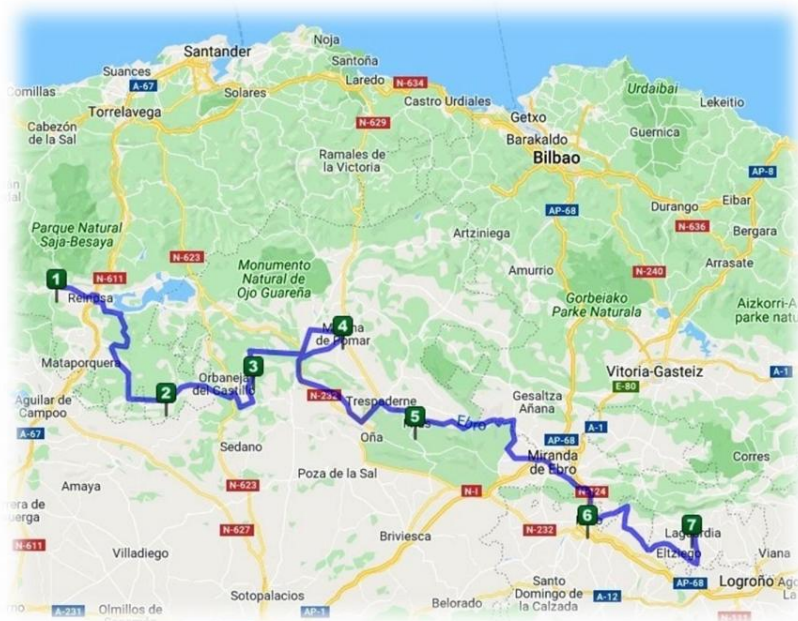


Cycling Safaris

Rioja – The Descent of the River Ebro

Self Guided Tour 2026

289 – 370km | 8 days / 7-nights



A superb trip, following the River Ebro, the longest in Spain, as it flows from its source in the Cantabrian Mountains down to the distant Mediterranean. The very name of the Iberian Peninsula comes from this river – Iberia, the country of the Ebro. Our route follows what begins as a tiny mountain stream flowing through the green pastures of Cantabria, beautiful valleys, imposing canyons, vineyards, past pretty and unknown villages, witnessing the changes in the landscape and the river itself. Finally we arrive in La Rioja, home of the finest wines produced in Spain. A sea of vineyards dotted with ancient villages, castles and wine-producing *bodegas*, all with the limestone mountains of the Sierra de Cantabria in the background. A magnificent trip for those who wish to visit parts of Spain the tourists never see.

TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 Transfer to Campoo

Arrival in Santander or Bilbao and transfer to our hotel in Campoo. Test bikes. That evening you will have dinner in your hotel.

Day 2 Campoo – Polientes 59km or 97 km

This stage takes us through some fabulous and unspoilt scenery. From the green mountain pastures of the Cantabrian Mountains, along the shores of the Ebro Reservoir, past the Monastery of Montesclaros surrounded by forests to finally rejoin the Ebro in the Valley of Valderredible and tonight's stop in Polientes. Those on the short version follow the river direct to Polientes. The longer version circumnavigates the Ebro Reservoir. Dinner in your hotel.

2026 TOUR PRICES

Per person sharing	€1200
Single supplement	€285
Touring bike	€150
e-bike	€245
Road bike (carbon)	€205

2026 TOUR DATES

Tour runs every Sunday (arrival and departure day) from 29th March to 25th October.

- Groups of 4 or more can choose any start date at no extra cost.
- Supplement for non-standard start dates: 1 person €315, 2 people €160 each, 3 people €110 each.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE

Included

- › 7 nights Accommodation in 3 & 4* hotels and country-inns with en-suite bathroom
- › Breakfast
- › 5 meals with wine (on Days 1 - 5)
- › Transfers to and from hotels on arrival and departure days
- › Luggage transport
- › Information Pack (Route Guide, maps, elevation profiles, GPS files)

Not included:

Bike rental is not included in the standard tour package

€45 rental of a Garmin

€70 charge if bringing your own bike as a transfer supplement for the bike case

ACCOMMODATION LIST ~ *Please note that confirmation of these places is subject to availability*

Ormas (Campoo)	Posada de Ormas
Polientes	Cuartelillo Viejo
Valle de Zamanzas	Posada Molino del Canto
Medina de Pomar	Hotel Romanca
Montejo de Cebas	Casa Rural Posada Colas
Haro	Hotel Arrope
Laguardia	Hospedería de los Parajes

BACK-UP SERVICE

As this is a self led trip you do not have the back-up of a guide and support van. Our aim is to allow you feel like an independent traveller, free to cycle each day at your own pace while at the same time having the security of knowing that your luggage will be waiting for you in your next accommodation. On some stages cyclists are also transferred part of the way to avoid unnecessary climbs (details in individual route descriptions).

Our "On Call" service means we are always available for help or advice.

BIKE RENTAL



Carbon road bike - male

Cube Attain GTC

A quality carbon bike with comfortable 32/34 gearing. 50/34 chainring - 11/32 cassette – 22 speeds



Carbon road bike - female

Cube Attain WLS GTC Pro

A quality carbon bike with comfortable 32/34 gearing. 50/34 chainring - 11/32 cassette – 22 speeds



Trekking bike - male

Trek FX

Good all-purpose bike. Fitted with mudguards, rear rack etc. 48/38/28 chainring – 11/32 cassette – 27 speeds



Trekking bike - female

Trek FX

Good all-purpose bike. Fitted with mudguards, rear rack etc. 48/38/28 chainring – 11/32 cassette – 27 speeds



E-bikes

Various models

Over the last few years, the e-bike has revolutionised cycle touring. Tours are made so much easier and differences between riders' abilities are minimized.

Equipment for touring & e-bikes

These bikes are supplied with a helmet (obligatory in Spain), rear luggage rack, choice of rear rack bag (5 litres) or a pannier (40 litres), mudguards, small front handlebar bag, odometer, basic toolkit, 1.5 litre water bottle and a lock

Equipment for road bikes

These bikes are supplied with a helmet (obligatory in Spain), small handlebar bag, odometer, pump, basic toolkit, 1.5 litre water bottle and a lock

Optional extras

Garmin (extra charge of €45)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Hotels in Frias

On day 5, our destination is Frias. However, the village of Frias does not have any suitable accommodation, so we use 3 different villages in the surrounding area. All hotels will provide dinner on this evening. Destinations will depend on availability and also the accommodation we have selected on each particular departure date. The final destinations are:

- Ranera (adds 6 km to the ride and also the following day's ride to Haro)
- Montejo de Cebas (adds 3 km to the ride, but then reduces the following day's ride by the same distance)
- Tobera de Frias (adds 2 km to the ride and also the following day's ride to Haro)

Route Guide and Maps

You will be provided with our Route Guide which includes detailed route instructions along with interesting information on landscapes, towns and villages, monuments, alternative route suggestions, timetables for local trains and buses, tips on eating and drinking, an exhaustive gastronomic dictionary and a host of other useful information and suggestions to keep cyclists occupied. Routes are carefully described so no time is wasted on unnecessary deviations. Maps of the area are also provided to support the Route Guide.

Trips that include more than one night in the same destination include optional round rides of differing lengths for these free days so cyclists will never be at a loose end.

Weather and Climate

Many people are put off coming to Spain on a cycling holiday due to the weather. They think it's going to be just too hot – and they are probably right! During the summer months Spain is one of the hottest and driest countries in Europe with temperatures climbing up to 40°C – 105°F or even more - too much for your average cyclist.

Temperatures can vary on this trip. The initial stages are at a higher altitude and cooler. The highest temperatures in Burgos in July and August are 26 °C . The average maximum temperature in April is 13 °C and in October 16 °C.

As we descend the river towards La Rioja, temperatures rise a little and those of Logroño (capital of La Rioja) would be representative of this latter half of the trip – the average highest temperature in July and August there are 29 °C. In Logroño the average temperature in April is 16 °C and in October 19 °C.

Terrain/ Gradients

Moderate cycling with some climbs as the route follows the River Ebro as it flows downstream. Some days may involve some climbing when the route moves away from the river.

Holiday extensions

Possibility of spending extra nights in Bilbao or Santander. Please email our office for more details

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Best arrival points:

Airports - Bilbao or Santander

Ferry ports - Bilbao or Santander

Bus / train stations - Bilbao or Santander

Please note it is more convenient to arrive in Santander and then depart from Bilbao.

The closest airport for arrival is Santander Airport and the most convenient for departure is Bilbao Airport and is preferable. However, it may be easier for customers to book a return flight from Bilbao Airport. It is important to remember that at the end of the tour, the transfer time from Laguardia to Bilbao is 90 minutes, so if we allow for a 2-hour check in time, then it means departure time from Laguardia would be three and a half hours before flight time. Thus, departure time from Laguardia is scheduled for 9 a.m. so customers should take this into account before booking their flights.

Another option is to spend an extra night in Bilbao and visit the city and the Guggenheim Museum (Remember the museum is closed on Monday except during the months of July and August when it is open every day).

By Air

Travellers on the routes of Asturias and Cantabria and also the Rioja route generally arrive at Santander or Bilbao Airport where they are met by our pick up service. Some companies fly directly to Santander or Bilbao from the UK and other European airports.

It is often possible to take connecting flights through Spanish airports such as Madrid or Barcelona or through other European cities. Our nearest airport is Santander connecting with Madrid and Barcelona, although flights are not so frequent. RyanAir has now opened a new route from London, Stansted to Santander Airport, actually closer to our starting point in Santillana del Mar.

You may like to extend your holiday with a mini-cruise. Brittany Ferries runs a service from the UK to Santander and P & O Ferries sail from the UK to Bilbao.

Please note that we do not get involved with travel arrangements as we feel that the customer will get the best possible deal either by searching the Internet or asking the local travel agent to check all possibilities.

By Ferry

Another alternative for these routes is a mini-cruise on the ferry. P & O run a service from Portsmouth to Bilbao which takes 36 hours. Brittany Ferries sail from Plymouth to Santander. The new ferry being brought into service in 2004 will do the crossing in 19 hours. Again, we will pick you up from the Santander or Bilbao ferryports.

Most companies will allow you to transport your own bicycle - check with individual companies for their policy on this.

Trains & Buses

If you are travelling within Spain, there is an excellent network of road transport. The Spanish Intercity train service is called Renfe. The local train service along the coast of the Basque Country, Cantabria & Asturias is called FEVE. The major coach companies, depending on where you are travelling, are Alsa and Continental Auto.