

PICOS DE EUROPA & SANTANDER

Hill Walking with a difference...culture, history, gastronomy & more...

Tour Date: 5 to 12 July 2017

This Picos 2017 tour begins with a combination of 5 walking routes through the most spectacular & emblematic places of the Picos mountains where you will enjoy the different landscapes that comprise the three Massifs of the Picos National Park. The walks vary from 13km – 15km of exciting hill walking. Each walk finishes in a local village deep in the valleys, where you will meet the local people, interact with them, enjoy their culture, customs & cuisine in these picturesque places.

There is another very special part to this walking tour that will add to your overall experience. We take you to historic Santander, an elegant city which extends over a wide bay into the Cantabrian Sea, nestled under the backdrop of the Picos de Europa. It's historic quarter includes majestic buildings which are situated against an incredible natural backdrop of sea and mountains. Its marine & commercial tradition is linked to centuries of tourism. Among the main attractions are the famous El Sardinero beach, the promenade, Casino & La Magdalena península.

This región is less spoiled by the mass market tourism of the Med coast, less well known to international tourists & yet offering the diversity & authenticity at the “real heart & soul” of Spain. Comprising the regions of Asturias, Castilla y Leon & Galicia, these are among the jewels of this amazingly diverse country. The landscapes & seascapes are amazing. History comes alive there as you walk among the historic & cultural traces of Neolithic man, Romans, Phoenicians, Celts & taste the fruits of their labours of their delicious food, wine & artistic culture.

This tour offers you superb hill walking combined with a real immersion in the culture & history of the región. As you leave Santander for your flight home we hope that you will be filled with the joys of life at your experience here & a deep desire to come back again.

PROGRAM DETAILS - (ideal for Groups of 20+ people)

Website: www.guheko.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheRealSpainHillWalkingPicosdeEuropaandmuchmore/?ref=bookmarks>

Day 1 – Wed 5 July 2017

Fly at 1305 from Dublin on www.ryanair.com arriving in Santander at 1605

You will be picked up by our coach at Santander airport & taken to the 8th century village of Potes, the capital of the Cantabrian Picos. Here we will tour the town, learn about it's history & importance in the región, the Monastery of Santo Toribio de Liébana is one of the most important in Christianity being host to one arm of the True Cross & a special site in the Holy Year of 2017. Potes was repopulated by Alfonso I of Asturias as part of the settlement of Liébana during the early part of the reconquest of Spain.

- Stay the first night in Hostería La Antigua in Potes in shared rooms.



Day 2 – Thursday 6 July 2017

Route 1 – Fuente De- Sotres

You start with a little trip that takes you to the start point at the Fuente De Cable car. The ridge offers astounding views & demands a stop to admire them not just of the mountains & out to the sea but of the flora & fauna, soaring eagles & staring vultures. You board the cablecar & feel the sensation of flight up to 1,800m where after a short stop we walk through patches of snow

through the heart of the Cantabrian Picos. This trail is carved from the joining of two glaciers – morrena (moraine) La Loma del Toro, passes by the world famous refugio, the Hotel Áliva & by the Picos retreat of the Royal family of Spain, finishing down the valley in the village of Sotres.

- Distance: 13 km
- Ascent: 250 m – Descent: 1000 m
- Duration: 4-5 hours.
- Stay in Sotres in the Hotel Peña Castil in shared accommodation.



Day 3 – Fri 7 July 2017

Route 2: Sotres- Collado de Pandebano – Canal del Tejo - Refugio La Tenerosa



This circular walk takes us on a route that combines high pastures of the Collado de Pandebano, to the Refugio Tenerosa & the base of the icon mountain of the Picos – Naranjo de Bulnes (Pico de Uriellu 2,529m), first scaled in 1904 by local shepards & Marques de Villaviciosa

- Distance: 12 km
- Ascent: 1.000m – Descent: 1.000m?
- Duration: 5/6 hours
- Stay in Sotres in the Hotel Peña Castil in shared accommodation.

Day 4 – Saturday 8 July 2017

Route 3: Ruta del Cares

This day starts with a 20min transfer from Sotres to Poncebos to begin this incredible walk, not just stunningly beautiful but is an outstanding feat of engineering, with a rute cut along the Cliff faces of the Río Cares gorge & through rock faces. It lies in the very heart of the Picos & is also

known as “La Garganta Divina” (The Divine Gorge). While Walking this route you feel the majestic energy of the towering cliffs. Charmed by the wild life, flowers & plants & the wild but friendly wild goats. It is another unique place. It is a walk that has everything, spectacular scenery, nature in abundance, gushing rivers, waterfalls bursting from the limestone rocks & caves. Simply awesome. Kilometres of path & canals crafted out of limestone rocks, surrounded by mountains over 2,000m. The track finally exits in Caín (Castilla y León).

- Distance: 12 km
- Ascent 400 m Descent 100
- Duration: 5-6 hours
- Stay in Hostal Campo in shared accommodation



Day 5 – Sunday 9 July 2017

Route 4: Posada de Valdeón- Soto de Sajambre

The route takes us to the top of the mountain range at Collado del Frade where you will feel on top of the world looking down across a sea of clouds & over to fields of snow where the “chamois”/”rebeco” rest & graze on the heathers & nutritious herbs. After a stop for a picnic we descend again From above the tree line into native wild forest, through a canopy of beech trees with spectacular vistas of snow peaked mountains seen through windows between the trees of the Bosques de Vegabaño. On this route you will see the massive & oldest oak in the Picos. Try hand in hand with at least 6 of your Friends to wrap your arms around it. You will enjoy incredible views, wild animals & the pallet of colours of the wild Alpine flowers. Ending our day takes us on a leisurely walk into the village Soto.

- Distance: 15 km
- Ascent: 900 m – Descent: 900 m
- Duration: 5-6 hours
- Stay the night in shared rooms in Hostal Peña Santa in Soto de Sajambre



Day 6 – Monday 10 July 2017

Route 5: Lagos de Covadonga-Covadonga

The day begins with a stunning drive to the Peaks. We stop at a “mirador” to climatise & soak up the spectacular scenery that awaits us, looking across the peaks out to the Cantabrian sea & the Bay of Biscay. Our journey continues to the walk starting point at the magical Lakes of Covadonga. From there we walk through Asturian pastures noting the unique Asturian cattle breed & follow the trail through the Vega (valley) de Orandi along by the river to the cave. Continuing we walk through these ancient high pasture farmlands to the Basilica of Covadonga with rose coloured limestone via “La Matona”, the natural woodlands of oak & beech, finally along a trail traversing Monte Auseva to the village of Covadonga, the home of the Virgin of Asturias.

- Distance: 13 km
- Ascent 300 m – Descent 800 m
- Duration: 4-5 hours
- Stay in Hostal Fermín in Cangas de Onís in shared accommodation



Day 7 – Tuesday 11 July 2017**Cangas de Onis to enjoy the historic city of Santander**

From Cangas we drive to the historic city of Santander. Here we check into a hotel in the centre & take time to learn about & enjoy the city. It's Roman heritage was found in archaeological remains on the Peninsula Magdalena. They include the remains of a building with mosaic floors, a hermes bronze, coins & ceramics & in San Martin a 1stc villa baths, & amphora. There are medieval & Roman remains & thermal structures under the Cathedral relating to the times of Emperor Trajan with indications of mining & commerce. The Abbey of the Holy Bodies in the existing chapel on the hill of Somorrostro was founded in the 9th c. From 1187 King Alfonso VIII of Castile further developed the city & regions maritime traffic, fishing & wine growing. La Puebla is the hill area overlooking the city facing the bay & the oldest part. The Puebla Nueva is the other ancient part with convents of Santa Clara & San Francisco. The two were joined by a bridge over the river that divided Becedo, used to transport timber from the Cantabrian forests nearby & give the raw material supply for shipbuilding there. The port city was an important contributor to the development of Castile in the later Middle Ages & for trade with the New World. It's city charter dates from 1755.

- Stay in Hotel Picos de Europa in shared accommodation. Dinner not included

Day 7 – Wed 12 July 2017

Free day until we rendezvous at the hotel at 1400 (2pm) to take the bus direct to Santander airport for the Ryanair flight to Dublin at 1630

SPECIAL OFFER – HUGE DISCOUNT FOR GROUPS/CLUBS - €885 PER PERSON*

***We offer groups of 20+ a discount of over €100 per person off our original price!!!!**

***We are also offering 1 FREE place when you have confirmed booking 20 people in your group.**

Price includes:

- All shared accommodation in Potes, the Picos and Santander
- Transfer from Santander Airport and back to Santander
- All transport in the Picos
- All breakfasts, dinners in the Picos
- All maps & guides of the walking routes in the Picos
- All of the walks in the Picos are led by an English speaking qualified local guide
- Guide will brief the group each morning using both maps & 3D bespoke presentations
- A Group Leader from Ireland or Spain (English speaking) will accompany the Group
- Guheko terms & Conditions apply

Not included:

- Flights
- Dinner in Santander
- Single supplement

HOW TO BOOK

Step 1

- Go to website Guheko the Tour Company www.guheko.com
- Click on “ Hill Walking Tours 2017”
- Select Tour B – “Picos de Europa + Santander”
- See the details of the program on the website, the terms & conditions including insurance

Step 2

- Contact the Irish Group Leader – Kevin Heery (contact details below)
- Group Leader in Ireland will co-ordinate & include you in the Irish Group

Step 3

- Make your payment Online through the www.guheko.com website
- Payments accepted – Visa, Mastercard, Bank Transfer

CONTACT DETAILS

Co-ordinator/Group Leader Ireland – Kevin Heery - Maumturks & Galway Walking Clubs, Ireland

Tel. ROI (00353) 87 2248694 – email: biznezdevelop@gmail.com Skype: kh9491

The Tour Company is “Guheko”, Leon - Spain – contact MD: Raul Temprano

Email: raul.temprano@guheko.com or turismoactivo@guheko.com Web: www.guheko.com

Tel. ES: (0034) 987 082 083

Group Leader Spain -Maite Cimadevilla Martinez

email: maite.cimadevilla@gmail.com Tel. ES: (0034) 680 504 597 Skype: maitecim1