



Spring Long Weekend Tour

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LA MANCHA Spring Long Weekend Tour 2012

Three days birding in La Mancha (3 days/2 nights)

Dates: From April 1st to June 10th 2012

Guide: Vicente Malagón

Presentation:

The Spring Long Weekend Tour brings you the opportunity to discover the best of La Mancha in just three days. The quality list of birds that can be seen in this tour is worth it, and we expect to watch over 120 different species, including **Black Stork, Marbled Teal, White-Headed Duck, Spanish Imperial Eagle, Black-Shouldered Kite, Eagle-Owl, Great Bustard or Pin-Tailed Sandgrouse**. Two National Parks and the all-in-one Campo de Calatrava, can show you why La Mancha is considered one of the best European spots for birdlife.

Target Bird Species:

Black-Neck Grebe, Squacco Heron, Purple Heron, Black Stork, Marbled Teal, White-Headed Duck, Black Vulture, Spanish Imperial Eagle, Black-Shouldered Kite, Lesser Kestrel, Red-Knobbed Coot, Purple Swamphen, Great Bustard, Little Bustard, Collared Pratincole, Pin-Tailed Sandgrouse, Eagle-Owl, Red-Necked Nightjar, Roller, Green Woodpecker, Thekla Lark, Wood Lark, Calandra Lark, Black Wheatear, Dartford Warbler, Spectacled Warbler, Moustached Warbler, Savi's Warbler, Southern Grey Shrike, Azur-Winged Magpie, Spanish Sparrow, Corn Bunting.

Expect to watch over 120 bird species.

Cost:

330 Pounds /375 € per person

Minimum 2 persons

Pounds Sterling is given as an estimate. All prices have to be paid in Euros.

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Itinerary:

1st Day: Campo de Calatrava

(Lunch, Dinner)

After your travel to **Almagro or Ciudad Real AVE High Speed Train Station**, you will be welcomed and escorted you to your accommodation for the next 2 days. Time for lunch and rest. After that we will head up to the **SPA Campo de Calatrava** for start birding: **Great Bustard, Little Bustard, Black-Bellied and Pin-Tailed Sandgrouses, Montagu's Harrier, Calandra Lark, Red-Billed Chough and Lesser Kestrel** could be the first species of our tour. In the evening we will move to the nearby **Sierra de Calatrava** where **Black Wheatear, Blue Rock-Thrush, Eagle-Owl and Golden Eagle** can be seen all year round. At night return to Almagro crossing the Calatrava fields in search for the **Red-Necked Nightjar** (May & June).

Dinner & Overnight in Almagro.

2nd Day: Tablas de Daimiel National Park & Vicario Reservoir

(Breakfast, Packed Lunch, Dinner)

After a relaxing night in Almagro, and very early in the morning, we'll start our tour heading to the **Navaseca Lagoon**, a haven for aquatic birds where we'll have chances for finding our first **White-Headed Ducks**. In this season the lagoon can be crowded of birds: **Black Neck Grebe, Greater Flamingo, Red-Crested Pochard, Purple Swamphen & Collared Pratincole** will be the target species for this amazing place.

Later we'll enter in one of the most important wetlands in Spain, the **Tablas de Daimiel National Park**. This endangered place, the former greatest jewel of the Spanish wetlands, is still an exceptional birding spot where you won't be disappointed. Explore the main itineraries in the park where we'll have excellent opportunities to watch some of the most endangered aquatic birds in the world, such as **Marbled Teal, White-Headed Duck & Red-Knobed Coot**. These three species bred in Tablas de Daimiel in 2011. Inside the park we'll have chances for other target bird species, such as **Little Grebe, Squacco Heron, Great Egret, Night Heron, Little Bittern, Garganey, Water Rail, Common Tern, Moustached Warbler, Savi's Warbler, Fan-Tailed Warbler, Pied Flycatcher, Bearded Reedling** ... to mention but a few.

After our picnic lunch with dramatic views of La Mancha and red Spanish wine, back to the fields around Daimiel and more birding en route. We'll follow ancient tracks discovering the **Guadiana River** and the **Old Calatrava Castle**, amazing spots where, in the way, we could enjoy a plethora of wildlife. Key birds could be the beautiful **Roller**, the colorful **Bee-Eater**, the nice **Hoopoe** or the tinny **Lesser Kestrel**. We'll go through a steppe area where we'll have another chance for **Great Bustard, Little Bustard & Pin-Tailed Sandgrouse**.

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Late in the afternoon, after a comfortable route following the ancient Guadiana River, we'll reach one of the most surprising spots of Spain, the **Vicario Reservoir**. This place could be a revelation for you. In less than one hour it's possible to watch almost all the European Egrets. **Spoonbill, Gull-Billed Tern, Sardinian Warbler, Kingfisher and Osprey** could be new species added to our day list.

Dinner & Overnight in Almagro.

3rd Day: Cabaneros National Park

(Packed Breakfast, Lunch)

Travel to the main entrance of the stunning **Cabaneros N.P.**, known over the World as the **Spanish Serengeti** and the best example of Mediterranean Forest in all the Iberian Peninsula. Accompanied by a ranger we'll take a special 4x4 vehicle where we'll be able to see the magnificent **Black Vulture** and the endangered **Spanish Imperial Eagle**. This place is a fantastic spot to see among other interesting species: **Black Stork, Griffon Vulture, Short-Toed Eagle, Booted Eagle, Red Kite, Black-Shouldered Kite, Little Bustard, Green Woodpecker, Wood Lark, Thekla Lark, Calandra Lark, Roller, Red-Rumped Swallow, Black-Eared Wheatear, Woodchat Shrike and the Azur-Winged Magpie**. With luck, expect to watch up to 10 different raptor species this morning. The safari into the park is magic, and we'll be able to enjoy watching big mammals like **Red Deer, Roe Deer, Wild Boar & Red Fox**. In this place, in the appropriate season (mid May) there could be chances even for **Red Footed Falcon**.

Back to Almagro for a Courtesy Lunch and **End of the Trip**. Transfer to Ciudad Real AVE High Speed Train Station if necessary

IMPORTANT NOTE: Itinerary can be changed depending the guide experience and according to different aspects to be considered, such as water levels, closed roads or tracks, customers opinions, holidays, etc. Everyday we'll have time to discuss the following days itineraries, so customer's opinions will be always welcomed for optimize the tour.

Services:

All ground transport in comfortable and big 4x4 vehicle. Fuel. Accommodations in double room with ensuite facilities. All breakfasts, lunches and evening meals as indicated. Free mineral water, Spanish red wine and tea for all the travel. Insurance. Cabaneros National Park entrance fees. Professional birding guide services. Use of spotting scope and binoculars (one per traveller). Birds, Flora, Reptiles, Butterflies and Mammals check-list. VAT 8%.

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Price excludes:

Personal equipment, expenditure on drinks not mentioned, any other activities not mentioned. Flights or Train tickets.

Cost guaranteed for a minimum of 2 travellers.

Itinerary will change depending on requirements of customers, destiny selected or weather conditions.

Ensure to arrange your tour in advance.

The cost needs to be paid in Euro through a bank transfer. Ask for our details.

If you have any dietary needs please inform us.

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