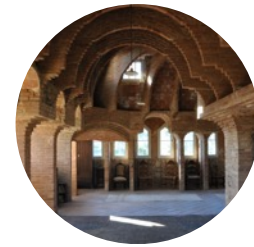


Cultural visit to LA TORRE DE BELLESGUARD, Barcelona



Details of Bellesguard

Date: Oct 1st 2016

Time: 13'30 h

Duration: 2 h (aprox.)

Guided tour by: Manuel Medarde (*see below for details*)

Location: c/ Bellesguard 16-20, 08022, Barcelona.

-The details of how to arrive there would be provided during the conference-

Reservations required: *Your name and number of persons interested should be sent at this e-mail address ecdo.gaudi.torredebellesguard@gmail.com before the **23rd September**.*

Price: *ticket price is subject to change according to group size (not exceeding 20€ and including donations to The Gaudí Research Institute).*

[Flying over Bellesguard](#) (video)

About the visit: LA TORRE DE BELLESGUARD (1900-1909)

Inspired by medieval castles, half way between de modernism and the gothic, in 1900 Gaudí created the Bellesguard tower as a summer residence for the Figueres family, a wealthy family from Barcelona. While archaeological data place the origin of the settlement from 400 b.c., the tower's history spans more than six centuries. During that time Bellesguard, named by the last Spanish king of the Catalan dynasty Martí "the Humane", has had many uses: from a roman fortress to a king's hunting lodge or even the king's palace. However, due to its strategic position and environmental conditions, the building was always linked to the Catalan nobility and was a critical spot in many episodes of the Catalan history.

Interestingly, in 1944 Lluís Guílerma Molas acquired the tower in order to build the first oncologic hospital of Barcelona. The Dr Guílerma, one of Spain's most distinguished physicians, was an assistant professor of Santiago Ramón y Cajal during his research on the neuronal structure, as well as a student of Marie and Pierre Curie in Berlin. The clinic, by the time pioneer of cancer treatment, was in use till the 70s when it became the residence of the Guílerma Family, fulfilling the purpose of Gaudí's design. In this regard, Gaudí was completely captivated by Bellesguard's history, resulting into one of his most creative projects. In Bellesguard, he was able to develop all the symbolism that characterize his work and that turn into a tribute to his

beloved Catalonia. Thanks to Manuel Medarde and with the excuse of one of the most emblematic buildings of Gaudí, we will have the privilege to go through most of the Catalan history, with a special taste of the history of oncology in Catalonia.

About Antoni Gaudí: THE POET of ARCHITECTURE



Antoni Gaudí i Cornet (Reus, 1852- Barcelona, 1926) is the architect with the most works declared UNESCO's World Heritage sites. He was however an enigmatic figure for many years and still remains so given his complex character. He had strong secessionist ideas and a deep religious mentality, yet openly criticized the Catholic Church. He was a social activist and a convinced follower of the motto "the culture will set us free". His personal complexity is highly succinctly summarized by the words of Elies Rogent, architect and president of the commission of the School of Architecture in Barcelona during Gaudí graduation speech in 1878; "I'm not sure if we are giving the title to a genius, or to a dement person". However, with Gaudí nothing was improvised. He consciously thought through all his decision and, as with any given scientist, systematically tested every single material or technique used in his constructions in order to give the objects the maximum utility. Always without exceeding the cost, he was a master in recycling, with the minimal impact to the environment. Gaudí's true originality lay in his "going to the origin". Inspired by nature, in combination with the technical sciences, he was able to understand its functionality, developing the most amazing methodologies and structures that allowed him to provide with movement to the static objects or to create window glasses with colors that mimic the "blue sky of Barcelona during spring after the tramontane wind". Nevertheless, he was not only innovative in his creations, but also with his managing skills. Always collaborating with the top specialist of each field, Gaudí was able to extract the maximum from each of his team members, without forgetting their health and security, concepts completely non-existent in Spain at that time. In his own words "there is no reason not to do something just because no one has tried it before". This creativity and constant innovation has meant Gaudí being recognized as of one of the most brilliant architects in history and, although we still cannot fully understand all his work' symbolisms, the beauty of his art is a universal message.



Window from the church in the Colònia Güell and pinecone inspiration

About our esteemed guide tour: MANUEL MEDARDE SAGRERA



Manuel Medarde (Blanes, 1934) is an industrial engineer and archaeologist with a PhD in pre-history and ancient history. He has devoted more than 36 years of his life into filling in the gaps in Gaudí's history. His deep knowledge of the scientific research method helped him to uncover many objects related to the architect and above all, 5800 unpublished documents signed by Gaudí himself. More importantly, and based on his knowledge in the anthropology research, Manuel Medarde has gathered testimonials from those who knew the architect and closely collaborated with him, providing an unprecedented document to better know the master and his working methodology. Medarde's work has actively helped to rediscover a Gaudí pioneer in his work, totally ahead of his time. An innovative creator-inventor that, beyond the label of architect and from the inimitability of his style, provides us with a legacy that can be applied today to multiple disciplines, from the ergonomic design to business management. Manuel Medarde has helped to restore preeminent Gaudí's work, such as the Palau Güell and the crypt at the Colònia Güell. All these combined with his work as a lecturer at the "Centre Internacional d'Estudis del Patrimoni Construït" at the "Escola d'Enginyers de Camins" (Technical University of Catalonia) and teachings of specialist courses at the "Museu Egipci de Barcelona". He is a co-founder of the Gaudí Research Institute, as well as the secretary of the International Committee at the Colònia Güell. Currently he is head of the research group at Gaudí's Torre de Bellesguard. It is an immense privilege to have him and his knowledge for our tour.

Transportation (optional): [The Bus Turístic BCN](#) (hop on hop off tourist bus) has offered to the assistants to the ECDO conference 15% discount (23,80€ final price) for use on the 1st of October. La Torre de Bellesguard is close to one stop along the Blue line of the Bus Turístic. More info at the email: [**ecdo.gaudi.torredebellesguard@gmail.com**](mailto:ecdo.gaudi.torredebellesguard@gmail.com).



The information was gathered at The Gaudí Research Institute and images are from Wikimedia Commons. Special thanks to Manuel Medarde for all his time and help during the organization of this event.

By M.Eugenia Delgado, PhD.