

A CHILD'S GEOGRAPHY

Volume IV



EXPLORE MEDIEVAL KINGDOMS
WRITTEN BY
TERRI JOHNSON
A CHILD'S GEOGRAPHY

Praise for *A Child's Geography: Explore Medieval Kingdoms...*

*My eleven year old daughter and I were delighted to read through A Child's Geography: Medieval Kingdoms. We both learned so very much! Reading this book really ignites the imagination and helps you feel like you are THERE, walking through the streets of the country being studied, tasting the local foods, and meeting new friends. My daughter was so interested in what we were reading that she begged to finish the book in one day! I am a trained classroom teacher that has been homeschooling for the past 18 years, and I would definitely place the Child's Geography books up there with the very best resources—ones you and your child will return to over and over again. ~ **Susan Menzmer***

*This was my first time reading any books in the A Child's Geography series and it will now be our new curriculum for geography as well as history. Beautifully written. The story pulls you in and allows you to fully immerse yourself in the places, sights, sounds, and scents of our world. The photographs are wonderful; beautiful, bright, and full of color. The book title says geography, but it is so much more. There is history and not boring text book history either. It's edge of your seat history that you, as well as your children, will enjoy. I have learned so much and I am excited to get the whole collection to begin our journey around the world! ~ **Stephanie Sanchez***

*I really enjoyed getting some more indepth research about several areas that I have visited in person, either as a child or an adult. As always, Terri's knowledge is accessible to children and their parents alike so we can all learn together! ~ **Meredith Boone***

*This book allows kids to not only learn geography and history, but to see where it is happening. History and geography should not be separate, they make sense to be placed together. ~ **Laura Strombaugh***

*A Child's Geography: Explore Medieval Kingdoms is so vivid, it is the next best thing to being there! What a wonderful way to experience geography! Cuddle on the sofa with children at your feet traveling to foreign lands and times gone by. ~ **Cindy Morgan***

*Awesome! I am hooked on the book and on Medieval Times! (and I am not a history buff!) ~ **Ginette Martin***

*First I want to say I greatly enjoyed your writing style. I loved feeling like I was traveling through Western Europe: food, sights, and sounds! It reminded me of *Longing for Paris* by Sarah Mae. I can't wait to read some of your other books and share them with my children when they get a little older. ~ **Beth Robinson***

*I love the content and the conversational tone. Great information. You have a nice balance of history, geography, food, and just what it is like to travel. I can't wait to see the book with the pictures and maps! ~ **Cheri Stamile***

*I absolutely LOVE it! The style of writing is so exciting, and really gives life to history...not just a stack of facts and dates. ~ **Marilyn Brasuell***

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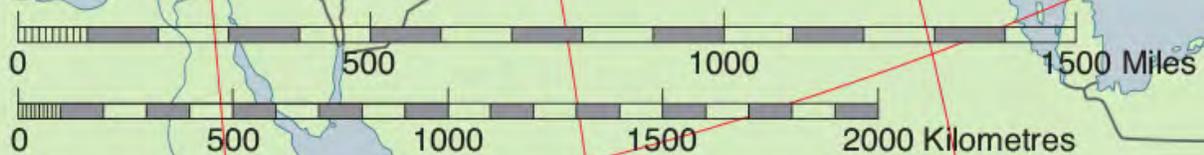
Table of Contents

Map of Medieval Kingdoms.....	4
Introduction	6
A Few Thoughts Before Embarking.....	7
Chapter 1, Spain, Pt I.....	9
Chapter 2, Spain, Pt II	25
Chapter 3, Portugal.....	38
Chapter 4, Tiny Kingdoms, Pt I.....	53
Chapter 5, France, Pt I.....	65
Chapter 6, France, Pt II.....	79
Chapter 7, France, Pt III	94
Chapter 8, France, Pt IV.....	111
Chapter 9, Switzerland	131
Chapter 10, Austria.....	143
Chapter 11, Germany, Pt I.....	157
Chapter 12, Germany, Pt II.....	173
Chapter 13, Tiny Kingdoms, Pt II	189
Chapter 14, Belgium	203
Chapter 15, the Netherlands	217
Glossary	231

Timelines, Map Work, Activities, Recipes, Prayer Guide and more can be found on the download page listed in the Introduction.



A Child's Geography: Explore Medieval Kingdoms



Introduction

After the fall of the Roman Empire in 476 AD, the Classical World plunged into darkness. Although the sun did not literally disappear from the sky, nor the stars fade from view, the world did change in ways that historians would describe as “dark.”

The time of leisure and the pursuit of recreational activities had come to a screeching halt. No longer did people have time to pursue education and scholarship, architectural advancements, or political debate. More pressing matters needed their attention. The people of the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe were now focused on sheer survival, as they were living day to day amid warring tribes, led by powerful **barbarian** warlords.

During these “dark ages,” city dwellers stopped building large and beautiful buildings; they stopped developing democratic systems of government; and they stopped writing books and music. This lack of growth and production is what made the dark ages so dark. Can you imagine a world without books or music? Neither can I!

The Dark Ages lasted for nearly 400 years. That is a long time! If you think about it, the United States has only been a nation for a little more than 225 years. In fact, the pilgrims set foot on this soil and established Plymouth Plantation about 400 years ago. So 400 years is a long time!

But the Dark Ages didn’t last forever and western societies eased into a time known as the Middle Ages (or Medieval time period). The “middle” of what, you ask? Well, the Middle Ages were the middle years between the Classical World of the Greeks and Romans and the Renaissance, which means “re-birth.” The age of the Renaissance received its name because society was finally “reborn” around the 15th century, nearly one thousand years after the Fall of Rome. The Renaissance ushered in a time of great rediscovery of the fine arts, of towering architecture, of political unrest, and of classical literature.

As we continue our explorations around God’s glorious globe, we will pick up where we left off. Leaving the Classical World behind, we’ll discover the medieval realm of the barbarians—the **Franks**, the **Visigoths**, the **Burgundians**, and others—by visiting the swiftly changing countries of Western Europe. We’ll charge into the heart of this old world, some areas still more medieval than modern in many ways.

Explore Medieval Kingdoms

This journey is going to be quite an adventure!

We left our flying carpet behind after the second volume of *A Child's Geography* and our scrolls after volume three. Let's don our tunics and strap on our swords as we venture into new territory, which includes Spain, Portugal, France, Andorra, Monaco, Switzerland, Austria, Liechtenstein, Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands. I cannot wait to see what we will find there, and who we will meet!

Are you ready to go? I am! Come! Let's explore medieval kingdoms and the modern-day countries of Western Europe.



Spain, Pt I

Moor Land in Spain

Across the scorching North African sands, the **Moors**, with their black capes billowing behind them, raced on horseback to Hispania, a new land full of hope and promise for the future. Ah, Hispania... the land of abundance, overflowing with green olives and purple grapes, ripe for the picking.

After the death of Mohammed in AD 632, the Muslims of Arabia began to expand their territory rapidly. They spread across northern Africa and settled in the land of Morocco, in the very north-west corner of the African continent. Do you have your travel map handy? Pull it out and see if you can find Morocco. It was here that this group of people became known as the Moors. While Morocco was a pleasant rest stop for the Moors, it was not their final destination. They had set their sights on conquering the barbarian tribe known as the Visigoths and settling the Iberian **Peninsula**, which is the region we know as modern Spain and Portugal.



Iberian Peninsula map by Robert Wilkerson, public domain image.

The Moors crossed the narrow **Strait** of Gibraltar on ships, bringing their horses with them. The Strait of Gibraltar is a waterway fifteen miles wide that separates the continents of Africa and Europe. (A **strait** of water isn't necessarily straight, without bends or curves. The word strait has nothing to do with "straight" lines. A strait is a narrow channel of water that connects two larger bodies of water.) On the Spanish side of the strait is the mighty



The Rock of Gibraltar, ThinkStock photos, used with permission.

monolithic limestone outcropping known as the Rock of Gibraltar. The ancient peoples of Greece and Rome referred to this rock as one of the Pillars of **Hercules** (the other and smaller one being Jebel Musa—or Mount Moses—on the African side of the strait). These Pillars marked the boundaries of the known world. What lay beyond was anyone's guess.

After the Moors crossed the strait, it took about eight years for them to conquer the Visigothic kingdom of Spain. The Moors loved their new land, but they were not content. Moorish raiders on horseback, with **scimitars** glinting in the hot Spanish sunlight, continued to move north over the next several decades, winning more and more land until they could go no further. They crossed the Pyrenees Mountains and made significant inroads into modern-day France before a legion of Frankish and Burgundian warriors, led by Charles Martel, stopped their advance at the Battle of Tours in AD 732.

Let's drop into Spain at the same location that the Moors did... at the Rock of Gibraltar. The Rock, and the surrounding area known as Gibraltar, are the property of the United Kingdom and not owned by Spain at all. But it is the southern entrance to Spain and a great place to start our adventure.

We need to have our maps out because as we pass through the UK territory of Gibraltar, we find ourselves in the southern region of Spain known as Andalucía. Andalucía is perhaps the most iconic part

of Spain because it typifies the very things we think of when we think of Spain—bullfights, horses, and flamenco dancing! In fact, the town of Ronda in the very south of Spain has the oldest bullfighting arena in the country, the Plaza de Toros de Ronda.

Terrifying hairpin turns and a steep mountain incline transport us into Ronda, a town built along the extreme edge of a sheer cliff face overlooking a deep gorge below. The village, with its dizzyingly tall, narrow bridge, is so lofty in altitude that it is often enveloped in rain-heavy clouds.

There is no bullfight scheduled for today, but it is fun to imagine one in this historic arena. The sport of bullfighting dates back to Ancient Greek and Roman times when many Man vs. beast competitions were held in the Colosseum and other arenas of the Classical World. Spain is not the only country that hosts bullfights in modern times, but when we think of bullfighting, we certainly think of Spain. Other countries that host bullfights are France and Portugal (both of which border Spain as you can see by looking at your map); Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela across the world in South America; and the Philippine Islands in the Pacific Ocean, southwest of Japan. Bullfighting was brought to these regions by the Spanish, who colonized these regions around the world.

The people who fight bulls are called “toreros.” You have probably heard of the more familiar term “matador” but this word only refers to the most senior torero. Finely dressed toreros must execute a series of choreographed moves, almost like a dance, waving a fiery red cape to entice the bull to charge it. Toreros must be very careful because there is great danger when they face the bulls in the bullring. The bulls can get very angry during the bullfight and their horns are very sharp, so the toreros must pay close attention and always be alert. And quick on their feet!



Bullfighting in Spain, ThinkStock photos, licensed for publication.

A Child's Geography

We'll continue our explorations of Spain in the city of Seville, the capital and largest city in Andalucía. Although not directly on the coast, Seville has a long history with deep seafaring roots. The Phoenicians originally colonized Seville over 2,200 years ago before it became a Roman **outpost**. In 1519, Ferdinand Magellan departed from Seville to complete the first **circumnavigation** of the globe. Spain also commissioned the Italian sea captain, Christopher Columbus, to sail to the New World. He departed from Palos, Seville's closest seaport. This is the reason his remains were given to this Spanish city and his tomb can be viewed inside the great doors of the **Cathedral** of Seville.

Mysteriously, the city of Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic also claims to possess the bones of Christopher Columbus. Although Columbus died in Spain, his skeletal remains were carried to Hispaniola—modern-day Dominican Republic—in 1537. In 1795, they were moved to Cuba, and later returned to Seville, Spain in 1898.



However, the journey may not have ended there, and this is where the mystery lies. Back in the Dominican Republic at the Cathedral of Santa María la Menor, a worker discovered a heavy leaden box marked “The illustrious and excellent man, Don Colón, Admiral of the Ocean Sea.” (Colón is the Spanish name for Columbus.) The implication of this find is that the Spanish may have taken the wrong man's bones back to Seville. Christopher Columbus' son was also named Don Colón, so it is possible that one of the sets of bones belongs to him. Or they may belong to someone else entirely. DNA testing has not proven the identity of either set of bones. And so, for this reason, each of these countries straddling the Atlantic Ocean proudly display *the* tomb of Columbus and dispute the other's claim to possess his illustrious remains. The 500-year-old mystery remains unsolved.

In modern times, Seville has become the center of flamenco music and dancing. Flamenco is a type of Spanish folk music

Explore Medieval Kingdoms

and dance. The unique dance style was born right here in the province of Andalucía. Today, we have the opportunity to see a flamenco performance at the theater. Flamenco is a combination of singing, guitar playing, hand clapping, and dancing. Let's hurry so that we don't miss any of it!

The audience loves the lively music, the colorful costumes, and the beautiful dancing. They show their appreciation by clapping and shouting their approval. I'll be quiet now so that you can enjoy the performance yourself:

<http://knowledgequestmaps.com/media-files-acg4-spain-ch1-2/>



Flamenco dancer, ThinkStock photos, licensed for publication.

What did you think of the flamenco performance? Isn't the footwork for flamenco dancing fast and intricate? It takes a great deal of practice to move your feet that quickly.

It's time to jostle our way through the crowds to the train station. The train will be here any minute and it is sure to be on time, because if it's late, passengers ride free. Spain has the best train system in Europe. The trains are extremely reliable and incredibly fast, reaching speeds of 220 miles per hour. They are also very comfortable and luxurious, especially the hotel-trains, which are Spain's "hotels on wheels." This clean and plush rail car makes us feel like royalty. Isn't it great that the windows are



Alhambra Citadel photo by Jiuguang Wang, public domain CC BY-SA 3.0.

so large? We can watch the scenery as we speed through the Spanish countryside with a short stop in Granada before we take a longer ride up north to Barcelona.

The view outside our window is spectacular as we zip east through green valleys and up into the **foothills** of Granada. The town lies at the base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Granada is best known for The Alhambra, a Moorish citadel and palace built in AD 889. I'm looking forward to exploring it with you.

Moorish poets described The Alhambra as a “pearl set in emeralds.” This description compares the color of the buildings to the color of pearls and the lush green woods surrounding the fortress to emeralds. The palace complex was designed with the foothill setting in mind. There is a park surrounding the citadel, which was planted by the Moors. Within the park are groves of orange and myrtle trees with rose bushes of many colors and varieties. Its most characteristic feature, however, was not planted by the Moors, but by the English. There is a dense wood of English elms that were brought here by the Duke of Wellington in 1812.

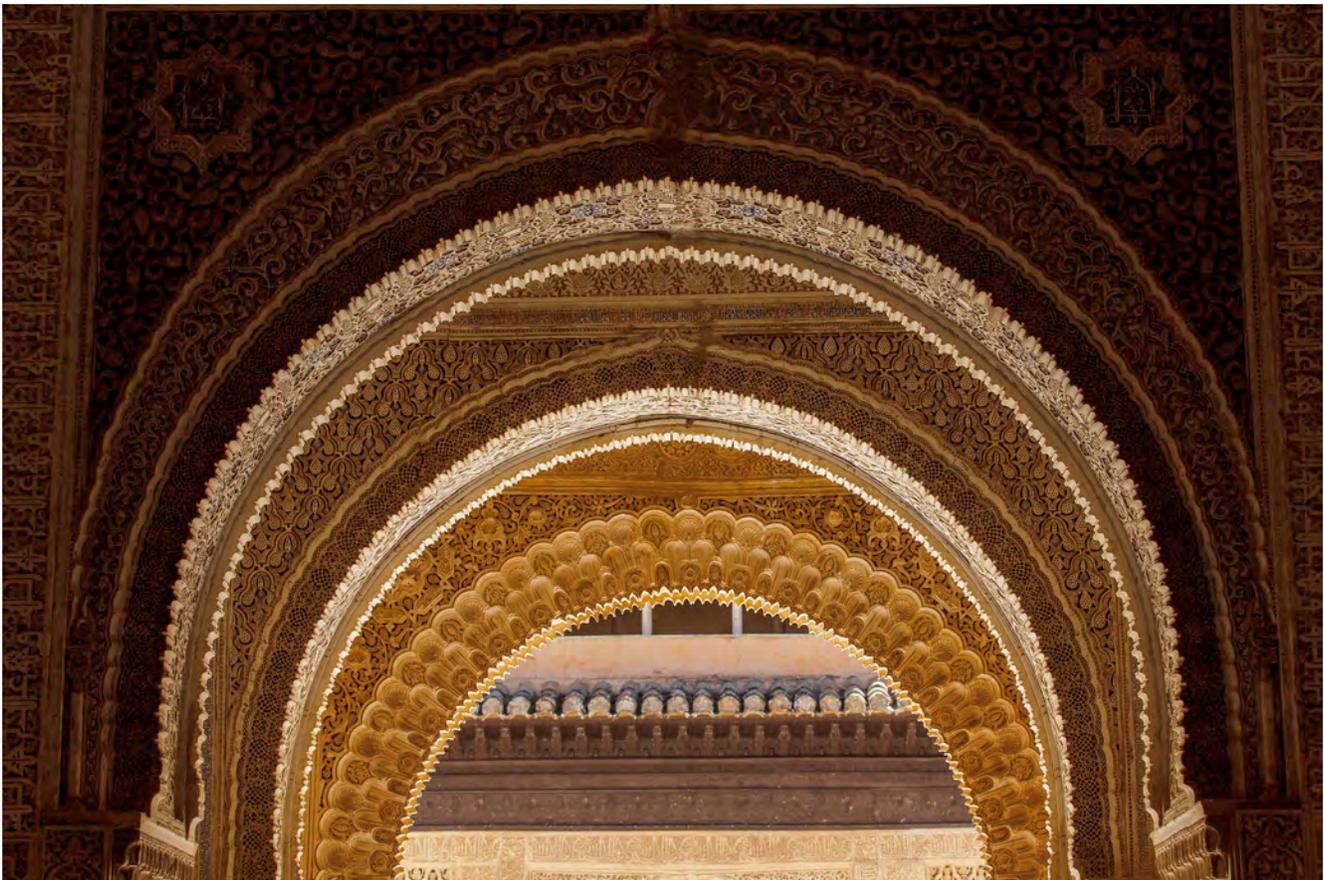
Do you hear that? That is the beautiful song of the nightingale. Bird songs and trills, along with the swishing sound of water cascading over falls and fountains, make the park a tranquil place to enjoy the beauty of this area.

Explore Medieval Kingdoms

Let's go inside and look around. This impressive fortress and the town of Granada were the last hold-outs of the Moors in Spain. The year 1492 holds great significance for the people of Spain and every year they celebrate an event that happened that year. And no, it has nothing to do with Columbus sailing the ocean blue. Spaniards celebrate 1492 because that is the year that the Moors were finally driven out of Spain after 800 years of domination. They celebrate the "Reconquista," or re-conquest, of this land by the Spanish Christians. On January 2, 1492, Emir Muhammad XII surrendered Granada after 600 years of occupation to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella after his defeat in the Granada War.

That is why you can see both Muslim and medieval Christian influence throughout the halls and rooms of the magnificent Alhambra. It is a beautiful, jaw-dropping palace that tells a long and complicated story. Be sure to take many photos to send back home. In fact, let's write a postcard home and tell them about our favorite thing we have learned so far here in Spain.

But not yet! It's time to hurry back to the train. Our "hotel on wheels" departs in an hour and we do not want to miss it. We'll write our postcards while we ride the rails north. Next stop, Barcelona!



Alhambra Citadel photo by SuperCar-RoadTrip.fr, public domain CC BY-SA 3.0.

A Child's Geography

But first, tell me what you remember about...

The Moors:

What do you remember about Morocco? Did the Moors end up staying there? They had to pass through the Strait of Gibraltar on their quest to conquer Spain. Do you remember the names of the pillars that stood on either side of the Strait of Gibraltar, marking it as the boundary of the known world for ancient peoples?

Spain:

Why do the people of Spain celebrate the year 1492? Here is a hint—it does not have anything to do with Christopher Columbus!

Tell me what you think about our trip through Spain. What sights and sounds do you remember? Can you name some of the places we visited? Would you rather see a bullfight or a flamenco dance and why?

Why is the Alhambra called “a pearl set in emeralds”? What two cultures are reflected in this beautiful palace and why?



Balmy Barcelona to Majestic Montserrat

It is quite an experience to travel by hotel-train up to Barcelona and one I think you will enjoy. We can settle in and get comfortable because we will not arrive in Barcelona until early tomorrow morning. We have a sleeper car to ourselves, but the beds fold into couches when we don't want to sleep. The big windows provide a magnificent view of the scenery outside.

While we zip north through the heart of Spain, let me give you some more information about the lay of the land. Spain takes up most of the Iberian Peninsula, along with Portugal and Andorra, which are smaller countries we'll learn about later. Spain is bigger than the state of California in the United States. It is the second largest country in Europe, right after France.

Spain is a mountainous country. The Pyrenees Mountains form its northern border with France. Other mountain chains and many high **plateaus** spread throughout the rest of the peninsula. However, the highest mountain in Spain is not found on the Iberian Peninsula at all. Mt. Teide is located on the island of Tenerife, one of the seven Canary Islands that belong to Spain, which are located in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Africa. Mt. Teide is an active volcano and the third largest volcano in the world.

The nation of Spain includes another set of islands too—the Balearic Islands—which are located on the other side of Spain near the Mediterranean Sea. And if that weren't enough, Spain's holdings in-



Spanish high speed trains, ThinkStock photos, licensed for publication.

clude two more areas—the cities of Ceuta and Melilla, enclaves located on the Mediterranean coast of Africa bordering Morocco. Do you remember what an **enclave** is? An enclave is a country, or portion of a country, that is entirely surrounded by another country. You can see these two cities on your map.

Running right through the heart of Spain is the Tajo River. In fact, there are several large rivers, including the Ebro, the Duero, the Guadalquivir, and the Guadiana, that crisscross Spain bringing water and nourishment to the semi-arid land in the south. Because of this, Spanish farmers can grow an abundance of citrus fruit, such as oranges, grapefruit, lemons, and limes. Like most countries that surround the Mediterranean Sea, Spain also grows olives and grapes in abundance.

Because Spain is so close to Africa, the wildlife is very diverse. We will see plenty of chameleons, lizards, and snakes during our stay here in Spain, but we might also spot a brown bear or a red deer. We may even see some creatures that are less familiar to us, such as ibex and mongoose. Let's keep a lookout for them before the sun goes down and our view of the world from our train window disappears.

It's time to prepare our train car and ourselves for sleep. When we wake up, we'll be in the beautiful seaside city of Barcelona. Night-night!



Guell Park, Barcelona, Adobe Stock Photos, licensed for publication.

Good morning! We have arrived in Barcelona and it is a beautiful, sunny day here on the Mediterranean coast. We couldn't have asked for a nicer day to wander through this lively and colorful city, the capital of Catalonia. Just like Andalucía, Catalonia is a geographical region of Spain. But the Catalans do not consider Catalonia a region; to them it is a nation that isn't officially recognized as one.

The people of Catalonia speak their own language—Catalan—in addition to Spanish. There are two additional languages spoken in regional parts of Spain—Galician and Basque—for a total of four languages spoken in this country.

Barcelona is the second largest city in Spain, after Madrid, with 4.7 million people calling it home. Barcelona has a rich and diverse history. It was founded over 2,000 years ago as a Roman colony. Later, it became the Visigoth capital during the Dark Ages and then a 14th century **maritime** super-power.

Let's stroll along the Ramblas first, since this avenue is the center of old Barcelona. Cafés and eateries line the street, so we are sure to find something delicious for breakfast. How about a bagel with eggs and ham, and maybe some coffee or hot chocolate to drink? Hot chocolate is a specialty beverage of Spain and is quite different from the hot chocolate served in other countries. The warm drink is thick,

dark, and sweet, traditionally served with fried-dough sticks, called churros. Perfect. If we sit by a window or out on the sidewalk, we can watch the many street performers that parade up and down the boulevard.

At the far end of the Ramblas is the Columbus **monument**, for it was here that King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain welcomed Christopher Columbus home after his first voyage to the New World. It is ironic that Barcelona should honor the man whose discoveries opened up new trade routes in the Atlantic Ocean, because this shifted the focus of European trade away from the powerful and wealthy trading ports on the Mediterranean, including Barcelona. Barcelona plunged into an economic decline during that transition, but today it is a bustling and exciting city.

Beyond the monument is the waterfront, which was completely renovated for the 1992 Summer Olympic Games that were hosted by Spain in Barcelona. Sand was trucked in to provide beaches for the great numbers of people that swarmed Barcelona to watch the Olympics. Promenades were constructed along those man-made beaches and cafés built along the promenades. Barcelona has become a lovely beach town.

We must visit the Gothic Quarter next. There, in the heart of old Barcelona is the Picasso Museum. Have you ever seen the artwork of Pablo Picasso? If you have, then you will be surprised by what you will discover here. Barcelona is the town of Picasso's youth and it has the largest collection of his early artwork anywhere.

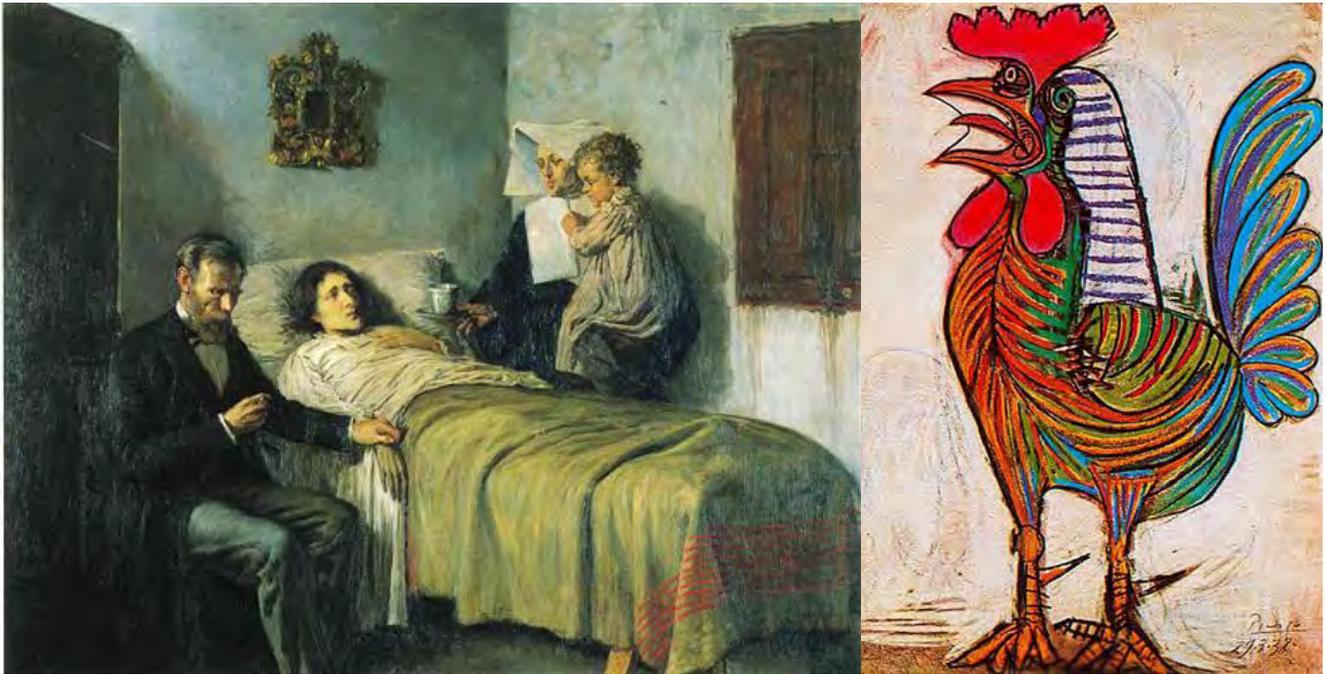


Barcelona beach taken by Mislav Marohnić, public domain image, CC BY-SA 3.0.

A Child's Geography

When you see the realistic art of Picasso's youth, you will have a greater appreciation for his later, more abstract art. The museum collection takes you back to his earliest works, which are very detailed and thoughtful. Even as a child and early teen, his portraits show impressive technique and insight into the emotions of his subjects. Often, his family members made appearances in his artwork, usually his father, appearing as a teacher, doctor, or priest.

As a child, Pablo Picasso painted like an adult. When he became an adult, he said that he learned to paint like a child—not painting what he saw, but what he felt.



Science and Charity by Pablo Picasso (1897) and A Rooster by Pablo Picasso (1938).

Beyond the Gothic Quarter and outside the dense Old City of Barcelona, we can visit the Eixample (pronounced [é-sham-pla] meaning “expansion”) district. The 19th century was a boom time for Barcelona. By 1850, the city was bursting out of its medieval walls, and so an expansion was planned to grow the city. Wide sidewalks, tree-lined boulevards and spacious squares were all thoughtfully planned and carried out for the Eixample district.

The vision for the Eixample was to allow everyone to be equal and have equal access to all amenities. Each district of twenty square blocks would have its own markets, hospitals, parks, schools, and day-care centers. However, the wealthy residents of the city turned this area into an architectural showcase to flaunt their wealth to their neighbors.

The wealthy citizens of Barcelona embraced Modernisme, the Catalan version of the Art Nouveau style, which was becoming popular throughout Europe in the late 19th century. Barcelona became the



Passieg de Gràcia taken by Mstyslav Chernov, public domain image, CC BY-SA 3.0.

capital of Modernisme, and you can see it everywhere in this Doctor Seuss-like section of town. The buildings are not square and angular, but rounded with flowery and flowing asymmetrical shapes.

Take a look at the mansions along the boulevard Passeig de Gràcia [pass-àge-de-gra-sia]. Because of all of the creative twists and swirling structures, the locals have nicknamed this neighborhood the “Block of Discord.”

Perhaps the most famous Modernisme architect of that time was Antoni Gaudí. Our word “gaudy” (which means overly extravagant and showy) derives from Gaudí and his exaggerated, whimsical designs. And yet, if you look closely at his work, you will begin to appreciate his style and ability to design buildings that do not look like they should be structurally sound, and yet are.



Sagrada Família, photo by Wjh31, CC BY-SA 3.0.

A Child's Geography

Gaudí's most famous work is the unfinished Church of the Holy Family, or La Sagrada Familia. He worked on it for over 40 years until his death in 1926. The work continues on the church. Its projected date of completion is the year 2026, the 100th anniversary of Antoni Gaudí's death. Like the construction of many grand cathedrals throughout the ages, this project will take many lifetimes to complete.

There is another Gaudí masterpiece that I would like for you to see, the colorful and whimsical Park Güell [gu-éya] (image on page 10). Park Güell began as a housing project, intending to provide homes for sixty families, but the high-end housing development flopped. However, a century later, it is a great success as a city park. Today, families flock to the park to enjoy the fanciful decor and the playful shapes of this unusual playground overlooking the grand city of Barcelona and the sparkling Mediterranean Sea beyond.

Before we call it a day, we need to take a side trip out of town to the Montserrat Monastery. A visit to the northwest corner of Spain would not be complete without seeing the monastery.

Montserrat means “serrated mountain” and you can understand how the monastery got its name as we wind our way into the mountains northwest of Barcelona. They look like the jagged edge of a serrated knife. You might want to keep your eyes on the road, as it is easy to get carsick on twisty mountain highways such as this one.

Now for the best part... we get to ride a **téléphérique** (which in English we would call a **gondola**, lift, or cable car) further up into the jagged mountains and be delivered right to the doorstep of the Benedictine abbey. Although once destroyed by Napoleon, the Montserrat Monastery was beautifully restored in the 19th century and has become the heart and soul of the Catalan people.



Although once destroyed by Napoleon, the Montserrat Monastery was beautifully restored in the 19th century and has become the heart and soul of the Catalan people.

A handful of Benedictine monks carry on the monastery's spiritual tradition. The Catalan people have a slogan “ora et labora” which means “pray and work” and these words sum up the life of a monk living in Montserrat.

Montserrat Monastery taken by Rodrigo Paredes, public domain image, CC BY-SA 3.0.

Pilgrims of the Catholic faith journey here to see the La Moreneta, a small wooden statue of the Virgin Mary, which was discovered here in the 12th century. The legend surrounding the statue is that St. Luke, the author of the Gospel of Luke, physician, and evangelist of Jesus Christ, carved the masterpiece, but **carbon dating** indicates that she is only 800 years old. Still, pilgrims reach out and touch the orb in Mary's hand to seek and receive her blessing.

It's time to drive back down the mountain and get some rest before we continue our tour of Spain. We have been blessed to wander through Moorish citadels, see an old bullfighting arena, watch flamenco dancers, tour the Eixample district of Barcelona, gaze upon the early work of Picasso, and ride a gondola car to a monastery hidden between serrated mountain peaks.

What will tomorrow's adventures bring? Only tomorrow will tell. Get some rest; there is still so much more of Spain to discover!



But first, tell me what you remember about...

Geography of Spain:

What chain of mountains forms Spain's northern border with France? Do you remember what the highest mountain is in Spain? It's located on the island of Tenerife. There's also something special about this mountain – can you tell me what it is?

Do you remember why Spanish farmers are able to grow such bountiful crops? Tell me! Of the crops that were mentioned, which are your favorites?

Can you name some of the animals you might find in Spain?

Barcelona:

What can you tell me about Barcelona, the diverse capital city of Catalonia? Do you remember which culture founded it almost 2000 years ago?

Which famous artist was from Barcelona? Have you ever seen any of his paintings? If so, what do you think of them?

Wow, the Eixample district is amazing...what are your thoughts about the architecture? Would you like to visit the Park Güell or the Sagrada Familia?

What does "ora et labora" mean?

Timeline of Spain

- 500 BC ↑ Toledo becomes important steel-working center
- AD 632 Mohammed dies
- AD 732 Battle of Tours (Poitiers)
- AD 1492 Moors driven out of Spain / Columbus sails for the New World
- AD 1500 King Phillip the 3rd constructs the Plaza Mayor in Madrid
- AD 1519 Ferdinand Magellan sails from Seville to circumnavigate the globe
- AD 1588 The Spanish Armada defeated by the British Navy
- AD 1850 Planning begins for the expansion of Barcelona
- AD 1900 The Spanish Civil War
- AD 1926 Antoni Gaudi dies during the building of the Sagrada Familia
- AD 1992 ↓ Summer Olympics held in Barcelona





Spain, Pt II

Further Up and Farther In

I am excited for what today will bring. We are traveling up to the Basque Country. The land of the Basques is one of Europe's nations without a country. Its territory comprises parts of northern Spain and southern France in the Pyrenees Mountains. The Basque people have a strong and vibrant heritage. They do not consider themselves Spanish or French; they are Basque. They even speak their own language.

When they drew the political borders of Europe, the Basque Country was left out. You won't find this country on any standard European map, but the Basque people define their country like this:



We are meeting up with two friends, Antton and Amaia. Amaia studied the English language abroad in the United States for a summer and lived with friends of our family. It was great to spend time with her and learn about her unique culture. Later, her brother Antton came out for a visit, and we enjoyed getting to know him as well. Now, they are happy to share their country, their heritage, and their people with us. We will learn a great deal about the Basque today! Let's go!

Map of Basque Country, by Gabriela Trisca, public domain, license CC BY-SA 3.0.

A Child's Geography

Our friends will meet us in Pamplona, the capital of the Kingdom of Navarre in Spain. This city is best known for the Running of the Bulls during the St. Fermin [fair-meen] Festival. We will be there just in time to watch.

“Kaixo,” Antton shouts from across the square.

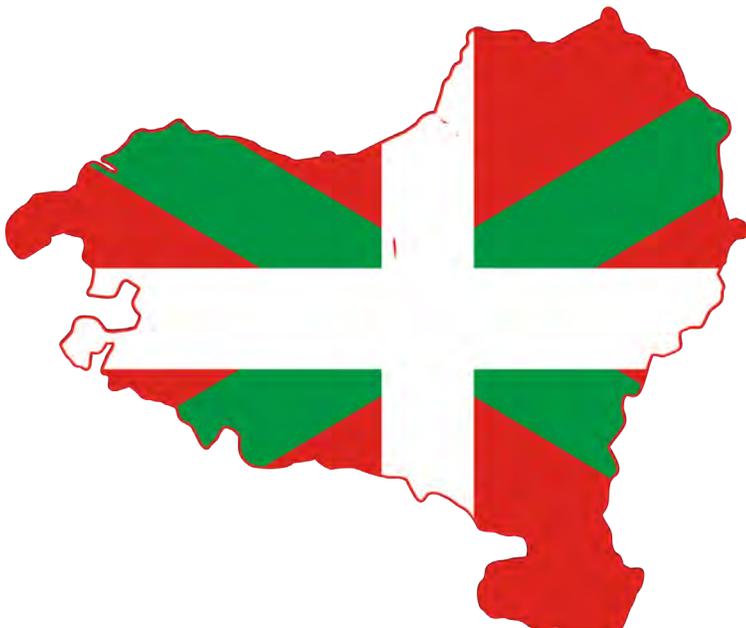
“Epa!” says Amaia, who hurries a bit faster than her brother to reach us.

These are the words spoken in Basque that mean “hello.” *Kaixo* [kay-sho] is the more formal greeting, but *epa* is the word used to greet friends.

The Basque language is like no other language in the world. You might think that it would be similar to Spanish or French, but actually it is not. In fact, it has no similarities to any European language or any language family whatsoever. Basque [Euskara in Basque] is believed to be an ancient language, pre-dating the arrival of Latin speakers from the age of the Roman Empire. It is considered a linguistic curiosity, since it has no living relatives.

The Basque language has been discouraged, even suppressed, from use by both the Spanish and French governments throughout the centuries, who believed that it would lead to **insurrection** and **revolution**. However, it re-emerged in the 1900's and has contributed greatly to the identity and independence of the Basque people.

“Epa,” we say in return. Our attempt to greet our new friends in their language is met with warm smiles and nods of appreciation.



“You are going to love Pamplona and the Running of the Bulls,” declares Amaia, switching to English. Her English is perfect and so is her Spanish. Most Basque people speak at least three languages fluently. “Hurry, let’s find a suitable place to watch the run before it starts. Stay close. The crowds get very animated during the festival.”

While we wait, Antton prepares us for what we are about to see. He has to shout a little for us to hear him over the din of the crowd. “The Running of the Bulls has



The Running of the Bulls, Pamplona, Spain, public domain image.

a long history. It began with cattle drivers who needed to move their herds quickly from pasture to market. Later, the tradition continued as bullfighting became more popular and herders ran their bulls through the streets of town to the corrals of the bullring. But it wasn't until Ernest Hemingway wrote about it in *The Sun Also Rises* that Pamplona's Running of the Bulls became world famous.

"After a preliminary benediction and prayer, a rocket will be fired that signals that the running has begun. The bulls are let loose on this cordoned-off street. The crowds go wild! But here's the crazy part that makes this event so exciting and so dangerous. Young men, who have been pre-approved and considered fit for the event, run in front of the charging bulls to incite them and hurry them through the streets to their destination, the bullring.

"While this is certainly a dangerous race, as these men run the risk of being gored by bull horns or trampled under bull hooves, there are exits all along the street that are wide enough for a person but not for a bull. Thank goodness for that!

"The run will last only about four minutes as the men and bulls run through four streets of the town. It goes by quickly, so let's watch it together now."

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A Child's Geography

Wow, isn't that something? I have never witnessed anything like that in my life! While no one was seriously injured during today's run, that is not always the case as bulls are very dangerous animals. Let's wait for the crowd to subside before getting out of here. Most of the injuries that happen during the Running of the Bulls are from the crowds pushing each other to see the event and then pushing each other to leave when it's over.

The bulls run once a day for seven days during the Festival of St. Fermin, which takes place during the month of July. A legend is told that St. Fermin was the first bishop of Pamplona, and that he converted 40,000 followers to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amaia declares, "Let's take the next train to San Sebastian, our home town, so we can show you around there. It is beautiful this time of year and the coastline is breathtaking. Shall we go?"

Our train takes us due north through the mountains to the city of San Sebastian, sitting like a jewel on the Bay of Biscay. San Sebastian is one of the most famous tourist destinations in Spain. You can see why. The sandy beach looks silky and the waves beckon us to play, just as they did to royalty of old. Doesn't that island in the middle of the bay look like a turtle?

San Sebastian is a center of Basque culture and Basque food. Before a refreshing swim in the sea, we should visit a few tapas bars and sample some of the local cuisine. **Tapas** are like little appetizers stabbed with a toothpick. It's best not to fill up too much in any one place because there are so many tapas bars to visit. Hopping from tapas bar to tapas bar is the way the locals eat lunch.

Let's step in here and see what is on the menu.

menu

BERENJENAS FRITAS fried eggplant slices, cabrales dip 7
PLÁTANOS DE CANARIAS FRITOS fried plantains, spicy mojo picón dip 6.5
CROQUETAS DE POLLO Y JAMÓN chicken, serrano ham béchamel croquettes 7
MANCHEGO FRITO fried cheese, herbs, orange marmalade 7.5
BROCHETA DE CHORIZO grilled spanish chorizo skewer, peppers, onions 7.5
HUEVOS ESTRELLADOS slightly spicy sweet potato fries, egg, diced bacon 8
BUEY A LA PLANCHA grilled angus sirloin steak, potato and mushroom purée 10
PANCETA ASADA slow-roasted pork belly, shallots, golden apple 9
TORTILLA DE PATATAS moist, potato and onion omelet 7
COLES DE BRUSELAS sauteed brussel sprouts, dates, almonds, sea salt 7
PATATAS BRAVAS fried potatoes, spicy tomato sauce, aioli 6.5
ATÚN A LA PLANCHA grilled ahi tuna, mango relish 9
MEJILLONES CON CHORIZO fresh sautéed mussels, chorizo, ginger broth 8
PULPO A LA GALLEGA steamed octopus, paprika, potato 9
CALAMARES A LA ANDALUZA fried squid, lemon aioli 8
GAMBAS AL AJILLO sauteed shrimp, extra virgin olive oil, garlic, hot peppers 9
PASTELITOS DE CANGREJO tasca-style crab cakes, frisée salad, aioli 9
CHOCOLATE A LA TAZA (thick hot chocolate)
CHURROS (fried batter sprinkled with sugar)



San Sebastian taken by Juanedc, public domain image, CC BY-SA 3.0.

A Basque specialty you are sure to love is cheese made from sheep's milk topped with walnuts and apple jam. Sounds delicious to me! What do you think? Will you give it a try? What else will you try?

When we are finished, we just count up the toothpicks on our plate and pay for what we have eaten. "Now," Amaia tells us, "Let's go to the beach and play in the waves."

She tells us that in the 1840s, Queen Isabel II of Spain was a regular visitor to this very beach. Her doctors recommended that she treat her skin problems by sunbathing here by the warm sea. The royalty of Spain and France took notice of this, and soon San Sebastian was on the map as the seaside destination for the rich and famous.

"After a swim in the sea, you must come to our home for dinner and to spend the night with our family."

We tell Antton and Amaia that we would like that very much.

Over dinner with their mother and father, we discuss plans for tomorrow's excursion. We will be on our own again, but they provide us with good ideas on what to do next and how to get there. We decide that we will visit the city of Bilbao, also in the Basque Country, home of the famous Guggenheim Museum. There we will find a breathtaking modern structure that houses some of the most enjoyable artwork in Europe. The hands-on exhibits in the Guggenheim Museum beckon visitors to wander, interact, and play; guests young and old fall in love with the abstract art creations. We are sure to love it, they tell us.

After we have spent some time in Bilbao, we will leave the Basque Country and head for Madrid, the capital of Spain. But before we get there, we will make a quick stop in Segovia. There is a castle that we simply must see. Walt Disney was so taken with this charming hilltop palace that he modeled Cinderella's castle after it. What do you say? Does this sound like a fun day to you?

Here are some links where you can take a virtual tour of the Bilbao Guggenheim Museum and the Segovia Castle. Then after that... I'll see you in Madrid!



Alcázar de Segovia, by Rafael Verdejo, public domain image, license CC BY 2.0.

<http://knowledgequestmaps.com/media-files-acg4-spain-ch1-2/>

“Adio!” We say goodbye in the Basque language to our lovely friends. “Aio” they say in reply, as this word means goodbye to friends. “Aio. Erskirik asko.” Thank you!

Tell me what you remember about...

Basque Country:

Where is the land of Basque located? What language do they speak? Is this language recognized by Spain and France?

Do you remember what happens in Pamplona each July? During what festival does it take place?

Can you describe the Running of the Bulls to me? Who participates? Why are so many people injured during the Running of the Bulls each year?

What did you think about the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao? Google search to learn about the colossal piece of modern-art that has taken up permanent residence in front of the Guggenheim? What's its name?



Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, public domain image by MykReeve, CC BY-SA 3.0.

Of Castles and Giants

Wasn't the castle of Segovia almost magical? That is how Walt Disney felt when he saw it. That is why his version of it as Cinderella's castle has become the iconic image for The Walt Disney Company's theme parks and feature films. Pretty spectacular!

When we reach Germany, in a later chapter, we'll visit another magnificent castle with pointed turrets and fairytale towers, the inspiration for a different Disney castle. Did you know there were two?

It is a short train ride to reach the capital city of Spain... Madrid. With over 4 million people, Madrid is the 3rd largest metropolis in Europe, after London and Berlin. Thankfully, it has a well-organized city layout and superior public transportation system so we shouldn't get lost.

Madrid is located on the Manzanares River in the very center of the country. In the country of Spain, all roads lead to Madrid. The sprawling metropolis is bordered on the north by the region of Castile-León and on the south by the region of Castile-La Mancha.

After we drop off our bags at our hotel, we can start our walking tour of one of the most artistic and cultural cities in the world. Within the urban area, we will find artifacts from old Roman **villas**, a Visigoth **basilica** near the church of Santa Maria, and medieval fortresses from the glory years of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, who commissioned Christopher Columbus to explore what lay beyond the Atlantic Ocean.



The Plaza Mayor in Madrid, Spain, public domain image by Sebastian Dubiel, CC BY-SA 3.0.

We'll start at the Plaza Mayor. The Spanish word "mayor" means "major." So this is the major, or main, square in Madrid. King Philip III built this square during the 16th century. A statue of him stands in the center. The buildings surrounding this large area are residences with balconies overlooking the square. Can you guess how many balconies there are? I'll save you some time counting: 237 balconies overlook Plaza Mayor. How would you like to live in a home that overlooks such a large public square?

The plaza has hosted many events, including soccer games, farmer's markets, and bullfights over the centuries. During the **Spanish Inquisition**, suspected **heretics** were put on trial and punished here in this main square of town. Since today is not a market day, there are no street vendors selling tortillas or empanadas. But we can walk down a side street to find some lunch.

Food in Madrid is a mixture of the cuisine found in other parts of Spain because when people moved from the outlying towns, villages, and regions of Spain into the big city, they brought their own cultures and food preferences with them.

Let's duck into this restaurant and see what is on the menu. Oh my! I'll bet you didn't expect this! Dried and cured ham legs dangle all along the walls of the cafe, displayed as though they were fine wines. The Spanish have a bit of an obsession with ham. In fact, you can see here that they serve sev-

eral varieties at different prices. The longer the pork has cured or the better the conditions in which the pig was raised (such as acorn fed and free range), the more expensive the ham.

Let's watch the man behind the counter, who is slicing a ham, to learn a little more about this Spanish delicacy. In this video, he even allows Phil, the host of *I'll Have What Phil's Having*, to try his hand at slicing the "jamón."

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Tortillas are on the menu too. Only these tortillas may not be the kind you are used to eating. Unlike flat bread, the Spanish Tortilla is more similar to an omelet filled with potatoes. It looks delicious. Shall we order ham and tortillas for lunch? We'll wash it down with Leche Merengada, a sweetened milk drink sprinkled with cinnamon. It's partially frozen, so it's like eating sweet, milky snow. Yum!

I don't know about you, but I am stuffed. I could use some exercise! Let's walk to our next destination, the Puerta del Sol. If the Plaza Mayor acts as the front parlor of Madrid, the Puerta del Sol would be the family room. Its name means the "Gate of the Sun." Puerta del Sol is a crowded space because it is where people meet with one another and where city celebrations take place. There are people eating lunch outside on the benches and street performers entertaining the crowds. Puerta del Sol is also the public transportation hub of Madrid. We can get on a metro train or a bus here that will take us anywhere we want to go in the city.



San Sebastian taken by Sergio Russo, public domain image, CC BY-SA 3.0.

A Child's Geography

However, the next place to visit is the Royal Palace and it's not far away, so we'll continue on foot to work off some of our big lunch.

The name of the palace in Spanish is the *Palácio Real de Madrid*, which means "Royal Palace of Madrid." Its enormous size is awe-inspiring. There are over 2,000 rooms in this palace. King Philip V, who was born in Versailles, France, commissioned the building project. Although he ruled Spain for 40 years, he was always a Frenchman at heart. The *Palácio* was meant to be the "Versailles" of Spain.

Although this is the official residence of the King of Spain, he and his family do not live here. However, he does use it to host special dinner parties and hold formal ceremonies. He can seat up to 150 guests around his incredibly long dining room table.

Let's go inside and look around. It's Wednesday so admission is free! Inside we are greeted by an enormous staircase, acres of paintings and tapestries, glittering chandeliers, and a lavish throne room. There are many striking displays of armor and porcelain, and lovely painted **frescoes** adorn the walls and ceilings. This grand palace was built to showcase the wealth of the Spanish Empire that once spread through many continents and across the vast ocean, spanning both **hemispheres**. "The empire on which the sun never sets" was the motto for the extensive Spanish Empire.

How did this empire become so large and wealthy? Explorers like Christopher Columbus and other European seafarers discovered new lands across the Atlantic Ocean and brought treasures found abroad back to their homeland. The discovery of the New World also opened up trade and strengthened commerce, bringing with it boatloads of riches from around the world.



Palácio Real de Madrid taken by Luis Garcia, public domain, CC BY-SA 3.0.

But new land brought new trouble. Most wars are fought over land, between those who own it, and those who want to own it. As the Spanish Empire grew, so did its opportunities to fight with its neighbors, especially England and France. In 1588, the Spanish Armada, a fleet of 130 ships, set sail from Spain in an attempt to overthrow Queen Elizabeth I of England. But it was an expensive disaster for Spain, who was soundly defeated by the British Navy.

Over the course of many years and many wars, the Spanish Empire weakened. Eventually, Spain became part of Napoleon's France. Later, Spain rebelled and King Ferdinand VII reclaimed the throne of Spain.

During the 20th century, Spain entered into a long and arduous war, the Spanish Civil War, when the Spanish people fought each other. By the end of this war, Spain was so weakened as a nation that a dictator named General Francisco Franco was able to gain control of Spain. He ruled it with an iron fist for the next 40 years. Upon his death, Juan Carlos became king, but he adopted a new constitution that made Spain a democracy.

That is Spain's long history in a nutshell. It is important to learn about the past of all people groups and the countries in which they live. Speaking of history, tomorrow we will visit the Alcázar castle. It was originally a Roman fort and then became an

Arab fortress. Later, when the Christians pushed the Moors out of Spain, it became a Christian castle.

The Alcázar castle was a favorite residence of the kings and queens of the Kingdom of Castile. It was there that Queen Isabella was crowned Queen of Castile and León before her marriage to King Ferdinand of Aragón in 1469, which joined their two great kingdoms making Spain a dominant force during its glory years.

And after that, we'll visit Toledo in the territory of La Mancha. Have you heard of it? Toledo has been an important city throughout the years as a steel-working and sword-making center since about 500 BC. Toledo came to the attention of Rome when Hannibal passed through it during the Punic Wars and it soon became a major supplier of weaponry for the Roman Legions.

Would you like to step into a modern sword-making forge? The Men at Arms: Reforged team recreates Aragorn's sword from *The Lord of the Rings* movie. **Note to parents:** The introduction includes some brief battle scenes from *The Lord of the Rings* and the conclusion contains unrealistic gore. My personal recommendation is to skip the conclusion.

<http://knowledgequestmaps.com/media-files-acg4-spain-ch1-2/>



Young Isabella of Spain, painting by Gerard David, 1520.



The Windmills of La Mancha, public domain image by Hugo Díaz-Regañón, CC BY-SA 2.0.

Later, Toledo hosted the historic Visigoth Councils of Toledo and then became the first major city to instigate the Christian Reconquista against the Arab Moors. The famous El Greco Museum is located there. But these are not the only reasons that you may have heard of Toledo of La Mancha.

Toledo and La Mancha are the setting for the best-selling fiction book of all time, *Don Quixote* [key-ho-tay], written by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. The story follows the adventures of Don Quixote, a man who reads so many chivalric novels that he loses his mind and decides to set out to revive **chivalry**, undo past wrongs, and bring justice back to the world. He recruits a farmer as his squire and together they set out on their imaginative knightly adventure. Considered the most influential work of literature from the Spanish Golden Age, *Don Quixote* has had a significant influence on other authors and their books, namely Alexandre Dumas' *The Three Musketeers* (1844) and Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884).

Perhaps you will be inspired to read it when we pass by the graceful windmills of La Mancha, the windmills that Don Quixote believed were giants that he had to fight and slay to save the world from evil. I did mention that he was delusional, right? Here is an excerpt from the book:

Just then they came in sight of thirty or forty windmills that rise from that plain. And no sooner did Don Quixote see them that he said to his squire, "Fortune is guiding our affairs

better than we ourselves could have wished. Do you see over yonder, friend Sancho, thirty or forty hulking giants? I intend to do battle with them and slay them. With their spoils we shall begin to be rich for this is a righteous war and the removal of so foul a brood from off the face of the earth is a service God will bless.”

“What giants?” asked Sancho Panza.

“Those you see over there,” replied his master, “with their long arms. Some of them have arms well nigh two leagues in length.”

“Take care, sir,” cried Sancho. “Those over there are not giants but windmills. Those things that seem to be their arms are sails which, when they are whirled around by the wind, turn the millstone.”

After we get a chance to “tilt at windmills”* like Don Quixote, we’ll be leaving the ancient and beautiful land of Spain. We have learned so much here and have a new appreciation for this country that dominates the Iberian Peninsula. I can’t wait to hear what you liked best about it.



Tell me what you remember about...

Madrid:

Have you enjoyed our trip through Spain so far? What is the capital city of Spain? Can you tell me some things that you might find hanging in cafés or markets in Spain?

What can you tell me about Plaza Mayor? Do you remember where it is located? Describe it for me. What types of events take place in Plaza Mayor?

Spain entered into a long and arduous war called the Spanish Civil War. What is a civil war?

Toledo and La Mancha:

Have you ever read Don Quixote? Maybe you want to now! Don Quixote inspired many other authors; can you name two? Don Quixote jousted windmills because he thought they were monsters. Can you think of any other things that are man-made that might look like monsters if you didn’t know what they really were?

* **Tilting at windmills** is an English idiom, which means attacking imaginary enemies. The word “tilt,” in this context, comes from jousting.



Lisbon – The City of Crows

Speeding across the hot dry plateau of central Spain on a bullet train, we're on our way to the ancient seafaring town of Lisbon on the coast of Portugal. Lisbon seems like a great place to start our adventures through Portugal, which is one of the oldest countries in Europe. This small nation, which shares the Iberian Peninsula with Spain and Andorra, is over 900 years old. It was the first European country to send explorers across the Atlantic Ocean over 600 years ago and to become a global superpower with a vast empire stretching westward from Africa to Brazil, and eastward to India and China.

Portugal, located on the extreme edge of the Iberian Peninsula, has a long stretch of coastline along the gray and menacing Atlantic Ocean. Although most of Portugal is located on the mainland, two **archipelagos**, or island chains, beyond the vast watery horizon also belong to Portugal. These islands are called Madeira and the Azores. You can see them on your map.



Straight through the middle of the country runs a large river called the Tagus River. It flows down from the high plateau of Spain and eventually empties into the Atlantic at the city of Lisbon. The Tagus River divides Portugal in half. The northern half is somewhat mountainous, especially on its eastern border with Spain. The southern half of Portugal, south of Lisbon, is less hilly and has wide-open plains.



The Azores and Mount Pico, public domain image by Björn Ehrlich, CC BY-SA 3.0.

The highest mountain in Portugal is not located in the north, or even on the mainland. Mount Pico is on the island of Pico in the Azores. More than just a volcano to the islanders, Mount Pico is a symbol of strength for all the people of Portugal.

We're starting our Portugal adventure in Lisbon, a medium-sized city at the mouth of the Tejo River. Lisbon was once considered the edge of the world, as you cannot go any further west in Europe than Lisbon. Today, its huge port welcomes ships from all around the globe, just as it did hundreds of years ago. Lisbon, the city that was once home to Ferdinand Magellan and Vasco da Gama, still feels like the gateway to the world.

Spanning the wide Tejo waters is Lisbon's mile-and-a-half long **suspension bridge**. It is one of the longest bridges in the world and looks strikingly similar to the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. In fact, they are cousins. In 1966, the same company that designed and built the Golden Gate also built this bridge. No wonder!

In many ways, this European city is reminiscent of San Francisco in California. But Lisbon is much, much older! It is as old as Rome and like Rome, was built on seven hills. Old **trolleys** clatter up and down the hills of Lisbon, through wide squares and around narrow cobbled corners.

A Child's Geography

While Lisbon's history goes back to Roman times, its golden age was during the 15th and 16th centuries when explorers like Vasco da Gama and others set out from Lisbon to sail around Africa, opening new trade routes to India and China. These new trade routes played a vital role in making Lisbon one of Europe's wealthiest cities.

A short time later, Portuguese explorers discovered places like Brazil in South America and brought home gold and diamonds, adding to Lisbon's wealth. That's why the people of Brazil speak Portuguese, the language of Portugal.

But not all of Portugal's history was sunshine and roses. Ruins around this city, such as the scarred pillars of the rebuilt church of São Domingos, memorialize Portugal's worst disaster. In 1755, a terrible earthquake struck the city on All Saint's Day, when most of the people of Lisbon were worshipping in churches.

It was said that people as far away as Ireland felt the tremors of the quake. Over 30,000 people died that day and most of the city of Lisbon was **razed** to the ground by one of three disasters that happened within a few horrible minutes. The earthquake (#1) caused many fires (#2) to blaze throughout the city and triggered a massive tsunami (#3) that slammed into the harbor a few minutes later.



Trolley Car in Lisbon by @SeanPavonePhoto, Adobe Stock Images, licensed for publication.



The Castelo de São Jorge in Lisbon, public domain image by Massimo Catarinella, CC BY-SA 3.0.

That is why this city is a mixture of old and new. For a European city, most of the buildings are considered “new” construction, having been built within the last 250 years. Many of its streets are broad to facilitate smooth traffic flow and the city’s well-designed grid layout is easy to navigate.

There is a castle in Lisbon called the Castelo de São Jorge, which translates to the “Castle of St. George,” named for St. George and the Dragon. Built by the Moors who swept in from North Africa during the 8th century, and conquered this region along with Spain, the castelo sits proudly on a high hill overlooking Lisbon. King Alfonso Henriques of Portugal drove out the Moors during the 12th century and claimed this palace for himself. Later, the royalty of Portugal took up residence elsewhere and the castle fell into ruins. Now, it is only an empty shell, but the surrounding park is lovely and has the best viewpoint of the city.

Shall we go see it?

Instead of hiking up the towering hill, we’ll ride the **funicular** to the top. Because Lisbon is such a hilly town, many trams and funiculars run throughout the city to help pedestrians get up and down the steep slopes. If you crossed a tram with an elevator, you would get a funicular. Let’s watch one now:

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The funicular that runs up to the Castelo de São Jorge packs tourists in like sardines on weekends, but not today. The castle at the top is large and imposing. Through the wide gate and across the nar-

A Child's Geography

row bridge, we duck through the archway of the crumbling outer walls and into the castle courtyard overgrown with large shade trees. Do you see the old cannons along the perimeter that once protected the **citadel**?

There are binoculars mounted on the wall too, so that we can look out across the city and far out to sea. Except for the sounds of birds chirping and chipmunks chattering, it is peaceful and quiet up here. Until, that is, the crows begin to caw.

Lisbon is infamous for being the city of crows. They are everywhere: up in the castle and down by the sea. The crow has been displayed as an official symbol of Lisbon since 1173, the year of Saint Vincent's death. During the Middle Ages, it was customary for every merchant in the city to keep a crow. And all of these pet crows were given the same name, Vicente, for their beloved saint.



The Alfama District in Lisbon, public domain image by di me amate il riflesso, CC BY-SA 3.0.

Let's descend into that maze of alleyways that tumbles down the hillside from the castle to the Tejo River. We'll walk since it's all downhill from here. This part of the city is called the Alfama. This salty fisherman's quarter survived the 1755 quake, so it has plenty of old-world charm along its narrow, cobbled streets.

The scent of clean laundry hanging out to dry mingles with the fishy smell of clams and seafood in this shabby, but quaint corner of Lisbon.

Listen. Do you hear that music? Perhaps we can find out where it is coming from. Around the narrow

street corner, we find a small square that beckons passersby to linger and listen awhile. A woman is singing a style of music called “fado.” **Fado** is a sorrowful Portuguese style of music that tells stories about hardship and fishing and life out at sea. Accompanying her is a man playing a Portuguese guitar, which is a 12-stringed instrument, a little fatter and rounder than a classical guitar.

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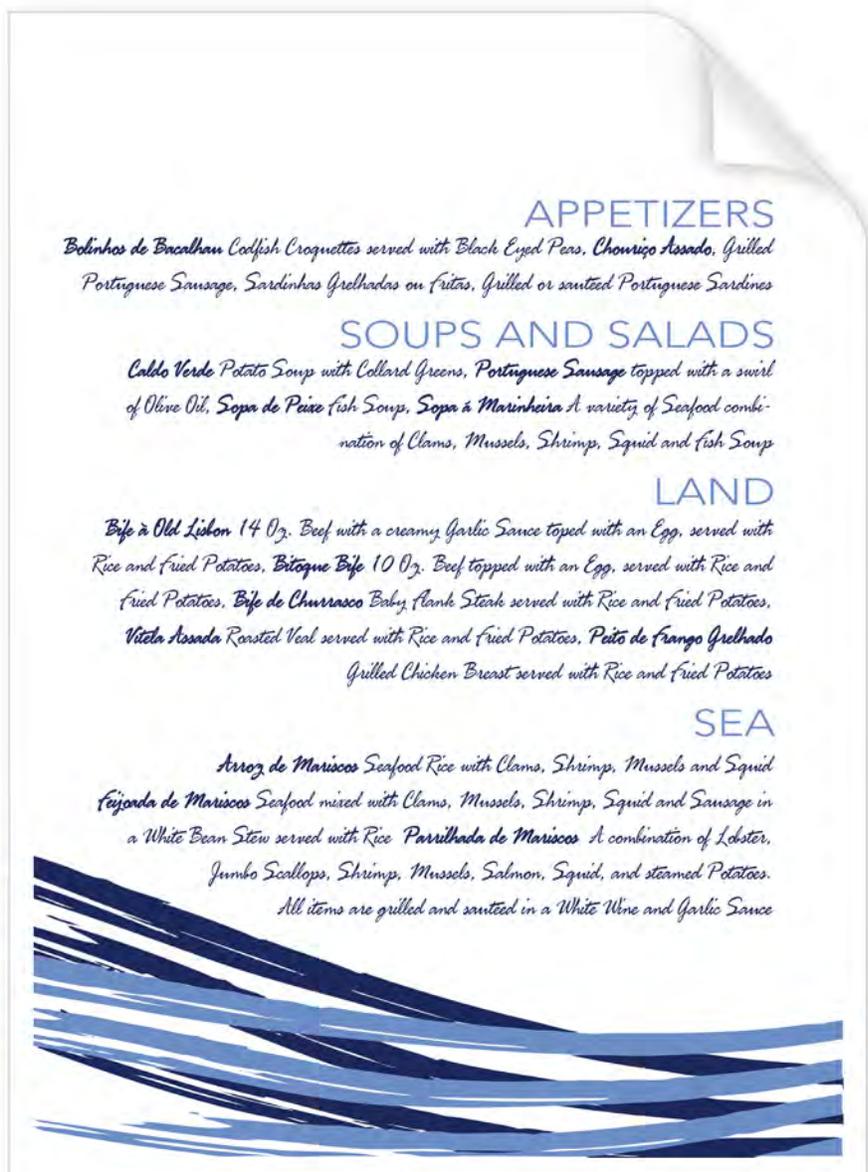
The sad music ends and everyone claps for the talented performers. Fado is such a unique style of music that is has been assigned world heritage status by **UNESCO**.

A couple blocks further down the hill, we’ll hop on the trolley that runs along the bottom of the Alfama district and make our way to Rossio Square, the most popular meeting place in this city. There, we can grab a bite to eat.

Lisbon is the capital of the Portuguese-speaking world and a melting pot of its once vast empire. Immigrants from former colonies such as Mozambique and Angola in Africa have added diversity and flavor to this unique city, making it just as likely that we will hear African music these days as Portuguese Fado. And we will likely find as much Brazilian or Indian food as Portuguese.

With a line extending outside the doors, this café looks like a local favorite. Here’s what’s on the menu:

Portugal is famous for its coffee-houses and pastries. For a thousand years, monks in monasteries have been creating pastries out of simple ingredients such as flour, eggs and almonds. For dessert, here are some choices:



A Child's Geography

Pastel de Nata – world-famous egg custard tart in filo dough, served warm, fresh out of the oven and sprinkled with cinnamon and powdered sugar.

Toucinho do Céu – classic Portuguese cake made with almonds.

Bola de Berlim – doughnut-like dessert made from sweet yeast dough, fried in oil, and filled with marmalade or jam. Dusted with powdered sugar.

What will you try?

That was delicious and filling. But we have more to see in Lisbon! We could ride the Elevador de Gloria, or Gloria Funicular, up that hill to the garden at the top. The funicular, built in 1885, was originally powered by water, then later by steam. Today, it runs on electricity. Or we can ride the Santa Justa Elevator that connects the lower town with the upper town. This elevator was constructed in 1902,



just a few years after its inspiration... the Eiffel Tower. Either way, let's head to the top of the hill for one more thing you need to see before we leave Lisbon.

It is the Chapel of St. John the Baptist, one of the most expensive chapels per square inch ever built. If you think that it looks like it came right out of the Vatican, then you would be right. Because it did. The chapel was constructed in Rome out of the most precious materials available and then it was used for one **papal** mass. After the mass was over, the chapel was disassembled and shipped here to Lisbon as a gift to the city.

The massive paintings on the walls are not paintings at all; they are called **mosaics** (a mosaic is created by assembling small bits of colored glass, stone, or other available materials to form an image). The Italians loved to include mosaics in their churches and cathedrals because candle smoke, which can dreadfully darken an oil painting, does not damage mosaics.

The Chapel of St. John, photo by Daniel Villafuela, CC BY-SA 3.0.

How did you like Lisbon? Are you ready to see the rest of Portugal, the countryside and the seaside towns? Let's remember what we have seen so far. Lisbon is a bustling port city located as far west as you can travel on the continent of Europe. Dating as far back as Rome, and also built on seven hills, Lisbon is proudly leading one of the oldest European nations. Quirky hillside transportation, ancient citadels, and delicious food mingle together to create a city as retro and classic as they come.

We can rest a while on the train; then we'll explore more of Portugal.

Tell me what you remember about...

Geography:

What can you tell me about Portugal's archipelagos? The highest mountain in Portugal is located on one of these islands. Why is it special to the people of Portugal?

Lisbon:

Why was Lisbon once considered the edge of the world? Why is this no longer true?

One of the longest bridges in the world is in Lisbon. What river does the bridge span? Can you tell me a fun fact that you learned about the bridge?

Tell me about Portugal's greatest disaster. When did it happen? Who did it impact?

Riding a funicular seems like a great way to see Lisbon. Describe the things you think you would see.



Cape Sagres in Portugal taken by Paulo Miranda, public domain image, CC BY-SA 3.0.

A Child's Geography

The Edge of the World

We're on our way to the rugged southwestern tip of Portugal. It is called Cape Sagres. In the days before Columbus, this was as close as you could get to the edge of our supposedly "flat" earth. A lighthouse marks the place that people in ancient times referred to as "the end of the world." Today, you will find fishermen casting their lines off the dizzyingly high cliffs and travelers taking "edge of Europe" photos with the vast Atlantic Ocean as their backdrop.

Cape Sagres is where Prince Henry the Navigator established his school of navigation. Henry was the son of King John I, who was the first Portuguese king of the House of Aviz. John I established his kingdom and throne from the old castle we explored earlier while in Lisbon, the Castelo de São Jorge. In fact, he named it after Saint George, the warrior-saint who is usually depicted slaying a dragon, when he married the English Princess, Philippa of Lancaster in 1387.

Prince Henry encouraged his father to conquer Ceuta, a great port city on the northern coast of Africa. Henry's fascination with Africa began when he learned about the trade routes that ended in Ceuta. He was intrigued with the idea of expanding trade for Portugal by exploring new trade routes, particularly by sea.

This fascination led him to found the School of Navigation on Cape Sagres. It was from here that Prince Henry sent forth his sailors ever further into the unknown. And it was here that he debriefed with them, learning from his explorers as they washed back ashore, weathered and worn from their adventures. The School of Navigation was *the* place for sailors of the 15th century to come and learn about map-making, ship-building, navigation, trade, and foreign languages in hopes of becoming world-famous, sea-faring explorers to newly discovered lands.

Salema is a salty sea town that is not far from here. This simple fishing village is a curious place to explore. Not much has changed in Salema in the last several hundred years. You will still see weath-



Henry the Navigator by Nuno Gonçalves, public domain image.

er-worn fishermen going about their work of mending pots and cleaning their catch, mostly octopi, out in the cool of the morning; and women wearing head scarves and seven-layer petticoats, hanging out their laundry to dry in the fresh ocean breeze.

Today, we will go out to sea with Marcelo in his fishing boat to “check the pots.” Fishermen drop down clay pots along the seabed just off shore, a fishing technique they have been practicing since ancient times. We learn that the pottery jars are octopus traps. The octopus, thinking these pots would make a nice cozy place to relax, climbs in and gets comfortable. He sets himself about the task of ambushing prey for his next meal, not realizing that he has been ambushed himself.



Pots for catching octopi, coast of Portugal, public domain image by GanMed64, CC BY-SA 2.0.

Marcelo hoists the jars and checks to see if there is an octopus inside. The octopus hangs on for dear life, as his new home is dragged suddenly out of the water. Once inside the boat, he is shocked by a spray of mace and quickly evacuates his refuge. Later this morning, the octopus will be sold in the village fish market and cooked up for someone’s dinner. Would you like to try a little octopus before we leave Salema and travel north to explore the rest of Portugal?

A Child's Geography

It only takes a few hours to drive from the southern tip to the northern region of Portugal, but we'll want to make a few stops along the way. The first stop is a cork oak forest.



Cork oak taken by Martin Olssen, CC BY-SA 3.0

For this reason, the workers are trained carefully and are very skilled. This skill is often passed down through families, from fathers to their sons.

Let's watch these men as they harvest cork:

<http://knowledgequestmaps.com/media-files-acg4-portugal-ch3/>

The cork industry employs 60,000 people in Portugal and is a 2 billion dollar industry, supplying bottle corks, corkboards, and cork flooring all around the world.

On our way north, we'll pass through Lisbon again, a good excuse to stop at the Belem Tower at the mouth of the Tejo River. As we cross the bridge that spans the broad river, we can see this imposing

Perhaps you have seen cork on the tops of wine bottles or maybe used as a bulletin board in your home or school. Have you ever thought about where that cork comes from? It comes from the bark of cork oak trees! Over 50% of the world's cork is grown in the small country of Portugal.

Let's watch the workers harvest some cork. Cork is only collected once a year—in the summertime. Each individual tree can only be harvested once every nine years so that the tree has time to grow back its cork. Trees are not cut down or harmed during the harvest, which makes cork a **renewable resource**. (A renewable resource is a resource that replaces itself naturally and is used over again. Examples are: oxygen, fresh water, solar energy, and timber. Renewable resources may also include commodities such as wood, paper, and leather.)

Cork is always cut by hand, very carefully, so as not to damage the tree. It is against the law to cut down a cork tree in Portugal.



The Belem Tower in Lisbon, Portugal, public domain image by Daniel Feliciano, CC BY-SA 3.0.

medieval fortress ahead. About 500 years ago, King John II built the four-story tower to protect Lisbon from attacks by sea. It is a very stately and strong fortress constructed from local Portuguese limestone. Over the years, it has been used for defense, as barracks for soldiers, and as a prison.

Passing through the Belem district, we can see some other fascinating sights. After the earthquake of 1755, Portuguese royalty moved their residence here and built it out of wood rather than stone. Adjacent to the royal palace is the coach museum. In 1905, when the Queen of Portugal realized that cars would make horse-drawn carriages obsolete, she decided to preserve her collection of fine royal coaches. The coach museum displays seventy of her gilded coaches in her elegant old riding room. Some of these coaches are more than 400 years old!

Also, you can see the old monastery where sailors went to worship before sailing into the unknown. Famous explorers, such as Vasco da Gama and Ferdinand Magellan, spent full nights in prayer here, beseeching the Lord for good health and safe travels before setting forth on their daring adventures.

About 10 miles north of Lisbon is Mafra and the Mafra National Palace, one of the largest palaces in the world. Have you ever seen anything so massive in your life? At one time, 45,000 people were working on it to complete it. To fulfill a promise he made to his wife, King John V built this palace

A Child's Geography

about 300 years ago. He promised her that if she bore him a child, he would build a **convent**. The birth of his first child, Princess Barbara, led to the beginning of construction on this magnificent structure conveniently located near his favorite hunting grounds. The sumptuous **Baroque** complex became a natural second home for Portuguese royalty who enjoyed the quiet country lifestyle away from the hustle and bustle of the big city. Its intended use as a convent was forgotten.

We'll enter between the two main towers in the front of the palace. Bells ring joyously, welcoming visitors from near and far. First, we pass through the extravagant basilica, or church, then through the rooms of the royal residence. Soon, we'll come to the best part... the library! If you love books, then you will love this. The library is the highlight of the palace. Inside, the walls, which are two stories high, are lined with 40,000 rare and expensive books.

We'll end our grand tour of Portugal by visiting its birthplace... Guimarães. Many say that Guimarães is the most charming place in the country. This quaint, historic town sits high in the northern mountains of Portugal and she welcomes locals and visitors alike with her colorful buildings and well-manicured parks.

Guimarães is known as the "cradle city" of Portugal because Henry of Burgundy established it during the 10th century as the first seat of government for the Portuguese. It is also the birthplace of Alfonso I, the first king of Portugal. Additionally, the city played a significant role in the Battle of São Mamede in 1128, which led to the formation of Portugal as a nation, one of the oldest in Europe at 900 years old. For these reasons, three words are engraved in one of the old towers of the original city wall: "Aqui nasceu Portugal" (Portugal was born here).

Let's grab a chair and some coffee or hot chocolate in one of the cafés in the town's main square and enjoy some people watching. Today is the festival of the Popular Saints (Santos Populares), celebrating Saint Anthony, Saint John, and Saint Peter. Many people get married on this day, and there will be fireworks tonight! People are dancing in the streets and enjoying themselves today.



Oliveira Square in Guimarães, public domain image by Feliciano, CC BY-SA 3.0.



Beautiful, colorful Portugal “at the edge of the world,” Adobe Stock Images, licensed for publication.

Our server, Alfonso, brings us some food that we didn’t order. It is bread and sardines. He explains that it is festival food and that it is on the house. Alfonso sees our quizzical looks and tells us, “We eat bread and fish to celebrate the saints and to remember Jesus’ miracle of the loaves and fishes.”

Oh, now we understand. We thank Alfonso and he bows slightly before heading back in to the kitchen.

We noticed another strange thing happening around us today. Many people are carrying around little plastic hammers in their hands or in their pockets. When they see a friend, or someone they know, each person takes a turn hitting their friends on the forehead with the little lightweight hammers. They believe it will bring them good luck. It looks odd, but everyone is laughing and enjoying themselves.

Our visit to Portugal has come to an end. The Portuguese people have deep roots, strong traditions, and kind hospitality. They have made us feel welcome and like we belong here. But we have more medieval kingdoms to explore! So, we nod our heads to these fine, adventurous people and their historic land as we set our eyes toward two tiny countries to the east—Andorra and Monaco. Our next adventure awaits...

A Child's Geography

Tell me what you remember about...

Cape Sagres:

Did you enjoy our trip to Cape Sagres? Tell me what makes this tip of Portugal so special. Would you have liked to attend Prince Henry the Navigator's School of Navigation? What skills would you have liked to learn at his school?

What do fishermen in Salema catch in clay pots? Describe the process of fishing with these pottery jars.

Northern Portugal:

Much of the world's cork is grown in Portugal. What did you learn about growing and harvesting cork? Why is it a renewable resource? Tell me about some other renewable resources.

Can you paint me a picture with words that describes the beautiful Mafra National Palace? I think my favorite room would be the library! Do you remember how many books are in it?

Timeline of Portugal

AD 700	↑	Moors conquer Portugal and build Castelo de Sao Jorge
AD 1100		King Alfonso Henriques drive the Moors out of Portugal
AD 1128		The Battle of Sao Marmede
AD 1755		Earthquake, fire, and tidal wave kills 30,000 people in Lisbon
AD 1885		Gloria Funicular built in Lisbon
AD 1905		The queen of Portugal puts her royal coaches on display
AD 1966	↓	Suspension bridge built in Lisbon

Timelines of Andorra and Monaco

AD 803	↑	Charlemagne rescues Andorra from the Moors
AD 988		Andorra becomes an independent state
AD 1962		Peter Seeger writes song about Andorra
AD 1215		Monaco founded as a colony of Genoa
AD 1297		Monaco captured by Francois Grimaldi
AD 1419		Monaco purchased from Spain by the Grimaldis
AD 1956	↓	Grace Kelly and the Prince of Monaco marry