

Where is Evolution?

Evolution is on Malapascua Island in the province of Cebu. We are located in The Visayas or Central Philippines.



Hang on a second, wasn't there a bad typhoon there?

Typhoon Haiyan (aka Yolanda) hit the island on November 8th 2013 & did a lot of damage but in the weeks following a massive effort was made to restore the island to its former glory. Evolution & a couple of other dive centres spearheaded the recovery programme for the local people & we immediately invested in bringing our resort back to full capacity. So everything is back to normal.



So what is the local currency and how do I get it?

The local currency is the Peso. Most of our customers now use ATMs to make withdrawals. In Cebu, ATMS are everywhere & many accept VISA & Cirrus cards from overseas. Traveler's Cheques are less popular & are becoming harder to cash in. Cheques in US dollars are the easiest to change whereas cheques in currencies such as Sterling are quite difficult.



What about banks, ATMS, money changers?

Malapascua is a real tropical island. No banks, No ATMS and very few opportunities to change money. We recommend that you bring enough cash to satisfy all your eating, drinking, sleeping and diving needs or make arrangements in advance to make a bank transfer. We offer our divers a vault in which to keep cash and most resorts do the same. The nearest ATM is a 5 hour round trip away so be sure to take what you need. We also can accept PayPal but bills must be settled at the beginning of your stay to allow time for PayPal to review payments.

Where can I stay?

Evolution has 16 well located rooms on site. They are a mixture of comfy Fan Rooms and Deluxe AC rooms and all have two beds so are good for twin share. Our Deluxe AC rooms are amongst the most popular on the island with handcrafted mahogany furniture, hot and cold water, private terrace, safety box and a very quiet location. There are lots of options on Malapascua, mostly in the mid-budget range. When fully booked Evolution can work with our partner resorts to find you a room that suits your specific budget and needs.



What is there to do in Malapascua?

Our island has world class diving & we can offer 4 scheduled dives a day. We have everything from the biggest Mantas, the shyest sharks & the tiniest pygmy seahorses. For the non-diver, Malapascua is hailed as one of the best golden-sand beaches in The Philippines - a country hailed as having the best beaches in the world. Day trips, snorkelling etc are on offer but Malapascua is real a place to pull out a good book, laze about & tune out of Western timetables.



Is it very touristy?

Malapascua is well known as a tourist destination but visitor numbers remain charmingly low. Around 1000+ people visit the island per month and are spread out amongst various different places. First and foremost Malapascua is a working island, populated by Filipinos who often use the picture postcard beaches to mend their nets, sort their catch & loll about in the shadow of a coconut tree. Prepare to share Malapascua with her residents & expect a warm welcome from everyone you meet.



What language do the locals speak?

The local dialect is Bisayan, the national language is Tagalog but the language of commerce and tourism is English. Most Filipinos have fair English & you can expect to communicate freely in English with almost everyone during your stay.



Are there any cultural differences I should be aware of?

Filipinos are warm & welcoming & generally very informal. They may often seem quite liberal in nature but they do maintain a cultural conservatism. While bikinis are OK on the beach it is better to be modest off the tourist beat. Filipinos are generally deferential to older or senior members of society & this can include tourists. It can therefore be inappropriate to lose your temper or raise your voice when dealing with locals. The Asian concept of 'saving face' also applies in The Philippines so its best to try & resolve disputes in a mutually respectful manner, especially if they have a public dimension.



What do I need to know about food and drink?

The Philippines has a tradition with alcohol which is very in line with Western countries. Local beers and spirits are widely consumed & socialising over a beer or rum is all part of local culture. Filipino food is somewhat the victim of its colonial past. Fried chicken sits easily alongside fresh coconut curry as a national favourite. Fast food is everywhere and fried food is even more popular. Cebu is famous for its spit roast pigs (lechon) & any carnivore should add this to their To Do list. The Philippines is a world leader in rice production & no Filipino meal is complete without it.



If I like The Philippines how long can I stay?

You will be issued with a 30 day tourist visa on arrival. This can be extended almost indefinitely in 2 months batches at any local Immigration office around the country. Just be sure to make sure you extend before heading off the beaten track. The nearest immigration office to Malapascua is in Cebu (Mandaue City) and extensions take about 1 hour. Be sure to wear a T Shirt and long pants to guarantee entry to the facility. Please note that you will need a return ticket or onward flight in order to board your plane to the Philippines.

What are communications like on the island?

Internet is now widely available on the island and Evolution offers free wifi to our customers. We recommend that our customers buy a local SIM card while here. The Philippines are prolific texters & almost anything can be organized with a few texts. Expect to pay less than 1 for a card & a few free texts to get you going. Topping up is very easy and is widely available on Malapascua.

Is there a pharmacy on the island?

Malapascua has no pharmacy and no western style shops. Supplies are limited here so if you have special requirements such as medication, dietary etc it is best to stock up in Cebu before arriving. Most resorts offer cold drinks but local shops generally do not have refrigerators or ways to store fresh produce.



So is there a doctor or hospital?

There is currently no doctor or medical facility on the island but we are working on this!

So...

We recommend that all visitors have travel insurance before visiting The Philippines - as is best practice for making any foreign trip. Evolution has an Emergency Action Plan in case of accidents which involves taking a patient to the nearest facility on Cebu Island.



What clothes should I pack?

Malapascua is warm all year around. The temperature ranges from 27C to 33C. Evenings can also remain quite warm although seasonal winds can make it quite comfortable. Shorts and T shirts are going to work for day and night. A rain jacket can be useful year around as when it rains it pours and sometimes our boat trips on the dive boat can see some spray. Evolution offers a laundry service. Cebu has a strong night life culture of restaurants, bars and clubs so occasionally long trousers, skirts etc are preferable.



So its hot and sunny all year round?

Its always hot and sunny in Malapascua - except when its wet and cloudy! The summer months can see occasional prolonged rain fall or seasonal down pours. Typhoons are more common in summer but by no means guaranteed. Equally typhoons can strike in any month of the year. Geographically, Malapascua is surrounded by large land masses which generally protect the island from the worst weather. Here at Evolution we try and tailor your trip to perfection - but we currently outsource the weather and we have no influence over it!



OK, sounds great - what next?

Book your flight, contact Evolution and prepare for the holiday of a lifetime!

For more information...

Contact the Evolution team at info@evolution.com.ph

