Join Us in Madrid, Valencia and Barcelona
March 5-16, 2018

Come with the Lyric Opera Guild next spring as we spend ten glorious days and nights in Spain. We will visit the enchanting cities of Madrid, Valencia and Barcelona; see three operas plus a zarzuela (optional); enjoy tours of some of the greatest artwork in the world, both inside and out, with the architectural masterpieces of Gaudi in Barcelona and Calatrava in Valencia as well as the wonders of Velasquez, Goya and El Greco at the Prado. You will also see three of the great opera houses in the world.

Did we mention that we will also see two of opera’s greatest performers, Placido Domingo and Jonas Kaufmann, each perhaps the greatest tenor of his generation?

Rob and Barbara Seaver of Request Italy, who have led our sold-out European trips for the last seven years, have planned an amazing ten-day adventure brimming with great performances, wonderful food and unforgettable visits to spectacular architectural masterpieces and some of the world’s greatest art museums. Our hotels will be outstanding and centrally located to afford you additional opportunities to explore these great cities on your own.

If this doesn’t intrigue you, stop reading now! But if it does, here are the details:

Monday, March 5, 2018. We will depart from the United States and fly to Madrid, arriving the next morning, checking in at our perfectly located hotel in the heart of Madrid.

Tuesday, March 6, 2018. We will enjoy a bus orientation of the beautiful historic center of the Spanish capital before checking into our hotel. We will have a welcome drink and a light snack at the hotel, and then visit the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, the second most important art museum in Madrid, which houses a stunning collection of European and American masterpieces. We will enjoy a welcome dinner that night.

Wednesday, March 7, 2018. In the morning, we will begin a two-part tour of one of the world’s great art museums, the Museo Nacional Del Prado, which is bursting with classics by the great trio of Spanish painters, Velasquez, Goya and El Greco, as well as countless other great European painters. In the afternoon, we travel to nearby Toledo, another UNESCO World Heritage site, famed for its extensive cultural and artistic heritage and the historical co-existence of Christian, Muslim and Jewish cultures. We will have a group lunch in Toledo and tour this...
Thursday, March 8, 2018. In the morning, we will take a short journey to the town of San Lorenzo de El Escorial, the site of El Escorial, the vast royal palace complex built for King Philip II by the architect Juan Bautista de Toledo, who also worked on the basilica of St. Peter’s in Rome. You will be awestruck by the imposing magnificence of this complex, which also includes an impressive display of masterpieces of art. Following a group lunch you may either explore more of Madrid on your own, or join an optional tour of the Palacio Real de Madrid, the official residence of the royal family of Spain. This evening is Verdi’s great opera Aida, featuring the celebrated soprano Anna Pirozzi, one of the world’s leading dramatic singers, who almost never appears in the United States but who stars in all of the great venues in Europe. Georgian Baritone George Gagnidze, of the Metropolitan Opera, is the Amonasro.

Friday, March 9, 2018. In the morning we will return to the Prado for the second half of our visit there. It is just too much to absorb in a single day. After lunch on your own, you may want to explore more of Madrid on foot, or you may want to join guide Rob Seaver when he goes to visit to the third great Madrid art gallery, the Museo Reina Sofia, dedicated to more modern Spanish art. Its collections feature two of Spain’s greatest 20th-century masters, Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dalí. This new museum houses Picasso’s haunting masterpiece Guernica. This evening is an optional performance of a zarzuela at Madrid’s traditional zarzuela theater (selection has not yet been announced) (extra charge).

Saturday, March 10, 2018. Today we travel to vibrant Valencia where we will relish a group lunch and tour the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia, the spectacular opera house designed by famed Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava. In the evening we will attend a rarely performed opera buffa by Franz Joseph Haydn, Il Mondo della Luna (The World on the Moon), featuring none other than Placido Domingo, who has long been associated with the opera in Valencia.
Sunday, March 11, 2018. After a walking tour of old Valencia, we will enjoy a group lunch before continuing on to Barcelona where we will receive an orientation tour. Dinner will be on your own; there is no evening performance.

Monday, March 12, 2018. This morning we will take a walking tour of the famous Gothic Quarter, then enjoy a group lunch. In the afternoon, take your time and stroll at your own pace along the often-proclaimed “greatest street in the world,” Las Ramblas. In the early evening we will have a tour of the world famous Gran Teatre de Liceu. You will be amazed at its ornate beauty. Later that evening we will enjoy a verismo masterpiece, Giordano’s Andrea Chenier, at the Liceu, starring the great tenor Jonas Kaufmann and famed baritone Carlos Álvarez. This is an unusual opportunity to hear Kaufmann live; he rarely performs any more in the United States.

Tuesday, March 13, 2018. Today we will concentrate on the world of Antoni Gaudi, Barcelona’s most famous son. In the morning, we will tour the Casa Milà, popularly known as “La Pedrera” (the stone quarry), a UNESCO World Heritage site because of its unique artistic characteristics. Then we will enjoy a group lunch before heading for the Park Güell, a public park redesigned by Gaudi with magnificent colonnades, statuary, gardens and one of Barcelona’s most famous public squares, originally called the Greek Theater but more recently rechristened as Plaça de la Natura (Nature Square). In the evening there is an optional performance at the Palau de Musica Catalana by pianist Rafal Blechacz performing works of Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann and Chopin. He is a winner of the coveted Gilmore Artist Award and is one of today’s leading young pianists.

Wednesday, March 14, 2018. This morning we will tour the Palau de Musica Catalana, have a group lunch, and enjoy a free afternoon and dinner on our own. There are two optional performances this evening. One is a concert version of Handel’s opera Ariodante at the GranTeatre del Liceu with famed conductor William Christie performing with his orchestra Les Arts Florissants. The other is a concert with tenor Mark Padmore and Julius Drake, pianist, together with the Cambra Choir, performing works of Schubert and Britten.

Thursday, March 15, 2018. In the morning, we will visit the Gaudi’s greatest masterpiece, the stunning La Sagrada Familia Basilica, a structure so complex and ornate that it is still being completed today, 135 years after the work began. We will have a farewell group lunch, then the afternoon is on your own. That evening there is an optional concert at the Palau de la Musica with Jaime Martin conducting Venezuelan pianist and composer Gabriela Montero and the locally based Cadaques Orchestra, performing works by Albeniz-Rueda, Rachmaninoff and Beethoven.
Tour Cost:

Land Arrangements .......................... $6,100
Airfare from and to Kansas City .......... $1,400
Total ........................................ $7,500
Added single supplement (if you want a single room at the hotels) ................. $1,000

Note: Our deposit amount for this trip is higher than usual because we have to purchase tickets early to be assured of seats.

Cancellation Policy

Your deposit and reservation constitute a contract for you to go on this trip. Upon receiving your deposit we will expend substantial sums to pay for your costs of this trip. If you must cancel, you will still owe the balance of the trip charge, but we will return whatever portion of your trip costs we are able to recover. We strongly recommend trip cancellation insurance to protect your investment in this trip. Please call your travel agent or check with trip insurance providers online.

Friday, March 16, 2018.

We depart for our return to the United States with the sights and sounds of Spain still tickling our senses.

If you have any questions please call our tour guide, Rob Seaver, at (785) 505-7001 (he is seven hours ahead of us in Europe, so please be considerate), or e-mail him at seaver1952@gmail.com.

Thanks!

Casa Milà, or La Pedrera, in Barcelona.

RESERVATIONS – Madrid Valencia and Barcelona (please print legibly)

Full Names (as on passport): _________________________________________________________
Address: _________________________________________________________________________
Phone: (____) ________________ E-mail address: _______________________________________
Date(s) of birth (required by airlines): ________________________________________________
[check one] □ Single Room □ Double Room, sharing with ________________________________
Any special dietary restrictions? ______________________________________________________

Please mark your choices for each of the following options:

March 7: Would you like the optional late night flamenco performance at a cost of $50 per ticket?
□ Yes □ No (check one).

March 9: Would you like the optional performance of a zarzuela at a cost of $55 per ticket? □ Yes □ No (check one).

March 13: Would you like the optional piano recital with Rafal Blechacz at a cost of $45 per ticket? □ Yes □ No (check one).

March 14: Would you like the optional concert performance of Ariodante at a cost of $90 per ticket? □ Yes □ No (check one).

March 14: Would you like the optional concert by Mark Padmore and the Cambra Choir at a cost of $45 per ticket? □ Yes □ No (check one).

March 15: Would you like the optional performance by Gabriela Montero and Cadaques Orchestra at a cost of $85 per ticket? □ Yes □ No (check one).

To reserve your spot on this trip, please send this form and a deposit of $1,500 per person by September 1, 2017. Your sending of a check constitutes a contract for you to join this trip. The remainder of your payment will be due on December 1, 2017. Please make your check payable to Lyric Opera Guild Trips and mail it to Don Dagenais, 5401 Brookside Blvd. # 503, Kansas City, MO 64112. If you wish to make your own air arrangements, let us know and we will deduct the air fare from your final payment (see trip cost summary above).