



HIKING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN COAST. ANDALUCÍA

Cabo de Gata and Axarquía



Exploring Spain
TREK CLIMB SKI & BIKE

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1 Introduction

Escaping the cold and looking for the **Mediterranean Sea**, its light and nature. We will visit two areas of **Andalusia** where the good weather, gastronomy and a superb network of trails make it a must for any hiking lover.

First, we will go to the region of Malaga, where we will visit **Axarquía**, an Andalusian paradise. Pretty villages and stunning scenery will accompany us on our tour through the trails and the mountains in this unique and varied destination.

In the second part of the trip our base camp will be **Cabo de Gata** in Almeria, where we will find the contrasts of sea and semi-desert landscape with temperatures that allow pleasant hiking days on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea.

We will explore some of the most outstanding trails in the **Cabo de Gata-Nijar Natural Park**, combining several paths when possible to make loops. We will be extremely careful with plant protection and the natural environment in general, at this particularly sensitive and unique ecosystem in Europe.

2 Destination

Cabo de Gata is a unique enclave in the Iberian Peninsula. It contains in its surrounding area one of the most deserted volcanic landscapes of Europe, contrasting however with a rich flora and vegetation highlighting the "Pita", which is the flower of the agaves. The prickly pears and palmettos also stand out. Land of contrasts, hidden caves, clear waters; the uniqueness of its natural building and the seabed of the coast are taken care of at **Cabo de Gata-Níjar Natural Park**. A depopulated and deserted inland accompanied by a tormented coast, dotted with countless beautiful bays, give us the opportunity to create tours of striking originality in Europe, walking or cycling. The village of San José, of great beauty, is the centre and base of operations for visiting the area.

The "**Sierras de Tejera, Almajara and Alhama**" **Natural Park** which borders the regions of Malaga and Granada, is part of the diffuse mountain ranges, mountain ridges and high mountains that form the Cordillera Penibética. It corresponds to the foothills of the chain and presents the last peaks above 2,000 meters before fading into the Subbética mountains. These are mountains inhabited since ancient times, with a land that invites to hike and enjoy the Mediterranean climate. The region where it is located, **Axarquía**, also contains historical and landscape importance that justify its reputation in Europe as a destination for well-known active tourism. **Torrox** or **Frigiliana**, are small samples of the interesting villages in the area that are interesting to explore and enjoy calmly.

3 Basic information

Destination: Andalucía (Spain). Cabo de Gata, Almería. Tejada, Almajara and Alhama mountain ranges. Málaga.

Activity: trekking.

Physical condition: */**. Terrain type: **.

Duration: 6 days (5 days trek).

Season: September to June.

Group size: 4-8 people.

3.1 Required physical condition and type of terrain

Physical level	Total elevation	Kms	Physical Condition
*	Up to 600 m	Up to 16 km	Normal: occasional sport practice
**	Up to 1200 m	Up to 23 km	Good: regular sport practice
***	Up to 1400 m	Over. 23 km	Very good: strict sport practice

Type of terrain

* Good conditioned forest tracks and trails

** Good conditioned trails. Presence of stones and roots on the way requiring attentive hike.

*** Bumpy, stone loose tracks, including off trails

Observations. It is required a good physical condition to be able to climb 800 metres at a gentle pace. It comprises but not mandatory a 1200-meter climb in a journey. Overall, the trek consists of easy ascents and achievable mountain tops by walk.

4 Programme

4.1 Programme outline

Day 1. Transfer to Malaga province. Group meeting.

Day 2. Ascent to Lucero peak (1.785 m) or Raspón de los Moriscos.

Distance 12 kms. + 810 m ascent. - 810 m descent Duration 4-5 hours. Difficulty: medium-low.

Day 3. Ascent to La Maroma (2.059 m) or Pico de Tejada.

Distance 18 kms. + 1280 m ascent. - 1280 m descent Duration 6-7 hours. Difficulty: medium-high, due to its duration and slope.

Day 4. Transfer to Cabo de Gata and trip from San José to la Isleta del Moro.

Distance 12 kms. Elevation gain +250 m. - 250 m descent. Duration 4 hours.

Day 5. La ruta de las Calas.

Distance 21 kms. + 710 m ascent. - 710 m descent Duration 8 hours. Difficulty: medium.

Day 6. Playazo – Aguamarga.

Distance 17.5 kms. Elevation gain +600 m. - 600 m descent Duration 5-6 hours. Difficulty: medium.

4.2 Detailed programme

Day 1. Transfer to Malaga province. Group meeting.

Day 2. Ascent to Lucero peak (1.785 m) or Raspón de los Moriscos.

Interesting and unfrequented ascent, which main attraction is the flora and the panoramic scenery from the summit since it is in the core of the mountain range.

We will depart from our accommodation by car to Canillas de Albaida through a trail reaching the Puerto Blanquilla, where we will begin our journey. On the way to Puerto Cómpea the limestone landscape stands out with a strong presence of marble.

The vegetation is mainly Carrasco Pine and Resinero pine, accompanied by Juniper, Palmito and Esparto as well as aromatic plants like rosemary and lavender.

Bordering Rajas Negras, we will face the climb to Las Perdices Pass (it is not unusual to find mountain goats here) and then through a zigzag path with spectacular sea views, we will cross the Colaero of Mosquitos and finally reach the summit of Lucero peak (1,785 m), also known as Raspón de Los Moriscos. This summit, pyramidal and slender, is an exceptional viewpoint of the entire Penibética and especially of the Almirajara and Tejada mountain ranges. We will also be able to see the Mediterranean Sea and the village of Torrox coast.

Due to its strategic position, a checkpoint of the Civil Guard was built at the time to monitor the passing of the "maquis" to the province of Granada, nowadays only one wall has been preserved.

Distance 12 kms. + 810 m ascent. - 810 m descent Duration 4-5 hours. Difficulty: medium-low.

Possibility of shortening the itinerary without affecting people who want to do the full itinerary since the journey is linear.



Day 3. Ascent to La Maroma (2.059 m) or Pico de Tejada.

Located in the Sierra de Tejada La Maroma (2,059 m) is the highest point in the province of Malaga. The Sierra de Tejada owes its name to the yew-tree, a conifer that abounded in these mountains and is now in danger of disappearing.

For this day, with the greatest ascent, we will depart from the Leisure Area of the Alcazares, after crossing the village of Alcaudín to crown what is considered the roof of Malaga according to the latest measurements. The tour goes through all kinds of roads and trails; traces the Loma de Las Víboras and after crossing the Era Tarara, runs along the range to reach the top, amid a landscape dotted with sinkholes and jous (holes of glacial origin, strangely called here like in the Picos de Europa) landscape.

This summit, "Cima de la Maroma", owes its name to an intriguing confusion of concepts transmitted by word of mouth. "Top of the Rope" really meant "Gap of the Rope". This is a gap at the top of the peak (Tejada) about 4 meters wide and 30 deep, which was a natural well of snow used by the men dedicated to the industry of the snow many years ago. They descended into the pit using a rope, "maroma" to collect the hardened snow kept inside the pit.

The way back is done along the same path with a variation in the final part to avoid the sharp descent of the hill of the Vipers.

Distance 18 kms. + 1280 m ascent. - 1280 m descent Duration 6-7 hours. Difficulty: medium-high, due to its duration and slope.

Possibility of shortening the itinerary without affecting people who want to do the full itinerary since the outward journey is the same as to return except for the final part before the summit.

Day 4. Transfer to Cabo de Gata and trip from San José to la Isleta del Moro.

After the ascent of the previous day and the transfer to Cabo de Gata we will follow an easier itinerary.

We start our trip in San Jose through a hidden cove in an interesting location by the sea, "Cala Higuera". Ascent to the tip below the tower of Cala Higuera, one of the ancient watchtowers around the coast.

From here the tour will take place by the sea but in height, with a comfortable path that coincides with the GR-92 to go down to the beach of Escullos, also setting for several films. The fortress of San Felipe from the eighteenth century is located here, one of the 9 forts that were built from Almeria to Malaga during the reign of Carlos III. There is also an ancient anchorage where the esparto was formerly carried and today a beach night bar "chiringuito" is located.

From here we'll follow a tight route by the sea to the fishing village of Isleta del Moro (the Moor Arraiz), where we can have a well-deserved beer with a tapa and then drive back to San Jose.

Distance 12 kms. Elevation gain +250 m. - 250 m descent. Duration 4 hours.



Day 5. La ruta de las Calas.

Route where the volcanic origin of the whole park is clearly visible, finding in the first half an hour the first beach, "Los Genoveses" to cross it and climb the morrón de los Genoveses. This beach has also been the setting

for several films, including "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" or "Lawrence of Arabia" and yes, it owes its name to the Genoese, who landed on this beach to lend a hand against the Moors.

We will go up and down different volcanic landscapes and different beaches and coves, as Prince Cove, different beaches of Barronal, Mónsul Cove, Cove of the Half Moon and cove of Charcoal, in that order.

Nothing better than enjoying a swim in the sea, even if you travel in the winter.

We will continue roaming more coves, to reach a final climb up the hill of Vela Blanca, where there is one of the ancient watchtowers that run through the entire coastline which is also reached by the road from the village of Cabo de Gata located on the other side.

To return, first we will follow the same path and then continue inland with a final climb through the hills of Barronal, appreciating the volcanic pot before going down again to Genoveses and returning by the same route.

Distance 21 kms. + 710 m ascent. - 710 m descent Duration 8 hours. Difficulty: medium.

Possibility of shortening the itinerary without affecting people who want to do the full itinerary.



Day 6. Playazo – Aguamarga.

Transfer to the Playazo, a nice beach in the town of Rodalquilar, village tucked inside the park, in the valley of Rodalquilar, ancient volcanic crater whose only exit was the Playazo.

Rodalquilar Valley has also been the scene for movies such as "For a few dollars more" among others. It has a significant mining past, with abandoned gold mines located in the upper town. It is a town where many artists and artisans from throughout the area are concentrated.

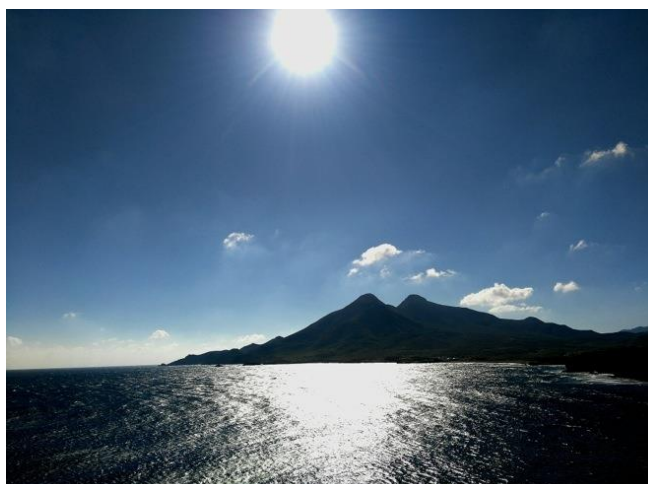
Just as we start the tour, which starts at the beach, we find La Batería de San Ramón, another of the 9 fortresses build by Carlos III from Almeria to Malaga and is now in private hands.

Our next goal will be the village of Las Negras, due to the abundance of black stones, which is very fashionable in area because of its proximity to the cove of San Pedro and with great tradition and great deals for diving in the area.

Cala de San Pedro will be our next goal and our stopping point. We can also find the castle of San Pedro, started in the XVI century and finished in the XVIII after two reforms. It is now in private hands that might transform the landscape. Besides being a natural harbour and idyllic enclave, it has a permanent water source, something very appreciated in this area that allows for permanent "hippy" settlements that use solar energy.

The rest of the tour will take us to the top of the Rellana of San Pedro first where there is a spectacular view of Aguamarga and then to the coves of Plomo y En medio. We'll be going up and down between palmettos, thyme, lavender and esparto and surrounded by a volcanic environment of great beauty. Return by car to our accommodation.

Distance 17.5 kms. Elevation gain +600 m. - 600 m descent Duration 5-6 hours. Difficulty: medium.



The journey will not finish later than noon to take the way back home after lunch time

5 Más información

Price. 680 euros. Supplement of 50€ for land transportation from Madrid.

5.1 Included

- Mountain Guide service throughout the trekking.
- Transportation from Malaga during the entire trip. Inquire about other possible options.
- First night accommodation in a hotel in Nerja in double room, breakfast included (arrival day, dinner is not included).
- 2 nights' accommodation in a hotel in Nerja in double room on half board basis. Consult for single supplement.
- 2 nights in double room hotel/apartment on half board basis in San José, Cabo de Gata. Consult for single supplement.

- Insurance coverage.
- Reservations management.

5.2 Not included

- Lunches. It will be picnic lunches on the way (sandwiches, fruit, etc.), with the possibility of restaurants and other establishments in the area of Cabo de Gata.
- Drinks on dinner menus.

5.3 Required equipment

It is important to carry a very light backpack to walk comfortably, so it is recommended to carry only light and essential gear.

- Backpack (25-35 litres).
- Trekking shoes or boots.
- Expandable hiking poles.
- Technical clothing:
 - Socks.
 - Long and short trekking pants.
 - Thermal t-shirt (base layer)
 - Fleece jacket or similar (second layer)
 - Gore-Tex jacket or similar (third layer)
 - Cap for sun protection
- Sunglasses
- Head lamp (extra batteries)
- Water bottle
- First aid kit and essential toiletries
- Sunscreen and SPF lip balm
- Camera
- Swimming suits

5.4 Observations

Date Flexibility

Aside from the regular travel trip dates, we are flexible to reconsider new dates if those are more convenient to the client's leisure plans. Do not hesitate to contact us should you have any different dates in mind.

Time and meeting point

One week prior to the trip departure date, an email will be sent to each participant to give away the meeting point and time along with the guide contact information. At this point any information considered essential to the trip organization will be shared.

Plane tickets (if applicable)

If case you wish us to handle you plane ticket, please contact us with airport arrival and departure details and number of needed luggage. Before issuing any ticket, Price and details Will be send to the client for its approval.

Muntania fee for plane ticket management is 20€ per person.

If, otherwise, you handle your plane tickets, please coordinate with us before hand to check on arrival and departure information.

Please take into consideration getting with you on your carry-on luggage some set of clothing in case of checked luggage lose.

Living expenses in Nerja

You can either cook in the kitchen available at the apartment or going out to taste the typical food in a local restaurant.

Trip variations

Possibility of doing only the first part of the trip (Malaga area) or the second part (Cabo de Gata). Inquire with Muntania.

5.5 Insurance policy

All activities in Spain have an accident insurance included in the price. Yet, if you practise mountain sports regularly and also travel frequently, **we suggest you get a travel insurance**, that as well as covering any accident and rescue it also protect you against many other situations.

If you do not have a travel insurance you can acquire one with our travel agency. Exploring Spain processes all insurances with **Intermundial**. The cost of these insurances is lower if you buy it through Exploring Spain than if you do it directly with Intermundial.

EU RESIDENTS

Ski/Aventure Plus

It is a **travel insurance** and also **covers the practise of many sports and activities**. You can get one for the duration of the trip or for the whole year, being able to choose the starting date. If you get the insurance for a year, it will not only be valid for the trip with Exploring Spain but also it will be valid for any other trips or activities you may do during that year.

Ski/Aventure Plus with Cancelation

It has the same coverage that the previous insurance but also you will be cover in case of cancelation of the trip and tickets in case of force majeure (sickness, injury...) for yourself and/or a relative.

The travel insurance with cancelation that we offer, allows a refund of the costs already paid for up to 1.000 €. If the cost of the trip and flights is higher, you can extend the amount covered (under request).

Multi-assistance Plus with or without Cancelation

Both Multi-assistance Plus with or without Cancelation are **travel insurances with better coverage** than the Ski/Adventure Plus with or without cancelation but they **do not cover the practise of sports**.

This insurance can be of your interest if you already have an accident and rescue insurance that covers the activity that you will be doing in the trip, but you do not have a travel insurance. It can also be useful if you are interested in a trip without practising any sports.

NON EU RESIDENTS

Incoming Cancelation Plus

This insurance covers the costs of the trip and the tickets if you have to cancel the trip before the departure because of different reasons like for example a sickness (see conditions of the insurance).

This insurance can be useful if you already have a travel insurance but it does not cover the cancelation of the trip or if you already have an insurance covering sports and activities.

Incoming Ski/Aventure Plus with Cancelation

It is a **travel insurance** and also **covers the practise of many sports and activities**. You will also be cover in case of cancelation of the trip and tickets in case of force majeure (sickness, injury...) for yourself and/or a relative. You can get one for the duration of the trip or for the whole year, being able to choose the starting date. If you get the insurance for a year, it will not only be valid for the trip with Exploring Spain but also it will be valid for any other trips or activities you may do during that year.

The travel insurance with cancelation that we offer, allows a refund of the costs already paid for up to 2.000 €. If the cost of the trip and flights is higher, you can extend the amount covered (under request).

*Consult prices and conditions for Intermundial insurances with Exploring Spain following this link:
<https://www.exploring-spain.com/insurances>

Included accident and rescue insurance

** Included accident and rescue insurance. Nº POLIZA 4020006195 Muntania Outdoors. Assistance phone number 24h 902 09 15 57 (it is the contact number for the insurance company Prebal, Previsión Balear M.P.S).

*** It is the customer's responsibility to inform the insurance company about the accident as soon as possible. Prior the departure for the trip, we will send you an email with the insurance policy number and the assistance number so you can have it during the trip.

**** Depending on where the accident happens, the customer will have to pay in advance if the insurance company indicates it, being the payment refunded by the insurance company within the policy's limits. In any case Exploring Spain – Muntania Outdoors S.L. is responsible for any advance payment required for the rescue or assistance.

5.6 Links of interest

- <http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/medioambiente/servtc5/ventana/busquedaEspacios.do;jsessionid=1F11927569C0905886D3F75EB8E970A2>
- <http://www.parquenatural.com>

5.7 Highlights

- Incredibly beautiful scenery and sea-desert contrasts.
- Singularity of the villages in the area.
- The history and traditions of the region.
- Well preserved environment.

5.8 Similar trips

- La Palma Island: The Hiking Paradise
- Hiking in La Gomera and Tenerife

6 Contact

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