

The Geography of Europe For Kids

By Rachel Bubb



Earlier I put together geography books for Asia (and Central Asia and the Middle East), Africa, South America, and Australia. I had in mind to do Europe but kept putting it off since I was busy doing other projects. I was also very intimidated putting this book together because each of these countries in Europe has such a long history and vivid culture. There's so much you can say about each and every place. If you can find good picture books and documentaries that go through the part of Europe you're going through in this book, it'll help geography come even more to life. At the end of the book are some ideas for this. One of the books that was a valuable help for me was the Eyewitness Atlas of the World (DK Publishing, 1994). Speaking of which, you'll need a good atlas to answer the map questions as you go through each country and region.

“We begin to see the lines we must go upon in teaching geography: for educative purposes, the child must learn such geography, and in such a way, that his mind shall therefore be stored with ideas, his imagination with images; for practical purposes he must learn such geography only as, the nature of his mind considered, he will be able to remember; in other words, he must learn what interests him. The educative and the practical run in one groove, and the geography lesson becomes the most charming occupation of the child's day.”

-Charlotte Mason (Home Education, page 273)



The York Minster in York, England

Copyright: April 2024 by Rachel Bubb
All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher except for the use of brief quotations.

Contact: Rachel Bubb
c/o 6443 El Camino Dr.
Redding, CA 96001

www.storiesfromchinaforkids.blogspot.com

www.inknewspaper.net

Table of Contents

1. Far West Europe: Portugal and Spain (Page 6)
2. The United Kingdom: Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England (Page 13)
3. Western Europe: France, Germany, Monaco, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, and Austria (Page 23)
4. Switzerland and Austria (Page 34)
5. Italy (Page 36)
6. The Balkans: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia (and Yugoslavia), Montenegro, Kosovo, Albania, and Macedonia (FYROM) (Page 43)
7. Greece and The Greek Islands (Page 50)
8. Eastern Europe: Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, and Ukraine (Page 54)
9. Far Eastern Europe: Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan (Page 66)
10. Central Europe: Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic, and Poland (Page 71)
11. Northeastern Europe: Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia (Page 76)
12. Russia (Page 81)
13. Scandinavia: Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland (Page 89)
14. Iceland (Page 95)
15. Ideas for Maps; For Further Reading; Notes, Sources, and Photo Credits (Page 97)

Introduction

Europe is such an interesting continent with so many countries that all have long histories, cultures, and languages. The continent has changed drastically in the last one hundred plus years, especially with World War I and World War II. They still find things buried in the ground from these wars. Europe is also full of castles, unique wildlife, and wonderful food. I've given a basic introduction to the countries in Europe. It's great if you can read a travel book of someone who's traveled through Europe as you go through European geography. Or, if you know anyone that lived in Europe for a time, you can interview them about how that part of Europe was like. Today there are numerous documentaries and shows on TV about different parts of Europe. At the back of the book are some ideas to get you started if you need them. On the next page is a map of Europe. Print out two copies of it. As you go through Europe's geography, color in each country with a different color. On the second copy, color in each geographical region as we go through it.

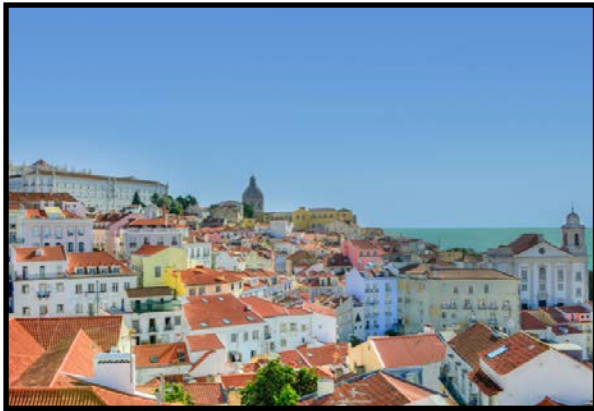


Europe



1. Far West Europe: Portugal and Spain

We'll first start with Portugal, the small country on the Western part of Spain. This country has a lot of coast since it's right along the Atlantic Ocean. That is why it explored the New World in the 1600s and the 1700s. They were good at building ships. Even today the capital city of Lisbon is famous as a shipping port. Of course, the country is famous for its seafood, which is often caught fresh off the coast. A huge earthquake hit Portugal in 1755 and most of Lisbon was destroyed and then rebuilt.



Lisbon

If you go further into the country, you might see lots of orchards in the hills, which are very beautiful. Most of the grapes are grown to make wine. In the southern part of the country (as well as in Spain) cork trees are grown. There

are also quite a few Eucalyptus trees in the mountains in Portugal. In your atlas look for Porto, one of the main cities along the coast in the north. The city is right where the Duoro River enters the country from the sea. Follow the coastline and find Lisbon, the capital of the country. Notice how it is right next to a bay, which the Tagus River runs into.

Follow along the southern coast and find the city of Sagres in your atlas, right at the Cape St. Vincent. A “cape” is an edge of a continent or a big piece of land that sticks out. Can you think of any other capes that you know? Perhaps one of the most famous capes is the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. Toward the south, can you find the Guadiana River? Note how it forms part of the border between Portugal and Spain before going through Portugal and then Spain.

Now we'll take a look at Spain. In the southern part find the Sierra Morena mountain range in your atlas and the slightly smaller Sierra de Segura range next to it. Right along the southern coast is another mountain range: the Sierra Nevada. Along the Eastern coast is the Valencia mountain range, which is famous for its olives. Then along the northern coast is Catalonia. In the far north lies the Pyrenees, which is a tall mountain range that separates Spain and France. There are so many mountains in Spain! While we're looking at mountains, see if you can also find the Galicia, the Cordillera Cantabrica, and the Basque Provinces. In the middle part of the country are the Sierra de Gredos and the Sierra de Guadarama. How many mountain ranges have "Sierra" in their name? It means a range of mountains.



Casa Blanca

Let's go back to the coast of Spain. In the south, can you find the Gulf of Cadiz in your atlas? Close by is the Strait of Gibraltar. This strait separates Europe from Africa. A strait is a narrow bit of water that separates one piece of land from another...it's like a road for water. From the Strait of Gibraltar you can look across the water and see Africa. If you follow along the coast, can you find Costa Blanca ("The White Coast" in English)? There are also some islands in the Mediterranean that belong to Spain: the Balearic Islands. There are also some islands off the northeastern coast of Africa called the Canary Islands, which belong to Spain. In the northern part of Spain is the Coast Brava, right next to France. Finally, can you find the Bay of Biscay? It's on the other side of Spain and France, in the north.

The capital of Spain is right in the middle of the country: Madrid. Close by are many beautiful grape orchards where wine is made. Speaking of orchards and wine, Valencia (which we talked about earlier) is also famous for its wine. One of Spain's most famous foods is from this part of the country: Paella (pay-ey-a). It changes a little from place to place but it is generally saffron flavored rice with vegetables and meat that are cooked in broth. Somewhat close by is Spain's other famous city: Barcelona. Can you find it on the eastern coast in your atlas? We talked about some of the mountains, but there are two big valleys in Spain: the Aragon Valley in the north (by the Pyrennees mountains) and the Andalusia Valley in the south (by the Sierra Morena mountains). Look at the map of Spain in your atlas and find some of the rivers. Do they run along the valleys? Do they all run into the ocean or the Mediterranean Sea? Which river is the longest?



Madrid, Spain