

From the “Balcony of Europe”, we started our trip through Al-Andalus. Malaga was our 1st destination. From there on, our native guide took us to Sevilla. Sevilla offered not only a lot of sightseeing but also a very warm weather. Sevilla contains a beautiful history behind it. In fact our 1st history lesson of Al-Andalus began with was about the history of Giralada Tower, also known as the “old minaret”. The diversity of colours and figures, that embody the tower, reflect the past and coexistence of different beliefs. The diversity of the tower raise questions for many of us as Young Swiss Muslims. Part of those differences contain the periods of Spanish history represented by the Royal Alcazar. The Royal Alcazar was founded by the Almohad Caliphate, a Moroccan Berber Muslim movement founded in the 12th century, and this ruling had continued by several monarchs and kings throughout the history. Currently the Royal Alcazar is occupied by the Spanish royal family. Upon completing our tour throughout Sevilla, many of us had sparked numerous questions for our tour guide. He could answer the more general questions, but for the more specific questions about Islam in Spain, we had directed our attention to the Imam of Sevilla Abdel Ghani Melara Navio, translated the Quran in his book “Traducción-Comentario Del Noble Corán” into the Spanish language. We had the amazing opportunity to have breakfast with this knowledgeable Imam and get our many questions answered that wasn’t by the tour guide.

After finishing our adventures throughout Sevilla, we travelled to Cordoba; also known as the biggest city in the world of the 10th century. It was during this time period that the Caliphate of Cordoba was established. While in Cordoba we went inside of the Great Mosque of Cordoba and further developed a better understanding of why this city was ahead of its time in terms of its sciences, history, philosophy, languages, etc. In Cordoba Muslims, Jews and Christians had lived amongst one another peacefully throughout history. I truly enjoyed visiting the capital and appreciated the rich history behind it, but wondered why are these historical places nothing more than tourist attractions? It seems that not even the wondrous history, of this city, is being taught in the local Spanish schools. Though Cordoba’s streets are filled with several monuments dedicated to the famous philosophers of its time, the country seems to have lost sight of the crucial knowledge that lies behind the history.

As we persisted throughout our travels we found ourselves surrounded by stunning architecture, designed during the Moorish time, known as to the ruins of Medina Azahara. From the ruins our travels led us to our next goal Granada, Spain. Upon arriving in Granada, our first stop took place in the great Mosque of Granada, where we had the chance to enjoy the Juma prayer. Whilst spending time in the Mosque’s garden, we noticed on the other side of the hills the palace Alhambra, our main purpose for coming to Granada. There were many pictures taken of this masterpiece, throughout the city, and so we were overjoyed to finally see it in person. The architecture was so astonishing we were seized breathless. Everything seemed unreal! The architecture was measured and unbelievably well-thought-out to the finest detail. You will find outside of the Alhambra an encasing of roots, from the beautiful gardens, throughout every corner, bring about a particular sensation of harmony.

Before we returned back, we had granted our taste buttons with the notorious Spanish olive oil. Our last stop was at an old, charming olive oil factory, where we spoilt ourselves and munched finest olive oil, as we have during the whole trip with coffee, chocolate, and the Spanish cuisine.