

Footsteps of Faith Through Spain & Portugal

12 Days: January 20-31, 2025

Visiting

Madrid • Toledo • Cordoba • Granada • Seville
Lisbon • Jerez • Evora • Guadarrama

Hosted By:
Rev. Andy Gans

\$3,679 from Houston
(based on 25 travelers)

- 1st class hotels
- All tours, transfers and transportation according to the itinerary
- All tips, taxes, airfare included
- Experienced tour manager





Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure and excitement that we invite you to join us on our 12 Day Footsteps of Faith tour through Spain and Portugal.

Experience Spanish and Portuguese history and culture as we learn more about how early Christianity, Judaism and Islamic faiths shaped this magnificent peninsula. Encounter the practices of each tradition, learn about the historical roots of those practices, gain an ap-

preciation for the hope and vision of each tradition.

As we travel through Southern Spain exploring the rich and diverse landscape, we will visit cultural and historical sites that help us understand the influence and impact the three Abrahamic faiths had on the region. We will visit the spiritual center and former capital of Spain, Toledo. Built in a spectacular setting encircled by the River Tagus, the city reflects a brilliant period of Spanish history when the cultures of east and west flourished and fused. Religious tolerance and coexistence were the key to a flourishing city which included the city of Cordoba. While in Cordoba we will visit the magnificent Mezquita, one of Spain's most unique buildings, where a Mosque was transformed into a Cathedral after the expulsion of the Moors. We'll walk through the Juderia, the old Jewish quarter, where narrow streets and white walls conceal cool patios and floral gardens. Seville, Jerez, Evora and Lisbon will also offer many opportunities to discover the beauty and rich history of the southern Iberian peninsula. In addition to our time spent exploring the stunning churches, mosques and synagogues, we will also have the opportunity to appreciate visits to historic forts, walled towns, and the tombs of Christopher Columbus, Ferdinand and Isabella. We will also make a stop at a producer of one of Spain's most famous exports, sherry.

There is a wealth of history and faith to be experienced in the places we will be visiting and I really look forward to this opportunity to learn with you while we walk in the steps of some of the early formers of several faiths.

The price of our tour includes roundtrip airfare, first class/select hotels, most meals all scheduled tips and transfers, the services of an outstanding tour director and sightseeing in a deluxe motorcoach. We look forward to having you join us on this trip of a lifetime.

NOW is the time to make plans and reserve your place on the tour as space is limited and we expect will sell out quickly. Don't miss out on this opportunity to experience the history, culture and remarkable scenery of the Iberian peninsula!

*Sincerely,
Rev. Andy Gans*

Phone number 713-467-2234 • Email address: andy@pinespc.org

TOUR FEATURES

- Round trip airfare from Houston.
- Government taxes/airline surcharges/tips.
- Accommodations at first class/select hotels, based on two persons sharing in twin-bedded rooms with private bath.
- Most meals while on tour.
- Services of a professional English-speaking tour director.
- Comprehensive sightseeing throughout.
- All hotel service charges, value added taxes, portorage where available, entrance fees per itinerary and tips.

YOUR DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

MON, JAN 20 - ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

Depart Houston on board your transatlantic flight to Madrid, Spain, arriving the following day.

TUE, JAN 21 - ARRIVE MADRID

Arrive in Madrid, Europe's highest capital city at over 2000ft above sea level. Transfer to our central hotel. Balance of the day for relaxation (Dinner).

WED, JAN 22 - MADRID

Morning tour of the city, made capital of Spain by Philip II in 1561. The city's golden age which followed produced many fine buildings, and attracted artists from all over Europe. See the statue of Cervantes' fictional hero, Don Quixote, in Plaza de España on our morning tour, as well as Cibeles square, Gran Via, the Christopher Columbus Memorial, Calle Mejor and Puerta del Sol. Later enjoy a tour of the magnificent Royal Palace, largest in Europe with 2800 rooms, still used for state receptions. Afternoon at leisure, maybe to visit one of the city's fine museums. (Breakfast and Dinner).

THUR, JAN 23 MADRID

Drive into the Guadarrama mountains north-west of the city to visit El Escorial, the palace built by Philip II as his principal residence following his move to Madrid. Recognised by UNESCO since 1984, the palace is the largest Renaissance building in the world, and the crypt contains the tombs of many Spanish Habsburg monarchs. Following a guided tour of this exceptional historical site, return to Madrid for a free afternoon and evening.

FRI, JAN 24 - CORDOBA

Leave Madrid by the south highway, entering the region of Castilla-La Mancha to visit Toledo, UNESCO World Heritage Site, former capital of Spain and the country's spiritual center. Built in a spectacular setting encircled by the River Tagus, the city reflects a brilliant period of Spanish history when the cultures of east and west flourished and fused. Visit the Cathedral, seat of the Archbishop, started in 1227, and see the magnificent sacristy, home to a series of paintings by the Greek artist El Greco, who lived and worked in Toledo for the last 35 years of his life. After free time for lunch, drive south to the city of Cordoba in Andalucia, Spain's most typical and evocative region (Breakfast and Dinner).

SAT, JAN 25 - CORDOBA

Morning tour of Cordoba, which greatly benefited from the long Moorish occupation when Muslims, Christians and Jews lived peacefully together. Visit the Mezquita, one of Spain's most unique buildings, where a Mosque was transformed into a Cathedral after the expulsion of the Moors, walk through the Juderia, the old Jewish quarter, where narrow streets and white walls conceal cool patios and floral gardens, and cross the Roman bridge, still in magnificent condition. Free afternoon and evening (Breakfast)

SUN, JAN 26 - CORDOBA

Cross Europe's largest olive-growing area to Granada, which grew in importance following the Christian capture of Cordoba in 1236. For the next two and a half centuries the Kingdom of Granada flourished, until the final expulsion of the Moors from Spain by Queen Isabel the Catholic in 1492. Visit the Alhambra, one of the most remarkable citadels ever constructed, commanding views of all Granada. Built for the Nasrid Dynasty, the richness, variety and originality of the decoration defy description. Then descend the hill to the city center, visiting the Royal Chapel, where the tombs of Ferdinand and Isabel, the Most Catholic King and Queen, testify to their definitive victory over the Moors in 1492. Return to Cordoba for the evening (Breakfast and Dinner).



MON, JAN 27 - SEVILLE

Depart Cordoba for Seville, built on the banks of the Guadalquivir river, from where many voyages of discovery departed, including that of Christopher Columbus in 1492. Visit the Alcazar, or Royal Palace, incorporating sections from many different phases of construction. Walk through the Barrio Santa Cruz, the most characterful neighborhood of the old city, and see the Cathedral, one of the largest in Europe, built on the site of a Mosque and featuring the tomb of Christopher Columbus (Breakfast and Dinner)

TUE, JAN 28 - SEVILLE

Enjoy an excursion to southern Andalucia and the town of Jerez, synonymous with the production of one of Spain's most famous wines, sherry. Visit a producer to hear how sherry is made, and enjoy a taste of the golden liquid. Then return to Seville. (Breakfast and Dinner).

WED, JAN 29 - LISBON

Leave Spain and cross into Portugal, visiting the city of Evora. A walled town since Roman times, Evora retains many fine palaces from the 16c and 17c., as well as a Roman temple possibly dedicated to Diana. Enjoy a guided tour of the city before continuing to Lisbon, capital of Portugal, for a 2-night stay (Breakfast and Dinner).

THUR, JAN 30 - LISBON

Morning tour of this fascinating city, spread along the mouth of the River Tagus before it flows into the Atlantic Ocean. Visit the riverside district of Belem, where Jeronimos Monastery, built by King Manuel II, is considered the finest example of elaborate and delicate Manueline architecture. Also see the Belem Tower, constructed in the middle of the Tagus to defend the Monastery and city, and the Monument of the Discoveries, erected to commemorate the Portuguese expeditions which discovered Brazil, the sea route to India and the world's first circumnavigation. Following a free afternoon, enjoy a farewell Fado show and dinner. (Breakfast and Dinner).

FRI, JAN 31 - DEPART FOR HOUSTON

Departure from Lisbon airport.

**For an application or more information
please go to: www.pinespc.org/spain**

General Conditions

RESERVATIONS, DEPOSITS AND FINAL PAYMENT:

Reservations may be secured upon payment of an initial deposit of \$500 per person, by check payable to Pines Presbyterian Church ("Pines"). Pines shall forward all proceeds to Cultural and Religious Tours Services Limited ("CRTS"), and other travel agencies for this tour. No reservation is considered firm until your deposit has been received by Pines. Your initial deposit payment shall be deemed to be an acceptance of all the terms of the General Conditions. A first payment of \$1,060 is due at Pines by May 15, 2024 (total payment required by 5/15/24 is \$1,560). A second payment of \$1,060 is due at Pines by August 15, 2024 (total deposit required by 8/15/24 is \$2,620). The balance of payment is due at Pines by October 15, 2024.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS: A U.S.A. passport valid for at least 6 months after our return date of the trip is required to travel. It is the sole responsibility of the traveler to check their passport's expiration date. Non-U.S.A. citizens may require visas in addition to a valid passport. It is the sole responsibility of non-U.S.A. citizens (including green card holders) to ensure they have the required visas/travel documents for each country to be visited on their tour and for re-entry into the U.S.A. Visa fees (if any) are not included in the tour price.

THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES:

AIR TRANSPORTATION: By any IATA/ARC air carrier or other scheduled jet carrier in standard economy class. Flights and air routings are at the discretion of air carriers and are subject to change without notice. Air arrangements are based on non-refundable bulk group airfares and cannot be upgraded. Cancellations made after air tickets have been issued are subject to full cancellation penalties as imposed by the airlines. Per TSA regulations, airline tickets must bear your first, middle, and last name as it appears on your passport and passengers are responsible to bear any name-change fees should they not provide the local travel agent accurate passport information.

AIRLINE SEATING: A local travel agency contracts non-refundable bulk group airfares in standard economy class. Airlines no longer provide seat assignments for groups and does not guarantee specific seat assignments. Seat assignments for groups are made at the discretion of the airline and are typically allocated by automated airline computer systems in alphabetical order. Seat assignments will not be advised until check in at the airport. The travel agent cannot request and does not guarantee specific seat assignments.

TAXES/SURCHARGES: U.S. departure taxes, overseas airport taxes, overseas local government taxes, security fees and airline imposed international surcharges are included as of February 27, 2024. Future price increases may be applied due to additional costs as imposed by a supplier or governments.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION: By deluxe motorcoach

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS: Accommodations are at first class and select hotels based on two persons sharing a twin-bedded room with private bath. A person taking a single room (subject to availability) must pay a supplement of \$650. Single rooms are limited and may be small.

MEALS: Breakfast daily and 8 dinners are included

SIGHTSEEING: As specified in the itinerary, using motorcoach transportation or other conveyances as required. Entrance fees and the services of local English-speaking guides or tour managers are included.

TRANSFERS: Assistance and transfers from airports to hotels and vice versa in private motorcoach

PORTERAGE: Porterage at hotels (where available) of one normal size suitcase (maximum weight 50 lbs.) is included in the tour price.

HOTEL SERVICES CHARGES/TAXES: Service charges and taxes normally included in bills, VAT and government taxes on hotel bills in effect on February 27, 2024 (excluding hotel tourist taxes), taxes on scheduled sightseeing and scheduled excursion trips are included in the tour price. Tips to tour director and long-distance coach driver included. Future price increases may be applied due to additional costs as imposed by a supplier or governments. Recovering VAT taxes is the sole responsibility of the passenger/purchaser.

LAND ONLY/DEVIATIONS: Passengers wishing to do their own air arrangements or wishing to deviate from the group itinerary must advise CRTS and Pines in writing no later than October 15, 2024. For air deviations, a \$100 non-refundable fee per person will be charged on all deviations in addition to any extra airfare that may be incurred. Air deviations are subject to availability and restrictions as imposed by the airlines.

BAGGAGE: Airlines may now charge baggage fees for checked luggage on international/domestic flights based on the policy of each carrier. The maximum number of pieces of luggage, the weight allowance and baggage dimensions may also vary by airline from the U.S.A. to overseas/domestic destinations and beyond. Many carriers require that checked luggage in economy class not exceed 50 lbs., with a combined length/width/height of 62 inches. Regulations vary for business/first class passengers. Airline policies regarding baggage are subject to change at any time without prior notice. It is the responsibility of each passenger to check with their airline prior to departure for baggage information, regulations, and compliance. Please refer to your electronic airline ticket receipt once received with the final tour documents. CRTS and Pines are not responsible for additional fees imposed by air carriers regarding baggage.

Due to the limited capacity of luggage compartments on CRTS motorcoaches, CRTS can only allow per person one normal-size suitcase (total dimensions of 62 inches) plus one carry-on bag (total dimensions of 45 inches). CRTS accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to the tour members' baggage or personal belongings at any time. Baggage insurance is recommended.

TRAVELERS REQUIRING SPECIAL ASSISTANCE: Disabled travelers requiring special attention or care must advise CRTS in writing at the time of reservation. A physically able companion must accompany any person who needs special assistance. Tour directors, guides, drivers or other tour, hotel personnel are not able to provide such assistance. CRTS is not responsible for any denial of services to the disabled participant by air carriers, hotels, restaurants or other independent suppliers. Certain countries/destinations involve extensive walking. Be aware that outside the U.S. the *Americans with Disabilities Act* is not applicable and facilities for disabled individuals are limited. CRTS not responsible for any passenger requiring special medical equipment.

THE TOUR PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

Passport fees, visa fees (if any), phone calls, valet, laundry service, wines, liquors, mineral water, after dinner coffee or tea, tips to non-tour related guides, local drivers/transfer agents and waiters, sightseeing, meals, and other services not specifically mentioned, excess baggage and all other items of a purely personal nature.

CANCELLATIONS: All cancellations must be received in writing at CRTS directly from the tour member. Written cancellations received by May 15, 2024 are subject to a \$200 per person administrative cancellation fee. Written cancellations received by CRTS between May 16, 2024 and August 15, 2024, are subject to a \$1,000 per person cancellation fee. Written cancellations received by CRTS between August 16, 2024 and October 15, 2024, are subject to a \$1,800 per person cancellation fee. Written cancellations received by CRTS after October 15, 2024 is subject to a 100% cancellation fee of the total tour price per person. No shows are subject to a 100% cancellation fee and reservations will be cancelled. Failure to receive additional deposits and final payment by the respective due dates may result in the cancellation of your reservation and the forfeiture of all deposits. Airline tickets are not refundable once issued. No refunds will be given for any unused services while on tour.

CRTS strongly recommends trip Insurance. Insurance for trip cancellation, medical evacuation, medical emergencies, baggage, etc. is available for purchase from third party providers.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: The airfare used is based on non-refundable bulk group fares in effect on February 27, 2024. Airlines reserve the right to increase fares without prior notice. Tour members will be required to pay any airfare increases and international surcharges as imposed by the airlines prior to departure. Airlines require a minimum of 15 persons departing from the same gateway city.

Land costs are based on estimated 2024 tariffs, overseas government taxes and rates of exchange in effect on February 27, 2024 and a minimum of 25 or more participants per coach. While we have made the best possible estimates of what we expect costs to be in 2025, we cannot guarantee actual prices, exchange rates and airfares. Any increases in land costs or airfares that may occur will be collected from each passenger prior to departure. CRTS reserve the right to increase the cost of the tour consistent with normal increases should the group fall below 25 persons, and/or in the event of fluctuations in exchange rates.

All prices are based on rates of exchange listed above and while every effort will be made to hold them firm, they are subject to change.

Travel in the year 2025 is expected to be at an all-time high. CRTS will make every effort to adhere to the itinerary and scheduled departure as outlined herein;

however, actual group size, or circumstances beyond our control may necessitate alterations. Departure date, itinerary sequence, and cities for overnight accommodations may change.

Please note that healthcare/medical costs outside the U.S.A. are not covered by Medicare or private medical insurance plans. Please consult with your health insurance supplier to obtain the necessary health/medical coverage for overseas travel.

STATE DEPARTMENT/GOVT AGENCIES: On occasion, a U.S. or foreign government agency, such as the U.S. State Department (www.state.gov), Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov), etc., may issue a travel advisory, warning or alert for a destination or surrounding area you may be visiting while on tour. CRTS encourages you to refer to these agencies to obtain the most current and up-to-date information. The terms and conditions of your tour program, including cancellation policies, cannot be altered based on any occurrence whatsoever and/or any travel advisory, warning or alert issued in the U.S. or foreign countries where your tour is scheduled to visit, including but not limited to weather conditions, flood, forceful wind, fire or accident, explosion, acts of terrorism, sabotage, insurrection, riots, strikes, civil disturbance bankruptcy, force majeure, war or threat of war declared or undeclared, local governmental regulations and intervention, sickness, epidemics, quarantines, pandemics, natural disasters, strikes, local, civil disorders, or any other act that may affect the service or agreements of a particular carrier or supplier.

RESPONSIBILITY: CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS TRAVEL SERVICES LIMITED, and its agents act only in the capacity of agents in all matters pertaining to hotel accommodations, sightseeing tours, and transportation, whether by railroad, motor bus, motor car, cruise vessel, boat, air, or any other means. Pines is neither an agent nor employee of CRTS and is not responsible for any act of omission beyond transmitting any deposit or payment to CRTS. Except for the willful negligence of its direct employees, neither CRTS nor Pines is liable for any damage, loss (including but not limited to personal injury, loss of enjoyment, distress, death and property loss), expense or inconvenience caused by any act or omission of any supplier providing tour services or by any other person or reason whatsoever or by any delays or changes in the itinerary, or the acts and omissions of the tour leader/host or travel agent. CRTS assumes no liability or responsibility for any injuries, inconveniences, illness, irregularity, or incidental damages occasioned by circumstances beyond the control of the tour operator, or by any person or reason whatsoever, including but not limited to events such as weather conditions, flood, forceful wind, fire or accident, explosion, acts of terrorism, sabotage, insurrection, riots, strikes, civil disturbance bankruptcy, force majeure, war or threat of war declared or undeclared, local governmental regulations and intervention, sickness, epidemics, quarantines, pandemics, natural disasters, strikes, local civil disorders, closure of airports, hotels or included sites, default or omission of any common or private carrier, or any other act that may affect the service or agreements of a particular carrier or supplier. CRTS reserves the right to cancel the tour at any time, to operate the tour with a substitute tour leader at any time, or to decline or not to retain any person as a member of the tour for any cause at any time. CRTS reserves the right to make changes in the published itinerary if needed, including deleting and/or adding cities, and changing the sequence of the itinerary, or whenever, in CRTS's sole judgment, as conditions warrant, CRTS deems it necessary for the comfort, convenience or safety of the tour. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not on board their vessel or conveyance. The passage contract in use by the airlines concerned, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the airlines and the purchasers of this tour and/or passengers. The services of any IATA/ARC air carrier may be used in connection with this tour.

Travel Arrangements by:

CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS TRAVEL SERVICES LIMITED
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