

# Spain - The Grand Tour

## Part 2 - Seville to Madrid

Joy & Andrew Lievesley







# Spain - The Grand Tour

## Part 2

Seville / Caseres / Salamanca / Madrid / Toledo





## Seville

GPS took us straight to the hotel, which was in a good central position, unfortunately there was another fiesta on... again... which made getting to the hotel more difficult than it should have been. We began with a visit to the Alcazar, which was pleasantly a lot quieter at the end of the day. The next morning we walked by the river taking in the bull ring where we purchase a sun hat for J as it was getting very hot. Then back to the centre for a tour of the Cathedral, which included a climb to the top of the tower via a ramp designed for horses.

After well earned refreshment we walked to Plaza de Espana which is a huge site created for the 1929 Ibero-American Exposition. After an awful meal the night before we found a great restaurant that was good for price, quantity and quality. We also discovered very near the hotel the best SB shop in Spain as well as a great ice cream shop..... life gets better and better.

On our last day in the city we walked local lanes to a nearby church; J attended the service, I read the paper in the sun. We then walked on to the Art Gallery followed by a late lunch. In the evening after drinks and a light meal we went to Plaza Major to see some strange architecture.







































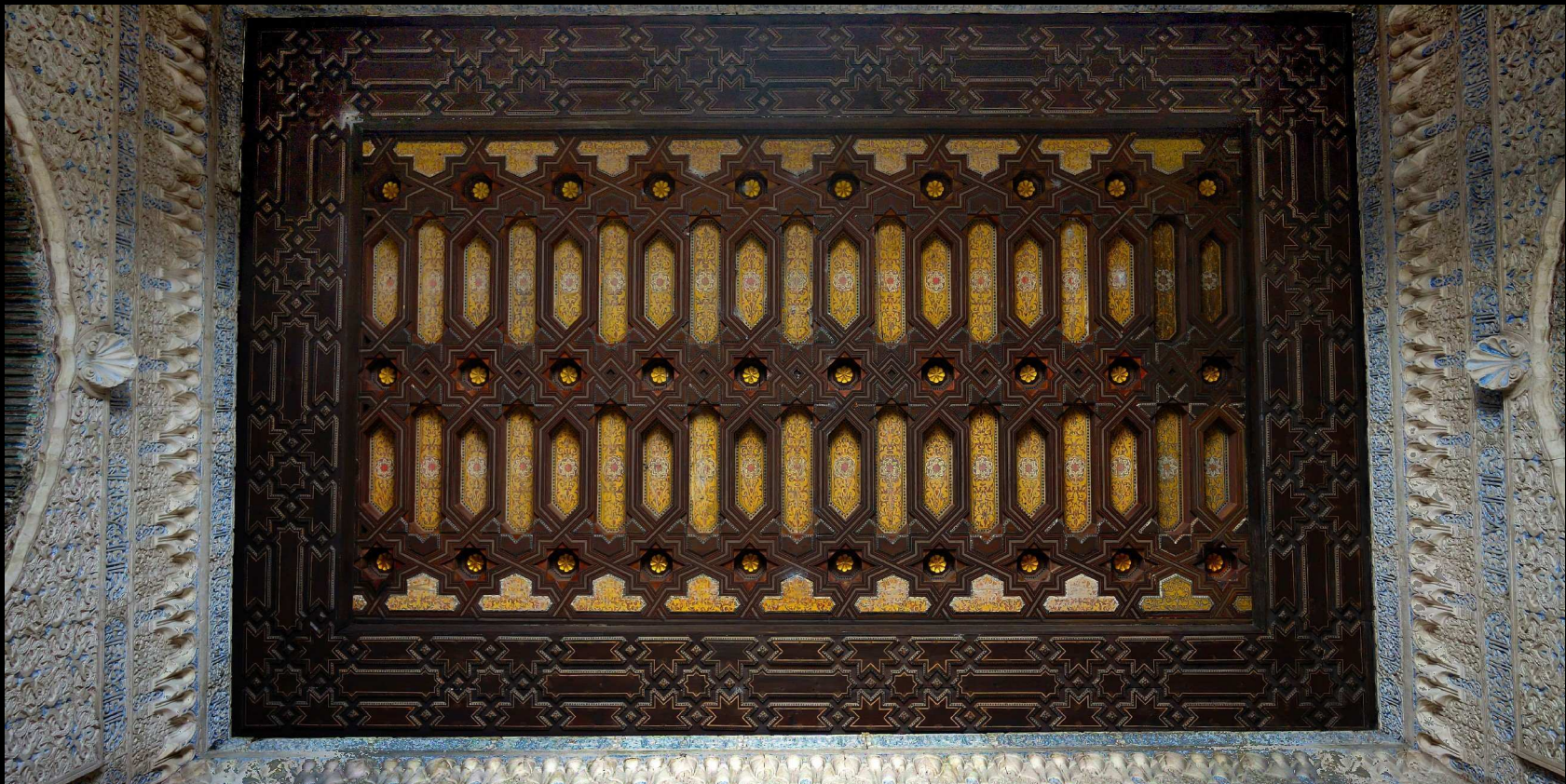
































OS en Sevilla 2014

**ABONO DE LA TEMPORADA**  
**PLAZA DE TOROS DE SEVILLA**  
Propiedad de la Real Maestranza de Caballería  
Empresa Pagés

27 de abril - Domingo Novillada con novillos y toros de lidia D. MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ D. MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ D. MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ	5 de mayo - Viernes Corrida de toros D. MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ D. MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ D. MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ	6 de mayo - Sábado Corrida de toros D. MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ D. MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ D. MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ	7 de mayo - Domingo Novillada con novillos y toros de lidia D. MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ D. MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ D. MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ
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VENTA DE LOCALIDADES: Los despectores de aquilón estarán abiertos los días del 11 de abril al 11 de mayo, de 10 a 14 horas y de 17 a 20 horas. Los días 12 y 13 de abril, las localidades permanecerán cerradas y el 17 de abril el horario será de 10 a 14 horas. El día de la celebración de cada espectáculo los despectores estarán abiertos ininterrumpidamente desde las 10 de la mañana hasta la hora de comienzo del mismo.

VENTA ANTICIPADA POR INTERNET en [www.lamaestranza.es](http://www.lamaestranza.es)





































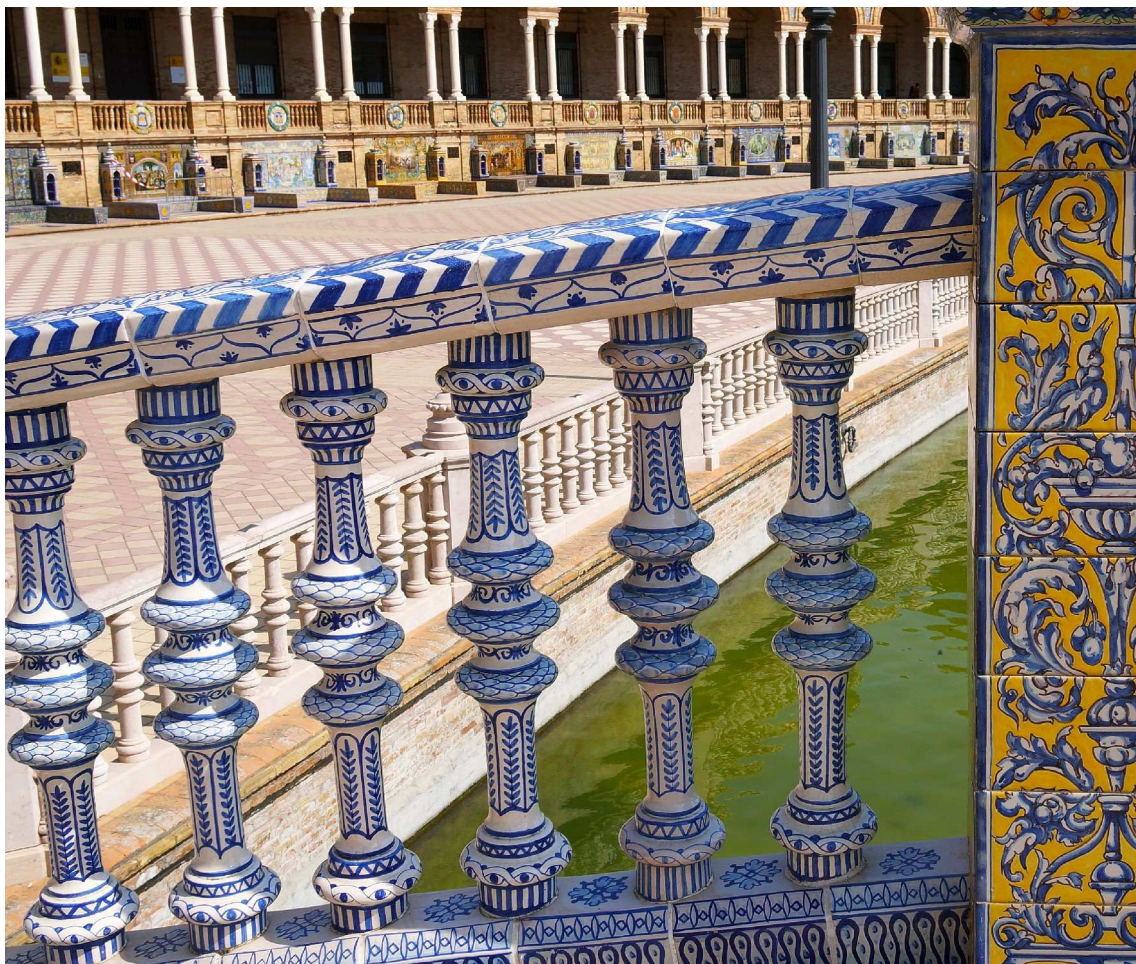
















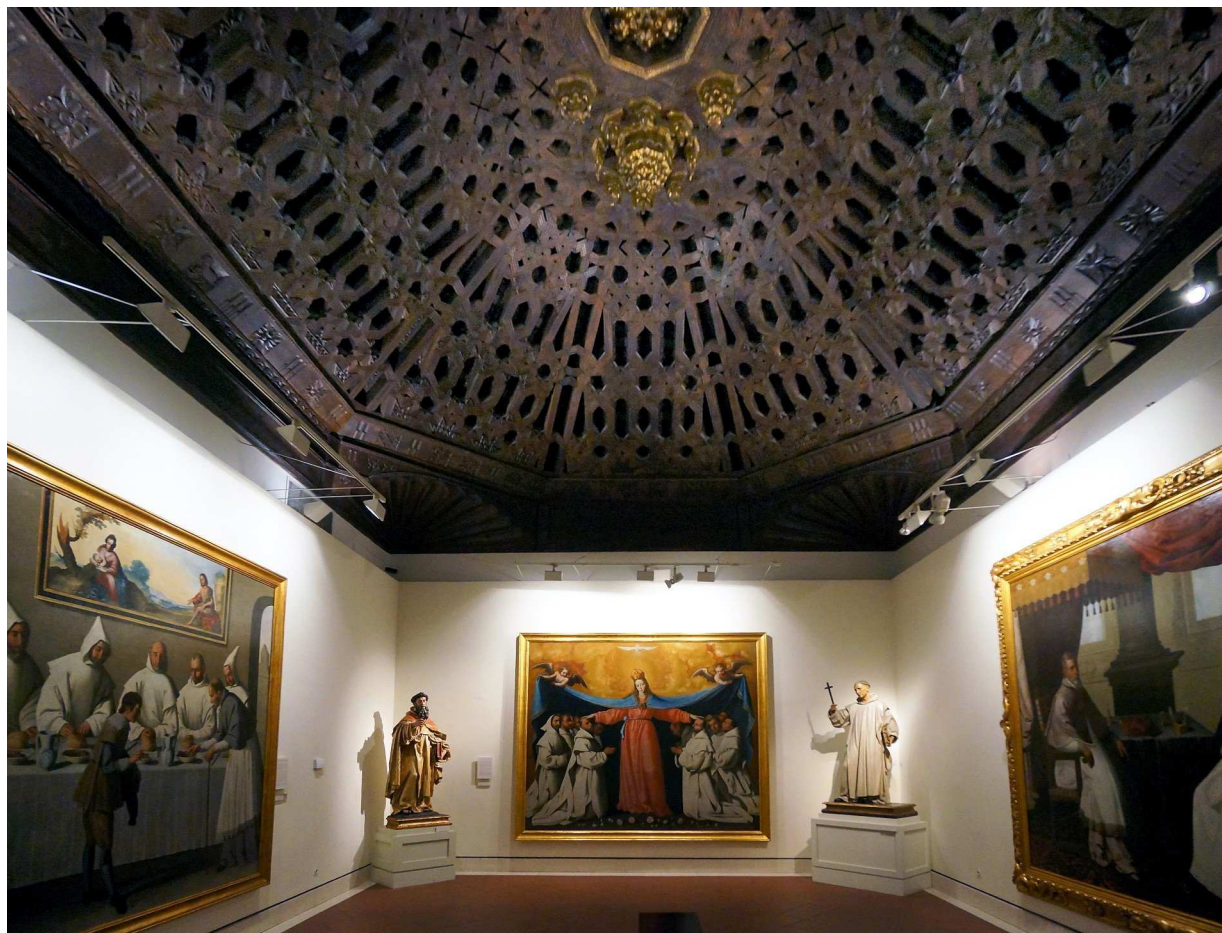
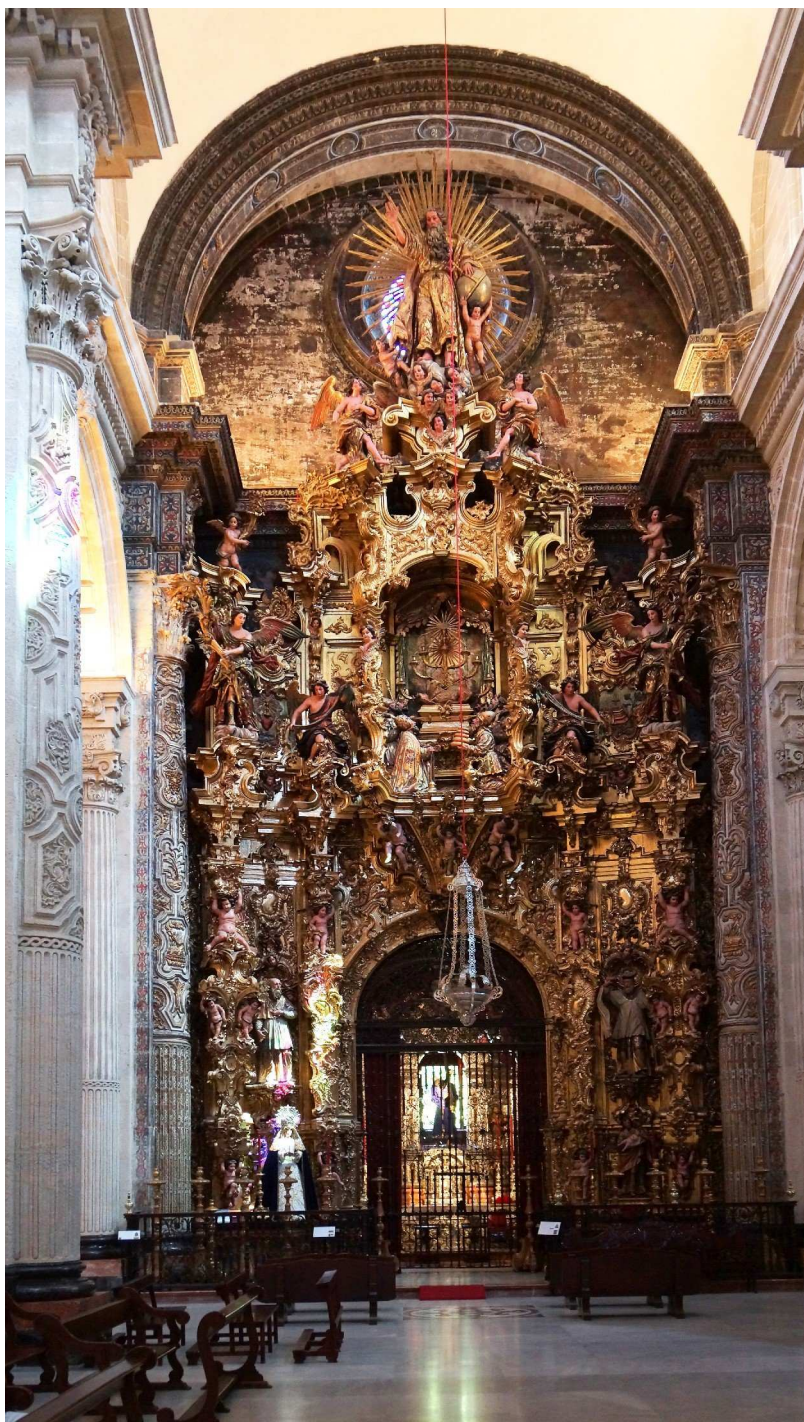
















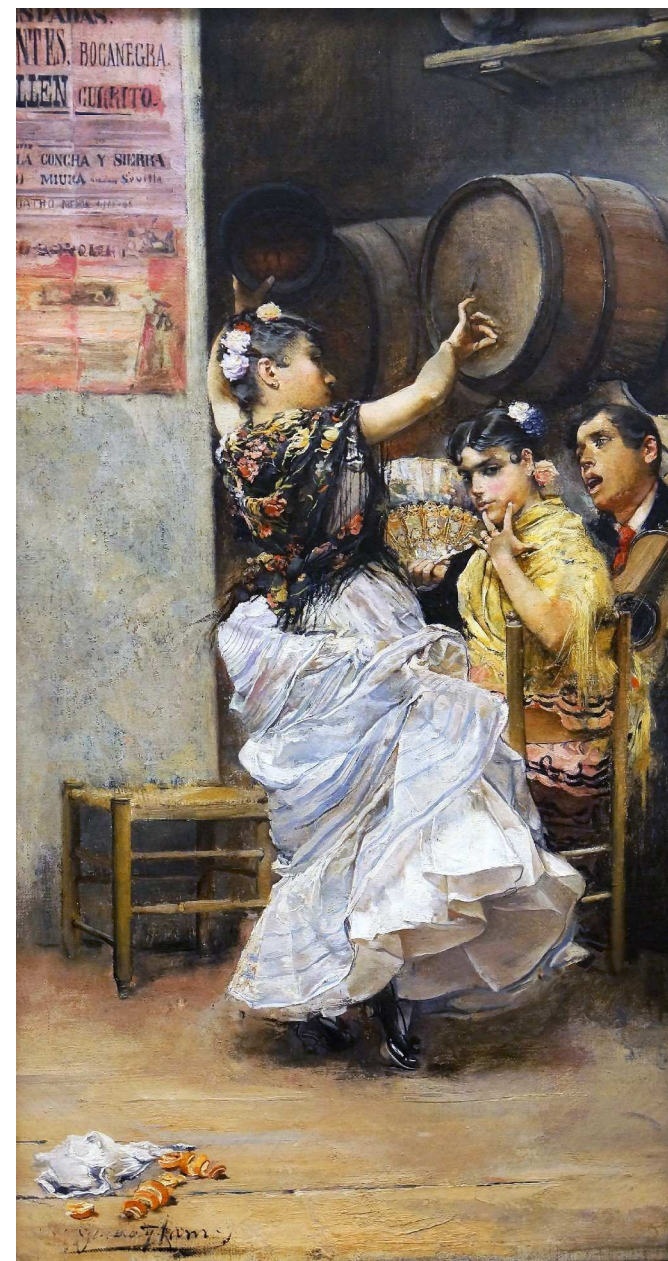
























We were sitting having a small snack near our hotel, when a table with young men underneath it came round the corner.

As I had been in Seville 5 years earlier in Easter week, I knew the answer....they were learning how to carry and navigate an Easter float on their heads.









## Caceres and Salamanca

Driving from Seville to Caceres we stopped off at Zafra for coffee (below), which seemed as quiet as it was five years ago when I walked on the Via de la Plata. At Caceres we stayed in this huge modern hotel, walked through the old town (Monday... it was closed) and ate out at an indifferent restaurant. Even the route marks for the Camino in the Plaza Major had been removed. On the way to Salamanca we diverted to the Jerte valley via mountain villages and drove up mountain passes at 1000m+.

At Salamanca we stayed at a good chain hotel by the Cathedral, in the centre. On the first night it was cold and windy, the first and only time on the holiday. We started off with a drink in Plaza Major before going on to a grim but expensive meal.

On the next day we had breakfast in a bar before setting off to visit the University buildings, the old and new Cathedrals (two for the price of one!) followed by a good and inexpensive lunch in a hostel bar. After a session of R&R in our hotel room we visited the Art Deco museum (the real reason to visit Salamanca!) a Dominican Monastery rounded off with a walk on the bridge and a drink in Plaza Major.















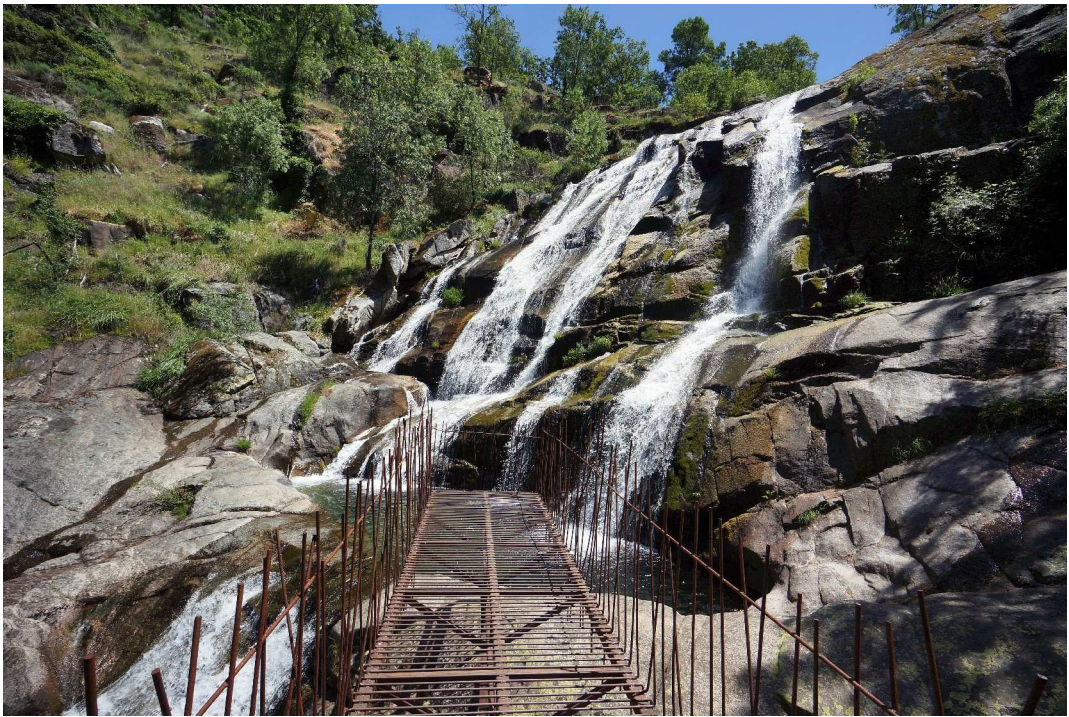
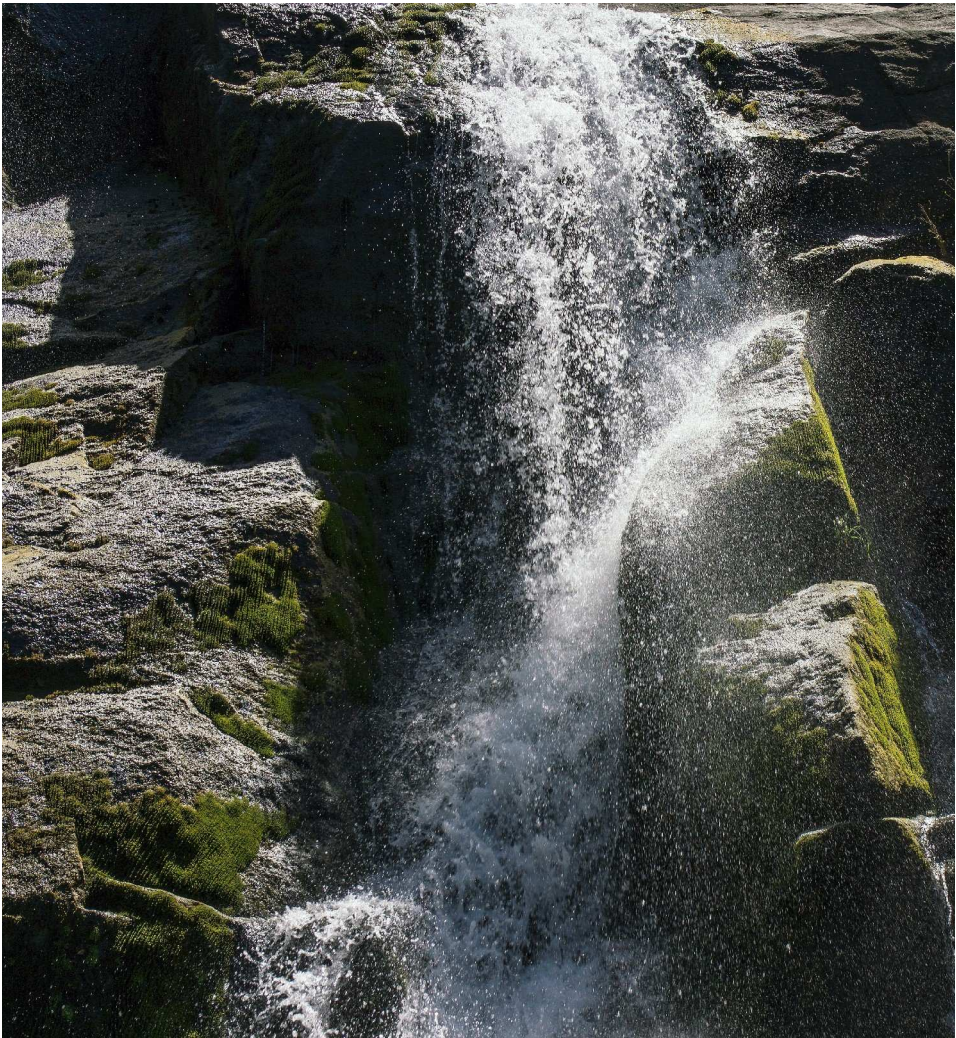
























On my walk on the Via de la Plata, I had a day off in Salamanca, sitting in the Plaza Mayor sketching and drinking an inappropriate amount of wine at lunch time.

I thought it was the best square I had ever seen.... so I was miffed to find a book fair taking place during this visit. I so wanted to show J this little gem at its best. I have used the pictures from my first visit on this page.



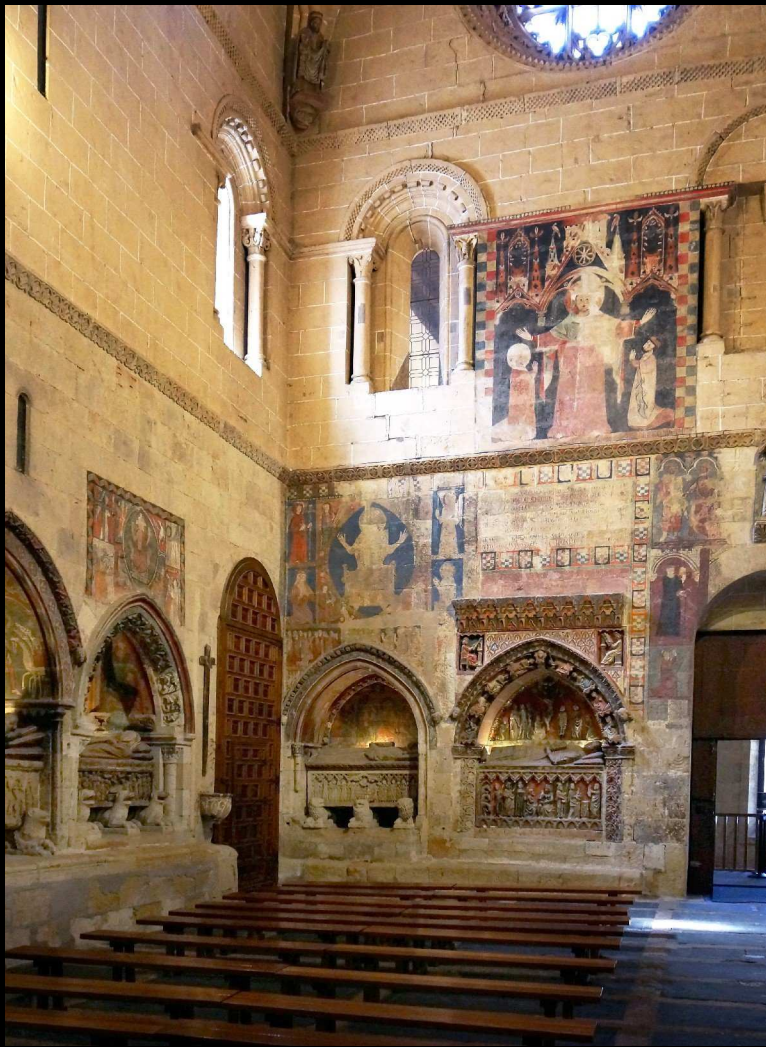








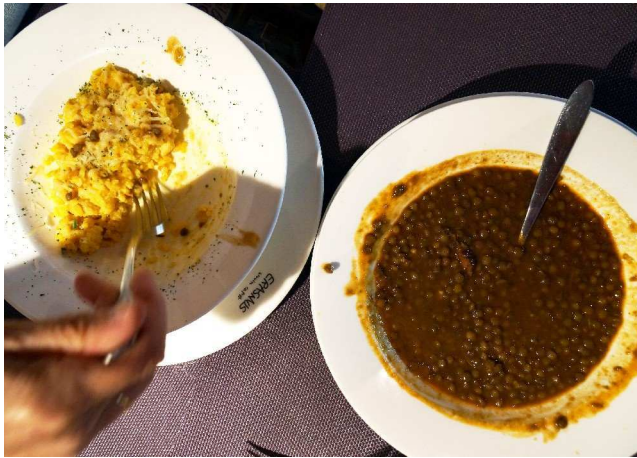
















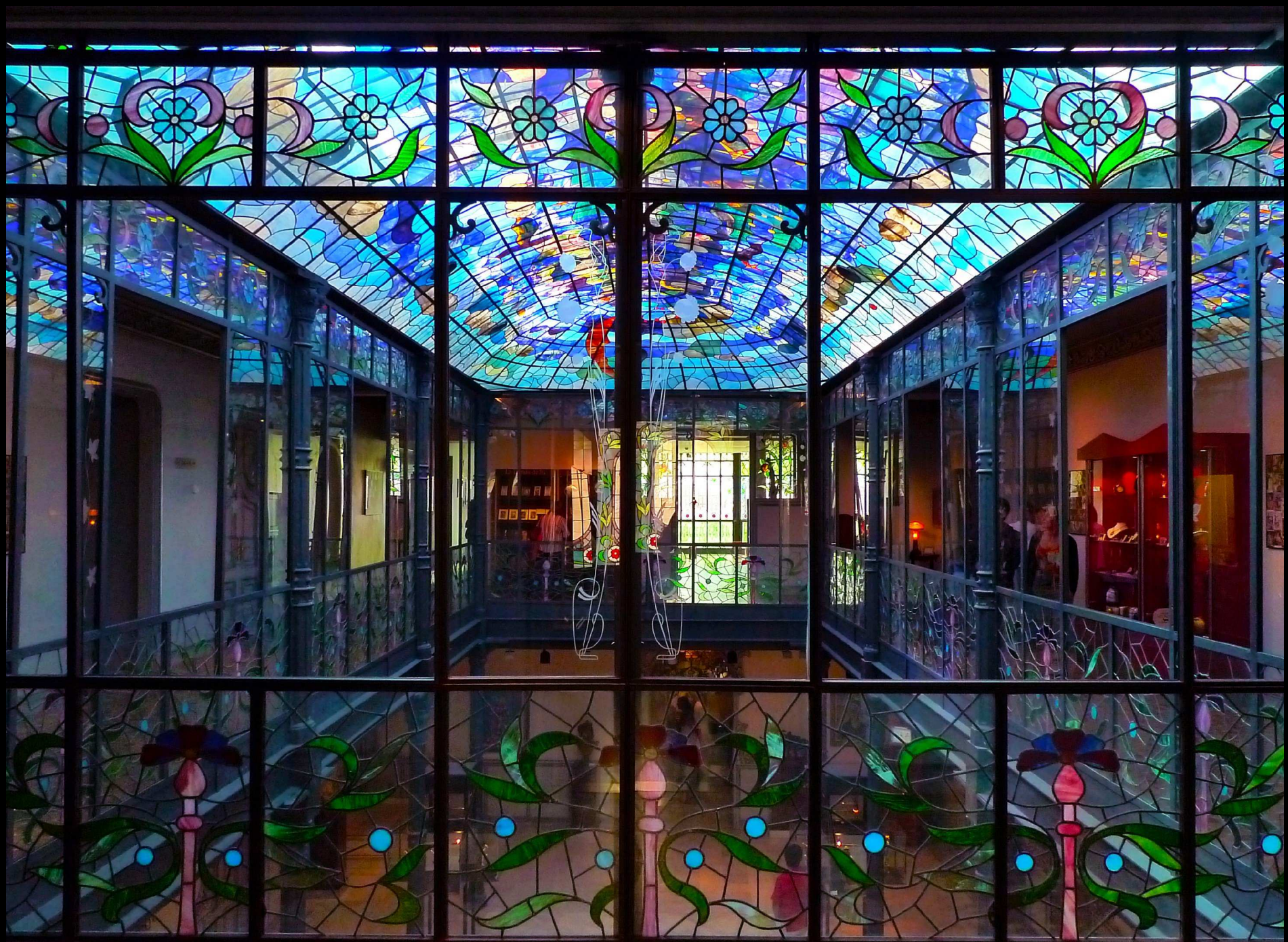








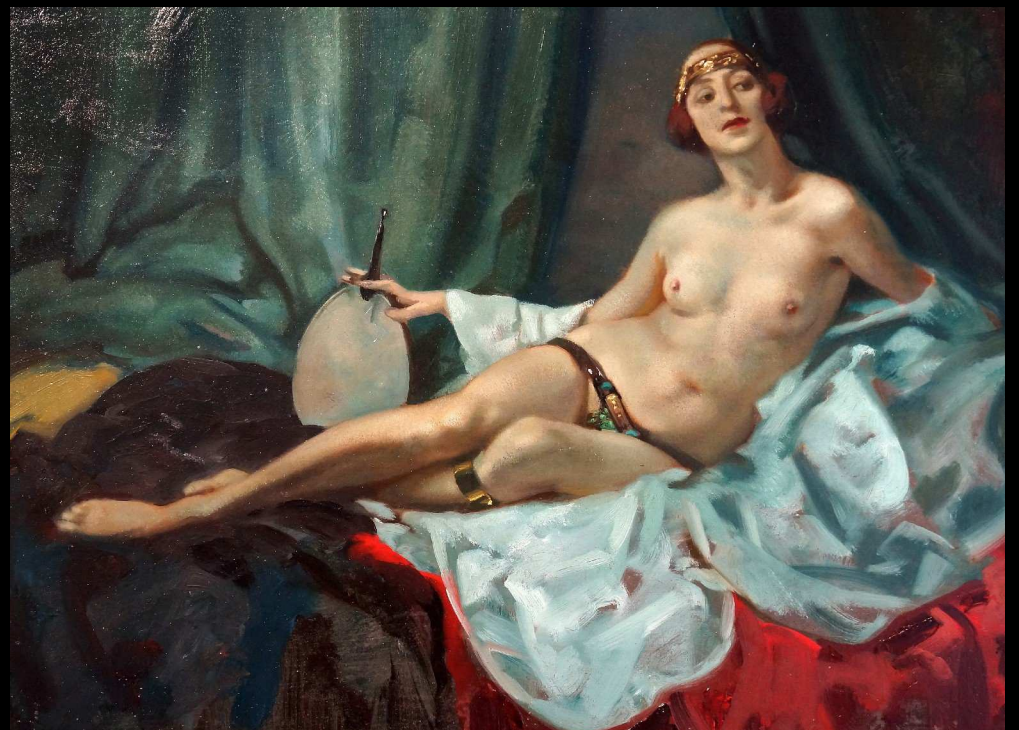


































## Madrid

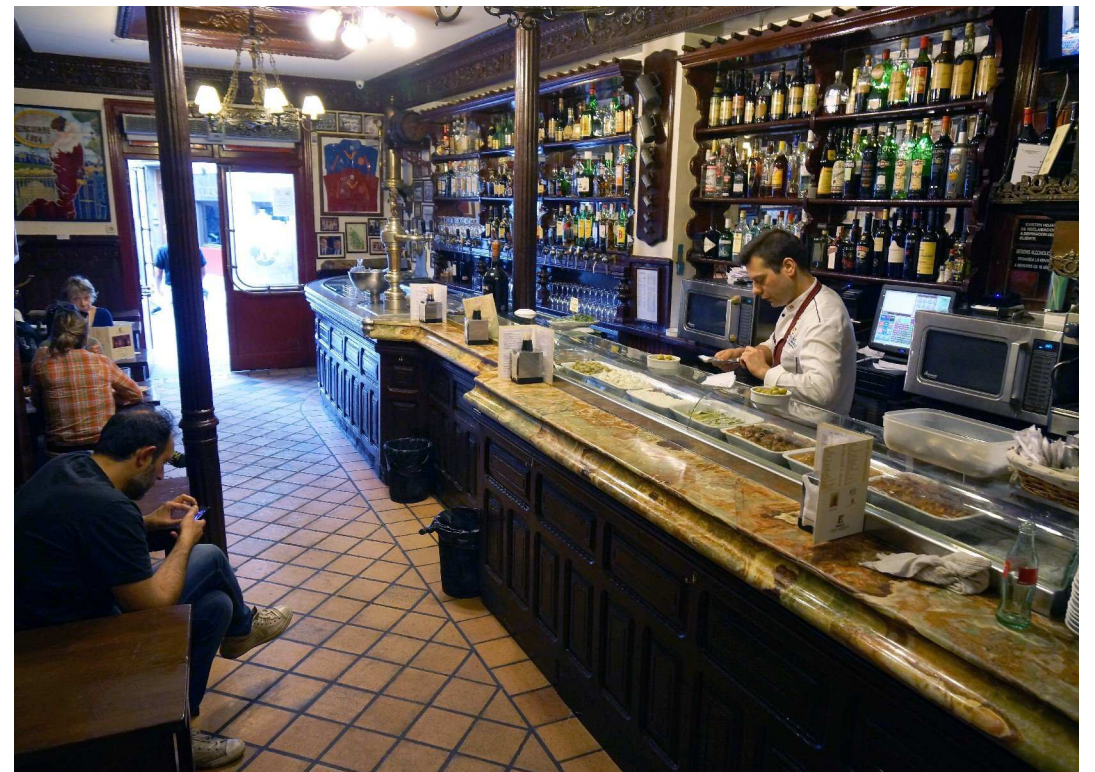
After driving from Salamanca and returning our hire car at the airport, we did the three change Metro trip to our hotel, situated near the Plaza Major. Leaving our bags, we took the pedestrian route down to the Botanic Gardens. We enjoyed a beer in a square, then food at a bar Rob had recommended. On the way back we stopped at a bakery for SB's to top up with great, but not necessarily good, calories.

The next morning we were up early to make sure we were at the front of the crowd for the Palacio Real, which sadly did not open until an hour later than advertised. Amazing place but no photography allowed. We then went next door to the Cathedral... if you are going to reorder a cathedral this is how to do it. Celebrating our 'pensionista' status we took the lift up the tower which offered great views over the city. Now in need of a coffee we stopped in a square on our way to a bar Rob had suggested for lunch, which was excellent. We both had Paella ... I forgot to take the photo, but managed one of the remains to remind us of a great lunch. We then went to Plaza de Espana, a very austere square of the Franco era. To continue our long walk we went to Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, which would have been very good if they had cleaned the pictures, instead you saw dark dull famous masters.

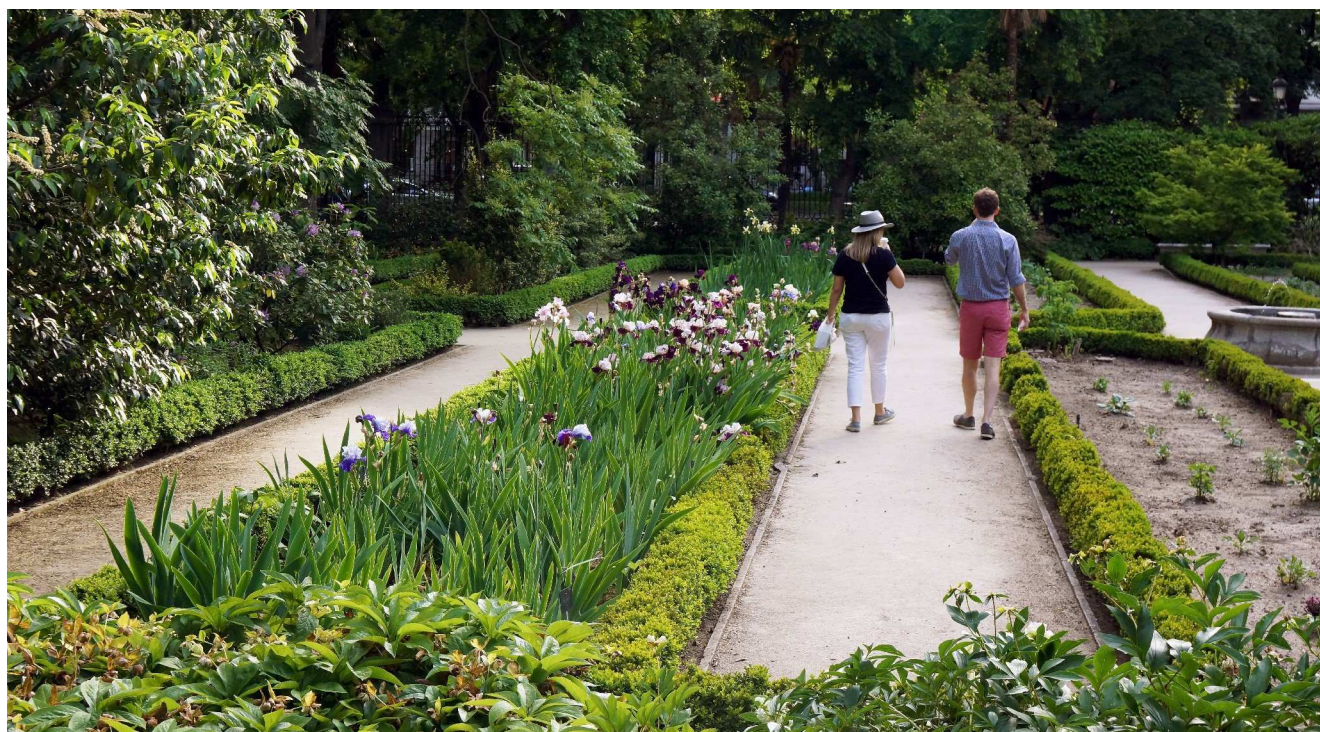
Up again early the next day to visit Monasterio de las Descalzas, same story we had to wait an hour as you were only allowed round as a group and the English group was not until 11am. So we repaired to a chocolate shop, where regrettably we could not do full justice to the place having just had a big breakfast. Impressive Monasterio but no photography allowed.

We then found our way to the Plaza Major and were greeted with a procession of huge flags and dancing in traditional costumes, yet another fiesta, this time for Madrid's patron saint. It was J's birthday so we had lunch in the square. After a period of R&R at our howe made our way to the Prado art gallery; the best art gallery ever. We arrived three hours before it closed and we got to see most of the display, but little time to stop and enjoy. No photography again!

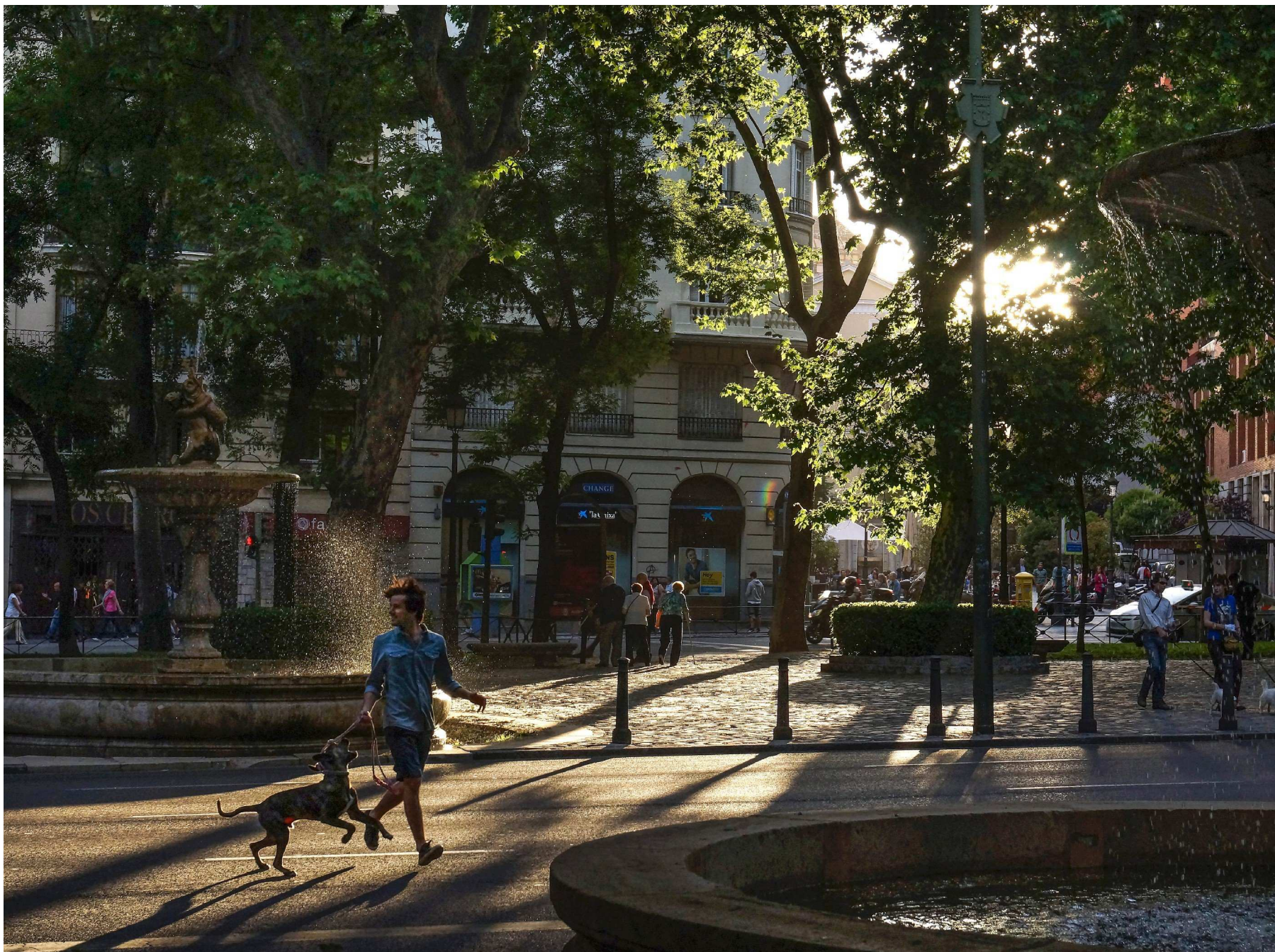
Walking back to the hotel we joined large crowds celebrating Atletico Madrid's winning the Spanish football league. We wandered into the Plaza Major where there was a concert on....we soon adjourned to the ice cream shop near the hotel for more calories to see us through to breakfast.































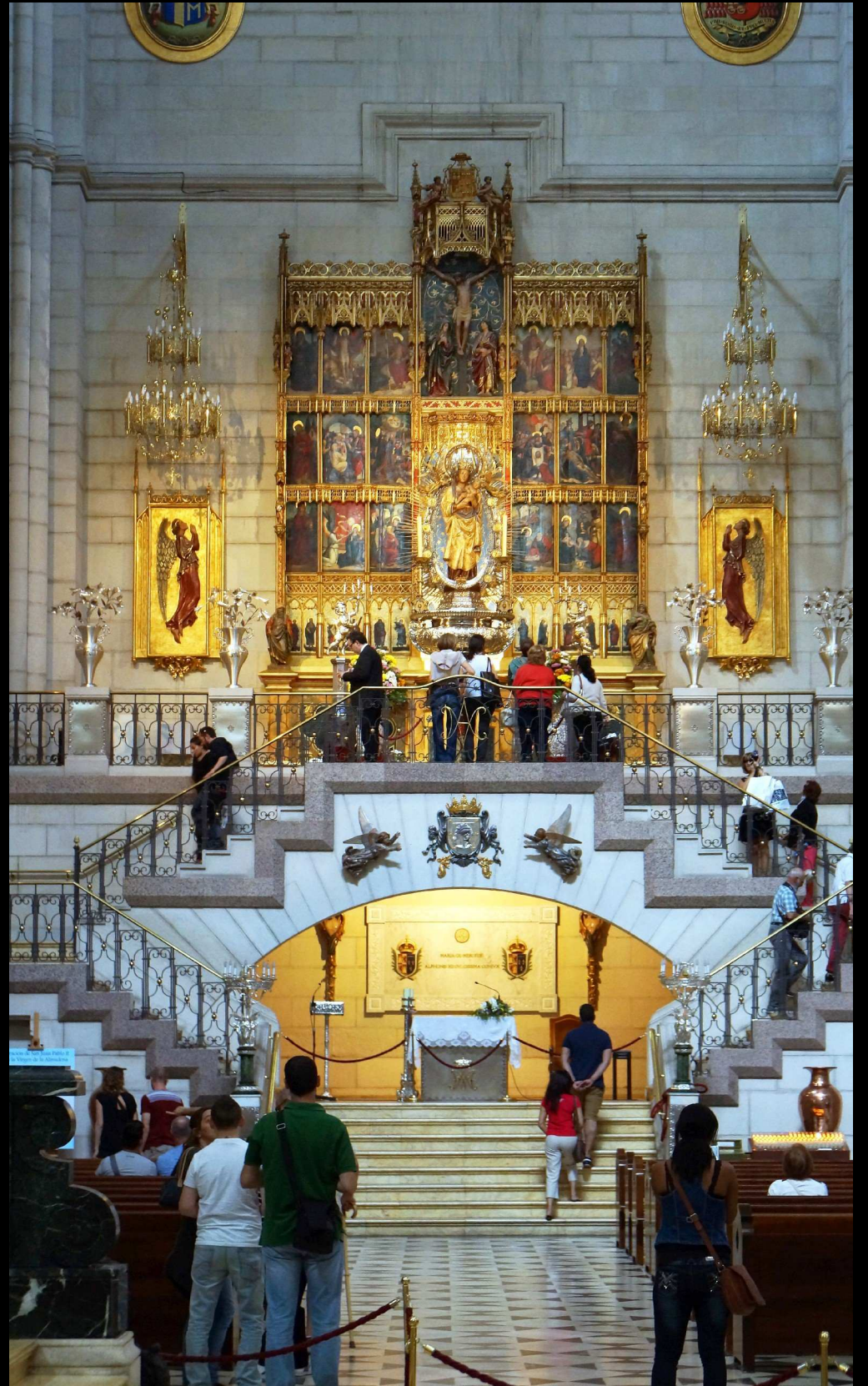
































HAY QUE HACER COMUNITADES  
CRISTIANAS COMO LA SAGRADA  
FAMILIA DE NAZARET QUE VIVAN  
EN HUMILDAD, SENCILLEZ Y ALABANZA  
EL OTRO ES CRISTO

























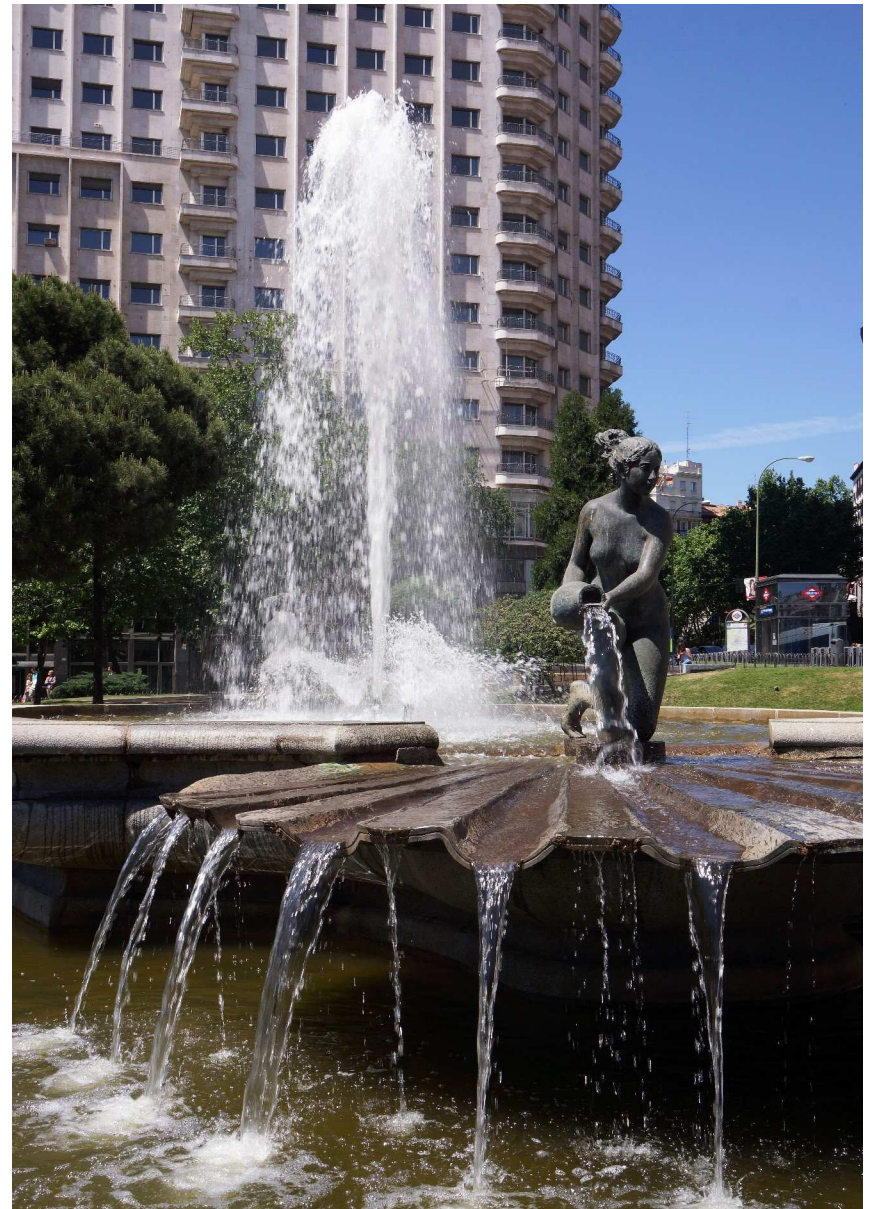








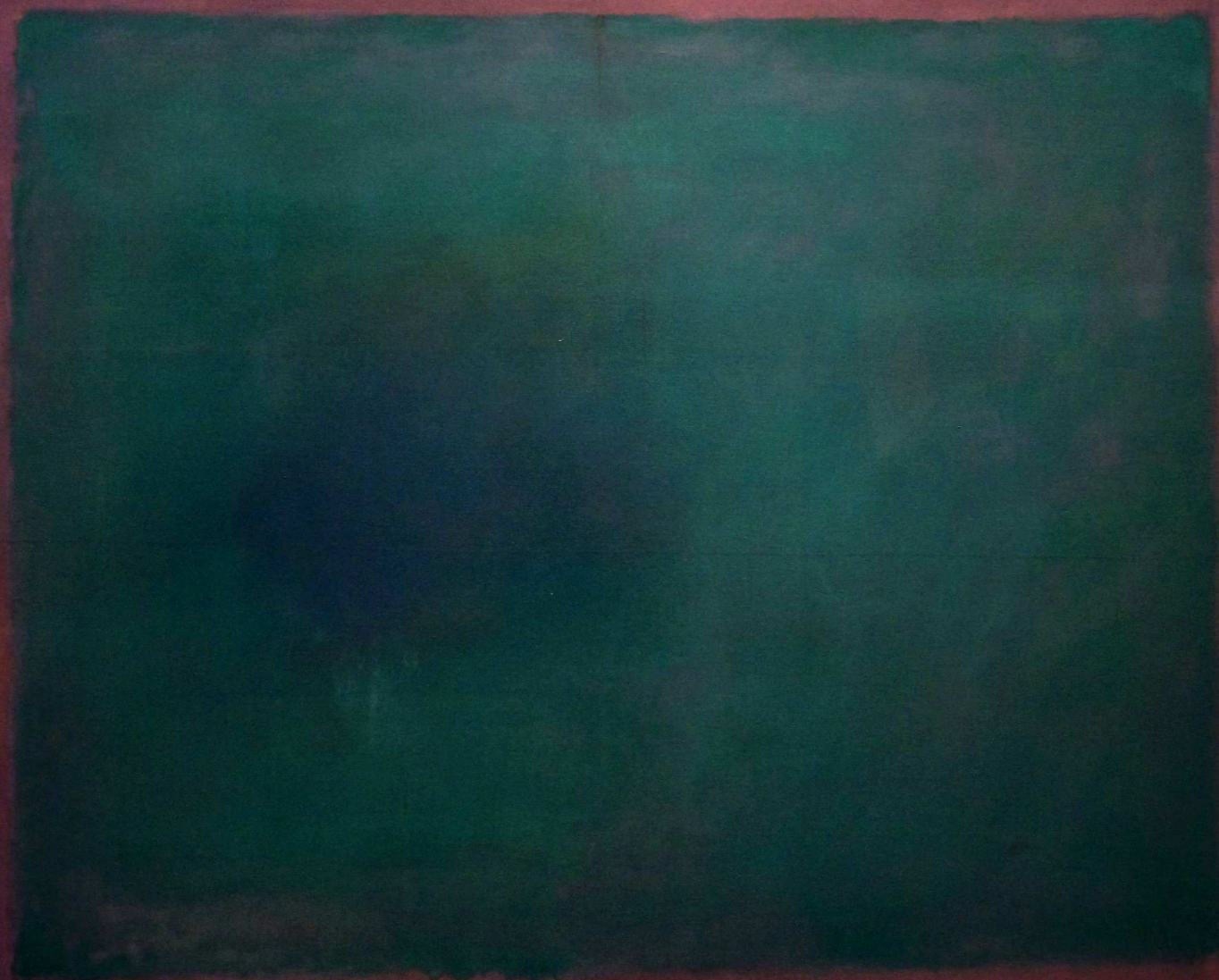




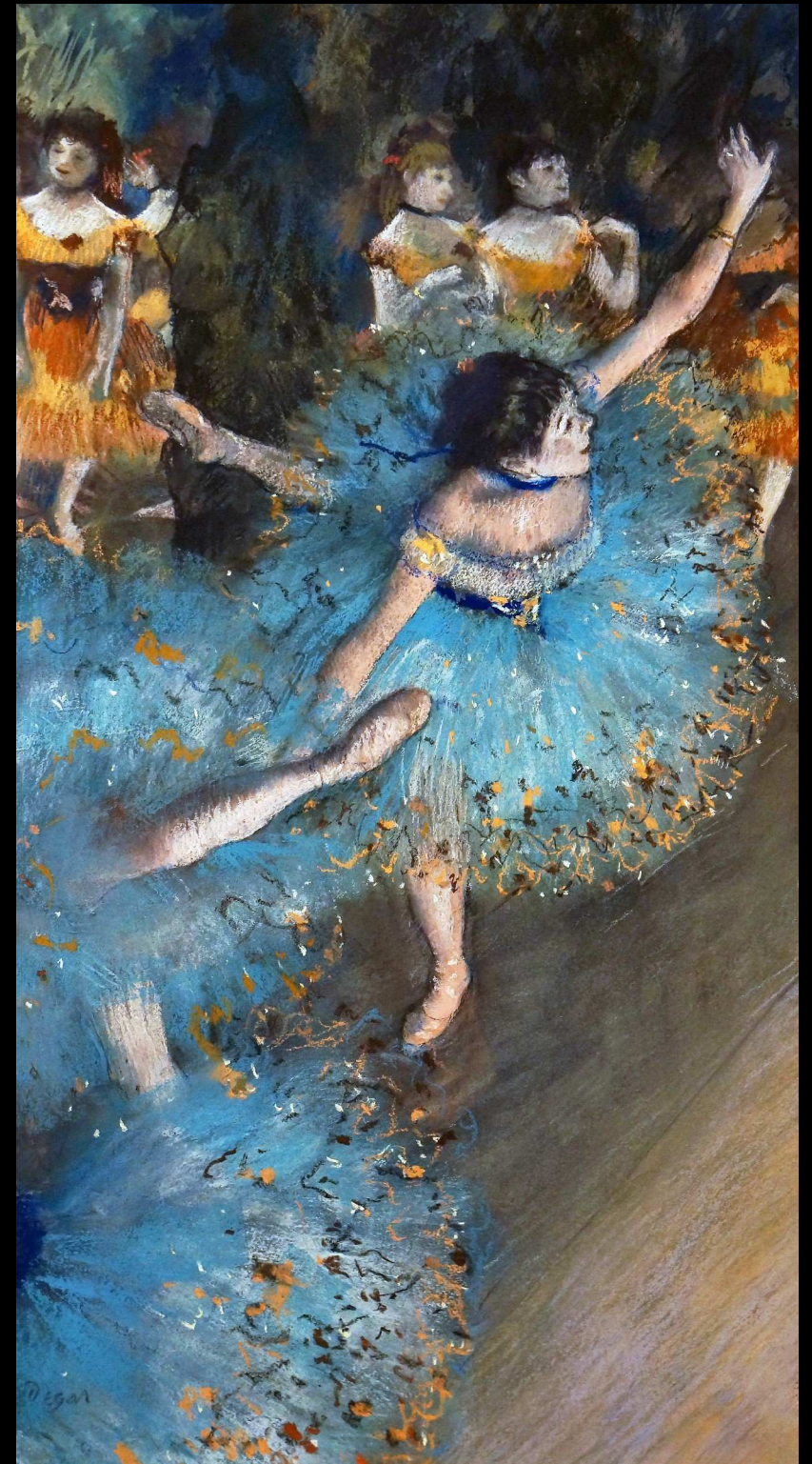
















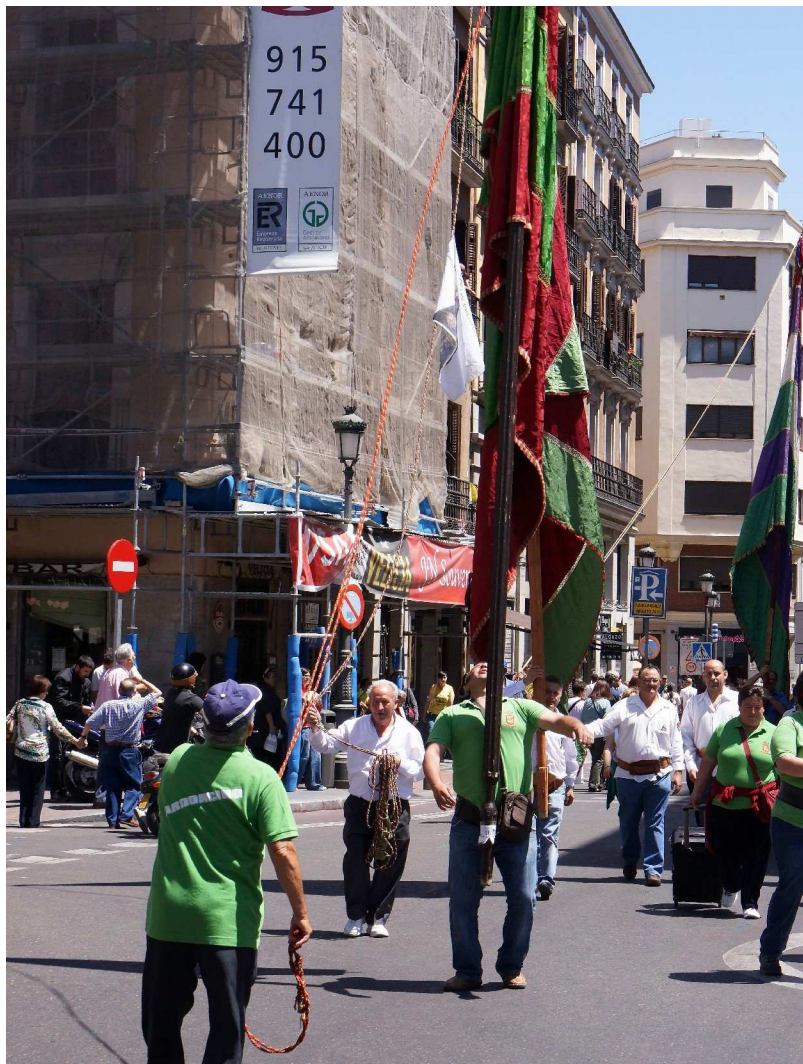
































CALLE  
DE  
ACADEMIA

CALLE  
DE  
RUIZ DE ALARCON

























HOSTAL CRUZ SOL \*\*\* 2º PISO

HOSTAL SANTA CRUZ 2º \*\*\*

ACCESOS  
PUERTA DEL SOL  
ATENCION  
TODOS LOS DIAS  
DE 8 A 22 H.  
PERMITIDO:  
CAMBIO DE FOTOGRAFIA  
Y VIDEOGRAFIA  
Y FOTOGRAFIA  
Y VIDEOGRAFIA

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## Toledo

This was a late addition to the master plan, I thought three days in Madrid was probably enough (it was!) and someone had mentioned to J that we should go to Toledo. So I booked us on the direct train from Atocha station to Toledo which took about an hour. We walked up from the station across an old pedestrian bridge up to the tourist office in the main square, as we had no maps. After an amazingly good almond SB and coffee we got stuck into the plan. First stop was the Alcazar, which was a tad disappointing compared to others we had visited.

We then went to El Greco's house, which was very good and had a series of his paintings of the twelve apostles. We followed this with visits to two buildings that at one time had been synagogue's. Wandering back we picked out a hotel that did a fantastic lunch at 13 Euro each. Suitably refreshed we had a long visit to the Cathedral, which had a lot of interesting corners + El Greco.

By this time we were 'touristed' out', so after a SB + coffee we found a courtyard in a museum to sit and wait until it was time to go to the station and a return trip to Madrid.



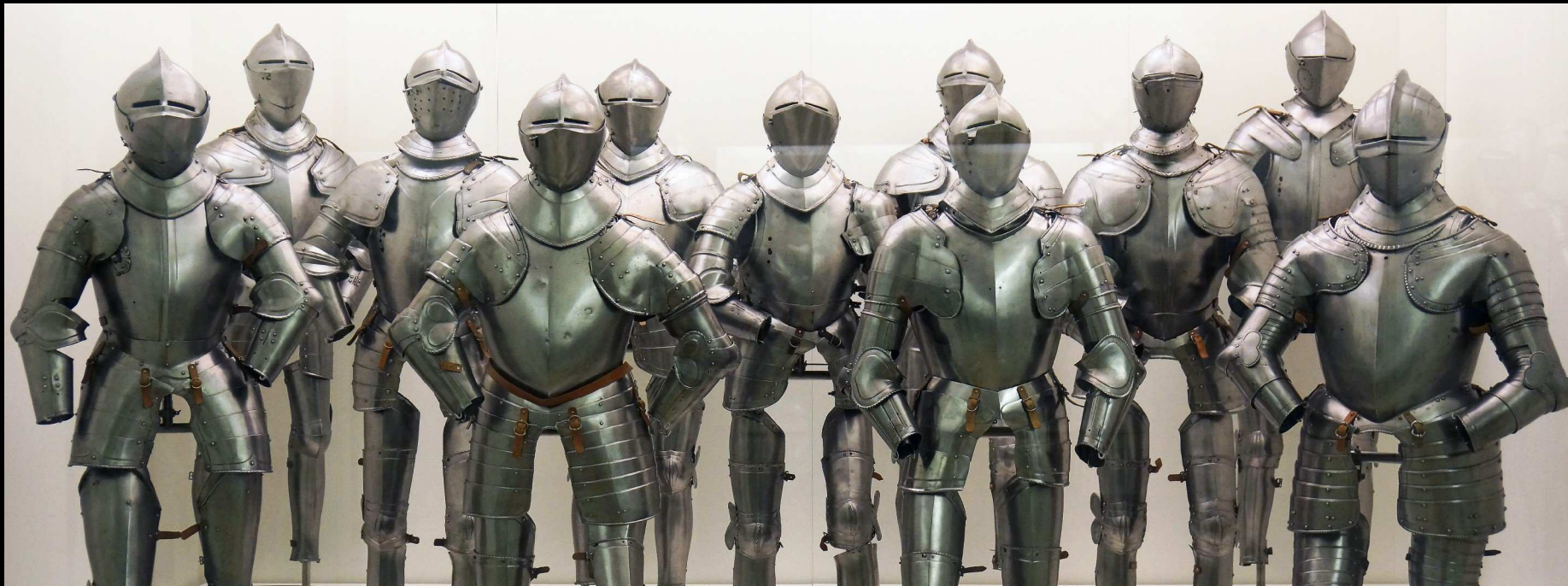
























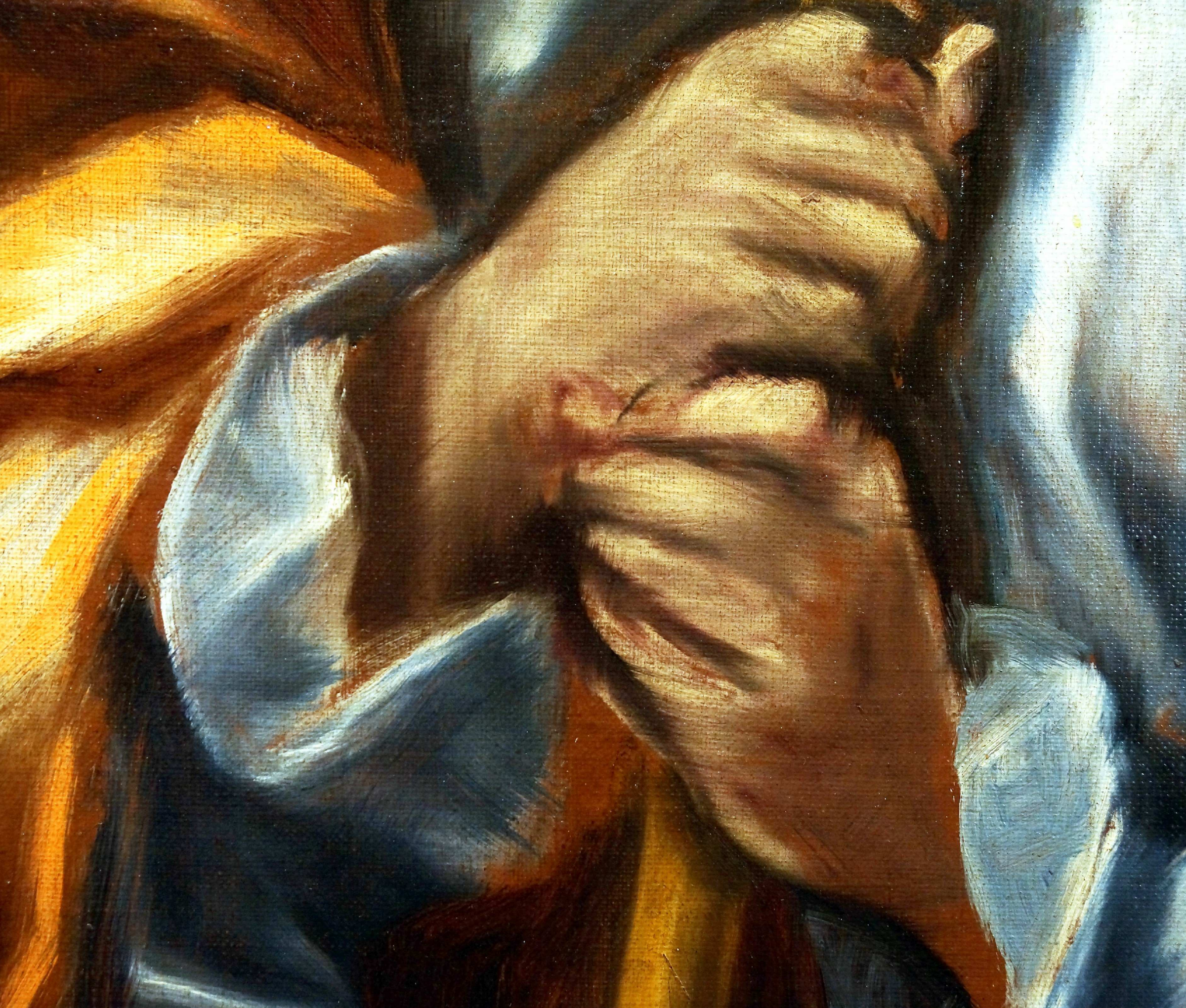




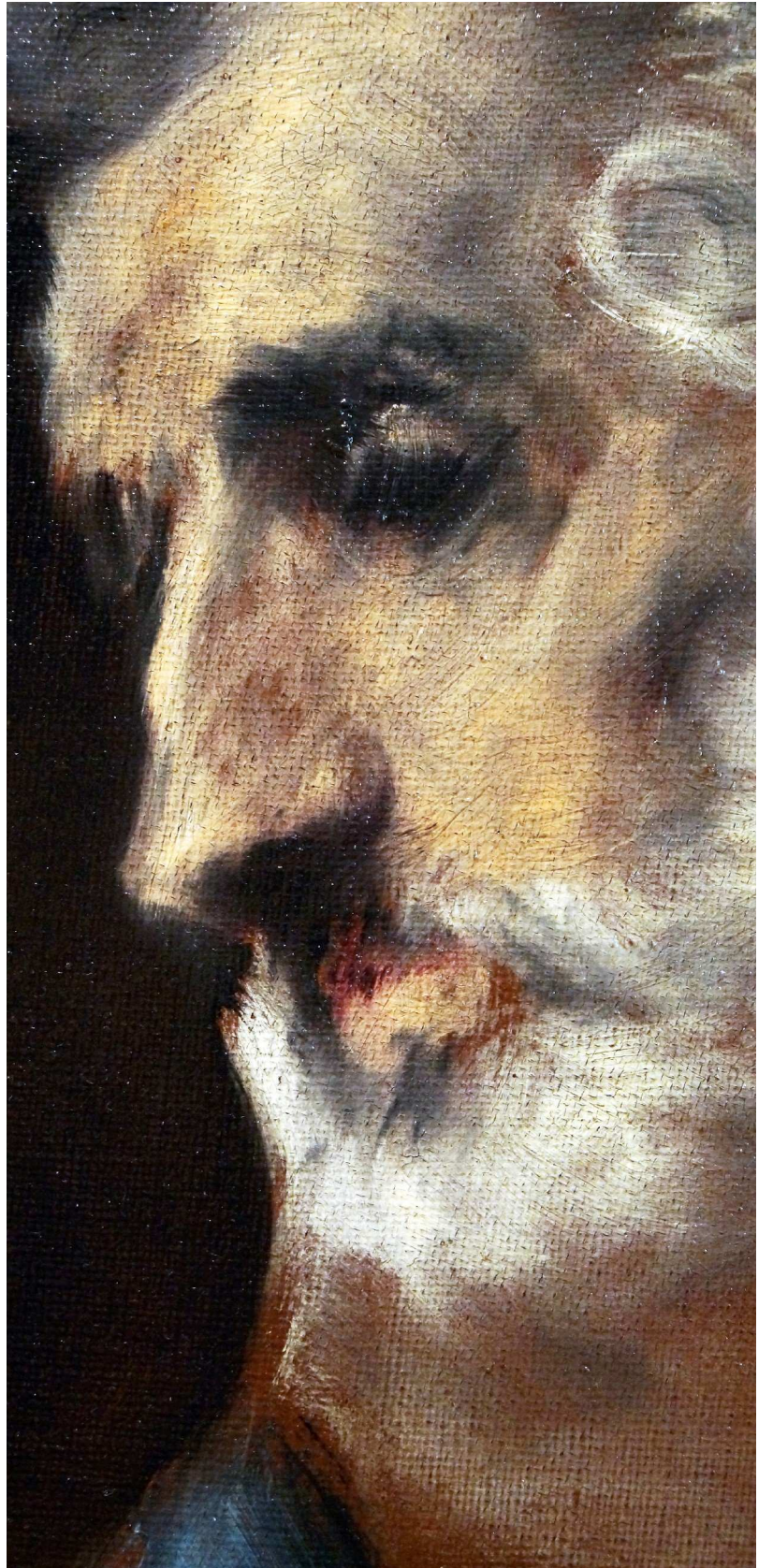
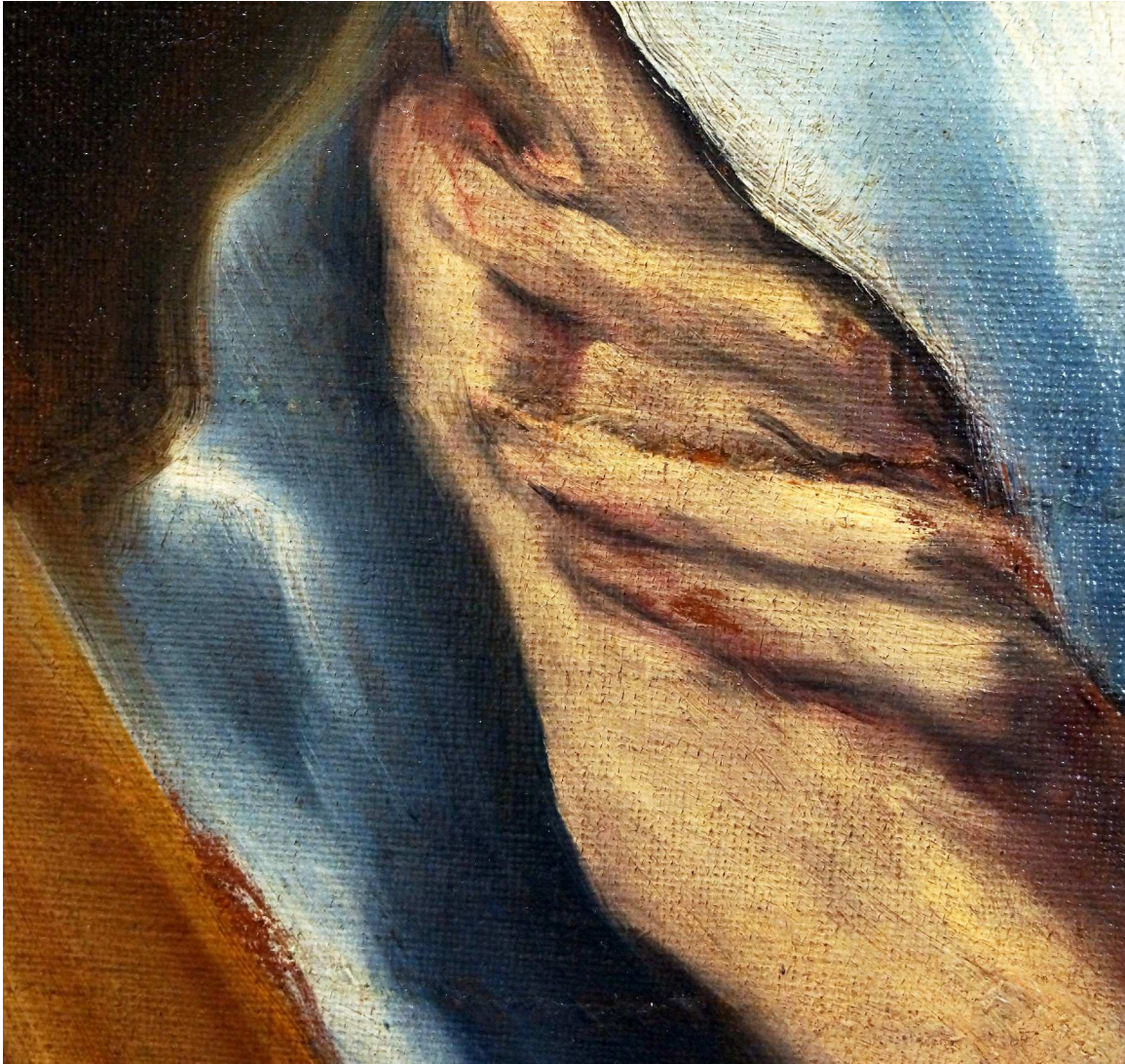




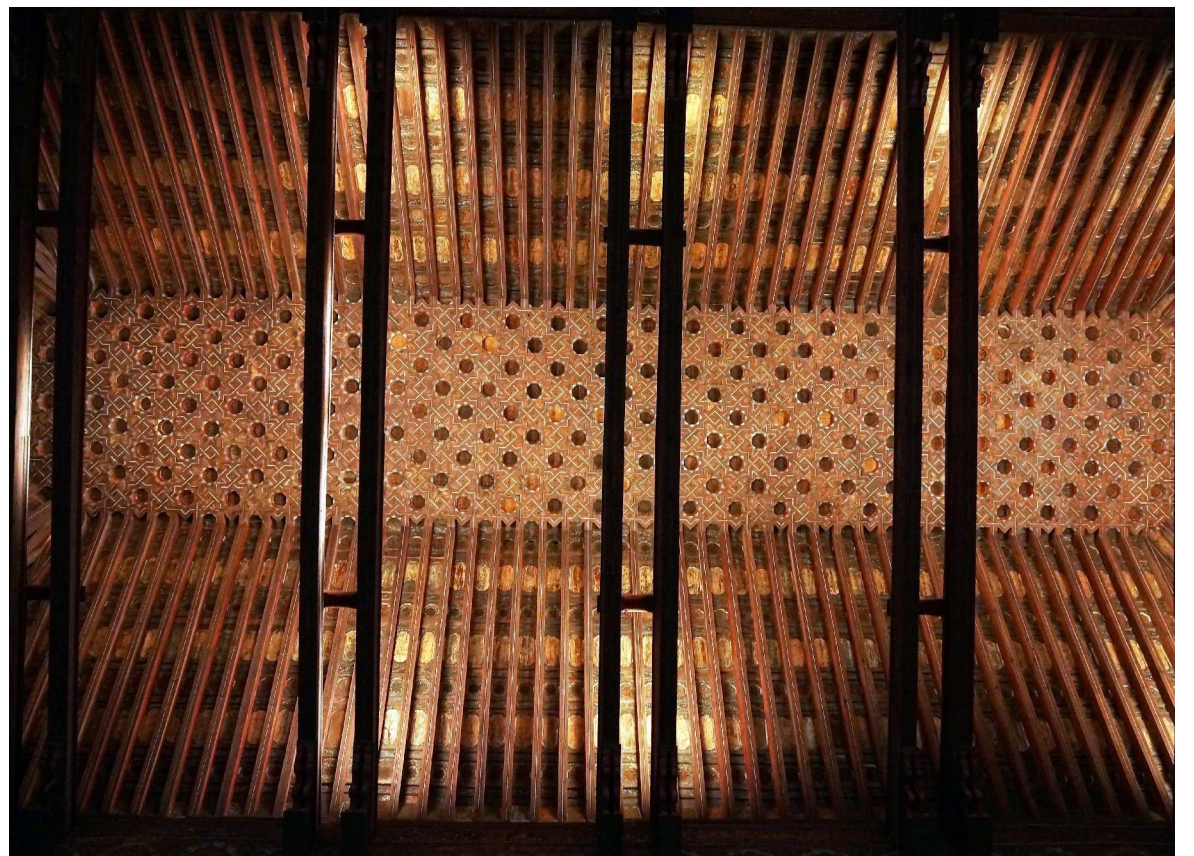
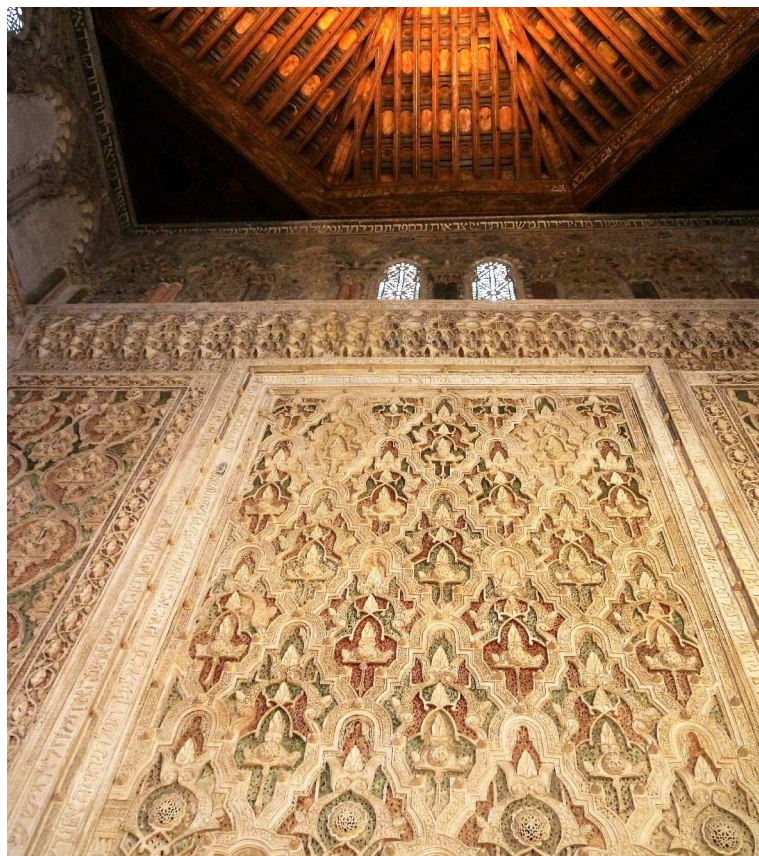




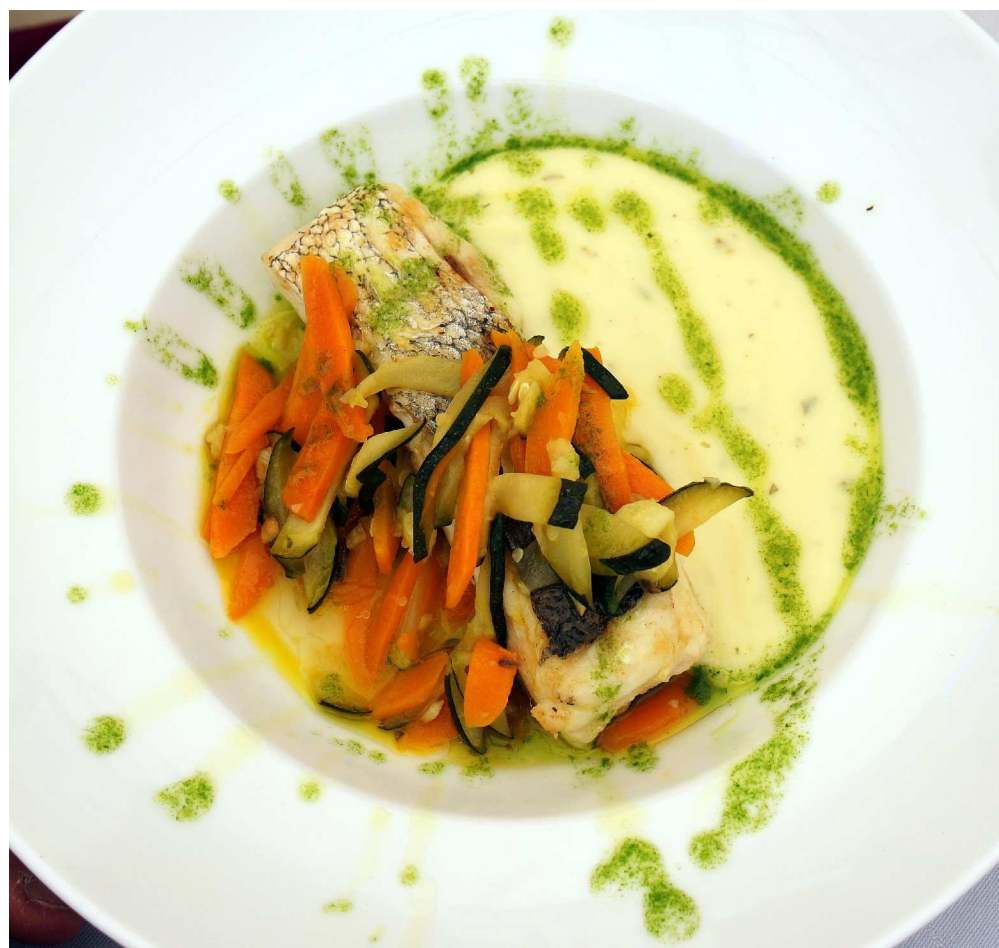




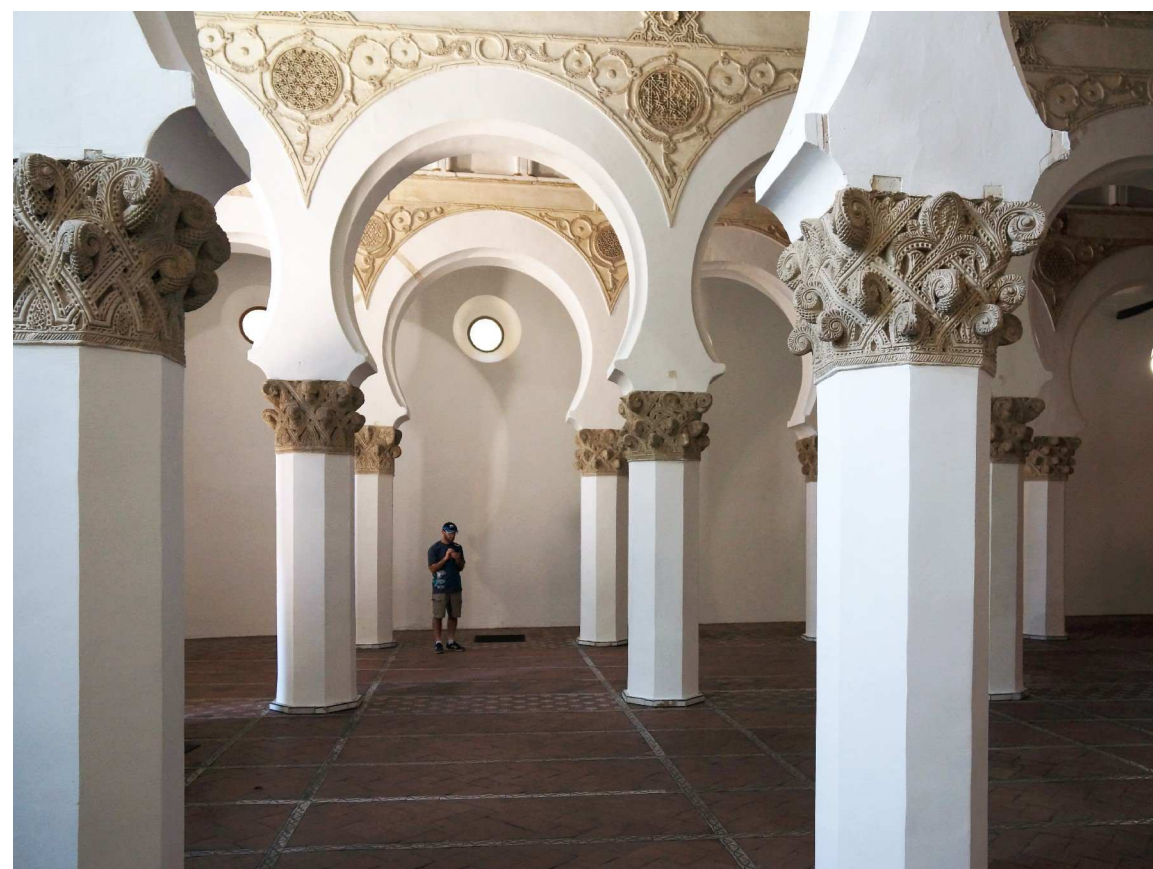
















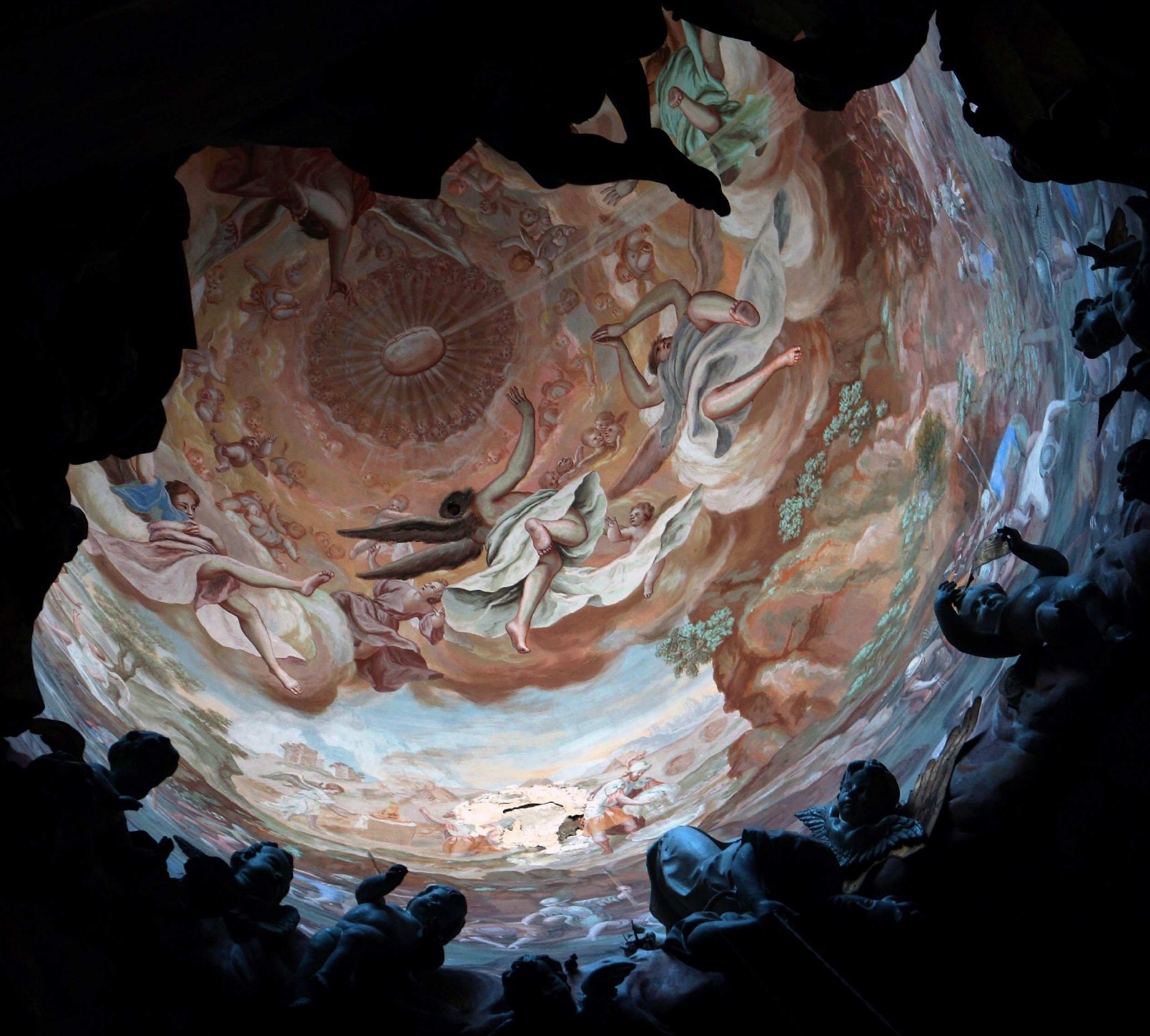




















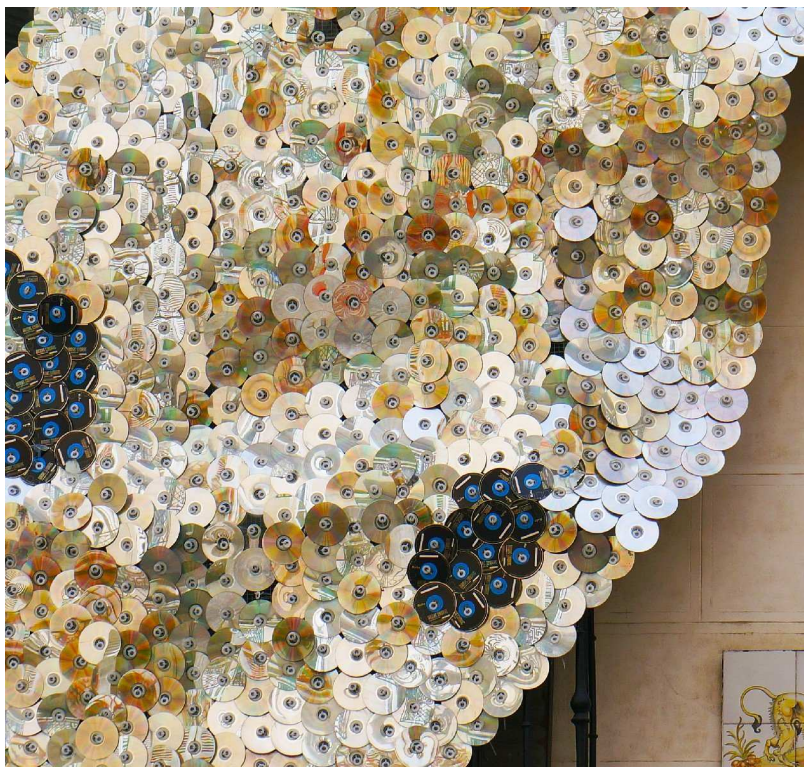












## Madrid Return

Our last day in Spain, we walked down to Parque del Retiro near the Prada, ending up in a very empty glass house with rocking chairs..... inspired by the London Crystal Palace

We then walked back via Atocha station to The Museum Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, essentially to see Picasso's Guernica, but passing other stuff on the way.

We then had a leisurely lunch in the restaurant attached to the art gallery, collected our cases and got the Metro to the airport. The first rain of the three weeks was due later in the day, but we avoided getting wet.















































