

Moors in Spain

Reading List

The Moors in Spain

by Stanley Lane-Poole

The history of Spain offers us a melancholy contrast. Twelve hundred years ago, Tarik the Moor added the land of the Visigoths to the long catalogue of kingdoms subdued by the Moslems. For nearly eight centuries, under her Mohammedan rulers, Spain set to all Europe a shining example of a civilized and enlightened State. Her fertile provinces, rendered doubly prolific by the industry and engineering skill of her conquerors, bore fruit an hundredfold.

The Moors in Spain

by M. Florian

This is a comprehensive history of the Moors, who were part of the Muslim empire and held territory in the Iberian peninsula for centuries until Ferdinand & Isabella were able to defeat them at the end of the 15th century.

Tales of the Alhambra

by Washington Irving

Tales of the Alhambra is must-reading for the traveler in Spain and the best souvenir of your visit. Irving is best remembered in this country for his collections of American folklore, like the stories of Rip Van Winkle and the Headless Horseman, but in Spain they remember him for the Alhambra stories. Irving lived in the old Moorish palace at a time when it was a neglected ruin, and his wonderful descriptions, interspersed with the folk-tales that he collected from the people of Granada, helped to spark interest in repairing and restoring the monument.

The folk tales, told in Irving's inimitable, witty style, usually deal with romantic elopements, or buried treasure, or both. Fantasy, history and folklore come together in this beautiful collection

The Moor's Last Stand: How Seven Centuries of Muslim Rule in Spain Came to an End

by Elizabeth Drayson

In 1482, Abu Abdallah Muhammad XI became the twenty-third Muslim King of Granada. He would be the last. This is the first history of the ruler, known as Boabdil, whose disastrous reign and bitter defeat brought seven centuries of Moorish Spain to an end. It is an action-packed story of intrigue, treachery, cruelty, cunning, courtliness, bravery and tragedy.

Basing her vivid account on original documents and sources, Elizabeth Drayson traces the origins and development of Islamic Spain. She describes the thirteenth-century founding of the Nasrid dynasty, the cultured and stable society it created, and the feuding which threatened it and had all but destroyed it by 1482, when Boabdil seized the throne. The new Sultan faced betrayals by his family, factions in the Alhambra palace, and ever more powerful onslaughts from the forces of Ferdinand and Isabella, monarchs of the newly united kingdoms of Castile and Aragon.

By stratagem, diplomacy, courage and strength of will Boabdil prolonged his reign for ten years, but he never had much chance of survival. In 1492 Ferdinand and Isabella, magnificently attired in Moorish costume, entered Granada and took possession of the city. Boabdil went into exile. The Christian reconquest of Spain, that has reverberated so powerfully down the centuries, was complete.

Blood and Faith: The Purging of Muslim Spain, 1492-1614

by Matt Carr

In 1609, the entire Muslim population of Spain was given three days to leave Spanish territory or else be killed. In a brutal and traumatic exodus, entire families were forced to abandon the homes and villages where they had lived for generations. In just five years, Muslim Spain had effectively ceased to exist: an estimated 300,000 Muslims had been removed from Spanish territory making it what was then the largest act of ethnic cleansing in European history. Blood and Faith is a riveting chronicle of this virtually unknown episode, set against the vivid historical backdrop of Muslim Spain. It offers a remarkable window onto a little-known period in modern Europe—a rich and complex tale of competing faiths and beliefs, of cultural oppression and resistance against overwhelming odds.

Muslim Spain and Portugal: A Political History of al-Andalus

by Hugh Kennedy

This is the first study in English of the political history of Muslim Spain and Portugal, based on Arab sources. It provides comprehensive coverage of events across the whole of the region from 711 to the fall of Granada in 1492. Up till now the history of this region has been badly neglected in

comparison with studies of other states in medieval Europe. When considered at all, it has been largely written from Christian sources and seen in terms of the Christian Reconquest. Hugh Kennedy raises the profile of this important area, bringing the subject alive with vivid translations from Arab sources. This will be fascinating reading for historians of medieval Europe and for historians of the middle east drawing out the similarities and contrasts with other areas of the Muslim world.
