SPAIN
BARCELONA & MADRID
APRIL 27-MAY 4, 2015
8 DAYS/6 NIGHTS
Hotel accommodation for 6 nights
Included meals consisting of:
Assistance of professional English speaking local guides in
Airport transfers with English speaking hostess
Hotel taxes and service charges

Roman settlement of Barcelona. Remains of the squared Roman
buildings date from Medieval Times, some from as far back as the
street, with its characteristic market of flowers and birds in the
in Barcelona. Modernist architecture). We will follow along the famous Ramblas
promenade of the most innovative artistic trends. At the beginning
of time 2,500 years, and all important periods of history in the
peninsula passed by the city: Romans, Visigoths, Moors... Its long
history and economic dynamism have made Barcelona a cultural
city, which can be seen in the historic-artistic heritage and the
promotion of the most innovative artistic trends. At the beginning
of the XXth, the Modernism art by Antoni Gaudí arrived in the moment of
big expansion of the city (Eixample quarter) and this art style marked
the present semblance in a considerable way. Check-in to the hotel
in Barcelona. Balance of the day is at leisure. Overnight at the hotel in
Barcelona.

This morning's guided panoramic city tour
Touring by private deluxe air-conditioned motorcoach
Assistance of professional English speaking local guides in
Barcelona and Madrid
Sightseeing, including local guide and all entrance fees, as follows:
- Full day city tour in Barcelona including lunch and beverages
- Half day city tour of Madrid
- Airport transfers with English speaking hostess
- Hospitality desk at each hotel with Central Holidays staff
- Portage at the hotel
- Hotel taxes and service charges

Mon, Apr 27 Depart USA
Depart the US this evening to Barcelona.

Tue, Apr 28 Arrive Barcelona
Barcelona’s history goes back in time 2,500 years, and all important periods of history in the
peninsula passed by the city: Romans, Visigoths, Moors... Its long
history and economic dynamism have made Barcelona a cultural
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in Barcelona. Balance of the day is at leisure. Overnight at the hotel in
Barcelona.

Wed, Apr 29 Barcelona
This morning’s guided panoramic city tour
will include the most emblematic monuments of the city, starting in
the Catalunya Square, which is the starting point of two of
Barcelona’s most famous streets, the Rambla (a wide promenade
in the old city) and the Passeig de Gràcia (a grand showcase of
modernist architecture). We will follow along the famous Ramblas
Street, with its characteristic market of flowers and birds in the
morning. We will walk in the Gothic Quarter where many of the
buildings date from Medieval Times, some from as far back as the
Roman settlement of Barcelona. Remains of the squared Roman
Wall can still be seen. It has a labyrinthine street plan, and contains
many of the city’s most important buildings such as: City Hall and
the Generalitat (regional government). After time is given for lunch,
we will continue our panoramic tour with a visit to Montjuic, a broad
shallow hill overlooking the harbor. While there we can visit Poble
Espanyol is an architectural museum and one of the biggest
attractions of the city encompassing contemporary art, architecture,
crafts and gastronomy. The museum consists of 117 full-scale
buildings, which recreates an Iberian village with streets, houses,
parks, theater, school, restaurants and artisan workshops. This
evening transfer to the Cavas Codiniu wine cellar in San Sadumi di
Noia (approx. 35 minutes from the hotel), producing wine from 1551,
to enjoy a welcome dinner. After, return to the hotel for overnight.

Thu, Apr 30 Barcelona
Today is yours at leisure to explore this fascinating city, or take advantage of the many optional programs
offered in and around the city of Barcelona. Tonight enjoy dinner with
drinks at the Port area of Barcelona. Overnight at the hotel in
Barcelona.

Fri, May 1 Barcelona/Zaragoza/Madrid
After breakfast at the hotel, depart Barcelona and travel south to Madrid, on the way we
will make a stop at the medieval city of Zaragoza. It is one of Spain’s
major cities. You will find a stunning legacy of monuments in the
streets of the city, vestiges of the Roman, Moorish, Jewish and
Christian communities. Stop for a walk in the Pilar Square, where
the local citizens congregate for important events, and where there are
the main monuments: Pilar Basilic, Sea, XVIth cent. Lonja (old market)... After an included lunch in Zaragoza, we continue to the
capital city of Madrid. Madrid is synonymous with culture and street
life. It is a capital open and welcoming, with the most exciting nightlife... But above all it is a cultural paradise, where you can find
the biggest concentration of art masterpieces in the Prado Museum,
the Reina Sofia Art Centre and the Thyssen-Bornesmiza Museum, all
within a few meters distance. You’ll also be able to visit such
impressive monuments as the Royal Palace, places with their own
particular charm like the Plaza Mayor square, the Retiro Park or the
active Gran Via... drop into typical bars and taverns to sample a range
of delicious ‘tapas’. Overnight at the hotel in Madrid.

Sat, May 2 Madrid
This morning enjoy a guided panoramic city tour.
We will travel some of Madrid’s main avenues such as the Gran Via,
full of life with its big old cinemas and theatre, a Spanish version of
Broadway. We will follow Castellana Avenue where monumental
fountains are located such as the beautiful Cibeles Fountain. See
the Parliament and other remarkable buildings such as the Royal
Palace of the King. Balance of the day is yours at leisure to continue
your exploration of this monumental city. Overnight at the hotel in
Madrid.

Sun, May 3 Madrid
Once again you are at leisure to enjoy this
interesting city full of artistic treasures. This evening transfer to the
Palacio del Negralejo, manor house with remains from XVI to XIXth
century transformed in an excellent restaurant full of charm and
historic atmosphere. Enjoy a farewell dinner before returning to the
hotel for overnight.

Mon, May 4 Madrid to USA
Transfer to the Madrid Airport for your
return flights home.

HOTELS (OR SIMILAR)

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<tr>
<td>Barcelona</td>
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<td>Hotel Princesa Sofia</td>
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From Barcelona...

MONSERRAT EXCURSION HD  $85
Montserrat, the serrated mountain, is a unique Natural Park and a massive rock reaching over 1200 metres (4000 feet). It is visible for miles, with weird shapes and rounded peaks that jut into the sky; there are paths, stairs, caves, chapels, hermitages scattered over the mountain, extraordinary landscapes and wonderful views. The Benedictine monastery is nearly 1000 years old, perched half way up the mountain and sheltered by its peaks. There is a basilica with the Chapel of Our Lady of Montserrat the famous XII century Romanesque sculpture, known as La Moreneta - the Black Madonna - the patron saint of Catalonia and a presence strongly felt and revered. The community of monks hosts a library of nearly 300,000 volumes and the oldest boys' choir in Europe! Which it can be listened occasionally at noon (not guaranteed).

Duration: 5 hours

DALI MUSEUM & GIRONA FD  $157
We will discover northern Catalonia, where the master painter Salvador Dalí grew up and we’ll explore Girona walking on the historic centre and strolling through the best-preserved Jewish quarter in Europe. In Figueres we will get in touch with the fascinating world of Salvador Dalí. Known as the home of Salvador Dalí, in this town with deep Catalan roots we will visit the Dalí Theatre-Museum, dedicated to the genius of surrealist painting. The Dalí Theatre-Museum is the largest surrealist object in the world, replacing the town's former Municipal Theatre which was destroyed during the Spanish Civil War. This is not a museum more, it is really impacting, you would like or not but everybody is surprised. After we will visit Gerona and see the beautiful walled city of Girona. It was originally built by the Romans as a fortress, and the best way to explore the medieval town is to lose yourself in the alluring labyrinth narrow streets which still reflect its two centuries of Moorish occupation.

Duration: 10 hours
Entrance fees included: Cathedral Girona and Dali Museum

MONSERRAT & SITGES FD  $192
Montserrat, the serrated mountain, is a unique Natural Park and a massive rock reaching over 1200 metres (4000 feet). It is visible for miles, with weird shapes and rounded peaks that jut into the sky; there are paths, stairs, caves, chapels, hermitages scattered over the mountain, extraordinary landscapes and wonderful views. The Benedictine monastery is nearly 1000 years old, perched half way up the mountain and sheltered by its peaks. There is a basilica with the Chapel of Our Lady of Montserrat the famous XII century Romanesque sculpture, known as La Moreneta - the Black Madonna - the patron saint of Catalonia and a presence strongly felt and revered. The community of monks hosts a library of nearly 300,000 volumes and the oldest boys' choir in Europe! Which it can be listened occasionally at noon (not guaranteed).

PANORAMIC BY NIGHT WITH A ‘PAELLA’ DINNER  $170
This cool capital offers us by night, even a more spectacular view of its main streets Passeig de Gracia, Gran Via les Corts...and some of their beautiful buildings, Holy Family church and other modernist buildings, get a magical aspect. Too, mostly avant garde architecture, as the Agbar tower illuminated, looks more impacting to us. We will take for the dinner a ‘‘Paella’ in a Restaurant. ‘Paella’ was the popular plate in the rural areas of Valencia, in the origin. Nowadays it has become a well-known Spanish dish all over the world. It is made with rice and many other ingredients (see food, vegetables, chicken...). We would say that it is a ‘must’ experience to taste it, once you are in Spain. ‘Paellera’ is the name of the peculiar enormous frying pan where it is cooked.

Duration: 3 hours
From Madrid...

**TOLEDO EXCURSION HD**

Toledo is one of the Spanish cities with the greatest collection of monuments. It preserves an artistic and cultural legacy in the form of churches, palaces, fortresses, mosques and synagogues. This great diversity of artistic styles makes the old quarter of Toledo a real open-air museum, which has led to it being declared a World Heritage Site. The city of Toledo has its origins in the Roman Toletum, this settlement was on the banks of the River Tajo after its conquest in 190 BC. The city maintained its importance for centuries and, in the Visigothic era, became the capital of Hispania (6th C.). The arrival of the Arabs in the 8th century, together with the presence of Christians and Jews, made Toledo the “city of the three cultures”. This was one of the Toledo's most splendid periods when, among other important events, the Toledo School of Translators was founded. Later, when Carlos V came to the throne in 1519, the city became an imperial capital. The maze of streets making up the historic centre of Toledo is only bounded by walls in which many gates were opened.

Esplanades, mosques and churches jostle in the narrow streets of Toledo, which is characterized by the mixture of artistic styles. If there is one person's name that defines Toledo it is El Greco painter (16th-17th C.). We will visit his masterpiece in St Tomé’s church. One of the most outstanding buildings in the city is the Cathedral, considered one of the high points of Gothic art although other styles can be seen inside.

**ESCORIAL MONASTERY & VALLEY OF THE FALLEN HD**

The monumental complex of the Royal Monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial is situated on the foot of a mountain 50km to the northeast of Madrid. Philip II ordered its construction to commemorate the victory on San Quentin battle (August 1557) over the troops of Henry II, king of France. The work lasted 21 years and as time went by it became a royal mausoleum, a necropolis for the Spanish monarchs. This tradition has been maintained throughout the history of the Spanish monarchy. Philip II ordered the design of El Escorial to Juan Bautista de Toledo, a Spanish architect who studied in Italy as Michelangelo’s helper in the construction of St. Peter’s Basilica (Rome). After Juan Bautista’s death, Juan de Herrera takes over as the head architect. Juan de Herrera executes the work with a serene style known as “Herreriano style”, characterized by the austerity of its lines. Symmetry and equilibrium are the best adjectives used to describe the architecture of El Escorial. The Monastery attracts attention with the grandeur of its construction. Its interior holds the Basilica, a Doric church that occupies the central part of the complex. We will visit the Palace of the Austrias, residence that Philip II ordered constructed next to the largest altar of the Basilica for his convenience. A window permitted the monarch to follow the mass from bed when illness prevented him from being able to stand up. The library is highlighted by its vaulted ceiling, wooden bookcases and marble floors. It was the first public library in Spain and had a collection of 40,000 volumes. This was a result of decree Philip II signed in which copies of all publications were required to be sent to him. We will follow to the Valley of the Fallen: This enormous monument built in between 1940 and 1959. It was built in commemoration of the fallen during the Spanish Civil war (1936-39). It is a Basilica excavated inside the mountain at 1350 m of altitude above sea level where an impressive 150 m high cross places itself over the magnificent nature reserve of Madrid mountain range.

**SEGOVIA & AVILA FD**

Segovia was converted into an important military fortress, during the Roman period in I century. During the centuries of Muslim invasion Segovia loses a great deal of its importance and the city loses many of its inhabitants. In the 10th century Segovia was reconquered by the Christians with the help of Alfonso VI of Castile. The city was revitalized and it recuperated some of its splendour. In the following centuries various monuments and churches were built. The 15th century was Segovia’s Golden Century – it consolidated its textile industry that reached world fame. Many noblemen built palaces in the city and kings spent long periods in the Alcázar. The historical-monumental richness of the city gained official status after being declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 1985. The Aqueduct of Segovia, situated in the center of the city, is the monument which has given the most fame to the city. It was constructed by the Romans between the 1st and 2nd centuries. The water was transported a total of 19 km (11 miles), and was constructed without mortar or cement. A complicated study of equilibrium forces makes the ashlars, or stones that compose each of the arches, stay standing upright. Its cathedral, is often named as the “Lady of Cathedrals”, is characterized by its unique floor layout surrounded by radial chapels and a semicircular sanctuary. Finally its Alcázar fortress, probably the most spectacular castle in Spain, is easy visible from many kilometers away. Ávila has a long history begins with the old Celtiberian settlement of the Vettones around the year 700 BC. The city was repopulated and rebuilt in the 11th century. The city’s period of greatest splendour was in the 16th century, when wool manufacture launched its economy. During that time of prosperity, many civil and religious buildings were erected in the city, and are nowadays still standing in the city’s historic centre. The symbol of the city is the wall, one of the best preserved walled sites in Europe. Its perimeter is two kilometres and a half, with about 2,500 battlements, 100 towers, 6 doors and 3 secondary entrances. Its Cathedral, which looks like a fortress and was built between the 12th and 14th centuries. Its apse, known as “cimborro”, is attached to the wall and is the largest defensive turret on the bastion. Throughout its history, Ávila was the birthplace of famous Spanish mystics such as Santa Teresa de Jesús and San Juan de la Cruz.

**SYNTHESIS**

- **TOLEDO EXCURSION HD**
  - **DURATION**: HD 5 hours, FD 8 hours
  - **ENTRY FEES INCLUDED**: HD Cathedral, Santo Tomé and Synagogue, FD Cathedral, Santo Tomé, Sinagogue and St John of Kings

- **ESCORIAL MONASTERY & VALLEY OF THE FALLEN HD**
  - **DURATION**: 10 hours
  - **ENTRY FEES INCLUDED**: Monastery of Escorial and Valley of the Fallen basilica

- **SEGOVIA & AVILA FD**
  - **DURATION**: 10 hours
  - **ENTRY FEES INCLUDED**: Alcazar and Cathedral in Segovia, Cathedral and Walls in Ávila

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The city of Toledo, with its rich history, is known as the “city of the three cultures.” This was one of Toledo’s most splendid periods when, among other important events, the Toledo School of Translators was founded. Later, when Carlos V came to the throne in 1519, the city became an imperial capital. The maze of streets making up the historic centre of Toledo is only bounded by walls in which many gates were opened. Synagogues, mosques and churches jostle in the narrow streets of Toledo, which is characterized by the mixture of artistic styles. If there is one person’s name that defines Toledo it is El Greco painter (16th-17th C.). We will visit his masterpiece in St. Tomé’s church.

One of the most outstanding buildings in the city is the Cathedral, considered one of the high points of Gothic art although other styles can be seen inside. El Escorial is situated on the foot of a mountain 50km northeast Madrid. Philip II ordered its construction to commemorate the victory on San Quentin battle (August 1557) over the troops of Henry II, king of France. The work lasted 21 years and as time went by it became a royal mausoleum, a necropolis for the Spanish monarchs. This tradition has been maintained throughout the history of the Spanish monarchy. Philip II ordered the design of El Escorial to Juan Bautista de Toledo, a Spanish architect who studied in Italy as Michelangelo’s helper in the construction of St. Peter's Basilica (Rome). After Juan Bautista’s death, Juan de Herrera takes over as the head architect. Juan de Herrera executes the work with a serene style known as “Herreriano style”, characterized by the austerity of its lines. Symmetry and equilibrium are the best adjectives used to describe its architecture. The Monastery attracts attention with the grandeur of its construction. We will follow to the Valley of the Fallen: This enormous monument built in between 1940 and 1959. It was built in commemoration of the fallen during the Spanish Civil war (1936-39). It is a Basilica excavated inside the mountain at 1350 m of altitude above sea level where an impressive 150 m high cross places itself over the magnificent nature reserve of Madrid mountain range.

### TOLEDO & ESCORIAL & VALLEY OF THE FALLEN FD $203

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