

SPAIN

— Barcelona · Madrid · Seville · Toledo —

“Spain—vibrant, messy, soulful. We moved through your cities carrying our own little universe in backpacks.”

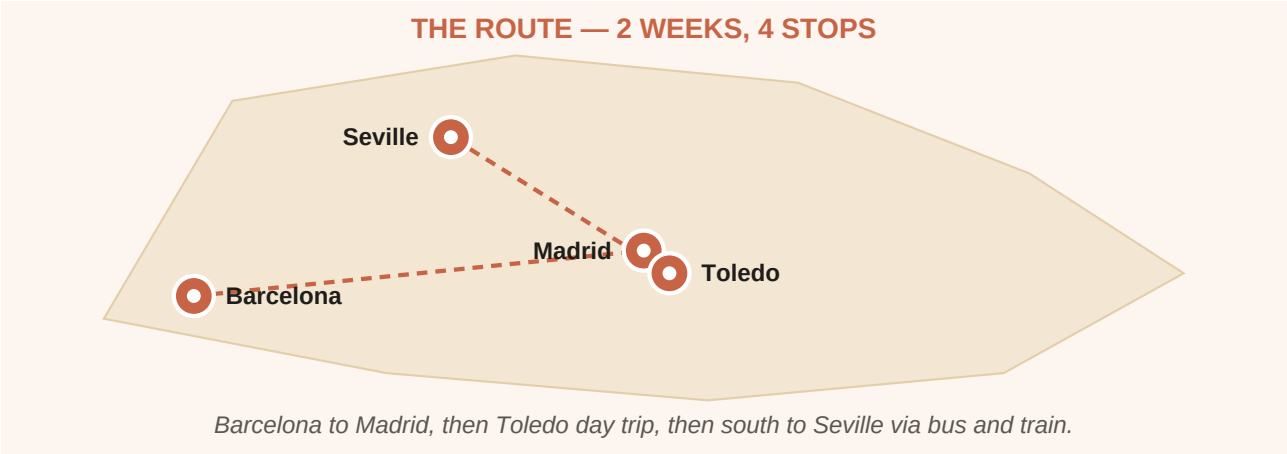


desk2destinations.com · Honesty over hype. Slow over rushed. Practical over pretty.

By Ayushi & Harshit Jain

Spain at a glance

From Barcelona's Gothic Quarter to Madrid's historic landmarks and Money Heist trails, we traced Spain's layers of history, art, and passion. We witnessed live flamenco in Seville, found quiet magic in Toledo's medieval streets, and learned that travel is as much about the people you meet as the places you see. Spain wasn't just about what we saw; it was about how it made us feel.



Best time	March to May, September to October
Visa (IN)	Schengen (Indian passport)
Currency	EUR (€)
Getting around	Excellent train and bus network connecting all cities. Hop-On Hop-Off buses available in major cities. Local transport cards with flexible options.
If we did it again	Not booking a proper photo session—too many candid memories and too few polished shots of each other.

The top 10 — our personal highlights

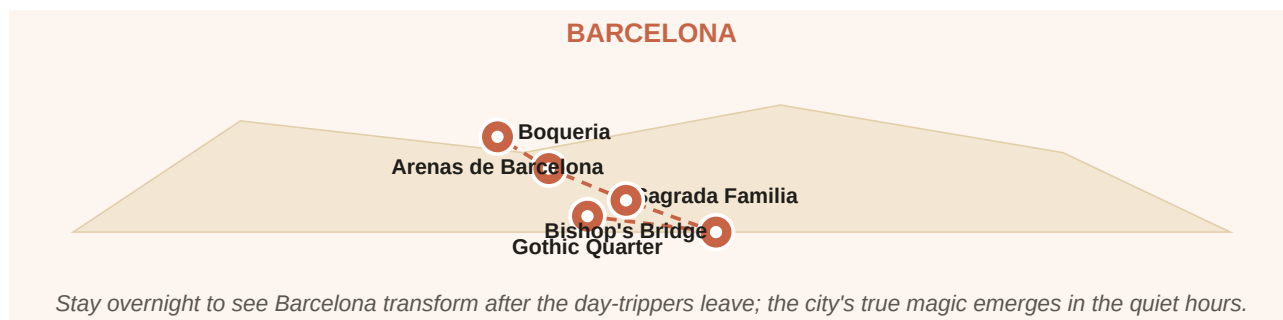
Ten moments worth flying back for. Ranked roughly in the order they made us go “oh.”

- 1** **Sagrada Familia** · [Barcelona](#)
Gaudi's unfinished basilica—spires reaching skyward like a stone forest.
- 2** **Gothic Quarter & Bishop's Bridge** · [Barcelona](#)
Medieval cobbled lanes and a fairytale archway that inspired Bollywood cinema.
- 3** **Puerta del Sol & Plaza Mayor** · [Madrid](#)
Heart of Madrid—from kilometer zero to historic plazas framed by symmetrical facades.
- 4** **Money Heist Trail** · [Madrid](#)
Walk the filming locations of La Casa de Papel around the Bank of Spain.
- 5** **Xavier's Walking Tour** · [Madrid](#)
A passionate guide who tells Madrid's stories—history, superstitions, and long-lost empires.
- 6** **Seville Cathedral & Giralda** · [Seville](#)
One of the world's largest Gothic churches and a former mosque minaret turned bell tower.
- 7** **Live Flamenco Performance** · [Seville](#)
Raw passion, fierce precision, and emotion that transcends language in front-row seats.
- 8** **Plaza de Zocodover & Alcazar** · [Toledo](#)
Medieval hilltop fortress and the beating heart of this perfectly preserved city.
- 9** **Puente de San Martin** · [Toledo](#)
A 14th-century bridge spanning the Tagus River—a monument to centuries of travelers.
- 10** **Pastel de Nata & Spanish Desserts** · [All cities](#)
Flaky custard tarts, churros with chocolate, and cinnamon-dusted everything.

Barcelona

Gothic Quarter & Sagrada's Stone Dreams

Landing in Barcelona felt like stepping into football poetry. From the Kissing Wall's mosaic of thousands of intimate moments to the neo-Gothic Bishop's Bridge, from Casa Batlló's dragon rooftop to Sagrada Familia's unfinished majesty, every corner told a story of artistic rebellion and cultural pride. We discovered the Caganer—Catalonia's quirky nativity figure—and learned about human towers called castells that embody community and courage.



Top 5 here

- **Sagrada Familia** — Gaudi's unfinished basilica bathed in golden hour—spires like a stone forest reaching skyward.
- **Bishop's Bridge** — A fairytale neo-Gothic archway with rumored curses and mysterious skulls hidden beneath.
- **Gothic Quarter Wandering** — Kissing Wall, Caganer figurines, street performers—magic happens in quiet alleys.
- **La Boqueria Market** — Fresh fruits, jamón, seafood, juices—sensory overload in the best way.
- **Placa de Espanya & Arenas** — Former bullring transformed into a shopping center—tradition meeting modernity.

Days	2 days (March 21, April 2)
Where we stayed	Apartment near Sagrada Familia with host offering milk chocolate upon arrival
Getting around	Metro, buses, walking. Hop-On Hop-Off buses optional. Early morning 6 a.m. train to Madrid.
Where we ate	Churros with thick chocolate, Indian brunch, unlimited soft drinks at vegan cafe, fresh pastries
Reality check	Day-trip crowds by 11 a.m.; arrive early. Book Sagrada Familia tickets in advance. Stay overnight to experience the city after tourists leave.

→ Read the full Barcelona guide on the site: desk2destinations.com/barcelona.html

Madrid

Historic Landmarks & Tales That Stir the Soul

Madrid welcomed us at 8:28 a.m. and unfolded with endless charm. We rode the Hop-On Hop-Off buses past centuries-old architecture—from Puerta del Sol's symbolic kilometer zero to Palacio de Cibeles' grand baroque facade. But the real magic happened through Xavier's GuruWalk tour, where history came alive through passionate storytelling about barber shops, century-old restaurants, and the quiet legacy of beliefs scattered across the city's spirals.



Top 5 here

- **Puerta del Sol & Plaza Mayor** — Kilometer zero of Spain's radial road system meets the historic beating heart with King Philip III's statue.
- **Xavier's GuruWalk Tour** — A theatre artist and piano teacher who reawakens the city through stories of superstitions, long-lost empires, and human connections.
- **Sobrino de Botin Restaurant** — World's oldest continuously operating restaurant since 1725—century-old oven still burning.
- **Money Heist Trail** — Walk the filming locations of La Casa de Papel around the Bank of Spain and historic rooftops.
- **Almudena Cathedral & Royal Palace** — Sunset hilltop views of these architectural masterpieces glowing in golden light.

Days	2 days (March 22, April 1)
Where we stayed	Newton Guesthouse—warm and inviting with clean spaces and vibrant hostel culture
Getting around	Hop-On Hop-Off buses, flexible metro/bus transport card system, local guides recommend specific routes
Where we ate	Rice and dal cooked in hostel, bubble tea, tapas, churros dipped in thick chocolate, cocido madrileño
Reality check	Book tours in advance; quality varies significantly. Get transport card with pre-loaded trips rather than daily passes. Leave 2+ hours for airport/station transit.

→ Read the full Madrid guide on the site: desk2destinations.com/spain-madrid.html

Toledo

Medieval Hilltop Where Time Stood Still

Toledo welcomed us with steep cobbled streets, golden light bouncing off stone that has stood for hundreds of years, and an unhurried rhythm that felt like stepping into another century. Armed with a hand-drawn map from a local guide, we stitched together our own path through cathedrals, watchtowers, and courtyards. The Alcazar fortress, Puente de San Martin bridge, and the Tagus River flowing below created a landscape of endurance, faith, and strength carved into stone.



Embrace the slow pace—Toledo rewards wandering more than rushing. Skip the tour, grab a hand-drawn map, and let the city guide you.

Top 5 here

- 📍 **Plaza de Zocodover** — Toledo's beating heart—once a marketplace, now alive with cafes, locals, and the hum of everyday life.
- 📍 **Alcazar of Toledo** — Fortress towers rising with unshakable authority—a monument to resilience and centuries of history.
- 📍 **Puente de San Martin** — 14th-century stone bridge spanning the Tagus with grand arches—a medieval monument to connection.
- 📍 **Archbishop's Palace** — Stately balconies and ornate facade—where religion and civic power intertwined centuries ago.
- 📍 **Tagus River Views** — Nature's peaceful breath after uphill climbs through medieval streets.

Days	1 day (March 23)
Where we stayed	Stored luggage at Madrid hostel, day trip from Madrid
Getting around	Train from Madrid to Toledo (1 hour), then walking entire medieval city on steep cobbled lanes
Where we ate	Vegan Spanish-style stew (decent), disappointing burger, outdoor Spanish lunch
Reality check	Plan 5-6 hours minimum for uphill walking and exploring. Early start recommended. Skip bubble tea in Europe—stick to local beverages.

→ Read the full Toledo guide on the site: desk2destinations.com/spain-toledo.html

Seville

Orange Blossoms, Flamenco & the Soul of Spain

Seville seeped in through wet cobblestones, the smell of orange blossoms and incense, and the electric passion of live flamenco. The Gothic Cathedral rose with overwhelming grandeur, the Giralda bell tower once served as a mosque minaret, and the Torre del Oro guarded the Guadalquivir River like a proud sentinel of maritime history. But it was the live flamenco performance in front-row central seats that left the deepest mark—raw emotion, fierce precision, and a cultural revelation that transcended language.



Stay overnight during Semana Santa (Holy Week) to experience Easter processions with pasos floats and centuries-old devotion rituals.

Top 5 here

- 📍 **Seville Cathedral & Giralda Tower** — One of the world's largest Gothic churches with a former mosque minaret turned bell tower.
- 📍 **Live Flamenco Performance** — Electric raw passion with woman in flowing dress, precise footwork, and emotion that transcends language.
- 📍 **Torre del Oro** — Golden tower reflecting maritime history by the Guadalquivir River—once a defensive watchtower for Seville's port.
- 📍 **Basilica de la Macarena** — Baroque white-and-ochre church housing the revered Virgin of La Esperanza Macarena revered during Semana Santa.
- 📍 **Nao Victoria Replica** — Historic ship commemorating 500 years of Magellan and Elcano's first circumnavigation voyage.

Days	2 days (March 30-31)
Where we stayed	Airbnb in pristine white apartment with curious cats and warm host sharing flamenco performance tips
Getting around	Bus from Faro (10 AM, 4 hours), Train from Madrid to Faro, walking cobbled lanes in Barrio Santa Cruz
Where we ate	Nachos with melted cheese and ground meat, gourmet burger with arugula, creamy potato salad with olives, vegan bowl with avocado and roasted chickpeas, arepas, vegetarian pizza, grilled Algarve seafood
Reality check	Book flamenco shows well in advance. Good seats (front-row center) make all the difference. Arrive early for Seville Cathedral to avoid crowds.

→ Read the full Seville guide on the site: desk2destinations.com/spain-seville.html

Costs — where the rupees went

Mid-range, vegetarian-friendly, two travellers splitting stays. Numbers are per-person, rounded honestly. Flights vary the most.

Accommodation	Hostels in city centers (Newton Guesthouse Madrid), private rooms 30-50 EUR/night	1,200
Food	Tapas, paella, local restaurants, occasional pastries and churros	1,800
Transport	Train/bus passes, local metro cards, intercity buses	800
Attractions	Hop-On Hop-Off buses, church entries, tower climbs (Belfort 366 steps)	600
Flamenco Show	Live performance in Seville with front-row central seats	350
Guided Tours	GuruWalk free walking tours (tips), Money Heist trail	150
Miscellaneous	Souvenirs, coffee breaks, unexpected detours	500
Currency Exchange	ATM withdrawals and modest conversion costs	200

Total: 7,200 per person

One last thing

Book train tickets in advance for intercity travel; local bus/metro cards offer better value than per-ride purchases.

Follow [@desk2destinations_](#) on Instagram for new diaries and reels, or drop us a note via desk2destinations.com/contact.html. If we got a city wrong, or you want one we haven't covered yet — that's the place to tell us.