

Seville, Madrid & Barcelona: Semana Santa



Behold a beautiful Semana Santa procession float adorned with hand-carved wooden statues.

DAY 1: FLIGHT TO SPAIN

Your trip begins with a regularly scheduled overnight flight to Seville aboard an internationally recognized airline.

DAY 2: ARRIVAL IN BARCELONA

Welcome to Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia. A Go Ahead representative greets you at the airport after you clear customs and then escorts you to your hotel. The rest of the day is free to begin your explorations of Barcelona. At a Welcome Dinner this evening, meet your fellow travelers.

Included meals: breakfast (in flight), dinner

DAY 3: BARCELONA

A professional local guide leads a sightseeing tour that passes by La Sagrada Família, Gaudí's masterpiece. As you study the church's mellifluous lines and multicolored Mediterranean-style mosaics, note that its construction was never completed after Gaudí's death but continues sporadically today as funds allow. As you travel through the city, take in panoramic views of the Columbus Monument, the 14th-century Barri Gòtic and Montjuïc, where much of the 1992 Summer Olympic Games took place. You'll also visit another Gaudí creation, Parc Güell, a garden village nestled on a hill overlooking the city. This afternoon, join an optional excursion to Montserrat.

Included meals: breakfast

Included entrances: Parc Güell

DAY 4: FREE TIME IN BARCELONA

Spend the day exploring Barcelona on your own. Stroll down Las Ramblas, visit Barceloneta beach, and visit the fortress atop Montjuïc to take in some of the best views of views of the city. Alternatively, you may join an optional Picasso and Gothic Barcelona tour to see the city's Picasso Museum and surrounding Gothic architecture. This evening, join our optional Flamenco Dinner Show.

Included meals: breakfast

DAY 5: TRANSFER TO MADRID

Board a train this morning for Madrid. You'll arrive in time to explore the city this afternoon at your leisure. Tonight's dinner is included.

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

DAY 6: SIGHTSEEING OF MADRID

A professional local guide leads today's tour through Madrid to the Prado, an extensive art museum that began as the private collection of the Spanish monarchy. Masterpieces you'll see here include Velázquez's *Las Meninas* and Goya's *La maja desnuda*. Next stop is the Palacio Real (Royal Palace), built by Bourbon King Philip V. Once the

11-DAY TOUR INCLUDES

- Round-trip air transportation with a major airline, airport transfers
- The services of a bilingual Go Ahead Tour Director
- A licensed local city guide in Barcelona, Madrid, Córdoba and Seville
- 9 nights accommodations in comfortable, well-located hotels with twin beds and private bath or shower
- All hotel service charges and tips, baggage handling and local taxes
- Buffet breakfast daily; 3 three-course dinners
- Private deluxe motorcoach
- Guided sightseeing and entrance fees to select sights as described
- Go Ahead travel gift and membership in our World Traveler Club, which includes credit toward your next tour

GUIDED SIGHTSEEING

DAY 3: Barcelona

DAY 6: Madrid

DAY 8: Córdoba

DAY 9: Seville

Tour Highlight

During Semana Santa, thousands throng the streets of Seville to observe Holy Week and watch the spectacular procession of elaborate floats, colorfully costumed penitents and brass bands. Many of the wooden sculptures adorning the floats are of great antiquity and artistic value. There is no better time to experience the Spanish people's passion for their cultural and religious history.

Insider's Tip

Barcelona's harbor has seen extensive renovations in recent years, ever since a beach was built specifically for the 1992 Olympics. Browse the harbor during the day for some of the city's best shopping venues, beaches and restaurants—most serving sangria right by the water.



Witness Sagrada Família, Gaudí's ambitious and unfinished Modernist masterpiece.



A carriage ride through Seville will transport to a bygone era.

seat of the most powerful court in the world, it was here that Spain officially joined the European Union in 1986. This castle boasts more than 2,500 extravagant rooms, along with a marble staircase and the swords of El Cid. This evening, indulge in succulent Castillian cuisine served by one of Madrid's finest restaurants at our optional Traditional Spanish Evening.

Included meals: breakfast

Included entrances: Prado, Royal Palace

DAY 7: FREE DAY IN MADRID

You might choose to enjoy the day at your leisure by visiting more of Madrid's museums, exploring its churches and parks or sipping a cerveza at a sunny cafe in the Plaza Mayor. Or join an optional excursion to Toledo. This optional guided sightseeing tour through Spain's first capital visits the Gothic cathedral, the prime seat of the Catholic Church in Spain and home to an exceptional collection of ecclesiastical treasures.

Included meals: breakfast

DAY 8: TRANSFER TO SEVILLE

This morning, you'll transfer by train to Córdoba, nestled into the Guadalquivir Valley. Here, you'll embark on a guided tour of the city that was once the center of Spain's Islamic caliphate. The highlight of your tour is a visit to the ornate Mezquita, the beating heart of the Ummayyad Dynasty's rule during the days of the caliphate and, later, a Christian cathedral. Then, travel by bus to Seville. After checking in to your hotel, you'll have time to be-

gin exploring one of Spain's most celebrated cities.

Included meals: breakfast

Please note: during Semana Santa, tens of thousands of travelers journey to Seville for the festivities. You should be prepared for crowds in the streets, at restaurants and around other notable tourist attractions.

DAY 9: SEMANA SANTA FESTIVITIES ON PALM SUNDAY

This morning, you're free to either attend Semana Santa services at a local church or explore on your own. Your Tour Director is also available to lead you to Seville's one-of-a-kind Semana Santa celebrations. Watch as religious groups from around the city parade toward the cathedral while wearing colorful costumes. This afternoon, enjoy a guided sightseeing tour of beautiful Seville. Behold the intricately tiled pavilion of the Plaza de España before entering the opulent Alcázar, once home to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. You'll visit Seville's Gothic cathedral, one of the world's largest, as well as the burial place of Columbus.

Included meals: breakfast

Included entrances: Seville Cathedral, Alcázar

DAY 10: SEMANA SANTA

Today is free to take in the Semana Santa festivities as you please. Membership in the brotherhoods that organize the Semana Santa processions—known locally as *hermandades* or *cofradías*—is often passed down through families, and some of these fraternal organizations have existed for cen-

turies. The oldest brotherhood, colloquially known as *El Silencio*, has been a part of Seville's Semana Santa since the 14th century! Tonight, share your Semana Santa memories with your fellow travelers over a Farewell Dinner.

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

DAY 11: DEPARTURE

A Go Ahead representative escorts you to the airport for your flight home.

Included meals: breakfast

(In the case of early morning departures, breakfast may not be provided.)



Travel Pace: 2

Travel pace levels are based on criteria such as length of tour, number of cities visited, number of included activities, as well as length of flights and land transfers.

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|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 - leisurely | 3 - active |
| 2 - comfortable | 4 - challenging |

Walking on Tour

This tour involves a moderate amount of walking, depending on your choices during free time. Tours are conducted by a combination of private motorcoach and some walking, especially when visiting the museums, cathedrals and monuments. Be aware of some uneven terrain, steps and narrow passageways.

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Climate

The following guide provides the average temperatures for a sampling of the regions on your itinerary.

SEVILLE

Jan–Feb	42°–63°F / 5°–17°C
Mar	46°–69°F / 7°–20°C
Apr	50°–71°F / 10°–21°C
May	55°–79°F / 12°–26°C
June	62°–87°F / 16°–30°C
July–Aug	66°–95°F / 18°–35°C
Sep	64°–90°F / 17°–32°C
Oct	56°–78°F / 13°–25°C
Nov	49°–69°F / 9°–20°C
Dec	44°–62°F / 6°–16°C

MADRID

Jan–Feb	32°–54°F / 0°–12°C
Mar	38°–60°F / 3°–20°C
Apr	42°–63°F / 6°–17°C
May	48°–71°F / 9°–22°C
June	56°–82°F / 13°–28°C
July–Aug	61°–90°F / 16°–32°C
Sep	55°–82°F / 13°–28°C
Oct	47°–68°F / 8°–20°C
Nov	39°–58°F / 4°–14°C
Dec	35°–52°F / 2°–11°C

BARCELONA

Jan–Feb	41°–57°F / 5°–14°C
Mar	44°–60°F / 7°–16°C
Apr	47°–62°F / 8°–17°C
May	53°–68°F / 12°–20°C
June	60°–75°F / 16°–24°C
July–Aug	66°–82°F / 19°–28°C
Sep	62°–78°F / 17°–26°C
Oct	54°–70°F / 12°–21°C
Nov	46°–62°F / 8°–17°C
Dec	42°–57°F / 6°–14°C

Pre-departure information for your tour

PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS

In order to enter Spain, U.S. and Canadian citizens need a valid passport. The expiration date must extend at least six months beyond the date of your return home. No visa is required for U.S. and Canadian citizens. If you are not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you must contact the Spanish consulate for your particular entry requirements.

AIRPORT AND DEPARTURE TAXES

All airport and departure taxes for your tour are included in the total trip cost printed on your invoice.

BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

Airlines have varying weight restrictions on luggage. Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage. Please contact your airline or refer to its website for detailed information regarding your airline's checked baggage policies. Bear in mind that your luggage will probably weigh more on your return trip due to souvenir shopping. We allow only one suitcase per person. One carry-on bag is also permitted, provided that it does not exceed 45 inches (length + width + height). There may be times when you will have to handle your own bags, and you'll find that lightweight luggage provides a distinct advantage. Make sure you label your baggage and carry valuables, medication and documents in your carry-on luggage.

CLOTHING AND PACKING TIPS

Light, loose-fitting clothing that provides comfort when exploring the sights is essential for your tour. A sun hat, sunglasses and a sturdy pair of walking shoes or sneakers are recommended for sightseeing, especially for the walks. It's always a good idea to be prepared for any eventuality—a lightweight sports jacket and emergency rainwear are advised. If you plan to visit an especially elegant restaurant or attend the opera or theater, you will probably feel more comfortable with something more formal to wear. Also, remember that it is preferable not to visit churches or other religious sites with bare legs and shoulders (and entrance may be denied on this basis).

HEALTH

There are no major health risks when traveling to Spain. It is always advisable to check with your doctor or health-care provider for the latest updates and overseas travel requirements. As mentioned, this tour does include a significant amount of walking. Travelers should be in reasonable health and should be accustomed to short hikes and walking on uneven terrain.

CUISINE

In Spain, breakfast is very light, usually consisting of only rolls and coffee. Lunch is traditionally a three-course meal which takes much of the afternoon to consume. The traditional dish is known as paella and is made from chicken, meat, vegetables, seafood and saffron rice. Dinner is less hearty than lunch and is served late, between 9 p.m. and midnight. Tapas, a meal comprising small samples of various appetizers, is a popular evening repast in Spanish bars and cafés.

TRANSPORTATION

Round-trip flights arrive in Barcelona and depart from Seville. Included transportation on this tour is by private motorcoach.

The city center in Seville is easily accessed on foot. Take local buses and taxis to reach outlying areas.

Madrid's main center is compact and walkable, but you'll want to take advantage of the fast and efficient metro system for most attractions. Buses and taxis (which are inexpensive compared to most European cities) are also readily available and well-regulated.

Navigating Barcelona can be a little daunting, due to the spread-out and ever-expanding design. However, most of the main attractions and tourist hangouts are near the area known as La Rambla (or Las Ramblas, actually a collection of streets) and the Barri Gòtic. For access to the other attractions, use the excellent metro system. You can buy tickets in singles or, for a better deal, in a package, from most tobacconists/newstands and metro vending machines.

CURRENCY

The euro is the currency you will be using on your tour. Better rates of exchange are usually available at your destination, although it is worth ordering some currency from your local bank to use when you first arrive. We strongly advise that you take debit/bank cards and credit cards, which can be used to withdraw cash at local banks, as needed. You can use most debit/credit cards at ATMs on the international networks Cirrus and Plus, but make sure to check with your home bank about withdrawal fees. We suggest that you inform your bank and credit card company of your travel plans, so that they won't confuse your international purchases for fraudulent charges. Please note: With the conversion to the euro, it has been increasingly difficult to exchange traveler's checks outside

of Europe's major cities—both at banks and shops—and they often attract higher fees.

ELECTRICITY

Spain operates on the European standard 220 volts.

TIME ZONES

Spain is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and six hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST). When it is noon in New York, it's 6 p.m. in Barcelona.

TIPPING

At the conclusion of your tour, it is customary to offer your Go Ahead Tour Director and driver a gratuity. We recommend tipping in your tour country's currency, the equivalent of \$3USD/CAD per person per day for your driver and \$6USD/CAD to \$9USD/CAD per person per day for your Tour Director. If applicable, we also recommend the equivalent of \$2USD/CAD per local guide. Tips can only be paid in cash. Please keep current local currency exchange rates in mind when tipping.

PURCHASING OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS ON TOUR

If you have not yet purchased your optional excursions, you may be able to do so while on your tour. Your Tour Director will only accept cash (in U.S. dollars only), Visa, MasterCard or American Express as payment for optional excursions. Please be advised that if you pay for an excursion by credit card while on tour, it may take up to three months for your card to be charged. Some optional excursions may only be purchased in advance. See the separate "Optional Excursions" sheet for more information.

International travel is, by its very nature, unpredictable. We must therefore reserve the right to change this itinerary without advanced notice to meet with local conditions at the time of travel. We appreciate your understanding. Please refer to the current catalog for terms & conditions, dates and prices.