



cultural note

the year 1492 holds great significance for several different cultures. In the United States, as in

Spain, it marks the year Columbus "discovered" America. However, it marks two other important events in the history of Spain. It is the date of the reconquest of Spain from the Moors (Islamic invaders from North Africa). But the Spaniards proved to be less tolerant than the Moors: 1492 was also the year that the Jews were expelled from Spain.

Country Background

History

Spain was settled by Iberians, Celts, and Basques. Its development was subsequently influenced by conquering Carthaginians, Romans, Visigoths, and Moors. The fifteenth century reconquest of Moorish-held Spain not only united Spain for the first time under a Christian king but marks the beginning of Spanish nationalism. Spain began its development of a colonial empire in 1492.

Over the next few centuries, Spain gained colonies, then gradually lost them in a series of conflicts. These losses included Mexico, most of Central and South America, the Netherlands, parts of Italy and Germany, Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico. Defeat in the Spanish-American War of 1898 ended Spain's global ambitions, although Spain retained a few African colonies until recent times.

In 1939, Francisco Franco became dictator of Spain after the bloody three-year Spanish Civil War. Spain remained neutral in World War II, but maintained good relations with the Nazis. As a result, Spain was not permitted entrance into the United Nations until 1955. Franco remained in power until his death, and tried to ensure political stability by designating Prince Juan Carlos as the future king of Spain in 1969.

Prince Juan Carlos became king of Spain in 1975, and soon had to put down an attempted military coup. He rapidly and independently mustered the support of many other parts of the military, allowing Spain to remain under civilian rule.

Type of Government

The current constitution was written in 1978 and makes Spain a constitutional monarchy. The king is the chief of state. Legislative power resides in the Cortes, or parliament, consisting of two chambers: the Congress of Deputies and the Senate. Deputies and senators are elected by universal suffrage and serve for four years.

The executive branch consists of a prime minister (who is the head of the government), his deputy, and ministers, all of whom are responsible to the Cortes.

Spain granted autonomy to Catalonia and the Basque country in 1980. However, political violence continues-mainly in the Basque region in the north, where some Basques seek total independence from Spain.

Spain continues to request the return of Gibraltar, which has been under British control since 1704.

cultural note

the 1980s showed rapid economic growth in the private sector and high levels of economic support from other countries, especially since Spain gained membership in the European Community in 1986. Changes for the better are expected to continue for Spain-particularly in light of the positive results of 1992. Spain successfully hosted the Olympic Games in Barcelona and Expo'92 in Seville, and celebrated the country's five hundredth anniversary of Columbus'voyage to the New World.

Language

The official language of Spain is Spanish, with the Castilian dialect used by the majority of Spaniards. It is the standard for business throughout every region of Spain.

In addition, the Basques of the north, the Galicians of the northwest, and the Catalans of the extreme northeast all speak their own languages.

Religion

Although Spain is an overwhelmingly Catholic country, Spain has no official religion. Today, 97 percent of Spaniards practice Catholicism.

cultural note

spaniards observe many holidays and rituals associated with the Catholic church. One of the elaborate processions during the week before Easter is the famous pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. Santiago is Spanish for "St. James," and the apostle's tomb is believed to be located under the church. During the Middle Ages, the relics made Santiago de Compostela the most important city of pilgrimage after Jerusalem and Rome. The saint's relics are still credited with miracles.

Demographics

The population of Spain is almost thirty-nine million. The capital, Madrid, has almost five million people in its metropolitan area.

In recent years, urbanization has occurred on a large scale.

Cultural Orientation

Cognitive Styles: How Spaniards Organize and Process Information

The culture of Spain opened up with the fashioning of a working democracy. Spaniards are open to information on all issues but do not change their attitudes easily. Most

information is processed associatively and subjectively. Spaniards' personal involvement with issues does not let them use more abstract rules and laws to solve their problems.

Negotiation Strategies: What Spaniards Accept as Evidence

One's subjective feelings on an issue are the ultimate source of truth. However, faith in the ideologies of the church or nationalism may help to formulate this truth. Seldom do Spaniards use objective facts to prove a point.

Value Systems: The Basis for Behavior

Spain is the home of the philosophy that all people are equal because each person is unique. Thus one must get to know each person as an individual. The following three sections identify the Value Systems in the predominant culture-their methods of dividing right from wrong, good from evil, and so forth.

Locus of Decision Making

The individual shoulders responsibility for his or her decisions, but the best interests of the family or group are always kept in mind. Self-identity is obtained from the family name and one's position in society. Relationships (both kinships and friendships) are more important than one's expertise in obtaining a job. The elite at the top of the social scale is a privileged minority group with substantial control over economic resources.

Sources of Anxiety Reduction

Although the Catholic church has lost most of its direct influence, the more educated a person is, the more likely he or she is to be a practicing Catholic. The church's teachings are basic to most of the population and are a source of structure, stability, and security. The extended family is being replaced by the nuclear family as a source of security. There is a strong belief in nationalism.

Issues of Equality/Inequality

Society is differentiated along class, occupational, and professional lines, with an expanding middle class and a decreasing proportion of rural poor. Changes in the system were made by revolutions or military coups in the past, but now the democratic form of government seems to be well in place. Machismo is still very strong. However, women are beginning to figure more prominently in education, politics, and the workforce. Women have complete equality with men before the law.

Business Practices

Appointments



punctuality

- While you should be on time for all business appointments, Spaniards are not always punctual. Be prepared to wait.
- Social events rarely begin at the scheduled time. Try to ask what time you are really expected to arrive; it is likely to be from fifteen to thirty minutes after the scheduled time.
- It is said that only the bullfights start on time in Spain

- Remember that many Europeans and South Americans write the day first, then the month, then the year (e.g., December 3, 1999, is written 3.12.99). This is the case in Spain.
- Always make business appointments well in advance, and confirm them by letter just before your arrival.
- The workweek is forty hours in Spain, but hours of operation may vary.
- In Madrid, businesses are open from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and again from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. In July and August, when most people take their vacations, hours may change to 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Friday.
- Government offices are usually open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- If a holiday falls on a Thursday or Tuesday, many people take a four-day weekend. Most Spaniards have thirty days paid vacation per year, and usually take them in July or August. Also avoid scheduling appointments around Easter or Christmas.
- Business can be conducted over meals, but many Spaniards go home for lunch, so do not be surprised if your invitation is politely declined.
- Do not schedule breakfast meetings before 8:30 a.m.



Negotiating

- Personal contacts are essential for business success in Spain. Select your Spanish representatives with great care, since once a representative is associated with you, it is very difficult to switch to another person.
- To the Spanish, information is considered a valuable commodity. For this reason, they may not be anxious to share useful facts with you, no matter how encouraging they may seem.
- Be warm and personal during your negotiations, yet retain your dignity, courtesy, and diplomacy. Your Spanish counterparts may initially seem restrained and indirect, but this is normal until your relationship has been established.
- Do not expect to discuss business at the start of any meeting.
- Politics, sports, and travel are good topics of conversation. Avoid discussions of religion.
- Bullfighting is considered an art, and should not be judged on any but Spanish terms; derogatory remarks about bullfighting are inappropriate.
- The Spanish give advice to one another and to foreigners freely; don't be offended by this.
- Have business cards printed up in Spain, with English on one side and Spanish on the other. Present your card with the Spanish side facing your Spanish colleague.
- Expect protracted negotiations.

cultural note

Spaniards are known for their pride and personal sense of honor. However, foreign business people are sometimes surprised that business acumen and expertise are not always highly regarded in Spain. (As with the upper-class English, to call

someone "clever" in Spain is a veiled insult.) Spaniards often take more pride in personal characteristics than in business skills.



Business Entertaining

- If your prospect accepts your invitation to lunch, this can be a good time to discuss business. However, do not bring up business matters until coffee is served following the meal.
- Always invite Spanish clients to excellent restaurants, since many Spaniards are very knowledgeable about gourmet food and vintage wines.
- At around 5:00 or 6:00 p.m., many Spaniards go out for hors d'oeuvres, called *tapas*. These *tapas* are eaten at a series of bars (called *tabernas*, *bars*, *mesones*, or *cafés*) and can vary from salted almonds and olives to octopus and potato omelets. Spaniards will walk from bar to bar, eating *tapas*, drinking sherry, and visiting friends for an hour or two.
- Dinner is not served until 9:00 or 10:00 p.m.
- You will probably not be invited to a Spanish home, as this type of socializing is reserved for intimate friends. You might, however be invited out to dinner.
- If an invitation to a Spanish home is offered, you may decline at first, and accept it only when pressed; first invitations are often only for politeness. If the invitation is extended again, you may accept.
- In the continental style of eating, the fork is held in the left hand and the knife in the right, and they are never switched. Push food onto the fork with the knife. When you are finished, place knife and fork side by side on the plate; if they are crossed or on opposite sides of the plate, you will be offered more food. Hands should be kept above the table. Pay compliments to your host (and to the waiters in a restaurant).
- If you have been invited out, reciprocate at a later date, being careful not to mention "repaying" your hosts.
- Be aware that many restaurants close for a month of vacation.

Time

- Spain is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (G.M.T. + 1), or six hours ahead of U.S. Eastern Standard Time (E.S.T. + 6).

Protocol



Greetings

- A handshake is a normal greeting.
- You will note that among close friends, Spanish men will add a pat on the back or a hug to the handshake.
- Women lightly embrace and touch cheeks while kissing the air. A professional woman may also greet a Spanish man who is a close colleague in this way.



Titles / Forms of Address

- First names are appropriate among friends and young people only. Always wait for your Spanish counterpart to initiate the use of first names or the use of the familiar form of address (tO) as opposed to the formal form (Usted).

cultural note

in Spain, the use of the familiar (W) and formal (*Usted*) forms of address are different from their usage in Latin America. For example, Spaniards always speak to domestic servants in the formal (*Usted*) manner; they feel this confers dignity and shows respect for the servant as a person. Also, the informal (W) form is more likely to be used by colleagues in a Spanish office than in a Latin American office.

Sometimes employees even speak to their bosses using the W (informal) form. This would border on insubordination in other Spanish-speaking countries.

- Most people you meet should be addressed with a title and their surname.
- Persons who do not have professional titles should be addressed as Mr., Mrs., or Miss, plus their surname. In Spanish, these are
- Mr. = Señor
- Mrs. = Señora
- Miss = Señorita
- Most Spaniards have two surnames: one from their father, which is listed first, followed by one from their mother. Only the father's surname is commonly used when addressing someone; e.g., Señor José Antonio Martínez de García is addressed as Señor Martínez and Señora Pilar María Nufiez de Cela is addressed as Señora Nuñez. When a woman marries, she usually adds her husband's surname and goes by that surname. If the two people in the above example married, she would be known as Señora Pilar María Nufiez Cela de Martínez. Most people would refer to her as Señora de Martínez or, less formally, Señora Martínez.
- As a general rule, use only one surname when speaking to a person, but use both surnames when writing.
- It is important to address individuals by any titles they may have, followed by their surnames. For example, teachers prefer the title Profesor, and engineers go by Ingeniero.



Gestures

- There are many gestures used in daily Spanish conversation. Their significance may vary from region to region, so observe local behaviors, and ask if you are unsure.
- To beckon another person, turn the palm down and wave the fingers or whole hand.
- Snapping the hand downward is used to emphasize a point.
- The A-O.K. gesture (making a circle of the first finger and thumb) is rude.



Gifts

- Generally, if you are given a gift, you should open it immediately.

- If you are invited for a meal at a Spanish home, it is appropriate to bring chocolates, pastries, or flowers (but not dahlias or chrysanthemums, which are associated with death).
- Don't give thirteen flowers-it is considered bad luck.
- Business gifts should not be given at a first meeting.
- If you give a business gift, choose it carefully; it should not be a vehicle for your company logo (although a fine pen with your company name is acceptable).
- Local crafts or illustrated books from your region are appropriate; university or sports team shirts and caps are good gifts for children.
- Gifts should always be name-brand items of high quality, and should be beautifully wrapped.



Dress

- The Spanish are highly aware of dress. This goes along with their concern for projecting an impression of good social position.
- Always select well-made conservative attire. Name brands will be noticed. Dress in subdued colors.
- Men dress conservatively, while women are expected to be stylish.
- Shorts are not acceptable in public.