

HOLY CROSS HIGH SCHOOL GOES TO PORTUGAL & SPAIN

13 days

Itinerary downloaded on: July 14, 2025

Day 1: *Departure from Saskatoon*
Day 2: *Arrive in Lisbon and transfer to Orem / Fatima Area*

Arrival in Lisbon and road transfer to the Fatima area. Time-permitting today, we visit Santarem, one of the oldest cities in the world (otherwise tomorrow). Walk through narrow streets to the Church of St. Stephen, containing the oldest recorded Eucharistic miracle, on continuous display since 1269 AD.

Overnight near Fatima.

Meal Plan: Dinner

Day 3: *Fatima - Nazare - Monastery of Saint Mary of Alcobaha - Braga*

Morning tour of Fatima; see the Basilica, the site of Francesco and Jacinta's graves, the Hamlet of Aljustrel, where the children lived, and Valinhos, the site of Our Lady's appearance. Continue short distance to seaside village of Nazare and break for lunch. Visit the Chapel of Our Lady of Nazare on a cliff overlooking the ocean. Continue to the Monastery of Saint Mary of Alcobaha, one of Portugal's most impressive religious monuments before heading north to Braga for overnight. Time-permitting stop in university town of Coimbra. Easter week evening procession and overnight.

Overnight in Braga.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 4: *Good Friday in Braga*

Today we tour Braga, not only the oldest city in the country but also Portugal's most religiously conservative. It's a great place to just wander at will and soak up the atmosphere. Afternoon free or possible excursion to Guimaraes, birthplace of Portuguese nation. Evening Good Friday processions and overnight in Braga.

Overnight in Braga.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 5: *Braga, Portugal - Tui, Spain - Hike La Ruta Portuguesa - Continue to Santiago de Compostela*

Travel by road across the border into Spain and the small town of Tui (58 km), where, after visiting the church of San Bartolomeu de Rebordans, we begin our breathtaking 16 km (4-hour) hike along La Ruta Portuguesa pilgrimage route to Santiago. This route was used by Queen Isabel of Portugal (1271-1336) to make at least one pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. From O Porrino continue by road to Santiago (109 km). Possible Santiago sightseeing on arrival and evening Easter festivities in Santiago and overnight.

Overnight in Santiago.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 6: *Easter Sunday in Santiago de Compostela*

We tour the highlights of Santiago and enjoy the colourful and exuberant Easter festivities, including the famous Mass. Time at leisure for independent exploration and to soak up the atmosphere.

Overnight in Santiago.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 7: *Santiago - Ponferrada - Leon*

Travel by road to Leon via Astorga, a walled town whose churches, convents and hospitals take travellers back to the purest tradition of the Pilgrim's Road. On arrival in Leon we'll have a comfortable bike tour on which you will get to know the "must see" places as well as spots further away from the typical touristic path. The Leon bike tour is ideal for everyone who wants to get to know the city in a short time but in a relaxed way. The tour covers the city in 3 hours with stops every few minutes for the guide to provide commentaries.

Overnight in Leon.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 8: *APR Leon - Picos de Europa*

Finish any outstanding Leon sightseeing, then drive into some of the most stunning scenery in all of Europe, the famed Picos de Europa. Straddling the Spanish regions of Asturias Cantabria and Leon, this mountain range is home to wild gorges, snow capped peaks, animals and many species of birds and flowers.

Overnight near Pico de Europa.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 9: *Picos de Europa*

The highlight today is the chance to walk on some of the continent's most beautiful mountain trails. There is something for everyone to do today. In the early morning will take a cable car up to the nearby peaks. From there we will have a full day to walk through this glorious scenery.

Overnight in Picos de Europa.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 10: *Picos de Europa - Caves of Altamira - Santander - San Sebastian*

Today we travel to San Sebastian via the Caves at Altamira, famous for its Upper Paleolithic cave paintings featuring drawings and polychrome rock paintings of wild animals. We stop at the seaside town of Santander before arriving in San Sebastian.

Overnight in San Sebastian.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 11: *San Sebastian - Bilbao*

Today we spend the day touring and soaking in the atmosphere of this charming and relaxed seaside town. San Sebastian boasts one of the best in-city beaches in Europe. It is quite unusual feeling that you can sunbathe and swim right next to major historical buildings and churches. The city is quite small and cozy, featuring many fish restaurants, several beaches, tons of pintxos (tapas) places and a choice of designer clothes shops. For a short easy hike visit the statue of Christ on top of the mountain between the beaches; it takes about an hour to walk up at a leisurely pace. Or just enjoy the beach -- you've earned it! Later today we travel the short distance to Bilbao for dinner and overnight.

Overnight in Bilbao.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 12: *Bilbao & the Guggenheim*

Morning visit to famous Guggenheim Museum. Explore the Old Town of Bilbao on a walking tour. We travel back in time to Medieval Bilbao with its cobbled streets, charming corners and squares, and trace its development through the centuries. Afternoon at leisure.

Overnight in Bilbao.

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 13: *Departure from Spain*

Departure from Bilbao. BUEN VIAJE!

Meal Plan: Breakfast and Dinner