In late January, Cartagena de Indias, the jewel of the Colombian Caribbean, shines brighter as soon as its walls, theaters, and plazas become the stage for and the witness to one of the most important cultural expressions in the world.

A street in Cartagena

The Hay Festival is an example of culture, pluralism, and celebration, at a par with the best festivals on the planet. Tourists and travelers from the world over visit this lovely city to surround themselves with letters and musical notes capable of making anyone sigh.

Renowned writers, authors, artists, musicians, and scholars from all continents come to Cartagena history destination to celebrate the most widely acknowledged and important cultural feast on the continent, and are welcomed by the waves of the sea and the shouts of palenquera fruit vendors.

Hay Festival's 4th version in Cartagena

In its fourth edition, Cartagena's Hay Festival presents writers, journalists, and people of letters of the stature of Salman Rushdie, Alberto Manguel, Cristina Fernández Cubas, Martin Amis, Joumana Haddad, and Benjamin Zephaniah.

From January 29 to February 1, participants from Colombia, the United States, Canada, Spain, the United Kingdom, and Lebanon will share their knowledge, theories, and thoughts with tourists and locals by means of discussions and talks in various salons throughout the city.

The schedule includes a discussion between artists Miguel Bosé and Juanes, and Roberto Pombo, from El Tiempo newspaper. The subject will be philanthropy and the role of artists as NGO ambassadors in the fields of health and education.

Origins of the Hay Festival

The Hay Festival, the Colombian version of which has taken place since 2006, originated in the Welsh town of Hay-on-Wye. It began in 1988 as a meeting of friends to share and debate their preferences in literature and the arts in general.

This literary feast, described by former US President Bill Clinton as “the Woodstock of the mind,” has been organized at a world level in countries like Spain, Italy, and Brazil since 1996.

If you were interested in the Hay Festival in Cartagena, you may like:

- Caribbean Handicrafts: Mompox filigrees, Wayúu weavings and the vueltiao hat .
- Tourist sites: Cartagena , Barranquilla y Santa Marta .
- Fairs and festivals: Barranquilla Carnival , Festival of the Vallenata Legend .