



Trekking the Planet

Discovering the Cultural and Natural Significance of the World



Where are we now?

- Darren and Sandy are in Barcelona, Spain, located at 41° N and 2° E.
- We have traveled approximately 46,897 miles (75,473 kilometers) from our starting point in California.



People and Culture

- Spain became part of the Roman Empire in 206 B.C. For over 300 years most of Spain was under Muslim rule. The last Muslim stronghold, Grenada, was captured in 1492 and Roman Catholicism became the official religion.
- During the 16th century Spain became a leader in discovery and colonization, with explorers such as Hernan Cortes and Francisco Pizarro and Pedro de Mendoza, establishing colonies in Mexico, Peru and Argentina, respectively.
- The population in Spain is about 46 million, making it one of Europe's least densely populated countries. The capital is Madrid, which is located in the exact center of the country.
- Spanish is the official language of Spain. There are differences in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary between the Spanish of Spain and the Spanish of Latin America, similar to the contrast between American and British English.
- Spain has a rich literary history, ranging from the novel *Don Quixote*, written by Miguel de Cervantes in the 17th century, to *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (about the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s), authored by Ernest Hemingway.
- Barcelona hosted the Summer Olympics in 1992. Spain has won recent world championships in soccer and basketball.



Madrid (source: EpicAdventurer.com)

Flamenco

The term *Flamenco* can refer to a energetic dance (baile) or a type of guitar playing (toque). This genre was first mentioned in the late 18th century and grew from the Andalusia region of Spain.

Click the first picture below to watch flamenco guitar playing by Andres Segovia, one of the most influential classical guitarists of the 20th century. To see a flamenco dance, click the second picture.



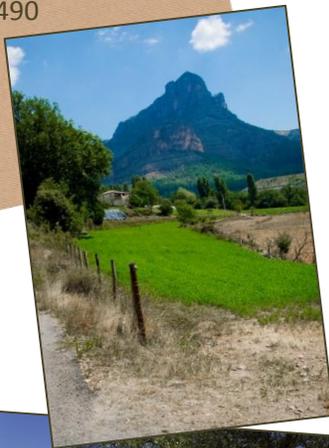
source: Wikipedia.org



Source:
6thgradegps.wikispaces.com

The Pyrenees Mountains

The Pyrenees Mountains form the border between France and Spain and separates the Iberian Peninsula from the rest of continental Europe. The Pyrenees Mountains are about 300 miles (490 kilometers) long.



Source:
Flickr.com/jjay69



Doñana National Park
 (source: Flickr.com/bigbear3001)

Nature and Environment

- Spain is twice the size of the U.S. state of Oregon and five times larger than the U.K. It is located on the Iberian Peninsula, occupying 85% of the area, with Portugal sharing the rest. At its closest point, Africa is located less than 10 miles (16 kilometers) south of Spain at the Strait of Gibraltar.
- Two sets of islands are territories of Spain. Off of Spain's east coast in the Mediterranean Sea are the Balearic Islands, the largest of which is Majorca. Sixty miles (97 kilometers) west of Africa are the Canary Islands.
- Spain's climate is dry in the south and rainy in the north. The Cantabrian Mountains act as a divide between these two zones. There is over 5,000 miles (8,000 kilometers) of coastline along the Mediterranean Sea.
- There are 14 national parks in Spain, protecting mountains, wetlands, beaches, forests, volcanoes and lakes. Doñana National Park on Spain's southwest coast contains three different ecosystems (swamps, moving dunes and stabilized sands) and is a UNESCO biosphere reserve and UNESCO World Heritage Site because of its biodiversity.

Our Plans

- We are back in Europe after being away for two months! Our ship left from Italy and is making its way through the Mediterranean Sea. Our time in Spain will consist of a visit to Barcelona.
- After stops in Gibraltar and Morocco, we will head out to the Atlantic Ocean and cross to the United States before heading on to South America.
- As we continue westward, be sure and send us your questions and comments so that we can include them in future updates.

More Information

- http://www.spain.info/en/reportajes/parques_nacionales_de_espana_ver_para_creer.html
- <http://www.mapsofworld.com/spain/climate-in-spain.html>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pablo_Picasso
- <http://www.eyeonspain.com/spain-magazine/fun-facts.aspx>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvador_Dali
- <http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/parks/donana-spain>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyrenees>
- <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/interesting-facts-about-spain.html>

Dali and Picasso

Two of the 20th century's most famous artists were born in Spain. Pablo Picasso was a painter and sculptor who was the co-founder of the Cubist movement, the invention of constructed sculpture. Salvador Dali was a surrealist painter who painted striking images.



The Persistence of Memory (1931) by Salvador Dali (source: Wikipedia.org)

Our Partners



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