

FESTIVAL IN VALENCIA

What are those funny statues in Valencia?

Miranda, Anne

Ana is visiting her cousin Rocio in Valencia, Spain. It's time for the yearly festival called Las Fallas. Ana has been to many Mexican festivals at home in Texas. Rocio says that Las Fallas will be very different!

A falla is a big statue. It's made of special paper called papier-mache. Groups of people in Valencia often hire artists to make fallas. Ana's family belongs to one of these groups. Their falla is in pieces on this truck. --Everyone helps put up

the falla. First, they unload the pieces. Then, they put the pieces together.

Fallas often make people laugh. Many fallas poke fun at stories in the news. Some are made to look like famous people in Valencia. Ana and her family go to see other fallas. This huge one is in the main plaza.

The group has a party while the fallas are being judged. The best fallas will win prizes. The next morning, Ana's family gets exciting news. Their group's falla has won a prize! Many people have special festival costumes. The people in Ana's family have had their costumes for many years. There's an extra one for Ana too.

This year, Rocio's mother has been chosen to pick up the prize for the whole group.

Next comes a parade. People in the group love to show off their winning falla. On the last night, Ana is in for a big surprise. First, the fire fighters spray the buildings. This is so the buildings won't burn. Then they set fire to the fallas all over Valencia. Everyone else is cheering, but Ana is shocked! Rocio explains that the fallas are always burned. It is the tradition.

Next year, their new fallas will be just as wonderful!