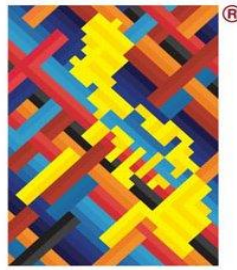


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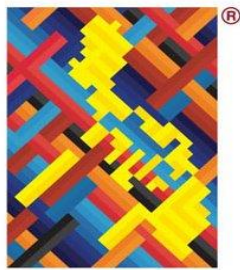
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Tourism Points of Interest

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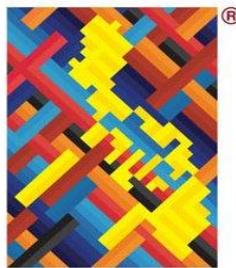


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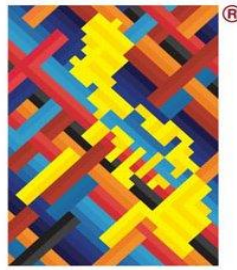
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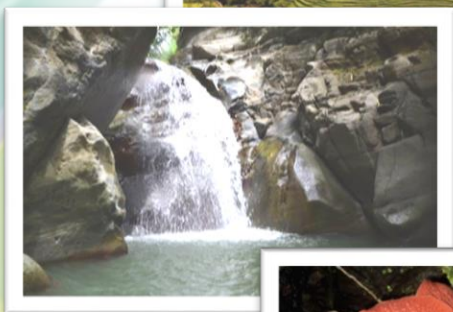
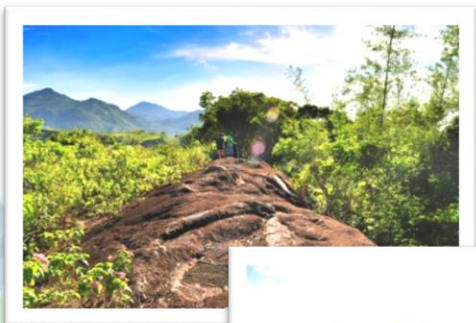
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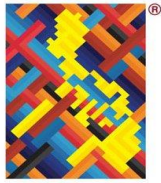
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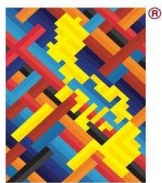


Miagao Church

Miagao's pride, the splendid St. Thomas of Villanova Church is one of the finest architectural legacies of the Augustinian Fathers in the Philippines today. Truly a unique church, it is symbol of the Miagaowanons' deep-seated religiosity, homegrown artistry and quintessential bravery blended together in an exotic and flamboyant showcase of eclectic sensibilities.

The church architectural merit lies on its façade – a charming baroque explosion of decorative lines, balustrades, niches and columns juxtaposed with local plateresque elements and botanical motifs. It is decorated with a relief sculpture of St. Christopher carrying the Child-child amidst coconut, papaya and guava trees. A large stone image of St. Thomas of Villanova, the town's patron saint, occupies the center niche. Flanking the main entrance are carved life-size statues of the pope and St. Henry with their coat-of-arms above them. Indeed, historians and writers of culture were right in saying that it is "the most Filipino of all Philippine churches" because "it exudes the native touch." The engineering value of the church is manifested in the thickness of its walls measuring 2 ½ meters, the sturdiness of its buttresses, which look like piano keys, and the massiveness and unevenness of its twin belfries, that also herald lots of quaint stories.

An earthquake baroque and a fortress-like church, this edifice stands an embodiment of Miagaowanons' personhood as defenders of Christian Faith, patrons of culture and art, and transmitters of heritage to the next generation. The 227 year-old St. Thomas de Villanueva church of Miagao is one of the four baroque churches in the Philippines inscribed in the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage List and the only world heritage site in the Visayas and Mindanao.

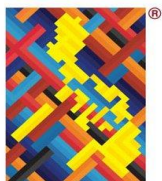


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Taytay Boni

The only existing stone bridge in Western Visayas and one of the nine surviving and outstanding Spanish colonial bridges in the Philippines, TaytayBoni is a concrete example of Spanish engineering and local craftsmanship working hand in hand to come up with such a monument. Measuring 34.81 meters long and 6.71 meters wide with one meter thick walls, the bridge was constructed in 1854 when Miguel Navales was the town's gobernadorcillo. It was named after BoniNeular, a resident of Barangay Guibongan who served as construction foreman and major carpenter. The materials used in the construction were stone blocks known locally as tablea or tabreha. The solid tablea was of yellow coral stones taken from the mountains of Miagao and Igbaras. These were secured into place with mortar made from a mixture of lime, sand and water. The bridge connected Miagao with its neighboring barangays and served as the economic pipeline of the town during the pre-war years. Transportation of goods and human traffic from Miagao and Iloilo City was made easy through this bridge. Now 159 years old, the bridge survived the killer quake that toppled many beautiful stone churches and destroyed Spanish bridges in Iloilo in 1948. Except for loosened stone blocks, TaytayBoni retains most of its glorious self.

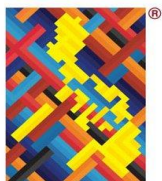


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Damilisan's Baluarte

Damilisan in Miagao, being the religious centre in Southern Iloilo and as customary subject of pirate attacks during Spanish colonization period, became the location of another Spanish landmark which residents dubbed as "baluarte" because of its strongly fortified defensive structure centuries back. This is built using the most readily available building materials around such as coral rocks, shells and limestone through the hardworking hands of the inhabitants upon the directive of Spanish friars, a congregation known as La Campana, to be used as a sentry and defense based of the town against the Muslim pirates. History relates that on May 7, 1754, pirates aboard twenty one boats, landed in this town. Led by Spanish officer Jose Echavarria, the inhabitants drove back the pirates to their ships. Later the invaders returned through Damilisan but they were resisted heroically by the natives led by Spanish Officer Francisco Arbuno. At present, Baluarte's remnant of a stump of its watch tower remains to stand sturdy.

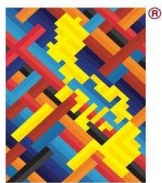


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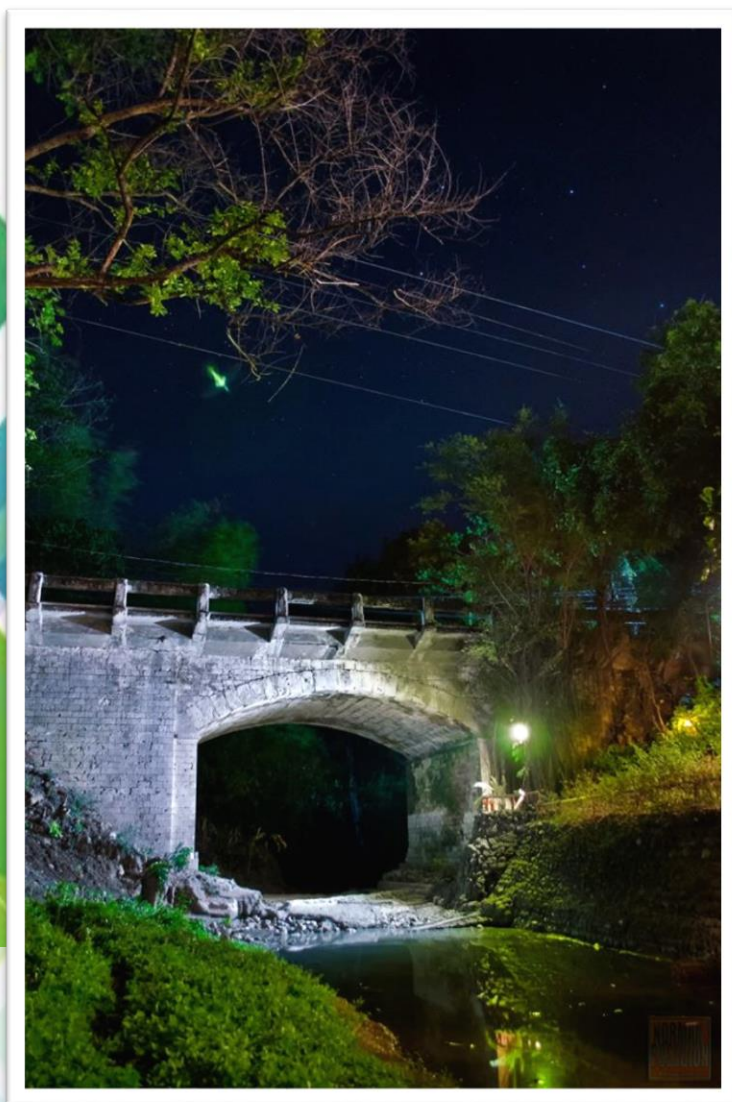


Kuta (Moro Watch Tower)

The extensiveness of Moro raids along the shorelines of Visayas in the 17th and 18th centuries, is evidenced by the surviving "cotta" or baluarte" (watch towers) built along the coast of Panay. One such "cotta" is still found in BaybayNorte, estimated to have been built in the mid-18th century when pirate raids were rampant in Panay. The ruins of another "cotta" can be found in Barangay Damilisan, Miagao. The Miagowanons experience the first pirate raid in 1741, fifteen years after Miagao became a town. The raiders landed in the area near the mouth of the Miagao River known as Sitio Buwang. After sacking the town of its wealth and desecrating religious images, the pirates burned the town's first church located in Ubos. The biggest raid, however, took place on May 7, 1754. Riding on 21 boats, the pirates landed at BaybayNorte and swarmed the town like hungry locusts. The Miagaowanons, under the leadership Spanish Officer Jose Echevarria, repulsed the raiders and drove them back to their boats. Later, the pirates returned and landed at Damilisan but they were repulsed by Spanish Officer Francisco Arburo. Arburo's forces were financially supported by Don Baltazar Javier, one of the richest men in the poblacion. The Moro raids served as inspiration to the holding of the Salakayan Festival which started in 1998.

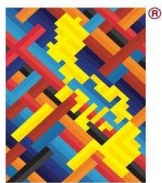


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Britanico Bridge

With the arrival of the Americans in 1899 a new dawn in Philippine infrastructure development commenced. In this age, Miagao's other stone bridge, Britanico Bridge (formerly called Sapa Bridge), was built together with other thousands of bridges all over the Philippines. According to DSWD, this only one remaining in Iloilo that is undamaged, serviceable and functional, however one of Miagao's many landmarks that need restoration and protection.



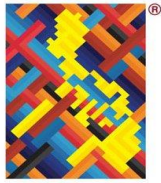
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Cagbang Pottery

An ancient industry surviving the tests of time, pottery in Barangay Cagbang has been long the cradle of Miagao's good quality pots and now, had been developed and had underwent development interventions from the local government which brought back its economic viability to the times when Barangay Cagbang was the only source of pottery products in Southern Iloilo. Clays truly had been streaming through residents veins and hands even several centuries ago where they have already gathered pounds and pounds of clay from natural deposits dug normally at the back of their houses. Currently, the barangay has been a recommended venue for tourist who hankers after an atypical experience of traditional or even modern pottery making. Visitors in Cagbang could try their hands in making clay pieces like mini pots and jars, pendants, vases or beads under the assistance of local potters that have never stopped turning all their pieces by hand. An on-site workshop is also put into practice where someone could test his or her own pottery-making dexterity with clay ready. All of these were being done to conserve the craft that had been passed down from its modest foundation until at present.

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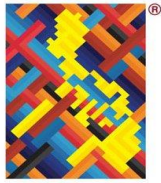


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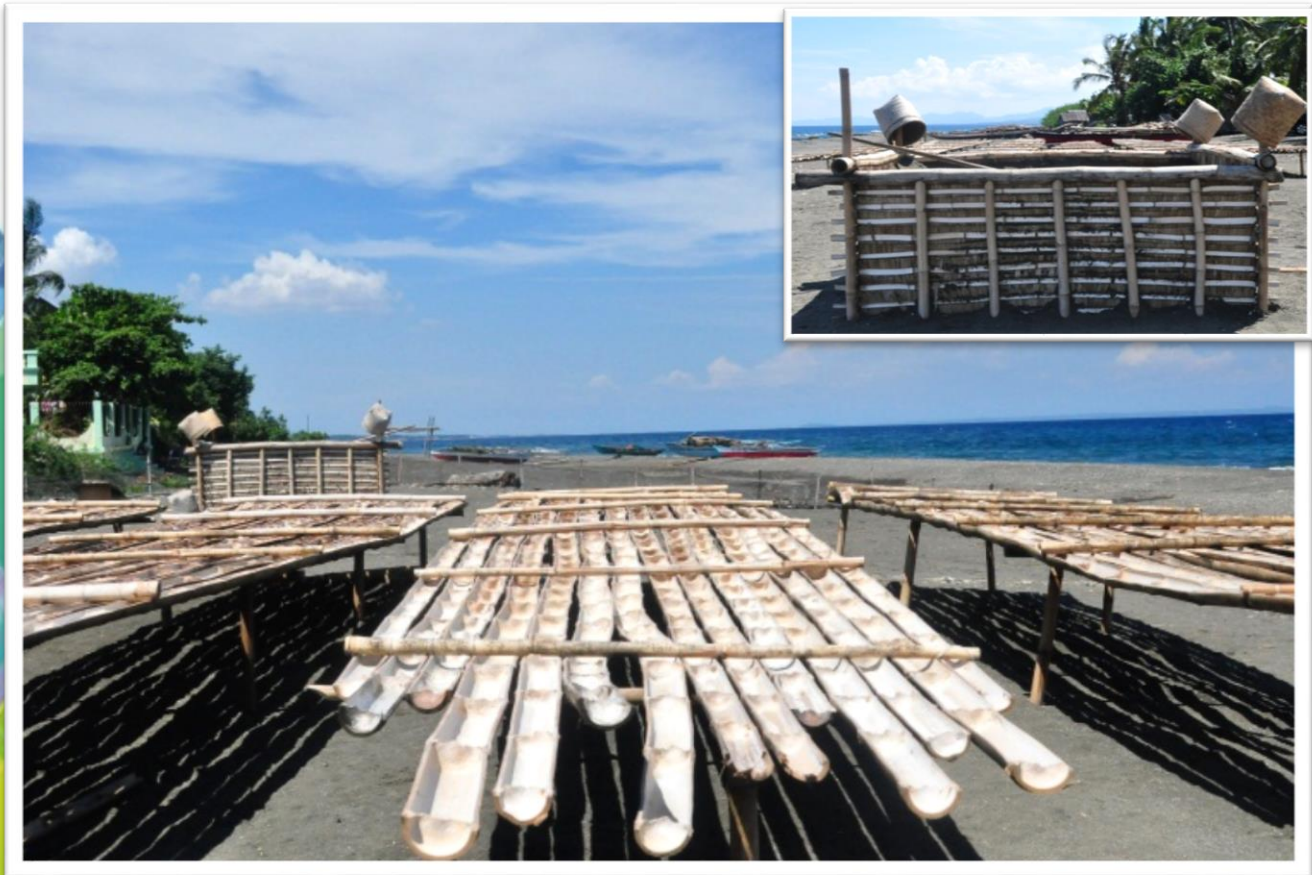


Miagao Hablon

The Miagao weaving community is definitely time-honoured and there was a period when the town's economy was backed by income from handwoven products. Industrialization of weaving in Miagao was started in 1855 by a Spanish Friar, beginning with humble products as patadyong, mosquito nets and pillowcases. Later, the weavers shifted to making colorful hablon, catapulting the textile to popularity which brought the local weaving population to 4,000 in the 1950's when it was recorded as a million-peso industry in Miagao. Weaving, however, was subsequently abandoned by the younger generations in favor of the "greener pasture." Miagao's handwoven textiles have been rediscovered and have starred in countless fashion events in the Philippines and abroad, making them a stable source of income for the regrowing number of Miagaowanon weavers. For those tourists who sought to feel how to be a local conventional weaver, a demonstration activity and on-hand learning of the intricate craft of Hablon weaving by the locals using the traditional methods are being done. Visitors are always spell bounded whenever they witness the entire production of Hablon textile that includes preparation of materials, designing, preparation of loom and threads, hand loom weaving, and warping of threads to Hablon cloth.



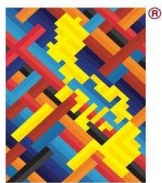
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Guibongan's Budbud or Saltmaking

Paving the way as the most unique and very traditional among the three identified salt varieties in Western Visayas, Miagao's budbud which originated in Barangay Guibongan in the year 1823, is classified as first class salt resulting the Baldoza and Guimaras salt varieties to classify as Class B and C respectively. Budbud making is a tedious method compared to the other mentioned varieties. A number of bamboo nodes are split lengthwise and set horizontally on posts about a meter from the ground. Coastal sand is placed inside these halves to serve as the filter. Then, sea water is poured into these bamboo splits and dried under the sun. To produce a clearer and more crystalline salt, salt-makers filter the crystal salts several times and rinse it with seawater. Hence, the output is of very high quality and worthy to be patronized by devoted buyers. Miagao is the salt-producer for its neighbouring towns like San Joaquin, Guimbal, Igaras, Tubungan and even Tigbauan and Oton. This traditional method of salt production is unique and truly reflective of the rich culture of Ilonggos.

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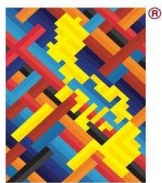


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Danao sa Miagao (Tinagong Dagat)

At an approximate elevation of 3,000 feet above sea level hid a lake with an astounding view and shrouded in mystery and enchantment which originally dubbed as "Danao" and locally known as "Tinagong Dagat". It is a wonderful and mystifying lake located in Barangay Ongyod, one of the higher upland barangays in the Municipality of Miagao, thus requires some hiking in order to experience the captivating magnificence of a lake which is ten times bigger than an ordinary swimming pool. According to the folklore, Danao lake was previously a mere mudhole or "turugban", in local term, fit only for two water buffalos to wallow. However, when residents that time captured a certain cattle rustler, they placed the man inside an empty sack and submersed and buried him alive in the said mudhole. From that day on, inhabitants points the reason of the unexplainable expansion of the mudhole into a lake and its immeasurable depth to the said incident. But, now, despite of its macabre mystery, Danao or Tinagong Dagat in Miagao still becomes one of the most visited spots especially during Holy Week by the locals and tourists looking for some spectacular scenic adventure.

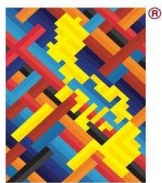


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Gui-ob ni Tidoy

Beneath the mountains of Barangay Onop in Sitio Tulahong lies an ideal rest area for mountain hikers who seek to conquer the steep land stretches of Miagao. Gui-ob ni Tidoy is a majestic bulb-like rock formation that covers black limestones with size twofold bigger than a standard basketball court. The area is teeming with vegetation from trees, fauna, wild birds that is why the base of the rock formation itself is a best place for camp sites for anyone who seeks a comfy means of accommodation. "Gui-ob" or "gihub" is a Kinaray-a term meaning "crack" or "cave on a rock". Tidoy, on the other hand, was Pedro Nopat who lived in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and who first inhabited the area. Myths in Onop divulge the story of Tidoy as a famous folk medicine practitioner who has a power of therianthropy or the capacity of being able to metamorphose into animals like lizards and pigs through some shapeshifting ability. Now, in Gui-obniTidoy resides two of the grand children of Tidoy namely Simplicio "Pisyong" Natonton and Ernesto "Erning" Nopat who stand as the area's successors.



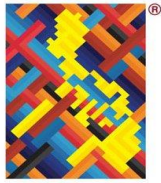
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Sinuhutan Cave

In a mountain which is two hours trailing from the centre of Barangay Onop dwells nature's ecstasy and one of the premiere natural attractions in the Municipality of Miagao that has been little discovered by tourism. Sinuhutan cave which came from its root local term "suhut" or "to walk below" is a perfect example for real-caving-adventure site. Tourists can access this splendid nature's bequest by coming through three entrances that lead to an array of intricate and amazing formations of stalactites and stalagmites including the "Jacosi Tab" where exist a specie of shrimp, the "Female Genital", and "the Plaza or the Cathedral" among others. It had been prominent for its immense chambers and complex eerie passages where breezy sound of small falls besieges the natural domicile. Sightseers cannot endure not to be gobsmacked by the cave's mystical vista and rocky landscape finely tuned by the clement and cool climate of the Philippine tropics. During the Japanese occupation, the cave became a clandestine fortress for early villagers. Moreover, nearby is an annexe cave of Sinuhutan called the Robin Cave where four kinds of bats settle in.

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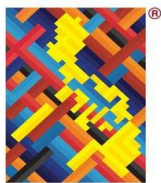
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Miagao Rice Terraces

Miagao's own version of Banaué rice terraces never fails to overwhelm sightseers who deliberately sought to witness the jaw-dropping and inconceivable panorama of terraces carved in the mountains of Barangay Cabalaunan. It has been a general thought that the Cabalaunan terraces were built with minimal equipment, mostly by the meticulous hands of the inhabitants in order to adapt the mountainous environs of Sitio Anoy for agricultural practice particularly rice farming. The terraces, reaching a lofty elevation and being constructed on perpendicular slopes, truly exemplify the utter merger of the physical, socio-cultural, economic, and political setting in Miagao. The Cabalaunan compound of stone or mud walls and the cautious fashioning of the natural form of hills and mountains to build stair-like pond fields, doubly maintained through the development of elaborate irrigation schemes, and an improved farming system, mirror a proficiency of engineering that is, indeed, a surviving refined landscape of exceptional splendour.

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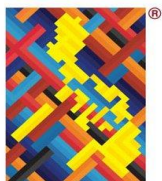


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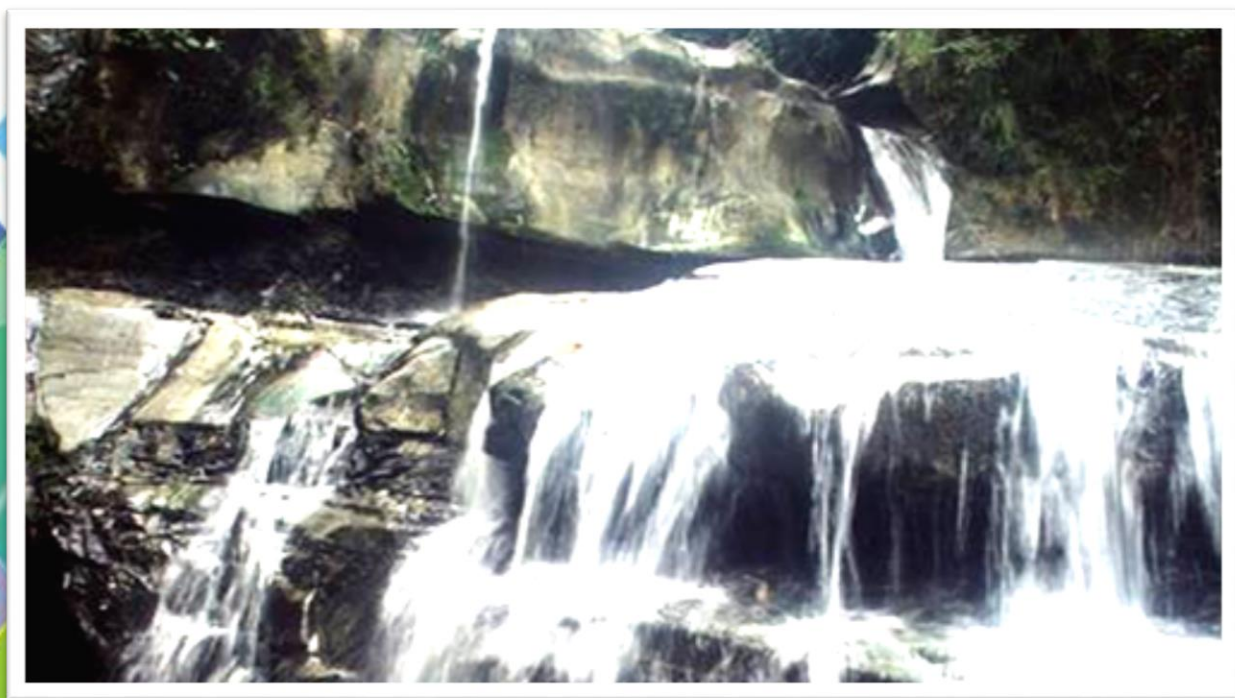


Banogon Falls

Flowing in the extremity of Barangay Dalije, Miagao, Banogon Falls is a concrete example of heaven's benevolence to the thirsty and hungry life forms beneath enabling the rise of lush vegetations and farms. This eminent heaven's sprinkle exemplifies a cascade of alluring and smooth white sleek hair strips falling gracefully like Rapunzel offering to let down her hair from her tower so that her lover can climb up to her. The word "banogon" may have come from the fact that the surrounding forest is home to "banog", a hunter bird of the eagle family. Viewed from afar the falls itself appears like a white heron about to take flight or a phoenix rising.



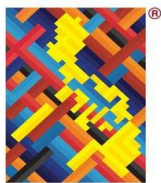
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Erecquican Falls

From a forest resided by Irik-ik birds and the shrill squeaks of bamboos grinding against each other came the name of Erecquican Falls. This is situated in Sitio Erecquican in Brgy. Alimodias, Miagao, Iloilo. Ice cold waters would sooth aching muscles as its small drops massage one's skin. Dip in its small limestone pools and contemplate on nature's sound as your mind creates your own musical composition, whose melody shall escape your mouth in a hum.

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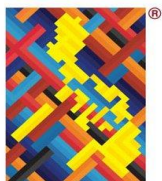


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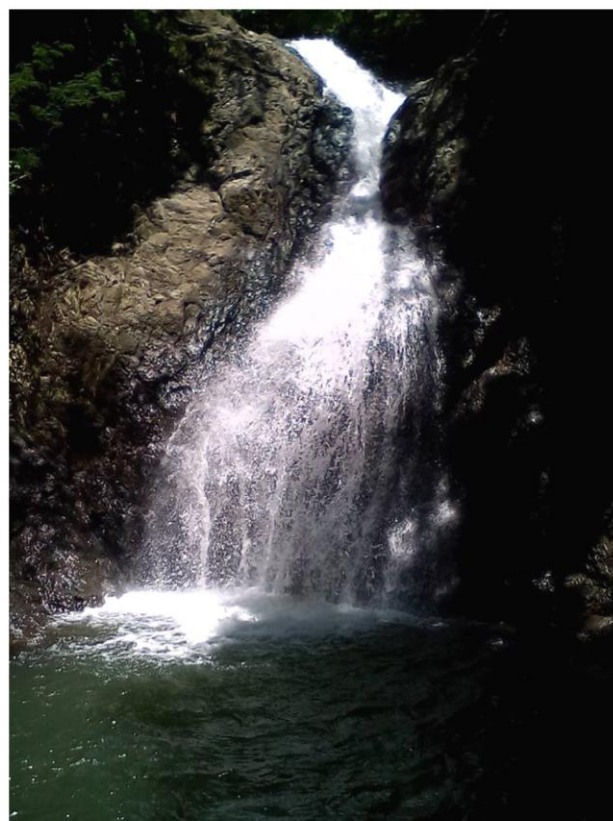
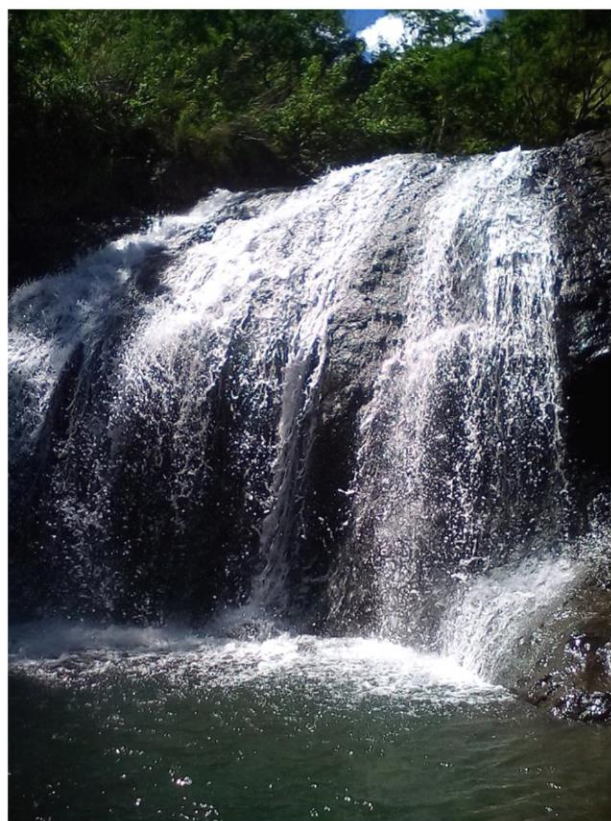


Bugsukan Falls

Making you feel the rush as you see water racing down from a mountain-top of Barangay Daliye, Miagao, Iloilo, the wondrous of Bugsukan falls is making a name of its own. This very intimate and romantic falls among all falls in the municipality etymologized its name from the local term "bugsuk" which means "to plunge". Its tranquil stretch made it comparable to a rich man's residence crystalline pool. Though seem to be an infinitesimal waterfall, this inviting pond with ambiance so playful is definitely irresistible in taking a plunge or in frolicking with close friends who enjoys the breezy and serene enveloped by cosmic beauty of wilderness. Without any dispute, Bugsukan falls is undeniably a wanderer's ideal place for peace, meditation, and communion with nature.

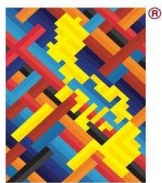


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Buslugan Falls & Parigusan Diwata

At an elevation of more than 1,500 meters above sea level and hidden from the prying eyes of lowlanders, Mother Nature generously opens her breasts to nourish the people of Miagao through a seven-tiered wonder, Buslugan Falls. The falls can be found on top of Brgy, Tigmarabo near the boundaries of Igbaras, Iloilo and Sibalom, Antique... The falls is the major source of OYAOY RIVER which traverses and waters the land of Barangays of Tigmarabo, Agdum, Maduyo, Mabayan, Oyaoy and San Jose... Of the seven tiers, the 7th tier at the top, "PARIGUSAN DIWATA" is an enchantment to behold... Water trickles from the many crevices of the solid rock in the "Parigusan"... It is the most hidden and the hardest to reach... The falls holds two calderas where weary travelers can take a dip to freshen their bodies after a long trek... According to the olden folks of Barangays Tigmarabo and Ongyod, when the moon is full, the Earth Goddess or "Diwata" bathes herself in these pristine pools.

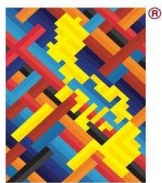


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Bato Labog

It is one of a kind God's creation that can be found in Barangay Olango, Miagao. It is an elongated rock that is painted in the centre of the mountain. Its estimated measures are around 400 meters long and 3-4 meters wide. Its name originates from the two local words "bato" and "labog" meaning "rock" and "long" respectively. It is stunning because of being such a hardened-river-like rock formation. Some says it's like rock embraced by a mountain. A mini cave can also be found within its premises which add up its magnificence. The fresh burst of air and the panoramic view of Miagao Rice Terraces and Miagao town on top of it deliver a soothing relief to those who visits it. It will take around 30 minutes' walk to reach the site. Everyone will surely enjoy the trekking and hiking going to this amazing rock formation.

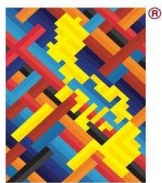


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Miagao Wild Berries

If sightseers will think like a bluejay, it may not be hard to stumble on some sort of a wild berry that is silently growing in abundance within Miagao's forests, fields, lawns, forest edges and streamside which is absolutely close to Baguio's strawberries. This product of the wilderness can grow up to six inches tall, and its leaves are split into three leaflets. Each leaflet, if scrutinized thoroughly, is at about 1 to 1 1/2 inches long and has miniscule teeth on its edges with hirsute petioles. The fruits' taste is an incredible blend of sweet and sour that would let foodies to crinkle their face or pucker and contort their lips in a not-so-conforming manner. Residents quip that if someone eats the fruit, an unexplainable vigour would invade the entirety of his body enough to overcome the easier-said-than-done hiking experience in the mountains of the municipality.



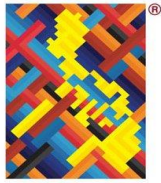
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Rafflesia

Another gift of nature that Miagao is really proud of, is the existence of Rafflesia, specifically rafflesia speciosa. It is endemic to the Philippine island of Panay. According to sources, this parasitic found in the remote mountains of the municipality is the third Rafflesia species documented to bloom in the Philippines which is belong to the medium-sized kind. The species was named by Julie barcelona and Edwino Fernando.

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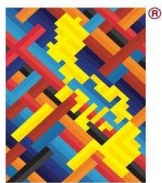


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University of the Philippines Visayas

The 12 km² wide University of the Philippines in the Visayas, known also as UPV and UP Visayas is a public research university in the Philippines, and one of the units of the University of the Philippines System. It is the most prominent and one of the leading educational institutions in the Southern Philippines. It also offers regional studies programs on the preservation and enrichment of the Visayan cultural heritage as well as a full complement of other subjects and majors. What is special about the campus is that it is the forefront of fisheries education in the country and hosts the only UP College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences with a focus on aquaculture, fish processing, natural products development, and post-harvest/food science majors. Over the years, the college has instituted degree programs that address the need for sustainable development of the country's fisheries resources and respond to the call for highly trained manpower in the field. Meanwhile, UPV football pitch was the location when Miagao grabbed the Guinness World Record for simultaneously flying the most number of sky lanterns on May 2013.



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Miagao Sea Life

Miagao has something to boast when it comes to popular scuba destinations in the world with areas of open water which contain coral reef. This could be verified if you snorkel in the waters of San Rafael and Narat-an to find corals and sea grass 200 to 300 meters offshore with 4 to 6 fathoms depth.

Coral reefs are very diverse, with many different sizes and shapes. Some reefs look like large sponges or brains, while others appear almost like underwater cacti or cabbage. Various life forms emerge such as sea anemone, clown fish, lion fish, soft and massive corals among others. Colors range across the spectrum, from bright orange or blue to dull yellow or brown.