

La tomatina

La Tomatina is almost irrelevant in the landscape of popular Spanish celebrations, and it was virtually unknown outside of the small village where it is held until somehow it caught the eye of some major media outlets and it kind of went viral in Spain and abroad.

The village where the Tomatina is held, [Buñol](#), has less than 10,000 inhabitants, and participation in the tomato throwing is limited to about 20,000 people (of which a large proportion are locals, of course), not to mention the tomato-throwing only goes back as far as 1945. Compare to that the typical attendance to other, centuries-old and far more popular Spanish festivals:

Sanfermines (Pamplona): The city population balloons from 190,000 to over 1 million people during the week long festival. More than 50,000 take part in the running of the bulls, which is only a small part (although the most famous worldwide) of the entire festivities.



That's the view from Pamplona's town hall during the *chupinazo*, the speech and fireworks that mark the beginning of the festivities. Similar crowd density can be found in all the streets leading to the main square for a kilometer or so.

Feria de Abril (Seville): The entire city and its metropolitan area (1.5 million people) revolves around the lighted fairgrounds for a week. Visitors vary depending on the weather but typically reach half a million.



That gate is just the entrance to the fairgrounds. You can see the attractions at the far right, and the whole area shown by the picture is covered by large tents full to the brim of people eating, drinking and dancing.

Las Fallas (Valencia): Large, elaborate wood and paper figures are built through the year by local neighborhood associations and then they are displayed and eventually burned down during the festival. Aside from the local population (2.5 million) about a million people travel to the region to participate.



It's difficult to convey the scale of this festival. Pretty much every square of the city has one or several figures (*ninots*) and the noise from the constant fireworks and firecrackers can be deafening (100dB are considered par for the course).

Moros y Cristianos (Alicante): Almost every village and neighborhood in the province (2 million inhabitants) celebrates a version of this festival, in which locals dress as either Moors or Christians and parade through the streets while enacting mock battles in remembrance of the region's history (little resemblance to actual historical events though).



And this is just a sample. There are many, many local and regional festivities across Spain that are far more popular and draw bigger crowds than la Tomatina. The only difference is that somehow the latter got incredibly good PR and became a staple in foreign media outlets.

Do not enter bottles or hard objects to the event.

Do not tear or throw your T-shirts to others.

Squash the tomatoes before throwing them.

Participants have to make way for trucks and lorries.

Stop to throw tomatoes when you hear the shot of the second warning fireworks.

The Tomato Fight Festival Info

La Tomatina begins at 11.00am with a bang and ends at 12.00am on point with another.

Only bring things you need! You will not need passports, laptops or mobile phones!

Wear old clothes or clothes you aren't planning on wearing again and expect it to be torn off!

Official buses return from the La Tomatina festival at 2 pm. If you miss the bus, you will need to find a way back by yourself.

Linguistics

<https://youtu.be/ivaLaMkzROk>

Pathology

Interdisciplinary

evolve

Code breaking

