

EXPLORE!

TRIP NOTES



Family Pyrenees Activity Adventure (FPY 2017)



TRIP DURATION
8
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Moderate

Tour Type: Centre Based
Accommodation
Grade: Standard

Trip Code: FPY

Trip Highlights - Family Pyrenees Activity Adventure

- ✓ Accommodation - Comfortable base in a family-run hotel with swimming pool
- ✓ Sort - Charming village with bars and cafes to watch the world go by
- ✓ Aigues Tortes NP - Easy walking around picturesque Sant Maurici lake in the region's finest National Park
- ✓ Noguera River - White water rafting and kayaking on one of Europe's best and safest rivers with good year round water levels
- ✓ Estaron Canyon - Abseiling and canyoning against a stunning mountainous backdrop

Trip Essentials

Accommodation: 7 nights Standard Hotel
Included Meals: 7 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 0 dinners
Start Point: Join trip: Barcelona Airport
End Point: Trip ends: Barcelona Airport
Transport: 4WD, Bus
Countries: Spain
Minimum Age: From 11 years

Family Pyrenees Activity Adventure

Set against the backdrop of the breathtaking Pyrenees, the town of Sort is an ideal location for an activity holiday. We abseil down gorges, kayak and whitewater raft along rivers and explore the beautiful surroundings of Aigues Tortes National Park. There is time each day to relax at our hotel and enjoy its inviting swimming pool. All activity equipment is provided and no previous experience is necessary.

We also offer a 'lite' version of this trip which includes your accommodation, 7 breakfasts, the service of a Explore tour leader and transfers, with the option of including flights from the UK. All activities on the 'lite' version are bookable and payable locally, allowing you to pick and choose how active you want to be each day.

TRIPLE ROOMS

This trip allows the option for triple rooms in apartments to be included within the booking on a selected number of night stops within the holiday. If you would like this option, a discount may be applicable on the cost of the trip - please ask our Sales team for further information.

Why Book this trip

This holiday is perfect for active families who enjoy the outdoors all set against the stunning backdrop of the Pyrenees. Sort is the Pyrenees' premier water-based activity centre - a true mecca for lovers of white-water rafting, canyoning, kayaking and hydrospeed. Our riverside hotel has been specifically chosen to offer a range of facilities including tennis courts, two swimming pools and a gym plus it is located close to the Aigues Tortes NP, the region's finest National Park with numerous walking trails. Furthermore, the town of Sort is an ideal location to discover the traditional local culture of the area and last but not least is blessed with a beautiful micro climate, allowing an average of 300 days of sunshine per year.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Accommodation Grade: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Moderate

These moderately paced tours provide some busy days with plenty of experiences to enjoy, as well as time to relax along the way.

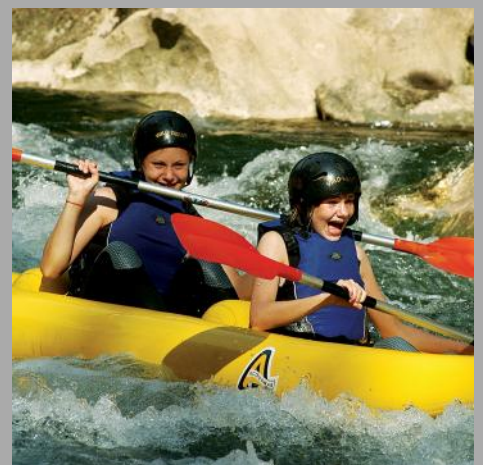
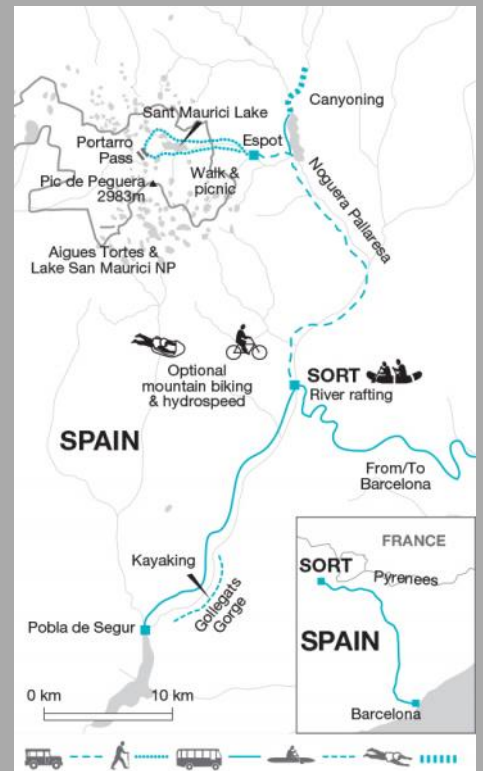
Your trip itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced Tour Leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they



love to share. Your Tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join Barcelona airport and drive to the hotel in Sort

Arrive Barcelona airport, transfer 3.5 hours to Sort and check-in at hotel. This charming mountain village close to the Noguera River is the centre for watersports in the Pyrenees. The name means 'luck' in Catalan. The main transfer leaves Barcelona airport at lunchtime although there is another transfer that can be arranged in the evening - please inform Explore which transfer you would like to be on.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** None

DAY 2 Walk in the Aigues Tortes National Park

We leave in the morning and head off in Land Rovers to the Sant Maurici Lake which is placed amidst the rugged mountain ranges of the Pyrenees with peaks of up to 3000 m surrounding the area. The image of the two Encantats peaks is surely the most stunning one in the mountain range. We walk along-side the lake, passing a beautiful waterfall before reaching the 'Mirador', a viewpoint high above Sant Maurici. We have our picnic lunch close by with local specialities such as longaniza sausage or farmhouse goat cheese before continuing our walk along the other side of the Sant Maurici lake and then driving back to Sort. (Approximately 3 hours walking, 300 m ascent)

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 3 Canyoning and Abseiling

In the morning we drive 30 minutes north to the beautifully set Guingueta reservoir, one of the dammed lakes of the Noguera river. There are excellent views of the Pyrenees with the backdrop of mountains all around. After changing into our wetsuits and harnesses we'll spend the morning abseiling, jumping and sliding down the Estaron Canyon. We'll be back at the hotel at lunch time and then the afternoon is free for more optional activities or relaxing by the pool. In the evening a dinner out of the village can be organized in one of the delightful restaurants tucked away in small mountain villages not to far from Sort.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4 White water rafting along the Noguera River

In the morning we drive to our activity base right next to the river where we don our wet suits and lifejacket to explore this exciting river on our rafts along a 14 km stretch of the river. Pass through some exhilarating rapids including the famous 'washing machine' rapid which will throw your raft onwards as you travel down the steep body of water and we are sure you will yell with triumph once through this rollercoaster of a rapid. The river Noguera is unique as there is a high enough water level all year round for water sports. The afternoon is free for exploring the village of Sort, an old capital of the area with remains of the castle dating back to the 11th century still overlook the village. A great location with beautiful surroundings and the backdrop of the Pyrenees, the town also boasts several pleasant bars and cafes where one can sit on the terrace and watch life pass by.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 5 Free Day - optional canyoning, abseiling, horse riding or mountain biking

By today you will hopefully know which activities you liked most and there are plenty of possibilities for a very active day, perhaps exploring 'hell's' canyon which involves abseiling 20 meters into a cave, horse riding or mountain biking. Another option involves a more challenging way of floating down the river in an activity called hydrospeed where you hang on to a little board following the current through rapids and calmer sections of the river.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 6 Free morning by the pool with an afternoon open kayak excursion

This morning is left free for relaxing or filling in with further optional activities that your tour leader can help you organise. This afternoon we will transfer to Geri de la Sal village where we get changed into our wet suits and spend the afternoon kayaking down

the Noguera River through some exciting rapids and stunning canyons. These kayaks are often referred to as 'open kayaks' (inflatable, very stable mini-rafts). This area is one of the last habitats of the 'quebrantahuesos' vulture (or bearded vulture) which is close to extinction in Europe - with a bit of luck we can see one.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 7 Free Day - optional mountain biking

Today you can rest at the pool or on the banks of the river. Alternatively you may want to go for a walk in the surrounding area or ask the Tour Leader to organize another activity for you. There are a wide range of possibilities; recommended is the exhilarating mountain bike ride through the Montgarri valley or perhaps you may wish to spend the afternoon horse riding.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 8 Return to Barcelona

After breakfast we drive to Barcelona Airport where the tour ends. If you are staying on you may wish to explore this fascinating city with its many attractions such as 'La Boqueria' food market, Las Ramblas boulevard lined with bars and restaurants and not to mention the many incredible architectural works of Antoni Gaudi. If your flight is later than the dropping off time at Barcelona airport, there is the opportunity to travel into Barcelona by bus and bags can be stored at the airports left luggage for around Euro 10 per piece of luggage.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

Ability to swim required

An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Notes

The hotel is situated in the small town of Sort which is next to the Noguera Pallaresa River in the Lleida Pyrenees. The hotel offers a range of facilities including; a bar, restaurant, lounge, children's play room, indoor and outdoor swimming pool, gym, tennis courts, sun terrace and a large garden area. There is even a spa and wellness area as well as a sauna. The en-suite bedrooms also offer a hairdryer, free Wi-fi, satellite TV and have views over the swimming pool, garden or local town.

For families of three or more we will use the hotel apartments ideal for families which are located at the hotel with direct access to the pool and garden area. The apartments have a fully equipped kitchenette, bathroom, dining room and TV. They have either one or two double bedrooms with either a twin or double bed and a sofa bed in the main room that is ideal for teenagers. Apartments are cleaned twice per week and once for a change of towels and bed sheets. Please note that these rooms will be allocated upon arrival and families will be housed in either the apartments or the hotel to ensure they are close together.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 7 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 0 dinners included in the price of this trip. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Spain

Lunch £: 6.00 - 10.00

Dinner £: 12.00 - 16.00

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Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Spain

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50 - 2.50 (depending on the region/area in Spain)

Water £: 1.40

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

These prices all include transport costs:

Kayaking course 2 hours - €55.00

Hydrospeed - €60.00

Hells Canyon - €60.00

Mountain bike - €50.00

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided.

In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour. The recommended amount for this is 15 Euros per person.

Foreign Exchange

Spain

ATM Availability: In cities and most major towns.

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: We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

Joining your Trip

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

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Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

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Travel Aware

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting cr@explore.co.uk or 01252 379438.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

Spain: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

Lone Parents

Spain

Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the Spanish embassy for further information on exactly what may be required.

Vaccinations & Protection

Spain

Nothing compulsory but Tetanus is usually recommended as a precaution. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Preparing for your Trip

Climate

Spain

Overall, spring, early summer and autumn are ideal times for a Spanish trip - though the weather varies enormously from region to region. The high central plains suffer from fierce extremes, stiflingly hot in summer, bitterly cold and swept by freezing winds in winter. The Atlantic coast, in contrast, has a tendency to damp and mist, and a relatively brief, humid summer. The Mediterranean south is warm virtually all year round. Spain's Islands the Canaries and Balaerics experience very mild winters and warm summers making them ideal year round destinations.

Clothing

Waterproofs for showers are also recommended as the weather can change with little notice as in all mountainous areas. Lightweight cotton clothing is advised from June to September with a fleece for higher walks.

Equipment

During the summer months we recommend you bring a sunhat and sunscreen as temperatures can be high. Water bottle and torch are essential.

Footwear

Walking or trail boots are essential, plus comfortable trainers. Sandals are useful in summer. An extra pair of old trainers is recommended for canyoning.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of luggage and a daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own baggage so don't overload yourself.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Spain

Population: 46,030,109

Size of Country: 504,782 sq km

Major Language: Castilian Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Basque

Religion: Roman Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Electric Supply & Plugs

Spain

2 Pin Round

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group (www.tourismconcern.org.uk) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

These trip notes were printed on 23/08/2017 09:56:16