Pamplona and Hemingway

Pamplona and Hemingway... Hemingway and Pamplona... They are intrinsically linked. The San Fermín festival fascinated him in 1923 when he was just a journalist from a Canadian weekly paper, the Toronto Star. Everything he experienced in those first visits to Pamplona, in 1923 and 1924, went into his first major novel: The Sun Also Rises.

Ernest Hemingway came to the festival on nine occasions between 1923 and 1939. He wrote about it in journalistic articles and in some of his novels, and as his literary star shone brighter, thousands of tourists from all over the world came and continue to come to Pamplona and Hemingway. Hemingway and Pamplona are intrinsically linked. The San Fermín festival... Hemingway and Pamplona... They are intrinsically linked. The San Fermín festival fascinated him in 1923 when he was just a journalist from a Canadian weekly paper, the Toronto Star. Everything he experienced in those first visits to Pamplona, in 1923 and 1924, went into his first major novel: The Sun Also Rises.

Hemingway mentioned this bar in his novel entitled Fiestas. He could usually be seen on this terrace before and after the bullfight in 1953 and 1959. He would get together with famous bullfighters and other personalities. Well-known bullfighter hotel. He would get together with famous bullfighters and other personalities.

Standing between Café Frutti and the Puente de la Jacoba, Hemingway mentions it in his booked entitled Death in the Afternoon.

This café is the common denominator for all his visits to Pamplona. Much of his novel Fiestas is set here.

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The fine cuisine and quality of this restaurant attracted Hemingway regularly. He would get together with famous bullfighters and other personalities.

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The writer, Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961) visited Navarre between 1923 and 1959. The two opposing worlds of the San Fermin festival and the Irati forest gave the Nobel Prize winner inspiration for his writing. Through literature, he gave Navarre international projection which continues to stretch far and wide to this day. Anyone who would like to find out more is welcome to visit the places that fascinated Hemingway. They are specific locations: Pamplona, Auritz/Burguete, Lekunberri, Arbe, Yesa… which now form a tourist route which remembers and pays homage to the man who promoted Navarre.

Lekunberri, a restful landscape
Hemingway had not visited Navarre since 1931. But the San Fermin festival proved such an enticement that he felt the need to savour the experience and see Navarre once again. And so he returned in the Fifties, visiting not just Pamplona, but also other places. That year, Hemingway stayed in the Hotel Ayestarán, in the town of Lekunberri, alternating with the Hotel La Perla in Pamplona. Lekunberri, in a very beautiful natural setting, was the place that the American writer chose to relax, to get away from the crowds and find some peace.

Yesa, where paths meet
Ernest Hemingway visited Navarre for the last time in 1959. This was the year that “Life” magazine wanted to put Hemingway on their front cover and write a lengthy article about him. So they sent a journalist and a photographer to Pamplona. It was the writer himself who suggested that the fishing pictures taken by the photographer Julio Ubiña should be shot on the banks of the Yesa reservoir. This feature explains why the writer’s image has remained immortalised and forever linked to this backdrop.

Auritz / Burguete, a place for relaxation
The family that owned Pamplona’s Hotel La Perla –more specifically, Teresa Graz, who founded it in 1881- came from a house called Korrosket in Auritz/Burguete. Everything seems to point to the fact that they introduced Ernest Hemingway and his friends to the tranquillity of this enclave in the Navarre Pyrenees.

A few days before, or after, the Pamplona festival in honour of San Fermin, Hemingway took his wife and some friends to enjoy a few days rest in the Hostal Burguete. The aim of his stay in Auritz/Burguete was to rest, enjoy the landscape and walk to the River Irati to fish a few trout.

River Irati, inspirational waters
The River Irati, slotted into the surrounding landscape, was the place where the writer Ernest Hemingway (Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954) chose to spend long hours alone, sitting close to the bank, in the hope that a trout would take his bait.

He came on foot from Auritz/Burguete, to the village of Arbe. His favourite place was close to ‘Los Baños’ (the baths). Witnesses tell us that he always came with a basket full of beer and as he drank them he indulgently left them lying around a tree.