

Toccata 2022 Tour Itinerary

DAY 1 | WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2022 | FLY TO FRANCE



TOCCATA Tahoe Symphony Orchestra and Chorus tour of France and Spain 2022 starts with an overnight flight from the **USA** to **France**. Refer to your **MCI tour handbook** for tips on making the journey smooth and comfortable.

DAY 2 | THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2022 | WELCOME TO FRANCE!



Your **Music Contact International tour manager** will be waiting to greet you at the airport. The rest of the day is for getting acclimated as we travel by private motor coach from the airport to **Toulouse, France** near the border of **Spain**. The region is called **Occitanie**, known for colorful food, wines, medieval castles, culture, history, a seacoast with islands, and market towns full of character.

Toulouse is the capital of **Occitanie**, the lively heart of the district, where we will spend the next couple of days. As a university city with a large population of students, academics, scientists and tech types, there's a thriving arts, music, and cultural scene. Settle into the hotel in **Toulouse** and refresh followed by an **orientation walk** to get acquainted with the neighborhood.

Tonight, **TOCCATA'S** tour kicks off with a **welcome dinner** of regional French fare and wine!

DAY 3 | FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 2022 | SIGHTSEEING AND SINGING IN TOULOUSE | CONCERT*



Each day of your tour begins with **breakfast** in the hotel dining room. Then, **a locally guided walking tour of Toulouse** nicknamed “La Ville Rose” for the enchanting coral colored buildings in its Vieux Quartier. View impressive sites from Place du Capitole, the magnificent main square, flanked by the Capitole (city hall) and Théâtre du Capitole, one of France’s most prestigious opera venues; Romanesque churches, convents and monasteries line the rest of the square. Enjoy time for lunch in an Old Quarter cafe and to peruse the charming shops and galleries.

This afternoon, **rehearse for the first performance of your tour: TOCCATA Symphony Orchestra and Choir will perform a concert in a splendid Toulouse venue** such as Couvent des Jacobins with ornate stained glass and frescoes, Basilique St. Sernin with an incredible bell tower, or possibly Église Notre Dame du Taur, which commemorates the city’s patron saint, St Sernin, said to be martyred on the very spot. A gracious public will be your audience.

DAY 4 | SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 2022 | A DAY IN TOULOUSE



Spend your day pursuing personal interests in Toulouse. An excursion to Musee Toulouse-Lautrec can be arranged. The museum sits in the fabulous town of **Albi** with palaces, cathedrals and medieval architecture. There is also plenty to do in Toulouse. Art lovers could visit Musee des Augustins fine arts collection and adjacent convent with a lovely church, cloister and garden. You could also rent a bicycle or paddle boat to see the city from another vantage point.

DAY 5 | SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 2022 | PERFORMANCES | CHURCH CONCERT*



This morning, prepare for a **fabulous day of performing**.

Sing and worship in a fabulous setting such as the Church at Fontfroide Abbey. Nestled in a lush green valley, the abbey is one of the most complete monastic complexes still operating today with an active wine production, monastery with vaulted cloisters, a restaurant and passion for music. The Cathedrale Saint-Just et Saint-Pasteur is another potential venue located in the center of Narbonne near the coast, with a soaring choir and priceless tapestries. There are a number of other wonderful churches and concert halls in the Toulouse/Narbonne area that may host the TOCCATA chorus for church and the orchestra for a concert following.

DAY 6 | MONDAY, APRIL 25, 2022 | NARBONNE & THE COAST



Today is for enjoying the **Narbonne** and its **Mediterranean Coast**. In **Narbonne**, enjoy the Palais Neuf, Archbishops Gardens, Canal and markets. Also see the birthplace of French singer Charles Trenet, born in Narbonne in 1913, whose famous song *La Mer*, you may recognize from French films.

Proceed outside of town to the coast where a scenic boat cruise and wine-tasting awaits!

DAY 7 | TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2022 | EXCURSION TO CARCASSONNE | CONCERT*



Today, discover **Carcassonne**. Drive through the exquisite countryside of vineyards and chateaux to the medieval town featuring a massive castle surrounded by stone walls, turrets and towers. The entire area is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the castle itself is a French national monument with extensive exhibits on the area's long history.

It may be possible to arrange a **concert in this gorgeous locale in one of the legendary Carcassonne churches** such as Eglise Saint-Nazaire with some of the most famous stained glass in the south of France, Carcassonne Cathedral from the 13th century, or Eglise St. Vincent with huge knave and lofty tower.

The rest of the day in **Carcassonne** is for strolling the banks of the **Canal du Midi**, which runs through the center of town, and exploring the picturesque cafes, galleries and shops around its riverfront. **Languedoc** wine tasting is a well recommended pastime here too, and you'll find numerous tasting points during your visit.

DAY 8 | WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2022 | FRANCE TO SPAIN | CONCERT*



Onto **Spain!** Drive south from **Narbonne** along the coast and cross the Spanish border into **Catalonia**. This prosperous semi-autonomous part of Spain has its own language (Catalan), parliament, flag and anthem.

Stop in **Figueres**, where Salvador Dali was born and visit the **Teatro Museo Dali**. The museum is designed to be a surrealist journey of his world, and contains one of the best collections of his art. The eccentric artist is buried in the courtyard here.

A concert opportunity for TOCCATA is being looked into at Teatro Museo Dali.

From **Figueres**, continue driving to **Barcelona**, the popular city known for art, Mediterranean flair, great soccer, architecture of Antoni Gaudi, parks, beaches and more! Settle into your hotel in Barcelona and enjoy the rest of the night to explore at leisure.

DAY 9 | THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2022 | SIGHTSEEING & SINGING IN BARCELONA



This morning is devoted to seeing highlights of Barcelona with a knowledgeable local guide. From Roman ruins, to Picasso murals, Las Ramblas, the Jewish Quarter, Gaudi treasures, and cultural points across Montjuic, take in the wonders of the fabulous city and its artistic roots.

Later, **rehearse for your next performance. Toccata Symphony Orchestra and Chorus will perform a concert in a unique Barcelona venue** such as the Cathedral of Barcelona, Atenuie Barcelones which features a central patio and auditorium known for classical concerts, the beloved Gothic Church of Santa Maria del Pi with awe-inspiring glass or possibly a performance in cooperation with the Museu de la Musica committed to collecting and preserving musical instruments in the name of performing arts.

Additional activities can be arranged around your concert schedule.

DAY 10 | FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2022 | A DAY IN BARCELONA



Today is open in **Barcelona** to spend as you wish. Optional tours and visits will be offered, supplements apply:

The **Palau de la Música Catalana**, one of the most unique and beautiful concert halls in existence. The Palau, built to elevate choral music, is a masterpiece of art nouveau and designated as a UNESCO heritage site. The venue is a hub for symphonic, choral music, and Catalan arts. Schedule permitting, you might want to take in a performance while you are in town.

Be immersed in magical views of the sea at the **Aquarium of Barcelona**. The aquarium is Europe's largest and most important museum of marine science and life in the Mediterranean and you will be awed by the sheer diversity of species and habitats that surround you.

A cooking class option will also be offered today – Learn to make tapas, paella, or other Catalan menu in the company of a skilled local chef before feasting on the tasty meal.

Nighttime activities including tickets to a cultural event, performance at the Palau, or opera at the Liceu may also be offered.

DAY 11 | SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2022 | MONTSERRAT & CAVA | CONCERT*



This day is for Enjoy an excursion northwest from **Barcelona** to the **Benedictine Monastery Santa Maria de Montserrat** high in the Catalan mountains. The complex of Montserrat is one of Europe's most important religious sites as it houses the Virgin of Montserrat "the black Madonna" in its basilica. Visitors flock to this holy place to pay homage to Our Lady and ask for her guidance through difficult times.

TOCATA Choir and Orchestra may perform a concert in this magnificent setting dedicated to the Patron Saint of Catalonia.

The **Basilica at Montserrat** is also home to **Escolania**, one of the oldest and most renowned boy choirs in Europe who sing daily at midday Mass and on special occasions. If the boychoir is in residence during your visit – they are often away on tour themselves – you will hear their angelic voices.

Descend the mountain to the surrounding countryside dotted with farms and vineyards. **Then, enjoy a presentation and tasting at a cava wine cellar and see firsthand the traditional methods used to produce the region's delicious sparkling wine.**

At the end of this delightful day, return to **Barcelona** where the night is open to spend as you wish.

DAY 12 | SUNDAY, MAY 1, 2022 | CHURCH SERVICE & GRAND FINALE! | CONCERT*



Your last full day in **Barcelona** starts at church where the **TOCCATA choir will sing as part of the worship service, and you'll enjoy** meeting, mingling, and socializing with the friendly congregation.

Then, **TOCCATA Choir and Orchestra will perform a final concert in Spain in the incredible Sagrada Familia Church**, the iconic landmark of the city. Gaudi's Church of the Holy Family attracts millions of visitors each year to admire its creative adornment and sculptures inspired by nature. The interior of the church is embellished by colorful windows that cast rainbows and auras of light throughout the holy space. **An opportunity to perform in this glorious space is being pursued as a most fitting grand finale to TOCCATA's tour.**

Toast the success of your concert tour in France and Spain at a festive farewell dinner with Flamenco show! There will be ample time to recount the many highlights of your tour!

DAY 13 | MONDAY, MAY 2, 2022 | FLY HOME OR EXTEND YOUR STAY



TOCCATA'S performance tour of France and Spain ends today with a flight home from Barcelona. Heartfelt goodbyes are exchanged at the airport and your group is sent off with memories to last a lifetime!