

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander QLS Cultural Calendar 2023

JANUARY

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KEY CULTURAL DATES

13 February	National Apology Anniversary
16 March	National Close the Gap Day
21 March	National Harmony Day
May	Indigenous History Month
26 May	National Sorry Day
27 May	Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum
27 May-3 June	National Reconciliation Week – Be a Voice for Generations
3 June	MABO Day
July	QLS Annual First Nations Plan
1 July	Coming of the Light
2-9 July	National NAIDOC Week For Our Elders
4 August	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day
9 August	International Day of the World's Indigenous People
7 September	Indigenous Literacy Day
13 September	Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People
October	Indigenous Business Month
November	First Nation Bedtime Stories Week



Booin Gari Festival (Come This Way)	Started in 2008 in Tewantin, Sunshine Coast. The Murri gathering is a family day to celebrate local Indigenous culture and history through a range of creative events and performances. Source: www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/arts/aboriginal-cultural-festivals#toc2
Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) 13-16 July	Started in 2009 and goes for 3 days in July. It features dance, music, fashion parades, dramatic performances, workshops and artists' talks. Source: ciaf.com.au
Clancestry	Celebrates arts and cultures of the world's First Nations Peoples with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Scheduled in February or October, the festival started in 2013 and is hosted by the Queensland Performing Arts Centre. Source: qpac.com.au/clancestry
Cully Fest	In Cunnamulla, south-west QLD, in 2016 but changes venues. Cully Fest is a 3-day outback and Aboriginal cultural festival that offers traditional Aboriginal dance and language, bush yarns, didgeridoo making and other workshops including song writing and ukulele, a cabaret with bush tucker dinner, a school excursion program, National Finals Rodeo and headline musical acts. Source: www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/arts/aboriginal-cultural-festivals#queensland
Cultural Fest	Despite the simple name this festival is held in Townsville since 1994. It is believed to be the biggest of its kind in Australia. Source: www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/arts/aboriginal-cultural-festivals#toc2
Dreaming Festival	Woodford (one hour north of Brisbane) is the largest Aboriginal cultural festival in Australia showcasing the wide variety of cultural expression. The festival started in 2004 and features performing arts venues, bars, Ceremony grounds, traditional healing, galleries, rituals, campfire story circles and a mass of stalls, workshop avenue and food outlets. Source: www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/arts/aboriginal-cultural-festivals#toc2
Laura Aboriginal Dance and Cultural Festival	A biennial three-day gathering dedicated to celebrating local dance and arts from across the Cape York region (far north Queensland). During the festival elders pass on the stories and meaning behind the dances and songs to the next generation. The festival was first celebrated in 1994. Source: www.anggnarra.org.au
Lockhart Festival	A 4-day dance festival organised by the Aboriginal community of Lockhart River on the far north Queensland coast. Over 100 dancers from 8 tribal groups in Arnhem Land, Cape York, fly into Lockhart by light plane: far away from their homelands, many of the dancers are meeting other tribal groups for the first time, and new relationships are forged between communities. Source: www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/arts/aboriginal-cultural-festivals#toc2
Quandamooka Festival	A full 3 month festival (June to August), includes traditional performances, dance, music and cultural tours and much more. Source: www.quandamookafestival.com.au
Bunya Festival	A 2 day festival with traditional dance and traditional methods of cooking with bush foods (Bunya nuts). This is a festival of coming together of sharing and learning in the Aboriginal context. See the website for when the 2023 event comes available. Source: www.discoversouthburnett.com.au/events/community-event/bunya-mountains-community-markets
Frontier Festival	The Gulf Country Frontier Days Festival is overflowing with Country and Western and Indigenous culture. By day, all eyes are on the ring for the National Indigenous Rodeo Championships. By night, First Nations performers and musicians from around the world take to the stage. A true celebration of the diversity of culture with the "Kabarriji Wangkiji Spectacular" – The Coming Together of Nations, taking centre stage for a 3 day event during August, refer to the website for more information. Source: www.queensland.com/au/en/things-to-do/events
Winds of Zenadth festival	ZENADTH Celebrating diversity through dance Sharing "Zenadth Kes" – the Torres Strait Islands. A unity festival. "Winds of Zenadth" is an all-islands festival celebrating a proud living culture with ancient roots, originally Melanesian. It is one of the biggest celebrations of Indigenous culture in the region. Visitors can witness the unique nature of Torres Strait Islander culture at the place where Indigenous islanders gather to practice, revitalise and preserve the language, art and ceremonies of Zenadth Kes. Experience a diverse Indigenous island festival with every island represented through dance and culture. Winds of Zenadth is a bi-annual event, next held in 2024 on Thursday Island. Source: www.queensland.com/au/en/things-to-do/events/arts-and-culture/indigenous-events-queensland.html
NPA Cultural Festival	Five times the Flame of Culture will call a gathering of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities at Injinoo, Umagico, Seisia, New Mapoon and Bamaga. The carved fire torch is lit to signify peace, unity and the flame of culture. It travels across country to Bamaga for a 2-day celebration. Experience the different dance, art, food and crafts of two Indigenous nations, with traditional carving workshops and cultural walkabouts to ancient sites of the Northern Peninsula. See website for information of 2023 details. Source: www.capeyorkaustralia.com/npa-cultural-festival.html

For more useful links please visit: tourism.tropicalnorthqueensland.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Deeper-Into-Dreamtime-Brochure-compressed.pdf OR www.queensland.com/au/en/things-to-do/events/arts-and-culture/indigenous-events-queensland.html