

SEPHARAD, RECOVERED LAND



CAMINOS DE
SEFARAD
RED DE JUDERÍAS DE ESPAÑA

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SEFARAD

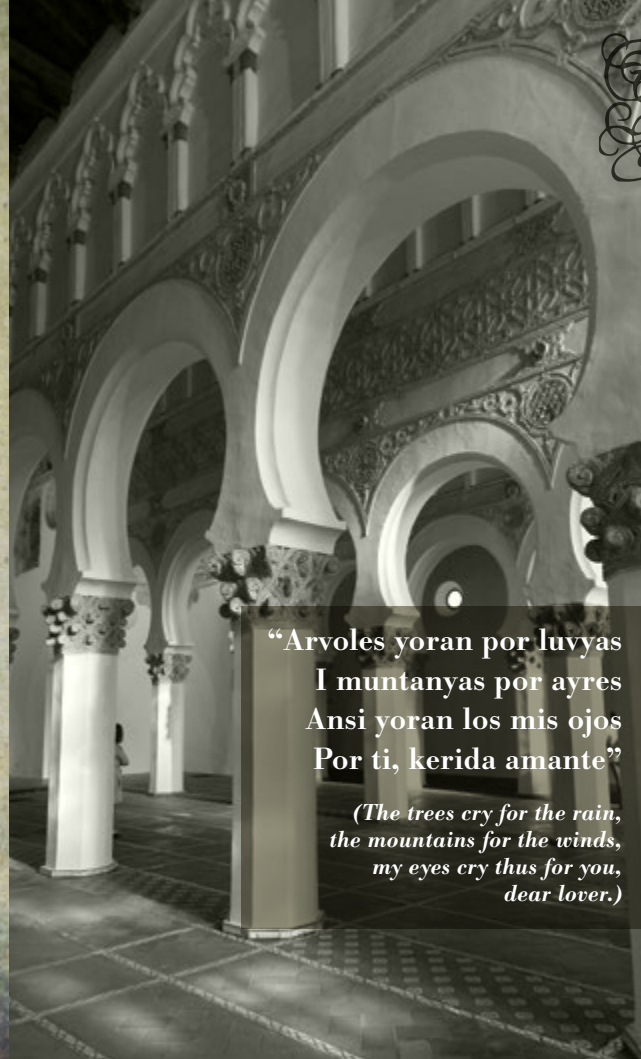
RED DE JUDERÍAS DE ESPAÑA

City names in Judeo-Spanish:

AVILA, BARCELONA, BEJAR, ESTEYA-LIZARRA,
HERVAS, KAÇERES, KALAHORRA, KORDOBA,
LEON, LORKA, LUZENA, MONFORT DE LEMOÇ,
OVIEDO, PLAÇENCIA, RIBADAVIA, SAGUNT,
SEGOBIA, SHAEN (JAÉN), TARAÇONA, TOLEDO,
TUDELA, TUY.



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This popular Sephardi
song ends with the words
“What will become of me?

In foreign lands I will die.” The
loved one for whom it cries is the
lost homeland, and we know that
it was sung again at Nazi exter-
mination camps by Sephardies
from all over Europe, who found
themselves again in tragic cir-
cumstances. The poem had been
written centuries earlier, in 1492,
to sing about the nostalgia for the
Spain from which they were expe-
lled. But Spain was not forgotten.
Thanks to the gastronomy, crafts
and cultural legacy, as well as the
neighbourhoods they left behind,
through the literature of Lope de
Vega, the Legends of Bécquer and
the novels of Galdós and Blasco
Ibáñez, they are still remembered.
And today, thanks to the Network
of Jewish Quarters in Spain (Red
de Juderías), those paths of the
imagination have been preserved
in the houses, streets and palaces
of these cities and towns.. Now,
in these places you can enjoy the re-
covered Jewish heritage by visiting
the Paths of Sepharad.

“Arvoles yoran por luyas
I muntanyas por ayres
Ansi yoran los mis ojos
Por ti, kerida amante”

*(The trees cry for the rain,
the mountains for the winds,
my eyes cry thus for you,
dear lover.)*

Ávila, cradle of the Kabbalah

Those who walk through the Puerta de la Malaventura at the Fortified Walls of Ávila will enter the Moshes de León garden. A sage among Sephardi sages, here he unravelled the mysteries of the Kabbalah, whose writings were put in its famous Zohar.



Barcelona, jewish Quarter

This is where the most famous of the Sephardic travellers, Benjamin de Tudela, who reached India and China before Marco Polo, made his first stop. He describes this city as one of merchants, inhabited by sages.



Béjar, the city of return

The aljama of Béjar, its Jewish quarter, was home to a synagogue, school and baths, as well as a butcher, town oven, hospital and cemetery. Unlike other cities, it was never surrounded by walls. This open way of treating the Sephardics enabled the birth and development of the intellect of eminent Medieval doctor Judah Ben Musa.

Cáceres, olive tree garden

The houses of the old Jewish quarter, on both sides of narrow, steep streets, hide a secret. Not only were they Jewish dwellings, but their back wall is also the actual fortified wall of the city. Some of the support beams still have the hole carved for the mezuzah, the little case where Jewish families would keep verses from the Torah. You must visit the new Jewish quarter next to Plaza Mayor.



Calahorra, inhabited

To find out about Jewish Calahorra, look at the moon, because one of its craters has been called Abenezra in honour of the wise Sephardic astronomer who spent his final days here. Then take a look at this Jewish neighbourhood of winding and often dead-end streets.



Córdoba, preserved Sepharad

The synagogue of Córdoba is one of only three that is preserved in Spain. Its splendid art and stunning interior show us much about Sepharad's past. The Jews, expelled by the Muslims, fled the city and flourished again under the protection of the Christian King Ferdinand III.



Estella-Lizarra, lookout and pathway

The Jews who chose to live high up, over the River Ega, sheltered by the two main castles that joined the powerful fortified walls of Estella-Lizarra, had good taste. Each house in the new Jewish quarter around the fortress was a lookout over the town. This privileged view can still be enjoyed today.



Hervás, crafts and creation

Wood, ironwork, leather and glass. These are the crafts that are made and sold on the streets of the Jewish quarter of Hervás today. Beautiful objects that are a feast for the eyes and legacy of the Sephardis, in addition to the houses with traditional architecture and frameworks of adobe and chestnut wood.



Jaén, pioneer

It was in Jaén where the Spanish Jews first flourished. As we see with Hasdai ibn Shaprut, who rose to the position of advisor to the caliphs of Al-Ándalus, his house still bears the Star of David on the facade, carved in stone. It was also from here, in Jaén, that the Sephardics were first expelled in 1483, nine years earlier than in the rest of Spain.



León, the city of the Zohar

León is full of Jewish remains: in store rooms and courtyards like that of the Jabalquinto Palace, and in the names that recall its merchant past: shoe shops, silverware shops, Azabachería. The sage Mosé de León, who took Kabbalah to its zenith with his work TheBook of Zohar, was born in its Jewish quarter



Lorca, a Jewish quarter surrounding Lorca Castle

The archaeological digs at Lorca Castle from the early 21st century discovered the remains of the Jewish quarter and its synagogue, which was never dedicated to another religion, since it was abandoned after the expulsion of the Jews. The synagogue, dated in the 15th century, was lit with glass lamps hung in its interior, which can now be admired at the Municipal Archaeological Museum.



Lucena, city of poets

Earl of Sepharad and city of the Jews, since unlike other cities, it was entirely inhabited by Sephardic Jews. Poets and sages came to the city, attracted by the academy of Talmud studies. Today Lucena has different symbols encrypted in its monuments, such as the relief evoking a menorah on the castle's Moral Tower, which houses the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology.



Monforte de Lemos, Hebrew star

The history of the Jews in Galicia is one of a tolerant region that, as in the case of Monforte, did not confine them to separate Jewish quarters. In this city, they choose to inhabit the squares and areas around the fortified wall, leaving the mark of their craftsmen and their merchants that are recalled in the streets named after their trades.



Plasencia, La Mota

Twenty anthropomorphic tombs symbolise the most outstanding aspects of the Jewish Cemetery, where the inhabitants of the La Mota Jewish quarter were buried. The San Vicente Ferrer Convent, now the Parador Nacional, was erected over the remains of the old synagogue. Later, a second Jewish quarter would be established on the streets around what is today Plaza Mayor.

Oviedo, past and present Sepharad

Jewish past and present come together in Oviedo. The current synagogue is in use in the La Casina building on Plaza del Fontán, where the Jewish quarter was, in the middle of the old town.



Ribadavia, sweet memory

From its businesses on Rúa da Xudería, Ribeiro wine was exported to many corners of Europe. The Sephardi Museum here has collected documents and archaeological remains on all the Galician Jewish communities. Gourmand rabbis and ambassadors from Israel have come to Ribadavia to try its traditional Sephardi pastries that are still made at some of its tafonas, or bakeries.

Sagunto, first Jewish quarter

The Sephardics inhabited Sagunto from the 1st century AD. They came after fleeing the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem by the Romans. Today its Jewish quarter is preserved with its original outline: dead-end alleyways, small squares and narrow, irregular lanes that take us back to the Middle Ages.



Segovia, living memory

The Didactic Center of the Jewish Quarter of Segovia, the old house-palace of Abraham Seneor, accountant of the Catholic Monarchs and Chief Rabbi, and later of the humanist doctor Andrés Laguna, is the ideal starting point to learn about the numerous vestiges housed in this city.



Tarazona, living legacy

When they fled Egypt, the Jews put up their tents in the desert, under the stars, calling this celebration the Sukkot. The Sephardics celebrated it in remembrance, with the name Cabañuelas, on Tarazona's Plaza de los Arcedianos,



Toledo, the city of two synagogues

Toledans were considered the most important Jews of Spain, like Samuel ha-Levi Abulafia. He was an important officer of King Peter of Castille I, whose sumptuous palace oratory, the beautiful Tránsito Synagogue with its austere exterior and sumptuous interior, is preserved today by the city. It is now a museum where you can learn about the history of Jews in Spain.



Tudela, city of the sage Abenezrá

Thousands of Jews who lived in Tudela, and today the three synagogues of the old Jewish quarter and the two of the new Jewish quarter, adobe and brick houses with their Mudejar decor remain. Even the door knockers seem to remind us of the locals who took their keys with them.



Tui, of Sephardics and Jews who converted to Catholicism

In the cloister of Tui Cathedral there is a menorah, or candelabra with seven arms, as a reminder of how the Jews helped to build its cloister. The Diocesan Museum also preserves something unique: the sambenitos, or penance cloaks, that were put on Jews who converted to Catholicism or were hung in churches to destroy their reputation.



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