

Moors and Christians in the Valencia Region



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The 'Moors and Christians' festivities have become one of the most widespread and attractive festivities in the provinces of Valencia and Alicante, combining peculiar elements of local character such as a taste for farce, disguises and gaudy attire as well as music and gunpowder.

The roots of the struggle between the followers of the cross and the crescent moon goes back to the battle of Lepanto, when its representation was a typical palace game that would eventually be performed in streets and squares. This was transformed under the influence of local history, turning the patron saint into the main character in the victory or 'miracle'.

In inland regions, the capture of the image and conversion of the Moors is a recurring theme, whereas in the south, around Alcoy, the battle commemorates a passage of the 'Reconquista' or the defence against Berber invaders, even though the festivity is actually dedicated to Saint George. Popular parades, luxurious attire, incessant marches with cymbals and bagpipes and vast amounts of gunpowder contribute to creating a powerful image.



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