

Spain

AN IDEAL SETTING
FOR YOUR
BUSINESS MEETINGS



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INTRODUCTION

Spain is a **world leader in Meetings and Events Tourism (MICE)**, a sure bet to guarantee the best outcome. What stands Spain apart are the immense variety and quantity of resources, our professionals' extensive experience and its top-quality accommodation and extraordinary infrastructures. It is also a fascinating country and one of the world's major tourist destinations.

The **2018 ICCA report** (International Congress & Conventions Association), in which **Spain is in fourth place**, confirms that our country is one of the best destinations for hosting forums, congresses and important professional events. Cities like Barcelona and Madrid occupy prominent positions within the top 10 in this report.

You can make the most of the services offered by the **Spain Convention**

Bureau (SCB), which gives free guidance and advice on available infrastructure and resources to companies organising events, making it easier for them to contact each of its local offices.

There are also a number of associations which can be contacted with a view to finding the ideal local partner to help you organise your events. Essential guidance for you to find the added value you are looking for. **SpainDMCs** is an official association of prestigious incoming travel agencies specialising in meetings and incentive programmes. If you are looking to hold a congress or a convention, your best option for finding a suitable partner will be **OPCE** (Spain's Association of Professional Conference Organisers).



▲ OVIEDO CONFERENCE CENTRE

Then there are the main international associations for the sector, like **ICCA**, **SITE** and **MPI**, all of which have a specific chapter in which the Spanish professional organisations are included.

Spain has **excellent transport infrastructure** which will enable those attending your event to travel securely and safely. According to the World Economic Forum's ***Global Competitiveness Report 2015-2016***, Spain is in the top ten countries in the world in terms of infrastructure quality.

Over 30 international airports, an extensive high-speed railway network (HST) and important cruise-ship ports make both internal and international travel easy.

There is so much to choose from. Spain boasts a **broad selection of destinations**, with versatile, multipurpose venues for meetings, all equipped with the latest technology. You have a choice of more than 50 conference halls and convention centres, located in iconic and avant-garde buildings, as well as audi-

toriums, trade fair centres and alternative venues such as museums, castles and theatres. In this regard you can obtain further information from the **APCE** (Spain's Association of Conference Centres) and the **AFE** (Spain's Trade Fairs Association).

Our **best-in-class MICE sector professionals** ensure the highest levels of attendee satisfaction: from the secretarial function for a conference to the provision of essential complementary services (audiovisual, catering, assembly, transport, etc.).

We are sure that here you'll find a suitable **environment, professionalism** and **services** for you to be able to hold a spectacular and highly productive event. Some of the major events and congresses in a number of sectors are held in Spain, and the figures speak for themselves: every year more than 20,000 events and congresses of all types are held in Spain.

The **wide-ranging and renovated hotel accommodation** in Spain is internationally renowned. You can choose that which best suits your requirements as there is a wide selection of 4- and 5-star hotels, in addition to the **96 Parador Hotels** strategically located in refurbished historical buildings.

There are great opportunities for combining work and leisure or organising incentive travel. Bleisure travel in Spain is a growing trend. There are endless opportunities for leisure in this friendly, hospitable country, so those attending your event can enjoy a **perfect blend of work and free time**.



Our main cities all have fabulous museums, unique cultural offerings and guaranteed night-time entertainment. A pleasant and festive stay is guaranteed by our fantastic beaches and the yearly hours of sunshine (an average of 2,500 throughout the country). All this, together with the **natural wealth** of fifteen National Parks, **world-famous cuisine** and the chance to **enjoy outdoor sports** make Spain an unbeatable destination for incentive travel.

Choose Spain for your meetings, conferences and incentive travel and you can't go wrong. You'll find so many advantages and facilities, professionals with proven experience and an ideal environment, so the participants are bound to be completely satisfied. No matter how hard you try, you won't find another destination rivalling what Spain has to offer.

MAIN CITIES FOR BUSINESS TRAVEL



▲ ROYAL PALACE

MADRID

Open-minded and cosmopolitan, Spain's capital city has endless possibilities. Testament to the city's suitability as a destination for MICE tourism is its hosting of leading international events such as ESMO (European Congress of Medical Oncology), WOBI (World Business Forum), WATMC (World ATM Congress) and FITUR (International Tourist Fair).

The city is the main Spanish **transport hub**, be that by plane, high-speed train or by road and it has an airport

with **connections to 170 destinations** worldwide.

Here you'll enjoy the **support and advice** offered by the Madrid Convention Bureau (MCB), a member of the Best Cities Global Alliance which promotes excellence in the organisation of major congresses, as well as numerous agencies and associations which will help you organise your event.

Madrid is proud of the **high level of satisfaction** shown by both those attend-

ing and those organising conferences. According to the ICCA Report on Meetings Tourism, Madrid scored over eight out of ten and together with London occupies seventh place in the ranking.

To its **splendid infrastructure** for organising congresses, conferences and incentive travel, we should add its attractive **artistic and cultural heritage**, **innovative cuisine** and the city's entertaining **nightlife**.

The city offers an incomparable walking tour: the Paseo del Arte or Art Walk, which includes the **Prado Museum**, the **Reina Sofía National Art Centre** and the **Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum**.

The Gran Vía, which has become Madrid's Broadway, the leafy Retiro Park and historic neighbourhoods such

as Madrid de los Austrias are just some of the city's endless attractions.

By day, the city offers hundreds of shops where everything is possible. At night Madrid never sleeps. The nightlife includes a host of theatres and venues with live music as well as a comprehensive selection of clubs and bars.

Lunch or dinner on a terrace surrounded by gardens or high up on a historical building are ideal opportunities to discover Spain's cuisine. In addition to the Michelin-starred restaurants there is a wide selection of restaurants and exclusive venues where private meetings can be held.

📍 **Further information:**

www.esmadrid.com/mcb/





VENUES

Two conference centres, two trade fair centres and numerous unique venues make Madrid a perfect destination where you will always get the best results from whatever event you may hold there.

CAMPO DE LAS NACIONES MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE CENTRE

This bright, modern building, a unique creation by the architect Ricardo Bofill, boasts exhibition areas, an auditorium, a large multipurpose hall and rooms with different capacities.

IFEMA - FERIA DE MADRID CON- GRESSES AND CONVENTIONS

A high-capacity centre which guarantees the success of any congress or event. Here you'll find twelve pavilions, two auditoriums and 97 rooms seating from 50 to 500 people.



▲ MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE CENTRE

CASA DE CAMPO TRADE FAIR PARK

Just five minutes from the city's heart, this centre is located in Madrid's largest green area, ideal for open-air presentations. There are four pavilions, a theatre-auditorium and a stage in the Puerta del Ángel neighbourhood.

PRINCIPE FELIPE CONGRESS CENTRE

It is located in the Madrid Marriott Auditorium Hotel, a short distance from the airport, and provides comprehensive services with 56 flexible areas for meetings and a 2,000-seat auditorium.

CAJA MÁGICA

MADRID

An ideal complex for holding corporate events great and small. The three stadiums within the complex make it possible to hold both outdoor and indoor events.



▲ CAJA MÁGICA

ACCOMMODATION

Madrid leads the Spanish market in terms of hotel accommodation, with over 80,000 beds. It also has a comprehensive range of top-quality establishments, with numerous four- and five-star hotels available. You just need to select the option which is best suited to the requirements of those attending your congress or meeting.

There are a number of top-flight hotels specialising in congresses, conventions and conferences. In the city centre you'll find the extraordinary **Puerta América**, a joint project by 18 of the world's best architecture studios.

In the Paseo de la Castellana, the city's business hub, there is the **Intercontinental Madrid** and the **Eurostars Madrid Tower**, both with high capacity and providing comprehensive services.

Of the 4-star hotels, special mention should go to the **Meliá Castilla**, with 7,000 square metres of space for meetings and a 500-seat auditorium, and the **NH Collection Madrid Eurobuilding**. The **Novotel Campo de las Naciones** and the **Pullman Madrid Airport & Feria** are also excellent as they are near the large conference centres.

BARCELONA

Whether it is for a large convention or a smaller event, you are sure to find the ideal venue in Barcelona. Locations full of charm and history, centres with the most up-to-date facilities, superb hotels and excellent connections via an **international airport** and one of the most important **all-purpose ports** in the Mediterranean.



▲ THE BASILICA OF LA SAGRADA FAMILIA

For over 30 years, the **Barcelona Convention Bureau** (BCB) has been providing advice and guidance to those organising congresses and meetings free of charge. Not only will they help you find the most suitable local partner, they will also assist you with any arrangements or paperwork that may be needed in this city with endless possibilities. With the WMC (World Mobile Congress) as the standard bearer, hosting around 100,000 professionals, Barcelona each year stages about 200 major events and conventions and 2,000 professional meetings, which means that it stands in first place in the ICAA ranking, both in the number of congresses and in those attending.

The up-to-date facilities and its importance in the field of biomedical research has meant that in recent years Barcelona has been selected as the ideal destination for medical congresses such as those for the ESC (European Society of Cardiology), EASD (European Association for the Study of Diabetes) and UEG (United European Gastroenterology). Another significant feature is the major industrial congresses, like Barcelona Industry Week and ITMA, the textile and garment technology exhibition which will be held in the city starting in 2019.

In addition to the excellent services, it is also ideal for incentive travel. An amazing blend of first-class ingredients, tradition, creativity and innovation have

turned it into a **foodie paradise** bathed by the Mediterranean.

Barcelona is a modernist city par excellence. It is home to the foremost architectural treasures designed by Antoni Gaudí, like the **Basilica of the Sagrada Família**, the universal symbol of the city, and the Güell Park. There are always interesting exhibitions, workshops and all kinds of activities in cultural centres and

museums like the **CaixaForum** and the **Picasso Museum**.

You'll find the most exclusive boutiques in the **Eixample** district in Barcelona, near the **Passeig de Gracia** and the **Avinguda Diagonal**. The city's nightlife is also renowned worldwide, with hundreds of lively terraces, bars and clubs.

📍 **Further information:**

www.barcelonaconventionbureau.com

▼ GÜELL PARK



VENUES

The city boasts a convention centre, three large conference centres and an endless number of auditoriums and halls equipped with the latest technology.

▼ FIRA DE BARCELONA



Photo: Juan Bautista Cofreces/123rf.com

FIRA DE BARCELONA

With 14 pavilions and two congress centres, the infrastructure and services are ideal for all kinds of corporate, social and cultural activities.

PALAU SANT JORDI

The stage usually reserved for pop and rock stars and elite sportsmen can be transformed into ideal venues for meetings, gala dinners and product presentations.

PALAU SANT JORDI

CCIB - CATALONIA CONVENTION CENTRE

There are 20 flexible and versatile halls with spectacular sea views ideal for any kind of event.

CATALONIA CONGRESS CENTRE

Part of the Hotel Fairmont Rey Juan Carlos I, it boasts two buildings, connected through the hotel's gardens, with surprisingly beautiful architecture, natural light and great functionality.

GRAN HOTEL REY DON JAIME CON- GRESS CENTRE

Made up by an auditorium seating over 350 people and an annex with eight halls with sea and mountain views and equipped with the latest technology.

ACCOMMODATION

Barcelona has around 75,000 hotel beds, so you're bound to find accommodation ideally suited to your requirements.

The elegant and sophisticated five-star **Hotel El Palace** has six areas with different capacities. Whilst the **Gran Hotel Princesa Sofía** offers both one of the largest facilities for events in the city, over 7,000 square metres, and the best assessment.

The four-star **Barceló Sants** is lays claim to being the best connected hotel in Barcelona, since it is in the grounds of the city's main railway station. Another well-connected hotel is the **Hotel Barcelona Center**, very near the Paseo de Gracia, the shopping centre and the business hub.

VALENCIA

With countless monumental attractions and a contagious, vibrant Mediterranean spirit, Valencia is a strong contender as a top MICE destination.

The blend of cutting-edge facilities and iconic attractions like the **City of Arts and Sciences** and the **Conference Centre** designed by Norman Foster were factors in Valencia being chosen to host congresses for the European Society for Trauma and Emergency Surgery (ESTES), the American Society of Hematology (ASH) and trade fairs like the SIF (International Franchise Fair).

You'll find traces of its past in the historical town centre and be amazed by its avant-garde buildings. The Gothic **Cathedral** and the **Lonja de la Seda (Silk Exchange)**, in the heart of the historical old town, are two of the city's most iconic buildings.

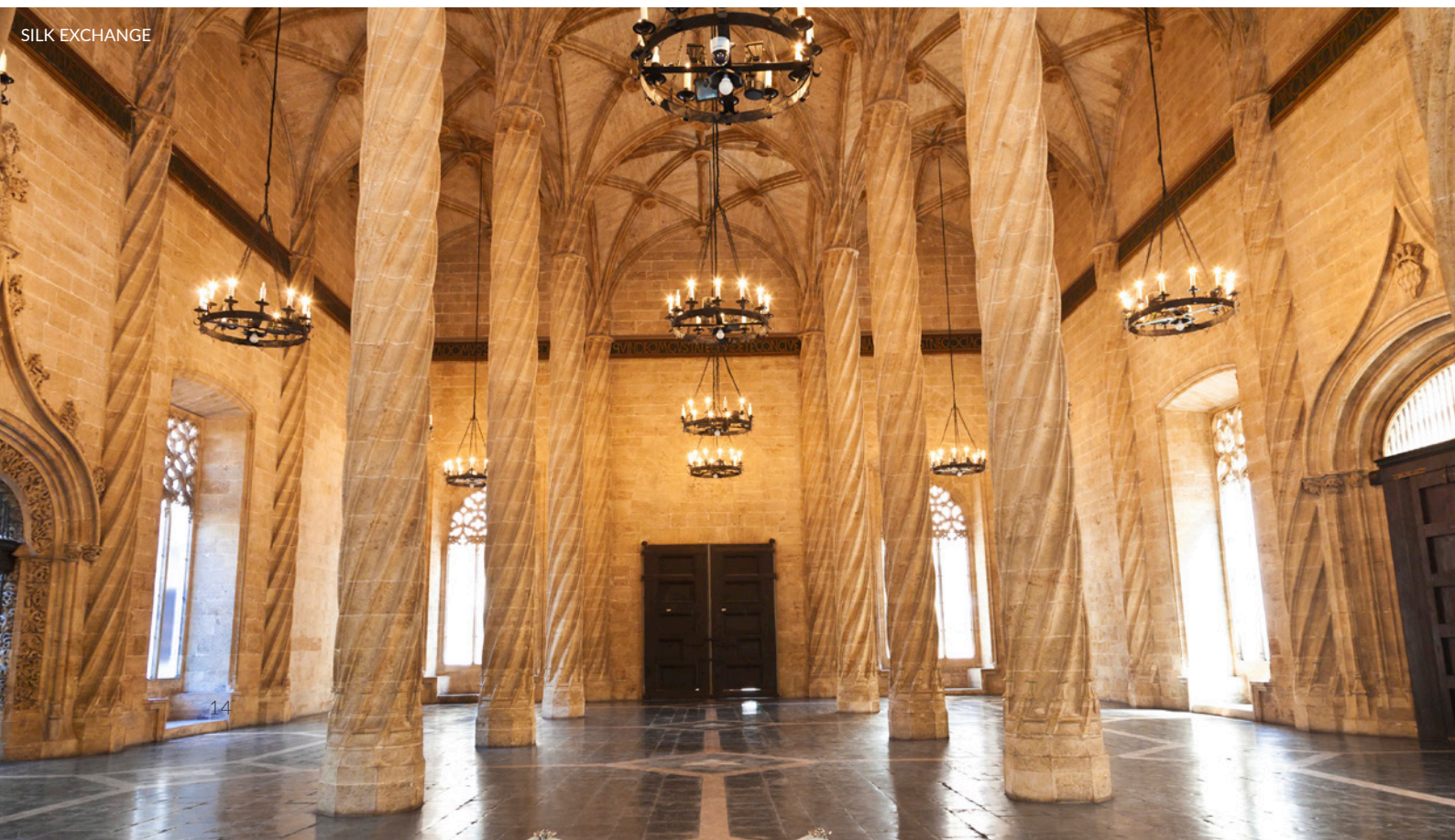
But Valencia has so much more to offer: The **Palau de la Generalitat**, the **Palau de la Música** and the **Valencia Institute of Modern Art (IVAM)** are must-sees.

Valencia is also a paradise for urban shopping, with areas in the historical town centre and the Russafa and Eixample neighbourhoods where fashion and design blend perfectly.

As for gastronomy, it is impossible to imagine this city without **paella**, the most renowned Spanish dish in the world. But Valencia's culinary art does not end here: you can enjoy tapas in the Plaza del Mercado or an innovative tasting menu in the great chef Ricard Camarena's one Michelin-star restaurant, just two of the amazing possibilities on offer.

① **Further information:**

www.valenciaconventionbureau.com



SILK EXCHANGE

VENUES

Valencia has one of the best congress centres in Spain and a trade fair for large conferences, as well as dozens of unique, state-of-the-art venues.

FERIA VALENCIA EXHIBITION CENTRE

Boasting the largest exhibition area in Spain. Feria Valencia is available for all kinds of events for up to 20,000 people.

CONFERENCE CENTRE

A building designed by Norman Foster which is a perfect blend of aesthetics, usability and versatility.

▼ CITY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

CITY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

As a venue for galas and events, this modern complex designed by Santiago Calatrava has a number of spectacular features: the Hemisfèric, the Príncipe Felipe Science Museum, the Umbracle, the Oceanogràfic, the Reina Sofía Palace of the Arts and the Àgora.





Its accessibility, great weather, unique cuisine, urban beaches and a lively cultural agenda make it an absolutely irresistible city.

▲ CATHEDRAL

ACCOMMODATION

With over 17,000 hotel beds, Valencia has been established as one of Spain's best destinations for holding conferences and meetings.

The main hotel chains have four-star hotels like the **AC Hotel Colón Valencia**, the **Meliá Valencia**, the

Barceló Valencia and the **Eurostars Gran Valencia**, all with the infrastructures required to make your event a real success. The hotels recommended by the Valencia Convention Bureau (VCB) also include the **Sorolla**, the **Primus Valencia** and classic hotels like the **Ayre Astoria Palace** and the **SH Inglés**.

SEVILLE

Tradition and modernity go hand-in-hand in Seville, the capital of Andalusia. Every year professionals and those organising events from all corners of the world choose it, attracted by the wonderful climate, the delicious cuisine and the hospitality of the locals.



Seville also has an excellent communications network which includes the **AVE** (high-speed train), the San Pablo International Airport and a modern river port accessible to cruise liners.

In recent years its position as a **preferential MICE destination** has been strengthened, making it the venue for

important events such as Aerospace & Defense Meetings and the Conference on Cardiovascular Disease.

Seville has endless attractions. It is a city **full of history** and is the perfect size for strolling around such historical features as the **Plaza de España**, the **Real Alcázar**, the **María Luisa Park** and the **Fine Arts Museum**.

There are numerous *tablaos flamencos* in the city but the most authentic ones where you can best enjoy this typically Spanish music are to be found in the Triana neighbourhood. The best atmosphere in the city can be found in the **Alameda de Hércules** district and the **Santa Cruz** and **Arenal** neighbourhoods.

Gastronomy is another of Seville's undoubted attractions. It features simply-prepared, exquisite dishes like *gazpacho* (chilled tomato soup), marinades, salted products and casseroles. The most outstanding establishments include Abantal, a one Michelin-star restaurant.

① *Further information: www.sevillacb.com*

▼ TERRACE WITH VIEWS OF THE CATHEDRAL



VENUES

The venues for meetings in Seville include the FIBES Conference and Exhibition Centre, a standard for quality at a national and international level. To the venues for meetings managed by Seville's main institutions, we should add a broad selection of haciendas, farmsteads and palatial houses ideal for incentive travel.

▼ CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION CENTRE



FIBES - CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION CENTRE IN SEVILLE

One of the most spacious and cutting-edge conference and exhibition centres in Europe, it has one of the largest auditoriums in the country, seating 3,500 people, as well as a series of multipurpose modules and areas.

BARCELÓ CONVENTION CENTER

On the banks of the Guadalquivir River, it has 25 halls and capacity for 1,200 people. It was specifically designed for holding professional events and is surrounded by gardens.

ESPACIO BOX SEVILLE

It can be customised making it possible to hold all kinds of events in its different areas. A world of à-la-carte possibilities in a venue with state-of-the-art audio-visual and technological facilities.



Photo: Calapre Pocholo/123rf.com

▲ METROPOL PARASOL SEVILLE

ACCOMMODATION

With nearly 17,000 hotel beds, there is something to suit everyone. 5-star establishments include the **EME Catedral**, a boutique hotel with two conference rooms, one with views of the cathedral and the other with a glass floor covering 1st century Roman ruins, whilst the Hotel **Palacio de Villapanés** gives your customers the opportunity to enjoy an 18th century palace in exclusivity.

If you're looking for a 4-star hotel near the Conference Centre the best options are the **Hotel Congressos** and the **AC Hotel Sevilla Forum**.

The **Ayre Hotel Sevilla**, very near the Santa Justa Railway Station, has flexible meeting rooms which makes it very versatile.

MÁLAGA

The capital of the Costa del Sol is very much in vogue. Investment in recent years in infrastructures like the Port of Málaga, the creation of tourist and cultural attractions and the promotion of a vibrant and innovative business culture make the city an ideal venue for showcasing your event.

The city's refreshing and cosmopolitan spirit has attracted numerous major original events like the INTEREX International Diplomatic and Business Forum and the AEDE Congress (Spanish Association of Endodontic Therapy).

Málaga has an extraordinary selection of cultural attractions, with about **40 museums and exhibition halls**, featuring the Picasso Museum, the Russian Museum Collection and the Pompidou Centre.

The wonderful **beaches** and nearby **golf courses** are a great option for daytime leisure, whilst at night the city centre provides a lively, attractive atmosphere.

In Málaga tapas have become an art form and it is traditional to enjoy these exquisite aperitifs in several different places.

📍 **Further information:**

www.malagaturismo.com/es/site/mcb



▲ POMPIDOU CENTRE
MÁLAGA

VENUES

Apart from the iconic Conference and Exhibition Centre, a symbol of quality and modernity, there are a number of unique venues: from one of Europe's most important botanical gardens to the city's historical buildings and iconic museums.

CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION CENTRE

Located just five minutes from the airport, it is ideal for organising and holding all kinds of events. Facilities include two pavilions, two auditoriums, two conference halls and fifteen multipurpose rooms making it suitable for holding trade fairs and conferences of any size.





▲ CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION CENTRE



MÁLAGA PICASSO MUSEUM

A cocktail in the central patio, a guided tour behind closed doors, a videoconference in the Auditorium, an art workshop... The Málaga Picasso Museum is ideal for all kinds of events, conferences and activities.

BARCELÓ MÁLAGA

One of the most state-of-the-art business hotels in Spain, with its modern design and extraordinary facilities. It enjoys direct access from the HST Railway Station, good connections with the airport and it is just a short distance from the city's main attractions.

ACCOMMODATION

There has recently been a significant increase in accommodation with over 10,000 hotel beds available in the city and 80,000 in the province, including such attractive nearby destinations as Marbella.

Luxury and attention to detail are prominent in the city's two five-star hotels, the **Gran Hotel Miramar Resort**, with modular meeting rooms and views over the gardens, and the **Hotel Vincci Selección Posada del Patio** which has a roof-top pool.

The four-star establishments include the Hotel **NH Málaga**, with a modern, functional conference centre, and the **Hotel Ilunion Málaga**, ideal for combining business and leisure. There are so many establishments of such a wide variety that you'll have no problem finding the most suitable for your event.

SAN SEBASTIÁN

San Sebastián (Euskadi) is a peaceful, elegant city surrounded by beautiful countryside. Its incomparable cuisine and extensive organisational experience, endorsed by major events like the International Film Festival and the European Molecular Imaging Meeting, make it an ideal destination for MICE travel.

► HISTORIC TOWN CENTRE



Travel to and from the city is very easy by any means of transport: it has up-to-date road infrastructure, excellent rail connections both national and international via the French TGV high-speed train, as well as its own airport. And the international airports of **Bilbao** and **Biarritz** are less than an hour away by car.

The white sandy beaches are ideal for enjoying the sun and the sea. The different neighbourhoods are just waiting for you to take a stroll and admire beautiful *Belle Époque* buildings, like the **Victoria Eugenia Theatre** and the **Town Hall**. San Sebastián lives and breathes culture, with a really attractive cultural offering featuring museums, theatres, film, jazz and classical music festivals.

San Sebastián enjoys a varied night life, with the lively **Parte Vieja** (Old Town), the **Reyes Católicos** pedestrian street, ideal for a cocktail on one of the terraces, and the **Gros neighbourhood**, where there are numerous bars where you can relax and have a chat.



▲ PINTXOS

But if there's one thing San Sebastián is famous for, it must be its delicious aperitifs, called *pintxos*. Innovative cuisine, one of the city's hallmarks, is in the hands of renowned chefs like Pedro Subijana, Juan Mari Arzak and Martín Berasategui.

📍 **Further information:**
www.sansebastiancongress.com



▲ KURSAAL CONFERENCE CENTRE

VENUES

The city has extensive experience in organising events and has a comprehensive range of facilities: There are iconic venues like the **Miramar Palace**, the **San Telmo Museum** and the **Victoria Eugenia Theatre**. There is also modern and innovative architecture, with surprising features like the **Aquarium Museum**, the **Tabakalera Cultural Centre** and the **Science Museum**.

KURSAAL CONFERENCE CENTRE

One of the city's icons, the Kursaal's modern twin buildings, designed by Rafael Moneo, combine creative inge-

nuity with the latest technology to guarantee the success of any event. Another factor is the environment and the versatility of the rooms and auditoriums.

FICOBA EXHIBITION CENTRE

A complex consisting of a general service area, three pavilions, an outdoor area prepared for shows and exhibitions, an auditorium, and numerous multipurpose rooms for conferences, seminars and meetings.

BASQUE CULINARY CENTRE

The modern facilities of this world-famous, pioneering academic institution include the possibility of enjoying special menus prepared by first-class chefs.

ACCOMMODATION

There has been an ever-increasing number of hotels in San Sebastián in recent years and in the near future it is expected there will be some 5,000 beds. There are numerous four-star hotels in the city centre which are able to meet any requirements both for accommodation and for leisure.

Without a doubt, the standard for five-star hotels must be the refined and elegant María Cristina, where the stars attending the San Sebastián Film Festival have been staying for several decades.

The four-star hotels most suitable for MICE tourism are the **Hotel Arima**, the **Hotel Mercure Monte Igueldo** and the **Hotel Barceló Costa Vasca**.

BILBAO

Its magnificent setting and its extensive range of services make Bilbao (Euskadi) one of Europe's most attractive cities for conferences, trade fairs and incentive travel. The surrounding green countryside with splendid forests and mountains provide endless opportunities for active leisure.



▲ EUSKALDUNA CONFERENCE CENTRE

Events are organised by an enormous range of sectors and fields to showcase the latest trends: technological talks, medical conferences, scientific presentations, sports events, entrepreneurial talks and culture-based conferences all choose Bilbao as the venue. The **Industrial Maintenance Innovation Conference** and **World Maritime Week (WMW)** are just two examples of the high level of acceptance by professionals from different sectors.

Bilbao invites you to stroll around and go shopping in the **Casco Viejo** or Old Town and its historical and artistic attractions, and then there's the 21st century district of **Abandoibarra** where you'll find works by some of the world's finest architects

and surprising open-air sculptures. Bilbao's cultural attractions include two extraordinary features, like the **Fine Arts Museum** and the **Guggenheim Museum**, as well as numerous other museums, art galleries and exhibition halls.

Basque cuisine is yet another added value for you to enjoy in this city. In Bilbao you have everything from Michelin-starred restaurants to bars serving tempting *pintxos*, as well as magnificent traditional restaurants, grills, cider bars and taverns where you can discover real Basque flavours.

① **Further information:**
www.bilbao.net/conventionbureau

VENUES

Most of the ideal venues for events are in modern, dynamic and innovative buildings, where the latest technology and the professional excellence of the staff will be able to meet any organisational challenge. In Bilbao there are numerous buildings and institutions suitable for holding large conferences, forums and trade fairs: the **University of Deusto**, the **UPV Auditorium**, the **Bilbao Arena** in Miribilla, the **BEC...**

EUSKALDUNA CONFERENCE CENTRE

Designed like a ship in memory of the shipyards that stood on the same site for decades, this is an innovative venue in the heart of 21st-century Bilbao. It has a large auditorium and 24 meeting rooms of different sizes making it ideal for all kinds of events.

BILBAO EXHIBITION CENTRE (BEC)

It has a number of very versatile multipurpose areas for from 20 to 2,500 people. This great venue has the most advanced communications systems and also has complementary facilities like the Bizkaia Arena which can hold all kinds of mass events.

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM BILBAO

Designed by Frank Gehry, it features sinuous lines and a titanium shell and has four areas for corporate events and meetings, in addition to the spectacular exhibition area.



ACCOMMODATION

A symbol of excellence and high quality, Bilbao has a **broad, varied selection of hotels** with about 4,000 beds (13,000 if you count the whole province of Vizcaya).

Some hotels occupy historic buildings like the **Carlton** and the **Ercilla López de Haro**, both with five stars and noted for their elegance and privacy.

Miró Bilbao, **NH Collection Ría de Bilbao** and **Meliá Bilbao** are fine examples of splendid avant-garde design and architecture and both are ideal for meetings tourism. The **Palacio Urgoiti**, five minutes from the airport, surrounded by nature and a golf course, is the perfect destination for team-building events and group dynamics.

THE BEST INCENTIVE TRAVEL

The variety of Spain's geographical features provide numerous options for organising unique experiences in an informal and relaxed atmosphere for promoting team spirit. Here you'll find a large number of DMCs in the different destinations to help you create this unforgettable experience which is often so difficult to find. And then you have the wonderful climate in Spain which means you can organise incentive travel at any time of the year.

▼ CALA MARMOLS
SANTANY, MALLORCA





ADVENTURE

Overcoming a challenge, taking part in a thrilling sports event, teamwork on rivers, seas and mountains, flying in a hot-air balloon... Spain is a paradise when it comes to making contact with nature. You can organise unique team-building activities, designed to eliminate stress and foster confidence and be enjoyed in extraordinary natural surroundings.

Explore the Picos de Europa National Park in Asturias **hiking** along the Cares Gorge Route or enjoying the spectacular landscape from a **4x4**, a thrilling experience. Oviedo, the region's capital, is surrounded by beautiful nature reserves where you can enjoy nature at its finest.

If your group is young and looking for adventure, you could release a little adrenaline **parachute jumping** in the Costa Brava or **canyoning** in Cuenca. These are all activities designed to release stress and promote team spirit.

The Canary Islands offer a host of possibilities. The Gran Canaria Convention Bureau has an extensive **outdoor training programme** which includes a great variety of activities: survival and orienteering games, multi-adventure circuits, trips on a pirate ship, off-road vehicle routes, water activities...

There are also unusual alternatives like camel riding, underwater excursions and routes in the archipelago through volcanic landscapes and tropical forests.

For mixed groups, a great option is to **play golf** on some of the best courses in Europe, like Valderrama, in Cadiz, and the PGA Catalonia Golf. **Snorkelling** in Cabo de Palos, a coastline interspersed with peaceful coves and crystal-clear waters, or enjoying the unique combination of snow and beach available in Granada are just two of the options available in Spain.

Sailing on a yacht in the Mediterranean or admiring the natural landscapes in the Madrid mountains while paddling a **kayak** are also unforgettable experiences and a guarantee for making your incentive trip a success.

FOOD

Spanish cuisine, a leading light in world gastronomy, can be included in numerous interesting and unusual activities.

An incentive trip really ought to include a workshop where you can have fun enjoying the authentic local cuisine. You can make contact with renowned chefs, **learn culinary secrets** and try out your skills at preparing all kinds of dishes.

Foster teamwork on a **gastronomic tour** in which the participants have to

overcome different challenges. Or try the best ingredients when visiting historic markets like the San Miguel Market (Madrid), the Bretxa (San Sebastián) and La Boquería (Barcelona).

Foster attention to detail by taking a course in **tasting local products**. There's something for everyone, from wine-tasting in an iconic winery to Iberian cured ham and virgin olive oil tasting in a rural farmhouse.

▼ SAN MIGUEL MARKET
MADRID



URBAN

Spain has **endless monuments and museums** of renowned international prestige. Each city has a varied and extensive selection of cultural attractions.

Andalusia is home to countless treasures. You can surprise your guests with a **nighttime visit to the Alhambra in Granada** or experience the magic of a **Flamenco show** in a tablao in Seville.

You can also visit the historical medieval town centre of cities like **Santiago de Compostela, Valencia** and **Cáceres** as part of a gymkhana through the most iconic streets and buildings. Spain is the only place where you can see the best opera, theatre and ballet or visit galleries like the **Prado Museum** in Madrid and enjoy the **Dalí Theatre-Museum** in Figueres.

Gamification and tailor-made experiences are becoming more and more popular and this can be seen in the increasing number of activities available for getting the most out of incentive travel. For promoting motivation and team spirit you have **escape rooms** which are becoming very fashionable in the provincial capitals. Or you could plan your trip so the participants can enjoy **Spanish festivals and traditions**, like the April Fair in Seville, the Sanfermines festivities in Pamplona and the Fallas bonfire festival in Valencia.

For those who are **passionate about football** you can visit iconic stadiums like Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabéu and Barcelona's Camp Nou, which will leave everlasting memories.

▼ NIGHT TOUR OF THE ALHAMBRA
GRANADA





OTHER DESTINATIONS AND VENUES

PARADOR HOTELS

Parador Hotels are distinctive establishments located in natural or historic sites of outstanding beauty. Palaces, monasteries, convents, castles... These places are not only interesting from the point of view of tourism, but also offer excellent gastronomic options, with all the best flavours of traditional cuisine.

If you're looking for somewhere different when it comes to organising your next company trip, the Parador Hotels are in unique locations and have teams of meeting planners experienced in organising corporate events.

📍 *Further information:* www.parador.es

WORLD HERITAGE CITIES

There are 15 World Heritage Cities which are unique and exceptional venues for holding any kind of professional event. They are an ideal blend of the past with the present, and have a variety of historical, artistic, cultural and gastronomic attractions as well as providing excellent services.

They are **benchmark tourist destinations** which have preserved their historical town

centres and where you'll find real artistic and architectural treasures of great value.

Monumental cities like Cáceres, Córdoba, Segovia, Salamanca, Santiago de Compostela and Toledo have numerous venues for holding meetings in exceptional surroundings.

📍 *Further information:* www.ciudadespatrimonio.org

CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE

Ensure your event stands out. In Spain there are numerous buildings designed by some of the **world's most prominent modern architects**. The spectacular exteriors are complemented by multipurpose halls and areas in the interior.

The more than 50 congress halls and conference centres in Spain include contemporary architectural masterpieces like the Conference Centre in Valencia designed by **Norman Foster** and futuristic buildings by **Santiago Calatrava** in Oviedo, Valencia and A Coruña.

The Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao and the Hotel Marqués de Riscal in

La Rioja, both by **Frank Gehry**, are ideal venues for holding an unforgettable meeting. Small cities like Avilés in Asturias also have magnificent cultural complexes like the Niemeyer Centre, the favourite work of the designer himself, the renowned Brazilian Architect **Óscar Niemeyer**.

Spain's best home-grown architectural talent is represented by stunning buildings like the Conference Centre in Zaragoza by **Nieto Sobejano**, the Kursaal by **Rafael Moneo** and the spectacular W Hotel in Barcelona by **Ricardo Bofill**.





MEETINGS IN SEPHARAD

This is an initiative which associates the Jewish Heritage in the 19 cities belonging to the **Spanish Network of Jewish Quarters - Sepharad Pathways** with the provision of the infrastructure and high-quality tourist resources demanded by the conference tourism industry. The most prominent of these are Barcelona, Oviedo, León, Palma de Mallorca and Córdoba.

① *For further information go to:*
www.redjuderias.org/meetings-in-sefarad/

CORPORATE EVENTS IN HISTORICAL MUSEUMS AND VENUES

It has never been so easy to organise an event in delightful places like wine-cellars, museums, palaces and theatres. In Madrid, extraordinary art galleries like the **Reina Sofía National Art Museum** and the **Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum** are available for holding work meetings and conferences complemented by private visits to their collections.

Plan your meeting in a Modernist building in Barcelona like the **Casa Batlló** or the **Casa Milà**, built by Gaudí, or take advantage of the fa-

cilities available at the **Palau de la Música** or the **Gran Teatro del Liceo** to add a unique touch to your event or presentation.

In the heart of Bilbao you'll find the **Azkuna Zentroa**, a majestic old wine warehouse whose interior has been refurbished by the designer Philippe Starck. In nearby San Sebastián, institutions like the **San Telmo Museum**, located in a monumental 16th century building, will provide striking surroundings for any corporate event.





AVE

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 95 minutes, or from Madrid to Barcelona in two and a half hours.

Photo: Brian Kinney/123rf.com

HOW TO GET TO SPAIN AND TRAVEL AROUND

▲ HIGH-SPEED TRAINS (AVE)

AIRPORT

In most Spanish airports there are airline companies offering connections to major cities all over the world. The airports offering the greatest number of international connections are **Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas**, **El Prat (Barcelona)**, **Palma de Mallorca Airport**, **Malaga Airport**, **Gran Canaria Airport**, **Alicante Airport** and **Tenerife South Airport**.

CAR

Spain has the **best network of motorways** and dual carriageways in Europe. There are ideal connections between all the cities in Spain so it is easy to **combine different destinations** for incentive programmes and other corporate events.

The main **vehicle rental** companies operate throughout the country. Both the hotels and the conference venues have special agreements and resources to facilitate group travel.

USEFUL LINKS

For further information on MICE destinations in Spain and to receive highly-qualified advice and guidance, visit the **Spain Convention Bureau** website on scb.es or contact the following Spanish and international associations:

- ① *Association of Spanish Destination Management Companies: www.spaindmcs.com*
- ① *Spanish Federation of Professional Conference Organisation Companies: www.scb.es/*
- ① *International Congress and Conventions Association: www.iccaworld.org*
- ① *Society for Incentive Travel Excellence: www.siteglobal.com*
- ① *Meeting Professionals International: www.mpiweb.org*



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