

THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines is an island nation located in Southeast Asia, with Manila as its capital city. The Philippine Archipelago comprises 7,107 islands. Philippines society is mostly a blend of diverse indigenous Austronesian and Asian cultures, as well as the Western culture of Spain and the United States. A former colony of Spain and the United States, the Philippines has many affinities with the Western world. Roman Catholicism is practiced by more than 80% of the population. English is recognized as an official language, along with Filipino.



The local climate is hot, humid, and tropical. The highest point is Mount Apo in Mindanao. There are many active volcanos such as Mayon Volcano, Mount Pinatubo, and Taal Volcano. The country also lies within the typhoon belt of the Western Pacific and about 19 typhoons strike per year. The flower called Sampaguita (Jasmine variety) was adopted as the National Flower of Philippines. It also happens to be the National Flower of Indonesia.

The Philippines is a newly industrialized country with an agricultural base, light industry, and service-sector economy. Makati City is the central business district. The Philippines has one of the most vibrant business process outsourcing (BPO) industries in Asia, including Fortune 500 companies.

Filipino culture is a fusion of pre-Hispanic indigenous Austronesian civilizations of the Philippines mixed with Hispanic and American cultures. It has also been influenced by Chinese.

As with many cultures, music (which includes traditional music) and leisure activities are an important aspect of the Filipino society. Various sports are also enjoyed, including boxing, basketball, badminton, billiards, football (soccer) and ten-pin bowling being popular games in the country.