

## **TOUR 2. Madrid at the 20<sup>th</sup> century**

### **SHORT DESCRIPTION**

Walking tour around Gran Via and Tribal

### **LONG DESCRIPTION:**

Today's tour is organized around the Gran Via ('Broadway'), which goes from Plaza de España to the confluence with Alcalá St. The best Spanish architecture of the first decades of the 20th century is depicted in the Gran Via or around it. Thanks to the first centennial, celebrated in 2010, you will find most of the buildings just restored. We will walk the section between Callao Sq. and Alcalá St., turning south to visit the former Financial District and the National Deputy Chamber, at Alcalá St. and San Jerónimo St. Then, we will cross to the North side to visit the renovated and pedestrian Tribal area starting Fuencarral St., where beautiful buildings from the XVI to the XIX centuries coexist. We will not miss centenary pastry shops and a magnificent view of Madrid from the Fine Arts Club building.

### **TIME:**

Duration: 3 hours

Length: 4 km

### **HIGHLIGHTS:**

Callao Square, Palace Press, Callao Cinema, Carrion Building, Matesanz House, Madrid Paris, Telefónica Building, Florida Hotel, The Oratory of Gracia Gentleman, Military Casino, San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Casino, The BBVA bank building, Banesto, Canalejas Square, Meneses building, The Violet Shop, Santander building, Lhardy, Mira House, The Congress Palace, Cervantes Statue, Grupama glockenspiel, Palace Hotel, ICO Museum, Zarzuela Theatre, Fine Arts Circle, San Jose Church, Metrópolis Building, Grassy, Ada Hotel, Chicote Bar and Museum, Tribal, Sciences Academy, The Virgin Mary Concepcion Convent, Riesgo Drugstore, Lara Theatre, St Anthony of the Germans Church, The Good Fortune Church.

### **STARTING POINT:**

Callao Square/ Plaza de Callao (tube Callao)

### **ENDING POINT:**

Gran Via corner with Callao Square/ Plaza de Callao (tube: Callao)

### **BEST TIME TO GO:**

Afternoon or evening

### **WORST TIME TO GO:**

At noon, there is much traffic or (is the time it's most congested with locals and tourists)

### **WHERE TO REFUEL:**

Have some modern Tapas at "The Queen Market", enjoy the best views of the street taking a coffee in "Circle of Fine Arts" (Círculo de Bellas Artes) and for an elegant snack try the centennial cafeteria "Lardy".

## START

Welcome to the Gran Via Tour. This promenade will take you along Madrid's Broadway and two of the neighborhoods placed at its sides, the trendy Tribal area and the Old Financial district around Alcalá St.

## INFO POI Gran Via

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1910 the reigning king Alfonso XIII, inaugurated with pick in hand an enterprise with which he intended to put Madrid on par with the great capitals of Europe. The Gran Via is still regarded with such importance that the Madrid city government uses it as the image for its promotional tourist campaigns throughout the world.

One of the great features of this street are the theatres, with so many great musicals that the Gran Via has become a kind of "Broadway in Madrid."

If we decide to take a stroll down the Gran Via, we cannot avoid seeing the magnificent handmade posters inviting us to see a musical.

1. **Callao Square.** The square is the centre of Gran Via and the heart of Madrid cinemas. The new road created opportunities for architects giving them the ability to create large buildings in the latest architectural styles.

## INFO Gran Via

The construction of Gran Via, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, required many buildings in the center of the city to be demolished. The street was a symbol of modernity and witnessed the early 20<sup>th</sup> century history of the city.

In the 1920's the Gran Vía became full of theatres and palaces with the 30's bringing about the great buildings. During the Spanish Civil War the major command centers were located on the Gran via. During the 50's and 60's the area recaptured its splendors. The glamour came back with local places like *Chicote*, where a lot of artists came to visit and enjoy cocktails and music. In addition the Gran Vía saw its shops multiply. Many of these shops are still in operation today with their original appearance and charm.

2. **Press Palace Building**

Here we have one of Madrid's first buildings that appeared near Callao Sq. designed by the young architect Muguruza. Based on a model imported from New York and Chicago these buildings housed cinemas, theatres, cafeterias, nightclubs, department stores, and offices. Today it still houses three cinemas and offices.

3. **Callao Cinema**

One of Madrid's Rationalist movement's most emblematic figures architect Soto proposed a simple building with ornamental art-déco elements and with designs that are somewhat reminiscent of the Viennese Secession. The tower was intended to act as a base for advertisements. And the flat roof hosted the first summer movie theatre of the city.

4. **Carrion Building**

The style of the Carrion Building is similar to German Expressionism and New York skyscrapers. This building's most emblematic features are its tower, designed to act as a base for a Schweppes advertisement which appears in many Spanish movies and

its pioneering air conditioning system (the first in the capital). The architect behind this building also designed the art-decò furniture for the complete building.

5. **Matesanz House**

Unfortunately for the construction of this building of the few examples of civil architecture, designed by the architect Juan de Herrera in the 18th century, was destroyed one. The current building was designed by Antonio Palacio the same architect who designed the Cibeles Telecommunications Palace and Fine Art Circle buildings and the Madrid metro's first stations which circulated from Puerta del Sol Station to the north of the city with eight stops. Nowadays it houses offices that are reminiscent in their aesthetic to Chicago Style with large iron structures that replace the concrete and large windows.

6. **Madrid Paris Building**

This building was home to a shopping centre that imitated those that were in Paris called Le Samaritan. It was a reflection of the beginnings of Spanish big department stores. It is on this street that one finds the most richly decorated shop windows, as well as the very first commercial galleries. It was designed to house the store on the lower floors and offices on upper floors. Since its inauguration it has never closed its doors but has changed owners several times. After the civil war it became a company with products for the home at social (reasonable) prices.

7. **Telefónica Building**

Europe's first skyscraper was built with a concrete-metal structure up to 89.30 meter high. Its architect Cárdenas Pastor, of the Madrid Baroque period, left his trademark in the form of the highly ornate decoration. It was the first skyscraper in Europe, but before the building was finished its walls were bombarded by shells during the Spanish Civil War. John Dos Passos wrote his chronicles of the war from the heights of this building. Currently, the Telefonica Foundation occupies almost all offices.

8. **Florida Hotel**

Famous because Ernest Hemingway, covered the 1936-1939 Spanish Civil War from the legendary and elegant Hotel Florida. Hemingway lived in the Florida Hotel with his girlfriend Martha Gellhorn and from the hotel she wrote some of the best chronicles of daily life in Madrid. The hotel sheltered all the foreign press during the conflict. The Daily Telegraph, The New York Times and the Daily Express among others and was one of the targets of Franco's Nationalists.

9. **The Oratory of Gracia Gentleman**

In order for the construction of Gran Vía to take place four streets, two convents, and a market had to disappear. What the avenue did respect was the oratory of this convent, one of the more representative creations of neoclassic royal by architect Juan de Villanueva, the same architect of the Prado Museum and the Royal Botanical Gardens in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The building resembles a small Roman temple. The Legend is that he was a great seducer who God urged to quit his ways. He heeded God's words and became a very devoted gentleman. His famous legend has inspired a zarzuela (Spanish opera) that bears his name.

10. **Military Casino**

It is the former Cultural Center of the Servicemen. The building was projected in 1915 by the architect Sánchez Eznarriaga. The casino was designed as a place of recreation and sport for military officers with table games, billiards and shooting, meeting rooms, lounges, and dining rooms. Highlights include its iron works and glass decoration, especially in the interior of the hall and the baroque facade of the corner, showing the Latin phrase "*Si vis pacem, para bellum*" ("If you wish for peace, prepare for war"). The façade consists of concave and convex curves accentuated in the windows, which are arranged with prominent balconies, balustrades, and topped the tower covered with a skew to their facades, everything with a French fashion taste.

NAVI: Turn left and walk across Virgen de los Peligros ST. Turn right at the junction of Alcalá St.

#### 11. **San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts**

Founded by the Bourbon King Charles III in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when he purchased the Baroque palace of a financier man and commissioned his architect Villanueva to reconstruct it in accordance with Neo-Classical principles as the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, and had all the Baroque decoration removed. The Academy is currently the headquarters of the Madrid Academy of Art. Its masterpieces are remarkable and its students included famous Spanish painters such as Goya, Picasso and Dalí.

#### 12. **Casino**

The private institution began in 1836 when an exclusive group of intellectuals met at the Café del Príncipe, located between Alcalá and Aduana Street, where the new building would be constructed in 1903. The Casino is a great example of Madrid's eclectic ideas in the early 20th century, with a mixture of French and Baroque cutting-edge styles. Highlights include the elegant reception room, a magnificent Neo-Baroque library, and the main staircase in a singular Modernist style, which is one of the best in Madrid. Today it remains a private institution, exclusively for members. The building has changed very little in the last years but has recently had a pool installed.

#### 13. **The BBVA Bank building**

This building was built by Bastida Bilbao, who also designed the Bank of Spain building. It was completed in 1923. The roof structure and its magnificent sculptures are the only decorations. The rest is built to show columns in great sobriety. Take a look at the figures on the roof. They are two chariots. The chariot and trucks in classical mythology symbolize progress and victory. Therefore, many banks in the modern Madrid chose these images to convey their success. The ones you see were made by Higinio Basterra.

#### 14. **Banesto**

This building was built in 1891 for the Insurance Company "Equitable". If you look towards the top, the temple of golden tones, black and brown striking from afar, you can see a simple clock flanked by two golden figures. The facade of the building is a clear example of the mixture of styles that was used by the architect, Joseph Grases Riera. Each floor is completely different from before. Notice the large windows covered by wrought iron railings and a large number of lamps, some hanging others resting on the first floor balcony. Look at those pieces that support the balconies they

are elephant heads carved in stone, all bordering the building, they are very well crafted and deserve special attention in the eyes of every one of them, shining as if they were really trying to communicate with whomever is watching them.

NAVI: Turn Left To Canalejas Sq

### 15. **Canalejas Square**

This Square is dedicated to Prime Minister Canalejas who was killed by an anarchist in 1912. Here we find some great buildings owned by banks and wealthy people. They wanted to show off their wealth in order to make people trust them. If they had money to build these buildings it meant they were capable of looking after other people's money. Their idea was to make this square a sort of financial area.

### 16. **Meneses Building**

In 1914 the widow of the financier Meneses commissioned their architects to build a commercial building with an attic reserved for housing. The site was small and the solution was to raise the height of the current building, achieving greater verticality of the facade through the provision of semi-columns of classical orders intertwined with giant iron and glass balconies. This type of architecture and the materials used in its construction would inspire other architects in Madrid, especially Antonio Palacios

### 17. **La Violeta Shop**

This shop sells sweets made with violet essence. It was a success from the very beginning which is why this shop is always full of clients who want to enjoy their tasty sweets. We do not know why King Alfonso XIII decided to make this special kind of sweets but probably because there are many violets in the mountains located at the north of Madrid. Legend said that King Alfonso XIII usually bought violets for his "official" wife, Queen Victoria Eugenia and also for his "second" wife. At least in this type of arrangement it was an easy way not to mix up the presents.

### 18. **Santander Building**

We are facing one of the most beautiful buildings surrounding the square. The project was commissioned by Spanish architect Eduardo Adaro in 1905. The facade is designed in a Renaissance style with flanking two statues, one of which is wrapped in a tuna and points to the head with his hands, symbolizes calculation. The other is a female figure holding an arc between her hands, symbolizing the economy. The building suffered many damages during the Spanish civil war in 1939 and many of the facade ornamentations had to be rebuilt.

### 19. **Lhardy**

This is Madrid's longest-running culinary act. Lhardy has been a Madrileño legend since opening in 1839 as a place for the city's literati and political leaders. At street level it may be the most elegant snack bar in Spain. Within a dignified antique setting of marble and hardwood, cups of steaming soup are served from silver samovars into classic porcelain cups, and rows of croquettes and tapas are served to standing clients. To pay you need to go to a cashier's kiosk near the entrance. The real culinary skill of the place, however, is on Lhardy's second floor, where you'll find a formal restaurant decorated in the ornate Belle Époque style and another in a remarkable Japanese style.

**20. Casa Mira**

This is a charming old-fashioned shop of traditional pastries, Casa Mira, opened since 1842, specializing in the Spanish nougat. Those of Jijona are tender and those of Alicante are hard. Also try the marzipan. This is the last in a dying breed of confectioner's where everything is handmade using the finest ingredients in the old-fashioned way with no preservatives or artificial colorings. You'll find delicacies here that don't exist anywhere else. Everything you buy will be cut and weighed and packaged in front of you, so you can be sure it's fresh.

**21. The Congress Members palace**

The palace is an imposing building with a neoclassical style built in 1850 as the seat of the Spanish lower house of parliament. The main entrance is flanked by bronze lions added in 1866 and framed by a large portico with allegorical representations. The statues represent justice, courage, fortitude, harmony, science, arts, rivers, trade, agriculture, abundance and peace. This entrance is only used once a year when the Spanish king officially opens the parliamentary year. The interior is dominated by a large semicircular assembly hall. The ceiling depicts several historical Spanish figures, including Columbus, Velázquez, Cervantes and Queen Isabel II, as well as some holes made by bullets during the coup d'état in 1989 by Colonel Tejero.

**22. Cervantes Statue**

In the middle of the Square you can see the monument to the famous Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes. Cervantes is considered the best Spanish writer of all time, for his novel "Don Quixote" written in 1605, it is considered the first modern novel. The writer died in April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1616, the same day as Shakespeare and in order to honor both of them, the UNESCO established April 23 as the International Day of the Book. The bronze statue was inaugurated in 1835, designed by sculptor Antonio Solá and cast in Rome by Prussian artists. The pedestal was projected by architect Isidro González Velázquez and it has two bronze reliefs by José Piquer.

**23. Grupama glockenspiel**

This is the first and only one glockenspiel in Spain with the five figure project design entrusted to Antonio Mingote who with a mix of expertise and intuition elected as characters King Charles III, the painter Francisco de Goya, the Duchess of Alba, the bullfighter Pedro Romero and the "Manola", representing the women from Madrid. Surrounded by bells, the clock was built in red copper plated with a stainless steel outer frame. Its diameter is 112 cm and 12 plated Roman numerals, with gold handles of 24 carats. Carousel display characters can be seen daily at noon, at three and eight pm.

**24. Palace Hotel**

The building was built by the architect Puig i Eduard Ferrés. Construction began in 1910 and was completed in just 16 months. Commissioned for the wedding of King Alfonso XIII with Queen Maria Victoria of Battenberg to accommodate their honored guests. It is a clear example of the early 20th architecture in Madrid. Worth walking in and enjoying the crystal dome, the most beautiful example of modernism in the city.

NAVI: Turn left to the back of the Congress block and turn right to the Jacometrezo St.

**25. ICO Collection Museum**

In 1996 Madrid opened the ICO (Official Credit Institute) Museum to display its collections of Spanish contemporary art, one of the most important private collections of Spanish art today. It often hosts temporary exhibitions of contemporary Spanish artists. Admission is free and among its permanent collection you can find the engravings of the Picasso "Suite Vollard" who shows his anxiety, melancholy, eroticism and tensions between the model and the work seen in the 100 prints. The Vollard Suite has much to do with the time that Picasso lived during the years in which he was devoted to the making of the series. It was the time of his marriage to Olga Koklova which destroyed his relationship with Marie-Thérèse Walter and his troubled marriage to Dora Maar. But it is also the time of the civil war in Spain which also affected the artist.

**26. Zarzuela Theatre**

In the late 19th century there was a Spanish Opera, boom which prompted the opening of this building in 1856. However at the beginning of the 20th century the Zarzuela began to lose its popularity and has never regained the fame that it once had. At present, many theatres of Madrid like the Zarzuela theatre offer some classic works of this genre in order to recall their glorious moments.

**27. Fine Arts Circle**

The academy occupies one of the most elegant buildings in town, designed by Antonio Palacios and completed in 1926. Since its creation it has been a private school for the teaching and dissemination of the arts: painting, printmaking, literature etc. Presently it offers a great number of classes with nude models, exhibitions, lectures and concerts in its theatre and concert hall. It has a masked ball for carnival every year that is remarkable. When Picasso arrived to Madrid in 1897 he took painting classes here.

**28. Cervantes Institute**

The headquarters of the Institute occupying the Caryatides building is a genuine emblem of Madrid. The institution is a worldwide non-profit organization created in 1991 to spread Spanish and Latin American culture. Exhibitions, conferences and debates are usually on its program. Pay attention to the beautiful female figures holding Cervantes' head the weight of the building are the caryatids, slaves to the Greeks after the War Medical forced to bear the greater burden in supporting the Persians.

**29. San José Church**

The Church was built in 1742 in the same place where another beautiful church was located. The new one was designed by Pedro Ribera. The style of the church is Baroque. Notice on one side the chapel has a very beautiful altarpiece of San Jose with a sculpture of the 18th century.

**30. Metrópolis Building**

The Metropolis building is probably the most famous of Madrid. It contained the offices of the Metropolis insurance company. The circular tower is surmounted by a dome of slate and covered with more than 30,000 loaves of 24 karat gold .In its original construction the tower supported a bronze statue, Phoenix, on which there

was a human figure with a raised arm symbolizing victory rising, ready to fly and its representing Ganymede. This figure was the symbol of the insurance company. The building was erected by French designers Jules and Raymond Fevrier, this edifice has a height of 45 m and is known popularly by the name of the "Coffin House", by the narrowness of the lot in which it is located.

**31. Grassy**

When in 1929 the watchmaker Grassy from Milan (Italy) opened the doors of this landmark business on number 1 Gran Via, it was a real revolution. The shop was beautifully decorated with Italian stucco, fresh and terrazzo floors it was the most elitist shop of the city. The basement still houses a clock museum whose collection was begun by the founder. Contemporary Spanish painter Antonio Lopez made a painting of the Gran Via in 1981, immortalizing this jewelry shop.

**32. ADA Hotel**

Since the construction of the first buildings on the Gran Via many fashionable private, member-only casinos have appeared. This building, known as the Royal Big Crag Club is exclusively for men. Current King Juan Carlos is an honorable member. The building was built in 1916 by architects Zumárraga and Gamba. Today it still hosts the clubhouse and on the upper floors the Ada Hotel is located which opened in 2009. It is interesting to go up to the terrace and enjoy the magnificent views of the street.

**33. Chicote Bar and Museum**

The bar was opened in 1931 by Perico Chicote, a former, enterprising Ritz's barman. It has been running almost without interruption since then. In the 1940's Chicote's was the place to buy black-market penicillin. In the 1950's Ava Gardner, Frank Sinatra, and Grace Kelly head a long list of illustrious American artists and writers that turned the place into the drinking and artist temple of the then grey, impoverished Madrid. The owner's collection of liquor bottles together with the glamour accumulated over the years dignified the place's to its actual museum title. Mr. Chicote left us many years ago but not the fame of his cocktails and the lively reunions on his bar.

NAVI: Take Gran Via and turn the first street on the right: Fuencarral Street

**34. Fuencarral Street & TRIBAL**

This Street has become a landmark of modernity, fashion, design, more underground movement in Madrid. Here you can find more fashionable alternatives and present the best brands, major designers and the latest trends. The quarter around Fuencarral Street is known as **TRIBAL**. This is one of the latest and renovated areas in Madrid and it is renowned for having the last trends. For this reason, they have also joined this new wave. Where? At the multi-spaces shops in Madrid: places where you can do some shopping, drinking or exhibition visiting. They are the most fashionable shops in Madrid.

NAVI: Turn left from Espiritu Santo, continue on Valverde St.

**35. Sciences Academy**

This building dates back to 1897 and hosting at inception the Royal Academy of Spanish Language. Although the Royal Academy of Science flourished during the reign of King Carlos III, which coincided with the illustration period in Spain. But we owe its first origins to King Philip the II. The idea was conceived in an atmosphere created by the coexistence of cosmographers with architects and civil engineers who serviced featured monarchs and with artillery and military engineers. The founding idea of the Academy of Mathematics came from the real architect Juan de Herrera, who was also its first director from 1583 to 1597.

**36. The Virgin Mary Concepcion Convent**

The convent of the Barefoot Mercenary Nuns was built in the 17th century. It was founded by Dona Maria de Montalba a rich widow who bequeathed her entire fortune to her confessor, who used the money to improve and build the church. The convent inside the church was transformed into a Baroque style and we can find some pictures of famous 17<sup>th</sup> century Spanish artists such as Juan de Toledo.

**37. Riesgo Drugstore**

This establishment was founded in 1866, Mr. Riesgo began his career as a herbalist, was once the largest in Europe, which for outstanding value and quality, had concessions for growing plants in the Botanical Garden, exporting its products aboard. The store retains the same look and decor from its inception with the front and side walls covered with 480 wooden boxes, numbered with small porcelain plaques.

**38. Lara Theatre**

Founded in 1880, this small theater was converted from its humble origins to the most elegant bourgeois theater in the city. The street facade is inspired by the French style prevailing at the time, with four arches with lanterns brought from Paris and with holes for hanging theatrical props. It still has the royal box that was used by King Alfonso XII and his son King Alfonso XIII, both very fond of theatrical performances and liveliness of the actresses of the time.

**39. Church of St. Anthony of the Germans**

In 1607 King Philip III founded a hospital for the Portuguese here. The church was built 20 years later and then King Philip IV gave the hospital over to the Germans. This gem of Baroque's architecture was built by the architect and Jesuit priest Pedro Sanchez. The interior, with its elliptical plan and its dome is a typical example of the elaborate decoration of the Baroque style. The walls are amazing with their frescoes by Luca Giordano and the dome is covered with a huge ceiling-painting by Francesco Ricci and Juan Carreño. Notice the High Altar because on each side there are three subsidiary altars, richly gilded and decorated with medallions, from which the last Habsburgs - Philip IV, Charles II, Maria Anna of Austria - look down on the visitor.

**40. The Good Fortune Church**

The church was built in 1916 on what were the ruins of the old Good Fortune Hospital, which famously attended to many of the wounded in the famous revolt of May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1808, and immortalized in the painting by Goya. The building features a variety of styles, Romanesque, Gothic and neo-Moorish. It is most remarkable for the Moorish influence in the arches and the use of bricks.

## Madrid Cool & Cultural

Notice behind the facade, a large window of Art Nouveau style in which we can categorize this church.

NAVI: Walk along Corredera de San Pablo St. directly to Gran Via

END POINT: Callao

That ends today's tour of Gran Via. Take a look to the theatre agenda, you may find a live musical show for this evening. From here, it is a short walk back to the shopping and leisure area of Fuencarral St., or just take the subway in Callao or Gran Via stations for reaching a different point of the city