

BRINGING THE WEEKEND MARKET MOVEMENT TO DAVAO

Tienda del Mercado is pioneering the weekend market culture in Davao, opening up opportunities to small businesses and budding entrepreneurs.

Weekend *bacheto* or *mercato* sprouted in business districts around Metro Manila, mainly serving gourmet and comfort foods to hungry foodies after work. The market is filled with overcrowding tourists and locals alike; all gathered with a shared enthusiasm for indulging in different food cultures. The *fiesta*-like atmosphere offers a diverse variety that ranges from grilled specialties and fresh organic produce to adventurous exotic desserts.

In Davao, Michael delos Santos and his team are bringing the weekend market movement to the city's weekend warriors. Tienda del Mercado is a weekly fair bringing local delicacies and organic produce to food-loving Davaoeños.

HOW DID TIENDA DEL MERCADO START? WHAT WERE YOUR INSPIRATION AND VISION FOR THE PROJECT? We started in March 2013 with our first event, the 1st Davao Sinugbafest. It was our pioneer project conceptualized to introduce Tienda del Mercado to the community during the 63rd Araw ng Dabaw. We were inspired by the weekend markets in Metro Manila catering to foodies and local communities alike, and we believe Davao City is ready for a new dining concept. We wanted to drive this concept to highlight and develop the diversity in Davao City.

Our vision is to become a must go-to place for every Davaoeño and for every tourist who visits Davao.

Tienda del Mercado is a place where people can explore their passions and develop their art. Reflecting the community's diversity and creativity in food, music, and art, we will be the nurturing ground for budding entrepreneurs and hopeful artists.

DID YOU FACE CHALLENGES WHILE SETTING UP TIENDA DEL MERCADO? We faced many challenges while setting up our business. Our business relies on the exhibitors and it's tough to convince entrepreneurs to commit to a new dining concept. It was quite a challenge convincing people that a new player like us would be the kind of busi-

ness partner that could help them take their ideas from the drawing board into reality.

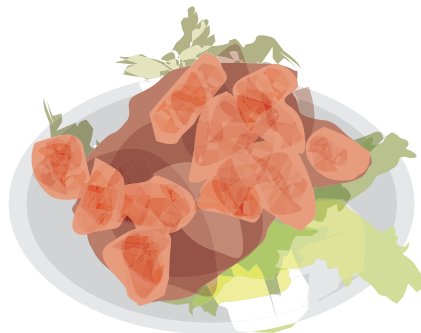
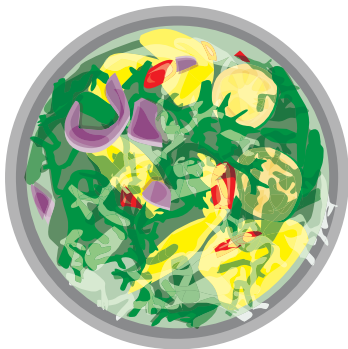
HOW'S THE RECEPTION SO FAR? ARE LOCAL SELLERS AND CUSTOMERS EMBRACING THIS OPPORTUNITY? Reception's been great! We've had excellent turnout for exhibitors eager to offer their products to Davao's discerning market. Every weekend, hundreds, sometimes even up to a thousand people go to Tienda to enjoy the food choices and to take part in the different activities.

WOULD YOU CALL THE PROJECT SUCCESSFUL NOW? HAVE YOU ACHIEVED YOUR VISION AND GOALS? We have a long way to go, but we believe that if we persist with marketing our concept we would become the "it" destination for Davao City. Opening the community to the business opportunities here is a challenge that we are very much willing to face.

WHAT KIND OF GOODS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE WEEKEND MARKET? DO YOU OFFER A LOT OF GOURMET FOOD ITEMS? Tienda del Mercado exhibitors mostly focus on food and the variety is excellent! The niche for gourmet food is slowly growing as more and more home-based businesses are joining the market. We have local gourmet goods ranging from yogurt, stuffed isaw, burgers, pizzas, pasta, *tupa*, seafoods, and even ice cream. We serve crocodile ice cream from Davao's very own Sweet Spot that's based in Crocodile Park.

WOULD YOU SAY DAVAOEÑOS TODAY ARE MORE THE FOODIE TYPE? Davaoeños have always been foodies! They like trying out new restaurants and new dining experiences. Next to this of course is Davao's discerning taste and fickle-mindedness. If they aren't happy with your food, you're sure to find out in the first few months of the

words **GRISEL GARCIA** illustrations **ELIZABETH TEOTICO**



WEEKEND MARKET SHOPPING LIST

PASALUBONG

- Durian bars
- Durian candy
- Pomelo
- Mangosteen
- Nutty Yema
- Choco Torte with Creams Sauce Cake from Blugre Cafe
- Pastillas
- Peanut Kisses
- Gourmet Cheese dabbed with honey from The Malagos Farm

BREAKFAST

Tapsilog –Fried beef strips, fried rice and egg.

Bulad –Dried and salted fish

Lekasi –Lechon kawali and fried rice

LUNCH

Lumpiang Hubad –A mix of green beans, carrots, celery, singkamas, and cabbage.

Davao Pomelo Salad –A dish of salad greens, mixed lettuce, pomelo, cashew nuts and an optional choice of cooked shrimp, grilled chicken or baked fish.

Adobong Puso ng Saging –Banana blossom chopped and marinated in vinegar, soy sauce and garlic.

Guso –Gelatinous seaweed salad.

Chicken Binakol –Stewed chicken dish cooked with coconut meat and coconut water

DINNER

Kalderetang Kambing sa Langka –Goat stewed in Jackfruit.

Kinilaw na Tuna –Fresh tuna marinated in vinegar and citrus juices such as lemon, spiced with chili peppers (siling labuyo) seasoned with ginger, onion, and salt

Sinuglaw (Sinugba and Kinilaw) –Combination of fresh tuna and grilled pork marinated with the same seasonings used in Kinilaw.

Imbaw –Clam soup

Kinhason –Baked scallops

Sutokil –A combination of Suba, Tola, and Kinilaw.

Law-Uy –A Visayan favorite that consists of several fresh vegetables cooked with fish.

Sinigang na Malasugi –Swordfish cooked in Tamarind soup.

SOURCES:

<http://davaocitybybattad.blogspot.com/2011/07/authentic-davao-food.html>

<http://davaoplace.wordpress.com/2010/10/12/wanted-souvenir-items-or-pasalubong/>

business. But this is one of the great things about Tienda del Mercado, we always have something new and something good to share.

DO YOU HAVE OTHER PLANS FOR TIENDA DEL MERCADO? ANY EXPANSION PLANS? Right now we're focused on stabilizing Tienda del Mercado here in Davao. When the time is right, we might consider expanding to nearby cities.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE BUDDING ENTREPRENEURS OUT THERE WHO WANT TO START A SMALL BUSINESS? Trust your gut

and take the plunge! A lot of entrepreneurs fail not because their idea is bad or they don't have enough experience. They fail because they fail to try. Tienda del Mercado is here to support budding entrepreneurs. If they have an idea that they want to try out, we are the perfect venue for their ideas. It's easy to operate, easy on the pocket, and less demanding on time because we only open on weekends.

Tienda del Mercado is open every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The weekend market is located in Acacia Street Juna Subdivision, Matina, 8000 Davao City. For inquiries, call 0942 622 8757 or visit their website, www.tiendadelmercado.com