

Walking in Spain

Hidden Spain

Holiday Notes 2017/2018



HOLIDAY
DURATION
8
DAYS



Tour type: Centred, Self-guided

Tour comfort: Standard

Walks grade: Moderate

Meals: Self-catering

Nearest airport: Alicante

Season: September to June

Holiday highlights - Hidden Spain

- ✓ Casa rural - Stay in a traditional village house with views of the surrounding mountains from the terrace.
- ✓ Tárbena Valley - Walk through a diversity of cultivated terraces with orchards of oranges, lemons, almonds, olives and carobs.
- ✓ Sierra de Carrascal de Parcent - Panoramic views from the 1,000m summit from where Ibiza can be seen on clear days.
- ✓ Jalon Valley - Walk through this picturesque valley famous for its vineyards and visit to a Bodega in Jalon.
- ✓ Rural Landscapes - Walk through a rich profusion of natural diversity, limestone matorral and cultivated landscapes.
- ✓ Moorish Castle - Visit the ruins of a Moorish castle that stands guard over the village.
- ✓ Barranc Tancat - Striking geology of this inaccessible gorge.

Holiday Essentials

Accommodation: 7 nights casa rural

Included Meals: None, see options

Start Point: Tárbena

End Point: Tárbena

Transfers: From airport to Tárbena and to the start/finish of walks as necessary.

Meals

This holiday is self-catering but you can also choose bed and breakfast, half-board or even full board if you prefer. Just let us know when you make your booking.

There is a small local supermarket, a bank and ATM machine close to the holiday cottage and three restaurants and three bars in the village.

Your Walking Itinerary

Walking Itinerary Note

The day-to-day itinerary given below may vary according to climatic conditions, a degree of flexibility is built in so the walks may not occur in the order given. Similarly, the itinerary may vary according to your preferences and walks lengthened, shortened or substituted for other similar alternatives.

Your Local Contact

One of our experienced local contacts will co-ordinate and arrange transfers and meals as required and will be on hand to assist you with any queries or problems you may have.

Navigatin

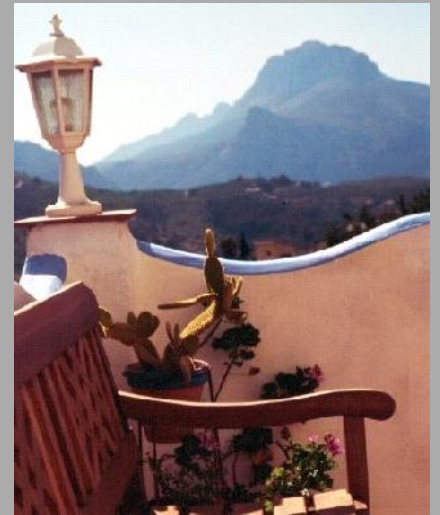
We provide local 1:25,000 topographic maps, A4 map extracts with the route, route notes to accompany the maps and a Garmin eTrek GPS to make sure you always get to your destination

DAY 1 Arrive Alicante Airport, transfer to Tárbenas

Met at Alicante Airport for transfer by car to Tárbenas a journey of about one and a half hours. During the journey you will have the opportunity to talk to your local contact about the week ahead and what to expect.

Once you arrive in Tárbenas you will be taken to your holiday cottage accommodation and shown around the house so you know where everything is and how it works.

Your base for the coming week is a picturesque village of white-washed houses that sit astride a rocky promontory from where you can see the coast and the emblematic sierras of Aitana, Aixortá and Bernia. After settling in you can take a stroll around the village's narrow streets and Plazas, the village is not very large so you cannot get lost. The locals are very friendly and it is usual to be greeted with a cheerful Bon día or Buenos días – it is customary to reply likewise.



DAY 4 Tárben Valley and freshwater springs

Tárben – Font d’Olbis – Tárben

Walking time: 4 to 5 hours. Distance: 12.4 km. Ascents: 515m. Descents 515 m.

A circular route that passes five freshwater-springs, no need for a water bottle today, and a tour of the northern end of the Tárben Valley. The route includes a variety of landscapes and geological formations.

We start by passing the first spring in the village, the Font Santa and then join the old Tárben to Castells de Castells road to climb up to a viewpoint from where you can see the entire valley spread out before you with the Mediterranean Sea glistening in the distance. This is the ideal viewpoint to appreciate the Herculean task of terracing these mountains, started by the Moors over 1000 years ago and followed by subsequent generations.

The route continues to ascend up through matorral and limestone rock formations, the views to the west opens out until we reach the Font d’Olbis, the name means the Forgotten Spring, and a chance to rest, enjoy the view and drink cool spring water straight from the mountain. From here we descend, on the left of the path you may see fossils embedded in the bedrock, through almond groves and then turn westwards to join an old footpath through matorral where you will see examples of the Fan Palm, a diminutive member of the palm family and the only native European member of the genus.

The route descends to the bottom of the valley, passing the Font Secá or Dry Spring, and some traditional farm buildings now converted into residences, to join the old Royal Road that connected Alicante with Valencia now converted into a rural lane as far as the Hotel Lehmi. From here we start to ascend back to Tárben on an old mule trail, still stepped and cobbled in places passing the delightful Font de Benisalim spring and returning to the Poble D’Alt before descending back down to Tárben and the last spring, the Font d’Enmig or the Middle Spring.

DAY 5 The Sacos Valley and the Fonts d’Algar.

Tárben To The Algar Falls.

Walking time: 5 to 6 hours Distance: 16 km Ascents: 330m Descents: 770m

Today you explore the southern end of the Tárben Valley and the Sacos Valley to finish at the Algar Falls, a series of waterfalls and natural rock pools formed as the Sacos River is forced through a narrow gorge.

The route starts along the old footpath that linked Tárben with Bolulla passing the huertas, or vegetable gardens, and olive groves below the village. The route ascends to views out over the coastal plain and the Mediterranean Sea, then turns inland to pass through pinewoods and views of the Sierra de Ferrer and the Sierra de Bernia. As the route gets further away from the village the landscape changes from cultivated to abandoned farmland and farm buildings.

In the valley bottom hidden amongst tranquil pinewoods we reach the Sacos River, there is no bridge so if it is running, the rivers usually have water in the spring after the winter rains, it’s a case of looking for stepping stones or just taking your boots and socks off to wade across. Here we have a chance to visit a remote carob farm that has been in the same family for over 400 years, some of the trees are huge veterans with an ample girth of over three meters.

The route now ascends up to an excursion to the nearby Cosí, this impressive geological formation of three

Prices

This holiday includes:

- All transfers for walks and Alicante Airport
- Seven nights self-catering accommodation.
- Maps and GPS for self guided walks

Basic holiday:	Self-catering	€ 340	Per person
Extras:	Half-board	€ 150	Per person
	Extra nights	€ 38	Per person
	Single supplement.	€ 130	Per person
	Picnic x 7	€ 48	Per person

Joining

You can choose to be met at **Alicante Airport** or make your own way by public transport.

Airport Transfer Service. Includes being met at the Arrivals Hall in Alicante Airport or Alicante railway station and transferred to Tárbenas and then the return transfer at the end of your holiday. See the **Prices** section for the cost of this service.

Public Transport. Alternatively, you can make your own way to Callosa d'en Sarriá by public transport and we will collect you from there. Details of public transport services can be found on the website. There is no charge for this service.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable.

Visa Information

Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

Vaccinations & Protection

Nothing compulsory. Tetanus recommended.

Electric Supply & Plugs

2 Pin Round

Foreign Exchange

ATM Availability: On arrival at the airport and in Tárbenas

Credit Card Acceptance: Visa and Mastercard are generally accepted in larger restaurants and some shops.

Travellers Cheques: Not recommended.

Local Currency: Euros

Recommended Currency for Exchange: We recommend you take the majority of your spending money in Euros cash.

Where to Exchange: In Tárbenas

Medical Attention

Doctor's surgery: Monday to Friday in the Tárbenas medical centre.

24 hour medical attention Health Centre in Callosa (14km)

Accident and Emergency: La Vila Joyosa Hospital (24km)

You will need to bring your European Health Card to obtain free treatment.