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Comer is a regular verb and is conjugated in the present tense, referring to the third person plural, in this case. For a full list of conjugations for this verb, see the chart at eftours.com/comer

1

Inverted punctuation marks were first introduced in 1754, but took a while to catch on.

2

WHY? BECAUSE!

It's easy to confuse "por qué" (why) with "porque" (because) in conversation. Keep an ear out for the stressed syllable "qué" to tell the difference.

5

THE SNACKS ARE COVERED

Tapas comes from *tapar*, which means "to cover". *Tapear* means to go from bar to bar, eating tapas and socializing.

3

The acute accent mark indicates the stressed pronunciation of the "e" sound.

3

¿POR QUÉ COMEN TAPAS EN ESPAÑA?

6

EN'DLESS POSSIBILITIES

En means "in" here, which is easy to remember. But when paired with certain verbs, it can also mean "by", "on", "of" or "at"

Ir en tren: To go by train

El doctor en medicina: A doctor of medicine

Estoy en el cine: I am at the movies

(Why do they eat tapas in Spain?)



7

ORIGIN STORY

One of the many theories is that the word *España* derives from *Ezpanna*, the Basque word for "border" or "edge", but no one knows for sure.

8

TILDE COWS COME HOME

In Old Spanish, the tilde (ñ) was written out as "nn". The pronunciation is close to a nasally *nyeh* sound.

The short answer—because it's delicious

The historical answer is more complicated.

Because of Spain's unique cultural diversity and rich history, it's sometimes impossible to track down the exact origin of words.

While almost everyone agrees that tapas were historically small snacks to cover (*tapar*) the glass of a beverage, the exact origin is still a mystery. Here are some explanations you'd hear if you asked around in Spain:

FLY GUARD

In a time before health codes and exterminators, many Spaniards think bartenders provided a flat snack to cover the drink from dust and fruit flies.

ROYAL FLAVOR

Some say King Alfonso XIII was given cured ham to cover his goblet on a windy beach. He allegedly asked for another "wine with the cover (*tapa*)," and everyone followed suit.

SNACK STOOL

Unsurprisingly, booth seating in Medieval Spain was in short supply, so some think tavern patrons rested their snacks on top of their glass out of convenience.

SAFETY MEASURE

In an effort to delay the rowdy effects of drunkenness, some think King Felipe III required all alcoholic drinks to be served with a small piece of food on top.

PHRASES

- *¿Qué tipo de tapas tienes?*: What type of tapas do you have?
- *¿Por favor, dame ... ?*: Can you give me ... ?
- *¿Qué me recomiendas?*: What do you recommend?
- *Me gustaría probar ese*: I would like that one

- *Al lado de*: Next to
- *Enfrente de*: In front of
- *¿Dónde está el baño?*: Where is the bathroom
- *A la derecha/izquierda*: To the right/left

COMMON TAPAS

- *gambas*: prawns
- *croquetas*: croquettes
- *aceitunas*: olives
- *bacalao*: salted cod
- *calamares*: fried squid



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