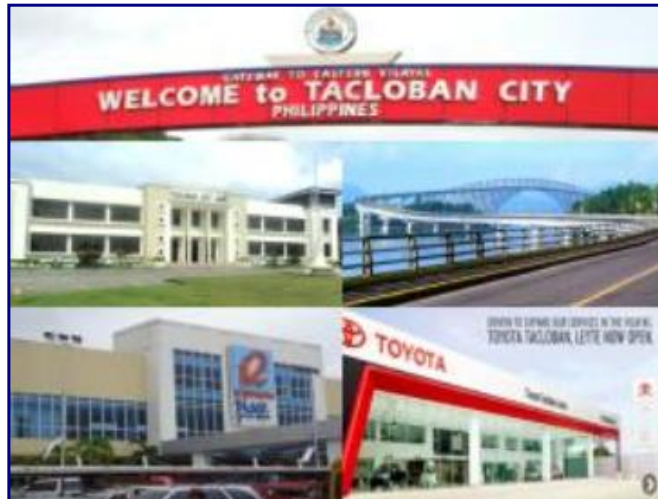




## Tacloban: A Fast Rising Highly Urbanized City

*Tacloban City, the regional center for trade, tourism, education, culture and government in Eastern Visayas, became a Highly Urbanized City in 2008. In just three years, the city emerged as a new entrant to the Top 10 HUC Governments in 2011. It ranked 7<sup>th</sup> among the 34 HUCs in the country based on DILG's performance index.*

*The city is famous for San Juanico Bridge, the longest and most beautifully designed bridge in the Philippines, linking the islands of Leyte and Samar.*



**History** Tacloban City was formerly known as *Kankabatok*, named after the prominent settler *Kabatok*, who occupied the area around the present Sto. Niño Church. Other inhabitants who came later were Gumoda, Haraging and Huraw who settled in the nearby areas. The Kanhuraw Hill where the City Hall is presently situated was formerly Huraw's domain. The whole settlement area was called *Kankabatok*, meaning *Kabatok's* property.

Kankabatok was then under the political administration of Palo but under the parochial jurisdiction of Basey, Samar. In 1770, the Augustinian Missionaries discovered the place and in 1813 the Franciscans came. During this period, *Kankabatok* was changed to *Tarakluban* which means the place where the inhabitants used the "*taklub*", a bamboo contraption, to catch crabs, shrimps and fish. Later, the name of the place evolved from *Tarakluban* to its present name Tacloban.

Tacloban was officially proclaimed into a municipality in 1770. Since then, Tacloban became a trading point between the provinces of Leyte and Samar. On February 26, 1830, Tacloban became the capital of Leyte because of the ideal location of its port. The Tacloban Port is well sheltered and has adequate facilities.

On June 20, 1952, Tacloban was created into a chartered city by virtue of Republic Act No. 760 signed by then President Elpidio Quirino. Its first City Mayor, Ildefonso Cinco, headed the city.

On December 18, 2008, Tacloban City was converted into a Highly Urbanized City (HUC) by virtue of Presidential Proclamation No. 1637. Tacloban became the first HUC in Eastern Visayas and 34<sup>th</sup> in the Philippines.

**Geography** The City of Tacloban is located in the northeastern part of the island of Leyte with a total land area of 201.7 square kilometers. It is composed of 138 barangays.

**Demography** Tacloban City registered a total population of 221,174 in the 2010 Census of Population, posting an annual growth rate of 2.16% from 2000 to 2010. Average household size stood at 4.8. Population density is recorded at 1,096 persons per square kilometer.



**Education** As the regional center for education, the city has a total of 40 public and 18 private elementary schools, 14 public and 15 private secondary schools in SY 2012-2013. It also hosts 3 government and 15 private tertiary schools.

In SY 2011-2012, Tacloban City posted a net enrolment ratio of 74.8% and 51.2% in the elementary and secondary levels, respectively. Cohort survival rate was recorded at 79.3% and 71.7%, in elementary and secondary levels, respectively.

**Health and Nutrition** The city has 2 government hospitals, including the Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center (EVRMC), a regional hospital, and 6 private hospitals which provide health care services for the entire region.

Prevalence of underweight children 0-6 years old was recorded at 8.5% in 2012.

**Poverty Situation** Latest poverty data released showed that Tacloban City posted the lowest poverty incidence among the 143 cities/municipalities of Eastern Visayas at 20.5% in 2009. This indicates that only 1 in every 5 individuals in the city is considered poor.

**Financial Resources** Tacloban is a First Class City. The Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) released by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) amounted to P424 million in 2013. This translates to an IRA per capita of P1,916.

Total revenue collected by the Bureau and Internal Revenue (BIR) in Tacloban City increased significantly by 27.1%, from P214 million during the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2012 to P272 million in the same quarter of 2013.

**Trade** With its strategic location and developed infrastructures, Tacloban City is ushering in more investments and businesses.

Robinsons Place Tacloban, the first ever mall in the region, started its operation in 2009. The Gaisano Capital Group also opened another branch in the city called Gaisano Central. Robinsons Tacloban North is now under construction and will soon operate at the new bus terminal at Barangay Abucay. The Shoe Mart is likewise set to open a hypermarket branch along Justice Romuladez Street fronting Gaisano Capital. These big malls serve as a one-stop-shop for shopping, dining and recreation.

Moreover, top car companies like Toyota, Ford, Chevrolet, Hyundai, Mitsubishi, Suzuki, Isuzu, Foton Motors and Pilipinas Hino Incorporated have already opened their showrooms and service centers in the city. It's like a cascading effect that more branches of gasoline stations, like Shell, Gulf, and RePhil, among others, are opening businesses in the city.

**Airport** The DZR Airport, a commercial domestic airport, is the biggest airport in Eastern Visayas. It may look the same as it was 10 years ago, yet in 2011, it ranked 8th busiest airport in the country with a total of 1,009,575 air passengers. Four (4) airlines (Cebu Pacific, PAL Express, Zest Air and Tiger Airways) service 14-16 flights a day to and from Manila and Cebu and 3 flights a week to Iloilo.

The most awaited Tacloban Airport Development Project is underway. In December 2012, the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) Bids and Awards Committee has already awarded the contract to FIAT Construction Services and BM Marketing in the amount of P176 million. The project covers the construction of apron, taxiway, and completion of northeast shore protection.

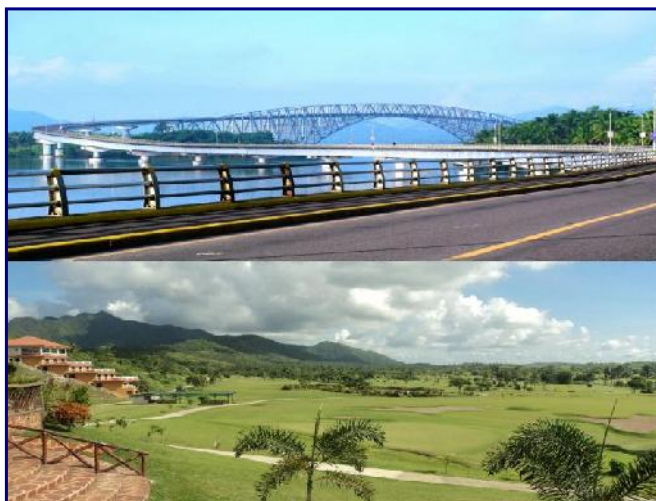
**Banks** The city has a total of 43 banks and 64 Automated Telling Machines (ATMs). The new office building of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas - Tacloban Branch is located along Airport Road, San Jose, Tacloban City.



**Convention Center** The Tacloban City Convention Center, popularly known as the Tacloban Astrodome, is the biggest venue in the city and can accommodate up to five thousand spectators. It is a preferred site for cultural affairs, job and trade fairs, general meetings

of cooperatives, concerts and basketball tourneys. It also houses several restaurants, bars and boutiques.

## Tourist Attractions



**San Juanico Bridge** The 2.16-kilometer bridge, connecting the islands of Leyte and Samar, is the longest and most beautifully designed bridge in the Philippines. It also serves as a vital link between northern and southern Philippines via Pan-Philippine Highway.

**San Juanico Park, Golf and Country Club** Golf enthusiasts will enjoy a couple of swings and the breathtaking view of nature in this place. Facilities include a restaurant, hotel and swimming pool.

**Sto. Niño Shrine and Heritage Museum**

The shrine is home to antique art collections, priceless furnishings, ivory and wooden sculptures of local and foreign origin. It used to be one of the presidential rest houses of the late Ferdinand Marcos and his First Lady Imelda Romualdez Marcos.



**Sto. Niño Church** This church is considered the most important religious site in the city. It houses the miraculous Sr. Sto. Nino, the patron saint of Tacloban.

**Madonna of Japan** The Maria Kannon Statue, also known as the Goddess of Peace, was a gift from Japan as a symbol of peace and friendship. The statue stands in a landscaped garden at Kanhuraw Hill.

**Tacloban City Hall** The City Hall is the seat of the City Government of Tacloban since 1952. It stands at the foot of Kanhuraw Hill, overlooking the Cancabato Bay.

**Leyte Provincial Capitol** The Provincial Capitol or the “Capitolio”, a neoclassical building built in 1907, is the seat of the provincial government of Leyte. It was once the seat of the Commonwealth Government of the Philippines when President Sergio Osmeña, Sr. came in 1944 with the World War II Liberation Forces.

**Price Mansion** The Price Mansion was the official residence and headquarters of General Douglas MacArthur during the Liberation period in 1944. Memorabilia of General MacArthur and World War II are kept there.

**Festival of Festivals** The Tacloban City Fiesta, celebrating the Feast of Sr. Sto. Niño, is held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June. The festival starts with the traditional Balyuan Rites at Balyuan Ampitheater, a re-enactment of the historical exchange of images between Barrio Buscada of Basey, Samar and Sitio Kankabatok, now Tacloban City. The residents of Sitio Kankabatok usually borrow the bigger image of the saint from the chapel of Barrio Buscada. The image is returned promptly after the festivities. The Sr. Sto. Niño is the revered patron saint of both places.

Two grandiose parades, the Sangyaw Festival and Pintados-Kasadyaan Festival, mark the occasion. These back-to-back festivals draw tourists to the city.

**Where to Shop** Shop with luxury and convenience at Robinsons Place Tacloban located along the National Highway at Marasbaras. The mall showcases a unique and exciting tenant mix, bringing together the best brands in the industry. As a special treat for its valued clients and visitors, Robinsons Mall offers an upgraded movie-watching experience in the region through its 5 state of the art cinemas that include a 3D cinema, the first in Eastern Visayas.



**Where to Stay** In Tacloban City, tourists can choose from around 40 accommodation establishments. Leyte Park Resort Hotel, one of Tacloban City's landmarks, is conveniently located at the heart of the city. Its hotel grounds have been transformed into the coolest party junction with various restaurants, bars and clubs called Club 65Hundred. Other hotels include Hotel Alejandro, Hotel d'Angelo, Zpad Residences and the newest and the biggest budget hotel in the city, Go-Hotels at Robinsons.

**Where to Dine** The Ocho Seafood and Grill Restaurant, will keep you coming back to Tacloban. This eating place serves the finest, fresh and sumptuous seafood in Chinese-Filipino fusion. For a taste of flavorful Italian dishes and home-made pasta prepared from the finest ingredients from around the world, dine in at Guiseppe's Restaurant. Other restaurants and cafés worth visiting include Socsargen Grill, Stefanie Smoke House, San Pedro Bay, Calle Z, Patio Victoria, Granda Manor, Julio's Buffet and Jazz Joint, Sunzibar, Sombrero, Uncle Sam, Kenny's, Ritz Tower de Leyte, Café Lucia, Café Urbana, Ayo Café and Dream Café.

**Getting Around** Public utility vehicles, like jeepneys, multicabs and tricycles, are found everywhere in the city. Few taxis are available at the airport and at Robinsons Mall. Car rental services are also available at Haven's and Victoria Global Ventures.

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