

## Filipino Culture – Table Manners

Like any other culture, **Filipino culture** has its own idiosyncrasies when it comes to table manners. Some of which cause Westerners to proclaim that all Filipino are rude.



This is not really true. It is completely acceptable behavior within Filipino culture. Some of the traditions are also overwhelming polite. Like most Filipino will never take the last piece of chicken from the table but they will eat every molecule of food on their plate. It is almost disrespectful to leave anything on your plate. That is scary when you think of some of the things that might end up on your plate. If someone puts balot on my plate, it will stay there until someone else eats it. Balot, often spelled balut is a fertilized duck egg that is partially developed, then boiled and eaten out of the shell. Jessie spells it with the “O” so I do too.

Especially in informal setting, Filipinos will often eat with their hands. Last night, I noticed a woman scoop up her rice with her fingers. It reminded me of a giant digging machine with its claw digging into the earth, clamping down on its target then lifting it to place the dirt into a waiting dump truck. Only now, the target is rice and the dump truck is her mouth.

Is that rude? No it is not. It would be rude to do that in the USA but we are not in the USA. Here it is normal and completely acceptable. I don't particular like to watch it so I don't. There is no reason I have to look at it. I can look someplace else. In more formal settings though most Filipinos will use a spoon. Forks are used much less frequently here. Though I think that is changing. Not every Filipino eats in this manner. Jessie doesn't do it. her son does though.

I've seen Westerners go on and on and complain until the cows come home about this. After the cows come up they complain about it some more if they can't find something else to complain. If it bothers you, don't watch it. Hey Mr. manners, did you forget it is rude in our culture to stare! Let it go, it isn't the end of the world. It is not worth one electrical impulse in your brain that it took to disapprove. Nor is it worth the vibration you are causing in my ears when you complain. maybe you feel better now though. After all you're better than that, right?. I know I should be kinder but I have my own hypocrisy. I dislike judgmental thoughts. Yes, I'm judgmental about judgmental people.

I've seen Filipinos do it in restaurant too. You know if you are use to doing this it would be easier than using a eating utensils. Me, I don't like touching squishy or slimy things. I like them even less in my mouth.

What is rude in your culture is not rude in another culture. Many things you do are rude to Filipino but most understand we don't know their ways and don't condemn us for it. It does seem that Filipinos are getting tired of the loud American syndrome though. I know of one landlord that doesn't rent to Americans any more because we complain too much. Put down your lawyers card, you won't be able to sue anyone fo that in the Philippines. Moving to the Philippines will require you to adjust. You don't have to adopt Filipino culture but you are going to have to live within it. Learning to see *Filipino culture* through Filipino eyes instead of Western eyes will likely lead to a more enjoyable experience for you.

Ref.: <http://www.cebuexperience.org/filipino-culture-table-manners/>

Look MUCH more here: [www.Table-manners.PhilippineCulture.ph](http://www.Table-manners.PhilippineCulture.ph)

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## **How to Eat Filipino Food With Your Hands**

- 1 Place a small amount of the main dish, called "ulam," on top of a little bit of rice, using your dominant hand.
- 2 Pinch your index finger and thumb together as if you are about to pick up a piece of cheese.
- 3 Include your other three fingers in the pinch.
- 4 Spread the pinch so that your fingers and thumb are shaped around the rice and "ulam."
- 5 Place your thumb behind the food.
- 6 Lean your head forward and lift your hand to your mouth.
- 7 Place fingers near your lower teeth and shove the food into your mouth with one big push of the thumb.

Ref.: [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_3805\\_eat-filipino-food.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_3805_eat-filipino-food.html)

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## **How to Use Proper Filipino Dinnertime Manners**

- 1 Keep your elbows off the table during dinner.
- 2 Avoid placing money on the table when food is set.
- 3 Resist any urge you may have to sing during the meal.
- 4 Serve guests first and offer second or third helpings.
- 5 Go ahead and burp. Burping is not considered rude and conveys you are full and enjoyed the meal. Sometimes a burp is followed with the expression, "Ay, salamat," which means, "Ahh, thank you."

Ref.: [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_3804\\_proper-filipino-dinnertime.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_3804_proper-filipino-dinnertime.html)

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