



EXAMPLE ITINERARY

BEST OF SPAIN & PORTUGAL

Explore the treasures of the Iberian peninsula

Looking for rich culture, fascinating history, unbeatable weather and incredible gastronomy? This fantastic tour of the Iberian Peninsula has all that and more...

We've handpicked our favourite locations in both Spain and Portugal which we believe perfectly highlight both the similarities and many differences between these two beautiful neighbouring countries. Starting in Madrid, Spain's exciting capital, and ending in Porto, Portugal's famous fortified wine producing city, you'll cross through incredible Andalucía, to explore the Moorish and royal treasures of Granada, Córdoba and Sevilla where you'll also experience the delights of whitewashed Andalusian hill towns, prancing horses, tasty tapas, and fine sherry wines. Then, it's on to Portugal; starting in lively Lisbon, you'll get a taste for the culture and delicious cuisine of this fascinating country. You'll then head on to Coimbra for a healthy dose of history and impressive architecture before ending in the proud city of Porto. On the way, you'll explore some of Portugal's lesser known, beautiful and culturally rich destinations such as Sintra, Nazaré and Aveiro amongst many others.

Let yourself be seduced and enchanted by this singular and gorgeous corner of the world on this 18-day Best of Spain & Portugal tour.

If you'd like to extend or adjust this itinerary, we'll be happy to customise it for you! We've included some suggestions at the end of this itinerary for inspiration.

SUMMARY (18 days)

Start: Madrid
End: Porto
3 N Madrid
2 N Cordoba
2 N Granada
3 N Sevilla
3 N Lisbon
2 N Coimbra
2 N Porto

What's Included?

- All private transfers
- Hotels (4-star)
- Breakfasts & all meals mentioned in the itinerary
- Guided tours with fluent English speaking guides. (including: skip the line access)

What's not Included?

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

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



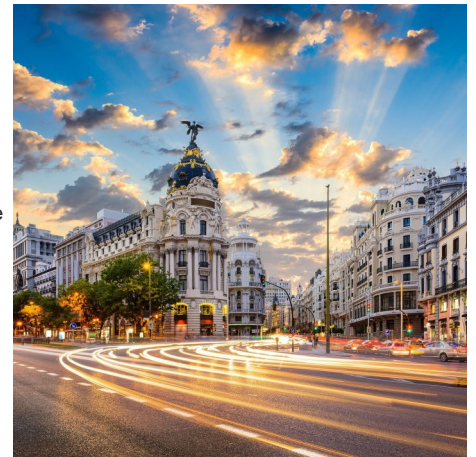
ITINERARY

DAY 1: Bienvenido! Welcome to Spain's Capital

Arrival and first day at your leisure

Upon arrival in Madrid, we will arrange for a private transfer to your hotel in the city centre. First afternoon & evening free to get acquainted with this cosmopolitan city and the vibrant atmosphere that it will offer over your stay.

We will provide you with maps, tips, and recommendations for good places to go for dinner & drinks.



DAY 2: Exploring the treasures of Madrid

Morning: Madrid guided tour (aprx. 4h)

Your art historian guide will meet you in the lobby of your hotel for an introductory walking tour* to discover the highlights of Madrid.

On this private tour, you will explore both **Hapsburg and Bourbon dynasties' legacies**, spanning the 16th to the 19th centuries. In the Madrid of the Habsburgs, you will learn about the development of the area around the **Plaza Mayor, the Casa de la Villa square, and the Puerta del Sol**, which marked the eastern gate of the city under their reign. The Bourbons expanded the boundary of the city beyond the Puerta del Sol to the Prado Museum and Retiro Park. The Bourbon dynasty was **inspired by the court of Versailles** and you can see the French influence in the buildings they commissioned, including the **Royal Palace, with its elegant Plaza del Oriente and Royal Theater, the Bank of Spain building**, the beautiful **Cibeles and Neptune fountains, and the world-renowned Prado Museum**.

This tour includes "skip the line" tickets** and a guided visit to the magnificent Royal Palace***

**The majority of the tour is done on foot but occasionally to avoid walking long distances and to optimize the time spent on-site visits, public transportation is sometimes needed (either taxi or metro). The cost of this public transportation is already included and no extra fees are added to the guided tour.*

*** Being a government building, the visit to the Royal Palace is subject to availability as it is sometimes closed for official events.*

Afternoon & evening free to explore other sites of Madrid at your leisure.

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 Habsburg dynasty (los Austrias) ruled Spain during its Golden Age and established Madrid as the capital of the country. During their reign in the 16th and 17th centuries, the old center of the city was transformed with the construction of many of the city's historic buildings around the area of the Plaza Mayor. The Bourbon dynasty reigned after the Habsburgs, and they continued the transformation and expansion of the city. They are responsible for commissioning some of Madrid's most iconic buildings, including the Royal Palace, the Cibeles and Neptune fountains and the Prado Museum.

Meals included: Breakfast



DAY 3: Imperial & Medieval Toledo

Full day trip (aprx 8 h)

Take the high-speed train to Toledo (just 30 min from Madrid). From your accommodation, you could either take a taxi to Madrid's Atocha railway station, which would be a 10-minute ride or go walking, which would take aprx. 15 minutes)

Upon arrival in Toledo, your art historian guide will meet you at the railway station and will take you on a short panoramic tour of the city in a taxi, stopping along the way at the most spectacular viewpoints.

This will be followed by a 3.5-hour walking tour of the historic centre. During this tour, you will visit the Cathedral, widely considered one of the high points of Gothic art given the great superimposition of styles in the building and a large number of renowned artists who left their mark on the church: from Pedro Berruguete to Enrique Egás, Petrus Petri and Juan Guas. On its main facade, the outstanding feature is the doorway, made up of three doors: Infierno (Hell), Perdón (Forgiveness) and Juicio (Judgement). The exterior is topped by the two cathedral towers, one of them in flamboyant Gothic style and the other in Gothic-Renaissance.

You will discover the beautiful Jewish quarter where you'll visit the El Tránsito synagogue which houses one of the best Mudejar coffered ceilings in Toledo, along with walls richly decorated with geometrical and botanical designs as well as Hebrew inscriptions. Nowadays, it is where the Sephardic Museum is located.

You will also get to visit the San Juan de Los Reyes Monastery, a superb example of flamboyant Gothic style outstanding for its great ornamentation and for its cloister, of great sculptural value.

After the guided tour, you will have some free time to have lunch (cost not included). We will provide you with our local recommendations for good places to eat the specialties of Toledo.

During your free time in Toledo you could also stroll the narrow streets of the old town and visit some other interesting sites on your own (i.e. the San Bartolome Church to admire the famous Greco painting "El Entierro del Conde Ordaz", The Synagogue of Santa Maria la Blanca or the Mezquita de la Luz) before taking a taxi back to the train station.

You will take the return train to Madrid

Back in Madrid, you can enjoy the **evening** by further exploring the city at your own leisure or by revisiting your favorite spots.

Toledo is one of the Spanish cities with the greatest wealth of monuments. Known as the "city of the three cultures", because Christians, Arabs, and Jews lived together here for centuries. Behind its walls, Toledo preserves an artistic and cultural legacy in the form of churches, palaces, fortresses, mosques, and synagogues. This great diversity of artistic styles makes the old quarter of the capital of Castile - La Mancha a real open-air museum, which has led to it being declared a World Heritage Site. If there is one person's name that defines Toledo it is that of El Greco. His House-Museum, a palace with the atmosphere of the period, exhibits some of the best works of the painter who made the city world-famous.

Meals included: Breakfast



DAY 4: The ancient city of Cordoba

Morning: Madrid to Cordoba, High speed train

Take the high-speed train to Cordoba (Only 1:45hours!).

Late morning : Cordoba guided tour (aprx. 3h)

Your art historian guide will meet you at the lobby of your hotel to take you for an introductory walking tour of aprx. 3 hours to discover the main* sites of **Cordoba, a Unesco listed city**.

The visit will, of course, include the famed **Mosque/Cathedral (La Mezquita)**, a monumental site which encapsulates this city's identity like few other buildings can, with the layers of its beautifully complex history visibly integrated in its walls and bearing the marks of the various and diverse cultures and civilizations that helped shape this fascinating city.

You will also discover the **Jewish quarter**, a quaint and charming network of pretty narrow lanes that will lead you to the Synagogue a unique building in Andalusia and **one of the three best preserved Medieval synagogues in the whole of Spain**.

This wonderful tour will end at the **Royal Alcázar/Palace**, once the residence of Roman governors and Moorish caliphs, and finally, in 1328 the Cordovan home of the Spanish kings.

**All skip the line tickets will be provided by your local guide on the day of the tour.*

***On Mondays, the Royal Alcazar, the Synagogue and all museums in Cordoba are closed. On Sundays and holidays, opening hours are shorter.*

Free afternoon & evening to explore the city at your leisure.

We will provide you with maps, tips, and recommendations for local bars & restaurants.

Córdoba is a city in the southern Spanish region of Andalusia, and the capital of the province of Córdoba. A great cultural reference point in Europe, this ancient city has been declared a World Heritage Site and contains a mixture of the diverse cultures that have settled it throughout history. Very few places in the world can boast of having been the capital of a Roman province (Hispania Ulterior), the capital of an Arab State (Al-Andalus) and a Caliphate. The city famously houses the Mezquita, a symbol of the worldly, sophisticated culture that flourished here more than a millennium ago when Córdoba was western Europe's biggest, most cultured city. Such splendour is palpable in the intellectual wealth of this city, that has seen the birth of figures like Seneca, Averroes, and Maimonides (Cordoba has in fact erected a life-size statue in honour of this physician and philosopher considered one of the greatest Jewish thinkers of all time).

Meals included: Breakfast



DAY 5: The colours & flavours of Andalusia

Full day trip to Montilla wine region (aprx. 7h)

On this exciting tour, we will venture out into the countryside to explore the beautiful hills of Montilla (still a very unspoiled wine region 40 mins south of Córdoba). Olive oil, gastronomy, and wine are part of Andalusia's popular wisdom and with this tour, you will delve into the fascinating world of olive oil and wine.

Your first stop will be a **family-run olive oil mill** where you will discover the full process of olive oil making. You will enjoy a tour of the family groves and learn about the different characteristics, culinary uses and health benefits of olive oil.

After a visit to the mill and the on-site museum, you will enjoy a very interesting short video about oil production followed by a tasting of two of their delicious varieties along with **freshly baked bread made by the very same 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 truly passionate viticulturist who will take you to the family vineyards to tell you about the history of this ancestral winery.

Next, you will be guided into the wine cellar, named by the family as "Sacristia", a remarkable sacred space where their oldest wines are kept.

On this educational **tour**, you will learn about the unique grape variety that grows exclusively in Montilla, the popular and worldwide known "Pedro Ximenez" and the entire process & aging system of these unique dry and sweet wines, a process that is probably the oldest in Spain.

The visit will end with a **delicious tasting** of some of these varieties **paired with a selection of tapas** showcasing some of the region's best products.

Raise your glass for a toast to a great wine experience!

After lunch, private transfer to your hotel in Cordoba where you will have the evening free to enjoy at your leisure.

*Did you know that Spain is the **largest producer of olive oil** in the world and that 80% of Spanish production is made in Andalusia? The history of olive oil takes us back to the Phoenician and Greek civilizations settled in the Iberian Peninsula over 3,000 years ago. The importance of olive oil to Spanish culture cannot be overstated; locals actually refer to it as "liquid gold". Spain is also home to an abundance of grape varieties; making it **the third-largest wine producers in the world**.*

*Home of the famed "Gran Capitan", Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, a Spanish general who fought in the Conquest of Granada and the Italian Wars, **Montilla** is the center of the Designation of Origin wine zone known as Montilla-Moriles. The landscape here is dry and the soil is a blinding white Albariza (white marl composed of clay, calcium and marine fossils). Its excellent moisture retention is very significant as this area is hotter than almost anywhere else in Spain. The wineries of the Montilla-Moriles Wine Route show the peculiarities of the development of these wines where the undisputed star is the Pedro Ximénez grape variety and in which the biological aging (for the Fino wine) and the oxidative aging (for the Amontillados, Olorosos and Pedro Ximénez) take part following the system of criaderas and soleras.*

Meals included: Breakfast & lunch



DAY 6: Úbeda & Baeza: Purely Baroque

Full day trip including private driver & guide (length: aprx 10h)

After you've checked out, your private driver will pick you from your hotel and will drive you to Baeza (aprx. 1.5h drive)

You will meet your art historian guide who will take you for a guided visit around Baeza (aprx. 2h). This town visit will also include a tour of their famed **Cathedral** which was originally built on a Roman temple. It later became a mosque, and in the reign of Ferdinand III it converted to Christianity under the advocacy of San Isidoro.

You will then be transferred to Úbeda (6 km away).

After a short break for **lunch** (cost not included) at one of the most traditional restaurants in Úbeda, where you will have the opportunity to try the delicious local homemade cuisine (will be indicated by your guide), your guide will meet you and will take you for a 2.5-hour walking tour in the old town including **the main monuments of Renaissance and Baroque architecture** such as the Capilla del Salvador Chapel which represents the first architectural commission obtained by Vandelvira, who went on to endow Úbeda, Baeza and Jaén with most of their outstanding Renaissance buildings.

You will also visit the awe-inspiring **Water Synagogue** which features a Women's Gallery and the Ritual Bath (Mikveh). Discovered by chance by a businessman during a real estate project, it is thought to date back to the 14th century.

After the guided tour, private transfer to your hotel in Granada (aprx. 1.5h) where you'll have the **evening free** to enjoy at your leisure.

The Renaissance Monumental Ensembles of UBEDA and BAEZA were declared World Heritage by UNESCO in 2003. Located in the very heart of the province of Jaén, they are Truly unique examples of all the grandeur of the Renaissance in Andalusia in the 16th and 17th centuries. The clear Italian influences to their urban model as well as the works of Andrés de Vandelvira, one of the most prestigious architects of the time, can be witnessed throughout the region.

Úbeda, the queen - Green olive groves mark the edge of this historic town. Plaza de Vázquez de Molina Square is home to the Úbeda's most representative examples of Renaissance architecture. The El Salvador Chapel, Santa María de los Reales Alcázares Church and Las Cadenas Palace will take you back in time to the most grandiose days of Úbeda's history. An amazing architectural site, where you can admire beautiful Plateresque façades, altarpieces by the great artist Alonso Berruguete.

Baeza, the lady - Baeza is a charming town with an incredible Renaissance heritage, whose most valuable treasures are gathered around the cathedral, a markedly Plateresque building. In its diamond-shaped points, flower ornamentation, braids, and pinnacles we see an artistic trend unique in all of Europe. The Plaza del Pópulo, formed by the Casa del Pópulo and the Fuente de los Leones fountain, should not be missed, nor the old abattoir. Many other palaces and ancestral homes will guide you through this town, the birthplace of nobles and aristocrats.

Meals included: Breakfast



DAY 7: The wonders of the Alhambra

Guided visit with private guide (length: aprx. 2.5h)

You will enjoy a guided tour* of aprx. 2.5 hrs during which you will **discover one of the most brilliant jewels of universal architecture**: the magnificent Moorish Alhambra Palace and its beautiful Generalife gardens.

The Alhambra is a series of palaces and gardens built under the Nazari Dynasty in the 14th century. This mighty compound of buildings – including the summer palace called Generalife, with its fountains and gardens - stands at the foot of Spain's highest mountain range, the Sierra Nevada, and overlooks the city below and the fertile plain of Granada.

We recommend having **lunch** (cost not included) at the Parador to enjoy their beautiful terrace which overlooks the Generalife gardens.

You will have the rest of the **afternoon & evening free** to enjoy at your leisure.

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. The Generalife was intended to reflect how paradise is described in the Koran ("shaded, leafy garden refreshed by running water where the fortunate ones may take their rest under tall canopies).

Meals included: Breakfast



DAY 8: Past & present splendours of Sevilla

Morning transfer to Sevilla (aprx 2h 45mins)

Your private driver will take you to your hotel in Sevilla.

Afternoon walking city tour with private guide (Length: 3h)

The perfect way to explore Seville's old town's UNESCO World Heritage Sites and learn about the important role they played in the history of the city.

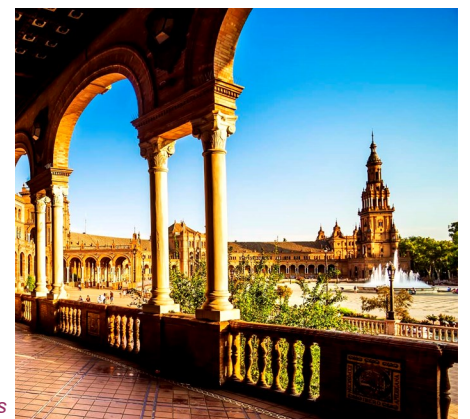
Your art historian guide will meet you at the lobby of your hotel for an introductory walking tour of aprx 3h to discover the main historic sites in Sevilla. The tour will include a visit to the Roman Catholic Cathedral of Sevilla, **the world's largest Gothic Church**, whose constructions lasted for over a century. You will then head to the Royal **Alcazar/Palace***, a beautiful example of Mudéjar architecture in the Iberian Peninsula. The tour will take you through the city's **Santa Cruz Jewish quarter**, this labyrinth of narrow streets and alleys designed to provide protection from the oppressive sun of the Sevillian summer are scattered with lovely green and lively plazas.

** Subject to availability: Being an active residence of the Royal Family, the Alcazar Palace is occasionally closed to the public. For security reasons, the information is never provided ahead of time.*

You'll have the **evening free** to enjoy at your leisure.

Some cities blast you away, others slowly win you over. Sevilla disarms and seduces you. The irresistible city of Sevilla, Andalusia's capital, is located on the shores of the River Guadalquivir. Its population of about 1.5 million makes it the fourth-largest city in Spain. Its historic center, the third-largest in Europe with an area of 4 km2, contains three UNESCO World Heritage Sites: the fabulous Mudéjar Alcázar palace, the Gothic Cathedral and the General Archive of the Indies. Lorded over by a colossal Gothic cathedral, the old town is an intoxicating mix of resplendent Mudéjar palaces, baroque churches and winding medieval lanes. Flamenco clubs keep the intimacy and intensity of this centuries-old tradition alive whilst aristocratic mansions recall the city's past as a showcase Moorish capital and, later, a 16th-century metropolis rich on the back of New World trade. But what is captivating about the city, as much as the monuments and works of art, is its essential romantic quality, the greatest city of Carmen, Don Juan and Figaro...

Meals included: Breakfast



DAY 9: The essence of the Andalusian capital

You will have the **morning & afternoon free** to enjoy this beautiful city at your leisure.

We will provide you with good recommendations for places to eat, drink and tips for city walks or any entertainment/events happening during your travel dates.

Flamenco performance and dinner

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 (all drinks are included).

With more than 40 years of experience, this "Tablao" offers the purest Flamenco you can find in Andalusia. Probably the best place in Sevilla to live the excitement and duende of flamenco. This show features up to 15 of the most professional flamenco artists in the whole of Spain. Excitement and enjoyment are guaranteed!



DAY 10: Ronda & the White Villages

Full day trip with private driver & guide (aprx 10hrs)

Your private driver/guide will pick you up from your hotel and will drive you to the picturesque town of **Ronda** where you will have an introductory walking tour of aprx 2.5 hours including the old town, the cliffs, the New bridge and the bullring. Later, you will be taken on a **scenic drive through the spectacular Grazalema natural park** where you will admire the charming towns of Grazalema and Zahara de la Sierra.

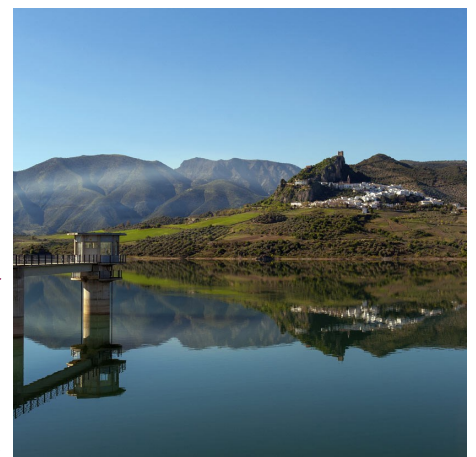
We highly recommend having **lunch** at a very nice restaurant overlooking the Zahara lake, called Al Lago (cost is not included but if you are interested we can make the reservation for you).

After lunch, you can stroll the narrow streets of the Moorish old town of Zahara and climb to the top of the Arab castle before heading back to your hotel in Sevilla's historic center.

***Ronda** is a mountaintop city that sits in the heart of the Serrania de Ronda. Set dramatically above a deep gorge and surrounded by lush river valleys, it is a place that is absolutely breathtaking. The gorge, El Tajo, separates the city's 15th-century new town from its Moorish old town. Puente Nuevo, a stone bridge spanning the gorge, has a lookout offering stunning views and the new town's Plaza de Toros, a legendary 18th-century bullring, is one of the city's most recognizable landmarks.*

***Grazalema**, a pretty town whose immaculately kept cobbled streets are lined with whitewashed houses adorned with wrought-iron rejas on their windows and plant pots spilling over with colorful flowers. Grazalema is the most popular base for hikes into the Parque Natural Sierra de Grazalema. It's also an age-old producer of blankets, honey, cheese, meat-filled stews, and an adrenaline-filled bull-running festival, it truly has its own special charm.*

***Zahara de la Sierra**, is quite simply a place that takes your breath away. It is, without a doubt, one of the most picturesque of all the Pueblos Blancos (white villages) in the Sierra de Grazalema, if not in the whole of Andalusia. The town enjoys an extraordinary setting, at the foot of the Sierra del Jaral and perched atop a hill surrounded by the turquoise waters of the Zahara-el Gastor reservoir. Standing guard above the village are the remains of a Moorish castle that commands views both over the surrounding countryside and the white-washed village beneath.*



Meals included: Breakfast

DAY 11: On the way to Lisbon

Morning

Your private driver will pick you up from your hotel and will drive you to Lisbon. On the way, you have the choice between the following two side trips:

Option 1: Evora day trip

Your private driver will pick you and up and will take you to the picturesque Portuguese town of Evora (aprx. 3.5h drive) the capital of Alentejo, the largest and most unspoilt region of Portugal.

You will meet up with your local guide for a 3.5h Cultural and gastronomic experience in Evora, one of Portugal's most beautifully preserved medieval towns. You'll taste local specialties and wines as you explore this beautiful city.

After your tour, private transfer to your hotel in Lisbon (aprx. 1.5h)

Évora is enchanting. Inside the 14th-century walls the city's narrow, winding lanes lead to striking architectural works: an elaborate medieval cathedral and cloisters; the Templo Romano (Roman temple); and a picturesque town square. Évora is also a lively university town, and its many attractive restaurants serve up hearty Alentejan cuisine.



Option 2: Iberian ham experience

On this day trip, you will discover the secrets of one of Spain's gastronomic icons by experiencing the artisanal process used for over 130 years. Our experts will lead you into the passionate world of world-renowned 100% Acorn-Fed Iberic Ham, an authentic national Spanish treasure.

After checkout, drive to a Jamon producer in *Corteconcepción*, a little town within the Aracena Natural Park (aprx 1.5h from Sevilla).

Your experience will begin with a visit to the **unique Spanish Dehesa habitat**, right in the heart of the **Sierra de Aracena Natural Park**, a Unesco protected Biosphere Reserve. This is where the **free-range black Iberian pigs are raised and are allowed to roam freely** from the month of November through March. You will enjoy a lovely walk through this beautiful landscape of Cork trees and Holm oaks during which you will learn about this singular pig breed, their environment, as well as the production guidelines established by the regional government to guarantee both the safety and quality of the Hams.



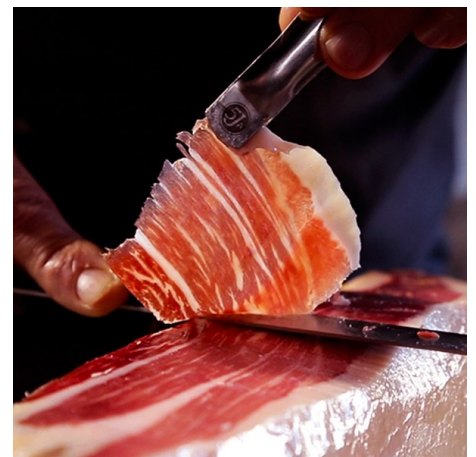
After this very pleasant and educational outdoor experience, it's on to **the curing cellars** where you will discover how the hams are prepared and how Sierras de Aracena's **unique environment** contributes to enhancing the flavor of the hams.

Time to taste and enjoy the end result!! You will be able to taste **two types of freshly carved Hams**: 50% Iberian "Cebo" ham & 100% Iberian "Bellota" ham C.O Jabugo

These will be accompanied by **specially selected wines** produced in Huelva province . To top things off, enjoy **a rare treat**: 100% Iberian acorn-fed cured pork loin or Iberian acorn-fed small pork loin, paired with a sweet orange wine. A truly unforgettable experience for your senses!!

Continue the drive to Lisbon (aprx. 3.5h)

Sierra de Aracena Natural Park is one of the largest protected areas in Spain. These woody hills, scattered with lovely typical white villages, are a fantastic refuge for wildlife and were declared Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO. It is here, in the Dehesa, that Iberian pigs are bred from which Jabugo Iberic hams are made. Without the Dehesa, jamón ibérico would not exist. This special forest of Holm Oak and Cork trees provides the perfect environment for the pigs to freely roam the wooded pastures and feed on fallen acorns.



Once in Lisbon, you will have the **evening** free to enjoy at your leisure.

Meals included: Breakfast & lunch

DAY 12: Culture & gastronomy of Lisbon

Private city & food tour (aprx.5h)

Your private local guide will pick you up from your hotel and will take you for a very enjoyable a gastronomic and cultural introduction to the city.

Pass through Bairro Alto and the most glamorous neighborhoods of Lisbon: Chiado, Rossio, Castle, and Alfama while tasting some of the most typical Portuguese specialties.

Admire the river from the city's main square and end the tour at Time Out Market, where you could stay for the rest of the afternoon.

With this tour, you won't need to have lunch since it works as a kind of long meal providing you with the most typical food experience you could possibly have in Lisbon.

You will have the **afternoon & evening** free to enjoy at your leisure.

Lisbon is the stunning capital city of Portugal, and one of the most charismatic and vibrant cities in Western Europe. Set against the ever-present backdrop of the Atlantic Ocean, it is a city that effortlessly blends traditional heritage with striking modernism. Perched on the edge of the Atlantic Ocean, Lisbon enchants travelers with its white-bleached limestone buildings, intimate alleyways, easy-going charm, and century-old wooden trams & iron funiculars. Lisbon is one of the oldest cities in the world and has been the most multicultural for centuries. Inhabited since Neolithic times, it has seen Phoenicians, Celts, Romans, and Moors since then, and each left their mark creating this city and country's unique culture and traditions. From the imposing São Jorge Castle, to the old city's pastel-colored buildings, the Tagus Estuary and 25 de Abril's suspended bridge, Lisbon is a wonderful city known for its unique light, thanks to its singular location and the reflection of the sun and the ocean on its tile-clad buildings.



DAY 13: Sintra, Cascais & Estoril

Full day trip part of a small group tour of 8 people maximum (aprx 8h)

You will meet your guide and group. Together you will head to Sintra where you will take a walk through **Pena Park** which home to an astonishing variety of plants and trees. On this walk, you'll discover **secret caves and trails**. You'll then enter the romantic **Pena National Palace** located at the top of the mountain and which also offers **amazing views of Sintra's Moorish castle**.

You'll then break for **lunch** (cost not included) in old Sintra where we also highly recommend not missing the opportunity to taste the **delicious pastries from this village**: *Travesseiro* and *Queijada*.

After lunch, the trip continues with a stop for a fabulous photo opportunity at the **Roca Cape cliffs**, **the westernmost point of Continental Europe** "where the earth ends and the sea begins".

This will bring you to **picturesque fishing village of Cascais** where you will have some free time to wander along the marina, have a coffee or do some shopping.

After this pleasant break, you'll drive along **the coast to Lisbon** passing the town of **Estoril**, its famous **Casino Royale**, and the **Guincho Beach** on your way back to Lisbon where you will have the rest of the evening free to enjoy at your leisure.

Sintra is a resort town, in the foothills of Portugal's Sintra Mountains, which leaves most visitors with a feeling of mystical enchantment. A longtime royal sanctuary, its forested terrain is studded with pastel-colored villas and palaces. The Moorish- and Manueline-style Sintra National Palace is distinguished by dramatic twin chimneys and elaborate tile work. The hilltop 19th-century Pena National Palace is known for a whimsical design and sweeping views. Its magical palaces, forests, Moorish castle and UNESCO World Heritage site city center are like a page from a fairy tale.

Cascais is a coastal resort town known for its sandy beaches and busy marina. Historically, Cascais was a minor fishing village, until King Luís I (1838 - 1889) choose it as his royal summer retreat. Today, Cascais is an elegant fusion of decorative 19th-century architecture, traditional Portuguese charm, and outstanding tourist facilities, which together creates a magnificent holiday destination.



DAY 14: Obidos & Nazaré

Day trip with private driver & guide

Your private driver will pick you up from your hotel in Lisbon and will drive you to the beautiful

Medieval town of Obidos (aprx. 1h)

Here, you'll walk through **Rua Direita** and pass the main entrance to the historic center, its construction having been completed around 1380, it is a true jewel.

Then, let yourself be surprised by the a chapel which features a balcony decorated with beautiful 18th-century tiles.

Pass by the cylindrical column in **Patrão Square** where you'll find a Camões quote and see the **four-tower castle** at the top of the monument.

You'll see the net which was Queen Leonor's gift to the local fishermen that found the body of her son Prince Afonso, who died in drowning, and the impressive **Santa Maria Church**.

You'll also admire the **Albarrã Tower**, an important historic landmark in Óbidos, the **Santiago Church**, founded in the 12th century, and of course, enter the Castle walls. Built under Arab rule, after the Christian conquest (1148) the castle was renovated and extended many times. King Dinis, who built castles tirelessly, restored and renovated the castle at the beginning of the 14th century. The castle was severely damaged in the earthquake of 1755 and was greatly neglected until the end of World War II when it was beautifully renovated.

On the way to Coimbra, you will pass by the **fishing village of Nazaré**, a picturesque seaside village, located on the Atlantic coast, it has long sandy beaches (considered by some to be among the best beaches in Portugal).

Here, you'll learn about the legend of Nazaré while you enjoy the views over the village in the seafront in a visit to the Sítio, a neighbourhood built over the grotto where a miraculous intervention in 1182 is said to have been done by the Blessed Virgin Mary, which saved the life of the 12th-century Portuguese knight Dom Fuas Roupinho (possibly a templar) while he was hunting deer one morning in a dense fog.

You will then be transferred to your hotel in Coimbra (aprx. 1.5h)

Free **evening** in Coimbra to explore this fabulous city at your leisure.

Óbidos is a beautiful town surrounded by a classic crenellated wall. The historic centre is a charming labyrinth of cobblestoned streets and flower-bedecked, whitewashed houses decorated with bight yellow and blue paint.

The town of Nazaré used to be known for its traditional costumes worn by the fishermen and their wives who wore a traditional headscarf and embroidered aprons over seven flannel skirts in different colors. These dresses can still occasionally be seen today. Nazaré is also a very popular surfing destination thanks to its very high breaking waves that form due to the presence of the underwater Nazaré Canyon.

Meals included: Breakfast



DAY 15: Coimbra - The city of students

Walking city tour with private guide (aprx. 4/5 hours)

Today, discover Coimbra; a city classified as World Heritage since 2013.

This half-day tour will include a **visit to one of the oldest universities in the world**, the Biblioteca Joanina. You'll also discover the **Royal Palace**, the **S. Miguel Chapel**, the **Chemistry Lab**, and the Colégio de Jesus.

Walk down the hill and pass by the **Cathedral of Coimbra** and the **Holy Cross Monastery**, following the footsteps of the many students who have walked the streets of this city, known as the city of students, over the centuries.

This lovely walk will end with a visit of **the old city** and **Mondego riverfront**.

You'll have the rest of the day free to enjoy at your leisure.

*Once the capital of Portugal all the way back in the 13th century, **Coimbra** has many impressive buildings, churches, and monasteries dating back to those days. As such, there are so many things to see and do in Coimbra. Famed for its university, which is one of the oldest in Europe, the city is a laidback place to visit, with lots of great bars and restaurants for you to enjoy. While it may not have the wealth of tourist attractions that Porto and Lisbon have, Coimbra offers an authentic Portuguese experience away from all the crowds and is well worth a visit. A captivating city with much to offer thanks to its intoxicating mix of history, culture, and art that make for an irresistible and unforgettable trip.*

Meals included: Breakfast



DAY 16: Aveiro, Portugal's Venice

Full day trip with private driver & guide (length: aprx. 6h)

Your private driver will pick you up from Coimbra and will take you to the picturesque village of **Aveiro** (aprx. 1h). Here, you will meet your guide who will take you to discover this beautiful and exquisite city.

Get to know this region's **impressive landscapes** dominated by water and learn about the local communities through fascinating and culturally enriching stories. You'll also get to taste **local sweets!**

Aveiro is located next to the sea and the *ria* (estuary), is crossed by a network of channels through which **moliceiros (local boats)** pass. These slim, colorful vessels used to be for collecting algae and seaweed, however, today you'll enjoy **a ride** on one of these for an unforgettable sightseeing experience.

Then, it's on to **Costa Nova** where you will have some free time for **lunch** (cost not included - suggestions will be provided by your guide) After lunch, your driver will take you to **Porto** (aprx. 1h) where you will have the **evening** free to enjoy at your leisure.

***Aveiro** is famed for its canals, Nouveau architecture, and colorfully painted Moliceiros boats. The city lies on the edge of the Ria de Aveiro, an expansive saltwater lagoon that was historically farmed for its seaweed, salt, and bountiful fish. Today, Aveiro is a bustling university city, with an authentic fishermen's district, ornate Art Nouveau houses, and numerous grand religious buildings.*

Meals included: Breakfast & sweets



DAY 17: Porto - Beyond the wine

Walking city tour with private guide (length: aprx. 4h)

The tour will begin at the **Cathedral of Porto** where you will explore the **medieval streets** that surround it and uncover the secrets that they hold.

You'll then make your way to the **S. Bento train station**, which is well worth a stop, to admire its walls and ceilings which count over **20,000 hand-painted tiles!**

On the way, you'll pass by **Aliados**, the city's main avenue and will learn why people from Porto are the proudest in the country...

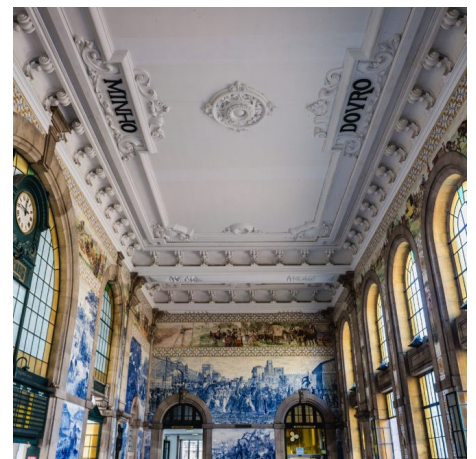
Learn some **fun & interesting facts** about Porto's ex-libris, the Clerigos Tower, and discover the cultural importance of the **Lello bookshop**.

Finally, you'll get to enjoy the view from one of the most beautiful **viewpoints** of the city just before your guided visit of the **Stock Exchange Palace** (Palácio da Bolsa).

The rest of **the afternoon & evening** will be free for you to further explore the city at your leisure.

Porto is a coastal city in northwest Portugal known for its stately bridges and port wine production. Edgy yet classic Porto is a city to explore and experience thanks to its beautiful historic center, sumptuous food and wine, and charismatic locals.

Meals included: Breakfast



DAY 18: Departure

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 enjoyed your stay with us in Spain & Portugal.

Hasta pronto! Até logo!

Meals included: Breakfast



If you would like to extend or adjust this itinerary to continue exploring with us, we will be more than happy to create a customised itinerary for the remainder of your stay. Here are some suggestions:

A) Douro Valley river cruise before or after Porto

B) More of Spain including the Northern regions of Castilla Leon, Galicia, Basque Country or Barcelona

C) The order can be switched so as to start in Portugal and end in Spain if the international flights options are better, it can even be possible to start & end in Lisbon.

PRICE & INCLUSIONS



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-star hotels with double rooms sharing
Breakfasts included - All centrally located
Air conditioning - En-suite rooms

TRANSPORT (all included)

Luxury AC vehicle
Private transfers to/from airport on arrival and departure only.
All private transfers from town to town mentioned in above Itinerary.
All trains and flights mentioned in the above itinerary.

GUIDED VISITS & TOURS (all entrance fees included)

Madrid - City tour
Toledo - Day trip
Cordoba - City tour
Granada - Alhambra visit
Seville - City tour
Ronda & White Villages day trip - City tour
Lisbon - City tour
Sintra, Cascais & Estoril - Group day trip*
Obidos & Nazaré - Day trip
Coimbra - City tour
Aveiro - Day trip
Porto - City tour

MEALS & SHOWS (all included)

Montilla - Olive oil & wine experience
Sevilla - Flamenco show & dinner

OPTIONAL

Evora - Day trip
Aracena Natural Park - Iberian Ham Experience

Assistance During Your Trip

Full support & assistance on hand 24/7

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.

Insurance

We recommend that all travelers take out their own private medical & travel insurance whilst traveling to avoid any unforeseen 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.

PRICE* (Per person)

Depends on the number of travelers and dates

Please enquire for further details

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

