

Spain

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Introduction

Once away from the holiday costas, you could only be in Spain. In the cities, narrow twisting old streets suddenly open out to views of daring modern architecture, while spit-and-sawdust bars serving wine from the barrel rub shoulders with blaring, glaring discos.

Travel is easy, accommodation plentiful, the climate benign, the people relaxed, the beaches long and sandy, the food and drink easy to come by and full of regional variety. More than 50 million foreigners a year visit Spain, yet you can also travel for days and hear nothing but Spanish.

Geographically, Spain's diversity is immense. There are endless tracts of wild and crinkled sierra to explore, as well as some spectacularly rugged stretches of coast between the beaches.

Culturally, the country is littered with superb old buildings, from Roman aqueducts and Islamic palaces to Gothic cathedrals. Almost every second village has a medieval castle. Spain has been the home of some of the world's great artists - El Greco, Velázquez, Goya, Dalí, Picasso - and has museums and galleries to match. The country vibrates with music of every kind - from the drama of flamenco to the melancholy lyricism of the Celtic music and *gaitas* (bagpipes) of the northwest.

Full country name: Kingdom of Spain

Area: 504,782 sq km

Population: 40.21 million

Capital City: Madrid (pop 3.1 million)

People: Spaniards (though Catalans and Basques display a fierce independent spirit)

Language: Spanish; Castilian, Catalan, Basque, Gallegan

Religion: 90% Roman Catholic

Government: parliamentary monarchy

Head of State: King Juan Carlos

Head of Government: Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero

GDP: US\$850.7 billion

GDP per capita: US\$21,200

Annual Growth: 4%

Inflation: 2.9%

Major Industries: textiles & apparel, food & beverages, metals, chemicals, shipbuilding, tourism

Major Trading Partners: EU (especially France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, UK, Benelux), US

Member of EU: Yes

Facts for the Traveler

Visas: Spain is one of 15 member countries of the Schengen Convention, an agreement whereby all EU (European Union) member countries (except the UK and Ireland) plus Iceland and Norway abolished checks at internal borders in 2000. The other EU countries are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden. EU, Norwegian and Icelandic nationals need no visa, regardless of the length or purpose of their visit to Spain. If they stay beyond 90 days they are required to register with the police. Legal residents of one Schengen country (regardless of their nationality) do not require a visa for another Schengen country. Nationals of many other countries, including Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland and the USA, do not need a visa for tourist visits of up to 90 days in Spain, although some of these nationalities (including Australians and Canadians) may be subject to restrictions in other Schengen countries and should check with consulates of all Schengen countries they plan to visit. Nationals of those countries wishing to work or study in Spain may need a specific visa, so should contact a Spanish consulate before travel. If you are a citizen of a country not mentioned in this section, check with a Spanish consulate whether you need a visa. The standard tourist visa issued by Spanish consulates is the Schengen visa, valid for up to 90 days. A Schengen visa issued by one Schengen country is generally valid for travel in all other Schengen countries. Those needing a visa must apply in person at the consulate in the country where they are resident. You may be required to provide proof of sufficient funds, an itinerary or hotel bookings, return tickets and a letter of recommendation from a host in Spain. Issue of the visa does not guarantee entry. You can apply for no more than two visas in any 12-month period and they are not renewable once in Spain. In the UK, single-entry visas for a 30-day stay cost £15.50. Multiple entry visas valid for a 90-day stay cost £21.70. Visas are free for spouses and children of EU nationals. Various transit visas also exist. Visa Extensions & Residence Schengen visas cannot be extended. Nationals of EU countries, Norway and Iceland can enter and leave Spain at will. Those wanting to stay in Spain longer than 90 days are supposed to apply during their first month for a residence card (*tarjeta de residencia*). This is a lengthy procedure - if you intend

to subject yourself to it, consult a Spanish consulate before you go to Spain as you will need to take certain documents with you. People of other nationalities who want to stay in Spain longer than 90 days are also supposed to get a residence card, and for them it's a truly nightmarish process, starting with a residence visa issued by a Spanish consulate in your country of residence. Start the process aeons in advance.

Time Zone: GMT/UTC +1 (+2 in summer)

Dialling Code: 34

Electricity: 230V ,50 Hz

Weights & measures: Metric

When to Go

In May, June and September you can rely on good weather, yet avoid the sometimes extreme heat - and the main crush of Spanish and foreign tourists. Winter along the coast is mild, while in the height of summer you can retreat to the northwest, or to beaches or mountains, if you need to get away from excessive heat.

Events

In true Spanish style, cultural events are almost inevitably celebrated with a wild party and a holiday. Among the festivals to look out for are **La Tamborrada** in San Sebastián on 19 January, a short but rowdy event where the whole town dresses up and goes berserk. **Carnaval** takes place throughout the country in late February; the wildest is said to be in Sitges. In March, Valencia has a week-long party known as **Las Fallas**, which is marked by all-night dancing, drinking, first-class fireworks and colourful processions. **Semana Santa** (Holy Week) is the week leading up to Easter Sunday with parades of holy images through the streets; Seville is the place to be if you can get accommodation. In late April the **Feria de Abril** in Seville is a week-long party counterbalancing the religious fervour of **Semana Santa**.

The last Wednesday in August sees the Valencian town of Buñol go bonkers with **La Tomatina**, in which the surplus from its tomato harvest is splashed around in a friendly riot. The **Running of the Bulls** (Sanfermines) in Pamplona in July is Spain's most famous festival. Along the north coast, staggered through the first half of August, is **Semana Grande**, another week of heavy drinking and hangovers.

Money & Costs

Currency: Euro

Spain is one of Europe's more affordable countries. If you are particularly frugal it's just about possible to scrape by for around €20.00 a day. This would involve staying in the cheapest possible accommodation, avoiding eating in restaurants or going to museums or bars, and not moving around too much. A more comfortable budget would be €40.00 a day, allowing for a basic hotel room, set meals, public transport and entry to museums. With €100.00 a day you can stay in excellent accommodation, rent a car and eat some of the best food Spain has to offer.

Credit and debit cards are widely accepted at hotels and restaurants, especially from the middle range up, and also for long-distance train tickets.

Be careful carrying your money, whether it's jingling or plastic, as tourists are a major target of theft - hundreds of thousands of credit cards go missing in Spain every year.

In restaurants the law requires menu prices to include service charge, and tipping is a matter of personal choice - most people leave some small change if they're satisfied and 5% is usually plenty. It's common to leave small change at bar and cafe tables.

Attractions

Madrid

This is Spain's headiest city, where the revelling lasts long into the night and life is seized with the teeth and both hands. Strangers quickly become friends, passion blooms in an instant, and visitors are swiftly addicted to the city's charms.

With a triad of truly great art museums that includes the Museo del Prado, and buildings like the Palacio Real that span the centuries, plus lively plazas, mighty boulevards and neighbourhoods brimming with character, Madrid has plenty of sights to keep the eyes, ears and mind occupied.

Balearic Islands

Floating in the Mediterranean between Spain and the North African coast, the Balearic Islands are invaded every summer by a massive force of hedonistic party animals and sun seekers. This is hardly surprising considering what's on offer: fine beaches, relentless sunshine, good food and wild nightlife.

Barcelona

Barcelona has transformed itself from smug backwater into one of the most dynamic and stylish capitals in the world. Summer is serious party time, with week-long festa fun. But year-round the city sizzles - it's always on the biting edge of architecture, food, fashion, style, music and good times.

The wild and whimsical architecture of Gaudí dominates the streets of Barcelona and makes for some of the finest city-walking in the world. The art will beckon you from museums and streetsides. The vibrant central drag, La Rambla, will lead you to the city's marvellous medieval quarter, Barri Gòtic.

Bilbao

Post-industrial Bilbao, the largest city in Basque Country (the País Vasco) is transforming itself with ambitious urban-renewal projects, most notably the marvellous **Museo Guggenheim de Arte Contemporáneo**. This twist-up of glass and titanium, designed by US architect Frank Gehry and inspired by the anatomy of the fish and the hull of a boat, is the city's showpiece. The contents of this sardine can are no less stunning than its exterior: works by Serra, Braque, Kandinsky, Picasso, Warhol and more line its walls and halls. The **Museo de Bellas Artes**, just 300m up the road, is also worth a look. When you tire of art riches, wander over to the restaurants and bars of the medieval *casco viejo*.

Granada

During the period of Muslim domination of Spain, Granada was the finest city on the peninsula. Today it is still home to the greatest Muslim legacy in Europe, and one of the most inspiring attractions on the Continent - the Alhambra.

The Alhambra palace is a must-see. Set against the stunning Sierra Nevada and surrounded by cypress and elms, it's an escape into Granada's Moorish past. There's a lot to see, including the Alcazaba, the Palacio Nazaries (Nasrid Palace) and the Generalife gardens, so allow at least an afternoon.

San Sebastián

San Sebastián is stunning. Famed as a ritzy resort for wealthy Spaniards who want to get away from the hordes in the south, it has been a stronghold of Basque nationalist feeling since well before Franco banned the use of Euskera, the Basque language, in the 1930s. Donostia, as the city is known in Euskera, is a surprisingly relaxed town with a population approaching 180,000. Those who live here consider themselves the luckiest people in Spain and will not hesitate to tell you so. After spending a few days on the beaches and a few evenings sampling the city's sumptuous tapas and nonstop nightlife, you may well begin to appreciate their immodest claim.

The Playa de la Concha and its continuation at Ondarreta is one of the most beautiful city beaches in Spain. You can swim from Ondarreta to Isla de Santa Clara, in the middle of the bay, and in summer, a number of rafts are anchored at the halfway point to serve as rest stops.

The Museo de San Telmo, in a 16th-century monastery, has a bit of everything - ancient tombstones, sculptures, agriculture and carpentry displays, a wonderful fine arts collection - and the squeakiest floors in Spain. Overlooking Bahía de la Concha is Monte Urgull, which is topped by a statue of Christ and has stunning views.

Seville

One of the first people to fall in love with Seville (or *Sevilla* if you prefer) was the poet-king Al-Mutamid, and the city's ability to dazzle has not abated since. It takes a stony heart not to be captivated by its exuberant atmosphere - stylish, confident, ancient, proud, yet also convivial, intimate and fun-loving.

In keeping with the slow-burn nature of the city's charms, two great monuments - the Muslim Alcázar and the Christian cathedral - reveal most of their glories only once you're inside them. These, along with many other buildings and areas around Seville, are World Heritage Sites.

Toledo

Toledo is an intact medieval city of narrow winding streets perched on a small hill above the Río Tajo. The city is crammed with fascinating museums, galleries, churches and castles. The awesome cathedral harbours glorious murals, stained-glass windows and works by El Greco, Velázquez and Goya.

Unfortunately, it is also crammed with daytrippers, so travellers wanting to enjoy the city should stay overnight and explore in the evening and early morning to see it at its best. The dominant Alcázar has been the scene of military battles from the Middle Ages right through to the 20th century. Other attractions include the city's two synagogues, the Iglesia de Santo Tomé (which contains El Greco's greatest masterpiece, The Burial of the Count of Orgaz) and the Museo de Santa Cruz. Archaeologists working on Toledo's Carranque recently uncovered a 4th-century Roman basilica, Spain's oldest.

Valencia

Spain's third-largest city, and capital of the province of Valencia, comes as a pleasant surprise to many. Home to paella and the Holy Grail, it is also blessed with great weather and the spring festival of Las Fallas, one of the wildest parties in the country.

One of Valencia's most raved about attractions is the baroque **Palacio del Marqués de Dos Aguas**. The facade is extravagantly sculpted and the inside is just as outrageous. The **Museo de Bellas Artes** ranks among the best museums in the country and contains works by El Greco, Goya, Velázquez and a number of Valencian impressionists. The **Instituto Valenciano Arte Moderno** (Institute of Modern Art) houses an impressive collection of 20th-century Spanish art. Pulling four million visitors a year, **Ciudad de las Artes y de las Ciencias** is a huge complex devoted to sciences and the arts that is easily the city's most popular attraction. Valencia's **cathedral** is also worth a visit. Climb to the top of its tower for a great view of the sprawling city.

Off the Beaten Track

Las Hurdes

Nowhere in Spain has been untouched by tourism, but beautiful Las Hurdes in mountainous northern Extremadura comes close. Time has not quite stood still, but it has certainly slowed right down, and many people still live in the traditional stone houses that are unique to this corner of Spain. It's an area of picturesque hamlets, waterfalls and fine walks, but you'll need a car to explore it properly.

Teruel

Located in the deep south of Aragón, Teruel has maintained an atmosphere all of its own. It is best known for its Mudéjar architecture, overwhelming Moorish flavour, magnificent cathedrals, and medieval belfries. Its kaleidoscope of inlaid stones and colourful tiles speaks of an Islamic tradition inflected with European Gothic.

Zaragoza

The appeal of Aragón's capital is that it has been relatively untouched by tourism - even its name has something a little Prisoner of Zenda-rish about it. Most travellers know it only as a train station between Barcelona and Madrid but it hides a wealth of authentic Spanish cuisine and Moorish history behind its coy facade.

Activities

Skiing is cheap and the facilities and conditions are surprisingly good. Spain is a trekking paradise, especially the Pyrenees and the

Picos de Europa. Cycling is also popular, as are watersports such as swimming and surfing.

History

At the crossroads between Europe and Africa, the Iberian Peninsula has always been a target for invading races and civilisations. The Romans arrived in the 3rd century BC but took two centuries to subdue the peninsula. Gradually Roman laws, languages and customs were adopted. In 409 AD, Roman Hispania was invaded by a massive contingent of Germanic tribes and by 419 a Visigothic kingdom had been established. The Visigoths ruled until 711, when the Muslims crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and defeated Roderick, the last Goth king.

By 714, the Muslim armies had occupied the entire peninsula, apart from the mountainous regions of northern Spain. The Muslim occupation of southern Spain (which the Spanish called Al-Andalus) was to last almost 800 years. During this period, the arts and sciences prospered, new crops and agricultural techniques were introduced and palaces, mosques, schools, gardens and public baths were built. In 722, at Covadonga in northern Spain, a small army under the Visigothic king Pelayo inflicted the first defeat on the Muslims. Symbolically, this battle marked the beginning of the Reconquista, the reconquest of Spain by the Christians.

By the end of the 13th century, Castilla and Aragón had emerged as Christian Spain's two main powers, and in 1469 these two kingdoms were united by the marriage of Isabel, princess of Castilla, to Fernando, heir to the throne of Aragón. Known as the Catholic Monarchs, they united all of Spain and laid the foundations for the golden age. In 1478, they established the notoriously ruthless Spanish Inquisition, expelling and executing thousands of Jews and other non-Christians. In 1482, they besieged Granada, and 10 years later the last Muslim king surrendered to them, marking the long-awaited end of the Reconquista.

Spain developed an enormous empire in the New World, following Columbus' arrival in the Americas in 1492. Gold and silver came flooding into Spanish coffers from Mexico and Peru as the conquistadors claimed land from Cuba to Bolivia. Spain monopolised trade with these new colonies and became one of the most powerful nations on earth. However, this protectionism hindered development of the colonies and led to a series of expensive wars with England, France and the Netherlands.

When Louis XVI was guillotined in 1793, Spain declared war on the new French republic, but was defeated. In 1808, Napoleon's troops entered Spain and the Spanish Crown began to lose its hold on its colonies. Sparked by an uprising in Madrid, the Spanish people united against the French and fought a five-year war of independence. In 1813, the French forces were finally expelled, and in 1814 Fernando VII was restored to the Spanish throne. Fernando's subsequent 20-year reign was a disastrous advertisement for the monarchy. During his time, the Inquisition was re-established, liberals and constitutionalists were persecuted, free speech was repressed, Spain entered a severe economic recession and the American colonies won their independence.

The disastrous Spanish-American War of 1898 marked the end of the Spanish Empire. Spain was defeated by the USA in a series of one-sided naval battles, resulting in the loss of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines, Spain's last overseas possessions. Spain's troubles continued during the early 20th century. In 1923, with the country on the brink of civil war, Miguel Primo de Rivera declared himself military dictator and ruled until 1930. In 1931, Alfonso XIII fled the country, and the Second Republic was declared, but it soon fell victim to internal conflict. The 1936 elections saw the country split in two, with the Republican government and its supporters on one side (an uneasy alliance of communists, socialists and anarchists, who favoured a more equitable civil society and a diminished role for the Church) and the opposition Nationalists (a right-wing alliance of the army, the Church, the monarchy and the fascist-style Falange Party) on the other.

The assassination of the opposition leader José Calvo Sotelo by Republican police officers in July 1936 gave the army an excuse to overthrow the government. During the subsequent Civil War (1936-39), the Nationalists received extensive military and financial support from Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, while the elected Republican government received support only from Russia and, to a lesser degree, from the International Brigades, made up of foreign idealists. Despite the threat of fascism, England and France refused to support the Republicans.

By 1939, the Nationalists, led by Franco, had won the war. More than 350,000 Spaniards had died in the fighting, but more bloodletting ensued. An estimated 100,000 Republicans were executed or died in prison after the war. Franco's 35-year dictatorship saw Spain isolated by economic blockades, excluded from NATO and the UN and crippled by economic recession. It wasn't until the early 1950s, when the rise in tourism and a treaty with the USA combined to provide much needed funds, that the country began to recover. By the 1970s, Spain had the fastest growing economy in Europe.

Franco died in 1975, having earlier named Juan Carlos, the grandson of Alfonso XIII, his successor. With Juan Carlos on the throne, Spain made the transition from dictatorship to democracy. The first elections were held in 1977, a new constitution was drafted in 1978, and a failed military coup in 1981 was seen as a futile attempt to turn back the clock. In 1982 Spain made a final break with the past by voting in a socialist government with a sizeable majority. The only major blemish on the domestic front since has been the terrorist campaign waged by separatist militant group ETA, which is trying to secure an independent Basque homeland. During 30 years of terrorist activity, ETA has killed over 800 people.

In 1986 Spain joined the EC (now the EU) and in 1992 Spain returned to the world stage, with Barcelona hosting the Olympic Games,

Seville hosting Expo 92 and Madrid being declared European Cultural Capital. In 1996 Spaniards voted in a conservative party under the leadership of the uncharismatic José María Aznar.

Accused of playing politics following a terrorist attack in Madrid in March 2004 - 200 people were killed - and held accountable for the unpopular deployment of troops in the overthrow of the Hussein regime in Iraq, Aznar was defeated in the polls in 2004, returning Socialists to power.

Culture

The dominant figures of the golden age were the Toledo-based artists El Greco and Diego Velázquez. Francisco Goya emerged in the 18th century as Spain's most prolific painter and he produced some wonderfully unflattering portraits of royalty. The art world in the early 20th century was influenced by a remarkable group of Spanish artists: Pablo Picasso, Juan Gris, Joan Miró and Salvador Dalí.

The guitar was invented in Andalucía in the 1790s when a sixth string was added to the Arab lute. It gained its modern shape in the 1870s. Spanish musicians have taken the humble guitar to dizzying heights of virtuosity and none more so than Andrés Segovia (1893-1997), who established classical guitar as a genre. Flamenco, music rooted in the *cante hondo* (deep song) of the *gitanos* of Andalucía, is experiencing a revival. Paco de Lucía is the best known flamenco guitarist internationally. His friend El Camarón de la Isla was, until his death in 1992, the leading light of contemporary *canto hondo*. In the 1980s flamenco-rock fusion (aka gypsy rock) was developed by the likes of Pata Negra and Ketama, and in the 1990s Radio Tarifa emerged with a mesmerising mix of flamenco, North African and medieval sounds. *Bakalao*, the Spanish contribution to the world of techno, has its headquarters in Valencia.

One of the world's greatest works of fiction is the 17th-century novel *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, written by Spain's Miguel de Cervantes. Important 20th-century writers include Miguel de Unamuno, Federico García Lorca and Camilo José Cela, winner of the 1989 Nobel Prize for literature. Prominent feminist writers include Adelaida Garcia Morales, Ana María Matute and Montserrat Roig.

Spanish films were once synonymous with the work of surrealist genius Luis Buñuel, who spent much of his time abroad. They are now associated with the mad-cap kinky farces of Pedro Almodóvar, who has enjoyed huge international success.

Spanish food has a deservedly fantastic reputation, and tapas are probably one of the most civilised inventions since cold beer. Paella, gazpacho and chorizo may be familiar to most Western diners, but Spanish cuisine goes well beyond these, with a smorgasbord of rich stews, soups, beans, seafood and meats, all of which have been influential in Latin American cooking. It's a good idea to reset your stomach-clock when travelling in Spain because lunch, eaten between 1.30 and 4pm, is usually the main meal of the day. The evening meal is lighter and is served between 10 and 11pm.

Spain's architecture ranges from prehistoric monuments in Menorca in the Balearic Islands, through to the Roman ruins of Mérida and Tarragona, the decorative Islamic Alhambra in Granada, Mudéjar buildings, Gothic cathedrals, castles and palaces, fantastic modernista monuments and Gaudí's intricate fabulist sculptures.

Environment

Spain and Portugal share the Iberian Peninsula, a vaguely square-shaped realm at the far southwestern edge of Europe. Spain occupies some 80% of this peninsula and spreads over nearly 505,000 sq km, making it the biggest country in Western Europe after France. More than half of the country is made up of vast, elevated tablelands - the *mesetas* - and five major mountain ranges stretch across the country. In fact, with an average altitude of 650m, it's the highest European country after Switzerland. Landscapes range from the deserts of Andalucía to the green wetlands of Galicia; from the sunbaked plains of Castilla-La Mancha to the rugged snowcapped Picos de Europa and Pyrenees.

Native flora is prolific, especially in the alpine regions.

The prevalence of an 'if you see it, shoot it' philosophy has destroyed much of Spain's wildlife. Critters that you may still come across include red squirrels, chamois, deer, ibex, genet and a wide range of reptiles. Spain has around 25 breeding species of birds of prey, and it is a haven for water birds thanks to its large wetland areas. Gibraltar is famous for its Barbary macaques, the only wild monkeys in Europe.

Most tourists come to Spain's coastal strip during July and August, when the sun is at its strongest. Madrid is unbearable at this time of year and is almost deserted by Spaniards. In the north, and on the Balearic Islands, summer temperatures of around 30°C are standard. In winter, the rain never seems to stop in the north, except in the backlands of Galicia and the Pyrenees, where they turn into snow. Generally the north is best during summer, Andalucía is best in spring, the centre is best in autumn, and the south is best in winter.

The Canary Islands archipelago in the Atlantic Ocean, west of Morocco, is an autonomous community belonging to Spain.

Getting There & Away

Spain has many international airports, including Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Santiago de Compostela, Seville, Granada, Málaga, Almería, Alicante, Valencia, Palma de Mallorca, Ibiza and Maó. A departure tax applies when flying out of Spain, but this is included in the price of the ticket at purchase.

Travelling to Spain by train can be more expensive than by bus unless you are under 26 or have a rail pass.

There are regular bus services to Spain from all major centres in Europe, including Lisbon, London and Paris.

Getting Around

The only time you might seriously consider flying within Spain is to get out to the islands. From Barcelona, Valencia and Alicante, there are often good deals on charter flights.

There are plenty of bus routes serviced by dozens of independent companies, and the bus network is more extensive than the train system and cheaper.

Ferries regularly connect the mainland with the Balearic Islands, but flying is a better value, considering the time saved.

Further Reading

The Story of Spain by Mark Williams: For a readable and thorough - but not over-long - account of Spanish history, this text is hard to beat.

The New Spaniards by John Hooper: This is a readable and engrossing account of Spanish society and culture.

Homage to Barcelona by Colm Tóibín: A fascinating study of Spanish culture, Barcelona-style.

Don Quijote de la Mancha by Miguel de Cervantes: This 17th-century novel about an errant knight's adventures along the blurry line between fantasy and reality is immensely popular.

Homage to Catalonia by George Orwell: Orwell's recounting of his first-hand experience fighting the fascists during the Spanish Civil War makes for riveting, revealing reading.

Fun Facts

Miguel de Cervantes penned the 17th-century tale, *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, often considered the world's first novel. Master painters Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali and Joan Miro were all born in Spain. Spanish film director Fernando Trueba won an Oscar for *Belle Époque*. Mosques and palaces of southern Spain feature geometric designs—rather than pictures of people or animals—because Islam forbids iconography.

Don't Miss This!

Rummaging for authentic Spanish souvenirs at open-air markets. A trip to Picasso Museum to see original sketches by pre-teenage Picasso. Sampling gazpacho (spicy cold soup), chorizo (spicy Spanish sausage), and paella (Spain's national dish, a huge platter with saffron-tinted rice and tons of seafood).
