

OPERA: MADRID AND BARCELONA

Music is probably the greatest product of the longstanding rivalry that has existed between these two great Spanish metropolitan cities. Each city has its own particular history. The younger capital city may regret its lack of a medieval past, but has largely compensated for this with its Bourbon style palaces, its legacy of museums and its grandiose Baroque and Neoclassical urbanism. The Catalan city, in turn, maintains the essence of medieval, commercial and proud Mediterranean cities. To this it has added, since the 19th century, the opulence of the Catalan industrial bourgeoisie and its daring urban plans. Even today it is interesting to observe how each city attempts to respond the challenges of the future in its own way.



Day 1 A first glimpse of Madrid provided by a scenic tour will allow us to appreciate the dimension and beauty of this city of three million inhabitants and its urban development over the last 150 years. We will see the vital points of the city, the Paseo de la Castellana avenue, the Manzanares River, Alcalá Street and Gran Vía; the Salamanca district, urban expressions from the Arturo Soria garden-city to the more recent Plaza de Castilla district, the Colón, España and Atocha squares, and extensive green areas such as the Retiro Park. Nearby we find one of the best examples of the Bourbon urban layout: the Paseo del Prado with its fountains, gardens and museums. Of special interest are the Mile of Art, Prado Museum, the Reina Sofia Museum and the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum. In the surrounding area is the Teatro de la Zarzuela, a building dating more than 150 years, the first and only stage dedicated to the traditional Spanish lyric genre. The Zarzuela, a popular musical genre that began in the 19th century, is characterized by musical numbers, songs, and dances inspired in the European scenography of the time. Possibility to attend a performance at the Teatro de la Zarzuela. Overnight in Madrid.

Day 2 Today we will discover the Madrid of the Austria Dynasty, a city that became the capital in 1561. Our visit will take us to the Royal Palace and next to it the Almudena Cathedral, a temple started towards the end of the 19th century when Madrid received its first bishop. Our route concludes at the Plaza de Oriente and the Teatro Real, a Bourbon structure from the Post-Napoleonic period that, following its remodel, offers superb acoustics.



From there, our path takes us to Calle Mayor, the Plaza de la Villa and the San Miguel Market, arriving at the Plaza Mayor, the prototype for so many other Castilian plazas of the 17th and future centuries. We will pass along Toledo Street until arriving to Puerta del Sol with its many recesses that evoke Spanish history of the last five hundred years. Possibility to attend a performance at the Teatro Real. Possibility of organizing a special dinner. Overnight in Madrid.

Day 3 After our flight from Madrid to Barcelona, we will enjoy a scenic tour of the "City of Counts". Our visit begins on the grand avenues of the Eixample district with its modernist buildings -notably the homes on the Paseo de Gracia such as Lleó Morera, Amatller, Batlló and Milá- and we will arrive at the Sagrada Familia, masterpiece of architect Gaudí. Following a stop in another of his better known works, the Güell Park, we will arrive at the top of Montjuich with its magnificent views of the city and the coast. In the city's historical district we will find the Gran Teatre del Liceu, the oldest of the city and, during the last 150 years, one of the most famous opera stages where Arias have been sung by the best tenors and sopranos of the world. The most recent remodeling has updated the building with the most modern technologies. Possibility to attend a performance at the Gran Teatre del Liceu. Overnight in Barcelona.

Day 4 Barcelona's historical district is known for its Gothic neighborhood where we will visit Santa Maria del Mar, one of the most beautiful examples of the peculiar Catalan Gothic style. Our visit takes us to such exemplary sites as the Cathedral, the Palau de la Generalitat, the Plaza Real and the famous Ramblas, a lively avenue perfect for a stroll. We will have the opportunity to see the emblematic Boqueria Market, the largest market in Spain, bound

to the city, its traditions and popular celebrations. Of course we will visit the Palau de la Música Catalana, designed by famed architect Domenech i Montaner, and one of the great monuments of Catalan Modernism, which earned it the title of World Heritage Site. Built in 1908, it still serves as an internationally renowned concert hall offering productions by the most notable performers and orchestras worldwide. Possibility to attend a performance at the Palau de la Música Catalana. Possibility of organizing a special farewell dinner. Overnight in Barcelona.

Day 5 Transfer to the Barcelona Airport.



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5 days	
Day 1	✈️ MADRID
Day 2	MADRID
Day 3	MADRID - BARCELONA
Day 4	BARCELONA
Day 5	BARCELONA ✈️

Madrid. Terraza Plaza Mayor. Foto cedida por: Consorcio Turístico de Madrid

Coral. Foto cedida por: Patronato Provincial de Turismo de Granada

Barcelona. Anillo Olímpico. Foto cedida por: Espai d'Imatge Turisme de Barcelona