

LA SEMANA SANTA



The Spanish word for 'Easter' is **Pascua**. The seven days leading up to Easter Sunday are called Holy Week, or **La Semana Santa** in Spanish.

Spain is a predominately Catholic country, so religious celebrations such as La Semana Santa are very important to Catholic followers and are the main events that they celebrate each year.



PROCESIONES



All over Spain, it is a week of spectacular street processions (**procesiones**) which symbolise the life, suffering and resurrection of Jesus.

Large floats called "pasos" make their way through the streets. On the floats, there are statues of Jesús and La Virgen María, and more religious figures. The floats depict scenes of Jesus's life, and the events leading up to his death. They are often very elaborate and always very heavy!



PASOS



Procesión Sevilla



Cristo Tres Caídas 10

Seville has some of the most spectacular and elaborate celebrations.

Tronos



Malaga is the city where you can see the biggest floats. They are called "tronos" and they can be carried by hundreds of men.

Banda de música



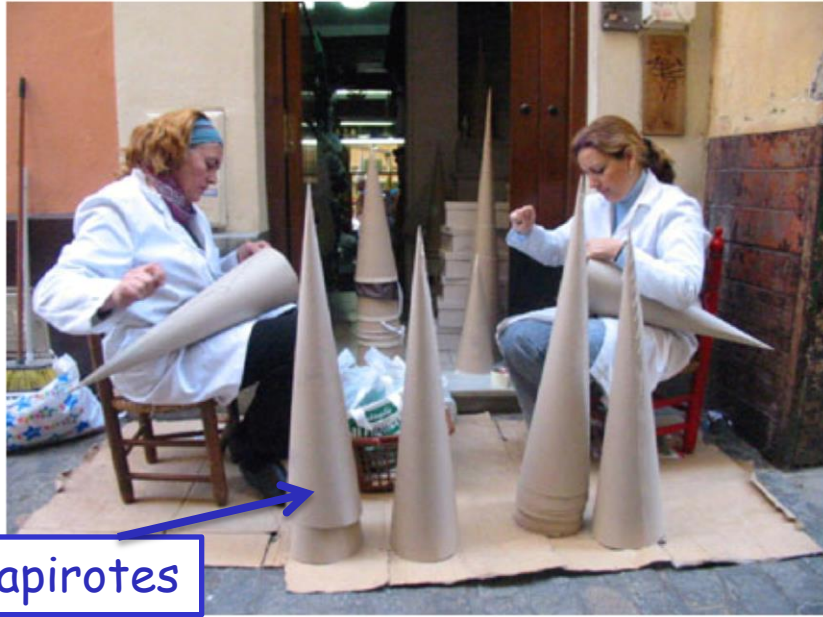
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Processions can also be accompanied by
"una banda de música".

Nazarenos



Los nazarenos are the people who follow the floats in the processions. They are also known as "penitentes" (penitent ones).



capirotes

For weeks before Semana Santa, people make costumes and prepare for the parades. Los penitentes wear cone shaped hats called "capirotes". They are meant to make them closer to God.



Nazarenos

Most of the Nazarenos carry candles during the procesion.

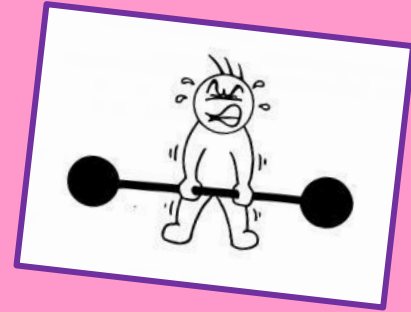


Some Nazarenos carry crosses "cruces" to represent Jesus's suffering.



Children can take part in the processions and also play in the bands.

Costaleros



The "pasos" are carried by groups of men called "costaleros". (Above they are practising with sandbags.) During the processions they move very slowly following the rhythm of the music.



DOMINGO DE RAMOS

The week starts with El Domingo de Ramos (Palm Sunday) which represents the day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem. On this day Spanish people attend mass at their local church. Children are given palm leaves to symbolise the palms that were thrown on the floor when Jesus entered Jerusalem.



Saeta

Sometimes, during the processions, people can listen to "uns saeta": a song where the singer will show his/her devotion to a particular image of Christ or the Virgin.



Singing from the heart, a capella, it gives voice to the deepest feelings about Christ's passion and death.

La mona de Pascua



Easter week in Spain is a time of serious processions and remembering the events leading up to and including the death of Jesus.

But, on Easter Day (**El Domingo de Resurrección**) it is a day of happiness and celebration because on this day the Resurrection of Jesus is remembered. In recent years the tradition of giving Easter Eggs has really taken off. In Cataluña they eat a special Easter cake called **La Mona de Pascua**.