

**Guided tours offer commentaries during a visit to the Church of San Ildefonso in the Convent of the Barefoot Trinitarians, the resting place of the author's remains**

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## The City Council organises tours of Cervantes' tomb for the 400th anniversary of his death

- Tours open to the general public are held every Friday and Saturday from 22 April to 31 December, except in July
- Via the Department of Culture and Sport, the City Council has organised a broad programme of activities to mark the 400th anniversary of the writer's death throughout the year

### **Madrid, 19 April 2016**

Via the Madrid Destino Department of Tourism, Madrid City Council has organised tours of Miguel de Cervantes' tomb for the occasion of the 400th anniversary of his death. The tours last 30 minutes and enable visitors and Madrid residents to gain first-hand insight, with the help of the explanations of professional tour guides, into the final resting place of the remains of the author of Don Quixote.

The Church of San Ildefonso in the Convent of the Barefoot Trinitarians, located at 18 Calle Lope de Vega, is the current site of a commemorative monument housing the remains that were discovered in the convent's crypt.

The tours, which commenced on Friday 22 April and will run until 31 December, are offered on Fridays at 4pm (English) and 5pm (Spanish) and on Saturdays at 11am (English) and 12 noon (Spanish). During July, the church will be closed and no tours will be held. Tour participants can register in person at the Plaza Mayor Tourist Information Centre. Each group will have a maximum of 25 people.

### **Commemorative tombstone**

In his last will and testament, Miguel de Cervantes requested that he be buried in the Church of the Convent of the Barefoot Trinitarians, to show his thanks to the Trinitarians who freed him from five and a half years of captivity in Algiers at the hands of Berber pirates. After the new church was constructed the remains of his tomb were lost.

Studies conducted by a multidisciplinary team which ended nearly one year ago concluded that there was documentary, historical and archaeological evidence that the remains found in the crypt of the current church included those of Cervantes and his wife, Catalina de Salazar.



In June 2015, these remains and those of the other people found in the crypt were moved to a tomb in the Church of San Ildefonso, which belongs to the convent. The City Council marked it with a plaque that reads: "Here lies Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547-1616)".

### **The research continues**

The remains of children found in the same crypt are still being studied this year. Evidence of severe cases of rickets was unearthed, more pronounced than usually seen in the same period in other countries. In view of this, the study may be able to increase our knowledge of this historical period. The Department of Culture and Sport at Madrid City Council has subsidised the research, contributing 30,000 euros.

The church is an example of 17th-century Madrid Baroque architecture. It was designed by architect Marcos López, featuring a Latin cross floor plan and without any side chapels. Among other gems from the era – as the convent was not disentailed – it houses a Penitent Magdalene that visitors can admire, attributed to Pedro de Mena. The piece is one of Spain's ten most important Baroque sculptures.

### **Municipal Cervantes programme**

Madrid City Council has put together a comprehensive programme to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Miguel de Cervantes' death.

Since March, a travelling exhibition on the writer and his oeuvre has been visiting the municipal public libraries. In addition, educational workshops, competitions, fun activities and lectures across all libraries will inspire visitors to explore Cervantes' literary legacy, encouraging them to read his works.

The theatrical anniversary programme centres around two productions at Teatro Español: *El cerco de Numancia*, from 16 April to 22 May, one of the plays written by Miguel de Cervantes, and *Quijote. Femenino. Plural*, from 14 April to 1 May.

Madrid's municipal institutions, which boast a heritage of valuable historical, artistic, bibliographic and documentary resources, have opened up their collections and holdings in honour of the occasion. The Municipal Printing House, the Museum of San Isidro, the Madrid History Museum, the Historical Library, the Music Library and the Newspaper Library will organise exhibitions, workshops and lectures exploring Miguel de Cervantes and his work from a range of perspectives.

In addition, the sites in the city frequented by the writer can be discovered on the "Miguel de Cervantes and the Literary Quarter" tour. For further details, visit [www.esmadrid.com](http://www.esmadrid.com)

Information on all activities in the municipal programme commemorating the 400th anniversary of Cervantes' death can be found at <http://bit.ly/1Sd0hO5> and on the Twitter and Facebook pages of Madrid's public libraries, as well as at <https://twitter.com/lineamadrid>.