

Spanish Fiestas and Festivals

When you think of **Spanish fiestas** and festivals which ones spring to mind? I'll bet that the **bullrunning in Pamplona** is probably top of your list. But what about the other major festivals?

Holy week (**Semana Santa**) in Andalucia is a personal favourite when every parish sends out elaborate floats carried by parishioners. A procession can go on throughout the night returning home early the following morning. Two weeks later Seville celebrates the **April Fair** which must go down as one of Europe's biggest parties.

Valencia in March is the '**Fallas**' when huge papier-mache figures are burnt in the streets every night after a year has been spent building them. And in Bunyol in August it's **La Tomatina**, the world's biggest tomato fight. These are certainly some of the biggest annual festivals as far as foreign tourists are concerned but what about all the little festivals that take place all over the country?

Every single city, town and village in the country celebrates its own unique fiesta and it's the smaller, local festivals that can prove just as rewarding to the visitor. In **Miraflores de la Sierra** in the Guadarrama mountains of Madrid we used to always go to the annual village festival of San Blas in February. The whole village heads out to a local hillside where a shrine to the village's patron saint stands. Everyone is equipped with chairs, tables, food and wine and huge pots are put on open fires where '**bacalao con patatas**' (cod and potatoes) is prepared for the whole village. By late afternoon all the villagers have returned to the bars which remain packed throughout the night. During the Carnival celebrations in the same village there's a day when a sardine is buried (**El Entierro de la Sardina**), a custom which I cannot explain!

There are many festivals of international interest which celebrate music and the arts notably the **Granada International Festival of Music and Dance** which takes place in the grounds of the Alhambra Palace. San Sebastian in the Basque Country is packed to the seams during its annual **jazz and film festivals** and the Benicassim Festival has become an important European music festival in a small town north of Valencia.

There are plenty food and drink related fiestas throughout the country and some bizarre festivals some of which involve **donkeys and church roofs**, but we won't go into that right now! In the coming months and hopefully years we'll be including interesting festivals both national and local in our newsletter and hope you'll enjoy hearing from us.

Useful Links:

[Calendar of Spanish Festivals](#)

[Pamplona Bull Run](#)

[Semana Santa in Seville](#)

[Seville's April Fair](#)

[Las Fallas in Valencia](#)

[La Tomatina Tomato Fight](#)

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