

LOTERÍA

Learning how to play Lotería is pretty simple if you have played bingo before, so no need to stress! The rules are very similar to regular bingo, placing mark spots on your board but here we call it a "tabla" or "carta".

Traditionally you would use raw beans as your marker, but there are no rules here and, honestly, anything you have an abundance of can be used, like pennies, small rocks, beads, anything! For this game you will need one "tabla" for each player and one deck of lotería cards. To play this game there needs to be at least three players, but the more the merrier, just make sure you have enough tablas to give around.

One person, will be announcing the cards. This person, known as "el gritón" or yeller, has to be witty and good with puns and rhymes as their job is not only to yell the name of the card but also to distract the players while doing so, and usually with humour. This person can also be playing their own board at the same time as the other players, but they need to be good at multi-tasking.

All the cards are in Spanish and they have an illustration of different things like "La Rosa" or "El Músico" sometimes you can even say a poetic phrase after each card like "La Dama, La dama puliendo el paso, por todo la calle real" translated to The Lady: The lady, taking an elegant walk along the main street. The point of the game is to be the first to fill your card and shout out "buenas" or "lotería" to declare your winning victory!

To us Mexicans, Lotería is always spent as a good time regardless of who wins or loses! It's a great game to play because, unlike other family board games, this game is easy to understand so people of all ages can play. Also, there are some families who add levels of difficulty to this game by playing several boards at the same time as a big one. Others, have the cards called out with riddles instead of the image, so you would have to guess what the card is. There are thousands of creative ways to play this game!

Did you know...

Lotería can be an excellent way to learn Spanish! Mostly because of its nature of simple, easily pronounced words associated with images and for its repetition, but also for the rhymes that help understand the use of vocabulary and its context! Also, through the images of lotería one can get to know a lot about Mexican culture in general. From the calavera or la muerte that represent día de muertos and our relationship with these images, to la chalupa that is a typical element from Xochimilco (a traditional place in Mexico city).

Lotería is not traditional to one specific state or region: everyone in Mexico has played this game! This is why the images shown here are so iconic and can be found everywhere in Mexico.

We would like to know what are some of your most greatest and funniest memories you've experienced while playing Lotería! A small healthy dose of competition won't hurt nobody right?



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