

THE SPANISH IBERICO HAM TRAIL

Let's taste the real Spain...



On this unique and pioneer tour focused on the Spanish gastronomy and especially on the Iberian ham culture, we will take you to the four different production areas around Spain. Not only will you explore the highlights of our country but also the most unspoiled corners that are literally 'off the beaten path'. On this fascinating two weeks journey you will visit local farmers and artisan producers who will teach you how Ibérico Ham is cured, you will practice the art of carving, you will enjoy delicious gastronomy, taste fabulous wines all whilst learning about the incredible Spanish history and of course experience our lifestyle, culture and traditions.

SUMMARY (14 nights)

Start & Finish Point: Madrid

2 Nights Salamanca

2 Nights Cáceres

3 Nights Sevilla

3 Night Cordoba

2 Nights Granada

2 Night Madrid

What's Included?

- All private transfers
- Hotels (4*)
- Breakfasts & all meals mentioned in the itinerary
- Guided tours (inc. skip the line access)

What's not Included?

- International Air Flights
- Medical Insurance
- Meals & Drinks, other than those mentioned in the itinerary
- Tips & Gratuities

***This is an example itinerary that can always be adjusted to meet
your individual requirements and budget.***



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ITINERARY

DAY 1: Salamanca

Arrival in Madrid & Transfer to Salamanca

Private transfer from Madrid to your hotel in Salamanca (approx. 2hrs)

First day at your leisure

First afternoon and evening to get acquainted with this cosmopolitan city and the vibrant atmosphere that Salamanca will offer over your stay. We will provide with maps, tips and recommendations for good places to go for dinner so you will feel as much as a local as possible.



DAY 2: Salamanca

Morning Salamanca guided tour

Your art historian expert guide will meet you at the lobby of your hotel for a 2.5hrs walking tour to the historic the city centre. You will visit two glorious Cathedrals (la Nueva and La Vieja), the University building (which holds the records of the Spanish Inquisition), the Shell house (Casa de las Conchas) and the famous Plaza Mayor (widely considered Spain's most beautiful plaza). You will also see interesting medieval plazas along with beautiful sandstone architecture. This tour will uncover both hundreds of years old history and lively modern vibe.

Salamanca is an ancient Celtic city in north-western Spain belonging to the community of Castilla y León. The city lies on several hills by the Tormes River. Its Old City was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988. The University of Salamanca was founded in 1218. It is the oldest university in Spain, the fourth oldest western university and one of the most important university cities in Spain supplying 16% of Spain's market for the teaching of the Spanish language. With its 30,000 students, the university is, together with tourism, a primary source of income in Salamanca.



Free afternoon & evening in Salamanca

Free afternoon & evening to further explore the city at your leisure. Here are some of our recommendations:

Clerecia (Universidad Pontifica)

Roman Bridge by the Tormes

River Casa List (Art Nouveau museum – private collection)

Convento & iglesia de San Esteban

Huerto Calixto & Melibea (public park and gardens)



DAY 3:

La Alberca, Hervás & Cáceres

Full day trip with private driver and guide to explore Castilla León and Extremadura countryside.

After check out, your private driver together with your tour guide will pick you from your hotel and will take you on a very scenic drive through the Dehesas of Iberian pigs farms to the charming little town of La Alberca (approx. 1h drive). At La Alberca, you will have a first introduction to the cured ibérico ham by visiting the “Oh, Espacio del Jamón” (an interactive museum and tasting centre where you will learn all about the different breeding areas in Spain and the varieties. Here you will taste up to 5 different ones!

After a short walking tour of approx. 1 hour around the picturesque town of La Alberca, you will be transferred to Hervás where you will enjoy a delicious lunch before the afternoon panoramic guided tour of this historic little town.

Later you will check-in at your hotel in Cáceres

La Alberca is a charming town nestled on the northern slopes of La Sierra de França at 1084 meters (3,556 feet) above sea level. It was founded in the 1300s and was the first village to be declared a National Historical Monument by the Spanish government. La Alberca’s fabulous medieval architecture is extremely well-preserved, from its narrow cobblestone roads to its thatched roofs. Most of the houses were built with the intention of raising animals and smoking meat inside, as a result, many floors have holes in them, to allow for the curing of meat on every floor. Toda y, La Alberca abounds with fine meat shops, offering a large variety of delectable ham.

Hervás, a town with a Jewish flavour. Hervás houses one of the best preserved Jewish quarters in the whole country (declared a Historical Artistic Site in 1969). This is a neighbourhood settled by Jews who came to the town in the 15th century and one on which they left their indelible mark on its streets and buildings. You will find the narrowest street in Spain. It is barely a metre and a half and is called Travesía del Moral. Its granite, sun dried brick and chestnut wood buildings endow Hervás with a matchless beauty.

Free evening in Cáceres

Free evening to get acquainted to this magic city. We will provide you with maps, tips and recommendations for local bars & restaurants



DAY 4: Cáceres

Morning

Your art historian expert guide will meet you at the lobby of your hotel for a 3 h walking tour of the wall city of Cáceres where you will explore its monuments and learn all its history. Embark on an exciting journey into the past by this monumental City as you travel through all its corners and cobbled streets. You will start the visit at Playa Mayor, then visit the Juderia Nueva, the Forum of the Balbos and the Town Hall (Ayuntamiento). You will continue the visit exploring the Torre de Bujaco, the most important of the city and whose viewpoint offers splendid views, the Plaza del Socorro, the Albarranas Towers belonging to its historical wall and the Arch of Spain.

After your tour, it's time to try the traditional gastronomy of the area at a Gourmet & Deli shop located right in the heart of the historic town. Together with your guide you will taste local wines and iberico cured meats from Extremadura.

The Old Town of Cáceres has a privileged Monumental Ensemble which is one-of-a-kind in Spain as well as in Europe. The walled area of Cáceres contains the best Spanish Renaissance Ensemble of both Civil and Religious Architecture, which keeps intact nowadays. The majority of the religious and civil buildings belonging to the Old Town of Cáceres date back to late 14th century, specially from refurbishments, extensions and newly constructed buildings made between 15th and 16th centuries. Because of this monumental splendour, Cáceres was declared as a Spanish National Monument in 1949, as well as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1986.

Free afternoon & evening

Free afternoon & evening to further explore the town at your leisure. We will provide you with maps, tips and recommendations for local bars & restaurants.



DAY 5: Merida & Sevilla

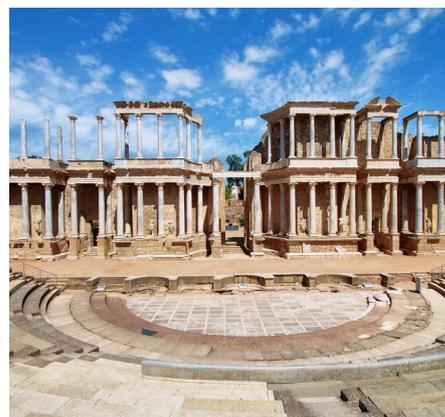
Full day trip to explore Badajoz province and the Extremadura countryside.

On your way to Sevilla (approx. 3 hours drive in total) you will make a couple of stops to explore two of the most attractive spots of this part of Spain (the border of Portugal is close by). Firstly, you will discover the well preserved archaeological site of Mérida by taking a 2.5hrs guided tour around the Roman Amphitheatre and the archaeological museum. Afterwards, you will visit the vineyards of Santa Marina wine state, part of the Alvear family wine producers, one of the oldest wineries in Andalucia and therefore in Spain. At the winery, you will taste 4 different wines and enjoy a delicious tapas lunch of traditional local products such as cured meats, cheeses and homemade patés.



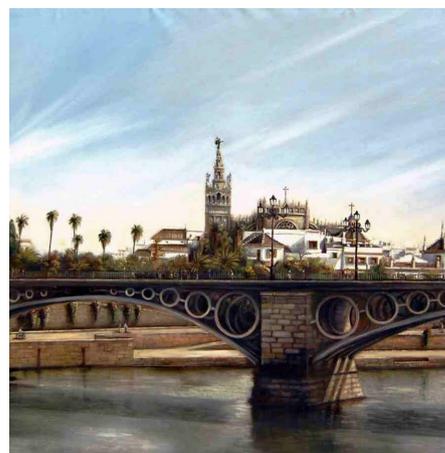
After lunch, you will be transferred to your hotel in Sevilla (approx. 2hrs drive/siesta...)

The Archaeological Ensemble of Mérida has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1993. Located in Extremadura, it has its origins in the year 25 BC, when Augustus completed the conquest of the North of Hispania and founded the Colony of Augusta Emerita. The city was created as an idealised model of Rome and was the capital of Lusitania, the western-most province of the Roman Empire. Following Diocletian's reform, it functioned as the capital of the Diocese of Hispania. It was also temporarily the royal seat of two Germanic peoples - the Suebi and the Visigoths - and under the Arabic dominion, Mérida was one of the three border capitals of Al-Andalus, together with Toledo and Zaragoza, ensuring control of the western part of the Iberian peninsula. The modern city of Mérida has been built on top of Emerita; yet, archaeological remains are well preserved and still evidence the Roman city



Free evening in Sevilla

Free evening to get acquainted to the city at your leisure. We will provide you with maps, tips and recommendations for local bars & restaurants



DAY 6: Sevilla

Morning: Sevilla guided tour

Your art historian guide will meet you at the lobby of your hotel for an introductory walking tour of approx. 3h to discover the main sites of the historic Sevilla (including the Cathedral, the Royal Alcazar /Palace and the Santa Cruz Jewish quarter). This is the perfect way to explore Seville's historical centre with a knowledgeable private guide. In just a half day you'll be able to visit the most important monuments of the city and learn about the part they played in the history of Sevilla and Spain. This tour includes 'skip the line' access to the Cathedral and the Alcazar so there is no need to queue, all entrance fees are also included.

Seville is the capital and largest city of the autonomous community of Andalusia. It is situated on the plain of the River Guadalquivir. The metropolitan population of about 1.5 million makes it the fourth largest city in Spain. Its Old Town, the third largest in Europe with an area of 4 km2, contains three UNESCO World Heritage Sites: the Alcázar palace complex, the Cathedral and the General Archive of the Indies. The Seville harbour, located about 80 kilometres (50 miles) from the Atlantic Ocean, is the only river port in Spain.

Sevilla-Free afternoon

Free afternoon in Sevilla at your own leisure. Our recommended places to visit and some things to do are:

- **Jardines de Murillo**
- **Plaza de España** (representation of the Iberoamerican Exhibition from 1929)
- **María Luisa Park**
- **Hotel Alfonso XIII**: excellent example of the Neo Mudejar style built in 1928 for the Ibero American exhibition. The building belongs to the Sevilla city council as a protected monument so you don't need to be a guest in the hotel to take a look and enjoy a drink in the courtyard or bars.

Evening Flamenco Show & Dinner

Tonight you will enjoy an evening of art & emotion at one of the most emblematic 'tablaos' in Sevilla. Witness the excitement and 'duende' of Flamenco first hand, and enjoy a delectable à la carte dinner with dishes of high Andalusian cuisine.



DAY 7:

Aracena Natural Park

Jabugo ham experience (approx. 9h)

Full day trip to visit the birthplace of Acorn-Fed 100% Iberico Ham in the Sierra de Aracena.

Here you will be able to see first-hand the secrets of one of Spain's gastronomic icons.

Discover the artisanal process that has been applied for over 130 years. You will be led by one of our experts who will allow you to experience the passionate world of Acorn Fed 100% Ibérico Ham, an authentic national treasure of Spain. This experience will start with a visit to unique landscape of the Spanish Dehesa habitat, where the black pigs are released and bred in complete freedom from November through to March. You will be right in the heart of the Sierra de Aracena Natural Park, a Unesco protected Biosphere Reserve. Afterwards, you will be visiting the curing cellars of one of the most prestigious Iberico Ham producers of the whole Sierra de Aracena in the worldwide-known town of Jabugo. The cellars have an ideal location at 660 m above the Atlantic Ocean with the perfect weather conditions which bring this type of hams the exceptional characteristics that define them. You will learn about the history of the cellars, which dated back to 1879. In the cellar facilities you will also find a museum room displaying some interesting images and videos to complete the educational part of the visit. After playing an enjoyable interactive game in which you can test your knowledge acquired during the visit, you will have the opportunity at last to taste the delicatessen. During the tasting, one of our great master carvers will show you how to cut the perfect slice, a thin morsel, enhancing the nuances and sensations that will flood your senses. A truly unforgettable experience for your senses!! To complete this Iberian products tasting, nothing better than trying the grilled meats at one of the local restaurants in Jabugo, where you can be delighted by sampling some of this region's most delectable products (including seasonal vegetables like wild mushrooms or chestnuts)

In the afternoon you will be driven to the picturesque town of Aracena where you will have the opportunity to visit the spectacular "Gruta de la Maravillas" (the Cave of Wonder). The audio guided tour of Las Maravillas Cave follows a circular route of around 1km, and takes around 45 minutes. The visit includes two of the three levels of the cavity, at temperatures of between 16-19 degrees and relative humidity of 98%.

After visiting the caves, head back to Sevilla where you will have the rest of the evening free to enjoy at your leisure

The Cave of Wonders is a network of limestone caverns. This natural underground monument is situated under the hill crowned by the medieval castle and Priory Church of la Señora del Mayor Dolor and has been open since 1914. The scenery of these caves has formed over many thousands of years through a process known as "karstification" - the slow erosion of limestone, gradually dissolved by carbonic acid, producing fissures, sinkholes, underground streams, and caverns.



DAY 8: Sevilla & Cordoba

Free morning in Sevilla

Leisurely morning in Sevilla to do some shopping, visit some museums or simply relax. Some optional activities such as cooking class, tapas tour, river cruise or a bike tour can be arranged as well

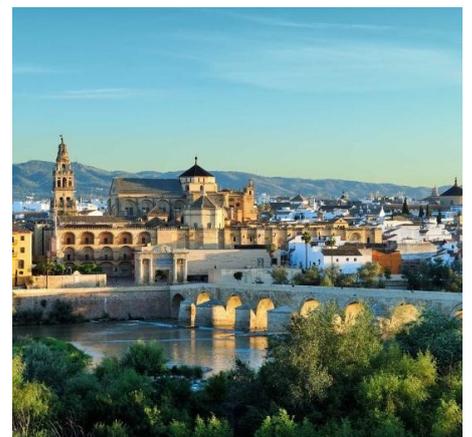
High-speed train to Cordoba

Private transfer from your hotel in Sevilla to the train station where you will take the high-speed train to Cordoba (Only 45 minutes!). Upon arrival in Cordoba, your private driver will take you to your hotel in the historic city centre

Afternoon: Cordoba guided tour

Your art historian guide will take you for an introductory walking tour of approx. 3h to discover the main sites of this UNESCO listed city of Cordoba (the Mosque/Cathedral, the Jewish quarter, the Synagogue and the Royal Alcazar/Palace).

Córdoba is a city in the southern Spanish region of Andalusia, and the capital of the province of Córdoba. It was an important Roman city and a major Islamic centre in the Middle Ages. It's best known for La Mezquita, an immense mosque dating from 784 A.D., featuring a columned prayer hall and older Byzantine mosaics. After it became a Catholic church in 1236, a Renaissance-style nave was added in the 17th century



DAY 9: Montilla

Montilla olive oil & wine region day trip (approx. 7h)

On this exciting tour we will venture out to explore the beautiful countryside and hills of Montilla (still a very unspoiled wine region in the South of Córdoba). This tour is designed for curious and adventurous wine lovers, amateurs and experts alike! Your private driver/tour guide will pick you up from your hotel and will take you to Montilla (approx. 40' ride). Olive oil, gastronomy and wine are part of Andalucía's popular wisdom. Through this tour, delve into the Montilla region to learn all about the fascinating world of olive oil and wine.

Your first stop will be family-run olive oil mill where you will learn the full process of olive oil making. You will visit the expansive groves of this family property, learn about the different characteristics, culinary uses and health benefits, taste two of their delicious varieties along with freshly baked bread also made by the family.

The second experience of the day is a visit to a local family-run boutique winery located right in the heart of the Sierra de Montilla, a stunning rural landscape with endless vineyards and rolling hills. Upon arrival, you will be welcomed by a true passionate viticulturist who will take you to the family vineyards to tell you about the history of this ancestry winery and the importance of the landmark surrounding. Next, you will be guided into the wine cellar, named by the family as "Sacristia", a remarkable sacred space where they keep the oldest wines of their entire production. On this educational tour, you will learn the fascinating facts about the unique grape variety that only grows in Montilla, the popular and worldwide known "Pedro Ximenez". You will also learn about the entire process and aging system of these unique dry and sweet wines, probably the oldest in the whole of Spain. The visit will end with a delicious tasting session including the 5 different varieties produced in the area: Joven, Fino, Amontillado, Oloroso and Pedro Ximenez dulce. Raise your glass for a toast to a great wine experience! Your olive oil and wine experience will be completed with a lovely pairing lunch at one of the most emblematic taverns in town.

After lunch, it's back to your hotel in Cordoba where you will have the free evening at your leisure

Cordoba-Free afternoon & evening

Free afternoon & evening in Cordoba at your leisure. Make sure that you don't miss a visit to:

- **The Viana Palace** (a beautiful manor house with stunning courtyards and gardens)
- **Julio Romero Museum** (a local painter's art collection)
- **The Roman Bridge** and The Calahorra Tower (Al Andalus museum)



DAY 10: Los Pedroches

Los Pedroches full day trip (approx. 7h)

Today, you will discover the unique landscape of the Spanish "Dehesa" habitat where the black pigs are released and bred in complete freedom from November through February. This is a very exclusive experience for an enjoyable outdoor day including: Iberian ham slicing workshop lead by a master craftsman, ham tasting and homemade lunch (grilled vegetables, beef and pork, fresh tomato salad and traditional desert)

The name Pedroches derives from the Spanish word for stone (Piedra), referring in this case to the granit that is abundant in the subsoil and which has traditionally been used by masons in the area to build churches, late-Gothic chapels and houses with elaborate arches.

Los Pedroches natural reserve is located in the Sierra Morena area at the Northern end of the Córdoba province.

Free evening in Cordoba

Free evening to further explore this ancient city at your leisure. We will provide you with maps, tips and recommendations for local bars & restaurants.



DAY 11: Granada

Morning: private transfer to Granada

After check-out, private transfer from your hotel to Granada (approx. 2hs)

Early afternoon: Alhambra guided tour

Meet your art historian guide outside the Mapa Mural (Wall map) at the main ticket sales office by the Generalife entrance gate for a private guided tour of around 3 hrs to discover the magnificent Moorish architecture of the **Alhambra Palace** and the beautiful Generalife gardens. This tour includes entrance tickets and 'skip the line' access to the different areas of the Alhambra so there is no need to queue. The Alhambra is Granada's – and Europe's – love letter to Moorish culture, a place where fountains trickle, leaves rustle, and ancient spirits seem to mysteriously linger. Part palace, part fort, part World Heritage site, part lesson in medieval architecture, the Alhambra has long enchanted a never-ending line of expectant visitors.

Granada-Free evening

Free afternoon & evening to explore Granada at your own leisure. Here are some of our recommendations:

- **Alcaiceria** (small zook)
- **Plaza Bib-Ramblas**
- **Plaza del Carmen** and the City Hall



DAY 12: La Alpujarra

La Alpujarra full day trip (aprx 10h)

Today you will discover the wild and picturesque region of the Alpujarra (Sierra Nevada Natural Park).

Your private driver will pick you up from your hotel in Granada and will take you to the village of Pampaneira (approx. 1.5h drive) where you will meet your local nature guide at “El Centro de Interpretation de Pampaneira” (the tourism office of the town). From there, your guide will take you to explore the most picturesque villages of this beautiful area for the rest of the morning. This 3hr tour includes some light hiking and a spectacular scenic drive, passing through the most impressive viewpoints of the whole Sierra Nevada NP. After a short introduction to the area and a walk around Pampaneira, you will be driven to the upper town, Capileira (only 4 km North). This is where your down hill hike along the Poqueiera ravine will start. You will pass by Bubi3n, where you will stop to visit a local weaving factory and will continue down to Pampaneira, where your hike and tour will end. Your guide will then take you to our favourite place in town, a little “bodega” and deli shop where you can taste some “Jam3n Serrano” from Tr3velez (a different variety from the Iberian ham you have been previously tasting on this tour). You will also taste some local cheeses and craft beers (one drink and tapa is part of the cost of this experience). Afterwards, if you are still hungry your guide will show you the best places in town to have lunch. In the afternoon you’ll have a couple of hours free time in Pampaneira to visit the chocolate factory of Abuela Ili or maybe have some coffee or homemade juices at Europa Caf3 in the Plaza.

At about 17:00 you will be transferred back to your hotel in Granada.

This region of mountain villages known as La Alpujarra clings to the southern flanks of the Sierra Nevada, cloven by deep, sheltered valleys and gorges which run down towards the Mediterranean.

The Alpujarra, as it is popularly known, in the singular, is famous throughout Spain because of its unique mini-ecology. Its terraced farmlands are constantly watered by the melting snow from above, constituting a high-altitude oasis of greenery which stands in dramatic contrast to the arid foothills below. The cultural interest of the region lies in its fifty-odd villages, which were the last stronghold of the Spanish Muslims, or Moors. Soon after the Castilians took Granada in 1492, all the city’s Moors were forced to convert to Christianity.



DAY 13: Madrid

Morning: Flight and transfer to Madrid

Private transfer to Granada airport to take an internal flight to Madrid (approx. 1 h duration)
Upon arrival at Madrid airport, private transfer to your hotel in the city centre.

Afternoon: Madrid guided tour

Your art historian guide will meet you at the lobby of your hotel for an Introductory walking tour of around 4hrs to discover the highlights of Madrid. This tour is focussed on the Hapsburg and Bourbon legacy and includes a guided visit to the magnificent Royal Palace.

Madrid, Spain's central capital, is a city of elegant boulevards and expansive, manicured parks such as the Buen Retiro. It's renowned for its rich repositories of European art, including the Prado Museum's works by Goya, Velázquez and other Spanish masters. The heart of old Hapsburg Madrid is the portico-lined Plaza Mayor, and nearby is the baroque Royal Palace and Armory, displaying historic weaponry.

Free evening in Madrid

First evening to get acquainted with this cosmopolitan city and the vibrant atmosphere that Madrid will offer over your stay. We will provide with maps, tips and recommendations for good places to go for dinner so you will feel as much as a local as possible.



DAY 14: Madrid

Madrid-Free day

Free day to explore other sites of Madrid at your leisure. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Prado Museum** (We can pre-book "skip the line" tickets for you if you are interested)
- **Reina Sofia Museum**
- **Thyssen Museum**
- **Retiro Park** (the green lung of Madrid)
- **The Crystal Palace** (a beautiful glass structure from 1887 located in the heart of Retiro Park)

OPTIONAL: Prado Museum-guided visit

This is a 2 hour private guided tour of the Madrid's Prado Museum to learn about the stories and figures behind the art. The most characterising pieces from diverse periods in history will be noted; starting from the Renaissance all the way to the height of Impressionism.



DAY 15:

End of your trip :(

We will arrange for a private driver to take you to the airport for your flight home :

Unfortunately all good things must come to an end...

We hope you enjoy your stay with us here in Spain.

Hasta pronto!



PRICE & INCLUSIONS

Iberico ham trail



ACCOMMODATION

At Just Explore we understand one of the biggest worries when booking a holiday is the standard for your hotel. That's why we only use pre-viewed character hotels with great locations to help you relax and enjoy your stay with us.

Your accommodation will be made up of:

4/5 Star hotels with double rooms
Breakfasts included - All centrally located
Air conditioning - En-suite bath rooms

TRANSPORT (all included)

Luxury, AC vehicle
All private transfers from airport /railway station to hotel and vice versa

All train and flights mentioned in the above itinerary.

All private transfers from town to town mentioned in the above itinerary

Guided Visits & Tours (all entrance fees included)

Salamanca - City tour
Caceres - City tour
Mérida - City tour
Córdoba - City tour
Seville - City tour
Granada - Alhambra
Madrid - city tour

MEALS & SHOWS (all included)

- Flamenco show & dinner (Sevilla)
- Olive oil, wine tasting & lunch (Montilla)
- HAM EXPERIENCES (drivers, guides, tastings and lunch)
- Day trip to La Alberca,
- Salamanca Day trip to Jabugo, Huelva
- Day trip to Los Pedroches, Córdoba
- Day trip to La Alpujarra

Assistance During Your Trip

Full support & assistance on hand 24hrs/day

As with all our clients we will provide you with maps, a list of recommended places to visit, bars & restaurants etc. to help you enjoy the authentic Spain whilst you're exploring at your leisure.

Medical Insurance

We recommend that all travelers take out there own private medical insurance whilst traveling to avoid any unforeseen medical expenses...

Please Note:

The above itinerary may change at any time due to circumstances beyond our control. We will duly advise of any such changes as soon as possible.

** Subject to our standard terms & conditions
(full details on separate sheet)*

PRICE* (Per person)

Depends on the number of travelers and dates
Please enquire for further details



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