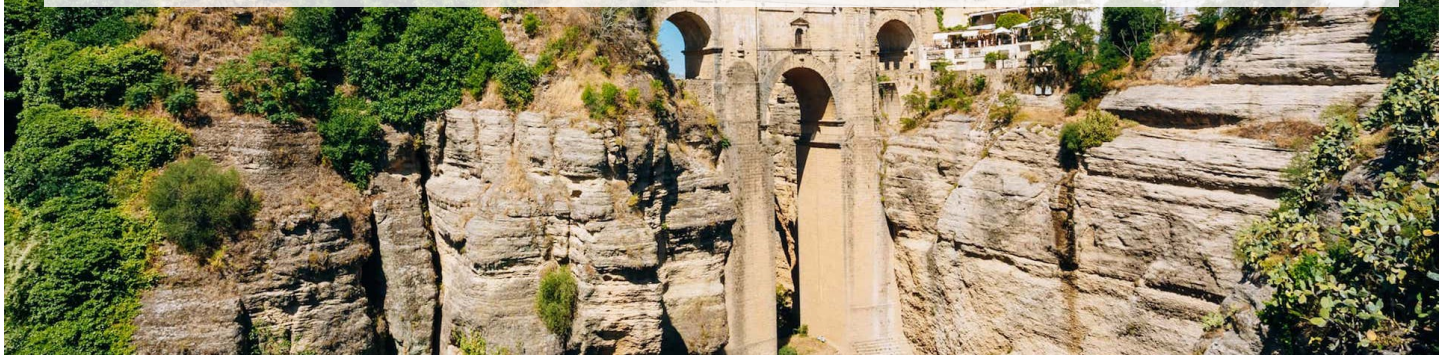


EXPLORE!

Andalucia by Bike
13 days

Spain - Trip code CSP



Andalucia by Bike

Discover the beauty and diversity of Andalucia as we explore the region by bike. We cycle on quiet backroads with varied scenery, from stunning natural parks to deserts, canyon lands and mountains. Along the way we discover a rich Moorish heritage reflected in the food, language and architecture, most notably in Seville, Cordoba and Granada. We also spend time in the windsurfing town of Tarifa, the impressive location of Ronda and a unique cave hotel in Guadix.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Scenic and varied cycle routes** - Beautiful and rewarding cycling through ancient Mediterranean forests, visiting Natural Parks, white villages and Canyonlands
- ★ **Seville, Granada & Cordoba** - Charming Andalucian cities with a fascinating Moorish legacy
- ★ **Sierra Nevada Foothills** - 2 days of cycling amid spectacular desert and canyonland scenery
- ★ **Natural Parks** - Cycle through the forests of the Alcornocales National Park and the mountains of southern Spain
- ★ **Ronda** - Visit the dramatic town high above El Tajo gorge

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

CYCLING GRADE:**Moderate**

Medium length rides suitable for cyclists who are used to undulating routes with occasional energetic climbs. Mainly on trails and quiet roads and you should have a reasonable level of fitness.

GROUP SIZE:**10 - 16**

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Trip starts Malaga

Arrive Malaga and check in to our hotel. There will be a short orientation walk around the old town before dinner.



Accommodation: Hotel Zenit (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Cycle with views over the Straits of Gibraltar to Tarifa

We start today with a bus ride to Alcornocales Natural Park which should take around two hours. After allowing time for bike fitting and once you are comfortable with your bike for the holiday we start our first ride - exploring the surroundings on a good off-road section, leaving from the Straits of Gibraltar view point. The route takes in some great views of the straits and across to Africa. The dirt track eventually becomes paved until reaching the lovely Andalucian town of Tarifa, on the southernmost tip of mainland Europe where we spend the night. The rest of the afternoon is left free to explore the charming historic centre of Tarifa.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 29 kilometres (330 metres total accumulated ascent and 630 metres descent).



Accommodation: Hostal Alborada (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available

DAY 3 - Ride through white villages of Grazalema Natural Park; continue to Ronda

This morning we leave Tarifa by bus and drive for about 2 hours up into another section of the Alcornocales Natural Park, this time to Puerto de Galis. From here we ride and enjoy the wonderful scenery and natural beauty of this region with typical Mediterranean forest until we reach the 'white village' of Benaolan in Grazalema Natural Park. Today's ride is on undulating terrain for the first 25km, then a 8km downhill followed by a 5.5km long climb that has an elevation gain of approx 300m. It's all downhill from the top of the climb until the end of the ride in Benaolan. From here we drive the short distance to our hotel in the historic town of Ronda, dramatically perched high above El Tajo gorge. You have the option to cycle the remainder to the hotel in Ronda which includes another climb.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 50 kilometres (1030 metres total accumulated ascent and 1100 metres descent).



Accommodation: Hotel Polo (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - Ride on 'via verde' cycle path; drive to Seville

We've allowed some time this morning to explore a little of Ronda before we leave at around 11am on our bus ride to the 'white village' of Olvera. Today's cycle ride starts here on our first 'via verde' - former railway tracks that have been converted into dedicated cycle routes. We follow the via verde downhill to Puerto Serrano from where we drive (1hr) on to Seville. The capital of Andalucía overflows with life and variety. It was originally divided into a working class quarter in Triana and a high-born area in Santa Cruz. Ramparts dating back to the 13th century, the Alcázar and the Giralda, all remind us of earlier Moorish occupation and later buildings reflect the Mudejar architectural style, a mixture of Moorish and Christian styles.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 34 kilometres (200 metres total accumulated ascent and 450 metres descent).



Accommodation: Hostal Sierpes (or similar)



Simple Hotel



Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - Explore Seville on foot

After a morning orientation tour by the Explore Leader the rest of today has been left free for you to explore this beautiful city. We recommend a visit to the Alcázar, a wonderful Moorish and Mudejar royal palace and the impressive Cathedral with its imposing

Giralda tower - originally a 13th century minaret.

No cycling today.



Accommodation: Hostal Sierpes (or similar)



Simple Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Cycle along the Guadalquivir Valley to Cordoba and orientation tour

After a short drive of about one hour east from Seville we leave the city behind and reach a point near Ecija from where we cycle on quiet backroads. The valley scenery is complemented by the lack of motorised transport, so we can enjoy our cycle in relative peace. The cycle route is generally on the flat following the Guadalquivir Valley and leads us into Cordoba. Standing on the banks of the Guadalquivir river, Córdoba was the first of Spain's important Moorish cities established in 719AD. It was the most enlightened of the Moorish period with one of Europe's leading universities of the time and is nowadays considered one of the most beautiful cities in Spain. Some time later this afternoon there will be an orientation tour by your Explore leader before dinner.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 55 kilometres (450 metres total accumulated ascent and 550 metres descent).



Accommodation: Hostal Santa Ana (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 7 - Explore Cordoba

Today has been left free for you to explore the wonderful city of Cordoba. We recommend a visit to the renowned Mezquita (optional), an extraordinary and unique building where instead of destroying the original mosque the Catholic king decided to build a cathedral within it. The early massive structure dates back to the 8th century, its roof supported by a forest of 850 coloured columns. In the evening we suggest you take in some traditional flamenco music and dancing (optional).

No cycling today.



Accommodation: Hostal Santa Ana (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available

DAY 8 - Drive to the northern slopes of the Sierra Nevada; desert cycle to Guadix

We leave Cordoba this morning and drive for about 3 hours further east to the northern slopes of the Sierra Nevada, Spain's highest mountain range on the Iberian Peninsula. For the next couple of nights we will sleep in a unique cave hotel in Benalua de Guadix and before starting our ride today we will drop our luggage off and check in. The cycle route today starts from the town of Calahorra, passing through several villages before reaching Guadix and finally right the way back to our hotel. The Tour Leader cycles with the group today.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 35 kilometres (200 metres total accumulated ascent and 530 metres descent).



Accommodation: Cuevas la Granja Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 9 - Cycling in the stunning desert of Hoya de Guadix

Today we cycle in the spectacular valleys of the Guadix Hoya, a desert-like landscape reminiscent of Arizona. It was in these areas where in the 1960s the famous Italian Western movies were shot. The whole area was once a very fertile region with settlements from Megalithic times boasting hundreds of Dolmens (stone tombs) from those days. We return to our cave hotel from Hernan Valle village, taking a short taxi transfer. The Tour Leader cycles with the group today.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 43 kilometres (700 metres total accumulated ascent and 400 metres descent).



Accommodation: Cuevas la Granja Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 10 - Ride the old mountain road to Granada

We begin with a short drive to La Peza (30 mins), where we start our ride and what better way to warm up those muscles than a steady ascent for a few kilometres (again on a car-free road). Then it's free-wheel time on this old mountain road to Granada.

Passing lakes and excellent mountain scenery, with just a few flat or uphill sections, we descend all the way into Granada and to our hotel. After checking in, we can take a spot of lunch in one of the many excellent bars or restaurants and then the afternoon is free. You may like the idea of an optional visit to the ancient Arabic Bath to relax those aching muscles. The Tour Leader cycles with the group today.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 40 kilometres (550 metres total accumulated ascent and 830 metres descent).



Accommodation: Pension Suecia (or similar)



Simple Pension



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 11 - Explore Granada; included guided visit to Alhambra and Generalife

Today we have included a guided visit to the remarkable Alhambra Palace and Generalife gardens. In 1239 Muhammad al-Ahmar, founder of the Nasrid dynasty and Sultan of Granada, began work on this, the finest example of Moorish architecture outside the Arab world. The fabulous decoration in stucco, both inside and outside the buildings, reveals the purest expression of a sophisticated civilisation just before its decline. The Generalife, the summer residence of the Caliphs, are rated among the top ten landscaped gardens of the world. The rest of the day has been left free for you to explore the main points of interest including the Albaicín, the old Moorish quarter where many Islamic traditions are retained, giving the city its characteristic look of white walls and narrow streets. There is a balcony plaza with spectacular views across to the Alhambra and Generalife with the Sierra Nevada as a backdrop. When dusk falls, we suggest a stroll around the old Moorish Quarter to see its illuminated patios.

No Cycling today.



Accommodation: Pension Suecia (or similar)



Simple Pension



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 12 - Scenic cycle through the mountains to Velez; drive to Malaga

We leave Granada this morning and drive south into the mountains, reaching Puerto Alazores pass (1040m) after about an hour and a half where our final ride commences. The route has a downhill bias and leads us towards Velez Malaga close to the Mediterranean coast. We end the ride here and pack up the bikes before the drive to Malaga (45 mins) and check into hotel.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 39 kilometres (300 metres total accumulated ascent and 1300 metres descent).



Accommodation: Hotel Zenit (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 13 - Trips ends Malaga

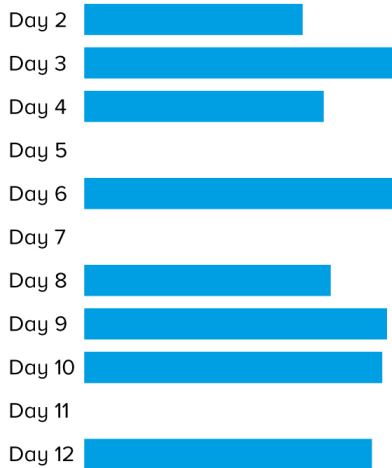
The trip ends this morning in Malaga after breakfast.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

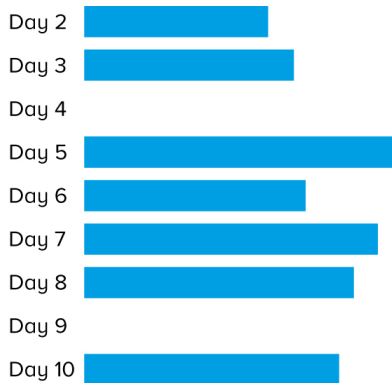
Cycling information

DAILY DISTANCE



Distance_Chart_CSP_2018

DAILY DISTANCE



Distance_Chart_CSP_2019

General cycling information

On this tour we cycle 325 km over eight days (an average of 41 km per day). We generally cycle on quiet tarmac roads (80%) with a few days on dirt tracks or compacted gravel cycle paths (20%). Most of the rides are on gently undulating terrain with more pronounced uphill sections on days 3, 9 and 10. Each day a support vehicle (with room for 2 passengers) carries the luggage from point to point, accompanying the ride wherever necessary. On Day 4 the support vehicle cannot follow the bikes on the Greenway and will meet the cycle group at the start and finish of the cycling. The cycle rides are not accompanied by a cycle guide, except on days 8, 9 and 10 when the TL will cycle with the group. On the other days clear instructions are provided by the Tour Leader to cycle individually or as a group. We have graded the route as moderate.

Bike included

27 gear Stevens Galant Lite hybrid bike.

Electric bikes (e-bikes) are available for an additional cost for the duration of the holiday. Please contact us for more details or to request your e-bike.

Bike information

Your included bike is a 27 gear Stevens Galant hybrid or similar make and model and will be the correct frame size for your height. A pannier and water bottle holder are included as well as the facility to fit your own pedals or saddle if you wish to bring them. We provide spare parts and take care of the day to day maintenance. All you need to bring is your own helmet and water bottle.

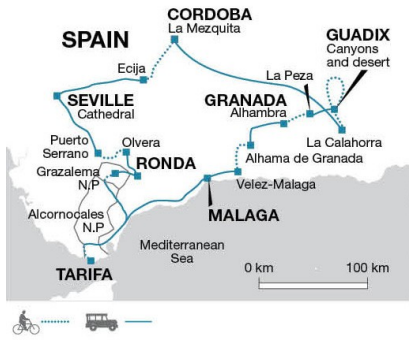
Electric bikes (available for an additional cost) will be the same Stevens Galant bike fitted with an Urban Fun e-bike kit upgrade. Please note this is with a unisex step-through frame. Please contact us for more details or to request your e-bike.

Cycling grade

Moderate

Why book this trip

Unlike many other operators, we include the hire of your bike in the overall cost of the holiday: you don't need to bring your own or pay extra to hire one locally. We also provide a support vehicle, spare parts and take care of day to day bike maintenance. All you need bring is your own helmet.



Map_CSP_2018



CSP_Map_2019

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 12



Transport

Bus
Bicycle



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader / Driver
Driver(s)



Accommodation

8 nights standard hotel
2 nights simple hotel
2 nights simple pension

Trip information

Country information

Spain

Climate

Overall, spring, early summer and autumn are ideal times for a Spanish trip - though the weather varies enormously from region to region. The high central plains suffer from fierce extremes, stiflingly hot in summer, bitterly cold and swept by freezing winds in winter. The Atlantic coast, in contrast, has a tendency to damp and mist, and a relatively brief, humid summer. The Mediterranean south is warm virtually all year round. Spain's Islands the Canaries and Balaerics experience very mild winters and warm summers making them ideal year round destinations.

Time difference to GMT

+1

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Roman Catholic

Language

Castilian Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Basque

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Seville - Casa de Pilatos €6.00 pp; Giralda Cathedral €9.00 pp, Parque Maria Luisa (free entry).
Cordoba - Flamenco show €20.00 pp; Local guide for Mezquita and Juderia €120.00 per group.
Granada - Tapas evening €25.00; Cathedral €5.00; Royal Chapel €4.00.

Clothing

When cycling: quick drying cycle tops, padded cycle shorts, lightweight wind and water proof jacket and warmer breathable layers where local conditions require.

General: Pack essentially for mild or hot weather depending on the time of the year.

Footwear

If you are not bringing cycle shoes then try to bring stiff-soled shoes as these are better for cycling - transmitting your energy into the pedals more efficiently. This becomes more relevant and recommended the more demanding the grade and distances to cover. SPD cycle shoes are not well suited to tours that combine sightseeing with cycling. Comfortable shoes, trainers, sandals or flip flops are useful when not on the bike.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

We recommend you bring a daypack and one main piece of luggage (total allowance: 44lb/20kg) which will be transported between hotels while you cycle. Check the bike details section to see if a pannier or handlebar bag is provided on the bike.

Equipment

On all Explore cycle holidays we strongly recommend you bring along and wear your cycle helmet. It is a legal requirement in Spain to wear a helmet that meets current safety criteria. In case of an accident resulting in personal injury, certain insurance policies are invalidated in cases where a helmet was not being worn.

Cycle glasses to protect against dust, pollen and the sun, padded cycle gloves and a water bottle or water delivery system (e.g. camelback or platypus) are also useful. You may choose to bring your own gel seat cover for added comfort. If a handle bar bag or pannier is not provided (check bike details) then you may like to bring a small rucksack to wear while cycling. Other items to consider bringing are a sunhat and sun cream, torch, earplugs and insect repellent. Please carry some or all of your cycling equipment e.g. helmet as part of your hand luggage.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Country Information

Spain

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£8.00 - 12.00

Dinner price

£16.00 - 20.00

Beer price

£1.50 - 2.50 (depending on the region/area in Spain)

Water price

£1.4

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Euros

Recommended Currency For Exchange

We recommend you take the majority of your spending money in Euros cash.

Where To Exchange

We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

ATM Availability

In cities and most major towns.

Credit Card Acceptance

Visa and Mastercard are generally accepted in larger restaurants and some shops.

Travellers Cheques

Not recommended.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Bicycle

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

Standard - Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Simple - These are usually small, family-run hostels, pensions or guesthouses which provide a no-frills experience with adequate amenities and service standards. Not all rooms will be en suite.

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Spain: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange

appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom. Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Spain

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory but Tetanus is usually recommended as a precaution. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.
