

ALLEGATO 5

IBERIAN PENINSULA

The first essential thing to know about Spain or Portugal is that they are not landlocked states, most of their boundaries are in fact

The wide access to the Mediterranean Sea and is great for overseas trade and cultural and technological exchanges.

Being the westernmost region of Europe helped in the discovery of America, and the narrow Strait of Gibraltar is strategically important and helps to connect Europe with

The second most important thing to consider is how mountainous the peninsula is. Spain is one of the mostcountries of Europe, with an average height of 660 meters or 2,165 feet, it's only surpassed by Switzerland, Austria and the microstates of Liechtenstein and

In the heart of Spain we have this big plateau called, which occupies most of the peninsula and is surrounded by mountains ranges, the Cantabrian Mountains to the, the Iberian System to the east, Sierra Morena to theand the Galician Massif to the northwest.

- **The Meseta Central** is split in two parts by the Central System, which is a mountain range that stretches fromto the Iberian System of Aragon.

As it's surrounded by many mountains and the average elevation is 600 meters, the climate iswith Continental characteristics.

That means that there's a high contrast of temperatures between day and night, summers are short and warm, and winters are long and cold.

Also rains are not very frequent, so the climate is more dry than theclimate and the terrain is arid.

What does all of this suggest?

1. Agriculture is difficult and water is a bit scarce, so that is a limitation to develop economically and to sustain a large population.
2. The mountains complicatelike building roads and railways

- **The Baetic Depression**, where the Guadalquivir River flows, between Sierra Morena and the Baetic System, and **the Ebro Valley** where the Ebro River flows, between the Iberian System and the Pyrenees: these regions are very fertile and suitable for

The highest mountain of the Iberian Peninsula, the Mulhacén, is in the, with an altitude of 3,478 m and the system continues underwater until it emerges again in the Balearic

On the other hand, the Pyrenees form the natural border between Spain and, that extends from the Bay of to the Mediterranean Sea.

Again, the have made trade and other kinds of exchanges more difficult, but at

the same time the mountains of Spain have prevented or at least made them more difficult. Spain has a defensive advantage and a privileged strategic location to control the Mediterranean and Atlantic access, but at the same time the orography makes trade, communications and cultural unification more difficult and expensive.

Natural disasters like, tsunamis, hurricanes or floods are extremely rare.

But water scarcity and desertification are a very serious threat in many regions of Spain, can only aggravate the problem.

Most **rivers** in Spain are and carry small volumes of water on an basis.

The south-eastern region of the Iberian Peninsula always has problems of water shortages.

Northern Spain has an with regular rains: the problem is that the mountains are too close to the ocean and it's impossible to make use of that rain.

<i>GLOSSARY (Oxford dictionary)</i>	
landlocked	almost or completely surrounded by land
trade	the activity of buying and selling or of exchanging goods or services between people or countries
westernmost	located furthest west
narrow	measuring a short distance from one side to the other
Average	calculated by adding several amounts together, finding a total, and dividing the total by the number of amounts (=media)
To stretch	Make something longer (=allungarsi)
Dry/arid	Without water (=secco/arido)
Scarce	there is not enough of it and it is only available in small quantities
railway	a track with rails on which trains run
To flow	(=scorrere)
suitable	appropriate
until	(=finché)
At least	(=almeno)
orography	Part of physical geography that studies the formation and features of mountains
<u>desertification</u>	the process of becoming or making something a desert
<u>threat</u>	(=minaccia)
To carry	To transport
Shortage	Vd."scarce"
Close	Near to

IBERIAN PENINSULA

The first essential thing to know about Spain or Portugal is that they are not landlocked states, most of their boundaries are in fact **water**.

The wide access to the Mediterranean Sea and **Atlantic Ocean** is great for overseas trade and cultural and technological exchanges.

Being the westernmost region of Europe helped in the discovery of America, and the narrow Strait of Gibraltar is strategically important and helps to connect Europe with **Africa**.

The second most important thing to consider is how mountainous the peninsula is.

Spain is one of the most **mountainous** countries of Europe, with an average height of 660 meters or 2,165 feet, it's only surpassed by Switzerland, Austria and the microstates of Liechtenstein and **Andorra**.

In the heart of Spain we have this big plateau called **Meseta Central**, which occupies most of the peninsula and is surrounded by mountains ranges, the Cantabrian Mountains to the **north**, the Iberian System to the east, Sierra Morena to the **south** and the Galician Massif to the northwest.

- **The Meseta Central** is split in two parts by the Central System, which is a mountain range that stretches from **Portugal** to the Iberian System of Aragon.

As it's surrounded by many mountains and the average elevation is 600 meters, the climate is **Mediterranean** with Continental characteristics.

That means that there's a high contrast of temperatures between day and night, summers are short and warm, and winters are long and cold.

Also rains are not very frequent, so the climate is more dry than the **Mediterranean** climate and the terrain is arid.

What does all of this suggest?

3. Agriculture is difficult and water is a bit scarce, so that is a limitation to develop economically and to sustain a large population.

4. The mountains complicate **communications** like building roads and railways

- **The Baetic Depression**, where the Guadalquivir River flows, between Sierra Morena and the Baetic System, and **the Ebro Valley** where the Ebro River flows, between the Iberian System and the Pyrenees: these regions are very fertile and suitable for **agriculture**.

The highest mountain of the Iberian Peninsula, the Mulhacén, is in the **Baetic System**, with an altitude of 3,478 m and the system continues underwater until it emerges again in the Balearic **Islands**.

On the other hand, the Pyrenees form the natural border between Spain and **France**, that extends from the Bay of **Biscay** to the Mediterranean Sea.

Again, the **Pyrenees** have made trade and other kinds of exchanges more difficult, but at the same time the mountains of Spain have prevented **invasions** or at least made them more difficult.

Spain has a defensive advantage and a privileged strategic location to control the Mediterranean and Atlantic access, but at the same time the orography makes trade, communications and cultural unification more difficult and expensive.

Natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes or floods are extremely rare.

But water scarcity and desertification are a very serious threat in many regions of Spain, and climate change can only aggravate the problem.

Most **rivers** in Spain are short and carry small volumes of water on an irregular basis.

The south-eastern region of the Iberian Peninsula always has problems of water shortages.

Northern Spain has an Oceanic climate with regular rains: the problem is that the mountains are too close to the ocean and it's impossible to make use of that rain.