



LIFESTYLE 3.26.2015 @ 2:14PM | 832 views

A New Luxury Tour of Spain Celebrates the Spectacular Settings of 'Game of Thrones,' Season 5



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As virtually the whole world likely knows by now, HBO's epic hit *Game of Thrones* is poised to return on April 12 for its breathlessly anticipated fifth season. In keeping with the show's tradition of filming in some of the world's most spectacularly scenic locations— including [Croatia](#), Iceland, and Northern Ireland—much of Season 5 was shot in southern Spain. Now, diehard fans of the cable-TV juggernaut and Hispanophiles alike can soak up the history and culture of *GOT*'s latest locales with a new [luxury](#) tour of some of Spain's greatest cities, courtesy of online high-end travel referral service [Zicasso](#).

In southern Spain, *GOT* fans will immerse themselves in the exotic would-be world of Dorne, which as the show's legions of fans are well aware, lies in the southernmost part of Westeros, the imaginary continent that's home to George R.R. Martin's dizzyingly dazzling story.



The enchanting Alhambra in the Andalusian city of Granada is one stop on Zicasso's new tour of Spain inspired by Season 5 of *Game of Thrones*. (Photo: Shutterstock)

Much of the new season's action is set in this desert oasis ruled by House Martell, following the unfortunate demise of the impossibly charismatic and provocatively pansexual Prince Oberyn Martell. (In one of Season 4's most memorable moments, his handsome head was crushed like a grape by the hulking Gregor Clegane, despite Oberyn's best efforts to avenge his sister's death at Clegane's murderous hands years before.)

The new Zicasso tour kicks off with two days sightseeing in Madrid before heading south by train to Andalusia, a region of striking contrasts and ancient cities where Moorish conquerors ruled for centuries and left their indelible imprint on its art, architecture and culture. There you'll "get your Dorne on," so to speak, with three nights in Seville, Andalusia's capital, feasting on sizzling plates of tapas and pitchers of zesty sangria and exploring sites including the world's largest Gothic cathedral. Also central to the itinerary: The world-renowned Alcázar, formerly a Muslim fort and widely recognized as the most stunning example of *mudéjar* architecture on the Iberian Peninsula.



Seville's stunning Alcázar, renowned for its incomparable Moorish architecture, stands in for the Water Palace of Sunspear, home of the Martell family in Dorne. (Photo: Shutterstock)

The oldest royal palace still in service in [Europe](#) (Spain's royal family uses its upper floors as its official Seville residence), its lavish courtyards and lush gardens provide a sumptuous setting in Season 5 for the Water Palace of Sunspear, Dorne's capital city and seat of House Martell. It is within its ornate walls that the newly introduced Prince Doran Martell, Oberyn's brother and ruler of Dorne, will meet with Jamie Lannister—blond, one-handed heartthrob and conflicted scion of the Seven Kingdom's most powerful family—and spend the fifth season trying to save his land and his hot-blooded people, who are especially vexed in the aftermath of Prince Oberyn's gruesome and untimely end.

From Seville you'll take a day trip to the town of Osuna—which boasts many fine baroque mansions and churches dating from the 16th to 18th centuries and was once colonized by Julius Caesar—and visit its 6,500-seat bullring, designed by Anibal Gonzalez, architect of Seville's sprawling Plaza de España.



Depicted as Daznak's Pit, this bullring is the site of epic battles filmed over 12 days.

The bullring in the Spanish town of Osuna becomes Daznak's Pit in *Game of Thrones'* new season. (Photo: Shutterstock)

In *GOT's* upcoming season, the bullring will appear as Daznak's Pit, the biggest and most ballyhooed fighting pit in Meereen, the largest and wealthiest of the Slaver Cities of Slaver's Bay and ripe for the conquering by the indomitable series heroine, Daenerys Targaryen. Without giving anything away, it's a safe bet that Daenerys and at least one of her formidable dragons will make a dramatic appearance there before the curtain closes on Season 5.

After Seville you'll venture to the picturesque city of Granada, perched at the foot of the majestic Sierra Nevada mountain range, and visit the legendary Alhambra, a UNESCO World Heritage site and one of Spain's most treasured cultural icons. Described by Moorish poets as "a pearl set in emeralds" thanks to the contrast of its buildings against the surrounding woods, it's an arguably unrivaled example of Moorish architecture, boasting breathtaking arabesques, soaring ceilings and exquisitely tiled walls. In short, it's a palace fit for a queen...or, in Daenerys' case, a *khaleesi*.

The seven-night tour is fully customizable and guests can choose from 4- or 5-star accommodations. Those who opt for 5-star, Lannister-worthy luxury will enjoy some of Spain's top hotels, including [Hotel Hospes Madrid](#), overlooking Madrid's Retiro Park and just steps from the Prado and Reina Sofia Museums; and Seville's [Hotel Palacio de Villapanes](#), a bastion of modern comforts charmingly situated within a former Moorish palace.

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