



**BASQUE COUNTRY AND NORTHERN SPAIN:
GARDENS, CULTURE & CUISINE
SEPTEMBER 15- 25, 2024**

**In support of the UC Botanical Garden
Escorted by Katherine Greenberg
Lecture & tour leader Sofia Barroso.**

Come with us to explore the Basque Country along the Bay of Biscay and meander through Spain's premier wine producing regions to La Granja and Madrid. We will meet with local experts and gain insights into unique cultures and traditions spanning thousands of years, from prehistoric times to the present. Along the way, we will enjoy the best of Spanish cuisine and hospitality in private homes and acclaimed restaurants.

*** SUNDAY 15 SEPTEMBER: USA- MADRID-SAN SEBASTIAN/BILBAO.**

MONDAY 16 SEPTEMBER: SAN SEBASTIAN. (D)

Independent arrivals to either San Sebastian or Bilbao airport. Check into **Hotel Londres y de Inglaterra** in San Sebastian for three nights. The hotel overlooks the beautiful bay of La Concha and is a short walk from the vibrant Old Town. San Sebastian is one of the top culinary destinations in Spain.

Lunch on your own.

**Hotel Londres y de Inglaterra
Zubieta Kalea 2.
20007 San Sebastian/Donosti
Guipuzcoa.
Tel. + 34 943 44 07 70**





In the afternoon meet your fellow travelers for a welcome drink in the hotel with tour leader Sofia Barroso and Katherine Greenberg, tour escort. Then depart by coach to see Chillida's Wind Comb sculptures on the way to Chillida-Leku, Edward Chillida's spectacular sculpture park and museum, located in Zabalaga just outside of San Sebastian. After a guided tour with Mikel Chillida, we will enjoy a catered dinner by their wonderful chef.



TUESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER: SAN SEBASTIAN- GUETARIA-ZUMAIA- SAN SEBASTIAN. (B, L, T)

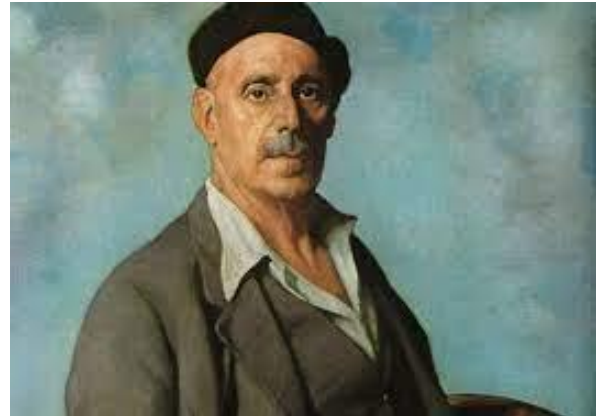
This morning drive to Guetaria, a lovely fishing village, to visit the Balenciaga Museum, founded in 2011. The museum is devoted to the great Basque fashion designer and housed in a building connected to the Aldamar Palace, former residence of the Marquis and Marquise of Casa Torre. After our visit we will stroll through the village and see the Church of San Salvador.



Lunch today will be at Kaia-Kaipe Restaurant, overlooking the port of Guetaria and famous for grilled fresh fish.



This afternoon we continue to the nearby village of Zumaya to visit the private home of the painter Ignacio de Zuloaga. His great-grandson Ignacio will show us their art collection and garden. Drinks and tapas will be hosted.



Return to San Sebastian for a free evening. A list of restaurants will be provided, and reservations are recommended.

WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER: SAN SEBASTIAN- CAMBO LES BAINS- GAZTELUR- ST JEAN DE LUZ- SAN SEBASTIAN (B, L)

This morning we drive to the village of St. Eugenie les Bains in the French Basque Country to visit Villa Arnaga, the traditional Basque home and garden of French author Edmond de Rostand.

It has a formal French garden with a Basque flair, full of charm.

Edmond Eugène Alexis Rostand (April 1868 – 2 December 1918) was a French poet and dramatist. He is associated with neo-romanticism and is known best for his 1897 play *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Rostand's romantic plays contrasted with the naturalistic theatre popular during the late nineteenth century. Another of Rostand's works, *Les Romanesques* (1894), was adapted to the 1960 musical comedy *The Fantasticks*.



Continue to Arcangues for lunch at the wonderful restaurant Atelier Gaztelur, located in a magnificent manor house. The property has a beautiful garden as well as an antique and decorative arts shop.



After lunch we will visit St. Jean de Luz and the Church of St.-Jean-Baptiste, where Louis XIV married the Spanish Habsburg infanta Maria Teresa. Our afternoon concludes with a visit to a private garden designed by Spanish landscape architect Chus Cagiga. Return to San Sebastian. Independent dinners.



THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER: SAN SEBASTIAN- BILBAO- SANTANDER (B, L)

After breakfast we depart San Sebastian for a scenic drive to Bilbao. Our visit will begin with an architectural tour of the city's landmarks, including the metro by Norman Foster, the walking bridge by Santiago Calatrava, and works by Rafael Moneo and Alvaro Siza.



Esther Boulandier will give us a lectured tour of the Fine Arts Museum, which is undergoing an extension designed by Sir Norman Foster. We will have time for a morning coffee at the museum.



Then walk to the nearby **Guggenheim Museum** for lunch at the museum's Bistro Restaurant. After lunch, a lectured tour will highlight special collections and Frank Gehry's unique architectural design for one of the 20th century's most important buildings.

Before travelling to Santander, we will see **Fernando Caruncho's labyrinth** at Deusto University.

Continue by coach to the charming sea town of Santander in the region of Cantabria. As San Sebastian, it was a summer destination for the Spanish Royal family.

Panoramic tour of the city on the way to our hotel. Check into **Gran Hotel Sardinero**, located in front of the famous city beach el Sardinero. **Check in for 2 nights.**

Dinner on your own.



Gran Hotel Sardinero
Plaza de Italia, 1,
39005 Santander, Cantabria
Tel. + 34 942 27 11 00

FRIDAY 20 SEPTEMBER: SANTANDER- SANTILLANA DEL MAR- ALTAMIRA CAVE MUSEUM - COMILLAS- SANTANDER. (B, L, T)

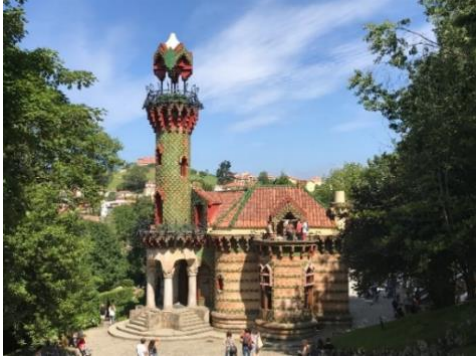
Our excursion this morning is to the **Altamira Cave Museum**. The actual cave is closed for public visits so we will see the fine replica created by Spanish architect Juan Navarro Baldeweg. We will also visit the museum, which explains the significance of this prehistoric moment and the impressive cave paintings, discovered at the end of the 19th century by Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola and his daughter Maria.



We continue to Santillana del Mar for a walk through the village and a visit to the Romanesque Collegiate church and its beautiful cloister. Will also visit Oliva Arauna's contemporary art collection at Torreon de Don Borja, with a welcome by Director Marcos Diez, followed by a lunch of regional specialties at **La Huerta del Indiano Restaurant**.

After lunch we drive to lovely town of **Comillas**. It came into fashion at the end of the 19th century through Count Guell, Gaudi's patron, and Antonio Lopez y Lopez, first Marquis of Comillas and Gaudi's father-in-law. We will visit El Capricho, designed by Gaudi, and then have free time to explore the town and its shops.

Tapas at a beautiful home and private garden in Comillas. Return to Santander.



SATURDAY 21 SEPTEMBER: SANTANDER-LA RIOJA-PEDRAZA (B, L, D)

This morning we depart for a scenic drive to La Rioja. This is the best-known wine district in Spain, and it occupies part of the territory of the Basque Country.

In the village of Abalos we will visit the **palace of the Marques de Legarda** and the **De La Real Divisa winery**. The oldest in Spain, this winery produces the Marques de Legarda wine. Martin Fernandez de Navarrete, the actual Marques de Legarda, will welcome us for a wine tasting experience.



At El Ciego we will visit the **Marques de Riscal winery**, which is known for producing some of Spain's finest wines. We will have lunch at 1860 Tradition Restaurant in the winery's hotel designed by Frank Gehry. He became friends with the owners of the Marques de Riscal winery while he was working on the Guggenheim Museum project in Bilbao.



In the afternoon we will see the distinctive architecture of the Ysios winery designed by Santiago Calatrava and then continue to the lovely medieval village of Pedraza de la Sierra to check into the **Hospedería de Santo Domingo for 2 nights**. Dinner at the hotel or in a village restaurant.

Hospedería de Santo Domingo
C. Matadero, 3,
40172 Pedraza,
Segovia
Tel. + 34 921 50 99 71



SUNDAY 22 SEPTEMBER: PEDRAZA- ABBATTE- LA GRANJA- PEDRAZA (B, L, D)

After breakfast we will enjoy a walk around **Pedraza** and see its pewter crafts, church, and castle. A morning drive will take us to the private monastery of Santa Maria de la Sierra. Built in the 12th century in a natural pine woodland, the abandoned monastery was recently transformed into a weaving center and garden of dye plants by Elena Goded. Elena, the Director of **Abbatte** and a professor of textiles, and her daughter will join us for a tour of the complex and lunch. We will see the looms, where local women create stunning shawls and blankets made with natural fibers and dyes. Abbatte also has a small shop near the Hotel Wellington in Madrid.



After lunch we depart for **La Granja de San Ildefonso** in the Province of Segovia. It was built in the 18th century by Felipe V, the first Bourbon king, as a summer palace. With an abundance of water from the Guadarrama Mountains, the king created extensive gardens with elaborate fountains. We will walk through the gardens and see the royal tapestry collection.



In the evening, drinks at a beautiful private home followed by dinner at the restaurant of famous chef Samantha de España.

MONDAY 23 SEPTEMBER: MADRID. (B, L)

Our morning drive will take us over the Guadarrama Mountains to Madrid. We will visit the new **Gallery of Royal Collections** at the Royal Palace. The museum displays highlights of the collections of the Spanish Habsburg and Bourbon dynasties in a magnificent contemporary building designed by architects Tunon y Mansilla.

Then we will join chef **Gabriela Llamas for lunch** and a demonstration of classic Spanish dishes, such as paella, tortilla de patata and gazpacho, at her cooking school near the Royal Palace.



This afternoon we will visit the **Palace of Liria**, home of the Duke of Alba. The palace has extensive collections and a beautiful garden designed at the beginning of the 20th century by le Forestier.



Check into the **Hotel Wellington for two nights**. This evening is free for dinner on your own. The hotel is centrally located in the elegant Barrio de Salamanca, with many restaurants, shops, and galleries nearby as well as the Retiro Park.

Hotel Wellington
C. de Velázquez, 8,
28001 Madrid
Tel. + 34 915 75 44 00



TUESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER: MADRID. (B, D)

Drive to the **Prado Museum**. Special visit to the museum before it opens to the public. Art historian Mauricio Macarrón will give us a guided tour of the masterpieces of the museum. The Prado's building was designed by 18th century architect Ventura Rodríguez. An extension to the museum was designed by Rafael Moneo, and Sir Norman Foster designed a new wing located in the remaining building of the Palace of El Buen Retiro.



After a mid-morning coffee in the Prado Café, we will visit the **Royal Botanic Garden**, founded in 1775 and located next to the Prado Museum. Antonio Regueiro, former Curator and now a member of the Garden's Board, will join us for a guided visit.

Free afternoon.

Our farewell dinner this evening will be at **Monteverdi**, one of Madrid most elegant new private clubs. It has a focus on music as well as fine dining experiences.



WEDNESDAY 25 SEPTEMBER: MADRID- USA

Check-out. Independent transfers to the airport for return flights to the USA.

Tour escort Katherine Greenberg, a garden designer and author, has been fascinated with Spanish gardens and culture since her first visit to the country. She studied Spanish history at the University of Madrid and the University of California. A past Chair of the UC Botanical Garden Advisory Board, Katherine is also a past president of the Mediterranean Garden Society and Pacific Horticulture. She has given several talks at the Royal Botanic Garden in Madrid and escorted UC Botanical Garden tours to Spain, Portugal, and Morocco.

Tour leader and lecturer Sofia Barroso is an art collector and president of Around Art in Madrid, and an advisor to several Spanish art foundations. She also oversees the care of her family's historic Moorish palace and garden in Toledo. Sofia has led many tours in Spain, Morocco & Portugal with a focus on contemporary & traditional art and gardens. She has spent her summers since childhood in the Spanish and French Basque Country and is a great connoisseur of the region. She now spends her summers in Cantabria where she knows the terrain well. She was the leader and lecturer for recent UC Botanical Garden tours to the Balearic Islands, Portugal, and Galicia

Please scroll down for the price and inclusions.

TOUR PRICE: \$8270.00 members single supplement \$1750
\$8370.00 non-members based on a minimum of 18 guests

INCLUDES:

- 9 night's accommodation, all rooms with private bathrooms
- All hotel taxes and service charges
- Breakfast daily- lunches and dinners as noted in the itinerary
- Deluxe private transportation
- Special English-speaking escort and local guides
- All sightseeing and entrances as per the itinerary
- Escorted by Katherine Greenberg
- Tax-deductible donation of \$500.00 to UC Botanical Garden

COSTS DO NOT INCLUDE:

- Airfare
- Tips to your guide
- Travel Insurance

For reservations and further information contact: Sterling Garden Tours
2907 Shelter Island Dr. Ste. 105-262 San Diego, CA Tel: 619 299-3010 x 10
cheryl@sterlingtoursltd.com www.sterlinggardentours.com