

Get Moorish from Seville



Romantic ... Seville

By Karen Goldman

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IT'S a city that seems to stay on your 'to do' list because so many other holidays get in the way!

But if you want a taste of authentic Spanish culture in one of the most romantic cities in Spain, now is the time to head there.

It is a melting pot of architectural styles through the ages with beautiful Moorish courtyards boasting elegant tiles and Spanish whitewashed buildings with both a Gothic and Renaissance twist.

Autumn would be a glorious time to venture to this fascinating place, which you can explore by foot, new tram and metro systems, or one of the many open top bus tours, giving you the flexibility to use at your leisure. A sunset ride by horse and carriage makes for a relaxing end to the day.

Start your day exploring the narrow, winding cobbled alleyways of the Barrio de Santa Cruz, which contains some beautiful old and restored houses, with cool inner courtyards and rooftop terraces. Some of these have been turned into small boutique hotels and one of the best is the Corral del Rey Hotel, which has just six bedrooms - all beautifully and individually furnished, with every need taken care of, from the ice cold lemonade on arrival, to the pre-recorded i-pods in the rooms - corraldelrey.com.

If you manage to find your way out of the maze of twisted lanes with tapas bars to tempt you at every turn, you should then make your way to Seville Cathedral, the largest Gothic temple in the world - it was built on the site of a 12th century mosque. Get ready for the 97 metre climb up the Giralda Tower adjoining the Cathedral, to have some of the best panoramic views of the city.

Nearby is the Real Alcazar (Royal Palace), which is still one of the residences of the Spanish Royal Family and is a stunning pot pourri of all the different architectural styles that have been added over the centuries by various rulers. The variety of themed gardens is stunning and you can enjoy the tranquility of this beautiful place for hours forgetting you are in the middle of a bustling city.

Do not leave Seville without visiting an authentic flamenco show - far removed from the type of show you will see on the Costas. This is more serious, more dramatic - the opera of dance. Casa de la Memoria holds their shows in a candlelit courtyard with huge Moorish lanterns and beautiful arches set the scene and create an authentic atmosphere.

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