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## Crimson and Quest: The best of resort and city hotels in Cebu

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(Left) Crimson's interiors are Balinese-inspired with Cebuano touches while Quest (right) has delightful interiors that offer value for money.



James Montenegro, area general manager for Crimson and Quest in Cebu.

If it's resort escape or a comfy place to work and stay in the city, two hotels in Cebu promise to give both leisure and business travelers a memorable stay and value for money. The 5-star Crimson Resort & Spa in Mactan and the 3-star Quest Hotel & Conference Center in Cebu City are both operated by Manila-based hospitality management company FilArchipelago Hospitality, Inc. (FHI). FHI operates another Crimson Hotel in Alabang, Manila and this year, it will be managing another world-class property—a 190-room resort in Boracay, also under the Crimson brand. FHI is a joint venture of Filinvest Development Corporation and Aston International through its Singapore-registered affiliate Archipelago International Pte, Ltd.

### Crimson Resort & Spa Mactan

Crimson Resort & Spa is easily considered one of the top Mactan resorts. It stands out for its very friendly professional service and its luxurious villas, which combine comfort and style with a contemporary Asian design.

The resort occupies a sprawling six hectares, and has 40 villas with private plunge pools, as well 250 guestrooms. It has four concept-themed restaurants and bars, two grand ballrooms, various sports and water facilities, and is proud home to Aum Spa, a 2,000-sqm spa that was recently named one of the most outstanding hotel spas by Agoda.com, Asia's leading hotel booking site. Aum Spa's treatments are traditional Filipino therapies using an exclusive range of therapeutic products made from 100 percent native medicinal herbs, as well as an extensive selection of luxurious spa skincare products.

The Crimson gardens are beautifully landscaped, and elements of wood, stone and woven natural Philippine fibers resonate throughout the resort, especially in the well-appointed rooms and amenities. The resort was masterplanned by the world-renowned architectural and interior design firm of Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo (WATG) from California, the landscape architecture firm of Belt Collins from Hong Kong, and the interior design talents of Manila-based ERFE & Associates. The result is a Balinese-inspired resort with unique Cebuano

touches.

Crimson's private villas are lavish havens of luxury. Categorized into four, the Ocean Front Villa is the most exclusive, with an unhindered view of the ocean. Each of the villas, with its 115-sqm space, features plunge pools, open plan living rooms with pull-out sofa sleepers, spacious bathrooms with sunk-in tubs and separate rain shower, and four-poster canopy king-sized beds.

According to James Montenegro, Area General Manager for Crimson and Quest in Cebu, "Our goal is not to have the highest in occupancy for our hotels, but to yield better revenues." He shares that the bulk of their clients are Korean and Japanese, as well as expats from around the region. "The main selling point is the distance of Cebu to these other countries, especially for families with children. Mactan, in particular, is a very family-oriented destination with is friendly, safe beach area," he says.

Montenegro points out that Crimson, which is on its fourth year, has its quality of service as its main draw. He expounds, "We try not to be your traditional resort—we are more free-flowing, not so stiff. Our staff are encouraged to enjoy things with our customers, to play with the children, to even play billiards or to dance with the guests when there are events. We are building a culture of interaction with our customers."

Other resort stand-outs are the international buffet lunch and dinner at Saffron Café, the Pan-Asian cuisine in elegant Tempo, the beach vibe of Azure Pool Bar with its chaise loungers built for two that offer a perfect view of the ocean, the three-tiered infinity pool, and the daily assortment of fun activities scheduled for the guests to choose from—activities like scavenger hunts and fish feeding for the kids and aqua aerobics and yoga sessions for the adults.

Crimson actually has a Director of Fun that oversees the activities offered in the resort. Guests are given a "morning ritual" whereby they receive in a coconut shell or a banig basket the list of activities for the day; then all these are capped with an "evening ritual", which is a traditional dance called "Call to the Sea" performed at the pool and beach areas at sunset.

Montenegro shares that expansion plans for Crimson Resort are underway. "About one more hectare of the 10-hectare property will be used for expansion; we will be building more facilities for guests by 2016," he discloses.

### **Quest Hotel & Conference Center-Cebu**

Comfort, convenience and affordability are the hallmarks of Quest Hotel & Conference Center in Cebu City. It's the ideal business hotel that offers premium facilities and safety in a convenient location at budget price. Strategically located at the Cebu Business District, it is near shopping areas, trendy nightspots, tourist attractions and business parks.

Quest Hotel Cebu has 427 nicely furnished rooms and suites, as well as 10 meeting rooms and social halls equipped with modern technology to provide hassle-free meetings, conferences and social events. Uncompromising approach to service complemented with good value for money makes Quest Hotel ideal for business and leisure travelers on the go.

The hotel's all-day dining restaurant, Pusô Bistro & Bar (named after pusô, Cebu's version of rice cooked in young coconut leaves) offers a sumptuous international buffet and a la carte dishes. The 350-seater restaurant also has three private dining rooms for small functions and intimate celebrations.

There is an outdoor swimming pool and fitness gym for leisure, and the business center and wifi access ensure that you can take care of business anytime.

Aside from upgrading the restaurant, Montenegro shares that they are working on developing a Women Travelers Floor, to be introduced this year. "There will be more emphasis on safety, having brighter bathrooms, for example, on that floor. It's really value for money that we offer in Quest, and we really want to put more emphasis on business travelers," he says.