Ivan:
Hello Boilermakers! Welcome to Travel to Asia brought to you by Purdue University’s Asian American and Asian Resource and Cultural Center. I’m Ivan Heneras from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management. I will bring you to the different countries in Asia this semester. The first country we are going to be visiting in the Philippines.

The Philippines is a beautiful archipelago in Southeast Asia composed of 7,641 islands. For this episode, we will be visiting some of those islands and some aspects of Philippine culture which you must see when you travel. So, here are 10 things to do if you visit the Philippines.

Of course on top of that list is to visit an amazing beach and there are thousands of beaches all over the Philippines. In fact one of the islands, Palawan is ranked the top island in the world by readers of Travel and Leisure Magazine, and of course, there’s Boracay, Bohol, Cebu and many, many other Islands you can choose from. When we talk about Palawan alone, the province is composed of 1,780 islands including popular clusters such as Coron and El Nido and the very high end of Amanpulo in the Pamalican Island. Of course, Boracay is known for its powder white sand beaches and stunning sunsets. But everywhere else in the Philippines, there is no absence of amazing sun, sand, and sea.

Second on the list would be to visit the Rice Terraces of the Philippine cordilleras a UNESCO world heritage site in the province of Ifugao on Luzon Island. According to UNESCO, the rice terraces of the Phillipine cordilleras is an outstanding example of an evolved living cultural landscape- the fruit of knowledge handed down from one generation to the next, and the expression of sacred traditions and the delicate social balance. They have helped to create a landscape of great beauty that expresses the harmony between humankind and the environment.

Number three on the list is another world heritage site, the historic town of Vigan, the best preserved Spanish colonial town in Asia. According to UNESCO, Vigan’s
architecture reflects the coming together of cultural elements from elsewhere in the Philippines, from China, and from Europe resulting in a culture and a townscape that have no parallel anywhere in East and Southeast Asia.

You haven't been to the Philippines if you haven't tried the food and that's of course number four the list is to try the local cuisine and there's more to the Philippines than Adobo and Lumpia. Filipinos start the day with a heavy meal composed of meat or fish, fried rice, fried egg, and vegetable condiments. Beef tapa is the local version of beef jerky and Daing na bangus is one of the many versions of dried fish and kare-kare is a very rich peanut stew with oxtail and vegetables. We also have our own version of the empanada but the star of the show is the spit roasted pig called lechon. Anthony Bourdain called the Cebu lechon the best pork dish in the world! Another dish he was raving about was the halo-halo dessert and of course, desserts or snacks would not be complete without rice cakes such as suman and kutsinta.

The Philippines is the center of the center of the center of marine biodiversity in the world. So number 5 on the list is to go scuba diving.

The Philippines is located in the ring of fire so number 6 on the list is to hike up one of its famous volcanoes. Some of the popular volcanoes include the Mayon Volcano with its perfect cone, Taal Volcano and Mount Pinatubo.

The Philippines has very colorful festivals all year round so number 7 on the list is to attend one of those festivals. Because of Spanish colonization, many of the countries festivals and events are a colorful mix of Catholic and pre-colonial practices such as the passionate Nazareno Procession, the rambunctious Ati-Atihan, Lenten Devotion such as Moriones and Cutud, harvest festivals such as Pahiyas and Vigan Flores De Mayo and the Giant Lantern Festival for Christmas. Other festivals celebrate local flair such as Panagbeng and Masskara.

Number 8 on the list is to take a boat ride through the Puerto Princesa underground river. The Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park has a 15 mile long underground river- one of the longest in the world and a spectacular limestone karst landscape. In 2011, it was included as one of the new 7 wonders of the world.

Of course, you haven't been to the Philippines if you don't explore its capital city, Manila, and that is number 9 on our list. Among Manila's favorite attractions are
Bay and its famed sunsets and Rizal Park, the San Sebastian Basilica which is completely made out of steel, and Binondo- the oldest ChinaTown in the world.

The Eastern side of the Philippines faces the Pacific Ocean so it has some amazing waves and number ten on the list is to go surfing. Here are some amazing pictures of a cloud nine wave in Siargao courtesy of our friends at Surfista Travels.

There you have it Boilermakers- that's it for today's episode. I do hope you enjoyed your trip to the Philippines. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please email us at aaarcc@purdue.edu Until the next episode, boiler up!