

# ELEGANCE, CULTURE AND RECONQUISTA IN SPAIN

13 days from Madrid to Santiago de Compostela, Oviedo, Bilbao, Pamplona, and Barcelona

## Vacation Highlights:

- ◆ Arrival transfer from Madrid airport to the hotel
- ◆ 13 day/12-night guided tour featuring:
  - Centrally located first class hotels:
    - 3 nights in Madrid
    - 2 nights in Santiago de Compostela
    - 2 nights in Oviedo
    - 2 nights in Bilbao
    - 1 night in Pamplona
    - 3 nights in Barcelona
  - Buffet breakfast daily
  - A welcome reception in Madrid (heavy hors d'oeuvres, a glass of wine, beer or soft drink)
  - A dinner in Santiago de Compostela (coffee or tea included)
  - A dinner in Pamplona
  - A farewell dinner in Barcelona (coffee or tea included)
- ◆ Hotel taxes and service charges
- ◆ Touring by modern air-conditioned motor-coach
- ◆ Professional English-speaking tour director
- ◆ Sightseeing tours with licensed local guides
- ◆ Admission included where indicated in bold letters
- ◆ Luggage handling at the hotels
- ◆ Whisper technology enhanced touring
- ◆ Departure transfer from Barcelona to Barcelona airport

## Tour spotlights:

- ◆ Madrid: grand open squares, late dinners
- ◆ Toledo, crafts, marzipan, captivating monuments
- ◆ Sandstone architecture, prolific university and the Plaza Mayor in Salamanca
- ◆ Santiago de Compostela, a major pilgrim destination
- ◆ Altamira caves, prehistoric art
- ◆ Bilbao, Frank Gehry's designed Guggenheim museum
- ◆ Pamplona, legendary "Running of the Bulls" festival, gothic style churches
- ◆ Barcelona, fantastical Sagrada Família, modernist landmarks by Gaudi

## Special features:

- ◆ Seafood dinner with Albariño wine
- ◆ Tasting of pintxos (local tapas)

## Hotels:

- ◆ Madrid: Santos Agumar (F) or similar
- ◆ Santiago de Compostela: Tryp Santiago (F) or similar
- ◆ Oviedo: Gran Hotel España (F) or similar
- ◆ Bilbao: Ercilla (F) or similar

- ◆ Pamplona: Albret (F) or similar
- ◆ Barcelona: EXE Laietana Palace (F) or similar

## Itinerary:

### Day 1, Arrive in Madrid, Sunday

You will be met and transferred to your hotel. The day is at leisure to begin exploring. Later, join your fellow travelers and your tour director for a welcome reception. **(WR)**

### Day 2, in Madrid, Monday

We begin with a guided half-day city tour of Madrid. Our drive takes us through the Gran Vía and the Paseo de Castellana, past the Plaza de España, Plaza de Oriente, Plaza Mayor, Puerta del Sol, Atocha Station, the fountain of Neptune, Cibeles fountain, the Bullring, the Santiago Bernabeu soccer stadium, and many more. The afternoon is at leisure. **(B)**

**Optional tour: Prado Museum**

### Day 3, in Madrid: Excursion to Toledo, Tuesday

We visit Toledo, a city with a wealth of monuments. It is known as the "city of the three cultures", because Christians, Arabs and Jews lived here together for centuries. During our guided tour we visit the **Santo Tome Church** and the **Synagogue of Santa María**. From Toledo we return to Madrid where the afternoon is at leisure. **(B)**

**Optional tour: Flamenco show with dinner**

### Day 4, to Santiago de Compostela, Wednesday

We Depart for Santiago de Compostela. On the way, we stop in Salamanca, an ancient city famous for its university founded by Alfonso IX in the early 1200's. There is time for lunch on your own and thereafter, we continue to Santiago de Compostela along the Camino. Many pilgrims follow this ancient route also known as the Way of St. James. In Santiago de Compostela, the evening is at leisure. **(B)**

### Day 5, in Santiago de Compostela, Thursday

Santiago de Compostela's center is called "Casco Histórico" (old town), an area once surrounded by walls in the 11th-century. We visit the **Cathedral** and the **Cathedral museum**, and view the tomb of St James the Great. In the afternoon we visit Cap Finisterre where pilgrims ceremoniously burn their boots. The day finishes with an early seafood dinner accompanied by Albariño wine. **(B, D)**

### Day 6, to Oviedo, Friday

After breakfast we head to North Galicia. Our scenic drive takes us past the Cabo Ortegal and the Asturian coast to Oviedo. **(B)**

### Day 7, in Oviedo, Saturday



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A half-day guided city tour of Oviedo takes us to the **Cathedral**, the Palacio de Valdecarzana, the ruins of the San Tirso Church, and the Porlier Plaza which is flanked by the El Conde de Toreno and Camposagrado Palaces. The afternoon is at leisure. **(B)**

**Optional tour: Visit of the cider house with dinner**

### Day 8, to Bilbao, Sunday

After breakfast we continue our journey towards Bilbao. On the way, we stop in Santillana del Mar, one of the North Coast's most picturesque villages. Its architecture dates to the Middle Ages. In its vicinity we visit the famous **Altamira Caves** where prehistoric art is well preserved. After our visit, we proceed to Santander where we have free time for lunch on your own. From there, we continue to Bilbao where we have a **tasting of local tapas called pintxos. (B)**

### Day 9, in Bilbao, Monday

On our visit of Bilbao, we see the vibrant old town with many shops, squares and typical Basque tavernas. We enter the **Guggenheim Museum**, an architectural masterpiece designed by Frank Gehry. The collection includes large-scale and site-specific art by such contemporary artist as Jeff Koons and Willem de Kooning. The remainder of the day is free. **(B)**

**Optional tour: Visit of the Basque coast**

### Day 10, to Pamplona, Tuesday

After breakfast, we depart for San Sebastian. En route, we visit Getaria, a charming Basque coastal village. Upon arrival in San Sebastian we see the Maria Cristina Hotel. It

is at here, at the Kursaal, that the film festival takes place. We also see La Concha beach, a crescent shaped urban seaboard. In the afternoon we arrive in Pamplona. Dinner is served later that night. **(B, D)**

### Day 11, to Barcelona, Wednesday

After breakfast, we have a half-day guided sightseeing tour of Pamplona featuring the Ciudadela, the City Walls, parks and gardens. We will hear about the 'Running of the Bulls' race, part of the San Fermin festival. From Pamplona we continue to Zaragoza for lunch on your own. Later that afternoon, we arrive in Barcelona and the rest of the day is at leisure. **(B)**

**Optional tour: visit of Montserrat**

### Day 12, in Barcelona, Thursday

Our guided half-day sightseeing tour includes Barcelona's most important artistic sights: Gaudi's Batlló, Casa Milá, the **Cathedral Sagrada Familia**, and **Guell Park**, declared an artistic monument and mankind's heritage by the UNESCO. In the afternoon you are free to explore more on your own. Join your fellow travelers and your tour director for the farewell dinner. **(B, D)**

### Day 13, depart Barcelona, Friday

Transfer to Barcelona airport after breakfast. **(B)**

Elegance, Culture and Reconquista in Spain (K130)		
departure dates	\$ pp double occupancy	\$ single supplement
21-Apr-21	\$3.290	\$940
16-May-21	\$3.290	\$940
5-Sep-21	\$3.290	\$940
10-Oct-21	\$3.290	\$940

**Rates are gross, per person, in US dollars**



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