

Title:

Old Spanish Charm - Valencia, Granada and Seville

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Summary:

Much of Spain has undergone a modernization effort. Fortunately, cities such as Valencia, Granada and Seville retain much of their old world charm.

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Article Body:

Much of Spain has undergone a modernization effort. Fortunately, cities such as Valencia, Granada and Seville retain much of their old world charm.

Valencia

Similar to Barcelona in some ways, Valencia is another must visit city in Spain. Located on the coast of the Mediterranean, the city has retained its old world charm without the modernization mistakes made in Barcelona. The old historic quarter is amazing because much of the architecture reflects Arabic influences arising from the rule of invading forces. Palaces are refurbished and streets tend to be strictly of the cobble stone variety. Perhaps the best way to take in the atmosphere is to grab a seat at an outdoor café, order tapas and just relax. For a big city, Valencia has a pretty nice collection of beaches, so don't hesitate to grab some rays.

Granada

For many travelers, Granada is the best city in Spain. The prime attraction is the Alhambra, a combination of fortress and palace built and used by the Moorish rulers who controlled Spain. The Alhambra simply has to be seen to be believed. The structure is in excellent shape and is detailed with intricate Moorish architecture and style. The internal structure is one of the most beautiful in the world. In addition to the palace, Granada gives off the air of a "real" Spanish city with cobblestone streets, bullfighting arenas and winding streets. Granada is a good place to just get out and walk.

Seville

If you want to see real Spanish bullfighting, Seville is the place. Whatever your feelings about the sport, the bullfighting ring of Plaza de la Real Maestranza is the finest in Spain and worth a visit. The bullfighting sessions are intense, but you should still visit the structure if you aren't interested in the actual event.

If you want nothing to do with bullfighting, you should still visit Seville to see the Alcazar Gardens. I once got lost in Seville and stumbled upon them. They are extremely green and beautiful with waterways, flowers and foliage everywhere. You can easily spend a relaxing afternoon putting around Alcazar and enjoying gardens that rival any others in Europe in my opinion. The Plaza de Espana is also worth a visit.

Spain often has problems mixing the old with the new in city planning. If you prefer the older atmosphere, Valencia, Granada and Seville are good destinations.