

Thursday, September 15th
The Cathedral, Royal Chapel and old downtown of Granada
Only Companions

09:30h Departure from the congress venue (Sercotel Gran Hotel Luna de Granada).

During the trip for companions the Cathedral, Royal Chapel and old downtown of Granada will be visited.

CATHEDRAL

The construction of Granada Cathedral was begun by Queen Isabella immediately after the conquest of Granada on the site of the Mosque. Carlos V, always respectful to the memory of his ancestors, made sure that the Cathedral was built in accordance with desires of the Catholic kings. This cathedral is a masterpiece of Spanish Renaissance style, with impressive facades and a stunning interior with a grand altar and many chapels of different ages and styles, the most interesting being the chapel of “*Nuestra Señora de la Antigua*”. It is one of the largest cathedrals in the world.

The first stone of the Cathedral of Granada was laid in 1523 on the site of the ancient mosque. Its master builder was Enrique Egas. These works, concentrating on the foundations, lasted five years. Egas was replaced by Diego de Siloé, another Spanish master builder trained in Italy. His first decision was to change the Gothic style of Granada Cathedral to the Renaissance style. He persuaded the King to change the style, which was possible because what built Egas was only the foundations.

The Cathedral of Granada was left incomplete in its facade. Of the two towers planned only one was built and its height had to be lowered because the foundations for a Gothic cathedral could not resist the heavy mass of the tower.



Granada Cathedral



Burial monument of the Catholic Monarchs in the Royal Chapel

ROYAL CHAPEL

The Royal Chapel is located between Granada Cathedral, the old Fish Market and the Church of Sagrario. The construction of the Royal Chapel of Granada was ordered by the Catholic Monarchs in 1504 as a place of burial for their bodies. The Monarchs died before the chapel was finished, and their bodies rested in the convent of San Francisco de la Alhambra (today the “*Parador Nacional de Turismo*”) until the Royal Chapel was completed. Charles V was subsequently commissioned in 1521 to move the bodies of his grandparents to the newly completed chapel. Carlos V buried almost all the dead of the family in the Royal Chapel, including Ferdinand and Isabella, Philip the Handsome and Joanna the Mad, his wife Elizabeth, their children and Princess Maria of Portugal, wife of Prince Philip.

It was Philip II who moved everyone buried in the chapel to his newly built Escorial. He left only the Catholic Monarchs and Philip and Juana, who currently lie with their parents.

The burial monument of the Kings is the work of the Italian Domenico Fancelli, who built it in Genoa with Carrara marble, while that of Joanna the Mad and Philip the Handsome is the work of Bartolomé Ordóñez.

WALKING THROUGH GRANADA’S DOWNTOWN

After that, companions will go for a walk for the Granada’s old downtown. They could visit, among other sites, the “*Corral del Carbón*” and the silk market or “*Alcaicería*”.

The “*Corral del Carbón*” is the only Nasrid alhóndiga preserved in its entirety in the Iberian peninsula. It was built before 1340, and his original name was “*Al-Funduq al-Gidida*” or New Alhóndiga. Located south of the Muslim city, next to the “*Alcaicería*”, to the souk of the Medina and to the Main Mosque, served as inn for merchants in transit, warehouse and wholesale market. In 1494 the Catholic Monarchs granted it to Sancho de Arana. At his death it came to auction, being used as hosting of coal merchants, later as “corral de comedias” and then as a tenement house.

It was declared a National Historic-Artistic Monument in 1918. It currently houses the offices and personnel administration of City of Granada Orchestra, and is home to the International Festival of Music and Dance of Granada. It is also occasional stage in the courtyard, of theatrical performances, flamenco concerts and conferences.



Corral del Carbón: main door and indoor view

Alcaicería market

The name Alcaicería (in Arabic “*al-Kaysar-ia*”) means the “place of Caesar”, to thank the Byzantine Emperor Justinian, after he granted the Arabs the exclusive right to manufacture and sell silk in the 6th century.

The Alcaicería, home of the Great Bazaar of Granada, was originally a labyrinth of streets and alleyways between New square and Bib-Rambla square, bursting with more than 200 stalls selling Arabic silks, spices and other precious goods. The Granadan Alcaicería was built in the 15th century, and survived until the 19th century, when a fire sadly destroyed it. A replica was built in a neo-Moorish style, beginning just off the Reyes Catolicos street and extending back as far as the Cathedral.

These days the Alcaicería is home to Granada’s souvenir stalls, selling a variety of ethnic clothing, Arabic craftwork (traditional painted ceramics, wooden inlay and typical stained-glass lamps) and souvenir memorabilia.

13:00h Arriving at congress venue.