

GOURMET SPAIN

Toledo, Salamanca, Burgos, La Rioja, San Sebastian

Day 1

After your arrival at Madrid airport, you will be met by your English-speaking driver who will whisk you off to the historic town of Toledo, known as the spiritual heart of Spain. There you will enjoy an informative gourmet walking tour of Toledo taking in the best Marzipan shops, an aperitif, and you'll hear an explanation of these "Three Cultures" in Toledo and the impact on Spanish cuisine. You will have an official guide who will share with you the fascinating history of this unique Spanish city. Lunch will consist of a feast at the top gourmet restaurant with a vast wine cellar. This restaurant is quite popular with local celebrities and politicians. After a delicious lunch, the rest of the day is at leisure to shop or relax. Overnight in Toledo.



Day 2

After a delicious breakfast and hotel check out you will be driven to the lovely town of Avila, a medieval village surrounded by a completely preserved 14th century fortified wall. Here you will enjoy a typical lunch of local specialties and rich red wines from the wine region of Toro. We'll climb the ramparts of the wall, and scale over the village, enjoying the views of the many churches and stork nests. After a digestive walk, you will travel north to the beautiful city of Salamanca which is said to "glow" as nearly all the architecture is made with sandstone, and this creates a bright reflection when the sun beats down. The afternoon will be spent enjoying a walking tour of the old part of this historic town and an aperitif in the beautiful Plaza Mayor. Highlights include the "House of Shells" an unusual palace covered in scallop shells (related to the pilgrimage of Saint James) and the exquisite cathedral. Your hotel is the old rector's mansion, now a tastefully renovated hotel. Dinner on your own to enjoy either tapas or a stylish venue. Overnight in Salamanca.



Day 3

Full breakfast at the hotel prior to leaving lovely Salamanca. Your driver will take you east towards the historic village of Peñafiel, stopping for a VIP wine tasting at a famed cellar. A private tour of the wine caves, installations and vineyards will be followed by a fun and informative wine tasting of the whole range of wines. After wine tasting, you will proceed to in the



town of Burgos. This town is one of the most important pilgrimage cities and its gothic cathedral is one of the most spectacular in the world. Lunch will be in a historic restaurant with old wood fired ovens, right in the heart of the old town. After a convivial long Spanish lunch, you'll enjoy the afternoon free (for a leisurely stroll or a siesta). Your hotel is in a converted monastery, recently refurbished and very elegant. The rest of the day is at leisure. Your hotel is within walking distance to a multitude of restaurants and tapas bars. Overnight in Burgos.

Day 4

Full breakfast in the hotel. From Burgos, you will travel northeast to the famous wine region of La Rioja. We will be received as VIPs at two very prestigious wineries for private cellar and vineyard tours as well as premium wine tastings. Lunch will be at an art nouveau castle in a medieval hilltop village set in vineyards. The early evening will be to enjoy on your own in one of the prettiest tiny villages of Spain, surrounded by a medieval wall and full of gourmet shops and restaurants. Dinner on your own to enjoy at the hotel (where they have a superb Basque chef) or at a 16th century nobleman's house, now a gourmet restaurant, a short walk from your hotel. Overnight in La Rioja.

Day 5

Full breakfast at hotel. From La Rioja we drive to the sea! The Basque coastline is simply beautiful, and your hotel is strategically located right on the sea. Upon arrival to San Sebastian, you will check in and freshen up before commencing on a walking tour from the hotel along the sea into the old town. The old part of San Sebastian is quaint, with a beautiful town hall, three major churches, narrow streets lined with tapas bars and brightly colored boats in the port. Lunch will be a highlight today as Basque gastronomy is considered to be the best in Spain. You will enjoy a few pre-lunch tapas and glasses of Rioja or the white Txacoli wine, or even Basque cider before sitting down to a creatively presented lunch at an intimate gourmet haunt. After a four course lunch, enjoy the rest of the afternoon at your leisure. There is a spa close to your hotel, and there are plenty of elegant shops if you are looking for retail therapy. This evening you are at leisure to enjoy San Sebastian on your own. Overnight in San Sebastian.



Day 6

Full breakfast at hotel. Today's events will be a major highlight. You'll receive a private VIP cooking class at a top culinary academy, run by an award winning chef. After your hands on cooking lesson, you will have the opportunity to sit with your culinary instructor and enjoy your Basque feast (the fruit of your efforts), accompanied by excellent wines from Rioja Alavesa. A free afternoon and evening are yours to enjoy San Sebastian "a tu bola", at your own pace. This short stay in San Sebastian will give you a taste for the region, and those who visit this jewel of a city tend to fall in love; you'll be back! Dinner on your own to enjoy at Arzak, Akelare, Berasetegui (all Michelin starred mythical restaurants) or local, charming tapas bars. Overnight in San Sebastian.



Day 7

Full breakfast in seaside hotel. We'll say farewell to San Sebastian by a private transfer to the Bilbao airport for your departure flight.

INCLUSIONS:

- 6 nights deluxe accommodations as per itinerary
- All transfers in luxury vehicle with English speaking driver
- private airport transfers
- 2 private cooking classes with famous Spanish chefs and keepsake menus
- 3 VIP winery visits with premium wine tastings
- 6 gourmet lunches; 1 tapas style dinner
- daily breakfasts
- cultural activities as per itinerary
- all applicable taxes

PRICE PER PERSON: based on double occupancy
\$6795 Cdn. (2 people)