

This year, the feasts coincided with the one hundredth anniversary of the arrival of the Claretian missionaries who came to take charge of the spiritual support of the region's residents.

This year, from September 20 to October 5, the city of Quibdó will celebrate the ancestral [San Pacho feasts](#) in homage to Francis of Assisi, patron saint of the capital of the department of Chocó, on the Colombian Pacific Coast.

Few popular celebrations complement with so much fervor religious commemorations and cultural expressions in the form of costumed groups, dances, music and stagings that recreate their ancestors. This is what takes place during San Pacho, as the Italian saint is called and whose day is celebrated across the world on October 4.

In Quibdó, the two-week-long celebrations involve, above all, the cult to the city's patron saint, as well as the participation of its inhabitants in most of the solemn and cultural acts. One of the most important feasts is precisely the "neighborhood scheduling", when twelve city neighborhoods, during an equal number of days, take over the Franciscan responsibility of leading the patron feasts with diverse acts and rituals.

Parts of the celebration

Every day, from September 21 to October 2, the neighborhoods selected take their turn at organizing the ceremonies, which follow a series of acts that include the ceremonial reception of the scepter; costume parades; chirimía and other wind instrument performances; the revulú, an agglomeration of people on their way to the eleven remaining neighborhoods; return to the neighborhood whose turn it is; and finally, the concentration of the public at the site of the popular evening open-air festivities, artistic representations, dances, and food sampling, among others.



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San Pacho Feasts in Quibdó /Picture Fundación Fiestas Franciscanas de Quibdó/

A rafting on the Atrato River, which commemorates the first celebration in honor of Saint Francis in 1648, and the Franciscan procession and arches are other traditional acts in which the people of Quibdó express their devotion for their patron saint. All these rituals are masterfully complemented by acts that simultaneously celebrate the African ancestry of the Pacific, the main ones being the costumed parades, the revulú and the abozaódromo, the latter consisting of turning of the streets into one large stage for various groups to present their choreographies to the rhythms of the abozao, the typical dance of Chocó.

The closing of the San Pacho Feasts takes place on October 5 with the lowering of the flags, a parade along the Franciscan route, and a mass for the dead at the cathedral.