15 DAYS

SPAIN SELF DRIVE

(MADRID, LA MANCHA & EXTREMADURA)

Day 1. Arrive at Madrid – Evening Tapas Walk

Arrive in Madrid and check in. Evening tapas walk through the atmospheric neighbourhoods of La Latina and Malasana — discover the extraordinary culture of eating and drinking in the Spanish capital.

Day 2. Private City Walk – Madrid's Royal Legacy

Private guided city walk: the magnificent Royal Palace, Plaza Mayor, Puerta del Sol, El Prado Museum, Retiro Park and the extraordinary Paseo del Arte — the greatest concentration of art museums in the world.

Day 3. Pick Up Rental Car – Drive to Toledo, City Walk

Collect your hire car and drive south to Toledo — the extraordinary UNESCO World Heritage "City of Three Cultures." Guided city walk: Toledo Cathedral, Alcazar fortress, Mirador del Valle, the Jewish Quarter and Synagogue, the old Moorish mosque.

Day 4. Drive to Almagro via Las Tablas de Daimiel

Drive south through La Mancha — the landscape of windmills and vineyards immortalised by Cervantes in Don Quixote — via Las Tablas de Daimiel National Park, one of Spain's most important wetland ecosystems. Arrive at Almagro, the charming historic town with its extraordinary Renaissance main square and ancient theatre.

Day 5. Explore La Mancha – Drive to Valdepenas

Explore the villages and vineyards of La Mancha, one of the world's largest wine regions. Drive to Valdepenas — the capital of La Mancha wine country, surrounded by vast vineyards producing the region's characteristic Tempranillo wines.

Day 6. Day Free on Your Own or Local Excursions

Day free on your own in Valdepenas or local excursions: the Castillo de Calatrava la Nueva — the spectacular clifftop fortress of the Knights of Calatrava; the traditional wine cellars (bodegas) of Valdepenas; and the natural landscapes of the Sierra Morena.

Day 7. Drive to Merida

Drive southwest through Extremadura to Merida — the extraordinary Roman city of Augusta Emerita, the capital of Roman Lusitania and home to the finest collection of Roman monuments in the Iberian Peninsula (UNESCO World Heritage).

Day 8. Guided Walking Tour of Merida

Full day guided walking tour of Merida: the spectacular Roman Theatre (2nd century BC), the Roman Amphitheatre, the Temple of Diana, the Arch of Trajan, the extraordinary Roman bridge across the Guadiana River (the longest surviving Roman bridge in the world) and the National Museum of Roman Art.

Day 9. Drive to Caceres

Drive north through Extremadura to Caceres — a perfectly preserved medieval and Renaissance walled city (UNESCO World Heritage) whose extraordinary skyline of palaces and towers has changed little since the 16th century.

Day 10. Walking Tour of Caceres Old Town

Full day guided walking tour of Caceres Old Town: the Plaza Mayor, the Arco de la Estrella gateway, the extraordinary collection of Extremaduran Gothic and Renaissance palaces, the Moorish Torre del Bujaco watchtower and the Jewish Quarter. Explore the extraordinary cobbled streets unchanged since the Conquistadors set out to conquer the Americas.

Day 11. Drive to Trujillo – Guided Walking Tour

Drive to Trujillo — the extraordinary birthplace of Francisco Pizarro, conqueror of the Inca Empire, and many of the most celebrated Conquistadors. Guided walking tour: the magnificent Plaza Mayor with its equestrian statue of Pizarro, the medieval castle, the Palacio de los Conquistadores and the extraordinary collection of Extremaduran Renaissance mansions.

Day 12. Day Trip to Monfrague National Park

Day trip to Monfrague National Park — one of Spain's most extraordinary wildlife destinations, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve protecting the largest surviving area of Mediterranean forest in the world. Home to the largest breeding colony of Black Vultures in the world, Spanish Imperial Eagles, Black Storks and Griffon Vultures.

Day 13. Drive to Madrid – Evening Food Tasting Tour

Drive back to Madrid. Check in and evening guided food tasting tour: the Mercado de San Miguel, the bars of La Latina and Malasana, and the extraordinary tapas culture of the Spanish capital.

Day 14. Madrid City Walk, Jamon Carving & Flamenco Show

Final full day in Madrid: morning city walk through the Royal neighborhoods, afternoon jamon iberico carving demonstration at a traditional mesón, evening Flamenco show at one of Madrid's great tablaos.

Day 15. Departure from Madrid

Transfer to Madrid International Airport for your return flight.

Must see ATTRACTIONS

La Latina and Malasana, Madrid

Las Tablas de Daimiel National Park

Almagro Old Town

The Castillo de Calatrava la Nueva, Almagro

Augusta Emerita - Merida

The National Museum of Roman Art, Merida

Caceres Old Town

The Palacio de los Conquistadores, Trujillo

Monfrague National Park

ACCOMMODATION *Options*

Madrid

★★★★★

Four Seasons Hotel Madrid
Mandarin Oriental Ritz Madrid
JW Marriott Hotel Madrid

★★★★

Hyatt Centric Gran Via Madrid
Hotel Vincci Soho
Hotel Catalonia Puerta del Sol

★★★

Hotel Petit Palace Puerta del Sol
Leonardo Hotel Madrid City Center
Hotel Regente

Must try FOOD

Vegetarian Paella

Traditional Spanish vegetarian paella (paella de verduras) combines short-grain Bomba rice, rich saffron, and sweet smoked paprika with seasonal garden vegetables like artichokes, green beans, and bell peppers. Cooked without stirring after the broth goes in, it develops a prized crispy bottom crust called socarrat.

Pisto Manchego

Originating in the La Mancha region, this traditional speciality is made of tomatoes, onions, eggplant or courgettes, green and red peppers and olive oil; it is usually served warm as a starter or to accompany another dish, often with white rice, bread and a fried egg on top or with pieces of cured ham.

Mazapán

A confection consisting primarily of sugar and ground almonds, sometimes augmented with almond oil or extract - variants can be made from other nuts, or apricot or peach kernels, instead of almonds; it is often made into sweets - chocolate-covered marzipan and small marzipan imitations of fruits and vegetables.

RESTAURANT Options

Halal Certified

Madrid

1. Salwa Cocina Libanesa – One of Madrid's highest-rated halal restaurants, authentic Lebanese cuisine, family-friendly
2. Al Mounia – Classic Moroccan restaurant established 1960, traditional Moorish décor, elegant setting
3. Restaurante Istanbul – Turkish and Middle Eastern cuisine, popular among halal-conscious visitors
4. La Barra de Acosta – Seafood-focused, halal-certified, excellent tapas selection near Palacio Real
5. Taj Mahal Madrid – Indian subcontinent cuisine, halal-certified, generous portions, popular with families