

# Spanish Explorer

## Barcelona, Madrid, Seville & Granada

with excursions to Toledo, El Escorial, Segovia, Cordoba & Ronda

### Day 1: Fly out from USA

Begin your Spanish adventure today, starting with an overnight flight from the USA.

### Day 2: Bienvenidos a España

Upon arrival in Spain you'll be met by your Global Explorers Tour Leader, who will accompany you throughout your tour. After checking into our centrally-located hotel for two-nights, this evening's first group dinner will be taken close to the city's famous *Las Ramblas*. Afterward we'll take an evening stroll to experience the atmosphere, a great way to end your first day in Spain.

### Day 3: "Barcelona!"

Today is dedicated to discovering the vibrant & exciting city of Barcelona.

During the morning our expert local guide will introduce you to the capital of Catalonia, a distinct & proud region with its own history & traditions. Amongst the sights we'll visit will be the *Sagrada Familia*, a stunning still-incomplete cathedral, that is just one of the architectural masterpieces in Barcelona designed by Antoni Gaudi.

During the afternoon you will have free time to explore at leisure - perhaps to visit the Picasso Museum, to tour the home of F.C.Barcelona, or just to lie on the beach!

### Day 4: From Catalunya to Castilla

Leaving Barcelona & the coast behind this morning, we journey south-west towards the Spanish capital Madrid, located in the heart of the Iberian peninsula.

En-route we'll visit the city of Zaragoza, a major city that is home to northern Spain's greatest Moorish palace & two cathedrals.

Later we will arrive in Madrid for three nights & enjoy our group dinner in the heart of this fun capital.

### Day 5: Madrid in depth

Discover the Spanish capital this morning, as our local guide leads us on a tour of Madrid. Afterwards we'll visit the renowned Prado Museum, home to Spain's greatest art, including works by El Greco, Velazquez & Goya..

Later in the day enjoy a taste of Madrilenos' relaxed pace of life on our leisurely walking tour of the city's squares, including trying some of the city's best hot chocolate & *churros*!

### Day 6: The Capital Region - Toledo

Today we venture outside Madrid, to explore Toledo.

Just an hour south of the capital, Toledo is one of Spain's highlights, a wonderfully atmospheric medieval city that was home to the artist El Greco. Indeed many of his works are still located here. The city also once enjoyed a reputation as Europe's leading center for sword-making. On our guided tour we will find evidence of all this & more.

We return to Madrid this afternoon in time for our group dinner.

### Day 7: La Mancha - the road to the South

We depart Madrid this morning & travel south to the Andalucia region, traveling through the La Mancha region - made famous in Cervantes' *Don Quixote*.

En-route we stop in Cordoba to visit the Mezquita, the former mosque of a city that was the cultural & intellectual capital of Europe 1,000 years ago!

In the afternoon we continue towards Seville, a city of orange blossoms & flamenco music, where we'll check-in for a two-night stay before enjoying an introductory stroll to dinner.

### Day 8: Seville, City of Flamenco & Oranges

Today we discover the treasures & delights of Seville with a half-day guided walking tour.

A visit to the Cathedral (burial place of Christopher Columbus) & its famous *Giralda* tower, is included, as well as exploring the narrow streets & alleys of the *Barrio Santa Cruz*, Seville's once thriving Jewish Quarter.

The afternoon today is totally free for you to enjoy Seville at your own pace before we rendezvous for dinner & an evening flamenco performance.

### Day 9: Ronda & the mountains of Andalucia

We board our bus this morning for the journey to Granada, taking us through the *Serrania de Ronda* mountains. The highlight of our day will be an extended visit to Ronda, the most famous of the region's 'white cities', an incredible town perched precariously above a deep gorge, its houses clinging to the cliffs.

Later we continue to Granada where, after checking-in for a two-night stay, we'll get familiar with the city on an introductory walking tour before dinner in an authentic local restaurant.

### Day 10: Granada & the Alhambra

Today is devoted to Granada & the Alhambra Palace, a reminder of the centuries of Moorish rule in southern Spain & perhaps the most exotic building in Europe.

Our guided sightseeing tour will explore the fantastic palace, & introduce you to the history of Muslim Spain, then later your tour leader will lead you on a short orientation walk through the city center, ending with gelato at one of the city's many *gelateria*.

Granada's narrow streets & hidden squares are a delight to explore & there will be ample free time to wander this colorful city, or simply to relax.

### Day 11: Adiós Espana!

Sadly it's time to depart this morning for your flight from Malaga to the USA, arriving home later the same day.