

# SPANISH **Total Solar Eclipse** ADVENTURE

AUGUST 7-14, 2026



PRE-TOUR EXTENSION TO  
**Madrid**  
August 3-8, 2026





## JOIN HIGHLANDS BIOLOGICAL STATION ON A JOURNEY TO VIEW THE TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE ON AUGUST 12, 2026, IN SPAIN.

Every total solar eclipse is spectacular, but the view from Palma de Mallorca will be extra special. When the Moon's shadow races across Spain, the eclipsed Sun will be floating just a few degrees above the western horizon. The interplay of celestial geometry will create dramatic effects in the atmosphere that don't happen when totality is high overhead.

Our journey begins on August 7 with an overnight flight from the U.S. to the vibrant city of Barcelona, Spain. Upon arrival, we'll settle into the luxurious Le Méridien Barcelona Hotel and explore the heart of Barcelona's Gothic Quarter, its historic streets, and hidden gems. Our first evening will culminate in a delightful *tapas* welcome dinner.

Over the next two days, we'll immerse ourselves in Barcelona's rich culture and architectural wonders, from Antonio Gaudí's iconic masterpieces like Casa Batlló and La Pedrera to the awe-inspiring La Sagrada Família and the enchanting Parque Güell. On a special visit, we'll dine under the stars at the Fabra Observatory and observe the night skies of Barcelona through a large vintage telescope. Enjoy a free day to explore Barcelona's many treasures at your own pace.

On August 11, we fly to the idyllic island of Mallorca. The next day, we'll visit the charming village of Valldemossa, nestled in the breathtaking Tramuntana mountains. As evening falls, we'll set sail from Port de Sóller, ready to witness the awe-inspiring total solar eclipse from the deck of our cruise ship. Experience the magic of totality as the Sun sets, casting an otherworldly glow over the sea. The following day, enjoy leisure time in Palma de Mallorca.

Finally, on August 14, we'll return to the U.S., returning cherished memories of this once-in-a-lifetime adventure. Join us on this captivating journey and be part of an extraordinary celestial event! A pre-tour to Madrid, Toledo, and Segovia is offered for those wishing to extend their time in Spain.



Lighthouse of Cap de Formentor, Mallorca





## STUDY LEADER

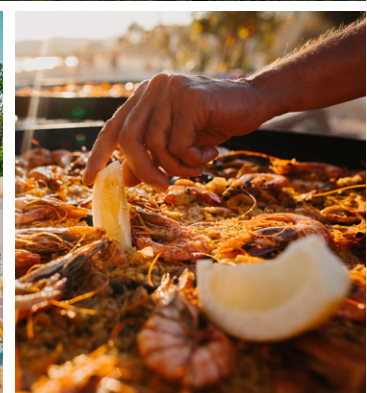
**Dr. James (Jim) Costa, Executive Director and Professor,  
Highlands Biological Station of Western Carolina University**

Your study leader is Dr. James (Jim) Costa, Executive Director and Professor at Western Carolina University's Highlands Biological Station. Jim is a field naturalist who teaches evolutionary biology, biogeography, and travel field courses in mainland Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands. With a special interest in the history of science, Jim has written extensively on the explorer-naturalists Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace, co-discoverers of evolution by natural selection. Recipient of the Wallace Medal and the Stephen Jay Gould Prize, his most recent books include *Radical by Nature: The Revolutionary Life of Alfred Russel Wallace* (Princeton, 2023), *Darwin and the Art of Botany* (with Bobbi Angell; Timber, 2023), and *The Descent of Man: An Annotated*

*Edition of Darwin's Classic Work* (with Elizabeth Yale; forthcoming from Princeton in 2026). Jim is a long-time Research Associate of Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology, and has served as study leader/lecturer for the Harvard Alumni Association Travel Program for many years.







## ITINERARY

### Friday, August 7: **U.S. / Barcelona**

Depart from your home city overnight to Barcelona, Spain. (MEALS ALOFT)

### Saturday, August 8: **Arrive in Barcelona**

We will arrive in Barcelona and transfer from the airport to our hotel. After check-in and some rest, we will gather for a walking tour of Barcelona's Gothic Quarter, exploring historic streets, squares, hidden corners, and century-old buildings. In the evening, we will enjoy a tapas welcome dinner. LE MÉRIDIEEN BARCELONA HOTEL (D)

### Sunday, August 9: **Barcelona**

After breakfast, we'll set off on a morning tour along the elegant Paseo de Gracia, where we'll marvel at the iconic works of the renowned architect Antonio Gaudí, including Casa Batlló and La Pedrera (Casa Milá). Following a delightful group lunch, we'll explore La Sagrada Familia, Barcelona's breathtaking cathedral, and the enchanting Park Güell, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We'll dine under the stars at the Fabra Observatory in Barcelona tonight. After dinner, we'll step into the observatory's grand dome, where the early 20th-century modernist hall and the historic 1904 meridian telescope—one of Europe's largest and oldest—await to reveal the wonders of the night sky. LE MÉRIDIEEN BARCELONA HOTEL (B, L, D)

Top left: Fabra Observatory Bottom left: Park Güell / Paella in Mallorca  
Right: Casa Milá (La Pedrera) / Cathedral of Santa Maria of Palma, Mallorca

### Monday, August 10: **Barcelona**

We will have a free day to explore Barcelona at our own pace. We can discover the many fascinating parts of this vibrant city on the Mediterranean coastline of Spain. Lunch and dinner will be on our own. LE MÉRIDIEEN BARCELONA HOTEL (B)

### Tuesday, August 11: **Barcelona / Palma de Mallorca**

After breakfast, we will fly to Mallorca, the largest island in the Balearic Islands, part of Spain. The island features an array of landscapes, from the rugged Serra de Tramuntana mountain range to the serene plains of Es Pla and the picturesque coves and beaches that dot the coastline. On arrival we'll tour Palma de Mallorca, including a visit to the Cathedral of Santa Maria of Palma (La Seu), renowned for its magnificent architecture and rose window, which includes a combination of Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque elements, making it a masterpiece of historical artistry. VICTORIA GRAN MELIÀ HOTEL (B, L)





Top left: **Total Solar Eclipse Phases** Bottom left: **Palma de Mallorca** Right: **Port de Sóller**

### Wednesday, August 12: **Palma de Mallorca / Valldemossa / Port de Sóller (eclipse day)**

This morning we'll depart for Valldemossa, a village steeped in old-world charm, nestled in an idyllic valley amid the Tramuntana mountains. Its ancient blonde stone houses contrast vividly with the surrounding green forests of olive, oak, and almond trees, and the blue sky above. In the early evening, we'll embark on the cruise from the Port de Sóller. Aboard our vessel just before sunset, we'll experience the total solar eclipse. Totality lasts 94 seconds, centered on 8:31:32 p.m. with the Sun 2.5° high.

Sunset (8:50 p.m.) occurs with a partial eclipse still in progress. We will partake in a celebratory eclipse group dinner thereafter. VICTORIA GRAN MELIÁ HOTEL (B, L, D)

### Thursday, August 13: **Palma de Mallorca**

Enjoy a free day to explore Palma Mallorca on your own. Later, gather for a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. VICTORIA GRAN MELIÁ HOTEL (B, D)

### Friday, August 14: **Palma de Mallorca / U.S.**

After breakfast, we will transfer to Palma de Mallorca airport for connecting flights home to the U.S. (B)



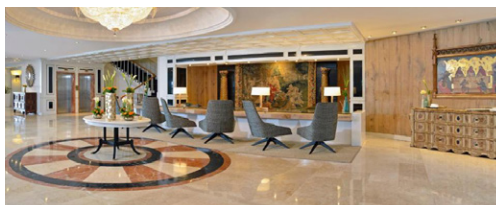
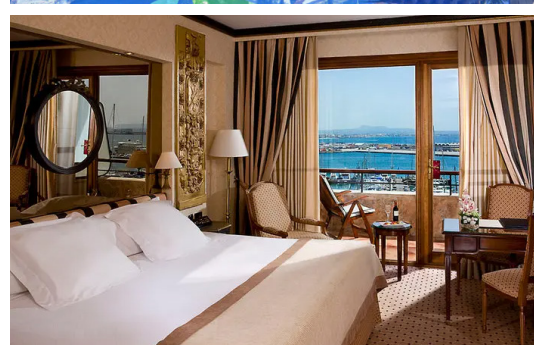
## PRE-TOUR EXTENSION

### August 3–8: **Madrid, Toledo, Ávila, Segovia**

Experience the best of Madrid and its surrounding cities of Toledo and Segovia with our Pre-Tour extension. Your journey begins with an arrival transfer in Madrid, followed by a half-day tour that includes the city's iconic landmarks such as Puerta del Sol, Plaza Mayor, and the Royal Palace. Step back in time with a full-day excursion to enchanting Toledo, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Next, we tour Ávila, a city known for its medieval walls, cobblestone streets, churches, and cuisine. We'll also explore Segovia, famed for its Roman aqueduct and fairy-tale Alcázar. At the end of our pre-tour, we will take a high-speed train to Barcelona to begin the main tour.

Our base for exploration in Madrid will be the five-star Wellington Hotel Madrid (4 nights), an emblem of luxury and elegance. Located in the upscale Salamanca district, our hotel combines classic charm with stately architecture and opulent interiors, offering easy access to the Retiro Park and Prado Museum. The extension price includes all breakfasts, 2 lunches, and 1 dinner, group transfers, portage, local guides, entrance fees, tips to local guides, hotel staff, waiters, servers, and drivers, and a high-speed train ticket from Madrid to Barcelona. The extension price is based upon a minimum of 10 participants.





Top left, top center, and middle:  
**Le Méridien Barcelona Hotel**  
Top right, bottom right, and bottom left:  
**Victoria Gran Meliá Hotel**

## ACCOMMODATIONS

### LE MÉRIDIEN BARCELONA HOTEL (3 NIGHTS)

Le Méridien Barcelona is a sophisticated five-star hotel situated on the iconic Las Ramblas, offering guests a blend of contemporary elegance and cultural immersion in the heart of the city. The hotel features artfully designed rooms and suites, many with panoramic views, private terraces, and curated artwork that reflect Barcelona's vibrant spirit. Guests can indulge in Mediterranean cuisine at CentOnze, enjoy cocktails at the Signature Cocktail Bar, or relax at the Explore Spa Studio with city views. With its prime location, luxurious accommodations, and commitment to sustainability, Le Méridien Barcelona offers an unforgettable experience for those seeking to explore the city's rich culture and history.

### VICTORIA GRAN MELIÁ HOTEL (3 NIGHTS)

The Victoria Gran Meliá Hotel in Mallorca is a luxurious five-star establishment that offers an exquisite blend of classic elegance and modern comfort. Located in the vibrant heart of Palma, this iconic hotel boasts breathtaking views of the Bay of Palma and the Cathedral. Its elegantly appointed rooms and suites are designed with a sophisticated touch, featuring contemporary amenities and stylish décor. The hotel's facilities include a sumptuous spa, a well-equipped fitness center, and various dining options that cater to gourmet tastes, from traditional Mediterranean cuisine to innovative international dishes. Whether you're lounging by the pool, enjoying a cocktail at the terrace bar, or exploring the nearby historic and cultural sites, the Victoria Gran Meliá promises an unforgettable experience of luxury and tranquility.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

This exclusive Total Solar Eclipse Tour to Spain is designed for HBS members and their friends who are also interested in observing a total solar eclipse and exploring the food, history and culture of Spain. In Madrid, expect temperatures ranging from 70°F (21°C) to 90°F (32°C); Barcelona typically has temperatures of 72°F (22°C) and 86°F (30°C) and Mallorca's average August temperatures are 75°F (24°C) to 88°F (31°C). Travel is by private coach, boat, and plane, with a high-speed train on the Pre-Tour extension. This tour will be a shared departure with the California Academy of Sciences. Please also note the Fabra Observatory and the eclipse viewing vessel will be shared by other educational affinity groups. However, your joint departure with the California Academy of Sciences will have its own tour director, buses and lecture space. As this is an astronomical event of international interest, hotels may be full of other eclipse travelers and independent travel groups from around the globe.

Since some travel in Mallorca will be relatively remote, everyone must be flexible with time schedules and willing to explore spectacular natural areas and small towns. Program participants requiring extraordinary assistance must be

accompanied by someone who can and will provide all required assistance. To help you choose the trip best suited for you and to ensure the smooth and efficient operation of our tour, we describe this trip as moderately active.

## PROGRAM NOTE

Totality on August 12, 2026, will be relatively brief all across Spain, and from Port de Sóller on Mallorca, it will last 1m34s. The partial eclipse begins at 7:38 p.m. local time (Sun 12° high). Mid-eclipse follows at 8:31:32 p.m. with the Sun 2.5° above the western horizon. We will provide an optimal viewing location aboard a catamaran boat in Mallorca to experience this phenomenon. Please keep in mind that because viewing the total solar eclipse will be weather-dependent, there is always a chance that passengers will not be able to view it or view it only for a short time. Neither Royal Adventures nor the HBS guarantees the viewing of the total solar eclipse. Keep in mind that unexpected schedule changes could affect the program. Your Tour Director will keep you informed of any planned activities changes. A sense of humor, flexibility, and patience will be greatly appreciated during this program, especially on Eclipse Day.

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

**PROGRAM COST INCLUDES:** On-tour flight from Barcelona to Palma de Mallorca, subject to increases, see below • Accommodations and meals as specified in the trip itinerary • Program of lectures with Study Leader and HBS Executive Director Dr. James Costa • Tour director on main program • Local guides throughout the tour • All land transportation during the tour • All entrance fees • Airport transfers for those using or meeting group flights • Baggage handling • Basic gratuities to guides and drivers • Pre-departure materials • Coordination and administration.

**PROGRAM COST DOES NOT INCLUDE:** International and U.S. domestic airfare (quoted separately) • Meals not specified in the itinerary • Personal items such as laundry, e-mail, fax or telephone calls, or mini bar charges • Liquor, dishes, and beverages, not part of included meals • Room service • Passport, visa or European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) fees • Excess baggage charges • Individual transfers • Medical expenses • COVID-19 testing, or quarantine expenses • Travel or evacuation insurance • Optional extensions or deviations from the scheduled tour • Any increases in the in-tour airfare (included as part of the land program cost), airport taxes, security, exchange rate increases or fuel surcharges imposed after the initial pricing of this program are not included • Gratuity for the Tour Director (at participant's discretion).

### **RESERVATIONS, DEPOSITS, AND FINAL PAYMENT:**

Reserving your space on this program requires a \$1,000 deposit per person. **A second nonrefundable deposit of \$2,000 per person will be due on or before September 15, 2025** (or \$3,000 due when booking after that date). The initial deposit may be charged to a credit card, and the second deposit, as well as the final payment, must be paid by check. Reservations are acknowledged in order of receipt. Final payment is due May 9, 2026, and must be paid by check. Royal Adventures handles all invoicing. CST #2009579-40.

**CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS:** Notification of cancellation must be received in writing by Royal Adventures. Cancellations within seven days of booking, full refund. No refunds after seven days from booking date. No refunds of any deposits or payments are made on or after May 9, 2026, regardless of booking date. There are no refunds for unused meals, accommodations or other trip features.

**INSURANCE:** We highly recommend the purchase of travel insurance. An application for travel insurance will be mailed upon confirmation.

**QUESTIONS:** Please email Jim Costa (costa@email.wcu.edu) or phone: (828) 526-2602. Or contact Royal Adventures at (925) 820-6260 ext 117 or 1-800-453-4754 ext 117 or email: sil@royaladventures.com.

## RESPONSIBILITY

Royal Adventures, its owners, and employees act only as agents for the various independent suppliers and contractors providing transportation, hotel accommodations, restaurant, and other services connected with this tour. Such travel and services are subject to the terms and conditions under which such accommodations, services, and transportation are offered or provided, and the Highlands Biological Station/Western Carolina University (hereinafter collectively referred to as "HBS") and Royal Adventures and their respective employees, agents, representatives, and assigns, accept no liability, therefore. HBS and Royal Adventures assume no liability for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or other irregularity that may be caused by the defect of any aircraft or vehicle or the negligence or default of any company or person engaged in carrying out or performing any of the services involved. Additionally, responsibility is not accepted for losses, injury, damages, or expenses of any kind due to sickness, epidemics, pandemics, pathogens, weather, strikes, local laws, hostilities, wars, terrorist acts, acts of nature, quarantine, force majeure, animal or insect bites, injury caused by improper viewing of the eclipse or other such causes. All services and accommodations are subject to the laws of the country in which they are provided. If this tour is canceled due to a force majeure event or other forces beyond our control, only the recoverable portion of unused services or accommodations, if any, will be refunded or credited on a future Royal Adventures tour. A force majeure event, in relation to this tour, shall mean any circumstances beyond our control, including, but without limitation, to acts of God, explosion, flood, forceful wind, fire or accident, war or threat of war declared or undeclared, acts of terrorism, sabotage, insurrection, riots, strikes, civil disturbance, sickness, epidemics, pandemics, quarantines, government intervention or other unforeseeable events. Limitations on travel arising from the COVID-19 pandemic or other pathogens shall be considered a force majeure event. Highlands Biological Station/Western Carolina University and Royal Adventures reserve the right to make changes in the published itinerary or to the trip leaders whenever, in their sole judgment, conditions warrant, or if they deem it necessary for the comfort, convenience, or safety of the tour participants. They reserve the right to withdraw this tour without penalty. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour or to substitute another qualified leader or special guest. Baggage and personal effects are the sole responsibility of the owners at all times. The price of the program is given in good faith based on current tariffs and rates and is subject to change. Any tariff, exchange rate, airfare, or fuel increases will be passed onto participants. Neither HBS nor Royal Adventures accepts the liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable airline ticket. The air ticket when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned. There are no refunds for unused meals, accommodations, or other trip features. I will not hold HBS nor Royal Adventures and/or its employees or agents responsible for any expense or loss caused by my/our failure to purchase trip cancellation and evacuation insurance coverage. Neither Royal Adventures nor HBS make any guarantees as to the viewing of the total solar eclipse. As part of the consideration and right to participate in this tour, each participant will be asked to sign a liability release, assumption of risk, and hold harmless agreement.

## PROGRAM COSTS

### LAND PROGRAM COST

Double occupancy . . . . . **\$8,145**, per person\*

Single occupancy . . . . . **\$11,645**

*a limited number of singles are available,  
first-come, first-served.*

Upgrade to an ocean view room at  
Victoria Meliá Hotel, in Mallorca . . . . **\$495**

### MADRID PRE-TOUR EXTENSION

Double occupancy . . . . **\$3,925**, per person\*\*

Single occupancy . . . . . **\$4,990**

*\*\*Based on a minimum of 10 passengers.*

*\*If you request to share a twin room, we will attempt  
to find a roommate for you. However; if at the time  
of final payment, no roommate is available, a single  
supplement fee will be charged.*

### SAMPLE AIRFARE

Atlanta > Barcelona >

Palma > Atlanta . . . . . **\$1,384**

*(As of May 2025 and subject to change)*



**TO REGISTER ONLINE:** Scan or click-on this QR Code or go to  
<https://royaladventures.intellibook.co/site/#/highlands-biological-station-eclipse-26/book>

**TO REGISTER BY MAIL OR FAX:** Fill out the following form

## RESERVATION FORM

Enclosed is my/our deposit for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$1,000 per person) for person(s) on the *Mallorca, Spain Total Solar Eclipse* plus \$250 per person for the optional *Madrid pre-tour extension*, if applicable.

☐ I/We understand that a second nonrefundable deposit of \$2,000 per person will be **due September 15, 2025**, (or \$3,000 due when booking after that date) and that final payment by check only is **due May 9, 2026**.

Please authorize credit card payment or make a check payable to **Royal Adventures**, and send, along with completed reservation form to: Royal Adventures, 9 Crow Canyon Ct. Suite 205, San Ramon, CA 94583 or Fax to 925-855-1909.

NAME AS ON PASSPORT DATE OF BIRTH

NAME AS ON PASSPORT DATE OF BIRTH

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP CODE

HOME PHONE CELL PHONE

E-MAIL(S)

### OCEAN VIEW ROOM MALLORCA

☐ I/We request an upgrade to an ocean view room at the Victoria Gran Meliá Hotel in Mallorca, at the cost of \$495.

### OPTIONAL MADRID EXTENSION

☐ I/We wish to join the Madrid optional pre-tour extension, August 3-8, 2026.

### PAYMENT OPTIONS

☐ Pay by check made out to "Royal Adventures"

☐ Please charge the deposit of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ AMEX ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover Card

CARD #

EXP. DATE SEC. CODE

I/We have carefully read the Program Cost, Terms and Conditions and Responsibility sections of this brochure and agree to their terms on behalf of myself and of my party named above.

SIGNATURE DATE

SIGNATURE DATE