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IF YOU GO

What to See and Do in Spain

A guide to restaurants, hotels and sites in Barcelona, Seville, Granada and Malaga.



Alfonso XIII hotel in Seville. Daniel Rodrigues for The New York Times

By Luisita Lopez Torregrosa Jan. 16, 2018

Barcelona

Hotel Casa Fuster, one of Barcelona's classiest hotels, is housed in a 1908-11 Modernista mansion. Check out the romantic Café Vienese and the rooftop terrace and pool with spectacular views. Rooms from 262 euros. Passeig de Gracia 132; hotelcasafuster.com.

Casa Gracia, a high-design hostel with a cool atmosphere, has a DJ-driven bar and quirky common spaces. Rooms from 103 euros. Passeig de Gracia 116; casagraciabcn.com.

Granada

Hotel Hospes Palacio de Los Patos is widely regarded as the best hotel in Granada. Housed in a classic Unesco-protected manor that features a grand staircase, an Arabian garden and the Roman Emperor spa. Rooms from 200 euros. Solarillo de Gracia 1; hospes.com.

Hotel Zaguan del Darro, in the historic Muslim quarter Albayzin, is a 16th century house with 13 different rooms, some looking out over the Rio Darro, close to the Alhambra. Rooms from 55 euros. Carrera del Darro 23; hotelzaguan.com.

Malaga

Gran Hotel Miramar, a palatial estate looking over the Mediterranean, evokes Nazariid Moorish architecture with ornate and delicate designs. Rooms from 310 euros. Paseo de Reding 22; granhotelmiramarmalaga.com/en

Molino Lario, at the entrance to the hyperkinetic casco antiguo (old city), has comfortable contemporary rooms, soothing décor, and a terrific staff. Small shuttered balconies look out to the bay and to the grand Cathedral. Rooms from 130 euros. Calle Molina Lario 20-22; hotelmolinalario.com.

Seville

Hotel Alfonso XIII, created in 1928 and renovated in 2012, is among the most luxurious hotels in Europe. It features classic Moorish Andalusian architecture with a glassed-in courtyard restaurant, glazed tiles and terra-cotta brick. Enjoy a cocktail at the jazzy Bar Americano. Rooms from 312 euros. Calle San Fernando 2; hotel-alfonsoxiii-seville.com.

Hotel Casa 1800, an idyllic inn in the heart of the Casco Viejo's Barrio Santa Cruz, offers great service, a warm atmosphere and elegant suites. Rooms from 195 euros. Calle Rodrigo Caro 6; hotelcasa1800sevilla.com.

Where to Eat and Drink

Barcelona

Tickets, one of the most sought-after reservations in the restaurant world, is the new culinary success of Ferran Adrià, who built a gastronomic revolution with his El Bulli. In a quirky space with circus and theater décor, Tickets serves a parade of exceptional dishes that defy description. Dessert is served in a separate room evoking Alice in Wonderland. Book only online two months in advance. Dinner for one (17 tapas plates, dessert tastings and a drink cost 124.85 euros. Avinguda Parallel 179. elbarriadria.com.

[Cervecería Catalana](#) draws a sophisticated morning-to-late-night crowd to its wide selection of hot tapas, salads and sausages, excellent beer and wine. It has a bustling and entertaining atmosphere smack in the middle of the splendid L'Eixample neighborhood. Two tapas and a mug of beer, 12.50 euros. Carrer de Mallorca 236; phone 93 216 03 68.

Granada

Carmela Restaurante specializes in Mediterranean cuisine with Andalusian traditions in a small dining room overlooking a popular corner of the old city. A dinner of bacalao (cod) mozarabe, a pionono dessert (bananas) and one glass of wine, 31.70 euros. Calle Colcha 13; restaurantecarmela.com.

Bodegas Castaneda, popular with tourists and locals, the bustling Castaneda is the tapas bar to end all tapas bars. Longtime waiters call out orders, slide through the crowd, and manage to serve hundreds of people quickly and nicely. Go early and expect to wait for a table. No reservations accepted. A dinner of fabulous berenjenas rellenas (stuffed eggplant), a slice of quiche, and one beer, 7 euros. Calle Almineceros, off famous Calle Elvira. No phone.

Malaga

El Refectorium, enclosed in glass windows in a contemporary setting, is far from the familiar tapas bars of the casco antiguo. It's informal but serves an elegant dinner in a restful dining room. A terrific sirloin cooked perfectly to order and a glass of exquisite Ribera come to 30.80 euros. Postigo de los Abades 4; phone 952 60 23 89.

El Piyayo, famous for its pescaitos fritos (fried fish), serves up typical tapas fare including manchego cheese to go with robust red wine. Dinner for one, 10 euros. Calle Granada 36; entreplatos.es.

Seville

La Azotea, a popular neighborhood tapas bar, offers a welcoming ambience, artfully presented plates and excellent wines. Dinner for one with wine, around 10 euros. Azotea has four branches in Seville. My favorite is on Calle Zaragoza 5; phone 955 11 67 48.

Mariatrifulca, a historic gastrobar with a view of the Guadalquivir River at the end of the Triana bridge, offers a rich menu of seafood, beef, salads. Their croquettes, lobster salad and arroz negro (black rice) are memorable. Dinner for three with wine, 90 euros. Puente de Triana, Plaza del Altozano n1; mariatrifulca.com

Zelai stands out among the countless tapas bars and cerveserias in the Casco Viejo with fabulous cod over black linguine. Dinner for one, around 10 euros. Calle Albareda 22; phone 954 229 992.

What to See

In Spain, everything.

Dozens of travel guides provide maps and details about Spain's monuments, castles, fortresses, cathedrals and museums. Lonely Planet publishes reliable and current guides with detailed maps, lists of everything, rates and costs, and sections on history, culture and the arts.

You should purchase sightseeing tickets in advance online. Group tour tickets to the [Sagrada Familia](#) in Barcelona start at \$25. Private tours cost more. For example, private tours to the Mezquita, in Cordoba, will run \$200. The Alhambra offers similar rates and a variety of tours.

Correction: January 19, 2018

An earlier version of this article rendered incorrectly the name of a restaurant in Barcelona. It is Cervecería Catalana, not Catalana Cerveseria.