



Spain's Professional SOCCER TOURS AND CAMPS 2006

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Tour Operator

Tighe O'Sullivan has been coaching for the past 15 years. His extensive travel experience includes Bolivia where he took part in the Tahuichi Academy, and Mexico for the "We Did it" Soccer Camp. For the past five years, in his position as Director of Real Madrid Soccer Camps, Northern California, he has organized and led groups attending the Real Madrid Soccer Camp. Most of his travel involves soccer in some form. He is fluent in Spanish and has traveled to Madrid eleven times in the last ten years. His hope and goal is to share his experiences of life, culture, and soccer with you and your family.

The following is a list to help you answer some of the most frequently asked questions. Please feel free to contact Tighe at any time on (415) 308-0603.

What is the purpose of this trip?

The purpose is for teams, players, and coaches to participate in our programs as soccer ambassadors of the USA. The purpose is to foster goodwill, friendship, camaraderie, and understanding between our two countries. Soccer has been long been accepted and preferred as a method and tool to bring nations together.

We give the opportunity to experience top class competition, visit clubs and their training facilities. This fosters a better understanding of the game, both on and off the field. It gives a sense of soccer culture, which is not currently part of American ideas or understanding.

Why Spain?

As a country Spain is known for its history, culture, food, and soccer. At this time the Professional League (La Liga) is one of the top leagues in Europe. In the past six years Spanish clubs have reached the Champions League Final five times. The country offers a great climate to play in, and the people are some of the nicest you can find in all of Europe. It also gives the opportunity for players to practice/learn one of the most used languages in the world.

Why Real Madrid?

Real Madrid recently celebrated its 100th Anniversary. In past eight years they have won three Champions League titles, and have as part of their team two FIFA World Players of the year in Zinedine Zidane and Ronaldo, as well as historically having the legends such as Figo, DiStefano,



Puskas, and Gento. Their youth programs have produced players like Iker Casillas, the youngest goalie to ever win a Champions League, and the new rising star Portillo just sixteen and now playing for Real's first team after beating all goal scoring records for their B and C teams. Real, as clubs go, does not have anyone in the world that can stand next to them in their accomplishments.

Are the kids in the Real Madrid Camp the entire time in Spain?

The players are not in the camp the entire time in Spain. We usually arrive a day or two before, which gives them the opportunity to adjust to the time change. During this time we usually take a trip to Toledo, the former capital city of Spain, and other touristy sites in Madrid.

Depending upon the availability of airline departures, we usually also stay a few days after the camp is over for the players to experience a little more of the city and culture of Madrid. This is determined once our reservations have been made. During these times the players stay in youth hostels, which, the rest of the year are filled with college students from outside the city.

Are you free to roam?

While participating in the Real Madrid Camp/Tour the players are generally not allowed to go anywhere without immediate supervision. They are required to stay on campus whether it is at the dormitories, or, at the Real Madrid facility, La Ciudad Deportiva.

In years past, when on free days away from the camp, some players have occasionally been given the opportunity to experience some freedom at appropriate times. This has been based upon the age, maturity, and parental consent. Just because consent has been given, does not mean we will always allow the kids to sightsee independently. In reality, for the most part we have always had monitors accompany the players on our free days away from the camp.

Is it safe to travel in Spain?

Spain is a European Union country. It is a safe country to travel in, but as with all countries, you will find crime. We try to avoid situations that put the kids at higher risk. The players safety is our number one concern. We have never experienced any negative incidents. All efforts will be made to ensure that this excellent record of safety continues.

Recent events in Madrid have made additional safety measures necessary. The Spanish Federation and Real Madrid have gone to extra lengths to ensure the safety of everyone at their camps. As the soccer camps are held on an enclosed campus safety the potential for any wrongdoing at camp is minimal at best.

With regard to traveling in country during the trip, any additional safety measures deemed necessary by the local authorities will be assessed and put in place as the departure date comes closer. We are in touch with Spain on a weekly basis, and travel arrangements to other cities will be dealt with in the most responsible and safest ways possible.



Can parents attend?

Parents can attend the trip. But, they are not allowed to visit or speak with their children while in the Real Madrid Soccer Camp due to conflicts of various types. While your child is attending the camp, a separate itinerary can be created for you, which, can be customized to your liking. Even though you are not allowed to meet your child at the camp, it can be arranged for you to see them train at La Ciudad Deportiva during sessions.

If your child is participating in the Real Madrid Soccer Tour parents can attend and participate in whatever activities that have been arranged with the tour operator. On the other hand, if the parents wish to set their own itinerary, that is also available, and/or a combination of both.

What is the difference between the camp and the tour?

The Real Madrid Soccer Summer Camp is a two-week camp. It is geared more for the individual player who wants the Spanish soccer experience and wishes to concentrate on skills. The players are fully scheduled from waking until they go to bed. They train in the morning with the Real Madrid youth coaches concentrating on overall technical skills, and then apply those techniques in games in the afternoon session. At night, they play in a mixed tournament of futbol sala (5 v 5 + goalies) until bedtime.

The Real Madrid Soccer Tour is a minimum of 9 days. It is more team oriented, but there is also the possibility of an individual participating with another team based upon availability and skill level of the child. The tour consists of customized training with the Real Madrid coaches. For example, if a team wants to work on a flat back four that can be the emphasis of their training sessions.

Additionally, participants in the tour will play against the actual youth team of Real Madrid, as well as other professional youth teams like Rayo Vallecano and Valencia. The tour is 100% custom made and can be done at any time of the year. Depending upon the timing chosen the team will also have the opportunity to see a live professional game in the legendary stadium Santiago de Bernabeu.

Can references be provided from previous parents/campers?

Upon request names, phone numbers, and/or letters written from previous attendee's or their parents can be provided.

Is there a problem with the language barrier?

Soccer is a universal language, so in respects to training the answer is "No!." As for communicating with other kids from around the world, it is generally not a problem either. You only have to remember that English is the official language of business, and therefore, most kids at the camp have learned English since they were young.

The following is a list to help you answer some of the most frequently asked questions. Please feel free to contact Tighe at any time on (415) 308-0603.



How is transportation taken care of?

Transportation whether it is vans, buses, trains, or metro is organized and supplied by the tour operator. We do our best to allow participants the opportunity to experience as many different modes of transportation, while, at the same time, making it as easy and affordable as possible.

How easy is communication with my child during his trip?

During the trip there is always a phone number where you can contact your child in case of an emergency. There are also always public telephones at the dormitories, or, just outside the youth hostels we stay at. We suggest that your child brings a calling card so the calling cost is known and for ease of use. Most times if you need to contact your child it can be done through email, the tour operator, or, by leaving a message where your child can get back to you. The tour operator will also provide a phone number so parents can contact him directly.

When is soccer season in Spain?

Soccer season runs from the first weeks of August until late December. It then takes a break and restarts in the first week of January and runs until mid May. This question is usually in reference to whether the kids will be able to see a game, or, watch any of the professional players train.

Real Madrid begins its training for the upcoming season at the beginning of the second week of the camp (the last week of July). For participants in the Summer Camp they may get a chance to see some famous players come in for their check-ups, and preliminary training. For those who wish to see a game in combination with their camp experience you should focus more on the "team tour" opportunities. This allows you to customize the trip to include a game with the dates you want.

When are the programs scheduled?

The Spanish Federation Soccer Camp is scheduled to begin in the first week of July and run two weeks, while the Real Madrid Camp will start in the third week of July. There is also the opportunity of attending during the first two weeks of August, but the bulk of our American participants go in July.

The tour motto is Anytime 2006 & 2007! We actually suggest that you do a combination of the two trips together. This year, for instance, there will be many individuals that will go to the Summer Soccer Camp for two weeks, followed by the tour. They are taking the time to work on their skill level, and at the same time, get real games in after. This will allow the complete experience whether it is language, culture, or touches on the ball.

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What is the level of competition?

The level at the camp varies. The players come from all over the world. There are players who are of the highest level and also those that are of an almost recreational level. As for the Soccer Tour, the level is determined by the level of the team coming to Spain. The first game to be played would be against a local team to size up competition, and, of course, the other games will include one against a professional club's youth team.

How long are the trips?

The trip for the camp is either 5 weeks or 3 weeks long.

The soccer tour trip starts at 8 days/7 nights, and can be custom made to be as long as the group would like.

Where do the trips depart from?

Our main hub of departure is SFO - San Francisco airport. Other arrangements can be made based upon where the individuals would be coming from, and how many there are.

Who is able to go?

Anyone can go, but as stated above, itineraries can be created for those who are not allowed to participate in the activities of the Summer Camp. As for the tour, you could even bring your entire family to experience the joys of Spain.

What about age cut off and game rules?

Generally we take players from ages 10-19 years old. If there is a child or team younger who wishes to attend we interview the player and the parents to assess the potential for a successful and fulfilling experience.

What documents are required?

Two copies of birth certificate, insurance information card, passport, and drivers license (if available). A signed release form, and registration form filled out including any diseases or allergies the child may have. Also, please make us aware if for any reason why a child may have difficulties in being able to participate in any activities described.

If you have any questions that were not answered here, or, would like additional information, please feel free to contact Tighe at any time on (415) 308-0603.