



GRAND TOUR OF SPAIN

 Educational
Tours

 Discover the Global Classroom

17 DAYS

Grand Tour of Spain

Spain



Number of overnight stays in parentheses. This tour may also be reversed.



Some compare the art of flamenco dance to the artistry of *toreros*, Spanish bullfighters, who engage in a sort of dance with the bull.

Program Fee includes:

- Round-trip airfare
- 15 overnight stays in hotels with private bathrooms
- Complete European breakfast and dinner daily
- Full-time bilingual EF Tour Director
- 6 sightseeing tours led by licensed local guides: Madrid • Burgos • San Sebastián • Barcelona Granada • Seville
- 2 sightseeing tours led by your tour director: Pamplona • Valencia
- 1 EF walking tour: Seville
- 1 EF orientation tour: Madrid
- 13 visits to special attractions: Prado • Royal Palace • Santo Domingo de Silos Burgos Cathedral • Guggenheim Museum Burgos Cartuja de Miraflores Monastery Monte Igueldo • Parque Guell • Alhambra Seville Alcazár • Seville Cathedral Real Maestranza bullring • Mezquita

OPTIONAL:

- Montserrat
- Morocco
- Seville Flamenco Evening
- El Escorial and Segovia

Day 1 Flight

Overnight flight to Spain • Relax as you fly through the night across the Atlantic.

Day 2 Madrid

Arrival in Madrid • Touch down in Madrid. At 2,100 feet, this is Europe's highest capital. After clearing customs, you are greeted by your bilingual EF Tour Director, who will remain with you throughout your stay.

Madrid orientation tour • Your tour director shows you 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 *madriñeños* who 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.

Visit to the Prado • Visit 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 3 Madrid

Guided sightseeing of Madrid • Your sightseeing adventure begins with a panoramic tour of Spain's capital city. 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.

Day 4 Madrid • Burgos

Transfer via Santo Domingo de Silos • Journey through the rolling hills of the peaceful Castilian countryside to Santo Domingo de Silos, a Benedictine monastery whose role in Spanish history began when one of its monks was the first person to write in Spanish (before that, only Latin was used as Spain's written language). At the heart of the monastery, you'll see a stunning Romanesque cloister adorned with a parade of sculpted forest creatures. Listen for the strains of Santo Domingo de Silos' world-famous monks' choir as you stroll amidst the grounds.

Arrival in Burgos • Continue on to Burgos, a town renowned for its connections with El Cid (whose name means "the lord" in Arabic). This legendary leader, who spent most of his life in Burgos (and was ultimately buried here), freed Valencia from the Moors in the 11th century.



Learn before you go
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Guided sightseeing of Burgos • As you pass by the town's medieval architecture, try to imagine the pilgrims who traversed Burgos on their way to Santiago during the Middle Ages. The Arco de Santa María, Burgos's last surviving medieval gate, once ushered visitors through the city's walls. Today, it is adorned with a statue of El Cid as well as a statue of Emperador Karl V. Ferdinand and Isabella welcomed Columbus back to Spain—after his second journey to the New World—at the 15th-century Casa del Cordón.

Visit to the cathedral of Burgos • Enjoy a visit to the cathedral of Burgos, the town's premier landmark. This Gothic structure with its stone spires dates back to the 13th century. The cathedral houses the tomb of El Cid as well as a painting of Mary Magdalene by Leonardo da Vinci.

Visit to the Cartuja de Miraflores • You'll also stop at the Cartuja de Miraflores, a Carthusian monastery where King Juan II of Castile, Queen Isabel of Portugal, and their son, Don Alfonso, are entombed. It was Don Alfonso's early death that allowed his sister Isabella to ascend to the throne and become a key financier of the Age of Exploration.

Day 5 Burgos • Bilbao

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.

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 6 San Sebastián

Guided excursion to San Sebastián • From the top of Monte Igueldo, take in the beautiful scenery of San Sebastián, a town sandwiched between the mountains and the sea. Stroll down Playa de la Concha and through the town's old quarter, where Isabel II spent her vacations. Napoleon III and Bismarck both spent time in San Sebastián as well. While in the Old Town, look for numbers on the balconies above—these used to be ringside seats for bullfights.

(Please note: Depending on weather conditions, groups may visit Monte Urgull instead of Monte Igueldo for views of San Sebastián.)

Day 7 San Sebastián • Barcelona

Tour director-led sightseeing of Pamplona • Travel through Pamplona, a town best known for its annual Fiesta de San Fermín, and especially its highlight, the running of the bulls. This dangerous but exciting tradition is said to have started in the 13th century as a way to move the animals through the town to be sold at the market. Ernest Hemingway set his novel *The Sun Also Rises* amid the bullfights of Pamplona.

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.

Day 8 Barcelona

Guided sightseeing of Barcelona • Your guided tour takes you past the controversial and still-unfinished La Sagrada Familia (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 España, a bustling six-street intersection that boasts the Magic Fountain of Montjuic, 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 Colon, a square built in honor of Christopher Columbus ("Columbus" is *Colon* 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.

Visit to Parque Guell • You'll also visit the Parque Guell, a World Heritage Site designed by Antoni Gaudí. The beautifully landscaped park is decorated with playful Modernist mosaics. Visit the Room of a Hundred Columns, a covered market with 84 pillars, and see the Casa-Museu, where Gaudí lived from 1906 to 1926.

Optional guided excursion to Montserrat • Opt to journey northwest to the picturesque town of Montserrat, which inspired the composer Richard Wagner as he wrote *Parsifal*. Its rugged mountain setting provides a dramatic backdrop for a 9th-century monastery whose basilica houses the Black Virgin of Montserrat.

Day 9 Barcelona • Valencia

Tour director-led sightseeing of Valencia • Your tour director acquaints you with Spain's third-largest city. Valencia is known for its broad boulevards, bell towers and colorful fiestas. According to legend, the town's cathedral became the home of the Holy Grail in the 15th century.

Day 10 Valencia • Granada

Transfer to Granada • Arrive in Granada. Located at the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, it was the last bastion of Moorish rule in Spain.

Day 11 Granada • Costa del Sol

Guided sightseeing of Granada • 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. (Please note: Because of the extreme popularity of the Alhambra, guided visits of the interior cannot be guaranteed during peak seasons.)

Transfer to the Costa del Sol • Travel to the Costa del Sol.

La Sagrada Familia is an icon of Barcelona.



Day 12 Costa del Sol

Optional excursion to Morocco • Join our full-day optional excursion to Morocco. Ferry across the Strait of Gibraltar and enter a world of mosques, camels, snake charmers and bustling markets. You'll travel to Tetouan, a serene North African town whose culture and architecture reflect the area's Moorish past. See the Andalusian and Islamic-influenced architecture, as a local guide leads you through the Medina. You'll also hear presentations at a carpet bazaar and a local spice shop.

Day 13 Costa del Sol • Seville

Transfer to Seville • Arrive in 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.

Optional Flamenco Evening • To better understand the soul of Spain, choose to attend an optional flamenco performance. Born of Indian, Moorish, Arabian and gypsy influences, flamenco dance is a passionate display of intricate heelwork and clapping, accompanied by songs and guitar.

Day 14 Seville

Guided sightseeing of Seville • Hispalis, as Seville was called in Roman times, is situated 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 Maria Louisa Park to view the beautiful mosaics of Plaza de España, built for the 1929 Ibero-American Fair. Next,

walk through the twisting alleys of the Barrio de Santa Cruz, Seville's old Jewish Quarter. The whitewashed houses with sand-colored trim are typical of Sevillian-style architecture, and many are still among Seville's most desirable homes. 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. On Mondays, when the Moorish Alcázar is closed, groups will visit the Casa de Pilatos, an early Andalusian palace with lovely gardens.

Guided visit to Seville's Cathedral • Columbus landed in Seville upon returning from his first voyage in 1493. Pay tribute at his grave inside the city's magnificent Gothic cathedral, the third largest in the world. Then climb the cathedral's Giralda Tower for a spectacular view of the city below.

EF walking tour of Seville • Our EF walking tour begins at the base of the Giralda Tower, Seville's best-known symbol. Make your way toward the 12th-century Torre del Oro, built to defend the river entrance to Seville. Then head for the Plaza de Toros.

Day 15 Seville • Madrid

Visit to the Mezquita in Córdoba • On your way back to Madrid, stop in Córdoba and visit the 8th-century Mezquita, formerly the largest mosque west of Mecca. Córdoba was once a sacred Muslim city and one of the world's great centers of learning. At its height, it was home to 700 mosques, 900 public baths and 70 libraries.

Transfer via Puerto Lápice • Travel through La Mancha, the region in which Cervantes' Don Quixote chased windmills. Stop in pic-

turesque Puerto Lápice, where travelers in centuries past found sustenance as they fed and watered their horses.

Arrival in Madrid • Return to Madrid.

Day 16 Madrid

Optional El Escorial and Segovia • Opt to journey into the Castilian countryside. First stop is El Escorial, known to Spaniards as "the eighth wonder of the world." In this royal city created by Philip II, see the king's deathbed and the tombs of the majority of past kings and queens of Spain. This enormous Renaissance palace boasts 16 courtyards, 2,673 windows, 1,250 doors, 86 staircases and 88 fountains. Then we proceed to the beautiful medieval city of Segovia, where Isabella was declared queen in 1474. Tour the 14th-century Alcázar fortress, where Christopher Columbus made out his will. See, too, the town's golden cathedral and Roman aqueduct. Dating from the 1st century, it was used until 1983.

Free time in Madrid • Alternatively, you'll have free time to become better acquainted with Madrid on your own. You might wish to visit museums, view the city's many monuments and churches, walk through outdoor plazas or sample tapas at a café.

Day 17 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.