

# Nerja History Group — Valencia

After the restrictions of the pandemic, on 23rd January, 34 of us of mixed nationalities, left for the long awaited trip to Valencia. Nerja History Group - Historic Sights and Gastronomic Delights in Valencia. We stopped outside Granada for our breakfast and then continued onwards. The route was slightly inland and we passed places such as Baza, which we have visited on a day trip previously.

We stopped for lunch, which we thoroughly enjoyed - the first of our gastronomic delights! We continued on, arriving at our 4 \* hotel at approx 6pm. After a time for unpacking and some r&r, we met for a welcome glass of cava in the piano bar - it has the longest piano we'd seen but sadly, no-one from our group could play. Then we had a lovely dinner in the hotel and a good night's sleep.

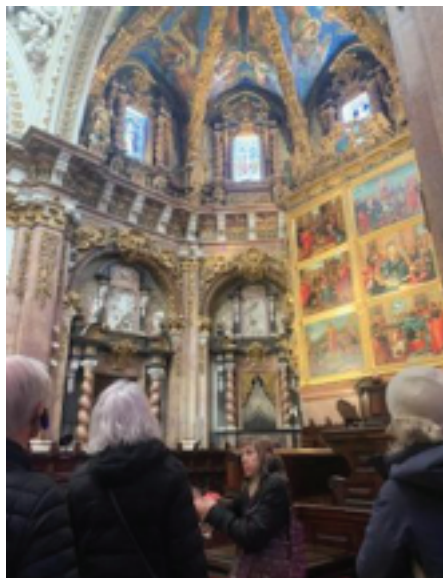
After an excellent buffet breakfast, we met our guide, Angela and were each issued with a whisperer ear piece, before embarking on our tour of the old City. We passed the bullring, which is still in use on occasions and went inside the modernist jewel, Estacion del Norte, (North railway station) which has stunning tiles. We then walked towards the Plaza Ayuntamiento, stopping to hear about the architecture and on to the Plaza Reina where Angela then guided us through the Gothic Cathedral of Valencia, built on a Roman temple, later a mosque. Inside, we quite literally found the Holy Grail, so we are led to believe. Other delights were original paintings by Goya and Caravaggio. We then indulged in the best hot chocolate and churros in town at Valor.



*Fan being hand painted*

We continued on to see various churches, the outside of the ceramics museum which has a wonderfully impressive facade and spent a short time in the municipal market, which is highly decorated.

We also saw fans being handpainted - fascinating. We then moved on to the building of the silk exchange, which has extraordinary pillars within and is surrounded by lovely gardens. Our morning walking tour of the old town finished at Restaurant El Forcat, famous for paella. We had a three-course lunch - most of us enjoyed a taste of three different rice dishes: original paella, black



*Inside Valencia Cathedral*

rice from squid ink and a seafood paella. The rest of the day was free. Some people chose to visit the Art Museum, others the Ceramics Museum. Everyone chose places to eat and how to spend the rest of the evening.

On the third day, after breakfast, we boarded the bus for a panoramic tour on our way to the iconic City of Arts and Sciences which was designed by the avant-garde, Valencian architect, Santiago Calatrava. It is regarded as one of the 12 treasures of Spain. It's quite a spectacular artistic creation, the contrast between the two parts of the city could not be more stark. We walked through the interactive science museum, outside once again, were told about the motive for Calatrava's vision - his love of water, his love of nature, etc. We had a guided visit of the wonderful Opera House and we had the great pleasure

of being able to experience its unique acoustics as we were able to hear a few minutes of exquisite orchestral practice. After a coffee break, we wandered through the city, looking at structures and



*Group with Angela*

lakes leading to the CaixaForum which is a multi-purpose space for culture, enabling exhibitions, conferences, etc to take place, sponsored by Caixa bank. Sadly, we didn't have time to visit each of the six buildings but those we visited and the overall view of the city were truly memorable.

We boarded the bus for a tour of the Port area before alighting in the Cabanyal district which has lovely old houses and where we had a tapas lunch at Casa Montana, an old winery from 1836, where we enjoyed a menu of six traditional tapas. Our bus took us back to the hotel where there was time for a rest before meeting at 8pm for a short walk to our evening restaurant. Alma del Temple is an extraordinary minimalist restaurant, displaying a mix of ages from a second-century BC Roman to a 12th C Arab wall and Gothic arches - an ideal setting for a Spanish history group! The food was delicate and delicious. The next morning, we departed for Nerja.

We stopped for a coffee and then continued to the Parador in Mojacar for lunch. Once again, an excellent meal in their lovely glassed dining room on the first floor, overlooking the sea. We boarded the bus for our return to Nerja, many enjoying an afternoon siesta, arriving in Nerja at 6.30pm.

Judging by the comments received and subsequent messages, it seems all enjoyed the trip and are asking "where to next?". The full article of this and previous trips is available on our website [www.nejahistorygroup.com](http://www.nejahistorygroup.com).

**Meetings with guest Speaker are held monthly Oct-April in The Cultural Centre, Nerja. For further information email: [nerjahistorygroup@yahoo.com](mailto:nerjahistorygroup@yahoo.com)**