

- **Place:** Sabanalarga, Department of Atlántico
- **Region:** Caribbean
- **Date:** March or April, depending on the Christian calendar
- **Duration:** 8 days



Holy Week in Sabanalarga

Holy Week in Sabanalarga was declared a Religious Cultural Site by the Assembly of the Department of Atlántico on December 11, 2007. It is a celebration with a tradition of over 180 years that reflects the faith of the participants in nine processions that begin on the second to last Friday of Lent and end on Easter Sunday.

Characteristic features of the Holy Week celebrations in Sabanalarga

The Holy Week in Sabanalarga is a fascinating experience of faith and cultural tradition that takes place on the Macondo stage of the Colombian Caribbean.

The inhabitants of Sabanalarga prepare the celebration a long time in advance in order to show a live tradition of faith, cultural tradition, and devotion. The simple act of arriving in town and taking the first step on its main plaza is enough to envelop visitors in the fragrance of the incense that burns on every corner of the town. Together with a sun that seems to shine brighter at this time of year, the burning incense signals the arrival of one of the most famous and recognized Holy Week celebrations in Colombia.

The Processions

Every detail of the processions is zealously guarded by each of the people who inherit from their fathers, generation after generation, the roles of effigy bearers, centurions, apostles, Nazarenes, Samaritans, virgins of sorrows, trumpeters, and bell ringers, among others.

The Holy Week celebrations in Sabanalarga, together with the Barranquilla Carnival, constitute the two most representative expressions of life in the Department of Atlántico.

Celebration attire and roles

The apostles are represented by senior citizens who take on the role of the men who accompanied Jesus on his long voyages 2,000 years ago. Just as in those times, on each day of the celebration, the apostles are in charge of looking for and setting up each step taken by Christ: from finding the donkey on which Jesus made his triumphal entrance on Palm Sunday, initiating Holy Week in Sabanalarga and the whole world, to planting a large olive orchard, the site at which the person with the role of Judas arrives and gives the kiss of treason to the image of Christ in the Gethsemane orchard.

At that moment, 80 men bearing torches and representing the Praetorian Guard that captured Jesus to take him to trial before the high priests appear on the scene. This is the point of departure of the only and original procession that goes to the main temple of Saint Anthony of Padua.

In similar fashion, every day of the Holy Week, Sabanalarga celebrates various representations of the moments lived by Christ, which changed the history of humanity.

The Holy Week celebrations in Sabanalarga provide a true experience of Colombian faith, tradition, and culture.

Events to highlight

Staging of the death and exhibit of the veilThe death of Christ is dramatized on a stage on the main plaza; the body is then removed from the cross and taken to the Holy Sepulcher.Holy Sepulcher processionThis is the most solemn of all processions and begins at nine o'clock in the evening. The body of Christ is taken to the Holy Sepulcher, which is considered the main religious and historical relic of Sabanalarga on account of its tradition and magnificence. The procession last until the dawn hours.{gallery}galeria/fiestas/sabanalarga{/gallery}

Did you enjoy the Holy Week processions in Sabanalarga? Also learn about:

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- The region's handicrafts: [Mompox filigree](#)

- Other feasts in the region: [Barranquilla Carnival](#)