



Pre-Departure Information

HIKING THE SPANISH PYRENEES



Table of Contents

TRAVEL INFORMATION	Passport Visas Money Tipping Special Diets Communications Electricity
MEDICAL INFORMATION	Inoculations Staying Healthy Getting In Shape
HELPFUL INFORMATION	Photography Being a Considerate Traveler
PACKING LIST	The Essentials WT Gear Store Luggage Notes on Clothing Clothing Equipment Personal First Aid Supplies Optional Items
READING LIST	Essential Reading Also Recommended

Reminders Before You Go

WELCOME!

We're delighted to welcome you on this adventure! This booklet is designed to guide you in the practical details for preparing for your trip. As you read, if any questions come to mind, feel free to give us a call or send us an email—we're here to help.

PLEASE SEND US

- Trip Application:** Complete, sign, and return your Trip Application form as soon as possible if you have not already done so.
- Medical Form:** Complete, sign, and return your Medical Form as soon as possible if you have not already done so.
- Air Schedule:** Please forward a copy of your email confirmation, which shows your exact flight arrival and departure times. Refer to the Arrival & Departure section of the Detailed Itinerary for instructions. Please feel free to review your proposed schedule with Wilderness Travel before purchasing your tickets if you have any questions about the timing of your arrival and departure flights or would like to confirm we have the required minimum number of participants to operate the trip.
- Vaccination Card:** Please send us a photo or scanned copy of your completed Covid-19 Vaccination Card if you have not already done so. Just the front side of the card is sufficient.

PLEASE CAREFULLY REVIEW

- Travel Documents & Medical Information:** Carefully review the Travel Documents and Medical Information sections of this booklet to familiarize yourself with Passport and Visa entry requirements for your destination, as well as any recommended inoculations.
- Optional Travel Insurance:** Review the Trip Cancellation & Transfer Fee Schedule included in the Detailed Itinerary. We recommend that all trip members purchase Travel Insurance.
- Extra Services:** Request any Extra Services (hotel nights, transfers, extensions) with your WT office contact using the Extra Services Request Form sent with your confirmation packet.
- Final Documents:** Approximately three weeks before your trip, we will send you final departure documents, including hotel and local contact information and rendezvous instructions.

QUESTIONS?

Call: 1-800-368-2794, go to our [website](#) or e-mail us at: info@wildernesstravel.com.

Travel Information

PASSPORT

A valid passport is required for your trip. Be sure to check the expiration date. Your passport must be valid for three months after your date of exit from Spain. In addition, we recommend your passport have at least two completely blank visa pages for every country you will be visiting. It is very important that the blank pages say “Visas” at the top. The last few pages of your passport, which say “Amendments and Endorsements,” and the final page of your passport, which may not have a page number, are not considered to be legitimate visa pages. The service of adding pages for visas was discontinued as of January 1, 2016. You can request a new passport through **US Passport Services Office** or use a visa service agency, which can take care of your passport renewal and expedite the process, if needed. We recommend **Passport Visas Express**. Be sure to allow sufficient time to acquire this before your trip.

It is a good idea to carry photocopies of your passport’s photo page and any acquired visa pages for your trip (if applicable) in case your passport is lost or as an additional piece of identification, as well as two extra passport photos.

VISAS

US citizens do not need a visa for countries visited on this trip. If you are a citizen of any country other than the US, check with a local consulate for entry requirements.

MONEY

The Euro is the official currency of Spain. The most convenient way to obtain Euros is to use your debit card at ATMs. To use an ATM internationally, you must have a four-digit PIN. Major credit cards are accepted in most shops in cities and larger towns. If you plan to use your credit cards, inform your credit card company before your departure that you will be using the card abroad.

TIPPING

Tipping is completely discretionary, but over the years, clients have asked us for tipping guidelines to reward guides for outstanding service. We suggest a tip of \$145 or more per trip member for each of the Trip Leaders, preferably in local currency. The Trip Leaders take care of gratuities for hotel and restaurant staff, and for local guides and drivers.

SPECIAL DIETS

Please reach out to us directly to discuss any dietary restrictions or concerns you may have. We can easily make arrangements for most diets, but please keep in mind that certain cultural differences or logistical limitations can make it difficult or at times impossible to accommodate all requests. With this in mind, please inform us at least eight weeks before your trip if you have a special diet, and any food allergies in particular, so we can do our best to meet your needs.

COMMUNICATIONS

Telephone

The international dialing code for Spain is 34. Please contact your cell phone company for specific instructions for international use.

Email & Internet Access

Internet access is available at most of our hotels, but connections may be spotty or unreliable.

ELECTRICITY

Europe has 220-volt current. Plugs usually have two or three prongs.

Medical Information

The following recommendations should be used as a guideline only; consult your physician for medical advice. It is vital that you let Wilderness Travel know of any medical problems, allergies, or physical limitations you may have. Please fill out and return the personal medical questionnaire, and feel free to consult us if you have any questions about your ability to undertake this particular trip.

Wilderness Travel is not a medical facility and has no expertise or responsibility regarding what medications or inoculations you and your physician decide are necessary for your safe participation in the trip.

Traveler's health information is available from the **Centers for Disease Control**. Medical travel products are available from **Travel Health Medicine** and from **Magellan's Travel Supplies**.

INOCULATIONS

No inoculations are required. However, it is easy to get a small cut, so a tetanus booster is strongly recommended (good for 10 years). If you take prescription medicines, be sure to bring enough for the duration of your trip.

STAYING HEALTHY

You can reduce your risk of getting sick on the trip by washing your hands often and not touching your face with unwashed hands. If you arrive on the trip with a cold or feel the symptoms of a cold, avoid close contact with others and move away from people before coughing or sneezing. The CDC recommends coughing or sneezing into a tissue or into the crook of your elbow or upper sleeve, not your hands.

GETTING IN SHAPE

We strongly urge you to train for your trip, as your enjoyment will be highly dependent on your level of fitness. The best training for a hike is to hike, especially over hills or rough terrain. Next best are running, swimming, bicycling, or other cardiovascular exercise. Stair climbing machines are excellent preparation for hiking uphill. Your feet should also be well prepared—make sure your hiking boots are sturdy, comfortable, and thoroughly broken-in. Altitude is generally not a problem on these trips. The itineraries are designed to take you gently to higher altitude, giving you plenty of time to acclimatize. However, some people still experience a few problems when they first reach high altitude. Slight headache and sleeplessness are the most common symptoms.

Helpful Information

PHOTOGRAPHY

Camera Recommendations

With the many advances in digital technology, a simple compact digital camera or even your smartphone is capable of taking pictures suitable for the needs of most people. For higher quality images and the ability to use long lenses for closer wildlife pictures, a DSLR camera is well worthwhile, though heavier. Most digital cameras and phones have good video options, but you may want to consider a GoPro for a lightweight, waterproof option. Always practice ahead of time with new equipment and bring your manual with you. Camera equipment is available for rent from **Borrow Lenses**, with a 10% discount offered to Wilderness Travel clients. This is an especially good idea for renting large zoom lenses that you may need for just one trip.

Camera Accessories

We recommend bringing at least two large capacity memory cards or a small digital storage unit (or tablet) to back up your photos, freeing space on your memory cards. Don't forget to bring a battery charger and a backup battery so one is always charged and ready to use. For trips where you may be away from power sources for multiple days, consider looking into a solar-powered battery charger or buying additional backup batteries, and check that you have the appropriate adapter for the electrical outlets in your destination.

Sharing Your Images

We would love for you to share photos from your trip, and with your permission, may even use your photos in our marketing materials or on our photo blog. We request that you send us a small sample of your best images. Please email your photos to wphotoblog@gmail.com or tag us [@WildernessTravel](#) on social media.

Photography Etiquette

When taking pictures of local people, be aware of cultural considerations. Approaching people with a warm smile and using polite gestures or simple phrases to ask permission to photograph them usually works well. It is always recommended to engage people in conversation before asking to photograph them, but if people do not wish to have their photo taken, please honor their requests. We urge travelers to avoid giving money in exchange for photo opportunities, which makes it harder for future travelers to have a meaningful personal interaction with local people. Please always heed your Trip Leader's guidelines for what is appropriate.

BEING A CONSIDERATE TRAVELER

Please show respect for the cultures we are visiting by observing local customs concerning appropriate dress, particularly in sacred places. Your Trip Leader is always available to answer any questions that you may have regarding this. If it is necessary to use a cell phone during the trip, please do so privately. Smoking is rarely an issue these days, but if you do smoke, please do so only away from the group.

Packing List

THE ESSENTIALS

- Air tickets (or E-tickets)
- Passport
- One other picture ID, such as a driver's license
- Expense money

WT GEAR STORE

To help you prepare for your next WT adventure, we've put together a great collection of top brands including Patagonia, Outdoor Research, Eagle Creek, and more at our **WT Gear Store** .

LUGGAGE

- Soft-sided suitcase, with a small padlock (must be unlocked for air travel).
- Daypack, large enough for a jacket or rain gear, water bottle, camera, and other items you want on the trail.

NOTES ON CLOTHING

Bring clothes you find most comfortable for walking. Although it will be warm enough for shorts on many days, bring some lightweight long pants for cooler weather and protection from tall grasses. Dressing in layers is the best way to stay comfortable. You'll want a change of clothes for the evening, but nothing dressy is necessary. Casual wear is fine, and coats and ties are not required. The months we run these trips are the optimal ones, weather-wise. However, mountain weather is fickle and can range from blue skies with temperatures in the 70s to cloudy, wet, cold days on which rain gear and wool garments are necessary. Even on a short trip like this one, you are likely to experience a full range of weather conditions. Be prepared.

Note: In Europe, there are dress requirements to enter churches: Shorts (or skirts) should come to the knees, and shoulders should not be bare. Women can use a shawl or large scarf to cover bare shoulders; short-sleeved t-shirts are acceptable. The dress code applies to both men and women.

Please pack everything in one piece of luggage, as this simplifies the transportation of luggage en route. Although airline service to Europe is generally reliable, it is best to wear or carry your hiking boots with you on your flights in the event that your luggage is lost or delayed. Likewise, don't pack valuables, such as travel documents, camera gear, or prescription medicines in your checked luggage.

CLOTHING

The clothing list below is provided as a guideline only.

- Good quality rain gear, such as a Gore-Tex rain/wind shell jacket with hood
- Heavy fleece jacket or wool sweater
- Light fleece sweater or sweatshirt
- Long-sleeved shirt. Quick-drying "travel" fabrics like nylon are recommended.
- T-shirts or short-sleeved shirts
- Hiking pants. Lightweight cotton or synthetic hiking pants are a practical choice. Jeans are not recommended because they can be hot and they take a long time to dry if they get wet.
- Hiking shorts. Quick-drying shorts are recommended.
- Shade hat with wide brim—preferably a waterproof one you can use as a rain hat as well
- Medium-weight hiking boots with Vibram-type rubber lug soles and good ankle support.
- Tevas or walking shoes for sightseeing in towns
- Hiking socks. Some people like thick Thorlo-type socks with padded toes/heels, or an outer sock and synthetic liner sock.
- Lightweight fleece gloves
- Lightweight fleece hat for warmth
- Synthetic long underwear
- Underwear/sleepwear. Synthetics dry faster.
- Casual city/hotel attire
- Swimsuit
- Flip flops and swim cap (both are required for the Caldes de Boi spa and available for purchase there)

EQUIPMENT

- 1-2 reusable water bottles, 1 qt. capacity.
- Good quality sunglasses with case.
- Collapsible walking stick or trekking poles
- Money belt or neck pouch. Always carry your passport, credit cards, and cash with you in a money belt or neck pouch tucked down inside your shirt or blouse.

PERSONAL FIRST AID SUPPLIES

Every trip member must bring a small kit for personal use. Your own experience will influence your choices.

- Sunscreen SPF 30 or higher and lip balm with sunscreen. We recommend mineral-based sunscreens with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide because they do not contain harsh chemicals that are harmful to the environment. Brands such as Honest Company, Badger, and Alba Botanica are found in most sporting goods stores and drugstores.
- Aspirin, ibuprofen, or Tylenol for muscle pain or headache, Tylenol PM for sleep
- Blister kit. Look for long-lasting gel-type bandages that you can apply directly on blisters, such as Band-Aid Advanced Healing Bandages or Curad Gel Multi-Day Bandages. "Liquid band-aids," such as New-Skin, are useful because they dry rapidly to form a tough protective cover over a blister.
- Prescription medications properly labeled
- Spare contact lenses or spare prescription glasses

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Voltage converter and plug adaptor for appliance use in hotels
- Camera, spare batteries, spare flashcards
- Bandannas (many uses)
- Lightweight binoculars
- Reading/writing material
- Small umbrella
- Gaiters
- Laundry soap for hand-washing clothes. Laundry service is available at the hotels in Caldes de Boi (Days 4-5) and Barcelona (Day 8).
- Washcloth, if you like to use one (most European hotels do not provide them)

Reading List

ESSENTIAL READING

Homage to Catalonia

George Orwell

2015, 256 PAGES

Orwell's portrait of the Barcelona uprising and the spirit of a city at war is a classic, an observant and heartfelt report from the streets.

Northeast Spain Map, Aragon Catalonia, Andorra

Michelin

This regional map (1:400,000) covers from Pamplona and Perpignan to Barcelona and the Mediterranean, south to Valencia.

Ghosts of Spain

Giles Tremlett

2007, 396 PAGES

Tremlett captures the Spanish character, history and modern politics in this masterful portrait, interweaving the story of his love for the country (where he has lived for 20 years) with interviews, anecdotes and observation.

ALSO RECOMMENDED

Pyrenees Map

Geo-Estel Cartography

2006

A beautifully shaded relief map that depicts Barcelona in the southeast to Biarritz in the northwest. Scaled at 1:400,000.

Eyewitness Guide Barcelona & Catalonia

Eyewitness Guides

2015, 208 PAGES

Handsome, convenient and up-to-date, this superbly illustrated guide features color photography, dozens of local maps and detailed information on the region's attractions.

A Traveller's History of Spain

Juan Lalaguna

2001, 304 PAGES

This survey of Spanish history features a useful chronology, historical gazetteer and a long section on contemporary life. It covers early settlements through the Romans, Goths and Moors to the present.

Boundaries, The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees

Peter Sahlins

1991, 351 PAGES

A study of national identity in Catalonia, Cerdanya and the border lands between France and Spain, with an overview of their demarcation and arbitrary division in 1659.

Romanesque

Norbert Wolf

2007, 95 PAGES

This slim volume introduces the Romanesque movement, the first universal style of the European Middle Ages dating to the 11th and 12th centuries, its artists and historical context.

Spain & Portugal Adventure Map

National Geographic

2011

A double-sided full color map of Spain and Portugal at a scale of 1:1,000,000 with good shaded relief, topographic detail, roads and waterways.

Through the Spanish Pyrenees: GR11

Paul Lucia

2008, 232 PAGES

A comprehensive, practical guide to the coast-to-coast series of trails and footpaths.

Barcelona

Robert Hughes

1993, 570 PAGES

A Longitude favorite, this big, thoroughly enjoyable cultural history of the city touches on architecture, art, religion and literature from Roman outpost to today.

Love and War in the Pyrenees, A Story of Courage, Fear and Hope, 1939-1944

Rosemary Bailey

2011, 352 PAGES

Inspired by the people of St Laurent de Cerdans in French Catalonia, Bailey reconstructs the life during World War II in the region.

A Piano in the Pyrenees

Tony Hawks

2007, 352 PAGES

British comic Hawks (Around Ireland with a Fridge) serves up another bumbling adventure in this account of buying a house in the French Pyrenees and trying to teach himself to play (not to mention move) a piano.

Dali, The Impresario of Surrealism

Jean-Louis Gaillemain

2004, 159 PAGES

A marvelously illustrated pocket encyclopedia, this handy little book in the New Horizons series covers Dali's life and work in surprising detail.

The Shadow of the Wind

Carlos Ruiz Zafon

2005, 512 PAGES

Set in the brooding atmosphere of post-WW II Barcelona, this gripping story-within-a-story has it all: murder, doomed love and a mysterious book which draws the young hero, Daniel Sempere, into the city's dangerous underworld.

Birds of Europe

Lars Svensson

2010, 416 PAGES

Featuring 3,500 glorious paintings by Killian Mullarney and Dan Zetterstrom, the second edition of this exquisite guide features updated text and maps.

Revised: December 05, 2022

Spain, A Traveler's Literary Companion

Peter R. Bush

2003, 242 PAGES

A collection of 30 stories from a who's who of contemporary Spanish literature, including writers from Galicia, Leon, the Basque Country, Madrid and Barcelona.

The Sun Also Rises

Ernest Hemingway

1995, 256 PAGES

Hemingway's great novel, which encapsulates the angst of the post-WWI "Lost Generation," is the story of unmoored American and British expats travelling from Paris to Pamplona.

The Birds of the Iberian Peninsula

Eduardo De Juana

2015, 688 PAGES

This definitive book on the birds of Iberia covers the status and distribution of each species in the region and also includes photos and introductory chapters on climate, habitats and the history of Iberian ornithology.