



The Best Dressed Women of the Philippines

**Earnest Snoops**  
by **Ernest L. Gonzaga**

The Best Dressed Women of the Philippines (BDWP) Annual Awards Ball, Manila's most elegant was recently held at the Makati Shangri-La's Rizal Ballroom. The vision was in white; tables were festooned with immaculate linens and floral centerpieces in a monochromatic theme.

The BDWP is an annual glitzy and dazzling event to raise funds for the Philippine Cancer Society (PCS), a nonprofit organization that helps indigent cancer patients. Businesswoman and honorary consul to Angola Helen Ong has been spearheading the event for years now together with the selection and organizing committee members Jayelles' Roselle Rebano, Mabel Abaño, and Marian Ong as well as Philippine Cancer Society (PCS) officials led by

vice chairman Antonio Ma. J. Guerrero. Marie Golez Tiongco, among others.

Since its inception, Imelda Ongsiako-Cojuangco had been gracing the event and donating P1 million to the PCS until her death last year. Awardees normally pay the tables for dinner, proceeds of which go to the PCS. Beyond ticket sales, many of the awardees have made the PCS their personal charity.

Former Miss Korea, Carolyn Lee Tan was this year's Style Icon who sashayed with gusto when presented. This year's BDWP awardees were composed of Imelda Pechera, Alta Redor Lyttle, Ingga S. Cabangon-Chua, Jerianne Ejercito Peña, Sheila Dizon-Carlos, Judy Miranda Abalos, Dr. Cecilia Ramos Berdad, Richelle Louise Singson Michael, Charisse Santillan-Tinio, Sheila

Men of Extraordinary Influence adopt a cancer patient for radiation or chemotherapy. Among this year's awardees are architect Ed Romualdez III, retail entrepreneur Ben Chan, builder Oscar Violago, and Malacañang communications head Martin Andanar.

For 13 years now, the Best Dressed Women of the Philippines continues its commitment to support PCS in its programs to help Filipinos battling cancer.

Bravo to another successful gala all for a worthy cause!

*(Photos by Jeff Arevalo/Henry Ferrer)*



Serla Russel and Agile Zamora



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Mhel Pechera



Joy Rustia



Michelle Lucas and Gemellie Gonzales



Maila Garcia King, Nikki Tang, Rosemarie Basa, Anna Sia, Marcott Almada



Carolyn Lee Tan



John Crespo and Mark Lester Lico



Anne Ong and Anna Sia



Jennifer Weigel, Ofelia Wadle, Bianca Gauthier, Beth Ventura and Michelle Lucas



# BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB:

## THE PHILIPPINES' FIRST AND ONLY 5-STAR MOUNTAIN RESORT

By ERNEST GONZAGA

Spread out over 34 hectares of prime Baguio land, adjacent to John Hay; the Baguio Country Club is the place to be in Baguio. There is hardly any tourist, local or international, who has been to Baguio without encountering the Baguio Country Club.

Whether one passes by en route to John Hay or Minesview, or hears about it from other people, Baguio Country Club is an institution, an integral part of Baguio. It is in fact, much more than that, having been declared a national heritage in 2005 when the BCC turned 100 years old.

Now there is even more reason to rejoice for Baguio residents, Baguio Country Club members and friends. The Department of Tourism, after careful evaluation and monitoring, awarded the BCC, formerly a Triple-A Resort, a much coveted 5 Star Status. It is not only the first but is the only 5-star Mountain Resort in the whole Philippines.

Several years ago, in an effort to bring up their ratings to international standards, the Department of Tourism released new guidelines for the accreditation and rating of resorts and hotels. In connection with this, Baguio Country Club and most other establishments in the Philippines underwent extensive evaluation.

The Standards Monitoring and Enforcement Division of the Department of Tourism which is the body tasked with evaluation and accreditation noted that the team effort of the Board of Directors, Management and Staff of the Baguio Country Club were of such magnitude that they exceeded, by a substantial margin, the mandatory requirements for a five-star property. It is a well-deserved honor indeed.

BCC General Manager Anthony de Leon attributed this notable and sought-after breakthrough to the assertive and constant upgrading and development of the

Club's luxury facilities. BCC will soon be inaugurating two major facilities. These are the world-class, environment-friendly Convention Hall and the Infinity Garden which are very popular venues in the BCC.

So read on and rediscover, this venerable Baguio Institution that continues to flourish beautifully and getting better, year after year.

Members and guests of Baguio Country Club enjoy the fascinating facilities such as the following:

The newly-refurbished Verandah which is composed of two main areas, the Potenciano Ilusorio and the Roman Ozaeta wing. The Verandah's lure include the alfresco dining, delicious a la carte offerings, and their ever popular theme buffets.

The Cotterman, the main dining area of the club which offers sumptuous breakfast, lunch, and dinner buffets. Its fireplace, woodwork, and piano music exude a romantic ambiance making it an immensely

popular date destination. Named after Charles M. Cotterman who was responsible for reorganizing the primitive Philippine Postal system to make it at par with the rest of the world.

Hamada Japanese Restaurant, a critically acclaimed Japanese restaurant headed by the BCC's Japanese chef, serves up authentic Japanese cuisine and has consistently been regarded among the top Japanese restaurants in the Philippines. Hamada utilizes the Teppanyaki style of cooking, guests are treated to acrobatic cooking performances by their highly trained battery of chefs. The Black Angus rib eye Teppanyaki and the Teppanyaki ice cream are de rigueur for an authentic Hamada experience.

Raisin Bread Shop, where a lot of people troop to BCC for the raisin bread alone. This prompted the renaming of the Pastry Shop to the "Raisin Bread Shop." While Raisin bread remains the star of the show, there are a lot of yummy pastries and cakes available. The famous Baguio Country Club Raisin Bread was born from the recipe of a previous General Manager of the Club, the late Mrs. Kate Reed Crosby. She was the GM of the BCC from 1955 to 1968.

Par 7 was formerly known as the "Golfers Nook." This has long been the traditional destination for players after a round of golf. While it is more of a sports bar or cocktail lounge, one can avail of the Verandah menu while chilling here.

Halfway House, aptly named because it is halfway through the challenging 18-hole Golf course and located in the middle of the lush course. Halfway House offers an alternative venue for non-golfers to relax and enjoy the scenery of Baguio.

W. C. Forbes Ballroom is considered one of the best ballrooms located outside Metro Manila. It is the premiere and most sought after venue in Baguio Country Club. Favored by the crème de la crème of high society from the highlands and lowlands. Utilizing the finest materials to

bring to life its grandiose design, the integration of classic interior design elements with elegant lighting fixtures resulted in a most beautiful place that is unequalled in the City of Pines. The ballroom is named after Governor General William Cameron Forbes, the founder of Baguio Country Club and the namesake as well of the opulent Forbes Park in Makati, as well as Governor Forbes Street in Manila.

Ballroom Roofdeck is all about the view here because, from the roofdeck, one is greeted with an expansive view of the Baguio Gold Mountain. Below are grandiose views of the Itogon-Tuding Benguet valley. The ballroom roofdeck is located directly above the Forbes ballroom and is the top choice of couples who wish to have an outdoor wedding. During the rain free months, it lends itself well to black tie events and elegant evening cocktails.

Ambassador Francisco V. del Rosario Jr. Hall is one of the most used for these corporate functions. It is quite fitting that the hall, named after the highly distinguished and multi-awarded Ambassador Francisco del Rosario Jr., remains the first choice of companies and organizations. Ambassador del Rosario used to be a board member of the Club and has made numerous, invaluable contributions that have been instrumental in making the Club the prestigious institution it is today.

President's Room has served as the boardroom away from home of countless corporations.

Being the Summer Capital of the Philippines, the Supreme Court holds sessions in Baguio during summer. By the same token, the President's Room gives the corporate world a venue to conduct business and hold meetings away from the heat of the Metro. Finished with simple but elegant furnishings, the size of this room is in fact well within the usual average size of corporate conference rooms with a sweeping view of the golf course; the weary executive only needs to lift his eyes to the windows in order to refresh his mind. The room is so named as a



Raisin Bread Shop



Cotterman



Par 7 (Bar)



President's Room



The Core Area



Roman Ozaeta Wing - Verandah

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tribute to past Presidents of the Baguio Country Club whose pictures line its walls.

Infinity Garden, one of the newer venues in the Club, delivers some of the best views that Baguio has to offer. Being an outdoor function area, its availability is quite dependent on the weather, but between the awesome views and the splendor of the garden, one would be hard put to find a more idyllic wedding venue.

These are just some of the exciting and fascinating outlets and activity area of BCC, to name a few.

The cottages are the most familiar part of the Club after the main club itself. Separated physically by the road, the cottages have been around for a long time and are quite famous in their own right.

At the moment, there are 15 cottages, all self-contained units that are complete and well appointed.

Baguio Country Club, being a 5-star retreat, is not cheap. The Deluxe rooms, however, offer excellent value and are the all time favorite of guests. Beautifully decorated in an eclectic mix of contemporary and native

interior design. Artifacts from all over the Cordilleras are integrated into the room décor.

The Executive Suites are located on the 4th Floor of the Club. The location ensures that views are superb all around. Being high up, noise from the Club activities below are essentially non-existent. With a total area of 125 square meters, the suite is almost three times the size of an average studio in Metro Manila. Each Executive suite has two bedrooms with separate bathrooms.

Golf is the major attraction of the Club as far as sports activities are concerned. Always a favorite in the competition circuit, the Club co-hosts the longest running tournament in the Philippines, the Annual Men's Fil-Am Invitational Tournament. Designed by renowned course designer Luis Golem Silverio, the course is a par 61, 18-hole course that spans a total of 4,038 yards.

Bowling is another big activity hub in the Club. A total of 8 bowling lanes make up the Bowling Center. Popular among avid bowlers, the Bowling facilities of the club are often tapped for tournaments.

Baguio Country Club offers a heated swimming pool, a perfect way to cap a fun day in Baguio. It has 3 major areas, the main pool, kiddie pool, and a Spa.

The very well equipped Fitness Center features a gym with a wide range of state of the art equipment.

An Aerobics room rounds out the Fitness center, and it serves as a venue for both aerobics and Yoga.

Recognizing the occupational risk of golf and other physical activities at the Club, the Fitness center also features licensed Physical Therapists for swift and effective rehabilitation.

The Baguio Country Club has truly evolved from its humble beginnings. The dreams of Governor General Forbes for BCC not only came true but have been surpassed by a wide margin.

Many Baguio institutions have come and gone, but clearly, the Baguio Country Club is here to stay. It has become an indispensable hub for social and corporate activities in Baguio. A highlands destination for business and leisure, the ONLY 5-star Mountain resort in the country. There's really nothing quite like it in the Philippines.



*Hamada Japanese Restaurant*