



## THE SIESTA STORY

### The Secret Life of the Siesta

Forget the pictures of lazy people sleeping under olive trees for five hours! The **Siesta** is way more interesting than that. Its story actually starts in **Ancient Rome**, not modern Spain.

The Roman calendar had a cool phrase: **hora sexta**, which means "the sixth hour." Now, this wasn't just any hour—it was the moment the sun went into "super-hot-and-I'll-burn-you" mode, right around midday. For farmers and workers, taking a break then wasn't lazy; it was **survival**! If you didn't rest, you risked passing out in the field. So, the midday pause was born out of pure, practical necessity.

This smart tradition traveled and became famous in hot countries like Spain. Why did it stick there so well? Two reasons: the serious heat, and the seriously big lunch, **la comida**. After a huge plate of food, all your blood rushes to your stomach, and your brain starts sending you sleepy signals. We call this a "food coma." Combine that food coma with 40°C heat, and boom—you need a nap! That's why in traditional Spanish towns, stores and cafés still often lock up between 2 PM and 5 PM. If you want to buy socks, you'll just have to wait.

Today, the traditional long siesta is actually fading in big cities because of busy modern schedules. But the idea is fighting back as the **power nap**! Scientists now agree that a quick 20-to-30-minute nap is amazing for your memory and mood. So, the siesta's history shows us something important: sometimes, the smartest thing you can do is just shut your eyes for a minute.

### Siesta Story Comprehension Check

Read "**The Secret Life of the Siesta**" and answer the questions below. Good luck!

#### Part 1: True or False (T/F)

Circle T for True or F for False.

1. **T / F** The story says the siesta tradition began in modern Spain.
2. **T / F** The Latin phrase **hora sexta** means "the first hour" of the day.
3. **T / F** For Roman workers, taking the midday break was considered survival, not laziness.

#### Part 2: Short Answer

Answer the following questions using complete sentences.

4. According to the text, what is the Spanish word for the seriously big midday meal that helps cause a "food coma"?
5. What two things combine in Spain to make people feel sleepy and need a nap in the afternoon? (Hint: one is about temperature, one is about food.)
6. In big modern cities, the traditional long siesta is changing. What is the shorter, science-backed version of the siesta called, and what duration do scientists recommend for it?

## Teacher's Key

### Part 1: True or False (T/F)

1. **F** (The story says it started in Ancient Rome.)
2. **F** (It means "the sixth hour.")
3. **T** (The text says it was a necessity/survival because of the intense heat.)

### Part 2: Short Answer

4. The Spanish word for the seriously big midday meal is **la comida**.
5. The two things that combine are **the serious heat** and **the seriously big lunch (la comida)**.
6. The shorter, science-backed version is called the **power nap**, and scientists recommend it lasts for a quick **20-to-30-minute nap**.