
Best Deluxe Travel Curation Services 2024 – Madrid

Valesa Cultural Services (VCS) has a distinguished 50-year history, boasting the claim of being one of Madrid's first agencies of this type. President and Founder Barbara Fulford set the wheels in motion when she began working with fellow Americans who were travelling to Spain back in 1968, and the business has not looked back since. Today they serve as the ultimate destination management tour company in Spain and Portugal for those who speak English and seek customised travel arrangements, creative itineraries, and personalised attention.

For more than five decades, Barbara Fulford has set the service gold standard for her English-speaking clients, affording them some of the best services that Spain has to offer, including unique, unusual venues and some of the country's finest art collections. One of the company's strongest areas is its cultural services division, founded in 1995 with co-owner Marcy Forman, to manage increased demand from abroad for the company's special interest tours. This division of Valesa provides groups with greater access to some of the country's finest private venues, all on the back of the business' unrivalled expertise and excellent personal contacts.

Doing everything except booking the plane ticket, Barbara and her team specialise in the creation of bespoke itineraries that are tailored to each client's needs and requirements, taking into consideration everything from budget to special interests, so as to provide a trip or event that is as unique as it is fulfilling. From arranging personal guides to booking hotels, internal transportation, meals, visits, and securing tickets for special performances, VCS really does do it all. Furthermore, all of its tour guides and escorts possess the necessary credentials to solidify their capabilities of providing an exemplary service to all. Historians, art curators, sommeliers and other such specialists also accompany guests on tours.

Barbara is proudly the President/Founder of Valesa, where she has leveraged her talents throughout her 50+ year tenure to organize nothing short of some of the most exciting, hands-on, and insightful cultural tours that are available in Spain and Portugal. Aside from this, her specialty lies in being a true connoisseur of some of the lesser-known elements of Spanish regional cuisines. Having

received a BA from Indiana University and an MA Middlebury College/University of Madrid in Spanish history and culture, her qualifications too connote distinction.

General Manager/Co-Owner Marcy Forman is an accomplished, renowned travel professional who sits atop more than forty years of industry experience on both sides of the Atlantic, spanning such areas as hotel management, travel agency sales, corporate meeting/event planning, as well as airlines and tour operations. Much like Barbara, Marcy also possesses all of the relevant qualifications to carry out the task at hand, namely a BS in Hotel Administration from Cornell University, as well as having completed Spanish culture studies in Madrid with Southern Methodist University.

Valesa Cultural has a history of arranging a variety of educational and special interest tours, with some of their most notable offerings, aside from the art-based tours that solidified their stellar reputation, being architecture, prehistoric caves, gastronomy/wines, gardens, UNESCO sites, and archaeology tours, to name a few. Personalized tours and events have been designed and carried out for a host of American museums, corporations, and other organisations, notably the Smithsonian Institution, Stanford and Yale alumni societies, and many more.

With help from the company's many trusted personal contacts, guests are also bestowed with special access to private venues, top local experts and lecturers, receive fabulous information and amenity gifts, and more. The results of which demonstrate the wholly unique VIP experience promised: collaborative planning style and continuous contact with travelers. After a long day of exploring, clients



can relax in one of the many four- and five-star hotels that VCS works with across Spain, Portugal, and Morocco, whereby guests will receive special treatment, negotiated contract rates, unique amenities, and usually the best rooms. All the hotels they offer are ones that the team has visited and personally inspected.

Ultimately, with more than 55 years of experience creating some of the most authentic and unforgettable trips around, Valesa Cultural Services expertly combines all of the elements necessary for a great travel experience. Travelers are left with memories that will last a lifetime.

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