



**It's time for Cinco de Mayo! It is a holiday that is widely celebrated in California, the Southwest, and in Puebla, Mexico, that honors the Mexican victory in the Battle of Puebla against the French in 1862. It is also the most confusing holiday. Cinco de Mayo is not Mexico's Independence Day, which is September 16, and doesn't signal its independence from Spain. This holiday honors the brave soldiers that fought against the French army. Mexico was on the verge of economic disaster after the Mexican Revolution of 1810, and the Mexican-American War of 1846, as it had borrowed money from France, England, and Spain to help finance the wars. In 1861, President Benito Juarez, the only indigena president in Mexico's history, suspended their payments on their foreign debt for two years. In turn, France invaded Mexico intending to make it their colony. The well-equipped 8,000 to 10,000 French soldiers who hadn't lost a battle for 50 years marched from Veracruz to Puebla on their way to capture Mexico City. General Ignacio Zaragoza and his 4,000 poorly equipped Mestizo soldiers were able to defeat the French on May 5, 1862, when they stormed the city. The actual number of soldiers on each side depends on the source; however, the Mexicans were outnumbered more than two to one.**

**The defeat of the French was a big morale boost for Mexico. Their determination and bravery of the Mestizos soldiers in order to gain freedom from a foreign power against all odds are honored on this day. Although the Mexicans won the battle, they did lose the war. The next year France sent reinforcements and attacked Puebla a year later and then captured Mexico City. In 1867, Benito Juarez and his army finally retook Mexico, and he resumed his presidential duties. On May 9, 1862, he declared Cinco de Mayo as a national holiday. Since 1863, those Mexicans who lived in the southwest have shown their loyalty to Mexico and celebrated the victory, and their Mexican heritage for it wasn't that long ago that Mexico had been forced to cede large areas of land to the US following their defeat in the Mexican-American War. Today people remember these brave soldiers that helped Mexico become free with parades, festivals, and reenactments of the Puebla Battle. Los Angeles is known for having the largest celebration in the United States. Hopefully, now you have a better understanding of this holiday as you enjoy the fruity beverages, guacamole and chips we associate with it.**



**THE MEXICAN MUSEUM**

**In Association with the Smithsonian Institution**



# Celebrate Cinco de Mayo with The Mexican Museum

**It's fiesta time! But Why? It's Cinco de Mayo or the fifth of May when the Mexicans defeated the French army in the Battle of Puebla in 1862.**

## 10 Fun Facts You Might Not Know:

1. **Cinco de Mayo is not Independence Day which is September 16th, when they fought Spain, not France, over 50 years earlier. The Superhero was Father Miguel Hidalgo of that war and not Benito Juarez and Ignacio Zaragoza.**
2. **France invaded Veracruz, Mexico in 1861, when Mexico's piggy bank was almost empty. President Benito Juarez decided to delay repaying the money it owed France for two years.**
3. **The well equipped, trained French army wore blue jackets and red baggy pants, which aren't good colors for a sneak attack.**
4. **The ill equipped farmers and Mestizos (a mixture of Spanish and Indian) were outnumbered. There were more than two French soldiers for every one Mexican. The Mexicans were the underdogs.**
5. **The famous battle lasted less than a day on that stormy, muddy day.**
6. **President Benito Juarez, Mexico's only Indian president, made Cinco de Mayo a national holiday in 1862. However it is no longer considered a national holiday outside of the city of Puebla.**
7. **Cinco de Mayo is celebrated more widely in the Southwest of the US than in Mexico, excluding Puebla.**
8. **Los Angeles has the largest celebration in the US and has been celebrating it since 1863. Parades, dances, mariachi music, reenactment of the battle and big fiestas are part of the celebrations.**
9. **87.5 million pounds of avocados are eaten every year at this time. Holey moley, that's a lot of guacamole!**
10. **People celebrate this holiday not just to devour the guacamole, chips, and other Mexican delights, but to remember the brave people who defeated the French against all odds, take pride in their culture, and celebrate the end of foreign control over Mexico forever.**

# Cinco de Mayo is Not Independence Day

## History of Mexico:

<https://youtu.be/Q4kF0IRzGnl>

## Other videos:

<https://youtu.be/QIICWQyK72Y>

<https://youtu.be/vz6fH7MIBoo>

<https://youtu.be/KAOG795Yrm8>

<https://youtu.be/XCEJldGnILc>

Cinco de Mayo	HOLIDAY	Independence Day
May 5, 1862	DATE	September 16, 1810
France	ENEMY	SPAIN
Battle of Puebla	EVENT	War of Independence
Less than one day	DURATION	21 years
Puebla	LOCATION	Mexico City
Benito Juárez, Ignacio Zaragoza	HÉROES	Father Miguel Hidalgo
Against Imperialism	STRUGGLE	For Independence
Won battle, lost war	OUTCOME	Defeated Spain, Independence



# Patriotic Cinco de Mayo Shaker

Music is something that all cultures have in common and unites the people of the world. Mexican music has its roots in ancient cultures like the Aztecs. They used drums, rattles, and flutes. Maraca were believed to be invented in Puerto Rico.

Your project will use the patriotic colors on the Mexican flag: red, white, and green. The green stands for independence from Spain and hope; the white stands for religious purity, and the red is for national unity and spilled blood.

## Materials for Cup Shakers

**Materials:** 2 cups or toilet paper tube\*, popcorn kernels for sound, glue stick, red, white, and green crepe paper streamers or tissue paper, confetti, or other things for decorating.

\*If you use a toilet paper tube, then glue cupcake liners on each end before proceeding with the above procedures



# Patriotic Cinco de Mayo Shaker Directions

## Directions for Cup Shakers



- Put seeds for the sound in one cup.
- Glue the two cups together.
- Wrap and glue the red crepe paper around the bottom section around each cup.
- Glue the extra red crepe paper to the bottom.
- Cover and glue each bottom with the same color.
- Wrap and glue the middle section with the white.
- Then wrap and glue the green around the top section.
- Get creative with the crepe paper. You can twist them into long thin strips, braid them, fringe them, make little balls,
- Tear into mosaic pieces, write words like Viva from long strips, make "W" shape designs or geometric patterns.

