

Philippines

Before departure: You are required to fill out [this form](#) in advance of arrival to and departure from the Philippines and have the QR code ready. etravel.gov.ph. You can do this at the airport if you forget, but your airline may ask at check-in. Proof of vaccination is not required.

Palawan Ultimate Safari: El Nido to Coron via Apo Reef – 24 Dives

Transfer Details:

- Departure: 08:00am
- Location: El Nido, Palawan
- Airport: El Nido ENI
- Return: 08:30am
- Location: Coron, Palawan
- Airport: Busuanga USU

What's Included:

- Meals and Snacks
- Water, tea, and coffee
- High speed internet
- Towels and toiletries
- Tanks and weights
- Night dives

What's Not Included:

Dive and travel insurance , Gratuities, Dive Courses, Nitrox

Highlights:

- Dive the best WWII Wrecks in South East Asia
- Dive the world-famous Barracuda Lake, a freshwater lake with a huge thermocline
- Dive with majestic manta rays in Sibaltan
- Lots of Sharks
- Night Dives on WWII wrecks and an amazing muck dive
- Swim in the crystal-clear waters of the remote Linapacan Archipelago
- See the rarely visited Linapacan WWII wreck

Day 1: El Nido to Sibaltan

Take the van from El Nido to Sibaltan where you will board the Navis 1. Attend the boat and Dive Safety Briefings to ensure a safe journey. Dive sites for Day 1: Wide Reef check dive, Manta Station, Wild East

Day 2: Linapacan Islands

Our second day we will visit Shark Highway for an amazing dive with Blacktip Reef Sharks followed by various dive through the beautiful Linapacan islands, culminating in a night muck dive at San Miguel Harbour. Dive sites for Day 2 include Shark Highway and the San Miguel Night Muck Dive.

Day 3: Linapacan to Culion

Today we dive the famously crystal-clear water of Linapacan, rated by some as the clearest water in the Philippines. Dive sites for today include the drift dive at San Miguel House Reef, Meadows, Pedro's Reef and Kaleidoscope Channel.

Day 4: WWII Wrecks

Day four opens up the world of underwater history, diving into some of the best-preserved WWII Wrecks in South East Asia and the most spectacular island in Coron – Black Island . Dive sites include Moruzan Maru, Akitsushima Maru, a colossal seaplane tender; and the gargantuan 170m oil tanker, Okikawa Maru.

Day 5: Dugongs

The variety doesn't stop yet. Day 4 brings us possibly the most unique dive of all; Diving with the incredibly rare and endangered Dugongs. We then make our way to the world famous Apo Reef. Dive sites for Day 4: Diving with Dugongs, Dimipac Island and then another dive on Colocoto Rocks.

Day 6: Apo Reef

This day will be spent diving the amazing sites around Apo Island, the Apo Reef hotspot for sharks and other large pelagics. Expect 30-50m visibility for these dives. Dive sites for Day 5: Ego Wall, Southwest Corner, Mabuti

Day 7: Apo Reef

Today we venture to the incredible Apo Reef for some deep dives to a sea mount and some exploration of the largest reef in the Philippines, followed by a party at Apo Island and then a late night departure back to Coron. Dive sites for Day 6: Swim with the huge schools of barracuda at the deep dive site of Apo 29, see the White-tip Reef Sharks relaxing on the sand at Shark Airport and more.

Day 8: Coron

Guests will disembark after some group pictures and a nice breakfast

Malapascua

Reconfirmation

- If you have booked a pickup, please reconfirm your arrival at least 72 hours in advance by email, text or WhatsApp (and ensure you get a reply!), including arrival time as well as flight number and/or other pickup details. This is to ensure we have the correct details for you, as mistakes happen very occasionally. If possible, provide a contact cellphone number, preferably with WhatsApp. We may not receive your confirmation if

you send it any later than that, and do not assume we have received it unless you receive a reply. Our office will try and send you the driver cell number a day in advance, but we do not always receive it from the transfer company. Be aware they sometimes they change last minute; as long as you go with the person with your name on the sign that will be fine.

Finding your driver

- Your driver or his representative will meet you. He will have a sign with your name and “Thresher Shark Divers”. He/she will be outside the terminal. Please take a few minutes to look around for him. It is a small airport and he will almost always find you quickly. There may be other ‘touts’ outside the airport trying to get your business. Please make sure you go with your booked driver as otherwise you will need to pay for your transfer twice. If you do not see your driver outside after looking around, either call the driver if you have the number, or call the chauffeur company on +63 917 6765021 or then call us +63 917 795 9433. You can try emailing dive@thresherdivers.com and admin@thresherdivers.com as we are often online.

Changes in pickup:

- Please call or send an SMS/WhatsApp if you have last-minute confirmations or changes on our office number +63-917-795-9433, rather than our booking number. Phone lines here are not good either so misunderstandings can occur easily, so please call and follow up with an email/SMS/WhatsApp. We do not monitor emails 24 hours a day, but our front desk will usually get you a quicker response during business hours: admin@thresherdivers.com.

Waiting time.

- Please be aware that there may be an additional fee if the driver has a long wait e.g. if your flight is delayed.

When you arrive at Maya port:

- You need to check in at the passenger terminal and register for the boat manifest with your name and nationality and pay P140 in “Environmental tax”. You may also need to pay the porter, P20-50 per bag depending on bag size. Please try and get some small change to the airport or on the way if possible. We will try and arrange this on your behalf in advance, but it is not always possible.

Late arrival/ Night boat crossings:

- It is no longer possible to make a night crossing as the coast guard does not allow it (after about 5pm). Please let us know as soon as possible if your flight arrives in Cebu after 12pm or if your flight is delayed. We can make arrangements for you to overnight in Cebu or near the pier. In the unlikely event a night crossing is allowed, extra charges will apply.

Staying in Cebu the first night

- If you are staying in Cebu, we advise you to book a hotel near the airport. Booking a hotel in Cebu City itself or on the Mactan coastline can add up to an hour to the journey each way depending on traffic. Google Maps does not always accurately display the journey times. Most airport hotels arrange free pickup, or you can get an airport yellow taxi. These are either metered or fixed price. Traffic is usually much better in the evening

if you want to stay near the airport and spend the evening in Cebu. If you want a transfer the next day, we can pick up from the hotel up to 12pm.

Early arrivals on Malapascua:

- The dive shop opens at 8am, so if you are arriving before that, the boat crew will probably take you straight to your resort.

Contact number: +63-917-795-9433 (incl WhatsApp). Please reserve use at night for emergencies as you may be waking the person who answers.

GMT +8.

Emergencies: Calls, texts, WA+63-966-804-9408.

For calls or text only +63-920-808-1869.

Booking contact: Andrea and Jess are on +63-917-625-4195. This is for advance booking arrangements rather than for last minute logistics and changes – for that you need to contact the office +63-917-795-9433. Feel free to reach out to Andrea, the owner, by Whatsapp at any time during your trip if you have an issue that is not being solved by our team on the ground.

Transfer time is 3-3.5 hours on average by car and 30 minutes by boat. Expect total transfer to take around 5-6 hours from landing time. The transfers booked are direct transfers. If you stop on the way for anything other than quick toilet stops – such as shopping, going into Cebu City etc., you will be charged an additional P1,000 per hour or part thereof. Please try not to stop as the drivers and your boat have a schedule to stick to.

You will be on a private boat (rather than a public ferry), though it may have other staff or other TSD customers on it.

Maya port: This is a very basic port and you may need to climb slippery stairs or walk, supported, on a plank to get onto the boat. So sensible shoes are advised!

Bad weather: Crossings in bad weather may cost extra or may have to be cancelled for safety reasons at the discretion of the Coastguard. Alternate arrangements will be made for you. These will be at your cost, though it's not a huge amount; we advise you get travel insurance to cover this. You probably won't get a refund from the resort booked in Malapascua, but you will be able to check in when you arrive the next morning and have the breakfast if included.

There will usually be two options for the first night:

Stay in Cebu near the airport

Drive to Maya and stay in a resort or guesthouse there. Our driver will bring you over the next day, we will call you in the car via the driver's phone to make arrangements. There are two cheap guesthouses right at the port (P1,000-2,000 for a room) and you can walk to the boat in the morning. There are others further away, ranging from P2,000 to P10,000+. For these you will need transport the next day, usually +P1,000.

If you make your own way to Malapascua, please be aware of the “commissioners” who meet the public boats. They are touts and not to be trusted. You can ask them for directions to TSD, we are a few minutes walk from the pier where you usually land. Head off to the right, past Maldito onto the next beach where you will see Blue Coral on the right. Turn left along the beach and we are the first two-floor building you will come to, about 100 meters down the beach. Also beware of the touts in Maya port.

Money & Payment

Cash: bring peso cash if possible, it is very much appreciated as there are no banks on the island. At TSD we accept all major currencies cash for diving, the bar and the restaurant and you can run up a bill and make one payment at the end. Please make sure notes are not torn, as Filipino banks will not accept them. We do not accept USD from before the year 2000 and we do not accept EUR 500 notes. We do not generally accept foreign coins.

ATMs and getting cash. There are several ATMs on the island, but run by the same company, so if one is out of money, the others maybe too. It is also possible to withdraw cash by card at the “Palawan” international payment shop (you need to install an app for this), and there is Western Union in M L’Huiller shop. There is also a money changer.

There is an ATM and money changer at the airport at the exit. If this does not work, your driver can take you to an ATM on the way. You will be safe carrying the money up to Malapascua. ATMs do not always let you take out a lot., and so please bring a back up method in case these are not working.

Credit cards are accepted on the island in some places, usually for a 5% fee.

Credit cards are occasionally declined by banks if Philippine payment is deemed ‘unusual behaviour.’ Inform them in advance and bring a backup!

We prefer not to accept your resort payment by credit card, please pay in advance or in cash for that if you can.

Bank transfers: You can transfer money in advance and often on-site.

Philippines (PHP) – usually 1-2 days to process

Eurozone (EUR) – usually 1-2 days to process

UK (GBP) – usually immediate.

USD (USD) and Canada (CAD) – usually 1-2 days to process

Singapore (SGD) and Hong Kong (HKD and USD) – usually immediate.

Australia (AUD) and New Zealand (NZD) – usually 1-2 days to process

Japan (JPY)

Wise.com: This is a great new way to send money internationally with low fees and great exchange rates. You can send in many currencies, and you can also send PHP to our Wise account using the email address dive@thresherdivers.com. Use our affiliate link for discounts if you are new to Wise <https://wise.com/invite/dic/andrearakhia>

Revolut: Another great new online app. Send in EUR, USD, GBP and some other currencies via the Revolut app to @tsdmalapascua

GCash: A Philippine payment app for instant transfers.

Deposits and prepayments:

The deposit amount credited is based on the final amount received in our accounts. You are responsible for all transfer fees and losses resulting from exchange rates charged by the banks and credit cards.

Our banks do not charge for incoming transfers if all fees are paid on your end (except for the US bank, \$5). However, some banks use an intermediary bank, which deducts charges from transferred amounts without notice. We cannot be held liable for these charges. If incurred, we will have to ask you to make up any short payment on arrival. To avoid this, please be sure to ask your bank to cover all wiring fees, including those of any intermediary bank.

When sending international payments, you must ensure that your bank clearly understands it is sending the payment in the currency of the receiving account. If not, the payment may be returned or credited in a different currency, which may involve additional exchange fees.

Package Balance: We request that full package payment is completed minimum 15 days in advance, or 30 days for group (4 or more). If for any reason this has not been done, final payment is due on arrival for all packages, prior to in-water activities.

Other money-related considerations.

The law states that you can bring PHP10,000 (= approx. USD250) maximum in or out of the country although we have never heard that this has been enforced. This applies to PHP only, not other currencies.

There is no longer any departure tax due at the airport, at the time of writing.

Cancellation policy

Note that we are more flexible if cancellation is pandemic induced.

Packages are non-transferable and non-refundable for dives and rooms. For prepaid deposits:

More than 30 days before – 30% of package price forfeit, minimum 2,500.

30 days before – 50% of package price forfeit, minimum of the room costs if larger.

14 days before or any time after arrival – complete package price forfeit

Unused dives from dive packages are non-refundable for any reason, including the weather, unless it is the fault of TSD

Cancellation policy for groups

Partial cancellation: Deposits for groups are taken as a deposit for each group member and the cancellation policy applies to each person. For example, if one group member cancels, their

portion of the deposit will be non-refundable according to the refund policy above unless someone else can fill their space. For entire group cancellations within 30 days, 100% of the total invoice applies.

Resort cancellation policies: Each resort has a different cancellation policy. Expect that if your room is fully or partially cancelled within one month of arrival or after arrival (e.g. if you decide to leave early or move resorts) that you will be required to pay the full amount.

Tepanee – once confirmed, room price is non-refundable.

Blanco – For bookings Dec 1-Mar 1, refunds and changes are not possible

Mar 1-Dec 1: Full payment if cancelled one month in advance, 30% otherwise.

For any refunds given, transaction charges will not be paid by TSD.

Insurance:

Please ensure you are adequately covered for diving, health, cancellation, delays in arrival or departure to due weather, ill health, accidents etc. and any other unforeseen reason that may lead to trip cancellation, missed dives out of your package, or unwanted trip extension. This means cancellations, losses and disruptions caused by reasons outside of TSD's responsibility will be shouldered by you unless you are insured. We will assist in providing all paperwork necessary for any insurance claim. For dive insurance, we recommend [DAN or Dive Assure](#) and they both have short-term policies. [More info and how to book.](#)

Diving

Bring your certification cards.

You will be allowed to dive within the limits of your certification and/or proven experience. You may be required to do a checkout dive as your first dive. This is at the discretion of the dive shop manager and for your own safety and that of your buddies.

Shark Dive: Thresher shark behaviour changed in 2022, and they have appeared at the further away, but shallower, Kimud Shoal. But both Kimud and Monad Shoal are more challenging dive sites. If you are an Open Water Diver, you are certified to dive only to 18 meters. This does not mean you cannot dive it, but you will need to do the dive with an instructor. Please contact us prior to booking confirmation if this applies to you and we will advise your best option.

Courses: If you will be doing a course with us you will need to complete a [medical form](#). Please take a look at this before you come, as you may need to see a doctor in advance.

First dive/ Refreshers: As per safe diving standards, you may be required to do a refresher or check dive as your first dive.

Tank Valves: Most of our tanks are INT yoke, but are DIN convertible, so if you have a DIN regulator you do not need an adapter.

10/15-liter tanks: We have a limited number of 15 litre tanks available for those with high air consumption. These are air or nitrox compatible and have an extra fee. Please request in advance. Likewise, for 10 litre tanks for smaller people. We do also have limited 5.5L and 3L tanks.

Dive price includes tank (air, 12L), weights, boat, Divemaster.

Unless otherwise stated, price does not include (prices current at time of writing, subject to change without notice)

Equipment rental (mask, fins & booties, wetsuit, BCD, reg): P350 per dive. The breakdown is:

BCD: 175 per dive

Regulator: 175 per dive
Wetsuit: P100 per dive
Mask and snorkel: P50 per dive
Fins and booties: P50 per dive

Marine park tax: P300 per day
Kimud Thresher Shark dive fee: P150 per day
Monad fee: P100 per day (or 150 if including Kimud)
Kalangaman park fee: P1,000 per day
Dusk or Night dive surcharge: P300
Fuel surcharges for longer trips: varies and may be more if we do not reach minimum numbers.
Generally
Gato or Kimud trip: P500
Monad/Gato trip: P1,000
Kalangaman or Dona: on site

Also available (prices current at time of writing):

Nitrox P350 per fill. Package rates are available including 10 fills for 2,500.

15L tanks P100/500 for air/nitrox

Computer rental: P250/dive P500 day

Torch rental: P300 per dive

Camera rental: P1,000/dive P1,500 day

Water temperature: 28-30°. This may drop as low as 24° or 26° from December to February.

Technical diving – we offer a range of technical diving, courses and equipment including twins, sidemount and trimix. If you wish to do technical courses or dives, please inform us in advance to avoid disappointment.

Please be reminded of the NO FLYING AFTER DIVING rule. We recommend a minimum of 18-24 hours surface interval after the final dive before flying.

To assist us with better service, we highly suggest providing us with customer information prior to arrival, including any required equipment rental, cert level, number of dives and rooming list. This is especially useful if you are in a group.

As you may know, sunscreen is very damaging to the reef. We proudly stock a Philippine brand of “Magwai Reef safe” sunscreen for sale if you do not have your own. Otherwise, we ask that you refrain from using it before diving and/or use clothing to protect yourself from the sun.

Food and drink

For your convenience, you can keep a bill at our bar (at the dive shop) and pay at the end of your stay along with your diving bill.

Other info

Malapascua is a basic island with no mainland electric, water or telephone lines. We consider ourselves lucky to have so far avoided large corporate resorts that such facilities attract. Most resorts are small family-run businesses with both the charm and the problems this entails.

Please bear in mind that we do not yet have 5-star accommodation or facilities. Electricity is pretty reliable though and Wi-Fi is at most resorts and in the dive center.

The water on the island ranges from slightly brackish in rainy season to quite salty in the summer (March to June). There is often a nationwide water shortage in the Philippines and because of this we are very careful with our use of water as part of our conservation effort. For camera rinses we provide a seawater rinse on the boat and an island water rinse in the dive shop. We can provide drinking water on request for this, but we ask that you help us conserve our precious resource by minimizing its use. Also, by taking quick showers etc.

We are an independent dive shop and use outside resorts for your booking. Your room price is the standard price for the resort rooms. You will pay directly through us. Whilst we do our best to ensure accurate room quotes, unexpected changes may occur due to reasons beyond our control.

Towels: most resorts provide one per person and they are not allowed to be used on the beach or boats.

Visas: Most countries are granted a 30-day visa on arrival. However, check with your local embassy for current requirements. In order to enter the country, your passport should have 6 months validity and you should have an ongoing ticket. <http://www.immigration.gov.ph/>. Visas are usually easy to renew in major cities.

Mobile phone access: There are two main providers on Malapascua – Globe and SMART. Globe is best. SIM cards can be bought cheaply (\$2) on the island but your phone must be unlocked. There is usually a stand open in the airport before you exit.

As of April 2023, it is a legal requirement to register your SIM card with the government. You will be asked for (current at time of writing): images of your passport, proof of address in the Philippines (e.g. resort booking or email confirmation), and return ticket showing date of departure.

Internet access: There is free wi-fi at the dive shop provided by Starlink, Elon Musk's satellite internet – this has been giving us some great speeds! Some resorts have it as well. Most resorts have wifi of some kind, and it is fairly reliable, but do not expect the same speeds you might get at home and be aware that the internet can sometimes go down island-wide (not a problem with Starlink!). We have both Globe and Smart phone and internet service available at the dive shop as well, so in case of emergency there should be no problem with communication.

Electric: Plugs are US style 2 pin flat plugs, 220V. We sell plug adapters in the dive shop but not voltage converters. You may also want to bring a surge protector.

Noise: The island can be noisy at night with cockerels and karaoke. Bring earplugs if this might be a problem. There are regular fiestas on the island including two big ones in November and May 11-12 and other major holidays. There can be loud music all night, so please check with us if you think this will be a concern and we will do our best to find you the quietest resort.

It is a good idea to bring a small torch/flashlight or your phone to use at night, as the island is not well-lit.

Resort Check-in time is 2 or 3pm, check-out time is 11 or 12pm. You may be able to have early check in/late check out for free depending on the resort and room availability.

All prices are subject to change without notice due to circumstances beyond our control although we will do our best to inform you in advance.