

Marian Shrines & the Way of St. James

10 days / 8 nights

Our Pilgrimage through the spiritually rich and beautiful countryside of Portugal, Spain and France will provide us with wondrous opportunities to reflect on our spiritual lives, come closer to God, and gratefully consider the sacrifices and dedication of those who have gone before. As we walk on holy ground, behold sacred shrines and experience timeless works of art, we will renew our commitment to the roots of our Catholic faith. The masses and meditations we celebrate along the way will draw us together as a community and will remind us of our blessings and the call to follow of Jesus Christ.

Day 1 – Departure from the USA

He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord (Romans 14: 6).

Our pilgrimage begins with an overnight flight to Lisbon, Portugal.

Day 2: Lisbon – Santarem - Fatima

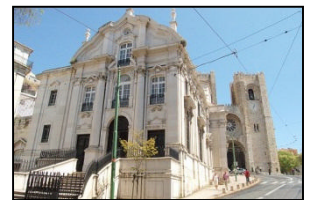
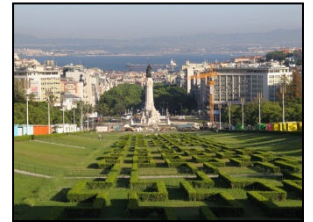
May Portugal never forget the heavenly message of Fátima, which, before anybody else, she was blessed to hear. To keep Fátima in your heart and to translate Fatima into deeds, is the best guarantee for ever more graces (Pope Pius XII).

After breakfast we'll travel some 45 miles north of Lisbon to Portugal's third largest city, Santarem, site of many notable churches including the Church of the Holy Miracle (*Igreja do Santissimo Milagre*) which contains a 13th century Eucharistic miracle on continuous display since 1269. The host is enshrined in its miraculous crystal pyx in a silver monstrance and placed on display atop a tabernacle. Four paintings and 16th century glazed tiles depict the miracle. We then continue on to Fatima, home of one of most well-known Marian shrines in the world, the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima (*Nossa Senhora do Rosário da Fátima*). Each year as many as four million people visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima because they are drawn by the story of three local shepherd children who in 1917 saw the Virgin Mary. On the 13th of each month from May to October 1917, the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared to Lúcia dos Santos (age 10), her cousins Jacinta (age 7), and Francisco Marto (age 9) in a pasture called the Cova da Iria near Fatima. We will enjoy dinner and an overnight stay in Fatima.

Day 3: Fatima

Yes, I shall take Jacinta and Francisco soon, but you will remain a little longer, since Jesus wishes you to make me known and loved on earth. He wishes also for you to establish devotion in the world to my Immaculate Heart (Mary's words to Lucia when Lucia asked the Virgin to take her and her cousins to heaven soon (as per Lucia's account)).

We'll begin the day by celebrating Mass, after which we'll visit the Tombs of Francisco and Jacinta as well as other sites related to the miraculous appearances of Mary to the children. According to Lúcia's account, Mary exhorted the children to say the Rosary every day and reiterated many times that devotion to the Rosary was the key to personal and world peace. We will have time in Fatima for our own devotions and prayers at the Hungarian Stations of the Cross, consisting of fourteen small chapels along walkways leading to a marble monument of Christ on the cross. The shrine of Fatima has played an important role in recent times. On May 13, 1967, Pope Paul VI prayed at the shrine with Sister Lucia, and Pope John Paul II credited Our Lady of Fátima with saving his life during the assassination attempt in 1981. He came to Fatima as a pilgrim on May 12, 1987, to express his gratitude, and the following day, he officially consecrated the human race to the Immaculate Heart of the



Virgin, as Pius XII had done before him. We will have much to prayerfully consider as we enjoy dinner and our last overnight in Fatima.

Day 4: Braga

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity (Corinthians 13: 13).

After enjoying breakfast, we journey north through Portugal and visit Braga, an ancient city that played an important role in the Christianization of the Iberian Peninsula. We'll visit *Bom Jesus do Monte*, a sanctuary and important site of pilgrimage whose name means "Good Jesus of the Mount." The work on the first chapels, stairways and church proceeded through the 18th century and its Baroque nature is emphasized by the zigzag form of its stairways. As pilgrims climb the stairs, it is said they encounter a theological program that contrasts the senses of the material world with the three theological virtues: Faith, Hope and Charity, culminating with the scenes of the Passion of Christ and the temple of God, the church on the top of the hill. The presence of several fountains along the stairway suggests the purification of the faithful. We'll also visit one of the most important buildings in all of Portugal, the Braga Cathedral. Toward evening, we'll make our way to Santiago where we'll enjoy dinner and an overnight stay.

Day 5: Santiago di Compostela

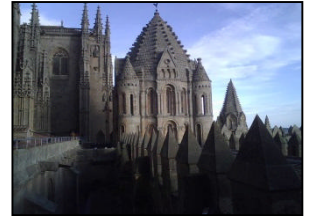
Live as if you had to die tonight, work as if you had to remain forever in this world (Archbishop Bartolomé de Raxoi whose bust and motto can be found at the Paxo de Raxoi near the Cathedral of Santiago).

Today we join the 1000-year old pilgrimage down the narrow streets of the city to the shrine of St. James in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela known in English as the Way of St. James and in Spanish as the *Camino de Santiago*. The cathedral, built on the spot where the remains of the Apostle James were said to have been found, borders the main plaza of the old and well-preserved city. We will have much to ponder as we admire the beauty of the sculptures and architecture, and pay tribute to his mortal remain before visiting the cloister museum. The remainder of the day is ours to visit the city. We might explore sites near the cathedral including the Praza do Obradoiro, the expansive square named after the workshops set up during the construction of the cathedral in the 11th century, the Colexio de San Xerome, witness to Santiago's status as a seat of learning since the late middle ages, and the Paxo de Raxoi – an elegant neoclassical palace and former seminary which today houses the regional government of Galicia. On the north side of the square is the Hostal de los Reyes Católicos, a Renaissance building commissioned by Isabella and Ferdinand in 1499 as a pilgrims' sanctuary. Tonight we'll enjoy dinner and an overnight stay in this beautiful place of pilgrimage.

Day 6: Burgos

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints (Psalms 116:15).

After breakfast, we'll travel to northern Spain, home to the magnificent Gothic Cathedral at Burgos, whose construction spanned from the 13th century to the 15th century. It is best known for its vast size, interesting architecture, and unique history. For example, the floor plan of the cathedral is difficult to make out due to its fifteen chapels which were added at all angles to the aisles and transepts. We'll also notice that many of the altars, chapels and monuments within the cathedral are of great artistic beauty and interest. After a full day, we'll enjoy dinner and an overnight in Burgos.



Day 7: Burgos - Lourdes

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only (James 1:22).

What a wonderful way to start the day—Mass at the magnificent Burgos Cathedral. We will also see another of the most celebrated cathedrals in Europe, the Santa Maria Cathedral, which was begun in 1221 and was built in many kinds of styles, predominantly flamboyant Gothic. The Santa Maria Cathedral took 300 years to complete, and it houses many interesting treasures, like its rich tapestries (including a well-known Goblin), and an old chest linked to the legend of El Cid. In fact, the remains of El Cid himself, together with those of his wife, Doña Ximena, lie under Santa Maria's octagonal lantern-like dome. From Burgos, we travel to Lourdes, the birthplace of St. Bernadette, where Our Lady appeared in 1858. Tonight, we'll dine in Lourdes as well as enjoy an overnight there.

Day 8: Lourdes

I am the Immaculate Conception (Que soi era immaculada concepcion) (Mary to Bernadette).

When Bernadette Soubirous was 14-years of age and out gathering firewood with her sister and a friend at the grotto of Massabielle outside Lourdes, she had an experience that completely changed her life and the town of Lourdes where she had lived. It was on this day in 1858 that Bernadette claimed she had the first of 18 visions of what she termed "a small young lady" (*ua petita damisela*) standing in a niche in the rock. The contents of Bernadette's reported visions were simple and mostly focused on the need for prayer and penance. We begin this morning with Mass after which we will walk in the footsteps of Bernadette as we visit the Grotto of Massabielle, the site of St. Bernadette's visions of the Virgin Mary. The Blessed Virgin is said to have pointed out a previously undiscovered spring in the grotto and instructed Bernadette to drink from it. The spring water from the grotto is believed to possess healing properties. We continue to the home in which St. Bernadette and her family lived at the time the girl saw visions of the Virgin Mary, the parish church, and other holy shrines and sites related to these miraculous visions. We are welcome to participate in the Procession of the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessing of the Sick (depending on seasonal schedules) in the late afternoon, and will return to the Sanctuary for the Rosary and Torchlight Procession (beginning at about 8:30 p.m. depending on seasonal schedules) after dinner. Tonight we return to our hotel for a second night's stay in Lourdes.

Day 9: Lourdes

For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, The just shall live by faith (Romans 1:17).

After breakfast and daily Mass at the Chapel Lourdes, we will spend our last day in Lourdes at our leisure and free to tour on our own. What a perfect time and place to reflect on all that we have seen and felt. Our last evening in this beautiful and sacred place will be particularly significant as we participate in a farewell dinner and the candlelight procession before returning to the hotel for our last overnight stay.

Day 10: Return to the U.S.

We will let the power of the holy shrines, priceless relics, and spiritual marvels of Spain and Portugal settle over us, then like other pilgrims of other times, go back to our lives with renewed faith.

This morning we depart from Lourdes for Toulouse and our return flight to the U.S.

