

From the cobbled streets of Toledo to the arabesque Alhambra and Manueline Lisbon, this well planned itinerary highlights the culture, art and landscapes of these two 'amazing' countries.



Lisbon's Monument to the Discoveries overlooking the Belem waterfront

Amazing Spain & Portugal

TOUR PACE

A popular, well paced tour of Spain and Portugal with two night stays in the cities of Seville and Lisbon, allowing plenty of time for in-depth sightseeing. Other driving days are comfortable, interspersed with sightseeing en route.

HOTELS

Hotels on this tour are mostly modern, and comfortable with first class facilities. They are centrally located, close to amenities and shops, except for the scenically located and comfortable Lisbon Marriott, which has splendid views.

DAY 1 – DEPART USA. Board your overnight flight.

DAY 2 – ARRIVE MADRID. Welcome to Madrid, Europe's highest capital, occupying the very centre of the Iberian Peninsula. Your *airport transfers* depart from Madrid Airport to the tour hotel at 09:00, 11:00, 13:30 & 16:00 hours. The rest of the day is at leisure to begin to get to know this stylish city. Tonight, enjoy a *Welcome Drink* with your Tour Director. Hotel: NH Nacional.

DAY 3 – MADRID – TOLEDO – GRANADA. Set off southwards this morning to the *city of Toledo, situated high above the River Tagus, and famous for its burnished steel swords, which have been crafted here for centuries. Walk through the cobbled streets to the great Gothic Cathedral and visit the Church of Santo Tomé, housing El Greco's famous painting, 'The Burial of the Count of Orgaz'.* Continue on through the dry plains of Don Quixote's La Mancha, before crossing the Sierra Nevada to reach *Granada*, capital of the Moorish Kingdom of Spain till the Moors' defeat in 1492. Hotel: Saray. (BB,D)

DAY 4 – GRANADA – SEVILLE. 'There is no pain in life so cruel as to be blind in Granada', cries the inscription on the walls of the Alhambra. *Bathed in morning light, the Alhambra Palace awaits: a fantasy of stone cut lace, arabesque gardens and fountains, built as a citadel by the Moors in the 13th century. You also visit the exotic water gardens of the Generalife, the royal summer residence.* Relax here in the sunshine, and enjoy the fine views over the town and its three verdant hills before embarking on a scenic drive to *Seville*. Hotel: Melia Lebreros. (BB)

DAY 5 – SEVILLE SIGHTSEEING. Your *guided sightseeing tour* of Seville reveals the city in all its glory! *Enter the immense 15C Cathedral, to see the final resting place of Christopher Columbus.* Back outside, see the fabulous *Alcazar* and slender *Giralda Tower*. Soak up the atmosphere in the fashionable *Santa Cruz Quarter*, with its flower decked wrought iron balconies. The rest of the day is at leisure. Tonight, why not enjoy dinner and a flamenco show? (BB)

DAY 6 – SEVILLE – LISBON. Bid 'adiós' to Seville and head for the green slopes of the Sierra Morena. After crossing the Portuguese border, continue through the infinite horizons of the Alentejo Plateau. Once over the amazing *Tagus Bridge*, you arrive in *Lisbon*, historic capital of Portugal - according to the poet Camoes, "the princess of the world...before whom even the ocean bows"! Tonight, *there are a selection of local restaurants to choose from for your Dine-around evening.* Hotel: Marriott. (BB,DA)

DAY 7 – LISBON SIGHTSEEING. A *panoramic guided tour* takes you along the spacious avenues of the Lower Town and beneath the hilltop Bairro Alto to the Terreiro do Paco, finest square in the city. Visit the Belem Quarter from where sailing ships set forth to discover unknown lands. See the modern *Monument to the Discoveries* and the more ancient *Belem Tower*, a masterpiece of Manueline style. It was erected to protect *Jeronimo's Monastery which you visit next. Take some time to admire the fabulous double tiered cloisters.* Then you are at leisure. Perhaps join a tour to the beautiful town of Sintra which was the summer residence of the Kings of Portugal? (BB)

DAY 8 – LISBON – FATIMA – SALAMANCA. Drive into the green hills north of Lisbon to visit *Fatima* the most celebrated place of pilgrimage in

Portugal. *Visit the Basilica* commemorating the appearance of the Virgin Mary to three children in 1917. Then cross the border back into Spain and continue to *Salamanca*, famous for its golden stone buildings. During your stay see the handsome arcades of the *Plaza Mayor*, the 16C *University Buildings* and *Puente Romano* bridge across the River Tormes - 15 of its 26 arches still date from the time of the ancient Romans! Hotel: Alameda Palace. (BB,D)

DAY 9 – SALAMANCA – AVILA – MADRID. Cross the rock strewn hills of La Morana, towards the city of *Avila*, still entirely enclosed within *11th century walls*, and unique in Europe. Walk awhile within the ancient city, before returning to *Madrid* for a *sightseeing tour*. Here, your *local guide* introduces you to the statue of *Cervantes* in the *Plaza de España*, the *Royal Palace*, *Cibeles Fountain* and *Parliament*. *This evening, bid farewell to your new found friends with a lively highlight dinner at a local restaurant.* Hotel: Melia Galgos. (BB,HD)

DAY 10 – RETURN TO USA. After breakfast, the airport shuttle service from the tour hotel arrives Madrid Airport at 07.00, 09.00 & 11.00 hours. (BB)



Jeronimo's Monastery in Lisbon



Why not enjoy a fiery flamenco