

## Spanish festival charges for tomato throwing

30<sup>th</sup> August, 2013



Spain's economic woes have led to one of its most famous festivals becoming a "pay-to-join" event. The cash-strapped town of Bunol will start charging

participants who want to take part in its world-famous Tomatina tomato-throwing festival. Tourists will have to pay a minimum of 10 euros (\$13) to be part of the hour-long tomato fight. Regardless, all 15,000 tickets have been sold. Local residents have been allocated 5,000 free tickets. The Tomatina costs the town 150,000 euros to organise. A hefty part of that sum goes toward paying for the 130 tons of tomatoes used as ammunition in the street battles. The streets are literally flooded with tomato juice at the festival's end.

Tourists from all over the world have flocked to the Tomatina for decades. Bunol's town mayor told reporters the decision to charge was partly due to financial constraints, but also out of security concerns. He said: "This is the first year we are charging for access to this popular festival due to the need to limit the crowd for safety reasons. We have had a problem for the past eight or 10 years. The Tomatina is not controlled. We don't know how many people are going to come." The festival started just after the end of WWII. There are various reports about its origins. The most popular is that of a brawl between teenagers near a vegetable market ending up with the youths pelting each other with tomatoes.

Sources: BBC / Enca / Wikipedia

### Writing

*It is fair that a town charges outsiders and not locals to join one of its festivals. Discuss.*

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

*economic woes / famous festivals / participants / tomatoes / tickets / ammunition / tourists / financial constraints / security / festival / origins / brawl / teenagers*

### True / False

- a) People will have to pay for a festival because of the poor economy. T / F
- b) Local people can go to the festival without paying. T / F
- c) 13 tons of tomatoes are used in the Tomatina festival. T / F
- d) Good drains mean there is almost no tomato juice in the streets. T / F
- e) The mayor said he is charging partly for safety reasons. T / F
- f) There has never been a problem at the festival in the past. T / F
- g) Tomatina started in the early nineteenth century. T / F
- h) People say the festival started after a fight between teenagers. T / F

### Synonym Match

- |                  |                        |
|------------------|------------------------|
| 1. woes          | a. amount              |
| 2. cash-strapped | b. limitations         |
| 3. take part     | c. fight               |
| 4. allocated     | d. participate         |
| 5. sum           | e. troubles            |
| 6. flocked       | f. to a certain extent |
| 7. partly        | g. different           |
| 8. constraints   | h. impoverished        |
| 9. various       | i. gathered            |
| 10. brawl        | j. shared out          |

### Discussion – Student A

- a) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'festival'?
- b) What do you think about the Tomatina festival?
- c) Which world festival would you most like to join?
- d) What festivals does your town hold? Are they good?
- e) Should street festivals be free?
- f) How much fun do you think the Tomatina festival might be?
- g) Is \$13 too much to join a festival?
- h) Is it right that local citizens can join the Tomatina for free?

## Phrase Match

- |                                       |                                 |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Spain's economic                   | a. participants                 |
| 2. start charging                     | b. part of that sum             |
| 3. Local residents have been          | c. to financial constraints     |
| 4. A hefty                            | d. between teenagers            |
| 5. The streets are literally flooded  | e. each other                   |
| 6. partly due                         | f. allocated 5,000 free tickets |
| 7. limit the crowd                    | g. the end of WWII              |
| 8. started just after                 | h. with tomato juice            |
| 9. a brawl                            | i. woes                         |
| 10. ending up with the youths pelting | j. for safety reasons           |

## Discussion – Student B

- Why do people like festivals?
- Is the mayor right to limit the number of people at the festival?
- Do you think other world festivals will start charging?
- What do you know about the Tomatina?
- What festival would you like to start?
- How many festivals have you been to?
- Is the Tomatina festival a waste of food?
- What questions would you like to ask the town's mayor?

## Spelling

- The shac-darpstep town of Bunol
- start charging tsiaticpnarp
- Local esiedntsr
- cedlloat 5,000 free tickets
- tomatoes used as ntniaumiom
- The streets are leiytlalr flooded with tomato juice
- cekfdol to the Tomatina
- financial nasircotnst
- charging for ccseas to this popular festival
- uvsiaro reports
- about its niogsri
- nigtelp each other

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. h	3. d	4. j	5. a
6. i	7. f	8. b	9. g	10. c

## Role Play

### Role A – Tomatina town mayor

You think it's OK to charge for people to join the Tomatina festival. Tell the others three reasons why. Ten euros is a small price to pay and it will help the festival. Disagree with everything said by the aid worker and the tourist. Agree with most of what the local citizen says.

### Role B – Aid worker

You are shocked that people throw tons of tomatoes at each other for fun. Tell the others three reasons why. Ask the mayor to end the festival and give the tomatoes to hungry people. Tell him his town does not need the festival and it's bad for its image.

### Role C – Tourist

You are very angry you have to pay to join the festival. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell the mayor local citizens must also pay. Tell him/her that people will stop going to the festival and the town will lose money from tourism. Tell him/her you will bring your own tomatoes if you can join for free.

### Role D – Local citizen

You think charging for the festival is a great idea. Tell the others three reasons why. You want the mayor to charge a higher fee. You also think people should bring their own tomatoes. You also think tourist, not local citizens, should clean the streets after.

## Speaking – World events

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the one you most want to go to at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                        |                                  |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Spain's Tomatina     | • New Orleans Mardi Gras         |
| • Rio Carnival         | • India's Holi (colour festival) |
| • Munich Oktoberfest   | • China's Lantern Festival       |
| • Cannes Film Festival | • Hiroshima Peace Festival       |

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.