

Brazilian Carnival

The Brazilian Carnival is an annual festival in Brazil held 40 days before Easter and marks the beginning of Lent. During Lent, Roman Catholics are supposed to abstain from all bodily pleasures, including the consumption of meat. The carnival, celebrated as a profane event and believed to have its origins in the pagan Saturnalia, can thus be considered an act of farewell to the pleasures of the flesh.

Brazilian citizens used to riot until the Carnival was accepted by the government as an expression of culture. That was because the Brazilian carnival had its origin in a Portuguese festivity called "entrudo".

Rio de Janeiro

Modern Brazilian Carnival finds its roots in Rio de Janeiro in the 1845, when the city's bourgeoisie imported the practice of holding balls and masquerade parties from Paris. It originally mimicked the European form of the festival, over time acquiring elements derived from Native American and African cultures.

In the late 19th century, the cordões (literally laces or strings in Portuguese) were introduced in Rio de Janeiro. These were groups of people who would parade through the streets playing music and dancing. Today they are known as blocos (blocks), consisting of a group of people who dress in costumes or special t-shirts according to certain themes or to celebrate the Carnival.

These "blocos" have become a big part of Rio de Janeiro's Carnival. There are more than 100 "blocos" nowadays and each year this number increases. Some are big, some are small, most concentrate in square and later parade through the streets and a few stay in the same place all the time. Each "bloco" has its place or street to parade and the big ones usually close the streets for car traffic. They usually start in January and last till the end of Carnival, so since the beginning of the year you can see a group of people dancing samba in any street of Rio in the weekends and during Carnival every day.

Usually the people who organize the "bloco" write their own music, which is played at all time during the parade, along with old carnival favourites called in Portuguese "Marchinhas de carnaval", and sambas that have become classics. Some important

"blocos" are "O cordão do bola preta", that goes through the heart of Rio's historical center, and "Suvaco do Cristo" in the neighbourhood, near Rio's Botanic Garden. Monobloco is another bloco that has become so famous that their band plays all year round in parties and small concerts.

Carnival in Rio de Janeiro is known worldwide for its elaborate parades staged by the city's major samba schools in the Sambadrome and is one of Rio's major tourist attractions. Each samba school rehearses all year round for this event and all of its



members take part in the rehearsals, whether experts or not. It is a place where people who always wanted to write a song, play a percussion instrument or choreograph a dance will have their opportunity. It is usual that during the carnival aristocrats dress up as commoners, men cross-dress as women, and poor people dress up as princes and princesses - social roles and class differences are expected to be forgotten once a year, but only for the duration of the festival.

Adapted from Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brazilian_Carnival

New words

English word	Slovenian word
lent	post
to abstain	vzdržati se
profane	posveten
to acquire	pridobiti

Summary

The Brazilian Carnival is traditionally held in Brazil every year 40 days before Easter. It symbolizes the beginning of Lent, the time, when people aren't allowed to eat meat and are supposed to abstain from all bodily pleasures. This carnival has pagan roots and the government didn't want to accept it. But later it had to since this carnival is an expression of culture.

The modern carnival is based on European balls and masquerades and dates back to 1845. Over time it acquired elements, deriving from Native Americans and Africa. The main part of the carnival represent so called "blocos". These are groups of people, which dance and sing on the streets. They begin with their performances in January and continue until the official beginning of the carnival. Nowadays there are more than 100 blocos and their number increases with every year. You can see people dancing samba on every corner of Rio de Janeiro. Some blocos move all the time and some of them have their own place, where they stay all the time.

Carnival in Rio de Janeiro is known worldwide and is one of the biggest tourist attractions. There are many different samba schools in Rio and every one of them is rehearsing for that carnival through the whole year. Everyone can perform, whether experts or not. People, who always wanted to show their dancing or to play their music, have possibility to be heard and seen.

During the festival all social differences are forgotten. Aristocrats dress up as ordinary people, men dress up as women, and poor people dress up as royalties. But this lasts just until the end of the festival.