



## DESTINATION: MT BANOI

<b>LOCATION :</b>	Batangas Province
<b>ELEVATION :</b>	600+ meters above sea level
<b>LEVEL :</b>	Minor Climb, Level II, Moderate
<b>JUMP OFF POINTS :</b>	Lobo, Batangas
<b>AVERAGE DAYS REQUIRED :</b>	2 Days (including travel time from Manila)
<b>MINIMUM DAYS REQUIRED :</b>	2 Days (including travel time from Manila)
<b>IT CREATED BY :</b>	Long Henson
<b>DISTINCT CHARACTERISTICS :</b>	Scenic Views of Batangas Bay
<b>LAST EDITED :</b>	March 6, 2000

### ◆ INFORMATION

Mt. Banoi is located at the town of Lobo in Batangas Province. The place is not a national park and the mountains are used as farmlands and grazing lands. Houses are also situated along the trails and various parts of the mountain. The main marker and distinct description of Mt. Banoi are its telecommunications antennas nestled atop one of the peaks. In fact, the campsite itself can be established at one of the facilities of Smart Communications, which is a fenced area with container vans used as quarters and equipment rooms.

The views on the other hand are spectacular, overlooking the Bay of Batangas and the surrounding provinces and nearby islands. The hike is also pleasant, and though exposed, winds usually make the hike pleasant. Along the route, there is a river and a small waterfall where you can take a refreshing bath. There are technicians who man the facilities 24 hours a day. According to one I have spoken, they are on a 3-month shift, staying entirely at the peak. You will also pass by small villages on your way to the summit.

### ◆ WHEN AND HOW TO GO

Banoi can be hiked all year round. To get there, take a bus bound for Batangas City. Alight at the intersection at Batangas City town before the bus enters the Batangas City Pier area. From there, you can already hire jeepneys but you may opt to go to the public market first for supplies and get

the jeepney there in the market where the regular trips to Lobo are located. Ask the jeepney driver to take you straight to the jump-off point, which is Barangay Balatbat, Lobo, Batangas. The trip passes by pleasant towns with rich gardens on each front yard. Then the road changes to rough road till you enter Lobo itself. You will pass by an old bridge (which is currently being replaced by a concrete one) over a deep ravine. This place is a popular rappelling site and was featured on one of the cigarette commercials where a man bungee-jumped to get a flower. From Balatbat, the trail starts near a small chapel along a dry riverbed. It continues to the top till you reach the antenna station. This is not actually the highest point or summit and there are no established trails to the summit since the place is not frequently explored. On the other hand it offers opportunities for exploration. The Smart facility serves as the campsite but if you wish for natural settings, you can camp at the flat areas before the antenna. According to one mountaineer I have spoken, there is another trail in Banoi, which leads to a different peak. That trail starts from a beachfront.

### ◆ POINTS OF INTEREST

Lobo has very nice beachfronts but not that popular to tourist since it is not easily accessible from Manila. If you want such places off the beaten track, this is the place to be. You can also bring some rappelling devices since the old bridge of Lobo is an ideal rappelling site.

### ◆ SUGGESTED ITINERARY

#### DAY 1

07:00 - Assembly at Buendia Corner Taft Avenue.  
 07:30 - ETD for Batangas City  
 10:30 - ETA Batangas City, Take Tricycle to Public Market  
 10:45 - Market Time, Early Lunch  
 11:45 - ETD for Barangay Balatbay, Lobo, Batangas  
 13:00 - ETA Jump-off Point, Snacks, Final Preparations  
 13:30 - Start Trek  
 14:00 - Small Waterfalls  
 15:00 - ETA Campsite  
 18:00 - Prepare Dinner  
 19:00 - Dinner, Socials  
 21:00 - Lights Out

#### DAY 2

08:00 - Wake-up Call, Breakfast, Break Camp  
 09:00 - Start Decent  
 10:00 - ETA jump-off point  
 10:30 - ETD for Batangas City  
 11:30 - ETA Batangas City, Lunch  
 12:30 - ETD for Manila  
 15:30 - ETA Manila

### ◆ SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN CLIMBING

Mt. Banoi is a peaceful and quite place. But the place is a transit point for NPA Rebels coming from Mindoro Island to some of their camps in Quezon and the Sierra Madres. The technician manning the facilities told us that the rebels usually pass by the installation. Last May 1999, an encounter between the rebels and the Philippine army forced around 300 residents of Malabnig and Banalo of Balatbat to evacuate. These encounters are not common but nevertheless, check with the local municipality regarding the peace and order situation before climbing Mt. Banoi. Such incidents

should never be a hindrance in climbing Banoi since almost all mountains in the country have rebels just like Mt. Banahaw and yet there are no reported incidence regarding hikers being assaulted by rebels. Enough water should be brought since waters in the rivers are not potable.

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