



# Cebu & Eastern Visayas

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## Best Beaches

- ➔ Malapascua (p292)
- ➔ Bantayan (p295)
- ➔ Alona Beach (p308)
- ➔ Anda (p315)

## Best Places to Stay

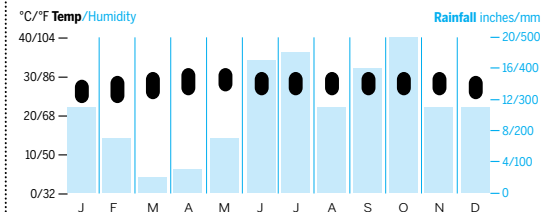
- ➔ Nuts Huts (p314)
- ➔ The Henry (p285)
- ➔ Mike & Diose's Aabana Beach Resort (p293)
- ➔ Abacá Boutique Resort & Restaurant (p291)

## Why Go?

Battered but not broken by duelling natural disasters in 2013, this region showed that it's more than just a glorious island playground. It's also incredibly resilient. Less than a month after an earthquake levelled Bohol's historic Spanish churches and denuded its iconic Chocolate Hills, super-Typhoon Yolanda (international name Typhoon Haiyan), flattened large parts of Samar, Leyte and Cebu. The heaviest-hit areas are still very much in recovery mode. Yet the message from the people was one of optimism: We're open for business, visit us, hear our story, help us heal. Meanwhile *most* of this region's prime attractions – the coral reefs and white-sand beaches of Bohol and Cebu, the waterfalls of Camotes and Biliran, the waves and caves of Samar and Leyte – were unaffected by the disasters. They remain as wonderful as ever, and ripe to be explored.

## When to Go

### Cebu



**Jul-Sep** Barring a typhoon, Samar and Leyte are dry while most of country is sopping.

**Apr-May** Flat waters for divers in Bohol, Cebu and Southern Leyte.

**Jan** The coolest month, plus the Sinulog festival in Cebu.



## Cebu & the Eastern Visayas Highlights

**1** Take in tarsiers, chocolate hills and rice terraces on a tour of mainland **Bohol** (p304).

**2** Experience close encounters of the thresher-shark kind on chilled-out **Malapascua** (p292).

**3** Swim, scramble and slog through the caves around

**Catbalogan** (p333) in Western Samar.

**4** Freedive with the swirling vortex of sardines off **Moalboal** (p297).

**5** Experience the fine museums, pulsating nightlife and emerging restaurants of **Cebu City** (p277).

**6** Go scuba-diving amid the coral reefs of **Balicasag Island** (p311) off Bohol.

**7** Drop in at **Calicoan Island** (p337), Samar, the country's best surf spot after Siargao.

**8** Snorkel with the gentle *tiki-tiki* (whale sharks) of **Pintuyan** (p326), Southern Leyte.