



Spain is a monarchy, which was restored after the death of dictator General Franco in 1975. The present monarch, **King Juan Carlos I**, is the only European monarch to voluntarily cede that power

The Spanish word for Spain is **España**, which comes from the ancient word Span, **meaning 'hidden land'**



Flamenco is not just a dance, but an art form that includes guitar, singing, dancing and 'palmas' (handclaps)



Spain is one of the top three tourist countries in the world with over 52 million visitors to that country each year



October 12, the day that Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492, is a **National Holiday in Spain**



Coria del Rio is a small town near Seville, where the **descendants of the first Japanese Embassy still use the surname Japon**. Approximately 700 of Coria's 25,000 residents use the surname, and, by tradition, they descended from six samurai from the embassy who decided to stay in Spain because they liked to fish the local river



The guitar was first invented and played in the Andalusian area of Spain in 1790. It was developed by adding a sixth string to the Arabian music instrument the lute



In Spain, everyone has two surnames. The first is your father's first surname and the second is your mother's first surname



SPAIN

Spain was one of the first European countries to **ban smoking** in all workplaces, and bars and restaurants (from 2006). But **around 40 % Spaniards between the 17 and 24 age group are smokers**



The Spanish people are extremely social. They enjoy meeting friends for **tapas** or going out for an evening stroll. **Spain has the highest number of bars, restaurants and coffee shops**, in the European Union, more exactly 344.426 !!!



Madrid, Spain's capital city, is located in the exact center of the country. It has been officially declared as **one of the "greenest" cities in Europe**



In Spain, **94 % of its population is Roman Catholic**. But despite strong opposition from the Catholic Church **Same-sex marriage is legal in Spain**. Spain legalized gay marriage in June 2005



Despite the beret being associated with France, the Basques in north-east **Spain invented the beret**



Spain is the world's **largest producer of olives**. It produces 44% of all the earth's olive oil. Grapes, almonds and oranges are other important Spanish crops



Spain is famous for its many celebrations or fiestas, which can last for a week or more. **On any given day, there's a fiesta happening someplace in Spain**



Spain is the European country closest to Africa. In fact, the Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla are the only European territories on the African continent



The first Europeans to arrive in the USA were from Spain and it was them who gave Florida its current name. Florida, California, Los Angeles and Las Vegas are all Spanish and not English words

Spanish food is not spicy! Chile peppers in Latin American countries make food tangy, but Spanish food is seldom hot. Maybe a little garlicky though



So hot high you didn't know about...