

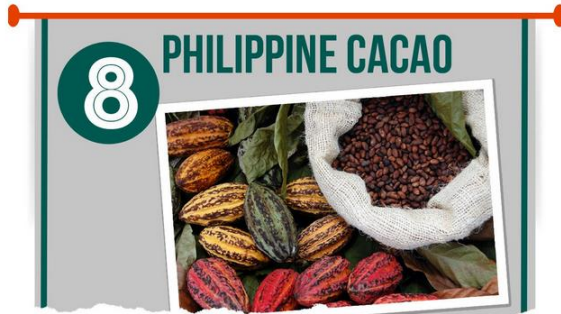
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By Amy Besa

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## 8 Delicious Regional PINOY FOODS YOU SHOULD DEFINITELY TRY

BY AMY BESA

My husband Rommy Derotan and I have been running [Purple Yam](#) restaurant in Brooklyn these past few years but I've been going back and forth to the Philippines to research and explore regional food items and tracking down handed-down recipes from generation to generation. The flavors of pre-refrigeration are part of our legacy. Heritage and heirloom food, like the original varieties of livestock and crops, are the trend within the organic food movement. Here are 8 regional foods that all Pinoy should try (and let their foreign friends try, too!).



Via [confectionerynews.com](#)

Why get imported when we grow them everywhere? I've been bringing to Brooklyn cacao from Davao, Tuguegarao, Tawi, Albay and from Negros Occidental.



Via [cheapcures.blogspot.com](#)

From Negros like the balbas pusa (cat's whiskers), gotu kola, guyabano leaves, sambong, yacon, etc.



Via [intheKasyon.com](#)

Enough of the snooty way of looking at beans! Not necessarily Arabica, but we have great Robusta and Liberica from Negros Occidental and Oriental, Mindanao and Cordilleras. It's how they were grown, fermented and roasted.



Via [evolve.com](#)

So many flavor nuances! From coconut sap, sugar cane, sugar palm, bananas, pineapple, bignay, duhat, etc. Go to Ilocos Sur and Norte, they have sukang iloko, which is sugarcane vinegar. There's paombong which comes from the town of the same name in Bulacan. You can get coconut sap vinegar from Sorsogon, Bicol and the Visayas.

[Pia Lim-Castillo](#) (+632-729-5413) sells these three really fabulous natural and organic vinegars that I use all the time.



Via [nonnopalaleo.com](#)

Navotas and Cavite are the best places to get patis from the first pressing and puro if possible. It is not salty at all. The commercial versions are really diluted patis with salt and caramel coloring added.



Via [whitakeofoodie.com](#)

The most famous are, of course, from Pangasinan (which is why it is named pang-asinan—because it is famous for its salt beds). I have tasted roasted sea salt from Zambales, which is great, too.

In Roxas City and Guimaras, they have the dukduk which is a block of salt cooked down by

burning driftwood collected from the beach and water is passed through the coal to collect the salt from the sea water. Coconut milk is added and the whole thing is cooked down to evaporate the water to leave a block of salt. People use this like hard cheese and grate them over garlic fried rice.

Unfortunately, only a few families make this now. Clueless airport people in NAIA confiscated my dukdok when I tried to bring this home with me from Manila to NYC, be sure to pack this in your check-in baggage!



Via [commons.wikimedia.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org)

Heirloom means the original rice grains and not hybrids. In the Cordilleras, some farmers retain the same grains that have been passed down from one generation to another. Some people believe that the healthiest food to eat are heirloom and organic because heirloom grains retain the original nutrients and hybrids tend to be watered down.

I like the purple ones like the diket from the Cordilleras. Very difficult to harvest because it is semi-glutinous and the farmers have to harvest the grains fast before the birds eat them up.



Via [hubpages.com](https://hubpages.com)

Tapuy is rice wine made by gnarled old men and women of the Cordilleras by fermenting soaked balatinaw rice grains. They make yeast first called bubud by mashing soaked ground rice together mixing it with pineapple or ginger or other fermenting agent.

Also try nipa lambanog from Infanta, Quezon. This will be the "in" alcoholic beverage of the Philippines soon!

Amy Besa and Romy Dorotan are the authors of "Memories of Philippine Kitchens." Besa is president of Ang Sariling Atin Culinary Heritage Institute.

<http://8list.ph/regional-filipino-foods/>

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