

Filipinos are a freedom-loving and a fun-loving people

Boracay Sunset



History:

The Philippines is the third largest English speaking country in the world. It has a rich history combining Asian, European, and American influences. Prior to Spanish colonization in 1521, the Filipinos had a rich culture and were trading with the Chinese and the Japanese. Spain's colonization brought about the construction of Intramuros in 1571, a "Walled City" comprised of European buildings and churches, replicated in different parts of the archipelago. In 1898, after 350 years and 300 rebellions, the Filipinos, with leaders like Jose Rizal and Emilio Aguinaldo, succeeded in winning their independence.



In 1898, the Philippines became the first and only colony of the United States. Following the Philippine-American War, the United States brought widespread education to the islands. Filipinos fought alongside Americans during World War II, particularly at the famous battle of Bataan and Corregidor which delayed Japanese advance and saved Australia. They then waged a guerilla war against the Japanese from 1941 to 1945. The Philippines regained its independence in 1946.

Filipinos are a freedom-loving people, having waged two

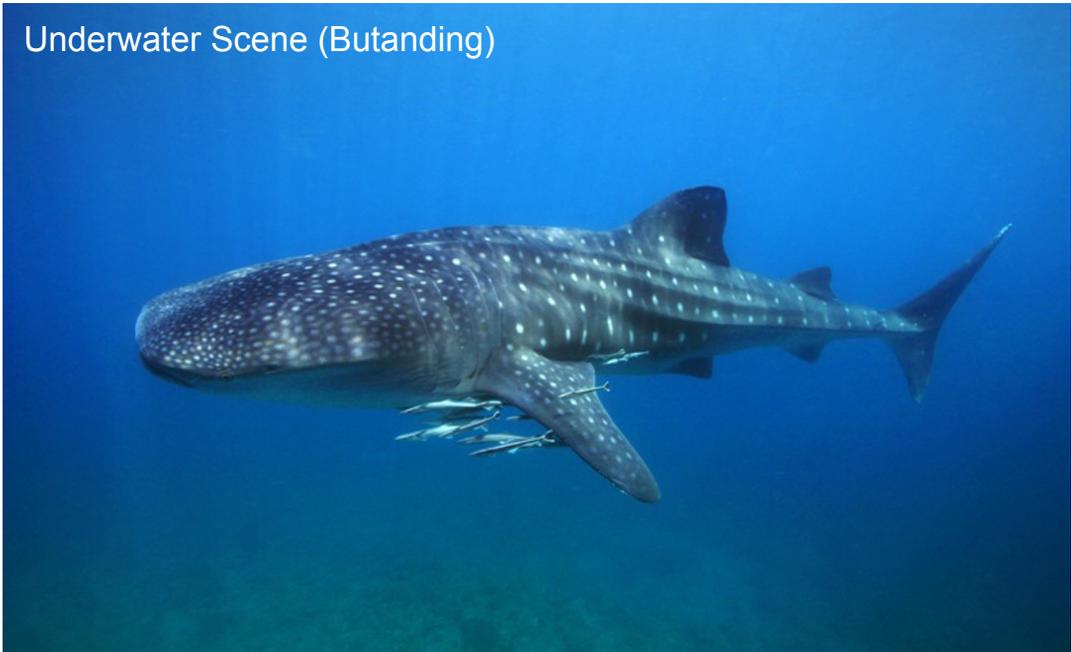
peaceful, bloodless revolutions against what were perceived as corrupt regimes. The Philippines is a vibrant democracy, as evidenced by 12 English national newspapers, 7 national television stations, hundreds of cable TV stations, and 2,000 radio stations.

Filipinos are a fun-loving people. Throughout the islands, there are fiestas celebrated everyday and foreign guests are always welcome to their homes.

People and Religion

The Filipino is basically of Malay stock with a sprinkling of Chinese, American, Spanish, and Arab

Underwater Scene (Butanding)



People



blood. The Philippines has a population of 76.5 million as of May 2000, and it is hard to distinguish accurately the lines between stocks. From a long history of Western colonial rule, interspersed with the visits of merchants and traders, evolved a people of a unique blend of east and west, both in appearance and culture.

The Filipino character is actually a little bit of all the cultures put together. The bayanihan or spirit of kinship and camaraderie that Filipinos are famous for is said to

be taken from Malay forefathers. The close family relations are said to have been inherited from the Chinese. The piousness comes from the Spaniards who introduced Christianity in the 16th century. Hospitality is a common denominator in the Filipino character and this is what distinguishes the Filipino. Filipinos are probably one of the few, if not the only, English-proficient Oriental people today. Pilipino is the official national language, with English considered as the country's unofficial one.

The Filipinos are divided geographically and culturally into regions, and each regional group is recognizable by distinct traits and dialects - the sturdy and frugal Ilocanos of the north, the industrious Tagalogs of the central plains, the carefree Visayans from the central islands, and the colorful tribesmen and religious Moslems of Mindanao. Tribal communities can be found scattered across the archipelago. The Philippines has more than 111 dialects spoken, owing to the subdivisions of these basic regional and cultural groups.

The country is marked by a true blend of cultures; truly in the Philippines, East meets West. The background of the people is Indonesian and Malay. There are Chinese and Spanish elements as well. The history of American rule and contact with merchants and traders culminated in a unique blend of East and West, both in the appearance and culture of the Filipinos, or people of the Philippines.

Hospitality, a trait displayed by every Filipino, makes these people legendary in Southeast Asia.

Agno Umbrella Rock





Seldom can you find such hospitable people who enjoy the company of their Western visitors. Perhaps due to their long association with Spain, Filipinos are emotional and passionate about life in a way that seems more Latin than Asian.

The Spaniards introduced Christianity (the Roman Catholic faith) and succeeded in converting the overwhelming majority of Filipinos. At least 83% of the total population belongs to the Roman Catholic faith.

The American occupation was responsible for teaching the

Filipino people the English language. The Philippines is currently the third-largest English speaking country in the world. Historically, the Filipinos have embraced two of the great religions of the world - Islam and Christianity. Islam was introduced during the 14th century shortly after the expansion of Arab commercial ventures in Southeast Asia. Today, it is limited to the southern region of the country.

Christianity was introduced as early as the 16th century with the coming of Ferdinand Magellan in 1521.

Protestantism was introduced by the first Presbyterian and Methodist

missionaries who arrived with the American soldiers in 1899.

Two Filipino independent churches were organized at the turn of the century and are prominent today. These are the Aglipay (Philippine Independent Church) and the Iglesia Ni Kristo (Church of Christ) founded in 1902 and 1914, respectively. Recently the Aglipay signed a covenant with the Anglican Church. The Iglesia ni Kristo has expanded its membership considerably. Its churches, with their unique towering architecture, are landmarks in almost all important

towns, provincial capitals, and major cities.

Culture and Arts

The major cultural agencies of government are the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the National Historical Institute, the National Museum, The National Library, the Records Management and Archives Office, and the Commission on the Filipino Language. The Heads of these cultural agencies are all ex-officio members of the NCCA Board and all except the Commission on the Filipino Language are together under the National Commission

Tarsier of Bohol





Wellness

on Culture and Arts Climate

The first half of the year, from January to May, is the best time to visit the country. November to February is cool, while March to May is hot and dry. June to October is rainy, with the months between July and September characterized by typhoons. Average temperature is 78 degrees F/25 degrees C; average humidity is 77%. Some parts of the country such as Cebu, are warm and comfortable in all seasons and can be visited throughout the year.

