

Kimberley & Peter en Europa 2011

España



Semana santa y la fiesta de Murcia

Among the first items on our itinerary were the parades for Semana Santa (Holy Week or Easter) and the Murcia agricultural festival.

The atmosphere at these two events was very different.....

Semana santa



The Good Friday parade in Cartagena was a sombre and serious affair, with applause mainly to show appreciation for the magnificent floats.

Semana santa



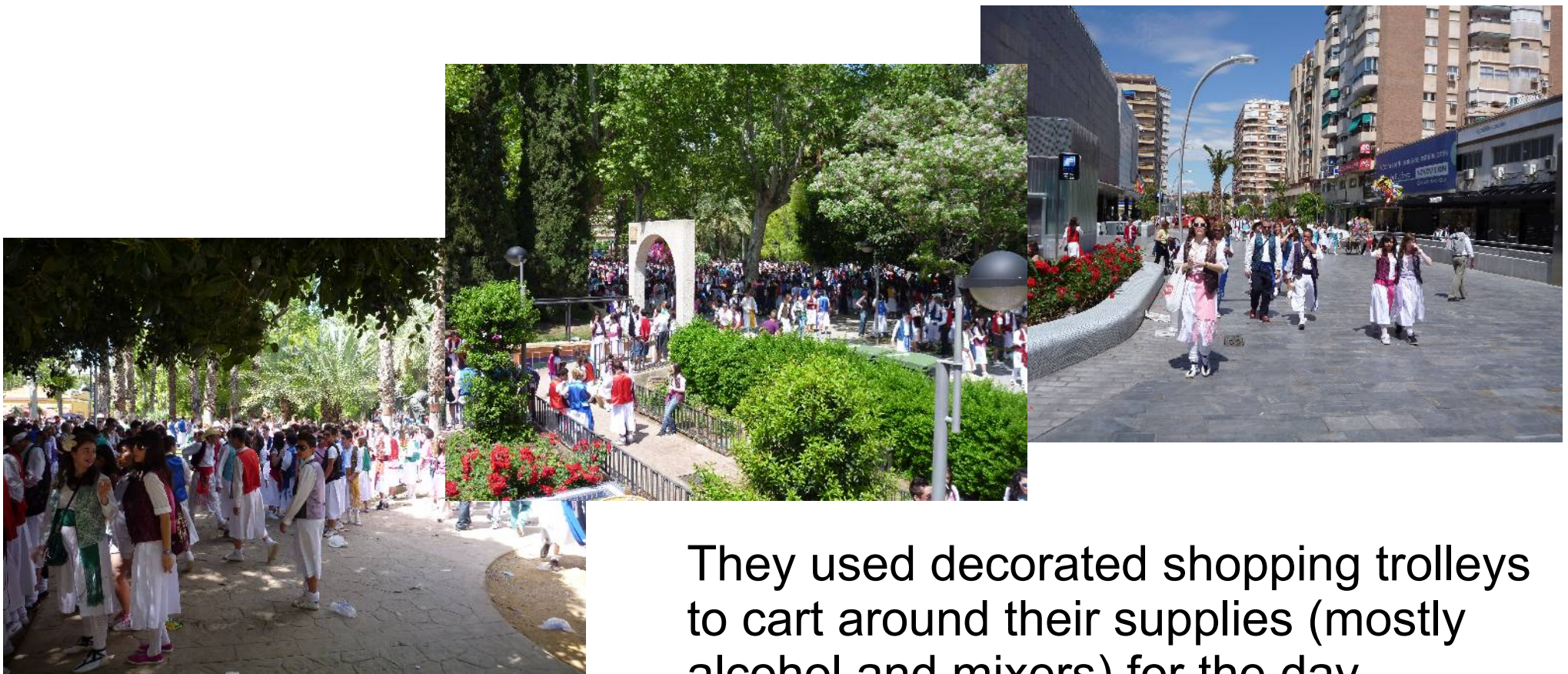
The hooded figures take a bit of getting used to! But they have nothing to do with racial persecution....

These communities have worn this traditional costume for centuries.



Murcia

At the Murcia fiesta, we had our first glimpse of how the Spanish like to party. The community divided into groups – the families, the young adults and the teenagers. Here is the teenagers' party in a public park. Ambulances were required by midday!



They used decorated shopping trolleys to cart around their supplies (mostly alcohol and mixers) for the day.

Murcia

The evening parade (not sure how many of the teenagers made it this far...) featured scenes of traditional life and work, and local produce was handed out to the crowd. We took home a bag of oranges, lemon juice, sandwiches, sausages, crisps and 2 beers!



Spanish food

I can't write about Spain without mentioning the food. We've had a mix of everything from extravagant to everyday, but even the most simple foods taste better in Europe!



Spanish culture

Where did you go on your school excursions in grade one? Picasso museum anyone? Salvador Dali perhaps?



(These photos are all from the Dali museum. The Picasso museum in Málaga did not allow cameras, but we did see a group of first-graders getting a lesson in Modern art interpretation.)

Spanish history

Spain has a turbulent history, with a Christian regime overthrown by a Muslim one in the 700s, only to be re-conquered by Catholics in the 1400s, and it is all represented in the stunning Mezquita of Cordoba. Although currently it only functions as a Catholic cathedral, this building contains both muslim and christian architecture spanning centuries of culture.

To me, it represents a missed opportunity – in 2004, the local Muslim population asked if they could worship here at the old mosque. The vatican refused. Not surprising, but then it says a lot about the church's lack of interest in taking a step forward toward harmony between faiths.



Spanish weather

Happy to report it got better after the first two weeks....



Spanish driving skills

It seems nearly every car older than about 5 years has some kind of dent on the right hand side.



.....and here's
the reason
why.....

Spanish roads

THIS is how wide some of the local streets are!
Yes, cars really drive down them!



Spanish driving skills

But you have to admit it..... the parallel parking here is *impressive*.



Spanish countryside



And finally, besides the fiestas, food and culture, the weather and the roads, is one of the best reasons to come to Spain: a never-ending supply of new landscapes and sights, each more spectacular than the last.







¡Adios!

