



Writer and editor **DELLE CHAN** is always game to explore different facets of a destination, whether it's hiking the hills or traipsing halfway across town for a good cup of joe. On her first trip to Boracay, she packs her itinerary with everything from food to sports.



WEEKEND WARRIORS

ONE DESTINATION, TWO DIFFERENT ADVENTURES



Philippines-born **KRIZTEL LORBES** is a Masters student in Media and Communication Management currently based in Berlin. After attending her friends' wedding in Manila, she trooped off to Boracay with a group of international friends for a sun- and alcohol-soaked vacation.



VIEW FROM THE TOP

To get the lay of the land, I head up **Mount Luho**, the highest point on the island. At just around 100m above sea level, it's less of a mountain and more of a hill. Nevertheless, I get a commanding view of the island's characteristic dog-bone shape from the peak's observation tower, and spend a few minutes admiring the scenery.



FRUITS OF MY LABOUR

I make a stop at the popular **Jonah's Fruit Shake & Snack Bar** at Station 1, which serves up what are supposedly the best fruit shakes in Boracay. I order the bestselling mango shake and take a swig from the bottle eagerly. The juice is sweet and creamy, yet refreshing, and does a great job quenching my thirst.



FUELLING UP

After wandering around D'Mall — an outdoor shopping centre with a motley assortment of souvenir shops and cafes — I opt to have dinner at **Spicebird**, a popular *piri-piri* (African bird's eye chilli) grill. I tuck greedily into the Piri-Piri Shrimp Board, which comprises gambas-style shrimp atop a bed of turmeric rice and served alongside veggie chips. The piquant piri-piri sauces, which are made from scratch in-house, make everything taste doubly delectable. [fb.com/spicebirdgrill](https://www.facebook.com/spicebirdgrill)



JUMPING OFF

Ariel's Point is an eco-adventure destination located 45 minutes away from Boracay by boat, and is a must-visit for any adrenaline junkie. Offering a variety of activities, the most popular one has to be cliff diving, with the highest jump-off point about 15m above the water. For the less audacious, kayaking, snorkelling, and paddleboarding are also available. A day trip set us back about PHP2,500 (S\$71.50) each, and the fee is inclusive of a boat cruise, barbecue buffet lunch, unlimited beverages (including beer), as well as unlimited access to water activities. The boat departs Ariel's Point for Boracay's White Beach. arielspoint.com

TO MARKET PHOTO: JP LIGUARN



TO MARKET, TO MARKET

Located at Station 2, **D'Talipapa** (talipapa means "wet market" in Tagalog), is a must-visit for first-time visitors as it offers great seafood deals and affordable cooking rates. Here, we stuff ourselves silly on garlic-battered shrimp, *adobong pusit* (a Filipino squid dish), baked mussels with cheese, and the freshest lobsters. My advice? Go there early as it gets extremely busy by 7pm.



SAY CHEERS

Sated from dinner, we head to **Om Bar**, located at Station 2. We settle comfortably into bean bags while the DJ spins ambient tunes from his deck. As the night goes on, the music transitions to more up tempo beats, and we find ourselves knocking back free shots and drinks generously dispensed by the bartenders. [fb.com/OmBarBoracay](https://www.facebook.com/OmBarBoracay)

FANCY AN ADVENTURE?
If you want to be one of our Weekend Warriors, get in touch.
tiger.ed@ink-global.com



FUELLING UP

I have a busy day ahead, so naturally, a hearty breakfast is in order. I get just that at **The Sunny Side Café** at Station 3, which, as its name suggests, is a bright and cheery space with equally smiley service staff. Everything on the all-day breakfast menu sounds droolworthy, but I eventually settle on the Malagos Chocolate Pancake, which is studded with dark chocolate chunks from Davao and topped with Chantilly cream. It's the largest and fluffiest pancake I've ever sunk my teeth into. thesunnysideboracay.com



8 AM



ROPE ME IN

Bulabog Beach on the island's eastern coast is a prime kitesurfing destination. On a whim, I decide to sign up for an introductory lesson at **Hangin Kite Center**, where I spend two hours learning the ropes, quite literally — from rigging up the equipment to flying a two-line trainer kite in the water. The sport is more technical than I expect; my kite keeps crashing onto the beach, much to my exasperation. However, I'm thankful that my instructor, Jana, guides me along with saintly patience. hanginkite.com



10 AM



FISHY BUSINESS

After all that wrestling with the kite, my stomach is rumbling again, so I walk over to tuna specialty restaurant **Hoy Panga!** at Station 2 for lunch. I order an enormous slab of tuna belly, which is grilled to perfection. Outside, beneath a canopy of coconut trees, a trio of street musicians drums up a beat — much to the delight of patrons and passers-by alike. fb.com/hoypangaboracay



1 PM



CHASING THE SUN

I've been told that it's a must to embark on a sunset sail when in Boracay, so I hop on one of the many *paraws* (local sailboats) that line the beach. The boat grunts gutturally as we push off from the shore, but we're soon bobbing lazily towards the molten yolk of the sunset — it's a truly glorious sight. Before I know it, the sail is over, and far too soon.



5 PM



LIFE'S A BEACH

The sun is out in full force, so I amble over to the famous **White Beach** — just steps away from the restaurant — to soak up some Vitamin D. This four kilometre stretch of sand definitely lives up to its reputation; despite the crowds, its shores are still powder-white and the water, incredibly crystalline. I lounge lazily on a deckchair and drink in the views with a coconut in hand.



2 PM



WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS

Lemoni Café in the heart of D'Mall serves up healthy all-day brunch fare, from sandwiches to pastas. After perusing the extensive menu, I eventually settle on a grilled shrimp and mango salad tossed in wasabi dressing. To my pleasant surprise, the portion is enormous, and it comes up nicely. lemonicafeboracay.com

My huge shrimp salad



8 PM

SAT



MORNING CUPPA

The night ends earlier than expected so I'm up bright and early the next morning for a caffeine fix at **Real Coffee**. This joint has been around for over 20 years, and is now considered a Boracay institution. With its homely bamboo and wood interior, aromatic coffee, and signature tangy calamansi muffins, it's little wonder that Real Coffee — located close to SeaWorld at Station 2 — is so popular among early risers. fb.com/RealCoffeeAndTeaCafe



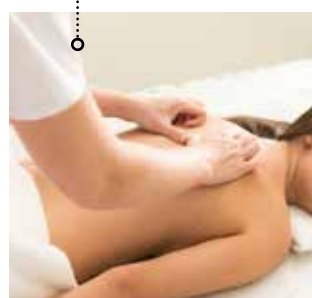
AWAY FROM IT ALL

White Beach may have its charms but we're on the lookout for an even more secluded spot. That's why we opt for **Balinghai Beach** — located between Puka Beach and Diniwad — instead. The stretch is owned by Balinghai Beach Resort, but walk-in guests can access the beach by paying a small admission fee, which can be used to cover food and drinks at the resort's restaurant. We spend a blissful few hours here lazing on the beach, enjoying the view of the crystal-clear blue waters. balinghai.com



FULFILLING A KNEAD

Seeking respite from the sweltering heat, I treat myself to a relaxing Swedish massage by **Sur Beach** as the rest of the group imbibe cocktails. Groups of masseuse ply their trade close to the many resorts in Boracay, and I get a view of the sea while the tension is slowly kneaded out of my tired muscles. Talk about a treat for the senses!



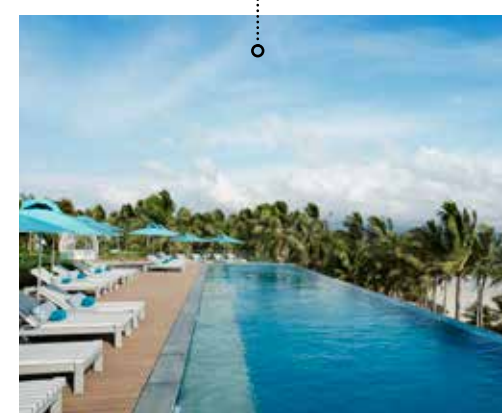
FALLING INTO YOU

If you want to see something funny, ask your friends to try their hands at stand-up paddling (SUP) after they have some alcohol in their systems. I manage to convince the group to rent some boards for a spot of SUP and, well, let's just say more time was spent in the water than actually standing up on the board. After a few hapless tries, everyone decides to head back for round two of happy hour.



SUNSET SESSIONS

The Lind is one of Boracay's newer resorts. Located close to the edge of Station 1, its quirky yet stylish interiors are sure to appeal to design buffs. The resort's infinity pool located on the third level is, without a doubt, one of the best spots to catch the sunset on the island, and that's exactly what we find ourselves doing, cocktail in hand. As I watch the sun dip below the horizon, I sip on a refreshing SampaMule, the resort's take on a classic Moscow Mule. thelindhoteles.com



AN EPIC NIGHT

After dinner and pre-game drinks, we find ourselves at **Epic**. Founded by the same people who run Manila superclubs Encore, Manor and Republic, Epic is a welcome addition to Boracay's party scene. A restaurant by day and a beach club by night, Epic is the place to go to boogie the night away. Local and international guests DJs regularly pop by to helm the decks. epicboracay.com



BALINGHAI BEACH PHOTO: EDUARDO GARCIA IV



ROOM WITH A VIEW

I begin my day with a 90-minute Ashtanga yoga class at **True Yoga**, which is located on the second floor of an Indian restaurant at Station 2. While the studio is tiny, I adore its beachfront location. From my mat, I am treated to splendid views of White Beach, and can even hear the waves lapping on the shore. It's the perfect setting for a spot of stretching and meditation.
fb.com/trueyoga.boracay

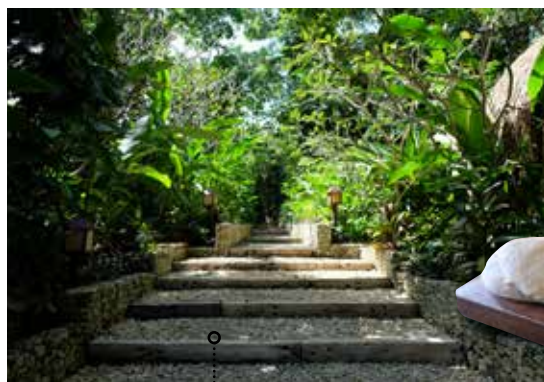


8 AM



SPA, SPA AWAY

Rejuvenated, I walk over to **Mandala Spa & Resort Villas**, an award-winning wellness retreat ensconced amidst verdant greenery. Here, I receive the spa's signature Hilot Trilogy treatment, which celebrates indigenous Filipino healing modalities and rituals. My therapist, Vic, applies coconut oil on my body using strips of banana leaves, before administering bentosa, a traditional vacuum cupping technique. She then kneads away the knots in my muscles with long, deep strokes. The experience is so soothing that I end up falling asleep.
mandalaspaaandresortvillas.com



10 AM



LIGHTLY DOES IT

Mandala's in-house restaurant, **Prana Café**, also champions healthy living, whipping up organic fare with ingredients sourced from its own herb garden. I order a tuna tartare marinated in bulgogi sauce, as well as some freshly baked bread served with herb butter, basil pesto and vinaigrette. While the food is light, it's bursting with flavour. Yum!
mandalaspaaandresortvillas.com



12 PM



LOCO OVER COCO

I still have room for dessert, so I take a tricycle to **Coco Mama** at D'Mall. This little dessert stand specialises in vegan and dairy-free coconut ice cream that's topped with sticky rice, diced mango and **pinipig** (immature grains of glutinous rice that are pounded flat and toasted) — all served in coconut shells. It's the ideal treat for a warm, muggy afternoon.
fb.com/cocomamaboracay



2 PM



OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

I'm bent on soaking up as much sun as possible, so I traipse over to under-the-radar **Diniwid Beach**. Despite being located just a stone's throw away from White Beach, this cove boasts none of the crowds that throng its more popular cousin. Instead, the only other visitors I see are a few local kids frolicking in the water. I settle comfortably on the beach with a book, digging my toes in the cool sand.



4 PM



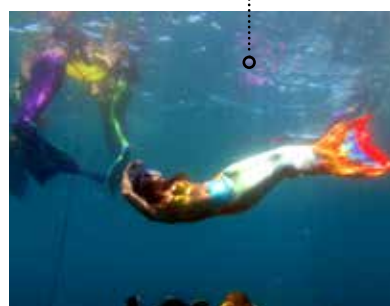
A PERFECT ENDING

Overlooking Diniwid Beach is **Spider House**, a rustic guesthouse and restaurant tucked into a cliff. I snag a seat at the resort's over-water platform (which also doubles up as a diving board for intrepid folks), and order a simple dinner — a platter of grilled squid and a glass of watermelon juice. As I tuck into my food, the sun slips languidly below the horizon, suffusing everything with a warm, golden glow. It's a magical ending to my whirlwind Boracay trip, and I promise myself I'll be back soon.
spiderhouseresort.com



7 PM

SUN



MAKE LIKE ARIEL

If you've ever fantasised about being a mermaid, the **Philippine Mermaid Swimming Academy** is where you can make them come true. Here, you'll learn how to swim with a monofin, as well as a mermaid tale. While I don't have time for it on this trip, I'm sold on the idea after visiting the academy and speaking to people who've tried it. It sure looks like a fun way to sneak fitness into my next vacay!
philippinemermaidswimminacademy.com



BIRD'S EYE VIEW

If you think Boracay is beautiful at sea level, wait till you see what it looks like from above. One of the guys in our group has brought his drone along, and we have lots of fun taking pictures and videos with it as we take a dip in the sea.



SCENIC ROUTE

Of course you can walk to get to **Mount Luho's Ocean Tower**, Boracay's highest point, but we choose a more adventurous way to get to the top — on an all-terrain vehicle (ATV)! As the prices can vary quite a bit, we haggle with a vendor for awhile, but the 360° unobstructed views at the top — along with the fun ride — are more than worth it.

PHOTOS: JP LUCORAN (BIRD'S EYE VIEW), PAULO VIOLAS (MAKE LIKE ARIEL)



GIFT WHISPERER

I can't leave Boracay without some souvenirs for my friends back in Europe, where I live now, so it's off to **D'Talipapa Market** to go for a spot of last-minute shopping. Yes, D'Talipapa isn't just about the seafood! I snag some keychains, touristy T-shirts, as well as some Filipino goods and delicacies, including my beloved dried mangoes.

PHOTO: WALTERGICISY / SHUTTERSTOCK, INC. (GIFT WHISPERER)



CHILL TIME

There's just about enough time for a cocktail (or two) at **Sur Beach Resort**, where happy hour starts early — at 2pm, rather than 4pm at most of the other bars around the island. We enjoy one-for-one cocktails and discounted beers along with onion rings and other bar bites as we spend the last few hours of our stay here chilling in one of the resort's cabanas.
surboracay.com



LAST MEAL FOR THE ROAD

Filipino food is always a win in my books, so I whisk the group off to **Mesa Filipino Moderne**, a restaurant located in Henann Regency Resort & Spa, where we feast on baked scallops, stuffed squid, beef kare kare, and tinapa rice (rice topped with salted egg and sprinkled with smoked fish flakes). It will be a while before I make another trip back to the Philippines, so I make sure I savour every mouthful I take.
fb.com/MesaPH

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