

- **Place:** Valledupar, Cesar
- **Region:** Caribbean
- **Date:** April 29 – May 3, every year
- **Duration:** 5 days



### Festival of the Vallenato Legend in Valledupar

The festival of the *vallenato* legend is one of Colombia's most important music and folk festivals. Literally, *vallenato* means 'born in the valley'. The term now applies to the people of the city of Valledupar and to the generic name for the music of the region. Traditionally, the festival is celebrated between April 26 and 30 in Valledupar, the capital of the department of Cesar. For five days, the city becomes an enormous party, full of parades, shows, contests, and good music.

## Origins of the Festival

The festival was created in 1968 for the purpose of rescuing the richness of the folklore that lay hidden underneath the vallenato music and recreating the magic of a land where myths, customs, and linguistic wealth nourish literature and music to become the lyrics and melodies of the vallenato.

## Scope of the Festival

The festival awakens universal interest on the part of journalists who travel from all over to cover the event and who represent over 200 media.

They are attracted by the music of Francisco el Hombre, "[the character who defeated the devil by singing the apostle's creed in reverse accompanied by the notes of his accordion, a story that was also rescued by Gabriel García Márquez in his book One Hundred Years of Solitude.](#)"

## Contests

The festival holds four main contests:

- Vallenato Music Typical Group in three categories: Professional, amateur, and children's.
- Contest of Amateur Accordion Players.
- Unpublished Vallenato Song , with its four rhythms: *merengue*, *paseo*, *puya* and *son*.

And other contests:

**King of Kings Contest** In addition to the yearly winners, every ten years a King of Kings is chosen from among the winners of the preceding decade. The best artist is awarded with La Pilonera Mayor prize, the highest possible award for a vallenato musician. Throughout the festival's history, only six composers have obtained the award (name them). *Piquería* *Piquería* are a kind of singing dialogue or duel, where participants confront each other through verses and rhymes, the winner being the fastest and most creative. The Vallenato Legend which dates back to 1576 and recalls the famous Leyenda del Milagro (the legend of the miracle) that has to do with the conversion of the Chimla, Tupe, and Cariachile Indians to Catholicism following cruel confrontations with the Spanish army.

The festival is not limited solely to concerts and contests. One of its main attractions, beyond folk music and dances, are the pilonero parades. Piloneros are the region's typical musicians.

Additionally, the festival offers numerous cultural proposals for all tastes. An art contest takes place before the festival, during which the promotional poster for the year is selected. And the legend of the miracle is staged by street theater groups.

For additional information, please visit [the festival's official website](#) .

**What did you think of the Festival of the Vallenato Legend in Valledupar. Why not spend more time in the Caribbean region:**

- Handicrafts:  
[The hammock from San Jacinto](#) , [Mompox filigree](#)
- [Sun and beach in Cartagena](#) and [Santa Marta](#)
- [Diving on the Caribbean Coast](#) .