

MADRID, PARIS & FRENCH RIVIERA

(Note: This is only a sample tour)

Day 1: Depart today on your flight to Madrid.

Day 2: Arrive **Madrid**. Madrid is sophisticated and stylish but was at one time cloaked in authoritarian repression and insularity. Today there are sweeping plazas and grand boulevards, fountains and palaces, elegant buildings and more than 40 museums. Guided city tour. See The Plaza Mayor and El Retiro Park. Tour the Plaza de Espana and the statue of Cervantes fictional hero Don Quixote. Then continue past the elegant Alcala shopping street, the Cibeles Fountain and cross the Puerta del Sol. Enjoy a guided visit to Las Ventas. This impressive bullring was built in mudejan (Moorish) style and today is also used for rock concerts and political meetings.



Day 3: Visit the **Royal Palace**, an extravagant and flamboyant Renaissance Neoclassical structure consisting of 2000 rooms which was completed in 1764 for Carlos III. Enjoy a leisurely walk to El Retiro Park or some shopping on the elegant Alcala shopping street. Afternoon visit to the Prado Museum or the Museo Thyssen Bornemisza. Walk back towards your hotel and shop Puerto del Sol, Plaza Mayor, Gran Via. Tonight attend a traditional flamenco show.

Day 4: Transfer to **Segovia** a UNESCO heritage site. The 2000 year old well preserved aqueduct is an imposing site. The prominent cathedral built in Renaissance times (1525 – 1768) is an excellent example of Gothic with its frilly exterior. Perched high on the hill is the **Alcazar**, a fortified palace that was once the residence of the monarchs of Castille, was at one time a prison, and then a Royal Artillery School. Visit the Alcazar. Evening flight to **Paris**.



Day 5: Walking orientation tour of the city. Your guide will leave you in the Latin Quarter or near **Notre Dame Cathedral**. The Latin Quarter got its name because at one time Latin was spoken here. Today it is a lovely place to stroll as it is brimming with cafes, restaurants, little bookstores, tourist shops all of which add to the lively and attractive ambiance of the neighborhood. Visit Notre Dame Cathedral, and Ste Chappelle and possibly the Conciergerie, all of which are located on the Ile de La Cite. Ste Chappelle was founded by King Louis IX who constructed it as a royal chapel and to house precious relics. The Conciergerie was built in the early 14th century and became the first prison of Paris. During the French Revolution nearly 3000 of the condemned, including Marie Antoinette, spent their last days here.. Today you can visit the Prisoners Gallery where cells have been reconstructed according to the time as well as a few mementos of the French Revolution. Board the metro to see the famous cabaret, **Moulin Rouge**. Continue to Montmartre, one of the most picturesque quarters of the city. It is a working class, colorful, crowded and lively area dominated by souvenir shops, cafes, and inexpensive clothing and multitude of fabric and notions stores. Climb or take the funicular up to **Sacre Coeur**, a beautiful white basilica, magnetically towering from the highest point in Montmartre. Tonight ascend the **Eiffel Tower**.



Day 6: Today a guided visit to the **Louvre**. Then see Place de la Concorde, Place Vendome and Palais Royale. Walk the Champs Elysee, Ave de Montaigne, Rue du Faubourg, and Saint Honore, widely cited as the most fashionable streets in the world. See the Arc de Triomphe. This evening visit Paris's grands magasins (department stores) Galeries Lafayette and Printemps department stores.

Day 7: Visit **Versailles**. See the Grand Apartments, Hall of Mirrors, King's and Queen's suites, and other sights. Afterwards, enjoy a behind the scenes tour of the Opera Garnier that includes a visit to the public foyers, the main auditorium and the backstage areas. The remainder of the day visit some of Paris's fascinating "nooks". The Canal Saint Martin Neighborhood is a hotspot for fashion-conscious bohos. Visit Rue Montorgueil one of Paris's oldest streets and is a vibrant cheery quarter bursting with food markets, pastry shops, bars, cafes, eateries and quirky contemporary boutiques and young cutting edge designers. Tonight a Seine Cruise.

Day 8: Depart for **Nice**. Starting in the 18th century, many wealthy English people passed the winter in Nice, enjoying the panorama along the coast. Full day of guided sightseeing of the Cote D'Azur region. The countryside, panoramic views and exclusive villas are breathtaking. Then on to **Saint Paul De Vence**, a picturesque and very touristy hilltop village which is home to a great many artists and writers. Return to the coast and visit **Cannes**, famous for the annual film festival and **Antibes**, Nice's attractive but much less crowded neighbor. Antibes picture perfect Old Town with its cluster of red tiled roofs rises above the blue Mediterranean and is a lovely spot to browse.

Day 9: Explore on foot or by bicycle the Promenade des Anglais. Visit the Hotel Negresco. Constructed in 1912 and in keeping with the conventions of the time, the Negresco opens on the side opposite the Mediterranean. Begin at Place Masséna, the 4 block section of the city referred to as the "Zone Pietonne", or "Pedestrian Zone". Fine selection of restaurants, cafés, small shops selling clothing, shoes and souvenirs. Later discover Old Town, one of the delights of the Riviera. Cars are forbidden on streets so narrow that the buildings crowd out the sky. You can wander down cobble streets or sit in an outdoor café on a Venetian like square.

Day 10: Au revoir la belle France

TOUR INCLUSIONS

- Return airfare to Madrid return Nice
- One way flight Madrid – Paris
- One way flight Paris – Nice
- Coach transfers
 - o Madrid – return airport
 - o Paris - return airport
 - o Nice - return airport
 - o Full day visit to Segovia
 - o Full day visit to Cote D'Azur area
- Assistance upon arrival in Madrid and Paris
- 8 nights accommodation with private facilities
- 8 breakfasts
- 4 dinners
- Guided tours
 - o Madrid coach tour
 - o Paris walking tour
 - o Cote D'Azur
- Entrances
 - o Las Ventas bullring
 - o Royal Palace
 - o Museum of choice in Madrid
 - o Flamenco show
 - o Alcazar in Segovia
 - o Guided visit Louvre
 - o Eiffel Tower
 - o Guided tour Opera Garnier
 - o Seine Cruise
 - o Versailles with audio guides
- 3 day metro pass in Paris

