

HIGHLIGHTS OF NORTHERN SPAIN

Blue-Roads | Europe (BRT)

With cosmopolitan cities and ancient villages, rolling vineyards and rugged mountains, Northern Spain is as unforgettable as it is eclectic. Discover awe-inspiring sights, tantalising flavours and fascinating culture as we leave the traditional tourist trail behind on our journey through the mesmerising Basque, Navarre and Catalonia regions.



TOUR CODE:

BHSBX3



Thank you for choosing **Blue-Roads**

Your extraordinary adventure awaits!

About your tour notes

These tour notes contain everything you need to know before your tour departs – from where to meet your fellow guests and local guide to what essentials to pack for your journey.

We recommend you print this document out and bring it with you on your tour. Give a copy to loved ones at home so they can follow your adventure, too.

IMPORTANT: please refresh this document as close to your departure as possible to ensure you're equipped with the latest information available.

THE BLUE-ROADS DIFFERENCE

- Master the art of Spanish cuisine with a traditional cooking class in Pamplona
- Explore the magnificent Olite Royal Palace – the medieval seat of the Court of Navarre
- Experience the coastal charm and gastronomical delights of San Sebastián

TOUR CURRENCIES

- Spain - EUR

Your **itinerary**

DAY 1 | BILBAO (SPAIN)

Architectural allure, natural beauty and rich culture – we'll meet the group in Bilbao and get to know each other over a sumptuous welcome dinner. Here's to the incredible adventure ahead! Accommodation: Catalonia Gran Vía Bilbao Hotel (or similar)

MEALS:

- Dinner

DAY 2 | BILBAO – SAN SEBASTIÁN

After breakfast, we'll kick things off with a locally guided city tour. A hub of contemporary architecture – we'll wander Bilbao's lively Old Town and receive an authentic insight into this industrious city. Then, it's time to visit the captivating exhibitions of the Guggenheim Museum for an education in art. After some free time for lunch, it's all aboard the mini-coach as we continue on to San Sebastián. As one of the gastronomic capitals of the world, we'll have the rest of the afternoon to discover the array of bars and restaurants this charming coastal town is famous for. Accommodation: Catalonia Donosti Hotel (or similar)

MEALS:

- Breakfast

DAY 3 | SAN SEBASTIÁN – LAGUARDIA

Before setting off for Laguardia we'll make a scenic stop at the Monte Igueldo Mirador lookout, which offers breathtaking views of San Sebastián. Timing dependent, we may have the opportunity to sample some local pintxos before arriving at our hotel in the heart of the Basque country. Finding ourselves surrounded by acres of vineyards and breathtaking landscapes, here we'll settle in for an included dinner. Accommodation: Hotel Eguren Ugarte (or similar)

MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 4 | LAGUARDIA – LA RIOJA – LAGUARDIA

This morning, we'll make the short drive to the medieval city of Laguardia. Here, we'll wander the ancient walled quarter with our expert Tour Leader and uncover the fascinating history behind the town's underground tunnels. We'll continue our journey to La Rioja – where we'll be lucky enough to visit a distinguished winery to enjoy a tasting session. Back at our accommodation, we'll have the evening to spend at our leisure enjoying the scenic vistas from the hotel's terrace or exploring the surrounding area on one of the nearby hiking trails. Accommodation: Hotel Eguren Ugarte (or similar)

MEALS:

- Breakfast

DAY 5 | LAGUARDIA – OLITE – PAMPLONA

Our road leads to enchanting walled town of Olite this morning. Here we'll explore magnificent Olite Royal Palace: the medieval castle that was once the seat of the Court of Navarre. Afterwards we'll have time to stroll the cobbled streets and settle in for lunch – the town's local restaurants boast exceptional Spanish fare, so we'll be spoiled for choice! Later we'll continue on to Pamplona, where an included dinner awaits. Accommodation: Hotel Maisonnave (or similar)

MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 6 | PAMPLONA

The capital of Navarre is ours to discover today! We'll spend some time admiring historic landmarks such as Pamplona Cathedral and the Plaza del Castillo on a stroll with our Tour Leader. Then we'll roll up our sleeves for a Spanish cooking class – with our very own creations on today's lunch menu. Later it's time to delve into this handsome city at our own pace. Explore the atmospheric lanes, verdant parks and grand Gothic churches. Or indulge in a spot of retail therapy in the Old Town, lined with buzzing shops and cosy taverns. Accommodation: Hotel Maisonnave (or similar)

MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Lunch

DAY 7 | PAMPLONA – JACA – BOLTAÑA

Our first stop of the day will be the Monastery of Leyre; one of the most historic religious complexes in Spain. Here we'll delve into the fascinating history of the region as we explore St Virila Abbey, the 'porta speciosa' doorway and the coffer – which holds the remains of the first kings of Navarre. We'll then continue our journey to Jaca – where we'll have the chance to stroll around the charming old town and lay eyes on the 11th-century Romanesque cathedral. The picturesque hilltop village of Boltaña is our home for the night – and setting for this evening's delicious included dinner. Accommodation: Barceló Monasterio de Boltaña (or similar)

MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 8 | BOLTAÑA – LLEIDA – CARDONA

Today, we'll turn back the hands of time with a visit to La Seu Vella – a magnificent hilltop fortress-cathedral that looms over the city of Lleida. Here we'll discover the medieval chapel, 14th-century Gothic cloister and bell tower with a local guide, before returning to the charming Old Town for some free time. Later, we'll continue to Cardona – where we'll explore the imposing castle that stands watch over the town. This evening is ours to spend at our leisure. Accommodation: Hotel Bremon (or similar)

MEALS:

- Breakfast

DAY 9 | CARDONA – BESALÚ AND SIURANA – GIRONA

Before departing Cardona, we'll have the opportunity to visit the Salt Mines – where we'll explore the old mine shafts and underground museum with a local guide. Afterwards, we'll set our sights on the medieval village of Besalú – a hidden treasure filled with Romanesque architecture. And this afternoon? A unique insight into the rural culture of Catalonia awaits at a traditional farm in Siurana. We'll be shown around before having the opportunity to sample some of the farm's delicious cheeses. Our last stop for the day is Girona, where we'll have the evening to explore at our own pace. Accommodation: Hotel Museu Llegendes de Girona (or similar)

MEALS:

- Breakfast

DAY 10 | GIRONA

This morning we'll seek out the likes of Girona's landmark Cathedral, the Esglesia de Sant Feliu and the medieval Sant Pere de Galligants on a locally guided walking tour, before having the remainder of the day to spend as we please. There's plenty of time for a leisurely lunch and a wander along the ancient city walls. Tonight, we'll regroup and reflect on our unforgettable journey with a farewell dinner. Accommodation: Hotel Museu Llegendes de Girona (or similar)

MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 11 | GIRONA – CADAQUÉS – BARCELONA

Before we say our final goodbyes, we'll pay a visit to the Salvador Dalí Museum-House in Cadaqués – where we'll see the surrealist artist's workshop, library and gardens. This afternoon, we'll make our way along the sun-kissed Costa Brava to Barcelona – where our tour will come to an end.

MEALS:

- Breakfast



Tour information

Meals

INCLUDED MEALS

Breakfast (B) is included daily.

Some of your lunches and dinners are also included, either in hotels or local restaurants. These are indicated by (L) and (D) in the itinerary.

Please note that drinks will not always be included.

We will do our best to accommodate any specific dietary requirements you may have. Please ensure to make these clear to us before your tour begins so we can communicate them to our hotels, restaurants and suppliers.

Other **information**

Finances

CHANGING MONEY

CASH: Foreign money can be changed at banks, airports, some railway and tube stations, and at major hotels (though at a less favourable rate).

CREDIT CARDS: Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted. American Express is only accepted in some larger establishments.

CASH MACHINES: ATMS are widely available.

TIPPING

Tipping is entirely at your discretion. If you feel you have received exceptional service, it is recommended that you tip £1-2/€ per day for Drivers and £4- 5/€ per day for Tour Leaders.

Insurance

Before travelling with Blue-Roads Touring, it is compulsory for all guests to take out comprehensive travel insurance. Please ensure your insurance covers medical expenses (including repatriation), cancellation cover, loss or damage to baggage and personal effects, money and personal liability.

We recommend you carry your insurance details with you at all times. You may be asked to provide details of your medical insurance or a payment guarantee in some countries before medical assistance can be provided.

For more information, please see our FAQ page: **www.blueroadstouring.com/faqs**

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact our friendly Customer Service team: **www.blueroadstouring.com/contact-us**

Passports and visas

Please ensure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your tour. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your tour's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling.

PLEASE NOTE: Some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure as requirements do change periodically.

We advise you to either carry a photocopy of your passport (and visa, if applicable) with you while abroad, or to ensure that you leave a copy with relatives back at home. This will enable the local embassy or high commission

to arrange a replacement if the original should be lost or stolen. If you do take copies with you on your tour, please ensure that you keep these separate from your original documents.

Medication and mobility

Whilst on your tour, we want you to have the smoothest journey possible which requires some mobility conditions:

- You must be fit enough to get on and off the vehicle on a regular basis, and to walk around towns and villages or to attractions.
- You must be able to walk up and down stairs and use a shower over the bath.

Please note that, unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate mobility scooter or wheelchair users as we frequently stay in traditional-style hotels and the majority do not have lifts or ground-floor rooms.

If you take medicine for certain conditions, such as diabetes or heart problems, please carry it with you at all times.

Please declare any medical conditions you may have in advance of your tour. If you are in any doubt as to whether our tours are suitable for you, please contact our friendly Customer Service team:
www.blueroadstouring.com/contact-us

Mental health and wellbeing

Culture shock, homesickness and periods of feeling down happen regardless of age. Be rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Tour Leader and Driver will do their utmost to make you smile.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call loved ones. Hearing a familiar voice whilst in an unfamiliar destination can help ground you and remind you you're not alone.
- Eat well. Nobody feels their best when they're hungry. There are plenty of nutritious culinary delights to be savoured along the road!
- Integrate with your fellow guests. The more you socialise with the group, the less likely you'll feel homesick.

Transport

We travel in premium mini-coaches equipped with comfortable seats, air conditioning and large windows for enjoying the view.

With far more flexibility than a standard-size coach, we're able to take the scenic route – winding through beautiful countryside to the heart of tiny villages and coastal towns.

What to **bring**

Based on our experience, the following items are essential.

Please note, this is a general packing list for Blue-Roads tours. What you pack will depend on the countries you're visiting as well as the time of year you plan to travel.

CLOTHING:

- Sun hat
- Sunglasses
- Sleepwear
- Warm jacket
- Underwear
- Long-sleeved tops
- Short-sleeved tops
- Shorts/skirts
- Socks
- Smart casual evening wear
- Light jacket
- Waterproof jacket
- Trousers
- Swimwear
- Walking shoes/comfortable shoes

OTHER THINGS TO PACK:

- Multi-use adapter plug
- Batteries
- Umbrella
- Any personal medication
- Toiletries
- Sunscreen
- Reusable water bottle
- Basic medical kit (including paracetamol, aspirin, plasters etc)
- Camera
- Towel
- Insect repellent

That's it!

We look forward to seeing you on tour.