

Granada & Torremolinos, Spain—Jan 25—Feb 2, 2013

By George Lopez TC

This year's TSC Winter Expedition was a touring adventure through Spain. 30 SCSCers joined a cadre of over 100 other Texans in what proved to be a fun trip across the big pond. A party of 13 that included a number of couples: David and Diane Stotz, Sandy and Robert Reeves, Andy and Sharon Smith, and Frank and Sueanne Yu, set out in advance of the main group to the first destination; Barcelona. There, they and a number of ladies, Ann Rogers, Marianne Pearce, Barb Carlson,

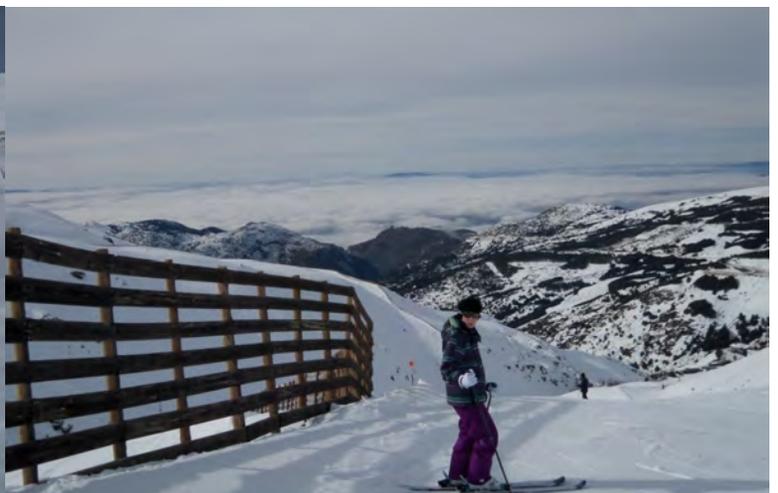


Yvonne McMahon, and Leslie Taylor stayed at the Avenida Palace as they worked off the jetlag, dined on rich tasty food and drank plenty of wine and beer in preparation of taking in the city's many beautiful sites. Places like the stunning "[La Sagrada Familia](#)", which when finished, will be the largest church in Europe, Güell Park, and the [Paseo de Gracia](#), the street that brings together more modernist civic buildings in the world. No wonder the ladies are smiling.

After three wonderful days on the Mediterranean city they boarded a sleeper train bound for Granada where they would join the main group led by George Lopez and Camille LaRoe. The main group had boarded an Air France jumbo in Houston and was pampered all the way to Paris. Can you say free champagne for everyone? How about some cognac after that tasty dinner and oh yes is that Ross Baker going for more French wine? After dinner and a movie all did their best to endure the 8 and a half hour trans-

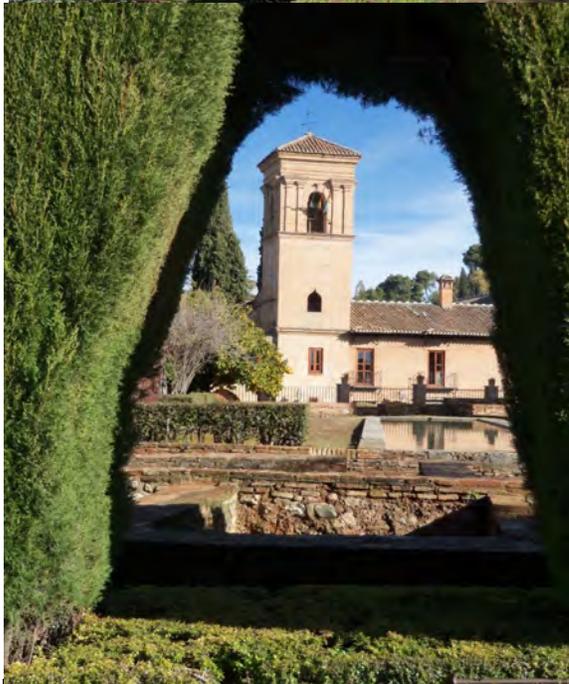
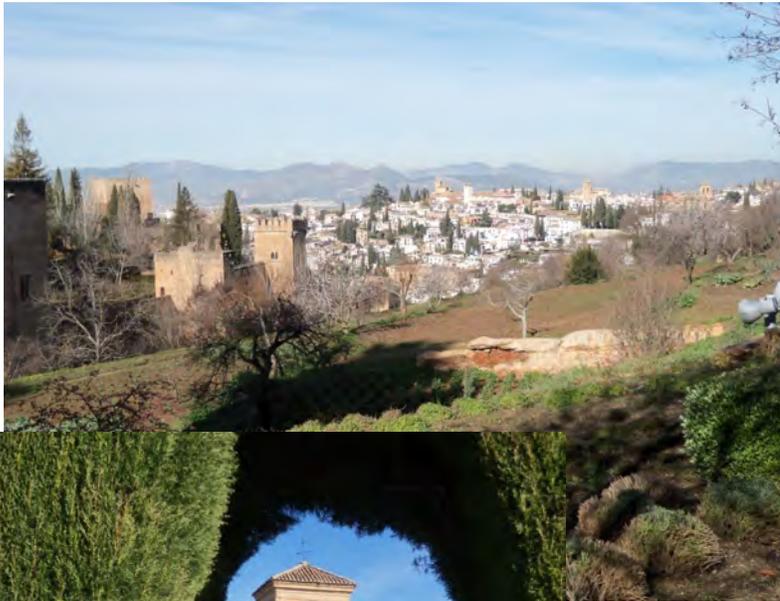
Atlantic flight. Some twisted and turned others walked. Evan and Lori stretched across the 5 center seats all to no avail. That is just too much time in a plane. After a nice breakfast the group landed in Paris and proceeded to take a three mile brisk walk to the other side of the airport and a totally different flight experience; smaller plane, smaller seats, and did she say 2 Euros for a bottle of water? Mercifully it was a much shorter flight and before the legs went totally numb we landed in Malaga. Spain at last, but not before customs, tracking down the luggage, looking for the tour bus and another head count off we go on a 2 hour tour of the picturesque Andaluz countryside. Oh wait. Is that an olive tree I see? Tired, but eager to get started, they group finally arrived at the hotel Carmen in beautiful downtown Granada, our base of operations for the next 5 days. How do you say where is my room in Spanish?

The itinerary for the trip was filled with a variety of tours and all sorts of activities. Some like Leslie Ward, Tor Lileng, Evan Howell and Lori Aubrecht, Angela Zumwalt and Robert Reily headed straight for the slopes at nearby Sierra Nevada. Rumor has it that while at the resort Evan attempted to be the first skier on the slopes wearing two left boots. Not to be outdone George Lopez managed to ski all day with two different size boots.



Others like the Stotz, Betty Gosse, Camille LaRoe, Yvonne McMahon, and Barbara Carlson, opted for a for a more relaxed day of wine tasting at a nearby vineyard to star their visit.

Each day there was a slate of optional activities in which to partake. One of the most popular was the Alhambra tour

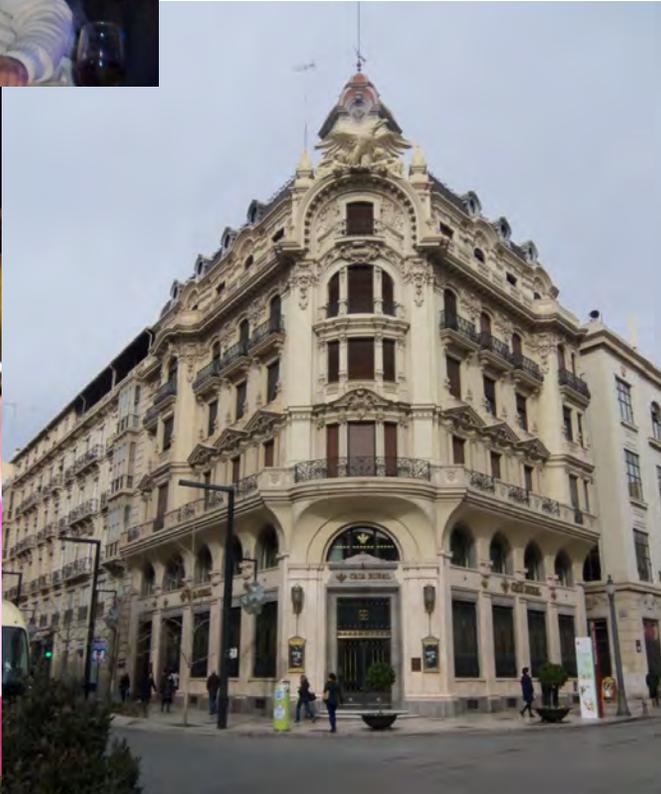


And then there was the welcome party. This was the first and last real opportunity to get all the participants on the trip in one place at the same time and a good time was had by all. We got to see a demonstration bullfight and got an opportunity to drink and be merry.



For the next few days some skied while the majority toured the Spanish countryside and historic sites. Just ask Sandra McCunis, Nancy Bryan, Millie Jude, Christie Burke and Jan Ferrell. They managed to go on many of the tours.

A Granada city tour, trips to Alpujarras, Ubeda and Baeza took them past millions of olive trees over hill and dale to historic sites all over the south of Spain.





And then there was Flamenco!



All too soon the group headed back to the Med to the shore city of Torremolinos. The snowcapped mountains in the background of the beach made for an interesting visual contrast.



From there two more tours headed to Gibraltar and Tangiers before the main group reluctantly headed back to Houston. Though the main expedition was over for most of us, ten lucky SCSCers got to stay for 5 more days.

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