

The Brazilian June Party



June is a lively month in Brazil. The cool weather calls for bonfires, lots of dancing, rich food and drinks. If you live here or are passing by, you will be invited to a *Festa Junina*, where you will eat Brazilian sweets and drink *quentão*, a hot drink made with *pinga*, or *vinho quente*, a hot spicy wine. Children and even adults dress up like country bumpkins, play traditional games and win prizes.

The *Festas Juninas* were brought to Brazil by Portuguese and Spanish settlers celebrating the harvest and their favorite saints.

One of the highlights of a *Festa Junina* is the *quadrilha*, which is a type of square dance with sometimes over twenty participants. A couple “getting married” leads the other “couples” in the *quadrilha*. Their “wedding ceremony” is only one part of a complex dance. The “groom” always runs away and is often brought back by the angry father of the “bride”. It is quite a spectacle. Sometimes, the participants even switch roles, the girls dress up as boys and the boys as girls. Colorful flags are strung up and hot-air paper balloons are released into the sky. The fun goes on into the night.

Catholics honor their favorite saints in a traditional *Festa Junina*: Santo Antonio (Saint Anthony), the patron saint of weddings (June 13); São João (Saint John), the saint who is a model for a perfect life (June 24); and São Pedro (Saint Peter), who guards the pearly Gates of Heaven (June 29). But the *Festas Juninas* do not necessarily include religion. Schools, clubs and churches normally host these parties.



Project

- ◇ Choose a typical *Festa Junina* food and write its recipe.
- ◇ Prepare a presentation for your class.

Adapted from: <http://festajunina.co.uk/the-brazilian-june-party>.