

# **OUR TRIP TO SPAIN, PORTUGAL And MOROCCO**

**May-June, 2005**



**Bob, Sharon, Wayne, Addie Leah**

**Brownlee**

## Forward

When decisions are made to travel, they can come about in very convoluted ways. Where and when figure prominently, and sometimes even Why!

For this particular adventure, Addie Leah and Bob had not been to Spain for a very long time, and had not yet visited Portugal. Wayne having announced that Dad and Mom should no longer travel without aid, gathered Sharon and strength, and joined us.

We flew to and from Madrid, but the rest of the journey was by bus. We were traveling as a small group of 16 persons, met and made new friends, and had a wonderful time.

Unfortunately, this is being written two years after the event (we have many things to do!) and therefore some aspects of the itinerary and picture details are a bit difficult to recover. But we have done our best.





## MADRID

Arriving in Madrid via Atlanta and Delta Air Lines worked OK, and Madrid had a brand new airport that seemed to be functioning just fine. We were traveling nominally with SmarTours, but they had combined us with a GATEWAY Tour, so we had to look for that sign to get to the hotel. At the trips end, there was ONE picture of the group that has come to our possession, and here it is!



This picture was taken at our Madrid hotel just as we were leaving for the Madrid Airport. Besides us, we see, left to right, Claude Solanas, Ruth Merwitz, Maxine Perlas, Nadine Weinstein, Ray Weinstein, Stanley Merwitz, Evelyn Solanas, Rich Thornhill, Helen DeGrasse, Jo Thornhill (standing next to Rich), and Doug Amato.





Addie Leah and Sharon are pictured at a monument in front of the big bull ring. We enjoyed the cathedral, shown top, and the many majestic buildings in the city.







## Segovia

Our visit to Segovia was almost majical. We arrived there on a Holiday, so most everything was quiet. The Roman Aqueduct was as silent as ever, but it speaks volumen about the past. It was great to have plenty to time to probe, and to see.



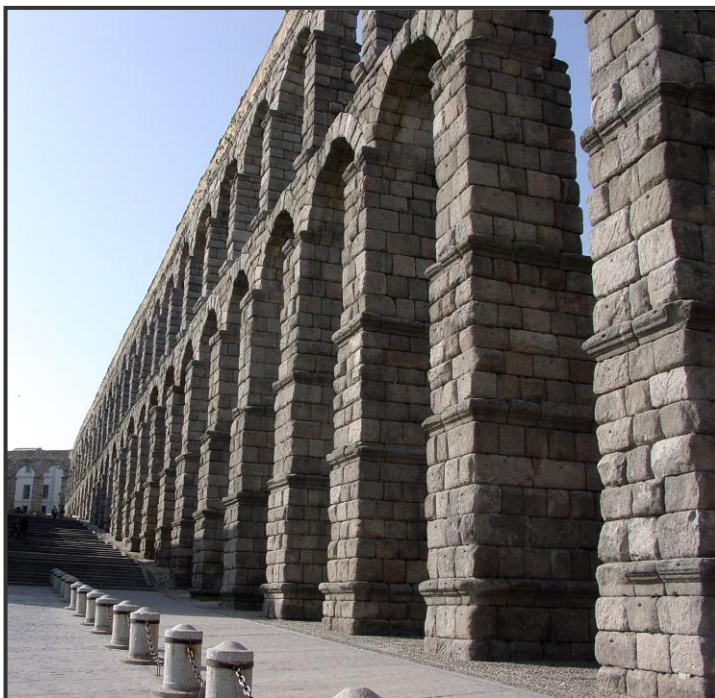


## Segovia's Alcazar is Always worth a Good Visit





Ah, but the Aqueduct calls one back again and again!





Segovia's Cathedral is also a must.





Now it is on to Avila, a wonderful walled city.



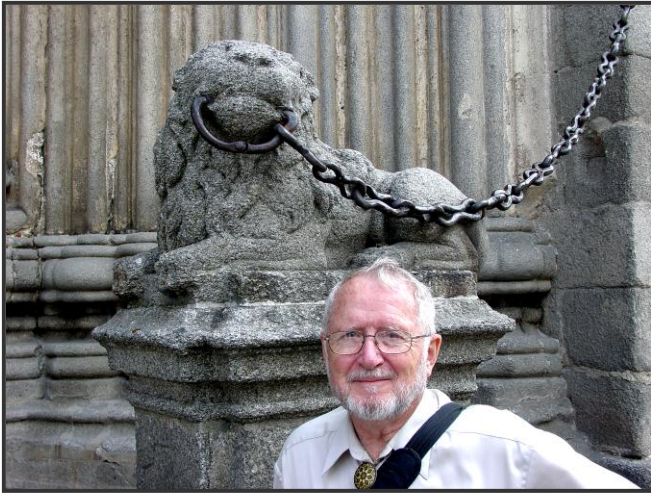




Founded in the 11th century to protect the Spanish territories from the Moors, Ávila has a magnificently-preserved city wall, a Romanesque cathedral, a number of medieval churches, and an authentic medieval atmosphere.

But for pilgrims, the city of Ávila is important because of its association with the great mystic and reformer St. Teresa de Jesus, better known as **St. Teresa of Ávila**. Teresa was a 16th-century Carmelite nun who reformed her order, had many ecstatic visions, and wrote several books. She is the female patron saint of Spain and was the first woman to be named a Doctor of the Church.













This is Plaza Mayor, in Salamanca, a University City.



The Cathedral was massive, as the entrance makes clear. There were a number of fine monuments.





## Fatima, Portugal



The three children of Fatima had 6 visions of the Virgin Mary over six months in 1917, and this church represents and documents the whole amazing story. We saw a number of pilgrims approaching the shrine on their knees, and were pleased to touch base at this particularly famous place.



It seemed to be a pretty slow day!



Lisbon was pretty much what we expected—a great city!





This historic plaza by the seaport has seen most everything. Once Portugal was the most powerful seagoing nation in the world, and it established colonies in many places all over the world, including one in Macau, China. (Portugese is the language of Brazil, never forget.)







Here we see one of the principal monuments to Portugal's many World Discoverers. The surrounding plaza has a mosaic of places where Portugese touched base.

(Notice Palau!)







There were many people in the Cloister of the Cathedral on this beautiful day, including a choir from Japan singing their way through Europe. Not everyone who put in an appearance, sang.







Visiting one of the country's palaces, we saw the “traditional” European idea of elegance for their Kings and Queens whenever they have the wherewithall.







The harbor was a fun place even while we were remembering the destruction of Lisbon by the 1755 earthquake. It approached a 9 on the Richter scale, was followed by a tsunami, and pretty much put an end to Portugal as a world power. But we had to ask questions about it and the guide seemed not to be very much up on it.

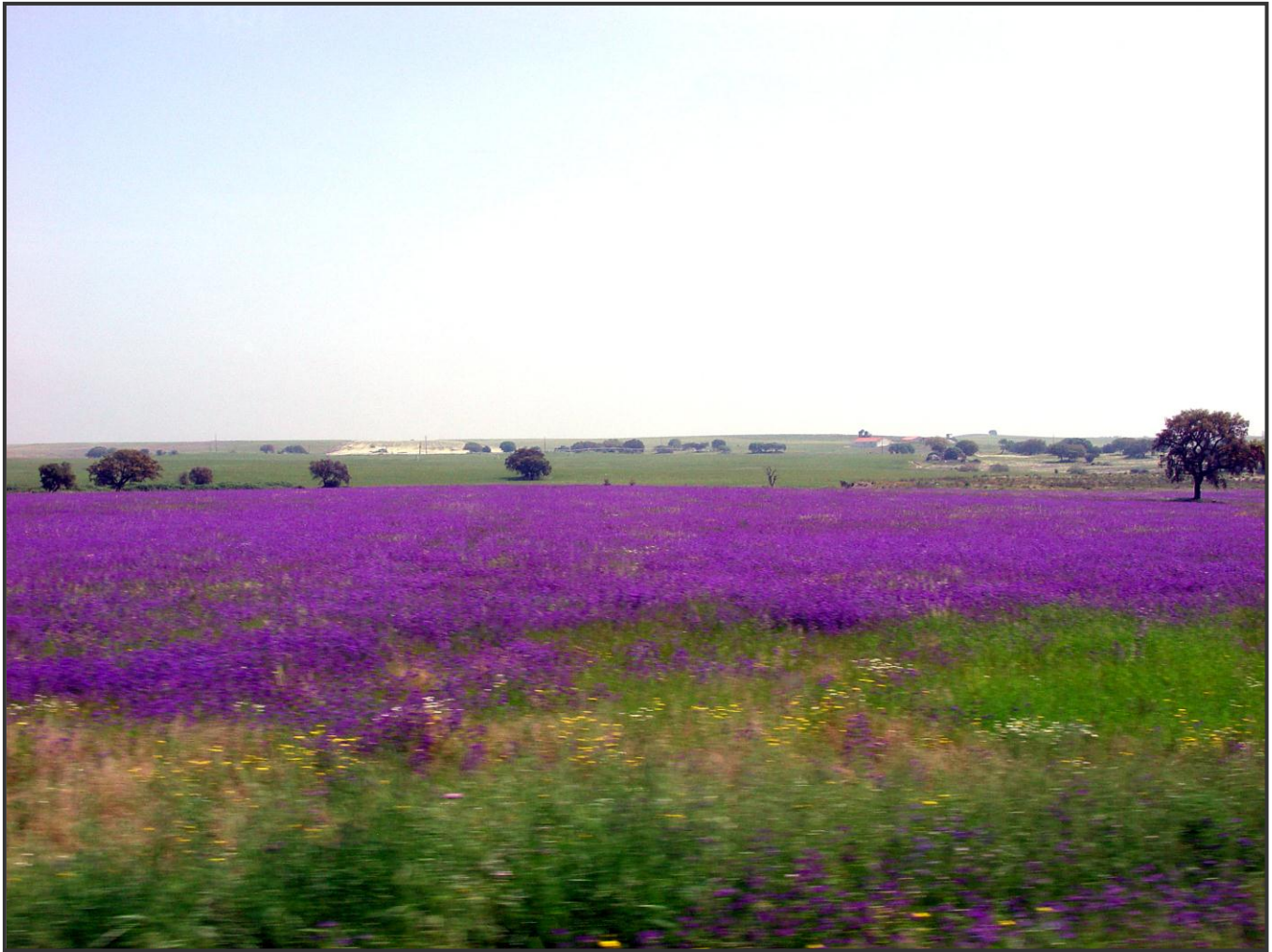


We found another fine Roman Aqueduct here. Those Romans really got around, didn't they?



South of Lisbon, on our way back to Spain, we saw some amazingly beautiful fields of flowers.





These, we were assured, were Violets!

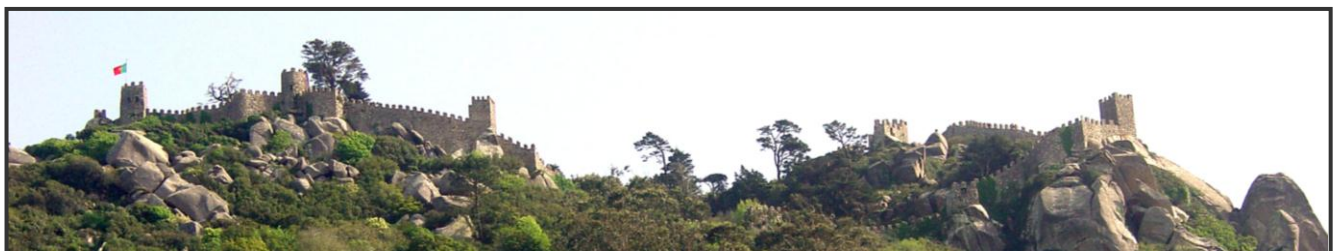




There were many orchards.



Also, there were many hilltops with what we judged to be obligatory alcazars.





A lunch stop at a small and ancient town gave us these views.





There was also an opportunity for a Walkabout.



On several occasions, Wayne's Walkabouts looked more as shown below!







Back in Spain, we arrive at Seville. Now, THERE'S a place to see and hear about!







The American Exposition was opened in 1927, and subsequently became the American Consulate there. It still looks pretty impressive, but as the site of considerable history it is of even more interest.





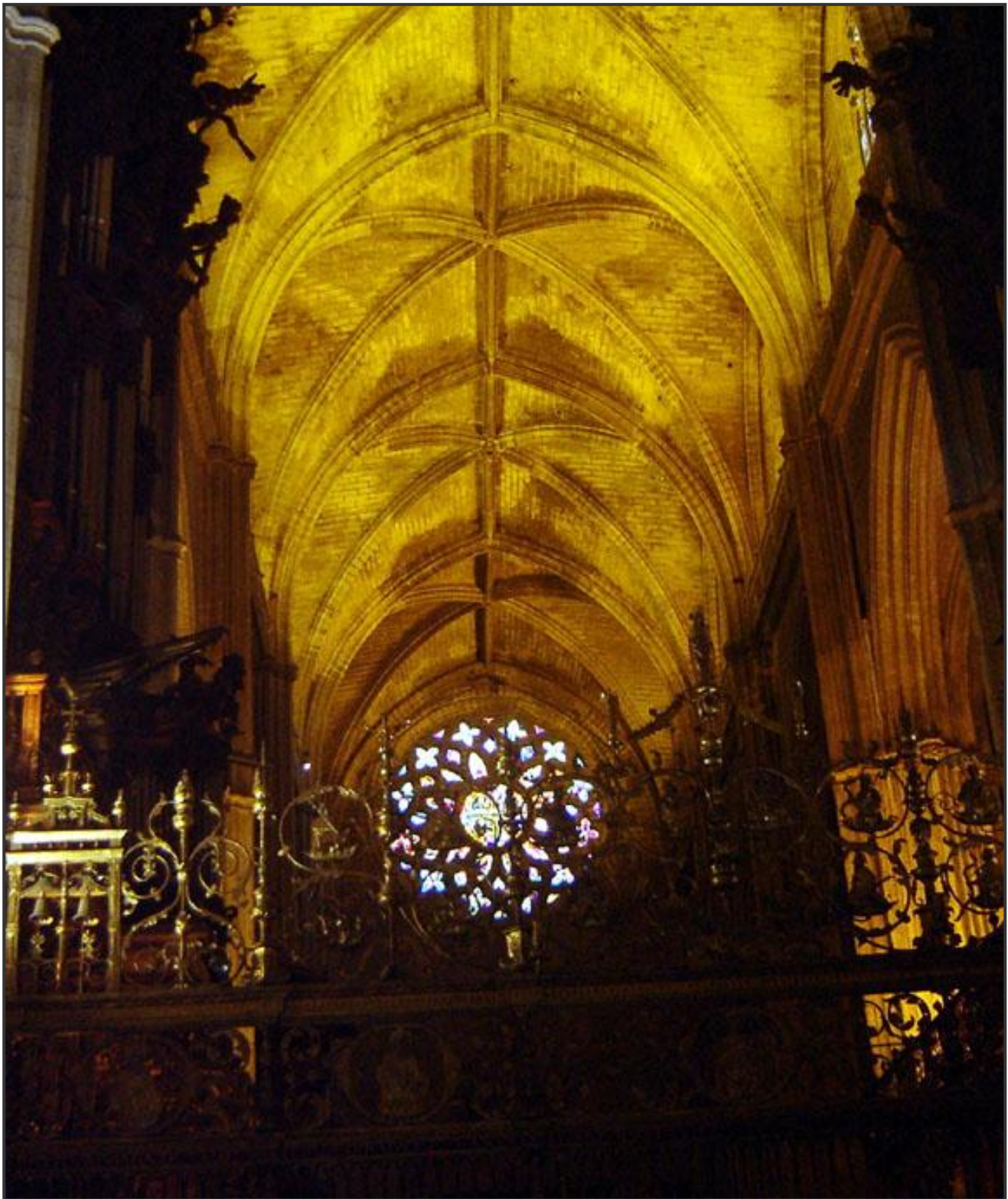


We noticed the orange when observing the cathedral.









The part of the church rebuilt after the Christians retook the place has some Gothic windows, so the span of centuries is clearly visible.

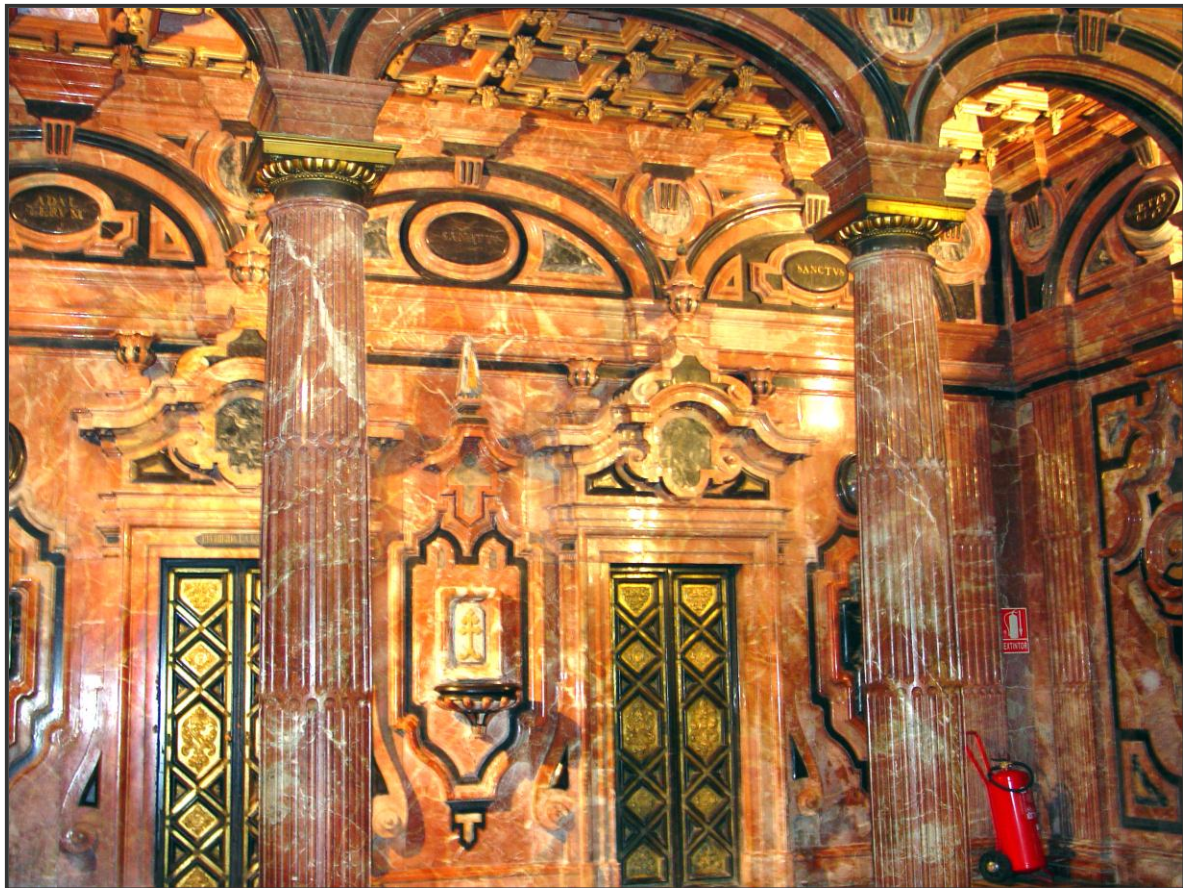




Here is the tomb of Christopher Columbus, in the Cathedral of Seville.



















There was a big celebration here, so we had to get in on it. Parades were continuous.







From Seville we headed for Morroco. Along the way we saw this hill, with a castle atop it. Look closely! Such was the thinking once in this part of the world.





The **Cordova Cathedral** is an amazing place. Cordova's history began in the 8<sup>th</sup> century when it was conquered by the Moors. They built mosques and palaces rivaling those of Constantinople. It was one of the largest cities in the world in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century the Christians recaptured Cordova, and turned the Great Mosque into a cathedral. So the building is now a combination of the two religious histories. Of interest to us was the fact that in recent times Moslems appeared, demanding repossession of the place, as they were there first. However, thanks to a well within the place that had been cleared after centuries of being filled, it was clear that the mosque had been built on the foundations of a Christian church, so the Moslem argument could not prevail. However, this is most certainly a clue as to what is ahead for many places over the world. Below, see us peering into the well.



These Roman arches speak to the time of the Mosque construction—Gothic arches were still centuries away.





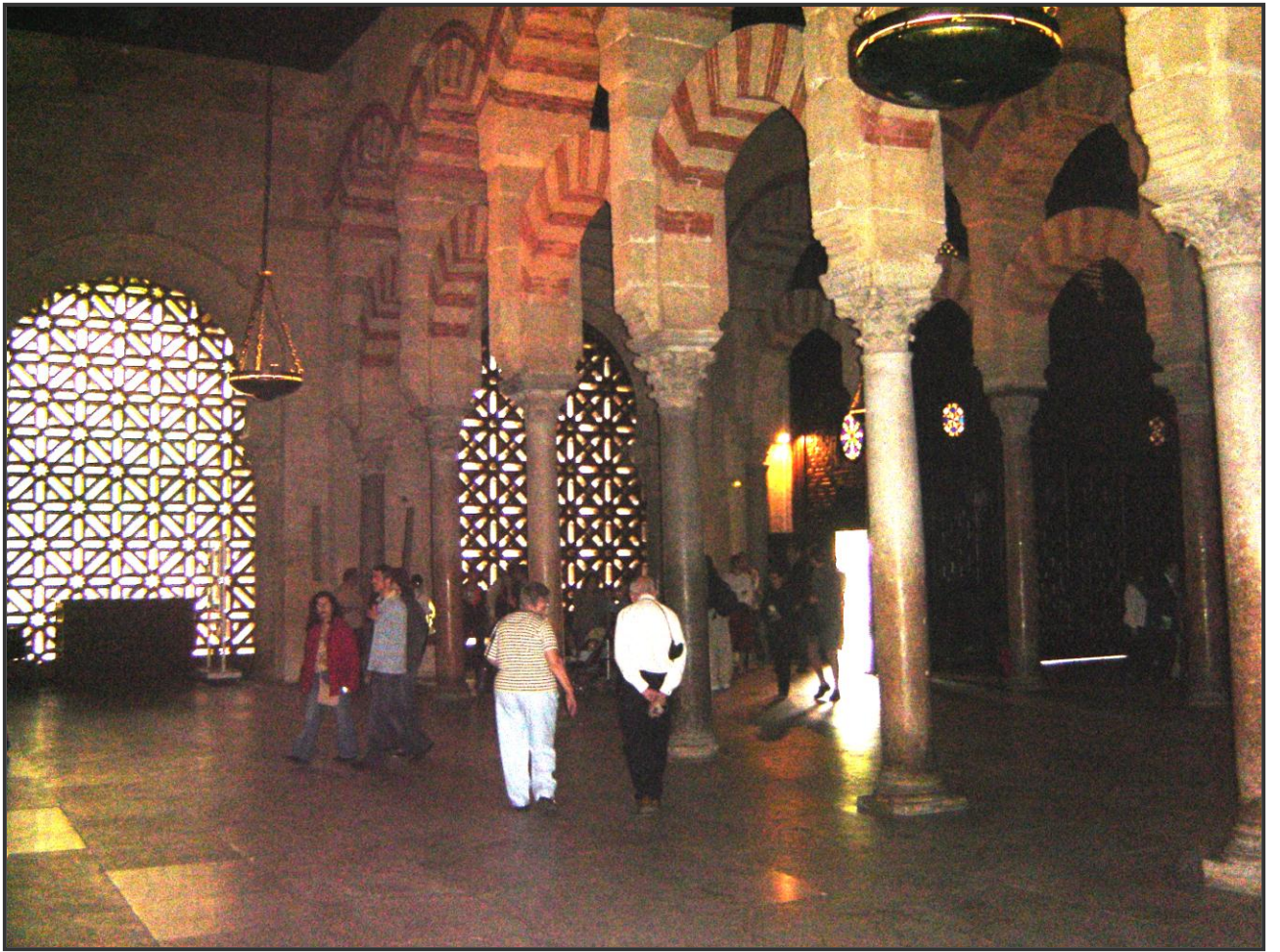




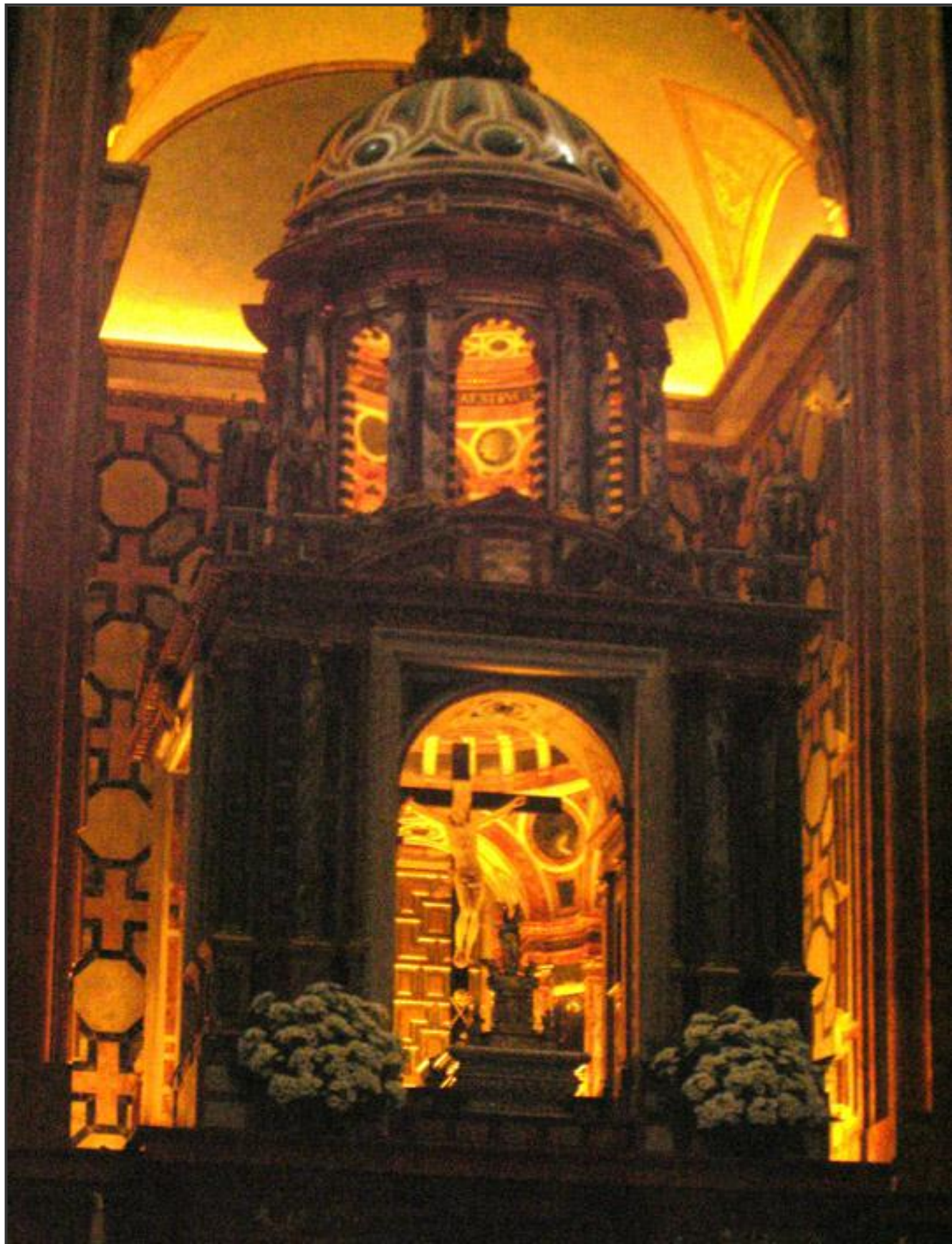






















Leaving Espagne Harbor on our way to Morocco, this was our view.



It did not take us long to see North Africa being North Africa, close to Spain or not!







Tangier camels were an expected sight. Surprise! They were for hire.







Morocco's Atlantic coastline is rough and rocky. It makes for good building material.





Local Markets are always fun to see.







A bit of rag-time music is always in order.





This is the entrance to the Kasbah, and below is the water well for the entire area.







Elegant doors such as this one are greatly appreciated. The street tiles are quite good also, but there was some cleaning up that could be done.



On the left is Suzanna, our tour guide, and to her right is our bus driver, Jose. In the basket, a snake.







This seemed to be an important building. With gates closed, it is probably an even better place.



There were rugs for sale also! (We bought one!)





The rug is in the bag being carried by Jose.







This is Tangiers's (alternate spelling, Tanger) fanciest hotel. Rooms were only \$85/night.



Were we the last to get off, or the first to reload? Who remembers?









Above is a principal street of Tangier. It is along the water front, near the ship docks. The beach is visible as are many of the buildings in the business district. Below, we see one of the ferry boats that make frequent trips between the two continents.







Back in Spain, we saw many windmills. Gilbrator Straight winds are reliable!



RRB grew up with windmills, and used to sit on their tops to survey the countryside. While it is not true that if you have seen one, you have seen them all, it is relatively easy to get that thought.



We now set up shop near Fuengirola, on the Costa del Sol, the Mediterranean coast.  
There is good sun bathing here, as a closer look will reveal.











Our view from our hotel room's outside deck meant that we tended to stay pretty close to home.

But then, it is true that the beach was also close to the room.





On our way to Granada, we had a very good day for seeing the country.





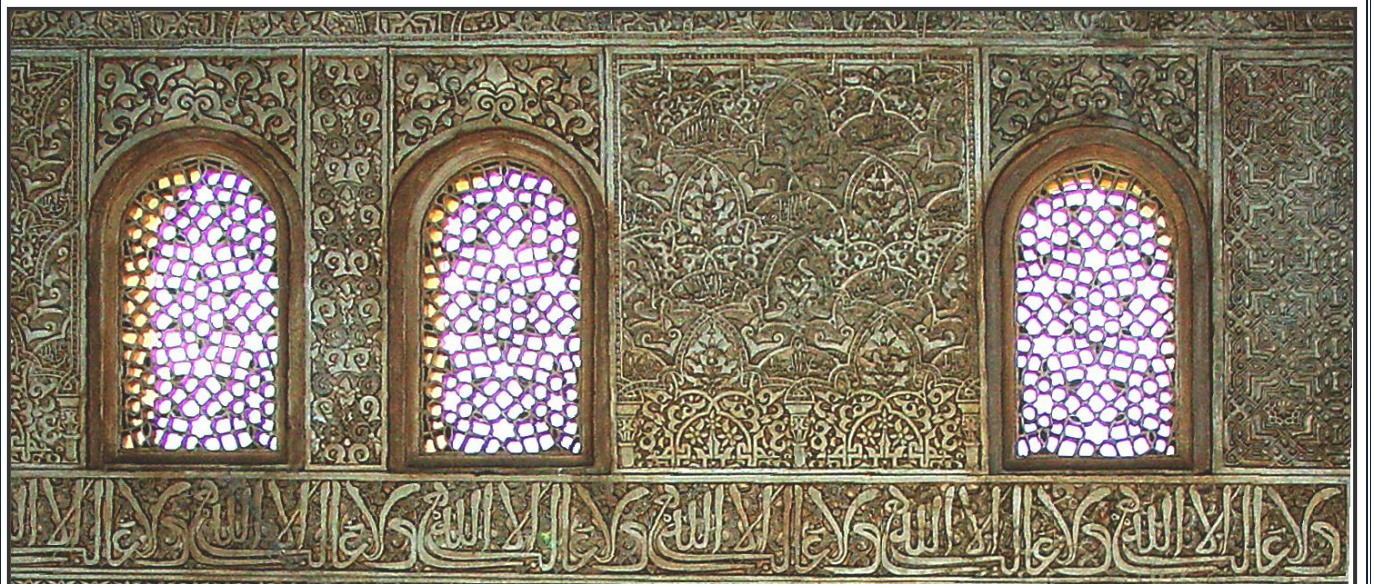
Granada is the home of the Alhambra. It was the residence of the Muslim kings of Granada and their court. Ultimately, a palace was built (added) by Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor.







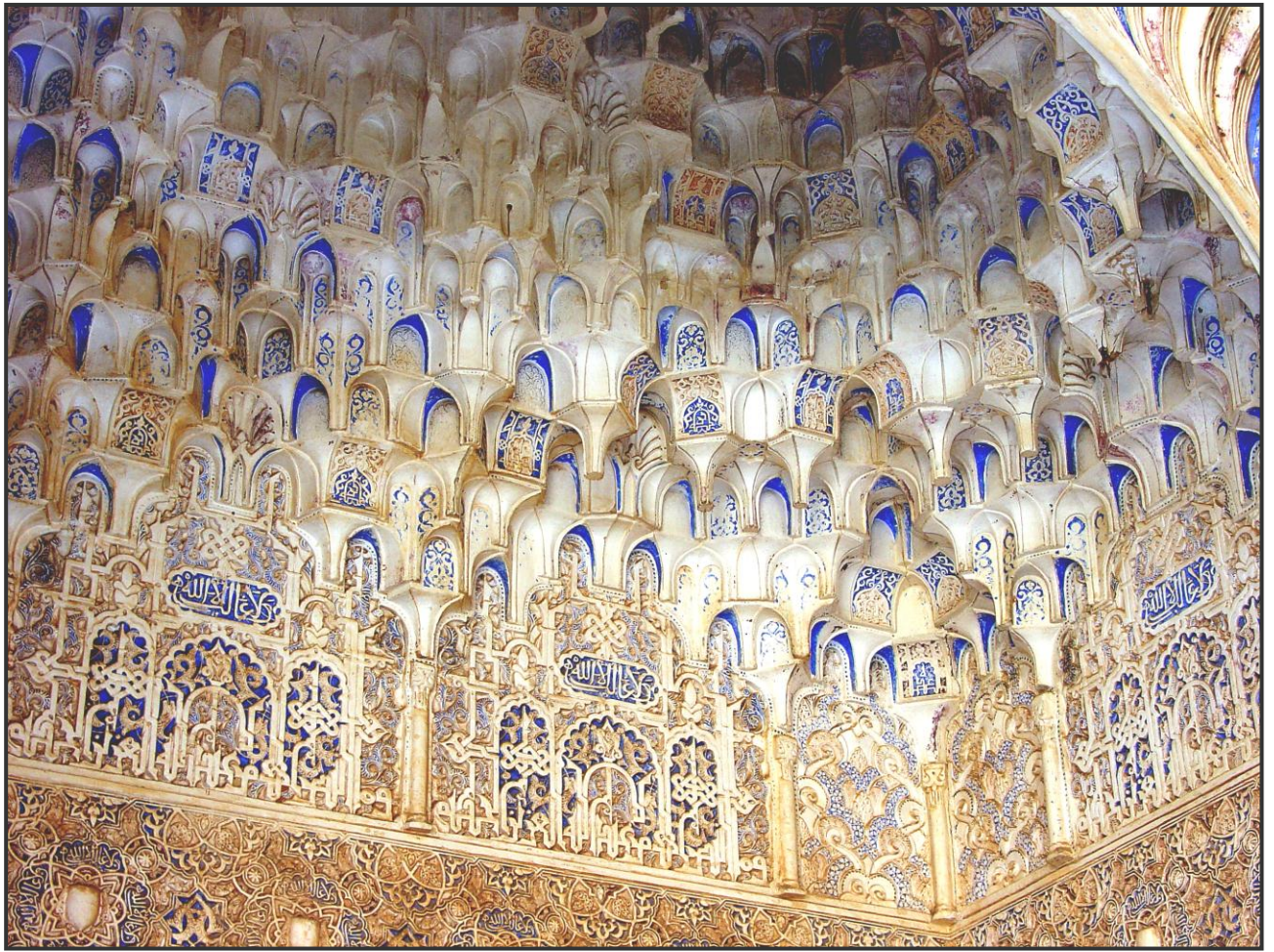












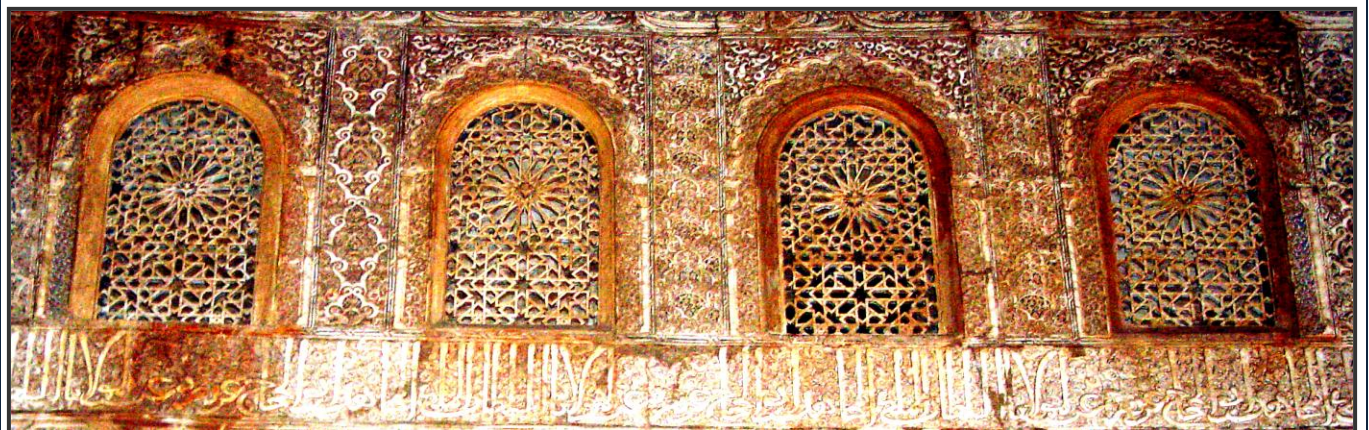






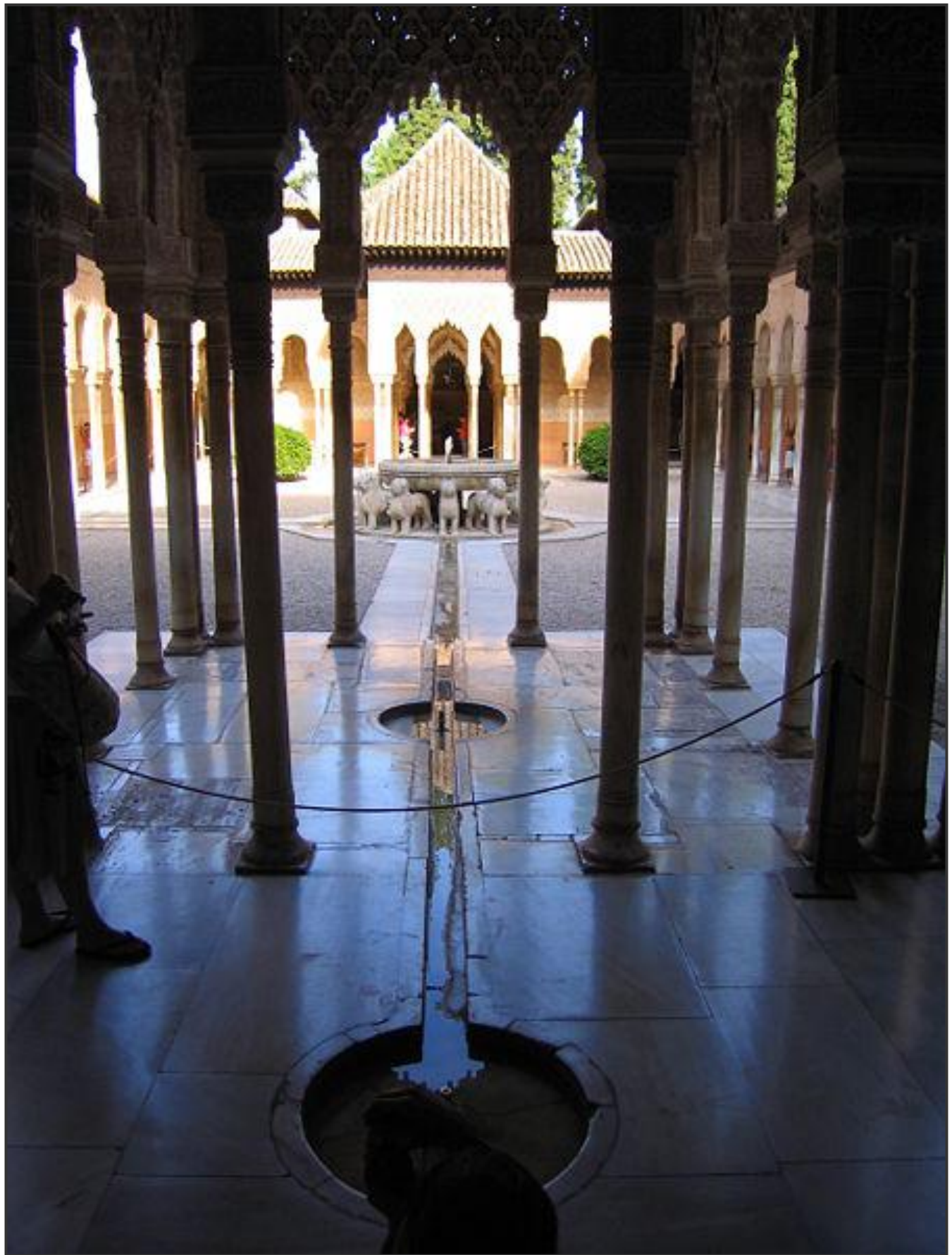


See that set of tables and sun covers on what used to be a street? This is where Addie Leah and Bob parked their compact rental car some years ago after driving it down those impossibly narrow streets. Each side of the street just cleared the fenders. If it appears impossible, it is probably because you really don't have the will to do such things in foreign countries, expecting to be arrested at any moment! Wayne also purchased his Spanish Guitar not too far from here. Granada is world famous for its guitars.



Four wonderful windows.









This is some wall!



















From Granada, we proceeded to Toledo, a favorite place of ours. It has a fascinating history. It fell to the Romans in 193 B.C. and later was the capital of the Visigoth kingdom (534-712 A.D.) As a Moorish capital (712-1031) it was a center of Arab and Hebrew learning. It was the capitol of Spain until 1560, and since then the capitol has been Madrid. It is famed for its metal work (swords, for example) and is an ideal place to stock up on Spanish souvenirs. The historic city center sits on a craggy rock, which is almost completely encircled by a meander of the Tagus River.







We truly enjoyed that particular overlook of the city. It was worth the whole trip.

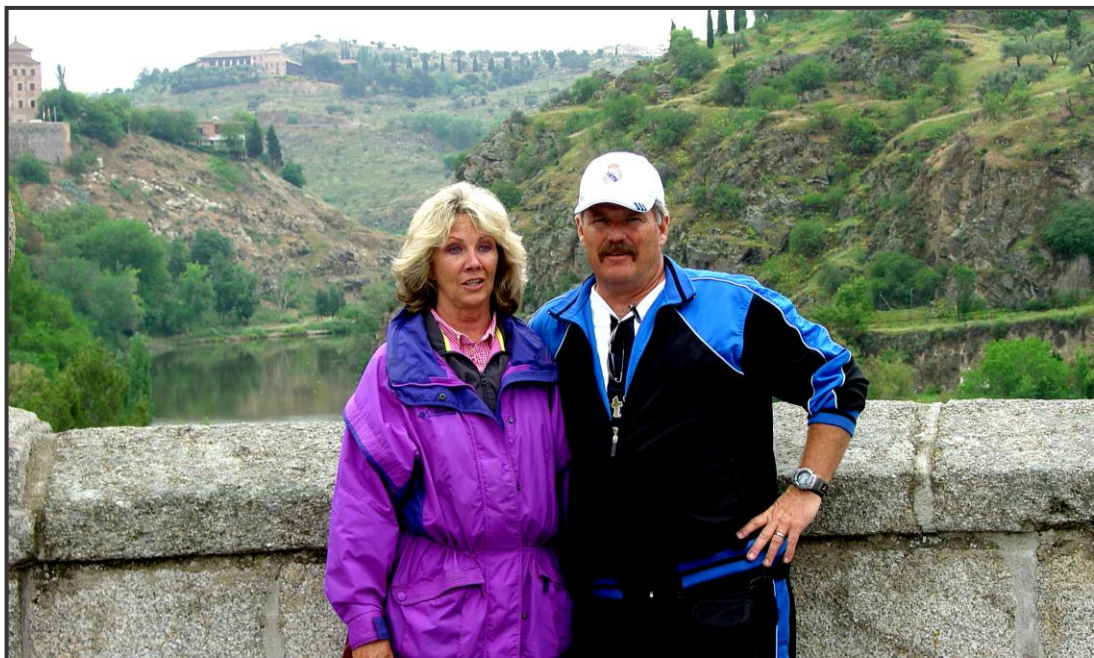








This bridge was completed in the early 1300's. It was our last stop for our visit to Toledo.







Chaotic picture taking is always in order, especially the last couple of days.





Does this mean that the trip has been worthwhile, or only that it is time to go home?







## Fellow Travelers



Addie Leah Brownlee



Bob Brownlee



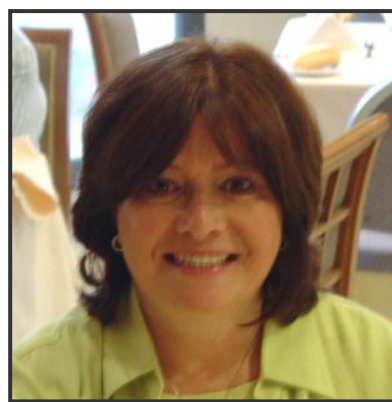
Claude Solanas



Doug Amoto



Evelyn Solanas



Helen DeGrasse



Jo Thornhill



Maxine Perlas



Nadine Weinstein





Ray Weinstein



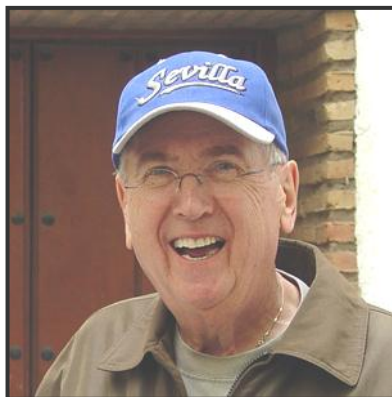
Rich Thornhill



Ruth Merwitz



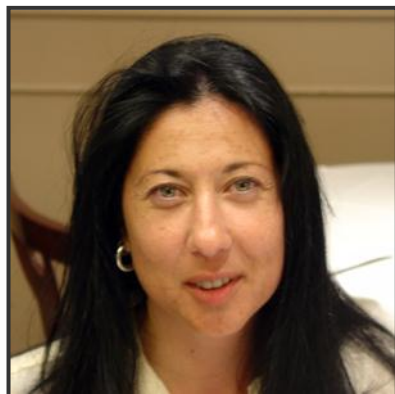
Sharon Brownlee



Stanley Merwitz



Wayne Brownlee



Suzanna



Jose Antonio