First UN Tourism Regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism for Asia and the Pacific
26 June 2024, Cebu, the Philippines

Preliminary Programme

In recent years, Gastronomy Tourism has emerged as a significant travel motivation, driven by the growing interest in food among travellers seeking authentic experiences. Particularly in Asia, renowned for its culinary diversity, gastronomy tourism serves as a major draw for tourists eager to explore the diverse cultures and culinary traditions that define the region.

The evident rise of Gastronomy Tourism presents substantial opportunities for sustainable socio-economic development, cultural exchange, and community well-being. Gastronomy tourism has expanded beyond dining experiences to encompass all stakeholders within a destination's gastronomy and tourism value chains, involving producers, processing firms, the hospitality sector, retail, and other service providers. Particularly notable is the profound connection of food with rural landscapes and, therefore, its significant impact on rural development. By safeguarding the gastronomic heritage and culinary traditions of a territory, gastronomy tourism initiatives play a crucial role in supporting local communities, thereby fostering regional cohesion and resilience. Additionally, gastronomy tourism offers travellers authentic perspectives into the traditions, history, and flavours of a destination, strengthening their connection with these local communities.

In its first edition, the upcoming UN Tourism Regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism for Asia and the Pacific will serve as a platform to celebrate the power of gastronomy tourism and bring together destinations and international experts to exchange knowledge and best practices in gastronomy tourism, with the objective of harnessing its transformative power, especially for the benefit of local communities and the environment.

Wednesday, 26 June

Venue: to be confirmed

08:30 – 09:30 Registration & Welcome Coffee

as of 15 Mar. 2024
10:00 – 10:30  
**Opening ceremony**  
- Ms. Gwendolyn F. Garcia, Governor of Cebu, the Philippines (TBC)  
- Basque Culinary Center (BCC)  
- H.E. Ms. Maria Esperanza Christina Garcia Frasco, Secretary, Department of Tourism, the Philippines  
- Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary-General, UN Tourism  

**Official Photo**  
Ceremony for UN Tourism Ambassador/s for Responsible Tourism (TBC)  

10:30 – 10:50  
**Setting the scene**  

10:50 – 12:00  
**Ministerial Dialogue**  

12:00 – 12:15  
**Presentation of UN Tourism – FAO Mountain Partnership project in the Pacific SIDS**  

12:15 – 13:00  
**When Gastronomy Meets the Territory. Insights by Asia Pacific Destinations**  

13:00 – 13:30  
**Live demonstration (cooking show) by local recognized Chef**  

13:30 – 15:00  
**LUNCH: Culinary Journey of the Philippines**  

15:00 - 16:45  
**Session: Get inspired!**  
This session will showcase inspiring presentations of successful initiatives in gastronomy tourism in Asia and the Pacific, looking into the value of linking food, the territory and tourism and providing an ideal space for the exchange of expertise and for the development of projects that foster sustainable and innovative practices in gastronomy tourism.  

16:45 – 17:00  
**Key Insights**  
--Ms. Sandra Carvao, Director, Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness, UN Tourism  

**Closing Ceremony**  
--Representative, Department of Tourism, the Philippines (TBC)  
--Mr. Harry Hwang, Director, Regional Department for Asia and the Pacific, UN Tourism