

2018 SPECIAL TOUR

The Sephardic Exodus in the Land of the Conquistadores



With Rabbi Jay Shasho Levy

About the Sephardic Routes

More Jewish travelers are visiting Spain than ever before. Next to Israel, Spain has become the most important destination for the Jewish traveler wanting to discover their roots, legacy and the essential role they played in the culture and history of Spain dating back 2000 years.

Our programs and tours take you to important cities and their Jewish Quarters that form part of these Sephardic Routes, where visitors learn of the glorious and tragic history of the Spanish Jews.

We will take you to the principal historic cities as well as off the beaten path towns and places, where the Jewish Communities thrived between the 10th and 15th centuries and later were forced to make crucial decisions that would affect their lives for centuries to come.

It's difficult to find a people who reached such heights, leaving such a valuable contribution and legacy.

We invite you to join us in this fascinating journey !



EXCLUSIVELY **SPAIN**.US®



The Sephardic Exodus in the Land of the Conquistadores

Join us for a very special trip to Sephardic Spain led by Sephardic Rabbi Jay Shasho Levy.

Your travels will take you to the once important centers of Jewish life in the historic Region of Extremadura and to crucial cities where the Exodus of thousands of Jewish Communities took place before, during and after the Inquisition Decree of 1492.

The glorious and tragic history of the Spanish Jews and their Sephardic heritage dates back 2000 years. The contribution of the Spanish Jews is hard to measure due to its immensity, with poets, mathematicians, doctors, astrologers, linguists, philosophers and translators who rose to recognition during the Jewish Golden Age in Spain.

History also shows us that there were some differences between the Jewish communities in the north which were influenced by the Kabbalah teachings and philosophy, while in the south they were also influenced by arts and poetry. You'll find their writings in the Arabic, Hebrew, Old Castilian and Ladino languages. It is difficult to find another people that has left behind such a valuable legacy.

The Spanish Jews also lived in isolated communities throughout Spain. They were protected by the different regional Caliphates and Kings, before the Christian Re-conquest of Spain and the Expulsion Edict in 1492. However, during the 13th century these growing communities had already started to experience massive pogroms and persecutions, even before the Inquisition Decree became the Law of the land.

During your trip you will visit cities where the Jewish Communities flourished, contributed and sought haven such as Toledo, Segovia, Trujillo, Hervas, Caceres, Plasencia and Madrid. During your trip you will enjoy the local gastronomy influenced by Sephardic traditional dishes.

About Rabbi Jay Levy

Rabbi Jay Shasho Levy is a descendant of Spanish Jews who left Spain at the time of the inquisition and then travelled to Aleppo Syria, Cuba, Argentina, and America.

Rabbi Levy earned his B.A., magna cum laude from Queens College, and was awarded a J.D. from the New York University School of Law. He studied at Yeshivas in NY and Israel and received rabbinic ordination from The Rabbinical Academy in New York.



Rabbi Levy has officiated and taught at synagogues and institutions nationwide and around the world, specializing in classes and programs about Sephardic history and Jewish Spain. He most recently was senior rabbi at the Sephardic Temple in Los Angeles, where he drew on his Sephardic heritage to institute musical, cultural and educational programs that explored the treasures of Sephardic life and history.

Music also plays an important part in Rabbi Levy's life; as a composer and author, he has been honored with many awards for his work, including RIAA Gold and Platinum records, the Parent's Choice Gold Award, the Parent's Magazine Prize, and the L.A. Times Best of The Year Award. His trips will be filled with music, including ancient Sephardic songs sung for the first time in hundreds of years in old synagogues and other Jewish sites.

Rabbi Levy is excited about sharing Jewish Spain with those who are interested in a fun and fascinating journey where they will experience the sights, sounds, and tastes of the Jewish past and present of Sepharad.

— 10 DAY ITINERARY —

Day 01 - Friday: Madrid - Toledo

Upon arrival in Spain's regal capital, Madrid, you will be met and driven to the magnificent medieval historic city of Toledo on a Hill, surrounded by the River Tago, where you will spend the next 2 nights. UNESCO has recognized Toledo as a World Heritage Site for its importance during the Golden Age of the Jewish, Muslim and Christian Communities.

This evening join your group for a special Sephardic Shabbat service with Rabbi Levy by the former medieval Synagogue Santa Maria La Blanca, followed by a special welcome dinner.

Day 02 - Saturday: Toledo

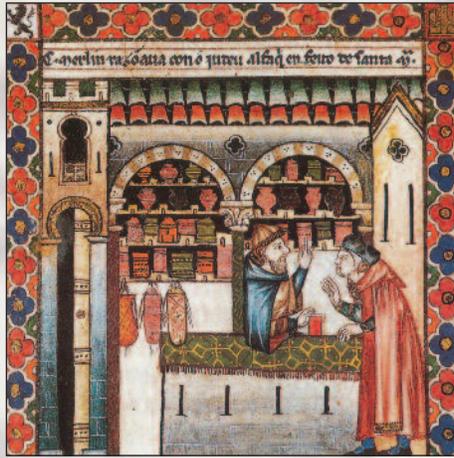
Today after breakfast enjoy a walking tour of this great city. Your first stop will be La Puerta de Bisagra for panoramic views of this 11th century walled city. Toledo is where master painter El Greco was sponsored by the Count of Ordaz in the 16th century. Continue your visit of Toledo when you visit Toledo's magnificent 13th century Cathedral, renowned as one of Spain's finest examples of Gothic architecture.

Next, walk through the well preserved and historic former Jewish Quarter with its magnificent Sephardic Museum, the 'Transito' Synagogue and 'Santa Maria La Blanca' Synagogue, both magnificent historic treasures. Relive the era when the Jewish Community was at its height, during the rule of King Peter the First of Castile.

We will then visit the home/museum of master painter 'El Greco', once the home of Toledo's Samuel Ha-Levi's prominent Jewish family. Here we will enjoy a magnificent display of El Greco's art work. Then continue to 'El Greco's masterpiece, the Burial of the Count of 'Ordaz', which is housed in a permanent exhibition hall.

Then walk through the streets where philosopher, doctor and poet, Yehudá Ha-Levi lived most of his life before moving to Cordoba. During your visit you will also learn of the crucial and tragic events that took place in Toledo and the effects that the bloody Spanish Civil War had on Toledo.

When finished, enjoy lunch in one of Toledo's historic Restaurants dating back to



your own, relax or visit some of the wonderful specialty shops found in this city.

Day 03 - Sunday: Segovia Day Excursion

Today you travel to beautiful Segovia. First stop will be a visit to the imposing Roman Aqueduct built in 211 A.D., which still stands and functions to this day.

Then continue to the Alcazar, the most photographed and famous medieval castle in Spain. Here you'll have a glimpse of what it was like to live in the royal court during medieval times. This castle was used as a mil-



itary base by Queen Isabel and King Fernando during the Christian Re-Conquest of Spain and the Expulsion of the Jewish Community. After your visit enjoy the rest of the day on

the 15th century, once the home of Spain's famed Inquisitor Andres de Torquemada as well as the controversial Cardinal Cisneros.

Your tour continues with a visit to the former Jewish Quarter of Segovia, where the community was divided during the Expulsion Decree. You will see some of the medieval structures featuring the architecture used during the 15th century. Here the Jewish community played an important role during the expulsion of the Spanish Jews. From this part of the city, you can also see the area where the former Jewish Cemetery once stood. When finished, visit Segovia's Corpus Christi Church, a very impressive structure. It was once Segovia's Synagogue.

Many visitors are not aware that Segovia had one of the largest Jewish Quarters in Spain. End your visit with a typical 'Segoviano' lunch in one of the restaurants near the Aqueduct, still frequented by Spanish Royalty. We will then return to Toledo.



Day 04 - Monday: Trujillo – Hervas

This morning you travel to and explore the fascinating medieval city of Trujillo, where the Conquistador of Peru, Francisco Pizarro and his brothers, Francisco de Orellana and Hernando de Alarcón, were born. The Conquistador Hernan Cortes also lived here before conquering Mexico.

Trujillo became an important center of commerce for the Jewish Communities during the 13th and 14th centuries.

Trujillo is a former fortress town and home to a medieval Castle that sits atop a hill overlooking the town main square.

The Coria Museum has displays on the regional links between Spain and Latin America. The life of Conquistador Francisco Pizarro, who vanquished the Inca empire, is traced at the Casa Museo de Pizarro, his former home. An equestrian statue dedicated to him stands in Plaza Mayor. The town became an important stop for Jewish commerce. After your tour of this great town and its important sites, enjoy lunch in its historic Parador. Then continue to the historic and fascinating town of Hervas where you will spend the night.

Day 05 - Tuesday: Hervas

Today enjoy a walking tour of historic Hervas which probably offers the best samples of how the Jewish Community once lived. It is also a favorite destination for visiting historians. The Hervas Jewish Community grew at a fast pace during their flight from Toledo's pogroms in the 14th century and during the Exodus that took place after the Expulsion Mandate in the 15th and 16th centuries.

During your tour of historic Hervas, you will visit their informative Museum which offers a complete chronology of the Jewish Communities, walk by the former Jewish Quarter, and then participate in a special Ceremony of the Planting of the Tree of Life, honoring former Jewish Communities that once lived here. During your visit, enjoy lunch in the heart of Hervas.

Day 06 Wednesday: Caceres – Plasencia

This morning you travel to another important city, Caceres. Here enjoy a walking tour of medieval Caceres where you will visit the sites where the Jewish Community once lived. During your visit you will discover that

Caceres is also home to an abundance of storks that make their nests here throughout the year.

Visit the former Jewish Quarter where the Jewish Community grew and expanded during the 15th century, while waiting for permission to enter Portugal, after the Expulsion Mandate. You will also visit the historic Archives of Caceres Jewish History as well as the former Synagogue, now a Church. After lunch in one of Caceres' established restaurants, continue your tour of Caceres before continuing to the lovely city of Plasencia where you will spend the next night at their magnificent Parador.



Day 07 - Thursday: Plasencia – Madrid

Today you visit Plasencia, situated on the bank of the Jerte River. Plasencia's historic quarter grew as a result of the city's strategic location along the Silver Route 'Ruta de la Plata'.

Towards the end of the 13th century, the Charter of Plasencia was created, at one time allowing the Christian, Muslim and Jewish people to live together within the city. This charter prompted the formation of a Jewish community in Plasencia, which became the largest Jewish community in Extremadura and which at that time held a considerable amount of economic power.

As of the 15th century, the noblemen of the region also began to move to Plasencia, defining its current lay out and appearance. In Plasencia you will tour the streets where the former Jewish Communities once lived, as well as visit the remains of the Jewish Cemetery. This afternoon after lunch, you travel to Madrid where you will spend the next 3 nights.

Day 08 – Friday: Madrid

Today enjoy a combined panoramic tour and walking tour of Regal Madrid, when you follow the Route of Hapsburg and Bourbon Royalty, which will include a tour of the Royal Palace and its magnificent 17th century Italian Florentine style gardens facing Madrid's elegant Opera House.

You will drive along the elegant Castellana Avenue, by the Fountains of Neptuno and Cibeles and Alcala's Regal Gate built by Charles the 5th of Spain, the beautiful Park of Retiro, the former Royal Salamanca District, Madrid's Plaza de Toros (Bullfight ring) and Plaza de España honoring the Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes. Then visit the beautiful 'Plaza Mayor' embellished and made famous by the Spanish Painter Diego Velazquez, as well as the vivacious La Puerta del Sol.

This evening celebrate a special Sephardic Shabbat led by Rabbi Jay Levy.

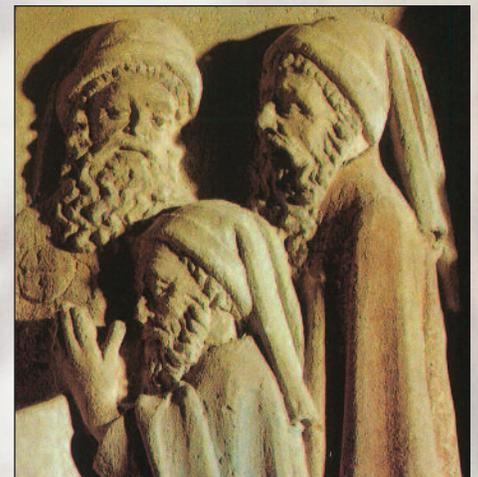
Day 09 – Saturday: Madrid

Today you will visit El Prado Museum, which houses the largest and most important collection of Spanish and European Masters. During your visit, you will be guided on a historic and comprehensive tour of the Spanish Masters featuring Velazquez, Zurbano, El Greco and Goya, and many others. Here you will be taken through a retrospective of these masters who influenced and made such a large contribution to the evolution of Art on the old continent.

Afternoon on your own. This evening join your group for a Farewell Dinner, followed by an authentic 'Tablao' Flamenco.

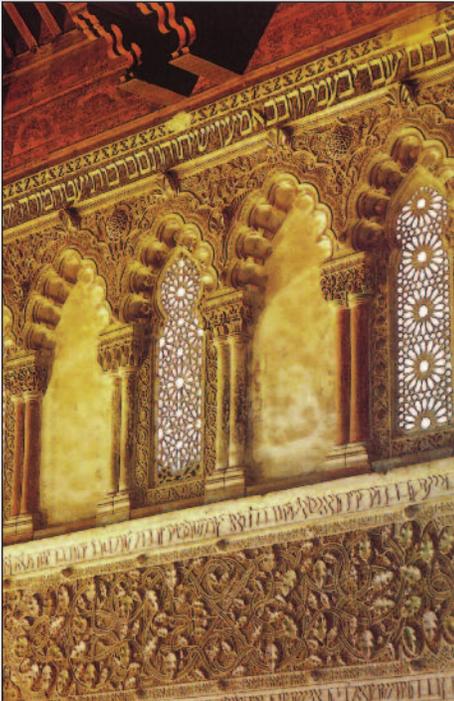
Day 10 – Sunday - Return Home

Today you will be driven to Madrid's International Airport for your flight back home.



The Sephardic Exodus in the Land of the Conquistadores

LAND PACKAGE INCLUDES



- Transfer from Madrid's Barajas International Airport to Toledo
- Comfortable Coach throughout your trip
- 4.5* and 4* Hotel Accommodations
- Daily Buffet Breakfast
- Portorage in each of the hotels
- Welcome and Farewell Dinner
- Shabbat in Toledo and Madrid
- Private Professional Guides in each city
- Entries to historic sites included
- Authentic 'Tablao' Flamenco Performance
- Transfer from Madrid to Barajas Intern'l Airport
- Hotels where you will staying:
 - Toledo : 4.5* Hotel Fontecruz
 - Hervas: 4* Hotel Hospederia Valle del Ambroz
 - Plasencia: 4* Parador de Plasencia
 - Madrid: 4* Hotel NH Nacional
- Land per person based on double occupancy US \$4,590
- Single Supplement US \$ 1,690

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