

Spain Guide



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Spain's Profile



Area: 315,489 square miles Population: 40,361,000 Population density: 128/sq. mile Capital: Madrid (5,603,285 inhabitants)		
Other important cities:		
Barcelona (4,667,136)	Alicante (676.237)	Vigo (420.672)
Valencia (1,465,423)	Zaragoza (656.922)	Santa Cruz de Tenerife (409.621)
Seville (1,294,081)	Las Palmas (609.628)	Cadiz (406.095)
Malaga (1,019,292)	Murcia (557.583)	San Sebastian (395.758)
Bilbao (946.829)	Palma de Mallorca (462.010)	Valladolid (377.562)
Oviedo 850.097	Granada 450.439	Tarragona (348.921)



Geography:

Mainland Spain is dominated by high plateaus and mountain ranges such as the Pyrenees or the Sierra Nevada. Running from these heights are several major rivers such as the Tajo, the Ebro, the Duero, the Guadiana and the Guadalquivir. Alluvial plains are found along the coast, the largest of which is that of the Guadalquivir in Andalusia, in the east there are alluvial plains with medium rivers like Segura, Júcar and Turia. Spain is bound to the east by Mediterranean Sea (containing the Balearic Islands), to the north by the Bay of Biscay and to its west by the Atlantic Ocean, where the Canary Islands off the African coast are found.

Of Spain's boundaries, 88 percent is water and 12 percent is land. The Bay of Biscay is to the north, the Mediterranean Sea and the Balearic Sea to the south-southeast, Portugal and the North Atlantic Ocean to the west, and France and Andorra to the northeast along the Pyrenees Mountains. The Mediterranean coast is 1,030 miles long, and the Atlantic coast is 440 miles long. The Pyrenees mountain range, extends 270 miles from the Mediterranean to the Bay of Biscay. In the extreme south of Spain is the Straits of Gibraltar, which separate Spain and the rest of Europe from Morocco in north Africa; at its narrowest extent, Spain and Morocco are separated by only 8 miles wide.

Outside the Spanish mainland are several other areas controlled by Spain: the Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean, the Canary Islands to the southwest, 67 miles off northwest Africa, and five places of sovereignty (plazas de soberanía) on and off the coast of Morocco: Ceuta, Melilla, Islas Chafarinas, Peñón de Alhucemas, and Peñón de Vélez de la Gomera

Weather & Climate

Peninsular Spain experiences three climatic types: continental, maritime, and Mediterranean. The locally generated continental climate covers the majority of peninsular Spain, influencing the Meseta Central, the adjoining mountains to the east and the south, and the Ebro Basin. A continental climate is characterized by wide diurnal and seasonal variations in temperature and by low, irregular rainfall with high rates of evaporation that leave the land arid. The northern Meseta, the Sistema Central, and the Ebro Basin have two rainy seasons, one in spring (April-June) and the other in autumn (October-November), with late spring being the wettest time of the year. In the southern Meseta, also, the wet seasons are spring and autumn, but the spring one is earlier (March), and autumn is the wetter season. Continental winters are cold, with strong winds and high humidity, despite the low precipitation.

Documentation

First of all, U.S. citizens only need a valid passport to travel to Spain as long as their stay does not exceed 3 months. **You are required to carry identification with you at all times when traveling in Spain.**

If you lose your passport, contact:

MADRID

United States Embassy

Calle Serrano, 75
28006 Madrid
Tel. (34) 915 872 240
Fax (34) 915 872 243

Canadian Embassy

Nunez de Balboa, 35
28001 Madrid
Tel (34) 914 233 250
Fax (34) 914 233 251

For other country residents, ask your government for information before departure. It is strongly recommended that you make two photocopies of your passport and other important documentation, including your list of phone numbers that Pure Adventures provides you in your pre-departure package, before leaving home. Leave one copy at home with family or friends, and keep another with you but separate from the actual documents.

Visas

Required by all except nationals who do not require a visa to visit a country, which is a signatory to the Schengen Agreement: includes: USA, Canada, all EU countries, among many others, check with your government.

Passport Regulations:

A visa is not required for a U.S. or Canadian citizen holding a valid passport unless he expects to stay in Spain more than 90 days and/or to study or seek employment. If, after entering Spain, the tourist decides he would like to stay more than 90 days, he can apply, once only, at any police station (questura) for an extension of an additional 90 days. He will be asked to prove that he is a bona fide tourist with adequate means of support and that he does not request the extension for study or employment. As a rule, permission is granted immediately. Non-American citizens should check current visa requirements with the nearest Spain Consulate before departure.



Registrations for Tourists

The formality of registering with the police within 3 days of a tourist's arrival in Spain is attended to by the hotels one stays with. If staying with friends or in a private home, the visitor has to register in person at the nearest police station within a 3-day period. In Madrid there is a special police information office to assist tourists. (Interpreters are available)



Custom Regulations

Luggage is examined on entering and leaving Spain. Free entry is allowed for personal effects: clothing (new and used), books, camping and household equipment, fishing tackle, 1 pair of skis, 2 tennis racquets, laptop, music device (iPod,MP3, etc.), tape recorder or Dictaphone, baby carriage, 2 cameras with 10 rolls of film for each camera if not digital, 1 movie camera with 10 rolls of film, binoculars, personal jewelry, portable radio set (subject to a small license fee), 200 cigarettes and 50 cigars or pipe tobacco not exceeding 250 grams.

All items mentioned above may be imported duty-free only on condition that they are for personal use and are not to be sold, given away or traded. A maximum of two bottles of wine and one bottle of hard liquor per person may be brought in duty-free. The bottles must not be opened. A maximum of 4.4 lbs. of coffee, 6.6 lbs. of sugar and 2.2 lbs. of cocoa are allowed duty-free.

Overseas tourists arriving in Spain after visiting other countries are allowed to carry with them souvenirs purchased and their receipts.

US Regulations on Purchases Abroad

Each U.S. tourist may bring back to the U.S. duty-free \$400 worth of goods purchased abroad. The goods must accompany the traveler. A flat rate of 10% is assessed on the next \$1,000 worth of goods purchased. Parcels containing gifts may be sent from abroad to the U.S. duty-free, providing the total value of such parcels received by one person, one day does not exceed \$50. Each package should be marked "Unsolicited Gift". The amount paid and the contents of the package should be declared.

No vaccinations are required to enter Spain or to reenter the U.S. and Canada



Medical

Healthcare & Medical Assistance

Tourists requiring urgent medical care should go to the nearest hospital emergency room (airports and many train stations also have medical teams and first aid facilities). Those with serious illnesses or allergies should always carry a special note from their physicians certifying in detail the treatments in progress or that may be necessary.

Pharmacies (*Farmacia*) keep normal business hours (9-1:30 and 5-8), but every mid-size town (or city neighborhood) has a duty pharmacy that stays open 24 hours. The location of the duty pharmacy is usually posted on the front door of all pharmacies. Before departure, it is advisable to procure a document certifying coverage by the national health-care service.

Medical Insurance

Spain has no medical program covering U.S. and Canada citizens. Therefore, U.S. and Canadian tourists are advised to take out an insurance policy before traveling. First Aid Service with a doctor on hand is found at airports, ports, and railway stations and in all hospitals. Medicines can be obtained only from the pharmacy, whether they are on prescription or over the counter.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Dial:

061 - Medical Emergency

12 - General Emergency

091 - National Police

092 - Local Police

080 - the Fire Department
(Bomberos)

062 - the Civil Guard (Guardia Civil)



REMEMBER! Though not mandatory, insurance is strongly suggested when traveling. Check with your own insurance company for best deal or Pure Adventures recommends Travel Guard. They can insure all different aspects of your trip! Credit cards can be useful insurance alternatives for rental cars. Also, double-check each insurance policy for lost or stolen luggage, airplane cancellation by airline, car rental (car rental companies offer their own insurance for an extra cost, though it is rarely the best).

Tax refund for purchases made in Spain by non-resident visitors

In Spain, value added tax (IVA -- impuesto sobre el valor añadido) is calculated at a rate between 7% and 16%. With regard to accommodation and restaurants, the flat rate is 7%, whereas retail goods, alcohol and electrical appliances are taxed at 16%. This is usually included on a quoted price, but you should confirm this prior to payment to avoid any confusion. Visitors from countries outside the European Union can take advantage of the tax-free shopping arrangement, which gives them exemption from paying VAT on purchases of more than €90.15 in shops displaying the "Tax Free" sticker. The Barcelona tourist authority sponsors the "Barcelona Shopping City" campaign that includes a guide to shops offering tax-free prices. More than 700 establishments in the city's main shopping areas back the tax-free initiative.

Visitors can ask for a Tax Free Check when they make a purchase of €90.15 or more in the same shop, and when they leave the European Union, they should have the Check endorsed at the border within three months of the date of purchase. On returning home, the Check should be presented at the Global Refund office (the concession which operates the Tax Free plan), where the IVA will be reimbursed either in cash, via credit card, or by mail in the form of an international money order. Ask for details when you make your purchase.

Money Belt

Crowded tourist sites all over the world are at pickpocket and gypsy risk and Spain is no exception. One should always be on alert for these petty thieves, but a good offence is the best defense. Keep your money hidden preferably in an inside pocket or money belt



The Euro

The monetary currency is the Euro which is divided as follows: bills of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500; coins of 1, 2, 5, 10 Euros, 20 and 50 cents. **Once in Spain, how do I convert my dollars in Euros?** Tourists reaching Spain without foreign currency can obtain Euros through any bank, ATM machines, or exchange office (Ufficio di Cambio) at airports, seaports and railway stations in the main cities. It is advisable to keep receipts of currency exchanged in case it is necessary to reconvert Euros back into dollars before leaving the country.

Banking Hours

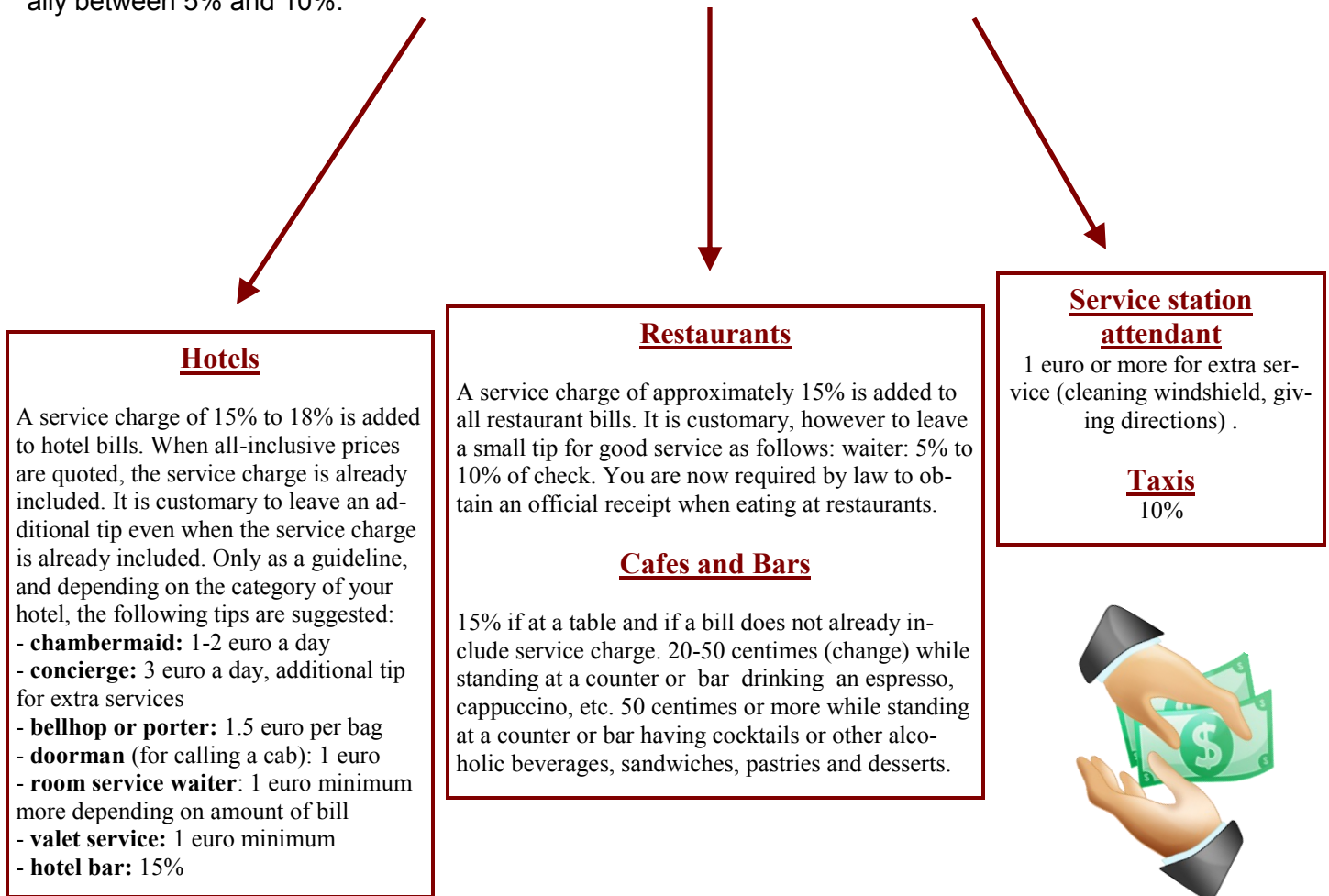
Foreign currency can be exchanged at all banks, which are open Monday through Saturday from 8:30am to 2:00pm (except in summer, from June to September, when they are closed on Saturdays) as well as at the exchange bureaus in the main cities. Many hotels and travel agencies will also change money. In addition most hotels, restaurants, and shops accept travelers checks and international credit cards.

Credit and Debit Cards

Can I use my Credit Card/Debit Card in Spain? Leading credit cards are recognized, too, and are useful for car rental, hotels and restaurants, as well as for cash advances at banks. American Express and Visa, which has an arrangement with the Banco de Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria, are the most useful; MasterCard is less widely accepted. Most Visa, MasterCard, and US cards in the Cirrus or Plus systems, can be used for withdrawing cash from ATMs in Spain: check with your bank to find out about these reciprocal arrangements - the system is highly sophisticated and can usually give instructions in a variety of languages. To cancel lost or stolen credit cards, call the following numbers: **American Express** tel. 915 720 303, **Diners Club** tel. 915 474000, **MasterCard** tel. 900 971 231, and **Visa** tel. 900 974 445

Tipping

All catering establishments in Spain include service in their prices. Nevertheless, the custom of leaving a tip, while not obligatory it is the norm in bars, restaurants, hotels and taxis, the amount of which is generally between 5% and 10%.



Safety Tips

- Use a secure method of transporting your money and documents. A money belt works great, you could also keep the paper money in “Ziploc bags” inside your money belt to avoid any damage by rain for example.
- If the belt does not appeal to you, try to use bags that can’t be pulled easily from your shoulder – try a backpack for example. Nowadays, backpacks come in so many shapes, sizes and colors you will surely find one to your liking.
- Secure in the safe box of your hotel or in your suitcase locked: your passport, airplane tickets, train tickets, part of your money / traveler checks, etc...
- Only take with you what you need for the day: keep only a photocopy of your passport on you, 1 credit card, some traveler checks and some cash.
- Try to get used to the currency in a safe place like your hotel room and don’t show a lot of cash in the street.

Phone & Post

How to Phone:

To phone abroad from Spain, first dial "00," then the country and city codes, and finally the phone number.

To call Spain from outside the country dial "0034" and the phone number.

If you are using an American cell phone to call within Spain, you will need to dial "0034" before the number

For directory assistance dial: **1003**

For international directory assistance dial: **1025**



Public Telephones

A sophisticated telephone system provides coverage nation-wide. Apart from booths (locutorios), there are standard street-corner public telephones, from which calls can be made to any part of the world, using coins or phone credit cards, which can be purchased at all branch post-offices (estafeta de correos) and tobacco-nists (estancos).

Cell Phones

Cellular coverage in Spain is excellent. In Spain, as in most countries in the world, the cell phone standard used is the GSM standard. If your current cell phone does not have this capability, you will need to either rent or purchase a cell phone that will work on the overseas networks. Your current cellular provider can give you what is known as a SIM card, which is the brain of the phone and you can easily slip into the GSM phone. This way, you will be able to retain your current phone number in the US or Canada. If your phone isn't equipped to work in Europe, you might want to rent a phone. We recommend Phone Rental or Cell Hire, who makes it convenient since they deliver the phone to your home before your departure: www.cellhire.com

Internet Cafes

No matter how responsible you try to be with your phone card, you can run up quite a bill when you call your parents/ your kids/ your significant other. E-mail may be an alternative and less expensive mean of communication. Whatever e-mail service you use in your daily life, I would set up web-access mail for your trip (like the mail offered by Yahoo! Hotmail, etc.). It is the easiest to use abroad since the only software and configuration you need are built right into the browser. Set this account up before you leave home, so you don't waste valuable time abroad.



Postal Service

The Spanish post office has branches everywhere including airports, railway stations, and harbors. At any branch post-office, you can mail letters, post-cards, and packages. Also, most branch offices will provide telegram, telex, and fax services. In all towns and cities there are corner pillar-boxes (yellow or red) where letters can be posted for collection. In Spain, the sale of postage stamps and bills of exchange, along with cigarettes, cigars, are sold through shops known as estancos, which are found throughout the country.



Holidays & Miscellaneous

Offices and Shops are closed Sundays in Spain. Sometimes in major tourist areas the shops stay open, especially during high season.

Here is the list of National Statutory Holidays:

JANUARY 1 - New Year's Day
JANUARY 6 - Epiphany
APRIL 18 - Good Friday
APRIL 20 - Easter Sunday
MAY 1 - Labor Day
AUGUST 15 - Assumption of the Virgin
OCTOBER 12 - Hispanic Day
NOVEMBER 1 - All Saints Day
DECEMBER 6 - Constitution Day
DECEMBER 8 - Day of Immaculate Conception
DECEMBER 25 - Christmas Day
DECEMBER 26 - Santo Stefano (Boxing Day)

Offices and Shops are also closed in the following cities on the local feast days honoring their patron Saints:

FEBRUARY 28 - Day of Andalucia (ANDALUSIA)
APRIL 23 - Day of Aragon (ARAGON)
APRIL 23 - St George's Day (CATALONIA)
MAY 2 - Day of Madrid (MADRID)
JUNE 8 - Whit Monday (BARCELONA)
JUNE 9 - Day of La Rioja (LA RIOJA)
JUNE 24 - Saint John the Baptist Day (CATALONIA)
SEPTEMBER 8 - Virgin of the Victory (MELILLA)
SEPTEMBER 11 - Day of Catalonia (CATALONIA)
DECEMBER 3 - Day of Navarre (NAVARRRE)



Shopping

Although normally shops are open from 9am to 1pm and 3:30-4pm to 7:30-8pm, in large cities and tourist areas shops have a tendency to stay open from 9.30am to 7.30pm with possible variations from town to town. Department stores are found in many Spanish cities and towns and are open from 9.30am to 7.30pm. Some excellent purchase options are: Clothes for men and women (dresses, shoes, gloves, silk ties, shirts); lacework, jewelry, leather goods (handbags, cases, boxes, luggage), ceramics, gold and silver items, alabaster, woodwork, straw, embroidery, glass and crystal ware.

Electrical Appliances

The electrical current in Spain is AC - the cycle is 50Hz 220 V. A tourist carrying electrical appliances to Spain should have a transformer, either obtained before leaving your country or bought at an electrical appliance shop in Spain. Plugs have round prongs, not flat, therefore an adapter plug is needed.

Laundry and Dry Cleaners

Most hotels have laundry and dry cleaning facilities. If the hotel does not provide these services, the desk clerk can direct you to the nearest shop (tintoria) or you can look in the Classified Telephone directory under Tintorie (cleaning and pressing) or Lavanderie (laundry).

Travel



International flights require you to be at the airport 2 to 3 hours in advance of your flight. Also, for return flight, the airlines prefer that you confirm 72 hours in advance of your flight. This is not critical, but good information to ensure your preparations to meet your flight time.

Pure Adventures Helpful Tips

#1. It is strongly recommended that you make 2 photocopies of your passport and other important documentation, including the list of phone numbers that Pure Adventures provides to you in your pre-departure package, before leaving home. Leave 1 copy at home with family or friends, and keep another with you, but separate from the actual documents.

#2. It is suggested, though not required, that passengers hold return or onward tickets and proof of financial means.

Earplugs can be very useful, both on the plane and in a hotel at night. They are light and easy to carry. Every traveler should have some.

When traveling to Spain from North America you will arrive the day after you left, generally in the morning. You will be somewhere between 6-9 hours ahead of North America. There are several methods to overcome the change and many suggestions. None may work for you, but trying to sleep on the plane will help you. Also, plenty of rest prior to departure will help. Upon arrival in Spain it will become difficult, as the first day goes on, to continue without sleep. If you cannot go on, take a short nap, with emphasis on short! Then go to bed early. Upon return, you will no doubt remain jet-lagged for a few days. You will arrive home (if you travel to North America) in the evening on the same day you left Spain.

Time In terms of standard time zones, Spain is six hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time in the USA and Canada. Daylight saving time in Spain goes into effect each year usually from the end of March to the middle of October.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO USE ONLY OFFICIAL TAXIS WHICH ARE EASILY IDENTIFIABLE. IGNORE OFFERS FROM DRIVERS OF PRIVATE CARS WHO OFTEN LOITER AROUND AIRPORTS AND RAILWAY STATIONS.

Extra charges: Night service supplement between 10pm and 6am . Sunday and holiday supplement Luggage (per item). For taxi trips outside the city boundaries, fares will be based on distance.

Highways and Roads: Maps, Routes and Tolls

There is an extensive and well-maintained road network. Tolls are charged on the autostrade (highways). As in the rest of continental Europe, vehicles travel on the right and overtake on the left. The wearing of seatbelts is compulsory for front and back seat passengers as well as for the driver. The use of portable telephones is prohibited if they require intervention by hand to function. The letter "A" indicates highways and Roads followed by a number written in white on a green back-ground. They are almost all subject to tolls, except for some brief stretches, especially approaching urban areas. Tolls are paid in cash at highway exit points. It is also possible to pay by Viacard Telepass cards (systems that make automatic payment possible without stopping at the toll booths) or Viacard a highway toll payment card which can be bought, at a value of either 25 / 50 / 75 Euro, on the highway, in many banks or in ACI offices. ACI provides complete car service throughout the country. Calls for assistance can be made 24 hours a day by calling 803.116 or by using the emergency booths located every 2 km along the roadway, They have buttons with a wrench symbol, to be used in the event of a breakdown, and with a red cross symbol for a first-aid emergency. Service areas are very frequent along all of the highways. The rest stops are always open, and, in addition to refueling, they also offer other services such as restaurants, bars, information offices, and banking windows.

Driving License Regulations

An International Drivers License is officially required to drive in Spain and can be obtained at AAA. The minimum driving age is 18 years. Drivers must hold a Green Card, the insurance policy covering the cost of assistance in case of an accident. EC format pink/green license is accepted; old-style green or non-European license must be accompanied with an International Driving Permit.

Gasoline

Gas stations are open from 8am to 8pm with some stations in major cities and on the highway open 24 hours. Fuel prices are government regulated, so don't waste time shopping around. (Though this may soon change.) Some fuel stations accept credit cards. Regular leaded gasoline has an octane rating of 92; the octane rating of super is 97. Unleaded gasoline is called *gasolina sin plomo*. Unleaded super gasoline has an octane rating of 95. Diesel is called *gasoil*. LPG is called *gases licuados del petróleo*.

Traveling by Car

Two red lights mean *No entry*. Generally, traffic on the right has priority. Normally where a minor road intersects a major road there's a sign reading "Stop" or "Ceda el Paso" (give way); if such a sign is not in place, the traffic on the major road still has priority. In built-up areas horns may be used only in cases of immediate and extreme danger. Elsewhere don't use the horn unnecessarily, but don't hesitate to use it in warning. When in daylight and outside a built-up area, you must use the horn to indicate your intention to pass; at night, flash the headlights instead. It's illegal not to use your vehicle's directional to indicate your intention to pass. And if a vehicle comes up behind you signaling that it wants to pass and if you see that the road ahead is clear, you must signal with your vehicle's right blinker to acknowledge the situation.

Traveling by Train

You may have purchased rail tickets for use while in Europe. First check your "train package". Depending on the best deal according to your travel plans, you may have:

- **Train tickets** mentioning departure point and destination, traveling date and cost. Usually on "regional train", which means not THALYS trains.
- **Train tickets** mentioning the departure and destination valid for about 2 months or more, plus an extra ticket mentioning the precise date when you will have to use it / the departure time of the train / the number of the train / the 1st or 2nd class info / the number of the car and the number of your seat(s): in fact this is your "Seat Reservation".
- **Spain or Europe Rail Pass**, plus a Seat Reservation., if you are making several trips by train in Spain or Europe. There are different types of passes available. Double-check the validity of your pass.

In large train stations, you must locate your train platform. If you have a Seat Reservation, don't forget to match the train numbers as there may be multiple trains bound for the same city, so check that you have your correct train number.

Barcelona

History:

Barcelona was founded on the Mediterranean coast between two rivers more than two thousand years ago. It is located in the North East of the Iberian Peninsula, just a short distance from France. Romans, Arabs and Christians all influenced Barcelona throughout the centuries. Traces of this diverse history with contrasting cultures can be found all over the city. From the Gothic Quarter built on Roman ruins to its Art Nouveau Eixample district dominated by Gaudí's exuberant architecture: Barcelona surely is a city of contrasts.

The emotional relationship of the Catalan people towards their golden age is very intense as for a long time they were deprived of their own state. During the 13th and 14th century the Catalan empire was a great power in the Mediterranean area and Barcelonans dominated sea trade. The Gothic Area is a relic of the wealth of this expansive era. With all its magnificent medieval buildings it is unique in Europe.

In the middle of the 19th century Barcelona's population slowly burst the medieval walls that surrounded the city. The extension of Barcelona (in Catalan Eixample, in Spanish ensanche) was planned according to the design of the engineer Idelfons Cerdà. The construction of Eixample began in 1860. The linear pattern can still be seen today. Cerdà's plan divides the 9 km² into 550 blocks, uniformly crossed by streets and three boulevards. All blocks should have included open and green spaces; some should have been left out and have become parks, unfortunately this remained a dream. On all of the blocks houses were built much higher than in Cerdà's original plan.

The decades around the turn of the 20th century were a fast ride, with anarchists, Republicans, bourgeois regionalists, gangsters, police terrorists, political gunmen called pistoleros and centrists in Madrid all clamouring for a slice of the action. This followed an explosion in Barcelona's population - from around 115,000 in 1800 to more than half a million by 1900, then over a million by 1930 - as workers flocked in for industrial jobs. As many as 80% of the city's workers embraced the anarchist Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT) by the end of WWI, and industrial relations hit an all time low during a wave of strikes in 1919-20 when employers hired assassins to kill union leaders.

Within days of Spain's Second Republic forming in 1931, a coalition of leftists and Catalan nationalists under the moniker Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya won the election and soon declared a republic within an 'Iberian Federation'. In 1936, in the face of rising ultra-right popularity, the ERC joined forces with other leftist groups across the country to form the Popular Front, which convincingly won elections of that year. In May 1937 infighting between factions of the municipal government - notably communists, anarchists and the POUM - exploded into a three-day street fight that killed at least 1500 people.

The Republican effort across Spain was troubled by similar infighting, which destroyed any chance they may have had of defeating Franco's fascist militia. Barcelona, the last stronghold of the Republicans, fell to Franco's forces in January 1939, and the war ended a few months later. Thousands of Catalans fled across the border to France, Andorra and further afield. Franco wasted no time in banning the Catalan language and flooding the region with impoverished immigrants from Andalucía in the vain hope that the pesky Catalans, with their continual movements for independence, would be swamped. Catalonia was granted limited autonomy in 1980 and today people gather all over town several times a week to dance the Sardana. While there's still talk of independence, it remains just talk. Meanwhile, Barcelona is the country's most happening town, and seems set to stay that way.

The 1992 Olympics allowed Barcelona to once again strut its stuff on the world stage, projecting an image of cultural prosperity. It hasn't looked back since. The once-shabby waterfront has been transformed with promenades, beaches, marinas, restaurants, leisure attractions and new housing. The games may be receding from the public mind but the impetus created has hardly slowed. Enormous projects to 'rehabilitate' vast tracts of rundown central Barcelona continue, the most recent being the huge Forum 2004 development in the city's east.

Shopping

Barcelona itself is like a large shop whose main axis of shops, known as the Shopping Line, consists of five-kilometer pedestrian precinct with wide pavements which can satisfy the most demanding requirements. Craftsmen's workshops, exclusive shops, franchises, shopping centers and street markets all go to make up the shopping offer of Barcelona. There are three main shopping areas in the city: Centro, Eixample and Diagonal.

Gastronomy

Barcelona's cuisine, cosmopolitan and filled with Mediterranean flavors, is a showcase for the greatest of Catalan recipes. Examples of local dishes are "butifarra amb mogetes" (sausage with white beans), "escudella i carn d'olla" (Catalan stew) and the emblematic "pa amb tomàquet" (bread rubbed with tomato). Of course, one must not forget "crema catalana" (Catalan crème brûlée) for dessert, or the excellent wines from Alella, Pla de Bages and Penedès.

What to See

Its early city centre, which was surrounded by walls during Roman times, makes up what today is the Gothic Quarter. Narrow streets, with quiet squares and attractive corners, are home to an abundant collection of Gothic buildings, both civil and religious. Surrounding Barcelona's impressive Cathedral, medieval palaces emerge, such as Casa dels Canonges, La Pia Almoina, and Casa d'Ardiaca. Next to the Gothic Quarter, the Ribera district, also of Medieval origin, begins. In its origins, it brought together traders and seagoing people, but with the passage of time many magnificent, small palaces were built as well. The urban development of the central area of Barcelona was defined, towards the end of the 19th century, by the Eixample (urban expansion). An extensive grid, with large avenues and chamfered corners, joined the irregular layouts of old districts and outlying towns to the surrounding hills. The emerging Catalan bourgeoisie chose this place to build its mansions and palaces, following the most daring principles of Modernism. One of the main arteries of the historic quarter, La Rambla, leads to the Mediterranean Sea, and it is one of the best places to catch the rhythm of the city.

Festivals in Spain

March / April

- Flamenco Festival-Jerez
- Festival of St. Medir-Barcelona
- Holy Week-Spain
- Pageant of the Passion-Sevilla
- St. George's Day/Lover's Day-Barcelona

May / June

- Day of the Autonomous Community-Madrid
- Corpus Christi Festival-Spain
- International Festival of Music and Dance-Granada
- St. John's Day-Barcelona

July / August

- Grec Festival-Barcelona
- European Balloon Festival-Barcelona
- Feast of St. James-Spain
- Verbena de la Paloma Folk Festival-Madrid
- Assumption Festival-Spain

September / October

- La Merce-Barcelona
- Spanish National Day-Spain
- International Jazz Festival-Barcelona

Spanish Language

ENGLISH TO SPANISH PHRASES

If you don't speak Spanish, don't worry! Here are a few words to help with your basic communication. If "words" don't work, try your hand at Charades!

Good morning	<i>Buenos Días</i>
Good evening	<i>Buenas Tardes</i>
Good-bye	<i>Adíos</i>
See you soon	<i>Hasta luégo</i>
Yes / No	<i>si/ no</i>
Thank you	<i>Muchas Gracias</i>
Please	<i>Por Favor</i>
Excuse me	<i>perdon</i>
You're welcome	<i>por nada</i>
Do you speak English?	<i>Habla usted inglés?</i>
Nice to meet you	<i>mucho gusto/ Encantado</i>
I don't understand	<i>no entiendo</i>

Other useful phrases

I'd like a ticket to...	<i>Necesito un boleto para</i>
What's the fare to...	<i>Que es el precio por el boleto a..</i>
I'd like to make seat reservations	<i>Me gustaria hacer reservaciones....</i>
Where is/are	<i>Donde esta/estan</i>
Can you tell me which way to	<i>Me puede decir como llegar a</i>
You are very kind	<i>Usted es Buena gente.</i>
Where is the bathroom?	<i>Donde estan los baños?</i>
Do you have a bathroom?	<i>Tiene usted un baño?</i>
How much do I owe you?	<i>Cuanto le debo?</i>
How much is this?	<i>Cuanto es?</i>
I would like	<i>Yo quiciera</i>
Could you help me?	<i>Usted me podria ayudar ?</i>
Where/when/how	<i>donde/cuando/como</i>
How long	<i>Qué tan largo</i>
How far	<i>A qué distancia?</i>
Yesterday/today/tomorrow	<i>ayer/ahora/mañana</i>
Day/week/month/year	<i>día/semana/mes/año</i>
To the right/left/straight	<i>a la derecha/a la izquierda</i> <i>/adelante</i>

Spanish Language

The days of the week / Los días de la semana

Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday/Saturday / Sunday
Lunes /Martes / Miércoles / Jueves / Viernes / Sábado / Domingo

The months / Los meses

January	<i>enero</i>	February	<i>febrero</i>
March	<i>marzo</i>	April	<i>abril</i>
May	<i>mayo</i>	June	<i>junio</i>
July	<i>julio</i>	August	<i>agosto</i>
September	<i>septiembre</i>	October	<i>octubre</i>
November	<i>noviembre</i>	December	<i>diciembre</i>

The numbers / Los numeros

One	<i>uno</i>	Six	<i>seis</i>
Two	<i>dos</i>	Seven	<i>siete</i>
Three	<i>tres</i>	Eight	<i>ocho</i>
Four	<i>cuatro</i>	Nine	<i>nueve</i>
Five	<i>cinco</i>	Ten	<i>diez</i>

Miscellaneous

Post office / Stamps	<i>el correo / estampillas</i>
Bank / ATM	<i>Banco /cajero automático</i>
Museum	<i>el museo</i>
Church	<i>la iglesia</i>
Supermarket/ market	<i>el super-mercado / el Mercado</i>
Newspaper / magazine	<i>el periódico/ la revista</i>
Bus stop / metro station	<i>parada del camión / estación de metro</i>
Restaurant	<i>Restaurante</i>
Bar	<i>Bar</i>
Bakery	<i>panadería</i>
Pastries/sweets/cakes/tarts	<i>Pastelitos</i>
Chocolate maker	<i>Chocolatero</i>
Candy maker	<i>Vendedor de dulces</i>
Cheese shop	<i>Queso</i>
butcher shop	<i>Carnicería</i>

Spanish Language

Restaurant / Restaurante

Menu / menu of the day	<i>el menu/ menu del día</i>
Dish of the day	<i>el plato del día</i>
Red wine / white	<i>vino rojo/blanco</i>
Water – carafe	<i>una garrada de agua</i>
Beer	<i>cerveza</i>
Bread	<i>pan</i>
Soup	<i>una sopa</i>
Pepper / salt	<i>pimienta/sal</i>
Salad	<i>una ensalada</i>
Salad dressing	<i>el aderezo</i>
dessert	<i>un postre</i>
Fruit	<i>la fruta</i>
Tea / herbal tea	<i>un té (de hierbas)</i>
Sugar	<i>azucar</i>
Coffee	<i>un café</i>
With milk / cream	<i>con leche / crema</i>
Ice cubes	<i>hielo</i>
Garlic / without	<i>con ajó/ sin ajó</i>
The bill	<i>la cuenta</i>
Waiter/waitress	<i>mesero / mesera</i>

Meat / Carne

Beef	<i>res</i>
Veal	<i>ternera</i>
Poultry	<i>pollería</i>
Chicken / turkey	<i>pollo/pavo</i>
Duck / goose	<i>pato/ ganso</i>
Liver	<i>hígados</i>
Lamb / leg of lamb	<i>cordero/ pierna de cordero</i>
Sausage	<i>salchicha</i>
ham	<i>jamón</i>
chop	<i>chuleta</i>
snail	<i>caracol</i>
frog leg	<i>anca de rana</i>
tongue (beef)	<i>lengua de res</i>
rabbit	<i>conejo</i>
bacon	<i>tocino/ beicon</i>
kidneys	<i>riñones</i>

Vegetables / Legumes

Spinach	<i>espnacas</i>
Broccoli	<i>brócoli</i>
Cauliflower	<i>coliflor</i>
Red cabbage	<i>repollo rojo</i>
Cabbage	<i>repollo</i>
Brussels sprout	<i>coles de Bruselass</i>
Mushroom	<i>champiñones</i>
peas	<i>guisantes</i>
Leek	<i>puerro</i>
onion	<i>cebolla</i>
Green bean	<i>ejote</i>
kidney bean	<i>habichuela/ frijol colorado</i>
Carrot	<i>zanahoria</i>
tomato	<i>tomate</i>
Potatoes	<i>papa</i>
French fries	<i>papas fritas</i>
Rice	<i>arroz</i>
noodles	<i>fideos</i>
Pasta	<i>pasta</i>
polenta	<i>polenta</i>

Fruits / Frutas

Apple	<i>manzana</i>
Pear	<i>pera</i>
Banana	<i>platano</i>
Grapes	<i>uvas</i>
Strawberry	<i>fresas</i>
Raspberry	<i>frambuesa</i>

Dairy products / Productos lácteos

Milk (cow) / Goat milk	<i>leche / leche de cabra</i>
Cream	<i>crema</i>
Butter	<i>mantequilla</i>
Egg	<i>huevo</i>
Cheese	<i>queso</i>
Cow's cheese	<i>queso de vaca</i>
Ewe's cheese	<i>queso de oveja</i>
Goat cheese	<i>queso de cabra</i>