

# Parol - Filipino Christmas Lantern

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Parol is a traditional Filipino Christmas decoration, a five point star-shaped Christmas lantern. Originally made of thin bamboo frames and covered with colored cellophane or with rice paper also known as Japanese paper or papel de Japon. It has two tails that serve as the rays of the star.

Parol reminds the [Filipino Christians](#) of the star of Bethlehem that guided the Three Wise Men on their way in search of Baby Jesus.

## Parol as Christmas Street Decorations



Parol of various shapes and sizes made of plastic sheet are favourite street Christmas decors around the city.

During Christmas season, **parols** are seen everywhere. As early as November, parols are hang on windows or door of every Filipino homes, offices, schools, shopping malls and even streets are adorned with these multi-colored lanterns. You will even find mini parols hanging on buses and jeepneys and cars. Today, the parol become more colorful because of the twinkling bulbs in dazzling pattern that help illuminates each parol.



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Filipinos used new and recycled materials to make parols, like plastic glasses, candy wrappers, soft drink straws, recycled papers and shells. The present day parol come in different shapes and sizes it doesn't have to be star- shaped, it can be round, rectangular or even square, like a diorama with the Nativity on it.

Parol represents the Filipino innovation, creativity and it is the greatest expression of Christmas spirit. Parol making is a traditional folk craft. School children are taught how to make parol and they usually have a lantern parade to showcase their work.

## Parol made from capiz shells



Elegant Christmas Parol made from capiz shells are very popular in the Philippines and are exported to other countries.

Parol making is not only a Christmas symbol, it is a symbol of hope for lots of Parol makers. Parol making business is a source of income for lots of Filipinos. They make parol as early as June, a lot of them are sold in the market from October. Parol vendors can be found everywhere, you will see them on the side walks, bus stops, jeepney stops or even along the highway.

Parol has become the most recognizable Christmas ornament for Filipinos not just in the Philippines, but in any country where there is a Filipino community. Parol are sold overseas, these are usually made from capiz or shells and are intricately designed, these last long and can be used every year. There are also Parol that are sold online.

## Giant Lantern Festival - San Fernando, Pampanga Philippines

The most spectacular exhibition and parade of Parol is held every year in San Fernando Pampanga, famous for the most unique star lanterns in shapes, colors and sizes made from all kinds of material.

The town becomes the center of Christmas activities, every year spectators get to marvel the amazing lights of the giant lanterns. These lanterns were made by the skillful parol makers from Pampanga.

The Giant Lantern Festival of San Fernando is the event that the province of Pampanga is most known for. No doubt that is the reason why San Fernando, Pampanga has been dubbed as the Christmas Capital of the Philippines.

You can read about the story behind the the Giant Lantern Festival [here](#).

The parol uplifts the spirit, instills a sense of pride and hope, it not only brightens Filipino Christmas, but it serves as an inspiration for Filipino ingenuity.

Parol can brighten any place



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- [How to Make a Parol](#)

Market Manila's simple and easy steps on how to make a parol, with pictures.

- [Manila's Giant Lantern](#)

These lanterns were displayed at Luneta park (2007)



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