

Philippine Sourcebook

Your guide to the best things that our country has to offer—especially food!

RICA DE JESUS, director, Jaric Foundation Inc. and avid blogger (heart-2-heart-online.com)

- Best cheese/queso ice cream:** Fruits in Ice Cream Quezo Real. I love cheese!
- Best steak restaurant:** Elbert's Steak Room, Makati City, tel (2) 339-3363, steakroom.com
- Best burger:** Sango! The Burger Master, Creekside, Makati City, tel (2) 830-0391
- Best mint chocolate chip ice cream:** Amici, Don Bosco Technical Institute, Makati City, tel (2) 818-4444
- Best way to keep in shape:** Boot Camp Class at Manila Polo Club, tel (2) 893-9137, manilapolo.com.ph

- Best place to view the Manila Bay sunset while having coffee:** Starbucks at Harbor View Square, Pasay City
- Best homemade apple pie:** Apple Crisp by Rose Lopez, tel (2) 810-7533, (+63917) 531-4166
- Best brazo de mercedes:** Vargas Kitchen, Makati City, tel (2) 810-7529
- Best tapa:** Tapas de

Gracia, tel (+63917) 805-6207; Dolor Guevarra, Quezon City, tel (+63920) 914-3031; Pica Deli, Quezon city, tel (2) 438-3476, (+63917) 530-6558

- Best foie gras dish:** Taglierini, Fegato d'Oca De Lusso (goose liver, cream, rose pepper) at Pepato, Greenbelt 2, Makati City, tel (2) 757-2636; and Foie Gras Brûlée and Seared Foie Gras on Melon Cucumber Carpaccio, Vanilla Bean dressing at Cav, Bonifacio Hight Street, Taguig City, tel (2) 856-1798
- Best sisig:** Cirkulo, Makati City, tel (2) 810-2763, elcirkulo.com
- Best Persian restaurant:** Hossein's Persian Kebab, Serendra, Taguig City, tel (2) 856-0632

GEORGIA ROA-REMULLA, DMD, pediatric dentist

- Best lemon torte (just the right blend of sweet and tart) and chocolate cake (each bite is a hundred calories you won't regret):** Carlo Estagle, tel (+63920) 955-2253
- Best chocolate cupcakes (like heavy chocolate cake with fudge and topped with whipped cream):** Ana de Borja Araneta, tel (+63917) 817-0301, (+63919) 230-0216
- Best Ilocos longganisa:** Eya Cabanos of Mom's Country Kitchen, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte, tel (77) 607-6390

- Best bisteca florentina:** By Chef Marco Legasto in Purple Feet, Wine Depot, Makati City, tel (2) 897-3220
- Best garlic chicken (must eat with the sauce mixed into plain rice):** Manila Golf Club, Makati City, tel (2) 817-4948
- Best mozzarella cheese by the block (for cooking):** Del Monte Golf Club, Bukidnon, tel (88) 855-5976, e-mail cubhouse@delmonte-phil.com. They also have good roast beef!
- Best jumbo pastillas de leche:** Iya Lagdameo, tel (+63918) 921-9952
- Pastillas pabalat (pastillas de leche wrapped in traditional cut Japanese paper):** Dr. Josephina Biudez, tel (+63917) 422-4918
- Best sans rival with macadamia nuts:** Gay Vasquez, tel (+63917) 301-0615
- Best lemon squares:** Betty's Kitchen, tel (2) 525-1648



Sleeping tiger at Island Cove

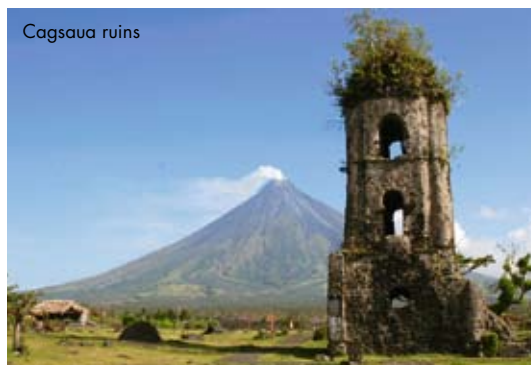
- Best place to see a tiger up close:** Island Cove, Kawit, Cavite, tel (2) 810-3740, islandcovephil.com
- Best-smelling handmade soaps:** Ilog Maria

Honeybee Farms, Cavite, ilogmaria.com. I love their cinnamon and spearmint soaps, and honey propolis shampoo

Best place to buy reasonably priced Chinese-style furniture: N&R Home Furnishings, Makati City, tel (+63926) 714-6854

FRANCIS ESCUDERO, Senator

My family is from Sorsogon and we have a lot of handicrafts, which you can find everywhere, from the Legaspi Airport shop to the public market. In Cagsaua ruins, you can get native mats or rugs, same as the ones being sold at malls in Manila. My wife even had one designed like a chessboard in black and white. You can buy the



Cagsaua ruins



Ilog Maria soaps



Abel iloco fabric

best pili in assorted flavors in the first and oldest pili house—once you get to Legaspi, you can ask anyone and they know where that old pili house is. There's a handicraft store in Gubat called Tony Co that exports native bags to the US and Europe. You can buy overruns with tags like Nine West, Esprit and Tommy Hilfiger still on them for as low as P250.

My wife Christine is from Cebu and she recommends Joanna Lhuillier beaded purses found in Shangri-La's Mactan Resort & Spa, where you'll also find souvenir items made of alligator skin. Their Chi Spa is the best, even better than the one we tried in Bali. Of course, the best lechon is in Cebu—no need to put sauce!

In Laoag City, Ilocos Norte she buys abel iloco fabric, which is always appreciated by her lady friends when she gives them as a gift.

In Laguna, Paete has great masquerade masks, decorative gift boxes and wine boxes made of wood. In Lili, you can buy nice slippers or *cachos*.

Before Christine got pregnant, she was so desperate she would do anything to conceive. She heard that the Sumaguing Cave in Sagada had a pregnant rock formation deep down the cave. But you must be really tough to go down, and back up. She did find the pregnant rock formation and hugged it for a long time, then had to climb back up for an hour and a half. In the mountain province, they sell fertility pendants at a very cheap price. She hiked for hours in Batad to get one—for whatever it's worth, we have twins now!

THELMA SIOSON SAN JUAN, Lifestyle Editor, *Philippine Daily Inquirer*

- Best pearl bargains:** Boracay beachfront. Manila society matrons have their own *suki* roaming the shore
- Best blankets, table runners, area rugs:** Abel iloco. Ask the help of blue-blood Ilocanos like Rene Guatlo and Sam Blas (tel [+63927] 247-3030) to escort you around the homes of the best weavers in Ilocos Norte
- Best antique finds (wood, glass, etc.):** Vigan, Ilocos Sur. contact Marjo Gasser, tel (77) 722-2755
- Best antique silverware:** Balay da Blas Pension House, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte, tel (77) 770-4389
- Best wood highland**



- sculpture and other ethnic finds:** Shopping area in the vicinity of Banaue Rice Terraces
- Best beef burger:** The Palms Country Club, Muntinlupa, tel (2) 771-7171, thepalmsclub.com
- Best roast chicken:** Lydia Castillo's Private Kitchen, tel (+63917) 627-2201

LUCY TORRES-GOMEZ, columnist, *The Philippine Star* and TV host, *Shall We Dance* (ABC) and *The Sweet Life* (QTV)

Best pedicure: Jean of Symmetria Salon, San Juan, tel (2) 705-1375. She cleans the toes so well that even after two weeks, they still look freshly done!

Best place to buy home accessories made of native materials: Grassroots, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. They accept custom-made orders

Best lechon (in the world maybe!): Ulcing's Lechon. Original Cebu lechon, named after the mother of the proprietress, tel (2) 810-6408, (+63919) 361-3291

Best chicken inasal (barbecued Ilonggo-style): JT's Manukan Grille, three branches in Quezon City, tel (2) 721-9026

Freshest oysters: My Spoon, Quezon City, tel (2) 929-9965, myspoonrestaurant.com

Best ginger biscotti, chocolate cupcakes with surprise filling, chocolate chip cookies: Roshan, tel (+63917) 833-6286

Best pâté de foie gras: Le Canard d'Or. Call Farah, tel (+63918) 926-4671

Prettiest shop: AC+632, Greenbelt 5, Makati City, tel (2) 758-2564

Nice pasalubong: Alice Blue soy candles (tel [+63916] 307-7466, aliceblycandle.com) and Randy Ortiz candles (Myth, Greenbelt 5, Makati City)—the scents are heavenly! *100 Questions Filipino Kids Ask* and *101 Filipino Icons*, both books available at Bench stores and adarnahouse.com

One-stop lifestyle shop: Bench—great quality and style at very affordable prices. Your money will go a very long way here!

Best jewelry store for standout pieces: Jul B. Dizon Jewellery, Edsa Shangri-La, tel (2) 634-7440, juldizon.com

Best custom-made designer jeans: Viktor Denim Republik, The Podium, Mandaluyong City, tel (2) 631-6440

Best home store: Soumak Bed 'n Beddings, Greenbelt 3, Makati City, tel (2) 757-3923. Their embroidered beddings and Kuliglig room spray are irresistible!

Best tapa: Mang Ben, tel (2) 926-750, (+63919) 390-427. His *tapa* is very thin, almost like bacon, but very Pinoy in taste. I've never met him, but I always order from him in bulk!

Best pound cake: Marta's Cakes!, Serendra, Taguig City, tel (2) 915-3802, (+63917) 500-9984

Best red velvet cupcakes: Cupcakes By Sonja, Serendra, Taguig City, tel (2) 856-0308



Boracay pearls