

NIMARA

Made of Toledo steel, often thought of as the finest in the sword making industry, Nimara displays many details of Spanish history and culture.

The raised designs on the hilt tell us of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. The phrase "Tanto monta, monta tanto", although difficult to translate literally, refers to the fact that the king was not higher in position than the queen. Theirs was the first kingdom in Spain to be ruled in this manner.

We also see carvings of their triumphant march into Granada, which had been in the hands of the Moors (aka Moslems, Arabs, etc.), Boabdil, king of Granada, is depicted as giving the keys of the city to them. The fall of Granada, in 1492, signaled the end of Arab reign as well as the end of the Middle Ages in Spain, the year of the invention of the printing press, and the year Columbus sailed for the Americas.

The shields on either side of the hilt are symbolic of Ferdinand and Isabella's individual kingdoms. Each brought 2 lands into their marriage; Isabella's were Leon and Castilla, while Ferdinand held Navarra and Aragon.

When Isabella died, however, her lands did not go to her husband, but rather would have been passed on to their daughter, Juana "la loca" (meaning crazy). Juana married Felipe "el hermoso" (handsome), who was a Hapsburg, son of Emperor Maximilian of the Holy Roman Empire. (Note: the Hapsburg symbol is an eagle, which we see behind Isabella's shield.) Juana and Felipe's son, Carlos, inherited the kingdom in Juana's stead.

Carlos was known as Carlos the First of Spain; however, he also inherited the Hapsburg land--which happened to be all of the Holy Roman Empire--and was known as Carlos the Fifth. He was by far the most powerful man in Spanish history (at least on paper). Feeling that it was too much, he gave away all his lands and finished his life in a monastery. (That is ironic because this is the same Carlos who had earlier in his life confronted Martin Luther in the Council of Worms.)

It is commonly believed that the flowers carved on the hilt in various places are fleur-de-lis, although what meaning this has is unknown. On the blade itself are two soldiers, one with a sword, the other with a stylized crossbow. The flowering vines around them are most likely merely decoration, and carry no known symbolism.

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