

# EXPLORE!

## TRIP NOTES



### Northern Spain by Rail (RSP 2017)



TRIP DURATION  
**12**  
DAYS



**Tour Style:** Classic  
**Tour Pace:** Moderate

**Tour Type:** Small Groups  
**Accommodation**  
**Grade:** Standard

**Trip Code:** RSP

#### Trip Highlights - Northern Spain by Rail

- ✓ Rail Journeys - Crossing the Basque region and Cantabria by rail
- ✓ Bilbao - Visit the extraordinary Guggenheim Museum and the Basque Railway Museum in Azpeitia
- ✓ Picos de Europa - Walking amongst the beautiful landscapes of Spain's oldest national park
- ✓ Leon and Santiago de Compostela - Two of Spain's most historic holy cities

#### Trip Essentials

**Accommodation:** 11 nights Standard Hotel  
**Included Meals:** 11 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners  
**Start Point:** Join trip: Bilbao  
**End Point:** Trip ends: Bilbao  
**Transport:** Bus, Train, Taxi  
**Countries:** Spain



## Northern Spain By Rail

This very special collection of narrow gauge rail journeys takes us along the spectacular coast of northern Spain and through the Picos de Europa mountain range. We visit the Basque Railway Museum and from Poncebos we climb high into the rugged mountains by funicular. We also enjoy Bilbao and the Medieval cities of Santiago de Compostela and Leon.

### Why Book this trip

If you're looking to ride the rails along northern Spain's spectacular coastline and through the Picos de Europa mountain range then this is the tour for you. As well as seeing some of the country's most captivating scenery, on this tour you also have the option of upgrading your stay by travelling on one of our Premium departures, where you can unwind after a busy day exploring in comfortable hotels for the majority of nights of your holiday. Please select the 'RSP 2016 PREMIUM' itinerary on the drop down menu for further details.



### 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 trip in Bilbao

Arrive in Bilbao and check-in at the hotel. Situated on the banks of the Nervion River, on the northern edge of the Iberian Peninsula, Bilbao is home to the iconic magnificence of the Guggenheim, one of the world's most famous museums and one of its most spectacular architectural creations. Lying amongst the verdant landscapes of Vizcaya Province, the city is the largest and most culturally dynamic in the Basque region, providing us with the perfect start to this incredible journey.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** None

## DAY 2 Bus to Azpeitia to visit the Basque Railway Museum

Early this morning we take a bus to the Basque Railway Museum, located in the old station at Azpeitia. The museum is considered one of the finest railway museums in Europe, its 25,000 square metres of tracks and pavilions housing a fascinating collection of rail memorabilia; with some 70 different vehicles on display, as well as an exhibition of railway clocks and one of the few remaining mechanical workshops to survive from the early years of the 20th century. Returning to Bilbao this afternoon, you will have free time to visit the Guggenheim museum.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 3 Train to Puente San Miguel; free afternoon in Santillana del Mar

Heading west this morning, we leave Bilbao and take a train towards the mountainous landscapes of Cantabria. Today's journey will take us to Puente San Miguel and from here we travel a short distance to Santillana del Mar. There are many historical buildings to enjoy, including the Merino and Don Borja Tower, which are said to be the oldest buildings in the town. You may also wish to visit the collegiate church of Santa Juliana, which is considered to be one of the best examples of Romanesque architecture in Cantabria. The church was built at the centre of the town and has now been declared a National Monument.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 4 Train to Unquera and funicular to Bulnes; walk in the Picos de Europa

This morning we continue west, following the coast of the fertile Costa Verde towards the old fortified port of Llanes. On arrival to the small village of Unquera we will make a direct transfer by bus up into the Picos de Europa, the beautiful mountain landscapes that lie to the south, whose towering peaks were the first comforting sight beheld by returning sailors to the European mainland. Arriving in the small village of Poncebos we then take the funicular railway (rack railway) up towards the remote community of Bulnes, where we can bask in the expansive grandeur of these mountains and take in the dominating heights of the Naranjo de Bulnes, at 2,519 m one of the highest peaks in the national park. Spain's first national park, the Picos are made up of three distinct massifs that extend across Cantabria, Asturias and Castilla y Leon, offering a grand expanse of mountains and canyons that are home to a wealth of flora and fauna, including wolves, the last remaining brown bears in Western Europe and the ever-present chamois. We'll take an easy walk through this spectacular setting before returning down to Poncebos on the Funicular. Alternatively there is the chance to walk down into the valley through the dramatic Canal de Tejo Gorge (1.5 hour, 400 m descent). Later in the afternoon we drive back on bus to Llanes to our hotel for an overnight stay.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## DAY 5 Train to Oviedo; afternoon free to explore

The next stage of our journey takes us across the fertile plains of Asturias and onto the university town of Oviedo, the cultural and economic centre of the region. This was one of the few regions of Spain that didn't fall under the influence of the Moors and its Medieval heart is still littered with examples of Pre-Romanesque architecture that dates back to the 8th-10th centuries. A free afternoon gives us the opportunity to explore the city and admire its past grandeur, especially around the grand Plaza Alfonso, which includes finely preserved palaces and the Gothic facades of its cathedral. The cathedral's exquisite interior contains the tombs of the Asturian nobility, as well as a superb 9th century chapel, the Camara Santa, which contains a wealth of Asturian art and golden relics. The city also has an excellent art gallery and archaeological museum and its outskirts are dotted with superb Pre-Romanesque churches, including the magnificent Santa Maria des Naranco and the 9th century church of San Julian de los Prados, which is believed to be the largest of its kind left in Spain.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **6** Free day in Oviedo; chance to visit the Asturias Railway Museum

With more free time today you may choose to continue exploring Oviedo and its environs, or perhaps make the most of the time by taking a journey by rail further afield. You might like to visit Colanzo or Laviana in the Rio Nalon Basin or take the train to Gijon and visit the Asturias Railway Museum, built on the site of the old Renfe (Spanish railways) station that dates back to the 1870's. The museum was conceived to preserve the railways unique local history and its permanent exhibition provides a fascinating insight into the relationship between the railways and the cultural and economic development of Asturias over the past century and a half.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **7** Train to Ferrol in Galicia and bus on to Santiago

Boarding the early morning train to Ferrol we head next for Spain's remote north-western corner and the fertile landscapes of Galicia, a region whose inhabitants are fiercely proud of their Celtic origins and whose traditions and language offer an interesting contrast to much of the rest of mainland Spain. Arriving in Ferrol this afternoon we then continue our journey by bus to the beautiful city of Santiago de Compostela, a city that during the Middle Ages was (after Jerusalem and Rome) the most important place of pilgrimage anywhere in the Christian world. On arrival we transfer to our hotel, after which the rest of the afternoon is free to discover this historic city.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **8** Free day to explore Santiago; you may like to visit the Folk Museum

Today has been left free to explore more of this most enigmatic of cities at your own pace, its historic centre being small enough to explore on foot. The 12th century Baroque cathedral, towering over the surrounding city streets amidst the majesty of the Praza do Obradoiro, is one of Christendom's holiest of shrines. Lying at the end of the famous pilgrim route of the Camino de Santiago, its crypt is believed to hold the tomb of St. James himself and the building's rich fusion of Romanesque, Gothic and Baroque styles is truly a work of the most exceptional architectural craftsmanship. Alternatively you may prefer to wander the city's narrow streets and visit some more of the myriad of architectural treasures that are dotted around the city. In the Convento de Santo Domingo de Bonaval you will find a folk museum dedicated to the Galacian region, whilst the Monasterio de San Martiño Pinario and the Palacio de Gelmirez are just two of the other jewels in this dazzling crown. And, at the end of the day, what better than to relax with a reviving drink on the Praza das Praterias and watch the world pass by.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **9** Train to Ponferrada; option to visit the Templar castle

Taking a taxi to the railway station we will board the morning train to Ponferrada in the Castilla Y Leon region, a landscape of expansive plains and rolling hills dotted with historic castles. Ponferrada's name stems from pons ferrata, a medieval bridge (reinforced with iron) that was constructed to aid the passage of pilgrims travelling along the Camino de Santiago towards the sacred city. Its imposing fortress, constructed by the Knights Templar between the 12th and 14th centuries, was built to protect the pilgrims, and in its time was considered one of the largest citadels in northwest Spain. Arriving this afternoon affords us an opportunity to take a walk along part of the pilgrim route, enjoying something of the idyllic landscape and quiet villages as we walk in the footsteps of the countless devotees whose feet have trodden these trails for centuries.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **10** Train to Leon; opportunity to visit the cathedral and historic centre

This morning there is an opportunity for a stroll through Ponferrada before we board the late morning train to Leon, a city that once lay at the heart of the region's reconquest from the Moors during the 11th century. Once the centre of Christian Spain, during the time that two thirds of the peninsula was under Muslim rule, the two central buildings of the city are its great Gothic cathedral and

the equally superb Romanesque Basilica de San Isidoro, both of which are without doubt two of the finest examples of their kind to be found anywhere in Spain. This afternoon there will be an opportunity to explore these remarkable edifices, along with the historic heart of the city. The cathedral is unique for the quality and magnificence of its stainedglass windows, which span seven centuries of history and cover subjects as diverse as religion, mythology and even medieval life, whilst San Isidoro is the final resting place of dozens of Christian kings and noble families, buried over centuries, beneath the stunning 12th century frescoes. Radiating out from the Plaza Mayor, the narrow streets are also filled with cafes, churches and old houses that provide a diverting choice of options for an afternoon of fascinating sightseeing.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **11** Free morning in Leon before taking the train to Bilbao

We have a free morning in Leon for you to discover more of the sights. You might like to return to and go inside the Gothic Cathedral or the Museum of San Isidoro. Or perhaps to take a stroll and stop to sample a range of tapas and wine in the Barrio Humedo, which is an area of the city concentrated within the old Roman city walls. Later this afternoon we embark on our rail journey from Leon through the Basque region to Bilbao. Our journey will take us around five hours travelling through the spectacular mountainous scenery before the train gradually descends towards the coast.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Available**

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY **12** Trip ends in Bilbao

Trip ends after breakfast. If there is time you have another chance to explore some more of this vibrant city, perhaps visiting the famous Guggenheim Museum.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

## Included Activities

On this trip we will take a number of long train journeys, so as well as enjoying the ever-changing views we'd recommend taking snacks and drinks and entertainment such as a book, audio books or an electronic book reader, games device or tablet, pack of cards or a quiz book.

## Accommodation and Meals

### Food & Drink

Included meals: 11 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 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

### 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

Bilbao: Guggenheim Museum €13.00, Arxanda Funicular €1.50 per way, Art Museum €7.00, Cathedral €6.00, San Isidoro €5.00.

Santillana del Mar: Colegiata de Santa Juliana €3.00.

Oviedo: Asturias Railway Museum - €2.40

Santiago de Compostela: Museum of Galician Culture €3.00, Pilgrims Museum €2.40, Cathedral Museum €6.00; guided tour of Santiago Cathedral and surrounding squares €120.00 per group.

Leon: Cathedral €6.00; guided visit (including entrance) - €12.00; walk along section of Camino de Santiago - €25.00 (depending on numbers).

## 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. Accordingly, you should allow approximately €10-20 for tipping.

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.

## 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](http://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>.

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## 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.

**EXPLORE!**  
The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE  
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE



Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers [www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore](http://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](http://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](mailto:cr@explore.co.uk) or 01252 379438.

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### 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.

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### 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](http://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.

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### 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

Lightweight cotton clothing is best from June to September, light rainwear may be needed at any time of year, but especially after the start of September, and a warm fleece/light jacket is recommended for cooler evenings and nights at the beginning and end of the season. Don't forget a swimming costume.

### Equipment

A water bottle, sunhat and high factor sunscreen are all essential. A head torch (for use on day 4 of the tour) may be useful to bring, however is not essential.

### Footwear

Good comfortable trainers or lightweight walking shoes. Sandals for relaxing.

### Luggage: On Tour

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

It's very important that you pack light and are able to lift your case. There is limited storage on the trains and the steps to board can be steep. A soft sided bag is best and the smaller bag you can use then the easier this will be for you to lift it on board and to store it.

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.



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## 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.

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## 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](http://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.

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## 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.

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### 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

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### 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.

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### 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.

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