

Cultural Capitals of
Spain
MADRID & BARCELONA



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Brandeis | TRAVELERS

November 8-17, 2025

Featuring Professor Jonathan Decter



Professor Jonathan Decter

Jonathan Decter is the Edmond J. Safra Professor of Sephardic Studies in the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis University. He is a specialist in the Jews of medieval Spain. His research focuses on the literature, thought, and social history of Arabic-speaking Jewry, and on the interplay of Islamic and Jewish traditions throughout the medieval Mediterranean. His most recent book, *Dominion Built of Praise: Panegyric and Legitimacy Among Jews in the Medieval Mediterranean* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018) won the National Jewish Book Award in Sephardic Culture and was a finalist for the Jordan Schnitzer Book Award. His first book, *Iberian Jewish Literature: Between al-Andalus and Christian Europe* (Indiana University Press, 2007), was awarded the 2008 Salo W. Baron Prize for best first book in Jewish Studies.

Brandeis | TRAVELERS

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Join us for a spectacular eight-night journey to experience world-renowned art, architecture, and Jewish history in Madrid and Barcelona.

Begin in Madrid with an exploration of great Spanish artists at the world-class Prado Museum and the premier Reina Sofia Museum. Experience Spanish modernism, surrealism, cubism, and avant-garde works, including a viewing of Picasso's "Guernica" painting. Spend a day in beautiful Toledo to explore the city's Jewish culture and heritage. Visit the Gothic cathedral and the Church of Santo Tome to view an El Greco masterpiece.

In Barcelona, experience the surreal, modernist works of visionary architect Antoni Gaudí with visits to the whimsical Parc Güell and his masterpiece, La Sagrada Família.

In the Gothic and Jewish quarters, delight in a special-access guided tour of the Chapter Archive in the Cathedral of Barcelona. Here, you will see documents and books that have been preserved since the Middle Ages, including some that provide a glimpse into the lives of Jews living in medieval Barcelona.

In partnership with local guides and experts, our tour will be led by Jonathan Decter, Edmond J. Safra Professor of Sephardic Studies in the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis, who will enrich and inform the journey with his knowledge of Sephardic Jewry.

Join us for a uniquely Brandeisian experience — one that offers stimulating conversation, camaraderie, and connection with other intellectually-curious alumni and friends.

Make your reservation today as space is limited, and we expect this popular tour will fill quickly.

Sincerely,

F. Patricia Fisher
Vice President, Alumni Relations
Brandeis University

UNESCO World Heritage

1. **Historic City of Toledo,**
Toledo
2. **Works of Antoni Gaudí,**
Barcelona
3. **Hospital de Sant Pau,**
Barcelona



Detail of mosaic ceiling,
Hospital de Sant Pau



Toledo



A World of Discovery



Immerse yourself in the cultural meccas of Madrid and Barcelona on this trip brimming with renowned art, stunning architecture, rich Jewish history and tantalizing Catalan cuisine! See Toledo's notable landmarks and explore its fascinating Jewish culture and heritage in depth. Behold masterpieces by renowned Spanish artists and be awed by Barcelona's whimsical, imaginative and truly astounding modernist and art nouveau architecture!

Top: Parc Güell, Barcelona

Above: Velázquez statue at Prado Museum entrance, Madrid

Cover: La Sagrada Família, Barcelona

Mail panel: Plaza de Zocodover, Toledo | Plaza Mayor, Madrid

Inspiring Moments



- Witness extraordinary masterpieces at **Madrid's renowned Prado Museum** during an exclusive, private tour.
- Walk in the footsteps of Spanish royalty at the opulent **Royal Palace of Madrid**.
- Be awed by **Toledo's artistic beauty** and explore its **rich Jewish heritage**.
- Visit Madrid's Reina Sofia Museum to see **Pablo Picasso's famous "Guernica."**
- Behold Antoni Gaudí's architectural gems, **La Sagrada Família and Parc Güell**.
- Marvel at the artistic, art nouveau beauty of the **Hospital de Sant Pau campus**.
- Learn to make Catalan specialties in a hands-on **gastronomic experience**.
- Experience three **UNESCO World Heritage sites**.

ALUMNI CAMPUS
ABROAD®



The Royal Palace and Almudena Cathedral, Madrid

Day 1 | In Transit

Depart your gateway city for Madrid, Spain. 🌐

Day 2 | Madrid, Spain

Upon arrival, transfer 🚗 and check in to the Hotel Wellington & Spa Madrid. Set out with your map and explore Madrid this afternoon.

Enrichment: Jewish Heritage & Culture.

This evening, enjoy a Welcome Reception and Dinner with your group at a local restaurant.

Day 3 | Madrid

Madrid's Art & Architecture. Relish a guided, morning panoramic tour of Madrid. Stop at the Plaza Mayor esplanade, a symbol of Madrid. Then, visit the acclaimed Prado Museum, home to one of the finest collections of European art from the 12th to 20th centuries. Take a private tour to see works by Spanish masters Diego Velázquez, Francisco de Goya and many more. Break for a group lunch at a local restaurant.

Royal Palace of Madrid. After lunch, visit the grand Royal Palace, the official residence of the Spanish royal family in Madrid, now used only for state ceremonies and events. Completed in 1764, the Baroque-style palace is one of the largest in Europe, with more than 3,400 rooms.

Day 4 | Toledo | Madrid

Toledo's Jewish Heritage. Spend the day in this city to admire its artistic beauty and explore its rich Jewish history. In the old city, see the Synagogue of Santa María la Blanca, perhaps the oldest, still-standing synagogue building in Europe and an icon of Sephardic history. Then, visit the 14th-century Synagogue of El Transito

and Sephardic House, a museum and cultural center preserving Sephardic Jewish heritage up until 1492. See the Isabelline-style Franciscan Monastery of San Juan Delos Reyes and visit the 12th-century Church of Santo Tome to view one of El Greco's most famous paintings, "The Burial of the Count of Orgaz." Cap off your day at the revered Gothic Cathedral of Toledo, one of Spain's most significant religious buildings. Admire the magnificent facade, with three richly decorated portals, and the vast interior's lavish decorations, baroque altarpiece and more. Relax over lunch at a local restaurant in Toledo.

Day 5 | Madrid

Reina Sofía Museum. Delight in a guided visit to Madrid's premier modern art museum to see its extensive collection of Spanish modernism, surrealism, cubism and avant-garde works. Be awed by Pablo Picasso's massive "Guernica" painting and admire works by masters such as Salvador Dalí, Joan Miró and Maruja Mallo.

Free Time: Spend the rest of the day pursuing

Puerta de Bisagra, Toledo






Left: Barcelona Cathedral in the Gothic Quarter
Above: Hospital de Sant Pau and Avinguda Gaudí leading to La Sagrada Família

your own agenda in Madrid. Consider day trips to Segovia or Avila, visit another museum or take a stroll in the city's iconic Retiro Park.

Day 6 | Madrid | Barcelona

After breakfast, transfer  to the station for the direct train to Barcelona. Arrive, transfer to the Renaissance Barcelona and drop your bags.

Free Time: Get acquainted with this vibrant, capital city on your own this afternoon.

Later, enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 7 | Barcelona

Enrichment: Modernism & the Architecture of Gaudí.

Gaudí's Barcelona & Catalan Modernism.

Today, experience the surreal works of Antoni Gaudí. The Spanish architect was a leading exponent of Europe's art nouveau movement, characterized by intense ornamentation and organic lines. On a guided walk, visit Gaudí's

playful Parc Güell to marvel at the architectural elements of colorful mosaics, organic shapes and imaginative structures – fanciful serpentine benches and a dragon stairway and fountain. Savor lunch at Catalan farmhouse restaurant.

Hospital de Sant Pau & La Sagrada Família.

After lunch, visit the extraordinary, art nouveau campus of the former Hospital de Sant Pau, regarded for its singular beauty and sensitivity to design. Then, walk along historic Avinguda Gaudí to witness La Sagrada Família, Gaudí's most famous work. The surprising, still unfinished and sometimes controversial basilica has become a symbol of Barcelona.

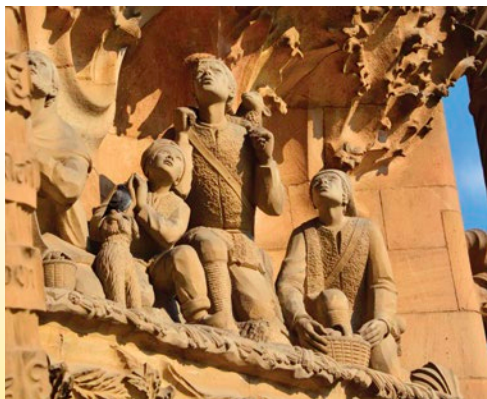
Day 8 | Barcelona

Jewish Heritage Archive Tour. Thrill to a special-access visit to the Chapter Archive in the Cathedral of Barcelona, where thousands of historic parchments, books and documents have been preserved since the Middle Ages. This includes documents only recently brought

Plaça Reial, Gothic Quarter, Barcelona



Detail, La Sagrada Família





Included Features



Accommodations (with baggage handling)

- **4 nights** in Madrid, Spain, at the deluxe Hotel Wellington & Spa Madrid.
- **4 nights** in Barcelona, Spain, at the first-class Renaissance Barcelona Hotel.




Transfers (with baggage handling)

- All train and deluxe motor coaches transfers in the Land Program.

Extensive Meal Program

- 8 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 3 dinners, including Welcome and Farewell Dinners; tea or coffee with all meals, plus wine, beer or soft drinks with lunch and dinner.

Your One-of-a-Kind Journey

- **Small group:** Sized just right at 28 guests.
- **Enrichment by expert speakers** enhances your insight into the region.
- **Engaging excursions** showcase the local culture, heritage and history.
-  **Electives** and free time to pursue your individual interests.
-  **AHI Connects | Local immersion.**
- Welcome and Farewell Receptions to mingle with fellow travelers.
- A personal VOX headset to hear your English-speaking guide clearly.
- Tipping of guides and drivers.
- Complimentary travel mementos.
-  **AHI Sustainability Promise:**
We strive to make a positive impact wherever we travel.

to light that help reconstruct the lives of those who lived in medieval Barcelona's *El Call*, or Jewish quarter, as far back as the 7th century.

AHI Connects | Barcelona Cook & Taste.

Learn to prepare rustic Catalan cuisine and savor the tasty, traditional dishes for lunch.

Free Time: Enjoy lunch and time at leisure.



Day 9 | In Transit

Enrichment: *The History of Catalonia & Barcelona.*



 **Elective | Montserrat & Penedès Wine Region.** Travel to nearby Montserrat to admire stunning views from the hilltop monastery and see the image of the Virgin of Montserrat in the basilica. Then, visit a winery in Penedès, Catalonia's premier wine producing region, for lunch and a Cava sparkling wine tasting.


Free Time: Or, opt out of the Elective Activity and enjoy the full day at leisure in Barcelona. Enjoy this evening's Farewell Reception at the hotel and Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant.


Day 10 | In Transit

After breakfast, transfer  to the Barcelona airport for the return flight  to your gateway city.

Note: Itinerary may change due to local conditions.

 Flights and  transfers included for AHI FlexAir participants.

 PYJ experiences are included.

 Elective experiences available at an additional cost.

Note About Activity Levels

We have designated activity levels for all excursions on this program. For more details, please call or visit our website.

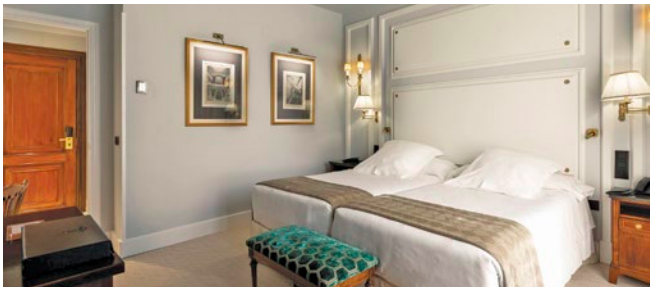
Excursions on this itinerary require:

- walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths and/or uneven surfaces
- getting on/off motor coaches and boats

Cooking class, Barcelona

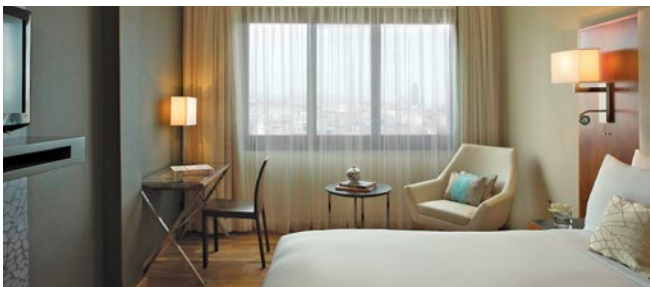
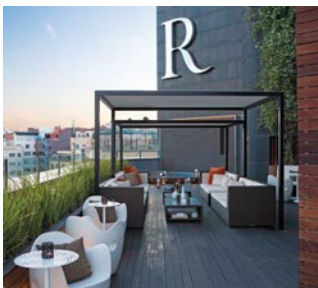


Accommodations



Hotel Wellington & Spa Madrid | Madrid ●●●●●

The Wellington Hotel & Spa is an elegant, historic hotel located in the heart of Madrid. Tastefully decorated rooms feature linen sheets and marble bathrooms, and there are six on-site restaurants and a luxurious lobby bar. Health and wellness facilities include a spa, steam, sauna, fitness room and pool.



Renaissance Barcelona Hotel | Barcelona ●●●●●

The Renaissance Barcelona Hotel is ideally located in the city center within walking distance to iconic sites and upscale shopping and dining. With a sophisticated blend of Modernist, Gaudí-inspired design, it features a Mediterranean restaurant, a stylish rooftop bar with a view, and a spa and fitness center.

Reserve your trip today!

To book your journey,
please call our AHI Travel Experts
at **800-323-7373** or
visit **brande.ahitravel.com**.

Program Dates

Travel dates †

November 8-17, 2025

† Travel dates include any overnights required for international travel. These dates may vary depending on air schedules.

Tour dates*

November 9-17, 2025

* Tour dates begin on the scheduled arrival date at your destination and end on the scheduled departure date from your destination.

Land Program

Full Price	\$5,640
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Special Savings	\$750
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Early Booking Special Price*	\$4,890
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*Early Booking Special Price valid if booked by date on address panel and paid in full at booking. If you pay only your deposit by early booking date, you still save \$250 per person.

Price includes applicable program taxes (such as VAT and port charges). All prices quoted are in USD, per person, based on double occupancy and do not include air transportation costs (unless otherwise stated). Special offers, promotions and discounts cannot be combined. Single accommodations are an additional \$1,395 (limited availability).

Please note: Program-specific terms and conditions are available at <https://brande.ahitravel.com/destinations/1894A?schoold=276>. You can also request a copy from our travel experts.

Any payment to AHI Travel constitutes your acceptance of the terms and conditions set out therein, including but not limited to the cancellation terms.

AHI FlexAir

Let us arrange your flights

Our experts are ready to assist you in booking flights. Our personalized air program offers the following advantages:

- **price guarantee** to protect you from fuel surcharge increases after ticket purchase
- arrival and departure **transfers** on group dates
- **flexibility** to change or cancel your reservation before departure on most flights (Fees may apply.)
- **assistance** in the event of schedule changes or delays



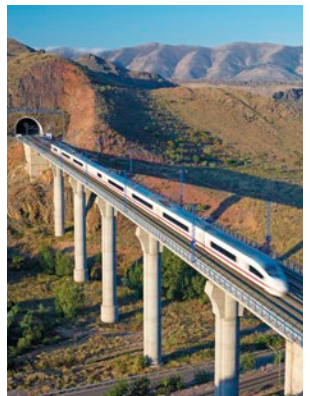
Cibeles Fountain, Madrid



Detail, Parc Güell



Passeig de Gràcia, Barcelona



High-speed train

AHI Travel Expertise



From your reservation to your return home, we are here to ensure you have the adventure of a lifetime.

Before you go:

Travel Consultants stand ready to answer your questions as they guide you through the reservation process.

Travel & Air Coordinators each offer their personalized assistance with flights, electives and special requests.

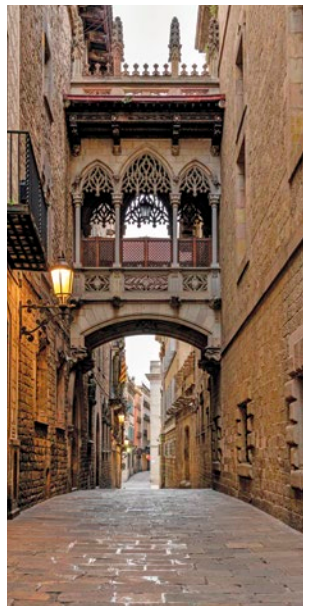
Travel Information provides pre-departure details and enrichment about your destination.

Once you arrive:

Your Travel Director, a seasoned, multilingual professional, manages daily logistics so you enjoy a seamless experience.

Handpicked Expert Guides offer fascinating insights and share their passion for their country with you.

Knowledgeable Lecturers deepen your appreciation for the region and its history, culture and current events.



Bishop's Bridge, Gothic Quarter, Barcelona

Brandeis

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Explore the Jewish heritage of Madrid and Barcelona!

AHI Travel's mission is to deliver inspirational, educational and cultural programs that delight travelers.

With AHI you can rely on:

- Experienced Travel Directors who attend to every detail of your journey.
- An exceptional travel value.
- Unique access to local sites.
- Flexibility and customization.
- Safety and security.



Please call or refer to our website for the most current program information, discounts and pricing.

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