Beth Levine - Spain Heritage & Discovery Tour

Travel dates: Depart USA Nov 08, 2026 / Return to the USA Nov 20, 2026

Day by Day Itinerary:

DAY 1, Sunday Nov 08: USA / Madrid

Depart your home city for an overnight flight to Madrid, Spain's vibrant capital and historic gateway to Sefarad.

DAY 2, Monday Nov 09: Arrive Madrid (Introduction to the Capital of Spain)

Welcome to Madrid, a grand European capital known for its elegant boulevards, monumental architecture, Royal Palace, and world-renowned museums. Madrid is home to modern Jewish community institutions and cultural organizations dedicated to preserving the legacy of Spain's Sephardic past.

Upon arrival at Madrid-Barajas Airport, you will be greeted by our local representative and transferred to your centrally located hotel. After time to refresh, we begin our exploration with an introduction to the historic heart of the city, walking through the stately Plaza Mayor and Puerta del Sol, two

squares that have witnessed the evolution of Madrid from medieval town to royal capital. As we stroll through the elegant thoroughfares of Gran Vía and Plaza España, your guide will provide an overview of Madrid's layered past, including the traces of Jewish history that survive in documents, museum collections, and urban placenames.
Overnight and dinner at the Catalonia las Cortes Hotel – Madrid. (D)

DAY 3, Tuesday Nov 10: Madrid – Sephardic Presence & Cultural Treasures

Today we delve deeper into Madrid's connection to Sephardic memory. We begin with a guided visit to a Sephardic cultural institution such as Centro Sefarad–Israel, dedicated to the heritage and contemporary life of Jewish communities of Spanish origin. Through exhibits, archives, and educational initiatives, the center helps illuminate the history, expulsion, and remarkable global legacy of Iberian Jewry.

We continue with a walking tour through Old Madrid, tracing areas historically connected to Jewish life and the city's medieval layout. The tour provides important context about how Madrid's Jewish population lived prior to the 1492 expulsion, and how the city's identity has been shaped by its multicultural layers.

Later, we visit the Royal Palace, one of Europe's largest functioning palaces, showcasing centuries of Spanish monarchy and art. The afternoon concludes at the famed Prado Museum, home to masterpieces by Velázquez, Goya, El Greco, and other giants of European art.
Overnight at the NH Collection Madrid Paseo del Prado Hotel – Madrid. (B)

DAY 4, Wednesday Nov 11: Madrid – Toledo – Córdoba

This morning we depart Madrid for Toledo, often called the "Jerusalem of the West," a hilltop city celebrated for its deep Jewish, Christian, and Muslim heritage. Toledo's Jewish

presence dates back to ancient times and flourished during the Middle Ages, producing scholars, poets, and statesmen who shaped the Golden Age of Sepharad.

Upon arrival, we visit the El Tránsito Synagogue and the Sephardic Museum, where beautifully preserved architecture and museum exhibits testify to the richness of Toledo's Jewish community. Nearby stands Santa María la Blanca, a striking synagogue building constructed in a Mudéjar style and considered one of the oldest surviving synagogue structures in Spain. We stroll through the atmospheric Judería, winding through narrow lanes lined with whitewashed houses, artisans' shops, and historic courtyards.

After lunch, we continue south to Córdoba, once the intellectual and spiritual heart of Jewish life in Al-Andalus. Evening at leisure to enjoy the city's historic streets and riverside views.
Overnight at the Las Casas de la Judería Hotel Córdoba. (B)

DAY 5, Thursday Nov 12: Córdoba – Lucena – Seville

This morning we explore Córdoba, a city that has long symbolized coexistence and cultural brilliance. We begin at the majestic Mezquita–Catedral, a monumental masterpiece reflecting centuries of Islamic and Christian architectural achievement. Nearby stands the small yet evocative Córdoba Synagogue, one of only three original medieval synagogues remaining in Spain. We also visit Casa de Sefarad or a similar Sephardic cultural center, offering a deeper understanding of Jewish life, music, and traditions in medieval Córdoba. Our walk through the Judería recalls the world of Maimonides, whose statue stands quietly in a nearby plaza.

We then depart for Lucena, located south of Córdoba, historically known as *Eliossana* or "The City of the Jews." During the Middle Ages, Lucena was one of the few Iberian cities governed largely by its Jewish inhabitants and became an outstanding center of Talmudic scholarship. Upon arrival, we visit the Jewish Cemetery, discovered in 2006 and now preserved as an archaeological site, where hundreds of medieval graves and inscriptions testify to the vitality of the community that once thrived here. We continue to the local Jewish Heritage Center and walk through the area believed to have been the medieval Judería. These visits offer an emotional and intellectual connection to one of Andalusia's most important Sephardic communities.

After our time in Lucena, we continue westward toward Seville, capital of Andalusia and one of Spain's most captivating cities.
Overnight at the H10 Casa de la Plata Hotel in Seville. (B)

DAY 6, Friday Nov 13: Seville (Jewish Quarter & Cultural Life)

Today we explore Seville, a city famous for its orange-lined streets, graceful plazas, and centuries-old blend of Moorish and Spanish culture. Seville's Jewish community flourished until the late Middle Ages, and its two main Juderías — Santa Cruz and San Bartolomé — preserve the atmosphere of winding lanes, secluded courtyards, and historic houses that still echo with the memory of Sephardic life.

We walk through these districts, learning about the Jewish community that once lived here and the profound transitions brought by the 1391 massacres and later Inquisition. Along the way, we enjoy architectural highlights and charming alleyways that reveal the romance and complexity of Seville's past.

In the afternoon, those who wish may join an optional visit to the Royal Alcázar, a masterpiece of Mudéjar palatial architecture and one of Spain's most enchanting sites.

Tonight we enjoy an evening Flamenco performance — a powerful and soulful art form that expresses the heart of Andalusian culture.
Overnight at the H10 Casa de la Plata Hotel in Seville. (B)

DAY 7, Saturday Nov 14: Seville (Jerez de la Frontera – Sherry Wine Tasting)

Today we travel to Jerez de la Frontera, the historic Andalusian city renowned as the birthplace of sherry wine. Upon arrival, enjoy an introduction to the city and its rich cultural heritage.

Visit a traditional sherry bodega to learn about the unique Solera aging process and the centuries-old traditions behind this world-famous wine. The visit concludes with a guided tasting of several styles of sherry.

Enjoy free time in the historic center for lunch on your own and independent exploration before returning to our hotel later in the afternoon.
Overnight at the H10 Casa de la Plata Hotel in Seville. (B)

DAY 8, Sunday Nov 15: Seville – Arcos de la Frontera – Ronda – Granada

We depart Seville and journey into the famed "White Towns" of Andalusia. Our first stop is Arcos de la Frontera, dramatically perched on a cliff with labyrinthine lanes, whitewashed houses, and sweeping views. We then continue to Ronda, one of Spain's most breathtaking towns, divided by the deep El Tajo gorge and home to historic sites that reflect its Roman, Moorish, and medieval past.

Following our visits, we make our way east to Granada, the last capital of Muslim Spain and a city whose history shaped the final chapter of Sepharad before the 1492 expulsion. Evening arrival with time to relax at our hotel.
Overnight at the Barceló Carmen in Granada. (B)

DAY 9, Monday Nov 16: Granada (Jewish Quarter, Alhambra & Generalife)

This morning we explore the Realejo, Granada's historic Jewish quarter, where centuries ago a thriving community lived, studied, and contributed to the cultural brilliance of the Nasrid kingdom. Though few physical structures remain, the neighborhood's layout and surviving landmarks allow us to imagine the life of Granada's Jewish population before the expulsion.

Later we visit the magnificent Alhambra Palace and the lush Generalife Gardens, architectural treasures that stand as the crowning achievements of Islamic Spain. The intricate palaces, delicate arches, and water-filled courtyards reflect the sophisticated world in which Jewish, Muslim, and Christian scholars once interacted.

We conclude at the Palacio de los Olvidados ("Palace of the Forgotten"), a museum dedicated to Jewish life and the Inquisition, offering further insight into the complex history of Sepharad. Evening at leisure.
Overnight at the Barceló Carmen in Granada. (B)

DAY 10, Tuesday Nov 17: Granada – Cáceres

In the morning we depart Granada and travel northwest to Cáceres, a city whose extraordinary medieval quarter has earned UNESCO World Heritage status. Upon arrival, we explore its maze-like streets, medieval towers, and stone mansions, discovering spots historically connected with the city's once-vibrant Jewish community. Cáceres offers a quiet, atmospheric environment perfect for appreciating the heritage of Old Castile.

Overnight at the Parador de Cáceres in Cáceres. (B)

DAY 11, Wednesday Nov 18: Cáceres – Hervás – Béjar – Madrid

Today's journey brings us into the heart of Spain's lesser known but profoundly meaningful Jewish heritage towns. We first visit Hervás, home to one of the best-preserved Juderías in Spain, where narrow streets, wooden balconies, and stone homes evoke a medieval Jewish community that persisted even after the expulsion.

We continue to Béjar, whose medieval Jewish quarter and castle walls preserve the memory of another important Sephardic center. Together, these small but evocative towns offer a glimpse into everyday Jewish life far from the major capitals.

Following our visits, we travel to Madrid, arriving in the late afternoon.
Overnight at the NH Collection Madrid Paseo del Prado Hotel – Madrid. (B)

DAY 12, Thursday Nov 19: Madrid (Free Day)

Today is yours to explore the city at your own pace. You may choose to visit the modern shopping districts, the lively San Miguel Market, or the serene Retiro Park. Optional museum visits — such as the Thyssen or Reina Sofía — can be arranged. Contemporary Sephardic lectures, cultural events, or concerts may also be available depending on schedule.

This evening a Farewell Dinner and overnight at the hotel.
Overnight at the NH Collection Madrid Paseo del Prado Hotel – Madrid. (B,D)

DAY 13, Friday Nov 20: Depart Madrid

Transfer to Madrid-Barajas Airport for your return flight home, carrying with you the profound memories and cultural insights of Jewish Spain.