



ASIAN TIGERS
MOBILITY

Settling-in Philippines

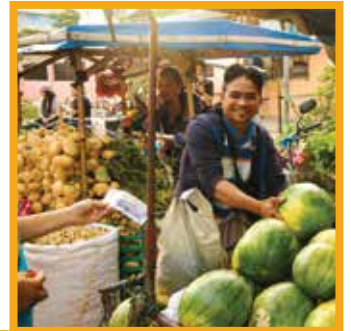


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The Basics

About Metro Manila

The National Capital Region, Metro Manila, is the metropolitan region covering the City of Manila and its surrounding areas in the Philippines. Metro Manila comprises of 16 cities and municipalities. Its total area is 638.55 square kilometers (246.55 sq mi) with an estimated 12.88 million population (August 2015 Census).

Prime business and commercial centers in the metropolis are Makati (the country's premier financial center), Bonifacio Global City, Ortigas Center, Quezon City, Manila, Pasay, and Alabang. People can find the Philippines' largest corporations and the country's major banks as well as the many multinational corporations. Shopping malls, serviced apartments and hotels can also be found in these areas.

Filipino (Tagalog) is the language spoken in Manila and considered as the official language of the Philippines. Since English has been made part of the education curriculum of the Philippines, most Filipinos can fluently speak, write and understand English. However, differences in pronunciation and diction may be observed. Filipino is used in mass broadcast media, but laws, books, and mediums of instruction are primarily written in English.

The major city, Manila, provides various transportation options. The unique one is the public jeepney, which has been in use since the years immediately after World War II. Buses, air-conditioned metered taxi, and Tamaraw FX minivans are also popular forms of transportation.

Metro Manila is also rich in history and diverse cultures, which are attributed to the colonization under the Spanish for 400 years, and 45 years under the Americans while all the time being influenced by Chinese, Indian and Arab cultures. These left the City with a colorful culture.

There are several landmarks with historical significance, most of which are located in the west. One of which is the Intramuros, the 400-year-old walled city that used to be the seat of the government during the Spanish Colonial Era and American period.

What beyond Manila's busy streets and crowded commercial centers are historical monuments that relish the past and festive joints that celebrate life. Among the places to see are Rizal Park, National Museum, Malacañang Palace, the CCP Complex, Nayong Pilipino, Ayala Avenue in Makati City, Ortigas Center in Mandaluyong City and the Corregidor Island. Restaurants are aplenty in these areas as well.

Metro Manila's Facts & Figures

Land Area	: 638.55 sq. km
Population	: 12.88 million
Cities:	: Manila, Caloocan, Las Pinas, Makati, Malabon, Mandaluyong, Marikina, Muntinlupa, Navotas, Pasay, Pasig, Paranaque, Quezon City, San Juan, Taguig, Valenzuela, Pateros
Density	
Time Zone	: UTC/GMT+8
Currency	: Philippine Peso (Php)
Religion	: Generally Roman Catholic
Language	: Filipino is commonly understood and spoken, English is widely used in business transactions and education
Weather	: Between tropical wet and dry climate and a tropical monsoon climate. Temperature at 28-38 degrees Celsius all year around. Dry season is January-April; wet season from May to December
Regular Holidays	: January 1 – New Year's Day Good Friday and Easter April 9 – Araw ng Kagitingan (Day of Valor) May 1 – Labor Day June 12 – Independence Day Every Monday of August – National Heroes Day November 30 – Bonifacio Day December 25 – Christmas Day December 30 – Rizal Da

Let's Talk About Culture



Local Culture

Charming, Hospitable and Friendly are the best words to describe Filipinos. They may seem distant at first sight, but the truth is that they are very friendly and welcoming foreigners. This trait is usually seen during festivals where many Filipinos are giving their best to entertain their visitors well.

Having Close Family Ties is also one of their unique traits. It is a significant cultural value that Filipinos have. They are taught to take care of each other and to be loyal to family and elders by simply obeying their authorities. Having a fondness for family reunions during holidays such as Christmas, New Year's Eve, All Saints' Day, Fiestas, homecomings, etc. is evidence that Filipino people value the close family ties.

Filipinos believe that keeping things to operate smoothly is one's duty. It is essential for them not to lose face. Being corrected or correcting another person in public is not an acceptable behavior. Therefore, they often say yes when they mean no or maybe. Others understand when the request is not fulfilled because saying no might have caused the individual to lose face.

When a family invites one to join for a meal, the offer must be refused at first. If they request again, it is permissible to accept. Time consciousness is not an important consideration. A planned meeting is expected to take place later, much later, or never.



Cultural Do's & Don'ts

Do's

Be friendly and smile. Filipinos by nature are very friendly and like to greet. Do reciprocate the gesture to show your appreciation.

Do try to learn the language. Learn some basic Filipino words, greetings, and introductions. These will be useful for you in getting around, and locals will appreciate the effort.

Do recognize that Filipinos tend to avoid using the word "No" in answering questions. Even though they mean to refuse, they will think of other ways to get their message across.

Do remind yourself that time is viewed flexibly in the Philippines. Being late is not a big issue and is acceptable.

Do have a good sense of humor. Filipinos are good at making jokes out of anything. Appreciating their jokes and laughing with them is an excellent way to build relationships with them.

Don'ts

Don't bring up any embarrassing situations as it is very important for Filipinos not to lose face. Keep in mind that no one likes being put on the spot.

Don't point your finger when addressing or trying to call someone. These are considered inappropriate gestures.

Filipinos are very hospitable and love to offer food to their guests once they get the chance. Don't refuse food that is offered to you, especially when they made an effort to cook for you.

If you are invited to a Filipino's home, do not forget to bring sweets or any gift to show your appreciation to the family.

Don't lose your temper. If you get angry, they may find you threatening and be less sympathetic to you.

Don't be intimate to the opposite sex unless married. Filipinos are naturally conservative and have reservations about intimacy, touching, and the like.

A photograph of a man smiling at a fruit stall. He is surrounded by large watermelons and a large sack of potatoes. A hand is visible handing him a banknote. The scene is outdoors under a blue and white striped awning.

Settling in Tips

Getting Around

Taxi

There are 2 types of taxi, airport taxi, and regular taxi. Airport taxis have a higher rate (Flagdown: Php 70.00) and are color coded yellow. The flag-down rate of the regular taxi is Php 40.00. It is white in color and caters to commuter apps such as Grab. The taxi drivers can speak English in general.

Jeepney

Jeepneys, sometimes called simply jeeps, are the most popular means of public transportation in the country. They are well-known for their crowded seating and kitsch decorations, which have become a ubiquitous symbol of Philippine culture and art. Jeepneys have fixed routes around the suburbs of Metro Manila. The minimum fare is Php 7.00.

LRT (Light Rail Transit)

Both the LRT Line 1 and LRT Line 2 Systems are utilizing an Automated Fare Collection System (AFCS) using plastic magnetic tickets (BEEP CARD) as fare medium. You can purchase and load the card at their respective station. The minimum fare is Php12.00.

MRT (Metro Rail Transit)

MRT is a rapid transit system of Metro Manila, and is composed of a single line that runs in the general direction along the north and south lanes of Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA). It uses a distance-based fare structure, with fares ranging from Php 13.00-28.00 (29 to 63 U.S. cents). And a plastic magnetic card (BEEP) as a fare medium.

Tricycle

A Tricycle can accommodate 2-9 people depending on style. The fares range from Php 6.00 to Php 250.00. It is commonly used when travelling short distances.

Multicab

It is a light truck that is similar to jeepney, but cleaner and less noisy engine. It also has fixed routes and can accommodate up to 11 people. These cabs can be seen in narrow streets and suburban areas.

Private Car

Requirements for getting a local driving license:

1. Original and one photocopy of the valid foreign license. If the foreign driver's license is not in English, the applicant should submit an official English translation from the local embassy of the issuing country.
2. Original copy of valid passport showing the latest date of arrival in the Philippines of the foreign applicant.
3. Original and machine copy of valid visa or alien certificate of registration (ACR) if the foreign applicant temporarily resides in the Philippines.
4. Original copy of the medical certificate with official receipt issued by an LTO accredited or government Physician.
5. Negative drug test result issued by DOH accredited drug testing center or government hospitals
6. Duly accomplished application for driver's license (ADL). (Download via <http://www.gov.ph/downloads/2014/06jun/DOTC-LTO-Form-21.pdf>)
7. Taxpayer's Identification Number (TIN), if employed, (In compliance to Executive Order 98 & MC ACL-2009-1251)

Medical Care

Private and Int'l Clinics & Hospitals

ST. LUKE'S MEDICAL CENTER, BONIFACIO GLOBAL CITY

Rizal Drive corner 32nd Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila
(632) 789-7700

**** Transferees may also contact: International SOS Hotline 6870909

MAKATI MEDICAL CENTER

No. 2, Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City, Makati, 1229 Metro Manila
+632.8888.999

THE ASIAN HOSPITAL

2205 Civic Dr, Alabang, Muntinlupa, 1780 Metro Manila
(02) 771 9000

***Transferees may also contact: International SOS Hotline 6870909

THE MEDICAL CITY

Ortigas Ave, Pasig, Metro Manila
(02) 635 6789

ST. LUKE'S MEDICAL CENTER, QUEZON CITY

Kalusugan, New Manila, Quezon City, Metro Manila
(02) 723 0101

***Transferees may also contact: International SOS Hotline 6870909

International Schools

As in every search, it is advantageous to narrow your preferences. Think for example what makes a school appealing to you and your children and what is acceptable and what is not when it comes to your children's education. Curriculum details, a medium of instruction, extra-curricular activities, school's facilities, the percentage of English native speakers in the classroom, whether the school is new or has some tradition, and school's fees are all vital points you want to consider before making any decision. Additionally, it is also important to consider the prospective school's location in conjunction with your new home's location.

As part of the Welcoming Pack that Asian Tigers Mobility has prepared for you, you will find a list of international schools each with detailed information. This should help you in making a decision.

Here are some of the major international schools that cater to the expat community:

British School Manila (BSM)

British curriculum, located at Bonifacio Global City (Taguig)

Brent International School Manila

American curriculum, located at Santa Rosa (Laguna)

International School Manila (ISM)

American curriculum, located at Bonifacio Global City (Taguig)

Daily Needs

Expat Housing

From condominiums to homes in gated communities, Metro Manila has plenty to offer when it comes to expat housing. Located in key expat-preferred areas – Bonifacio Global City, Makati, Pasig, and Alabang, condominiums available locally come either furnished, fully equipped with all kitchen appliances and utensils as well as entertainment appliances or semi-furnished. If you are keen to live a Western-like suburban life, the three locations (Makati, Pasig, and Alabang) have gated villages. It features detached and semi-detached houses. These condos and village are either near or within the commercial business districts so specialty stores/supermarkets selling international goods, fitness centers, entertainment centers, etc. are easily accessible.

Banking

Philippines has a comprehensive banking system consisting of various types of banks, from large universal banks to small rural banks and even non-banks. All the banks are licensed by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (Central Bank of the Philippines) under the General Banking Act of 2000.

Groceries

There are many supermarkets in the Philippines in where you can find almost everything from home appliances, clothing to all kinds of food products and necessities. Waltermart Supermarket IGA, Puregold, Super 8 Grocery Warehouse and Robinsons Supermarket are the major supermarkets which operate several branches all over the Philippines. Some of them also offer online grocery shopping and delivery.

Electricity

There are three associated plug types in the Philippines. One has two flat parallel pins, another has two flat parallel pins and a grounding pin, and the last one has two round pins. The Philippines operates on a 220V supply voltage and 60Hz.

Telephone and mobile

For domestic long-distance calls or calls to mobile numbers, dial 0 followed by the city code (or mobile prefix) and then the seven-digit number.

Useful dialing codes from landlines include:

- Philippines country code - 63
- International dialing code - 00

The Philippines' fixed-line network is operated by the Philippine Long-Distance Telephone Company (PLDT). International calls can be made from any PLDT office for US\$0.40 per minute. Local calls are very cheap, and long-distance domestic calls are also very reasonable.

Mobile phones are ubiquitous, and the Filipinos spend much time on texting. Local SIM cards are widely available and can be loaded up cheaply with data and phone credit. Roaming is possible but expensive.

A close-up, low-angle shot of several hands clinking glasses filled with orange juice. The glasses are clear and textured, and the juice is a vibrant orange. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with green foliage and a hint of a person in a blue and white outfit. The text "Let's Have Fun" is overlaid in white on a semi-transparent orange band across the middle of the image.

Let's Have Fun

Networking

Alabang Ladies International Group (ALIG)

It is a social network for expats as well as locals based in Manila, Alabang, and part of Muntinlupa. If you are new to Manila, they will help you learn about living in the Philippines and settle into the community. They have a variety of social events and volunteer works you can participate in. It could be a good option for you to make new friends while doing something meaningful.

The American Women's Club of the Philippines (AWCP)

It is a social organization who help assist newcomers to settle in the Philippines and provide opportunities to their members to enrich experience living in the Philippines through community service charity projects. They have quarterly meetings offering opportunities to meet other members for socializing and keeping the members updated on the latest club activities.

The American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (AMCHAM)

The Chamber exists to serve the U.S. businesses through the participation of members in promoting their long-term objectives while contributing to the civic and economic development of the Philippines.

The Australian-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce (Philippines)

The ABG was set up by the Senior Trade Commissioner in 1974 to provide a common meeting place for Australian businesspeople who are based in Manila or are visiting Manila. The ANZCHAM's Mission is to be a highly effective organization that visibly supports and promotes business relationships between Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines.



Need Help?

Emergency Contacts

Emergency

National Emergency Hotline	: 911
National Police (PNP) hotline patrol	: 117
National Police (text-based)	: 2286
Bureau of Fire Protection (NCR)	: (02)426-0219, (02)426-3812, (02)426-0246
President's Hotline	: 8888

Other

National Disaster and Risk Management Council	: 911-5061 to 65
National Poison Control Center	: 524-1078 / 554-8400 loc. 3276
Manila Water Company	: 1627
Maynilad Water Services	: 1626
Manila Electric Company (MERALCO)	: 16211

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We make every effort to ensure the information contained in these destination guide is accurate and up-to-date. However, do keep in mind that the rules, regulations and other material in these guides change from time to time, so we cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. We suggest that you contact the appropriate Asian Tigers office if you have any questions. They will be glad to help you.