

Old Spanish Days Poetry Contest Rules & Regulations

Theme: Poems must be inspired by how Old Spanish Days celebrates Santa Barbara's heritage and traditions of delicious food, colorful music, thrilling dance, and moving song, all imbued with a spirit of friendliness, hospitality, and tolerance.

Rules: General

1. The competition offers three age categories: 11 and under, 12-18 years old, 19+ years old. A prize winner and runner up will be awarded in each of the three age categories.
2. Entrants must be residents of Santa Barbara County.
3. The closing date of the competition is 11:59 pm (PDT), May 31, 2026.
4. An entrant can only make one submission of 1-3 poems. All entries will be considered anonymously by the judges.
5. Entries will not be returned, so please keep a copy.
6. Under no circumstances can alterations be made to poems once entered.
7. Entries will receive confirmation of receipt at the time of submission.
8. The competition organizers reserve the right to change the judging panel without notice.
9. The judges read all the entries; their decision is final. Neither the judges nor Old Spanish Days staff will enter into any correspondence.

Rules: Poems

1. All entries are judged anonymously; the poet's name must not appear on poems themselves.
2. All poems must have a title **and must not exceed 40 lines in length** (excluding title).
3. Poems must write to the suggested theme.
4. Poems must be written in English.
5. Poems must be the entrant's original work. AI-generated/assisted work is prohibited.

6. Entries must not have been published, self-published, published on a website or made public on social media, broadcast, or featured among the winners in another competition before 31 March 2026.

Rules: Winners

1. Prizewinners and runners-up will be notified by the end of May 2026 and asked to take part in a series of events and readings happening during and around Old Spanish Days (August 5-9, 2026). All winners will be expected to provide a biography and photograph.
2. Only the winning entries will receive a response.
3. The copyright of each poem remains with the author. However, authors of the winning poems, by entering the competition, grant Old Spanish Days the right in perpetuity to publish and/or broadcast their poem. Use of the poems elsewhere for one year from May through August 2026 is subject to permission from Old Spanish Days.