



Best of Spain with Madrid, Toledo, Basque area: San Sebastian & Bilbao May 6-13 2024

\$3999. No single costs if you ask for a share and we cannot find one.

Single Supplement \$999

Deposit \$650 per terms/ conditions on Booking Form

May is the best month to visit Spain. Weather is mild, few crowds, flights accessible. This is a trip with few extras, 2 meals most days, fully escorted by our English speaking staff. We include the capital of Basque country where food is king and seafood comes directly from the cold waters of the Bay of Biscay. Basque culture is of the oldest in Europe; language unique and its landscapes, rocky mountainous and coastal.

May 6 Monday Depart May 5 arrive Madrid May 6. Transfer on own to our hotel in central



Madrid. Taxis charge a set fee of about 35\$US airport to town. If you wish a private transfer, please let us know. Check in to our hotel. Tonight we dine in a private room in our hotel. Our hand picked Tour Manager meets us for dinner and gives a detailed orientation about our time together. **Dinner includes wine.** Overnight Madrid Radisson RED

Our hotel in Madrid is a 4 star centrally located Radisson. The hotel has a fitness center, free wifi, restaurant and bar. Rooms are air conditioned with flat screen

tv's, hairdryers, safe etc.

May 7 After buffet breakfast, we depart by private coach for a guided tour of the Royal Palace and a walking tour to include major squares and avenues of Madrid. Plaza Mayor is the heart and older part, dating from Hapsburg times. We continue to Plaza de Cibeles with its magnificent fountain surrounded by palaces and impressive buildings, then Puerta de Alcala, one of the five gates to the city; its triumphal arch dates from 1778. The final stop today is Puerta del Sol, the center of Madrid. Return to our hotel. **Breakfast and Dinner with wine** tonight in a restaurant near the hotel.

May 8 After breakfast we visit the world famous Prado Museum with our private tour guide.



After the museum we travel to Retiro Park then drive to Gran Via, a huge shopping area. Shopping in Madrid includes: well priced leather goods, brilliantly colored espadrilles, ceramics, jewelry. Transfer back to the hotel on own. Tonight we enjoy dinner with wine and a thrilling **Flamenco show. Breakfast and Dinner with wine.**

Note: for those of you who wish to visit another museum we recommend the Reina Sofia, for modern art and Spanish Civil War exhibits like Picasso's 1937 Guernica.

May 9 After breakfast today, we have a Madrid Food Tour – Gastronomy and History with Lunch (Including Tapas Tasting at Mercado de San Miguel). Afternoon a half day tour to UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE town of Toledo, dating from Roman times and peaking in the 11

century. (Optional \$85 seat in bus trip with local guide). The drive is about 45 minutes each way. **Breakfast and Food Tour Lunch.**

May 10 We depart Madrid today traveling north to Burgos then San Sebastian. Burgos has a UNESCO heritage cathedral and retains much of its medieval atmosphere. We have free time here for lunch (not included) then continue to San Sebastian, a world famous Basque town set between the sea and mountains. San Sebastian is the culinary capital of Spain as well as vacation area for former royalty. The city is one of the top places to visit in Western Europe. It is a Basque town, different from much of Spain. The entire old town is pedestrianized and renovated. We enjoy a panoramic funicular and a walking tour. Tonight a local specialty or **Pintxos Tasting Paired with Spanish Wines.** Hotel San Sebastian is Zenit Convento San Martin **Breakfast and Pintxos style Dinner. Pintxos are uniquely Basque; the word means toothpick. Foods are handled with toothpicks.**

Our hotel is modern inside but an old convent outside; it is a 4 1/2 stars 100 yards from the sea. Rooms have a/c, coffee machines, tv, hairdryer etc.

May 11 This morning some free time. Then we are off to Bilbao, home of the Guggenheim Museum by star architect, Frank Gehry, one of the most impressive buildings in the Western World. Bilbao is the largest city in Basque Spain. You will hear a Celtic language not Spanish and see a city awarded many times for its unusual urban designs. Our home here is **Hotel Abando** A local guide will take us on a tour of Old Town.



Hotel Arrizul Congress is in central Bilbao and is a luxury hotel. The hotel has a/c, hair dryers, wifi and many tourist services.

May 12 Visit the Guggenheim Museum with our guide. Afterwards some free for last minute shopping and sightseeing. **Farewell dinner** tonight with wine at a local restaurant. **Breakfast and Dinner.**

May 13 After breakfast transfer to the Bilbao Airport for flights home. **Breakfast** Flights from Bilbao connect with those via Madrid, Paris, London and other major

European capitals.

If you wish to add extra nights in Madrid, please ask.

Included:

Touring as described with entrance fees above.
Full time Tour Manager to travel with us.
Local Guides
Private coach.
Porterage 1 bag (between 8AM-8PM)
City Tax
One option to Toledo \$85 extra

Not included

International Airfare
Tips to Guides, Drivers and Tour Manager.
Anything not mentioned in the above itinerary.

Photos from Madrid and San Sebastian Tourism sites.