

# From the Glories of al-Andalus to the Golden Age

## Madrid & Toledo Cultural Tour



*Madrid historic centre*

**This is a wonderful opportunity to see Madrid and medieval Toledo on and off the beaten track. Tutors from Art & Culture Andalucía will provide guidance full of knowledge and enthusiasm.**

**The cultural centre of Madrid is famous for its exceptional range of first-class museums, as well as for its vibrant restaurants and bars. Medieval Toledo on the other hand, gives you a strong sense of stepping back to a time when Christians, Muslims and Jews lived side-by-side and produced hybrid architectural styles that are unique to Spain.**

**Join us for an uplifting few days in early summer.**

*“The purpose of art is washing the dust of daily life off our souls.”*

**Pablo Picasso.**

## Day 1 - Madrid

### Hotel Catalonia Las Cortes. Meet in the lobby at 15.30. Afternoon 16.00-19.00 - The Prado Museum

This afternoon we explore the Spanish collections in the Prado starting with El Greco and ending with Goya. We will look at some wonderful Zurbarán painting including spectacular Still Lives. We will spend time with Velázquez and marvel at his technique while hearing the story of his most famous painting, Las Meninas. After a tea break you will have free time to explore other areas of the Prado's collection.



*Goya. Clothed Maja. 1800-1805. Prado Museum*

**Evening 20.30.** We will enjoy a meal together at one of our favourite restaurants, close to the hotel.

## Day 2 - Toledo

### Meet in the lobby at 08.15. Taxis to Atocha station and train to Toledo. 08.50 – 09.23

We will start our exploration of medieval Toledo at the former mosque of Bab al-Mardum, an outstanding example of Mudejar architecture. We will then visit the church of San Roman, with its remarkable Apocalyptic frescoes, and now the home of the city's Visigothic museum.

Next will be Santa Maria la Blanca, one of only two surviving medieval Spanish synagogues. We then visit the fourteenth century church of San Tome, where we will see one of El Greco's finest paintings.



*Mosque of Bab al-Mardum/Church of Cristo de la Luz, Toledo*

**13.30-15.00 Lunch.** After lunch we will spend some time in Toledo's spectacular thirteenth century Cathedral, considered by many to be the *magnus opus* of the gothic style in Spain, though the cloisters do retain some Mudejar characteristics. In the Sacristy we will see the impressive collection of paintings by El Greco.

**18.25 – 19.58** Train to Madrid

**Evening 22.00.** We enjoy a live Flamenco show at the Cardomomo Club, just five minutes walk from the hotel. Choose whether to eat beforehand or to order a few tapas at the show.

## Day 3 - Madrid

### **Meet in the lobby at 09.15. Taxis to the National Archaeological Museum of Madrid. 10.00-12.00**

This is one of the world's great archaeological museums, founded in 1867 by Royal Decree of Queen Isabel II. We will focus mainly on the Islamic section, examining selected items in some detail and broadening our understanding of the medieval period, when 'Spain' was divided into the Moorish and Christian kingdoms.

### **Afternoon 13.00-14.30 Joaquín Sorolla's House**

Sorolla (1863-1923) was one of the most revered artists of his day. His works have recently been seen in the Garden Show at the Royal Academy. This is a unique visit (non-guided) to his studio and the house where he lived towards the end of his life with his wife Clotilde.



*Joaquín Sorolla. Walk on the Beach 1909. Sorolla House Museum, Madrid.*

### **15.00 Lunch at the Círculo de Bellas Artes.**

The Círculo de Bellas Artes, founded in 1888, is the hub of the Arts Scene in Madrid. It occupies a superb building designed by Antonio Palacios in 1926, declared a national artistic monument in 1981. With concerts, lectures, exhibitions and films, it has it all and Picasso took classes there. The café, with chandeliers, impressive ceilings and statues, was inaugurated in 1926 and is called La Pecera.

### **17.00-19.00 Guided visit to the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection**

With nearly 1,000 works on display, the collection offers an extraordinary overview of art from the 13<sup>th</sup> Century to the twentieth century. We will be focussing on the Renaissance and the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries.

## Day 4 - Madrid

### **Meet in the lobby at 09.30. Taxis to the Reina Sofia. 10.00-12.00**

This is Spain's Museum of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century art and was inaugurated in 1992. It is dedicated almost exclusively to Spanish art and has some of the great masterpieces such as Picasso's Guernica. Artists such as Miró and Tapiés and sculptors such as Gonzalez and Gargallo can be found amongst works by Max Ernst, Salvador Dalí, Henry Moore and Alexander Calder, to name a few.

### **12.30 Taxis to the Colnaghi Institute for a private visit. 13.00-14.30 or Palacio de Liria**

The Colnaghi Institute, already well-established in London, New York and Venice, has just recently opened in Madrid. We will be taken on an exclusive private tour of the gallery, which highlights the inter-relationships between works of different periods and cultures.

**14.30** Farewell lunch at a nearby restaurant, then taxis to the hotel to collect luggage before your flight home.



*Pablo Picasso. Guernica. Reina Sofia.*

### **Tutors**

Dr. Jacqueline Cockburn is Managing Director of Art & Culture Travel. She was formerly Head of the Department of Art History at Westminster School, Chief Examiner in Art History at Cambridge International Education, and an Associate Lecturer at Birkbeck College, University of London. Ian Cockburn is a Director of Art & Culture Travel and has an MA from the Courtauld Institute in medieval Spanish art history.

### **The fee of £1,550 per person (minimum 12 people/maximum 16 people)**

The fee covers three nights individual accommodation at the 4-star Hotel Catalonia las Cortes, including breakfasts. All teaching and guiding by two specialist tutors over four days. All museum and other entry fees. All taxis within Madrid and Toledo. Return train journey to Toledo. Monday evening meal, Tuesday lunch in Toledo, Wednesday lunch at the Bellas Artes, and Thursday farewell lunch. Entry to the Cardomomo Flamenco Club. (Itinerary subject to variations).

**Not included in the fees:** Flights, transfers to and from the airport in Madrid, travel and medical insurance. Tuesday and Wednesday evening meals.

**Fitness:** Please note, a suitable level of fitness and mobility is required for walking and visiting galleries.

**Hotel Catalonia las Cortes.** Del Prado, 6, Madrid historic centre. A former 18th Century palace, now modernised, this four-star hotel is very near the Prado and other key museums. It is located in a picturesque and quiet street near Plaza Santa Ana, with plenty of nearby restaurants and bars. The hotel is smart but not over-luxurious, with friendly staff and a very fine breakfast.

**Contact: Jacqueline Cockburn at Art & Culture Andalucía**

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