

Saint Anthony of Betxí



Ajuntament
de Betxí



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Sant Antoni is Betxí's patron saint. His popular festivity takes place on 17th January, including many events and traditions. One of these traditions and maybe the most popular and remarkable is the pilgrimage to "Muntanyeta de Sant Antoni" which is a hill located in Betxí.

"Sant Antoni de Betxí està dalt d'un pilaret ..."

There is also a song dedicated to the Saint, it is a folk song that people from Betxí sings and dances to honour Sant Antoni. .



"Sant Antoni Pop Festival"



Local band "Los Altragós"

Continuing with music, it also takes place during Sant Antoni's festivities "Sant Antoni Pop Festival", which started more than fifteen years ago and it has already become a tradition. First thought as a garage music festival of local bands, through the years it has consolidated and has become a reference for this kind of music now hiring both national and international bands.



As said before, one of Betxi's hallmarks is Saint Antoni's Hill (Muntanyeta de Sant Antoni). On its top it can be found St. Antoni's hermitage, a restaurant bearing the Saint's name and an oriel that offers a fantastic view of the entire Plana Baixa region.

It is just four Kilometers from Betxi's city center.



During the festivities to honour the Saint several traditional acts take place. Among them some of the most important are "La Matxa" which is a parade that takes place on Saint Antoni's Eve (17th January). Saint Antoni is the patron saint of Betxi and of animals as well. So, this is a parade in which people who have pets participate along with them, they receive a blessing, surround Saint Antoni's bonfire and they are given the traditional "rotllo" which is a bread with anisette bagel-shaped very typical from Betxi and specifically of this event. It ends with traditional music and dances performed by folk musicians (dolçainers and tabalers) and dancers who dance "el ball del barril" wearing traditional vestments.



But the central act of Saint Antoni's festivities is yet to come, it is the pilgrimage from Betxi to La Muntanyeta and it takes place 17th January in the morning. Everybody meets in Plaza Mayor and then heads to the Muntanyeta first stopping in Saint Antoni's Street to leave the image of the Saint there and then continuing to the top of the Hill.



Several traditions like collecting and wearing the neckerchief of the pilgrimage, "les tres culaetes" that is sitting down for three times in a certain trunk hidden in the way or ringing the hermitage bell when it is reached in order to be lucky during the year can be performed during the way.



A mass in the hermitage to honour the Saint is celebrated.

Friends and family meet in the Muntanyeta this day, they have lunch together, make barbecues and Street Stalls can also be found there selling toys and traditional sweets.



Just before the night falls everybody comes back to Betxi smelling of charcoal and country, happy because they have enjoyed good things in life like the company of their nearest and dearest, traditional food and nature. So, Saint Antoni is a festivity that brings people together and invites them to enjoy life and traditions, maybe that is the reason why it is so popular in Betxi.

