



June Celebration

In June three popular Saints are celebrated: St. Anthony, on June 13th (this Saint is said to be a matchmaker; women who are losing hopes to find a husband appeal to St. Anthony, particularly during the periods of the June Parties); St. John (according to popular faith, the responsible for a good harvest of corn), on the 24th; and St. Peter (the guardian of heavens, with control over the clouds and rains), on the 29th.

It became a Brazilian tradition to organize parties to celebrate these saints. Because they always happen in June, they are called "Festas Juninas" in Portuguese. This tradition was originated in the smaller cities of the countryside, where people are more religious and more dependant on good crops; nowadays, this festivity can be found all over the country. In larger cities, it is usual that churches or schools organize these feasts, trying to raise some extra funds.

The feasts have some typical features: music, costumes, food, decoration, games.

A bonfire is always present (June is a cold month in the south of Brazil). People wear clothes associated with hillbillies (the Portuguese word for hillbilly is "caipira"); young boys make up beard and moustache; young girls arrange ponytails. Music is based on simple instruments (triangle, accordion), with several traditional songs.

Food is heavily based on corn and other ingredients available on farms; boiled corn, baked corn, popcorn, several candies based on corn, milk and peanuts (*pé-de-moleque*, *canjica*, *curau*, *pamonha*, *cocada*). To drink, several juices for kids, and, to help adults warm up, **quentão** (the name means "very hot"; the drink is prepared with **cachaça**, sugar, and ginger).

