



Best-Day
Adventures
A division of Ayelet Tours

BEST-DAY ADVENTURES: Jewish Heritage Adventure Through PORTUGAL & SPAIN

For single Jewish travelers in their 40s, 50s & 60s

PORTUGAL: May 15-23, 2022

SPAIN: May 22-30, 2022

(As of 10/22/21)



Traversing these two incredible countries, travelers will delight in a unique exploration of Portugal and Spain highlighted with an immersion into Jewish life past and present. We will spend time in more than 8 glorious cities, exploring our Jewish heritage, tasting new wines from old world villages, tapping our toes at cultural performances, and sampling the flavors of local cuisine.

Historic places, unspoiled beauty and distinctive tastes are ours to be enjoyed as we savor the essence of Spain and Portugal. Throughout this tour, we'll introduce you to our special brand of touring, and along with a great group of fellow single travelers, every day will be the BEST DAY of your trip...so far!

Note: *This is an active tour. Guests should be in adequate physical condition. Full participation may require periods of standing or walking along even, uneven and occasionally hilly terrain. There may be steps, inclines, & cobblestone surfaces. Participants with physical limitations should take this into account.*

Sunday, May 15, 2022: DEPART FOR PORTUGAL

- We depart home on our overnight flight to Porto, Portugal! Contact Ayelet Tours for flight assistance.

Monday, May 16, 2022: ARRIVE PORTO, PORTUGAL

- Upon arrival, transfer on own to our centrally located beautiful downtown hotel.
- Today we offer a casual meet & greet as our group arrives throughout the day.
- Tonight, we join together for our **welcome program**, including a special greeting from a representative of the local Jewish community,
- Following our program, we enjoy a festive **welcome dinner** offering a variety of delicious local fare.



Overnight in Porto (D)

Tuesday, May 17, 2022: PORTO

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day with a city highlights tour. We will see the worldwide acclaimed **Casa da Musica** concert hall, designed by the architect Rem Koolhaas. We continue to the waterfront area where we will see **Castelo do Queijo**, a fortification situated along the coast built in the 15th century. We will explore the famous **Livraria Lello**, one of the oldest bookstores in Portugal and frequently rated among the top bookstores in the world (and an inspiration to Harry Potter author JK Rowling); Continue to **Torre dos Clerigos**, a Baroque church whose tall bell tower can be seen from various points of the city and is one of its most characteristic symbols of Porto. Next, we will see the **S. Bento Railway Station**, built in 1916. It houses a unique collection of over 20,000 tiles, representing key moments in the country's history.
- Later we will head to the riverfront **Ribeira**, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO for its preservation of local architecture. Here we will have free time to appreciate this beautiful neighborhood by foot before we head out on a **riverboat** for a short tour from another perspective.
- Free time for lunch (on own).
- This afternoon, we continue our tour in **Vila Nova de Gaia** where we enjoy a tour of the wine cellars, including a Porto Wine tasting!
- After time to relax and refresh, tonight, we enjoy **dinner** together at a local restaurant along the waterfront.

Overnight in Porto (B, D)

Wednesday, May 18, 2022: PESO DA REGUA

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Today we travel through the **Douro Valley** (wine region) on our way to another of Portugal's UNESCO World Heritage treasures - the beautiful vineyards from where the world-famous Port wine is still produced. Driving through **Marão Mountain range**, we enjoy one of the most wonderful landscapes in the world, with endless rows of vines dotting the slopes in the banks of the Douro River.
- We will visit **Quinta do Vallado**. Built in 1716, it is one of the oldest and more famous "quintas" (a vineyard estate) in the Douro Valley. We tour the Quinta as well as taste some of their most well-known vintages.
- After spending a morning getting to know and understand how this wine comes alive, we will proceed to the city center, **Peso da Régua** where we will have our **lunch**.
- This afternoon we continue to **Trancoso** where we check into our hotel and enjoy an evening at leisure or choose to "follow the leader" to dinner.

Overnight in Trancoso (B, L)

Thursday, May 19, 2022: TRANCOSO & BELMONTE

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We begin our day with a walking tour of **Trancoso**, where the Jewish presence is well-documented dating back to 1273. Jewish Heritage still lives in the written documents, local traditions, and in the buildings that we will see, such as the **Gato Preto House** and **Poço do Mestre**. This legacy allowed the **Isaac Cardoso's Jewish Cultural Center** to be built and we will have the opportunity to visit this modern testament to our ancestry.
- This afternoon, we enjoy **lunch** together followed by a visit **The Castle of Belmonte** followed by the **Jewish Museum** to discover how the **Crypto-Jewish** (the secret adherence to Judaism while publicly professing to be of another faith) community lived up until the mid-20th century.
- Next, we will visit **Bet Eliahu Synagogue**, one of only 3 active Jewish communities. The synagogue opened in 1996, 500 years after the edict expelling the Jews from Portugal. Belmonte most likely had a synagogue in the 13th century and though there are no traces of it, its existence is proven by a stone in the Jewish Museum.
- Enjoy an evening at leisure or choose to “follow the leader” to dinner.

Overnight in Belmonte (B, L)

Friday, May 20, 2022: TOMAR TO LISBON

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Today a walking tour of the medieval city of **Tomar**. Along the way, our guide will give a brief history of the Inquisition in Portugal and touch upon dramatic literary descriptions of those terrible times.
- We explore the recently restored **Abraao Zacuto Museum**, which served as a synagogue in the 15th century, and today is a significant reminder of one of the greatest **Sephardic Jewish communities**.
- We continue to **Convento De Cristo** that once served as the headquarters of the Order.
- Later this afternoon, we continue to Lisbon and check into our hotel with time to freshen up.
- This evening we share a special **Shabbat** experience with the local community.

Overnight in Lisbon (B, D)

Saturday, May 21, 2022: SINTRA & BELÉM

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Travel to Sintra's breathtaking **Pena Palace**, an architectural masterpiece perched atop the Sintra Mountains. The castle is yet another UNESCO World Heritage Site and is considered one of the 7 Wonders of Portugal. The palace is surrounded by a forest of 500 different tree species gathered from the four corners of the earth.
- We walk through the **Jewish quarter**, where Jews lived before the forced conversions of 1497.
- This afternoon, we travel to the seaside town of Belem. Following free time for lunch on own we will provide a special tasty treat of custard tarts from the world-famous **Pasteis de Belem** coffee house. Sneak a peek inside of this acclaimed institution, whose walls are covered with the well-known blue and white tiles of Portugal.
- We continue our tour with an overview of the fortified **Tower of Belém**, an old ship's security post that also served as a prison. If time permits, we will visit the **Church of Santa Maria de Belém**, where lies the tombs of Vasco da Gama, and Manuel I who forcibly converted the **Jews of Portugal**. This was where Columbus first returned after discovering the New World.
- Enjoy an evening at leisure or choose to “follow the leader” to dinner.

Participants joining for the Spain-only portion of the tour, depart home tonight on their overnight flight to Lisbon!

Overnight in Lisbon (B)



Sunday, May 22, 2022: JEWISH LISBON

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we embark on an extraordinary Jewish tour. On our walking tour through the heart of Lisbon we'll visit many places of hidden Jewish significance, chief among them is **Rossio Square**. The **National Theatre** stands upon the site of the **Palace of Estaos**, where during the Inquisition, many Jews were tortured and killed as heretics. The adjacent Square of **Sao Domingo** is the site of the Massacre of 1506, when more than 500 New Christians (Jews who were forced to convert) were tortured and killed. This massacre happened 9 years after the forced conversions, nearby at **Palácio dos Estaus**.
- We walk through the **Judaria Grande** (Large Jewish Quarter), established in the 13th century under King Dinis. During the Moorish rule, Jews co-existed with Muslims in the neighboring Alfama quarter, the oldest quarter of Lisbon.
- We view the famed **Elevador de Santa Justa**, a Neo-Gothic tower of merchant transport and stop in the **Chiado** and **Rua Garrett** a merchant district with historic retail shops.
- Other sites of interest this morning include the upscale residential district of Príncipe Real with boutiques, gardens, and cafes, the **Carmo Ruins**, the roofless church of the great earthquake, and the most important Judaic artifacts of Portugal and Bairro Alto, home to great Jewish sages.
- Following the tour, we have time for lunch (on own) downtown.
- This afternoon, join us for a special **baking demonstration**, where we will learn how to make the most famous dessert in all of Portugal - **Pastel de Nata**.



NOTE: *Participants joining for the Spain-only portion of the tour arrive throughout the day.*

- *Upon arrival, transfer on own to our centrally located downtown hotel.*
- *This afternoon, those arriving for the Spain-only portion of the trip will join a short welcome program and introductions at our hotel.*

- This evening, we ALL join together for **dinner** at a local restaurant accompanied by traditional Portuguese Fado music! Tonight, will serve as a welcome event for those who just arrived, a farewell event for those headed home, or a continuation of the tour for those who are participating in both segments of the tour.

Overnight in Lisbon (B, D)

Monday, May 23, 2022: DEPARTURE / LISBON TO EVORA, PORTUGAL AND CORDOBA, SPAIN

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.

Those who depart today will transfer to the airport on own to catch their flight home.

- We head through the heartland of Portugal along a vast sea of cork trees, vineyards, and olive trees into the southern province of **Alentejo**. Along the way, our guide will give a brief presentation regarding the cork industry, wine and olive oil production.
- Upon arrival in the medieval city Évora, we enjoy walking tour of this 2,000-year-old cultural oasis. We will visit the **Diana Temple** (Roman construction from 1st century A.D.), the **Inquisition Court** and the **House of the Inquisitor**. We will learn more about the importance of the **Jewish community** and their legacy in Évora, as we visit the main Plaza where a memorial was placed on behalf of all the victims from the Portuguese Inquisition.
- Enjoy lunch on own in Évora.
- We continue to Cordoba where we enjoy an included group dinner at a local restaurant.

Overnight in Cordoba (B, D)

Tuesday, May 24, 2022: CORDOBA & GRANADA

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We start with a walking tour of **Cordoba**, once considered the largest city in the world. Today, it is quite small and easy to visit in a day. We start our day by visiting the **Medieval Synagogue** (year 1315) from what was once the Muslim ruled area of the Iberian Peninsula. We will visit the **Jewish quarter** and the **Jewish Museum** where we come to understand how important the Jewish Community of Cordoba was. One of the most recognizable names from the Cordoba Jewish community is Maimonides (buried in Tiberias, Israel). One of the named plazas that we will encounter is **Plaza Juda Levi**, a famous physician, poet and philosopher of the Spanish Sephardic period, born 1075. The tour concludes with a visit to the 8th century **Medieval Mosque**; the only one in all of Europe.
- We enjoy an included **lunch** in a traditional Sephardic Restaurant before departing for Granada.
- Upon arrival in Granada enjoy some time to refresh, then join together for **dinner** at a local restaurant.



Overnight in Granada (B, L, D)

Wednesday, May 25, 2022: GRANADA

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we explore the famed **Alhambra Palace**. Among the oldest quarters in the city, the Alhambra rises up like an imposing castle with reddish tones in its ramparts that prevent the outside world from seeing the delicate beauty they enclose. Originally designed as a military area, the Alhambra became the residence of royalty and of the court of Granada in the middle of the thirteenth century. Now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Alhambra is a treasure trove of Moorish architecture.
- This afternoon, we return to the city center for an afternoon and evening at leisure.

Overnight in Granada (B)

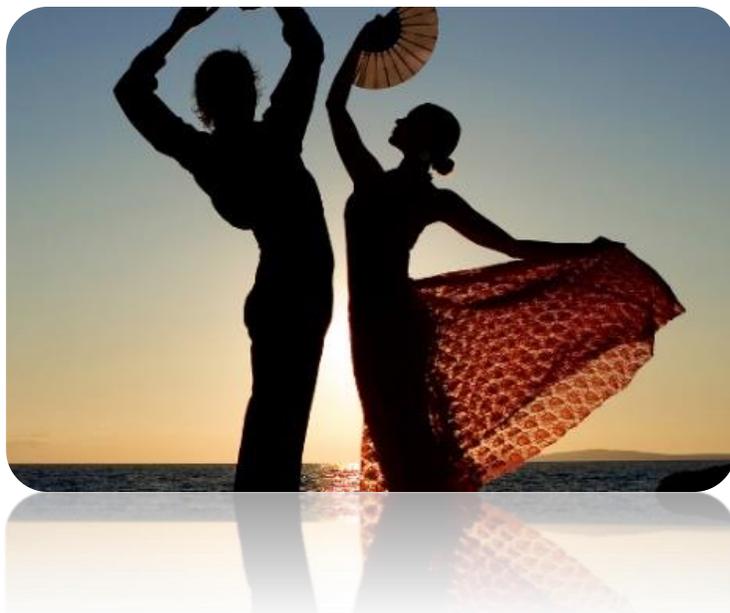
Thursday, May 26, 2022: SEVILLE

- Breakfast, check out of our hotel and depart to Seville.
- Upon arrival, we enjoy a sightseeing tour of the city to get in touch with some of the most iconic locations. We will see the **La Real Maestranza Bullring**, which was built during the 18th century and is the oldest and the most traditional bullring in Spain. We will view the **Torre del Oro - the Golden Tower**, a fort built by the river during the Moorish days. We see the **San Telmo Palace** before we stop at the **Plaza de España** where we still see some of the impressive pavilions created for the World's Fair Expo 1929, held in Seville. The iconic plaza may be familiar to movie fans as well!
- This afternoon we enjoy a local cuisine **food tour in the district of Triana**. This neighborhood is known for being the birthplace of soulful flamenco dancers and valiant bullfighters, as well as the site of Seville's famous ceramic industry. Traditionally, it has also been home to an eclectic mix of residents, from sailors and bullfighters to potters and flamenco dancers – all especially proud of their Triana heritage.
- Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure

Overnight in Seville (B, L)

Friday, May 27, 2022: SEVILLE

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin by exploring the connection this city has with famous Operas such as Carmen. Next to the former Tobacco Factory where this famous cigar-maker Carmen once worked is the monument of the famous Spanish soldier "El Cid" that in 1961 became a movie starring Sophia Loren and Charlton Heston. After, we will stop by **Bairro de Santa Cruz**, the former **Jewish section** of the city - nowadays one of the most romantic quarters in Spain thanks to the myth of Don Juan. Our tour concludes at the Cathedral where the tomb of Christopher Columbus stands.
- After free time this afternoon, we join together for a short **Shabbat Kiddish** followed by **dinner** at a local restaurant enhanced by a traditional **Flamenco Show!**



Overnight in Seville (B, D)

Saturday, May 28, 2022: BARCELONA

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Transfer to the airport for our flight to Barcelona
- Upon arrival, we visit **Montjuic** to take in the beautiful panoramic views. Montjuic translates to "Jewish Mountain" from medieval Catalan, and remains of a medieval Jewish cemetery have been found here.
- Enjoy some free time for lunch (on own) in the Gothic Quarter.
- This afternoon, we enjoy a **walking tour** of Barcelona's **Jewish Quarter**; abandoned after the pogroms of 1391, almost 100 years before the Spanish Inquisition and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. Today, we can see the remains of historic buildings including two medieval mikvehs and one of the oldest synagogues in Europe.
- We check into our hotel and have time to refresh.
- Tonight, we enjoy **Havdalah** and **dinner** together with members of one of the local Jewish communities.

Overnight in Barcelona (B, D)

Sunday, May 29, 2022: BARCELONA

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we take a tour inside the **Sagrada Familia**; fruit of the work of genius architect Antoni Gaudi and *still* under construction over 120 years since its inception in 1882.
- We continue with a tour inside **Parc Guell**, another masterpiece of Gaudi, now a public park under the guise of UNESCO.
- Free time for lunch (on own) in **Las Ramblas**, a bustling outdoor pedestrian street chock full of alfresco dining, street vendors, entertainment, and shopping.
- This afternoon, we explore the **Picasso Museum** and other famous sites followed by some free time to explore at leisure!
- Tonight, we enjoy a festive **farewell dinner** followed by a **musical performance at the Palau de la Música** an extraordinary concert venue known as an architectural jewel of Catalan Art Nouveau. The iconic **Concert Auditorium** has been the privileged setting for the musical life, both national and international for more than hundred years in Barcelona.

Overnight in Barcelona (B, D)

Monday, May 30, 2022: DEPARTURE

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Transfer to airport on own.
- We arrive home and start making plans for our next Best-Day Adventure!

The Memories Last Forever!!

**Itinerary subject to change*

