



FILIPINO CULTURE

A high-level guide in understanding the Philippine culture

FILIPINO HOSPITALITY

WARM WELCOMES

Filipinos are genuinely friendly. Expect gentle nods, warm smiles, or cordial handshakes from Filipino men. Bright smiles and lively hand waves are usual greeting gestures from Filipino women or "Filipina". These warm greetings are often extended to virtually anyone, anywhere, at any time, even to strangers and foreigners alike.

INNATELY SOCIABLE

Filipinos are warm. They love engaging in social conversations. They regularly catch up with friends, colleagues, family, and even new acquaintances over food, coffee, and social media. It is common to find Filipinos interacting voluntarily with foreigners to share interesting stories about the Philippines, the people, the community, their hometown, family, or life story.

Filipinos, in general, are mindful of other's feelings so they try their best to express opinions and ideas in a humble and diplomatic manner to avoid appearing arrogant and rude. They will let you finish your sentence to avoid being perceived as being disrespectful and will immediately apologize if they unintentionally cut you off or if they felt that they have offended you.

They also practice the spirit of "bayanihan". It is a selfless act of a community coming together to extend help to neighbors or anyone that needs assistance in any way they can.

NATURALLY POLITE

Filipinos are respectful. They use titles of respect with the person's first name. For example, they add "mang" (mister) or "kuya" (brother) when referring to older men and "aling" (ma'am) or "ate" (sister) for older women.

Filipinos practice a polite form of speech by including the words, "po" and "opo" during conversations with older people and/or people with higher ranks to demonstrate respect. And there is Pagmamano, a traditional way of showing respect to elderly by either kissing the back of their hand or raising the elder's hand to touch your forehead.



PINOYS: WHO ARE THEY?

"Pinoy" is a slang for Filipino. They are, in majority, of Malay descent with a strong Spanish, Japanese, Chinese and American influences. The archipelago consists of over 7000 islands with more than 111 dialects spoken from different regions and cultural groups.

Tagalog is their official language while English is second (over 50 million English speakers in 2020). The Philippines is recognized globally as one of the largest English-speaking nation in Southeast Asia.

TIGHT FAMILY BONDS

Filipinos are known for their strong family ties. They have a high regard to their family and often consider them as their top priority. In an average household, family members would work all day and do all they can to provide for their family's needs.

The bond extends to blood relatives. In a Filipino household, it is common to find three different generations living together. Grandparents often play a significant role in raising their grandchildren. Extended families and relatives usually live close to one another and regularly gather during large celebrations.

FILIPINO FOOD SCENE

Visit a Filipino home and you will leave with a full stomach. Filipinos are known to be great cooks, and they love to share food on their tables regardless of how simple it may be. A typical Filipino meal would either be a fried, stewed or soup dish, a side of vegetables (crushed tomatoes, papaya salad or sauteed mixed veggies), "sawsawan" or dipping sauce (fish sauce, soy sauce, or vinegar), fresh tropical fruits (usually bananas or mangoes), and most importantly, hot, and fluffy rice.

Filipinos are certified foodies. Wherever you go, you will find a "carinderia" (local food stall that sells rice and a variety of viands), "sari-sari" stores (local convenience stores filled with pantry essentials, snacks, etc.), "tusok-tusok" or street food carts, and more.

"Tara! Kain tayo!" (Let's eat!).

FUN IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines is a land of fun and celebrations. Filipinos have a treasury of feast and festivals from different regions all throughout the year. These festivals exhibit the Filipino's rich and diverse culture. They celebrate to pay homage to their history, patron saints and to express gratitude for a good harvest. In every big Filipino celebration, is a line up of good food from "Lechon" (whole roasted pig) to "Pancit" (noodles), and many more.

But the biggest and longest celebration in the whole country is "Pasko" or Christmas. Filipinos love this holiday so much that they start decorating their house with Christmas ornaments and Christmas songs are played everywhere in as early as September. In summary, Filipinos are one of the warmest people in the planet. They are hard workers with deep respect to their families. They easily build strong relationships, and they are great communicators.



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