



Philippines Tourism E-Newsletter

April 2016

IT'S MORE FUN IN THE PHILIPPINES

IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome to your April Issue of the Philippines Tourism's E-Newsletter, a monthly online of the Department of Tourism (PDOT) London, back after upgrading of our website and functionalities.

We will be updating you on the country's latest tourism developments and positive news in the country.

We will also be detailing our current activities and campaigns designed to encourage more visitors to discover why it is "More Fun" in the Philippines.

PDOT London's New Tourism Attaché

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Page 2

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Page 2

The Philippines Department of Tourism Outlines Its Strategy to the UK Travel Trade

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Page 2

Numerous Travel Accolades for the Philippines

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Page 3

Visit the Philippines Again 2016 is in Full Swing

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Page 4

Positive Tourism Developments in the Philippines

1. DOT Eyes Philippines as a Food Hub in Asia
2. Tourism Department and hotel owners commit to Green Building Code
3. Aquino Sees More Tourists Visiting PH

Page 4

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PDOT London is proud to announce that it welcomes its new Tourism Attaché and Director for Northern and Southern Europe, Mr. Gerard "Gerry" Panga, a tourism marketing and product development specialist with over 20 years of solid industry experience.



He graduated with a B.S. Degree in Tourism from the University of the Philippines- Asian Institute of Tourism (1991). He was an accomplished student leader cited with a recognition award having served actively as the school's Student Council Vice Chairman (1989), and Chairman (1990).

Gerry has also an MBA degree as a scholar of the Philippine Civil Service Commission (2003), and Masters in Tourism Specialization from the School of International Tourism Sciences in Rome, Italy, sponsored by the World Tourism Organization (1998).

He worked previously as Group Tour Manager with the Manila Pavilion Hotel (Feb. 1993-April 1994) before moving to and staying with the national tourism government service in the last 21 years.

He first worked with the Philippine Convention & Visitors Corporation-Travel Trade Sales for 10 years with last assignment as OIC-Regional Manager handling Philippines/Europe/North America Markets (Sept. 1994-Feb. 2004), then transferred to the Department of Tourism (DOT) to serve as

the Philippine Tourism Representative to Taiwan, and as Tourism Attaché to China for combined 11-year foreign service (Feb. 13, 2004-Feb. 12, 2015)

Gerry was recalled to the DOT Head Office in Makati on Feb. 13, 2015 and was assigned to the Market Development Group -Route Development Program where he assisted in opening flight routes and expanding air access/seat capacities to the Philippines from all key source markets around the world. He was also appointed as the Secretary General of the Pacific Asia Travel Association - Philippines Chapter.

After 1 year of residency with the DOT Head Office, Gerry was recently appointed to handle the Philippine Tourism Office in the United Kingdom which has jurisdiction over Northern and Southern Europe market cluster.

Gerry is married with three kids, and likes scuba diving, biking and other outdoor and adventure activities, and traveling with business and leisure travel experience to more than 20 countries and territories.

2015 Marks a Record Breaking Year for Philippines Tourism Especially for the UK Market and a Double Digit Increase in Arrivals for January 2016

2015 saw a tremendous rise in tourism arrivals from the UK, growing to 154,589 individuals. This represented a 15.65% growth rate over 2014, the highest annual growth rate experienced in more than a decade. It was also notably higher than the global growth rate of tourism to the Philippines of 10.91%.

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2016 on the other hand saw global visitor arrivals for the first month of the year reach 542,258 individuals registering a double-digit increase of 13.17% over January 2015.

The country generated an estimated earning of PHP 21.94 billion or GBP 313.43 million from tourism activities for the month of January 2016.

United Kingdom ranked 4th in highest per capita spend in the country.

The strong performance of the industry is expected to continue this year as the industry is gearing for aggressive marketing activities and international events such as the holding of the ASEAN Tourism Forum in January, as well as, increasing awareness of the country's product offerings which will be able to sustain influx of visitors to the Philippines.

The United Kingdom remains as the highest visitor-generating market in Europe and 8th overall for January. It posted a growth rate of 25.95% increase over the same month in 2015 with 15,072 arrivals.

The Philippines Department of Tourism Outlines Its Strategy to the UK Travel Trade



LONDON, UK (March 16, 2016) - In the newly opened Philippine restaurant, Romulos Cafe, The Philippines Department of Tourism (PDOT) London announced its plans to its partners in the travel industry. With "Visit the Philippines Again in 2016" campaign in full swing, many exciting activities are set to entice travellers to visit the country's 7,107 islands.

2015 saw a tremendous rise in tourism arrivals from the UK, growing to 154,589 individuals. This represented a 15.65% growth rate over 2014, the highest annual growth rate experienced in more than a decade. It was also notably higher than the global growth rate of tourism to the Philippines at 10.91%.

For "Visit the Philippines Again in 2016", there are numerous events slated in the country, beginning with the ASEAN Travel Forum (ATF) in January, Routes Asia in March. In April, food will be the showcase as Madrid Fusion Manila celebrates its second year bringing esteemed Michelin chefs from around the globe to showcase their craft.

Manila will also be hosting the World Street Food Congress featuring 24 Street food masters from up to 10 countries. The World Food Expo is slated to be held in August. In October, Manila will be hosting TBEX, the world's largest gathering of travel bloggers, writers and new media representatives. Supporting these events are increases in route access to the Philippines including daily flights from Philippine Airlines by June and more airlifts to secondary Philippine gateways. There will also be an additional 5,500 deluxe rooms by International Chains across Manila, Boracay and Cebu.

Outlining the Philippines' tourism plans for the UK for the coming year is the new Tourism Attaché and Director for Northern and Southern Europe, Mr. Gerard "Gerry" Panga, a tourism marketing and product development specialist with over 20 years of solid industry experience.

Building on the success of its year-long advertising campaign on London buses and taxis last year, 2016 sees the promotions of the Philippines through experiential events and activations in different venues such as the major train stations in London.

PDOT London is also ramping up its digital campaign, starting with its new upgraded website, www.itsmorefuninthephilippines.co.uk, filled with content, imagery and special offers from its travel partners. It has also increased its presence on social media with over 12,700 followers in the UK. It will also be hosting special blogger events and press trips to the country.

The Philippines will be present at the biggest consumer and trade events having successfully participated at the Destinations Show, London International Dive Show and PATA Exchange earlier in the year. It will have a major presence at the Birmingham Dive Show and World Travel Market later in the year.

PDOT London will be increasing its partnership activities with the travel trade by participating in travel trade networking functions such as the PATA Quiz Nights and travel trade magazine roadshows. Joint-promotional campaigns, training events, familiarization trips and the establishment of an e-learning platform are also expected throughout the course of the year.

The tourism office will also be continuing promotions on esteemed publications both for consumer and travel as well as conduct special promotional campaigns on Amazon.

Over the next few weeks, publications, blogs, magazines, dailies and even TV studios such as Travel Hack, the Independent, ITV, Wanderlust, Telegraph, Diver Magazine, Geographical Magazine and Marine Planet are expected to visit the Philippines.

All these events and activities will continue to further encourage visitors to discover why "It's More Fun in the Philippines" and empower the travel industry in the UK to drive support for the destination even more.

Numerous Accolades for the Philippines

In the past few months, the Philippines has continued to garner numerous accolades for travel from esteemed travel publications and bodies such as Condé Nast Traveler, The Guardian, PATA, Trip Advisor and National Geographic.



Palawan is named the Best Island in the World by Condé Nast Traveller Readers' Choice Awards for the 2nd Consecutive Year.



Boracay is named one of the World's Most Romantic Islands by Condé Nast Traveller Readers.



Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary is inscribed into the UNESCO World Heritage List, the Philippines' 6th Natural and Cultural Site.



The Philippines received the award for PATA CEO Challenge 2015 Top Destination (Albay).



Nacpan Beach in El Nido is included in Trip Advisor's 10 Best Beaches in the World.



Sabang Beach in Palawan is listed in Guardian's 50 Best Beaches in the World.



National Geographic Picks Mt. Kanlaon as one of the best places to backpack in 2016.

Visit the Philippines Again 2016 is in Full Swing

With the country holding "Visit the Philippines Again in 2016", there are numerous events slated in the country, beginning with the Asean Travel Forum (ATF) in January, Routes Asia in March.

VPA 2016 is a retail-based campaign to drive urgency and excitement among foreign travelers to visit the Philippines and return for more fun, friendship, feel-good adventures, and fabulous memories to cherish in 2016. It will definitely be most fun-filled and exciting year for the country and its foreign visitors.

The Philippines remains to be a focus of festivals and events boasting a festival somewhere in the country for every day of the year.

This month, Manila is hosting Routes Asia. In April, food will be the showcase as Madrid Fusion celebrates its second year in Manila bringing esteemed Michelin chefs from around the globe to showcase their craft. Manila will also be hosting the World Street Food Congress featuring 24 Street food masters from up to 10 countries. The World Food Expo is slated to be held in August.

In October, Manila will be hosting TBEX, the world's largest gathering of travel bloggers, writes and new media.

Positive Tourism Developments in the Philippines



DOT Eyes PH as a Food Hub in Asia

by [Louise Maureen Simeon – Philippine Star]

MANILA, Philippines - The Department of Tourism (DOT) is aiming to position the

Philippines as a center of food and gastronomy in Asia as it brings Flavors of the Philippine Festival 2016.

"It will take us to every corner of the archipelago for gustatory discoveries, for treasures handed down from generation to generation, for fusion dishes that encapsulate the identity of Filipinos," DOT Undersecretary Benito Bengzon said.

This is also in line with the second run of the Madrid Fusion Manila slated from April 7 to 9 that will bring together top-rated and acclaimed avant-garde chefs from across the globe.

"Madrid Fusion Manila has placed the Philippines on the world gastronomical map.

There is no better way to celebrate our common cultural history but through enjoying and appreciating good food," Spain's Secretary of State for Trade Jaime Garcia-Legaz said.

In celebration of the World Food Month in April, DOT has lined up a month-long festival that would showcase the country's gastronomic offerings, from culinary tours, food trucks, bar crawls, concerts, to agricultural fairs, weekend gourmet markets and bazaars.

Flavors of the Philippines will be held simultaneously in different malls, restaurants and venues across the country starting March 31.

Read More:

<http://www.philstar.com/business/2016/03/15/1562974/dot-eyes-philippines-food-hub-asia>

Hotels Commit to Green Practices

by [Louise Maureen Simeon – Philippine Star]

MANILA, Philippines - The Department of Tourism (DOT) and Philippine hotel owners have committed to adopt green practices and curb greenhouse gas emissions.

The DOT and the Hotel Owners Associations Inc. (PHOAI) pledged to abide by the Philippine Green Building Code issued by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

The Green Building Code provides a framework of standards that will enhance sound environmental and resource management, including efficient use of materials, site selection, planning, design, construction, use, occupancy, operation and maintenance of buildings without significant increase in cost.

Tourism Secretary Ramon Jimenez Jr. noted that greening the hotel industry would provide one big window of opportunity in sustaining the growth of the country's tourism industry.

"Through our collaboration with the hotel industry, we can offer cleaner air and a greener environment to travelers and we help hotel owners bring down their electricity cost. That translates to a more competitive environment for the tourism industry," Jimenez said.

PHOAI president Arthur Lopez added that the Green Building Code would be a top priority of hotel owners and that they would improve energy efficiency of their establishments.

Read More:

<http://www.philstar.com/business/2016/02/15/1553026/hotels-commit-green-practices>

doubled to P227.62 billion in 2015 from P112.55 billion in 2010.

Read More:

<http://www.malaya.com.ph/business-news/business/aquino-sees-more-tourists-visiting-ph>

Aquino Sees More Tourists Visiting PH

President Aquino on Tuesday highlighted the increase in tourism arrivals in the Philippines under his presidency and said he expects this trend to continue.

President Aquino was the guest of honor at the opening of the Novotel Manila in Araneta Center in Cubao, Quezon City, the first Novotel branch in the country. Novotel Araneta had its soft-opening last year.

Novotel is operated by the AccorHotels Group which also runs Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila.

Aquino welcomed the opening of the new hotel as well as AccorHotels' plans to put up five more developments.

Aquino said the AccorHotels' continuing venture is timely as he expects an influx of visitors following the success of the "It's more fun in the Philippines" campaign.

"It gives me great pleasure to witness the beginning of endeavors like this. It is a concrete manifestation of your confidence in our country; it tells me that, like us, you took a long, hard look at our prospects and decided that the best is yet to come—that the years ahead hold even greater progress for the Philippines," he said.

The President said the construction of more hotels helped maximize the potential of the country's tourism industry citing the increase in new rooms to 221, 486 by end 2014 across the country from 162, 403 rooms in 2012. He said another 37,352 new rooms will be built this year.

Aquino said the increase in the number of rooms is at pace with the increase in international tourist arrivals that grew to 5.36 million by 2015 from 3.52 million in 2010. International tourism receipts more than

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