- **Place:** Cali, Valle del Cauca
- **Region:** Pacific
- **Date:** August
- **Duration:** 5 days

Petronio Álvarez Festival /Picture: mariacecita /

The Petronio Álvarez Festival consolidated itself as the largest and most representative feast of Afro-Colombian folklore from the Pacific Coast. The sensuousness of the dances and ancestral chants that renovate themselves in musical fusions and the traditions that make an entire people vibrate to masterly renderings by traditional percussion instruments – *marimba*, *conuno*, and
guazá
– are only the preamble to all the reasons you may have for coming to Cali in mid-August.

Origins of a young festival

The Petronio Álvarez Festival began in 1997 in response to the need to create a space for the meeting of composers, musicians, and researchers of the native music of the Pacific Coast.

The ethnic and cultural plurality of Cali quickly echoed this event that quickly grew in numbers and became embedded in the heart of a region whose inhabitants came to regard the Festival as a means of preserving, making their own, and connecting rural and urban Afro-Colombian cultural expressions.

Over one hundred musical groups are convoked annually to compete for the Petronio Álvarez Prize in various modalities. However, the most sought-after prize is an ovation from a demanding public that generously surrenders to music that touches the right fibers of their lives.

Live culture pa’gozá

The Petronio Álvarez Festival is a state of mind and soul imbued with the conviviality of Colombia's Pacific region.

Pa'gozá, to enjoy; this is what the festival is about. Yet, it is more than a festival: it is a state of mind that awakens the senses. Exquisite food offers with a taste of the sea surround the festival, as well as handicrafts that provide surprising textures in products made from banana leaf fibers and a gourd by the name of "totumo".

Every night the Festival is a sound and light show on a continuously changing stage of music and color. Kerchiefs are waved to the beat of the currulao rhythm and the people wear their brightest smiles to renew their pride in belonging to a culture that recreates its roots with the best it has to offer.