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 variety 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, religion, and traditions. With each region having different influence in their arts, crafts, and ancestral 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 actual 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." Cordillera name also used for some parts the Luzon Region... Northern most region of the Philippines, Luzon gets its Cultural influence from Hindu-Buddhist, Spanish and many ethnic religious 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

* 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 familys. 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 testament 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 amoung 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 poeple. 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 waring tribles. 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.
MINDANAO -- This is the southern most region of The Philippines. Being the second largest island in the Philippines, its Culture consists of mostly Muslim or "Moro" people, also composed of other ethnic groups such as the Maranao, Tausug, Banguingui, and indigenous tribes know as Lumad. You will see alot of Arabian, and Middle Eastern influence in thier costumes and dances.

Dances of Mindanao

* Dance : Singkil  Sinkil dance takes its name from the bells worn on the ankles of the Muslim princess. Perhaps one of the oldest of truly Filipino dances, the Singkil recounts the epic legend of the "Darangan" of the Maranao people of Mindanao. This epic, written sometime in the 14th century, tells the fateful story of Princess Gandingan, who was caught in the middle of a forest during an earthquake caused by the diwatas, or fairies or nymph of the forest. The rhythmic clapping of criss-crossed bamboo poles represent the trees that were falling, which she gracefully avoids. Her slave loyally accompanies her throughout her ordeal. Finally, she is saved by the prince. Dancers wearing solemn faces and maintaining a dignified pose being dancing at a slow pace which soon progresses to a faster tempo skillfully manipulate apir, or fans which represent the winds that prove to be auspicious. The dancers weave expertly through criss-crossed bamboos.

* Dance : Kini Kini  Kini means the Royal Walk. Maranao women performed this dance with scarves. The beauty of the scarf and the talent and grace in which it is displayed. Shows their elite social upbringing.

* Dance : Pangalay  A pangalay native to the Badjao, sometimes known as the "Sea Gypsies." Pangalay is a dance that emphasizes the agility of the upper body. The rhythmic bounce of the shoulder with simultaneous alternating waving of arms are the basic movement of this dance. The pangalay is commonly performed at weddings and other social gatherings. You will also see some parts of the
Sinkgil in this dance also. Another part of this dance is also called the Muslum four Bamboos.

* Dance : Asik
This is performed by a solo maiden, adorned with fine beads and make up, long head scarf. She would dance to win the favor of her Sultan master. Many time the girls would dance to win the hearts of her master or to make up for a wrong she had done. She would give her whole heart and soul into this performance to soften the heart of her master to accept her...

**LOVE OF LIFE AND COUNTRY - VISAYAS REGION**

VISAYAS -- Being the Central Island of The Philippines, Visayas is also broken down into three sections. Central, Eastern, Western. Consisting of Austronesians, Negritos, these we Animist Tribal Group. Many others tribes from around surrounding island would come after the downfall or break up of thier tribes. Visayas became a melting pot for many different Tribes and Cultural backgrouds. You will find Arbian, Spanish, and some Western influences in the dances of this region. You will see that the dances of the Visayas are more upbeat and exciting, not so much in Drama and tribal meanings as other regions.

Visayas Dances

* Dance : Sayaw Sa Banko
This dance is native to the barrio of Pangapisan, Lingayen, Pangasinan, and demands skill from its performers who must dance on top of a bench roughly six inches wide.

* Dance : Tinkling
Tinnikling is considered the national folkdance with a pair of dancers hopping between two bamboo
poles held just above the ground and struck together in time to music. Originated from Leyte Province, this dance is in fact a mimic movement of “tikling birds” hopping over trees, grass stems or over bamboo traps set by farmers. Dancers perform this dance with remarkable grace and speed jumping between bamboo poles.

* Dance : Subli
The term “subli” is from two tagalog words “subsub” meaning falling on head and “bali”, which means broken. Hence, the dancers appear to be lame and crooked throughout the dance. This version is originally a ritual dance of the natives of Bauan, Batangas, which is shown during fiestas as a ceremonial worship dance to the town’s icon, the holy cross

* Dance : Maglalatik
Originally performed in Binan, Laguna as a mock-war dance that demonstrates a fight between the Moros and the Christians over the prized latik or coconut meat during the Spanish rule, this dance is also shown to pay tribute to the town’s patron saint, San Isidro Labrador. It has a four-part performance such as the palipasan and the baligtaran showing the intense battle, the paseo and the escaramusa- the reconciliation. Moro dancers wear read trousers while the Christian dancers show up in blue. All dancers are male; with harnesses of coconut shells attached on their chests, backs, thighs and hips

Ref.: http://philippinesculturalfolkdances.blogspot.dk/