France and Spain

10 days
France and Spain

Included on tour

Round-trip flights on major carriers; full-time Tour Director; weShare, EF’s personalized learning experience; hotels with private bathrooms; breakfast and dinner daily

**Sightseeing:** Paris; Versailles; Barcelona; Sagrada Familia; Montserrat; Madrid; Toledo

**Entrances:** Versailles Palace & Gardens; Louvre; Fragonard Paris; Notre Dame Cathedral; Park Guell, Barcelona; Sagrada Familia; Montserrat Monastery; La Cova, Manresa; Royal Palace, Madrid; Prado Museum, Madrid; Santo Tome & Synagogue, Toledo; Cathedral, Toledo; San Bernabeu Stadium; Flamenco Show, Madrid

**Overnight stays:**
- Paris* (3)
- Barcelona* (3)
- Madrid* (2)

*Denotes Central Location
Your itinerary

Day 1: Fly overnight to France
Board your overnight flight to Paris!

Day 2: Paris
Arrive in Paris
Welcome to Paris, cosmopolitan City of Light. Over the centuries, Paris has grown to become the undisputed center of France, and one of the world's most important cities both culturally and politically. Equally famed for its high fashion, awe-inspiring museums and elegant cuisine, Paris has also been a center of theater, literature and philosophy throughout the ages.

Walking Tour of Montmartre and Sacré-Coeur
Visit the spectacular Sacré-Coeur, a Catholic basilica built atop the Montmartre hill. From here enjoy some of the most breathtaking views of the City of Light before heading to the cafés and shops that line the small and quaint streets. Relax at the Place du Tertre and watch talented artists at work or choose to have your own portrait done. Montmartre was once home to many struggling artists, including Picasso, Monet, and Renoir.

Day 3: Paris
Guided sightseeing of Paris
Discover the city on the Seine during your bus tour. Learn about Paris’ origins as a Roman settlement as you pass through the île de la Cité, where you will also see Notre Dame Cathedral. Pass by the imposing Arc de Triomphe, and the Place de la Concorde, dedicated to King Louis XV and the site where Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette were executed during the French Revolution. Continue down the elegant Champs-Elysées to the École Militaire, where a promising young Napoleon launched his rise to power. Then, head through the Latin Quarter where you will see the world-renowned Sorbonne University. Drive along the Seine for wonderful views of the Musée D’Orsay, the Louvre, and the Pont de Neuf, or “new bridge,” which is ironically Paris’ oldest. Finally, make a photo stop at the iconic Eiffel Tower, built for the 1889 World’s Fair. Learn why this impressive, yet controversial symbol of Paris was spared the wrecking ball in 1909.

Guided excursion to Versailles
Take an expertly guided tour of Versailles. Nobody does decadence like Louis XIV, and there’s no better testament to this than Versailles. Under the direction of the Sun King, the château that began as a modest hunting lodge exploded into one of the largest palaces on Earth. On your excursion to this lavish estate, explore the state apartments of the king and queen and the magnificent Hall of Mirrors. Walk through the meticulously landscaped gardens and marvel at dozens of ornate fountains. Discover why Versailles was more than just a vacation home: Louis XIV hosted his royal court here to rein in their power and prevent their political rise. *(Because of the extreme popularity of Versailles, guided visits of the interior cannot be guaranteed during peak seasons. In this case, your group will hear a presentation from your guide before entering the palace.)*

Day 4: Paris
Visit the Louvre Museum
The Palais du Louvre, built to defend the city in the 13th century, now safeguards one of the world’s greatest art collections. Enter the museum through world-renowned architect I.M. Pei’s 1989 modernist glass pyramid. Inside, discover priceless antiquities from Egypt, Greece, Italy and Asia such as the statues of Venus de Milo and Nike of Samothrace, better known as Winged Victory. You’ll also see some of the Louvre’s most prized paintings by Renaissance and European masters, including Leonardo da Vinci’s painting of the mysterious Mona Lisa.

Visit the Fragonard Shop
Fragonard is one of the most recognizable perfume brands in France. It started in the south of France where lavender fields are abundant. Today you will visit its workshop in Paris and learn the process of making perfume.

Walking tour of Paris
Begin your walking tour at the Louvre and cross over the Seine River. On the left bank, watch the bouquinistes selling old books and postcards and catch glimpses of the Conciergerie and St. Chappelle built for the Pont Neuf, the oldest bridge in the city. Continue through the Latin Quarter, an area dominated by the Sorbonne, Paris’ most famous university, founded in 1253. The quarter was named for its inhabitants’ native tongue; Latin was the official language until 1793. As you stroll, look for the Panthéon, created by Louis XV because of a promise he made during a severe illness to build a church dedicated to Saint Geneviève if he survived. Your tour will end at Notre Dame Cathedral.

Visit Notre Dame Cathedral
Built between 1163 and 1361 over the remains of an ancient Roman temple, it was here that Napoleon crowned himself emperor in 1804. Victor Hugo once described the sculptured façade of Notre Dame as “a vast symphony in stone.” However, had it not been for the creation of his famous hunchback, Quasimodo, the cathedral might never have returned to its former glory. Hugo’s novel *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* helped inspire a 23-year restoration of the cathedral that began in 1841. Step inside to admire the stained-glass rose window and seemingly weightless vaulted ceilings.

Day 5: Paris | Barcelona
Board a TGV train to Barcelona
Get on board one of France’s Trains a Grande Vitesse (TGV) and watch the rolling countryside and picturesque towns roll by as you approach speeds of up to 170 miles per hour.

Arrive in Barcelona
Arrive in Barcelona, Spain’s second-largest city. As the capital of fiercely nationalistic Catalonia, Barcelona was the hotbed of resistance under the rule of General Franco and celebrates its unique identity through its language, its increasingly influential government, and on the global stage as host to the unforgettable 1992 Olympic Games.
Day 6: Barcelona

Guided sightseeing of Barcelona
Stroll the narrow lanes of the 14th-century Barrio Gótico, the oldest surviving part of the city. Continue on to Gaudí’s masterpiece, the fantasyland of Park Guell, complete with a bright mosaic lizard fountain and the longest bench in the world. Then enjoy a marvelous harbor view from atop Montjuïc Hill, where much of the 1992 Olympics took place.

Guided sightseeing of the Sagrada Familia
Enter into this amazing skeleton of a cathedral. Gaudí began this church in 1882, and it remains unfinished. Construction still continues and completion is slated for the mid-21st century, yet no one knows if the finished product will be what Gaudí intended. Take your time to explore this bizarre masterpiece by wandering around the base, marveling at the enormous statues of saints or climbing one of the many towers for a spectacular view of the city.

Day 7: Barcelona

Guided Excursion to Montserrat
Journey to the picturesque town of Montserrat, which inspired the composer Richard Wagner as he wrote Parsifal. Its rugged mountain setting provides a dramatic backdrop for a 9th-century monastery whose basilica houses the Black Virgin of Montserrat.

Visit La Cova
Nearby Montserrat lies Manresa, where it is believed that Saint Ignatius spent eleven months of his life. He used the cave for prayer and to write his spiritual exercises; today you will be able to enter the cave through the lobby designed by Marti Coronas, a Jesuit Brother, with its stained glass windows and bronze reliefs, as well as the marble designs throughout the cave.

Day 8: Barcelona | Madrid

Board an AVE train to Madrid
Board Spain’s high-speed train, dubbed the AVE-Alta Velocidad Española. The first AVE train was inaugurated in 1992 with the completion of the Madrid-Sevilla line. The train will reach a maximum speed of more than 180 miles per hour before arriving in Madrid, your destination for the evening.

Arrive in Madrid
At 2,100 feet, this is Europe’s highest capital, a Mecca for art-lovers, the world-stage for bullfighting and home to the world’s most famous soccer team! The city was elevated to capital status in 1561 at the instigation of Philip II, and the lavishly opulent Palacio Real, built in 1738, is now an uninhabited but fascinating monument to Spain’s much-revered monarchy.

Guided sightseeing of Madrid
Your local guide introduces you to the sights of Madrid on a panoramic tour of the city. Continue with a visit to the extravagant Palacio Real (Royal Palace), built by Bourbon King Philip V. Once the seat of the most powerful court in the world, it was here that Spain officially joined the European Community in 1986. The palace boasts more than 2,000 extravagant rooms, including one encased in porcelain. Marvel at the splendor of the marble staircase, the golden Throne Room and the incredible collection of priceless frescoes and chandeliers.

Visit the Prado Museum
Explore the Museo del Prado which houses an astonishing 3,000 paintings collected by Spanish royalty. This massive building is constantly expanding in order to accommodate its impressive catalogue of Velázquez and Goya. It also boasts fine pieces by El Greco, Botticelli and many Flemish artists.

Day 9: Madrid

Guided excursion to Toledo
Embark on a journey to the former Spanish capital of Toledo, where Muslims, Jews and Christians once peacefully coexisted. Notice the influence of all three cultures as you tour the 12th-century St. Mary's Synagogue. Designed to be a mosque but then used as a synagogue, it was finally converted into a church. You’ll also visit the cathedral that dominates Toledo’s skyline before continuing to the Church of Santo Tomé. Here, you’ll view El Entierro del Conde de Orgaz (The Burial of Count Orgaz), one of El Greco’s supreme achievements. Then, make a final stop at a local damascene workshop. Damascus is an intricate Muslim craft originated in Damascus and made famous in Toledo. Enjoy some additional time to explore on your own and enjoy lunch before returning to Madrid.

Visit San Bernabeu Stadium
Visit the San Bernabeu Football Stadium, home of the famous Real Madrid Football Club. Mega-stars David Beckham, Sergio Ramos and Cristiano Ronaldo and have all played here on the home team. Besides being host to several finals of the Spanish Cup, the stadium has played host to Pope John Paul II and was the site of the 1982 World Cup finals.

Flamenco Evening
The name itself evokes the emotions and traditions of Spain. Flamenco is a unique art form combining guitar playing, singing, chanting, dancing and handclapping. (Keep in mind that the guitar is a Spanish invention, dating back to the 1500’s.) There are two main types of song: one lively and cheerful (cante chico) and the other sad and haunting (cante jondo). (A beverage is included)

Day 10: Depart for home

Transfer to the airport for your return flight
Your Tour Director assists with your transfer to the airport, where you’ll check in for your return flight home.

Itinerary is subject to change

For complete financial and registration details, please refer to the Booking Conditions at www.eftours.com/bc.
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“My daughter has gained such an amazing view of the world and history from this experience. She has not stopped talking since I picked her up at the airport. Thank you for all the organization, helpful hints, flexible payment plan, and knowledgeable tour guides.”

–CHARLOTTE, PARENT