

It goes to the reason that if a person has spent their entire life in one country, they would naturally gravitate towards it rather than the rest of the globe. "Banana" was the term used to label someone that appeared explicitly "yellow" but internally "white", implying that even if you "look Chinese", you immerse yourself in "Western culture" more than you do in your own — yes, sounds derogatory and insulting, but growing up, it was normal (classic family reunion banter). I grew up as one of those — a Chinese-Malaysian, raised in a predominantly English household with the sole opportunity of speaking Mandarin with my grandparents and relatives so naturally, my Mandarin wasn't perfect. Along with it, we were expected to learn not just Mandarin but also English, Malay, Cantonese, and Chinese dialects dictated by your family's background. I was always told that "we must never forget our roots" and that the ability to speak multiple dialects is what "preserves our heritage". Chinese culture is strongly and deeply embedded into Malaysian culture. We practically celebrate every Chinese tradition in the book to ensure that we don't "forget", including celebrating all three cultures regardless of whether we were Chinese, Indian, or Malay.

Malaysia is a cosmopolitan country predominantly consisting of the ethnicities Malay, Chinese, and Indian, so you naturally get the best of 4 worlds: Malay culture, Chinese culture, Indian culture, and most significantly, Malaysian culture, which celebrates the union of all three ethnic groups. I've never made much of an attempt to engage with cultural traditions, believing that my time will come to care about 'tradition' when I'm sixty. I never realised the privilege and exposure I had growing up in a rich multiracial country that was considered a natural part of our daily life, but nobody was truly aware of Malaysia's rich cultural heritage when I immigrated to Australia. I believe that migrating definitely comes with struggles, especially if the home you've known your entire life suddenly feels forgotten when you relocate to a whole other continent. Australia is undeniably diverse. I've been introduced to a myriad of other cultures aside from Eastern and Southeastern ones. Despite the evident distinctions in nationality and ethnicity, I can't help but appreciate the beauty each culture has to offer. The understanding that all cultures, regardless of their historical origins, hold a special meaning for the people and the community. It celebrates the unity and harmony amongst all, highlighting connection and diversity amongst all cultures. In a contemporary world full of prejudice and discrimination, diversity and social cohesion hold a meaningful role in breaking stereotypes, hatred, and bigotry towards each other.