

Southern Visayas, Philippines

7 nights Itinerary

- **Meeting point for embarkation:** Marina Seaview Restaurant, Mactan Island
- **Embarkation time:** 13:00
- **Disembarkation:** 10:00

Transfers between Mactan-Cebu International Airport or local hotels and Marina Seaview Restaurant are provided free of charge on embarkation and disembarkation day.

Transfers to hotels and resorts outside of the Mactan Island and Cebu City areas can be arranged for an additional charge.

Marine Park & Port Fees: 100 USD per person* (payable on board only)

PLEASE NOTE: *Marine park fees are subject to change without notice.* The applicable amount at the time of departure will be added to your onboard extras to be paid before disembarkation.

*There is an additional charge of 30 USD per person, also payable on board, for diving with whale sharks at Oslob should you choose to do so.

Minimum dive certification and experience

Diving conditions in and around the Visayas are generally suitable for all levels of divers although some sites can be challenging for inexperienced divers due to currents.

Divers wishing to join this itinerary are advised to have Advanced Open Water certification*, or equivalent, with a minimum of 10 logged dives and experience in strong currents.

*PADI Advanced Open Water certification can usually be completed on board if requested and confirmed in advance.

Guests who do not fulfil the minimum certification and experience requirements may be denied participation in some or all dives.

It is a mandatory requirement for all divers to have insurance which covers scuba diving activities, including emergency evacuation and recompression chamber costs.

Itinerary Details

Participation in this liveboard itinerary is subject to acceptance of our Terms & Conditions as outlined here: www.masterliveboards.com/terms-conditions.

Number of scheduled dives: Up to 22

This itinerary involves some long-distance travel between sites and, whilst we attempt to ensure the number of planned dives is fulfilled, bad weather and sea conditions can affect the boat's ability to reach a specific dive site in good time and may impact on the number of dives that are possible.

Safety and dive briefings are conducted in English. If you, or any of your group, do not speak or understand English, please contact us.

The following is an example of the day-to-day itinerary.

Day 1: Embarkation at 13:00 followed by lunch and briefings. If time allows there may be a check dive scheduled but *diving on embarkation day is not guaranteed*.

Day 2-6: Your Cruise Director will schedule up to 4 dives per day; 3 day dives and a sunset or night dive. A typical diving day is scheduled as follows:

- Light Breakfast followed by a briefing & Dive 1
- Full Breakfast, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 2
- Lunch, relaxation followed by briefing & Dive 3
- Snack
- Briefing for Dive
- Dinner

Day 7: Usually 2 morning* dives before Philippine Siren commences the cruise back to the marina.

Day 8: Following breakfast on board, disembarkation is scheduled for between 09:30 am and 10:00 am.

*We kindly request that guests check their flight departure times to ensure that they leave a minimum of 24 hours between their final dive and the departure of their flight.

Following is an example of the dive sites that we may visit during your time aboard Philippine Siren. Guests are welcome to suggest preferred dive sites to the Cruise Director who will be happy to accommodate guests' wishes, where possible, and if the schedule allows for it.

The safety of our guests and crew is paramount and we will always do our best to offer diving at alternative locations should we be unable to visit the areas listed below for any reason.

Cabilao Island

There are many interesting and colourful walls and coral gardens around the island of Cabilao; we usually choose from the following:

Gorgonian Wall

Starting at 5 metres and extending to a depth of 60 metres, this 100-metre-long wall is awash with giant gorgonians, corals and sponges. Also featuring many overhangs and small caves, fish activity is plentiful and hidden wonders are waiting for the eagle-eyed to find including pygmy seahorses, frogfish and rare nudibranch specimens.

Lighthouse

So named because the site is in front of the lighthouse on the northwest tip of Cabilao Island, this is a sloping wall covered with seagrass and corals which is often frequented by green turtles. Amongst the corals and sponges, you are also likely to find frogfish, cowrie snails, ghost pipefish, stargazers, Pegasus seamoths, various crustaceans, and electric file clams.

Talisay Tree

Along the northern shore of Cabilao, Talisay Tree is another gorgonian-covered wall with a shallow seagrass garden interspersed with elephant-ear and barrel sponges. The site offers some fantastic wide-angle and macro photo opportunities with bubble corals playing host to their commensal shrimps and orangutan crabs.

Cambaquiz

Cambaquiz is a favourite location for a sunset or night dive. Comprising a gentle sandy slope dotted with clusters of soft corals, sea pens and seagrass there is an abundance of delights to be discovered here by torchlight. Stargazers lie camouflaged in the sand while an array of crabs and shrimps can be found hiding in the corals and grassy patches along with seahorses, pipefish and wunderpus to name just a few.

Panglao Bay, Bohol

Panglao Island is located just 850 metres off the southwestern tip of Bohol Island. The bay area around Panglao's western shore boasts over 20 dive sites and some of the highest marine biodiversity in the world. Following are the sites we usually dive if we visit Panglao Bay.

Gak-ang

Gakang is a tiny island located on the outer edge of Panglao Bay which features a shallow reef with beautiful coral gardens at 3-5 metres and a magnificent wall reaching depths of 25-40 metres covered in large sea-fans, sponges and soft corals. Angelfish, butterflyfish, damsels, and frogfish are just a few of the residents to see along the way; The eagle-eyed might even find pygmy seahorses hiding in the gorgonians.

Danao

Danao is primarily a long wall which starts at 5 metres and drops down to around 25 metres. On the sandy bottom, there are scatterings of coral around which you will find a variety of shrimp and crab species as well as plenty of macro delights. The wall is covered with beautiful hard and soft corals playing host to an array of reef fish and frogfish. Banded sea snakes are also a common sighting here.

Doljo Point

Located on the westernmost corner of Panglao Bay, Doljo Point is a steep, sloping wall which has two distinct aspects; The top section of the wall is between 5 and 20 metres below the surface at the base of which a sandy slope extends to 25 metres and the second wall section which drops down to beyond 40 metres. All along the wall, there are giant gorgonians, sponges and leather corals. In addition to the usual reef fish gracing the length of the walls, whitetip and blacktip reef sharks, tuna, barracuda and Spanish mackerel and rays can often be seen patrolling the peripheral blue water.

Napaling

Napaling is another stunning wall that drops almost vertically from 3 to 40 metres and has lots of crevices and small caves to explore. Apart from the stunning corals and colourful fish, Napaling is also known for the massive sardine shoals that are almost always present and a delight to watch as they shimmer and sway en-masse in the shallow waters just off the reef top.

Oslob (optional)

The optional whale shark encounter, where the whale sharks are hand-fed, can be done by diving or snorkelling, subject to additional fees payable at the destination. Please be advised **it is not allowed to use strobes and/or flashlights here.**

Sumilon Island

Located just off the southeastern tip of Cebu Island, Sumilon was the first official marine sanctuary in the region. The dive sites around the island are renowned for usually having superb visibility, stunning coral gardens and an abundance of fish and other marine life. Blacktip and whitetip reef sharks are regularly spotted here, as well as turtles and large schools of trevallies and snappers.

Dauin, Negros

Dauin, with its black volcanic sand, is famous for its muck diving and fabulous macro creatures. Depending on the season, different types and sizes of octopuses, sea horses, frogfish from minuscule babies to full-grown adults, a variety of ghost pipefish, and flamboyant cuttlefish can be found.

The Cars

Perhaps rather unimaginatively named, the main attraction of this dive site is the artificial reef created from the chassis of two cars that host an amazing amount of marine life. Surrounded by sand at a depth of 24-29 metres, you will usually find groups of snappers, angelfish, lionfish and sweetlips hanging around the wrecks which, if you take a closer look inside, have also created a perfect environment for an array of crustaceans. On the sandy slope that leads to the wrecks, the keen-eyed are likely to discover no end of macro delights including juvenile frogfish, robust, ornate and velvet ghost pipefish, sand divers, dragonets, flamboyant cuttlefish and much, much more.

Secret Corner

It's no secret that this sandy, rubble-strewn slope is potentially a cephalopod lover's nirvana. Blue-ringed, mimic and coconut octopus, wunderpus and flamboyant cuttlefish are just some of the species that can be found here. Other delights include snake and garden eels, waspfish, spiny devilfish, hairy frogfish and seahorses.

Ceres

This is another fantastic macro site featuring a sandy slope and artificial reef made up of tyres and concrete mooring blocks. Named after the local bus company that donated the tyres, marine life that can be found here includes stargazers, seahorses, a variety of frogfish species, flamboyant and pygmy cuttlefish and ambon scorpionfish.

Mainit

Currents at this location are often strong, so it is usually dived as a one-way drift. Featuring a mix of black volcanic sand with patches of hard and soft corals, fish life is prolific and varied. This lively and exhilarating dive ends in an area with yellow, sulphur-rich, hot sand, hence the name Mainit meaning 'hot' in Visayan.

San Miguel

A relatively shallow dive site with sandy slopes, seagrass beds and a small reef full of fish, San Miguel is another critter wonderland! This is the place to find all your favourites including a variety of nudibranchs, ghost pipefish, tiny juvenile frogfish and even the possibility of finding Pygmy Squid, mimic octopus, or newly hatched flamboyant cuttlefish.

Apo Island

Apo Island Marine Reserve is one of the most successful marine sanctuaries established in the Philippines. Reef hooks and gloves are not allowed and night diving is unfortunately not permitted. The order of dives will be based on the currents and conditions of the day choosing from:

Coconut Point

Situated on the northwestern tip of Apo Island, strong currents make for an exhilarating and sometimes challenging dive. Also referred to as 'The Washing Machine', this fast-paced drift

takes divers over the sloping coral reef to a rock wall; a sandy channel between two cliffs provides an opportunity to take a breather and look out for passing pelagics. Along the way, large schools of trevallies, blackfin barracuda, snappers, sweetlips, potato groupers and plenty of sea snakes can be encountered.

Cogon

On the eastern side of Apo, this is another site that often experiences strong currents and therefore dived as a drift. Starting as a sandy slope that evolves into a coral reef leading to a steep wall, there is plenty of coral and marine life activity to catch your eye as you are carried along by the current. A large school of big-eyed trevally are commonly seen here as well as reef sharks, blue-spotted stingrays and turtles.

The Chapel

On the west side of the island, the reef starts as a gentle sandy slope with scatterings of coral bommies becoming progressively steeper as you get nearer to the wall section which drops off to more than 40 metres. The wall is dotted with small crevices and caverns adorned with soft and hard corals, sponges, sea fans and anemones hosting an abundance of small aquatic creatures. Electric clams, a wide variety of nudibranchs, eels and crustaceans are just some of the delights that await the inquisitive diver. Hawksbill and green turtles can also be found munching on the corals while large predatory fish pass by in the blue.

Rocky Point West

Just beyond the chapel opposite the marine park warden's office, Rocky Point West offers some of the most stunning hard corals to be found in the region with endless patches of leather corals on the top. The steep reef walls support numerous colourful reef species; pyramid butterflyfish and red-toothed triggerfish can usually be seen here in their hundreds. Frogfish, cuttlefish, banded sea snakes and hawksbill turtles are also common sightings.

Balicasag Island

The small island of Balicasag, just off the tip of Panglao, is characterised by its many turtles, coral gardens and steep walls which provide overhangs, cracks & crevices in which to search for a variety of marine species. This area has been a marine protected area since July 2017 and allows two dives per day only with valid permits.

Divers Heaven

One of the big attractions of this aptly named, beautiful dive site is the hawksbill and green sea turtles that can often be seen here. The shallows comprise a sandy area covered with seagrass which the turtles come to graze on and also has plentiful coral formations, reef fish and macro species. The coral coverage becomes denser and more extensive as you progress further down the steeply sloping reef which reaches depths of 40+ metres and features many ledges and overhangs with lots of soft corals, gorgonians and sponges. Goldband fusiliers, Big-Mouth mackerel, Midnight snappers, Redtooth Triggerfish, Angelfish, Barracuda, Bluefin trevally and Bigeye trevally are just some of the fish that you are likely to see in large numbers along the reef. Leaf scorpionfish are another delight that can be found in this aquarium-like environment as well as numerous nudibranchs, eels and anemone fish.

Black Forest

Named for the proliferation of black corals that can be found at depths that extend beyond recreational limits, Black Forest is well known for its biodiversity and beauty.

Often dived as a drift, the reef forms a steep slope with a wide variety of corals and marine life. Damsel fish, anthias, chromis, scorpionfish, wrasses, turtles and more can be found going about their business in and around the corals; in the blue, schools of jacks, blue-dash fusiliers and barracuda are common sightings as well as Titan triggerfish and Napoleon Wrasse.

Should you have any questions concerning the dive sites or whether this itinerary is suitable for your experience level, please contact our reservations team dive@masterliveboards.com.