

Embracing Espana

Inspirational views that add reasons why you should

CONSIDER SPAIN.....



Plaza d'España

We begin our journey in Seville, or as the Spanish call it; Sevilla.

Located near the Portuguese border in the south-west corner of Spain, this dynamic city boasts many beautiful attractions.

For example, The Plaza d'España is an open air tribute to the diverse, cultural regions of Spain. It features a man-made moat with gondola rides, an expansive, arched esplanade and impressively tiled facade.



Tiled Tribute

Pedestrians are encouraged to stroll along this unique tiled tribute, which basically spans the entire width of the Plaza.

Entrance to The Plaza d'Espanha is free.

It is customary to find Flamenco Dancers, Jugglers, Hand-Made Craft Vendors & Traditional Musicians at this venue. Of course, there is also a souvenir shop, washroom facilities and Ticket Counter on the grounds.



A Great Introduction to Spain's Diversity

Each region is represented with a tiled crest and map, informative signs and a historically or culturally significant scene, also depicted in tile.

Visitors are also free to visit some of the interior space and stroll along the shaded balcony, seen at the top of this photo.



Spanish Craftsmanship

A honey-comb ceiling, decorative pillars and tile inserts complement the Plaza's shaded balcony.

Seville is a great location for those who crave delicious tapas, exhilarating Flamenco shows, an array of fascinating museums and flourishing architectural features.

Huge parks with beautifully sculpted gardens and giant shade trees are a welcome refuge from hot summer temperatures.



Metropole Parasol

A true architectural marvel - The Metropole Parasol shades hundreds of daily visitors on its street level, while offering a paid tour of its below-ground Antiquarium. Here, Roman Ruins are visible through a glass floor.

Surrounded by cafes and restaurants, it has become a favorite gathering place for locals and tourists alike.



UPPER DECK

Elevators provide access to stunning, 360 degree viewing platforms on top of the Parasol.

Look out to a collage of ancient church spires and grimacing gargoyles competing with sun washed roof terraces and a sea of colorful storefronts.



Torre d'Ouro, Seville

Choose riverside views from pedestrian walkways or one of many Cruise options but don't miss this Ancient riverside tower built to house royal treasure.....



The Real Alcazar

**This exquisite Arabian
Palace and Garden,
lies in the
Heart of the City.
Entrance is limited so
it's best to pre-order
your tickets online.**



Imagine A Royal Spa Day!

Hushed underground baths lie
beneath the Real Alcazar Palace.
This attraction is just
meters away from the
city's most famous Cathedral.



Cathedral Entrance

`La Giralda' Tower, The Roof Tour, The 14th Century Chapel of our Lady of Antigua and the enormous Dome built above the Main Altar are just a few of the highlights in this; the largest Gothic Cathedral in the World.

***Just meters from the Real Alcazar in the heart of Seville.**



VALENCIA

On the east coast of Spain, this Mediterranean jewel has it all!

Frontline Dining on a Sandy Beach, a bustling Historical Old Town, Modern Shopping Malls, Iconic Cultural Landmarks.....

Add freshly squeezed Valencia Orange juice to your breakfast menu. Sample towering cream-filled pastries with lunch. Savor the delicate depths of Spanish wine with your Valencian dinner.

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OCEANOGRÀFIC VALENCIA

Bonnethead Sharks, Mediterranean Tortoises, sprightly Seals, Sea Lions, Tropical Fish, Dolphins, Crocodiles, Beluga Whales, Flamingos, and Sea Turtles are waiting for you in separate Mediterranean, Arctic, Tropical and Antarctic exhibits.

The 4D Cinema, Wetlands Aviary, Photographic Exhibitions and fun-filled Kid Zone add to one of Valencia's best attractions.



MUSEU DE LES CIENCIAS AND HEMISFERIC DOME

Many of us imagine Bull Rings, Castilian Lace, Tapas Bars, Flamenco Costumes and Cathedrals when we hear the word 'España'.

But Spain offers an impressive, modern infrastructure. Cross-country and intercontinental transportation options, a great national health care system and impressive educational institutions top a long list of positives.

Plus, families have unlimited options to explore modern attractions like this one, also found in Valencia.



MERCADO

FRESH PRODUCE, HONEY AND JAMS, BUTCHER COUNTER MEATS, SWEET AND SAVOURY BAKED GOODS, CATCH OF THE DAY SEAFOOD AND FISH, CHEESES, WINE, REGIONAL LIQUERS, FLORAL BOUQUETS, EGGS, DAIRY AND JUICE.....

Located in the heart of the city, Valencia's Central Market products fill your senses with a profusion of colors, smells and flavors.



Holy Ground

Since the days when Queen Isabel La Catolica and her King Ferdinand expelled Arab Rule on the Iberian Peninsula, Spain has remained a predominantly Catholic nation.

Priceless artifacts, paintings, iconic relics and sculptures are housed in its architecturally extraordinary sanctuaries.

Valencia's churches are no exception. Their revered treasures, representing centuries of spiritual devotion should not be overlooked.

MADRID

ONE CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL EXCITED WHEN DRIVING THROUGH THIS GATEWAY INTO THE CITY OF MADRID. THE CAPITAL OF SPAIN HAS SO MUCH TO OFFER!

HIGHLY RATED PRIVATE SCHOOLS, SPECIALIZED MEDICAL CENTERS AND ESTABLISHED SERVICE INDUSTRIES ARE COMPLEMENTED WITH SOME OF THE FINEST MUSEUM COLLECTIONS IN EUROPE.

FROM THE PRADO ART GALLERY TO THE SAN GINES CHOCOLATERIA TO THE DESIGNER SHOPS IN THE PLAZA MAYOR, MADRID NEVER FAILS TO IMPRESS.

SOMETIMES EVEN THE SMALLEST DETAILS ARE A PLEASANT SURPRISE!

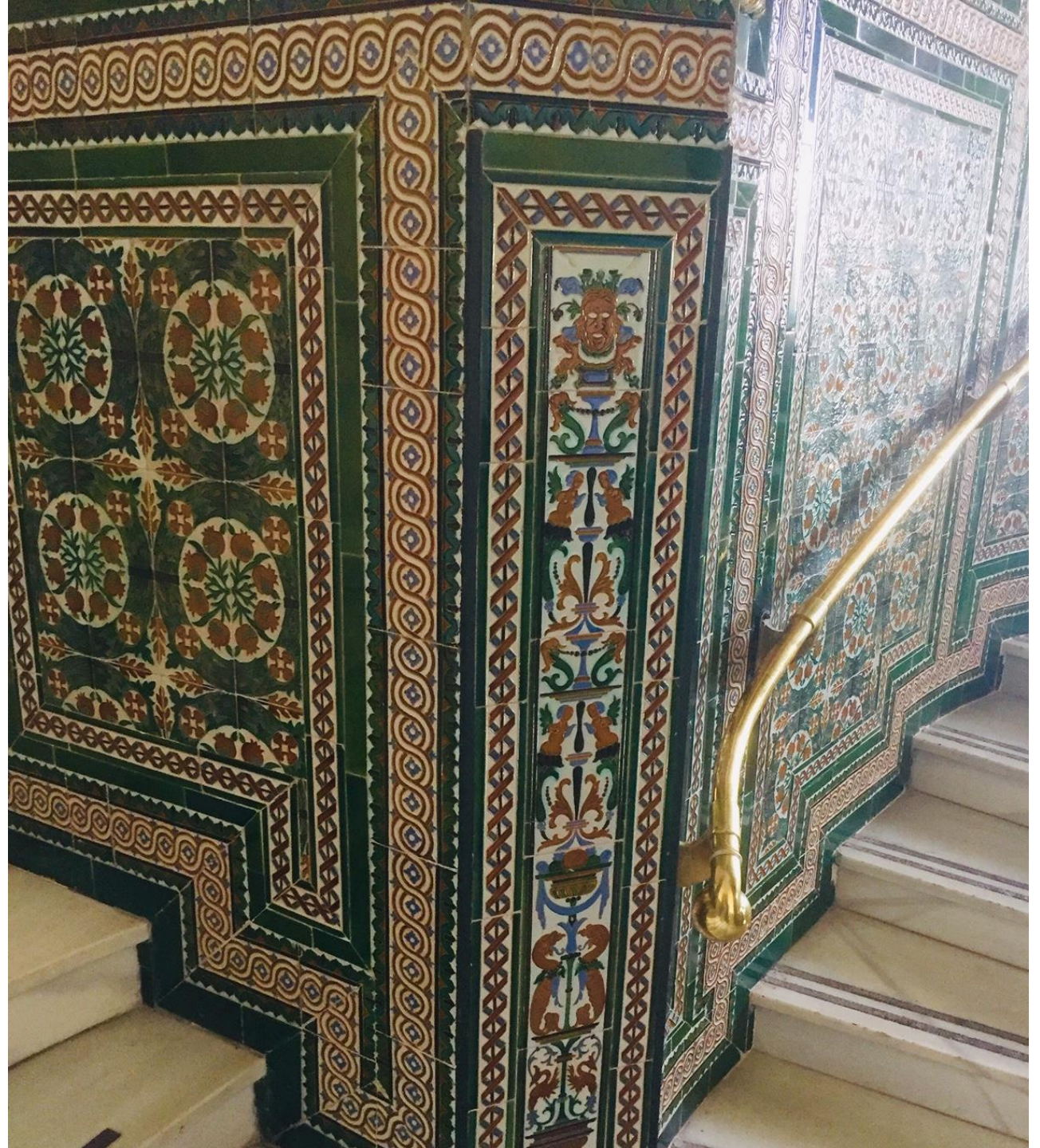


INTRICATE TILE FEATURES

FOR EXAMPLE, SO MANY OF MADRID'S FACADES AND INTERIORS ARE HIGHLIGHTED WITH COLORFUL TILES.

THIS STAIRWELL IN THE PALACIO DE CIBELES ISN'T EVEN ON THE OFFICIAL TOUR – WE SPOTTED IT ON OUR WAY TO THE WASHROOMS. CAN YOU IMAGINE?

INTRICATE EMBELLISHMENTS LIKE THESE ARE EVERYWHERE! MADRID IS TRULY A CITY OF ARCHITECTURAL WONDER.



FROM LIMESTONE & CENTURIES OLD BRICK.....

Located behind the PRADO MUSEUM, this unobtrusive chapel is perched on a small berm between two ultra modern buildings. Hundreds of years old, it is one of many unique structures.



TO PRISTINE WHITE PLASTER.....

Craftsmanship that depicts every style and every material abounds. Now the entrance to a typical Spanish bank, this ornately detailed doorway welcomes customers into a beautifully refurbished interior.



TO WROUGHT IRON TRIM....

EXTRAORDINARY IS ORDINARY IN
MADRID.

CUPOLAS, TOWERS, ROUNDED
CORNERS, LAVISH ROOF TERRACES
AND ART DECO PICTURE WINDOWS –

REAL ESTATE IS AN affordable ART
FORM IN SPAIN.



TO LAYERED ARCHES AND GLASS

**THE ARMOURY AT THE PALACIO REAL
IN MADRID, PRESENTS A GLIMPSE OF
SPANISH WEAPONRY AND GARB.
BEHOLD THE SUPERIORITY OF
TOLEDO'S FINEST SWORDS!**

**EQUALLY DAZZLING ARE THE ROYAL
CHAPEL, THE THRONE ROOM, THE
CAVERNOUS ENTRANCE HALL AND
TIERED STAIRWELL.**



PLAZA DE TOROS

FOR CENTURIES THE CRIES OF OLE' AND THE SWAYING RED CAPE OF THE MATADOR LURED VISITORS TO THIS BULLRING IN MADRID.

EVEN NOW, 'THE RUNNING OF THE BULLS' REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR EVENTS IN THIS COUNTRY.

BUT WHETHER YOU SUPPORT SUCH SPORT OR NOT, THE VIVID RED BRICKS AND EYE-CATCHING TILES ON THIS GIGANTIC CIRCULAR ARENA STAND AS A TESTAMENT TO SPANISH CULTURE.



THE BEAR OF MADRID

WHIMSICAL STATUES AND FOUNTAINS GRACE MANY PUBLIC SQUARES, GARDENS, PARKS AND PATHS, MAKING MADRID A WONDERFULLY PEDESTRIAN CITY.

THE STATUE OF THE BEAR AND THE STRAWBERRY TREE IS A SCULPTURE OF THE 20TH CENTURY (1967). IT IS LOCATED NEXT TO THE LARGE, CENTRAL FOUNTAIN IN PUERTA DEL SOL SQUARE.



LA ALMUDENA CATHEDRAL AND MUSEUM

**I HAVE TWO WORDS FOR THOSE WHO
VISIT LA ALMUDENA...**

Look Up!

**TWO MORE FOR AFTER YOU FINISH
TOURING THE INTERIOR & MUSEUM...**

Go Up!

**THE VIEW FROM THE ROOF IS
AMAZING AND THE ARTISTRY ON THE
ROOF IS EQUALLY CAPTIVATING.**



MUSEO NAVAL

THE SPANISH ARMADA AND ITS
LEGENDARY 16th CENTURY
CONQUISTADORS TRAVELLED TO THE
FAR CORNERS OF THE EARTH IN THE
NAME OF ITS KINGS AND QUEENS.

CONQUEST AFTER CONQUEST, ALL AT
THE HELM OF SOME OF HISTORY'S
GREATEST WARSHIPS.

PANORAMIC CANVASSES, SEAFARING
INSTRUMENTS, MINIATURE REPLICAS,
AUTHENTIC WOODEN AND PLASTER
FIGUREHEADS AND MUCH MORE WILL
DELIGHT ALL AGES.



PALACIO DE CIBELES

NOT AS GRAND AS THE PALACIO REAL, BUT STILL FULL OF SURPRISES, THE INTERIOR OF THIS LANDMARK HAS BEEN ESSENTIALLY GUTTED AND RENOVATED TO INCLUDE MUSEUM AND PHOTOGRAPHIC AS WELL AS FINE ARTS GALLERY COLLECTIONS.

ALSO IN HOUSE ARE A LOVELY EATERY AND GIFT SHOP WITH COMFORTABLE SEATING FOR TIRED VISITORS THROUGHOUT THE BUILDING.

ONE OF THE MOST PHOTOGRAPHED EXTERIORS IN MADRID, CIBELES IS AN ENORMOUS ARCHITECTURAL SHOWSTOPPER.





Barcelona SAGRADA FAMILIA

THERE IS NOT A PHOTO FRAME BIG ENOUGH TO CAPTURE THE MAGNIFICENCE OF THIS MONOLITHIC DESIGN BY GAUDI (1852 – 1926). INSPIRED BY HIS LOVE OF GOD AND NATURE, GAUDI'S UNIQUE SIGNATURE STYLE MIXES ELEMENTS OF GOTHIC AND ART NOUVEAU. HIS WORK DOTS THE BARCELONA CITYSCAPE WITH EASILY DISTINGUISHED ARCHITECTURAL BRILLIANCE. SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION IN THIS DECADE, THE BASILICA DE LA SAGRADA FAMILIA IS A MUST SEE LANDMARK THAT REPRESENTS THE ESSENCE OF SPANISH INNOVATION.

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of the interior of the Sagrada Família in Barcelona. The image captures the soaring, organic columns that resemble tree trunks, reaching towards a complex, star-shaped vaulted ceiling. Warm, golden light filters through various openings, creating a dramatic and ethereal atmosphere. The architecture is a masterpiece of Antoni Gaudí's Catalan Modernism.

Barcelona SAGRADA FAMILIA

LIKE TREE TRUNKS REACHING FOR THE HEAVENS, GAUDI'S INTERIORS COMBINE THE IMPACT OF NATURAL LIGHT ON STAINED AND CRYSTALLIZED GLASS, CREATING A CELESTIAL AURA WHICH COULD BE COMPARED TO THE INTENSITY OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS.

TICKETS TO THE BASILICA & MUSEUM SHOULD BE BOOKED IN ADVANCE, ONLINE. THE SAGRADA FAMILIA HAS ALREADY BEEN DECLARED A UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE AND IS THE LARGEST UNFINISHED CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE WORLD.



Barcelona CASA AMATLER & CASA BATLLO

FOUND IN THE EIXAMPLE DISTRICT, BOTH OF THESE GAUDI DESIGNED HOMES WERE COMMISSIONED BY PRIVATE CITIZENS AND USED AS RESIDENCES IN THE 1900'S.

TODAY, PRIVATE TOURS PROVIDE INSITE INTO THE FUTURISTIC MINDSET OF GAUDI...HIS PLAYFUL USE OF TILE, THE RICH HUES OF HIS WOODEN MOTIFS AND CUSTOM-DESIGNED FURNISHINGS, ELABORATE WINDOW DRESSINGS AND FRAMES. EVERY DETAIL; INCLUDING THOSE FOUND ON THE ROOF AND IN THE GARDEN, IS METICULOUSLY PLANNED.



Barcelona CASA MILA- LA PEDRERA

LEFT: SPECTACULAR ROOFTOP VISTAS SEEN THROUGH AN ARCHED OUTCROP FINISHED WITH THE TRENCADIS TECHNIQUE- MIXING BROKEN TILES WITH STONE, MARBLE AND GLASS.

LA PEDRERA IS AN APARTMENT BUILDING LIKE NO OTHER. FROM ITS WHALEBONE ARCHED ATTIC TO THE FIRST ABOVE-GROUND INDOOR PARKING GARAGE EVER BUILT, IT FEATURES MANY ONE-OF-A-KIND PIECES OF FURNITURE, DESIGNED BY GAUDI (MASTER SUITE BED, RIGHT).

Barcelona and Shopping in Spain

Afraid you might miss great shopping in your new European location? No worries!

Spain's El Corte Ingles, Mercadona and DIA stores are joined by retail imports such as Carrefour, Auchan, LIDL, Media Markt, Eroski and Inditex.

You'll find many familiar clothing labels and a huge selection of designer brands in spacious, modern shopping malls plus an exciting collection of cottage industry stores with a full range of kitsch and classy products.





UNFORGETTABLE *Barcelona*

BARCELONA'S DISTRICT #1 IS THE CUITAT VELLA (OLD CITY IN THE CATALAN LANGUAGE). IT HAS SEVERAL NEIGHBORHOODS, INCLUDING GOTIC, LA RAMBLA AND EL RAVEL. WALKING THROUGH THE WARREN OF NARROW STREETS, IT'S EASY TO NOTICE THE CATALONIAN PRESENCE IN BARCELONA.

CATALONIA'S NORTHERN CLIMATE, DISTINCT LANGUAGE, FLAG AND FOOD PROVIDE A DIFFERENT KIND OF EXPERIENCE FOR ITS RESIDENTS.

ALICANTE AND THE SOUTHEASTERN COAST

THE CITY OF ALICANTE IS THE CAPITAL OF THE PROVINCE ALSO NAMED ALICANTE. IT IS LOCATED ON THE SOUTHEASTERN, COSTA BLANCA COASTLINE.

WITH A POPULATION OF ABOUT 325,000, THE CITY IS DIVIDED BY GEOGRAPHY, ON TWO LEVELS.

UP TOP, THE VIEWS FROM SANTA BARBARA CASTLE EMBRACE THE SEA AND PORT BELOW.

NOT AS WELL KNOWN AS A TOURIST DESTINATION, THIS PROVINCE STILL OFFERS AN ATTRACTIVE RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE:



CASTILLO DE SANTA BARBARA

SITUATED ON MOUNT BENACANTIL, CASTILLO DE SANTA BARBARA ACTS AS A BACKDROP TO THE PORT AREA.

IT PROVIDES VISITORS WITH AN AMAZING VIEW OF THE COSTA BLANCA SHORE, AN INTERESTING HISTORICAL EXHIBIT AND PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT CASTLE LIFE MAY HAVE BEEN IN THE 9TH CENTURY.

THE CASTILLO WAS BUILT DURING THE MUSLIM DOMINATION OF THE IBERIAN PENINSULA.



THE BARRIO DE LA SANTA CRUZ...

OR THE *OLD TOWN*. IT'S DIVIDED INTO SMALL, OFTEN COLORFUL NEIGHBORHOODS WITH MANY NARROW STREETS AND ENTERTAINING NIGHTLIFE.

FROM HERE YOU CAN TAKE AN ELEVATOR TO THE CASTLE – WHICH SITS AT THE PINNACLE OF SANTA BARBARA HILL (SEEN HERE) - QUITE A CHALLENGE ON FOOT!

ALICANTE IS HOME TO ONE OF THE LARGEST FILM STUDIOS IN EUROPE.

TOURISM, PAPER AND PLASTICS AS WELL AS CONGRESSIONAL EUROPEAN UNION OFFICES ROUND OUT THE PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES HERE. THERE IS A STRONG EXPAT COMMUNITY IN THIS AREA.



CASCO ANTIGUA

**TALK ABOUT A “TIGHTLY KNIT
COMMUNITY” ...
WITH BARELY ENOUGH ROOM TO WALK
BETWEEN THE POTTED PLANTS AND PATIO
CHAIRS, THIS UNIQUE SECTION OF THE OLD
TOWN IS PICTURE POSTCARD PERFECT!**

**RESIDENTS WITH THEIR OWN VEHICLES
MUST PARK AT EITHER END OF THE STREET
AND DELIVERIES ARE CARRIED IN BY HAND
OR WHEELED IN ON CARTS.**

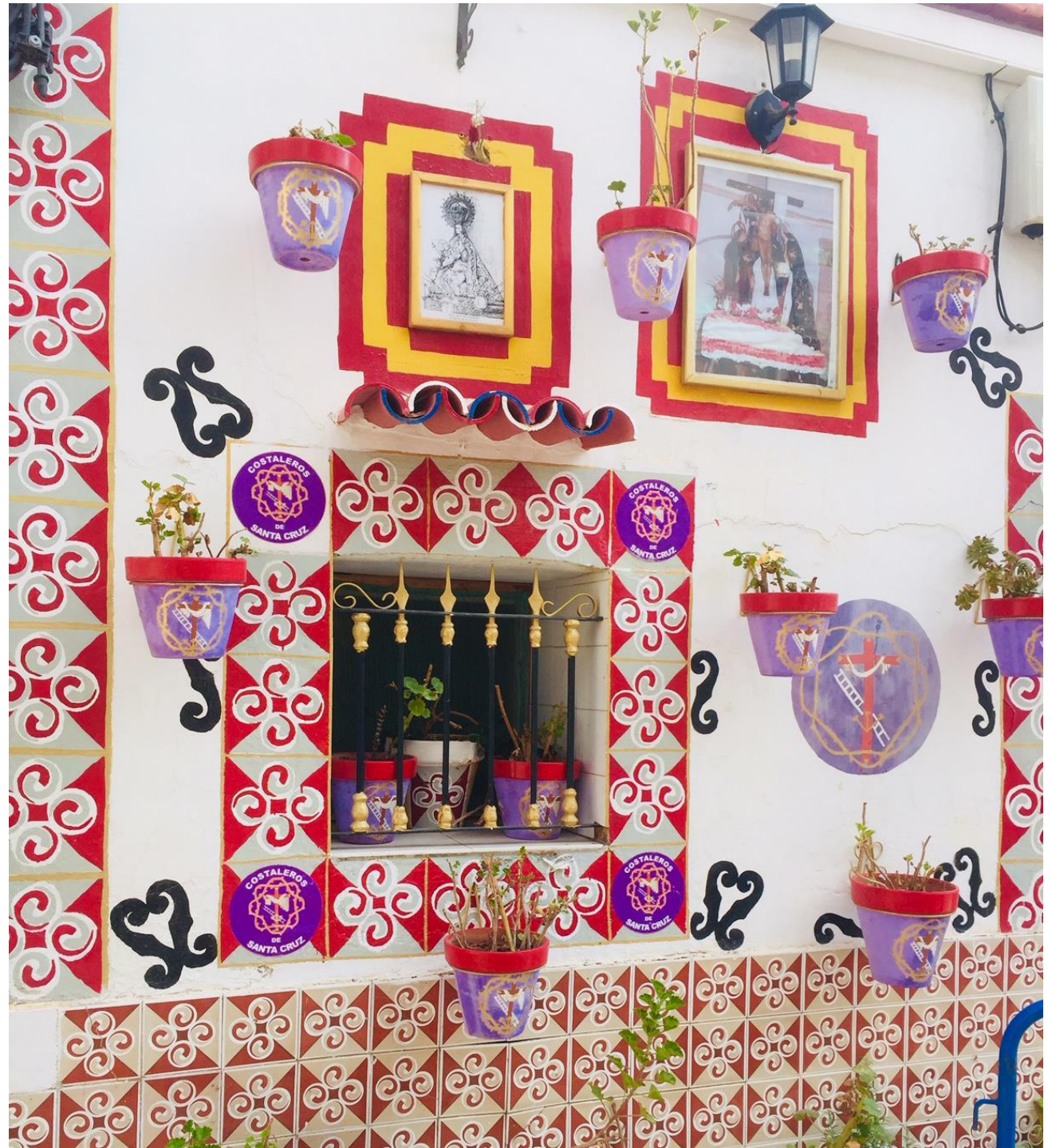


AN ARTFUL APPROACH TO REAL ESTATE

SO MANY OF CASCO ANTIGUAS' HOMES
FEATURE FRAMED PHOTOS OF PAST
GENERATIONS, FLORAL TRIBUTES AND
VIVID TILES.

SMALL WROUGHT IRON CHAIRS AND
TABLES FOR TWO ARE FREQUENTLY PLACED
IN NARROW WALKWAYS. THE ATMOSPHERE
IS FILLED WITH RESPECTFUL BUT FAMILIAR
CAMARADERIE.

GASTRONOMIC TOURS OF THE OLD MARKET
AND LOCAL RESTAURANTS ARE VERY
POPULAR IN ALICANTE WHERE CULINARY
STYLE IS AS UNIQUE AT THE HOUSES:



MODERN & SPACIOUS ALICANTE

TAKEN FROM THE PORT AREA, THIS PHOTO DEPICTS THE PEDESTRIAN PARK IN DOWNTOWN (LOWER LEVEL) ALICANTE. HIGHRISE CONDOS, HOTELS AND OFFICE BUILDINGS TO THE LEFT; OLD TOWN TO THE RIGHT AND UPPER RIGHT IS THE STEEP HILL WHERE CASTILLO SANTA BARBARA IS PERCHED.

THIS SHOT WAS ALSO TAKEN ABOUT 3 BLOCKS FROM THE BEACH. THE N-332 ROUTE TRAVELS THE LENGTH OF ALICANTE'S COASTLINE.



LATIAJUANA KITSCH

THERE ARE 9 LA TIA JUANA RESTAURANTS IN SPAIN AND EVERY ONE OF THEM OFFERS DELICIOUS, AUTHENTIC, MEXICAN FOOD.

THE POINT HERE IS TO ONCE AGAIN DISPEL SOME OF THE PERCEPTIONS WE MAY HAVE ABOUT THIS COUNTRY. YES, IT HAS A TON OF TRADITIONAL EATERIES & REGIONAL MENUS – BUT – IT IS ALSO OFFERS A VAST ARRAY OF INTERNATIONAL CUISINE.

CAN YOU WATCH A HOLLYWOOD BLOCKBUSTER IN ENGLISH, IN A MODERN CINEMA IN SPAIN? YES!

CAN YOU RIDE A HORSE THROUGH A ROCKY DESERT CANYON THAT'S LOCATED NEXT TO AN OLD WEST SETTING? YES!



Cadiz: An Ancient Seaside Mecca

You can sense the centuries of history in this city's quieter moments. Like the wisest of well-mannered ladies, she welcomes the present and future but never lets go of her past.

Whenever I visit Cadiz I feel like I'm on a 1950's movie set. A backdrop of lavish cobalt blue and lush green, sets the stage for a stellar cast of ancient ruins lying beneath massive shade trees, neighbored by crenelated rooftops, shadowed by steepled churches.



The Gentle Giants of Cadiz

Who needs an awning?

Whether you're walking along the coast, through a park, next to a garden or right through the center of town, you can't help but notice the enormous gentle giants of Cadiz.



Cadiz and La Caleta

Located alongside the historical city center, between the Castles of San Sebastien and Santa Catalina, La Caleta Beach (meaning 'the small bay' in Spanish) is a natural Atlantic harbor situated on Spain's Costa de la Luz.

Sunbathers, surfers and waterfront diners walk the sandy shore where ancient Carthaginians and Romans landed their ships.



Cadiz Roll a Pair of Rocky Dice

A chunky, man-made barrier helps to protect this pedestrian walkway from harsh Atlantic storms.

Although the water is often too cold for swimmers, surfers clad in bodysuits enjoy the small wave action regularly.



Pedestrian Friendly Streets of Cadiz

**Tourists walk up an Old Town hill to the
sunlit Plaza ahead.**



Finding Hidden Treasure in Cadiz

Cadiz has a fascinating history of shipwrecks, as depicted in this 3D art tableau on the coastline road.

Historians estimate that, dating from as far back as the Phoenicians, thousands of ships have sunk in The Bay of Cadiz and rest on the muddy ocean bed.

Archeologists believe that many of the wrecks were preserved by the mud but may soon be destroyed by current dredging operations and the expansion of the modern Port of Cadiz.



TIME
for a
BREAK

