{rokbox title=|Cartagena Cathedral.|}images/stories/turistainternacional/Adondeir/Destinosfindesemana/hayfestival2010/fachada-cartagena3.jpg{/rokbox}

Cartagena Cathedral.

Cartagena decks itself in light and letters every January to make everyone vibrate with marvelous narrations, exciting novels, and touching poems that come forth from the pen of writers who find their inspiration in life. The Walled City exudes culture and beauty and opens spaces for the Hay Festival , one of Colombia's largest literary events.

From January 28 to 31, tourists will be immersed in theater, exhibits, workshops, and conferences. Additionally, they will be accompanied by over 80 guests and will have the chance to enjoy a concert by Manu Dibango, the Cameroun saxophonist, who will present a fusion of the typical music of his country and jazz and funk rhythms.

Hay Festival, Colombia's major literary event.

For five consecutive years, the festival has brought together, not only nationally and internationally renowned writers, but also cultural promoters, musicians and critics from the world over.

Main events

On this occasion, close to 50 events will take place, not only in the Walled City, but also in Bogotá , the country's capital, and in Riohacha, a town in the department of La Guajira. Here are a few of them:

Cartagena

{rokbox title=|Heredia Theater, Cartagena.|}images/stories/turistainternacional/Adondeir/Destinosfindesemana/hayfestival2010/cartagena-heredia.jpg{/rokbox}

Heredia Theater, Cartagena.

- Roberto Pombo, editor of El Tiempo newspaper, will interview Fernando Trueba, director of the Oscar-winning Belle Epoque.
- Andrew Roberts, a specialist on the Second World War and author of The Storm of War, will give a conference on how Hitler lost the war.
- Luis García Montero, Darío Jaramillo, and essayist William Ospina will have a dialogue with Ramón Cote in the frame of the Poetry and Narrative, Diffuse Frontiers event.
- The following authors will participate in the poetry gala on January 29: Michael Ondaajte (Canada – The English Patient), Luis García Montero (Spain – And now you're the owner of the Brooklyn Bridge), Ramón Cote (Colombia – Poems for a Common Grave), Hugo Chaparro Valderrama (Colombia – For a Distant Ghost), William Ospina (Colombia – Aurelia Artura), Darío Jaramillo (Colombia – From eye to tongue), Zoé Valdez (Cuba – The sea desired), Joumana Haddad (Lebanon – The Return of Lilith), and Ibrahim Nasrallah (Palestine – The Book of Death and the Dead).
- Awards ceremony of 3er Concurso Nacional de Cuento, the third national story contest, in which hundreds of Colombian students participated.
- Exhibits: Darwin Now (British Council), "Daniel Mordzinski, Fotógrafo Entre Escritores" (Daniel Mordzinski, a photographer amid writers), "Ni con el pétalo de una rosa", (Not even with a rose petal); the latter against abuse of women.

The event gathers eminent international authors.

Film makers Fernando Trueba, Alejandro González Iñárritu, Sergio Cabrera, and Peter Godwin will participate. Ian McEwan, Alfredo Gómez Cerdá, Juan Gabriel Vásquez, Paolo Giordano, Óscar Collazos, and Najat El Hachmi will be present as writers. Musicians include Mara Carlyle and Manu Dibango. Historians and critics will also attend.

Bogotá and Riohacha

{rokbox title=|The sombrero vueltiao, the typical arrowcane hat used by vallenato musicians in the Colombian Caribbean.|}images/stories/turistainternacional/Adondeir/Destinosfindesemana/hayfestival2010/sombrero-vueltiao.jpg{/rokbox}

The sombrero vueltiao, the typical arrowcane hat used by vallenato musicians in the Colombian Caribbean. Photo by Flickr user Andres Rueda .

Ian McEwan, winner of the Booker Prize with his novel “Amsterdam”, will discuss his work with Hay Festival Director Peter Florence. The Xirriquiteula theater company will perform the shows Girraffes and Papyrus for children.

On its part, Riohacha will celebrate the vallenato - a Colombian musical genre - as a literary expression. Children’s writers Jordi Sierra i Fabra and Yolanda Reyes will attend. Composer and minstrel Nemesio Nieves, from the Wiwa indigenous group, and Julian Daza, a storyteller and writer, also from the Wiwa group, will discuss the Peninsula of La Guajira and its culture, in the company of Wayuu (another indigenous group) poets Livio Suárez and Sergio Cohen. The latter is also a palabrero, a conflict mediator.

Click here for the complete schedule of the event.

Origins of the Hay Hestival

{rokbox title=|Dome of the Cartagena Cathedral.|}images/stories/turistainternacional/Adondeir/Destinosfindesemana/hayfestival2010/cupula-cartagena1.jpg{/rokbox}

Dome of the Cartagena Cathedral.

In 1998, Welshman Peter Florence created the Hay Festival, in the city of Hay-on-Wye, to bring together the best of literature and to foster an encounter between readers and authors. The Festival’s spirit arrives in Latin America and chooses Cartagena as a venue, thanks to the efforts of Gabriel García Márquez and Carlos Fuentes.

Thus, the Hay Festival – this marvelous feast of letters – is being celebrated in Colombia since 2006, becoming another attraction for tourists, readers, critics, authors, musicians, and artists. This four-day festival fills the Walled City with magical moments that exude culture.

If you are interested in more experiences on the magic of Cartagena, please visit…

- Cartagena de Indias: Elegance in the Colombian Caribbean
- Cartagena de Indias photo gallery
- Isla del Pirata, one of the Rosario Islands - 360º panoramic photo

- Cartagena video
- Cartagena: Flicker photos of tourists like you