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| **Document** | **My Blog, My Philippines** |

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| **Chapter Title** | **Filipino Culture - Part II** |
| **Articles** | **National Public Holidays** |
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| **Author** | **Alex Moises** |
| **Inspiration** | **Little Angel Gabby** |

**National Public Holidays**

**January 1: Bagong Taon - New Year's Day: This holiday is celebrated with an abundance of food, gift-giving and merry-making to welcome the new year. Usually, family members gather together for the occasion. Sometimes, friends and colleagues are invited. Special foods are prepared and Filipinos feast on these. Children receive gifts from their parents, relatives and friends.**

**March or April for at least 4 Days: Panahon ng Kuwaresma (Quaresma) - Lenten Season: This holiday is a commemoration of the passion and death of Jesus Christ. The Philippines is a pre-dominantly Christian nation and Filipinos observe Christian religious practices such as going on a retreat, attending mass or worship service or undergoing personal reflection or meditation. Filipinos also use this long holiday as a time to relax at home and be with the family, to attend to personal things often forgotten during regular working or school days or to go on vacation.**

**April 9: Araw ng Bataan - Bataan Day: This holiday serves to honor Filipinos and American soldiers who fought and died defending the Philippines against the Japanese invaders during World War II. The ideal for which Bataan stands for is forever enshrined in the hearts of Filipinos.**

**May 1: Araw ng Manggagawa - Labor Day: This holiday honors the Filipino workers.**

**June 12: Araw ng Kalayaan - Independence Day: This holiday is a commemoration of the first declaration of Philippine independence from a foreign colonial ruler. During this day, the nation honors the heroes and heroines of the Philippine republic. Official functions are carried out in such places as the Andres Bonifacio monument in Kalookan City, Jose Rizal monument in Rizal park and Kawit, Cavite.**

**Last Sunday of August: Araw ng mga Bayani - National Heroes Day: This holiday is dedicated to the heroes and heroines of the Philippine republic.**

**November 1: Araw ng mga Patay - All Saints Day: This holiday is a time to remember the loved ones who have passed away by visiting their cemeteries, by praying for their souls or by simply recalling --- with fondness --- the times when they were still alive. The commemoration of All Saints Day goes with the commemoration of All Souls Day which makes for a good break from work. Hundreds of thousands or even millions of people of Metro Manila leave the metropolis to go to their provinces just to visit the cemeteries of their loved ones.**

**November 2: Araw ng mga Kaluluwa - All Souls Day: This holiday serves to honor the loved ones who have passed away.**

**November 30: Araw ni Bonifacio - Bonifacio Day: This holiday is the birthday of Andres Bonifacio --- the founder of the revolutionary society known as the Katipunan. A good number of monuments have been erected to honor Bonifacio and the most famous is the Andres Bonifacio monument in Kalookan.**

**December 24: Disperas ng Pasko - Christmas Eve: This holiday is a commemoration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Filipinos celebrate this day by preparing special foods at home. These foods are served throughout the day whenever friends, relatives or colleagues come to visit them. The climax of this event occurs on the eve of Christmas when a special meal called "noche buena" is prepared. During "noche buena," family members enjoy all the special foods that have been prepared. The all-day celebration is punctuated by gift-giving and merry-making, and it continues until the early hours of Christmas day, which is the reason for the celebration.**

**December 25: Pasko - Christmas: This holiday is in honor of Jesus Christ. Christian tradition has it that December 25 is the birthday of Jesus Christ. Since the Philippines is a pre-dominantly Christian country, Filipinos celebrate this day with so much food and gift-giving. For Filipinos, Christmas day is the "main event" of the holiday season, which lasts for three weeks.**

**December 30: Araw ni Rizal - Rizal Day: This holiday is a commemoration of the martyrdom of Jose Rizal in 1896. An iconic structure stands on the site where Rizal was executed. This is the Rizal monument at Rizal park in Manila, which is a popular tourist attraction.**

**December 31: Disperas ng Bagong Taon - New Year's Eve: This holiday is celebrated --- with much hope and fanfare --- to welcome the coming of the new year. In the past, Filipinos welcomed the new year with a bang by using firecrackers to create loud noises. (This is a Chinese tradition which the Filipinos have assimilated.) However, the use of firecrackers by individual Filipino during new year's eve has been discouraged because, in the past, it had caused the destruction of properties, injuries to thousands of revelers and even death to a number of individuals.**

**National Celebrations and Commemorations**

**March or April for four days at least: Lenten Season: This holiday is a commemoration of the passion and death of Jesus Christ. During this season, Filipinos observe Christian religious practices such as going on a retreat, attending mass or worship services or undergoing personal reflection. A great number of Filipinos use this period to go on a holiday vacation. They go to resorts and nice beaches, which are quite easy to find in the Philippines. A greater number of Filipinos take this opportunity "to go back to the provinces" and to return to their hometowns. The vast majority take this time to be with their families and to do the things they cannot do during the entire year.**

**Throughout May: Flores de Mayo: This is a celebration which takes the form of a pageant-parade and it gives honor to the town's beautiful ladies who symbolize all that is good and feminine. These ladies are accompanied by male escorts during the parade.**

**June 12: Independence Day: The nation celebrates the day when it first declared its independence from foreign colonial rule. Various activities that serve to honor the country's heroes and heroines are carried out throughout the Philippine archipelago. The most notable of these activities are the flag-raising ceremonies held in landmark places like the Andres Bonifacio monument in Kalookan, Jose Rizal monument in Rizal park and Kawit, Cavite.**

**August 13-19: Linggo ng Wika - National Language Week: This is a week-long celebration of the Filipino language in schools throughout the country.**

**November 1 and 2: All Saints Day and All Souls Day: The nation remembers their departed loved ones by visiting their cemeteries, by praying for their souls or by simply recalling --- with fondness --- the time when their departed loved ones were still alive. Just before All Saints Day, many Filipinos spend a lot of time cleaning the tombs of their loved ones. From October 31 to November 2, cemeteries virtually turn into camping grounds since the family members of the departed would stay in the cemeteries for the whole day or the whole night.**

**November 30: Bonifacio Day: The nation honors Andres Bonifacio, the founder of the revolutionary society called Katipunan that led the uprising against the Spanish colonial rulers.**

**December 24-25: Christmas: This holiday season serves to honor Jesus Christ and it is celebrated with so much food and gift-giving by Filipino families and their relatives, friends and associates.**

**December 30: Rizal Day: The nation honors Jose Rizal, the national hero of the Philippines**

**December 31 - January 1: New Year Celebration: This holiday period is celebrated with an abundance of food, gift-giving and merry-making to welcome the new year. Family members, relatives, friends and associates gather together.**