



The Cuisine of the National Capital Region

Exploring the food culture, traditions, and culinary identity of Metro Manila — the Philippines' political, economic, and cultural heart.

FILIPINO CULINARY HERITAGE

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Learning Outcomes

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

01

Identify

Geographical characteristics and cities of NCR

03

Describe

Food culture, traditions, and preparation methods

02

Explain

How urbanization shapes NCR cuisine

04

Appreciate

NCR's role in modern Filipino gastronomy

Metro Manila

This map illustrates the geographical layout of Metro Manila and its surrounding provinces. The central urban area is composed of several cities, each represented by a different shade of blue. Taguig is the darkest blue, indicating it is the largest or most central city. Other cities include Quezon City, Manila, Makati, San City, Saloocan, Pasay, Taguig, Parañque, Vavostas, Par Piña, and Mariñque. The surrounding provinces are shown in light gray: Bulacan, Rizal, Cavite, Laguna, and San Juan. A scale bar at the bottom indicates distances from 0 to 50 units, and a north arrow is located in the bottom left corner.

Provinces: Bulacan, Rizal, Cavite, Laguna, San Juan

Cities: Quezon City, Manila, Makati, San City, Saloocan, Pasay, Taguig, Parañque, Vavostas, Par Piña, Mariñque

Other locations: Mandalayong, Valekina, Calocca

Located in **southwestern Luzon**, NCR is unique — it has **no provinces**, comprising **16 cities and 1 municipality**. Surrounded by Bulacan, Rizal, Cavite, and Laguna, it is a highly urbanized region with commercial centers, coastal communities, and river systems.

A Melting Pot of Cultures

Metro Manila's role as the center of commerce and migration made it a convergence of culinary traditions.

Tagalog Heritage

Traditional Filipino flavors at the core

Chinese Influence

Noodles, dumplings, hopia, roasted meats

Spanish Colonial

Stews, pastries, and festive dishes

American & Global

Fast food, fusion, and modern gastronomy

Street Food Culture



Street food became a symbol of everyday Filipino life — affordable, convenient, and deeply cultural.



Fish Balls & Kwek-Kwek

Iconic fried snacks sold on every corner



Isaw & Barbecue

Grilled skewers popular at night markets



Banana Cue

Caramelized banana on a stick — a beloved merienda

Binondo: The World's Oldest Chinatown

Chinese-Filipino Culinary Legacy

Binondo, Manila introduced flavors and techniques that became inseparable from Filipino cuisine:

- Noodles and rice toppings
- Dumplings and dim sum
- Hopia and roasted meats
- Soy sauce and vinegar-based cooking



Signature Dishes by City



Manila

Arroz caldo, lumpia, Chinese-Filipino noodles, ensaymada



Quezon City

Street food specialties, sisig variations, fusion cuisine



Makati & Taguig

Contemporary Filipino dishes, gourmet desserts, international fusion



Pateros

Balut, salted eggs, and duck-based delicacies from its duck-raising tradition

Food Preparation Methods

Traditional

Frying, grilling, stewing, braising — used in homes, street stalls, and fast food

Modern

Fusion cooking and molecular gastronomy in upscale Metro Manila restaurants

Key dishes: Adobo, kare-kare, caldereta, fried chicken, lumpia, barbecue, pastries, and desserts reflect the full range of techniques used across the region.

Food Industries & Key Ingredients

Though urbanized, NCR is a major hub for food manufacturing and processing, relying on neighboring provinces for raw agricultural supply.



Seafood Trading

Coastal access supports active seafood markets and processing



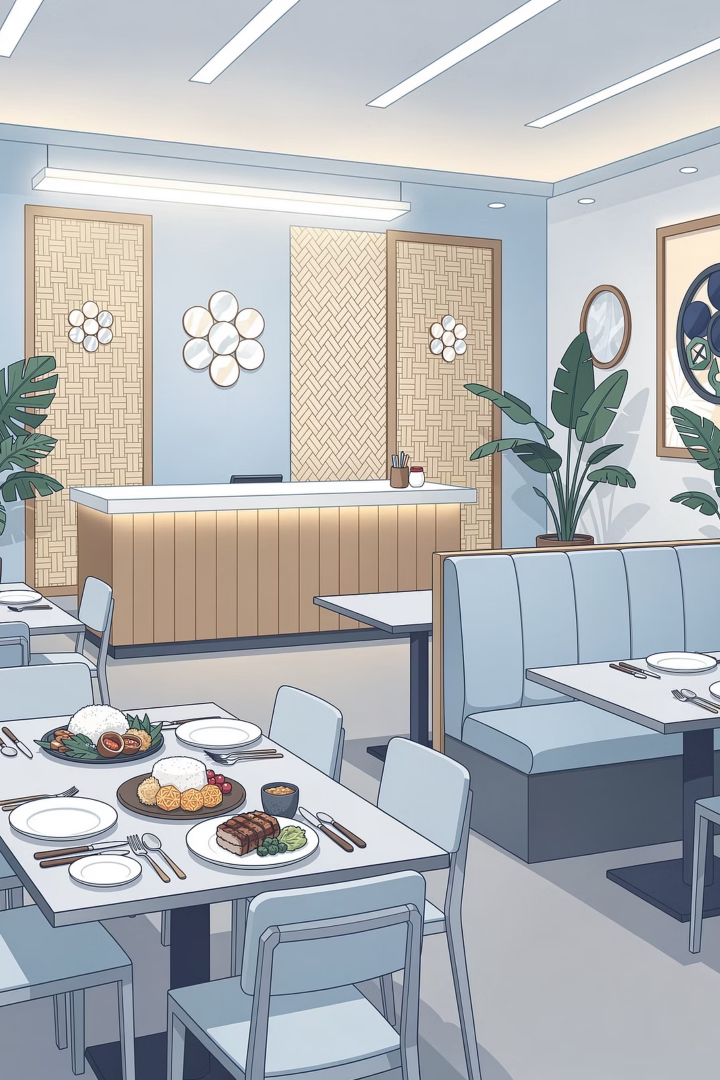
Bakery Production

Pandesal, ensaymada, and pastries are staples of daily life



Staple Ingredients

Rice, noodles, pork, soy sauce, and vinegar anchor most NCR dishes



NCR: The Culinary Gateway of the Philippines

Metro Manila is where **traditional Filipino flavors meet innovation and global influence**. NCR cuisine preserves multicultural food traditions, drives national food trends, and reflects the history, culture, and creativity of the Filipino people.

- ✔ Through this lesson, students gain a deeper appreciation of how food tells the story of Metro Manila.