Tricycles are motorcycles with sidecars, either for carrying passengers or for carrying goods.

There is a third type of tricycle – the pedal tricycle or pedicab. This is simply a push-bike fitted with a sidecar. Tricycles, usually referred to as trics (pronounced "trikes"), have become another Philippine icon.

They were originally designed to operate on small back-roads where jeepneys or buses were not permitted, but today you will find trics everywhere, even on national highways. But they are not permitted on expressways (toll roads).

Highway Hazards
It is the tricycles (and jeepneys) that have made Philippine highway travel so slow. Trics, and often pedicabs, just putter along at a snail’s pace, often on the overtaking lane while ignoring the blasting of horns by other drivers wanting to overtake.

And it is the tric that often leads to head-on collisions by drivers who run out of patience and overtake recklessly. It all gets back to the main road rule here – "Might is Right!" - and trics come near the bottom of the ladder, just one rung above dogs, cats, chooks, and pedestrians.

Thanks to a combination of jeepneys and trics on the highway, the trip from San Fernando City, La Union, to Angeles can often take over four hours – that’s an average speed of only 45 kilometers an hour.

Legal Requirements
A passenger tric has a legal capacity of five people including the driver. Quite often, however, you will see trics carrying up to 10 passengers, some on the roof, others jammed into the sidecar, more on the seat behind the driver, one on the fuel tank in front of the driver, with still others hanging off the steps and the rear of the tric.

Trics can pick up passengers only in their own area but may drop passengers off in any area.

Hiring a Tric
Hiring a tric is a bit like hiring a taxi – you hire the entire vehicle, not just a seat as you do in a jeepney.

Always agree on a price for your trip BEFORE you get in. Just ask the driver if he knows your destination, and then ask how much. The tric driver will often say "up to you." If so, just quote what you think is a fair price. Most times he will accept your price, but if he doesn’t, you can haggle some more, or just walk away and try another driver.
And don’t pay for the tric until you have reached your destination.

Blue Tric - Bauang

When getting into a tric watch your head. Some trics have weird ornaments in the passenger compartment. Most trics have a vertical backrest, often unpadded and with no lower back support. This can be very uncomfortable, especially on a bumpy road.

Once on board, hang on. Depending upon the road condition and the speed of the tric you will probably find it a very bouncy experience, with your head often belting the metal roof. You can always ask the driver to slow down, but this is usually a waste of words.

**Tricycle Selection**
Despite the downside of riding a tric, I ride at least two every day, usually to destinations that cannot be reached by jeepney. But I am selective in my choice of trics and I know many of the local drivers. I have their cell phone numbers and call them to come and pick me up. Several of the drivers have become very good friends.

If you find a driver with a good tric, and who is also a good driver, I suggest you ask him for his cell phone number. Most will be happy to give it to you.

**Tric Safety**
If you have baggage try and fit it into the passenger compartment so you can keep an eye on it. A friend of mine once hired a tric at the Tacloban Airport. The driver put the bags on the rear rack. As they drove off another bloke hopped onto the seat behind the driver and started talking to my friend.

It appeared to be a friendly conversation and just before the destination the friendly guy said goodbye and hopped off.

At the destination my friend found that while talking, the bloke had been rummaging through his baggage and handing valuables to a tric driver behind him. Beware!
