



Spanish Accents

Some of the world's most important museums are located in the cities of Spain, and in the upcoming months they'll present some not-to-be-missed exhibitions.

BY LAUREN SIEBEN

FORGET WHAT YOU THINK YOU KNOW ABOUT Spain. Images of the old country, flamenco dancers and matadors — the prototype Carmen engrained in our minds — make up only one part of the country's tourist draw. Spain is a country replete with art and architecture, from quirky and cosmopolitan Barcelona to Madrid's Paseo del Arte and Bilbao's ultra-modern Guggenheim. The country is home to noteworthy galleries from Segorbe to Seville; so we've catalogued museum highlights from the bustling cities of Madrid and Barcelona to the burgeoning Basque seaport of Bilbao.

Bilbao

BILBAO, IN THE BASQUE COUNTRY, is a major seaport and one of Northern Spain's most bustling urban centers. Its defining site is the Guggenheim Museum — even the building itself makes a bold architectural statement. Architect Frank Gehry designed the museum

with its seemingly random curves to reflect light; the structure has been praised as one of the greatest deconstructivist buildings in the world. The Guggenheim is home to a large collection of constantly changing contemporary art exhibitions; popular permanent pieces include Richard Serra's "The Matter of Time."

Upcoming Exhibition to See: If you missed Haunted: Contemporary Photography/Video/Performance, which is at the NYC Guggenheim until September 6, you can catch it when it resurfaces in Bilbao on November 9. Haunted outlines the growing prevalence of photography in contemporary art from the 1960s onward. The exhibition also explores this theme through sculptures and paintings that incorporate photographic elements.

Barcelona

BEING IN THE CITY OF BARCELONA is like visiting a museum before you even enter a gallery. Antoni

Gaudí's curvaceous architecture spreads across the city from La Sagrada Família to Park Güell. Barcelona also boasts its own Picasso Museum, housed within five medieval castles and containing over 3,500 of the artist's works.

Upcoming Exhibition to See: Picasso-Degas debuts here October 15. The exhibition is comprised of over 120 paintings and sculptures by Picasso and Modernist artist Edgar Degas, comparing both artists' work and exploring Picasso's fascination with Degas.

Madrid

HOME TO THE FAMOUS GOLDEN TRIANGLE OF ART situated along the city's Paseo del Arte (Art Avenue), Spain's capital boasts three of the country's most celebrated art museums: the Prado Museum, the Reina Sofía National Museum and the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum.

The Prado is the most visited site in Madrid and contains Spanish, Flemish and Ital-



(This Page) Exterior views of the Guggenheim Bilbao.(Opposite Page) Interior of the Prado.



ian masterpieces from the 12th through 19th centuries. Notable pieces include Velázquez's "Las Meninas," the museum's most popular piece, and expansive collections from Spaniards Goya and El Greco.

Upcoming Exhibition to See: Bibliotheca Artis: Treasures from the Museo del Prado Library is on view from now through October 17. Bibliotheca Artis showcases 40 16th- through 18th-century books and manuscripts taken from the Prado's archives, alongside eight paintings from the museum's collections from artists including Velázquez and El Greco, to illuminate how the museum's literary and artistic collections intertwine.

The Reina Sofía celebrates twentieth century art from modern masters including Salvador Dalí and Pablo Picasso. The museum's most visited piece is Picasso's "Guernica," the artist's response to the 1937 Nationalist bombing of the small village of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. Reina Sofía also has a full-access library with over 100,000 books, audio record-

ings and videos.

Upcoming Exhibition to See: Desbordamiento de Val del Omar, which opens October 5, highlights the film career of Spanish director José Val del Omar and his signature PLAT (which stands for Pictorial-Luminous-Audio-Tactile) technique of creating images.

The collections of the Thyssen-Bornemisza cover eight centuries of art, with works ranging from Renaissance to Baroque to Post-Impressionist eras. Popular works include pieces from Duccio, Rubens, Rembrandt, Monet and Van Gogh, and the museum is home to several of Picasso's masterpieces.

Upcoming Exhibition to See: Impressionist Gardens is not-to-be-missed if you're visiting later in the year (it opens November 16). As its title suggests, the exhibition centers on Impressionist representations of the world of flora, which were especially popular in France after the 1860s, following the introduction of numerous new plant species in the country and a subsequent rise in garden popularity. ■