

THE BEST BEACHES AND ISLANDS

Mon Pasicolan sent in an email with above title and 10 gorgeous pictures with commentary.

Rejoinders had more photos, with comments on the beauty, the costs, and how there are many more beaches to explore.

Jimmy summed it up with:

Terrific, Mon. El Nido was my best!

*Let's plan on some other beach we've not
been to - before the imp Alzh gets us down.*

So I decided to pool (no pun intended) all the photos together, add more that I personally have been to, and make sure most of them show some decent sample of humanity enjoying the beauty.

1. El Nido, Palawan



Comments on El Nido:

Haven't been there yet, but definitely is on the itinerary. My daughter and son-in-law went there 3 months ago and left me to do the "apostolic" duty of taking care of the grandkids in Tanjay. Sigh...

Comments on Boracay:

Ah, great beach indeed. White sugary sand, and night action to boot. See photo below with a sorry-looking sample of a Boracay beach-comber, unidentified.



Comments on Palau Island:

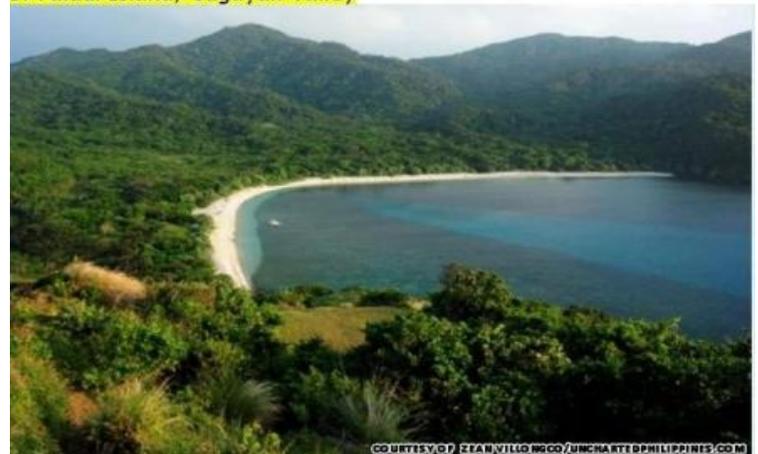
It might be a challenge indeed to get there, but years and years ago, we went on an excursion with Mon and a whole bunch of us to "the last pristine beach in Batangas" and it was quite an experience getting there, and more so coming back. Old b&w photo is on right, showing the group, but not the beach, otherwise, you'd see lots of stinging jellyfish. Maybe we should try going to San Juan beach again?

2. Boracay, Aklan



Sundowners, anyone? Just another perfect day in Boracay.

3. Palaui Island, Cagayan Valley



Getting to Palaui's best beach is a challenge, but the rewards make the hassle worthwhile.



4. Panglao, Bohol



Just your average Panglao beach. Tired of looking at white sands yet?

Comments on Panglao:

Yes, the sand is white, but coarse, mainly made of crushed coral and shells. But never mind, resort(s) are great, with swimming pools, and coconuts. Right photo shows a monkey trying to climb the tree.



5. Bantayan Island, Cebu



If the crowds of Boracay turn you off, Bantayan Island has luxury comforts minus the action.

7. Samal, Davao



Off the coast of Samal lies Buena Vista Island, with its blindingly white beaches. Pretty lady sunbathing not guaranteed.

6. Caramoan, Camarines Sur



8. Siargao Islands, Surigao del Norte



Ah, yes, all the four beaches look most inviting. Again, on my itinerary.

9. Great Santa Cruz Island, Zamboanga



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Great Santa Cruz Island is famous for its pink coralline sand, the only beach of its kind in the Philippines.

Comments on Great Santa Cruz Island:

We were there years ago, and remember the strong rip tide. Sorry, no picture. But wait, there also was a pinkish beach the group visited. Below is a beach in Sabtang island off Batanes, accessed after a scary heaving boat ride. The guide said the sand was coral, shells, and petrified sea weed, hence the sand's hue, Matches the guy's red pants.



10. Pagudpud/Bangui, Ilocos Norte



ALABIC YANOS/COURTESY OF ILOCOS NORTE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Nothing says "I'm on vacation" like an Instagram of yourself sunning next to a giant windmill.

Comments on Pagudpud:

The group was almost there. We skirted the beach and the windmills since we already came from nearby Saud beach, shown below with beautiful belles.

Now, more beaches not on Mon's list of 10:



Above, Laoag's Fort Ilocandia beach facing China sea. Big waves.

Right, Batanes' Mahatao beach. Resort huts were native; later washed away. Sea pounding on coral breakers sounded like 747.



Mactan's Maribago resort, a stone's throw from Cebu City.



Pandamon beach, one of the island hopping tours from Mactan, Cebu, after a 45 minute boat ride, almost to Bohol.



Sand Bar, Bais, at high tide. Hire a 25 pax "yacht" for P4k, stay on the entire day after chasing dolphins, and going to mangrove forest. Bring your barbeque to broil on the boat. Just an hour and a half drive (the pier) from Dumaguete.



Takatuka resort, isolated but modern enclave near Sipalay, accessible only by 30 minute boat ride, mainly European clientele. Choice of 3 or 4 other European-owned resorts in the area. About 5 hour drive from Dumaguete.



Siquijor resort. Good beaches. Not as touristy as Panlao. Accessible by daily ferry from Dumaguete.



La Libertad resort. Large social hall excellent for parties, etc. View from a/c'd cottage. Fishing boats in distance. About 2-1/2 hours north of Dumaguete.



Bacong swimming hole. You can rent a tree-house cottage for the day. Just 15 minutes south of Dumaguete. Who dem?



Dauin, 30 mins from Dumaguete. A number of excellent foreign-owned resorts and restaurants, with dive equipment and boats to bring you to renowned Apo island.



Malatapay, 40 minutes south of Dumaguete. Closest jump off point to Apo island. Good beach and cheap cottages. And a madhouse market day every Wednesday.



Corregidor beach. Good swimming. What more to say?



Tanjay's backyard beach near fishing pier. Not recommended. Too mucky and shallow, but good to just enjoy the fresh air off the pier, and play a game of basketball, as that's all what the pier has, a court. No boats dock there.



Buswang beach, in the rain. A fishing village, where we have a rest/beach house. But no more beach. The sea has eroded the shoreline to where the railing is.

So folks, take your pick. Where do we go next?