

# TRAVEL INFORMATION

## **ABOUT THE PHILIPPINES**

The Philippines is made up of 7,107 islands and covers a land area of 115,739 sq m (299,764 sq km) with Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao as main island groups and Manila as capital city. Time zone is GMT+8 hours.

### **Population**

The World Bank (2015) estimates the country's population and annual population growth at 101 million and 1.73 percent, respectively. The largest island group of Luzon accounts for more than half of the entire population, with fishing and agriculture as common livelihood.

### **Language**

Filipino and English are the two official languages. Filipino, which is based on Tagalog, is the national language while English is also widely used and is the medium of instruction in higher education. Eight (8) major dialects are spoken by majority of the Filipinos, namely: Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligaynon or Ilonggo, Bicol, Waray, Pampango, and Pangasinense.

### **Religion**

Some 86 percent of Filipinos are Catholic. About 4 percent are Moslem. The rest are made up of smaller Christian denominations and Buddhists.

### **Climate**

March to May is hot and dry. June to October is rainy. November to February is cool. Average temperatures: 78°F/25°C to 90°F/32°C; humidity is 77%. For updated weather information, click on <http://www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph>.

### **Clothing**

For SEARCA events, smart casual clothing is suitable during the day and recommended all year round because of the heat and humid temperature. Light, loose cotton clothing is best. Nylon and wool should be avoided. Sweaters (cotton, acrylic) are needed during cool season evenings, if visiting mountainous areas, or staying in centralized air-conditioned meeting rooms or halls throughout the day. For formal occasions, suit and tie are suitable business attire for men, minus the suit on warm days. Barong Tagalog, a native formal wear among Filipinos, is always acceptable. For women, a suit or blouse and skirt are best for daytime appointments. Filipiniana is also accepted for formal functions.

### **Currency**

The Philippine monetary unit is the peso, denoted as PHP, divided into 100 centavos. The US dollar is the most recognized foreign currency but the international currencies and traveller's checks may be exchanged at the airport, hotels, malls and other commercial establishments, banks, and authorized money changing shops accredited by the Central Bank of the Philippines. Banking hours is 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday to Friday. International credit cards such as Visa, Diners Club, Bank Americard, Master Card, and American Express are accepted in major establishments.

### **Anti-Smoking Law in Enclosed Places, etc.**

Section 5 of the Philippine Tobacco Regulation Act of 2003 (Republic Act 9211) prohibits the carrying of any lighted tobacco product in public vehicles, schools, health centers, elevators, cinemas, malls and in places where fire hazards are present. Smoking is also banned in recreational facilities for minors. Fines imposed on violators of this section range from PHP 500 to PHP 10,000.

## **Airport Tax**

Passenger Terminal Fee is levied on all passengers embarking for:

1. International travel: PHP 550
2. Domestic travel: PHP 200

Place of payment: Airport of departure.

Exempt:

1. Children under 2 years of age.
2. Transit passengers remaining in the transit area and not leaving the airport.
3. Crew members.

## **VISA INFORMATION**

### **Guidelines on the Entry of Temporary Visitors to the Philippines**

Nationals from countries listed below who are traveling to the Philippines for business and tourism purposes are allowed to enter the Philippines without visas for a stay not exceeding thirty (30) days, provided they hold valid tickets for their return journey to port of origin or next port of destination and their passports valid for a period of at least six (6) months beyond the contemplated period of stay.

Nationals from the following countries are allowed to enter the Philippines without a visa for a period of stay of thirty (30) days or less:

1. Andorra	32. Croatia	62. Iceland	92. Mongolia	122. Saudi Arabia
2. Angola	33. Cyprus	63. Indonesia	93. Morocco	123. Senegal
3. Antigua and Barbuda	34. Czech Republic	64. Ireland	94. Mozambique	124. Seychelles
4. Argentina	35. Democratic Republic of the Congo	65. Israel*	95. Myanmar	125. Singapore
5. Australia	36. Denmark	66. Italy	96. Namibia	126. Slovakia Republic
6. Austria	37. Djibouti	67. Jamaica	97. Nepal	127. Slovenia
7. Bahamas	38. Dominica	68. Japan	98. Netherlands	128. Solomon Islands
8. Bahrain		69. Kazakhstan	99. New Zealand	129. Tajikistan
9. Barbados	39. Dominican Republic			130. South Africa
10. Belgium	40. Ecuador	70. Kenya	100. Nicaragua	131. Spain
11. Benin	41. El Salvador	71. Kiribati	101. Niger	132. Suriname
12. Bhutan	42. Equatorial Guinea	72. Kuwait	102. Norway	133. Swaziland
13. Bolivia	43. Eritrea	73. Lao People's Democratic Republic	103. Oman	134. Sweden
14. Botswana	44. Estonia	74. Latvia	104. Palau	135. Switzerland
15. Brazil*	45. Ethiopia	75. Lesotho	105. Panama	136. Thailand
16. Brunei Darussalam	46. Fiji	76. Liberia	106. Papua New Guinea	137. Togo
17. Bulgaria	47. Finland	77. Liechtenstein	107. Paraguay	138. Trinidad and Tobago
18. Burkina Faso	47. France	78. Lithuania	108. Peru	139. Tunisia
19. Burundi	48. Gabon	79. Luxembourg	109. Poland	140. Turkey
20. Cambodia	49. Gambia	80. Madagascar	110. Portugal	141. Turkmenistan
21. Cameroon	50. Germany	81. Malawi	111. Qatar	142. Uganda
22. Canada	51. Ghana	82. Malaysia	112. Republic of Korea	143. United Arab Emirates
23. Cape Verde	53. Greece	83. Maldives	113. Romania	144. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24. Central African Republic	54. Grenada	84. Mali	114. Russia	145. United Republic of Tanzania
25. Chad	55. Guatemala	85. Malta	115. Rwanda	146. United States of America
26. Chile	56. Guinea	86. Marshall Islands	116. Saint Kitts and Nevis	147. Uruguay
27. Colombia	57. Guinea Bissau	87. Mauritania	117. Saint Lucia	148. Uzbekistan
28. Comoros	58. Guyana	88. Mauritius	118. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	149. Vatican
29. Congo	59. Haiti	89. Mexico	119. Samoa	150. Vanuatu
30. Costa Rica	60. Honduras	90. Micronesia	120. San Marino	151. Venezuela
31. Cote d'Ivoire	61. Hungary	91. Monaco	121. Sao Tome and Principe	152. Vietnam
				153. Zambia
				154. Zimbabwe

\*The following are allowed to enter the Philippines without a visa for a stay not exceeding 59 days:

1. Holders of Brazil passports; and
2. Holders of Israel passports

\*The following are allowed to enter the Philippines without a visa for a stay not exceeding fourteen (14) days:

1. Holders of Hong Kong Special Administrative (SAR) passports.
2. Holders of Macau Special Administrative Region (SAR) passports.

The following are allowed to enter the Philippines without a visa for a stay not exceeding seven (7) days:

1. Holders of Macau-Portuguese passports
2. Holders of Hong Kong British passports.

**Important Note:**

Nationals who are subjects of deportation/blacklist orders of the Department and the Bureau of Immigration shall not be admitted to the Philippines. Further inquiries may be addressed to the Visa Division (Telephone numbers:556-0000 and ask the operator to connect you to Visa Division), Department of Foreign Affairs, 2330 Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City or to any Philippine Embassy or Consulate abroad.

For more details, please click on: <http://consular.dfa.gov.ph/visainformation>

For a listing of Philippine embassies abroad, click on:  
<http://www.dfa.gov.ph/posts/pemb.htm>