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**PALACIO REAL
 DE MADRID**

The Royal Palace of Madrid stands on the site of the former Alcázar palace of the Spanish Habsburgs, which was destroyed by a fire on Christmas Eve in 1734. Philip V, the first Bourbon king of Spain, commissioned the building of a new palace, which was completed in 1764. Today it continues to be the official residence of Their Majesties King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia of Spain, and is used for state ceremonies.

VISITING THE PALACE

1. MAIN STAIRCASE

Designed by Francesco Sabatini, it consists of two flights. On the ground floor opposite the bottom of the stairs stands a sculpture of Charles III as a Roman emperor. On the first landing are two marble lions by Robert Michel and Felipe de Castro. The personal standard of HM King Felipe VI is displayed on the balustrade. The paintings on the vaulted ceiling are by Corrado Giaquinto and represent the *Triumph of Religion* and the *Church Protected by the Spanish Monarchy*.

4. ANTEROOM OR SALETA OF CHARLES III

Late 17th-century paintings by Luca Giordano illustrate Old Testament scenes and passages from the history of Rome. The fresco painting by Anton Raphael Mengs on the vaulted ceiling represents the *Apotheosis of Tejan*.

5. ANTECHAMBER OF CHARLES III

The four portraits of Charles IV and Maria Luisa of Parma are masterworks by Francisco de Goya. The monumental late 18th-century clock representing *Chronos supporting the Celestial Sphere*, crafted by Godon, is one of the most spectacular in the superb collection of clocks assembled by Spanish monarchs, now in the care of Patrimonio Nacional.

6. CHAMBER OF CHARLES III

Polychrome stuccowork ceiling, walls lined with silver-embroidered silk and Spanish marble flooring. The whole scheme was designed by Mattia Gasparini in accordance with the late baroque taste for *chinoiserie*.

7. "FRAMCAR" OF CHARLES III

Passageway. Tapestry cartoon by Goya. *The Boar Hunt*, and portraits of Ferdinand VII and his fourth wife Maria Cristina of Bourbon.

8. HALL OF CHARLES III

Originally the bedchamber of Charles III. Portrait of his order wearing the cloak of his order painted by Mariano Salvador Maella. 18th-century French chandelier in the shape of a fleur-de-lis and fresco painting by Vicente López, *Allegory of the Institution of the Order of Charles III*, of 1828.

9. PORCELAIN ROOM

Its walls and ceiling are covered entirely in porcelain panels attached to a wooden framework and perfectly assembled. The whole decoration was crafted at the Buen Retiro royal porcelain manufactory during Charles III's reign.

10. YELLOW ROOM

The secrétaire and chest-of-drawers were crafted by the french cabinet-maker G. Beneman and the bronzeist P. A. Forester in the 18th-century. The chairs are commonly referred to by the name *sillas de peñeta* owing to their resemblance to an ornamental hair comb.

11. BANQUETING HALL

This grand banqueting hall and ballroom was created in 1879 on the orders of Alfonso XII by joining three rooms belonging to the former apartments of the Queen, Charles III's wife Maria Amalia of Saxony. It is notable for the magnificent 16th-century Flemish tapestries, French and Chinese porcelain and the fifteen bronze and crystal chandeliers. It is still used by the King and Queen today for state banquets.

12. BAND ROOM OR CINEMA ROOM

Exclusive *dessert* or table centrepiece of hardstone, enamel and gilt bronze, created by the Roman goldsmith Luigi Valadier. Early 19th-century bronze table adornments by Pierre-Philippe Thomire. Hardstone and stucco work *dessert* crafted by the Royal Workshops during the period of Charles IV.

13. SILVERWARE ROOM

Silverware and silver gilt objects from the 19th to the early 20th-centuries.

14. PORCELAIN AND GLASS ROOM

18th- to 20th-century porcelain dinner services and glassware of different provenance.

15. GALLERY

This gallery provided members of royalty with access to their respective apartments. The serene classical baroque style of the Prince's Courtyard can be admired from the picture windows. Sculptures of the Catholic Monarchs by José Vilches, 1862.

16. ROYAL CHAPEL

The construction of the Chapel began in 1749 following the designs of the Palace architect Giovanni Battista Sachetti. The central dome was painted by Corrado Giaquinto.

17. ROOM LEADING TO THE OFFICIAL APARTMENTS OF QUEEN MARIA CRISTINA

Portrait of Alfonso XII painted by Federico de Madrazo.

18. ANTECHAMBER OF MARIA CRISTINA OR STRADIVARIUS ROOM

Group of four instruments crafted for the Spanish court by the famous luthier of Cremona, Antonio Stradivari, between 1667 and 1709. It consists of two violins, a viola and a violoncello, all of them decorated; there is also a single, undecorated violoncello. This set is unique in its kind for its magnificent sound.

19. CROWN ROOM

This room brings together the most symbolic objects of the Spanish monarchy:

- Crown and Royal Sceptre.
- Collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece.
- Table of the Sphinxes.
- Proclamation Speech of HM King Felipe VI.
- Organic Law 3/2014 on the Abdication of HM King Juan Carlos I.

20. CAMÓN

This area is called *camón* (enclosed balcony with a view) because it commands a view of the main staircase, allowing the ceiling fresco painted by Corrado Giaquinto to be observed from a different perspective.

21. OFFICIAL ANTECHAMBER

Portraits of Charles III, Alfonso XIII and Victoria Eugenia, the first and last monarchs to live in the Palace.

22. OFFICIAL SALETA

Tapestries woven at the Santa Bárbara royal tapestry manufactory in the 18th-century. Ceiling fresco, the *Power of the Spanish Monarchy*, painted by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo.

23. THRONE ROOM

The most representative room in the Royal Palace. Superb decorative scheme consisting of the furniture, silk draperies and various sculpture groups, as well as the magnificent fresco of the *Greatness of the Spanish Monarchy* painted by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo in 1764. Venetian chandeliers of silver and rock crystal, purchased in 1780. This room, like others in the Palace, is the setting for the most important state ceremonies such as the Pasqua Militar marking the start of the military year, the annual reception for the whole Diplomatic Corps accredited to Spain and the reception held on the national feast day.

ROYAL ARMOURY

Created by Philip II, who assembled the arms and armour of his father Emperor Charles V and other ancestors, as well as his own. It was added to by his descendants of the Habsburg and Bourbon dynasties. It is one of the most important collections of parade and tournament armour in the world.

SCENIC VIEWPOINT, CAMPO DEL MORO GARDENS

To the west of the Royal Palace lies the garden that is commonly known as "Campo del Moro". Philip II ordered the purchase of this land between the Alcázar and the River Manzanares to provide his residence with an adjacent green area, but the gardens were not laid out until well into the 19th-century. It was connected with the Real Casa de Campo parkland, which also belonged to the Crown until 1931.