



## DESTINATION: MT CRISTOBAL

<b>LOCATION :</b>	Quezon & Laguna Province
<b>ELEVATION :</b>	1500 meters above sea level
<b>LEVEL :</b>	Major Climb, Level II, Moderate
<b>JUMP OFF POINTS :</b>	Dolores Quezon, Nagcarlan Laguna
<b>AVERAGE DAYS REQUIRED :</b>	2 Days (including travel time from Manila)
<b>MINIMUM DAYS REQUIRED :</b>	1 Day (including travel time from Manila)
<b>IT CREATED BY :</b>	Long Henson
<b>DISTINCT CHARACTERISTICS :</b>	Crater Campsite, Mossy Forest, "Spooky Mountain"
<b>LAST EDITED :</b>	April 24, 2000

### ◆ INFORMATION

Mt. Cristobal was long known within the mountaineering community as the "spooky mountain." It was always referred to as Banahaw's alter ego meaning that if Banahaw is the power mountain with lots of positive energy, Cristobal supposed to be the opposite- a mountain with negative energies. Lot's of stories circulates that tends to prove this but we are not just sure if they are fabrics of a mountaineer's adventurous imaginations bolstered by a pre-conditioned mind that this place is supposed to be a "horror mountain." Everytime we climb the place, one member will claim of hearing strange sounds at night but the only thing I can remember spooky was during one time we climbed wherein we saw a dead man in the summit. A check at the local police station revealed a mysterious murder scene that happened in the mountains. What a place to do such a thing! It's a bit funny that such a mountain named after a saint would be notorious as a haunting place. Banahaw was once actually called Monte Cristobal.

Cristobal is part of the volcanic Mt. Banahaw but unlike Lukban de Banahaw, which lies on the slope of Banahaw itself, Cristobal seems to be a different mountain of its own. Along the slopes of Cristobal, a wide flat area can be seen which was actually a test site of a proposed geothermal plant that didn't pushed through. Another controversial project that was proposed was the creation of a Hi-way that will link Dolores to Nagcarlan passing in-between Mts. Cristobal and Banahaw. The project didn't materialize since residents and environmentalist opposed the idea.

### ◆ LEGENDS

Being a "Spooky Mountain," Mt. Cristobal has a lot of legends, urban legends that is, since most of them are recent stories created by the city hikers which have circulated back within the city limits. One of the popular myths about the mountain is that a creature that the locals call the "Tumao" roams around its premises. The Tumao is actually similar to the bigfoot of western legends. The best activity to do while you are camping on its peak is to do some night trekking especially when the fog sets in and test the limits of your bravery. Imagine the swamp, mossy crater and dense jungle. The sun sets early in the campsite since you are inside a crater. Better watch "The Blair Witch Project" before hiking Cristobal.

## ◆ WHEN AND HOW TO GO

Climbing Cristobal is safe all year round. Weather is also not a problem except if you don't like being drenched by the rain. In going to Cristobal, you follow the same travel procedure as in going to Banahaw since the trailhead of Cristobal is less than a kilometer away from the trailhead of Banahaw. Before reaching Kinabuhayan, a large intersection with a chapel at the corner marks the junction that separates both trailheads. Turn left and start your hike but if you have hired a jeep, you can ask the driver to take you further at the geothermal site. It's a wide field where you can camp if you have traveled later during the day. The start of the hike passes through plantations. Then you will see a fork before the trail begins to ascend. The left trail is a direct assault to a steep exposed part of the mountain. It offers a superb viewpoint but since exposed, it's hot when the sun is up. Trail is also steep. The normal trail used is the one turning right. First stop is the famous psychic's house, Montelibano. The people there are friendly and you can rest inside the house. If nobody is around, you are still welcome to rest at its balcony. Then like entering the twilight zone, you will pass through a backyard gate to enter the forest line. From there, the trail is visible up to the campsite. A huge boulder is the midpoint marker of the trail. Before the final ascent, the two trails converge to a single trail going inside the crater to the campsite. You will then reach what they call as "apparent summit" because you may think it is the highest point in Cristobal. You will then descend to the crater. The first campsite is beside a small pond. Following the trail further will take you to the bigger second camp. From this campsite there is a trail going to the view point. The true summit has no trail and if you want to go there, you have to hack your way through tall cogon grass. Cristobal is not yet fully explored so if you are the adventurous type and have lots of time to spend, you can further explore the other craters, peaks and viewpoints.

## ◆ POINTS OF INTEREST

Cristobal is very much near Kinabuhayan so you can trek your way there in less than an hour. Actually, after climbing Cristobal, most mountaineers go to Kinabuhayan for eating bathing and catching a ride back to San Pablo City. There is also a trail from Cristobal going to what they call as the "Potato Station" which is a farm and research center for potatoes. There is also an un-established trail within the Cristobal area that goes to Nagcarlan. I have heard that there is also a Nagcarlan approach to Cristobal and/ Banahaw and some hidden springs.

## ◆ SUGGESTED ITINERARY

### DAY 1

- 06:00 - Assembly at Buendia corner Taft Avenue (JAM, JAC, TRITRAN)
- 06:30 - ETD Manila to San Pablo City
- 09:30 - ETA San Pablo. Hire Jeep to Cristobal trailhead (Geothermal Site)
- 10:00 - ETD for Cristobal
- 11:00 - ETA Cristobal, Start Hike Towards Montelibano's House
- 12:00 - Lunch at Montelibanos
- 13:00 - Resume Trek
- 16:00 - ETA Campsite, Set-up Camp, Explore Mossy Forest and View Point

- 17:00 - Prepare for Dinner
- 18:00 - Dinner/Socials
- 21:00 - Light's Out

## DAY 2

- 06:30 - Wake-up Call, Breakfast
- 07:00 - Start Trek Towards Summit
- 07:30 - Summit
- 08:00 - Trek Back to Campsite
- 08:30 - ETA Campsite, Breakcamp
- 09:00 - Start Descent
- 11:00 - ETA Montelibano's, Continue Trek towards Kinabuhayan
- 12:00 - ETA Kinabuhayan, Lunch, Bath at Kinabuhayan
- 13:00 - ETD fro San Pablo
- 14:00 - ETA San Pablo, Catch Bus for Manila
- 14:30 - ETD San Pablo for Manila
- 17:00 - ETA Manila

### ◆ SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN CLIMBING

No permits or courtesy registration are required to climb Cristobal. Take enough water since the only water source is at Montelibano's rest house. Better bring all water you need from home. The small ponds at the campsite are not potable. Cristobal's crater is not that cold during the summer months but the opposite during the months of December to January. Though camp is inside the crater, winds are sometimes unbelievably strong like the entire wind being blown inside the crater. Last time it happened, our tents collapsed.

**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](mailto: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.