



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 Philippine Commission on Population (PopCom, 2018) estimated the country's population and annual population growth at 107 million and 1.69 percent. 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 83 percent of Filipinos are Catholic. About 6 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 other international currencies 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.

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21-25 January 2019 | SEARCA, College, Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines



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. SEARCA facilities are no-smoking areas.

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 ASEAN member countries (.e.g, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) and others 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 of Timor-Leste need visas to enter the Philippines.

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 | 31. Cote d'Ivoire | 61. Hungary | 91. Mongolia | 121. Saudi Arabia |
| 2. Angola | 32. Cyprus | 62. Iceland | 92. Morocco | 122. Senegal |
| 3. Antigua and Barbuda | 33. Czech Republic | 63. Indonesia | 93. Mozambique | 123. Seychelles |
| 4. Argentina | 34. Democratic Republic of the Congo | 64. Ireland | 94. Myanmar | 124. Singapore |
| 5. Australia | 35. Denmark | 65. Israel* | 95. Namibia | 125. Slovakia |
| 6. Austria | 36. Djibouti | 66. Italy | 96. Nepal | 126. Slovenia |
| 7. Bahamas | 37. Dominica | 67. Jamaica | 97. Netherlands | 127. Solomon Islands |
| 8. Bahrain | 38. Dominican Republic | 68. Japan | 98. New Zealand | 128. Somalia |
| 9. Barbados | 39. Ecuador | 69. Kenya | 99. Nicaragua | 129. South Africa |

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10. Belgium	40. El Salvador	70. Kiribati	100. Niger	130. Spain
11. Benin	41. Equatorial Guinea	71. Kuwait	101. Norway	131. Suriname
12. Bhutan	42. Eritrea	72. Lao People's Democratic Republic	102. Oman	132. Swaziland
13. Bolivia	43. Estonia	73. Latvia	103. Palau	133. Sweden
14. Botswana	44. Ethiopia	74. Lesotho	104. Panama	134. Switzerland
15. Brazil*	45. Fiji	75. Liberia	105. Papua New Guinea	135. Thailand
16. Brunei Darussalam	46. Finland	76. Liechtenstein	106. Paraguay	136. Togo
17. Bulgaria	47. France	77. Lithuania	107. Peru	137. Trinidad and Tobago
18. Burkina Faso	48. Gabon	78. Luxembourg	108. Poland	138. Tunisia
19. Burundi	49. Gambia	79. Madagascar	109. Portugal	139. Turkey
20. Cambodia	50. Germany	80. Malawi	110. Qatar	140. Tuvalu
21. Cameroon	51. Ghana	81. Malaysia	111. Republic of Korea	141. Uganda
22. Canada	52. Gibraltar	82. Maldives	112. Romania	142. United Arab Emirates
23. Cape Verde	53. Greece	83. Mali	113. Russia	143. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24. Central African Republic	54. Grenada	84. Malta	114. Rwanda	144. United Republic of Tanzania
25. Chad	55. Guatemala	85. Marshall Islands	115. Saint Kitts and Nevis	145. United States of America
26. Chile	56. Guinea	86. Mauritania	116. Saint Lucia	146. Uruguay
27. Colombia	57. Guinea Bissau	87. Mauritius	117. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	147. Vatican
28. Comoros	58. Guyana	88. Mexico	118. Samoa	148. Venezuela
29. Congo	59. Haiti	89. Micronesia	119. San Marino	149. Vietnam
30. Costa Rica	60. Honduras	90. Monaco	120. Sao Tome and Principe	150. Zambia
				151. Zimbabwe

* Brazilian and Israeli nationals are given fifty-nine (59) days stay based on existing agreements.

*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.

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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://www.dfa.gov.ph/consular/visa.htm>

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