sounder transducer nearly back in the cockpit), I dropped a waypoint and we reversed out of there. We then used our GPS to drop our anchor far enough from the waypoint to make sure we had swinging room. The shelf went from 12 ft to 35 ft to 75 feet in about 100 feet, so it was tricky. We finally dropped in about 50 ft and let out 150 ft of scope (all chain, with a 100 lb anchor). It seemed like sand on the bottom.

The spot we dropped our anchor was at approximately 06 29.72 N / 125 34.76 E (this with the GPS in the cockpit and the anchor on the bow!)

It was easy getting out in minimal light in the morning—just don't cut the point to the east too closely—the reef comes out quite aways.

### **7.3.12 Malalag Bay (West Side)**

**Aziza – September 2015:** Anchored at 06 36.04 N, 125 24.59 E

As an anchorage it's middling, open to the north to northeast. As a destination, it sucks. Come here if you need to, but seek elsewhere for enjoyment.

In times of yore, this would have been a good anchorage, with excellent shelter at the head of the bay. In fact, I'm told it was used during one of the international oil crises to park a fleet of VLCCs who had nothing else to do.

Today, the inner part of the bay is filled with odorific fish farms, (the current Google Earth photo is absolutely accurate) and the outer part is used by large craft such as LNG carriers, VLCC

crude carriers, and assorted freighters. Not to mention the usual fishing bancas (deep sea variety). We motored around the bay for half an hour or more trying to find a nice, idyllic spot, and/or get toward the head of the bay, and gave up.

So ... Do not pass go; go straight to the above coordinates ... Anchor off the sort-of beach in 5-10 metres just NW of the oil tank farm and off the defunct fish processing shacks. Enjoy the sound of the oil carrier generators overnight – not terribly loud, to be fair. But at least the water was clean, if not clear, so we were able to swim and had an acceptable stopover.

### **7.3.13 Lawa (West Side)**

**Carina – September 2014:** We are at Lawa along the coast. Little village. The usual kids. Our anchorage... 06-11.14N / 125-42.39E, 23 feet sandy. A little roll.

Villagers directed us here when we anchored further north. They were worried the weather would bring swell further north about 150 yards.

### **7.3.14 Quality Point (West Side)**

**Catamini – July 2013:** We found a calm anchorage in SW winds at N05.48'393/E125.33'936 in 10m sand

### **7.3.15 Butulan Bay (West Side)**

**Soggy Paws – September 2014:** We got really knocked back by the SW winds on our way south down the gulf, and weren't making progress as we should have been to get into Sarangani before dark. We looked at this carefully on Google Earth and it does look possible to find a reasonable anchorage here, likely shallow enough to anchor and somewhat protected from the SW winds. We did not go in here, though.

Possible spot: 05 37.475 N / 125 26.585 E

### **7.3.16 Sarangani Islands (Southern End)**

These islands, just 8 miles off the southern tip of the western side of the Gulf of Davao, make a good all-weather stop when transiting the area. There are two anchorages—one somewhat of an open roadstead, and one with 360 degree protection.

**Catamini – July 2013 – Balut Island:** - Quality Pt to East Balut Isl -morning 13kt wind SW; calm anchorage N05.24'286/E125.25'764 in 14m mud

Here we got a call on VHF 16 by the Philippine coastguard. They saw us on the AIS or radar. They just wanted some information (Captain's name and Last and Next Port), and did not care if we were staying a few days in the islands after having checked out of the Philippines.

**Soggy Paws – September 2014 - Balut Island:** In case you're struggling to make an anchorage in the Sarangani Islands before dark, here is our route in from the North. We did this at midnight. I don't remember shallowest depth, but I never got concerned (30-40 feet, in spite of the fact that the Google Earth photo makes it look shallower. We anchored in 65 feet, seems like sand. Rolly at times, though. And 10-15 kts of wind. But safe and easy enough to enter at night, if you're inclined. Good Globe internet here, but no Smart.

Would probably not be good with any east in the wind.

BalutN N05°28.385' E125°26.158'  
BalutAppr N05°26.982' E125°26.241'  
BalutMid N05°25.727' E125°26.530'  
BH1 N05°24.149' E125°26.930'  
BH2 N05°24.040' E125°26.590'  
BH3 N05°24.181' E125°26.108'  
SP Anch N05°24.122' E125°25.611'

If you have daylight, you can work your way in closer to the SW, and get into 35 ft sand, and get a little more protection from the swell.

**Soggy Paws – September 2014 – Port Patuco (Sarangani All-Wind Anchorage):** I would NOT go in here at night. Decent light recommended unless you are good at following a route precisely. Shallowest depth about 30 ft I think--it's just fairly narrow.

Approach N05°28.730' E125°28.002'  
N05°28.627' E125°28.137'  
N05°28.604' E125°28.199'  
N05°28.572' E125°28.305'  
N05°28.522' E125°28.409'  
N05°28.492' E125°28.430'  
N05°28.340' E125°28.441'  
N05°28.265' E125°28.475'  
N05°28.126' E125°28.606'  
N05°28.730' E125°28.002'  
N05°28.627' E125°28.137'  
N05°28.604' E125°28.199'  
N05°28.572' E125°28.305'  
N05°28.522' E125°28.409'  
N05°28.492' E125°28.430'  
N05°28.340' E125°28.441'  
N05°28.265' E125°28.475'  
Anchorage N05°28.126' E125°28.606'

Anchor in 33 feet good holding, GREAT protection. Globe internet here, but not as good as in the other anchorage (must get your dongle out of the cabin). Google earth charts good (but hard to see hazardous reef in the middle of the bay).

If you go in any further than the Anchorage waypoint, go very slowly and/or look at the Google Earth picture really closely. There are some very shallow reef areas.

Plenty room here for several boats. Town nearby and some banca traffic in the bay. From here it's 117 nm to Sangihe anchorage, due south.

#### **7.4 Davao and Samal Island**

There is a very good overview of Davao City on Wikipedia:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Davao\\_City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Davao_City)

**Noonsite - November 2013:** Holiday Ocean View Marina is located at the northern end of Samal Island, in the Davao Gulf. It is in a typhoon-free area being in southern Mindanao.

The Gulf of Davao is situated on the south coast of Mindanao Island and has several islands, in addition, there are over 30 rivers and creeks which empty into the Gulf.

Although other parts of Mindanao suffer from political unrest, Davao City and Samal are relatively safe places to stop (apart from the usual petty crime). And Oceanview Marina at Samal is one of the safest places to leave a boat for a trip home. In 5 years of using it as a cruising base and a storage location, we have not heard of ONE instance of any kind of theft or problems with a stored boat.

##### **7.4.1 Approach, Arrival and Formalities**

Note that Holiday Ocean View Marina info (contact and rates) is in a separate subsection below.

**Sail the Philippines FB Group – December 2024 – Davao Arrival:** Heads up, domestic clearance in Davao. You now have to clear into Davao, sending pre arrival emails to quarantine, immigration and customs. We are staying at the Oceanview marina and had to confirm this morning that we had sent pre arrival before they would open the gate. The marina did say that they will be fined if boats don't send pre clear emails.

Quarantine will ask for your free pratique from your original port of entry (or last port). If you email it, you don't have to visit their office. Immigration will ask for your last clearance, they were ok when we said that Puerto Princessa didn't issue one. Customs were more difficult when we couldn't provide clearance from PP (we pointed out that PP told us that domestic clearance isn't required etc) and won't issue the paper work to us until they have talked to PP directly. They got a little ansty when we said we left PP three months ago and needed an explanation why it had taken us so long to get to Davao... They are also coming in the morning to inspect the boat. Only charge (apart from transport costs....) was 130 pesos for the paperwork at Customs.

Responses from others:

- The official requirements are:
  - all yachts should check out with Customs upon departing domestic ports based on Department of Transportation 2024-020 (but most ports do not require this);
  - according to Quarantine regulations all boats must check in with them upon arrival in Philippines but some Quarantine offices (esp. Cebu) require check in even for domestic-to-domestic port travel although the regulation is not specific on this point and it is IMHO a misinterpretation of the regulation.

- The new customs regulation for check out at every port is in response to a recent incident where a significant Person of Interest escaped the country on a boat to Singapore in order to evade arrest
- The full document of this new regulation is now posted in Sail the Philippines FB group. Look in the Files section.

**Soggy Paws – 2018:** The “fast track” fee is back. They are still randomly requiring “appropriate attire” at Immigration. When we went to check out, Dave and I were both wearing boater’s shorts, close toed shoes, and a polo shirt. They would let Dave in with shorts, but not me!! For women especially, no sleeveless shirts and no knees visible.

**Soggy Paws – November 2016 – Checking In at Davao:** We checked in at Immigration from Indonesia (for the 4<sup>th</sup> time in 3 years) and had a very pleasant time. They are no longer charging the extra 1000 PHP “Fast Track” fee (which had been properly receipted each time before, but which they had no real good explanation for what it was). So our check in at Immigration cost only 720 pesos (about \$15 USD). We had brought our own copies of documentation, passports, and crew list, so there was no delay or charge for getting copies made.

We didn’t go to Quarantine. Technically I guess you are supposed to, but nobody we know of checking in to Davao (except maybe Brick House) has gone there.

Immigration is right across from Victoria Mall. So after Immigration, we went shopping, intending to stop at Customs on our way back to the marina. But we got carried away with shopping and ran out of time (if we were to make the last shuttle back to the marina at 3:30pm). So Dave had to go back to Customs the next day. But that was free and quick.

The boat is now good “forever” (?? We have never heard of any issues in the Philippines about “duty” being due on the boat if it is kept in the Philippines for an extended period, like many other countries). And we have 30 days on our Immigration. We will have to renew once after 30 days, then the next renewal after that we can get a 6 month renewal.

**Brick House - May 2014 - Checking In at Davao:** Some officials are a little on the corrupt side here, if given the opportunity. Immigration tried to charge 1750 pesos but when I (nicely) demanded a receipt for the full 1750 not just 750, he gave us 1000 pesos back rather than giving us a receipt. He took the money back out of his desk drawer that he HADNT given to the cashier. (Thats what tipped me off).

Then Quarantine charged us 1500 pesos, that he too put in his wallet...but when I asked for a receipt he said no problem - went in to to someone else's desk, got a receipt, filled it out and signed a different name than what was on the rest of our paperwork, and gave it to us. At least he gave us the clearance papers to leave the country with in addition so we wouldn't have to come back when we leave someday.

Customs on the other hand, besides some bad street children on our approach to the Customs building, were honest and extremely nice. No fees, and they thanked us for coming by with our papers. No forms, no questions, just let me see your quarantine papers, your passports, and ships papers.

Even with the extra fees we ended up paying, our total for check in was \$51 US, but it seems like that may vary depending on moods of officials.



At least we don't have to go to a dock, and have people tromping on board, etc when we check in. And they seem to care very little about any of it - so nothing to worry about at all. It seems like you could be in the country a month or two before checking in and nobody would care or notice.

### **Process to check in:**

First, come to Marina at Davao and get your slip in the ordinary fashion.

2. Once you are rested and comfortable at the marina and the sun is out, you can think about going to Davao City to clear in. Bring your ships papers, crew lists, last port clearance, passports, etc. Bring any unlocked cell phone with you to get a SIM today. (see "Communications" below for details on phone and internet access).

3. Take a marina shuttle to the ferry dock and take the ferry to Davao. (see Ferry details below under "Getting Around"). Also see my note on appropriate attire to wear to Immigration below. You will need pesos, so if you have no pesos, ask the secretary the night before, or someone that you know, if you can borrow 500 pesos until you can find an ATM machine. That will be more than enough for taxi to immigration etc. (*Ed note: There is an ATM at Victoria Mall across from Immigration, easy peasy*)

4. From the ferry dock, walk up to the main street where there is a row of taxis and ask anyone to take you to **Immigration**. They all know where it is. It is across from Victoria Plaza mall. Taxi will cost about 150 pesos (\$3.41 US) Make sure its metered and started at 40 pesos (*all the Island Taxis, waiting at the ferry dock are good clean safe metered taxis*). When you get out, if you have no cash, go in to the mall across the street ( Victoria Plaza) for a money changer or ATM and get some Pesos. I would recommend a minimum of 5000 pesos so you have enough for fees and bribes and taxis back. Bigger places take credit cards, but many require cash. The officials only take cash.

First go to Immigration. Make sure to wear appropriate attire, or you won't be let in the front door: Women- cover your knees and no bare shoulders. Open toed shoes are OK, just NOT flip flops. Tevas are fine. You can throw on a dress over your clothes just outside the door and they will let you in no matter how wrinkled and frumpy you look. Men: Long pants and closed toed shoes. And of course a shirt of nearly any kind. (*Soggy Paws 2016 - This seems to be intermittently enforced, some days yes, some days not*)

Ask for receipts for any money you pay. Be ready to question firmly but with a smile anything they can't give you an official receipt for. They will have a 4 page form of questions to ask you, but our guys just had us fill out the first half of page 1 and he left all the remaining pages blank - he didn't want to wait.

You will get 1 month, and will pay at least 720 pesos here and will get a receipt for it. If asked for an extra 1500\$, ask for an official receipt, don't give up on this, and likely you wont have to pay it. Its explained as customary overtime charges for the people who board your boat. Nobody boarded your boat, especially not off hours, and this is just something going in to the official's pocket, literally. The guy we talked to had a pretty convincing story, but when we pressed for a receipt he handed the 1500\$ back to us obviously preferable to him than giving a receipt.

Once you have your stamp in, you are ready to go to **Quarantine** next. Don't try to go to customs next because they will just send you to Quarantine since they need paperwork from

them. *Note from Soggy Paws 2016: No one else we know has gone to Quarantine, and we have not had a problem on 3 check-ins when going to Customs without going to Quarantine.*

Take a taxi (should cost about 80 pesos) to: Medical Quarantine Officer on Layapura Street/Corner of Chevez Street

You need to leave here with a Free Practique Certificate. It cost us 1500 pesos to get this. We felt this may have been an illegitimate charge. The receipt he gave us upon request was a different signature, and not stamped or other. The money went in his wallet.

Next take a taxi to **Customs** ( 'Sasa Wharf' if the taxi doesn't know and should be about 140 pesos). Be careful of the street children here they are very pesky and many people warned us about them. Sign in at the outside shack/desk, and leave a picture id in exchange for a visitor's badge. Wander in to the building, turn left in the hallway, and the office is the first one on your left. Supply all paperwork including the Free Practique from Quarantine, and there is no fee.

We believe that with this done you are done checking in. We could certainly be wrong.

When you return back, just ask the taxi to bring you to the Sasa Ferry Dock - the one that goes to Samal - they all know where it is. It iss about 140 to 180 pesos from almost wherever you are in town.

Now you are official. We have heard that you can now apply for the next 30 day visa that will start the day after your first one runs out.

**Visas** to stay here are expensive:

First 30 days - about 9\$ US per person

Next 30 days - about 69\$ per person

Next 2 months - about 161\$ per person OR Next 6 months (*note, as of 2018, you cannot usually get more than 2 months at a time*) - About 253\$ per person (you choose which extension at this point). I believe there is a 1 month extension too, but not sure of price. If you leave its VOID when you return, you start over again at 1st visa at beginning of this list)

I think there is a Retirement visa you can get if you are over 60 that involves putting a large deposit in the bank here and keeping it in place then you can avoid all the visa feesbut it costs money to get it too so you have to be staying here for a while.

**Zephyr - July 2013 - Visa Extensions:** Yesterday, we headed in to Immigrations to get our Visa extension. When you come into the Philippines, you get an automatic 21 day Visa for free (*Soggy Paws 2016: now 30 days*). After that, you pay. Well, we didn't want to wait till the last day to do it(next Monday) so we headed in on a Thursday. We took plenty of money and our passports.

We arrived at the office about 1010 and got two of the forms to fill out. What we didn't know was that we needed a copy of the page in our passports that showed the stamp where when we arrived. So off to another shop to get it for the official. Back to Immigration and by 1030, we had handed in our papers.

We were smart enough to bring books along for the wait. About 1115, Tracy's name was called out (lucky to hear it above to noise in the office) and she went to the counter and paid \$6030 pesos (about \$143 US) to the official. She then returned and sat and waited with me. About

1150 (just before lunch break) the officials started calling out names and everyone went to the counter and got their forms. They wanted everyone gone by lunch time. Simple and easy and now we are set till September 9th.

*Soggy Paws Update 2016: This process seems to have been streamlined in 2016. Much less waiting around. Cruisers advise to either get their first thing (hard to do if you are relying on the marina shuttle), or around 11am when the first wave of people have been cleared out. They are open over lunch.*

#### **7.4.2 Holiday Ocean View Marina - 07°11.89' N / 125°42.62' E**

**Important Updated Info – Sep 2019:** As of September 2019, Holiday Oceanview Marina has finished their adjacent condominium building, and they are trying to convert to a more resort-like place. They will no longer haul new boats for long term work or storage.

The marina is still operational and still has ample space and will accept new boats for in-water storage.

In an emergency, you may be able to haul and stay on the ramp for a couple of days to complete underwater maintenance. (We were able to haul for a couple of days in late 2019, but I'm not sure if this is because we are longtime residents or because they have a policy in place for short hauls. The tidal situation—need to go in and out on a high tide—complicates things if you have any draft over about 4 ft and need to stay out more than a day or two).

Their [holidayoceanviewmarina.com](http://holidayoceanviewmarina.com) website is no longer functioning. Best contact email is the marina manager's (Dina's) email address [holidaygroup.oceanviewmarina@gmail.com](mailto:holidaygroup.oceanviewmarina@gmail.com). Ruth's cell phone number (as of Jan 2020) is +63 917 326 2003

As of January 2019, in-water rate for a 44' catamaran was about \$12 USD per day, plus electricity. Monohull rate is less. Contact the marina directly for current rates.

**Note: The marina DOES NOT monitor any VHF frequency. They \*might\* have a radio they can use and turn on if they notice you circling outside. Best to make contact either with a yachtie or the manager by email and/or cell, and tell them an exact ETA as you get close. Several resident yachties hang out on the Sail SE Asia Facebook Group.**

**Older somewhat obsolete Info (2014):**

##### **From Their Former Webpage**

Marina provides 56 In-water side-to berths for yachts up to 50 feet LOA (2 spaces fit longer yachts up to 100 ft LOA).

Slipway for vessels up to 60 ft LOA, 28ft beam, 7ft draft & 20 tons.

Boatyard with Dry Storage for over 25 boats

Club House / Bar / Fridge / Meeting room / WiFi

Clean Bathrooms & Showers with Hot/Cold water

Laundry: washers and dryer

24/7 Manned security and CCTV

Twice-daily complementary shuttle bus to/from Babak town and 10min Davao City ferry

**Soggy Paws Note 2016:** Nobody is listening to Channel 68, UNLESS you tell them ahead of time that you are coming (ie, text or email THAT DAY with an approximate ETA). Then MAYBE someone will be on 68. Some of the cruisers hang out on Channel 74—if you can't raise anyone on 68, try 74.

Marina Entrance: 07°11.89' N - 125°42.62' E

### **From their Activities page:**

**Weekly Pot-luck BBQ** - Our BBQ is ready for all the marina guests. Every Friday evening, most guests get together for a congenial potluck BBQ, dear to international cruisers. Charcoal is ready, just bring anything to BBQ and some dish to share. A great time to swap stories and have a great time!

**Scooter and car rentals** – It is possible to rent a scooter from a place nearby. Samal Island is easy driving. Going over into Davao in your own transportation is a bit more hectic (taxis and public transportation is cheap). Around Samal island you can visit the waterfalls and other interesting sites ... Take a ride on the uncrowded local roads. See the sights at your own pace!

**Snorkeling and Scuba Diving** - You can snorkel on the coral reefs just outside the marina or you can go with any local tour operator to snorkel or scuba along Samal island and her small islets.

**Shopping and Entertainment in Davao City** - Davao City is a 1 million+ city with a vibrant economy. The city hosts a plethora of shopping and entertainment options. From cosmopolitan Mega-malls with luxury stores and Imax theaters to local bazaars with inexpensive fresh fruits, vegetables, fish and meat markets. From fancy international restaurants to fast food and local street-side food stalls. From Health salons to bicycle repairs ... Choices are infinite! Inexpensive transportation by taxis, buses, jeepneys, motorcycles and tricycles. Book an hotel in your price range and enjoy the nightlife.

**Tours & Attractions around Davao City** – There are several points of interests around Davao City that can be visited during a day-trip. You can rent a car or use public transportation ... or like some cruisers, you can even have your own transportation and explore the area by yourself or even the whole of the Philippines. Your imagination is the limit!

**International Airport:** Davao (DVO) is an international airport with direct flights to Singapore. Flights inside the Philippines are cheap, and there are many airlines and many destinations possible from Manila. Philippine Airlines, Cebu Pacific are the most prolific Philippine airlines. Singapore Airlines and Air Asia are also good options from Davao.

**Brick House - May 2014:** There are at least 25 slips open right now and a number of people are getting ready to depart.

So for our 40 feet boat, it's about \$175 US per month with water and many other privileges. Electric is around 40\$ per month and optional.

Go see the secretary in the office once you are in your slip to sign an agreement. It has you list your insurance company on the form, but we don't have insurance and left that part blank and they still let us in.

The marina itself is set up well. Nice floating docks with modern and new facilities. Very protected. Good enough security. Very quiet at night, very peaceful serene place unlike the rest

of Davao. Friendly helpful people. A few social things each week. A trading library, and a great place to sit and buy beers and drink watching the sun go down over the seas and mountains in the distance over the top of the sailboats. Clean hot showers and toilets. Nice enough grounds. Decent enough haul out facility.

But the marina is not near anything at all. You could get very bored here very quickly unless you have some money to spend to go off and do tours or the like. There are a number of things to do on the island of Samal, but transportation presents a little bit of a problem.

Overall, so far, we do NOT love Davao (the city). Everything is available somewhere but we find it difficult to find out about where and what is available, and there is so much traffic that it's not fun to explore this city. It's not a waking city at all - lots of construction happening, inadequate sidewalks in many places, cars don't consider crosswalks in the least, and it's easy to get run over. Very little threat though of being ripped off or pickpocketed - you feel very safe here. And there is no betelnut or other vulgarity in the street. Restaurants seem adequately clean.

**Noonsite - November 2013:** The only marina on Mindanao island is on the northern tip of Samal Island at the Holiday Ocean View Resort. This is a secure place to leave a boat long-term.

Holiday Oceanview Marina

07°11.94N, 125°42.74E , Garden Island City of Samal, Near Davao City , Philippines

The marina facility offers 2 floating docks with a combined total of 56 berths. Each berth can fit yachts up to 50 feet LOA. The end of the docks can fit longer yachts up to 100 ft LOA. Each dock has electric connection 220Vac-30A - 60Hz (small fee) as well as water connection (included) . Fuel service is available.

The marina entrance is closed with a wave breaker so very little swell is ever felt inside the marina. Entrance and berthing maximum depth is about 12 feet.

Contact marina staff prior to arrival to open the gate and provide mooring assistance.

**Zephyr - August 2013:** The marina can hold just about any size of boat. Big slips.

Electricity is 220 volt but we can't seem to get our step down transformer to play nicely with it. We had to run our generator till we went to Davao and bought a car battery charger. It's keeping our batteries topped off.

Free water that is body friendly (so far).

Good security with no crime problem that we have heard about.

Taxi to the ferry(leaves Oceanview) to Davao at 0830, 1300, and 1500. Will return you to the marina. Go in to Davao and return by 1330 or 1530 and get taken back to the marina.

Free good wifi at the marina and you can purchase a dongle from Globe at any of the many shopping centers in Davao. Works great. Using it now as the wifi at the club house won't quite reach the boats but works great at the nice clubhouse.

The clubhouse also has cold cokes (bottles for 14 pesos) and sprite (same), and several types of San Miguel beer(33-34 pesos apiece).

You can store some food in the space left over in the frig. There are two freezers available for storing frozen food. First ice cream we have had that we could eat at any marina.

There are game nights and pot luck barbecue nights as well as a Wednesday night meal cooked by a local couple for just \$175 pesos(\$4.00 US).

The boat yard has a competent crew (from what we have seen). We're trying to get our teak decks ripped off and the deck re fiber glassed. Haven't been about to get a quote so far.

Getting into the marina--As you approach, call on channel 68. They will remove or open the three gates to the marina. Yes, three. One with floats on the outside, then a big metal swing gate and then another set of floating buoys. No clue why but it does keep anything from coming into the marina (or escaping).

### **7.4.3 Cruisers Services**

#### **7.4.3.1 Dinghy Dock & Trash Disposal**

The marina takes all trash.

There is not much anchorage outside the marina, and the marina has a closed gate, so coming and going by dinghy is not easy and is not encouraged (though some people have anchored outside for a few days and dinghied in).

#### **7.4.3.2 Money**

**Brick House - May 2014:** There is an ATM at the Victoria Mall across from Immigration.

**Zephyr - July 2013:** After we finished with Immigration, we crossed the street and headed into the Victoria Mall. We needed a bank to get some local currency. We'd tried a bank across the street and our ATM card didn't work with their system. We needed another bank. It took some looking but we found an ATM in the mall that would give us some money. The bank puts a limit of just \$10,000 pesos(about \$225 US) on any transaction and adds a \$200 fee(about \$5.00 US) on every transaction. That can really add up after a while.

#### **7.4.3.3 Diesel and Gasoline**

**Brick House - May 2014:** Diesel is 46 pesos a liter, so about 4\$ or so per gallon?

#### **7.4.3.4 Propane (Cooking Gas)**

**Soggy Paws – Jan 2019:** They no longer do propane tank fills on Samal. You can buy a local tank and swap it out, but not get your own tank filled. There is a gas station on the "mainland" not far from the ferry dock that will fill propane tanks and can do most common tanks (US, Australian, etc). The gas station is Star Gas (I think) and it's on the right as you go into town. You can leave the tank there for a fill and collect it on your way back to the ferry. You can see the propane filling area from the street.

**Soggy Paws – 2016:** The Marina van driver will take your propane tank for a fill, and bring it back when it is done. Cost for a fill is \$15-20. They can do American tanks for sure, not positive about what other country tanks they can support.

We bought two new 25 lb fiberglass tanks from Ecor, out near S&R. We believe they have an Indonesia fitting on them—they can't be filled, but they can be exchanged at several locations in

Davao. We usually take the tank on an S&R trip, as there is an EC Gas place not far away on Maa Road. +63 932 122 5884 is the contact number. They will meet you at S&R and bring you a full tank to exchange with your empty.

**Brick House - May 2014:** Propane in to your bottle 11 KG is about 20\$ and takes 2 trips to town - 24-48 hours to do it.

#### **7.4.3.5 Groceries/Provisioning**

Note: The best source of what is available for the boat is in a black book at the bar.

**Brick House - May 2014:** Grocery store prices seem to be the same or better than Palau. Availability of products in Davao.

CAT/DOG FOOD- readily available and about same pricing as Palau or cheaper. Cat sand more expensive though. Dry food looks to be about 30% cheaper from what I remember from Palau, about the same variety. Petco at the Victoria - not big or impressive- get the US store and size out of your mind - it's a small small pet store. People make pets of dogs here, not so much catsso only the basics for cats. There are plenty of animal clinics spread around Davao, but no longer on on Samal Island.

TREATS Fudgee Bars which we grew to like in Pohnpei and paid about 3-5\$ for are about 1\$ here for a 12 pack. They do have double stuffed oreos here for about 80 cents a roll. Lots of donut shops, coffee shops and bakeries, lots of icecreams and fruit shakes. Lots of fast greasy food. Good pizza but our more expensive meal option. Lots of Chinese and Philippino food. Try a Durian shake - but they are terrible. Not just the smell but the taste and the aftertaste. Sort of like Tuba in the islands but frozen.

The only specific things I noted so far that are NOT available in the one big grocery store we went to (may be in others) is:

- Coffee Creamer FLAVORED, not available
- Ground coffee or coffee beans not available

The large malls are like malls in America.

FRUIT is cheap. Pineapples about 75 cents, mangos about 30 cents each, cantalopes about 60 cents. Everything that is available in Palau is available here.

**Liquor Availability and Prices:** The price for beer is 800 pesos for a case of 24 cans, or 600 pesos for a case of 24 bottles, and then you pay 120 pesos on top of that for a deposit on the bottles. No deposit on the cans.

So bottles, if you bring them back for the deposit are: 57 cents US each (25 pesos). Cans are 33 pesos, or about 75 cents US each.

However, with that said, we were offered beers at a "resort" yesterday, and it was 15 pesos ( 34 cents US)for a bottle of soda, and 30 pesos for a beer (68 cents US).

Bottles of Tanduay rum - something less than 2\$ US per 750ml bottle. They make coconut rum and mango rum too, same price. The there is also Tanduay whiskey, schnapps, bourbon, gin and others for about the same price. IMported is obviously considerably more. Although, I found an off brand Irish cream for about 7\$, and many other alcohol imitations for less than 10\$ US.

The boxed wine, I forget the name of it, same brand as in the Marshall Islands, 3L and 5L is about 10-18\$ US per box depending on brand and which size. Bottles of local wines are as low as \$2.50 US, up to whatever you want to spend.

Nobody will be thirsty here.

**Zephyr - July 2013:** Meat here is pitiful. Beef especially. A good steak (if you can find it) will run you \$10.00 per pound and up. Most are thinly cut and the better ones come from Australia. Pork on the other hand is everywhere and you can get any part of the pig you want. From the snout to the legs(no tails seen yet), it's available. You can find pigs legs, all sliced from the joint to the end of the nails, all available in one easy to carry package. I've no clue as to what they do with a pigs foot but they are all over the place. Chicken is also available but again can be quite pricey. Boneless, skinless chicken breasts are only available in the freezer section after having been imported (normally from Australia).

One day we went to the "G" mall. We hadn't been there yet so we wanted to see what it was like. As I've written before, every mall has a big grocery store attached and this one was no different. The nice thing is that it had more American goods on it's shelves than the rest. It will make it easier to get any US provisions once we start that chore before we leave here.

#### **7.4.3.6 Water**

**Soggy Paws – August 2018:** The marina gets water from a well, so it is considered potable and many cruisers put it in their tanks. We felt the water was very “hard” and didn’t want to crust up our plumbing, so we use the showers ashore and top our tanks when needed by 5 gal purified water jugs, available from the marina for a cost of under \$1 per jug. We use about 5 jugs a week, primarily for drinking and doing dishes.

#### **7.4.3.7 Boat Parts & Repairs**

**Soggy Paws – January 2020:** A friend found water maker hose at this location:

Punu Hydraulic Hose Centre in Davao (1500 PHP).

Gahol Building, Quirino Avenue, 10-A  
Poblacion, Davao City,  
8000 Davao del Sur  
Tel : +63 82 224 4149

**Soggy Paws – 2017:** A few more things we had done in Davao in 2017, we couldn’t find what we needed in the city. So we ordered from other places in the Philippines.

**Expanded PVC:** This is a building material good for making lightweight shelving. It comes in white, up to ½” thickness, and can be glued and painted. We used this for some interior shelving and for the interior of our new custom refrigerator. Ordered by phone from Cady Marketing in Manila. We paid the amount requested by depositing the cash in their bank account, and they shipped it freight collect to the 2GO office in Davao near Sasa Wharf.

**Extruded Polystyrene Insulation (aka “blue board”):** This material is used extensively in the US for making custom refrigeration boxes, normally comes in 1” 4x8 panels. We couldn’t find any in 1” thickness in the Philippines, but found a company in Manila, Concrete Solutions, using a near identical product for building insulation. These come in 2” thickness, in 2’x4’ blocks. We got a



quote by email, paid the amount requested into their bank account, and it was shipped to us. Arrived in about 10 days, and we had to go pick it up at the docks.

**Electronic Components:** Order online at <http://rsphilippines.com>, pay by credit card, and have it shipped to the marina address. Took about 10 days to arrive, shipping was free.

**Light Canvas/Sewing Work:** We had more **canvas** (sewing) work done by “Ariel the Tailor”. Ariel is on the road between the marina and Babak (Dondon knows where he is). When we were selling Soggy Paws, we had Ariel make new cushion covers for our bed mattress, and slipcovers for our salon cushions. He did a great job of both. In 2017, we also had him sew a number of sunbrella items (covers for cockpit equipment), plus Textaline cushion covers for the cockpit. He did a beautiful job of all of it, for a very reasonable price. He will come to the boat to look at what you want done, then you drop it off (and all the supplies he needs, like sunbrella, material, “magic tape (Velcro)” etc) at his house. He will measure your stuff and tell you how much cloth he needs. (Regular and upholstery cloth is available in several places in Davao, best is NCCC on Magsaysay, at the top). He gets busy from time to time because his main business is sewing school uniforms and church choir uniforms for the people in the nearby villages. But if you work with him, he will work you in to his schedule. He also does clothing if you need something special. There is another guy in Babak that will re-stitch canvas that we never used.

Ariel Llevado Cell 0908-3252-2655 His English is not great, but we always managed to convey to him exactly what we wanted, sometimes with sketches and some comical pantomiming.

He is not always at his house, so if you plan to stop in to talk to him, might text him first and make sure he will be there.

**Awnings:** Many of the boats in the Philippines have UV stabilized plastic awnings, with welded seams (not sure exactly the plastic material used, just make sure they know you want it for outdoor use). These are fairly inexpensive (compared to Sunbrella). If you can sketch up what you want, they will fabricate it for you. They have light plastic and heavier plastic. We used the “canvas” shop that’s around the corner from the Davao Famous restaurant on Magsaysay at the upper end of Chinatown. Give them a sketch of what you want with dimensions. Indicate where you plan to put grommets (if you are going to put in your own non-rusting grommets). Unless you tell them explicitly not to put in grommets, they’ll put in grommets that will rust.

**Soggy Paws – 2016:** Current labor rates: the marina charges ALL labor at 500 php per day, with a minimum increment of a half day (in 2017 it was by the hour). It doesn’t matter whether it is the master carpenter, the welder, or the sander, all labor is charged at the same rate. External workers charge at around 400 to 500 php per day. We have one worker who charges 600 php per day (Alex), but he works twice as hard and is twice as smart as the average marina worker.

We had 2 **life rafts** (old boat and new boat) serviced at Berben Merchant in April 2016. We hired the marina truck for a special trip to take 3 rafts to their facility, and then a day or two later, pick them back up. Cost for trip, was I think 500php each time. We emailed Berben ahead of time ([info@berbenmerchant.com](mailto:info@berbenmerchant.com), [berbenmarine\\_account@yahoo.com](mailto:berbenmarine_account@yahoo.com)) with our liferaft specs and the day that we hoped to drop them off, and got a written quote for servicing the raft back by email the same day. The quote came to 30-35,000 PHP (about \$625-650 USD). It was itemized for all the things they thought needed done. However, about half of it is optional (replacement of flares, medical kit, etc). You can direct them to do what you want them to do.

We paid around \$250 USD for each raft for them to open the valise and unpack the raft, inflate the raft (and leave it inflated for proscribed number of hours), inspect the raft and its contents—they took everything out and noted it all. Then you can choose piece by piece what you want to replace. (we replaced almost nothing because we have what we need in grab-bags). They check the inflation cylinder visually for rust and that it is still showing charged. Then they pack it all up. Any replacement items or repairs are extra, but clearly quoted ahead of time.

**Soggy Paws – 2015:** We bought **boat name stickers (vinyl lettering)** at GWP Graphics on R Castillo, about halfway between Jas Machine Shop and the Agdao Flyover on the inland side of the road. You specify color, font, height of letters, and style, plus a maximum length, and they make up the lettering. Best for you to write it all down, including the exact lettering you want (spelled properly, and whether all caps or upper+lower case. For some reason we didn't get the font we actually specified, but it was close enough (had rounded corners on the letters instead of the square corners of Arial). It cost us 200 php for lettering that was 4.5" x 3ft, and was ready in a couple of hours. Contact: 327-1286, 0949-818-7433 or [gwp\\_graphic@yahoo.com](mailto:gwp_graphic@yahoo.com)

We bought **304 Stainless Tubing** at Shanghai Stainless. 316 was not available. You may be able to ship 316 in from Manila, but someone told us they ordered 316 and ended up with 304. 7.4 ft of 1.5" was 740 php. Address: Dr 1 Lex Bldg, R Castillo Street, Agdao.

The **Chain Galvanizing** is still available from Beta Spring. There have been some mixed results over the last 2 years. We were very happy with what they did for us in late 2014, but another cruiser had a terrible experience—their chain had not been “tumbled” after the galvanizing and came with all the links stuck together. He spent quite a bit of time sprucing it up. Bottom line is to INSPECT AT BETA SPRING before you accept and pay for your galvanizing, and make sure they do a good job. That's what we did, and we were very satisfied. Leave it to the local guy to take it down and pick it up, and you get what you get.

**Brick House - May 2014:** CHAIN GAVANIZING is available.

ELECTROPLATING/CHROMING is available. Almost everything is available but it will take some asking around to find it. There is no great guide or telephone directory that shows you everything.

BOTTOM PAINT - TransOcean Paint, 4 liters about 100\$ US. Others are available, about same price.

WOOD is available, but not teak or mahogany. PVC PANELS are available. UPHOLSTERLY, etc available.

CORIAN COUNTERTOPS, WELDING, ENGINE REPAIR, REFRIDGERATOR REPAIR, SOLAR SUPPLIES, BATTERIES, WIND GENERATORS, LED LIGHTS, AND MUCH MUCH MORE IS AVAILABLE - you just have to ask around.

NO SAIL REPAIR is AVAILABLE in Davao. Must send to Cebu, but this process is reported to be very easy, and very cheap to do. Sails can be made and you can purchase materials from there to do it yourself as well.

**Sloepmouche - 2013 - Labor Rates:** Day rates: non-qualified US\$ 7.5 - carpenter/welder, ... \$15 ... supervisor \$25 per day. We are re-doing all our bilges completely with wood stringers, epoxy and fiberglass. Local epoxy is good and inexpensive ... you can find strong woods (but not teak) locally. We have had the whole boat repainted with Dupont - Imron paint (get locally).

We even bought 8x4 PVC panels in 3,9,12 and 15mm to use instead of plywood for interior building.

If you are ready to work yourself or at least supervise the workers you find and hire ... and are satisfied with a marina that offers many services (general maintenance, painting, epoxy, ...) my recommendation would be, without hesitations, where we are now.

#### **7.4.3.8 Laundry**

**Soggy Paws - April 2016:** They have a terrible time keeping the washing machines working at the marina (power issues and hard water). Low water pressure makes a 30 minute wash cycle into a 1.5 hour wash cycle. There is no working dryer, but ample clothes lines.

We have opted to take our laundry into the Babak. For a small tip, the HOV shuttle driver will drop it off for you and pick it up. The cost is very cheap—we have never paid more than about 200 php for all our laundry for a week or two. It comes back soft, dry, and nicely folded and smelling nice.

**Brick House - May 2014:** Laundry is difficult but hand washing easy. There are super small machines at the marina, that take about 1.5 hours to wash, and 2 hours to dry. But the clothes do seem to come out clean if the machine doesn't break down halfway through your wash.

There are lines to use just outside the laundry room to hang your clothes to dry. The whole thing is on an honor system - you mark down how many loads you do. 50 pesos a wash, 100 pesos per dry.

#### **7.4.3.9 Medical/Dental**

**Soggy Paws – 2016 – Dental Work:** Several people have recommended a dentist that is located across the street from the Swiss Deli on JP Laurel. One person went to this dentist for a crown and felt she was treated horribly. We used the dentist that is in the basement of SM Lanang to replace a crown and do a cleaning. We felt it was pretty good value.

**Brick House - May 2014:** The hospital in Davao is adequate, has all the latest and greatest equipment and a lot of very competent doctors.

You can go in without an appointment, get referred to a doctor in the correct expertise, see the doctor, and get the procedure done that you want, all in the same day.

The prices are not super cheap but won't completely bust you either. Sample prices:

- Appointment to consult with a doctor: 10-30\$
- US MRI to ear: 400\$.
- US Gynecological exam with pap smear: 22\$
- US Mammography and Sonogram together: 125\$ US.
- 2 benign growths cut off Leg and stitched up, in an OR room for 30 minutes: 125\$ US.
- They can not do Lasik surgery - must be done in Manila or Cebu - about 700 per eye.
- Dentist visit for cleaning in mall about 11\$ US.

#### **7.4.3.10 Getting Around**

**Soggy Paws – Jan 2019 - Trikes:** With the paving of the road that was completed between Babak and the Marina in 2015, you are no longer limited to only the marina van. Tricycles are now pretty easy to get, either by flagging one down on the road, or by having a few phone numbers and calling one in.

The standard fare between Babak and the Marina is P100. It's P150 to/from the ferry. We have negotiated round trip rides between the Marina and Precious Gardens for pizza for about P200 for the round trip (make sure you get a firm price, and the phone number of the guy).

Ask resident cruisers for numbers of their favorite guys. Some are more honest and prompt, and have better bikes, than others.

**Soggy Paws – Jan 2019 – Hire Van:** We learned of a hire van available on the island, for tours, provisioning, etc. Samal Transport 0910-071-9760 or 0916-190-0368. We hired an air conditioned van good for 8-10 people for an all day tour of the island for \_\_\_\_\_. You can also contract them to take you into Davao for a personal shopping trip for a fixed daily rate.

**Brick House - May 2014:** Here is the process to get to Davao proper from the Marina, and back.

1. Sign a sheet on the bar up at the office that you want to take the 830am bus to the ferry dock the next morning. There are two or three shuttles a day to the ferry from the marina, for free.

They go at 830am and 130pm and 3pm and return at 9am, 2 pm and 330pm. Our experience has been that it can sometimes go as much as 20 minutes early so be there very early if you want to guarantee a seat.

It's a free shuttle for Oceanview guests only.

2. The ferry costs 20 pesos (about 50 cents US per person) Get on and go across - all ferries from there go to the "Ferry Dock" on the other side so you cant get lost.
3. When you arrive on the "mainland" side, from the ferry dock, walk up to the main street where there is a row of taxis and ask anyone to take you to where you want to go. The taxi should be metered and the meter should start at 40 pesos.
4. When you return back, ask taxi to bring you to Ferry Dock - the one that goes to Samal - they all know where it is. Its about 140 to 180 pesos from almost wherever you are in town. The ferries go continuously all day. Again go in the "wrong way" lane.
5. If you plan to get a ride back in the van, try to get there 30 minutes early to avoid it leaving without you.
6. It's a good idea to get the shuttle driver's phone number, and the marina manager/secretary, so if you get stranded, you can call. Be nice to the driver, and let him know if you are coming back/when and he will be more responsive to you. Text him when you are waiting..

If you miss the Oceanview shuttle van, you can take a trike back which is a motorcycle with a car thing attached to it that fits up to 7 people ( or 2 Americans) on it. It can be had for as little

as little as 100 pesos. The lowest we have been able to get with haggling is 150 pesos. 200-300 pesos is not unheard of. It's a fun ride if not a little unsafe and noisy. The drivers speak almost no English.

#### **7.4.4 Communications**

##### **7.4.4.1 Telephones, Cell Phones and Internet**

**Soggy Paws – January 2019:** If you are only going to stay in Davao / Samal area, which carrier you use doesn't really matter, except for the pricing issue (it's cheaper to call Smart-Smart or Globe-Globe than Globe-Smart). If you are going cruising and only want one sim card, get Globe. Globe has significantly better coverage on a percentage basis, Philippines-wide. If you want to get as much coverage as possible, get both. We started out with a Smart in our phones and a Globe Mifi device, that worked OK. But when I replaced my phone, I got a dual sim phone so I could have both in my hand.

The costs for data is changing, but we could still buy a month's worth of "unlimited" data on Globe for P999 (this one is no longer advertised, so you need to know how to do it—it is Supersurf 999, google it). The "unlimited" part is a bit bogus—you get 800Mb and then the connection slows to a crawl. You can also buy GB packages for various amounts.

"Topping up" in the Philippines is called "adding load". You can either buy load from someone who has a load sim, or buy scratch cards (available at cell phone stores in the mall). I was never successful in adding load electronically with my American credit card, via the Smart or Globe websites or apps. I WAS able to load both Smart and Globe cell phones using Ding.com or Recharge.com. This costs a tiny bit more, but is hugely more convenient, especially if you are using a mifi device (you can only load with a scratch card by taking the sim card out and calling a number).

Both Globe and Smart offer 4G internet and now have decent coverage out at the marina. Talk to local cruisers about who has the best deal and speed right now before you buy.

**Brick House - May 2014:** Everyone has a cell phone, its 75 cents US to get a SIM card put in, and you can fill up for about 2\$ US to get some time on the phone.

Try to get a cell phone as early as you can - its how EVERYONE communicates here.

I recommend SMART for your cell phone but others could work too. More people seem to have SMART and that offers very cheap SMART to SMART calling. Its 1 peso which is about 2 cents a minute to talk to another SMART cell phone, about 10 cents to talk to other numbers, if you dial \*1000 first. <http://www1.smart.com.ph/>

The SM Mall is great for cell phone shopping. ON the 3rd floor in a back corridor, every company imaginable is represented!

Sim cards about 75 cents. \$22.50 US per month for unlimited with GLOBE which works well at marina, (but they DO throttle you back if you use more than 1GB a day, but then just for a day).

We bought a 45\$ gadget that allows all your wifi devices to connect to it WHILE IT CONNECTS TO INTERNET BY 3G, so you don't have to fiddle with a router or anything else. This device is unlocked so we can use in other countries too, I hope.

Globe is the company to look for for 3G internet.

#### **7.4.4.2 Mail & Shipping Stuff In**

##### **Soggy Paws – 2018: Update on shipping addresses**

Downtown delivery address, good especially for large items like Balikbayan Boxes or Philippines local shipments of larger stuff. Samco, the parent company will (eventually) deliver the large item to the marina. Or you can hire the marina van to go get it if you are in a rush.

(Your name) – (Yacht Name)  
Holiday Oceanview Marina  
SAMCO Building, F. Bangoy Street  
Davao City 8000  
Philippines

One of the residents in the marina has been successfully buying stuff on the SE Asia Amazon look-alike, Lazada. Here is the address he has been using.

(Your name)  
Holiday Oceanview Marina  
Sitio Ilihan, Babak,  
Davao Del Norte - Island Garden City Of Samal - Camudmud  
(Your phone number)

LBC is a shipping company similar to UPS that operates in the Philippines, and in some locations worldwide. Here is the LBC Babak Delivery Address, the closest and easiest to get to from the marina.

(Your name)  
LBC BABAK  
Code PB005  
Zone2, Villarica,  
Babak IGACOS  
Davao del Norte 9018

(your PH phone number)

**Soggy Paws – 2016:** A few people have used Priority or International Express mail to ship small stuff to Davao. Most of the time it gets here. Sometimes it goes missing (forever) in Manila.

We have shipped several Balikbayan Boxes via LBC from Florida. The LBC shipper is in Jacksonville, but we found a Philippine ice cream shop in Cocoa Beach who would accept our shipment—apparently a van makes a ~weekly run up the coast of Florida to Jacksonville, collecting LBC boxes from small enterprises on the way.

We also shipped one big box from San Diego. We found an LBC “store” in San Diego and went there to drop our box off.

The big boxes only cost around \$100 to ship all the way from Florida to Davao, but it takes around 3 months to get to Davao. Though there are fairly strict regulations on paper about what you can ship (value, etc), no one has ever questioned anything we put in the box (either size or value). But you can’t insure your stuff for what it’s worth, because the contents are supposed to be worth less than \$200. Our 3 boxes have each been heavier than one man could lift.

LBC will also accept odd sized packages. We shipped an 8-ft tube with some railing in it. Cost was around \$60 USD and went on the same ship as our box (3 month delivery).

Recently a new service called Johnny Air has come about, which seems to be doing a good service shipping small stuff air freight. They have a US address on the East Coast and the West Coast that you ship to. And within about 7-10 days it is delivered in Davao.

<http://johnnyairplus.com>

LBC has also initiated a similar service. Both cost about \$7/lb with some minimum charge.

DO NOT USE DHL or FEDERAL EXPRESS or you will end up paying a lot for shipping, and a good amount for "Customs Fees", and it won't get here any faster.

Finally, I have had to express mail 2 documents, one to Malaysia and one to Australia, and both times used LBC for this, for about \$25. The documents were delivered in about 7 working days. They do want to open up the envelope and see what you are shipping. They would not let me include a cash payment (of about \$25) in one envelope I was sending. The other alternative is PhilPost.

#### **Sloepmouche - April 2014:**

your name – boat name

Holiday Oceanview Marina  
SAMCO Building, F. Bangoy Street  
Davao City 8000  
Philippines

Anything sent from US by USPS > no import duties, only 1.25USD flat fee.

Big stuff, search the internet for a BALIKBAYAN company in US close from where things will be shipped to you EXEMPT for import duties.

*(note there is more discussion about Balikbayan in [Section 1](#))*

#### **7.4.5 Things to See and Do**

##### **7.4.5.1 Restaurants & Bars**

**Brick House - May 2014:** There are NO restaurants in waking distance that we have found so far. We had a nice buffet dinner tonight served here at the marina for about 4\$ US each.

**Zephyr - July 2013:** Most restaurants deliver. KFC delivers for 40 pesos(less than a dollar) and guarantees it in less than 30 minutes. Even McDonalds delivers.

Food here is bland. No salt or pepper. Not many spices of any kind seem to be used in any cooking. The spices are on the shelves but from what I have tasted, never used. We carry our own salt and pepper shaker when ever we go to town.

Everyone eats with both hands. One hold a fork and the other has a spoon. The Fork shovels the food onto the spoon and in it goes. It acts as a shovel to collect what is on the place. Very fast and efficient.

There is no such thing as a "large" drink in a restaurant. You can order one but what you get might be 12 ounces. And rare is the restaurant that offers free refills.

#### **7.4.5.2 Diving & Snorkeling**

The outer wall of the Holiday Oceanview Marina is not a bad snorkel, just pick a time with clear water.

See this link: <http://www.davaoscubadive.com/divesites.htm>

There are no dive operations on Samal Island. At one time, if you had all your own tanks and gear, you could charter a speed boat with a driver from the marina and go diving. The boat could accommodate 5-6 divers.

Dive Operations in Davao (downtown Davao on Monteverde Street near Santa Ana wharf).

**Carabao Dive Center** [carabaodivers@yahoo.com](mailto:carabaodivers@yahoo.com) <http://cdc.e-davao.com>

+63 82 222-0121 (land line)

+63 928 504 7642 and +63 922 861 0874 cell

**Scubaqua Dive Center**

+63 82 298-6546 (land line)

+63 932 439 7771 and +63 922 366 8509 cell

At least one of these operations were doing "dive tours" of the northern Davao Gulf in a tourist banka. At one point we were quoted for a 3-day explore/dive trip (don't remember details).

#### **7.4.5.3 Land Touring**

Mount Apo

Philippine Eagle Reserve

#### **7.4.5.4 Hiking**

#### **7.4.5.5 Movies**

**Zephyr - July 2013:** We headed into Davao City today to take a bit of time off. We decided to go see "The Lone Ranger" with Johnny Depp. Once across on the ferry, we boarded one of the colorful busses that run through the city. It took us to the SM Mall. Cost for the 4 mile (approximate) trip--16 pesos (38 cents) for both of us.

We had to wait for a few minutes as the mall doesn't open till 10:00 and we got there at 0945.

The movie cost 140 pesos (\$3.33 each) a piece. We had a bottle of water and a coke and they came to 70 pesos (\$1.66). The movie was great and it was just about a private showing as the other two folks that came in left after about 20 minutes. Guess they didn't understand the premise of the "Lone Ranger". As the mall had just opened earlier this year, the theatre was state of the art with nice seats and big booming sound.

#### **7.4.6 Checking out of Davao for Foreign Ports**

##### **Soggy Paws – 2016 – Checking out after being in PI for More than 6 Months**

Be forewarned that if you have been in the Philippines for more than 6 months, you need to do a little extra on check-out. There is a form you must get that proves that you have not incurred any debts, etc. while in the PI.



**Brick House - May 2014 - Checking out of the Philippines in Davao:** Here is what our friends told us was required to check out of Davao.

### **Immigration**

Go upstairs thru intelligence office door & turn right.

You need photocopies of:

- Passport photo page
- Last entry stamp page
- Last extension page
- Copy of ships papers (which you get back)

No charge.

You get and Exit Stamp on passport and a copy of the Port Clearance.

### **Customs**

You need photocopies of

- Ships papers
- Crew list
- Port Clearance from immigration

You get your Port Clearance

Cost PHP115.00

## **7.5 West Coast of Mindanao**

### **7.5.1 Typhoon Hole in Murceilagos Bay**

Dream Reach – December 2021: When Typhoon Odette was bearing down on Port Carmen in December 2021, we and another boat sailed south 120 nm to a bay on the NW corner of Mindanao. There we found a good anchorage to weather the typhoon. The anchorage was at 08-36.072 N / 123-33.775 E.

*Ed Note: The bay is full of detached coral reefs and not well charted on CM93. Navionics has details but I don't know if they are in the right place. Best to make a satellite chart of the route in.*

**WARNING:** There is a power line across the bay that is very inconspicuous and hangs low in the middle. When entering, if you stay very close to Caburos Island on the west side of the channel into 20' of water there is an estimated 85' of vertical clearance. We had Bob on the top of my mast and He estimated we cleared by 15 feet. West end of power line approx. 08° 37.51' N / 123° 34.3064' E

Security issues: We only stayed two to let the typhoon pass. Had no issues.

### **7.5.2 Jasaan / Cabulig Bay**

There's a town marked in Cabulig bay on the CM93 charts, this is apparently the town of Jasaan (it shows up named in other charts).

**Fellow Traveler - 2011:** There is a shipyard here (not for yachts to haul). Best bet to anchor is very near their dock, but being very careful of the shallows that spread out from the stream that enters right beside the shipyard. Otherwise, it is probably just dropping the hook in 150 feet and standing an anchor watch. I had 50 knots of wind outside the harbor a few miles, but flat calm in the harbor....the mountains seem to provide a total windbreak. It is possible to get welding and fabrication done at the shipyard, and to tie alongside. Neither is cheap by Philippine standards. Management was very friendly.

### **7.5.3 Cagayan d'Oro (Port of Entry)**

**Fellow Traveler - 2011:** I cleared into the Philippines in Cagayan de Oro, Mindanao, which is listed as an official yacht clearance port. The authorities were easy to deal with there, but I would not recommend this port--no protection and no easy dinghy access.

If one is determined to use it, then the calm, but deep and crowded harbor at Jasaan (NE of CdO) be used for staging coming and going, and only anchoring in Cagayan during the day.

In CdO, I was charged about 25 cents for a form, but did have to taxi from the port to Immigration in town. In Dumaguete, I've heard varying reports. If I were doing it again, in the NE monsoon, I might try Maasin. (*we heard from Kokomo in 2014 that Maasin has no Immigration Office*)

## **7.6 Zamboanga and the Jolo Area (PIRATE TERRITORY – AVOID!)**

**Soggy Paws – 2016** – As of 2016, the Abu Sayyef Group (commonly abbreviate ASG) has been strengthening and recruiting in the SW Mindanao area. It is advised to stay well away from this area. Most of the kidnappings against foreigners have originated in this area.

Note that in September 2013, there was "rebel activity" in Zamboanga (SW tip of Mindanao).

**From the NY Times, Sep 12, 2013:** The conflict in Zamboanga City began Monday when several hundred heavily armed men tried to march to the city hall to raise a flag and declare independence from the national government, according to the police. The rebels claim it was a peaceful march and that they were attacked by the military.

The group has demanded that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation or the United Nations be brought in to facilitate negotiations, according to Mr. Climaco. The national government has countered that the standoff is a domestic matter.

The Moro National Liberation Front signed a peace deal with the Philippine government in 1996, but its leaders were angered when a separate agreement was forged with the rival Moro Islamic Liberation Front last year that some leaders said would encroach on the original deal.

The Abu Sayyaf Group and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom fighters did not participate in peace talks and advocate an armed struggle to establish an Islamic state in the southern Philippines. Security analysts say the Abu Sayyaf has lost much of its ideological underpinnings and operates primarily as a kidnap-for-ransom gang.



## 8 Cmap Chart Offsets for OpenCPN

Sometimes CM93 Edition 2 charts are quite off in some places. However, some of the charts are very detailed. So it is useful if using OpenCPN to apply offsets to make the Cmap charts somewhat line up with the Google Earth charts we are using.

The below is pretty techie stuff.

**I make no warranty that offsets won't put you on a reef.**

**Use this info with extreme caution. No guarantees!!**

### 8.1 How to Apply Offsets in OpenCPN

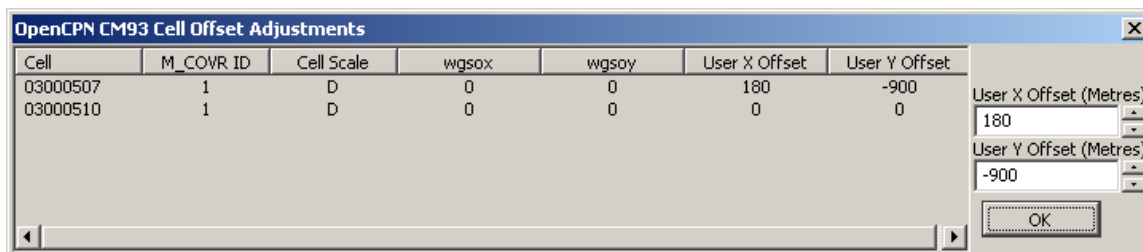
Unlike Maxsea, when you apply offsets to "correct" CM93 charts in OpenCPN, it shifts the chart, not the GPS position. (this is the right way to do it).

Here's a quick rundown on calculating the offset and applying it:

1. Drop a mark in OpenCPN on a prominent feature on a GoogleEarth chart for an atoll. (end of an island, or center of a pass, for example)
2. Turn off Chart Quilting (F9 key, or use the Settings Dialog). There are two easy ways to tell whether Chart Quilting is on or off.
  - a. If the colored ovals at the bottom of the screen have square corners instead of oval corners, quilting is off.
  - b. If you right-click on the CM93 chart (anywhere), the pop-up window will have an additional menu item "CM93 Offset Dialog"

Pressing F9 again will turn quilting back on.

3. Right-click on the CM93 chart and select "CM93 Offset Dialog". This pops up the OpenCPN CM93 Cell Offset Adjustments window:



Normally, if you are zoomed in, you will only see one line (the most detailed chart). Regardless, click on the line to highlight that line. Then enter the offsets in the box to the right. X offsets move the chart left and right. Y offsets move the chart up and down. As soon as you TAB out of the entry field, the offset will be applied. (Clicking OK also applies the offset, but also closes the window).

Keep fiddling with the offsets until the mark you dropped on the prominent feature on the GoogleEarth view, lines up correctly on the CM93 view.

4. Now check the offset in several other places on the chart. Often you will get it perfect in one spot, and it will be off in another spot. This is the nature of imperfect charts. Fiddle

until you are happy with it... either the pass you intended to go in is dead-on, or you have an average view.

### Notes:

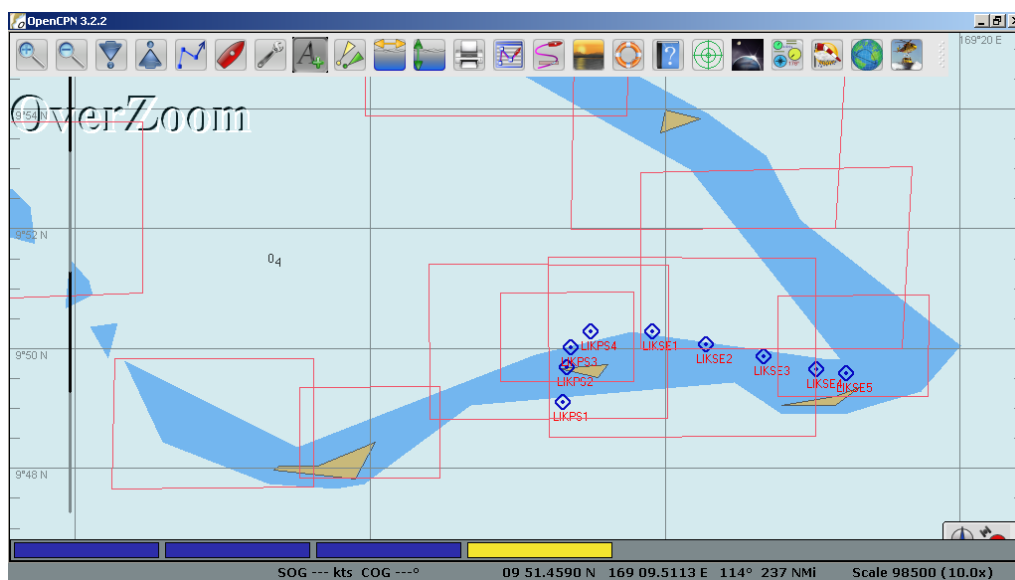
See the OpenCPN help file for more info (there's not a lot in v3.2.2, but may be in the future).

In OpenCPN, these offsets are, I think, saved in the CM93 folder in the OpenCPN folder in the Program Data folder (see the Help/About tab for where the log file is... that's where you'll also find a CM93 folder.) (ie where the layers folder is).

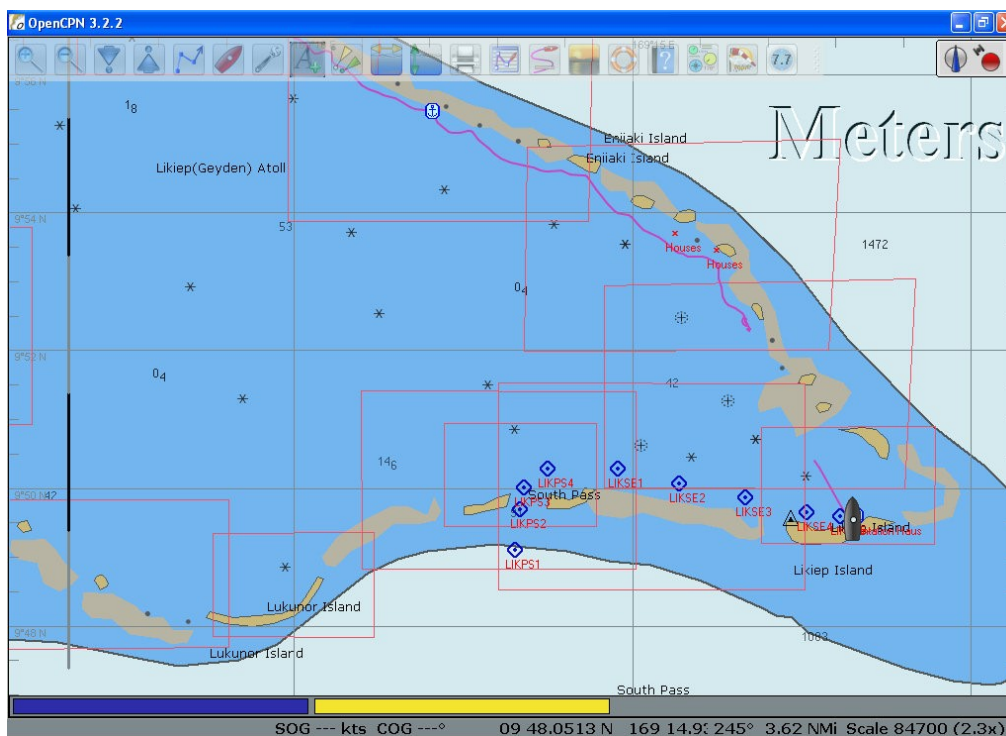
They appear to be saved in a file that is named the same as your CM93 chart folder name. Backing up this folder, AND keeping the same naming convention on another computer MIGHT allow you to transport these offsets to another computer. I haven't found any other way in OpenCPN to do so.

**Warning:** There are a LOT of different CM93 chart sets floating around. Offsets for a 2010 version of charts (what mine are) may not be appropriate for a 2011 (or 2005) version of charts.

Also, if your set of charts have been made from combined directories (ie copying an "update" into an existing CM93 directory, some charts may be there that are not in someone else's "2010" list. Example: Below is a screen shot from the most detailed chart I have for Likiep Atoll on one computer.



And here is about the same view with the "same" chart set on another computer:



Note considerably more detail. This chart, 2940504, dated 2010-03-01, does not exist apparently in the "latest" 2010 chart set. (it also won't be displayed by Maxsea, even if it is present in the CM93 folder).

Note that the "best" chart set for the Philippines seems to be a 2007 version, as later updates removed detail. You can download a copy of this version at [yachtvalhalla.net](http://yachtvalhalla.net).

## 8.2 Offset List

**I make no warranty that these offsets won't put you on a reef. Use this info with extreme caution. No guarantees!! USE YOUR OWN EYEBALLS and only navigate in reefy areas with good light!!**

Place	Chart Cell	M COVR ID	Cell Scale	X Offset	Y Offset	My Chart Date	Comments
Puerto Galera	03100362	1	F	-155	159	2004-04-19	
Busuanga W Coast (Middle)	03060348	3	C	-400	-220	2000-01-01	
Busuanga W Coast Puerto del Sol	03060357	1	D	-200	200		

Busuanga S Side, Dibatuc Island	030303	1	D	-280	160	2004-04-19	
Linapacan Island (N side)	03030357	1	D	-60	230	2004-04-19	
Linapacan Island (N side)	0294038	1	C	99	-100	2000-01-01	
???	0294038	1	C	-150	239	2000-01-01	
Malampaya Sound	02940348	1	C	=300	500	2000-01-01	<b>CAUTION, THIS CHART IS POORLY DONE!! MAJOR ERRORS and DISPLACEMENTS</b>
Port Barton Area	0294038	1	C	100	1200	2000-01-01	

## 9 Filipino Words and Phrases

Not intended to be comprehensive, but here are a few useful phrases. These came from <http://mylanguages.org> Though I'm not positive, these phrases are probably Tagalog.

Also, understand that there are several dialects in the Philippines. Tagalog is the "official" language, but there is also Visayan (or Bisayan) and Cebuano. These are widely spoken in the southern Philippines. In rural areas, some people will only speak their local dialect and not Tagalog or English.

There is a smattering of Spanish in the Filipino word base. If you are stuck, and know the Spanish word for what you are asking, try that.

### 9.1 Greetings

Hi!  
Good morning!  
Good afternoon!  
Good evening!  
Welcome! (to greet someone)  
Hello my friend!  
How are you? (friendly)  
How are you? (polite)  
I'm fine, thank you!  
And you? (friendly)  
And you? (polite)  
Good  
Not so good  
Long time no see  
I missed you  
What's new?  
Nothing new  
Thank you (very much)!  
You're welcome! (for "thank you")  
My pleasure  
Come in! (or: enter!)  
Make yourself at home!

Hi!  
Magandang umaga!  
Magandang hapon!  
Magandang gabi!  
Maligayang pagdating!  
Hello, kaibigan ko!  
Kumusta ka na?  
Kumusta na po kayó?  
Mabuti namán akó, salamat!  
At ikáw?  
At kayó po?  
Magánda  
Hindi masyadong magánda  
Matagál nang waláng pagkikita  
Mis na kitá  
Anóng bago?  
Dati pa rin.  
(maraming) salamat!  
Waláng anumán!  
Ikinalulugod ko.  
Tulóy po kayó!  
Huwag kang mahiyâ!

### 9.2 Farewell Expressions

Have a nice day!  
Good night!  
Good night and sweet dreams!  
See you later!  
See you soon!  
See you tomorrow!  
Good bye!  
Have a good trip!

Maging masayá sana ang araw mo!  
Goodnight!  
Goodnight, tulog ka nang mahimbing!  
Mamayâ uli!  
Hanggáng sa muli!  
Bukas uli!  
Paalam!  
Ingat sa byahe!



I have to go  
I will be right back!

Kailangan ko nang umalis  
Babalik ako agád!

### **9.3 Holidays and Wishes**

Good luck!  
Happy birthday!  
Happy new year!  
Merry Christmas!  
Happy Fiesta!  
Happy Valentine's day!  
Congratulations!  
Enjoy! (or: bon appetit)  
Bless you (when sneezing)  
Best wishes!  
Cheers! (or: to your health)  
Accept my best wishes

Good luck!  
Malígayang bati!  
Manigong bagong taón  
Malígayang paskó!  
Malígayang pyesta!  
Malígayang araw ng mga pusò!  
Congrats!  
Kainan na!  
Bless you  
Malígayang bati sa kasál mo!  
Mabuhay!  
Tanggapín mo ang pagbati ko

### **9.4 How to Introduce Yourself**

What's your name?  
My name is (John Doe)  
Nice to meet you!  
Where are you from?  
I'm from (the U.S./ The Philippines)  
I'm (American/ Filipino)  
Where do you live?  
I live in (the U.S./ The Philippines)  
Do you like it here?  
The Philippines is a beautiful country  
What do you do for a living?  
I'm a (teacher/ student/ engineer)  
Do you speak (English/ Filipino)?  
Just a little  
I like Filipino  
I'm trying to learn Filipino  
It's a hard language  
It's an easy language  
Oh! That's good!  
Can I practice with you?  
I will try my best to learn  
How old are you?  
I'm (twenty one) years old  
It was nice talking to you!  
It was nice meeting you!  
Mr.../ Mrs. .../ Miss...  
This is my wife

Anóng pangalan mo?  
(John Doe) ang pangalan ko.  
Ikinalulugod kong makilala ka  
Saan ka nagmulâ?  
Nagmulâ ako (sa U.S. / sa Pilipinas)  
(Amerikano / Pilipino) ako  
Saán ka nakatirá?  
Nakatirá ako (sa U.S. / sa Pilipinas)  
Gustó mo ba dito?  
Magandáng bansâ ang Pilipinas.  
Anó ang hanapbuhay mo?  
(Guro / Estudyante / Engineer) ako  
Marunong ka ba (mag-Ingles / mag-Tagalog)?  
Konti lang  
Gustó ko ng Tagalog  
Sinusubukan kong matuto ng Tagalog  
Mahirap na wikà 'yan  
Madalíng wikà 'yan  
Oh! Magandá 'yan!  
Maaarì bang magpraktis ako kasama ka?  
Susubukan ko ang lahat upang matuto  
Ilang taón ka na?  
(Dalawampu't isang) taóng gulang na akó  
Masayá akó at nakausap kita!  
Masayá akó at nakilala kita  
Ginoó.../Ginang.../Binibini...  
Siyá ang asawa ko

This is my husband  
Say hi to Thomas for me

Siyá ang asawa ko  
Pakisabi kay Thomas, hi

### **9.5 Romance and Love Phrases**

Are you free tomorrow evening?  
I would like to invite you to dinner  
You look beautiful! (to a woman)  
You have a beautiful name  
Can you tell me more about you?  
Are you married?  
I'm single (male)  
I'm single (female)  
I'm married  
Can I have your phone number?  
Can I have your email?  
Do you have any pictures of you?  
Do you have children?  
Would you like to go for a walk?  
I like you  
I love you  
You're very special!  
You're very kind!  
I'm very happy  
Would you marry me?  
I'm just kidding  
I'm serious  
My heart speaks the language of love

Walà ka bang gagawin bukas ng gabí?  
Nais kong anyayahan ka sa isáng hapunan  
Ang gandá-gandá mo  
Ang gandá ng pangalan mo  
Maaari ka bang magkwento tungkol sa sarili mo?  
May asawa ka na ba?  
Binatà pa akó  
Dalaga pa akó  
May asawa na akó  
Maaari ko bang hingín ang phone number mo?  
Maaari ko bang hingín ang email mo?  
May mga litrato ka ba diyán?  
May anak ka na ba?  
Gustó mo bang maglakád-lakád?  
Gustó kitá  
Mahál na mahál kitá  
Napaká-special mo!  
Napakábait mo!  
Ang sayá-sayá ko  
Pakakasalan mo ba akó?  
Nagbibirô lang akó  
Seryoso akó  
Binibigkás ng pusò ko ang wikà ng pag-ibig

### **9.6 Solving a Misunderstanding**

Sorry! (or: I beg your pardon!)  
Sorry (for a mistake)  
No problem!  
Can you repeat please?  
Can you speak slowly?  
Can you write it down?  
Did you understand what I said?  
I don't understand!  
I don't know!  
What's that called in Filipino?  
What does that word mean in English?  
How do you say "thanks" in Filipino?  
What is this?  
My Filipino is bad  
Don't worry!  
I agree with you  
Is that right?

Pakiulit pò!  
Pasensya na  
Walâ 'yon!  
Pwede bang pakiulit?  
Pwede bang sabihin mo nang dahan-dahan?  
Pwede mo bang isulat?  
Naintindihan mo ba ang sinabi ko?  
Hindi ko maintindihan!  
Hindi ko alám!  
Anóng tawag diyán sa Tagalog?  
Anóng ibig sabihin ng salitáng iyán sa Ingles?  
Paano mo sasabihing "thank you" sa Tagalog?  
Anó 'to?  
Ang pangit ng Tagalog ko  
Huwag mag-alalá  
Naniniwalà akó sa'yó  
Tamà ba'yón?

Is that wrong?  
What should I say?  
I just need to practice  
Your Filipino is good  
I have an accent  
You don't have an accent

Malî ba'yón?  
Anóng dapat kong sabihin?  
Kailangan ko lang magpraktis  
Okey ang Tagalog mo  
May puntó ako  
Wala akong puntó

### **9.7 Asking for Directions**

Excuse me! (before asking someone)  
I'm lost  
Can you help me?  
Can I help you?  
I'm not from here  
How can I get to (this place, this city)?  
bayang itó)  
Go straight  
Then  
Turn left  
Turn right  
Can you show me?  
I can show you!  
Come with me!  
How long does it take to get there?  
Downtown (city center)  
Historic center (old city)  
  
bank  
It's near here  
It's far from here  
Is it within walking distance?  
I'm looking for Mr. Smith  
One moment please!  
Hold on please! (when on the phone)  
He is not here  
Airport  
Bus station  
Train station  
Taxi  
Near  
Far  
  
by bicycle  
by bus  
by car  
by train  
on foot

Magtatanong lang pô  
Nawawalà akó  
Pwede bang tulungan mo akó?  
Pwede bang tulungan kitá?  
Hindî ako tagá rito  
Paano akó makakapuntá (sa lugar na itó/ sa  
  
Direcho lang  
Tapos  
Lumikô sa kaliwâ  
Lumikô sa kanan  
Pwede bang ipakita mo sa'kín?  
Ipapakita ko sa'yo!  
Halika, sumama ka sa'kín  
Gaano katagál bago makarating doón?  
kabayanan  
lumang lungsod  
  
bangko  
Malapit lang 'yan dito  
Malayô 'yan dito  
Pwede bang lakarin?  
Hinahanap ko si Mr. Smith  
Teka munà  
Teka munà, huwag mong ibababâ  
Walâ siyá rito  
Airport  
Terminal ng bus  
Terminal ng tren  
taxi  
Malapit  
Malayò  
  
sa pamamagitan ng bisikleta  
sa pamamagitan ng bus  
sa pamamagitan ng kotse  
sa pamamagitan ng tren  
lakad

cafe  
library  
map

karinderya  
aklatan  
mapa

### **9.8 Emergency Survival Phrases**

Help!  
Stop!  
Fire!  
Thief!  
Run!  
Watch out! (or: be alert!)  
Call the police!  
Call a doctor!  
Call the ambulance!  
Are you okay?  
I feel sick  
I need a doctor  
Accident  
Food poisoning  
Where is the closest pharmacy?  
It hurts here  
It's urgent!  
Calm down!  
You will be okay!  
Can you help me?  
Can I help you?

Saklolo!  
Hintô!  
Sunog!  
Magnanákaw!  
Takbó!  
Alerto!  
Tawagan ang pulís!  
Tawagan ang doktór!  
Tawagan ang ambulansya!  
Okey ka lang?  
Masama ang pakiramdám ko  
Kailangan ko ng doktór  
Aksidente  
Pagkakalason  
Saán ang pinaka malapit na botika?  
Dito masakít  
Ngayón na!  
Relax lang!  
Magiging okey ka rin!  
Pwede bang tulungan mo akó?  
Pwede bang tulungan kitá?

### **9.9 Hotel Restaurant Travel Phrases**

I have a reservation (for a room)  
Do you have rooms available?  
With shower / With bathroom  
I would like a non-smoking room  
What is the charge per night?  
I'm here on business /on vacation  
Dirty  
Clean  
Do you accept credit cards?  
I'd like to rent a car  
How much will it cost?  
A table for (one / two) please!  
Is this seat taken?  
I'm vegetarian

Naka-reserve akó  
May bakanté ba kayóng kwarto?  
May shower / may CR  
Gustó ko ng non-smoking room  
Magkano ang bayad kada gabí?  
Nandito akó para sa negosyo/para sa bakasyon  
Madumí  
Malinis  
Tumatanggáp ba kayó ng credit card?  
Gustó kong umarkilá ng kotse  
Magkano?  
Pakisuyò nga ng mesa para sa (isá/dalawá)  
May nakaupô na ba dito?  
Vegetarian akó

I don't eat pork  
I don't drink alcohol  
What's the name of this dish?  
Waiter / waitress!  
Can we have the check please?  
It is very delicious!  
I don't like it

bad  
clean  
dark  
difficult  
dirty  
dry  
easy  
empty  
expensive  
fast  
foreign  
full  
good  
hard  
heavy  
inexpensive  
light  
local  
new  
noisy  
old  
powerful  
quiet  
correct  
slow  
soft  
very

Hind akó kumakain ng baboy  
Hindî akó umiinóm ng alak  
Anóng tawag sa ulam na'tó?  
Waiter / waitress!  
Pakisuyô nga ang check  
Napakasaráp nitó!  
Ayoko nitó

masama  
malinis  
madilim  
mahirap  
marumi  
tuyo  
madali  
walang laman  
mahal  
mabilis  
dayuhan  
puno  
mabuti  
mahirap  
mabigat  
mura  
liwanag  
lokal  
bago  
maingay  
luma  
malakas  
tahimik  
tama  
mabagal  
malambot  
tunay

weak

wet

wrong

young

mahina

basa

mali

bata

### **9.10 Time Related Expressions**

What time is it?

It's 3 o'clock

In The Morning

In the evening

At Night

Today

Now

Tomorrow

Yesterday

Anóng oras na?

Alás tres na

Sa umaga

Sa gabí

Sa gabí

Ngayóng araw

Ngayón

Bukas

Kahapon

### **9.11 Shopping Expressions**

How much is this?

I'm just looking

I don't have change

This is too expensive

Expensive

Cheap

newspaper

notebook

big

deep

long

narrow

short

small

tall

thick

thin

wide

Magkano itó?

Tumitingín lang akó

Walâ akóng panuklî

Ang mahál naman nitó

Mahál

Mura

pahayagan

kuwaderno

malaki

malalim

mahaba

makitid

maikli

maliit

matangkad

makapal

manipis

malawak

### **9.12 Daily Expressions**

Give me this!

Are you sure?

Ibigáy mo sa'kín 'to!

Sigurado ka?

Take this! (when giving something)  
Do you like it?  
I really like it!  
I'm hungry  
I'm thirsty  
He is funny  
In The Morning  
In the evening  
At Night  
Hurry up!

Tanggapin mo 'tó!  
Nagustúhan mo bá?  
Gustóng-gustó ko' tó!  
Gutóm na akó  
Nauuhaw akó  
Nakakatawá siyá  
Sa umaga  
Sa gabí  
Sa gabí  
Bilís!

### **9.13 Cuss Words (polite)**

This is nonsense! (or: this is craziness)  
My God! (to show amazement)  
Oh gosh! (when making a mistake)  
It sucks! (or: this is not good)  
What's wrong with you?  
Are you crazy?  
Get lost! (or: go away!)  
Leave me alone!  
I'm not interested!

Kalokohan 'to!  
Susmaryosep!  
Nakú!  
Ang pangit!  
Anó bang problema mo?  
Balíw ka ba?  
Layas!  
Hayaan mo munà akóng mag-isá!  
Hindî akó interesado

### **9.14 Basic Vocabulary**

#### **9.14.1 Food**

supermarket  
food  
almonds  
bread  
breakfast  
butter  
candy  
cheese  
chicken  
cumin  
dessert  
dinner  
fish  
fruit  
ice cream

supermarket  
pagkain  
mga almendras  
tinapay  
almusal  
mantikilya  
kendi  
keso  
manok  
kumin  
dessert  
hapunan  
isda  
prutas  
surbetes

lamb	tupa
lemon	limon
lunch	tanghalian
meal	pagkain
meat	karne
oven	oben
pepper	paminta
plants	mga halaman
pork	baboy
salad	salad
salt	asin
sandwich	sanwits
sausage	batutay
soup	sopas
sugar	asukal
supper	hapunan
turkey	pabo
apple	mansanas
banana	saging
oranges	mga dalandan
peaches	mga milokoton
peanut	mani
pears	mga peras
pineapple	pinya
grapes	mga ubas
strawberries	strawberries
vegetables	mga gulay
carrot	karot
corn	papkorn
cucumber	pipino
garlic	bawang
lettuce	litsugas



olives  
onions  
peppers  
potatoes  
pumpkin  
beans  
tomatoes  
tastes  
bitter  
fresh  
salty  
sour  
spicy  
sweet

oliba  
mga sibuyas  
peppers  
patatas  
kalabasa  
patani  
mga kamatis  
kagustuhan  
mapait  
sariwa  
maalat  
maasim  
maanghang  
matamis

#### **9.14.2 Animals**

alligator  
alligators  
bear  
bears  
bird  
birds  
bull  
bulls  
cat  
cats  
cow  
cows  
deer  
many deer  
dog  
dogs  
donkey

buwaya  
alligators  
madala  
bears  
ibon  
ibon  
toro  
bulls  
pusa  
cats  
baka  
cows  
usa  
maraming mga usa  
aso  
aso  
asno

donkeys  
eagle  
eagles  
elephant  
elephants  
giraffe  
giraffes  
goat  
goats  
horse  
horses  
lion  
lions  
monkey  
monkeys  
mouse  
mice  
rabbit  
rabbits  
snake  
snakes  
tiger  
tigers  
wolf  
wolves

### **9.14.3 Household Things**

bathroom  
bed  
bedroom  
book  
ceiling  
chair

donkeys  
agila  
eagles  
elepante  
elephants  
dyirap  
giraffes  
kambing  
goats  
kabayo  
kabayo  
leon  
Lions  
unggoy  
monkeys  
mouse  
mice  
kuneho  
rabbits  
ahas  
snakes  
tigre  
tigers  
malayo sa gutom  
wolves

banyo  
kama  
silid-tulugan  
libro  
kisame  
upuan

clothes	mga damit
coat	amerikana
cup	tasa
desk	mesa
dress	damit
floor	palapag
fork	tinidor
furniture	mga kasangkapan sa bahay
glass	salamin
hat	sombrero
house	bahay
ink	tinta
jacket	dyaket
kitchen	kusina
knife	kutsilyo
lamp	ilawan
letter	sulat
pants	pantalón
paper	papel
pen	pluma
pencil	lapis
pharmacy	farmasya
picture	larawan
plate	plato
refrigerator	ref
restaurant	restawran
roof	bubong
room	kuwarto
rug	alpombra
scissors	gunting
shampoo	shampoo
shirt	sando

shoes

soap

socks

spoon

table

toilet

toothbrush

toothpaste

towel

umbrella

underwear

wall

wallet

window

telephone

this

that

these

those

Questions

how?

what?

who?

why?

where?

#### **9.14.4 Outside**

art

beach

country

desert

earth

flowers

sapatos

sabon

medyas

kutsara

mesa

banyo

sipilyo ng ngipin

tutpeyst

tuwalya

payong

damit na panloob

pader

pitaka

bintana

telepono

ito

na

mga ito

iyon

Tanong

kung paano?

ano?

sino?

bakit?

kung saan?

sining

tabing-dagat

bansa

disyerto

lupa

bulaklak

football	putbol
forest	kagubatan
game	laro
garden	hardin
geography	heograpya
history	kasaysayan
house	bahay
island	isla
lake	dagat-dagatan
moon	bulan
mountain	bundok
movies	sine
music	musika
ocean	karagatan
office	opisina
player	manlalaro
river	ilog
sea	dagat
sky	langit
soccer	putbol
stars	stars
swimming pool	swimming pool
theater	teatro
tree	puno

#### **9.14.5 Weather**

It's freezing (weather)	Napakagináw
It's cold (weather)	Magináw
It's hot (weather)	Maiinit
bad weather	masamang panahon
cloudy	maulap
cold malamig	
cool lumamig	
foggy	mahamog

hot mainit  
 nice weather  
 pouring  
 rain ulan  
 raining  
 snow  
 snowing  
 ice yelo  
 sunny  
 windy  
 spring  
 summer  
 autumn  
 winter

ganda ng panahon  
 pagbuhos  
  
 Malakas  
 snow  
 may snow  
  
 maaraw  
 mahangin  
 tagsibol  
 tag-init  
 taglagas  
 taglamig

#### **9.14.6 People and Relationships**

aunt  
 baby  
 brother  
 cousin  
 daughter  
 dentist  
 doctor  
 father  
 grandfather  
 grandmother  
 husband  
 mother  
 nephew  
 niece  
 nurse  
 policeman  
 postman

tiyahin  
 sanggol  
 kapatid na lalaki  
 pinsan  
 iha  
 dentista  
 doktor  
 ama  
 lolo  
 lola  
 asawa  
 ina  
 pamangking lalaki  
 pamangking babae  
 nars  
 parak  
 magdadala ng sulat

professor	propesor
son anak	
teacher	guro
uncle	tiyuhin
wife	asawa

#### **9.14.7 Short Expressions and words**

Good	Magandá
Bad	Pangit
So-so (or: not bad not good)	Medyo
Big	Malakí
Small	Maliít
Today	Ngayóng araw
Now	Ngayón
Tomorrow	Bukas
Yesterday	Kahapon
Yes	Oo
No	Hindî
Fast	Mabilís
Slow	Mabagal
Hot	Mainit
Cold	Malamíg
This	Itó
That	Iyón
Here	Dito
There	Doón
Me (ie. Who did this? - Me)	Akó
You	Ikáw
Him	Siyá
Her	Siyá
Us	Tayo
Them	Silá
Really?	Talagá
Look!	Tingnán!
What?	Anó?
Where?	Saán?
Who?	Sino?
How?	Paano?
When?	Kailán?
Why?	Bakit?

### **9.14.8 Numbers**

Zero	walâ
One	Isá
Two	Dalawá
Three	Tatló
Four	Apat
Five	Limá
Six	Anim
Seven	Pitó
Eight	Waló
Nine	Siyám
Ten	Sampû
eleven	labing-isa
twelve	dose
thirteen	labintatlo
fourteen	labing-apat
fifteen	labinlima
sixteen	labing-anim
seventeen	labimpito
eighteen	labing-walo
nineteen	labinsiyam
twenty	dalawampu
hundred	daan
first	una
second	pangalawa
third	ikatlo
fourth	pang-apat
fifth	ikalima
sixth	pang-anim
seventh	pampito
eighth	pangwalo
ninth	ikasiyam
tenth	ikasampu
eleventh	pang-onse



twelfth	ikalabindalawa
thirteenth	ikalabintatlo
fourteenth	panlabing-apat
fifteenth	pang-labinlima
sixteenth	panlabing-anim
seventeenth	ikalabimpito
eighteenth	ikalabing-walo
nineteenth	ikalabinsiyam
twentieth	ikadalawampu
once	minsan
twice	dalawang beses