



SUMMER WANDERLUST

"SUMMER is ycumen in" goes the old English song, and this may well be the cue for people to go on vacation and see their country and others.

For the well-heeled Filipino tourist it is faraway places beginning with Hongkong, on to Japan and then the United States to the east; or Singapore, Thailand, the Middle East, and Europe to the west. The more adventurous track the exotic places like the South Seas or even mainland China or Siberia. In any case the wanderlust comes during these months, and the home-bound ones need not despair about not being able to leave the country.

People from other lands consider the Philippines exotic enough, and they come by boat and by air, usually by air. It takes foreign tourists to make Filipinos appreciate the local sights, and except for an item here and there the brochures do depict the attractions faithfully enough.

Mayon is indeed a volcano with a perfect cone; the engineering of the Ifugao terraces does stagger our imagination; Baguio is truly a cool place; Tagaytay does have breathtaking views.

The Philippines has lovely places, as the tourists put it; but for an occasional inconvenience here and there, their stay would be perfect. But what is a tour without some surprises.

This year the Philippines is making a strong bid for more tourists from abroad. This has been anticipated since

1967 when President Marcos said at the IATA (International Air Transport Association) meeting:

"The Philippines has adopted the policy of welcoming here the airlines of all countries provided this country can derive the maximum benefit of an exchange of fifth freedom rights with the countries that the airlines represent."

On August 21, 1968 Malacañang authorized the foreign office to start negotiations on new air service agreements between the Philippines and 12 other countries. Malacañang said such negotiations should envisage "adopting the open skies policy on a strictly recipro-

cal basis." The adoption of such policy called for air negotiations with Japan, Cambodia, France, Italy, South Korea, Belgium, Taipeh, Singapore, the United Arab Republic, the United States, and Lebanon.

A little controversy developed over the interpretation of the open skies policy, with the Philippine Air Lines withdrawing from the Philippine Chamber of Tourism which has maintained that "open skies" mean "an invitation to any and all other airlines with whom the Philippines has diplomatic relations, to land, load, and unload passengers to and from points."

Meanwhile the Foreign Office has been negotiating agreements with foreign countries on a reciprocal arrangement for the entry and unloading of passengers and cargo from international airlines. In the past five months the Philippines has signed air transport agreements with eight countries outside Southeast Asia. These countries are France, the United Arab Republic, the Scandinavian countries, Lebanon, Italy, and South Korea. At present the Philippines is negotiating an agreement with Indonesia.

The tourist drive is on. Last month President Marcos inaugurated the opening of Inter-continental Hotel in Makati, stressing the country's bid for more people to come and see the Philippines.

The "natives" may do well to join them. **PM**

