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From your Digest

**Lucas Villar** · Updated June 14

Lives in Madrid, Spain

Who colonized Spain?

Ok, get ready for the list:

- **Phoenicians**

The blue on the map

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The were seafearers, traders, fishers from the eastern Levant (Lebanon and Israel) who dominated the Mediterranean sea and had the most expensive cloth pigments until the invention of modern chemistry. Known as the Puni by the Romans. They called Spain Sphaniam (land of rabbits in Phoenician). They brought us food consevation techniques, shipbuilding techniques and according to one theory our name.

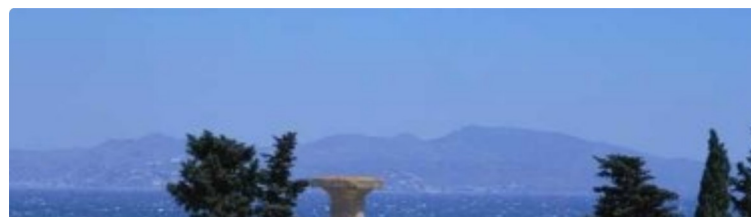
Cádiz (Gades in Phoenician) was their biggest city in Spain and it is today the oldest city in all of Europe and one of the oldest cities on the planet.





They replaced the Phoenicians as the main power in the Mediterranean and as such they colonised the peoples in the sea too. From the southernmost part of the Balkan peninsula, they settled in northeastern and southeastern Spain. They brought us their culture and the techniques to cultivate olives and wine. They called us Iberians and our peninsula Iberia because of the river Ebro (Iber in Greek), which is the river that carries the most water in Spain and apparently Iberians back then were obsessed with the river. Also they matched the Phoenicians' Sphaniam and called us Hispania meaning this time "land of the west" in Greek, referring to Spain being the westernmost territory of their world (the Mediterranean sea).

The city of **Ampurias** (Emporion in Greek) was their largest city in Spain





But a much better known Greek settlement that grew to become a large city is **Barcelona** (Barcino in Greek)

*Old **Barcino***



*Modern **Barcelona***





- Carthaginians



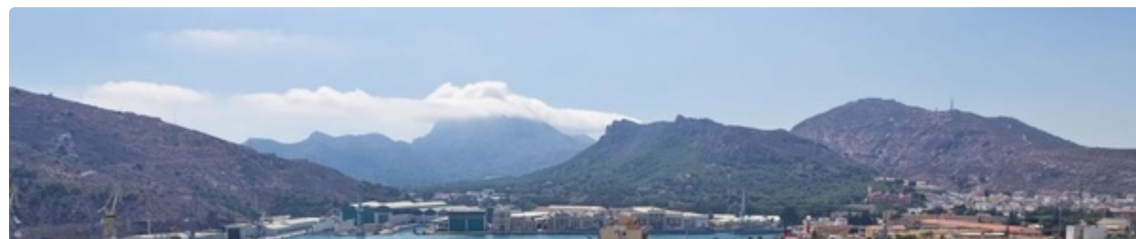
The red on the map, Carthage was the 3rd big Mediterranean power in history. When Tyro (the Phoenician capital) fell to Babylon, the Phoenicians disappeared, but their big city in the western Mediterranean called Carthage (modern Tunis) thrived; the richness and power that Carthage acquired were unrivalled in the sea. They decided

Latin) now called Cartagena in Spanish. The Carthaginian capital in Spain became a large city in the Mediterranean. They are famous for their innovations in naval warfare their harbour engineering and their usage of elephants in battle. Other cities were Akra Leuke (Alicante) and Eivissa (Ibiza).

Carthage Harbour



Old New Carthage





Modern **Cartagena**



- **Romans**

Rome after the 2nd Punic War



Hispania (Latin for Spain) became the first Roman province after the 2nd Punic War. In the 1st Punic War Rome took control of the Greek colonies in the western Mediterranean including southern Italy and Spain. Among them Saguntum near Valencia which was attacked by Carthage in the 2nd Punic War, Rome took control of all Carthaginian land in Spain during that war. Ending as in the map above.

Then Rome went on to conquer mainland Carthage and the remaining of dying Greece in the eastern Mediterranean, as well as expanding further inland in Spain.



At this point was the Golden Age of the Roman Republic. Some big Roman cities were Tarraco (Tarragona), Saguntum (Sagunto), Hispalis (Seville), Corduba (Córdoba), Toletum (Toledo), Segovia (Segovia), Caesar Augusta (Zaragoza), Emerita Ausgusta (Mérida), Complutum (Alcalá) or Legio (León). Viruually every major town in Spain was Roman, I'll just focus on a few ones, but almost all have a Roman past. **Rome is the mother culture of Spanish culture, the other colonisers left some input, but Rome left our culture and identity.** From our language, Spanish, which is nothing more than a modern form of Latin, to our diet (grain, olives, grapes, fish and their derivates), lifestyle, religion or traditions (Spanish bullfighting appeared from the iconic Roman gladiator fights after they were banned)... Spaniards adopted the Latin culture and language and kept them to this day. Even the name of the country *España* comes from Latin *Hispania* and it covers the same territory except for *Lusitania* (Portugal).

Map of Hispania



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Roman *Tarraco*



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Spanish *Tarragona*



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*Roman **Saguntum***





Spanish **Sagunto**







Spanish **Seville**

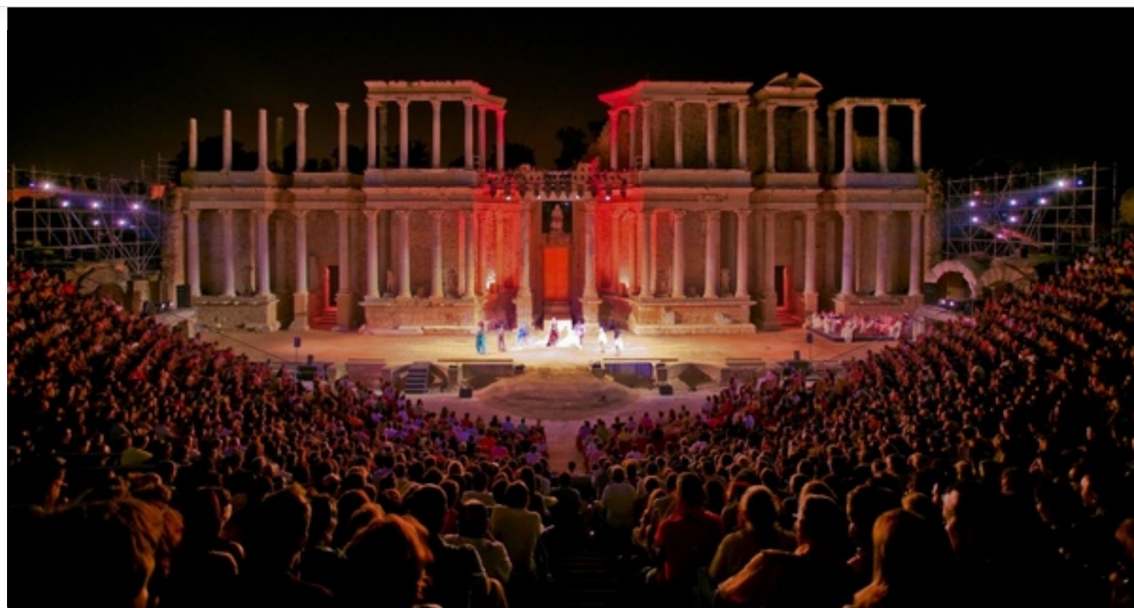




Roman ***Emerita Augusta***

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Spanish **Mérida**





*Roman **Segovia***



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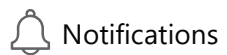


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Spanish **Segovia**





Trajan, Hadrian, Seneca, Theodosius.... All of these Roman Emperors, generals and writers were from Spain. **The degree of integration of the province of Hispania into the empire was never achieved by any other empire that has conquered the land.**

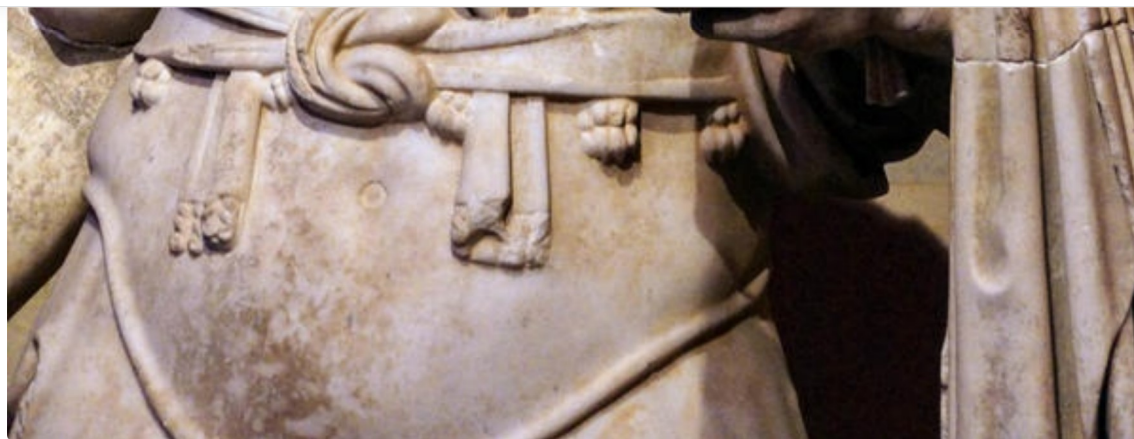
Trajan



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*Hadrian*

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Seneca





- Suebi





A Germanic people who came after the fall of Rome from southern and eastern Germany and settled in the region of Gallæcia (Galicia) and northern Lusitania (Portugal). They were eventually conquered by the Visigoths. Although they were the only ones capable of resisting the Visigoths long enough.

- **Alans**



Another Germanic tribe

- **Vandals**





They were a Germanic tribe that settled in southern Spain, but were ousted by the Alans and Visigoths to migrate to northern Africa

- **Visigoths**

The Visigoths as viewed by the Latin/Romance peoples of southern Europe





The Visigoths were a much more powerful Germanic people, they had been *fœderati* of the Romans being in charge of protecting Gaul in exchange for some power and fertile lands in it. But when Rome started collapsing and the Ostrogoths entered Italy attacking and sacking Rome ending with the assassination of the Roman emperor's Romulus Augustus' parents (he was just a boy) and forcing him to flee. The Visigoths in Gaul learnt of what their brother tribe had done and decided to take control of Gaul and later pushed south to Hispania. They expelled all the before mentioned Germanic tribes and more which had flocked to Spain to settle there their kingdom after



The Visigoths ruled southern France and Spain for a period of time, before the Franks from the Netherlands would push down on Gaul forcing the Visigoths to abandon that side of the Pyrenees and resisting in Spain. Moving the capital from Tolosa (Toulouse) in the French Pyrenees, to Toletum (Toledo) in central Spain.



Later they conquered the Suebi (light blue) and the coastal possessions of the Byzantines (dark blue). They ruled over Spain for 3 centuries as the first kingdom covering all of Spain independently. They ruled their way for a brief time, they progressively became Roman/Latin, changing language, keeping the laws, changing religion and adopting local traditions and culture. They left little legacy, especially in our language. And they were eventually conquered by the Moors.

- **Moors**





The Moors crossed to help prince Witiza in a Visigothic civil war and they stayed after defeating the army starting to conquer Spain. They established the capital in Córdoba and formed the province of Al Andalus inside the Ummayyad Caliphate. They were defeated by the Spanish in Asturias in the battle of Covadonga and by the French in the battle of Tours ending there their expansion.

They left architecture and monuments that last to this day, they brought food from the Middle East and India such as oranges or lemons which are used today in Spanish food very often and are also grown in our fields being essential to our agriculture and landscape. Also spices such as saffron and albahaca very present too in Spanish food. They also left some input in our language similar to the Visigoths.



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They eventually lost ground



Until becoming just Granada

Coat of arms of Granada





Granada was very prolific in art and architecture too

The Alhambra

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that. Nothing special. Suddenly one of the students or raises his hand and says. [\(more\)](#)



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