

April Fair

Guide to be
a good fairground

Sevilla.

Muy famosa.
Muy desconocida.

- History
- The casetas
- The flamenco dress
- Day Feria/Night Feria
- The funfair
- Sevillanas
- The Maestranza & bullfighting

History

The origins of Seville's Spring Fair or Feria de Abril date back to 1846. It was originally conceived as a livestock market by José María Ybarra, first Count of Ybarra, and Narciso Bonaplata, during the period when the Count of Montelirio was Mayor of Seville, but it was not until the following year that it was officially inaugurated, with the event lasting three days.

The event was declared a Fiesta Mayor by the City Council in 1910, thus encouraging visitors to travel to Seville during the designated dates in April.

Around the same time bullfights began to be held at the Maestranza bullring and this contributed to increasing the popularity of the Feria even more.



April Fair

History

Sevilla.
Spain.



History

For the celebration in Seville of the 1929 Latin American Exhibition, the Feria, which by then had become an essentially festive event with no connection with the trading of livestock, was moved to the Prado de San Sebastián, which remained its official site until 1972, its 125th anniversary.

It then moved to its current location in an unused open area in the barrio of Los Remedios, and the opportunity for growth which the new space offered led to the Feria reaching the worldwide level of fame and importance it enjoys today, becoming the city's most iconic cultural and festive event, and an epicentre for social life where Sevillanos enjoy a whole week of partying with family and friends.



April Fair

History

The Feria de Abril is held one or two weeks after Holy Week and lasts for a week. It officially begins on Saturday night or “sábado del pescaíto”, when the hundreds of thousands of light bulbs installed on the feria site are turned on to mark its inauguration (after which it is traditional to sample pescaíto frito or fried fish in the casetas), and comes to an end at midnight the following Saturday with a spectacular firework display next to the river Guadalquivir.



History

With its casetas, arranged along streets named after famous bullfighters, the Feria almost becomes a small ephemeral town. Entrance to the site is through a colourful and monumental portada or gateway which is installed every year. Illuminated with thousands of lights, the portada, which is different each year, makes reference to a particular monument in the city and is a popular meeting place for the locals.

The whole Feria site is lit with thousands of light bulbs covered by farolillos (spherical paper lanterns). The streets themselves are covered with compressed albero (a bright yellow soil sourced from the nearby municipality of Alcalá de Guadaira, which is traditionally used in Seville in gardens and bullrings).



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Spain

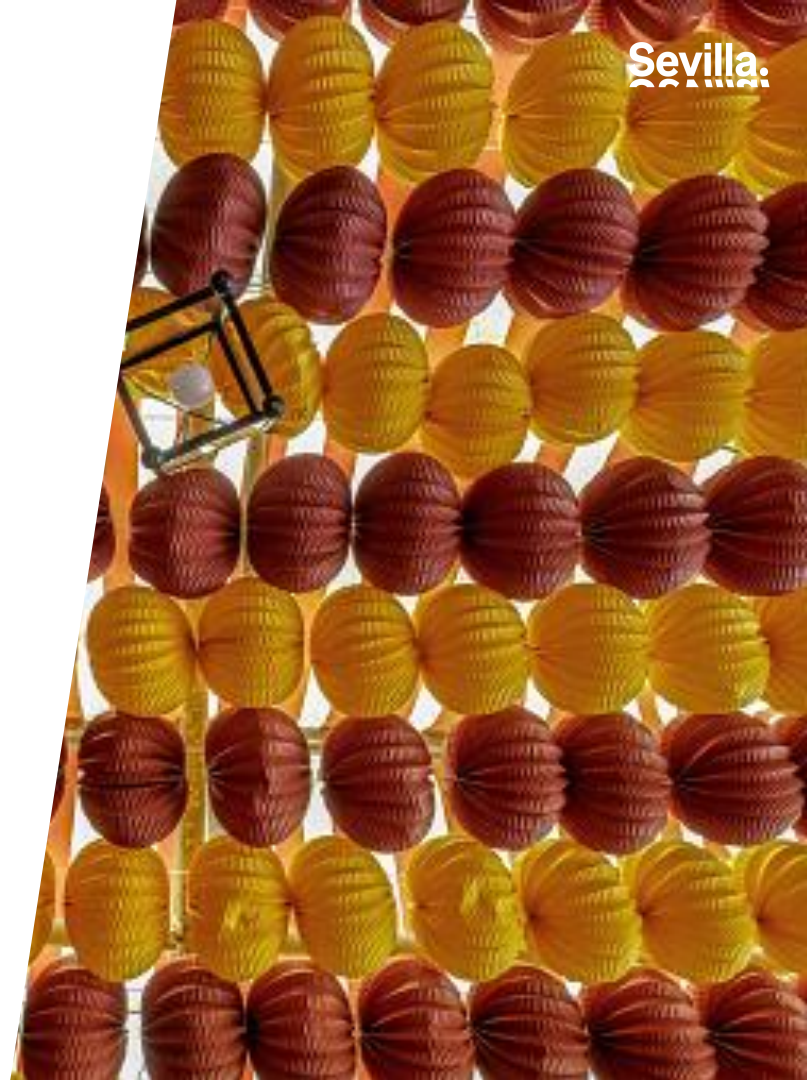
The casetas



The casetas

Most of the social interaction between the visitors to the caseta takes place in the frontal or finer part, which is what we can see from outside. This is where all the dancing and singing takes place and there are usually tables and chairs for relaxing and enjoying a typical dish accompanied by a good Fino or Manzanilla. Out of sight in the back part or trastienda are the kitchen, bar (ideal for a quiet conversation) and toilets.

More than a thousand casetas belonging to families, societies, organisations, companies and neighbourhoods (the latter with free admission) are installed each year in the feria. The vast majority are privately owned and therefore it is recommended that visitors go to the Feria with someone from Seville who can take them to the casetas of their colleagues and friends.



Casetas with free admission

The casetas belonging to various of the city's neighbourhoods and political parties have free admission and remain open until three in the morning with people dancing to rumbas and sevillanas.

→ Caseta del turista

c/ Pascual Márquez 225

→ Distrito Macarena-Macarena Norte

c/ Pascual Márquez 85-89

→ Distrito Casco Antiguo

c/Antonio Bienvenida 97-101

→ Distrito Nervión-San Pablo-Santa Justa

c/ Costillares 22-26

→ Distrito Este-Cerro-Amate

c/ Pascual Márquez 215-219

→ Distrito Sur-Bellavista-La Palmera

c/ Ignacio Sánchez Mejías 61-65

Casetas with free admission

→ Distrito Triana-Los Remedios

c/ Pascual Márquez 153-157

→ La PeCera

c/ Pascual Márquez 9

→ Caseta de Fiestas Mayores

c/ Costillares 13-27

→ UGT

c/Antonio Bienvenida 10

→ PSOE Andalucía

c/Antonio Bienvenida 97-101

→ CCOO

c/ Pascual Márquez 81

→ Partido Andalucista

c/ Juan Belmonte 196

→ USO

c/ Curro Romero 29

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The flamenco dress



The flamenco dress

It is a firm tradition that Sevillian women go to the feria wearing the classical flamenco or gypsy dress. Its origins can be traced back to the early livestock fairs, where the women who accompanied the traders and dealers, mostly gypsies and peasants from Andalusia, usually wore cheap percale dresses with the classic polka dots.

With the passing of time, these long working dresses ending in two or three horizontal ruffles became increasingly fashionable because of the way they enhanced the shape and grace of a woman's figure.



The flamenco dress

The Seville Exhibition of 1929 contributed to the consolidation of the flamenco dress, leading to its being accepted by the wealthier classes as essential wear for the feria.

The characteristics and shape of the dress have evolved with the passing of time: V-shaped, rounded or square necklines; tight-fitting waist with the skirt opening like a flower; hair tied up in a bun; and a special focus on the accessories (flowers in the hair, a scarf or a manila shawl, earrings, etc). Today, the flamenco dress is the only form of regional costume which still follows the dictates of women's fashion.



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Sevilla.

Day Feria/ Night Feria



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Day Feria/Night Feria

There are many different moments to enjoy the feria, and the atmosphere varies depending on the time of day.

Thus, we can make a differentiation between the daytime and night-time feria. The daytime activity tends to begin around 2.30 pm, with people arriving at the casetas to have lunch, enjoy the festive and colourful atmosphere, and admire what is popularly known in Seville as the “paseo de caballos”, an iconic parade of horses and carriages, a spectacle which is unique in the world.

Sevilla.



Day Feria/Night Feria

On the morning of the Sunday leading up to the Feria, a driving competition held in the Maestranza bullring offers an excellent opportunity to admire the various carts and carriages which participate in the paseo de caballos during the feria week. The event is promoted by the Real Club de Enganches de Andalucía and includes a display of the various technical and aesthetic characteristics of each discipline.

Extremely interesting. Night time tends to be for the young or the real feria enthusiasts. It begins when the bullfights finish around 9.30 pm, and, after dining in the casetas or in the restaurants located in the area surrounding the site, it is time to enjoy everything the Feria has to offer, with the flamenco and the drinking carrying on until well into the early hours of the morning.



April Fair

Sevilla.
Sevilla

The funfair



The funfair

The Funfair offers a wide range of amusements and attractions for all the family. Known as the “Calle del Infierno” or “road of hell” because of the loud music and noisy atmosphere created around the attractions, the temporary funfair occupies a large open area situated next to the feria site itself.

There are some four hundred different attractions, ranging from the more traditional – the big wheel, the whip, dodgems, rollercoaster, etc., - to other more modern and spectacular ones: the human catapults, windmills, freefall towers, and other spectacular attractions which reach dizzying heights and speeds.



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The funfair

Our unquenchable desire to win a prize either by luck or skill, means that the various stalls with tombolas and other games are also very popular: camel races, hooking ducks, water guns, bingo, etc.

To one side of the Funfair are the marquees of the circus, an itinerant artistic spectacle which includes acrobats, clowns, magicians, animal trainers and other artists, and always delights the younger ones amongst us.

Sevilla.
CASA



April Fair

Sevilla.

Sevillanas



Sevillanas

Sevillanas are the typical form of song and dance of Seville's Feria. They are derived from ancient compositions which were known as "seguidillas castellanas", which, over time, evolved into the form of song and dance that we know today. There are many types of sevillanas which in terms of their lyrics and themes can be classified into: regionalist (Feria, Holy Week, celebrities, bullfighting, Seville, etc.); songs of love; rocierras; corraleras, etc. There are also slower and faster styles.

Sevillanas are usually danced in pairs, although there are exceptions and more experimental forms in which the dance is performed by more than two people carrying out the steps and movements at the same time.



The Maestranza & bullfighting



The Maestranza & bullfighting

The Feria de Sevilla would certainly not be the same without the bullfighting. Together with Las Ventas in Madrid, Seville's Maestranza bullring is considered the most important in the world, therefore to earn international recognition, it is essential that bullfighters deliver an outstanding performance in Seville's arena.

The bullfighting season at La Maestranza starts on Easter Sunday, and there are also other events throughout the year. The season called "de farolillos" lasts until the last day of the Feria, attracting the most celebrated matadors of the day and the finest Spanish bulls.

The Real Maestranza bullring is situated in the very heart of the barrio of El Arenal in an area delimited by the boulevard of Paseo de Cristóbal Colón, and calles Adriano and Antonia Díaz.



The Maestranza & bullfighting

It was built between the 18th and 19th centuries, between 1761 and 1881 to be precise, and its beautiful façade is in a baroque style with marked regionalist features, such as the distinctively Andalusian combination of white and albero colours. Its upper terraces are covered by a roof supported by marble arches and columns. On the eastern side is the Puerta del Príncipe, the most famous door in the world of bullfighting.

When a bullfighter performs exceptionally well (a minimum reward of “three ears”) they emerge through this door carried on their followers’ shoulders. In Seville, the experience of bullfighting has a special intensity which starts with the paseíllo and does not finish until the aficionado arrives home.



The Maestranza & bullfighting

Indeed the fiesta does not draw to a sudden halt with the dying of the last bull, the passion and enthusiasm continue on the streets, in the bars, or in the Feria, where friends gather to comment on what happened in the plaza that afternoon. This is why in Seville bullfighting takes on a special meaning: it is a ritual, a deeply rooted tradition of which both the sevillanos and the bullfighting world is immensely proud.

The expectant hush, the ovations and the respect with which the public appreciate the professionalism of matadors demonstrate the true respect which people have for the art. The Real Maestranza de Caballería and Plaza de Toros de Sevilla. The very Mecca of bullfighting.



Sevilla.
Muy famosa.
Muy desconocida.

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