



Puenbo Birding Garden
Hotel and Tours

ESPAÑA

ESPAÑA

5 or 8 days

Itinerary

ESPAÑA

Spain offers the greatest biodiversity in Europe as it has two distinct bioclimatic regions, the Euro-Siberian Atlantic to the north and the Mediterranean to the south, along with a rich geography with spectacular mountain ranges.

This natural beauty is accompanied by a vast historical, cultural and gastronomic legacy that we can learn about during this fantastic 13-day tour, with the expert local naturalist guide, Pablo Perez.

ITINERARY

Madrid, the capital of Spain, will be the point of arrival and departure on this tour, being able to request extra days to visit the city if desired.

During the 13 days of the tour the main guide, Pablo, will drive a van with a maximum of six visitors through the Spanish geography, always looking to stay in charming rural hotels, linked to the natural environment to be visited and including possible visits to rich historical and cultural elements and charismatic wine cellars.

DAY 1/ MAY 5 - MADRID In the evening visitors will meet at the hotel for a reception and presentation of the trip.

DAY 2 /MAY 6 - LAGUNA DEL TARAY At 7:00 a.m. we will leave Madrid early in the morning, heading south towards Toledo, where we will visit one of the main inland wetlands of the country in the middle of the Biosphere Reserve of La Mancha Húmeda.

El Taray has a network of hiding places prepared for the observation and photography of different species, from birds of prey (Marsh Harrier, Iberian imperial Eagle, Bonelli's Eagle, Black and Red Kites, Common Buzzard) to aquatic birds (waders, ducks, herons, flamingos, storks) and marsh and migratory passerines (warblers, whiskers, nightingales, shrikes, stonechats, chiffchaffs, gnatcatchers, bearded reedling).

During the visit to the wetland and the observation from the hides we will have the opportunity to look for a large number of species typical of the Mediterranean area. After lunch we will approach the nearby cereal plains to look for steppe birds (Great Bustard, Little Bustard, Iberian Sandgrouse, Stone-curlew) and birds of prey (Montagu's Harrier). If there is something characteristic of Castilla-La Mancha, as Cervantes said, it is its historic windmills, which we can visit in the afternoon before settling into the hotel.

DAY 3 / MAY 7 - MOUNTAINS OF TOLEDO A short distance from Toledo, we will enter the so-called Montes de Toledo, a mountain range of hills covered with holm oaks, a typical Mediterranean mountain of the center-south of the peninsula. In this area, wild ungulates abound, with deer, wild boar, roe deer and fallow deer, and large Black and Griffon vultures fly continuously, but the real protagonist is the Iberian Lynx, a seriously endangered feline endemic to the Iberian Peninsula.

Iberian Lynx At midday we will visit other meadow areas for unique birds of prey such as the Iberian imperial Eagle and in the afternoon, we will visit the charismatic medieval city of Toledo, where we will sleep nearby.

At midday we will visit other meadow areas for unique birds of prey such as the Iberian imperial Eagle and in the afternoon, we will visit the charismatic medieval city of Toledo, where we will sleep nearby.

DAY 4 / MAY 8 - MONFRAGÜE NATIONAL PARK We will leave the hotel in Toledo to head towards the region of Extremadura, one of the great ornithological destinations in Spain. There we will enter the charismatic Monfragüe National Park in search of good sightings of Black, Griffon, Egyptian Vultures, Black Stork and Iberian imperial Eagle.

In the surroundings of the observation points we will enjoy the presence of the Solitary rock Thrush and late in the day we will try to spot the king of the Iberian nights, the Eurasian Eagle Owl.

For tonight we will stay at the National Park's guesthouse in the heart of the protected area.

Eurasian Eagle Owl

DAY 5 / MAY 9 - LLANOS DE CACERES- TRUJILLO- VILLAFAFILA

From Monfragüe we will approach the so-called Llanos de Cáceres in Santa Marta de Magasca, an excellent place for steppe birds, such as the endangered Little Bustard. Next to them we will be able to observe the typical larks of the agricultural plains of the south of the peninsula (Calandra Lark, Crested Lark, Thekla Lark, Common Moorhen), next to birds of prey such as the Booted Eagle or the Blue-winged Kite, species that are gradually expanding further north following a trend related to climate change.

After this morning dedicated to birdwatching, we will head to the emblematic city of Trujillo for lunch. In the afternoon we will head north along the Ruta de la Plata, crossing the province of Salamanca to reach Zamora. We will stay in the vicinity of the Natural Reserve of Villafafila, a famous ornithological enclave where the largest population of Great Bustard in Spain and the world is located.

DAY 6 / MAY 10 – VILLAFAFILA SOMIEDO

At first light we will walk the paths around Villafáfila in search of steppe birds, but not only, as the Reserve has several endorheic lagoons that concentrate a large number of waterfowl.

This will be our last stop in the Mediterranean and pseudo-steppe area of the peninsula before a radical change of environment to enter the mountains of the north of the peninsula, a much wetter and greener region.

Before arriving in Somiedo, we will stop at the Pardevalles winery located in Valdebimbre to enjoy a short wine tour and a wine tasting.

Our next destination will be another emblematic area of the Cantabrian Mountain range, the Natural Park of Somiedo in Asturias, where our main objective will be the observation of the Cantabrian brown bear.

DAY 7 / MAY 11 - SOMIEDO

We will spend the day in the Natural Park waiting for bear and chamois watching early and late in the day, with complementary visits to some small rural villages where traditional sustainable livestock farming is still maintained in Spain.

In these routes and during the waiting to observe mammals, we will have the opportunity to observe the characteristic birds of prey of these mountains: Golden Eagle, Egyptian Vulture, Short-toed Eagle, Common Kestrel and we will be surrounded by Whinchat and Northern wheatear, we will see Red-backed Shrike and other typically Atlantic species such as the Marsh Tit.

Cantabrian Brown Bear DAY 8 / MAY 12 – SOMIEDO, CABO PEÑAS, CANGAS DE ONÍS

After a last early attempt at bear watching, we will head to the coast, to Cape Peñas, the northernmost point of Asturias and a quartzite ledge with cliffs 100mt high that juts out into the Cantabrian Sea.

The coastal cliffs of Cape Peñas attract countless migratory passerines (robins, finches, larks, pipits, redstarts, blackbirds) that cross to the peninsula from the coast of Brittany in France and from the United Kingdom. Sightings of Short-eared Owls are not rare, and we will have the opportunity to enjoy the evolutions of the resident Peregrine Falcon.

From the edge of the cliffs, we will look out to sea to contemplate the migratory passage of seabirds that takes place at this time of year off the Cantabrian coast: with thousands of gannets and shearwaters flying continuously from east to west off the coast of Asturias.

In the afternoon, we will continue our route towards the east to radically change the scenery again. We will head to Cangas de Onís, gateway to the Picos de Europa National Park.

DAY 9 / MAY 13 - NATIONAL PARK OF PICOS DE EUROPA

Our first destination will be the lake of Covadonga, a route at altitude in which we will change the landscape leaving behind the Atlantic forests of oak to access a world dominated by rock.

The protagonists here will be the mountain birds, with Yellow-billed Choughs, Water pipit, Northern wheatear. In the sky we will see Golden Eagles and Griffon Vultures, but our goal will be the Bearded Vulture, which has a small growing population in these mountains, the result of an interesting reintroduction project.

On the way back from this route, after a picnic lunch, we will stop at the Historic Site of Covadonga, the seed of the Reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula in the 8th century AD and the cradle of the Kingdom of Spain. From there we will go around the Picos de Europa to the north enjoying magnificent landscapes to sleep in the Cantabrian part of these mountains in Cosgaya.

Bearded Vulture DAY 10 / MAY 14 - PICOS DE EUROPA NATIONAL PARK, RIAÑO

Early in the morning, we will take the cable car of Fuente Dé to access the high mountain at around 2200mt to see alpine birds: Wallcreeper, Alpine Accentor, Alpine Chough, with a little luck Snowfinch and we will again have the opportunity to observe Bearded Vultures on a majestic mountain scenery.

In this area we will be able to see small herds of Cantabrian Chamois, an endemic goat of these mountains. By mid-afternoon, we will continue along the road to the Puerto de San Glorio, which will offer us some exceptional viewpoints over the Picos de Europa, before descending towards the southern slope of the mountains and accessing the Riaño Mountain. On this route, we will try to spot Iberian goats in the cliffs of the Llánaves gorge and we will spend the last hours of the afternoon looking for wildcats.

Cantabrian Chamois DAY 11/ MAY 15 - RIAÑO

Our last destination will be specifically focused on the observation of the endemic Iberian wolf and the Wild Cat. The Riaño Mountain is one of the best places in the country for the sighting of this species.

To try to observe the wolf we will wait at dawn and at dusk in strategic points that the guides of Riaño will have controlled to ensure that the observation options are as high as possible. In these outings there will be the opportunity to see mountain birds and other species of mammals abundant in the area, such as Deer, Roe deer, Wild boar, which are the main prey of one of the main predators of the Iberian fauna.

Wild Cat
Iberian Wolf

DAY 12 / MAY 16 – RIAÑO, MADRID

At dawn, we will make our last attempt with the wolf before saying goodbye to Riaño to return to Madrid by road and make a written summary of everything we have seen on the tour.

DAY 13 / MAY 17 – MADRID - FLIGHT HOME

Travelers who have participated in this complete journey of discovery of Iberian wildlife will have the opportunity to take the plane back to their country or extend their stay a few more days to visit Madrid.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Because this is a time when the weather can already be changeable, leaving winter behind and welcoming spring, it is recommended to bring a variety of hiking equipment, including waterproof and layer clothing including a fleece.

The possible walks to be developed will be suitable for all audiences and of reduced extension, always prioritizing the observation of nature over other possible compatible themes such as hiking and culture. During the observations, animal welfare will always prevail and the guide will be free to modify the itinerary to ensure safety at all times.

The visit to the wineries will be complemented in one of the afternoons during the first days.

Includes:

- * **Specialized guide**
- * **Van**
- * **Accommodation in 4* hotels**
- * **All meals during the tour starting breakfast of day 2 until dinner of day 12.**
- * **Excursion to the private reserve in El Taray**
- * **Excursion to the private reserve in the Montes de Toledo**
- * **Entrance to all National Parks**
- * **Cable car of Fuente Dé**
- * **Access to Covadonga Lakes**
- * **Excursion to the Riaño Mountains**

Services not included:

- **Soft drinks and alcoholic**
- **Tips**
- **Laundry**
- **Phone Calls**
- **Personal expensse**
- **PCR or Antigen Covid-19 test.**
- **Items not listed above**



Puembo Birding Garden **Hotel and Tours**

WE ALSO OFFER CUSTOMIZED TRIPS TO THE Galapagos Islands INCLUDING YOU A PRIVATE
NATURAL HISTORY GALAPAGOS GUIDE AND AN EXPERT MAMMAL AND BIRD GUIDE.

For more on any of these trips write to

reservas@puembobirdingarden.com or operacionespbg@hotmail.com

Or call / WhatsApp: 593 997591313