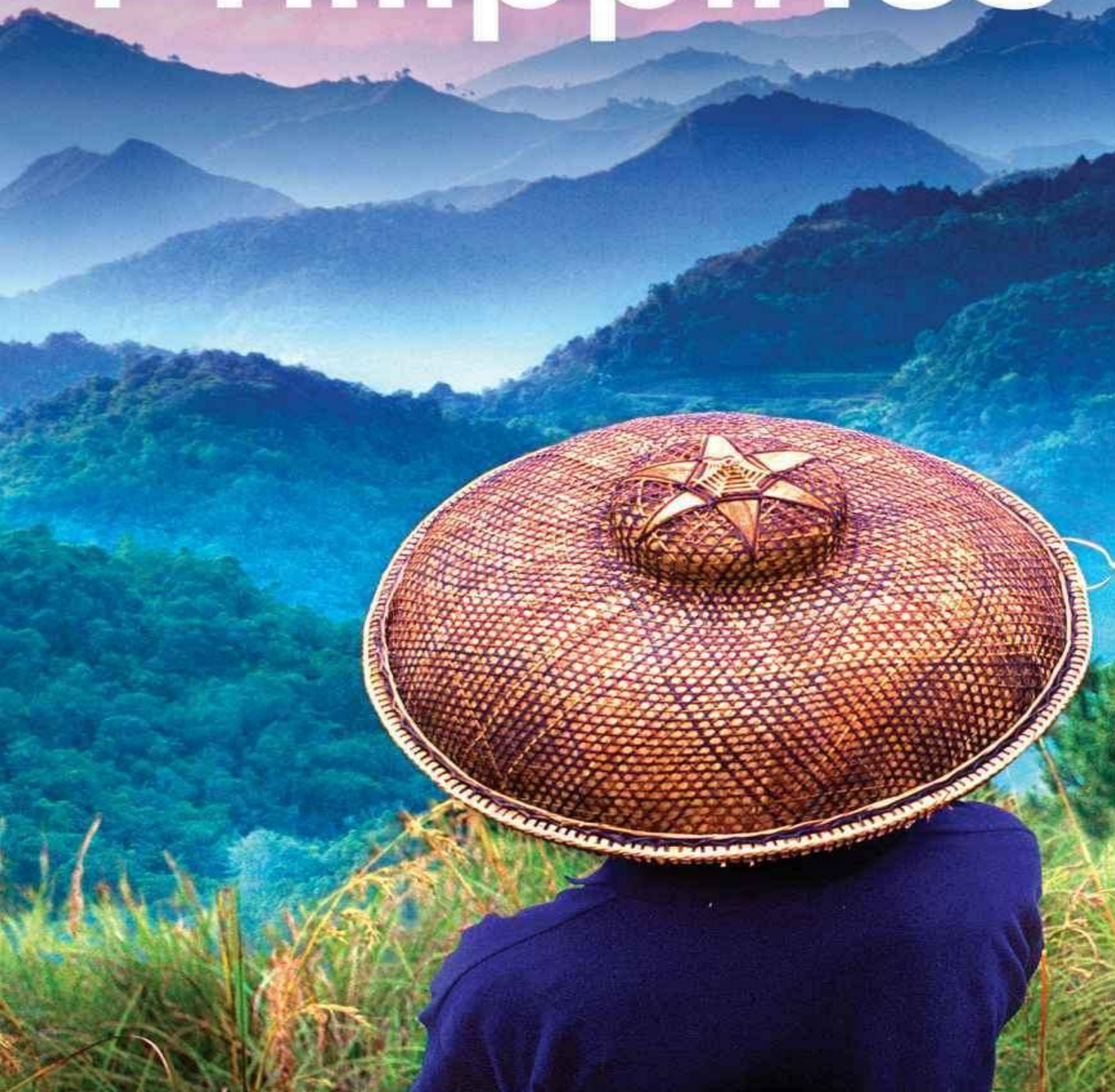


lonely planet

# Philippines



# Philippines



# How to Use This eBook

4 easy-to-use sections

1

## PLAN YOUR TRIP

Your planning tool kit

Photos & suggestions to help you create the perfect trip.

2

## ON THE ROAD

Your complete guide

Expert reviews, easy-to-use maps and insider tips.

3

## UNDERSTAND

Get more from your trip

Learn about the big picture, to make sense of what you see.

4

## SURVIVAL GUIDE

Your at-a-glance guide

Vital practical information to help you have a smooth trip.

Look for these symbols to quickly identify listings:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Sights             |  Eating                  |
|  Activities         |  Drinking                |
|  Courses            |  Entertainment           |
|  Tours              |  Shopping                |
|  Festivals & Events |  Information & Transport |
|  Sleeping           |   |

**All reviews** are ordered in our authors' preference, starting with their most preferred option. Additionally:

**Sights** are arranged in the geographic order that we suggest you visit them, and within this order, by author preference.

**Eating and Sleeping reviews** are ordered by price range (budget, midrange, top end) and within these ranges, by author preference.

These symbols give vital information for each listing:

-  Must-visit recommendation
-  Sustainable or green recommendation

**FREE** No payment required

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Telephone number |  Vegetarian selection |
|  Opening hours    |  Family-friendly      |
|  Parking          |  Pet-friendly         |
|  Nonsmoking       |  Bus                  |
|  Air-conditioning |  Ferry                |
|  Internet access  |  Tram                 |
|  Wi-fi access     |  Train                |
|  Swimming pool    |  |

For symbols used on maps, see the Map Legend at the end of this eBook.

# The key to the perfect trip

Lonely Planet eBooks make trip planning and on-the-road travelling easier than ever

## 1. Discover amazing experiences

Gorgeous photos of top sights with links to author recommendations help you plan where to go.

### Montenegro's Top 16

#### Sveti Stefan



1 The postcard-perfect walled island village of Sveti Stefan is a wonder to behold. It's a tiny slice of Mediterranean beauty, with its white-washed buildings, stone and olive trees peering between the windows, and a beach of fine white sand. Content yourself with the views, or walk to the island's main point of interest, the main point of coming time horizontal as possible. Take a boat through the woods to Petrovo, and go early taking photographs - it's hard to get a good shot.

#### Sveti Stefan

#### Sights

##### Sveti Stefan Beach

The main point of coming time horizontal as possible

## 2. Content when you need it

Downloading eBooks on the road is simple, and you can carry as many guides as you need.



## 3. Plan your perfect trip

Search for destinations, bookmark favourites and add notes to customise your guide.

## 4. Essential online travel info

Links to the best business and travel websites bring all the info you need into one place.

## Features you'll love while on the road...



Map links to reviews mean you can find info quickly.



Zoom-in maps make it easy to navigate in a new place.



Art Gallery of Western Australia  
MAP GOOGLE MAP

Offline maps mean no data-roaming charges.

To get the most out of the maps in this guide, use the zoom function on your device, or visit <http://media.lonelyplanet.com/ebookmaps> to grab a PDF of the maps.



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## Behind the Scenes



# Welcome to the Philippines

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*The Philippines is defined by its emerald rice fields, teeming mega-cities, graffiti-splashed jeepneys, smouldering volcanoes, bug-eyed tarsiers, fuzzy water buffalo and smiling, happy-go-lucky people.*

## Cultural Quirks

The Philippines is a land apart from mainland Southeast Asia – not only geographically but also spiritually and culturally. The country's overwhelming Catholicism, the result of 350 years of Spanish rule, is its most obvious enigma. Vestiges of the Spanish era include exuberant town fiestas (festivals), unique Spanish-Filipino colonial architecture and centuries-old stone churches. Malls, fast-food chains and widespread spoken English betray the influence of Spain's colonial successor, the Americans. Yet despite these outside influences, the country remains very much its own unique entity. The people are, simply, Filipinos – and proud of it. Welcoming, warm and relentlessly upbeat, it is they who captivate and ultimately ensnare visitors.

## Islands & Beaches

With more than 7000 islands, the Philippines is a beach bum's delight. There's an island to suit every taste, from marooned slicks of sand in the middle of the ocean to sprawling mega-islands like Luzon and Mindanao. Sun worshippers and divers should head straight to the Visayas, where island-hopping opportunities abound and the perfect beach takes many forms. More adventurous travellers can pitch tent on a deserted stretch of coastline and play solo *Survivor* for a few days.

## Outdoor Adventures

The Philippines isn't just about finding an isolated beach and getting catatonic. From kayaking to kiteboarding to canyoning to spelunking, the Philippines can capably raise any adrenaline junkie's pulse. While surfers are just catching on to the tasty (if fickle) waves that form on both coasts, divers have long been enamoured of the country's underwater charms. Freshwater pursuits include rafting and wakeboarding. Back on terra firma, trekking can be done just about anywhere, while rock climbing is gaining popularity. And the Philippines is also, unofficially, the zipline capital of the world.

## Tempestuous Tropics

We've all had it happen: your trip to paradise is ruined by day after day of torrential monsoon rain (in the Philippines that paradise is often Palawan). There are a couple of simple ways to avoid this. One, study the climate charts. The western parts of the country get hammered by rain at the peak of the southwest monsoon (July to September), so go east during this time (unless there's a typhoon

brewing). Two, stay flexible. Dispense with advance bookings so you can migrate to fairer climes if need be.

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Blue Lagoon, Pagudpud  
ALVIN LAMUCHO/GETTY IMAGES ©

# Why I Love the Philippines

By Greg Bloom, Author

With 7000 tropical islands on my doorstep, all ripe for exploration, I find it easy to *like* the Philippines. Love, on the other hand, is borne of subtler things. Love is borne of long rooftop jeepney rides through the mountains of North Luzon; of a frosty San Miguel at sundown on a sublime slab of Visayan sand; of a fresh-fish lunch, followed by a siesta on an interminable bangka journey through Palawan's islands; of friends with names like Bing and Bong; of phrases like 'comfort room'; of – dare I say it – karaoke. Now that is love.

# The Philippines' Top 15

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## Bacuit Archipelago

Cruising through the labyrinthine Bacuit Archipelago ([Click here](#)) of northern Palawan, past secluded beaches, pristine lagoons and rocky islets, is an experience not to be missed. Only a short bangka (wooden boat) ride from the easygoing coastal town of El Nido, Bacuit Bay presents a thrilling mixture of imposing limestone escarpments, palm-tree-lined white-sand beaches and coral reefs. Overnight island-hopping trips in the bay or further north through the Linapacan Strait towards Coron offer an opportunity to bed down in remote fishing villages where the daily catch is grilled for dinner.



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### Ifugao Rice Terraces

It's easy to look at a map of North Luzon and assume the Cordillera is all untamed wilderness. And yes – there's rugged jungle. But what really strikes a visitor to Banaue, Batad and the other towns of Ifugao is how cultivated the mountains are. Even the sheerest cliffs possess little patches of ground that have been tilled into rice paddies. Take all those patches together and you get a veritable blanket of upland-tilled goodness, an unending landscape of hills rounded into rice-producing lumps of emerald ([Click here](#)).



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