



รายงานการวิจัยฉบับสมบูรณ์

จุดยืนภาพลักษณ์ทางการท่องเที่ยวของกลุ่มประชาคมเศรษฐกิจ

อาเซียน: กรณีศึกษาประเทศฟิลิปปินส์

ASEAN Image Positioning: The Case Study of Philippines

โดย กุลวรา สุวรรณพิมล

มิถุนายน 2552

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ชุดโครงการริเริ่มการจัดตั้งเครือข่ายความร่วมมือของผู้มีส่วนร่วมในด้านการ
ท่องเที่ยวและธนาคารข้อมูลเพื่อการจัดการการท่องเที่ยวของกลุ่มประชาคม
เศรษฐกิจอาเซียนเพื่อหาจุดยืนผลิตภัณฑ์ทางการท่องเที่ยวของ 10 ประเทศใน
กลุ่มอาเซียนรวมถึงประเทศเกาหลีใต้และจีน

สนับสนุนโดย สำนักงานกองทุนสนับสนุนการวิจัย

(ความเห็นในรายงานนี้เป็นของผู้วิจัย สกว.ไม่จำเป็นต้องเห็นด้วยเสมอไป)

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Executive Summary

The objective of this study was to explore the potential destination image and positioning of the Philippines and to consider SWOT analysis of Philippine tourism.

This research employed a qualitative method. Extensive literature research and focus group interviews were employed as key research tools. The primary data were benefited from a number of meetings and discussions with strategic players in Philippines tourism. The focus group technique was employed through several informants in Manila, Philippines. The respondents were asked to answer different questions in relations to current tourism in the Philippines as well as its tourism image and positioning. A series of correspondence analyses were used to investigate their responses.

The results of the SWOT analysis were that there were fifteen major destinations mostly recommended by visitors and travel agencies around the world which included 1) Sightseeing and City tour in Manila, 2) Historical Touris attraction in Manila, 3) Environs of Manila, 4) Clark, 5) Subic, 6) Baguio, 7) Banaue, 8) Vigan, 9) Laoag, 10) Boracay, 11) Palawan, 12) Cebu, 13) Bohol, 14) Camiguin, and 15) Davao.

Regarding the positioning of the Philippines as a tourist destination, it was revealed that this country should emphasize the areas of the adventure, nature, as well as its rich culture.

However, suggestions included that the Philippines should create a more effective approach to market positioning of its attractions as a more competitive destination, as well as encourage a cooperation amongst the members of Asian countries .

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การจัดการท่องเที่ยวในกลุ่มประชาคมเศรษฐกิจอาเซียนได้เจริญเติบโตอย่างรวดเร็ว และเป็นที่รู้จักกันอย่างแพร่หลายทั่วโลก ผลจากการกระตุ้นการท่องเที่ยวโดยการรวมตัวกัน เพื่อประโยชน์ร่วมกันสูงสุด ในกลุ่มประเทศอาเซียน วัตถุประสงค์ของการศึกษาในครั้งนี้ เพื่อหาภาพลักษณ์ และจุดยืนของผลิตภัณฑ์ทางการท่องเที่ยวของประเทศฟิลิปปินส์ ซึ่งเป็นประเทศหนึ่งในกลุ่มประเทศอาเซียน และเพื่อวิเคราะห์หาจุดแข็ง จุดอ่อน โอกาส และอุปสรรค ของการท่องเที่ยวของประเทศฟิลิปปินส์ เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการศึกษาค้นคว้าครั้งนี้ คือ เก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลจากวรรณกรรม และการสัมภาษณ์กลุ่ม ผลของการศึกษา เพื่อหาภาพลักษณ์ของผลิตภัณฑ์ทางการท่องเที่ยวของประเทศฟิลิปปินส์ เพื่อให้เกิดประสิทธิภาพในการแข่งขันทางการตลาดมากยิ่งขึ้นในกลุ่มประเทศอาเซียน

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ABSTRACT

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Tourism in ASEAN will be a focus of worldwide tourism since destinations in ASEAN countries have been increasing dramatically in world popularity. Their overall attractiveness is determined by their unique features which optimize the benefits within their tourism constraints. The objective of this study was to explore potential destination image and positioning of the Philippines, a nation among ASEAN countries, and to consider SWOT analysis of Philippine tourism. Extensive literature research and focus group interviews were employed as key research tools. The results provide significant insights into Philippine tourism and call for a more effective approach to market positioning of its attractions as a more competitive destination.

Key words: ASEAN, destination image and positioning, tourism in the Philippines

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Chapter 1

The Philippines – Overview

1.1 Introduction

The Philippines is an archipelago in Southeast Asia. It is composed of 7,107 islands covering a land area of 115,739 square miles (299,764 square kilometers). The three big island groups are Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The country is divided into 17 regions with Manila as its capital. It has a tropical climate and its average temperature is 25 degrees Celsius to 32 degrees Celsius with a total population of 83.05 million (2005 census). Its population growth is estimated at 2.36 percent annually. Luzon, the largest island group accounts for more than half of the entire population.

The two official languages are Filipino and English. Filipino, the national language is based in Tagalog, one of the eight major dialects in the Philippines. The other major dialects include Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligaynon or Ilonggo, Bicol, Waray Pampango and Pangasinense. Both Filipino and English are the medium of instruction in the Philippine schools. The eight (8) major dialects spoken by majority of the Filipinos are Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligaynon or Ilonggo, Bicol, Waray, Pampango, and Pangasinense. English is widely used in all levels of instruction – elementary, secondary and tertiary. The Philippines is the second largest speaking country in Asia.

Through the years two great world religions were embraced by the Filipinos – Islam and Christianity. Islam was introduced during the 14th century and Christianity during the 16th century. Some 83% of the Filipinos are Catholic, 5 % are Moslems, and the rest are made up of smaller Christian denominations and Buddhists.

The Philippines appears on the map of Southeast Asia like the broken beads of a rosary. The length of its coastline is 17,460 kilometers which is twice as long as that of continental United States. The long coastline of the country provide good fishing grounds, fine harbors, stunning beaches, picturesque tribal villages, and milder climate due to the existence of land and sea breezes. The Philippines is indeed a beautiful country with remarkable sights that attract local and foreign tourists.

The Philippines has a rich history combining Asian, European, and American influences (Ann Ness, 2003). Prior to Spanish colonization in 1521, the Filipinos had a rich culture and were trading with the Chinese and the Japanese. Spain's colonization brought about the construction of Intramuros in 1571, a "Walled City" comprised of European buildings and churches, replicated in different parts of the archipelago. In 1898, after 350 years and 300 rebellions, the Filipinos, with leaders like Jose Rizal and Emilio Aguinaldo, succeeded in winning their independence. In 1898, the Philippines became the first and only colony of the United States. Following the Philippine-American War, the United States brought widespread education to the islands. Filipinos fought alongside Americans during World War II, particularly at the famous battle of Bataan and Corregidor which delayed Japanese advance and saved Australia. They then waged a guerilla war against the Japanese from 1941 to 1945. The Philippines regained its independence in 1946.

The new Philippine Constitution was ratified in early 1987, signaling the country's return to democracy with Administrative, Legislative and Judicial Branch. The current Chief of state is President Gloria MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, along with Vice President Noli de Castro. The Cabinet is appointed by the president with the consent of the Commission on Appointments (Trousdale, 1999).

From a long history of Western colonial rule, interspersed with the visits of merchants and traders, the Philippine people is a unique blend of east and west, both in appearance and culture. Therefore, the Filipino character is actually a little bit of all the cultures put together. The bayanihan or spirit of kinship and camaraderie that Filipinos are famous for is said to be taken from Malay forefathers. The close family relations are said to have been inherited from the Chinese (Ann Ness, 2003). The pity comes from the Spaniards who introduced Christianity in the 16th century. Hospitality is a common denominator in the Filipino character and this is what distinguishes the Filipino. Filipinos are probably one of the few, if not the only, English-proficient Oriental people today. It is clear that the country is marked by a true blend of cultures; truly in the Philippines, East meets West. The background of the people is Indonesian and Malay. There are Chinese

and Spanish elements as well. The history of American rule and contact with merchants and traders culminated in a unique blend of East and West, both in the appearance and culture of the Filipinos, or people of the Philippines.

In general, Filipinos are a freedom-loving people, having waged two peaceful, bloodless revolutions against what were perceived as corrupt regimes. The Philippines is a vibrant democracy, as evidenced by 12 English national newspapers, 7 national television stations, hundreds of cable TV stations, and 2,000 radio stations. Filipinos are also a fun-loving people. Throughout the islands, there are fiestas celebrated everyday and foreign guests are always welcome to their homes. The Filipino is basically of Malay stock with a sprinkling of Chinese, American, Spanish, and Arab blood.

The Philippine food may be seen in form of indigenous food from land and sea, field and forest. The history and society earlier introduced influenced the Philippine cuisine as the people turned them to their tastes and accepted them into their homes and restaurants, and especially the harmonizing culture that combined them into contemporary Filipino fare.



Figure 1.1 The Philippines

1.2 Background of the case studies

Philippines is one of the most remote, peripheral, uncertain, and multicultural regions of the ASEAN. Its tourism requires urgent strategic management action in order to compete with alternative destinations and maximise the prosperity of the host population.

Indeed, tourism has been heavily promoted not only by the Philippines government but also by the governments of many countries in South-East Asia as a key component of development strategies for several decades. This is because it is believed that tourism promotion will serve as a substantial source of employment, foreign exchange earnings and export receipts, thereby contribute to economic growth and improved income distribution.

In Philippines and other developing countries, land, forests, irrigation water and piped water are key natural resources for agriculture, forestry, manufacturing and services. To the extent that natural resources and the environment influence the production in developing countries, they can be thought of as factors of production. Importantly, the management and distribution of water resources inevitably has environmental connections with land use and forest benefits; thus, any changes that affect the allocation of water resources can also create conflicts of land use in agriculture and forestry as well.

Unfortunately, the perceived economic merits of tourism-based development and thus of tourism promotion policies might hinder policy makers and researchers from considering the economy-wide impacts, especially those on major macroeconomic indicators, other industries' performance, resource allocation, income distribution and the environment. Until now, there are no empirical studies in Philippines that consider the effects of tourism on the economy and the environment.

As a result, this paper concentrates on a number of factors that influence the Philippines image positioning as well as on their impacts on the prosperity of the private sector and the local society and attempts to propose a strategic framework for competitiveness enhancement. It is obvious that only competitive destinations will be

able to maximise their benefits in the future (Buhalis, 2000) and if Philippines would like to benefit from tourism, it should learn from the international experience and adapt its strategic and operational practices.

This research is based on on-going primary and secondary research and benefits from a number of meetings and discussions with strategic players in Philippines tourism. A comprehensive literature review is also incorporated in order to facilitate further research on the topic. As most destinations are comprised by an amalgam of tourism small and medium-sized enterprises (Tourism organizations), it is argued that the competitiveness and prosperity of destinations are closely interrelated with those of Tourism organizations and vice-versa. This is also reinforced by Porter's (1990) analysis of 'the competitive advantage of nations' where the competitiveness of the geographical area of business operations is directly influenced by both the external business environment and the competence of local enterprises.

1.3 Literature Review : The concepts of positioning a destination

A number of studies that have been published in major tourism journals have explored positioning by comparing competitive destinations (Andre, Bigne and Cooper 2000; Botha, Crompton and Kim 1999; Uysal, Chen and Williams 2000). For instance, Gartner (1989) investigated the competitiveness of four US states: Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah for their tourism and recreation attributes (activities). The analysis produced two dimensions that demonstrated the features linking groups of people together after clustering the four states with similar inherent attributes. Furthermore, in the context of Korean domestic destinations, Kim (1998) analyzed people's psychological or perceptual assessments of the attributes for five Korean locations: Cheju Island, Gyeongju, Sulak Mountain, Haeundae Beach, and the Yusung area. The attributes considered were seasonal and cultural attractiveness, clean and peaceful environment, quality of accommodations and relaxing facilities, family-oriented amenities and safety, accessibility and reputation, and entertainment and recreational opportunities.

The study by Uysal et al. (2000) evaluated the competitiveness of Virginia as a popular tourism state by creating a perceptual map revealing similarities and differences in how 10 states were rated on 48 geographical and cultural characteristics. Virginia was found to be most competitive with Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and West Virginia in natural features, and with Pennsylvania, Maryland, South Carolina and Georgia in historic and cultural heritage. The researchers suggested that destination promotional activities could be established based on the results of their positioning analysis. In a similar study, Chen and Uysal (2002) used correspondence analysis to identify the competitive market position of Virginia compared to eight other US states and Washington DC. Pennsylvania and Virginia were perceived to be the best states for mountains, quaint towns, and beautiful countryside.

It is obvious that a locale has multiple characteristics that may be similar to or different from those of other locations. A variety of tangible and intangible features contribute to determining potential and actual demand, levels of satisfaction and intentions to revisit, and positive word-of-mouth advertising. The preceding research studies strongly support the conclusion that in a competitive market environment, it is important to understand the perceived strengths and weaknesses of a destination compared to its competitors. Furthermore, the concept of positioning has a potential connection with destination branding in that a location is considered to be a product with brand image, loyalty, or equity (Cai 2002; Gnoth 1998; Williams and Palmer 1999). Therefore, assessing the competitive status of destinations helps marketers in creating effective strategies and plans.

Positioning of a tourism destination is defined as the process of identifying how a destination compares in regional, national, and international terms as a place for a certain type of activity or as a viable alternative location to other destinations that may have a stronger or more well-established position. The main objective of positioning is to create a distinctive place in the minds of potential tourists, so that they know how a destination differs from competitive destinations, and how. It can satisfy their needs (Botha, Crompton, & Kim, 1999). If a tourist destination fails to create a distinctive place,

the consequences may include: increased direct competition from stronger competitive destinations, confusion among marketers about the needs and wants of target markets, and a fuzzy perception of the opportunities available at the destination.

Beyond image studies, positioning studies have focused on comparing the attributes of a destination with the same attributes of other destinations. With this process, it is possible to establish the destination's own special position relevant to the needs and preferences of tourists based on the weaknesses or strengths of other destinations. Results of a positioning study can also be used for comparative advertising of a destination to differentiate it from advertising strategies of other destinations. In conclusion, positioning studies go beyond image studies and show more effective ways to suggest destination image management policies (Ahmed, 1991 and Crompton et al., 1992).

In sum, the above studies have identified various attributes related to tourists' preferences, features of destinations and benefits sought from destinations. These studies have shown that spatial displays of destinations and their attributes can assist in determining the status of a destination compared to other destinations. Successful destination positioning must therefore be based on genuine product attributes and must be incorporated into the promotional efforts of a country's regions and resorts.

1.4 Methodology

This research aims to examine the Philippine tourism image and positioning. It employed a qualitative method. Given the research objectives, there was evidently an intimate relationship between the researcher, what was studied and the situational constraints that shaped the inquiry. These were not compatible with the quantitative method that produces results largely in numerical terms, that isolates them from their multiple relationships and interpretations, and that is often alleged to have neglected the differences between the natural and social world of socio-cultural constructions (Patton, 2002). This theoretical reasoning led to a qualitative method being adopted in this study.

The main research methods for qualitative research may vary, although it often involves a range of interview styles and ethnography observation (Bryman, 2001). Qualitative researchers, often attempt to describe and interpret some human phenomenon based on the words of the selected informants, the collection and analysis of documents, along with other research activities (Health, 1997). Two kinds of qualitative data collection were used in this study: in-depth interviews and written documents. The use of these multiple methods demonstrates an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being investigated, and this also facilitates a triangulation process that can increase the reliability of the research findings. The combination of methods and sources in a single study is best understood as a strategy that provides rigor, breadth, complexity, richness and depth for the inquiry (Flick, 1998).

In detail, the research was first based on on-going secondary research, mostly written documents. A comprehensive literature review was incorporated in order to facilitate further stage of the research. The literature review started from attributes of the Philippines and tourism destinations in the international travel literature. The review then moved towards rationales and concepts of tourism and image positioning. Some questions were in fact derived from this literature search.

The primary data were benefited from a number of meetings and discussions with strategic players in Philippine tourism. The focus group technique was employed through several key informants in Manila, the Philippines. The respondents were asked to answer different questions in relations to current tourism in the Philippines as well as its current tourism image and positioning. A series of correspondence analyses were used to investigate their responses. As a result, Philippines SWOT analysis as for its tourism industry was addressed and 15 destinations were recommended, which will be discussed in later chapters.

Chapter 2

Philippines – Festivals (Fiesta)

The fiesta is part and parcel of Filipino culture. The Philippine festivals must go on through good times and bad times. Each city has at least one local festival of its own, usually on the feast of its patron saint, so that there is always a fiesta going on somewhere in the country. But the biggest and most elaborate festival of all is Christmas, a season celebrated with all the pomp and pageantry the fun-loving Filipino can manage. The Philippines famous festivals are presented as follows.



Figure 2.1 The Philippines Festivals (Fiesta), source:

http://www.tourism.gov.ph/images/discover/main_pic/festivals_fiestas.jpg

2.1 January Fiesta

Feast of the Black Nazarene

This festival is held every 9th of January in Quiapo, Manila. Devotees of that number in the thousands flock around the life-size statue of the Black Nazarene (Jesus Christ) as it inches across the streets packed with devotees around Quiapo church. Devotees attribute many miracles to this 400 year old image which was brought to the Philippines from Mexico in the 7th century.

Sinulog Festival

This festival is celebrated every 3rd week of January in Cebu City. This Philippine fiesta in Visayas region celebrates Cebu's patron saint, the Santo Niño (Child Christ). This week long event is marked by processions, street dancing and parades. This fiesta is a local version of the Mardi gras.

Ati-Atihan Festival

The fiesta starts from the 16th to the 22nd of January in Kalibo, Aklan. Revelers masquerading as Negritos in colorful costumes, dance to the beat of drums while chanting "Hala Bira!" in preparation to the Sunday procession in honor of the Santo Niño.



Figure 2.2 Ati-Atihan Festival, source:

http://www.lakbaypilipinas.com/images/aklan_kalibo_atiatihan.jpg

2.2 February Fiesta

Feast of Our Lady of Candles

The festival is organized every 2nd of February in Jaro, Iloilo City. This is the biggest and most opulent religious fiesta in the Western Visayas region. The blessing of the candles and the yearly procession of the patroness, the Nuestra Señora de Candelaria is followed by the fiesta's queen and her court which highlights the fiesta at the town plaza.

Babaylan Festival

The festival is held every 19th of February in Baguio City, Negros Occidental. The public gets a rare view into the simulated rituals of mystics, ancient healers and priests in various ceremonies such as marriage, healing and harvest.

2.3 March Fiesta

Eid El Fitir

This fiesta is commemorated every 9th of March in Region XII in Mindanao. Muslim Filipinos mark the end of their 30-day fasting as the crescent moon emerges after the Holy Month of Ramadan.

Moriones Festival

The festival is reenacted during the Holy Week in Boac, Marinduque. This Philippine fiesta is based on a play about the story of Longinus, the centurion whose blind eye is cured by a drop of Jesus Christ's blood. Actors wear colorful wooden mask and dressed as Roman soldiers.

2.4 April Fiesta

Manaoag Pilgrimage

The fiesta is held every 2nd week of April in Manaoag, Pangasinan. Devotees and pilgrims flock to the shrine of Nuestra Señora de Manaoag for the feast of the patroness of the sick, the needy and the helpless. Her image is believed to be miraculous.

2.5 May Fiesta

Flores de Mayo

This May fiesta is held nationwide during the month of May. Literally meaning the "flowers of May", this fiesta commemorates the search for the Holy Cross by Reyna Elena and her son, the emperor Constantine. This Philippine wide fiesta is marked by a parade of maidens escorted by young men under floral arches. The main participant represents Reyna Elena and the emperor.

Pulilan Carabao Festival

The festival is held every 14th of May in Pulilan, Bulacan. Hundreds of festively adorned carabaos are paraded by the farmers on the street leading to the church. There they are made to kneel down to pay homage to San Isidro de Labrador, the patron saint of farmers.



Figure 2.3 Pulilan Carabao Festival, source:http://www.pinoytravelblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2006/08/pulilan_kneeling_carabao.jpg

Pahiyas

The fiesta is organized every 15th of May, farm families give thanks to San Isidro Labrador for a good harvest by decorating their houses with brightly colored rice wafers called kiping.

Obando Fertility Rites

This festival is held from May 17 to 19 in Obando, Bulacan. Massive numbers of men and women dance towards the town church praying for a wife, husband or a child. The pilgrims dance to San Pascual Baylon, Santa Clara de Assisi or the Virgen de Salambao for their wishes.

2.6 June Fiesta

Parada ng Lechon

On the 24th of June in Balayan, Batangas, this festival literally translated as the "parade of roasted pigs". This fiesta is a celebration of the feast of St. John the Baptist. Roasted pigs are dressed up and paraded around town before being eaten.

Pintados Festival

The festival is held every 29th of June in Tacloban, Leyte in which town folks parade through town with colorful body paint to recall their ancient warrior tradition where tattoos represented bravery and prestige.

2.7 July Fiesta

Bocaue River Festival

This July fiesta is held every 1st Sunday of July in Bocaue, Bulacan. The highlight of this Philippine fiesta is the fluvial procession in honor of the miraculous Krus ng Wawa or Cross of Bocaue. Devotees douse each other with water as they scramble to ride the pagoda boat.

Raja Baguinda Festival

The 3 day festivities start on the 2nd week of August in Jolo, Sulu. The festivities commemorate the arrival of Raja Baguinda who is credited of spreading the Islam faith to the Sultanate of Sulu.

2.8 August Fiesta

Kadayawan Sa Dabaw

The fiesta is held every 3rd week of August in Davao City. This festival thanks to the bounty of fruits and flowerers as the waling-waling orchid blooms. Colorful floats are bedecked with beautiful orchids and other flowers in the grand parade.

2.9 September Fiesta

Feast of Nuestra Señora de Peñafrancia

The fiesta is celebrated every 3rd Saturday of September in Naga, Camarines Sur, Bicol Region. Highlight of this fiesta is the grand fluvial parade where the image of the Lady of Peñafrancia is carried through the river aglow with floating candles.

2.10 October Fiesta

Masskara Festival

The festival is held every 3rd week of October in Bacolod City, Negros Occidental. Mask-making puts a quaint accent on the festivities to mark Bacolod City's charter day. Brass bands, beauty contests and parades are held before the evening's highlight of street dance where folks wear their beautiful masks.



Figure 2.4 Masskara Festival, source:

http://student.vub.ac.be/~lacera/images/bacolod_masskara_festival2.jpg

2.11 November Fiesta

Higantes Festival

This fiesta is celebrated from November 22 to 23 in Angono, Rizal, male devotees carry the image of San Clemente in a procession that features pahadores, clad in colorful garb and wooden shoes and carrying boat paddles and higantes (giants) 10 feet tall papier mache puppets.

2.12 December Fiesta

San Fernando Giant Lantern Festival

The festival is celebrated the whole month of December in San Fernando, Pampanga. The festival culminates in a judging contest of the best, biggest and most beautiful Christmas lantern made by the local craftsmen in San Fernando.

Binirayan Festival

The fiesta dates are from the 28th to the 30th of December in San Jose Antique. Ethnic pagentry reaches a new high on the beaches of Maybato in San Jose and Malandong in Hamtik, where the drama of the first Malay settlement at Malandong is played out.

Chapter 3

Philippines – Destinations

Philippines is recognized as the land of tranquility, freedom, and adventure where many visitors experience a number of unforgettable memories, including astonishing arts and culture, natural resources, and friendly hospitality. In this section, useful information regarding 15 places mostly recommended by visitors and travel agencies around the world, including 1) Sightseeing and city tour in Manila, 2) Historical Tourist attraction in Manila, 3) Environs of Manila, 4) Clark, 5) Subic, 6) Baguio, 7) Banaue, 8) Vigan, 9) Laoag, 10) Boracay, 11) Palawan, 12) Cebu, 13) Bohol, 14) Camiguin, and 15) Davao will be provided.

3.1 Sightseeing and city tour in Manila

First, it is a must to visit Manila, The capital of the Philippines. It sets the archipelago's rhythm and is a pulsating hub that blends the Oriental with the Occidental, the quaint with the modern, the religious with the profane, and the mundane with the extraordinary.

Manila has been witness to the Philippines' history and growth. In historic time, it was plagued with bombs during the Second World War, and has housed 14 presidents. Its beauty has withstood the test of time.

At the heart of Manila's history is Intramuros. It features the grand Manila Cathedral with its detailed stone carvings and stained glass mosaics; Fort Santiago, the site of torture chambers and dungeons; and a favorite wedding spot, the San Agustin Church.

It is also important to note that Greater Manila, made up of 11 cities and five towns, is where the country's most prestigious business addresses and trendiest leisure establishments are found. Fashionable hotels, restaurants, discos, music bars, boutiques and specialty shops converge around the sleek Ayala and Ortigas Centers.



Figure 3.1 Manila

Major attractions for city tour in Manila are listed below.

CCP Complex

Houses the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) that has a main theater (Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo), little theater (Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino) and experimental theater (Tanghalang Huseng Batute), the Philippine International Convention Center, Folk Arts Theatre (Tanghalang Francisco Balagtas) and the Manila Film Center. This cradle of arts and culture is located along Roxas Boulevard. Ballets, symposiums, concerts and plays are staged here. Don't miss the show!

Coconut Palace Complex

Don't forget to come marvel at how the different parts of the "tree of life" – the coconut tree – are put to use in this abode by the sea.

Greenhills

This is a paradise established for bargain-lovers. With rows upon rows of stands, there are almost everything to sell, from jewelry and clothes to accessories and the latest electronic gadgets.

Quiapo Church

Home of the Black Nazarene whose feast is celebrated every January 9, and attended by millions of devotees who have been touched by the Nazarene's miracles. The Black Nazarene is an image of Christ brought by Augustinians in the 17th century, and is said to grant miracles. Quiapo is another haven for bargains.

Las Pinas Bamboo Organ

Located in St. Joseph Church in Las Piñas, the bamboo organ gets full attention from musicians from all over the world during its annual festival.

Malacanang Palace

The presidential home and seat of the government's executive branch. Get ready for more photos!

Baywalk

Found along Roxas Boulevard, this is a perfect haven for lovers and families alike. It has a stream of al fresco restaurants serving fresh seafood and other Filipino cuisine. Our advice? It is best to go here in the afternoon, just in time to see the spectacular sunset mirrored on Manila Bay.

Malate

Malate is very famous for its night life, where almost all bars, restaurants and clubs are located. Have fun!

University Belt

For all student visitors, this is a hub of learning institutes like Far Eastern University, University of the East, Centro Escolar University, Mapua University and San Beda College makes up the University Belt along Recto Avenue in Manila.

Manila's Chinatown

Another unmissable place, located in the Binondo district. This is Chinatown that symbolizes the long history of Chinese presence in the Philippines pre-dating the arrival of the Spaniards. The Chinese have been influential in business, especially in retail trade and their culture, which have been absorbed into Philippine life. You can also enjoy various kind of Chinese food here.

Chinese Cemetery

This is an astonishing place. Members of the Filipino-Chinese community have mausoleums three stories high, complete with amenities like living rooms, bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens and even mailboxes.

Araneta Coliseum

Located in Cubao, Quezon City, it is the biggest covered dome in Asia. Beauty pageants, concerts and the games of the Philippine Basketball Association and University Athletics Association of the Philippines, to name a few, are held here. Prepare to take lots of photos!

3.2 Historical attractions in Manila

Major historical attractions in Manila are listed below.

National Museum

Manila National Museum is located at the former Senate building. It houses many artworks by renowned Filipino artists, including Juan Luna's Spoliarium. Don't miss this if you are a lover of fine arts.

Museum of the Filipino People

This museum is of course, where we can learn much about Filipino and their life style. Located almost beside the National Museum, it interestingly houses artifacts from different regions of the Philippines, displaying the diverse and colorful culture this archipelago has to offer.

Intramuros

You will love the beauty of Intramuros. This walled city steeped in Old Spanish history is where several Spanish churches and other landmarks are located, such as the Manila Cathedral, San Agustin Church with its 4,500-pipe organ, and the parks such as the Puerta Real Gardens and the Baluarte de San Diego.

Rizal Park (Luneta)

As you may have heard of it. Here is where visitors can see the monument of National Hero Dr. Jose Rizal. A few meters away is a Light and Sound Show, held at the

exact place where he was executed. It is also a great place to stroll and enjoy picnics with their family. Cecille and I so enjoyed the walk of Rizal Park.

Museo Pambata (Children's Museum)

Visitors as family with children, we would like to recommend Museo Pambata, which is the first hands-on interactive children's museum in the Philippines. It has an exciting learning center with six theme areas, namely: Kalikasan (Environment), Maynila Noon (Old Manila), Tuklas (Science), Paglaki Ko (Career Option), Katawan Ko (Body Works), and ang Bata sa Mundo (Children in the Global Village). It also has a reading resource center and children's playground. It is also a venue for children's activities such as storytelling, puppet shows and various workshops. You may need to spend quite a long time there.

3.3 The environs of MANILA

I would also like to recommend other major cities. These include Quezon City, also known as an entertainment hub as well as a government center; Marikina City; the shoe center of the Philippines; Parañaque City, known for its dry goods and seafood markets and restaurants; and Las Piñas, which houses the world's only bamboo organ at St. Joseph's Parish Church.

Calabarzon, comprised of the five provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon , is only a few hours away from Manila. The area boasts of great destinations and leisure activities for day trips or overnight getaways as well as export processing centers. Next, Cecille and I would like to recommend some key tourist attractions in Manila which are selected from different types and sites within Manila.

Tourist attractions

Vital attractions are scattered around Manila areas. Most famous attractions include the natural beauty of Tagaytay as well as Mount of Makiling. These are suitable for all nature-lovers who wish not to travel too far from the capital city. All significant details are listed here below.

Tagaytay

Only a few hours' drive from Manila is the refreshing wisp of a city that is Tagaytay. Located in Cavite, perched atop a ridge, Tagaytay offers the most splendid views of Taal Volcano – the world's smallest.

Corregidor

Aptly called "The Rock," Corregidor lies at the mouth of Manila Bay. This tiny island was the scene of much fighting between the Filipino-American forces and the Japanese during World War II. Today, it is hauntingly historic tourist attraction.

Laguna hot springs

The area of Laguna around Los Baños trades heavily on the health properties of its hot springs which bubble from the lower slopes of Mount Makiling. You will enjoy the scenery as much as the hot springs!

Mount Makiling

This is a precious natural resource of the Philippines. The dormant volcano of Mount Makiling is identifiable by its shape – like a reclined woman. The mountain is named after Mariang Makiling, a young woman whose spirit is said to protect the place.

Pagsanjan

Francis Ford Coppola chose Pagsanjan Falls, 80 kilometers southeast of Manila, as the location for the final scenes of *Apocalypses Now*. Today, tourists come here to shoot the rapids, especially during the rainy season when they are most thrilling.

3.4 Clark

Now we are taking you to Clark, the second destination in this guide. Clark in Angeles, Pampanga was a former U.S. Air force Base and has long been the principal aviation center of the Philippines. Since the American troops left, the Philippine government has been working hard to convert Clark into a vibrant economic zone.



Figure 3.2 Clark

It is 70 kilometers north of Manila and an hour east of Subic. It has become popular among tourists because it's a center for some thrilling adventure sports, including parachuting, microlight flying and off-road motorcycling.

Tourist Attractions

There are a number of tourist attractions to offer here. Cecille and I would introduce you to six different places here, which will surely thrill all nature and adventure lovers.

Mt. Pinatubo

First, one of the most famous volcano in the world. This Mt. Pinatubo. Filipinos have experienced the wrath of this active volcano in 1991. But despite the havoc it once sowed, tourists remain to admire it. Mt. Pinatubo's summit can be reached in one full day via nearby Capas in Tarlac. Once at the peak, visitors will be able to see the majestic jewel-blue crater lake.

Mt. Arayat

Next, this is an equally attractive destination. This dormant volcano can be scaled even by the inexperienced climber.

Expo Pilipino

The Philippine National Centennial Exposition is the centerpiece of the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the proclamation of Philippine independence on June 12, 1898. It is a celebration of the Filipino's history, culture, and achievements in the past 100 years, as well as aspirations for the next millennium. Its exhibits were discontinued during the administration of former President Joseph Estrada. Today, its 35,000-seat capacity amphitheater is a favorite venue for concerts, ecumenical services and political rallies.

Hot Air Balloon Festival

This is an annual festival when balloonists from all over the world participate. This is a second-to-none event.

Mimosa Leisure Estate

Inside this estate is the Holiday Inn Clark that has a fitness center and jacuzzi, free-form swimming pool, tennis and table tennis, billiards and darts, and an adventure camp for kids.

Fontana Leisure Park

To all risktakers, this resort is a casino and a swimming pool that is mechanically-equipped to produce waves. Don't get too carried away!

3.5 Subic

Now, we have come to the fifth destination. Subic is the largest Naval Base outside the USA before being transformed into a commercial free port. It is just 210 kilometers northwest of Manila, and it is a destination of historical significance. It also promises a myriad of experiences, from majestic beaches with fascinating shipwrecks to a multitude of outdoor adventures.

Historically, the Aetas were the inhabitants of Subic before Spanish colonizers came. Their ancestral origin is traced to the foot of Mt. Pinatubo, a revered place they believe to be the abode of a good named Apo Namalyari. Soon afterward Juan de Salcedo, a Spanish conquistador discovered Subic in 1542. He reported that the area

was a deep bay and was a strategic location as a port. There was an existing fishing village back then, called “Hubek”, which meant “head of the plow”. Historians say that Salcedo mispronounced it by calling it Subig, this was how its name began to come about.



Figure 3.3 Subic

The Spanish issued a Royal Decree by King Alfonso II declaring Subig as a naval port in 1884. Subig later became “Subiq” and the letter q, apparently of Spanish origin was transposed to c, this was most likely done to avoid mispronunciation by the Americans.

In 1899, the Americans included Subic Bay as one of the locations to be visited by patrolling gunboats. Commodore George Dewey of the Asiatic Squadron, who battled the Spanish fleet in Manila declared Subic Bay as “having no equal in the Philippine islands.”

US President Theodore Roosevelt designated Subic and 70,000 hectares of its neighboring land as an American military reservation in 1903. A year after, the Subic Naval Station was operational. It was the largest US Marine Corps training facility outside the mainland United States. After the Philippines gained its independence from

the Americans an agreement was signed granting the Americans use of the 16 military installations including Subic and Olongapo.

Today, Subic is not just a glimpse of the past, but is also a solace for travelers with a thirst for adventure and an exhilarating getaway for groups of all ages.

Tourist Attractions

A major tourist attraction to be recommended here is Subic's lush forests where you can enjoy ecology tours.

Ecology Tours

Here, visitors can explore Subic's lush forests with a native guide. Inclusive of cultural immersion among the Negritos, such as showing medicinal plants, gathering of food, cultural presentations (hunting, fishing, happy dance), jungle survival demonstration (fire making and cooking in the bamboo). The tour lasts 2 to 3 hours.

3.6 Baguio

Our sixth destination in the Philippines is Baguio City. The city is in northern Luzon, known as the summer capital of the Philippines. It is a popular destination particularly during the months of March, April, and May for both local and foreign tourists because of its cold climate. Also known as, "The Flower City of the North," it is a great venue for various outdoor activities. Come Christmas time, Baguio is also a preferred vacation spot.



Figure 3.4 Baguio

Geographically, Baguio is located some 250 kilometers north of Manila, where is nestled 5,000 feet above sea level on the Cordillera Mountain Range, the highest metropolis in the Philippines. In the heart of Benguet Province, it benefits from having political autonomy, being a chartered city since 1909. With an area of 49 square kilometers enclosed in a perimeter of 30.6 kilometers, it has 20 administrative districts where its 129 barangays are distributed.

Baguio, before being discovered by the Americans a century ago, was known as the “rancheria”, Cattle and horses used to flock the area during dry seasons, but most of the time was marshland with a shallow lake where the locals hunted for ducks and snipes.

The Americans saw Baguio as a place to build a future metropolis. A water source was found, pine trees were everywhere and grass covered the area. They immediately decided to make Baguio an admirable site for the future summer capital and health resort of the Philippines.

Today, Baguio is a melting pot of cultures. The diversity of indigenous ethno-linguistic groups enriches the socio-cultural scene. The Ibalois are considered the original settlers and together with other Cordillera groups such as the Bontocs, Kalingas, Ifugaos and Kankanaïs, comprise about 10 percent of the total population. Other ethnic groups from as far as Mindanao also settled in the area. Local visual artists also gather

in the city of pines for it is a comfortable space to hone their talents together with their contemporaries.

Baguio City is also popular for its vegetable and strawberry produce. It is also an ideal place for golfers and those who love to trek. Simultaneously this promotes environmental awareness and education for both the young and the young at heart. It is a mountain paradise with a cornucopia of attractions that will surely entice any tourist to visit more than once.

Tourist Attractions

There are six major attractions to offer in the city of Baguio. These are the mixture of shopping centre, local village and historic places.

Session Road

First, at the heart of downtown Baguio is a Session Road. This incline cuts through a row of business establishments which includes restaurants, groceries, drugstores, bookstores and other specialty shops. Marvel at quaint tribal memorabilia while Igorot sidewalk vendors convince visitors to purchase unique love potions and herbal cures. Nightlife converges to wine and dine until the wee hours of the morning.

Tam-Awan Village

Here, it is about two kilometers northwest of the town center. It is a replica of an Igorot Village that was built on the side of a hill. It is possible to stay overnight in this original Ifugao houses, the brainchild of the Chanum foundation, a group of artists who are dedicated to preserving and nurturing the native culture in the Cordilleras. There are demonstrations of handicraft skills like weaving, wood carving and rice production.

Central Market

Known as the Central Market, the life vein of Baguio courses within and throughout the central market. No trip is complete without a visit to its showcase of fresh vegetables, fruits, flowers, preserves, handicrafts, silver brass, jewelry and even surplus army goods.

Camp John Hay

Formerly a rest and recreational station of U.S. military troops, this facility was turned over to the Philippine government on July 1, 1991. The 535- hectares haven boasts a world class 18-hole golf course, wooded hiking areas, a skating rink, bowling alleys, tennis courts and mini-golf course. Camp John Hay also has cottages, which are now open to the public.

Mansion House

This place conveys political significance. This imposing and majestic Baguio mansion housed a long line of Philippine presidents and American governors-general. Its ornate iron gate is often open to curious visitors.

Easter Weaving Room

Historically, Episcopalian missionaries have played an important part in educating the native Igorot. You won't be disappointed to visit the Easter Weaving Room. You would admire tattooed tribeswomen as they create the most ornate weaves from the indigenous backstrap looms and other more conventional looms.

3.7 Banaue

Our seventh destination is Banaue. Interestingly, the word "Banaue" is derived from the word "Banawor", a nocturnal, swift flying bird that lived in one of the oldest sitios of the town. When the Soaniards occupied the town, they mispronounced Banawor, as Banaue, and the name stuck.

Banaue is politically subdivided into 18 barangays, namely: Amaganad, Anaba, Balawis, Banao, Bangaan, Batad, Bocos, Cambulo, Ducligan, Gohang, Kinakin, Poblacion, Poitan, Pula, San Fernando, Tam-an, Viewpoint and Uhaj.

Because of its high altitude, Banaue is often described as "where land merges with the clouds to meet the heavens, and the rice terraces as "the stairway to the sky."



Figure 3.5 Banaue

Banaue is a place for nature adventures and cultural immersion. Days are for indulging in activities such as strolling, biking and trekking. Evenings are for campfire chats at a village or warm indoor cossetting at the lodges and inns.

Tourist Attractions

In Banaue, there are a lot to offer for visitors. We would introduce 14 major attractions that would undeniably impress you during your visit to Banaue.

Banaue Rice Terraces

First, tagged the “Eighth Wonder of the World”, the Banaue Rice Terraces start from the base of the Cordilleras and reach up to several thousand feet high. Its length, if stretched from end to end, could encircle half of the globe. The rice paddies are fed by mountain springs and streams that are channeled into an irrigation canal that runs downhill through the terraces. Make the most of it! This could also be a romantic place for any couples.



Figure 3.6 Banaue Rice Terrances

Tam-an Village

Tam-an is a small Ifugao village located about 323 steps down from the Banaue Hotel's swimming pool. Astonishing to see here are the bones of their ancestors bundled, preserved and wrapped in colorful handwoven blankets.

Banaue Museum

This museum is just a few minutes' walk from the Poblacion junction. It houses artifacts costumes, writings and photos about the Ifugaos and other tribes of the Cordillera region.

Creative Pagan Museum

This second museum houses an extensive collection of Cordilleran sculptures. A beautiful garden with an Ifugao hut can also be seen outside the museum.

Viewpoint

Located on top of a plateau, from here one can take great pictures of the rice terraces from different angles and magnitudes. You may also take the option to trek the terraces from here.

Hapao Rice Terraces

The rice terraces located in Hapao are one of the new extensive centuries-old, stone-walled terraces. It is also believed that the Terrace Culture of the Ifugaos started here.

Poitan Village

Here in this village, you can see the legendary “stone post” protected and idolized by the village people. One can also see the most sacred idol of the Ifugaos – the bulol or “Rice God” – protecting the grains in the granary. Ifugao hut line the mountain slopes in this village.

Guihob Natural Pool

This natural pool is four kilometers from the town proper. You have to hop and jump over huge boulders to reach the crystal clear waters of Guihob. This is the perfect place for those who want to take a refreshing swim.

Batad Rice Terraces

Batad is approximately 16 kilometers from the town proper. Here the amphitheater-like terraces are found. Tattooed men and women can also be seen cultivating their daily staple here. Tattoos are similar to clothing for the locals of this part of Banaue.

Tappiyah Waterfalls

These cascading waterfalls can be found in Batad. The falls has an enormous basin where people can swim. You won't be disappointed with it.



Figure 3.7 Tappyah Waterfalls

Banga-an Village

This village is only two kilometers from the junction leading to Batad. One can simply idle his hours away gazing at the village's fascinating environs.

Mayoyao Village

Mayoyao village is located 41 kilometers from Banaue. Its main attraction is its stone-walled rice terraces.

Ducligan Hot Springs

These hot springs are found at the bank of the banaue-Duclian River and adjacent to a deep pool.

Mount Amuyao

This mountain is the 8th highest peak in the Philippines, with an elevation of 2,702 meters above sea level. It is located between the boundary of Banaue and Mayoyao. Its summit provides a climber with a breathtaking panorama of the Mountain Province, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya and Ifugao.

3.8 Vigan

Vigan is our eighth recommended destination. It is the capital of Ilocos Sur. Historically, it was established in the 16th century. It is the best preserved example of a planned Spanish colonial town in Asia. Its architecture reflects the coming together of cultural elements from elsewhere in the Philippines and from China with those of Europe to create a unique culture and townscape without parallel anywhere in East and Southeast Asia. It was the seat of the Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia, comprising the whole Northern Luzon, in 1758. It was also once called Ciudad Fernandina in honor of King Ferdinand. It was chartered into a city in 2001. Today, it serves as a mirror of the colorful history of our country. Vigan is one of the five UNESCO World Heritage Sites found in the Philippines.



Figure 3.8 Vigan

Tourist Attractions

Seven major tourist attractions are generally recommended. These range from natural resources to built attractions. More information are hereby presented.

Calle Crisologo

First to offer in Vigan is Calle Crisologo which is located at the heart of the Mestizo district. This cobblestone street is lined on both sides by centuries-old houses. The ground floors are converted to stores and souvenir shops.

St. Paul's Metropolitan Cathedral

Next is the church that has three naves, altars, and a choir loft. The Augustinians built this majestic church in 1790-1800 in a unique "Earthquake Baroque" architecture. The octagonal belfry is located 10 meters south of the cathedral.

Museo de San Pablo

This museum complex, named in St. Paul's honor, is Vigan City's newest addition to its list of places to see. Situated within the Metropolitan Cathedral, it is committed to conservation through a distinct faith-culture approach.

Arzobispado (Archbishop's Palace)

This is the only surviving 18th century arzobispado in the country, the palace served as headquarters of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo in 1898. Its Museo Neuva Segovia showcases ecclesiastical artifacts gathered from churches all over Ilocos Sur.

Plaza Salcedo

This elevated elliptical plaza west of the cathedral features the 17th century Juan de Salcedo Monument, the oldest of its kind in Northern Luzon.

Burgos National Museum

This ancestral house of Padre Jose Burgos has an excellent exhibit of archeological and ethnographic treasures, antiques and amazing artifacts.

Simbaan a Bassit

At the end of Vigan's Quezon Avenue, you can also see his cemetery chapel. Historian Alberto Lacsamana writes that the "uniqueness of the chapel lies in its being the only one in the region having an espadana hung with bells."

3.9 Laoag

This is the ninth destinations of our grand tour to the Philippines. Laoag means “light” in the Ilocano dialect. It sits within Ilocos Norte, a province on the region of the Philippines blessed with a rich heritage and a haven of age-old churches that mirror how the Catholic religion’s predominance greatly affected the Filipino way of life.



Figure 3.9 Laoag

Long before the coming of the Spaniards, Laoag and its surrounding provinces have been famous for their gold mines. Merchants from neighboring countries like Japan and China would come to trade gold with beads, ceramic and silk. The people, believed to be of Malay origin, called their locality “samtoy” or “sao mi toy, which literally meant “our language”.

After the Spanish conquistadores settled in Manila, they moved to other locations they can conquer, in the late 1500’s. Juan de Salcedo, Legazpi’s grandson, led an expedition to the north with eight armed boats and 45 men at the age of 22.

Salcedo, together with his men, first set foot in Vigan and then moved on to Laoag, Currimaos and Badoc. Along the coast where the men sailed, they were amazed to see sheltered coves, or “looc”, where the locals lived. Thus, they named the region, “Ylocos” and its people, “Ylocanos.”

The Spanish conquistadors spread Christianity throughout the region. Tracts of land were utilized to build Churches and bell towers in line with the Spanish mission “bajo las campanas”. These old churches standing on numerous areas of the locality are a remembrance of history and are a reflection of the rich culture that evolved from the Spanish occupation of Laoag.

Today, Laoag is a bustling city with all the creature comforts. Restaurants, fast food chains and grocery stores are located within the city. Telecommunications is not a problem for there are phone lines where one can make both local and international calls. It has an international airport so it is very accessible to all kinds of travelers.

Tourist Attractions

Eight key attractions in Laoag are presented here. These places have a lot to offer which would take your breath away.

Cape Bojeador Lighthouse

Cape Bojeador lighthouse is located 45 kilometers north of Laoag City. It was built in 1892 on a high point of land projecting into the sea. Overlooking the northern portion of the South China Sea, it sends signals to ships passing by the Cape even until today.

Paoay Church

The Paoay Church is also included in the UNESCO World Heritage list. To see this majestic structure with its unusual mix of architectural influences (Gothic, Baroque and Oriental) is an overwhelming experience. The church was constructed during 1704 and was completed in the late 1890s. The coral stone bell tower beside the church was used as an observation post of the Katipuneros during the Philippine Revolution.

St. William's Cathedral

This church was built in 1612 inspired by the Italian Renaissance. It has a two-storey façade held by four pairs of coupled columns. The Augustinians built the church.

Sta. Monica Church

Sitting approximately seven kilometers east of Laoag is the Sta. Monica Church. It was built facing the Sarrat River. This structure was inspired by Neo-Classical and Baroque architecture.

Sinking Bell Tower

One of the must-see attractions in the city of Laoag, the Sinking Bell Tower is located more than 90 meters away from the St. William's Cathedral.

Juan Luna Shrine

The Juan Luna Shrine is located in Badoc. It is a repository of the Luna family memorabilia. The paintings of Juan Luna are exhibited, including a reproduction of the Spoliarium.

Malacanang of the North

Malacanang of the North is situated overlooking the legendary Paoay Lake. It was built as the official residence of the late President Ferdinand Marcos.

Pasuquin Cave

Don't miss to explore the Pasuquin Cave, which is 45 minutes from the town proper through a dirt road. A permit from the mayor's office must be secured before going.

3.10 Boracay

Our tenth destination in the Philippines is Boracay, which is the country's most famous destination. Patronized worldwide by beach lovers who've come to just visit, build a home, or set up shop, Boracay has that effect only an incredibly beautiful beach can have on anyone in search of "paradise". Since its earliest revelers found their way to this Visayan island in the late 80's, Boracay has grown tremendously as a beach destination for both locals and foreigners. Today, the three kilometers stretch of White Beach is strewn with luxurious resorts, world-class spas, an array of restaurants and bars with international cuisine, and outdoor shopping establishments that feature the best of the islands. Amid the constant hubbub of Boracay's party scene, it is still

possible to wake up to clear skies, sparkling turquoise waters, and the satisfying pleasure of being in one of the best beaches in the country, possibly even in the world.



Figure 3.10 Boracay

Boracay is found at the northwestern tip of Panay, off the Sibuyan Sea in the Western Visayas region. The island experiences ideal beach weather half the year through, with the months of December to May as its peak season. Between June to November, few tourists make it to Boracay as the rainy season puts a damper on experiencing Boracay's famous beach. With the unpredictability of the weather, rates around the island are understandably lower.

Before becoming a Mecca for beach lovers the world over, Boracay was solely inhabited by the Ati tribe. The name "Boracay" comes from this indigenous people, a derivative of the local word "borac" which means cotton, a reference to the island's white sand. The Atis still live on the island, though in a small, secluded area cut away from the runaway development of their native land.

Boracay is politically a part of the municipality of Malay in Aklan province. The island is made up of three communities: Yapak, Balabag and Manoc-Manoc. Though celebrated for its beaches. Boracay also has hilly areas as well as lush forests.

Tourist Attractions

Boracay's main draw is White Beach, over three kilometers of incomparable powdery fine white sand. This is like heaven for all sealovers. If this isn't enough to provide amusement or recreation, there are a few other places to check out in the island. Ask about the Shell Museum and the Tirol Museum, where visitors can gain a more informed understanding of Boracay. The Department of Tourism office located in D'Mall, Station 2 will be able to provide more options on what to see.

3.11 Palawan

As our eventh destination in the Philippines, Palawa is widely known as "The Last Frontier". The archipelago of Palawan is a magnificent world that should be discovered slowly, feet wriggled into its pristine white sands, and its waters swam in with indulgence. Palawan is the country's largest province, spanning 1.5 million hectares. Bounded by irregular coastlines of fine white sand, its interior thrives with lush virgin forests and incredible wildlife. Palawan is the most well preserved major island group in the Philippines. The rain forest, caves, coral reefs, mangroves, beaches and clear blue waters are its best assets. One has to go around the islands of Palawan to see how its people and the local government's conservation efforts have born fruit.

Palawan consists of about 1,769 islands: the Calamian Island group to the north, the Cuyo islands group to the northwest, and the Balacbac-Bugsak group to the southwest. Scuba diving is spectacular because of its crystal clear blue-green waters teeming with the marine life. Fall in love with the majestic hawksbill and green sea turtles, the delightful dugong or sea cows, and plenty of species of dolphins, whales, sharks and manta rays. Above water, there are many species unique to the place, like the Palawan bear cat, Palawan mongoose, Palawan peacock pheasant, fish-eating Palawan eagle, king cobra, and many rare species of parrots and butterflies. Other delightful creatures like the Calamian deer or the large Monitor lizards also thrive here.



Figure 3.11 Palawan

Lustrous pearls of every shape and size are plentiful in Palawan. And all over El Nido, Coron and Pabellones Islands are swallows' nests, costing up to US\$3,000/kg., which are harvested as the main ingredient of the expensive Chinese delicacy, bird's nest soup.

Palawan has actually been called the "island of the gods" and it is not without reason, the spectacular sea and landscapes of Palawan; especially at El Nido, gives the impression of seeing heaven's beauty on earth. Acknowledged as the Philippines' last frontier, Palawan is a must see for the traveller who appreciates the majesty and splendour of nature.

Tourist Attractions

There are quite a number of tourist attractions to visit in Palawan. Some selected attractions are presented as follows:

Tubbataha Reef

This is the Philippines' first national marine park, and now a World Heritage Site protected by the UNESCO. The abundance of marine flora and fauna in this 33,200-hectare reef rivals that of most sites because of the wealth of unique species found only here. Mega fauna like whales, whale sharks, hammerhead sharks and manta rays can be seen during its peak seasons (April-June). Visitors will need a live-in boat to explore the wonders of this marine world, located in the Sulu Sea, cradled between the Palawan and Visayas island. It takes 12 hours of calm sailing to reach Tubbataha from Palawan.

But visitors will need an entry permit issued by the Tubbataha Management Office before they can enter the park.

Puerto Princesa Subterranean National River Park (St. Paul Underground River)

This is another of Palawan's World Heritage Sites. It is the world's longest underground river, located underneath St. Paul Mountain. A stalagmite formation of a lion seems to guard the place. Visitors can travel underneath by means of a banca and marvel at the features above them on the mountain's roof above them.

Honda Bay

Honda Bay is just 30 minutes from Puerto Princesa. You can take a boat and beach hop the dozens of beaches on the islets that dot the bay. You can enjoy swimming, snorkelling, diving or just relaxing on the beach amidst the clear waters and fine sand. The panoramic view would surely leave a lingering impression on the visitor. Honda Bay is a host of beautiful islands like Snake Island (named because of the winding strip of sandbar), Starfish Island and Pandan Island.

Ulugan Bay

At Ulugan Bay, you can enjoy a sightseeing spree and get to see mangrove farms at Bahile river and spectacular islands with towering milestone cliffs; travel by means of paraw (Filipino boat) and see the Kaluyo Falls; snorkel or dive to view the bay's magnificent marine creatures; or go spelunking inside Ugong Rock, which is dotted with dozens of amazing caves.

Ursula Island

The islet of Ursula is approximately 20 kms. Off Brooke's Point in southern Palawan, about an hour by boat from Rio Tuba, Bataraza. The vegetation is made up of old growth lowland forest with moderate undergrowth, consisting mostly of tree saplings and seedlings. Fishermen frequent the island and there are numerous trails to wells dug in the interior and some small nipa huts. Ursula has been promoted in the past as an ecotourism destination, but it is apparently not visited by many tourists at present. Ursula Island is also notable for the bird sanctuary. This is a place not to miss, especially for nature-lovers.

Kayangan Lake

Kayangan Lake is located at Coron Island, Northern Palawan, and it is said to be the cleanest lake in the Philippines. Sometimes called the Blue Lagoon, this freshwater lagoon is amidst sheer limestone cliffs. This beautiful picture-perfect scenery can be seen after a walk up a mountain trail. Watch out for your camera memory!



Figure 3.12 Kayangan Lake

Tigman Beach, Aborlan

Tigman is Aborlan's famous beach with several resorts. The beach has potential for resort development or a private beach resort. It is also a good place for private retirement villas. This is where you can enjoy the beauty of nature and tranquility.

Malun-Ao Island

At Malun-Ao island, mangrove forests and fish sanctuaries can be found here. The common fishing grounds are located at the island. Popular fishing methods at the municipal level include nets, deep and shallow fish corrals, fish cage, haul seine, and other traditional methods. Major fish species caught are anchovy, mackerels and tuna, minor species include crabs, lobsters, shrimps and clams.

Sombrero Island

This is one of the most popular diving sites of Philippines. The island is also considered as a marine sanctuary preserved to protect aquatic animals. Enjoy the underwater world.

Mangit Cave

The cave has spectacular formations around its interior. Mangit cave is named after its smell, Tagbanua term "mângit" which means an "unpleasant odor" lies on the mountainous part of Barangay Apurawan at upper portion of Barangay Sagpangan. Bats are the inhabitant of this cave. This was used by natives long time ago as storage for their harvested kaingin rice.

Tabuan (market day)

This is where people from Aborlan do their market day on Sundays when vast produce like bamboo, rattan and batad handicrafts are up for sale. Enjoy your shopping!

Cabigaan

Cabigaan is the area in which the indigenous people of Tagbanua reside. In December, they have a Thanksgiving ritual during the full moon, with the runsay (healing ritual) coinciding on the same day. Another interesting way of life in Philippines!

Busuanga Island

Busuanga Island is another famous island with white beaches and clear blue skies. Busuanga Island is the largest island in the Calamian Group in the province of Palawan in the Philippines. The Island is, in fact, the second largest in the province after Palawan island itself. The island is located halfway between the islands of Mindoro and Palawan with the South China Sea located to the west and the Sulu Sea to the southeast.

In the south of the island, there are the two other major islands of the Calamian Group: Culion Island and Coron Island. The western third of the island is under the municipality of Busuanga and the eastern two-thirds belong to the municipality of Coron.

Busuanga Island is mainly known as a diving location due to the twelve World War II Japanese wrecks that were sunk by American navy bombings in Coron Bay, a

natural anchorage near the town center of Coron, on September 24, 1944. This is another spectacular site for all divers.

Calauit Island

Calauit Island is actually known as a sanctuary for African wildlife such as giraffes and zebras; visitors will ride a well protected jeepney, which meanders through the park.

The 3700 hectare large Calauit Island is the sanctuary of African and Palawan wildlife threatened with extinction. Calauit was decreed a game preserve and wildlife sanctuary in August 1976 by then President Ferdinand E. Marcos. It was the late President's response to an earlier appeal made for Kenya by the International Union of Conservation of Nature to help save African animals caught in the midst of civil strife.

Today giraffes, zebras and impalas live together with rare animals like bear cats, Calamian deer, mousedeer and Palawan peacocks, which are endemic to Palawan. The aviary is a recent addition. A guide drives visitors around the national park in a specially designed jeep for a reasonable price.

Coron Island

Here at Coron Island, mangroves and beautiful reefs are home to spectacular varieties of marine flora and fauna. Don't miss towering limestone cliffs and hidden lagoons!

Culion Island

The island has great attractions like rollicking mountains and hills, mangrove forests, and bays where dugongs (sea cows) munch sea grass all day.

Bacuit Bay

Found in El Nido, Bacuit Bay has a collection of 45 islands, each with its own secret lagoons and beaches, virgin forests, limestone cliffs and caves.

Bulalacao Falls

Here, visitors will get to hike through rice paddies and dense forestation along mountain slopes to get to the falls, located in Baranggay Pasadena. It would be helpful to get a professional tour guide who will guide you through the place. Please note that

visitors are usually not allowed to enter here during the rainy season in August to October.

Caalan Beach

Caalan Beach is another recommended place for visitors. From the cottages situated here, all visitors can get a full view of the most divine sunsets.

Cadlao Island

Cadlao is an island in Bacuit Bay. White sand beaches, lagoons, dense forests and mangroves abound here. Trekkers will enjoy nature trails throughout the island. This is a must-go destination for ecotourists.

Lagen Island

This island destination is for those of the more expensive taste. Its resort offers luxurious facilities and services. Come for great snorkeling and kayaking!

Malapaco Island

There is a secret lagoon here at Malapaco Island. To reach this beautiful and exotic place, moor your boat through the gap nearby, and then swim through the gap between rocks. A place to keep fit, I shall say!

Paglunagan or Shimizu Island

Just a few feet from the shore of Paglunagan Island are coral beds and varieties of marine life waiting to be seen. Snorkeling is spectacular here. This is the uniqueness of Paglunagan island where visitors can have their own private get away with no boats in sight and with the white beach.

Seven Commandos and Ipil Point Beaches

These two beaches are popular destinations for sunset dinners. Packed lunches may also be taken here during the island-hopping trips. These wonderful beaches are very ideal for water sports lovers as well as honeymoon couples seeking for romantic atmosphere.

Tapiutan Island

Tapiutan Island has an excellent beach for snorkelling and, on the southern tip, one of the best spots for diving complete with rock fissures and tunnels. Grouper, turtles and barracuda are common in this area. For visitors who tire of the ocean, there are

opportunities and good reasons to explore inland. The jungle and swamps remain largely undeveloped, and are home to more than 100 species of birds and twelve species of mammals. This is another attraction suitable for ecotourists.

Rasa Island

If you like cockatoos, this is the place for you, where hundreds of the yellow-crowned birds fly and perch. Other varieties of birds are the Black-Naped Oriole, the Kilit-kilit or Blue-Headed Racket Tail and the white Vintage Shama.

Arena Island

Arena Island, 89 km northeast of the Tubbataha reefs and Cavili close by are small coral islets and sand cays with fringing reefs. Arena Island also has a lighthouse and seaweed farms. Crystal Clear waters make for great snorkeling and diving.

Tabon Cave

Tabon Cave is also known as the “Cradle of the Philippine Civilization” because of the discovery of the Tabon Man (Homo Sapiens species 22,000-24,000 years old) in limestone cliff-clad Lipuun Point or Tabon Cave complex. Around here are several other islands to choose from which are beautifully isolated.

Tumarbong Falls

You must go through a forest trail that will lead you to the Tumarbong River. Following the river, you will be led to his awe-inspiring falls, which is the habitat for a variety of birds, and other flora and fauna.

Little Baguio Waterfall

Because of its cool atmosphere and inviting waters, Little Baguio waterfall is a good place to take a dip and wash off the day's worries.

New Agutaya Beach

New Agutaya is the longest beach shore in the Philippines at 14 kilometers with beautiful flawless and white sand. The beach is said to be similar to Boracay 25 years ago, where it is not tainted with endless noise, Bar flies, Drugs and Red light district.

Lake Danao

Lake Danao is a freshwater lake located in Pacijan Island, the largest island in the Camotes Islands group. Lake Danao is the largest and the only lake in Palawan

mainland. It is shaped like a figure eight near the northern half of the island. Mangrove trees, fire trees, coconut palms are the dominant vegetation that outline its shores. There is also an islet, called Daan Lungsod, in the middle of the lake which is a natural attraction. Enjoy the spectacular views!

Malampaya Sound

Malampaya Sound is part of the sea where a heavy concentration of natural gas was discovered. It is home to two species of dolphins: the Bottle-nose and the Irrawady dolphins, as well as thousands of other marine species.

Pabellones Islands

Pabellones Islands are a group of three islands with awesome limestone cliffs, on the sides of which are the expensive swallow's nests that are the main ingredient in the Chinese delicacy bird's nest soup.

3.12 Cebu

Cebu is our twelfth destination. It is the fastest growing metropolis outside of Metro Manila. Located in the middle of the Visayas, the island is a commercial hub that contains the country's second international airport, which is the most important transport facility in the Visayas and Mindanao. Cebu is also a center of the shipping industry, with 80% of the country's shipping industry based in this "Queen City."

Although known popularly as cosmopolitan arena for business and industry, Cebu is also known to offer travelers a great escape from city life. The province is replete with white-sand beaches that never fail to attract tourists and locals alike. Neighboring islands are a popular destination for beach-lovers, and the nearby island of Mactan is a favorite among people who want to experience the sun and surf without going too far away from the city. The mountains are equally distant from the city, and Cebu has a host of lookout points and bars that offer a fantastic view.



Figure 3.13 Cebu

Cebu was historically discovered by Ferdinand Magellan who, having sailed into the harbor of Mactan, was slain by Lapu-Lapu, the chieftain of Mactan Island. Years later, the Spanish conquistadors returned and established it as the seat of Christianity in the Philippines. What once was a fishing village and busy trading port in 1521 has evolved into a highly urbanized metropolitan center which now serves as a focal point of growth and development in southern Philippines. Up until today, Cebu is still referred to as the “Queen City of the South”.

English as well as Filipino. Cebuanos can be quite friendly and hospitable, but most are known to be very economical in their spending. The weather in Cebu is best from December to May, when it isn't wet or too hot. The coolest period is from December to February, the hottest from March until May.

Tourist Attractions

Cebu's most popular tourist attraction is Magellan's Cross and its information is listed below.

Magellan's Cross

Being the cradle of Christianity in the country, the kiosk behind the Sto Nino Basilica in downtown Cebu enshrines the famed cross that made believers of the Filipinos. It is a historical landmark that serves as a reminder of the power and persuasiveness of the Catholic Church in the Philippines.

Still in downtown Cebu is Fort San Pedro, another historical landmark that showcases Spanish memorabilia left over from the Spanish colonial period. It was once a bulwark of Spain's power in Cebu. Today it serves as a vestige of past colonial command. Because the Spaniards were the most enduring colonizers in the Philippines history, it is their influence that is most apparent in society. Casa Gorordo is a testament to Spanish cultural influence, being a museum of artifacts of old that have carried over into centuries of use and adoption. This house-turned-museum gives a glimpse of life during heavy Spanish influence.



Figure 3.14 Fort San Pedro

Here, people are quickly realizing that Cebu's best beaches are actually three hours away from Cebu City and are found in Bantayan and Malapascua islands. Both beachfronts still carry a virgin quality that appeals to many a traveler, and so in recent years they have ironically been subjected to progress and development. Located north

of Cebu, these neighboring paradise getaways have but a few resorts just yet, which nonetheless attract a bevy of beachcombers and vacationers.

3.13 Bohol

Bohol is the thirteenth destination to recommend by us. It is situated in the central portion of Northern Visayas, and the island province of Bohol is the tenth largest in the country. On the northwest of this oval-shaped province is Cebu, while on the northeast is Leyte. Bohol has 73 smaller offshore islands aside from the mainland, and this assures a remarkable retreat that nature has to offer.

Bohol is 700 kilometers directly south of Manila, and is an island popular for its tropical waters and dive sites. The name Bohol is believed to be derived from Bo-ol, a barangay located in Tagbilaran City. Bohol was among the first places toured by Magellan's expedition. According to history books, "the Concepcion", one of Magellan's ships, was burned in this province after Magellan was killed by Lapu-Lapu in Mactan.



Figure 3.15 Bohol

Miguel Lopez de Legazpi made his way to Jagna, east of Bohol and made a blood compact with Sikatuna and Sigala, signifying them as blood brothers. Bohol then was a part of the province of Cebu and was known as "the rsidencia".

Before the Spanish conquistadors settled, Boholanos had exhibited a culture that was uniquely their own. Artifacts, with designs influenced by the Ming Dynasty, were found as proof of the thriving culture in areas such as Mansasa, Dauis, and Panglao. There were also traces that the early inhabitants already had a system of writing. Unfortunately materials used were leaves and bamboos, which easily perished.

Now Bohol is a tropical paradise that tourists long to experience. From its rich heritage to its splendid surroundings, it is an awesome destination showcasing picturesque islands and wonders of nature.

Tourist Attractions

A numbers of key tourist attractions in Bohol are presented here. These would give you more ideas of your trip plan when visiting Bohol of the Philippines.

Chocolate Hills

Another natural beauty, Chocolate Hills is located in barangay Buenos Aires, town of Carmen, 55 kilometers from Tagbilaran City. It has 1,268 nearly perfect cone-shaped hills, with two of the hills developed into a resort.

Tarsier encounters

The tarsier, otherwise known as the midget monkey, is found within Bohol in the town of Corella. It is considered as the smallest primate in the world. It has huge round eyes. The tarsier measures 4 to 5 inches with a tail that is longer than its body. This is a must for animal-lovers!

Loboc River

Located 21 kilometers from Tagbilaran City, a boat cruise along the Loboc River exhibits an exciting boat ride along palm-fringed banks and serene waters, from Loay Bridge, its outlet. The boat ride ends at Tontonan falls. Enjoy cruising along the river!

Panglao Island

Panglao island boasts of pristine white beaches, almost equal to that of Boracay Island. It has been targeted to be the site of world-class resorts for Bohol.

Badiang Spring

Badiang Spring is located in the town of Valencia, 44 kilometers away from the city. The volume of water that gushes from twin pipes makes the place fascinating. People from neighboring towns usually come to this unique bathing place during weekends, where the bathers choose from among the swimming pool, the waterfalls and the beach, all situated in one place.

Blood Compact Site

Located in Tagbilaran City of Bohol District, Blood Compact Site is a marker which commemorates the spot where Datu Sikatuna, a native chieftain, forged a blood compact with Don Miguel Lopez de Legazpi, representing the King of Spain, for the purpose of fostering firmly relations between the two countries. The blood compact on March 16, 1565 is considered as the first Treaty of Friendship between the Filipinos and the Spaniards.

3.14 Camiguin

The fourteenth destination to recommend in this guidebook is the island of Camiguin. It is said to be “born of fire”, pertaining to the seven volcanoes located on this 238 sq.km. patch of land that sits across the provinces of Misamis Oriental and Cagayan de Oro. In 1953, Mt. Hibok-Hibok erupted violently enough to spew both lava and land that later cooled down to form an extended part of the province. A circumferential road now runs through the entire land, embracing the parts that created the “underwater cemetery” and forming underwater canyon now inhabited by a wealth of marine life.



Figure 3.16 Camiguin

Camiguin is an island where nature runs aplenty. It boasts an impressive list of tourist attractions and activities, and it is an inviting escape for a nature lover who can trek to waterfalls, bike to springs (hot and cold), lounge on a sand bar, dive, climb, and just breathe in the fresh mountain air.

The entire island is inhabited by about 80,000 people, and it takes just one and a half hours to go around the island on a well-paved road that takes you from architectural relics rife with history to lush clearings facing the open sea. Small and developed just enough to be comfortable, Camiguin could very well be the perfect island to travel to for a few days of adventure and exploration.

Tourist Attractions

Some major tourist attractions in Camiguin are introduced here to give you some ideas of how best to spend your holiday to Camiguin.

White Island

This is an uninhabited strip of white sand just a few kilometers away from Camiguin. It's best to go early in the morning as there is little shade on this solitary islet. Mostly everybody makes their way to this sand strip instead.

Katibawasan Falls

Kaibawasan is a resplendent 60 meter waterfall, with a pool good for lounging around nature. Enjoy photograph-taking, swimming and sightseeing at the Falls!

Ardent Hot Springs

This natural hot tub is more defined by the activities that go on around it. The hot spring itself encompasses only a small area while its surroundings play host to concerts, cockouts, and campouts. A resort sits beside it.

Mount Hibok-Hibok

Mount Hibok-Hibok is the tallest mountain in the province. It remains as one of Camiguin's active volcanoes. Its scenic beauty will surely take your breath away.

Sto. Nino Cold Springs

The Sto. Nino cold spring is a bubbling pool of refreshing water that draws in crowds. There is also the commercial setup around it (karaoke joint, shops, and resorts), which would make your trip more enjoyable.

Underwater Cemetery

Underwater cemetery is seen as a highlight of Camiguin. The cemetery became a watery graveyard in 1871 when the Old Volcano on the island erupted and changed the landscape. A white cross juts out from the sea, a mere replica of the original that is actually farther out and completely submerged.

Moro Watchtower

This is a former lookout point for Muslim crusaders who reportedly invaded Camiguin repeatedly to take its women. The watchtower was more massive in size, as women and children took refuge there while the men battled against the pirates. Now only a small section is left as a huge part of the watchtower was torn down to make way for the school that now surrounds the relic.

Enigmata Art Gallery

This eclectic, eccentric art gallery cum guesthouse adds much character to the island. Filled with curios fashioned from the most improbable materials, this art house is a veritable gathering place for the creative energies that run through the island. Those who appreciate arts should not miss it!

Soda Water

Pool filled with fresh, clean, sparkling water, the Soda Water pool is surrounded by mountains and is a refreshing stop that's cut away from the main road.

Mantigue Island

Final to recommend in Camiguin is Mantigue Island. It is a four hectare white sand islet with a forest in the middle. It is four kilometers away from Barangay Mahinog, a popular dive spot.

3.15 Davao

Our fifteenth and final to recommend in this guidebook for Philippines is Davao. Davao probably derives its name from the ancient Bagobo word "daba-daba" or fire, which the tribe used for its rituals. The Tagabua tribe, on the other hand, called the river bisecting the region "Daba" and the Guiangan tribe, "Davoh". Situated in the typhoon-free southern area of the Philippines, Davao is a diverse sights, sounds and tastes. It is a melting pot of both immigrant and highland cultures that blend in a colorful, exciting tapestry of ethnic heritage and modern lifestyles.

Davao is the most progressive city in Mindanao and is the center of economic activity in Southern Philippines. It is now a fast emerging gateway to the evolving East ASEAN Growth Area including Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and Malaysia – a re-emergence of trade cooperation by the four countries during the 17th century.



Figure 3.17 Davao

Davao is one of those places where urban relaxation is possible. It has wide, well-lit streets, beautiful buildings, great resorts, the friendliest people and the freshest fruits, vegetables, and the day's catch from the sea. While you find malls, five-star hotel and nightlife, you can still feel an almost pastoral ambience due to the wildflowers, long blades of grass, beaches and towering Mt. Apo.

Indeed, Davao is touted as one of the most beautiful cities in Asia. From an airplane at night, it looks like an inverted universe with its billion dancing lights shining from wide, well-lit structures, streets and establishments.

Tourist Attractions

Some major tourist attractions are introduced here to help you with travel information when visiting Davao.

Davao Museum

Davao Museum is located at the Insular Village in Lanang. It is a repository of tribal art, costumes, jewelry, handicrafts and others. Paintings, sculptures, and ceramics are also exhibited.

Eden Nature Park & Resort

As you may notice by its name, Eden Nature Park and Resort is recognized as a mountain paradise where one can commune with nature. This place has numerous recreational activities for visitors and a restaurant located in the mountains. Guests can stay in mountain cabins and camping sites.

Samal Island

Nestled within the cradle of Davao and the sea is the island garden of Samal. In the past, Samal Island housed the Aguinaldo Pearl Farm where cultured pearls were created using the latest Japanese technology. In its place now is the exclusive Pearl farm Resort with a row of beautifully crafted nipa huts, some of which are two to three stories high. The Samal houses are elevated from the water by the use of stilts so you can easily go down from the house and snorkel in the crystal clear waters with a variety of marine life. Another attraction is the Mandaya Tribe. Usually two women and kids from this tribe spin the cloth that made them famous.

Malipano Island

Here you get a spectacular sunset touching the waters and white sand with the red and gold of the sun. You can kayak to and from here, and it has seven spacious villas that are three storeys high, built and designed with an old Spanish era theme.

T'boli Weaving Center

T' boli Weaving Center is located at the Waterfront Hotel. Famous products here are woven materials like the yakan cloths and those woven by the Mandaya tribe and other T'boli handicrafts like traditional wedding hats, bamboo paper clips, and table mats and coasters made from abaca fabric. Watch out for big spenders!

Dabaw Etnika

It is located inside the Insular Hotel. Mandaya women weave their cloths which are not only made into clothes but also into table decorations, bags, beadwork jewelry, belts and other accessories. Great souvenir shopping!

Philippine Eagle Camp

This well-maintained camp is a sanctuary for the Philippine Eagle and other animals native to the Philippines. Great day out for family tour groups!

Puentespina Orchid Garden

A variety of flowers, especially the orchid, cattleya, ylang-ylang and waling-waling (*Vanda Sanderiana* for the purebred) can be seen and chosen at this garden. Puentespina gives pamphlets on how to grow orchids, and is open Monday to Saturday. If the purchase is above P500, a free box will be provided.

Lola Abon's Durian Factory and Mindanao Industrial Confectionery

These are factories south of Davao City where you can watch durian fruits being processed into jams, candies, and other processed products.

Lon Wa Temple

It is a Chinese Temple which is only four kilometers from the airport where the Buddha with the Thousand Hands inside this golden marbled pavilion can be seen. The tourists may also opt to have fortune read by the monks from the paper that can be picked from the incense sticks.

Talikud Island

Near Samal Island, Talikud Island has beautiful beaches where visitors can enjoy snorkeling/diving. Caves with resident snakes and bats can also be found.

Tagum

Various places of interest can be seen in Tagum. At the Dalisay Village, there is a citrus plantation, with exotic orchids and other plants, a Japanese tea house, and modern sports facilities.

The Davao Penal Colony was once a World War II concentration camp for war prisoners. Now, it was turned into a plantation for rubber, cacao and abaca, and a botanical garden and a zoo, which are maintained by the inmates. Visitors can also buy a variety of wood carvings and stay in the guesthouses. In addition, visitors can swim at the famed white sand beach at Carmen.

Northwest of Tagum, visitors can go to Tibi-tibi in Kapalong where there are hanging bridges and waterfalls, and native tribes of the Matigsalug, Talaingod and Langilan. Lake Ampawid in Asuncion has great marble quarries and banana plantations.

Southeast of Tagum are waterfalls, the Mainit Hot Spring National Park near Mabini and the Tagnanan Beach with its white sand. Mabini has the Maputi hot Springs,

the Cawacawa Waterfalls and the darkly mysterious Masara Mines. At the Nabunturan area, the endangered Philippine Crocodile is claimed to swim.

In all, it is evident that the Philippines is the land of astonishing arts and culture, natural resources, and friendly hospitality. Its tranquility, freedom, and adventure would provide visitors experience a number of unforgettable memories. However, it is important to note that its tourism may require strategic management actions in order to compete with alternative destinations and maximize the prosperity of the host population.

Chapter 4

The Philippines – Current tourism situation

It is clear that the Philippines is recognized as the land of tranquility, freedom, and adventure where many visitors experience a number of unforgettable memories, including astonishing arts and culture, natural resources, and friendly hospitality. However, the inconvenience of indirect transportation schedules; large differentials in charges for groups and individual customers by accommodation establishments; lack of information about the Philippines tourism product; as well as insufficient marketing by Tourism organizations, Furthermore, the research on motivation, attitudes and satisfaction of tourists arriving in Philippines has been inadequate and unclear.

The Philippines tourism product is an amalgam of natural, cultural and heritage attractions spread throughout the country, as well as a wide variety of services offered predominantly by Tourism organizations. Accessibility to the Philippines is facilitated through 92 airports, most of which can receive direct international charter flights. An extensive domestic scheduled flights network is provided by Philippine Airlines and Air Philippine, as well as by newly established private carriers which take advantage of the increasingly deregulated skies. The proliferation of private airlines (e.g. Cebu Pacific, Subic Air, Tair Airways). In addition, a complex network of sea, road and rail transport enables passenger transportation throughout the country. During the last decade there has been a remarkable improvement to the quality and ability of vessels in Philippines.

Tourism is also increasingly recognized as an instrument for regional development policies in Philippines. However, tourism's contribution to employment is jeopardized, as increasingly the industry is using self-catering and self-serviced accommodation and catering. It has therefore been difficult to know the exact contribution of tourism to the Philippines economy, mainly because there is inadequate research on expenditure, flows of income and national accounts.

It is obvious that the Philippines is endowed with a wealth of coastal natural resources with white sandy beaches, diverse coral reefs, wetlands with endangered birds and an extensive tropical shoreline that provide the basis for the potentially largest marine tourism industry in the world (Trousdale, 1999). The 18000 kilometer Philippine coastline is endowed with a wealth of natural tropical resources that provide numerous benefits to local residents and to the economy in general. Coral reefs alone cover about 27,000 square kilometers of area (Ann Ness, 2003). This of course thanks to its geographical assets.

It is also clear that marine tourism plays a significant role in the Philippine tourism industry. It has in fact expanded rapidly in the 1980s and 90s in the Philippines and much of the increase is attributed to these tropical coastal assets that are very appealing to vacationers. The activities usually engage in scuba diving, snorkeling and beach visits for recreation and relaxation. However, visitors numbers declined somewhat in 2000 and 2001 due to perceived peace and order problems in the southern part of the country but 2002 again had increased arrivals approaching 2 million visitor annually (White and Rosales, 2003). It is also noted that various forms of tourism enclaves mostly occupied by small scale and locally owned tourism establishments, assist to varying degrees with rural economic development.

The socio-cultural setting in the Philippines is quite favorable to tourism for several reasons. English is commonly spoken around the country, the level of education is high by developing country standards and people are naturally friendly and outgoing. In terms of the political setting, it tends to work against a well-managed and smoothly functioning tourism industry. It has been observe that politicians often vie for tourism development in their areas thus creating many small, poorly planned tourism developments. The main concerns about tourism development stem from the potential negative social and cultural impacts. Numerous incidents of changing values in areas where tourism is thriving and where sex, drugs and other lax values seep into adjacent communities are not uncommon.

Interestingly, the Philippines actively promoted and earmarked 2003 as 'Visit Philippines year'. Not only does the country want tourism, it needs it for economic development since the society is service oriented and indeed has the capacity to manage visitors. It is easy for Filipinos to accept and accommodate tourists and given the opportunity, people will gravitate towards tourism as an enterprise with the hope of improving their incomes. According to Department of Tourism Philippines (2005), the current tourism image may be explained in three words. These are Nature, Culture and Adventure. It is clear that the Philippines are home of various festivals. This is evident by the current tourism marketing campaign under the name of "WOW Philippines". This aims to represent the Philippines as a hotspot with wide range of festivals and dancing in which the tourists can enjoy the country by swingaround Philippines with selection of tour packages with the finest Filipino food. The Philippines is thus the country with a rich heritage, numerous mountains and beaches, not to mention terrific shopping and thrilling adventure travel around its 7,107 islands.

4.1 Tourism supply in Philippines tourism

The Philippines tourism product is an amalgam of natural, cultural and heritage attractions spread throughout the country, as well as a wide variety of services offered predominantly by Tourism organizations. Accessibility to Philippines¹ is facilitated through 92 airports, most of which can receive direct international charter flights. An extensive domestic scheduled flights network is provided by Philippine Airlines and Air Philippine, as well as by newly established private carriers which take advantage of the increasingly deregulated skies. The proliferation of private airlines (e.g. Cebu Pacific, Subic Air, Tair Airways).

In addition, a complex network of sea, road and rail transport enables passenger transportation throughout the country. During the last decade there has been a remarkable improvement to the quality and ability of vessels in Philippines.

¹ List of airports in the Philippines,
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_airports_in_the_Philippines

As supported by Camison et al. (1994: 443), who claims that the conditions determining the competitiveness of a tourist service (whether accommodation, catering, a theme park, a wholesale travel agency, etc.) and the holiday experience of a tourist find meaning in a certain geographical area (the destination) defined by a multidimensional relationship among firms and industries involved, transport and communications infrastructure, complementary activities (commercial infrastructure, tradition of fairs, etc), support services (training, information, etc.), natural resources and institutional policies.

It has been difficult to know the exact contribution of tourism to the Philippines economy, mainly because there is inadequate research on expenditure, flows of income and national accounts.

Tourism is also increasingly recognised as an instrument for regional development policies in Philippines. However, tourism's contribution to employment is jeopardised, as increasingly the industry is using self-catering and self-serviced accommodation and catering (Zacharatos, 1989: 284).

It is obvious that the Philippines is endowed with a wealth of coastal natural resources with white sand beaches, diverse coral reefs, wetlands with endangered birds and an extensive tropical shoreline that provide the basis for the potentially largest marine tourism industry in the world (Trousedale, 1999). The 18000 kilometer Philippine coastline is endowed with a wealth of natural tropical resources that provide numerous benefits to local residents and to the economy in general. Coral reefs alone cover about 27,000 square kilometers of area (Ann Ness, 2003). This of course thanks to its geographical assets.

Tourism overall in the Philippines accounts for 8.7 percent of the Gross Domestic Product and generates approximately 5 million jobs within its 83 million population. According to Department of Tourism (2002), the number of tourist arrivals from 1995 to 2001 for the Philippines is ranging from 1.8 million to 2.2 millions. Like other countries, the Tourism Secretary sits on the National Cabinet and tourism is seen as a means to

assist with national objectives' of poverty alleviation, employment generation and infrastructure strengthening. The Philippine coastal environment through tourism generates significant revenues from marine recreation and the associated hotels, food and purchases.

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Interestingly, the Philippines has world-class business facilities, a globally oriented business population, and a hospitable business atmosphere that hope to make the Philippines a premier EVENT destination in Asia. Its renowned creativity and a rich heritage further deem it the perfect setting for this incentive travel. The Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) is Asia's first international convention center, officially opened to the world in September, 1976. It is the largest convention site in Metro Manila, boasting a 4,000-capacity, multi-level plenary hall, 14 meeting rooms, and even a press center. There are at least eight other major convention sites in the metropolis, including the World Trade Center and Megatrade Hall, complemented by a variety of de luxe and first class hotels situated strategically within and nearby the business and commercial districts. Manila is the political, economic, social, educational, cultural, and recreational hub of the Philippines – offering just the right mix of conveniences, attractions, and attitude for every EVENT endeavor. The campaign dubbed as “Meetings Make Manila” is a concerted effort by select group venue owners, hotels, tourist transport operators, Philippine Airlines, and other private and public sector entities, all coordinated by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Philippine Convention & Visitors Corporation (PCVC). It seeks to promote Manila as an ideal EVENT destination, with added motivation through such programs as the MMM Incentive Package encouraging parties to actively bid for international events to be held in Manila 2000 and beyond.

There is also a 'Solid Support System' to ensure the better success for tourism in the Philippines. These include the presence of both the DOT and PCVC are available to assist business and incentive travelers in the Philippines in every way. The PCVC is a non-stock, non-profit government corporation attached to the DOT, tasked with promoting the country as an ideal tourism, EVENT, and incentive travel destination. The Country Conventions and Incentive Travel Unit (CIT), in particular, provides comprehensive information, technical assistance, and guidance to meeting planners, incentive travel and special event organizers who seek an ideal venue for their events and exhibitions. In addition, a 'National Ecotourism Strategy' was endorsed at the national level which further focuses on tourism progress to ensure a sustainable development it was mandated that the national ecotourism strategy be brought out.

The contribution of Philippines tourism to the national economy demonstrates the magnitude and complexity of the industry. Following a brief demand analysis, an examination of tourism supply is undertaken, whilst strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT) analysis demonstrate the competitiveness of both destination and its Tourism organizations. In addition the research elaborates on a wide range of structural problems and illustrates their effects on the profitability of the private sector and on the impacts of tourism at the destination.

Chapter 5

SWOT Analysis

A valuable exercise in the comprehensive planning process is the identification of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT)², which is a strategic planning tool used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in a project or in a business venture or in any other situation of an organization or individual requiring a decision to reach the organizational objectives. It involves monitoring the marketing environment internal and external to the organization or individual.. Strengths are those available and valuable assets that should be preserved or improved on. Weaknesses are drawbacks or short-term challenges that need to be addressed so that they do not cause long-term problems to the viability of either the quality of life or the economy of the area. Opportunities are the long-range positive trends affecting the country as well as the positive paths that we might follow. Threats are long-term weaknesses that can undermine attempts to meeting the goals established by Philippines.

Consistent with the Philippines background information and its current tourism situations, the SWOT analysis was developed from data derived from public opinion as well as interpretation of profile information about Philippines. This analysis is the basis for the development of goals and future strategies in order to identify some crucial factors for better understanding of the tourism industry in the Philippines. The result will be used to help identify opportunities that offer Philippines a set of realistic, tangible, and affordable actions for the community to pursue

²SWOT ANALYSIS, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SWOT_analysis

SWOT analysis for the Philippines tourism industry

We now describe SWOT of the Philippines tourism industry in more details.

5.1 Strengths

As far as strengths of the Philippines tourism and its tourism organizations are concerned, their flexibility and ability to tailor products to consumers' needs are of great importance to their existence. Philippines tourism organizations can identify profitable niches in the market, establish their requirements and attempt to satisfy specialised needs. Direct control by entrepreneurs permits quick and efficient managerial reaction to external challenges.

In addition, diversity of destination assets and wealth of natural and cultural resources are also significant assets of Philippines. The beauty of these resources can be seen around the country, such as, beaches, wildlife parks, falls, rivers, resorts, reefs, etc. Furthermore, unspoiled attractions in many regions (beaches and fishing barrios) make the tourists can fully enjoy privacy and tranquility. Consequently, tourists benefit from local resources which are ideally situated to offer special-interest holidays. As a complement to this, Philippines can also be regarded as paradise for spenders, since the country's living cost is quite low.

The Philippines tourism organizations also capitalise on personal relationships with consumers, suppliers, labour and the entire tourism industry in general. Their size enables the provision of a personal finish to all products provided, while it is not unusual for customers to become friends, and to be treated accordingly.

Likewise, strong relations with employees support labour loyalty and low turnover. The proprietor's family is normally directly involved with many aspects of the business, reacting efficiently and promptly to any problem arising. Their involvement in running the enterprise provides considerable benefits, especially in having a very flexible, multi-skilled and dedicated workforce which tolerates unsociable working schedules. Family members feel committed to the long-term prosperity of the enterprise

and often do not distinguish between their professional and local family life. Thus, a better matching between tourism demand and tourism organizations' supply is achieved.

Moreover, it is not only the beautiful places that every tourist appreciates, friendliness and hospitality are widely perceived for Philippines tourism industry: Filipinos themselves are warm, friendly and hospitable.

As Philippines used to be colonized by different countries, the Filipinos have become peace-loving, nationalistic, and freedom-fighters. There are a number of good traits and values that Filipinos inherited from foreign invaders, which became their strengths forming Filipino identity, including religious (from the Spaniards), educational (from the Americans), and commercial (from the Chinese and Malays).

Apart from beautiful destinations and friendly personality, there are many world class facilities in major cities of Philippines similar to many countries attempting to be competitive advantage in tourism markets,

There is another advantage of Philippines tourism industry in which English is commonly spoken around the country. The two official languages are Filipino and English. Filipino, the national language is based in Tagalog, one of the major dialects in the Philippines apart from Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligaynon or Ilonggo, Bicol, Waray, Pampango and Pangasinense. Both Filipino and English are primarily used in the schools from pre-elementary to tertiary levels. It is widely accepted that Philippines is the second largest English speaking country in Asia.

Furthermore, there are moves to identify tourism projects to target poverty reduction and classify tourism as one of the priority of economic development. In this case, there are policies and programs that identify tourism as a priority activity in addressing poverty alleviation and community empowerment.

Primarily, the Philippines is very competent skilled manpower to support and strengthen the tourism industry. In combination with English skills, the Philippines tourism appears to be more advantageous than many countries having difficulties in

effective English conversation. In many cases, The English proficiency at acceptable level is insufficient to provide visitors with services effectively.

5.2 Weaknesses

A focus of the weaknesses of Philippines tourism industry is critical for understanding the ability of the industry to compete in the ASEAN tourism arena. Although entrepreneurs are normally an asset, it seems that a number of managerial problems often arise.

In addition to unclear image of destination with too varied cultures, religions, and political histories, lack of strategic and operational management skills generates inconsistency in the creation and delivery of Philippines tourism products. This has direct implications for consumers' satisfaction and the projected image of the tourism industry. There is often a complete lack of strategic vision and enterprises are often treated as an extension of proprietors' domestic environment. Furthermore, limited community involvement, support and awareness through the tourism management and environment conservation also represent the Philippines tourism industry weakness.

Many entrepreneurs recruit family members and relatives as personnel and suppliers in spite of the fact that more appropriate alternatives can be found. Therefore, the management of tourism organizations clearly projects the proprietor's family life-style and decision-making processes onto an enterprise. Besides, marketing is another significant weakness for most entrepreneurs and Philippines resorts, as they are often unaware of the techniques available and therefore focus on a product-oriented rather than a consumer-orientated approach. As a result, uncoordinated, isolated, trouble-shooting marketing activities are occasionally undertaken, rather than a consistent and well-planned marketing campaign.

In addition, the Philippines tourism industry appears to lack of marketing research regarding consumers' needs making the situation difficult to identify methods for improving services in order to meet consumers' expectations. Furthermore, inability

to finance and execute advertising campaigns and other promotional techniques reduces their visibility in their markets. These weaknesses, in combination with the fact that many entrepreneurs are quite unfamiliar with information and communication technology (ICT), add to the problems of tourism organizations in promoting themselves effectively. Consequently, both Philippines tourism organizations and destinations suffer from relying too much on the tourism distribution channels to promote and distribute their product. In particular, intermediaries and especially tour operators have enormous power within the channel and are capable of determining the Philippines tourism product, marketing, distribution and pricing mixes.

Therefore, the marketing campaign and the visibility of Philippines tourism to its main target markets are often determined by the coverage, space, photographs and description in tour operators' brochures. This issue; however, can be found in many ASEAN countries.

In addition, there is usually little economic development in the supplying sectors as most resorts in Philippines are located in peripheral areas. Therefore, remote destinations have to import essential raw and construction materials from elsewhere, while Tourism organizations often face transportation, delivery and purchasing problems and excessive transportation costs.

Moreover, lack of economies of scale in purchasing raw material, low bargaining power, and lack of advanced facilities are additional operational disadvantages. In this case, it means that Philippines tourism organizations have to pay for products more than their larger counterparts.

In most tourism organizations, personnel have to cover a wide range of positions, a loose job description is usually provided and multi-skilled personnel are required. The labour turnover, due to the seasonality of the tourism industry, reduces the availability of qualified and experienced personnel and makes tourism product delivery not only variable, but also unprofessional. The small size of operation provides little opportunity for the division of tasks, professional employees and proper training. Since no quality standards are introduced, service delivery varies according to the

occupancy, service provider and timing. As a consequence, lack of specialized personnel and inadequate training procedures mean that human resources management is a major weakness of Philippines tourism.

Inadequate Infrastructure and well-equipped facilities in rural areas or non-major cities (roads are not well maintained) appear to be another major weakness of Philippines tourism industry that must be taken into an account. In terms of fundamental infrastructures for Philippines tourism industry, the Philippines government appears to lack sufficient financial resources to implement fundamental infrastructural needs and international services are adequate³. Transportation and accessibility to remote destinations may also be a weakness, as most enterprises are located in peripheral and often inaccessible regions. Tourism organizations tend to feel frustrated because they are unable to attract consumers, simply because they cannot provide convenient, reliable and affordable transportation. Although there are many flights and airports in operation in Philippines, many of their qualities are considered lower than an acceptable level.

Moreover, Philippines tourism organizations confront significant financial constraints as on the one hand they are required to invest in fixed assets at the beginning of their operations, and on the other hand, there is a discrimination against them by financial institutions, since they normally have very few assets. Consequently, they are forced to accept unfavourable financial deals. However, please note that this issue has long influenced many tourism countries.

While the tourism industry is one of the most important economies of Philippines in addition to agricultures and mining, the Philippines tourism industry suffers from seasonality problems and need to produce adequate income within a limited period every year.

Similar to many tourism countries, lack of diversified investment in other economic activities forces proprietors to work intensively in the peak months and rest in

³ Philippines Economy Overview, <http://www.asiatravelinfo.com/philippines/overview.asp>

the off-peak months, while their pay-back period is inevitably unfavourable. As the tourism industry becomes more professional, embraces quality management and responds to an increasingly discerning customer, Philippines tourism organizations' typical lack of business expertise and minimal standardization may become an issue of concern for the Philippines tourism industry.

Besides all weaknesses mentioned above, negative media report (sex tourism, political clash and kidnapping cases) issued to the world can be defined as a crucial issue restricting the growth of Philippines tourism industry as most people are very concerned about their safety when traveling to inexperienced destinations,.

5.3 Opportunities

The Philippines is located in Southeast Asia, which is well-known as dream destination for global tourists. Because of the location, it is potential for Philippines to participate in greater ASEAN co-operation.

All tourists who are from all over the world can apply one visa for ASEAN countries and there is not visa requirement for all ASEAN members in order to enter Philippines. This will create investment opportunity due to the increasing number of tourist arrival.

Recent developments in the external environment present numerous opportunities for the Philippines tourism. The Southeast Asian (SEA) Games in 2005 provide the city and the country with a unique challenge and opportunity to redevelop itself and demonstrate its unparalleled heritage and natural resources. The Games also provide the resources and funding as well as a deadline for several infrastructural projects that had already been scheduled but not yet finished. In addition, several projects are anticipated to improve the superstructure of the industry through both renovation of existing properties and through the development of new hotels and other facilities. This also provided major opportunities for the attractiveness and competitiveness of the Philippines tourism industry.

Traditionally, remote and insular destinations, where most Philippines resorts and tourism organizations are based, achieve a competitive advantage in tourism. Philippines tourism benefits from the continuous growth of tourism demand, as more people require holiday services. In this case, information and communication technologies (ICT) can provide strategic tools for Philippines tourism destinations and tourism organizations by enabling them to manage their product more efficiently disseminate information and establish a distribution mechanism through destination management systems (Buhalis, 2000). ICTs also offer opportunities for developing innovative tourism products for tourists who would like to spend time working during their stay at the destination.

As found in many developing countries, Philippines tourism attempts to achieve a cost advantage, since it employs unpaid family members and operates in inexpensive peripheral regions which often have a lower cost of living in comparison with metropolitan areas.

5.4 Threats

In terms of threats, environmental degradation through inappropriate waste management and excessive usage of natural resources can be evaluated.

Lack of skills and funds effectively increases environmental problems in Philippines. Like many Southeast Asian Countries, several resorts suffer severe damage while entrepreneurs and local authorities feel powerless to take remedial measures.

Moreover, oversupply of tourism service providers and lack of well-defined carrying capacity limits in several destinations have placed numerous Philippines resorts and tourism organizations in a disadvantaged position as they cannot achieve sufficient income. Similarly, the concentration of power in fewer tourism industry enterprises through emerging globalisation also threatens the ability of Philippines Tourism organizations to survive, as international vertically integrated tourism organizations acquire control over local enterprises.

Destinations often have limited infrastructure provisions which fail to follow the pace of development, generating pressure on the existing inadequate facilities.

Philippines tourism and Tourism organizations have limited means of dealing with unfavourable situations and thus are more vulnerable to their impacts. Political intervention, perhaps through the public sector decisions and the legislator framework often damages the prosperity of Tourism organizations. As Tourism organizations have little lobbying power they have limited influence over political decisions which determine their welfare.

The SWOT analysis demonstrates quite clearly that the Philippines tourism industry confronts a wide range of problems and threats which will potentially jeopardise its ability to provide suitable tourism products in the future as well as its ability to make a contribution to the national welfare. However, several opportunities and challenges emerge and they need to be addressed in order to strengthen the competitiveness of the industry. Further analysis is therefore required in order to assess the factors which generate these problems and also to identify ways to respond to the challenges they present.

Furthermore, the economic impacts of tourism in Philippines become debatable, especially due to the inadequacy of tourism economic research and data, while the destination has to bear the environmental, social and cultural decay.

Similar to many ASEAN members, the largest obstacle in developing a competitive tourism industry in Philippines has been the inconsistent and political intervention. It has been accepted that tourism is several times utilised as a political reason.

Uncontrollable international media reports appear to be another serious threat to the Philippines tourism industry. To illustrate this point, a number of violent incidents caused by the extremist Muslims have long been perceived by many people all over the world and also the outbreak of an armed conflict that makes the Philippines understood

as the Wild-West of Asia⁴. However, it is undeniable that a spread of world terrorist in Philippines has long impacted the country for several years⁵.

In addition, tourism consumption being characterised as a particular category of private consumption in the national accounts, it fails to reflect the real tourism impact on each economic sector. Consequently, tourism policy follows conventional wisdom and concentrates on attracting a larger volume of tourists, ignoring scientific methods to assess the economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of each tourism segment, assuming that the greater the tourism volume, the better for the national economy.

Because the deficient scientific examination of Philippines tourism and its impacts prevents the authorities from establishing quantifiable and measurable tourism policies, their policies are based on subjective and personal judgments, while feedback practices are rarely followed.

On the supply side, increased use of resources due to international tourism growth in its region, failure of the infrastructure to follow the dramatic expansion of the superstructure, in combination with the lack of solid institutional context of tourism policy and long-term regulation, result in the exploitation and inadequacy of environmental and socio-cultural resources, as well as the inability of the industry to generate the level of economic benefits desired and expected.

Because of the aforementioned structural problems, most tourism industry enterprises are experiencing a decline in profitability. Hotels in particular are badly affected due to the high fixed assets, as well as their immobility and inflexibility which prevent them from adjusting to demand fluctuation. Several reasons determine their low profitability and inability to increase prices in line with inflation. In various Philippines destinations, as their economic, social, cultural and environmental resources are exploited without ensuring their sustainability.

⁴ Fear of U.S.-style massacre resonates in Asia, available at http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20070417/wl_nm/usa_crime_shooting_world_dc

⁵ Philippine group beheads hostages, available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6574773.stm>

Water shortage has already been experienced in a number of tourism destinations, according to Barba (2004). Most of the islands also face water shortage due to the inability of natural supplies to provide sufficient water for the tourism demand. Imported mineral water from the mainland is an expensive way to solve this problem due to the transportation cost, while it creates more waste and environmental damage. Urgent coordination with all tourism actors at the local level is essential, while regulation is required to set objective and measurable limits and targets, in order to preserve local environmental resources.

Moreover, lack of close cooperation among ASEAN countries for strategic partnership and competition from neighboring countries in the region, such as, Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand, etc., can be categorized as another threat to the Philippines tourism industry. However, there is another consequent threat found in these countries, commercial sexual exploitation is another potential threat defacing the image of Philippines tourism industry.

Chapter 6

Towards the Philippines Tourism Industry Development

As has already been discussed, this research attempts to provide a framework for strategic planning which will enable the strengthening of the competitiveness of Philippines tourism and Tourism organizations. Porter (1985: 1) states that competitive strategy 'is the search for a favorable competitive position in an industry' which is a function of the attractiveness of the industry and the relative competitive position within that particular industry. According, he further claims that 'competitive strategy aims to establish a profitable and sustainable position against the forces that determine industry competition'. Competitiveness is, therefore, defined as the effort undertaken by organizations to maintain long-term profitability, above the average of the particular industry within which they operate or above alternative investment opportunities in other industries.

Traditionally, the tourism industry in the majority of destinations worldwide is based on a network of Tourism organizations which provide all types of tourism products and services, while enabling closer interaction between the host population and visitors, as well as facilitating a rapid infusion of tourism spending into the local economy. As 'tourists' overall experience is composed of numerous small encounters with a variety of tourism service providers' (Moutinho, 1990: 104), there is a great overlap between the customer perception of local Tourism organizations and destinations, which makes them almost indistinguishable. Consequently the competitiveness and prosperity of destinations and Tourism organizations are closely interrelated, as the fortune of the one depends heavily upon the management and competitiveness of the other.

We believe that all Philippines tourism destinations should distinguish their tourism products for a unique benefit of tourist product that would enable them to strengthen their position in the international tourism, as well as to attract first-class and loyal tourists (Gilbert, 1984, 1990). We suggest that Philippines tourism industry should

focus towards the different strategies in order to define appropriate markets for tourists and serve them accordingly.

As most destinations consist of Philippines tourism organizations, there is an overlap between their strategic orientations, and therefore the above analysis is applicable to both the Philippines tourism industry and Tourism organizations.

Although the unique service for tourists' needs should be their priority, offering perceived value for money would determine their competitiveness in the marketplace. As a result, all Philippines resorts and Tourism organizations should assess their assets and strengths for serving specific target markets, taking advantage of their small size which facilitates flexibility and specialisation. It is quite apparent that the cost advantage strategy has to be avoided in management of tourism destinations, as regions need to preserve their scarce environmental and sociocultural resources and achieve sustainable development.

The attraction of the lower end of the market is inevitable and as a consequence, there are no alternative strategies. The minimisation of further sociocultural and environmental damage, as well as attempts to improve the surrounding environment, should also be a primary objective of both tourism destinations and Tourism organizations in this case. As a result of the tourism product integration, consumer satisfaction cannot be achieved by independent businesses separately, but by the entire network of Tourism organizations in Philippines destinations.

As tourist demand elasticity has increasingly become doubtful in recent years, the price of the holiday is no longer considered to be the most important attribute in the decision-making process.

Cost control and rational management is the second strategic objective needed to increase efficiency and profitability of both Philippines destinations and Tourism organizations in the long term. Standardisation of the service delivery process and minimisation of the labour cost through better operational management would be primary recommendations.

For the effectiveness of the Philippines tourism industry, we suggest that managers and employees should improve their productivity and marketing skills by intensive training. In addition, the rationalisation of supply management and the use of new technology is expected to reduce operational costs. Finally, integration of service delivery enables Tourism organizations to provide complementary services and achieve additional revenues without immense costs.

We suggest that the Philippines tourism industry should focus on how to create overall satisfactions to their employees for the effectiveness of delivering tourism products to visitors. As Berry (1981: 34) states 'the satisfaction of the needs and wants of the internal customers can upgrade their capacity for satisfying the needs and wants of their external customers' and as a consequence, it can contribute to the competitiveness and profitability of the Philippines tourism industry.

Furthermore, the Philippines tourism industry should emphasise the sustainable development of destinations and local areas, not only for the host population but also because this is vital for both consumer satisfaction and the profitability of Philippines tourism organizations. Although in many cases that the tourism organizations are unable to incorporate these types of strategic objectives and tasks on their own, they can initiate a framework of necessary actions for sustainable destination development through their associations. Environmental protection is naturally the most important strategic objective as consumers' environmental consciousness has been raised recently. In addition, natural resources management is necessary, as tourism demand may exhaust the resources and especially the water supplies (Barba, 2004).

The improvement of accessibility, public services, as well as telecommunications facilities is a crucial factor. Transportation is also significant in increasing both consumer satisfaction and profitability of Philippines tourism industry, as it determines whether consumers can access the destination easily, while it also provides the first impression to tourists.

In this case, there are many requirements that must be taken into consideration for Philippines transportation, such as, improvements of timetables, and services,

reliability; increasing transportation capacity; and an enhancement of the fleet in terms of speed, cleanliness and leisure facilities. Furthermore, greater flexibility is needed by transportation operators in order to meet demand needs. Economic integration can improve the economic and social benefits of tourism in the region and the efficiency of tourism organizations.

Philippines tourism organizations need to offer a fair return-on-resources utilized back to the host community. A mechanism should be established in order to reinvest part of the revenues in the sustainability of resources; provide services for the host community, such as education, training, health services; and generally ensure equity in distribution of wealth produced from local resources.

Concluding Remarks

It is undisputable that the Philippines has a diverse coastal environment with a variety of ecosystems, and extremely rich biodiversity and productivity. Its people are also open, international and adaptable, rooted from the national colonial history and culture. The historic legacy also originates diverse traditions of food, festivals and religions in the society. The government is encouraging EVENT tourism with extensive meeting and convention facilities as well as the nation's diversity of people, music and festivals. It is nonetheless clear that the white sand beaches, diverse coral reefs, wetlands with endangered birds and a tropical shoreline provide the basis for the potentially largest marine tourism industry in the world. This therefore stresses the growing role of marine tourism in the country and the well-being of coastal communities.

With the influx of both local and foreign tourists to these marine tourist spots, it is inevitable that destruction of natural resources will occur. However, with the right collaboration among stakeholders (LGUs, private sectors and local residents) such destruction can be prevented. This is exemplified by the resurgence of Apo Island in Oriental Negros as a favorite diving spot of foreign tourists. With the proper technical support provided by Silliman University, local residents were able to restore the underwater beauty of the island. Thus, there is optimism that community-based and

local government facilitated tourism development in coastal areas of the county will thrive in the coming years and contribute more to both environmental sustainability and the generation of rural wealth.

The emerging international tourism competition; the hitherto mass tourism orientation of the industry; the transformation of demand; the development of the volume of tourists visiting; the dependence upon intermediaries for the distribution of the tourism product in the major target markets; the lack of a wide range of managerial skills by Philippines tourism entrepreneurs; and the lack of a comprehensive tourism policy by the public sector has led the competitiveness of Philippines tourism to decline. This has several unfavourable implications for the profitability of the private sector as well as numerous negative economic, sociocultural and environmental impacts for the host population. As a result the return on resources utilised for the production of Philippines tourism services is inadequate and the sustainability of Philippines as a major tourism destination is rapidly becoming doubtful. Based on a strategic analysis, the paper illuminates the strategic weaknesses and structural problems of both the private and public sectors, and demonstrates that a rationalisation of the tourism industry is urgently required.

A thorough examination of tourism impacts in each region would be a prerequisite for tourism planning as it will establish and provide scientific backing to strategic targets. We believe that the regional level planning is more suitable for drawing sustainable strategies, especially for areas with dissimilar needs like the Philippines destinations.

It should also take into consideration the uniqueness of insular economies, as well as the cultural and environmental resources of each particular region and the complexity of rural and urban functions. The planning process should encourage the complementarity and coexistence of economic activities, rather than promote sectoral separation and single-sector developments. A strategy for Philippines tourism industry should aim to facilitate consumers for enhancing the long-term prosperity of the industry, and improve the welfare of the host populations. We believe that better quality services

would stimulate the competitiveness of the Philippines tourism product, strengthen its position in the international market.

Regarding the positioning of the Philippines as a tourist destination, it was revealed that this country should emphasize the areas of the adventure, nature, as well as its rich culture.

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Philippines – Destinations

Introduction

Hello! Allow me to introduce myself. I am Kulvara Suwanpimol from Thailand. I am here today with my friend, Cecille. She is a Filipino, and we would like to take you to a grand tour of the Philippines. This is an unmissable journey. Philippines is among the most famous destinations in Southeast Asia. Philippines is also one of the most remote, peripheral, uncertain, and multicultural regions of the ASEAN. Its tourism may require some strategic management actions in order to compete with alternative destinations and maximise the prosperity of the host population.

Well, let me talk a bit about tourism industry in the Philippines. Tourism has been heavily promoted not only by the Philippines government but also by the governments of many countries in South-East Asia as a key component of development strategies for several decades. This is because it is believed that tourism promotion will serve as a substantial source of employment, foreign exchange earnings and export receipts, thereby contribute to economic growth and improved income distribution.

In most people views, Philippines is by far recognized as the land of tranquility, freedom, and adventure where many visitors experience a number of unforgettable memories, including astonishing arts and culture, natural resources, and friendly hospitality. In this article, Cecille and I would like to show you 13 major destinations that would take you to a holiday of a life time! (just like I have).

Philippines and its recommended destinations

As earlier mentioned, from here onward, many useful information in relation to those 15 places mostly recommended by visitors and travel agencies around the world are

concisely presented here. These include 1) Sightseeing and city tour in Manila, 2) Historical Tourist attraction in Manila, 3) Environs of Manila 4) Clark, 5) Subic, 6) Baguio, 7) Banaue, 8) Vigan, 9) Laoag, 10) Boracay, 11) Palawan, 12) Cebu, 13) Bohol, 14) Camiguin, and 15) Davao. I shall then start with Manila, the capital of the Philippines.

Sightseeing and city tour in Manila

First, it is a must to visit Manila, The capital of the Philippines. It sets the archipelago's rhythm and is a pulsating hub that blends the Oriental with the Occidental, the quaint with the modern, the religious with the profane, and the mundane with the extraordinary.

Manila has been witness to the Philippines' history and growth. In historic time, it was plagued with bombs during the Second World War, and has housed 14 presidents. Its beauty has withstood the test of time.

At the heart of Manila's history is Intramuros. It features the grand Manila Cathedral with its detailed stone carvings and stained glass mosaics; Fort Santiago, the site of torture chambers and dungeons; and a favorite wedding spot, the San Agustin Church.

It is also important to note that Greater Manila, made up of 11 cities and five towns, is where the country's most prestigious business addresses and trendiest leisure establishments are found. Fashionable hotels, restaurants, discos, music bars, boutiques and specialty shops converge around the sleek Ayala and Ortigas Centers.



Figure 1 Manila

Major attractions for city tour in Manila are listed below.

CCP Complex

Houses the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) that has a main theater (Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo), little theater (Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino) and experimental theater (Tanghalang Huseng Batute), the Philippine International Convention Center, Folk Arts Theatre (Tanghalang Francisco Balagtas) and the Manila Film Center. This cradle of arts and culture is located along Roxas Boulevard. Ballets, symposiums, concerts and plays are staged here. Don't miss the show!

Coconut Palace Complex

Don't forget to come marvel at how the different parts of the "tree of life" – the coconut tree – are put to use in this abode by the sea.

Greenhills

This is a paradise established for bargain-lovers. With rows upon rows of stands, there are almost everything to sell, from jewelry and clothes to accessories and the latest electronic gadgets.

Quiapo Church

Home of the Black Nazarene whose feast is celebrated every January 9, and attended by millions of devotees who have been touched by the Nazarene's miracles. The Black Nazarene is an image of Christ brought by Augustinians in the 17th century, and is said to grant miracles. Quiapo is another haven for bargains.

Las Pinas Bamboo Organ

Located in St. Joseph Church in Las Piñas, the bamboo organ gets full attention from musicians from all over the world during its annual festival.

Malacanang Palace

The presidential home and seat of the government's executive branch. Get ready for more photos!

Baywalk

Found along Roxas Boulevard, this is a perfect haven for lovers and families alike. It has a stream of al fresco restaurants serving fresh seafood and other Filipino cuisine. Our advice? It is best to go here in the afternoon, just in time to see the spectacular sunset mirrored on Manila Bay.

Malate

Malate is very famous for its night life, where almost all bars, restaurants and clubs are located. Have fun!

University Belt

For all student visitors, this is a hub of learning institutes like Far Eastern University, University of the East, Centro Escolar University, Mapua University and San Beda College makes up the University Belt along Recto Avenue in Manila.

Manila's Chinatown

Another unmissable place, located in the Binondo district. This is Chinatown that symbolizes the long history of Chinese presence in the Philippines pre-dating the arrival of the Spaniards. The Chinese have been influential in business, especially in retail trade and their culture, which have been absorbed into Philippine life. You can also enjoy various kind of Chinese food here.

Chinese Cemetery

This is an astonishing place. Members of the Filipino-Chinese community have mausoleums three stories high, complete with amenities like living rooms, bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens and even mailboxes.

Araneta Coliseum

Located in Cubao, Quezon City, it is the biggest covered dome in Asia. Beauty pageants, concerts and the games of the Philippine Basketball Association and University Athletics Association of the Philippines, to name a few, are held here. Prepare to take lots of photos!

Historical attractions in Manila

Major historical attractions in Manila are listed below.

National Museum

Manila National Museum is located at the former Senate building. It houses many artworks by renowned Filipino artists, including Juan Luna's *Spoliarium*. Don't miss this if you are a lover of fine arts.

Museum of the Filipino People

This museum is of course, where we can learn much about Filipino and their life style. Located almost beside the National Museum, it interestingly houses artifacts from different regions of the Philippines, displaying the diverse and colorful culture this archipelago has to offer.

Intramuros

You will love the beauty of Intramuros. This walled city steeped in Old Spanish history is where several Spanish churches and other landmarks are located, such as the Manila Cathedral, San Agustin Church with its 4,500-pipe organ, and the parks such as the Puerta Real Gardens and the Baluarte de San Diego.

Rizal Park (Luneta)

As you may have heard of it. Here is where visitors can see the monument of National Hero Dr. Jose Rizal. A few meters away is a Light and Sound Show, held at the exact place where he was executed. It is also a great place to stroll and enjoy picnics with their family. Cecille and I so enjoyed the walk of Rizal Park.

Museo Pambata (Children's Museum)

Visitors as family with children, we would like to recommend Museo Pambata, which is the first hands-on interactive children's museum in the Philippines. It has an exciting learning center with six theme areas, namely: Kalikasan (Environment), Maynila Noon (Old Manila), Tuklas (Science), Paglaki Ko (Career Option), Katawan Ko (Body Works), and ang Bata sa Mundo (Children in the Global Village). It also has a reading resource

center and children's playground. It is also a venue for children's activities such as storytelling, puppet shows and various workshops. You may need to spend quite a long time there.

The environs of manila

I would also like to recommend other major cities. These include Quezon City, also known as an entertainment hub as well as a government center; Marikina City; the shoe center of the Philippines; Parañaque City, known for its dry goods and seafood markets and restaurants; and Las Piñas, which houses the world's only bamboo organ at St. Joseph's Parish Church.

Calabarzon, comprised of the five provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon, is only a few hours away from Manila. The area boasts of great destinations and leisure activities for day trips or overnight getaways as well as export processing centers. Next, Cecille and I would like to recommend some key tourist attractions in Manila which are selected from different types and sites within Manila.

Tagaytay

Only a few hours' drive from Manila is the refreshing wisp of a city that is Tagaytay. Located in Cavite, perched atop a ridge, Tagaytay offers the most splendid views of Taal Volcano – the world's smallest.

Corregidor

Aptly called "The Rock," Corregidor lies at the mouth of Manila Bay. This tiny island was the scene of much fighting between the Filipino-American forces and the Japanese during World War II. Today, it is hauntingly historic tourist attraction.

Laguna hot springs

The area of Laguna around Los Baños trades heavily on the health properties of its hot springs which bubble from the lower slopes of Mount Makiling. You will enjoy the scenery as much as the hot springs!

Mount Makiling

This is a precious natural resource of the Philippines. The dormant volcano of Mount Makiling is identifiable by its shape – like a reclined woman. The mountain is named after Mariang Makiling, a young woman whose spirit is said to protect the place.

Pagsanjan

Francis Ford Coppola chose Pagsanjan Falls, 80 kilometers southeast of Manila, as the location for the final scenes of *Apocalypses Now*. Today, tourists come here to shoot the rapids, especially during the rainy season when they are most thrilling.

Clark

Now we are taking you to Clark, the second destination in this guide. Clark in Angeles, Pampanga was a former U.S. Air force Base and has long been the principal aviation center of the Philippines. Since the American troops left, the Philippine government has been working hard to convert Clark into a vibrant economic zone.



Figure 2 CLark

It is 70 kilometers north of Manila and an hour east of Subic. It has become popular among tourists because it's a center for some thrilling adventure sports, including parachuting, microlight flying and off-road motorcycling.

Tourist Attractions

There are a number of tourist attractions to offer here. Cecille and I would introduce you to six different places here, which will surely thrill all nature and adventure lovers.

Mt. Pinatubo

First, one of the most famous volcano in the world. This Mt. Pinatubo. Filipinos have experienced the wrath of this active volcano in 1991. But despite the havoc it once sowed, tourists remain to admire it. Mt. Pinatubo's summit can be reached in one full day via nearby Capas in Tarlac. Once at the peak, visitors will be able to see the majestic jewel-blue crater lake.

Mt. Arayat

Next, this is an equally attractive destination. This dormant volcano can be scaled even by the inexperienced climber.

Expo Pilipino

The Philippine National Centennial Exposition is the centerpiece of the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the proclamation of Philippine independence on June 12, 1898. It is a celebration of the Filipino's history, culture, and achievements in the past 100 years, as well as aspirations for the next millennium. Its exhibits were discontinued during the administration of former President Joseph Estrada. Today, its 35,000-seat capacity amphitheater is a favorite venue for concerts, ecumenical services and political rallies.

Hot Air Balloon Festival

This is an annual festival when balloonists from all over the world participate. This is a second-to-none event.

Mimosa Leisure Estate

Inside this estate is the Holiday Inn Clark that has a fitness center and jacuzzi, free-form swimming pool, tennis and table tennis, billiards and darts, and an adventure camp for kids.

Fontana Leisure Park

To all risktakers, this resort is a casino and a swimming pool that is mechanically-equipped to produce waves. Don't get too carried away!

Subic

Now, we have come to the fifth destination. Subic is the largest Naval Base outside the USA before being transformed into a commercial free port. It is just 210 kilometers

northwest of Manila, and it is a destination of historical significance. It also promises a myriad of experiences, from majestic beaches with fascinating shipwrecks to a multitude of outdoor adventures.

Historically, the Aetas were the inhabitants of Subic before Spanish colonizers came. Their ancestral origin is traced to the foot of Mt. Pinatubo, a revered place they believe to be the abode of a good named Apo Namalyari. Soon afterward Juan de Salcedo, a Spanish conquistador discovered Subic in 1542. He reported that the area was a deep bay and was a strategic location as a port. There was an existing fishing village back then, called “Hubek”, which meant “head of the plow”. Historians say that Salcedo mispronounced it by calling it Subig, this was how its name began to come about.



Figure 3 Subic

The Spanish issued a Royal Decree by King Alfonso II declaring Subig as a naval port in 1884. Subig later became “Subiq” and the letter q, apparently of Spanish origin was transposed to c, this was most likely done to avoid mispronunciation by the Americans.

In 1899, the Americans included Subic Bay as one of the locations to be visited by patrolling gunboats. Commodore George Dewey of the Asiatic Squadron, who battled

the Spanish fleet in Manila declared Subic Bay as “having no equal in the Philippine islands.”

US President Theodore Roosevelt designated Subic and 70,000 hectares of its neighboring land as an American military reservation in 1903. A year after, the Subic Naval Station was operational. It was the largest US Marine Corps training facility outside the mainland United States. After the Philippines gained its independence from the Americans an agreement was signed granting the Americans use of the 16 military installations including Subic and Olongapo.

Today, Subic is not just a glimpse of the past, but is also a solace for travelers with a thirst for adventure and an exhilarating getaway for groups of all ages.

Tourist Attractions

A major tourist attraction to be recommended here is Subic's lush forests where you can enjoy ecology tours.

Ecology Tours

Here, visitors can explore Subic's lush forests with a native guide. Inclusive of cultural immersion among the Negritos, such as showing medicinal plants, gathering of food, cultural presentations (hunting, fishing, happy dance), jungle survival demonstration (fire making and cooking in the bamboo). The tour lasts 2 to 3 hours.

Baguio

Our sixth destination in the Philippines is Baguio City. The city is in northern Luzon, known as the summer capital of the Philippines. It is a popular destination particularly during the months of March, April, and May for both local and foreign tourists because of its cold climate. Also known as, “The Flower City of the North,” it is a great venue for

various outdoor activities. Come Christmas time, Baguio is also a preferred vacation spot.



Figure 4 Baguio

Geographically, Baguio is located some 250 kilometers north of Manila, where is nestled 5,000 feet above sea level on the Cordillera Mountain Range, the highest metropolis in the Philippines. In the heart of Benguet Province, it benefits from having political autonomy, being a chartered city since 1909. With an area of 49 square kilometers enclosed in a perimeter of 30.6 kilometers, it has 20 administrative districts where its 129 barangays are distributed.

Baguio, before being discovered by the Americans a century ago, was known as the “rancheria”, Cattle and horses used to flock the area during dry seasons, but most of the time was marshland with a shallow lake where the locals hunted for ducks and snipes.

The Americans saw Baguio as a place to build a future metropolis. A water source was found, pine trees were everywhere and grass covered the area. They immediately decided to make Baguio an admirable site for the future summer capital and health resort of the Philippines.

Today, Baguio is a melting pot of cultures. The diversity of indigenous ethno-linguistic groups enriches the socio-cultural scene. The Ibalois are considered the original settlers and together with other Cordillera groups such as the Bontocs, Kalingas, Ifugaos and Kankanaïs, comprise about 10 percent of the total population. Other ethnic groups from as far as Mindanao also settled in the area. Local visual artists also gather in the city of pines for it is a comfortable space to hone their talents together with their contemporaries.

Baguio City is also popular for its vegetable and strawberry produce. It is also an ideal place for golfers and those who love to trek. Simultaneously this promotes environmental awareness and education for both the young and the young at heart. It is a mountain paradise with a cornucopia of attractions that will surely entice any tourist to visit more than once.

Tourist Attractions

There are six major attractions to offer in the city of Baguio. These are the mixture of shopping centre, local village and historic places.

Session Road

First, at the heart of downtown Baguio is a Session Road. This incline cuts through a row of business establishments which includes restaurants, groceries, drugstores, bookstores and other specialty shops. Marvel at quaint tribal memorabilia while Igorot sidewalk vendors convince visitors to purchase unique love potions and herbal cures. Nightlife converges to wine and dine until the wee hours of the morning.

Tam-Awan Village

Here, it is about two kilometers northwest of the town center. It is a replica of an Igorot Village that was built on the side of a hill. It is possible to stay overnight in this original Ifugao houses, the brainchild of the Chanum foundation, a group of artists who are

dedicated to preserving and nurturing the native culture in the Cordilleras. There are demonstrations of handicraft skills like weaving, wood carving and rice production.

Central Market

Known as the Central Market, the life vein of Baguio courses within and throughout the central market. No trip is complete without a visit to its showcase of fresh vegetables, fruits, flowers, preserves, handicrafts, silver brass, jewelry and even surplus army goods.

Camp John Hay

Formerly a rest and recreational station of U.S. military troops, this facility was turned over to the Philippine government on July 1, 1991. The 535- hectares haven boasts a world class 18-hole golf course, wooded hiking areas, a skating rink, bowling alleys, tennis courts and mini-golf course. Camp John Hay also has cottages, which are now open to the public.

Mansion House

This place conveys political significance. This imposing and majestic Baguio mansion housed a long line of Philippine presidents and American governors-general. Its ornate iron gate is often open to curious visitors.

Easter Weaving Room

Historically, Episcopalian missionaries have played an important part in educating the native Igorot. You won't be disappointed to visit the Easter Weaving Room. You would admire tattooed tribeswomen as they create the most ornate weaves from the indigenous backstrap looms and other more conventional looms.

Banaue

Our seventh destination is Banaue. Interestingly, the word "Banaue" is derived from the word "Banawor", a nocturnal, swift flying bird that lived in one of the oldest sitios of the town. When the Soaniards occupied the town, they mispronounced Banawor, as Banaue, and the name stuck.

Banaue is politically subdivided into 18 barangays, namely: Amaganad, Anaba, Balawis, Banao, Bangaan, Batad, Bocos, Cambulo, Ducligan, Gohang, Kinakin, Poblacion, Poitan, Pula, San Fernando, Tam-an, Viewpoint and Uhaj.

Because of its high altitude, Banaue is often described as “where land merges with the clouds to meet the heavens, and the rice terraces as “the stairway to the sky.”



Figure 5 Banaue

Banaue is a place for nature adventures and cultural immersion. Days are for indulging in activities such as strolling, biking and trekking. Evenings are for campfire chats at a village or warm indoor cossetting at the lodges and inns.

Tourist Attractions

In Banaue, there are a lot to offer for visitors. We would introduce 14 major attractions that would undeniably impress you during your visit to Banaue.

Banaue Rice Terraces

First, tagged the “Eighth Wonder of the World”, the Banaue Rice Terraces start from the base of the Cordilleras and reach up to several thousand feet high. Its length, if stretched from end to end, could encircle half of the globe. The rice paddies are fed by mountain springs and streams that are channeled into an irrigation canal that runs downhill through the terraces. Make the most of it! This could also be a romantic place for any couples.



Figure 6 Banaue Rice Terraces

Tam-an Village

Tam-an is a small Ifugao village located about 323 steps down from the Banaue Hotel’s swimming pool. Astonishing to see here are the bones of their ancestors bundled, preserved and wrapped in colorful handwoven blankets.

Banaue Museum

This museum is just a few minutes’ walk from the Poblacion junction. It houses artifacts costumes, writings and photos about the Ifugaos and other tribes of the Cordillera region.

Creative Pagan Museum

This second museum houses an extensive collection of Cordilleran sculptures. A beautiful garden with an Ifugao hut can also be seen outside the museum.

Viewpoint

Located on top of a plateau, from here one can take great pictures of the rice terraces from different angles and magnitudes. You may also take the option to trek the terraces from here.

Hapao Rice Terraces

The rice terraces located in Hapao are one of the new extensive centuries-old, stone-walled terraces. It is also believed that the Terrace Culture of the Ifugaos started here.

Poitan Village

Here in this village, you can see the legendary “stone post” protected and idolized by the village people. One can also see the most sacred idol of the Ifugaos – the bulol or “Rice God” – protecting the grains in the granary. Ifugao hut line the mountain slopes in this village.

Guihob Natural Pool

This natural pool is four kilometers from the town proper. You have to hop and jump over huge boulders to reach the crystal clear waters of Guihob. This is the perfect place for those who want to take a refreshing swim.

Batad Rice Terraces

Batad is approximately 16 kilometers from the town proper. Here the amphitheater-like terraces are found. Tattooed men and women can also be seen cultivating their daily staple here. Tattoos are similar to clothing for the locals of this part of Banaue.

Tappiyah Waterfalls

These cascading waterfalls can be found in Batad. The falls has an enormous basin where people can swim. You won't be disappointed with it.



Figure 7 Tappiyah Waterfalls

Banga-an Village

This village is only two kilometers from the junction leading to Batad. One can simply idle his hours away gazing at the village's fascinating environs.

Mayoyao Village

Mayoyao village is located 41 kilometers from Banaue. Its main attraction is its stone-walled rice terraces.

Ducligan Hot Springs

These hot springs are found at the bank of the banaue-Duclian River and adjacent to a deep pool.

Mount Amuyao

This mountain is the 8th highest peak in the Philippines, with an elevation of 2,702 meters above sea level. It is located between the boundary of Banaue and Mayoyao. Its summit provides a climber with a breathtaking panorama of the Mountain Province, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya and Ifugao.

Vigan

Vigan is our eighth recommended destination. It is the capital of Ilocos Sur. Historically, it was established in the 16th century. It is the best preserved example of a planned Spanish colonial town in Asia. Its architecture reflects the coming together of cultural elements from elsewhere in the Philippines and from China with those of Europe to create a unique culture and townscape without parallel anywhere in East and Southeast Asia. It was the seat of the Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia, comprising the whole Northern Luzon, in 1758. It was also once called Ciudad Fernandina in honor of King Ferdinand. It was chartered into a city in 2001. Today, it serves as a mirror of the colorful history of our country. Vigan is one of the five UNESCO World Heritage Sites found in the Philippines.



Figure 8 Vigan

Tourist Attractions

Seven major tourist attractions are generally recommended. These range from natural resources to built attractions. More information are hereby presented.

Calle Crisologo

First to offer in Vigan is Calle Crisologo which is located at the heart of the Mestizo district. This cobblestone street is lined on both sides by centuries-old houses. The ground floors are converted to stores and souvenir shops.

St. Paul's Metropolitan Cathedral

Next is the church that has three naves, altars, and a choir loft. The Augustinians built this majestic church in 1790-1800 in a unique "Earthquake Baroque" architecture. The octagonal belfry is located 10 meters south of the cathedral.

Museo de San Pablo

This museum complex, named in St. Paul's honor, is Vigan City's newest addition to its list of places to see. Situated within the Metropolitan Cathedral, it is committed to conservation through a distinct faith-culture approach.

Arzobispado (Archbishop's Palace)

This is the only surviving 18th century arzobispado in the country, the palace served as headquarters of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo in 1898. Its Museo Neuva Segovia showcases ecclesiastical artifacts gathered from churches all over Ilocos Sur.

Plaza Salcedo

This elevated elliptical plaza west of the cathedral features the 17th century Juan de Salcedo Monument, the oldest of its kind in Northern Luzon.

Burgos National Museum

This ancestral house of Padre Jose Burgos has an excellent exhibit of archeological and ethnographic treasures, antiques and amazing artifacts.

Simbaan a Bassit

At the end of Vigan's Quezon Avenue, you can also see his cemetery chapel. Historian Alberto Lacsamana writes that the "uniqueness of the chapel lies in its being the only one in the region having an espadana hung with bells."

Laoag

This is the ninth destinations of our grand tour to the Philippines. Laoag means light" in the Ilocano dialect. It sits within Ilocos Norte, a province on the region of the Philippines blessed with a rich heritage and a haven of age-old churches that mirror how the Catholic religion's predominance greatly affected the Filipino way of life.



Figure 9 Laoag

Long before the coming of the Spaniards, Laoag and its surrounding provinces have been famous for their gold mines. Merchants from neighboring countries like Japan and China would come to trade gold with beads, ceramic and silk. The people, believed to

be of Malay origin, called their locality “samtoy” or “sao mi toy, which literally meant “our language”.

After the Spanish conquistadores settled in Manila, they moved to other locations they can conquer, in the late 1500's. Juan de Salcedo, Legazpi's grandson, led an expedition to the north with eight armed bots and 45 men at the age of 22.

Salcedo, together with his men, first set foot in Vigan and then moved on to Laoag, Currimao and Badoc. Along the coast where the men sailed, they were amazed to see sheltered coves, or “looc”, where the locals lived. Thus, they named the region, “Ylocos” and its people, “Ylocanos.”

The Spanish conquistadors spread Christianity throughout the region. Tracts of land were utilized to build Churches and bell towers in line with the Spanish mission “bajo las campanas”. These old churches standing on numerous areas of the locality are a remembrance of history and are a reflection of the rich culture that evolved from the Spanish occupation of Laoag.

Today, Laoag is a bustling city with all the creature comforts. Restaurants, fast food chains and grocery stores are located within the city. Telecommunications is not a problem for there are phone lines where one can make both local and international calls. It has an international airport so it is very accessible to all kinds of travelers.

Tourist Attractions

Eight key attractions in Laoag are presented here. These places have a lot to offer which would take your breath away.

Cape Bojeador Lighthouse

Cape Bojeador lighthouse is located 45 kilometers north of Laoag City. It was built in 1892 on a high point of land projecting into the sea. Overlooking the northern portion of the South China Sea, it sends signals to ships passing by the Cape even until today.

Paoay Church

The Paoay Church is also included in the UNESCO World Heritage list. To see this majestic structure with its unusual mix of architectural influences (Gothic, Baroque and Oriental) is an overwhelming experience. The church was constructed during 1704 and was completed in the late 1890s. The coral stone bell tower beside the church was used as an observation post of the Katipuneros during the Philippine Revolution.

St. William's Cathedral

This church was built in 1612 inspired by the Italian Renaissance. It has a two-storey façade held by four pairs of coupled columns. The Augustinians built the church.

Sta. Monica Church

Sitting approximately seven kilometers east of Laoag is the Sta. Monica Church. It was built facing the Sarrat River. This structure was inspired by Neo-Classical and Baroque architecture.

Sinking Bell Tower

One of the must-see attractions in the city of Laoag, the Sinking Bell Tower is located more than 90 meters away from the St. William's Cathedral.

Juan Luna Shrine

The Juan Luna Shrine is located in Badoc. It is a repository of the Luna family memorabilia. The paintings of Juan Luna are exhibited, including a reproduction of the Spoliarium.

Malacanang of the North

Malacanang of the North is situated overlooking the legendary Paoay Lake. It was built as the official residence of the late President Ferdinand Marcos.

Pasuquin Cave

Don't miss to explore the Pasuquin Cave, which is 45 minutes from the town proper through a dirt road. A permit from the mayor's office must be secured before going.

Boracay

Our tenth destination in the Philippines is Boracay, which is the country's most famous destination. Patronized worldwide by beach lovers who've come to just visit, build a home, or set up shop, Boracay has that effect only an incredibly beautiful beach can have on anyone in search of "paradise". Since its earliest revelers found their way to this Visayan island in the late 80's, Boracay has grown tremendously as a beach destination for both locals and foreigners. Today, the three kilometers stretch of White Beach is strewn with luxurious resorts, world-class spas, an array of restaurants and bars with international cuisine, and outdoor shopping establishments that feature the best of the islands. Amid the constant hubbub of Boracay's party scene, it is still possible to wake up to clear skies, sparkling turquoise waters, and the satisfying pleasure of being in one of the best beaches in the country, possibly even in the world.



Figure 10 Boracay

Boracay is found at the northwestern tip of Panay, off the Sibuyan Sea in the Western Visayas region. The island experiences ideal beach weather half the year through, with the months of December to May as its peak season. Between June to November, few tourists make it to Boracay as the rainy season puts a damper on experiencing Boracay's famous beach. With the unpredictability of the weather, rates around the island are understandably lower.

Before becoming a Mecca for beach lovers the world over, Boracay was solely inhabited by the Ati tribe. The name "Boracay" comes from this indigenous people, a derivative of the local word "borac" which means cotton, a reference to the island's white sand. The Atis still live on the island, though in a small, secluded area cut away from the runaway development of their native land.

Boracay is politically a part of the municipality of Malay in Aklan province. The island is made up of three communities: Yapak, Balabag and Manoc-Manoc. Though celebrated for its beaches, Boracay also has hilly areas as well as lush forests.

Tourist Attractions

Boracay's main draw is White Beach, over three kilometers of incomparable powdery fine white sand. This is like heaven for all sealovers. If this isn't enough to provide amusement or recreation, there are a few other places to check out in the island. Ask about the Shell Museum and the Tirol Museum, where visitors can gain a more informed understanding of Boracay. The Department of Tourism office located in D'Mall, Station 2 will be able to provide more options on what to see.

Palawan

As our eventh destination in the Philippines, Palawa is widely known as "The Last Frontier". The archipelago of Palawan is a magnificent world that should be discovered

slowly, feet wriggled into its pristine white sands, and its waters swam in with indulgence. Palawan is the country's largest province, spanning 1.5 million hectares. Bounded by irregular coastlines of fine white sand, its interior thrives with lush virgin forests and incredible wildlife. Palawan is the most well preserved major island group in the Philippines. The rain forest, caves, coral reefs, mangroves, beaches and clear blue waters are its best assets. One has to go around the islands of Palawan to see how its people and the local government's conservation efforts have born fruit.

Palawan consists of about 1,769 islands: the Calamian Island group to the north, the Cuyo islands group to the northwest, and the Balacbac-Bugsak group to the southwest. Scuba diving is spectacular because of its crystal clear blue-green waters teeming with the marine life. Fall in love with the majestic hawksbill and green sea turtles, the delightful dugong or sea cows, and plenty of species of dolphins, whales, sharks and manta rays. Above water, there are many species unique to the place, like the Palawan bear cat, Palawan mongoose, Palawan peacock pheasant, fish-eating Palawan eagle, king cobra, and many rare species of parrots and butterflies. Other delightful creatures like the Calamian deer or the large Monitor lizards also thrive here.



Figure 11 Palawan

Lustrous pearls of every shape and size are plentiful in Palawan. And all over El Nido, Coron and Pabellones Islands are swallows' nests, costing up to US\$3,000/kg., which

are harvested as the main ingredient of the expensive Chinese delicacy, bird's nest soup.

Palawan has actually been called the "island of the gods" and it is not without reason, the spectacular sea and landscapes of Palawan; especially at El Nido, gives the impression of seeing heaven's beauty on earth. Acknowledged as the Philippines' last frontier, Palawan is a must see for the traveller who appreciates the majesty and splendour of nature.

Tourist Attractions

There are quite a number of tourist attractions to visit in Palawan. Some selected attractions are presented as follows:

Tubbataha Reef

This is the Philippines' first national marine park, and now a World Heritage Site protected by the UNESCO. The abundance of marine flora and fauna in this 33,200-hectare reef rivals that of most sites because of the wealth of unique species found only here. Mega fauna like whales, whale sharks, hammerhead sharks and manta rays can be seen during its peak seasons (April-June). Visitors will need a live-in boat to explore the wonders of this marine world, located in the Sulu Sea, cradled between the Palawan and Visayas island. It takes 12 hours of calm sailing to reach Tubbataha from Palawan. But visitors will need an entry permit issued by the Tubbataha Management Office before they can enter the park.

Puerto Princesa Subterranean National River Park (St. Paul Underground River)

This is another of Palawan's World Heritage Sites. It is the world's longest underground river, located underneath St. Paul Mountain. A stalagmite formation of a lion seems to guard the place. Visitors can travel underneath by means of a banca and marvel at the features above them on the mountain's roof above them.

Honda Bay

Honda Bay is just 30 minutes from Puerto Pinesa. You can take a boat and beach hop the dozens of beaches on the islets that dot the bay. You can enjoy swimming, snorkelling, diving or just relaxing on the beach amidst the clear waters and fine sand. The panoramic view would surely leave a lingering impression on the visitor. Honda Bay is a host of beautiful islands like Snake Island (named because of the winding strip of sandbar), Starfish Island and Pandan Island.

Ulugan Bay

At Ulugan Bay, you can enjoy a sightseeing spree and get to see mangrove farms at Bahile river and spectacular islands with towering milestone cliffs; travel by means of paraw (Filipino boat) and see the Kaluyo Falls; snorkel or dive to view the bay's magnificent marine creatures; or go spelunking inside Ugong Rock, which is dotted with dozens of amazing caves.

Ursula Island

The islet of Ursula is approximately 20 kms. Off Brooke's Point in southern Palawan, about an hour by boat from Rio Tuba, Bataraza. The vegetation is made up of old growth lowland forest with moderate undergrowth, consisting mostly of tree saplings and seedlings. Fishermen frequent the island and there are numerous trails to wells dug in the interior and some small nipa huts. Ursula has been promoted in the past as an ecotourism destination, but it is apparently not visited by many tourists at present. Ursula Island is also notable for the bird sanctuary. This is a place not to miss, especially for nature-lovers.

Kayangan Lake

Kayangan Lake is located at Coron Island, Northern Palawan, and it is said to be the cleanest lake in the Philippines. Sometimes called the Blue Lagoon, this freshwater lagoon is amidst sheer limestone cliffs. This beautiful picture-perfect scenery can be seen after a walk up a mountain trail. Watch out for your camera memory!



Figure 12 Kayangan Lake

Tigman Beach, Aborlan

Tigman is Aborlan's famous beach with several resorts. The beach has potential for resort development or a private beach resort. It is also a good place for private retirement villas. This is where you can enjoy the beauty of nature and tranquility.

Malun-Ao Island

At Malun-Ao island, mangrove forests and fish sanctuaries can be found here. The common fishing grounds are located at the island. Popular fishing methods at the municipal level include nets, deep and shallow fish corrals, fish cage, haul seine, and other traditional methods. Major fish species caught are anchovy, mackerels and tuna, minor species include crabs, lobsters, shrimps and clams.

Sombrero Island

This is one of the most popular diving sites of Philippines. The island is also considered as a marine sanctuary preserved to protect aquatic animals. Enjoy the underwater world.

Mangit Cave

The cave has spectacular formations around its interior. Mangit cave is named after its smell, Tagbanua term "mângit" which means an "unpleasant odor" lies on the mountainous part of Barangay Apurawan at upper portion of Barangay Sagpangan. Bats are the inhabitant of this cave. This was used by natives long time ago as storage for their harvested kaingin rice.

Tabuan (market day)

This is where people from Aborlan do their market day on Sundays when vast produce like bamboo, rattan and batad handicrafts are up for sale. Enjoy your shopping!

Cabigaan

Cabigaan is the area in which the indigenous people of Tagbanua reside. In December, they have a Thanksgiving ritual during the full moon, with the runsay (healing ritual) coinciding on the same day. Another interesting way of life in Philippines!

Busuanga Island

Busuanga Island is another famous island with white beaches and clear blue skies. Busuanga Island is the largest island in the Calamian Group in the province of Palawan in the Philippines. The Island is, in fact, the second largest in the province after Palawan island itself. The island is located halfway between the islands of Mindoro and Palawan with the South China Sea located to the west and the Sulu Sea to the southeast.

In the south of the island, there are the two other major islands of the Calamian Group: Culion Island and Coron Island. The western third of the island is under the municipality of Busuanga and the eastern two-thirds belong to the municipality of Coron.

Busuanga Island is mainly known as a diving location due to the twelve World War II Japanese wrecks that were sunk by American navy bombings in Coron Bay, a natural anchorage near the town center of Coron, on September 24, 1944. This is another spectacular site for all divers.

Calauit Island

Calauit Island is actually known as a sanctuary for African wildlife such as giraffes and zebras; visitors will ride a well protected jeepney, which meanders through the park.

The 3700 hectare large Calauit Island is the sanctuary of African and Palawan wildlife threatened with extinction. Calauit was decreed a game preserve and wildlife sanctuary in August 1976 by then President Ferdinand E. Marcos. It was the late President's response to an earlier appeal made for Kenya by the International Union of Conservation of Nature to help save African animals caught in the midst of civil strife.

Today giraffes, zebras and impalas live together with rare animals like bear cats, Calamian deer, mousedeer and Palawan peacocks, which are endemic to Palawan. The aviary is a recent addition. A guide drives visitors around the national park in a specially designed jeep for a reasonable price.

Coron Island

Here at Coron Island, mangroves and beautiful reefs are home to spectacular varieties of marine flora and fauna. Don't miss towering limestone cliffs and hidden lagoons!

Culion Island

The island has great attractions like rollicking mountains and hills, mangrove forests, and bays where dugongs (sea cows) munch sea grass all day.

Bacuit Bay

Found in El Nido, Bacuit Bay has a collection of 45 islands, each with its own secret lagoons and beaches, virgin forests, limestone cliffs and caves.

Bulalacao Falls

Here, visitors will get to hike through rice paddies and dense forestation along mountain slopes to get to the falls, located in Baranggay Pasadena. It would be helpful to get a

professional tour guide who will guide you through the place. Please note that visitors are usually not allowed to enter here during the rainy season in August to October.

Caalan Beach

Caalan Beach is another recommended place for visitors. From the cottages situated here, all visitors can get a full view of the most divine sunsets.

Cadlao Island

Cadlao is an island in Bacuit Bay. White sand beaches, lagoons, dense forests and mangroves abound here. Trekkers will enjoy nature trails throughout the island. This is a must-go destination for ecotourists.

Lagen Island

This island destination is for those of the more expensive taste. Its resort offers luxurious facilities and services. Come for great snorkeling and kayaking!

Malapaco Island

There is a secret lagoon here at Malapaco Island. To reach this beautiful and exotic place, moor your boat through the gap nearby, and then swim through the gap between rocks. A place to keep fit, I shall say!

Paglunagan or Shimizu Island

Just a few feet from the shore of Paglunagan Island are coral beds and varieties of marine life waiting to be seen. Snorkeling is spectacular here. This is the uniqueness of Paglunagan island where visitors can have their own private get away with no boats in sight and with the white beach.

Seven Commandos and Ipil Point Beaches

These two beaches are popular destinations for sunset dinners. Packed lunches may also be taken here during the island-hopping trips. These wonderful beaches are very ideal for water sports lovers as well as honeymoon couples seeking for romantic atmosphere.

Tapiutan Island

Tapiutan Island has an excellent beach for snorkelling and, on the southern tip, one of the best spots for diving complete with rock fissures and tunnels. Grouper, turtles and barracuda are common in this area. For visitors who tire of the ocean, there are opportunities and good reasons to explore inland. The jungle and swamps remain largely undeveloped, and are home to more than 100 species of birds and twelve species of mammals. This is another attraction suitable for ecotourists.

Rasa Island

If you like cockatoos, this is the place for you, where hundreds of the yellow-crowned birds fly and perch. Other varieties of birds are the Black-Naped Oriole, the Kilit-kilit or Blue-Headed Racket Tail and the white Vintage Shama.

Arena Island

Arena Island, 89 km northeast of the Tubbataha reefs and Cavili close by are small coral islets and sand cays with fringing reefs. Arena Island also has a lighthouse and seaweed farms. Crystal Clear waters make for great snorkeling and diving.

Tabon Cave

Tabon Cave is also known as the "Cradle of the Philippine Civilization" because of the discovery of the Tabon Man (Homo Sapiens species 22,000-24,000 years old) in limestone cliff-clad Lipuun Point or Tabon Cave complex. Around here are several other islands to choose from which are beautifully isolated.

Tumarbong Falls

You must go through a forest trail that will lead you to the Tumarbong River. Following the river, you will be led to his awe-inspiring falls, which is the habitat for a variety of birds, and other flora and fauna.

Little Baguio Waterfall

Because of its cool atmosphere and inviting waters, Little Baguio waterfall is a good place to take a dip and wash off the day's worries.

New Agutaya Beach

New Agutaya is the longest beach shore in the Philippines at 14 kilometers with beautiful flawless and white sand. The beach is said to be similar to Boracay 25 years ago, where it is not tainted with endless noise, Bar flies, Drugs and Red light district.

Lake Danao

Lake Danao is a freshwater lake located in Pacijan Island, the largest island in the Camotes Islands group. Lake Danao is the largest and the only lake in Palawan mainland. It is shaped like a figure eight near the northern half of the island. Mangrove trees, fire trees, coconut palms are the dominant vegetation that outline its shores. There is also an islet, called Daan Lungsod, in the middle of the lake which is a natural attraction. Enjoy the spectacular views!

Malampaya Sound

Malampaya Sound is part of the sea where a heavy concentration of natural gas was discovered. It is home to two species of dolphins: the Bottle-nose and the Irrawady dolphins, as well as thousands of other marine species.

Pabellones Islands

Pabellones Islands are a group of three islands with awesome limestone cliffs, on the sides of which are the expensive swallow's nests that are the main ingredient in the Chinese delicacy bird's nest soup.

Cebu

Cebu is our twelfth destination. It is the fastest growing metropolis outside of Metro Manila. Located in the middle of the Visayas, the island is a commercial hub that contains the country's second international airport, which is the most important transport

facility in the Visayas and Mindanao. Cebu is also a center of the shipping industry, with 80% of the country's shipping industry based in this "Queen City."

Although known popularly as cosmopolitan arena for business and industry, Cebu is also known to offer travelers a great escape from city life. The province is replete with white-sand beaches that never fail to attract tourists and locals alike. Neighboring islands are a popular destination for beach-lovers, and the nearby island of Mactan is a favorite among people who want to experience the sun and surf without going too far away from the city. The mountains are equally distant from the city, and Cebu has a host of lookout points and bars that offer a fantastic view.



Figure 13 Cebu

Cebu was historically discovered by Ferdinand Magellan who, having sailed into the harbor of Mactan, was slain by Lapu-Lapu, the chieftain of Mactan Island. Years later, the Spanish conquistadors returned and established it as the seat of Christianity in the Philippines. What once was a fishing village and busy trading port in 1521 has evolved into a highly urbanized metropolitan center which now serves as a focal point of growth

and development in southern Philippines. Up until today, Cebu is still referred to as the “Queen City of the South”.

English as well as Filipino. Cebuanos can be quite friendly and hospitable, but most are known to be very economical in their spending. The weather in Cebu is best from December to May, when it isn't wet or too hot. The coolest period is from December to February, the hottest from March until May.

Tourist Attractions

Cebu's most popular tourist attraction is Magellan's Cross and its information is listed below.

Magellan's Cross

Being the cradle of Christianity in the country, the kiosk behind the Sto Nino Basilica in downtown Cebu enshrines the famed cross that made believers of the Filipinos. It is a historical landmark that serves as a reminder of the power and persuasiveness of the Catholic Church in the Philippines.

Still in downtown Cebu is Fort San Pedro, another historical landmark that showcases Spanish memorabilia left over from the Spanish colonial period. It was once a bulwark of Spain's power in Cebu. Today it serves as a vestige of past colonial command. Because the Spaniards were the most enduring colonizers in the Philippines history, it is their influence that is most apparent in society. Casa Gorordo is a testament to Spanish cultural influence, being a museum of artifacts of old that have carried over into centuries of use and adoption. This house-turned-museum gives a glimpse of life during heavy Spanish influence.



Figure 14 Fort San Pedro

Here, people are quickly realizing that Cebu's best beaches are actually three hours away from Cebu City and are found in Bantayan and Malapascua islands. Both beachfronts still carry a virgin quality that appeals to many a traveler, and so in recent years they have ironically been subjected to progress and development. Located north of Cebu, these neighboring paradise getaways have but a few resorts just yet, which nonetheless attract a bevy of beachcombers and vacationers.

Bohol

Bohol is the thirteenth destination to recommend by us. It is situated in the central portion of Northern Visayas, and the island province of Bohol is the tenth largest in the country. On the northwest of this oval-shaped province is Cebu, while on the northeast is Leyte. Bohol has 73 smaller offshore islands aside from the mainland, and this assures a remarkable retreat that nature has to offer.

Bohol is 700 kilometers directly south of Manila, and is an island popular for its tropical waters and dive sites. The name Bohol is believed to be derived from Bo-ol, a barangay located in Tagbilaran City. Bohol was among the first places toured by Magellan's expedition. According to history books, "the Concepcion", one of Magellan's ships, was burned in this province after Magellan was killed by Lapu-Lapu in Mactan.



Figure 15 Bohol

Miguel Lopez de Legazpi made his way to Jagna, east of Bohol and made a blood compact with Sikatuna and Sigala, signifying them as blood brothers. Bohol then was a part of the province of Cebu and was known as “the rsidencia”.

Before the Spanish conquistadors settled, Boholanos had exhibited a culture that was uniquely their own. Artifacts, with designs influenced by the Ming Dynasty, were found as proof of the thriving culture in areas such as Mansasa, Dauis, and Panglao. There were also traces that the early inhabitants already had a system of writing. Unfortunately materials used were leaves and bamboos, which easily perished.

Now Bohol is a tropical paradise that tourists long to experience. From its rich heritage to its splendid surroundings, it is an awesome destination showcasing picturesque islands and wonders of nature.

Tourist Attractions

A numbers of key tourist attractions in Bohol are presented here. These would give you more ideas of your trip plan when visiting Bohol of the Philippines.

Chocolate Hills

Another natural beauty, Chocolate Hills is located in barangay Buenos Aires, town of Carmen, 55 kilometers from Tagbilaran City. It has 1,268 nearly perfect cone-shaped hills, with two of the hills developed into a resort.

Tarsier encounters

The tarsier, otherwise known as the midget monkey, is found within Bohol in the town of Corella. It is considered as the smallest primate in the world. It has huge round eyes. The tarsier measures 4 to 5 inches with a tail that is longer than its body. This is a must for animal-lovers!

Loboc River

Located 21 kilometers from Tagbilaran City, a boat cruise along the Loboc River exhibits an exciting boat ride along palm-fringed banks and serene waters, from Loay Bridge, its outlet. The boat ride ends at Tontonan falls. Enjoy cruising along the river!

Panglao Island

Panglao island boasts of pristine white beaches, almost equal to that of Boracay Island. It has been targeted to be the site of world-class resorts for Bohol.

Badiang Spring

Badiang Spring is located in the town of Valencia, 44 kilometers away from the city. The volume of water that gushes from twin pipes makes the place fascinating. People from neighboring towns usually come to this unique bathing place during weekends, where the bathers choose from among the swimming pool, the waterfalls and the beach, all situated in one place.

Blood Compact Site

Located in Tagbilaran City of Bohol District, Blood Compact Site is a marker which commemorates the spot where Datu Sikatuna, a native chieftain, forged a blood compact with Don Miguel Lopez de Legazpi, representing the King of Spain, for the

purpose of fostering firmly relations between the two countries. The blood compact on March 16, 1565 is considered as the first Treaty of Friendship between the Filipinos and the Spaniards.

Camiguin

The fourteenth destination to recommend in this guidebook is the island of Camiguin. It is said to be “born of fire”, pertaining to the seven volcanoes located on this 238 sq.km. patch of land that sits across the provinces of Misamis Oriental and Cagayan de Oro. In 1953, Mt. Hibok-Hibok erupted violently enough to spew both lava and land that later cooled down to form an extended part of the province. A circumferential road now runs through the entire land, embracing the parts that created the “underwater cemetery” and forming underwater canyon now inhabited by a wealth of marine life.



Figure 16 Camiguin

Camiguin is an island where nature runs aplenty. It boasts an impressive list of tourist attractions and activities, and it is an inviting escape for a nature lover who can trek to waterfalls, bike to springs (hot and cold), lounge on a sand bar, dive, climb, and just breathe in the fresh mountain air.

The entire island is inhabited by about 80,000 people, and it takes just one and a half hours to go around the island on a well-paved road that takes you from architectural relics rife with history to lush clearings facing the open sea. Small and developed just enough to be comfortable, Camiguin could very well be the perfect island to travel to for a few days of adventure and exploration.

Tourist Attractions

Some major tourist attractions in Camiguin are introduced here to give you some ideas of how best to spend your holiday to Camiguin.

White Island

This is an uninhabited strip of white sand just a few kilometers away from Camiguin. It's best to go early in the morning as there is little shade on this solitary islet. Mostly everybody makes their way to this sand strip instead.

Katibawasan Falls

Katibawasan is a resplendent 60 meter waterfall, with a pool good for lounging around nature. Enjoy photograph-taking, swimming and sightseeing at the Falls!

Ardent Hot Springs

This natural hot tub is more defined by the activities that go on around it. The hot spring itself encompasses only a small area while its surroundings play host to concerts, cockouts, and campouts. A resort sits beside it.

Mount Hibok-Hibok

Mount Hibok-Hibok is the tallest mountain in the province. It remains as one of Camiguin's active volcanoes. Its scenic beauty will surely take your breath away.

Sto. Nino Cold Springs

The Sto. Nino cold spring is a bubbling pool of refreshing water that draws in crowds. There is also the commercial setup around it (karaoke joint, shops, and resorts), which would make your trip more enjoyable.

Underwater Cemetery

Underwater cemetery is seen as a highlight of Camiguin. The cemetery became a watery graveyard in 1871 when the Old Volcano on the island erupted and changed the landscape. A white cross juts out from the sea, a mere replica of the original that is actually farther out and completely submerged.

Moro Watchtower

This is a former lookout point for Muslim crusaders who reportedly invaded Camiguin repeatedly to take its women. The watchtower was more massive in size, as women and children took refuge there while the men battled against the pirates. Now only a small section is left as a huge part of the watchtower was torn down to make way for the school that now surrounds the relic.

Enigmata Art Gallery

This eclectic, eccentric art gallery cum guesthouse adds much character to the island. Filled with curios fashioned from the most improbable materials, this art house is a veritable gathering place for the creative energies that run through the island. Those who appreciate arts should not miss it!

Soda Water

Pool filled with fresh, clean, sparkling water, the Soda Water pool is surrounded by mountains and is a refreshing stop that's cut away from the main road.

Mantigue Island

Final to recommend in Camiguin is Mantigue Island. It is a four hectare white sand islet with a forest in the middle. It is four kilometers away from Barangay Mahinog, a popular dive spot.

Davao

Our fifteenth and final to recommend in this guidebook for Philippines is Davao. Davao probably derives its name from the ancient Bagobo word “daba-daba” or fire, which the tribe used for its rituals. The Tagabua tribe, on the other hand, called the river bisecting the region “Daba” and the Guiangan tribe, “Davoh”. Situated in the typhoon-free southern area of the Philippines, Davao is a diverse sights, sounds and tastes. It is a melting pot of both immigrant and highland cultures that blend in a colorful, exciting tapestry of ethnic heritage and modern lifestyles.

Davao is the most progressive city in Mindanao and is the center of economic activity in Southern Philippines. It is now a fast emerging gateway to the evolving East ASEAN Growth Area including Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and Malaysia – a re-emergence of trade cooperation by the four countries during the 17th century.



Figure 17 Davao

Davao is one of those places where urban relaxation is possible. It has wide, well-lit streets, beautiful buildings, great resorts, the friendliest people and the freshest fruits, vegetables, and the day's catch from the sea. While you find malls, five-star hotel and nightlife, you can still feel an almost pastoral ambience due to the wildflowers, long blades of grass, beaches and towering Mt. Apo.

Indeed, Davao is touted as one of the most beautiful cities in Asia. From an airplane at night, it looks like an inverted universe with its billion dancing lights shining from wide, well-lit structures, streets and establishments.

Tourist Attractions

Some major tourist attractions are introduced here to help you with travel information when visiting Davao.

Davao Museum

Davao Museum is located at the Insular Village in Lanang. It is a repository of tribal art, costumes, jewelry, handicrafts and others. Paintings, sculptures, and ceramics are also exhibited.

Eden Nature Park & Resort

As you may notice by its name, Eden Nature Park and Resort is recognized as a mountain paradise where one can commune with nature. This place has numerous recreational activities for visitors and a restaurant located in the mountains. Guests can stay in mountain cabins and camping sites.

Samal Island

Nestled within the cradle of Davao and the sea is the island garden of Samal. In the past, Samal Island housed the Aguinaldo Pearl Farm where cultured pearls were created using the latest Japanese technology. In its place now is the exclusive Pearl

farm Resort with a row of beautifully crafted nipa huts, some of which are two to three stories high. The Samal houses are elevated from the water by the use of stilts so you can easily go down from the house and snorkel in the crystal clear waters with a variety of marine life. Another attraction is the Mandaya Tribe. Usually two women and kids from this tribe spin the cloth that made them famous.

Malipano Island

Here you get a spectacular sunset touching the waters and white sand with the red and gold of the sun. You can kayak to and from here, and it has seven spacious villas that are three storeys high, built and designed with an old Spanish era theme.

T'boli Weaving Center

T' boli Weaving Center is located at the Waterfront Hotel. Famous products here are woven materials like the yakan cloths and those woven by the Mandaya tribe and other T'boli handicrafts like traditional wedding hats, bamboo paper clips, and table mats and coasters made from abaca fabric. Watch out for big spenders!

Dabaw Etnika

It is located inside the Insular Hotel. Mandaya women weave their cloths which are not only made into clothes but also into table decorations, bags, beadwork jewelry, belts and other accessories. Great souvenir shopping!

Philippine Eagle Camp

This well-maintained camp is a sanctuary for the Philippine Eagle and other animals native to the Philippines. Great day out for family tour groups!

Puentspina Orchid Garden

A variety of flowers, especially the orchid, cattleya, ylang-ylang and waling-waling (Vanda Sanderiana for the purebred) can be seen and chosen at this garden. Puentspina gives pamphlets on how to grow orchids, and is open Monday to Saturday. If the purchase is above P500, a free box will be provided.

Lola Abon's Durian Factory and Mindanao Industrial Confectionery

These are factories south of Davao City where you can watch durian fruits being processed into jams, candies, and other processed products.

Lon Wa Temple

It is a Chinese Temple which is only four kilometers from the airport where the Buddha with the Thousand Hands inside this golden marbled pavilion can be seen. The tourists may also opt to have fortune read by the monks from the paper that can be picked from the incense sticks.

Talikud Island

Near Samal Island, Talikud Island has beautiful beaches where visitors can enjoy snorkeling/diving. Caves with resident snakes and bats can also be found.

Tagum

Various places of interest can be seen in Tagum. At the Dalisay Village, there is a citrus plantation, with exotic orchids and other plants, a Japanese tea house, and modern sports facilities.

The Davao Penal Colony was once a World War II concentration camp for war prisoners. Now, it was turned into a plantation for rubber, cacao and abaca, and a botanical garden and a zoo, which are maintained by the inmates. Visitors can also buy a variety of wood carvings and stay in the guesthouses. In addition, visitors can swim at the famed white sand beach at Carmen.

Northwest of Tagum, visitors can go to Tibi-tibi in Kapalong where there are hanging bridges and waterfalls, and native tribes of the Matigsalug, Talaingod and Langilan. Lake Ampawid in Asuncion has great marble quarries and banana plantations.

Southeast of Tagum are waterfalls, the Mainit Hot Spring National Park near Mabini and the Tagnanan Beach with its white sand. Mabini has the Maputi hot Springs, the Cawacawa Waterfalls and the darkly mysterious Masara Mines. At the Nabunturan area, the endangered Philippine Crocodile is claimed to swim.

We hope this informative guide to Philippines is useful to those who may be interested in visiting the Philippines. Time and tide wait for no man, it is a great destination and you will absolutely enjoy it! Come and share the same perfect experience with us soon.

Appendix B Confirmation Letters

Appendix C The meeting's pictures

Pictures







Appendix D Curriculum Vitae

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Date of Birth : 23 June 1958
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Education

1985-1988 Doctor of Public Administration
 Centro Escollar University,
 Manila, Philippines
 1984-1985 Master of Arts (Management)
 Centro Escollar University,
 Manila, Philippines
 1979-1982 Bachelor of Arts (English)
 Ramkamhaeng University,
 Bangkok, Thailand

Experience

2007-Present Vice President of Student Affair
 Phuket Rajabhat University, Muang
 Phuket 83000
 1992-2006 Head of Tourism Department
 Phuket Rajabhat University, Muang
 Phuket 83000
 Director of Tourist's Guide Training Program
 Under the Supervision of TAT.

Teaching :

Tourist Guide

Organization and Management

Tourism Industry

Organization Behavior

Human Resource Management

Eco-tourism Management

2004	Coordinator of the Research Project in the Southern Thailand under the Supervision of Higher Education Council
1998-2002	Vice President of Student Affair
1995-1998	Dean of Management Science Faculty, Rajabhat Institute Phuket, Phuket 83000
1993-1995	Head of Management Science Faculty, Teacher College, Phuket 83000

Observation and Training

- Participate in the seminar of TQM: Total Quality Management at Wolfverhamton, London, England, 1996
- Observing Tourism of project of cooperation between Phuket Rajabhat University and Edith Cowan, South Australia, 2003
- Observing sustainable tourism development a project of cooperation with the Khong River Group in Chiang Rai, Vietnam, 2004
- Training 6 foreign language guide classes together with Tourism Authority of Thailand
- Training 7 Coastal guide classes together with Tourism Authority of Thailand
- Training 5 specialty guide classes together with Tourism Authority of Thailand

Writing Books

- Principles of guiding
- Human Resource Management

- Organization and Management

Research

- A study of the attitude of foreign tourists to the tourism industry in Phuket
- A Study of the extent of the participation of the community at Koh Prathong, Kuraburi district, Phang-nga Province
- A Study of the effectiveness of transportation systems including regular bus services and charter bus services
- Service Quality Development Project of Human Resource and Partnership for the Development the Art and Cultural Tourism in Andaman Sea Region : Phuket, Pang-nga and Krabi
- ASEAN Image Positioning: The case study of the Philippines (in process)