



BIRDING IN SPAIN'S WILD WEST

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Batuecas natural Park - Sierra de Francia, Biosphere reserve

The remarkably lush Sierra de Francia and Batuecas Natural Park hosts both Atlantic and Mediterranean forest such as Sweet Chestnut, Pyrenean oak, Cork oak, Arbutus, cultivated Olive, Cistus ladanifer, and Tree heather. From heights of over 1600m you can dip down into lush wooded valleys at 600m above sea level with a Mediterranean micro-climate. Amongst rocky outcrops live groups of Spanish Ibex, and around the valleys breed Black stork, Egyptian vulture, Griffon Vulture and Golden eagle. The whole area has a charmed feel with its medieval villages and half-timbered houses, balconies almost touching as houses huddle together amongst the forested hills. Historically a fruit growing area, nature here has filled in the some of the spaces abandoned by man: cherry and olive groves on terraced banks above sparkling streams, too remote to reach except on foot or by mule, are home to an abundance of wildlife. We'll look for Alpine Accentor and Dartford warbler on the more exposed heights, Crested tit, Firecrest, Western Bonelli's & Sardinian warblers further down, and above, Peregrine Falcon, Goshawk, Egyptian, Black and Griffon Vulture and Golden Eagle. We'll wander along tracks and read the signs left by mammals such as genet and stone marten, wild boar and roe deer.

All year: Crested Tit, Cirl & Rock Bunting, Sardinian & Dartford warbler, Firecrest, Black Redstart, Bullfinch, Hawfinch, Water Pipit, Dipper, Short-toed Treecreeper, Lesser-spotted Woodpecker, Blue Rock thrush, Griffon & Black vulture, Golden eagle, Goshawk.

Autumn/Winter: Redstart, Spotted flycatcher, Alpine accentor.

Spring/Summer: Turtle Dove, Red-rumped swallow, Egyptian vulture, Booted eagle, Short-toed Eagle, Honey buzzard, Black stork.

When booking three or more subsequent tours, 5% discount will be applied to the overall price.