



The pride of Kalinga

by: Raiza Cariazo

“United we stand, divided we fall,” is the saying that fits our province Kalinga for it is one of the few which was never colonized by foreigners and as a result, we were able to preserve our natural resources as well as our culture.

Kalinga, dubbed as “The Peacock of the North” for the people’s invincible spirit of sovereignty, is a land endowed with majestic mountains, rustic villages, rice terraces, mystique, and legends and tales of the legendary God, Kabunian. It is the cradle of the Cordillera culture for its culture is highly refined and colorful with its varied dances, songs, music, and exotic tribal finery.

Kalinga is rich enough in terms of natural resources.

Sleeping Beauty, located at Tinglayan, is one of the famous natural attractions in Kalinga. Photographers could take their snapshots of this fabled mountain at the Sungang Viewpoint located at Maswa in Basao, Tinglayan. Sungang Viewpoint also presents a noble and photographic view of the Tulgao and Dananao Rice Terraces.

If Ifugao has the Banaue Rice Terraces, Kalinga is also proud to present the amphitheater-like Tinglayan Rice Terraces.

It is also in Tinglayan where you can experience rafting (the adventure you shouldn’t miss while here in Kalinga) at Chico River with Class 5 rapids. You can also find the Palan-ah falls and hot springs here.

In Tabuk City, specifically at the Talama View Park, a place ideal for eco-walk adventures and picnics, you can see the breathtaking view of Chico River.

If in Region 2 there is the Magat Dam, in Kalinga we have the Chico River Diversion Dam, which serves as the main source of water irrigating the vast farmlands of Tabuk City and neighboring villages.

If you also want to take a glance of the newly created City of Tabuk, just go up the park in front of the Provincial Capitol while also enjoying the cool air.

Moving on to Tanudan, a culture-rich municipality, you could see the majestic Mount Binaratan, Kabunian’s Mountain, and Lubo Rice Terraces. At Kabunian’s Mountain, you will be astonished with its complete silence for legends say that no birds, animals, nor insects dare to disturb the place as a respect to the gods.

If you want to experience or take adventures on foggy mountain-sides, just proceed to the municipality of Bal-balan, at Balba-lasang National Park which is dubbed as the “Little Baguio” of Kalinga. Below the forested surface of this municipality gently flows the clear water of Ugid Maling Subterranean River.

You can also take a dip in the Saltan River, Kalinga’s cleanest river, or be the first to explore the mysterious caverns of Buaya Caves.

Want to watch a live weaving of the famous tapis, bag, and g-string? Just visit the Mabilong Weavers Village at Lubuagan, the haven of weavers in the province.

In terms of historical places, Kalinga has its own. In Pinukpuk you can find the famous Aguinaldo Hill where the Katipuneros, led by Emilio Aguinaldo, made their last stand (in Kalinga) against the Americans. In one of its public school grounds, you could also see the century-old Aciga Tree.

Kalinga has something to show off in terms of religious landmarks. We have many old churches in the province. These are the Tuga Catholic Church, referred to as the first seat of the early missionaries in the province, located at Tuga, Tabuk, and St. Joseph Catholic Church at the town proper of Naneng, Tabuk. Upon reaching our capital town, we have the St. Williams Cathedral which has alluring designs showcasing the beauty of Kalinga culture and arts.

After visiting all these places, you must not forget to taste the Kalinga Brew Coffee, one of Kalinga's best native products, which is now making its way into the local and foreign markets.

It's also nice to learn and recognize the local cultures, traditional practices, and values in Kalinga.

There is what we call bodong (peace pact system) which was conceived because of the Kalingas' desire to live in peace and social security so that advances towards economic prosperity and social stability might be achieved according to the people's concepts of wealth and well-being and that they may develop and preserve cultural heritages.

In the far-flung part of Kalinga otherwise known as Upper Kalinga, it is in their values that if a man is hurt or killed by other people, his injury or death is avenged by his family. When the avenging family is a relative or near blood, an indemnity is demanded by the offended family, but if they come from different villages, elders or leaders from both places are called upon to represent their respective sides in the argument. Through the power of bodong, tribal wars are prevented.

Kalingas are hospitable. If you are a visitor, they would give you the best accommodation and if there are cases that the house where you enter in cannot accommodate you all, the neighboring houses will be opened for you. You are always welcome because it would be their honor to entertain you. They respect the personal belongings of others. They are generous. If there are activities in the community, it is their custom to give something. They have great respect to elders that's why if there are misunderstandings between two tribes, the elders are the ones to be called.

Traditional practices vary from each municipality. In some places in Kalinga, sharing of family property is more or less equal but in Lubuagan, Tanudan, and Tinglayan, it is the first born who will inherit the family's belongings.

Another unique tradition is the first visit of the first grandchild to the house of the grandparents. In Tanudan and Tinglayan, during that occasion, pigs are being butchered and beads and blankets are given to the child. In Lubuagan and Pasil, they prepare rice cakes, play tongngatong, and give beads and blankets to the child. In Balbalan, Pinukpuk, and Tabuk, they dance, sing, and butcher animals.

It is also their practice to play tongngatong on a wedding so that Kabunian will guard the couple and bless them with children.

On the forested area of Kalinga, there is what we call botad, an alarm or call for assistance when someone is injured in the forest. Men and women go to the place to help in carrying or curing the injured.

It is also in the culture of those in Upper Kalinga to celeb-rate datum, a ritual by which a young warrior is formally re-cognized and admitted to the society of the brave.

Bayanihan in Kalinga is also still alive. If a family will transfer to their new house, neighbors come to help. If there are some works in the field, neighbors would voluntarily offer their services. The same as when there are activities in the community like weddings. The services of the Kalingas are not payable, but valuable.

So come on and take part of our culture or come and explore our beautiful, superb, and fabulous province — Kalinga!

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