

Spain

Destination Guide




Contents



Spain is one of the most popular holiday destinations in Europe, with great lifestyle and cultural nuances from region to region. For many travellers to visit. With mouth-watering seafood, crystal clear beaches, beautiful flamenco dancers, vibrant nightlife and unusual festivals like the world's biggest food fight - La Tomatina!. Each city has a unique & fascinating ambience to discover, whether it be the capital Madrid, Barcelona or the bustling city of Seville. With so many fantastic destinations in Spain, it's easy to make the most of your holiday with Auto Europe. Use this Destination Guide for information on travel in Spain and suggested self-drive itineraries.

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Renting a Car in Spain

Class	Fuel Capacity	Type	Transmission	Fuel/Air Cond.
M = Mini	0.8 - 1.0	B = 2 Door	M = Manual	R = Yes
E = Economy	1.0 - 1.4	D = 4 Door	A = Automatic	N = No
C = Compact	1.2 - 1.6	C = 2/4 door	N = Manual 4WD	D = Diesel Air
F = Full size	2.0 - 3.2	L = Limousine	C = Manual AWD	Q = Diesel No Air
P = Premium	2.0 - 4.2	S = Sports Car	B = Auto 4WD	H = Hybrid Air
L = Luxury	2.0 - 4.2	T = Convertible	D = Auto AWD	I = Hybrid No Air
X = Special	1.2 - 3.0	J = All Terrain	Examples: ECMN: E = Economy C = 2 or 4 door M = Manual N = No Aircon FDAR: F = Full Size D = 4 Door A = Automatic R = Aircon	E = Electric Air
		R = Recreational		C = Electric No Air
		F = 4 Wheel Drive		
		X = Special		
		K = Commercial Van/Truck		
		P = Ute		
		X = Special		
		E = Executive		

Do I need a credit card?

Yes. A credit card will be needed when collecting the vehicle and will be used for a security bond. The deposit is generally the insurance excess of the rental car, which depends on the category of vehicle you have booked and the rate type.

Automatic and Manual Transmissions

Both automatic and manual vehicles are available in Spain. Automatic vehicles are generally more expensive and may be more scarce at smaller depots.

Collecting at an Airport in Spain

At most Spanish airports you will find your rental company has a desk in the arrivals hall, with the rental cars located within walking distance. However, at smaller airports you may be required to collect your vehicle from a downtown depot. A courtesy transfer will be provided from the airport to the depot in this instance. Auto Europe offer all-inclusive prices which generally include any location / airport fees and charges that may otherwise apply. Remember to check at the time of booking to ensure your rental will include all airport fees.

Can I collect my rental car in one Spanish city and drop it off in another Spanish city?

Yes, this is certainly possible. In some cases there may be a one-way fee charged by our suppliers when you collect your rental. Auto Europe will advise of any additional fees before you travel. In most cases, there are no fees for one way rentals within Spain.

Motorhome Rental

Enjoy the convenience of accommodation and transport in one. Auto Europe offers 2 - 6 berth vehicles, with collection points at Barcelona, A Coruna, Cartagena, Madrid, Gijon, Girona, Lugo, Malaga, San Sebastian, Seville and Tarragona. Explore some of the most scenic camping grounds Spain has to offer.

Rental Vehicle Insurance



Rental Vehicle Insurance

Spanish law requires all vehicles to have compulsory third party (CTP) injury insurance, although your car rental supplier should already have comprehensive insurance covering their cars. In the case of an accident, it must be reported to the insurance provider immediately and an excess will be due.

Car Rental Companies in Spain will normally include:

- **Third Party Insurance and compulsory insurance** will be included in your car hire price. This covers you for other people's injury and damage to their vehicle.
- **Collision Damage Waiver (CDW):** This limits your financial liability for damage to the rented vehicle and is normally included in prepaid car hire prices. Rentals are normally subject to liability excess, which can be reduced at the time you collect your rental car or by taking out **Auto Europe Excess Refund Insurance**.
- **Theft and Loss Cover:** This limits your financial liability for the loss or theft of the rented vehicle and is generally included in the prepaid car rental price.
- **Fire and Liability:** Limits your financial liability for bodily injury or death, and is normally included in the prepaid car hire price.
- **Personal Accident Insurance:** This covers the driver for personal injuries and is generally not included in your car rental rate. It is considered an optional extra that you can take out upon collection of the car.

Auto Europe Excess Refund Insurance

When renting a vehicle, the rental rates include basic insurance. However, in the event that the vehicle is stolen or accidentally damaged, there is usually an insurance excess amount which the driver is liable to pay to the rental company. To avoid any unexpected costs opt for Auto Europe Excess Refund Insurance which will offer a reimbursement for the supplier's damage and theft excess to a maximum for AU\$5,000. Simply add this onto your car rental booking prior to departure and you could save thousands of dollars in case of an accident. To find out more, simply call Auto Europe on 0800 885 052 or visit the [Auto Europe website](#).

The Auto Europe Hire Car Excess Refund Insurance is managed by Accident & Health International Underwriting Pty Limited, ABN 26 053 335 952, AFSL 238261 and underwritten by CGU Insurance Limited, ABN 27 004 478 371, AFSL 238291.

Driving Laws in Spain

- Drive on the RIGHT hand side of the road. The driver sits on the left hand side of the car.
- Do not park in areas painted yellow on the pavement, curb or where a no parking sign is displayed. In major cities, parking spaces marked blue on the pavement are metered parking, spaces marked with yellow are no parking. Before parking your vehicle, make sure to check for signage nearby, otherwise you may be left with a parking infringement and/or your car towed. Double parking is also illegal within Spain.
- On almost all motorways you will pay a toll, depending on the distance. Pick-up a machine-dispensed ticket upon entering the motorway, then pay on exit; don't lose the ticket or you will pay the maximum fee. Choose your lane to pay by person or machine with a credit card.
- At roundabouts, signs will indicate that traffic on the roundabout has priority. If there is no sign then the traffic entering the roundabout has priority. Give way to traffic from your left unless otherwise signed.
- Having headphones in your ears is banned, with the exception of hearing aids.
- It is illegal to wear sunglasses in a tunnel.
- Laws are strict on the use of indicator lights, make sure to use your indicators when overtaking and turning or you run the risk of getting fined.
- Drink driving is a very serious offence. The limit is 0.05%. Exceeding this will incur severe penalties including imprisonment or confiscation of your licence.
- Mobile phones cannot be used while driving, even when pulled to the side. You must park completely away from any traffic before using your phone.
- Pedestrians and cyclists have the right of way.
- In case of a breakdown, all vehicles must be equipped with two (2) warning triangles and a reflective jacket that must be worn when outside the vehicle and the triangles placed 30 metres in front of and behind the vehicle. This should be provided with your rental car.
- Unless otherwise specified, the speed limits are 75 mph (120km/h) on toll motorways, 68 mph (110 km/h) on open roads, 31 mph (50 km/h) in built-up areas and cities.
- Children under 12 years of age or under 135 cms in height must be seated in an appropriate child seat.



Parking

In Spain, various types of signs are used to indicate parking restrictions. Some areas employ alternate side parking, meaning parking is only allowed on one side of the road depending on the date. Signs marked 1-15 or 16-31 mean you cannot park on that side between those dates. On one way streets, parking on the left only.

Pay-and-display machines are common throughout Spain. Parking is free on Sundays and public holidays, unless otherwise indicated.

Min & Max Age Requirements

Min Driving Age: Usually 21 years depending on the supplier and vehicle type.

Young Driver Surcharge: Drivers aged 21-24 years may be charged a fee of €18.08/day, with a maximum fee of €175.20 per rental.

Max Driving Age: The majority of locations in Spain do not have a maximum driving age, however there may be restrictions for drivers aged 70-75 in some regions. In some cases, aged drivers may be required to hold a letter from their GP stating they are healthy and fit to drive. Check with Auto Europe for further details.

Licence Requirements

A full driving licence is required to drive in Spain. All drivers must have held a full valid driving licence for a minimum of one year. New Zealand residents are required by law to have an international drivers licence. Contact your local motoring association for further information. Carry your driver's licence with you when you travel, as some authorities may not recognise the international driver's licence and could ask for additional confirmation of your licence.

Cross Border Fees and One Way Rentals

Travelling between Spain and other European countries:

International one way trips are definitely possible. However, as with any international one way, this will incur a one way fee. Prices vary depending on the supplier, the length of the rental and the drop off destination.

Can I collect my car in Spain, visit another European city, then return it to Spain?

Travel is certainly possible to visit surrounding mainland European countries. There will be restrictions on travel to Northern European countries in winter, so advise Auto Europe when you make your car hire booking if you're considering travel to these countries. Most suppliers will not permit travel to Eastern European countries. Driving outside of mainland Europe or the United Kingdom is strictly forbidden.

Regions of Spain

North Western Spain:

Galicia
Asturias
Cantabria

Northern Spain:

Basque country
Navarra
La Rioja

North Eastern Spain:

Catalonia
Aragon
Extremadura

Central Spain:

Madrid
Castile-La Mancha
Castile-Leon

Eastern Spain:

Murcia
Valencia

Andalucía

The Islands:

Balearic Islands
Canary Islands

Regions & FAQs



Can I collect my rental car in Spain and drop it off in Britain?

Many rental suppliers in Spain do allow one way rentals to other countries, however drop off fees do apply. International one ways always need to be booked in advance. If you are travelling outside the country, please inform Auto Europe at the time of booking.

Should I take out additional insurance on my car rental?

Rental rates will include basic insurance: Collision Damage Waiver (CDW), Third Party Liability and Theft Protection. In the event that your rental vehicle is accidentally damaged -regardless of fault- or stolen, the insurance excess is the maximum amount for which you are liable.

Should I hire a GPS for driving in Spain?

GPS units can also be requested direct with some suppliers, however this will be at their own rates

What do I do if I want to extend my car rental whilst in Spain?

Once the car rental has commenced you will have to call the depot where you initially collected the vehicle. If the car is available to be extended, you will be offered additional days at the local rate.

North West Spain



Spain's northwest is its most historic region, situated north of Portugal and sharing the coastline with the Atlantic Ocean. This area has an astonishing history divided into three autonomous communities, Galicia, Asturias and Cantabria. Galicia province, located north of Portugal, is filled with gushing valleys, scenic mountains and rivers flowing towards the Atlantic Ocean. Asturias lies between Cantabria and Galicia; perfect for self-drive tours through its lush forests blanketed with stunning scenery and unspoilt coastlines. Cantabria is home to the city of Santander and stunning coastal roads.

Attractions

Tower of Hercules – A lighthouse built back in the 98-117AD, which is still a functioning lighthouse today and also one of the world's oldest.

Santiago de Compostela Cathedral – A medieval cathedral discovered back in 819 AD which was built over the tomb of Saint. James, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ.

Santa Maria del Naranco and San Miguel de Lillo monuments – Two Roman Catholic churches erected in the 9th Century, which are now declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Picos de Europa, National Park – A huge national park with a range of mountains, wildlife and villages stretched along three regions, Leon, Cantabria and Asturias.

Parque de la Naturaleza de Cabarceno – A wildlife park located 15km from Santander; renowned for the semi-freedom of their animals, and scenic botanical routes.

Palacio Real de La Magdalena – The Royal Palace of the Magdalena located in Santander, was built back in the early 1900's, now today a historical architectural site.

Events

January

Día de los Reyes (Three Kings Day) – January 6, festival of the Epiphany Parades, and the traditional time to give presents in Spain.

June

Corpus Christi – June 2, Spanish holiday marked by big processions, especially in Toledo, Málaga, Seville, and Granada.

September

Feira Franca - The fair marks the height of Pontevedra's Prosperity in in the 15th and 16th centuries, through historical recreation, theatre, animation and demonstration of artisanal activities.

October

Fiesta de San Froilán - 4–12 October, celebration of the patron saint of the city of Lugo.

November

All Saints Day – 1 November, a national public holiday in Memory of relatives and friends. A solemn but very important day in the lives of many Spaniards.

Self Drive Tours: Northwest Spain



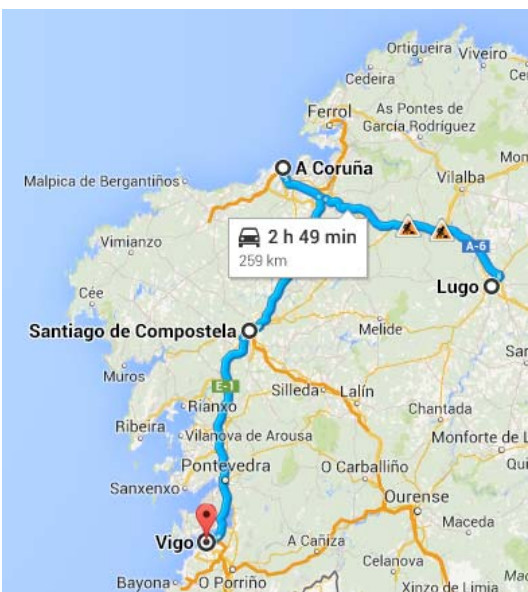
The Pilgrims Drive

Enjoy this revered and celebrated path along the Pilgrims Way in Spain, also known as the Camino de Santiago. While this path is traditionally hiked by pilgrims, it can easily be driven and enjoyed just as much. Each city has a cathedral that is of great importance to this pilgrimage. Start your journey at the foot of the French Pyrénées in the tiny town of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port and travel south on the N135 through Roncesvalles to the famous city of Pamplona. Make the most of this wonderful town, recognised for the Running of the Bulls. Continue south west through the delightful city of Burgos, which boasts a colourful culinary scene with an endless list of tapas restaurants, perfect for any foodie. Continue west to León where you can taste the local special, *embutidos*. Make a stop in the incredibly beautiful town of O Cebreiro which sits 1300m above sea level. The rest of the drive is almost entirely downhill, venturing through the village of Villafranca del Bierzo on your way to Santiago de Compostela. Attend the pilgrim mass at the cathedral and explore this phenomenal coastal city in Spain.



Lugo to Vigo

Just half a day trip, you'll pass through four major towns. Your journey starts from the gothic town of Lugo. Here you will witness the architectural heritage and sites surrounded by Roman Walls. When you leave Lugo, drive towards the west on the A-6, take the A Coruña exit, and continue the drive along the AP-9 until you arrive into A Coruña. This beautiful region is popular for its clean beaches, sunshine, water sports and its rich Celtic and Roman heritage which is still very much alive today. Moving on, take the A-6 and continue onto the AP-9. As you drive along this route you have the option to take a detour and visit the famous medieval town of Santiago de Compostela - visited by hundreds and thousands a year for its historic and religious reference. Hop back onto the AP-9 and follow the signs to Vigo. A well established tourist destination. Visitors flock to Vigo for its wonderful summer weather, attractive beaches and its varieties of modern and architectural sites.



Northern Spain



Northern Spain consists of three autonomous communities, La Rioja, Navarre and the Basque Country. All three communities have a strong historic appearance set upon vast landscapes. La Rioja is the smallest autonomous community in Spain, yet still popular by outside tourists for its world-class wine. The Navarre province is most famous for its festivals, such as the 'Running of the Bulls' in Pamplona. The Basque Country is made up of three smaller provinces - Alava, Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya. Bilbao is the main tourist hotspot in the Basque Country and boasts a vibrant mix of modern and historic architecture.

Attractions

Pamplona

Pamplona Cathedral - The Cathedral of Royal Saint Mary is Pamplona's most symbolic monument. Built around the 15th Century, this gothic houses some of the greatest historic artefacts.

Ciudadela - a great example of Europe's renaissance fortifications, built in the 16th century.

Bilbao

Guggenheim Museum - A modern and contemporary building designed by American architect Frank Gehry and temporary exhibitions of other Guggenheim collections.

Mercado Rural de Santo Tomas - A lively street market set up with hundreds of stalls selling fine quality merchandise and produce.

Events

January

Cider Season - 13th January, the last day of apple harvest and marks the official start of the cider season when cider houses serve their latest ciders.

San Sebastian Feast Day - the Patron Saint's Day,

features various parades, parties, races, and celebrations long into the night.

February

Caldereros (Tinker Day) - Early February, street parades and parties commemorate the historic arrival of Hungarian Gypsies in San Sebastian.

May

Sagardo Eguna (Cider Day) - Early May, a historic local festival which was first held in 1985.

June

Beer Fest - Mid-June, situated around the Paseo de Justo Elizaran, hosts a vast marquee and a range of beers to be tasted.

August

Aste Nagusia - Beginning the first Saturday after August 15th, Bilbao's festival lasts 9 days with lively music, theatre and evening fireworks displays.

September

The San Sebastian International Film Festival - one of Spain's most famous film festivals set over nine days.

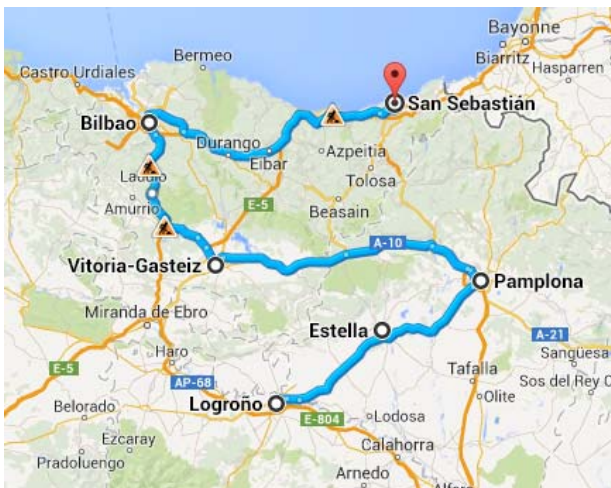
November

Marathon - An important international sporting event held through central San Sebastian.



The Grand 'S'

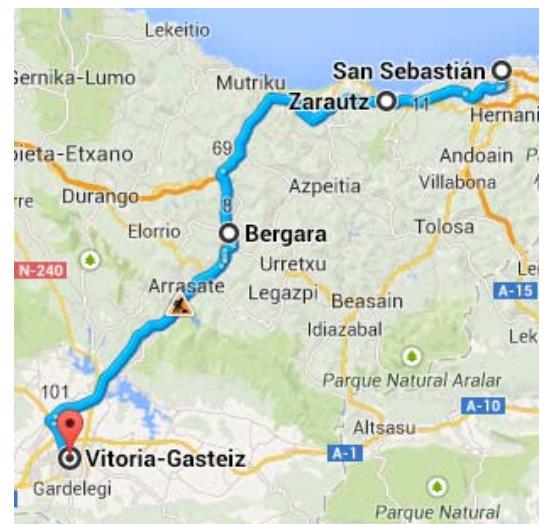
This trip is relatively short, you will pass through four exciting cities along the way. From the capital city of Logroño (La Rioja), hop on to the A-12 and head towards the east. Halfway towards Pamplona, would be medieval town of Estella where you'll find the buildings of historic Roman and Gothic architecture. Continuing on the A12, follow the signs that lead you into Pamplona. Take the AP-15 out of the city; follow on through the A-10, then onto the Autovia del Norte. Make a quick stop for a meal in Vitoria-Gasteiz before continuing on along



the Autovia de Altube. Passing by spectacular scenery in the Basque Country region of the AP-68, follow the signs and take the exit that will lead you into Bilbao. A modern city of its own, Bilbao has it all to fit any traveller's needs. One monument that can't be missed is the Bilbao Museum; its magnificent architecture is truly outstanding. For the last leg of your trip drive along the A-8 for one last glimpse of Spain's beautiful countryside, before finishing off in the coastal city of San Sebastián with its beautiful resorts, festivals, brilliant waters, magnificent scenery and friendly people, which are some of the many exciting features this vibrant city offers.

San Sebastian to Vitoria Gasteiz

From the unspoilt city of San Sebastian, drive along the A-8, while making a quick stop at the beaches of Zarautz, before heading south-inland. As you drive, you'll pass through acres of vast scenery and mountains. This is a great opportunity for a short stop for some quick snaps. Once you pass through Elgoibar, lookout for the turn off onto the AP-1. Not long down the road you'll find a small town called Bergara. Make a quick turn off to visit this friendly small town village before getting back on the roads again. Take the exit that will allow you to continue south along the N-240, and within twenty minutes you will arrive into your destination Vitoria-Gasteiz. Built upon an agricultural culture and medieval designs, Vitoria-Gasteiz is a charming little city where you can relax, wonder through the numerous museums and historic buildings, join in a festival or taste fine Basque wine.



North East Spain



North East Spain has two autonomous communities; Catalonia and Aragon. Catalonia is nestled along the coastline of the Balearic Sea, while Aragon sits in between Navarra and Catalonia. Barcelona is the capital city of Catalonia and is the second largest city in Spain, after Madrid. Barcelona, along with its modern and gothic architecture, bars, restaurants and clubs, hosts a variety of festivals throughout the year. Inland is the sacred city of Zaragoza, embraced by the Ebro River and one of the greatest monumental towns in Spain. Aragon is less populated and perfectly suited for those looking to head off the beaten track.

Attractions

Catalonia

La Sagrada Família - A massive Roman Catholic church in Catalonia which is still under construction since 1882.

Volcanoes - extinct Volcanoes near the town of Olot are now great hiking routes and make for interesting lesson in geology of the region.

Barcelona

Magic Fountain - The most spectacular water fountains in Barcelona. During the summer evenings light shows are displayed, where hundreds of visitors come to watch the spectacular fifteen minute display.

La Rambla - one of Barcelona's busiest streets, tree-lined and full of street performers and artists.

Aragon

Belchite - An old time village torn down from the Spanish civil war. Left undisturbed, visitors have the chance to freely walk through the historic ruins.

Events

January

Festes dels Tres Tombs - A real Catalan tradition, held on 17th January, part of the district festival of Sant Antoni Abat.

March

Holy Week - Holy Week in Zaragoza, attracts over 100,000 visitors to the city and the Good Friday procession is accompanied by 3,500 drums.

April

Jueves Santo - Mid-April, held yearly on Easter Thursday. Celebrations include religious parades and processions through the heart of the Casco Histórico district.

May

Corpus Christi - Carpets of flowers, processions and a 'dancing egg' is balanced on the cathedral's fountain in Barcelona.

June

Circuit Festival - The LGBT festival features a parade starting at the Placa de l'Universat, Barcelona and attracts over 70,000 visitors.

October

Fiestas del Pilar (Pilar Festival), Zaragoza - A festival celebrating the patron saint Virgen del Pilar, with a host of events, funfairs and parties attracting crowds of thousands.

December

Swimming Cup - annual Christmas event where people dive into the cold icy waters of Barcelona Port.



Zaragoza to Barcelona

In just under a day's trip, you'll be able to visit at least five cities and villages, and view historic artefacts as you pass by stunning Spanish scenery.

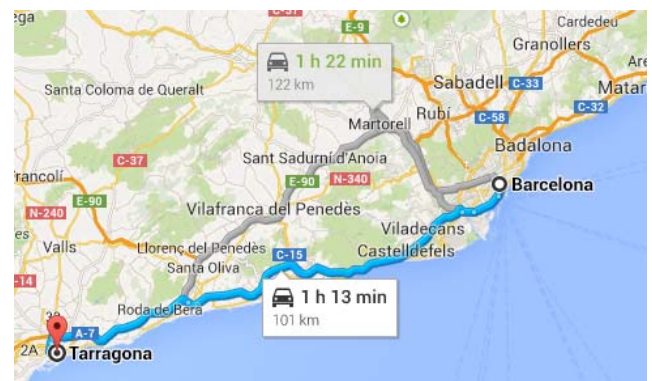
From the banks of the Ebro River in Zaragoza, take the E-90/A-2 and follow the road along the AP-2. Take the exit that leads you into Lleida, where you will find glimpses of the surviving ruins and the still standing cathedrals, built from as early as the 9th Century. Head out onto the LL-12, and continue along the AP-2. Take the exit onto the AP-7 towards Terrassa, an interesting place that holds many fabulous treasures, from churches to monasteries. Take the C-58 out of town and then follow the road along the B-10 and B-20. It won't take you long until you arrive into Mataro. During the summer months, visitors flock here to enjoy the water sports, shopping and bathing along the famous marina. When you're back onto the road, head south along the C-31 and follow the signs into Barcelona. Settled along the borders of the Balearic Sea, Barcelona is a stylish and diverse city with countless activities, such as partying at one of the cities many enjoyable fiestas, eating bocadillos, or just relaxing at Barceloneta Beach. Barcelona offers you a thoroughly enjoyable experience.



Barcelona to Tarragona

This trip has two parts, and you have the choice to take either the coastal route west or the inland route. For an enjoyable start take the coastal route. Drive along the Autopista De Pau Casals approximately 20 minutes south until you arrive into the Parc Natural Del Garraf. The Garraf is an exotic nature park made up of limestone, potholes, sinkholes and rasclers which combined make a classic Karst Mediterranean landscape; a truly magnificent site to explore.

When you are back onto the Autopista de Pau Casals, take the AP-7 exit and continue along this road. Take Exit 33 and follow the signs into Tarragona. The southernmost province in the Catalonia Region, Tarragona boasts a diverse mix of crystal clear waters, pristine beaches, preserved roman ruins. Highlights of the province's attractions include a range of wine-related activities and festivals. When you're ready to head back into Barcelona, why not experience the inland route. Hop back onto the AP-7 for 80km, and then follow the AP-2 and B-23 towards Barcelona. From there, follow the streets signs into Barcelona.



Central Spain



Central Spain is one of the most beautiful and diverse regions in Spain with ancient ruins, fantastic scenery and impressive architecture. Localised towns and cities boast their unique combination of Roman monuments, splendid parks and modern attractions. Located in the heart of central Spain is Madrid, the Spanish capital city. Other provinces include Castile-La Mancha, Castile-Leon and Extremadura, all surrounding Madrid.

Attractions

Madrid

Royal Palace - The Royal Palace is a massive building built with a base of columns, the official residence of the Kings of Spain.

Try the Tapas - Soak up the real Spanish culture, and taste mouth-watering tapas in off-the-beaten track locations. You could wash it down with a local red wine or sangria!

Toledo

Cathedral of Toledo - One of the greatest gothic Structure in Spain.

Monasterio de San Juan de los Reyes - A historic monastery, built around the 1400's, which still stands today.

Segovia

Segovia Aqueduct - One of the most significant and preserved monuments left by Romans in Castile-Leon.

Guadalupe

Royal Monastery of Santa Maria de Guadalupe - A significant Roman Catholic monastery built by the Extremadura Community, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993.

Events

January

San Antón - A little unusual to an onlooker, this event has priests blessing pets in San Antón Church, on the feast day of Spain's patron saint of animals.

May

Madrid Day - An annual concert is held in memory of the 1808 rebellion against Napoleon.

June

San Antonio de la Florida (St. Anthony of Florida) - the city's biggest street party and a highlight of all the festivals in Madrid.

September

Festival de Otoño (Autumn Festival) - September to November, highlights include performing arts festival, (music, dance and theatre) with acts from around the world.

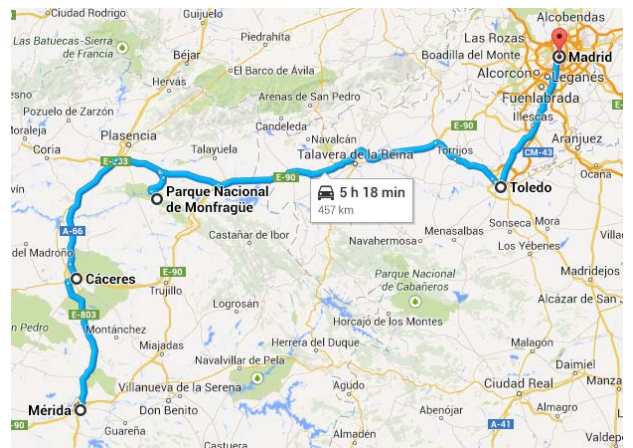
December

Día de los Inocentes - this is a day of practical jokes, similar to April Fools Day and celebrated on 28th December each year.



Mérida to Madrid

From the small village of Mérida marked upon a Roman Heritage, take the A-66 and travel towards Cáceres where you can discover the medieval ruins within. One outstanding monument is the 15th Century gothic Golfines de Abajo Palace. Hit the roads again & take the A-58 towards the east, follow the road for 50km and take the exit onto the A-5. This leg of the trip is over 200km long, so best to carry some snacks. The scenery is splendid, but to see more make a stop at the Parque Nacional de Monfragüe, where you can join in on a walking tour or even try a suggested self-guided tour around the park. Continuing along the A-5, take Exit 76 and follow the signs to Toledo along the A-40. Toledo is a pleasant city, combined with its strong religious presence of Arab, Christians and Jews. It is no wonder why Toledo has been named as the “City of Three Cultures”. To complete your journey, take the AP-41 for 60km, and take the exit onto the R-5 and continue towards Madrid. Within an hour, your journey will end in the famous Spanish city of Madrid, best known for its ever-growing economy, abundant history, impressive architecture, and lively culture.



Valladolid to Madrid



Hop in your car from Valladolid, which was once a city of wealth held by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. One can't miss the Valladolid castle, a truly outstanding artefact still standing within the city. Head out and follow the signs towards the A-62 and continue along the road for 25km. You will then need to take the A-6/A-62 Exit, follow the road for 2km, and then continue along the E-82/A-11. Just over an hour later you will arrive into Salamanca, a small province, nestled in the south west corner of Castile and Leon borders. Here you can visit one of the oldest universities in Spain and possibly the oldest in Europe. To finish your journey, hop onto the N-501 for 5km, and

then merge onto the A-50 for 95km. Look for the A-51 exit in Ávila, join in on the AP-6 for 40km, and then continue along the A-6 for another 40km. You will soon arrive into the capital of Spain - Madrid, one of the largest cities in Western Europe with a population exceeding 3 million people!



The eastern region consists of two provinces, Murcia and Valencia. Both autonomous communities are nestled along the east Mediterranean coast of Spain overlooking the beautiful Spanish Gulf. Valencia rests in the centre of Eastern Spain, with Murcia directly in the south. All year round, tourists from many countries around the globe come to visit these two appealing communities, not only for pristine beaches and wonderful weather, but to visit some of the greatest monuments held within the two cities.

Attractions

Valencia

Plaza de la Reina - A Centuries old cathedral and bell tower

Spanish Paella - Valencia is the region where Paella was invented, you wouldn't want to leave without trying some of this mouth-watering cuisine

Dip in the Hot Springs - about 90km north of Valencia, the spring bubble at 25°C year round

Murcia

Mar Menor - Europe's largest salt water lake, popular for many varieties of water sports

View the sunset - the El Valle and La Fuensanta in the mountains behind the city

Alicante

Terra Natura - Interactive safari park and zoo

Events

January

Cabalgata de los Reyes (Three Holy Kings / Wise Men) - 5th January, a religious parade where three men dressed as the Three Wise Men distribute gifts and sweets to children lining the streets.

March

Las Fallas - A famous festival well-known around Spain. Floats representing many major buildings and landmarks parade through the streets, and then are finally burnt on a bonfire.

April

Semana Santa Marinera (Holy Week) - Start of April, celebrations are held around the country in the lead up to Easter.

May

Fiesta del Cristo del Grau - 4th May, an event which marks the religious statue of Christ from the Santa Maria del Mar Church, which is held along the waterfront of the Valencia Grau District.

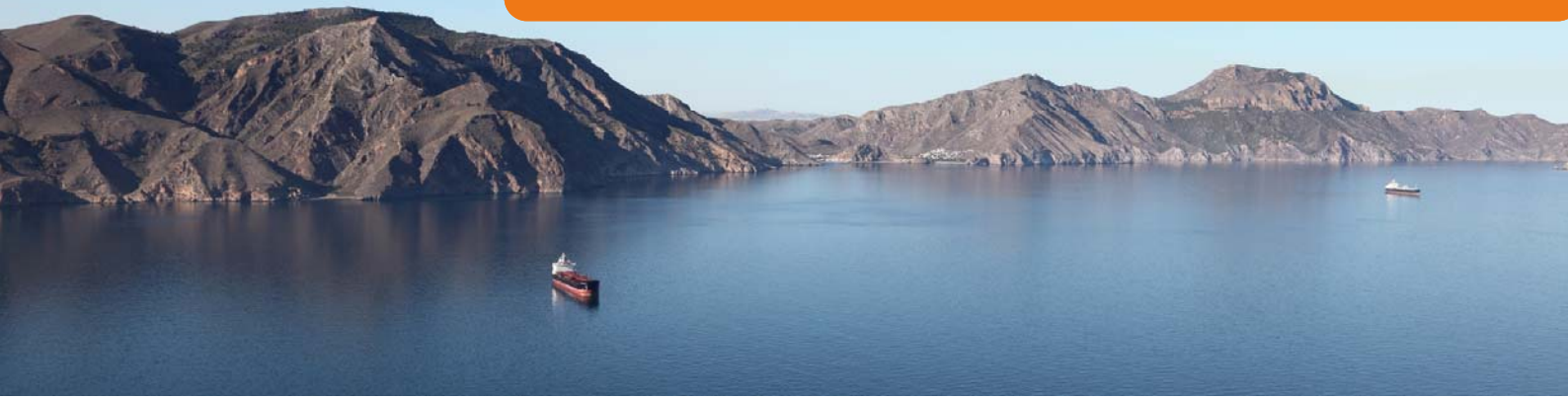
July

Feria de Julio - Last week of July, a huge festival held throughout Valencia. Activities include bullfights, fireworks, concerts, food stalls and parties.

August

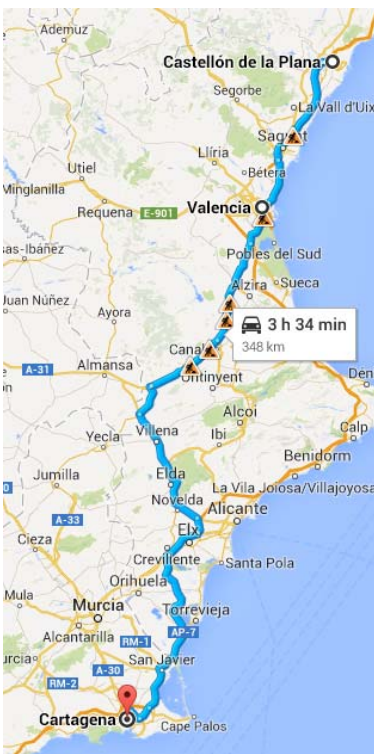
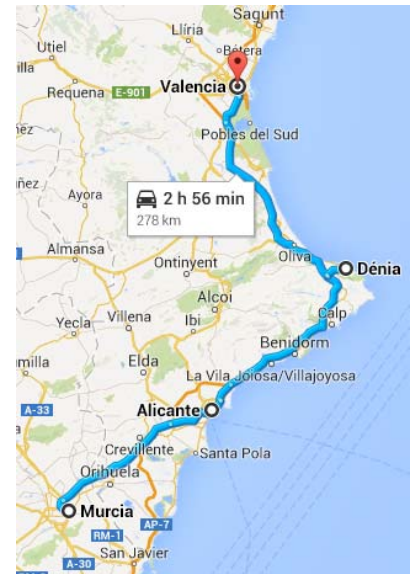
La Tomatina - the last Wednesday of August sees the world's biggest food fight! Throw tomatoes at other happy revellers. Pack goggles!

Self Drive Tours: Eastern Spain



Eastern Coastal Drive

Start your drive in the town of Murcia, known for its fresh produce, festivals and gorgeous baroque churches. From Murcia, head towards the A-30 and continue along the E-15/A-7 for 70km. Take the exit into Alicante for long stretch of sandy beaches and pristine waters. When you are back on the road, look for the A-70, and continue along the AP-7 for 70km. Take Exit 62 into Dénia, a beautiful city set upon the east coast of the Valencia region. There are countless activities to do here, you can jump on a ferry and tour the calm seas of Dénia, swim at one of many beaches along the harbour, explore and discover some of the greatest monuments and buildings, or maybe enjoy a relaxing massage. After all that, head to Valencia. Hop onto the CV-725 and onto the AP-7. Continue north for 80km and then 14km along the V-31 towards Valencia, a magnificent city overlooking the Mediterranean Sea famous for its annual spring festival the Las Fallas, as well as impressive landmarks, unspoilt beaches, exciting fiestas, splendid cuisines and breathtaking scenery.



Castellón de la Plana to Cartagena

This trip is a fair long drive; however driving along the east coast of Spain is truly memorable, from its rugged terrain to watery views and fantastic scenery, you'll quickly find yourself in the moment. From the attractive town of Castellón de la Plana venture out onto the open roads of the A-7 heading south towards Valencia. Make a quick stop in the magnificent city of Valencia, for a fine meal and a little sight seeing before jumping on the coastal stretch of the AP-7. You can choose to visit one of many interesting sites as you please on your journey south. Stop at all or either Denia, Javea or Benidorm for a relaxing beach getaway, or for a great dining experience along the boardwalks. On the AP-7, take Exit 67 and journey along the A-70 for 30km, and then 80km along the AP-7 into Cartagena. Cartagena is a beautiful city which holds one of Spain's most important commercial and navel ports. The architecture is superb and pleasantly mixed with both old and new buildings. As you explore the city's great artefacts, don't forget to visit the important Naval Museum and Naval Head Quarters.



Andalucía is one of the largest single regions in Spain, offering over three-thousand hours of sunshine a year, and with some of the best beaches and coastlines. Located in the southern area of Spain, this region is divided into eight provinces; Almería, Cádiz, Córdoba, Granada, Huelva, Jaén, Málaga & Sevilla. The Andalusian shoreline stretches 900km across the Costa del Sol (Málaga) coastline which features some of the finest resorts in Spain. Being one of the warmest regions in Spain, Andalucía offers many wonderful activities, from trekking through its beautiful mountain ranges to street parties, as well as soaking in the glorious weather it has to offer.

Attractions

Eat some more Tapas! - When you visit different regions, you can't miss out on tasting some of the local delicious tapas!

Granada

Alhambra - A Moorish palace built and constructed during the mid 14th century for the last Muslim Emirs in Spain.

Málaga

Alcazaba - An Arabic Moorish Fortification in the Malaga Region that dates back to the 700s.

Grab a fish dish - fish is Malaga's speciality, and there are plenty of fish restaurants along the beach.

Events

January

Dia de la Toma - A fiesta held in Granada where King Fernando's sword and Queen Isabel's crown are marched through the streets.

March

Holy Week - Religious celebrations are held in the lead up to Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

April

Fiesta de San Marcos - Marks the event of San Marcos, eight bulls are released onto the streets.

June

Dia del Pescaito (Fried Fish Day) - A Seafood Festival held roughly 20km outside Malaga in a town called Torremolinos.

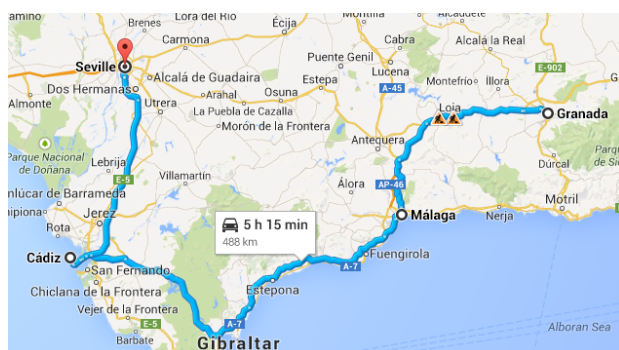
October

Festival Internacional de Jazz - A well-known jazz festival held in Seville and Granada.



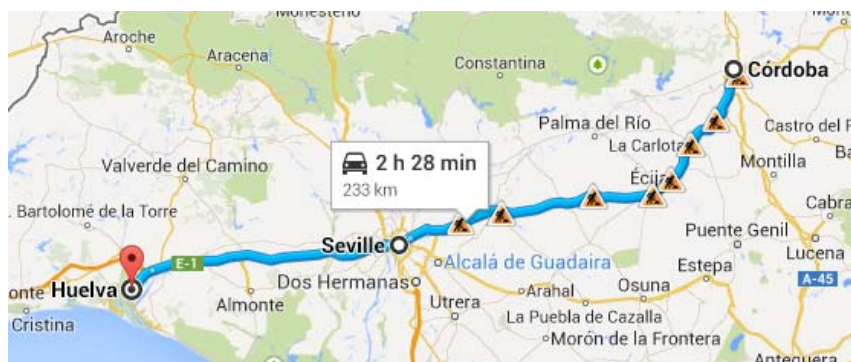
The Best of the South

Experience the great wonders of southern Spain with your car hire. Pick up your car in the mesmerizing city of Granada, where you can visit the Alhambra and enjoy the unique culture of the city. Take the A-92 to exit 177 and then join on the A-92M. Another 25km south, merge onto the AP-46, and then 12km along the A-7 into Málaga. On your arrival taste some of Málaga's finest wines or climb the steps of the Gibralfaro castle. When you are back on road, hop onto the E-15/A-7, and travel along the coast for approximately 50km. On the A-7 towards Algeciras, take exit 110B, continue along the A-381 for 90km, 20km on the AP-4 and then 9km on the N-443. As you cross the bridge you will find yourself on a small island called Cádiz. Cádiz offers the best beaches as well as international tourist attractions such as: the unique horse racing events on the beach of Sanlúcar de Barrameda and the prestigious Carnival of Cádiz. Drive out of the city along the N-443 and then hop on to the AP-4 for 80km. Another 17km along the E-5/A-4, you will soon arrive into Seville. Visit some of Seville's best attractions, such as touring the Gothic Cathedral of Seville or indulge at one of Seville's finest restaurants.



Córdoba to Huelva

This drive is relatively easy and allows you to visit the best sites that the Andalucía region offers. From the modernized city of Córdoba, take the E-5/A-4 and head south-west for 140km towards Seville. Seville is ranked the fourth largest city in Spain, and is also the heart of the Andalucía region where bullfighting, tapas, flamenco and festivals are paramount. To experience the most out of Seville, stay a few days, so you have the chance to enjoy the countless attractions and activities that you can see and do. When you are ready to head out again, hop onto the A-49, travel west for 80km, then take the exit onto the H-31 and follow the signs into Huelva. A city that is dedicated to its bustling port, Huelva is a pleasant city with many great monuments, attractive plazas, and without a doubt splendid seafood! There is also a considerable amount of history marked upon this city, from the Plaza de las Monjas, to its very own sprawling industrial port.



Stay Healthy & Stay Safe



Stay Healthy

Spain's water quality is quite good and drinkable in some major cities, however it is recommended that you keep to bottled water. When eating out try and avoid undercooked meat or fish as some fish may contain toxins or bacteria. Also, stay away from unpasteurized milk as this can contain micro-organisms that may cause disease or infection.

Sunscreen is highly recommended as Spain reaches very high temperatures in the summer months (June-August).

Hospitals in Spain are well maintained and can be easily accessed in major cities. It is advisable to obtain travel insurance prior to traveling outside of New Zealand. For a medical emergency in Spain, call the **European Emergency Number: 112**.

Stay Safe

Spain is a safe country to visit, but travellers should watch out for petty theft. Scamming is a common method for thieves in Spain and motorists are sometimes targeted for such scams. Remain vigilant, but do not let it ruin your trip. Exercise usual safety precautions when you travel and keep your passport and valuables safely locked away.

Many beaches in Spain have beach-safety flags. They are coded as follows:

Green: Safe to Swim

Yellow: Use caution and stay close to the shore

Red: Do not swim – dangerous water conditions

Animals are not allowed on beaches. First Aid can be found with a Red Cross posted along the beach. Keep a close eye on your belongings and use lockers or a cloak room if available.

Police

Call 112 for Police, Ambulance or Fire Service.

Where To Get Help

New Zealand Embassy

Pinar 7 3rd Floor

Madrid

Tel. no. +34 915 230 226

embnuevazeland@telefonica.net



Money Matters

Currency

Euro (EUR €) = 100 cents (¢) Notes are in denominations of €500, €200, €100, €50, €20, €10, €5. Coins are in denominations of €1 and €2, 50, 20, 10, 5 and 1 cent coins.

Currency Exchange

Available in airports, major banks and bureaux de change. Generally banks are open Mon-Fri 0900-1400 and Sat 0900-1300

ATMs

ATMs (automatic teller machines) are located in almost all towns and cities, especially in most banks and accept major credit and debit cards. While Spanish ATMs will usually give you the option to transact in your home currency, it is wise to transact in euro to avoid higher exchange rates.

Credit & Debit Cards

Major credit and debit cards should be accepted throughout Spain, though some businesses have systems that are out of date and may not accept foreign cards. Contact your credit card company immediately if your credit card is lost or stolen.

Tax

In Spain, a value-added tax (VAT) also known as IVA (impuesto sobre el valor añadido) of 21% is applied on goods and services. Visitors who make purchases over €90,16 are entitled to a refund of the 21% VAT from any shop if they are taking them out of Europe within three months of purchase. To apply for the refund ask the shop for a cash back refund form (or similar) & present to the customs booth at the airport, port or border for a VAT refund.

Tipping

Tipping is not normally expected, except for around tourist areas where a service charge may be added to the bill. Locals tend to leave small change, generally around 5% when dining at restaurants.



The Self Drive Specialists

Auto Europe are New Zealand's leaders in self drive holidays. Since 1954, Auto Europe has been a leader in worldwide car hire services. In recent years, we have expanded our services to include over 20,000 car rental locations in over 135 countries worldwide. We boast an extensive choice of car hire as well as luxury and budget motorhome rentals to suit your needs. Our expertise brings you highly competitive prices, alongside outstanding customer service and efficiency.

Booking is easy!

Once you have planned your self drive itinerary and are ready to book, simply visit www.autoeurope.co.nz or click on one of the links below:

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Alternatively call our dedicated Reservations Team on 0800 885 052.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Auto Europe hopes that you find the information in this guide helpful for your self drive holiday in Spain. The touring information has been created to be used as a guide only. All information shown is correct at the time of publication.

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Last updated July 2014