

Tappiya Falls, Ifugao

THE CORDILLERAS



CLIMATE

Baguio is known as the 'Summer Capital of the Philippines' due to its cool climate. Indeed, The Cordilleras as a whole is one of the coldest regions in the Philippines, with an average daily high of 24°C and low of 15-17°C at nighttime.

Regional Office
Department of Tourism, Baguio Tourism Complex, Governor Pack Road, 2600 Baguio City, Tel: +63 74 442 7014 / 442 8848, dotcar@tourism.gov.ph

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Philippine Department of Tourism
 Indonesia Office
 Jl. Dr. Saharjo No. 96A
 South Jakarta, 12960
 Indonesia

Tel: +62 (21) 8379 3456

info@wisatafilipina.com
 pdotindonesia1@gmail.com
 www.wisatafilipina.com

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

The country's only land-locked region is also one of its most lightly populated areas, across its six provinces of **Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga** and **Mountain Province**. It's not the easiest of regions to get around due to its isolated communities and terrain of mainly steep slopes and mountain ranges.

GETTING TO AND AROUND

The main entry points to the region are **Baguio** and **Abra**. Manila to Baguio takes about 7hrs by road, Abra is about 8hrs from Manila. Within the region, choose from buses, vans or jeepneys or hire a car. There are seasonal charter flights from Manila and Clark Airports to Loakan Airport near Baguio City. It's best to check schedules in advance for flight details.

WHERE TO STAY

Mountain accommodation in The Cordilleras is no-frills, homely and affordable – the best places, including inns and homestays, have a rustic, authentic charm. Baguio has more upmarket, modern options.

THE CORDILLERAS

The UNESCO World Heritage listed rice terraces, The Cordilleras



WELCOME TO THE CORDILLERAS

Described by some as ‘the Eighth Wonder of the World’, **UNESCO-listed Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras** – sculpted more than 2,000 years ago from mud walls – are the most famous sight in The Cordilleras of North Luzon. But the spiny Cordilleras Central mountains themselves also lure those who like to get active in the fresh air, with wonderful hiking, biking and caving locations. This is also a fascinating region from a cultural point of view thanks to several fascinating burial sites and to the presence of tribes maintaining their traditional ways of life.

“This ancient cultural landscape beautifully illustrates human harmony with nature.”

– National Geographic Traveller

WHY IT'S MORE FUN IN THE CORDILLERAS

Hiking, caving and swimming in waterfalls await those who seek out this inland region, which is scantily populated save in **Tabuk** and **Baguio City**. The latter is the Philippines’ summer capital due to its elevated location and hence milder temperatures – its historic **Burnham Park** is popular for its lagoon, orchardium and picnic grove. The Cordilleras is a great place to combine cultural discovery with outdoors activities since many of the province’s most important heritage sites are in spectacular natural settings.

Mountain view, Kalinga



TOP EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

- **Say-am Festival of Apayao, February** – the province’s way of celebrating their anniversary as a separate province. The celebration features street dancing, cultural performances, agri-tourism exhibits and trade fairs.
- **Bodong Festival, Kalinga, February** – the festival features music, chants, arts, Kalinga’s songs, and cultural shows, agri-tourism exhibits and trade fairs.
- **Panagbenga Festival, February** – a parade of the flower that abounds in Baguio and Benguet.
- **Panagbenga Street Dance Parade, Baguio City, February/March** – floats, processions, local music and competitions.
- **Arya! Abrenian Kawayan Festival, Bangued, March** – bamboo is a major product in Abra, thus the name of the festival. The celebration features, parades, fashion shows, *balikbayan* (visiting overseas Filipinos) night and cultural shows, celebrating the anniversary of the founding of the province.
- **Mangan Taku Food Fair, Baguio City, April** – a showcase for indigenous food from the region’s six provinces.
- **Lang-ay Festival of Mountain Province, April** – cultural festival highlighting the Foundation Anniversary of Mountain Province, with street dances, theatrical performances, sports competitions and agri-trade fairs.
- **Gotad Ad Ifugao, June** – a cultural festival showcasing cultural presentations, craftsmanship, chants, songs and rituals.
- **Adivay Festival of Benguet, November** – a month-long celebration of agri-tourism through the culture, arts and industries of Benguet. It culminates in the *Grand Cañao* and cultural presentations by the 13 municipalities.

CULTURE AND FOOD

The **Ifugao** people are known for their chants and their unique musical instruments, which include the **nose flute**, **buzzer** and **bamboo zither**. You may be able to see these in action and watch dances and rituals at one of the region’s colourful festivals. The Ifugao are especially known for their organic heirloom *tinawon* rice, planted on their rice terraces and harvested once a year.

Other mountain produce and dishes not to be missed include Benguet coffee, *gipah* herbal tea, *miki abra* (a breakfast noodle soup), *abra masa podrida* (shortbread cookies), *golaria* (doughnuts), *inladit* (sweet crackers), *pinalatan* (chicken with pomelo leaves and chili), *pinaltit* (a ground-pork appetiser), *abraw* (vegetables stewed in fish paste), *kiniling/etag* (smoked meat) and *pinunnog* (smoked sausage).



Baguio City Market



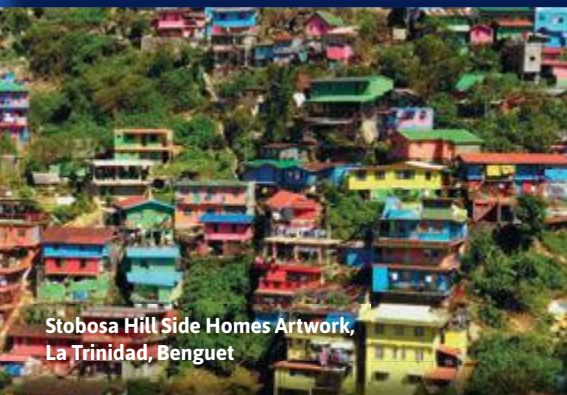
Ifugao



Whang-od Oggay, the last Kalinga tribal tattooist

TOP 10 ACTIVITIES

- Walk through the rice terraces in the provinces of **Ifugao** (Mayoyao, Hungduan, Kiangan), **Mountain Province**, **Kalinga** and other provinces
- Hike up **Mt Timbak** to see the unique **Fire Mummies** in their natural caves.
- Trek up **Mt Pulag**, **Mt Ugo** and **Mt Ulap** in **Benguet** for views down over a ‘sea of clouds’.
- See centuries-old coffins in **Lumiang Burial Cave** then spelunk in nearby **Sumanguing Cave**.
- Discover the hanging coffins suspended high on the cliffs in **Echo Valley** in **Sagada**.
- Swim in the natural pools of **Bomod-ok Falls**.
- Tour the **BenCab Museum**, Baguio City, with its works by Ben Cabrera and other Filipino artists.
- Visit the **Bontoc Museum** showcasing the heritage of the region’s indigenous peoples. Admire the Ifugao woodcarvings in the **Museum of Cordillera Sculpture**.
- Take in the ethnography displays in the **Saint Louis University Museum of Arts & Cultures** and **Museo Kordilyera** at the **University of the Philippines Baguio**.
- Tour **Tam-awan Village** – an Artists Gallery in Baguio City, which uniquely blends indigenous aesthetics and exquisite Cordilleran craftsmanship in an artist’s concept for a village adapted to its setting.



Stobosa Hill Side Homes Artwork, La Trinidad, Benguet



Bomod-ok Falls, Sagada
© Hannah Reyes



Panagbenga Flower Festival, Baguio City



Hanging coffins, Sagada