



“  
**RETOUR A**  
**L'ESSENTIEL**”

*« More than  
survival, it's life... »*





What's "Retour a  
l'Essentiel?"

page 3

Where is  
it?

page 4-5

What about the culture?

page 6

What do I need to  
know?

page 7

What do I  
take?

page 8

With who ?

page 9

What am I gonna do?

page 10/21

Sustainable  
focus

page 22



What's the  
price?

page 23



# ARE YOU READY FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCE?

## "In search of the authentic"

An adventure at "L'essence même" is a real adventure. It is an adventure of sharing with the local people who live on this territory which is theirs. Learning new cultures, living differently.

## "Back to basics"

Remove everything superfluous to focus on his real needs. Re-learn how to meet his vital needs.

## "Feeling alive"

An upheaval in lifestyle and daily life allows one to find oneself again. By going to see where your mental and physical limits are.

## "Feed on knowledge"

You will have the chance to learn a new way of life, new practices. Nothing better than learning by sharing real experience.

# PHILIPPINES

The Philippines is a country in South East Asia consisting of more than 7000 islands. Its capital is Manila on the island of Luzon. It is a predominantly Catholic country and is one of the most westernized countries in Asia. Spain and the United States, both of which colonized the country, have each had a great influence on Filipino culture which is a unique blend of East and West.



Caramoan is located on a peninsula in the south of the Bicol region on the island of Luzon. A group of islands and islets scattered in the Pacific Ocean, endowed with the beauty of nature and preserved by its isolation. It is a rural landscape where white sandy beaches and limestone cliffs are common.

"Cara" means turtle and "Moan" means island.

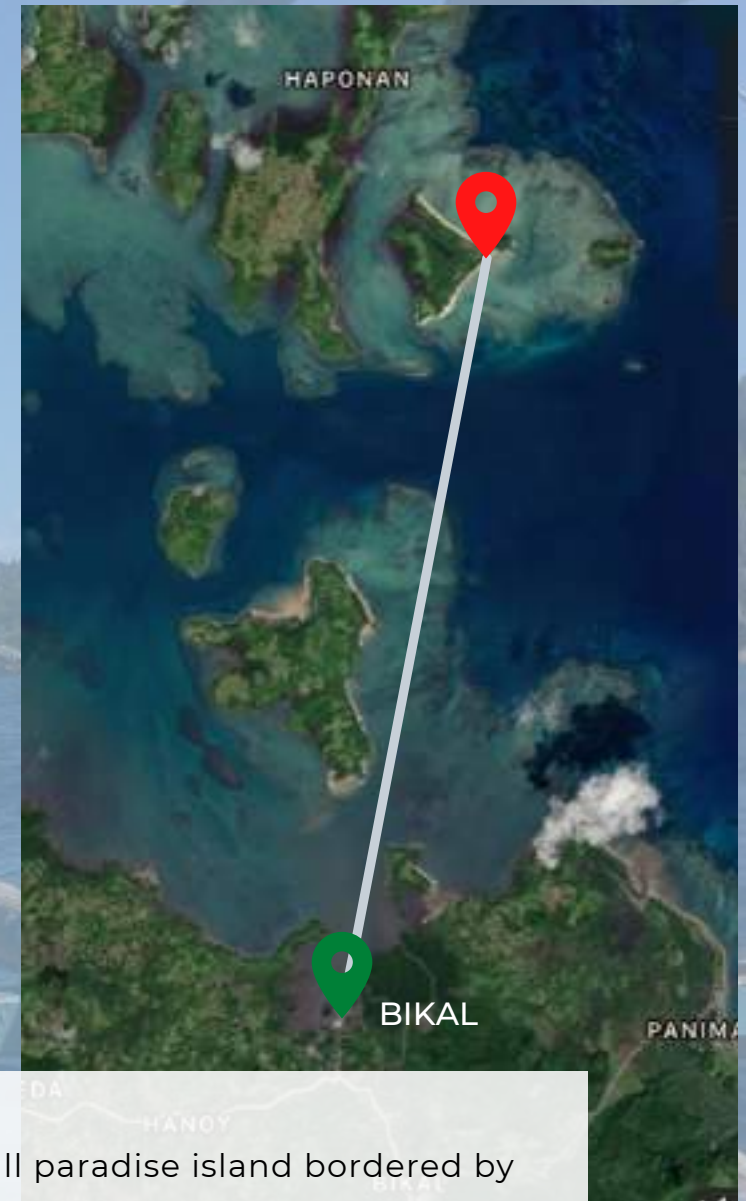




# THIS ISLAND

You will depart from the small fishing port of Bikal, aboard the bangka (small Philippine fishing boat) for the desert island.

It will take you 45 minutes by boat before you land in paradise.



This is Baieng Island, a small paradise island bordered by two sandy beaches, some limestone cliffs and a thick jungle.

On this island you will find all the resources you need to live, coconut trees, crabs, fish...



# BAHALA NA

Bahala na is a socio-cultural value in the Philippines. A value between fatalism and determinism, a social value of taking risks with peace of mind. The determined and affirmative attitude reflects the Filipino value system that leads to free choice, determination and achievement of goals, as well as a sense of peace: "Bahala na" is a positive value in situations or circumstances beyond our control. It allows us to put difficult life situations into perspective.

*"Things are gonnabe okay."*

That it is an expression of  
*"courage and fortitude,  
a willingness to face  
difficulty and a  
readiness to accept the  
consequences."*

Camilo Osías  
*The Filipino Way of Life: The Pluralized  
Philosophy*

This value will be passed on to you as you meet and discuss with the locals. Filipinos are communicative optimists and have a happiness of life.



# PRACTICAL INFORMATION



- **No vaccine required**  
*(but be sure to keep your vaccinations up to date)*
- Arm yourself with **mosquito repellent**.



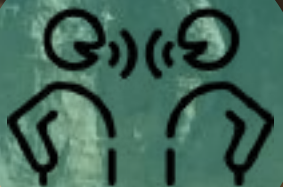
The currency of the Philippines is the **Peso (₱)**.  
**1€ -> 56.27 ₱** as of March 3, 2020.



- **Free 30-day visa** to the Philippines.  
*(for French, Belgians, Swiss or Canadians)*
- **Exit ticket obligatory**



- Best period: dry season from **December -> April**
- Climate: **tropical**, hot and humid  
*(annual temperature 26°C)*



- **Filipino and English.**  
*(All Filipinos speak English)*
- Yeah, you'll need to speak a little **English**.



- **GMT/UTC + 8 o'clock.**
- When it is **noon in Caramoan**, it is **5am the same day in Paris** (6am, daylight saving time).



## YOU NEED

### Clothes

- 3 synthetic T-shirts
- 1 long sleeve shirt
- 1 light waterproof jacket (poncho, raincut)
- 1 swimsuit
- 1 pair of hiking pants
- 1 pair of shorts
- 2 synthetic or merino underwear
- 1 hat or cap
- 1 pair of sandals
- 1 pair of beach shoes
- 1 pair of walking shoes
- 1 pair of sunglasses

### Others

- 1 headlamp
- 1 or more external batteries
- 1 mosquito repellent - tropical zone
- 1 sunscreen: Index 50, water resistant
- 1 microfiber towel or small terry towel
- 2-3 drybag or ziplock type waterproof bags
- 1 Go Pro or camera with waterproof housing
- 1 waterproof notebook ("rite in the rain" type) with a pencil

# BACKPACK (40L)



## WE HAVE FOR YOU

### Materials

#### Sleeping

- 1 hammoc
- 1 tarpe
- 1 ligt blanket

#### Cooking

- 1 pan
- 1 knife

#### Fishing

- 1 fishing line
- 1 hook
- 1 fishing net

#### Survival

- 1 machete

### Supplies

- 10 L of water
- 1 kilo of rice
- 1 kilo of fruit
- 1 kilo of vegetables



# LOCAL GUIDE

## "Pong"

His real name is Ismael, but maybe he'll tell you why everyone calls him "Pong", it's very funny.

He was born in Caramoan and grew up here, Pong knows nature, he is the specialist of picking and cabins. He's an observer, he'll show you everything the island has to offer. Pong is an optimist and with him there is never any problem.

He's an incredible person who has a lot to pass on.



## "Ely"

Ely is an amazing person, very good listener. He manages to live from his job as a guide in Caramoan and loves his work which supports his wife and five children. He is very proud of his region even though he knows that it is difficult to live in this remote area. Ely is the professional of survival, he knows all the fishing techniques and making fire without a lighter is not a problem for him. He will show you that living on a desert island is not so complicated.



# DAY 1 : ARRIVAL IN MANILLA

We will pick you up at the **Manila airport** to take you to the hotel Alicia Apartment 3\* to drop off your bags.

Depending on the time of your arrival and your fitness level we can organize a **tour of the city of Manila**.

Manila does not have a good reputation and yet there are many nice and friendly places like the Intramuros district, the Rizal park or Paco park. All this on foot or by bike.



---

It'll be a chance to start tasting the **local specialties**.

Gastronomy in the Philippines is a mixture of different cuisines: Malaysian, Chinese, Spanish and American. The dishes are very tasty and varied. Rice holds an essential place in this local gastronomy.

Night at the hotel Alicia Apartment 3\*



# DAY 2 : IN THE SKY AND ON THE ROAD

## *Morning*

Let's go for another day of transportation. Departure from the airport of Manila for a **1 hour flight to the city of Naga** at the heart of the island of Luzon.

Once in Naga, it's not over... We will take you to the Bus Terminal to take a local bus to Caramoan the final destination.

**5h of bus** immersed with the philippines and surrounded by beautiful scenery, rice fields, mountains and the seaside, a beautiful glimpse of the Philippines.

At the arrival of the bus, a tricycle is waiting for you (it's a super fun and very used means of transport in the Philippines), direction "Residencia de Salvacion" resort.



## *Afternoon*

Once settled in your room you can **enjoy the large beach** that borders the resort, or go for a **walk in the small fishing village of Paniman** to meet the local population.

In the Philippines you will always be greeted with a "Hello sir" or "Hello madam" and a big smile.

If you still have some strength left you can **take a kayak** and go **into the river in the middle of the jungle** (a foretaste of adventure).

Night at the Residencia de Salvacion.



# DAY 3 : DIRECTION PARADISE

## *Morning*

After a last breakfast with civilization, it will be time for you to leave for the small port of **Bikal to embark** for the island. The transfer will be by tricycle.

Once in Bikal, you will have to load your belongings, equipment and food on the boat (on a Bangka, the traditional Filipino fishing boat).

It's a **45 minutes boat ride** with Pong, your first guide, it will be the opportunity to start getting to know him.

You will see the island getting closer before you can set foot on it.

Once you arrive, you will have to unload your stuff and **choose the camp site** with Pong, you will learn how to make the right choice and **set up a camp**.

Meal based on fruit bought the day before in the village.



## *Afternoon*

Once the camp is set up and with a full belly you will leave with Pong to **go around the island** in order to spot every corner of the island, which will be useful for the rest, **be observant** and don't hesitate to ask questions.

The sun sets around 5:30 pm, you will enjoy the **sunset with a coconut** just picked before eating a cold meal prepared the day before.

For the first night, Pong will sleep on the island with you.

**He will give you a little book called "Retour à l'essentiel".**





# LITTLE BOOK "RETOUR A L'ESSENTIEL"

*To find yourself, to refocus on yourself*

## Meditation

in 5 steps

- 1- Adopt a stable and comfortable posture, sitting upright with your feet flat on the floor.
- 2- Relax your shoulders, place your hands on your thighs or knees, palms up or down.
- 3- When you are ready, gently close your eyes.
- 4- First pay attention to your breathing, without modifying it.
- 5- Be patient with yourself.

## Yoga



Different positions that are good for body and mind...

This book will be given to you at the beginning of your stay.

Its aim is to allow you, at your own pace, through **meditation, relaxation** and **yoga techniques**, to **find yourself**, to **refocus on yourself**.

All this during the calm of your day on the desert island.

This environment will allow you to remove all the parasites of your life in order to gather only the essential and to draw the positive from it.

We advise you to devote 1 hour of your day to discover this book and do a few exercises a day.

The conditions of life on the desert island combined with exercises like this will allow you **an intense inner well-being**.



# DAY 4 : FIRE & ANGLING

## Morning

First wake up on the island, the sun's glow crosses the canopy and the sound of the waves gently wakes you up.

Breakfast with fruit in a calm and restful atmosphere.

The sound of a Bangka in the distance, it's time for Pong to leave you but don't worry, Ely is in the boat.

You meet Ely who explains the mission of the morning: **to make fire!**

Depending on the weather you will learn how to make fire in any conditions, very dry or very wet... Of course without lighter or matches.

It takes 1 hour of effort to make a fire, once it is lit you will have to fetch wood, a lot of wood, in order to maintain the fire all day long.

You will then learn how to **cook on wood fire**, cook rice and dosage.



## Afternoon

First hot meal on the desert island and it will be a pleasure.



The afternoon will be devoted to angling. Ely will give you line and hook, it's up to you to **make a fishing line**. Then you will have to make a wooden fishing reel.

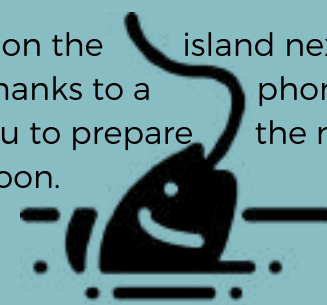
Then it's off for a fishing party, hoping to catch big fish...

Before leaving, Ely will then show you how to leather the fish caught in the wood fire.

The rest of the afternoon is free and everyone is busy according to the division of tasks, fishing, wood, rest, meditation, yoga...

First evening in total autonomy (Ely will be on the island next door, he will be reachable 24 hours a day thanks to a phone that will be given to you), it will be up to you to prepare the meal based on rice and fish caught in the afternoon.

Night in bivouac on the island.





# DAY 5 : PICKING & COOKING



## *Morning*

Second awakening on the island, you had taken your marks and you feel good.

This morning you are autumn for the preparation of breakfast.

Pong will join you in the early morning to pass on his knowledge of the forest and learn to recognize what is edible or medicinal.

Then you will cook with him. Pong loves to eat and cook, that's also what the Philippines is all about.

## *Afternoon*

In the early afternoon, Pong will show you how to improve your living conditions.

You will make spoons, baquettes, plates for eating and cooking, using coconut and bamboo as raw materials.

Afterwards Pong will leave you on the island, free to do whatever you want.

Yoga or meditation exercises, fishing, walking in the forest or simply enjoying the beautiful surroundings to rest.

It will be up to you to make yourself dinner in the evening with what you have learned in the morning.

Night in bivouac on the island.



# COOKING WITH PONG

## *Cooking can be done anywhere*



Pong will give you a real cooking class (better than with Philippe Etchebest) with food found in the jungle and in the middle of a desert island.

He loves to cook this way and he will share this passion with you.

His favorite dish is sweet potatoes with the green leaves of a jungle plant called: Malunggay and small rock fish (all with a little rice of course). You can find all these ingredients on the island.

But that's not all, Pong will also show you how to make kitchen utensils with what you have around you, like coconut, bamboo, wood...





# DAY 6 : CRABS & SHELLS

## *Morning*

A new awakening on the island, today it is Ely who will pass on to you his knowledge of seafood.

He will join you in the early morning, before the tide comes in to teach you how to catch crabs (which I hope for you will be bigger than on the picture) and find edible shellfish. You will learn how to make crab traps and how to find out where the shells are.

Once your bags are filled with seafood, you will share a meal with Ely.



## *Afternoon*

The afternoon will be free and it will be necessary to say goodbye to Ely who will leave you for 4 days of autonomy. It will be the occasion for a last exchange to ask him your questions but life on a desert island doesn't scare you anymore and you know your environment by heart.

You now know:

- Maintain a fire and cook with
- Fishing for fish
- Picking coconuts and opening them.
- Sleeping on a desert island
- Picking edible plants in the jungle
- Catching crabs
- Collecting shells

It's up to you!



# DAY 7-8-9 : ALONE IN THE WORLD

## *Autonomy*

**You are now in the autonomy phase.**

It's time to put into practice what you've learned in the last 4 days.

This is the most intense moment of your stay, you will feel both alone and strong at the same time. Strong to be able to live with so little.

**You're gonna get back to basics...**

Ely stays on the island next door and will be available 24 hours a day, He will be able to reach your island in 20 minutes if necessary.



### DAY 7

You are now alone on the island and therefore free. It's up to you to organize yourself and divide the tasks.

You will have to meet your vital needs, use your time to find yourself and do meditation and yoga exercises in the book that

Pong has provided you with.

### DAY 8

Same as the day before, you'll be on your own for the whole day. Fishing, gathering, cooking, relaxing, meditation, yoga, here's something to occupy your day...

Enjoy your new life...

Ely will come and see you in the late morning to make sure everything is all right.

### DAY 9

Last days of Robinson take advantage of it to make your last desire, do not hesitate to take a mask and go to enjoy the seabed that the island offers you.

Tonight Pong and Ely will be with you to share the last evening and the last night, it will be the occasion to share your experience with them.

They will certainly make you taste the local Gin around the wood fire to finish this experience of life in beauty ...





# BE ON ONE'S OWN



*In the middle of nowhere, but  
well.*

During this phase of autonomy, you will experience new sensations.

You'll be alone, in the middle of nowhere, but you'll feel good.

Because you will have all the knowledge you need to thrive in this beautiful environment.

It will be the moment to find yourself, to question yourself about what life really is? to know what you really need?

It is during this phase that "survival" and inner well-being will complement each other and make you feel good, calm and soothed...

# DAY 10 : END OF THE ADVENTURE

## *Morning*

It's time for the last wake-up call on this deserted island... Pong and Ely have prepared a breakfast for you, you will gain strength before returning to camp. A boat will arrive at the end of the morning for a **return to civilization**.

Hot meal in a small restaurant in the town of Bikal with to take a tricycle to the Residencia de Salvacion.



It will be necessary to say goodbye to Pong and Ely who will have become true friends after this very emotional experience...



## *Afternoon*

After a well-deserved hot shower, the afternoon will be free.

If you are not fed up with the deserted islands, we suggest you to go to a **small island hopping** to enjoy one last time these wonderful landscapes with turquoise waters and white sand.

Night at Residencia de Salvacion.



# DAY 11-12 : RETURN & DEPARTURE

## DAY 11

Breakfast at the resort and departure for the bus to Naga airport.

After 5 hours drive, you will have to jump on a small plane to Manila.

You will arrive in Manila at the end of the day, we will drive you directly to the hotel. You will have some time left to go to the city to buy some souvenirs.

Night at the hotel Alicia Apartment 3\*



## DAY 12

This time it's really over... It will be time to close your suitcases and go to the Manila Airport

Back to France...

We will drop you off at the airport.



*Memories in your head...*

# SUSTAINABLE FOCUS

## First objective

Participate actively in the local economy :

- by only employing people from the Caramoan region. Whether it is the bus driver, the tricycle driver, the rice seller, the guides, all the actors you will meet are locals.



## Second objective

Donate 6% of profits to a local environmental protection foundation.

## Third objective

Contribute to the clean-up of deserted islands that are polluted by waste from the sea that comes ashore on the islands' beaches.

Garbage bags will be available during the stay on the island to collect the waste.





# PRICE

## 649 € / person\*

\*Estimated price for a single person.

Discounts for additional persons.

Possibility of combining the adventure with visits to cities of interest and other tourist destinations in the region. Contact us and we will prepare an itinerary tailored to your individual needs.

## Not Included



Internationals Flights (from Paris, between 400€ and 800€ depending on the period)

The meals of the days 1,2,11 and 12.



Insurance, personal expenses, tips

## Included



All internal transfers:

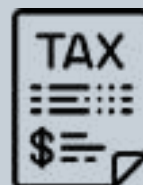
- round trip flight Manila / Naga
- Naga / Caramoan bus
- tricycles to the resort / harbour
- return boat to the island

Supervision by local guides for 5 days.  
Assistance 24/7



All the materials you need to survive, sleep, fish and cook.

All the food necessary for 8 days in autonomy on the desert island (water, rice, fruit, vegetables)  
Meal days : 3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10.



Environmental taxes  
Donation to the local environmental protection foundation

7 nights in bivouac on the island  
1 night in manila  
2 nights in the resort "Residencia de Salvacion" in Caramoan



# ARE YOU ENJOYING THIS TRIP ?



[contact@lessencememe.fr](mailto:contact@lessencememe.fr)

We will get back to you and we can speak about the project together  
Everything can be modified according to your wishes and availability.

Follow us on the social networks to get the latest news



lessencememe

& on the website [www.lessencememe.fr](http://www.lessencememe.fr)

