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DESTINATION DETAILS

MANILA:

The capital of the Philippines - its heart and soul -- is Manila. It sets the rhythm of life in this archipelago and is a pulsating hub that blends the Oriental with the Occidental, the quaint with the modern, the mundane with the extraordinary.

With 7,107 islands, and a coastline twice the length of that of the United States, the Philippines can claim to be Asia's Beach Capital. Enjoy the warm crystal blue waters of both the China Sea and the Pacific Ocean. Mention the Philippines and images of long, white sand beaches and bodies of water blessed with a variety of marine life come to mind.

Manila was born out of the ashes of a once flourishing Malay settlement by the banks of the Pasig River. In 1571, Miguel Lopez de Legazpi established the Ever Loyal City of Manila which, until 1898, was the seat of Spanish colonial rule in Asia. He built the city within walls and called it Intramuros.

An anchor tourist destination, Manila is the very core of the 7,000 times more islands that make up the Philippines. It is a center for the performing arts in Asia.

The Philippines has a tropical climate with two distinct seasons: wet and dry. Typhoons and tropical storms are a common occurrence during the wet season, particularly in the northern part of the Philippines, and occurs from late May till early November. Dry season starts from late November until late April. December to February is a pleasant time to visit the Philippines. Temperatures during this time range from 24-30°C (75-86°F) at its peak. From March to May, temperatures heat up but as Manila is by the coast, it rarely goes beyond 37°C (99°F).

BORACAY:

Boracay is a small bone-shaped tropical island located approximately 200Km south of Manila and 2Km off the northwest tip of the mainland island of Panay in the Western Visayas region of the Philippines.

The palm-studded island of Boracay - with its white, talcum-fine beach, balmy weather and warm, crystalline waters - is like a hypnotic magnet that lures many to a lotus existence. In this tiny, butterfly-shaped island at the northwestern tip of Panay in Western Visayas, days can be spent by simply lazing on the beach and nights are for indulging in the tropical party lifestyle. Boracay is an anchor tourist destination and one of the 7,000 times more islands that make up the Philippine archipelago.

On the island, the two main modes of transport are via motor-tricycles along the main road or by walking along the beaches. Pedicabs are also available for transport along the

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Beachfront Path. Other means of transportation include mountain bikes, quadbikes and motorbikes, all of which can be rented. To explore around the island's coast, motorized bancas and sailing paraws are available for rent. These are outrigger canoes and are common sight in waters around the island. The sailing paraw is a narrow hulled boat with outriggers either side and with passengers sometimes seated on a trampoline platform between the outrigger supports. These are extremely fast off the wind, but can be unwieldy for inexperienced sailors.