- **Place:** Sevilla, Valle del Cauca

- **Region:** Pacific
- **Date:** Second week in August
- **Duration:** 3 days

Bandola Group /Picture: Mario Carvajal /

The Bandola Festival is a meeting of the best Colombian folk music. It takes place every year in Sevilla, the coffee capital of the department of Valle del Cauca , as soon as kites start to fly in the August winds.

Since 1996, autochthonous rhythms and musical expressions, among them, *pasillo*, *cumbia*, *jor opo*
,
rajaleñas
and
currulao
, get together in a celebration that enriches Colombia's cultural diversity. It is an exquisite invitation for the soul. A call to brotherliness in the midst of musical accords and the heartbeats of visitors.

The name of the Festival

The Colombian Andean bandola is a small wooden cordophone derived from the Arab musical instruments that arrived in the Americas and similar to the European mandolin. It makes happy sounds that impart uniqueness and force to interpretations and is generally accompanied by the guitar and the *tiple*, a small instrument of the guitar family that is considered a national instrument. However, the Festival actually takes its name less from the bandola instrument than from the Grupo Bandola, a group that has been the driving force of culture in Sevilla for the past 26 years.

The Bandola, a Colombian Andean instrument. Picture: Mario Gonzalo / Grupo Bandola

What the festival offers

Those who attend the Festival can enjoy nightly concerts at La Concordia Park. Over 400 musicians and 30 groups take turns playing on the platform until the wee hours of the morning, offering a warm and varied show that is also a tour of Colombian geography.

The Bandola Festival is a Colombian folk music encounter that takes place every August in the town of Sevilla in the department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia.

For those who wish to learn more about the music, the Festival organizes educational concerts where the background of each piece is carefully explained to the audience for a better understanding of the repertoire.

Musicians, folklore scholars, and specialists are sure to find workshops and encounters, such as the ones held by the bandola players, which undoubtedly enrich the Festival's agenda.

Events like the *Cantorío de Mujeres* (women's singing) and concerts in traditional cafés are institutionalized events to which attendees look forward. They are a veritable factory of sensitivity, merriment, and renovation of the spirit.

The joy of music arrives everywhere on the *Radiola del Bandola*. This is a truck full of performers in charge of touring every block in every district in town with musical notes.

Every year, the Bandola Festival awards the *Bandola Diego Estrada prize*, in recognition to the work and musical contributions of authors and interpreters who preserve or reinvent national musical traditions.

Sevilla, added value to the Festival

The Bandola de Sevilla Festival. Picture: Martin Gaviria / Colombia Travel, courtesy of the Bandola's official portal