

# SEVILLE'S NEW LOOK

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There's nothing like a world Expo to rejuvenate a city, and that's exactly what's happen-

## Facts from hacks

Taxi drivers will be playing a dual role during the Barcelona Olympics. Not only will they be delivering tourists around town, they've been designated Olympic information officers. To qualify for the title, taxi drivers must successfully complete a test on the games.

ing to Seville.

You can't quite see the "new Seville" just yet, except on blueprints. But this city that Columbus called home is spending billions to become a modern and technologically efficient city for 1992.

The country is spending \$5 billion to modernize Seville's and Andalusia's transport and communications infrastructure. A high-speed rail link is under construction to join Seville to Madrid. The line is expected to be completed by 1992 and will run direct from Madrid to the Expo '92 site in only three hours.

The Madrid-Seville highway is also undergoing construction to make it easier for Europeans to drive to Expo, held



Artist's rendition of the fairgrounds for Seville's shot at world attention—Expo '92

from April 20 to Oct. 12 during the quincentenary (500 years) of Christopher Columbus' discovery of the Americas.

Driving in Seville itself will be made easier through a variety of construction projects that will see the construction of six new bridges and a motorway around the town center. No cars will be permitted on the Expo site.

Unfortunately the historic and quite beautiful Plaza de Armas train station is going to be torn down, and another modern station, Santa Justa, will be built in the southeast part of the city to replace it.

Airports in Seville, Malaga and Jerez will be enlarged and remodelled to deal with the increase in traffic. Expo organizers expect Seville's airport capacity to grow from 1,300 to 4,300 passenger an hour and the Malaga airport to double to 10 million passengers a year.

Javier de la Puerta, an Expo '92 press officer, says only eight new hotels (middle and upper bracket) are planned for Seville proper to accommodate the influx of tourists. He expects and hopes that most people coming to Expo will find accommodation outside Seville. There are now 361 hotels within a three-hour traveling radius of Seville and 615 pensions.

"We don't want to build too many hotels in Seville because we don't want to be left with a bunch of empty hotels after Expo is over. We hope that people will want to base themselves in Madrid, Malaga and the Costa del Sol and come to Seville by car, train or plane,"

de la Puerta explains.

"We're improving our road system, so it should be faster to get to Seville from Madrid and take about two hours by car from the Costa del Sol. So there won't be a need to stay overnight," says de la Puerta.

Expo organizers say between 30 and 40 million people—47.2% Spanish and 52.8% foreign—will visit Expo '92, on the island of La Cartuja. The largest number of visitors

is expected in July and August, when the temperature rises to 38C.

To shade visitors from the exhausting heat, Expo organizers have developed a ingenious reforestation plan that will decrease the temperature on the Expo site by 10 degrees. Half a million plants from five continents will be planted, and a chain of waterways will be built around the site to carry off the heat.



This 600-year-old monastery will be restored as the new Spanish Pavilion

## Barcelona hotels go boom

Barcelona is busy building hotels to accommodate the onslaught of visitors coming for the 1992 summer Olympics.

There are 17 new hotels going up near the \$1.4-billion Olympic site with another six hotels in the works.

The six hotels are expected to add 2,000 new beds. Barcelona's Hotel Association has already allocated 15,500 hotel beds—80% of the city's total hotel capacity—for the Olympics held July 25-Aug. 9.

Further accommodation will be provided when the construction of the Press Villages at Montigala and Vall d'Hebron is completed. The Olympic Village in Poble Nou will have space for 15,000 athletes.

The Olympic Committee also plans to use six ocean liners as floating hotels bringing the total number of beds to 40,000.