



**BARBADOS**

June 2-Aug. 6

Barbadians have been commemorating its **Crop Over Festival**, which celebrates the final harvest of the sugar cane season since 1687. Bajan cultural heritage and carnival carpe diem fuse at Crop Over galas, boozy catamaran cruises and soca band battles. Folk concerts, art markets and culinary events are crowd pleasers. A Foreday Morning street party precedes the Grand Kadooment Day Parade of feathered, sequined and bejeweled masqueraders. [visitbarbados.org/crop-over-festival](http://visitbarbados.org/crop-over-festival)



**ANGUILLA**

Aug. 2-12

Commemorating the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies on Aug. 1, 1834, the **Anguilla Summer Festival** begins with fireworks. Crowds gather for calypso and soca band competitions and sailboat races, and starting before dawn, the J'ouvert street party bands play on floats. Celebrants wear elaborate, colorful and revealing costumes during The Grand Parade of Troupes. Fest foods include sweet crayfish, curry goat and barbecue. [whatwedoinanguilla.com/calendar/anguilla-summer-festival](http://whatwedoinanguilla.com/calendar/anguilla-summer-festival)



**CUBA**

July 18-27

Santiago's exotic blend of French-Haitian, Spanish, Moorish and African cultures is showcased in **Carnival of Santiago de Cuba's** traditional dancers, colorful floats, bands and folkloric characters parading through twisting hillside streets flanked by Spanish Colonial-era buildings. The festival's origins date back to the 17th-century Fiestas de los Mamarrachos. Lively spectators nosh on tapas, peanut brittle bars and sip rum daiquiris. [cubatravel.cu](http://cubatravel.cu)



**ANTIGUA**

July 27-Aug. 7

Started in 1957, **Antigua Carnival** celebrates emancipation from slavery with the Glow Parade of illuminated, cultural-themed floats and calypso and soca competitions. Partiers coated in mud, powder and paint dance dawn to dusk in Monday's J'ouvert, followed by the Carnival Tuesday Parade of the Bands and flamboyant costumed dancers. Fest foods include sweet Antigua black pineapple, pepper pot stew and locally made rums. [antiguacarnival.com](http://antiguacarnival.com)



**BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS**

July 27-Aug. 10

For 60 years, the British Virgin Islands has commemorated its freedom from colonialism during the **Emancipation Festival Celebrations** held on Tortola. Horse races, car shows, food fairs, gospel events and folkloric presentations surround an all-star concert lineup. Join the Rise & Shine Tramp J'ouvert and fest finale Road March Champions parade of vibrantly costumed revelers. [bvitourism.com](http://bvitourism.com)



**GRENADA**

Aug. 13-14

Known as Spice Island in the Caribbean, Grenada calls its carnival **Spicemas**. Riotous fetes, party cruises, concerts and calypso and soca competitions lead up to the Dimanche Gras celebration, J'ouvert and Monday Night Masquerade. At Tuesday's Parade of the Bands, swiveling dancers balance dazzling feathered headdresses, and marchers in traditional Short Knees costumes playfully sprinkle spectators with baby powder. [spicemasgrenada.com](http://spicemasgrenada.com)



**BELIZE**

Sept. 8

The Creole-themed **Belize City Carnival** is held on the island's Independence Day. Body-painted partiers jive to calypso, soca and reggae during dawn's J'ouvert. Costumed children lead the Carnival Road March of festooned floats pulled by dance troupes, donning beaded, fringed and plumaged ensembles and headdresses resembling giant birds and butterflies. Foods include tamales, meat pies, ceviche and conch fritters. [belizecarnival.bz](http://belizecarnival.bz)



**Carnival!**

Island cultures are front and center in Caribbean celebrations

BY KIT BERNARDI

Missed out on February's Fat Tuesday Mardi Gras fun? This summer, head to the Caribbean for vibrant carnivals celebrating the islands' histories and cultures with rum-in-the-sun fetes, pageants, culinary events and rousing masquerade parades.

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