

An International Learning Experience for Culturally and Intellectually Curious Adults

Designed, Organized and Guided by Faculty & Staff of Universitas Castellae

Valladolid, Spain

Language of Instruction: English

Application Date: November 17, 2019

Program Dates: April 17-30, 2020

Arrive Madrid: Friday, April 17

Depart Valladolid: Thursday, April 30

The imagination thrives – or so it seems to me – on oblique attention; it never stirs so magically as when the intellect is austerely absorbed in worthy inquiries. - Eva Brann

I. Program Introduction

This program's main features are straightforward:

- a gathering of a small group of culturally and intellectually curious adults with various backgrounds and life experiences;
- an environment that is highly conducive to learning, sharing ideas, and enjoying life together;
- a thematic focused on selected aspects of life, culture language, food and wine in Spain.

II. Program Content & Schedule

We try to understand contemporary Spain by focusing especially on food and wine, which together are an integral part of the country's history, culture and economy. Through supplementary sessions, participants also learn about Spain's landscape of conjunctions, contradictions, and collisions where myths coexist with realities, where civilizations often meet and flourish, and where diversity in all its manifestations can spur creative energies, intellectual collaborations, social cohesion, and challenges. Conversational language classes are also central to this program. Participants can expect a flexible schedule, usually consisting of approximately three hours each workday (roughly 9:30am – 12:30pm) dedicated to language, conversation, and culture. Thematic content (presentations/discussions/excursions) usually take place in the early afternoon or early evening (usually 1-2 hours, but longer for field visits). A full working program schedule will be available in due course.

A. Food & Wine in Spain *Food* offers important insights into all world cultures. In Spain, food is linked to a way of perceiving the world, expressing cultural and regional identities, and engaging in meaningful ways with others. *Wine* has been made in Spain since the first century AD, and today Spain is the world's top exporter and third largest producer of wine (behind France and Italy). Our aim is to understand daily life in Spain by learning about its diverse culinary traditions, with special focus on Valladolid and the Ribera del Duero region. Participants will learn about the importance of food and wine in Spain, the language used to describe them, the processes of production, and the venues of enjoyment. Included are professional presentations as well as direct experience with visits to tapas bars, vineyards, kitchens, and bodegas. Participants also have opportunities to prepare and share meals together.

B. Supplementary Topics Many other topics are important for any understanding of Spain. Each day, therefore, we dedicate an hour or two to learning more about Spanish life and culture. Representative topics include:

1. Spanish History In these sessions we learn about selected aspects of the deep and recent history of the Iberian Peninsula, with special focus on such important periods as Islamic Spain, the Age of Expansion & Empire, the Golden Age, the Disaster of 1898, Civil War, Francoist Spain, the transition to democracy, enduring regional identities, and recent history.

2. The Arts in Spain During several sessions dedicated to art, we focus on selected masters of Spanish painting such as El Greco, Velázquez, Goya, Gaudí, Miró and Picasso. Included are visits to museums in Madrid, including the Prado and Reina Sofia. We also examine polychromatic wood sculpture with a visit to the best museum of its kind. Additional sessions on art, depending on participants' interests, may include sessions on music and dance (classical, flamenco, contemporary), film, or local cultural traditions.

3. The Great Literature of Spain Spain has produced many extraordinary writers, some of whom are not well known outside of the Spanish-speaking world and others who are world-renown. Among the country's great literary figures are Cervantes, Zorilla, Baroja, Unamuno, Delibes, Lorca, Matute, Galdós, Cela, Clarín, and Jiménez. In sessions focused on literature, we gain insights into the creative imagination of two or three of Spain's writers.

C. Spanish Language Language offers an important window into culture and allows for meaningful interaction with local people. Our program includes daily language training or tutorials. The focus is on conversational Spanish - speaking and listening comprehension at the appropriate level. Our aim to help participants use Spanish in daily life both during this program and for use during subsequent visits to Spain or other Spanish-speaking countries.

III. Program Location

The vibrant, historically rich, university city of **Valladolid** (population: > 300,000) is our base for exploration and discovery, complemented by local field visits and to nearby cities and villages. Valladolid is one of the historical capitals of the Spanish Empire. Ferdinand and Isabella married there. Columbus died there. Writers such as Cervantes, Zorilla and Delibes were born or lived there for a time. Our host institution is

Universitas Castellae

, a small international education organization with over 30 years of experience in global teaching and learning. The principle program staff, coordinators and instructors have decades

of academic and professional experience in global education.

IV. Program Participants

Participants are chosen based on the quality of their applications which need to demonstrate sincere interest in the program theme and language learning. An ability to understand and speak English, at least at a basic level, is expected. No previous experience in Spain is required, and participants from beginning language to advanced level of Spanish are welcome. Cultural and intellectual curiosity are the main criteria for acceptance. While the program schedule provides ample time for reflective solitude and individual exploration, it is expected that each participant will engage whole-heartedly in the program activities and bring their own education and life experiences to the table. Please note that this program is welcoming of a wide variety of participants at various levels of interest in Spain. The environment is friendly, informal, welcoming, and fun. The program is not, however, designed for mere tourism.

V. Recommended Readings

All serious intellectual adventures include careful meditations on selected readings. Each participant should choose and read *at least one* book regarding food and wine in Spain, and *one additional* book (or view a film) on other aspects of Spain in advance of the program start date. A longer list of suggested readings is available upon request.

Recommended readings
include:

A. Food & Wine

- *Grape, Olive, Pig: Deep Travels Through Spain's Food Culture* by Matt Goulding

B. History & Culture

- *The History of Spain* by Peter Pierson

- *The New Spaniards* by John Cooper

C. Art, Music & Dance

- *From El Greco to Goya* by Janis Tomlinson
- *Duende: A Journey in Search of Flamenco* by Jason Webster

D. Literature

- *The Holy Innocents* by Miguel Delibes
- *Deep Song and Other Prose* by Federico Garcia Lorca

E. Films

- *Film Blood Wedding* (1981; adapted from Lorca) by Carlos Saura
- *The Holy Innocents* (1984; adapted from Delibes) by Mario Camus

VI. Program Cost

[Program Duration: 14 days]

The fee for the April 17-30, 2020 program is 1800 Euro.

This ***includes***:

- This covers instructional costs for language training, content sessions, guest lectures, discussion facilitation, advising, museum entry fees, guides.
- **Transportation.** This covers on-arrival airport transfer (by group bus) from Madrid's Barajas airport on April 17 and return to Barajas for those departing on April 30; and program educational excursions.
- Lodging (13 nights) options include *shared apartments* (2-4 people, self-catering, furnished with bedding and kitchen supplies), *host families* (with this option up to two meals per day and laundry service are included),

hotels.

NB: The hotel option involves supplementary fees. The amount depends on the hotel chosen, single or double room occupation, and choice of any meals at the hotel. Accepted participants will receive a housing options form to indicate their choices.

The program fee **does not include** airfare or ground transportation (roundtrip Madrid); personal spending money; meals (except as indicated above); independent travel; passport and visa fees (if applicable); or optional activities. Each participant must have his/her own health insurance. Program fees may be paid in advance via bank transfer, or in Euro upon arrival. (We operate on the honor system, so do not require deposits, but are not set up to accept credit cards.) For individual questions about the program costs and billing procedures, please contact

Eva Higuero

at Universitas Castellae

:

evahiguero@hotmail.com

VII. Application and Further Information

The process of application is designed to be simple and welcoming. If you are interested in a friendly atmosphere, a vibrant intellectual life, and the sharing of ideas with other thinking adults, you are encouraged to apply. To do so, please prepare a brief (1-2 page) statement (in English) expressing your interest. Please include the *reasons you want to join* the program and include word about

what ideas or past experiences

would make you a good participant. Include a brief outline of your life: interests, reading, work, and experiences outside your home country (if any). Finally, include your contact information: full name, address, email and telephone number.

The due date for application is **November 17, 2019. Early application is encouraged.** Within one week of the application due date, if you are accepted, you will receive further details on the program schedule, forms to fill out and return (including lodging preferences, travel plans, dietary restrictions, deposits and payments, finances, and insurance forms).

Please submit your application materials – and any questions you have about the program – to

Michael Monahan

at

monsmd@gmail.com