



# Tour Information



# Pre-historic Rock Art in Northern Spain





## Travel

### Passports

You may need to renew your British Passport if you are travelling to an EU country. **Please ensure your passport is less than 10 years old (even if it has 6 months or more left on it) and has at least 6 months validity remaining from the date of travel.**

For more information, please visit: [passport checker](#)

### Visas

You do not need a visa for short trips to Spain. For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

For further information, please check here: [travel to the EU](#)

Spanish consulate: 20 Draycott Place, London SW3 2RZ; Tel: 020 7589 8989, Fax: 020 7581 7888.

Open Mon-Fri 0915-1400 (except Spanish National holidays).



## Tickets

You will be sent an e-ticket, which shows your flight reference number, with your final departure documents. You can check in online up to 7 days before travel. Checking in online also provides the opportunity for you to pre-book seats, if you wish, at an extra cost.

Please check that the details on your tickets are accurate and that all names are spelt correctly and match the names on your passport.

Your ticket is non-transferable and non-refundable. No refund can be given for non-used portions.



## Baggage

Your Vueling ticket includes one hold bag of up to 20kg plus **one** cabin bag that can fit under the seat in front of you, (maximum size 40 x 20 x 20cm, including any handles or wheels).

Please contact the airline for further information <https://www.vueling.com/en/vueling-services/prepare-your-trip/luggage>

### Transfers

On arrival in Bilbao, transfer by coach to Santander for check-in to your hotel (approx. 1 hour 15 minutes journey).

### Special Requests

If you haven't already done so, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.

### Border Control

At border control, you may need to show a return or onward ticket, show you have enough money for your stay, use separate lanes from EU, EEA and Swiss citizens when queueing.

### Taking food into EU countries

You are not able to take meat, milk or any products containing them into EU countries.



## Accommodation

### Silken Rio Hotel, Santander

This stylish, modern four-star hotel is located on the seafront next to the beach of El Sardinero. Facilities include bar, 'Marea Alta' restaurant and very comfortable bedrooms with all modern amenities including en-suite bathroom, TV, telephone, wifi, air-conditioning, safe, minibar and hairdryer.

For more information, please visit the hotel's website:

<https://www.hoteles-silken.com/en/hotel-rio-santander/>

### Gran Hotel Regente, Oviedo

The modern, four-star Gran Hotel Regente is located in the heart of historic Oviedo, close to a host of restaurants, cafes and bars. Facilities at this modest but comfortable hotel include a bar and well-appointed bedrooms with all modern amenities including en-suite bathroom, TV, telephone, wifi, safe and hairdryer.

For more information, please visit the hotel's website:

<https://www.granhotelregente.com/en/>

### Hesperia Bilbao Hotel, Bilbao

Located across the River Nervión from Bilbao's Guggenheim Museum, Hesperia Bilbao has an eye-catching coloured glass façade. Bilbao's old town and city centre are 10 minutes' walk away. It offers spacious, stylish rooms with free wifi and a 42-inch satellite TV. All of the modern rooms are air-conditioned, soundproofed and feature a private bathroom with free toiletries and a hairdryer. The hotel serves a buffet breakfast.

For more information, please visit the hotel's website:

<https://www.hesperia.com/en/hoteles/spain/bilbao/hotel-hesperia-bilbao>



## Food

Eating out in Spain can often be cheap, and meals substantial rather than gourmet. But the Basque Country is an exception to this – the region's capital on the Spanish side of the border, San Sebastián, has the highest concentration of Michelin-starred restaurants after Paris! An excellent way to sample Spanish food (and atmosphere) is to try *tapas* (known as *pintxos* in Basque Country), which are served at any time of day in local bars. These are small tasters or snacks, which range from cheese and olives to squid or meat delicacies.

As most of Spain's coastal areas, Basque cuisine is dominated by seafood – freshly caught *bacalao* (salt cod), baby squid, anchovies, *merluza* (hake), sardines, *besugo* (sea bream), clams, crab, tuna and baby eels. Often served with a tomato, capsicum pepper, onion and the local *Espelette* pepper side (*piperade*), they are also prepared as a stew or soup, such as *txoro* or the tuna-based *marmitako*.

But the lush, mountainous inland area also boasts excellent regional produce, including cured meats, sausages, chorizo, *boudin*, the excellent *Jambon de Bayonne*, cheeses, and delicious vegetables, such as peppers, beans, asparagus and artichokes.

Traditional sweets include *cuajada* (milk curd) served with honey and walnuts, *macarons*, and *Touron* (*pâte d'amade* or marzipan).

Coffee (*café*) is served black, in small cups, unless a *café con leche* is ordered.

Some restaurants will offer a set meal at a fixed – *menú del día* – at lunchtime, generally good value for money. Usually, a discretionary service charge is added to your bill in restaurants and bars, but it is customary to leave small change if good service is provided.

Generally speaking, mealtimes in Spain are much later than in the UK. Lunch is normally taken between 1400 and 1600; dinner is very often eaten any time after 2100 or even 2200.



## Drink

Wine in the Basque country tends to be light, fresh, fruity, and white, an excellent accompaniment to the seafood of the region – the Txakoli DO white wines are young, light, and slightly sparkling. If you prefer a red, try the soft and fruity local *Rioja Alavesa DO*.

Well-known Spanish beers (*cerveza*) include *San Miguel*, *Damm*, *Estrella Galicia* and *Cruzcampo*. Spanish brandy is as different from French as Scotch whisky is from Irish. It is relatively cheap, pleasant, although some brandy drinkers may find it a little sweet. Brands include *Carlos I*, *Osbourne* and *Fundador*.

**Meals included in the price of your holiday are:**

**Breakfast** – daily

**Dinner** – two dinners with wine



## Destination

Northern Spain, particularly Asturias and Cantabria, is home to some of the best examples of Palaeolithic cave art in the world. These caves have been inscribed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites because of their importance and date from 35,000 to 11,000 B.C. This tour explores some of the best along the coastline in Northern Spain.

**Details of places of interest included in the tour:**

### Museum of Prehistory and Archaeology

Cantabria is a region of exceptional archaeological and heritage wealth. Its caves, ten of which have been recognized as World Heritage, have provided large Palaeolithic collections of useful and unique art furniture. The Museum presents this heritage to the public in a didactic and dynamic museum context. The exhibition aims to communicate to the visitor how the evolution of the ways of life in the Prehistory and History of Cantabria was, a privileged heritage scene, representative of the European Palaeolithic and Prehistory. A state-of-the-art installation, endowed with abundant audio-visual and interactive media, digital posters and large-scale scenography's.

*For more information about the museum, please visit:*

<https://www.spain.info/en/places-of-interest/museum-prehistory-archaeology-cantabria/>

### Altamira Caves

The Cave of Altamira is located near the historic town of Santillana del Mar in Cantabria, Spain, and is described as Spain's 'Sistine Chapel of Palaeolithic art'. It is renowned for prehistoric parietal cave art featuring charcoal drawings and polychrome paintings of contemporary local fauna and human hands. The earliest paintings were applied during the Upper Palaeolithic, around 36,000 years ago. The site was only discovered in 1868 by Modesto Cubillas. Aside from the striking quality of its polychromatic art, Altamira's fame stems from the fact that its paintings were the first European cave paintings for which a prehistoric origin was suggested and promoted. Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola published his research with the support of Juan de Vilanova y Piera in 1880 to initial public acclaim. However, the publication of Sanz de Sautuola's research quickly led to a bitter

public controversy among experts, some of whom rejected the prehistoric origin of the paintings on the grounds that prehistoric human beings lacked sufficient ability for abstract thought. The controversy continued until 1902, by which time reports of similar findings of prehistoric paintings in the Franco-Cantabrian region had accumulated and the evidence could no longer be rejected. Altamira is located in the Franco-Cantabrian region and declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1985.

*For more information about the caves, please visit:*

<https://www.culturaydeporte.gob.es/mnaltamira/home.html>

### El Castillo

The Cueva del Castillo, or Cave of the Castle, is an archaeological site within the complex of the Caves of Monte Castillo, in Puente Viesgo, Cantabria, Spain. The archaeological stratigraphy has been divided into around 19 layers, depending on the source they slightly deviate from each other, however the overall sequence is consistent, beginning in the Proto-Aurignacian, and ending in the Bronze Age. The El Castillo cave contains the oldest known cave painting: a large red stippled disk in the Panel de las Manos was dated to more than 40,000 years old using uranium-thorium dating in a 2012 study. This is consistent with the tradition of cave painting originating in the Proto-Aurignacian, with the first arrival of anatomically modern humans in Europe. A 2013 study of finger length ratios in Upper Palaeolithic hand stencils found in France and Spain determined that the majority were of female hands, overturning the previous widely held belief that this art form was primarily a male activity. Cueva del Castillo was discovered in 1903 by Hermilio Alcalde del Río, a Spanish archaeologist, who was one of the pioneers in the study of the earliest cave paintings of Cantabria. The entrance to the cave was smaller in the past and has been enlarged as a result of archaeological excavations. Alcalde del Río found an extensive sequence of images executed in charcoal and red ochre on the walls and ceilings of multiple caverns.

*For more information about El Castillo, please visit:*

<https://cuevas.culturadecantabria.com/en/>

### Las Monedas

Las Monedas is part of the Altamira Caves and Palaeolithic Cave Art in northern Spain declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This is the longest cave in the Monte del Castillo area. Its name

comes from a cache of coins ('monedas') from the time of the Catholic Monarchs that was discovered inside the cave, one dating from 1563. It runs for 800 metres, although only 160 metres can be visited, and the route provides a wonderful spectacle of stalactites, stalagmites, columns and coloured karst formations. The images are concentrated in a small side hall and comprise groups of different symbols as well as 17 animal figures (horses, reindeer, goats, bison and a bear), dating from around 10,000 BC.

*For more information about Las Monedas, please visit:*

<http://www.spainisculture.com/en/monumentos/cantabria/cuevas monte castillo - las monedas.html>

## El Pendo Cave

In the heart of the Camargo valley, this cave with a large opening and monumental sized entrance was discovered in 1878 by Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola. Since then, it has been subjected to numerous archaeological explorations, the latest with the discovery of an important panel of red paintings, in 1997. Research into this archaeological site has provided key information, as regards knowledge of human and technological evolution and the behaviour of Homo Neanderthal and Homo sapiens. Thus, the stratigraphic and archaeological sequence, commencing at least 82,000 B.C. reaching up to 1,500 B.C., are a major focus of scientific debate. Apart from shedding light on activities to do with everyday life, this important set of portable art and decorative elements, associated with the first occupations by Homo sapiens, point to the fact that the underground space was used for other social purposes.

*For more information about El Pendo Cave, please visit:*

<https://cuevas.culturadecantabria.com/el-pendo-2/>

## El Pindal

El Pindal Cave is located at the mouth of the River Cares-Deva, at the eastern end of Asturias, in a section of the coastal strip known as Cape San Emeterio. It has a single entrance above the sea, overlooking the coastline, and a longitudinal gallery of 600 metres in length, only the first 300 of which can be visited. Divided into five areas, this Magdalenian site houses zoomorphic representations such as deer, horses, bison, as well as a noteworthy fish and mammoth. The paintings in El Pindal Cave were most likely done in

different moments during the Magdalenian culture, and probably even before, over a broad period of time ranging between 18,000 and 13,000 years ago.

*For more information about El Pindal, please visit:*

<https://www.turismoasturias.es/en/descubre/cultura/arte-rupestre/rupestre-cueva-de-el-pindal#>

## Cave of Tito Bustillo

Tito Bustillo Cave is one of the most important Palaeolithic art sites in the world. On 7 July 2008, the Permanent Committee of UNESCO inscribed this site in its select list of World Heritage together with four Asturian sites (Pindal, Peña de Candamo, Llonín and Covaciella) and nine more sites in Cantabria and the Basque Country. The need to preserve and conserve the unusual heritage of the cave and the hard-to-reach location of most of the artistic groups led to the creation of the Tito Bustillo Cave Art Centre. The Centre is aimed at promoting dissemination and research of the life and the artistic production in Tito Bustillo in connection with other Asturian sites. A modern and innovative exhibition offers significant insight into the artistic creations of our ancestors.

*For more information about the cave, please visit:*

<http://www.centrotitobustillo.com/en/2/la-cueva/24/cueva-de-tito-bustillo-patrimonio-mundial.html>

## Parque de la Prehistoria de Teverga

The Prehistoric Park of Teverga is an original and unprecedented project in Europe. It is made up by a series of cultural premises whose aim is to divulge the art of the Superior Palaeolithic in Europe. An important sample of these artistic manifestations is reunited here by means of exact reproductions of significant parietal sets and furniture art objects. The Park offers three modern buildings fully integrated in the environment and in permanent dialogue with the landscape. We are dealing with clearly differentiated areas: the visitor reception area, the Gallery and the Cave of Caves, the last two being different architectonic spaces but with a common theme. To sum up, the Park is a sample of another era, a place to get to know the past and to understand the development of mankind while discovering the origin of art.

*For more information about the Parque, please visit:*

<http://www.parquedelaprehistoria.es/en.html>

## Bilbao

Bilbao, an industrial port city in northern Spain, is surrounded by green mountains. It's the de facto capital of Basque Country, with a skyscraper-filled downtown. It's famed for the Frank Gehry-designed Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, which sparked revitalization when it opened in 1997. The museum houses prominent modern and contemporary works, but it's the curvy, titanium-clad building that receives the most attention.

*For more information about Bilbao, please visit:*

<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/spain/aragon-basque-country-and-navarra/bilbao>

## Your lecturer / Guide

**Dr David Saunders** - David has an interest in all areas prehistoric. He undertakes archaeological excavations at Stonehenge and Marden Henge and has lectured throughout the UK. He has just published a book on animal movement across the Stonehenge landscape, "The Cursus Enigma." He has led several tours for Travel Editions in recent years which have been extremely well received.

**During your trip enjoy two evening lectures:**

*'Climate change and the prehistoric artists'*

*'Can signs show us the way?'*

## Tour manager

Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operated according to plan. If you have any problems or questions, please see him or her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and do everything to help you enjoy your holiday.

## Reading Suggestions

**Coosje Van Bruggen, Frank O Gehry: Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao**

This is a celebration of the architecture of Frank O. Gehry's Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. It details the design process that is an intrinsic part of Gehry's revolutionary approach: his use of non-traditional materials and his sensitivity to the environments of his buildings, his method of envisaging a building through semi-automatic drawings and hand-made models.

**Introduction to Paleolithic Cave Paintings in Northern Spain Color Edition: Volume 4**  
(Paleolithic Arts in Northern Spain)

## Practical Information

Although none of the cave walks are particularly difficult, some of the underground paths may be uneven and slippery and there may be a lot of steps to negotiate, so it is essential to have comfortable, well-fitting and protective footwear. It is advisable that boots are ankle high to provide good ankle support. Vibram soles tend to have better grip. It is always advisable to break in your boots before your holiday. Try two pairs of socks, one thin pair close to the skin, and a thicker outer sock.

## Grading

This tour has been graded as **Demanding:** On your feet all day, uneven terrain (e.g. cobbles).



## The Basics

**Climate** – The weather in northern Spain at this time of year is likely to be pleasant, but there is the chance of the odd shower. Our best advice is to come prepared.

**Time** – GMT +2 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 1 (Standard time Nov-Mar).

Language – Spanish and Catalan

Religion – Roman Catholic

**National holidays** – New Year's day (01 Jan); Epiphany (06 Jan); Good Friday; Easter Monday; St George's Day (23 Apr); Labour day (01 May); Whit Monday; St John the Baptist Day (24 Jun); Assumption of Mary (15 Aug); Catalonia Day (11 Sep); Spanish National holiday (12 Oct); All Saints' day (01 Nov); Spanish Constitution Day (06 Dec); Immaculate Conception (08 Dec); Christmas day (25 Dec); St Stephen's Day (26 Dec).

**Currency** – Euro. €1 = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

**Banks** – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are located in all towns and cities, as well as airports, major train stations and other spots. They usually offer an attractive exchange rate. Those banks that still exchange foreign currencies into local money will always charge a transaction fee, so withdrawing money from an ATM usually represents the most logical means of obtaining euros.

**Credit cards** – American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted across the country. If you're eating at a restaurant, check prior to the meal that your card will be an acceptable form of payment. Even in cities, it's advisable to carry a supply of cash with you at all times. Varying amounts of commission can be charged.

**Electricity** – 220 volt, two-pin continental plug.

**Drinking water** – Tap water is safe to drink, although some complain it has a strange taste, so it is generally recommended to drink bottled

water, readily available in supermarkets and shops.

**Shops and Museums** – Shops are open Mon-Sat 1000-1400 and 1700-2000. Supermarkets and department stores tend to open 0930-2100/2200 and may open on Sundays in large cities.

Please note that some museums close on Mondays.

**Clothes & Shoes** – You may like to bring a warm sweater for cool evenings. Light rain wear for the occasional storm and good grip/flat walking shoes are recommended.

**Camera** – bring plenty of memory cards/film and any spare camera batteries as these are not always available. Please check with your guide before photographing people.

**Bath plugs** – The hotel has plugs for basins, but it is useful to carry a 'universal' one with you.

**Telephones/mobiles** – You should be able to use your mobile phone, depending on your operator and contract. The guarantee of free mobile phone roaming throughout the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway has ended. Check with your phone operator to find out about any roaming charges you might get from 1 January 2021. A new law means that you're protected from getting mobile data charges above £45 without you knowing. Once you reach £45, you need to opt in to spend more so that you can continue using the internet while you're abroad. Your phone operator will tell how you can do this.

**Tipping** – To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services, but for your guidance about £2-3 per person per day for the tour manager is the norm. We would like to reiterate that tipping is an entirely optional payment and this information is given purely to answer any questions you may have about it.



## Health

### Doctor/Dentist/Chemist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a doctor.

**Keep receipts for insurance claims.**

### Hospital

Your tour manager/hotel reception will arrange hospital transport.

**Keep receipts for insurance claims.**

### General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit For Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)

### Sun Protection

Spanish summers can be hot and sunny, so always ensure you take sufficient sun protection and moisturiser. A sun hat and sunglasses are also advisable.

### Inoculations

You should check with your own doctor and take their advice as to which inoculations are required for the country you are visiting, as only they know your medical history and recommendations are liable to change at short notice.



## Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad.

To be covered under your Travel Insurance Policy, if you become ill, it is essential that you contact a local doctor and telephone the emergency number of your insurance company. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of medical attention.

### Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC)

Before you travel, make sure you've got a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) or travel insurance with health cover.

You may not have access to free emergency medical treatment and could be charged for your healthcare if you do not have an EHIC or GHIC when visiting an EU country, or travel insurance with full healthcare cover when visiting Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein. If you have an EHIC it will still be valid while it remains in date. Your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) will be valid if you are travelling to an EU country.

For further information about the GHIC please visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>



**Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:**

00 44 20 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 0900-1700), telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 7841 023807 or 00 44 7831 133079

**PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.**

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday:

British Consulate General Barcelona

Avda Diagonal 477-13

08036 Barcelona

Spain

Spain.consulate@fco.gov.uk

Fax: +34 933 666 221

Telephone enquiries: 902 109 356 (in Spain), +34 917 146 300 (if outside Spain).

Consular phone lines are open 0900-1700.

Travel Editions

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