

SPLENDID SPAIN

11 Nights / 12 Days

Highlights:

- **Madrid** – City tour – Plaza Mayor, Royal Palace, Prado museum, Puerto de sol, Campo del Moro.
- **Malaga** – City tour – The cathedral, La Alcazaba, Castillo de Gibralfaro, Picasso museum, Palacio Episcopal.
- **Gibraltar** – The Rock of Gibraltar, Europa point, Siege Tunnels.
- **Seville** – City tour – Cathedral, Columbus Tomb, Arab Mosque, Giralda Bell tower, Santa Cruz Jewish quarter, Reales Alcazares, Casa de Pilatos, Plaza D' Espana, Maria Luisa park.
- **Valencia** – City tour – Serranos tower, Quart tower, the Cathedral, Lonja de la Seda, Institute of Modern art.
- **Barcelona** – City tour Las Ramblas, Opera house, Columbus Monument, Barri Gotic, Picasso Museum, La Sagrada Familia, La Pedrera and Monteserrat.

Day 01 Arrive Madrid

Arrive at Madrid International Airport. Our local representative will be waiting at the airport to welcome you and transfer you to the hotel. As the capital of Spain, Madrid has a modern infrastructure as well as historic neighbourhood. Rest of the day at leisure on own. Visit one of the many shopping areas around the streets of Almirante and Conde de Xiquena. Also visit the large departmental stores in the vicinity of Puerta del Sol and Salamanca district which has prestigious shops selling fashions, accessories, jewellery and furniture. Head for some exciting nightlife at one of the many streets of Paseo de la Castellana or Paseo del Prado which has some of the best quality restaurants, cafes and popular night spots. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 02 Madrid – City Tour

After breakfast proceed for a city tour of Madrid. Start the tour at the “Plaza Mayor” (Main Square) which was built in the 16th century. Beneath the arcades you can find an assortment of shops that sell fabrics, costume jewellery and souvenirs and also outdoor cafes and bakeries. Then visit the “Borbons Dynasty” area and visit the 18th century Royal Palace. The palace is no longer used as a residence but as a tourist attraction. Most of the important rooms can be visited and the palace is very interesting with its architecture and gardens. There are some excellent frescoes inside the palace. After that visit the Prado Museum which is considered one of the world’s finest museums and provides a historical and cultural perspective. It houses the world’s finest masterpieces by famous painters like Velazquez and Goya. The former “Casa de Correos” (Post Office) was built in 1768 under the direction of French architect Marquet. It is crowned with a tower with clocks on its four sides; the most famous time piece in Madrid. There are many other outstanding spots, churches and convents full of art. Then visit the Sabatini Gardens and Campo del Moro located in the city centre. Rest of the day at leisure to explore and shop at Puerta de Sol. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 03 Madrid – Malaga

After an early breakfast, check out and transfer to the station for your train to Malaga (2 Hrs / 40min.). Arrive at Malaga and transfer to hotel and check in. Malaga is regarded as the capital of the Costa del Sol. Malaga is a stylish city which continues to attract visitors from all over the

world. Once a port city, the place has evolved into one of the most attractive beach resorts in Europe. With its Mediterranean coastline and perfect climate throughout the year, there is no shortage of restaurants, shops and some of the best nightlife in Spain. The Mediterranean waters are warm and safe for swimming. Rest of the day at leisure to explore the place on your own. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 04 Malaga

After breakfast visit the major sights in the city including “The Cathedral” and several churches. There are also some excellent museums the highlight being the “La Alcazaba” – a fortress and the “Castillo de Gibralfaro” with fantastic views of the town and the bay. Spain’s famous painter, “Pablo Picasso” was born in Malaga. His birthplace was converted into the famous “Picasso Museum” with his masterpieces. Also visit the “Palacio Episcopal” – Bishop’s Palace, which faces the Cathedral’s main entrance and has one of the most stunning facades in the city and makes an evocative setting for temporary art and sculpture exhibits. Rest of the day at leisure. You can visit one of the many beaches like – “Puerto Banus” which is very famous beach to be seen especially with “Hollywood” stars. Other beaches you can visit are “Playa Del Cristo” and “San Pedro. Malaga is not only the perfect place to explore the historical monuments, little streets and squares with delightful café culture but it is also a wonderful place for shopping. There are many chic designer boutiques, designer shops, indoor commercial shopping malls and swanky shopping streets. You can also visit Malaga’s city park which runs alongside the “Paseo del Parque”. The park contains beautiful tropical flowering trees and shrubs. Evening dine at one of the many top rated restaurants and open air cafes or dance your night away at a piano bar or at an exclusive night club. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 05 Malaga – Gibraltar - Malaga

After breakfast, check out and transfer by coach to Gibraltar (around 90 minutes). Arrive at Gibraltar known for the popular “The Rock”. The place being an overseas territory of the United Kingdom on the southern coast of Spain at the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea (U.K. visa is required to enter the border of Gibraltar). The inside of “The Rock” is a labyrinth with the secret internal roads and tunnels four times longer than those on the surface. See the “Europa Point” where the Atlantic Ocean meets the Mediterranean Sea. The cable car drops you off at the top of “The Rock” and you can use it to return to the bottom or just walk down. Also see “The Siege Tunnels” which were carved out by the Merchant Marine to defend Gibraltar from the mainland during the Great Siege of 1779 to 1783. Originally the tunnel was only 82 feet in length, but by the end of World War II, the tunnels had reach a winding distance of over 30 miles. These tunnels seem to go on forever. Entering on one end of the rock, you almost literally go to the other side. Then we will transfer back to Malaga. Rest of the day at leisure. Overnight at hotel.

Day 06 Malaga – Seville – Malaga

After breakfast proceed for full day excursion to Seville. First visit the Cathedral, one of the world’s most beautiful Gothic temples. See the Columbus Tomb and the former minaret of the Arab mosque with the Giralda Bell Tower, formerly a minaret which when built was the tallest tower in the world. Enjoy a walking tour of the quaint old Santa Cruz Jewish Quarter with its bright flowers, white washed buildings and winding streets. After the Santa Cruz quarter, we will pass by the Reales Alcázares (Royal Fortresses), Archive of the Indies declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Another important renaissance building in the city is the Casa de Pilatos, a palace that fuses Gothic and Mudejar elements with Renaissance influences of Italian origin. Then continue onto Plaza D’ Espana – the Spanish Square. This magnificent construction is highlighted with polychromatic ceramic tiles. The semi circular plaza has a diameter of 200 metres and is flanked by two spectacular towers and a bordering lake that are worth seeing.

Transfer to Malaga (2 hrs./ 30 min.). Arrive at Malaga and transfer to hotel and check in. Rest of the day at leisure. Overnight at the resort.

Day 07 Malaga - Valencia

After breakfast check out and transfer to the station for your train to Valencia (8 to 9 Hrs). Arrive at Valencia and transfer to hotel and check in. Rest of the evening at leisure to explore the place on your own. Valencia is situated in the centre of the Spanish Mediterranean coastline and overlooks the Gulf of Valencia. It is also the administrative capital of the Valencian community. Valencia has outstanding landscapes, wide pavements and modern architecture. Evening you can shop for some exquisite and world famous “Lladro” porcelain figurines, handmade glassware, ceramics, handicrafts and jewellery along with the latest fashions. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 08 Valencia

After breakfast visit the city which is a treasure trove of Roman and Arabic architecture surrounded by citrus groves. It is city with avant-garde buildings erected in the new millennium. Thanks to its location, Valencia has been the Spanish gateway to the Mediterranean, with the special charm that seaport cities have. The fine sand and crystal waters, the vastness of the open sea, and the proximity of the coastal mountain range lend the Valencian coast a unique appeal. View the highlights of this historical city, such as the ornate 14th century Serranos Tower and imposing 15th century Quart Tower. First stop will be in the Cathedral of Valencia which stands in the same place where the first temple of the Roman city was erected, and later, an Arab mosque. Second stop will be in the most remarkable building, the Lonja de la Seda (the Silk Exchange), an elegant Gothic structure built towards the end of the 15th century that has been declared World Heritage Site. It stands in the same place where the first temple of the Roman city was erected, and later, an Arab mosque. See the Valencia Institute of Modern Art having permanent collections, temporary exhibitions, conferences and workshop the old Silk Exchange, recognized by UNESCO as one of the most beautiful buildings of European civil Gothic architecture. In the evening visit one of the many beautiful beaches like Levante / Malvarrosa which is a high quality beach in the north with excellent water sports and equipments available on hire. Have a fun evening where you will have a presentation on how to make the traditional Valencia paella (Spanish dish) followed by a delicious paella dinner. Dine at “El Carme”. Valencia is known for its vibrant nightlife which begins only after midnight where the music plays until dawn. A lot of clubs are situated in “Calle Juan Llorens” area. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 09 Valencia - Barcelona

After breakfast check out and transfer to the station for your train to Barcelona (3 Hrs). Arrive at Barcelona and transfer to the hotel and check in. Barcelona lies on the Mediterranean coast and is the second largest city in Spain. The visitor unfamiliar with its history might be surprised that such a modern and enterprising city preserves its historic Gothic center almost intact, or by curious contrast between the maze of narrow streets and the grid-like layout of the “Eixample”, the urban planning “Enlargement” project completed at the end of the 19th century. Fabulous architecture, brilliant Spanish cuisine, flamboyant culture and wonderful weather combine to make Barcelona a truly magnificent city. The city has medieval districts and the most beautiful examples of Modernism and 20th Century Avant-Garde art. The buildings built by the Catalan architects like Antoni Gaudí and Lluís Domènech Montaner were declared World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. Enjoy the rest of the day exploring on your own. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 10 Barcelona

After breakfast, proceed for a city tour of Barcelona, Catalonia’s capital and one of the most vibrant and lively cities in Spain. The tour starts with “Las Ramblas” which is a tree lined pedestrian boulevard selling everything from clothes, jewellery, souvenirs etc. See the Bird

market, colourful flower stalls, 19th century Opera House and The Columbus Monument. Then visit the Barri Gotic – a concentration of medieval Gothic buildings with a maze of interconnecting streets linking with squares with plenty of cafes. Two of the city's most significant buildings – the Ajuntament and the Palau de la Generalitat are located here. After that visit the Museu Picasso which is Barcelona's most visited museum. The museum shows numerous works that trace the artist's early years. Then visit the "La Sagrada Familia" - a unique creation that has become Barcelona's most universal symbol. In 1883 the brilliant architect "Gaudí", agreed to direct this work, succeeding Francisco de Paula. The artist worked on it until his death. Work to complete this grand church continues still today. Also visit the La Pedrera – another Gaudi masterpiece, it is a quarry with uneven grey stone façade that ripples around a street corner with wrought iron balconies. Visitors can tour the building and go right up to the roof. There is also a museum dedicated to Gaudi's work. Evening is free for some shopping as this city is a city of styles. Shop at some of the best designer label outlets at La Rambla and Plaça de Catalunya. Enjoy some of the best nightlife the city offers like outdoor cafes, restaurants and discotheques. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 11 Barcelona – Montserrat – Barcelona

After breakfast, visit Montserrat, driving across picturesque little villages will reach the outstanding Montserrat Mountain situated at an altitude of 1,235 meters. Our first visit will be The Royal Basilica, where the famous XII century Romanesque sculpture of virgin Moreneta shall be admired. An audition of "La Escolania de Montserrat" will be included, this children chorus is considered as one of the oldest in Europe. Drive back to the Hotel. On the return we will stop at the Barcelona's harbour where you can go and shop or visit Aquarium by own. Rest of the day at leisure free on own. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 12 Depart Barcelona

After breakfast, morning at leisure. Later check out and transfer to the airport for your departure flight back home.