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## An American Family Reunion in Catalonia

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*Wellfleet, Mass., August 28, 2007:* Peter and Ethel Young are culture-loving New Yorkers who love to travel. At 81, they're setting an adventurous example for the next generation—and the one after that—by gathering their children and grandchildren for a unique family reunion. The group of 18, flying from Buffalo, Philadelphia, Boston, and other points along the east coast, will converge in Barcelona this October.

The Youngs knew that finding a one-week itinerary to please three generations of travelers would be challenging. Their solution—which sounds expensive but doesn't have to be—was to work with a custom travel planner.

The best tailor-made plans rely on in-depth knowledge of the terrain, so the Youngs' first step was to settle on a destination. "They had done some background reading on Barcelona, and that has certainly made the planning easier," says Teresa Parker, the Youngs' travel planner, who is a trained chef and specializes in culinary tours in the region.

"The family's 'travel personality' came through clearly from the outset," says Parker, who starts each custom plan with an interview. "They said, 'We love the Ritz, but we're happy in a B&B if it gives us the chance to meet local people,' and that gave me a real sense of their priorities."

"They also said, 'We love food, but not frou-frou food,'" so Parker has set up some down-home food experiences—a seafood lunch in a fishing port, a picnic in a vineyard, a tasting at a small family-owned winery.

It's important to feel that the person planning your trip understands your style. Parker's other tips for planning a successful intergenerational journey:

- Don't be afraid to seek out custom plans—a tailor-made trip is not necessarily more expensive than a high-quality ready-made tour, and is much more likely to fulfill your vision of the perfect experience;
- Have a specific destination in mind so you can choose a specialist with deep local knowledge;
- Name the one or two things you value most—music and food, for example, were important for the Youngs;
- Be clear about your expectations in these priority areas—the Youngs have ruled out Michelin-starred restaurants, for instance, but their musical tastes are eclectic and they're open to jazz, classical, or flamenco;
- There is no need to design the trip solely around the elders' pace. Ask your planner to engage different energy levels at once. For example, while younger generations walk to Gaudí architectural landmarks, the elders will taxi, and while the fittest will bicycle through the Catalan countryside, the others will travel by car for a rendezvous in a village along the route;
- Appoint a family spokesperson to work with the planner—one person who can conduct the occasional "poll," bring questions to the planner, and share background information with the larger group.

**The trip price is \$3295 Per Person/Single Supplement \$600.** Limited to 16 participants. Travelers must book and pay for their own air tickets. The tour starts and ends in Barcelona.

Spanish Journeys offers intimate culinary tours in Catalonia and Barcelona. Trips are led by company director Teresa Parker, who is bilingual and earned a chef's diploma in Barcelona. Parker also offers custom plans for independent travelers visiting the region.

For more information about this or other Spanish Journeys itineraries, contact Teresa Parker at [teresa@spanishjourneys.com](mailto:teresa@spanishjourneys.com), or by mobile phone at 917-363-0339.





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