Cruise Details

Name:	Secrets of the Douro & Madrid
Reference:	EMERALDEPDM040927-1
Operator:	Emerald Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Emerald Radiance
Regions:	Douro
Departs On:	04 Sep 27
Departs From:	Porto
Arrives On:	14 Sep 27
Arrives At:	Madrid
Cruise Nights:	10
Total Vacation Days:	11

Itinerary

Day 1: Porto (Portugal)

Welcome to Porto, where you'll be met at the airport and transferred to your contemporary Emerald Star-Ship. This evening, join your fellow guests for dinner on board.

You will remain docked in Porto overnight, allowing you to explore this vibrant city after dark.

Arrives On: 04 Sep 27

Day 2: Porto (Portugal)

Relax on board today and enjoy a full day of cruising through the World Heritage-listed Douro Valley. This fascinating area builds on two millennia of wine-producing history, and viticulture has shaped the surrounding landscape, with small, sleepy villages surrounded by dozens of terraced vineyards. A highlight will be seeing Carrapatelo, the deepest lock in Europe. EmeraldPLUS
Portuguese cooking demonstration on board
Learn how to make the iconic Portuguese sweet

treat Pastéis de Nata (custard tarts) during an on board cooking demonstration. The expert chef will share the story and traditions behind this signature dish and involve guests in an immersive experience.

Arrives On: 05 Sep 27

Day 2: Pinhão (Portugal)

Arrives On: 05 Sep 27

Day 3: Pinhão (Portugal)

A hidden gem just a few hours from Porto, Pinhão (pronounced ‘Pin-yow’) is a tiny village in the heart of the Douro Valley, surrounded by vineyards and beautiful countryside. It’s a place to take things slowly, sip local Port wine, explore hiking trails, or relax and soak up the charms of Portugal. Included Excursion
Visit to Quinta do Tedo with wine tasting
Visit the beautiful Quinta do Tedo vineyard, set on the hills surrounding the confluence of the Douro and Tedo rivers. This 18th-century estate is environmentally sound, creating organic produce using traditional viticulture methods. Enjoy tasting their famous Port wine and learning about how they blend traditional viticulture methods with modern technology to create a seamless process. Alternatively, join a guided walk through their vineyards, stopping to admire the beautiful surrounds. EmeraldACTIVE
Kayak experience in Pinhão
Embark on a kayak excursion along the Pinhão River, taking in the impressive views from the heart of the Douro Valley. You’ll glide slowly past patchwork farmland, terraced vineyards and sprawling estates as you traverse this tranquil tributary of the Douro. EmeraldACTIVE
Guided active walk through the vineyards
Enjoy a guided walk through local vineyards, stopping along the way to admire the surroundings and the views over the Douro River. There are several different possibilities for hiking, to be adopted according to the fitness and desires of the group. Afterwards, join the group for the wine tasting.

Arrives On: 06 Sep 27

Day 3: Vega de Terrón (Spain)

Arrives On: 06 Sep 27

Day 4: Vega de Terrón (Spain)

Just across the Spanish border, Vega de Terrón is at the junction of the Douro and Águeda rivers. It’s the gateway to the ancient city of Salamanca, known as the ‘Golden City’ for its stunning

Renaissance architecture built from Villamayor sandstone, which glows golden, pink, and ochre at sunrise and sunset. Included Excursion
Guided tour of Salamanca
Founded in Roman times, the ancient city of Salamanca and its World Heritage-listed Old Quarter have an illustrious past, having been held by the Carthaginians, Romans and Moors. Set out on a walking tour, which includes exploring the postcard-worthy galleries and arcades that adorn Plaza Mayor. You'll also have the opportunity to see Casa de las Conchas, a building that has been lovingly decorated with more than 300 shells, and Salamanca's university, one of the oldest universities in Europe, dating back to 1218. EmeraldPLUS
Tuna music band in Salamanca
The tradition of 'tuna music' dates back to the 13th century, arising from poor university students who would sing in the streets to raise money for their tuition. It showcases a powerful tradition of academic and social life in Spain, with performers dressing in distinctive clothing, including capes with colourful ribbons to represent their school. Enjoy a performance of this unique music from a local group.

Arrives On: 07 Sep 27

Day 4: Salamanca (Spain)

Arrives On: 07 Sep 27

Day 5: Pocinho (Portugal)

The tiny village of Pocinho is around 30km (18.64 miles) from the Spanish border, surrounded by river and mountains. This isolated spot has a population of just a few hundred, with its white-walled and red-roofed buildings all but blending into the landscape. Nearby, museums and archaeological sites will take you deeper into Portugal's history. Included Excursion
Tour to Castelo Rodrigo
Visit the charming medieval town of Castelo Rodrigo, a small, fortified village perched high on a hilltop. Uncover the secrets of its history, admire its 16th-century walls and walk down charming, narrow medieval streets. Later, try some typical local products and enjoy some free time to explore on your own. EmeraldPLUS
Port wine cocktail lesson on board
Return to your Emerald Star-Ship for lunch, then enjoy a Port wine cocktail lesson as you cruise down the river. Port wine became popular in the 17th century and is created by adding brandy to wine during fermentation, resulting in a strong, sweet, high-alcohol style that can be used in many delicious combinations. DiscoverMORE
Archaeological tour by 4x4 at the Côa Valley Museum (extra expense)
The tour begins at the Côa Museum, a vast open-air rock art collection of the Côa Valley. Board your jeep and drive to the area where the abandoned Côa dam was being built, and onwards through a landscape marked by the construction work that determined the recent history of the Côa rock art. The final part of the tour is on foot.
Activity level: Difficult/Active, Duration: 3.5

hours.

Arrives On: 08 Sep 27

Day 5: Régua (Portugal)

Arrives On: 08 Sep 27

Day 6: Régua (Portugal)

Get an insight into Portuguese life in Régua, a busy town that sits at the western edge of the Port wine growing region. It is steeped in winemaking culture and has been an important trading and transport centre since the 18th century. Backed by the stunning Serra do Marão mountains, it promises dramatic scenery and a welcoming atmosphere.

Cruise to Porto in the afternoon, where you'll remain docked overnight, allowing you to explore this vibrant city after dark. Included Excursion
Guided tour of Lamego
On today's included excursion, you'll visit the marvellous Baroque village of Lamego, a place that has been shaped by Portugal's devout Catholic faith and centuries of winemaking. Nestled among the terraced slopes of the Douro Valley, the elegant town is infused with Baroque style. Stop to admire the picturesque Shrine of Our Lady of Remedies, a structure that stands gracefully over the town. Its hundreds of zigzagging stairs are decorated with tiled friezes and climb out of a tailored garden resplendent with a variety of trees. EmeraldPLUS
Rural lunch at a local quinta
Enjoy a rural lunch at a local Quinta, a famous wine estate in the Douro, which is certain to be a highlight of your trip. A traditional meal will be served and beautifully accompanied by local entertaine EmeraldPLUS
Mosaic tile painting lesson on board
Colourful painted tiles, called azulejos, are everywhere in Portugal. Learn about their origins, place in Portuguese culture and how they are created during a mosaic tile painting workshop on board. This hands-on experience will immerse you in Portuguese artistic traditions. You'll even get to take home your azulejos as a souvenir. EmeraldACTIVE
Walk down the steps of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Remedies
From the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Remedies, an important pilgrimage site on a hill above Lamego, walk down 686 cobbled steps to reach the centre of the village. This Baroque, zig-zag staircase offers spectacular views and is lined with small chapels and shrines dedicated to various saints and martyrs. DiscoverMORE
Visit to Mateus Manor House (extra expense)
Built in the 18th century, Mateus Manor House is one of the finest representations of Baroque architecture in Portugal. Consisting of the main house, the gardens, a winery and a chapel, you may recognise these wonderful dwellings from the label of Portugal's famous rosé wine. Enjoy a guided tour of this spectacular estate.
Activity level: Moderate, Duration: 2.5-3 hours

Arrives On: 09 Sep 27

Day 6: Porto (Portugal)

Arrives On: 09 Sep 27

Day 7: Porto (Portugal)

Located at the mouth of the Douro River, Porto is a fascinating and eclectic mix of modern and ancient architecture. Famous for its export of Port wines, it’s easy to imagine how British merchant ships would have once clustered together in the medieval harbour, waiting to take their produce across the water. Included Excursion
Guided tour of Porto
Your included coach tour of the coastal city will introduce you to its highlights, from the bustling waterfront to its colourful buildings and iconic bridges. It will touch on the fortified structures of Castelo da Foz and Castelo do Queijo, a building whose pentagonal façades overlook the ocean. EmeraldPLUS
A cruise through Porto
This evening, a charming evening cruise will shine a different light on Porto's skyline. EmeraldPLUS
Guided active walk in Porto
For those who wish to see the charms of Porto on foot, this active walk through the town will bring you closer to the vibrant daily life of the locals. Cross the old iron bridge back to Porto city to admire the Porto Cathedral and visit the Old Town and São Bento railway station. DiscoverMORE
Visit to Quinta da Aveleda (extra expense)
Explore the fairytale-like property of Quinta Aveleda, a renowned sparkling wine producer with a 150-year history. A highlight of this tour is the estate’s enchanting gardens. After your tour, enjoy a wine and cheese tasting followed by some free time.
Activity level: Moderate, Duration: 4 hours DiscoverMORE
Guided bike tour to the Atlantic (extra expense) A guided e-bike tour is the easiest and most attractive way to discover the wonderful city of Porto. Enjoy a few hours cycling along the Douro River until you reach the Atlantic Ocean. The path is flat, and there will be several stops along the way for commentary and photo opportunities.
Activity level: Moderate; Duration: 4 hours

Arrives On: 10 Sep 27

Day 8: Porto (Portugal)

Depart your Emerald Star-Ship in Porto and transfer to the airport for your included flight from Porto to Madrid. You'll be met at the airport and then transferred to your centrally located hotel for an exciting three-night stay in this captivating city. Later, meet your fellow guests and tour director for a welcome drink.

Arrives On: 11 Sep 27

Day 8: Port information not found

Arrives On: 11 Sep 27

Day 9: Port information not found

Soak in the sights of Madrid on your included morning tour. Later, you may choose to join an optional Emerald DiscoverMORE excursion or to continue exploring the city at leisure. Included Excursion
Guided city tour of MadridThis morning, join your local guide for an insightful walking tour of Madrid. Take in the capital's vibrant centre. Soak up its momentous past as you peruse the classical-style Sabatini Gardens, resting in front of the Royal Palace, and Gran Via, Madrid's most iconic street, pulsating with shops, restaurants and entertainment venues. DiscoverMORE
Tastes of Madrid (extra expense)
Immerse yourself in the vibrant flavours of Madrid, where culinary tradition meets market-fresh excellence. Share authentic tapas bursting with local character, savour the smoky richness of chorizo, and indulge in the sweet crunch of freshly made churros. Thanks to one of Europe’s largest markets, you’ll also have the chance to taste fresh fish prepared in true Spanish style—all perfectly complemented by a refreshing glass of sangria. This experience today truly captures the essence of Madrid’s gastronomic soul.
Duration: 1.5 hours, Activity level: Easy

Arrives On: 12 Sep 27

Day 10: Port information not found

Enjoy a full day discovering more of the many charms of Madrid on an optional Emerald DiscoverMORE excursion or at your own pace. You may wish to admire the stunning architecture of the Royal Palace, official residence of the Spanish royal family and Western Europe’s largest palace. Or stroll through beautiful Retiro Park, one of the city’s largest parks, resplendent with ornamental gardens, stunning monuments and a scenic lake. Alternatively, consider a visit to Mercado de San Miguel, a historical building that houses a world-renowned gastronomic market; the ideal spot to sample local Spanish delicacies, such as churros with chocolate. DiscoverMORE
Guided Tour of Toledo (extra expense)
Today’s excursion to Toledo, the ‘City of Three Cultures,’ is a journey that delves into Spain's rich multicultural heritage, where Christian, Muslim and Jewish traditions have harmoniously co-existed for centuries. With stunning medieval architecture and renowned artistic features, walking through Toledo feels like stepping into a living museum, where each narrow, cobbled street, bustling plaza and striking building tells centuries-old stories.
Duration: 6 hours, Activity level: Active

Arrives On: 13 Sep 27

Day 11: Port information not found

This morning, it's time to bid farewell to your fellow guests and Madrid, taking with you cherished memories of the Iberian Peninsula with you

Arrives On: 14 Sep 27

For more information on this cruise, please call +44 (0)1202 767926.

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