

# Catholic Pilgrimage Choir Tour to Spain and France

Standard Tour #3 (8 nights / 10 days)

## Day 1

Departure from USA via scheduled airline service to Barcelona, Spain. Enjoy full meal/beverage service and in-flight entertainment during this trans-Atlantic flight.

## Day 2 Barcelona, Spain

Arrive at Barcelona Airport. Meet your MCI Tour Manager, who will assist the group to the awaiting chartered motorcoach for a transfer to the hotel via panoramic tour of Barcelona's highlights en route, including Las Ramblas, Gothic Quarter, Cathedral etc. Evening Welcome Dinner and overnight.

*Barcelona was originally founded by the Phoenicians. Although it belongs to Spain, it is the capital of Catalonia, and is a more dynamic city than ever, hosting the 1992 World Olympic Games. It is a large industrial center with a very busy port; it is also a university town, an important cultural center with an opera-house and many museums, theaters and concert halls.*

## Day 3 Barcelona

A morning guided tour includes the Gothic Quarter to see its Cathedral, the Plaça del Rei, and the Roman City. Next, go to the Eixample Quarter, location of many of Barcelona's best Modernista buildings. Travel down the Passeig de Gràcia, a luxurious street adorned with elegant wrought iron street lamps which contains the finest examples of Modernist architecture in Barcelona. Then visit the La Sagrada Familia, Europe's most unconventional church, yet uncompleted. **Participate/sing in a Mass followed by a concert in the Cathedral or other church.**

## Day 4 Barcelona / Zaragoza

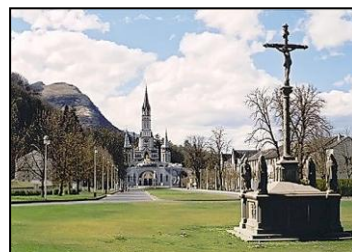
We make our way to the spiritual heart of the Catalonia region, Montserrat, home to the Benedictine monastery dramatically set in the Montserrat mountain range. Tourists from around the world flock to this monastery to view its magnificent architecture in such a striking setting. This shrine has attracted pilgrims for over 700 years. Visit the Black Madonna of Montserrat, probably Spain's most fervent devotion to the Blessed Mother, visit the Benedictine Monastery and hear Escolania Children's Choir sing their morning Mass. Continue to Zaragoza for overnight.

*Zaragoza, once the residence of the kings of Aragon and now chief town of its province and the seat of a famous university, lies in the Ebro basin, on the right bank of the river. From time immemorial it has been the principal crossing point for traffic from the Pyrenees into Castile.*

## Day 5 Zaragoza / Lourdes, France

**Participate/sing in a Mass in the impressive and beautiful Basilica of the Virgin of Pillar.** The basilica's construction started in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Transfer to Lourdes for overnight.

*Lourdes, beautifully situated on both banks of the Gave de Pau on the northern fringe of the Pyrenees, is the summer residence of the bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes and a famous place of pilgrimage.*



## Day 6 Lourdes

**Participate/sing a morning Mass.** Enjoy a walking tour of 'In the Footsteps of Bernadette.' We visit the Cachot (former jail cell that once served as the Soubirous family's home); the parish church; Fr. Peyramale's Presbytery; the Hospice and the Boly Mill. Afternoon at leisure. Late afternoon participate in the Procession of the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed of the Sick. Evening transfer to the Sanctuary for the Rosary and Torchlight Procession.



## Day 7 Lourdes / Burgos, Spain

Transfer to Burgos to visit the Cathedral. Our Lady of Burgos was begun in the 13th century and was completed in the 15th and 16th centuries. The entire history of Gothic art is summed up in its superb architecture and its unique collection of works of art, including paintings, choir stalls, tombs and stained-glass windows. Burgos Cathedral was added to the World Heritage List in 1984. **Participate/sing a morning Mass in the Cathedral.**

*Burgos possesses more religious monuments than any other Spanish diocese. In addition to the collegiate churches of Lerma, Villadiego, Plampiega, Palenzuela, Cobarrubias, and others, there are in Burgos alone many magnificent buildings. The cathedral, with its chapel of the Condestable, the monastery of Las Huelgas, and the Carthusian monastery of Miraflores, are museums of really permanent value.*



## Day 8 Burgos / Madrid

Transfer to Madrid via El Escorial, the magnificent palace and monastery built by Phillip II. Visit the Royal Apartments and the Basilica. A few miles away, view the Valley of the Fallen. Continue to Madrid for overnight.

*Madrid, Europe's highest-lying capital, stands in the foothills of the Sierra de Guadarrama, right in the center of the Iberian Peninsula. It is a very hospitable city, known for the quality of its light and climate. Madrid became the capital of Spain in the 16th century when Spain ruled a vast empire. Its attractions include three internationally famous art galleries, a royal palace, grand public squares and many museums filled with the treasures of Spain's history.*



## Day 9 Madrid

A morning guided tour of Madrid includes seeing Plaza Mayor (site of executions, tournaments, weddings, bullfights and Inquisition trials), Plaza de España, Retiro Park, and entrances to the Royal Palace and the incomparable Prado Museum. Afternoon at leisure for additional sightseeing, church visits or other planned activities. **Participate/sing in an evening Vigil Mass in Basilica of San Miguel.** Farewell Dinner and overnight.



## Day 10 Depart for home

Transfer to Madrid's International Airport for return flight to USA. Arrive home in the evening of the same day.