



Tour Information

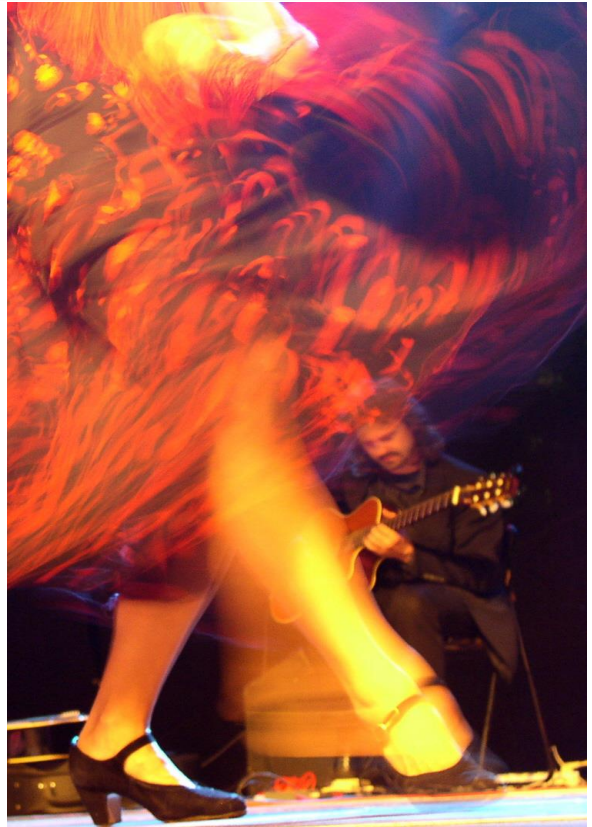
The specialists in designing individualised European travel experiences.

Luxury Tours for Independent Travellers

Choose from a smorgasbord of unique travel experiences and we will design your very own tailor-made holiday of a lifetime.

Add extra days, destinations, sightseeing or excursions. As an independent traveller you can even undertake the tour in either direction.

Take a detour or a break in the tour to do 'your own thing' for a while, like hiring a car in Andalusia or Provence to explore the hills and villages to create a truly individualised and unique itinerary.



France Spain Tour



France Spain Tour

Highlights

19 DAYS | PARIS | LOIRE VALLEY | BORDEAUX | NARBONNE | BARCELONA
SEVILLE | GRANADA | MADRID



Paris

View the city from the top of the Eiffel Tower and Montmartre. Stroll along the banks of the river Seine, the tree-shaded boulevards dotted with cafes and bars and the Champs Elysee at night.



Loire valley – Amboise

Witness the glamour and grandeur of French royalty and gain insights into 'castle life' of days gone past during your visit to the famous Loire valley castles. Enjoy a wine tasting in a cellar cave and lunch in a family estate vineyard.

Bordeaux

Explore the UNESCO World Heritage Site Bordeaux and discover the beautiful medieval village of St Emilion, one of the most picturesque villages in France.

Narbonne and Carcassonne

Be fascinated by these two ancient cities and their history dating back to the Bronze age. Walk among the walls and fortifications of Carcassonne with its 52 towers. Take a cruise on the Canal du Midi for a panoramic view of this medieval city.

Barcelona

The flamboyance and colour of Barcelona's art and architecture will take your breath away. Visit the medieval Gothic quarter and Gaudi's famous Sagrada Familia Cathedral.

Seville

Be seduced by the charm of this magical city with its marvelous architecture, a legacy of the Moors, the Gothic cathedral with its minaret transformed into a Christian bell tower. Feel the passion and drama of a flamenco show.

Granada

Indulge in a feast of the senses in Granada. Visit the Alhambra fortress, palace and garden then get pampered in an Arabian bath for the total experience of Granada's Moorish heritage.

Madrid

Immerse yourself into Madrid's colours and vibrancy - the magnificent Royal palace, the flamenco and tapas bars. Walk the cobble-stoned alleyways of medieval Toledo and visit its castle and 13th century cathedral.

France Spain Tour

Prices & Inclusions

Accommodation

- 18 nights in first class, 4 and 5 star hotels, some in historical buildings.

Travel

- 1st class train tickets between destinations. Seat reservations where required.
- Airport transfer to hotel with shared shuttle bus.
- Transport from hotel to airport on departure with shared shuttle bus.

Meals

- 18 full breakfasts.
- Wine tasting and lunch during the Loire valley castle tour.
- Tapas and wine during the Flamenco show in Seville
- Tapas in Madrid

Sightseeing and Excursions

- Sightseeing with a double-decker 'hop-on-hop-off' bus in Paris.
- Priority admission ticket to Versailles Palace.
- Priority tickets (no queuing) for the Eiffel Tower.
- Priority admission ticket to the Louvre.
- Priority admission ticket to the Arc de Triomphe etc
- Loire valley castle tour
- Excursion to St. Emilion from Bordeaux
- Independent train excursion to Carcassonne from Narbonne.
- Gothic Quarter walking tour or guided sightseeing tour by bicycle in Barcelona
- Guided tour of the Sagrada Familia including admission ticket in Barcelona
- Sightseeing tour in Seville
- Seville night tour with Tablao Flamenco Show
- Guided tour of the Alhambra including admission tickets in Granada
- Arab bath visit in Granada
- Guided coach sightseeing tour or walking tour with visit and admission to the Royal Palace in Madrid
- Half-day excursion to Toledo from Madrid
- Tapas night walking tour in Madrid

Not included

Some city tourist taxes.

Surcharges apply if travelling during holidays, New Year's Eve, Bastille Day, arrival of the Tour de France in Paris or other local events. These prices and tour information are correct at the time of the website going live, however are subject to confirmation at the time of booking.

Tour prices

All tour prices are published on our [website](#)

We also cater for solo travellers, families and groups. Prices by application. Upgrades to superior luxury accommodation can be arranged on request at extra cost.

France Spain Tour

Itinerary

As these tours are self-guided and for independent travellers they can commence at any time of the year.

(Inclusions in italics)

Day 1 - Paris

Start your familiarization with the city on the 'Paris Grand Tour' and enjoy the view from the open top deck of *the sightseeing bus* with a local, multi-lingual tour guide. See the Champs-Elysee, Louvre, Notre-Dame, Eiffel Tower, Palais Royal and many other attractions.

Day 2 –Paris

View the city in all its glory from the *viewing platform of the iconic Eiffel Tower*. Then spend some time to explore the many treasures of Paris, Montmartre, Sacre Coeur or the many open-air fresh food, collectibles and arts markets and take the '*Grand Boulevard Tour*'. In the evening enjoy a meal and some music in the Latin Quarter.

Day 3 – Paris

The day is yours to see more of the sites of Paris. Visit Versailles Palace with its royal Apartments, Hall of Mirrors, Queen's Bedroom and the Gallery of Battles in the world's most magnificent and glorious palace. Explore the palace gardens and take a visit to the Queen's Hamlet, where Marie-Antoinette played at being a shepherdess in the 1780s. Watch the famous fountain show which is accompanied by music composed at the time of Louis XIV.



Or admire the three world-famous works in the Louvre: the Venus de Milo, the winged Victory of Samothrace and Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa painted at the beginning of the 16th century.



Day 4 – Loire valley – Amboise

After arrival take the afternoon to enjoy delightful Amboise. Stroll on the esplanades located along the docks by the Loire, the best place to take in the fantastic views of the river. Visit the royal castle, the Chanteloup pagoda and Clos-Lucé, where Leonardo da Vinci spent his last days and many of his inventions are on display.

Day 5 – Loire valley - Amboise

During this *all day excursion into the Loire valley* and the visit to 2 castles witness the glamour and grandeur of French royalty and aristocracy, and gain insights into "castle life" in these Renaissance riverside castles.

The largest of the Loire castles, the turreted Chambord Castle was built for King Francois I as a hunting lodge. The intricate stone "double helix" staircase leading up to the spires and turrets of the rooftop terrace is thought to have been designed by Leonardo da Vinci.

Cheverny Castle is the most beautifully furnished of the Loire Valley castles, with a fine collection of 17th-century furniture.

Chenonceau Chateau was built in 1513 over the River Cher in traditional Renaissance style, and is known as the Chateau des Dames (the Ladies' Castle) because of the influence of the famous women who lived there.



The tour includes the visit to one or two castles (varied throughout the week), visits to picturesque towns and gardens, a *wine tasting in a cellar cave and lunch in a family estate vineyard*. (Itineraries vary throughout the week).

Day 6 – Bordeaux

The city of Bordeaux is a UNESCO World Heritage listed site thanks to more than 350 historic buildings, including 3 religious World Heritage buildings, and is a French part of the Routes of Santiago de Compostela. Take time to visit Palais Rohan, the imposing neo-classical Grand Theatre and the enchanting facades of the quays that extend for more than a kilometre along the river. Its buildings feature high arches and slated roofs with the very slim stone chimney stacks rising above them all.

Day 7 - Bordeaux

During a *small-group tour from Bordeaux* you will discover the beautiful medieval village of St Emilion. Named after an 8th century Breton monk whose followers started wine production in the area, St Emilion is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Walk along the original city walls and climb the steep cobblestone streets, exploring wine cellars, artisan studios and art galleries. You'll also have free time to enjoy a wine tasting, or you can pay a visit to the famous underground church carved out of solid limestone.



Extend your stay in Bordeaux and explore more of its surrounding countryside. Take an excursion into the famous wine-growing regions or to the fishing village of Arcachon.

Day 8 - Narbonne

The heart of Narbonne is the town's port on the La Robine canal, a UNESCO World Heritage site. You'll very quickly find yourself back in the Middle Ages walking around Narbonne with its courtyards, cloisters, gothic choirs and works of art. Visit the Bourg quarter (old merchants' quarter) and sample the regional delicacies at the famous covered market of Narbonne with more than 70 stalls offering local goods and wines.

Day 9 – Narbonne - Carcassonne

Explore Carcassonne and its famous medieval walled inner city with its 52 towers. Take a boat trip on the Canal du Midi. Pass through the locks, discover the towpaths and enjoy the views of the medieval city and the vineyards of the Cabardès.

Day 10 - Barcelona

After an exciting train journey from France into Spain and checking into your hotel, one of the highlights of our holiday awaits you: a *guided tour of the Sagrada Familia*, one of the most visited buildings in the world and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This as yet unfinished cathedral by Antoni Gaudi with its rich ornamentation and 70m high vaults was consecrated and proclaimed a minor basilica by Pope Benedict XVI.

Day 11 - Barcelona

During a *two-hour walking tour of Barcelona's Gothic Quarter* (known as the Barri Gotic), you will visit the district's streets, squares and old buildings, and learn about the quarter's history and people. Alongside Barcelona's medieval buildings are the remains of the ancient Roman city, and the walking tour includes a visit to the Temple d'August, the best preserved Roman relic in Barcelona. You will also visit the Placa del Rei, where you will see many medieval buildings, including the Palatine chapel of Santa Agata.



Alternatively you can choose to explore the sites of Barcelona with a *guided bicycle tour*. Late in the tour there will be a break at an outdoor beach bar to relax for a bit while taking in the sights and atmosphere of the Mediterranean. Remember to bring a swim suit if you want to take a dip in the sea.

Day 12 - Barcelona



Spend the day seeing more of the exciting art and architecture of Barcelona, including Gaudi's famous Pedrera, Casa Batllo or Parc Guell. Stroll down the Ramblas and soak up the vibrant Catalan atmosphere or take an excursion into the countryside surrounding Barcelona to medieval Girona, the Dali museum at Figueres, the Royal Basilica at Montserrat or visit the famous wine producers of the Penedes region.

Day 13 - Seville

Take a *panoramic night-time tour* through the lamp-lit streets of Seville, and then feel the passion of a *flamenco show*, or "tablao". *Enjoy wine and tapas* while you soak up the atmosphere and rhythm.

Day 14 - Seville

Discover the history and secrets behind this magical orange-scented city on an *informative morning tour*. Beautiful Seville has many impressive monuments dating back over the centuries. The Moors' legacy of marvelous architecture includes the Gothic cathedral with its Giralda, a minaret transformed into a Christian bell tower.

Extend your holiday by another day in Seville. Combine your love for sherry and horses on a day trip to the fabled city of Jerez. Enjoy a wine tasting and watch an equestrian ballet at the Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art. Later, join a boat trip (or coach, subject to sea conditions) from Puerto de Santa Maria to Cadiz, the oldest populated city in Europe.

Day 15 - Granada

After checking in to your hotel set out in the afternoon to explore the hills and the old district of the Albaicin with its narrow street, nooks and crannies and marvelous landscapes. Make sure you don't miss a visit to the 'Cuevas' or caves of the monastery of Sacromonte, still inhabited today.



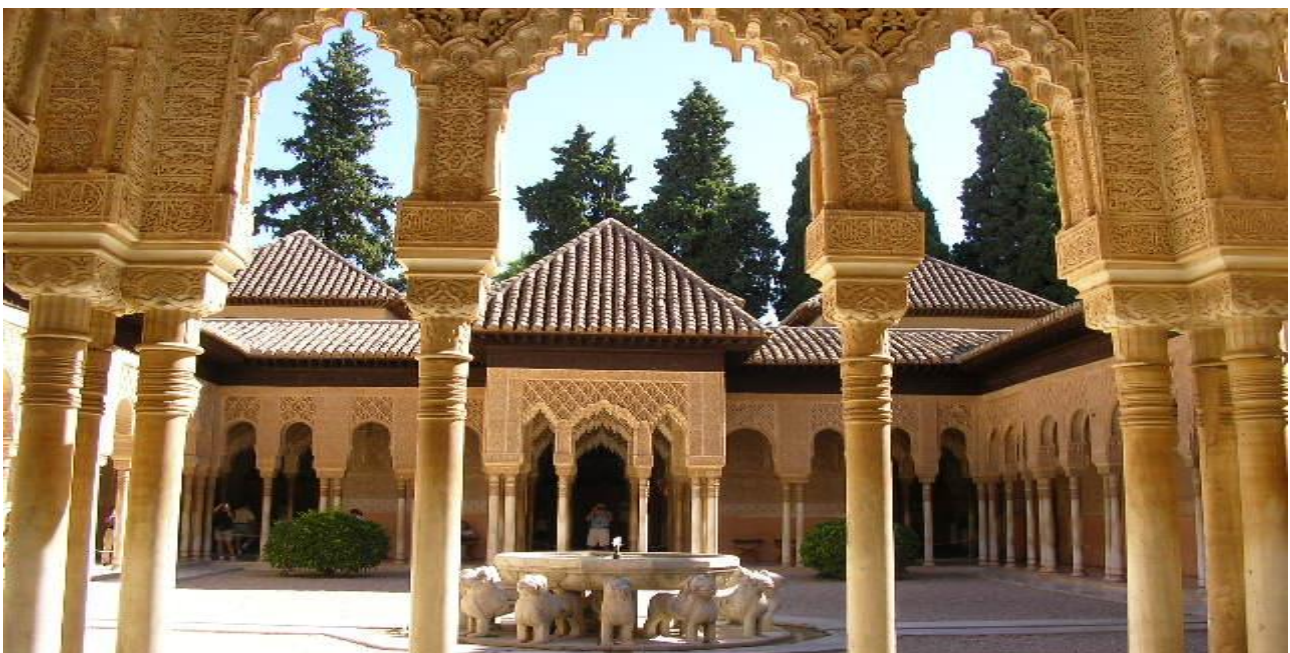
Day 16 - Granada

Combine history and indulgence on an unforgettable excursion into Granada's Moorish heritage.

In the morning, see *one of the most visited monuments in the world, the Alhambra*. Built on the red hill known as Assabic, overlooking Granada, construction of this Moorish fortress began in the 13th century. The remarkable garden and courtyard complex also includes the 16th-century palace built by Charles V.

You then have the afternoon free before making your way to *indulge in an Arab bath*. Relax to the soothing murmur of water, glistening Arabic tiles, essential oils, jasmine perfume and mint tea.

Extend your visit in Granada by adding a full day excursion to Cordoba. Begin by visiting the Catholic Cathedral, converted within an original Mosque when the Christians conquered Cordoba in 1236. With nearly one thousand pillars, the original Gothic style is combined with Baroque and Renaissance elements. Then you will visit the old Jewish Quarter that dates back to the time of the Romans and Goths.



Day 17 – Madrid

Madrid comes truly alive after nightfall. Sample Spanish nightlife and Madrid's tasty tapas on an *evening walking tour* that will tantalize your taste buds! Led by an entertaining foodie guide, this walking tour is the best introduction to the laid-back Madrilenos lifestyle. You'll visit Madrid's tucked-away corners and feast on tasty treats you would never discover on your own, leaving you with a lasting feeling for Madrid and its people, and an appetite for its fabulous food and drink! Along the way, your guide will explain the traditions behind Madrid's food and wine and provide interesting facts about Madrid's history and customs.



Day 18 - Madrid

Marvel at the sights of Madrid on a *guided walking tour of the city including the Royal Palace*. Learn about Madrid's past and the events that have shaped the city you see today.

Discover Madrid's multi-faceted history, from its Arab origins to the reigns of Phillip II and Charles III, and finally to present day Madrid. Madrid's Royal Palace, built in the 18th century on the site of an ancient alcazar (Arab-fortress) in the classical Italian baroque style, is one of the most beautiful and best preserved palaces in Europe. Your tour of the palace reveals rich tapestries and exquisite china in every room.



In the afternoon you will *visit Toledo*, Spain's medieval capital. You will discover a glorious city filled with amazing medieval architecture, and take a walk into the past along its cobblestone alleyways. Toledo is a National Monument to Spain's art and history, combining Arabic, Mudéjar Gothic and Renaissance architecture. Tour highlights include the amazing 13th-century cathedral and the medieval castle.

Day 19 - Madrid

On your last morning in Spain make time for a last visit to the magnificent Plaza Mayor before being *driven from the hotel to the airport*.

Average travel time between destinations: 3 hours and 30 minutes.

Travel in Style

Comfort & Luxury

Travelling

Travel in style in Europe's luxurious superfast trains and arrive relaxed and in next to no time at your holiday destinations. Comfortable, fast and stress-free. Enjoy the spacious seats, plenty of leg room, ability to move around and the magnificent views from the comfort of your reserved first class seat or the dining car. No early morning starts and no late afternoon arrivals at the next destination.



Accommodation

Your luxurious hotels will not just be a comfortable place to stay at but will be a feature in itself and enhance your European experience, right in the heart of the cities, close to all the historic sites and within 'strolling' distance of restaurants and cafes. Step out of the front door of your hotel and be surrounded by the sounds, sights, music and ambience of the town. Your hotel will also be a place to retreat to - be that in a peaceful inner courtyard, a lakeside terrace, a garden, or rooftop terrace.

Food

Taste the regional specialties. We will also provide you with information prior to your departure on local markets, restaurants, wine taverns or little 'hole in the wall' eateries that you might like to check out.

Atmosphere and sights

You will have ample time to explore and become familiar with each place as you are not spending a lot of travelling time getting from one destination to the next and staying 2 nights minimum everywhere. All of us have our own preferred way of how and what to see in a city and how much time to spend where. We have therefore given you sightseeing options to choose from that will fit your personal preferences.

Hassle free travelling

We take care to plan and organize your holiday in every detail and to your personal liking. Just pack your bags, get on the plane and enjoy a stress-free and well-paced holiday. Our programs are a well-balanced mix of magnificent architecture but also markets, river or lake cruises, walks in the countryside, themed excursions or strolls along rivers and little cobble-stoned alleyways.



Tailor Made

Independent Travelling

'Self-guided' travelling

You are travelling as independent travellers, with your own tickets, reservations, detailed itinerary, directions, timetables, admission tickets, maps etc. Every day will be quite clearly laid out in your itinerary, with train departure and arrival times, seat reservation details, destination information, directions and maps where sightseeing tours will leave from or how to get to or from the train station to your hotel, usually in easy walking distance. The various sightseeing tours at your destinations will be pre-booked and we will provide you with detailed information regarding the time and content of the tour, and departure points.

Communication

Travelling in Europe, in particular Western Europe, you will find that you won't have any communication problems as good English is widely spoken. Sharing of local knowledge and insights into the culture and history of the country you are visiting, usually provided by a tour leader, will be available during your sightseeing tours by local expert guides.

Increased flexibility and choices

Having your own tickets gives you more flexibility. For example in Paris if you want to visit Versailles palace and your travelling partner prefers to spend the day at EuroDisney you can do that - it's your choice. If you happen to fall ill and prefer to stay for another day you can catch the train the next day as your train ticket will be valid for up to two months. (Obviously you would have to pay for the extra day in the hotel and another train seat reservation). The usual departure time for the train is around 10 am, giving you plenty of time for a leisurely breakfast.

The choice is yours

We ensure that our tours are planned and organized with attention to every detail and we feel confident that you will find that everything works smoothly. You will have the advantage of the substantial savings of the 'self-guided' tour price and you can choose to use these savings to splash out on some exciting optional travel experiences, like extra excursions, pamper treatments or indulging in some regional delicacies.



Tailor Made

About Us

Many years of travelling, living in various countries in Europe and intensive research of travel destinations have inspired us to create the tours in our program. Our personal experience has taught us that rushing from one place to the next is not the best way to experience a different culture. To enjoy every moment and have a truly memorable holiday one needs to travel at a leisurely pace.

We know that a holiday has to be well structured and balanced – not just a string of major European cities with their magnificent architecture. And we also know that tastes and preferences in regards to travel experiences vary greatly – while one traveller might want to spend an entire day in Paris at the Louvre another traveller would rather spend the day at EuroDisney. Our concept of self-guided, individualised tours can accommodate both with ease.

And this is what makes our tours unique.

We realize that not everyone wants to experience Europe with 40 other travellers in a bus on the exact same itinerary. Or – at the other end of the spectrum – not everyone wants to hire a car and make their own way, driving on the highways and into the cities of Europe.

That's why we have chosen the comfort and flexibility of train travel for you.

Travelling in Europe's super fast trains nevertheless gives you the feeling of 'slow travel', as you have more time at each destination and never rush from place to place. We have designed the itineraries so that most mornings you will leave at about 10am and on average your travel time between destinations ranges from 2 ½ hours to 4 hours and 20 minutes, depending on your tour.

We are continually researching and visiting the destinations on the tours to ensure that all the services you receive are of the absolute highest standard.

As a registered travel agency and member of the Australian Travel Compensation Fund you can have the peace of mind that your money is secure and you will not find yourself stranded and without tickets or valid reservations. The Travel Compensation Fund has an ongoing financial monitoring system in place that helps prevent the failure of a participating travel agency. In the case of a financial collapse of the participating travel agency however, eligible travellers are provided with compensation through the TCF if the traveller has suffered a financial loss.

Our Travel Compensation Fund Number is: 10067

<http://www.tcf.org.au/index.as>

Our Travel Agent Number is: 3402878

<http://www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au/travel-agent-licence-check.htm>

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Terms & Conditions

See our website for detailed Terms and Conditions.