



Por:
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EXPERIENCE "FESTA JUNINA" - ONE OF BRAZIL'S NICEST CULTURAL EVENTS DURING THE WINTER SEASON:

Festa Junina is also called "Saint John's Festival." This is actually an old European celebration that was imported to Brazil during the colonial era. It was celebrated in Spain and Portugal and in some other European countries as a "Midsummer Day." Of course, in Brazil this is not mid summer, but mid winter. These event, which are held on June 13th (Santo Antônio), 24th (São João) and 29th (São Pedro) are celebrated in Brazil on the winter solstice. Junine Festival is celebrated all over

Brazil as a big event. The celebration involves cowboy outfits, Brazilian and European dances, games for kids and authentic Brazilian barbecue. It's a great fun for the whole family and for locals and tourists alike. The festival started originally in rural communities. The purpose was to celebrate the coming harvest on the longest day of the year, the summer solstice (in Europe). In urban areas it has turned into a giant party and all schools enjoy a perfect wedding celebrated by little grooms and brides, since it is a festival celebrating love and wedding promoted by the Saints. (Santos Casamenteiros). Traditionally, people believed that in June parties they could offer promises to Santo Antonio, São João and Santo Pedro, so they got a boyfriend or girlfriend.

Festa Junina involves fireworks and bonfires with food, drink and fun for everybody. Like Brazil's Carnival, Festa Junina is also theatrical in nature. People dress up in traditional Brazilian country clothes, but you'll also see people wearing outlandish costumes. Girls wear dresses with flowers, straw hats and shoes sometimes boots. Boys wear jeans and a

checked shirts and straw hats. Most festivals will celebrate a typical country wedding or two!

This party atmosphere can last up to ten days, almost two weeks of continuous partying, drinking and eating, a great time to visit Brazil! Traditional food served is mainly made of corn. Some examples are baked corn, hominy, popcorn, corn cake, "pamonha" (a fresh corn cake). Some typical drinks of the party for adults are made of alcohol. Some examples are quentão, pinga and others, but there are also drinks made from other things.

There are a lot of flowers decorating, it is very colorful, there are stands with lights, stands of food and games and there are straws and colorful flags all over too. It is a colorful country party and there is normally at least a big bonfire too.

Some of the games offered are:

- "Pescaria": is a game where you throw a bait to catch a paper fish and win a prize

- "Boca de Palhaço": you throw a ball in the clown's mouth and win a prize.

- "Pau de Sebo": Souvenirs are placed at the tip of a greased pole. Whoever

finishes climbing the mast, gets the gift.

- "Correio Elegante": It is a game where participants send each other love messages during the party.

Dance: "Quadrilha" is a dance that is very exciting and it is like an informal waltz when a man and a woman pretend to get married. In general, the first pair in the dance is the "groom and bride" and they stage a wedding.

Festa Junina is not only a great time to party and see fireworks, it's also a great time to learn some traditional Brazilian dance steps. The parties happen mainly in schools, churches, clubs, houses, ranches and mainly squares on smaller country towns. During Festa Junina, you have the opportunity to learn some old European dances fused with Brazilian soul.

Bia de Salles is an internationally acclaimed writer, freelancer editor, published author, sought-after translator & interpreter. As an extremely well respected, internationally-known language expert; Bia, who is originally Brazilian and currently live in La Quinta, CA enjoys writing about different subjects. For more information about her, you may check her bio and background at www.biadesalles.com

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