



DESTINATION: LUKBAN DE BANAHAW

LOCATION :	Quezon Province
ELEVATION :	1875 meters above sea level
LEVEL :	Major Climb, Level III, Strenuous
JUMP OFF POINTS :	Lukban, Quezon
AVERAGE DAYS REQUIRED :	2 Days (including travel time from Manila)
MINIMUM DAYS REQUIRED :	2 Days (including travel time from Manila)
IT CREATED BY :	Long Henson
DISTINCT CHARACTERISTICS :	Rainforest, Mossy Forest, Conical Volcano
LAST EDITED :	March 1, 2000

◆ INFORMATION



Mossy Crater

Technically speaking, Mt. Banahaw is one large mountain with three major peaks, the Banahaw, the Cristobal and the Lukban de Banahaw. But for some these are three different mountains. If the skies are clear, you can see Mt. Banahaw from Manila with two other equally impressive mountains standing at the opposite sides of Banahaw that is Cristobal and Lukban. Lukban is actually a vent on the slope of Banahaw, which transformed into a majestic almost perfect conical volcano due to the piling up of lava from the said vent for hundreds of years.

Mountaineers claim that climbing Lukban de Banahaw is more difficult than Banahaw (Dolores). Although trekking time for the latter is longer, the steepness and non-established trail of Lukban makes it more difficult. There are also some parts of the trail where you have to go under or over fallen trees. But compared to Banahaw, Lukban is more densely covered with more exotic plants on its slopes. It is often called by mountaineers as "mini-Mayon" due to its conical shape. Its campsite is located at the summit, which can hold about 10 tents. There are lots of trees around this summit campsite that views are restricted. There was once a tower that was erected in the summit so that you can get some views but through the years, it was eventually destroyed. A mid-camp can be setup on a flat open space midway to the summit which mountaineers call "*mukha*" or "face" due to a carving of a face in one of the trees at the center of this campsite.

◆ LEGENDS

According to barrio folk legends, a beautiful goddess named Princess Samantha appears from time to time on the sacred mountain. Princess Samantha is believed to be a cousin of Legendary Mariang Makiling whose mountain abode in Laguna enchanted and inspired many generations of artist from poets, lyricist, composers and writers. Ayuti residents (the barrio at the foot of the mountain) believe in the existence of a pair of golden cows that sometimes appear to wayfarers on Banahaw. Quite interesting though that a lot of similar legends exist in the Philippines even places far apart. This golden cow legend is one of those commons to residents living on the foot of a mountain. Another interesting and funny example is the usual claims of an existence of a lake at the summit of a mountain by low land residents who have not even been to the summit. They will usually argue that you have not been to the summit if you have not seen it.

◆ WHEN AND HOW TO GO

To go to Lukban, you have to go to Sta. Cruz Laguna first either via BLTB, Tritran, JAC or JAM. Before there were BLTB trips that goes directly to Lukban. From Sta. Cruz, you can take a jeepney ride to Lukban at the Sta. Cruz public market or better yet, hire a jeepney that will take you to the jump-off point, at Barangay Ayuti, Lukban. Tell the driver that you need to go to the PLDT station. Ayuti is actually around 4 kilometers from Lukban. Ayuti is a large vegetable plantation, which is the source of some of the vegetables here in Manila. But prior to getting at the plantation, you will pass by Lukban's waste disposal site. It's quite a contrasting site.

The start of the trek is at the PLDT transmitter station at a high elevation where you can see the outlying province. You can inquire about the trailhead at the guard at the PLDT station. The initial start of the trail is a bit confusing since it passes through a river. Then from the main trail, there is a gate that protects the mountain from climbers without permission from the Local Government Unit. It is usually locked and you can get the key if you go to the municipal hall for a courtesy registration. Actually, the fence don't cover the entire mountain so you can just trek around it to get pass the gate but it's a bit time consuming and confusing so better request for the permit. From the area prior to the gate, there is a trail going directly to Taytay Falls in Majayjay. If you suddenly stumble on an open field with large viewpoint overlooking the outlying town, you are at the wrong trail.

After entering the gate, you only have one trail to the summit. But after a typhoon, fallen trees make require you to reroute and retrace the trail.

From the summit, there is a trail going inside what they call a "mossy crater" due to the thick mosses at the floor and the huge old trees. It's really a thick jungle out there. You can further trace a trail going to a view point over looking Banahaw.

They claim that there is a trail from Tayabas to Lukban and from Tayabas; you can also hike towards Dolores via Durungawan. In getting down the mountain, after going to the PLDT station, you have to trek the four kilometers of dirt road to the main Hi-way of Lukban to Tayabas Quezon unless you ask the same jeep you have hired to fetch you on your way home.

If you need to take a bath before going home, there is a nice small pool at the rice field on the other side of the road. You can ask the houses nearby for directions.

◆ POINTS OF INTEREST

Lukban is a nice town at the foot of the mountain. It's good to be there during the annual "*Pahiyas*" fiesta, which is a national tourist attraction happening on May 19 of every year. *Pahiyas* is some sort of a thanksgiving during the feast of their patron saint, San Isidro Labrador. During the feast, the town transforms into one colorful place wherein they decorate their houses with farm produce and "*kipings*" made from rice. On your way home, you will be passing by Luisiana (not Louisiana), and then Pagsanjan, another popular tourist destination. Then a final stop at Sta. Cruz, Laguna for the trip back to Manila. Sta Cruz, by the way, houses the icon of Our Lady of Maulawin from Mt. Sembrano.

◆ SUGGESTED ITINERARY

DAY 1

19:00 - Assembly at Buendia Corner Taft in Pasay City
 19:30 - ETD for Sta. Cruz (Tritran, JAC, JAM)
 22:00 - ETA Sta. Cruz, ETD for PLDT Station. Brgy. Ayuti, Lukban, Quezon
 23:00 - ETA PLDT Station, Set camp
 23:30 - Light's Out

DAY 2

07:30 - Wake-Up Call, Break Camp, Breakfast
 08:00 - Start Trek
 11:00 - Lunch Break at "Mukha"
 12:00 - Resume Trek
 16:00 - ETA Summit, Set Camp, Explore Mossy Crater
 18:00 - Prepare Dinner
 19:00 - Dinner, Socials
 20:00 - Light's Out

DAY 3

08:00 - Wake Up Call, Breakfast and Break Camp
 09:00 - Start Trek
 12:00 - Lunch on Trail
 13:00 - Resume Trek
 14:00 - ETA PLDT Station, Resume Trek to Hi-way
 15:00 - ETA Hi-way, Decent Lunch, Go to Rice Field Swimming Pool for Bath
 16:00 - ETD Lukban
 17:00 - ETA Sta. Cruz, ETD Manila
 20:00 - ETA Manila

◆ SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN CLIMBING

Secure permit from and courtesy registration from Lukban municipal Hall. Water sources are not available along the trail. There are small rivers along trail and at the summit but water is not potable. You need proper filtration for your safety.

Waiver : Although the author have tried to make the information in this itinerary as accurate as possible; time changes policies, inflation/cost and even the physical condition of places mentioned here thereby we accept no responsibility for any loss, injury or inconvenience sustained by any person who used this itinerary. You may contact the resources listed in the contacts section of this itinerary or via the directories section of this website to make your trip as more accurate.

We appreciate comments and/or corrections for the updating of this itinerary to make it as accurate as possible. We would also welcome your submissions or contributions of other itineraries not listed in this website for other people to learn and enjoy. Credits will be given to the contributor. Contact e-mail : long2@rocketmail.com

All rights reserved. No part of this itinerary may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise except brief extracts for the purpose of review, without the written permission of the copyright owner. Since it is a common practice among mountaineering communities to create written itineraries of activities, special permission will be given for the reproduction of this itinerary for such purpose with the condition of indicating the source: MMS and author: Long Henson as well as the mention of the waiver indicated herein.

