

HALI TOUR

19 - 31 May 2015

in association with



MARTIN
RANDALL
TRAVEL

LEADING EXPERTS IN CULTURAL TOURS

Spain & Portugal

A 13 day cultural tour of the Iberian Peninsula with expert guidance and exclusive access to the region's most important art, carpets and textiles.

An opportunity to experience the royal, religious and cultural history of the cities and provinces of Spain and Portugal via the architecture of palaces, fortresses, synagogues, mosques, cathedrals, convents and monasteries.

- Private access to parts of the art and textile collections that are not usually on public display
- Opportunities to visit temporary exhibitions and permanent collections at national and lesser known museums.
- Handpicked luxury accommodation in central districts of some of Europe's most picturesque cities with scheduled free time to enjoy them at your leisure
- View magnificent Islamic and European art from the fifteenth to twentieth centuries at:
- Lisbon – Madrid – Toledo – Zamora – UNESCO World Heritage sites – Castile – Cuenca

Limited places are available. Please register your interest by contacting us on:

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Decorative arts of Iberia

Tour Itinerary 19–31 May 2015

DAY 1: LISBON

Visit the Gulbenkian Museum, an outstanding private art collection of Islamic and European art from the 15th - 20th centuries including the one of Europe's most important classical carpet collections. First of two nights in Lisbon.

DAY 2: LISBON

Drive to Lapa to the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga with 15th- and 16th-century Portuguese works of art, textiles and the important 16th century Safavid carpet that once belonged to Queen Catarina of Portugal. Continue to the Castelo de São Jorge – Arab castle conquered by the Christians in 1147, embellished over centuries by Portugal's kings, destroyed and now restored. Descend with views of the labyrinthine Alfama to the Romanesque cathedral. End the day at the Jerónimos Monastery at Belém, an outstanding example of the exuberant Manueline style with fine carving and vaulting.

DAY 3: LISBON, MADRID

Fly at c. 11.15am from Lisbon to Madrid (Iberia Airlines). In the afternoon visit the recently renovated Archaeological Museum, to provide an introduction to Iberian civilizations and Roman Spain, prior to subsequent visits focussing on the decorative arts. First of six nights in Madrid.

DAY 4: MADRID

Morning visit to the Royal Tapestry Factory, founded in 1721 by Phillip V with designs by Goya, many of which are still reproduced today. Continue to the Royal Palace, also built by order of Phillip V, with tapestries and carpets from the 15th to 18th centuries. The visit includes access to areas not normally open to the public and the tapestry storeroom. In the afternoon visit the church of San Antonio de la Florida, with beautiful frescoes by Goya. Dinner takes the form of a tapas walk, with the option to attend a flamenco show.

DAY 5: MADRID

Visit the Museum of Decorative Arts, with a collection of some of the most well preserved carpets and embroideries in Spain from Cuenca, Alcaraz and the Alpujarras region ranging from the 15th to 18th centuries. Continue to the Monasterio de las Descalzas Reales with tapestries woven to designs by Rubens. The evening is free for independent exploration of Madrid.

DAY 6: TOLEDO

Crammed onto the crown of a river-girt promontory, Toledo displays the masonry residue of a greater mix of peoples and civilizations than perhaps any other city in the world. The Cristo de la Luz mosque dates from 999 and is one of the earliest surviving examples of Moorish architecture in Spain, while the Synagogue of El Tránsito contains impressive Mudéjar decoration. The church of Santo Tomé has El Greco's Burial of Count Orgaz, his greatest work (private view). See more of his work and his burial place at the convent of Sto Domingo. The Gothic cathedral is Spain's largest and the most richly endowed with paintings (El Greco, Velázquez, Titian) and a large collection of tapestries from Europe. Toledo's unique 15th-cent. tapestry of the Astrolabes, probably produced in Tournai is both a perplexing riddle and an esoteric masterpiece. It is displayed in the Museum of Santa Cruz, a fine Plateresque building.

DAY 7: MADRID

Private morning visit to the museum of the Instituto Valencia de Don Juan, housing an important collection of Islamic textiles, rugs and tapestries from the 15th-century as well as ceramics and other decorative arts. Continue to the Lázaro Galdiano museum with works by El Greco, Goya and Murillo. Spend the afternoon at the Prado, which is among the world's greatest art galleries, concentrating on the Spanish school.

DAY 8: PASTRANA, CUENCA

All-day excursion to see some of the finest surviving Gothic tapestries at Pastrana, depicting the conquests in Morocco by Alfonso V, King of Portugal (1432–1481), as featured in HALI 164. Continue to Cuenca, whose old town sits high on a narrow ridge bound by rivers, the castle ramparts at the top affording spectacular views. One museum has two works by El Greco, another has Roman remains and an extensive collection of carpets from the Cuenca school of the 16th - 18th centuries.

DAY 9: ZAMORA BURGOS.

On the Roman road that connected Astorga to Mérida, Zamora rose to importance during the Reconquista as a bastion on the Duero front. Much of its Romanesque architecture survives, including the cathedral of Byzantine influence. The cathedral museum contains 15th and 16th century Flemish tapestries, including four from the Trojan War series. Continue to Burgos for three nights.

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DAY 10: BURGOS.

Full day in the early capital of Castile, whose cathedral combines French and German Gothic styles and has remarkable vaults and 16th-century choir stalls. On the outskirts is the convent of Las Huelgas Reales with its important early Gothic church and a museum of exceptional Medieval textiles taken from the Royal tombs. Afternoon excursion to the charming mediaeval town of Medina de Pomar with fine Romanesque churches and the Fortress of the Constables of Castile. Private visit to the Monastery of Santa Clara, founded in 1313, with a splendid, 15th century Holbein de Alcaraz carpet.

DAY 11: SEPÚLVEDA, SEGOVIA.

Drive to Segovia, via the charming town of Sepúlveda, whose Romanesque church affords dramatic views of the valley below. Built on a steep-sided hill, Segovia is one of the loveliest cities in Spain and architecturally one of the most richly endowed. An afternoon walk includes the cathedral, a soaring Gothic structure, and the restored Alcázar (castle), dramatically perched at the prow of the hill. The remarkable Roman aqueduct is one of the biggest in Europe. First of two nights in Segovia.

DAY 12: SEGOVIA, LA GRANJA.

Free morning; suggestions include the contemporary art museum of Esteban Vicente and the Museum of Segovia. Drive to La Granja de San Ildefonso, the palace constructed for Philip V in the early 18th century, with magnificent formal gardens and tapestries including the Flemish Apocalypse series, The Triumphs of Petrarch and the Honours and Virtues series based on cartoons by Goya.

DAY 13: EL ESCORIAL.

This vast retreat-cum-palace-cum-monastery-cum-pantheon was built from 1563 to 1584 for Philip II, successfully embodying his instructions for 'nobility without arrogance, majesty without ostentation, severity in the whole'.

It may be necessary to slightly amend the programme according to local conditions.

LECTURER – GIJS VAN HENSBERGEN.

Art historian and author specialising in Spain and the USA. His books include Gaudí, In the Kitchens of Castile and Guernica and he has published in the Burlington Magazine and Wall Street Journal. He read languages at Utrecht University and Art History at the Courtauld, and undertook postgraduate studies in American art of the 1960s. He has worked in England, the USA and Spain as exhibitions organiser, TV researcher and critic. A HALI staff member will also be present throughout.

PRACTICALITIES

Price: £4,200 (deposit £400). This includes: international flights from Lisbon to Madrid; travel by private coach; hotel accommodation as described below; breakfasts, 7 dinners (including 1 tapas walk) and 3 lunches with wine or beer, soft drinks, water and tea or coffee; all admissions; all tips; all state and airport taxes; the full time services of the lecturer and HALI representative. **Single supplement £730** (double for single occupancy).

ACCOMMODATION.

Hotel Bairro Alto, Lisbon (bairroaltohotel.com): an attractive 5-star hotel in an excellent location. NH Palacio de Tepa, Madrid (nh-hotels.com): a small and excellently located 5-star hotel. Rooms are comfortable and décor is contemporary. NH Palacio de la Merced, Burgos (nh-hotels.com): a smart 4-star hotel in a converted palace. Rooms are comfortable and richly furnished. Palacio San Facundo, Segovia (hotelpalaciosanfacundo.com): a centrally located 4-star hotel in a converted 16th century casa-palacio. Rooms vary in size but all are well-equipped. This is a long tour with a lot of walking in town centres, some of it on cobbled streets and uphill. It should not be undertaken by anyone who has difficulty with everyday walking and stairclimbing. Average distance by coach per day: 73 miles. Dinners tend to be at 8.30 or 9.00pm in Spain. Insurance and travel costs to Lisbon and on from Madrid are not included.

GROUP SIZE: between 10 and 22 participants.