Dances of the Philippines

Countries in the world have their own cultures made more colorful, beautiful and vibrant because of Folk Dances that are reflection of who they are. In the east, the Chinese have their symbolic Dragon Dance, the Japanese have the ancestral dance Bon Odori. In the west the Americans have their Square Dance. On the other hand, the Philippines will not be left behind. "The Pearl of The Orient" boast of a varitey of Filipino Folk Dances.

The Philippines consist of 7107 islands, and is broken down in three groups of islands. The Luzon, Mindano, and Visayas. Each of these regions contain different languages,history, regligon, and traditions. With each region having different influence in thier arts, crafts, and ancestorical dances. Lets take a trip through each region and explore the different styles, costumes, Dances and Talents from Each Region.... As we explore each of the regions and styles, please remember alot of these Cultural and Folk dances represents hardships and daily back breaking tasks, that has turned into a art form. Many of the dances you will read about here were actuall activities or chores that the Filipino endured to survive the poor economy and state of the nation.....

LUZON -- Consisting of the tribes such as Ifugao, Benquet, Kalinga, Bontoc, Apayo, Kalinga, sometimes these are call Igorot. " But sometimes that is considered degrading."
Cordillerea name also used for some parts the Luzon Region...
Northern most region of the Philippines, Luzon gets its Cultural influence from Hindu-Buddist, Spanish and many ethnic regilous tribes. All with differences and beliefs. But in all the Cultural and Folk Dances from this region represents all different factions in one way or the other.

Dances of Luzon ( see side bar for pictures of many of the dances )

* Dance: Idaw

This dance sometimes has many names and different versions. Most common is this dance depicts the hunting ritual performed before a tribal war. The tribes men would go out and look up and watch for the scared Idaw bird. Which is said to lead the tribe to victory. Also look at the clothing, Philippines being a very hot climate, plus the use of as little material as possible, the traditional clothing was not made to cover much of the body....

Dance : Banga

This dance displays the Igorot women on their way to the river to fetch the daily water supply for thier families. It shows the skill and strength of the women as they would carry heavy laden clay pots (Banga) full of water. Their grace and agility while balancing the heavy pots, sometimes stacks 5 high, is a testiment of the Filipino and how hardships become a art form and talent. As a young girl you would start with only one pot. Of course
as you become older and more experienced, along with the fact that you could provide more water for your family in one trip. Pots could be stacked as high as 5 or 6. The more pots you could carry showed your skill and also you standing amongst the women of that area. They would all gather and march to the river each day, singing a native song which is represented by the flute and banging of bamboo on iron pots in the dance......

* Dance : Idudu

The family is the basic structure of family life among the Itneg / Tinggian people. The caring for the Children is shared by both the mother and father. While the men are clearing the fields, breaking the soil with bamboo and their feet, the women watch the children. Soon as the men are done, they take care of the children while the women do back breaking work. You can see in the dance how the women will take the bamboo baskets in a shaking fashion like drying the rice, while the men are going in circles in background like they are toiling the land. Then you will see the women put down the baskets fold the cloth into a baby while the husband stands aside. Then the women will turn over the baby to the husband, pick up the bamboo and start toiling the land while the men hold and cradle the babys........

* Dance : Ragsaksakan

The word means "Merriment". This dance would be performed after a successful headhunt and also for a peace pact between warring tribes. The colorful hand woven blankets "blankets of life" are worn around the neck while baskets to carry produce or rice are worn upon the head. Some versions of this dance use the "Banga" instead of the basket.