

News Release

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For Immediate Release

Spanish Naval Vessel, *Juan Sebastián de Elcano*, to visit the Port of Galveston

Galveston, Texas...March 29, 2005...The schooner *Juan Sebastián de Elcano* will visit the Port of Galveston from April 6, 2005 through April 10, 2005. This event will be a milestone for the vessel and the city of Galveston, since it will be the first time in the 78 years of the *Juan Sebastián de Elcano*'s history and in 76 years of her training voyages that she will call at the Port of Galveston. With this visit the Spanish Navy hopes to strengthen brotherhood ties with this city whose history has deep Spanish roots. She is scheduled to be greeted and escorted into port by Galveston Historical Foundation's *Elissa* and other sailing craft. *Juan Sebastián de Elcano* is the official training ship for Spanish midshipmen. The 4-masted, top-sail schooner has square-rigged foremast consisting of 20 sails. The ship, owned and operated by the Spanish Navy, is 370 feet long and is crewed by 257 Spanish naval officers and crew including 47 cadets.

Galveston will be one of three U.S. ports visited by *Elcano*. Galveston will be the first port-of-call followed by Miami and New York.

Under the current five-year career plan for naval officers, cadets in their fourth year who have already been promoted to midshipmen go on a cruise of instruction of not less than six months in the training ship *Juan Sebastián de Elcano*. During this training cruise, midshipmen learn the foundation of their sailor's training that will accompany them throughout their careers. The training ship provides the setting in which midshipmen have their first tough and long term contact with the sea.

The building of the *Juan Sebastián de Elcano* was ordered under the Royal Decree of April 17, 1925, according to the plans and blueprints drawn up by the Echevarrieta y Larrinaga Shipyards of Cadiz. Work began on November 25th of that same year. The ship was launched on March 5, 1927, and delivered to the Navy on August 17, 1928. In 1956 and subsequently in 1978, ambitious modernizing work was carried out in the Carraca Naval Shipyards.

The hull is made of iron. There are four masts named "Blanca", "Almansa", "Asturias" and "Nautilus" after other training ships which preceded the *Elcano*.

The Elcano will be open to the public from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 7 through Saturday, April 9. After Holy Mass on Sunday, the ship will depart.

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