



Mindoro

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Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Pandan Island Resort (p207)
- ➔ Coco Beach Island Resort (p198)
- ➔ Apo Reef Club (p206)
- ➔ El Galleon Beach Resort (p196)
- ➔ Tambaron Green Beach Resort (p203)

Best Hikes

- ➔ Mt Halcon (p201)
- ➔ Mt Igliit-Baco (p206)
- ➔ Siburan Rainforest (p208)
- ➔ Mt Talipanan (p192)

Why Go?

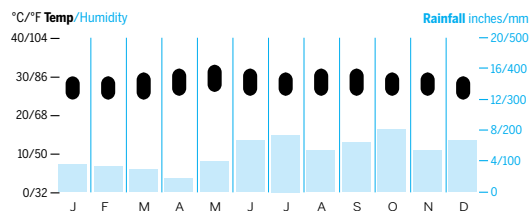
Bisected by a virtually impassable mountain range – aptly named the High Rolling Mountains – rugged Mindoro is part tropical paradise, part provincial backwater. Forming a dramatic backdrop almost everywhere, the mountains separate the island's two provinces: rough and rugged Mindoro Occidental to the west, and more prosperous Mindoro Oriental to the east.

Most tourists head to the dive resorts around Puerto Galera on the north coast, but there is much more to Mindoro. If you prefer remote to resort, venture into Mindoro Occidental where virtually tourist-free Sablayan, jumping-off point for the pristine dive mecca Apo Reef, awaits. Better roads are making this once hard-to-reach province more accessible.

Mindoro's south coast has unforgettable island-hopping, while in the mountainous interior you can hike to remote villages populated by one of Asia's most primitive tribes, the Mangyan.

When to Go

San José



Apr-May The rainy season has yet to begin and the winds are at their calmest for Apo Reef.

Feb-Apr The driest months and the best season for climbing Mt Halcon.

Oct-Nov Another transitional period, windwise, meaning more flat seas for divers.



Mindoro Highlights

- 1 Submerge among turtles, sharks, wrasses and countless other sea critters at incredible **Apo Reef** (p206).
- 2 Explore the coves and beaches of **Puerto Galera** (p192) and dive its underwater wonders.
- 3 Observe the head count of critically endangered *tamaraw* (native buffalo) at **Mt Iglit-Baco National Park** (p206).
- 4 Discover the unexpected attractions around **Sablayan Prison Farm** (p208).
- 5 Launch an assault on **Mt Halcon** (p201), the Philippines' ultimate climb.
- 6 Take in the Philippines' premier open-air music event, Puerto Galera's **Malasimbo Music & Arts Festival** (p195).