Batangas (Tagalog: Lalawigan ng Batangas), (Spanish: Provincia de Batangas), is a first class province of the Philippines located on the southwestern part of Luzon in the CALABARZON region. Its capital is Batangas City and it is bordered by the provinces of Cavite and Laguna to the north and Quezon to the east. Across the Verde Island Passages to the south is the island of Mindoro and to the west lies the South China Sea. Poetically, Batangas is often referred to by its ancient name Kumintang.

Batangas is also where Taal Volcano, one of the Decade Volcanoes, is located. It is also where the Taal Heritage town lies, a small picturesque town that has ancestral houses and structures dating back to the 19th century.

Batangas has the second largest international seaport in the Philippines after Metro Manila. The identification of the city as an industrial growth center in the region and being the focal point of the CALABARZON program resulted to the increasing number of business establishments in the city’s Central Business District (CBD) as well as numerous industries operating at the province’s industrial parks.

The first recorded name of the Province was Kumintang, after the Datu who inherited the dominion from Datu Balensusa. Its centre, the present day Balayan, was the most progressive town of the Province and the traditional centre of governance. Later, as the eruption of the Taal Volcano destroyed a significant portion of the town, the provincial centre was transferred to Taal, which was then called Bonbon and the name of the province was changed after that of the town.

The term batangan means a raft, the people used so that they could fish in the nearby Taal Lake. It also meant the numerous logs found in the Calumpang River, the body of water that runs through the northeastern portion of the town and assumes the shape of a tuning fork.

Long before the arrival of the Spaniards in the Philippines, large centers of population already thrived in Batangas. Native settlements lined the Pansipit River, a major waterway. The province had been trading with the Chinese since Yuan Dynasty until first phase of Ming Dynasty in the 13th and 15th century. Inhabitants of the province were also trading with Japan and India.

Archeological findings, show that even before the settlement of the Spaniards in the country, the Tagalogs, especially the Batangueños, had a very high level of civilization. This was shown by some jewelry, made from a chambered nautilus’ shell, where some tiny holes were drilled by some tube. The way it was drilled shows that early Batangueños had an idea of what is beautiful.

Later, the pre-historic Batangueños was influenced by India as shown in some ancient potteries. In fact, a Buddhist image was reproduced in mould on a clay medallion in bas-relief from the Municipality of Calatagan. According to experts, the image in the pot strongly resembles the iconographic portrayal of Buddha in Siam, India and Nepal. The pot shows Buddha Amithaba in the tribhanga pose inside an oval nimbus. Scholars also noted that there is a strong Mahayanic orientation in the image, since the Boddhisattva Avalokitesvara was also depicted.

The province of Laguna, which was formerly called La Laguna and La Provincia de la Laguna de Bay, was named after Laguna de Bay, the body of water that forms its northern boundary. Laguna de Bay, in turn, was named after the town of Bay, the first provincial capital. Captain Juan de Salcedo with a band of one hundred Spanish-Mexican soldiers conquered the province and its surrounding regions for Spain in 1571. The province of La Laguna comprised the modern province of Laguna, as well as parts of what are now known as Rizal and Quezon provinces.

Laguna was the site of multiple engagements during the Sangley Rebellion, made up of Chinese-Filipino mestizos. In 1603, Antonio de Morga relates how the Chinese rebels scattered to three divisions, one of which went to the mountains of San Pablo. Captain Don Luys de Velasco, aided by Spanish and Filipino forces, was successful in pursuing the rebels. Eventually the Chinese were able to kill Luys de Velasco and ten of his men, before securing themselves in San Pablo while waiting for reinforcement from the mainland. On October 20, 1603, Governor-General Pedro Bravo de Acuña then sent Captain Cristoval de Axqueta Menchaca to pursue and crush the rebellion and was successful after twenty days of fighting.