

PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS OF SPAIN

Notes

A. Names

1. Family names
 - a. Spaniards have two family names, the family name of the father followed by the maiden name of the mother, often joined by *y*.
Example: Pedro Ortega (y) Gomez
 - b. When a woman marries, she keeps her father's family name and takes on the father's family name of her husband, which is preceded by **de**.
Thus, Pedro's wife, whose maiden name was Elena Lopez y Suarez, would be called: Elena Lopez de Ortega.
2. **Saint's Day** (*el día del santo*) Most Spanish children have, as their given name, the name of a saint. They generally celebrate their saint's day instead of, or in addition, their birthday.

B. Customs

1. La **tertulia**: An informal social gathering for the purpose of meeting and chatting with friends.
2. La **siesta**: An afternoon nap or rest following the noon meal.
3. La **loteria**: A government-controlled lottery with frequent drawings.

C. Religious holidays

1. **Navidad** (Christmas): The most important religious holiday in Spain. Christmas trees are not used. Instead, each home has a Nativity scene or **nacimiento**, clay figures representing the scene of the birth of Christ. On Christmas Eve (**la Nochebuena**) people attend a Midnight Mass (**misa de gallo**). Children receive gifts on January 6, the Day of the Three Wise Men (**Día de los Reyes Magos**). The Reyes Magos play the same role in Spanish life as Santa Claus.
2. **Carnaval** (Carnival): A celebration that occurs during the three days before Lent.
3. **Pascua Florida** (Easter): Celebrated throughout Spain and Spanish America. **Semana Santa** (Holy Week) is observed the week before Easter, with solemn ceremonies. The Holy Week celebration in Seville is world-famous.
4. **Día de los Difuntos** (All Souls' Day): is solemnly observed by visiting graves of dead friends and relatives on November 2.

D. National Holiday

1. **El Dos de Mayo** (May 2): Commemorates the uprising of the Spanish people against French rule (1808).
2. **Día de la Raza** (October 12) : Columbus Day

E. Sports and Spectacles

1. **Corrida de toros** (bullfight): Very popular in Spain. The **toreros** (bullfighters) attempt to show their skill and bravery fighting against a ferocious **toro** (bull), specially bred for strength and bravery.
2. **Jai-alai**: A game of Basque origin, somewhat similar to handball.
 - a. **el fronton**: the three-walled court
 - b. **la cesta**: a curved basket strapped to the players wrist, in which the ball is caught and thrown against the wall
3. **Fútbol** (soccer): Very popular in Spain

F. Regional Dances

1. Andalusia: ***bolero***, ***flandango***, and **flamenco** (dance of the gypsies); all accompanied on the guitar
2. Aragón: ***jota***
3. Catalonia: ***sardena***

G. Typical Foods

1. **Arroz con pollo**: chicken and rice
2. **Paella**: chicken, seafood, and rice
3. **Cocido**: stew; most popular among farmers and laborers

H. Typical Beverages

1. **Chocolate**: thick hot chocolate usually served at breakfast with ***churros*** (fried strips of dough coated with cinnamon and sugar)
2. **Horchata**: cold drink made with crushed or powdered almonds, sugar and water

I. Picturesque Types

1. **Sereno**: night watchman who patrols houses and neighborhoods
2. **Gitano**: gypsy; found mostly in southern Spain