

Spain National Day Special

Museums, history and nature on offer

Oct. 12 is the National Day of Spain, a day that celebrates Spain's worldwide legacy and ties to the international community as well as commemorates the country's history and achievements. The date is tied to the early exploration of the Americas and the beginnings of Spanish expansion.

Spain is regularly ranked among the top two nations by international tourist arrivals, making it a major drawcard for visitors year-round. The capital, Madrid, boasts



A statue of painter Diego Velazquez adorns the entrance of the Prado gallery in Madrid.

GETTY IMAGES

several world-class art galleries, including the Prado, Thyssen-Bornemisza and Reina Sofia museums, which are all in the same neighborhood, Paseo del Arte. The Royal Palace, Western Europe's largest, is renowned not only for the opulence of its interior and grounds, but also for the Mirador de la Cornisa observation deck with views of the Campo del Moro Gardens and Casa del Campo Park. The painting gallery is home to works by Luis Morales, Caravaggio and Goya.

The capital of Catalonia, trendy Barcelona, is a city defined by the work of the artist and architect Antoni Gaudi, whose art nouveau work can be seen across town. He began work on the Basilica of La Sagrada Familia in 1883 and work on the project continues to this day, with completion anticipated in 2026. Other prominent Gaudi buildings are Guell Park and Casa Mila, both UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The most famous of Barcelona's streets is Las Ramblas, which reaches the Mediterranean at Port Vell. Elsewhere in Catalonia is Tarragona, home to the Tarraco archeological site that dates back to Roman times. This is also

vineyard country and produces some of Spain's best wine, such as Rioja and Ribera del Duero. The monastery of Santa Maria de Poblet is a highlight of the popular Cistercian Route pilgrimage trail and houses an important library of religious texts.

Andalusia is a southern region still associated today with the period of Muslim control over the Iberian Peninsula that began in the eighth century and ended with the 1492 Reconquista. The Alhambra, in the city of Granada, is perhaps the grandest reminder of this period: a complex of Islamic buildings, leafy walkways, gardens and fountains that served as living quarters for the ruling monarchs of the time. The Great Mosque of Cordoba is another reminder of the Caliphate, with the interesting twist that it was converted into a cathedral in 1236. Cordoba also has several sites dating as far back as Roman times, and the remains of the medieval Jewish quarter.

The Balearic Islands sit in the Mediterranean Sea and, in addition to tranquil fishing villages, visitors are attracted to its famous nightlife. The nightclubs of Ibiza attract the biggest names in electronic



The fortress of Alhambra sits in the hills above Granada in Andalusia.

GETTY IMAGES

music, but the island also has a UNESCO-listed old town, the Phoenician settlement of Sa Caleta, and the Roman necropolis at Puig des Molins. The largest island in the chain, Majorca, boasts Cabrera National Park and the Serra of Tramontana mountain range, a favored hiking destination. Minorca, meanwhile, is famed for 216 kilometers of coastline and being listed as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve for its wealth of flora, fauna and wetland areas.

The article references excerpts from Spain's official tourism website. For more information, please visit <https://www.spain.info/en>.

Congratulations

*on the Occasion of
the National Day of Spain*

 Mitsubishi Corporation