For a month, between March and April of 1793, two Spanish corvettes, commanded by Alessandro Malaspina and José de Bustamante y Guerra, were anchored at Sydney Cove. The Malaspina Expedition (1789–1794) was a five-year maritime scientific exploration funded by the Spanish government.
King Carlos III authorised Malaspina’s expedition, a mission aimed not only at designing a new vision of the political and economic order of the Americas, but also to carry out studies in natural history, cartography, ethnography, astronomy, hydrography and medicine, all necessary to enhance world knowledge, describing the places that they visited and adding newly discovered species to botanical and zoological inventories.

During their stay in Sydney the commanding officers, as well as members of the crew, explored the local area from Port Jackson to Parramatta. The Australian stage of their voyage generated hundreds of manuscripts, drawings and maps that describe in detail the voyage, their explorations around the Sydney region and also provide a record of progress in the settlement of Sydney only a few years after the arrival of the First Fleet.

To commemorate the 225th anniversary of this expedition the Spanish Embassy has sponsored a display featuring reproductions of significant material from a number of archives and museums in Madrid.

This event also celebrates the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and Spain.
Views of the English Colony of Sydney, 1793
BRAMBILA, Fernando (1763-1834). Quill and sepia wash. Bordered with ink. Signed. Museo Naval, Madrid


Links