

Visayas / Leyte / Malapascua Philippines (Cebu - Cebu itineraries)

Trip Information

- **Arrival airport:** Mactan-Cebu International (CEB)
- **Departure airport:** Mactan-Cebu International (CEB)
- **Embarkation Meeting point:** Marina Sea View Restaurant, next to Cebu Yacht Club, Mactan Island

Flights and Transfers

Transfer between Mactan-Cebu Airport or local hotels and Philippine Siren on embarkation and disembarkation day is included in the liveaboard price.

Transfers from and to hotels and resorts outside of the Mactan or Cebu City area can be arranged for an additional charge.

Advice on Flights

International flights may be booked into and out of Manila or Cebu. We recommend that you plan to arrive in Manila or Cebu at least 1 day before the liveaboard departure date to allow for possible flight delays or schedule changes and to ensure you start your holiday well-rested.

If travelling via Manila with international and domestic connections on the same day, please allow plenty of time for transfer between domestic and international terminals and check-in.

IMPORTANT: Guests who are planning to arrive in Cebu on the day of embarkation are kindly requested to book a flight which arrives in Cebu no later than 12.00, noon. The airport is a short taxi ride from our embarkation meeting point.

Disembarkation in Cebu at the end of the liveaboard will be just before 10:00; we kindly ask guests not to book flights that depart earlier than 13:30 on the day of disembarkation. Earlier departures are logistically problematic and therefore not recommended.

If a morning flight departure is unavoidable, guests can disembark the evening before but will need to arrange a hotel for the night and their own airport transfer. Please note however that doing so may also exclude you from diving on your last day.

International Pre-Arrival and Pre-Departure registration

With effect from 15th April 2023, all travellers to and from the Philippines are required to use the Bureau of Immigration's eTravel portal (<https://etravel.gov.ph>) to register their personal and travel details. This is in line with the directive of the government's Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases on the complete utilisation of the e-Travel system which was introduced in December 2022, and to facilitate faster and more convenient airport procedures.

The Bureau of Immigration (BI) will discontinue the use of paper-based arrival and departure cards beginning 1st May 2023.

Arriving passengers: Need to register within seventy-two (72) hours before their scheduled time of arrival in the Philippines.

Departing passengers: Need to register within seventy-two (72) hours before their flight's scheduled departure time from the Philippines.

To register, each traveller needs to:

1. Visit etravel.gov.ph
2. Select "Philippine passport holder" or "Foreign passport holder" according to their nationality
3. Enter their travel details and email address
4. Enter personal details and sign a health declaration form to complete the registration
5. Wait for their QR code to be generated then download and print/save a digital copy.
6. Present their QR code upon check-in before their flight departure or during the Bureau of Quarantine (BOQ) verification upon arrival.

Visa and Passports

The majority of visitors to the Philippines are allowed entry without a visa for stays of up to 30 days. However, as visa and passport regulations differ for certain nationalities, we advise our guests to check visa procedures and requirements with their nearest Philippines embassy or consulate.

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least 6 months from the date of entry into the Philippines. Upon arrival in the Philippines, you may be asked to show your confirmed return/onward flight ticket.

Airport Fees

Passengers travelling within and from the Philippines are required to pay airport terminal fees. Please ensure that you retain a sufficient amount of PHP to pay these fees upon departure: it can only be paid in cash.

- Domestic departure: 200 PHP
- International departure: 850 PHP

Guests should ensure they have small denominations of Philippine Peso for departure taxes and any excess baggage charges before departing from Manila or Cebu.

Scuba Diving Equipment

The Philippines Office for Transportation Security includes 'scuba equipment' on a list of blunt instruments that are not to be carried in hand luggage on flights originating within the Philippines. We advise that guests pack all diving equipment in their check-in luggage rather than their carry-on as there have been cases of guests being prohibited from carrying their regulators in their hand luggage. If you are unsure, we advise contacting your airline for clarification.

Insurance

Insurance which covers scuba diving is mandatory aboard all of our vessels. Your insurance must cover all of your scuba diving and snorkelling activities, including the costs for recompression chamber treatment and emergency air evacuation. We therefore strongly recommend purchasing diving-specific insurance to cover any diving-related eventuality.

All guests are also required to carry full travel and cancellation insurance, as outlined under section 3 of our [Terms and Conditions](#). We cannot be held liable for delays occurring during the cruise, nor any delays or cancellations of flights, accommodations, or tours and transfers that we organise on your behalf.

For further details of why travel insurance is a crucial part of your holiday arrangements, take a look at our blog - '[Do You Really Need Travel Insurance?](#)'

Master Liveboards act as a referrer for DiveAssure who offer dive and travel insurance policies, including short-term and multiple-trip policies. Their comprehensive 'Dive & Travel Plus' plan has been specifically developed for diving liveaboard holidays and covers expenses in the event of missing your liveaboard departure due to flight delays or missed connections, and also provides cover for lost diving days if for any reason the boat is required to abort the cruise; for instance, due to a guest injury, mechanical breakdown of the ship, air supply failure, inclement weather conditions, etc. Please consult our webpage for details and a direct link to DiveAssure's booking portal: www.masterliveboards.com/insurance.

Diving Information

Generally diving around the Visayas is suitable for all levels of diver although some areas may pose challenges for those who are inexperienced in currents.

Guests' Level of Diving

It is recommended that guests wishing to get the most out of diving in the area have **PADI Advanced Open Water certification*, or equivalent, with a minimum of 10 logged dives.**

You will need to provide copies of your certification card(s) as part of your pre-embarkation [API](#) and may also be asked to show them along with a record of your logged dives as proof of experience when you board.

*For guests who have the minimum number of required dives but are not certified as Advanced Open Water divers, we can offer the course on board if it is booked before the liveaboard departure.

Any guests who our crew feel have insufficient skills or experience in certain conditions may be denied participation in some or all dives during the liveaboard.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the diving conditions, or are interested in completing Advanced Open Water certification during your cruise, please contact our reservations team.

Fit to Dive

All divers are responsible for ensuring that they are fit to dive, and are required to provide a completed medical statement before their liveaboard departure. Guests who have any symptoms or medical conditions that could be restrictive to diving will need to obtain a doctor's certificate clearing them to dive, before travelling. The medical statement can be downloaded from our website at www.masterliveaboards.com/forms

If you are unable to complete the statement as directed or provide a current doctor's certificate (less than 1 year old) clearing you to dive, you accept that you may not be able to take part in certain aspects of the holiday you have booked with us.

Diving Safety

Use of a dive computer is compulsory; For your safety, we strongly urge all guests to always remain well within the limits of their dive computer, follow the instructions of the cruise director and guides when making repetitive dives and make a safety stop at the end of each dive throughout their liveaboard trip.

Guests are responsible for their own dive profiles and must stay within the limits of their certification.

Flying after Diving

Current studies indicate that you should wait at least 24 hours after multiple days of repetitive diving before flying. Please keep this in mind when you book your onward international or domestic flights.

Diving Emergencies

There are numerous recompression facilities throughout the Philippines; the most accessible of which are located in Manila, Cebu, Batangas and Subic. There is a hyperbaric chamber at Viscom Station Hospital in Cebu City which would be the closest should an incident occur while diving in the Visayas.

In the unlikely event of an accident, private emergency air evacuation may be needed to access these facilities depending where we are in the itinerary.

Diving-specific insurance should be purchased before your trip departure and must cover all costs which may be incurred as a result of a diving-related incident, including emergency air evacuation, recompression chamber charges and related costs.

As per our [Terms & Conditions](#) dive insurance and travel insurance are mandatory.

Water Temperature and Exposure Suits

Water temperatures are broadly similar throughout the Philippines with averages of around 26°-28°C (79°-82°F) year-round. Most guests find that a 3mm or 5mm wetsuit is suitable for the expected water temperatures. 3 mm shorty wetsuits are available to rent on board. However, we recommend that those who feel the cold easily, especially with repeated diving, bring a full-length wetsuit and/or an extra rashguard, vest or hood with them.

Diving Equipment

Use of a dive computer is compulsory for every diver. Diving equipment is available to rent for an additional charge but is subject to availability and should be pre-ordered.

A single 11 litre (80 cu ft) cylinder with air fills, weight belt and weights are provided free of charge.

There are a limited number of 13 litre (100 cu ft - sometimes referred to as 15L) aluminium cylinders available, at an additional cost, by special request only and must be pre-booked.

Equipment rental and Nitrox costs can be viewed under 'Extras' on the Philippine Siren page of our website: www.masterliveboards.com/boats/philippine-siren.

Please pre-book rental equipment and cylinders at the time of confirming your liveboard holiday, as they are subject to availability.

Underwater Photography and Videography

Philippine Siren offers specialised features for underwater photographers and videographers, which include:

- Indoor workstations for the preparation and maintenance of cameras.
- Individual storage drawers for cameras and peripheral items.
- Large rinsing tanks with frequently changed fresh water.

Our crew is well-trained in the handling of delicate camera equipment and will bring your cameras to/ from the tenders for you.

PLEASE NOTE: The use of strobes is NOT permitted in some areas that may be included on your liveboard itinerary.

General Information

Advanced Passenger Information (API)

There are certain details that we require for administrative purposes before guests travel, including application for Balicasag Dive Permits*. Guests are required to submit the required information via our secure online portal at www.masterliveboards.com/portal.

*For Balicasag permits we also need copies of all divers' certification cards. Please be sure to send copies of your cards to our team at dive@masterliveboards.com no less than 1 month before the start of your trip.

Forms

It is a requirement for all guests to complete the following forms before the commencement of their liveaboard itinerary: medical statement, liability releases, and standard safe diving practices statement, which can be found at www.masterliveaboards.com/forms.

To save some time, and to ensure that you have no pre-existing conditions that could affect your diving, you can download the forms from the above link, fill them in, and bring them with you. By completing and signing the forms, you are confirming that you have read, understood, and agree to the conditions outlined in the forms.

If you are unable to complete the forms as instructed, you accept that you may not be able to take part in certain aspects of the holiday you have booked with us.

Time Zone

The local time in the Philippines is +8 hours UMC (GMT).

Money Matters

The local currency is the Philippine Peso (PHP).

There are many banking & money changing facilities in Cebu and Manila, although more favourable exchange rates may apply in your home country. ATMs are easy to find in most cities and airports throughout the Philippines.

The vast majority of hotels, resorts, shops and restaurants will accept a wide range of credit and debit cards. Please note that in some cases, away from the major cities, a service charge for credit card handling may be added which can range from 3.5% – 6.0% of your purchase total.

Guests should ensure they have small denominations of Philippine Peso for departure taxes and any excess baggage charges before departing from Cebu or Manila.

Health

Health standards vary throughout the country depending on location. All major towns have hospitals and doctors available. In some areas, they do not meet Western standards but in others they exceed them. Manila and Cebu have international-class hospitals whilst the hospitals in other parts of the country will ensure that you receive more than adequate care.

It is a requirement for all guests to have travel and diving Insurance which covers medical treatment and expenses. It is your responsibility to ensure your insurance fully covers all of your requirements, including pre-existing conditions, medical expenses and repatriation in the event of accident or illness, diving injuries and emergency medical evacuation.

We advise all guests to ensure that their routine vaccinations are up to date, use insect repellent and cover exposed skin to prevent any insect-borne diseases.

We recommend that travellers take sensible precautions with food to prevent stomach upsets and be sure to drink either boiled or bottled water only.

Yellow Fever certificate requirements

A Yellow Fever vaccination certificate is required for travellers arriving from countries with a risk of yellow fever transmission and for those who have transited for more than 12 hours through an airport of a country with a risk of yellow fever transmission.

Please consult your doctor or nearest health authorities for up-to-date medical travel advice and vaccination recommendations well before departure.

Language and Religion

There are over 170 different languages and dialects spoken in the Philippines although Tagalog (also known as Filipino) is the most widely spoken. Nearly all Filipinos who work in the tourism industry speak good English and English road and street signs are found nationwide.

Almost 90% of the population is Christian with over 80% being Roman Catholic. The largest religious minority is Muslim, which makes up about 5% of the population.

Climate and Weather

The Philippines is a tropical country with a climate that is roughly divided into two seasons ('dry' and 'rainy'), although temperatures are fairly even all year round. Coastal and inland temperatures range from 27°-28°C (80°-82°F) up to 33°-34°C (91°-93°F) with an average of approximately 31°C (87°F). Evenings are marginally cooler.

The dry season runs from November through to May but there is always the chance of light rainfall during this period. The warmest months are usually March through to May.

Rainy season generally begins in early June and can extend through to November.

Life on Board

The main features of the vessel can be seen on the Master Liveboards website, here: www.masterliveboards.com/boats/philippine-siren.

Accessibility

Due to the layout of the boat, Philippine Siren may provide challenges, or be unsuitable for guests with limited mobility. Please contact us for further details if you have any concerns.

Accommodation

All cabins on board Philippine Siren are twin or double occupancy. Single occupancy may be available on request and is subject to a supplemental charge.

Cabin Facilities

All cabins have individually controllable air-conditioning and private en-suite bathrooms with centrally heated hot water. Other facilities include towels, bathrobes and a lockable safety box.

Food and Drink

Meals are provided on a full board basis including a light breakfast, full breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks with unlimited drinking water, tea, coffee, fruit juices and soft drinks.

Local beer (lager), wine and spirits are available from our cocktail bar for an additional fee.

We offer a choice of International and locally inspired cuisine and can cater to special dietary requirements with advance notice. Should you have any specific dietary needs, allergies, or special requests, please advise your sales consultant at the time of confirming your liveaboard trip to ensure we are able to make provisions for your needs.

Please note: It can be very difficult to find low-fat or soya products that are common elsewhere. While we always do our best to accommodate dietary requests, please consider bringing some of your own foods if the lack thereof may constitute a health risk or seriously compromise your enjoyment of your holiday.

Clothing and Footwear

Dress on board is very casual and most guests feel comfortable in little more than swimwear, shorts and t-shirts. A sweater is advised for cooler nights, particularly after multiple dives. Philippine Siren is equipped with laundry facilities and our housekeeper is more than happy to launder your clothes during the trip for a small charge.

We do request that guests respect the wishes of others by donning clothing for meal times. Most guests prefer to walk barefoot on board our vessel; however, island visits may require sturdy sandals or cross-trainers.

Electricity

Both 220V and 110V European style 2 round pin sockets and Universal sockets are available on board. Nevertheless, we do advise guests to bring their own adapters to ensure you have the correct type to charge your equipment.

Staying Connected

Wi-Fi internet access is available for guests to use onboard Philippine Siren for a small charge. The cost is 25 USD per person for 7 nights, or 35 USD per person for 10 nights.

Most mobile phones that have 'roaming' will work in the Philippines, or local SIM cards and data packages can be purchased at Cebu and Manila Airports or various shopping outlets.

Mobile phone coverage varies throughout each cruise but is typically best when close to major islands, such as Cebu and Negros. However, signal strength can be sporadic or very weak and, in some areas, or while cruising, there may be no coverage at all.

PLEASE NOTE: Mobile phone service providers in the Philippines are required, by law, to register subscriber details before a SIM card can be activated. This means, if you wish to purchase a local SIM card before embarkation, you will need to provide your full name, passport details and Philippines contact address to fill in the provider's SIM registration form.

The vessel is also equipped with satellite phone communications which can be used by guests in the event of an emergency, for a small charge.

Smoking

Smoking on board is permitted in designated outdoor areas.

Environmental considerations

Although there are recycling programs and facilities in place in the Philippines, they are very limited and are only able to process a small amount of recyclable plastic materials. We therefore ask our guests to consider the following to help with our mission to reduce our environmental impact.

Batteries

If your equipment requires a unique battery size or will need a lot of replacement batteries during your trip, please bring them with you. We kindly request that you take spent batteries home so that they can be recycled or disposed of properly. Alternatively, ***consider using rechargeable batteries*** as there are plenty of sockets to plug in a charger on board.

Water Bottles

We are dedicated to becoming single-use plastic-free across all of our fleets. Plastic straws and stirrers have been banned on all of our boats and we do not provide single-use plastic bottles on board.

If you own a sports bottle, we simply ask that you bring it with you, or you can purchase one on board. If you don't have one and you don't want to purchase one, we have plenty of cups on board that you can use to ensure you remain well hydrated.

Plastic bags and wrappers

We do not provide plastic bags for purchases made on board, although reusable canvas bags are available for sale. Please help us minimise plastic waste by removing plastic wrappers and packaging from items before travelling. If you bring plastic bags with you, please reuse them, and take them home.

Toiletries

We kindly ask that guests consider the type of products they are bringing with them and, where possible, to bring environmentally friendly toiletries for use on board, and to take partially or unused products home with them.

Payments on Board

Marine Park and Port Fees

Marine, park and port fees will be added to your invoice to be paid on board before disembarkation; please refer to your itinerary details for further information.

Optional Extras

Philippine Siren offers a range of services and optional extras to make your stay on board even more enjoyable. We offer some land excursions and the use of kayaks throughout your cruise free of charge.

The following services are also available for an additional fee:

- 1 Hour Relaxation Massage
- Laundry
- Dive Courses
- Exclusive Siren Fleet merchandise

All prices on board are quoted in USD although we are also happy to accept cash payment in PHP, GBP, EUR and AUD (Exchange rate from USD on board will be based on local bank rates at that time). We can also accept payment by credit card (Mastercard or Visa) for which there is a 3% surcharge.

Equipment rental, nitrox and other extras that can be paid for in advance do not incur additional charges, except for any that might be imposed by your bank or card issuer.

Guests are advised to bring 250-400 USD cash with them for any incidental costs in addition to marine, park & port fees and gratuities, in case of credit card payment issues.

Tipping

We believe that tipping is a matter of personal choice. Should you feel that our crew has made your holiday extra special, they would certainly appreciate a tip as a sign of your appreciation.

Please note that ***we are only able to accept tips in cash***; for this purpose, an envelope will be provided by the cruise director at the end of your time on board. He/ she will make sure the tips are divided equally amongst all crew members, including the captain and dive guides.

Safety on Board

Emergency Management & Equipment

All Philippine Siren crew members have been extensively trained in emergency management procedures. A thorough boat safety briefing will be provided by your cruise director at the start of your trip, during which all guests will be requested to participate in a life jacket drill. Further practice scenarios may be performed during your cruise to assist our crew in keeping their skills sharp.

Philippine Siren is equipped with many modern safety features including automated life rafts, EPIRB, satellite communication and emergency pumps.

First Aid

Philippine Siren is equipped with a fully stocked medical first aid kit for treating minor injuries and ailments, as well as for assisting trained medical professionals in remote locations. You will also find on board an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), which has been proven to greatly increase the survival rate in the eventuality of cardiac fibrillation.

There is also a full complement of medical-grade oxygen on board which can be administered to divers through DAN kits or unit-specific attachments.

Our dive teams are all qualified emergency responders. Should you feel unwell at any point during your cruise, please seek the advice of your cruise director who will be able to assist you.

Extending your holiday

Travelling within the Philippines can be made exceptionally easy when you book with Master Liveboards. We can offer a range of domestic flights, hotels, transfers and short excursions for before or after your trip.

Optional Extension

To extend your liveboard holiday experience and ensure you are fully relaxed, we can offer you the following package:

- 1 night pre-cruise and 1 night post-cruise in a hotel of your choice.
- Domestic flights between Manila and Cebu
- All domestic transfers

Furthermore, we are happy to assist with your holiday extension, either pre- or post-cruise in Cebu, or elsewhere in the Philippines. Just let our Reservations Department know of your wishes and we can tailor packages to suit your needs.

Details of suggested hotels and Cebu-based tours and excursions can be found under the Philippines section of our website's download page: masterliveboards.com/downloads

Bohol Island Tour

Explore the island of Bohol on a full-day tour incorporating the Historic "Blood Compact" site and the Tarsier Sanctuary in Corella as well as a cruise in the Loboc River and a visit to the geological wonder of the Chocolate Hills. The tour includes the ferry crossing between Cebu and Bohol, land-based transportation, entrance fees, lunch and English speaking guide.

Prices and details of other Cebu-based excursions can be viewed here: [Cebu Based Tour Suggestions](#)

Malapascua Extension – Thresher Shark Dives

Malapascua Island is a small island just off the northern coast of Cebu Island, and is the only place in the world where you can experience daily thresher shark action. As thresher sharks' numbers are diminishing, a marine park was established in the Monad Shoal area to protect and rehabilitate these magnificent sea creatures. We can arrange Malapascua transfers, accommodation and diving packages to fulfil your requirements. Just let us know when and for how long, and leave the rest to our reservations team.

Prices for add-ons vary depending on the time of booking; please contact our team for further details and prices, dive@masterliveboards.com or consult your agent for more information.

FAQs

If there are any questions that have not been answered, please visit our website at www.masterliveboards.com or email us at dive@masterliveboards.com.

Contact Information

Master Liveboards - Thailand Office

10/512 Moo 3,
Tambon Vichit,
Muang Phuket 83000,
Thailand

Open Monday - Friday 08:30 - 18:30 and Saturday 09:00 - 17:00 ICT (UTC+7)

Web: www.masterliveboards.com

Email: dive@masterliveboards.com

Thailand Office: +66 (0) 76 367 444

UK number: +44 (0) 208 099 2230

USA (Toll Free): +1 866 258 6398

WhatsApp: +66 (0) 62 668 7136

Philippines Office

Worldwide Dive and Sail Philippines
Marina Seaview
F. Martir Street., Brgy. Ibo, MEPZ 1
Mactan Cebu, Philippines
Tel: + 63 32 413 3776 (Office hours only)

Philippines Emergency Numbers:

Tel: +63 917 724 2430 (Destination Manager - Jan)

Tel: + 63 917 631 3211 (Boat)

Master Liveboards 24hr emergency number:

Please only use the 24hr emergency if you are unable to get a response from the numbers above.

UK Mobile: +44 786 212 6398

What to Bring

Our blog, [Packing for a Scuba Diving Liveaboard](#) provides useful tips on what to pack. Please ensure you *remove all plastic wrappers and packaging* from items you are bringing with you.

The following is a checklist of essential items that you should ensure you bring with you for your trip on Philippine Siren. You can also download a complete packing checklist from the General Information section of the Master Liveaboards [downloads page](#)

Passport

6 months validity and at least 2 empty pages for visa stickers and stamps

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Travel Documents

Flight tickets - International & Domestic; hotel booking; excursions

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Cash & Credit Card for emergencies

Recommended amount (additional to park & port fees): 250 - 500 USD

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Diving Certification & Logbook

Including Nitrox Card if certified & intending to use Nitrox

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Travel and Diving Insurance Documents

To include emergency medical evacuation

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Essential Diving Items

Dive computer with full battery

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Toiletries & Medications

Including sunscreen (reef-safe, please) & insect repellent

Inform booking team of medical conditions

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Essential Clothing Items

Swimwear, hat and lightweight jacket

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Guests are strongly advised to carry essential items in hand luggage in case of lost or delayed luggage through International or Domestic Flights.