



2. PLAZA DE TOROS

ERNEST HEMINGWAY TOURIST ROUTE

GENERAL ROUTE PLAN

1. Estació del Nord
2. Plaça de Bous
3. Hotel Metropol
4. Edificio de Correos
5. Ajuntament de València
6. Hotel Reina Victoria
7. Hotel Inglés
8. Café El Siglo
9. El Micalet
10. Café Ideal
11. Hotel Vincni Palace
12. Hotel Royal



This is the most mentioned place because Hemingway visited it on numerous occasions. The beginning of his passion for bullfighting. So much so that you could say that this space, inaugurated in 1859 and declared a Historic-Artistic Monument in 1983, is where he discovered that passion.

In *Death in the Afternoon*, he reveals that in the 1920s he discovered bullfighting precisely due to a photo taken in the Plaza de Toros de València: 'Once I remember Gertrude Stein (author and patron of artists in Paris) talking of bullfights spoke of her admiration for Joselito and showed me some pictures of him in the ring and of herself and Alice Toklas sitting in the first row of the wooden barreras at the bull ring at Valencia with Joselito and his brother Gallo below. I had just come from the Near East, where the Greeks broke the legs of their baggage and transport animals and drove and shoved them off the quay into the shallow water when they abandoned the city of Smyrna, and I remember saying that I did not like the bullfights because of the poor horses.'

Prejudices that would disappear years later, becoming a great bullfighting *aficionado*. So much so that he explained to Ezra Pound that bullfighters are the most admirable artists around: 'The bullring is the only remaining place where valor and art can combine for success.'

Hemingway, who in València liked to watch the bullfights from the barrier, where 'you see danger and learn to appreciate it'. The author refers that 'seat prices vary depending on how popular they are or how much shade they get. The cheapest seats are those at the top, in full sun, with no shade at any time. They are exposed to the sun, and on a hot day, near the roof, the temperature in a city like València can reach incredible levels, up to 104 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade'. There, he



found a moral argument in bullfighting that strengthened his sense of life and death, mortality and eternity. He also dedicated a poem to El Litri in reference to a goring he suffered.

In chapter four of *Death in the Afternoon*, when speaking of the bullfighting season, he says he had been ‘treated best in [...], of all places, Valencia’ and that ‘Andalucian breeders send their biggest and finest bulls to the July fair at Valencia.’

He places an episode on 31 July 1927 in the Plaza de Toros infirmary, when a bull gored ‘regional bullfighter’ Manolo Martínez ‘of the barrio of Ruzafa’ and Dr Serra had ‘the skill’ to assist him. Later, in *The Dangerous Summer*, he describes this space ‘as suffocating as a prison cell in Senegal’ after a goring he witnessed with Luis Miguel fighting.

Manolo Martínez was a contemporary of El Gallo and Vicente Barrera ‘an able dominator of bulls’ with ‘talent’ and ‘a natural sense of bullfighting and ability to see the fight as a whole, extraordinary reflexes and a good physique’.

A regular at the fair in July, where up to seven visits have been recorded, one that appears in his novels was in 1925 when he followed the bullfighter Cayetano Ordóñez. One of his most important experiences in that bullring was when he witnessed a *corrida* on 26 July 1959 with bullfighters Antonio Ordóñez and Luis Miguel Dominguín. This episode was documented in *A Dangerous Summer*, published after his death, in 1985.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Address: 28 Xàtiva Street.

ACCESSIBILITY

Access: Accessible via ramps and no steps.

Parking: No spots reserved for PRM nearby.

IMAGES



Façade of the Plaza de Toros

