



PRIVATELY
CHARTERED

NORTHERN SPAIN AND THE DOURO VALLEY

ABOARD EL TRANSCANTABRICO GRAN LUJO AND SPIRIT OF CHARTWELL

Spain | Portugal
22 May – 14 June 2017 (24 Days)

FROM THE VINEYARD TO THE CITY

Carrying the sweet grapes of a proud city's namesake from the abundant hills of the Douro Valley to the eager lips of the world, the life source of the Iberian Peninsula flows deep and free. Fishing boats bob on the tide as they have for centuries, framing a scene of bygone days in a place where nostalgia is celebrated and never forgotten.

DEPART AUSTRALIA

Day 1: Monday 22 May

Boarding our evening Emirates flight to Europe, we're looking forward to skirting the periphery of northern Spain and Portugal.

ARRIVE BARCELONA (SPAIN)

Day 2: Tuesday 23 May

Located just off Las Ramblas, hotel El Palace is the perfect base for discovering Barcelona. An afternoon at leisure precedes dinner at the hotel.

BARCELONA

Day 3: Wednesday 24 May

Bring the Spanish spirit to life touring the Gothic Quarter, including the ever evolving Sagrada Familia. The fragrance of saffron infused paella will lead you to the beach for a tantalising seaside meal. Then, explore Gaudi's beguiling candy cane creations at Park Guell until sunset dapples the city in muted evening pastels. Tonight's Welcome Dinner in a special location is sure to impress.

BARCELONA

Day 4: Thursday 25 May

Follow the sea breeze further afield today.

▶ Perhaps your palate will guide you on a gourmet inspired tour of local Catalan cuisine, learning the secrets of local artisan food and wine? Or maybe you will strike out further to admire the mountain monastery of Montserrat, with its iconic basilica. We reconvene for a dine-around this evening.

BARCELONA – SAN SEBASTIAN

Day 5: Friday 26 May

After a morning at leisure and a traditional tapas lunch, we're ready to open our hearts to San Sebastian aboard an afternoon flight.

Ever a highlight, this diminutively sized town is a proud purveyor of fiercely unique Basque culture. The air is flavoured with salt, the taste of sangria lingers on your lips and bars laden with Pintxos and Basque beer beckon.

The Hotel Londres is a personification of elegance and timeless beauty. An inhouse dinner with sea views sets the scene.



VILLASANA DE MENA JOIN EL TRANSCANTABRICO GRAN LUJO

Day 6: Saturday 27 May

Transferring to Bilbao, we meet the esteemed El Transcantabrico Gran Lujo. Spain's oldest vintage train is a hotel on wheels steeped in old world glamour, exclusively chartered for Captain's Choice guests.

Settling into our elegant private cabins in their beautiful saloon cars, this is the last time we will have to unpack for seven nights.

Soon the cityscape of Bilbao fades into rural pastoral scenes on the tracks to Villasana de Mena. Don't expect any of the locals to speak English here. This evening the train remains stationary as it will every evening so you can enjoy an uninterrupted sleep, dreaming of the journey to come.



Opposite: Capture the essence of the Douro River

Fall in love with the sundrenched beauty of San Sebastian



Take in the impressive panorama over the Bay of Santander

BILBAO – SANTANDER

Day 7: Sunday 28 May

A whistle stop to Bilbao's Guggenheim museum precedes a passage to Santander, capital of Cantabria. With its striking city beaches, this coastal gem sparkles on our afternoon city tour.

► Feeling lucky? As we're overnighing in Santander, perhaps you'll join us for a flutter in the city casino after dinner on board?



Chase Spain's coast on El Transcantabrico Gran Lujo

POTES – CABEZON DE LA SAL

Day 8: Monday 29 May

Doesn't it feel like we are exploring a side of Spain that others miss? Chasing the rural idyll, the morning takes us on an excursion through the gorge of La Hermida until we reach the impressive Shrine of Santo Toribio de Liebana. Our train continues to later Potes, but with dinner and local entertainment on board, we're happy to leave exploration until tomorrow.

SANTILLANA DEL MAR – ARRIONDAS

Day 9: Tuesday 30 May

We press on this morning to Santillana del Mar, with its beautifully preserved medieval old town, and hope to watch seagulls chasing the fishing boats returning with their catch in the village of Ribadesella. We meet the train back in Arriondas where we settle in for the night after dinner.

OVIEDO – CANDAS

Day 10: Wednesday 31 May

Nestled among the Picos de Europa Mountains, we'll visit Lake Enol and the Sanctuary of Covadonga. Reaching the elegant capital of Asturias, said to have been settled by two monks in 761, we find it beautifully preserved in its original state. Our train continues on to Candas over dinner.

AVILES – LUARCA

Day 11: Thursday 1 June

The train snakes along the coast, stopping off in Aviles on our way to Gijon. We're now over 800 kilometres from Barcelona and feeling a different side to Spain. Dubbed 'the white town of the green coast', fishing village Luarca has a simple beauty – bobbing boats, white bluffs and plunging cliffs pose the perfect backdrop for a memorable dinner on board.

RIBADEO – VIVEIRO

Day 12: Friday 2 June

Resplendent in early summer, western Asturias melts into the Galician countryside as we make our way to Ribadeo. Wriggle our toes through the wet sand of Las Catedrales Beach, with its impressive natural archways carved by the relentless seas of the Bay of Biscay. No doubt the sea air has worked up your appetite. Lunch awaits in Ribadeo before we're back aboard the El Transcantabrico Gran Lujo heading to the city walls of historic Viveiro, where we call it a night.

VIVIERO – PORTO JOIN SPIRIT OF CHARTWELL

Day 13: Saturday 3 June

As we cross country from Viviero to Ferrol, we prepare to disembark El Transcantabrico Gran Lujo, waving goodbye to staff who have become our close friends.

Just three hours' drive takes us across the border into Portugal this morning. At Ribeira waterfront, the Spirit of Chartwell awaits. Exclusively chartered for our guests, it's enlightening to consider that this is the barge the Queen of England travelled upon for her Diamond Jubilee.

Opposite: Visit the verdant port wine vineyards of the Douro Valley





Another perfect day shines over the terracotta rooftops of Lisbon

PORTO – REGUA

Day 14: Sunday 4 June

From the railways of Spain to one of Portugal's most famous rivers, our journey takes us to lunch at the 14th century Alpendurada Monastery. We explore the Douro Museum before we're back aboard, meandering past port wine vineyards stacked up over the hills.

We are treated to a live Portuguese Fado singing performance on board as the sun dips into night over their haunting melody. Docking in Regua, the celebrations will be enlivened with a traditional folk music show.

REGUA – PINHAO

Day 15: Monday 5 June

The ornate Mateus Palace is a sight to behold on our excursion ashore to Vila Real. We're back on board for lunch to learn more about Portuguese gastronomy.

We dock in Pinhao for dinner at Morgadio da Calçada, a house set in a famous enotourism region, followed by a port wine tasting.

PINHAO – BARCA D'ALBA

Day 16: Tuesday 6 June

Figueira de Castelo Rodrigo is a cosy mountain town boasting a proud castle, medieval streets and an ancient city wall.

Back on board, strolling through the Spirit of Chartwell, it's no stretch to imagine the Queen of England sashaying through in all her finery. In line with the regal theme, we look forward to the Captain's Dinner tonight as we dock in Barca d'Alba.

SALAMANCA

Day 17: Wednesday 7 June

Crossing back into Spain momentarily today, our tour to Salamanca embraces the rhythm of Espana with a rousing matinee Flamenco performance amid the Renaissance architecture of Castilla's most famous city.

Back on board our ship we cross the border, ending a perfect day with a sunset cruise and traditional Portuguese barbecue.

ENTRE OS RIOS

Day 18: Thursday 8 June

We enjoy our last day on the river today, kicking back to admire the view as our regal vessel meanders through the tranquil waters of one of Portugal's most picturesque wine regions. Perhaps you'll enjoy another lecture about Portuguese culture, or make your own entertainment with a book.

As one last sunset burns over the horizon we make our way to Entre os Rios and settle in for one last night on board.

PORTO

DISEMBARK SPIRIT OF CHARTWELL

Day 19: Friday 9 June

Pousada do Freixo Palace is the jewel in Porto's crown. Admire gilt edged Renaissance style paintings before a walking tour of Porto. Baroque churches and terracotta rooftops bank the Douro. An afternoon stroll concludes with dinner at the hotel.

PORTO

Day 20: Saturday 10 June

Ready to paint a portrait in people and provinces beyond the beaten track, we sail to Guimaraes, the country's former capital. At Braga, we admire the view from the Bom Jesus do Monte sanctuary before returning to the hotel.

LISBON

Day 21: Sunday 11 June

Arriving in the capital, we meet Lisbon, where sunshine yellow trams clatter winding lanes. We are staying at the Pestana Palace, a national monument whose ornate ambience speaks volumes for the impeccable service we are to expect.

► Tasting a world of choice, we have worked up an appetite to enjoy tonight's dine-around dinner.

LISBON

Day 22: Monday 12 June

Where will your last day in Portugal take you?

► Admire Pena National Palace and Sintra National Palace, straight out of a fairytale. Or follow the devout path to encounter the Shrine of the Virgin Mary in Fatima.

An easy walking tour of Lisbon takes us for some early evening wine tasting before an impressive farewell dinner at the hotel.

DEPART LISBON

Day 23: Tuesday 13 June

Enriched with the culture of Iberia, it's time to say 'adeus' one last time as we make our way to the airport after breakfast.

ARRIVE AUSTRALIA

Day 24: Wednesday 14 June

After the royal treatment we have received, it's almost surprising there's not a red carpet waiting for us on our arrival back to Australia.



ABOARD EL TRASCANTABRICO GRAN LUJO

Combining the elegance of the 1920s with the sophisticated luxury of modern times, the El Trascantabrico Gran Lujo will take you through the landscapes of northern Spain in unparalleled style.

For more information on the train and suites please refer to page 72.



ABOARD SPIRIT OF CHARTWELL

Centrepiece of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee pageant on the River Thames in 2012, the Spirit of Chartwell exudes grace as it takes its esteemed guests over the waters of Portugal's Douro River.

For more information on the ship and suites please refer to page 73.

TOUR COST

Based on per person, twin share in a Deluxe Suite aboard El Trascantabrico Gran Lujo and a Stateroom aboard Spirit of Chartwell – from Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane flying with Emirates. Prices from other cities are available on request.

Economy Class	\$25,880
Business Class	\$32,710
First Class	\$36,700

All regional flights are in Economy Class

Cruise & Land Only

(Join in Barcelona for dinner on Day 2 and depart Lisbon after breakfast on Day 23)..... \$23,570

Supplements (add to base tour cost, per person, twin share)

Royal Suite (Spirit of Chartwell) \$1,580

Single Suite Supplement including hotels (add to base tour cost) \$11,320

El Transcantabrico Gran Lujo

During our adventure through Northern Spain and The Douro Valley (pages 24–29), explore a side of Spain that others miss on El Transcantabrico Gran Lujo. There's simply no train in Spain better equipped or more luxurious. Built in 2011 with just 14 cabins, your comfort was the first and last thought in design. There are no bunk beds – simply your choice of double or twin configuration. Train travel is during the day to ensure a comfortable night's rest – it also means you don't miss the changing landscapes along the way. Breakfast is served aboard each morning whilst most lunches and dinners are taken in fine local restaurants, giving you a taste of the local flavours. Wine, beer and soft drinks are included with lunch and dinner when travelling on the train.



Deluxe Suite

Features a living room, bedroom with a double bed or twin beds, and an ensuite bathroom. The living room has a sofa which can be turned into a bed. Each suite is equipped with a luggage rack, desk, safe and minibar, as well as state-of-the-art comforts such as LED screens, in-room music tuner, climate

control, computer with free Internet access and a telephone. Deluxe Suites also have a spacious ensuite bathroom, with hydro massage shower/steam sauna, hairdryer and a varied set of toiletries.



Spirit of Chartwell

Another feature of Northern Spain and The Douro Valley (pages 24–29) is your time aboard the Spirit of Chartwell. For while many may claim to treat you like royalty there are very few that Her Majesty The Queen has sailed on herself. The centrepiece of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee river pageant becomes your home on the Douro River for six nights. The Spirit of Chartwell combines old world club elegance with modern comforts. Intimate staterooms (twin bed configuration; double bed available in Royal Suite only) are finished in rich cream and mahogany decor with a private ensuite. Excellent cuisine is served in the panoramic dining room and the adjacent piano bar is a wonderful place for an aperitif or a nightcap.



Stateroom

These outward facing cabins are located on the main deck and come complete with twin beds, climate control, a satellite television, safe, double wardrobe, desk and a large ensuite.



Royal Suite

The ship’s indulgent Royal Suite is positioned at the front of the ship on the Saloon Deck. In addition to the extra space and views, it presents a comfortable sitting area.

Legend

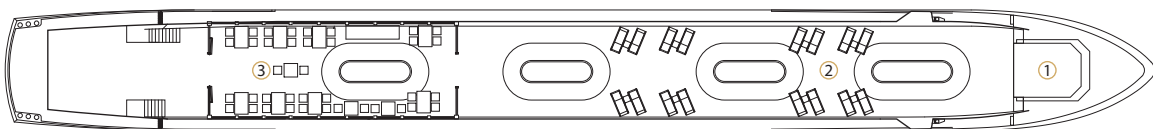
- Stateroom
- Royal Suite

Deck Plan

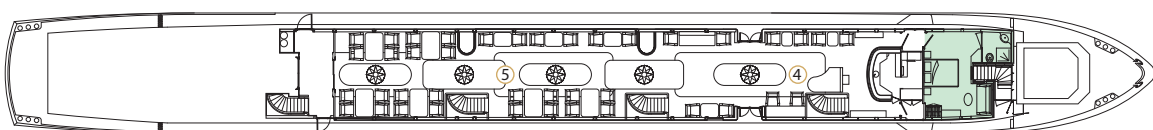
- 1 Wheelhouse
- 2 Sun Deck
- 3 Charles Dickens Solarium
- 4 Somerset Maugham Piano Bar
- 5 George Bradshaw Restaurant



Sundeck



Saloon Deck



Staterooms Deck

