

CULTURE + WALKING

# SPAIN

Barcelona to Costa Brava



*Classic*  
JOURNEYS





“Classic Journeys provides unbeatable access to experiences around the globe.”

— *Travel + Leisure*

## Catalonia & the Mediterranean Coast

When we asked our guides how to describe Catalonia to you, they surprised us. “Tell them we are Tuscany, only better.” We’ll admit they have a point. Spain’s easternmost province is a sensory revelation that easily equals the best of Italy. The aromas of the local markets and the fresh Mediterranean air along the Costa Brava remind you how rich the world really is. And stimulated by walks in rustic countryside or on the cosmopolitan avenues of Barcelona, your sense of taste will be more than satisfied by the vivid flavors of Catalan cuisine. With all due respect to our guides, this tour offers so much that Tuscany can’t—paths through a park full of extinct volcanoes...a dip in the sea at your private resort...and quirky Art Nouveau architecture that’s a unique trait of this proud region’s DNA. If you have already enjoyed time in Southern Europe’s other favorite regions but don’t want to repeat yourself, make this your next destination. We promise you won’t be disappointed!

## DAY 1

### BARCELONA

- Explore the Gothic Quarter on a leisurely walk
- Guided visit to La Sagrada Familia
- Celebrate over a festive welcome dinner of paella

Barcelona is one of Europe's most beautiful and distinctive cities, as you'll see on a leisurely walk from your hotel through the city's medieval heart, the Gothic Quarter. You feel as if you've literally stepped back into time in the maze of tightly packed medieval streets.

How long does it take to build one of those multi-spired basilicas that tower over so many European cities? The answer is still to come in Barcelona. Your exploration continues with a visit to La Sagrada Familia where the first stone was laid in 1882 (and you'll get a glimpse of the construction that continues to this day). It's just one of the landmark designs of the architect Antonio Gaudí that you'll encounter as you roam Barcelona.

This evening, you'll stroll to dinner through the ancient merchant's quarter, La Ribera, and past the Basilica de Santa Maria del Mar. Your welcome feast is at your guide's favorite restaurant, a 100-year-old landmark that's a favorite spot of actors, musicians and politicians.

**OVERNIGHT: BARCELONA**  
**MEALS: D**

## DAY 2

### BARCELONA / RUPIT

- Enjoy a country walk past gray and pink stone farmhouses to a dramatic waterfall
- Visit the medieval town of Besalu
- Relax at our historic villa with panoramic views

This morning, you leave behind Barcelona for a drive to the village of Rupit, located in the rolling hills of Northern Catalonia. Here, you have the option to explore the picturesque village or join your guide for a remarkably scenic waterside walk to a dramatic waterfall. Along the way, you'll see how various Mediterranean cultures have influenced the land. Scattered across the hills, masias (farmhouses) built of local pink and gray stone may remind you of Tuscany or Provence.

After lunch in Rupit, you'll continue on to the town of Besalu, famous for its 10th-century bridge, mikveh, Romanesque churches and medieval atmosphere.

The climax of the afternoon is the arrival at your four-star hotel in the heart of the province of Girona, true Catalan Tuscany. It's a remarkable home for the next two nights.

**OVERNIGHT: OLLERS, GIRONA**  
**MEALS: B, D**

## DAY 3

### GIRONA

- Go for a scenic forest stroll to Croscat volcano
- Explore the ancient walled town of Girona

Your invigorating day begins with a drive to Garrotxa Volcanic Park, Europe's largest region of extinct volcanoes. A walk through an unusual beech tree forest offers great

views of Croscat volcano – the youngest and highest volcano in the Iberian Peninsula.

After a short visit to Santa Pau, including a special invitation into a local potter's workshop, you'll arrive in the ancient walled city of Girona just in time for lunch and exploration. Delightfully hidden, except to the locals, it's full of narrow streets, and rows of pastel-colored houses leaning over the banks of the River Onyar. The Jewish community was a robust part of the town until their expulsion in 1492. But even today, El Call is one of the best-preserved Jewish quarters in the world. You'll hear about that heritage on a leisurely walk that also takes you past the 13th-century cathedral, the Romanesque baths, and along the Passeig Arqueologic, where you get an astounding view of the Charlemagne Tower.

The country air is good for the appetite, so you won't be disappointed that Girona is well known for its pa amb tomàquet, a Catalan specialty of grilled bread slathered in olive oil, garlic and fresh tomato.

**OVERNIGHT: OLLERS, GIRONA**  
**MEALS: B, D**

## DAY 4

### EMPORDÀ

- Explore the medieval towns of Empordà on foot
- Relax at our coastal hotel with views of the Costa Brava

This morning, a short drive leads to the starting point of a peaceful walk in the Empordà region. Along the way, you'll see a 10th-century chapel and enjoy the shade of a forest of cork oak and pine carpeted in rosemary, lavender and rock-rose leading to an ancient water-mill.

Lunch is in Peratallada, a village that seems to be taken from a fairy tale. The town's name is derived from the words for "carved stone," and you'll understand why as you walk the cobbled lanes closely lined with stone houses.

Later in the day, you'll be well primed for arrival at our luxurious coastal hotel where you can swim in the pool, stretch out on the beach or explore the nearby villas and seaside mansions. If you're so inclined, join our guide for a walk along the coastal trails for your first glimpse of the Costa Brava.

**OVERNIGHT: PLATJA D'ARO, GIRONA**  
**MEALS: B, D**

## DAY 5

### EMPÚRIES / FIGUERES

- Explore fine Greco-Roman ruins overlooking the sea at Empúries
- Linger at the Dalí Museum on an unhurried afternoon visit
- Enjoy a wine tasting at a local winery

A scenic morning walk leads to the fabulous Greek and Roman ruins of Empúries, a city built by Greek merchants on the Mediterranean seashore more than 25 centuries ago, and later occupied by the Roman legions. In both the Greek and the Roman sites, you can admire the layouts of public and private houses, some with amazingly well-preserved floors with Roman mosaics, the outline of the main streets lined with shops, public baths, gardens and temples; all surrounded by huge city walls. As you explore with our guide, and with the blue Mediterranean in the backdrop, the

**DAILY ITINERARY**  
**SPAIN | BARCELONA TO COSTA BRAVA | CULTURE + WALKING**

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ruins grow in your imagination into the great city it once was, when Europe and the world were still taking shape.

The region's most famous son was Salvador Dalí, and this afternoon we visit his hometown of Figueres. There's time for a relaxed visit to the Dalí museum, which the artist personally designed and decorated. Having already spent some time along the coastline of the Costa Brava, it's easy enough to see how Dalí's surreal paintings actually reflect this dramatic landscape. Afterward, you'll enjoy a visit to a local winery before returning to your resort hotel for an evening in the relaxed tempo of this seaside land.

**OVERNIGHT: PLATJA D'ARO, GIRONA**

**MEALS: B**

## DAY 6

### COSTA BRAVA

- Marvel at the beauty of Cap Roig Botanical Garden
- Shop in a 10th-century town, lounge on the beach or linger on the hotel terraces
- Toast your week during our festive farewell dinner

This entire day is dedicated to exploring the coastal villages that dot the Costa Brava, and taking in the breathtaking sea views, cliffs and coves. You begin in Cap Roig where the castle and its lush botanical garden was the fairy-tale creation of a Russian architect and his aristocratic English wife. They thought this spot overlooking the Mediterranean was the best place on earth for their dream home, and even today you'll agree. If you've ever walked the Cinque Terre, you'll feel right at home here. The path takes in white sand beaches, secluded coves ringed by umbrella pines, and hillside villas painted in glowing ochre and cream. Along the

way, you'll pause in Calella, a red-tiled fishing village with a simple white church tower.

Just in time for a leisurely lunch, you'll find yourself on a crescent-shaped bay hugged by the small village of Llafranc. This afternoon, you can choose to relax on the beach or at the hotel where you can lounge away your last afternoon overlooking the sea.

After a full day soaking up the Costa Brava, a wonderful farewell dinner awaits! Maybe you'll choose to enjoy grilled local fish so fresh that it was caught just that morning. Savor a cup of cremat (a mixture of rum and coffee), a typical sailor's drink, while enjoying outstanding views of the entire coast stretched out below. Bon profit!

**OVERNIGHT: PLATJA D'ARO, GIRONA**

**MEALS: B, D**

## DAY 7

### BARCELONA

- Return drive to Barcelona
- Part company in Gaudi's favorite city

After breakfast, you'll return to Barcelona where your group parts company. Extend your visit in this charming city to do more exploring or as a convenient base for excursions to Montserrat, the wineries of Alt Penedès and the popular beach resort of Sitges.

**MEALS: B**





## Tour Hotels



### Duquesa de Cardona

Located near La Rambla and the Gothic Quarter, this historic 16th century building was once home to nobility. Restored in 1850 and converted into a luxury hotel in 2003, the hotel's decor blends the original style with Barcelona's distinctive flair.

**OVERNIGHT: BARCELONA | NIGHTS: 1**



### Casa Anamaria

In the heart of the Girona province, with the Pyrenees mountains in the background, this hotel is housed in a magnificent Patrician villa. It features charming rooms, a well tended garden, and a salt water swimming pool with great views.

**OVERNIGHT: OLLERS, GIRONA | NIGHTS: 2**



### Salles Cala Del Pi

This upscale oceanfront hotel is set on Cala del Pi Bay, overlooking the Mediterranean. Elegant rooms and suites, decorated in traditional Catalan style, feature private balconies. Enjoy a spa treatment or a dip in the pool.

**OVERNIGHT: PLATJA D'ARO, GIRONA | NIGHTS: 3**

## Tour Dates & Prices

Tour Dates	Price per Person	Price per Person
	Double Occupancy	Single Occupancy
May 10-16, 2020	\$4,895	\$5,590
June 7-13, 2020	\$5,195	\$5,890
September 6-12, 2020	\$5,195	\$5,890
October 4-10, 2020	\$5,195	\$5,890
May 9-15, 2021	\$4,995	\$5,690
June 13-19, 2021	\$5,295	\$5,990
September 5-11, 2021	\$5,295	\$5,990
October 3-9, 2021	\$5,295	\$5,990

Want a different date? Or your own date? Visit [CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE](https://CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE) to learn more about private journeys.

## Trip Essentials

**TRIP LENGTH:** 7 Days, 6 Nights

**START:** 2:30 PM Lobby of hotel, Barcelona, Spain

**END:** 1:00 PM Downtown, Barcelona, Spain

**TERRAIN:** Easy to moderate on good trails.

## What's Included

- Memorable accommodations for 6 nights
- All breakfasts and 5 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip and handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to tastings, historic sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals, and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

## Above & Beyond Benefits

- **Invisible Check-In**
- **Wine on Us**
- **Privileged Access Events**

**READY TO BOOK?**  
**CLICK TO MAKE A RESERVATION**

## Or give us a call

**1-833-387-1210**

Mon-Fri 8:00AM – 5:00PM PST

[moreinfo@classicjourneys.com](mailto:moreinfo@classicjourneys.com)

*Travel for Free*

*Your trip is free when you organize a Classic Journeys trip with 10 or more travelers (including you)! Or you can share your savings with other group members.*

## TRAVEL WORRY-FREE!

It's easy with insurance from Travel Guard. Your policy can cover trip cancellation, travel delays, lost luggage, medical emergencies, and more. If you are traveling with kids, add them to your policy at no extra cost. [Click here](#) or call 800-826-4919 for details.

## AMBASSADOR CLUB

As a Classic Journeys guest, you are invited to join the Ambassador Club after your first Classic Journeys tour. As a member, you'll have access to a [whole suite of Ambassador benefits](#) you can use immediately and as often as you like.

## ENJOY THE UNEXPECTED

When you travel with Classic Journeys, you can expect handcrafted surprises built into every trip, but some things just can't be anticipated. Unusual weather, a once-a-year festival or an unscheduled site closing will inspire us and your local guide to improvise and modify this itinerary. Likewise, the hotels named here are used on the majority of our trips, but occasionally one of them can't accommodate us. If that happens, you can count on us to let you know before departure and make sure you're in a hotel of equal or better quality. It's our goal to make your trip exceptional!

\*\*Any discount offered cannot be combined with other offers, and only applies to published (regularly scheduled public) departure dates in our catalogs or on our website.

# THE Classic Journeys Difference



## HANDCRAFTING TRIPS OF A LIFETIME.

At the end of the day, we fundamentally believe that every guest on every departure of every trip should have a trip of a lifetime. We're fortunate to play the role of well-connected friend, linking our guests with amazing guides, artisans, winemakers, hoteliers, restaurateurs, naturalists, and too many others to list here.

That's what motivates me and our team — in our La Jolla HQ and around the world — every day. Join Us!

President & Founder



## You can expect the highest standards:



### Luxurious Lodgings:

Ours include coveted properties that appear in "World's Best" and "Gold List" rankings.



### Included Activities:

You'll never be surprised with add-on fees on your activities that include snorkeling to cooking lessons.



### Local Guides:

Your guides are locals who are always at your side like well-connected friends.



### Small Group Travel:

With an average of just 10-12 guests, it's a small footprint that guarantees you access that's off-limits to larger groups.



### Amazing Cuisine:

From Michelin-starred restaurants to lunch in a farmhouse kitchen, you'll have a seat for the region's signature dishes.



### Unmatched Value:

"Excellent value" and "unbeatable access" are two of the reasons that Travel + Leisure has consistently voted us a World's Best Tour Operator.

## You'll enjoy these handcrafted travel experiences in Barcelona and the Costa Brava...

- Relaxing at Casa Anamaria, a magnificent Patrician villa overlooking the tranquil countryside
- Walking through remote Girona, a whitewashed village that tilts over the River Onyar
- Skipping the lines at La Sagrada Familia for a private tour of Gaudi's cathedral
- Exploring with cordial local guides like Ricardo, who will convince you that this isn't really Spain. It's Catalonia, with its own language and personality
- Tasting amazing cuisine, 5-star paella, rustic country sausages and sheep's milk cheese

*"I have never been disappointed with the Classic Journeys guides. I continue to be impressed."*

—Susan L., Mystic, CT

**Let's Go!**

TO RESERVE: 833.493.5038 | [CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/RESERVATIONS](https://www.classicjourneys.com/reservations)



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Culture + Walking

### PICTURE YOURSELF...

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- Living in luxury at a seaside Belle Epoque hotel
- Challenging friendly locals to a game of pelota

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/basque/>.



## Provence

Vineyards & Villages of the Luberon

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### PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Trailing through vineyards and olive groves
- Shopping colorful markets for pique-nique provisions
- Savoring private tastings and culinary how-to's

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/provence/>.



## Spain

Andalucia's Seville to Córdoba

Culture + Walking

### PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Rambling the winding streets of whitewashed villages
- Strolling through olive groves to a private tasting
- Exploring a palatial "paradise on Earth"

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#### PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Wine-tasting on the grounds of a castle
- Traversing the streets of towering hill towns
- Jumping to the head of the line to see Michelangelo's David

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/tuscany/>.

# “Enthusiasm is Contagious”

AS TRAVEL + LEISURE NAMES CLASSIC JOURNEYS THE WORLD'S BEST TOUR OPERATOR FOR 2019, FOUNDER EDWARD PIEGZA REVEALS HOW IT FEELS. ENTHUSIASTICALLY.



*EDITOR'S NOTE: Just before publication of this issue, Travel + Leisure magazine announced that its readers have voted Classic Journeys the World's Best Tour Operator for 2019. It's the second time Classic Journeys has won that recognition and the 14th consecutive year the company has been in the Top 10.*



### **Congratulations! How did you get the news?**

I received a top-secret email and phone call from the editor of *Travel + Leisure* a few weeks ago with orders not to tell ANYONE. Friends and neighbors must have wondered why my smile has been so extra big lately. Now they know.

### **And how does it feel to be the World's Best Tour Operator again?**

Awesome. Humbling. So, so satisfying. Deeply gratifying to learn that we have achieved what we set out to do which is to handcraft trips of a lifetime for every guest who travels with us. I'm known as long-winded, so I could probably come up with 10 or 15 more ways to describe it if you want me to keep going.

### **Why do you think *Travel + Leisure* gave you this recognition?**

Actually, it isn't the *T+L* editors who make the decision. That's the best part. Their readers cast the votes. So the people who do the traveling, the guests who explore the world with us and our competitors — they are the ones who raised their hands to tell *T+L* that Classic Journeys is the World's Best Tour Operator based on their own experiences. Let me say it right here: "To all of you who voted for us, you are the World's Best Guests!"

### **What do you think makes your guests the World's Best Guests?**

That's easy. They are curious. They care about connecting with people of different cultures and immersing themselves in the world. They treasure experiences more than things. Like the old ad slogan went, they go for the gusto and crave the chance to have one-of-a-kind moments. They are incredibly interesting and interested people, and all of us at Classic Journeys count it as a real privilege to share in their passion for travel. And we feel that way on the

other 364 days of the year when we're not celebrating recognition like this.

### **I guess this is what you meant when you told me that "Enthusiasm is contagious."**

Absolutely. That's not our official motto, but it could be. We love what we do. We enjoy helping guests figure out how to invest their precious time and budget. I can honestly say that all of us feel that way — the Guest Services folks who interact with you while you're planning your trip, the Tour Operations team members who plan all of the logistics, the local guides who lead each one of our trips full time. There's just a huge amount of positive energy in what we do, and I think it truly is hard to resist. We'd climb into every one of our guest's suitcases and go along with them if we could. Because we can't, we call each guest while they're on tour just to be sure they are having a trip of a lifetime.

### **Has anyone ever called Classic Journeys obsessive?**

I hope so, because we are. Everything is in the details. For instance, we've created a special tour for the total eclipse of the sun which is going to pass over parts of South America in 2020. We've already analyzed likely traffic patterns in the most remote areas and figured out how to structure our itinerary so that our guests will be in place in the path of totality while the people who don't plan ahead will be stuck in jams on remote dirt roads. We enjoy obsessing about details like that so that our guests never have to.



### **How can you top this?**

Oh, we never let ourselves think of it that way. We just continue to approach every single guest on each and every departure like the most important guest we've ever had. It seems to be working! Of course, we keep looking for new ways to win more converts. For 2019, we've launched a new series of Classic Journeys that are based from

## **"I voted for you!"**

We've heard that expression so many times lately from guests who registered their votes with *Travel + Leisure*. Given the results, we know it's true ... and you know that your votes really count!

### **STAFF AND GUIDES**

"I always feel like I'm traveling with a best friend. I prefer your local guides to the ones that other companies fly in."

### **ITINERARIES AND DESTINATIONS**

"If it's on my bucket list, you always seem to go there. Of course, with so many options you always seem to make my list longer and longer!"

### **ACTIVITIES**

"On your trips, I've cooked with Michelin chefs, sung songs with Quechua schoolchildren, and walked on glaciers with the descendants of Vikings. Fun doesn't begin to describe it."

### **ACCOMMODATIONS**

"How you manage so many 5-star properties on these trips shocks me. But please, please, please keep it up!"

### **FOOD**

"I have never eaten so well so often so happily. When you people claim that you are foodies, you aren't kidding."

### **OVERALL VALUE**

"We have never had a better vacation at any price."

river cruise boats. On a different note, seeing how many travelers can't always find as much vacation time as they really want, we have developed a series of 6-day or shorter quick trips that go as far afield as Iceland, the Galápagos and Morocco.

### **Final thoughts?**

It's always an honor to win recognition. But, for all of us at Classic Journeys, the biggest privilege is to share the dreams of our guests and make those dreams come true. That connection is the best feeling of all.