

Table of Hikes

SISTEMA CENTRAL	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	TRANSPORT
ALTA RUTA DE GREDOS	5 DAYS	MODERATE-DEMANDING	BUS
LAKES & PEAKS	2 DAYS	MODERATE	BUS, TAXI
THE WAY OF THE EMPEROR	7-9 HOURS	MODERATE	BUS, TAXI
SIERRA DE CANDELARIO	2 DAYS	MODERATE	BUS
VALLE DE LA FUENFRÍA	5½-6 HOURS	MODERATE	TRAIN, BUS
CUERDA LARGA	3 DAYS	MODERATE-DEMANDING	TRAIN
THE PYRENEES	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	TRANSPORT
THE PYRENEAN TRAVERSE	17 DAYS	MODERATE-DEMANDING	BUS
BASSES DE LES SALAMANDRES	4¾-5¼ HOURS	MODERATE	BUS
ESTANYS DE SISCARÓ	4-4½ HOURS	MODERATE	BUS
PIC DE L'ESTANYÓ	6½-7½ HOURS	DEMANDING	BUS
ESTANY LLONG	5½-6 HOURS	EASY-MODERATE	BUS, TAXI
REFUGI DE COLOMINA	2 DAYS	MODERATE-DEMANDING	BUS, TAXI
PORT DE RATERA D'ESPOT	4½-5 HOURS	MODERATE	BUS, TAXI
WATER WORLD	6 HOURS	MODERATE	TAXI, CAR
FRONTIER RIDGE	3½ HOURS	EASY-MODERATE	BUS
LAGO DE CREGÜEÑA	5-5½ HOURS	MODERATE	BUS
BUTTERFLY VALLEY	3½-4 HOURS	MODERATE	CAR
PUERTO DE BARROSA	5½ HOURS	MODERATE	CAR
STAGGERING SESTRALES	3 HOURS	EASY	CAR
BASQUE COUNTRY & NAVARRAN PYRENEES	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	TRANSPORT
ATXULAR'S EYE	5 HOURS	EASY-MODERATE	BUS, TAXI, CAR
URKIOLA: ANBOTO RIDGE	5-5½ HOURS	DEMANDING	BUS, TAXI
THE WONDERS OF ARALAR	4½-5 HOURS	EASY	BUS, TAXI
SAN SEBASTIÁN TO PASAI DONIBANE	2½-3 HOURS	EASY	BUS, TAXI
INTO THE WITCHES' LAIR	4 HOURS	EASY-MODERATE	BUS, TAXI, CAR
FRONTIER VIEWS	4½ HOURS	EASY-MODERATE	CAR
VULTURES & VERTIGO	5½ HOURS	MODERATE	CAR
PILGRIMS TO POTTOKS	5½ HOURS	MODERATE	BUS, TAXI, CAR
CORDILLERA CANTÁBRICA	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	TRANSPORT
SAJA-BESAYA TRAVERSE	2 DAYS	MODERATE	BUS, TRAIN
VIEWS OF THE ORDIALES	6-6½ HOURS	EASY	BUS, CAR
VEGA D'ARIO	6-7 HOURS	MODERATE	BUS, CAR
LAKE WALK	2½ HOURS	EASY	BUS, CAR
BULNES LA VILLA	4-5 HOURS	MODERATE	BUS, CAR
LA GARGANTA DEL CARES	6 HOURS	EASY	BUS, CAR
MACIZO DE ANDARA	3½-4 HOURS	MODERATE	CAR, TAXI
RUTA DE TRESVISO	5½-6 HOURS	MODERATE-DEMANDING	BUS, CAR
PUERTOS DE ÁLIVA	4 HOURS	EASY	BUS, CAR

BEST TIME	SUMMARY	PAGE
JUN/SEP	A traverse across the central Gredos with an ascent of Almanzor	44
JUN/SEP	Ridge-walking around Covacha and through the best of the Gredos	49
JUN/SEP	A search for signs of past Emperors	50
JUN/SEP	Up a beautiful valley into a stunning corrie below Calvitero	53
MAY/JUN/SEP	A pleasurable hike around a lovely valley and up Cerro Peña Águila	56
MAY/JUN/SEP	An introduction to Guadarrama's valleys, ridges and summits	57
BEST TIME	SUMMARY	PAGE
LATE JUN-SEP	An east-west trek through the most spectacular parts of the Spanish Pyrenees	73
MAY-OCT	Woodland, open heath, mountain tarns and home via a couple of gorgeous valleys	105
MAY-OCT	A steep ascent to the col of Port Dret, then a drop to Estany de Siscaró	106
JUN-SEP	A scramble along the Cresta de L'Estanyó rewarded by magnificent views	107
JUN-SEP	The park's classic walk with stunning views from the Portarró d'Espot	110
JUN-SEP	A challenging trek over the Coll de Peguera	111
JUN-SEP	A route taking in some of the park's finest vistas	113
JUN-SEP	Glowing Alpine lakes and a windy pass	114
JUN-SEP	An ascent to a couple of cols on the French frontier	117
JUN-SEP	An exhilarating ascent to the Pyrenees' third largest lake	118
JUN-SEP	Hide from the people and hang with clouds of butterflies on this walk to a beautiful secret lake	118
JUN-SEP	Spectacular valley of marmots and a high walk to France	120
JUN-SEP	Find out if you suffer from vertigo by peering over the Sestrales ledge	121
BEST TIME	SUMMARY	PAGE
JUN-OCT	Poke Atxular in the eye and enter a secret world	133
JUN-OCT	A nerve-wracking scramble up a mystic peak	137
MAY-OCT	Discover the bizarre landscapes of lovely Aralar	140
YEAR-ROUND	From city cool to countryside calm, discover the best of the Basque coast	143
MAY-OCT	Grab a black cat and tall hat and get to know the world of witches	145
MAY-OCT	Tip-toe along the frontier and stare, awestruck, at two countries at once	147
MAY-OCT	Flex your wings and look for baby vultures on these high cliffs	149
MAY-OCT	History, forests, mountains and shrunk-in-the-wash ponies	152
BEST TIME	SUMMARY	PAGE
MAY-SEP	A fascinating traverse through five picturesque villages along ancient trails	163
JUN-OCT	Gaze longingly at the landscapes of Spain's first national park	169
JUN-OCT	Spectacular Picos walk past lakes, pastures and stunning peaks	172
JUN-OCT	Family-friendly hike past pretty lakes and flower bedecked meadows	174
JUN-OCT	Zigzag along a cliff ledge and play Thomas the Tank back down again	175
JUN-OCT	The classic walk of the Picos up a stunning gorge	177
JUN-OCT	A blissfully lonely walk with wonderful scenery to boot	178
JUN-OCT	Haul yourself a sweaty 800 metres up an old mining trail with glorious views	180
JUN-OCT	A scary cable car and the chance to play peek-a-boo with the Picos	181

GALICIA	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	TRANSPORT
MONTE PINDO	5–6 HOURS	MODERATE–DEMANDING	BUS
SPINDRIFT	2 DAYS	EASY–MODERATE	BUS
ILLA DO FARO	2–2½ HOURS	EASY–MODERATE	BOAT
ILLA MONTE AGUDO	2–2½ HOURS	EASY	BOAT
ANCARES RIDGE	5½–7 HOURS	MODERATE–DEMANDING	TAXI
PIORNEDO LOOP	4½–5½ HOURS	MODERATE	TAXI
DEVESA DA ROGUEIRA LOOP	6–7 HOURS	MODERATE–DEMANDING	TAXI
RÍO LOR MEANDER	2 DAYS	EASY–MODERATE	BUS, TAXI
VALENCIA	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	TRANSPORT
ELS PORTS LOOP	6 DAYS	MODERATE	BUS
RUTA LA MARINA ALTA	4 DAYS	MODERATE	BUS, TAXI
SIERRA DE BERNIA LOOP	5 HOURS	EASY–MODERATE	CAR
MALLORCA	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	TRANSPORT
MONESTIR DE SA TRAPA	4–4½ HOURS	EASY–MODERATE	BUS, TAXI
SÓLLER TO DEIÀ	3–4 HOURS	EASY	BUS
BARRANC DE BINIARAIX & EMBASSAMENT DE CÚBER	3½–4 HOURS	EASY–MODERATE	BUS
VALLDEMOSSA LOOP	5¼–5¾ HOURS	MODERATE	BUS
SÓLLER TO SA CALOBRA	6¼–7¼ HOURS	MODERATE	BUS, BOAT
TORRENT DE PAREIS	4–4½ HOURS	MODERATE–DEMANDING	BUS, BOAT
ANDALUCÍA	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	TRANSPORT
SIERRA DE CAZORLA LOOP	6½ HOURS	EASY–MODERATE	BUS
RÍO BOROSA	6–7 HOURS	MODERATE	BUS
ALPUJARRAS WALK I: THE LOW ROUTE	2 DAYS	MODERATE	BUS
ALPUJARRAS WALK II: THE HIGH ROUTE	2 DAYS	MODERATE	BUS
SIERRA NEVADA TRAVERSE	3 DAYS	MODERATE–DEMANDING	BUS
CABO DE GATA COAST	3 DAYS	EASY–MODERATE	BUS, TAXI
GRAZALEMA LOOP	6 HOURS	EASY–MODERATE	BUS
BENAMAHOMA TO ZAHARA DE LA SIERRA	5 HOURS	EASY	BUS
ALÁJAR FIGURE OF EIGHT	6 HOURS	EASY–MODERATE	BUS
CAMINO DE SANTIAGO	DURATION	DIFFICULTY	TRANSPORT
CAMINO DE SANTIAGO	30 DAYS	MODERATE–DEMANDING	BUS, TRAIN

BEST TIME	SUMMARY	PAGE
MAY–OCT	Hike up through natural sculptures on one of Galicia's most celebrated mountains	192
YEAR-ROUND	Enjoy deserted white-sand beaches and small fishing villages along the rugged coast	193
JUN–SEP	Superb coastal walk to the picturesque lighthouse in Spain's newest national park	198
JUN–SEP	Gorgeous beaches, rare bird sanctuary look-out, and spectacular views from this national park island	199
JUN–OCT	A magnificent sky-walk along the Ancares' highest peaks and down to a pre-Roman hamlet	201
JUN–OCT	Varied walk through lush forest and mountain pastures with magnificent ridge-top views	203
JUN–OCT	A glorious range of flora on dense forest walk to Galicia's only glacial lagoon	205
JUN–OCT	Follow the crystalline Lor river through charming chestnut groves and ancient villages	206
BEST TIME	SUMMARY	PAGE
APR–JUN	A remote, rugged landscape of spectacular gorges, narrow passes and small villages	219
MAR–MAY	A crossing of the region's highest ridge with terraced slopes, deep gullies and Islamic ruins	228
MAR–MAY	Stupendous views of mountains and waves from a jagged ridge	232
BEST TIME	SUMMARY	PAGE
FEB–MAY	A coastal ascent to the ex-Trappist monastery of Sa Trapa and inland return	241
OCT–MAY	Varied, leisurely walk on ancient coastal trails among olive groves	244
FEB–MAY	Follow an old pilgrim route up the spectacular Barranc de Biniaraix valley	246
FEB–MAY	Superb coastal views from the Camino del Arquiduque	248
FEB–MAY	A spectacular cliffside corniche between the Coll de Biniamar and Cala Tuent	250
MAY–SEP	A challenging part-walk, part-clamber down the island's most spectacular gorge	253
BEST TIME	SUMMARY	PAGE
APR–JUN, SEP–OCT	Fall for the mountains and woodlands of the beautiful Parque Natural de Cazorla	264
APR–JUN, SEP–OCT	Tunnels and exquisite gorge scenery on the Cazorla park's most celebrated walk	265
APR–MID-JUN, MID-SEP–EARLY NOV	Berber villages, dramatic gorges and perfect pine forests	269
APR–MID-JUN, MID-SEP–EARLY NOV	See the Alpujarras from up high while dipping in and out of canyons	275
JUL–EARLY SEP	Spectacular high-level wilderness and peaks, including Mulhacén	278
MAR–JUN, SEP–OCT	Beaches, cliffs and coves of southern Spain's most spectacular seaboard	284
MAY–JUN, SEP–OCT	The lovely limestone country of the Sierra de Grazalema	289
MAY–JUN, SEP–OCT	Upland pastures, dense woodlands and a lovely village on this beautiful Sierra de Grazalema route	291
APR–JUN, SEP–OCT	Expansive views, meadows of wildflowers and Peña de Arias Monteno	293
BEST TIME	SUMMARY	PAGE
APR–OCT	Epic walk across the north of Spain along an ancient and culturally rich pilgrimage trail	307

The Author



STUART BUTLER

English-born Stuart Butler grew up walking around his native South Devon coastline and up on Dartmoor before moving onto bigger, though not necessarily better, mountains with walking holidays in the Indian and Nepalese Himalaya, Pakistan's Karakoram, Morocco's Atlas, Ethiopia's Simiens, the Scottish highlands, Norway, Kenya and all over France and Spain.

He now lives close to the Pyrenean foothills on the beautiful Basque beaches of the French/Spanish border. He has worked on a number of Spanish titles for Lonely Planet and stories from his travels can be seen on www.oceansurfpublications.co.uk.

MY FAVOURITE HIKES

Wow, what a question! Obviously I would have to choose one in my own area, the gorgeous green Basque country. Here I'd pick the Frontier Views (p147) or Urkiola (p137) walks both for their stupendous views. But then again maybe if I was feeling cold and blue I'd pick one in the southern sun. I'd never say no to the Sierra Nevada (p278) or, for something different, I'd go for the Cabo de Gata Coast walk (p284) – where I could combine both beach and boots. But good as these areas are, in the end it would have to be the Pyrenees (p73) – either going the whole slog on the traverse or, if I had to pick just one single day walk then definitely the Staggering Sestrales walk (p121).

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

Several authors contributed to the research and writing of sections of this book. See p385 for details.

LONELY PLANET AUTHORS

Why is our travel information the best in the world? It's simple: our authors are passionate, dedicated travellers. They don't take freebies in exchange for positive coverage so you can be sure the advice you're given is impartial. They travel widely to all the popular spots, and off the beaten track. They don't research using just the internet or phone. They discover new places not included in any other guidebook. They personally visit thousands of hotels, restaurants, palaces, trails, galleries, temples and more. They speak with dozens of locals every day to make sure you get the kind of insider knowledge only a local could tell you. They take pride in getting all the details right, and in telling it how it is. Think you can do it? Find out how at lonelyplanet.com.

© Lonely Planet. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'