

Name _____

Cinco de Mayo: Celebrating Mexican Culture and Heritage

Cinco de Mayo is a festive holiday celebrated on May 5th each year. While many people think it is Mexico's Independence Day, it actually commemorates a significant battle in Mexican history. Let's explore the history and celebrations of Cinco de Mayo!

The history of Cinco de Mayo dates back to May 5, 1862, during the French occupation of Mexico. At that time, Mexico was facing a financial crisis and was unable to pay its debts to European countries, including France. In response, France sent troops to Mexico with the intention of establishing a French-controlled empire.

On May 5, 1862, the Mexican army, led by General Ignacio Zaragoza, faced the French army in the Battle of Puebla. Despite being outnumbered, the Mexican forces emerged victorious, delivering a significant blow to the French army. This victory became a symbol of Mexican resilience and the fight for freedom.

While the French occupation continued for a few more years, the Battle of Puebla became a source of inspiration for the Mexican people. Cinco de Mayo celebrates their bravery and the determination to defend their homeland.

In Mexico, Cinco de Mayo is primarily celebrated in the state of Puebla, where the battle took place. The city comes alive with parades, music, traditional dances, and colorful costumes. People gather in the streets, waving Mexican flags and joining in the festivities. It is a day to honor Mexican culture, heritage, and national pride.

Outside of Mexico, Cinco de Mayo is widely celebrated in the United States, particularly in areas with a significant Mexican population. It has become a time to showcase and appreciate Mexican traditions, food, music, and dance.

In schools, students learn about the history and significance of Cinco de Mayo. They study Mexican culture, create colorful crafts, and participate in festive activities. Some schools may organize special assemblies or performances featuring traditional Mexican dances and songs.

Cinco de Mayo is also known for its delicious food. Tacos, enchiladas, guacamole, and salsa are popular dishes enjoyed during the celebrations. Many people savor the flavors of Mexican cuisine and try their hand at cooking traditional Mexican recipes.

While Cinco de Mayo is a day of joyous celebration, it is important to remember its historical significance. It represents the Mexican spirit of perseverance and the fight against adversity. It is a reminder of the importance of defending one's freedom and embracing cultural heritage.

So, on Cinco de Mayo, let's celebrate Mexican culture, honor the bravery of the Mexican people, and enjoy the vibrant festivities that bring people together in joy and unity.



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Reading Comprehension Questions

1. What is Cinco de Mayo?
2. What battle does Cinco de Mayo commemorate?
3. Who led the Mexican army in the Battle of Puebla?
4. How is Cinco de Mayo celebrated in Mexico?
5. Why is Cinco de Mayo celebrated in the United States?