

events

Parintins' Boi-Bumba folkloric festival

Festival
Nacion
30th June



A celebration in loose remembrance of the legend of two slaves, mixed with Indian folklore, the Boi-Bumba dance is part of a festival in the Amazonian town of Parintins. At the end of every June, tens of thousands of people flock to see the parades and music at the Bumbódromo stadium.

The legend goes that a pregnant slave, Mãe Catarina, had the uncontrollable urge to eat a bull's tongue. After she pestered her husband Pãe Francisco, he killed the best bull on the farm but was caught and sentenced to death by his master. Catarina found a witchdoctor/priest who resurrected the bull and Francisco was saved.

The story may have been forgotten, but for two families, the Cids and the Monteverdes. Local people built bulls, remembering Catarina's desire, and when Roque and Antonio Cid came to the Amazonian region in the late 19th

century as part of the rubber boom, they promised to make a model of a bull with their riches. The Cids' bull was called Caprichoso and, in a similar way, Lindolio Monteverde created the bull Garantido a few years later.

Each June the families brought out their bull to parade around the town. They also came with their *repentista*, a singer who would sing praises to his family's bull and criticise that of the opposing family. In a place and at a time when feuds were rife, the two families were likely to fight each other if they met as they went around the town. As the years passed it became more of a re-enactment in the streets, and in the 1950s the two bulls moved their "competition" to the local churchyard. ■