Vancouver PCG’s “Proudly Philippines” Brings a Taste of Filipino Cuisine and a Glimpse of Philippine Travel Destinations to Vancouver

15 June 2019 – Consul General Maria Andrelita S. Austria welcomes guests to the opening ceremony of the “Proudly Philippines” Food and Travel Fair, held on June 15, 2019 at the Robson Square, Vancouver, in celebration of the 121st anniversary of the proclamation of Philippine Independence, the 70th year of PH-CA relations and the Canada-wide declaration for the very first time of the month of June as Filipino Heritage Month. The opening program was attended by representatives from the Canadian government, members of the Consular Corps of British Columbia, business and Filipino-Canadian communities, and media.

Mr. Jason Pires (left), Co-anchor of CTV Morning Live in Vancouver, and Ms. Michelle Eliot, Host of CBC Radio’s BC Today, were the emcees for the opening program. Jason’s mother is a Filipino while Michelle was born in the Philippines.
(Clockwise from top left photo) Member of Parliament for Vancouver-Kingsway Don Davies, B.C. Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology Bruce Ralston, and Vancouver Deputy Mayor Sarah Kirby-Yung were the Canadian officials who graced the event. Philippine Department of Tourism-San Francisco office (PDOT-SF) Senior Tourism Officer Zeny Pallugna delivers her closing remarks. PDOT-SF supported the Consulate in mounting “Proudly Philippines”.

Consul General Maria Andrelita S. Austria cuts the ribbon to officially open the fair, with the assistance of (L-R) Senior Tourism Officer Pallugna, Deputy Mayor Kirby-Yung and MP Davies.
The La Riva Dance Studio and Ms. Sheryn Regis provided the entertainment during the opening program. The La Riva Studios is a family-owned business, founded and directed by Riva Oquendo in 1996, with the goal of expanding the dance community by teaching young children ballroom, hip hop and cultural dances. (Right) Sheryn Regis rose to fame during the first season of the Filipino singing competition, “Star in a Million”, and was dubbed the Crystal Voice of Asia by the Philippine local media. Sheryn is now based in the US.

Some of the Filipino-Canadian artists who performed during the day were (clockwise from top left photo) the Aklanon Sto. Niño Association of B.C., Zambales Dance Group, violinists Kimwell and Grace del Rosario of Rosario Strings., Marife Elsted, Salve Dayao, and BIBAK.
Participating Filipino restaurants (clockwise, from top left photo) Plato Filipino, Kulinarya, Aling Mary’s Bakeshop and Goldilocks provided a taste of Filipino cuisine for visitors throughout the day.

Corinthian Distributors and AFOD Ltd. (top two photos), two of the biggest Canadian importers of Philippine products, share their booth with Seasia Foods Ltd., and Runtels Solution Inc., as well as Philippine exporters, Mama Sita, Paradise Fruits Corporation (middle photos), Loobi Canada Inc. (bottom photo), and Mega Global Corporation to highlight Philippine products already available in Canada.
Also joining the event were various Vancouver-based enterprises owned by Filipino-Canadians, such as (clockwise, from top left photo) Kape, Kasama Chocolates, Bukobaba Essentials Inc., La Glace, FlipSide Desserts, and Filipino franchises, Max’s and Potato Corner.
The Philippine Department of Tourism-San Francisco office led travel agencies, (clockwise, from top left photo) New Millennium Holidays, Tourmasters Travel, Maligaya Travel, and Aling Mary's Travel & Tours, as well as Philippine Airlines, in enticing visitors to the Philippines. The DOT’s photo booth, provided by Lucky Studios, was a highly popular attraction for the guests.

In addition to food and travel, “Proudly Philippines” also showcased the work of a group of Fil-Canadian artists (some of the exhibiting artists L-R: Lenore Lim, Tessie Dechupa and Ed Lantin) and photographer Allan Florendo, who presented the Consulate with one of his framed pictures of the Dinagyang festival. Kanna Ng of Weavina likewise promoted her mat-woven products.