



DESTINATION: MT GUITING-GUITING

LOCATION :	Romblon Province
ELEVATION :	2058 meters above sea level
LEVEL :	Major Climb, Level III, Strenuous
JUMP OFF POINTS :	Sibuyan Island, Romblon
AVERAGE DAYS REQUIRED :	7 Days (including travel time from Manila)
MINIMUM DAYS REQUIRED :	6 Days (including travel time from Manila)
IT CREATED BY :	Long Henson
DISTINCT CHARACTERISTICS :	Knife-edged Ridges
LAST EDITED :	March 1, 2000

◆ INFORMATION

Viewing the mountain from the town proper, one would observe a jagged or saw-toothed outline, creating an impression of a vast and challenging terrain. Guiting-Guiting actually means saw-toothed. This is one of the few, if not the only mountain in the Philippines, where there are no recorded conquests of natives or locals prior to the famous first conquest of mountaineers. During that memorable day, the town of Magdiwang was on a festive mood, celebrating this magnificent breakthrough. Ever since the locals became fond of mountaineers that they are extra-hospitable to mountaineers who sets foot on the island. The local municipal library keeps scrapbooks of mountaineers who have successfully scaled the summit. These include the first conquest of mountaineers. Because of that, most sites or land marks in Guiting-Guiting where named after the first explorers like Mayo's peak and Bulod's Spring.

The thick forest cover offers sanctuary to mountaineers, loggers, animals, birds and insects. Stopping and appreciating the rich bio-diversity of the area is a must. Closely observe the different variety of trees and bushes as one nears the peak. Crossing the ridge is one of the highlights of the climb. You will do a lot of scrambling, balancing, and leaping from boulder to boulder and a bit of rock climbing. It is called Knife ridge because of the rocky path, which requires you to balance while traversing it. There are ravines on both sides. If you happen to be welcomed by the winds on both sides, take the opportunity to work on your acrobatic skills. Before scaling the knife Ridge, one must be able to psyche oneself and discard any fear that might begin to set in. Some mountains are challenging for their breadth, Guiting-Guiting is one mountain that calls your attention to the varied faces of the earth. It "de-familiarizes" your mind and body with the usual climbing habits and poses

new puzzles to solve until you realize you are interacting with the mountain as much as the mountain interacting with you.

Sibuyan Island itself is a unique Philippine environment. It contains wide variety of endemic species of plants and animals, which was due to the fact that this island has long been isolated from other islands because of the deep seas that surrounds it. Compared to other Philippine Islands which was a part of a big mass of interconnected island thousands of years ago.

◆ LEGENDS

Last 1994; there was a group of mountaineers who have perished while scaling Mt. Guiting-Guiting. They were trekking along a riverbed when suddenly; flashfloods came down cascading from the mountains engulfing the group. Stories now circulate that there were times when the ghost of those who perished makes their presence felt to hikers and mountaineers.

◆ WHEN AND HOW TO GO

The best and safe time to go to Guiting-Guiting is during the late days of summer. Avoid the rainy season so you will have good chance of reaching the summit. Otherwise the rocks may be too slippery and dangerous. To get there, first you must check the schedule of the ferry that leaves for Sibuyan, Romblon. There are regular trips at the Lucena and Batangas piers. The ferry from Batangas takes around 18 hours to reach Magdiwang Port in Sibuyan, Romblon while the ones from Lucena takes only about 14 hours. But the ferries from Batangas City are the Ro-Ro steel vessels while those from Lucena are smaller wooden boats. If you want adventure, take the Lucena trip instead. Dolphins usually bow-ride on small vessels. Upon arrival, try to pay courtesy call to the Mayor of the town. From Magdiwang, hire a tricycle going to Barangay Tampayan. Look for Bulod or Manong Lee to assist you in your pre-climb preparations as well as guide services. They allow only one group at a time up in the mountains so better check schedules of other mountaineering groups prior to your trip, if possible to avoid wasting time waiting for previous group to finish their expedition.

There are two challenging peaks to assault before reaching the summit. The first, Mayo's Peak, is an 8-hour trek from the jump-off point. Four makeshift camp areas set up by the locals can be seen along the trail. Be wary of time spent during rest periods. Reach the summit before night falls so you can enjoy the view of the scissors-like edges of the other peaks across the saddle leading to the summit. The second peak, called the peak of deception is truly deceiving. As one nears the summit, one gets the notion that this is the peak of Mt. Guiting-Guiting. But upon reaching the peak, you will discover that there is another peak to assault. It takes 4 hours from Mayo's peak to reach the peak of Mt. Guiting-Guiting. You need to start early in order to reach the summit before noon and give ample time for the trek back to base-camp. Fog descends quite rapidly and obscures visibility in the afternoon. The condition of the terrain is completely different from the previous day's hike. At this point, you will be exposed to the scorching heat of the sun with no trees for cover traversing the entire Knife-edge Ridge all throughout the day.

◆ POINTS OF INTEREST

Sibuyan Island has a lot to offer. It has rustic beaches ideal for snorkeling and swimming. But the main attraction of the island is its waterfalls. It was once called the land of waterfalls due to the number of waterfalls it has to offer. Cawa-cawa falls, Lagting Falls, Cataja Falls, and Lambingan Falls are some of the popular tourist attractions. Besides that, there are other falls waiting to be explored. In planning your trip to Sibuyan, it is advisable to allocate extra time to explore this island. The trip around the island itself is an interesting experience. On your way home via Batangas Pier, the bigger ships pass by the island of Romblon which is famous for its marbles and marble products. The ship will give you enough time to stroll around this place. It also passes by San Agustin before continuing to Batangas City

SUGGESTED ITINERARY

DAY 1

- 09:00 - Assembly at BLTB Pasay Station. *Take a bus bound for Batangas pier (Batangas City) (Batangas - Romblon = 18 hours) (You may take the Lucena bus bound to Lucena pier with shorter time travel (Lucena - Romblon = 14 hours) but fewer vessels available and sometimes limited to the Kalayaan vessels (smaller wooden vessels - scary & inconvenient but more exciting especially when the dolphins accompany your travel compared to the VIVA ships of Batangas City))*
- 09:30 - ETD from BLTB
- 12:00 - ETA at Batangas pier. Take your Lunch
- 13:00 - All aboard! To the island of Romblon

(Note: If you can check departure time of vessels beforehand- the more exact the itinerary will be.)

DAY 2

- 07:00 - ETA Magdiwang pier, Magdiwang Sibuyan Romblon. *(Romblon has 3 major Islands - Romblon, Tablas and Sibuyan) (Sibuyan has 3 towns - Magdiwang, San Fernando and Cajidiocan)*
- 07:30 - Breakfast; go to town proper from pier via tricycle and have a courtesy call to the mayor of Magdiwang. Also don't fail to visit the public library for more info on Guting Guiting.
- 08:30 - Go to the house of Manong Lee for registration as well as arrangements for guides. It is advisable to start trek the following day. Spend the rest of the day going on to other beautiful places along the island (Lambingan falls, pristine beaches, town proper).

DAY 3

- 06:00 - Breakfast and final preparations.
- 06:30 - ETD from Manong Lee's house to the jump off point.
- 07:00 - ETA Jump off point.
- 07:15 - Start of Trek. (Lunch on Trail 12:00 PM)
- 17:00 - ETA Mayo's Peak. Set camp.

DAY 4

- 06:00 - Breakfast and preparations for summit assault. Bring with you some snacks, packed lunch, water (for a day's consumption) and rain protection gears. Remember the lighter the easier for you to climb on rock formations along the cliffs.
- 12:00 - Lunch break!

- 13:00 - ETA summit. (If you are not able to reach summit by 1:00, abort the assault so that you will not be caught off by night on the dangerous trail. Never drink on pitcher plants!)
- 13:15 - ETD summit.
- 17:00 - ETA Camp site. Prepare for dinner.

DAY 5

- 06:00 - Breakfast.
- 07:00 - Break Camp.
- 07:30 - ETD Camp site (Lunch on trail).
- 15:00 - ETA Manong Lee's house.

DAY 6

- 07:00 - Breakfast.
- 08:00 - ETD From Manong Lee's house.
- 09:00 - ETA Magdiwang Pier, All aboard!
- 10:00 - ETD Sibuyan Romblon.

DAY 7

- 03:00 - ETA Batangas Pier.
- 03:30 - ETD Batangas pier to Manila.
- 06:00 - ETA Manila. Home Sweet Home!

◆ SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN CLIMBING

Water source called Bulod's spring is about 30 minutes away from the peak. It is advisable to spend the first day touring around Sibuyan before starting the expedition on the second day. You can stay at the school premises courtesy of Manong Lee during your stay at the lowlands. During the summit bid, wear protective clothing since the rocks are sharp. Long pants, long sleeved shirt and gloves are advisable. Trail is also exposed so prepare for the sun's heat. Bring enough water for there are no more water source from Mayo's Peak to Summit. During the second day, it's advisable to use daypacks instead of the heavy backpacks. Registration is required prior to climbing and is done through the house of Manong Lee.

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