

# EXPLORE THE TOP AFRICAN FESTIVALS IN 2012



Africa being the second largest continent offers a lot of opportunities for travel, exploration, and learning. The vast diversity of culture, music, and arts makes it one of the best getaway destinations for festival lovers.

Most often, travelers schedule their visits at the same time with a festival they want to attend. The festivals in Africa range from historical and traditional celebrations that will give visitors the insight to the local customs and traditions that have been in the given country for centuries to international music festivals featuring contemporary music from all over Africa and other continents. Here is a few most popular African festivals:

## **Marrakech Biennale** (Marrakech, Morocco; February 29 - June 3, 2012)

The Marrakech Biennale is an international festival for contemporary arts. It kicks off with five days of performances, debates, talks, and film screenings. For three months, the event will feature a visual arts exhibit based in the ruined El Badi Palace along with other events all throughout the city. There will also be an installation involving the nine African video artists famously called Medin-O-RAMA.

## **Cape Town Dragon Boat Festival** (Century City, Cape Town, South Africa; March 2-4, 2012)

The Cape Town Dragon Boat Festival is an annual Dragon Boat competition. It is open for participation to corporate or private teams with categories for both women and men paddlers. This spectacular and exciting team sport though originally from China was introduced to South Africa in 1992. Two beautiful wooden dragon boats were given as gifts to Cape Town by their sister city I'lan County, Taiwan. As a celebration, local canoeists and lifesavers raced and won against the visiting Taiwanese Navy fleet. Nothing much happened until 1995 when the 1st Cape Town Dragon Boat International was held. Since then, the Cape Town Dragon Boat Festival was celebrated annually.

## **Wellington Harvest Festival** (Wellington, South Africa; March 2012)

The Wellington Harvest Festival offers live music, gourmet food, and a lot of wine tasting activities. It is a weekend full of laughter, fun, and taste for the entire family. Taking place at various wine estates and game reserves, all types of entertainment are made available. It includes biking for the more hyped up guests, and pony rides and ice cream for the children.

## **Harare International Festival of Arts** (Harare, Zimbabwe; May 1-6, 2012)

The Harare International Festival of Arts (HIFA) is one of Africa's best cultural festivals. It is a 6-day annual festival and workshop program that showcases the best of local, regional, and international arts and culture by way of dances, plays, street performances, circus, visual arts, and musicals. HIFA 2012 will be the 13th edition of the festival since its inception in 1999. It is considered the largest cultural festivity in Zimbabwe. HIFA is also listed as one of the eight major annual celebrations in Africa.

## **Saint Louis Jazz Festival** (Saint Louis, Senegal; May 24-28, 2012)

The Saint Louis Jazz Festival is a Jazz enthusiasts gathering in Senegal. Renowned Jazz artists from basically everywhere will gather in the country and perform to the international crowd in various

venues throughout the town. The list of musicians who previously took part in the festivity includes Randy Weston, Herbie Hancock, and Joe Zainul. It is not only the legendary artists who are given the opportunity to play for the international audience but new Jazz groups can also be seen and heard in this event. At least 30 new groups perform each year.

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