

# Grand Tour of Portugal & Spain: Porto to Barcelona

Pre-departure information for your tour



## Passport, Visa & Entry Requirements

- In order to enter Portugal and Spain, U.S. and Canadian citizens need a valid passport with an expiration date extending at least six months beyond the date of reentry.
- We recommend having at least one blank passport page for entry stamps.
- Beginning in 2025, U.S. and Canadian passport holders must register for an [ETIAS](#) travel authorization in order to enter many European countries.
- Passport holders from over 60 visa-exempt countries (including the U.S. and Canada) will need to apply for an ETIAS travel authorization in order to visit 30 European countries. That means that even if you've previously traveled to any of these European countries without a visa, starting in 2025, you'll need to get ETIAS authorization to visit them again. If you're traveling to multiple countries with this requirement, you only need to complete the form once. All Go Ahead travelers are responsible for obtaining their own ETIAS travel authorization before departure. For more details, please visit our [Help Center](#).
- If you are not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you must contact each country's consulate for your specific entry requirements.
- You can see the most up-to-date entry requirements for the destination(s) you'll visit on tour by going to [goaheadtours.com/entry-requirements](https://goaheadtours.com/entry-requirements) and searching the code GPS.

## Arrival & Departure Information

- Round-trip flights booked through Go Ahead Tours arrive in Porto, Portugal and depart from Barcelona, Spain (or Bilbao on the tour extension).
- Transfers to and from the airport at your destination are included for travelers who have purchased their flights through Go Ahead Tours. Travelers who purchase their own flights may request airport transfers with Go Ahead Tours for an additional cost if they are arriving or departing on the standard day.
- When you arrive in Porto, a Go Ahead representative will be waiting for you in the

arrivals hall with a Go Ahead sign or a sign with your name(s). If you don't see a representative immediately, please be patient and stay in the arrivals area. They may be assisting another traveler who has also just arrived and will be back shortly.

## Transportation on Tour

- This tour includes various modes of transportation including trains and private motor coach. Some modes of transportation will have raised platforms or steps and often not provide access to ramps or lifts.
- Train rides from Córdoba to Madrid and Madrid to Barcelona are included in the price of your tour. The tour extension also includes a train ride from Barcelona to Pamplona.
- All other included transportation on this tour is by private motor coach.
- European train stations typically operate similarly to airports where security measures, such as baggage and body scanners, are common. Platforms are often spread out across large distances and require travelers to manage their luggage on escalators or stairs. Portage services are not offered on train transfers and luggage storage on trains is extremely limited. Please keep in mind that trains may only be stopping at the stations for a few minutes; speed with loading and unloading may be imperative.

## Baggage Allowance & Expectations

- Please note that our travelers are limited to one checked bag and one personal item per person due to storage limitations on motor coaches and other transfers, which includes a train.
- Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to exceed baggage size and weight restrictions. Be advised that you are responsible for any baggage fees incurred on all flights.
- Contact your airline(s) for baggage size and weight restrictions for your flights.
- Make sure you label your baggage and keep valuables, medication, and documents in your carry-on bag.
- Travelers must manage their own luggage

throughout tour as porters are not guaranteed. This includes at hotels, airports, and train stations.

- Luggage storage on trains is extremely limited, and often requires travelers to lift their suitcases onto storage racks, sometimes above the seats.

## Clothing & Packing Tips

- We recommend packing lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that can be easily layered to accommodate varying temperatures, as well as a light jacket or rainwear.
- A sturdy pair of walking shoes or sneakers is recommended for sightseeing.
- You may want to pack dressier attire if you plan to visit a high-end restaurant or attend a special performance.
- It is preferable not to visit churches or other religious sites with bare legs and shoulders (and entrance may be denied on this basis).
- We recommend packing a reusable water bottle to cut down on single use plastic waste.
- We recommend packing a universal adapter, as well as a voltage converter if you plan on using your own hairdryer or other device without a built-in converter.
- We recommend packing your Insurance Card (from your primary insurance provider) in your carry on luggage.

## Meals & Cuisine

- This tour includes 5 dinners. Included meals may be plated set menus, buffet or family style depending on the location. Dinners include one glass of beer, wine, or soft drink and water, coffee and tea.
- Breakfast each morning is also included at the hotel and is typically buffet style with hot and cold options.
- Portuguese food is fresh, hearty, and delicious. Try seafood stew cooked in a cataplana, a shell-shaped copper pan, or the national dish, bacalhau (salted cod). A couvert, or simple plate of bread, butter, and olives, is often served when you sit down to a meal—while it is free in many restaurants, some will add a charge to your bill for it.
- In Spain, breakfast like a local with just a pastry and coffee. Then, tuck into a three-

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course lunch featuring a Spanish staple like savory seafood paella or grilled meat and fried potatoes. Dinner is less hearty than lunch and is served late, between 9pm and midnight. Snack on small plates called tapas any time of day.

- Cuisine in Spain's southern Andalusia region is heavily influenced by surrounding countries, and has many Arabic elements. Kebabs are popular, and desserts are often prepared with almonds, honey, and cinnamon. Be sure to try Serrano ham, which is considered a regional delicacy, as well as the famous chilled soup known as gazpacho.
- Catalan cuisine, which can be found in Barcelona, is markedly different from food in other parts of Spain. Nearly every restaurant will offer pa amb tomàquet—toasted bread with tomato and olive oil. Fresh seafood, hearty meat dishes, cheeses, and locally grown vegetables, such as wild mushrooms, are culinary mainstays.
- Pintxos, small snacks that are usually spiked with a toothpick to a piece of bread, are an especially popular sort of tapas in the Basque Country on the tour extension.

## Tipping

- At the conclusion of your tour, it is customary to offer your Tour Director and driver a gratuity in local currency. Please keep current exchange rates in mind.
- We recommend tipping the equivalent of \$10USD to \$12USD per person per day for your Tour Director and the equivalent of \$3USD per person per day for your driver.
- If applicable, we also recommend the equivalent of \$2USD per local guide.
- Tips can only be paid in cash.
- If you are traveling to multiple countries with different currencies and the same Tour Director, ask them what currency they prefer for their tip.
- The cost of portage is included in your tour price, and it is not necessary to tip baggage handlers.

## Currency

- You will use the euro on this tour.
- Better rates of exchange are usually available overseas, although it's worth ordering some

currency from your local bank to use when you first arrive.

- We strongly advise that you take debit/bank cards and credit cards, which can be used to withdraw cash at local banks as needed.
- You can use most debit/credit cards at ATMs on the international networks Cirrus and Plus, but make sure to check with your home bank about withdrawal fees.
- Inform your bank and credit card company of your travel plans so that they won't confuse your international purchases for fraudulent charges.
- International banks and businesses primarily accept debit and credit cards that work with the EMV chip system. If you do not already have at least one debit or credit card with a chip in it, we strongly recommend requesting one from your bank prior to your tour.
- Plan ahead and bring cash to tip your tour director, local guides, and bus drivers. We also recommend keeping coins in the local currency on hand, as some public bathrooms may charge a fee for use.

## Responsible Travel

- When you travel with EF Go Ahead Tours, you'll make a positive impact on the places you visit, and the people and animals you meet along the way. That's because our three core Responsible Travel commitments—protecting the environment, supporting local communities, and promoting animal welfare—are at the heart of every tour we offer.
- Travel, when done responsibly, can make an enormous socio-economic impact to communities. To maximize your impact, eat at locally owned restaurants and shop at local businesses. Ask your Tour Director to point out restaurants they recommend.
- Prepare for your trip: be aware of the monetary norms such as tipping and negotiating in a market, learn about the destination's forms of etiquette, and take some time to learn a few words in the local language.
- When interacting with locals, make sure to ask people for permission before you take their picture, and approach cultural

differences with empathy and an open mind.

- EF Go Ahead Tours encourages our travelers to limit their waste while on the road, especially single use plastics. You can avoid single use plastics by packing your own toiletries, using electronic documents, and bringing a reusable water bottle and shopping bag. If you need to use plastics or paper, please recycle.
- Environment: On this tour, we recommend the use of a reusable water bottle, as the local drinking water is safe for travelers. Your Tour Director can provide additional guidance on local water standards. Make sure to bring a reusable water bottle to cut down on single use plastics.