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Downtown Travel Presents the Philippines to Top US Agents



The Philippine Department of Tourism-New York, Downtown Travel US, and Philippine Airlines hosted a packed event to present the Philippines as a top tourist destination to US agents. (PDOTNY Photo)

NEW YORK, 16 April 2018 - Close to 100 of the top travel agents in the East Coast were hosted by Fernando S Virgolino, Director of Marketing and Product Development, Downtown Travel and Philippine Department of Tourism Attaché for the US East Coast, Ms Susan del Mundo at the Philippine Center New York *Kalayaan* (Freedom) Hall, on Fifth Avenue, Manhattan for a destination product update last 12 April.

These same agents learned more about the Philippines as a multi-dimensional destination for bespoke tours and travel experiences that covered everything from: holidays, architecture, health, wellness, medical, MICE (meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibits), culinary, diving, sporting events, education, honeymoon, heritage and culture tours as well as product updates on the top 10 destinations within the country's 7,106 islands. These included, the multi-awarded / nominated Palawan, Boracay, Cebu, and Bohol, Davao, Siargao, Banawe, Baguio, Ilocos Region and the Bicol Region.

Mr. Joesyl Vasquez (Area Manager) and Ms. Jean Charisse Rodriguez, (Account Manager – International Passenger Sales) of Philippine Airlines New York presented before partner travel agents. These travel agents also learned about the newest non-stop

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flight that the national carrier, Philippine Airlines will be operating in October 2018; PR 127 – JFK-MNL (02:00 – 06:10 +1) and PR 126 MNL-JFK (18:30 – 21:00) giving international passengers more time on ground in the Philippines with only a 15-hour flight as opposed to the usual 18-hour journey currently with one stopover in Vancouver.

PAL was also given the long overdue four-star rating from SkyTrak early this year and a befitting cap to all the efforts they have done having been the first Asian international full-service airline having started in February 1941.

“The US market is a significant source for tourists who want to explore, experience and enjoy the Philippines, given our close country ties and our shared historical milestones. We are pleased by this exciting travel trade destination update event organized by Fernando (Virgolino) of Downtown Travel, established 30 years ago and has expanded into one of the largest consolidators in USA and to Europe.” Ms Susan del Mundo enthuses. She further added, that as early as 2014, the US market has been rediscovering the Philippines placing this country on the top preferred destinations along with China, India and Japan. For the first time in a long time, in 2016, the North American market has reached a growth rate of more than 14% and has remained the second largest source market with more than 1M visitor arrivals, yearly.

The event was capped off with a prelude of the flavors in the Filipino Restaurant Week (14-26 May 2018 in New York) with one of the participating Chefs, Aris Tuazon of Ugly Kitchen preparing a spread of bold, unique and authentic Filipino dishes.

As a surprise, Philippine Airlines had a lucky draw for a roundtrip ticket to the Philippines which was won by Kelsey of Allison Sargent Events (New York).

For more information about the Philippines, available tour packages and airlines travelling to the Philippines, please visit: www.philippinetourismusa.com, www.philippineairlines.com, www.holidayswithdowntown.com. END



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