

Running with the Bulls: Fiestas, Corridas, Toreros, and An American's Adventure in Pamplona

Gary Gray



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In "Running with the Bulls," Gary Gray grabs hold of us and takes us on a grand and intimate tour of one of Spain's most passionate and historic cities. In 1926, Ernest Hemingway brought the frenetic charge of Pamplona's Festival of San Fermin to life in The Sun Also Rises. Today, that same energy still exists for the thousands who descend upon the city each July. At the center of the celebration is the famous encierro -- the running of the bulls. Gray, a professor of finance at Penn State, has participated in the encierro every year for over two decades. He has befriended dozens of Pamplonicas, many of whom are closely tied to the inner circle of the Festival. From this unique perspective, he leads us on several crazed sprints through the Plaza de Torus as half-a-dozen bulls, each bred to kill, rush from behind with hot breath and razor-sharp horns. He explains the history and pageantry behind the corrida (the Spanish bullfight); takes us to witness the religious pilgrims on their somber march, and pulls us into a pulsing Spanish street dance. We taste the richness of each meal and fullness of each glass of wine, as the wonders of Pamplona are revealed through his eyes. At once a rousing adventure of an American man seduced and a beautifully rendered portrait of Spain and her culture, "Running with the Bulls" is sure to be a classic of travel literature for years to come.

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