



Things to know before coming to Malapascua

Arrival

- Please make sure you have double checked all covid entry requirements and documents just prior to departure as things may change last minute.
- If you have booked a pickup, please **reconfirm** your arrival **at least 72 hours** in advance by email, text or WhatsApp (and ensure you get a reply!), including arrival time as well as flight number and origin of flight/ferry company and pier/hotel. This is to ensure we have correct details for you as mistakes happen very occasionally. Please write this in the body of the email rather than sending the e-ticket. If possible, provide a contact cellphone number or other IM. We may not receive your confirmation if you send it any later than that, and do not assume we have received it unless you receive a reply.
- Please call if you have last minute confirmations or changes. Phone lines here are not good either so misunderstandings can occur easily, so please call and follow up with an email/SMS/WhatsApp.
- If your flight is significantly delayed, please try and contact us **by SMS, WhatsApp or phone.** +63 917 795 9433. We do not monitor emails 24 hours a day. If you can only email, please cc our front desk to help get a speedier response: admin@thresherdivers.com. Please be aware that there may be an additional fee if the driver has a long wait.
- **When you arrive at the airport**, our driver or his representative will meet you. He will have a sign with your name and "Thresher Shark Divers". He/she will be **outside** the terminal. Please take a few minutes to look around for him, as he may not be allowed directly outside. It is a small airport and he will almost always find you quickly. There may be other 'touts' outside the airport trying to get your business. Please make sure you go with your booked driver as otherwise you will need to pay for your transfer twice. If you are sure he is not there please call, or if online you can try emailing dive@thresherdivers.com and admin@thresherdivers.com as we are often online. We will try and send your driver number in advance.
- **Late arrival/ Night boat crossings:** It is not usually possible to make a night crossing as the coast guard does not allow it (after about 6pm). Please let us know as soon as possible **if you flight arrives in Cebu after 12pm** or if your flight is delayed. We can make arrangements for you to overnight in Cebu or near the pier. In the unlikely event a night crossing is allowed, extra charges will apply.

- **Staying in Cebu**

- If you are staying in Cebu, we advise you book a hotel near the airport. Booking a hotel in Cebu City itself or on the Mactan coastline can add up to an hour to the journey each way depending on traffic. Google maps does not accurately display the journey times. Most airport hotels arrange free pickup, or you can get an airport yellow taxi.
- If you want a transfer the next day, we can pick up from the hotel before 12pm.

Contact number: +63-917-795-9433 (incl WhatsApp).

Please reserve use at night for emergencies as you may be waking the person who answers. GMT +8.

Emergencies: Calls, texts, WA+63-966-804-9408. For calls or text only +63-920-808-1869.

- **Transfer time** is 3-3.5 hours on average by car and 30 minutes by boat. Expect total transfer to take around 5-6 hours from landing time. The transfers booked are direct transfers. If you stop on the way for anything other than quick toilet stops - such as shopping, going into Cebu City etc., you will be charged an additional P800 per hour or part thereof. Please try not to stop as the drivers and your boat have a schedule to stick to. You will be on a private boat (rather than a public ferry), though it may have other staff or other TSD customers on it.
- **Maya port:** This is a very basic port and you may need to climb slippery stairs or walk, supported, on a plank to get onto the boat. So sensible shoes are advised!
- **Bad weather:** Crossings in bad weather may cost extra or (rarely) may have to be cancelled for safety reasons. Alternate arrangements will be made for you. These will be at your cost, though it's not a huge amount. You probably won't get a refund from the resort booked in Malapascua, but you will be able to check in when you arrive the next morning. There will usually be two options:
 - Stay in Cebu near the airport
 - Drive to Maya and stay in a resort there. Our driver will bring you over the next day, we will call you in the car via the driver's phone to make arrangements. There will be extra costs for this, usually P1,000 for the driver's extra time and cost for the room in Maya; there are some budget options and nicer places.
- **Extra fees in Maya port:** There are fees for the porters and for the small boat that takes you to the main boat. We include these fees in the cost of transfers. HOWEVER, there are some local touts in Maya who may try to get money off you, but please do NOT pay money to the locals in Maya. Ask the TSD staff for help if needed.
- **If you make your own way** to Malapascua, please be aware of the "commissioners" who meet the public boats. They are touts and not to be trusted. You can ask them for directions to TSD, we are a few minutes walk from the pier where you land. Head off to the right, past Maldito onto the next beach where you will see Blue Coral on the right. Turn left along the beach and we are the first two-floor building you will come to, about 100 meters down the beach. Also beware of the touts in Maya port.

Money & Payment

- **Cash:** bring peso cash if possible, it is very much appreciated as there are no banks on the island. At TSD we accept all major currencies cash for diving, the bar and the restaurant and you can run up a bill and make one payment at the end. Please make sure notes are not torn, as Filipino banks will not accept them. We do not accept USD from before the year 2000 and we do not accept EUR 500 notes.

ATMs on the island are unreliable! There are ATMs and they usually work, but it's best not to rely on them. There is an ATM at the airport at the exit. If this does not work, your driver can take you to an ATM on the way. You will be safe carrying the money up to Malapascua. ATMs do not always let you take out a lot. There is a 24-hour money changer at the airport, and you can change most major currencies with some of the businesses on the island, but only if they have enough pesos. The exchange rate is poor except for USD. There is a new "Palawan" international payment shop on the island also, and you may be able to withdraw money on a card through them.

Credit cards are accepted on the island in some places, usually for a 5% fee.

- Credit cards are occasionally declined by banks if Philippine payment is deemed 'unusual behavior.' Inform them in advance and bring a backup!
- We prefer not to accept your resort payment by credit card, please pay in advance or in cash for that if you can.
- **Bank transfers:** You can **transfer money in advance**. **You MUST send bank transfers *at least one week in advance of your arrival date*** to ensure it arrive in time to be credited to your package, unless you are transferring within the same country. Otherwise you may need to pay balance on site and get a refund to your account after departure. We have several accounts:
 - Eurozone (EUR)
 - UK (GBP)
 - USD (USD) and Canada (CAD)
 - Singapore (SGD)
 - Australia (AUD) and New Zealand (NZD)
 - Philippines (PHP)

Wise.com: This is a great new way to send money internationally with low fees. You can send in 20+ currencies, and you can also send PHP to our Wise account using the email address andrea@thresherdivers.com. Use this link for discounts if you are new to Wise <https://wise.com/invite/u/andreaa389>

- **Deposits and prepayments:**
 - Deposit amount credited is based on the **final amount received in our accounts**. You are responsible for all transfer fees and losses result from exchange rates charged by the banks and credit cards.
 - Our banks do not charge for incoming transfers if all fees are paid on your end. However, some banks use an intermediary bank, which deducts charges from transferred amounts without notice. We cannot be held liable for these charges. If

incurred, we will have to ask you to make up any short payment on arrival. To avoid this, please be sure to ask your bank to cover all wiring fees, including those of any intermediary bank.

- When sending international payments, you must ensure that your bank clearly understands it is sending the payment in the currency of the receiving account. If not, the payment may be returned or credited in a different currency, which may involve additional exchange fees.
- **Package Balance:** We request that full package payment is completed minimum 15 days in advance, or 30 days for group (4 or more). If for any reason this has not been done, final payment is due on arrival for all packages, **prior** to in water activities.
- The law states that you can bring PHP10,000 (= approx. USD250) maximum in or out of the country although we have never heard that this has been enforced. This applies to PHP only, not other currencies.
- There is a **DEPARTURE TAX** due at the airport, at time of writing it is P750/950 depending on your flight.

Cancellation policy

Note that we are more flexible if cancellation is pandemic induced ☺

- Packages are non-transferable and non-refundable for dives and rooms. For prepaid deposits:
 - More than 30 days before - 30% of package price forfeit, minimum 2,500.
 - 30 days before - 50% of package price forfeit, minimum of the room costs if larger.
 - 14 days before or any time after arrival - complete package price forfeit
 - Unused dives from dive packages are non-refundable for any reason, including the weather, unless it is the fault of TSD
- Cancellation policy for groups
 - Partial cancellation: Deposits for groups are taken as a deposit for each group member and the cancellation policy applies to each person. For example, if one group member cancels, their portion of the deposit will be non-refundable according to the refund policy above unless someone else can fill their space. For entire group cancellation within 30 days, 100% of total invoice applies.
- **Resorts:** Each resort has a different cancellation policy. Expect that if your room is fully or partially cancelled within one month of arrival or after arrival (e.g. if you decide to leave early or move resorts) that you will be required to pay the full amount.
 - **Tepanee** – once confirmed, room price is non-refundable. We can work with you on final confirmation date if your stay is a while away.
 - **Blanco** – For bookings Dec 1-Mar 1, refunds and changes are not possible
Mar 1-Dec 1: Full payment if cancelled one month in advance, 30% otherwise.
- For any refunds given, transaction charges will not be paid by TSD.
- **Insurance:** Please ensure you are adequately covered for diving, health, cancellation, delays in arrival or departure to due weather, ill health, accidents etc. and any other unforeseen

reason that may lead to trip cancellation, missed dives out of your package, or unwanted trip extension. This means cancellations, losses and disruptions caused by reasons outside of TSD's responsibility will be shouldered by you unless you are insured. We will assist in providing all paperwork necessary for any insurance claim. For dive insurance we recommend DAN or Dive Assure. Dive Assure offer insurance for as little as 1 day.

Diving

- BRING YOUR DIVING CERTIFICATION CARDS!!!
- You will be allowed to dive within the limits of your certification and/or proven experience. You may be required to do a check out dive as your first dive. This is at the discretion of the dive shop manager and for your own safety and that of your buddies.
- **Shark Dive:** This is a deeper site and for Advanced Divers only! If you are an Open Water Diver, you are certified to dive only to 18 meters. This does not mean you cannot dive it, but you will need further training for this site, which we can provide. Please contact us *prior* to booking confirmation if this applies to you and we will advise your best option.
- **Courses:** If you will be doing a course with us you will need to complete a medical form. Please take a look at this before you come, as you may need to see a doctor in advance. https://www.padi.com/sites/default/files/documents/2020-08/10346E_Diver_Medical_Form.pdf
(Please copy and paste link into your browser if it does not work)
- **First dive/ Refreshers:** As per safe diving standards, you may be required to do a refresher or check dive as your first dive.
- **Tank Valves:** Most of our tanks are INT yoke. We have a limited amount of DIN tanks, so if you have a DIN regulator please bring an adapter. We also sell DIN adapters and have a small number to rent.
- **10/15-liter tanks:** We have a limited number of 15 litre tanks available for those with high air consumption. These are air or nitrox compatible and have an extra fee. Please request in advance. Likewise, for 10 litre tanks for smaller people.
- Dive price includes tank (12L), weights, boat, DM.
Unless otherwise stated, price does not include (prices current at time of writing, subject to change without notice):
 - Equipment rental (mask, fins & booties, wetsuit, BCD, reg):
P350 per dive/ P700 per day)
 - Marine park tax: P300 per day
 - Monad Shoal diver fee P100 per day
 - Dusk or Night dive surcharge: P300
 - Fuel surcharges for longer trips: varies and may be more if we do not reach minimum numbers.
- Also available (prices current at time of writing):
 - Nitrox P350 per fill. Package rates available including 10 fills for 2,500.
 - 15L tanks P100/500 for air/nitrox
 - Computer rental: P250/dive P500 day
 - Torch rental: P300 per dive
 - Camera rental: P1,000/dive P1,500 day

- **Water temperature:** 28-30°. This *may* drop as low as 24° or 26° from December to February.
- **Technical diving** – we offer a range of technical diving, courses and equipment including twins, sidemount and trimix. If you wish to do technical courses or dives, please inform us in advance to avoid disappointment.
- Please be reminded of **the NO FLYING AFTER DIVING rule**. We recommend a **minimum** of 18-24 hours surface interval after the final dive before flying.
- To assist us with better service, we highly suggest providing us with an accomplished customer information sheet prior to arrival, including any required equipment rental, cert level, number of dives and rooming list. This is especially useful if you are in a group.
- **Sunscreen.** As you may know, sunscreen is very damaging to the reef. We usually have stocks of “Reef safe” sunscreen for sale if you do not have your own. Otherwise we ask that you refrain from using it before diving and/or use clothing to protect from the sun.

Food and drink

- For your convenience, you can keep a bill at Oscar’s Bar and Restaurant (at the dive shop) and pay at the end of your stay along with your diving bill. You can pay in any currency and also by credit card (+5%).

Other info

- Malapascua is a basic island with no mainland electric, water or telephone lines. We consider ourselves lucky to have so far avoided large corporate resorts that such facilities attract. Most resorts are small family-run businesses with both the charm and the problems this entails. Please bear in mind that we do not yet have 5-star accommodation or facilities. We do have generally reliable 24-hour island electric and Wi-Fi at most resorts and in the dive center and our restaurant/bar.
- The water on the island ranges from slightly brackish in rainy season to quite salty in the summer (March to June). There is often a nationwide water shortage in the Philippines and because of this we are very careful with our use of water as part of our conservation effort. For camera rinses we provide a seawater rinse on the boat and an island water rinse in the dive shop. We can provide drinking water on request for this, but we ask that you help us conserve our precious resource by minimizing its use. Also, by taking quick showers etc. Tapanee resort is the only resort with fresh water; they have three desalination machines to convert sea water to fresh water, and this is another reason we recommend them.
- We are an independent dive shop and use outside resorts for your booking. Your room price is the standard price for the resort rooms. You will pay directly through us. Whilst we do our best to ensure accurate room quotes, unexpected changes may occur due to reasons beyond our control.
- **Towels:** most resorts provide one per person and they are not allowed to be used on the beach or boats.

- **Visas:** Most countries are granted a 30-day visa on arrival. However, check with your local embassy for current requirements. In order to enter the country, your passport should have **6 months validity and you should have an ongoing ticket**. Please also check any current covid requirements. <http://www.immigration.gov.ph/>. Visas are usually easy to renew in major cities.
- **Mobile phone access:** There are two main providers on Malapascua – Globe and SMART. Glove is best. SIM cards can be bought cheaply (\$2) on the island but your phone must be unlocked. There is usually a stand open in the airport before you exit.
- **Internet access:** There is free wi-fi at the dive shop and most resorts. It is fairly reliable, but do not expect the same speeds you might get at home and be aware that the internet can sometimes go down island-wide. We have both Globe and Smart phone and internet service available at the dive shop, so in case of emergency there should be no problem with communication.
- **Electric:** Plugs are US style 2 pin flat plugs, 220V. We sell plug adapters in the dive shop but not voltage converters. You may also want to bring a surge protector.
- **Noise:** The island can be noisy at night with cockerels and karaoke. Bring earplugs if this might be a problem. There are regular fiestas on the island including two big ones in November and May 11-12 and other major holidays. There can be loud music all night, so please check with us if you think this will be a concern and we will do our best to find you the quietest resort.
- **Regulators:** Please make sure you pack them in your check-in luggage as they are no longer allowed in carry-on at some airports.
- It is a good idea to bring a small torch/flashlight or your phone to use at night, as the island is not well lit.
- **Resort Check-in time** is 2 or 3pm, check out time is 11 or 12pm. You may be able to have early check in/later check out for free depending on the resort and room availability.
- All prices are subject to change without notice due to circumstances beyond our control although we will do our best to inform you in advance.

See you soon!!!