

CLARK

2023

FLYING OUT? CHOOSE CRK

Clark International Airport as a 'showcase of local architecture and design'

RELAX AND REFUEL

Clark's coffee culture

STAYING IN AND AROUND NEW CLARK CITY

DREAM RIDE

Here's why New Clark
City should be your next
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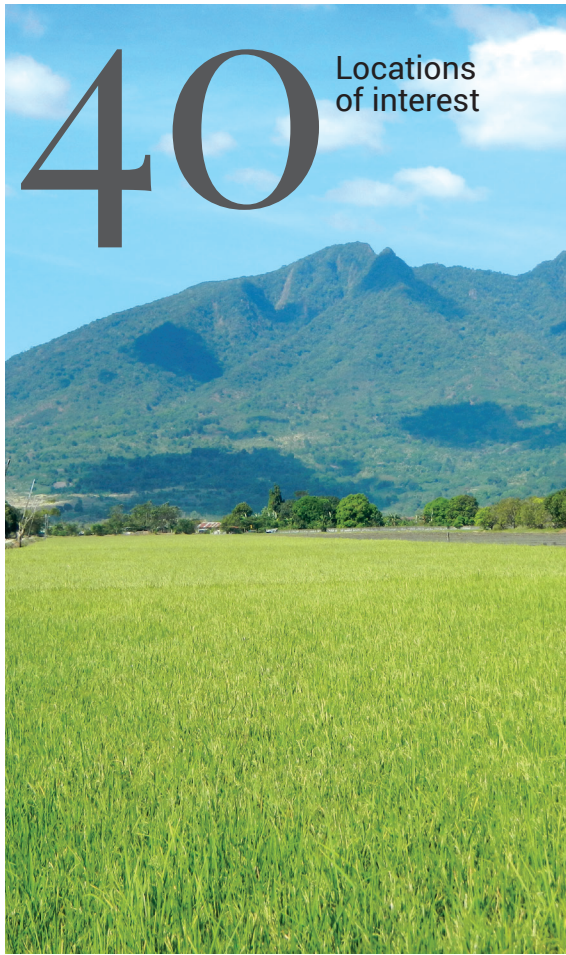
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ABOUT THE COVER:
The cover image of *Clark* was shot on location at Clark International Airport (CRK), the design of which was inspired by nature. The green carpet that dominates the image is a reference to Clark's verdant environs: its rice fields, mountains, and teal-tinged lakes. Going beyond aesthetics, color in CRK is functional, serving as a navigational guide for passengers. Green is the main color for the international area as it faces Mt. Arayat; blue, the domestic area as it faces Manila Bay.
On Bronja: Bonita Mahogany with Capa La Reyna Dress by Ditta Sandico Ong; Tulle ballgown with sheers by Christine Lam; Rhodium gold flower earrings and ring with multicolored sapphires from Imelda's Jewelry. Photographed by Jonathan Baldonado and styled by Miss Kayce/KC Leyco Mempin.



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Iconic

Relax and refuel

Clark's coffee culture

WORDS BY **BRONTË
H. LACSAMANA**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
WALTER BOLLOZOS

Sports-related independent cafés and Korean-inspired chains are part of a nascent coffee culture taking root in Clark Freeport Zone, known simply as Clark.

Whether it's to power up in preparation for energy-intensive action or to wind down after a fulfilling adventure along with other tourists, a visit to one—or all—of these cafés in Clark is a must.

CYCLES & BREW



It's 7 a.m. on a weekend. Cycles & Brew (CnB)—a lively café, bicycle shop, and brewery in one—is filled with cyclists, triathletes, and tourists seeking a cup of joe and a hearty breakfast.

Though CnB has been open since 2016 with sports merchandise lining its shelves, and coffee and beer on its menu, it was only in 2020—when the pandemic's transportation restrictions sparked a cycling renaissance—that business boomed. Today, a bike repair shop stands next to CnB.

Customers can eat outside, where there's a breeze and a clear view of passersby in the Clark Parade Grounds area. A cup of ice-cold Horchata (a Mexican rice-milk drink with cinnamon), costing P170, will both cool you down and fill you up.

The Long Ride Special (composed of beef *tapa*, *longganisa*, and two sunny-side up eggs with fried rice and freshly brewed coffee) is the shop's best-seller. At P330, the delicious and plentiful meal is worth any long ride as its name implies.

For coffee, Caramel Macchiato, Cappuccino, or White Mocha options are all



sufficiently strong but still sweet, within the P130–150 range. And if you need something with a little more kick to end your day, try their Sunset Craft Beer.

Location: E. Jacinto Street, Clark Freeport Zone
Contact: 0943-703-0667, cyclesandbrew@gmail.com

Facebook: facebook.com/CyclesandBrew
Instagram: instagram.com/cyclesandbrew



TOM N TOMS COFFEE

With bright and spacious interiors and a Korean-style menu, Tom N Toms boasts a warm, cozy atmosphere with wooden tables and chairs—the highly sought seats being the comfortable couches perfect for group hangouts.

A visit here requires munching on a tortilla pizza (P240 for the whole thing) or its signature chocolate-filled pretzel (P175 apiece, P300 for a set which includes a drink and a dip).

Espresso beverages are priced from P135 to P200, while the best-selling Strawberry Yogurt Latte goes for P295.

Though this Korean café chain is found throughout the Philippines, the Clark branch is definitely in the running for the busiest yet most warm and welcoming.

Location: Building SRD Bldg. I (2103) 1st Floor Exclusive Area B, E. Jacinto St., Clark Freeport Zone

Contact: 0949-197-1458, tomntomscoffeec Clark@gmail.com

Facebook: facebook.com/TomNTomsCoffeeClark
Instagram: instagram.com/tomntomsc Clark

BAKER J CAFÉ



For authentic French cuisine with a bit of Filipino mixed in, head to Baker J Café, situated in the scenic Mimosa Plus Golf Clubhouse.

Aside from two dining halls designed for elegance and comfort, there is an al fresco area facing the golf course that provides sunny ambience for post-game feasts for hungry golfers and weekend lunches out for families or couples, care of French chef Jean Louise Leon.

Its extensive bread and brunch menu is also the biggest of all Baker J kiosks in other Quest or Crimson Hotel branches.

You can't go wrong with Eggs Benedict (poached eggs with ham and English muffin, costing P320), with yolks that gently ooze out

upon slicing the egg whites. The variation with smoked salmon costs P600.

Fresh croissants—fluffy, buttery, and flaky—are best paired with Baker J's house brew coffee sourced from the Good Cup Coffee Co. On a hot day, go for the Nitro Affogato (P300), an ice-cold caffeine fix topped with ice cream.

Location: Mimosa Plus Golf Clubhouse, 538 Country Club Drive, Filinvest Mimosa+ Leisure City, Clark Freeport Zone

Contact: 0998-587-8077, bakerjcafe@mimosaplusgolf.com

Facebook: facebook.com/bakerj.ph
Instagram: instagram.com/bakerj.ph



Another evoking the trendy food scene in Seoul, Korea, is Here Café, an Instagram-ready joint that seats 500 people and occupies a spacious two-storey building.

A well-lit industrial interior features a minimalist, monochrome color scheme paired with modern fixtures. A popular remote working spot, Here has reliable WiFi and no shortage of outlets.

There to just chill? The al fresco patio is the place for you.

Here Café isn't all aesthetics, though: caffeine lovers sip on iced Caramel Macchiatos (priced P165–195) or hot Caffé Mochas (P155–185). As with all Korean-inspired menus, sweet drinks are a must: the best of which is their Strawberry Smoothie (P185–200).

Pastas and pizzas priced at P400–500 are ordered left and right during lunch, while bread aficionados linger at the self-service bakery, where you can get anything from muffins to *pain au chocolat*.

Location: 2041 Ninoy Aquino Ave., Clark Freeport Zone
Contact: 0995-413-0405, herecafeclark@gmail.com
Facebook: facebook.com/@Here-Cafe-Clark-City-100083274995575/
Instagram: instagram.com/herecafeclark

HERE CAFÉ

CAFÉ DIA



Situated in the Dia Town business complex—which also has a hotel, a restpub, a kid-friendly garden, and an events place—Café Dia blends perfectly with its colorful surroundings.

Warm and playful—with wooden baubles, cute trinkets, and orange lights adorning the space—the café has wide windows that give a glimpse of the vast, open lawn in the center of Dia Town.

Favorites include Spicy Salted Shrimp Pasta (P200+) to mouthwatering cakes such as the Classic Sansrival (P180+).

Top pick for hot drinks: Roasted Almond Coffee (P180), which has a soothing aroma and nutty flavor. On the iced side: Dia Jelly (P195), the café's take on coffee jelly.

Location: 29th Gil Puyat Ave., Dia Town, Clark Freeport Zone
Contact: 0956-996-4519, diatownclark22@gmail.com
Facebook: facebook.com/DiaTownClark
Instagram: instagram.com/diatownclark



Palpitate Coffee is the go-to place when there are sports or arts events in the nearby leisure park, with the annual Aurora Music Festival being the most famous.

Due to its prime location at a Petron station that's also near the SCTEx toll gate, Palpitate has a steady stream of visitors. Depending on the season, it could be athletes, students, or chatty travelers seeking refuge from the hot sun.

Depending on your mood, try the Palpitate Latte, the Seasalt Latte, or the Matcha Latte, which are all in the P160 to P180 price range. Oat milk is available for the lactose-intolerant.

Tip: Pair your drinks with cakes, which cost P120 to P210.

Location: 2nd Floor, Udenna Avenue, Petron Gas Retail Plaza, Clark Freeport Zone
Contact: 0917-884-3449, palpitatecdc@gmail.com
Facebook: facebook.com/palpitate.philippines
Instagram: instagram.com/_palpitateph



PALPITATE COFFEE

Dream ride

Looking for new cycling routes to unlock? Here's why New Clark City should be your next bike destination.

WORDS BY **KARA SANTOS** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **WALTER BOLLOZOS**

Biking through traffic-free roads with wide open spaces, views of nature, and good cafés after is enough to make any cyclist happy.

Just 2.5 hours north of Manila is a new biking mecca that's already generating buzz in the cycling community. Billed as the country's first smart, green, and disaster-resilient metropolis, New Clark City (NCC)—a 9,450-hectare development located in the towns of Capas and Bamban in Tarlac—recently hosted bike races. While cyclists may be familiar with the Clark Freeport Zone, NCC is also fast gaining popularity.

The Sacobia Bridge and secure bike lanes on the New Clark City-Clark International Airport Access Road will soon cut down travel time between the two areas of Clark from 25-30 minutes to just 15 minutes.

While some NCC areas are still being developed, the New Clark City Athletics Stadium in Capas has already become the preferred playground for athletes based in Central Luzon.

Take it from Nikko Huelgas, a two-time triathlon gold medalist at the Southeast Asian Games (SEA Games). "I'm able to maximize my potential as an athlete and as a cyclist because of the wide roads, bike-friendly infrastructure and roads, and the quality of life because of how the master plan is laid out. There is a more peaceful environment and everything is more accessible," said Huelgas, who has been training in Pampanga and Tarlac since 2017.

After retiring from the national team, Huelgas relocated from Las Piñas in Metro Manila to Clark, where he enjoys easy access to bike-friendly roads and facilities of the NCC Sports Hub. Huelgas gets his work-life balance as an events supervisor for the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA).



Bike destinations in and around NCC

CAPAS NATIONAL SHRINE

This memorial dedicated to those who died in the Bataan Death March during the Second World War is about 6 kilometers away by bike from the NCC stadium.

MONASTERIO DE TARLAC

In the mood to tackle uphill routes? Make your way to the top of Mt. Resurrection Eco Park in Lubigan, San Jose to gaze at a 30-foot high statue of Jesus Christ towering over the hilly landscape. The monastery is about 25 kilometers away from NCC.

MT. PINATUBO

With its majestic turquoise waters surrounded by massive rock formations, Mt. Pinatubo is one of the most sought-after hiking spots near Manila. Sta. Juliana, the jump-off point for trekkers, is 16 kilometers from NCC. While 4x4 jeeps and ATVs are the preferred mode of transport, mountain bikers can pedal through moon-like terrain of lahar and bouldered-strewn rivers known as Crow Valley to the crater lake. Support vehicles and guides are still required to ensure safety.

GOSHEN RESORT

Want to explore ancient Rome on a budget? This four-hectare sightseeing resort in the outskirts of Bamban has Greco-Roman inspired architecture, a replica of a Colosseum, and marble columns for all your photo op needs. Goshen, which is about 11 kilometers from NCC, is accessible via the old Sacobia Bridge and Monicayo, Pampanga, through quiet, hilly roads.

CLARK FREEPORT ZONE

Get some long-distance training on well-paved roads by biking from NCC to Clark and back—about 60 kilometers for a round trip—for lunch or coffee rides. Clark Parade Grounds has trendy dining options and cafés. Make sure to stop by Cycles & Brew, a bike shop that specializes in coffee and craft beer. Get a workout by including Clark Pader—the equivalent to Timberland’s “Shotgun” and “The Wall,” a pair of uphill climbs in San Mateo, Rizal—in your route. For thrills, you can also pass by the abandoned Clark Air Base hospital, said to be one of the most haunted destinations in Asia.

HADUAN HANGING BRIDGE

Within Clark Freeport Zone, you can navigate a short dirt trail to Sitio Haduan, an Aeta Community. From the dirt road near Aqua Planet, you can cross the Haduan Hanging Bridge by bike and get a stunning view of the Sacobia River. The distance between NCC and Haduan Hanging Bridge is about 30 kilometers.

PAMPANGA

Entrepreneur Poch Jorolan organizes heritage bike tours around the City of San Fernando, and towns of Bacolor, Guagua and Sta. Rita in Pampanga. Enjoy good scenery, visit artisan food makers, and visit old churches around Pampanga on two wheels on your next trip. For organized bike tours, check out **Outreater** on FB and IG.

“There’s a growing number of opportunities here, and it’s only the beginning. Clark can stand on its own, especially with the airport connecting to domestic and international destinations,” he said.

OLYMPIANS AND AMATEURS ALIKE

Officially opened to the public during the 2019 SEA Games, the NCC Sports Hub serves as a world-class venue for international, national, and regional sports competitions and events.

The Athletics Stadium, whose design was inspired by the crater of Mt. Pinatubo, has a 400-meter competition track and a seating capacity of 20,000.

The Aquatics Center features three swimming pools: an olympic-sized swimming pool, training pool, and diving pool. There is also an outdoor 400-meter long four-lane warm-up track.

In addition, the sports hub has an Athletes’ Village with 525 rooms that can accommodate more than 1,500 athletes.

The sports hub has become the playground of athletes for training programs and clinics, such as the qualifying trials for the selection of the aquatics team to this year’s SEA Games in Cambodia.

“Olympic teams from different countries would train here, such as the Israel Swimming Association who came here for a couple of weeks before they went



NCC is open to the public daily from 6:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Cycling or any sporting and motor racing events or corporate activities using bike lanes and other open areas in NCC may be booked via email to marketing@bcda.gov.ph.



Up for the challenge? New Clark City is home to uphill bike lanes—perfect for cyclists who are ready for some grueling bike routes lit by solar-powered street lights.

straight to the Tokyo Olympics. The fact that they went here validates and shows that this is world-class standard,” said Huelgas.

Once the NCC Sports Hub reopened to the public in 2022, the facility has hosted numerous biking events, including the Clark Cycling Classic, the Philippine Cycling Festival, duathlons, triathlons, and the First Ultra Gravel Challenge in February 2023, with over 800 cyclists in attendance.

It was during the Ultra Gravel Race, which offered a technical course of cross-country, single tracks, gravel, fire roads, and river crossings in the event route, that triathlete Pey Gutierrez, who is also the administrative assistant to the BCDA office of the president and CEO, realized that the area holds a lot of potential for different types of cycling beyond sports events.

“*Nakita ko na marami pa palang lugar sa Tarlac, hindi lang sa New Clark City ang pwede natin maging spot. Yung pinuntahan namin mga rough*

Bike lanes by the numbers



P21.9 million

amount spent by Clark Development Corporation (CDC) on bike lane project inside the Clark Freeport Zone as of February 2023

19.24 kilometers

length of existing Clark Bike Path from SM Clark to the San Felipe Bridge passing the Clark Freeport and Special Economic Zone

7 kilometers

length of new inbound and outbound bike lanes along M.A. Roxas Highway

894.4 meters

length of the iconic Sacobia Bridge which includes six lanes for vehicles and two lanes each side for bicycles

15 minutes

time it takes to drive to/from New Clark City to the new Clark International Airport via Sacobia Bridge

29.57 kilometers

length of available bike lanes in New Clark City as of June 2023

4

number of bike lane projects completed in New Clark City as of June 2023

60 kilometers

total length of bike lanes in NCC once completed



Biker’s Pit Stop — an eco-friendly stopover for bikers to rest and recharge after a tiring ride. Located at the rotunda bounded by Pandar

Pira Avenue and Creekside Road, this area has tables and chairs for bikers to relax, bike parking, restrooms, bike repair tools, and retail spaces for food kiosks and cafes. A pump track will soon be made available to the public.

Cross Country Trail (CXC trail) — a challenging route made for professional bikers seeking adventure. The trail is located along the Creekside Road with Midori Park serving as the starting point.

roads, off-road, *makikita mo na ang dami pa palang magandang views dito sa Tarlac*,” he said.

Cyclists agree that NCC has much to offer for all skill levels.

“The routes and trails inside and outside New Clark City will give you everything for both road and off-road kinds of cycling. Fast straightaways, climbs and ascends if someone is into cardiac experience,” said cyclist and entrepreneur Poch Jorolan, who joined the 50-kilometer party category of the Ultra Gravel Event.

“The course was excellent. Great scenery, warm and welcoming people of Capas and Bamban, Tarlac that complimented the preparation of the organizers. Even if I’m from the area, there are so many places there that I saw for the first time. To be honest, I told my cycling friends in jest that I think I’m done joining road cycling events and back to off-road,” added Jorolan.

According to Gutierrez, BCDA is developing mountain bike trails in the area due to the number of requests they’ve received from the biking community.

National athletes can train for free in the stadium and swimming pools, while the open grounds, parks, and environs are all open to the public, including recreational cyclists, free of charge.

“Whether you’re a professional cyclist, a leisure one, advanced or beginner, whether you’re a mountain biker, gravel biker, or road biker, New Clark City is welcome to all cyclists and all levels of cyclists,” said Huelgas.

New Clark City’s streets are more than thoroughfares and are a living part of the city. They follow the grid models for people to easily navigate and enjoy commuting along wide shaded sidewalks and bike lanes.

“*The routes and trails inside and outside New Clark City will give you everything for both road and off-road kinds of cycling. Fast straightaways, climbs and ascends if someone is into cardiac experience.*”

— cyclist and entrepreneur Poch Jorolan



(L-R) Genevieve Hizon-Perez, Nikko Huelgas and Pey Gutierrez



ECO-TOURISM

Anchored on the principle of sustainability, New Clark City has a developable area of 40% while the remaining 60% will be preserved for green and eco-tourism ventures.

Open spaces offer secure place to bike, run, jog, eat, enjoy picnics, do yoga, and just chill especially on weekends where visitors and athletes can enjoy an extended stay until midnight to sample the variety of food, music, and entertainment at the Walk On’s Food Court in the commercial center.

Cultural events, concerts, team-building exercises, and other lifestyle and wellness activities requiring bigger seating capacity are hosted at the Athletics Stadium or at the Athletes’ Village.

LONGEST AND SAFEST BIKE LANE

Cyclists are drawn to Clark because of its natural surroundings and long stretches of car-free roads and bike lanes in between. Those who like to do long-distance training can go from Clark to NCC and back via Bamban, Tarlac. Within NCC itself, cyclists can do 50–60 kilometers loops through rolling and flat roads.

Ongoing developments include the 894-meter long Sacobia Bridge, which has six lanes in its main carriageway, and two bike lanes on each side; and the access road to the Clark International Airport. Once completed, this will add a 20-kilometer stretch of road and secure bike lanes, giving cyclists access to both areas of Clark via the longest bike lane in the Philippines.

Safety reminders for cyclists in Clark

-  No helmet, no ride.
-  Make use of front and rear lights after sunset.
-  Follow bike lanes when turning left at busy intersections.
-  Observe and follow traffic lights.
-  Maintain cleanliness (dispose of litter properly).
-  Avoid crowding while riding or resting. Give way to others.

Counting the existing 15-kilometer bike lane from Clark to the new bridge, there will be a total of 35 kilometers of secure and safe bike lanes.

“It will become a giant cycling city that’s for all. Hopefully, this will encourage more people to keep biking and make time for workouts and not just work. To embrace a life of balance and quality of life,” said Huelgas. 🚲

Staying in and around New Clark City

WORDS BY **BJORN BIEL M. BELTRAN, CHELSEY KEITH P. IGNACIO, AND ANGELA KIARA S. BRILLANTES**

Whether you want to luxuriate in comfort or reconnect with nature, the hotels and resorts in and around New Clark City have got you covered.

Heading to Clark for a business trip, an outdoor adventure, or a staycation? Here are just some of the options.

(Note: Featured rates are mostly based on information from the respective websites or official Facebook pages of each hotel.)

AN OASIS OF SERENITY

As part of the Hann Casino Resort Complex, Swissôtel Clark bills itself as a “beacon of Swiss vitality and sustainability.” Its Pürovel wellness philosophy, inspired by the four Alpine seasons, informs products and treatments geared toward

renewal (spring), peak activity (summer), recovery (autumn) and rest (winter).

The Pürovel Spa & Sport is a serene oasis staffed by skilled therapists trained in Swiss and Asian techniques.

A sparkling, aquamarine infinity pool also awaits on the level 5 rooftop terrace offering up the breathtaking views of Mt. Pinatubo and the Zambales Mountains. Combined with the only alpine spa in the Philippines, Swissôtel Clark guarantees rest and relaxation.

This, of course, includes modern rooms and suites with floor-to-ceiling windows, marble bathrooms, and automated systems. There are 10 restaurants to choose from and five meeting spaces, several of which are open until early morning.

Starts at P7,768/night

Facebook/Instagram: @swissotelclark

Swissôtel



FACEBOOK.COM/SWISSETELCLARK



Clark Marriott Hotel

FACEBOOK.COM/CLARKMARRIOTT

FIRST-CLASS COMFORT

Five-star Clark Marriott Hotel brings world-class service to Clark. Its 260 rooms and suites feature large, well-lit work desks, plush beds topped with cotton linen, and a sleek bathroom with a separate tub and shower.

These are coupled with amenities such as Clark Marriott's very own Quan Spa, which offers massages, body scrubs, body wraps, and a hydro lounge; a fitness center; an outdoor pool; and a whirlpool.

Completing the luxury experience are unique dining experiences: an all-day buffet at Goji Kitchen + Bar; Cantonese fare at Wu Xing; authentic Korean cuisine at Smoki Moto; casual dining and handcrafted cocktails at The Lounge;

coffee, pastries, and sandwiches at Urban Coffee; and Asian flavors at Noodle Inc. (inside Goji Kitchen + Bar). Complementing delightful dining from these restaurants is a stunning view of Clark.

Starts at P10,000/night

Facebook/Instagram: @clarkmarriott

GRAND GREEN SPACES

The grand heritage homes in America and the manors in the charming villages of Europe inspired the The Mansion at the Villages.

At its main building, The Mansion offers one-bedroom suites, as well as deluxe rooms with a view of the garden or the pool. About 150 meters away from the main building are the Mansion



The Mansion

THEMANSIONATTHEVILLAGES.COM/THE-VILLAS



PHOTO COURTESY OF HILTON CLARK SUN VALLEY RESORT

Hilton Clark Sun Valley Resort

Villas. Each villa has two floors and a private patio. The villas with two and three bedrooms also have a private balcony and a pocket garden.

The hotel has five pools, tennis courts, baseball fields, a playground and a lawn chess set, a jogging path, a firepit, and gazebos.

Rooms and suites start at P6,450/night, Villas start at P10,950/night
Facebook/Instagram: @themansionboutiquehotelclark

RELAXATION AND DISCOVERY

Hilton Clark Sun Valley Resort is an all-in, inclusive escape, with more than 300 guest rooms and suites with Hilton's signature Serenity bed and premium bath amenities.

The hotel also provides relaxation and wellness through its fitness center outfitted with the latest Precor equipment and free weights, an outdoor pool, a walking and jogging path, a newly opened

Apricus Wellness Spa, and a soon-to-open wellness center.

Hilton Clark offers exceptional dining experiences at Olive, a "melting pot of flavors" highlighted by an open kitchen; XI, a modern take on Chinese cuisine; and Treat bar lounge, a morning coffee spot that transforms into a place for light cocktails at night.

Through "Discover Clark," Hilton Clark also has curated leisure and environmental activities at nearby locations: golf at the Clark Sun Valley Country Club; touring at Clark Museum and 4D Theater; and adventures at Dinosaurs Island Park, Deca Wakepark Clark, Clark International Speedway, and Aqua Planet, among others.

Starts at P9,154 per night
Facebook: @hiltonclarksunvalleyresort
Instagram: @hiltonhotels

COMFORT AND SAFETY

Midori Clark Hotel and Casino, the first luxury hotel in the Clark, is composed of 111 luxury rooms—open, airy, and filled with natural light—surrounded by ancient acacia trees.

The sea of green is also an invitation to more refined pursuits. Midori stands amid several golf courses: the Mimosa Golf Course, a 36-hole championship course backdropped by dramatic foothill mountains and lush greens; the adjacent 18-hole Fontana and Apollon Korea Country Club, with design cues from Korean landscapes that reference Jeju Island; the Clark Sun Valley Golf and Country Club, an undulating 36-hole course for advanced golfers; and the Air Force City Golf Course, a compact but well-maintained course.

Rates range from P14,800/night (superior) to P18,800/night (deluxe)
Facebook/Instagram: @midoriclarkhotel

MINIMAL AND PEACEFUL

The white facade of Hotel Seoul is a blank canvas that reflects the blues of its water spa and the greens of its environs.

The hotel offers four types of villas, four types of suites, and eight types of hotel rooms to accommodate a range of budgets.

Meanwhile, the Hotel Seoul Restaurant offers guests a choice of Korean, Western, and Filipino cuisine.

Guests enjoy several water features which include a water spa, there is also a hydrotherapy jacuzzi and lap pool.

Rates: Starts at P4,700 per night
Facebook: @HotelSeoul
Instagram: @hotelseoul_17

NURTURED BY NATURE

Ensnconced on a cliff 200 meters above sea level, Secret Cabins Resort has a 180-degree view of the Bamnan mountain range in nearby Tarlac. An existing A-frame cabin will be joined by smaller cantilevered versions that will be built along the slope. Each one will accommodate four to eight guests.

A 12-meter lap pool with an infinity edge gives an unobstructed view of the mountains.

Weekday rate (Monday–Thursday) is P17,800, Weekend rate (Friday–Sunday) is P19,800.
Both rates are good for 15 pax.
Facebook and Instagram: @secretcabinsresort

FEEL-GOOD STAYS

The new South Wing of Park Inn by Radisson Clark, composed of 254 rooms and suites, is ideal for business travelers. Meeting spaces equipped with free WiFi and cutting-edge audiovisual equipment can accommodate up to 100 guests.

During their downtime, visitors can take advantage of the outdoor pool, the fitness center, HUES all-day restaurant, and bars at the lobby and pool.

Park Inn also has access to the SMX Convention Center Clark, making the hotel a good choice for event participants.

Starts at P5,950 per night
Facebook and Instagram: @parkinnclark



Hotel Seoul

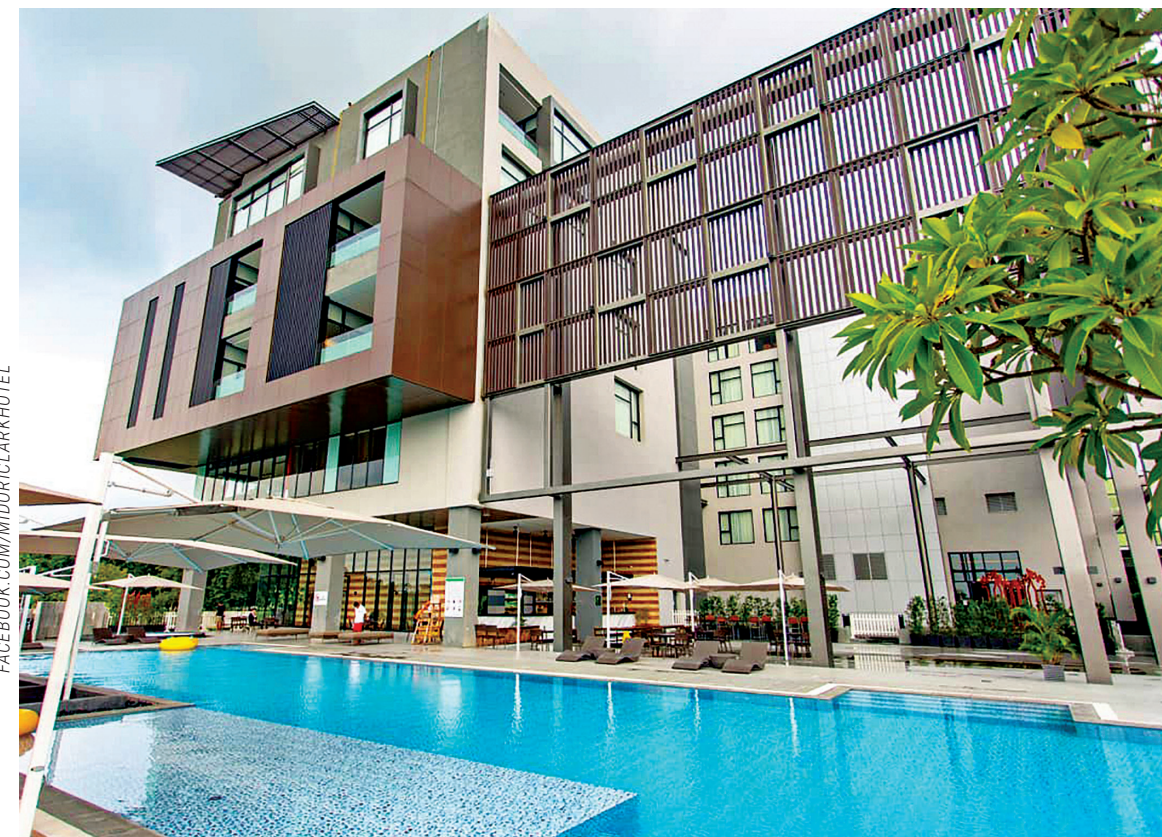
PHOTO COURTESY OF HOTEL SEOUL



Secret Cabins Resort

PHOTO COURTESY OF SECRET CABINS RESORT

Midori Clark Hotel and Casino



FACEBOOK.COM/MIDORICLARKHOTEL



Park Inn by Radisson Clark

PHOTO COURTESY OF PARK INN BY RADISSON CLARK

Design for the future

New Clark City to become a model city of the 21st century

WORDS BY JOHANNA POBLETE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JONATHAN BALDONADO

“Don’t wait for the future. Create your future,” remarked Architect Felino “Jun” Palafox, Jr., while showing 3D video animations of the updated master plans and conceptual architecture for the Clark Freeport and Special Economic Zone and the Clark International Airport (CRK).

The principal architect and urban planner of Palafox Associates is responsible for mapping out the seven districts of the main 4,400-hectare Clark Freeport Zone, including the 2,000-hectare aerotropolis (“airport-driven city”) that is the beating heart of the emerging business and leisure hub in Central Luzon.

Airports, recognized as a driving force of international integration and local economic growth, make a definitive first impression. “Airports and seaports are the business cards of a country. Before you become an investor, you must be a satisfied tourist. Airport *pa lang*, ‘di ka na-satisfy [If you’re not satisfied at the airport], why invest in the Philippines?” said Palafox.

Contained in the Clark master plans are highly detailed studies of themed developments interconnected by multi-lane highways and arterial roads. Mass transit networks are intended to ease traffic congestion and cut back reliance on private vehicles. Green spaces abound, with pocket gardens on rooftops not occupied by solar panels, or in between buildings along pathways.



Everything you need within 15 minutes

At Clark Freeport and Special Economic Zone, everything a person needs should be within easy reach in 15, 10, or 5 minutes, whether by public or private transport. “We try our best to design 15-minute cities, 10-minute communities, 5-minute neighborhoods: walkable, bikeable, and [accessible via] public transit,” Architect Felino “Jun” Palafox, Jr., asserted.

“We also design healthy cities,” he added. By design, Clark’s master plan encourages an active lifestyle. Bike lanes and elevated walkways are an integral part of mobility mapping at Clark, rather than an afterthought, as is often the case in other parts of the country. As a result, pedestrians can easily plot their daily 10,000 steps. Traversing the bike trails has also become habitual not just for locals but also tourists and weekend warriors.

Plans are under way to increase mass public transport, so that private automobiles become the last transport option. For one, waiting sheds are already in place for the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network playing the main freeport zone route.

EASY COME, EASY GO

Once the New Clark City access road project is completed, travel time to and from New Clark

City to other districts of Clark, and the Clark International Airport by way of Sacobia Bridge, will be reduced to 15 minutes from 45 minutes as well.

Overall, Clark has the advantage of well-planned and well-constructed transport corridors. In particular, the Subic-Clark-Tarlac-Expressway (SCTEX) has greatly reduced travel time, being connected to the Central and North Luzon Expressways, as well as the Tarlac-Pangasinan-La Union Expressway, and the Subic Freeport Expressway.

The Clark International Airport already has a transport hub for P2P buses going to nearby Mabalacat City, and Olongapo City in Subic, or even farther such as Baguio City, all the way to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) in Metro Manila.

Meanwhile, construction is ongoing for the highly anticipated North-South Commuter Railway, which will connect Clark to Metro Manila and Calamba, Laguna.

Other recommendations by the urban designers would be to further develop waterways, linking the freeports and cities. For example, if Pampanga River and Pasig River were made navigable, “it will only take 35 minutes” from Pampanga to Metro Manila, said Palafox. — JP



WWW.BCDA.GOV.PH



CRK currently offers direct flights to/from Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, Macau, Korea, Thailand, Dubai and Qatar with connecting flights to the United States, Middle East, and Europe. Domestic destinations such as Boracay, Palawan, Davao, Cebu, Bacolod, Cagayan de Oro, Iloilo, General Santos and so much more are available via Cebu Pacific, Philippine Airlines, AirAsia, AirSwift and Sunlight.

The master plans paint an idyllic portrait of environment-friendly communities and buildings. They underscore connectivity, livability, and inclusivity (e.g., mixed-income, cross-generational, PWD-friendly, etc.). “[We’ve designed] smart, sustainable, resilient, livable, walkable, bikeable, safer, healthier, hopefully happier, integrated places to live, work, shop, dine, learn, and worship, with wellness and healthcare centers, [and] with some 24-hour cycle activity centers,” said Palafox.

If these master plans are followed, and the attendant business plans implemented, said Palafox, Clark can be a “first-world aerotropolis by 2037.”

PRACTICAL LUXURY BY DESIGN

Clark International Airport, with its three runways and new passenger terminal building built to accommodate up to 8 million passengers, is a regional gateway that promises to elevate Clark’s status as an aviation, logistics, and tourism hub. Already, it is garnering favorable reviews from tourists, the bulk of whom choose Clark as their top destination in Central Luzon. The airport is also an indisputable showcase of local architecture and design, engendering pride of place among Kapampangans.

“Our culture can be celebrated by the world if we present it properly, and that is what Clark is doing, it is presenting our culture properly,”

continued on page 31

Anchored on sustainability, “Iconic” echoes the design principles of Clark and New Clark City. It highlights local talents who use upcycled materials and espouse an environment-friendly production process guided by a vision of a greener and better future for all.

Styling by
Miss Kayce / KC
Leyco Mempin
Assisted by
Dyna Fabela &
Nisa Achacoso
Makeup Martin
Alonzo
Hair Rommel
Gregorio



The 20,000-seater Athletics Stadium in NCC heavily features a patented color reminiscent of sunset called Active Orange. “It breathes life into you,” says Architect Royal Pineda, Principal Architect and CEO of architectural firm Royal Pineda + Architecture + Design.

Opposite page: Mirielle Black Boots and Mirielle Tan Boots, both from Risque
This page: Yellow and Green Weave + Spoon & Fork Carved Heels and Orange and Green Ugat Carved Heels, both from Risque



This page, on Bronja:
 Bonita Mahogany with Capa
 La Reyna Dress by Ditta
 Sandico Ong
 Tulle ballgown with sheers by
 Christine Lam
 Rhodium gold flower earrings
 and ring with multicolored
 sapphires from Imelda's
 Jewelry

Opposite page, on Isabella:
 Reassembled Half Dress
 from Rafglang
 Tribal Peace Dreams
 handwoven tapestry-style
 scarf worn as tube and
 Mermaid Terno swimwear
 bottom by Twinkle Ferraren
 Spiral figure diamond earrings
 and ring from Imelda's Jewelry
 Mirielle Black Boots from
 Risque

**Brand/Designer
 Contact Info:**

Ditta Sandico Ong
www.dittachannel.com
ditta@dittachannel.com
 IG: @dittasandico

Twinkle Ferraren
www.twinkleferraren.com
 IG: @twinkleferraren
[Facebook.com/
 TwinkleFerraren](https://www.facebook.com/TwinkleFerraren)
twinkle.ferraren@gmail.com
 0917-490-4399

Rafglang
info@rafglang.com
 Press || +63947-398-6082
 Website: rafglang.com
 Instagram: @_rafglang

Le Ngok
 Email le_ngok@yahoo.com
 IG @le_ngok
 0929-762-3239

Style Isle
www.styleisle.shop
 IG: @styleisleph
[Facebook.com/StyleIslePH](https://www.facebook.com/StyleIslePH)
styleisle.ph@gmail.com

Imelda's Jewelry
imeldasjewelry@gmail.com
 IG @imeldasjewelryph
 0920-923-8115

AC +632
 2nd Floor Greenbelt 5
 7005-6082
felicity@vasia.com.ph

Risque
www.risquemanufacturing.com
risquedesigns.ph@gmail.com
 IG: @risquedesigns



Clark International
 Airport (CRK)
 boasts of a curved
 roofline inspired by
 Mt. Arayat and the
 mountain ranges
 of Zambales.
 Inside the terminal
 building, the ceiling
 sports a design
 pattern reminiscent
 of the bent-bamboo
 frame and capiz
 grid of a parol.

The VIP Lounge at 2nd floor of the Athletics Stadium can accommodate as many as 100 guests with exclusive access to the track and bleachers area, and can be booked for private and commercial shoots at marketing@bcda.gov.ph.



The design of the Athletics Stadium itself recalls the crater of Mt. Pinatubo. Locally sourced lahar (volcanic debris) from the explosion of the same volcano in 1991 was used for its structure.

This page, on Bronja: Twinkle Ferraren Constellations Connect Handwoven Jacket; Reengineered Twill Trousers from Rafglang; Style Isle "Wings" Upcycled handwoven earrings made of pineapple-abaca-cotton-silk fibers with beaded tassels; Shoes from Risque

Opposite page, on Isabella: Denim off shoulder overcoat, denim origami leg warmers from Le Ngok; Amorphous Rose gold Baroque pearl earrings from Imelda's Jewelry. **On Bronja:** Ocean Robe Dress from Le Ngok; Clustered oval sapphires rings and ring from Imelda's Jewelry; Orange and Green Ugat Carved Heels from Risque

Seen in the background, the 894-meter long Sacobia Bridge has six lanes in its main carriageway and two bike lanes on each side. Once the New Clark City access road project is completed, travel time to and from New Clark City to other districts of Clark, and the Clark International Airport by way of Sacobia Bridge, will be reduced to 15 minutes from 45 minutes.



This page, on Bronja: Mermaid Terno Swimmable wrap top & Navigating the Dreamscape Floral Petal Bloom Embroidered Malong by Twinkle Ferraren; Upcycled handwoven Earrings by Style Isle; Choker in Onyx, Fabric and Brass Metal in Gold from AC +632

On Isabella: Capa La Reyna Yellow Dress, and Red Obi Belt from Ditta Sandico Ong; Rose cut sapphire earrings with foiled gold texture design from Imelda's Jewelry

Opposite page, on Bronja: Twinkle Ferraren Two-toned Tassel Connect Crop Jacket made with handwoven textile from Camarines Sur, Bicol; made from handwoven upcycled yarns from T-shirt collars; Style Isle "Wings" Upcycled handwoven earrings made of pineapple-abaca-cotton-silk fibers with beaded tassels



The Aquatics Center features a 10-lane competition pool, an eight-lane training pool, and a diving pool with a five-meter maximum depth. This World Aquatics-certified facility has been hosting swimming, diving, water polo, freediving and artistic swimming competitions since it opened in 2019. For reservations and inquiries, please write to marketing@bcda.gov.ph.



Lahar has become both a mark of resilience and a stamp of ownership for the locals. “Lahar became the material for the new [architectural] fiber of the city because it is abundant, and it becomes an instant identity of the place. Lahar became the DNA of New Clark City; and I would say, of Central Luzon,” said Architect Royal Pineda, who used the material prominently.

This page, on Isabella: Yellow tulle bustier layered gown by Christine Lam; Repousse Brass Sheet Drop Earrings in Flower Pattern Dipped in 24k Gold from AC +632; Black Weave Stiletto from Risque

Opposite page, on Isabella: Colorful knotted yarn dress over striped patchwork jumpsuit accessorized with blue and black arm warmers all from Le Ngok. **On Bronja:** Twinkle Ferraren Wovenwear Remix Super Tassel Top (hand crochet + handwoven) layered over a dress by Ditta Sandico Ong; Rose cut sapphire earrings with foiled gold texture design by Imelda’s Jewelry

Elevated airport experience

Mindful of the need to make a good impression on tourists even as it welcomes *balikbayans*, CRK is keen to make the travel experience as comfortable as possible with the following policies and choice amenities:



“SILENT AIRPORT” POLICY

In lieu of strident calls for boarding and departure, passengers can refer to flight information screens. Public announcements are used only during emergencies.



CONTACTLESS CHECK-IN AND BAG DROP

Face-to-face interaction is minimized as travelers can opt to use self-service check-in kiosks and automated bag-drops, or even contactless ordering at restaurants and coffee shops.



GENDER-NEUTRAL BATHROOMS

Restrooms at the new CRK terminal provide all-gender accommodations for transgender, non-binary identifying individuals, and cis-gender people traveling with opposite-sex children or elderly companions. Other inclusive features include nursing stations and prayer rooms, each with a foot-washing area for Muslims.



OFW LOUNGE

Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) have a dedicated transit lounge equipped with plush sofas, flatscreens, and a pantry.



FREE SEATING CLUSTERS

Waiting areas are characterized by comfortable seating arrangements, ranging from serviceable metal benches outdoors to more artsy wooden furniture inside. Playful rocking chairs that look like art installations are also available.



CONCIERGE SERVICES

For those who do enjoy personal interaction, ALWAYS, the bespoke meet & greet service by the Plaza Premium Group, offers concierge services for passengers to have a seamless, coordinated, and fast-tracked airport experience.

Passengers may opt to relax at the ALWAYS lounge while the concierge team takes care of the arrangements, from baggage handling and luggage wrapping, to car transfer and hotel booking and dinner reservations.



PREMIUM LOUNGE FACILITIES

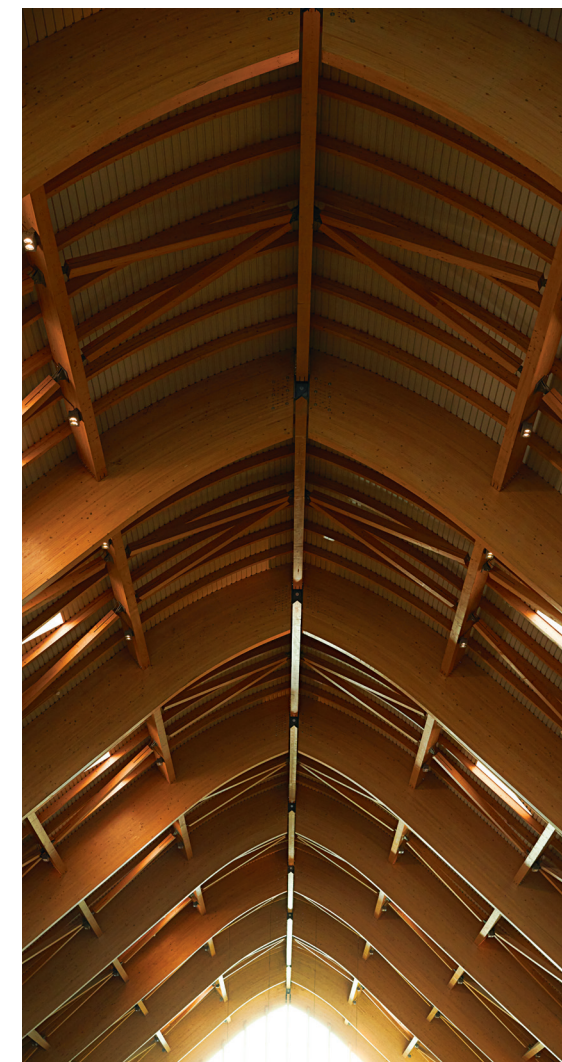
While there are private lounges at the airport that cater specifically to business class passengers alone, Plaza Premium Group caters not only to corporate accounts but also offers travelers a pay-for-use arrangement (good for two hours) at their Plaza Premium Lounge, which can accommodate up to 130 people.

The lounge features grouped or separate seating arrangements with the chairs designed as workstations (equipped with charging outlets, even a phone), dining stations, and semi-private sleep or meditation pods. WiFi access is provided for all.

The self-service buffet arrangement offers a range of food and free-flowing beverage options, including complimentary wine and beer. Gluten-free food is also available upon request.

The lounge includes a smoking room with its own exhaust system; a spacious restroom, with separate shower rooms; a PWD-friendly combination toilet and shower; and a private infant care room with a breastfeeding chair and diaper-changing unit.

A glass-fronted VIP area is also reserved for guests of a premium hotel and resort group. — JP



continued from page 19

said Architect Royal Pineda, Principal Architect and CEO of architectural firm Royal Pineda + Architecture + Design (formerly BUDJI+ROYAL), which was commissioned by the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) to develop the main passenger terminal at CRK, as well as other iconic structures in nearby New Clark City.

Pineda believes in elevating architectural design via a “modern Filipino” sensibility that is both practical and aspirational—what he terms “practical luxury.” For the airport, he created zones with comfortable seating that would improve the experience of the space and respect the dignity of travelers and their greeters in the waiting areas. “Practical luxury is for everyone, design is for everybody, and the Filipinos can live in luxury by design,” he underscored, adding that to be authentic to the space and local cultural context, one must design with “*alumana*” (mindfulness). Moreover, given that the Philippines is in a tropical setting, he prefers that builds retain a “*maaliwalas*” (cozy, serene and warmly inviting) atmosphere.

Latching on to what would resonate with the local population, he took as his inspiration Mt. Arayat and the mountain ranges of Zambales, seen clearly in the curvature of the airport’s pitched roofline. Inside the terminal building, the ceiling sports a design pattern reminiscent of the bent-bamboo frame and *capiz* grid of a *parol* (the star lantern is iconic to Pampanga). To create the effect, he used warm natural wood—choosing the highly efficient and precisely measured glued laminated timber (glulam) sourced from sustainably managed spruce forests, imported from Austria, and easily assembled onsite. The structure has

Clark International Airport has a modern Filipino design sensibility.

CLARKINTERNATIONALAIRPORT.COM



Banyan - Arrival Pavilion - Bridge

New Clark City, a subzone of Clark, is poised to become a smart, green, and resilient city of the future. Ongoing development promises the following investment-worthy advantages:

TALENT MAGNET

Dr. Francisco Villanueva, Jr., President of Clark Investors and Locators Association (CILA), said that the whole of Central Luzon serves as a “talent catchment” for Clark. He observed that Clark exhibited robustness during the recent pandemic by not halting production—instead, workers braved the hassle of permits from multiple local government units while traveling from home to the office, were billeted at nearby hotels, or worked from home.

Villanueva indicated that apart from retaining remote work as an option, providing affordable housing within Clark for rank-and-file employees will ensure that Clark-based locators will be assured of business continuity while attracting more talent from the outlying areas. “People who are not from Angeles, or Mabalacat, or from other parts of Pampanga, or Bulacan, they spend about four hours to five hours of traveling,” he pointed out.

To address this, a 34.55-hectare affordable, multi-tenure and climate-resilient housing project is being developed at New Clark City in Capas, Tarlac. The housing project will be located downtown, and will feature a river park, town center, community square, sports park, other pocket parks, as well as mixed-use residential and commercial developments. The zone will be connected to bus rapid transit and metro rail transit networks for ease in mobility.

New Clark City’s affordable housing strategy is meant to demonstrate how the existing community can be integrated within the new metropolis. Prospective homeowners include government locators, private employees, and the residents of nearby municipalities. This is a joint project of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) and the British Embassy of Manila under the Global Future Cities (GFC) Programme of the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The GFC is an official development assistance program that supports sustainable and inclusive urban development in 10 countries and 19 cities worldwide. New Clark City was chosen as one of the pilot areas.

“Let’s unlearn from the Central Business District (CBD) of Makati, where the daytime

population is 11 times the tenant population and the employees of Makati are priced out of the housing stock of Makati. The employees of Makati CBD are like OFWs, five to six hours away from their families every day,” said Architect Felino “Jun” Palafox, Jr. “That’s why in our plans for Clark, [it’s] a place to live even for employees.”

LEARNING CENTER, KNOWLEDGE HUB

Clark is home to the Philippine Academy for Aviation Training and international schools, whereas New Clark City has the National Academy of Sports and Philippine Science High School – Infinitem Campus.

Targeted to be operational by 2026, the 4.6-hectare Infinitem learning resource center will serve as a campus for its senior high school students and a resource center for teachers and professionals. It will house a multi-purpose academic building with 24 classrooms, case rooms, library, faculty room, and a dining hall; a research center for chemistry, physics, environmental science and biology; a technology hub for computer science, mathematics and humanities; an innovation center; a training center; dormitories; administration building; and a summer camp area.

In addition, campuses being developed in New Clark City include the University of the Philippines – New Clark City, Technological University of the Philippines, and Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

The proposed Ayta Ethno-Botanical School (AEBS) will also be built in New Clark City, in a bid to embed the indigenous concept of environmental protection in the collective knowledge and philosophy of Clark. The school is meant to preserve the living heritage of indigenous communities in Central Luzon, by teaching indigenous and traditional ways, including the use of native plants for medicine and shelter, as well as weapons, adornment, clothing and utensils.

SPORTING EVENT, MICE DESTINATION

Clark and New Clark City already have the sports facilities to serve as training and competition ground for superstar athletes. Since its initial foray as the official venue for the 30th SEA Games in 2019, New Clark City has also regularly hosted large sporting events, from fun runs to triathlons to golf tournaments.

An exciting addition to the roster is the

450-hectare Hann Reserve, an emerging luxury golf destination affiliated with the Professional Golfers’ Association of America (PGA) that will feature state-of-the-art player development facilities including three 18-hole championship golf courses: a mountain course by world-renowned Niklaus Design; a valley course designed by South Korean professional golfer K.J. Choi; and a river course designed by former World No. 1 golfer Sir Nick Faldo. Targeted completion of each golf course will be in 2026, 2027, and 2028, respectively.

The integrated leisure lifestyle development by Hann Development Corp. will also have clubhouses, a 10-hectare public park, a mixed-use commercial center, premium villas and residences, and several luxury hotels and resorts, including Banyan Tree and Angsana Resorts, Sofitel and Emblems by Accor, and The Luxury Collection and The Westin by Marriott International.

Clark as a host destination has the advantage of plentiful well-appointed and modern accommodations, numbering around 80 convention/meeting halls, nearly 4,000 hotel rooms, and 126 dining facilities. There are also at least 45 tourist attractions within and around the special economic zone. It comes as no surprise that Clark will be the stage for MICECON 2024, the largest gathering of Meetings, Incentive Travel, Convention and Exhibitions (MICE) professionals in the country, in July 2024. This will provide an opportunity for not only Clark but also its adjacent communities to showcase the area’s natural attractions and rich history, culture, and heritage to local and international MICE delegates.

The area’s potential to be a major player in global sports tourism as well as the MICE industry can only be further enhanced with improved mobility courtesy of the airport, upcoming high-speed railway, and the soon-to-be-revitalized bus rapid transit scheme traversing the Clark Loop.

Policy reforms to include more competitive incentives could also contribute to making Clark a more attractive tourism and MICE destination, said Villanueva. “How did Clark start off as an industrial [powerhouse]?... People would come here, they’d play golf and see this is a lovely place, [that] the environment is so nice, and they start investing here,” he said. “We have a great environment. We have good people... We need to really have more aggressive and competitive incentives.” — JP



a tensile strength that’s able to withstand a Category 5 hurricane; it is also engineered to be fire-resistant.

High ceilings allow for air circulation and a natural cooling effect. There are also air-conditioning vents situated much lower, at person height, providing cool air. A glass façade brings ample natural light in, saving on power costs while allowing people to enjoy the mountain views that are mirrored in the building’s design. Finally, locally sourced lahar (volcanic debris) flooring in a terrazzo or marble finish, grounds the structure. There’s a poignant quality to its dark beauty, considering the vast quantities of lahar originated from the catastrophic explosion of Mt. Pinatubo in 1991.

Lahar has become both a mark of resilience and a stamp of ownership for the locals, and so Pineda used the material prominently not just in the airport but also in the New Clark City structures, among them the Athletics Stadium and Aquatics Center, built in time for the 30th SEA Games hosted by the Philippines in 2019. “Lahar became the material for the new [architectural] fiber of the city because it is abundant, and it becomes an instant identity of the place. Lahar became the DNA of New Clark City; and I would say, of Central Luzon,” said Pineda.

NEW CLARK CITY’S VIBRANT STYLE

Architect Pineda’s structures in Clark and New Clark City (NCC) have reached iconic status, inviting commentary upon sight. Besides the lahar gray, however, there is another prominent color that serves as a distinctive accent/contrast: the “B+R Active Orange” anti-corrosive paint developed together with Norwegian firm Jotun. It lights up the stylized star shape that is the NCC brand on Sacobia Bridge, which links NCC with the airport, as well as the façade, pillars and the bleacher seats of the 20,000-seater Athletics Stadium (its open design and ridged roofline inspired by Mt. Pinatubo’s crater, the orange reminiscent of a sunset). Hints of orange are also seen in the 2,000-seater Aquatics Center, as well as the basketball court at the Athletes’ Village.



“It breathes life into you—it right away celebrates that sports venue identity. Otherwise, if it’s all gray, it’s flat, it doesn’t have that pulse,” Pineda explained the choice of orange. “We decided also to take that opportunity to create an identity, that’s why we patented that to be this Active Orange designed specifically for Clark... This is what I’m saying, the desire to do better leads you to creativity, and it leads you to ownership, it leads you to pride,” said Pineda.

Practical luxury is shown here in the sparseness of the stadium’s open ceiling, which allows for the installation of additional utilities without dismantling the stadium’s ceiling board. The structural frames and lahar concrete were also deliberately left unpainted for easy maintenance. Meanwhile, the aquatics center is open-air and naturally ventilated, apart from the air-conditioned VIP lounge. The swimming pools (an Olympic pool, a training pool, and a diving pool) maintain the required temperature thanks to the tropical weather and the hot-steel siding and PVC linings installed.

B+R Active Orange, an anti-corrosive paint developed together with Norwegian firm Jotun, is Clark’s signature color. It lights up the façade of the Athletics Stadium and the basketball court at the Athletes’ Village.



New Clark City is fast becoming the venue of choice for international and local competitions and events. The world-class sports facilities like the Aquatics Center here is accessible to athletes of all ages and backgrounds.

There was a conscious effort to maximize the usable space and invest in essential technology, such as monitoring equipment (e.g., automatic lap timers for the competition pool's 10 lanes, and the motion-sensitive track flooring). Both structures are also engineered to resist earthquakes of up to 8.9 magnitude. As such, the stadium's nine-lane, 400-meter track and field oval, and a four-lane warm-up track, are accredited by the World Athletics. The Aquatics Center is also accredited by World Aquatics, the international governing body for aquatic sports formerly known as the Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA).

Pineda said smart design is not just about installing advanced technology but also taking one's cue from nature and working with what's locally available. He indicated that they carefully selected the site of the sports complex and adjacent River Park, understanding the contours of the land. "Being smart is always being mindful. Being smart is driven by the human heart... Create something that respects nature," he said.

INVESTING IN NEW CLARK CITY

The consensus is that the beauty of Clark stems from its natural environment, more than anything else. "How did Clark start off as an industrial [powerhouse]? People would come here, they'd play golf, see this is a lovely place, that the environment is so nice, and they start investing here," said Dr. Francisco Villanueva, Jr., President of Clark Investors and Locators Association (CILA). He also noted the importance of having the Clark International Airport, all roads converging in Clark, and "everything being 10 minutes away." "If you're in Clark, you're in a self-contained environment. So, it's good."

Irineo "Bong" G. Alvaro, Jr., CILA Director (and its former chairman) and the President of Midori Hotel, agreed that Clark's green spaces can relieve stress, particularly in contrast to Metro Manila's traffic, pollution, and other everyday stressors. Moreover, Clark has the advantage of safety and security. High elevation, the surrounding mountains, and the secured perimeter of a former military base means Clark is protected on all sides.

For his part, Villanueva claims that workers from Metro Manila, after being assigned to Clark,

no longer wish to leave. Families of executives treat Clark as a weekend getaway. Foreign nationals who work for the multinational companies and hotels also bring their families to Clark, where the children can study in international schools. The influx of migration has resulted in cities like Angeles growing at double the rate of the country average, claimed Villanueva.

Locators are in it for the long haul, from 25 up to 50 years. They are keen on working with the government on regionally competitive incentives for Clark locators, as well as additional benefits for the workers (e.g., expediting mass transport options, ensuring accommodations for the rank-and-file in Clark-based dormitories, additional training opportunities). "We have a great environment, we have good people... [and] we have a history of working with government with success," said Villanueva.

New Clark City, as the freeport's subzone, has barely scratched the surface of its 9,450-hectare master plan; it has yet to build agro-industrial and commercial hubs; affordable housing that will be open to all regardless of age, background, and income; a government administrative center; additional school campuses, including the Ayta Ethno-Botanical School (AEBS) with its Museum of Ayta Botanical Knowledge; and a 44.8-hectare public park whose design was recognized by the Singapore Institute of Landscape Architects.

There are no white elephants in New Clark City, according to Architect Pineda. Case in point, the NCC sports complex has continued to be utilized post-SEA Games. The Athletes' Village was used during the pandemic as a quarantine space. The complex has also served as the temporary home of national athletes undergoing their training program for SEA Games and Paris Olympics. Moreover, it has served as a venue for sports organizations, as well as private companies and government agencies, for their team-building programs and corporate events.

"It's part of our challenge to achieve a living architecture... How do you create an architecture that grows? When you design with that mindset, all the things that you create become future-ready. [You are] thinking of the [needs of] people of today and for tomorrow," said Pineda. 🌱

Coexisting with nature

WORDS BY JOHANNA POBLETE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JONATHAN BALDONADO

Clark prides itself on how the built environment complements the natural environment. In NCC, only 3,500 hectares out of 9,450 hectares are buildable, leaving 6,000 hectares or 60% of green and open spaces for upland farming and forest reserves. Less than 40% will be developed. Moreover, situated within residential, commercial, and industrial zones, are green spaces, including parks and recreational areas. The design philosophy is to ensure that everyday activities provide opportunities for the local populace to harmoniously coexist and interact with nature.

Kenneth Cobonpue's viewing pods, called *Barrio* after the Filipino word for "community," are made from rattan, a native material.





A green and sustainable open recreational space inspired by global best practices and Philippine heritage will rise at the heart of New Clark City soon.

CENTRAL PARK, NEW CLARK CITY

Envisioned as a people's park, this sprawling 44.8-hectare green recreational space is situated at the heart of New Clark City in Tarlac. Once built and opened to the public, it will be a hub of local activity to rival that of the 32.48-hectare Burnham Park in Baguio City, and the 58-hectare Rizal Park in Manila. At just the design stage, the park was awarded the SEMEC Gold Award for the Analysis and Planning Category of the 2022 Singapore Landscape Architecture Awards. The

as-yet-unnamed “central park” is intended to be a sustainable and inclusive model that can be replicated in other cities in the country.

Notably, the park is designed to positively influence microclimate in New Clark City. Architecture and design firm Broadway Malayan indicated that not only does the park provide an attractive and safe recreational space for the community, but it also “performs an important environmental and resilience role to help reduce the urban heat island effect and create biodiversity corridors and habitats.” By virtue of its central location, the park itself forms part of a primary network of interconnected city canals and river channels that create a natural “green-blue” grid across the city.

Cool spots and breeze corridors are part of the design of the park. Trees will provide shade on pedestrian walkways to achieve a “breezy, yet shaded, comfortable, quiet and relaxing” vibe, another means of creating a ‘maaliwalas’ atmosphere. Other proposed features include a floating lakeside stage, a pedestrian bridge, retention pond, multipurpose lawns, meditation alcoves, a calisthenics or outdoor gym, sunset plaza, and rain gardens.

RIVER PARK, NEW CLARK CITY

Art and nature cohabitate in the River Park, an environmental and recreational corridor that currently stretches 4.5 kilometers, including



jogging paths and bikeways laid out along 1.4 kilometers, with the potential of expanding up to 9 kilometers. A mere stone's throw away from New Clark City Sports Hub, the park meanders along the side of Cutcut River, with spacious wood-and-metal viewing decks for those who wish to picnic by the water. Ample parking space can also accommodate food trucks.

Scattered throughout the park are the art installations of distinguished local artists such as Kenneth Cobonpue (Barrio), Bernardo Pacquing (Domes Village), Jude Tiotuico (Pag-Ahon) and Bea Valdes (Sibol). These art installations are not just meant to be admired and reflected upon, but also interacted with. Pacquing's dome-like structures, constructed from reclaimed wood and steel, and linked by suspended bridges, also serve as an outdoor playground, whereas Cobonpue's rattan gazebo sculptures are utilized as rest-stops or viewing pods, as well as a play site.

Architect Royal Pineda said the handpicked artists were asked to express their own sensibility as Filipinos, from a strong brief to use nature as their inspiration. “We are able to put together a taste or feel that is for Clark because it was the nature of Clark that was our inspiration... There is a micro-identity, but when you zoom out, [modern] Clark is a pixel of the modern Philippines,” he pointed out.

Thanks to its proximity to the sports complex and accessibility to the main roads, River Park has become a regular hangout for the local populace. Fitness enthusiasts use the natural inclines and paved paths to jog or bike, and the pocket lawns to perform calisthenics and martial arts. Teenagers

are drawn to the open amphitheater to rehearse their school plays and dance presentations. Families with very young children stroll the pathways and utilize the playgrounds, whether the conventional swings and monkey bars, or the unusual functional art.

STOTSBERG PARK (CLARK PARADE GROUNDS), CLARK FREEPORT ZONE

“Open spaces are the lungs of the city. We emphasize that in our planning for Clark,” said Architect Felino “Jun” Palafox, Jr.

Fort Stotsenberg was the original name (after the cavalry officer whose monument still stands at the west side of the park) of this part of Clark. They've retained the name as a nod to history, while converting the parade grounds into a public park.

The park is a flat plain bordered by large trees, sporting a 2.2-kilometer rubberized jogging path, and with public restrooms within easy access. The sprawling grounds serve as a recreational space for the community, a venue for sporting events such as fun runs and obstacle course games, and other community events such as Christmas bazaars.

Stotsenberg Park is also a popular site for tourists who want to learn more about Clark's history. There are memorials and historical markers on the park grounds, and at one end of the park is the Clark Museum and 4D theater. Nearby, standalone “barn houses” painted white are also now considered part of the heritage of Clark; these will be renovated to function as government offices or restaurants, but the structural style and façade were kept intact. 📍

The Domes Village is a series of four dome-like structures—each with its own theme—linked by suspended bridges, and located in the River Park in New Clark City. Made out of reclaimed hardwood from old houses, the domes are the result of a collaboration between Silverlens Galleries, Filipino artist Bernardo Pacquing, and Rotterdam-based designers Superproject and Summum Engineering.

WORDS BY C. K. P.
IGNACIO

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
WALTER BOLLOZOS

The Clark community

People make the place.

Communities have to grow around the facilities erected in New Clark City (NCC) in order to realize the potential of the 9,450-hectare metropolis billed as “a city that has been built for people and not for cars or for things.” Two early adopters share what it’s like to live in a place without stress, without pollution, without traffic.

MITCH OTSURU PARK *Entrepreneur and triathlete*

Clark is “one of the best playgrounds,” said Mitch Otsuru Park, who grew up around sports and has tried everything from gymnastics to rock climbing to triathlon, her present love.

“I have lots of friends—triathletes from Manila—and they always tell us how lucky we are that we’re based in Clark. You can easily bike around, there’s no traffic, not too many cars. And the weather is perfect,” said Park, a mother of two who is in the restaurant and property leasing business aside from being involved in tourism organizations that promote Clark.

Park picked up the multisport composed of swimming, cycling, and running over the pandemic after seeing her friends complete the Ironman Triathlon, a grueling long-distance event that consists of a 3.9-kilometer swim, a 180.2-kilometer bike ride, and a 42.2-kilometer run, for a total distance of 226.3 kilometers.

Finishing an Ironman race is on the bucket list of many athletes, she said.

In pursuit of the dream, Park has been going to NCC, where she participated in a three-day triathlon camp led by coaches of Baguio Benguet Triathlon, an amateur sports team composed of young grassroots athletes.

They used the warm-up track, the training pool at the Aquatics Center, and biked around NCC using a route that includes the Access Road and Sacobia Bridge. “We maximized the [place],” she said, adding that they stayed in the Athletes’ Village during the camp.

Being a resident of Clark, Park also gets to do long three- to four-hour rides from her neighborhood to NCC on weekends, capped by a meal at any one of the restaurants in the area. She’s hoping that a food joint specializing in local Kapampangan fare will open its doors.

Every time she comes to NCC to train, it feels like she has run on the place. “Hopefully, in the future, there will be more teams who will train here with us,” she said. “It’s really world-class.”

ROWENA BATAD *Aeta staff at New Clark City Athletes’ Village*

Rowena Batad is one of 500 Aetas working in New Clark City, according to the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA).

“Masaya, kasi kami ‘yung mga pioneer *ch*,” said Batad, who, for three years has been a member of the Athletes’ Village housekeeping staff, staying on top of the sport facilities and 500 rooms capable of accommodating over 1,500 occupants.

Batad remembers the heady atmosphere of the 30th SEA Games in 2019, which saw 11 participating countries.

“Maraming mga foreigners, *iba’t-ibang lenggwahe*,” she said.

Other members of Batad’s family followed suit and took advantage of the employment opportunities generated by the development: her husband is a security guard in NCC, one child is posted at the Aquatics Center, another child works in the One West Building in Clark Global City.

“Nagpapasalamat ako sa BCDA,” she said, adding that other members of her village are similarly employed.

Batad and her family were priority hires since they were among those relocated by the establishment of NCC, which straddles Bamban and Capas, Tarlac. Indigenous communities affected by the project were relocated and given financial assistance.

For Batad, the rise of NCC represents a better future. One development will pave the way for another, and another, and another until NCC becomes a thriving metropolis comparable to—if not surpassing—other central business districts.

“Sinasabi ko ngayon sa mga anak ko na hindi pa nagtatrabaho at nag-aaral pa: mag-aral kayo nang mabuti kasi pagdating ng araw hindi lang ‘long building na ‘to [ang makikita n’yo rito] (I tell my children who aren’t working yet and who are still in school: study hard because when the time comes, this isn’t the only building [that you’ll see here]),” she said. 📍



Locations of interest

When in Clark, you have plenty to see and do.

Metro Manila residents, together with friends and family, regularly travel 100 kilometers to spend the weekend in Clark, Pampanga. Tourists transiting from Clark International Airport will miss out unless they stick around for a day or two, and discover what all the fuss is about.

MOUNTAINS OF PAMPANGA

You don't have to be an experienced mountaineer to climb the mountains in Pampanga, but you do need to be reasonably fit. Day hikes are doable, but be ready to jump off very early (make sure to eat a full breakfast!) so that you're climbing during the cool hours. It usually takes four to five hours to get to the summit, an additional two hours to stay and enjoy the view, before taking another four to five hours to get off the mountain.

Fairly challenging climbs include Mt. Damas in San Clemente, Tarlac, and Mt. Arayat in Arayat/Magalang, Pampanga. Mt. Damas is known for a steep ascent and a river crossing on the way to the summit (652 meters above sea level or masl). Mt. Arayat, meanwhile, has a "monkey trail" on the way to its Pinnacle Peak (920 masl) that is not for the faint-hearted. If you don't like hanging on to a thin rope while going up a steep incline, consider this fair warning. However, beginners have persevered and deemed the views from the top as worth the hardship.

Beginners have persevered and deemed the views from the top as worth the hardship. A different type of climb, which becomes less challenging if you go part of the way in a four-wheel drive vehicle, is Mt. Pinatubo. Depending on the time of year, you can have either a dry, dusty and rocky climb, or a slippery bit of water crossing and muddy trails. Your reward is getting high enough to view the caldera's turquoise blue waters from a makeshift view deck. You are also allowed to go down to the crater lake, although swimming is prohibited.

As an alternative to mountain peaks, you may opt to visit lower-situated waterfalls instead. There are three in San Clemente, Tarlac: Ubod Falls, Candang Falls, and Timbangguyob Falls (meaning "carabao's horn," as the falls are in the shape of a funnel). For safety, it's best to go trekking during the dry season, as part of a tour group, with a local guide.

SACRED MONUMENT, SHRINE, AND SANCTUARY

If hillside retreats are your cup of tea, then you may opt to visit "the mountain of resurrection" in San Jose, Tarlac. At around 300 masl, you'll find the Monasterio de Tarlac and its 30-foot statue of the Risen Christ. The monastery's claim to fame—besides the towering replica of the son of God—is harboring a relic of the True Cross, enshrined in a gold box, inside its chapel.

For those who prefer history to religion, Capas National Shrine is a powerful reminder of the ravages of war and the bravery of American, Filipino, and Czechoslovakian soldiers who became prisoners of war and were forced to endure the Death March from Mariveles, Bataan to Camp O'Donnell in Capas, Tarlac during World War II. The 70-meter obelisk is part of a sobering monument filled with the names of the dead, but there's



Mt. Arayat

JUDGE LORO | WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

also touching levity to be found in the fighting words of surviving members of "The Battling Bastards of Bataan" scrawled across a monument built for their comrades.

Finally, Canarem Lake Bird Sanctuary is a birdwatcher's paradise. Migratory birds from China and other countries make their stop at Canarem Lake during the winter season, joining birds endemic to the Philippines that make the surrounding wetlands their home. The nature preserve at Canarem is easily accessible by road; nearby Candaba Swamp, in contrast, offers a more challenging, muddy trail. Both are well-regarded by bird photographers and ecotourists.

WATERPARKS & OTHER RECREATIONAL PARKS

Clark also specializes in family fun. Bring the kids to Aqua Planet, touted as the country's most modern water theme park. It sits on a 10-hectare property in Clark, with over 38 slides and attractions to slip, surf, and even "drop" from. Competitive family members may race side-by-side on varicolored parallel slides (dubbed "Octopus Racers"), or challenge each other to attempt the wave pools, safe in the knowledge that competent lifeguards are watching closely.

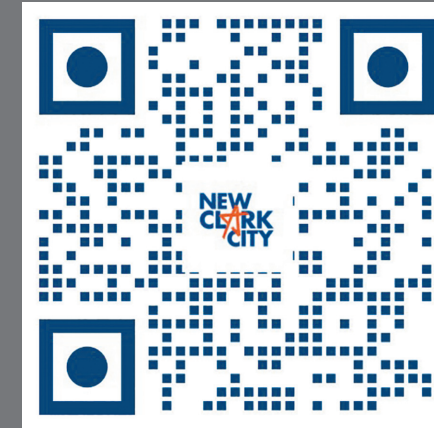
If that's not enough of an adrenaline rush, learn how to wakeboard utilizing safety cables at nearby Deca Wakeboard Park. First-timers and inexperienced wakeboarders may rent the basic equipment and practice with an instructor in the Beginner's Area for the "Little Bro" course (as low as 1 kilometer/hour speed at 3 feet water level), whereas experienced and professional wakeboarders can attempt the "Big Bro" Course (30 kilometers/hour at 7 feet water level).

If you'd rather stay dry, you could try racing at Kart City along MacArthur Highway in San Roque, Tarlac. The outdoor track layout is designed to be safe, even for beginners and fun racers, but more experienced karters can still enjoy the workout. Since Kart City is also well-known for its scrumptious Filipino food offerings, those who want to sit this one out can dine while waiting for their companions to finish the 10 laps.

Whatever weekend activity you fancy, there's a surfeit of recreational sites and sights that will make your stay at Clark memorable. — JP

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+(632) 8575-1700



DIRECTORY

BASES CONVERSION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (BCDA)

BCDA Corporate Center
2nd Floor, Bonifacio Technology Center 31st St., corner 2nd Avenue
Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila 1634

BCDA CLARK

9F One West Aeropark Building
Industrial Estate – 5 Clark Global City
Clark Freeport Zone, Mabalacat
2023 Pampanga, Philippines

@TheBCDAGroup
bcda.gov.ph
bcda@bcda.gov.ph

For marketing, investment, and sporting events concern:
marketing@bcda.gov.ph

CLARK DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (CDC)

Building 2125, Elpidio Quirino St., Clark Freeport Zone,
Pampanga, Philippines, Angeles City, Philippines

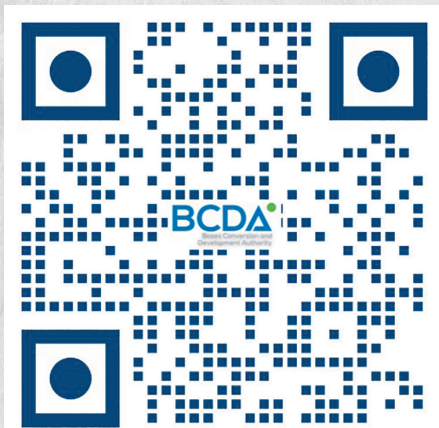
visitclark
visitclark.com
For tourism-related inquiries: tpdpromotions@gmail.com

CLARK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (CRK)

Andres Bonifacio Avenue, Clark Freeport Zone,
Pampanga, Philippines 2023

CRKInternationalAirport
bcda.gov.ph
crk@lipadcorp.com

Pampanga Line: +63 (45) 598-3120
Manila Line: +63 (2) 8250-5183
For general inquiries: crk@lipadcorp.com
For commercial leasing inquiries: commercial@lipadcorp.com
For traffic development inquiries: trafficdevelopment@lipadcorp.com



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