



**Debutante** (or Deb) (French word for “**female beginner**”) is a young lady from an aristocratic or upper class family who has reached the age of maturity, and as a new adult, is introduced to society at a formal presentation known as her “**debut**” or “**coming out.**” Originally, it meant the young woman was eligible for marriage, and part of the purpose was to display her to eligible bachelors and their families with a view to marriage within a select upper class circle. This event is traditionally referred to as **The Debutante’s Ball.**

In the Philippines, a debutante’s ball is very popular and widely celebrated when young Filipina teenager turns 18.

The highlight of a debutante’s ball is known as **The Grand Cotillion Dance** where the Debutante, with an escort, share a waltz dance with the elegantly-dressed cotillion court composed of her friends of 9 boys and 9 girls. A special cotillion choreographer is normally hired by the debutante’s parent to teach the un-experienced boys and girls to perform a highly-choreographed waltz dance. Practices for the dance can last for 6 months and normally held in the debutante’s residence every weekend.

The other popular dance is **The 18 Roses Dance** where the Debutante shares a memorable dance with 18 men with each one offering a freshly-cut red beautiful rose. The father of the debutante is typically the first one to dance, often called **The Father and Daughter Dance.** The Debutante picks the 18 songs to play and the participants normally include relatives, friends, godfathers, neighbors and acquaintances.

Next of the tradition is **The 18 Candles Presentation**, wherein 18 ladies will light 18 candles to resemble the 18 lights that will serve as guidance to the debutante as she makes her transition to the status of a full grown woman. Sometimes, the 18-lighted candles are the candles that the debutante blows before she cuts the cake. Most often, the mother of the debutante is the last of the 18 candles participants. Each participant also says a word, a congratulatory note or wishes to the debutante.

A new activity that we have seen lately is what others call **The 18 Symbolic Treasures**, where 18 participants, mostly family friends and relatives, as well as godmothers and godfathers, offer a gift to the debutante. A perfect gift is something that the Debutante can treasure as she moves on to college and started to live as a young woman.

The last of the tradition is **A Word From The Debutante**, where the Debutante shares her thoughts of probably one of the most memorable times of her life.

Likewise, a debutante's ball is a way for the parent to showcase to the society their daughter's talents or special skills like dancing, singing or playing instruments and other talents she possesses.

The debutante's ball normally concludes with hours of dancing enjoyed by both the adults and teenagers.

**The following is the typical Debutante's Ball Agenda**

*INTRODUCTION OF THE COTILLION COURT, THE FAMILY, ESCORT, AND THE DEBUTANTE*

*TOAST IN HONOR OF THE DEBUTANTE*

*WELCOME REMARKS BY THE PARENTS*

*INVOCATION OR PRAYER*

*DINING TIME*

*VIDEO PRESENTATION*

*THE FATHER AND DAUGHTER DANCE*

*GRAND COTILLION WALTZ DANCE*

*COTILLION COURT SPECIAL DANCES*

*18 ROSES DANCE*

*18 CANDLES PRESENTATION*

*SINGING OF THE TRADITIONAL BIRTHDAY SONG*

*BLOWING OF THE CAKE CANDLES*

*CUTTING OF THE CAKE*

*18 TREASURES PRESENTATION*

*A WORD FROM THE DEBUTANTE*

*DANCING TIME*

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