

# TPB spotlight

E - B U L L E T I N

Tourism Promotions Board Philippines

AUGUST 2021

## ALL SET FOR PHITEX 2021: BEYOND BUSINESS



The Philippine Travel Exchange or PHITEX has always been one of the biggest events organized yearly by the Tourism Promotions Board. Since it was established in 1996, PHITEX has gathered international buyers for face-to-face tabletop business appointments with Philippine sellers and to experience Philippine destinations with the goal to increase tourist arrivals. But when the COVID-19 pandemic happened, questions emerged as to its annual implementation.

Despite the threat of the pandemic, the TPB went on to stage PHITEX 2020 in Panglao, Bohol but as a hybrid event for the first time. "Business UnUsual" became the running theme given the scenario that combined virtual sessions with in-person transactions.

The business-to-business (B2B) sessions, which saw the participation of 161 Philippine sellers and 121 foreign buyers from 34 countries,

generated 1,205 leads including 76 actual onsite bookings equating to over Php 42M in projected revenues.

For 2021, the TPB will hold PHITEX as a hybrid event once again in light of the ongoing pandemic with ACEA Subic Beach Resort in the Subic Bay Freeport Zone as the new venue for the online B2B sessions and networking.

This year's theme is "Beyond Business" to highlight safe, smart, and sustainable tourism as a vital element in TPB's strategic marketing plan for the new normal.

"Last year's Phitex was about pivoting as we had to face the challenges of going hybrid and leveraging on technology more than ever to conduct our business. Thankfully, it was a resounding success, so we are very much excited to pick up where we left off but with a clearer perspective this time around because we are no longer adjusting. We are about moving forward and making significant

decisions that will create a better normal for the industry," TPB Chief Operating Officer Maria Anthonette Velasco-Allones said.

PHITEX 2021 is scheduled on September 19-23. Participation is on a pre-registration and first-come-served basis and as of this writing, 149 Philippines sellers have registered.

Meanwhile, buyer registration and screening are still ongoing, but buyers from 25 countries have expressed interest.

Aside from B2B, an educational seminar will be held prior to the actual event to update Philippine sellers on sustainable tourism initiatives and technological innovations. Post-tours will also take place to further promote the tourism destinations of Subic Bay and Region III.

For more information about the event, visit the official website at <http://www.phitex.ph>.



## New partnerships and new flights – DOT Taiwan marches programs ahead to the new normal

### Onward we go!

This is the overarching theme based on the latest accomplishment report presented by the Philippine Department of Tourism (DOT) in Taiwan. Apart from sustaining market visibility, the report includes programs that aim to position the Philippines as a safe and fun destination for the Taiwanese travelers to consider given its advantageous proximity and newly-launched flights connecting Taipei and Manila.

Let's take a look at these programs laid down by Tourism Attaché Dr. Hazel V. Habito Javier:

### WHAT'S BEEN DONE

#### TRAVELTHRU app launch

DOT Taipei launched TRAVELTHRU, the newest online travel app made to showcase the latest Philippine tourism products. Around 90 properties in Manila, Bohol, Boracay, Cebu, Palawan (Puerto Princesa, Coron, and El Nido) and other top Philippine destinations are already on board with products including golf tours, leisure and beach holidays, and others to be included soon. To date, there are 1,700 travel agents and counting registered in the said application.

#### Product Presentations

The tourism office presented the latest Philippine products and new normal safety protocols on March 23, 2021 with the support of the Taipei Association of Travel Agents (TATA). Another presentation was scheduled in Taoyuan on April 14, 2021. Meanwhile, a comprehensive product presentation to wholesaler agents was held virtually on August 12, 18 and 19, 2021.

#### Taipei-Clark Travel Bubble

In collaboration with Tigerair Taiwan and Taiwan Basketball Association, DOT Taipei helped in mounting the travel bubble from Taipei to Clark for the FIBA Asia Qualifier Cup on June 13-21, 2021.

#### Davao Promotions

Since December 2020, Davao has been promoted as the newest destination for the Taiwanese market through various marketing initiatives such as the development of destination brochures, OOH advertisement in MRT stations, train cars and billboards, as well as online advertisements, press releases, newspaper advertorials and travel magazine coverage.

#### Starlux Airlines Launch of Taipei-Manila flights

DOT Taiwan also supported the launching of Starlux Airlines' newest route, Taipei-Manila, which commenced its inaugural flight last July 8, 2021. This is a welcome move as it provides travel service to people commuting between the countries for work purposes. In the long run, this new route will cater to tourists bound for the Philippines post-pandemic. Currently, Starlux Airlines operates two flights per week.

#### Promotion of Philippine Cuisine

In June 2021, the tourism office uploaded three new episodes promoting Filipino cuisines in partnership with one of the leading Taiwanese media/travel influencers, Danny Wen, on its official YouTube Channel and Facebook page.





## Academic Institution Partnerships

DOT Taipei was instrumental in the partnership forged between Fooyin University in Kaohsiung and the Trinity University of Asia. Through this initiative, both universities will discuss various opportunities for students and professors/staff including ESL, health and wellness, internship and more. An ocular visit will be conducted by both parties in the Philippines and Taiwan post-pandemic.

## Online Promotions

To sustain the Philippine visibility in the market, DOT Taipei ramped up its digital efforts through its official Facebook and YouTube accounts. Apart from two online consumer events on Facebook, it also promoted Philippine tourism products with TATA during a Facebook Live event last August 4, 2021.

## Networking with ESL and Dive agents

Just recently, DOT Taiwan organized a networking meeting with ESL agents and another one will be held with dive agents to get updates and efforts relative to these programs and promotions as well as develop potential collaborations to strengthen the market's awareness in preparation for future tourism activities after the pandemic.

## Participation in the Taiwan Philippine Knowledge Exchange and Future Prospects on Indigenous Knowledge and Sustainable Development Tourism Online Forum

On August 24, 2021, Tourism Attaché Javier was invited as one of the panelists on the online forum organized by the Science and Technology Innovation Center for Taiwan Philippines Indigenous Knowledge, Local Knowledge and Sustainable Studies.

## WHAT'S NEXT

### Ongoing

DOT-Taiwan is currently facilitating a new partnership between the University of Taipei and another Philippine academic institution.

## Product Presentations / Roadshow

### September – November 2021

Central and Southern Taiwan\*

\*Due to the soft lockdown implemented in May 2021, the presentation to the seven cities (have yet to be identified) in Central and Southern Taiwan was rescheduled for these dates.

## Participation in Consumer Travel Fairs

October 22-25, 2021	Taichung International Travel Fair
November 5-8, 2021	Taipei International Travel Fair
November 26-29, 2021	Taipei Travel Expo Kaohsiung International



## Tactical Campaigns

### 2021 4th Quarter

Taipei City

### Philippine Culinary Promotions

This project will feature the best Philippine dishes and drinks through a pop-up Jeepney-inspired food cart promoted through online advertisements.

To know more about DOT-Taiwan's programs, visit:  
[www.itsmorefuninthephilippines.com.tw](http://www.itsmorefuninthephilippines.com.tw)

Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/itsmorefuninthePhilippines.tw](https://www.facebook.com/itsmorefuninthePhilippines.tw)



# TOURISM IMPACT ON THE COUNTRY: REVISITING FOUNDATIONS AND STRENGTHENING RECOVERY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

**T**he latest August Weekly Chat session of the Tourism Promotions Board featured speakers from the academe and other government agencies, tourism stakeholders, and the medical sector who shared their perspectives on the significance of the tourism industry in the country.

The presentation of Mr. Gerald Junne L. Clarino, Chief Statistical Specialist of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), highlighted the importance of collecting relevant information for the tourism industry and how its revenue contributes to the Philippine economy. Atty. Reynaldo L. Ching, Officer-in-Charge for the Administration and Finance of the Department of Tourism, on the other hand, discussed the role of the national government in tourism building and support.

Meanwhile, Dr. Maricel G. Gatchalian-Badilla, Associate Professor of the University of the Philippines – Asian Institute of Tourism (UP AIT), shared tourism research findings and explained the role of the academe and the use of technology in tourism recovery. Supporting this, Mr. Allen A. Vasquez, President of Rakso Computer Technology, Inc., detailed the key areas, such as e-commerce, where technology can help tourism businesses succeed.

*“When the pandemic started we were thinking, how do we increase the confidence of our tourism establishments? So we thought about showing them through the video and through social media the readiness of our destinations.”*

— Ms. Marie Elaine C. Unchuan  
Regional Director  
Department of Tourism – Region X



*“We have to seize the moment right now to prepare. Prepare all our digital assets, our channels, our solutions, our platforms coming into this surge, in customers, surge in tourists.”*

— Mr. Allen A. Vasquez  
President, Rakso CT



*“We believe that in the direction towards normal, the first step is by having herd immunity. So we are actually very supportive of the vaccination, and currently more than 95% of our employees are already vaccinated.”*

— Ms. Malu A. Arriola  
PR and Guest Experience Manager  
Costabella Tropical Beach Hotel



*“We cannot just say that we have put safety protocols in place, but rather, we have to show it. How often are the tables and chairs disinfected? How often do the doorknobs and the handrails once touched, disinfected right away?”*

— Dr. Maricel G. Gatchalian-Badilla  
Associate Professor  
University of the Philippines – Asian Institute of Tourism



On the medical front, Dr. Edsel Maurice T. Salvana, Director of the Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology of the University of the Philippines Manila National Institutes of Health, shared the latest COVID-19 updates.

From the private sector, Ms. Malu A. Arriola, Public Relations and Guest Experience Manager of Costabella Tropical Beach Hotel, emphasized the seriousness of containing the virus by encouraging staff to be inoculated and reducing opportunities for personnel-customer contact by improving resort rooms and al fresco facilities.

In addition, Medical Director Dr. Homer Lim of The Farm at San Benito shared the importance of abdominal health and the role it plays to strengthen the immune system of the individual. He also mentioned The Farm's support on the well-being of their clients by offering the right food and activities.

Finally, Ms. Marie Elaine C. Unchuan, the DOT X Regional Director, gave a detailed and insightful presentation on the region's activities including the accreditation of tourism establishments, development of the region's brand, and the production of videos on new sustainable travel circuits featuring farm, dive, mountain and cultural tourism.



HAVE A  
SAFE TRIP,  
PINAS

# PANGASINAN

## FROM SEASCAPES TO SERENITY

If you're looking for a destination to visit and experience "more fun in the Philippines" but don't have the time and money to tour the entire archipelago, fret no more. A trip to the province of Pangasinan is the getaway you need.

Pangasinan's long coastal area has made the province one of the top beach destinations in the country. Patar Beach in Bolinao is reputable for its clear waters and clean fine sand. It also boasts of cozy accommodations to suit everyone's budget.

The Hundred Islands in Alaminos, one of the most visited sites in Pangasinan, is also an exciting spot for swimming and island hopping. But aside from the islands, which are the main attractions, it is also a pilgrimage spot. One of the islands feature the 56-foot statue of Jesus Christ, a site that has gained a lot of devotees since its installation in 2017.

Another famous pilgrimage spot is the 400-year-old St. Vincent Ferrer Parish in Bayambang, and to celebrate this milestone, a 51-meter-high statue of St. Vincent Ferrer was built from engineered bamboo panels. This amazing architecture holds the Guinness World Record for the tallest bamboo structure in the world. And if you're looking for the leading pilgrimage site, it is the Lady of Manaoag Church in Manaoag, frequented year round by devotees from all over the world.



For the adventure seekers, there's Camp Puor, famed for its Bargis (from the word "barge" or a flat-bottomed vessel or boat). To reach the camp, visitors need to ride the Bargis, a make-shift boat made from fuel tanks of WWII airplanes that crashed into the Balingasay River. But if you want a more relaxing ride, Bolinao offers a floating restaurant that serves fresh and authentic Pinoy and Pangalatok cuisines. The trip involves a one hour cruise along a river with flourishing mangroves.

And because enriching one's knowledge about a destination completes a travel journey, don't miss out on Casa Real in Lingayen. The newly-restored national historical landmark will soon be a museum for artifacts and pieces of history important to the province.

Finally, a trip to Pangasinan wouldn't be complete without trying its irresistible cuisine such as the famous Dagupan Bangus and the tiny yet delicious Calasiao Puto & Kutsinta.

All this and much more make Pangasinan a worthy destination to nourish the body, the mind and the soul. It definitely gives justice to the country's slogan as you will never run out of options when it comes to activities and you'll surely have fun experiencing them all.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

**EVERY WEDNESDAY**

**WEEKLY MEMBERS' CHAT**

**11-17 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**PHILIPPINE TOURISM  
INFLUENCERS PROGRAM**  
Zamboanga

**19 – 23 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**PHILIPPINE TRAVEL EXCHANGE  
(PHITEX) HYBRID EDITION**  
Subic, Zambales

**05 – 06 OCTOBER 2021**

**TOURISM MARKETING  
SEMINAR**

**07-08 OCTOBER 2021**

**2<sup>ND</sup> TOURISM AND  
TECHNOLOGY FORUM**

**08-14 OCTOBER 2021**

**BICOL EXPRESS  
FUNDEMIC CARAVAN**

**25 – 29 OCTOBER 2021**

**INTERNATIONAL  
TOURISMUS BORSE  
(ITB) ASIA 2021 (VIRTUAL)**

**28-29 OCTOBER 2021**

**MICECONNECT 2021**  
Boracay, Aklan



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PHILIPPINES**

**SAVE  
THE  
DATE**

**OCTOBER  
28-29  
2021**



**M.I.C.E. CONnect 2021**