



***L'hachzir atara l'yoshna* - Restoring the (Sephardi) Crown  
(Cordoba, Almagro, Ciudad Real, Toledo, Madrid)**

**29th October – 2nd November 2026**



We return to Spain, a Jewish Journeys destination not visited for too long, and with a very clear sense that nothing remains static, since even the past changes, at least in our understanding. And so, on the one hand, this JJ charts a classic route from Cordoba, the very epicentre of the Sephardi experience (possibly of all diaspora story), and one time capital of the great *Umayyad* caliphate, through Toledo, the great symbol of *Convivencia*, the aspiration of Christians, Muslims and Jews to live alongside each other.

But obviously that is not the whole nor the honest story of Sephardi Spain. To do that, not only must we visit the dark side – Christian reconquest, expulsion, conversion etc - but most importantly ... today! A very different Jewish community has built itself in Madrid in the last hundred years, drawing in all that is absent from the classic version – Reform Judaism and Chabad.

And so, this is our JJ attempt to do what Rav Ovadiah Yosef imagined would be his task as Sephardi Chief Rabbi in Israel, *l'hachzir et ha'atara l'yoshna*, to restore the Sephardi crown to its rightful place.

## THE DETAILS:

**Price** will be £1115 per person sharing a double/twin room or £1410 for single occupancy. The price includes

- All transport during the trip but excludes your travel to and from Spain which is not included and is your responsibility.
- 4 nights hotel accommodation on a Bed and Breakfast basis, 2 evening meals, all entry fees and local co-ordinator and as usual will be led by Jeremy Leigh throughout.
- It does not include other meals or tips to local guides or drivers. We suggest that you budget 6 euros (or equivalent currency) per day for those tips which will be collected in cash.
- 

## HOTELS:

**Cordoba:**                      **Hotel Macia Alfaro 4\***  
<https://www.maciahoteles.com/en/maciaalfaros/>

**Toledo:**                        **Hotel Eurostars Toledo 4\***  
<https://www.eurostarshotels.com/eurostars-toledo.html>

Trip is based on a minimum of 30 participants. A non-refundable deposit of £200 per person is payable with your booking form. Balance of payment will be due by 29<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

We will be recommending flights from London to Spain and back once we confirm your place on the trip. There will be coach transfer for the return flight only back to Madrid airport.

## HOW TO BOOK:

To book please contact Marcel Manson at West End Travel. Tel: 07712 290520 [marcel.manson@westendtravel.co.uk](mailto:marcel.manson@westendtravel.co.uk)

**PLEASE DO NOT BOOK YOUR TRAVEL UNTIL THE TRIP AND YOUR PLACE ON IT ARE CONFIRMED.**

## **DRAFT ITINERARY**

**Thursday 29th October**

**Cordoba**

14.00 Meeting hotel Cordoba, introductions.

Walking tour of the Juderia (Puente Romano de Córdoba, Juderia, Mezquita, Maimonides statue, Synagogue, Piazza del Podro, Bab el Yahud). Literally walking the footsteps of history, we start a journey that takes us back to one of the most remarkable and life changing moments of Jewish history, the Muslim conquest of Spain in the early 8th century. Formally, this leads us to the sites that survive to remind us of those remarkable times. But questions remain ... a large quantity of tourist framing of this moment begins with the conclusions, a desire to create an idealized expression of Jewish – Muslim harmony. Our purpose is scratch a little more deeply for a sharper version of that time, and by definition, sharper questions for today.

18.00 Group dinner

O/n Cordoba

**Friday 30<sup>TH</sup> October**

**Al Andalus (Cordoba)**

09.30 Depart for Medina AlZahra:

By the 10th century, the glory of Al-Andalus was so firmly established, to the point that the Jews of Cordoba, living in the shadow of the palace of Abd-el Rahman III may have counted themselves the successful and developed community of the diaspora. Our visit to the palace, Medina alZahra is a chance to listen, explore and discuss the real meaning of that moment? What is a 'great Jewish community'? How safe is 'safe'? And who exactly was Hasdai Ibn Shaprut?

12.00 Return to Cordoba,

12.30 Break, Lunch

14.00 Walking tour continued.

18.30 Shabbat and Friday night dinner at Casa Mazal, centre for Andalucian Jewish culture and cuisine.

O/n Cordoba

**Saturday 31st October**

**Ciudad Real / Almagra / Toledo**

08.30 Departure from Cordoba. We punctuate the long drive northward (south to centre of the country) dropping in on the former Jewish towns of Almagra and Ciudad Real.

11.00 Spanish Jewry in crisis and transition. Nothing lasts forever, even the good times.

From the moment the Muslim armies conquered the Iberian Peninsula in the 8th century, Christianity fought back in the long campaign of the *Reconquista*. But the

campaign never really finished with the capture of territory. These two locations offer us sites and stories that highlight the great challenges faced by Jews in times of transition; to stay and adapt? to suffer? or to leave? Both cities offer the classic challenges of the Spanish Jewish trail.

13.00 Lunch

14.30 Almagra. More off the beaten track but no less challenging, with the full-blown story of *conversos* whose life experience would ultimately affect Jewry far beyond the village life of La Mancha.

16.00 Depart for Toledo

18.15 Check in hotel, Toledo

O/n Toledo

### **Sunday 1st November**

### ***Convivencia (Toledo)***

09.00 Walking tour of Toledo. Synagogue Santa Maria La Blanco, Synagogue El Transito – Samuel Ha-Lavi Museum; Toledo Cathedral

Outwardly, the jewel of Spanish Jewish tourism on account of having two preserved synagogues and a Jewish Museum. But more than that, Toledo was the location for that remarkable and endlessly complicated period in the 12th century, known as *Convivencia*, when theoretically three cultures (Jewish, Muslim and Catholic) cultures 'coexisted', at the heart of a powerful Catholic kingdom. This was the heyday of cultural transmission, through the famous Toledo school of translators. As well as seeing these jewels of the Spanish Jewish heritage trail, we will discuss the true meaning of coexistence.

13.00 Break, lunch

15.00 From past to present: Alcazar and the politics of the civil war.

17.00 Break

O/n Toledo

### **Monday 2nd November**

### **Madrid**

07.30 We depart early, to do a swift update, moving from Medieval to modern and the story of a new Jewish community, one that 'returned' against the backdrop of a very different history.

Medieval community, Plaza Isabella (Calle Independencia and Vergara); Modern community Synagogue Beit Yaacov.

13.00 Lunch, final sites

15.00 Finish

