

COLOMBIA'S TOP CELEBRATIONS IN 2020



CELEBRATIONS TIMELINE



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CELEBRATIONS TIMELINE

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PASTO



The southern Colombian city of Pasto is not very well known among travellers, but there is one event that takes place there every year that attracts people from around the world: the Pasto Blacks and Whites' Carnival. This UNESCO-recognised carnival takes place every January and is unique in its celebration of racial heritage and diversity. Every year between January 2 and 7, the otherwise nondescript town of Pasto, in the southern Colombian department of Narino, comes to life. The Carnaval de Blancos y Negros, or Blacks and Whites' Carnival, is the largest carnival celebration in southern Colombia, and draws a considerable number of tourists from across the country and the world. For six incredible days, the city becomes one giant party, as people take to the streets in parades, dressed in colourful costumes, and shower each other with foam and talcum powder. It's a noisy, messy and fun way to see in the start of the new year.

Manizales Fair 4th to 12th

The Manizales Festival is held annually at the beginning of the new year after Cali's Festival. During the festival, you can enjoy mixed Colombian, European, and Spanish traditions like bullfights, craft shows, folk music and orchestra concerts, and the International Coffee Pageant.

The highlight of the festival is a beauty pageant in which the 'International Queen of Coffee' is crowned. During the week there are lots of exhibitions and traditional performances of national folklore.

MANIZALES



January

CARTAGENA



International Music Festival

4th to 12th

The purpose of the XIV edition of the festival is to highlight, through its program, the main musical elements characterizing the transition from the classical style to the early romanticism. As in all complex artistic and historical phenomena, particularly those involving transitions, including music, there are no clear boundaries between the end of a style (the classical in this case) and the beginning of another (the early romanticism). On the contrary, the two stylistic movements frequently co-exist during the same period and in the musical production of one same author. Such is the case of Schubert, whose music develops within the boundaries of apparently classic forms, but who, at the same time, substantially transforms the paradigms of this style. Despite the complexity of the matter, the aesthetic categories of the beautiful and the sublime, and the musical works proposed in the program, may help us differentiate the characteristic elements of each language.

Hay Festival

January 30th to February 2nd

Every year in late January, Cartagena pays homage to literature during the Hay Festival, one of the most important international literary festivals in the country. Attendees enjoy novels and poems as well as plays, exhibitions, workshops, and conferences. This event, also held in other countries, lasts for four days during the last week of January, and brings together writers, journalists, poets, musicians, and artists from Colombia and other countries in Latin America and around the world. In addition to adult-oriented discussion groups and seminars, the Hay Festival organizes activities for children such as the Festivalito, the National Short Story Competition, and a variety of workshops.

CARTAGENA



February

World Salsa Festival 3rd to 9th

CALI



If there is an event not to be missed in Cali, the kingdom of Salsa, it is the World Salsa Festival. During these festivities, well-known orchestras perform; every Salsa school and dance academy in Colombia and from other countries comes to Cali. About 5000 dancers gather to celebrate the “Caleña” dance, and show their talent...

It is a unique opportunity for visitors to learn this popular dance from Cali. They will be able to take classes, meet music lovers passionate about this rhythm, and above all attend the contest for which many dancers train throughout the year.

Barranquilla Carnival

22nd to 25th

The Carnival of Barranquilla is one of Colombia's most important folkloric celebrations, and one of the biggest carnival in the world. During the carnival, Barranquilla's normal activities are paralyzed because the city gets busy with street dances, musical and masquerade parades. Barranquilla's Carnival includes dances such as the Spanish paloteo, African congo, and indigenous mico y micas. Many styles of Colombian music are also performed, most prominently cumbia, and instruments include drums and wind ensembles.

BARRANQUILLA



April

BOGOTÁ

Estereo Picnic Festival April 3rd to 5th

Born in 2010 as one of the first of its kind in South America, Festival Estéreo Picnic – held each year in the Colombian capital city of Bogotá – is now one of the continent’s biggest and most important music festivals. In that time, the event has hosted more than 250 international acts and welcomed more than 200,000 festival-goers. The musical style of the festival is similar to that of Lollapalooza and European festivals such as Glastonbury, focusing on alternative rock, indie music, punk rock, reggae, electronica and hip hop. Originally launched as a one-day event, the festival expanded to two days in 2013 before consolidating itself as the three-day giant that it is today, complete with an array of music, food, bars, parties, activations and much more.



April

POPAYÁN



Easter Week

5th to 12th

Easter Week in Popayán has been the country's largest religious celebration since 1566. The processions were declared as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2009. They attract thousands of visitors, who are fascinated by the rigor and solemnity of the participants, who carry figures representing the Passion of Christ on their shoulders. While the evening parades draw in the crowds, the town is just as lively during the day with plenty of stalls, free concerts and street performances.

Festival of the Vallenato Legend

April 29th to 2nd May

The best composers and performers of *vallenato* music, which includes *merengue*, *puya*, *paseo*, and *son*, meet at the Vallenato Legend Festival, the greatest popular folk culture festival in Colombia. While the accordion players typically steal the show, musicians compete to be crowned *Rey Vallenato* (Vallenato King) at the Vallenato Legend Festival. Along with the main competition, other cultural activities such as parades, concerts, storytelling, painting and book expositions, and theatrical shows are featured throughout this energetic Festival.

VALLEDUPAR



June

BOGOTÁ



Rock in the park June 2020

The Rock in the Park Festival, which takes place in Bogotá in the summer, brings around 400,000 music fans to the Simón Bolívar Park for a weekend. Running for more than 20 years, Rock in the Park is a true Bogotá institution for rockers, by rockers. On average, around 50 bands take part in the three day festivities. This year you can experience the best of what local and international rock has to offer by catching acts like Napalm Death, The Black Dahlia Murder, Suicidal Tendencies and many more.

Folk Festival June 2020

This festival was created in 1974 and takes place in the city of Ibagué famous for its music festivals, concerts, and music conservatory. You can enjoy traditional Colombian music and competitions between groups and soloists who are mainly farmers from the region. During this time women are dressed in traditional dresses, and men wear white shirts and pants with a coloured kerchief around their neck and traditional shoes—alpargatas or espadrilles. Visiting the central parks and squares, you will also see concerts and traditional dances such as pasillo, sanjuanero, and bambuco. It's impossible to stay still to the beat of traditional Andean rhythms! It's a great opportunity to feel and to learn about Colombian folk music and dancing, meet local people, make new friends, and just enjoy Colombian culture.

IBAGUÉ



July

SANTA MARTA



Festival of the Sea July 2020

The international festival of the sea was created in 1959 and is considered the most important event in the City of Santa Marta. Every year this event attracts foreign and domestic tourists, and the main goal of this event is to show the traditions of the region. This festival has different cultural activities such as: parades, musical performances, nautical sport competitions. It is also the best opportunity to savour the traditional food of the region.

Festival of Flowers July 31st to August 9th

The festival of flowers, or Feria de las Flores in Spanish, is the most important social event for the city and is a pageant of concerts, artistic events, an orchid exposition and parades of vintage cars, *paso fino* horses and most importantly the flower parade. Enjoy a fantastic view from bleachers alongside the route where you can watch this pageant of colour, music and human endeavor as over 1000 *silletteros* walk through the streets carrying their cumbersome but beautifully crafted creations.



MEDELLÍN

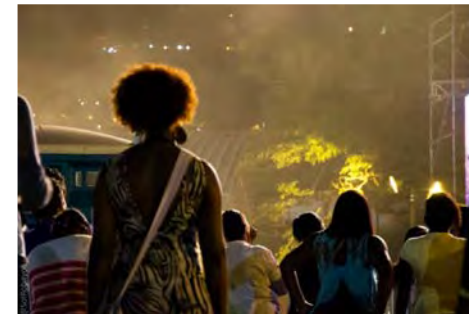


August

CALI

Petronio Alvarez Pacific Music Festival August 2020

A culture can be understood through its sounds, which is why the Petronio Alvarez Pacific Music Festival, held annually in Cali in August, is essential for those wishing to learn more about the Afro-Colombian cultural and social heritage of Cali and the Pacific coast. Expect a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural event with great artistic performances and plenty of gastronomic indulgences. This is an event not to be missed by neither tourists or residents of the city as it also provides a great place to socialize and have fun.



September

BOGOTÁ



Wine and Food Festival

September 2020

As a way to bring the world's top chefs and the mix of Colombian cuisine, the Wine & Food Festival was created to show the world its unique flavors. Every year a wide range of different local and international chefs open up kitchens, restaurants and their lives around Bogotá's gastronomic zones to make the most exquisite dinners and banquets.

Featuring a collection of events such as elegant dinners, cocktail shows and wine tastings, come and satisfy your palates through art, music and design.

Jazz Festival

September 2020

Lively rhythms can be heard in Mompox every October during the International Jazz Festival, where national and international musicians, inspired by this magical town, offer the best of their repertoire. During this festival, squares, churches and streets of the city host musical events to the rhythm of jazz. The streets are filled with great musical content along with artisan, cultural and gastronomic activities, folklore parades and other activities. It is a perfect opportunity to discover this UNESCO World Heritage site and the colonial charms of Mompox while being surrounded by the extraordinary sounds of the jazz world.

MOMPOX



September

QUINDIO



Coffee Nacional Festival September 2020

As in every year, the municipality of Calarcá in the department of Quindío celebrates one of the most representative celebrations of the Colombian Coffee Axis, the National Coffee Festival that with its activities and cultural elements shows the typical riches of this region and the importance Coffee as an economy base in this department.

Green Moon Festival September 2020

This manifests for three days the joy and joviality of Afro-Caribbean people. This festival is characterized because features of the history of the Island are present within it, such as the absolute disappearance of the indigenous presence, as well as the colonization by the English who introduced Africans to work in large plantations. This mixture of cultures is manifested today in the San Andrés culture. The programming of this event, begins with a parade that runs through the main streets of San Andrés, to the sound of the drums and along with choreographies, who have the opportunity to enjoy this celebration can admire the color that marks the beginning of this holiday.

SAN ANDRÉS



October

VILLAVICENCIO



The International Coleo Festival October 2020

Coleus is an activity of the man who works on horseback, consisting of reaching the steer or bull that departs from the pack. Finding him by the tail, the cowboy knocks down the animal by spinning it on its back.

Decades later, Julio Eduardo Santos Quiroga, dynamic promoter of the llanera culture, took the final step: he idealized a coleus event in which different countries of America would participate. It would no longer be in Creole sleeves made in chuapo, guadua or round wood to compete between friends and fans.

November

CARTAGENA



Independence of Cartagena and National Beauty Pageant November 2020

Festivities include parades, especially so in Cartagena when the largest and most colourful parade takes place, ending at Plaza Trinidad, the location where Cartagena's independence was declared.

Also, every November, Colombia becomes a huge party thanks to the National Beauty Pageant, which has been held in Cartagena since 1934 in order to unite Colombian regions around the beauty of Colombian women. Numerous events are held during the Pageant and women from all around Colombia participate.

December

CALI



Cali Fair

December 2020

The Cali Fair, held every year from the 25th to the 30th of December, is one of the most important traditional celebrations in the country and on the continent. Events such as bullfights, beauty pageants, fashion shows, concerts by some of the most famous musicians in the world, and, of course, salsa festivals are held during the Fair. The festival prides itself on creating a true carnivalesque atmosphere for its visitors from start to finish.

Lights Festival

December 2020

The charming village of Villa de Leyva in the department of Boyacá, located only 3 hours away from Bogota, celebrates the Christmas festivities at the beginning of the month of December with wonderful traditions. Since its creation in 1986, the lights festival has taken place in the beautiful colonial streets of Villa de Leyva, to pay tribute to the Immaculate Concepcion. On this occasion, the best pyrotechnic companies compete in a show of fireworks. The balconies of the village are decorated with lights, candles and lanterns. The fireworks and the outside lighting on the streets of Villa de Leyva is a unique spectacle that invites many visitors to come and share the Colombian Christmas spirit, a celebration accompanied by Christmas choirs, folk music bands, exhibitions of paintings, etc.

VILLA DE LEYVA

