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Artist leading culture, cuisine trip to southern Spain

Grania Litwin, Times Colonist
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The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain and not on artists' canvases, hopes Victoria portrait painter David Goatley.

The artist is leading a painting and teaching trip to southern Spain this fall from Sept. 15 to 27, to a little village a few miles inland from Malaga in southern Spain.

"It's where the real Spain begins, not along the Costa del Sol with its unbroken line of bars, hotels and crowded beaches.

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This is where you see the 700-year Moorish influence, the cork trees, olive groves, the ruggedly beautiful countryside, medieval towns and bleached white cottages, hidden courtyards and narrow streets hung with potted flowers.

"This Spanish jaunt is a great opportunity to explore one of the most romantic regions I've ever visited and come back with a wealth of sketches, studies and pictures to provide material to keep myself and students busy for years to come," said Goatley, who was born in London and lives in Victoria.

He has painted portraits of artists Robert Bateman and Ted Harrison, opera star Richard Margison, former Lt.-Gov. Iona Campagnolo, former prime minister Kim Campbell and leading business figures all over the States. He has also taught evening art classes for 16 years at Art Space, as well as at Malaspina College, at the Victoria College of Art, in Calgary and in other cities.

He says the trip to Andalusia will offer culture, history and cuisine as well as painting.

The trip is being organized through Creative Arts Learning Vacations -- www.flavoursofspan.net -- and visitors stay in the home of part-time Vancouver residents Mike and Hilary Powell, who have a winter home in Spain. They used to run restaurants in Portugal and the Costa del Sol, frequented by people like Tom Jones, Sean Connery, Cliff Richard, Louis Jordan and Deborah Kerr.

Years later they bought an old flour mill that sleeps 12 guests, and started running cooking and art classes.

"I didn't know them at the time, but I ate at their restaurant once years ago while making a TV commercial on location. It was fabulous," Goatley recalled. giltwin@tc.canwest.com

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