

MY TOWN

Magical Manila

Filipino artist Patricia Eustaquio has plenty of appetite for her beloved hometown. By Jeff Chu

Cebu-born but Manila-raised Eustaquio's first solo U.S. exhibition opens September 19 at **Tyler Rollins Fine Art** (trfineart.com) in New York City. Her works include *Strange Fruit*, a cast-brass sculpture of *atis* (custard apple), and a series of paintings called *Butcher's Blossoms*—some of the images are details of orchids, while others are meat, and it's startlingly hard to tell them apart. Her food pieces, she says, "relate to this appetite for objects and consumption of art."

Stay The Malate area feels more authentic than some newer neighborhoods. Stay at the **Sofitel** (*Roxas Blvd., Pasay City*; 63-2/551-5555; sofitelmanila.com; doubles from P6,550), in the Cultural Center of the Philippines complex.

See+Do For inspiration, I usually go to the old parts of Manila, near Manila Bay and near Chinatown. I say that's *Manila Manila*. I love seeing the old churches; my favorite is the **Minor Basilica of San Sebastián** (*Plaza del Carmen, Quiapo*; 63-2/734-8931). The national museum is poorly maintained, but new galleries are opening, including a strip of interesting ones along Pasong Tamo in Makati, such as **Silverlens** (*2F YMC Building 2, 2320 Chino Roces Ave.*; 63-2/816-0044; silverlensgalleries.com), which represents me in Manila. In Old Manila, a gallery just opened called **1335** (*1335 A. Mabini St., Ermita*; 63-2/254-8498; 1335mabini.com) in Casa Tesoro, a colonial building transformed into several floors of gallery space.



Books by local authors at La Solidaridad.

Poolside view of Manila Bay at Sofitel.



Artist Patricia Eustaquio.



Contemporary Filipino art at Silverlens Gallery.

Shop Casa Tesoro has a store on one floor where they sell traditional crafts from all over the Philippines, like the hand-carved wooden Ifugao figurines called *bulols*. I love the old bookstore **La Solidaridad** (*531 Padre Faura St.*; 63-2/254-1086), owned by Filipino artist Francisco Sionil Jose. I also always send people to the **S.C. Vizcarra** (*737 Roxas Blvd., Parañaque City*; 63-2/854-6753; vizcarra1925.com) factory, where they sell nice hand-woven bags made out of lotus leaves and cane.

Eat+Drink For me, Manila is about the water. Go to Manila Bay for sunset cocktails. **WhiteMoon Bar** (*2F Sunset Quay, Manila Ocean Park, Parade Ave.*; 63-91/7520-0375; drinks for two P400) is right on the water. **Ang Bistro sa Remedios** (ljerestaurants.com.ph/bistro-remedios; dinner for two P5,600) is very old, with traditional Filipino food like crispy *pata* (fried pig's leg).



Sip and sup at NamNam.

NamNam (*GF Greenbelt 2, Makati*; 63-2/625-0515; dinner for two P1,800) has more modern Filipino dishes—not fusion, just updated traditional. But most of my family doesn't like Filipino food. They like Spanish food. We eat at **Terry's** (*GF 1 Lafayette Sq., 132 L.P. Leviste, Makati*; 63-2/844-1816; dinner for two P3,000) for really good tapas. ✦