

The Traditions / Festivals of the Philippines

1. Sinulog



History of Sinulog Festival

Sinulog is held in celebration of one of the country's most famous historic relics: the Santo Niño de Cebú. This was the statue of the baby Jesus that was handed to the Rajah Humabon of Cebu by the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan in 1521.

This was one of the most important events in the religious history of the Philippines as it paved the way to the birth of Christianity in the country.

At the moment of receiving the holy image, it was said that Queen Juana, the main consort of Rajah Humabon, danced with joy holding this image of the child Jesus.

The other natives followed her example, and this event was regarded as the first Sinulog dance. The same event was used as the basis for most Sinulog dances.

The Sinulog dance steps are also believed to originate from Baladhay, Rajah Humabon's adviser. When Baladhay got sick, Humabon ordered his tribe to bring Baladhay into a room where the Santo Niño was enthroned.

After a few days, Baladhay was heard shouting and was found dancing by the native tribe. Baladhay was asked as to why was he was shouting and dancing. He pointed at the image of the holy Jesus and explained that baby Jesus was tickling him.

In turn, Baladhay danced with the little child and explained that he was dancing the movements of the river. To this day, the two-steps forward, the one-step backward movement is still used by Santo Niño devotees who believe that it was the Santo Niño's choice to have Baladhay dance.



Sinulog Festival Sinulog Festival or Santo Nino Festival is an annual religious and cultural festival in Cebu. The festival is thought to be the first of the most well-known festivals in the Philippines.

It also attracts between 1 to 2 million visitors from all over the country every year and gives travelers the opportunity to join Cebu tours to explore the province.

Besides the religious part of the celebration, Sinulog is also well-known for its street parties before the day of celebration and during the day of the festival.

Meaning of Sinulog Sinulog comes from the Cebuano word “Sulog” which means “like water current movement” which depicts the forward-backward step of Sinulog dance.

2. Dinayang



The Dinayang Festival is in Iloilo on the island of Panay every 3rd Sunday of January. Originated from the parade to receive the image of little Jesus. The Spanish pastor it was brought into the Philippines hundreds of years ago, believing that he helped drive out pirates, which often invaded the islanders in ancient times.

Every year, the townspeople parade the monks on the streets of the city. Later it was changed to a pageant, parade and street dance, adding one more day to the 3rd Saturday of January, called Cassdiyahan, meaning happiness or fun. The parade, which dances on Cassdiyahan, is dressed in traditional indigenous costumes, both men and women. It is known as a tribe, each of which is represented as an actual story in ancient times.

The 3rd Sunday of January will be the real good. Performers must paint their faces and bodies in black or black brown.

Men dressed as ancient warriors had colorful feather hats and carried weapons such as spears or bows, and women were dressed in grass skirts. And painted in black brown as well. Most importantly, every tribe must have a symbolic image of Jesus.

Dinagyang Festival History



The Dinagyang festival history started in 1967 when an Augustinian priest from Cebu gave a replica image of the Santo Niño as a birthday gift to a fellow Augustinian priest in Iloilo. Since then, a novena mass was held every Friday at the San Jose Parish Church.

In 1969, a competition was organized similar to the popular Ati-Atihan Festival of Kalibo town in Aklan province. That time, the Dinagyang was known as “Iloilo Ati-Atihan.”

“Dinagyang” became the official name almost a decade later when radio broadcaster Pacifico Sudario insisted on using a local word to distinguish the festival from the well-known Ati-Atihan of Kalibo.

Another thing to note is that the Dinagyang Festival performances are anchored on a folkloric story about the Barter of Panay. The story revolves around how 10 Bornean datu and their families fled a tyrannical ruler in Borneo early in the 13th century and sailed towards the island of Panay. When they arrived, the Borneans bargained with the native Atis to occupy the lowlands. To celebrate the barter, the Borneans painted their bodies with soot and danced with the Atis.

Because of the remarkable celebration, Dinagyang Festival has been famous not just in the Philippines, but across the world.

Dinagyang Festival in Philippines when it comes to warriors and dancing To the sound of the drum We tend to think of African warriors or Indian warriors in pioneering America but this is Southeast Asia.

The men and women, with their black-brown bodies, are made of ashes and colors, painted on their bodies and faces, wearing bright orange feather hats and bracelets made of stone and glass of color sparkling like rainbows. Dance and jump at the beat of a thrilling drum with beautiful dance moves. With unison as a result of long hard training.

3. Ati - Atihan



The Ati-Atihan Festival is a feast held in honor of the Santo Niño (Holy Child or Infant Jesus) held annually in January concluding on third Sunday, in the town of Kalibo, Aklan in the Philippines.

Dubbed as the Mother of All Philippine Festivals, the Ati-Atihan Festival is widely known not just in the Philippines but across the world. Ati-Atihan Festival meaning is “to be like Atis or Aetas (Aklan Province’s natives).”

Similar to Cebu’s Sinulog Festival, and Iloilo’s Dinagyang Festival this event is celebrated to honor the Child Jesus, Santo Niño.

The celebration consists of multiple events that happen in various parts of Kalibo town. You’ll never run out of things to do because Ati-Atihan has all kinds of events— from solemn masses, loud marching bands to partying on the streets.

So if you plan to visit Boracay in January, you might as well watch the locals masquerading as Negritos in colorful costumes, chanting “Hala Bira!” while doing the Ati-Atihan Dance in Aklan.

In Honor of the Christ Child

Ati-Atihan was originally a pagan festival. Missionaries gradually added Christian meaning. Today, Ati-Atihan is celebrated in honor of the Christ Child, the Santo Niño. Three days of parades leading up to the main procession that starts in the chapel on Sunday afternoon. The parades are colorful and vibrant, much like the Mardi Gras festival in Brazil.

Celebrants paint their faces with black soot and wear bright, outlandish costumes as they dance in revelry during the last three days of this two-week-long festival.

Ati-Atihan – is a pagan ritual, which has become an annual affair that the natives look forward to with great expectations.

It is the most extravagant fiesta in the Philippines celebrated in Kalibo, Aklan every 3rd Sunday of January in honor of the Infant Jesus.

Ati-Atihan derived its name from Atis, the aboriginal Negritos of the area in the Visayas.

Ati-Atihan is a story of the friendship between the Ati tribe and the Malay tribe who came to live in Kalibo in Aklan where the Ati tribe was settled. They started the song and dance ritual to express their gratitude for each other.

Spanish missionaries gradually added a Christian meaning and made it a celebration in honor of the Santo Niño (Infant Jesus).

The excitement builds of the festival.

Ati-Atihan takes place at Kalibo in Panay in the second week of January, then at Ibaay and Makati one week later. To prepare for the festival, villagers make their own unique costumes and form groups to practice dances. Their costumes look either bizarre or regal. Expectance builds up during the last few days of preparation and reaches an exciting climax on Friday when the dancing and party start.

Ati-Atihan Festival History

In 1975, a Catholic priest named Msgr. Jose Iturralde wrote that the origin of the Ati-Atihan Festival started from an old couple who lives in the western part of Aklan.

Msgr. Iturralde said that in the early-1700s, a fisherman went fishing in a river but caught a piece of wood instead. He threw the wood away, but it repeatedly returned to his net. The fisherman was dismayed so he just went home and decided to bring the wood. He threw it in a pile to use as fuel to cook their meal. While sleeping, the fisherman and his wife heard a beating sound. When they search where it's coming from, they found a carving of a child on the piece of wood from the river.

The fisherman placed it in their altar. Since then, the family received blessings, including good fish harvests. After a few weeks, the fisherman sought advice from a priest.



The priest asked the fisherman to place the wood at the Ibalay Parish but the wood was repeatedly disappearing and was always found at the roof of the fisherman's house.

The Ibalay residents believed that the incident was a call for them to seek forgiveness of their sins. Part of their penance was to blacken their faces with coal and to dress in rags which later on became the Ati-Atihan Festival costume. After doing this, the piece of wood has remained and never disappeared in the church.

One day, a group of Spaniards known as the Moros from the Mindoro province tried to invade Ibalay. The residents fought back and dedicated their victory to the piece of wood.

Until now, the fight between the natives against the Spaniards is being commemorated as part of the Ibalay Ati-Atihan.

In 1798 Padre Fernando de Legaspi, a priest based in Malinao town, heard about the yearly celebration being held in Ibajay.

Upon witnessing the revelry, he decided to do it, too, in the towns of Malinao and Kalibo in 1800. And on June 11, 1871, a testament was signed by a Kalibo priest with businessmen in town to institutionalize the holding of the annual Ati-Atihan Festival.

On the other hand, there's another legend connected to the Ati-Atihan Festival history. It was said that 10 Bornean datus sailed to Aklan to escape the dictatorship of their ruler. They accidentally landed on Panay Island and welcomed by the Aetas.

The 10 Bornean datus were believed to have bought the entire Panay Island from the Aetas with gold jewelry. This legend was, however, officially declared a myth by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

Hala, Bira!

During Ati-Atihan, streets are filled with people singing and dancing in striking costumes.

These costumes are usually brightly colored, with tall, impressive headdresses. Faces blackened with soot, parade participants move to the rhythm of drum beats and the clanging sound of tin cans, crying

"Hala, Bira!" (Ha-La-Bee-Ra) which means "to strike a blow." School bands and Orchestras add to the music, and the revelers celebrate late into the night.

In contrast to the busy festivities that happen throughout the three-day celebration, Ati-Atihan ends somberly with a procession on Sunday. Participants carry torches and, starting from their town churches, walk along the streets that outline the town.

4. Pahiyas Festival



Every famous festival in the Philippines is always colorful, and Pahiyas Festival, without a doubt, is one of the most colorful and vibrant festivals in the Philippines.

This is an annual celebration to pay homage to San Isidro Labrador, the patron saint of farmers, for a bountiful harvest in town. Houses are decorated with the town's best agricultural products, mostly colorful Kiping— a traditional Filipino leaf-shaped wafer made from glutinous rice.

What's more exciting about Pahiyas festival is that FREE and grab-all-you-can fresh fruits and vegetables are everywhere for the visitors to taste and enjoy.

Main Highlights

Early Morning Procession in honor of San Isidro Labrador

Free food for everyone and the colorful houses decorated with Kiping.

Brief History of the Pahiyas Festival

every May 15, the townsfolk of Lucban, Quezon, don their houses with fruits, vegetables and colorful kiping (a leaf-shaped wafer made of rice and dyed with food coloring) in celebration of the Pahiyas Festival.

The word ‘pahiyas’ was derived from the word ‘payas’, which means decoration or to decorate. The reason behind such practice dates back to the 15th century, when farmers used to offer their harvests at the foot of Mount Banahaw. Over time, they brought their farm produce at the church in honor of the town’s patron saint – St. Isidore the Laborer, who is the patron saint of farmers, laborers and peasants.

During that time, farmers would bring their harvest to the town church and the parish priest would bless them as a way to give thanks to the Lord for their bountiful harvest. But as time progressed, the church can no longer accommodate all harvests. It was then agreed upon for the harvests to be displayed in the farmers’ houses instead. Thus, the parish priest would go around the community to bless their harvests.

The Pahiyas Festival Nowadays

Locals believe that keeping the tradition alive was essential because it brought them away from deprivation and misfortune in their town.

In May 1963, what was originally a pagan festival transformed into the colorful, grand festival that Filipinos know today. Apart from holding a competition that chooses the house with the most creative design, the festival also included cultural shows, various contests, parades and exhibits that would boost the tourist of the town of Lucban.

It was the idea of the Art Club of Lucban’s Founder and President Fernando Cadelina Nañawa.

Instead of just putting the agricultural harvest in front of their door steps, the facade of each participating house also put commercial products such as hats, abaniko or hand-held fans, mats, bags, the famous Lucban longganisa (Filipino-style sausages) and of course, the kiping.

The highlight of the Pahiyas Festival comes after the town’s procession where the spirited tradition of ‘Kalas’ takes place. The term literally means to romp away the harvests and decorations from the houses as a symbol of joy and merriment. Indeed, the Pahiyas Festival has become one of the most-sought after festivals across the Philippines, luring in locals from nearby towns and even tourists from other countries.

Party at Pahiyas Festival

There should be an expression that goes something along the lines of “Party like it’s Pahiyas”. The Pahiyas festival is, without a doubt, one of the most vibrant and colorful festivals in the Philippines, if not the entire world.

Okay, we might be exaggerating a little, but believe us, it’s only by a little.

The Pahiyas Festival is held every year on 15th May in Lucban, Quezon. It is a celebration of a munificent harvest.

Pahiyas is celebrated across the country, so wherever you find yourself in the Philippines, you will be able to participate in this glorious festival.

Reference

http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Tagalog/Cynthia/festivals/atiatihan_fs.htm

<https://www.zenrooms.com/blog/post/ati-atihan-festival/>

<https://www.zenrooms.com/blog/post/festivals-in-the-philippines>

<https://theculturetrip.com/asia/philippines/articles/pahiyas-the-philippines-most-colourful-harvest-festival/>

<https://guidetothephilippines.ph/articles/history-culture/sinulog-festival-cebu-guide>

<https://www.zenrooms.com/blog/post/dinagyang-festival/>

<https://tripivent.com/events/pahiyas-festival-may-lucban-quezon/>

Group Members (Room 2)

Name: Nurhayatee Mahama 406006044

Name: Nalinee Wasoh 406006067

Name: Arofiyah Weabuesa 406006068

Name: Busra Teama 406006088