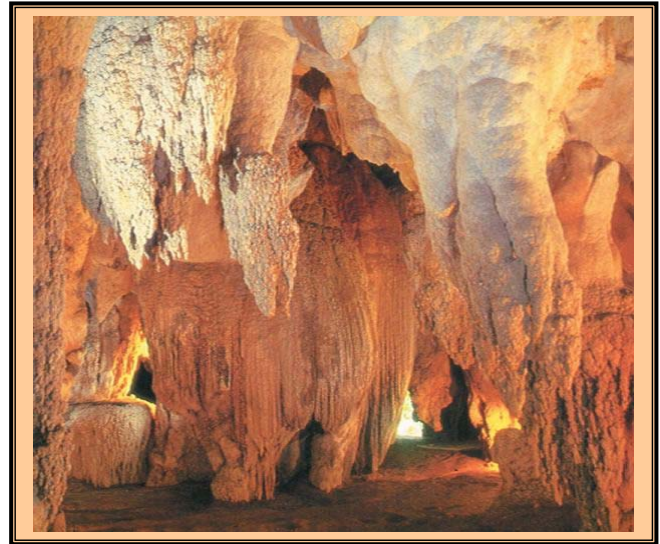




Basey: beauty expressed in wondrous caves

Basey, Samar is known for its natural beauty. The town is home to some of the world's wondrous caverns, subterranean rivers, waterfalls, and unique limestone formations.

It is likewise famous for its intricately woven mats or "banig". Its beautiful designs and varied colors attract the hundreds of visitors to the municipality who buy the product as their favorite "pasalubong". The word "banig" has become synonymous with Basey.



History Basey, originated from the word "baysay" which means beauty. Basey is one of the oldest municipalities in the country. It was originally created as a "pueblo" in the 26th century through Royal Spanish Proclamation.



Geography Basey is geographically located at the Southwestern part of Samar Province, Eastern Visayas Region.

It is bounded by the towns of Sta. Rita and Pinabacdao, Samar in the north, Borongan and Maydolong, Eastern Samar and Marabut, Samar in the east and San Pedro Bay on the south which separates it from Tacloban City, the regional capital.

It has a total land area of 513 square kilometers, making it the largest municipality of Samar. It is composed of 15 barangays.

Demography Basey registered a total population of 48,389 in the 2007 Census of Population. Its population density of 94 persons per square kilometer is the eleventh lowest density among the 25 municipalities of the province. Majority of the people speak Waray dialect.

Climate Basey's climate is generally cool and invigorating due to the cool breeze emanating from the forest area. There is no dry season but a very pronounced maximum rain period that occurs from December to January.

Financial Resources Based on the latest income classification, Basey is classified as First Class municipality. It registered an Average Annual Income of P58.7 million from 2004-2007. In 2008, its Internal Revenue Allotment amounted to P74.0 million which translates to an IRA per capita of P1,510.

Socio-Economic Activities Mat weaving is the municipality's prime industry. It provides a living to around 60% of the population. The women of Basey weave a variety of intricately designed mats from sedge grass locally known as "tikog". Other products include wall decors, room dividers, ceiling panels, furniture matting, place mats, throw pillows and fancy bags.

The locals of Basey have been weaving mats long before the Spaniards came and the tradition was handed down from many generations.



Basey also has a vast water resource where delectable lapu-lapu, crabs, lobsters, prawn and shrimps are caught along San Juanico Strait, San Pedro Bay and from the Cadac-an River also called the Golden River.

Its major agricultural products include palay, coconut, banana, rootcrops and vegetables.

Tourist Arrivals In 2008, around 1,678 tourists visited Basey. More than four-fifths or 82.7% were domestic tourists.

Scenic Spots

Sohoton Natural Bridge and National Park Basey, takes pride of its 840 hectare National Park. It is located at Rawis of Brgy. Guirang. Fascinating geological features like caves, limestone boulders, rockholes, weathered rock formations, and underground rivers abound the area.

The most prominent assemblage in the park are the cathedral-like caves: Panhulugan Cave, Panhulugan Cave II, Sohoton Cave, and two smaller ones, Bugasan and Capitagan Caves.

The Sohoton Cave is a cathedral like dome with an entrance of a parabolic arch about 50 meters high. On its ceiling hangs various spiked-shaped crystalline stalactites while rustic and cavernous walls and stalagmites rises on its floor.

The Natural Bridge is an extraordinary huge arch-shaped rock that connects two mountain ridges spanning the Sohoton River.

The National Park is part of the Samar Island Natural Park (SINP) declared as a Protected Area under National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) by virtue of Presidential Proclamation No. 442 dated August 13, 2003.

Kayaking in Sohoton At Barangay Inuntan, 6 kayaks are available for rent. These will leisurely take tourists to Sohoton Cave, passing through the calm water stretch of the Golden River in just 20 minutes.



Other Places of Interest One can also visit the 17th Century Church, Mt. Carmel Chapel (Buscada), and other caves like Saub, Rawis, and Yuni.



Banigan-Kawayan Festival The feast of St. Michael is celebrated annually, every 29th of September. It highlights the Banigan-Kawayan Festival showcasing the municipality's intricately woven mats and bamboo crafts.

Getting There Tacloban City is the jump-off point to Basey, which can be reached by boat or van in 45 minutes. From Basey, land or water transport can take you to the Sohoton Caves and Natural Bridge.

References and Data Sources:

Executive and Legislative Agenda 2008-2010, Basey, Samar
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A Municipal Profile**

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For your information needs, please contact us at: (053) 325-7508
email us at nscbru8@yahoo.com
or log on to www.nscb.gov.ph/ru8