

Salamanca to the Sea



Highlights

- Ávila
- Cathedral de San Salvador
- Salamanca City Tour
- Segovia Tour
- Segovia Alcázar
- Tapas Dinner
- Madrid City Tour
- Prado
- Córdoba
- Mezquita-Cathedral
- Seville City Tour
- Seville Cathedral

Options

- Flamenco Performance

Itinerary Salamanca (2), Madrid (2), Cordoba (1), Costa del Sol (2)

DAY 1 Fly overnight to the fabulous Kingdom of Spain.

DAY 2 SALAMANCA ¡Hola! Your private bus and driver will transfer you to Salamanca, a city of domes and spires with a long tradition of learning. Make a stop in the ancient walled city of Ávila. The ramparts are complete and form one of Europe's most vivid examples of medieval fortifications. Visit the massive Cathedral del San Salvador, begun in 1091. Continue to the lovely university city of Salamanca, located in southern León on the right bank of the Río Tormes.

DAY 3 SALAMANCA Salamanca is a city full of golden buildings, picturesque courtyards, and aesthetic splendor. On this morning's City Tour see the University of Salamanca, founded by Alfonso IX of Leon in 1218, the oldest and most prestigious university in Spain. View the "Casa de las Conchas" (House of Shells); its remarkable façade is the most representative example of the transition period between Gothic and renaissance architecture in Spain. Visit the "Catedral Vieja" (Old Cathedral), 12th century Romanesque in style, crowned by a beautiful Byzantine dome called the Gallo Tower, and the adjoining 16th-century, Gothic cathedral or "Catedral Nueva". The rest of the day is free for strolling around the city's beautiful Plaza Major or along some of the pretty little streets brimming with history and life.

DAY 4 MADRID Travel through the Sierra de Guadarrama with a stop for a tour of the walled city of Segovia, site of well preserved Roman ruins, including an aqueduct built in the first century. Segovia was the city under attack in Ernest Hemingway's classic war novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and the site of the coronation of Queen Isabella. The old part of the city has narrow, winding streets and buildings of honey-colored stone. Tour the Alcázar, everybody's favorite castle in Spain, then continue on to Madrid and savor a

Tapas Dinner tonight; a variety of tidbits ranging from mushrooms fried in garlic to meat-filled pastries.

DAY 5 MADRID Start the day with a guided Madrid City Tour. See the Plaza de España, Retiro Park, the statue of Cervantes, the Royal Palace, and Plaza Mayor in Old Town. Later enjoy a guided tour of the world-renowned Prado Museum, where you can see some of the world's most famous paintings including *Las Meninas* (The Maids of Honor) by Velázquez and Goya's scandalous *Majas*.

DAY 6 CORDOBA See the windmills of Don Quixote's La Mancha area, then tour Córdoba to see the two famous gates of La Calahorra and Puerta del Puente. Continue to the Alcázar of Catholic Kings and visit the Old Mosque/Cathedral (Mezquita), which ranks as one of the most splendid examples of Islamic art and architecture in Western Europe. Spend the night in this charming Andalusian town of narrow winding streets, pretty flowered balconies, and low whitewashed houses.

DAY 7 COSTA DEL SOL Your journey continues via a Seville City Tour to see the Torre del Oro and the Maestranza Bullring. Also visit Seville's Giralda and the 15th century cathedral where Christopher Columbus is buried, then transfer to the Costa del Sol (Sunshine Coast) that stretches along Andalusia's Mediterranean shore. The coast is punctuated along its entire length by the ruins of Moorish towers, defenses against attacks by Barbary pirates.

DAY 8 COSTA DEL SOL Today is free to enjoy the sun, sand and surf of the Costa del Sol's beaches and subtropical Mediterranean shores.

DAY 9 DEPART Transfer to the Malaga airport, and jet home with fabulous memories of your adventures from Salamanca to the Sea.