



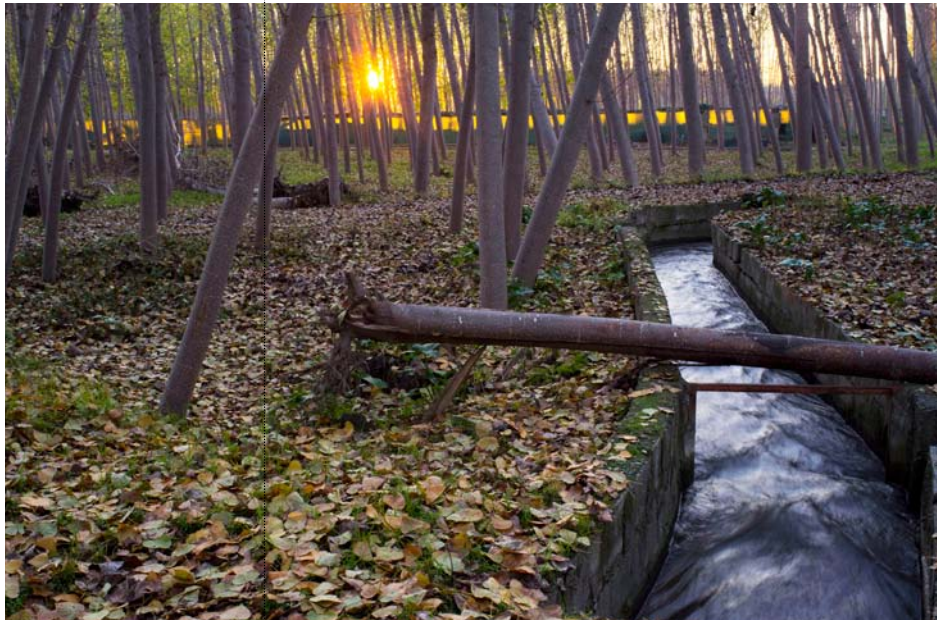
■ View of Santa Fe, looking south



■ Santa Fe, La Vega and Sierra Elvira



■ Countryside and fields of La Vega



■ Landscape of La Vega. Irrigation channel

LA VEGA DE GRANADA, WITNESS TO IMPORTANT EVENTS IN HISTORY

Poplar trees beside the Genir river; tobacco-drying frames, orchards and fields of crops announce the entrance to the area known as **La Vega de Granada**. At its heart lies Santa Fe, a historic town which faces the city of the Alhambra; it is surrounded by landscapes where time seems to have stood still, and has fabulous views of the Sierra Nevada and the majestic peaks of Veleta and Mulhacén.

Around this lovely town there are numerous roads which we can take to explore the area more fully, such as the ones which connect Santa Fe with the municipality's two outlying districts, El Jau and Pedro Ruiz, and those which lead to the Dehesa de Santa Fe peri-urban park.

THE BIRTH OF A NEW PERIOD IN WORLD HISTORY

The town of Santa Fe is one of those places in which history is condensed and accelerated. It was constructed opposite the city of the Alhambra to put an end to the War of Granada; this is where the first European state of the Modern Age was formed, when the **'Capitulations for the Surrender and Handing Over of Granada'** were signed by the Catholic Monarchs and Boabdil, the last Nasrid sultan, on **25th November 1491**. This brought an end to more than seven centuries of Muslim kingdoms on the Iberian peninsula.

Another historic event also ensured that the name of Santa Fe would be inscribed in history: on **17th April 1492** the **'Capitulations of Santa Fe'** were signed between the **Catholic Monarchs and Christopher Columbus**. This document detailed the agreements which were made with regard to the expedition which Columbus was about to undertake, travelling westwards towards the Indies, and which resulted in the **discovery of the new continent of America**.

These developments brought one period of Spanish history to a close and the Discovery of America, among other events, marked the start of the Modern Age in world history



■ El Pósito building, Calle Isabel la Católica, the Seville Gate and the old Casa Real



■ The Granada Gate, Calle Real and the Loja Gate in the background



■ Statue of Christopher Columbus



■ Statue of Isabel, the Catholic Queen



■ 'From Santa Fe to the Indies' exhibition, Institute of America

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A HISTORICAL HERITAGE IN PERMANENT EVOLUTION

The town carefully preserves the **layout of its historic centre** as its most precious asset. It is crossed by two main streets which start and end at gateways and which intersect, creating a central square. Designed in the style of a military camp, the grid plan of Santa Fe became the first **urban model** of Modern Spain and was exported to numerous towns on the American continent.

The historical buildings in Santa Fe reflect the way the town has evolved over time. You can still see the **four gateways** or arches which, hundreds of years ago, were the only ways of entering the walled and **fortified town**, after crossing the drawbridges over the 'Caba', or moat, which surrounded it. Once the gates of Granada, Jaén, Loja and Sevilla were no longer needed for defensive purposes, they were converted into chapels dedicated to four invocations of the Virgin, but their original essence was carefully retained.

Another interesting and surprisingly large building is the **parish church, the former Collegiate Church of the Incarnation**, which was built in the 18th century to replace the primitive one which had been constructed by the Catholic Monarchs. Beside the church stands the old **Casa Real**, which nowadays is the Parsonage, a building called **El Pósito** and, opposite, the Town Hall which is in neo-Mudejar style. Together with the **Institute of America**, these form a square which was once the old parade ground but is now the centre of the town's social, political, religious and cultural life.

Within the historic town centre we also find the **chapel of Los Gallegos, or El Señor de la Salud**, at the end of a beautiful 19th century promenade of the same name, and the **statue of Christopher Columbus at Km 0 of The Discovery**.



Looking southwest from La Encarnación church



El Señor de la Salud promenade



Calle Real



1777 Plan of Santa Fe, by Francisco de Quintillán



Plaque marking Km 0 of the Discovery

ART, CULTURE, ENTERTAINMENT AND TRADITIONS

Santa Fe has turned its history and traditions into art, culture, gastronomy and entertainment. In April, numerous cultural events take place in the town. During the festival of Las Capitulaciones, which is classified as an **Event of Interest to Tourism in Andalucía**, the historical centre takes on the form of a 15th century town with a craft market, street theatre, parades, music and dancing. Another festival with a historical theme is La Merendica, a day when people go out into the countryside for a traditional meal. It takes place on 25th November each year, to commemorate the **signing of the Capitulations for the Surrender of Granada**.

The most important religious festival in Santa Fe is **Corpus Christi**. The procession passes through streets which have been decorated with poplar branches and shawls, the ground is covered with reeds, and beautiful altars are set up all along the route. The Easter processions are also remarkable in Santa Fe, especially El Nazareno on Holy Tuesday and the Santo Sepulcro and Virgen de los Dolores on Good Friday. The procession of **Cristo de la Salud**, which takes place in March, is also very special.



Medieval market of the Capitulaciones de Santa Fe

An event called the '**Quema de El Penas**' marks the start of the festivities in honour of San Agustín, the patron saint of Santa Fe, and this, together with local festivals in Pedro Ruiz in July, and El Jau in August, ensure that the warm summer nights are filled with a party atmosphere, entertainment and fun for all the family and for groups of friends.

Other cultural and sporting events which are also very popular are the **International Festival of Comedy Theatre**, which brings the best theatre companies and comedians from Spain, Europe and American countries to Santa Fe, and the **Prueba de Fondo Hispanidad**, a 10-kilometre run through the town on 12th October each year, in which several thousand people take part.

The gastronomy of Santa Fe specialises in locally-grown vegetables and dishes prepared with thyme and other aromatic herbs, but perhaps the most famous delicacy from this area is the Pionono, a type of cake which has become an emblem of Santa Fe since the Casa Isla bakery began making it in 1897. It is now world famous, created by Ceferino Isla in honour of Pope Pius IX and inspired by his attire.



Pionono cake



Blessed Sacrament of Corpus Christi



'Quema de El Penas'



Comedy Theatre Festival



SANTA FE

Cradle of Hispanity