

TTG THE OFFICIAL Show Daily



Issue

2

ASEAN
TOURISM FORUM 2026
Navigating Our Tourism Future, Together
28-30 JANUARY | CEBU, PHILIPPINES

ATF 2026
January 29, 2026
Cebu, Philippines



TTG Asia • TTGmico • TTG Asia Luxury
TRAVEL JOURNALISM
BUSINESS ARTICLE
12-Time Winner
PATA Gold Awards



TTG Asia
FEATURE
OF THE YEAR
NPPS Awards



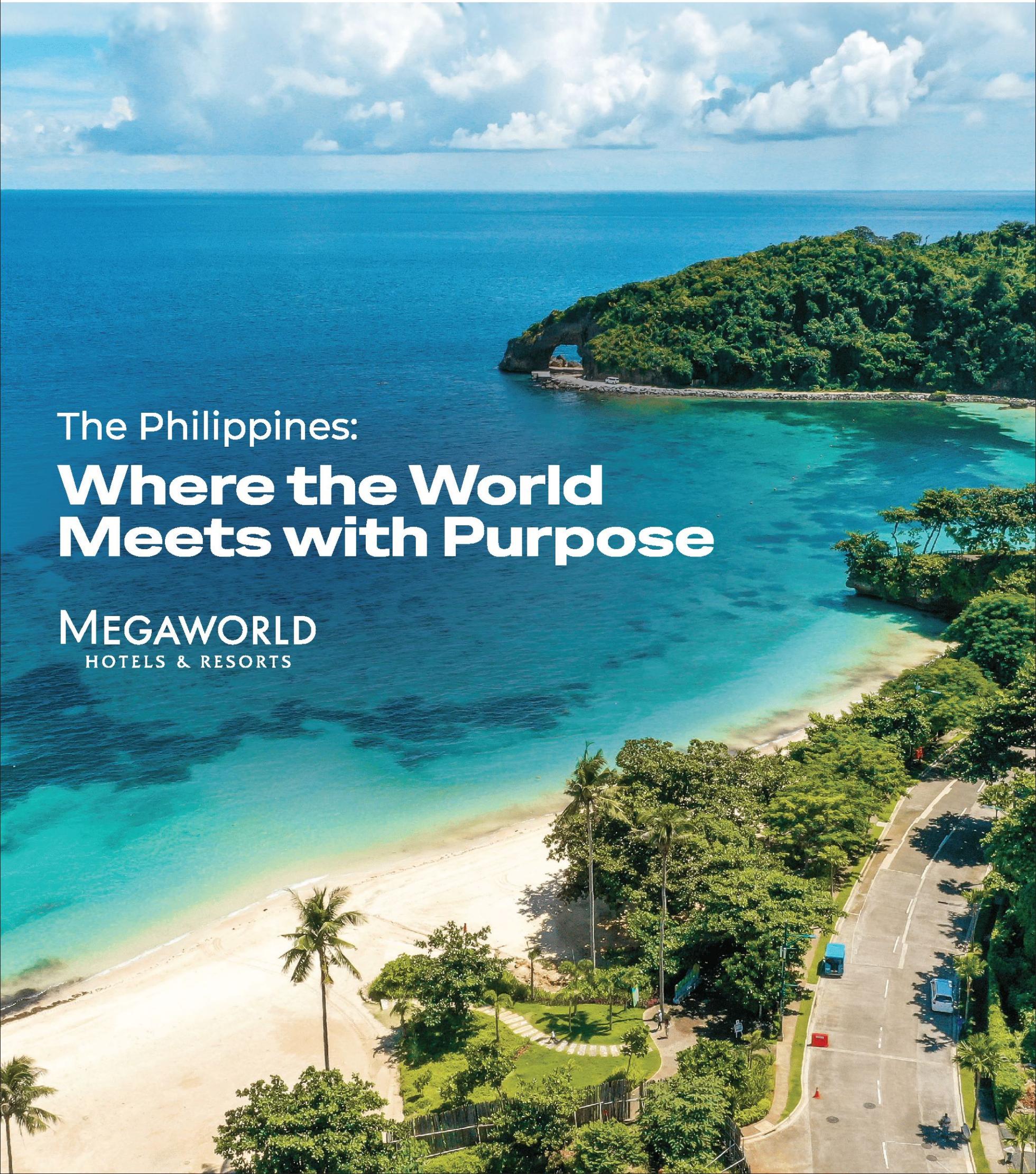
TTGassociations • TTG Asia
TRADE MEDIA
OF THE YEAR
MPAS Awards



TTGassociations
JOURNALISM EXCELLENCE
PRINT & ONLINE
Anak Sarawak Award

The Philippines: Where the World Meets with Purpose

MEGAWORLD
HOTELS & RESORTS



Beyond its expanding venues and growing room inventories, the Philippines is elevating its MICE proposition with a deeper sense of purpose—one that weaves together culture, community, and connection. Leading this shift is the country's largest hotel management group, Megaworld Hotels & Resorts. Recently recognized by the Department of Tourism with the prestigious Philippine Tourism Excellence Award, the group is shaping the country's top destinations where business and lifestyle come together seamlessly, delivering meetings defined by a strong sense of

place, meaningful engagement, and a distinctly human-centered approach.

"More than outcomes, today's meetings create shared meaningful impact. At Megaworld Hotels & Resorts, we believe that every meeting or conference is an opportunity to give back. Through initiatives like The Sampaguita, MHR's brand of service, we ensure that we create a better experience for our guests, associates, and communities we serve," said Cleofe Albiso, Managing Director of Megaworld Hotels & Resorts.



Boracay Newcoast Beach



Boracay Newcoast Convention Center

Mactan, Cebu

Cebu is one of the country's most thriving business districts and Mactan Newtown elevates Cebu's MICE appeal with world-class venues just 15 minutes from Mactan-Cebu International Airport. Mactan Expo is a colossal indoor location in the heart of Mactan Newtown township. Delegates stay conveniently at Savoy Hotel Mactan Newtown or the newly opened Mercure Mactan Cebu, both across the venue.

Meetings in Mactan are infused with environmental purpose. The township actively supports marine conservation, most notably through Savoy Hotel Mactan Newtown's "Adopt-a-Reef" program. Using innovative methods such as coral fragmentation and artificial reef structures, delegates and partners are given opportunities to participate in reef rehabilitation.

Boracay

Boracay is attracting more business travelers and digital nomads as the famous island destination saw more MICE facilities. One of these is Boracay Newcoast, a private estate that blends business with island living. At its center is the 1,200-seat Boracay Newcoast Convention Center supported by three Megaworld Hotels & Resorts properties—Belmont Hotel Boracay, Savoy Hotel Boracay Newcoast, and Chancellor Hotel Boracay—offering over 1,500 rooms combined and are equipped with flexible function rooms and outdoor venues.

What gives meetings in Boracay deeper meaning is the island's commitment to mindful travel and cultural respect. Home to the Ati Indigenous Community, Boracay reminds delegates that every gathering takes place on shared ground.



Mactan Newtown Beach



The Glass Pavilion, Mactan Newtown Beach

The Philippines:

**Where the World
Meets with Purpose**

MEGAWORLD
HOTELS & RESORTS



ATF 2026
January 29, 2026
Cebu, Philippines

Issue

2



Philippines propels national progress with tourism growth

Key tourism initiatives, such as expanding transport networks and talent training, are aligned with broader national development goals

By Rachel AJ Lee

The Philippine government is positioning tourism as a core pillar of national development, aimed at driving inclusive economic growth through 2026 and beyond.

Verna Buensuceso, undersecretary, Philippine NTO head, Philippine Department of Tourism (DoT), detailed how the sector's momentum is central to the nation's broader development goals through a number of key initiatives.

In 2025, the Philippines recorded 6.5 million foreign visitors and returning overseas Filipinos, generating an estimated 694 billion pesos (US\$11.8 billion) in tourism revenue.

To increase high-value spending and simplify entry, the government has introduced visa-free entry for Indian, Taiwanese, and Chinese nationals. Other reforms include cruise passenger visa waivers, e-visas for remote workers, and a VAT refund scheme for tourists that will be launched later this year.

Recognising air travel as the backbone of an archipelago, the strategy also involves opening more domestic routes, and longhaul connections to cities like Paris, San Francisco, and Brisbane. Domestically, expanded services are linking islands like Cebu to destinations such as Boracay to spread economic benefits across regions, Buensuceso shared.

Buensuceso also highlighted the suc-



A bustling Philippine pavilion greets ATF 2026 buyers and trade visitors; photo by Karen Yue

cess of the Philippine Experience Program, which utilises cultural heritage and arts caravans to showcase regional diversity. To date, the programme has completed caravans across 34 provinces, 33 cities, and 54 municipalities.

"The project was designed to be developed in close coordination with tour operators, including national and local operators, as well as online platforms. These efforts have successfully been translated into 66 tour packages," she elaborated.

Furthermore, the government has also institutionalised the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence, training over 412,000 workers to ensure a consistent, world-class standard of hospitality rooted in seven core Filipino values.

Buensuceso underscored the expansion of the Philippine tourism portfolio, which has diversified beyond traditional beach and dive tourism. This includes developing Muslim-friendly accommodation and Halal-certified kitchens – Philippines climbed to eighth spot in the 2025 Global Muslim Travel Index – and higher-spending segments such as golf tourism, and sports tourism.

To enhance the visitor experience, the DoT has established a 24/7 multilingual tourist assistance call centre, and is building approximately 100 Tourist Rest Areas nationwide to provide clean and secure spaces for travellers.

"This national agenda is currently being showcased on the regional stage.

"Hosting the ASEAN Tourism Forum is a timely opportunity to demonstrate our country's readiness to welcome travellers and partners from across the region," said Maria Margarita Montemayor Nograles, chief operating officer, Tourism Promotions Board Philippines.

"Through this event, we ensure equal promotional opportunities reach communities across our country, an effort evident in our post-tours to destinations like Pampanga, Davao, and Palawan. This momentum will continue throughout the year as we host around 90 ASEAN dinner functions in Manila, Boracay, Cebu, Iloilo and other key destinations."

Chroma outlines next phase of expansion

Chroma Hospitality is entering its next phase of expansion with a trio of developments that signal both brand diversification and scale, according to country manager James Montenegro.

The group is currently operating more than 2,000 rooms and is targeting close to 3,000 rooms within the next five years, driven largely by fully owned developments rather than management contracts.

Leading the rollout is the debut of Grafik, Chroma's first in-house lifestyle brand, launching in Baguio with a 256-room property called The Pinehouse, located within the historic John Hay estate. Positioned as a millennial-forward, experiential brand, the property is fully contactless and designed around open, social spaces. It is also built around curated touchpoints such as walking tours and wellness activities that connect guests with the estate's natural setting.

"It's a little bit different from what we normally do, and that's what excites us about it," said Montenegro.

Chroma is also preparing to break ground on its next Crimson Hotels & Resorts property in Clark in 2H2026.

The third pillar of Chroma's expansion is Chroma Beyond, a new loyalty programme designed to deliver instant rewards rather than long-term point accumulation.

Together, the initiatives reflect Chroma Hospitality's intent to scale deliberately while strengthening brand identity and guest experience across its growing Philippine portfolio. – **Stephanie Zheng**

SMHCC doubles down on integrated districts

SM Hotels and Conventions Corp. (SM-HCC) is doubling down on an integrated complex model designed to capture and keep the high economic impact contributed by business events delegates within a destination.

Walid Wafik, SMHCC's senior vice president for operations, said: "At SM-HCC, we view convention centres not as standalone facilities but as catalysts for broader economic growth. Our approach is straightforward: we don't just build venues; we shape destinations."

This strategy, proven at the SM Mall of Asia complex, is now being scaled to upcoming developments like SMX Seaside Cebu, where a 26-hectare integrated dis-

trict comprising retail, hospitality, entertainment, and events will serve as demand engine for the entire region.

Walid noted that SMX Manila welcomed about 4.4 million guests recently, contributing to nearly seven million visitors across the nationwide network – levels that isolated venues rarely match. He attributed this success to large-scale events that generate a recurring flow of people.

"Department of Tourism data shows MICE visitors spend over US\$573 per day, roughly five times more than leisure travellers. In a standalone facility, much



Walid: keep money flowing within the ecosystem

of that spend disperses across the city. In an integrated complex, it stays within the ecosystem, multiplying benefits across hospitality, retail, and lifestyle components," Wafik explained.

According to Walid, today's organisers favour streamlined logistics and the convenience of a single, fully integrated destination, where delegates can seamlessly transition from meetings to accommodation, dining, and leisure.

He told *TTG Show Daily*: "Our integrated developments, from the dual-brand complex in Pasay to upcoming properties like Park Inn by Radisson SM City Das-

mariañas, are built around that expectation, creating a more compelling experience and stronger repeat business."

The company has a five-year plan to increase its room inventory by over 50 per cent – and progress is good. All new properties are in the Philippines, reflecting the company's continued confidence in the destination.

In the pipeline are Park Inn by Radisson SM City Dasmariñas, targeted for 4Q2027; SM Olongapo Central and Laoag as well as a major dual-brand Radisson and Park Inn development at SM Seaside City in 2028; and SM City Sta. Rosa and an expansion for Park Inn by Radisson Davao in 2029. – **Rachel AJ Lee**

Inbound picks up pace

Intensive destination marketing leading up to Visit Malaysia 2026, friendly visa policies, and new itineraries are powering up arrivals into the country

By S Puvaneswary

Malaysian inbound players are capitalising on the government's ongoing nationwide *Visit Malaysia* campaign as well as improved access through visa-free entry for key source markets to further drive business.

Since December 2023, visa-free entry for nationals of China and India has significantly lowered travel barriers while enhancing Malaysia's competitiveness as a preferred destination.

Arokia Das Anthony, executive director, The Essence of Asia Tours & Travel, told *TTG Show Daily* that bookings for January 2026 and forward bookings for February are "off the charts".

He noted that with the visa-free policy, the company is now receiving FIT bookings from India with just a two- to three-day lead time, compared to three weeks or more previously.

He added: "The *Visit Malaysia* campaign has had a clear impact. We have also introduced new destinations such as Ipoh and the Cameron Highlands to the Indian market due to request from our

overseas partners for new itineraries, and demand is coming from repeat visitors who have already visited traditional destinations like Langkawi and Genting and want new places.

"In addition, we have positioned Tioman and Redang Islands as more affordable alternatives to the Maldives for Indian holidaymakers and honeymooners."

Jessica Koh, director, The Traveller Malaysia, noted that millennials, in particular, are increasingly seeking experience-led travel. The travel company is strong in the Indian and South-east Asian inbound markets to Malaysia.

She shared that her company is working closely with the Sabah Tourism Board to promote the state's nature-based attractions, adding: "We are positioning Sabah as a hidden jewel of Malaysia, discovering cultural traditional warriors, thrilling adventures and connecting with the nature and wildlife experiences."

She added that

Koh: investing in community-led tourism experiences

her company has also seen more group and business events travel from the Philippines, which she attributes to a deeper market understanding of Malaysia's key urban destinations, particularly Kuala Lumpur and Penang.

Koh has observed a broader trend among FITs – demand is spiking for off-the-beaten-track destinations and community-based tourism experiences. To cater to this, her company is developing more experiential products across West Malaysia, including rural stays, heritage-led itineraries, and community-driven activities that allow travellers to engage more deeply with local culture and lifestyles.

She shared: "We believe community-based tourism will gain further traction during this *Visit Malaysia* year and continue to grow beyond it, as travellers increasingly seek more meaningful and immersive experiences."

Based on Trip.com's booking data for 1Q2026, Malaysia is among the five most popular outbound destinations for travellers from South-east Asia and China. It also ranks within the top 10 choices for visitors from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea, highlighting continued regional and intra-Asian travel demand.

Stephane Thong, general manager, Trip.com Malaysia, shared: "This year, Trip.com is focused on shining a spotlight on all that this country has to offer in support of *Visit Malaysia 2026*, and strengthening Malaysia's growing appeal as a leading destination in the region."



TTG TravelTrade Publishing is a business group of TTG Asia Media

EDITORIAL

- Karen Yue** Group Editor
- S Puvaneswary** Editor, Malaysia/Brunei
- Mimi Hudoyo** Editor, Indonesia
- Audrey Ng** Editor, TTG Content Lab
- Rachel A.J Lee** Assistant Editor, TTGmice, TTGassociations
- Melissa Anne Tan** Sub Editor
- Caleb Richard Lai** Photographer
- Redmond Sia, Fish Chan** Creative Designers
- Lina Tan** Editorial Assistant

CONTRIBUTORS

- Rosa Ocampo, Marissa Carruthers, Anne Somanas, Caroline Boey, Stephanie Zheng

SALES & MARKETING

- Pierre Quek** Publisher and Head Integrated Solutions
- Chimmy Tsui** Publisher and Head Integrated Solutions (China)
- Shirley Tan** Regional Account Director
- Seth Leow** Senior Business Manager
- Cheryl Lim** Advertisement Administration Manager
- Tan Yu Yun** Marketing Executive

PUBLISHING SERVICES

- Nur Hazirah** Web Executive
- Katherine Leong** Circulation Executive

TTG ASIA MEDIA

- Darren Ng** Managing Director

For sales & marketing enquires, please contact traveltradesales@ttgasia.com

In brief

Find ASEAN on Jeju Olle Trail

Ten commemorative benches – a symbol of friendship between the ASEAN grouping and South Korea – have finally been installed along the famed Jeju Olle Trail.

The Commemorative Ceremony: Completion of the 10 ASEAN Benches at the ASEAN-Korea Olle, hosted by the ASEAN-Korea Centre, was held at Parnas Hotel Jeju on November 11 last year. The ceremony also aimed to further promote South-east Asian travel into Jeju, and enhance cultural and tourism cooperation between Jeju and ASEAN. – **Karen Yue**

THAI's first A321neo takes off

Thai Airways has entered a new phase of short- and medium-haul travel on January 22, 2026, as its first Airbus A321neo completed its inaugural commercial flight from Bangkok to Singapore.

The flight, TG413, marked more than a fleet upgrade, representing a milestone in the airline's recovery following the completion of its court-supervised business rehabilitation triggered by Covid-19.

THAI will receive 31 other A321neo aircraft over the next three years, with 16 due to be delivered this year. – **Rachel AJ Lee**

CrescentRating's big move

CrescentRating, a specialist in halal travel, has become the first Singapore-based company to be admitted as an affiliate member of UN Tourism. According to chief executive and founder Fazal Bahardien, the membership provides access to events attended by governments and companies, as well as opportunities to propose projects supported by UN Tourism under its Programme of Work (PoW) for affiliate members.

The company has received PoW approval for its Halal in Travel Gastronomy Summit, set for Johor Bahru in October, and a new glossary for halal tourism. – **Caroline Boey**

New, deeper pathways into Thailand

Tour operators in Thailand are tapping into tertiary territories to ignite fresh appeal in the country amid a noticeable shift in visitors' travel demand and desire to steer well off the beaten track.

Edwin Briels, managing director of Exploration Travel Thailand, said he launched the company three years ago with the "aim of doing things differently" in response to the need for the nation's industry to endure a "shake-up".

"Now, we have agents and clients who are more educated about Thailand and are looking for real experiences, not the staged Thailand," Briels said, adding that it is important for tour operators to seek out tertiary destinations.

"We're looking at more unexplored areas and how we can tell the story of that area to create unique itineraries. This paints a much nicer image of Thailand, as a lot of people now think of overtourism in some areas, like Phuket," Briels said.

Itineraries include less explored destinations such as Kaeng Krachan, Isaan, Chanthaburi, Sukhothai and Chiang Khong, which Briels said have piqued the interest of international tour operators that have grown tired of Thailand.

Briels added that this also taps into the community development element of tourism, with the company working with locals to curate tours and experiences, as well as training them to be skilled guides and hosts.

"Two tour operators from Europe and one from the US said they stopped selling Thailand for 10 years because everyone is doing the same thing, but have come back because we're doing something different," Briels said.

Matthew Clancy, general manager of Khiri Travel Thailand, also noted a shift in demand for destinations beyond Thailand's main hotspots. "Travel, once again, is becoming more and more about the journey and less about the final destination," he commented.

"People want journeys that feel authentic, personal, and exploratory rather than



Parts of Thailand less trodden are being highlighted; cycling in Isaan

commercial or overdeveloped, and there seems to be a growing appetite for places that still feel real, where culture, nature and everyday life have not been shaped primarily around tourism."

Clancy cited Isaan, where a new Khiri Travel office has been launched in Khon Kaen to develop operations in the region, Lampang, Nan and Loei provinces, as well as Trang province and its islands, as destinations Khiri is developing. – **Marissa Carruthers**

Experience the Best of the Philippines in 8 Destinations

Recognized Taste. Reimagined Stays.

Across its island destinations, **Crimson Hotels & Resorts** continue to shape experiences that resonate with today's discerning travelers where refined cuisine, thoughtful design, and intuitive hospitality come together with ease.



Scan this QR code to see more details about our properties.



Michelin Selected Dining at Crimson Resort & Spa Mactan



Paella negra—deep, briny, and indulgent. A signature expression of Spanish soul at Enye, the Michelin-selected restaurant of Crimson Resort & Spa Mactan.

At Crimson Resort & Spa Mactan, culinary excellence takes center stage.

Enye by Chele Gonzalez, the resort's signature Filipino restaurant, was named a *Michelin Selected Restaurant* in the inaugural Michelin Guide Philippines; a recognition that places Crimson Mactan among destinations celebrated for exceptional dining.

Under the direction of **Chef Chele Gonzalez** and helmed by **Chef Javier Amador**, Enye offers a contemporary expression of Spanish cuisine; grounded in heritage, elevated by global technique, and guided by a deep respect for craft and ingredients.

Award-Winning Dining at Crimson Resort & Spa Boracay

In Boracay, Crimson's culinary narrative continues with distinction.

Mosaic Latin Grill, one of the signature dining destinations at **Crimson Resort & Spa Boracay**, was awarded **Best Restaurant at the Condé Nast Johansens Awards for Excellence 2026**.

Known for its bold Latin flavors, expertly grilled specialties, and vibrant atmosphere, **Mosaic Latin Grill** has become a defining dining experience on the island — recognized by one of the world's most respected luxury travel authorities.



An inviting interior designed for shared plates, slow evenings, and vibrant Latin cuisine—Mosaic Latin Grill at Crimson Resort & Spa Boracay.

A New Chapter of Stay at Crimson Resort & Spa Mactan

Complementing its global culinary recognition, **Crimson Resort & Spa Mactan** introduces its newly refreshed rooms and villas, designed to elevate the guest experience.

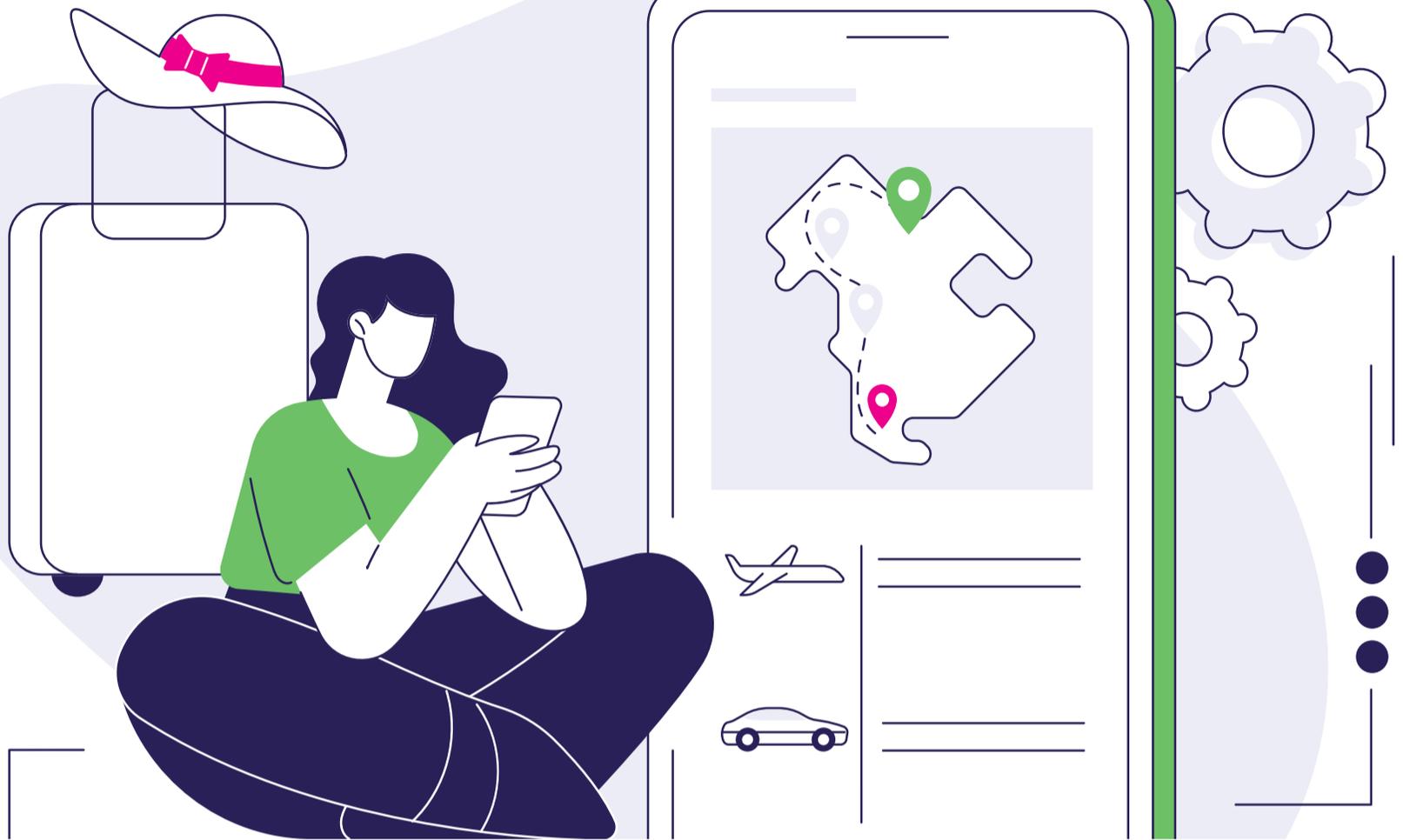


Light-filled spaces and elevated details come together in the newly refreshed signature villa of Crimson Resort & Spa Mactan.

These reimagined spaces reflect a modern tropical sensibility — lighter palettes, refined textures, and intuitive layouts that create a seamless sense of comfort and calm. Every detail is considered to support rest, retreat, and renewal.

Excellence, Across Destinations

Across the country, **Quest Hotels & Resorts** complements this with well-placed city stays in Manila, Cebu, Clark, and Tagaytay, designed for how people work, meet, and move through the day.



Visual Generation/shutterstock

Emerging cities take the lead

Agoda's latest report outlines how data-driven marketing and technology are helping hotels and DMOs capture surging traveller demand in rural and secondary destinations

With travellers increasingly seeking experiences beyond traditional hubs, Agoda's *2026 Travel Outlook Report* explores the emerging trends set to reshape Asian tourism.

A rising middle class, streamlined visa processes, and expanding flight networks are shaping travel choices across Asia, with travellers increasingly looking beyond familiar hotspots.

The report revealed that searches for accommodation in secondary cities across

Asia have grown 15% faster than in traditional tourism hubs over the last two years.

Secondary destinations accounted for 34% of total accommodation searches on Agoda in 1H2025. In addition, 43% of travellers cited lower costs as their top reason to explore these destinations, while unique local culture, special promotions, and outdoor activities were also key motivations.

Ease of access is an important factor for travellers considering new destinations, particularly in India (91%), the Philippines

(89%) and Indonesia (80%).

Governments across Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan, and India are intensifying efforts to diversify tourism through infrastructure upgrades and targeted regional campaigns.

To support these goals, platforms like Agoda are sharing data insights and digital marketing tools with destination marketing organisations (DMOs), helping to connect rural properties and lesser-known locales with a global audience.

Diversifying accommodation supply is also important to meet traveller preferences and create new economic opportunities.

Non-hotel options such as villas, apartments and boutique guesthouses on Agoda have increased steadily from 2022 to 2025, supporting immersive stays while allowing local property owners to enter the digital economy.

The report also highlights key strategies for industry partners in 2026: enhancing digital visibility with updated listings and reviews, using data insights for targeted marketing, and expanding offerings to include authentic cultural, culinary and outdoor experiences.

By adopting these approaches, accommodation providers, local experience providers, DMOs and travel brands can diversify revenue, strengthen resilience, and deliver high-value experiences to travellers.

Andrew Smith, senior vice president,



Travellers want authenticity, value and a sense of discovery that the major hotspots cannot always deliver.

Andrew Smith

Senior vice president, supply
Agoda

supply, Agoda, said: "Secondary cities are no longer hidden gems. They're becoming the engine of travel growth across Asia.

"Travellers want authenticity, value and a sense of discovery that the major hotspots cannot always deliver. This shift unlocks real opportunity for local communities and for the partners who move early. At Agoda, our focus is straightforward – we equip our partners with the data, insights and digital tools they need to capture this demand and win in these emerging markets."

Conducted in October 2025, the report drew on a survey of 3,353 Agoda customers from nine key Asia-Pacific markets (India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam).



Japan has seen a rise in interest for its secondary destinations, such as Takamatsu in Kagawa Prefecture (pictured)

Rooted in Love for Country: Megaworld Hotels & Resorts' Trailblazing Role in Philippine Tourism

As the largest hotel operator in the Philippines in terms of room keys, Megaworld Hotels & Resorts (MHR) plays a key role in the country's tourism. Its role goes beyond running hotels and welcoming guests. It begins with a shared love for the Philippines and a commitment to honor its heritage, empower its people, and shape the future of hospitality through trailblazing initiatives.

"At Megaworld Hotels & Resorts, everything we do is rooted in our love for the Philippines. Our initiatives are not just about elevating hospitality standards, but about honoring our heritage and sharing the warmth of Filipino hospitality with the world," Cleofe Albiso, Managing Director of Megaworld Hotels & Resorts, said.

This love for country comes to life through initiatives that extend well beyond hotel walls. Megaworld Hotels & Resorts continues to invest in what truly prepares a destination for the world—championing inclusivity, nurturing future leaders, uplifting communities, and creating workplaces where people feel valued and inspired. Together, these efforts reflect a deeper belief: that Philippine tourism grows strongest when it is guided by heart, purpose, and a shared vision for the future.

Championing Muslim-Friendly Initiatives

As Philippine tourism continues to welcome a more diverse global audience, MHR remains at the forefront of inclusivity through its Muslim-friendly initiatives. From halal-certified kitchens and prayer facilities to culturally aware service training, the group ensures that Muslim travelers feel respected, comfortable, and truly at home.

All 14 properties under Megaworld Hotels & Resorts have been recognized as 100% Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Establishments (MFAE) within just nine months of signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Tourism at the Arabian Travel Mart. Moreover, the hotel group partnered with the Philippine Department of Tourism and the local government of Malay, Aklan, and launched the Marhaba Boracay, a pioneering project that transformed a 300-meter stretch of white-sand beach at Cove 2 in Boracay Newcoast into a dedicated Muslim-friendly zone, complete with family-oriented amenities and private spaces thoughtfully designed for Muslim women and children.



All 14 properties under Megaworld Hotels & Resorts have been recognized as 100% Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Establishments (MFAE) within just nine months of signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Tourism at the Arabian Travel Mart.

Sampaguita: MHR's Icon for Philippine Hospitality

MHR keeps the ideals and symbolism of the Philippines alive through The Sampaguita. Inspired by the national flower, the Sampaguita Brand of Service is MHR's heartfelt expression of Filipino values of love, honor, dignity, and healing. More than a service standard, it has evolved as an advocacy going beyond the guest journey. The Sampaguita extends its reach to MHR's meaningful community programs and sends the message of care and compassion.

The Sampaguita has also become the tangible expression of MHR's dedication to preserving Filipino heritage. In commemoration of the second year of the advocacy, MHR in partnership with Global-Estate Resorts, Inc. (GERI) and Rotary Clubs of Binan and San Pedro, Laguna, created the first-ever Sampaguita Park, which is home to 2,500 sampaguita seedlings.

Shaping the Future Leaders

Investing in the future of Filipino hospitality means nurturing the leaders of tomorrow. Launched in May 2025, the Next Gen Leadership Council is an eight-month mentorship and leadership training program that empowers the talented young professionals within the hotel group to contribute ideas, drive innovation, and participate in strategic decision-making.

Twenty-three young individuals with executive potential from the 14 MHR properties were selected through a rigorous evaluation process and were paired with mentors to guide them throughout the program.

This initiative fosters collaboration across ranks and generations, blending experience with fresh perspectives. More importantly, it ensures that the future of Philippine tourism remains dynamic and forward-thinking.

A Great Place To Work

True hospitality begins from within. The Circle of Happiness is MHR's people-first culture that places employee well-being and growth at the core of its operations. It is centered on five pillars—Love for Self, Love for Work, Love for Family, Love for Country, and Love for God. By creating an environment where associates feel supported, heard, and inspired, MHR has been recognized as a great place to work for the past three years.

With 90% of employees affirming MHR as a great place to work and an 87% Trust Index Score, the certification reflects the group's people-first culture and inclusivity. MHR deeply believes that happy and empowered teams deliver warmer experiences and contribute positively to the destinations they serve. In doing so, MHR helps create a sustainable tourism ecosystem where people grow alongside the industry.

Each of MHR's initiatives is a reflection of a shared love for country—a belief that when hospitality is guided by heart and patriotism, it becomes a powerful force for national pride and global recognition.



90% of employees said that Megaworld Hotels & Resorts is a Great Place To Work. MHR was recognized as a Great Place To Work in the past three consecutive years.



The Sampaguita continues to inspire compassion and community-building. Through partnerships with Dwellbeing and Project PEARLS, MHR has distributed over 8,200 meals to families in need. MHR has planted more than 6,000 sampaguita seedlings across its townships and partner communities to date.

E-mail: salesinquiry@megaworldhotels.com

[f](#) [@](#) megaworldhotelsandresorts

www.megaworldhotels.com

MEGAWORLD
HOTELS & RESORTS

BELMONT
HOTELS

SAVOY
HOTELS

RICHMONDE HOTELS

Kingsford Hotel
MANILA

HOTEL LUCKY CHINATOWN
悅華酒店

TWIN LAKES
HOTEL

GRAND WESTSIDE HOTEL

CHANCELLOR HOTEL
BORACAY NEWCOAST

MERCURE
HOTEL
MAGTAN CEBU

Wellness pursuits



From left: Clinique La Prairie at Tri Vananda will open in 2026; Parkroyal Collection Pickering adds wellness appeal to Singapore's tourism story

From government-led curation to private sector experience development, wellness tourism offerings in Asia-Pacific are flourishing, discovers *TTG Show Daily* reporters

Indonesia takes wellness route to high-yield markets

Indonesia's Ministry of Tourism (MoT) is focusing on wellness tourism to attract high-value travellers and respond to the global trend towards health and wellness.

Rizki Handayani, deputy of industry and investment at the MoT, said development in wellness and health tourism began in 2022. Yogyakarta, Solo, and Bali were identified for wellness investments.

These destinations offer distinct wellness activities. Yogyakarta and Solo have traditions in practices such as traditional massage, meditation, and herbal remedies. Bali provides a range of wellness options, including traditional healing, wellness resorts, and organic cuisine.

The MoT aims to expand this by identifying other potential wellness destinations and working with them to improve their offerings.

"Our goal is to position wellness as the primary reason for travellers to choose Indonesia as a destination," said Rizki. She added that her office is working with the West Java regional government to identify development opportunities.

West Java is considered attractive due to the Sari Ater hot springs in Subang Regency and other hot spring facilities in Garut Regency. Plans are being made to introduce healing, detox, and fitness programmes in the region. West Java's proximity to Jakarta and availability of workforce also make it a practical location for wellness tourism development.

Rizki noted that Indonesian wellness is linked to the country's nature and culture, and encouraged other regions to explore wellness development.

She explained that Indonesian wellness includes traditional treatments and herbal medicine, known locally as *jamu*, as well as cultural elements.

"Traditional dance movements, with their inherent spiritual meaning, and

sound healing, are part of the Indonesian wellness experience," she said.

She also sees potential for science-backed programmes, such as anti-aging treatments and medical rehabilitation, to be established in the country.

A challenge for Indonesia's wellness tourism is the shortage of travel agents and destination management companies (DMCs) experienced in creating comprehensive wellness trips, noted Rizki. To address this, the MoT is promoting collaboration between wellness providers and travel agencies to develop wellness packages.

The MoT led local wellness providers and destinations to Expo 2025 in Osaka, Japan, to showcase Indonesia's wellness offerings.

Then in September 2025, the annual International Tourism Investment Forum 2025 was held in Bali with wellness as its theme, highlighting efforts to promote the country's readiness for wellness tourism.

– **Mimi Hudoyo**

Singapore builds wider scope of wellness offerings

Singapore Tourism Board is shining a brighter spotlight on the city-state's wellness tourism offerings, ranging from the variety of wellness events that are being built into the country's annual calendar and science-backed wellness and longevity experiences to wellness hotels that are attractions in their own right.

The NTO's chief executive Melissa Ow shed light on this wellness approach during Singapore's Tourism Industry Conference 2025 in April last year.

She pointed out: "Singapore has a unique value proposition, as a city in nature offering urban wellness experiences safeguarded by high standards. The potential is immense and we will work to capitalise on this burgeoning segment."

Visitors to Singapore can choose to

partake in many wellness events and activities. The Klook Wellness Weekend that took place in February 2025 was one such example. Travel platform Klook took over Singapore's stylish enclave Duxton Hill with the event on February 22 and 23, 2025, offering visitors more than 60 wellness experiences, from cold plunges and meditative sound baths to Traditional Chinese Medicine workshops. The event was Klook's nod to the rising demand for wellness and restorative travel experiences.

Sarah Wan, general manager of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore at Klook, told *TTG Show Daily*: "Travel data from Global Web Index shows that across South-east Asia, more than half (57 per cent) of millennials and Gen Z prioritise relaxation as a factor when deciding on their destination, underscoring the growing importance of wellness during travel."

"We've observed an uptick in demand for wellness and health experiences. Globally, our platform data shows that bookings for such experiences doubled in 2024 compared to the previous year, along with a 69 per cent increase in platform visits, indicating rising interest from travellers in the wellness space."

Ow shared that STB would deepen efforts to introduce more offerings through wellness centres, such as an integrated wellness centre by PowerMoves featuring fitness classes, aesthetics and wellness workshops that opened in Dempsey in April.

She added that science-backed wellness and longevity experiences have the potential to attract sizeable visitor spend and drive repeat visits to Singapore.

Ow also sees "good opportunities" in using wellness hotels to attract health-focused travellers to Singapore. – **Karen Yue**

Phuket scores first Clinique La Prairie wellness resort

Montara Hospitality Group, owner and

operator of the luxury resort Trisara in Phuket, Thailand, formed a partnership with Swiss wellness specialist Clinique La Prairie to jointly launch a new health resort in the popular holiday destination.

Set to open in central Phuket in mid-2026, the new Tri Vananda resort will house South-east Asia's first and only Clinique La Prairie wellness facility. It will also feature exclusive pool villas and a surrounding residential community.

Wellness facilities at Clinique La Prairie at Tri Vananda will include a medical centre with diagnostic equipment, an Olympic-size swimming pool, a wellness restaurant for personalised nutrition, a well-being centre, and a mindfulness centre.

Montara Hospitality Group CEO Kittisak Pattamasavee told *TTG Show Daily*: "It's a project that we feel is timely and will hopefully put Phuket and Thailand on the global stage in regards to wellness tourism."

He added that the health facility will also "bring a science-backed wellness lifestyle approach to Phuket".

Kittisak said his company has long recognised a "great business opportunity in wellness because Thailand was already a destination for medical tourism."

"There was also a mega global trend of people living longer. We believe that longevity is one thing, and quality of life is another – there has to be focus on health span, not just life span," he added.

"Since Thailand already has a great medical tourism reputation, then wellness tourism is just a natural next step for the country. But more than that, my family has our own story about overcoming challenges in life through resetting and taking better care of ourselves."

"My father, the chairman of Montara Hospitality Group, for example, had to overcome the financial crisis of 1997 and the 2005 tsunami. He did it through meditation and mindful living. He is a firm believer in cognitive well-being."

The chairman's belief in mindful living has inspired Tri Vananda to adopt cognitive well-being as one of its unique wellness offerings.

"We are using our personal experience with hospitality and wellness to create something that responds to the global trend," remarked Kittisak. – **Karen Yue**

Always at home in world-class hospitality

In the heart of Filinvest City, Alabang, The Bellevue Manila has been welcoming visitors since 2003. With 456 rooms, two pools, multiple dining options, and a grand ballroom, this 5-star hotel caters to business travelers, families, and leisure seekers alike. Every detail is designed to make guests feel cared for, from personalized service to thoughtfully curated spaces.



THE BELLEVUE
MANILA



Tower Swimming Pool



Kids Play Area



Dimsum All-You-Can at Phoenix Court



Grand Ballroom



Azurea Spa



Gym

TheBellevueManila @bellevuemanila (+632) 8771 8181 www.thebellevuemanila.com

5139 North Bridgeway, Filinvest City, Alabang, Muntinlupa 1781

Visit
Malaysia 2026
Truly Asia[®]



 City Skyline, Kuala Lumpur

TOURISM
MALAYSIA



www.malaysia.travel

Surreal Experiences!

Discover Asia's Best in One Extraordinary Destination.

Visit
Malaysia 2026
Truly Asia®



Local Cuisine, Penang

TOURISM MALAYSIA



www.malaysia.travel

Surreal Experiences!

Discover Asia's Best in One Extraordinary Destination.

Reshaping tourism flow

With Greater Mekong Subregion tourist numbers expected to surpass 85 million by 2027, smart visitor management is crucial to protect cultural heritage, reduce environmental impact and enhance visitor experience.

By **Marissa Carruthers**

The Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) is anticipating a visitor surge in the coming years – from 72 million in 2019 and 65 million in post-Covid 2023 – to reach a predicted excess of 85 million by 2027, according to the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office. This projection has highlighted the importance of visitor management to protect the environments and communities that call GMS destinations home.

“What happens when visitors love a place too much? We see overflowing waste, overcrowding and communities pushing back against tourists. That’s why visitor management is key to saving what we love,” said Chumpol Musiganont, deputy director-general of the Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration in Thailand.

Speaking at the Mekong Tourism Forum in Luang Prabang, Laos in June, Musiganont added: “Poor experience leads to fewer return visits, while effective management enhances quality, protects heritage and ensures community equity.”



Phu Kra dueng National Park adopts smart management to protect trails and wildlife

Common techniques

Musiganont pointed to tools used to control impacts and enhance visitor experience. Zoning and spatial planning is a common technique, where specific zones are designated for activities, such as tourism, conservation or residential use.

Timed entry and booking systems, including advance reservations and ticket quotas, can be effective in managing visitor flow during peak periods. Additionally, digital tools are proving key, such as smart visitor monitoring using apps or Internet of Things sensors, to track visitor numbers, patterns and behaviours.

“This is a good way to learn how many people there are and where congestion occurs,” said Musiganont, adding that data

can help with informed decision-making and planning.

Thailand has been able to better manage tourist flows with the QueQ app, which allows visitors to reserve entry to popular attractions and venues. To date, at high demand sites, QueQ has reduced the average waiting time by 38 per cent.

A code of conduct for tourists is also essential for visitor management. Musiganont recalled how massive Chinese inbound volumes to Thailand earlier had resulted in friction between visitors and residents.

He said: “Thai people complained about improper behaviour. That happened because they (the tourists) were never informed about how to conduct themselves. Foreigners must be informed of the code of conduct.”

Finally, he recommended involving local communities. “Engaging local residents in decision-making and benefit-sharing, while fostering stewardship and cultural integrity is important to gain local support,” he stated.

Easing congestion in Thailand

The small mountain of Doi Suthep in Chiang Mai province, Thailand is surrounded by a national park and is home to the famed Wat Phra That Doi Suthep Buddhist temple. This destination receives millions of visitors annually.

Visitorship surges especially on weekends and during religious festivals, leading to parking issues, littering and noise.

“The visitor experience and site integrity were under pressure. Many who had to wait in one place felt upset and complained,” Musiganont said.

A raft of actions was introduced. This included enforcement of one-way traffic, zoning, regulation of vendor stalls, and installing signs and behavioural guidance

encouraging quiet and respectful conduct in sacred areas.

It also trialled the QueQ app, which reduced waiting times during busy periods by 32 per cent. During the trial period, all of these tools combined reduced temple congestion by 40 per cent and complaints by 50 per cent, while increasing visitor satisfaction by 27 per cent, according to Chiang Mai Tourism Office.

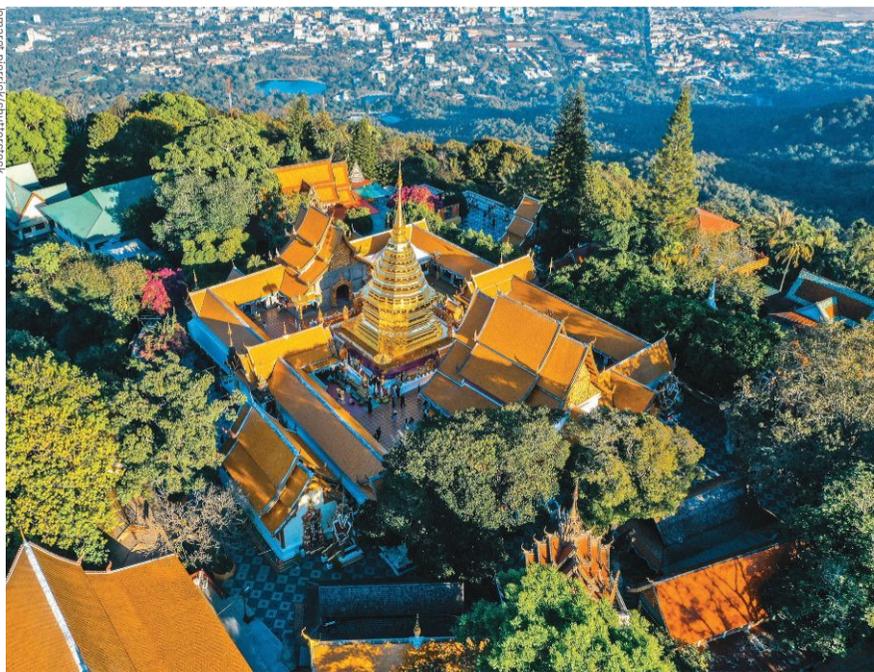
Thailand’s Phu Kra dueng National Park is now working on strategic visitor management. It is popular with visitors hiking the 5.5km trail to camp overnight at its summit. The large volume of visitors results in up to 180kg of waste dumped daily at the summit, which attracts elephants. Trails are also eroded, making it inaccessible to the elderly and disabled. Furthermore, congestion issues are common on weekends.

To overcome this, the park has unveiled ambitious plans to introduce a cable car system and shuttle hub. App-based queuing and reservation systems will be introduced, as well as visitor zoning and capacity control, and wildlife and visitor tracking tools.

The project is currently under Environmental Impact Assessment, but predicted benefits include reduced trail erosion and improved waste management, minimising wildlife disturbance, and increased access.

Musiganont said: “Visitor management isn’t about limiting tourism, it’s about shaping it. Smart tools, like zoning and digital queuing, are already making a difference.”

He urged GMS tourism leaders to invest in capacity-based infrastructure, such as smart queuing and controlled access, engage local communities as custodians and co-designers, support legal reform and policy innovation that enables sustainable solutions in protected areas, and use data to guide action.



Wat Phra That Doi Suthep welcomes millions yearly

Your *Stay* Awaits

Comfort in every city. Home, wherever you go.



SAVE

Member-exclusive rates & offers

EARN

Stay and dine to earn MyPoints and turn them into rewards

SHOP

Shop with MyPoints on over 100 brands

UPGRADE

Unlock Silver Status with enhanced perks after just 10 nights

SCAN TO JOIN



MyMILLENNIUM



Ceilings for the lobby and conference facilities at the newly-opened South Palms Resort and Spa Panglao - MGallery Collection in Bohol are built with rattan, an abundant, tactile natural material

Time machine

Hotels today can be mini time capsules – offering a past steeped in heritage, a present grounded in nature and local immersion, and a future powered by wellness and sustainability – proving that a single property can be both a custodian of history and a blueprint for what’s to come, writes **Anne Somanas**

In 2025, hotels are no longer just places for weary travellers to rest and refuel; in the hands of visionary designers, they have become vessels for time travel – liminal spaces where past legacies, present-day narratives, and future ambitions converge.

Lobbies double as living rooms for locals and guests alike. Landscapes are conceived as wellness infrastructure. Architecture blurs the lines between nature and the built world, all while keeping one eye firmly on the decades ahead.

Past: Cultural revival as a portal to history

At Dusit Central Park, Bangkok, Thailand, a flagship restoration in collaboration with Thailand’s Silpakorn University – renowned for its arts heritage – sets a benchmark for living history.

Led by Dragon Company with interiors by André Fu Studio, the rebuild of the group’s 1970 property, described by Dusit Thani’s group CEO Suphajee Suthumpan as “deeply personal”, preserves original elements, from the iconic spire to cultural motif pillars, while upgrading comfort and sustainability.

Balconies have been replaced with bay windows so guests can enjoy panoramic

views of Lumpini Park shielded from city pollution, while the mixed-use complex also houses a new retail centre and the largest urban rooftop park in the city centre.

Aman Nai Lert Bangkok in Thailand – opened in April 2025 – also takes history as a key reference. It integrates the historic Nai Lert Park Heritage Home – built by Phraya Bhakdinorasreth “Nai Lert”, a visionary entrepreneur who helped shape modern Bangkok – into a serene ultra-luxury sanctuary anchored by a century-old Chamchuri tree at its centre.

“Nai Lert’s rich heritage provided an incredible foundation for this project. Our goal was to honour this legacy and Thai culture in a modern, timeless way alongside Aman’s renowned design DNA, developed over three decades,” shared Jean-Michel Gathy, principal and founder of Denniston.

Heritage revival is not limited to bricks and mortar. At InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort, the Bill Bensley Digital Design Tour, launched in January 2025, adds an immersive high-tech twist, guiding in-house guests via smart devices through the designer’s inspirations from Vietnamese culture, nature, and heritage across four themed levels – as if Bensley himself were guiding them through.



... we’re moving toward plant-based solutions: bamboo, rattan, recycled wood products, and cross-laminated timber.

Patrick Keane
Founder, Enter Projects Asia

Present: Nature-positive, community connected design

In the present, hotels ground guests in place through nature-positive and community-connected design.

“Guests seek more than accommodation; they desire immersive narratives that connect them to the local culture,” said Stéphane Lasserre, HKS studio practice leader for hospitality, who champions biophilic and place-based design.

“Hotel design has shifted from stylised representations of place to deeply authentic, destination-rooted experiences,” he added.

HKS, which has worked on mega-projects, such as Resorts World Sentosa Island Master Plan (2019) and Shanghai West Bund Mandarin Oriental Hotel and Convention Center (2028), today applies circular systems, AI modelling, and community collaboration to ensure spaces give more than they take – socially, ecologically, and economically.

Patrick Keane, founder of Enter Projects Asia, identified three trends driving hotel design today: new locations, including new markets and new destinations; going local – engaging community & community arts and crafts; and barefoot luxury, or sustainable eco-luxury.

He noted that post-pandemic, nature-driven concepts have moved from niche to mainstream, and that even “the most conservative design briefs” now include references to nature’s materials.

“Before the pandemic, the ideas of wellness and plant-based sustainability and community engagement and going local were all niche concepts. But now, they’ve become mainstream concepts that everybody has to somehow engage in to have that relevance or risk looking completely out of date,” he noted.

“All our ceilings for the lobby and conference facilities at the new South Palms Resort and Spa Panglao-MGallery Collection in Bohol (the Philippines) are cloud-like patterns made from one-kilometre of rattan – saving over one-kilometre of plastic and toxic materials by a simple move of switching to an abundant, tactile natural material,” Keane said.

He defined three “flavours” of genuine sustainability impact: performance (energy efficiency, passive cooling), arts and

crafts (low-impact, local materials), and biophilic design (organic forms and plant integration), noting that certifications have now modernised this concept.

Keane cautioned against tokenism – such as eliminating plastic straws, but placing plastic furniture around the pool – and championed early design decisions that truly reduce impact.

For Siriporn Sririam, a biologist and nature conservationist serving as senior project officer, Thailand & regional at Agence Française de Développement (AFD), nature-positive tourism means rethinking hotel design to actively protect biodiversity – from property design that reduces impact to coastal areas, to beachfront hotels that actively reduce light pollution to support turtle nesting.

Thoughtful menu design plays a part too, such as a 2024 project at Jaras Restaurant, InterContinental Phuket Resort, where a partnership with WWF Thailand brought invasive species like blackchin tilapia into a zero-waste fine-dining menu to drive ecological balance.

Future: Wellness as a bridge to longevity

Today’s hotel narrative also extends into the future, where technology-integrated wellness and sustainability become dual bridges to future-proofing both people and the planet.

“Wellness has transcended the traditional spa to become an intrinsic element woven throughout the entire hotel experience,” explained Lasserre, adding that HKS, with assistance from its research team, incorporates scientifically backed principles of brain wellness and emotional design, curating rooms to evoke specific emotions through thoughtful selections of furniture, fittings, and natural materials.

Robert Day, HKS studio leader for master planning and landscapes, pointed to the emergence of integrative wellness.

“Luxury properties are increasingly offering an expanded suite of wellness facilities – including world-class healthcare capabilities – while retaining the comfort, aesthetics, and service standards of a luxury resort,” he said.

He anticipates more high-end retreats that seamlessly integrate advanced treat-



Today’s hotel designers simultaneously hold the past, present and future in mind, encapsulating them all in one stay; HKS’s Stéphane Lasserre (left) and Robert Day, pictured

ment facilities into their environments, creating transformative sanctuaries where guests can invest in preventative health, longevity, and lifestyle renewal within an elevated travel experience.

Wanvut Sanphasitvong, a physician at VitaLife Scientific Wellness Center and Bumrungrad International Hospital, echoed these observations, noting that wellness travellers are increasingly seeking proven results and “want to get younger by staying in these (wellness) hotels”.

The Siro brand, billed as the world’s first fitness and recovery-themed hotel, designed by LW Design Group in Dubai’s One Zaabeel, exemplifies this shift.

“Our vision was to design not just a hotel, but a comprehensive wellness ecosystem where every element enhances the guest’s journey toward optimal health,”

said Pooja Shah-Mulani, LW’s creative managing partner.

Keane foresees a “plant-based revolution” in building materials that mirror sustainability trends across industries. This will result in tactile spaces that feel alive.

“We see ourselves as part of this shift. The Industrial Revolution, more than 200 years ago, transformed construction with steel. Now, I believe we’re moving toward plant-based solutions: bamboo, rattan, recycled wood products, and cross-laminated timber. That’s the direction I see the industry taking,” he stated.

Lasserre noted “future-proofing” as a key trend, where hotel spaces are designed to remain relevant for decades, while Day said the rise of *bleisure* would result in ever more liminal spaces that could transition seamlessly between work and play.



Enter Projects Asia’s Kaiyan Wellness Farmacy is pioneering light-based therapies and integrative design to redefine wellness hospitality

Unwavering ambitions

Malaysia is firing up marketing efforts, infrastructure upgrades and smoother immigration process to hit tourism targets.
By **S Puvaneswary**

Local stakeholders gear up for *Visit Malaysia 2026*; Kuala Lumpur pictured

Malaysia is targeting 47 million international tourist arrivals this year in conjunction with the year-long *Visit Malaysia 2026* campaign, which will contribute some RM329 billion (US\$79.9 billion) in tourism receipts.

Towards this goal, the government has allocated RM500 million to support the campaign, including RM60 million for promotional incentives, marketing and organising tourism, and cultural events.

Prime minister Anwar Ibrahim announced a significant investment in Malaysian tourism, including RM50 million in matching grants to encourage charter and international flights.

Additionally, the government has allocated RM25 million from 2026's national budget to improve tourism infrastructure and preserve UNESCO heritage sites, such as Mulu National Park, Lenggong Valley, and Forest Research Institute Malaysia's

Forest Park.

Minister of tourism, arts and culture Tiong King Sing said: "*Visit Malaysia 2026* is not just about welcoming visitors but about giving the world a reason to remember Malaysia. This campaign aims to create pride and prosperity for the people of Malaysia, while leaving behind a legacy of unity, resilience and vision for future generations."

He stated that the true value of tourism lies not just in statistics, but in the ability to convert Malaysian heritage into a national strength, integrate tourism into the people's economy, and ultimately, forge Malaysia into a globally-recognised brand that inspires pride.

To facilitate smoother entry for international travellers, Malaysia has expanded the use of autogate immigration clearance at Kuala Lumpur and Penang airports to citizens from 63 low-risk countries, including all South-east Asian nations. The

automated system allows passengers to scan their passports and clear immigration within 10 to 15 seconds, significantly reducing wait times.

With improved access and strong government backing, tourism players are gearing up to capture new demand.

Among Kuala Lumpur's latest luxury additions is the 410-key Hyatt Regency Kuala Lumpur at KL Midtown, which opened in August 2025. The hotel features 306 guestrooms and 104 one- and two-bedroom serviced residences, blending the comforts of home with five-star sophistication. Its facilities – including expansive event spaces, a wellness floor, and curated dining concepts – cater to both business and leisure travellers.

Its general manager, Till Martin, said the hotel is aligning closely with Tourism Malaysia to design campaigns and packages that complement the national tourism drive.

"We see *Visit Malaysia 2026* as an incredible opportunity to showcase not just our hotel, but Kuala Lumpur's renewed energy as a global destination," he shared.

"As a new entrant to Kuala Lumpur's competitive hotel scene, we are actively building brand awareness. Our team will be attending major international travel tradeshows to introduce the property to global partners and media."

Meanwhile, in Sabah, Borneo Nature Tours will expand its flagship Borneo Rainforest Lodge to tap Asian markets including China, India, Korea and Japan.

Its director of sales, Alven Lim, said: "Our goal is to diversify the lodge's predominantly European visitor base and raise awareness of Borneo's biodiversity and conservation efforts among Asian travellers."



“This campaign aims to create pride and prosperity for the people of Malaysia, while leaving behind a legacy of unity, resilience and vision for future generations.”

Tiong King Sing
Minister of tourism, arts and culture,
Malaysia

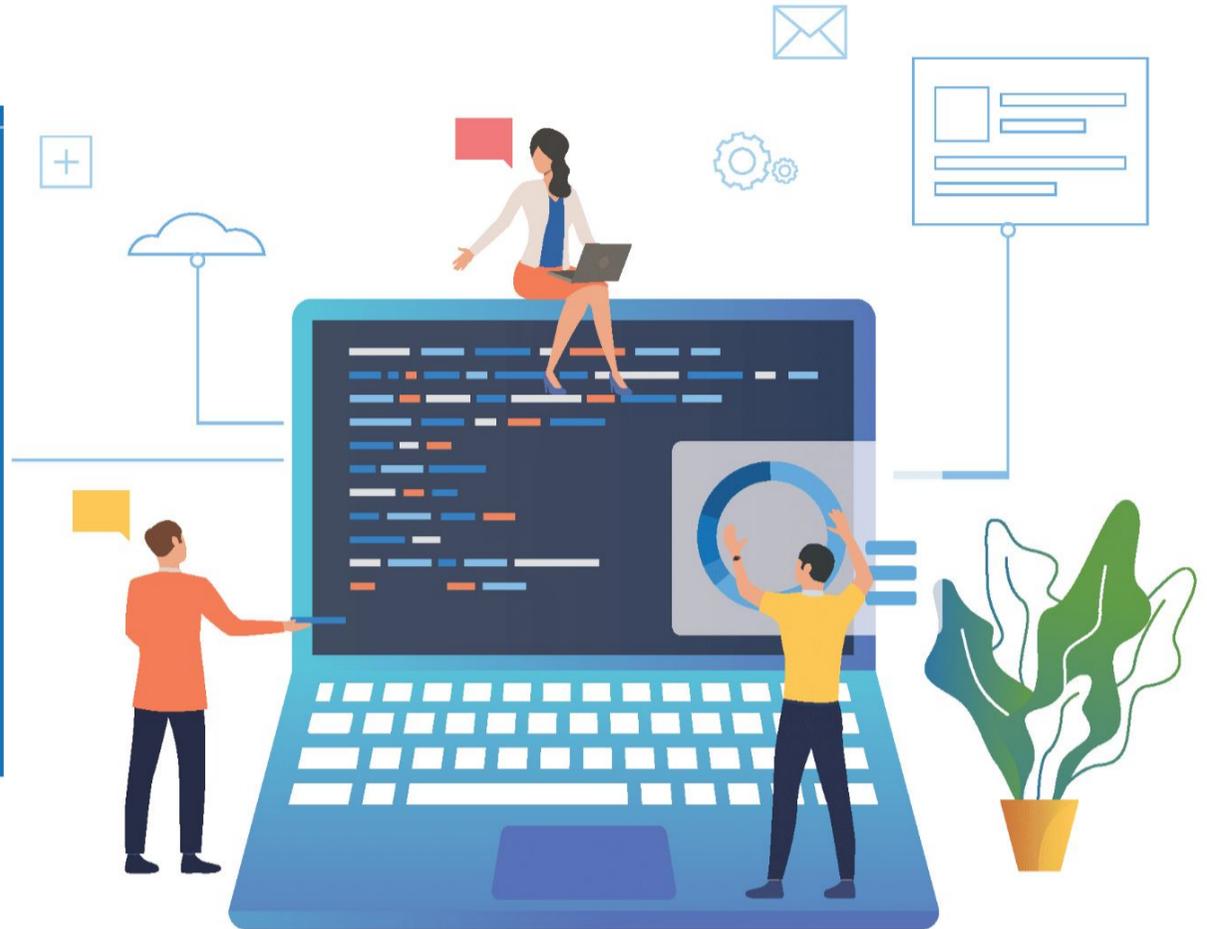


MEZAFIL SHUTTERSTOCK

Introducing TTG Content Lab



Backed by the experienced editorial team of TTG Travel Trade Publishing, **TTG Content Lab** is where creative content is crafted to help your brand achieve your messaging goals. Adopting a collaborative approach, TTG Content Lab producers work with you to produce **engaging and insightful content across multimedia platforms**, from sponsored trend reports and advertorials to branded microsites and video presentations.



Here's What's New!

TREND REPORTS AND OUTLOOKS

Produced by TTG title editors and reporters, trend and outlook reports dissect drivers of new business opportunities and challenges, to help our readership take smarter, informed steps into the future

TOPICAL DEEP DIVES

Built to give our readership new and exciting ideas that will enhance their business proposals, Topical Deep Dives focus on hot developments and ideas in the travel and tourism as well as business travel and events space

Our Past Projects



View More
Examples
Here

Come Talk To Us About Co-Creating:

- Trend Reports and Outlooks
- Topical Deep Dives
- Reader Engagement Events
- Advertorials
- Sponsored Posts
- Microsites
- Video Presentations
- and more

Enquire About Special Advertising Rates / Collaboration
Singapore +65 63957575 | Hong Kong +852 2237 7272

Email traveltradesales@ttgasia.com



nutteat samnongpl/shutterstock

Jachamong/shutterstock



Regional gains and local investment are driving Myanmar's modest tourism sector

Glimmers of hope

Despite ongoing safety concerns, Myanmar's tourism sector is resilient, driven by emerging interest from Eastern Europe and steady arrivals from key Asian markets. By **Marrissa Carruthers**

Myanmar's tourism sector continues to be plagued with international fears over safety and security. International arrivals continue to drop, although small glimmers of hope are being pinned on emerging markets from Eastern Europe.

While the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has not officially revealed tourism targets for 2025, according to its latest figures, during the first 10 months of 2025, Myanmar welcomed more than 809,000 foreign visitors, mainly from China, Thailand and South Korea.

Sammy Samuels, founder of Myanmar Shalom Travels, referred to the tourism situation as "challenging", adding that while overall arrivals are still lower compared to pre-2020 levels, there is "some increase" in regional travellers and small private tours.

"Despite continuing challenges, in 2025 there was some partial rebound, mostly driven by domestic tourism, regional travellers and some interest from international visitors", Samuels said, adding he is "cautiously optimistic for 2026".

Samuels stated that his company expects to see interest from Eastern European markets, such as Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania. He referred to

this as "one of the most interesting emerging markets for Myanmar in 2026 – curious travellers with a strong interest in cultural destinations".

Phyoe Wai Yar Zar, managing director of DTH Myanmar, added that there may be "moderate recovery" in 2026, with neighbouring Asian countries, such as Thailand, China, India and South Korea, as well as select Western markets, including Spain, Portugal and Russia.

He also expressed cautious optimism for 2026. "While Myanmar's tourism sector faced ongoing challenges in 2025 due to international travel advisories, it also demonstrated modest resilience, driven by a gradual rebound in arrivals from Asian markets."

Samuels said the biggest issues continue to be around safety and political stability. "International travel advisories, reduced flight connectivity, both international and domestic, and limited global marketing also contribute to lower visibility," he added.

However, Phyoe Wai Yar Zar said the tourism landscape is showing "encouraging" signs of activity, with local investors playing a leading role. "New hotels are being acquired and developed, while restaurants and bars are opening.

"This momentum reflects confidence in the sector's long-term potential and demonstrates how local entrepreneurship is driving growth and diversification in hospitality and leisure services," he added.

However, another tour operator who asked to remain anonymous, painted a grimmer picture. He said in 2025, the

company has received four or five international bookings, mostly from relatives of expats living in Myanmar.

During a visit to Inle Lake, he said workers reported an average of five visits a day to the once-bustling tourist site. "Many countries have travel advisories in place, and even if people do come, the atmosphere is very different than before. A lot of people are in distress," he stated.

"Visitors also have to be flexible as the situation can change very quickly. Infrastructure is not good, flights are limited, as are the internet and electricity."



While Myanmar's tourism sector faced ongoing challenges in 2025 due to international travel advisories, it also demonstrated modest resilience, driven by a gradual rebound in arrivals from Asian markets.

Phyoe Wai Yar Zar
Managing director, DTH Myanmar

Exciting times ahead

With a much-anticipated cruise line, a new live music venue, and other novel attractions, Singapore shows it can continuously offer something fresh for visitors. By **Caroline Boey**

Singapore continues to refresh its appeal with destination-exclusive experiences, new products and curated off-the-beaten track tours that show a different side of the city to woo visitors in 2026.

Banking on its reputation for safety and diverse offerings, Jean Ng, assistant chief executive, experience development group, Singapore Tourism Board (STB), said visitors can look forward to new cruises, indoor and outdoor nature-themed attractions, and live entertainment.

Commenting on the upcoming maiden voyage of *Disney Adventure*, marking Disney Cruise Line's first homeport in Asia, she stated: "Cruising has always offered strategic value to Singapore. (*The Disney Adventure*) is expected to catalyse fly-cruise demand, attracting more international visitors to cruise from Singapore, adding a new dimension to our destination."

Existing attractions have also seen enhanced areas. Mandai Wildlife Reserve has opened Curiosity Cove, an indoor nature-based immersive playscape for children aged 12 and below, while Exploria, a fully immersive and interactive multimedia edutainment experience, is described as a "journey beyond wilder boundaries to explore real-life phenomena in hyper-natural environments across five wildlife

themed worlds".

The second phase of Rainforest Wild, Singapore's fifth zoological park, will feature diverse landscapes of the Afro-Tropical region and Madagascar.

Ng pointed out that Mandai Wildlife Reserve is the first park in Asia to integrate adventure elements into its design, and the immersive experience will combine aerial adventure activities with wildlife observation.

Elsewhere in Singapore, a new venue expected to open this year is Grange Road Event Space, a 3,000-capacity live music venue built to host international touring acts and local artistes.

"As Live Nation's first live music venue in South-east Asia, developed in partnership with Lendlease Global Commercial REIT and supported by STB, it will also serve as an incubator for emerging musical talent, providing a platform for aspiring artistes on both national and international stages," commented Ng.

When asked about key source markets in 2026, Dominic Ong, chairman - inbound and surface transport, National Association of Travel Agents, foresees China will continue to perform strongly.

"Singapore is known to be a safe and green country. In addition to the ease of communication - where many locals able to speak Mandarin - there are also many

flights between the two destinations," he explained.

Furthermore, regional travellers who missed major events such as the Singapore Grand Prix are expected to show renewed interest, driven by pent-up demand, in recurring major events next year.

Ong noted that alongside Disney Cruise Line, Princess Cruises' *Sapphire Princess* and *Diamond Princess*, will once again homeport in Singapore from 2026.

This marks the return of Princess Cruises since 2019, which could attract even more overseas visitors who are interested in fly-cruise experiences and encourage them to explore Singapore.

Darren Tan, managing director, World Express, shared that the DMC is curating off-the-beaten track experiences for its traditional US and European customers, who are getting younger.

World Express offers programmes for foodies, tours to various neighbourhoods, as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)-focused group tours to Enabling Village, a community space in Singapore designed to be inclusive for all. Guides include those with disabilities or who are neurodivergent, Tan added.

The destination head of another DMC, who requested anonymity, believes Singapore needs a campaign to address its status as a global tourism city and to correct the



“Cruising has always offered strategic value to Singapore.”

Jean Ng
Assistant chief executive,
experience development group,
Singapore Tourism Board

perception it is expensive.

He pointed out Singapore should market its way of life and lifestyle, even its back streets.

It is also time, he added, to explore new markets in Africa, where new economies are growing, and to offer these visitors ease of entry.



Singapore plans to enhance existing attractions, as well as develop exclusive experiences, new products and curated tours

One Travel Trade Connection. Infinite Possibilities.

Connecting travel trade industry across Asia-Pacific and Greater China since 1974 with unparalleled audited reach, comprehensive foothold in the Leisure Trade, MICE, Business Travel, Associations, and Luxury segments, we are the clear choice.

Subscribe to our titles now!



Core Print & Online Titles

- TTG Asia
- TTG China
- TTG India
- TTGmice
- TTG-BTmice China
- TTGassociations
- TTG Asia Luxury

Special 2025 Editions

- TTGmice Planner 2025/2026
- TTG Travel Awards 2025

TTG Show Daily

- ASEAN Tourism Forum
- ITB Berlin
- IT&CM China and CTW China
- PATA Travel Mart
- IT&CMA and CTW Asia-Pacific
- ITB Asia



Scan QR Code to subscribe to our publications



TTG Asia • TTGmice • TTG Asia Luxury
**TRAVEL JOURNALISM
BUSINESS ARTICLE**
11-Time Winner
PATA Gold Awards



TTG Asia
**FEATURE
OF THE YEAR**
MPAS Awards



TTGassociations • TTG Asia
**TRADE MEDIA
OF THE YEAR**
MPAS Awards



TTGassociations
**JOURNALISM EXCELLENCE
PRINT & ONLINE**
Anak Sarawak Award



Top-level interactions

By Caleb Richard Lai



Best of the land

By Caleb Richard Lai



ATF 2026's big welcome

By Caleb Richard Lai



ASEANTA's glitzy night

By Caleb Richard Lai



A brilliant showcase

By Caleb Richard Lai



A massive Philippine tourism contingent, led by Tourism Promotions Board Philippines' Maria Margarita M Nograles, spread the love



Ministry of Culture and Tourism Laos' Phouthone Dalalom (right)



Megaworld Hotels & Resorts Philippines' Cleofe Albiso (fourth from right) with the leadership and operations team from all its 15 hotels in the country



Second from left: Tourism Authority of Thailand's Yatika Kaewborisoot and team welcome buyers with warm smiles



Minister of Tourism Republic of Indonesia Widiyanti Putri Wardhana (fourth from left) presents the Indonesian tourism contingent



Chroma Hospitality Philippines' Carmela Bocanegra (third from left) and Filinvest Hospitality Corporation's James Montenegro (centre)



Sabah International Convention Centre Malaysia's Shiry-Ann Angkee (left)

Let's talk business at ATF 2026

By Caleb Richard Lai

VIEW SHOW PICS
& DAILIES HERE



SM Hotels & Conventions Corporation Philippines' Walid Wafik and Catherine Nepomuceno (both seated) lead their team



The Bellevue Resort Bohol Philippines' Shanna Almazan (left) and Andrew Y Fernandes



Prime Plaza Hotels & Suites Sanur-Bali Indonesia's Lestari Holmes (back row, centre) and team



From left: Department of Tourism Philippines' Hazel Habito Javier, Cels Sy, and Zeny C Pallugna



Sabah Tourism Board Malaysia's Josephine Chai (right)



City of Dreams Manila Philippines' Irish de Silva



Province of Cebu Philippines' Rowena Lu Y Montecillo (third from left) and team are ready to show off the Queen City of the South



Batam View Beach Resort Indonesia's Anddy Fong

SM Hotels and Conventions Expands Park Inn by Radisson Across the Philippines

SM Hotels and Conventions Corp. (SMHCC) is propelling the impressive growth of Park Inn by Radisson brand across the Philippines, revitalizing the midscale hotel landscape by building upon the strong success stories of five Park Inn by Radisson hotels in key destinations - North EDSA, Clark, Iloilo, Bacolod, and Davao.



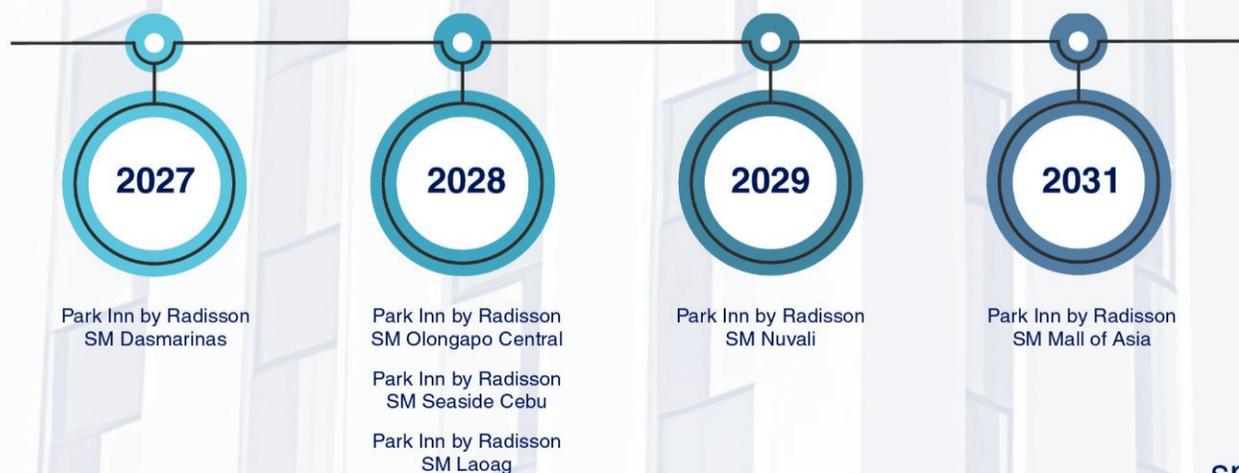
As demand for high-quality yet affordable accommodations surges, SMHCC's commitment positions Park Inn by Radisson as the top choice for discerning travelers nationwide. Offering smart, modern, and value-driven stays, it caters seamlessly to both business and leisure guests. Each hotel is thoughtfully designed with inviting spaces, adaptable meeting facilities, and the consistent comfort that reflects its international reputation. Guests enjoy hassle-free experiences, innovative amenities, and the warm, genuine service that sets the brand apart.

“Through its sustained partnership with Park Inn by Radisson, SMHCC brings world-class hospitality fused with authentic local flair to prime destinations across the country. Park Inn is not just expanding, it is thriving and redefining the hospitality experience in the Philippines, making memorable stays accessible to more Filipinos and visitors alike.”

Peggy E. Angeles, Executive Vice President



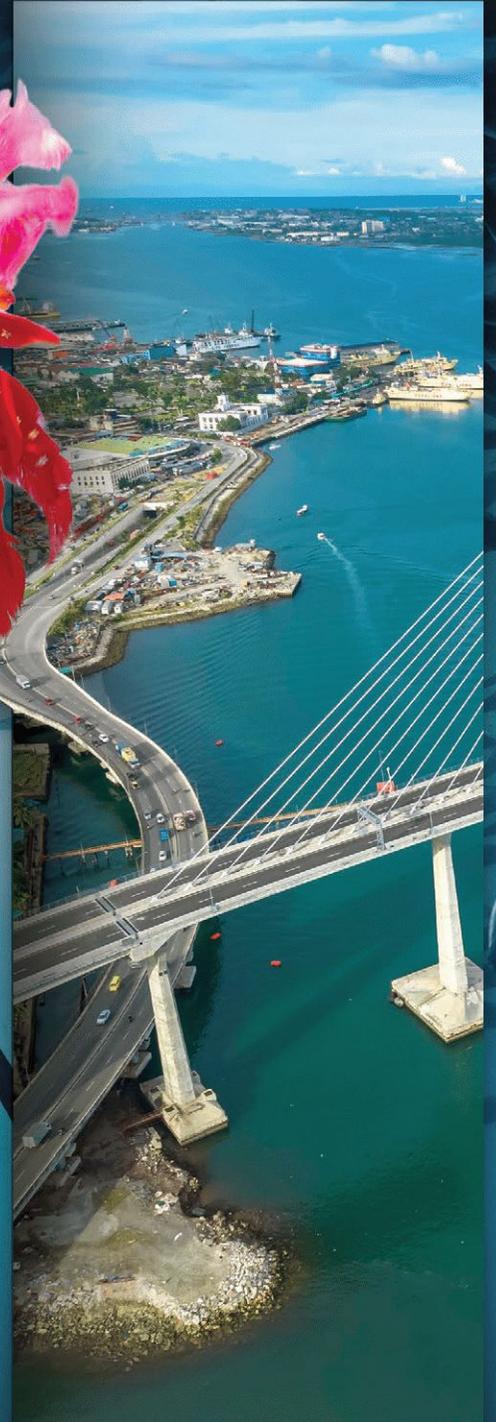
Good Stays are coming to more places.



VISAYAS

The Heart Of The Philippine Islands

Right in the middle of the archipelago, the Visayas connects the country through movement, culture, and the sea.



With Cebu and neighboring islands offering modern MICE venues and strong regional access, meetings are seamless by design. Beyond the boardroom, island-hopping, diving, and coastal dining turn work trips into shared experiences.

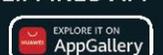
The Visayas blends business with the joy of the islands.

LOVE
THE PHILIPPINES



**SCAN TO ENJOY THE
PHILIPPINE EXPERIENCE**

DOWNLOAD THE TRAVEL PHILIPPINES APP





The Granary, Richmonde Hotel Iloilo

Iloilo

Iloilo City is another MICE destination in the Visayas and gained fame for its recognition as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy. Located within the 72-hectare Iloilo Business Park, the Iloilo Convention Center (ICON) offers over 11,000 square meters of event space. Four halls on the ground floor can host up to 2,400 guests, while seven function rooms upstairs accommodate 50 to 115 participants.

Megaworld Hotels & Resorts supports events with nearby accommodations including Richmonde Hotel Iloilo, Courtyard by Marriott Iloilo, and the upcoming Belmont Hotel Iloilo. These hotels actively support Iloilo's UNESCO designation by championing local cuisine, working with homegrown producers, and integrating Ilonggo food heritage into banquets.

Batangas

Because of its proximity to the country's capital, Batangas offers a refreshing escape for business travelers. At Twin Lakes Hotel, corporate retreats and leadership summits are set against panoramic views of Taal Lake. The hotel features a 766-square-meter pillarless hall for up to 500 guests, flexible meeting spaces, and The Glass House—an intimate venue with sweeping scenery.

Purpose-driven meetings are further enriched through the hotel's farm-to-table initiatives, which highlight locally sourced ingredients and support nearby farmers. In line with Megaworld Hotels & Resorts' commitment to inclusivity, Twin Lakes Hotel also offers Muslim-friendly menus, ensuring that every delegate feels respected and thoughtfully accommodated.



Twin Lakes Hotel



Plunge Bar, Grand Westside Hotel

Metro Manila

Megaworld Hotels & Resorts contributes a large chunk of room inventory in Metro Manila's MICE scene with over 3,600 rooms across key properties including Eastwood Richmonde Hotel, Richmonde Hotel Ortigas, Hotel Lucky Chinatown, Savoy Hotel Manila, Belmont Hotel Manila, Kingsford Hotel Manila, and Grand Westside Hotel. Strategically located within major business districts and lifestyle townships, these hotels offer easy access to airports, convention centers, and entertainment hubs in the metro.

Turn Manila-based meetings into moments of shared humanity and hope through Project Pearls, a foundation supported by Megaworld Hotels & Resorts that uplifts underprivileged communities through education, nutrition, and empowerment programs.

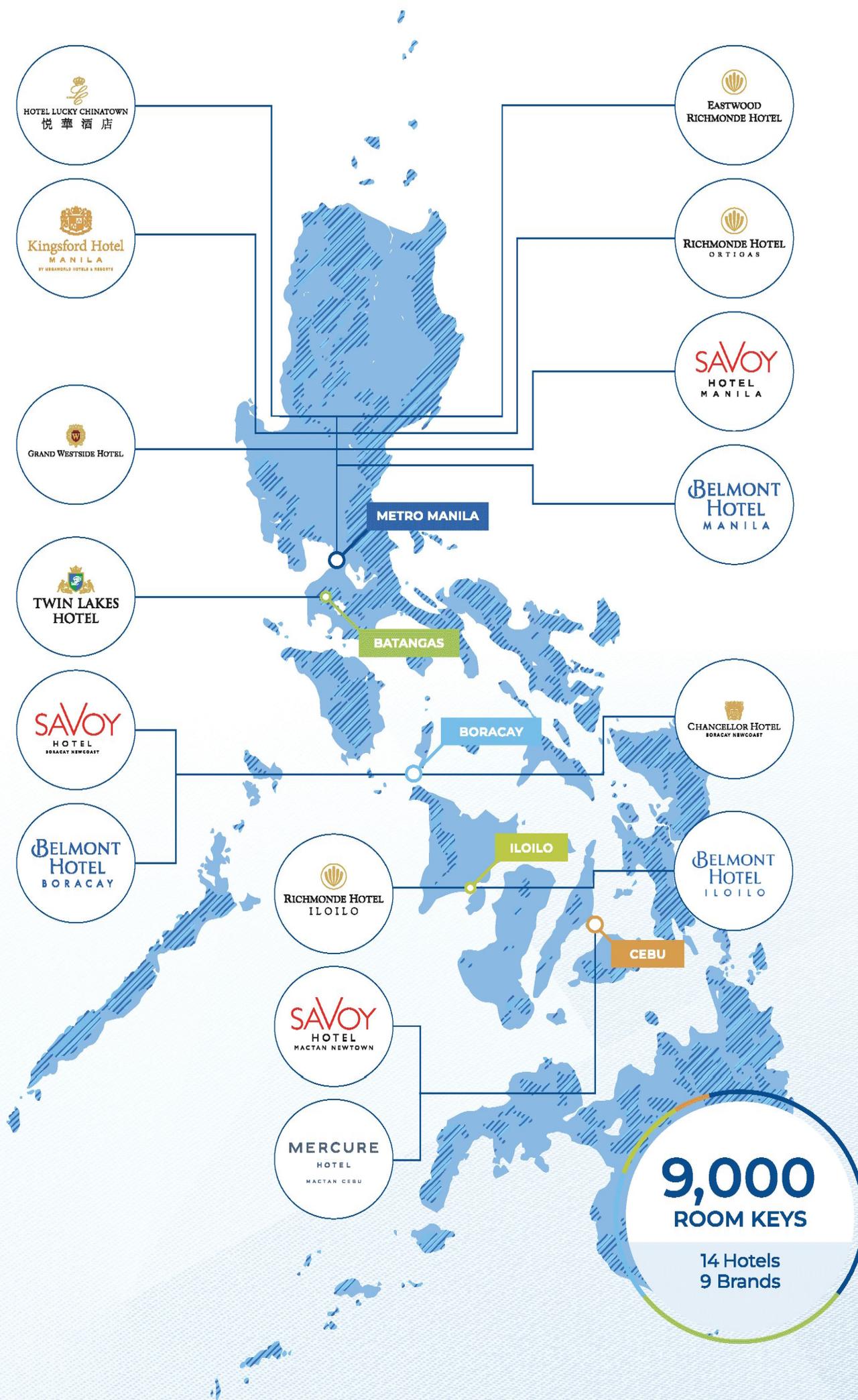
Across Boracay, Cebu, Iloilo, Batangas, and Metro Manila, Megaworld Hotels & Resorts proves that productivity thrives when paired with thoughtful design, strategic locations, and lifestyle-driven experiences. These destinations remind us that where we meet can be just as impactful as what gets decided there.



Eastwood Richmonde Hotel

MEGAWORLD

HOTELS & RESORTS



Journey with the largest hotel operator in the Philippines.

Scan the QR Code to know more.

