

THE SAMBA DE SALVADOR



The first thing one associates with the south-American state Brazil is without doubt local music. It is very lively, energetic and extremely positive. There are many opportunities to enjoy the rhythm of samba, but the true devotees would never dare to miss the famous Brazilian festivals and carnivals. And soon, one of the most popular ones will take place in the city of Salvador da Bahia.

This year its beginning is scheduled for February 15, and last officially until February 20, however, it is very likely that the celebrations will continue until the next day, Ash Wednesday.

Annually, the festival is visited by nearly 2.5 million tourists eager to admire the parades and enjoy the wild beats of Brazilian passionate music. The main attraction of the Salvador carnival are the "trios electricos," huge bands that play the samba from the top of the sound trucks. They parade very slowly along the three carnival circuits. Their being called 'trios' derives from the very beginning of this tradition, as the first one was an old car with a driver and two musicians. The trios form the core of a 'bloco.' These consist of a people who pay for a costume, or more likely a uniform, to be able to march with the trio. The security personnel carry a rope that marks the boundaries of each of the blocos. So, joining a bloco may become quite challenging and dangerous at times.

The other part of the carnival are the barracas. They are little stands attracting tourists with some good quality music and beer. Thanks to them, Salvador becomes a city of ten thousand parties.

The carnival is a perfect opportunity for anyone to let off steam and enjoy the true Brazilian spirit. Many of the dances are based on African religious ceremonies; much of the Brazilian population are the descendants of former slaves brought here by the Portuguese, and so the carnival also represents a celebration of the African heritage.

Local culinary specialties, comfortable hotels, passionate music and all the joy one experiences in the streets is an ideal way of spending a holiday.

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