



THE
HISPANIC
COUNCIL

SPANISH HERITAGE IN THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL

REPORT

JANUARY 2020

Juan Ignacio Güenechea

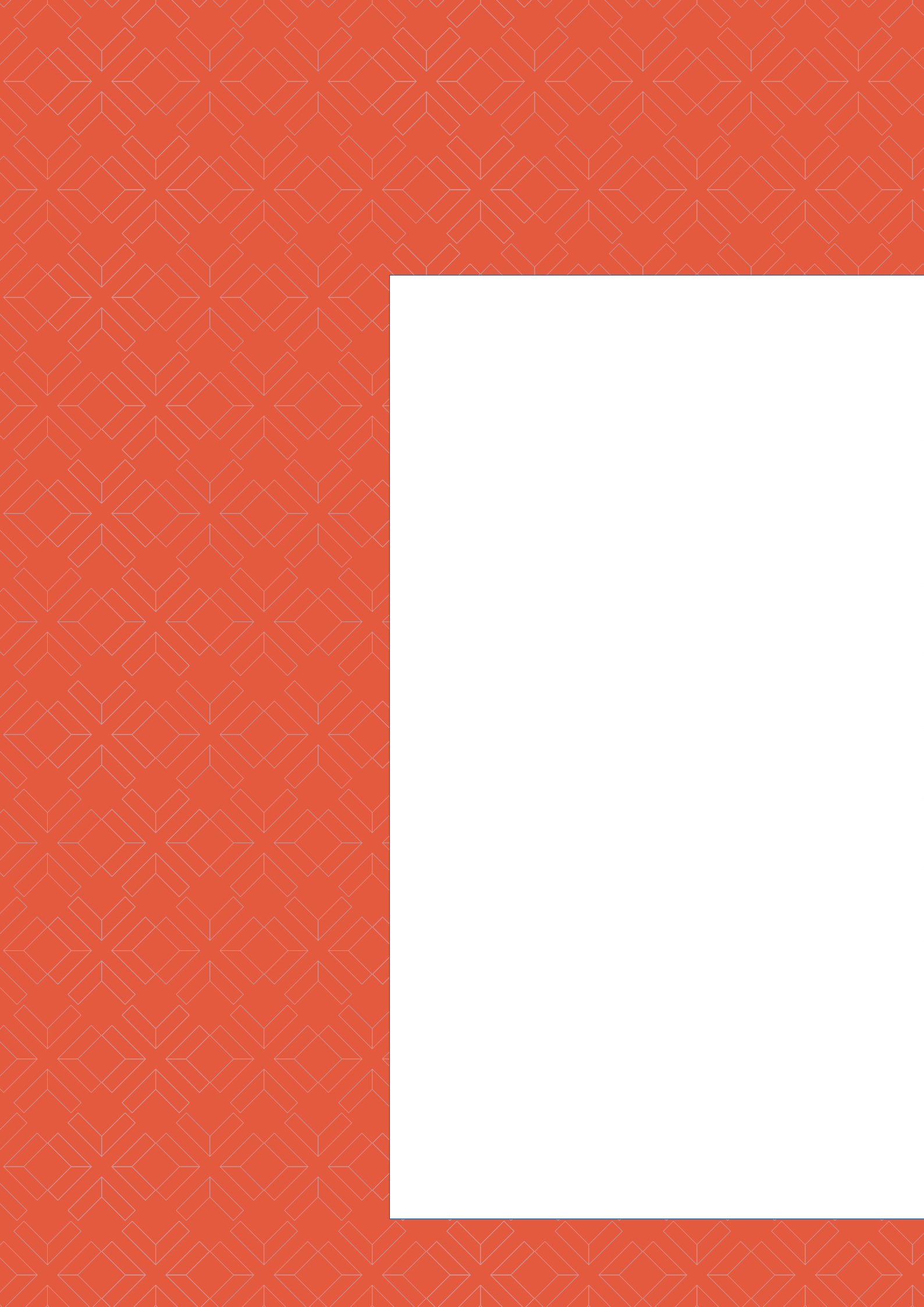
With the support of:



GOBIERNO
DE ESPAÑA

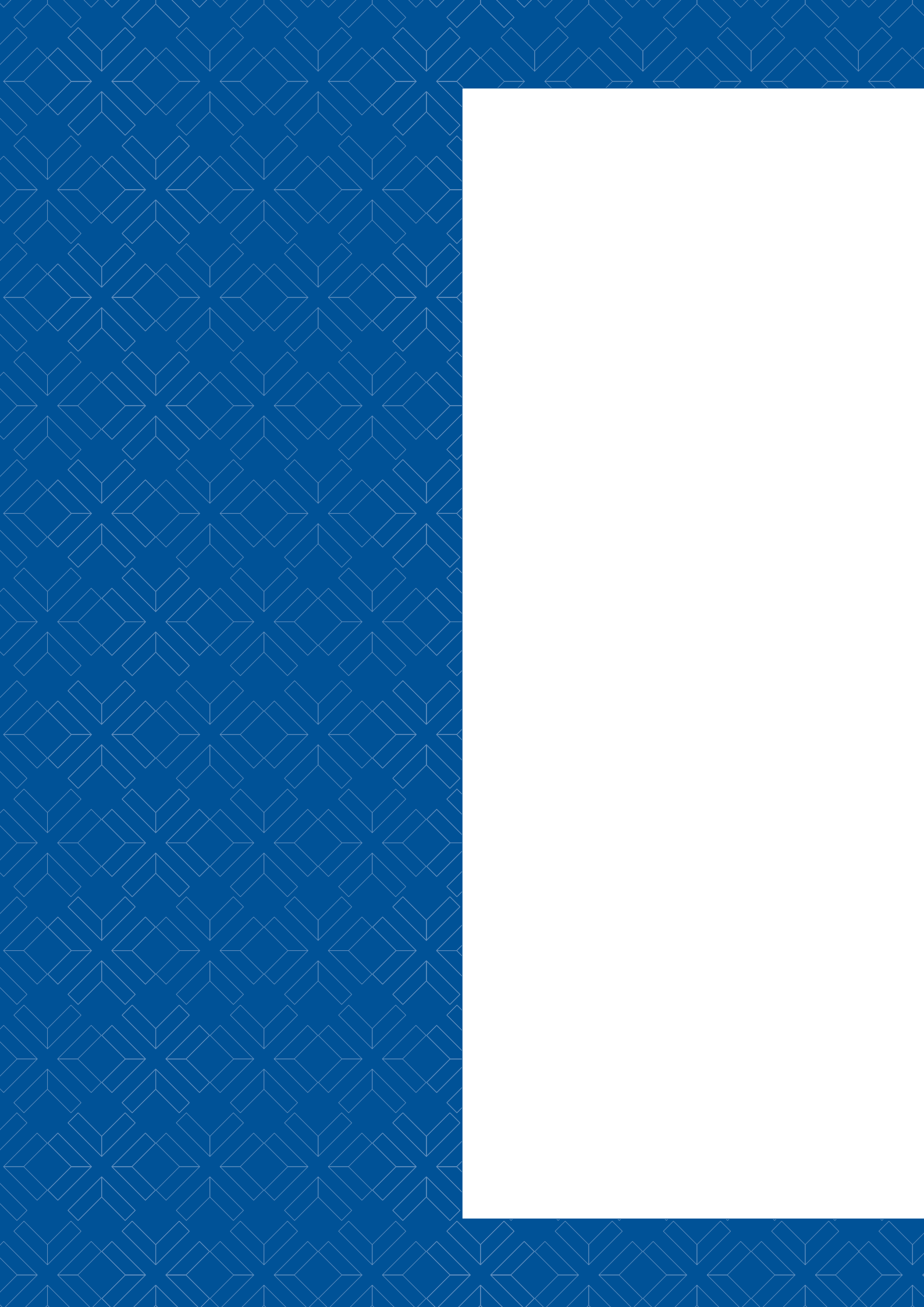
MINISTERIO
DE DEFENSA

SECRETARÍA GENERAL DE
POLÍTICA DE DEFENSA



INDEX

	THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL	07
1.	PICTURES FROM THE CAPITOL ROTUNDA	10
2.	AMERICAN HISTORY FRIEZE IN THE CAPITOL ROTUNDA	13
3.	SPANISH HERITAGE IN THE NATIONAL STATUARY HALL COLLECTION	16
4.	MARBLE PORTRAIT OF ALFONSO X THE WISE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	19
5.	THE FIRST SETTLEMENTS IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE UNITED STATES	21
6.	COLUMBUS AS A PROTAGONIST	25
7.	BERNARDO DE GÁLVEZ AND BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS	31



Dear reader:

The U.S. Capitol is undoubtedly one of the great symbols of American democracy and the center of the country's legislative and political activity. In addition, **this building hosts different works of art that make it a true museum of American history**, a history that cannot be understood without the Spanish imprint that **has marked the United States for more than 500 years**.

The millions of visitors who tour its halls and most emblematic places each year may not be aware that **this building also has important references to the Spanish heritage of the United States**. From figures such as Bernardo de Gálvez or Junípero Serra, to key figures in the history of America such as **Hernán Cortés or Francisco Pizarro**. They are all remembered in this iconic building.

We talk about all of them in this new report from **The Hispanic Council** in which we present the Spanish heritage in the U.S. Capitol. We have tried to gather **the main elements that we can find and explain why they are there**. This is one more example of the strong historical and cultural ties between Spain and the United States.

We hope it will be of your interest.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "DUreña" with a stylized flourish underneath.

Daniel Ureña
President. The Hispanic Council

This activity has received a subsidy from the Secretaría General de Política de Defensa del Ministerio de Defensa.



THE
HISPANIC
COUNCIL

AUTHOR

Juan Ignacio Güenechea

THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL

The U.S. Capitol is the place where the Senate and the House of Representatives meet to discuss, debate and deliberate national policy and make the laws of the nation. Considered the core of the legislative branch of government, **the U.S. Capitol is the central building of the Capitol Campus**, which includes the main office buildings of Congress and three Library of Congress buildings built in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The design of the U.S. Capitol was chosen by President George Washington in 1793 and its construction began shortly thereafter. **In November 1800, Congress met for the first time in this building** when a part of it - the north wing - was completed. In the 1850s, large annexes were authorized at the north and south ends of the Capitol due to the great westward expansion of the country and the resulting growth of Congress as new representatives arrived. **Since then, the Capitol and its impressive dome have become international symbols of American democracy.**

This building has a design that **clearly evokes ancient Greece and Rome**, both of which inspired America's founders, as they provided their nation with the basic elements for its creation.

Therefore, in addition to its active use by Congress, **the U.S. Capitol is also a museum of American art and history**. Every year, it is estimated that between 3 and 5 million people from all over the world visit not only the building, but also the many and diverse works of art that it houses.

Whoever visits the Capitol, may not realize that the Spanish heritage occupies a very important place in this place. Murals, sculptures, paintings, engravings... **diverse references to the more than 300 years of Spanish presence in the United States** that often go unnoticed in one of the most important buildings in the world.

Perhaps the best-known element by all is **the portrait of Bernardo de Gálvez**, when in 2014 the U.S. Congress paid its debt to this Malaga-born figure in the War of Independence, although many other names of illustrious Spaniards are hidden within the walls of the Capitol. Even **some completely unsuspected ones, like Francisco Pizarro or Hernán Cortés**, are also present in this emblematic building.

In this report we present **the Spanish footprint in the U.S. Capitol**, we compile the main elements we can find and explain why they are there. **Once again, this is another example of the extensive historical and cultural ties that unite Spain and the United States**, a relationship that must continue to be promoted and strengthened.



1.

PICTURES FROM THE CAPITOL ROTUNDA

The rotunda of the U.S. Capitol is the central rotunda of the building and serves as the symbolic and physical “heart” of the building. It contains eight large framed historical paintings, all in oil on canvas and measuring 3.7 by 5.5 meters. Such is the importance of this location that the funeral chapels of great public figures of the United States are held there, as it recently happened with Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg. There, among those 8 paintings, is Hernando de Soto.

DISCOVERY OF THE MISSISSIPPI BY HERNANDO DE SOTO



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

Hernando de Soto made an impressive expedition through much of what is now the southeastern United States. On his journey, **de Soto was the first European to see the Mississippi River, a feat that has earned him a place in the country's history and a preferred location within the Capitol.** It will be mentioned in detail later, but De Soto's body, after his death, was also deposited in the same river. **Such was his importance and his legacy, that this explorer also had a model car with his name on it and it appeared on the 10 dollar (1860) and 500 dollar (1918) bills.**

The painting was made by William Henry Powell (1823-1879) who was the last artist appointed by Congress to create a painting for the Capitol Rotunda. Powell worked in Paris, and completed it in 1853, after which Congress added it to the Rotunda collection, **thus completing the eight elements mentioned above.**

THE ARRIVAL OF COLUMBUS IN AMERICA



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

Another one of the eight paintings in the Capitol Rotunda **depicts Christopher Columbus and his arrival in America in 1492**. This means that, together with De Soto's, 25% of the paintings in this space refer to the country's Spanish legacy.

There is no doubt that Columbus' arrival in America on October 12, 1492 changed the course of history. Columbus' expedition was the gateway to all subsequent development of the American continent, and although formally the Genoese never arrived in North America, **his figure is also closely linked to what is now the United States.**

The painting tries to reflect in detail the key elements of Columbus' arrival in America. The Admiral is seen carrying the emblem of the Catholic Kings and at the bottom of the composition we find the ships he commanded on the other side of the Atlantic: the Pinta, the Niña and the Santa Maria.

The American **John Vanderlyn (1775-1852)** was selected by Congress in June 1836 to paint the Columbus Landing for the Capitol Rotunda. **The painting was completed in 1846 and installed in 1847.** This image has had more visibility in the United States, as, for example, **in various collections of stamps issued by the U.S. postal service** commemorating the arrival of Columbus in America.

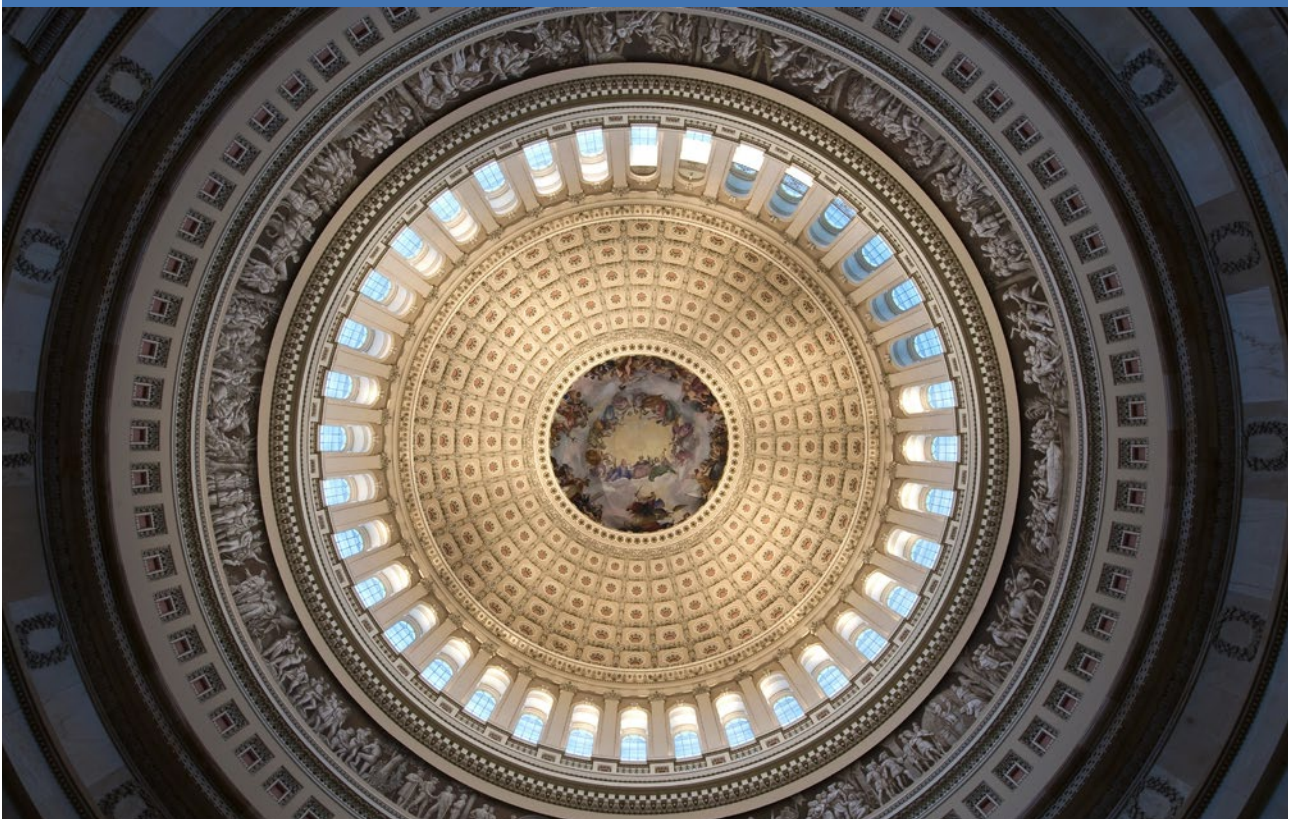


2.

AMERICAN HISTORY FRIEZE IN THE CAPITOL ROTUNDA

If we were at the Capitol Rotunda and looked up, we would be able to observe the frieze of that, in a circumference of just over 90 meters and almost 18 meters from the ground, reflects 19 great events in the history of America.

VIEW OF THE DOME OF THE CAPITOL ROTUNDA



Columbus and De Soto appear again and this time, in the frieze, **we also find two prominent Spaniards in the history of Spain in America: Hernán Cortés and Francisco Pizarro.** In this case, 4 of the 19 parts of the frieze refer to the history of Spain.

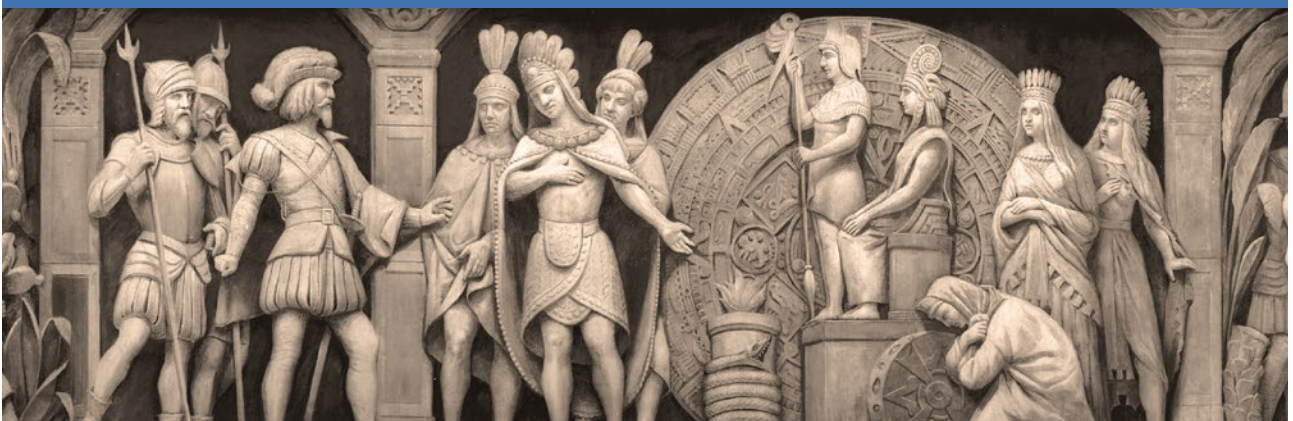
- For Columbus, **the representation used is that of his arrival in America in 1492.** The sailor is observed descending to land before the reception of the natives.
- Hernán Cortés was, without a doubt, **the most important character of the conquest of Mexico,** thus it was decided that **the historical moment when he encounters Moctezuma II in 1519 was to be included in the frieze.**
- If Cortes was fundamental for Mexico, **equally important was Pizarro in Peru,** in this case, Congress included the Spanish conqueror pointing the way to Peru.
- Finally, in the case of **Hernando de Soto, the scene chosen to represent his legacy was the moment of his funeral,** in which his body was submerged in the Mississippi River.

ARRIVAL OF COLUMBUS IN AMERICA



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

ENCOUNTER BETWEEN HERNÁN CORTÉS AND MOCTEZUMA II



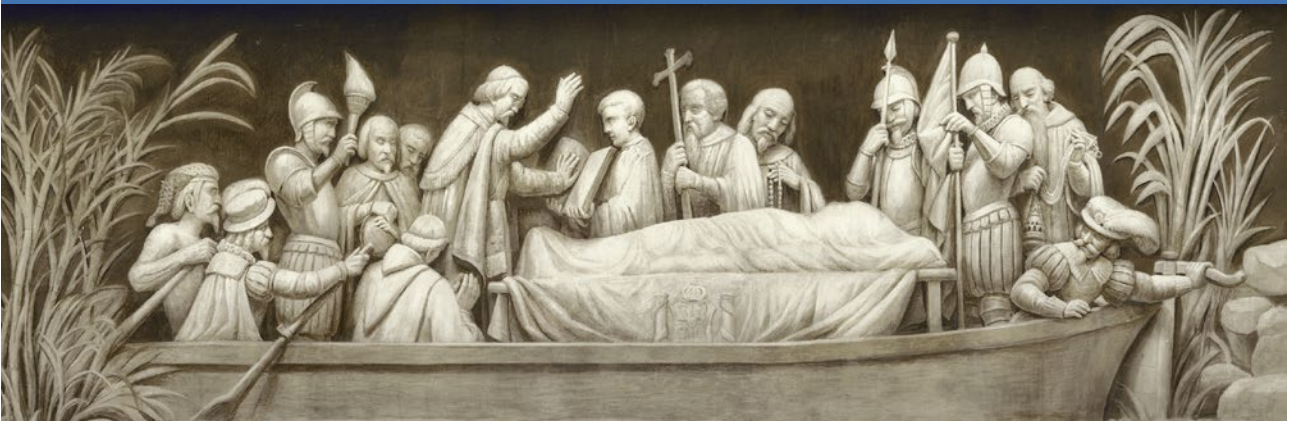
Photography: Architect of the Capitol

PIZARRO MARCHES TO PERU



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

FUNERAL OF HERNANDO DE SOTO



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

According to a statement from 1877, the frieze in the Capitol Rotunda would depict “events in our history in chronological order, beginning with the arrival of Christopher Columbus...”. **Thus, the 19 scenes shown begin with Columbus and the next three are, those of Cortés, Pizarro and De Soto, in that particular order.**

The frieze was designed **by the Italian artist Constantino Brumidi**, who presented his design in 1859, although he did not begin work until 1877. Brumidi was the creator of the four pieces that refer to Spain and died without completing the frieze in 1880. **His successor would be Filippo Costaggini, who at the end of the work realized that, due to a miscalculation, there was still room for three more depictions.**

Costaggini presented his designs and they were not approved. The same happened with the sketch made by Charles Ayer Whipple to fill the space in 1918, which was finally eliminated. **It was not until 1953 that the frieze was completed, when Allyn Cox was selected for the task.**

3.

SPANISH HERITAGE IN THE NATIONAL STATUARY HALL COLLECTION

The concept of the National Statuary Hall was to have a room in which each state of the United States would contribute two statues of relevant figures in their history so that their legacy would be remembered in the Capitol and serve as a symbolic representation of each territory. At present, therefore, the collection of the National Statuary Hall has 100 statues.

This idea for the hall emerged in the mid-19th century. When the construction of new areas of the Capitol were completed, the representatives left an empty space that was deemed should have some use. After several proposals and ideas, **it was Representative Justin S. Morrill who proposed that the area should host the statues sent by the states.** The law that was adopted in 1864 said:

“...the president is authorized to invite each and every state to provide and furnish statues, in marble or bronze, not to exceed two per state, of deceased persons who were citizens of that state, and illustrious by historical renown or by distinguished civic or military service which each state deems worthy of this national commemoration...”

This is how the states began to send their statues to be placed in the National Statuary Hall. **As the country grew, so did the number of states and the number of statues.** Upon this, statues had to be relocated to other locations by means of different resolutions.

Currently, the collection is distributed as follows:

35 statues in the National Statuary Hall

24 at the Capitol Visitor Center

13 in the crypt

13 in the Hall of Columns

6 in the Capitol Rotunda

The others are located in different areas and wings of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Among these 100 statues there are two that **have close ties to Spain: the Franciscan Junipero Serra, representing California, and the Italian Jesuit Eusebio Kino, representing Arizona.**

FRAY JUNÍPERO SERRA

Father Junípero was born on November 24, 1713 in Petra, Mallorca, **into a family of modest origin that baptized him as Miguel José.** After his first studies, he decided to follow a religious career and finally **took his vows on September 15, 1731, being named Junípero.**

In spite of being a distinguished professor, he decided to follow his calling as a missionary **and in 1749 he traveled to the Missionary School of San Fernando in the capital of Mexico,** from where he moved to Sierra Gorda, lands where he evangelized the native population for more than 8 years.

In 1769, together with Gaspar de Portolá, he led the Holy Expedition for the Spanish settlement in Upper California. There he carried out an incessant evangelization work, at the service of native populations.

His work as a missionary **led him to found 9 of the 21 missions of Spain in California.** In 1769 he established a mission in the current location of San Diego, California, followed by San Antonio, San Buenaventura, San Carlos, San Francisco de Asis, San Gabriel, San Juan Capistrano, San Luis Obispo and Santa Clara.

There he served the native community, **evangelizing the locals and providing them with trades, education and food.** He died on August 28, 1784, in the mission of San Carlos



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

Borromeo, near Monterrey. Such was his dedication that Pope Francis canonized him, thus **becoming the first Hispanic saint in the United States**. The Pope affirmed that this Spanish Franciscan **“sought to defend the dignity of the indigenous people he evangelized”**.

Serra’s statue symbolizes both his dedication to the communities he served and **his crucial contribution to California’s early develop-**

ment, establishing the mission system that was the seed of what is now the state.

The sculpture, made of bronze, was the work of Italian artist Ettore Cadorin and was delivered to the Capitol in 1931. On the California side, **the other statue representing the state and accompanying Serra is that of President Ronald Reagan**. Serra’s is one of 35 statues located in the National Statuary Hall.

EUSEBIO KINO

Eusebio Kino was born on August 10, 1645, in Segno, Italy, **but carried out all his professional and personal activity under the flag of the Spanish Empire in America**. Father Kino stood out from a young age because of his talent and intelligence. In fact, he was a professor of mathematics at the University of Ingolstadt, **but his ambition always was to leave on as missionary**. He requested to go to Asia, but his destination would end up being New Spain.

After spending a few years in Cadiz, where he learned Spanish, he left for America. There, **his first destination was Baja California, which at that time was believed to be an island**. His evangelizing mission was complicated while there, but later, he would leave for the north, **where he would begin the job of his life, that which would take him to the United States Capitol**.

Kino was assigned to Sonora, with the responsibility of establishing missions and evangelizing the northern part of the region, thus reaching the south of what is Arizona today. **Father Kino built missions in Sonora and Arizona, introduced modern livestock and farming methods**, and forged a close relationship with the natives.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

Through his efforts, **roads were built to connect previously inaccessible areas.** His numerous horseback expeditions covered large areas, and thanks to his knowledge he was able to map the area, **thus deducing that California was a peninsula.**

Among many others, **this missionary founded the San Cayetano de Tumacácori Mission in Arizona,** the San Xavier del Bac Mission and many small missions called “*Visititas*”, which are located on both sides of the current border

between the United States and Mexico. **Father Kino died in 1711 leaving an indelible legacy in the current state of Arizona.**

His bronze statue was made by Suzanne Silvercruys and sent to the Capitol in 1965. On the Arizona side, Kino is accompanied by **the former Republican candidate for president in 1964 and state senator, Barry Goldwater.** Kino’s statue can now be found in the Capitol’s visitor center.

4. MARBLE PORTRAIT OF ALFONSO X THE WISE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

In the U.S. Capitol, there are 23 marble relief portraits above the gallery doors of the House of Representatives that depict historical figures prominent for their work in establishing the principles underlying American law. They were installed when the chamber was remodeled between 1949 and 1950.

The reason for including **Alfonso X The Wise** is none other than the important Spanish presence in what is now the United States and, specifically, **because of the legal heritage that Spain left in many territories of the country.**

During the term of Alfonso X The Wise, **a body of laws known as the “Siete Partidas”** was drafted. It is important to note that these laws were also instituted in American territories, making necessary adaptations over time.

After independence, the Spanish rules that had governed the territories did not disappear. In the United States, a multitude of rulings citing the *Siete Partidas* can be found in the Supreme Courts of Louisiana, Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and California.

MARBLE PORTRAIT OF ALFONSO X THE WISE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

Alfonso X The Wise is accompanied by historical figures such as **Napoleón Bonaparte, Moses, Thomas Jefferson, Edward I of England or George Mason**. The characters in the marble portraits were chosen by academics from **the University of Pennsylvania and the Columbia Historical Society in Washington, D.C.**, in collaboration with authorized members of the Library of Congress.

5.

THE FIRST SETTLEMENTS IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE UNITED STATES

Although many place the beginning of the history of what is now U.S. to the arrival of the Mayflower in 1621, the truth is that more than 100 years earlier, the Spanish were already present. Since the arrival of Juan Ponce de León in 1513 in Florida, followed by many other expeditions, the history of this territory had a clear Hispanic presence. These settlements and the key role that Spain played in the development of the territory that is now the United States are also remembered on the Capitol.

We begin by analyzing three works that **EverGreene Painting Studios produced between 1993 and 1994** that narrate important moments of the Spanish presence in the United States.

ON THE WAY TO “TERRA INCOGNITA”

The arrival of Columbus to America took place before the settlements. Although he never set foot in what is now the United States, he is **one of the most recurrent figures in the Capitol.** His arrival to America was the beginning of what later would be the settlements in U.S. territory, so one of the corridors houses a mural that recalls this moment.

It is a map with the name of “Terra Incognita” (which in Latin means “Unknown Land”). On it appear the names of **the original Native American tribes of the eastern coast of North America** in their approximate geographical locations. In addition, **this first map recalls the arrival of Columbus**, whose three ships are represented crossing the ocean.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

This work marks **the beginning of Spanish presence in America and their encounter**

with the native peoples, which would give rise to the continued settlement in now U.S. territory.

ST. AUGUSTINE, THE OLDEST CITY IN THE UNITED STATES

After Columbus' arrival, **Ponce de Leon would arrive in Florida in 1513 opening the way for the effective settlement of Spain in the United States.** Within this journey that was beginning, one of the most important milestones of the Spanish presence in the United States **was the foundation of the oldest city in the country that was continuously inhabited: St. Augustine.** Founded by Pedro Menendez de Aviles in 1565, it was a fundamental enclave in the Spanish presence in Florida and its immense Hispanic legacy can be appreciated today.

This fact is also reflected in the U.S. Capitol. In one of the corridors of the Capitol **there is a painting called "The first four settlements in America"**. In it we observe four settlements and their founding dates: St. Augustine (1565), Jamestown (1607), Plymouth (1620) and Savannah (1733).

In addition, the composition also recreates **the fort of the city of St. Augustine and the iconic fort of St. Mark, which served as a fortress for the city in different battles with the English.**



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

THE ROLE OF THE SPANISH MISSIONS

The system of missions that Spain implemented in North America **was key for the settlement and development of different areas of what today is the United States.** It is enough to remember the 21 missions that were created in Alta California, shaping the birth of the great cities that we know today. For that reason, given its relevance, Evergreene Painting Studios carried out this creation between 1993 and 1994 **in which the figure of the Spanish missions in the United States is enhanced.**

The painting shows how a converted Native American kneels in prayer under the guidance

of a monk in front of the mission of El Carmelo. This mission, located in California, **is one of the greatest exponents of the Spanish legacy on the west coast of the United States.**

The role of the Spanish missions is fundamental to understanding the development and settlement of Spain in these places. In turn, **they are very important pieces of the historical and cultural heritage of the United States.** The missions, in this way, represent a basic element in the configuration of what the United States is today and how Spain conceived its presence in North America.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

ENTRANCE TO MONTERREY

This work was not done by the studio that created the three previous ones, in fact, **it is 100 years older and was done by a German painter named Albert Bierstadt**. The painting is part of the collection of the U.S. House of Representatives **and revisits the entry into Monterrey of the Serra y Portolá expedition in 1769**.

This painting was made in 1876, after the German artist completed one entitled “The Discovery of the Hudson River”, which shows Anthony Hudson’s exploration of the Hudson River. It should be remembered that this was

not the discovery of the Hudson River, **as Spanish expeditions had previously sailed the area** and even named it “San Antonio”.

In any case, the Bierstadt painting **illustrates a Catholic mass celebrated in Monterey Bay**. In a sunset, one can see the Spanish ships, the country’s insignia, as well as to the missionaries and military of the expedition. This expedition **was one of the most important carried out by the Spanish in what is now North America**, ensuring Spanish control of the territory on the west coast and giving rise to what is now California and its most iconic cities.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

6.

COLUMBUS AS A PROTAGONIST

In addition to his presence in the Capitol Rotunda and the American History Frieze, as well as other references to his expeditions that can be found in paintings and murals in the building, Columbus has other spaces in which he is the protagonist. We are now talking about two references to the navigator the Senate and the ones known as “Columbus Doors”.

COLUMBUS AND THE INDIAN MAIDEN

Constantino Brumidi, **the main author of the American History Frieze in the Capitol Rotunda**, also did many other works in the U.S. Capitol. In fact, in the Senate **we can find the so-called “Brumidi’s corridors”**, named after the artist who designed the murals and frescoes that decorate the space, although other artists were also responsible for many of the details.

Brumidi decided to make one of the frescos in which we can appreciate **Christopher Columbus with a native on his arrival in America**. The work was completed in 1875 and maintains its place in the Senate more than 140 years after its creation.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

COLUMBUS IN GRANADA

Also, in the Senate, we can find a work by Augustus Goodyear Heaton in which **we see a Columbus who, unlike the other elements of the Capitol, has not yet left for America.** The scene is intended to represent a meeting in Granada between Christopher Columbus and an emissary of the Catholic Monarchs in which he is informed that his company is accepted.

The artist emphasized that what he wanted to exemplify was **the moment of happiness that envelops Columbus when his expedition is authorized**, in a “vindication of his genius” according to Heaton himself. We can see that Columbus goes by mule and transports his books and a globe. Heaton wanted to show **that Columbus had been proposing his trip to different European monarchs** for some

time and that, before his arrival in America, **the acceptance of the company by the Catholic Kings** was another moment to be remembered.

In order to try to give more realism to the scene, the author moved to Granada to get to know the land and to capture it in his work. **He would finish his work in 1884 and Congress acquired it in 1891.** Before staying at the Senate, the work was exhibited in Madrid and at the Columbus exhibition in Chicago that commemorated the 400th anniversary of the arrival in America. In addition, this representation that now hangs on the walls of the U.S. Senate has **also been part of several collections of U.S. Postal Service stamps** to commemorate events related to the arrival in America.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

COLUMBUS DOORS

Designed by the American sculptor Randolph Rogers, **these doors contain 9 scenes from the life of Christopher Columbus.** The doors were installed in 1863 and moved to their current location in 1961 following the expansion of the east wing of the Capitol.

The life of Columbus **begins in the lower left with Columbus before the Council of Salamanca** and continues clockwise until the death of the navigator.

In addition, other notable figures in Spanish history are represented on the doors, such as **the Catholic Kings, Hernán Cortés and Francisco Pizarro, among others.**

The doors designed by Rogers **were manufactured in Munich by the Royal Bavarian Foundry and were finally installed in 1863.** After installation they were relocated twice to their current location and in 2008, they were renovated and thoroughly cleaned.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

The following is an analysis of the main scenes of the Columbus Doors:

I. COLUMBUS BEFORE THE COUNCIL OF SALAMANCA (1487)

It shows Columbus trying to convince the Council appointed by Ferdinand the Catholic **to support his theory and allow him to open a new route to the Indians.** On both sides of the scene, we find two statuettes: that of **John Perez de Marchena** and that of **Henry VII of England.**



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

2. DEPARTURE FROM THE RABIDA CONVENT (1492)

Columbus, riding a mule, **prepares to leave the door of the convent led by Friar Juan Pérez**. The scene tries to show that Pérez was so impressed with Columbus' vision that he **wrote to the Queen urging her to reconsider supporting the expedition**. The statues that flank this episode are those of **Hernán Cortés and Beatriz de Bobadilla**.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

3. AUDIENCE WITH FERDINAND AND ISABELLA (1492)

This scene shows **Queen Isabella listening carefully to Columbus' explanation of his map**, with Ferdinand at her side. Finally, as is known, the kings would approve the financing of the trip. Next to this panel are the statues of **Alonso de Ojeda and Queen Isabella herself**.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

4. DEPARTURE FROM THE PORT OF PALOS (1492)

La Niña, la Pinta and Santa Maria **set sail on August 3, 1492 from this port** and in the image, we see how Columbus leaves his son Diego in the care of religious before embarking. **Américo Vespucio and Pedro González de Mendoza** are the statues that accompany the scene.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

5. COLUMBUS' ARRIVAL IN THE NEW WORLD (1492)

Of course, **the centerpiece of the doors represents Columbus' arrival in America.** The navigator claims the lands for Spain, banner and sword in hand. You can also see **more men from the expedition and natives hiding behind the plants** watching the event closely.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

6. COLUMBUS' FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE NATIVES (1492)

On the right, this scene shows the Spaniards **taking possession of the land while a cross is seen on the island of Hispaniola.** This scene is accompanied by statuettes of **Pope Alexander VI and Francisco Pizarro.**



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

7. COLUMBUS' ENTRY INTO BARCELONA (1493)

The scene tells how Columbus, after returning from his first journey, **triumphantly enters the gates of the city of Barcelona on horseback.** In this case, the figures on either side of the scene are those of **Fernando el Católico and Vasco Núñez de Balboa.**



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

8. COLUMBUS IN CHAINS (1500)

On this piece we can see **Columbus in chains with Don Francisco de Bobadilla**. The scene shows how, due to the bad government of the overseas territories, Don Francisco de Bobadilla, who was sent to replace Columbus and investigate the charges against him, arrests the Genoese. The statues of **Charles VIII of France and Bartholomew Columbus** are seen at the sides.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

9. DEATH OF COLUMBUS (1506)

Finally, the Columbus Doors close the tour with a scene where, **as he lies on his deathbed**, priests and friends gather around him, and a priest holds a crucifix. **Columbus died in Valladolid on May 20, 1506**. The statues on either side of the scene recall **King John II of Portugal and Martin Alonzo Pinzon**.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

7.

BERNARDO DE GÁLVEZ AND BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS

Finally, as a conclusion to the tour of the Spanish legacy of the U.S. Capitol, there are two more pieces that remind us of this shared history. Both Bernardo de Gálvez and the religious Bartolomé de las Casas are present in the U.S. Capitol, although for very different reasons.

BERNARDO DE GÁLVEZ, HERO OF U.S. INDEPENDENCE

This Malaga native has a portrait that, since 2014, **hangs in a room of honor of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee**. The painting, a copy of a work from that period, was commissioned to the artist Carlos Monserrate. However, of all the elements analyzed so far, this one has a particularly special history.

Bernardo de Gálvez was born in Macharaviaya (Málaga) in 1746. From a young age he excelled in the Spanish army and became governor of Louisiana in 1776. His support in the War of Independence for the 13 Colonies and important victories in contests such as Pensacola **were crucial to the final victory and independence of the United States.**

Given his importance, more than 230 years ago, the Founding Fathers of the United States **approved in Congress to honor Bernardo de Gálvez, the protagonist of the history and formation of the country,** by hanging one of his



Photography: Architect of the Capitol

portraits in Congress along with other historical figures such as **Thomas Jefferson and George Washington**. But this decision was never carried out.

We had to wait until 2014, when 231 years later the resolution agreed upon in 1783 by Congress was fulfilled. In addition, **Bernardo de**

Gálvez has the title of Honorary Citizen of the United States, the highest distinction granted in the United States to a foreign personality. **The British Prime Minister Winston Churchill or Mother Teresa of Calcutta** are some of the members of this select club, in which this Malaga-born man is located.

BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS

De las Casas also has representation in the Capitol, specifically **in the previously mentioned “corridors of Brumidi” where Christopher Columbus is also located**. In the image you can see the Dominican on his desk accompanied by a native, **looking out of a window at the native peoples whose slavery he denounced**.

It is frequent that those who criticize the Spanish performance in America raise as a flag the work of the Dominican friar Bartolomé de las Casas. Certainly, the writings of the friar, **which had an enormous diffusion in the centuries after colonization and are still frequently cited today**, generated very negative views of American colonization. However, **today we know that Bartolomé de las Casas is excessive in all his descriptions**, and especially in his judgment of people linked to the Spanish presence in America.

Regardless of the later influence of his work, the Dominican persevered for decades urging the Spanish rulers to **stop mistakes and inappropriate behaviors that were committed in the Indies, and even to abandon them**. That work is the one that granted him a place inside the Capitol and Brumidi’s fresco that refers to this Spaniard has the title: “Bartolomé de Las Casas, the apostle of the natives”.



Photography: Architect of the Capitol



THE
HISPANIC
COUNCIL





With the support of:



THE
HISPANIC
COUNCIL

www.hispaniccouncil.org