

BREATH TAKING BATANES



Let us experience *Batanes*,
explore the rich natural endowments of a Protected Area
and the cultural heritage of the Ivatan indigenous people.

House of Dakay

Things you must know

Welcome to Batanes Islands, the northernmost inhabited islands in the Philippines! It is the home of the gentle-peace-loving *Ivatan* Indigenous people. They are among the 103 diverse indigenous communities in the Philippines. They speak two major languages, *Ichbayaten* as spoken by the people of Itbayat, and *Ivatan* as the language by the people of Batan and Sabtang. The *Ivatan* language has the *Ivasayen* and the *Isamurong* as its dialects.

Batanes is the only province in the Philippines to become protected in its entirety because of its unending spectrum of habitat types, rich and indigenous social and cultural qualities, high biodiversity, and unique landscapes and seascapes. Because of this, some restrictions as stipulated in RA 8991 are necessary. The guidelines are supported by a community who wants to keep the pristine beauty of their place... **YOUR HELP TO THIS END WILL ENSURE THAT BATANES WILL REMAIN SPECIAL:**

- 1 A guided tour is necessary to fully appreciate the interesting stories of the sites and their communities
- 2 Become part of the environmental conservation initiatives of the locals by bringing all your plastic wastes with you when you leave Batanes, do not extract flora from sites, and avoid collecting natural endowments such as shells and stones.
- 3 Avoid buying items that are deemed endangered. Please always coordinate with your tour guides/ tour operators.
- 4 Flying drones should be coordinated with the Protected Area Management Board and documentary and research projects should be coordinated with the tribal councils in order to process the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC)
- 5 Observe proper decorum when entering Catholic churches which form parts of the many heritage sites.

DANGERS AND CHALLENGES

- While Batanes remains to hold a minimal crime rate on theft and robbery, keeping your things secured in public places is best to avoid attracting opportunities for theft.
- September to January can be challenging for the visitors due to inclement weather. Cancellation of flights may occur for days. It is best to bring enough money and clothing when planning a visit during this time.
- The winding, narrow, blind, and cliffy roads can pose danger to motorists.

What to Buy

Namet and
Ivatan Gold
Accessories
Tinon Attire



Garlic

Batanes garlic as the main export product is organic and certified healthy



Processed foods

wakay,
turmeric,
ginger,
rootcrops



Arts and Crafts



What not to miss in Batanes

(with the help of your chosen tour operator)



**BREATHE IN FRESHNESS
AS YOU COMMUNE WITH
NATURE IN OUR PRISTINE
FOREST PATCHES OR ON
TOP OF HILLS**



**RECONNECT TO THE PAST OF
THE IVATANS BY VISITING
THE IJANGS AND
BOAT-SHAPED BURIALS**



**VISIT OUR COMMUNITY
ARTISANS AND LEARN
HOW TO MAKE THE ICONIC
VAKUL AND KANAYI**



**JOIN THE LOCAL FARMERS
AND LEARN FROM THEIR
TRADITIONAL FARMING
PRACTICES**



**JOIN THE LOCAL
FISHERWOMEN AS
THEY FORAGED FOR
SHELLS AND
SEAWEEDS DURING
LOW TIDE**



**VISIT AN IVATAN HOUSE
AND LEARN FROM THE
MANY STORIES OF THE
RESIDENTS**



**RENEW YOUR SPIRITUALITY
IN OUR CENTURY OLD
CATHOLIC CHURCHES**



**TEASE YOUR GASTRONOMIC
CRAVINGS. TRY THE
VUNUNG MEALS OR JOIN A
COMMUNITY CELEBRATION**



**THERE ARE FEW PEOPLE
WHO ARE ABLE TO SING THE
LAJI. FIND ONE AND LEARN
TO SING OUR LYRICAL
POETRY**



**IMMERSE WITH THE
COMMUNITY- THERE IS
SO MUCH MORE TO
LEARN!**

Useful Ivatan Phrases

PAKAPYAN KA PA NU DIYOS

Good Day / May God be with you — Magandang Araw

DIYOS? (JUUS?)

Tao po?

MANIPIRA YA?

How much is this? — Magkano po ito?

ICHADDAW KU IMU

I love you — Mahal kita

MAVID

Beautiful — Maganda

OON

Yes — Oo/ Opo

UMBA

No — Hindi

DIYOS MAMAHE

Thank you / May God Repay You — Salamat

ANGU INGARAN TA JIMU?

What is your name? — Ano ang pangalan mo?



Glimpse of the Past

Archaeological studies show that Batanes was settled by humans as early as 4000 years ago. Their arrival in Batanes is considered by prehistorians as part of the initial phase of the dispersal of Austronesian-speaking populations from Taiwan to the Philippines and the rest of Island Southeast Asia.



Savidug Idiang

The early inhabitants of Batanes were organized into several independent socio-political units called *idi* or *hili*. Each *idi* or *hili* was headed by a chieftain called "*mangpus*" (the equivalent of "*datu*" in other part of the Philippines). To protect themselves from attacks, they built their settlements on elevated places like hilltops and mountain sides which the Ivatans today call "*idiang*". They marked the grave of their dead relatives with stones arranged in the shape of a boat. These burial features point to an early belief in Batanes that the dead travels to the afterlife using a water vessel.

The annexation of Batanes to the Spanish Colonial State became official on June 26, 1783, under Governor Joseph Huelva Y. Melgarejo. It was the last territory added to the Philippines. Towns in Batanes were founded starting from Basco and Ivana in the year 1784, Mahatao and Uyugan in 1796, Sabtang island in 1845, and Santa Maria de Mayan of Itbayat in 1855.



Ivatan Architecture



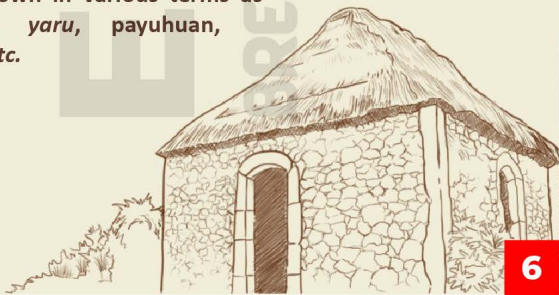
San Carlos Borromeo Church

At the heart of Batanes landscapes, is an astounding Ivatan vernacular architecture. The Ivatan houses, the superb Spanish era churches, bridges, and government buildings represent the built

identity of the Ivatans, showcasing the central values of resilience and adaptability and a whole amount of skills.

The Ivatan traditional houses are made of cogon, lime, and stone. Call it less in curvature design, but the beauty of its firmness and its climate resiliency is a model for disaster preparedness.

The Ivatan Architecture depicts the strong sense of community by the Ivatans. The buildings are constructed through community cooperation known in various terms as *kamañidungan*, *yaru*, *payuhuan*, *kayvayvanan*, etc.



Farming and Fishing



The majority of Ivatans are engaged in farming and fishing as a means of livelihood or as a force of habit. Various traditional farming and fishing practices are still being practiced in the communities, especially in the planting of root crops such as *uvi*, *dukay*, and the main export product of garlic.

The fishing ritual of *kapayvanuvana*, is practiced by the *Mataw* (traditional and seasonal dorado fishermen) of Valugan in Basco and Mahatao. It is a ceremonial practice to open the *vanua* or fishing port to obtain the favor of the spirits of the sea and have a safe and bountiful fishing season. The ritual is usually held in March signifying the start of the fishing season for the dorado locally known as *arrayu* which is abundant along the pacific coast until around June as they transmigrate.



Ivatan Food



Luñis

Village Kitchens come to life every time the community gathers together for merry-making and when cooperative systems are called for. While Batanes food is simple and is mostly a result of survival food preparation- they are fresh, organic, and tasty.

Generally, there is a specific food for specific events. In large community gatherings, the iconic *vunung* is served. It is the Ivatan version of a set meal where supas or turmeric rice, *luñis* or pork confit, *uved* or ground banana rhizome mixed with pork blood, and *nihaman a bagu* or pork turmeric are wrapped together in breadfruit leaves giving that added flavor.

From January to March each year communities come together to plant *ube*. Women of the village will prepare the *kukun* which is served as a takeaway meal for those who came to help in the planting of yam. Boiled dried dorado, chunks of beef, fried flying fish, and boiled eggs are wrapped in breadfruit leaves. Lunch would consist of *lawuya* or boiled chunks of meat in vegetable and fat noodles called *miki*.

Today, local cooks are offering upscaled Ivatan dishes making them more palatable for both locals and visitors. Given that Batanes is isolated far up north, Ivatans are used to consuming everything on their plate, a practice greatly encouraged for visitors to avoid the wastage of the produce of the local farmers.

Music and Dance



Ivatans are by nature happy people with deep sensitivity to their values. They love merriment, celebrations, and entertainment. Though they did not invent as many musical instruments, they express their gracefulness in dancing *Fundanggo Ivatan* and *La Jota* during weddings and community fiestas. A church-winged band called *musiko* or *banda* sets the festive mood of religious town

fiestas and civic celebrations. Religious songs thanking the patron Saint of the town are staged with dance movements in community theaters. Dramatized dance entertainments like *palupalu*, *atta*, *arap ji tukun*, and *Portuguese dance* complement fiesta entertainment.

Ivatan lyrical poetry called *laji* is not recited, but sung. It is a treasured intangible heritage that carries a rich emotional expression in figurative language.



Palupalu

Flora and Fauna



With a total land area of 20,323 ha and a marine area of 193.255 ha, Batanes is home to at least 21 endemic biological species such as the Batanes Pit Viper locally called *vuday*.

Batanes is also one of the countries' emerging destinations for bird watchers, photographers, and enthusiasts being a flyway for migratory birds such as the grey-faced buzzard or *kuyab* which usually moves from Japan or Taiwan seeking warmer climates during the months of September and October.



Kuyab



TOURIST INFORMATION

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Tour Operator

Accommodation

Tour Guide



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