

TPB spotlight

A Quarterly e-Magazine of the Tourism Promotions Board Philippines

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2022

TPB WEAVES THROUGH 2022: EFFORTS SPUR PH TOURISM COMEBACK



**TPB SCORES RECORD-BREAKING
SALES AT THE 10TH REGIONAL
TRAVEL FAIR**

**PHITEX 2022 YIELDS RECORD
HIGH 173M SALES LEADS**

**DEMAND FOR PHILIPPINES IS
HIGH AT 2022 WORLD TRAVEL
MARKET**

**TPB PHILIPPINES NAMED
'SUSTAINABILITY LEADER
OF THE YEAR' AT TRIPZILLA
EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2022**

spotlight

Editor-in-Chief
MARIA MARGARITA MONTEMAYOR NOGRALES

Executive Editor
CHARLES AAMES M. BAUTISTA

Managing Editors
APPLES M. ABERIN
TERESITA DL. LANDAN
ANTHEA REINE Q. IFURUNG

Associate Editors
MARIA FEBBIE R. ALACAPA
APRIL ROSE M. ENERIO

Creative Directors
MARIA NEDALIN L. MIRANDA
PAULINE SARAH N. MANCITA

Copy Editor
MA. PATRICIA M. YULO

Writers:
ROSE ANNE B. CRUZ
MA. JANELLE CRISHA S. CU

Section Editors
LEAH MARIE C. SY
JANET W. CANOY
MARIVIC M. SEVILLA
ARNOLD T. GONZALES
WILSON R. SUBA

Layout Artists
JAMESON CARANZA
SHIRLEY ESPADERO
LORENZ D. CABANOS
JEN MARIELLE R. BAWAR
KRISANDRA A. CHEUNG

Photographers
UHDE L. ASUAL
NARJAY R. CALINAO

SPOTLIGHT is a quarterly e-magazine of the Tourism Promotions Board Philippines spearheaded by its Marketing Communications Department.

If you are willing to contribute and share in the upcoming issues, please contact April Enerio april_enerio@tpb.gov.ph. Contributors will be acknowledged accordingly. *Articles are edited to suit length and style parameters.

TPBPHL

TOURISM PROMOTIONS BOARD PHILIPPINES

4F Legaspi Towers 300 Roxas Boulevard
Manila, Philippines 1004
Tel Nos: +63 2 85259318 to 27
Email: info@tpb.gov.ph
Website: www.tpb.gov.ph

[f](#) [i](#) [t](#) @tpbphl

CONTENTS

HEADLINES

- 2 TPB Weaves Through 2022: Efforts Spur PH Tourism Comeback
- 4 PHITEX 2022 Yields Record High 173M Sales Leads
- 5 TPB Chief Bares Plans to Strengthen Agency's Tourism Marketing Initiatives

MARKET LINKS

- 6 Demand for Philippines is High at 2022 World Travel Market
- 7 The Philippines Positioned as Premier Dive Destination at the DEMA Show 2022
- 8 TPB Bags Best Booth Design at Philippine Travel Mart
- 9 TPB Scores Record-Breaking Sales at 10th Regional Travel Fair
- 10 Upskilling South Cotabato Dreamweavers to Start E-Commerce Growth
- 11 Philippine Business Mission to Japan Nets P54.7M Sales Leads
- 12 Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines Named 'Sustainability Leader of the Year' at TripZilla Excellence Awards 2022

MICE UPDATES

- 13 TPB and City Government of Davao Sign Agreement for the Staging of MICECON 2023

TOURISM BYTES

- 14 Philippines Hailed as World's Leading Dive and Beach Destination
- 15 First Philippine Parks Congress: Growing Healthier, More Liveable Cities through Urban Parks
- 16 Frasco Hails First-Ever North Luzon Travel Fair as Critical to Revitalizing Tourism; Reiterates the Philippines' Readiness for Visitors
- 18 DOT, DMW Launch Newest Incentivized Tourism Promotions Campaign

BUCKET LIST

- 19 Ready to Travel? Discover the Philippines' Rich Cultural Heritage
- 20 Adventure Awaits You in Davao

MEMBERS' BULLETIN

- 22 TPB Members' Night: Of Great Feats and Sweet Victories

BLOGGER'S BOX

- 24 Safety and Sustainability - Aspirations of a Student for the Tourism Industry

SNAPSHOTS

- 25 Weaving Paths through Sustainability

MORE FUN

- 26 PHITEX 2022 Post-Tours: Exploring the Philippines' Unrivaled Destinations

HR ON THE MOVE

- 27 TPB's GAD Team Joins "Women for a Safe and Progressive Philippine Tourism" Seminar

TPB CARES

- 28 A Tree for Tomorrow: TPB Members Head to Antipolo for a Go-Green CSR Program
- 29 2023 1st Quarter TPB Calendar of Events



COVER PHOTO:
Lake Sebu, one of the prime eco-tourism destinations in the Philippines

In this issue, we put a spotlight on how the Philippines' initiatives on sustainable tourism is gaining massive ground with its latest recognition as 'Sustainability Leader of the Year' awarded by the prestigious TripZilla Excellence Awards. We also feature TPB's back to back programs and events that yielded record returns for the country as it closed 2022.

ON THE SPOT

How time flies.

I cannot help but feel emotional as I flip through the pages of this Spotlight Q4 issue and have nothing but gratitude. We at the TPB are only able to weave such beautiful stories of victory because of you — our tourism stakeholders.

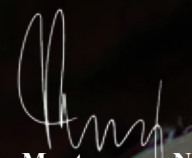
With President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. declaring the voluntary and optional use of face masks a few months ago, I am hopeful that we are entering the coming year filled with a spirit of renewed hope.

Having been at the helm for a little over two months and witnessing our collaborative efforts first-hand to bring the Filipino brand to the world, we have generated record-high sales leads in our institutionalized events such as PHITEX and RTF, co-launched the Bisita, Be My Guest incentivized program with the Department of Tourism, actively participated in the largest international trade fairs and business missions to further the country as a premier leisure, investment, dive and MICE destination, and even received an esteemed recognition from TripZilla as its Sustainability Leader of the Year. All these were attained thanks to your full support.

Much like the process of weaving, all the success did not happen overnight. Rather, it took the commitment of the entire tourism industry to strengthen the threads of partnership and collaboration. It is the culmination of our collective efforts to adapt, take action and have courage in this "better" normal.

For this new year, it is my fervent prayer that you do not lose that commitment to support all the programs and projects we have lined up in the months to come. If our unity can bring so much wins for the country in such a short amount of time, I cannot help but wonder what is in store this 2023.

So let us toast to an even better year ahead of us!


Maria Margarita Montemayor Nograles
Chief Operating Officer
Tourism Promotions Board Philippines



Sustainable
Community-Based
Tourism



WORLD
TRAVEL
MARKET



PHILIPPINE
TRAVEL
EXCHANGE



TPB Weaves Through 2022: Efforts Spur PH Tourism Comeback

2022 was a banner year for Philippine tourism as the industry bounced back after two challenging years under the COVID-19 pandemic. There are many factors to this robust comeback, but the participation of the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines in various local and international events as well as forging partnerships with the government, private sector, and tourism stakeholders played a huge role in the industry's recovery.

Even from the very beginning, optimism was already high as the Department of Tourism (DOT) noted over 7,000 arrivals just a week after the borders reopened for international tourists. But the easing of restrictions not only welcomed foreign arrivals, it also gave the TPB the opportunity to finally participate in face-to-face international events to showcase the best of the Philippines.

These events included the ASEAN Tourism Forum, which promoted ASEAN region as one tourist destination; Expo 2020 Dubai, one of the biggest global events with 192 participating countries; Arabian Travel Mart where the Philippine contingent garnered a total of 445 interactions in its Smart Badge booth at the Dubai World Trade Centre; and the Virtuoso Travel Week, an annual meeting that gathered tourism suppliers from all over the world for business-to-business (B2B) sessions with an audience of 5,000 luxury professionals from 100 countries.

Also included in TPB's itinerary in 2022 were Tourism Expo Japan (TEJ), the biggest travel trade fair in Japan; the Women Annual Convention of the Global Trade Chamber (GTC) with more than 200 foreign delegates from Europe, the Americas, and other parts of the world; and the Malaysia International Travel Mart (MITM) in Kuala Lumpur, one of the most sought-after travel fairs with 100,000 visitors from the travel and tourism industry.

Moreover, the TPB led the Philippine delegation at the World Travel and Tourism Council Global Summit in Riyadh and the Philippine Business Mission in Japan, an annual travel trade event that provides a platform for suppliers of Philippine tourism services to woo Japanese clientele.

As for the Meetings, Incentive Travel, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) sector, the TPB joined the Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME) 2022 in Australia, M&C Asia Connection in Singapore, IBTM Americas in Mexico, IMEX Frankfurt in Germany, and the Incentive Travel & Conventions, Meetings Asia (IT&CMA) in Bangkok.

These shows saw the participation of around 300 - 500 MICE planners / organizers from Asia Pacific, Europe, and the Americas, and through the efforts of the TPB and its Philippine MICE Industry Co-Exhibitors, around USD 16 million in business leads were generated for the Philippines.

On the domestic front, the TPB yielded record-high numbers in businesses generated in its institutional events such as the Philippine Travel Exchange (PHITEX), the biggest government-led travel trade event in the country, with reported Php 173 million sales leads out of the 116 total number of buyers from 32 countries.

Its Regional Travel Fair featuring Eastern Visayas in April 2022 also generated Php

35 million in sales leads while its second installment in CALABARZON, which was held in conjunction with the first Philippine Weavers' Tourism and Trade Fair last October, registered a record-breaking Php 83 million in actual and negotiated sales.

Apart from organizing its institutional events, the TPB also participated in the SmarTourism launch, highlighting the country's top tourist attractions via virtual destination videos and 360° VR Experiential Tours; the Clipper Race that allowed paying amateur crews from foreign countries to circumnavigate the globe in 11 specially designed yachts owned by Clipper Ventures in Subic Bay; "It's More Fun For All" inclusive campaign of the DOT that highlighted inclusivity and featured persons with disability, and the PTAA Travel Tour Expo where more than 32,000 attendees gathered to avail of exclusive travel deals from 142 exhibitors.

Meanwhile, the TPB conducted Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, which included the donation of flatboats, vintas, and school supplies to the residents of Santa Cruz Island in Zamboanga and motor vehicles for the Nayong Filipino Foundation; the provision of free RT-PCR tests for 4,400 qualified unvaccinated or partially vaccinated domestic tourists, and a tree planting activity during the 1st PH Ride With A Purpose campaign with motorcycle riders.

TPB's successes were made even sweeter and more meaningful as the Philippines received global recognition and accolades such as back-to-back wins at the 29th World Travel Awards - from



the World's Best Dive Destination to World's Best Tourist Destination and Best Beach Destination. The country also bagged the TTG Travel Awards' 2022 Destination of the Year, made it to Condé Nast Traveler's (CNT) 40 Most Beautiful Countries in the World, and was recognized by Travel + Leisure (T+L) for the islands of Boracay, Palawan, and Cebu.

The agency, on the other hand, received an inaugural award as "Sustainability Leader of the Year" during the TripZilla Excellence Awards in December 2022 and won the Best Pavilion during the 29th PTAA Travel Tour Expo.

Capitalizing on the global return to normalcy, the TPB is gearing up for bigger adventures and experiences in 2023. Watch out for its next regional travel fairs, travel tour expos, and travel marts as well as TPB's Membership Campaigns in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. TPB will also continue to participate in international diving, resort and travel events, the Philippine Business Mission, travel and adventure shows, and many other activities to captivate local and foreign tourists alike.



PHILIPPINE
BUSINESS MISSION



TOURISM EXPO JAPAN



PHITEX 2022 YIELDS RECORD HIGH 173M SALES LEADS

The Philippine Travel Exchange (PHITEX) 2022 tallied a record-breaking PHP 172,602,851.00 business sales leads in just two days, according to data from the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines.

The said amount is based on the initial submission of negotiated sales of Philippine sellers physically present at the event from October 19 to 20, 2022, surpassing sales reports of pre-pandemic editions when it lodged 94.8 million in 2018, and P46 million in 2019. In its hybrid format in 2020 and 2021, sales leads from the PHITEX aggregated to P43 Million and P69 million, respectively.

Now in its 21st year, the PHITEX remains as the biggest government-led travel trade event in the country organized by the TPB.

“The impressive turnout of buyers and sellers and the record-breaking numbers encapsulate the positive outlook for our country and growing interest in our destinations. As we embark on an aggressive campaign to revive our tourism industry and roll-out never before seen projects that will facilitate an enhanced connectivity into and around the Philippines, and provide a more convenient and seamless travel experience for guests, we anticipate more interest from local

and international tourism stakeholders,” shared Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco, who sits as the chairperson of the TPB.

“President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. has reiterated the tourism industry’s crucial role as an important economic development tool and this initiative is an avenue which can facilitate the creation of more employment opportunities and livelihood for our countrymen,” the tourism chief added.

This year’s PHITEX was conducted in a hybrid format with international buyers and local sellers participating in on-site business-to-business meetings held at the Marriott Grand Ballroom and online via a virtual platform.

Out of the 116 total number of buyers representing 32 countries, 53 were physically present and 63 participated virtually. The negotiated sales were computed from the seller’s sales leads reports for both confirmed and pencil-booked sales.

Meanwhile, 80% of the international buyers present during the event traveled to six post-event tour circuits: Cebu-Bohol, Negros Oriental-Siquijor, Ilocos, CALABARZON, Davao, and Metro Manila.

Aside from experiencing the newly developed circuits, the buyers were joined by Philippine tourism stakeholders in a series of networking nights to further expand the business opportunities offered by PHITEX. The virtual business meetings were held from October 26-28.

TPB Chief Operating Officer Margarita Nograles exclaimed, *“We are so proud of the collective efforts of our TPB team, our partners and sponsors, our stakeholders and our suppliers who mounted this successful event. This is the biggest negotiated sales generated by PHITEX in all its years. Secretary Frasco has always emphasized the importance and opportunity in equitably promoting all our regions and not just our popular destinations. This strategy has been proven effective as we brought the Regional Directors to be part of the B2B process, incorporated an exhibit of all the regions, invited weavers from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, and made sure that in our cultural shows, we integrated all regions in the visuals and live performances.”*

PHITEX 2022 was organized in partnership with Philippine Airlines, and with the support of Globe Business, Primer Group of Companies, Destileria Limtuaco, Holiday Inn, Newport World Resorts, Hotel 101, Double Dragon, and San Miguel Brewery.

TPB Chief Bares Plans to Strengthen Agency’s Tourism Marketing Initiatives

Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines Chief Operating Officer Maria Margarita Montemayor Nograles bared the agency’s plans to beef up its marketing and promotions initiatives, as well as its strategies, to revitalize the tourism industry.

TPB COO Nograles committed that under her leadership, the agency will remain focused and prioritize the implementation of board-approved programs, activities, and projects in line with DOT’s 7-point agenda and strategies for tourism development.

“Our marketing and promotional efforts have always exuded creativity. Given the fact that we were able to execute programs while in the pandemic displays the resiliency of the projects we have done.

With this being our strength, we are banking on the continuation of these projects as our pre-pandemic numbers have shown increasing numbers,” said TPB COO Nograles.

The TPB will also concentrate mainly on the enhancement of the overall tourist experience and strengthening of its domestic tourism programs and campaigns such as Philippine Motorcycle Tourism, the Philippine Faith and Heritage Program and the Habi, Hilom, Halal. These campaigns were initially launched in 2021 and plans are underway to further augment the execution.

Considering also the easing of travel borders worldwide, the agency pumped up its international promotions and activations and participated in some of the biggest international travel trade events for the last quarter of this year such as the World Travel Mart (WTM) in London, Diving Equipment and Marketing Association (DEMA) Show in the USA and the Philippine Business Mission (PBM) in Japan. This will be followed by its participation in Internationale Tourismus-Borse (ITB) in Berlin and the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) in Indonesia by the first quarter of 2023, among others.

“These key international shows have proven to drive a significant number of leads and exposure for the country and the TPB Philippines is more than ready to be back on the stage and spotlight to aggressively showcase what the Philippines has to offer,” added TPB COO Nograles.

The MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions) Industry is another area that the TPB has been working closely on as the country is poised to become a premiere MICE destination. The agency won bids to host the Worldchefs Asian Presidents Forum and the 2023 International Women Conventions, among others. TPB will also spearhead the Philippines’ participation in one of the largest and sought-after expositions worldwide, the World Expo 2025 in Osaka.

Moreover, the agency staged its institutional events such as the Philippine Travel Exchange (PHITEX) and the Regional Travel Fair (RTF) CALABARZON last October.

Lastly, TPB COO Nograles mentioned strengthening tourism governance through close collaboration with local government units and stakeholders by means of marketing assistance to sustainable community-based tourism destinations and support to DOT regional offices, attached agencies, tourism stakeholders, and associations.

“The Philippines’ strengths lie in the promotion of sustainable tourism, it being an inclusive destination, and providing a plethora of opportunities for tourism investments and events. Rest assured that the TPB will give its full support to the DOT under the leadership of Secretary Frasco. I am grateful and eager to work and learn at the same time,” enthused TPB COO Nograles.



DEMAND FOR PHILIPPINES IS HIGH AT 2022 WORLD TRAVEL MARKET

The Philippine delegation for the 2022 World Travel Market, led by Tourism Secretary Ma. Christina Garcia Frasco, ended the event on a high note with 211 reported business leads made from November 7-9 at ExCel London.

Supported by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB), the Philippine team, together with 17 Philippine and UK-based private sector companies composed of tour operators, hotels, and resorts, conducted B2B (business-to-business) meetings with international buyers mainly from Europe and Asia during the 3-day global travel trade event.

"It's an exciting time to travel to the Philippines given how we continuously open new circuits and support more tourism developments spearheaded by the tourism department," said TPB Chief Operating Officer Maria Margarita Montemayor Nograles. "We see increased interest in the country which comes at the wake of continuous awards and recognition from reputable travel publications and organizations. We look forward to making our presence in the World Travel Market bigger and better with the support of our

local government partners, private stakeholders, and industry associations."

Aside from the business meetings conducted, the Philippine team showcased a 3-day cultural performance at the venue's Entertainment Boulevard and conducted a networking activity at "The Retreat," a health and wellness area sponsored by TPB where visitors were treated to the traditional Philippine "hilot" massage. The Philippine booth, designed with sustainability in mind, also gave visitors a glimpse of the white sands of Boracay, notable festivals like MassKara, and some of the country's culinary offerings.



The Philippine delegation entered WTM 2022 to communicate the Filipino brand across all markets, collaborate with international stakeholders, showcase the country's quality destinations, and sustain a strong and distinguished presence in the global tourism industry.

Next live event: 6-8 November 2023 at ExCel London.
<http://london.wtm.com/>

THE PHILIPPINES POSITIONED AS PREMIER DIVE DESTINATION AT THE DEMA SHOW 2022

The Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines went all out to position the Philippines as a premier dive destination at the Diving Equipment and Marketing Association (DEMA) Show 2022 last 01 to 04 November 2022 in Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida, USA.

The annual DEMA Show, which attracts hundreds of visitors including industry professionals, is the largest trade-only event in the world for scuba diving, ocean water sports, and adventure travel companies.

The Philippine delegation was composed of representatives from the DOT in Calabarzon, Central Visayas, Eastern Visayas, and Davao; TPB Philippines; the Philippine Commission on Sports Scuba Diving (PCSSD); and dive resorts and operators such as the Crystal Blue Resort, Magic Resorts Philippines, Discovery Fleet, Kasai Village Dive Resort, Scandi Divers, El Galleon Resort / Asia Divers, Buceo Anilao Beach & Dive Resort, Atmosphere Resort & Spa, Amun Ini Beach Resort & Spa, Salaya Beach Houses, Atlantis Dive Resort and Liveaboard, Arkipelago Divers & Beach Resort, Reef Haven Scuba Diving School, Sea Explorers Philippines, Marco Vincent Dive Resort, and Club Aquasports Dive Center.

Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco is optimistic that the Philippines' participation in international trade shows such as the DEMA Show will signal a strong comeback for the country's dive industry. In addition, the national government appropriated a budget of Php 9.53 million for the first time to the PCSSD, an attached agency of the DOT in charge of marine sports, to intensify dive tourism promotion and development.

"We are elated that our national government has been supporting the dive industry ever since and we are more than ready to welcome dive professionals and enthusiasts from all over the world. Our 7,641 islands, tropical climate, accommodating

locals, diverse marine life, and world-renowned underwater sites await you here," said Tourism Secretary Frasco.

The Philippines booth at the DEMA Show highlighted the country's best dive sites and featured activities such as the sardine run, reef wall snorkeling, dolphin watching, and wreck diving, among others.

On top of the business meetings and networking sessions, the Philippine booth also catered to extensive educational opportunities through the conduct of country presentations and information dissemination about the recent developments in the Philippine dive industry.

For TPB COO Maria Margarita Montemayor Nograles, the Philippines' participation in DEMA Show will help sustain the country's presence in the international tourism scene, particularly in North America which is a significant source of pre-pandemic tourist arrivals. This is also in consideration of the expectation that with the opening of international borders, 30% of Americans will be taking more leisure trips until the end of the year.

"We have been participating in this event since 2015, however, due to the pandemic, we were not able to maximize the marketing and business opportunities for the past two years. Now is the time to reinforce the country's recognition as one of the world's best dive destinations and to tap US markets to re-explore the Philippines for underwater adventures. We are surely back in the game," said TPB COO Nograles.

Recently, the Philippines was recognized as Asia's Leading Dive Destination at the World Travel Awards 2022 for four years in a row, edging Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand and signifying an opportune time to aggressively promote diving as one of the country's strongest tourism offerings.



TPB BAGS BEST BOOTH DESIGN AT PHILIPPINE TRAVEL MART

The Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines bagged the Best Booth Design for Sponsors / Exhibitors Category during the 33rd Philippine Travel Mart (PTM) held last September 30 to October 2 at the SMX Convention Center Manila, MOA Complex in Pasay City.

The Philippine pavilion showcased the country's rich cultural and heritage treasures through the Mandaya weavers and the centuries-old UNESCO World Heritage Site of Vigan, Ilocos Sur. Aside from heritage, the booth also featured the stunning underwater scenery of Cebu.

To beef up the booth activations, interactive trivia games, coffee sampling by Kaulayaw Coffee, and craft demonstrations enticing travel experiences in the Philippines welcomed booth visitors.

"This recognition reaffirms TPB's commitment to promoting the diversity of Philippine destinations. I am thrilled to be welcomed with this award and look forward to working with the dynamic team from the Tourism Promotions Board as we tread towards tourism recovery and promote the Philippines as a top-of-mind destination for leisure and business travel," said TPB COO Maria Margarita Montemayor Nograles.

Every year since its inception, PTM highlights new discoveries for travelers, from world-renowned islands and vibrant



heritage to discovering the country's lesser-known tourism circuits and destinations.

Dressed-up booths representing the diversity of Philippine tourist attractions packed the halls of SMX Convention Center. Themed "Safe Travels," this year's edition featured 300 exhibitors from across the 12 regions of the country.

Organized by the Philippine Tour Operators Association (PHILTOA), the three-day flagship event offered travel enthusiasts myriad exclusive deals on domestic and international tour packages, accommodations, airfares, and other tourism-related services of up to 50% off the regular prices.

In its continuous effort to push forward the country's tourism industry, the TPB Philippines once again gave its unyielding support to the 33rd PTM as co-presenter with the Department of Tourism.



TPB scores record-breaking sales at 10th Regional Travel Fair

Less than a week after a successful turnout at the Philippine Travel Exchange (PHITEX) 2022, the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines registered record-breaking actual and negotiated sales amounting to PHP 83 million at the 10th Regional Travel Fair (RTF) held from 27 to 30 October 2022 in Nuvali, Sta. Rosa, Laguna, signifying an increase of PHP 45,452,000 (120%) and PHP 27,360,000 (49%) from the 8th and 9th RTFs, respectively.

"For the 10th Regional Travel Fair, we focused on CALABARZON, a region that has shown a very meaningful manifestation of resilience throughout the crucial times in our country's development," said DOT Undersecretary Atty. Mae Elaine Bathan who gave the keynote speech at the event on behalf of Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco.

RTF began in 2018 as an avenue to promote and sell domestic tour packages by showcasing the rich culture, heritage, and products of a Region through collaboration and support of the DOT regional offices, local government units, and private stakeholders. This TPB signature event has since generated an average sales lead of 30M per run.

Honorable Ramil Laurel Hernandez, the Governor of the Province of Laguna, shared his confidence on the outcome of the program, "Alam natin na ito ay isang mainam na paraan upang maipakilala sa ating mga turista ang mga natatanging produkto at serbisyong matatagpuan sa iba't-ibang travel destination sa

bansa." [We know that this is a good way to introduce to our tourists our key products and services found in various travel destinations in the country.]

TPB Chief Operating Officer Maria Margarita Montemayor Nograles also expressed, "All of these initiatives aim to revitalize the tourism industry in the country and introduce new innovations and ideas that not only transform but enhance the entire travel experience."

The four-day hybrid edition of the RTF featuring "#DiscoverCALABARZON" commenced with a half-day onsite and online tourism forum on best practices in tourism operations. It was followed by whole day, face-to-face business-to-business (B2B) sessions with 48 sellers from Region IV-A and 47 buyers and 27 Sellers/Exhibitors from outside the region. The last two days opened to the public, however, due to Typhoon Paeng, The Philippine Weavers' Tourism and Trade fair and the RTF consumer fair took place simultaneously online while the hybrid arrangement at Solenad III in Nuvali resumed the following day. Pre and post tours in Laguna, Batangas, and Cavite for 47 buyers were also conducted for an immersive experience of the regions.

The 10th Regional Travel Fair was organized in partnership with the Department of Tourism Region IV-A and Ayala Malls in cooperation with the Provinces of CALABARAZON, Technopark Hotel, and Cebu Pacific Air.

UPSKILLING SOUTH COTABATO DREAMWEAVERS TO START E-COMMERCE GROWTH



"Kemdol Lake Sebu!", translated as "Moving Forward Lake Sebu", was the prevalent theme of the Sustainable Community-Based Tourism (SCBT) Marketing Enhancement Workshops attended by the T'boli and B'laan tribes last 19 November 2022 at the Camp Lake View in South Cotabato.



Organized by the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines, the extensive 3-day workshop involved digital marketing, brand development, sales, merchandise planning, and sustainable packaging to aid the South Cotabato weaving communities as they venture into e-commerce.

"Production is not a problem. Marketing is a problem. Because of our immediate needs in financial matters, our tendency is to sell out items at a very, very low price. But we cannot stop doing this because all these skills are already inculcated in the heritage and culture of our indigenous people. If we stop, our culture will gradually die," said Boi Nena K. Twalang, a princess of Lake Sebu and the Chairperson of the Indigenous Political Structure.

10 | December 2022

The program, a first in the province, ties up the SCBT and the Habi programs of the TPB that expressly safeguard the intangible cultural heritage and traditions of the weaving communities. It also ensures the sustainability of the destination for tourism and the traditional arts and craft products and services by the SCBT members.

"There is power in our stories. That is our power. We have to keep telling these stories. One such way is by empowering our dream weavers with the right skills to give them more leverage in the market," said TPB Chief Operating Officer Maria Margarita Montemayor Nograles during the opening ceremony.

"With this workshop, we will continue to empower you. You teach us of your culture, we will learn how to respect it, we will learn how to promote it the way you want to promote it and we will take it to the world," she added.

The TPB also handed over starter kits to the Fu Yabing Weaving Center, LEMSNOLO Community, Lang Dulay Weaving Center, and the Cooperative of Women in Health and Development (COWHED). These starter kits contain boxes of variety-colored threads, rolls of Abaca fabric that can produce hundreds of rolls of T'nalak and B'laan Tabih fabrics, and more than 200 kilos of multi-colored beads.

According to the TPB, this pledge of assistance can cover six to nine months of production of the identified communities.

Special awards were given to groups who were able to demonstrate their learnings with quality outputs they can use for their future platform.

As part of its commitment to sustain the collaboration established during the SCBT Marketing Workshops in South Cotabato, TPB announced during the closing ceremony that it will be organizing a business-to-business event on 16 February 2023 in Lake Sebu. The agency will bring together buyers from Manila to network with the local weaving communities of the said province, a pronouncement that was received with huge gratitude from the local attendees.

Lifestyle influencers and models Apple Aberin and Kelly Misa as well as international Fortune Magazine correspondents were present during the opening day of the workshop and were treated to an authentic T'boli experience in Lake Sebu. Other guests also participated in activities at the LEMSNOLO Cultural Village.



PHILIPPINE BUSINESS MISSION TO JAPAN NETS P54.7M SALES LEADS

A delegation of more than 30 Philippine sellers from hotels, resorts, airlines, and other tourism sectors successfully wrapped up the 14th Philippine Business Mission (PBM) to Japan.

Led by Department of Tourism (DOT) Undersecretary for Administration and Finance, Atty. Shereen Gail C. Yu-Pamintuan and Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Chief Operating Officer Maria Margarita Montemayor Nograles, the expedition netted Php290,153,750.00 in sales leads from both the Osaka and Tokyo leg.

"As Japan is one of our valued partners when it comes to tourist exchange, we are looking forward to a significant increase in the number of international visitors both ways, and we anticipate that this event will rekindle the spirit of friendship between our two nations," said COO Nograles.

"As we welcome more tourists on Philippine shores, we are elated to share wonderful progress in our efforts to make the Philippines a premiere destination for leisure travel, MICE and investments for the international community," she added.

One of TPB's institutional programs, the PBM is considered as the country's premier travel trade event and a vital source of travel information and tourism leads in Japan.

Held annually for the past 13 years and halted only in the past two years during the height of the pandemic, the PBM is a multifaceted program that aims to serve as a platform and venue for the Philippines' travel and tourism suppliers to meet with their Japanese counterparts to initiate and strengthen business partnerships.



During the mission, Undersecretary Pamintuan said that the Philippines is now open for business and ready to welcome the tourists to the country's amazing destinations.

"I am happy to report that Philippine tourism is building its momentum with 2.2 million arrivals since we opened our borders to international travel in February 2022," the Undersecretary said. "More so, as of October 31, 2022, the Philippines has generated more than PHP130 billion in tourist receipts, 2,000% more than what was recorded by the end of last year."

She also shared, "Time and again, we have proven that Japan's economic fortunes are intimately tied to that of the Philippines. As our country's sixth largest source of tourists to the Philippines, Japan is among the strongest pillars of Philippine tourism."



The PBM targeted over 230 Japanese buyers from the tourism industry for one-on-one business discussions with the Philippine sellers. The Philippine delegation's activities included a seminar on significant developments in Philippine tourism. The mission also highlighted the reintroduction of the Philippines' new tourism products as well as the reopening of its borders to Japanese travelers. Additional perks for the Japanese tourists to consider the Philippines as their next destination were the raffle draws of round-trip tickets to the Philippines sponsored by Philippine Airlines (PAL) and Cebu Pacific Air.

The event ended with a Philippine Festival on December 3-4, 2022, in Yoyogi Park, Tokyo. It was the largest meeting of the Filipino community in Japan and a venue for cross-cultural exchange with the Japanese market. This year's festival gathered 70,000 visitors and 96 exhibitors thanks to the support of the Philippine Embassy and the Philippine Assistance Group.



Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines Named ‘Sustainability Leader of the Year’ at TripZilla Excellence Awards 2022

Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines wins big at the **TripZilla Excellence Awards 2022**, getting named the Sustainability Leader of the Year by the prestigious awards body. TPB Philippines, the marketing and promotions arm of the Philippine Department of Tourism (DOT), topped the polls after extensive online voting from 14 to 28 October 2022.

A new category in the TripZilla Excellence Awards, **Sustainability Leader of the Year** aims to honour companies and organizations taking strides in responsible tourism. Its addition recognizes the role of industry leaders in minimizing tourism’s negative impact on the social, economic, and environmental landscape of key destinations.

Sustainability remains at the forefront of TPB Philippines’ efforts to promote the Philippines as a world-class travel destination. Through its initiatives in promoting environmental awareness and local-centric experiences, the TPB hopes to develop the country’s thrust of green and sustainable tourism among all stakeholders.

12 | December 2022

Amid the pandemic, TPB sought to highlight unique cultural activities in the Philippines: batok (traditional tattoos) in Buscalan, Kalinga; hilot (traditional massage) and the annual healing festival on Siquijor Island; and the different forms of textile weaving across the country. TPB also spearheaded efforts to promote farm tourism in a bid to support local farmers and nature-based adventures in and around Metro Manila.

Additionally, TPB regularly engages with local and foreign explorers to encourage the practice of sustainable behaviour when travelling.

About TripZilla Excellence Awards 2022

Now in its 8th year, TripZilla Excellence Awards continues to put a spotlight on the trailblazing brands delivering the experiences that travellers love the most. It’s organized by TripZilla, a leading online travel media in Southeast Asia with a reach of more than 20 million readers every month. More than a hundred celebrated travel brands nabbed nominations for TripZilla Excellence Awards 2022. Winners were

awarded after an extensive online voting process on TripZilla.com.

SOURCE: TripZilla Website



TPB and City Government of Davao Sign Agreement for the Staging of MICECON 2023



Davao City – The Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines and the City Government of Davao signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the city’s hosting of the Philippine M.I.C.E. Conference (MICECON) during a ceremonial MOA signing held at SMX Convention Center, SM Lanang Premier, Lanang, Davao City last 22 December 2022.

“We strongly believe and claim that Davao’s hosting of the MICECON will provide a tremendous boost to the city’s tourism industry and be a huge step towards its own vision of making Davao a preferred MICE destination not only in the Philippines but in Asia”, said TPB COO Maria Margarita Montemayor Nograles.

She also added, *“That is why we are very excited to make this happen with the ardent support of the City Government of Davao under Mayor Sebastian Duterte who recognizes the massive role that MICE tourism could play not only for Davao as the host city but also for the country’s economic returns.”*

The City Government of Davao expressed its full support and cooperation for the successful staging of the MICECON that is scheduled on 01-03 March 2023.

“The City of Davao would like to extend our most heartfelt gratitude for choosing Davao City to host MICECON 2023 and making it official through today’s signing of the MOA. Meetings,

Incentives, Conventions, and Events are a great help to the tourism industry here in Davao, that is why it is always a pleasure and honor for us to host MICECON. We believe that MICECON will help revitalize Davao’s tourism sector and open more doors for business that will boost the whole region’s economic growth”, said Davao City Vice Mayor Jay Melchor B. Quitain, Jr. who was present during the MOA Signing to represent City Mayor City Mayor Sebastian Z. Duterte.



Aside from Vice Mayor Quitain, Jr. and COO Nograles, the signing also saw the presence of MICECon 2023 Davao Organizing Co-Chair Kennedy V. Kapulong and Conference Convenor of Philippine MICECON Arnold T. Gonzales.

MICECON is the largest gathering of Meetings, Incentive Travel, Conventions, and Exhibitions (M.I.C.E.) professionals in the country. It has become a reliable event for MICE stakeholders which prides itself on having incentivized event components to benchmark on and opportunities for networking with both international and local MICE experts. The 2023 edition of MICECON is expected to garner a total of 500 in-person delegates in Davao including virtual delegates from the tourism industry.



Interested delegates may register through <https://www.micecon.ph/preregistration/>.



Philippines Hailed as World's Leading Dive and Beach Destination

The Philippines has been hailed as the World's Leading Dive Destination and the World's Leading Beach Destination for 2022, besting all other countries at the 29th World Travel Awards Grand Final Gala Ceremony held in Muscat, Oman, recently.

"These global victories for the Philippines evince the unparalleled beauty of our country and the distinct warmth of the Filipino people. We sincerely thank the World Travel Awards and everyone from all over the world whose vote of confidence is timely as the Philippines fully opens its arms to welcome tourists to our shores," Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco said.

"Under the vision of President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., among the Department of Tourism's objectives are to further enhance the development and promotion of key destinations and to equalize development by supporting lesser-known areas across our Regions. These Awards are a source of inspiration for us in the Department of Tourism to work even harder as the Marcos administration ushers in the resurgence of the tourism industry as a major pillar of economic growth and source of livelihood for millions of Filipinos. As we anticipate the influx of more tourists, we shall continue the work to improve the overall tourist experience in the Philippines, and herald the best of the Filipino brand to the world," the tourism chief added.

The Philippine dive portfolio continues its four-year winning streak for the World's Leading Dive Destination title as it lored

over the world's finest diving destinations, which include the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, the Cayman Islands, Maldives, Fiji, Mexico, Azores Islands, French Polynesia, Galapagos Islands, St. Kitts, and Belize.

As the World's Leading Beach Destination, the Philippines also bested other beaches around the world, including previous awardees such as Maldives, The Algarve in Portugal, Jamaica, Galapagos Islands in Equador, Turks and Caicos Islands.

Meanwhile, three partner tourism establishments also shared the World Travel Awards distinction: Amanpulo, as the World's Leading Dive Resort 2022; City of Dreams Manila, as the World's Leading Casino Resort 2022; and Ascott Bonifacio Global City Manila, as the World's Leading Serviced Apartments 2022.

The DOT was also nominated as the World's Leading Tourist Board this year, as well as Siargao as the World's Leading Island Destination and Intramuros as the World's Leading Tourist Attraction.

The 29th World Travel Awards gathered the best of the travel and hospitality industries from its regional awardees across Asia, Caribbean, Central America, Europe, Indian Ocean, Middle East, North America, Oceania, and South America.

SOURCE: Department of Tourism



FIRST PHILIPPINE PARKS CONGRESS: Growing healthier, more liveable cities through urban parks

The Department of Tourism (DOT), National Parks Development Committee (NPDC), Nayong Pilipino Foundation (NPF), Intramuros Administration (IA) and Urban Land Institute Philippines (ULI), in partnership with the City of Manila, and City of Baguio, held the first-ever Philippine Parks Congress last 23 to 25 November 2022.

The event aims to gather public and private sector stakeholders involved in developing urban parks and green spaces across the Philippines to lay the foundation for creating a national framework for the development of Philippine urban parks.

"The pandemic highlighted the importance of parks and open spaces and it's apt that we are holding the first Parks Congress at the largest park in Metro Manila - Rizal Park, Luneta," said Cecille Lorenzana Romero, Executive Director of NPDC.

"With the pandemic pushing us to be more appreciative of open spaces, there could be no more perfect time than now to organize the first-ever Philippine Park Congress not just to promote sustainable development for our community, but also to attract tourists and enhance the tourism experience which is included in the 7-point agenda of DOT Secretary Cristina Frasco," shared by Nayong Pilipino Foundation Executive Director Gertie Duran-Batocabe.

"The Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 highlights that cultural infrastructure and open spaces should be more inclusive to allow for dialogue and cultural exchange. Parks promote art, heritage, culture and other related domain of the Philippine creative industry, and we have seen activities like these help Intramuros recover during



the pandemic. The first Philippine Parks Congress will allow us to learn about best practices to make our parks and open spaces more inclusive," Edgardo Baysic, OIC of IA noted.

MANILA PARKS STUDY TOUR. The event kicked off with a guided tour around major parks and open spaces in the country's capital – Paco Park, Rizal Park Luneta, Fort Santiago, ASEAN Garden, Baluarte de San Diego Gardens, Arroceros Forest Park, Mehan Garden, and Kartilya ng Katipunan.

MAIN PLENARY DAY. A series of talks and lectures by key people from both the public and the private sector took place during the Main Plenary Day at the Rizal Park Open Air Auditorium last 24 November 2022. Keynote Speaker, Jelle Hendrik Therry of Ramboll opened with a lecture on urban parks design from a global perspective and Paulo Alcazaren of PGAA Creative Design provided a lecture on a history of urban parks in the Philippines. Other speakers shed light on their respective organizations, agencies and companies by sharing their unique experiences, best practices and technical services in maintaining and operating public parks and open spaces.

Participants also had a chance to take part in the discussion of the proposed National and Local Public Parks Authority (NALPA) bills currently being reviewed in Congress and in the Senate.

BAGUIO PARKS STUDY TOUR. With its new tourism campaign line, Breathe Baguio, the City of Baguio shared its rehabilitation projects and programs that breathed new life to its famous sites such as the Botanical Gardens, Mines View Park, Burnham Park, and Dominican Hill, a new art and cultural hub.

The inaugural Philippine Parks Congress is also a celebration and a recognition of the 60th Founding Anniversary of the National Parks Development Committee, 50th Founding Anniversary of Nayong Pilipino Foundation Inc., and 10th Founding Anniversary of Urban Land Institute Philippines.

SOURCE: National Parks Development Committee

Frasco hails first-ever North Luzon Travel Fair as critical to revitalizing tourism; reiterates the Philippines' readiness for visitors

Clark, Pampanga— Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco expressed confidence on domestic tourism as key to the country's economic resurgence, hailing the maiden edition of the North Luzon Travel Fair held from 18-20 November 2022 at SMX Convention Center in Clark, as critical to the revitalization of tourism.

"That is why all of our Regional Directors from the entire country are here today. To bring back home the good news that North Luzon is ready for the revitalization of tourism in this part of the country," the Tourism Chief was quoted as saying.



With the overarching theme "Weaving our Way to Recovery," Secretary Frasco in her keynote message said that the North Luzon Travel Fair was expanded out of her Listening Tours initiated upon assumption to office.

"A little over 3 months ago, I visited Clark and touched base with our tourism stakeholders, players from various sectors, including the aviation, hotel, tourism services, tourism operators, travel agencies, and other tourism industry stakeholders. And in this listening tour, our stakeholders enumerated the various challenges that they faced in the past few years. Subsequent to that, I spoke to our Regional Directors from North Luzon who echoed the same sentiments, and there they shared their plans to hold a North Luzon Travel Fair and I express my unequivocal support but added the requirement that

the North Luzon Travel Fair should not only be limited in its exposure to people in North Luzon but to everyone from across the Philippines," she reiterated.

"Not only will the (fair) give exposure of our local government units, our ecozones, our bases, our hotel, resorts and other accommodations, service, agencies, and tour operators be limited to this travel fair but more importantly our Regional Directors will proceed from this travel fair to actually visit the regions of North Luzon to be able to ensure that they from the central and southern regions of Philippines would be able to bring the domestic tourist from their side of the country to your side of the country," Secretary Frasco added.

The Tourism Chief also proudly shared that the Philippines continues to be a top of mind destination all over the world. She

added, "only that in this period of recovery, it is critical for us to ensure that we continue to improve the enabling mechanism of coming to and going to around the Philippines."

She reiterated that tourism remains to be a top priority of the Marcos Administration. "The message of the Department of Tourism, led by our President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. is that tourism is a priority, which intends to leave no region behind in the development of the industry. Not only will we limit ourselves to the promotions of our sites but most importantly we will ensure the institutional development of the entire industry by introducing changes by addressing gaps and most importantly by listening to the needs of the stakeholders," she added.

3.8 million visitors in North Luzon

During the event, Secretary Frasco announced that North Luzon has already logged 3.8 million visitors from both domestic and foreign tourists as of today, Nov. 18.

"And while recently, we have reopened our country to international travel, I can see that we are well on our way to recovery because you are well on our way to the 9.6 million arrivals that you had in this side of the country prior to the pandemic," she added.

The Philippines is open for business

Secretary Frasco also reiterated the openness of the country to receive guests in The New Normal.

"We are grateful to our President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. for laying down the necessary tools to

ensure this openness and readiness of the Philippines. He has issued executive orders to the effect of lifting the outdoor and indoor Mask Mandate," she added, ensuring that fully-vaccinated guests are no longer required RT-PCR tests when coming into the Philippines. In addition to this, she said the Philippines now allows foreigners with just a negative antigen test.

"The Philippines is open, the Philippines is ready to receive tourists and investments all over the world and North Luzon is ready to lead the way to light up the Northern Philippines," Secretary Frasco concluded.

Highlights of the 1st North Luzon Travel fair

The North Luzon Travel Fair is made possible with the cooperation of the DOT regional offices in Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley, and Central Luzon, in partnership with Alliance of Travel and Tour Agencies of Pampanga (ATTAP) aimed at creating a one-stop-shop venue for industry collaboration, showcasing the domestic tourism destinations, products, services, delicacies, gifts, and pasalubong items, as well as cultural presentations from the northern side of the Philippines.

The three-day event highlights (1) Business-to-Consumer (B2C) showcasing discounted packages, air tickets, accommodation, and other tourism-related products; (2) Business-to-Business (B2B) sessions which shall provide an opportunity for tourism stakeholders to experience innovative ways of developing business

connections and update local industry partners with the latest tourism offerings; (3) Buyers Familiarization Tour of the North Luzon Regions; and (4) the Hibla ng Lahi Fashion show, a fashion show that would feature and showcase the regal and indigenous fabrics from the North Luzon regions to empower local Filipino traditions, culture, and customs to thrive in the modern market and revive the handwoven culture.

After the travel fair, the TravEx participants will have simultaneous Post-Event Familiarization Tours to Ilocos Region (Region I), Cagayan Valley (Region II), Central Luzon (Region III), and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), extending the benefits of the tourism value chain to the local communities, stakeholders, and destinations of Northern Luzon.

Other participating regions in the North Luzon Travel showcased some of their finest crafts and tourist destinations are DOT National Capital Region (NCR), IV-A (CALABARZON), IV-B (MIMAROPA), VI (Western Visayas), Region VII (Central Visayas), VIII (Eastern Visayas), Region XII (SOCCSKSARGEN), and XIII (CARAGA).

Other partners in support of the North Luzon Travel Fair include the Tourism Promotions Board Philippines (TPB), Subic-Clark Alliance for Development (SCAD), Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Clark Development Corporation (CDC), Digital Out-of-Home Philippines (DOOH), and Philippine airlines as the event's partner airline. The North Luzon Travel Fair is managed by Total Exhibit and Expo Solutions.

SOURCE: Department of Tourism





DOT, DMW LAUNCH NEWEST INCENTIVIZED TOURISM PROMOTIONS CAMPAIGN

The Department of Tourism (DOT) on December 15 (Thursday) officially launched an incentive program to entice Filipinos to take an active role in the promotion of Philippine tourist destinations.

In cooperation with the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW), the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines, and private sector partners including SM Supermalls, the DOT unveiled the Bisita, Be My Guest (BBMG) Program, a promotional campaign which seeks to incentivize Filipinos, especially Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) and Overseas Filipinos (OFs), who invite foreigners to visit the Philippines with raffle tickets and chances to win vacation tour packages from select local destinations.

Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco said that through this project, the DOT seeks to inspire all Filipinos by making them ambassadors of Philippine tourism, and, for OFWs and OFs, offer them a platform where they can reconnect with their families, at the same time, help the country earn economic gains through increased tourist arrivals.

"By combining the aspects of rebuilding trust and confidence in traveling to the country; working hand in hand with our stakeholders, adapting products and services as well as the shift to digital, we are empowering fellow Filipinos to become part of nation-building by inviting visitors to visit the country through our online referral program," Frasco said in her address during the campaign launching at SM MOA Music Hall on Thursday (Dec. 15), attended by over 250 industry leaders and representatives from the public and private sector, and media.

"We envision the Bisita, Be My Guest Program as the Filipinos' way of showing their love for the country as we invite visitors to our homes, show them the beauty of our landscapes and beaches, our culture and heritage, and let them experience world-class Filipino hospitality," she added.

Also present at the launch event was DMW Secretary Susan "Toots" Ople, who emphasized the BBMG's significance in empowering OFWs to help the country, particularly, its tourism industry.

"All of them [OFWs] are so eager to help our country and to help our President succeed. I mean that's the common denominator. Saan man kami pumunta, our OFWs are saying, 'Ano maitutulong namin?' 'Paano kami makakatulong?' And so this [Bisita, Be My Guest] program gives them a vehicle to do just that," said Secretary Ople.

"[In] behalf of the Department of Migrant Workers, [in] behalf of the OFWs that we represent and the families that they belong to, I just want to say, let's make this work. Let this be a pambansang effort to bring as many guests as possible and to make every OFW feel special as Philippine tourism ambassadors," she added.

Through a pre-recorded message, First Lady of the Philippines Louise "Liza" Araneta Marcos lauded the launching of the BBMG program.

"We all know that the Filipinos are the most hospitable people in the world and I'm sure this will be a great factor in the success of this program. We really need to bring in more tourists to the Philippines because we want to show how hospitable we are, how kind we are, and how good we are at letting them feel at home. So thank you, DOT Officials. Thank you everyone for launching this project, which I'm sure will benefit the country," the First Lady said.

Also showing her support to the DOT and its partner agencies is no less than Vice President Sara Duterte who, in a pre-recorded message, expressed her confidence in the BBMG program.

"I trust that this program will create a wide avenue for the development of our tourism industries while it seeks to provide excellent travel packages to foreign and domestic visitors. May your concerted efforts in this regard promote the beauty of our country's destinations and sustain the progress of our local communities in various regions," enthused the Vice President.

The complete promo mechanics as well as registration information for Sponsors and Invitees can be found on the official BBMG website: <http://bbmg.philippines.travel>.

Source: Department of Tourism

READY TO TRAVEL?

Discover the Philippines' Rich Cultural Heritage

Stunning landscapes. Century-old architectural structures. Breathtaking natural wonders. The Philippines boasts of beautifully preserved historical landmarks and rich cultural heritage that made the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

RICE TERRACES OF THE PHILIPPINE CORDILLERAS

1

Plan your trip up north and see the Ifugao's National Cultural Treasure that has stood the test of time. Carved about 2,000 years ago, the sheer beauty of these stair-like terraces will leave you in awe! Explore these UNESCO-blessed rice terraces in the towns of Kiangan, Hungduan, Mayoyao, and Banaue.



HISTORIC CITY OF VIGAN, ILOCOS SUR

Take a trip down memory lane when you visit the historic city of Vigan in Ilocos Sur! A place where "time stands still," Vigan is known for its Spanish-styled houses, cobblestone streets, and horse-drawn carriages. Walk through the pages of history in this well-preserved heritage city with attractions dating back to the 1500s.

2

3

PUERTO PRINCESA SUBTERRANEAN RIVER NATIONAL PARK

Discover Puerto Princesa's unique underground river and stunning rock formations. This UNESCO World Heritage Site features a jaw-dropping sight of limestone karst landscape, unspoiled natural beauty, and a forest teeming with wildlife. No wonder it also holds a place in the New 7 Wonders of Nature! Cruise through the famed underground river and see why it's a true wonder of the world.



TUBBATAHA REEFS NATURAL PARK

Treat yourself to an extraordinary underwater adventure in this world-renowned scuba diving site. A dream destination for most scuba divers, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is home to a great diversity of marine life and pristine coral reefs. Take a scenic swim with manta rays, whales, schooling fish and turtles, or even sharks! Tubbataha's dive season is only three months long (March-June) so make sure to plan your trip for this underwater treasure.

4

5

MOUNT HAMIGUITAN RANGE WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

If you are looking for an adventure and nature getaway, Davao Oriental's Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary is a perfect place to be. A biodiversity hotspot, Mindanao's first and only UNESCO World Heritage Site towers at an elevation of 5,315 feet above sea level and hosts a number of threatened flora and fauna such as the iconic Philippine eagle, Philippine cockatoo, and pitcher plants. Appreciate nature and see some of the Philippines' endangered species in this Mindanao jewel!



For a complete and updated travel guide to the Philippines, download the Travel Philippines App now!

Adventure Awaits you in Davao

Wondering where to spend your next travel adventure? If you're looking for a place where modern city vibes, cultural heritage, and the beauty of a tropical paradise converge, Davao Region is the place to be!

Located in the southeasternmost part of the Philippine Islands, Davao Region prides itself as one of the country's top travel destinations with its beautiful beaches, mouth-watering dishes, and a wide range of close-to-nature adventures. With these offerings, it's no surprise that the Region recorded a 70% growth rate in collective tourism arrivals as of August 2022 and is poised to exceed the government target.

Explore the white-sand beaches

Among the top tourist spots is the largest resort city in the Philippines—the Island Garden City of Samal (IGaCos). It is blessed with immaculate white-sand beaches, diverse marine life, and turquoise blue waters that are perfect for snorkeling, scuba diving, and island hopping.

With the Davao del Norte Sand & Beach Circuit, you can make your Samal Island hopping possible while also witnessing the wonders of Angel's Cove, Wishing Island, Pearl Farm, Malipano Island, and Isla Reta for as low as Php 1,500. Fee already includes the boat, boat entry fee, environmental fee, picnic lunch, tour guide, and travel insurance.

There are also other adventures that await you such as taking a dip at the Hagimit Falls, spelunking and exploring the Monfort Bat Cave, cliff diving at Talikud Island, and even hiking

Mt. Puting Bato. Indeed, you will never run out of things to do and explore at the Island Garden City of Samal!

Discover the green and close-to-nature city

Davao City makes you redefine what a city is as it strives to modernize without taking away the classic beauty of nature, making it the perfect place for those who want the best of both worlds.

Malagos Garden Resort prides itself as the home of the Malagos Chocolate Museum—the first in the country. It gives a tree-to-bar experience by allowing tourists to create their own chocolate! Aside from the museum, there are various activities offered such as birdwatching, feeding animals, and watching an interactive bird show. Malagos Garden Resort remains true to its philosophy of #ToBeOneWithNature.

If you are searching for a place to meditate and connect with your inner spirit, perhaps the Tamayong Prayer Mountain is the one you are looking for. Also known as the Garden of Eden Restored, this man-made European-inspired garden occupies the foothills of Mt. Apo and provides tourists with a realization of everyone's imagination of what heaven looks like. Albeit

owned by The Kingdom of Jesus Christ, the place welcomes everyone regardless of their religious beliefs and practices.

Meanwhile, if you are interested in knowing and seeing the king of birds in real life, you may want to check out the Philippine Eagle Center. This tropical rainforest environment provides shelter and also serves as a captive breeding program for eagles whose numbers are decreasing drastically. The facility offers free tour guiding and use of kiosks as well as special education programs like keeper talk, falconry, and open classroom project.

Another tourist spot for nature trippers and animal lovers is the Eden Nature Park and Resort. It is, by far, one of the largest man-made forests ever created in an effort to combat illegal logging. Since its redevelopment in 1997, the park has been committed to preserving the environment and giving tourists an authentic mountain experience. For those with a brave heart, it offers fun adventures such as skyriding where you get a glimpse of the beauty of Davao from above. The park also introduces the Mindanaoan culture for those who are interested to get an in-depth knowledge of their traditions and beliefs.

Hike the highest peak

How can we forget the tallest mountain in the Philippine Archipelago when discussing the mountains of Mindanao? Mt. Apo, known as the "Grandfather of Philippine Mountains" provides more than just a stunning view from a distance; it also serves as a source of electricity and water and is inhabited by indigenous

tribes. It was designated as a protected area in addition to being an ASEAN Heritage site. Many adventurers include this peak, which rises 2,956 meters above sea level, on their bucket lists!

Your stay in Davao won't be satisfying and complete without tasting the sweetest fruits in the country! Blessed with fertile soil and a relatively better climate, Davao produces the best fruits such as pomelo, lanzones, papaya, and banana. But among the list, try the king and queen fruits—durian and mangosteen! Indeed, Davao is the Philippines' fruit basket and is also one of the world's biggest growers and exporters of exotic fruits.

If you are looking for a travel destination, choosing Davao will never disappoint you. It will never fall short in meeting, if not exceeding, your expectations!

Know more about the Philippines by downloading the Travel Philippines App today via Google Play and App Store or visit <https://app.philippines.travel/>.



**TRAVEL
PHILIPPINES**
app.philippines.travel





TPB Members' Night: Of great feats and sweet victories

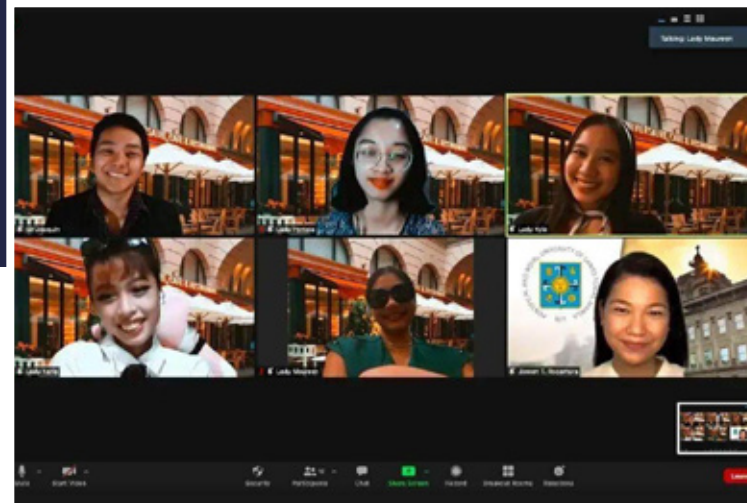
What a year it has been! To celebrate Philippine tourism milestones and recognize the success of TPB members who thrived through the pandemic, the TPB held its first-ever Members' Night last 16 December 2022 at the Philippine International Convention Center, Pasay.

Here are a few photos from the event:



Safety and Sustainability

Aspirations of a Student for the Tourism Industry



If you were to ask a tourism student the reason why they chose their course, 99% of the time their answer would most likely be because they want to travel, explore the world, and go on adventures. The same goes for me.

But who knew that a few days of class suspension would turn into weeks, months, and even years?

It was every tourism student's nightmare not only because we could not travel due to the lockdown but also because seeing employees being laid off and tourism businesses declaring bankruptcy added to the anxiety and uncertainty caused by a global health emergency. Thankfully, the industry is now on its way to recovery and people are traveling again.

The pandemic has given us a very valuable lesson, which is the importance of public health. This is why one of my aspirations for the new normal of travel is for us to have safe and fun travels. I hope that we continue to promote the health and safety of the people as well as abiding by the standards set for cleanliness and hygiene even when the pandemic ends. Doing so can help prevent another pandemic from occurring, which is something we all do not want to happen.

Another aspiration that I have for the tourism industry in the new normal is sustainability. Though tourism contributes

greatly to our economy, it also negatively impacts the environment. As a staffer of the environment committee of UST - Students Tourism Society, promoting responsible travel and raising awareness about sustainable practices have always been two of my advocacies. I believe that even our small and simple efforts in sustainability matter because if we collectively practice traveling responsibly, we can minimize our carbon footprint.

As tourists are now more eager to travel in order to make up for the lost time during the lockdown, I hope that they continue to make a positive difference and conserve the environment.

Additionally, carrying capacities should continue to be implemented to avoid overcrowding and heavy traffic jams, especially with the 'revenge travel' surge.

I also aspire for our industry to have stricter regulations regarding our carbon footprints and nature conservation to significantly minimize the negative effects of tourism on our planet.

Hopefully, by the time I graduate, the pandemic will be over and travelers will continue to travel safely and sustainably.

Written by: Ma. Karla Ysabelle R. Manansala

Karla is a 4th year BS Tourism Management student majoring in Travel Operations and Service Management at the University of Santo Tomas. She is an aspiring flight attendant who wishes to travel across seven continents to both learn and share wonderful stories with people around the globe. During her free time, she enjoys scrapbooking, writing poems, crafting accessories, and experimenting with makeup.

Weaving paths through sustainability

To empower cultural pride among communities as well as enhancing the community members' skills in terms of digital marketing, product branding, and sustainable packaging design, the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines extended marketing assistance to the Sustainable Community-Based Tourism (SCBT) destinations in Lake Buhi, Camarines Sur and Samar, Leyte on 9-13 and 17-21 December, respectively.

Here's a glimpse of the SCBT run in Camarines Sur and Samar.



PHITEX 2022 Post-Tours: Exploring the Philippines' unrivalled destinations

From stunning landscapes and seascapes to vibrant cultural heritage, the Philippines takes pride in its naturally diverse tourist attractions. The hospitality and warmth of the locals also make a visit to the Philippines meaningful and worthwhile.

With Philippine Travel Exchange (PHITEX) Post-Tours presenting an opportunity for PHITEX buyers to explore the unrivalled beauty of Philippine destinations, we asked some of them about their post-tour experience and here are their responses:



“The Negros Oriental-Siquijor post-tour was great. I love every place that we have been to. Wish I could stay even longer. For me, it’s the Filipino people. Being here, how friendly everybody is. The highlight of the tour was probably seeing diverse sea creatures. I got some great pictures. Seeing the sea turtles, being up close with them in their natural habitat, and being able to dive next to them. For scuba divers, this is definitely a great location to be at.” – Richard Petric, Prestige Travel Systems, United States



“This is the first time that I have been to Ilocos and I have heard so much about it, coming up here. It is fantastic, this place is a must on your itinerary. The people are great and it has a vibrant history and culture. It’s so different from other parts of the Philippines and it is very special. So if you like adventure, it’s here. If you like culture, if you like religion, if you like all these aspects, Ilocos is the place to come.”
– Raymond Aucott, Pack Ya Bags Travel Wholesale, New Zealand



“The tour has been wonderful. It’s really nice to see a new part of the world and get to experience local hospitality in multiple different ways. The waters in Siquijor’s Cambugahay Falls was perfect and it was a kind of obviously not a secret place but it felt very secluded and nice thing in nature.” – Jatinder Gupta, Dove Travels, India



“The people are the biggest treasures that we have here in the Philippines, especially in Bohol and Cebu. All the best in the future to our tourism here. Thank you for the wonderful hospitality and hope to see you soon.”
– Anabelle Bedrejo, Fiesta Travel Int'l. Ltd, Canada

TPB's GAD team joins “Women for a Safe and Progressive Philippine Tourism” seminar

Violence against women or VAW is one of our country’s biggest social problems. According to the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), this is a result of gender disparity that “leads men to gain more power over women.”

Every year, the PCW leads the country with an 18-Day Campaign to End VAW and TPB’s Gender and Development (GAD) team supports the cause. Last November 21, TPB’s GAD team attended the “Kababaihang Pilipino sa Turismong Ligtas at Progresibo” (Women for a Safe and Progressive Philippine Tourism) seminar organized by the Policy Formulation and International Cooperation Division of the Department of Tourism (DOT).

TPB GAD members Ms. Ayang Rosima and Mr. Dan Ferrolino who were at the seminar said that apart from women empowerment, the PCW is gathering support from male VAW advocates and conducting activities that highlight positive masculinity because men play a vital role in ending violence against women. And when a VAW-free community is built, having a safe and progressive Philippine tourism is possible.

“Safe and progressive tourism means accessible tourism for all, and this covers gender, age, race, and even PWDs,” said Mr. Ferrolino. “A tourist destination therefore must not only have facilities that can cater to the basic needs of a traveler but also provide a safe space that promotes inclusivity and discourages discrimination.”

Apart from the seminar, the TPB GAD team also attended the kick-off ceremony for the 18-Day Campaign to End Violence Against Women last November 25 and organized various activities for VAW awareness within the organization such as a film showing activity, gender sensitivity training, and the displaying of the 2022 18-Day Campaign to End VAW official banner in the TPB office.



HO HO HO! TPB Christmas party honors its retirees

This year’s Christmas party celebration of the TPB was quite special as it honored the “Magnificent Seven” who took their final bow. Led by COO Marga Nograles, the retirement ceremony saw Mr. James Sy and his wife Mrs. Leah Sy, Mr. Uhde Asual, Ms. Julie Bolante, Ms. Nelia Ramos, Ms. Doris Aparejado, and Ms. Prescya Sevilla receive plaques of appreciation for their years of service.

After the ceremony and to get into the spirit of Christmas, TPB’s HR department organized fun activities for the children of TPB employees and a raffle draw.



A tree for tomorrow: TPB members head to Antipolo for a go- green CSR program



Tourism stakeholders who are part of the TPB Membership Program don't usually gather offline, but when they do, something special happens. Last November, 31 DOT-accredited establishments and organizations participated in the 1st Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Program of the TPB for its members with an aim to create deeper environmental awareness and assist communities in spreading the message of sustainable tourism.

A reforestation activity took place at Mt. Purro Nature Reserve in Antipolo that gave TPB members a chance to plant narra, durian, and rambutan fruit seedlings. This was followed by immersion with the Dumagats, one of the oldest communities in the Philippines, who shared their stories and cultural treasures; a local fruit seed awareness activity initiated by Seed Nation; a trek through the Payaguan River to give participants an overview of the reality of upland communities and to allow them to develop a deeper respect and understanding for rivers, and a regenerative travel workshop to encourage tourism stakeholders to have a shared responsibility in preserving the environment so they can "leave a destination better than it was before they arrived."

This first CSR is a special program as TPB members have been, for the last two years, participating in online activities only such as educational workshops and interventions to strengthen their policies in achieving the goals of Philippine tourism. But this hands-on activity was set to provide a venue for the TPB members to be more environmentally conscious as ambassadors of green and sustainable tourism and help mitigate the adverse effects of tourism on the environment.

The TPB's Domestic Department spearheaded the CSR activity and all other activities for TPB members who have grown to more than 500 since its inception. For its project officer, Ms. Ronileen Bauto, not only did the CSR program help develop a deeper appreciation among tourism stakeholders on the importance of reforestation towards food security, clean water, rich biodiversity and other tangible benefits in the role of sustainable development, it also increased the engagement of the members. And due to its success, the Domestic Department is now looking into conducting more go-green CSR activities in the future such as a clean-up drive, feeding program, and marine conservation.



2023 1st QUARTER TPB CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

11

Hybrid TPB Membership Seminar
Taal Vista Hotel, Tagaytay

16-20

Conduct of Tourism Marketing Plan Workshop in the Municipality of Del Carmen, Surigao del Norte
Del Carmen, Surigao del Norte

18-20

TPB Members' Familiarization Tour Site Validation
Iloilo-Capiz

19-22

Sustainable Community-Based Tourism Site Validation
Laguna/Mindoro/Cebu

20-23

Philippine Motorcycle Tourism Anniversary and Ceremonial Ride
Cebu

24-25

11th Regional Travel Fair Site Validation
Cebu

25-28

TPB Members' Familiarization Tour Site Validation
CDO-Camiguin

25-Feb 2

Marketing Enhancement on Community-Based Tourism
Sagay and Capiz

21-29

International Boat Show Düsseldorf
Düsseldorf, Germany

28-30

Destination Holiday and Travel Show 2023
London, UK

FEBRUARY

2-5

ASEAN Tourism Forum
Yogyakarta, Indonesia

3-5

30th Travel Tour Expo
SMX Convention Center, Manila

10

Hybrid TPB Membership Seminar (NCR)
Metro Manila

15-19

TPB Members' Familiarization Tour Implementation
CDO-Camiguin

16-18

Outbound Travel Market / Business Luxury Travel Mart
Jio World Convention Centre, Mumbai, India

19-22

Philippine Tour Guides Hybrid Conference 2023
Iloilo

21-24

TPB Members' Familiarization Tour Site Validation
Batanes

23-25

Part 2 SCBT Tourism Culture and Business Immersion Program
Lake Sebu

24-26

Outdoor Adventure and Travel Show in Toronto
Toronto, Canada

MARCH

1-3

MICECON 2023
Davao City

3-5

Go Diving Show 2023
UK

1-16

Regional 360 Virtual Reality Tours
Central and Western Visayas

6-10

TPB Members' Familiarization Tour Implementation
Iloilo-Capiz

7-9

Internationale Tourismus-Börse (ITB) Berlin
ExpoCenter City (Messegelände Berlin), Germany

8-13

Domestic Tourism Invitational Program
Laguna-Rizal-Batangas

10-13

DRT Show in Taiwan
Taipei Flora EXPO Dome, Taipei City, Taiwan

15-19

Marketing Enhancement on Community-Based Tourism
Cordillera

20-24

TPB Members' Familiarization Tour Implementation
Batanes

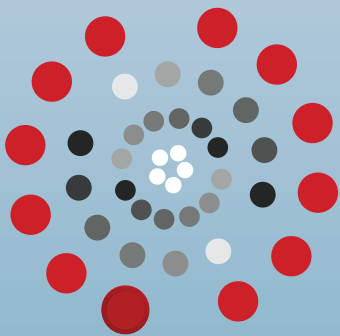
24-28

Marketing Enhancement on Community-Based Tourism
Mauban, Quezon

SAVE THE DATE

01-03 MARCH 2023 | DAVAO CITY

SCAN
TO REGISTER!



M. I. C. E. CON 2023
PHILIPPINE M. I. C. E. CONFERENCE
MEETINGS . INCENTIVE TRAVEL . CONVENTIONS . EXHIBITIONS
MICEConverge: BLAZE NEW TRAILS