

## **Practical Information (FAQ)**

This is a list of the information most requested by our visitors – plus a bit more. If there is anything you need to know that we have not covered here, please inform us. We will be glad to advise you and, if necessary, add the new details to this page.

You come packing for your trip, you might consider also taking a look at our Checklist. Don't be one of the many traveller who leave something important behind.

- Luggage and Dive Equipment
- Visas and Other Documents
- Insurance
- Health
- Climate
- Money
- Payment of Balance in Neptune Diving Resorts Philippines
- Telephone and Internet
- Cultural Customs
- Security
- Shopping
- Clothing
- Diving Regulations

### **Luggage and Dive Equipment**

Divers and surfers coming to the Philippines often bring their own equipment. Please be aware that luggage allowances, both hand and checked-in, vary greatly from airline to airline and excess weight is increasingly frowned upon and very expensive. Some airlines allow an additional item of sports equipment to be checked in as hold luggage, provided that it is requested before hand. Remember security restrictions on luggage items, plus a few diving related requirements like removing batteries and bulbs from dive torches and making sure that nothing contains pressurised gas (e.g. pony cylinders).

Most general holiday accessories can be purchased in the Philippines but whether you buy them here or before you come, there are certain basic items you should consider packing for the Philippines, e.g.:

- Sunglasses
- Headwear for sun protection (sun shade, hood, cap, scarf, etc.)
- Sun cream (min. factor 25 recommended) – expensive in the Philippines
- Insect repellent
- Warm clothing for cooler nights or mountain visits

### **Visas and Other Documents**

On the plane to the Philippines, you should receive a landing card which must be completed and submitted at Passport Control. They are not always distributed on flights but they are available,

on request, in the Arrivals Hall at the airport. A similar card must be completed before going through passport control on departure from the Philippines. This is normally given out at check-in. Visas – You get a 29 day visa upon arrival. If you plan to stay longer than 29 days, visas are available in the Philippine Embassy in your home country but it is easier – and usually cheaper – to purchase one on arrival in the Philippines. **Please note:** Your passport should still be valid for at least six months when you enter the Philippines.

### **Insurance**

It is highly recommended that you arrange good travel insurance before travelling. Some policies offered by, for example: banks and credit card companies as added incentives for customers often leave much to be desired when it comes to claims. Be sure to read the small print. Also, verify with the insurance company that any sporting activity you might take part in is covered by your policy – that should include horse riding and quad biking which are very popular in the mountain. We advise divers to obtain a comprehensive diving insurance with DAN [www.daneurope.org](http://www.daneurope.org) and Dive Assure [www.diveassure.com](http://www.diveassure.com) or one of the other reputable insurers recommended by the major diving agencies such as (PADI etc.).

### **Health**

There are currently no compulsory vaccinations required for the Philippines. However, it is highly recommended that you be vaccinated against polio, hepatitis A and tetanus.

Although stomach upsets are relatively rare these days, diarrheas treatments are advisable inclusions in your personal first aid kit, although pharmacies are numerous, and will provide most common prescription and non-prescription medicines and toiletries. You should be aware that the Philippine medical services are not free and that hospitals, doctors, dentists, etc, are unlikely to come up to the standards that the residents of most European countries have come to expect. In the event of a diving incident, there are excellent hyperbaric and medical facilities available at the major diving venues. However, the accumulated costs of **hyperbaric treatment** for pressure accidents, specialised medication and hospitalisations, plus possible emergency repatriation can be prohibitive, so it is wise not to economise on insurance. Please see the above recommendations **Insurance** regarding cover for divers and diving activities. Dehydration can be a serious problem, especially during the hotter summer months (February – July). The recommended daily water intake is an absolute minimum of 2 liters per person. Divers should add another liter for every dive they do. In case of mild dehydration, it is usually sufficient to drink rehydration salts dissolved in water (30g/day. More serious cases will require medical attention.

### **Climate**

Generally, Cebu has sunny weather all year round with the minimal risk of typhoons. Hottest times of the year is March to June, the coolest times are from December to February. “High season” is traditionally late October to early June, although the area is busy at weekends throughout the year and during any Asian Holidays. The water temperature is around 26-28 degrees whole year around.

### **Money**

Wire Transfers:

When you are paying for your vacation via wire transfer, please send our reservations office a copy of the wire transfer details so we can credit your account faster. Transfers can be made in EUR, GBP, USD, SGD, AUD and NZD.

### Money to Bring:

The local currency is the Philippines Peso (Php). Personal charges are billed in pesos.

Payments can be made using either cash or credit cards. All major currencies are accepted (based on the daily exchange rate), but change due will be given in pesos only. We do not offer foreign exchange services at the resorts.

There are no resort charges for using credit cards for services and/or purchases, though your credit card may charge a foreign transaction fee. We accept VISA, MASTERCARD or AMERICAN EXPRESS.

**Please note: We cannot provide cash advances on credit cards and we cannot process tips/gratuities by credit card.**

USD cash may be accepted at some local establishments and at the airport for terminal fees.

There is an ATM in Moalboal and in Santander. However, we suggest you do not rely on ATM machines outside of Manila and Cebu City as the machines are prone to technical failure, may be out of cash or may not support your card.

**Traveller's Cheques – We do NOT accept this form of payment.**

### Transfers

**Meet and Greet:** If your domestic transfer arrangements and/or Manila hotel arrangements have been booked with us we will provide concierge assistance in Manila. Our reservations team will provide maps and details on where to meet our staff.

**Travel to Moalboal:** Travel to Cebu City (Mactan International Airport) is usually a 1 1/4 hour domestic flight from Manila. At the airport, once you meet your driver upon exiting baggage area and customs, our staff will load your luggage. Our driver should be wearing a blue Neptune polo shirt and will usually have a sign with guest or group name. The private van or car will usually stop at a service station for refreshment.

**Travel to Santander:** Travel to Dumaguete City (Sibulan Airport) is usually a 1 1/4 hour domestic flight from Manila followed by a 20 min boat ride. At the airport, once you meet your driver upon exiting baggage area and customs, our staff will load your luggage. Our driver should be wearing a blue Neptune polo shirt and will usually have a sign with guest or group name. When you reach Santander/Cebu the resort is 5 min from the pier.

Alternative you can start your trip by visiting Moalboal first. Then we can bring you down to Santander with one of our drivers. Or Vice versa of course, start your trip in Santander. Then we can bring you up to Moalboal with one of our drivers. There are both vans and cars for these trips. Just let us know how many people you are for each trip.

### Manila Airport & Flight Information

**Terminal 1:** Also referred to as 'NAIA' handles most international flights

**Terminal 2:** Also referred to as the 'PAL Terminal' has two wings – domestic and international. These terminals exclusively handle all Philippine Airlines (PAL) Flights

**Terminal 3:** Handles all Cebu Pacific flights as well as ANA, Air Asia, Cathay Pacific, Delta, Emirates, KLM and Singapore Airlines

Connections between terminals requires land transfers – our reservations team will advise on transfer times and options.

Guests connecting between a Philippines Airlines (PAL) international flight to a Philippines Airlines (PAL) domestic flight (or vice-versa), i.e. PAL to PAL with same day transit, will be directed to PAL transfer services and do not need to transit between terminals via public roads. Please follow PAL staff directions. This transition shortens the inter-terminal transfer time, but also means that Neptune Diving Resort Philippines staff cannot meet you for your inter-terminal transfers. Please be sure to check your luggage through to your final destination, if other than Manila.

**Terminal Fees/Taxes:** There is an international terminal fee of Php750 (approx. \$15) when you leave the Philippines. This fee is included in your international ticket and no longer has to be paid in cash. The domestic terminal fee in Manila is Php200 (approx. \$4) and is likewise included in the purchase of all tickets. Provincial (Dumaguete, Cebu and Puerto Princesa) domestic terminal fees are approximately P150 (\$3) and have to be paid in cash. If Neptune Diving Resort Philippines books your transfers within the Philippines to include your domestic round trip economy tickets then these domestic terminal fee are included in the ticket price. If you arrange your own domestic airline reservations then you are responsible for arranging payment of the terminal fees.

**Carry-On Luggage Restriction:** Philippines Office for Transportation Security has issued new rules that include 'Scuba Diving Equipment' (including regulators) on the list of blunt instruments that are not to be in carry-on/cabin baggage on flights originating within the Philippines. Please ensure that all scuba equipment is secured within checked-in baggage on all domestic flights and on all departing international flights.

**Luggage Claim Tags:** You will be given tags for each piece of check-in luggage at the check-in counter. When you get to the Dumaguete airport do not claim your luggage but give these tags to our representative and we will collect your bags. If you are traveling with a group your group leader may collect them all after check-in.

#### Check-in Baggage Allowance and Excess Baggage with Domestic Airlines

For Cebu Pacific our domestic tickets include 32 Kg/70 lbs. This can be upgraded to:

40 Kg/88 lbs total - \$50 round trip add on 55 Kg/121 lbs total - \$105 round trip add on 60 Kg/132 lbs total - \$115 round trip add on 70 Kg/154 lbs total - \$130 round trip add on 80 Kg/176 lbs total - \$150 round trip add on

For PAL our domestic tickets include 20 Kg/44 lbs. This can be upgraded to:

25 Kg 55lbs total - \$22 round trip add on 30 Kg/66 lbs total - \$40 round trip add on 35 Kg/77 lbs total - \$50 round trip add on 40 Kg/88 lbs total - \$70 round trip add on

**Note:** Passport names and date of birth must be received at least 90 days prior to arrival to book domestic flights. Confirmation of upgraded weight requirements requires 4 days advance notice of flights. Maximum weight per bag cannot exceed 30 Kg/66 lbs.

## At The Resort

Front desk services available: Front desk services include laundry, massage bookings, wake up calls, transfer confirmations, information, dive/beach towels and excursion bookings.

Room amenities: All Neptune rooms have climate controlled air conditioning, fans, fully stocked minibars including emergency toiletries (prices are very reasonable), digital safety box for your valuables, hot and cold water. Drinking water are available in each room. Water refill stations are available around in the resort.

**All rooms at both Neptune resorts are no smoking.** Guests may smoke outside or in designated areas.

Entertainment: Both resorts have friendly beach bars where the dive staff members gather in the early evening - please join them for a drink or to catch up filling in your logbook, or just to watch the sun go down. Marine Life and video presentations are also arranged on selected evenings.

Towels: Bath towels are provided in rooms along with a token for one additional beach towel each day. There is a charge for extra beach towels.

Electricity: Power at both resorts is 220V. Transformer or 110V are only available in the camera room (with fixed step down transformer). Sockets are flat two or three pin - American style. Both resorts have back-up generators in case of power interruptions.

Internet Access and Phone Calls: Our rooms do not have phones but you make phone calls (local or international) from the front desk during open hours for a fee. Wireless and LAN Internet connections are available at both resorts from either our desktop computers or your own laptop. Internet connection is complimentary with your vacation.

Dress Code: Neither resort has specific dress codes however no swimwear or wet clothing is allowed in the restaurant areas; further we do ask that men wear a shirt in the restaurant areas.

Food/Beverages: You can inform us of any special dietary requirements you have when you check-in online (see first section of this FAQ).

We offer a wide range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages throughout the day. Diving is prohibited after drinking alcohol. Brewed coffee, hot tea, iced tea and filtered water are complimentary throughout the day. Italian, other specialty coffees and fresh juice are complimentary only until 10am with breakfast, but available for a fee after that. **A corkage fee is charged on alcoholic beverages consumed at the resorts not purchased there.**

Water: Filtered water served in the resort restaurants and dive shops is safe to drink and free of charge; you are welcome to refill bottles to take to your room. Tap water is not safe to drink. We recommend you brush your teeth with, and drink only, either the filtered water we provide or bottled water that is available either in the minibar or restaurant (for a charge).

Food safety: We highly recommend that you eat all your meals in the resort. While many will tell you it is ok to eat food from local establishments and street vendors, please be advised this is a developing country and refrigeration is many times nonexistent. Items the locals or even expats living there have no problem consuming can make those unaccustomed quite sick.



## Diving Introduction

Your dive guide will discuss sites and preferences with you and ensure you get the most from every dive.

The typical dive schedule includes three day dives and one night dive (four dives total) to choose from. Our dive schedule on a normal day looks like this. We start in the morning with our first dive at 9:00 AM then next dive at 11:30 AM and next dive in the afternoon at 14:30 PM. Night dive kicks off from just after sunset or around 18:30 PM. Our dive schedule are very flexible, or we can adjust it to fit your group.

Typical dive time is approximately 50-60 minutes with a maximum depth of 100 feet (30m). As general policy, Open Water Divers will only be allowed on dives below 60 feet (18m) or night dives if they can show proof of previous experience and exhibit adequate in-water skills, adventure training dives are available. For divers with a desire to dive beyond 60 minutes, please contact us, your group leader or agent for options and prices.

**Both Moalboal and Santander require divers to exhibit good buoyancy control at all times, to respect the underwater environment and not wear gloves.**

**Please also note that if dive days are cancelled or curtailed due to weather there is no reimbursement or compensation (see sections referring to insurance).**

**Mandatory Equipment: The use of dive computers is mandatory when diving at either Neptune resorts.**

**Marine Park Fees:** Both in Moalboal and Santander there are Marine Park fees to pay at the resort; these are not include in vacation prices. Marine Park fees are established by the local authorities and can change at any time. Our Marine Park fees quotes are based on the rates at the time of the quote, however guests are responsible for paying the marine park fee rate that is established for their period of travel.

**Underwater Photography:** You will also find plenty of dedicated rinse areas in the dive shop and matted surfaces to work on.

**Diving Documents & Medical:** Please bring your certification card (mandatory) and log book. If you require Nitrox, please bring a Nitrox certification card. All divers are asked to sign a waiver on arrival. Please ensure that any diving medical concerns are addressed before you travel.

**Rental Equipment:** Rental equipment is available at both resorts; unless otherwise specified in your voucher pre booked dives only include tanks, weights, boat and guide.

**Nitrox:** Nitrox 32 & 36 is available at both resorts for an additional fee.

**Dive Courses:** Most PADI courses from kids programs to professional training are available at both resorts. If you would like to use your time to improve your skills such a Nitrox or Naturalist Course please contact your tour organizer for details. It is possible to exchange dives for dive courses. If you haven't been diving for a while both locations offer scuba tune-ups.

Other Commonly Asked Questions Temperature (approximate averages):

Dec - March

Air (average day) 74-86 (24-30) Water 74-79 (24-26)

Late March – May

86-95 (30-35) 82-86 (28-30)

June - August

86-92 (28-33) 80-84 (27-29)

Sept - Nov

81-90 (27-32) 77-82 (25-28)

**Note:** Moalboal and Santander would have the same weather and temperature on average.

**Medical:** Both resorts have contingency medical plans for diving and non-diving emergencies and have first aid kits, oxygen and defibrillators. The closest recompression chamber to Moalboal and Santander is Cebu City. Full oxygen kits and first aid kits are included on every day trip at both resorts (travel times are around five to twenty minutes maximum on these). Guests are required to have both medical and diving health insurance.

Neither location is considered a risk for Malaria but inoculations for Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Polio and Tetanus are recommended. As always, your physician should be consulted on these and other questions you may have about traveling to the tropics. We strongly recommend drinking plenty of water and other non-alcoholic fluids during your stay.

**Gratuities:** Gratuities are not included in your vacation and are not mandatory. If you feel the Neptune Team helped make your trip enjoyable and you received a superior level of service may we suggest a gratuity of approximately 10% of your vacation price. Envelopes are provided at the resort where you may choose individual team members, departments or the whole staff with whom to share your tip.

**Gratuities cannot be charged to a credit card;** therefore one should plan to bring enough cash for gratuities.

**Environmental Users Fee (Moalboal and Santander):** A Php 110 (approx. \$2.20) 'Environmental Users Fee' is added to all personal bills for those aged between 12-60. This fee is a local government imposed tax to raise money for projects to help sustain the local environment.

**CONTACT US WITH ANY OTHER QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS**

If you have other questions feel free to visit our web site, [www.neptunediving.com](http://www.neptunediving.com), email us at [moalboal@neptunediving.com](mailto:moalboal@neptunediving.com) and [santander@neptunediving.com](mailto:santander@neptunediving.com) or talk to your group leader or agent.

Once again we look forward to having you with us soon.