



HOST COUNTRY

Information

# INTRODUCING PHILIPPINES



The Philippines is defined by its emerald rice fields, teeming megacities, graffiti-splashed jeepneys, smouldering volcanoes, bug-eyed tarsiers, fuzzy water buffalo and smiling, happy-go-lucky people.

The Philippines is a land apart from mainland Southeast Asia--not only geographically, but also spiritually and culturally. The country's overwhelming Catholicism, the result of 350 years of Spanish rule, is its most obvious enigma. Vestiges of the Spanish era include exuberant town fiestas (festivals) like Kalibo's Ati-Atihan, unique Spanish-Filipino colonial architecture, and exquisite, centuries-old stone churches lording over bustling town plazas. Malls, fast-food chains and widespread spoken English betray the influence of Spain's colonial successor, the Americans. Yet despite these outside influences, the country remains very much its own unique entity.

The people are, simply, Filipinos - and proud of it. Welcoming, warm and relentlessly upbeat, it is they who captivate and ultimately ensnare visitors.

The Philippines consists of more than 7000 islands, and at certain times of the year it will feel like you have them all to yourself. The typical island boasts a jungle-clad, mountainous interior and a sandy coastline flanked by aquamarine waters and the requisite coral reef, but you'll find plenty of variations on this theme, from marooned slicks of sand in the middle of the ocean to sprawling, overpopulated mega-islands like Luzon and Mindanao.

The Philippines isn't just about finding an isolated beach and getting catatonic. From trekking in the mountains of North Luzon, to getting airborne on a kite board in Boracay, to spelunking in the cave systems of Samar, the Philippines can capably raise any adrenaline junkie's pulse. Much of the action in the Philippines naturally takes place in and around the water. Kitesurfing and windsurfing are big in Boracay and in Daet, Bicol. While surfers are just catching on to the tasty waves that form on both coasts at certain times of the year, divers have long been enamoured of the country's underwater charms. You need only know how to snorkel to go fin deep with the gentle butanding (whale sharks) in Southeast Luzon.

Freshwater pursuits include rafting, kayaking and wakeboarding. On terra firma, the rice terraces around Banaue are most popular for trekking, but there are peaks--including many volcanoes--to be bagged across Luzon, the Visayas, Mindoro and Mindanao.





# DURING THE WORKSHOP

## WHAT TO BRING

- Casual Attires

## WHAT TO WEAR

Establishments in the Philippines are mostly air-conditioned. While it can be warm and humid outside, the conference rooms will be air-conditioned. For this, we recommend that you bring with you light scarf, sweater, shawl or jacket.

As you will be going out on an excursion, we suggest that you bring with you comfortable clothing and a pair of sneakers or sandals. Hat, shades and sunblock will also go a long way to save you from possible sunburn.

## ELECTRICITY

The voltage in the Philippines is 220 volts alternating at 60 cycles per second. If you are traveling with a device that does not accept 220 volts, it is safe to bring with you a voltage converter.

Outlets in the Philippines generally accept 2 plugs:



## INTERNET SERVICE

Internet connection will be available in the guest rooms, conference rooms and secretariat.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the Philippines, you will see armed security guards and military personnel guarding buildings, offices and even shopping malls. The National Police force patrols streets watch over the general public's security. They also sometimes assist traffic aides in controlling the traffic. If the police or other civil authorities stop you for any reason, you should show respect and respond to questions politely. If you do not understand what the police is saying, you may tell them so.





# ARRIVAL

## AIRPORT

Ninoy Aquino International Airport Manila, Philippines

### Terminal 1:

Air China, Air Niugini, Asiana Airlines, China Airlines, China Eastern Airlines, China Southern Airlines, Ethiopian Airlines, Etihad, Eva Air, Gulf Air, Japan Airlines, Jeju Air, Jet Star Asia, Korean Airlines, Kuwait Airlines, Malaysian Airlines, Oman Air, Qantas Airlines, Qatar Airways, Royal Brunei, Saudia Airlines, Thai Airways, Tiger Airways, Turkish Airlines, United Airlines, and Xiamen Airlines

### Terminal 2

PAL Express and Philippine Airlines

### Terminal 3

Delta Air Lines, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Cathay Pacific Airways, Singapore Airlines, All Nippon Airways, Emirates Airlines and AirAsia Phils.

International and Domestic flights:  
Cebu Pacific Air

Domestic flights:  
PAL Express

### Terminal 4

Tigerair Philippines, Air Asia Zest, and Skyjet Airlines

Reminder to our guests that a terminal fee of PHP550.00 for all international departures is collected/charged at Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) upon your departure/exit, payable in PHP and USD.

*AFS staff/volunteer will pick up the participants at Terminal 1, 2, 3, 4. The AFS staff/volunteer will be wearing an AFS shirt and or bringing a placard with the AFS logo on it in order to be easily recognized.*



# OTHER MATTERS

## **Tipping**

In the Philippines, giving of tips highly depends on the services provided. It can range from P50.00-P100.00 when dining in restaurants or when in hotels. Some restaurants incorporate service charge (SC) in the bill. If you check your receipt (OR) and SC is charged, then giving tip is optional.

## **Stores**

Shopping Malls open from 10:00am-10:00pm. There are, however, several 24/7 convenient stores and fast food chains that can be found around the metro. Food deliveries can also be availed 24/7. Contact information can be requested from the front desk.

## **Traffic**

The traffic is left-sided.

It is safe to take metered cabs/taxis for tourists. It is an inexpensive commonly used public transportation next to trains and jeepneys. The flag down is as at P40.00 and P3.50 for every 300meters.

## **Shopping**

Shopping is one of the things tourists love in the Philippines. One of Asia's cheapest and largest bargains are found in the Philippines. Bargains in the Philippines are cheaper compared to the bargains in Singapore and Hong Kong. Prices of the goods for Philippine bargains are comparable to the ones in Thailand and in China.

Greenhills Shopping Center in San Juan is one of the biggest "organized" markets in Manila, selling everything at light prices that can still be haggled down. For the rock bottom prices, Quiapo, Baclaran and Divisoria have the biggest and best markets where you will even find lovely little knick knacks for your home.

Tesoros and Balikbayan Shop on Pasay road will have an array of products from across the Philippines. Also SM's Kultura store showcases local artistry and craftsmanship, bringing together specialties from all over the Philippines for a unique shopping experience.

## **What to Buy in Manila**

Handicrafts, shell work, pearls, and wooden artifacts are popular purchases for visitors shopping in Manila.

Baskets with a variety of functional and decorative uses are retailed around the city. For something quirky, pick up the locust baskets or fish traps. They'll be quite the talking point in your living room back home. Another fun Manila souvenir is the miniature jeepney replica.

Art aficionados may also like to take home a work of art or two by local painters. Galleries run regular shows and international names like Sothebys too have been snapping up works by Filipino artists.

