



Spain 2026

Barcelona · Seville · Madrid · May 10–19, 2026

TRAVELERS

Adam & Tsitsi · First international trip together

SEVILLE — QUERENCIA DE SEVILLA

May 13–15

BARCELONA — RENAISSANCE FIRA HOTEL

May 18–19

DOCUMENT VERSION

Family Copy

BARCELONA — FOUR POINTS SHERATON DIAGONAL

May 10–13

MADRID — AVANI ALONSO MARTÍNEZ

May 15–18

EMERGENCY

112 · US Embassy Madrid: +34 91 587 2200

Trip Overview

Dates	City	Hotel	Duration
May 10 (9am) → May 13 (8am)	Barcelona	Four Points by Sheraton Barcelona Diagonal	~3 days
May 13 (noon) → May 15 (morning)	Seville	Querencia de Sevilla	~2 days
May 15 (afternoon) → May 18 (late afternoon)	Madrid	Avani Alonso Martínez	~3 days
May 18 (evening) → May 19 (early flight)	Barcelona	Renaissance Barcelona Fira Hotel	Overnight

Flights & Trains

Outbound — Saturday, May 9

Leg	Route	Flight	Depart	Arrive	Terminal
1	Columbus (CMH) → Boston (BOS)	Delta DL5663	6:15 AM	8:25 AM	CMH: Terminal M / BOS: Terminal A
2	Boston (BOS) → Barcelona (BCN)	Delta DL0250	7:35 PM	8:35 AM May 10	BOS: Terminal E (intl) / BCN: Terminal 1

11-hour BOS layover — rest, eat, and prepare for the overnight transatlantic flight.

Barcelona → Seville — Wednesday, May 13

Route	Flight	Depart	Arrive	Terminals
Barcelona (BCN) → Seville (SVQ)	Vueling VY2224	10:00 AM	11:45 AM	BCN: T1 / SVQ: Single terminal

Seville → Madrid — Friday, May 15

Route	Operator	Depart	Arrive	Class
Sevilla Santa Justa → Madrid Atocha	AVE (Renfe)	9:34 AM	12:12 PM	Comfort

Madrid → Barcelona — Monday, May 18

Route	Operator	Depart	Arrive	Class
Madrid Atocha → Barcelona Sants	Iryo	3:52 PM	6:54 PM	Infinite

Return — Tuesday, May 19

Leg	Route	Flight	Depart	Arrive	Terminal
1	Barcelona (BCN) → Atlanta (ATL)	Delta DL0195	11:00 AM	3:04 PM	BCN: T1 / ATL: Intl Terminal (E/F)
2	Atlanta (ATL) → Columbus (CMH)	Delta DL2786	6:05 PM	7:43 PM	ATL: Domestic South / CMH: Terminal M

Both travelers have Global Entry — use automated kiosks at ATL. ~3-hour layover is comfortable but don't linger.

Barcelona

May 10 (9am) → May 13 (8am) · ~3 days

Hotel: Four Points by Sheraton Barcelona Diagonal

Phone: +34 934 868 800

Check-out: 8:00 AM, May 13

Getting around: Metro T-Casual card (10 trips ~€11.35) · Uber/
Cabify

Address: Avinguda Diagonal 161–163, 08018 Barcelona

Check-in: 3:00 PM (arriving ~11 AM — leave luggage if room not ready)

Airport transfer: Uber from El Prat T1 (~€25–35, ~30–35 min)

Day 1 — Sunday, May 10

Arrival Day · Free Walking Tour + First Night Out

Arriving after an overnight flight with little sleep — keep it easy. One guided tour to get oriented, then food and drinks.

8:35 am Land at El Prat Airport (BCN Terminal 1)

Immigration now includes biometric capture (fingerprints + facial scan) under the new **EU Entry/Exit System (EES)**, active as of April 10, 2026. Budget **60–90 minutes** — early reports show wait times exceeding 2 hours at peak periods. Have your return flight info and hotel address ready. Collect bags, then open Uber app and request ride to hotel (~€25–35, ~30–35 min).

→ Request Uber as soon as you have data in the arrivals hall.

~11:30 am–12:00 pm Check in & rest

Drop bags, freshen up. If room isn't ready (standard check-in is 3 PM), leave luggage and head out. Nap if needed — but keep it under 20 minutes.

1:30 pm Passeig de Gràcia stroll Free · ~2 hrs

Walk Barcelona's grandest boulevard. See Casa Batlló and La Pedrera from the outside. Get your bearings.
→ Leave hotel by 1:15 PM — 10–15 min walk to the boulevard.

4:30 pm Runner Bean Gothic Quarter Free Walking Tour Tips ~€10–15/person · ~2.5 hrs

Best introduction to Barcelona's old city — 2,000 years of history: Roman ruins, medieval Jewish quarter, Inquisition sites, hidden plazas, Barcelona Cathedral. English-only, small groups. Meet guide with the green umbrella.

Meeting point: Plaça Reial (confirm on their website)

→ Leave Passeig de Gràcia by 4:10 PM — 15 min walk south to Plaça Reial through the Gothic Quarter.

7:00 pm Vermouth & Pintxos in El Born ~€8–12/person · ~1 hr

Spaniards don't sit down to dinner until 9pm — bridge the gap the local way. Order a glass of *vermut* with olives, pintxos, or *pan con tomate*.

8:30 pm Dinner in El Born — El Xampanyet or Bar del Pla ~€30–40/person · Walk in — no reservations taken
El Xampanyet (Carrer de Montcada 22) — Barcelona institution since 1929, house-poured cava, salt-cured anchovies. Arrive by 8:15–8:30 PM to get a spot. If there's a wait, **Bar del Pla** (Carrer de la Montada 2) is right nearby — lively modern Catalan tapas and natural wines.

10:30 pm El Paradiso Speakeasy ~€12–18/cocktail · ~2 hrs

Enter through the pastrami sandwich shop at Carrer de la Reina Cristina 7. One of the best bar experiences in Europe.

Day 2 — Monday, May 11

Gaudí + Montjuïc · Full Day

The big Gaudí day — Casa Batlló in the morning, Sagrada Família in the afternoon, Montjuïc in the evening.

8:00 am La Boqueria Market — Breakfast Free entry / €5–10 food · ~1 hr

Arrive before 9am to beat the crowds. Eat at a stall bar inside.

→ Leave by 9:10 AM — Casa Batlló is a 15 min walk north along Las Ramblas and Passeig de Gràcia.

9:30 am Casa Batlló ~€49–55 · 1.5 hrs

Gold ticket includes the general visit + immersive Gaudí Dôme (360° dome, binaural sound), AR tablet, original Concierge Room, and private Batlló family residence. Morning light on the façade is stunning. Out by ~11:00am.

Passeig de Gràcia 43, Eixample

11:00 am Passeig de Gràcia stroll + coffee Free · ~1 hr

Walk north past La Pedrera (admire from outside), find a café, decompress.

→ Head toward Cervecería Catalana by 11:50 AM — 5 min walk. Arrive at noon to beat the Spanish lunch rush.

12:00 pm Lunch — Cervecería Catalana or El Nacional

~€20–30/person · ~45 min · Walk in — no reservations taken

Arrive at noon sharp. **Cervecería Catalana** (Carrer de Mallorca 236) — legendary tapas and montaditos, ask for the *menú del día* (2–3 courses + wine, €12–18). If there's a queue, **El Nacional** (Passeig de Gràcia 24) is the stunning Art Deco food hall backup.

Carrer de Mallorca 236 (Cervecería Catalana) or Passeig de Gràcia 24 (El Nacional)

→ Leave by 12:45 PM — Sagrada Família is a 15 min walk east.

1:30 pm Sagrada Família €43 · 2–2.5 hrs

Complete Experience = basilica + Nativity Tower + audio guide. Early afternoon light through the stained glass nave is spectacular. Allow 2–2.5 hours.

⚠ Construction works on Carrer de la Marina through May 2026 — arrive 15–20 min early.

Carrer de Mallorca 401, Eixample

→ Leave by 3:45 PM. Take taxi or Bus 150 from Plaça d'Espanya to the Montjuïc cable car base.

4:00 pm Montjuïc Cable Car up ~€13

Taxi or Bus 150 from Plaça d'Espanya to the cable car base. The most scenic way up.

4:30 pm Olympic Stadium & Anella Olímpica Free · ~45 min

Walk the track of the 1992 Olympic Stadium, see the cauldron, and take in city views from the Olympic Ring.

5:15 pm MNAC €12 · 1.5 hrs (closes 8pm)

Catalonia's premier art museum — Romanesque murals, Gothic paintings, Modernista works. Terrace views over Plaça d'Espanya at dusk are spectacular.

→ Leave MNAC by 7:00 PM. The castle is a short cable car ride or 10 min walk uphill.

7:00 pm Montjuïc Castle €5 · ~45 min

Walk the ramparts, sweeping port views at golden hour. Check closing time (typically 8pm) — skip and go straight to dinner if closed.

9:00 pm Dinner — Seven Ports (Set de Portes) ~€40–55/person

One of Barcelona's most storied restaurants, open since 1836. Famous for seven varieties of paella, grilled fish, and a grand old-school dining room — elegant without being stuffy.

Passeig d'Isabel II 14, Barceloneta

Day 3 — Tuesday, May 12

Montserrat + Wine Tour → Beach Evening · Full Day

9:25 am Check in at Barcelona Nord Bus Station

Tour departs 9:45 AM — arrive 20 min early for check-in.

→ Leave hotel by 9:00 AM — Barcelona Nord is a 15–20 min taxi/Uber from the Four Points.

9:45 am Montserrat + Winery Tour departs 7–8 hours

Meet at Barcelona Nord Station, Carrer de Napols 68. Cogwheel train up · guided monastery visit · Black Madonna · free time for monk-made foods → Oller del Mas winery with tastings + tapas/lunch.

~6:00 pm Return to Barcelona

Tour typically wraps around 6 PM — allow a buffer before heading to the waterfront.

6:30 pm Barceloneta Waterfront stroll Free · ~1.5 hrs

Decompress by the sea. Grab a cold beer or *clara* (beer + lemon) from a beach kiosk and walk. The perfect *merienda* window.

8:30 pm Dinner — XIRINGUITO ESCRIBÀ €25–40/person

Right on the sand at Barceloneta beach. Excellent paella and fideuà from one of Barcelona's most respected culinary families (the Escribàs also run the famous pastry shop). Last night in Barcelona — celebrate.

Ronda del Litoral 42, Barceloneta

△ EARLY DEPARTURE — MAY 13

- **7:30 AM** — Wake up, final pack
- **8:00 AM** — Check out of Four Points by Sheraton
- **8:00–8:30 AM** — Uber to El Prat Airport (~€25–35, ~25–30 min). Request early — Uber is best with luggage on a time-sensitive morning.
- **~8:30 AM** — Arrive T1. Vueling check-in and bag drop. Domestic/Schengen security is typically fast.
- **10:00 AM** — Vueling VY2224 departs for Seville

BARCELONA PRACTICAL NOTES

- **Weather:** 64–72°F (18–22°C), mostly sunny. Montserrat is up to 10°F cooler.
- **Cash:** Cards accepted nearly everywhere. Carry €20–30 for markets and bars.
- **Dress code:** Shoulders and knees covered at all religious sites.
- **Pharmacy:** Look for the green cross — farmacias on nearly every block in Eixample.
- **Nearest hospital:** Hospital Clínic de Barcelona, Carrer de Villarroel 170 (~10 min taxi).
- **Pickpockets:** Most active on Las Ramblas, La Boqueria, and the metro L3 green line.

Seville

May 13 (noon) → May 15 (morning) · ~2 days

Hotel: Querencia de Sevilla (Arenal, steps from the Cathedral)

Address: Calle Fernández y González 4, 41001 Seville

Phone: +34 954 051 400

Check-in: 12:00 PM (noon) — Early check-in

Check-out: 4:00 PM — Late checkout available (leaving 8 AM: check out early, leave bags with concierge)

Airport transfer: Uber from SVQ (~€15–20, ~20–25 min)

Day 4 — Wednesday, May 13

Arrival Afternoon: First Impressions

Vueling VY2224 departs Barcelona 10:00am, lands Seville ~11:45am · ~7 hours of exploring available

~11:45 am **Land at Seville Airport (SVQ)**

Small airport — you'll be out quickly. Uber to hotel from the arrivals hall.

~12:15 pm **Uber to Querencia de Sevilla** ~€15–20 · ~20–25 min

1:30 pm **Check in & freshen up**

Drop bags, change shoes, grab a water.

2:15 pm **Barrio de Santa Cruz** Free · 1–1.5 hrs

Start here. Seville's enchanting former Jewish quarter — whitewashed lanes, orange trees, flower-filled patios. Find a terraza and order a glass of fino sherry. Your first taste of Seville.

Old Town, adjacent to the Cathedral

→ Leave Santa Cruz by 3:35 PM — the Archivo is right at the Cathedral square, 5 min walk.

3:45 pm **Archivo General de Indias** Free · 30–45 min

A stunning UNESCO Renaissance building holding Spain's entire colonial archive — right next to the Cathedral. Worth 30 minutes for the architecture alone.

Avenida de la Constitución

→ Leave by 4:15 PM — Metropol Parasol is a 10 min walk north.

4:30 pm **Metropol Parasol — Las Setas** ~€5 rooftop · 45 min–1 hr

The world's largest wooden structure with a rooftop walkway. Aim to be on the platform by 5pm — arguably the best views in Seville. Roman ruins museum underneath.

Plaza de la Encarnación (10 min walk north of hotel)

→ Leave by 5:30 PM — Bodega El Garlochi is a 10 min walk south, back into Santa Cruz.

5:45 pm Bodega El Garlochi Drinks ~€4–8 · 30–45 min

A bizarre, candlelit bar decorated entirely in Semana Santa religious iconography. Order a *Sangre de Cristo* cocktail. Unlike anything else in Spain. Don't skip this.

Calle Boteros 26, Santa Cruz

→ Leave by 6:35 PM — hotel is 5 min walk for comfortable time before flamenco.

6:45 pm Hotel Bar at Querencia — Pre-Flamenco Drinks Hotel credit

Perfect spot for a glass of fino sherry or gin tonic before the show. Order generously — Leave by 7:15 PM to arrive at Casa de la Memoria with time to find seats.

Querencia de Sevilla — Calle Fernández y González 4

7:30 pm Casa de la Memoria — Flamenco Show €25–45/person · ~1 hr

100 seats, no amplification, performed in a 200-year-old courtyard palace. Smaller and more intimate than larger venues. Most reviewers call it the best flamenco they've ever seen.

Calle Cuna 6, Santa Cruz

~8:45 pm Mercado Lonja del Barranco Free entry / €10–15 drinks & bite · ~1 hr

Eiffel-designed iron-and-glass market right on the Guadalquivir. Closes at midnight — perfect for a late glass of wine by the river.

Calle Arjona 2, Arenal (5 min walk)

Day 5 — Thursday, May 14

The Big Day: History, Romance & the River

Full day · ~12 hours available · Three major bookings today

8:30 am Breakfast at Hotel Complimentary — included with hotel

Tostada con tomate, café con leche, fresh orange juice. Fuel up — it's a packed day.

10:00 am AIRE Ancient Baths €28–38/person · 2 hrs

A beautifully restored 12th-century Arab bathhouse — steam rooms, hot and cold pools, optional massage. A blissful start to a packed afternoon.

Arrive 15 minutes early. Leave hotel by 9:30 AM — 10 min walk through Santa Cruz.

Calle Aire 15, Santa Cruz

→ Leave by 11:45 AM — La Brunilda Tapas is a 5 min walk toward the river.

12:00 pm Lunch at La Brunilda Tapas €15–20/person · 45 min–1 hr

One of Seville's most beloved tapas restaurants — creative modern takes on Andalusian classics. Excellent croquetas. Book ahead or arrive right at noon.

Calle Galera 5, Arenal

→ Leave by 1:30 PM — Plaza del Triunfo is a 10 min walk through the Cathedral square.

2:00 pm Priority Access Cathedral, Giralda & Alcázar Tour Small-group guided · ~2.5 hrs

Skip-the-line entry to all three landmarks with a local guide (Purple Crown Tours via GetYourGuide). The Cathedral is the world's largest Gothic cathedral and Columbus's resting place. Climb the 35 ramps of the Giralda tower. The Alcázar is the oldest royal palace in Europe still in use.

Meeting Point: Plaza del Triunfo (next to La Inmaculada Concepción monument)

~4:30 pm Triana Neighborhood + Mercado de Triana Free · 1.5 hrs

Cross the Triana Bridge into flamenco's birthplace. Browse ceramics workshops, explore the covered Mercado (handmade azulejo-tile stalls), and walk Calle Betis for river views back toward the Cathedral.

West bank of the Guadalquivir

→ Leave Triana by 5:45 PM — walk or taxi (~€5) south to Parque de María Luisa.

6:00 pm Parque de María Luisa + Plaza de España Free / rowboat ~€6 · 45 min

Stroll through the orange-blossom park to the grand 1929 semi-circular plaza. Rent a rowboat (~€6) — one of the most romantic things you can do in Spain. Golden hour here is magic.

Parque de María Luisa (20 min walk south, or short taxi)

→ Leave by 6:40 PM — Castillo San Jorge jetty is a 10 min walk north along the river.

7:00 pm Exclusive River Boat Tour with Tapas 1 hr

Private river boat cruise with tapas included. Sunset light on the water as you pass the Torre del Oro, Maestranza bullring, and Triana. Arrive 10 min early.

Jetty: Castillo San Jorge, Triana side (near Elizabeth II Bridge) · Paseo de Mtra Sra. de la O, 6

~8:15 pm Late Dinner — Santa Cruz Tapas Bars €15–25/person

Sevillians eat late. Wander Calle Mateos Gago: *salmorejo, croquetas de jamón*, fried fish, and a bottle of chilled Manzanilla.

Calle Mateos Gago, Santa Cruz

Friday, May 15 Morning — Seville Departure

Train departs 9:34am — need to be at Santa Justa by 9:00am

7:30 am **Guadalquivir Sunrise Walk** Free · 30 min

Walk the riverfront between the two bridges — the Cathedral and Torre del Oro glow at golden hour. A perfect final memory of Seville.

Between Puente de San Telmo & Puente de Isabel II

8:00 am **Breakfast at Hotel + Checkout** Complimentary — included with hotel

One last hotel breakfast. Check out of Querencia de Sevilla — leave bags with concierge if you took the sunrise walk first.

△ DEPARTURE TO MADRID — MAY 15

- **~8:30 AM** — Uber to Sevilla Santa Justa station (~€8–12, ~10–15 min)
- **~9:00 AM** — Arrive station — 30 min before departure. Station has cafés if you're early.
- **9:34 AM** — AVE: Seville → Madrid (Comfort Class) · Arrives 12:12 PM
- Seats are assigned. Board early if you have large bags — luggage racks at each end of the car.

SEVILLE PRACTICAL NOTES

- **Getting around:** Very walkable — most attractions within 15–20 min of hotel. Taxis ~€5–8 within center.
- **Weather:** 68–86°F (20–30°C) — hottest of your three cities. Sunscreen + hat essential.
- **Siesta hours:** Smaller shops close ~2:00–5:00 PM. Tourist sites stay open.
- **Pharmacy:** Abundant in Santa Cruz and along Avenida de la Constitución.
- **Nearest hospital:** Hospital Universitario Virgen del Rocío, Avenida Manuel Siurot (~10 min taxi).

Area	What's There
Santa Cruz	Hotel, Alcázar, Cathedral, Arab Baths, tapas bars, El Garlochi
El Arenal	Lonja del Barranco, Torre del Oro, river cruise, flamenco
Macarena / Centro	Metropol Parasol (Las Setas), Archivo de Indias
Triana	Ceramics workshops, Mercado de Triana, Calle Betis river views
María Luisa Park	Plaza de España, rowboats, orange blossom gardens

Madrid

May 15 (afternoon) → May 18 (late afternoon) · ~3 days

Hotel: Avani Alonso Martínez (Almagro neighborhood)

Phone: +34 915 940 213

Check-out: 12:00 PM noon (train at 3:52 PM — leave bags with concierge after checkout)

Address: Calle de Santa Engracia 5, 28010 Madrid

Check-in: 3:00 PM (arriving ~12:45 PM — leave luggage with concierge)

Getting around: Metro ~€1.50/ride (Multi card) · Uber/Cabify · very walkable between Centro, La Latina, Letras

Day 6 — Friday, May 15 Afternoon

Madrid Arrival: Free Walking Tour + Sunset at Debod

AVE from Seville arrives 12:12 PM · Get oriented with a guided walk, then sunset at the Temple of Debod

~12:12 pm **Arrive at Madrid Atocha**

Uber from Atocha to the Avani Alonso Martínez (~€8–12, ~15 min). Recommended with luggage over the metro.

~12:45 pm **Check in at Avani Alonso Martínez**

Drop bags. If room isn't ready, leave luggage with concierge and grab a quick bite near the hotel before the tour.

→ Leave hotel by 1:40 PM — Plaza Mayor is a 20 min metro or Uber ride south.

2:00 pm **Madrid Free Walking Tour — SANDEMANs** Tips ~€10–15/person · ~2.5 hrs

The perfect arrival orientation. A local guide walks you through Habsburg Madrid — Royal Palace exterior, Plaza Mayor, Mercado de San Miguel, Plaza de la Villa, and Puerta del Sol — with history, stories, and restaurant tips.

Meeting point: Plaza Mayor (SANDEMANs)

5:00 pm **Coffee & rest near Sol or hotel**

Recharge after the tour.

→ Leave by 6:15 PM — Temple of Debod is a 15 min walk NW from Sol, or a short Uber.

6:30 pm **Temple of Debod** Free · 30–60 min

Madrid's most romantic sunset spot — an ancient Egyptian temple with the Royal Palace silhouette behind it. Arrive at 6:45pm for the best light. Sky turns pink over the palace.

Parque del Cuartel de la Montaña

7:30 pm **Gran Vía Evening Stroll** Free

Walk east from Debod toward Plaza de España and down Gran Vía. Ornate facades glow golden. Natural connector to La Latina for dinner.

→ Leave Gran Vía by 8:30 PM — Taberna El Tempranillo is a 10 min walk or short metro ride SW to La Latina. Arrive by 8:45 PM to get a spot.

9:00 pm Taberna El Tempranillo — Wine & Dinner ~€20–30/person · Walk in — no reservations taken · arrive by

8:45 PM

700+ Spanish wines by the glass, charcuterie and cheese, floor-to-ceiling wine rack. A perfect first Madrid dinner — an education in Rioja, Ribera del Duero, and Albariño. **Backup:** Casa Lucas (Calle Cava Baja 30, just down the street) — creative tapas, excellent wine, cozy wooden interior.

Calle Cava Baja 38, La Latina · Backup: Casa Lucas, Calle Cava Baja 30

11:30 pm Chocolatería San Ginés €5–8

Churros and thick hot chocolate at midnight — a Madrid institution since 1894. The only correct way to end night one.

Pasadizo de San Ginés 5, Centro

Day 7 — Saturday, May 16

Royal Palace, Art & Underground Dining

The heaviest museum day — Royal Palace in the morning, Prado in the afternoon

8:30 am Breakfast near the hotel

Quick coffee and *tostada* before heading to the Palace.

→ Leave hotel by 9:45 AM — Royal Palace is a 20–25 min Uber or metro ride southwest.

10:15 am Royal Palace of Madrid — Self-Guided Entry & Royal Collections €14 · 1.5–2.5 hrs

The largest palace in Western Europe — 2,800 rooms of baroque splendor. The Royal Collections gallery is included. Walk the courtyard afterward toward Almudena Cathedral next door.

Calle de Bailén, Centro

→ Leave by 12:30 PM — Plaza Mayor is a 10 min walk east.

12:45 pm Plaza Mayor + Mercado de San Miguel Free plaza / food €5–15 at market

Stand in the grand 17th-century plaza, then step into the 1916 iron market for vermouth and small bites.

Plaza de San Miguel, Centro

→ Leave by 1:15 PM — lunch is a 15 min walk east toward the Prado area.

1:30 pm Lunch near the Prado ~€15–25/person · Walk in — no reservation · arrive by 1:30 PM

Walk-in options: **La Montería** (Calle de Lope de Rueda 35) — Michelin Bib Gourmand, traditional Madrid cuisine; **Vinoteca Moratín** (Calle de Moratín 36) — wine bar, seasonal dishes; **Lateral Paseo del Prado** (Paseo del Prado 13) — reliable contemporary Spanish across from the museum.

→ Leave by 2:30 PM — the Prado entrance is a 5 min walk from any of these.

2:45 pm Museo del Prado €15 · 2–2.5 hrs

Spain's greatest museum. Focus on Velázquez, Goya, and one or two rooms of Flemish masters — then stop. Prado fatigue is real.

Paseo del Prado s/n, Retiro

→ Leave by 5:15 PM — the Botanical Garden is right next door.

~5:15 pm Paseo del Arte Walk + Real Jardín Botánico Free walk / €6 garden

Stroll the UNESCO-listed boulevard. The Botanical Garden is steps from the Prado — 5,000 plant species, a romantic decompression after the museum.

6:00 pm Puerta del Sol stroll Free · 30 min

Spain's km 0. Bear-and-strawberry-tree statue. Quick photo stop — natural connector to the Literary Quarter.

8:30 pm Bodega de los Secretos — Dinner €50–70/person · 2–2.5 hrs

A 17th-century wine cellar beneath the Literary Quarter — brick-vaulted alcoves, candlelight, elevated Spanish cuisine. The most romantic restaurant in the itinerary.

Calle de San Blas 4, Barrio de las Letras

Day 8 — Sunday, May 17

Guernica, Rooftops & Bohemian Barrios · The Reward Day

10:00 am **Estación de Chamberí Ghost Metro Station** Free · Weekend only

A ghost metro station frozen in time since 1966 — original tile murals, period advertisements, vintage signage. Weekend guided tours only. Close to your hotel — genuinely remarkable.

Glorieta de Chamberí, Chamberí

→ Leave hotel by 9:45 AM (10 min walk). Leave Chamberí by 11:00 AM — Metro Line 7 south to Atocha (~20 min).

11:30 am **Museo Reina Sofía — Guernica** €12 · 1.5–2.5 hrs · Paseo del Arte Pass included

Come specifically for Guernica and a few rooms of 20th-century Spanish art — don't try to do the whole museum. Two hours is the right amount.

Calle de Santa Isabel 52, Atocha

→ Leave by 1:30 PM — Barrio de las Letras is a 5 min walk north.

1:45 pm **Lunch in Barrio de las Letras** ~€15–25/person · Walk in — no reservation

Walk-in options: **Taberna La Dolores** (Plaza de Jesús 4) — classic 1908 tiled bar, excellent jamón and cold beer; **Cervecería Cervantes** (Plaza de Jesús 7) — down-to-earth locals' bar, ice-cold cañas; **Casa Alberto** (Calle de las Huertas 18) — est. 1827, vermouth on tap, open Sundays.

Around Plaza de Jesús / Calle de las Huertas, Barrio de las Letras

2:30 pm **Parque del Buen Retiro** Free / rowboat ~€8

Rent a rowboat on the lake, then stroll to the free Palacio de Cristal (1887 iron-and-glass greenhouse with contemporary art). A warm May Sunday in Retiro is one of the best things Madrid offers.

Retiro District

→ Leave Retiro by 4:30 PM — Puerta de Alcalá is at the park's northwest corner.

4:45 pm **Puerta de Alcalá + Metro to Malasaña** Free

Walk through the 18th-century neoclassical triumphal arch, beautifully lit in late afternoon. Then metro up to Malasaña.

Plaza de la Independencia, Retiro

5:30 pm **Barrio de Malasaña — Wander** Free

No agenda. Vintage shops, craft gin bars, indie bookstores, excellent street art. Explore the side streets off Calle Fuencarral. Find a drink before the rooftop.

→ Leave Malasaña by 7:15 PM — Círculo de Bellas Artes is a 10 min walk south to Calle de Alcalá.

7:30 pm **Círculo de Bellas Artes Rooftop** €5 entry + drinks

Madrid's best rooftop bar — 360° panorama from an ornate 1920s arts club. Your sunset drink of the trip.

Calle de Alcalá 42, Centro

9:30 pm **Barrio de las Letras — Late Tapas Dinner** ~€30–40/person · No reservation needed

The Literary Quarter — Cervantes and Lope de Vega's old haunt, quotes in the pavement. Excellent wine bars and intimate tapas restaurants. A perfect final Madrid evening.

Around Calle de las Huertas, Centro

Day 9 — Monday, May 18

Romanticismo, La Latina & Goodbye Madrid

A gentle museum morning near the hotel · La Latina lunch · Barcelona train at 3:52 PM

9:00 am **Slow Hotel Breakfast**

No rush. You've earned a slow morning.

10:00 am **Museo del Romanticismo** €3 · 1–1.5 hrs

A 19th-century townhouse frozen in time — tapestried rooms, miniatures, period costumes, and a beautiful courtyard café. Rarely crowded. A 10-minute walk from your hotel.

Calle de San Mateo 13, Almagro

→ Leave hotel by 9:50 AM. Leave museum by 11:15 AM to walk back for checkout.

11:30 am **Checkout & leave bags with concierge**

Head to La Latina — grab a coffee on the way.

1:30 pm **La Latina Tapas Crawl — Lunch** ~€20–30/person

Wander Calle Cava Baja at your own pace — vermouth, jamón, croquetas, whatever looks good. On a Monday you'll have the bars largely to yourselves. No reservations, no itinerary. Just eat well and say goodbye to Madrid properly.

Calle Cava Baja, La Latina

→ Leave La Latina by 2:50 PM — Uber to the Avani (~10 min) to collect bags, then Uber to Atocha by 3:20 PM.

△ **DEPARTURE TO BARCELONA — MAY 18**

- **~3:00 PM** — Collect bags from Avani concierge
- **~3:20 PM** — Uber to Madrid Atocha (~€8–12, ~15 min) — arrive 30 min before departure
- **3:52 PM** — Iryo Train: Madrid → Barcelona Sants (Infinite Class) · Arrives 6:54 PM

MADRID PRACTICAL NOTES

- **Getting around:** Metro excellent — clean, fast, cheap (~€1.50/ride). Buy Multi card at any station.
- **Weather:** 59–77°F (15–25°C). Cooler mornings/evenings — light jacket for rooftop bars.
- **Siesta hours:** Smaller shops close ~2:00–5:00 PM. Museums stay open.
- **Pharmacy:** Throughout Almagro and along Calle Fuencarral near the hotel.
- **Nearest hospital:** Hospital Universitario de La Princesa, Calle de Diego de León 62 (~10 min walk).

Area	What's There
Almagro	Hotel, Museo del Romanticismo, Chamberí Ghost Metro (nearby)
Retiro / Paseo del Prado	Prado, Reina Sofía, Botanical Garden, Retiro Park, Palacio de Cristal, Puerta de Alcalá
Centro / Habsburg Madrid	Royal Palace, Plaza Mayor, Mercado de San Miguel, Puerta del Sol, Gran Vía, San Ginés
La Latina	El Tempranillo, tapas crawl, Calle Cava Baja
Barrio de las Letras	Bodega de los Secretos, late-night tapas, literary quarter
Malasaña	Bohemian wander, craft bars, vintage shops
Montaña Park	Temple of Debod (sunset)

Return — Barcelona & Home

May 18 (evening) → May 19 (flight) · Overnight before departure

Hotel: Renaissance Barcelona Fira Hotel

Phone: +34 932 618 000

Check-out: 12:00 PM noon

Address: Plaza Europa 50–52, 08902 L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Barcelona

Check-in: 3:00 PM (arriving ~7:30 PM — no issues)

Location note: Near the Fira convention center — ~€20–30 and ~15–20 min Uber to El Prat T1

Monday, May 18 Evening

~6:54 pm **Arrive at Barcelona Sants**

Uber from Barcelona Sants to Renaissance Fira Hotel (~€10–15, ~10–15 min). Request from the station exit — you'll have luggage and it's the end of a long travel day.

~7:30 pm **Check in & settle**

Drop bags, decompress. No rush.

8:30 pm **Light dinner nearby or at the hotel**

Intentionally low-key — you're tired, have a flight in the morning, and the Fira neighborhood is quieter. Hotel restaurant or a simple local spot is the right call.

10:00 pm **Pack & prep for departure**

Set alarms. Confirm Delta check-in (opens 24 hours before departure). Lay out travel clothes. Early night.

Day 10 — Tuesday, May 19 — Departure Day

6:30 am **Wake up**

Shower, finish packing, final room check.

7:00 am **Breakfast**

Hotel breakfast if included, or coffee and pastry from the lobby/nearby café.

△ **DEPARTURE — TUESDAY, MAY 19**

- **7:25 AM** — Request Uber to El Prat Airport Terminal 1 (~€20–30, ~15–20 min). Allow extra time — international departures need 3 hours before an 11:00 AM flight.
- **8:00 AM** — Arrive El Prat Terminal 1. Check in, drop bags, pass through security. Note: **EU Entry/Exit System (EES)** applies at exit — biometrics are checked when departing the Schengen Area. The 3-hour early arrival provides sufficient buffer.
- **11:00 AM** — Delta DL0195: Barcelona (BCN T1) → Atlanta (ATL) · Arrives 3:04 PM · ~10 hours
- **3:04 PM** — Arrive Atlanta. US Customs & Border Protection. **Both travelers have Global Entry** — use automated kiosks, typically 10–15 min. Re-check bags for connecting flight, then proceed through domestic security (TSA PreCheck).
- **6:05 PM** — Delta DL2786: Atlanta (ATL) → Columbus (CMH) · Arrives 7:43 PM · ~3 hr layover is comfortable.
- **7:43 PM** — Arrive Columbus (CMH). Welcome home.

Quick Reference Card

Emergency & Contact

Emergency (all Spain) 112

Tourist police 091 (Policía Nacional)

US Embassy Madrid +34 91 587 2200 · Calle de Serrano 75

US Consulate Barcelona +34 93 280 2227 · Paseo Reina Elisenda 23

Adam's insurance Tin Leg Luxury · Emergency outside US: +1 727-264-5657 (collect)

Tsitsi's insurance Europ Assistance Schengen · Emergency: +34 91 536 82 96 (24/7)

Essential Info

Currency Euro (€) · Cards accepted almost everywhere · Carry €20–30 cash

Electrical Type C/F plugs · 230V · Bring US-to-EU adapters (bring 2)

Tap water Safe to drink in all three cities. Ask for *agua del grifo* to avoid bottled.

Language Spanish everywhere; Catalan in Barcelona. English at tourist sites, less so at local bars.

Dress code Shoulders & knees covered at all churches & cathedrals. Carry a light scarf.

Meal Times

Breakfast 8–10 AM (light — coffee and *tostada*)

Lunch 2:00–4:00 PM (the main meal)

Merienda 6–7 PM (vermouth, pintxos — bridge to dinner)

Dinner 9:00–11:00 PM — restaurants don't start serving dinner until 8:30–9 PM

Weather (May)

Barcelona 64–72°F (18–22°C) · Mostly sunny · 10°F cooler at Montserrat

Seville 68–86°F (20–30°C) · Hottest city · Hat + sunscreen essential

Madrid 59–77°F (15–25°C) · Cool mornings · Light jacket for evenings

Tipping Guide

Situation	Suggested Tip
Sit-down restaurants	Round up or leave €1–2 at casual spots. €5–10 at fine dining (Bodega de los Secretos).
Tapas bars / counter service	Leave small change (€0.20–0.50) or nothing — both are normal.
Free walking tours	€10–15/person. These guides work entirely on tips — this is their income.
Private / small-group tours	€5–10/person for a good guide.
Spa / Arab Baths	Optional — €2–5 if you had a massage.
Uber drivers	Optional — rounding up or adding €1–2 is appreciated but not expected.
Hotel staff	€1–2 for porters. Housekeeping not expected but appreciated.

Safety & Scam Awareness

Pickpockets & Common Scams

Spain is very safe for travelers, but petty theft is common in tourist zones.

- **Pickpockets** are most active on Las Ramblas, La Boqueria, Barcelona metro (especially L3 green line), crowded plazas, and major attractions. Keep phone in a front pocket and bag zipped and in front of you.
- **Friendship bracelet scam** — Someone ties a bracelet on your wrist on Las Ramblas and demands payment. Say "*No, gracias*" firmly and keep walking. Don't let them touch your hands.
- **Fake petition signers** — Groups near tourist sites ask you to sign a "petition" then demand money. Decline and move on.
- **Overcharging at restaurants** — Stick to places with posted menus. Ask if a price seems wrong before paying.
- **ATM safety** — Use ATMs inside banks. **Always decline the "conversion to USD" option** (Dynamic Currency Conversion) — it adds a 3–5% markup. Always choose to be charged in euros.

Packing Essentials

- **Comfortable walking shoes** — 15,000–20,000 steps/day. Break in before the trip.
- **Light scarf or shawl** — Cathedral dress code + cool evenings.
- **Sunscreen & sunglasses** — Essential in Seville (86°F in May).
- **Light jacket or sweater** — Madrid mornings (59°F) and rooftop bars.
- **Refillable water bottle** — Fill from the tap. Saves €2–3/day.
- **Day bag / crossbody** — Small, zippered, worn in front.
- **EU power adapter(s)** — Type C/F. Bring at least 2.
- **Document copies** — Passport, insurance, hotel & flight confirmations. Digital + one printed set in luggage.

Luggage Strategy

CONFIGURATION & TRANSIT DAYS

Configuration: 2 large checked bags + 2 backpacks (carry-on)

- **Vueling (BCN → SVQ):** ✓ Top-tier fare purchased — includes 1 checked bag, carry-on, personal item, priority check-in, and priority security per person. No baggage add-ons needed.
- **Transit days with luggage:** May 13 (BCN → SVQ), May 15 (SVQ → MAD), May 18 (MAD → BCN). Uber between hotel, station/airport, and new hotel each time.
- **May 18:** Check out of Avani at noon, train at 3:52 PM. Leave bags with concierge while you explore La Latina.

Apps to Download Before Departure

NAVIGATION & COMMUNICATION

- Google Maps (*download BCN, SVQ, MAD offline*)
- Google Translate (*download Spanish pack*)
- Uber

TRANSPORT

- Delta app
- Renfe app (*AVE tickets*)
- Iryo app (*Madrid → BCN tickets*)

FOOD & BOOKINGS

- TheFork (*restaurant reservations*)
- Airalo (*wife's eSIM — install before departure*)

¡Buen viaje!

First international trip together · Spain, May 2026