

# TRAVEL MONO

*Latin American Travel, Culture & Lifestyle*

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admini

Barranquilla Carnival 2017



Barranquilla Carnival is the second biggest street carnival in the world, drawing in 1.5 million people to the city.

Only the Rio Carnival in Brazil can boast a bigger audience, and when you consider other famous global



carnivals, such as Notting Hill-London, Mardi Gras-New Orleans, and Cologne-Germany, that's quite an impressive feat.

Barranquilla Carnival is little known outside of South America, and while that may do its worldwide reputation a great disservice. It in fact creates an amazing, diverse, and authentic experience, that has not become a fully tainted tourist trap.

Every year, Barranquilla Carnival begins on the Saturday before Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday is always 46 days before Easter, and Easter itself is a movable feast. This means Barranquilla Carnival has taken place across the months of February and March.

## 2017 Barranquilla Carnival – Saturday the 25<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday the 28<sup>th</sup> of February.

In 2003 UNESCO declared Barranquilla Carnival a *Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity*.

Quite a title, and in a nutshell it represents ‘living culture’ and UNESCO’s mission to protect intangible culture. In this case, the language, music, dance, traditions and rituals of the Carnival, the 25,000 performers, and the diverse range of musical expressions and ethnic groups represented.

The first day of the carnival (Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> February this year) opens with the Battle of the Flowers. Considered the most important event of the carnival, as all participants flow through the city on a 5-to-6-hour float parade.



Stephanie Mendoza Vargas. Barranquilla Queen 2017.

The Carnival Queen leads the parade, and this year’s queen is Stephanie Mendoza Vargas. A 22-year-old Law Student and Barranquilla native. She will be accompanied by ‘King Momo’ a character associated with the king of carnivals. This year played by Germán Álvarez Cabrera, a 54 year old chosen for his Cumbia music skills. An Afro-Caribbean, dance orientated, traditional music, of the Colombian and Panama Atlantic coasts.



Sunday sees the Parade of Traditions take place, or the great parade. This is a foot parade with everyone walking, dancing, and performing along the route. Colourful and magnificent masks are popular. Performers compete during the day to win a place in the following years Battle of Flowers, like a promotion to the higher league.

On the Monday of Barranquilla carnival, an orchestral festival takes place. With Latin and Afro Caribbean bands performing well into the following day. A fantasy parade, focusing on the performers costumes also occurs this day.



The final day of the Barranquilla carnival,



the Tuesday, has a symbolic burial of Joselito

Carnaval.

Joselito represents the joy of the carnival, and his demise and burial is mourned by all the carnival goers as things come to an end. The mood is lightened with a comedy festival on the Tuesday evening.

As a visitor you will probably be looking to purchase a ticket for one of the many 'Palcos' along the routes. The Spanish word 'Palco' basically means a *Loge* or *private box* in English, and in the carnival sense relates to the private enclosures used to view the carnival parades.

The cost of a ticket varies depending on the location of the Palco, and from where you purchase the ticket. There are many touts and outlets who add on service charges along the way. But it should be relatively easy to source tickets. Expect to pay around 200,000 pesos for a three day ticket, with free beer on day one.

You can also expect to be sprayed with foam and flour throughout the course of celebrations. As people from all walks of life come together for the carnival, making it unique in Colombia at breaking down social, racial, and economic barriers.

If you are really keen to get involved earlier, the weeks leading up to the main parades also include various events and parties.



## **Baranquilla Carnival 2017 - Build Up Schedule**

**20-January Flag-raising**, Intendencia Fluvial, Calle 30 # 46-10 • 3:00 pm

**21- January Bando Reading** Peace Square , Court La Magdalena. • 8:00 pm

**28-January First tour of verbenas**

**29-January Carnival Seedling**, Sacred Heart Park, Tropical Almond Park • 2:00 pm

**03-February Queen's Friday and Orchestras**, The Magdalena district court, Cra. 6 cl 35 •  
7:00 pm

**04-February Band and Coronation of the Kings of the Children's Carnival**, Peace Square •  
4:00 pm

**05-February Paco Paco in Barrio Abajo**, Barrio Abajo, Cra. 51 between Calles 48 and 49B •  
3:00 pm

**10-February Festival of Dances of Relation and Specials**, Homage to Angela Pedroza, Plaza  
de la Paz

**11-February Party of Comparsas**, Plaza de la Paz, Calle 53 between Cra. 45 and 46 • 4:00 pm

**12-February Dance and Cumbias Party**, Peace Square • 10:00 a.m.

**17-February Guacherna**, Carrera 44 with Calle 70 • 7:00 pm

**18-February Second round of verbenas**

**19-February Parade of the Children's Carnival**, Carrera 53 with Calle 70 • 11 a.m.

**23-February Coronation of the Queen and King Momo, Metropolitan Stadium parking •  
8:00 pm**

**24-February Third round of verbenas, Dance in the Street**

## Baranquilla Carnival 2017 Schedule

Saturday the 25th of February

**Battle of Flowers  
Tribute to the Sea and River  
Road 40 • 12:00 noon**

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**Grand Parade of King Momo  
Calle 17 • 2:00 pm**

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**Dance Street – Tradition Festival  
Road Race Par 50 • 7:00 pm**

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**Festival Comedy  
Metropolitan park  
• 5:00 pm**

Sunday the 26th of February

**Great Parade of  
Tradition and Folklore  
Route 40 • 1:00 pm**

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**Festival of Comedy  
Olaya • 5:00 pm Park**

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**Baila Street  
Carnival, its music and its roots  
Road Race Par 50**

- 8:00 pm

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**Election and Crowning  
of the Queen popular**  
parking Metropolitan Stadium

- 8:00 pm

Monday the 27th of February

**Great Parade of Troupes**

Route 40 • 1:00 pm

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**Festival of Orchestras**  
parking Metropolitan Stadium

- 3:00 pm

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**Festival Comedies**

Park Calancala

Calle 50 between Cra. 30 and 32

- 5:00 pm

Tuesday the 28th of February

**It Litany meeting**

Cleaver Barrio Abajo

Cra. 54 and Calle 48

- 6:00 pm

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**Joselito leaves with ashes**

Carrera 54 and Calle 58

- 4:00 pm

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**Festival of Comedy**

Tropical Almond Park

Calle 38 and Carrera 30.

- 6:00 p.m