



*The IBCPC France 2026 festival is breaking new ground by offering participants a parade of nations featuring 3 simultaneous processions for even more energy and celebration.*

*3 processions, 3 times the fun – the choice is yours!*

# NATIONS PARADE





## THE 'LAND' PARADE

The traditional walking parade, in alphabetical order of nations, gathered behind your flag bearers.

## THE 'BOAT' PARADE

A procession on the water in dragon boats, parallel to the land parade. 26 dragon boats, 26 teams (selected on a voluntary basis) to accompany the Land Parade to the sound of drums and **have the privilege of experiencing the festivities from the lake.**



## THE DANCING DRAGONS' PROCESSION

10 dragons to set in motion with sticks, 100 participants (selected on a voluntary basis) to accompany the Land Parade with the undulating dragons.

Against the picture-postcard backdrop of Aix-les-Bains, the 3 Parades progress simultaneously, side by side, giving the Parade of Nations a completely unique resonance: a festival of colours, laughter, joy and sounds for memories that will last a lifetime.

**DETAILED INFORMATION HERE**

[www.ibcpcfrance2026.com/participants/nations-parade](http://www.ibcpcfrance2026.com/participants/nations-parade)



# THE LAND PARADE

ON THURSDAY 28TH, AS FROM 3PM

A walking procession of approximately 1 km, lasting 15 minutes, along the lake on a shaded promenade between the esplanade and Aqualac beach.

Gathered in alphabetical order by nation, behind your [flag bearers](#), you will stroll along, taking in the full splendour of Aix-les-Bains' natural beauty. The lake bordered by mountains as a background throughout the walk.



## BECOME A FLAG BEARER

You can now apply to be a flag bearer

### ◆ AT THE NATIONS PARADE

The **youngest** BCS paddler of each country will be picked as a flag bearer during the Nations Parade. This is on a voluntary basis and anyone can now apply at the following link: <https://ibcpcfrance2026.com/participants/nations-parade/flag-bearer-parade-nations/>

### ◆ AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY

The **oldest** BCS paddler of each country will be picked as a flag bearer during the Nations Parade. This is on a voluntary basis and anyone can now apply at the following link: <https://ibcpcfrance2026.com/participants/nations-parade/flag-bearer-closing-ceremony/>



## THE OPENING CEREMONY

The parade ends at the race site on Aqualac Beach when starts the **opening ceremony**. Under the lenses of the festival's photographers and videographers, you will be part in one of the highlights of the week: **the ritual of awakening the dragons**.



This spectacular moment marks the instant when the dragon boats transform from inert objects into symbolically living creatures. At the heart of the ceremony is a solemn ritual: awakening the dragon's five senses by placing a dot of red paint on its eyes, nose, tongue, ears and centre of its forehead. More than just decoration, these gestures consecrate the dragon as a protective entity for the community and crews.

Much more than a prelude to the festival, this ritual will immerse you in centuries of traditions linked to rivers, fertility and the legend of the poet Qu Yuan. Witnessing this awakening is to experience a rare moment where spirituality and spectacle meet, where tradition becomes a living experience. Flamboyant colours, the vibrations of the drums, spectacular scenery: the awakening of the dragons offers an unforgettable immersion into the festive and symbolic soul of Chinese culture.



# THE BOAT PARADE

*This is a world first for an IBCPC festival, something never seen before!*



With the boat parade, the 2026 IBCPC Festival takes advantage of its natural setting and its large alpine lake to give the parade of nations an extraordinary dimension.

**The aim is to have 26 dragon boats evolving side by side to form a coordinated procession.** After a few minutes, the dragon boats line up opposite Aqualac beach to take centre stage in the highly symbolic 'dragon awakening ritual'.

## Why take part in the Boat Parade?

- Be part of **something that has never been done before**
- Experience the festivities from the water in an original parade set to the rhythm of paddles and drums.
- Have the chance to watch the land parade from outside and fully appreciate what we are all creating together.
- Be front-row spectators of the dragon awakening ritual. From the boats, you will experience the opening ceremony up close.

## Practical information about the Parade:

- The Boat Parade is a team event, not an individual one.
- For safety reasons, the team leader must gather **a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 18 teammates** in one boat (including drummers and helm). The remaining teammates would take part in the land parade or the dragon dance.
- The boat parade is **open to supporters**.
- Helms must be registered helms, with a **valid helm certificate**.

**REGISTER HERE**

[www.ibcpcfrance2026.com/participants/nations-parade](http://www.ibcpcfrance2026.com/participants/nations-parade)





# THE DRAGON DANCE

*This is a world first for an IBCPC festival, something never seen before!*



The dragon dance is a spectacular choreography that originated in traditional Chinese culture. **An undulating 25m long fabric dragon made up of articulated sections and supported by poles regularly appears at Dragon Boat festivals and embodies the spirit of water.** It is a symbol of power, wisdom and happiness. In the Chinese culture, each colour has its own meaning: a green dragon calls for a bountiful harvest, yellow symbolises the empire, gold or silver are metaphors for prosperity, and red represents joy.

**10 people are needed to bring the dragon to life** by moving a section of its body with their pole. The aim is to imitate the sinuous, undulating movements of rivers. The synchronisation of the different parts of the dragon is essential to achieve a realistic effect, particularly the movements of the head. **Whirling, undulating, spinning: the dragon dance combines artistic expression, coordination, teamwork and agility.**

At the end of the parade, together with the participants of the land parade, you will experience the opening ceremony and the dragon awakening ritual. It is an emotional time where tradition and festivity merge.

## How about becoming part of the show by bringing the dragons to life?

The 2026 IBCPC Festival aims at organising a parade of 10 dragons on land, requiring 100 'dragon tamers' for the day.

### Why take part in the Dragon Dance?

- Become an artist for a day!
- Acquire new skills to replicate in your clubs and local events.
- Be an integral part of the show and enjoy a unique experience.

### Practical information about the Dragon Dance:

- Participation in the dragon dance is on an individual basis. It does not commit the rest of the team, who may choose to take part in either the boat or land parades.
- Participation in the dragon dance requires prior attendance at a Dragon Dance workshop.

**Please note:** handling the dragon requires keeping your arms raised for extended periods of time. The dragon's head can weigh up to 4 kgs.

**REGISTER HERE**

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