



Spain - Weekend Escape

INTRODUCTION

Possibly the greatest singletrack in Spain has been uncovered in The Marina Alta Mountains of southern Valencia. Since we began our trips here in 2000 we've hosted journalists from the biggest UK magazines and they all said the same thing – this place is fantastic!

HIGHLIGHTS

- Amazing Mozarabic singletrack trails – totally different from those ridden on our week trip
- En-suite rooms in lovely guesthouse, right in the heart of a mountain village
- Qualified guides with good guide:client ratio keep you safe and ensure great days out

OUR SPANISH MTB PARTNERSHIP

Our Spanish guiding team are some of the most experienced, qualified and highly professional mountain bikers you could ever ride with. Trained in the UK to the highest standards through the SMBLA awards scheme both Gary and Sarah know how to lead, where to lead and how to guarantee that each day is a great day out. They are based in Spain for most of the year, so when they're not guiding they're out cutting back undergrowth to uncover yet more singletrack for future guests, or the many who return each year, to sample and enjoy.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT HOLIDAY

At CycleActive we carefully grade our trips according to both the level of fitness you need and, for mountain biking, the level of skill you need. We also offer personal advice to anyone who needs it, by email or on the phone, to ensure that you find a holiday suitable for your abilities and desires.

This trip is Fitness Grade 3

You need good fitness from regular exercise sessions and time spent actively involved in cycling. The trip involves full days on the bike with some challenging climbs.

This trip is Skill Grade C

On the holiday there's a mixture of rocky, technical singletrack riding, double track mountain trails and gravel tracks over loose stones and rough ground. You should be confident over steep and rocky ground, or be ready to learn some new skills with our expert instructors. There is the chance to avoid some demanding trails, but not all, so confident biking skills are essential.

SUMMARY ITINERARY From the UK

Day 1 (Thursday). Fly to Alicante where we collect you for the 2 hour transfer to our guesthouse, up in the mountains.

Day 2. The first ride day gets you straight onto the famous Mozarabic Singletrack on the slopes of Bernia Mountain.

Day 3. More singletrack challenges as we ride the trails through Al Azrac – the old Moorish King – territory.

Day 4. A superb mix of trails and ecosystems as we ride through the mountains and the Jalon valley to the coast.

Day 5 (Monday). If flights are planned right you'll get a morning blast on the best technical singletrack trails, right above our village.

Full details of dates, prices and what is included can be found on our website.



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Detailed Itinerary

Day 1 – Arrival

You fly into Alicante on a Thursday and can arrive at any time, although the main transfer we operate leaves the airport in the early evening (extra transfers, at an extra charge, can be organised by prior arrangement).

Once you've settled into the guesthouse we'll get bikes built up before a superb 3 course dinner. Then it's time to rest up in preparation for a full day out on the trails tomorrow.

Day 2 - Bernia Mountain Trails

Friday begins with a short ride out to the valley that lies below Bernia Mountain. Our route for the day zig-zags through the terraces of ancient nut and olive trees, mixing open climbs with superb singletrack descents, including sections through natural bamboo tunnels which follow the river trail back towards our guesthouse. At the end of this great, full day out, you'll have time for a siesta before another big dinner, and maybe a few beers in the local bars.

Day 3 - Ancient Singletrack

Saturday's ride takes us into the heart of Al Azrac territory - the land once controlled by this fearsome Moorish King. Riding a mixture of fire roads and mozarabic donkey trails through ancient ruins, you'll get to see some amazing scenery, and the beautiful cherry orchards of the lower valleys. That's if you can tear your eyes away from the breathtaking trails!

Day 4 - Jalon Valley to the Sea

Sunday's ride is another treat, taking us from the door of our guesthouse down through the Jalon valley and on to some challenging mozarabic trails to the coast, at Moraira. There are climbs along the way, of course, but the focus is on superb descents and overall great riding before we hit the coast for a swim, a beer, and a bus back up to the guesthouse.

Day 5 - Last Spin then Home

Monday is departure day, but we always recommend late afternoon flights so you can sneak in a 2 hour early morning ride. There are loads of short options from the village, whether you want an easy cruise or something fast, furious and very challenging to end the weekend on a real high. We then pack up the bikes and transfer down to the airport for flights home.

Further Info

Our guesthouse is a beautiful old town house, facing onto the cobbled streets of the village. Just round the corner is our bike store and workshop, where we can get the bikes assembled and checked.

Your guides are SMBLA qualified, highly experienced mountain bike leaders and instructors. If you want to develop your skills or just pick up some riding tips during the weekend then they will help you to get the most out of your time with us.

The trails here are some of the most breathtaking singletrack rides you'll find anywhere in Europe. Our guides were quite possibly the first people ever to mountain bike on them, but only after many days of cutting back and clearing to make sure they flowed perfectly.

A classic Marina Alta ride and a day to remember – pack your swimmers and a towel in the bus and enjoy the beach and sea at the end of your ride.



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TRAVEL FACTS

Geography and Climate

This tour is based in the Marina Alta Mountains, which are on the Mediterranean coast of Spain. The mountains are little known and as a whole are very untouristed. The villages are still quite traditional, with good local bars, shops and cafes in the village where we stay. This region enjoys a good climate almost all year as the region is location on the east coast of Spain it guarantees sunny, warm weather for most of the year.

Our Pension in Castell de Castells

We stay in the "Pension Castells", a 200 year old renovated guest house in the heart of the village. With comfortable twin or double bedded en-suite rooms, superb meals each night (with a good supply of local wine, straight from the barrel!) and its roof top terrace overlooking the village streets and mountains beyond, this is the perfect place to be based.

Cycling Support

While cycling in Spain you need to be able to carry your own basic provisions and tools, as the vehicle cannot follow us during the rides. Our leaders carry a good toolkit and will help to fix most bike problems, and if the problem is too serious we are usually not far from assistance or a road. Our vehicles will be permanently based at the Pension, should anyone need to be collected from a distant valley due to a medical or technical problem. Note that while we do have a well-equipped workshop, we cannot guarantee to be equipped for all repairs and there are no bikeshops nearby, so you must ensure that your bike is in good working order before coming on the tour.

Cycle Hire

If you want to use your own bike it is usually easy to find flights which are suitable and we will send you our guideline packing instructions. If you prefer to rent one for the trip we offer excellent bikes from DMR and Kona, with retail values from £750 to £950. Please call us to discuss bike hire so that we can find what's best for you.

Flights and Transfers

We can book your flight through an ATOL bonded agent and you will have a separate contract for your flight with them. Alternatively you can book your own flights through Easyjet, BMI, Monarch or Thomson who cover most regional UK airports now.

With a transfer time of around 2 hours from airport to guesthouse we can only make one journey on arrival day and departure day. This is usually time to fit in with flights arriving mid to late afternoon and departing at a similar time. If you wish to arrive early you may be able to take a taxi to a beachside bar or just relax at the café in Alicante airport. If you need to arrive late please let us know so we can organise a taxi for you (additional cost approx £75 as it is a 2 hour drive). On departure day you will need to reserve an extra transfer with us if you intend to fly home earlier than the afternoon transfer allows – please check availability and prices before booking your flights.

Passports and Visas

For entry into Spain, UK citizens need a full passport, but a visa is not required.

Clothing and Equipment

On booking, a detailed list of useful and essential items will be sent to you. You must bring your own cycle helmet that must be worn for all cycle rides.



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