

TOURIST RESOURCES AND TOURIST POTENTIAL OF MINDORO ISLAND IN THE PHILIPPINES

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Abstract: The article is devoted to the study of the tourism potential of Mindoro Island in the Philippines. The total area of Mindoro Island, which is in the Luzon islands group, is 10571.8 km² and the total population of the island is 1,4 million. Mindoro, the seventh largest island in the Philippines, is a mountainous and rugged island. The Mindoro Island, situated in the triangle formed by Luzon, Palawan and Panay islands, is one of the most visited and most popular tourism centers of the Philippines. In this study, the geographical location, natural and human geographical features of the island of Mindoro, as well as the tourist attractions and tourism advantages are briefly discussed. The main purpose of the study is to acquaint a wide range of readers with tourism resources, tourism potential, natural and cultural tourist attractions of Mindoro Island and offer new options for recreation for curious tourists. The paper provides a multivariate analysis of tourism on the island by discussing the tourism advantages and disadvantages of Mindoro Island. As a result of the study, the authors have prepared a useful tourist guide for foreign tourists who will visit the island. It was revealed that Mindoro Island is not as big as Luzon, it is not as crowded as Mindanao, it does not have as many luxurious tourist spots as Boracay, and it cannot be said that it is a famous tourist destination like Palawan Island. However, this tropical island attracts thousands of holidaymakers from all over the world every year due to its unique natural beauty and breathtaking tourist attractions. Mindoro Island can offer an alternative travel option, an exciting travel itinerary and an interesting travel destination for every curious tourist 365 days a year.

Key words: Philippines, tourism, tourism potential, Mindoro Island, Philippine Archipelago, tourist attractions, accommodation facilities

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INTRODUCTION

The island of Mindoro, situated just south of the island of Luzon, is the seventh largest island of the Philippine archipelago by surface area. The total area of Mindoro island, which is found in the group of islands of Luzon, is 10571.8 km² and the total population of the island is 1.4 million. On the island of Mindoro, there is an average of 132 people per km² (Table 1). The size of the island is almost the size of the Republic of Montenegro, but the fact that it has twice the population indicates that the island has a higher population density. The lack of any urban settlements with a population of more than 200,000 within the island borders demonstrates that Mindoro is devoid of metropolitan cities. The fact that the largest cities of the island, San Jose and Calapan, have a population of less than 160000, proves this evaluation. Furthermore, Roxas, Mansalay, Rizal, Gloria, Pinamalayan, Victoria, Santa Cruz, Sablayan, Porto Galera, Mamburao, Paluan, San Teodoro and Pola are the other major settlements of the island of Mindoro (Helbling and Schult, 1997). Almost all of the large settlements are situated in the coastal parts of the island and almost all of them look like

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underdeveloped towns (Fabinyi, 2018). Therefore, as we go from the coasts to the inner parts, both the population density decreases and infrastructure services such as transportation, communication, sewerage, highway, electricity and internet begin to fail. Since the central areas of the island are covered with very rugged terrain and dense tropical forests, they are the poorest, least populated and least developed areas of Mindoro (Atasoy and Atış, 2020).

Table 1. Main Characteristics of the Mindoro Island (Armacost, 1994)

Group Islands Located: The Luzon Group Islands	Total Population: 1,4 million
The Province: East Mindoro and West Mindoro	Arithmetic Population Density: 132 people/km ²
Number of Towns Embodied: 25	Number of Barangays Embodied: 590
Surface Area: 10 571,8 km ² The Highest Point: Mountain Halkon (2586 meters)	The Largest Settlements: Calapan, San Jose, Roxas, Mansalay, Rizal, Gloria, Pinamalayan, Sablayan, Magsaysay, Victoria, Santa Cruz, Porto Galera, Mamburao, Paluan, San Teodoro.
Mathematic Location: 12°07' – 13°30' north latitude and 120°18' – 121°30' east latitude.	The Longest River: River Lumintao The Largest Lake: Lake Naujan The Largest Province: San Jose

The island of Mindoro is bordered by the island of Luzon in the north, the island of Marinduque in the northeast, the islands of Lubang, Golo and Ambil in the northwest, the islands of Tablas, Carabao, Boracay and Panay in the southeast, and the islands of Busuanga, Coron and Culion in the southwest. Minola, Balateros, Markoe, Big La Laguna and Batangas bays are situated in the north of Mindoro island, Bulalacao, Mangarin and Pandarochan bays in the south, Varadero, Mansiol, Cogolong, Colasi and Calapan bays in the east, Dongon, Paluan and Sablayan bays in the west. (Chirikov et al., 2008; Encyclopedia, 1935). The world-famous "Apo Marine Reserve", which is visited by thousands of divers every year is found to the west of the island of Mindoro. The Tablas strait, located east of the Mindoro island, separates it from the islands of Tablas, Marinduque and Banton. The Mindoro strait, located in the west of the island, separates it from the islands of Busuanga, Koron and Culion. In the south of the island are some small but touristic islands such as Ilin, Ambulong, Sibay, Semirara, Caluya and Liwagao. In the Verde strait, situated between Luzon and Mindoro, there are small islets such as Maricaban, Isla Verde, Baco and Silonay. Medio, Silonay and Paniguian located in the northeast of the island of Tablas Mindoro to the east of Mindoro, Ilin and Ambulong to the southwest, Buyayao, Alibatan, Aslon, Tambaron and Masin to the southeast, South Pandan and North Pandan to the west of Mindoro are the examples of small islets in the area Medio, Silonay and Paniguian situated in the northeast of Mindoro island; Ilin and Ambulong to the southwest; Buyayao, Alibatan, Aslon, Tambaron and Masin to the southeast; South Pandan and North Pandan to the west of Mindoro are examples of small islets located in the coastal shelf area of North Pandan Mindoro (Steere, 1891).

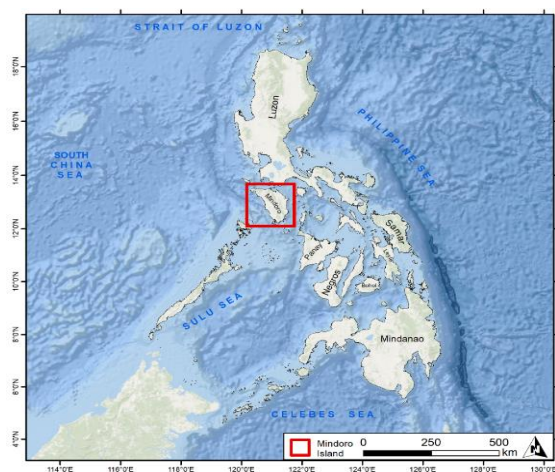


Figure 1. Location Map of the Mindoro Island

Table 2. Major Administrative and Geographical Features of the Occidental Mindoro Province (Amoroso et al., 2022)

Name of the Town	Population of the Town (Year 2020)	Surface Area (km ²)	Population Density (person / km ²)	Number of Barangays Embodied
Abra de Ilog	35 176	533.70	66	10
Calintaan	30 190	382.50	79	7
Looc	7 802	132.30	59	9
Lubang	17 437	113.10	154	16
Magsaysay	39 767	282.08	141	12
Mamburao	47 705	283.51	168	15
Paluan	18 566	564.50	33	12
Rizal	40 429	242.50	167	11
Sablayan	92 598	2188.80	42	22
San Jose	153 267	446.70	343	39
Santa Cruz	42 417	681.40	62	11
TOTAL	525 354	5851	90	164

In terms of administrative management, the island is divided into two provinces; East Mindoro (Oriental Mindoro) and West Mindoro (Occidental Mindoro) (Figure1). The population of the western Mindoro province exceeds 500000 and its capital is the city of Mamburao. The population of the eastern province of Mindoro exceeds 900000 and its capital is the city of Calapan. Occidental Mindoro province includes 11 counties and 164 barangays, whereas Oriental Mindoro province includes 14 counties and 426 barangays (Table 2 and Table 3).

The most important airports of the island are the San Jose Airport near the city of San Jose in the southwest of the island, the Mamburao Airport near the city of Mamburao in the northwest of the island, and the Calapan Airport near the city of Calapan in the northeast of the island. However, since these airports have regional importance and are not open to international flights, the foreign tourists cannot come directly to Mindoro by airline. Air connections via Manila and sea transport connections from the Batangas port are the most practical way to reach the island. The provinces of Oriental Mindoro and Occidental Mindoro are not among the most industrialized and most developed provinces in the Republic of the Philippines, nor are they among the poorest and most underdeveloped provinces. As seen in Table 2, in 2020, the Occidental Mindoro Province had an area of 5851 km² and a total population of 525 354. In this province, which covers

a total of 11 towns, there is an average of 251 people per km². In the Occidental Mindoro Province, Sablayan (2188.80 km²) is the largest town in terms of surface area, and Lubang (113.10 km²) is the smallest district (Table 2). Furthermore, among these 11 towns within the provincial borders, San Jose has the highest population (153 267 people) and Looc (7 802 people) has the smallest population. San Jose has the most barangays (39), whereas Calintaan has the fewest barangays (7) (Table 2). San Jose, the province's most populous county, has the province's highest arithmetic population density (343 people/km²). However, Paluan, which is the most mountainous, poorest and least developed town of the province, has the lowest arithmetic population density (33 persons/km²) in the province (Table 2).

It is understood that in the Occidental Mindoro Province, only 1 town has a population of over 100000 and all 3 towns have less than 30000 people. As a result, Occidental Mindoro can be defined as a sparsely populated and poor state where rough terrain covers large areas, employment areas and transportation connections are insufficient, few settlements, tourism activities are not well developed (Santos and Tomeldan, 2009). In 2020, the Oriental Mindoro Province has an area of 4238 km² and a total population of 908339 people. In this province, which covers a total of 14 districts and 426 barangays, there are an average of 214 people per square kilometer.

In the Oriental Mindoro Province, the largest town in terms of surface area is Naujan (503.10 km²) and the smallest district is Roxas (85.26 km²) (Table 3). Furthermore, Calapan (145786 people) with the highest population within the borders of the province, and San Teodoro (19121 people) with the smallest population. Within the borders of province, Calapan has the most barangays (62), whereas San Teodoro has the fewest barangays (8) (Table 3).

It is understood that only two towns in the Oriental Mindoro Province have populations exceeding 100000 and 7 towns have less than 50000 people. Roxas, which is one of the most developed counties in the province, is the county with the highest arithmetic population density (690 people/km²) in the province. In fact, San Teodoro, one of the least developed towns of the Oriental Mindoro Province, has the lowest arithmetic population density (56 people/km²) in the province (Table 3). As a result, the distance to the sea coast and main transportation routes, altitude and ruggedness, diversity of economic activities and settlement density are the most important factors designating the population density in Mindoro Island (Schult, 2001; Kulakova, 2015). Mindoro, the seventh largest island in the Republic of the Philippines, is a mountainous and rugged island mostly covered with rainforests and poor road routes. Therefore, plains and plateaus cover a very small area, while mountainous and high lands cover a very large area throughout the island. Two large mountain masses stand out on the island: one is Mount Halkon (2586 m.), situated in the northwest of the island, and the second is Mount Baco (2488 m), situated in the central parts of the island. The remaining parts of the island are covered with low hilly areas, tropical forests, stream valleys and fertile alluvial plains. The highest mountain masses of Mindoro island are: Mount Halcon (2586 m), Mount Baco (2488 m), Mount Wood (2020 m), Mount Sinclair (1870 m), Mount Patrick (1681 m), Mount Indie (1668 m), Mount Merrill (1570 m), Mount Calavite (1520 m), Mount Tallulah (1488 m), Babuy Peak (1450 m), Mount Iglit (1432 m), Mount Roosevelt (1392 m), Mount Burburungan (1297 m) and Mount Malasimbo (1206 m). In other words, there are only 14 to 15 mountain masses higher than 1200 meters within the island borders (Villanueva and Buot, 2018). The plains of Calapan, Roxas, Rizal, Mamburao, Sablayan, San Jose and Paluan and the valleys of Bongabong, Bucayao Silonay, Tugulian and Lumintao constitute the most fertile agricultural lands on the island.

There are many streams in the island, which are short, have narrow valleys, are not suitable for transportation, and form deep gulfs at the river-mouth. In the northern and eastern parts of Mindoro island, there are streams such as Budburan, Bongabong, Bansud, Pula, Casiligan, Bucayao, Sumagui, Sukol, Malay, Tukuran, Abra de Ilog and Puluan. In the southern and western parts of the island, there are streams such as Tugulian, Mamburao, Maasim, Mimping, Pagbahay, Malom, Ramayan, Maslud, Amnay, Mongpong, Bucayao Silonay, Lumintao and Cagaray. Small dam lakes on some streams stand out. Not all of the streams on the island are suitable for river transportation. The Bongabong and Lumintao rivers are the longest rivers on the island (Steere, 1891). The entire island of Mindoro has a humid tropical-monsoon climate, but there are some climatic differences between the eastern and western parts of the island. In the eastern parts of the island, there is a certain amount of rain almost every month, so there is no distinct rain and no distinct dry season (Lemuel et al., 2021).

The western parts of the island have two more distinct seasons, summer and autumn — rainy, winter and spring — dry. Moist tropical and monsoon forests grow on the mountain slopes of the island, swampy areas and mangrove forests sometimes appear along the coast. Throughout the year, the island has high humidity, temperature, cloudiness and precipitation. The average annual temperature of the island is 27.68°C and it is clear that it is 0.46°C higher than the Philippines average. In Mindoro, the highest monthly average temperature was 30.68°C in May, and the lowest monthly average temperature was 23.47°C in February. As is clear, there is no great variation in temperature values throughout the year and there is only a 6-7 degree difference in monthly average temperatures.

Table 3. Major Administrative and Geographical Features of the Province of Oriental Mindoro (Mendaña and Apritadam, 2021)

Name of the Town	Population of the Town (Year 2020)	Surface Area (km ²)	Population Density (person/km ²)	Number of Barangays Embodied
Baco	39 817	216.23	184	27
Bansud	42 671	343.47	124	13
Bongabong	76 973	498.20	155	36
Bulalacao	44 366	321.86	138	15
Calapan	145 786	250.06	583	62
Gloria	50 496	245.52	206	27
Mansalay	59 114	446.62	132	17
Naujan	109 587	503.10	218	70
Pinamalayan	90 383	282.26	320	37
Pola	35 455	159.34	223	23
Puerto Galera	41 961	247.85	169	13
Roxas	58 849	85.26	690	20
San Teodoro	19 121	341.00	56	8
Socorro	41 585	151.38	275	26
Victoria	52 175	146.23	357	32
TOTAL	908 339	4238.38	214	426

On the island of Mindoro, 114 days (31%) rainy and 251 (69%) days without rain were recorded on average out of 365 days a year. The annual average precipitation amount falling on the island varies between 800 and 2900 millimeters according to the geographical location, and the humidity rate throughout the year has been identified as 77.55% on average. The least precipitation falls in March (19 mm) and the highest precipitation falls in December (163 mm) across the island. Generally, the driest period of the island is accepted as the monthly rainfall in the January-April period does not exceed 40 mm (Mape and Borja, 2021). Therefore, the foreign tourists planning a sea vacation usually visit Mindoro between January and April. In general, since the monthly precipitation in the July-December period varies between 90 mm and 163 mm, it is considered the most humid and rainiest period of the island. Therefore, those who want to visit the island should avoid visiting Mindoro during this period. In other words, when the climate characteristics of Mindoro island are examined, it is possible to claim that the most unfavorable period in terms of sea tourism is July - December with plenty of rain. However, since the island receives rainfall all year round, it is not possible to talk about a distinct "dry season" and a distinct "rainy season". On the fertile plains of Mindoro island, rice, maize, peanuts, bananas, cereal crops, sugarcane and coconut are commonly grown. Cattle breeding, poultry breeding and especially pig breeding are common, and small cattle breeding is almost non-existent. Furthermore, tungsten, gold, marble, copper and nickel mining and fishing are also common on the island. Even though Mindoro does not have very rich gold mines, the name of the island means "Mina de Oro" in Spanish, "Gold Mine". Despite the fact that mining is one of the most profitable economic investments on the island, it both damages natural ecosystems and forest lands, triggers serious ecological problems and indirectly affects tourism activities and public health on the island. Therefore, mining and tourism cannot be the sectors that will develop side by side in the long run (Santos and Tomeldan, 2009).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the present study, the demographic, economic, geographical and ecological characteristics of the Mindoro Island was examined, and both the tourism advantages and disadvantages as well as the tourism resources of the island were attempted to be identified. The author conducted city surveys and geographical observations on the Mindoro Island between 23 October – 20 November 2022; as a result, he personally examined majority of the tourism centers on the island. The methodological basis of the study is the methods of a systematic scientific approach (Figure 2), comparative geographical, cartographic and expert assessment (Dunets et al., 2020; Dmitriyev et al., 2021; Suleimenov et al., 2022; Khazai et al., 2018; O zgeldinova et al., 2017). One of the primary objectives of this study is to proclaim the great tourism power of this small island to the world and promote the island in terms of international tourism.

A comprehensive assessment of the tourist and recreational potential of the island based on the study included the following steps. First stage. Identification of parameters for assessing an object in the blocks "natural conditions and resources", "cultural and historical resources", "security of tourist infrastructure", "information security of tourism". Second stage. Collection of information necessary for the assessment. Processing of information from statistical documentation of local tourism management bodies. Study of hotels, sights, leisure and recreation infrastructure, transport support. Third stage. Bringing the obtained indicators

of evaluation criteria to a single measurement system. The weighting coefficients are calculated. Further, the calculation of private indicators of the tourist and recreational potential is carried out: natural conditions and resources, cultural and historical resources, provision of tourist infrastructure, information provision of tourism (Dmitriyev et al., 2022; Ocampo, et al., 2018; Suleimenov et al., 2022; Ibrahim et al., 2021; Ilies, et al., 2017).

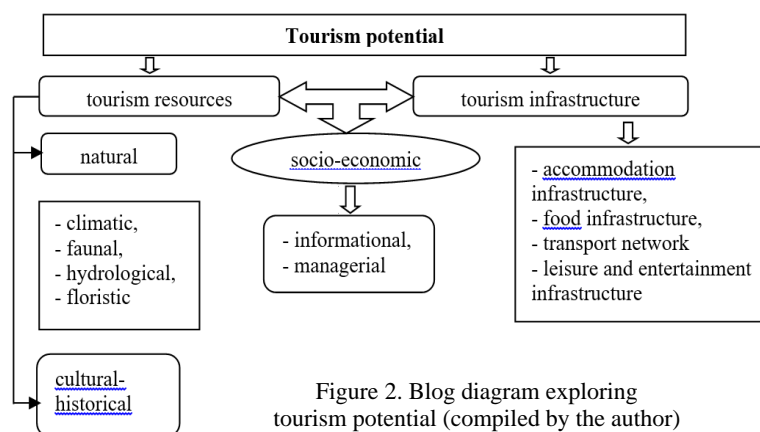


Figure 2. Blog diagram exploring tourism potential (compiled by the author)

Table 4. Top 20 Natural and Cultural Tourism Attractions of the Mindoro Island (Source: Authors, 2022)

Top 20 Natural Tourism Attractions of the Mindoro Island	Top 20 Cultural Tourism Attractions of the Mindoro Island
White Beach	Hanging Bridge of San Agustin
Lake Naujan	Bancuro Church Ruins
Apo Reef Nature Park	Sto. Nino Catholic Cathedral
Puerto Galera Mangrove Conservation	Tukuran Hanging Bridge
Tamaraw Waterfall	Oriental Mindoro Heritage Museum
Takipanan Beach	Mangyan Village
Mouth Halcon	St. Joseph Cathedral
Tribalhills Nature Park	San Jose Municipal Plaza
Mount Calavite Wildlife Sanctuary	St. John the Baptist Church
Sabang Beach	Sablayan Museum
Buyayao Island	Calapan City Plaza
Mount Iglit-Baco National Park	Grace Island Resort
Siburan Rain Forest	Calawagan Mountain Resort
Inasakan Beach	Simbahang Bato
Tukuran Waterfall	Jolly Waves Waterpark & Resort
Aninuan Beach	Iglesia Ni Cristo - Lokal ng Calapan
Alibatan Island	Bansud Municipal Park and Plaza
Tribalhills Nature Park	Lamando's Clan Family
Talon Waterfall	Capitol Children's Park
Haligi Beach	Kambal Bato Mountain Resort

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Undoubtedly, the tourism sector is the most important economic sector, the most important employment area and the most important source of income for the island population. Mysterious caves, high waterfalls, clean beaches, high mountains, national parks with high biodiversity, lakes with interesting fish and coral reefs with hundreds of living species make the island of Mindoro attractive and interesting. Being close to the island of Luzon and the capital Manila, as well as having ferry connections with the islands of Tablas, Panay, Luzon, Coron and Romblon, is a great advantage for the Mindoro island both in terms of tourism and transportation. The Mindoro coasts are also one of the Philippines' most popular diving destinations. "Hole in Wall", "Aninuan Reef", "Giant Clams" and "Sabang Wreck" are among the most popular places by divers on the coasts of Mindoro. There are hundreds of beaches on the island but the most famous and popular ones are: "White Beach", "Aninuan Beach", "Small La Laguna Beach", "Big La Laguna Beach", "Aroma Beach", "Tamaraw Beach", "Haligi Beach", "Pebble Beach" and "Sabang Beach"***.

Table 5. The most interesting cultural tourism attractions in the Mindoro Island and its surroundings (Source: Authors, 2022)

Natural Tourism attractiveness	Geographical Location or Touristic Center
Nature reserves	Lake Naujan National Park, Iglit-Baco Mountain National Park, Tribalhills Nature Park, Mount Calavite Wildlife Sanctuary, Apo Reef Natural Park, Mansalay Fish Sanctuary, Dao Waterlily Park, Bancuro – Naujan Bird Observatory, Infinity Farm Natural Park, Silonay Mangrove Conservation Ecopark, Wawa Mangrove Conservation Area.
Tourist beaches	Sabang Beach, La Laguna Beach, White Beach, Haligi Beach, Aninuan Beach, Inasakan Beach, Pebble Beach, Tamaraw Beach, Talipanan Beach, Aroma Beach, Encenada Beach, Long Beach, Tayamaan Beach, Dulangan Main Beach, Bayanan Beach, Balete Beach, Encenada Beach, Sablayan Beach, Maasin Beach Resort, Balatasan Beach Resort, Buktot Beach, Sunrise Beach Resort, Amor Beach Resort, Sikatuna Beach, Lush Green Camp & Resort, Matala Beach, Fridays Boquete Beach, Sibalat Beach, White Lady Resort, Pocanil Beach Resort, LM Beach Resort, PGD White Sand Beach Resort, Lou Bamboo Beach Resort, Costa Del Eve Beach Resort, Mampusti Beach, Bighani Beach Resort, Royal Splash, Blanco Beach Resort, Pili Beach Pinamalayan, Polacay Beach, Papangkil Beach, Estrella Beach Bay, Suki Beach, Lambingan Beach, Wawa Beach Front, Abra De Ilog Beach.
Tourist caves	San Rafael Cave, Minolo Cave, Akulya Underwater Cave, Balatero Cave, Malabitan Coral Cove, Underwater Sea Cave, Luyang Baga Cave.
Mangrove Forest Areas	Silonay Mangrove Conservation Area and Ecotourism, Puerto Galera Mangrove Conservation, Wawa Mangrove Conservation Area, Maidlang Mangrove and Beach Forest Reserve.
Impressive waterfalls	Marayos, Cawa-Cawa, Tukuran, Gumaer, Tamaraw, Talipanan, Arapay, Aninuan, Walang Langit, Gumaer, Botolan, Talon, La Pantay, Agbalala, Bisay, Tabocaya, Calawagan, Corralmo, Tangisan, Aras, Malatung-Tong, Cabacungan, Papali.
Interesting hydrographic formations	Mantangkob River and Different Rock Formation, Lake Libuao, Lake Naujan, Sonaport, Lake Fishponds Lagoon, Babahurin Mountain River, Enchanted Bato Creek, Dangare Vista Hill, Acapulco Spring Resort, Tabinay Cold Spring, Hydro – Paitan, Misong Taguan Najuan Oriental Minduro.
Interesting geomor-physical formations	Mindoro Pines, Mount Calavite, Mount Halcon, Mount Baco, Lake Naujan View Park, San Teodoro Boardwalk, Devil's Mountain View, Mindoro Pines, Sablayan Prison And Penal Farm.
Small tourist islets	Apo, Ilin, Masin, Alibatan, Sibalat, Aslom, Ambulong, Buyayao, Panaquian, Medio, Silonay, Pandan, Horca Piloto, Baco Chico, Plong Gitna, Pulong Munti, Garza, Semirara, Libagao, North Pandan, South Pandan.
Recreation center or tourist park	Bulusan Park, Naujan Park and Plaza, Antonino Plaza, Babangonan Plaza, Infinity Farm, Bansud Municipal Park and Plaza, Labasan Seaside Baywalk, Capitol Children's Park, Lamando's Clan Family, Magsaysay Municipal Plaza, San Jose Baywalk, Bantayog-Wika para sa Mangyan, Bato-Ili Mangyan Community, Sablayan Parola Park, Camp Pitogo, Pinamalayan Park, Heritage Park – Rizal, Sophia's Garden, San Jose Municipal Plaza, Water Garden – San Jose, Montelago Hot Spring, Verde Island Purifiers.
Faith centers and churches	Holy Spirit Parish, St. John the Baptist Church, Masjid Al-Rahma Mosque, Masjid Al-Falaq Mosque, St. Joseph Parish Church – Paluan, Wawa Catholic Church, Aninuan Muslim Compound, Puerto Galera Church, Holy Family Parish, Iglesia Ni Cristo - Lokal ng Malamig, Saints Peter and Paul Mission Area, Santo Niño Cathedral, Jamia Asmaa Hudaya – Puerto Galera, St. Jose Parish Church – San Jose, Sumagui Seventh-day Adventist Church, Proper Bansud Catholic Church.
Botanical gardens and agro-tourism centers	Sibayan Red Farm, Artimisium Farm, Faith Paradise Agri Tourism Farm, Sibayan Red Farm, Tagpuan sa Garden, Lamando's Clan Family, Paclolo Sunflower Farm, Love Hidden Farm, Argel Farm And Resort, Runas Mini Garden, Villa Irosin Farm Resort, Tabing - Ilog Farm Tourism, ock of Hope Tomoco's Farm Resort.
Historical monuments and museums	Simbahang Bato, Oriental Mindoro Heritage and Cultural Center, Sablayan Museum, Nicolas Heights, Mindoro Landing Monument, Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Center, Bulalacao Tourism Cum Heritage Center.
Education, science, sports and cultural centers	Mindoro State University, Mindoro State College of Agriculture and Technology, Eastern Mindoro College, Occidental Mindoro State College, Occidental Mindoro National College, Divine Word College of San Jose, Occidental Mindoro National High School, Ponderosa Golf Club, Malasimbo Music & Arts Festival, Extreme Sports Puerto Galera, Boquete Tennis Village, Prince of Peace College, Puerto Galera Academy, Glare Swimming Pool, Immaculate Heart of Mary Academy, The Narra Spring Resort, Acapulco Spring Resort, Sablayan Sports Complex, Mindoro Bible College, Saint Anthony College of Science and Technology, Divine Word College of Calapan.
Diving training centers	Action Divers, Sea Rider Dive Center, Asia Divers, Scuba For Change, Dive With Super J, Frontier Scuba, Pacific Divers, South Sea Divers, Badladz Scuba Diving, Arkipelago Divers, EACY Dive School, Octopus Divers, Sabang Fun Divers, Diving Puerto Galera, Scandi Divers, Sablayan Divers, Mermaid Dive Resort, Enjoy Divers, Izakaya Palm Divers Tropicana Dive Center, Payapa Divers, Guli Divers, Sabang Dive Center, Fridays Diving Center and French Touch Divers.

There are many stream valleys, canyons and waterfalls on the island of Mindoro. The most visited waterfalls by foreign tourists are: Marayos, Cawa-Cawa, Tukuran, Tamaraw, Talipanan, Arapay, Aninuan, Papali, Agbalala, Bisay, Calawagan, Malatung-Tong and Cabacungan (Table 4). The lack of basic human services such as markets, restaurants, accommodation facilities, tourism offices and bus connections near these waterfalls is a major tourism disadvantage.

Tourists visiting the Mindoro island can take private lessons at diving schools and get acquainted with the rich underwater world of the region. The most popular diving schools on the coasts of Mindoro are: Action Divers, Sea Rider Dive Center, Asia Divers, Scuba For Change, Dive With Super J, Frontier Scuba, Pacific Divers, South Sea Divers, Badladz Scuba Diving, Arkipelago Divers, EACY Dive School, Octopus Divers, Sabang Fun Divers, Diving Puerto Galera, Scandi Divers, Sablayan Divers, Mermaid Dive Resort, Enjoy Divers, Izakaya Palm Divers Tropicana Dive Center, Payapa Divers, Guli Divers, Sabang Dive Center, Fridays Diving Center and French Touch Divers (Safina, and Amosova, 2017).

Mindoro island has very rich touristic resources in terms of geomorphological, ecological and hydrographic, archaeological and historical, architectural and cultural tourism attractions (Figure 3). Below (Table 5), the most interesting natural tourism and cultural tourism attractions in Mindoro island and its surroundings are compiled separately.

The most important tourism attractions in the Mindoro island and its surroundings and those listed above were explicated below under the headings of "touristic cities", "national parks" and "accommodation facilities".

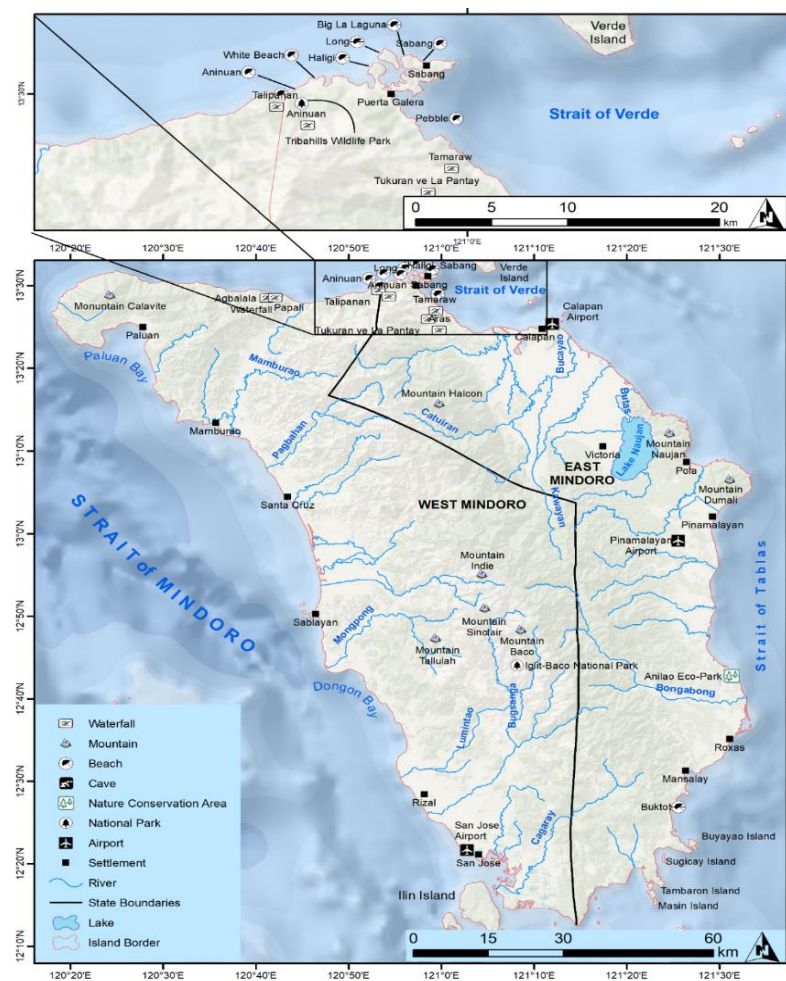


Figure 3. Tourism Map of the Mindoro Island (Source: Authors, 2022)

Puerto Galera

In the Philippines, Puerto Galera is both a lively town, a town center, a busy port and a world-famous tourism center. However more importantly, Puerto Galera is a very meaningful term used to describe hundreds of different elements in the geography of the Philippines. There are many hotels, streets, commercial centers, villas, hostels, educational institutions, health institutions, churches, museums, restaurants, bars, massage parlors, markets, streets, pharmacies, restaurants, etc., bearing the name Puerto Galera within the borders of Mindoro island. Puerto Galera, situated on the northeast coast of Mindoro island, has many beautiful coves and is both Mindoro's most visited tourist town and one of the most popular diving destinations.

With a population of approximately 40000 people, Puerto Galera has many sea creatures living in its waters and there are many beaches, restaurants, hotels, diving schools and entertainment venues near the town. The underwater caves around the town, beaches and sunken ships at the bottom of the sea attract the attention of divers to these coasts. Puerto Galera is the most famous place on the island with its clean and quiet pocket beaches, fun bars, snorkeling and scuba diving spots. "White Beach", "Aninuan Beach", "Sabang Beach", "Dulangan Beach", "Haligi Beach" as well as "Big La Laguna" and "Small La Laguna Beach" are the most visited beaches by the local and foreign tourists near the town.

In summary, Puerto Galera is both the tourism capital and the most visited town on the island of Mindoro (Muyot, 2022). Puerto Galera is 130 km from the capital Manila and only 51 km from the provincial capital of Calapan. Ferry services between Batangas and Puerto Galera are of great importance for the tourism development of the Mindoro Island. In the immediate vicinity of Puerto Galera, there are many tourist attractions that attract the attention of local and foreign tourists. "Puerto Galera Mangrove Conservation Ecological Park", "Talipanan Beach", "Tamaraw Falls", Medio and Paniquian islands, "White Beach", "Sabang Beach", "Tabinay Cold Spring", "Talipanan Falls", "Puerto Galeta Catholic Church", "Minola Bay" and "Aninuan Beach" are the most popular tourist attractions in Puerto Galera area to see Table 4.

If the tourists visiting Puerto Galera fancy a quieter and more peaceful rural environment or wish to have a holiday in serene and clean sea coves intertwined with nature, they can choose one of the beaches such as "Pebble Beach", "Aplayang Munti", "Dulangan Beach" or "Bulabod Beach" which are very close to the town center. For those who wish to get away from the crowded settlements, the noisy traffic and the tourist-filled bars, these quiet coves and clean beaches may be just the tropical paradise they've been looking for. Puerto Galera is the busiest region of Mindoro Island in terms of number of

touristic facilities and variety of accommodation. “AV Suites”, “Atlantis Dive Resort”, “Steps Garden Resort”, “Garden of Eden Dive Resort”, “Utopia Resort & Spa”, “Infinity Resort”, “Lalaguna Villas Luxury Dive Resort & Spa”, “Edgewater Dive” & Spa Resort”, “Manarra Sea View Resort”, “Nirvana Resort”, “Jalyn’s Resort”, “Lalaguna Villas Luxury Dive Resort and Spa”, “Badladz Beach and Dive Resort”, “The Mang-Yan Grand Hotel by Cocotel Powered”, “Casalay Boutique Villas & Dive” and “Out of the Blue Resort” are the most prestigious and luxurious accommodation facilities in Puerto Galera region. The most important common feature of these listed hotels is that most of them are high-priced beach hotels that appeal to high-income groups. Furthermore, among these accommodation facilities, only the “AV Suites” is included in the group of five-star hotels. In a nutshell, Puerto Galera is not only the most popular tourist destination on the island of Mindoro, but also the region with the most hotels and accommodation facilities.

Nevertheless, even though there are more than 200 accommodation facilities in this region, the lack of five-star hotels is a major drawback in terms of international tourism. Furthermore, the concepts of tourism activity and nature protection are two conflicting concepts. Puerto Galera: As the number of touristic facilities in the Sabang region increases and the number of tourists intensifies, it is seen that the environmental problems in the region increase exponentially. Puerto Galera: Preserving the sea corals on the Sabang coast and leaving them as an ecological legacy without destruction for future generations should be the primary task of today's generations and today's Philippine administrators.

The City of Calapan

The city of Calapan is both the largest and busiest port on the island of Mindoro, the administrative center of the MIMAROPA District, and the capital of the Oriental Mindoro province. The city of Calapan is not only the most strategic and largest commercial, industrial, transportation, art, culture, science and education center of the Oriental Mindoro province, but also the only urban settlement within the provincial borders. Other large settlements within the provincial borders (Roxas, Pola, Pinamalayan, Puerto Galera, Mansalay etc.) do not have the official city status even though they are populated settlements. Calapan is surrounded by the Bay of Calapan to the north and northeast, Naujan county to the south and southeast and Baco county to the west (Hernandez, 1988). In the Calapan region, the Malaylay, Baruyan, Silonay and Baco rivers discharge their waters into the sea. Thus, the alluvial soils accumulated by these rivers, the swampy lands they form and the wet plains suitable for rice farming are the most common geographical elements seen around the city.

The fact that the Calapan region is one of the top quality and largest rice production areas of the Philippines is due to these geographical features (Estoque et al, 2018). Calapan is situated 45 kilometers southeast of the city of Batangas and 130 kilometers south of Manila. The city of Calapan has an area of 250 km² and consists of 62 barangays, 22 of which are classified as urban and 40 of which are classified as rural. Marshes and mangrove forests are possible to see in the coastal areas of the city, which situated on a wide and fertile plain. Calapan, which was a small town with a population of 33000 in 1960, managed to increase its population to 67000 in 1980, 106000 in 2000 and 145000 in 2020 as a result of high fertility and intense migration (Lemuel et al., 2021). Today, Calapan is one of the two largest cities on the island of Mindoro, along with San Jose, which has a population of more than 150000.

Food and canned food industry, clothing and textile industry, chemical and machinery industry, crop production, livestock and fishery, communication and port activities, furniture and rice production are the most important economic activities of the city of Calapan. Bananas, coconuts, rice, mangoes, citrus fruits and various tropical fruits are widely grown in the fertile Calapan plain. There are regular sea transportation services for 12 months between the Port of Calapan and the Batangas International Port on the island of Luzon. The city of Calapan also has a regional-scale airport and has regular air transport links with Ninoy Aquino International Airport in the capital, Manila. Calapan is not a typical tourist town, nor is it one of the Philippines' most popular holiday destinations.

However, there are many waterfalls, beaches, nature reserves, caves, botanical gardens, mangrove forests, lakes, spa centers and interesting touristic small islets around the city (Table 6). The islands of Baco-Chico, Horca-Piloto and Silonay, situated close to the city of Calapan and easily accessible by cheap boat tours, are among the most popular islets for one-day picnics and beach holidays. Furthermore, the "Silonay Mangrove Conservation Area and Ecotourism", which is an example of the Philippines' most interesting and best preserved mangrove forests, is found just east of the city of Calapan and is visited by thousands of tourists every year. Calapan is famous in the Philippines as both the

Table 6. The most popular tourist centers in the city of Calapan and its surroundings (Source: Authors, 2022)

Caluwangan Cave	Horca-Piloto sand beaches
Suqui Beaches	Jolly Waves Waterpark & Resort
Baco-Chico Island	Silonay Mangrove Conservation Area
Rizal Park	Calapan City Museum
Halhal Cave	Bulusan Nature Park
Caluwangan Lake	Holy Infant Cathedral
Silonay Island	Santo Nino Cathedral
Parang Beaches	Oriental Mindoro Heritage Museum
Balite Beaches	Maidlang Mangrove and Beach Forest Reserve
Dambana ni Jesus	Czeascape Beach Resort
Calapan City Plaza	Mangyan Heritage Center
Aras Cave - Baco	Calapan City Zoological and Recreational Park
Infinity Farm Resort	Wakeboarding at Calapan Aqua Park

country's rice export champion and the city of festivals. The “Kalap Festival”, “Sto. Niño de Calapan Festival”, “Sinkaw Festival” and “Mardigras Festival”, celebrated regularly every year with the participation of both local and foreign tourists, are the most vigorous and well-attended tourist festivals of Calapan. There are many motels, hostels, villas, hostels and hotels suitable for every budget in the city of Calapan. Among the most popular and interesting accommodation facilities in the rural vicinity of Calapan are the “Coco Farm Resort”, “Infinity Farm Resort”, “Jesstar Resort Malamig Calapan City”, “Eduardo's Resort”, “Jolly Waves Waterpark & Resort”, “Kambal Bato Mountain Resort” and “El Pueblo Rhizort”. Those who wish to have a peaceful holiday among the natural rainforests in a quiet environment can prefer one of these accommodation

facilities. Among the top quality accommodation facilities in the city center of Calapan are the "Vincios Hotel & Restaurant", "Sunshine Beach Resort", "Filipiniana Hotel Calapan", "Calapan Holiday Resort", "NutriTECH Hotels & Events", "Casa Estela Boutique Hotel & Cafe", "Hotel Metropolis" and "Mahalta Resorts and Convention Center".

The City of San Jose

San Jose, situated in the Occidental Mindoro province of the Philippines, is the largest and most populated settlement on the island of Mindoro, together with Calapan. This port city housing 153267 according as the 2020 census, represents one-third of the province's population and is the largest of any city in the MIMAROPA region (excluding Puerto Princesa city). As of May 2, 2019, the city of San Jose was politically divided into 39 barangays (San Jose, Province of Occidental Mindoro**). San Jose county is bordered by Rizal and Calintaan provinces to the north, Mansalay and Bulalacao provinces to the east, the Mangarin Strait and Magsaysay province to the southeast, and the Mindoro Strait to the west. Ambulong and Ilin Islands are also found within the San Jose County boundaries. San Jose, situated on the southwest coast of Mindoro island, is 173 kilometers from the provincial capital, Mamburao (Chirikov et al., 2008).

This vibrant city has the largest commercial port and busiest airport in the province of Occidental Mindoro. It is also the city with the highest number of banks, workplaces, transportation and trade establishments among all settlements within the borders of the province. Therefore, the city of San Jose is considered the economic, cultural, transportation and commercial heart of Southern Mindoro (Table 7). The main exports of the city include rice, salt and processed fish. This strategic city has been one of the cities with the fastest growing and fastest economic development on the island of Mindoro in the last 20-30 years. The city of San Jose was ranked 13th for "overall competitiveness" among the Philippine local government units in the 2017 Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index.

The territory of the city of San Jose has fertile plains that are fragmented by numerous stream valleys. A wide variety of agricultural products are grown on these fertile plains, especially corn, coconut, banana, garlic, rice, tropical fruits and root crops. Rice production and rice trade are very developed in the city (Andriesse, 2018). The aquaculture, poultry, cattle, shrimp, egg and fish trade is also very common in San Jose. Mining industry, furniture production, canning and food industry, milk production, seafood production and textile industry are the most developed economic branches of San Jose.

Even though the city of San Jose and its surroundings are not among the most popular tourist destinations in the Philippines, they do have many interesting tourist attractions. Small tropical islets, Catholic churches and historical buildings from the Spanish era, beaches and coves suitable for sea tourism, interesting bridges, monuments and museums are the major tourist attractions that draw the foreign tourists. The islands of Ilin, Ambulong, Garza, and Manadi, located just south of San Jose and easily accessible by inexpensive boat tours, are among the most popular tourist destinations for a day-long beach vacation. Even though there are many accommodation facilities in San Jose city center, "Sikatuna Beach Hotel", "Seasons Hotel And Convention Center", "Villa Enriquez", "Sikatuna Town Hotel", "Mindoro Plaza Hotel", "SJ Mansion Hotel" and "Beachfront" Bed & Breakfast" are the most popular ones.

Table 7. The most popular tourist destinations in and around the City of San Jose (Source: Authors, 2022)

Aroma Beach	Mindoro Landing Monument
Galleria Onal	Bantayog-Wika para sa Mangyan
Ilin Island	San Jose Municipal Plaza
Madam G	Caminawit Pioneer Memorial Church
Sophia's Garden	Biggy's River Resort
Bubog Beach	Argel Farm And Resort
Ambulong Island	Magsaysay Town Plaza
Inasacan Beach	Site of Southern Mindoro Academy
Acacia Park	Central Heritage Park
Garza Island	San Isidro Labrador Church
Grace Island Resort	St. Joseph Cathedral
Murtha Airfield	Archaeological Site at Sitio Bubog
Love Hidden Farm	Lighthouse at Ambulong Island
Devil's Mountain View	Adoration Chapel of Iling Proper
Statue of Liberty	Santissima Trinidad Church

Mount Iglit-Baco National Park

"Apo Reef Nature Park", "Naujan Lake National Park" and "Iglit-Baco Mountain National Park" are among the most important nature conservation areas of the Mindoro Island and Philippines. Iglit-Baco Mountain National Park (Nailian a Parke ti Banbantay Iglit-Baco), one of 35 National Parks within the borders of the Republic of the Philippines, is one of the largest protected areas of both the Mindoro island and the country, covering an area of 754.55 km².

The National Park, situated in the central part of the Mindoro Island, was founded in November 1970 and is situated on the territory of East Mindoro and West Mindoro provinces. The National Park area embodies eight river basins, as well as numerous mountains, plateaus, steep slopes, hills and deep valleys. In the National Park area dominated by the mountainous and rugged lands and tropical forests, there are high mountains such as Wood (2005 m), Bako (2488 m), Tallulah (1488 m), Sinclair (1846 m.) and Indie (1645 m) (Hernandez, 1988). The longest streams of the island of Mindoro, such as Mongpong, Bongabong, Mag-Asawang Tubig, Lumintao and Panggalaan, take their source from this park area and start their long river journeys by flowing towards the sea. The National Park area is home to an endemic Tamaraw species, a hoofed mammal known as "Bubalus Mindorensids"**. In fact, the main reason for the foundation of the Iglit-Baco Mountain National Park is to conserve and sustain these interesting and rare animals.

The National Park is also home to a wide variety of wildlife, different bird species and interesting plants (Gonzales and Dans, 2001). There are many tourist attractions in the Iglit-Baco Mountain National Park and its immediate surroundings. "Tangisan Falls", "Tamaraw Gene Pool", "Panikian Lake", "Tagpuan sa Garden", "San Rafael Cave", "Bato Bansud", "Bansud Municipal Park and Plaza", "Villa Prescilla Mountain View Resort", "Xiemomo Park", "Hidden Paradise", "Enchanted Bato Creek", "Dangare Vista Hill", "Libao Lake", "Papweke Cave" and "Magtangcob Station" are examples of these tourist attractions situated close to the National Park.

Lake Naujan and Naujan National Park

Lake Naujan, situated in the northeast of Mindoro Island, is the fifth largest lake in the Philippines. Naujan, found east of the town of Victoria, northwest of the town of Pinamalayan and southeast of the city of Calapan, within the eastern Mindoro provincial borders, is a tectonic lake in terms of formation features and the maximum depth of the lake bowl is 45 meters. The only outlet or only sea connection of the lake, which has fresh waters, is the Butas River, which flows to the north. The area of the lake is 81 km² and the total area of the lake basin is around 300 km². While the length of the lake in the north-south direction is 14 kilometers, its width in the east-west direction is 7 kilometers. Numerous streams and creeks drain off into the lake, while the Butas stream in the north is the only stream fed by the lake waters and carries the Naujan waters to the ocean.

It is understood that there are many Naujan geographical concepts in the Philippines, since the town of Naujan is located to the north of the lake and the Naujan mountain is located to the east of the lake basin. There are many hot springs on the eastern shores of the lake. There is no large lake basin on the island of Mindoro, except for Naujan. Baruyan, Libao, Malibago, Patay na Ilog and Caluangan are the examples of other lakes on the island. Naujan, which is under RAMSAR protection, has been in National Park status since 27 March 1956. The area of Naujan National Park is 216.5 km², spread over the territory of four municipalities. Naujan National Park offers a wealth of opportunities for scientific research by ornithologists, botanists and zoologists. Naujan National Park offers a wealth of opportunities for scientific research of ornithologists, botanists and zoologists. Especially with its rich fish and bird diversity, the lake attracts the attention of both tourists and scientists. Philippine duck, black-crested bird, Mindoro spotted pigeon, Mindoro royal pigeon cockatoo, rhinoceros, ash thrush are the most interesting bird species of the National Park (Naujan Lake National Park**). Naujan National Park offers natural environments suitable for various recreational activities such as picnics, fishing, swimming and water sports. The tourists visiting the Naujan National Park can also visit the nearby towns of Victoria, Sokorro, Pinamalayan, Pola and Naujan. “Polacay Beach”, “Tagumpay Gravel Sand Beach”, “Misong Taguan”, “Montelago Hot Spring”, “Castilio Sa Papangkil Beach”, “Dao Waterlily Park”, “Simbahang Bato”, “Naujan”, which are also close to the lake basin, as well as the tourist centers such as Monument”, “Sibayan Red Farm”, “Naujan Lake View Park” and “Naujan Park and Plaza” can also be visited by the tourists.

Mount Calavite Wildlife Sanctuary

The Mount Calavite Wildlife Sanctuary, established in 1921, is situated in the northwest of Mindoro Island and is one of the oldest nature reserves in the Philippines. Mount Calavite is the highest point of this sanctuary, whereas the Binuangan river is the longest stream of the reserve. The Calavite mountain, located in the Paluan bay and northwest of Paluan town, is 1521 meters high and is situated on the Calavite peninsula of the same name. The sanctuary situated within the municipality of Paluan and northwest of the city of Mamburao, the capital of West Mindoro province, covers almost the entire Calavite peninsula (Canoy, 1980). The Verde strait, situated in the north of the Calavite Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary, formerly called Paluan National Park, separates the Calavite peninsula from the Lubang and Golo islands. The Calavite peninsula is one of the rare areas of our planet inhabited by Philippine dwarf buffaloes. The Mount Calavite Wildlife Sanctuary, founded as a bird sanctuary in 1920, today covers an area of 18016 hectares. There are many endemic plants and animals within the boundaries of the sanctuary. Visitors to the Calavite Sanctuary should also visit the interesting nearby attractions such as “Calawagan Mountain Resort”, “White Stone Beach Resort”, “I Love Paluan Landmark” and “Agbalala Water Falls”.

Mindoro Island Accommodation Facilities

Mindoro, one of the most important marine tourism centers of the Republic of the Philippines today, attracts thousands of domestic and foreign tourists every year with its natural beauties, interesting botanical gardens, pristine tropical forests, authentic resorts, majestic waterfalls, touristic parks, mysterious caves, scary deep valleys, white sandy beaches and desolate cute islets. There are more than 550 accommodation facilities that are suitable for all budgets and vary widely throughout the island. It is even possible to claim that the abundance of economically priced accommodation facilities (more than 400 in total) offers a great tourism advantage to the island of Mindoro. Puerto Galera–Sabang, Calapan–Pinamalayan, Bulalacao–San Jose, Roxas–Mansalay, Paluan–Mamburao and Sablayan–Santa Cruz regions are among the geographical locations where accommodation facilities are most concentrated throughout the island. For the convenience of tourists visiting the island, the most popular accommodation facilities in these regions are listed below (<https://www.agoda.com/tr>).

The most popular beach hotels in Puerto Galera - Sabang Area:

“Ocean Place Dive Resort”, “Badladz Beach and Dive Resort”, “Answer Hotel”, “Le Manoir des Bougainvilliers”, “Nirvana Resort”, “The Manor at Puerto Galera”, “Fisherman's Cove Resort and Diving Center”, “Utopia Resort & Spa”, “Dolphinbay Beachfront Resort”, “Blue Crystal Beach Resort”, “PG Island Diving Resort Hotel”, “Edgewater Dive & Spa Resort”, “Garden of Eden Dive Resort”, “Oriental Sabang Hill Resort”, “Seashore Beach Resort”, “Garden of Eden Dive Resort”, “Blue Water Resort”, “Mountain View Eco Park and Events Place”, “Hillside Resort Sinandigan”, “La Laguna Beach Club & Dive Centre”, “Banana Moon Beach Resort”, “Arkipelago Divers & Beach Resort”, “Blue Lagoon Dive Resort”, “El Galleon Dive Resort”, “Capt'n Greggs Dive Resort”, “Red Coral Beach Resort”.

The most popular beach hotels in White Beach -Talipanan Region:

“The Mang-Yan Grand Hotel by Cocotel Powered by Fave”, “Crystal's Palace”, “Casa Bella Villa”, “White Beach Resort”, “Orient De Galera Beach Resort”, “Hollywood Palm Beach Hotel and Resort”, “Rem's Hotel”, “Villa Guada Whitebeach by Building Green”, “Villa Lato Montagna Resort”, “ZEN Rooms Delgado”, “Summer Connection Beach Resort”, “White Beach Hotel Bar & Restaurant”, “Medelaine's Beach Resort”, “Mindorinne Oriental Beach Resort”, “Sunset at Aninuan Beach Resort”, “Tamaraw Beach Resort”, “Tribal Hills Mountain Resort”, “AV Suites”, “Veronica's

Inn “Amami Beach Resort”, “Infinity Resort”, “Sunny Beach Resort”, “Joan Beach Resort”, “Deluna Diving Resort”, “El Canonero Diving Beach Resort”, “Talipanan Beach Puerto Galera”.

The most popular beach hotels in Calapan – Pinamalayan District:

“Jamilla's Private Pool Resort”, “Bali Beach Resort Mindoro”, “Hiraya Farm and Resort”, “Seacliff Suites Hotel & Resort”, “Aplaya de Analiza Hotel”, “The Sanctuary By Positadi”, “El Dionisio”, “Mahalta Resorts and Convention Center”, “Donnyland Beach Resort”, “Calapan Bay Hotel”, “Tree of Life Business Center”, “Casa Estela Boutique Hotel & Cafe”, “Filipiniana Hotel Calapan”, “Hotel Metropolis”, “El Pueblo Rhizort”, “Calapan Holiday Resort”, “Kambal Bato Mountain Resort”, “Lush Green Camp & Resort”.

The most popular beach hotels in Roxas – Mansalay Region:

“MB Hiraya Beach Resort”, “Ern Suites”, “LaSersita Casitas and Water Spa Beach Resort by Cocotel”, “Costa Del Eve Beach Resort”, “Mahalta Glamping Resorts and Leisure Farm”, “L.D. Ignacio's Island Resort”, “Mahalta Glamping Resort”, “JMD Hotel and Restaurant”, “La Primera Grande Beach Resort”, “Kamayan Beach Resort”, “Paraiso De Oro Beach Resort”, “Anilao Eco Park”, “Jopat's Hotel & Resort”, “KW&E Hotel”, “Prisville Triangle Resort”.

The most popular beach hotels in Bulalacao – San Jose Neighborhood:

“Panganiban Resort”, “Biggy's River Resort by Cocotel”, “Caniwal Resort”, “De Kack's Private Resort”, “Villa Paulina Spa and Resort”, “Lanada Resort”, “Glendenning Hotel and Resort”, “Aroma Family Hotel and Resort Complex”, “Seasons Hotel And Convention Center”, “Sikatuna Beach Hotel”, “SJ Mansion Hotel”, “Hotel Platinum”, “West Town Hotel”, “Mindoro Plaza Hotel”, “Beachfront Bed & Breakfast”, “Nicole's Island View Resort”, “Festin Paradise Resort”, “Southdrive Beach Resort”, “By The Sea Hotels – Bulalacao”, “EM'z Bayview Mountain Resort”, “Balai Del Barrio”, “Kitesurf Mindoro”, “Pocanil Beach Resort”.

The most popular beach hotels in Sablayan – Santa Cruz Neighborhood:

“Seasons Hotel Sablayan”, “John's Beach Resort”, “Grand Creek Hotel and Resort”, “Sablayan Beach Resort”, “Gustav's Place Silver Beach Dive Resort”, “Wency Amor Hotel”, “Vizales Guest House”, “Sablayan Adventure Camp”, “ARK Bed and Breakfast Resort”, “Punta De Poblacion Beach Resort”, “Landmanz Hotel”, “The Countrywoods Resort”, “Apo Reef Club”, “Holiday Ocean Resort”, “Trisha Erona Beach Resort”.

The most popular beach hotels in Paluan – Mamburao Region:

“La Virginia Beach Resort Paluan”, “Maslud Cove”, “Choco Beach Hotel”, “Maru's Food Lounge & Beachfront Rooms”, “Traveler's Hotel and Restaurant”, “La Gensol Plaza and Hotel”, “Bill's Hillside Resort”, “Mindoreños Hotel and Restaurant”, “Alastre Beach Resort”, “Orient Queen”, “Capitol Hills Apartelle”, “Paradise Beach Resort”, “Flowing Farm Resort”, “Navigator's Farm Resort”.

The most popular inland hotels not located on the seafront:

“Kambal Bato Mountain Resort”, “Tagbungan Mountain Resort and Lantuyan River”, “Eduardo's Resort”, “Isla De Oro Hotel”, “Grand Creek Hotel and Resort”, “Infinity Farm Resort”, “Panikian Lake Resort Hotel”, “Argel Farm and Resort”, “Anilao Eco Park”, “Villa Clarita Resort”, “Montelago Hot Spring”, “Jams Dreamland Private Resort” ve “Calawagan Mountain Resort”, “Coco Farm Resort”, “La Estancia Resort”, “Jolly Waves Waterpark & Resort”.

Beach hotels on the islets in the immediate vicinity of Mindoro:

“Grace Island Resort by Cocotel”, “Sugicay Island Resort”, “Tambaron Green Beach Resort”, “Inasakan Beach Resort”, “Pandan Island Resort”, “Buyayao Island Resort”, “Elizabeth's Hideaway Hotel & Restaurant”, “Fridays Puerto Galera”, “Coral Garden Resort and Dive Center”. For those who prefer sunbathing and sea holidays, the Mindoro Island has many accommodation facilities to offer for every taste and every budget. There are many types of accommodation within the borders of the island, from hotels to family villas, from motels to hostels, from hostels to rental apartments. As in many Philippine islands, the number of luxury accommodation facilities that will appeal to high-income groups is very insufficient on the island of Mindoro. Even though it is famous for its beach hotels and diving centers, there are also interesting and quality resorts located far from the sea within the borders of the island of Mindoro. Those who wish to have an ecological holiday among the natural rainforests away from the sea can achieve this in extraordinary hotels on the island of Mindoro.

Undoubtedly, Mindoro is one of the most well-known and most visited islands of the Republic of the Philippines. The island of Mindoro, which has turned into a world popular tourism center with the Calavite Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary with unique species, Giant Clams and Sabang Wreck diving centers, Sabang shores famous for its nightlife, White Beach famous for its white beaches, Ambulong island famous for its long white beaches and secluded bays, Halcon and Calavite mountains covered with rainforests, Naujan and Caluagan lakes with rich fish resources, is one of the most interesting and favorite islands of the Philippines. High mountains and long deep valleys, steep slopes and dense rainforest, numerous bays and peninsulas, jagged ocean shores and hundreds of secluded beach areas are the first prominent geomorphological features on the Mindoro Island. Mindoro Island is not as big as Luzon; it is not as crowded as Mindanao; it does not have as many nightclubs and luxury tourist attractions as Boracay, nor is it possible to say that it is as popular as Palawan. Nevertheless, this tropical island attracts thousands of holiday makers from all over the world every year due to its unique natural beauty and breathtaking tourist attractions. Mindoro island can offer an alternative touristic option, an exciting tourist route and an interesting tourist destination for every curious tourist for 365 days. However, this tropical island also has problems waiting to be resolved.

The main problems and tourism disadvantages of Mindoro Island can be listed as follows:

- The number of both ports and airports throughout the island is very insufficient. There is no railway transportation between the cities, tourism centers and large settlements of the island, and there is no sea transportation between the port cities. The lack of any other transportation option within the island apart from the highway negatively impacts the tourism activities in Mindoro. The transportation between the settlements is not carried out by modern buses, but by primitive three-wheeled motorcycles, which is the best example of the transportation problems on the island.
- Highways throughout the island are very old and neglected, very narrow and inadequate. If international tourism is to be developed in Mindoro, modern highways and wide highways need to be built as soon as possible. The existing road network also needs to be improved, expanded and modernized. The fact that there are almost no car rental companies makes it even more difficult for foreign tourists to travel within the island.
- The problem of clean drinking water, uninterrupted electricity and internet is available in almost all regions of the island. Frequent power and internet cuts in settlements complicate the daily life of both locals and foreign tourists. The old electricity, water, internet and telephone infrastructure need to be renewed and the cable connections above the ground, which generate an eye sore, need to be placed under the ground.
- Inadequately-trained tourism personnel and lack of experience in the service sector are common in many touristic facilities. The lack of knowledge and experience in touristic personnel is clear in many touristic centers such as hotels, restaurants, terminals and bars. The attitude and behavior unconformity of language, tradition and culture observed between foreign tourists and local people can sometimes lead to negative consequences that can shadow the holiday of foreign tourists (Mendaña and Apritado, 2021).
- Uncoordinated construction and widespread squatting are very common in the Mindoro Island as well as in the whole country. It is possible claim that especially the irregular housing and unsightly concretion on the sea shores disturb every foreign tourist. Negligible and grimy settlements devoid of modern architectural approaches, towns devoid of green park areas and children's playgrounds are common throughout the island and constitute both an aesthetic and urbanization problem.
- Even in large settlements, the insufficiency of modern hospitals, sports complexes, large shopping malls, car rental companies, urban parks and recreation areas, cultural centers such as cinemas and theaters negatively impact the foreign tourists. The insufficiency of service areas for daily needs such as pharmacies, cash machines, hairdressers, post offices, and exchange offices is present in almost all settlements on the island. The benevolent, helpful and friendly nature of the local people is a positive social feature that alleviates all these problems and should be emphasized.
- The fact that infrastructure problems such as transportation, communication, sewerage, electricity and internet are present in almost every part of the island is one of Mindoro's priority problems waiting to be solved. Furthermore, the insufficiency or frequent disruption of sports, education, culture and health services in many regions negatively impacts both local people and incoming tourists now and again.
- Natural disasters such as earthquakes, tropical storms, floods, landslides, tsunamis and typhoons occur occasionally in Mindoro, as in every Philippine Island. These types of natural disasters that negatively affect tourism are the geographical fate of Mindoro and are the nightmare of foreign tourists who are not used to such disasters.
- Rapid deforestation and illegal lumbering have created major problems on the island in the last half century (Schult, 2001). Furthermore, strong erosion and soil loss, rapid decline of plant and animal species throughout the island are the main ecological problems in the Mindoro Island in the last quarter century. Rapid pollution of seas, dams, lakes and streams is a very common ecological problem on the island (Villanueva and Buot, 2015). The fact that urban and rural settlements generally do not have water treatment facilities and the indiscriminate discharge of industrial and domestic wastes into the oceans and river basins will adversely affect tourism in the long run (Muyot, 2022). An island whose regional development and tourism achievements depend on marine tourism must take more radical decisions to preserve its sea waters.
- Mindoro is not an island that will satisfy the high demands of capricious wealthy tourists. Therefore, it is possible to say that this tropical island appeals to the low-income and middle-income tourists. Mindoro is not the right holiday destination for those seeking for luxury hotels, quality and clean food, sparkling city streets, quiet and safe traffic. However, it is possible to say that Mindoro is the right holiday destination for the nature lovers and adventure-loving tourists who wish to travel freely with their backpacks and seek economic holidays.

CONCLUSION

The Mindoro Island is neither the most underdeveloped nor the most developed of the Philippine islands in terms of transportation and communication connections, cultural and sports activities, education and health opportunities. However, it is undoubtedly one of the richest and luckiest of the Philippine islands in terms of water sports center, hotel, restaurant, bar, diving center, variety of beaches, entertainment and shopping center options. More importantly, even though this mysterious island does not have a very large area, it hosts a wide variety of tourism types. Today, the main types of tourism applicable on the island of Mindoro are: health tourism, sports tourism, hunting tourism, marine tourism, faith tourism, adventure tourism, rural tourism, eco-tourism, agrotourism, cave tourism, underwater diving tourism, cultural tourism, mountain tourism, congress tourism, tourism, gastronomic tourism, river tourism and botanical tourism. Nevertheless, in the last quarter century, a large part of foreign tourists visiting Mindoro visit the island for marine tourism, festival tourism and underwater diving activities. As a result, the geographical, cultural and ecological diversity throughout the island has led to the diversification of both tourism types and recreational activities. Therefore, hundreds of different recreational activities are practiced in different parts of the island. Freshwater fishing, mountaineering, paragliding, wildlife watching, rafting, canoeing, cave and rock climbing, sea surfing, bird watching, cycling, camping, trekking, mountain climbing and sport diving are among the major sports and recreation activities.

The most important factors that make the island of Mindoro a tourism brand and ensure its success are as follows:

- Strategic geographical location and easy access to neighboring islands are one of Mindoro's greatest economic and tourism advantages. Geographical proximity to the capital Manila and major international airports. Having regular ferry connections between the ports of Puerto Galera and Calapan and the port of Batangas on the island of Luzon is a very important transportation advantage. As a result, there are continuous and regular ferry connections between the island of Mindoro and the islands of Luzon, Tablas, Panay, Coron and Romblon for 12 months.

- It is a great tourism advantage that the creatures, endemic species and natural formations that are not available on any island of the Philippines can be seen on the island of Mindoro. This interesting island, with its endemic species, interesting geomorphological and hydrographic formations, geographical landscape attractiveness, and diversity of flora and fauna, constitutes a real treasure of nature for curious tourists. For instance, it is a great opportunity for ecotourism that it hosts around 15 nature protection areas, 1 Nature Park and 2 National Parks within the borders of the island.

- The rich historical-cultural heritage, many interesting architectural monuments, as well as historical castles, monasteries, statues, monuments and Catholic churches from the Spanish period are the other touristic advantages of the island. The island's many canyon valleys, coral formations, tropical beaches, tourist parks, mysterious caves, historical-cultural places, uninhabited islets, natural mangrove forests, romantic coves, interesting museums, historical Catholic churches and magnificent waterfalls enhance the island's reputation even more.

- The fact that there are many quality hotels, restaurants, bars and accommodation facilities suitable for every budget on the island is a great advantage in terms of tourism. Furthermore, the great diversity of tourism types and recreational activities thanks to its cultural, ecological and geographical diversity further increases the touristic competitiveness of the island.

- Unlike the island of Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago, Mindoro is a very safe island. The lack of security and terrorism problems throughout the island for foreign tourists is of great importance in terms of international tourism mobility.

- Mindoro has a great tourism potential that can be sustained for 12 months and 365 days uninterrupted for sea surfing, diving, rural tourism, beach tourism, health tourism and eco tourism. Having Puerto Galera, a global holiday brand with its famous beaches, musical bars, interesting dive sites and entertainment venues, grants the island a great touristic reputation.

Even though Mindoro is not among the top three islands in the list of preferences made by foreign tourists for the Philippines, there are many holiday options, the number of economic hotels and touristic facilities is high, there are no security and terror problems for foreign tourists throughout the island and it is available for uninterrupted four seasons sea tourism. Furthermore, the great diversity of recreational activities and tourism types to be practiced has led to a significant increase in the number of tourists coming to this island in recent years. Mindoro Island is an interesting and colorful geographical place full of contradictions and contrasts. On the one hand, the island in general reflects a poor rural landscape with poor infrastructure, and on the other hand, it offers rich landscapes with large entertainment centers, high-rise shopping centers, luxury resorts and world-famous hotels. There are, on the one hand, virgin nature, desolate tropical forests, mysterious canyon valleys and secluded shores, while there are, on the other hand, a lively tourism, modern industrial establishments, noisy traffic flow and a large number of interesting tourist facilities. Mindoro is an island that is both very close and far away from the modern and civilized world. Sparse and densely populated lands are together, untouched nature and heavily polluted lands, poor and rich views are side by side on this island.

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