



## Trekking in Spain - Picos de Europa

SPAIN - TRIP CODE PC

WALKING AND TREKKING

### Why book this trip?

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A week-long trekking holiday into the beautiful high mountain scenery of the Picos de Europa National Park. Explore the area in depth with walks in the unspoilt and wild landscapes of the western, central and eastern massifs.

- **Sotres** - Stay in a small family -run hotel in the highest village and enjoy JuanJo and Sonia's hearty homemade food
- **Garganta de Cares** - Walk along cliff-cut pathways through this spectacular gorge
- **Aliva valley** - Take the exhilarating Fuente D' e cable car to enjoy stunning views



**INCLUDED MEALS**  
Breakfast: 7  
Lunch: 6  
Dinner: 6



**TRIP STAFF**  
Explore Tour  
Leader  
Driver(s)



**TRANSPORT**  
Bus  
4WD



**ACCOMMODATION**  
7 nights  
comfortable hotel



**WALKING GRADE:**  
Moderate



**GROUP SIZE:**  
10 - 16

## Itinerary

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

### DAY 1 - Join trip at Bilbao Airport. Drive to the tranquil mountain town of Sotres

Our trip begins in the Arrivals Hall at Bilbao Airport (BCO) at 10.30 am. If you would like to join the complimentary airport transfer today, the latest time your flight can arrive is 10.00am. We will travel together as a group to our hotel in Sotres, a three hour drive away. Sotres is the highest village in the Picos, situated between the central and eastern massifs and within the designated Biosphere Reserve. It is an ideal base for exploring the spectacular mountain landscape.

Our comfortable base for the week is the family ran Casa Cipriano hotel, located in the heart of the Picos de Europa mountain range. The rooms are simple yet cosy and feature tiled floors, wooden furniture and an en suite bathroom. The hotel features a bar as well as a restaurant serving home cooked food, which we'll enjoy tonight.



**ACCOMMODATION:**  
Casa Cipriano Hotel (or similar)

**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



**SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE**



## DAY 2 - Spectacular ridge walk with views of all three massifs of the Picos National Park

We start our day with a short transfer to El Collado de la Caballar (1,100m), the starting point for today's walk. We start with a gentle descent to Tobaos Majada (900m) then start our ascent to Collado de Pasadoir (1,215m). We follow the ridge through the pastures of Portudera, Todrin and Tambrin with some spectacular views (weather permitting) along the ridge of all three massifs before we start our descent to the outskirts of the Arenas de Cabrales - here we join and follow an original cobbled roman road for one and a half kilometres, returning to Sotres for the night.

Today's 17 kilometre walk is expected to take around seven hours with approximately 350 metres of ascent and 550 metres of descent.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Casa Cipriano Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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## DAY 3 - Trek to Vega de Urriello Refuge at the foot of the iconic Naranjo de Bulnes mountain

This morning we drive the short distance down to the collection of red-roofed buildings known as Invernales de Cabao and cross the river. Then, ascending along a series of switch-backs, we gain height quickly to reach a viewpoint looking back towards Sotres. The track levels out now, ascending more gradually onto a plateau. Here stands the tiny hamlet of Pandebano, where, in AD718, a battle took place between the Visigothic Christians and the remnants of a somewhat depleted Moorish army. Leaving our vehicle, we walk up to a 'saddle', where the huge monolith of the Naranjo de Bulnes (Pico Urriellu 2,519m) comes into view. Rearing straight up from the surrounding rockscape, this rust-coloured mountain is the famous iconic image of the Picos. We walk up to the base where there is a refuge and the chance to see climbers attempting to scale the improbable sheer face.

Today's 16 kilometre walk is expected to take around six-and-a-half hours with 800 metres of descent.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Casa Cipriano Hotel (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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#### **DAY 4 - Hike through beech forest to Treviso. Drive to the medieval town of Potes.**

We start this morning with a short drive to Jito de Escarandi from where we start our walk at 1,395m. We follow an old shepherds' paths down through the Valdediezma beech forest and pastures to Sobra Valley and up to Treviso where we will stop for a lunch break en route. After lunch we will continue down the Balcon de Pilatos to Urdon where we will meet our bus to take us on to Potes where we stay for the night. The medieval town of Potes centres around the river with stone bridges, cobbled streets and historical buildings.

Today's 10 kilometre walk is expected to take around five hours with 1,150 metres of descent.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Hotel Valdecoro (or similar)



**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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#### **DAY 5 - Take the spectacular Fuente De Cable Car, walk down into the Aliva valley.**

Today we drive to Fuente Dé making a visit to the Santo Toribio de Liebana Monastery on the way. We take the cable car up 1,000 metres to the rugged high plateaux of the Picos to be greeted with panoramic views of the national park. We walk through alpine meadows down the Aliva glacial valley to Sotres, stopping for a picnic lunch and to see the abandoned Las Manforas mines.

Today's 18 kilometre walk is expected to take around five hours with 100 metres of ascent and 1,000 metres of descent.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Casa Cipriano Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### DAY 6 - Trek through the imposing Cares Gorge to Cain

Today we drive down through Alpine scenery to Puente Poncebos at 218 metres. Here the medieval pack horse bridge spans the Cares river. This marks the starting point for the walk through the dramatic gorge of the Garganta del Cares - a cleft over 1000 m deep and some 12 km long. The path literally cuts into the cliffs in places; only with the aid of tunnels and bridges is it possible to traverse its entire length. This is one of the highlights of any visit to northern Spain and is a six hour round trip on foot, although walkers can turn back at any point and return to Poncebos where there are places to eat and drink if you wish before we return by vehicle to Sotres for a well-earned rest.

Today's 24 kilometre walk is expected to take around six hours with with 300 metres of ascent and descent.



ACCOMMODATION:  
Casa Cipriano Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

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### DAY 7 - Ascend Trasmacondiu Col (1,850m). Picnic lunch on the Andara Vegas pastures

We return to Jito de Escarandi for the start of our walk to the Caseton Refuge (1,225m) via Trasmacondiu Col (1,850m) and the Andara Vegas pastures. From the Col we descend around Macondiu mountain

(summit 2,050m) to the refuge for lunch, then continue back to Jito de Escarandi (1,300m) where the minibus will be waiting to return us to Sotres. We will arrange a transfer back to the hotel or you may choose to walk the final 30 minutes back to Sotres.

Today's 12 kilometre walk is expected to take around four and half hours with with 150 metres of ascent and 550 metres of descent.



**ACCOMMODATION:**

Casa Cipriano Hotel (or similar)

**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

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**DAY 8 - Drive to Bilbao Airport where the trip ends**

Departing the mountains very early this morning, we drive to Bilbao Airport (BCO) where we will arrive at about 8.30am and this is where the holiday ends. The earliest time you should book a flight to depart today is 10.30 am.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

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## Trip information

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### Climate and 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	Plugs	Religion
+1	2 Pin Round	Roman Catholic

## Language

Castilian Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Basque

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## Budgeting and packing

### Clothing

Bring light and comfortable clothing that can be layered according to the temperature. The weather conditions in the mountains can be changeable, and it can become cool, especially at night, so bring warmer layers. Tops made from wicking materials which keep you drier and warmer are recommended as a base layer, and walking trousers are preferable to trousers of heavier material such as jeans. A waterproof jacket is essential at all times in case of rain and wind.

- Breathable wind and waterproof jacket (you may also wish to bring waterproof trousers)
- T-shirts
- Long sleeved tops
- Sunhat
- Long trousers
- Shorts (if you prefer to walk in them)
- Swimwear and towel
- Midlayer Fleece/pullover
- Socks (liner and thicker pair)
- Insulated jacket
- Gloves and scarf or buff

### Footwear

We recommend you bring walking boots with ankle support- leather or fabric are both fine. Make sure that your boots are worn-in and comfortable before the start of the trip. Also trainers or sandals for relaxing and general wear. We suggest that on international flights you either carry your walking boots in your hand luggage or wear them - should your luggage be lost or delayed, your own boots are the one thing that will be irreplaceable.

### Luggage

20kg

### Luggage: On tour

Bring one main piece of luggage and a 20-30 litre day sack is recommended. You will need to carry what you need for the day which may include a raincoat, jumper, camera, sun-cream, water and picnic lunch. On hot days you will carry fewer clothes but more drinking water.

## Equipment

- Sunglasses
  - Sun cream
  - Small Torch (with spare batteries and bulb)
  - Camera
  - Walking poles (recommended)
  - Personal toiletries
  - Personal first aid kit - On each walk a first aid kit is carried but you should have your own blister kit, supply of plasters, aspirin and other essentials.
  - Insect repellent
  - Small waterproof dry bag (for items such as your mobile phone)
  - Reusable water bottle (minimum 1 litre) - Get 15% discount on a Water-to-Go bottle [www.explore.co.uk/about-us/responsible-travel/water-to-go-discount-with-explore](http://www.explore.co.uk/about-us/responsible-travel/water-to-go-discount-with-explore)
  - Lunch bag/Tupperware (for packed lunches)
- Plastic Bags - If you pack bits and pieces in plastic bags inside your day sack they will stay dry in case of rain.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. You may however, want to recognise a leader that has done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It is a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we would recommend £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline.

### Local crew

Although voluntary, tipping is a recognised 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. Accordingly, you should allow approximately £20 of local currency for tipping. In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leader may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the trip.

## 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	Dinner price	Beer price
£8.00 - 12.00	£16.00 - 20.00	£1.50 - 3.50 (depending on the region/area in Spain)



**Water price**

£1.4

**Foreign Exchange****Local currency      Recommended Currency For Exchange**

Euros

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.

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**Transport, Accommodation & Meals****Transport Information**

Bus, 4WD

**Accommodation notes**

Situated in the heart of the region's highest village of Sotres, Casa Cipriano is a small family-run hotel perfectly located as a base for exploring the spectacular and little known Picos de Europa mountain range in the heart of northern Spain's Asturias region. A walk through the village leads to a viewpoint of the surrounding peaks.

The hotel features a bar as well as a restaurant serving home cooked food - not to be missed is the traditional and very delicious La Fabada Asturiana, a hearty soup made with beans, chorizo and black pudding. In winter an open log fire makes for a comfy nook in the bar, whilst in summer the terrace outside is a popular spot for guests and locals alike. Next door the family also runs a small shop, selling everything from small locally made souvenirs to cheeses and cured hams.

Rooms are simple yet cosy and feature tiled floors, wooden furniture and an en suite bathroom with a shower over a small bath tub. Central heating during the winter ensures a comfortable stay. There is a TV and hairdryer in all rooms.

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**Essential Information**

## Government Travel Safety 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, Commonwealth & Development 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.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://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 receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from

the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

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**

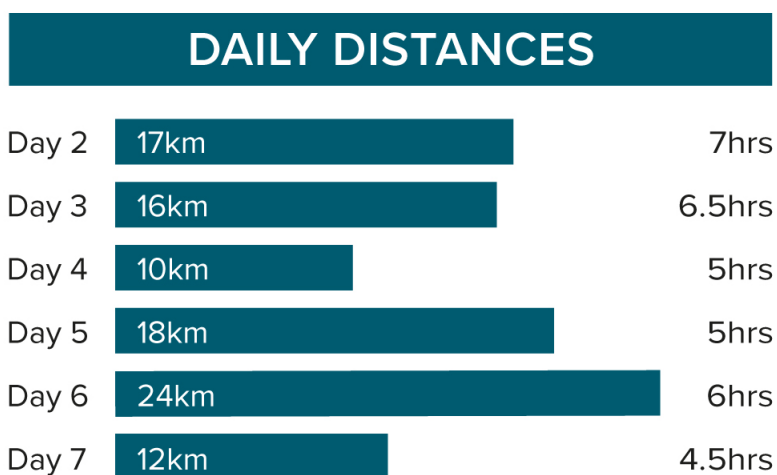
### **Vaccinations**

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.

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### Walking and Trekking information



### Walking grade

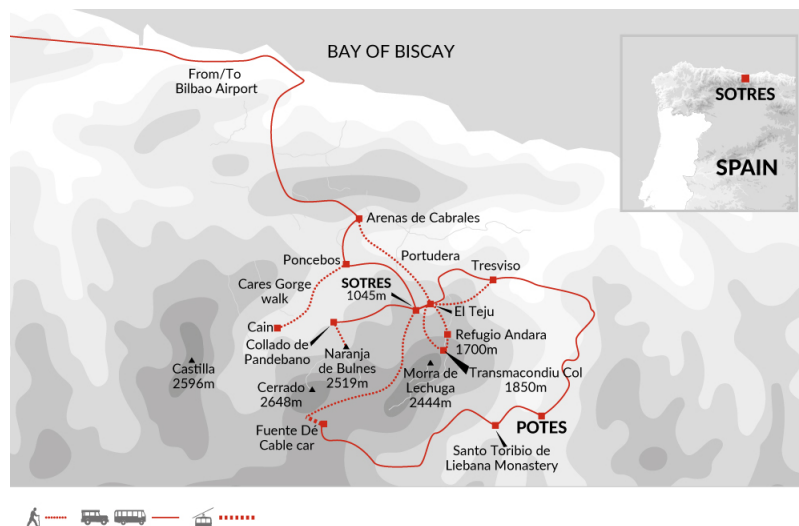
Moderate

### Trek details

Walks on 6 days for between 4.5 to 7 hours on mountain paths. Significant ascent and descent on most days, over 1,000m descent on days 5 and 6. The trails are good and well-defined with some scree.

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### Additional Information



## Why book this trip

Situated in the heart of the region's highest village of Sotres, Casa Cipriano is a small family-run hotel perfectly located as a base for exploring the spectacular and little known Picos de Europa mountain range in the heart of northern Spain's Asturias region. A walk through the village leads to a viewpoint of the surrounding peaks. In the evenings relax in the cosy hotel bar and enjoy JuanJo and Sonia's hearty homemade food - on most days breakfast, a picnic lunch and dinner are provided. Learn about the culture of the shepherds of the Picos de Europa and the traditional way of making cheese, tasting at the local restaurants.

## Reviews

 <p><b>AWARD WINNING EXPLORE LEADERS</b></p>	 <p><b>PRICE GUARANTEE PROMISE</b></p>	 <p><b>AIRPORT TRANSFERS</b></p>
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