

The CASTILIAN



Highlights

- Madrid City Tour
- Prado Museum
- Toledo City Tour
- Avila
- El Escorial
- Valley of the Fallen
- Segovia
- Barcelona City Tour
- Pueblo Español

Options

- Flamenco Performance
- Picasso Museum

Itinerary

Madrid (4), Barcelona (3)

DAY 1 Depart for Spain.

DAY 2 MADRID *Bienvenido a España!* Your guide will introduce you to your host family or transfer you to your hotel by private bus.

DAY 3 MADRID Today, enjoy a Madrid City Tour to see the Royal Church of San Francisco el Grande, Plaza Mayor, the Teatro Real, and visit the magnificent Prado Museum. While at the Prado be sure to see Goya's *Majas*. As an option, thrill to the click of castanets and the stamp of heels at an exciting Flamenco Performance tonight.

DAY 4 TOLEDO Venture to historic Toledo, where the influences of Christian, Jewish and Moorish cultures can still be seen in the architecture and the art of the city. See the masterpieces by El Greco in the Cathedral on your Toledo City Tour. Also see the Old Synagogue, the Royal Palace and the Church of Santo Tomé, and visit a fascinating sword workshop to see how the famous Toledo Blades are made.

DAY 5 SEGOVIA Journey into the ancient walled city of Ávila, town of Stones and Saints. The 12th century walls are amazingly well preserved; for the best view try Quatro Postes, or Four Posts, on the Salamanca road. Next, stop at El Escorial, site of the beautiful Monastery of San Lorenzo el Real. Then, visit the Valle de los Caidos, the Valley of the Fallen. Located in the Guadarrama Mountains, this monument was built to honor those slain in the Spanish Civil War. Continue on to the historic

city of Segovia to see its magnificent Roman aqueduct. Built during the reign of Trajan in the first century, it is almost 2,000 years old and is still in operation! Also visit the magnificent and imposing Alcázar of Segovia, standing high on a crag between two valleys.

DAY 6 BARCELONA Transfer by train to the Olympic city, Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia. Catalan is the official language here, although Castilian Spanish is also spoken. Barcelona is a unique amalgamation of booming industrial city, charming university town and diverse cultural center.

DAY 7 BARCELONA Explore Barcelona on a City Tour. You will see the Parque de la Ciudadela, Barceloneta and its beaches, Barrio Gotico, Plaza de España, Palacio Nacional and Fuentes, then visit Gaudi's amazing Church of the Sagrada Familia and drive into the Parque Guell. Also visit Pueblo Español, a village on Montjuïc representing architecture and artisans from all regions of Spain.

DAY 8 BARCELONA As an option, visit the fascinating Picasso Museum located in the beautiful Gothic palaces of Berenguer de Aguilar and Baron de Castellet. See the artist's works dating from when he was nine years old to his famous 44 variations on Velázquez's *Las Meninas*.

DAY 9 DEPART Fly home with improved language skills and fantastic memories of your Castilian Experience.