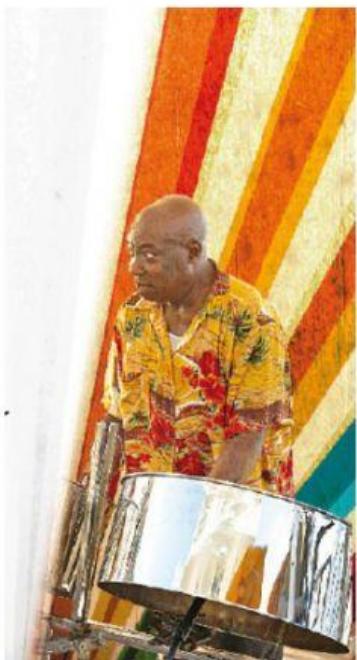


Notting Hill Carnival

- a. A chance to remember the past
- b. Where a festival atmosphere comes to life
- c. A special day of music and culture

The Notting Hill Carnival is the largest street festival in Europe and one of the largest in the world. The first carnival was a small event which was held in 1964 as a way for Afro-Caribbean and West Indian communities to celebrate their cultures and traditions. This annual festival fills the streets of Notting Hill in West London with amazing displays of music, costumes and colourful sights. In recent years, this spectacular event has become multi-ethnic and has attracted more than one million people.

The earliest form of this festival goes all the way back to the early 19th century. The first Caribbean-themed carnivals were mainly a way for the steel band musicians who played their drums in Earls Court to demonstrate their skills.



When the parades passed through the streets of Notting Hill, residents gathered in the streets. The festivities reminded them of the homes they had left behind.

In the past, steel band, soca and calypso music were the main styles featured at the carnival. However, in recent years you can hear anything from reggae to R&B, funk, house, dub and more. Sound systems are set up, but also live stages. Local bands as well as international artists take part, so it is an opportunity for everyone to enjoy sounds from around the world.

The Notting Hill Carnival takes place every August and lasts for three days. On Saturday, you can follow the event known as the "Panorama," a drumming competition between steel bands, which now takes place in Hyde Park. Sunday is Children's Day and there is a short parade for children in costumes. The main parade is on Monday, and the route is about 3 miles long. Expect to see colourful floats and people in Caribbean-style costumes dancing to loud music. It is the day most people attend and everyone is welcome.



There's nothing like the inviting smell of traditional Caribbean food, which is characteristic of the Notting Hill Carnival. There are more than 300 street stalls where you will get the chance to taste jerk chicken, fried fish, curry goat, rice and peas as well as other exotic dishes.

Read again and answer the questions. Choose a, b or c.

1. What is true about the Notting Hill Carnival?

- a. It is the oldest street festival in Europe.
- b. People from different ethnic communities take part in it.
- c. It is a traditional celebration that started in the Caribbean.

2. How did the first Caribbean-themed carnival start?

- a. As a way for people from the Caribbean to socialise.
- b. As a way to help people who felt homesick.
- c. As a way for musicians to perform and express themselves.

3. What kind of music could you listen to at the original carnivals?

- a. Calypso, reggae and funk.
- b. Music from around the world.
- c. Soca and calypso.

4. What is true about the drumming competition?

- a. It takes place at a different venue.
- b. It takes place during the main parade.
- c. It takes place on the same day as the children's parade.

5. Apart from the music and the parade, what is another main attraction at the Notting Hill Carnival?

- a. traditional arts and crafts
- b. street stalls with a great variety of food
- c. traditional dance competitions

6. What is the purpose of this text?

- a. to describe a popular carnival
- b. to explain how the carnival is organised
- c. to provide information about Caribbean traditions