



Spanish Immersion Mini Missions You Can Try at Home

Episode 63

Summary: Are you unable to travel right now, be it for health or financial reasons? We've got you covered. Listen as Tamara explains real-life applications for you to be able to satisfy your need to be immersed in a Spanish environment without the hassle or expense of travel.

Time	Transcript
00:35 - 02:01	Welcome to Episode 63 of the Learn Spanish Con Salsa podcast. In this episode of the show, we're going to talk about some ways that you can create an immersion experience for yourself while you're at home. Now I'm just getting back off the road from the Podfest Multimedia Expo that was held in Orlando over the weekend and I had a great time connecting with other podcasters and coming up with some good ideas for how I can make this show better. But I understand if the coronavirus has you a little scared to travel right now. After all, every day the news is changing and I hope that if you're listening to this a year from now, that this will just be a thing of the past like SARS or swine flu, or any of the other epidemics that we've had. So make sure you wash your hands out there. But if you are afraid to travel right now, or simply just can't travel because it's not in your budget, I wanted to talk about some ways that I've used in the past to create a Spanish immersion environment while I'm at home. Now, I know a lot of times when you think immersion, you think I have to get on a plane, and I have to go somewhere where I'm immersed in the language 24/7, or I have to sign up for a special program that people will speak only Spanish for about three months and then I'll become fluent. Well, there are some easier and simpler ways that you can actually do this while you're at home and I'm going to share with you a couple of them right now.
02:03 - 03:30	So one way to approach this instead of a full-on immersion, is to set small achievable goals or mini immersions that you can do throughout the day that can really help not only immerse you in Spanish while you're at home but give you some practical real-world experience with using the Spanish language. So you may have heard before the tip to change the language of your phone to

	<p>Spanish, right? So basically going into your cell phone settings and changing the language to Spanish. Now, I've tried that in the past, but I have one bit of caution about that. If you're going to change the language of your phone to Spanish, number one, you want to make sure you know the word "idioma" which means language. It's really important because you don't want to do what I did, which is I changed my phone to Spanish and then I had to go into the store to get support because my phone was acting up. I don't remember what it was, but I needed to take it into the store. And I gave it to the guy at the counter, I said, "Hey, I need help with my phone." And he looked completely puzzled because I had forgotten I had changed my phone to Spanish, right? So the word "idioma" means language, and you'll need to know that when you need to change your settings back to English. So if you're going to give someone else your phone, like if you need technical support, make sure you know the word "idioma", so that you can go there and switch it back to English, okay?</p>
03:30 - 04:41	<p>So that's not the only reason I don't recommend changing your whole cell phone over. Really, it's not super useful. I mean, you will learn some technological terms. It will change some of your apps to Spanish, but there is a simpler way that you can do that. So the first thing I would recommend for sort of a mini immersion you can do at home is to change some of your apps to Spanish. So this isn't as dramatic as changing over your whole phone and it will prevent you from accidentally deleting everything on your phone if you don't know some of the Spanish terms while you're going through the settings, okay. So pick one or two apps that you use pretty frequently, and go to the settings for those apps and change them to Spanish. Now another thing you might want to do if you haven't already, and this will vary depending on your phone, whether it's a type of Android or iPhone, is you want to add a Spanish keyboard to your phone. So you can type the letters with accents, some of the punctuation as well, the letter "ñ" for example. So change over your keyboard or add a Spanish keyboard to your phone. And then just pick one or two apps that you use pretty frequently and start to use those in Spanish.</p>
04:41 - 05:15	<p>Now, the great thing about those apps is that since you use them frequently, you're already familiar with what the settings are. So you really will be picking up the language from "Oh, this is how you say this in Spanish" or "This is how I would do this in Spanish." So it's a very, very simple way to get some experience with using Spanish in a way that you already use it in your day to day life. So tip number one is to just change one or two apps that you use</p>

	frequently into Spanish on your phone. Hopefully, you find that a little bit less intimidating than changing over your entire phone language to Spanish.
05:16 - 06:11	Now my next tip, and this one is related, but it's a little bit different, is I call this the GPS test. Okay, so being able to follow directions is a very important skill when you're traveling. So this is a way that you can practice that before you even go anywhere or just when you're around town. If you change the language of your GPS to Spanish, then you'll be able to practice following directions and learning the vocabulary of giving directions and going to different places in Spanish. Now, from my nerdy grammar perspective, it does help to get familiar with the imperative or command tense of some of the verbs that are used. And most of the GPSs are going to use the formal tense so they're going to use "usted", so you'll get some exposure to the command tense if you want to learn a little bit of grammar as well. Now there is a way to do this that's safe and simple so that you don't end up stressed out, lost or confused.
06:12 - 06:52	So first, when I did this, I used my GPS to navigate home when I was leaving a destination. So this meant I pretty much knew the routes, so I knew what it was going to tell me so it was relatively low risk. But I was able to familiarize myself with the commands and I also learned some new words, like how to say "Make a slight right turn" not just "Make a right turn." This is also an effective learning method because the same instructions are repeated over and over again. So this is a way to hear Spanish, although it may be a robotic sounding voice, but you hear the instructions over and over again so you get to become familiar with the vocabulary and you learn it pretty well.
06:53 - 07:42	Now after you do this a couple of times going to a destination that you're already familiar with, I would suggest you navigate to a few places that you've never been before and see if you make it there without getting lost. So this can be a great trick. Now, I will walk you through very briefly how to do this in Google Maps, and again, this is if you're just going to change the app. Now, I will say, if you go with the approach of changing over your entire phone, your phone will do this for you automatically. But if you just want to do this, say, in Google Maps, you just open the Google Maps application, and again, I'll include some directions for this in the show notes page as well. It's going to be at learnspanishconsalsa.com/63 , that's learnspanishconsalsa.com/63 for episode 63 of the podcast, and I will try to give you some hints and tricks for how to do this.
07:42 - 09:07	But basically, you're going to go to click on your profile if you're within the Google Maps app. So you're going to go into your profile. So if you have a picture or an icon in the top right hand of the screen, and again, I have an

	<p>Android so if you have an iPhone, this may be a little different. You're going to scroll down to where it says "Settings". And under "Settings", you're going to scroll down again to where it says "Navigation settings". Now there, it will give you an option to change the voice. So if you go to "Voice selection", you can actually select "Español". There is an option for "España" and also "Latino América". So, of course, if you're listening to this podcast or you're in the US, I would suggest Español, Latino América and you can change that over. And that will actually change the voice the next time that you start to navigate somewhere. Now I will say this, another reason why this is pretty cool is because your display may still show up in English so it sort of depends on, again, how your phone is set up. Technology is always fun to play with. But that even helps too because then you can still kind of read and check where you're going to make sure you really don't get lost, but the voice will change over to Spanish so all the voice commands will be given to you 100% in Spanish.</p>
09:08 - 10:31	<p>Another popular app that people use, I know, is called Waze because I know that it gives you the traffic and everything when you're navigating, so it's waze.com. So when you open the Waze app, at the bottom left of the screen, there's a little search icon, it looks like a little looking glass. If you click on that, it'll open up another screen and you'll see a little icon that looks like a gear appear, which is for settings. And when you click on that, you just go right to "General", which is the first option on the menu. And you'll see right at the top, it says "Language", so you can just click on that and you can change it over to Español. So it's not going to be under "s" for Spanish is going to be under "E" for Español. And it has the options for both "España" and it says, "A. Latina" for América Latina. So the one I would select is "Español América Latina". And then it's going to alert you that the language has changed, and it's going to ask you to restart or reiniciar the Waze app. So there you go. And then with Waze, the display will also change to Spanish so all the words will be in Spanish as well. So you'll be able to navigate to where you need to go, hopefully without getting lost in Spanish. So that's the second thing you can try if you want to create sort of an instant immersion experience at home and get some practice with using Spanish in the real world.</p>
10:32 - 11:42	<p>Now my last tip is to actually follow a recipe in Spanish and make a meal. Now I know that some of you may or may not know this about me, but I am a vegetarian. I do not eat meat. So sort of, in Latin America especially, that can be a little bit difficult. Also in the US and in the South where my family is from, it was really difficult to switch over to a vegetarian diet, but I have been a vegetarian for over 20 years now. So It's really something that I've had to learn as I've tried to experience some of the different cuisines from Latin</p>

	<p>America, to find versions of it that are vegetarian. So one site that I really like has vegetarian options, but again, it also has traditional options. So if you are a meat-eater, no judgment, and you can find a ton of recipes, but one website I like that has both vegetarian-friendly and also healthy versions of some of the food that's cooked in Latin America, specifically the Dominican Republic is called Cocina Dominicana. So that's Cocina Dominicana, which is like Dominican Kitchen, and I'll include a link to that in the show notes as well.</p>
<p>11:43 - 12:52</p>	<p>The thing I love about this website is not only because it provides vegetarian options. It also gives every recipe in both Spanish and English. So again, this is a safe immersion opportunity because you can print out the recipe in Spanish and you can also, for a backup, look at the English versión so you can make sure you know what all the ingredients are and you understand some of the vocabulary, okay? Another great part of this is, once you get the recipe, I encourage you to go to a Latin market to purchase some of the supplies or the food or the ingredients that you're going to need to make the dish. Now in my case, I made the sancocho recipe that was on the Cocina Dominicana website, which was awesome. And the thing about making certain dishes is that it requires ingredients that you may not have in your local food market, but going to a Latin market is also an opportunity to use your Spanish. So I encourage you to find a Latin market if you have one in your community and go into the Latin market to actually buy some of the ingredients. Probably some of the vegetables and some of the spices that you need are going to be in the Latin market.</p>
<p>12:53 - 14:14</p>	<p>So one thing you can do if you're super afraid, and you don't want to go up and talk to someone and start a conversation, simply go up to the store clerk and ask them if they have something, right. So it's a good way, they'll probably direct you to it, they'll show you where it is, but try to do that in Spanish, right? And so I'm giving you this because it's super easy. You only need to know one word, which is “tienen” which is “they have”, right? So it's the plural form of the verb “tener”, but it's conjugation for “ustedes” because in this case, you're asking, “Do you all have something?” So you're asking, does the store sell it, essentially. But a quick and easy way to do that? You can just say, “¿Tienen guandules?” right? Like, “Do you have guandules?” or “Do you sell that?” So all you have to do is raise the intonation of your voice to ask a question. And if you're too afraid to say anything else, that's all you need to say, “Hi, do you have beans?” So just kind of ask that question, and that may get you started in a conversation or at least you'll be able to complete that part of your little immersion mission, okay? So I definitely encourage you to check out a recipe on a website that has recipes in Spanish and also to go to a</p>

	local Latin market, support your local community and also get some of the ingredients that you may not be able to find anywhere else.
14:15 - 15:49	<p>Now, in my case, one time when I did this, I made sancocho, which is a soup, or like a stew that usually has lots of meat in it and lots of chicken and different things. It's a very hearty stew, which is really good for the winter. I made the vegetarian version or vegan version of it from Cocina Dominicana, and I absolutely loved it. And I actually probably still have some in the freezer right now that I haven't eaten yet because I made a big batch of it, but again, I had to purchase some vegetables that they only had at the Latin market. Now I will say, one of the things to look out for is it can be hard to translate some of the names of these foods or ingredients. So if it's something that is not native to where you live, you might have to struggle with figuring out what you would call it in English, which is, again, why I'd recommend going to the Latin market because then you don't have to worry about that translation. So there are some different varieties of squashes, for example, that may all be translated to "calabaza", which is the word for squash, but there [are] different varieties that they may have there, that we don't necessarily have. There [are] definitely lots of root vegetables as well, that have names that we just may not know because we don't have an equivalent for it in English, because we may not just grow it here. So there [are] just different things to consider, but it's a great, great opportunity for immersion because you can follow along with the recipe, learn about a dish that you may not have tried before, and also get to find out where your local Latin market is if you haven't been there before, and maybe connect with some folks in there as well, okay?</p>
15:50 - 16:11	<p>So those are my three tips. Now, the first one was to change one or two apps that you use frequently on your phone to Spanish. The second one was to change your GPS to Spanish actually follow directions to go to a new place after you try some familiar places first. And the last one is to try out a recipe in Spanish and go to your local Latin market to purchase the ingredients.</p>
16:12 - 17:04	<p>Okay, so I hope you enjoyed this episode and I want to hear from you. If you could, send me a DM on Instagram @learns spanishconsalsa. Or if you're already in our Facebook group, post in there and let us know which one of these mini immersion missions are you going to try out this week. I always want you guys to get something out of this that you can implement and do right away. These are pretty simple. I mean, the recipe may require a little bit of planning, but the one for directions you can try the next time you drive somewhere or the next time you walk somewhere, right? Google Maps gives you directions walking as well. So go ahead if you're listening to me right now while you're on the road, definitely don't do it while you're driving, but when</p>

	you get to where you're going, change over your GPS to Spanish and the next time you get in the car to go somewhere, listen to what the directions are, even if you already know where you're going, just so you can get familiar with some of that vocabulary.
17:05 - 17:25	So try to pick one thing that you can do right away and I guarantee you this will give you some practical experience using the Spanish language in a day to day setting. And you can do it at home without having to get on a plane and risk getting sick. Or just looking at your bank account and making sure that you can save up for a really big trip that you want to take in the future, okay?
17:25 - 17:36	So that is it for this episode of Learn Spanish Con Salsa podcast. As always, I hope you learned at least one thing that will take you one step closer from Spanish beginner to bilingual. Hasta la próxima.

Show Notes: <http://www.learnspanishconsalsa.com/63>

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