

Grand Tour of Spain & Portugal



TRAVEL WITH ME PRIVATE

Join our private tour to Spain & Portugal, especially designed for Travel with Me Solo Travellers. More solo rooms to ensure your own space while still sharing this incredible experience with other, like minded, solo travellers

Price from \$8390 pp Twin Share and from \$10500 Solo/ Flights are not included

18 Days/17 Nights
10 Sept to 27 Sept 2024

Inclusions

- Private Travel with Me Journey
- Fully escorted by English speaking National Guide
- Meals and Culinary activities where indicated
- Touring and entrance fees where listed
- Glass of wine with all included dinners
- Price based on 4 star hotels
- Deposit of \$800 required in 7 days
- Finals due 10 June 2024
- Price will be adjusted in line with Euro at time of final payment

Price and Itinerary are subject to change at any time



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ITINERARY

Day 1: 10 Sept - Barcelona

Arrival to Barcelona airport. Individual transfers to the hotel (Own Cost). Welcome dinner at a waterfront restaurant tonight!

 *Hotel Catalonia Barcelona Plaza or similar (D)*



Day 2 - 11 Sept - Barcelona

After breakfast begin a guided tour of Barcelona which includes Barcelona's most important artistic sights: Gaudi's famous buildings Casa Batlló, Casa Milá, the Cathedral Sagrada Familia (entrance fee to the cathedral included) and Guell Park, declared an artistic monument and mankind's heritage by the UNESCO. We pass by the Barcelona's Monumental Bull Ring and the city park La Ciutadella. Around midday free for lunch. In the afternoon enjoy a tapas and wine tasting tour in our favorite neighborhood of El Born: you will visit 4 spots where you indulge in over 10 dishes!

Evening free for strolling around on your own.

 *Hotel Catalonia Barcelona Plaza or similar (B)*

Day 3 - 12 Sept: Barcelona

Breakfast in hotel. This morning continuation of the city tour featuring Plaza Catalunya, Vía Laietana, the Cathedral, the Gothic Quarter and Plaza Sant Jaume. Continue to the Vila Olímpica and the Port Olímpic, pass the Montjuic Mountain, and see the harbour. Then, enjoy a Ham and Wine tasting tour! You will start the tour visiting one of our famous Food Markets in Barcelona. There you will see the authentic little stands specialized in selling these cured meats made of Iberian pig. It is always fun to feel like a local doing the shopping in this colourful and lively markets. Afterwards you will head for a wine shop where you can sit down and taste and chat and compare 4 different types of ham matching them with 4 different types of Catalan wines (two cavas and two wines) to see what matches the best or which one each of you like the most.

Evening free for strolling around on your own.

 *Hotel Catalonia Barcelona Plaza or similar (B)*

Day 4 - 13 Sept: Barcelona to Valencia

Breakfast in the hotel. Departure to Valencia. Upon arrival, afternoon guided tour of Valencia, one of the most lively Mediterranean cities, known for its numerous gardens. Tour of the old part of the town includes the Cathedral with a bell tower of 8 angels – the symbol of the town, Puerta del Real, Puerta de la Trinidad, Puerta de las Serranos and a walk through the lively streets of Barrio de Carmen.

At the end of the tour, get ready for your traditional Valencian paella cooking class! You will prepare your own typical Valencian paella end then, of course, taste it!

 *Hotel Catalonia Excelsior or similar (B/D)*



Day 5 - 14 Sept: Valencia to Granada

After breakfast departure to Granada, passing by a famous tourist centre Alicante and the town Murcia. Of all Spain's mainland provincial capitals, Alicante (Valenciano: Alacant) is the most influenced by tourism, thanks to the nearby airport and resorts. Nevertheless it is a dynamic, attractive Spanish city with a castle, old quarter and long waterfront.

Murcia is a sizeable but laid-back provincial capital with a handful of interesting sights and a pleasant, strollable centre. Like Valencia, it is famous for its huerta, a surrounding zone of market gardens dating back to Moorish times, which supply the city's restaurants with excellent fresh produce and drive a thriving tapas scene. Arrival to Granada in the evening.

Dinner and overnight Granada.

 *Hotel Catalonia Granada or similar (B/D)*



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Day 6: 15 Sept: Granada

After breakfast start the guided tour of Granada, one of the most charming cities in Spain with its unique architecture, a mixture of Moorish, Muslim and Catholic art. You shall visit the famous Alhambra Palace (entrance included) and the amazing gardens of Generalife (entrance included). Walk through the old part of the city and visit of the Royal Chapel (entrance included), where King Ferdinand and Queen Elisabeth are buried. Free afternoon and evening in Granada.

 *Hotel Catalonia Granada or similar (B)*

Day 7: 16 Sept: Granada - Cordoba - Seville

After breakfast transfer to Cordoba and upon arrival enjoy a guided tour of Cordoba. You will be able to visit Mezquita de Cordoba, a Roman Catholic Cathedral and former Mosque. Under the rule of Islam, it was built as the second-largest mosque in the world, and is perhaps the most accomplished monument of the Umayyad dynasty of Cordoba. After the Spanish Reconquista it was transformed into a church, and some of the Islamic columns and arches were replaced by a basilica in early Baroque style. After visit you will be able to walk through the streets of barrio de la Judería, known for its interesting interior patios. After visit free time for personal activities and lunch. In the afternoon way to Sevilla and overnight.

 *Hotel Catalonia Santa Justa or similar (B)*

Day 8: 17 Sept: Sevilla

After breakfast begin a guided tour of Seville. You will visit the two most important highlights of central Seville: the Cathedral of Santa María (entrance included), biggest in Spain and place where is buried Christopher Columbus, and the Royal Alcazar (entrance included), Arabic palace from the 14th Century and nowadays residence of the Spanish kings, to end with a nice walk through the historical Jewish section called Santa Cruz. In the evening Tapas dinner & Flamenco show.

 *Hotel Catalonia Santa Justa or similar (B/D)*



Day 9 - 18 Sept: Sevilla - Gibraltar - Sevilla

This morning depart Sevilla to Gibraltar, where you will enjoy a guided tour. It starts at the Pillar of Hercules, from where it will be possible to see the magnificent Straits of Gibraltar. So-called because the Greeks and Romans believed Hercules held up the heavens with the Rock of Gibraltar and Jebel Musa, it is located at the entrance to the Gibraltar nature reserve.

From there your tour will take you to St. Michael's Cave, a unique natural formation used for entertainment purposes over the centuries. Full of impressive stalactites and stalagmites but with easy access, it is one of the highlights of Tours in Gibraltar.

Complete the ascent to the Top of the Rock for your next stop. Here you will be able to go on a Skywalk if you dare before seeing the monkeys. The Barbary macaques, that are normally quite friendly unless cornered, are the only free-ranging primates in Europe.

Finish off at the Great Siege Tunnels, one of the greatest engineering feats of the 18th Century. Built under a four-year long siege into solid limestone rock, they were designed to fire upon the enemy lines that were trying to advance on Gibraltar.

Return to Sevilla in the evening, dinner and overnight.

 *Hotel Catalonia Santa Justa or similar (B/D)*

Day 10: 19 Sept: Sevilla - Evora - Lisbon

After breakfast depart direction Lisbon. En route stop in Évora, a place which is classified as World Heritage by UNESCO. This city accomplishes a great harmony of all époques that marked the prestigious history of Évora. On the Giraldo Square, from the arcades you will have a great perspective; you'll notice the right architectural proportion and balance of the city. This city with six kilometres of ramparts can be visited by foot: the historical quarter, with the roman and gothic cathedral, the Roman Temple, Saint Francis church and the Bone Chapel. From Evora proceed to Lisbon. Dinner and overnight in Lisbon.

 *Hotel Turim or similar (B/D)*



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Day 11: 20 Sept: Excursion to Cascais - Cabo de Roca - Sintra - Lisbon

After breakfast begin a guided tour of Lisbon. We start with a panoramic tour that will take us through the most historical and traditional points of the city, such as the Park Edward VII, Liberty Avenue, Restauration Square, Rossio Square, the Downtown (rebuilt after the earthquake of 1755) and Commerce Square. Afterwards we continue to Belém, that is known as the “Discoveries Quarter” – it was from here that the caravels set sail to their trips to South America and to the Orient. First we stop at the Tower of Belém (outside visit) – built in Manueline style on the north bank of the River Tagus for the defence purposes of the city – and afterwards we make a photo stop at the Monument to the Discoveries, that celebrates the Portuguese discoveries and specially Henry the Navigator. We continue by visiting the Jeronimus Monastery (entrance included), built in the 16th century in Manueline style. This monument celebrates the power of King Manuel I and the magnificence of the empire. Proceed to Alfama, the quarter where the city was born.

In the afternoon begin the excursion: travel to Estoril for panoramic view of its gardens and Casino. On to Cascais, where we stop for a beautiful view of the fishing port. Due to its strategic position Cascais became a look-out for Lisbon during the age of the Discoveries. It became very famous at the end of the 19th century, when it was chosen as a summer residence by the Portuguese Royal Family. From Cascais we drive along the coastline towards Cabo da Roca, the westernmost point in Continental Europe with wonderful views over the Atlantic and with a unique flora. Continue to Sintra, a beautiful town situated on the green slopes of a mountain range. This town used to be the residence of the Portuguese royal family during the middle ages and it was considered World Heritage by UNESCO. In Sintra you will have an opportunity to taste the local cheese cake – queijadas, and visit the impressive Sintra Palace (entrance included). From Sintra return to Lisbon. In the evening Fado dinner.

 *Hotel Turim or similar (B/D)*

Day 12: 21 Sept: Lisbon - Coimbra - Porto

After breakfast we depart North direction Coimbra. The city of Coimbra is divided into two: the baixa (lower town) by the river is the main commercial centre and alta (upper town) is the older part of the city where the university and many of Coimbra’s main attractions are located. Meet your local guide for a tour of Coimbra, a charming town with an ancient and traditional University, where we mingle in the atmosphere of students. Inhabited by Romans and Arabs, it was once the capital of Portugal, before Lisbon took its place. During the tour we visit the University & Library (entrance included), the first to exist in Portugal, since the XIII century and one of the most important universities in Europe: see the Library, a masterpiece of gilt wood-work and its courtyard from where we have another nice view over Mondego river.

In the afternoon continue onto Porto and check in the hotel. Dinner and overnight Porto.

 *Hotel Catalonia Porto or similar (B/D)*

Day 13: 22 Sept: Porto

After breakfast begin your guided visit of Porto’s most attractive areas such as the Ribeira quarter, St. Francisco Church (entrance included), the Stock Exchange (entrance included), and the one of the Porto’s wine cellars to enjoy the tasting of Porto wine. Continue with enjoyable 1 hour cruise on the Douro River (included).

 *Hotel Catalonia Porto or similar (B)*

Day 14 - 23 Sept: Porto

Full day at leisure. Possibility for the optional excursion along the Douro valley.

 *Hotel Catalonia Porto or similar (B)*



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Day 15: 24 Sept: Porto - Salamanca

After breakfast departure to Salamanca. an ancient city famous for its university founded by Alfonso IX in the early 1200's. All the buildings in the center of town, even the new ones, are made of the stone from Villamayor, which contains a high concentration of iron making possible very filigree works. Together with its characteristic golden color gives strong personality to all the town. Our panoramic tour features the highlights such as Casa de las Conchas, the Roman Bridge, Plaza Mayor, Old and New Cathedral and the University Quarter with its famous Salamanca University. The reminder of the day is free to stroll around on your own.

 *Hotel Catalonia Plaza Mayor or similar (B)*

Day 16: 25 Sept: Salamanca - Avila - Segovia - Madrid

Early departure toward Avila. Sta. Teresa de Jesús, a great mystic woman of the Catholic Church, was born in the city of Avila, which conserves the most ancient and complete fortified complex in Spain (XI century). Its 2500 m wall and its 90 fortified towers surround the old city, which houses great part of its monumental treasure including a large number of Romanesque style churches, gothic palaces and a fortified cathedral of the XII century. After orientation tour of Avila proceed to Segovia. The Roman Empire left in Segovia the Aqueduct, which is 16 km long. It was the residence of some of the kings of Castilla and preserves one of the most important medieval groups of buildings in Spain. The cathedral is considered "the Lady of the Cathedrals" thanks to its elegance, and the Alcazar is the most spectacular castle in the country. After orientation tour of Segovia we proceed to the final destination of the day, Madrid.

 *Hotel Catalonia Plaza Mayor or similar (B)*

Day 17: 26 Sept: Madrid

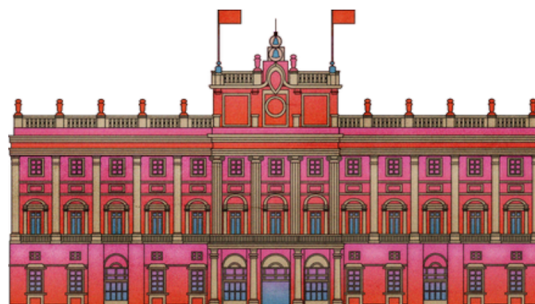
Breakfast. Start a guided HD s/s tour of Madrid (4 hrs), a multi-faced city, with its Arab-fortress which origins to the court days during the reign of Philip II and that of Charles III, at which period some important building schemes were undertaken and, finally, present day Madrid, one of the most important European capitals. We'll drive past such well-known avenues as those of Gran Vía and Castellana, famous squares such as the Plaza de España, Oriente, Mayor, Puerta del Sol, Atocha, Neptuno, Cibeles, Puerta de Alcalá, Colón and Plaza de Castilla, quarters of major historical relevance such as that of the Austrias, the Borbouns and Salamanca, the Oeste and Retiro parks, commercial and financial areas Coliseums such as the Bullring, the Santiago Bernabeu soccer stadium, University Campous, etc. Time permitting we shall visit also the Basilica San Francisco. The afternoon is at leisure. Farewell dinner at the local restaurant (walking distance, without the coach transfer).

 *Hotel Catalonia Plaza Mayor or similar (B/D)*

Day 18 - 27 Sept: Depart Madrid

Breakfast. Transfer to Madrid airport for your home bound flight.

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