

Asturias, Spain's Best Kept Secret!

Sample Itinerary

10 days /9 Nights: Tour Starts and Ends in Madrid or Barcelona with Your Arrival and Departure

B = Breakfast / L = Lunch / D = Dinner / EF = Entrance Fee / (A) Appetizers (Included)

Day One (L): Our trip starts upon your arrival to Madrid or Barcelona airport where we will pick you up and take you to our comfortable centrally located hotel. Once settled in, lunch is on us at one of our favorite neighborhood eateries where we will give you a tour briefing with a Q and A session about the rest of the trip. That evening we will give you a little taste of Barcelona's or Madrid's many fascinating places.

Day Two (B, L): After breakfast we are driven by private transfer to the airport for our late morning flight (1hour) to the green Spain of Asturias. Upon arrival we are picked up by our local driver and taken to a nice hotel in the charming old port area of Gijón, our home base for the next 8 days. At around 3 PM we treat you to a tasting menu accompanied by local cider or fine wines from Galicia and Rioja at a traditional restaurant as an orientation to authentic Asturian cooking and culture. Our hotel is conveniently located within easy walking distance to shops, banks, fabulous beaches and historic architecture.

Day Three (B,EF, A): We head east to the picturesque coastal town of Ribadesella to take a guided tour of the Tito Bustillo Caves, where we observe beautiful displays of very well preserved paleolithic artwork painted on the interior walls of the cave. After the visit, we drive a little further east to the enchanting port village of Llanes to stroll its narrow medieval streets and stop into a local cantina for an appetizer of steamed clams and an icy cold beer. From here we have a five minute drive to a wonderful family restaurant whose specialty is "*langosta en pelota*", shelled or naked lobster! Other delicious fish and meat plates are available. Another option is their menu of the day, which is a three course meal with wine water and coffee at a very reasonable price. After our long and leisurely meal we'll head back to our hotel in Gijón.

Day Four (B, EF), takes us south to the region's central city of Oviedo. Our driver will drop us off in the historic center, where we will visit its fabulous Gothic cathedral with parts that date back to Romanesque and pre-Romanesque periods. Then we stroll up to the city's fascinating food market to check out its impressive displays of meat, fish, seafood, vegetables and tempting local cheeses before lunching at our favorite local restaurant just around the corner. After our meal, we will be taken to three of Spain's most significant pre-Romanesque temples from the 9th century: San Miguel de Lillo, Santa María de Naranco and San Julián. The first two are UNESCO world heritage sites.

Day Five (B): We take the fisherman's trail west along the rugged Cantabrian coast visiting a series of delightful fishing towns including Cudierlo and Luarca; virtually unscathed by tourism! En route back we stop for lunch at a rustic restaurant frequented by local families and fishermen in the tiny hamlet of Antromero. Their specialty is fresh lobster smothered in cooked vegetables. Other items on the menu include fresh rock crab, marinated mussels, razor clams, wild bream, monkfish and hearty seafood stews!

Day Six (B): We venture southeast to the majestic Picos de Europa mountains, driving through a deep canyon that forms some of Spain's wildest terrain. Characterized by a network of roaring rivers, jagged limestone cliffs and birds of prey, its breathtaking beauty debatably competes with Yosemite and the Grand Canyon. The main difference is the medieval architecture! At midday, juicy steaks and tender lamb chops accompanied by fresh vegetables and homemade cheesecake await us at Restaurante El Oso!

Day Seven (B, L, EF): Today we stay a little closer to home, first visiting Cabo de Peñas to the northwest, a magical point that offers incredible views over the wild Cantabrian coast. Then we head southwest to the city of Avilés, situated on a water inlet once used for international maritime trade. After meandering through the city's streets with thirteenth century churches and beautiful green parks we will treat you to a traditional lunch at a classic restaurant. After lunch, we will visit the recently inaugurated Oscar Niemeyer International Cultural Center designed by the Brazilian Architect of the same name. "*An open square to the humankind, a place for education, culture and peace*" O.N.

Day Eight (B), Our last full day in Asturias takes us to Covadonga National Park, stopping on the way in the foothill town of Cangas de Onís to sample edibles and drinkables at the local market and take in the fabulous views from its Roman bridge. Then we continue our climb to "Lagos de Enol", two beautiful lakes rested on a high plateau surrounded by greenery, snow capped mountains and big sky. After, we descend to the Basilica of Covadonga and its holy cave. Nearby, nestled in a green gorge we have our cozy mountain restaurant that offers venison, wild boar and of course the famed Fabada Asturiana, a rich garlic based bean stew laced with local chorizo and bacon. Goes very well with red wine or local cider!

Day Nine (B): After breakfast we say goodbye to our friends in Gijón and head to the airport for our flight back to Madrid or Barcelona. Either city offers endless opportunities for wonderful food, live music, fun bars, opera, theater, movies in English or just a relaxing dinner at a nice restaurant. Where ever you want to go, we'll take you there or we'll point you in the right direction. Enjoy!

Day Ten (B): We will accompany you to the airport by private transfer to assure you reach your flight comfortably. ¡Buen Viaje!

\$2,500 per person for party of six
\$2,880 per person for party of four
\$3,290 per person for party of two

Included:

Private Airport Transfers
Nine Nights Hotel with daily breakfast (2 in Madrid or Barcelona and 7 in Gijón)
Welcome Tapas Lunch in Madrid or Barcelona
Roundtrip Airfare from Madrid or Barcelona to Asturias
Private Driver for Regional Excursions
All Entrance Fees as Per Itinerary
A Tasting Menu in Gijón
All Local Taxes

Not Included:

Flights to and from Spain
Midday and Evening Meals Unless Specified in Itinerary
Any Means of Transportation Outside Itinerary
Evening Entertainment
Hotel Extras and Gratuity
Travel Insurance

Please note that the reason why all midday and evening meals are not included (with the exception of tapas sessions and tasting menus) is that appetites can vary enormously from person to person and day to day. Furthermore, different items on the menu can vary greatly in price. For example, at our favorite restaurant in Llanes Asturias, one couple may order *percebes*, a vey exclusive type of crustacean followed by fresh lobster and a bottle of Albariño, a fine white from Galicia, while another couple may opt for the *menu of the day*, which tends to be a typically regional and wholly satisfying three-course meal that includes house wine, mineral water and coffee. The former could cost from 80 to 120 euros per person while the latter ranges from 12 to 18 euros per person. Both choices are excellent!

What we strive for is to provide all of our guests with authentic regional gastronomic experiences. That is exactly what you'll get at all of our selected restaurants no matter what you order!

All of our selected restaurants whether hi-end or neighborhood eateries are of the highest standards of quality and service with the freshest ingredients!

If you are interested in this tour please see the Terms & Conditions page on our Website.



www.spainbydave.com