

## So You Want to Marry a Filipina

### Why?

Don't get me wrong, I think it's a great decision for many men, but definitely not for everyone. Too often Filipinas are tossed into that broad and meaningless category of "Asian Women." Why do I say meaningless? Typically that category would include Filipino, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Thai, and Malaysian women, amongst many, many others. Yet these people have different languages, different ethnicities, different religions, and different cultures. About the only thing they have in common is that they can see the same ocean if they make it to the beach.

For that reason I discourage any man from marrying a Filipina simply because he has some mythical notion (which the Internet tends to perpetuate) that all women from that area of the world are pretty much the same.

Anyway, here's a little test for you prospective husbands. There are two aims here: first, to determine how much you actually know about your prospective wife's homeland and culture, and two, to check your ability to deal with certain nuances once the marriage is official. Be honest, because you're the only person who knows your score, and there aren't any cash prizes!

1. Have you ever been to the Philippines?
2. Can you find the Philippines on a map?
3. Can you list three languages, other than English, spoken in the Philippines?
4. What are the three primary religions/denominations in the Philippines?
5. When did the Philippines become a U.S. colony? When did it become fully independent?
6. Why do Filipinos typically have Spanish names?
7. Do you plan on having children? Preferably several?
8. Are you at all reluctant to accept your new wife's family as your own, and if not, are you prepared to provide financial assistance to your new, extended family when they need it for schooling, medical care, or food?
9. Are you tolerant of superstitions?
10. Do you like soy sauce, garlic, and fried foods?
11. Do you like raw fish?
12. What is the preferred utensil when eating? Silverware, chopsticks, none?
13. Do you know how to bow properly?
14. Do you anticipate that your wife will be submissive and obedient?
15. Are you getting married basically for the sex? Be honest now!

16. If you are not Catholic, and your wife is, how will you raise your children?

17. What is the difference between a Tagal, Ilocono, Zambal, and Visayan?

18. How does a Filipina differ from a Japanese woman? A Thai woman? Why does that make her a better choice for you?

19. Are you marrying a Filipina because you pretty much hate the women of your own country?

Answers and comments:

1. Have you ever been to the Philippines? Yes=5 pts.

2. Can you find the Philippines on a map? Yes=1 pt.

3. Can you list three languages, other than English, spoken in the Philippines?

1 pt for each language. Examples: Tagalog, Ilocono, Visayan, Cebuano, Zambal, etc.

4. What are the three primary religions/denominations in the Philippines? 83% Roman Catholic, 9% Protestant, 5% Muslim. 5 pts if you selected these three correctly (percentages are not, of course, required for a correct answer).

5. When did the Philippines become a U.S. colony? When did it become fully independent? 1899, 1946. 5 pts. for each date.

6. Why do Filipinos typically have Spanish names? The Spanish Friars forced the native Filipinos to take Spanish names during the Spanish colonial period. When the Spanish arrived the local priests & friars began to baptize the local people into the catholic church and undertook the first registration of births, marriages and deaths, this way they could effectively manage their new congregations. Naturally, they did not consider names like Lapu Lapu to be very Christian, so they gave baptized them with new Spanish names. Correct answer=3 pts.

7. Do you plan on having children? How many? 1 pt for each child.

8. Are you at all reluctant to accept your new wife's family as your own, and if not, are you prepared to provide financial assistance to your new, extended family when they need it for schooling, medical care, or food? If you're prepared to help your in-laws, financially, as if they were your own family, give yourself 4 pts.

9. Are you tolerant of superstitions? Yes=2 pts.

10. Do you like soy sauce, garlic, and fried foods? Yes=5 pts, No=(-5 pts)

11. Do you like raw fish? Yes=(-5 pts). Trick question. 90% of Filipinos don't. One site visitor tells me that on Mindanao, kinilaw (with raw fish) is very popular, but if you know what kinilaw is, you shouldn't be taking this test anyway! Some Americans eat raw beef, too, but it's not the norm.

12. What is the preferred utensil when eating? Silverware, chopsticks, none? None. Finger foods include rice and just about everything else. Silverware is used selectively, and chopsticks not at all (at least no more than any American might use them). None=5 pts, Silverware=1 pt.

13. Do you know how to bow properly? Yes=(-2 pts).Trick question. Filipinos don't bow. If you were thinking of the "mano po" gesture, give yourself +2pts instead. If you don't know what that means, you don't get the points, and it wouldn't hurt you to figure it out before you meet the girl's parents!
14. Do you anticipate that your wife will be submissive and obedient? No=2 pts. Filipinas are generally non-confrontational, but that should not be mistaken as submissive. They are simply more sophisticated in getting you to do what they want you to do. They may hesitate to challenge you in front of other people, also, to save you from embarrassment. Even when you are clearly off your rocker.
15. Are you getting married basically for the sex? Be honest now! No=5 pts. Sex is part of marriage (well, most marriages), but what do you plan on doing with the other 96% of your day? She's not going anywhere, you know. She might even want to talk to you!
16. If you are not Catholic, and your wife is, how will you raise your children? Just something to think about. No points either way. You'll both have to decide, and the odds are that she's more devoted to her religion than you are to yours, so be prepared for some soul-searching on this matter.
17. What is the difference between a Tagal, Ilocono, Zambal, and Visayan? These are ethnic divisions within the Philippines, each with its own distinctive culture, foods, and language. In the last century the divisions were referred to as "tribes." But don't be misled. Tagals, Zambals, etc., are not rivals, at least not in modern times. A Filipina can maintain her local ancestral heritage and still happily remain "Filipino." Comparing these groups is not unlike comparing Southerners to Californians to New Englanders in the U.S. 5 pts if you got this one right.
18. How does a Filipina differ from a Japanese woman? A Thai woman? For one thing, unless she's from Mindanao, odds are that she's a very devoted Christian. She's probably got Spanish, Malaysian, and Chinese blood in her, and possibly even American. In general, she speaks excellent English. Filipinas come from a nation that is very western. In fact, after centuries of Spanish and American rule, the Philippines more closely resembles Mexico than Japan or China. If you got the general idea right, give yourself 5 pts. Why does that make her a better choice for you? That's for you to decide. No points.
19. Are you marrying a Filipina because you pretty much hate the women of your own country? Yes= (-25 pts). I know that sounds like a rather draconian penalty, but you have to realize that hating an entire gender, even within the confines of a single country, just isn't reasonable. Odds are that your mom, grandmother, and sister weren't Filipinas, right? Did you hate them, too? It's one thing to say that you believe that you'll have a greater chance of finding the woman you want in the Philippines, but it's quite another to say that all the woman from your own homeland are unworthy of marriage. If you're marrying a Filipina, it should be because of who she is, not who she is not. That she isn't from your own homeland in no way guarantees she will be any more suitable for you than any other woman.

#### Calculating your Score (below)

60+ pts: Either you're from the Philippines or you're already married to a Filipina. If not, you certainly did your homework! Congratulations!

40-59pts: Not bad at all. I'd proceed with my plans if I were you, but it wouldn't hurt to educate yourself a little bit about the Philippines.

20-39pts: Hmm...average showing. Well, at least you've got the knowledge and qualifications it would take to pull this off, but I think you might meditate a bit longer before committing yourself. So you STILL want to marry a Filipina!

01-19pts: Is it Philippines or Phillipines or Phillipines? Danger! Danger!

0 and below: This can only end in disaster, you realize.