

# Picos de Europa

## *Summer in the Cantabrian Mountains*

**June 24 - 30, 2021**

Itinerary

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### **Day 1 / June 24: Bilbao airport - La Hermida - Potes (Picos de Europa)**

Meet and welcome at Bilbao airport before heading to the picturesque town of Potes via the impressive La Hermida gorges. Depending on flight times we may do some birding in a nearby public area which still has excellent old oaks and Chesnut trees. In the holes of these ancient trees a few pairs of Common Redstart breed while Yellowhammer, Tree Pipit, Wryneck and European Serin are also well present. Dinner and accommodation in Tama (Potes).

### **Day 2 / June 25: Potes - San Glorio**

Today we will visit the San Glorio mountain pass. There are several interesting sites to enjoy birds and butterflies on the journey up, so we will certainly make a few stops before reaching the top. Here Tree Pipit, Citril Finch, Northern Wheatear and Common Linnnet are all possible. This area is still good for elusive Grey Partridges, a hard-to-find species which behaves very like a mountain species in Northern Spain. This is as well a great location to look for the scarce and endemic Chapman's Ringlet, the largest of all the ringlet butterflies present in Europe. Dinner and accommodation in Tama (Potes).

### **Day 3 / June 26: Potes - Fuente De (Cable car day)**

This is definitely the most exciting day for all tours to the Picos de Europa. Taking the cable car from Fuente Dé to the top of the mountain and so accessing mountain habitat of over 1,800 m.a.s.l will provide us with excellent opportunities for seeing some of the special birds present in this corner of Spain. Wallcreeper, White-winged Snowfinch, Alpine Accentor and Alpine Chough will be our main targets while we should also find Northern Wheatear, Water Pipit and Egyptian Vulture. There is no better place in the country which gives the chance to see all these birds without strenuous hiking being involved! We will explore the rocky cliffs and glacial pools, where we hope to find the rare Alpine Newt. Lammergeiers are being also regularly seen thanks to a reintroduction plan taken place in area. Before returning to our hotel in Potes we will walk into the woods next to a charming mountain village where Middle-spotted Woodpeckers breed and where we have previously seen Black Woodpecker. Dinner and accommodation in Tama (Potes).

### **Day 4 / June 27: Potes - Local birding near our hotel**

There are plenty roads and hiking itineraries starting near Potes. On our fourth day of tour we will spend part of the day exploring some Sessile and Holm Oak woods which differ from each other in their birds. We will try to find Firecrest, Cirl Bunting, Pied Flycatcher, Spotted Flycatcher, Middle Spotted Woodpecker, Wryneck, European Honey Buzzard and Red-backed Shrike. Amongst the butterflies we should also see the showy Cleopatra, Brimstone and Spanish Swallowtail. Orchids, with particularly abundant Pink Butterfly and Lizards are specially attractive due to its variety.

**Day 5 / June 28: Potes - Piedrasluengas - San Salvador (Romanesque church)**

The popular Piedrasluengas mountain pass is perhaps one of the best sites for Black Woodpecker but there are also other interesting birds that might be seen here like Marsh Tit, Goldcrest, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush, Golden Eagle and Yellow-billed Cough. Anyway the views of the impressive mountain chain of Picos is just breathtaking! Not far from there and crossing the border into the Castilla y León region there are a couple of sites where Brown Bears are occasionally reported by locals. These are also good places for Rock Bunting and Eurasian Bullfinch. A quick visit to the beautiful Romanesque church of San Salvador de Cantamuda and its surrounding fields will make all a very special day.

**Day 6 / June 29: Potes - Vega de Liebana (and surroundings)**

The little villages in the area known as the Valle de Liébana all provide good chances to see Common Redstarts breeding in the old buildings and tree holes. Various common birds are also present in their surrounding orchards as well as these being good places to look for Wryneck and Great Spotted Woodpecker. However, our main target today will be the very localized Middle Spotted Woodpecker. Western Bonelli's Warbler, Firecrest, Short-toed Treecreeper and Red-backed Shrikes should be also seen today. Last night accommodation in Tama (Potes).

**Day 7 / June 30: Potes - Bilbao airport**

If time allows we will make a couple of stops along the coastline to look for a few new species for our tour. Transfer to Bilbao airport where the trip ends.

***The status of some bird species nesting in the Picos de Europa doesn't recommend to publish locations where we will be trying to find them. So this itinerary is just a basic idea of what we could do and what we might see during the week. Your guide will provide precise details about daily plans during the trip.***

**PRICES:**

Per person sharing in twin / doubled-room with private facilities: **€ 1.475**

Single Supplement: **€ 230**

*Group size: Min. 4 – Max. 7 travelers plus our guide*

**The price includes:**

- \* Ground transport from Madrid airport in modern, fully seat-belted, air conditioned 9-seat vehicle
- \* 6 Nights accommodation with en suite bathroom in Corcal de Liebana Rural Hotel (Tama)
- \* All meals inc breakfast, fantastic “tapas-rationes” lunches and evening meals + red wine in a moderate consumption
- \* Services of professional birding guide
- \* Cable car return tickets
- \* Basic travel insurance
- \* Bird checklist (revised edition 2016)
- \* All taxes

**The price doesn't include:**

- \* Air fare (Easyjet, Ryanair & other companies operate daily flights from several UK airports)
- \* Extra drinks and other items of a personal nature

**Number of travelers:**

The minimum number of travellers on each trip is 4 and the usual maximum number is 7 plus the guide or 14 with two guides.

**Travel:**

Because other birding tours normally carry the cost of the airfare and are not necessarily the cheapest, *Spainbirds Nature Tours* asks the customer to book the flights independently to Madrid, Málaga, Seville, Santander or any other specified airport where the trip starts and ends. This gives you the customer, greater flexibility in terms of choosing the flight and return leg of your journey home (flights and/or other means of transport) specific airport departures, times to suit you, special offers and carrier companies. *Spainbirds Nature Tours* is a licensed tour operator (CICMA 2517) which is allowed to book flights for our clients, please don't hesitate to letting us know if you prefer that we book your airline tickets for you. The meeting point for customers will be the corresponding local airport depending on the trip selected.

**Ground transport:**

We always use comfortable, modern air conditioned minibus or people carrier. All our vehicles comply with the current EU safety legislation. Notice please that we don't charge any fee to transport people, and our incomes are applied as a trip organizer and wildlife guide services but never as professional drivers.

**Accommodation & food:**

Accommodation is carefully chosen by *Spainbirds Nature Tours* to offer the customer a good quality standard of hotel or fully equipped country inn next to the birding areas. We ensure that all rooms are en suite and price includes usually full board (breakfast, picnic lunch and evening meal + red wine & water unless other board conditions are applied). For those who require a single room they will have to pay the corresponding supplement, which will depend on the chosen itinerary shown in the tours section of our web site or current brochure.

**Dates:**

Since the groups are usually small, the journey dates may occasionally be fine tuned to meet the needs of all interested parties but will never be changed if the flights have been already booked.

**Insurance:**

It is highly advisable to take out a personal insurance policy before leaving your country. Please let us know the name of your company insurance before travelling. For information of all travellers *Spainbirds Nature Tours* has its own civil liability insurance through **REALE SEGUROS, policy number 1331100001899/0**, covering damages to third parties to a maximum of 1,800,000 Euros. As travel agency licensed by the Spanish Tourism Board all our clients will be traveling covered by a *basic travel insurance*, but which might not be enough to cover certain personal or items damages.

In addition to your personal Travel & Medical Insurance, do bring (and carry with you when out and about) your up to date European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) – they only last 5 years! If you still have one of the older forms (E111) then it needs to be changed to this new card.

Note for UK travelers: You do not have to pay for an EHIC, which can be obtained or renewed free of charge by calling 0300 3301350 or applying on-line at [www.ehic.org.uk](http://www.ehic.org.uk). This is a secure site that diverts to the correct page within the main NHS.UK website. The cards are valid for five years, after which they can be renewed, again, free of charge. Please notice that the new Brexit situation will make to all cards expire after December 31, 2020!!!

### How to book a tour to Spain:

To book our services you need to make a written confirmation by letter or email or fill our booking form available on our web site, plus paying **€ 450 as deposit** for all the Spain tours. Deposits for our overseas expeditions are showed in the literature related to every tour.

**The rest** shall be paid to *Spainbirds Nature Tours* by wire transfer or credit card, **at the latest 60 days** before the journey starts. The price includes guide services, accommodation, all meals, ground transport and fuel. Customers are entitled to cancel their bookings at any moment, but on the following terms:

1. If the cancellation is made between booking and 60 days before the start of the trip they will forfeit the deposit or, if preferred, it will be kept for future tours run by *Spainbirds Nature Tours* **with an expiration date of ONE year**.
2. If the cancellation is made between 59 and 31 days before the start of the journey they will forfeit **50%** (where the deposit would be also included) of the total amount paid to *Spainbirds Nature Tours*.
3. If the cancellation is made within 30 days of the start of the journey they will forfeit **100%** of the total paid. Any breach of the above instalments or unjustified delays in paying them will automatically lead to cancellation of the booking, the above mentioned rules then being applied. The post-cancellation sum of money to be reimbursed will be sent by wire transfer. All amounts paid must be done by bank transfer to our account on OPENBANK (details will be sent to you once you confirm booking).

If you agree these booking conditions please then fill and send us your **booking form**.

*\* Every of our overseas tours has its own booking conditions since all international and domestic flights are usually included in the price. If you are interested to fly from your home country and not meeting the group in Spain please let the office know this issue to find the most suitable alternative for both sides. You will be able to find our terms and conditions for the overseas tours in the pdf file linked in the literature of every tour.*

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