Fantastic Festivals

Festivals around the world are celebrations. Some common festivals celebrate holidays, music, and culture, to name a few. And then there are some uncommon ones that celebrate color, tomatoes, ant nests, and mobile phones.

La Tomatina (Tomato Festival) is a weeklong festival that takes place every August in a small town in Spain. The last day of the festival is the high point—it involves ham and tomatoes. First, someone climbs to the top of a greasy pole and grabs a ham from the top. Then, a bunch of trucks unload over a hundred tons of tomatoes onto the street. That’s when the fun begins. For the next hour, people grab the tomatoes and throw them at each other! (Not to worry—the tomatoes are crushed beforehand so that nobody gets hurt.) If you decide to take part, don’t forget your goggles!

Holi (the Festival of Colors) is an important Hindu holiday. It celebrates the end of winter and the beginning of the spring harvest season. On the last day of this cheerful holiday people visit friends and family, taking colored powders and water balloons filled with colored water with them. People throw the colored powder up into the air and smear it on each other’s bodies and faces. They also squirt the colored water that is in the water balloons all over each other. It almost makes you wish that those balloons contained soapy water!

The country of Finland is home to some really strange competitions. One of them is the Ant-Nest Sitting Competition. The idea is to see who can sit on a nest of angry ants the longest. In a modern contest, the Mobile Phone Throwing World Championships, prizes are awarded to those who throw a cell phone the farthest, and to those who have the most style while doing it.