



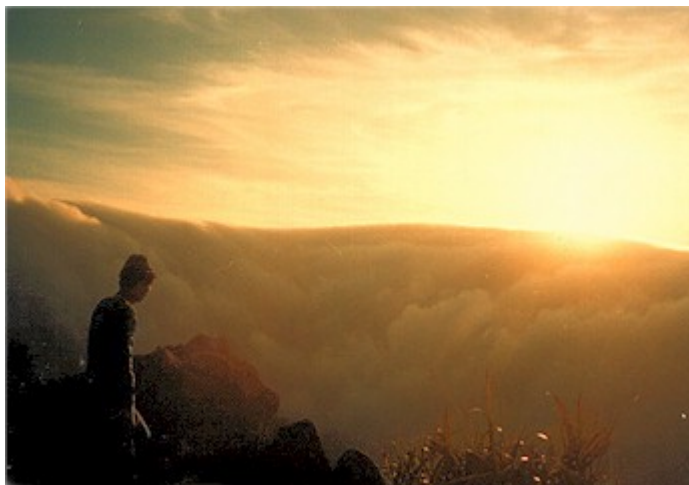
## DESTINATION : MT. BANAHAW - DOLORES TRAILS

<b>LOCATION</b>	Quezon (Dolores, Lukban, Sariaya, Lucena, Tiaong, Candelaria, Tayabas) and Laguna (San Pablo, Majayjay, Liliw, Nagcarlan)
<b>COORDINATES</b>	
<b>ELEVATION</b>	2450 meters above sea level
<b>LEVEL</b>	Major Climb, Level III, Strenuous
<b>DISTINCT CHARACTERISTICS</b>	Pilgrimage Place; Rainforest; In-active Volcano; Crater View (Caldera)
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	Hiking
<b>JUMP-OFF POINT</b>	Kinabuhayan, Bgy Sta Lucia, Dolores Quezon
<b>AVERAGE DAYS REQUIRED</b>	2 - 2.5 days (including travel time from Manila)
<b>MINIMUM DAYS REQUIRED</b>	1.5 days (including travel time from Manila)
<b>IT CREATED BY</b>	Long Henson
<b>DATE LAST UPDATED</b>	July 17, 2001

### ● INFORMATION

It is said that Mt. Banahaw keeps away those who are not yet ready to receive its secrets. Rising some 2450 meters from sea level, this active volcano, a part of the Banahaw-Cristobal National Park, has long been believed to be a storehouse of psychic energy. The local residents consider it a sacred mountain. It teems with legends and superstitions. It has been the home to countless members of religious cults, hermits, soul searchers, spiritist and faith healers who climbs its slopes to meditate in its cave and commune with the mountain spirits. It clearly shows the other side of Filipino fanaticism and superstitious ways. Being in Banahaw is something like stepping into incredible stories of apparitions, heavenly voices, strange sounds, dwarves, fairies and even UFO's. Geographically, Banahaw stands on a power point where the key lines of the earth intersect. Wherever such latitudes and longitudes meet, they create energy fields that allow higher frequencies of perception, physiological or otherwise. Banahaw is one of those rare fields just like Lourdes in France, Sedona in Arizona, Bali in Indonesia and Ayers Rock in Australia, to name a few. People living in the foot of the mountain speaks of apparitions of Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary and even Dr. Jose P. Rizal and other national heroes

An old legend has it that a hermit living near Banahaw once had a vision that it was to become the New Jerusalem. Appropriately, the names of all topographical features had been given names with biblical allusions, *Kinabuhayan*, *Dolores*, *Santo Kalbaryo*, *Kweba ng Dios Ama* and the famous Jacob's Well to name a few. During Holy Week, pilgrims ascend to the crater rim peaks called *Durungawan* to relieve the passion and death of Jesus Christ. There, three crosses have been strategically planted to recreate the actual crucifixion scene. On Good Friday, however, the summit should be deserted, as the mystics believe that only God the Father may bear witness to His Son's death. It is also said that on the same day, an *enkanto* (spirit) opens a hidden cave near the crosses, which acts as the pathway to the nether world. Anyone left on the summit will be compelled to enter it and never return. Mt. Banahaw is a silent eloquent towering refuge. It forces the visitor to see beyond, if only momentarily, his/her superfluous needs. For an instant, even the most jaded traveler becomes pure of heart and for that alone, a climb up the mountain is well worth it.



Banahaw is located 100 kilometers southeast of Manila. It is the highest peak among a series of mountains and is surrounded by the towns of San Pablo, Majayjay, Liliw, Nagcarlan, Tiaong, Candelaria, Sariaya, Lucena, Tayabas and Lucban. Being an active volcano, its last recorded eruption was on 1721. That eruption caused a lake to form on the volcano's crater which may have caused the crater to burst open during a possible eruption of 1743, though geographer Fr. Huerta mentioned in his *Estado Geographica* that it happened sometime 1730. The crater today is called *ilalim*. It also resulted the transfer of the town of Sariaya to its fourth and present site. In the 19th century Banahaw was called Monte de Majayjay or Monte San Cristobal which was then considered the "gateway" in ascending the mountain. It was also called "Vulcan de Agua" because of the numerous springs that flow from the base. The present name Banahaw might have been derived from the word Ban-aw which means a vantage point to a lofty position.

## ● LEGENDS

A legend has it that because of the turmoil in the Middle East in a not too distant past, the four Archangels transferred the Holy Land to Mt. Banahaw. In the 16th century, a legend said that a Chinese cutter, Juan Ynbin, whose body dismembered by the Spaniards and thrown to the sea as a result of a revolt against forced labor during the construction of the shrine of Caysasay came back to life. He claimed that a beautiful woman saved him from the sea and placed him on a leaf that carried him to Majayjay within the view of Banahaw. Another legend says that somewhere in between 1886 and 1939, a Holy Voice or *Santong Boses*, dictated the locations of the holy places in Banahaw which also gave the names to these places. It was given to one of the famous mystics of Banahaw, Agripino Lontoc from Taal Batangas who hid in the mountains from the Spaniards who branded him as a rebel. He also went into the mountains to seek for amulets. The story goes that every time he tried to leave the mountain, he would go blind and this forced him to stay in Banahaw to become one of its first hermits. Banahaw was also the headquarter of a group of dissidents headed by the famous local hero, Apolinario de la Cruz or Hermano Pule sometime in 1840-43. He was the person who named places such as Jacob and Kalbaryo. In an offensive against Pule, he and his wife was killed wherein his head, stuck to a pole, was displayed at the road to Tayabas to warn all rebels. Pule promised to return as the *Santong Boses*.

## ● WHEN AND HOW TO GO

Mt. Banahaw can be scaled through various jump-off points like Dolores, Tayabas (Banahaw de Tayabas), Sariyaya (Guis-guis Trail) and Lucban (Lucban de Banahaw) but most of these trails have different peak destinations though there are already recorded traverse from one peak to the other or climbs using a combination of these trails.

This itinerary is the Dolores Trail. The Dolores Trail, the most popular particularly among the pilgrims, has two other sub-routes, the Crystalino and the Tatlong Tanke routes. There is a third route in Dolores that is no longer being used. It connects to the Guisguis trail of Sariyaya going inside the crater. So officially, the two Dolores trails, Crystalino and Tatlong Tangke are considered the Banahaw de Dolores climb.

In climbing, it is advisable to take one of the trails going up and the other on your way down to see the two routes.

The climb can be easily done even without a guide for trails are visible and marked. Looking for guides within the place may be difficult for most people living within the jump-off area are not inclined into climbing or guiding in particular. The climb itself is not a technical one, but a long strenuous hike. To go there, take a bus bound for Lucena City (Tritran, JAM, JAC, BLTB).



Get off at San Pablo Laguna. Ask for the jeepney stop for jeeps bound for Dolores Quezon (regular trips are from 4:00 AM to 4:00 PM, though special trips can be arranged 24 hours a day with much added cost). Kinabuhayan in Brgy. Sta. Lucia, Dolores, Quezon is the official jump-off point. From Kinabuhayan, you can ask the locals for the start of the trail or you can go directly at the back of the barangay hall. The trail initially splits into two, the Crystalino and the Tatlong Tangke trails. Either of the two, follows the established path straight to the peak (Durungawan I). From there you can choose what trail to take in descending the mountain, either the other Dolores trail, the Guis-guis trail or Tayabas/Lucban trails.

Banahaw can be scaled any time of the year though it is best advised especially for beginners and the curious to climb it during the Holy Week. Few weeks before the Holy Week is the best time because during that time, the place is already prepared for the Holy Week revelry with make-shift stalls along the trail but not as crowded and littered as the Holy Week itself.


## ● POINTS OF INTEREST

Along Crystalino trail you will pass by the Crystalino Falls, Suplina Falls, *Salamin Bubog* (glass mirror) which is a small pond in which the waters are still as a mirror; the *Kweba ng Dios Ama* (cave), one of the most sacred place but you will be disgusted to see a concrete house erected by one of the local sects right in the mouth of the cave; the *Pintong Lihim* (sacred door)- two large boulders with divergent paths and *Niluhuran* (place where trees knelt) which was named due to the bent trees which abound the place and some minor pilgrim sites (holy places). At the summit try to visit the

*Durungawan* (view points) I, II, and III (highest point), the cave near the cross and the crater view overlooking Guis-guis and two other rivers *Tubig ng Gatas* at *Tubig ng Dugo* (river of blood and milk because one is white as marble and the other red as iron oxide). Along the *Tatlong Tangke* route, pass by *Kapatagan* (plains) and the *Tatlong Tangke* (3 natural water tanks). From the summit, you can also take the trail going down the crater towards Sariyaya or from Durungawan III, you can go to a longer un-established trail to Tayabas and/or Lucban trails.

Within Kinabuhayan area, the *Bakas* (Christ's foot print), *Santo Calbaryo* (Calvary), *Tres Personas*, *Ilog ng landas* (river), *Ina ng Awa*, *Husgado* (cave), *Kweba ni San Pedro* (cave), *Kweba ni San Pablo* (cave), *Prisintahan*, *Dolorosa*, *Piedra Mental*, *Ciudad Mystica*, *Buhok ng Birhen*, *Nunong Lalake* and some other pilgrim places are worth to visit. You can also trek the nearby Mt. Cristobal, Banahaw's alter ego. Still further within San Pablo City, visit San Pablo's Seven lakes. R&R at Bato Resort in Dolores, Hidden Valley in Alaminos or Villa Escudero in San Pablo. A very useful guide to these places is a book published by Bookmark called Banahaw by Fr. Vitaliano Gorospe. This is not a guide book nor a mountaineering book but nevertheless, the information are very useful for your trip. Other books, "Let's Hike" and "Action Asia" list Banahaw as one of its featured hiking destination.

Summary of sacred places :



Bato (rocks)	San Bernardo
	Kristalina
Piedra Mental	Suplinang Tubig
Kamalig ng Asin	Salaming Bubog
Kamalig ng Yaman	
San Miguel	Taluktok (peaks)
Matandang Kiling	Tres picos
Pinagapusan	Tatlong tangke
Koronang bato	Santo kalbaryo
Tore ng Babel	Santong Durungawan I
Papirmahan	Santong Durungawan II
Bakas ng paa tungo sa Inang	Santong Durungawan III
Santisima	
Bakas ng paa ng Niño sa tabi ng	Kweba (caves)
Prisintahan	Prisintahan (San Pedro)
San Bernardo	Prisintahan (San Pablo)
San Rafael	Ina ng Awa
Santo Domingo	Husgado
	Santa Clara
Bukal (springs)	Kweba ng Dios Ama
Balon ni San Isidro	Santo Kolehiyos
Lihim na tubig	Inang Santisima
Banyo ng Birhen	Birheng Maria
Balon ni Santong Jacob	Immaculada Conception
Tubig ng Sta. Lucia	Ama at Inang Ginoo
Buhok ng Birhen	Patricia San Jose
Tubig ng Santisima Trinidad	Pinaglaruan
Tubig ng Buhay	
Santa Ines	
Tubig ng Ina ng Awa	
Hilamusan	

## ● SUGGESTED ITINERARY

### DAY 1

19:00	Assembly at Buendia corner Taft Avenue (Tritran, JAM, JAC bus stations). Take the San Pablo bound buses. (fare estimate 90 Php- 6/99)
19:30	ETD Manila to San Pablo (passing by Sto. Tomas, Tanauan and Alaminos)
22:30	ETA San Pablo City (alight within the Red Cross office near the Catholic Church)
22:40	ETD from San Pablo to Bgy. Sta. Lucia, Dolores Quezon. Jeepney stop at marketplace (fare estimate: 35 Php- 6/99) There is no regular trip in the evening but arrangements can be made.
23:15	ETA Jump-off point - Kinabuhayan, Dolores Quezon
23:20	Lights off (Camp at school grounds)

### DAY 2

06:30	Wake-up Call, Breakfast
07:00	Start Trek (via Crystalino route)
09:00	ETA "Kweba ng Dios Ama"
12:00	Lunch on trail
16:00	ETA Durungawan I, set camp, explore Durungawan II and III
18:00	Prepare for dinner.
23:00	Light's off

### DAY 3

06:00	Wake-up Call, Breakfast,, Break camp
08:00	Start decent via Tatlong Tangke route (Tatlong Tangke and Crystalino trails splits near Durungawan before entering forest line)
10:00	ETA Kapatagan
11:00	ETA Tatlong Tangke
13:00	ETA Kinabuhayan
13:30	Delayed Lunch
15:00	ETD from Kinabuhayan to San Pablo
16:00	ETA San Pablo, Take BLTB for Manila trip
19:00	ETA Manila

## PICTURES



The famous Calvary Cross



Viewpoint from Banahaw's Crater

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

No climbing permit is necessary to climb Mt. Banahaw though a courtesy registration should be done at the Barangay Hall within Kinabuhayan.

Potable water source are abundant on the lower slopes of the Crystalino Trail particularly within Crystalino Falls, Suplina Falls and some dripping water from the mouth of the *Kweba ng Dios Ama*. From the Tatlong Tangke Trail, the water source is only available at the Tatlong Tangke area but not potable and will need filtration and treatment. But during the Holy week period, stalls springs up along the trails even up to the summit so bottled water as well as softdrinks can be purchased along the trail. Nevertheless, three days is so short so you can carry all the necessary water you need for the trip than bothering yourself looking for water sources.

Clothing for cold temperature is necessary especially when sleeping at the peak. Rain gear is also a must since rains are due even during the summer months especially during cloudy days when cloud mist engulfs the peak area.

In terms of security, it's very safe to take the Dolores trail even for foreign tourist, more than the other Banahaw trails though all of them are considered safe. Even though Banahaw is one of the mountain here where the local insurgents, the NPA, takes refuge particularly the Melito Glor or Banahaw Command, they are not visible nor active, they are far away from the trails or may not even be staying up in the mountains. They don't mind the pilgrims and mountaineers frequenting the place. In fact, in Banahaw, climbers are very frequent that you will normally encounter them many times during your expedition especially during the Holy Week making climbing safer but on the other hand, lacking privacy.

In case of emergency, the nearest Police and medical facilities can be reached about 4 kilometers from Kinabuhayan within the Dolores town proper itself. Barangay officials can be reached within Kinabuhayan area.

## CONTACTS

**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.

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