



# Philippine Culture Manual for Foreigners: Understanding the Culture of the Philippines

*Bob Martin*

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The culture of the Philippines is very much misunderstood by foreigners. Many people from other countries think that the culture in the Philippines is very similar to western culture. After all, the Philippines was ruled by the Spanish for 400 years, followed by nearly 50 years of American rule. Of course the culture would have been influenced by the west, and thus the Filipino way of thinking and acting would be very western. Wrong. It doesn't take long of living in the Philippines to realize how wrong that thinking is. The fact is that the culture of the Philippines is very complex, and also very different from western cultures. It is not easy for foreigners to understand, even after years of living in the Philippines. At the time of this writing, I have lived in the Philippines for nearly 15 years, and I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of Philippine culture, but it took many years to gain that knowledge. In fact, I was able to gain a lot of understanding of Philippine culture because I had a private tutor who taught me how to speak Bisaya (one of the Philippine languages), and she also spent significant time explaining Philippine culture to me as part of the courses. In this book, I will lay out the tenets of the culture of the Philippines for you. I will also give you some real life examples of Philippine culture at play, and how I dealt with the various real life situations. I truly believe that learning these cultural lessons is a big factor in enjoying a good life in the Philippines. If you try to live in the Philippines without an understanding of the things in this book your life will be a constant series of frustration, misunderstanding in dealing with Filipinos and a general unhappiness with living in the Philippines.

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