

# PHILIPPINE TOURISM 2015

## *unprecedented heights*

<b>5.36M</b> <b>Tourist Arrivals</b>	<b>306.58B</b> <b>Pesos Inbound Expenditures</b>	<b>4.98M</b> <b>Tourism-related Jobs</b>
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Source: Arrival/Departure Cards, Philippine Tourism Satellite Accounts

### TOURIST ARRIVALS

Breaching the 5M foreign arrival mark for the first time in the country's history, tourism performance in terms of arrivals grew by 10.91% reaching 5,360,682 visitors by the end of 2015, a 10.91% growth from 4,833,368 in 2014. Korea is the top visitor-generating market with 1,339,678 tourists – the largest count from a single market to date. This market constituted 25% of all arrivals and registered a double digit increment of 13.97% compared to the previous year's arrivals of 1,175,472. The United States of America contributed the 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest influx of tourist arrivals with 779,217 visitors registering a 7.81 % increase from last year's arrivals of 722,750 and accounted for a 14.54 % of the total visitor arrivals. Occupying the 3<sup>rd</sup> spot was Japan with 495,662 visitors and shared 9.25% of the total. This market grew by 6.88% compared to the 463,744 arrivals it generated in 2014. China with 490,841 visitors occupied the 4<sup>th</sup> spot which accounted for a 9.16 % of total arrivals and posted the largest growth among the top tourist markets with a 24.28% increase compared to its previous year's arrivals of 394,951.

The 5<sup>th</sup> major inbound market was Australia with 241,187 arrivals comprising a 4.5% share of the total arrivals.

Completing the top ten visitor markets are Singapore with 181,176 arrivals, Taiwan with 177,670 arrivals grew by 24.27 % from its previous year's arrivals, Canada with 156,363 arrivals, Malaysia with 155,814 arrivals, and United Kingdom with 15.65% growth providing 154,589 arrivals.

### TOURIST RECEIPTS

In terms of income, the Philippines has reached an unprecedented Php 306.58 billion in inbound expenditures. This amount is 2.8% higher than the 2014 earnings amounting to Php 276.89 billion.

The average daily expenditure for 2015 is estimated at Php 4,888.82, while the average per capita expenditure is estimated at Php 48,350.44. The average length of stay of tourists in the country for the year is recorded at 9.89 nights. Korea remains as the top spending market with visitor spending amounting to Php 66.55 billion, followed by the USA with Php 42.31 billion expenditures, Australia ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> by providing Php 12.83 billion while Japan



accounted for Php 12.20 billion to take the 4<sup>th</sup> spot. Completing the top five spending markets is China with visitor spending of Php 10.19 billion.

### **TOURISM EMPLOYMENT**

For 2015, there were 4.982 million workers directly employed in the tourism industry which is estimated to account for 12.7% of the total employed population in the country. Of this total, passenger transportation is the leading sector with 1.792 million trailed closely by the accommodation, food and beverage sector with 1.734 million in employment.

### **TOURISM PLANNING AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT**

The DOT has completed the Tourism Guidebook for Local Government Units (LGU) which is a tool that guides LGU's in formulating tourism plans. This undertaking is a joint effort with the Department of Interior and Local Government, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Development Academy of the Philippines and their consultants. The guidebook also contains templates and forms which the LGUs can pattern their plans after. For 2015, Orientation-Workshops on Tourism Guidebook were conducted at the provinces of Aklan, Masbate, Palawan, Ilocos Sur, and at the National Capital Region.

For Cruise tourism, the DOT conducted port inspections in preparation for the formulation of Cruise Tourism Strategy. To increase the number of cruise ship calls in the Philippines by cruise lines in all categories, a Cruise Tourism Development Strategy Workshop was conducted to promote an increase in the sea-bound number of tourists to the country and as well as their spending ashore.



On Ecotourism, the Department has developed and implemented the ecotourism programs and projects based on the National Ecotourism Strategy and Action Plan (NESAP) 2013-2022 which include the conduct of Ecotour Package Development Workshop for Balinsasayao Twin Lakes Natural Park and Bataan Natural Park and site validation of Baler Ecostrip as possible ecotourism model site.

For community-based tourism development, the Department has redeveloped and enhanced the National Homestay Program to provide quality tourist experience, and promote sustainable tourism to benefit the guests as well as the homestay owners from Baler, Siquijor, and Kiangnan with its second dry run.



#### ***Tourism Working Group (APEC-TWG) Meeting held last May17-18, 2015 in Boracay***

As part of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Hosting of the Philippines, a conference was held in Boracay, Philippines, on 19 May 2015 which tackled the issues of taxation in the tourism and travel industry. A study was also pursued by the APEC Tourism Working Group (TWG) entitled "An Assessment of the Role of Taxation in Promoting Travel and Tourism Growth in the APEC Region". This study was conducted in partnership with the private sector represented by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). It aims to assess

the impact of current taxation measures as well as their modifications/ changes overtime in relation to travel and tourism demand, revenues and job growth in participating APEC economies; evaluate the comparative position of taxation levels in the travel and tourism industry against taxes imposed on the other key sectors in participating APEC economies to ensure fair and equitable treatment of taxation across industries in the region; and determine the degree of inhibition to regional economic integration and growth by taxation policies.



**Participants from ASEAN Member States posed with Asst. Secretary Cañizal (far left), Tourism Secretary Jimenez, Jr. (6<sup>th</sup> from left), Philippine Commission for Women Exec.Dir. Emmeline Versoza(5<sup>th</sup> from right) during the Forum.**

It was also the Philippines' pride to host the First ASEAN Gender and Development (GAD) Forum on Tourism held on September 8-9, 2015 at Diamond Hotel, Manila, with the theme: Improving Women Empowerment in Tourism: Women's Initiative in Decision and Policy Making. Participants were representatives from the ASEAN, China, Japan and Korea National Tourism Organizations (NTOs) and ASEAN Ministry Office in charge of Gender and Development as well as representatives from various government agencies, Tourism industry associations, academe, local government units and other



tourism industry stakeholders. The Forum also shared best practices in the ASEAN region in Gender responsive tourism particularly in promoting greater participation of women in leadership and decision making in the tourism sector.



**ASEAN Plus Three Tourism Youth Summit participants at the South Palms Resort, Panglao, Bohol**

The Philippine Department of Tourism was also the proud host to the ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan and Korea) Tourism Youth Summit 2015 held last September 28 to October 03, 2015 at the South Palms Resort in Panglao, Bohol and at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Cebu City.

This program is a component of the ASEAN Plus Three Tourism Cooperation Work Plan 2013-2017 adopted during the 12th Meeting of ASEAN, China, Japan and ROK Tourism Ministers in January 2013 in Vientiane, Lao. The Philippines together with Thailand were selected as the lead country coordinators on the convening of the ASEAN Plus Three Tourism Students Summit. From 2013 to 2014, Thailand was host to the said Youth Summit and it was the Philippines' turn to host in 2015.

With the theme: "Building the Future through Culture, Identity and Community", the Summit provided awareness among the youth participants about the ASEAN initiatives and ASEAN Economic Community. Likewise, the youth were able

to establish camaraderie, cultural exchange and shared knowledge on issues related to cultural preservation, environmental protection and socio-economic growth.

A total of forty two (42) participants representing nine (9) ASEAN member countries including Japan were able to experience adventure, culture and ecotourism product offerings of Bohol and Cebu such as visits to the Chocolate Hills and Philippine tarsier and wildlife sanctuary, Loboc river cruise and tree planting at Bohol Biodiversity Complex. The group was also treated to a city tour and visit to the University of San Carlos, one of the oldest university in the country.



***Tourism Secretary Ramon Jimenez, Jr. during Madrid Fusion 2015 held at the Mall of Asia***

## MARKETING

2015 is “Visit the Philippines Year!” and part of this year’s festivities is the famed Madrid Fusión Manila which showcased Spanish and Filipino chefs in a worldwide culinary stage as they celebrate 300 years of shared history through food. Madrid Fusion which featured three exciting events namely the International Gastronomy Congress, Trade Exhibition and Flavors of the Philippines Festival was held at the SMX Convention Center, Pasay City from April



24 to 26, 2015. Some of the favorite local chefs and Michelin-starred Spanish chefs participated in this event. The conduct of food tours and tastings, roving food trucks were likewise all part of the said event.



***MTV Music Evolution Banner displayed at the venue, Quirino Grandstand, Rizal Park, Manila***

Another banner activity under the Visit the Philippines Year 2015 campaign was the MTV Music Evolution Manila 2015 held at the Quirino Grandstand, Rizal Park, Manila last May 2015. The event, a first of its kind, an international musical concert showcased the evolution of music genre sounds that was telecast live to an international audience of over 300 million in 160 countries. The musical concert also featured iconic and contemporary hip hop artists from both international and local music scenes who performed on a single stage.



***DOT Undersecretary Benito C. Bengzon, Jr. gives the welcome remarks during the Grand Opening Ceremony of the DRT Philippines Show 2015 at SM Mega Mall, Ortigas, Manila***

## **DIVE**

After making waves in Beijing, HongKong, Shanghai and Taiwan, it is now the Philippines' chance to host Dive Resort Travel (DRT) Show, considered the largest international dive expo in Asia Pacific in partnership with LX Development Group (LXDG), owner of the DRT Show franchise. With the theme "It's More Fun To Dive in the Philippines", the three-day dive fair was held at SM Megatrade, SM Mega Mall in Mandaluyong City last September 11-13, 2015 which gathered a total of 4,569 participants composed of dive exhibitors, dive enthusiasts and marine conservationists.

During the event, several activities were lined up to include an exhibition of international and local dive companies which showcased their latest dive products, equipment, and resorts/destinations. Likewise, a Dive Travel Exchange or business to business (B2B) meeting was organized to provide opportunities for the local dive tour operators to network with foreign buyers from source markets such as China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia, United Kingdom, Germany and the United States.



In addition, there were a series of underwater photography and cinematography workshops, marine conservation and technical diving seminar conducted by international experts.

A photo gallery with over 100 underwater photographs taken by several of the country's top professional underwater photographers and cinematographers were exhibited during the event.



***Visitors to the DRT Philippines Show flock to the Underwater Photo Gallery to view underwater photos taken in the Philippines by top underwater photographers***

## **ROUTE DEVELOPMENT**

To strengthen the Philippines' position as the central hub and multiple gateway destination in Southeast Asia, the Department has embarked on route development initiatives to improve air access to the country. As a member of the Philippine Air Negotiating Panel, the Department has actively participated in air talks with the following countries: Singapore, Taiwan, Oman, Australia, Mexico, Qatar, Turkey, Russia and Korea to increase air seat entitlements. The Department conducted networking activities with route planners from Taipei,

Taiwan to assess possible direct flights from Kalibo and Cebu. Route development support was also provided to charter operators from China for the Xiamen to Legazpi, Guangzhou to Laoag and Guangzhou to Cebu flights; and the Philippine Airlines' new flight from Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea) to Manila.

The Department actively participated in Routes Asia 2015 held in Kunming, China last March 15-17, 2015. During the said event, a hand over ceremony was held from China to the Philippines as the next host of the Routes Asia 2016. The country has three (3) booths represented by the Department of Tourism, Mactan-Cebu International Airport and Clark International Airport. The Department also attended the World Routes 2015 held in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa last September 19-22, 2015 to promote the international gateways of the country, to network with airline route planners and developers as well as to promote the country's hosting of Routes Asia 2016 in Manila. The Philippines was among the finalists for the most prestigious World Routes Marketing Awards together with other destinations such as Ireland, Hungary, Tenerife, Australia, and Las Vegas of which the overall winner was won by Ireland.

Likewise, in preparation for the Philippine hosting of Routes Asia 2016 the Department conducted the Training on the Fundamentals of Route Development for the Philippine organizing team and route development stakeholders.



*Philippine Delegation led by Dir. Verna Buensuceso, (3<sup>rd</sup> from left) Head of the Market Development Group (MDG) posed at the Philippine Booth during the Routes Asia 2015 held in China last March 2015.*

## ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE

To continuously develop the interest for the Philippines as a Learn English destination, the DOT actively participated in ten (10) travel fairs in identified source markets; Korea's Study Abroad and Emigration Fairs, Begin Lingua Fair (Russia), JATA Tourism Expo 2015 and ESL Long Stay Fairs (Japan), Education Expo 2015 (Beijing and Shanghai).

For the first time, the DOT participated in Thailand's Office of Civil Service Commission (OCSC) International Education Expo.

The Department further showcased the programs and facilities of Philippine ESL schools during consumer activities such as the ESL Spring Fair in Tokyo, ESL Autumn Roadshows in Fukuoka, Osaka and Nagoya, Japan and the first Study in the Philippines Exhibition held in Taipei, Taichung and Kaohsiung, Taiwan. The agent's familiarization trips were also organized for partners to better appreciate our local ESL schools in Manila and Cebu.

Likewise, to further improve our Philippine ESL products, the Department conducted site inspection of local ESL schools located in Cavite to assess and ensure that facilities, services and qualifications of teachers meet the qualification requirements of the ESL market. The DOT also partnered with the British Council to conduct a demo of the Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT) with ESL teachers in Baguio and Cebu.



***ESL Autumn Roadshow in Osaka***

## **MEDICAL TRAVEL AND WELLNESS TOURISM**

The Philippines ranked 8<sup>th</sup> among the top medical tourism destinations in the world in 2015, according to the International Healthcare Research Center and the Medical Tourism Association (MTA). MTA is a global non-profit association for medical tourism and the international patient industry that represents healthcare providers, governments, insurance companies, employers and other buyers of healthcare. This was based on a study where the Philippines had been overwhelmingly mentioned as the results were retrieved, even as the country was not included in the earlier survey. After force-



ranking, the Philippines came out 8<sup>th</sup> for medical tourism attractiveness.

The Department of Tourism, in partnership with the other members of the Technical Working Group (TWG) composed of the Department of Trade and Industry-Board of Investment (DTI-BOI), Department of Health (DOH) and with the private sector stakeholders has completed the Healthcare Services for Medical Travel and Wellness Tourism Industry Roadmap to ensure sustainability of the industry as it provides services to medical travelers seeking healthcare in the country and meeting the global standard in patient safety and quality healthcare.

To ensure the continuity of the program for medical travel, the DOT organized the Workshop dubbed 1st Convenor's Meeting on Healthcare Services for Medical Travel and Wellness Tourism Industry Roadmap participated by the members of the TWG, internationally accredited hospitals in Metro Manila and Cebu. After having identified the formation of clusters, leadership council, data collection branding, international patient pathway or (IPP) and market development, the workshop initiated the implementation of the Action Plan as recommended in the Industry roadmap.

To sustain our presence among our key targeted market development areas, such as the US and Middle East, the DOT participated in the 8<sup>th</sup> World Medical Tourism and Global Healthcare Congress held in the USA in September 2015 and in the International Medical Travel Exhibition and Conference (IMTEC) held in Dubai in October 2015.

Likewise, as a result of the Philippines' continued presence in the international medical travel shows, the medical tourism fam tour and medical travel exchange were conducted and participated in by foreign buyers.

With the immediate objective of increased participation of other stakeholders and international gateways, product audits of Cebu-based internationally accredited hospitals, facilities such as Perpetual Succour, Chong Hua, and Cebu Doctor's Hospitals were conducted which led to their inclusion in the Philippine medical tourism program.

To keep abreast on the current trends in global medical travel and wellness tourism, the DOT undertook the conduct of research and networking with key industry players on medical travel and wellness tourism.



*International Medical Travel Exhibition and Conference (IMTEC) held in Dubai in October 2015.*

## **TOURISM STANDARDS AND TRAININGS**

The Office of Tourism Standards and Regulation and Office of Industry Manpower Development have continuously provided support to industry stakeholders in capacity development and training courses.

A total of 137 training sessions were conducted that benefitted 5,867 individuals by equipping them with the skills, proper awareness and enhancing their competitiveness in their fields. Several training programs for various tourism stakeholders were conducted for the year to include: Train the Trainers for Tour Guides, Ecotourism awareness for Quirino Province executives, Eco Guiding, Eco-Cultural Community Tour Guides. Seminars for tourist drivers and kalesa drivers of Intramuros were conducted to train them as guides and tourism frontliners. Likewise, to train the police on tourism awareness, crisis management, tourist safety and security, the seminar for national Tourist Oriented Police for Community Order and Protection (TOPCOP) was conducted. Other trainings completed were: effective customer service for NAIA partners, micro tourism retail and Filipino professional therapist seminar, Kulinarya training, food and beverage handling seminar for DOT personnel, tourism awareness and capability building seminar for LGUs, and earthquake preparedness seminar among others.





***PNP participants attending the Seminar for national Tourist Oriented Police for Community Order and Protection (TOPCOP)***

Further, the ADB-Canada Improving Competitiveness in Tourism Philippines (TA-8334 PHI) is still on-going. It is a project of the Asian Development Bank with the Department of Tourism as its implementing agency and funded by Government of Canada. It is part of the increasing competitiveness for inclusive growth which has commenced last November 2013.

The said Project is a capacity building intervention to support regulatory review and reform, raise tourism and hospitality service and accommodation standards, and develop skills to support growth. It includes:

- Regulatory Impact Assessment which analyzes survey findings for input to RIA work plan and reform of tourism-related license project to which the analysis of the business license and permits survey report was already completed;
- for Hotel and Resort Quality Assurance and Accreditation System, the Department (1) assessed 700 establishments wherein 141 of those were assessed in 4 pilot regions such as in Cebu, Bohol, Palawan, and Davao;
- developed and piloted the Services Hospitality Efficiency Food Friendliness (SHEFF) Standards;
- Trained 75 DOT Assessors and 25 Third Party Assessors on the New National Accommodation Standards;



and (4) developed and piloted the New 'Mabuhay' Accommodation Standards on 28 enterprises and trained 50 DOT Assessors.

For the Tourism Industry Skills Development, final report on the implementation of Phase 1 of the Industry Skill Grant Scheme was already completed.



***National Master Trainers and Master Assessors Training on Front Office Operations held at Subic Park Hotel last July 2015***

The Department of Tourism, with technical assistance from Asian Development Bank and Government of Canada has developed and produced a Manual on Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA). It aims to provide guidance in institutionalizing RIA program within the DOT and its attached agencies, as a mechanism to ensure a well-crafted tourism-related regulation.

Under the RIA, the Department has completed five (5) Regulatory Impact Statements (RISs) including: (a) Rules and Regulations Governing the Conduct of Sports Scuba Diving in the Philippines; (b) Cost Recovery of Hotel Accreditation Fees; (c) Simplification of Travel Tax Administration; (d) Guidelines on Marine Wildlife Tourism Interactions; and (e) Review of Special Residents Retirement Visa Application Fee.

The DOT also conducted series of RIA seminars with 87 participants from DOT and attached agencies as well as trainings with 350 local government officials from Cebu, Bohol, Davao, and Palawan. Focus group discussions with scuba diving agency (PADI), operators, establishments and professionals were undertaken to finalize the draft scuba diving rules and regulations. It also completed the survey on business and licensing permit system of 1,000 tourism establishments as well as that of tourism related establishments in Bohol, Cebu, Davao, Palawan, and Manila.



*Mercure Hotel, Ortigas(left), Discovery Primea (Makati), right*

## INVESTMENTS

The Department has endorsed a total of 19 new projects related to tourism development for 2015. This includes eight (8) Hotels, two (2) Tourism Economic Zone Locators, two (2) Integrated Hotel and School Complex, five (5) Resorts, and tourist inn and apartment hotel. Total project cost amounted to 18.280 billion pesos with a manpower complement of 1,373 personnel to be employed upon completion of the said projects. These properties range from international giants such as Mercure of the Accor Group,



Radisson, homegrown big players such as Seda and Go Hotel Brands, integrated developments that feature schools, to the limited rooms of luxury resorts.

## REGIONAL OFFICES

The Regional Offices continued to partner with the Local Government Units (LGU's), NGO's, private sector and other tourism stakeholders to implement the various planning, marketing and promotions and regulatory activities of the Department. For this year, the DOT-NCR Office conducted three (3) technical assistance activities and participated in five (5) international and local travel fairs, tourism exhibits and other related tourism activities such as Travel Tour Expo 2015; the First Pasay Travel and Tourism Summit; and DOT's Countdown to Christmas: Celebrating the Regions Exhibit.

With cruise tourism becoming one of the fastest growing segments in the tourism industry, and Manila as the most visited port of call for international cruise ships, the NCR Office provided ship reception which includes lei reception and provision of cultural performances to the delight of the cruise passengers of twenty (20) cruise liners which docked at Manila South Harbor. Among these cruise ships were: 1) MS Costa Victoria with 2,394 passengers, 2) Arcadia P.O. Cruises with 1,940 passengers, 3) MS Celebrity Century with 1,800 passengers, and 4) Legend of the Seas among others. This is proof that the Philippines is becoming a popular cruise destination.

Likewise, to expand its networking with international cruise operators and eventually attract more cruise ships to make their stops in the Philippines, the DOT-NCR participated in the Cruise Shipping Miami 2015 held at Miami,

Florida, USA on March 16-22, 2015. The Office conducted nine (9) industry manpower trainings such as the Tourist Oriented Police for Community Order and Protection (TOPCOP) Phase I Phase II which provides basic tourism concepts and overview to PNP personnel who are designated as tourist police. Calesa drivers also underwent Tourism Frontliners Seminar to enhance the skills of the Kutseros in providing excellent customer service. The Office also organized cultural, educational activities for group tours, international convention delegates among others.

DOT Cordillera Administrative Region (DOT-CAR) provided technical assistance in terms of validating tourism sites for the Ifugao Provincial Tourism Development Plan and Tuba Municipal Tourism Development Plan as well as conducted manpower training seminar on Homestay program. The Region also provided support to Cordillera Great Traverse which promoted adventure tourism while assistance was also provided to several festivals to include 6<sup>th</sup> Tam-awan International Arts Festival 2015 coinciding with the celebration of the Heritage Month which gathered Baguio artists as well as other artists to showcase their artworks depicting Cordillera culture.

The DOT-Region I provided assistance to nine (9) local festivals and events such as Hundred Islands Festival, Bangus Festival and also participated to 22<sup>nd</sup> Travel Tour Expo. To attract more cruise ships to make their port of calls in this region, the Office participated in the Cruise Shipping Miami in Florida.

To market Cagayan Region as the “Adventure capital of the Philippines” and as a nature and culture based tourism destination, DOT-Region 2 provided marketing support services to various

festivals/events such as Kalesa, Kabayo, Kutsero Festival (KKK) held in Isabela and Kalanguya Festival in Nueva Viscaya. The Office also provided assistance to Cebu Pacific One for Fun Caravan in Cagayan.

In addition, media and travel trade invitational's were organized for events such as Windsurfing and Kite boarding, while industry trainings on Homestay program, eco tour guiding, Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Management for stakeholders were conducted. Technical assistance to the LGUs in terms of formulation and updating of tourism development plans and conduct of workshop on investment and incentive code were undertaken.

DOT-Region 3 conducted several training programs such as TOPCOP seminars held in Pampanga, Aurora and Bataan while planning and marketing assistance was provided for projects namely National Consultation on the draft “Guidelines on Marine Wildlife Tourism Interaction in the Philippines, Launch of North Philippines Visitors Bureau and APEC Summit in Clark, Pampanga. Likewise, the Regional Office continued to conduct accreditation of tourism establishments such as hotels, resorts, tourist inns, travel and tour agencies, tourist land transport, restaurants and spa.

In the CALABARZON area, among the activities of the DOT-Region 4-A Office include the conduct of Visitor Satisfaction Survey for Taal Volcano Island in Talisay Batangas, review and evaluation of eco-tourism projects as well as monitoring of the implementation of sustainable tourism development projects such as Mt. Makiling Forest Reserve (MMRF) as ASEAN Heritage Park, Los Baños Laguna; and Mt. Daguldo, San Juan Batangas. The Office also extended support and assistance to several cultural festivals and events such as Parade of Lights Festival in Batangas, Pahiyas in Lucban, Quezon and



the 400<sup>th</sup> Founding Anniversary of Los Baños, Laguna. In addition, the Office coordinated and hosted the familiarization tours of the international and local tri-media to increase awareness of the region's various destinations.

To promote cruise tourism and enhance the image of Puerto Princesa City, Coron, and Romblon as a “must experience” cruise destinations, the DOT-Region 4-B provided ship reception to 13 cruise ships among these were MV Legend of the Seas, MS Europa, Star cruises’ Superstar Aquarius, MS Amadea, MV Albatros.

In addition, MIMAROPA Office also extended technical assistance to the tourism industry stakeholders during the conduct of DOT-ADB Canada Tourism Industry Skills Training Grant Workshop held in Puerto Princesa City. In terms of tourism planning and product development, assistance was also provided to LGU's, NGO's, tourism establishments and stakeholders in the assessment and evaluation of touristic value of proposed toursites in Sibuyan Island, Romblon, San Vicente and El Nido, Palawan, proposed Busuanga River cruise and Gumaer Falls in Abra de Ilog, Occidental Mindoro.

Likewise, the Office provided marketing and promotions support to various events to name: Commemoration of “A Salute to Valor: Palawan - 70 years of Freedom”, 1<sup>st</sup> MIMAROPA Festival, Malasimbo Festival among others. Industry manpower trainings like housekeeping for Homestay program were conducted in Marinduque, El Nido and San Vicente Palawan as well as front office operations seminars in El Nido, Palawan, and Mindoro Occidental and Calapan City. Famtrips were also organized for media, tour operators, and stake holders to create awareness on

MIMAROPA's tourism products.



For Bicol region, the DOT-Region 5 developed a total of three (3) new tourism products namely Inland Cultural Heritage Ecotourism in Libmanan, Camarines Sur; the Dolphin Watching (is currently being developed) in Sto. Domingo, Albay; and the “Albay by the bay” which is an island hopping activity in Bacacay, Albay. The region also validated/ evaluated a total of 14 sites in Aroroy, Masbate (8 sites) and in Libmanan, Camarines Sur (6 sites). A total of 38 capacity building seminars for industry workers and LGUs were conducted while there were 8 local travel and trade fairs and four international events were actively participated to name: the 14<sup>th</sup> Bicol Tourism, Trade and Investment Mission to USA, and the 35<sup>th</sup> BNAA Convention in Tampa Bay, Florida. The Region also provided assistance to 37 local festivals such as Bicol Arts Festival in Legazpi City and Daragang Magayon Festival in Albay, and to sixteen (16) special events to name; Daet International Kite Boarding Competition and Pilgrimage tours to Joroan and Peñafrancia.

To promote cruise tourism in the Western Visayas Region, DOT Region 6 participated in Cruise Shipping Miami, Florida and at Seatrade Cruise Asia held in South Korea. The Region also participated in the Jeju technical visit in Seoul, Korea to conduct benchmarking of seaports. Likewise, to allow the passengers and crew of cruise ships to experience the Filipino hospitality, the Office provided welcome reception to seven (7) cruise ships which made their port of call in Boracay namely; MS Costa Victoria, MS Celebrity Century, MS Seabourn, Seven Seas Voyager, Legend of the Seas, Costa Atlantica and MS Europa.

The Regional office likewise provided assistance during the conduct of APEC meetings in Bacolod, Iloilo and Boracay as well as other events to promote the region as an emerging MICE destination. Marketing and promotions support were

also provided to festivals and other events such as Masskara Festival, Panaad sa Negros, Celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> Founding Anniversary of Badiangan, Iloilo, Tinuom Festival which highlighted local cuisine of the municipality. Various media, airline representatives, tour operators and different groups were assisted during their famtour held in Boracay. A total of 31 trainings/ workshops were implemented and to ensure the successful hosting of 2 APEC meetings while in preparation for the hosting of two (2) APEC meetings in Bacolod City and Negros Occidental, ocular inspections of convention facilities was undertaken.

Likewise, in partnership with the DENR, DOT-Region 6, identified as a priority ecotourism destination has conducted several ecotourism activities such as Workshop for the Formulation of the Rajah Sikatuna Protected Landscape–Ecotourism Management Plan; ocular inspection of Lake Balanan in Negros Occidental; and the consultation and preparatory activities for the Green Passport Project. There were also invitational/familiarization trips/ incentive travel and exposure trips conducted.

For 2015, DOT-Region 7 was the proud host to the ASEAN Plus Three Tourism Youth Summit 2015, participated in by youth from the nine (9) ASEAN member countries including Japan. The summit enabled the youth participants to raise the level of awareness of the ASEAN youth on issues pertaining to cultural preservation, environmental protection, and socio-economic growth. In terms of tourism development planning, the DOT-Region 7 has completed the conduct of 39 tourism development planning orientation/seminars, seven (7) ecotourism development programs such as the DOT-DENR joint projects like the Lake Balinsasayao Stakeholders' Orientation and Rajah Sikatuna



Protected Landscape Stakeholders' Orientation.

A total of 33 industry manpower trainings were implemented for this year and these include the Tourism Industry Skills Grant Scheme Workshop held in Cebu and Bohol. In preparation for the hosting of APEC meetings and International Eucharistic Congress, APEC and Orientation Seminar for Taxi Drivers were conducted. Likewise, thirteen (13) market development activities such as media coverage/photo shoots featuring the various destinations of Central Visayas in TV and print were undertaken.

To develop and promote activities that would generate visitor arrivals and tourist receipts as well as promote awareness on the programs, activities and projects of Eastern Visayas, DOT-Region 8, provided support/assistance to 27 major events such as the Apostolic visit of Pope Francis in Tacloban, International Coastal clean-up and the annual festivals of the Region. There were eight (8) media fam tours hosted, three advertisements and 11 events coverage and press conference for the Eastern Visayas Summer Fun launch 2015.

With Eastern Visayas getting popular as a cruise destination, cruise ship reception was provided to cruise liner MS. Caledonia Sky with 100 cruise passengers and MS Europa with 365 passengers. These cruise ships docked at Capu Island in Northern Samar and Limasawa Island in Leyte and in Kalanggaman Island, Palompon, Leyte.

To intensify marketing and promotion of the Region as a cruise destination it actively participated to Sea Trade Cruise held in South Korea to increase awareness of the Philippines' potential as a cruise destination and at the same time, network with cruise operators. It also joined the Philippine Business Mission in Japan.

DOT-Region 9 continues to promote bird watching as an activity to attract and sustain awareness on the value of environmental protection through tourism. To highlight the uniqueness of Zamboanga City in the birding community, having been recognized as the first ever breeding ground of the great egret documented in the Philippines, the DOT-Region 9 co-organized together with Zamboanga State College of Marine Sciences and Technology (ZSCMST), Wild Bird Club of the Philippines, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Zamboanga City Tourism Office the 1<sup>st</sup> Zamboanga Bird festival or Dia de Aves held last February 2015. The bird festival was held at the bird sanctuary in Rio Hondo Village inside the Zamboanga State College of Marine Sciences and Technology. The festival was a success which attracted a lot of people including foreign bird-watching enthusiasts from Denmark, England, and France. Also the DOT Regional Office conducted an Eco guide seminar to train the locals of Manukan on cave guiding.

To intensify promotion of Region 10 destinations, cultural festivals, facilities and services, the DOT Region 10 Office provided assistance on the various activities such a Talk on “Tourism in Cagayan de Oro and its new Trends”, Festivals of festivals in Malaybalay City. A welcome ship reception was provided to MS Caledonean Sky Expedition in Cagayan de Oro and Camiguin. They also conducted a total of 42 inspections of tourism establishments.

For Region 11, “ONE DAVAO” which is a regular program of DOT-Region 11 in partnership with One Davao Tourism Officers Association, all tourism events and activities of each province and city were calendared. Packages for the peak seasons were created and key events were

highlighted. In addition, a MICE program called “Let’s Meet in Davao” was conducted aimed at positioning Davao as a MICE destination wherein those who will hold their meetings in Davao can avail of incentives such as discounted hotel rates, transport fares and shopping perks. Aside from incentives, those who will visit Davao will get to experience the cultural and ecotourism attractions which Davao has a lot to offer.

In terms of industry manpower training, the Office has conducted a total of 21 trainings/seminar like a seminar for tourist van drivers.

DOT-Region 12 provided assistance to 57 festivals/events and travel fairs in order to promote the region. Also, the DOT Office participated in local and international events as well as organized familiarization tours to attract tourists to come and experience the rich cultural heritage and ecotourism potentials of the Region.

To pave the way for the development of local cuisines that will represent the region’s culture as an iconic cuisine, the DOT-CARAGA provided assistance to Kumbira, an annual culinary live show competition which aims to showcase the culinary talents and skills of Caraganons. The culinary live show was held last February 26-27, 2015. To capacitate the tourism workers, tourism industry training programs were regularly conducted to include frontline service training for public utility drivers, tourist reception and tour guiding techniques as well as gender and development training. The DOT CARAGA also provided support to the International Competition on Game fishing and Surfing.



## ATTACHED AGENCIES

**The Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA)** has implemented various tourism infrastructure projects nationwide particularly in areas with high tourism potentials. In 2015, it rehabilitated and upgraded several tourism areas across the country and implemented a more efficient and convenient systems for collecting travel tax.

A total of 52 infra projects were completed, with an aggregate cost of PH 1,048.164 Billion. Some of these notable projects included the construction of the following: Iloilo Convention Center in Iloilo, World War II Landmark, Historical Park and Pavilion in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte, Tourism Center New Public Grandstand in Cabarroguis, Quirino, cottages in Sibuan Cove, Davao, Calayan Island, foot bridge and wharf, pavilion and view deck of the first Easter mass ecological, historical and recreational Park in Butuan City. TIEZA has also completed the construction of tourist visitors' centers and green rest rooms in popular destinations like Aklan and Underground River in Puerto Princesa, cottages and convention center in Bislig, Surigao del Sur and construction of multi-purpose building with boardwalk in Donsol, Sorsogon.



***Iloilo Convention Center ready for the APEC meetings***

It has also undertaken the restoration of the Carlos Botong Francisco mural at the Manila City Hall, rehabilitation of Banaue Hotel roofing in Banaue, Ifugao as well as the reconstruction of Loboc river terminal in Bohol. To develop Camp Manuel T. Yan as an ecotourism and tribal park, construction of ecotourism complex office, viewing deck and tribal houses were already completed. Likewise, with the inclusion of Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary in Davao Oriental to the UNESCO World Heritage Site and at the same time increase its appeal as an ecotourism destination, construction of the Visitor's Information Center, Research Center Building and signage were completed.



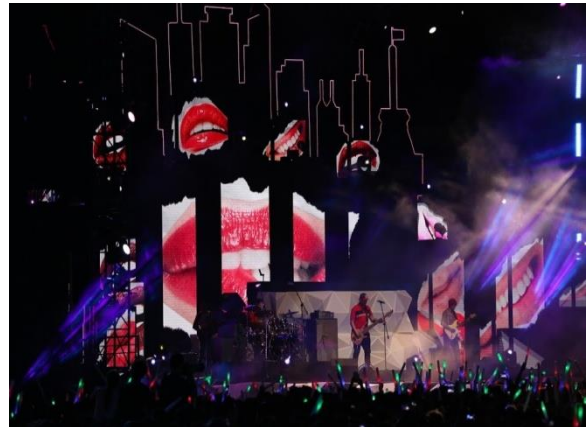
***Visitor Information Center at Mt. Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary ecotourism Park in Davao Oriental***



As part of the 117<sup>th</sup> Philippine Independence celebration, TIEZA in partnership with DOT, Local government of Kawit, Cavite and the National Historical Commission of the Philippines has installed the monumental lighting and video mapping show of the iconic Aguinaldo Shrine. This 20 minute state of the art video mapping show is the first of its kind in the country and has presented the Aguinaldo Shrine in a completely new perspective, allowing new technology to transform the heritage structure of the Aguinaldo house into a modern one. The agency also participated in various travel and trade events, and provided support to LGU-initiated events & festivals. On revenue collections, the TIEZA generated a total of PH 3,129.64 Billion in revenue collection from operating properties and processing fee of PH 147.336 Billion for the year.

**Tourism Promotions Board (TPB)** is tasked to market and promote the Philippines domestically and internationally as a world-class tourism and MICE destination. TPB in partnership with the DOT launched a new marketing campaign called Visit the Philippines Year (VPY) 2015 during the Philippine Travel Exchange (PHITEX) 2015. The VPY is a tourism tactical campaign aimed to sustain the It's more Fun in the Philippines" campaign by coming up with a year-round calendar of events for 2015 all over the country that will attract both foreign and local tourists to actively participate and be part of these events. Some of these include the Visit of Pope Francis early this year, Madrid Fusion, APEC meetings and Leader's Summit, Siargao International Surfing and MTV Music Evolution Manila 2015 among others. MTV Music Evolution was a live musical event which featured the evolution

music styles and sounds have evolved over the years. The event was recorded live for global telecast to an international audience of over 300 million in 160 countries. This musical event showcased iconic and contemporary hip hop performers from both international and local music scenes in a single stage.



*Guest live band performs during the MTV evolution held at Quirino Grandstand last May 17, 2015 (Photo credit TPB)*

Likewise, TPB organized PHITEX which aimed to generate maximum exposure of the Philippine destinations to key target markets and launch packages designed for MICE and leisure markets; MICE Conference or MICECON has become an institutional annual M.I.C.E. (Meetings, Incentive Travel, Conventions and Exhibitions/ Events) an educational program for M.I.C.E. and tourism practitioners that focuses on global trends on M.I.C.E.



of a music genre and allowed the younger generation to experience and discovers how



***Busy day at the registration area of the Philippine M.I.C.E. Conference 2015 on its first day (Photo credit: TPB)***

For 2015, TPB has implemented 50 invitationals/familiarization trips to showcase various tourist destinations such as Boracay, Davao, Manila and Environs, Cebu, Bohol, Palawan, and Tagaytay. Special projects were also implemented such as Visit Bohol 2015; It's more fun in the Philippines, Korea Golf Show, Country Commitment, FOBISIA Games 2015, Korea Golf Show, Country Commitment, and two (2) Domestic Special promotions. It also participated in 16 international Trade and Consumer Fairs, three (3) domestic trade and consumer fair. TPB also hosted APEC 2015 Welcome Dinner Shows held in Clark, Pampanga and in Tagaytay, Cavite.

**The Intramuros Administration (IA)** continued its restoration, conservation, and maintenance activities through the reconstruction of San Ignacio Church as Museo de Intramuros in order to house the IA museum collection which includes ecclesiastical pieces, furniture, jewelry, and other antique items; the rehabilitation of Aduana St. (including Magallanes Drive) and Fort Santiago; and preparation of bidding documents for the TIEZA endorsed and approved projects.



IA organized a total of six (6) co-sponsorship shows and events such as Papal Visit, Redhorse Musiklaban, PTAA 22nd Travel Tour Expo 2015, Gregorian Choirs of Paris, 2015 Pinoy-Euro Jazz Concert, and LPU Fun Run as tourism promotion activities. In addition, seminar-workshop on food preparation was conducted for the Intramuros street vendors.



***Street vendors in Intramuros learn about food preparation (Photo by Ali Ongsinco)***

In recognition of its efforts in protecting the Spanish colonial architecture of the Walled City, Intramuros Administration was awarded with the Heritage Prize 2015 by the Association of UNESCO World Heritage Cities of Spain. Tourism Secretary Ramon R. Jimenez, Jr. received the award from the Mayor of Ávila and the current chair of the Association last October 30, 2015 at Palacio de los Verdugo, Ávila in Spain.

This also marked the first time that the Association of UNESCO World Heritage Cities of Spain has honoured a foreign institution with the heritage award. Secretary Jimenez expressed his appreciation for the award and recognized the importance of the partnership between the Intramuros Administration and the Escuela Taller de Filipinas for the preservation and restoration efforts in the Walled City.



*Secretary Jimenez, Jr. receives the Heritage Award from Jose Luis Rivas Hernandez, Mayor of Avila, Spain*

**The National Parks Development Committee (NPDC)** provided general maintenance work and development of assigned parks such as Rizal Park, Paco Park, and T. M Kalaw Center Island. To maintain the peace and order in the parks, additional CCTV cameras were installed within the parks. Likewise, in terms of promotion of recreational, cultural, and educational programs, the NPDC implemented various events/ regular programs/presentations/activities such as Concerts at the Park (50), Paco Park Presentations (38), Labs Kita Sabado (52), presentations on the Martyrdom of Dr. Jose Rizal, 36 Weeknights @6 (cinema, music, dance, theater, literature, and visual arts. Film Screening of Cinema in the Open Air, special events/projects such as the Earth Hour, Christmas Day Concert and New Year's Eve countdown and Horticultural Exhibit among others. There were 17 various



activities/exhibits held at the Rizal Park Visitor's Center, and four (4) Harana Para Kay Rizal and hosting of nine (9) events of national/historical significance to include the Feast of the black Nazarene, Pope Francis State and Pastoral Visit, Shell Eco Marathon, GomBurZa Death Anniversary, Independence Day, 200<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Hermano Puli, National Day, Rizal Day 2015 (119<sup>th</sup> Martyrdom of Dr. Jose Rizal), and Paco Park Plans Turn-over Ceremony.



*Concert at the Park*



*Martyrdom of Dr. Jose Rizal*

**Nayong Pilipino Foundation (NPF)** continued to promote Philippine heritage and culture through conduct of year round activities such as educational tours as well as mounting of cultural performances featuring the Nayong Pilipino Dance troupe and Rondalla which showcased the beauty and ethnicity of Philippine folkdances and music to the delight of foreign guests, local visitors and students. Also, to bring new face to the organization, a new company logo and rebranding was introduced in 2015. The branding of fun and Philippine culture are easily conveyed through the playful smile and a face similar to the Masskara festival mask which is symbolic of the Filipino's fun and festive nature.



*The new logo of the Nayong Pilipino*

**Duty Free Philippines Corporation (DFPC)** has generated sales amounting to USD 226 Million achieving 97% of its \$235 Million target revenue for the 2015. They organized several promotional events to boost sales and increase customer awareness of the Duty Free Philippines. The events include Chinese New Year celebration, Anniversary Blast Promo, Sunday Madness Sale, and Peso Power @ Php 44 and Smart Shopping Hours Raffle Promo. The DFPC as part of its expansion project to serve more tourists opened its new store outlet at the Bacolod



Silay International Airport last May 2015 which generated total sales of US\$232, 492.08 Billion for May-November 2015.



## PHILIPPINE RETIREMENT AUTHORITY

In 2015, the Philippine Retirement Authority has undertaken significant steps to improve its quality of service rendered to its stakeholders/ customers. The Philippine Retirement Authority has contracted the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) to establish an ISO Quality Management System, one of the strategic measures undertaken to improve its performance scorecard.

By the end of 2015, the Retiree-Expenditure Monitoring System, a system that will monitor and measure the actual expenditures of retiree-members (spend on visa deposit conversion, household, medical services, etc.) is expected to establish what has been one of the corporate targets of PRA under Social Impact perspective. The agency will conduct a Customer Satisfaction Survey which is one of the corporate targets on the Performance Scorecard of the Authority for FY 2015.

In addition, Retiree Application Servicing and Billing Information System (RASBIS) will serve as the core information system of the Authority.

The Impact to the world of retirement in the Philippines has been evident in various international recognitions such as the following:

Philippines: Top Global Retirement Destination	
8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Top Expat Destination 2014</b> InterNations Survey by Expats Insider
7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>The 21 Best Places to Retire Overseas 2014</b> Live & Invest Retire, Overseas Index
★	<b>2014 Top 20 Best Places to Retire in the World</b> Forbes Business Magazine
44 <sup>th</sup>	<b>2014 Global AgeWatch Index</b> GlobalAge Watch Index by HelpAge Int'l.

