

SPAIN

SPLENDOURS OF MOORISH AND CHRISTIAN ARCHITECTURE AND ART

a. GRANADA AND THE ALHAMBRA, THE FASCINATIONS OF CADIZ, BARCELONA AND THE GUGGENHEIM AT BILBAO

Susanna spent years studying and working in this fascinating country across which the forces of Islam struggled for power from 711 to 1492. We make an armchair tour round the finest of all Moorish palaces, the Alhambra set amid the snow covered hills of Granada, visit the memorable Court of the Lions, see the great Christian Renaissance palace of Charles V, built alongside the Alhambra, go south to the unspoiled 16th century port and cathedral city of Cadiz, much of which remains just as it was when galleons containing the gold and silver from the New World entered its harbour. We visit the great granite cathedral of Santiago, where generations of pilgrims have arrived staff in hand to place their hands on the scallop shell on St James on a central pillar; explore the narrow streets of the Barri Gotic or old town of Barcelona, the most complete surviving Gothic quarter in Europe, visit the twin towers of piece of Gaudi's Sagrada Familia and Gaudi's Guell Park with its houses with their sinuous ceramic clad decorations and wrought iron gates and the great houses he built in the centre of the city We made a visit to Barcelona's Picasso Museum housed in an ancient house of a Catalan nobleman and end with a visit to Frank Gehry's titanium clad Guggenheim Museum at Bilbao, the museum that brought back life to this Basque coast.



SPAIN CATHEDRAL AT SANTIAGO DE C...



SPAIN THE GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM IN BILBAO



SPAIN COURTYARD IN MADRID



SPAIN BARCELONA THE TEMPLE OF GAUDI

b. BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF MADRID AND THE GLORIES OF GOYA

Madrid, the Hapsburg capital of Spain is a city rich in fountains, boulevards, cafes, its great landmarks are the Plaza de Cibeles and the Plaza Real, once the



SPAIN MADRID THE PLAZA REAL

scene of court entertainments, public burnings and executions and bullfights. Now all traffic is banned and you can wander at will in this historic area. Then we explore the Prado, one of the worlds' greatest art museums containing the work of Goya, this most Spanish of artists who records the beauty of life as well as the harsh realities of war and brings us to a closer understand of Spain and its historic blend of cultures.



ESPAÑA: MADRID - EL VELAZCO

c. TREASURES OF THE PRADO AND THE THYSSEN BORNEMISZA MUSEUM

We examine the great artists of Spain and the works of Flemish painters like van der Weyden and the portraitist Antonio Mor whose greatest works were bought for the collections of the Kings of Spain, now on view for everyone at the Prado, housed in what was once a royal palace. We look at the Spanish Inquisition through new eyes and see the Spanish court through the eyes of Velasquez with its doomed Hapsburg princes and stately little infantas dressed up like adults. To understand a country it is necessary to study not only its history but its art.



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