

When Cristina Sanchez told her parents that she wanted to become a bullfighter instead of a hairdresser, they weren't too pleased. But when she was eighteen her parents realised that she was serious and sent her to a bullfighting school in Madrid, where she trained with professionals.

Since last July, Sanchez has been the most successful novice in Spain and is very popular with the crowds. After brilliant performances in Latin America and Spain earlier this year, Sanchez has decided that she is ready to take the test to become a *matador de toros*. Out of the ring, Sanchez does not look like a matador. She is casually elegant, very feminine and wears her long blond hair loose. She seems to move much more like a dancer than an athlete, but in the ring she is all power.

When she was fourteen, Sanchez's father warned her that the world of bullfighting was hard enough for a man and even harder for a woman. It seems he is right "It really is a tough world for a woman," says Sanchez "You start with the door shut in your face. A man has to prove himself only once, whereas I have had to do it ten times just to get my foot in the door."

In perhaps the world's most masculine profession, it would seem strange if Sanchez had not met problems. But even though Spanish women won the legal right to fight bulls on equal terms with men in 1974, there are still matadors like Jesulin de Ubrique who refuse to fight in the same ring as her.

Sanchez lives with her family in Parla, south of Madrid. Her family is everything to her and is the main support in her life. "My sisters don't like bullfighting, they don't even watch it on TV, and my mother would be the happiest person in the world if I gave it up. But we get on well. Mum's like my best friend."

When Sanchez is not fighting she has a tough fitness routine - running, working out in the gym and practising with her father in the afternoon. By nine she is home for supper, and by eleven she is in bed. She doesn't drink, smoke or socialise. "You have to give up a lot," says Sanchez. "It's difficult to meet people, but it doesn't worry me - love does not arrive because you look for it."

Sanchez spends most of the year travelling: in summer to Spanish and French bullfights and in winter to Latin America. Her mother dislikes watching Sanchez fight, but goes to the ring when she can. If not, she waits at home next to the telephone. Her husband has had to ring three times to say that their daughter had been injured, twice lightly in the leg and once seriously in the stomach. After she has been wounded the only thing Sanchez thinks about is how quickly she can get back to the ring. "It damages your confidence," she says "but it also makes you mature. It's just unprofessional to be injured. You cannot let it happen." Sanchez is managed by Simon Casas, who says. "At the moment there is no limit to where she can go. She has a champion's mentality, as well as courage and technique."

1. When Sanchez told her parents that she wanted to be a bullfighter they

A felt a little pleased.
B thought she was too young.
C thought she had a good sense of humour.
D were initially opposed to the idea.

2. Sanchez thinks that

A living in today's world is difficult for a woman.
B bullfighting is a difficult career for women.
C is almost impossible to succeed as a female bullfighter.
D women have to demonstrate their skills as much as male bullfighters do

3. Sanchez's mother

A is everything to the family.
B prefers to watch her daughter on TV.
C supports her more than the rest of her family.
D would prefer Cristina to leave the ring.

4. What does "it" in line 37 refer to?

A the fitness routine
B not socialising
C giving up
D smoking

5. Sanchez doesn't socialise often because

A she doesn't like cigarettes and alcohol.
B her work takes up most of her time.
C she is worried about meeting people.
D it's too difficult to look for friends.

6. What does Sanchez think about after being injured?

A her next chance to fight bulls
B her abilities
C her development
D her skills

London often gives the impression of being more comfortable with its past than its present. From the world-famous landmarks of St Paul's Cathedral, Buckingham Palace and the Tower of London to the traditional and well-loved double-decker buses, the theatres and the many grand hotels, England's capital offers visitors a journey through centuries of history. This journey is even better now that the building works, which covered many historic sites, have been taken down. Newly cleaned and restored buildings are revealed, and the city looks as if it has been revitalised.

The city has also rediscovered its river. The area between the South Bank Arts Centre, which includes the National Theatre,, and Tower Bridge, has been brought back to life and the city has found a new heart along the forgotten riverside. As you walk eastwards along the river from Westminster, you will discover that old warehouses have been transformed into galleries, shops and clubs.

Across the river from London Bridge is "The City of London", the financial district of the capital. The City has its own historic delights such as the 15th century Guildhall and churches designed by Sir Christopher Wren. The best way to explore the City is on foot. For instance, you can "walk through the ages" starting from Fournier Street and ending at the modern Lloyd's building on Lime Street. Remember, however that in London you are never far away from the past; the old-fashioned red telephone boxes are becoming popular again and many London pubs - where a visitor might ask for a pint of bitter - have been restored to their original Victorian beauty.

But the capital is not a historical theme park. It is a lively and exciting metropolis which is well-known for its popular culture, music, clubs, street fashion, and visual arts. Today, many of its wide variety of restaurants claim to be as good as in any other European capitals. For example, Marco Pierre White's highly recommended restaurant at the Hyde Park Hotel is a perfect example of new English cuisine - unusual, sophisticated and extremely expensive. When it comes to shopping, Covent Garden and King's Road in Chelsea offer a mixture of reasonably priced chainstore clothing and unique boutiques selling everything from rave gear to skateboards. Shoppers with full wallets and more sophisticated tastes should head for Knightsbridge, where Harrods and Harvey Nichols compete to be the most exclusive department store in London.

Much of London's energy and originality is now centred in Soho, the city's liveliest and most bohemian area, squeezed in between the department stores of Oxford Street and the bookshops of Charing Cross Road. Soho, once considered one of the dirtiest and most dangerous parts of London, was cleaned up in the early 1980's. Today, with its gurgling cappuccino machines and pavement cafes, it has become a meeting place for all kinds of people from all over the world, whatever the hour of day or night.

So even if you are new to the city, you don't have to try hard in order to experience the real London. Despite its heavy traffic and shaking underground railway, it is still one of the world's greatest and most cosmopolitan cities.

1. According to the first paragraph, what is the most outstanding characteristic of London?
 - A the number of hotels
 - B the number of historic sites
 - C the number of landmarks
 - D the number of theatres
2. What has recently happened alongside the river?
 - A The area has been redeveloped.
 - B A new bridge has been built
 - C New warehouses have been built.
 - D Old warehouses have been turned down
3. The City of London
 - A was built by Sir Christopher Wren.
 - B is mainly made up of churches.
 - C is a museum of architecture.
 - D contains different styles of architecture.
4. The new English cuisine is
 - A well represented by White's restaurant.
 - B only available at the Hyde Park Hotel,
 - C available in all London restaurants,
 - D not worth the price the diner is expected to pay.
5. What does the writer think of London's shopping facilities?
 - A They are too expensive for most people.
 - B They provide for a variety of tastes.
 - C They are all quite reasonably priced.
 - D They don't have enough customers.
6. Before the 1980's, Soho was
 - A neat and tidy.
 - B popular among foreigners
 - C very crowded.
 - D unsafe and unclean.
7. What does "it" in line 46 refer to?
 - A Soho
 - B London
 - C Oxford Street
 - D shopping in London