

# dash

DESIGNED FOR TRAVELERS

TOP

## Travelers' Choice

THE MOST TITILLATING DIVES, TAKE-MY-BREATH-AWAY MOTORBIKE RIDES, BEYOND-BLISS HOLISTIC EXPERIENCES, AND MORE!

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### DASH SPECIAL SIARGAO

A resident thrill seeker's list of off-track things to do other than wave rides



### DASH SPECIAL TAGAYTAY

Kawa baths, lake view dining, and the quaintest cafes in this favorite southern place



### DASH SPECIAL CAVITE

Las Brisas at Tierra Del Sol to hold its grand open house in December





Kawaghan Island



# Other than wave rides

A resident thrillseeker's list of off-track things to do in Siargao

WORDS: JONALYN FORTUNO

**THERE'S TOTALLY A LOT MORE TO SIARGAO ISLAND** than its sensational waves, and you'll be surprised. From lesser-known islands and thrilling adventures to the best eats and chill homestays, Italian expat and adventure tour organizer Gianni Grifoni takes us to spots where even non-surfers can have a great time in the island.

## See hardly expored islands

Forget Daku Island, Guyam Island, and Naked Island. There are other strings of beautiful islands with white sand beaches minus the crowd like **Anahawan**, **La Janosa**, and **Mam-on**. These islands remain very much unexplored, so expect to see an untouched shoreline, good corals, and even a small fishing village.



## Where to stay

# BRAVO BEACH RESORT

WORDS: LEILANI CHAVEZ

**T**raditional but modern. Sleek and homey. Functional and attractive. Few of the many descriptions befitting **Bravo Beach Resort Siargao** located between General Luna town and the famous Cloud 9 surf breaks.

Bravo's accommodation are easily adored: the cottages are fashioned in contemporary architecture made using native materials, labeled with designs of the island and sea animals. Guests can choose to stay in one of the three types of rooms on offer.

Families or friends can book the Garden Rooms that come with a private garden, a large semi-open shower, and a loft. The Double Room has queen-size beds and convertible sofas. Boho surfers can go for Surf Bunk Beds that are shared dorm rooms.

The resort arranges water-based activities like surfing lessons, kiteboarding, diving, fishing, and wakeboard riding, and is the basecamp of *My Siargao Guide*, which arranges island tours.

**Wow factors.** Bravo's exclusive white-sand beachfront, sunset strolls and wave crash-watching; Bravo's restaurant that offers the yummiest menu in the island, from main courses to desserts. Must try: the banoffie pie.

**The nest.** Bravo's high-ceiling well-lit rooms are a mix of white walls and wood coupled with plush pillows, spacious bathrooms with hot and cold shower. The garden and deluxe rooms overlook the garden, the Pacific, and the hammock at the patio. There's also an in-room safe and laundry service.

1. View from Bravo Resort
2. The Garden Room, which features a semi-outdoor shower and a private garden
3. *Tapa de Boquerones*, a favorite at Bravo Restaurant
4. Bravo Restaurant and common area



1



2



3



4



### THE BASICS

**From Php1,200 (USD22)**

per person per night for the bunk beds.

**Php3,900**

for two per night for the Double Rooms, with breakfast.

**Php5,100**

for the Garden Rooms. Tourism Road, Brgy. 5, General Luna, Siargao

Tel: +63999 877 8518

Email:

stay@bravoresort.com

Bravosiargao.com

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Dakotan Island



Photo by Daniel Soriano

Motorbike riding in Malinao

“La Janosa is the uncrowded version of Naked Island while its sister island Mam-on boasts of a white sand beach. Anahawan Island, on the other hand, has good surf breaks but it’s advisable to get a guide who can take you to the right spot,” says Gianni.

#### Bask in underwater marvel

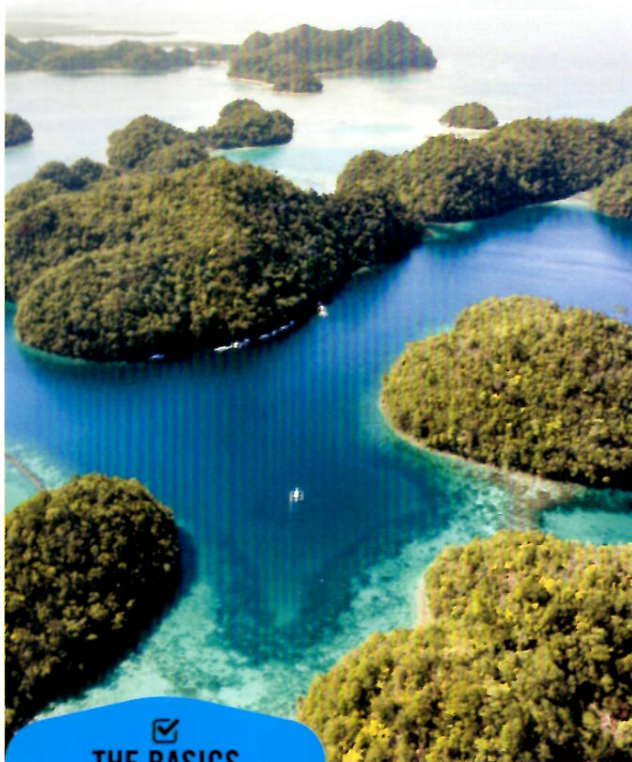
Freediving and scuba diving are two other exciting things water babies can do in Siargao. Gianni recommends **Pansukian** or **Naked Island** for freedivers for its nice coral formations, reefs and good visibility. The water in these spots are usually calm, great for snorkeling.

Experienced scuba divers can head to **Blue Cathedral**, which features a 20-meter-diameter hole on top and two deep caverns. Gianni says that when you go down to 40ft deep, there’s a good chance to see barracudas and tiger sharks. This underwater rock formation is named such for it looks like one with its three entrances: the top hole, north cavern and east cavern. Sun rays would pass through the hole, creating a prism effect, making the water appear as if it’s bathed in blue light.

*Located in General Luna, near Cloud 9*

Another must-try challenging dive spot is **Dapa Channel**, notable for its strong current especially at the





## THE BASICS

### GET THERE

SkyJet flies daily  
from Manila to Siargao.  
SkyJetAirlines.com

### TOURS

Kermit Siargao  
offers Siargao tours.  
Mobile: +63917 655 0548,  
+63920 968 9934  
Kermitsiargao.com



Photo by Dane Soriano

From top: Sugba Lagoon; and Kermit Siargao's loungey restaurant

tide shift. Gianni says the experience is like flying because the strong current will push you through the water.

### See Siargao on a different angle

What can be a better way to bask in the beauty of Siargao's ocean than to stand up paddleboard (SUP)? Gianni suggests a route from **Kermit Siargao to Malinao** for a chance to paddle through masses of mangroves. **Del Carmen** is another great spot for a mangrove tour. The town is more than just a jump off point to Sugba Lagoon for it has the largest stretch of mangrove forest in the country and is home to a rare saltwater crocodile species.

### Gamefish and head to a hilltop lake

There are towns in Siargao that lets you escape the maddening crowd of General Luna: **Pilar** and **San Benito**. "People come to Pilar for Magpupungko Rock Pools but what they didn't know is that it's a great game fishing destination," Gianni says. Pilar also has a quaint fishing village where people built their homes over water.

San Benito town, located on the west coast of Siargao, is small village that's home to a beautiful hilltop lake and uninhabited tiny isles that are as appealing as the famous players Guyam, Naked and Daku islands. "What I like most

about San Benito is the serene Poneas Hilltop Hidden Lake, also home to different freshwater species," says Gianni.



### Who is Gianni Grifoni?

Gianni Grifoni is a Swiss-Italian expat and a Siargao local at heart who founded Kermit Siargao over a decade ago. He's a marine biologist, dive instructor, surfer, chef, and clothing brand *Gwapitos* co-owner

### Have a food adventure

Culinary gems have sprouted in Siargao so if dining is the topic, you will not run of options. For authentic brick-oven Italian pizza and fresh-made pasta, there's **Kermit Siargao**. **Harana Surf Resort**, according to Gianni, serves the best crispy *kangkong* (water spinach) *halo-halo* (a dessert made of shaved ice, mixed beans and fruits), fried chicken and poke bowl. Bayud Boutique Resort's in-house restaurant, **The Surfing Pig**, is also worth the little detour for their *sisig* tacos, *lechon kare-kare* (roast pork in peanut stew) and *kinilaw* (local ceviche). Fried chicken lovers may as well try the island's version of KFC: CFC or **Catangnan Fried Chicken**.