

Northern Spain

19-30 Oct 2012

Discover the delights of this forgotten part of Spain, from the misty green hills of Galicia and Asturias to the sandy beaches of the Basque Country, from Santiago's pilgrim route to Pamplona's street of the bulls, from Oviedo's ancient churches to Bilbao's mind-bending Guggenheim Museum to Barcelona's eccentric Sagrada Familia.

Day 1 - DEPART USA –

Board your overnight flight from Salt Lake to Madrid.

Day 2 - MADRID AT

LEISURE – Welcome to Madrid! On arrival at Madrid Airport, you will be transferred to your hotel. Relax and settle in. This evening you are invited to a Welcome Reception with your Tour Director, which includes a welcome drink and a light informal meal.

Hotel: Melia Galgos.

Meals: Welcome Reception



Day 3 - MADRID SIGHTSEEING – Join a local guide for a sightseeing tour along the noble avenues. Drive by the statue of Cervantes' fictional hero, Don Quixote, in the Plaza de España. Continue past Cibeles Fountain and the Parliament and cross the Puerta del Sol. Visit the Prado Museum, a rose coloured palace housing works by Velázquez, Goya, Titian, Botticelli, Rubens, and many others. Take time out to relax at a café or shop in the boutiques. In the evening, consider joining a dinner of regional Spanish food, complete with wine and music. **Meals: Buffet Breakfast**

Day 4 - MADRID – ZAMORA – SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA –

Northwards today through the Guadarrama Mountains to the infinite horizons of Old Castile. See the impressive Castillo de la Motta, conquered by Queen Isabella, before arriving in the fortified town of Zamora, where among the famous 12C Romanesque churches there are good cafés and tapas bars to choose from. Continue north to Santiago de Compostela, founded in 813 when, according to legend, the tomb containing the remains of the Apostle St James was discovered. For dinner this evening, enjoy the freedom of your Dine-Around program, and choose from a selection of restaurants recommended by your Tour Director. **Hotel: NH Obradoiro.**
Meals: Buffet Breakfast / Dine Around



Day 5 - SANTIAGO SIGHTSEEING

- In the Middle Ages, Santiago de Compostela was the third most important city for religious pilgrimage after Jerusalem and Rome, attracting pilgrims from all parts of Europe, and it remains one of Spain's most remarkable cities. Your local guide will acquaint you with its buildings and heritage. The majestic Praça do

Obradoiro is one of the world's finest squares. Gaze upon the impressive façade of the Cathedral, built upon the site of the original basilica erected over the Apostle's tomb. This afternoon there is free time to explore the narrow streets and old squares at your leisure. **Meals: Buffet Breakfast**

Day 6 - SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA – OVIEDO – Get your cameras ready for a scenic drive along the Costa Verde. This Green Coast of Asturias, one of Spain's most beautiful, is named after the colour of the sea, and the pine and eucalyptus trees that line the shore. Your route reveals glorious coastal vistas before turning inland to the modern town of Oviedo. A local guide shows you the 9th century churches built when the city was capital of Christian Spain. Visit the church of San Julian covered with 1,000-year-old wall paintings and the stately square of Plaza Alfonso II, next to the cathedral. Round off the day with an introduction to Northern Spain's drink of choice in the 'Boulevard of Cider'. **Hotel: Silken Monumental Naranco/Silken Gijon. Meals: Buffet Breakfast / Dinner**

Day 7 - OVIEDO – SANTANDER – See the unique Roman bridge in Cangas de Onis as you head into the foothills of the Picos de Europa, Spain's second largest National Park, which encompasses 647 square kms of spectacular mountain and gorge scenery. Here visit the holy cave of Covadonga, a shrine to Pelayo, who achieved the first Christian victory over the Moors in 722. Continue to Santillana del Mar, which many writers have called 'the most beautiful village in Spain.' Stroll through the rustic cobblestone streets



with stone houses decorated with carved heraldic symbols and reach the delightful church square. After time to explore, drive along the cornice road, with views of the Costa de Cantabria to reach the sophisticated beach resort of Santander. **Hotel: Santemar. Meals: Buffet Breakfast / Dinner**

Day 8 - SANTANDER – BILBAO – SAN SEBASTIÁN

– Drive to nearby Bilbao to admire the striking modern architecture of the Guggenheim museum, one of the world's most spectacular buildings. Now a pleasant drive along part of the Costa Vasca, dotted with small coastal fishing villages. Pause in Zumaia at the mouth of the Urola, where you can see 'el ratón', the mouse-shaped rock. Continue on to San Sebastián, the pearl of the Cantabrian coast. The city has a



harbour filled with fishing boats and pleasure craft and you can enjoy a number of sporting activities on its large sandy beach. **Hotel: Barcelo Costa Vasca. Meals: Buffet Breakfast / Dinner**

Day 9 - SAN SEBASTIÁN SIGHTSEEING – Admire the beauty of San Sebastián on a guided walking tour of the Old Quarter. See the numbered balconies of the Plaza de la Constitucion, a reminder of the days when bullfights were held in the square. The afternoon is at leisure to stroll along San Sebastián's boardwalk or ascend Monte Igueldo for beautiful views of the town and bay. Tonight maybe discover the city's rich gastronomic tradition?



Meals: Buffet Breakfast

Day 10 - SAN SEBASTIÁN – PAMPLONA – ZARAGOZA – BARCELONA

– First stop this morning is in Pamplona, the city of the running of the bulls. Perhaps take a stroll to the famous Estafeta Street before moving on through the notable Rioja wine-producing region. Lunchtime finds you in the Plaza del Pilar, in the shadow of Zaragoza's baroque Cathedrals. Continue to Catalonia's vibrant capital, Barcelona. **Hotel: Pullman Skipper. Meals: Buffet Breakfast**

Day 11 - BARCELONA SIGHTSEEING

– Join your local guide in the Plaça Nova in the heart of the Gothic quarter. See the cathedral and walk through the Roman gate to tour the narrow lanes and old squares. Now drive by the lively Rambla and along the Passeig de Gràcia, adorned with elegant wrought-iron street lamps and the most flamboyant Modernist buildings. Continue through the Eixample district to visit Gaudi's extraordinary, unfinished Sagrada Familia church. Both inside and out, it defies belief! The afternoon is at leisure. This evening, raise your glasses at a finale Celebration Dinner with wine at a local restaurant. **Meals: Buffet Breakfast / Celebration Dinner**



Day 12 - RETURN TO USA – Your tour ends after breakfast. Transfer to the Barcelona Airport for your homebound flight. **Meals: Buffet Breakfast**

INCLUDED FIRST CLASS SERVICES

- Escorted by a professional Tour Director
- Headsets for all guided visits and walking tours
- Enjoy the unique comfort of Insight's Luxury air-conditioned 40 seat coach with extended leg room and on-board restroom
- Insight Hotels include all service charges, taxes and portorage
- Insight Traveller Welcome pack
- Airport arrival and departure transfers

INCLUDED HIGHLIGHTS

- Madrid: Take a guided tour through the famous Prado Museum See the statue of Don Quixote in the Plaza de España, Cibeles Fountain and Puerta del Sol
- Zamora: See the Cathedral and remains of the city walls
- Santiago de Compostela: A guided tour of the old town including the impressive Cathedral
- Costa Verde: Experience the coastal vistas of Asturias
- Oviedo: With a local guide, see 1,000 year old wall paintings in the 9 C church of San Julian; Plaza Alfonso II, cathedral and sample Northern Spain's 'Sidra'
- Covadonga: Visit the shrine to Pelayo
- Santillana del Mar: Visit 'the most beautiful village in Spain'
- Bilbao: See the spectacular modern Guggenheim Museum
- Zumaia: See the rock known as 'el ratón' (the mouse)
- San Sebastian: Enjoy a guided walking tour of the Old Quarter including Plaza de la Constitucion

- Pamplona: Visit the city of the running of the bulls
- Barcelona: Enjoy a walking tour of the Gothic quarter. Admire the modernist buildings of the Passeig de Gràcia. Witness Gaudi's Sagrada Familia church from both the inside and out
- Scenic Drives: Costa Verda, Picos de Europa, Costa Vasca, Costa de Cantabria, Rioja wine-region

INCLUDED QUALITY DINING

- A Welcome Reception with light informal meal (WR)
- Choose from a selection of restaurants on your Santiago Dine-Around evening (DA)
- A celebration dinner with wine at a Barcelona restaurant (CD)
- 10 Buffet Breakfasts (BB), 3 three-course table d'hôte Dinners, or Buffets, plus tea or coffee (D)

Tour Pace: Two restful nights in Madrid is followed by a long day to Santiago de Compostela. After that, the tour eases up with a mixture of two-night stays and shorter touring days, allowing free time in the coastal towns and for sightseeing visits.

Hotels: Well-located and mostly modern hotels with excellent facilities are a feature of this tour. Finish at the uber-chic Pullman Skipper next to the beach at Barcelona, within walking distance to Las Ramblas and myriad restaurants.

Land cost: \$2850 per person double occupancy

Single supplement: \$870

Air: \$1300 per person (subject to change without notice until tickets purchased)

Deposit: \$300 per person **Due:** 22 May 2012

Final payment due: 10 August 2012

Travel protection available: \$249.00 per person

Must be purchased with the deposit to cover pre-existing conditions

RESERVATION FORM
Northern Spain

October 19-30, 2012

Your Name(s): _____

(Name as it appears on your valid passport. Penalty fees will be charged for name corrections)

Birth dates _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone #: _____

Email Address: _____

Number of persons in room Single: _____ Double: _____ Triple: _____

Seating Preference Aisle: _____ Window: _____ Next: _____

Frequent Flyer #s if any: _____

A deposit of \$300.00 per person is enclosed

-Trip insurance is strongly recommended (\$249.00 per person)-
(insurance must be paid with deposit)

A valid passport is required for this tour

Please remit to:

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535 East 4500 South, Suite D200
Salt Lake City, UT 84107
Phone: (801) 266-2775 / (800) 255-3230
email: monica@thomatravel.com

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