

# Cebu to host Routes Asia 2019

---

BARCELONA, SPAIN - At the sidelines of this year's World Routes 2017 Forum, Philippine Department of Tourism (DOT) Secretary Wanda Tulfo-Teo expressed pleasure as UBM World Routes Brand Director Steven Small announced the good news of choosing the island province of Cebu to host Routes Asia 2019.

"We are very optimistic to witness the robust growth of Philippine aviation and tourism especially in Central Visayas with the huge opportunity that comes from hosting Routes Asia 2019 in Cebu. We foresee significant gains similar to the results arising from having the same forum in Manila last year," Secretary Teo enthused.

Manila hosted the 2016 edition of Routes Asia, the largest routes development forum in the region which brings together leading airlines, airports and their stakeholders to discuss air services to, from and within Asia.

"From January to December 2017, Philippine Airlines, Air Asia, and foreign airlines China Eastern, Sichuan, Xiamen and Shenzhen will be bringing a total of 482,196 additional international airseats as a result of our aggressive air talks and negotiations last year," Teo added.

According to a partial report released by the DOT-7 Central Visayas, Cebu welcomed close to 1.5 million visitors from January and April 2017, an increase of 4.16 percent from 1.43 million visitors during the same four-month period in 2016.

Cebu, with its flagship gateway Mactan-Cebu International Airport, has emerged as the major air hub with direct flights abroad and numerous connections to other major destinations in the Visayas and Mindanao.

"Improving access is key to attracting new markets, strengthening traditional ones and opening up huge opportunities for employment and business for our people in the tourism industry," Teo added.

Meanwhile, Mactan-Cebu International Airport Authority (MCIAA) General Manager Steve Dicdican said, "We are extremely excited to host Routes Asia 2019 and we hope to

exceed the expectations and give a record breaking experience that will highlight the province's charm and hospitality."

Routes Asia 2016 was attended by 1,200 international and local delegates composed of airlines, airports, tourism authorities and aviation data providers.

#### Photo Captions

*Routes Asia 2019 goes to Cebu: From L-R UBM World Routes Brand Director Steven Small, MCIAA Steve Dicdican, DOT Secretary Wanda Tulfo-Teo, UBM Director of Aviation and Maritime Brands Andrew Williams, and DOT Undersecretary Benito Bengzon Jr.*

*Before going to Cebu in 2019, next year's edition of Routes Asia will be arriving to Brisbane, Australia*