

In the Path of the Conquistadors SPAIN

WITH PROFESSOR STANLEY GUENTER



FAR
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ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL TRIPS

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SPAIN: IN THE PATH OF THE CONQUISTADORS

with Dr. Stanley Guenter



Conquest, Reconquista, and the World of the Conquistadors: From Rome and Arabs to the Americas

The kingdom of Spain has had an immense impact on world history and civilization. Five hundred years ago, the Conquistadors had just conquered the Aztec Empire of Mexico and were about to start their conquest of the Maya kingdoms. Within a decade, they would conquer the Inca of Peru, and the wealth in gold and silver that they seized would help make 16th century Spain the richest kingdom and most powerful empire on earth.

But the Spanish were not always conquistadors; eight hundred years before they created their New World, it was they who were the conquered. In 711, Arab and Berber Muslim forces crossed the Strait of Gibraltar to quickly defeat and take over almost the entire kingdom of the Visigoths, a Germanic group that had taken the Iberian Peninsula from the Romans, Byzantines, and other invading Germanic groups. The culture and mindset of the Spanish conquistadors was born over the long period of the Reconquista, during which Spain was contested

between the Islamic Moors of fabled Al-Andalus in the south, and the Christians of the north, whose kingdoms of Asturias, Leon, Castile, and Aragon would eventually merge to become the powerful Spanish kingdom and empire of the 16th century.

Join Far Horizons on a truly unique 15-day exploration of the cities and landscapes that shaped the world of the Spanish Conquistadors. Our journey will take us to the heartland of the fabled Al-Andalus, including its stunning capitals of Córdoba and Granada, to the famed lands of Castile and its many castle-topped hills. We will also visit Extremadura, the parched land of western Castile, where Cortés and Pizarro and so many of the other fearsome conquistadors came from. Our trip will conclude with visits to the wonderfully preserved medieval cities of Salamanca and Avila and a special tour of the castle of Zorita de los Canes, which perfectly exemplifies the diverse ethnic history of medieval Spain.



Daily Itinerary

Day 1

Depart for Madrid, Spain

Depart on a flight bound for Madrid, Spain.

Day 2

Arrive in Madrid

Arrive in Madrid, Spain and transfer to our centrally located hotel for two nights. Enjoy our welcome dinner at an elegant local restaurant. (D)

Day 3

Visit Two Museums in Madrid

Today, we explore two impressive museums. The Museo de América (Museum of the Americas) is the only museum in the world dedicated to the preservation, research, and dissemination of the heritage of the American continent and the peoples that have historically inhabited it. Its collections include pre-Hispanic archaeological objects, works of art from the colonial period, and a large ethnographic sample of American cultures from the 19th and 20th centuries.

After lunch on our own, continue to the Museo Arqueológico Nacional (National Archaeological Museum), founded in 1867 by a Royal Decree of Isabella II to be a depository for archaeological, ethnographical, and decorative art collections compiled by the Spanish Monarchs. Here, we will see evidence of Spain's long history of conquest and reconquest through the various artifacts from the Celtiberians, Phoenicians, Romans, Visigoths, Moors, and finally, the Catholic Castilians. (B/D)

Day 4

Toledo

This morning, we drive to Toledo, a beautiful medieval city, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here, we explore a historical crossroads of cultures by visiting various Visigothic, Moorish, Jewish, and Spanish buildings and museums, which reflect Spain's tumultuous and multicultural history leading up to the era of the conquistadors heading to the Americas. Having been conquered multiple times in history – by the Moors in 711 and the Christian Spaniards in 1085 – Toledo perfectly exemplifies the pattern for the conquests of great capital cities in the Americas. Our walking tour of the city includes many important stops: the Museo de los Concilios y la Cultura Visigoda, a museum exhibiting the history of the Visigoths, inside a beautiful and decorated 13th century Mudéjar church; the Sinagoga del Tránsito, a 14th century Mudéjar synagogue, and the adjacent Museo Sefardí, exhibiting the history of Jews in Spain; the Sinagoga de Santa María La Blanca, a beautiful 12th century Mudéjar synagogue; and the Mezquita del Cristo de la Luz, a small mosque built in 999. Overnight at the Hacienda del Cardenal, a restored palace with stunning gardens and vistas. (B/L/D)



Daily Itinerary *(cont'd)*

Day 5

Córdoba

Córdoba will forever bear the imprint left by Roman, Islamic, and Christian rulers. It rose to become the most sophisticated city in Europe and, along with Constantinople and Baghdad, was one of the three cultural centers of the medieval world. The original Roman walls were maintained by the Muslim and later Christian rulers and extensive portions of these fortifications still stand today. Upon arrival in Córdoba, we will enjoy a walking tour of the historic center, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, revealing its layers of history. A maze of narrow streets leads to the oldest district, the Judería or Jewish quarter, which stands on the area formerly occupied by the Moorish medina and contains the most characteristic monuments in the city. Spend two nights in the Casas de la Juderia within the old city walls. Dinner is on our own. (B/L)

Day 6

Córdoba

We continue our explorations of Córdoba today, beginning at Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos, a Moorish palace taken over after the Christian reconquest. It was the summer home of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella and the site of their meeting with Christopher Columbus before his famous voyage. La Mezquita, or the Great Mosque, a UNESCO World Heritage Monument, was begun in 786 and is the third largest mosque ever built.

Water was brought into palaces and mansions and taken to the fields for irrigation by a complex system of channels created by the Moors, whose agricultural architecture was unparalleled. After lunch on our own, we visit the Albolafia Noria or waterwheel, the last vestige of an array of mills and dams built on the Guadalquivir River in Córdoba between the 8th and 10th centuries. (B/D)

Day 7

Granada

This morning, we will take in breathtaking scenery as we journey by train to Granada. In the 13th century, the last Muslim dynasty of Spain, the Nasrids, made Granada its capital. Upon arrival in the city center, we will enjoy lunch followed by a walking tour of several medieval sites, beginning with the old Islamic quarter, the Albaicín, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here, narrow winding streets and ancient walls are reminders of its medieval past. We will enter the Iglesia de El Salvador, whose courtyard was adapted from that of the original Great Mosque of the city, and see the Iglesia de San Juan de los Reyes, converted from a mosque in the 16th century but still retaining the original minaret. We will visit the madrasa that once housed an Islamic school and currently is used by the University of Granada. Nearby, the Catedral de Granada, built over a former mosque, imprinted Christianity in the former Islamic capital. Not far is the Capilla Real, which was constructed to house the remains of the Catholic Monarchs, Isabella I of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragon, who unified Spain and conquered Granada, the last Muslim enclave in the peninsula. Then, it is on to the Iglesia del Sagrario, a church partially built over a mosque, and the Alcaiceria, the 15th century Silk Merchant's Exchange. The Corral del Carbón is the oldest remaining Muslim structure in the city and the only surviving Islamic grain exchange on the Iberian Peninsula. Our day will end at the Iglesia de San Nicolas for the view over the Alhambra at sunset. Dinner is on our own to discover one of Granada's excellent restaurants or enjoy an optional Flamenco show in Sacromonte. Overnight for one night at a centrally located hotel. (B/L)



Daily Itinerary *(cont'd)*

Day 8

Granada and the Alhambra

This morning's highlight is Granada's stunning Alhambra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most beautiful works of architecture of the medieval world. Built on a hill with commanding views of the city and the plain beyond, it became the Nasrid dynasty's royal city in the 14th century and the residence of the kings and their court. It is renowned for its display of intricate tilework and its captivating blend of Moorish and Spanish artistic influences. The Generalife Gardens are an enchanting extension of the Alhambra, showcasing lush greenery, vibrant flowers, and intricate water features. The Koran continually repeats the idea that heaven is a garden with running water, and Generalife Gardens was a remarkable endeavor to create paradise on earth.

In the afternoon, we travel again by train, to Seville. In the late afternoon, we will admire the iconic landmarks and charm of this Andalusian city aboard a cruise on the Guadalquivir River. Overnight for two nights at a boutique hotel located within the city walls. (B/L/D)



Day 9

Seville

Seville was once the most strongly fortified city in Europe. Our all-day tour takes us first past the 12-sided Torre del Oro, a tower that was once part of the defense walls constructed by the Almohads, and then by three of the remaining city gates. Then we visit two outstanding UNESCO World Heritage Sites, beginning at El Real Alcázar, a royal palace considered the most beautiful on the Iberian Peninsula. Constructed on top of an Almohad fortress, it is an outstanding example of Mudéjar architecture, a style and decoration heavily influenced by Islamic workmanship. This bastion remains an outstanding testimony to the civilization of the Almohads as well as that of Christian Andalusia. Built in the 15th century on the site of a former Almohad mosque, the Catedral de Sevilla was meant to demonstrate the city's power and wealth after the Reconquista. It is the largest Gothic building in Europe and houses the tomb of Christopher Columbus. Attached is La Giralda, a former minaret that is a masterpiece of Almohad architecture. Now functioning as the bell tower of the church, this elegant tower is considered the finest of the three great Almohad minarets (the other two are in Rabat and Marrakech). There will be time to climb to the top for a view of the city. Dinner is on our own this evening. (B/L)

Daily Itinerary *(cont'd)*

Day 10

Seville and Medellin

Andalusia is a region full of rich culinary traditions, resulting in mouth-watering dishes like gazpacho, paella, and traditional tapas. This morning, we will tour the local markets to select fresh ingredients representing this vibrant food culture for a hands-on cooking class followed by lunch. In the afternoon, we depart for Trujillo with a stop in Medellín en route. Hernán Cortés was born here and would later lead the expedition that caused the fall of the Aztec Empire, bringing large portions of what is now mainland Mexico under the rule of the King of Castile in the early 16th century. We will view the statue of Cortés in the city center before continuing to Trujillo, where we will overnight for one night. (B/L/D)



Day 11

Trujillo

The hometown of Francisco Pizarro and his brothers, the conquerors of the Inca Empire, Trujillo is a well-preserved medieval town with magnificent views over the Extremaduran countryside. We begin our explorations at the large equestrian statue of Francisco Pizarro in the beautiful Plaza Mayor and continue to the Museo de la Coria, dedicated to interactions between the conquistadors of the region and the Americas. Nearby, the Casa Museo de Pizarro and the Casa Palacio Marqués de la Conquista are grand houses of the Pizarro family. The Iglesia de Santa María la Mayor is the main church of the town, built between the 14th and early 16th centuries and thus was quite new when Pizarro and his brothers would have prayed here before setting out on their journey to the far side of the world to bring down an empire many times larger than all of Spain. While Trujillo is most famous for the Pizarro family, it was also home to another famous explorer, Francisco de Orellana, who was the first Westerner to sail down the Amazon River. A battle he fought on that trip against a local tribe whose women fought alongside the men against the Spanish prompted Orellana to name the river the Amazon after the warrior women of Herodotus' history.

In the afternoon, we transfer to Salamanca with a quick stop at Plasencia, the birthplace of Inés Suárez, the only female conquistadora who played a significant role in the conquest of Chile in the 16th century. Upon arrival in Salamanca, dinner is on our own. Spend two nights at a centrally located boutique hotel. (B/L)

Daily Itinerary *(cont'd)*

Day 12

Salamanca

Salamanca is famous for its university, the third oldest in all of Europe and the oldest in Spain, where many of the conquistadors studied, including Cortés. The conquistador of the American Southwest, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, was born in Salamanca, as was the conquistador of Yucatan, Francisco de Montejo. It is here where Christopher Columbus argued his case for a western voyage to the Indies in front of a court of Dominicans in 1486/7. Our tour of the university includes some original rooms, the wooden benches well-carved by students from the era of the conquistadors, and an amazing Plateresque façade reflecting similar architecture throughout Mexico and Peru. After lunch on our own, we continue to the Plaza Mayor, one of the most famous and beautiful in Spain, and two remarkable cathedrals – the Old Cathedral (Catedral Vieja de Santa María) and the New Cathedral (Catedral de la Asunción de la Virgen). The Old Cathedral, dating back to the 12th century, features Romanesque and Gothic architecture, while the New Cathedral, constructed in the 16th century, showcases stunning Plateresque and Baroque styles, making them both architectural gems of this historic city. (B/D)



Day 13

Ávila

Depart Salamanca this morning to Ávila, renowned for its well-preserved medieval walls, a UNESCO World Heritage site that encircles the entire historic city center. Its impressive Gothic cathedral and numerous Romanesque and Renaissance churches represent Spain's rich architectural and cultural heritage, all but perfectly preserved from the era of the Reconquista.

After our visits and lunch, we drive on to Zorita de los Canes, a small town located west of Madrid and home to the medieval Castillo de Zorita that overlooks the Tajo River. We overnight at the charming Posada de Zorita de los Canes, known as the little paradise of Alcarria for its stunning vistas. Tonight's farewell dinner will be a treat for the senses. (B/L/D)



Daily Itinerary *(cont'd)*

Day 14

Castillo de Zorita de los Canes

With its defensive hilltop position, Castillo de Zorita de los Canes played a crucial role during the Reconquista and now stands as a cultural monument to the complex history of the region. If available, Dr. Guenter, who spent much time working at this site, will arrange a private tour for our group with archaeologists to learn about the preservation of the castle and artifacts. In the late afternoon, return to Madrid and overnight at an airport hotel. Dinner is on our own. (B/L)

Day 15

Depart Spain

Independent transfers to the airport for departing flights. (B)

PLEASE NOTE: Occasionally, due to circumstances beyond our control, itinerary changes may occur. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility should this be necessary

Pre and Post Trip Extensions

Far Horizons offers pre or post extensions for many of our trips. We can also arrange extra nights at the arrival and departure hotel should you wish to arrive early or depart later. Please contact us for details.

Why Take This Tour?

**Visit six of Spain's
UNESCO World Heritage
Sites:**

**Toledo, Córdoba, the
Alhambra and Generalife
Gardens in Granada,
Seville, Salamanca, and
Ávila**

**Enjoy a traditional
Flamenco dance
performance**

**Experience a culinary
cooking class**

**Private tour of Castillo
de Zorita de los Canes
with archaeologists**

**Limited to 14
participants**





Tour Information

Pricing

For current pricing, please visit farhorizons.com and navigate to our trip page.

Inclusions

Price based on double occupancy and includes:

- Internal flights during the trip (if applicable/unless otherwise noted)
- The accompaniment of your scholar throughout the entire trip
- Local English-speaking guide
- Hotel accommodations (3 or 4 stars; or best available based in the area)
- Ground transportation
- Airport transfers for arrivals and departures
- Most meals as noted in the itinerary
- Entry fees to all included sites and museums
- Gratuities to guides, drivers, and restaurant and hotel staff
- Coordination for any private presentations or tours

Trip prices are based on a minimum number of participants. If this minimum number is not met, trip prices are subject to change. Should the prices need to change, Far Horizons will reach out to registered guests to discuss directly.

Single Supplement

Should a roommate be requested and one not be available, the single supplement will be charged.

Exclusions

- International round trip airfare
- A separate donation check of \$150.00 per person to a designated donation project
- Passport or visa fees
- Required vaccines or tests
- Airport or departure taxes
- Alcoholic drinks, beverages or food not included on set menus
- Excess baggage charges
- Personal tips and hotel incidental expenses
- Laundry or other items of a personal nature

Donation Checks

As a tour company that benefits from the cultural and natural riches of our destinations, we have a policy of donating to the scientific and cultural sites and projects which we visit. This has created a bond between Far Horizons and the academic and local communities that has helped us establish an extensive list of lecturers and contacts in each of our destinations. We ask that each participant donate to the noteworthy project we designate. The donation amount is \$150.00 per person. Note that the donation is required as part of your registration for the trip and that it is non-refundable.

Exchange Rate Fluctuations

Prices are based on currency exchange rates keeping below a projected level. While it is unlikely, if the exchange rates should change substantially, Far Horizons reserves the right to charge an additional amount to the trip cost.

Registration

A deposit of \$1000 per person is required along with your registration & health forms, which will be linked in the email confirmation you receive once you pay your deposit on our booking platform. Final payment is due 120 days before departure. Prior to departure, you will be sent a reading list and a tour bulletin containing travel information.



Tour Information *(cont'd)*

Cancellation

Cancellations received in writing at least 120 days before departure will receive a refund less a \$500 per person administrative fee. Cancellations received less than 120 days before the departure date will not receive a refund. If for any reason you are unable to complete the trip, Far Horizons will not reimburse any fees. Upon registering for the tour, the purchase of travel protection with both trip cancellation and emergency evacuation is strongly advised. Links to recommended insurance policies will be included in the email you receive confirming receipt of your deposit.

Expectations During Travel

Our trips are designed for flexible, energetic people who like to be active, have a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude. We have designed this trip to be as comfortable as possible, while also aiming to visit some remote or unique sites that other companies do not attempt to include in their itineraries. There may be days where we have very long drives and the conditions of the roads may vary. Hotels and transportation in some remote areas may not be up to western standards. There may be times when no bellhops are available; please pack with the understanding that you need to be able to handle your own luggage at times. Sometimes we may be walking over uneven trails for a mile or more; hiking boots are strongly recommended. Not every meal will be haute cuisine and several lunches may be picnics or box lunches. By maintaining a flexible attitude we will soon be captivated by the beauty of the natural scenery, the hospitality of the local people, and the fascinating sites we will see. Your flexibility and patience will be appreciated.

Air Ticketing

International round trip flights are not included in the cost of the trip. If Far Horizons must change the trip dates or cancel the trip for any reason, Far Horizons is not responsible for any air ticket you may have purchased. Please send your complete air schedule as soon as you have it. NOTE: Please contact Far Horizons if you would like for us to handle your air ticketing.

Private Tours and Talks

The private tours of archaeological sites and talks by specialists are scheduled in advance and include a donation to each. Specialists working at these sites are excited about showing their work to interested enthusiasts. However, please be aware that there may be times when the director or a member of the staff may not be on site when our groups arrive due to other commitments.

Walking and Standing

Far Horizons expects all participants to be physically active and able to walk and climb independently throughout the full touring days. This includes walking over uneven terrain (uphill and downhill) for 2 miles or more at each site. You should expect to be on your feet for much of each day, averaging as much as 5 miles of walking per day. **As such, each participant should be able to walk unaided at a pace of 3 miles per hour for at least an hour at a time, and to stand unsupported for at least 60 minutes.** Bearing this in mind, we suggest that, if you have not already done so, you begin walking several miles every day, ideally including stairs and hills. If you have questions about your ability to keep up with the group or the strenuous nature of this trip, please contact the Far Horizons staff.



Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that you consider purchasing travel insurance. Should illness or an unforeseen event force you to cancel your travel plans after your final payment or during your trip, it would be doubly unfortunate to incur a significant financial loss. Trip cancellation protection will enable you to be reimbursed for the loss of your payment if you are unable to travel for any of the covered reasons in the "Outline of Coverage" section, or should you have an accident or suffer from any medical conditions during the trip.

Far Horizons offers customized protection plans through Travel Insured International (a Crum & Forster Company) with the following benefits:

- Trip Cancellation and Trip Interruption for covered reasons
- Trip Delay
- Baggage Loss and Baggage Delay
- Emergency Medical Expenses and Emergency Medical Evacuation
- 24-Hour Accidental Death & Dismemberment
- 24-Hour Travel Assistance & Concierge Services
- Option to upgrade to 'Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR)

We recommend reviewing the language in detail so you are aware of specific parameters; Depending on the policy, to waive the Pre-Existing Medical Condition Exclusion or to upgrade to CFAR coverage, the plan must be purchased within 14 to 21 days of the initial trip deposit, full trip cost must be insured, and traveler is medically fit at time of plan purchase. Otherwise, coverage may be purchased at any time prior to departure.

To obtain a personalized quote and/or purchase a plan through Far Horizons/Travel Insured International, simply click [HERE](#). For specific questions regarding the Worldwide Protector Plan, please contact Travel Insured International's Customer Care Center at 1-800-243-3174 or by email at customercare@travelinsured.com, and refer to Far Horizons' account number: 54070.

Itinerary Changes

Changes in our itinerary, accommodations, and transportation schedules may occur. While we are committed to keeping as close to the published details as possible, sometimes it is simply not possible. Weather events, government affairs, or other factors out of our control sometimes come into play. A good book to read as well as patience, flexible attitude, and a sense of humor are essential.





Meet Your Study Leader...

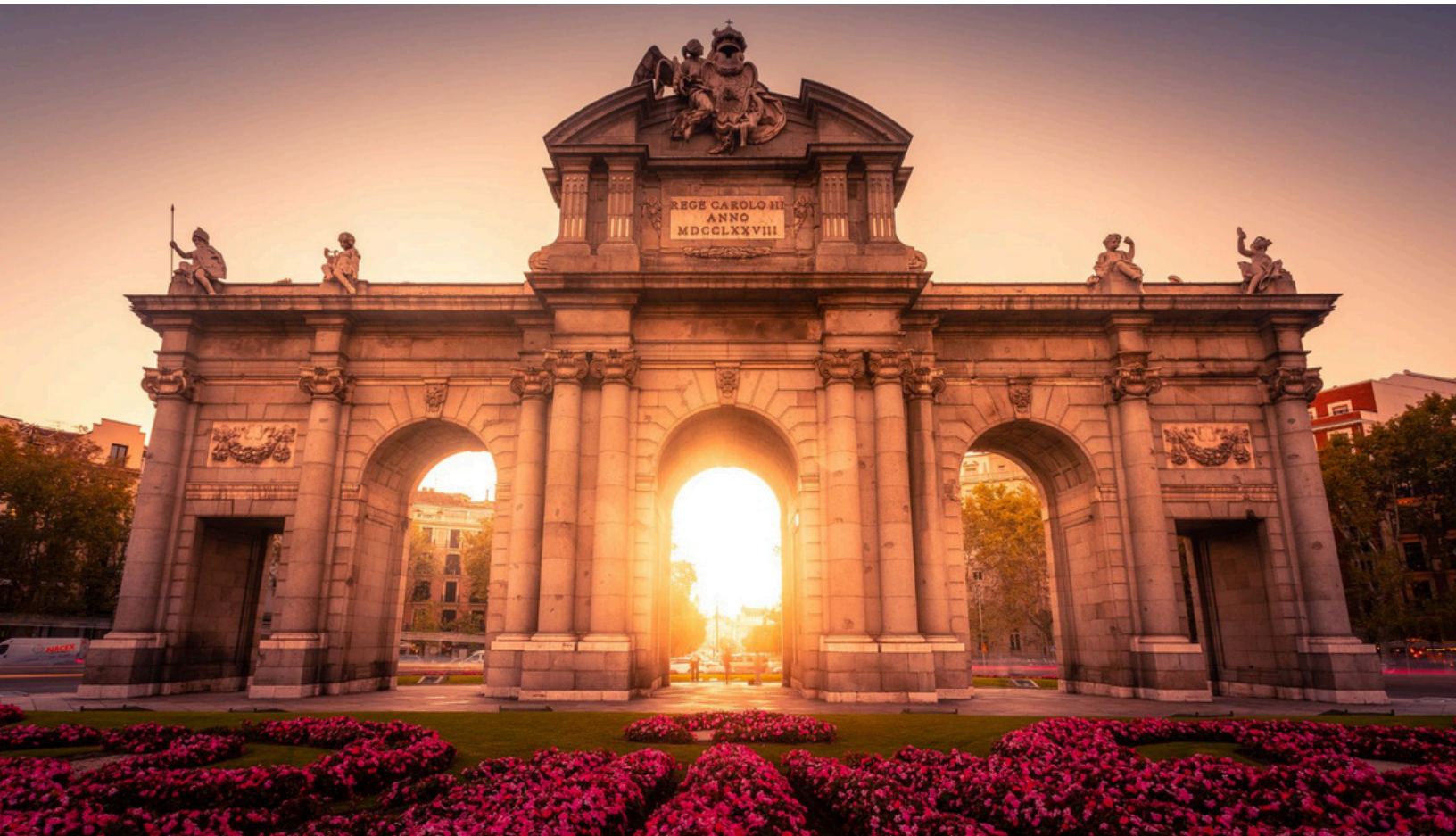
Dr. Stanley Guenter

Stanley Guenter was first introduced to the Maya culture and ancient script at the age of ten. He has been studying the Mesoamerican cultures ever since. He obtained his undergraduate degree at the University of Calgary, his Master's Degree at La Trobe University in Melbourne Australia, and his PhD in Archaeology from Southern Methodist University.

He has worked on archaeological projects in eastern Tabasco, Mexico and is currently an epigrapher and archaeologist with two archaeological projects in Guatemala: The Regional Archaeological Investigations of Northern Petén, Guatemala (RAINPEG) and the Southern Methodist University El Peru/Waka' project.

Stanley is one of the outstanding rising stars of Mesoamerican writing systems and has taught and presented at many conferences in Canada, the United States, Australia, Germany and Denmark.

He has done a full study of the inscriptions of Dos Pilas in relation to Tikal (you may see the readings on mesoweb.com).





What People Are Saying About...

Dr. Stanley Guenter

“Stan is amazing! He was full of information and attentive, and was always so quick to share. He was very attentive and patient with questions. He had a great sense of humor too and a very pleasant, easy going personality. I hope you can entice him to lead future trips!”

- DAVID WESTPHAL

Why Travel with Far Horizons?

With over forty years of experience, and an 85% customer return rate, we have stood the test of time. Remind yourself what makes Far Horizons so unique.

✦ Scholar Led Tours

Every tour is led by a well-respected PhD scholar with expertise in the subject & regions we visit.

✦ Trusted Partnerships

Trusted Partnerships: Every tour is led by a well-respected PhD scholar with expertise in the subject & regions we visit.

✦ Behind the Scenes Access

Our groups have private access to closed areas and on-site specialists.

✦ Unique Trips

Our itineraries are designed to showcase sites that are off-the-beaten path; we explore places that many travelers never see.

✦ Personalized Service

We love knowing our guests and helping with the decision process. We are here to assist you.

✦ Small Groups

Our tours have a maximum of 14 travelers. So you can trust that you will have a boutique experience every time.



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SPAIN

WITH PROFESSOR STANLEY GUENTER

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