



The IMMIGRANT

Fun Run

Vol. 2 No.2 Q2 2013
Philippine Edition
ISSN No.
2 2 4 4 3 2 7 4

With a meager budget, the Department of Tourism has started a phenomenal meme campaign that breaks boundaries. Rhoel V. Fernandez reports

THE HAPPIEST PEOPLE I KNOW WORK in shorts. It's as true in Batanes, northernmost tip of the Philippines, as it is at the Google headquarters in Northern California.

I thought of this as Nards Garcia, in navy blue cargo shorts and Umijang statement shirt (Umijang is the Ivatan word for "let us help each other") was proudly showing us the centuries-old coral-and-stone houses in the seaside town of Savidug in Batanes' Sabtang Island.

"I want to educate the people here on the value of what we do. I want to show them that everyone can stand to benefit from what we are doing," our cheerful Ivatan guide said as we approached a limestone quarry by the shore.

In a province where 90 percent of jobs are provided by the government, tourism can create opportunities where there was none before. To date, more than 60,000 Batanes residents have left to find work elsewhere in the Philippines or abroad.

Batanes Governor Vicente Gato recognizes the situation, and the value of travel and tourism to his province. He has been meeting with UNESCO officials in an effort to protect and classify the province's remaining heritage sites.

He hopes Batanes can get a piece of the pie from the 400,000 tourists who visit the Philippines every month.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) considers travel and tourism as one of the leading job creators in the world, employing 98 million people directly. This represents three percent of the world's total employment.

"When indirect and induced impact is included, the industry contributes to around one in eleven jobs worldwide," 2013 Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report from the WEF said.

In the fickle international travel circuit where everyone is looking for the Next Big Thing, the Philippines is battling to be the it-place.

In 2012, there were 4.3 million tourist arrivals in the country, "the highest number ever" according to Philippine Tourism Secretary Ramon Jimenez, Jr. The Philippines, he said, is on track to hit its goal of 10 million visitors for 2016.

The WEF report ranked the Philippines 82nd out of 140 countries in its Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index, up by 12 places from last year. The Philippines is the most improved country in the region, ranking 16th regionally and 82nd overall. Among the country's comparative strengths are its natural resources (44th), its price competitiveness (24th), and a very strong—and improving—prioritization of the Travel and Tourism industry.

The WEF further noted that the Philippine government's spending on the travel and tourism sector as a percentage of its gross domestic product is now first in the world. It added that the country's tourism marketing and branding campaigns are seen to be "increasingly effective."



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Photo by George Tapan

With little fanfare, the Department of Tourism (DoT) launched in 2012 what could be its most successful campaign yet—*It's More Fun in the Philippines*. Tourism Secretary Jimenez, a 35-year veteran of the advertising industry, credited this campaign for the increased tourist arrivals last year.

The campaign addresses the question often posed by foreigners “Why should I go to your country?” with a typical Filipino answer: “It’s more fun where I come from.”

Since DoT has a mere US\$2 million for promotions, compared to the US\$40 million spent by Malaysia, the department turned to a previously untapped, relatively free and very dynamic resource—the Filipino online community.

In a 2010 International Telecommunication Union study, the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies discovered that an estimated 29.7 million Filipinos, almost 30 percent of the population, were connected to the Internet.

“There is a tremendous amount of interest. I’ll tell you why. We have gone into the social media not just with the country brand—we have gone into the social media with the lifestyle people have been looking for all their lives,” Jimenez said in a recent interview aired on a government television.

The *It's More Fun in the Philippines* campaign instantly went viral as netizens posted their own memes, personal travel photos with a playful pun and the new slogan. In effect, anyone with a computer or mobile device, and Internet access became a Philippine tourism brand ambassador.

International travel authorities like *Travel & Leisure*, *Conde Nast*, *CNNGo*, and the BBC have taken notice and made their recommendations to the rest of the world. *The New York Times* included the Philippines in its 46 Places to Visit in 2013.

Just who have dropped in so far? From January to February this year, Korea topped the visitor count (241,116), accounting for slightly more than a quarter of the total inbound traffic. Visitors from the United States (120,868), Japan (73,621), China (69,610) and Taiwan (37,921) rounded up the top 5. The United Kingdom (18,563) and Germany (13,774) topped the European guests.

“The big phenomenon is that Filipinos are actually supporting the brand more. The campaign

is based on the supposition on the Filipino, not the place but the people,” Jimenez said.

“You need the buy-in of the population and once you have that, you have a tremendous momentum. Ultimately, social media drove this. It’s Filipinos believing their country is worth the visit that makes the biggest difference,” he said.

But are the small-town folk like Nards having as much fun?

“That depends on whether their local government can keep up with the ensuing demands of a successful national government-led marketing campaign,” Jimenez said, “underscoring the need for local leaders to be more involved in the tourism front.”

equally famous tourist draws as its Chocolate Hills.

Other provinces are taking their cue from these tourism models.

Not relying on the Mayon Volcano’s perfect cone to attract tourists, Albay Governor Joey Salceda convened a tourism alliance with its neighbors Catanduanes, Masbate and Sorsogon to jointly discover and promote new travel destinations and regional festivals. He is also working on reviving the train system from Manila to Albay for a more affordable and scenic travel options.

The private sector is also in on the action. Companies such as ABS-CBN with no core



Photo by George Tapan

“The phenomenon is that Filipinos are actually supporting the brand more. The campaign is based on the supposition on the Filipino, not the place but the people.”

—Philippine Tourism Secretary Ramon Jimenez Jr.

“They are very important because they are (the ones) on the ground. If the local governments do not cooperate, there is no tourism. You can almost identify where tourism is at its most successful; the most active LGUs are also there. It doesn’t happen unless the people on the ground buy into it,” Jimenez said.

The local governments have their work cut out for them. The WEF report cited challenge areas in the Philippines: the difficulty of starting a business in the country in both cost and length of the process, safety and security concerns, inadequate health and hygiene, and underdeveloped ground transport, tourism and information and technology infrastructure.

But there are success stories, too. Palawan, Bohol and Camarines Sur did not happen overnight or by accident. These places had local leaders who took a risk thinking out of the box and who were willing to invest political capital, time and the money in the tourism sector.

Camarines Sur built and heavily promoted a modern waterpark complex for a niche wakeboarding crowd, and its Caramoan Islands have hosted seven international editions of the popular *Survivor* reality show.

Palawan adopted an aggressive and highly publicized ecological tourism approach while Bohol worked on the preservation of its cultural heritage and marine life, which are now

competencies or active interest in tourism rolled out *Choose Philippines*, a social media-driven brand that aims to capitalize on the travel and tourism enterprise through country promotion. Adventure tourism groups such as Travel Factor have weekly trips all over the archipelago that cater to an increasingly mobile yuppie crowd, whose photos are later splashed on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and their blogs, wittingly or unwittingly carrying the “It’s More Fun in the Philippines” message.

On a trip to Sagada I watched our young guide Derek Gonzales, an enthusiastic Travel Factor intern studying tourism in college, rappelled down a precarious drop in Lumiang Cave. I hope he doesn’t need to trade in his trekking shorts for corporate slacks in some overseas resort.

It’s people like him, Nards, the dancing entourage at the El Nido airport, the sand-sculpting kids in Boracay and the whale shark guides of Pamilacan that personify the “ever-relaxed, happy-go-lucky people” described by the *Lonely Planet* guidebook on the Philippines.

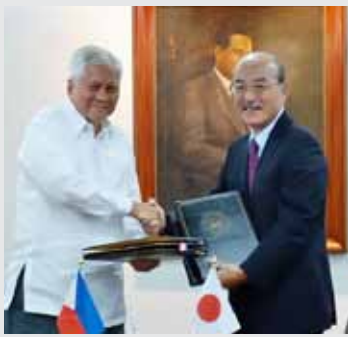
“The (Filipino) is what ultimately hooks people to the Philippines. Many arrive expecting the country to be ‘dangerous,’ to discover instead a land of shiny, happy people. When everybody’s smiling like it’s going out of style, how can you not enjoy the place?” ●

Rhoel V. Fernandez is a freelance writer and editor. He has worked in the print, broadcast and online industries in various positions, the most recent as editor-in-chief of *Choose Philippines* (www.choosephils.com), ABS-CBN’s country advocacy campaign.

Japan Signs PhP23 Billion ODA Loans

Japanese Ambassador Toshinao Urabe and Secretary of Foreign Affairs Alberto F. Del Rosario signed on the exchange of notes for two (2) ODA loans amounting to 54,034 billion yen (approximately PhP23.183 billion) and two (2) grant aid projects amounting to 1,040 million yen (approximately PhP446 million) at the Department of Foreign Affairs last March 25.

One of the loan projects will fund the improvement of LRT (Light Rail Transit) Line 1 and 2 amounting to PhP18.5 billion with the acquisition of new coaches, improvement of current facilities



related to LRT Line I south extension and extension of LRT Line 2. These will contribute to the mitigation for road congestion in Metro Manila, air pollution and climate change.

The other is the PhP4.6 billion fund to construct the new Bohol Airport. This project is seen to improve convenience and safety in air transportation with the construction of the

new airport in Panglao island to replace the existing Tagbilaran airport whose number of passengers has been increasing rapidly, and thereby contributing to sustainable development in the area.

Public-Private Partnerships Key to Green Growth

According to a new study on financing for green growth by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in 11 Asian developing countries, US\$90 billion per year will be required over coming decades for these countries to transition to sustainable, low-carbon economies. However, there is only US\$1.6 billion in approved investments in low-carbon projects and programs in the 11 countries which includes the Philippines.

The report, *Fast Out of the Gate: How Developing Asian Countries Can Prepare to Access International Green Growth Financing*, reviews more than 200 public and private sector funds and mechanisms for financing projects. It aims to help Asian policymakers, public and private fund managers, banks, and even local communities identify ways to fund low-carbon development.

Uk Envoy Bares Plans to Boost RP-UK Business Ties

British Ambassador Stephen Lillie set out the UK Government’s plans to develop British Chambers of Commerce through its global network of Embassies and High Commissions. He signed a Memorandum of Understanding to seal the partnership with Roger Lamb,



Vice Chairman of the British Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (BCCP) before business leaders at a luncheon at the Manila Peninsula Hotel last March.

“We have put business promotion front and centre of the UK Foreign Office’s effort,” Lillie said. “There is in my view

no better time to be signing such a partnership. From GDP growth to the stock market and international competitiveness rankings, all the good indicators are going up. Meanwhile, the negative indicators, corruption and the government deficit are going down.”

The IMMIGRANT

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ON THE COVER:

“Windsurfing in Boracay”. Unknown to many, Boracay has been a hotspot for windsports in Asia in recent years. George Tapan, the dean of travel photography in the Philippines, captured a piece of this action. George’s stunning photograph of island scene in Palawan won in 2011 *National Geographic* Photo Contest.

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Island Notes

Bitten by travel and shutter bugs? Let award-winning travel photographer and writer Lester V. Ledesma show you tips on how to best capture the Philippines

TO GET TO KNOW THIS country intimately, you need to mix a seasoned traveler's taste for adventure with the homegrown familiarity of a local. Here are tips and must-dos when touring these islands.

Getting Around:

- If you hail a passing tricycle (the country's version of Thailand's *tuktuk*) on the road, its driver is most likely going to charge you the regular fare for nearby distances. However, if you board a tricycle that's parked, its driver will assume you want the whole vehicle for yourself and charge you the "special" rate, which is the regular fare times the number of seats.

- Forget the packed inside seats when traversing the Cordillera mountain range by jeepney. Instead, sit on the rooftop where the space is less cramped and the vistas are unfettered. Here, you'll be passing through mountainside roads set amidst stunning landscapes. Bring your camera for the ride—and shoot with one hand holding on to the roof!

- By all means, ask for a window seat on the "A" side of the aircraft if you're flying to Legazpi City. The plane makes a dramatic fly-by near the Mayon Volcano as it approaches the airport, giving you an awesome ringside view of its fiery crater. Take a morning flight for the best light!

- Looking for the best rental rates for the local *banca*? Start a bidding war between boatmen at the pier. This technique works best in less touristy areas where passenger traffic isn't as heavy. But considering how

small and basic these native outrigger boats can get—do you really want to ride on the cheapest boat?

Seeing the Sights:

- You can take the slow, plodding climb up Zambales' Mt. Pinatubo, or you can go right up there in style—on a chartered airplane. The Clarkfield-based Omni Aviation offers hour-long fun flights over this famous volcano and its surreal crater lake. Since they only use 2- or 4-seater Cessnas, you'll be in the company of a select few when you take in that stunning view.

- Apo Island Nature Reserve off the coast of Dumaguete offers some of the best snorkelling sites in the world. This place is rich in marine life, you can literally walk into the water and take great underwater photographs, just meters from the beach. Where can you find General Santos City's number one attraction? When he's not training for his next fight, you'll find champion boxer Manny Pacquiao hanging out in his very own Pacman Sports Bar. The locals say he's approachable, and is always willing to pose for a souvenir photo-op.

- Malamawi Island's White Beach, off the coast of Basilan, is every bit as pretty as the shores of Boracay. It's also practically unknown to most tourists, thanks (or no thanks) to its location in the Philippines' "wild south." But rest assured it's perfectly safe there thanks to a detachment of smiling Marines right at the water's edge.

Eating and Drinking:

- And speaking of Basilan, this island off Zamboanga City produces some of the country's best-tasting coffee. Ask for it

at the eateries throughout the local market. Too bad it's neither exported, nor available outside the island.

- Anthony Bourdain may sing praises to Zubuchon's spit-roasted pig, but this restaurant isn't the ultimate dining experience for *lechon* connoisseurs in Cebu. That honor goes to the Carcar Public Market, an hour's drive from the Southern Queen City. At the rear end of this compound is a whole section dedicated to lechon, with dozens of stalls hawking their own versions of this delectable Cebuano dish. Here the pork is sold by weight, served in seconds and eaten with the hands. Cheap, fast and blissfully good—Tony would have loved this.

- You may have already tried the *batchoy*, but chances are you've never heard of that other signature Ilonggo broth, the *cansi*. It's a deliciously salty and sour bone marrow soup that packs plenty of beef and tendon. Cansi is best enjoyed with double rice and a Coke at Sharyn's Cansi House in Bacolod City.



ISLAND LIFE. (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) Aerial view of Mt. Pinatubo's crater, Mayon Volcano's perfect cone, Malamawi beach in Basilan, bancas in Apo Island, suman and tsokolate in Ozamiz, and lechon in Carcar, Cebu City.

- Who would have thought that there would be outstanding *suman* and *kakanin* in—of all places—Ozamiz City. On a lonely countryside road outside town is Clarin House of Suman, a bamboo hut-eatery that boasts the region's best native eats. Think tasty rice cakes and creamy coconut milk-infused goodies. This place has no address but don't worry everyone knows where it is.

- Crispy Tawilis, that southern Tagalog delicacy of deep-fried freshwater sardine, can all-too-often be served in a distressingly soggy mess at some restaurants in the highland city of Tagaytay. There's one joint though that consistently serves it in all its crispy goodness. You'll find it right at the junction of Aguinaldo Highway and the Tagaytay-Nasugbu Road—a small eatery with no name, right at the edge of a row of roadside gardening shops. And they sell it really cheap. ●



Photos by Lester V. Ledesma

He may be a born-and-bred Pinoy, but travel photojournalist **Lester V. Ledesma**, a two-time PATA Gold awardee for photography, is a citizen of Asia. This Singapore-based lensman covers the region for international magazines, his words and photographs earning him a host of prestigious awards. He is also the brains behind PhotoTrek, an outfit that specializes in culturally immersive photography tours to Asia's most exciting shooting spots. Visit his website at www.skylightimages.info or look him up on www.facebook.com/phototreks.

Report or Deport

Immigration lawyers from ACCRA Law Office offers the 911 on alien registration and deportation in the country

Are all foreigners required to register with the Bureau of Immigration?

Yes. As a general rule, all aliens should register with the Bureau of Immigration (BI) and be issued an Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR), unless otherwise exempted by law (*Sec. 1, Alien Registration Act of 1950*).

Who are exempted from the registration requirement?

Among the aliens who are exempted from the BI registration requirement are the following: (a) foreign government officials and members of his official staff/family; (b) temporary visitors and transients who stay in the Philippines for less than sixty (60) days; (c) foreign personnel of multinational regional headquarters or multinational regional operating headquarters; (d) holders of the special resident retiree’s visa (SRRV); (e) holders of the special investor’s resident visa (SIRV); (f) holders of the 47(a)(2) visa issued to foreign personnel of enterprises registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) and (f) other categories exempted by special laws.

What is an Alien Certificate of Registration Identification Card (ACR I-card)?

In 2005, the Bureau of Immigration implemented the ACR I-Card Project which automated the entire process of alien registration and integrated the issuance of various paper-based alien documents into a microchip-based identification card called the Alien Certificate of Registration Identification Card (ACR I-Card). On the face of the ACR I-Card appears the photo, visa data, date and place of birth, citizenship, address, signature, thumbprint and other personal data of the alien. Encoded into the ACR I-Card are the holder’s photograph, biometrics, photo page of the passport and other data provided in the paper registration document. Also periodically encoded into the ACR I-card are payments of fees for the annual report, the Emigration Clearance Certificate (ECC), Re-entry Permit (RP) and Special Return Certificate (SRC) of the holder. Less comprehensive data is

encoded in the ACR I-Card issued to tourists who stay for more than fifty-nine (59) days. (*Bureau of Immigration Memorandum Order No. AFF-05-006*)

Some aliens who are exempt from registration choose to voluntarily register and obtain the ACR I-Card which is a generally accepted identification for aliens in the Philippines.

What are the consequences if an alien fails to apply for or renew his ACR I-card?

Those who are required to register and who fail to apply for an ACR I-Card or submit the annual reportorial requirements may be held liable for administrative fines, or be prosecuted, and upon conviction, be punished by a fine or imprisonment or both (*Sec. 6, Alien Registration Act of 1950*). A violation of the Alien Registration Act of 1950 is also a ground for deportation (*Sec. 37, (10), Philippine Immigration Act of 1940*)

What is the annual report required to be filed by immigrants and non-immigrants?

Immigrants and non-immigrants who are 14 years of age or over, temporarily or permanently residing in the Philippines, are required to file an annual report with the Bureau of Immigration (main office) or its district offices within the first sixty (60) days of every calendar year. Failure to file the said report may subject the alien to an administrative fine or to prosecution for violation of the law, and upon conviction, to fine or imprisonment or both. The parent or legal guardian of an alien who is less than fourteen (14) years must file the annual report on his behalf. (*Sec. 10, Alien Registration Act of 1950*)

What is deportation?

Deportation is an administrative procedure for the expulsion of an alien who initially gained legal entry, admission or residence in the Philippines but whose presence has become untenable because of some serious infraction of Philippine law, regulation or policy (*Morano v. Vivo, G.R. No. L-22196, 30 June 1967*).

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essay

The Brit Express

ONE OF MY MEMORABLE MOMENTS from President Benigno Aquino’s visit to London last June was his photoshoot outside the Intercontinental Hotel. Surrounded by Filipino and British well-wishers, the President posed on board one of London’s famous red double-decker buses emblazoned with an “It’s More Fun in the Philippines” advert. Similar adverts were placed on taxis and in London Underground stations.

The message about the Philippines’ attractions as a tourism destination is literally getting around Britain’s capital. And from what I hear, the campaign is proving a hit not just in my own country, but in many other countries. A nine percent increase in 2012, bringing in over four million international tourists, suggests the campaign is reaching parts that its predecessors did not.

For those of us who call the Philippines home (even temporarily), the “More fun in the Philippines” campaign affirms what we already know. I have spent most of my diplomatic career in or working on Asia. For me, the Philippines can compete with the very best when it comes to breathtaking natural beauty.

During holidays that I have taken here I have enjoyed the pristine beaches, blue water and wonderful coral reefs of diverse islands such as Bohol, Boracay and Siquijor. It was fun island hopping in El Nido. I enjoyed hiking up (or just viewing) volcanoes in Taal, Pinatubo and Mount Mayon. For history, it’s been fascinating to visit the ancient Spanish churches, including the numerous ones along Laguna de Bay. (I wonder how many people do not realise how accessible these are from Manila?).

My personal highlight? Swimming with the whalesharks (and lots of them) at Donsol in Sorsogon.

When I leave the Philippines it will be with many happy memories, but also regrets at the many places I never managed to visit. The Batanes Islands are top of that list: we tried, but were thwarted by a typhoon.

In time, I suspect “It’s more fun in the Philippines” could enjoy similar success and recognition as the long-running “Malaysia Truly Asia” campaign which helped Malaysia attract around 25 million tourists last year. The UK, incidentally, has even more with around 31 million—with each one spending around PhP36,000 during their stay.

The revenue earned from tourism underlines why it has to be one of the key pillars of the Philippines’ future economic development. But a successful tourism industry depends on more than just brand awareness, vitally important though this is. Critically, it also requires the right tourism infrastructure to be in place to support growth in arrivals, and ensure that people go home again with great experiences to tell family and friends. Just as the Philippines’ natural beauty is no longer a secret, the “to-do list” is also pretty clear if the tourism business is to achieve its full potential.

Air connections are a good starting point. The absence of direct flights to Europe is an obvious problem. The EU air ban, mirroring the US FAA’s own restrictions on flights to the US, is the obstacle here. The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines knows what it has to do to address international concerns on this score. Responsibility for fixing this is therefore firmly in its hands.

After that, the challenge is really all about physical infrastructure—whether it’s modern airports able to cope with large numbers of flights, or an adequate supply of quality hotel rooms in the different tourist centres. On this, I think a lot of comment misses a crucial point. Yes, the Philippines has some of the most gorgeous resorts and boutique hotels in Asia. Sadly, many tourists from Europe and North America can’t afford to stay in them. But neither do they want to stay in the most basic, budget alternatives. An increased supply of (quality) three- and four-star hotels is needed to cater to this middle market.

It’s clear that the government is focused on this agenda, and so is the private sector. The government is also to be warmly congratulated for its efforts to bring peace to those parts of the country suffering from conflict.

Over time that could make huge, new, and stunningly beautiful swathes of Mindanao and Sulu safely accessible to foreign tourists. There’s a lot of hard work to do for the Department of Tourism and its partners in the meantime. But with over 7000 islands to choose from, and a government determined to drive the country’s economic development forward, I feel confident that more and more international tourists will be discovering that it really is more fun in the Philippines. ●



THE DIPLOMAT
by Ambassador
Stephen Lillie
of United Kingdom

Welcome to the Circus

It's election time once again, and in the Philippines, it's the greatest show on earth. American book author and expatriate Ted Lerner writes

THE TASK THAT I AM ABOUT TO UNDERTAKE does not come easy. In fact I'm nervous as hell. You see, I am about to break one of my cardinal rules of writing here in the Philippines. I am about to write about Philippine politics. Specifically, the national elections to be held in May.

Politics is a topic that perennially sits at the top of my "no go" list when it comes to things to write about in the Philippines. Oh sure, as a regular news junkie I could offer up a few informed opinions about the upcoming national elections. But I value my amazing life and beautiful family here in these spectacular 7,107 islands. And politics here can be, well, not only a touchy subject, it can also be mortally dangerous. Scores of Filipinos die each election cycle from political related violence. I guess that's really all you need to know when I tell you that Philippine politics is not the ideal arena to mingle in for foreigners.

Even the Comelec, the acronym for the Philippine election body, Commission on Elections, put out a warning to foreigners not to meddle in the nationwide elections scheduled this coming May. The resolution states that "it is unlawful for any foreigner, whether juridical or natural person, to aid any candidate, or political party, organization or coalition, directly or indirectly, or to take part in, or influence in any manner, any election, or to contribute or make any expenditure in connection with any election campaign or partisan political activity."

Ok fair enough. But now I must issue a statement of my own, in order to protect myself from some mayor or barangay official deciding to declare me "persona non grata" after reading this article:

"Let it be known from here to the very end of this essay that no matter how well-written, these words are in no way intended to influence or contribute one single thing to the May elections. I would much rather write about my recent trip to Vigan (to see the old Spanish colonial buildings, not interview Gov. Chavit Singson), or Manny Pacquiao (the boxer, not the politician) than about politics. I only embark upon this journalistic effort in order to better inform my fellow expats residing in the beautiful Philippine Islands about what to expect in the upcoming elections, how to survive them with body and mind intact, and how to actually enjoy the fantastic and noble democratic exercise this amazing nation is about to embark on."

There. I feel safer already.

Now, the best way to wade into these byzantine waters and get you up to election speed is to take a brief look at the election by the numbers, if only to get our heads around the scope of what is happening on May 13; There are 233 seats up for grabs in the House of Representatives, 12 seats in the Senate, 80 positions for governors; 80 vice governors; 766 provincial board members; 143 city mayors; 143 city vice mayors; 1,598 city councilors; 1,491 municipal mayors; 1,491 municipal vice mayors; and 11,932 municipal councilors.

That's a lot of contests to be decided and it gives you a good idea why the elections here tend to be so chaotic and noisy. That's also why nearly every bare hollow block wall

and electrical pole in your neighborhood has been festooned with posters and tarpaulins of smiling people. In fact it is these smiling faces that provide you with one of the keys to what exactly this election season is all about. Which is to say, not much.

If you look closely at these signs, you'll notice that you will never know just what particular issues the candidate stands for. Environment, poverty, taxes, health care, graft and corruption, infrastructure,... nobody's really letting on what they intend to do about these vital concerns if they get elected. Well, there's a reason for this. And that's because Philippine elections are not about issues.

Oh sure, there's the obligatory phrase "Good Governance." This catch-all phrase is slung around as cavalierly as the way a taho vendor slings the excess water to the ground from his silver drum before serving you his delectable sweet concoction. Who doesn't like "Good Governance?" But what exactly does "Good Governance" mean?

As far as I can tell, 'Good Governance' in the Philippine context translates to whichever candidate has that certain twinkle in their eye, that cute, innocent and irresistible smile that Filipinos adore, and, of course, the

catchiest song with the good beat.

I learned this lesson very early in the morning the day after Easter Sunday, which signalled the official start of the 2013 campaign season. As I was contentedly dreaming away, I was unceremoniously shaken from my slumber at 7:30AM by the hideously loud and unmistakable melody of the hit Korean song, "Gangnam Style." Except this wasn't Psy's "Gangnam Style." This was a recording done by some local politician, whose name fit perfectly with the syllable count of the words "Gangnam Style."

The 'Gangnam' assault came in the form of giant speakers on top of a car and was just the start of an ear-splitting musical cacophony that filled my neighbourhood straight through lunch that day. Versions of Nicki Manaj's "Starship," J-Lo's "Get Out On The Dance Floor," and various reworked Filipino pop diddies all rocked the 'hood. And I wondered; How is it that no politician has the same theme song? Do they coordinate with each other? And do potential voters actually vote based upon which song they like the best?

Another essential factor in getting elected to office here is to be famous or have a famous name. If you've been in the

Philippines for more than a decade, it's easy to look around at the candidates running and ask: "Geez, are these are the same people running for Senate that were running back in the late 20th century?" Well, sort of.

Family dynasties dominate Philippine politics. Fathers pass on the office to their children and they to their children and the same family ends of up dominating one position for decades. One prominent senator who's not up for re-election recently railed against political dynasties when she claimed that 80 percent or 18 of the current 23 senators are members of political families. She also said that of the country's 80 provinces, 94 percent or 73 out of 80 have political dynasties.

Well, in a nation where well over half the populace of 90 million people scrounge for their daily bowl of rice, who has time for the minutiae of policy when you've got hungry mouths to feed? Clearly, a famous name means just about everything.

That's why celebrities have such an advantage and often waltz into office. They enjoy instant name recognition. Plus it's likely that being stars, they've had some



Illustration by Conrad Javier

Here Comes the Sun

Solaire has risen in Manila and is poised to change its tourism landscape. Maurice Arcache reports



Grace & Felix Ang



Al and Carla Tengco



Bloomberg Resorts Corporation Director Donato Almeda, Mayor Jun Bernabe, Solaire COO Michael French and GGAM President Brad Stone



Fernando and Kit Zobel, Jaime Augusto and Lizzie Zobel, and Mia Borromeo



Karen Jimeno and Evan McBride



Max & Zelda Kienle with daughters Jessica Kienle & Stephanie Kienle Gonzalez



Leading the official opening of Solaire Resort & Casino were His Excellency Benigno S. Aquino III, Bloomberg Resorts Corporation Chairman and CEO Enrique K. Razon Jr., with (left to right) GGAM EVP Gary Saunders, GGAM Chairman and CEO William Weidner, GGAM President Bradley Stone, Solaire COO Michael French, Chairman of PAGCOR Cristino Naguiat Jr., Mayor of Parañaque City, Honorable Florencio “Jun” M. Bernabe Jr., Secretary of the Cabinet Jose Rene Almendras, Bloomberg Resorts Corporation Vice Chairman Jose Eduardo Alarilla, and Bloomberg Resorts Corporation Director Donato Almeda

AT EXACTLY 2:28PM PRESIDENT BENIGNO S. Aquino III together with Bloomberg Resorts Corporation Chairman and CEO Enrique K. Razon Jr., officially opened Solaire to the public together with GGAM EVP Gary Saunders, GGAM Chairman and CEO William Weidner, GGAM President Bradley Stone, Solaire COO Michael French, Chairman of PAGCOR Cristino Naguiat Jr., Mayor of Parañaque City, Honorable Florencio “Jun” M. Bernabe Jr., Secretary of the Cabinet Jose Rene Almendras, Bloomberg Resorts Corporation Vice Chairman Jose Eduardo Alarilla, and Bloomberg Resorts Corporation Director Donato Almeda.

“Macau and Singapore are always competing for bigger pieces of this (gaming) industry’s very lucrative pie. Your presence in the country is proof positive that... above all else, the Philippines works,” said Pres. Aquino as he led the opening of the first Las Vegas-style integrated playground Solaire Resort & Casino last March 16.

“We have worked very hard to bring into Solaire the finest and the brightest—from architecture and construction, interiors and amenities to gaming, cuisine and entertainment. Solaire will be an exceptional destination resort and gaming complex, the like of which has not been seen nor experienced in the Philippines” shares Razon during his opening remarks.

Hosted by Marc Nelson, Joey Mead and Rovilson Fernandez, Solaire’s opening ceremonies was a testament to the resort’s grandeur with stunning visuals and graceful aerial dancers. Guests during the opening day included renowned personalities and foreign dignitaries who were all given an exclusive preview of Solaire before it finally opened to the public.

Complemented with overflowing drinks and samplers from some of Solaire’s signature restaurants, everyone was given the first salvo of what Solaire has to offer. As festivities went on till the evening, guests also enjoyed world-class performances from one of the Philippine’s top balladeers and Las Vegas performer himself Martin Nievera together with famed international performer Ryan Gallagher. ●



Bloomberg Resorts Corporation Director Donato Almeda, Katrina Razon, Solaire Director of Communication and Public Relations Joy Wassmer, Pagcor Chairman Cristino Naguiat and wife Maria Teresa Naguiat, and Solaire COO Michael French



GGAM Executive Vice President Gary Saunders, Solaire COO Michael French, Bloomberg Resorts Corporation Chairman and CEO Enrique K. Razon Jr., and GGAM President Brad Stone



Bloomberg Resorts Corporation Chairman and CEO Enrique K. Razon Jr. with wife Lizzy and daughter Katrina and Aslie Aslanian



Stores Specialists Inc. Executive Vice President Anton Huang



Fern and Junie Peña, and Nono Ibazeta

Welcome to the Circus

From page 5

training in singing and dancing and this is a major factor in the likeability department, especially at campaign sorties in the far-flung provinces where political rallies take on the character of a daytime variety show. I guess the voters there feel that if you can sing and dance, you can certainly govern. Or perhaps that thought is better expressed another way; even if you can’t govern, at least you can sing and dance.

Certainly one good aspect of national elections in the Philippines is that the exercise itself clearly helps the economy, especially amongst the poorer classes. I saw one statistic recently that said that classes D and E spend approximately 15 to 16 percent more for a shopping trip during an election year than they would normally spend per shopping trip during non-election years. Where the teeming masses get this extra 15 to 16 percent to spend is not for me to say—again, I’m a foreigner and I don’t want to be seen as interfering—but who can complain about money flowing?

By the time May 13 rolls around, the crescendo of the elections will no doubt reach a feverish pitch, and you’ll probably think the world is going to come crashing down around you. At the very least you’ll want to murder that Korean star Psy, for having the nerve to dream up a song so catchy, that even Filipino politicians think it will get them elected to the office of their choice.

But have no fear. No matter who claims victory—and that’s just about everyone running—life is sure to go on as usual in these tropical islands. The people will keep smiling, the weather will stay warm and there will be fun, intrigue and a bevy of cold beverages around every corner. And you can tell people far and wide that you survived and experienced one of the most colorful election exercises anywhere on the planet.

Ain’t democracy great? ●

Ted Lerner is author of the timeless Philippine classic book, *Hey, Joe—A Slice of the City—An American in Manila*, as well as the Asian adventure travel book, *The Traveler & the Gate Checkers*. Both books are available at bookstores throughout the Philippines and online at www.tedlerner.com.

Report or Deport

From page 3

Who may be subject to deportation?

Under Section 37 of the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940, the following aliens may be subject to deportation: (a) any alien who gains entry by false and misleading statements, or without inspection and admission by immigration authorities; (b) any alien who enters the Philippines who was not lawfully admissible at the time of entry; (c) any alien who is subsequently convicted in the Philippines and sentenced for a term of one year or more for a crime involving moral turpitude within five years from his entry, or who, at any time after such entry, is so convicted and sentenced more than once; (d) any alien who is convicted and sentenced for violation of the law governing prohibited drugs; (e) any alien who practices prostitution or is connected with the management or procurement of prostitutes; (f) any alien who becomes a public charge within five years after entry from causes not affirmatively shown to have arisen prior to entry; (g) any

alien who remains in the Philippines in violation of any limitation or condition under which he was admitted as a non-immigrant; (h) any alien who believes in, advises, advocates or teaches the overthrow by force and violence of the Government of the Philippines and its officials; (i) any alien who engages in profiteering, hoarding, or black-marketing; (j) any alien who is convicted of an offense under the Revised Naturalization Law or other laws relating to acquisition of Philippine citizenship; (k) any alien who defrauds his creditor by absconding or alienating properties to prevent them from being attached or executed and (l) any alien who violates other laws. (Sec. 37, *Philippine Immigration Act of 1940*)

What is the nature of deportation proceedings?

A deportation proceeding is administrative and summary in character and need not be conducted in accordance with ordinary court proceedings. However, no alien shall be deported without being informed of the specific grounds for deportation nor without being given a hearing under rules of procedure to be prescribed by the Commissioner

of Immigration. Any alien under arrest in a deportation proceeding may be released under bond or under such other conditions as may be imposed by the Commissioner of Immigration. (Sec. 37, (c) and (e), *Philippine Immigration Act of 1940*)

What is the effect of deportation?

A deported alien shall forever be ineligible for readmission unless the following conditions concur: (a) there is permission prior to embarkation to the Philippines obtained from the Board of Commissioners of the Bureau of Immigration who issued the order of deportation; and (b) a waiver of exclusion is secured prior to embarkation to the Philippines from the Commissioner of Immigration who issued the warrant for deportation. Failing in either or both conditions, the alien remains forever barred from seeking re-entry or re-admission into the Philippines (Sec. 29[a][15] and Sec. 43 of the *Philippine Immigration Act of 1940*).

The following FAQs are the sole opinion of the authors and should not be construed as legal opinion or advice.
— **The Immigrant**

Atty. Regina Padilla Giraldez served as Associate Commissioner of the Commission on Immigration. She is the currently the head of the Immigration Department of the Accra Law Offices. **Atty. Ma. Khristina Garcia Angel** is a Senior Associate and Atty. Marco L. Lainez is an Associate of the Accra Law Offices.



Green Luxe Living

Tucked in the verdant forest of Bataan, Anvaya Cove shows how to enjoy active, healthful, green luxurious life

FOR A COUNTRY THAT IS blessed with year-long sunshine, summer is a season that you either get used to or take pleasure in. But if there's anything more appealing than basking in this leisurely, sunny atmosphere, it's probably experiencing the best things about this fine season *every* day in your own home.

At Ayala Land Premier's Anvaya Cove, its residents get more than their fair share of sunshine, but a stunning view of Bataan's verdant mountains and the cobalt waters of the West Philippine Sea.

A 470-hectare exclusive seaside community in Bataan, Anvaya Cove embodies luxury living with a purpose. It is also an internationally recognized development for its environmentally sustainable features creating a more unique living environment for the residents.

"Anvaya Cove's location has lent the property with splendid panoramas, open expanses, wetlands teeming with life and abundant forests, which are all preserved

through careful masterplanning. Thus, the development offers exceptional living and leisure choices geared towards recreation and relaxation," shares Paolo Viray, Project Development Head of Anvaya Cove.

In 2011 it launched its mid-rise living space called the Sea Breeze Verandas. Woven into the terrain using the airy and inviting Asian Tropical design aesthetic done in a palette of soft, earthy tones, each unit has been thoughtfully designed with verandas further maximizing the effect of the natural, breezy weather within the property. It also functions as a tranquil space, where residents can enjoy the views.

Today Anvaya Cove has more than 2,000 members who enjoy its sprawling amenities integrated in the expansive residential-leisure blueprint. The Anvaya Cove Beach and Nature Club, located at the center of the property, houses various amenities: multi-purpose function rooms; recreational beach areas that feature the Water Sports Pavilion and the Pawikan Bar and Grille; a pool complex that boasts of an infinity pool, lounge pool, and lap pool, and nature camp



trails. There is really something for everyone who lives in Anvaya Cove.

However, Viray is quick to add that the Anvaya's amenities do not only cater to the residents—from time to time Anvaya plays host to prestigious sporting events.

"Every year, especially during summer, Anvaya Cove hosts interactive events dedicated to the members of the club," Viray reveals. "We have also hosted the first season of the Philippine Kayaking Series, and just recently, we have hosted the Anvaya Cove 13th Philippine Hobie Challenge."

Anvaya Cove has always been a staunch advocate of promoting environmental sustainability, mainly through nature-friendly programs and activities. "As part of this initiative, we always encourage our members and guests to practice kayaking,

paddle boarding, and sailing. Motorized equipment like jet skis are not allowed in the area since we are preserving the tranquility of the beach where the *pawikans* naturally live," Viray shares.

This year, Anvaya is set to launch an 18-hole par-72 championship golf course where the terrain's best features—mountain and sea views—will serve as the backdrop for the course's front and back nines.

"The layout of this newest development will combine the scenic views of nature preserves that bound Anvaya Cove," says Viray. "We always make sure that our residents' leisure or recreational preferences are addressed through the amenities and facilities that we build and are guaranteed with privacy, exclusivity, and high regard to nature."



Hot in the City

Stylist and fashion journalist Geollette Esguerra lists down the hottest summer products for the ladies this season—all of which are proudly Filipino-made

SUMMER HERALDS TRAVEL season which brings to mind exotic beach getaways, mountain adventures, or urban treks. Rock any location in style with these proudly Pinoy products that combine sound advocacy with good aesthetics.

While **Karimadon** is known for its cocktail dresses and gowns, it also has casual dresses and swimwear perfect for the summer. Case in point: This Day-Glo neon swimsuit with cutouts in Baywatch orange bumps off the usual triangle bikini by introducing the popular one-piece shape for swimwear. www.karimadonfashion.com

While backpackers and rough-and-ready adventurers might find the idea of wearing accessories unnecessary, the jetsetter would undoubtedly find delight in statement pieces like **Vero**, Italian for 'genuine.' These artful designs by Gladys Young are set in precious metals—gold and silver or bronze with colored diamonds and gemstones. Her latest collection *Under the Sea* features intricately detailed pieces that resemble shells, corals, among other ocean forms. At 2/F Greenbelt 5 Ayala Center, Makati City



Peace out and thrive in the freedom-loving spirit cultivated by **Bath Junkies**, a premium grade bath and skin care brand with a bohemian beach vibe. "Our bohemian beach side focuses on our love for the environment, clean, and healthy things. We want our products to bring pleasure, love and joy in simple things in life," says owner Donna Santos. The products are made from 100% natural ingredients, essential oils, with plant-based whitening and anti-aging active ingredients. At 2/F Main Building, SM North Edsa and at the Pure Beauty Store at Serendra

The key for summer chic are exotic skin bags and accessories, like **Lally Dizon's Oro Barra Crocodile** collection, using animal products from South America but assembled in the Philippines. "I am proud to say that they are Philippine-made and are given utmost attention to detail," she says of the new pieces—like the square envelope clutch, long envelope clutch, ventana cuff, and even the belt. www.lallydizon.com



Lumago, which means "to blossom" in Tagalog, brings together the inspiring history of the colorful paper bead accessories created by hand by the Lumago Ladies Cooperative. As the line has now expanded to other recycled materials, **Lumago Designs** also makes use of recycled leather and fabrics with pulltabs.

www.lumagodesigns.com



It is believed that every year Boracay's shorelines are slowly diminishing as each beachgoer unintentionally takes three handfuls of sand (around 170g) from the beach. This adds up to around 155 tons of sand per year! **Lagu Beach Towels** counters this by producing beach-friendly towels that repel sand. Available in bright, summer-friendly colors like aquamarine, bright blue, salmon red, mint green, and fuchsia. www.lifeonthesands.com



Tee Time

From page 10

yourself as a good golfer you just have to play the Dye course and see how you stack up against an outlandish, penal design.

Eagle Ridge has something for everyone with its superb sports facilities. It may be quite a bit of travel from Metro Manila but once you're there you get the feeling that really there's just "so many golf courses, but so little time..."

Sherwood Hills Golf Club

This relatively undiscovered gem of a golf course, designed by Jack Nicklaus, has been named as one of the world's best but is sometimes overshadowed by its bigger neighbor. But what Sherwood Hills lacks in size it more than makes up in the design. This track is a veritable proof that great, thoughtful and challenging design is possible without tricking up the golf course—reason that won for Sherwood an 85th ranking in the prestigious biennial Top 100 Golf Courses



Sherwood Hole no. 18.

outside the U.S. in the May 2007 edition of *Golf Digest*.

With the club now under new management resulting in much improved facilities and the start of the construction of the third nine holes, Sherwood Hills looks promising more than ever. But even as it is right now, the current 18-holes are a golfing adventure that will test you whichever color of tee you prefer to start your round.

I couldn't put it any simpler: Sherwood Hills is a pure golfing experience that any expat golfer in the Philippines should not miss. Trece Martinez, Cavite

Telephone: +63 (46) 419.0558

Email: ogm_sherwood@yahoo.com

Antipolo Sun Valley Golf Club

For all intents and purposes, Arnold Palmer-designed course Sun Valley is currently the best designed and best maintained public course ever built in the country. That accolade should merit a drive out to Antipolo City past the Masinag Market to see what it's all about.

Carved out of the hills east of Metro Manila, this 18-hole course gives true meaning to the up and down round with uphill and downhill par 4s and even a par 3 into a cavern. Palmer has been careful in incorporating natural features of the land with man-made landscaping, and it's nowhere evident than Hole no. 3's green which is surrounded by a natural falls and artificial pond. It gets pretty steep at the next hole as it will remind you of Baguio's old cardiac hole. I recommend that you attack it with a golf cart in tow as golf and triathlon should never mix.



Sun Valley Hole no. 2.

The fact that Sun Valley is a public course means you can walk in anytime without being put through the hassles endemic to exclusive and "exclusive" golf clubs. It's a definite a "must try."

Barangay San Juan, Antipolo City
Telephone: +63 (2) 401.3589 to 90
Email: sunvalleygolf@yahoo.com.ph
Website: www.sunvalleyphilippines.com

The former editor-in-chief of *GOLF Magazine Asia*, **Buddy Resurreccion** plays a big part in putting the definitive golfing guidebook, *Golfing Philippines*. He regularly writes a column in *Inquirer Golf Monthly*.

Often Sailing



Mona Polo gives a primer on the Philippine sailing scene

CATCH THE WIND. The Philippine Sailing Team and (INSET) an island pit stop during the annual Hobiecat Challenge.

SO YOU'RE NEW TO THIS archipelago and you want to learn to sail? Not surprising. Stereotypical tropical idylls of warm, clear waters, awesome beaches and gorgeous babes aside, the seas and the winds simply beckon. Not a member of a yacht club? Not a problem.

The good news is that sailing is becoming more accessible as both a competitive and recreational sport, and you don't even need to own a boat to find your sea legs and learn the difference between a tack and a jibe.

First stop, the National Sailing Center at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, which is run by the Philippine Sailing Association—the same people behind the sailing teams we field at the SEAGames. Sounds a bit too serious? They're open to newbies, including children as young as seven years old. Training classes for dinghy and keelboat sailing start at Php 3,000 for four days of basic training, including boat rental. For sheer convenience, accessibility, plus competition-level instructors, the National Sailing Center should be a no-brainer option for learning to sail. Just a word of warning though: Manila Bay's water is not known for being immaculate.

Noob tip:

Stay for the sunset. Go sailing in the morning, grab lunch at Harbour Square, catch a matinee in one of the theaters, and stay for the world-famous Manila Bay sunset.

Got more time? Then head out to Taal Lake Yacht Club (TLYC) in Talisay, Batangas. The home of the Hobie 16 fleet is accessible through the South Expressway, or via the Tagaytay Ridge, but best bring your own car because commuting there is tedious but not impossible.

Hobies 16s and Toppers take over the water here, although there's a lot of room for rowers and windsurfers, too. An afternoon learning to sail a Hobie 16 will set you back about Php2,000, for lectures and on-the-water training by an instructor, as well as monitoring by a safety crew. That rate varies according to group size, and whether you actually need to rent a boat or not (hello friendly boat-owner friends!).

Further south is the island of Mindoro and Puerto Galera Yacht Club (PGYC). They offer basic, intermediate, and advanced sailing courses on dinghies. The rate for adults (non-members)

Noob tip:

Their website states "the more you practice, the less it costs" so flexibility and frequency are keys. The high concentration of excellent inns, hotels, restaurants and cafes in the area and up on Tagaytay's ridge are also great excuses to learn sailing at TLYC.

Noob tip:

Group and family discounts are available by request, so gather your troops and learn to sail together.

is Php7,840, covering three days with theory and hands-on lessons from a full-time instructor, safety boat with crew and safety equipment, and use of a dinghy.

Dinghy rentals and yacht charters are also available, so whether you actually want to learn to sail or simply want to cruise around on a chartered yacht, PGYC is your go-to place.

The good news is that sailing is becoming more accessible as both a competitive and recreational sport, and you don't even need to own a boat to find your sea legs and learn the difference between a tack and a jibe.

Once you've got your sailing basics down pat and are confident with your boat-handling skills, you might want to join some competitions to see how you fare against other sailors. All three locations above have a year-round calendar of events, practice races and competitions, so best to try to keep your self in the loop.

If you fall in love with Hobie 16 sailing and have some serious wanderlust as well, then you have more reasons to get in the sailing circuit. Weigh in at PHINSAF's Traveler Series, which is held at different sail-friendly locations in the Philippines like Paoay Lake, Subic Bay, Punta Fuego, and Oton.

Or, sign up for the Philippine Hobie Challenge.

Now on its 13th year, The Hobie Challenge is your best chance to see the Philippines with a group of like-minded newbies and sailing aficionados. The week-long extreme sailing competition is also an island-hopping adventure, hitting popular travel destinations, exclusive island resorts, as well as obscure islands that you wouldn't know how to find on a map.

Hobie Challenge sailors of all skill levels (including Hobie Worlds champions) fly from all corners of the globe for some serious competition, yet judging from this year's podium finishes by three father-daughter teams, it's not just about sailing and traveling, but family-oriented fun as well. If you're in for the travel and not for the competition, then try to crew for one of the keelboats or cruising yachts that make up the rally fleet.

If you're really eyeing action on bigger boats then Subic Bay, Manila Bay, Puerto Galera and Boracay should all be on your radar for regattas that happen this side of Asia, such as The President's Cup, Boracay Cup, Subic Bay-Boracay Race, and Commodore's Cup. The Rolex China Sea Race and its alternate, the San Fernando Race (organized by the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club) both start out at Victoria Harbour in Hong Kong and attract top caliber international sailors, so make room for those on your calendar too.

And if you haven't realized it yet, in an archipelago like the Philippines, there is simply no excuse to not go sailing. ●

Noob tip:

Wear sun-protective clothing and slather on some serious sunblock. Take plenty of drinking water with you to hydrate from within. And remember: Safety first, fun second.

Useful Digits:

Philippine National Sailing Center

Liwasang Ullalim
Cultural Center of the Philippines
Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City
+63 2 528 1707
mobile +639265285601

Taal Lake Yacht Club

Talisay, Batangas
+63 43 773 0192
+63 2 811 3183
email: peter@sailing.org.ph
www.sailing.org.ph/tylc

Puerto Galera Yacht Club

P.O. Box 30450 Sto Niño
Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro
+63 43 287-3401
mobile +63 917 520 5874
email: clubhouse@pgyc.org

Tee Time

While public golf ain't cheap and there aren't too many choices either, these courses offer serious fun (pardon the oxymoron) and challenge for the expats without club memberships. Buddy Resurreccion has these recommendations



Walled Course

The 4,089 yard, par-66 Club Intramuros Golf is easily one of the most picturesque among the golf courses in Manila. It lies in the perimeter of the 18th century fortress and has neo-classical Commonwealth buildings as a backdrop.

In the 1990s former president Fidel Ramos, an avid golfer himself, tasked Andy Dye, the king of penal golf design, to remake what was once a flat and dull course. Add a number of well-placed halogen lamp posts and you have the only night golf facility in the country. Treat the distractions—the blaring horns of the jeepneys and a street mongrel being chased away by guardia civil as part of the local color.

Small rolling greens and sand bunkers abound. It's a short course so it's more advantageous to carry extra fairway woods and chippers than your big face driver. Be sure to linger longer on the island green 10th since its Andy's homage to Uncle Pete's world famous 17th TCP Sawgrass.

Located in the heart of Manila, Club Intramuros is just a walk away from famous tourist landmarks such as Casa Manila, Fort Santiago, Manila Cathedral, San Agustin Church inside the city walls; Baywalk; Cultural Center of the Philippines; Museo Pambata, National Museum for arts and culture; World Trade Center for trade and business fairs; SM Manila and Robinson's Place for urban shopping; and Star City, a small theme park.—**Walter C. Villa**

Bonifacio Drive cor. Aduana Street, Port Area, Intramuros, Manila
Telephone: +63 (2) 527.6613, 526.1291

REALITY CHECK: Cheap, affordable golf is practically non-existent in this country. Public golf is severely limited to two options and a few military courses so getting to a decent playing surface without club membership could really cost you.

But hey, let's say you're in the mood for a treat and none of your friends with memberships are free to accompany you to renowned Manila Southwoods or Sta Elena or Wack Wack or whatever exclusive club you have in mind. Where do you head out for a game?

There's Club Intramuros, Camp Aguinaldo, Kagitingan, Navy or Villamor—these are within Metro Manila and on a good day when there's not much traffic on the course, you could keep your office staff busy in the morning and still be able to squeeze in an 18-hole round before EDSA turns into a parking lot.

However, this is supposed to be a treat—Tifton grass greens, finely cut fairways, decent locker rooms, right? So allow me to come up with few suggestions where they won't throw you out before you can even ask if you will be able to play.

Batangas

Thanks to the interconnection of SLEX (South Luzon Expressway) and Star Tollway, the trip to Lipa has just become a breeze albeit a slightly more expensive one. Take the Malvar exit and turn right towards the city and the old national highway will lead you towards two excellent courses.

Summit Point Golf and Country Club

Make a left at the Shell station to get to the Summit Point clubhouse. This 18-hole track is a relatively new addition to the golf courses in the Philippines and each hole is supposed to be a replica of some famous golf hole before a lot of things got lost in translation. What you're left with are 18-holes that are uniquely Summit Point's.

Mind you, there is a lot of sand on this course—in fact, there's so much sand here that someday they might have to sell the clubhouse in order to replenish the bunkers. But all things considered they add a huge dose of challenge to the Summit Point experience.

Bring something to show that you're a resident to avail of the local walk-in rate rather than the tourist rate. Summit Point does deserve a visit if you're in or around Lipa City.

Inusluban, Barangay Plaridel, Lipa City, Batangas

Telephone: +63 (43) 756.0560

Mt. Malarayat Golf and Country Club

A bit farther down the road is Mt. Malarayat Golf and Country Club. It is 27-holes of golfing bliss amidst the cool and invigorating climate of

Mt. Malarayat Golf Makulot course Hole no. 7.



Lipa City. You will have three choices of 18-hole combinations depending on the availability of the nines.

However, do make it a point to play all the holes since it will allow you to savor Hole no. 7 of the Makulot course which was voted by *Golf Magazine* as one of the "Top 500 Best

Holes in the World" in 2000. It's a wonderfully shaped hole that will test your mettle requiring a properly placed drive off the tee that could set you up for a chance to go for the green in two.

The golf course has always been immaculately maintained and is a joy to play on. The clubhouse also offers a well-appointed restaurant and a locker room that features a Jacuzzi with grand view of the course.

Barangay Dagatan, Lipa City 4217, Batangas, Philippines

Telephone: +63 (43) 756.7007 Email: golf@malarayat.com

Website: www.malarayat.com

Cavite

The province of Cavite plays host to a lot of golf courses in the Calabarzon region but there's this nook along Governors Drive with two golf clubs that have enough golf courses between them to last you the entire week.

Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club

The largest golfing complex in the country with four golf courses each designed by Isao Aoki, Greg Norman, Nick Faldo and Andy Dye, Eagle Ridge is truly a golfer's haven. It's so huge that the drive from the Metro South gate along Governors Drive towards the main clubhouse stretches to five kilometers.

Not to fret though, the ride will be the best time for you pick the course you'd play. The Norman course is the most popular since it's relatively benign, making it easy and fun to play. The Aoki course, which has its

Eagle Ridge Dye course Hole no. 13.



own Japanese-inspired clubhouse, is pretty much straightforward without gimmicks.

The Faldo and the Dye courses are tough with lots of movement and undulations in the fairways and greens. If you fancy

Turn to page 8

BE AT ONE WITH THE ROAD

The best kind of drive is driving you don't have to think about. It lets you enjoy the ride completely. No fumbling for knobs and switches, no distracting noise and sounds - every element is designed to make perfect sense.

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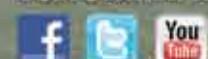
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VOLVOCARS.PH





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As concrete pavements give way to gentle waves, you open your eyes to a world of wonder. At Anvaya Cove, your choices for living are as richly diverse as the scenery itself. Step out onto your private terrace to gaze at stunning views of the sea and mountains, reveling in the tranquility of a neighborhood cocooned in resplendent nature.

There's a perfect escape for every mood, a home perfect for every family. Sea Breeze Verandas' airy condominium communities. Multi-dwelling quads at the lushly green Seascapes Ridge. Abundant land-and-house neighborhoods, enlivened by escapades at the Anvaya Cove Beach and Nature Club and the future Anvaya Cove Golf and Sports Club. Each day brims with the joy of discovery, as your family flourishes in the heart of nature.

Natural wonders, unforgettable adventures, and the comforts of home: at Anvaya Cove, all paths lead to an endless summer.



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Anvaya Cove is a joint development project of Ayala Land, Inc. and Subic Bay Development and Industrial Estate Corporation.