

CITY BREAKS
in Spain



www.spain.info



INTRODUCTION

▲ METROPOL PARASOL
SEVILLE

Any time of the year is ideal for a **city break** in Spain. Enjoy a couple of memorable days in one of our main cities.

Discover all its charm as you stroll through the streets and parks, enjoy the culture, a little *shopping* and make a gastronomic tour. You'll want to come back again soon!

Take a flight and get from anywhere in Europe to cities like Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Malaga, Bilbao and Palma de Mallorca in just a **few hours**. Once in Spain, it's easy to make short trips from one city to another by plane or **high-speed train**.

You can just feel the culture in every corner of our cities. Stroll around historic neighbourhoods like Madrid de los Austrias and the Gothic Quarter in Barcelona, visit the Picasso Museum in Malaga and make the most of Seville's cultural agenda.

Then there are incredible parks like the Retiro in Madrid and the María Luisa Park in Seville, green areas which really are the lungs for these cities.

Spain is a cheerful, welcoming and open-minded country. We invite you to discover our customs and spend a few days enjoying memorable **festivities**. You'll have a great time at the "Fallas" in Valencia, the "Semana Grande" Festival in Bilbao and the "La Mercé" Festivities in Barcelona.

Savour Spain's traditional as well as its avant-garde **cuisine**. Visit traditional and avant-grade restaurants, gastronomic markets and try some of the best wines in the world.

Don't worry, the excellent quality of public **transport** will enable you to get around in the cities with no problems. The wide **variety of hotel accommodation** means you'll be able to choose the best alternative to suit your requirements. Take a dip in the pool on a terrace with sea views or get your strength back in a spa after a long walk around the city.

Spain is cheerful and welcoming, find out for yourself. We welcome you with with open arms!

COME AND ENJOY SPAIN FOR 2 OR MORE DAYS



MADRID, THE CITY OF ART

You can wander through streets steeped in history, discover some of the more than 60 museums, stroll around parks and gardens and enjoy an exciting cultural programme... and why not, enjoy the legendary Madrid nightlife. Madrid is a modern and welcoming city with a multitude of things to see and do. Come and discover one of Europe's most entertaining cities.



DAY 1: ROUTE FOR HISTORY AND MUSEUMS

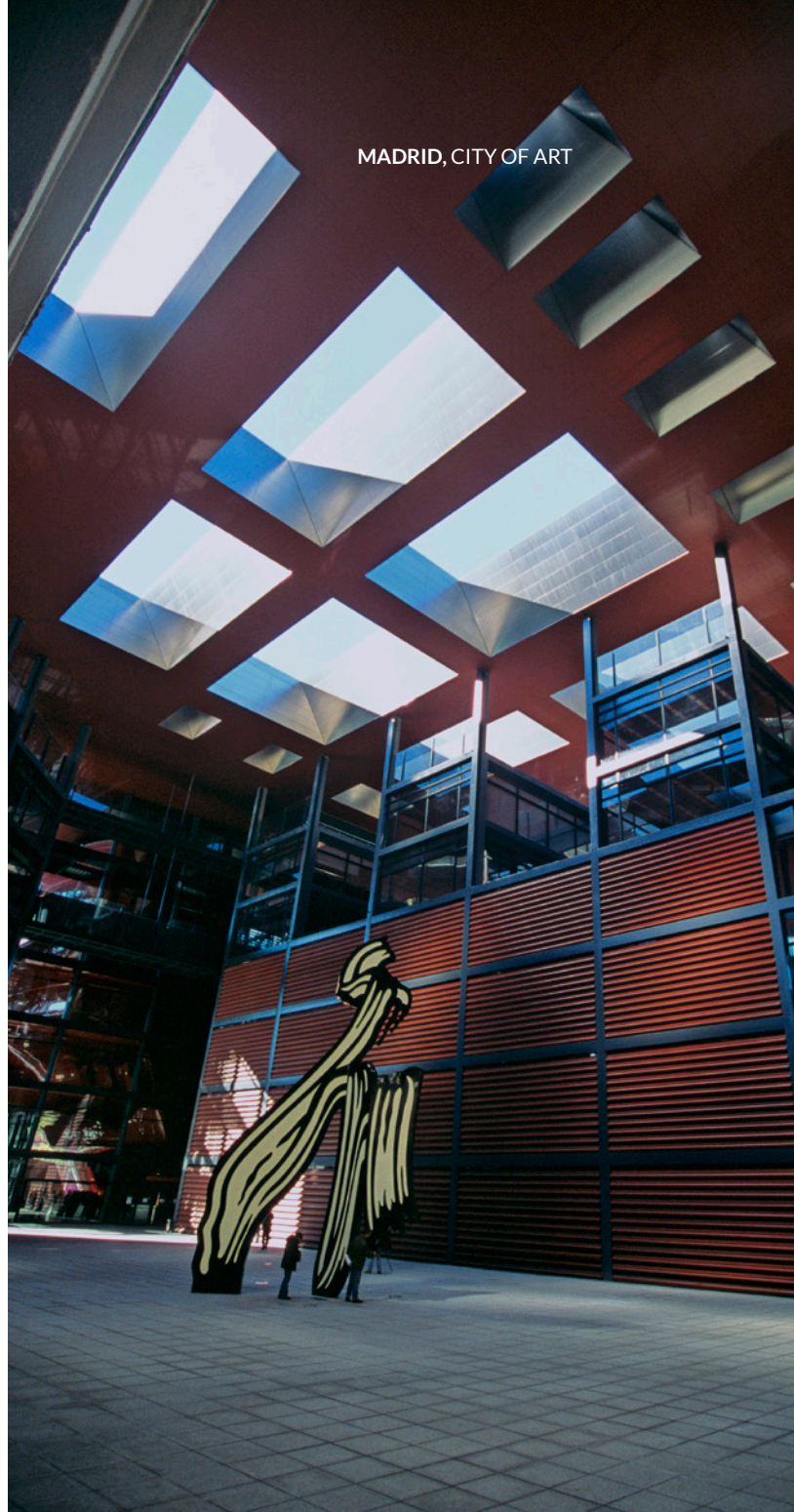
As a starting point, Madrid offers visitors an incomparable tour: The “**Paseo del Arte**” or “art walk”, with its concentration of museums, palaces and beautiful gardens. Starting out from the monumental **fountain of Cibeles** you'll find some of the best art collections in the world in the **Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum**, the **Prado Museum** and the **Reina Sofía Museum** which houses great works of contemporary art like Picasso's *Guernica*.

Nearby you can enjoy beautiful, interesting places like the **Royal Botanical Gardens** which has species of plants and trees more than 200 years old.

To whet your appetite, move on to **Malasaña**, the scenario for the “*Movida madrileña*” counter-cultural movement of the 80s, and **Chueca** the focal point for the city's LGBT+ scene. Two fashionable neighbourhoods where you can eat in truly original places and enjoy some alternative shopping.

Take a relaxing walk or cycle through the **El Retiro Park**, an emblematic garden full of statues, fountains and magical little enclaves. You can also row out on the lake, watch street performers and admire monuments like the **Crystal Palace**, a beautiful building that used to be a greenhouse and is now used for holding temporary exhibitions.

Another area where the natural environment plays a leading role is Madrid Río, a large green area running alongside the Manzanares River with more than 10 kilometres of pedestrian routes.



MADRID, CITY OF ART

▲ REINA SOFÍA NATIONAL ART MUSEUM
MADRID

When night falls it's time to enjoy the atmosphere in the **La Latina** neighbourhood, one of the oldest and most charismatic in the city. In the winding streets and beautiful little squares you'll find some of Madrid's most traditional restaurants and plenty of places to enjoy some tapas.

DAY 2: THEATRE AND SHOPPING

A day spent shopping and enjoying yourself will prove the best way of getting to know other parts of the city. You'll be seduced by luxury in the **Golden Mile**, in the district of Salamanca. This is where you'll find the most exclusive shops, including the top Spanish firms. The busy **Gran Vía** is another good shopping area where most of the fashion chains can be found.



Take a walk through the **Madrid de los Austrias**, the home of such representative monuments as the **Puerta del Sol**, the **Plaza Mayor** and the **Royal Palace**. When it's time to rest, sit down on a terrace with a vermouth or go to the **San Miguel Market** for a few *gourmet* tapas.

The **Barrio de las Letras** or District of Letters pays homage to the great writers living here in Spain's Golden Age and is one of the city's cultural focal points. Here you'll find some of the most renowned of Madrid's extensive network of theatres.

If you're looking for a great show, then you could try a musical in the Gran Vía, or perhaps an opera at the **Teatro Real**.



▲ SAN MIGUEL MARKET
MADRID



▲ SEGOVIA

IF YOU'RE STAYING FOR A FEW MORE DAYS...

Less than an hour's drive from Madrid there are a number of interesting cities like **Alcalá de Henares**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the birthplace of Miguel de Cervantes. You can walk around the churches and mansions, the centuries-old University and follow in the footsteps of the author of *Don Quixote*.

Segovia, which is also proud to be a World Heritage Site, has the Roman Aqueduct, the Plaza Mayor square and the Jewish quarter as its main attractions for the visitor.

Very near Madrid there are other delightful towns with so much history, like **Aranjuez** and **El Escorial**.

📍 *Further information:* www.esmadrid.es

BARCELONA, CITY OF MODERNISM

Discover why Barcelona is one of the world's most visited cities. The cosmopolitan feel, the privileged location on the shores of the Mediterranean and the cultural attractions will make you want to come back again and again. It is the capital of Catalonia, the birthplace of the major 20th-century avant-garde movements and the epitome of a modernist city. It also has Roman remains and medieval neighbourhoods through which you can stroll and just feel the history.

◀ CASA BATLLÓ
BARCELONA



DAY 1: MODERNIST ROUTE

Your day starts in the heart of Barcelona. Here you'll find the **Basilica of La Sagrada Família**, the icon of the city and its greatest exponent of Modernism. It is the extraordinary work of **Antoni Gaudí**; its most spectacular feature being the pointed towers. You can climb to the top of some of them and enjoy a beautiful panoramic view of the city from high up.

If you go straight along the Avenida de Gaudí it will take just five minutes to reach the **modernist enclosure of Sant Pau**, with colourful stained-glass win-

dows and golden domes. History goes hand-in-hand with avant-garde architecture in this former hospital designed by **Lluís Domènech i Montaner**, one of the essential celebrities of Modernism.

The city's most surprising buildings and monuments are shared between Montaner and Gaudí. The latter was responsible for the **Parque Güell** which is like something out of a fairy tale. A walk through this park awakens even the least vivid imagination. The curious shapes and bold colour combinations mixed with the vegetation create a magical world.

Stop for a rest and something to eat in the **Gracia neighbourhood** where the narrow streets and little squares are home to real culinary treasures. Here you'll find everything from traditional cellars and bars to prime examples of international and signature cuisine.

Once your hunger has been satisfied you can move on to the **Paseo de Gracia**, one of the city's main thoroughfares. In this area you'll find two of Gaudí's most representative buildings, **La Pedrera-Casa Milà** and the **Casa Batlló**, where the light, the colour and the organic shapes blend together with the wood, the ironwork and the stoneware. Pure magic.

In the evening you can visit **El Born**, Barcelona's most sophisticated neighbourhood. An area full of charm where you can admire the **church of Santa María del Mar** or enjoy a pleasant dinner in one of the restaurants or delightful terraces.

DAY 2: THE ART OF SHOPPING

Visit the ancestral heart of Barcelona in the **Gothic Quarter**. The narrow streets and medieval buildings will take you back in time. Visit the palaces which are now the **Town Hall** and the "**Generalitat**" or Regional Government, the **Cathedral** and the Gothic Basilica of **Santa María del Pi**.



▲ SANTA MARÍA DEL MAR CHURCH AND SQUARE
BARCELONA

▼ GÜELL PARK BARCELONA





▲ PORT VELL
BARCELONA

Mid-morning, we suggest you take a culinary tour through the district of **Ciutat Vella**. There you can enjoy the lively atmosphere of the **Santa Caterina Market** and its colourful roof and ceiling. Try the exquisite dishes served at one of the stalls and some of the delicious products of Catalan cuisine, like butifarra sausage and bread with tomato.

If you have a sweet tooth try some hot chocolate with “churros” (traditional fried-dough pastries) in one of the renowned chocolate shops in the Calle **Petritxol** or go to the **Ciudadela Park**, a garden enclosure built to imitate the Luxembourg gardens in Paris and where

there are several museums, a collection of sculptures, the Catalonia Parliament building and even a municipal zoo.

In the evening you can go shopping in **Las Ramblas** and the surrounding area, one of the most colourful and lively areas in the city and home to the some of Barcelona's oldest and most emblematic establishments.

Another option is to visit the extensive district of **Sants-Montjuïc**, overlooked by the hills of Montjuïc. The Castle of Montjuïc and other look out points on these hills offer panoramic views of Barcelona and allow to contemplate all the splendor of the Mediterranean.

At the most westerly end of the city you'll find the **Monastery of Pedralbes**, an excellent example of Catalan Gothic architecture. From the beautiful cloisters and chapels to the areas where the monks undertook their everyday activities, it is a place where time appears to have stood still. Next to it you'll find the **Palacio Real de Pedralbes**, an ancient country mansion restored in the 19th century and surrounded by impressive gardens.

When evening comes you can enjoy the opera at the **Gran Teatro del Liceo**, one of the most important in Europe. You not only get to enjoy the performance, you can also visit its most representative areas and learn about the details of its magnificent architecture.

For a dinner by the sea, you should go to **Port Vell** and **Maremagnum**, a shopping centre with a wide selection of restaurants and numerous terraces with views of the Mediterranean.

IF YOU HAVE MORE TIME...

You could perhaps visit the **Güell colony**, a group of Modernist buildings of great historical and cultural value. If you're looking for a natural environment, the **Sau-Collsabra valley**, with streams, cliffs and pre-historic caves, and the **Montserrat Nature Reserve** are two magnificent options.

Your getaway won't be complete without taking a dip at one of the sublime, sandy beaches in nearby towns like **Vilanova i la Geltrú** or **Sitges**.

📍 *Further information:*

www.barcelonaturisme.com





SEVILLE, CITY OF LIGHT

Visit Andalusia's capital and enjoy the lively atmosphere in the streets and squares while you discover some real cultural treasures. The influence of the Moorish culture has left an especially beautiful mark on the historic quarter. While you're there you really must go to a "tablao" and fall under the spell of Flamenco dancing and singing.

◀ REAL ALCÁZAR FORTRESS IN SEVILLE

DAY 1: HISTORY, TRADITION AND MODERNITY

Start your tour at the **Real Alcázar** fortress, one of the most spectacular monumental complexes in the world. You'll feel like you're in *Game of Thrones* as you stroll through the interior and the gardens which were used as a location when the series was filmed. In the nearby Plaza del Triunfo, surrounded by historical buildings, you'll find the **Archive of the Indies**, a principal point of reference for the study of Spain's presence in America.

Around the Alcázar stands the **Santa Cruz neighbourhood**, formerly the Jewish Quarter, where you'll find the authentic Seville and what used to be a synagogue, now the church of **Santa María la Blanca**. The narrow streets will lead you to the **Plaza de la Virgen de los**

Reyes where you'll find the **Cathedral of Santa María de la Sede**. Climb up the ramps to the bell tower where you'll be rewarded with unforgettable views over the city from the **Giralda**, formerly a minaret on what was a Moorish mosque.

The route continues towards the **Plaza Nueva** or **Plaza del Salvador**, where tapas become an art form. There is a selection of small taverns and up-to-date bars offering delicious snacks in an incomparable atmosphere.

In the afternoon, continue on to the Guadalquivir, the river which has determined the history and the layout of the city. There you'll find the **Torre del Oro**, a defence tower built in the



▲ SEVILLE CATHEDRAL



▲ PLAZA DEL SALVADOR, SEVILLE

13th century which was covered with golden tiles, hence its name. The interior houses the **Naval Museum** which contains models, compasses and ancient navigation charts.

Cross over the **San Telmo** or the **Triana** bridge to the other side of the river and you'll be in Seville's quintessential sailor's and Flamenco district. Dine on one of the terraces overlooking the **Calle Betis**, at the foot of the Guadalquivir, and enjoy the delights of Seville's night atmosphere. Or go to one of the numerous "tablaos", given over exclusively to Flamenco singing and dancing.

DAY 2: HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE RIDE DOWN A ROUTE OF SCENTS AND FLAVOURS

One of the most traditional ways of discovering the majestic **Plaza de España** and the delightful **María Luisa Park** is to take a horse-drawn carriage. This architectural complex was designed to be the main building for the 1929 Latin American Exhibition. It is semi-elliptical in shape which symbolises Spain embracing its former American colonies, and looks out towards the Guadalquivir River as the suggested route to take to reach America.





CITY BREAK

Photo: Karol Kozłowski/123rf.com

▲ PLAZA DE ESPAÑA
SEVILLE

Then continue on towards the former **Real Fábrica de Tabacos**, where tobacco from the Americas was received and processed. It is one of the prettiest buildings in the city where the main character of Bizet's Opera "Carmen" worked. All this before it became the headquarters for the University of Seville.

From there you can take the metro, the bus or hire a bicycle to complete the cultural route at the **Fine Arts Museum**. There you'll find a splendid collection of 17th century paintings from Seville, with works by great artists like Murillo, Velázquez and Zurbarán.

Enjoy the sunshine and the atmosphere as you stop for lunch in the **Alameda de Hércules**. The area around the oldest public gardens in Europe has recently been populated with tapas bars, delightful cafeterias and first-class restaurants.



Photo: herpizarro/123rf.com

OLD ROYAL TOBACCO FACTORY
UNIVERSITY OF SEVILLE

The evening is perfect for a walk through the **San Luis neighbourhood** as far as the **Basilica of La Macarena** and its Museum, one of the city's most important centres of religious devotion, especially at Easter when the Nazarenes take out their images for the procession.

Dine in the area around the **Metropol Parasol**, a wooden structure which the people of Seville have named as “The Mushrooms”. This avant-garde creation was designed by the architect Jürgen Mayer, and claims to be the largest wooden structure in the world. From the viewing platform you get sensational views over the city.

▼ METROPOL PARASOL
SEVILLE



▲ CORDOBA GATE
CARMONA, SEVILLE

IF YOU HAVE MORE TIME...

You really should visit the towns and cities on the Baetic-Roman Route. In the Seville countryside you can explore **Carmona**, **Osuna** and **Écija**, where history lives on in the form of castles and beautiful Baroque buildings.

The archaeological complex of **Itálica**, in Santiponce, contains the ruins of what was the first Roman city built outside what is now Italy. There you'll find the remains of the amphitheatre, precious houses, thermal baths and other public buildings.

📍 *Further information:*
www.visitasevilla.es



Small informational plaque next to the painting.



MALAGA, CITY OF MUSEUMS

Enjoy the sunshine in one of Spain's most fashionable cities. The Gibralfaro castle casts a watchful eye over this lively and bustling city full of beautiful little corners. You'll just love the beaches, the museums and the hospitality of the people.

Photo: Malaga Tourist Board

▲ MALAGA MUSEUM

DAY 1: SHOPPING AND CULTURE

The **Calle Marqués de Larios** and the surrounding area, in the historical town centre, are perfect for a morning's shopping. It is the commercial hub of the city where you'll find the main shops selling fashion and accessories.

You can round off the morning with a cultural visit to one of Malaga's many museums. The city where the genius Picasso was born maintains vivid memories of one of the 20th century's greatest artists. The Buenavista Palace houses the **Picasso Museum** which represents eight decades of his artistic production.



▲ CALLE MARQUÉS DE LARIOS
MALAGA

There are 37 museums in the capital of the Costa del Sol, so you have plenty to choose from. Looking for some surprising contemporary art? Your best choice is the **Pompidou Centre** and its multi-coloured cube. Here you'll find benchmark works from the collection of its counterpart in Paris.

If classical painting is more your style, then try the **Carmen Thyssen Museum** where there is a comprehensive collection of 19th century Andalusian art. Or visit the Collection at the **Saint Petersburg-Malaga Russian Museum** in the unique Tabacalera building, with over a hundred works from the 15th to the 20th centuries.

Midday is the ideal time to stop for a few tapas and a glass or two of Malaga wines

near the **Cathedral of La Encarnación**, one of the city's most important monuments, after you have been inside for a visit. It has its own gardens and a magnificent patio, as well as the ashlar in the choir, the work of the sculptor Pedro de Mena.

It is less than a ten-minute walk to the **Alcazaba**, an 11th century Moorish fortress-palace which is a blend of history and beauty. Climb up to the battlements for a magnificent view of Malaga and learn more about how it was built and its occupants, from the archaeological samples in the interior.

At its feet there is what used to be a **Roman theatre**, an ideal area for a pleasant dinner in one of Malaga's most traditional bars.

▼ POMPIDOU CENTRE
MALAGA





▲ LA MALAGUETA BEACH
MALAGA



SARDINE KEBABS

DAY 2: A DAY AT THE BEACH AND THE BOTANICAL GARDENS

An essential part of any visit to Malaga is to spend some time on one of the city's beaches. One of the most popular with local residents is **La Malagueta**, since it is very near both the city centre and the port. Forget the stress, lie under the sun on the golden sands and cool off with a nice dip in the sea.

All along the beach front there are numerous places where you can get a bite to eat. The most typical ones are the beach bars serving traditional skewered grilled sardines, the genuine flavour of Malaga.

In the evening you can enjoy the hundred-year-old trees and magnificent surroundings in the **Botanical-Historical Gardens of La Concepción**. Follow one of the routes suggested by the garden itself (the forest route, the lookout points and round the world in 80 trees) or explore the surprising palatial house of the Loring family, part of the Malaga gentry, for whom it was built at the end of the 19th century.

You can end the day in the shopping centre in the port where you'll also get one of the best panoramic views of the city's monumental district.



MALAGA

IF YOU HAVE MORE TIME...

Visit the dolmens in **Antequera** and **Ronda**, nearby towns with a lot of charm and home to these megalithic remains and other architectural treasures. In Ronda there is an amazing gorge which is over 150 metres deep dividing the city in two and crossed by two incredible bridges. Or you could try one of the beaches in **Nerja** and see the caves, with really original rock formations and cave art.

① **Further information:**
www.malagaturismo.com

RONDA
MALAGA

BILBAO, CITY OF GASTRONOMY

Bilbao is a hospitable city which invites you to stroll around and go shopping or discover surprising outdoor sculptures and buildings designed by some of the best architects in the world. Basque cuisine and its exquisite *pintxos* or aperitifs is yet another added value.

◀ OLD TOWN
BILBAO

DAY 1: TRADITION AND AVANT-GARDE

Take the funicular up **Mount Artxanda** and enjoy one of the best panoramic views of Bilbao. This hundred-year-old train takes only three minutes to reach the **Artxanda lookout point**, with stunning views of the city and the surrounding hills.

Ride back down in the funicular and you'll reach the estuary. Then stroll along the **Campo de Volantín** walkway as far as the **Zubizuri**, a futuristic pedestrian bridge which leads to the **Uribitarte Promenade**. This landscaped route along the left bank of the estuary leads to the **Guggenheim Museum**.

There you can enjoy masterpieces of modern and contemporary art. It also provides two first-class culinary experiences. **Nerua**, with one Michelin star and the **Bistró Guggenheim Bilbao**. In the area surrounding the museum you'll find **Puppy**, the famous sculpture shaped like a dog and covered with natural plants, as well as numerous places where you can sample delicious Basque cuisine.

Visit the **Abandoibarra** district where the city's shipyards used to be and which have been immortalised in the numerous sculptures you'll see as you pass by. Very near here you'll find another great gallery, **the Bilbao Museum of Fine Arts**, with works by Goya, Velázquez and Picasso.



BILBAO, CITY OF GASTRONOMY

The Bilbao Guggenheim Museum, designed by Frank Gehry, is the international symbol of the city.

MOUNT ARTXANDA
BILBAO



GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM BILBAO



Photo: Yulia Grogoryeva/123rf.com

PINTXOS

This pleasant walk takes you across the **Pedro Arrupe bridge** and onto the campus of the **University of Deusto**, comprising a number of buildings of great architectural value. Special mention should go to the main building in Classicist style. In the interior you'll find a great central staircase, the library (now a conference room), a Gothic chapel and an auditorium.

Further along the **Botica Vieja riverbank** you'll be able to enjoy another of the city's defining views. To the right, a giant stone tiger crowns a former important factory.

Discover Bilbao's night life in **Azkuna Zentroa**, an old wine warehouse refurbished by the designer Philippe Starck. You'll find a culture and leisure centre where everything imaginable is possible: exhibitions, concerts, swimming pool, restaurants, shops, cinemas...

▼ AZKUNA ZENTROA
BILBAO



Photo: Bilbao Tourist Board

DAY 2: GET TO KNOW BILBAO THROUGH ITS FLAVOURS

You should spend the morning of your second day quietly enjoying the **old town**, also known as the “Siete Calles de Bilbao”, or Seven Streets of Bilbao. An ideal area where you'll be surrounded by shops, restaurants and churches like that of **San Antón** and the **Cathedral of Santiago**.

Stop for a rest in the **Plaza Nueva** and try some delicious aperitifs in some of the best bars in the old town.

From the monumental **Arriaga Theatre**, cross over the **Zubia Bridge** and continue your gastronomic journey in what is called the **Ensanche**. This area features bars serving exquisite *pintxos* in the Gran Vía, Calle Albia and the Plaza Circular. It is one of the best shopping and cultural districts in Bilbao, with hundreds of shops, cafés and theatres.



▲ HISTORICAL TOWN CENTRE
BILBAO

The Bizkaia Bridge, better known as the hanging bridge, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and really should not be missed. It is one of the oldest and most original transporter bridges in the world, and provides an incredible view of the countryside around the **Bay of Bilbao**.

IF YOU HAVE MORE TIME...

You'll find **Donostia-San Sebastián** fascinating. This beautiful city is the capital of Guipúzcoa and is a perfect blend of architecture, gastronomy and the sea. The different neighbourhoods are home to buildings in the style of the *Belle Époque*, like the Victoria Eugenia Theatre and the Town Hall.

Nearby there are beautiful seafaring towns like **Orio**, **Zarautz** and **Getaria**, home to the Balenciaga Museum, and the birthplace of the famous fashion designer.

📍 **Further information:**
www.bilbaoturismo.net



VALENCIA, AVANT-GARDE CITY

Valencia is a place you're bound to love. Washed by the Mediterranean, it is the capital of the Region of Valencia and is famous for its beaches and exceptional climate. You'll find traces of the remote past in the old town centre and be amazed by its avant-garde buildings. History, tradition and the future await you in this city full of contrasts.

▲ CITY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
VALENCIA

DAY 1: AVANT-GARDE VALENCIA

Leave a full morning free for visiting one of Europe's largest centres for the promotion of science and culture: the **City of Arts and Sciences**. Walking amongst penguins, observing the earth from space and going inside the DNA structure are just some of the surprises that await you in this futuristic venue.

It was designed by the architect from Valencia, Santiago Calatrava, and consists of several buildings with amazing avant-garde architecture. After crossing **l'Umbracle**, an enormous landscaped garden with sculptures by contemporary artists, you will come to a colossal

transparent glass structure. This is the **Príncipe Felipe Science Museum**. Here the motto is, "Forbidden not to touch", and it contains a number of interactive exhibitions.

In **L'Oceanogràfic**, the largest aquarium in Europe, you can learn about the sounds of the sea and walk along surrounded by sharks. The stunning **Hemisfèric** houses a cinema which shows films in three-dimension and IMAX digital format. And finally, there's the **Palau de les Arts** auditorium, a building designed in the form of an immense sculpture that is a venue for theatre, music and dance.

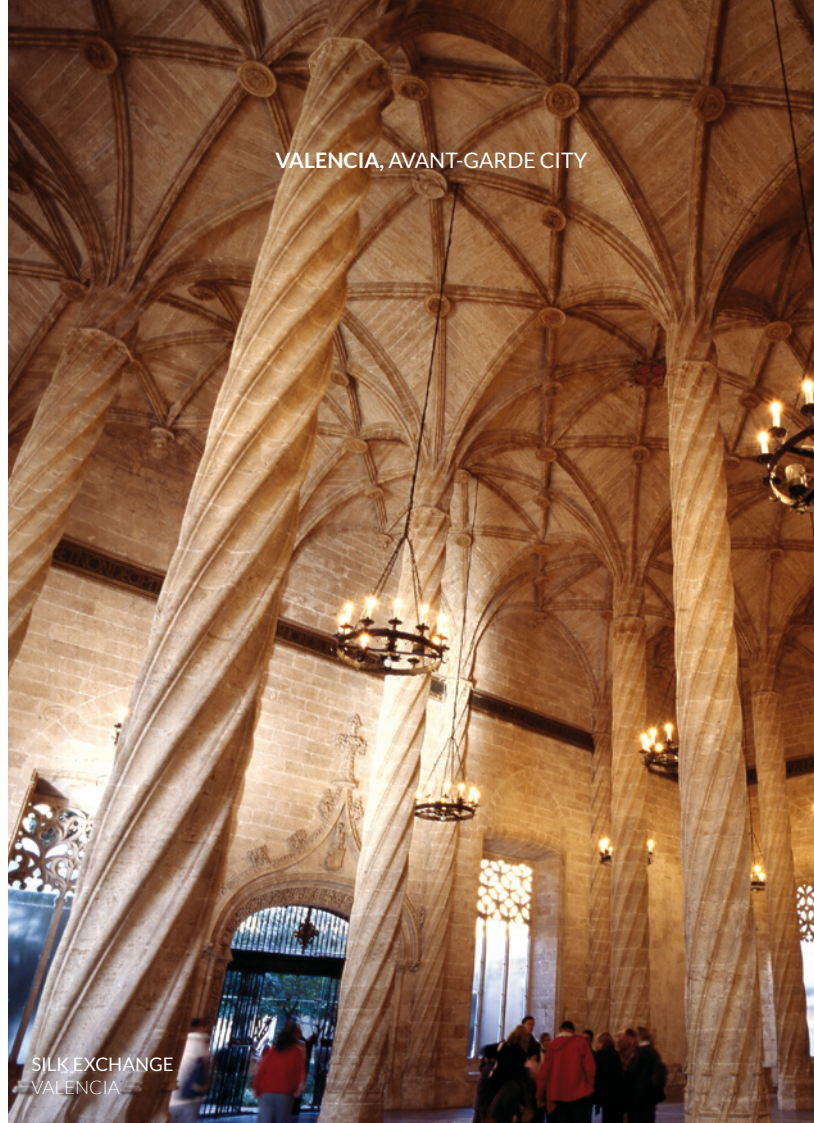
Then you should visit the multicultural neighbourhood of **Ruzafa**, an area full of contrasts and one of the most fashionable in Valencia. **Ruzafa Market** is the nerve centre of this neighbourhood. Stroll around its stalls and immerse yourself in a world of colours and flavours. The surrounding area is full of restaurants, bars and shops where you'll find a souvenir so as not to forget your stay in the city of the Turia.

Just 10 kilometres from the city you can spend a relaxing evening in the **Albufera Nature Reserve**, a navigable wetland with a great variety of flora and fauna. This privileged environment will transport you to a world of unspoiled nature, where the only sounds you'll hear will be the birds singing and water trickling.

DAY 2: TRADITIONAL VALENCIA

Start the day in the heart of Valencia with a visit to the World Heritage **Silk Exchange**. It is one of the most impressive civil Gothic buildings in Europe, and includes such fascinating elements as the hall of Columns and the patio of the Orange Trees.

Nearby you'll find the **Miguelete** as the bell tower of **Valencia Cathedral** is known. From the top, you get a beautiful panoramic view of the city. From here, as you go towards the banks of the Turia River you'll come to the **Serranos towers**, a gateway in the medieval city walls used as a prison for knights and noblemen until the end of the 19th century.





CITY BREAKS

▲ CENTRAL MARKET
VALENCIA

Once there you can stroll around or stop for a rest in any of the beautiful spots in the **Turia gardens**. It is one of the largest urban green parks in Spain, a paradise for *joggers*, cyclists, families and nature lovers. At one of the bends of the river you'll find the **IVAM (Valencian Institute of Modern Art)**, which exhibits the evolution of Spanish art, from the crisis in classic avant-garde art up to the sixties.

If you feel like eating somewhere different, then take a walk in the old town as far as the **Central Market**, a Modernist gem where you'll find products from Valencia's sea and gardens. Stroll around the traditional stalls and *delicatessens* and admire the light shining through the domes and stained glass windows.

And your trip could not be complete without a little shopping. In the picturesque **neighbourhood of El Carmen** you'll find souvenirs, culinary delights, top fashion, exclusive porcelain and footwear designed and manufactured in the Valencia region.



▲ SAGUNTO
VALENCIA

IF YOU HAVE MORE TIME...

With more than 2,000 years of history, in the city of Sagunto there is a lot to see. The highlights are the **Roman ruins** and **Sagunto Castle**.

The region of **Utiel-Requena** is famous for its wines. Visit the vineyards that dot the rocky landscape. Stop off at a wine-cellar and taste the wine from the area.

Manises is famous for its pottery. Here there are several museums and you can admire the **Els Arcs** aqueduct.

① **Further information:**
www.visitvalencia.com



PALMA DE MALLORCA, MEDITERRANEAN CITY

Culture, beaches, nature, great alternatives for leisure and relaxation... The capital of the island of Mallorca has so much to offer. You'll be amazed by the historical old town and the surrounding areas.

▲ MAJORCA CATHEDRAL
PALMA DE MALLORCA

DAY 1: BEACHES AND CULTURE

Start your tour of the city in the delightful **Plaza de la Reina**. It has a central round fountain and a pretty garden with flowers and tall trees.

It is less than a five-minute walk to the **Almudaina Royal Palace**, a symbol of the city's civil power. In the interior there are Moorish baths, collections of Flemish tapestries and vintage clocks, palatial rooms...

At the foot of the Almudaina you'll find the charming **gardens of S'Hort del Rei**, which are a blend of a traditional

Mallorcan garden with Andalusian elements like the water fountains in the Generalife in Granada.

From there, continue along what used to be the city wall until you reach **La Seu**, the cathedral of Palma. This is a chance to see one of the most spectacular rose windows in the world, known as the "eye of the Gothic era". The cathedral was renovated by Antonio Gaudí and contains a spectacular mural by the Mallorcan painter Miquel Barceló in one of the chapels.



You really shouldn't miss resting on one of the fine sandy beaches and taking a dip in the turquoise blue waters. Apart from the beach of **Playa de Palma**, if you're looking for sea, sand and sunshine you should try **Portitxol**, **Arenal**, **Caló des Grells** or **Cala Comptessa** which are all near the centre of the city. You'll think you're in paradise.

In the afternoon we suggest a shopping trip in the **Plaza de Cort** area where you'll find the Town Hall with its beautiful

Baroque facade. From here you can access a number of streets where the spirit of the old-fashioned merchant still prevails, like the **Paseo de la Artesanía**, where genuine craft work can still be found.

Then you'll come to the **Paseo del Borne**, where you'll find the most exclusive shops as well as restaurants and bars where you can sample and purchase typical Mallorcan specialities like *sobrasada* sausage and "ensaimada" pastry, as well as the best international cuisine.

DAY 2: MUSEUMS AND SHOPPING

The **Palau March** and its museum are located between the Plaza de la Reina and the Almudaina. Its patios are home to an excellent collection of contemporary sculpture, with works by Rodin, Moore and Chillida, amongst others. The interior rooms contain such gems as an 18th century Neapolitan nativity scene and a valuable library containing incunables, codices and nautical charts.

Learn about the history of the city through its archaeology in the **Mallorca Museum** and the **Moorish baths** in the **Can Fontirroig gardens**. This is one of very few monuments remaining in Palma from the time of Moorish occupation.

On your way to the **Plaza Mayor**, remember to stop in front of the adjoining facades of **Can Forteza-Rey** and **Almacenes El Águila**, a fine example of the influence of Modernism on Palma's architecture. You can access the beautiful private patios by purchasing a guided tour.

A good choice for lunch would be one of the modern, alternative restaurants near the **Olivar Market**. This area has a wide choice of culinary establishments where you can try some of Mallorca's most exquisite products.

If you're looking for more culture, then go to the headquarters of the **Pilar and Joan Miró Foundation** on the outskirts of the city. This is where you'll find a good part of the legacy of Joan Miró, an area dedicated to contemporary artistic creation and where you can reflect on themes relating to the surrealistic works





▲ PLAZA MAYOR SQUARE
PALMA DE MALLORCA

of this genius. You could also visit the **Juan March Museum Foundation** and enjoy the collection of works by 20th century Spanish artists like Picasso, Juan Gris and Salvador Dalí.

After the museum you might like to go shopping, so we suggest a pleasant walk along La Rambla, with stalls selling flowers and plants, an image that would make an ideal postcard. Between **La Rambla** and the **Plaza de España**, the nerve centre of Palma, you'll find streets like **Vía Sindicato** and **Jaime III**, where there is a blend of traditional shops and modern stores selling perfume, accessories and fashion.

For dinner, we recommend the delightful, unusual and fashionable neighbourhood of **Santa Catalina**. In what used to be where the fishermen lived you can now enjoy anything from Mediterranean cuisine to international gastronomic delicacies.

IF YOU HAVE MORE TIME...

Very near the city you'll come to **Valldemossa** and the Real Cartuja, formerly a monastery and where the Polish composer Chopin lived with the French author George Sand.

Manacor is renowned for the manufacture of beautiful artificial pearls. It is also the municipal district where you'll find extraordinarily beautiful underground caves like those of El Drach and El Hams.

Then there's the wonderful **Sierra de Tramontana** mountain range and the natural monument of Torrent de Pareis, a spectacular cliff. Are you ready for more? Take a dip at one of the beaches and coves. You can go hiking in the **Mondragó Nature Reserve**, take a boat trip to the **Island of Cabrera** or visit the stunning Gothic fortifications of the **Bellver Castle**.





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Travel securely and comfortably. The airports of Madrid, Barcelona, Palma de Mallorca, Malaga, Seville, Bilbao and Valencia have excellent domestic connections and with the main European cities.

If you prefer the train, the **Spanish National Railway Network (RENFE)** links all the country's main cities and regions. The unquestionable stars of the system are the **AVE high-speed trains** which serve 25 tourist destinations, with Madrid as their main


hub. You can travel from Madrid to Valencia in only one hour and thirty five minutes, or from Madrid to Barcelona in two and a half hours.

Spain has one of the **best networks of motorways** and dual carriage-ways in Europe. There are excellent connections between all the cities in Spain which means that it is easy to **combine different destinations**. The main **vehicle rental** companies operate throughout the country.



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