



# Barcelona, Southern France & the Italian Riviera

12 days | 14 days with Rome extension

Discover the essence of the Mediterranean with a journey through the sun-kissed landscapes and distinctive cultures of Spain, France, and Italy—plus a glamorous surprise in the form of Monaco's iconic coastline. Begin in Barcelona, Gaudi's architectural playground, before meandering through medieval Avignon. Greet the Mediterranean, starting with Nice's azure waters, before winding through the cliffside tapestry of Cinque Terre and reveling in the Renaissance in Florence. Extend your trip to Rome and fill your heart with the Eternal City's living history.



## Your tour package includes

- 10 nights in handpicked hotels
- 10 breakfasts
- 3 dinners with beer or wine
- 7 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach

## Included highlights

- La Sagrada Família
- Carcassonne
- Avignon
- Papal Palace in Avignon
- Cap Ferrat
- Nice's Old Town
- Monaco
- Cinque Terre
- Florence Duomo

## Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 2.5 hours daily across mostly flat terrain, including paved roads and cobblestone streets, with some steep hills.

## Group size

15–38

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## Overnight Flight → 1 night

### Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Barcelona today.

## Barcelona → 3 nights

### Day 2: Arrival in Barcelona

*Included meals: welcome dinner*

Welcome to Spain! Need a little pick-me-up when you arrive? Dive right into Spanish culture with shareable small plates—tapas to locals—like croquetas: crispy, deep-fried rolls with a crunchy exterior and a savory, gooey interior. Wash it all down with an orxata—a sweet, milky drink known as horchata to the broader world but made with tiger nuts in Spain.

Tonight, meet your Tour Director and fellow travelers at a welcome dinner, served with beer or wine.

### Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Barcelona

*Included meals: breakfast*

You don't have to be an architecture fan to enjoy Barcelona, but you may just leave as one by the end of your trip. Roman ruins, Gothic drama, and soaring odes to modernism fill the city with unparalleled architectural landmarks, many of which are UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

- Immerse yourself in the awe-inspiring beauty of La Sagrada Família, a testament to Antoni Gaudí's genius. Inside, marvel at the intricate details and stained glass that bathe the space in confetti-like bursts of color.
- Drive along Passeig de Gràcia, where you'll encounter Gaudí's "House of Bones" (Casa Batlló) and the sculptural Casa Milà. Feel the pulse of the city as you traverse Barcelona and see how architectural modernism interacts with everyday life.
- Venture to Montjuïc, the hill overlooking Barcelona and site of the 1992 Olympic Games. At the Mirador de l'Alcalde, breathe in panoramic views of the city, the harbor, and beyond, perfumed by a Mediterranean breeze and surrounding gardens.

- Pass through the grandeur of the Plaça d'Espanya, a hub of Catalan culture. Look for the pair of towers, inspired by the campaniles of Venice, and a classically styled fountain at the center of it all.

If you'd like to deepen your newfound love for Antoni Gaudí, we recommend joining the excursion to Park Güell, where your eyes will joyfully bounce from colorful mosaics to the tops of whimsical residential rooftops. Savor every tiny detail in the stonework—you never know what surprises you'll uncover when you take your time.

If you choose to spend your free afternoon in Barcelona exploring on your own, you can explore the Gothic Quarter and walk its narrow medieval streets. You'll find charming squares like the Plaça del Rei and spot Barcelona Cathedral, a masterpiece of Catalan Gothic architecture built between the 13th and 15th centuries.

+ Park Güell & La Pedrera

### Day 4: Free day in Barcelona

*Included meals: breakfast*

On your free day in Barcelona, you can opt to forge your own perfect day or add one (or two!) curated excursions to your itinerary.

If it's cascading valleys and mountain views you're after, opt for the journey to Montserrat. You'll ride a high-flying cable car to the Santa Maria de Montserrat Abbey; on a clear day, you can peep the Pyrenees Mountains in the distance.

You can then choose to end your day with a romantic, passionate, and dramatic display of Andalusian culture at a flamenco dinner show. If you do spend your free day winding through Barcelona on your own, go for some rest and relaxation at Barceloneta Beach, where you can take a leisurely stroll on the boardwalk and—if it's warm—dip your toes in the Mediterranean. Or, pack a picnic and a bottle of cava (a Spanish sparkling wine) and head to Barcelona's central Parc de la Ciutadella. Walk its lush gardens or sit by the Cascada Monumental fountain for some prime people-watching.

+ Montserrat

+ Flamenco Dinner Show

### Day 5: Provence via Carcassonne

*Included meals: breakfast*

En route to Provence, France, take a captivating detour to explore the enchanting, fortified city of Carcassonne. This medieval settlement, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, takes you back in time from the moment you enter its imposing fortress gates.

Well-preserved ramparts and towers encircle the city and offer glimpses of the surrounding countryside. As you go, you'll be walking in the footsteps of knights, nobles, and artisans that thrived within its formidable walls where every cobblestone tells a story.

## French Riviera → 2 nights

### Day 6: French Riviera via Avignon

*Included meals: breakfast*

Make your way to Nice and the French Riviera by way of Avignon, known as the "City of the Popes." Sited along the Rhône River, Avignon's place at the confluence of history and culture dates to it being the seat of the Catholic papacy in the 14th century. Discover Avignon's legacy of architecture and art with a local guide leading the way.

- Stroll through the heart of the city, its historic center unfolding before you, past cobbled streets and imposing stone walls that still stand guard today.
- Step inside the magnificent Papal Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most significant medieval Gothic buildings in all of Europe. From its cavernous chambers to its extensive courtyards, the enormous structure boasts fortress-like walls more than 160 feet tall—a surefire way to protect its residents.

You'll then enjoy free time in Avignon for lunch.

Try a light and refreshing salade niçoise with tuna, olives, and eggs. For a sweet treat, find a shop selling Papalines d'Avignon, liqueur-filled chocolate bonbons.

### Day 7: Sightseeing tour of Cap Ferrat & Nice

*Included meals: breakfast*

Embark on a sunny, salty exploration of the French Riviera, a region known for its glamorous resorts and azure coastlines dotted with yachts.

## Provence → 1 night

- Marvel at scene-stealing views of the Mediterranean Sea as you stand atop the cliffs of Cap Ferrat. Turquoise waters, washes of greenery, and coves peeking from the coastline combine to make the dreamiest vistas.
- Tour the opulent Villa Ephrussi, a magnificent mansion with lavishly decorated rooms commissioned by the Rothschild banking family. The real allure, however, lies in the meticulously landscaped, themed gardens surrounding the villa, each boasting its own unique charm—from the fragrant Rose Garden to the exotic Spanish Garden.
- Conclude your day with free time in Nice's Old Town, a labyrinth of narrow streets that connect bustling squares, quaint cafes, and the vibrant Cours Saleya market, where you can shop for local specialties like tapenades and candied fruit.

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## Italian Riviera → 2 nights

### Day 8: Italian Riviera via Monaco

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner*

Leave France for the Italian Riviera today. Stop en route to explore the tiny Principality of Monaco with your Tour Director, who will share glimpses into its storied past, its transformation from a strategic fortress to a haven of luxury, and the fascinating legacy of the ruling Grimaldi family.

- Begin your exploration by ascending Le Rocher, one of Monaco's four quarters, or quarters, nicknamed for the elevated rock that houses the historic Old Town. Gaze at the Monaco Cathedral, an exquisite example of Romanesque-Byzantine architecture. The cathedral is renowned for its white stones, stunning facade, and being the final resting place of Prince Rainier III and Princess Grace.
- Pause outside the majestic Prince's Palace, first built as a fortress in the late 12th century. The royal residence showcases a blend of architectural styles and enjoys an unmatched view of Monaco and its crystalline coastline.

This evening, sit down for an included dinner with your group, served with beer or wine.

### Day 9: Sightseeing tour of Cinque Terre

*Included meals: breakfast*

Occasionally, even the glossiest travel books and the most glowing reviews can't capture the overwhelming beauty of a place. Join your Tour Director today to discover Cinque Terre, Italy, an

idyllic cluster of five villages set on seaside cliffs. Perched along a jagged six-mile strip of coastline, Cinque Terre's arresting natural beauty prompted Italy to designate the entire area a national park.

- Board a train to Monterosso and feel your smile widening as you come across the pebble beach, punctuated with orange and blue umbrellas, that defines this village. Known for its cultivation of lemons, Monterosso celebrates the tart fruit with a festival each May.
- Traverse the sparkling Ligurian Sea by boat to Vernazza, a village adorned with a tapestry of pastel-colored waterfront houses. Let yourself fall under the trance of fishing boats gently bobbing up and down in its harbor.
- Continue your nautical journey to Riomaggiore, known for its rugged coastal scenery. Colorful buildings cascade down the cliffside and appear to spill into the small marina—a valley between two steep hills.
- Learn about the Via dell'Amore, a famous hiking path that connects two of the five villages. Along the Way of Love, visitors find the path strewn with nets suspended from the rocks—waiting for lovers to write their name on a padlock, attach it to the net, and throw the keys into the sea so they're bound forever to one another.
- Enjoy short walks through Cinque Terre's villages, savoring the unique atmosphere, traditions, and cuisine of each.
- Transfer back to your hotel by train and take in the changing landscapes of Liguria's dramatic coastline and vineyard-covered slopes. Bookmark them in your heart to come back to again and again.

*Please note: The boat ride is weather-dependent. In the event of inclement weather, you'll visit the villages by train. In addition, the specific villages you visit may vary.*

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## Florence → 2 nights

### Day 10: Transfer to Florence & sightseeing tour

*Included meals: breakfast*

Travel to Florence—Tuscany's capital and the world's greatest treasure trove of Renaissance art and architecture. Get to know the city with a local guide.

- Head to Florence's UNESCO-listed historic center and view its exquisite, 15th-century

cathedral—the Basilica di Santa Maria del Fiore, or Florence Cathedral. It remains one of the largest churches in the world and its trademark brick dome is, to this day, the largest masonry dome ever built.

- Learn about the cathedral's distinctive, marble-clad facade and its instantly recognizable dome, the latter of which was built by Filippo Brunelleschi and has become a symbol of the Renaissance and Florence itself.
- Pass Giotto's Campanile. This bell tower, a masterpiece of Gothic architecture, rises nearly 280 feet above the city and features the same red, white, and green marble found on the Florence Cathedral's facade.
- Walk past the Piazza della Repubblica, one of Florence's main squares, to the medieval Ponte Vecchio, an iconic bridge that spans the Arno River and has been lined with shops since the 13th century.
- Stroll along the Arno and through the Uffizi Gallery's courtyard to the Piazza della Signoria—a beautiful square that's situated just outside the Palazzo Vecchio and home to several notable statues, including the *Fountain of Neptune* and a replica of Michelangelo's *David*.

### Day 11: Free day in Florence

*Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner*

Since you find yourself in the heart of Tuscany, why not add a trip through the rolling hills, vineyards, and olive groves of this cinematic setting? The excursion to San Gimignano takes you deep into the Tuscan countryside and into a town whose skyline is dominated by 14 medieval towers. Then, tingle your tastebuds with a tasting of local olive oils and balsamic vinegars.

Prefer to head out on your own and need inspiration for your free day in town? Escape the crowds and wander through the Boboli Gardens, located behind the grand Palazzo Pitti. Explore the extensive greenery, hidden pathways, and stunning sculptures of this peaceful oasis, then dive into the vibrant Mercato di Sant'Ambrogio, serving locals for more than 100 years. Smaller than its more famous counterpart, the Mercato Centrale, you'll get an intimate and authentic appreciation for how Florentines live. Browse market stalls bursting with fresh produce, regional delicacies, and traditional wares, and maybe join the locals for a coffee or a bite at the market's lively cafes.

Later, celebrate your trip at a farewell dinner this evening, served with beer or wine.

+ San Gimignano: Medieval Sights & Tuscan

## Flight Home

### Day 12: Departure

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home or extend your trip with a stay in the Eternal City—Rome—where you'll traipse across timeworn paths as the city's monuments keep enduring watch. And if you have the chance to cap off a week of zesty, bright Mediterranean fare with a few days of gnocchi and gelato, seize it!

### + Rome extension

Rome wasn't built in a day and, if you ask us, it wasn't meant to be enjoyed in a day, either. Whether you play time traveler while hopping between historic sites or live out your best take on Roman Holiday, the day belongs to you, and we're here to help. Ask your Tour Director for their favorite ways to savor the city—like their secret spot for pasta carbonara—or join curated experiences that take you into the heart (and full belly) of Rome.

- Pass by Palatine Hill to the ancient chariot-racing stadium known as the Circus Maximus. Then, take in the Terme di Caracalla—a beautiful and luxurious public bath that functioned from the third to the sixth century.

### Day 13: Free day in Rome

*Included meals: breakfast*

On your free day in Rome, you can discover the hidden gem of Trastevere, a bohemian and mostly car-free neighborhood filled with narrow streets and delectable trattorias. Get your fill of pasta, pastries, and gelato when you add our bespoke (and finger-licking) walking tour through Trastevere's eateries.

Need a moment of respite? Visit picturesque Aventine Hill, home to the peaceful Giardino degli Aranci (Orange Garden) and the famous keyhole view of St. Peter's Basilica—which you can visit by adding the guided tour of Vatican City to your day. Here, you'll also experience the grandeur and serenity of the Vatican Museum, as well as the Sistine Chapel's venerated ceiling fresco. The day is yours to seize.

Finally, join your fellow group members for a farewell drink as you celebrate your trip.

+ Food of Rome: Walking Tour of Trastevere  
+ Iconic Sights: Vatican City

## Flight Home

### Day 14: Departure

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

## Rome → 2 nights

### Day 12: Sightseeing tour of Rome

*Included meals: breakfast*

Depart Florence for Italy's capital, Rome, whose entire historic center—including the Forum, Colosseum, Pantheon, and the religious and public buildings of Papal Rome—is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Follow in the footsteps of ancient Romans on a guided tour of the Eternal City.

- Soak up more than 2,000 years of imperial Roman history, viewing the fourth-century Arch of Constantine—the largest surviving Roman triumphal arch—and the Arch of Titus. The latter dates to the first century and became an inspiration for other triumphal arches, including the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.
- Enter the Colosseum, the iconic amphitheater built between 70–72 A.D. to host events such as gladiatorial games.
- Stop at the ruins of the Forum, which served as a setting for parades, elections, and trials.



# Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.\* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: [goaheadtours.ca/SFI](https://goaheadtours.ca/SFI) | 1-800-754-5066

## Day 3: Park Güell & La Pedrera

\$149CAD/\$159CAD\* (4 hours, departure time varies)

On today's excursion, discover the magnificent works of Antoni Gaudí, the famed Spanish architect known for his bold, distinct designs. Casa Milà is the first stop.

Take a guided tour of this building, popularly known as "La Pedrera," which was built by Gaudí between 1905 and 1910. Everything about the building is visually unique, from its wave-like stone structure to the grandly designed roof. Next, you'll head to Park Güell, also designed by Gaudí. Your guide will lead you through the park, which contains stunning buildings, intricate stonework, and colorful mosaics. At the top of the park, marvel at the brilliant views of Barcelona.

## Day 4: Montserrat

\$129CAD/\$139CAD\* (4.5 hours, departure time varies)

Journey to the ninth-century Santa María de Montserrat Abbey, which inspired the composer Richard Wagner as he wrote Parsifal. Ride a high-flying cable car up the mountain and enjoy magnificent views of the Llobregat River Valley and—if the skies are clear—the Pyrenees. A local guide will lead the way to the secluded Santa María de Montserrat Abbey, where you may have a chance to see La Moreneta, Catalonia's miraculous and beloved statue of the Virgin of Montserrat. Take some time to explore the monastery before descending the mountain by bus and driving back to Barcelona. Please note: Due to the ever-changing schedule of church activities, a viewing of the statue of La Moreneta can't be guaranteed.

## Day 4: Flamenco Dinner Show

\$175CAD/\$185CAD\* (4 hours, departs in the evening with dinner included)

The clapping, the singing, the stamping—experience the dramatic art of flamenco dancing, one of Spain's most celebrated traditions. Expressive and colorful, this Andalusian style of dance combines guitar playing (toque), song (cante), and rhythmic clapping (palmas). Dinner will be served before the performance.

## Day 11: San Gimignano: Medieval Sights & Tuscan Flavors

\$159CAD/\$169CAD\* (6 hours, departs in the morning, lunch included)

Travel through the beautiful Tuscan countryside to discover the medieval village of San Gimignano. During the Renaissance, the rival Guelph and Ghibelline political factions flexed their muscles by constructing tall towers throughout San Gimignano; fourteen of those towers survive today. Later, visit a local winery for a taste of the area's wines and a sampling of olive oil and balsamic vinegar that you simply won't find anywhere else. Then, enjoy lasagna during a light lunch.

## Extension excursion options

### Day 13: Food of Rome: Walking Tour of Trastevere

\$189CAD/\$199CAD\* (3.5 hours, departs in the afternoon)

Meet up with a local guide for a culinary-themed walking tour of Trastevere. This historic neighborhood is located across the Tiber River and is home to some of the Rome's best shops, bars, and restaurants. Step inside four handpicked eateries, each of which showcases the area's rich culinary traditions. You'll enjoy tastings of aperitivi, pasta, pastries, and gelato—all quintessential Italian foods. Over an aperitivo and a glass of wine, your guide will talk about the various flavors and cooking techniques that have come to define the local cuisine. Watch locals go about their daily lives as you stroll along the charming trattoria-lined streets during your tour.

### Day 13: Iconic Sights: Vatican City

\$175CAD (3.5 hours, departure time varies)

This guided tour takes you inside Vatican City—a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most sacred places in Christendom. This independent city-state within Rome serves as the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church and is home to the Pope. Upon arrival, turn on your pre-distributed headset and dive into the Vatican's rich history with your local guide. First, visit the Vatican Museums, which are more than 500 years old and house many of the world's most important Classical- and Renaissance-era sculptures. Next, step inside the Sistine Chapel, whose frescoed ceiling is arguably Michelangelo's greatest masterpiece. Finally, pay a visit to the enormous St. Peter's Basilica, the epicenter of the Roman Catholic faith. The artists who have contributed to its glory are some of the best Italy has ever known: Bramante, Peruzzi, Raphael, and Michelangelo. Masterpieces await at every turn, from Bernini's magnificent bronze canopy to Michelangelo's Pietà.

Please note: Should this excursion fall on a Sunday, it'll be moved to another day of the tour. Backpacks aren't allowed in the Vatican, and shorts and sleeveless shirts are strictly prohibited. Due to closures of certain entrances and pathways, wait times may extend to several hours during busy travel months. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 70 days prior to departure.

\*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at [goaheadtours.ca/terms](https://goaheadtours.ca/terms)