

Madrid

Capital of Spain, full of art, history, and vitality.

Main attractions include:

- **Prado Museum (Museo del Prado):** A world-class art museum housing masterpieces by Goya, Velázquez, Bosch, and others. Must-see works include Velázquez's "Las Meninas" and Goya's "The Nude Maja."
- **Royal Palace of Madrid (Palacio Real de Madrid):** The official residence of the Spanish royal family (now used only for ceremonies), featuring Baroque architecture.
- **Puerta del Sol:** The central landmark of Madrid, famous for the New Year's Eve countdown clock. The square features the statue of Madrid's emblem, the Bear and the Strawberry Tree, as well as the "Kilometer Zero" marker, the starting point of Spain's road network.
- **Plaza Mayor:** A 17th-century square surrounded by red brick buildings and outdoor cafés.
- **Mercado de San Miguel:** A historic iron market over a century old, offering a variety of shops selling Spanish tapas, seafood, ham, and desserts.
- **Gran Vía:** A hub for fashion stores, opera houses, and cinemas.
- **Santiago Bernabeu Stadium (Estadio Santiago Bernabeu):** Home stadium of Real Madrid, a must-visit for football fans!

Barcelona

Capital of Catalonia, blending Gaudí's fantastical architecture, Mediterranean charm, and vibrant urban culture.

Main attractions include:

- **Sagrada Família** – Gaudí's unfinished masterpiece, construction began in 1882 and is expected to be completed in 2026. Must-see highlights include the Nativity Façade, personally designed by Gaudí with intricate carvings; the Passion Façade, featuring a modern style with clean lines; and the interior forest of columns, where colorful stained glass creates a dreamlike play of light.
- **Casa Batllo** – The "House of the Dragon," a modernist building remodeled by Gaudí, with an exterior that resembles ocean waves.
- **Casa Mila (La Pedrera)** – The "Quarry," Gaudí's last residential building design, with rooftop chimneys that look like alien soldiers.
- **Park Guell** – Gaudí's fairy-tale park, with the main terrace offering panoramic views of Barcelona. The mosaic lizard, wavy benches, and mushroom-shaped houses make for fantastic photo opportunities!
- **Recinte Modernista de Sant Pau (Hospital de Sant Pau)** – The world's most beautiful hospital, a modernist architectural complex with stunning stained glass and dreamy gardens.
- **Camp Nou** – The home stadium and museum of FC Barcelona.
- **La Rambla** – The soul street of Barcelona, stretching from Plaça de Catalunya to the harbor.

Toledo

This medieval city is perched on a hill, surrounded on three sides by the Tagus River (Río Tajo). Known as Spain's "Imperial City," it was once the capital of the Visigothic Kingdom and the Kingdom of Castile, merging Christian, Jewish, and Islamic cultures. In 1986, it was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Main attractions include:

- **Toledo Cathedral (Catedral Primada de Toledo)**- the center of Spanish Catholicism and a pinnacle of Gothic architecture, built between the 13th and 15th centuries. Highlights include the Main Altar (Retablo Mayor): a resplendent gilded wood carving, and the Transparente: a Baroque-style skylight design.
- **Alcazar of Toledo (Alcazar de Toledo)**- a landmark fortress from the 16th century, now housing the Army Museum (Museo del Ejército), which displays many medieval armors and weapons. The rooftop observation deck offers panoramic views of the entire city.
- **Monastery of San Juan de los Reyes (Monasterio de San Juan de los Reyes)**- commissioned by Queen Isabella to commemorate the 1476 victory at the Battle of Toro, featuring a blend of Gothic and Mudéjar architectural styles.
- **Jewish Synagogues (Sinagoga del Tránsito & Santa María la Blanca)**- testimonies to the city's multicultural heritage. Among them is the Church of Santa María la Blanca, originally a 12th-century synagogue that was later converted into a church, featuring Mudéjar-style white walls and arches. The Sinagoga del Tránsito, built in the 14th century, now houses the Sephardic Museum.
- **Puerta de Bisagra**- the main city gate of Toledo, designed with a double arch and topped with the imperial coat of arms of Charles V.
- For a panoramic view of the ancient city, visit the Mirador del Valle (Valley Viewpoint), where you can capture classic postcard-worthy panoramic shots of Toledo.

Recommended day trips around Toledo:

Consuegra Windmills

- A small town in the Castilla-La Mancha region of Spain, famous for its iconic white windmills featured in the story of Don Quixote, representing the area's signature landscape.

Segovia

An ancient city in the Castilla y León autonomous community of Spain, known for its Roman aqueduct, fairy-tale castle, and roast suckling pig. It is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Main attractions include:

- **Acueducto de Segovia**- Ancient Roman engineering marvel, built in the 1st century, stretching 818 meters long and composed of 167 arches, constructed without any adhesive! The best photo spot is at Azoguejo, about 28.5 meters high, which is the highest section of the aqueduct in the plaza.

- **The Alcazar of Segovia**- with its spires and moat resembling a fairy tale scene, served as the inspiration for Disney's "Snow White" castle.
- **The Church of San Martín (Iglesia de San Martín)**- a prime example of Romanesque architecture, featuring a bell tower that blends Mudéjar style.
- **Roast suckling pig (Cochinillo Asado)** - a famous dish in Segovia, and the century-old restaurant Mesón de Cándido comes highly recommended.

Cordoba

A thousand-year-old city in Andalusia, blending Islamic, Jewish, and Christian cultures, famous for the "Mosque-Cathedral" and the Flower Alley, it was designated a World Heritage Site in 1984.

Main attractions include:

- **The Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba (Mezquita-Catedral de Cordoba)**- the world's only building where a mosque and a cathedral coexist. It was built by the Moors in 785 and expanded with a Christian cathedral in the 16th century. Inside are 850 red-and-white double arches, the mihrab (prayer niche) adorned with golden mosaic representing the pinnacle of Islamic art, and a Baroque main altar, creating a striking cultural contrast.
- **Calleja de las Flores in Cordoba postcard scene**- a narrow alley with white walls on both sides adorned with colorful ceramic flower pots, and at the end, a view of the mosque's bell tower. Our tour coincides with the citywide "Fiesta de los Patios" (Patio Festival) held from May 4 to 17, 2026, when the entire city is bursting with blooming flowers.
- **The Alcazar de los Reyes Cristianos (Castle of the Christian Monarchs)**-a 14th-century palace of the Catholic Monarchs, where Queen Isabella once received Columbus.
- **The Roman Bridge (Puente Romano)**-a 1st-century Roman relic, a 16-arch stone bridge connecting the old town with Calahorra Tower. At dusk, the lights illuminate the mosque, creating a **stunning night view**.

Seville

The capital of Andalusia, famous for its passionate flamenco, magnificent Moorish architecture, and streets fragrant with orange blossoms.

Main attractions include:

- **Seville Cathedral (Catedral de Sevilla)** - the largest Gothic cathedral in the world and was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987. Christopher Columbus is buried here. Must-see highlights include La Giralda: originally a minaret of a mosque, you can climb to the top for panoramic views of the city. The main altar: the largest gilded altar in the world, standing 30 meters tall. The Orange Tree Courtyard (Patio de los Naranjos): remnants of the original mosque.

- **The Royal Alcazar (Real Alcazar)** - the oldest royal palace in Europe still in use, blending Moorish and Mudéjar styles. Key areas to explore include the Palace of Peter I (Palacio de Don Pedro), with its intricately carved arches and tilework reminiscent of scenes from One Thousand and One Nights, and the symmetrical reflecting pool in the Courtyard of the Maidens (Patio de las Doncellas).
- **Plaza de Espana** - built for the 1929 Ibero-American Exposition, features a semicircular red brick building and canals creating a stunning view. The square is dotted with benches decorated with colorful ceramic tiles representing Spain's provinces.
- **Metropol Parasol** - a modern architectural "mushroom cloud," is a wooden structure with an observation deck offering 360-degree views of Seville's red rooftops.
- **The Torre del Oro (Tower of Gold)** - a 12-sided ancient riverside tower that once stored gold brought from the Americas and now houses a maritime museum.
- **Flamenco and local delicacies** - The group will enjoy a flamenco dance performance in Seville and taste local delicacies such as oxtail stew and Spanish gazpacho.

Granada

The treasure of Andalusia, famous for the legendary Alhambra Palace, Moorish culture, and snowy mountain landscapes, was designated a World Cultural Heritage site in 1994.

Main attractions include:

- **The Alhambra Palace** - the pinnacle of Islamic art and the last palace of the Moors, includes the Palacios Nazaríes (Nasrid Palaces), the Palacio de Carlos V (Palace of Charles V), the Generalife gardens, the Patio de los Leones (Court of the Lions) with its 12-lion fountain symbolizing paradise, and the Patio de los Arrayanes (Court of the Myrtles) with a reflective pool mirroring the arches. **The Granada Cathedral (Catedral de Granada)** - features a blend of Renaissance and Gothic styles, and Ferdinand and Isabella are entombed in the Royal Chapel (Capilla Real).

Ronda

Located in Málaga Province, Andalusia, Spain, Ronda sits atop a cliff 750 meters above sea level and is Spain's most famous "white mountain town." Ronda's history dates back to the Roman era, but its heyday was during the Islamic rule (8th–15th centuries), when the Moors built castles, city walls, and irrigation systems here. Ronda is also the birthplace of modern bullfighting culture and is home to one of Spain's oldest bullrings.

Main attractions include:

- **Puente Nuevo (New Bridge)** — Ronda's iconic structure, spanning the Tajo Gorge at a height of 98 meters, was built in the 18th century. The bridge features an observation deck offering breathtaking views of the gorge.
- **Ronda Bullring (Plaza de Toros)** — Built in 1785, it is one of Spain's oldest bullrings and the birthplace of modern bullfighting rules. The bullring houses a museum showcasing related history and artifacts.

- **Palacio del Rey Moro (Moorish King's Palace)** — The residence of Moorish rulers in the 14th century, featuring beautiful gardens and a "water mine staircase" (La Mina) that leads down to the valley floor. It once served as an important water defense system.

Gibraltar

Located at the southern tip of the Iberian Peninsula, adjacent to Spain, this British Overseas Territory is home to the iconic Rock of Gibraltar, which shelters the only wild monkey population in Europe – the Barbary macaques.

Gibraltar sits at the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea and has long held significant military strategic value. The area features an extensive network of underground tunnels, many of which were used for military purposes during World War II. Gibraltar blends British and Spanish cultures, with tourism, finance, and shipping as its main industries.

Famous attractions include St. Michael's Cave, the Moorish Castle, and Europa Point.

Spanish cuisine

Based on Mediterranean flavors, blending mountain delicacies, seafood, and diverse cultures, impressing diners from Michelin-starred restaurants to street-side eateries! Classic dishes include:

- **Paella** - considered Spain's national dish, originated in Valencia and is cooked in a flat pan called a paellera. Common varieties include Seafood Paella (Paella de Mariscos) featuring large prawns, mussels, and squid, and Black Rice (Arroz Negro), where squid ink colors the rice black.
- **Spanish Tapas** - Must-try items include Jamón Ibérico, thinly sliced Iberian ham from acorn-fed black pigs; Tortilla Española, a thick omelet made with potatoes and onions; and Gambas al Ajillo, shrimp sautéed in olive oil with garlic slices and chili.
- **Summer refreshers: Gazpacho** - a chilled vegetable soup made from tomatoes, green peppers, and cucumbers, and Sangría, a party drink combining red wine, fruit, and sparkling water.
- **Rabo de Toro (Oxtail Stew)** - A famous Andalusian dish where oxtail is slow-cooked in red wine until the meat falls off the bone, served with mashed potatoes.
- **Churros** - A popular breakfast treat of freshly fried dough sticks dipped in thick hot chocolate, with Madrid's "Chocolatería San Ginés" highly recommended.
- **Cochinillo (Roast Suckling Pig)** - A specialty of Segovia, known for its crispy skin and tender meat.

Flamenco

Flamenco is an art form originating from the Andalusia region in southern Spain, encompassing singing, music, and dance. The development of flamenco was greatly influenced by the Moors and Jews of Andalusia, and it also incorporated many artistic elements from the Romani people. Flamenco dance is an improvisational dance that includes emotional interaction between the dancers, singers, musicians, and the audience. Dancers often wear lace dresses (Traje de Flamenca) or tight pants (for men) and hard-soled leather shoes. Sevilla can be considered the birthplace of flamenco dance.