



Spain



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Itineraries



Barcelona & Around

Spend a lifetime in Barcelona and it may not be enough, filled as it is with so many intensely wonderful experiences. But drag yourself away, and you'll soon discover that the wider Catalonia region is a brilliant place to explore.

You'll need a minimum of two days in **Barcelona** to soak up Gaudí, taste the city's culinary excellence and wander its old town. When you can tear yourself away, rent a car and head north along the Mediterranean shoreline, passing through **Tossa de Mar** and its castle-backed bay, then **Calella de Palafrugell** and **Tamaríu**, two beautifully sited coastal villages, before heading inland to pass the night in wonderful **Girona**. The next day is all about Salvador Dalí, from his fantasy castle **Castell de Púbol** to his extraordinary theatre-museum in **Figueres**, and then his one-time home, the lovely seaside village of **Cadaqués**. The next morning leave the Mediterranean behind and drive west in the shadow of the Pyrenees – a long day in the saddle, but a day with one jaw-dropping vista after another. Your reward is a couple of nights based in **Taüll**, gateway to the utterly magnificent **Parc Nacional d'Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici**. A loop south via Lleida then east will have you back in Barcelona by midafternoon on your final day.



Grand Spanish Tour

If you have a month to give, Spain will reward you with enough memories to last a lifetime.

Begin in **Barcelona**, that singular city of style and energy that captivates all who visit. Count on three days, then catch the high-speed train to **Madrid**, a city that takes some visitors a little longer to fall in love with, but it will only take a couple of days to fall under its spell of high (fantastic art galleries) and low (brilliant hedonistic nightlife) culture. We recommend that you spend an extra two days here, using the capital as a base for day trips to **Segovia** and **Toledo**. Catch another train, this time heading for **Salamanca**, that plateresque jewel of Castilla y León. After a night in Salamanca, travel north by train to **León** to stay overnight and see the extraordinary stained-glass windows of its cathedral, and then continue on to **Bilbao**, home of the Museo Guggenheim Bilbao and so much that is good about Basque culture. Spend a night here, followed by another couple in splendid **San Sebastián**. A couple of days' drive along the Cantabrian, Asturian and Galician coasts will take you along Spain's most dramatic shoreline en route to **Santiago de Compostela**, where a couple of nights is a minimum to soak up this sacred city. Wherever you travel in the north, from San Sebastián to Santiago, make food a centrepiece of your visit.

Catch the train back to Madrid, then take a high-speed train to **Córdoba** (two nights) and **Seville** (two nights). While you're in the area, detour north by bus or train to the Roman ruins of **Mérida** (one night), the fabulous old city of **Cáceres** (one night) and medieval **Trujillo** (one night). Return to Seville and make immediately for **Granada** (two nights). Add an extra couple of nights and a rental car and you can visit the lovely villages of **Las Alpujarras**. Keep the car (or catch the train) and travel from Granada to **Valencia** to spend a couple of days enjoying its architecture, paella and irresistible energy. You've just enough time to catch the high-speed train to cliff-top **Cuenca** (one night) on your way back to Madrid at journey's end.



2 WEEKS Castile & Aragón

The Spanish interior may not fit the stereotype of sun, sand and sangría, but we love it all the more for that. This route takes in lesser-known cities and stunning villages that lie beyond well-trodden tourist trails.

From **Madrid**, head to some of the loveliest towns of the heartland: **Segovia**, with its Disney-esque castle, walled **Ávila** and vibrant **Salamanca** will occupy four days of your time with short train rides connecting the three. Trains also connect you to the towns of **León** and **Burgos**, home to two of Spain's most extraordinary churches. An extra night in Burgos allows you to take a day trip to the medieval villages of **Covarrubias** and **Santo Domingo de Silos**, where you might catch a service of Gregorian chants. Make for **Zaragoza**, one of Spain's most vibrant cities, with a wealth of monuments and great tapas – two days is a must. Rent a car and head for the hills where **Sos del Rey Católico** perches like a Tuscan hill town. Drive south to overnight in dramatic **Daroca**, encircled by mountains and ruined city walls, then on to **Teruel**, with its Mudéjar gems. Finish your journey in **Albaracín**, a spectacular village, with medieval architecture as extraordinary as its setting.



10 DAYS Northern Spain

Spain's Mediterranean Coast may get the crowds, but the country's northern coastline from San Sebastián to Santiago is one of the most spectacular in Europe.

There is no finer introduction to the north of the country than **San Sebastián**, with its dramatic setting and fabulous food. Two nights is a minimum. Less than three hours west by train, **Bilbao** is best known as the home of the Museo Guggenheim Bilbao and warrants at least a night, preferably two. To make the most of the rest of the coast, you'll need a car. Cantabria's cobblestone medieval **Santillana del Mar**, the rock art at **Altamira** and the village of **Ribadesella** will fill one day, with another taken up by the valleys of the **Picos de Europa**. After a third night in irresistible **Oviedo**, tackle Galicia's coastline, one of Spain's natural wonders, punctuated with secluded fishing villages and stunning cliffs. As you make your way around the coast for a further two nights, don't miss **Cabo Ortegal**, dynamic **A Coruña** and the **Costa da Morte**. For the last two nights, linger in **Santiago de Compostela**, a thoroughly Galician city, a place of pilgrims, fine regional cuisine and a cathedral of rare power.



10 DAYS Andalusian Adventure

There's more to Andalucía than the monument-rich cities, although these are not to be missed. This route takes you through three iconic cities and some of the region's most beautiful villages.

Begin in **Málaga**, which has enough attractions to keep you occupied for one very full day – don't miss the Picasso Museum. No Andalusian itinerary is complete without at least a few nights in peerless **Granada** with its astonishing Alhambra, gilded Capilla Real and medieval Muslim quarter of Albayzín. Rent a car and make for the valleys of **Las Alpujarras** with their other-worldly scenery and North African-style villages; stay overnight. If you've kept the car, head west for three days along quiet back roads to some of Andalusia's most spectacular villages and towns: Mudéjar **Antequera**, spectacular **Ronda**, **Tarifa** with its bohemian air, beguiling **Vejer de la Frontera**, and **Arcos de la Frontera**, one of Andalusia's most glorious *pueblos blancos* (white villages). With three days left, leave the car and spend a night in **Jerez de la Frontera**, allowing time to visit its sherry bodegas, then catch a train north to flamenco-rich **Seville**, which is, for many, the essence of Andalusia.



2 WEEKS Essential Spain

If you want to understand why many visitors fall in love with Spain and never want to leave, look no further than its vibrant, passionate, extraordinarily beautiful cities. This itinerary takes you through the best Spain has to offer.

So many Spanish trails begin in **Barcelona**, one of the coolest places on earth. Explore the architecture and food, before catching the train to **Valencia** for another dose of nightlife and the wonders of the Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias. This is the home of paella; if you only try Spain's signature dish once, make it here. A fast train whisks you to mighty **Madrid** for the irresistible street energy, pretty plazas and one of the richest concentrations of art museums on the planet. Another fast train takes you deep into Andalusia, with **Córdoba** your entry point. The highlight is the 7th-century Mezquita, which captures the essence of Spain's formerly Islamic south. From Córdoba it's a short hop to fabulous **Seville**. But we've saved the best till last: **Granada**, once capital of Muslim Al-Andalus, boasts the extraordinary Alhambra, its alter ego the Albayzín, and a food scene that embraces Spanish culinary culture in all its variety.

2
WEEKS

Mediterranean to Mountains

This journey takes you from the shores of the Mediterranean to the deep valleys of the Pyrenees. You'll need a car to cover this in two weeks. Your reward is a chance to visit some of northwestern Spain's lesser-known jewels.

Begin in **Valencia**, that most appealing of Mediterranean cities, then drive northwest, pausing in the flamingo-rich **Delta de l'Ebre** en route to **Tarragona**, one of Catalonia's most underrated destinations, with its fabulous Roman ruins. From Tarragona, head inland along the **Cistercian Route**, then cut through Aragón to vibrant, historic **Zaragoza**. After a couple of days in the Aragonese capital, pause overnight in the engaging provincial capital of **Logroño**. Continue west through the fine monastery towns of **Santo Domingo de la Calzada** and **San Millán de Cogolla** and then on into La Rioja, Spain's premier wine-producing region – **Laguardia** is a wonderful base. Head out into the eastern reaches of Navarra, for the beguiling fortress towns of **Olite** and **Ujué**, then on to pretty **Pamplona**. From here, climb into the **Navarran Pyrenees**, at their most beautiful in the Valle del Baztán and Valle del Roncal.

10
DAYS

Extreme West

Extremadura is one of Spain's least known corners, which is all the more reason to visit.

Begin with a night in Extremadura's north, in **Plasencia**, which is jammed with notable buildings, churches and convents. From Plasencia, catch the bus or train to **Cáceres**, whose Ciudad Monumental is one of the finest surviving medieval cores in any Spanish city. After two nights here, regular buses take an hour to nearby **Trujillo**, a smaller but equally enchanting relic of the Middle Ages. Spend two nights here: one to explore the warren of cobbled lanes, and another to rent a car for a day trip to the charming hill town and pilgrims' destination of **Guadalupe**. From Trujillo it's just over an hour by bus south to **Mérida**, but the journey spans the centuries: Mérida boasts some of Spain's most impressive Roman ruins, and you'll need at least two nights here to take it all in. Further south again by bus across the dry plains lies whitewashed **Zafra**, a precursor to Andalucía in spirit, architecture and geography. After a night in Zafra, all roads lead to magical **Seville**, one of Andalucía's (and Spain's) most captivating cities.

Off the Beaten Track: Spain

ILLAS CÍES

Galicia has many candidates for little-known secrets but the Illas Cíes, off the coast of Vigo, is our pick for its fine beaches and lack of crowds. (p537)

ZAMORA & AROUND

Zamora is a little-visited Romanesque treasure. Not far away, the medieval village of Puebla de Sanabria is stunning. (p171)

SIERRA DE FRANCIA

The timeworn Sierra de Francia contains some of Spain's least-visited back-country villages. The pick is probably La Alberca but San Martín del Castañar is utterly beguiling. (p155)

WESTERN EXTREMADURA

Western Extremadura is the land time forgot, from the quiet valleys of the Sierra de Gata and Las Hurdes to remote Alcántara (p555) with its fine Roman bridge.

CÁDIZ

Cádiz is all about narrow white-washed streets where the seafood and wine flow freely in summer. The nearby beaches are some of Spain's best. (p610)

BAEZA & ÚBEDA

These twin towns (p709 and p711) in the north of Andalucía are two of Spain's finest Renaissance gems. Better still, they're lightly toured.



NORTHERN ARAGÓN

Draw near to the Pyrenees from the postcard-perfect villages of Aínsa, Alquézar and Torla on the cusp of the Parque Nacional de Ordesa y Monte Perdido. (p380)

EL MAESTRAZGO

Straddling southwestern Aragón and western Valencia, isolated El Maestrazgo specialises in meandering back roads and pretty hamlets. (p751)



NORTHERN ARAGÓN

ANDORRA
LA VELLA

EL MAESTRAZGO

CABO DE GATA & ALMERÍA

The Cabo de Gata (p722) is dramatic, wild and an antidote to overdeveloped shorelines. Its gateway, Almería (p717), is one of Spain's most agreeable provincial towns.

Map Legend

Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Body surfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

Eating

- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- S-Bahn/Subway station
- Taxi
- T-bane/Tunnelbana station
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Tube station
- U-Bahn/Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book



Isabella Noble

Andalucía, Cantabria & Asturias, Extremadura English-Australian-Spanish. Isabella has lived and travelled in Spain since 1994. Her in-depth investigations of distant northern regions far from her Andalusian home began at the age of 12. Now based in London, Isabella writes on Spain, India, Southeast Asia and beyond for Lonely Planet, Telegraph Travel (where she's the Northern Spain expert) and others. Highlights this trip: tapas-touring in Cáceres, rediscovering

Cantabria's prehistoric cave paintings and 'researching' Galician wines. Find Isabella on Twitter and Instagram (@isabellamnoble).

Read more about Isabella at:

lonelyplanet.com/members/isabellamnoble



John Noble

Andalucía, Galicia John, originally from England's Ribble Valley, has lived in an Andalusian mountain village since 1995. He has travelled lengthily all over Andalusia and most of the rest of Spain and helped write every edition of Lonely Planet's *Spain* and *Andalucía* guides. The diversity of Spain's many distinct regions is endlessly fascinating and John loves returning to the green pastures, spectacular coastlines, old stone architecture, warm hospitality and distinctive culture of the far northwest, Galicia – in many ways, almost a different country from the rest of Spain, where the food and wine seem to be getting better and better with every trip!

Read more about John at:

lonelyplanet.com/members/ewoodrover



Josephine Quintero

Málaga Province Josephine has lived in a small village just outside Málaga since 1992. As well as continually 'discovering' the Costa capital, Josephine loves strolling along the beachside promenades throughout the coastal resorts. A highlight this trip was discovering a Roman sulphur spring that has escaped being commercialised and enjoying inspirational art during an open studio weekend in the picturesque mountainside village of Gaucín.



Brendan Sainsbury

Seville, Granada Province, Aragón, Castilla La Mancha Originally from Hampshire, England, Brendan first went to Spain on an Inter-rail ticket in the 1980s. He went back as a travel guide several years later and met his wife-to-be in a small village in rural Andalusia in 2003. He has been writing books for Lonely Planet for over a decade, including three previous editions of the *Spain* guide. For this trip, Brendan loved going underground in Zaragoza, reading *Don Quixote* in La Mancha, and walking (and running) ridiculous distances when he ran out of buses.



Regis St Louis

Barcelona Regis fell in love with Barcelona a decade ago, after arriving in the city and being awestruck by its wild architecture, culinary creativity and warm-hearted people. Since then he has returned frequently, learning Spanish and a smattering of Catalan, and delving into the endless layers of Barcelona's deep cultural heritage. Favourite memories from his most recent trip include fêting the arrival of three bearded kings during Día de los Reyes, catching a surreal circus arts show

in a seaside suburb, and exploring far-flung corners of Montjuïc at sunrise. Regis authored three editions of *Barcelona*, and he has contributed to *Spain*, *Portugal* and dozens of other Lonely Planet titles. When not on the road, he lives in New Orleans.



Andy Symington

Valencia, Murcia Andy hails from Australia but has been living in Spain for fifteen years, where, to shatter a couple of stereotypes of the country, he can frequently be found huddled in sub-zero temperatures watching the tragically poor local football team. He has authored and co-authored many Lonely Planet guidebooks and other publications on Spain and elsewhere; in his spare time he walks in the mountains, embarks on epic tapas trails, and co-bosses a rock bar.



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Anthony Ham

Madrid, Castilla y León In 2001 Anthony fell in love with Madrid on his first visit to the city. Less than a year later, he arrived on a one-way ticket, with not a word of Spanish and not knowing a single person. After ten years living in the city, he recently returned to Australia with his Spanish-born family, but he still adores his adopted country as much as he did on the first day he arrived and returns often. When he's not writing for Lonely Planet, Anthony writes about Spain, Australia and Africa for newspapers and magazines around the world (www.anthonyham.com).



Sally Davies

Barcelona Sally landed in Seville in 1992 with a handful of pesetas and five words of Spanish and, despite a complete inability to communicate, promptly snared a lucrative number handing out leaflets at Expo '92. In 2001 she settled in Barcelona, where she is still incredulous that her daily grind involves researching fine restaurants, wandering about museums and finding ways to convey the beauty of this spectacular city.



Bridget Gleeson

Basque Country, La Rioja, Navarra Based in Buenos Aires, Bridget is a travel writer and occasional photographer. Before her years in South America, she lived in Italy and travelled extensively in Spain; along the way, thanks to her *madrileño* friends, she's learned how to use *vosotros* and *tío*, how to make a proper tortilla, and how to stay out all night.



Anita Isalska

Catalonia Formerly Lonely Planet's digital editor, Anita surprised no one when she swapped office life for travelling the world with her trusty laptop. Spain has long been an obsession, from hikes in the rugged north via Madrid all-nighters to the full quota of Costas, but it's Catalonia that keeps luring her back. Anita is a freelance copywriter and journalist for a host of international publications, specialising in budget travel, offbeat adventures and food. Check out some of

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