

## **PNoy declares 2015 ‘Visit PH Year’**

Written by Aurea Calica  
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**Tourists try out the extreme white water tubing adventure on the Kinale River in Barangay Soa, Malinao, Albay. The experience involves riding the rapids on inner tubes. □**  
*(Photo by Edd Gumban)*

MANILA — President Aquino has ordered a more aggressive tourism campaign as the country hosts the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit this year and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Tourism Forum in 2016, declaring 2015 as “Visit the Philippines Year (VPY).”

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“There is a need to consolidate the activities and products of the public and private sectors into one calendar of events to showcase the outstanding work of Filipinos in music and arts, lifestyle and entertainment, sports and adventure, business and history and culture, as well as unveil the many historic treasures, natural wonders and unforgettable adventures of the country,” Aquino said in Proclamation No. 991 he signed on March 30.

All other departments, bureaus, offices and instrumentalities of the national government, as well as local government units are likewise enjoined to give full support and cooperation to the Department of Tourism (DOT) in the exercise of its duties under the proclamation.

The President said the Philippines’ hosting of APEC this year and the ASEAN Tourism Forum in 2016 would both serve as venues to promote the country as host of meetings, conventions and exhibitions in the Asia-Pacific.

Aquino said tourism was also a good platform for closer collaboration between the public and private sectors, as well as the international community in hosting events that would attract foreign visitors and showcase local talent and skills.

He added that a progressive tourism sector could provide the much-needed resources to improve infrastructure and product development, generate employment and stimulate investments.

To promote public and private sector participation, Aquino ordered all agencies and instrumentalities of the government to submit to the DOT, through the Tourism Promotions Board, their lists of international and local events and activities for inclusion in the VPY calendar of events.

He also tasked them to use the VPY logo in all their information materials to support the dissemination of information about the tourism campaign.

All Philippine embassies and consular offices, as well as the Department of Trade and Industry and DOT foreign offices, shall also ensure the publicity and information related to the VPY

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2015, Aquino said.

“The postmaster general shall cause the design, printing and issuance of a special stamp for VPY 2015,” the President further said.

Aquino also encouraged the private sector, especially those companies involved in the business of hotel and lodging, travel and tours, transportation, retail and souvenirs, as well as restaurants to support the VPY 2015 by developing relevant tour programs and packages for both foreign and local tourists.

“All public and private schools and universities are also encouraged to initiate projects and events related to the theme VPY 2015,” the President said.