

The Road to Santiago

ART, ARCHITECTURE, CULTURE AND GASTRONOMY IN GREEN SPAIN

with Brian Ladd
10 to 26 May 2016 (17 days)



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TOUR LEADER

Brian Ladd is a specialist in European and Australian sculpture, and brings a broad knowledge and enthusiasm to the study of art. Between 1996 and 2010, Brian was head of Public Programs at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and was responsible for programming that enlivened the Art Gallery, engaging diverse audiences with art.

He is a graduate of Sydney's National Art School, Vice-President of the Art Gallery Society, a Brett Whiteley Foundation Director, UNSW Art & Design Advisory Council Member and William Fletcher Foundation Art Advisor. Since 1995 Brian has led Society tours to Europe and the USA, including *Iberian Mosaic: Andalusia to the Atlantic* to Spain and Portugal in 2014.

On this magnificent journey incorporating aspects of Spain's legendary Camino de Santiago, discover the outstanding artistic heritage, cultural diversity, verdant landscapes and culinary delights of northern (or green) Spain.

Rich in art, architecture, history and culture, the vibrant cities of Barcelona, Pamplona, Bilbao, León and Santiago de Compostela are just some of the highlights of this journey from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic. Encounter a variety of landscapes – from mountains to coast, cultivated to wild – and follow the 1200 year old pilgrimage route of the *Camino de Santiago*.

Sample, savour and enjoy new Spanish cuisine which is taking the culinary world by storm.

At a glance...

- Discover Spain's rich heritage of Romanesque and Renaissance architecture and art
- Five nights in cosmopolitan Barcelona
- Tour Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao
- Opportunity to walk short sections along the Camino de Santiago
- Five gourmet meals complemented by regional wines
- Stays in two 5-star historic *paradors* – in León and Santiago



Itinerary

Mon 09 May 2016

Depart Australia

Suggested departure from Australia on Emirates/QANTAS Airlines flights to Barcelona via Dubai.

Tue 10 May

Arrive Barcelona

Mid afternoon arrival in Barcelona and check in to your hotel.

This evening, join Brian Ladd and fellow travellers for a welcome briefing, and wine and tapas reception. **GB**

Wed 11 May

Barcelona

Start your exploration of Barcelona with a morning walking tour that will take you into the heart of the Barri Gotic, where much of the city's historic architecture is contained within a few blocks, including the Cathedral, Palau de la Generalitat and Casa de la Ciutat.

Lunch at Els Quatre Gats (The Four Cats), a brasserie that Pablo Picasso frequented.

After lunch take a panoramic coach tour of Barcelona, which will introduce you to many other parts of the city, including the famous boulevard Las Ramblas, Vila Olímpica, Port Vell, the Monument to Colón (Columbus) and Eixample (the Art Nouveau quarter). Visit the Fundació Joan Miró (1893-1983) situated on a hill overlooking the city, to view paintings, graphics and ceramic artworks by the internationally renowned abstract artist, who was born in Barcelona.

B L

Thu 12 May

Barcelona

Join Brian for a talk about the Catalan architect, Antoni Gaudi, and celebrated Spanish artists Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali and Joan Miró.

The focus today is on Antoni Gaudi (1852-1926), Spain's most celebrated architect. Begin the day with a coach trip to Park Guell, to explore an extraordinary park designed by Gaudi as a modern garden suburb for the bourgeoisies.

On a walking tour of Barcelona, discover remarkable Art Nouveau buildings. Gaudi was the leading exponent of this movement, known in Catalonia as Modernisme, which flourished from 1854 until the 1880s, and encompassed virtually all the arts. Visit his Casa Milà, known locally as La Pedrera (Catalan for quarry) and Casa Batlló.

After lunch (at leisure) visit Gaudi's greatest work, the massive unfinished Temple Expiatori de la Sagrada Família, a Catholic church under construction since 1882. **B**

Fri 13 May

Barcelona – Figueres – Girona – Barcelona

Enjoy a full day coach journey to the north east of Catalonia, to the province of Girona. Our destination is Figueres, the birthplace of leading surrealist artist, Salvador Dalí (1904-1989). Visit the Teatre-Museu Gala Salvador Dalí, a large museum designed by Dalí himself which houses his astonishing work and in which the late artist and his wife, Gala, are buried.

Return via the Provincial Capital of Girona and enjoy a Basque lunch at one of the more popular restaurants frequented by locals.

After lunch explore the city's tight huddle of ancient arcades, grand churches, climbing cobbled streets, medieval baths and Catalonia's most extensive and best preserved Call (medieval Jewish quarter), all enclosed by defensive walls. **B GL**

Sat 14 May

Barcelona

Our day begins with a visit to the renowned Picasso Museum, dedicated to the towering genius of twentieth century art, Pablo Picasso (1881-1973). This modern museum is housed in five Catalan-Gothic-style palazzos dating from the 13th and 14th centuries, located at the edge of the Barri Gòtic district.

Afternoon is free to further explore Barcelona.

Tonight you may wish to attend a concert at the Palau de la Música, an exceptional Art Nouveau theatre (optional, not included in tour cost). **B**

Sun 15 May

Barcelona – Zaragoza

Early morning departure from Barcelona for Zaragoza. On the journey, call into the township of Fuendetodos to visit Casa Museo de Goya, the modest house in which the great Spanish painter Francisco de Goya (1746-1828) was born. Visit the Museo de Grabados next door and view a presentation of his celebrated etchings.



After lunch at leisure in Fuendetodos (at own expense), continue to Zaragoza and check in to the hotel.

Enjoy a walking tour to visit the city's monumental cathedral. The domes of the Basílica del Pilar, dominate Zaragoza on the right bank of the River Ebro. Successive sanctuaries on this site have enshrined the miraculous Pillar (Pilar), above which the Virgin was believed to have appeared. The present building dates from 1677 and was designed by Francisco Herrera the Younger. From the late 18th century, there are ceiling frescos painted by Goya as a young artist.

The nearby La Seo, or the Cathedral of Zaragoza (remarkable for its size and architectural influences reflecting Gothic, Mudejar and Baroque styles) can be visited at your leisure. **B D**

Mon 16 May Zaragoza – Pamplona

Today en-route to Pamplona, visit the Romanesque Church of Santa María de Eunate, an important 12th century church. Here begin a walk (optional) for a short distance along the Camino to Puente La Reina, to a picturesque medieval town named after its historic Queen's Bridge, where two main pilgrim routes converge. Walk approximately 2.5 km to meet the coach and return to Pamplona.

The capital of Navarre – and the former capital of the fiercely independent Kingdom of Navarre – Pamplona is famous for the running of the bulls during the San Fermín religious festival, held annually in July. It has a fascinating history beginning with its reputed establishment as a military camp for the great Roman general Pompey, in 75-74 BC, after whom it takes its name (originally Pompaelo, later Pamplona). The city was an important pilgrimage destination on the Camino de Santiago from France.

B D

Tue 17 May Pamplona

Join Brian for a morning talk about *El Camino de Santiago* – Europe's most famous pilgrimage trail – its history, legends and heritage (including the Running of the Bulls in Pamplona).

Later, enjoy a walking tour of Pamplona's Old Quarter, followed by a visit to the city's main Cathedral standing on a rise just inside the

city ramparts, amid a dark thicket of narrow streets. The Cathedral is a late-medieval Gothic gem with a neoclassical facade (an 18th-century addition).

Afternoon at leisure in Pamplona.

You may wish to visit the Museo de Navarra (optional). Housed in a former medieval hospital, this superb museum has an eclectic collection of archaeological finds (including a number of outstanding Roman mosaics unearthed mainly in southern Navarra), as well as a selection of art, including Goya's distinguished portrait of the Marqués de San Adrián, from the year 1804. **B**

Wed 18 May Pamplona – San Sebastián – Bilbao

Depart Pamplona this morning for Bilbao, via the lively resort of San Sebastián, on the shores of the Bay of Biscay. The city is famous for its gastronomy; enjoy a special lunch at the renowned Restaurant Ni Neu.

After lunch complete the journey to Bilbao, the capital of the Spanish province of Biscay. Bilbao was founded in the early 14th century and became a significant commercial centre with trade based on the export of iron ore extracted from the Biscayan quarries.

Today, Bilbao is experiencing an ongoing social, economic, and aesthetic renewal process, kick-started by the spectacular Guggenheim Museum designed by Frank Gehry, and opened by King Juan Carlos I in 1997. **B GI**

Thu 19 May Bilbao

Morning orientation coach tour of the city. Drive to the mouth of the River Nervión to see the famous 1893 "Vizcaya" (Hanging) Bridge and, upon return to the city centre, see many bridges which span the banks of the river, including a later suspension bridge next to the Guggenheim Museum which opened in 1972, but was redesigned by French conceptual artist Daniel Buren in 2007.

Leave the coach for a walking tour of the city centre to discover Bilbao's rich variety of architectural styles, ranging from Gothic to contemporary.



Vista de la Basílica, Zaragoza



Plaza del Castillo, Pamplona

Following lunch (at leisure), visit the city's Museo de Bellas Artes, which has a fascinating collection of old master paintings, Spanish impressionists, and modern and contemporary Basque art. **B**

Fri 20 May

Bilbao

Join Brian for an early morning talk about the Basques, Bilbao, the Guggenheim dynasty and Guggenheim Museum.

This morning visit Bilbao's celebrated Guggenheim Museum, designed by acclaimed Canadian – American architect Frank Gehry. Rising from the banks of the Nervión behind stunning sails of titanium, the museum has emphatically put the city on Europe's cultural map. The museum has an impressive contemporary sculpture collection and presents spectacular contemporary art exhibitions.

Enjoy lunch at the Guggenheim Museum's famous Nerua Restaurant (l Hat).

Afternoon at leisure to stay in the museum or continue your exploration of Bilbao. **B GL**

Sat 21 May

Bilbao – Oviedo – León

Depart for León. En route to León we visit the historic city of Oviedo, former capital of the Kingdom of Asturias (722-910). The Christian kingdom survived the period of Moorish hegemony to become the spearhead of the Christian *Reconquista* in the late Middle Ages. Oviedo was an important station for many Camino pilgrims taking the coastal Camino de Santiago.

Oviedo is a treasure trove for important religious architecture, with a historic cathedral, early Asturian churches, monasteries and Christian shrines, some of which date back to the 9th century. View the churches of San Julián de los Prados.

Check into the historic Parador 'Hostal San Marcos'. Originally a monastery, it was founded in the 12th century to provide lodgings for pilgrims travelling to Santiago de Compostela. This is one of the most interesting Renaissance buildings in Spain. The many exterior carvings depicting religious and historical events across the 100 metre long facade are worthy of note. **B D**



Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao

Sun 22 May

León

Join Brian for a morning talk about León, the *Reconquista* and Spanish Inquisition.

Morning visit to León Cathedral, a fine example of soaring Gothic 13th century architecture, renowned for its magnificent stained glass windows. Also visit the Romanesque Church of San Isidore, built into the Roman walls which encircle the old city.

After lunch (at leisure) travel to the historic town of Astorga, once the location of strategic cross-roads for several major pilgrimage routes. Enjoy a short walk (2.5km) on a picturesque section of the Camino (optional) before entering the township. In Astorga see the fine Gothic Cathedral (15th century) and Antoni Gaudí's neo-Gothic masterpiece, the *Bishops Palace*, located next door to the Cathedral.

B D

Mon 23 May

León – Santiago de Compostela

This morning depart León by coach for Santiago de Compostela (350 km/approx. 4-5 h)

Afternoon arrival and check-in to your hotel, the splendid Parador 'Hostal Dos Reis Catolicus'. The Hostal is adjacent to the monumental Cathedral of Santiago, located on Obradoiro Square, and originated as a royal hospital in 1499. It continues this age-old practice today and is reputed to be the oldest hotel in the world.

B D

Tue 24 May

Santiago de Compostela

After breakfast join Brian in the 'Sacrista Alta' Hostal for a talk about St James, the Cathedral of Santiago, the pilgrims destination and the old town of Santiago de Compostela, a Unesco World Heritage Site.

Following the talk begin your exploration of Santiago with a local guide on a walking tour of the historic centre of Santiago de Compostela, including Obradoiro Square, the Renaissance cloister of the University, Plaza de Platerias, the Holy Gate, Azabacheria, the Cathedral of Santiago, and the church museum and monastery of San Martín.



León Cathedral interior

Finish with the Pilgrim's Mass, officiated every day at the high altar of the Cathedral of Santiago at 12.00 noon.

Afternoon at leisure. **B**

Wed 25 May Santiago de Compostela

Day at leisure to further explore Santiago de Compostela

Tonight, join Brian and fellow travellers to celebrate the conclusion of the tour with a farewell dinner: **B** Farewell **GD**

Thu 26 May Depart Santiago de Compostela

Tour arrangements conclude after breakfast. If returning to Australia today, make your way to the airport for departure on Emirates/QANTAS flights via Madrid and Dubai. Arrival in Australia early morning Saturday 28 May.



Tapas by Elamaki via Wikimedia commons

Tour prices

Per person, twin share	AUD 8,950
Single supplement*	AUD 2,140
Deposit per person	AUD 500
Final payment due	11 Mar 2016

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

Tour code AG1607

Fitness level Moderate
Please see booking conditions for fitness level definitions.

Suggested airline Qantas/Emirates
Please contact Renaissance Tours for current airfares and flight reservations.

Visa
Australian Passport holders do not require a visa for Spain.

Tour price includes

- Accommodation in centrally located four and five star hotels with private facilities and daily breakfast **B**
- Meals as per itinerary (**L** = Lunch, **D** = Dinner **G** = Gourmet) including wines.
- Comprehensive sightseeing, including local guides and entrance fees as per itinerary
- Lectures and talks with your tour leader throughout
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers
- Hotel portorage (one piece per person)

Tour price does not include

- International airfares (please contact Renaissance Tours for assistance)
- Transfer on arrival and departure
- Items of a personal nature, including telephone, laundry, taxis, room service etc.
- Travel insurance

Your hotels

Barcelona - Hotel Garnados83★★★★

Zaragoza – Palafox Hotel★★★★

Pamplona – Gran Hotel La Perla★★★★

Bilbao – Meila★★★★★

Leon – Pardor 'Hostal San Marcos'★★★★★

Santiago de Compostela – Parador 'Hostal Dos Reis Catolicos'★★★★★

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 and page one of your passport.

DEPOSIT / FINAL PAYMENTS

Your deposit is due at the time of booking and is used to pay hotel, airline, performance tickets and/or other deposits. It is non-refundable in the event of your cancellation.

Final payment is due 60 days before departure. Failure to make the final payment by the due date may result in cancellation of your booking and loss of deposit.

Payment by cash, cheque, direct deposit, American Express, MasterCard and Visa is accepted. 1.5% service charge applies to payment made by MasterCard and Visa. 3% service charge applies to payment made by American Express.

Payments for some international airfares can be made by credit card without a service fee. Please check for details.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS

a) Cancellation by You – Cancellation charges will be applied as shown below, calculated from the day written notification is received by Renaissance Tours. In addition to cancellation fees for tours operated by Renaissance Tours as shown below, airlines, hotels and other third parties may impose up to 100% cancellation charges.

60 days or more	Forfeit of deposit
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 may apply for additional arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours, such as air tickets, hotels and travel insurance premium. If the reason for cancellation is covered by the insurance policy, you may be able to reclaim these charges.

b) Cancellation by Us – We reserve the right to cancel a tour for any reason (such as failure to reach minimum tour participant numbers). Except for

force majeure, we will not cancel a tour less than 60 days before departure. No further 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.

Cancellation and/or amendment fees may apply for additional travel arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours.

PASSPORTS, VISAS AND VACCINATIONS

All travellers must be in a possession of a valid passport – most countries require a 6-month validity from your date of entry or exit. For some countries (e.g. China, Vietnam, India, Russia), visas are included in the tour cost and will be arranged by Renaissance Tours prior to travel. For other countries, it is your responsibility to ensure you have the appropriate visa(s).

You are also responsible for obtaining all necessary inoculations and preventative medicines as may be required for the duration of the tour.

TOUR PRICES

Prices quoted in our tour information are based on exchange rates, cost of services and applicable taxes at the time of publication. Prices may be subject to change in the event of significant currency fluctuations or the introduction of new taxes, up until final payment is received.

In the event of a price increase, whether because of a currency fluctuation, increase in taxes or a correction in advertised prices, we will advise you and you have the option of accepting the amended prices, inclusions and booking conditions or withdrawing from the tour and receiving a full refund of all monies paid.

Once final payment is received, all prices will be guaranteed and no surcharges will apply.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a condition of travel that you are covered by comprehensive travel insurance for international tours. Your travel insurance can be arranged by Renaissance Tours.

FITNESS AND PARTICIPATION

Most of our tours require a MODERATE level of fitness.

However, in certain destinations (e.g. Silk Road, Central Asia, Outback Australia, tropical destinations) or in certain seasons (e.g. mid-winter, mid-summer) or because of the nature of travel (e.g. remote rail), certain tours will require an ABOVE AVERAGE or CHALLENGING level of fitness.

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

MODERATE

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 1–2 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

ABOVE AVERAGE

In addition to the above, tour members must also be able to:

- undertake walking tours of 2–3 hours
- climb staircases of 100 or more steps

CHALLENGING

In addition to the above, tour members must also be able to:

- handle extremes of temperature (e.g. below 0 or above 35 degrees)
- handle extremes of altitudes (e.g. 4000 metres and above).

You can find the full terms & conditions at www.renaissance-tours.com.au/booking-conditions or we would be happy to post you a copy on request.



Cathedral of Santiago of Compostela



Equestrian statue of Santiago apostle, town hall of Santiago de Compostela



Renaissance
Tours

1300 727 095 (AU)

0800 403 621 (NZ)

call (+61 2) 9299 5801

fax (+61 2) 9299 5805

email info@renaissancetours.com.au

visit www.renaissancetours.com.au

Level 4, 47 York Street, Sydney NSW 2000

GPO Box 5068, Sydney NSW 2001

ABN 14 069 591 448

Travel agent