



WOLFWATCHING IN THE CANTABRIAN MOUNTAINS

October 14-17th 2019

Optional extension to Somiedo for Brown bear





The Cantabrian Mountains along with the West corner of Spain (Zamora and Galicia) hold the vast majority of Spain's wolves and are the stronghold of the species in Europe. Our tour will be focus on the *Montaña Palentina*, right in the centre of the Cantabrian Mountains, between the Castilian-Leonese plateau and the Bay of Biscay, making it one of the most biodiverse regions in Europe.

Our base for this wolf watching tour is in a cosy, welcoming, family-run hotel located in the mountains. The hotel is surrounded by a wild landscape, high mountain ridges rich with vast deciduous oak and beech forests which support different packs of wolves and some endangered population of the Cantabrian Brown Bear. Looking for Wolves requires a great deal of persistence and patience. During the early morning, we will be driven by 4-wheel vehicles to remote viewpoints to scan from high ridges for Iberian Wolves, Bears and other mammals. After having picnic breakfast, we will spend the rest of the morning and afternoon exploring and looking for other wildlife. Furthermore, these mountains hold a healthy population of Wildcats and we will look for them.

Regarding birds, we might encounter raptors such as Golden Eagles, Peregrines and Griffon Vultures. In addition, Black and Middle Spotted Woodpeckers breed in the forested slopes and valleys.

Flights

The closest airport is Santander. Ryanair flies 4 times a week from London Stansted to Santander airport.



Food

All included in the price from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 4. Dinner will be in the rural hotel and it will consist of traditional local meals with local wine. Our picnic lunch will be prepared everyday by the rural hotel.

Accommodation

A beautifully restored and comfortable rural hotel in delightful surroundings. All rooms are provided with private facilities.

Cost

890 € per person in double room (65 € single supplement). 90% succeed in watching the Iberian Wolf!

Minimum 4 guests and maximum 7 guests.

Itinerary

Day 1. Monday Oct 14th. Arrival to Santander airport- San Martin de Perapertu



Your local guide will be waiting for you at the airport. On arrival we will drive southwest for about 1:30 hours towards our accommodation in the mountains. Depending on the flight times, we will make our first attempt to find the Wolves.

Day 2-3. Tuesday and Wednesday Oct 15-16th.



For the next two full days, from dawn until dusk, we will search for the region's wildlife. Before sun rise, we will be in the watchpoint searching for the elusive Iberian Wolf. This is not a tour for the loud and talkative! Be should be quiet at any time, and for long periods in order to see this top predator.

From mid-morning to mid-afternoon, we will visit different locations to look for other mammals and birds. There are a lot of chances we see Wildcats. These mountains are one of the best spots in Europe for this feline. The population is healthy and pure, no like other



parts of Europe where there has been hybridization with domestic cats.

The mountains and valleys are rich in birds of prey, and include Red Kites, Hen Harriers, Northern, Goshawks, Griffon Vulture and Golden Eagle. In the forest we might find Crested Tits, Firecrest, Crossbills and the stunning Black Woodpecker! There are good number Wildboar, Red and Roe Deer which is the main food resource of Wolves.

Day 4. Thursday Oct 17th. Departure to Santander airport

Our flight is due to leave late at night, so we will spend all day looking for the wildlife we might have missed before driving the short distance to Santander airport.

End of the trip to one of the most pristine areas in Europe! Home of a wide variety of wildlife, including the Iberian Wolf!

Our main targets during the tour will be the Iberian Wolf and the Wildcat. In addition, we might see the Cantabrian brown bear, but the density in this part of Picos is lower than in the Western part. So, if you were interested in combining this trip with an extension for the Cantabrian Brown Bear, please contact us!