

Dreaming in La Mancha

An unforgettable adventure in the land where dreaming became art



Take a Magical Journey in the Footsteps of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza

Given its astounding number of representations in popular culture—ranging from children’s cartoons to TV and film adaptations to melodramatic Broadway musicals to grandiose operas and ballets—there is little doubt that Miguel de Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* (1605-1615) has staked its claim to being one of the most influential pieces of literature in the history of the written word. What is it about the amusing and whimsical tales of the “knight of the woeful countenance” that continues to resonate through the ages with artists and audiences alike? Perhaps the answer to that question, much like the illusory visions of the title character, is one that is unique to each dreamer.

“Dreaming” will, in fact, be our central theme as we journey together through the rugged beauty of La Mancha to seek out the locations—both the evident and the more enigmatic—that undoubtedly inspired this masterpiece of literature. Our quest will be to

uncover something of the mystery and excitement of the fascinating era known as the “Siglo de Oro”—The Spanish Golden Age—from the land, the rich history, and the subtle details in the text of the novel itself. Together we will explore the historical background of the author, including the social, political, and religious milieu of the times in which he lived, as we traverse the evocative region he chose as the setting of his masterpiece. Our reward will be to gain a richer appreciation of this influential work that sits at the apex of the world literary canon.

Join us for an enchanting week of wandering down cobblestone lanes through majestic medieval cities, exploring picturesque byways and rustic villages, discovering stunning, off-the-beaten-path locales, and, perhaps, even coaxing our own imaginations enough to glimpse two silhouettes on a distant hillside while we delight in their dalliance with windmills.



Tour Itinerary Overview

May 28: Tour begins in Madrid, Spain
May 29: Madrid - Alcalá de Henares - Madrid
May 30: Madrid - Esquivias - Toledo
May 31: Toledo - Puerto Lápice - Consuegra - Almagro

June 1: Almagro - Argamasilla - El Toboso - Alarcón
June 2: Alarcón - Teruel - Zaragoza
June 3: Zaragoza - Barcelona
June 4: Tour ends in Barcelona, Spain

Day to Day Tour Summary

Day 1: Sunday, May 28

Arriving in Spain's majestic capital, Madrid, this morning, you are greeted by your Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director who provides assistance with your hotel check-in. You are free to relax or explore until this afternoon when we convene with our Tour Leader, Professor Ilan Stavans, for a meet-and-greet reception before setting off on a walking tour of the historic center of Madrid guided by a local expert. The highlight of the tour will be our visit to the Convent of the Barefoot Trinitarians where we pay homage to the writer whose seminal work is the reason for our coming together. The tale of why Miguel de Cervantes chose to have his remains interred at this humble abode of peaceful worship and how they were only quite recently rediscovered creates fascinating and revealing overtures to the journey that lies ahead of us. This evening you join fellow sojourn members and Professor Stavans for the opening reception and keynote address followed by our welcome dinner. An informal after-dinner gathering is offered for those who wish to enjoy conversation and a nightcap. (R, D)

Day 2: Monday, May 29

Following our daily briefing, we depart Madrid by bus to visit the picturesque town of Alcalá de Henares, the birthplace of Cervantes and a UNESCO World Heritage site. The streets, squares, churches and convents in



Madrid's Stunning Almudena Cathedral

the historic town are all redolent of the Spanish Golden Age and impart a vision of what life would have been like in Castilian Spain four centuries ago. Our visit takes us to both the church where Cervantes was baptized and the house where he was born. The décor and furnishings of Cervantes' house, which is also a museum, provide a fascinating, authentic depiction of a mid-sixteenth-century Spanish household. The museum also houses an impressive array of early editions of *Don Quixote*, which presents an opportunity for Professor Stavans to share with us how the rich prose of Cervantes' writing fundamentally changed the Spanish language. After lunch, we return to Madrid for tours of the renowned Prado Museum and the famous Royal Armory. The latter's exquisite collection of medieval armor allows Professor Stavans to expand on some important themes from the novel, including knight errantry and the laws of chivalry. Following our visit, the evening is free for you to explore the city's multitude of culinary and cultural delights. Be sure to ask your tour director for excellent dining suggestions. (B)

"We were somewhat apprehensive to try an organized tour, but this experience was phenomenal."

-Barbara B., Annapolis, MD

Included meals are indicated in parentheses following each daily description:

B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner; R = Reception



Day to Day Tour Summary

Day 3: Tuesday, May 30

Departing Spain's capital this morning, we travel south toward the enigmatic City of Toledo. On the way, we drop by tiny Esquivias, the town where Cervantes was married to Catalina de Salazar y Palacios in 1584 and is widely held to be the locale where Cervantes was inspired to create some of the marvelous characters that would later populate the pages of *Don Quixote*. Our walking tour of Esquivias includes visits to the church where his nuptials took place and the Museum of Cervantes House. After lunch, we continue on to Toledo where we take an afternoon walking tour that reveals some of the rich heritage and prestige of this multi-layered city for us. After checking into our hotel, we enjoy several hours of free time to relax and explore before we gather for an engaging seminar dinner with Professor Stavans. (B, D)



Alcazar above the medieval San Martin bridge - Toledo

Day 4: Wednesday, May 31

Following our daily briefing, we set out to discover more of the rich and fascinating cultural heritage of Toledo under the careful stewardship of our Tour Leader, who introduces us to some of the city's remarkably eclectic attractions. Departing the historic city at midday, we travel to the village of Puerto Lápice where a lunch stop entices our imaginations to envision bygone Iberian days as we dine at the Venta del Quixote—famously portrayed in the novel as the

inn that Don Quixote mistakes for a castle and where he is dubbed a knight in the cobblestone courtyard. The Venta del Quixote is unique for retaining the authentic look and charm of Spanish inns during the 17th century in La Mancha. After lunch, we take a short drive to the awe-inspiring Castle of Consuegra with its splendid array of gigantic windmills that unfold along the adjacent wind-swept hills. These imposing structures will certainly evoke images of one of the most iconic scenes to grace the pages of all of western literature, and one that Professor Stavans fondly recounts for us as we stand in their shadows. Our visit to the 13th-century castle with its rough-hewn stones and winding corridors presents us with the perfect setting to ponder how life inside such a fortress would have been centuries ago. We finish the day arriving at the elegant Parador de Almagro, a historic, 16th-century convent that has been painstakingly restored into a charming hotel. Following check-in, you are free to spend the evening as you see fit, perhaps taking a leisurely stroll around the illuminated grounds of the parador or perhaps wandering off to the allure of some Spanish culinary delights in Almagro's Plaza Mayor, just a short walk away. (B, L)



Statue of Cervantes in Alcalá de Henares



Day to Day Tour Summary

Day 5: Thursday, June 1

Departing Almagro this morning, we travel to the quaint town of Argamasilla de Alba where we visit the Cave of Medrano, reputed to be the place where Cervantes wrote some parts of his literary masterpiece while serving a prison sentence. Next, we journey southward to the remote Cave of Montesinos. It is here that a fascinating scene—often the topic of scholarly debate—from *Don Quixote* takes place. As we gather around the cave's mouth, Professor Stavans helps us reimagine that pivotal scene so that we may form our own opinions regarding the extraordinary dreams the hero experiences when he descends into the depths of the cave. Following our visit, we make a short getaway to a picturesque retreat along the shores of the lovely Ruidera Lakes where we enjoy a Scholarly Sojourns signature picnic—an idyllic setting in which to relax over tasty refreshments and good conversation. After lunch, we travel to the town of El Toboso, the home town of Don Quixote's idealized paramour, Dulcinea. Indeed, if not for his ardent passion for Dulcinea, our romantic hero may have never sallied forth on his glorious quest. For as Cervantes writes, “. . . a knight errant without a lady-love is a tree without leaves or fruit, a body without a soul.” During our exploration of the Museum House of Dul-



cinea, Professor Stavans highlights the significance of Don Quixote's elusive muse, while also making the connection to the prominent theme of courtly love in the novel. We conclude the day in the resplendent confines of the Parador de Alarcón, a magnificently renovated 8th-century Moorish castle ensconced atop a craggy promontory that casts its gaze across the sweeping fertile plain of the Jucar River. Having all of the rooms within Alarcón's formidable walls reserved solely for our group, we shall lord over the castle as we assemble for a magical evening that includes a sumptuous seminar dinner and delightful entertainment in a setting befitting royalty. (B, L, D)



Day 6: Friday, June 2

We travel northward today, wistfully leaving behind the rough, windswept landscapes of Castilla-La Mancha as we enter the region of Aragón, where we make our way to the vibrant and opulent city of Zaragoza, situated along the banks of the Ebro River. An exquisite blending of architectural styles from old-world and modern Spain intermix here among the lively Spanish boulevards and plazas. There will be no shortage of astounding structures to behold as we venture through the Old Quarter of the city marveling at the soaring towers of the Basilica of Our Lady of Pilar, a true gem of late 17th-century Baroque architecture, and the impeccable single tower of the nearby Cathed-



Day to Day Tour Summary

dral of San Salvador, built on a historic site that was once the forum during Roman occupation. As we make our way through the incredible labyrinth of streets and plazas, Professor Stavans calls to our attention that Zaragoza was an intended destination for Don Quixote and Sancho Panza until an interesting revelation is made regarding a spurious sequel to Cervantes' original publication. Truth be told, it may very well be that we have that fraudulent author to thank for the genuine second part of Cervantes' tour de force. Following our walking tour of the beautiful city, the remainder of the afternoon and evening are free to explore on your own, feast on the city's celebrated culinary offerings, and perhaps take in some of its festive nightlife. (B)

Day 7: Saturday, June 3

This morning we make our way eastward toward glorious Barcelona—picturesquely nestled upon the golden shores of the Mediterranean Sea. After checking in at our historic, city-center hotel, we set out on a guided walking tour of Barcelona's Old Quarter that introduces us to the mesmerizing architecture, seductive culinary flavors, and manifold cultural delights that have positioned the city as the preeminent travel destination in Spain. Together we take in some of the most iconic sites, including the sprawling thoroughfare known as The Ramblas, the soaring gothic cathedral, and La Boqueria—the city's celebrated central market.



A spectacular view of Barcelona



The majestic Basilica of Our Lady of Pilar and the Ebro River

Following some free time to explore on our own, this evening we rendezvous with our tour director and Professor Stavans for a pleasant reception followed by our sojourn's special farewell dinner. (B, R, D)

Day 8: Sunday, June 4

Our sojourn draws to a close today, but not before we make a few more important visits. First, we stop at a print shop, just as Don Quixote and Sancho Panza did in the novel. Here Professor Stavans illuminates the significance of book publishing in the 17th-century, particularly how the advent of the printing press served as the impetus for Romance and Chivalry novels to become commonplace reading during this age, which, by the way, is humorously parodied in *Don Quixote*. Our final destination is a visit to an antique book and manuscript dealer, where Professor Stavans shares with us some final thoughts and insights about Cervantes' beloved work and its indelible legacy on both Spanish and world literature. It is, perhaps, most fitting that our enchanting tour draws to a close along the shores of the sparkling, turquoise sea with a horizon as endless as our imaginations. For here, if we set our gaze just right, we may be able to spy two seemingly mismatched mounted figures riding off into the distant azure. (B)



Your Tour Leader Is an Internationally Recognized Author, Translator, and Publisher



Ilán Stavans, one of today's preeminent essayists, cultural critics, and translators, is Lewis-Sebring Professor in Latin American and Latino Culture and Five College-Fortieth Anniversary Professor at Amherst College. A native of Mexico, he has written numerous books and his play, *The Disappearance*, performed by the theater troupe Double Edge, premiered at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles and has been shown throughout the world. His story *Morirse está en hebreo* was made into the award-winning movie *My Mexican Shiva* (2007). Stavans has received multiple awards and honors, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, the National Jewish Book Award, the Southwest Children Book of the Year Award, an Emmy nomination, the Latino Book Award, Chile's Presidential Medal, the Rubén Darío Distinction, and the Cátedra Roberto Bolaño. Stavans is the publisher of Restless Books (www.restlessbooks.com) and the co-founder of Great Books Summer Program (www.greatbookssummer.com). His 2015 work, *Quixote: The Novel and the World* offers refreshing insights on the central themes at play in *Don Quixote* and has received international acclaim from both scholars and the public alike.

You travel from Spain's majestic capital, through Castilla-La Mancha to shining Barcelona

Stay in beautiful settings across Spain

Town	Region	Nights
Madrid	Madrid	2
Toledo	Castilla-La Mancha	1
Almagro	Castilla-La Mancha	1
Alarcón	Castilla-La Mancha	1
Zaragoza	Aragón	1
Barcelona	Catalonia	1

Legend

- Journeys by coach
- Overnight stops
- Intermediate stops





Stylish, Boutique Hotels and Historic Abodes Create the Perfect Atmosphere for Your Tour



The Principal—Madrid

Combining sophisticated elegance and modern design, the five-star Principal Hotel consistently ranks at the top of lists of Madrid's finest hotels. Its comfortable, modern rooms and a calm color scheme provide a tranquil haven in the heart of the city and its chic roof terrace is one of the most coveted spots in Madrid for a drink in summer. The Principal's prime, central location means that just about everywhere in the city is easily reached with a short walk.



Parador Alarcón—Castilla-La Mancha

A magnificently renovated 8th-century Moorish castle atop a craggy promontory with stunning views across the sweeping fertile plain of the Jucar River, Parador Alarcón offers luxury accommodation in an atmosphere that will transport you to the middle ages. Each of its rooms is opulently furnished with beautiful fabrics and traditional furnishings. The charming town of Alarcón has been declared an *Area of Artistic-Historical Importance* due to its beauty.



Sercotel Pintor El Greco—Toledo

Set within a renovated 17th-century bakery in the historic center of Toledo—a UNESCO World Heritage Site—Hotel Pintor El Greco is located just 150 feet from the El Greco Museum in Toledo's historic Jewish quarter. Offering a pleasing mix of classic and modern decor, this elegant, boutique hotel is just steps from all of Toledo's historic attractions, splendid dining and shopping, and colorful nightlife.

For a complete list of lodging on this tour, please visit www.scholarlysojourns.com.

The Highlights and Special Features of Your Tour

- Sojourn leader, Professor Ilan Stavans, is Lewis-Sebring Professor in Latin American and Latino Culture at Amherst College, and is also an internationally recognized author, translator, publisher, and TV personality
- Two days in Spain's capital Madrid, including a privately guided walking tour of its historic center
- A visit to Alcalá de Henares, the birthplace of Cervantes and a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Luncheon at a 17th-century "venta" (inn) much like those depicted in *Don Quixote*
- Visit to the scenic castle and windmills of Consuegra
- Three days exploring locales associated with *Don Quixote* amid the rugged beauty of the historic Castilla-La Mancha region
- A visit to the world-renowned Prado Museum
- An overnight stay and privately guided walking tour in the breathtaking city of Toledo, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- A night in the stunning Mediterranean city of Barcelona
- A Scholarly Sojourns signature picnic along the picturesque shores at Lagunas de Ruidera
- Overnight stays in the exquisite paradors of Almagro and Alarcón



Tour Details

Dreaming in La Mancha

Dates:

May 28—June 4, 2017 (Sojourn #1341722)

Price:

\$3,995/Person (Double Occupancy)

\$4,695/Person (Single Occupancy)

**Click here to
register online!**

Tour begins/concludes:

Madrid, Spain / Barcelona, Spain

Optional air package* :

\$1,299/Person

*Air package includes round-trip, economy airfare New York—Madrid/Barcelona—New York, airport transfers in Spain, and 100% travel insurance. Departures from other North American gateways also available. Price subject to change until booked.

Price Includes:

Eight-day travel program of sightseeing, tours, presentations, and discussions led by Ilan Stavans, 7 nights hotel accommodation in four and five-star, boutique hotels, meals as indicated on the day to day summary, opening and closing receptions, all entrance fees, visits, excursions, and sightseeing as noted in this detailed itinerary, private guides, ground transportation, the services of a dedicated Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director for the duration of the tour, all gratuities (except for hotel porters), and all other sojourn activities as described in the day to day summary.

Price Does Not Include:

Airfare; airport transfers; meals not indicated in this detailed itinerary; beverage options other than water, wine, beer, or soft-drinks with group meals; local transportation by bus, taxi, metro or light rail; passport or visa fees and necessary photos; immunizations; travel insurance; excess baggage charges; airport taxes; travel insurance, medical, hospitalization, or evacuation costs; gratuities for hotel porters; laundry; other personal items, including incidental hotel charges; any other item not specifically indicated.

Arrival and Departure Information

Meeting location:

The meeting point for this tour is The Principal Hotel in Madrid, Spain. Those making their own travel arrangements should plan to arrive at the hotel between noon and 2:00PM on Sunday, May 28, 2017. You will be greeted by your Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director who will assist you with check in.

Sojourn Start Time:

The tour program begins promptly 3:30 PM on Sunday, May 28, 2017. The first group activity will be a meet-and-greet reception in the hotel lounge followed directly by a guided walking tour of Madrid's historic center.

Sojourn Conclusion:

Your sojourn concludes at approximately 12:00 PM on Sunday, June 4th in Barcelona, Spain. An optional shuttle will be offered for those wishing to go directly to Barcelona Airport. If making your own flight/travel arrangements, please allow for enough time to travel to the airport after the program ends.

Early Arrival or Late Departure:

Scholarly Sojourns is happy to assist you with booking additional nights prior to the start of your tour or following its conclusion. Often we are able to secure better rates than are available to the general public.

Registration Information

To register or for further information:

Call us: 1-800-419-3443

We are ready to assist you Monday to Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM (EST).

Visit us at: www.scholarlysojourns.com

Here you will find an online registration form as well as a printable version. You will also find the most up-to-date details on this sojourn and all of the other programs offered by Scholarly Sojourns.

Other Information

Sojourn Combinations: Save \$250 per person and receive a free transfer between locations when you book two consecutive sojourns.

Please Note: The information presented here details this sojourn's planned activities, meals, accommodations, and starting/ending times. We reserve the right to make changes which will improve the program or when circumstances beyond our control necessitate such modifications. Prices are subject to change until booked. Complete terms and conditions are available at our website.



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