

## Imperial Spain

Tuesdays, January 14 to March 17, 2020 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon  
Fairfield Senior's Centre, 80 Lothian Avenue, Etobicoke  
[www.learningunlimitedetobicoke.com](http://www.learningunlimitedetobicoke.com)

**Co-ordinator and Presenter: Carolyn Harris**

**Course Overview:** King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile transformed Spain into a world power, sponsoring Columbus' voyages to the Americas and forming alliances with other European kingdoms. This new Imperial Spain also had a dark side: the rise of the Inquisition, and the exploitation of the native peoples in the new colonies. The legacy of Imperial Spain still has a profound influence on the modern world.

**January 14: Medieval Spain:** The region that is now Spain experienced an intellectual and cultural golden age during the medieval period, shaped by the coexistence of Muslim, Jewish and Christian communities.

**January 21: Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile:** The marriage of Ferdinand and Aragon of Isabella of Castile in 1469 led to a dynastic union of much what is now Spain. "The Catholic Kings" defeated the Emirate of Granada, the last of Muslim kingdoms in the Iberian Peninsula.

**January 28: The Spanish Inquisition:** Ferdinand and Isabella rejected the medieval Spanish custom of coexistence of different religions. In 1480, Ferdinand and Isabella established The Spanish Inquisition to investigate converts to Christianity.

**February 4: The New World:** Ferdinand and Isabella and their descendants sponsored a series of expeditions to the Americas and the Pacific that resulted in Spain acquiring an overseas empire. The voyages of Columbus, Cortes and Pizarro devastated the Aztec and Inca empires in what is now Mexico and Peru.

**February 11: Spain and Europe** Ferdinand and Isabella's grandson, Emperor Charles V of the Habsburg dynasty was King Carlos 1 of Spain and the Holy Roman Emperor, placing Spain at the centre of European events.

**February 18: Art and Culture:** Spanish monarchs were cultural patrons who encouraged the development of painting, architecture, music and literature. King Philip IV was immortalized in the paintings of Diego Velasquez and Miguel de Cervantes satirized medieval chivalric culture in his innovative novel *Don Quixote*.

**February 25: The War of the Spanish Succession:** The Spanish Habsburg dynasty came to an end in 1700. France and Austria (supported by Britain) proposed their own candidates for the Spanish throne and went to war. The war transformed the dynastic union between Castile and Aragon into a permanent political union.

**March 3: War and Independence:** At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Spain, establishing his brother as a temporary monarch, and the region became embroiled in the Peninsular War. Amidst the turmoil, much of Spain's overseas empire sought independence.

**March 10: The Spanish-American War:** Spain's overseas empire was in gradual decline over the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century but in 1898, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Guam and the Philippines were still under Spanish control. The Spanish-American War marked the final end of Imperial Spain.

**March 17: The Legacy of Imperial Spain:** Spain no longer presides over an overseas empire but the global presence of the Spanish language as well as enduring cultural influences reflect the legacy of Imperial Spain.

**Committee Contact and Chair: Loretta Fines**