SUCCESS OF ‘THE WAY OF THE HOLY GRAIL’ AT THE 7TH INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC-PROFESSIONAL CONGRESS ON CULTURAL TOURISM IN CORDOBA (SPAIN)

Thursday 18 February, 2021

More than 170 researchers from 70 universities around the world will participate this year in the VII International Scientific-Professional Congress of Cultural Tourism in Cordoba (Spain), an activity that takes place from Wednesday, February 17th to Friday, February 19th in a virtual format, where various studies of the new post-coronavirus future will be present.

Link VII International Scientific-Professional Congress on Cultural Tourism:

http://www.congresointernacionalturismocultural.com/

It is worth mentioning the presence of Dr. Ana Mafé García with her talk *"Valencia, focal point of the Way of the Holy Grail, Route of Knowledge, Path of Peace"* at the table dedicated to Religious Tourism. The main objective of this conference was to highlight the Jubilee Year in the Cathedral of Valencia 2020-2021. Since 1959 there is evidence of the existence of a route traced by the Archbishopric of Valencia that runs from the Royal Pantheon Monastery of San Juan de la Peña (Huesca) in the Pyrenees, to the Cathedral of Valencia itself.

In her speech, she presented the preliminary studies she had carried out for the presentation of a global and international European project carried out through the Cultural Association The Way of the Holy Grail, with the support of the different administrations involved in the development of this route, especially those of the municipalities along the route.

This route was established on the occasion of the celebration of the 17th Centenary of the arrival of the Holy Chalice in Spain and was named the Routes of the Holy Grail.

Similarly, Mafé stressed the importance of *"The union of collaborative synergies on the part of political authorities and the social and business fabric is the only way for this plan to succeed", "Spain is facing a unique challenge due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Its regional governments must put forward economic reconstruction plans to be financed by Europe", "The return of capital invested in the Way of the Holy Grail", "A commitment to employment, the economic recovery and social development of all the municipalities that are involved with the work that the Cultural Association The Way of the Holy Grail has been carrying out for twenty years"* and concludes *"we have presented in Aragon an Integral Strategic Plan from the civil society, the same will be presented in the City Council of Valencia, the commonwealth of l'Horta Nord and in the maximum number of organisms within the Valencian Community".*

Currently the Association offers a **"Pilgrimage Credential"** so that pilgrims can obtain their diploma of Lady or Knight of the Way of the Holy Grail through the Association. The Travel Agency that officially organizes the *Camino del Santo Grial* is **Valeten Travel**. Dra. Mafé, president of the **Cultural Association The Way of the Holy Grail,** says that pilgrimage this way is a way to grow in knowledge and also to enjoy nature. It is now possible to carry out this wonderful adventure in search of the Holy Grail.

Dr. Mª Genoveva Millán Vázquez de la Torre, president of the Honorary Committee, explained that *"the aim of the congress is to improve and share knowledge, explain experiences and promote cooperation between the academic and professional worlds, which will enable collaboration contacts to be established and encourage the creation of networks between researchers and the business world on a national and international level".*

Ten universities are participating in the organisation of the 7th edition. These include the University of Guadalajara (Mexico), the National University of Southern Patagonia (Argentina) and the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) through the UNESCO Chair in Food, Culture and Development, the National University of Costa Rica, Loyola Andalucía University, the University of Córdoba, the University of Barcelona, the Michoacán University of San Nicolás de Hidalgo (Mexico), the University of Ibn Zohr (Morocco) and the National University of Hermilio Valdizán (Peru). The selected research is published in the academic journal "Journal of Tourism and Heritage Research".

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Dr. Mafé also took part in this congress as Moderator of the General Tourism Round Table with papers dealing with law, opportunities for the development of railway tourism and signage for the blind.

She has also participated in a world first research on the Nazca lines through the paper *"Archaeological Tourism in Peru: the Nazca lines as an irrigation system for mega water harvests".*

Together with Carlos Enrique Hermida García, director of the project Salvar Nazca, she presented the state-of-the-art system for the lines. For the last two years, Dr. Mafé has been coordinating the academic research of this international team.

The Cordoba Provincial Council (through the Provincial Tourist Board) and Cordoba City Council (through the Cordoba Municipal Institute of Tourism) are collaborating in this academic conference.

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