

Chapter 32

Geography of Spain



LOCATION OF SPAIN

Located in the southwestern part of Europe, Spain occupies eighty percent of the Iberian peninsula, which it shares with Portugal.

SIZE AND POPULATION

Spain has an area of about 200,000 square miles (four times the size of New York State), and a population of about 40,000,000 inhabitants.

MOUNTAINS

1. The Pyrenees (los Pirineos), in the northeast, separate Spain from France.
2. Cantabrian Mountains (la Cordillera Cantábrica) in the northwest.
3. Guadarrama Mountains (la Sierra de Guadarrama), near Madrid.
4. Sierra Nevada and Sierra Morena, in the south.

RIVERS

1. El Ebro, in the northeast, flows into the Mediterranean Sea.
2. El Tajo, in the central region, is the longest river. It runs by the city of Toledo.
3. El Guadalquivir in the south, is the deepest and most navigable river in Spain. It runs by the cities of Seville (Sevilla) and Cordova (Córdoba).

OVERSEAS POSSESSIONS

1. The Balearic Islands (Islas Baleares) are located in the Mediterranean Sea. They are a popular resort area. Mallorca is the largest island in the group.
2. The Canary Islands (Islas Canarias) are located in the Atlantic Ocean, off the northwestern coast of Africa.
3. Ceuta and Melilla are two port cities in Morocco, Africa.

IMPORTANT PRODUCTS

1. Spain is both an industrial and an agricultural country.
2. The principal agricultural products are olives, oranges, grapes, wheat, lemons, and cork.
 - a. Spain occupies third place in wine production in Europe.
 - b. The wines of Jerez (sherry), Rioja, and Málaga are world-famous.
 - c. Spain is one of the world's leading producers of olive oil.
3. Mineral resources are coal, iron, mercury, lead, and copper.

REGIONS OF SPAIN

Spain is divided into fifteen regions.

- Cantabria, in the north
- Galicia, in the northwest
- Asturias, in the north, east of Galicia
- Basque Country (País Vasco), in the north, bordering the Pyrenees
- Navarre (Navarra), in the north
- Aragon (Aragón), in the northeast, east of Navarra
- Catalonia (Cataluña), in the northeastern corner
- Rioja (La Rioja), south of Navarra
- Castile and Leon (Castilla y León), in the north central part of the peninsula
- Castile-La Mancha (Castilla-La Mancha), in the center
- Madrid, in the center, north of Castile-La Mancha
- Valencia, in the east
- Extremadura, in the west, between Portugal and Castile-La Mancha
- Andalusia (Andalucía), in the south

LANGUAGES

1. Spanish (español, or castellano) is the principal language spoken in Spain.
2. Galician (gallego) is spoken in Galicia.
3. Basque (vascuence) is spoken in the Basque Country.
4. Catalán is spoken in Catalonia.

EXERCISE A

Match the words in column A to their related words in column B. Write the letter in the space provided.

A	B
_____ 1. Asturias	a. Balearic Islands
_____ 2. Spanish	b. Atlantic Ocean
_____ 3. Sierra Morena	c. Spain's longest river
_____ 4. Galician	d. region in the northeast
_____ 5. Tajo	e. wine
_____ 6. Guadalquivir	f. language spoken in the northwest
_____ 7. Jerez	g. most navigable river
_____ 8. Canary Islands	h. mountains
_____ 9. Catalonia	i. region in the north
_____ 10. Mallorca	j. principal language of Spain

EXERCISE B

If the statement is true, write *Sí*, if it's false, correct it by replacing the word(s) in boldface. Write the word(s) in the space provided.

1. The Pyrenees separate Spain from **Portugal**. _____
2. The Mediterranean Sea is situated **west** of Spain. _____
3. Spain and Portugal form the **Iberian** Peninsula. _____
4. Some Spanish **wines** are world-famous. _____
5. Spain has a population of about **60,000,000**. _____
6. Mallorca is one of the **Canary** Islands. _____
7. The Cantabrian Mountains are in the **south** of Spain. _____
8. The most navigable river in Spain is the **Tajo**. _____
9. **Málaga** is an important wine producing country. _____
10. The principal language of Spain is **Basque**. _____

EXERCISE C

Select the word or expression that correctly completes each sentence.

1. The (Guadarrama / Pyrenee / Cantabrian) Mountains separate Spain from France.
2. (Apples/ Oranges / Machines) are an important product of Spain.
3. Spain is located in the (southwestern / northeastern / central) part of Europe.
4. Spain has two ports that are situated in (South America / Africa / Mexico).
5. A popular resort area of Spain is (the Balearic Islands / the Canary Islands / Extremadura).
6. The (Tajo / Ebro / Guadalquivir) River passes by Toledo.
7. (Murcia / Aragon / Leon) is in the northwestern part of Spain.
8. An important mineral resource of Spain is (gold / tin / mercury).
9. Spain has an area of (40,000,000 / 200,000 / 1,300) square miles.
10. The (Pyrenee / Guadarrama / Cantabrian) Mountains are near Madrid.

EXERCISE D

Complete the following statements.

1. The _____ is the longest river of Spain.
2. The _____ are islands in the Mediterranean Sea that belong to Spain.
3. _____ is a region of central Spain.
4. Spain is the one of the world's leading producers of _____ .
5. _____ is a region that covers most of southern Spain.
6. The Cantabrian Mountains are in the _____ part of Spain.
7. Spain consists of _____ regions.
8. The Sierra Nevada is a mountain range in the _____ part of Spain.
9. The regional language of Catalonia is _____ .
10. A Spanish river that flows into the Mediterranean Sea is _____ .