

The history of Spanish

Germanic Visigoth and Arabic Influences 3/6

Narrator:

The history of Spanish in about 6 minutes. Chapter 3: Germanic Visigoth and Arabic Influences or 'Do you prefer your goths visi or still?'

In the 5th century several Germanic groups invaded the peninsula before being chased off by another group – the Visigoths. Who stayed for 300 years, but didn't influence the culture and the language much, as they stuck to Roman customs.

But they did leave words, many to do with admin and war. And popularised many suffixes – az, ez, iz and oz that are found on Spanish surnames.

Around the 8th Century - a Muslim army from North Africa, landed and conquered the Visigoths settling in for centuries. Their impact on the Spanish lexicon was enormous.

In the kitchen alone they gave us sugar, oil, noodles, watermelon and alcohol. And for afters dished up around 4000 more words. Many beginning with the Arabic article 'a' or al- as a prefix - like 'al' and 'kuhl' – the classic Arabic name for alcohol.

The Iberian Peninsula didn't just absorb other languages, it also 'spread the words...' When the Sephardic Jews were expelled in 1492 they took their Spanish language to places like Turkey, the Balkans and Greece - where different varieties of Judeo-Spanish are still spoken today, which is more than you can say for Gothic.