



# Palawan island No. 1 getaway spot in the world

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**BEST HOLIDAY DESTINATION** Ariara island boasts of 600 meters of soft, white sand, one of the reasons it topped the British edition of Vogue Magazine's 100 best holiday destinations in the world. PHOTO FROM WWW.ARIARAISLAND.COM

The fun in the Philippines is definitely starting to pick up with a private [getaway](#) island in Palawan province taking the top spot in the British edition of Vogue Magazine's 100 best [holiday destinations](#) in the world.

The Department of [Tourism](#) (DOT) on Monday announced that the magazine, which named Ariara Island—a 103-hectare "private paradise" snuggled among the untouched Calamian Islands—as the world's No. 1 getaway spot, will hit the stands in August.

In a statement, Tourism Secretary Ramon Jimenez Jr. said Philippine tourism would surely benefit from the worldwide recognition.

"What is remarkable is that the entire resort is a testament to the unique artistry and skills of Filipino designers and artisans," Jimenez said.

"The use of local materials and traditional techniques serves as good advertising for Filipino craftsmanship and world-class products," he added.

"Tourism is not just about counting tourist arrivals ... more importantly, it is about building opportunities on the ground and improving lives, in communities, in very real places."

The resort is owned by British property developer Charles McCulloch and his wife, Carrie.

The United Kingdom remains to be one of the Philippines' biggest tourism markets, registering over 104,400 tourist arrivals last year, which the DOT noted was a record.

## Ultimate destination

Ariara Island's eco-friendly structures, its luxurious and spacious villas and cottages, were designed by renowned Filipino architect Jorge Yulo.

Every piece of furniture that adorns these structures was handcrafted and upholstered by local carpenters. Some had also been outsourced to Filipino artisans.

The DOT said the resort's wooden baths employed traditional boat-building techniques, while marble baths were hand-carved from single blocks of Romblon marble.

Cushions were crafted from Mindanao's vivid tribal [fabrics](#) and its wall accents featured heliographs and ceramics created by Filipino artist Ugu Bigyan.

The tropical island resort has been described as "the ultimate off-the-beaten-track destination," which offers guests—a group of up to 18 people—an all-inclusive package of exclusivity, relaxation, 24-hour service, excellent cuisine and a wide array of amenities.

For \$295 (P12,000) a night per person, guests can relax in its posh villas and cottages and enjoy an unbroken view of the neighboring islands and the [clear blue](#) waters of Palawan.

Guests will be made to feel like royalty even in the bedroom, which is adorned with a private terrace and a garden, hanging chairs and hammocks, a four-poster bed, a walk-in closet, a large bathroom and an open-air shower.

Out in the sea, they can enjoy jet-skiing, windsurfing, canoeing, snorkeling or scuba diving to discover Calamian Islands' rich diversity of marine life.

## Intensified promotions

Lucky visitors may even spot some of the world's endangered species of sea turtles such as Hawksbill, leatherback, Olive Ridley and green turtles crawling along Ariara's main beach to lay eggs.

Guests who are avid bird watchers may turn to the island's unspoiled forest for relaxation. It is home to