




## “Birthplace of the Novel”: A Literary tour of Spain 2026

18 SEP – 8 OCT 2026

Code: 22628

Tour Leaders Susannah Fullerton, OAM, FRSN, Anneli Bojstad

Fitness Level 

**Level 2 - Intermediate**

For people with energetic lifestyles and very good mobility

In the footsteps of great literary figures including Miguel de Cervantes, Federico Garcia Lorca, Miguel de Unamuno, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Ernest Hemingway and Gerald Brenan.

## Overview

Learn about the riches of Spanish literature from [Susannah Fullerton](#) and study the great artworks of Spain from art historian [Anneli Bojstad](#).

- Travel in the footsteps of the immortal Don Quixote and his creator, Cervantes, seeing windmills, houses, landscapes and churches.
- View Picasso's 'Guernica', and see paintings by El Greco, Goya, Sorolla and Murillo in the Prado and other galleries with art historian Anneli Bojstad.
- Visit the birthplaces and homes of extraordinary Spanish writers, Lope de Vega, Lorca, Unamuno, Jiménez, Zorrilla, and Machado.
- Follow the explorations of visiting writers, including Washington Irving, Hans Christian Andersen, Laurie Lee, Jessica Mitford, George Orwell, Gerald Brenan, Ernest Hemingway, and Jan Morris.
- Visit the world-famous Alhambra palace, and enjoy exclusive visits to some private palaces.
- Visit monasteries connected with Christopher Columbus, and view his maps in libraries.
- Enjoy beautifully laid out gardens, with their cooling fountains and pools.
- See cathedrals, convents, monasteries, mosques, synagogues and temples, all with fascinating literary and historical associations.
- Stay in Ronda and see its spectacular gorge, and the famed bull ring where Hemingway was much at home.
- Enjoy meals and refreshments in fabulous literary establishments, including the Mesón de Cándido, Francisco Umbral's Café Gigón in Madrid, and Lhardy Restaurant where Benito Pérez Galdós and his characters often ate.

Overnight Seville (3 nights) • Ronda (1 night) • Málaga (1 night) • Granada (3 nights) • Almagro (2 nights) • Toledo (3 nights) • Salamanca (2 nights) • Segovia (2 nights) • Madrid (3 nights)

## Introduction

In 1605 and 1615 the two parts of Miguel de Cervantes' novel *Don Quixote* were published, and the world was never the same again. This was the birth of the modern novel and every novelist can be grateful to Cervantes for starting this superb literary form. Cervantes' masterpiece has proved endlessly fertile and adaptable. It remains one of the world's most translated novels, it has shaped the identity of people and nations, the knight has been a universal role model, and he and Sancho Panza are crucial to Hispanic identity. To follow in the footsteps of author and characters is to journey into the heart of what a novel is, what it can achieve, and what it means to us.

This literary tour of Spain will take you to the places Cervantes knew, and to the settings of his novel. We can "tilt against windmills" in Consuegra, visit his birthplace in Alcalá de Henares, and view rare editions of his works in libraries. Spain would not be what it is today without *Don Quixote*. Indeed, literary critic Ian Stavans, author of *Quixote: The Novel and the World*, is convinced that "the Spanish language exists in order for this magisterial novel to inhabit it".

However, this literary tour will also include other important Spanish writers. From Seville to Córdoba, Ronda to Málaga, Granada to Madrid, we will encounter many fascinating authors. Poet and playwright Federico García Lorca was assassinated at the start of the Spanish Civil War – we will see his birthplace and the house that inspired his famous play, *The House of Bernarda Alba*. Novelist Miguel de Unamuno was a writer and philosopher who played a vital role in the literary and intellectual life of Salamanca – we visit an excellent museum in his name.

Poet Juan Ramón Jiménez won the 1956 Nobel Prize for Literature, although he believed that “if they give you ruled paper, write the other way”. In Moguer, where he was born in 1881, we visit his Birth House and the House-Museum which preserves his library. Symbolist poet Antonio Machado was born in Seville, but settled in Segovia and we will see places connected with his important modernist writings, as well as following in the steps of José Zorrilla, poet and playwright who became the National Laureate of Spain.

And there will be visiting writers, who fell in love with Spain, its history and culture. Washington Irving thought Granada the “most picturesque and beautiful city, situated in one of the loveliest landscapes” and wrote his 1832 *Tales of the Alhambra* as a result of his time in Spain. American poet Longfellow found that “romantic dreams filled his brain” when he was in Spain. Ernest Hemingway found it hard to stay away from Spain and set *The Sun Also Rises* and other works of fiction there. Laurie Lee recounted his travels in Spain, playing music as he went, in *As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning*, while Graham Greene’s *Monsignor Quixote* is a tribute to Cervantes’ classic. George Orwell and Gerald Brenan wrote about the Civil War, John Masefield visited, Jessica Mitford ran away to Spain, Virginia Woolf adored her walking holiday there, Jan Morris was insightful about the country and its culture in her travel book, and modern novelist Chris Stewart bought a farm in Spain and was inspired to write the fabulous *Driving Over Lemons*. Spain has brought the best works out of so many great writers.

There will also be superb art in this tour. Picasso was hugely influenced by literature and his famous sketch of Don Quixote on his horse, Rocinante, is to be seen all over Spain, and we will view his ‘Guernica’, possibly the world’s most powerful anti-war painting, in Madrid. There will be Renaissance El Grecos in Toledo, and more Picassos in Málaga which was the city of his birth. And of course there will be some wonderful statues, of authors and their fictional creations.

Other highlights of this tour will be magnificent palaces, great cathedrals, the dramatic gorge of Ronda, a royal library, monasteries and convents, sweeping plazas, and private palaces. You cannot explore the literature of a country without also delving into its history. We will dip into Islamic Spain, discover the ‘juglares’ of the Medieval minstrels, seek out Saint Teresa, get to know the Generation of 1898, and tackle Civil War history, including the turbulent years of the Republic and the grim postwar period. As Carlos Ruiz Zafón has said, this is a place “haunted by history”.

Explore Spain, “the beautiful country of wine and songs” as Goethe called it, through the eyes of its great authors, take the paths of visiting writers who fell in love with its people and landscapes and were inspired to write, and discover the indefatigable knight’s impact on the world in the country where Cervantes created him. Visit the land that gave the world the novel, and so much more.



## Leaders



### Susannah Fullerton, OAM, FRSN

President of the Jane Austen Society of Australia, Susannah has published several books on Jane Austen and has lectured extensively on famous authors, their lives and works both in Australia and overseas.

Susannah Fullerton, OAM, FRSN, majored in English Literature at the University of Auckland. She then completed a postgraduate degree in Victorian fiction and prose at the University of Edinburgh. For over 25 years Susannah has been President of the Jane Austen Society of Australia. She has lectured extensively on Jane Austen in Australia and overseas and has published many articles about Jane Austen's works. She is the co-author of *Jane Austen – Antipodean Views* and published *Jane Austen and Crime* in 2004, and *Brief Encounters: Literary Travellers in Australia* (Picador) in 2009. Susannah's latest books are *A Dance with Jane Austen*, *Happily Ever After: Celebrating Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice* and a memoir *Jane & I: A Tale of Austen Addiction*. Susannah is very well known on the Australian speakers' circuit as a literary lecturer. She gives talks on famous authors, their lives and works, and on history and art, at the Art Gallery of NSW, State Library of NSW, ADFAS, WEA, schools, for a great variety of clubs and societies, and on zoom. Susannah uses her training in drama to delight her audiences with dramatic readings from novels and poems. Her interest in literature is wide ranging. She is a member of the Dylan Thomas Society of Australia, the Australian Brontë Association, the NSW Dickens Society and she is Patron of the Kipling Society of Australia. She has worked on literary prize committees, organised literary conferences and is a most experienced lecturer and group leader.



### Anneli Bojstad

Author and curator Anneli has lived & worked in Spain for the past 36 years, dividing her time between Madrid and Andalucía. She obtained a BA in Art History (Stockholm University) and a MA in Hispanic Studies (Complutense University, Madrid). Anneli has hosted ASA's tours to Spain since 2008.

Swedish-born Anneli Bojstad has lived and worked in Spain for the past 35 years, dividing her time between Madrid and Andalucía. She spends her time developing and managing cultural projects in various fields, curating art exhibitions, and publishing books on gardens, architecture and Spanish landscapes. Anneli gained her BA in Art History at Stockholm University and a MA in Hispanic Studies at Complutense University, Madrid. She is fluent in both Spanish and English.

She is the author of *Great Gardens of Spain* (2011), *Jardines Mágicos de España* (2011) and *La Gran Aventura de los Indianos* (2008) and has contributed articles to major publications including *Architectural Digest*, *Vogue*, *Elle Deco*, *Telva* and *Casa & Campo*. She has curated exhibitions including 'Jardines del Alma' in the Real Jardín Botánico. For over 10 years she worked as Administration and Communications Manager for the landscape architecture practice, Estudio Eduardo Mencos ([www.eduardomencos.com](http://www.eduardomencos.com)).

Anneli has assisted in planning and hosting ASA's tours of Spain since 2008, sharing her passion for Spanish history, culture and garden design. Her tours include 'Great Monuments and Gardens of Spain' and 'Art and Culture in Spain'. In 2025 she leads ASA's new tour entitled 'Andalucía: Cultural Landscapes of Southern Spain' for which she spent several months researching, and also looks forward to joining Susannah on ASA's new literary tour of Spain.

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### *Combine this tour with*

#### Sicily and the Aeolian Islands 2026

9 OCT – 23 OCT 2026

#### Cyprus, Kos & Rhodes: Civilisations of the Eastern Mediterranean 2026

8 OCT – 25 OCT 2026



## Itinerary

DRAFT Itinerary Currently in Preparation

The following itinerary lists a range of site visits which we plan to visit. Many are accessible to the public, but some require special permission. The daily activities described in this itinerary may change or be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate alterations in opening hours and confirmation of private visits. Participants will receive a final itinerary together with their tour documents. The tour includes breakfast daily, lunches & evening meals indicated in the detailed itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch and D=dinner.

### Seville – 3 nights

Day 1: Friday 18 September, Arrive Seville

- Tour commences at 9am in the foyer of the [Hotel Inglaterra](#)
- Welcome Meeting
- Literary walking tour incl. Santa Cruz Quarter, the Hospital de los Venerables (Fundación Focus) & the Real Fabrica de Tabacos whose famous employee was Carmen
- Cathedral and Giralda of Seville
- Welcome Dinner at a private 17-century palace

**Meeting Point:** The tour commences at 9 am in the foyer of the [Hotel Inglaterra](#) situated 250 metres from the Cathedral, overlooking the Plaza Nueva.

We will start our exploration of Spain and its literature in Seville, one of the first Spanish cities to fall to the Moors and, according to Lord Byron, a city “famed for oranges and women”. It’s a place that has stirred the romantic imagination for so long, that it can be hard to separate illusion from reality. Spanish writer Azorin concluded that Seville was “silence, elegance, the majesty of words and deeds, the profound spirituality created by a long tradition of art, poetry and riches”. In the 16th century Seville was one of the biggest,

richest and most cosmopolitan cities on earth, thanks to its monopoly on Spanish trade with the American continent.

Birth place of Don Juan (as portrayed by dramatist Tirso de Molina), the place where Cervantes was imprisoned, the city that won the heart of Washington Irving, Seville was for Lorca "a city that lies in wait for rhythms and coils them like labyrinths ... like the stems of a burning vine." Laurie Lee was dazzled by "the creamy crustation of flower-baked houses", while French poet Théophile Gautier admired the Sevillian women. Camilo José Cela stated that "about Seville one could speak all one's life, without reaching a definite conclusion. Seville, like the blue of the sky and the green of the olive trees, is ever changing ... It inspires even the dullest of poets." Let's begin our Spanish odyssey with inspired from this historic city.

Following a short Welcome Meeting we commence our tour with a literary walk through the Santa Cruz quarter, Seville's medieval ghetto. Despite its narrow winding streets, this precinct grew in popularity in the 16th and 17th centuries. Aristocrats built small palaces here, without disturbing its original, picturesque street plan.

We also visit the 17th century Hospital de los Venerables. Originally a residence of elderly priests, this is now a cultural centre. Of particular interest is its very original sunken courtyard, with arcaded galleries at a higher level and a central fountain, which is descended via circular steps decorated with tiles. Its design is a pleasant interplay of spaces of square and curved plan.

This afternoon we visit Seville's Cathedral. This huge building, which is the largest Gothic structure of its type in Europe, was built upon the foundations of the Almohad Friday Mosque by the Christian conquerors of the city. It retains the general plan and dimensions of the mosque and its courtyard that was used by the Islamic population for ritual ablutions. The courtyard, as its name – Patio de los Naranjos – suggests, is now dominated by a veritable forest of orange trees. Although now used primarily as a thoroughfare, the courtyard would once have provided Islamic students with a quiet shady place for the study of the *Qur'an*; plantings would have been more diverse at that time. The cathedral boasts what is arguably Spain's greatest *retablo mayor*, a massive gilt and painted wood retable occupying the whole of the chancel wall. It also contains a number of major medieval, Renaissance and Baroque artworks (including paintings by Goya and Murillo) and the tomb of Christopher Columbus.

The cathedral's bell tower, originally the minaret of the Almohad Friday mosque, is in the same style as those at Rabat and Marrakesh in Morocco. It is a monumental, square tower that houses seven superimposed rooms. Access is provided by a ramp up which the Imam once rode a donkey five times a day to call the faithful to prayer. The exquisite brick patterns on its four façades assured its survival when Seville fell to the Christians. Upon it they placed a belfry (bells are anathema to Islam) and a weather vane, or *Giraldillo*, which gives the tower its modern name, 'Giralda'.

This evening we enjoy an exclusive Welcome Dinner at an elegantly restored private 17th-century Casa Palacio (stately home) in the heart of Seville, a short walk from our hotel. (Overnight Hotel Inglaterra, Seville)  
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## Day 2: Saturday 19 September, Seville

- Museo de las Bellas Artes
- Hospital de la Caridad
- Archivo General de Indias
- Royal Alcázar of Seville



We start with a visit to the Museo de Bellas Artes, one of the best fine art museums in the country. Its collection ranges from the medieval to the 20th-century. There are works by Murillo, Zurbarán and El Greco for us to admire.

Seville's Hospital de la Caridad was founded in 1674 and still operates as a place of charity for the old and infirm. Its major benefactor was Miguel de Mañara, whose dissolute life before he joined a brotherhood, is supposed to have inspired the story of Don Juan. La Caridad has works by painter Valdes Leal which show futile pursuits and rotting flesh as a reminder of humanity's transience.

The Archive of the Indies is housed in what was once an exchange building and centre of trade. In 1785 King Carlos III had all Spanish documents relating to the 'Indies' collected under one roof, and the archive holds letters from Columbus, Cortés and Cervantes.

In the afternoon we visit the Royal Alcázar, a palace that was once the site of the Islamic-era citadel. It became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1987 and is still used as a residence by the royal family when they visit Seville. Much of it is in the ornate Mudéjar style – the tiles and decorations are gorgeous. Here, Ferdinand and Isabella gave their blessing to Columbus' expedition, and studied maps with Magellan. The palace was used as a set in *Lawrence of Arabia* and in *Game of Thrones*.

Andalucian palaces needed gardens – for shade, for growing fruit, for the cooling sound of water in fountains, and for flowers. The gardens adjoining the Alcázar, with their courtyards, pools, fountains and water channels, entranced travel writer H.V. Morton who thought them the most beautiful place in the city – we will explore them. (Overnight Seville) B

### Day 3: Sunday 20 September, Seville – Moguer – Palos de la Frontera – Seville

- Casa Natal de Juan Ramón Jiménez, Moguer
- Casa Museo Zenobia – Juan Ramon Jimenz, Moguer
- Monasterio de la Rábida, Palos de la Frontera
- Casa de Pilatos

Juan Ramón Jiménez received the 1956 Nobel Prize for Literature for his verse, seen as 'lyrical poetry' of 'artistic purity'. He was born in Moguer, Andalucía, in 1881 and today his birthplace is a museum. The large white house (it was navy blue in his time) had an impact on the whole of his life, as shown in his volume *Moguer*. From its roof terrace, he could see the town's churches, river and marsh.

Walking in his footsteps past the Monastery of Santa Clara (where Columbus prayed after returning from his first voyage in 1493), we find nearby the Jiménez House Museum in an 18th century building that was restored by his family. Here Juan Ramón Jiménez lived with his wife Zenobia, here he did much of his writing, following his belief that "if they give you ruled paper, write the other way." The museum preserves his collection of books, his vast newspaper library, his typewriter, furniture and the telegram he received announcing he had won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1956.

We will also view the exterior of an interesting 16th century house, once home to Admiral Hernández-Pinzón of the Spanish Navy. Washington Irving visited him here. The Admiral's ancestor, Martín Alonso Pinzón, sailed with Columbus and is credited as being a 'co-discoverer' of America.

La Rábida Monastery at nearby Palos de la Frontera was founded by the Franciscans in 1261. Christopher Columbus stayed here two years before his famous first voyage, depressed that King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella had turned down his request for finance for his planned expedition. The guardian at La Rábida, who



was also confessor to the Queen, assisted him in having his proposal reconsidered by the royals. There's a Mudéjar cloister, an exhibition about Columbus' voyages, and maps of the New World. This is the place where, it is said, the vision of a New World was conceived.

The Casa de Pilatos is the palatial home of the Dukes of Medinaceli. Considered the prototype of an Andalucian palace, it has about 150 'azulejo', or glazed-tile, designs. It's not surprising that it has proved popular with film makers – *Lawrence of Arabia*, *1492: Conquest of Paradise*, *Kingdom of Heaven* and *Knight and Day* all have scenes which were shot there. (Overnight Seville) BL

## Ronda – 1 night

Day 4: Monday 21 September, Seville – Córdoba – Ronda

- Great Mosque, Córdoba
- Synagogue, Córdoba

We leave Seville this morning and set off for Córdoba, once the capital of Islamic Spain. This awe-inspiring city was the birthplace of the Roman stoic philosopher Seneca.

We begin with a visit to Córdoba's Great Mosque described by writer Sacheverell Sitwell as "one of the beautiful and wonderful buildings of the world", is now a World Heritage site. The mosque (c.786-986), one of the earliest and finest still standing, was constructed by successive members of the Umayyad dynasty. Its outer façades boast exquisite geometrical and floral patterns set in the *tympana* of horseshoe arches and in panels above them. Within the prayer hall is a forest of columns supporting superimposed tiers of polychrome arches thought to have been modelled upon the Roman aqueduct at Mérida.

The *mihrab* (prayer niche) is adorned with exquisite abstract designs in mosaic executed by a school of Byzantine mosaicists from Constantinople. These mosaics, and those of the domes above the *mihrab*, give meaning to Allah's prescription to the prophet concerning images: that they should act as a simile to nature, not an abstraction of it; and that they should convey by their delicacy the notion that nothing material has meaning or permanence. The mosque is punctured by a huge cathedral; its minaret became the cathedral bell tower.

We also explore the old Jewish Quarter (*Judería*) of the city, including Córdoba's delightful small synagogue. The Jews arrived in Córdoba before the Muslims and almost immediately made it a centre of learning. They established the Jewish Quarter after the city had become the capital of Muslim Spain. Its 14th-century synagogue is one of three surviving medieval synagogues in Spain. It has a women's gallery, and the upper reaches of its walls are in the *Mudéjar* stucco style, with Hebrew inscriptions. These stuccoes, like those of many mosques, alternate geometrical and vegetal motifs.

In the afternoon we travel to Ronda, one of the most spectacularly situated cities in all of Spain. Ronda sits on a huge rocky outcrop, straddling a limestone cleft. No wonder, in its past, it has sheltered outlaws and rebels. Ernest Hemingway loved its ancient bull ring and wrote of the ritual of the bullfight. He stayed in La Ciudad Vieja, the old town area. German poet Rainer Maria Rilke was certain he had found the city of his dreams in this "startling ... wild and mountainous" place. Film maker Orson Welles also adored Ronda; in fact, he loved it so much he had his ashes interred there. (Overnight Ronda) BD

## Málaga – 1 night

Day 5: Tuesday 22 September, Ronda – Málaga

- Puente Nuevo

- Plaza de Toros (Bullring) and home to the Real Maestranza de Caballería de Ronda (Royal Riding School)
- Optional visit to Baños Árabes (Arab Baths)
- Museo Picasso Málaga

Our morning guided walk will take us into some of the historic places of the city – the Plaza de Toros, inaugurated in 1785, where Hemingway watched the bullfights that so inspired his writings, the bullfighting museum (for writer Kenneth Tynan, bullfighting represented the “summit of human aspiration”), and the bridge that dramatically straddles the gorge.

We then travel on to Málaga, a thriving port city since Phoenician times, and a place famed for its sweet Málaga wines. Our first stop will be the Picasso Museum. It was the artist himself who first mooted the idea of this museum, as he wanted his work to have a place in the city of his birth. In the end it was Picasso’s son who pushed for things to actually happen, and his grandson who donated 233 works of art. All housed in a revamped 16th century palace, this is an unmissable collection of some of Picasso’s finest work. (Overnight Málaga) B

### Granada – 3 nights

Day 6: Wednesday 23 September, Málaga – Churriana – Granada

- Literary walking tour of Malaga: incl. monuments dedicated to Hans Christian Andersen, Vicente Aleixandre, Rubén Darío, and Solomón ibn Gabirol; the Cathedral & Roman Theatre
- Archaeological Museum in the Palacio de Aduana
- Casa Gerald Brenan, Churriana

Málaga is often referred to as the ‘the land of poets’: there are many historic sites, cafés and neighbourhoods associated with authors who left their mark or wrote about the city.

One expects to find story-teller Hans Christian Andersen in Denmark, not in Andalucía. However, Andersen was an ardent traveller and arrived in Málaga in 1862 as part of a Spanish tour. The city captured his heart. He revelled in the figs, dates and grapes, the sound of castanets, and people-watching in the Alameda. “In none of the Spanish towns”, he wrote, “have I been so happy, so entirely at home, as here in Málaga.” We will admire this great writer’s statue in the Plaza de Marina.

Poet Vicente Aleixandre Merlo (who won the 1977 Nobel Prize for Literature) was not born in the city, but adopted it as his own “city of paradise” and felt entirely Andalucían. There’s a monument in tribute to him near where he spent his childhood. There’s also a bust of Rúben Dario, the Nicaraguan poet who initiated the late 19th century ‘modernismo’ movement and played an important role in Spanish journalism, and a statue of Solomón ibn Gabirol, an Andalucían poet and Jewish philosopher born in Málaga in 1021. Literary establishments include El Café de Chinitas, an iconic Málaga café which was frequented by Lorca (whose poetry is incorporated in a mosaic on the building), Picasso and Salvador Dali.

Málaga has many other interesting monuments and museums. We shall view the exterior of the city’s Renaissance Cathedral, walk through the Atarazanas market (the former 14th-century Nasrid shipyards) and visit the magnificent Roman Theatre, constructed in the 1st century BC. This superb ruin was rediscovered in 1951, and the amphitheatre was reopened to the public in 2011 (interestingly, poetry by Picasso was read out at the opening). We also view the extensive archaeological collection held in the newly renovated Palacio de Aduana.

British author Gerald Brenan spent much of his life in Spain and wrote of the country's history and places in such works as *The Spanish Labyrinth*. His Málaga home became a place where Spanish and British cultures mixed. Brenan was married to American writer Gamel Woolsey and together they welcomed visitors who included Hemingway, E.E. Cummings, Bertrand Russell and even Laurence Olivier. Today it is a centre fostering Anglo-Spanish cultural relations. Brenan was buried in Málaga's English cemetery.

In the late afternoon we drive on to Granada, an enigmatic city set spectacularly in the crook of the Sierra Nevada. (Overnight Granada) B

#### Day 7: Thursday 24 September, Granada

- Alhambra and Generalife
- Casa-Museo Manuel de Falla
- Time at leisure
- Early evening walk of the Albaicín incl. Corral del Carbón
- Dinner at the Mirador de Morayma Restaurant

The World Heritage Alhambra Palace is a pure lesson in medieval architecture. Standing on a plateau overlooking Granada, this palace fortress was constructed between 1238 and 1358. Today it is one of the best-preserved palaces of the historic Islamic world. Its marquetry, mosaics, stucco, pools and courtyards are stunning. It was from the Alhambra that Boabdil, the last Moorish king, descended into the valley to hand over the keys of the city to Catholic monarchs in 1492, thus ending more than 700 years of Moorish occupation. Yet, Moorish influence has persisted in Spain's architecture, language, cuisine and culture.

Washington Irving's 1832 *Tales of the Alhambra* is a collection of stories, sketches and essays, an intriguing blend of fact and fiction, written after Irving had actually lived at the Alhambra for a few months. He felt he could never do the magnificent building justice: "How unworthy is my scribbling of the place", he concluded. Victor Hugo called it a palace "that the Genies gilded". Lorca also wrote of the palace's mysterious attraction and its beauty.

The Generalife, on the palace's northern side, is where courtiers and kings could escape palace intrigues and enjoy natural beauty. The gardens have patios, pathways and pools, and provide welcome shade. We will spend the morning enjoying a tour of this incredible building and its gardens.

Composer and pianist Manuel de Falla is one of Spain's most important 20th century musicians. Because of his interest in flamenco, he spent two decades in Granada, very near the Alhambra, and his former home is now a museum. Here he wrote operas and concertos, and participated in the rich cultural life of the city. A particular friend was Federico Garcia Lorca who visited him there. After Lorca was murdered, Falla left Spain in a hurry. His personal possessions, desk and piano are all on display at the museum.

After some time at leisure, we enjoy an early-evening walking tour of the Albaicín area of Granada. This was the old Muslim quarter of the city and for poet and playwright Lorca its cobblestoned streets were a place of inspiration. From this neighbourhood he watched the sunsets, described in his *Impressions and Landscapes*, and here he found the motifs and words for his *Gypsy Ballads*.

Lorca loved to dine in the local cafes – we will do the same and enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. (Overnight Granada) BLD

#### Day 8: Friday 26 September, Granada – Fuente Vaqueros – Valderrubio – Granada

- Museo Casa Natal Federico García Lorca, Fuente Vaqueros
- Casa Bernarda Alba & House Museum Federico García, Valderrubio
- Flamenco Show

The 'Generation of '27' was an influential group of avant-garde poets and artists in the 1920s. The group introduced symbolism, futurism and surrealism into Spanish literature. Its most emblematic member was Federico García Lorca, poet, playwright and theatre director. Although he did live for a while overseas, Lorca was deeply influenced by his native Andalucía and his poems *Gypsy Ballads* and his plays *Blood Wedding* and *The House of Bernarda Alba* are full of Andalusian motifs and settings. Lorca, who was gay, explored homoeroticism and also the traditional position of women in his writings. His socialist views made him unacceptable to the Nationalist Militia. The farmhouse where he was born in Fuente Vaqueros is now a museum, which we will visit. It holds his art and works by his contemporaries, his correspondence, manuscripts and curiosities.

At nearby Valderrubio is another Lorca museum. His family moved here in 1906 and, even after moving to Granada, they continued to use it as a summer holiday home.

Lorca's last play, completed only months before his death, was his rural tragedy, *The House of Bernarda Alba*. Señora Bernarda Alba, who is aged sixty, wields total control over her five daughters. This is a play with no male characters, which explores the themes of sexual repression and passion. The house of the domineering woman, Francisca Alba who inspired the character, is now the House of Bernarda Alba Museum.

Lorca is the most translated Spanish poet of all time. An airport is named for him, as is a park, some lecture halls, and Leonard Cohen used a Lorca poem for one of his songs. Once Lorca settled in Granada, he was visited by other poets and artists, including Manuel de Falla, Salvador Dalí, and Juan Ramón Jiménez. Lorca read out his poems in Granada cafes, studied at the university and watched local flamenco dancers. It was in Granada that most of his great works were written and it was in this city that his life came to a brutal end (the location of his body is not known). In San Jerónimo, which he passed when walking to the university, were his publisher and bookseller, the Cervantes theatre and favourite cafes. We will take a walk in his footsteps.

Prior to being a poet, Lorca was a musician. He was a great pianist and connoisseur of Andalusian music with a passion for flamenco which began at an early age while listening to *zapateo* and the *cantes del arte jondo* in his home in Fuente Vaqueros. Tonight, we attend a performance of flamenco. (Overnight Granada)  
BL

## Almagro – 2 nights

Day 9: Saturday 26 September, Granada – Viso del Marqués – Almagro

- Capilla Real & Cathedral, Granada
- Palacio del Marqués de Santa Cruz, Viso del Marqués

This morning we visit Muslim and Christian sites in the centre of Granada. The Capilla Real (Royal Chapel), built in flamboyant late Gothic style, houses the magnificent Renaissance tombs of Ferdinand and Isabella, their daughter Joan 'the Mad' and her husband Philip 'the Handsome'. In the adjacent Sacristy is a dazzling collection of royal regalia and Flemish paintings. We then walk to the cathedral, one of Spain's last, which was envisaged by its founder, Charles V, as a model of the heavenly Jerusalem.



In the afternoon we visit the Palacio del Marqués de Santa Cruz, a 16th century, Italian-style building with superb frescoes, before continuing to the historic Parador de Almagro where we will be based for 2 nights. The parador occupies the former Convent of Santa Catalina which dates to the 17th century. Tonight, we dine in the parador's restaurant whose menu is a reflection of the regional cuisine of La Mancha. (Overnight Parador de Almagro) BD

#### Day 10: Sunday 27 September, Almagro

- Museo Nacional del Teatro (scheduled to reopen in 2026)
- Corral de Comedias
- Afternoon at leisure

This morning we begin with a visit to the National Theatre Museum which is the only museum in Spain dedicated exclusively to the history of the theatre.

Almagro is a town with a rich architectural heritage. Its colonnaded stone plaza with enclosed green balconies has a 17th century theatre, Corral de Comedias, which we visit. A Corral de Comedias is a type of theatre in Spain that originated in the courtyard space of Spanish homes. Typically, they have a covered stage, several floored galleries and wooden balconies facing the stage. They were built during the Golden Age of Spanish theatre and proved popular entertainment spaces. The first recorded performance here took place in 1629. It has a fascinating history, as it was only 'rediscovered' in 1950. Now a drama festival is held here annually.

The rest of the day is at leisure, to relax at our beautiful Parador accommodation, or perhaps visit the local embroidery museum, and explore this delightful town. (Overnight Parador de Almagro) B

#### Toledo – 3 nights

##### Day 11: Monday 28 September, Almagro – Consuegra – Toledo

- Don Quixote Route: Windmills of Consuegra
- In the footsteps of Cervantes, Toledo
- Museo de Santa Cruz: incl. works by El Greco & Statue of Cervantes

Consuegra has 11 windmills and a restored castle, all on a ridge overlooking the plains of La Mancha. Nearby is an old inn which claims to be the very inn where Don Quixote was 'knighted' by the landlord. We are now entering *Don Quixote* territory and will stop to admire the windmills. Convinced that the windmills are giants, Don Quixote spurs his aged horse Rocinante towards them, determined to do battle, although faithful Sancho tells him firmly they are just windmills.

We continue on into the city of Toledo. Situated on the Tagus River and known as 'the city of three cultures' because of the influences of Christians, Muslims and Jews throughout its history, Toledo is rich in literary associations. Under Alfonso X, it developed a Toledo School of Translators – they translated the Bible, and the first book ever written about chess, amongst many other works. Four hundred years after the first part of *Don Quixote* was published, a series of routes was designed through the region which would take tourists to places connected with the novel. Two sections of that route are based in Toledo. Cervantes' childhood home is in the city. Later, he and his wife had a home in the Andaque neighbourhood. In Toledo's labyrinthine streets, he met soldiers, innkeepers, swindlers and merchants, taking note of them all, and adding them to the pages of his masterpiece. In its opening pages, he even pretends that he has purchased the manuscript about Don Quixote in the Alcaná district of Toledo.

We will enjoy an afternoon stroll in the footsteps of Spain's greatest writer, finding his strong presence in the city – ceramic tiles recreating scenes from his novel on benches in the main square, statues of author and characters, and the Posada del Sevillano which is a setting in his novella *The Illustrious Maid*.

The Museum of Santa Cruz is housed in a 16th century building which was once a hospital. Today it displays an excellent collection of Toledo art – paintings, ceramics and handcrafts. (Overnight Toledo) B

#### Day 12: Tuesday 29 September, Toledo

- Museo del Greco
- Santo Tomé
- Toledo Cathedral
- Afternoon at leisure
- Cigarral de Menores (to be confirmed in 2026)

Doménikos Theotokópoulos is better known to history as El Greco, great painter, sculptor and architect. He was born in what is now modern Crete in 1541, and moved to Spain in 1577, staying there until his death in 1614. His home was Toledo and today there is an El Greco Museum in the old Jewish quarter of the city. It recreates his residence, which no longer exists, displays many of his paintings (including his thirteen representations of Christ and his disciples), as well as paintings by other 17th century Spanish artists.

Santo Tomé Church was built in the 14th century and displays El Greco's masterpiece of both glowing and sombre colours, 'The Burial of the Count of Orgaz'.

Toledo's massive cathedral reflects in its splendour its history as the spiritual heart of the church in Spain. It's an excellent example of Spanish Gothic art and, in the opinion of writer Joseph Barette, it is a "gothic edifice which can almost vie for amplitude with that of Milan". It has medieval stained glass, a magnificent Baroque altarpiece, cloisters, and the tombs of Spanish monarchs.

The Cigarral de Menores was donated in 1618 to a group of clerics for the foundation of a religious order. It ceased housing a religious community in 1835 and eventually passed into the hands of Dr Gregorio Marañón, doctor, humanist and historian, who made it an important meeting place for cultured and political people. Marie Curie visited, as did Alexander Fleming, and Lorca read from his plays there. It was at the Cigarral that Marañón wrote many of his books. Today the Cigarral displays many contemporary sculptures, has lush gardens (including about 800 olive trees) and remains a lovely example of a 16th century Spanish house and former convent. (Overnight Toledo) B

#### Day 13: Wednesday 30 September, Toledo

- Sinagoga del Tránsito
- Sinagoga de Santa María la Blanca
- Monasterio de San Juan de los Reyes
- Afternoon at leisure: Optional visit to Tavera Hospital (San Juan Bautista Hospital)

In 1492 a decree was issued that expelled all Jews from Spain. They had four months in which to decide whether to abandon their religion, or leave their homes. The expulsion was motivated by economic reasons and from religious prejudice. Inside the synagogue of El Tránsito is the Sephardic Museum which portrays the rich heritage of Jews in Spain.

In 1391, a massacre of Jews took place in Toledo's Sinagoga de Santa Maria la Blanca, and the building was

taken over as a church. Restoration has returned it to its original state, with beautiful carved stone capitals and stunning white plasterwork. According to Sacheverell Sitwell, this is a place “haunted by ghosts of the Sephardim”. In the view of travel writer Jan Morris, “the Jews have left behind them a strain of blood, a look in the eye, that is apparent everywhere in the cities of Spain, and subtly contributes to her grandeur.”

The nearby Monastery of San Juan de los Reyes is considered one of the most beautiful Gothic churches in the country. It was founded by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella to celebrate the birth of their son and a recent military victory over Portugal.

The afternoon is at leisure. There will be an optional visit to the Tavera Hospital. Built in the late 16th century by order of Cardinal Tavera, the hospital was dedicated to St John the Baptist. Today it displays a wonderful collection of art and documents including paintings by El Greco and Ribera, Tintoretto and Giordano. (Overnight Toledo) B

### Salamanca – 2 nights

Day 14: Thursday 1 October, Toledo – Ávila – Salamanca

- Monastery de la Encarnación
- Museo Teresiano of the Discalced Carmelites
- By special appointment, visit to a private palace including lunch and access to historical archive
- Murallas: Ávila’s 12th-century walls
- Basílica of St Vicente

We leave Toledo for Ávila, stopping en route at Cuatro Postes (a monument related to Saint Teresa of Ávila) for a splendid view of Ávila’s superb 11th century walls.

We will follow in the footsteps of this pioneering female author, born in Ávila in 1515. Nun, mystic and writer, Teresa – who is known as Saint Teresa of Jesus or Saint Teresa of Ávila – is considered one of the most exceptional figures of Spanish spirituality. Teresa became the central figure of a movement of spiritual and monastic renewal, reforming the Carmelite Orders of both women and men. The movement was later joined by the younger Carmelite friar, mystic and writer Saint John of the Cross, with whom she established the Discalced Carmelites.

Teresa was a prolific writer and her works include *The Life* – her autobiography, as well as *The Interior Castle* which portrays her spiritual journey as a progression through a series of rooms. Novelist Vita Sackville-West described Teresa as clinging to “iron railings to prevent herself from being supernaturally lifted into the air”. Irish writer Kate O’Brien disliked seeing Teresa’s index finger preserved in a bottle, while Richard Ford dismissed her as “a mere tool of the Jesuits”. Neither would have approved of a local sweetmeat being named after her.

Saint Teresa’s book *The Way of Perfection* particularly stands out as a practical guide to spiritual growth, emphasizing the importance of mental prayer and detachment from world concerns. Artists often depict her with a quill pen or a book, symbolising her role as a writer and Doctor of the Church.

We will visit the Monastery of Encarnación where St Terese spent almost 20 years and the Convent of San José, her first foundation (she initiated another 16 foundations) before lunch in a private palace hosted by the owners. After lunch we’ll have exclusive access to one of Spain’s finest private archives, with exceptional historical documents dating from the 13th century and onwards including letters by Terese of Ávila.

The medieval defensive walls of Ávila are the best preserved in all Spain. Its gates, towers and massive walls are now part of the UNESCO World Heritage site that is all of Ávila. It is possible to walk about half the circumference of the walls, and we will stroll along them and visit the Church of San Vicente before travelling on to Salamanca. (Overnight Salamanca) BL

#### Day 15: Friday 2 October, Salamanca

- Literary walking tour of Salamanca
- Casa Museo de Unamuno (Unamuno House Museum)
- Salamanca University: the Library, the Old Library (Oldest Library in Spain, and UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Catedral Vieja
- Afternoon at leisure with optional visit to the Convent of San Esteban

Founded as an Iberian settlement in pre-Roman times, Salamanca fell to Hannibal in 217 BC. The city later enjoyed more illustrious times and is today a showcase of Renaissance and Plateresque architecture. The Old Town is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Salamanca had an important role to play in the evolution of Western society. In 1492 the first grammar of the Spanish language was published there, important as the first study of the rules of any European language except Latin. Christopher Columbus planned voyages in Salamanca, as did Hernán Cortés. The Gregorian calendar was first proposed there, and Cervantes spent time in the city. In 1554 an intriguing anonymous book called *The Life of Lazarillo de Tormes*, a work which critiques both Spanish society and the Catholic Church, was set in Salamanca (Lazarillo is born by the city's river) and is credited with founding the whole genre of the picaresque tale.

We will begin the day with a walking tour to admire some of the literary sites of the city – the Plaza Major, the Roman Bridge over the river Tormes, the crypt known as 'the cave of Salamanca' which gave its name to a short theatrical work by Cervantes, and places connected with prose dramatist Fernando de Rojas.

Miguel de Unamuno, philosopher, poet, playwright, essayist and novelist, was once Dean of the University of Salamanca. He taught at the university during times of great political upheaval. His Baroque-style home is today a museum, where we can see his private library and learn something of his literary legacy.

Salamanca has the oldest university in the Hispanic world and one of the oldest in the world in continuous operation, founded in 1218 by King Alfonso IX. It became a well-known hub for research and study with the famous intellectual movement of scholars in the 16th century, including Francisco de Vitoria, regarded as the forefather of the law of nations and human rights. The university library is an ancient one. (It is said that somewhere on its façade is a sculpted frog, and that those students who can spot it, will pass their exams.)

We also visit Catedral Vieja, Salamanca's Old Cathedral. Built in the Romanesque style and dating from the 12th-13th centuries, this cathedral stands right next to the more modern cathedral dating from the 16th century – the two buildings share cloisters. The University used the cathedral as a place for teachings and students even sat exams in some of the chapels there.

In the late afternoon there will be an option to visit the Convent of San Esteban, a Dominican monastery where Columbus is thought to have stayed. During the Counter-Reformation, the monastery was an important centre of learning, as the Dominican fathers founded there the intellectual movement known as the School of Salamanca, with philosopher and jurist Francisco de Vitoria at its head. (Overnight Salamanca)

B



## Segovia – 2 nights

Day 16: Saturday 3 October, Salamanca – Valladolid – Segovia

- Casa de Cervantes, Valladolid
- Casa Museo José Zorrilla, Valladolid
- Orientation walk of Valladolid

Valladolid, a city of beautiful churches, was the home of Miguel de Cervantes from 1603 to 1606 and his home is now a museum. He must have worked on *Don Quixote* there, as Part 1 of the novel was first published in 1605.

José Zorrilla was a poet and dramatist, who became National Laureate. He was born in Valladolid in 1817 and began writing verses when only twelve. He was much influenced by Sir Walter Scott and Chateaubriand. He gained fame with his play *Don Juan Tenorio*, a romantic interpretation of the legend of Don Juan. Zorrilla's birthplace is now a museum, with a lovely garden and many personal items donated by his widow.

We will enjoy a late afternoon guided walk in Valladolid to see the Plaza Major, one of Spain's most splendid squares, the university and some of its churches. Columbus died in this city, alone and forgotten. Today Valladolid has the distinction of hosting the World Jigsaw Puzzle Championships – what fun for competitive dissectologists!

We then make our way to Segovia, a spectacularly sited city. When Laurie Lee walked across Spain in the 1930s, he was hugely impressed: "Here were churches, castles, and medieval walls standing sharp in the evening light, but all dwarfed by that extraordinary phenomenon of masonry, the Roman aqueduct, which overshadowed the whole." (Overnight Segovia) B

Day 17: Sunday 4 October, Segovia

- Walking tour of Segovia: In the Footsteps of Antonio Machado
- Casa Museo de Antonio Machado
- Afternoon at leisure
- Evening reception at a private palace overlooking Segovia's Roman aqueduct (to be confirmed in 2026)
- Dinner at Mesón de Cándido Restaurant

Antonio Machado was a leading figure in the literary movement known as the 'Generation of '98', and was not only a poet, but a professor of French in Segovia. The lodging house where he stayed while teaching is today a museum in his name, with a fine bust of the poet, collections of his published works, his furniture and mementoes.

We can follow Machado's daily route through the city to his place of work, walking by the great Roman aqueduct, to a lookout with stunning views of the mountains. In the medieval Casa de los Picos he presented a lecture, at the Café Juan Bravo he enjoyed debating, and it was in Segovia that he had his secret affair with a married woman, always referring to her in his writings as 'Guiomar'.

Following an afternoon at leisure we enjoy exclusive access to a private palace overlooking Segovia's aqueduct, where we shall be hosted by the owners and enjoy a glass of Sangría in the garden.

So as to sample traditional Segovian cuisine, we will dine at Mesón de Cándido. The original 17th century Cándido was the first promoter of Segovian suckling pig and Castilian gastronomy. His restaurant, right next to the aqueduct, is renowned and the establishment's 'Golden Books' contain the signatures of writers, Nobel Prize winners, politicians and celebrities who have dined there. (Overnight Segovia) BD

## Madrid – 3 nights

### Day 18: Monday 5 October, Segovia – Madrid

- Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia: Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*
- Walking tour of Madrid: In the Footsteps of Hemingway (3.4kms)

The Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid holds one of the great treasures of modern art, Picasso's 'Guernica'. Painted in 1937, it was the artist's response to the Nazi bombing of the city of Guernica. The day of the attack was market day and women and children were out and about. Picasso depicts them as innocent, defenceless humanity. Today a tapestry copy of the work hangs at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York. 'Guernica' is visceral, powerful and deeply moving.

For Hemingway, Madrid was "the most Spanish of all cities" and "the centre of the world" – it drew him back again and again. In the afternoon we enjoy a guided walk in his footsteps, up Calle Prado to the Plaza Major, to the places where he often drank, such as Hotel Madrid and Chicote's (the oldest cocktail bar in Spain, whose collection of over 10,000 different whiskies would have greatly appealed to Hemingway), the Telefónica Building from where he would broadcast his reports (as did John dos Passos and Antoine de St Exupéry), and the places where he dined. Hemingway saw a lot of Madrid at night: "Nobody goes to bed in Madrid until they have killed the night ... In no other town I have lived in ... is there less going to bed for sleeping purposes." (Overnight Madrid) B

### Day 19: Tuesday 6 October, Madrid

- Walking tour of the Barrio de las Letras (Literary Quarter) including the Casa Museo Lope de Vera (Lope de Vega House Museum)
- Biblioteca Nacional de España (National Library Madrid)
- Lunch at Café Gijón
- Museo Nacional del Prado

The Barrio de las Letras is the literary district of Madrid, a charming neighbourhood of small streets and pretty squares. This morning, we will take a walking tour through those streets. Cervantes lived and died at 2 Calle Cervantes. His rival, the playwright Lope de Vega, was also a resident of the Barrio. Baroque writer Francisco de Quevedo lived there, as did Tirso de Molina and Zorrilla.

Our walking tour includes a visit to the Lope de Vega Museum. Playwright Lope de Vega, the "Phoenix of Wits", eulogised the city of his birth: "Madrid, there is no city, / more pleasantly bathed by sun and sea". He was an incredibly prolific author, with about 500 plays attributed to him (although he claimed to have written at least 1,500), some 3,000 sonnets, 3 novels, 4 novellas and 9 major works of poetry. His collected plays filled 25 volumes. In his seventy-three years, he found time not only for all this writing, but to serve as a soldier, work in various noble households, marry twice and enjoy at least four affairs. A force of nature (or a "freak of nature", as his rival Cervantes called him)! American Henry Miller once stated "I could gobble up the fifteen hundred plays of Lope de Vega in one sitting." The house which Vega purchased in 1610, and lived in until his death in 1635, has passed through many hands over the centuries. In the 1930s it was purchased by the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language and restored. On display are pieces of his

furniture, portraits, and books and the museum gives a good idea of the style of domestic life during Spain's Golden Age.

The National Library of Spain was originally founded as a royal library by Philip V in 1711. As a copyright library, it collects, preserves and documents Spain's literary and cultural heritage. Some of its treasures include a first edition of *Don Quixote*, and handwritten codes by Leonardo da Vinci.

Lunch will be eaten today at Café Gijón, a place where literary gatherings known as 'tertulias' were held, and still are. Madrid writer Francisco Umbral was there so often his portrait now adorns the walls. He even dedicated one of his novels to the venerable café. Its mahogany-panelled walls, red-cushioned seats and marble-topped tables have witnessed literary creativity and debate. The place is a survivor of Madrid's golden age of café society life.

We walk off lunch in the famed galleries of the Prado which, in Hans Christian Andersen's opinion was "a pearl, a treasure, worthy to be sought, and deserving a journey to Madrid to see it". The Prado holds one of the finest collections of paintings in the world. Among European masterpieces collected by the Spanish monarchs we will view works of Hieronymus Bosch and Rubens (Flemish school); Albrecht Dürer (German school); Raphael and Titian (Italian school). The Prado's greatest treasures, however, are its Spanish paintings from the 17th and 18th centuries. The rooms devoted to Velázquez include such marvels as *Las Meninas*, the *Surrender at Breda*, the Habsburg Equestrian Portraits, and the images of court dwarfs. All periods and aspects of Goya's career are represented here, from the early tapestry cartoons, through his war scenes, royal and aristocratic portraits to the profoundly pessimistic late 'Black Paintings'. (Overnight Madrid) BL

#### Day 20 Wednesday 7 October, Madrid – Alcalá de Henares – Madrid

- Convento de las Trinitarias Descalzas de San Ildefonso, Madrid (to be confirmed 2026)
- Museo Casa Natal de Cervantes (Cervantes Birthplace Museum), Alcalá de Henares
- In the Footsteps of Cervantes, Alcalá de Henares
- Corral de Comedias de Alcalá de Henares
- Farewell Dinner at Lhardy Restaurante

The Convento de las Trinitarias is the final resting place of Spain's greatest writer, Cervantes. Translated into more than fifty different languages (and into English alone at least eight times), *Don Quixote* has made its way around the world, influencing other writers, artists, musicians, travellers and political movements. Cervantes too was a traveller, taking part in the Battle of Lepanto, a captive of the Turks, a tax collector, a prisoner in Seville, and yet he never lost sight of his creative powers and he changed history by writing what is credited with being the world's first novel. His last years were spent in Madrid and he died there in 1616. According to his wishes he was buried in the Convent of the Barefoot Trinitarians. In 1673 his remains were transferred elsewhere when renovations were being carried out on the building. They went missing, but forensic scientists discovered them in 2015 and he was formally reburied. Cervantes wrote several plays, some poems, a pastoral romance, *La Galatea*, and various tales, but it is story of Alonso Quijano, who reads so many chivalric tales that he loses his mind and decides to become a knight-errant, that has gripped the imagination of the world.

The life of Cervantes began in Alcalá de Henares, north-east of Madrid. The house where he was born and spent his early years is now a museum, which we will visit. The house has been recreated to give an idea of the way it would have looked in the 16th century. It displays furniture, ceramics, art works and a library collection.

The historical centre of Alcalá de Henares is a UNESCO World Heritage site. On our walking tour, we will see the imposing statue of Cervantes and the Hospital de Antezana where his father (a surgeon) worked. We also visit the Corral de Comedias, which is a superb example, with its cobbled courtyard, tiered seating, and a space reserved for women called the 'cazuela'. It is one of the oldest theatres in Spain.

Our farewell dinner will be at Lhardy Restaurant. Author Benito Pérez Galdós, realist novelist and leading literary figure in 19th century Spain, is often regarded as Spain's equivalent to Dickens, Balzac or Tolstoy. It has been said that his books and historical novels hold the key to understanding Madrid in the 19th century. Many of his characters dine at Lhardy, one of the oldest restaurants in the city and the place which introduced French haute cuisine to the Madrileños. Galdós claimed the place was so posh that "they even put white ties on the buns". Alexandre Dumas dined there and stayed next door (the house is now marked with a plaque). What an ideal place to end our tour and share literary experiences and reminiscences with each other. (Overnight Madrid) BD

#### Day 21: Thursday 8 October, Tour Ends Madrid

- Tour concludes in the morning
- At leisure/Check out

As Cervantes said, "Neither good nor evil can last for ever...", and our tour must come to an end. Our tour ends in Madrid after breakfast. In the morning you will be required to check out of the hotel. Please contact ASA if you require assistance with a transfer to the Madrid Airport. B



## Accommodation

A special feature of this tour is our stay in several heritage hotels. ASA has selected 4-star (5-star hotel in Madrid), many of which are themselves historical buildings and/or are located in historical centres. All rooms have en suite bathroom.

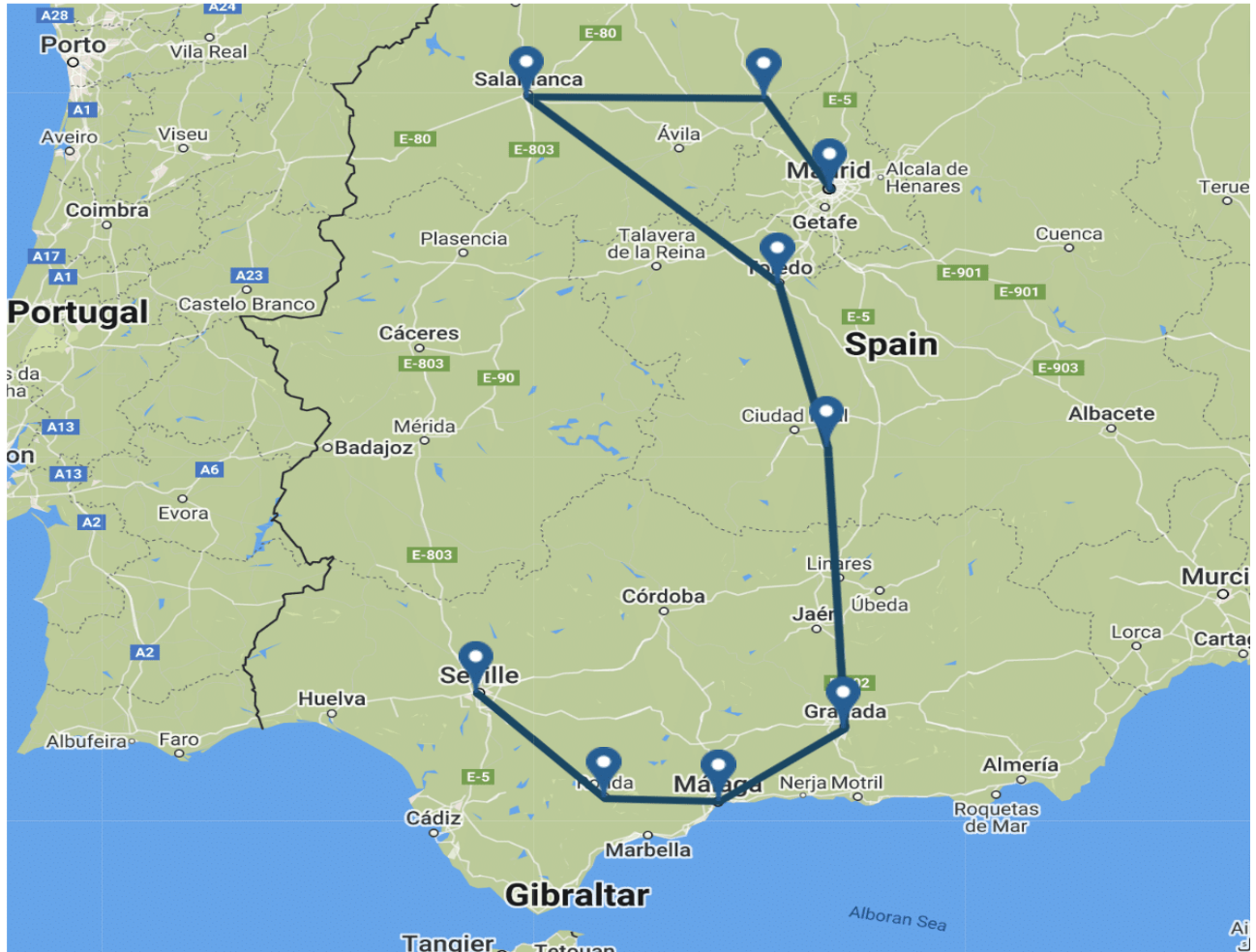
- Seville (3 nights): 4-star [Hotel Inglaterra](#) – situated 250 metres from the Cathedral, overlooking the Plaza Nueva. As Seville's most prestigious establishment in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it received visits from illustrious people of the time, including King Alfonso XIII, Queen Elizabeth of Belgium and the Prince of Wales.
- Ronda (1 nights): 4-star [Parador de Ronda](#) – housed in the former 18th-century city hall, alongside the Tagus River next to the Puente Nuevo and the bullring. Ernest Hemingway lived and wrote here. His famous novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, tells of the atrocities committed here during the Spanish civil war.
- Málaga (1 night): 4-star [Hotel Molina Lario](#) – housed in two refurbished 19th century buildings and retaining their original façade, located opposite the Cathedral and just a short distance from the port, the Picasso Museum and the city's pedestrian district.
- Granada (3 nights): 4-star [Hotel NH Collection Granada Victoria](#) – charming hotel in a central historic building close to the Cathedral and Alhambra Palace.
- Almagro (2 nights): 4-star [Parador de Almagro](#) – located in the town centre, housed in the former Convent of Santa Catalina which dates from the 17th century. The 400-year old monastery features magnificent Mudéjar tile work.
- Toledo (3 nights): 4-star [San Juan de los Reyes Hotel](#) – located in the famous Jewish quarter, within easy walking distance of the town's historic monuments.
- Salamanca (2 nights): 5-star [Hotel Alameda Palace](#) – within a short distance to Plaza Mayor and Salamanca's historic centre
- Segovia (2 nights): 4-star [Hotel Real Segovia](#) – newly renovated hotel located on a pedestrian street just a short walk from the Roman aqueduct and Segovia's Cathedral.
- Madrid (3 nights): 4-star [Hotel Innside Madrid Gran Via](#) – ideally situated in the centre of Madrid, and a short walk to Plaza Mayor, Puerta del Sol and the Royal Palace.

Note: *Hotels are subject to change, in which case a hotel of similar standard will be provided.*

### Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a single-occupancy room throughout the tour. In all hotels on the tour, this will be a double/twin room for single occupancy. The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.

## Tour Map



## Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD \$TBA Land Content Only

AUD \$TBA Single Supplement

Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with private facilities in 4-star & 5-star hotels.
- Breakfast daily, lunches & evening meals indicated in the itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=Lunch & D=dinner.
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals may not have drinks included.
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach.
- Porterage of one piece of luggage per person at hotels.
- Lecture and site visit program.
- Tour handbook.
- Entrance fees to museums & monuments.
- Use of audio headsets during site visits.
- Tips for the coach driver, local guides and restaurants for included meals.

Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- Airfare: Australia-Seville, Madrid-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Airport-hotel transfers
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Travel insurance



## Fitness Criteria & Practical Information

Fitness Level 

### Level 2 - Intermediate

For people with energetic lifestyles and very good mobility

You must be able to:

- manage at least five to six hours of physical activity per day with ease.
- walk at a regular to moderate pace; some days for at least 5-7km.
- keep up with the group at all times. Cities visited are explored extensively on foot and may involve cobbled streets with steep inclines (eg. Ronda, Granada & Toledo).
- negotiate historic monuments and writers' homes which may include steep and uneven stairs or uneven terrain.
- stand for one to two hours during visits to galleries and museums without the need to sit.
- manage your own luggage at some hotels.
- cope with a more demanding tour schedule which is planned around the siesta (midday break):
  - Length of days: Regional museums are often closed between 1 and 4pm; many days therefore include early-morning departures (between 8.00-8.30am), concluding in the late afternoon (between 5.30-6.30pm).
  - Late meal times: lunch is usually between 1 and 2pm. Evening meals are generally not served until 8-8.30pm.

### Fitness Levels

Please also view the fitness criteria required for our tours, graded from Level 1 to Level 3, at [www.asatours.com.au/fitness-level/](http://www.asatours.com.au/fitness-level/)

All ASA tours are active programs suitable for people with a good level of mental and physical fitness and good mobility. They are not suitable for people who lack stamina, have difficulty walking at the group's



pace or who have mobility issues. An unavoidable aspect of every tour is the need to manage walking, stair-climbing and standing for long periods of time.

It is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to their suitability to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. Before enrolling on an ASA tour please read the fitness requirements carefully.

## Booking Conditions

### ASA INTENTION TO TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

Some ASA tours fill almost immediately. Don't miss out! You can register your 'Intention to Travel' by completing this application and returning this to ASA with a AUD \$200.00 per person deposit. Once the tour price has been published, the itinerary and ASA Reservation Application Form will be sent to you. From the time you receive the itinerary you will have two weeks to either:

- Send us a completed ASA Reservation Application Form together with an additional deposit of AUD \$800.00 per person. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation. At this time your deposit of AUD \$1000.00 is subject to the tour's Booking Conditions.

Or

- CANCEL your Intention to Travel in writing. ASA will refund your AUD \$200.00 per person deposit, less a \$66.00 service fee (including GST).



# Intention to Travel Application

TOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_

TOUR DATES \_\_\_\_\_

## Booking before the tour price is available

Some ASA tours fill almost immediately. Don't miss out! You can register your 'Intention to Travel' by completing this application and returning this to ASA with a AUD\$200.00 per person deposit. Once the tour price has been published, the itinerary and ASA Reservation Application Form will be sent to you. From the time you receive the itinerary you will have two weeks to either:

- Send us a completed ASA Reservation Application Form together with an additional deposit of AUD\$800.00 per person applicable for International tours OR AUD\$300.00 per person applicable for Australian tours. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation. At this time your full deposit is subject to the tour's Booking Conditions.

### OR

- Cancel your Intention to Travel in writing. ASA will refund your AUD\$200.00 per person deposit, less a \$66.00 service fee (including GST).

## Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Ms ☐ Miss ☐ Dr ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

MIDDLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SURNAME \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_ POSTCODE \_\_\_\_\_

TEL. (AH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ TEL. (BH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL address \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ GENDER Male ☐ Female ☐

## Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like: ☐ a twin-bedded room ☐ a double-bedded room ☐ a room for sole occupancy

I am travelling: ☐ on my own ☐ with a friend/family member Travel Companion \_\_\_\_\_

## Meals

☐ I do not have any specific dietary requests

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

☐ fish ☐ poultry ☐ red meat ☐ dairy products

☐ eggs ☐ pork ☐ nuts

☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence ☐ Postal Mail ☐ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour.

ASA's ability to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs, your health and safety and the health and safety of other tour members, is of paramount importance to us. For this reason the ASA Reservation Application includes a Medical Information section. As a general guideline, you must be able to accomplish each of these activities *without assistance or support*:-

- walk & stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions
- walk confidently on and over uneven surfaces
- climb at least 3 flights of stairs
- embark and disembark from ferries, buses and trains
- walk up and down steep slopes
- walk at a steady pace and no less than 1 km every 15 - 20 minutes
- organise, manage and carry your own luggage
- follow and remember tour instructions
- meet punctually at designated times and places
- administer your own medication.

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

## Tour / Course Name

Name of Traveller 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Traveller 2 \_\_\_\_\_

I have enclosed a payment to the value of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

Payment by (please indicate): ☐ Cheque ☐ Direct Debit (see below) ☐ Credit Card (see below)

## International Payments

Welcome to our international travellers! If you are making a payment and do not have an Australian bank account/credit card, we can only accept payment as follows:

- via credit card with the applicable fee - the credit card company/bank will set the exchange rate
- via bank transfer; please give your surname and tour code (eg. Smith 21705) as a reference and ask your bank to allow for all charges.

Bank cheques or personal cheques will not be accepted.

### By Cheque (accept Australian cheques only)

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

### Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

### Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank ANZ  
Branch 420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic  
Swift Code ANZBAU3M  
BSB 013-423  
Account No 3472-32759

Bank confirmation No. \_\_\_\_\_

Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date Money Transferred  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard, Visa & American Express 2%

Please debit my: ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above

Credit Card Number  
\_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code (CVC) \_\_\_\_\_

Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cardholders Name  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cardholders Billing Address  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode  
\_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Phone  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cardholders Signature  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### AUSTRALIANS STUDYING ABROAD

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