

## Discovery World opens 5-star resort in Samal

ISLAND GARDEN CITY OF SAMAL — Hotel and resort operator Discovery World Corp. (DWC) opened the five-star resort hotel Discovery Samal in Limao here on Friday (July 21).

The six-hectare Discovery Samal boasts 128 hotel suites, 15 executive suites, and the Grand Signature Suite. Dining options include the Morning Catch, The Shoreline, Garden City Café, and Haribar Lounge.

The resort also offers Samal Escape Spa where guests can enjoy rejuvenating treatments, therapeutic massages, and personalized wellness programs.

With its state-of-the-art facilities, Discovery Samal is positioned as an ideal venue for business and gatherings for corporate events, conferences, and celebrations.

The opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony was led by Beatrice Gonzalez-Magallanes, president of Discovery Samal; John Tiu, chairman of DWC; Christopher Tiu, DWC board member; Jose Parreño, president of Discovery Hospitality Corp.; Stanley Lau, general manager of Discovery Samal and Island Garden City of Samal Mayor Al David Uy.

“But it wasn’t just one person or a select few who made this dream a reality. It was a collective effort, a symphony of talents, and an army of hardworking staff who poured their heart and soul into bringing this project to life. To every single person who contributed their time, energy, and passion, I extend

my sincerest gratitude,” said Ms. Gonzales-Magallanes during the ceremony.

Mr. Lau said Samal is the ideal place to showcase and provide its guests with “service that’s all heart,” which the Discovery brand is known for.

Discovery Samal is the first and only Discovery Resort brand in Mindanao, and has the biggest resort convention facilities in Davao.

Meanwhile, the opening of Discovery Samal is expected to boost tourist arrivals in Island Garden City of Samal, according to the city’s tourism officer Jennifer Cariaga.

In terms of tourist arrivals, she said they are aiming for more than 800,000 tourists, but the figure may go up with the opening of Discovery Samal.

Ms. Cariaga said tourist arrivals reached 1.9 million in 2019 but this dropped to 150,000 in 2020 due to the pandemic-induced lockdowns.

Tourist arrivals bounced back in 2021 with 670,000 and in 2022 with 750,000.

“In terms of tourism, the opening of Discovery Samal has a huge impact as people and investors will see that Samal has the potential,” Ms. Cariaga said.

Discovery World is a hotel and resort operator with several facilities across the country that include Discovery Shores Boracay, Club Paradise Palawan, Discovery Suites, Discovery Primea, Manami, and now, Discovery Samal. — **Maya M. Padillo**

# WeWork sees Southeast Asia as growth driver as firms go hybrid

By Cathy Rose A. Garcia  
Managing Editor

THE continued adoption of hybrid work schemes is expected to drive the growth of flexible workspaces in the Philippines, according to WeWork.

“It is good to see our locations in Manila buzzing with members and activities. Hybrid has been a key driver of workplace adoption for our members in the Philippines and Southeast Asia,” Dylan Burke, WeWork portfolio director for rest of Southeast Asia, said in an e-mail interview with *BusinessWorld*.

“Most of them are back in the office three to five days weekly, and working from home or sometimes in another WeWork location for the rest of the week.”

He noted companies are now prioritizing collaboration as the primary purpose of the office, instead of simply as a place to work.

“Since employees are only back for some days in the office, they would prioritize in-person collaborations and meetings, to make

their trip back to the office ‘commute worthy,’” Mr. Burke said.

WeWork Philippines has seen bookings for large meeting rooms surge 4.7 times year on year in the first quarter.

As hybrid work schemes continue, many companies are now evaluating their workplace strategies. Some have realized they no longer need full floors or secure long-term leases in traditional spaces.

“From small businesses to large enterprises, companies want the ability to grow or scale their space as needed with the option of short- or long-term leases that can optimize their real estate costs. Now more than ever, companies would not want to commit to 10-15 year lease agreements; especially in the face of inflation and operational pressures,” Mr. Burke said.

This is where WeWork comes in, as it can provide companies with various solutions and flexible financial commitments.

Aside from private offices and full floors, WeWork now offers solutions to address companies’ hybrid needs.

All Access is a monthly membership that allows members to work from any WeWork location

in the world, while On Demand is a “pay-as-you-go” solution to access any WeWork workspace or meeting room when needed. It also offers a workplace management software for employees.

Mr. Burke said that in the first quarter, WeWork has seen a 77.5% jump in its All Access bookings from the fourth quarter of 2022.

### SOUTHEAST ASIA

Mr. Burke said Southeast Asia, particularly the Philippines, will continue to be a key driver of WeWork’s growth.

“Across the region, our revenue and occupancy continue to gain positive momentum and I am focused on how we can continue to sustain this; and also be a strategic partner to companies expanding into and within the region,” he said.

As of the first quarter, WeWork reported its occupancy rate in Asia-Pacific (Southeast Asia/South Korea/Australia) stood at 83%, the highest globally (excluding franchise markets).

“WeWork Philippines’ occupancy has been consistently in the higher range throughout the pandemic,” Mr. Burke said.

WeWork has 30 locations in Southeast Asia, including four in the Philippines — RCBC Plaza, Milestone at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Menarco Tower, and Uptown Bonifacio Tower Three.

“Manila is a fast-evolving economy that attracts business activities and leaders from all over the world and I see the central business district specifically Bonifacio Global City (BGC) and Makati, which is where WeWork is based, continues to be an emphasis for business interactions and engagements,” Mr. Burke said.

WeWork Philippines members include, large multinational companies (MNC), small and medium enterprises (SMEs), startups and individual entrepreneurs.

“Individuals want access to diverse business communities, networking opportunities, and the flexibility to work from any location globally. With SMEs that are on a fast track to growth and exploring multiple market expansions, they lean on our global portfolio. As for MNCs, their focus is to optimize operations which also means they have to be savvy and strategic with their workplace commitment,” Mr. Burke said.

## Six ways to handle soaring temperatures with a low-carbon lifestyle

YOU could be forgiven for thinking humans are helpless against extreme heat. All over the world, record high temperatures are raising concerns about heat stress, which has claimed more than 100 lives in India this year and killed over 60,000 people in Europe last summer.

One obvious solution — adding more air conditioning (AC) — is catch-

ing on fast. Through 2050, an estimated 10 new AC units will be sold every second. That influx, though, threatens to exacerbate the climate crisis that necessitated it.

In some places and at particularly high temperatures, air conditioning may be the safest and most effective option for staying cool — but it isn’t the only one.

Here are tips for coping with hotter days without increasing your carbon emissions.

### Avoid AC — when you can.

Don’t underestimate the impact of a powerful fan. Fans replicate the best parts of a cool breeze — fast-moving air helps remove body heat — while using about 1% of the electricity of an AC unit. — **Bloomberg**

### FULL STORY



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