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## Documentos Adicionales



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# La bandurria filipina

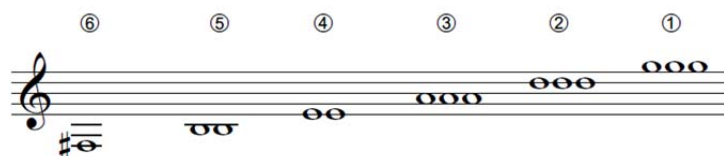


## THE PHILIPPINE BANDURIA

*By Mariefrance Vasquez Ballester and Nico Julayco*

The rondalla, a performing group consisting of plucked stringed instruments with the bandurria as the main instrument, was introduced to the Philippines by Spain during the colonization period, but there is no exact date when it began in the country. It arrived in the Philippines on the backs of Spanish conquistadors, where it flourished amid the vibrant musical traditions of the local indigenous populations. Its journey began in the 16th century, when Spanish conquistadors brought with them the vihuela, a precursor to the banduria. The instrument underwent a process of evolution upon adoption and adaptation by the Filipino people. The Spanish instruments (bandurria and laud) served as the model for the Philippine rondalla instruments, but with time, they changed to become distinctly Filipino. They acquired its unique pear-shaped body and was crafted using indigenous woods such as Narra, Ipil, Rosewood, and Mahogany. Due to the creativity of the Filipino luthiers, the shape and range of the Philippine banduria have been customized, from additional fretboards to beautiful designs where bandurias are not merely pear-shaped.

The Philippine Banduria instrument was subsequently referred to as "banduria" with a single "r" in place of "bandurria," which referred to the Spanish version, in reference to the Philippine model. In contrast to its Spanish counterpart, which features twelve strings, the Philippine Banduria is comprised of fourteen (14), with six (6) courses, and tuned in fourths.



*Philippine Banduria Tuning*

To create an even higher sound, Filipino luthiers also introduced the "Piccolo Banduria." This alteration was undertaken to enhance volume and impart a more Filipino sound, specifically the "kalansing" or "brilliant resonance" that is essential for Philippine folk dance accompaniment and fiestas. Employing the identical playing techniques as the Spanish bandurria, the Philippine banduria is performed with a plectrum or pick and rapid up-down strokes, tremolo, and legato style, which emulates singing by connecting notes.

As the principal instrument of the rondalla in the Philippines, the Philippine Banduria is currently gaining popularity among people of all ages, from grade school students to adults. This is the result of annual music competitions in the Philippines that include the Solo Banduria category and the Department of Education's music curriculum, which includes Banduria as a major for Performing Arts high school students. Banduria virtuosos in the Philippines include Elaine Juliet Espejo and Nikki Zen Obmasca. Since the emergence of banduria competitions in the country, an increasing number of banduria soloists are now achieving virtuosity.

Furthermore, Musicondalla, a music company specializing in rondalla music and performance founded by the author, Mariefrance V. Ballester, with the MPG, or Musicondalla Performing Group, with Nico Julayco as the music director and the company's official ensemble playing rondalla instruments such as the banduria, Octavina, Laud, guitar, and double bass, are the current rondalla pioneers in the modern world, reaching out to rondalla enthusiasts all over the world to promote this music and culture.

Moreover, the trajectory of this instrument extends beyond its historical confines. Banduria is once more undergoing a transformation when performed by modern musicians. By experimenting with novel tunings, techniques, and genres, contemporary composers push

the boundaries of music. Consisting of new audiences while preserving the instrument's illustrious history, traditional melodies are revitalized across genres, from jazz to rock.

For further information on the Philippine Banduria, please visit [www.musicondalla.com](http://www.musicondalla.com) or subscribe to the YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@MusicondallaOfficial> for performances and educational videos.

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