



# Aardvark Israel

## Spain - Sample Itinerary

### Day One

We will hit the ground running as we stroll through the streets of Barcelona as we head over to enjoy our first taste of Spanish cuisine for lunch. In the afternoon, we will be guided on a tour of the Old Jewish Quarter. We will walk through the ancient Jewish streets of Barcelona and see what's left and learn what once was. Particular focus will be placed on Shlomo ben Aderet, the "Rashba," a medieval rabbi, halachic scholar, and Talmudist who was born in Barcelona and was a leader of Spanish Jewry in his time. We will also visit Sinagoga Major, said to be the oldest synagogue in Europe. Originally constructed in the 3rd century, the synagogue was lost for nearly 500 years and then rediscovered in modern times. Restoration began in 1997 and the synagogue was opened to the public in 2002. We will then take a maritime tour of Barcelona on the beautiful wooden yacht, the Goleta Karya, sailing along the Mediterranean coast. Back on shore, you will have some free time to shop and explore.

### Day Two

The first stop today will be the Jardins de Miramar which are public gardens with views over the harbor. Next is the Museum Fundacio Joan Miro which houses a collection of modern art. We will then visit the Nou Camp Stadium, home of the Barcelona Football Club and one of the world's most impressive and largest stadiums. It will then be time to shop at L'illa Diagonal, a gargantuan mall housing 170 shops and restaurants, two 4- star hotels, and a sports center. Our final stop will be Casa Batllo, which is a Gaudi masterpiece built in his signature style in which fluid lines and organic forms replace straight lines and right angles. In the evening, we will feast at an authentic tapas restaurant.

### Day Three

We will continue with our exploration of cool sites in Barcelona with a visit to CatedralBarri Gotic which houses the tomb of Saint Eulalia along with a number of paintings and valuable metalwork. The Cathedral is the most important building in the Gothic Quarter. Then we will catch the bus from Placa Catalunya, a major square in the heart of Barcelona, and head to the Forum which was designed by the Swiss architect Jaques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron. The triangular building is an architectural landmark in Barcelona and has been the subject of some controversy. Housed here is the Museu Blau which is the natural history museum. After this, we'll hit many stops along the Gaudi 'modernista' architecture line – visiting the famously unfinished Sagrada Familia, and then spending some time exploring the bizarre Park Guell, with its Gaudi sculptures and gardens and the UNESCO World Heritage site, Casa Mila with its spectacular rooftop – it's a day straight from a Dr. Seuss book! In between, there will be a breathtaking stop

at Tibidabo which is Barcelona's highest point so we can see the whole city. We will top off the day with a street art tour. In the evening, we will celebrate Shabbat with a special dinner at Chabad with a host of other visitors to Spain. After dinner, we will take a leisurely walk back to the hotel together.

### **Day Four**

Today we will get a slightly later start before heading out to explore Barcelona by foot. In the morning, we will head over to the bustling Mercato de la Boqueria, one of the most colorful and entertaining markets in Europe. Then we will explore the Las Ramblas area at our own pace. For lunch, we will be enjoying a picnic in a local park. In the afternoon, we will be meeting with Fuensanta Alcala Luque, the parent of an Aardvark alum. Fuensanta will talk to us about her life growing up in Barcelona and about her discovery that her family was Marranos (secret Jews from the Spanish Inquisition). In the late afternoon, we will make our way to Poble Espanyol which is a replica of an Iberian village made up of 117 buildings representing different craft workshops and local artisans. This will also be the site for our evening activity which is Tablao de Carmen, a dinner theatre where we will eat a delicious meal of Spanish food and see an authentic Flamenco show featuring singing, dancing, and music. On the way home, we will stop by the Magic Fountain of Montjuic.

### **Day Five**

A long yet spectacular day of touring awaits as we board our tour bus and make our way to the largest city in Northern Catalonia, Girona. Until the expulsion of the Jews in 1492, Girona was home to one of the most important medieval Jewish communities. The Call (Jewish Quarter) has been well preserved and the city is a focal point for studies of Jewish Spain. It was also the home of the great Jewish Commentator, Ramban, and whilst in the city, we will learn about his radical views towards Israel. Before heading back to Barcelona we will also stop in Figueres, the birthplace of Salvador Dali, and home to the amazing Teatre-Museu Dali (theatre-museum). This theatre is said to be a "multi-dimensional trip through one of the most fertile (or disturbed) imaginations of the 20th century".