Traditional Craftsmanship

IVATAN, BATANES ISLAND GROUP PROVINCE, NORTHERN PHILIPPINES. Each household in Batanes traditionally owns two to three houses: the screened raku or savahay (the living room, bedroom and the area for keeping household paraphernalia which should not be exposed to soot), kusina (kitchen, cooking, dining, storage for food both fresh and preserved), rahaung (not for human shelter but for farm and fishing paraphernalia as well as for a chicken nest [vinahayan]). There are many types that conform to certain periods in time, ethnic groupings and functionality. Described in this article are traditional houses found in Barangay Itbud in the municipality of Uyugan.

Marlu C. Gabile

Typhoon-swept people like the Ibayat adapt their houses to the whimsy of the winds.
SINADUMPARAN is a low, stone and lime-walled house with thick cogon roof. It is usually 4-5 meters in width and 6-7 meters in length. Its walls have a thickness of a meter or so and a usual height of 5-6 meters from the ground. The floor plan is rectangular, commonly in two stories, composed of the basement (ahbu) and the upper story (sahad). Both kitchen and main building are similar in shape but differ in height, with the main being higher. The two structures are connected by a batalan, which is level to the floor of the kitchen. There are two or three steps going up the main structure.

Chivuvuhung – The walls of this structure are made of thatched cogon enclosing the floor space on all sides. This houses the hearth on one end with a sleeping area on the other.

Kamadid – This has a low structure made entirely of wood, reeds and cogon. It has a triangular shape when viewed from the front, with the two sides serving as its roof going down to its walls. It has a trapezoidal shape as seen from the side view where both ends are open. This type of house is commonly used as a shelter for fishing boats and other seacrafts. Very few of these remain today.

Mayhurahed – This resembles the chivuvuhung. The only difference is that this has a low wall made of stone, chopped cogon and mud or lime and sand between the ground and the cogon sides which is called hurabed.

Maytuab/Nituavan – The four sides of the roof of this structure tapers upward to the top to form a trapezoidal shape on the two opposite longer sides and triangular on the other two opposite shorter sides. It has a low basement.

Rahaung (A) – This is more complex than the kamadid. Its triangular cogon roof is lifted from the ground by four or more wooden posts.

Rahaung (B) – This essentially has the same basic structure as the (A) variant with an additional protection in the form of cogon and reeds on both ends.

Sinadumparan – A house with walls and sides made of stone and mortar. The narrower side walls are extended upward forming a triangle to which its cogon roof is leveled. It has a low basement used for storage or shelter for animals.

Sinadumparan a binedberan – This structure’s slight difference with sinadumparan is the way the roof is made. The roof is placed above and extends to the triangular wall.

Chivuvuhung

Kamadid

Mayhurahed

Maytuab/Nituavan

Rahaung (A)

Rahaung (B)

Sinadumparan

Sinadumparan a binedberan

Felix Y. Adami

ITBAYAT, BATANES ISLAND GROUP PROVINCE, NORTHERN PHILIPPINES. The woven cone-shaped yuvuk (basket for women) is common in Itbayat, Batanes. The basket is shaped like an inverted cone and cannot stand upright by itself. It is carried at the back with a strap slung to the head called aperid.

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ITBAYAT, BATANES ISLAND GROUP PROVINCE, NORTHERN PHILIPPINES. The woven cone-shaped yuvuk (basket for women) is common in Itbayat, Batanes. The basket is shaped like an inverted cone and cannot stand upright by itself. It is carried at the back with a strap slung to the head called aperid.

Yuvuk

Felix Y. Adami

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The persistence of old traditions into the modern times, is seen in this desolate mountain road, where both people burdened with yuvuk, and carabaos bearing people bearing yuvuks, pass one another.