



## ROMAN SPAIN GARDEN TOUR

*Come with us to visit stunning Roman villas and amphitheaters, as we travel from Madrid through central and southern Spain. Rome was the paramount power in Hispania on the Iberian Peninsula for over six centuries and left an enduring legacy before the arrival of the Moors in the 8th century. Spanish history and culture is unique in Europe and thriving in the 21st century! Our tour will include visits to Toledo, Segovia, Merida, as well as the famed Andalusian cities of Cordoba, Seville, and Granada. We will also visit the ancient hills towns of Carmona and Ronda, ending in Malaga on the Costa del Sol. Along the way, we will visit charming patio gardens and a private ranch, while enjoying the best of Spanish hospitality and cuisine.*

### **Saturday, May 2 Madrid**

**D**

Individual Arrivals

Evening Cocktail and dinner at Capitan Alatrisme restaurant

HOTEL WELLINGTON

Velazquez, 8

28001 Madrid

Tel. +34 915 75 44 00

### **Sunday, May 3 Madrid**

**B. L**

We depart the hotel on foot to visit the MAN: Museo Arqueológico Nacional of Madrid.



We will visit the Roman collection drawn from different regions of Spain containing statues and busts of numerous emperors as well as a well-displayed selection of mosaics, together with other elements of Roman culture.

We then board our bus for transfer to the Botanical Garden.

The Royal Botanical Garden was established on its present site during the 18th century when Spain still retained its overseas territories in the American continent and the Philippine Islands, allowing Spanish scientists to take part in the task of a systematic botanical classification from all parts of the extensive monarchy. Enjoy a walk through the garden seeing the different collections- Bonsai, Olive Trees, and much more.

We will walk to a nearby restaurant for lunch.

Next we visit the Prado Museum which houses one of the finest art collections in the world. The museum is based on the collection of successive Spanish monarchs from the time of Queen Isabel the Catholic onwards and it was opened to the public in 1819.



Our visit will focus on the Spanish artists such as Velázquez, Murillo, Zurbarán, and Goya. The Museum also contains Flemish works collected by the Catholic monarchs, as well as Italian paintings by Titian and Tintoretto. Beyond that, we will find masterpieces by great universal artists such as El Greco, Bosch, Van Dyck and Rembrandt.

We return to the hotel with the afternoon and evening free.

**Monday, May 4 Segovia**

**B, L**

## **Full day tour to Segovia seeing the Roman Aqueduct, Romanesque churches Cathedral and Plaza Mayor.**

We depart by coach to Segovia driving northwest of Madrid over the Guadarrama mountains.



The medieval town of Segovia was an important military town in Roman times. It continued to be important during the Middle Ages as reflected in its Romanesque churches and the Gothic Cathedral overlooking the Plaza Mayor (main square).

As we walk through the ancient walled city, we will pass a number of Romanesque churches from the 11th and 12th centuries, Renaissance fortresses, palaces and residences.

Segovia's Gothic Cathedral was built during the reign of Charles V and is constructed of beautiful golden stone. We will see the 1st century Roman Aqueduct, one of the principal Roman monuments in the Iberian Peninsula and one of the finest aqueducts still in existence today, and now a UNESCO World Heritage site

Our lunch is at Candido with views of the Aqueduct. We return to Madrid with dinner on our own this evening.

**Tuesday May 5 Toledo -Merida**

**B, L, D**

### **Full day excursion to Toledo and Merida.**

We depart the hotel for a full day excursion south to Merida.

We will visit the Roman Villa of Carranque,



Carranque is the site of a complete collection of *in situ* Roman mosaics created for a villa of the late 4th century owned by a member of the imperial family. It was only rediscovered in the late 20th century.

After the visit we continue to Toledo, known to the Romans as Toletum, subsequently the capital of the Visigothic kingdom of Spain.

Lunch will be served at the Restaurant Venta de Aires located in the old Roman Circus.



After lunch, we will depart for Merida with dinner included at the hotel.

PARADOR MERIDA  
C. Almendralejo, 58, 06800 Mérida, Badajoz  
Tel: +34 924 31 38 00

**Wednesday, May 6 Merida**

**B, L, D**



This morning we will meet our local guide in the lobby of the hotel and set out on our tour of Merida.



Merida was known by the Romans as Emerita Augusta and was the capital of the Roman province of Lusitania, corresponding to the present Spanish region of Extremadura and most of modern Portugal. It retains numerous remains of the Roman period including a long bridge over the River Guadiana, a theater, an amphitheater and Spain's National Museum of Roman Art housed in a fine building dating to the 1970's and 80's.

We will have lunch at a local restaurant with the afternoon free for individual pursuits. Dinner is at the hotel.

**Thursday, May 7 Merida - Carmona**

**B,L,D**

**Full day excursion to Italica and Seville.**

We depart Merida by coach for Italica, the ruins of an impressive Roman city just 7 km from Seville.



Italica was founded in 206 a.c. by Publio Cornelio Scipio, the African, as a place to recover the wounded troops as well as a place of residence for their war veterans. It was the place of origin of the emperors Trajan and Adriano.

With the Emperor Augustus, the city developed by differentiating what was called the nova urbs. A new city that came to have drainage, services ... that is, one of the most advanced cities in the Roman world at the time.

It remained in use until the Muslim period when it became a quarry of materials, being then known as Seville the Old.

We continue to Seville with lunch at recommended restaurant.

We'll visit Seville seeing the Cathedral. Seville's Cathedral rises up on the site of the great 12th century mosque that nowadays only retains its minaret, known as the Giralda.



Following we visit the palace and gardens of the Reales Alcazares (Royal Palace) which is one of the purest and greatest examples of Mudejar (Christian-Muslim) architecture containing Moorish, Gothic and Renaissance elements.



We continue to Carmona with dinner at our hotel.

**PARADOR DE CARMONA**  
Alcázar s/n, 41410 Carmona, Sevilla  
Tel: +34 954 14 10 10

### **CARMONA**

Carmona is a small town of extremely ancient origin, on an elevated calcarenite ridge (los Alcores) above the valley of the River Guadalquivir, some 35 kilometres from Seville on the road to Córdoba. Archaeological remains indicate habitation of the site during the Bronze Age and a trading city of the Tartessos period with Punic presence, and after the collapse of Tartessos the Turdetani maintained it as a viable city due to prosperous agriculture on the plain.

It became a principal military center for Carthaginian forces and was occupied in 206 B.C. by the Romans, who knew it as Carmo. They minted coinage there, and built or rebuilt walls, of which the 2nd-century Seville Gate still stands (known as the Alcázar Viejo "Old Fortress"), The Córdoba Gate is also basically Roman, though reformed in the late 17th and 18th centuries. Down the hill from this gate there is a small Roman Bridge. Julius Caesar commented that Carmo was the best-fortified city in the province of Hispania Ulterior, and it stood on what became known as the Via Augusta which passed through the city as the Cardus maximus.

A Roman Necropolis also exists on the edge of the town beyond the walls. It was in use from the 1st century B.C. to the 4th century A.D.

**Friday May 8 Cordoba**

**B, L, D**

### **Full day to Cordoba**

En route to Cordoba we arrive at Basilippo for a tour of this very special Olive Oil Mill with a tasting of their best Virgin Olive Oils.





We arrive in Cordoba and visit the Alcazar which was built under Castilian rule in the 13th and 14th centuries on the remains of a Moorish predecessor. This palace was where the Catholic Monarchs, Fernando and Isabel, made their first acquaintance with Columbus in 1486. One hall displays some remarkable Roman mosaics, dug up from Plaza de la Corredera in the 1950s. The Alcazar's terraced gardens – full of fishponds, fountains, orange trees and flowers – are a delight to stroll around.

Then we continue viewing a few of the flower-filled Patios of Cordoba



Lunch at recommended restaurant





We will visit the Mosque-turned-Cathedral. This monument, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is one of the most remarkable buildings in the world. See the impressive red and white arches in the prayer hall of the Mosque, as well as Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque styles in the Cathedral. This space allows visitors to witness the unique religious history and overlapping of cultures that define the city of Córdoba.

We return to Carmona with dinner at the hotel.

#### **Saturday, May 9 Ronda - Malaga**

**B, L**

This morning we depart by coach for Ronda. On arrival, we meet our local guide and begin our visit of Ronda.

Lunch at recommended restaurant

We depart Ronda for Reservatauro where we will visit the Bull Ranch. In Reservatauro we will have the unique opportunity to immerse ourselves in the environment of the king of the meadow. During the tour with professional guides, we will learn about the breeding secrets and the brave bulls selection, observing close by the bulls, the erales, the utreros, (the mother cows with their newborn calves), the fantastic herd of horses raising their foals born in the spring as well as observing the fauna and flora of the Serranía de Ronda.



After the visit we continue to Malaga with dinner on our own.

**HOTEL AC MALAGA PALACIO**  
Calle Cortina del Muelle, 1, Distrito Centro, 29015 Málaga  
Tel: +34 952 21 51 85

**Sunday, May 10 Malaga**

**B, L**

**Tour of Malaga, Botanical Garden of La Concepcion and Roman.**

The Botanical Garden of La Concepcion is an English landscape garden with more than 150 years of history. It is one of the few gardens with subtropical climate plants that exist in Europe. It has more than fifty thousand plants, of two thousand tropical, subtropical and indigenous species, highlighting the collection with more than a hundred different species of palms, bamboos, aquatic plants and its historic garden.



We will visit also the Jardin del Huerto, the oldest garden within Jardín Del Retiro, a botanical-ornithological garden situated in Churriana, just outside Málaga city

center. The estate is almost 350 years old. It has been called one of the most beautiful gardens in all of Spain. The grounds are renowned for their rare juxtaposition of French, English, Italian and Moroccan styles, and breathtaking views of the coast, the mountains, countryside and the city skyline. One of the most famous aspects of the gardens is El Olmo, a 200-year-old elm tree, as well as some 30,000 palm, cypress, magnolia, and fruit trees which can be seen within the vast grounds.



We continue to view Malaga's Roman theatre. This monument lies at the foot of the Alcazaba fortress in the western part of the city. It was discovered in 1951, after having remained buried underground for many centuries. Dating back to the first century, it was built during the Empire of Augustus. It was used up until the third century. The Arabs used parts of the theatre for their own building purposes. They took capitals and column shafts for their own Alcazaba fortress as support for the horseshoe arches over the doorways. The area has three main stands and gateways that lead into the stands (vomitorium).

Lunch at recommended restaurant

After lunch, visit the Picasso Museum (Pending confirmation)

Dinner on our own this evening.

**Monday, May 11 Granada**

**B, L**

### **Full day excursion to Granada**

We depart for Granada and meet our local guide for our tour. Granada is one of the most beautiful cities in Andalucía. Its history, cobbled streets, and exquisite gastronomy make it an enticing destination for visitors. This city is known for its unmistakable traces of Moorish culture, grand architecture, and magical neighborhoods.





Visit the stunning Alhambra complex. The Alhambra is a UNESCO World Heritage site and Spain's single biggest attraction. This hilltop fortress-palace of the Nasrid kings, the last Muslim rulers in Spain, is the most remarkable monument of Moorish art in the country. The Palace premises comprise beautiful rectangular courtyards and numerous fountains, as well as the Nasrid buildings that served as living quarters for the monarchs and their servants.

The harem gardens of the Generalife, the summer palace of the Sultans, are filled with lush vegetation, vibrant flowers and tranquil fountains, providing an oasis-like atmosphere.



After our tour, we will enjoy lunch at a recommended restaurant.

Return to Malaga with the evening at leisure

**Tuesday, May 12 Malaga**

**B.L**

### **Half day tour of Malaga**

We meet our local guide and depart on a walking tour of the city visiting the Carmen Thyssen Museum

The Carmen Thyssen Museum (Museo Carmen Thyssen Málaga) is an art museum in the Spanish city Málaga. The main focus of the museum is 19th-century Spanish painting, predominantly Andalusian, based on the collection of Carmen Cervera, fifth wife of Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza.

Since 1992 the Thyssen family's art collection has been on display at the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid. However, Carmen Thyssen has been an art collector in her own right since the 1980s, and her personal collection is shown separately. In 1999, she agreed to display many items from her collection in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum for a period of twelve years. Meanwhile, a home for her collection was sought in Málaga. This museum, a conversion of a sixteenth-century building, opened to the public on 24 March 2011



Later we'll see the Cathedral de Málaga, built in the Renaissance style mainly during the 16th century, it is the second tallest cathedral in Andalucía.

Our farewell lunch is at Toro Muelle Uno. Dinner on own.

### **Wednesday, May 13 Departure**

Private transfers to the airport.

Tour Escort: Katherine Greenberg, a garden designer and author, has been fascinated with Spanish history and culture since she studied at the University of Madrid. She has returned to Spain many times and makes new discoveries with each visit. She looks forward to sharing a memorable experience with our tour group on this special tour!

## TOUR PRICE:

\$9480.00 members, single supplement \$1998.00, \$9580.00  
non-members, based on a minimum of 16 guests

## INCLUDES:

- 11 night's accommodation, all rooms with private bathrooms
- All hotel taxes and service charges
- Breakfast daily- lunches and dinners as noted in the itinerary
- Deluxe private transportation
- Special English-speaking escort and local guides
- All sightseeing and entrances as per the itinerary
- Escorted by Katherine Greenberg
- Tax-deductible donation of \$500.00 to UCBG

## COSTS DO NOT INCLUDE:

- Airfare
- Tips to your guide
- Travel Insurance

For reservations and further information contact:

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