

Education
First



*College Study
Tours*

SPAIN: LAND OF MANY CULTURES



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11 OR 14 DAYS

Spain

PROGRAM FEE INCLUDES:

- Round-trip airfare, bus transfers, overnight train
- 8 overnight stays in hotels with private bathrooms, 1 night couchette accommodations (plus 3 nights with extension)
- European breakfast daily
- 4 dinners (plus 1 dinner with extension)
- Full-time EF Tour Director
- Select guides and entrances to special attractions as per itinerary

OPTIONAL:

- Arabic baths
- Figueras



Flamenco dancing has a deep-rooted history in Spain, although its origins are uncertain.

A collage of cultures has shaped Spain's intriguing identity. The legacy of Romans, Visigoths, Muslims, Jews and Christians have left an indelible imprint on the country's cuisine, art, literature and traditions. Experience the cultural mosaic for yourself as you witness Spain's unique architecture, peruse timeless masterpieces at its world-class museums and stand in the shadows of its historic monuments.

Day 1 Flight

Overnight flight to Spain • Spend the night flying across the Atlantic.

Day 2 Madrid

Arrival in Madrid • Touch down in Madrid. After clearing customs, you are greeted by your EF Tour Director, who will escort you to your hotel and will remain with you throughout your stay.

Walking tour of Madrid • Travel back in time to Spain's Golden Age, when painters such as Goya and Velázquez ruled and the Royal Court reigned. Get acquainted with the center of Iberia and its biggest draw—the friendly madrileños that inhabit the cafés, tascas and flea markets that pack the city. And discover what makes Pedro Almodóvar want to immortalize the Madrid scene in his films.

Day 3 Madrid

Guided tour of Madrid • Your day begins with a panoramic tour. At the Puerta del Sol, the center of Madrid, pass through one of the nine arched gateways leading to the Plaza Mayor, the Renaissance hub of the city. This grand square has witnessed events ranging from bullfights to royal weddings to public executions. Continue to the Plaza de Oriente, Madrid's largest square, outside of the Palacio Real (Royal Palace). Next, you will explore this magnificent palace, built by Bourbon King Philip V. Once the seat of the most powerful court in the world, it was here that Spain officially joined the European Community in 1986. The palace boasts more than 2,000 rooms, including one with extravagant ceramic walls. Marvel at the splendid marble staircase, the golden Throne Room and the incredible variety of priceless frescoes and chandeliers.



Visit to the Prado • A local expert will introduce you to the world-renowned Prado, filled with works collected by the Spanish monarchy. One of the museum's most famous paintings is *Las Meninas* by Velázquez. You'll also find Goya's paired canvases *The Clothed Maja* and *The Naked Maja*, along with works by Bosch, El Greco and many others.

Day 4 Toledo • Madrid

Guided tour of Toledo • Today, take a tour of the former Spanish capital of Toledo. Notice the Christian, Muslim and Jewish influences as you tour the 12th-century Santa Maria La Blanca Synagogue. Designed to be a mosque but then used as a synagogue, it was finally converted into a church. Visit the cathedral that dominates Toledo's skyline before continuing to the Church of Santo Tomás. Here, you'll view *El Entierro del Conde de Orgaz* (*The Burial of Count Orgaz*), one of El Greco's supreme achievements.

Day 5 Seville

Transfer to Seville • Follow the Guadalquivir River to Seville—capital of Andalusia, birthplace of Velázquez and host of the 1992 World's Fair. If you're lucky enough to arrive in spring, Seville will greet you with the sweet fragrance of orange blossoms.

Day 6 Seville

Guided tour of Seville • Hispalis, as Seville was called in Roman times, rests on the banks of the Río Guadalquivir and is Spain's only river port. See the Old Tobacco Factory, setting of Bizet's opera *Carmen*, and pass the Plaza de Toros, one of Spain's preeminent bullrings. Then visit the María Luisa Park to view the beautiful mosaics of Plaza de España, built for the 1929 Ibero-American Fair. Next, walk through the geranium-laden alleys of the Barrio de Santa Cruz, an aesthetic treat you'll always remember. Top off your tour with a guided visit to the Moorish Alcázar. Built

for Pedro the Cruel in the 14th century, it is one of the purest examples of Mudéjar architecture in the world. When the Moorish Alcázar is closed (Mondays), groups will visit the Casa de Pilatos. (Please note: Some groups may visit the Archive of the Indies instead of the Alcázar. This museum, opened in 1785, boasts the largest collection of maps, journals, drawings and records of Spain's exploration of the New World—including the writings of Columbus, who set sail on his famous adventure from Seville.)

Day 7 Granada

Transfer to Granada via Córdoba • Travel to Córdoba, northeast of Seville. The former Moorish capital was once a draw for intellectuals and known as one of Europe's cultural centers. Today, see the influence of the Moorish, Roman, Jewish and Christian cultures that flourished here at different times in the city's history. Continue to Granada. Located at the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, it was the last bastion of Moorish rule in Spain.

Optional Arabic baths • Opt to bask in the unique experience of thermal baths at the Baños Arabes in Granada. There are three rooms to relax in: the hot water room, warm water room and cold water room. Afterwards, enjoy a 15-minute massage.

Day 8 Granada

Guided tour of Granada • Recall both the *Arabian Nights* and the works of Washington Irving as you tour Spain's most celebrated building: Granada's 14th-century Alhambra. See the exotic mosaics and richly ornamented courtyards of the country's last Moorish stronghold. Here, Christopher Columbus discussed with the king his plans for sailing to India. Then walk in the footsteps of sultans as you tour the Generalife, a 14th-century palace surrounded by magnificent rose gardens, where they often spent their summers.

Night train to Barcelona • Board your overnight train to Barcelona.

Day 9 Barcelona

Arrival in Barcelona • Arrive in Barcelona, Spain's second-largest city and the capital of Cataluña. Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand V received Columbus in Barcelona upon his return from the Americas in 1493. Barcelona played a prominent role in the overthrow of Spain's monarchy in 1931, and was also the last city in Spain to surrender to Franco in 1939.

Guided sightseeing of Barcelona • Your guided tour takes you past the controversial and still unfinished La Sagrada Família (the Church of the Holy Family), where you will make a photo stop. This masterpiece of twisting spires and colorful mosaics was designed by Gaudí, who estimated it would take 200 years to complete. You will also see some of Gaudí's other works during our panoramic bus tour of Paseo de Gracia, one of Spain's most cosmopolitan streets. Check out Plaza de Catalunya and Plaza de España, a bustling six-street intersection that boasts the Magic Fountain of Montjuïc, a fountain that puts on a fabulous show of water, lights and music on the weekends. Then enjoy a marvelous harbor view from atop Montjuïc Hill, where much of the 1992 Olympics took place. Here, you will see the former stadium and the Olympic Rings. Continue to the Plaza de Colón, a square built in honor of Christopher Columbus ("Columbus" is *Colón* in Spanish). Finish your tour in the 14th-century Barrio Gótico, the oldest surviving part of the city, and home to the stunning Barcelona Cathedral, built in the Mediterranean Gothic style.

Day 10 Barcelona

Optional excursion to Figueras • Join an exciting half-day optional excursion to Figueras, a Catalan city on the exquisite Costa Brava. You'll visit a one-of-a-kind theater museum dedicated to the surrealist world of renowned Spanish painter Salvador Dalí. This museum contains the broadest range of Dalí's works and offers a unique experience to step into the world of the artist.

Day 11 Home

Return home • Your tour director assists with the transfer to the airport, where you'll check in for your return flight home.

EXTENSION

Day 11 Barcelona • Bilbao

Extension to Bilbao • Alternatively, your group can extend its stay by three days.

Transfer to Bilbao • Journey to the heart of the Basque Country (or Euskadi, as the natives call it) to Bilbao, a city nestled at the foot of the Pyrenees. Tonight, savor a traditional pintxos dinner, which is the Basque region's form of tapas, small appetizer-like plates featuring a wide array of meat, vegetables, bread and cheese.

Day 12 Bilbao

Guided sightseeing of Bilbao • Journey to the heart of the Basque Country (or Euskadi, as the natives call it). Your sightseeing begins with a walk through Bilbao, a city nestled at the foot of the Pyrenees. Stroll through the rustic streets of the casco viejo (old town) to the Catedral Basílica de Santiago, Bilbao's Gothic Cathedral. You may even have time for some churros y chocolate (fried pastries and hot chocolate, a Spanish favorite) at a local café.

Visit the Guggenheim Museum • Visit Bilbao's Guggenheim Museum of modern and contemporary art. Designed by American Frank Gehry, the building is an internationally renowned architectural masterpiece. Its fanciful walls of titanium, limestone and glass surround a vast collection of 20th-century art, including works by Andy Warhol and Jackson Pollock.

Day 13 Bilbao

Excursion to San Sebastián • Enjoy free time today to explore San Sebastián. Maybe you will relax on one of the beautiful beaches or indulge in a small meal (locals eat up to six meals a day) at one of the many restaurants and cafés. Rumor has it that San Sebastián has more restaurants and bars per person than anywhere else in the world!

Day 14 Home

Return home • Your tour director assists with the transfer to the airport, where you'll check in for your return flight home.

For complete financial and registration details, please refer to the Booking Conditions.

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Itinerary subject to change.

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