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Suggested Food Plan: 3 Days in Spain

From our guide **Top 10 Best Foods to Try in Spain**. Print it or save it to your phone.



Day 1: Madrid classics

Begin with churros con chocolate for breakfast, then move to a tapas lunch with tortilla and croquetas. If the weather is cool, swap the tapas lunch for a booked table at a traditional restaurant serving cocido madrileño. In the evening, order a plate of jamón ibérico with a glass of sherry.

Day 2: Valencia rice and sea

Take a fast train from Madrid to Valencia, check in and head for a long lunch of paella valenciana, ideally booked in advance. In the afternoon, walk through the city, and in the evening have a light tapas dinner with gambas al ajillo.

Day 3: Andalusian summer

Travel to Córdoba or Seville by train. Order salmorejo for lunch, with chopped egg and ham, and follow it with a plate of tortilla. In the evening, a last round of croquetas and pimientos de Padrón closes the trip. If you prefer the north, swap this for Galicia and a plate of pulpo a feira in Melide.

The 10 places at a glance

1. Jamón Ibérico

How to get there: Ham bars and delis are in every Spanish city, with the finest producers around Salamanca, Extremadura and the Sierra de Aracena in Huelva.
How long to spend: About 30 to 45 minutes for a plate and a drink.
Best time to go: Any time of year, as an aperitivo before lunch or dinner.
Tip: Look for the seal colour on the leg, and ask for the carver to cut by hand.
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2. Tortilla de Patatas

How to get there: Available in almost every bar and cafe in Spain.
How long to spend: About 20 to 30 minutes.
Best time to go: Mid-morning, lunchtime or as an evening tapa.
Tip: Ask whether it is "con cebolla" or "sin cebolla" before you order.
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3. Paella Valenciana

How to get there: Best eaten in Valencia city or in the villages around the Albufera, reachable by bus or taxi.
How long to spend: One to two hours for a leisurely lunch.
Best time to go: Lunchtime, ideally booked a day ahead.
Tip: Order for a minimum of two and ask if it is made fresh.
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4. Pulpo a Feira

How to get there: Best in Galicia, with Melide an easy stop between Santiago de Compostela and Lugo.
How long to spend: About an hour.
Best time to go: Lunchtime, when the cooking is at its freshest.
Tip: Ask for "pulpo á feira" and a plate of bread to mop up the oil.
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5. Salmorejo and Gazpacho

How to get there: Available across Andalusia, with Córdoba the home of salmorejo.
How long to spend: About 30 minutes as a starter.
Best time to go: Summer lunchtimes.
Tip: Ask for it "sin jamón" if you do not eat pork.
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6. Pimientos de Padrón

How to get there: Common in bars across Spain, best in Galicia and in summer.
How long to spend: About 20 minutes as a snack.
Best time to go: Summer, for the freshest peppers.
Tip: Eat them while hot and drink water or beer if you hit a spicy one.
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7. Croquetas

How to get there: Available in tapas bars and restaurants nationwide.
How long to spend: About 30 minutes.
Best time to go: Lunchtime or early evening, with a drink.
Tip: Ask what the filling is, as the menu name may not tell you.
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8. Gambas al Ajillo

How to get there: Common in tapas bars and seafood restaurants across Spain.
How long to spend: About 30 to 45 minutes.
Best time to go: Lunchtime or early evening.
Tip: Order extra bread, and be careful as the dish arrives very hot.
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9. Cocido Madrileño

How to get there: Served in traditional restaurants across Madrid, usually in the central districts.
How long to spend: Around two hours.
Best time to go: Lunchtime, from autumn to spring.
Tip: Book ahead and check which days the restaurant serves cocido.
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10. Churros con Chocolate

How to get there: Found in chocolaterías and cafes across Spain, especially in Madrid.
How long to spend: About 30 minutes.
Best time to go: Breakfast, mid-afternoon or late at night.
Tip: Eat the churros as soon as they arrive, while still crisp.
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Getting Around Spain for Food

Spain has an excellent high-speed rail network between Madrid, Valencia, Córdoba and Seville, so you can eat your way across the country without a car. Book tickets ahead on Renfe, as popular services sell out. Within cities, metros and buses are cheap and frequent. Rural areas, such as Galicia's octopus towns, are easier with a hire car, but regional buses and trains also serve Santiago de Compostela and Melide, so check timetables. If you want to add a side trip from Valencia after your paella lunch, our guide to the best day trips from Valencia has easy ideas.

Opening times, prices and transport change often, so check with each venue or operator before you go. For the full guide, photos and FAQs, see https://toptravelinsider.com/top-10-best-foods-to-try-in-spain/.