



Discover the Golden Age of Spanish Jewry

A 9 days/8 nights Jewish Heritage Journey throughout Spain

May 31st - June 8th 2023

(optional 3-days extension to Barcelona

June 8th - June 11th 2023)

ITINERARY

May 30th (Tuesday): USA – SPAIN.

Departure from the US. Overnight on board.

May 31st (Wednesday): MADRID

Arrival in Madrid, the modern capital of Spain and its largest city. The city has preserved the look and feel of many of its historic neighborhoods and streets. Upon arrival, Transfer to hotel on your own. After welcoming all participants, we will have a panoramic visit of the city before getting off the bus to visit *Plaza Mayor*, famous for housing the trials of the inquisition during the 17th and 18th centuries and the *Mercado de San Miguel*, a lovely place to have lunch before heading to *Plaza de Oriente* and enjoying a guided visit of *Palacio Real* (Royal Palace). Rest of the day at leisure. Dinner on your own and overnight in Madrid.



June 1st (Thursday): TOLEDO

Day excursion to Toledo, the Imperial City and once known as “Jerusalem of the West”, one of the main centers of Sephardic Jewry in the Middle Ages. Upon arrival, we are ready to stroll the winding narrow streets which have created a stunning historic labyrinth that opens to hidden *plazas*. *Mudéjar* architects built the Synagogue of *Santa Maria la Blanca* in the 11th century, which has maintained its original majesty over the years. After, we will pay a visit to the Synagogue of El Transito, built by Shmuel Halevi Abulafia, the wealthy treasurer to king Pedro I of Castile, AKA *el Cruel* (but for others he was known as *el Justiciero*, the Just) and that nowadays houses the Sephardic Museum. After the day in Toledo, return to Madrid and have some free time before going for group dinner. Overnight in Madrid.



June 2nd (Friday): CORDOBA

Morning AVE train to Córdoba (قرطبة), the birthplace of Lucio Seneca, *Maimónides* (Moshe ben Maimon) and *Averroes* (Ibn Rushd). Upon arrival, we will head to the old *Juderia* to visit its beautiful medieval Synagogue built in 1315, which is the only one that has survived in this



city over the years. Next, we will tour the magnificent 8th century *Mezquita* (Mosque), famous for its pillars of granite, marble, and jasper, finishing our tour on *Calleja de las Flores* (the alley of the flowers), a nice and picturesque little street decorated with lots of flowers. Lunch on your own. After checkin at the hotel and get some rest, you will enjoy

a special tour and a Ladino musical performance at *Casa de Sefarad*. After spending the day in what it was once considered the most important and biggest city of the western world and the capital of Al Andalus - where the Umayyads ruled for over three centuries- we will celebrate Kabbalat Shabbat. Shabbat dinner and overnight in Cordoba.

June 3rd (Saturday): CORDOBA

Day at leisure in Cordoba. Among other places, you can visit the *Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos*, the Arab baths, the Archeological museum or even take an excursion to *Madinat Al-Zahra*, a fortified palace-city on the western outskirts

of Córdoba, built in the 10th century by Abd-ar-Rahman III (912–961), a member of the Umayyad dynasty and the first caliph of Al-Andalus. It served as the capital of the Caliphate of Córdoba and its center of government. Alternatively,



you can simply stroll through the narrow streets of the center of Cordoba or cross the Roman bridge over the *Guadalquivir* river, the only entrance to the city in ancient times. Overnight in Córdoba.

June 4th (Sunday): GRANADA

After having an early breakfast at the hotel, we will then board our bus to Granada with a stop in Lucena, which is known for being a totally Jewish city during the 12th Century. We will visit the former Jewish cemetery, where 340 tombs were excavated and reburied in 2008. We will continue our journey to Granada. The place was once known as *Garnata al-Yahud* -Granada of the Jews-. The kingdom of Granada was also the last Moorish stronghold in Spain; it was conquered by the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand II of Aragon & Isabella I of Castile, in 1492. Upon arrival, we will have lunch and after, we will get a guided tour of the *Albayzin*, a neighborhood in Granada that maintains the layout of Medieval Moorish narrow streets. With its neat narrow lanes and well-kept traditional houses, the area has retained its old charm and is the ideal place to discover Moorish architecture. It is especially famous for its dramatic views overlooking the Alhambra palace. Once the visit is finish, you will be going down the old historical center to check in at the hotel. Dinner and overnight in Granada.



June 5th (Monday): GRANADA

After having breakfast in the hotel, you are ready to visit Granada's main attraction: the *Alhambra* (الْحَمْرَاء – the Red), the mighty yet graceful Citadel and Palace planned by the 13th and 14th centuries Moorish Rulers of Granada.



Walking across the Court of the Myrtles you will stop at the "Hall of the Ambassadors" in *Comares Tower*, where the terrible Edict of Expulsion was issued on March 31st, 1492. Also amble through the magnificent terraced *Generalife Gardens*, with its shadowy cypresses, oleander, pavilions and cool fountains.... Rest of the day at leisure. You may want to visit the Royal Chapel of Granada where Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand are buried. Dinner on your own and overnight in Granada.

June 6th (Tuesday): SEVILLA

Morning bus to Sevilla, the passionate capital of Andalusia. which lies mostly along the right bank of the Guadalquivir River (from the Arabic *al wadi al-kvir* –the big river-). The city was Islamic from 711 until 1248, when King Ferdinand III of Castile conquered it back from the Almo-hads. Sevilla is also where the destruction of Spanish Jewry began in June of 1391. The bloodshed of Sevilla was the first of many and within two months, they extended like wildfire all throughout Castile and Ara-gon. These massacres led to mass con-versions and, eventually, to the expulsion in 1492. After checking in your hotel, you are ready to explore *Plaza de España*, (lo-cated inside *Parque de María Luisa*) and built between 1914 and 1928 for the Ibero-american Exhibition of 1929. The complex is a huge half-circle with buildings continu-ally running around the edge accessible over the moat by numerous bridges representing the four ancient king-dom of Spain. It is a landmark example of the Regionalism Architec-ture. Rest of the afternoon at leisure. And to finish the day, we will have a group dinner. Overnight in Sevilla.



June 7th (Wednesday): SEVILLA

After enjoying breakfast at the hotel, you are ready start your day by visiting the *Reales Alcázares* and its impressive Gardens, built by king Pedro I of Castile in the 14th century -inspired by Granada's Alhambra-



and still in use. After, we will head to the 15th century gothic Cathedral, right across the square and considered the third largest church in the world, where you can climb the tower (The *Giralda*, former minaret). After having lunch on your own followed by typical siesta, we will stroll through the narrow lanes

of the charming Santa Cruz quarter, the former *Judería* (the Jewish quarter). And to finish the trip in your last night in Sevilla, you will enjoy an authentic *flamenco* performance. Overnight in Sevilla.

June 8th (Thursday): SEVILLA

Transfer to airport/train station (on your own) to fly back home/continue to Barcelona.

BARCELONA POST TRIP

June 8th (Thursday), BARCELONA. Barcelona, the most modern and european city in all Spain, and capital of the region of Cataluña (Catalonia). Meet tour guide at the hotel and we will head to *Montjuïc* (literally Mount of the Jews), where the ancient Jewish cemetery was located until the end of the XIV Century (right after the riots of 1391). It was declared a landmark site in 2009 at the petition of local Jewish congregations as well as the civil society. From this vantage point we gain a breathtaking view of the whole city, especially the Olympic Stadium situated high above the city and the harbour below. We head back to the city where we will walk through the pulsing heart of the city (*Barrio Gotic*), the medieval quarter of the city. We will see the impressive Gothic Cathedral, the Royal Square (*Plaça Real*), the place of the famous Jewish-Christian dispute of 1263, and also the *Carrer dell Call*, the old Jewish quarter. We will stop by the *Sinagoga Mayor*, the Main Synagogue of Barcelona which was not only the oldest in Spain but in all of Europe. Despite the temple's importance, it was discovered almost by accident as for many centuries of use for other purposes, the building re-opened as a synagogue and museum in 2002 after steps were taken to ensure its restoration. Overnight in Barcelona.



June 9th, (Friday), GIRONA. Departure in the morning heading north for a visit of Girona, probably the best preserved old Jewish quarter in all Spain and also considered the cradle of the Jewish Kabbalah. Girona's medieval quarter is surrounded by ramparts that rise from the original Roman walls. At its heart is the old *Call*, restored in 1980. From its main street, once an old Roman Road, steep and narrow cobbled alleys wind under archways and between stone buildings that sunlight rarely reaches. It is here where we will visit the home of RaMBaN or Rabbi Moshe Ben Nahman (1194-1270) known in spanish as *Nahmánides* or *Bonastruc Ça Porta*, the great Kabbalist, which houses today the Jewish Museum. Returning to Barcelona in the afternoon. And prepare for Shabat. Kabalat Shabbat followed by shabbat dinner. Overnight in Barcelona.



June 10th, (Saturday), BARCELONA. Our last day in Barcelona is dedicated to Gaudi and his impressive architecture. Our bus will pick us up at the hotel and we will begin with a panoramic motor coach tour of Antonio Gaudi's buildings and monuments as *Casa Batlló* and *La Pedrera* on the fancy *Paseo de Gracia*, and the still unfinished (started in 1882) cathedral of the Holy Family (*Sagrada Família*). We finish our tour on the renowned *Rambla*, a mile long lively pedestrian promenade, lined with trees, cafes and shops. Balance of the day at leisure. Farewell dinner and overnight in Barcelona.



June 11th (Sunday). RETURN BACK HOME. Transfer to the airport to board plane back home.

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