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Embassy of Switzerland in the Philippines

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DECEMBER 2025

SWITZERLAND IN THE PHILIPPINES — **NEWSLETTER**

A MESSAGE FROM THE AMBASSADOR

Dear readers,
Dear Swiss citizens in the Philippines,

The saying “time flies” is particularly true in the Philippines. I have now been stationed here in Manila for over two years, together with my wife Denise and our two daughters. However, it seems much shorter to us, which is a good sign, as we all know.

Not a week goes by without special and unique events in Metro Manila or in other regions or provinces of this beautiful country. We particularly enjoy interacting with the local population. It is easy to strike up a conversation and quickly learn exciting and moving stories. Their openness is inspiring and makes it easier to connect with people.

We have traveled around the country many times and enjoy the fascinating and diverse landscapes and cultures. Thanks to our daughters, we also get to experience other circles of local society firsthand, not just the “diplomatic world.” This is enriching and shows the great diversity here.



My team at the embassy is always available if you need information or assistance. Our doors are open, and I look forward to welcoming you in person at various events in the future.

In recent months, we have had two personnel changes at the embassy involving transferable staff. Firstly, Livia Meisser and Hans-Christian Baumann have taken up their new positions as my deputies. They come from Bern and replace Céline and Tim FÜRST, who have moved to Ankara. Like their predecessors, they work in job-sharing. Secondly, Maria Washabaugh has taken over from René Bänziger, who returned to Switzerland after more than 40 years with the Swiss Confederation to enjoy his well-earned retirement, as the new operations manager. She came with her husband from Hanoi. In addition, David Schwizer joined us in June and is completing a one-year operations manager training program at the embassy in Manila. I wish our new team members all the best in their varied roles and a smooth transition into their new environment. This is what makes our lives as representatives of the Swiss Foreign Ministry so varied.

As we can all see on a daily basis, the geopolitical situation is currently more than challenging, and we have seen easier times. The Philippines in particular is facing key issues in the South China Sea that should not be underestimated. As many international observers and experts say, the Indo-Pacific is the “new center of the world.” The resilience of the people of the Philippines is impressive, and they know how to adapt to changing situations. This is also necessary when you consider that countless Filipinos live and work abroad, all over the world, so to speak. There is hardly a place on our globe where you will not meet a fellow Filipino. This is a hallmark of the local society, which is very distinctive.

I look forward to further exchanges with you and wish you a Merry Christmas, which, as you know, officially began in the Philippines at the beginning of September. Enjoy getting together with your friends and relatives during this festive season and draw strength from these important gatherings.

On behalf of my family and the entire embassy team, I wish you all the best, both personally and professionally!

With warm regards,

Dr. Nicolas Brühl

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PHILIPPINES



EMBASSY OF SWITZERLAND
IN THE PHILIPPINES

DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITIES

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The Embassy's diplomatic section coordinates the bilateral relations between Switzerland and the Philippines across the political, economic and cultural domains.

Building on the previous year's milestone, the **Swiss Innovation Prize 2024** was successfully held in November, celebrating excellence in sustainability, creativity, and innovation. The event brought together Filipino innovators and Swiss companies to showcase solutions that contribute to a more resilient and forward-looking future.



In the area of economic diplomacy, the Embassy works closely with the **Swiss Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (SwissCham)** to promote trade and investment opportunities, strengthen business relations, and support Swiss companies operating in the country.

The Embassy also actively participates in business, trade and economic conferences. In October, **Deputy Head of Mission, Hans-Christian Baumann**, gave the opening speech at an **IMF Conference** on debt transparency, underscoring Switzerland's commitment to transparent, accountable and sustainable public finances.



EMBASSY OF SWITZERLAND IN THE PHILIPPINES



Also in October this year, the Embassy welcomed a high-level **Switzerland Tourism** delegation that comprised of CEO Martin Nydegger, and other Swiss tourism partner destinations, underlining the potential of the Philippines as a market for Switzerland Tourism and further deepening cooperation in promoting tourism between the two countries.

The team remains actively engaged in **monitoring human rights developments** in the Philippines and continues to work closely with civil society, government, and international partners on initiatives that promote **democracy, press freedom, and education**. Through the **small grants programme**, the Embassy **supports impactful local projects** with a priority on peacebuilding, strengthening of democratic institutions, women's empowerment, rights of minorities and sustainability and innovation.

Looking ahead, the section will coordinate Switzerland's engagement with the Philippines during the **Philippines' ASEAN Chairmanship in 2026**.

OPENING OF AN HONORARY CONSULATE IN DAVAO CITY



Since August 2024, the embassy has had an honorary consulate in Davao City. **Heinz Egli** was appointed to this position by the Directorate of Resources of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). The embassy congratulates Mr. Egli on his appointment and looks forward to continuing the already fruitful and established collaboration.

The embassy also has an honorary consulate in Cebu.

Please note that **honorary consulates do not have consular powers** and therefore cannot issue Swiss visas or passports. Nor can they act as notaries or deal with civil status matters.

[Honorary Consulate Davao City](#)

[Honorary Consulate Cebu](#)

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

NEWSLETTER

HAVE YOU MOVED?

- Did you know? You can change your address in your personal details at any time using the FDFA online desk.
- You will find this and many other functions in the online desk. However, your new contact details can still be communicated by email.

➔ [Online desk](#)

HAVE YOU DECIDED TO RETIRE IN THE PHILIPPINES?

- It is never too late to learn more about retirement in your country of residence and the challenges that come with it. Living abroad may mean that governmental support, along with familial and social networks, may not be as readily available as they are in Switzerland. It is crucial to consider potential situations where you might require assistance and to arrange the necessary precautions in case your independence is compromised. The brochure "Ageing Well Abroad" will help you with your planning.

➔ [Brochure "Ageing well abroad"](#)

ARE YOU LOOKING TO CONNECT WITH OTHER COMPATRIOTS?

- Swiss clubs offer opportunities to meet other people. At events related to Switzerland (e.g. the national holiday on August 1), you will have the chance to meet some of your compatriots. These gatherings are a good opportunity to share your experiences in your country of residence and obtain useful information.

➔ [Contact details for Swiss clubs in the Philippines](#)

SWISSINTOUCH: SWITZERLAND IN YOUR POCKET

- SwissInTouch is the information and communication platform of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA, enabling Swiss citizens abroad to stay in touch with their embassy or the FDFA headquarters. Register now!

➔ [SwissInTouch](#)

NATURAL HAZARDS

- The Philippines is prone to natural hazards such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and typhoons. These phenomena can cause flooding, landslides, and significant damage to infrastructure. The Embassy publishes a guide entitled "Preparedness measures and behavior in crisis situations for Swiss nationals in the Philippines" on its website.

➔ [Access to the leaflet](#)

RETURNING TO SWITZERLAND AFTER A LONG PERIOD LIVING ABROAD?

- You also need to prepare your return to Switzerland carefully. Essentially, the process is similar to emigrating, which means you may need to deregister in your host country, complete customs formalities, find somewhere to live, register in your new place of residence, look for work, or join the social security scheme. Our website provides an overview of the steps you need to take as a Swiss citizen abroad when returning to Switzerland.

➔ [Returning to Switzerland](#)

BATANGAS AND REGION IX

- The Embassy is seeking a contact person in the province of Batangas and another in Region IX to strengthen its existing network. At the Embassy's request, these individuals can provide information on whether Swiss nationals have been affected by a natural disaster or any other major incident in their area. Interested adults can volunteer as a contact person by reaching out to the Embassy via email or phone.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

NEWSLETTER

ENTRY INTO SWITZERLAND

SCHENGEN VISA FOR THE FOREIGN SPOUSE OF A SWISS CITIZEN AND FOR THE MINOR CHILDREN OF THE FOREIGN SPOUSE

- Schengen visa applications (for stays of up to 90 days) must be submitted directly to the embassy and not to our external service provider VFS Global. An appointment is required to submit the application and must be requested in advance from the embassy by email.

➔ [Information on Schengen visas for foreign spouses of Swiss citizens and for minor children of foreign spouses](#)

ENTRY/EXIT SYSTEM (EES) FOR THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS ENTERING SWITZERLAND

- The Entry/Exit System (EES) is a European database that electronically records the entries and exits of third-country nationals (e.g., Filipino nationals) crossing the external borders of the Schengen area. It replaces manual stamps in passports and stores travelers' biometric and biographical data. The aim is to enhance security, detect overstayers, and streamline border controls. The system is in Switzerland in operation since October 12, 2025. Further information is available in English, and will gradually be added in other languages, on the official website of the European Commission.

➔ [Travel to Europe – EES](#)

➔ [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

NEWSLETTER

EMBASSY OPENING HOURS

Appointments for identity documents can be booked online.

Please check the validity of your document so that you can order a new travel document in good time.

For any consular questions, the counter service is open **Monday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**, except on public holidays.

Our website provides information on the consular services available under the “**Services**” section.

Phone calls are answered **Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** and from **1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.**, and on **Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

[Appointment for identity documents](#)

[Public holidays of the representation](#)

[Representation website and contact details](#)

A recipe for those with a sweet tooth!

Carrot cake

30 minutes preparation time / 1 hour 25 minutes total time / 378 kcal per serving

For 12 pieces, you will need:

Dough

5 egg yolks
250 g sugar
250 g grated carrots
250 g ground almonds
1 organic lemon, grated zest and juice
80 g white flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
5 egg whites
1 pinch of salt

Icing and topping

250 g powdered sugar
2 ½ tablespoons kirsch or lemon juice
14 marzipan carrots

Utensils

For a springform pan approx. 24 cm in diameter, the base lined with baking paper

Here's how to do it:

Dough

Beat the sugar and egg yolks with an electric mixer for approx. 5 minutes. Add the carrots, almonds, and lemon to the mixture and stir. Mix the flour and baking powder and fold into the mixture.

Beat the egg whites with the salt and gently fold into the mixture with a rubber spatula. Pour the batter into the springform.

Baking

Bake for approx. 55 minutes in the lower part of an oven preheated to 180°C. Allow to cool slightly, then remove the edge of the pan. Place the cake on a wire rack and allow to cool.

Icing and topping

Mix the powdered sugar and kirsch well, pour into the center of the cake, spread over the top and sides using circular motions. Decorate with marzipan carrots and let dry.

Enjoy!



SWISS RECIPE