# MarinaBaixa **Newsletter**

Todays guest Speaker.

# **Dee Lane**

Life in a small village in The second world war. May 2021 Issue: 141





THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE



# President's Report. Things are now getting more norm

Things are now getting more normal it seems, this is the third month in a row that we have been able to hold our monthly meetings and some of our groups have also been able to take place. Now that border restrictions have also been lifted we are hopeful that we can have some day trips out. Margaret and Malcolm are busy researching.

Travel to and from the UK still appears to be a bit hit and miss, what with the border controls sometimes not accepting residencia cards and insisting on the "new" TIE, another reason to obtain these cards. Appointments for these are quite readily available in Alicante but not so much in Benidorm which is a pity as it is much easier to get to the Benidorm office than the Alicante one.

Hopefully self isolating on arrival in the UK will also be lifted shortly, especially if we can prove we have had both our COVID jabs with the expected Green Digital Certificate which apparently is coming out in early June.

John and I have our fingers (and toes) crossed that we will make it back to the UK later this year to seen family and friends and maybe we might get some visitors over here, but in the meantime we have just got back from a 10 day break in sunny Ciudad Quesada, which was a very pleasant change of scenery, not a pine tree in sight, and a break from housework. Now that the borders have opened we can venture further afield and explore more of this beautiful country we have settled in, revisiting some favorite places and exploring some new ones. Stay safe everyone, till June hasta luego



At the time of publication today we have now signed up 41 members who will have received this digital version of the latest newsletter via the U3A WhatsApp group.

# Its not to late for you too join!

To register for this version simply take a photo with your mobile phone of the QR code opposite and then just accept the invitation to join the new group.

That's it then you're all set to receive the newsletter every month directly to your mobile telephone or tablet device. If you still require a printed version please order it direct from today. u3aterry@gmail.com

With Wi-Fi or mobile data enabled hold your phone camera over the QR image below to join the U3A newsletter what's app newsletter group.







Today - 1pm for 1.30pm
Lunch
Oasis Restaurant
La Nucia

Cost: € individual per person.
Please indicate to

# **Hazel Layt**

our events co-ordinator on arrival at the meeting If you will be joining us for lunch.

Today.





Confirmed date: Friday 18th June 2021.

Bodegas D. Flotentino Perez in Casas De Juan Nunes and Miguelito Ruiz de la Roda

We have had a long wait for this! This bodega is situated just a few kilometres outside the Valencian border which is now open.

The price includes lunch in the very spacious Bodega restaurant as well as a guided tour. Malcolm and I will be collecting payments at Monday's May general meeting.

We have also decided to collect payments at a quiet bar in Albir. El Patio is located on Calle Manuel de Falla, next to the Three Lions pub across the road from Dealz. We will be there on Tuesday June 1st and Wednesday 9th June between 11am and midday.

We will continue to use temperature checks, social distancing and wearing masks on the coaches until Covid restrictions are lifted.

#### **Extremadura Holiday in March 2022**

At todays general meeting on the 24th of May we will be taking names of members who are interested in joining this trip next year. We expect the holiday to be the same or similar to the one planned for March 2020. We will have details of all the visits, which Joan Flint kindly wrote details of, for you to see at the meeting today it is also available on the website along with the Newsletter. See supplement attached (digital version only).

All meals are included from lunch en route to Caceres and lunch on the final day. We even have our own tour guide from when we arrive in Caceres! Malcolm and I think it will be the best holiday we have offered so far.

We will continue to use temperature checks, social distancing and wearing masks until Covid restriction are completely lifted. Hopefully, there will be no restrictions by then!

Please contact us, not our secretary, if you are interested.

Margaret: 602 293 642 Malcolm: 604 537 275

Email: u3amhamer45@gmail.com

#### **Your Contact Details.**

We currently maintain a database with every single members details, which is kept secure for data protection purposes.

If any member has changed any of the following, telephone number, email or res-

idential address over the past few years or so please let our new secretary have their updated details. We particularly need this information if you go any on any organised trips or events to



contact info!

comply with the terms of our policies and procedures within U3A.

#### Solo Amigos.

The members of the Solo Amigos are so sorry to see Liz leaving for England. She has done a sterling job of organising coffee mornings and lunches at some lovely places. We are having a farewell lunch at Opera in Altea on Friday 28th May. Any further information call Jane Goode on Tel: 636410858.

### Strollers.

16 members met on Sunday Afternoon, 2nd of May at the 'Old Market Car Park' in Altea for our planned 'Stroll' around the Rio Algar at Altea.

We kept our COVID distancing and set off along the southern bank heading inland enjoying the really good weather and the wonderful local countryside. After stopping to read local wild life notices we crossed the river. A nice steady flow was observed. (no recent heavy rain inland) We then followed the road up a slight rise then a country path with excellent views over the well overgrown flora and orange groves toward the village of Cap Negret, over the tram line crossing at the tram stop and then on back to our starting point car park. Walking through this quaint little village toward the river crossing where most of us stopped to admire the beautiful river estuary where the local wildlife can be occasionally observed.

On nearing our destination car park, many of us took the option, of rather than finishing our stroll here where we started, to carry on toward the beach area, past the interesting and popular local metal art works to the English café 'Lock Stock' for a well earned drink. Once that was over we made our way back to the car park.

A fine time was had by all during this first proper U3A Stroll this year thanks to the recent easing of COVID restrictions.

# Wine and Dine at Casa del Mar de Espania.

Twenty six members attended our most recent Wine and Dine event.

From a set menu everyone had an enjoyable time as you can see from the pictures below.



In the pictures below you will see that Hazel Layt is in a wheelchair.

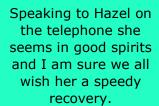
Hazel took a bit of a tumble a few weeks ago landing very awkwardly damaging all the tendons in her foot. The recovery will be slow about 8 or 9 weeks.





Hazel has since had a further set back after falling from her bed on hearing the doorbell ring.

She landed face down on a tiled floor and now has black eyes and bruising to her face.



Elaine Mitchell has very kindly stepped in to run Hazels craft group temporarily.







#### Art Exhibition.

# After todays meeting pop along to the art exhibition here at the Casa de Cultura.

A small group of six amateur artists have an exhibition they call themselves "Art Amigos".

Of these six, four of them are U3A members. There will be just short of 100 paintings on display in watercolours, acrylics and water soluble oils.

This exhibition is open from 8.30 -14.00 and 17.00 - 22.00 until this Friday. Please call in.

#### New group idea

Proposed computer group. With a few more members we will be in a better position to proceed further to forming the group, discussion of the format, place and timing etc bearing in mind the need for a good internet connection!

If you feel you could join this group please let me know or Margaret Hamer. We are hoping to encompass use of app driven mobile phones as well!!

**Garry Bell** 

# Last Month's winner of the newsletter competition.



**Barbara Knapton** wins six bottles of wine after being selected as winner from all the correct entries.

Thank you to everyone who took part.



# Some More Funnies this month





I think your child is dead

I've come to the conclusion that I have a memory like an Etch-A-Sketch...
I shake my head and forget everything!



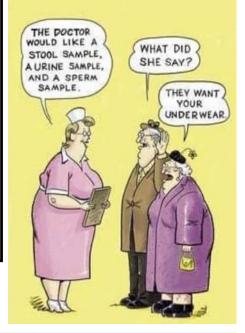
A huge thanks to everyone who keeps sending me in the humorous but sometimes a bit to risky content, for the newsletter.

I try to print everything that is suitable for publication so here's a few more this month.

At least I can have a real laugh and see everything which makes me smile so please keep sending them in.

Terry Read (Editor)





Old age is golden I've often heard it said, but sometimes I wonder as I crawl in my bed. With my ears in my drawer, my teeth in a cup and my eyes on a shelf until I wake up. When sleep dims my eyes I think to myself, is there anyhing else I should put on that shelf? The reason I know my youth has been spent, is my-get-up-and-go has got-up-and-went! But, I really don't mnd as I think with a grin, of all the fun places my get-up has been!





3C's Chaps Chatter & Coffee



Weekly - Thursdays M.Godoys Restaurant Albir 11.00 am New Venue & Time

Contact: Geoff Mitchell 96 686 4962

New Group ideas

"WANTED"



Café Philo



Monthly -10.00 am to 11.30 am Suspended until further notice.

The Forum, Alfaz del Pi Contact: Kate Ferry 96 584 5039 Classical Music



Monthly - (Oct to Apr) 2nd Wednesday Cancelled until further notice 10.30 am to 12.30 pm. Geoff Mitchell's home, Albir Contact: Geoff Mitchell 96 686 4962

Crafts



Weekly - Thursdays

Albir Social Centre 12.30 pm - 3.00 pm Contact: Hazel Layt 659 018 400

**Guitar Lessons** 



Weekly - Wednesdays

Next Door to Isa Rastro, N-332, Albir 4.00 pm Suspended until further notice.

Contact: Peter Ritson 96 687 5282

Member Assistance



On Demand

Support group for Members in special need.

Contact: Sue Bell 680 214 320

Backup: Maureen Barrett

688 680 645

Petanca



Weekly - Thursdays

Scandinavia Park
Alfaz del Pi 3.00 pm
Contact: Colin Wilson
684 424 588 or
Ruth Morris
663 562 316

Solo Amigos



At Various times Next Meeting TBA

See full details below.

Contact: Jane Goode 636 410 858

Spanish Culture



Bi-monthly (Oct to Apr)
2nd Wednesday

The Forum, Alfaz del Pi Contact: Elaine Mitchell 96 686 4962

Spanish Language



**Weekly - Wednesdays** Casa de Cultura, Alfaz Beginners:1.00-2.15 pm Improvers:2.30-3.45 pm

Contact: Joan Flint 96 680 8591

Strollers



**Monthly -**Next Strollers Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May See full details below.

Contact: Andy Graham 602 297 299

Ten-pin Bowling



Monthly -1st Tuesday Suspended until further notice.

7.15 pm for 7.30 pm start La Marina Centre, Finestrat Contact: Martin Greener 684 423 586 Watercolour



Monthly -1st Monday

11.00 am to 1.00 pm. Casa de Cultura, Alfaz Contact: Elaine Mitchell 96 686 4962 Coming Soon



Computer / smart phone support group.

Register your interest today. With **Garry Bell**.

## **Latest Group News**

Solo Amigos Group. Jane Goode has started a what's app group for communications. Contact Jane: 636 410 858

**Chaps & Chatter.** New venue M. Godoys Albir 11am Thursdays.

**Sunday Strollers**. Next stroll/picnic Monday 31st May taking place at. **Orcheta Embalsa** Time 2-00 for 2-30 start. Directions n332 towards Alicante, turn off Sella, Orcheta sign follow on towards Orcheta at sign for Vila Rugby turn left follow this road up to where it changes into limestone road keep on to top where you will find large car park, this is our meeting place you can come just for the picnic and or the various strolls that are available.

On my visit yesterday the picnic tables and chairs had been removed though I understand they were there a few weeks ago so it would be wise to bring your own!!

Andy has asked if anyone has a music system they could bring along?

#### **MARINABAIXA U3A**

U3A MARINA BAIXA IS A CHARITABLE, NON-PROFIT MAKING ASSOCIATION WHICH MEETS IN THE NORTH COSTA BLANCA AREA OF SPAIN.

IT COVERS THE AREAS OF ALBIR, ALFAZ DEL PI, ALTEA, BENIDORM, CALLOSA, FINESTRAT, LA NUCÍA, POLOP AND VILLAJOYOSA.

THE ASSOCIATION HOLDS ITS GENERAL MEETINGS AT THE CASA DEL CULTURA ALFAZ DEL PI

OUR GENERAL MEETINGS ARE ALWAYS HELD ON THE FOURTH MONDAY OF THE MONTH. @ 11AM.

If you have not heard of this Association and would like to join you can be assured of a warm wecome. Please visit the website www.u3amarinabaixa.com

To find out more information there is also a Facebook page. Alternatively please contact the secretary Kathleen Bailey at U3AMBSEC@GMAIL.COM for more information.



Please see the attached supplement regarding the Extremadura trip planned for March 2022

This detailed information regarding the holiday was produced by Joan Flint.



Valencian region vaccine rollout really begins to pick up pace. People in age groups up to 56 yrs are now being called.

Currently in Spain vaccine doses are being distributed to approximately 360,000 people per day. This has very quickly improved over the last few weeks with plenty of supplies of vaccines now available.

Make sure your Spanish mobile number is registered with your health centre this is how you will be contacted.

#### **Committee Members 2021**

#### **Ruth Morris**

President / Speaker Co-ordinator

Tel: 663 562 316

email: ruthonroad@yahoo.co.uk

#### **Elizabeth Potter**

Vice President / Charity Co-ordinator

Tel: 965 882 572 or 677 698 860 email: liz.potter@live.com

#### **Kathleen Bailey**

#### Secretary / Almoner

Tel: 965 845 803 or 615 745 366 email: u3ambsec@gmail.com

#### Anne McGrath

#### Treasurer

Tel: 691 048 285

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#### **Margaret Hamer**

## Travel Co-ordinator

Tel: 602 293 642

email: u3ahamer@gmail.com

#### **Malcolm Hamer**

#### **Assistant Travel Co-ordinator**

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#### **Hazel Layt**

#### Social and Events Co-ordinator

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#### **Terry Read**

#### **Newsletter Editor / Webmaster**

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email: u3aterry@gmail.com

#### **Garry Bell**

#### **Groups Co-ordinator**

Tel: 680 214 320

susanandgarrybell@gmail.com

## Pamela Dawson Tasker

#### **Press Officer**

Tel:

email: pdawson802t@cv.gva.es

### Group Leaders. (Contact Details)

#### Chaps & Chatter or Classical Music.

**Geoff Mitchell**. Tel: 966 864 962

#### Café Philo.

Kate Ferry. Tel: 965 845 039

#### Crafts.

Hazel Layt. Tel: 659 018 400

#### **Guitar Lessons**

Peter Ritson. Tel: 966 875 282

#### Members Assistance.

Sue Bell. Tel: 680 214 320

#### Petanca.

Ruth Morris. Tel: 663 562 316

#### Solo Amigos

Jane Goode. Tel: 636 410 858

#### Spanish Culture.

Elaine Mitchell. Tel: 966 864 962

# Spanish Language.

Spanish Language.

Joan Flint. Tel: 966 808 591

#### Sunday Strollers .

Andy Graham. Tel: 602 297 299

#### Ten Pin Bowling.

Martin Greener. Tel: 684 423 586

#### Watercolour Group.

Elaine Mitchell. Tel: 966 864 962

# Extre ladura

Lying in southwestern Spain, Extremadura is bordered to the north and east by <u>Castile and Leon</u>, to the south by <u>Andalucia</u>, and to the west by Portugal.

In Roman times, Extremadura was an important part of the Iberian peninsula. it lay astride the Via Delapidata, a major trade route for the commerce of tin and copper, that crossed Roman Iberia from the north coast to the south. Renamed Via de la Plata or Ruta de la Plata in mediaeval times, the route is today both a long-distance hiking route, and a vaguely defined tourist trail, running through Extremadura from north to south. The



region is also crossed by the main route leading between Madrid and Lisbon.



Extremadura, to many Spaniards, means ham. The Extremadura sierra is the only place in the country which supports the pure-bred lberian pig, source of the best jamón serrano. For its ham to be as highly flavoured as possible, the pig is allowed to roam wild and eat acorns for several months of the year. The village of Montánchez between Cáceres and Mérida produces ham considered to be the King of hams but the authentic product is extremely expensive. A few thinly cut slices often costing as much as an entire meal. The local wine pitarra is an ideal accompaniment.

On Wednesday there will be an opportunity to taste the Ibérian ham and receive a free bottle of wine!

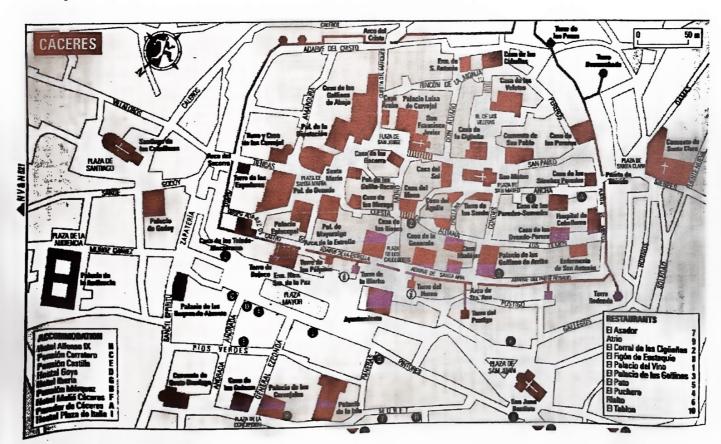
Cáceres (Monday) has an almost perfectly preserved walled town, the Ciudad Monumental (Monumental City). Narrow cobbled streets twist and climb among ancient stone walls lined with palaces, mansions, arches and churches, while the skyline is decorated with turrets, spires, gargoyles and enormous storks' nests. Protected by defensive walls, it has survived almost intact since the 16th century.

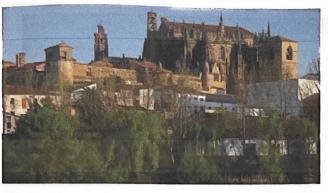
The Plaza Mayor is just outside its walls and is one of Spain's most beautiful public squares. From here pass through the low **Arco de la** 



Estrella built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and to the left is the imposing Casa de Toledo Moctezuma with its domed tower. Walking straight ahead you reach the Plaza de Santa Maria, considered to be the most impressive of the old town's three main squares flanked by the Casa de los Golfines de Aba, the Palacio Episcopal and the Gothic church of Santa Maria – Cáceres's finest church.

At the highest point in the town is the Plaza de San Mateo where can be found the church of San Mateo, another Gothic structure with fine chapels, and the Casa de la Cigüeña (House of the Stork), whose narrow tower was the only one allowed to be preserved when the rest were removed by royal decree. It is now a military installation and soldiers are not too happy about photographs being taken!. On the other side of the square note the family crests on the Casa del Sol, and indeed many of the other buildings within the walls. Just behind, in the Plaza de las Veletas, is the Casa de Veletas which houses the Museo de Cáceres (closed on Mondays and from 2.30-4.00 pm Tuesday to Saturday). Note the balustrade here made from Talavera ceramic jugs. From here a footbridge leads to the Art Museum Casa de los Caballos (House of horses). Other buildings worth mentioning are the Casa de los Golfines de Arriba and the Casa del Mono (House of the Monkey) – now a library adorned with grotesque gargoyles and a stone monkey chained to the staircase in the courtyard.

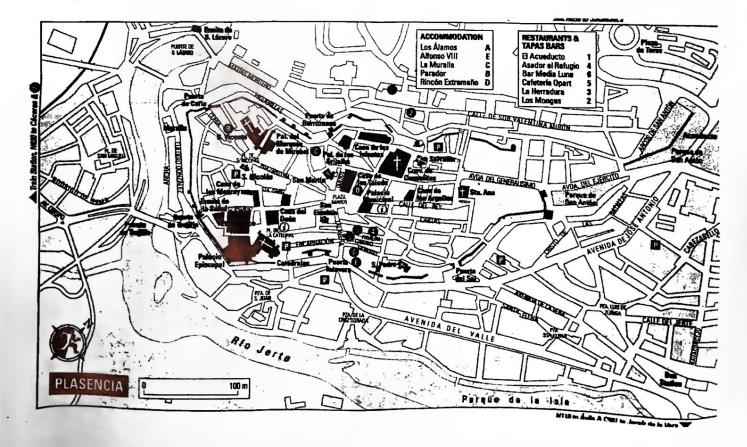




Tuesday morning a visit to the Jerte Valley to see the cherry trees. After lunch off to Plasencia which is an ancient city sitting in a loop of the Rio Jerte. It is surrounded by medieval walls. These were built in 1198 and incorporated seventy towers and eight gates as well as an Alcazar. Most, though not the Alcazar, remain however a lot of the walls have been used as the back walls of houses and so much is hard to see.

One of the main gateways into the town is the impressive Puerta de Trujillo o de La Salud. Step through here and you are in the heart of the old town which largely dates to the 15th century when noblemen of the region moved here and built palaces, imposing houses and religious buildings. Once through the gate there is one of the main sights in Plasencia - the two cathedrals which are built back to back. The older one, the cathedral Vieja is Romanesque and contains a museum with works by Ribera. The newer cathedral, the 16th century Catedral Nueva is an unfinished gothic cathedral. Builders had various difficulties with the construction and in the end just bricked up the open end. Inside though take a look at the Renaissance choir stalls carved by Rodrigo Aleman. Also by here is the beautiful Casa Consistorial built in the 16-18th centuries. Its simple facade with rows of arched windows is very elegant. Another historic building is the 15th century Convent of San Vincente Ferrer which is built on the site of a Jewish synagogue in the old Jewish quarter. It has a beautiful cloister with a Mudejar ceiling. The convent has been converted into the Parador of Plasencia and is a stunning hotel with a wealth of original architectural features.

The Palace of Mirabel has a lovely patio and garden and a collection of Roman busts and altar stones to see. Another lovely courtyard you can visit is in the distinctive red coloured Casa de los Varona y Vargas. Walking round the old centre is very pretty and there are some amazing buildings. It is very quiet however and for a bit more activity head to the main square of Plasencia, the Plaza Mayor, which is a lively one - especially on Tuesdays when Plasencia has an excellent weekly market. The Plaza Mayor is also a good spot to head for for cafés and tapas bars. The town hall is also in the square. The Museo Etnográfico Textil Provincial is situated in a 14th century hospital. It contains a good selection of colourful local costumes and crafts.



Mérida (Wednesday morning including Ibérico ham tasting, lunch at hotel and afternoon free in Cáceres))

The capital of Extremadura, Merida was one of the most famous Roman capitals of the Iberian Peninsula and features some of the best preserved Roman ruins in Europe .Extremadura was held to be the traditional boundary between Moorish and Christian Spain. Merida itself was passed between Christian, Moorish, and even Portuguese control. It's a fabulous place to walk. Like Rome (only much smaller!) archaeology pops up in the



strangest corners, and the Moorish influence adds a grace of its own to the town.

The Roman Theatre The Roman Theatre (Teatro Romano) is the jewel of Merida's Roman heritage. It was built in 18 BC and 6000 people could be seated here.

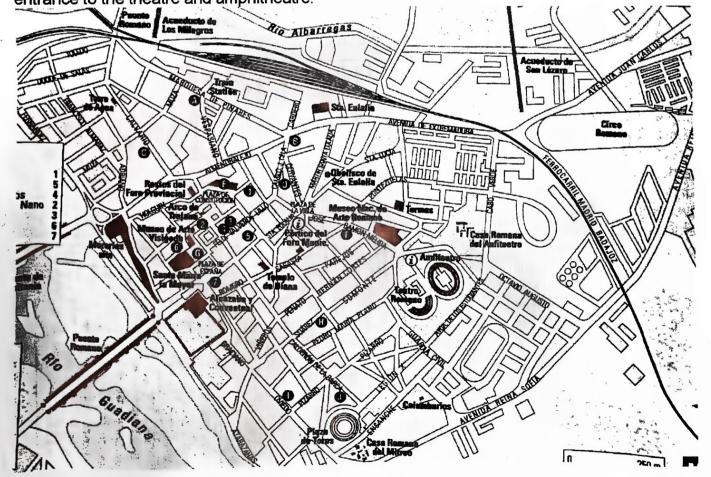
The Aqueducts There is over 5 miles of aqueduct running though Merida and the Acueducto de los Milagroson on the northwest side of town is the most complete and feeds two nearby manmade lakes.

The Roman Bridge Consisting of 64 Granite arches, the longest in Roman Spain, it's now a footbridge over the Guadiana river. The modern bridge you see behind it was used to take the load off the ancient one; it wasn't until 1993 that the Roman bridge was decommissioned as the main entrance into town for vehicle traffic.

**Temple of Diana** In the centre of the town in the Plaza de España is a strange looking Roman ruin consisting of several columns. In the 17th century, a nobleman built a rather large residence inside the columns, using four of them in the construction of the house itself.

The Alcazaba The Alcazaba, constructed in 835 from the remains of a Roman fort, is located near the Roman Bridge, which it was designed to protect. There are good views from the top.

Museo Nacional de Arte Romano (National Museums of Roman Art) The Museum, opened in 1986, provides a beautiful display of antiquities used by the Romans. It's located in front of the entrance to the theatre and amphitheatre.



**Trujillo** (Thursday morning with lunch in restaurant) The town preserves its history in two areas: the medieval "village," of Arabic origin, and the "city" from the 15th and 16th centuries.

The city is structured around the **Plaza Mayor** with its bronze-cast statue of Pizarro on horseback. In the 16th century it became a noble plaza, since the conquistadors and diverse families from the nobility began to build houses and palaces in it. Around the square are the **San Francisco** (1600), **Santa Clara** (late 15th century) and **San Martín** 

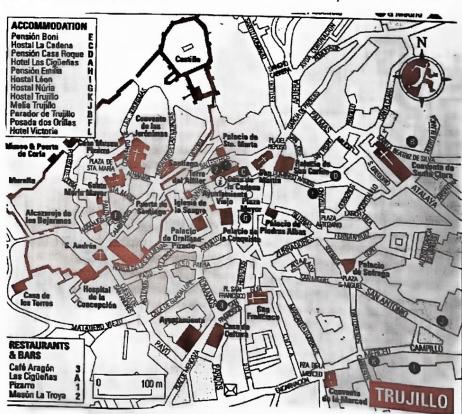


Churches. The temple, with only one nave and vault, houses various Renaissance side chapels. Also, there are many palaces and manor houses (16th-18th centuries) that are characterized by their angular balconies. The **Palace of the Dukes of San Carlos** (16th century), for example, has this typical angular balcony. Behind the main façade an interior patio is hidden with two levels and porticos with Tuscan columns.

The Palace of the Marquis of Piedras Albas is another notable building among those that face the plaza. This Renaissance mansion has so-called "bread" colonnades and is notable for its three segmented arches. One of the most outstanding in the area is the Palace of the Marquises of the Conquista. On the cobblestone streets that leave from the plaza there are other notable residences such as the House of the Royal Peso or of the Chaves Cárdenas, Gothic with Renaissance additions, or the Palace of Juan Pizarro of Orellana, from the 16th century. Meanwhile, the Citadel of the Altamiranos was erected starting in the 13th century. The main gate stands out, dating from the 16th century, flanked by two crumbling towers.

The "village" is enclosed by a wall marked by 17 towers, the remains of the Citadel of the Bejarano and the Jerónimas lookout. On one end is the **Arabian Caliphate Castle** (mid-9th century, expanded in the 12th century) rising dominant over the city., in the centre, churches such as **Santa María la Mayor** (13th to 16th century), **Santiago** (13th to 17th century) and **Vera Cruz** (13th century), and manor houses. The **Santa María Temple** is considered to be one of the most beautiful examples of the Romanesque style in Trujillo. The building, constructed atop an old mosque, has many medieval portals on the outside and a tower from the late Romanesque period. Inside, the vaults that cover the structure of three naves can be admired, as well as an

outstanding Gothic altarpiece made in 1480 and which is considered to be one of the best in Extremadura. The Santiago Church located next to the gate of the city of the same name, has a semicylindrical apse and a tower left over from the original construction. The Arabian Caliphate Castle rises dominant over the city. Trujillo shares the most representative dishes of the region with the rest of Extremadura. Products derived from Iberian pig are outstanding, as well as dishes such as caldereta (a stew with sheep or goats meat), migas (with a bread base), etc.



# Guadalupe (Thursday afternoon)

Guadalupe is a historic village, with cobbled streets and traditional homes, filled with valuable monuments, like the Sanctuary-Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe, declared World Heritage site. Since its foundation, the Monastery became one of the main pilgrimage centres in the Peninsula. It was also the stage of significant events, like the audience that the Catholic Monarchs granted Christopher Columbus to give him the caravels that would take him on his journey to the New World.



1 2 Miles 12

Inside there are two outstanding **cloisters**, one Gothic and one Mudejar and a pavilion that exhibits the transition from Gothic to Mudejar. Located in the central **Plaza de Santa María**, the fountain of Tres Caños is a reminder of one of the historical milestones of La Puebla, since it was in this square that the first Indians brought by Columbus from his second journey to America were baptised.

Across from the Monastery is the **old hospital of San Juan Bautista** (15th century), now a Parador. Throughout its existence, the building received thousands of pilgrims that travelled to Guadalupe. It was also an important School of Medicine, where many of the doctors that worked for the Royal Court were trained.

Main Street (**calle Mayor**) is the main artery in a network of cobbled streets lined with traditional homes that have wooden balconies, porticoes and porches and it connects the higher and lower parts of the city.

Guadalupe is a great showcase of the regional cuisine. Dishes such as Iberian sausages, "ajoblanco" (a cold soup with almonds, garlic, bread and olive oil), "migas" (breadcrumbs with Spanish sausage and bacon), lamb stew and "Father-Pedro-style" chicken. Wines with the label Designation of Origin-Ribera del Guadiana go very well with any of these dishes.

# Alcántara (Friday morning, lunch at hotel)

The town was built on a rock above the southern bank of the <u>Tagus (Tajo) River</u> just east of the Portuguese frontier. The walled town was named by the Moors after the sixarched Roman bridge <u>Al-Qantarah</u> (Arabic: "The Bridge"), which spans the Tagus. Built in AD 105–106 in honour of the emperor <u>Trajan</u>, the bridge, 670 feet (204 metres) long, was destroyed by the Moors in 1214 but was restored in 1543 and many times since. It has been called "one of the

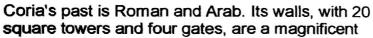


noblest Roman monuments in Spain." In 1218 Alcántara was given to an order of knights who, upon being given the town by Alfonso IX, took its name for their order. In addition to the bridge, notable landmarks include the church of Santa María de Almocóbar, dating from the 13th century, and that of San Benito (1576), which belonged to the convent (now in ruins).

The Romans built many wooden bridges, but none has survived, and their reputation rests on their masonry bridges. One beautiful example is the bridge here at <u>Alcántara</u>. The arches, each spanning 29 metres (98 feet), feature huge arch stones (<u>voussoirs</u>) weighing up to eight tons each. Typical of the best stone bridges, the voussoirs at Alcántara were so accurately shaped that no <u>mortar</u> was needed in the joints. This bridge has remained standing for nearly 2,000 year

# Coria (Friday afternoon)

The stone bridge, a civil architecture project from the Renaissance, stands over a riverbed that is dry since 1590, when the Alagón river was naturally diverted from its course as a result of a powerful flood.





example of Roman defence architecture from the 2nd to 4th centuries, preserving still some of their original funerary steles on them. The 15th-century castle still has its keep standing, as well as the "castillejo", a bastion. The cathedral was built in a variety of styles, given the long time it took to complete, which began in the 15th century in Gothic-Renaissance style.

Other outstanding buildings from the town's monumental heritage are the 15th-century convent of Madre de Dios (Mother of God), located within the confines of the wall; the episcopal palace, built in 1626; the church of Santiago, from the 16th century, with a Mannerist reredos, and images from the 16th to the 18th centuries; the royal prison, present site of the City Museum; the ecclesiastical prison, built in 1760; and a botanical garden in the outskirts.

Saturday morning is free with lunch at hotel before returning to Albir in the afternoon.