



Pamplona 2010

Information Booklet

Watching the Bull Run.

The run can be watched from behind the wooden fence which lines most of the route. The longest stretch of fencing is at the Town Hall square, and at the end of Mercaderes Street, as well as all along most of Estafeta Street and the stretch which goes from the end of that street into the bull ring.

The fencing is double-lined and the spectators must remain behind the second line of fencing. The first line of fencing is kept clear for runners who need to make a quick exit from the path of the bulls! In the spacing between the two rows of fencing only the medical teams, the police and perhaps some press photographers are allowed to stand.

To find a good spot behind the fence means taking up position at about 6.30am. Inevitably, this means waiting around without much to do until 8am when the run begins. There is no way you can "book a place in advance". Anyone who wants to see the run must take up their position and hold it. You also need to be aware that the fencing in front tends to block the view quite a bit.

One possible place to watch is to go down to the starting post. There is a small sloping square just near where the local Museum is and which is looking over the starting place in Santo Domingo. Here, there is no wooden fencing and you look down at the runners gathered round the niche where they sing their simple paen to the small figure of San Fermin to implore his protection. The stretch from where the bulls will be released is just below and the view of the stretch leading up to the Town Hall is quite clear. It's certainly one of the best spots and of course, for that reason is heavily populated. Get there about 5.30am or 6am at the latest, in order to get a good position.

Alternatively, you can watch the bull run for a few euros on big screens in the Bull Ring (Plaza del Toros). The bull run ends here each day, and once the bulls have finished the gates are closed and a number of smaller steers are released into the crowd. With a few hundred people in the ring, this is always an exciting way to spend the morning!

Finally, for those who want a bird's eye view of the bull run, we can arrange a spot for you on a local's balcony along Estafeta Street. Speak to one of our Topdeck crew to book your spot!

Tips for the Bull Run(ners)!

- Don't run on your first day there - watch the first time, to get an idea of what to expect.
- Not only should you avoid running on the first day for the reasons mentioned above - it is also possible that you won't even be allowed to run. Each year, more and more people come to Pamplona to run with the bulls and the first day is the most popular. As a result, the police are getting stricter with who they allow to run - an inexperienced looking foreigner is more likely to be pulled from the crowd on the first day than on any other day.
- Your biggest fear should be not of the bulls but of other people around you falling on top of you, or tripping you, or simply stopping in front of you. With the vast numbers of people running this happens a lot. Even if you think you can outrun a bull, take into account that when five people fall in front of you, it is going to be difficult to take evasive action.
- If you go down, stay down! Cover your head and just lie there. You might get a few bruises but it is safer than trying to get up. Onlookers will tap you on the shoulder when it is safe to move.
- Don't try and catch the bulls' attention or touch them. In theory, the bulls just want to get out of the tight spaces as quickly as possible. If you distract them, things could get serious.
- Take the corners tight, as the bulls are going to go wide.
- Start after what is known as 'dead man's corner'. It is 300 meters from the end and is marked as such. Swallow your pride - starting at the beginning will result in injuries.
- The most dangerous points are Callejon-Plaza de Toros and the end of the Cuesta de Santo Domingo.
- Don't drink. If that is impossible, don't drink too much.
- Don't carry anything with you - you run the risk of breaking and/or losing it!
- If you want to get into the arena, don't fall behind the bulls, as they will close the gates shortly after the bulls have entered.

In no way does this advice constitute safe passage through Pamplona's Running of the Bulls. Hundreds of hyperactive people running from six angry bulls is unpredictable - this advice is simply intended to assist you. If you insist on running - good luck!

What's on when?

6th July - Opening ceremony

We head in around 9.30am to get a good position for the opening ceremony! Get ready for an amazing experience! At 12.00 noon the Square in front of the Town Hall is witness to the chaos when the San Fermín Fiesta literally takes off with a bang. This moment is marked by a rocket - the "Txupinazo" - which is set off to announce the start of the Fiesta. The announcement; "Pamploneses, Pamplonesas, Viva San Fermín! Gora San Fermín!" (people of Pamplona, long live San Fermín!) is shouted across the crowd. The crowd responds with cries of "Viva!" and "Gora!" and the rocket is launched into the sky.

Today is a BIG DAY - wear close toed shoes to avoid broken glass and prepare to be covered in Sangria!!!

7th July - First Bull Run

+ Topdeck Sangria BBQ

An early start this morning as we head into town for the first Bull Run. The Bull Run kicks off at 8am - if you're going to run this week it's probably best to sit out the first run and get an idea what it's all about!

This afternoon gear up for another BIG DAY at our optional Sangria party from 1pm to 4pm - don't miss it! Only €15 per person for a delicious lunch and plenty of Sangria!

8th July - Second Bull Run

+ San Sebastian

Another early start today!! After taking in another Bull Run experience those on longer trips can jump on the coach and head to San Sebastian for a day at the beach... This is optional so if you'd rather stay in town, the choice is yours!

What else is on during the Festival?

Bull of fire

At 11pm in the evening there is a “fire-bull” let loose around Estafeta Street and Mercaderes for the children to play with. It’s metal and shaped in the form of the front quarters of a bull and carried on the shoulder. From its sides spurts firecrackers and sparks which cause noisy excitement as the bull rushes about the street. It’s entertaining for the kids and it can make for a good photo. It’s not usually a very crowded spectacle - the only danger comes from a bolting spark possibly burning a hole in your clothes.

Bull Fights each night

Trying to get tickets for the daily bullfights is a continuous headache, not only for visitors to Pamplona but also for the locals. Only 10% of the total tickets are officially on sale - and this happens only because they are legally required to be. The rest of the tickets are allocated to members. The 10% on sale are sold the day before each bullfight at special box offices just in front of the Bull Ring which open at 9pm. Only four tickets per person are issued and the price varies daily. Tickets are more expensive on weekends.

Fireworks each night

At 11pm every night during the Festival there is a half hour fireworks display put on in the park. In the Ciudadela (the old citadel) at the Vuelta del Castillo you will get the best view of the display, although of course, the display can be seen and heard almost all over the city. It’s worth having a good look at it, as well as the Spanish partying which accompanies it.

Important Contact details.

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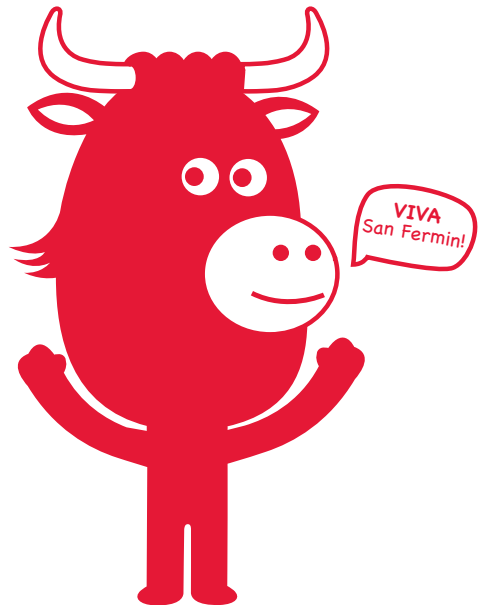
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THE CAMPSITE DETAILS

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Behave!

San Fermin has a name for being anarchic - a place where, during the days of the Fiesta, anything goes. And when you see the whole town in celebration, this may seem to be correct.

However, it's not quite true. Any misdemeanours are punished, just as in any other place, with a night in jail, or a fine.

You will see that there are a lot of families and children around the streets, even late at night. This tends to tame the crowds slightly and fights are rarely seen. That said - as visitors to Pamplona - we expect that you respect the culture and local rules of the town! It's going to be a mad week of partying but remember that breaking the law is breaking the law! Enjoy yourself and allow others at the Festival to do the same. Fly the 'tourist' flag proudly and don't end up the one seen on TV giving us all a bad name!

Have fun but be careful!

Please remember that you are in a foreign town that is over run with locals and tourists alike! Keep an eye on your possessions at all times (pick pockets will be about) and try to keep your map with you. With the volume of people - there is always the unfortunate truth that dodgy people will be around! Stay with friends and avoid getting stuck in compromising situations - especially if you have been drinking!

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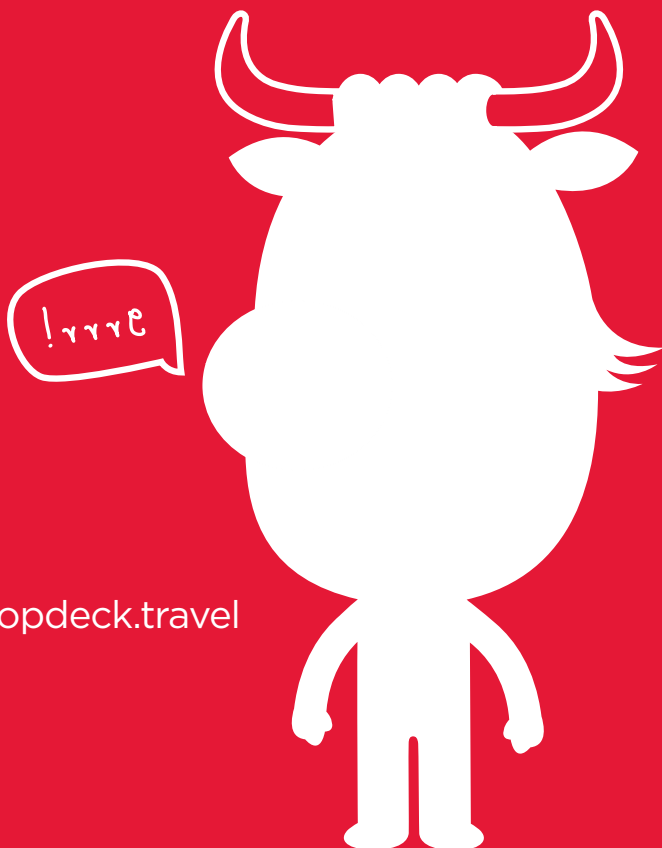
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