



Music is a big part of the Philippines Pavilion experience.

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Rubbing visitors the right way

The Philippines is offering a free massage for pavilion visitors, **Tang Zhihao** reports.

Feeling tired after a long day of walking around the Expo Garden? Then why not take a 10-minute free Hilot massage in the Philippine Pavilion to ease those tired limbs.

This traditional Philippines treatment, which uses a hands-on healing art that involves intuition and massage, is proving a hit at the pavilion if the long queue waiting to try it is anything to go by.

"It is a chance for us to experience what to us is a new type of massage," said Huang Yanqu, a visitor to the Philippines Pavilion. "I have never heard of this style of massage."

"Here you will get the best type of Hilot massage as all the masseuses working here are from the spa at the Shangri-La Hotel in Manila," said Imelda P. Sarmiento, the director of Philippines Pavilion.

Hilot differs from other traditional massages from around the world as it has no predetermined sequence of strokes. It is up to the masahista (Hilot practitioners) to determine what is needed and

where to start the massage.

"Hilot is a highly intuitive massage where we identify areas of energy imbalance in the body through touch before we start massage," said Chona Monacillo, a Hilot practitioner at the pavilion.

Chona said that a full Hilot massage takes about an hour to address and treat imbalances. But the shorten version of the treatment will still allow visitors to feel the relaxing effects of the process.

The masseuses start the massages at 9:30 am and work through until 9 pm. About 200 visitors a day get to try the treatment.

"We hope this 10 minute massage can give visitors a feel of what Philippines Hilot treatment is all about," said Sarmiento. "If people enjoy the process, then they are welcome to come to the Philippines for the full treatment."

Occupying an area of 2,000 square meters, the Philippines Pavilion is akin to an urban environment that combines all the elements of daily life. It includes a musical instruments exhibit, a perfor-

mance area, a café, spa, boutique and trade zone.

"We don't want the pavilion to be like a museum," said Sarmiento. "We are trying to create a community where everyone knows each other and takes care of each other."

Themed as "Performing Cities," designers of the pavilion have successfully transformed the structure into a venue for musical performances — vocal, instrumental, classical, traditional, folk, rock, solo and dancing. Artists dressed in traditional Philippine costumes clothes perform daily. Performers include Kontra Gapi, Caliph8, the Philippine Pavilion Dancers, and Emcy Faustino — all well known in the Philippines. Sarmiento said visitors are welcome to interact with the artists.

The facade of the Philippines Pavilion catches the visitor's attention with its creative montage of hands projecting a multiplicity of meanings — the Filipino culture of kindness, hospitality and sympathy. The message conveyed by this montage is that the Philippine is a country in which people understand and value these traditional cultural aspects.

newsbites

Smoking ban enforced

Four new measures are in place to curb smoking in the Expo Garden. Greater efforts have been made by the media to inform visitors of the smoking regulations in the garden. Security checks will be stricter at entrances to prevent visitors from bringing in lighters or matches. More smoking areas will be added. And through volunteers and text messages, smokers will be advised of smoking regulations.

Apartment shortage

The daily rental apartment market around the Expo Garden has seen dramatic growth recently as budget hotels in the area reach capacity. An apartment with two bedrooms and a living room with a monthly rent of around 3,500 yuan can yield 12,000 yuan a month if it's turned into a daily rental apartment. A three-bedroom apartment costs from 900 yuan to 1,500 yuan a day. Although the rent is relatively high, these apartments are in short supply. Some are booked through to August.

Student rush

As the semester comes to a close at the end of June and summer vacation begins, more students are likely to visit the Expo Garden. To accommodate the influx, the Expo Garden will strengthen visitor supervision, optimize services, increase security and monitor the supply of food, water and transportation. The Bureau of Shanghai World Expo Coordination suggests that visitors enter the Garden after 5 pm, as half of the daily visitors have left by that time.

Presidential visit

India's President Pratibha Devisingh Patil toured the Expo Garden and lit a welcome lamp during a visit to the India Pavilion. The president also visited the China Pavilion. Her six-day state visit was to look at ways for better communications and cooperation between China and India. This year marks the 60th anniversary of Sino-India diplomatic relations. Shanghai Party Secretary Yu Zhengsheng met the visiting president and thanked her for India's support during the Expo 2010 Shanghai.

Expo hotline

The official Expo hotline, 962010, has multilingual services in 12 languages, including English, French and Japanese. China Telecom operates the 24-hour hotline in cooperation with 962288, the Shanghai Call Center. Hotline staff can help with licensed products, ticketing, volunteer recruitment, site tours, visitor services and complaints.

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