

TRAVEL WITH FRIENDS IN 2012



Portugal & Northern Spain: From Lisbon to Bilbao

10 – 24 September 2012 (15 days / 14 nights)

Tour Leader: Brian Ladd


Renaissance
Tours





Tour leader Brian Ladd

Dip.F.A. (Sculpture), Dip.Ed.

A specialist in European and Australian sculpture, Brian Ladd brings a broad knowledge and enthusiasm to the study of visual art. From 1996 – 2010 Brian was head of the Public Programs Department at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. He was responsible for wide ranging, innovative education and public programs that enlivened the Art Gallery and engaged diverse audiences with art.

Brian lectures for the Art Gallery Society and, since 1995, has led tours to Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Central Europe and the USA.

Portugal & Northern Spain: From Lisbon to Bilbao

Explore the unique regional cultures of Portugal and Northern Spain, travelling from Lisbon to Bilbao, through the charming medieval cities of Porto, Santiago de Compostela, Leon and Burgos. These fascinating and diverse destinations reflect distinct traditions that have found expression in the art, architecture, food and wine of each region. The cities and towns share complex histories, from the occupation of the Islamic Moors to the Christian Reconquista, both of which have shaped the unique character of this part of the world.

Thanks to the importance of the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela in Medieval times and the immense wealth brought back by the Portuguese and Spanish explorers during the 16th and 17th centuries, both countries are richly endowed with Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque art and architecture. But you will be equally astounded by the abundance of striking contemporary art and architecture throughout the Iberian Peninsula, epitomised by Bilbao's Guggenheim Museum.

The tour is not only designed to incorporate visits to important sites of great art and architecture, the journey itself will play a key part. Encounter landscapes of dramatic beauty and variety, from the Atlantic coastal escarpments and rivers of Portugal, to the remote plateaus and plains of Northern Spain. This will be a journey to savour slowly and enjoy fully.



Santiago de Compostela Cathedral

ITINERARY

Sun 09 September 2012

Depart Australia

Suggested departure from Australia on Qantas / Air France flights via Singapore and Paris.

Mon 10 September

Arrive Lisbon

Arrive Lisbon in the morning. Check-in to your hotel located in the centre of Lisbon close to the Avenue de Liberdade. Lisbon is one of the oldest cities in the world. It was a Phoenician trading post around 1200BC. The city is most famous for its maritime successes, particularly from the 15th – 18th centuries, including Vasco da Gama who set out from Lisbon to successfully navigate a sea passage to India in 1498. During this era Lisbon was the capital of an empire. A devastating earthquake struck Lisbon in 1755. The ruined city was rebuilt with a new grid street plan for the central Baixa district at its heart.

During the 19th century Portugal lost its empire and declined as a European power. Industrialisation brought new economic wealth to the country in the second half of the century, yet political unrest followed by the lengthy dictatorship of Antonio Salazar from 1926 – 1968 which saw stagnation and cultural isolation envelope Portugal. Since the end of the dictatorship Lisbon has enjoyed renewed economic growth, freedom and prosperity.

Tonight join Brian Ladd for a welcome dinner. (D)

Tue 11 September

Lisbon

Morning orientation tour of Lisbon. Starting in the **Avenue de Liberdade** and the **Baixa** (lower town) district, see some of Lisbon's most beautiful squares and visit the **Sé Lisbon Cathedral** and the lookout of **Graça**. Pass the **Monastery of S. Vicente** and the **National Pantheon**. The picturesque working class area of **Bairro Alto** dates from the 16th century that has traditionally been the city's bohemian haunt of artists and writers. The **Alfama** is the oldest district of Lisbon, spreading on the slope between the **Castle of Lisbon** and the Tagus river and has always been the inspiration for Fado songs.

After lunch, visit the celebrated **Museu Calouste Gulbenkian**, to view its impressive and wide ranging art collections, spanning Egyptian and classical antiquities, European old and modern masters, as well as Oriental and Islamic treasures. (BL)



Palácio da Pena

Wed 12 September

Lisbon

Today explore **Belem**, Lisbon's most monumental and historical area. It was from here that many of the great Portuguese explorers embarked on their voyages of discovery. Start at the **Torre de Belém** (1515-21), the ornately decorated fortress in the River Tagus, from which sea journeys of exploration began. Visit the **Mosteiro dos Jeronimos**, a great monastery and monument to the wealth of The Age of Discovery and representing the culmination of Manueline architecture of this period.

Afternoon visit to the **Berardo Museum** which has one of the world's most acclaimed modern art collections, with works by Warhol, Picasso, Dali, Duchamp, Magritte, Miró, Bacon, Jackson Pollock, Jeff Koons, among others representing dozens of modern movements. (B)

Thu 13 September

Lisbon

Morning visit to the **Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga**. The Portuguese national art collections are housed in a 17th century palace.

Continue to the town of Sintra, the favourite summer retreat of the Kings of Portugal. In the heart of the old town we visit the 14th century royal palace, **Palácio Nacional de Sintra**.

Afternoon visit to the extraordinary **Palácio da Pena** in Sintra, built by King Consort Ferdinand II, completed in 1885. (BL)

Fri 14 September

Lisbon – Porto

A morning's drive takes you from Lisbon to Porto (270km, approx. 3.5hrs). Porto is located on a magnificent site near the mouth of the Douro River. Porto is an ancient port steeped in history and tradition.

On an afternoon tour discover Porto through its monuments by renowned architects such as Gustave Eiffel's **Dona Maria Bridge**, Nicolau Nasoni's **Clerigos Tower**, Rem Koolhaas' **Casa da Musica** and Siza Vieira's **Serralves Museum** which is an arresting minimalist construction of vast, whitewashed spaces bathed in natural light.

Continue to **Vila Nova de Gaia** ('Gaia') across the Douro river from Porto with a shared history of port-wine making. No visit to Porto would be complete without a visit to the terracotta-topped Port Wine warehouses for a tour and tasting. (BD)



Cathedral in Santiago de Compostela

Sat 15 September

Porto

After breakfast discover Porto's historic centre on a walking tour. The **Ribeira** district is a UNESCO World Heritage zone of winding lanes, zigzagging staircases and tiled churches. The **São Francisco Church** looks like an ordinary 14th century Gothic and Baroque construction but has the most extraordinary golden Baroque church interior. The austere fortress-like cathedral has Gothic cloisters which covered with magnificent blue and white tiles from the 18th century.

Porto has other stunning tilework. One of the largest and most exquisite displays covers the **Igreja do Carmo** (Carmo Church). **Silvestre Silvestri's** magnificent 1912 panel illustrates the legend of the founding of the Carmelite order. At the **São Bento Station** around 20,000 magnificent tiles alluding to the history of transport and Portugal cover most of the atrium.

After lunch visit the **Soares Dos Reis Museum**, housed in the formidable **Palácio das Carrancas**. It holds significant collections of Portuguese ceramics, paintings and sculptures from the 16th – 19th centuries. (BL)

Sun 16 September Porto – Santiago de Compostela

Depart Porto after breakfast and travel into Spain to Santiago de Compostela (190km, approx. 2.5hrs). Santiago de Compostela is situated in Galicia in the far north western reaches of Spain. Since the 9th century, it has been one of the most important medieval pilgrimage destinations for Christians and is the culmination to the 'Way of St James', the pilgrimage route. Legend has it that the body of the Apostle James the Greater is buried within the great Cathedral, which is the focus for pilgrims. The historic Old Town, with its old quarters and maze of narrow streets, is designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Afternoon walking tour of the historic centre of Santiago, which was Christendom's most important pilgrimage site after Rome and Jerusalem during the Middle Ages. Visit the **Convent of San Martino Pinario** and the Cathedral which towers over the city and has welcomed pilgrims to Santiago since the 11th century. (BD)

Mon 17 September Santiago de Compostela

Santiago de Compostela's rich and renowned heritage has been increased in the last two decades with outstanding



Contemporary Art Museum of Castilla and León (MUSAC)

examples of contemporary architecture. The city spaces and buildings designed in recent years by Álvaro Siza, Giorgio Grassi, John Hejduk, Peter Eisenman, J.P. Kleihues or Gallego Jorroto establish a dialogue with the old buildings, giving Santiago a surprising new facet. A prime example is the **City of Culture (CdC)**, designed by New York's Peter Eisenman, a magnificent cultural macro-structure destined to become a 'city' of knowledge and creativity.

In the afternoon visit traditional workshops and see artisans at work using different materials such as leather, traditional braiding, silverwork and jet stone. See artisans at work which all share a common goal – reviving the traditional trades and materials of Galicia's and Santiago's culture. (B)

Tue 18 September Santiago de Compostela – Leon

Morning at leisure to further explore Santiago de Compostela on your own. In the afternoon travel by coach to Leon (350KM approx. 4hrs). Leon is the former capital of the ancient Kingdom of Leon. It was an important pilgrim stop on the Way of St James and retains significant Romanesque and Gothic monuments. The imposing Cathedral, decorated with fine Gothic sculptures, and several other major buildings remind one of the city's medieval importance. (BD)

Wed 19 September

Leon

Morning visit to **Leon Cathedral**, another fine example of Spanish Gothic architecture and renowned for its magnificent stained glass windows, and the **Church of St Isidore**, built into the Roman walls which encircle the city.

Later visit the **Contemporary Art Museum of Castilla and León (MUSAC)** by Spanish architects Mansilla + Tuñón which won the 2007 Mies van der Rohe Award, the European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture. The design works to redefine the role of a museum with respect to its cultural context and the way people experience museums. (B)

Thu 20 September

Leon – Burgos

Today travel to Burgos. (190KM, approx. 2.5hrs). Burgos, on the banks of the Arlanzon River, is the former capital of the Kingdom of Castile and Leon. There are major buildings associated with the early monarchs of the Kingdom yet its most distinguished landmark is the magnificent Cathedral, whose lofty Gothic spires dominate the city skyline.

Afternoon tour of **Burgos Cathedral**. Founded in 1221, this great Gothic cathedral was constructed over three centuries and features the work of many European architects and artists. Also visit the lavishly decorated convent of **Las Huelgas**, founded in 1187. (BD)

Fri 21 September

Burgos – Bilbao

Morning drive from Burgos to Bilbao (160KM, approx. 2hrs). Bilbao is the capital of the Spanish province of Biscay. A Basque city, Bilbao was founded in the early 14th century and became a significant commercial centre with trade centered on the export of iron ore extracted from the Biscayan quarries. Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries the city was an important centre of heavy industry, including ship building. This economic activity brought wealth and prosperity to Bilbao. However, during this era political movements to gain independence for the Basque territories sometimes involved waging war with the Spanish central government.

Begin your exploration of Bilbao with a walking tour including a visit to the **Museo de Bellas Artes**, which has a fascinating collection of old masters, Spanish impressionists, modernists, and contemporary art. (BD)

Sat 22 September

Bilbao

Today visit Bilbao's newest emblem, the **Guggenheim Museum** designed by acclaimed architect Frank Gehry. The art museum opened in 1997, rising from the banks of the River Nervion behind stunning sails of titanium that have emphatically put the city on the cultural map of Europe. It is the European showcase for the modern art collection founded in New York by art patron Solomon R. Guggenheim. The museum also presents spectacular contemporary art exhibitions. Remainder of the day at leisure to remain in the museum or take a stroll along the river. (B)

Sun 23 September

Bilbao

Full day excursion to **San Sebastián** (Basque: Donostia) located on the shores of the beautiful, crescent-shaped Bahía de La Concha. Here classic structures stand alongside French-influenced works in the style of the Belle Époque (Golden Age) as well as avant-garde and modern buildings that break with traditional aesthetics.

San Sebastián is well known for its public sculptures. The work of sculptor Eduardo Chillida and architect Luis Peña Ganchegui, el Peine del Viento (the Wind Comb) is a perfect example of beauty in its pure state. Other works include the lofty sculpture **Construcción Vacía (Empty Structure)**, by Jorge Oteiza and **The Memoria** by Aitor Mendizbal, dedicated to all victims of terrorism.

The **San Telmo Museum** is housed in a former 16th-century monastery with an attractive cloister. Visit the chapel, whose walls are decorated with frescoes by José María Sert chronicling Basque artisanship.

Join Brian Ladd and fellow travellers for a farewell lunch before returning to Bilbao. (BL)

Mon 24 September

Depart Bilbao

Tour arrangements conclude after breakfast. If travelling on the suggested flights, transfer to the airport for an evening flight on Air France to Singapore via Paris, connecting with overnight flights to Australia on Qantas. (B)



São Francisco Church in Porto

Paradores Spain

Paradores are hotels housed in historic buildings such as Castles, Palaces, Fortresses, Convents and Monasteries offering a unique experience.



Parador Santiago de Compostela 'Hostal Dos Reis Catolicos'

A mixture of history, art and tradition, the **Parador Santiago de Compostela 'Hostal Dos Reis Catolicos'** forms a magnificent corner with the cathedral in one of the most visited regional capitals of the world.

The hostel which originated as a Royal Hospital in 1499 gave lodging and shelter to the numerous pilgrims making their way to Santiago. It continues this age old practice today and is considered to be the oldest hotel in the world.



Parador de Leon 'Hostal San Marcos'

The **Parador de Leon 'Hostal San Marcos'** was originally a monastery founded in the twelfth century to provide lodging for the pilgrims travelling to Santiago de Compostela. It later became the headquarters of the Order of Saint James whose soldiers provided protection for the pilgrims.

The original building was demolished in the sixteenth century and the construction of the present building, on the original site, commenced in 1515.

This is one of the most beautiful Renaissance building in Spain. The carvings depicting religious and historical events on the 100 metre long facade are worthy of note.



Lisbon



Torre de Belém in Lisbon



Nicolau Nasoni's Clerigos Tower in Porto

TOUR PRICES

Per person, twin-share	AUD6,850
Single supplement*	AUDI,250
Deposit (per person)	AUD500
Final Payment	12 July 2012

*Single travellers may request to share. Please advise at time of booking.

TOUR CODE AGS Portugal & Spain

SUGGESTED AIRLINE

Qantas / Air France

Air France airfares include Qantas flights between Australia and Singapore connecting with Air France flights to Europe via Paris Charles de Gaulle airport.

Please contact Renaissance Tours for fares and assistance with flight reservations.

TOUR PRICES INCLUDE

- Accommodation in centrally located 4-star hotels with private facilities and daily breakfast (B)
- Meals as per itinerary (L=Lunch, D=Dinner) including a special Welcome dinner and Farewell lunch. Wine with dinners.
- Transfers on arrival and departure if travelling on suggested flights
- Comprehensive sightseeing and visits to galleries and attractions with Brian Ladd including entrance fees as per itinerary
- Coach transportation in comfortable, air-conditioned vehicles
- Lectures and talks with your tour leader throughout
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers
- Hotel portorage (1 piece per person).

DO NOT INCLUDE

- International airfares
- Transfers on arrival and departure if not travelling on suggested flights
- Drinks with lunches
- Items of a personal nature, including telephone, laundry, taxis etc.
- Airport portorage
- Travel insurance

YOUR HOTELS ★★★★★



Hotel Tivoli Jardim
Lisbon



Hotel Eurostars das Artes
Porto

Parador 'Hostal Dos Reis Catolicos'
Santiago

Parador 'Hostal San Marcos'
Leon



NH Palacio de Merced
Burgos



Melia
Bilbao

NB. Hotels of a similar standard may be substituted

TERMS & CONDITIONS

How to Book

Complete, sign and return the Booking Form available from Renaissance Tours with your deposit of \$500 per person. Upon receipt of your Booking Form and deposit, you will receive confirmation of your place from Renaissance Tours.

Deposit / Final Payments

Deposit (at time of booking) AUD500

Your deposit is used to pay supplier deposits and is non-refundable in the event of your cancellation. Your final payment is due 60 days before departure. Failure to make your final payment by the due date may result in cancellation of your booking and loss of deposit. We reserve the right to charge a late payment fee in the event of late booking and/or payment to cover additional communication and other expenses.

Payment by cash, cheque, American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa is accepted. A 3% service charge applies for payment by American Express and Diners Club.

Cancellation & Refunds

You may cancel the booking at any time. Written notification is essential even if verbal notification of an intention to cancel has been given. Cancellation charges will be applied as shown below, calculated from the day written notification is received by Renaissance Tours. In addition to the charges shown below, airlines may impose up to 100% cancellation charges.

60 days or more	forfeit of deposit (includes any flight deposit paid)
59 - 45 days	25% of tour cost
44 - 31 days	50% of tour cost
30 - 15 days	75% of tour cost
Less than 15 days	100% of tour cost

The above cancellation charges include applicable GST.

In addition to the above cancellation charges, the full insurance premium together with any existing administration fees is also payable in the event of a cancellation by the Client. If the reason for cancellation is covered by the insurance policy, you may be able to reclaim these charges.

Forced Cancellations

We reserve the right to cancel a tour for any reason (such as failure to reach minimum tour participant numbers). Except for force majeure or the Client's failure to pay the final balance, we will not cancel a tour less than 60 days before departure. Unless the Client fails to pay the final balance, we will return all monies paid, excluding payment for travel insurance and administration fees.

No compensation will be paid in the event of cancellation by Renaissance Tours. A full refund of monies paid for tour costs will be the full extent of our liability. Airlines may impose up to 100% cancellation charges.

Passports, Visas and Vaccinations

It is your responsibility to be in possession of a passport valid for 6 months after the date of your return to Australia. You are also responsible for obtaining all necessary visas, inoculations and preventative medicines as may be required for the duration of the tour. Information about these matters or related items is given in good faith but without responsibility on the part of Renaissance Tours.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of travel that you are covered by comprehensive travel insurance. You can make your own arrangements or your travel insurance can be arranged by Renaissance Tours. In either case all participants must provide the following information no later than 60 days prior to commencement of travel:

- a copy of your travel insurance policy (or details of master policy)
- the emergency telephone number of your insurance company
- next of kin emergency contact

Fitness and Participation

While our tours do not require a special level of fitness, for the overall benefit of the group, all tour members must possess a moderate level of mobility, including the ability to:

- negotiate airports and railway stations without wheelchair assistance
- use combined shower/bath facilities (it is impossible to guarantee walk-in shower facilities)
- undertake walking tour of 2-3 hours duration, including using stairs, walking over cobblestones and other uneven surfaces
- stand for long periods in museums and other sites
- embark / disembark coaches, trains and other methods of transportation without assistance
- handle your own luggage

If you (or we) have any doubts about your ability to participate in your chosen tour, you may be required to have a doctor's appraisal. This would require a doctor to read the itinerary of your chosen tour and provide you with a written confirmation of your ability to participate.

Terms & Conditions

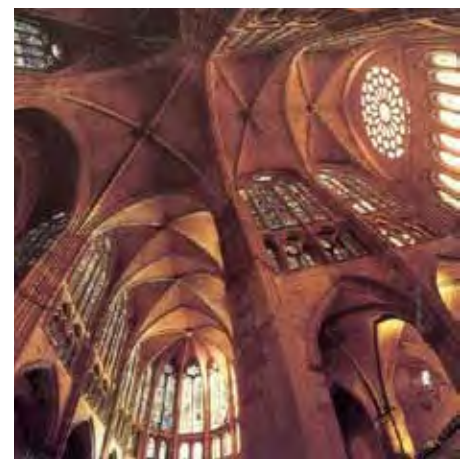
You can find a copy of the full terms & conditions attached to the Renaissance Tours booking form. They can also be found on our website at: www.renaissancetours.com.au or we would be happy to post you a copy on request.



Empty Structure by Jorge Oteiza at San Sebastian



Las Huelgas Convent at Burgos



Leon Cathedral



Front Cover: Guggenheim Museum Bilbao
Back Cover: Ribeira District in Porto

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