

CHAPTER 4

GEOGRAPHICAL DESTINATIONS

4.1 Laoag/Vigan

Situated in the northwestern coast of Luzon, Laoag and Vigan are two most popular towns in Region I, or the Ilocos Region. Laoag has an international airport which caters to flights from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Guangzhou. The quaint way of life and setting of Laoag adds to its charm to many visitors. Vigan on the other hand, has the best preserved example of a planned Spanish colonial town in Asia with its architecture reflecting fusion of cultural elements from elsewhere in the Philippines with those of Europe creating a unique townscape.

4.2 Banaue/Baguio

Banaue, one of the nine (9) towns of Ifugao province, is home to the world famous Ifugao Rice Terraces dubbed as the “Skyway to the Sky”. Lying high in the Cordillera mountain ranges, it is indeed a sight to behold and to cherish for a lifetime. The length of the rice terraces if connected end to end would encircle half of the globe. It is the artistic center of the Ifugao carvers and Ikat weavers. Since daily existence in the locality permanently unites man with nature, Banaue is inevitably positioned as an eco-tourism and historico-culture destination.

Baguio, the summer capital of the country, is one of the few places in the Philippines blessed with a cool climate by an average of 10-degrees Celsius. The abundance of the Benguet Pine trees adds to the uniqueness of the city. Baguio City is often times used as the jump-off point of travelers to the other wonders of Northern Luzon like: the calm beaches of La Union; the fabled Hundred Islands of Pangasinan; the world famous Banaue Rice Terraces in Ifugao; the ancient churches; Spanish influenced houses, historical and cultural relics of Ilocos, Kalinga Apayao and Abra.

4.3 Subic/Clark

Subic and Clark together form a hub of air transport, tourism, trade, finance and industry in Central Luzon. Both former bastions of U.S. military might, they are now sites to the booming freeports in the Philippines, are fast developing industrial and tourism destinations. Jungle safaris, ocean adventures, shopping, fine dining, gaming and nightly entertainment shows are among the many activities that visitors may enjoy.

4.4 Metro Manila and Environs

Metro Manila or the National Capital Region is the major gateway to the country's alluring 7,107 islands and the nation's heart and soul. This cosmopolitan region is an intriguing blend of the past and present, of striking contrast and contradictions, blessed with significant historical and cultural destinations; it is likewise enriched with modish skyscraping edifices and state of the art shopping malls. Believed to be the ultimate city to millions of Filipinos living outside the metropolis, Metro Manila is the central nerve of all activities in the country, the seat of government, the center of trade and economic activities and the core of education, culture and arts.

Located in Cavite province south of Manila, Tagaytay City is a postcard-pretty city perched on a ridge. The crisp and cool climate earned the city the title second summer capital of the country next to Baguio City. With the fertile land due to numerous volcanic eruptions, practically anything grows in the area as such local fruits abound in Tagaytay. Coconut groves dot its ridge and classy accommodations give visiting tourists the pleasure of relaxation and a magnificent view of the smallest active volcano in Taal, Batangas.

4.5 Palawan

The nature sanctuary of the Philippines, Palawan is wrapped in mantels of rainforests, dive sites, majestic mountains, primeval caves and immaculate beaches, surrounded by coral shelf abundant of varied and colorful marine life, and boasts of exotic flora and fauna, like the mousedeer and scaly anteater. Its waters are great not just for diving but also for fishing and has miles of sub-surface coral and rainbow reef walls surrounding the coasts and coves teeming with a great variety of marine life.

4.6 Boracay

The palm-studded island of Boracay, prides itself of its white, talcum-fine beach, balmy weather, and warm crystalline waters .It is located at the northwestern tip of Panay Island in Western Visayas. The best part of the island is the four-kilometer White Beach known as the "finest beach in the world" fronting the first-class resorts. On the eastern side lies Bulabog beach, drawing enthusiasts from all over the world especially during the peak season from November to March. In January, it is the site of an International Funboard Cup.

4.7 Cebu/Bohol

Popularly known as the Queen city of the South, Cebu City prides itself as a thriving and highly urbanized center and second to Manila's bustling metropolis. It is also home to numerous white sand beaches, crystal blue waters and swaying palms, making it the perfect place for business and

leisure. Five popular tourist destinations are located nearby namely, the Mactan Island, Malapascua Island, Moalboal town, Panagsama Beach and Olango Island.

The island province of Bohol is one of the loveliest islands in Visayas and an hour away from Cebu by boat. Skimmed by gentle coves and white sand beaches, Bohol is home to the tarsier, the smallest primate in the world and the 1,268 perfectly cone-shaped mounds dubbed as “The Chocolate Hills”. Also, some of the best dive sites in the country are found in two of its islands: Balicasag and Pamilacan.

4.8

Davao

Situated in the typhoon-free southern area of the Philippines, Davao is a city of diverse sights, sounds and tastes, the most progressive city in Mindanao, and the center of economic activity in the south. It is a melting pot of western and highland cultures that blend in a colorful, exciting tapestry of ethnic heritage and modern lifestyle. It is now a fast emerging gateway to the evolving East ASEAN Growth Area, a return of our centuries-old trade cooperation with the countries of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and Malaysia during the 17th century.