

Christmas in the Philippines

People in the Philippines love Christmas and spread out the celebrations for as long as possible. Some shopping malls even start decorating and playing Christmas carols in September! In the Philippines, the main language spoken is Filipino. The word Christmas in Filipino is Pasko.

Decorations

In the Philippines, most homes are decorated in lights and lanterns. Lanterns on bamboo poles or frames are called parol, and are usually in the shape of a star made out of colourful Japanese paper or cellophane.

Church

During December, churches hold a series of dawn masses called Simbang Gabi (Night Mass) or Misa de Gallo (Rooster's Mass in Spanish). Some services start as early as 3 o'clock in the morning.

Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve is very important to Filipinos who celebrate by attending a Midnight Mass at church and by having a traditional Noche Buena feast. People open their houses to celebrate with friends and family to eat together and give presents. Most tables would include foods such as lechon (roasted pig), pancit (noodles), rice cakes (bibingka and puto bumbong), fruit, steamed rice and other desserts.

Maligayang Pasko po!
Merry Christmas

Sana maligaya ang Pasko mo.

I hope your Christmas is merry.



Did you know?

- A person from the Philippines is called a Filipino (male or female).
- The Philippines is a country made up of over 7000 islands.

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Christmas in the Philippines Questions

1. What is the Filipino word for Christmas?

2. What is the main language spoken in the Philippines?

3. How do you say 'Merry Christmas' in Filipino?

4. What is one way Filipinos decorate their homes around Christmas time?

5. What are Simbang Gabi?

6. How do people usually celebrate Christmas Eve?

7. What food is eaten at Noche Buena?

8. What food do you eat at Christmas time with your family?

Christmas in the Philippines **Answers**

1. What is the Filipino word for Christmas?

Pasko is the Filipino word for Christmas.

2. What is the main language spoken in the Philippines?

Filipino is the main language spoken in the Philippines.

3. How do you say 'Merry Christmas' in Filipino?

Merry Christmas in Filipino is Maligayang Pasko Po.

4. What is one way Filipinos decorate their homes around Christmas time?

Filipinos decorate their homes by putting up coloured lanterns called parol.

5. What are Simbang Gabi?

Simbang Gabi are night masses at church, sometimes starting at 3am.

6. How do people usually celebrate Christmas Eve?

Most people attend Midnight Mass at church followed by a huge feast at home with family and friends.

7. What food is eaten at Noche Buena?

The foods eaten at Noche Buena include: noodles, bread, sweets, roast pig, rice and rice cakes.

8. What food do you eat at Christmas time with your family?

Children's own answers. Answers will vary.

Christmas in the Philippines

People in the Philippines love Christmas and spread out the celebrations for as long as possible. Some shopping malls even start decorating and playing Christmas carols in September! This mostly Christian (Catholic) nation is seen as having the world's longest Christmas season, lasting into early January. In the Philippines, the main language spoken is Filipino. The word Christmas in Filipino is Pasko.

Maligayang Pasko po!
Merry Christmas

Sana maligaya ang Pasko mo.

I hope your Christmas is merry.

Decorations

Christmas customs (a tradition, something that people do) in the Philippines have been influenced by the Americans and the Spanish. Most homes are heavily decorated in lights and lanterns. Lanterns on bamboo poles or frames are called parol and are usually in the shape of a star made out of colourful Japanese paper or cellophane. The star represents the star that led the three wise men to Jesus in the nativity story.

Church

Between the 16th and 24th of December, churches hold a series of dawn masses called Simbang Gabi (Night Mass) or Misa de Gallo (Rooster's Mass in Spanish). Some services start as early as 3 o'clock in the morning.

Christmas Eve- Bisperas ng Pasko

Christmas Eve is very important to Filipinos who celebrate by attending a Midnight Mass at church, and by having a traditional Noche Buena feast. The Noche Buena is when



people open their houses to celebrate with friends and family to dine together and exchange gifts. Most tables would include food such as lechon (roasted pig), pancit (noodles), bibingka and puto bumbong (rice cakes), fruit, steamed rice and other desserts. When getting together, Filipinos also love to sing - it would be hard to find a household that didn't have a karaoke machine!

Did you know?

- A person from the Philippines is called a Filipino (male or female).
- The Philippines is a country made up of over 7000 islands.
- The parol lantern originated from the Mexican piñata.

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1. What is the Filipino word for Christmas?

2. What is the main language spoken in the Philippines?

3. How do you say 'Merry Christmas' in Filipino?

4. What is one way Filipinos decorate their homes around Christmas time?

5. What are Simbang Gabi?

6. How do people usually celebrate Christmas Eve?

7. What is the feast on Christmas Eve called?

8. What food is eaten at Noche Buena?

9. What food do you and your family normally eat at Christmas time?

10. What is one tradition you do with your family and friends at Christmas time?

Challenge

Do some research to find out more about how the parol lanterns originated in the Philippines.

Christmas in the Philippines **Answers**

1. What is the Filipino word for Christmas?

The Filipino word for Christmas is Pasko.

2. What is the main language spoken in the Philippines?

Filipino is the main language spoken in the Philippines.

3. How do you say 'Merry Christmas' in Filipino?

Merry Christmas in Filipino is Maligayang Pasko Po.

4. What is one way Filipinos decorate their homes around Christmas time?

Filipinos put up coloured lanterns called parol to decorate their homes.

5. What are Simbang Gabi?

Simbang Gabi are night masses at church, sometimes starting at 3am.

6. How do people usually celebrate Christmas Eve?

Most people attend Midnight Mass at church followed by a huge feast at home with family and friends.

7. What is the feast on Christmas Eve called?

The feast gathering on Christmas Eve is called Noche Buena.

8. What food is eaten at Noche Buena?

During Noche Buena most people would eat lechon (roasted pig), pancit (noodles), bibingka and puto bumbong (rice cakes), fruit, steamed rice and other desserts.

9. What food do you and your family normally eat at Christmas time?

Children's own answers. Answers will vary.

10. What is one tradition you do with your family and friends at Christmas time?

Children's own answers. Answers will vary.

Christmas in the Philippines

People in the Philippines love Christmas and spread out the celebrations for as long as possible. Some shopping malls even start decorating and playing Christmas carols in September! This predominantly Christian (Catholic) nation has earned the distinction of the world's longest Christmas season, lasting into early January. In the Philippines, the main language spoken is Filipino. The word Christmas in Filipino is Pasko.

Maligayang Pasko po!
Merry Christmas

Sana maligaya ang Pasko mo.

I hope your Christmas is merry.

Decorations

Christmas customs in the Philippines have been largely influenced by the Americans and the Spanish. Most homes are heavily decorated in lights and lanterns. Lanterns on bamboo poles or frames are called *parol* and are usually in the shape of a star made out of colourful Japanese paper or cellophane. The star is meant to represent the star that led the three wise men to Jesus in the nativity story.

Church

Between the 16th and 24th of December, churches hold a series of dawn masses called *Simbang Gabi* (Night Mass) or *Misa de Gallo* (Rooster's Mass in Spanish). Some services start as early as 3am. Attending mass is a way of showing devotion in anticipation of the birth of Jesus.

Christmas Eve- Bisperas ng Pasko

Christmas Eve is most cherished by Filipinos who celebrate by attending a Midnight Mass at church, and by having a traditional *Noche Buena* feast. The *Noche Buena* is when people open their houses to celebrate with friends and family to dine together and exchange gifts. Most spreads would include foods such as *lechon* (roasted pig), *pancit* (noodles), *bibingka* and *puto bumbong* (rice cakes), fruit, steamed rice and other desserts. When getting together, Filipinos also love to sing - it would be hard to find a household that didn't have a karaoke machine!



Did you know?

- There are eight main languages in the Philippines.
- The Philippines is a country made up of over 7000 islands.
- The **parol** lantern originated from the Mexican piñata.

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Christmas in the Philippines Questions

1. What is the Filipino word for Christmas?

2. What is the main language spoken in the Philippines?

3. How do you say 'Merry Christmas' in Filipino?

4. What is one way Filipinos decorate their homes around Christmas time?

5. What are Simbang Gabi?

6. Use a dictionary to find the meaning of 'devotion'.

7. How do people usually celebrate Christmas Eve?

8. What food is eaten at Noche Buena?

9. What is one tradition you do with your family and friends at Christmas time?

10. Describe the similarities and differences between how you celebrate Christmas, and how Filipinos celebrate Christmas.

Challenge

Do some research to find other ways the Philippines has been influenced by Spanish and the American customs.

Christmas in the Philippines **Answers**

1. What is the Filipino word for Christmas?

Pasko is the Filipino word for Christmas.

2. What is the main language spoken in the Philippines?

Filipino is the main language spoken in the Philippines.

3. How do you say 'Merry Christmas' in Filipino?

Merry Christmas in Filipino is Maligayang Pasko Po.

4. What is one way Filipinos decorate their homes around Christmas time?

Filipinos put up coloured lanterns called parol to decorate their homes.

5. What are Simbang Gabi?

Simbang Gabi are night masses at church, sometimes starting at 3am.

6. Use a dictionary to find the meaning of 'devotion'.

'Devotion' means dedication to one's religion.

7. How do people usually celebrate Christmas Eve?

Most people attend Midnight Mass at church followed by a huge feast at home with family and friends.

8. What food is eaten at Noche Buena?

The food eaten at Noche Buena include: noodles, bread, sweets, roast pig, rice and rice cakes.

9. What is one tradition you do with your family and friends at Christmas time?

Children's own answers. Answers will vary.

10. Describe the similarities and differences between how you celebrate Christmas and how the Filipinos celebrate Christmas.

Children's own answers. Answers will vary.