



The Running of the Bulls

Directions: Read each article about San Fermín and the Running of the Bulls. Then, answer the questions that follow.

Part 1: Pamplona Bull Running

The festival of San Fermín is more commonly known as the Running of the Bulls outside Spain. The festival officially begins at midday on 6th July every year with the 'Chupinazo' (opening ceremony) that takes place on the balcony of the Casa Consistorial in Pamplona. The ceremony is marked by a rocket being launched from the city hall and an explosion of fireworks. Thousands of people congregate in the square awaiting the mayor's official announcement that the fiestas (parties) have begun, a rocket is launched, and the partying begins.

History of the Running of the Bulls

The history of the bull running in Pamplona is not clear. There is evidence of the festival from as far back as the 13th century when it seems the events took place in October as this coincided with the festival of San Fermín on October 10th. It seems that the modern-day celebration has evolved from this as well as individual commercial and bullfighting fiestas which can be traced back to the 14th century.



Over many years, the mainly religious festival of San Fermín was diluted by music, dancing, bullfights and markets such that the Pamplona Council proposed that the whole event be moved to July 7th when the weather is far more conducive to such a celebration. To this day, San Fermín remains a fixed date every year with the first bull run at 8am on July 7th and the last at the same time on July 14th.

The joining together of the religious, commercial and bullfighting festivals and the move to July 7th led to the first official celebration of San Fermín in 1591. The fiesta was a low-key affair in comparison to the modern-day festival, as it only lasted two days. Dancing and fireworks became features of the festival over the next few years and the event was extended to July 10th.



It was thanks to the writing of American writer Ernest Hemingway that San Fermín developed the notoriety of today. The publication of his novel “The Sun Also Rises” in 1926 told the world about the Pamplona bull running festival, which attracted people from all over the world to this annual festival.

Part 1 Questions

1. The festival of San Fermín takes place in _____, Spain.
2. What is the opening ceremony called? _____
3. What signals the beginning of the festival?

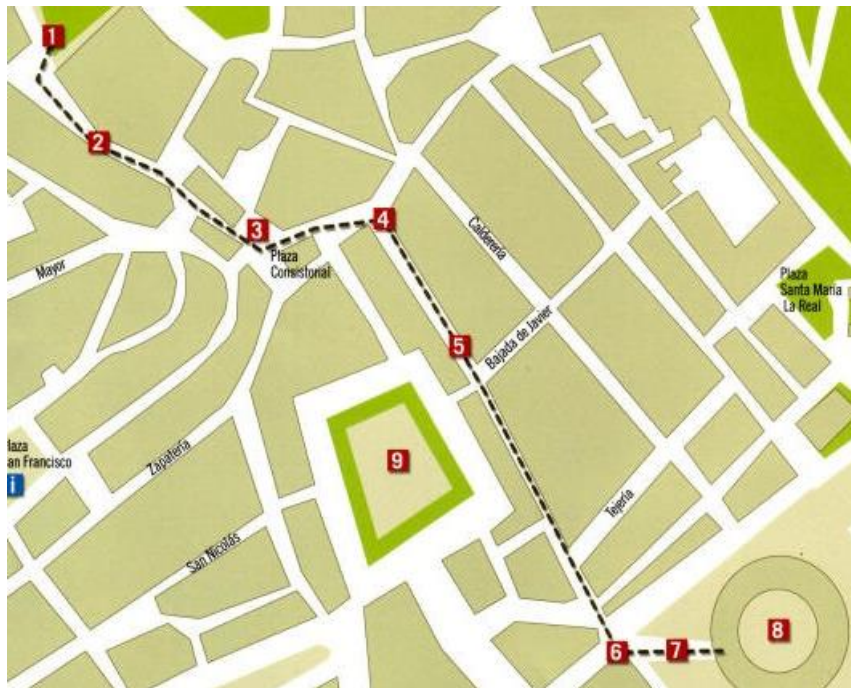
4. What time and date does the festival begin?

5. When it first began, the festival was mainly a _____ festival that grew to include music, dancing, and bullfights.
6. The festival gained notoriety when it was written about in _____'s novel, The Sun Also Rises.

Part 2: The Bull Run – El Encierro

The Pamplona bull run (el encierro) takes place at 8 AM every morning from July 7th-14th. There are eight runs in total. Runners must be in the running area by 7.30 AM. The actual run stretches from the corral at Santo Domingo where the bulls are kept to the bullring where they will fight that same afternoon. The length of the run is 825 meters (0.51 miles) and the average time of the run from start to finish is about three minutes. Each day, six fighting bulls run the route as well as two herds of bullocks.

Runners (called *mozos*) dressed in white with a red handkerchief around their necks pray to San Fermin, then a second rocket announces that the bulls have left. The bulls and the runners then proceed along the route.



Bull Run Route

1. Corralillos
2. Cuesta de Santa Domingo
3. Plaza del Ayuntamiento
4. Curva de Mercaderes hacia Estafeta
5. Calle Estafeta
6. Curva de Telefónica
7. Callejón
8. Plaza de Toros
9. Plaza del Castillo

A third rocket is set off once all the bulls have entered the bullring and the fourth, and final, rocket means that the bulls are now in the bullpen and the bull run has finished. The vast number of people taking part in the bull run adds to the danger of running alongside wild bulls weighing in the region of 700kg (1500 lbs) each!

Watching the Bull Running

You can stand behind the fences that mark the route of the bull run, but you need to arrive by around 6.30 AM to get the best spots on the top of the fence directly overlooking the run. Another good spot is in front of the museum on Santo Domingo where there is not a fence but the best spots here are usually taken before 6 AM leaving you with a cold two-hour wait before the run starts. A great alternative is to **get yourself onto a balcony** overlooking the bull run. You might be lucky enough to meet someone who invites you onto their terrace, alternatively, ask in the tourist information office. Your only other options are to go to the bullring and watch the end as the bulls arrive in the arena or to head for a local business/restaurant and watch the bull run which is shown live every morning on national TV.

Watching the Bullfights

On every evening of the fiesta beginning at 6.30 PM on July 7th, there is a bullfight in the Pamplona bullring. Tickets for the bullfights are sold out well in advance as the arena only holds 12,500 people. Every evening after the day's bullfight, some tickets go on sale for the next evening's event at the 'taquillas' at the bull ring. You'll usually find ticket touts operating around the Plaza de Toros during the day and before the bullfight selling at elevated prices.



Article and photography source: <http://www.spanish-fiestas.com/festivals/san-fermin/>

Part 2 Questions

7. Write the significance of each rocket signal:

a. First rocket:

b. Second rocket:

c. Third rocket:

d. Fourth rocket:

8. What is the length of the bull run? _____

9. In Spanish, the bull run is called "el _____."

10. On every evening of the fiesta, there is a _____.

11. Name three possible places to view the bull run:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____