

EUROPEAN HISTORICAL THERMAL TOWNS ASSOCIATION - EHTTA

Created in 2009, the EHTTA is a network composed of 25 member spa towns situated in 11 European countries, including Evian in France, Baden Baden in Germany, Bath in the United Kingdom, Ourense in Spain, Acqui Terme and Montecatini Terme in Italy, the Karlovy Vary region in the Czech Republic, Budapest in Hungary and Bursa in Turkey.

The objectives of this European network consist of obtaining recognition of the innovative and cultural characteristics of the European spa towns from the European Union, with a view to developing their tourist activity in the framework of a new plan encouraging the cross-border tourism of "Destination Europe". EHTTA encourages the development and economic restructuring of thermal towns, and safeguarding their cultural heritage through the exchange of experiences and best practices on a European level.

Collectively, the member towns of EHTTA are an integral part of the Cultural Route of Historic Thermal Towns, recognised by the Council of Europe.

SOURCE PROJECT

The "Sources of Culture: the Cafés of Europe" initiative is a two-years project involving 11 partners from 6 different European countries. It is a multidisciplinary project based on the origins and the future of the "European spa-town culture", aiming to discover, through collaboration and coworking between cities, this shared European heritage that lays on spa tradition.

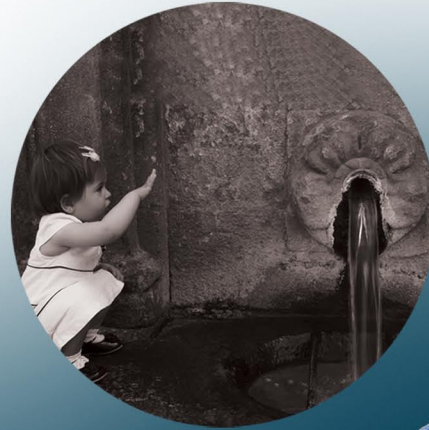
Debates organised in the framework of this project - the Cafés of Europe - will be gathered together and put into perspective in a "Thermal Blue Book", which will present contributions and scenarios for Europe in 2020. It will also encourage and improve the intercultural dialogue and exchange, through the creation of a permanent common platform from where to spread a notion of creative thermal culture in these cities.

OURENSE, CAPITAL THERMAL

For the City Council of Ourense the celebration of this second Café of Europe is an opportunity to discuss two main questions in our identity as city: our thermal tradition and our position as pilgrimage center. The cults of deity Revve Anabareago first and the Way of Saint James later turned Ourense into a pilgrimage place where travellers come seeking our healing waters as well, a fact that contributed to preserve this thermal tradition through history. A clear connection arises here, the one established between waters, pilgrimages and spirituality, summarized in the concept of "Hospitality", the main axis of this Second Café of Europe and the essence of our history as city. Segundo Café de Europa e característica principal da nosa historia como cidade.

"Water is Life on this land, our land. It takes care of us, cuddles us, looks for our wellbeing. Its vapours take us into the mystery and the divine, make our demons disappear and take us into that magic world where life becomes poetry".

Lalo Pavón, Journalist.



19th September 2013

Liceo de Ourense

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September 19th 2013

**Second Café
of Europe**

**Water, Pilgrimages,
Spirituality**



September 19th 2013

Second Café of Europe

Water, Pilgrimages, Spirituality

A history of hospitality through the sources of Europe

The Second Café of Europe "Water, Pilgrimages and Spirituality" is an event organized by Ourense City Council as part of the European project SOURCES. This initiative is developed in the framework of European Culture Programme 2007-2013 for intercultural cooperation; and is coordinated by the Route of Spa Towns in the Massif Central (France) and the European Association of Historical Thermal Towns (EHTTA), entity of which Ourense is founder member. This international meeting on new concepts around thermalism will take place the 19th of September in the Liceo of Ourense.

By holding conferences and debates, this Café aims to identify how European thermal cities have developed through history a singular and unique identity characterized by its sense of hospitality: places of peace and wellness, destinations for the rest and recovery of the travellers and pilgrims across Europe.

By exploring the past and the present, these debates will contribute to shape new proposals and ideas that will help these cities to face 21st Century new challenges. At the same time, they connect with the objective of SOURCE project: celebrating a common "European Thermal Culture" based upon the dialogue between cultures and the artistic, creative and travelling spirit. This series of new Cafés taking place in 8 different European cities, will try to reinvent this avant-garde spirit, giving these cities back their due place.

This celebration seeks also to spread awareness of the existence and work developed by the EHTTA, its members and the European Cultural Route they are part of.

PROGRAMME

16:00 - 17:45 h.

FIRST SESSION

"Water and Cults in the Ancient Times"

Water is synonym of spirituality in the Ancient Times, an element that connects the human and the divine. In Europe, water deities used to link the old indigenous beliefs with the new foreigner ones, those which came with the Roman conquerors, transforming this cult and arising new meanings. All the historical baths that are spreaded across Europe are still witnesses of this transformation and therefore, its study, conservation and divulgation becomes a challenge for these cities; in order to throw some lights on the past so it could light our present.

Introduced and moderated by Mr. José María Eguileta Franco, Ourense City Council Archaeologist.

First Part: Water Deities in Roman and Pre-Roman Hispania

- Mrs. María Cruz González Rodríguez, Professor at País Vasco University.
- Mr. Juan Carlos Olivares Pedreño, Professor at Alicante University.
- Mr. Gonzalo Matilla Séiquer, Professor at Murcia University.

Second Part: Study, Conservation and Recovery of Historic Baths

As Burgas de Ourense, Asset of Cultural Interest.- Mr. Celso Rodríguez Cao, archaeologist responsible for the excavations of As Burgas complex; and Mr. Pedro Araújo Nespereira, geologist, Professor at Vigo University.
Bath, World Heritage- Mrs. Catherine Lloyd, representative of the city of Bath in the EHTTA.

18:00- 19:00 h.

SECOND SESSION

"Bath and Pilgrimages: from the Middle Ages until today"

There are two cities in Europe that religion and history turned into pillars of the continent. Santiago de Compostela, at the Western end, is the final destination of several ways that since the Middle Ages spread all through European geography; and Rome, in the heart of Italy, connect with Canterbury through a huge diagonal known by their travellers as the "Via Francígena". Thousands of pilgrims walk these roads every year, and their travels have already become a key part of our European cultural identity. Thermal cities take also part in this history of pilgrimages, as these are the place where wanderers stop to rest their body and minds, places of peace and serenity.

Introduced and moderated by Mr. José Luis Rodríguez Cid, president of the Ourense's Association of Friends of the Silver Way

- The Ways of Santiago: Mr. Francisco Singul, historian and representative from Xacobeo S.A.
- The Vía Francígena: Mr. Massimo Tedeschi, president of the European Association of Vía Francígena and president of the ANCOT (National Association of Italian Thermal Cities).

Session will be closed by Mrs. Pilar Barraca de Ramos, representative from the Ministry of Culture, Education and Sports of Spain in the Enlarged Partial Agreement on European Cultural Routes.

19:15 - 21:00 h.

THIRD SESSION

"Thermalism for the 21st Century: New ways of dialogue and wellness"

It is said that spa industry is living now in the 21st Century its second Golden Era. In a global society which gets quicker and more and more changeable it is true that thermal cities have known how to master the big challenges of our time in order to turn water, once again, into a central element of human life. We present here examples that set the guidelines for the new paths thermal industry must follow in the future: wellness, preventive medicine and active life, environment care and relationships, intercultural dialogue, the recovery of the past through memory and heritage...

Introduced and moderated by Mrs. Teresa Pacheco, president of the Latin American Association of Thermalism and Wellness and director of the magazine Tribuna Termal

- Mr. Luis Ovejero Ovejero, Medical Director of Archena Spa (Murcia, Spain)
- Mr. Antonio Acha, Manager of Almeida de Sayago Spa (Zamora, Spain)
- Mr. Fernando Fernández-Chirat Navarro, Director of Alange Spa (Badajoz, Spain)
- Mrs. María José David, Manager of Pedras Salgadas Spa&Nature Park (Portugal)
- Mr. Tomás Ares Güimil, Medical hydrologist, president of Tesal Group
- Mr. Santiago Juárez, Director of El Molinar