

Heritage & Culture of Spain

7 Night Parador Tour - Half Board

Your itinerary

The following pages contain general information about your car or motorcycle tour and the locations where you will stay. The order in which they appear may not be the order your hotels have been confirmed for you - for your individual itinerary please refer to your holiday documentation.





Maps and route planning To help plan your trip we provide you with an excellent map of Spain. It's also useful to go to travel websites such as Google maps, viamichelin.com* or www.theaa.co.uk.

*Motorway tolls, where applicable, are indicated on this site.

Hotel directions With your travel documents is an information sheet for each hotel which has been booked for you giving directions together with some further details.

Arrival Unless stated, you will be expected to arrive at each of the hotels pre-booked for you by 6pm each day. This should allow time for a fairly leisurely drive between overnight stops but if you find you will be arriving later than this please ring the hotel so your room is held for you.

This tour is on a half board basis, with breakfast and set menu dinner included.

Your itinerary takes in some of the most amazing architectural wonders and landscapes within easy driving distance of our ports - from the fairytale castle (Alcazar) of Segovia to the wealth of history in Toledo and the stunning university city of Salamanca which are all World Heritage sites.

It may be worth checking the website of individual attractions, monuments and museums for opening dates and times in advance to avoid disappointment.

Lerma



Parador Lerma

36k south of Burgos, Lerma is an historic little town above the Arlanza river which can be seen from some distance away as you approach it. The Parador stands in the square on the highest point of the town, on the site of

the Ducal Palace which was built at the beginning of the 16th century for King Felipe III. The old town is entered by a huge gate set between 2 round towers and it's a fairly steep climb to reach it. For wonderful views of the river and surrounding scenery to the left of the town hall take the steps up to the ramparts.

About 20 minutes from Lerma is the ancient village of Covarrubias, with lovely medieval streets to wander through and the famous 15th century churches of San Cosme and San Damián. A little further is the 18th century monastery of Santo Domingo de Silos where Gregorian chants can be heard and the nearby gorge of La Yecla is also worth visiting. The regional capital, Burgos, has one of Spain's most beautiful cathedrals.



Burgos

Segovia

This city has some outstanding monuments and has been strategically important since Roman times when the famous two-tiered aqueduct was built - this is still in operation and one of the finest examples in existence. Places to visit include Riofrío (11k) and its Palacio de Caza, La Granja de San



Segovia's Roman aqueduct

Ildelfonso (12k) with its Royal Palace and amazing gardens, and Pedraza de la Sierra (35k), a walled village more like an open air museum than a living community. This exceptionally beautiful place has a lovely medieval castle and an arcaded square. An international music festival is held annually from 5-7 July, when the village is candlelit at night.

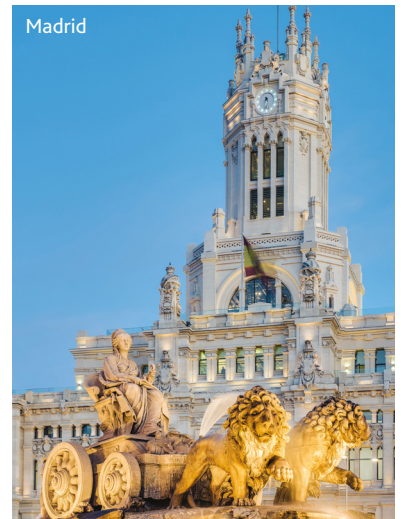
Toledo

The driving time between Segovia and Toledo is less than 2 hours so you may like to take this opportunity to make a stop in the stunning capital city



Toledo

Madrid which is on your route. Toledo is one of Spain's richest cities in terms of its wealth of wonderful monuments and its blend of cultural history from 3 origins - Christian, Jewish and Arab. As well as being a World Heritage Site, in 2016 Toledo was declared the country's gastronomic capital and held a series of culinary events and festivals in honour of this title. Local specialities include handcrafted marzipan, Machecho cheese, Castilian soup, stewed partridge and venison with wild mushroom or pears.



Madrid



Segovia

Salamanca



An extremely attractive university city built of golden stone, it has some magnificent monuments, domes and spires. It is small enough to be able to explore on foot and the central, very beautiful Plaza Mayor with its lively bars and cafés has a great atmosphere and is a popular meeting place as well as a stage for outdoor entertainers, sometimes in period costume. Not far from the cathedral is the fabulous Casa Lis museum with its collection of Art Deco and Art Nouveau - it's worth going to look at the incredible building with its stained glass even if you don't go inside! At the edge of the old city, the recently restored Puente Romano bridge is also worth discovering - walk across for wonderful views by day or night. For many centuries this Roman bridge was the only way across the river to Salamanca. **Alba de Tormes** (23k) is known for its pottery making and is the resting place of Santa Teresa.

Zamora



This city on the river Douro is crossed by a wonderful Roman bridge and has ancient origins with city walls dating from 893. It has narrow lanes, dozens of medieval

buildings and beautiful Romanesque churches including its 12thC cathedral. It's a great place to soak up the atmosphere of an unspoilt, friendly, and typically Spanish city. Nearby **Toro** also has an outstanding cathedral and gives its name to a very good red wine.



On the way to Santillana you may like to take a detour to **León** (approximately an extra 35 miles / half hour drive). This lively university city has wide boulevards and squares and some stunning architecture including the cathedral with its very beautiful windows, the Renaissance San Marcos monastery and the Basilica de San Isidoro which has valuable Romanesque frescoes in the crypt.

Santillana del Mar

This is one of northern Spain's most picturesque villages with its wealth of historic buildings including medieval, Baroque and Renaissance styles. The Colegiata church is said to be the best Romanesque



architecture in Cantabria. At holiday times, particularly Easter and August the village becomes extremely busy so during these times it's best to visit in the evening after the crowds have gone. **Altamira**, about 20 minutes' walk away has some famous prehistoric cave paintings discovered at the end of the 19thC. The original caves cannot be visited except by special request made well in advance but you can visit the museum where there are also the replicated caves. **Suances** (5k from Santillana) is a fishing village and small seaside resort with 2 good beaches including one popular with surfers.

Santander & Bilbao

Santander is one of the most traditional holiday resorts of northern Spain where many of the Spanish themselves choose to holiday, escaping the more arid inland areas. There is a superb sandy beach, modern leisure amenities and an attractive promenade laid out with flower borders and trees. The city has wonderful restaurants and shops plus a variety of nightlife and entertainment.



Over recent years **Bilbao** has been transformed into a vibrant modern city with plenty to attract tourists. In addition to the Guggenheim museum there is much more to see (and best explored on foot) - the old quarter, remarkable architecture, stunning bridges, parks, museums, art galleries and great shopping.

