



# **Ecotourism**

Experiences to connect with nature

Book a wine TASTING for YOU and your friends

### experience.catalunya.com



**THE OFFICIAL ONLINE STORE FOR EXPERIENCES IN CATALONIA** Which one do you prefer to experience? Excursions from Barcelona, adventure and sport, wine and gastronomy tourism, charming villages, cultural visits, family fun.

Book now and live different emotions.



# CONTENTS

ECOTOURISM IN CATALONIA Return to nature Where to practise ecotourism Areas of ecotourism interest in Catalonia	4 6 8		
		Nature guide	12
		Land conservation	14
		Rules for the good ecotourist	15
Certifications	16		
D CONNECT WITH NATURE	18		
Birdwatching	22		
Observing flora and fauna	32		
Emblematic mountains and geology	46		
Flavours of the rural world	58		
Night sky	70		
Mediterranean coast	74		
BE ACTIVE IN NATURE	86		
Hiking	90		
Cycle touring	102		
FAMILY ECOTOURISM	110		
-			
12 ECO-ROUTES THAT ARE CLOSER THAN YOU THINK	126		
PRACTICAL INFORMATION			
Ecotourism calendar	142		
The biodiversity of Catalonia's natural heritage	145		
More information	146		

# ANY SEASON IS IDEAL IN CATALONIA RETURN TO NATURE

### PROTECTED LANDSCAPES

30% of territory in Catalonia is protected. It has a national park (Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici), 17 natural parks and sites, and a total of 165 protected natural spaces. If you like to walk, Catalonia is crossed by long-distance paths suitable for all ages.



### EXCEPTIONAL Flora

Catalan flora is one of the most diverse on the European continent. Holm oaks, beech forests, fir groves, maquis, scree, lagoons, rocky areas... More than 600 habitats and 3,500 species have been identified in Catalonia, both inland and coastal.



### **ANIMALS IN THEIR HABITATS**

Here, you can get to know our fauna in its natural habitat, from dolphins in Cap de Creus to deer in Boumort... you can even see reintroduced species such as bears or the black vultures, not to mention reptiles and amphibians. Plus, if you like birding, 445 species await you in Catalonia. Will you be able to find them all?

### À LA CARTE GEOLOGY

Catalan geology is quite a sight to behold: you can admire it in deep gorges such as Mu or Collegats, in the steep walls of Montsant, Els Ports or Cap de Creus, in the nearly 40 volcanoes of La Garrotxa, and in caves such as Salnitre or El Toll.

In a relatively small territory that allows you to go from high in the Pyrenees mountains to the sea in just a few hours, the natural heritage of Catalonia stands out for its diversity. You can enjoy this wealth of ecotourism resources and their attractions in any season thanks to mild and pleasant temperatures, more than 300 days of sunshine per year and an offering of high quality tourist services. Welcome!

### WHERE TO PRACTISE **ECOTOURISM**

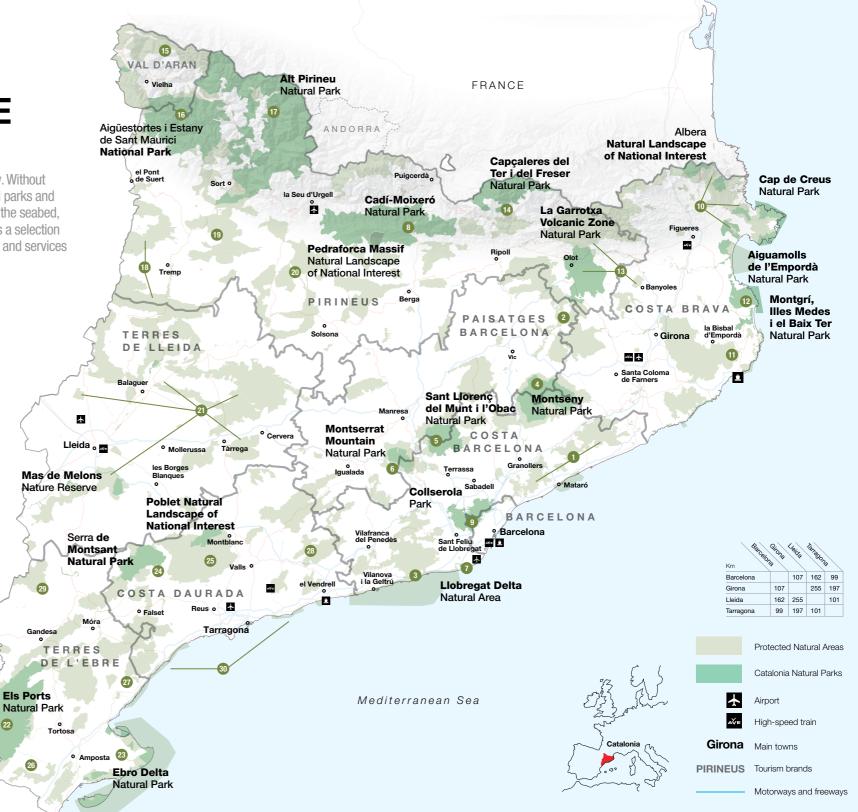
Catalonia boasts an exceptional natural heritage and biodiversity. Without the need to travel long distances, you can enjoy its many natural parks and many other protected natural areas, from the high mountains to the seabed, from the unique forests to the coastal plains. This map highlights a selection of 30 ecotourism areas of interest that include all the equipment and services needed to enjoy them. Discover them all!

22



1 Coastal Range 2 Guilleries-Savassona Massif and Coast of Garraf 4 Montsenv **5** Sant Llorenc del Munt i l'Obac 6 Montserrat Mountain 1 Liobregat Delta 8 Cadí-Moixeró / Pedraforca 9 Collserola 1 L'Alt Empordà **1** Empordanet 12 Montgrí i Illes Medes 13 Garrotxa-Pla de l'Estanv 1 Vall de Núria-Vallter 15 Val d'Aran **16** Aigüestortes 1 Valleys of the Alt Pirineu 18 Montsec-Conca de Tremp 19 Collegats i Boumort 20 Serres d'Odèn-Port del Comte-Alinyà 2 Natural Areas of the West 22 Els Ports 23 Ebro Delta 24 Priorat-Montsant 25 Muntanyes de Prades-Poblet 26 Thousand-year-old olive groves 27 Serra de Llaberia-Tivissa-Vandellós-Cardó

- 28 La Vall del Gaià
- 29 Banks of the Ebro
- 30 Coastal Areas South Coast



### AREAS OF ECOTOURISM INTEREST IN CATALONIA

Witnessing deer rutting in the Pyrenean mountain ranges, spotting whales in the Cap de Creus Natural Park or birdwatching in the Ebro Delta are just some of the ecotourism activities that you can practise in Catalonia. Below is a list of the various areas featuring their main activities; just a sample of the many experiences that you can enjoy in a land that can be crossed in a single day from north to south. Don't miss out!

#### Types of activities



### 🛈 COASTAL RANGE 🛛 🍄 🍄

Less than 50 km from Barcelona, this mountain range runs parallel to the coast through the parks of Montnegre i el Corredor. It offers views of the sea and the GR 92, a long-distance trail that follows the Catalan coastline from one end to the other.

### 🛛 GUILLERIES-SAVASSONA 🛛 🖉

This space overlooks the Sau reservoir and the cliffs of Tavertet i Collsacabra, impressive geological formations full of caves, crags, gorges... A paradise for lovers of nature photography.

### S MASSIF AND COAST OF GARRAF

The parks of Garraf, Olèrdola and El Foix, and the Colls-Miralpeix Area of Natural Interest are characterised by an exotic landscape of limestone that has been eroded by water. The Mediterranean dwarf palm, one of Europe's two native palms, can be found here in abundance.

### • MONTSENY

This natural park is also a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. It is cluster of Mediterranean and Central European landscapes of extraordinary biodiversity right next to large metropolitan conurbations.

### 🗿 SANT LLORENÇ DEL MUNT I L'OBAC 🏘 🧲

It features astonishing crags and monoliths of reddish stone that contrast with the green pine forests and holm oak groves of its mountain slopes.

### O MONTSERRAT MOUNTAIN 🕥 🧿

This geological jewel is part of the Central Catalonia Geopark. It emerged from the formation of the Pyrenees and the subsequent retreat of an inland sea 36 million years ago. It can accessed by funicular or cable car, two sustainable modes of transport.

#### 🖸 LLOBREGAT DELTA 🛹

The Llobregat Delta Natural Area can be reached on public transport from Barcelona. It is a strategic point along the migratory route of many birds and brings together more than 360 species.

### 🛽 CADÍ-MOIXERÓ / PEDRAFORCA 🥂 🌹 🐔

With more than 1,000 catalogued botanical species, its botanical richness is palpable along the old routes that cross the area, such as the old paths used by the *trementinaires*, women who sold herbs and medicinal remedies.



### 🖲 COLLSEROLA 🎋

The real green lung of Barcelona, the Catalan capital, is accessible by public transport. There are many trails that can be easily hiked or cycled along.

### 🛛 L'ALT EMPORDÀ ᅺ 😹 💰

Going whale spotting or diving below the surface at the Cap de Creus Natural Park, discovering the habitat of the endangered Hermann's tortoise in the Albera Area of Natural Interest or that of the birds that populate the Aiguamolls de l'Empordà Natural Park are just some of the many attractions of this area.

### 🛈 EMPORDANET 🛛 🌹 🏠

The inland Les Gavarres Area of Natural Interest and the Castell-Cap Roig Natural Area and hills of Begur on the coast are characterised by their cork forests, megalithic monuments and coastal paths which are ideal for walking. They skirt a steep coastline, once the refuge of pirates and smugglers.

### 🕑 MONTGRÍ I ILLES MEDES 🛛 🗖 着

In the heart of the Costa Brava, the Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park is one of the best areas in the world for controlled diving.

### GARROTXA-PLA DE L'ESTANY

La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park is the best example of a volcanic landscape on the Iberian Peninsula. It has about 40 craters and a unique beech forest: La Fageda d'en Jordà. And all this near the lake of Banyoles, the largest in all of Catalonia.

### 🕲 VALL DE NÚRIA - VALLTER 🛛 🍄 🤻 🖈

The source of the Ter and Freser rivers give name to the Capçaleres del Ter i el Freser Natural Park, near the mythical Vall de Núria valley, with peaks almost 3,000 metres high and which is reached by rack train. It also contains Alpine meadows, hundred-year-old forests and a history of sustainable use of natural resources which continues to this day.

### 🕑 VAL D'ARAN 🎋 🌹 🖈

With three-quarters of its territory protected by the Natura 2000 Network (a European network of biodiversity conservation areas), the Val d'Aran is a real jewel of fauna and flora which is always worth a visit.

### 🕫 AIGÜESTORTES \, 🏠 🖈 🧔

The Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park is the only one in Catalonia. This high-mountain landscape and impressive relief harbours a great wealth of animal and plant life. Water, with almost 200 lakes and innumerable streams, is the star along with deer and chamois.



It also includes the highest peak, the Pica d'Estats (3,143 m), and the largest lake, Certascan. In this alpine landscape you can see the mythical brown bear and a huge variety of butterflies, among other species.

### 🕲 MONTSEC-CONCA DE TREMP 🛋 🜑

This area, which houses the impressive Mont-rebei



© MIGUEL ANGEL ÁLVAREZ

gorge, has been declared a Tourist Destination and Starlight Reserve endorsed by UNESCO thanks to its excellent weather conditions.

### 🕲 COLLEGATS I BOUMORT 🖪 🧔 🗲

Mid-September to mid-October is the perfect time to visit the Boumort National Hunting Reserve and experience the unique natural spectacle of the deer rutting season, in which bucks compete with their bellowing to win over the roes.

### SERRES D'ODÈN-PORT DEL COMTE-ALINYÀ

A must for lovers of carrion birds, since here it is possible to easily observe the four species of vulture that live in Europe: the bearded vulture, black vulture, griffon vulture and Egyptian vulture. THE MEDES ISLANDS, A NATURAL PARADISE ON THE COSTA BRAVA.

### 🕲 NATURAL AREAS OF THE WEST 🛛 🛃

A variety of steppe and wetland birds live, nest and breed here. It is an ideal destination for fans of nature photography.

### 🕲 ELS PORTS 🛛 🖈 🌹

This natural park has one of the southernmost beech forests in Europe and is home to over a thousand botanical species. Another ecological incentive to visit is that it is the most important reserve for the lbex on the lberian Peninsula.

### 🕲 EBRO DELTA 🦼 🄫

A Biosphere Reserve, this huge delta is the most important aquatic habitat in the western Mediterranean. Species as spectacular as the flamingo reproduce here.

### 🛛 PRIORAT-MONTSANT 🥌 🏠

Cliffs, gorges and crags are evidence of its limestone origins. In addition, the steep relief of the Serra de Montsant provides the opportunity to travel through a landscape with a thousand years of winemaking tradition.

### MUNTANYES DE PRADES-POBLET

Mycological and mediaeval routes converge in this place which is home to the only Pyrenean oak forest in Catalonia. In addition mushroom lovers, those of Romanesque architecture and history will enjoy the Cistercian jewel that is the monastery of Poblet.

### 🕲 THOUSAND-YEAR-OLD OLIVE GROVES \, 🏠

Between the plain of La Galera and the Serra de Godall mountain range is the Museu Natural de les Oliveres Mil.lenàries de l'Arion. Ideal for seeing on foot, it includes 40 examples of thousand-year-old olive trees and is the oldest and largest collection in the Iberian Peninsula.

### PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS

Catalonia boasts an exceptional natural heritage and biodiversity, a treasure to be discovered and preserved. It has a huge network of very valuable natural areas that range from high mountains to the coastal plains, from Eurosiberian forests to semi-arid moorlands to marine areas.

The system of protected areas is based on a network of 184 zones of ecological value that include a national park (Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici), areas of environmental interest, landscapes, monuments and nature reserves.

#### Areas accessible to everyone

Many of the activities and experiences on offer the natural areas of Catalonia are suitable for all visitors, including those with reduced mobility or another form of disability. Many of these areas have signposted itineraries and accessible routes, materials and circuits adapted to these needs.



### Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park

The Salto Path Planell d'Aigüestortes walkway Sant Maurici lake approach walkway Sant Esperit viewpoint walkway La Gorga bridge walkway Canal de Roca Blanca path itinerary ▶ Girona Greenway ▶ Aiguamolls de l'Empordà Natural Park Cortalet-Mas del Matà route Mas del Matà-Platja del Matà-Les Llaunes route

#### ❷ SERRA DE LLABERIA-TIVISSA- € ♠ VANDELLÓS-CARDÓ

The effects of erosion are clearly visible in this natural landscape featuring limestone crags, chasms and caves. They are ideally covered on foot, by bicycle or on horseback.

### 🕲 LA VALL DEL GAIÀ 🌹 🏠

This unique river area on the banks of the Gaià River, included in the European Natura 2000 Network, stands out for its riverside woodland and countless springs that made it possible to establish the Santes Creus monastery.

#### Ebro Delta Natural Park Garxal lagoon itinerary Olles lagoon itinerary and viewpoint Ebro Delta Natural Park Ecomuseum Ullals de Baltasar area itinerary Pond of L'Encanyadissa itinerary The Casa de Fusta and its viewpoint La Tancada - Albert Rull viewpoint La Tancada - Raimundo viewpoint ► Garraf Natural Park La Pleta botanical itinerary Can Grau adapted sensory itinerary ► Terra Alta Greenway Sebes Nature Reserve and Flix river bend Montseny Natural Park Adapted itinerary of Santa Fe (the well of Frare) Sant Llorenc del Munt i l'Obac Natural Park Casanova de l'Óbac adapted itinerary Serra de Collserola Natural Park Fondal path itinerary Montesquiu Castle Park Itinerary through the gardens of Montesquiu Castle ► Guilleries-Savassona Natural Area Can Mateu itinerary Liobregat Delta Natural Area Remolar - Filipines itinerary Itinerary through the river's natural areas

Alt Pirineu Natural Park
 Mollera d'Escalarre adapted itinerary
 Sant Joan de l'Erm adapted itinerary
 Cadi-Moixeró Natural Park
 Cap del Ras viewpoint itinerary
 Pedraforca viewpoint
 Orris viewpoint
 Route to Salencar de Llesp

#### To find out more:

For more information on the accessibility conditions of these areas visit the website: http://turismeperatothom.catalunya.com/en

### 🕲 BANKS OF THE EBRO 🌹

One of the most attractive way to see this riverside landscape is by kayak, canoe or other similar type of sustainable vessel. It is also worthwhile to extend the visit to the Flix river bend.

### 🕲 COASTAL AREAS - SOUTH COAST 🛲

The coast and the sea depths will captivate us on the section that goes from the beach of Torredembarra to the Cap de Santes Creus, in L'Ametlla de Mar. An unbeatable option is to travel this stretch of coastline aboard a boat.

# **NATURE GUIDE**

A nature guide will help you to understand the true meaning of the natural area during your visit. They will convey its true essence and allow you to connect with it. Thanks to their expertise, your ecotourism experience will be unforgettable.

Ecotourism is not just about having fun but also about enabling you to really learn about and understand the natural areas you visit: what species there are and why they live in that habitat, what their needs are, the features of the landscape... This will you help you become aware of the need to respect this valuable natural heritage.

Catalonia boasts many exceptional natural areas, attractive in their own right, which you can visit on your own. However, as well as the richness of the natural resource in itself, what makes an ecotourism experience truly exciting is the way in which you approach its sights. This approach and appreciation of the environment will depend to a great extent on how you interpret what you are seeing. The deeper you delve, the more you will enjoy it. Therefore, it is best to go with an expert or an ecotourist or nature guide. They will act as an intermediary between you and the natural surroundings; they will interpret what you see, and you'll

see more with them than you would see alone, since they will help you experience the environment and understand it. Using clear and entertaining explanations, they will help you understand, become enthusiastic about what you see and get the most out of the experience.

Put yourself in the hands of an expert nature guide, really connect with nature and enjoy a more enriching experience.

### EVERYTHING YOU COULD NEED

In addition to nature guides, in the protected natural areas of Catalonia you will find facilities, devices and materials that will help complete your experience. At the visitor centres, interpretation centres and ecomuseums you will be given everything you need, and you will also find the interpretive itineraries and signposting very useful.





# YOU CAN ALSO HELP

Land conservation is a strategy that helps safeguard natural areas of special interest based on the active and responsible participation of everyone (owners, conservation entities, companies, citizens...).

These non-profit entities, both public and private, need the support of everyone, including you. Here is how you can collaborate.

The areas with land conservation agreements, due to the importance of their natural and scenic value, provide good opportunities for ecotourism activities. If you sign up for any of them, you will actively contribute to preserving the areas you visit and, at the same time, you will benefit from these big advantages:

► You will receive information first hand, in a fun and entertaining way, about the resources and values of the area that these entities have a deep understanding of.

► You will contribute directly to the conservation of these areas, since a part of your money will go directly to the conservation project.

► You will interact with local inhabitants and

contribute to their sustainable development through the involvement of environmental entities, service companies, accommodation, restaurants...

► You will be able to sample and purchase agrofood and artisanal products from the area.

You will participate in the application of codes of best practices associated with certain activities, such as nature photography or ornithological tourism.

Become aware and get involved in land conservation. *Arrelia* and *Viu la terra* are two of the many conservation entities found in Catalonia. On their websites you can easily search for and book spectacular experiences in nature. Enjoy them and do your bit for nature!

To find out more: www.arrelia.cat / www.viulaterra.cat

### RULES FOR THE GOOD ECOTOURIST

### Know the natural environment well.

Find out in advance about natural attractions, restrictions, itineraries, etc.

#### **2** Be well-equipped.

Wear proper footwear, comfortable clothes and discreet colours. A pair of binoculars, a map, a GPS and a field guide are also very useful.

### **3** Visit in good company.

A good guide will help you to have a safe and unforgettable experience.

#### Move around without leaving evidence of your presence.

Whenever you can, opt for public or shared transport.

### **8** Visit tourist centres.

Many protected natural areas have visitor centres that carry information on activities, guides and itineraries.

### **9** Take your waste with you.

Take all waste away with you and inquire about non-profit entities that help conserve the natural area you have visited.

### U Help to conserve.

Ask guides or visitor centres about projects or non-profit organisations that help preserve natural space.

SOURCE: Basora, Xavier, Ecoturisme a Catalunya. Guia per descobrir i conservar la natura [Ecotourism in Catalonia. A Guide for Discovering and Preserving Nature], Consell assessor per al desenvolupament sostenible, 2010.

Be respectful.

Adhere to the regulations of

the natural space: do not

disturb the fauna or take

flowers or rocks with you.

Look for locally-sourced

certified companies.

Book accommodation with

the Catalan Environmental

Quality Stamp, or certified

with the European Charter

for Sustainable Tourism.

**b** Consume

craftwork).

**b** Choose

local products.

products (foods or

Silence is a great ally.

### CERTIFICATIONS: HOW TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE AND **RESPONSIBLE ECOTOURISM**

Catalonia is committed to tourism that respects the environment and its inhabitants. Therefore, these certifications ensure that you travel in a more responsible way.

### WHERE ARE YOU GOING? GET INFORMED

Find out how we conserve biodiversity throughout our territory so that those of us who live in Catalonia or who visit it can enjoy its rich natural heritage in the best possible way.

#### **Protected Natural Areas**

They are unique, so you must get involved in the protection of their great biodiversity and in the sustainable development of their communities. This way, we can preserve the identity and authenticity of these rural areas and their traditions.



UNESC: Global

**UNESCO** Geoparks

#### Starry skies

Exploring them means

supporting communities

committed to reducing

promoting sky quality.

light pollution and

© TINA RAGUÉ / AC

4600 million years.



Local service companies

Opting for these contributes to sustainable



Starlight Destinations, Starlight Foundation

### HOW ARE YOU TRAVELLING? GET INVOLVED

Man and the Bicophy

Biosphere Reserves,

UNESCO

You will strengthen your commitment if you choose companies that have environmental guarantee and sustainable mobility certificates.

#### Accommodation

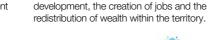
EUROPARC Sustainable Tourism

Tourism, Europarc

European Charter for Sustainable

You will sleep more soundly if you know that your accommodation minimises its environmental impact. Give value to sustainable management by prioritising vital issues such as waste management or energy saving.







BIOSPHERI Sustainable Tourism (ECST) Biosphere

### **GET EXCITED**

Leave a positive imprint on the territory and its people as you share unique experiences and places.



Tag your #CatalunyaExperience with #ExperiencersCatalunya on Instagram and you can be part of the Big Experiencers Catalunya Album

# CONNECT WITH **NATURE**

© SEBASTIAAN BEDAUX









© CAMPAMENTS LIFE D'INTEL·LIGÈNCIA EMOCIONAL I LIDERATGE



Watch the **flamingos** fly over the **Ebro Delta**, follow the trail of the elusive brown **bear** in the **Pyrenees**, walk between volcanoes and lava streams in **La Garrotxa**, discover one of the most important **sea beds** in Europe (the **Medes Islands**), contemplate the incredible **starry Montsec sky**, be a shepherd for a day... These are just a sample of our many and varied suggested ecotourism experiences for you to get to know and enjoy **Catalonia's rich biodiversity**. The following pages are filled with practical information for organising the activity of your choice. Be inspired; **connect with nature and learn from it**. **9** 

© MÓNNATURA PIRINEUS



# CRAZY ABOUT WINGS

Ornithological tourism (birdwatching or birding as it is more commonly known) is one of the most popular ecotourism activities in the world. In Catalonia, you will find up to 400 species of birds. Thanks to this, and to the easy access to observation areas, it is one of the best areas in Europe to see a huge variety of species, some of them rare or protected. An ornithological paradise where you observe birds of prey and carrion birds, such as vultures, flying over the valleys of the Pyrenees, or a myriad of waterfowl, including elegant flamingos, that choose to nest and rest in the wetlands of L'Empordà and in the Llobregat and Ebro Deltas.

BIRDS IN AIGUAMOLLS DE L'EMPORDÀ NATURAL PARK. © LLUÍS CARRO





Where Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by train to L'Aldea-Amposta-Tortosa (www.renfe.es) and by bus to Amposta (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration 2 h Participants open to all When spring, autumn and winter Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French FLAMINGOS IN THE EBRO DELTA

"Birds of the Delta" is a guided and accessible walk for all around MónNatura Delta during which you will learn to identify the most common birds in the natural park, such as the different species of ducks, the grey heron, the egret, the common redshank and the flamingo. The flamingos are perhaps the most representative species of the Ebro Delta, the only place in Catalonia in which these birds manage to reproduce successfully and with a certain stability thanks to the absence of land predators, favourable weather conditions and the absence of low-flying aircraft. **Q** 

Migratory birds in wetlands Marshland Family ecotourism



MónNatura Delta de l'Ebre +34 677 053 801 www.monnaturadelta.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre





Where Sant Carles

de la Ràpita. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.hife.es/en-GB) to Sant Carles de la Ràpita Duration 3 h Participants open to all When spring, summer and winter Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French BANDING IN THE DELTA SCIENTISTS FOR A DAY

The Ebro Delta occupies 320 km<sup>2</sup>, 20% of which are natural areas and 75% of which is arable land. In this activity, we will participate in the scientific banding of birds (capture, banding, data collection and release of the specimen) alongside the person in charge of fauna at the Plegadís Foundation. The activity is part of the "Noctua - Rapaces" (Noctua - Birds of Prey) project and encompasses the reintroduction of the native turtle (*Emys orbicularis*). We will see resident species, with birds such as the marsh bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus whitherby*), a very rare subspecies that has its largest breeding colony in the world in the Ebro Delta. **Q** 

Migratory birds in wetlands Family ecotourism Marshland



Apartaments Ornis +34 648 166 527 www.ornis.cat

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre





Where Deltebre. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.hife.es/en-GB) from Sant Carles de la Ràpita to Deltebre Duration 2-3 days **Participants** open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



Nòmada Viatges +34 977 481 497 www.nomadaviatges.com A RIVER OF WINGS AND BIRDS

# 360° PANORAMA **OF THE DELTA**

With "A River of Birds, Wings Gliding over the Delta" you have two days to explore the diversity of the Ebro Delta. We begin the route in Deltebre, visiting the Ecomuseum of the Natural Park to introduce us to the life and world of the delta. Next, we will walk along the Fangar Peninsula, an immense sandy beach and ideal spot for seabird watching. In the afternoon, we will head to the mouth of the Ebro by boat. The next day, we will visit L'Encanyissada lagoon and then MónNatura, a 360° viewpoint and interpretation centre with the only salt flats in the delta that are open to the public. •

Rural world Marshland Migratory birds in wetlands Local products



To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre



Where Cabacés.

Serra de Montsant Natural Park How to get there by train to Falset (www.renfe.com) and bus to Cabacés (www.empresaplana.cat) Duration 4-5 h Participants open to all When summer Languages Catalan and Spanish



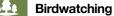
"Scientific Bird Banding in Cabacés" is a workshop offered by the Taxus Association to get to know the common birds in the Montsant mountain range. It's an activity for the whole family that requires visitors to be attentive and careful. Each specimen, once identified, is measured and weighed, and then all its data is recorded before it is banded with the corresponding number. When this process is complete, the bird is released back into its natural environment. All data collected is used in science projects. •

Farming landscape Family ecotourism



El Priorat Tourist Office +34 977 831 023 www.turismepriorat.org/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/serra-montsant







Where Torroella de Montgrí. Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.moventis.es) Duration between 2 and 3 h **Participants** open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

**ORNITHO-KAYAKING IN GIRONA** 

# THE BIRDS OF **THE RIVER TER**

The activity "Ornitho-Kayak on the Ter" will captivate lovers of ornithology and river fauna. This is an experience specially designed as an introduction to different species of fauna and, above all, the peculiar species of this area. It consists of a kayaking trip down the river Ter, in which a guide will inform participants about the different species we see and hear during the trip. Arriving at Verges, you walk back to the starting point. This allows the birds to be followed from hidden spots so as not to invade their habitats and routines. **Q** 

Family ecotourism Mediterranean flora Migratory birds in wetlands Farming landscape

EUROPARC

Mas Ramades +34 626 047 340 www.masramades.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/illes-medes © MAS BAMADES



Where Aiguamolls de

l'Empordà Natural Park How to get there by train to Llancà (www.renfe.com) or by bus to Sant Pere Pescador (www.moventis.es) Duration 3 h Participants minimum two people When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English, French and German

# **KAYAKING THROUGH THE WETLANDS** SIGHTINGS FROM THE WATER

On the edges of the Aiguamolls de l'Empordà Natural Park, you can start out in the world of birdwatching in a simple and educational way while enjoying a kayak trip. Thanks to this adapted activity open to all members of the public, which takes place at the mouth of the Fluvià River, you will visit interesting places such as the island of Caramany. There, you can easily make your way into the habitat of the park's waterfowl and other migratory species, such as the osprey, observing them and recognising them using identification cards, without disturbing their routine. •

Migratory birds in wetlands Coastal and delta landscapes Marshland

SK Kayak +34 627 433 332 www.kayakcostabrava.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/aiguamolls-emporda



### THE BEARDED VUI TURE THE MOST ICONIC SILHOUETTE

Very few images better represent a mountain landscape than the flight of a bearded vulture. Salvatgines offers you a hide in the mountains of Carreu (El Pallars Jussà), from where you can watch and take an unforgettable set of photos to capture one of the most beautiful images in nature. In Catalan, Spanish and English. The same company also offers deer spotting in Boumort. •

Birds of prey and carrion birds Hoofed animals Brown bear Unique forests High-mountain landscapes

To find out more: www.pallarsjussa.net/en/experience-nature/boumort-mountains

Where Serra de Boumort

How to get there by train to La Pobla de Segur (www.renfe.com) and by bus to Sort (www.alsa.com) Duration from 9 am to 2 pm When spring, autumn and winter

Salvatgines +34 627 753 205 www.salvatgines.com



### **BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

Do not disturb the birds. Making them fly or getting too close to see them better, photograph them or record them is never justifiable.

### **Z** Observe them from

afar. This is always the best option. Simply apply common sense and keep on the paths or tracks.

### **J** Look for designated

places for observation or photography, such as lookouts and observation towers.

#### **4** Do not enter cultivated areas. They may seem deserted. but remember that there are species

that nest on land.

### **5** Try not to make unnecessary noise

and do not use lures or other means of attraction in protected areas.

### During the breeding

season, please take greater precautions. Do not go near nests or breeding colonies.

### If you are going with a pet, remember it a predator. Keep

that the birds will consider your dog on a lead.

#### **8** If you come across a protected species

that is wounded or observe an infraction, notify the forestry service by phoning +34 935 617 000. @agentsruralscat

### **9** Leave the area you

visit just as you found it. Even better, if possible.

### **10** The observational

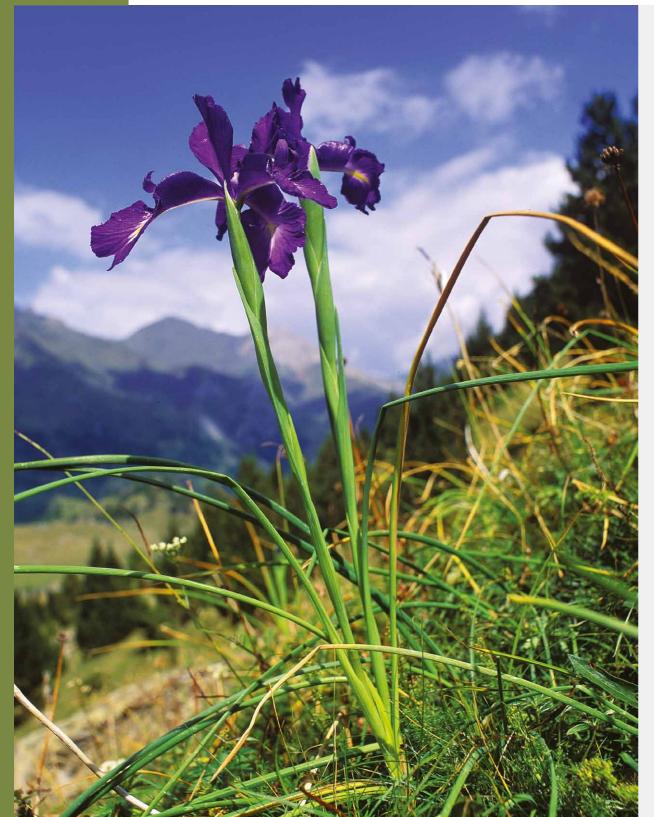
data you collect may be of scientific interest. Share it on cooperative science portals such as https://ebird. org/ or https://www.ornitho.cat.

### Plus... **DELTA BIRDING FESTIVAL**

In the penultimate week of September, the MónNatura Delta de l'Ebre, located in the heart of the Ebro Delta, hosts the only birdwatching contest of its kind in Catalonia. The Delta Birding Festival offers a programme of activities full of talks, competitions, workshops, courses, exhibitions, field trips, etc. This is all accompanied by a large fair of products and services for naturalists and those who enjoy nature in a respectful way. Ticket proceeds will go to the conservation of threatened habitats and species.

www.deltabirdingfestival.com/?lang=en





# NATURAL ATTRACTION

The power of attraction of wild animals is undeniable and seeing them in their natural habitat is priceless. In Catalonia, you can hear the bellowing of rutting Pyrenean stags, watch wild goats climb the massifs of Montserrat and Els Ports, or track the footprints of the elusive brown bear. Plus, don't miss the aquatic wildlife of the Medes Islands, home to spectacular Neptune grass meadows.

The plant life also offers great diversity, with typically Mediterranean forests, others which are more unusual like the beech forests of La Garrotxa, and the alpine flora with truly emblematic species such as orchids.



IRIS LATIFOLIA (*IRIS XYPHIOIDES*). © JOSÉ LUIS RODRÍGUEZ



2

Where Tortosa. Els Ports Natural Park How to get there by train (www.renfe.es) and bus (www.hife.es/en-GB). Collection service available Duration 3 days (2 nights) Participants groups of 2 to 10 people When all year round Languages Catalan Spanish, English, French, German and Dutch

Ports Experience +34 699 371 931 www.portsexperience.com/en

# ALL THE ENERGY OF THE FOREST

At the heart of the Terres de l'Ebre Biosphere Reserve is the Els Ports Natural Park, a place with renowned and unique forests. Their appeal changes depending on the seasons of the year in which you visit. Their colours, their height, the falling of leaves and the wide spread of the roots will tempt you in to wander and to escape... and, above all, to feel the grandeur of nature. With the "Forest Bathing" activity, thanks to the ancient Japanese technique of *Shinrin Yoku*, you will develop a deep and renewing connection with the environment, visiting spaces of great environmental value where you can connect with the volatile particles of the trees and plants, capable of reinforcing your natural defences. It is a walk during which all five of your sense will spring into action, bringing you other valuable psychological and emotional effects.  $\mathbf{Q}$ 

Unique forests Historic trees Beech forests Emblematic mountains and geology Wild goats

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/ports



Where La Vall de Gaià. Natura 2000 Network How to get there by bus (www.igualadina.com) Duration 2 h 30 min Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

EUROPARC Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

El Brogit +34 689 006 199 www.elbrogit.com

To find out more: www.concadebarbera.info/en © FERRAN NADEU GZ

## BEEKEEPING FOR EVERYONE THE SECRETS OF BEES

"Artisan Honey Tasting" is a simple and refreshing excursion on which you can discover the melliferous (honey bee-attracting) flowers of the area around the Juncosa Bee Sanctuary, located in mixed agroforest lands in the mountains of Montmell. The beekeeper himself will lead the tour, taking in the beehive-museum where you will delve into their world and learn their language and characteristics before finishing off with a home-made honey tasting, which also includes other honey-derived products, such as quince cheese and beer. We will visit the workshop of Joan Maria Llorenç, artisan beekeeper and member of the Association of Friends of the Bees of Muntanyes de Prades, who will explain the different varieties of honey that they produce and with which we will enjoy an unusual tasting, a tasting of artisan honey! **Q** 

Family ecotourism Traditional trades Rural world Local products





Where Senterada. Near the Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park How to get there by bus (www.alsa.com) and by the Tren dels Llacs train to Pobla de Segur Duration 6 days Participants individuals, couples and groups When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



Casa Leonardo +34 973 661 787 www.casaleonardo.net/en

### PYRENEAN BOTANICALS HOLIDAY AMONGST THE HERBS

Forests and valleys such as La Vall Fosca are interesting on a botanical level above all because of their diversity. Their flora merits attention, with plants whose attractions lie in their varied colours, shapes and uses. If you would like to walk around a selection of natural environments in the Pyrenees, accompanied by an expert who will impart their knowledge of the landscape, its plants and their uses and local customs, choose "Holiday Amongst the Herbs". You will enjoy pleasant walks through La Vall Fosca and the surrounding area, quiet spots which are accessible to the general public, on the edge of Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park. You will also enjoy some traditional food and end the day making either a traditional medicine, recipe, liqueur or soap with the herbs you have gathered. **9** 

High-mountain landscapes Alpine flora Local products Mushrooms Folk traditions Hiking

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/aiguestortes 0.001220101120



Where Boumort mountains How to get there by train to La Pobla de Segur (www.renfe.es) and by bus to Sort (www.alsa.com) Duration 2 days Participants nature lovers in good physical shape When September and October Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

# A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE BELLOWING OF THE STAG

Taking place over two days and one night, this is a fantastic midmountain crossing in pursuit of the sound of the bellowing of the stag, a singular and unique experience that takes place between September and October. During their rutting season, males fight each other to win over the females. To observe them in all their splendour and interfere as little as possible in this vital moment, these organised guided outings allow you to admire the wild flora and fauna, listen to this guttural sound and observe the birds of prey that inhabit the walls of these rugged mountains. **9** 

Bellowing of the stagBirds of prey and carrion birdsHigh-mountain landscapesHoofed animals

Rutes Pirineus +34 691 772 966 www.pyreneestrails.com

To find out more: www.pallarsjussa.net/en/experience-nature/boumort-mountains



19

Where Boumort National Reserve How to get there by bus to La Pobla de Segur (www.alsa.com) Duration 3 days Participants experienced hikers When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

# IN BLACK VULTURE TERRITORY ECOSAFARI IN BOUMORT

"Walk on the Wild Side of Boumort" offers three days of adventure along ancient cattle trails with the help of a local guide in one of the most inhospitable and uninhabited places in Catalonia: the Boumort National Reserve. On the first day, you will have the chance to spot some of Europe's great birds from a wildlife observatory, such as the black vulture, the common vulture, the bearded vulture and, if you're lucky, the Egyptian vulture, as well as other mammals that inhabit the Boumort National Reserve. On the first night, you will sleep in an old forest house that has been restored as a refuge, and the second night will be spent in a camp near the troglodytic villages of Solduga and Espluga, under a starry sky. **9** 

Birds of prey and carrion birds Night sky Brown bear Hoofed animals Emblematic mountains and geology Alpine flora

Outdoor Adventour +34 973 043 409 www.outdooradventour.com/en

To find out more: www.pallarsjussa.net/en/experience-nature/boumort-mountains © OUTDOOR ADVENTOUR



 Where Son.

 Aigüestortes i Estany

 de Sant Maurici National Park

 How to get there

 by bus

 to Esterri d'Àneu

 (www.alsa.com)

 Duration 2 h

 Participants

 open to all

 When all year round

 Languages Catalan,

 Spanish and English

MónNa

MónNatura Pirineus +34 973 626 722 https://monnaturapirineus.com/en

# EMBLEMATIC PYRENEAN SPECIES FAUNA IN ITS HABITAT

The Valls d'Àneu area boasts real diversity, both biological and also in terms of different ecosystems that act as a refuge to a good number of threatened species. Of particular significance amongst them are the bearded vulture, the brown bear and the wood grouse. The MónNatura Pirineus wildlife centre gives you the chance to see a great number of the species that live in this area through a guided tour of a 6-hectare space in the Son forest. During the "Fauna of the Pyrenees" activity, you will learn directly from environmental educators about the characteristics of species as emblematic as lynx, martens, roe deer, chamois, wildcats and the Eurasian eagle-owl. The centre also participates in the bearded vulture recovery programme. **9** 

High-mountain landscapes Family ecotourism Alpine flora Hoofed animals Valleys

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/aiguestortes





Where Vilamós. Val d'Aran How to get there bv bus (www.alsa.com) Duration 2 h Participants open to all When spring, summer and autumn Language Aranese, Catalan, Spanish and French

# NATURAL DISCOVERY THE SECRETS **OF PLANTS**

"The Secrets of Plants" experience is a two-hour walk to learn about the plants you will find in the Val d'Aran, accompanied by guides from Verd e Blu. You will discover how they were used in the past, their uses in healing and also their nutritional properties. Plus, you will have fun learning about popular beliefs with roots and an oral tradition dating back to the origins of time. This is also an ideal educational activity to awaken our senses to all the smells of the high-mountain forest. This way, you will share the best ways to recognise, collect, dry or use these plants in the genuine and wellpreserved high-mountain environment that is the Val d'Aran. •

Traditional trades High-mountain landscapes Alpine flora Butterflies

BIOSPHERE Visit Val d'Aran +34 973 640 688 www.visitvaldaran.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/alt-pirineu



Where Montsenv Natural Park How to get there by train to Sant Celoni (www.renfe.es) Duration 3 h (walk) / 8 h (training) Participants experienced hikers When dates according to demand Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

A NEW WAY OF LOOKING THE MOST CONTEMPORARY **FLORA** 

Mediterranean vegetation encompasses 20% of the world's vascular plants, some 24,000 species whose history dates back to the origins of our contemporary culture. Now, you can enjoy "A Stroll Amongst the Herbs" around Montseny. You will learn to identify wild plants, their respective uses and their history and traditions from ancient times right up to the modern day, in the surroundings of the Montseny Natural Park, the most diverse in Catalonia. This is a walk among wild plants to discover how their fragrances, textures and image explain both how the area's inhabitants used them in the past and how they are used in the modern day in contemporary haute cuisine. •

Hiking Unique forests Mediterranean flora Mushrooms Beech forests

Naturalwalks +34 662 251 059 www.naturalwalks.com/en

To find out more: https://parcs.diba.es/web/montseny





Where Olot. La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park How to get there by bus to Olot (www.teisa-bus.com) Duration 2 days (weekend) Participants minimum aroup size of 8 people When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

### LA GARROTXA VOLCANIC ZONE SEEING **BUTTERFLIES**

La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park is an exceptional environment due to the large number of species of butterflies that are found there. Accompanied by Trescàlia's expert nature guides, the "Butterflies in the Natural Park" activity offers you a weekend of natural discovery where you will "hunt" the infinite varieties of diurnal butterflies that inhabit this magical enclave surrounded by volcanoes. It is an introduction to these fantastic insects that includes a stay in a very comfortable and welllocated rural house with good local gastronomy. •

Volcanoes Unique forests Local products Family ecotourism Butterflies Emblematic mountains and geology

👱 EUROPARC ainable Tourisr

Trescàlia +34 657 861 805 https://trescalia.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/garrotxa @ TRESCÀL //



Where Tortosa and Amposta. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there bv train to L'Aldea-Amposta-Tortosa (www.renfe.es) or bus (www.hife.es/en-GB). Collection service available Duration 4 days (3 nights) Participants groups of 4 to 10 people When from March to November Languages Catalan, Spanish, English, French, German and Dutch

EXPERIENCE RIVER, FOREST AND SEA CONNECT WITH NATURE

The "Natural Connection" activity offers a truly immersive guided collective experience that introduces you to the natural elements (river, birds, forests and sea) of the Terres de l'Ebre Biosphere Reserve. The first day is dedicated to birdwatching while you kayak down the leafy last section of the River Ebro. On the second day, it is the turn of 'forest bathing' nature therapy (Shinrin Yoku) in Els Ports Natural Park, topped off with a mindful snorkel in the wild and rugged coves of L'Ametlla de Mar, right in the middle of the Terres de l'Ebre Biosphere Reserve. Accommodation is in a 'masia', or typical Ebro Delta rural house, so that you can see the surroundings up close and get a feel for rural life in the far south of Catalonia. •

Birdwatching Unique forests Wild goats Rivers and waterfalls Family ecotourism Night sky Historic trees

Ports Experience +34 699 371 931 www.portsexperience.com/en

BLOSPHER

To find out more: www.ebrebiosfera.org/en

42 / Connect with nature

### WILDLIFE INVESTIGATOR WHALES & DOLPHINS AHOY!

Would you like to join a whale research team in Cap de Creus? Be a marine biologist for a day and look out for dolphins and whales whilst contributing to their study and conservation. This is one of the activities offered by Wildsea Europe, a network of coastal resorts across Europe promoting responsible seaside tourism, in which you can experience nature and animals at close guarters. **9** 

Night sky Whales & dolphins Underwater fauna Neptune grass

**WILDSEA** To find out more: **E U N O P E** www.wildsea.eu Where Cadaqués. Cap de Creus Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.moventis.es) Duration one week When summer Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

Submon +34 932 135 849 www.submon.org/en



### A NATURAL BATH THE FOREST WELCOMES US

Have you ever entered a mature forest and noticed that it makes you come to a standstill? Have you listened to the silence and felt the benefit it brings you? Have you turned off your mobile phone before entering? We accompany you, calmly and without haste, on an immersion into a forest sanctuary that will make you tremble with feeling, so you can experience a "forest bath". The objective is not to walk, but to contemplate the sensations it gives us and become aware of how it welcomes us. **9** 

Unique forests Historic trees

To find out more: www.vallsdaneu.org/en



Where Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park / Alt Pirineu Natural Park How to get there by bus to Esterri d'Àneu (www.alsa.com) Duration 3 h 30 min When from March to November

Obaga Activitats

+34 619 93 82 67

www.obagaactivitats.cat/en



Where L'Estartit. Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.sarfa.es and www.ampsa.org) to L'Estartit Duration 2 h Participants certified divers When from April to November Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

# AMONG GROUPER AND BARRACUDAS

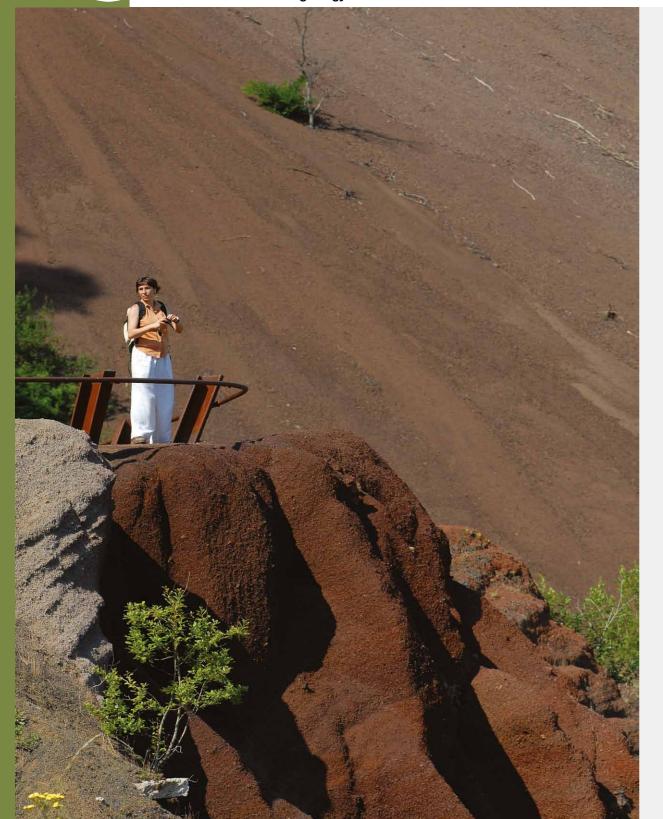
The Medes Islands are a very well-preserved nature reserve, full of life and unique landscapes, where we find a great diversity of fish that are accustomed to the presence of divers. Here, it is common to swim between huge schools of barracudas, amberjack and salema porgy. It is also possible to find eagle rays, moonfish and tuna, and, of course, large and ever-curious grouper. These seven islets offer a wide variety of dive sites suitable for any qualified diver. This activity offers guided groups with a maximum of four divers per guide. **9** 

Whales & dolphins Neptune grass Underwater fauna



El Rei del Mar +34 972 751 392 www.elreidelmar.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/illes-medes



# WHEN THE ROCKS TALK

Landscapes which were created by lava, like La Garrotxa, where there are some 40 volcanoes; spectacular underground caves like those at Meravelles, in Benifallet; the unique morphology of Montserrat mountain, the symbol of Catalonia... these are some of the geological jewels found in Catalonia. In Catalonia, you can also find out how the Pyrenees were formed from the time when they were a sea, and discover two UNESCO Global Geoparks: Central Catalonia and Conca de Tremp-Montsec. In Catalonia, the stones will tell you their story. Listen to them.

CROSCAT VOLCANO, IN LA GARROTXA VOLCANIC ZONE. © JOSÉ LUIS RODRÍGUEZ <u>infsc</u>



# THE NETWORK OF GEOPARKS

More than 36 million years ago, in the geographical heart of Catalonia, there was a sea which disappeared upon the arrival of the Pyrenees mountains, in a process which has left us a legacy of spectacular rocky formations and a wealth of natural resources which define the landscape and the society of this territory.

This important geological heritage has been recognised in the form of two UNESCO Global Geoparks, well-delineated geographical areas whose landscapes have geological relevance at an international level. They are managed in line with a global concept of protection, education and sustainable development, and with the involvement of local communities. Both geoparks are worth a visit.

In Catalonia, there are two geoparks which are part of a global UNESCO network: the Conca de Tremp-Montsec Geopark which encompasses El Pallars Jussà: Baix Pallars in El Pallars Sobirà, Coll de Nargó in Alt Urgell. Vilanova de Meià, and Camarasa i Àger in La Noguera, and the Geological and Mineral Park of Central Catalonia, made up of the areas of Bages and Collbató.

In both parks you will find sustainable geotourism activities which aim to publicise these areas while, at the same time, preserving the important geological resources of each one; fossilised remains, caves, chasms, faults, mines, tunnels, basalt and granite rock formations, gorges, rock faces...

In this sense, you will find exceptional singularities in both geoparks, such as the El Toll and the Saltpetre caves in the Geological and Mineral Park of Central Catalonia and the spectacular gorges of Mont-rebei, Terradets and Collegats in Conca de Tremp-Montsec Geopark.

To find out more: www.europeangeoparks.org



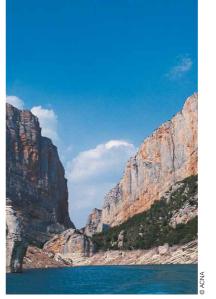
### **HOLES IN** THE GROUND

The caves of El Toll, in the municipality of Moià, and the Saltpetre caves in Collbató, within the Montserrat mountain complex, are the geological jewels of the Geological and Mineral Park of Central Catalonia. Because of the remains found there, the former are considered the "palace" of Quaternary animal life. The complex is made up of four caverns formed from ancient coralloids and a chasm. If you start the visit in Manresa, you can add Sant Ignasi cave to the itinerary.

Land caves Paleontological remains

To find out more: www.geoparc.cat/en





### **BEARING WITNESS TO THE PAST**

On this trail through the Conca de Tremp-Montsec Geopark it is the stones which will "talk to you". They will tell you about prehistorical times in the Sant Gervàs mountains, through the L'Home de la Terreta cave paintings or the palaeontological remains in the Nerets sites. They will also explain how the Pyrenees were formed as you traverse the narrow passes of Mont-rebei, Terradets and Collegats, head down to the Gurp gorge and contemplate the rock faces of Roca Regina.



In Tremp, the Epicentre Visitors Centre provides you with self-quiding information so that you can explore the geopark area.

Paleontological remains Night sky



To find out more: www.projectegeoparctrempmontsec.com/en





a cave trail in PDF format. It will guide you from Manresa to the caves at Collbató and Moià. You can do it all year round.







Where Senterada. Near the Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park How to get there by bus (www.alsa.com) and by the Tren dels Llacs train to Pobla de Segur (www.trendelsllacs.cat) Duration one week Participants open to all When autumn and spring Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



Casa Leonardo +34 973 661 787 www.casaleonardo.net/en

### **DISCOVER THE CATALAN PYRENEES** SECRETS OF **ECOSYSTEMS**

The Catalan Pyrenees, with mid and high-mountain landscapes, is home to magnificent mountain meadows and groves of pine, oak and holm oak. With the "Nature Holidays" experience, you will be able to visit the wetland marshes of Montcortès lake, the Riguerna valley and the ponds at Basturs. With this activity, you will be able to observe the flora and fauna of Conca de Tremp and the Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park. What's more, you will be doing this along spectacular routes and paths that pass through Collegats, La Bonaigua, Esterri and Escalarre. Casa Leonardo is a rural accommodation that also offers you the option of up to six themed outings, led by an expert guide, in order to get to know more about the birds, butterflies, dragonflies and the plant life of the area. •

High mountain landscapes Unique forests Peaks Valleys Alpine flora Birds of prey and carrion birds Mushrooms

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/aiguestortes © CASA LEONARD

Where Vielha. Val d'Aran How to get there by bus to Vielha (www.alsa.com) Duration 3 days Participants reaular hikers When snow season Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

HIGH MOUNTAINS IN THE VAL D'ARAN

# **GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL** IN THE SNOW

The "Leadership Route in Snowshoes" offers you the chance to disconnect and enjoy nature while discovering the many and valuable natural resources of the Pyrenees, both flora and fauna. This experience allows us to connect with nature and give the best of ourselves in the wild, silent and magical environment that is the Val d'Aran. You will stay in a mountain refuge and you must be physically fit enough to carry out 4-5 hours of hiking per day. In return, you'll gain emotional intelligence and return home with your batteries "naturally" recharged. **Q** 

Snow Unique forests Peaks Valleys Alpine flora

LIFE Leadership School +34 675 491 993 www.lifeleadershipschool.com

To find out more: www.visitvaldaran.com/en





Where Sant Esteve de Palautordera. Montseny Natural Park How to get there by train to Palautordera (www.renfe.es) and bus to Sant Esteve de Palautordera (www.sagales.com) Duration variable according to stay Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



Hotel SomLom +34 938 482 073 www.somlom.com

#### SPIRITUAL REST

# WELLNESS **IN MONTSENY**

This accommodation, designed under strict environmental criteria to guarantee relaxation and maximum rest, is located in the Montseny Natural Park and Biosphere Reserve, the highest massif in the Catalan pre-coastal mountain range. Its natural park offers a unique mosaic of Mediterranean and Central European landscapes. Besides time for enjoying these unique landscapes, the SomLom hotel allows guests to practise therapies such as acupuncture, osteopathy, zero balancing, shiatsu, different massages, physiotherapy, etc. To reduce its environmental impact, the hotel is built using certified natural wood and uses only renewable energies. •

Rural world Family ecotourism Night sky Mushrooms Beech forests

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/visiteu-nos/els\_parcs\_de\_catalunya/montseny



Where Olot. La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park How to get there by bus to Olot (www.teisa-bus.com) Duration 3-4 hours **Participants** open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

EUROPARC Sustainable Tourist

Guies Ama Dablam +34 615 233 442 www.quiesamadablam.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/garrotxa

#### **ORIENTEERING IN LA GARROTXA**

# THE WILD SIDE OF LA VALL D'EN BAS

In this activity, called "La Vall d'en Bas Orienteering Circuit", we will learn how to use a compass and interpret a map in a complete orienteering circuit around La Vall d'en Bas, in La Garrotxa, Here, we will visit emblematic places such as the picturesque village of Els Hostalets d'en Bas, the headwaters of the Fluvià or the old Royal Way, all in an unspoilt environment with unique forests, lush cliffs, waterfalls and valleys. We will also pay attention to the flora and fauna of the forest. An all-round experience for walkers, who will be transported back to times when humans only came to this area when in transit. •

Family ecotourism Observing flora and fauna Rural world Traditional architecture Beech forests Farming landscape



1

Where Olot. La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park How to get there by bus to Olot (www.teisa-bus.com) Duration 3 days Participants hiking enthusiasts When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

EUROPARC Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

+34 657 861 805 www.trescalia.com A WEEKEND IN LA GARROTXA

# **VOLCANOES AND RIVERS OF LAVA**

"Volcanoes and Lava Flows" is a trail that you follow independently which takes you around the La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park. This park contains the best display of volcanic landscape across the Iberian peninsula, with 40 volcanic cones and more than 20 lava flows. You will visit 14 volcanoes (Croscat, Santa Margarida, Montsacopa, etc.) and La Fageda d'en Jordà beech forest, which is spectacular both in spring and autumn. The orography, soil and climate provide a varied and often lush vegetation with holm oaks, oaks and beech forests of exceptional botanical and scenic value. **9** 

Observing flora and fauna Peaks Family ecotourism Volcanoes Beech forests

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/garrotxa



Where Olot. La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park How to get there by bus to Olot (www.teisa-bus.com) Duration 3-4 hours Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English 30-METRE-HIGH WATERFALLS HIGH PANORAMIC VIEWS

Some of the treasures that can be found in La Garrotxa include 100-metre-high waterfalls, fissures in stone, ravines and gorges with crystal-clear water, beech forests, plus spectacular views from its peaks and crags. With this "La Vall d'en Bas Trekking Route", you can discover all this and much more. This is an interesting and simple circular route that crosses the town of Els Hostalets d'en Bas and the old Royal Way that linked Vic with Olot. With the assistance of an expert guide, you will enjoy unique and special spots such as rivers bordered by vegetation and moss, or waterfalls of more than 30 metres in height. **9** 

Hiking Family ecotourism Peaks Rivers and waterfalls Volcanoes



Guies Ama Dablam +34 615 233 442 www.guiesamadablam.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/garrotxa





#### CERDANYA ECORESORT

SPIRITUAL MONTSERRAT THE MOST MAGICAL MOUNTAIN

An itinerary around the southern slope of Montserrat that includes a "Forest Bath" to improve the understanding of this mountain as a link between nature and spirituality. Montserrat is a natural environment that is considered sacred by many cultures throughout history. On this excursion, you will discover the patterns of symbolic communication that human culture has established with this natural environment from a cultural or religious perspective. **9** 

Unique forests Historic trees Hiking

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/visiteu-nos/els\_parcs\_de\_catalunya/montserrat Guies de Montserrat +34 660 006 610 www.gdm.cat/en

Where

Natural Park

Duration 2 h

When

Montserrat Mountain

Link up with the cable

(www.aeridemontserrat.

llerademontserrat.cat/en)

spring and autumn

com/en) and the rack train (www.crema-

How to get there by train (www.fgc.cat/en).

car railway stations



Where Prullans. Cadi-Moixeró Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.alsa.com) Duration 1 day Participants open to all When snow season Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

### SNOW IN LA CERDANYA

# WALK WITH SNOWSHOES

Respect for the environment and adventure is the essence of the "Snowshoeing" activity at the Cerdanya EcoResort. Over the course of the day, we will enjoy nature and the snow, sharing experiences between parents and children. The tour lasts about two hours if you include time spent snowshoeing, stopping for games and of course, the inevitable snowball fights. You will discover impressive views, landscapes, unexplored corners, and much more. The routes run through little-frequented places and are accompanied by some technical explanations and curiosities of the flora and fauna of this Pyrenean habitat. **9** 

Observing flora and fauna Snow Rural world Family ecotourism Valleys Peaks

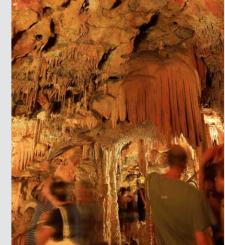
Cerdanya EcoResort +34 973 510 260 www.cerdanyaecoresort.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/cadi

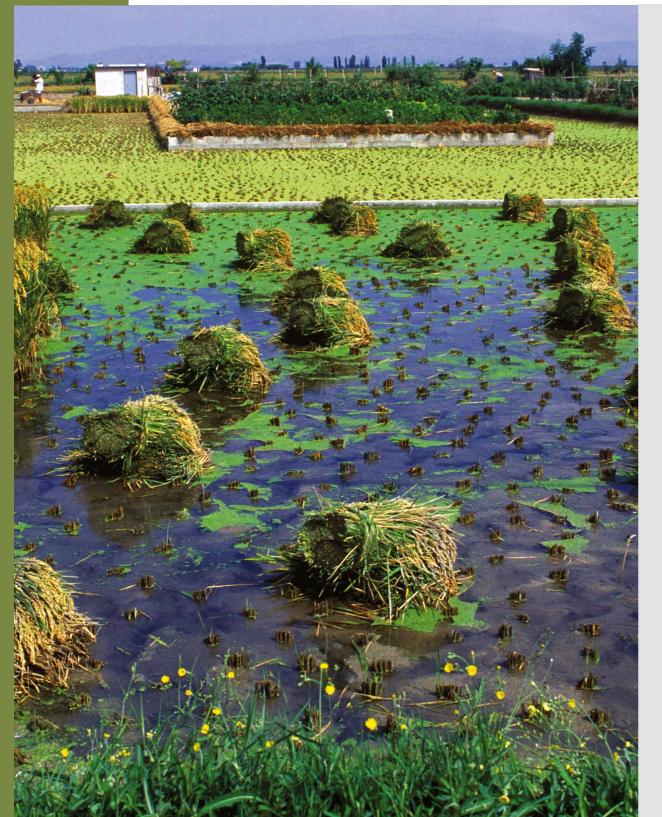
### Plus... THE SPECTACULAR MERAVELLES CAVE

Discovered half a century ago, this cave in the village of Benifallet, on the Ebro river, lives up to its name (Marvels). It is 500 metres in length (200 meters are accessible) and has three chambers. The Llapis (pencil) chamber displays stalactites and stalagmites; in the Amphitheatre chamber, due to the water and minerals they carry, the lakes are circular in shape and look like terraced seating. The Music chamber is the smallest but the only one which displays all formations: stalactites, stalagmites, columns, etc., all of great beauty.

www.benifallet.altanet.org/les-coves-meravelles



© PATRONAT DE TURISME DE LA DIPUTACIÓ DE TARRAGONA



# NATURE AND **TRADITION**

Finding out which wild grasses have been used since long ago, learning how to identify typically-Pyrenean flowers, nuts and seeds and taking a trip through the vineyards of El Penedès on sustainable transport are just some of the ways to understand the close relationship between nature and humans. Ecotourism contributes to the survival of rural and farming communities, prevents depopulation, is vital for their economy and keeps ancestral trades and traditions alive. Taking part in it also gives you the chance to acquire local products and craftwork.

RICE FIELDS IN THE EBRO DELTA. © JOSÉ LUIS RODRÍGUEZ <image>





Where Deltebre. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration half day or 1 day **Participants** open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



This is an invitation to get to know the Ebro Delta in a different way. With the "EcoCultural Safari through the Delta", you will be able to carry out different combined activities, for example, a tour with vehicles to get to know the different ecosystems of the Ebro Delta and its great ornithological richness. Or, you can practise activities linked to the traditional art of rice cultivation and obtaining resources before we had machines. It is a journey back in time through a genuine space: the marshland and rice fields of the Ebro Delta. These have a unique history and culture deeply rooted in its people that is worth getting to know in a leisurely way.

Rural world Traditional trades Observing flora and fauna Marshland



Delta Polet +34 677 456 224 ww.deltapolet.com

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre © DELTA POLE

Where Sant Jaume d'Enveja. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.hife.es/en-GB) **Duration** varies depending on the route **Participants** open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

#### **RIVER WALK**

# **DISCOVER THE BANKS OF THE EBRO**

One of the most beautiful, pleasant and peaceful itineraries that can be enjoyed in Sant Jaume d'Enveja is the river walk that runs parallel to the river for 30 kilometres. You can head in the direction of the mouth (right) or go upstream towards Amposta. Both directions let you admire riverside woodland, Mediterranean vegetation and flocks of birds. This is a trip recommended by the Cases del Delta rural accommodation. •

Cycle touring Marshland Rural world Family ecotourism Traditional architecture Farming landscape



Cases del Delta +34 657 800 085 www.casesdeltaebre.com/en

To find out more http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre





Where Deltebre. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by train to L'Aldea-Amposta-Tortosa and bus to Deltebre (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration 4 hours Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English, French and Russian



Riu a l'Ebre +34 600 471 078 www.riualebre.com/en MUSSEL BEDS IN THE EBRO DELTA

# **'FISH' OUT ALL ITS SECRETS**

"Taste of the Sea" is a guided activity for groups of up to 15 people. It involves a bike ride through rice paddies from Deltebre to the port of Illa de Mar, in Fangar bay. From here you will kayak out to the mussel farm to find out about how mussel breeding works and, at the end, there will be a tasting of several of the Ebro Delta's star products: mussels (locally known as the *musclo*) and oysters. This route, which combines sport and gastronomy, helps you discover first hand the art of shellfishing and the work of shellfishermen, and you will observe the fauna that inhabits this bay (western marsh harrier, herons... and, if you're lucky, even flamingos). **•** 

Migratory birds in wetlands Cycle touring Local products Underwater fauna Traditional trades Rural world

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre © RIU A L'EBRE



Where Deltebre.

Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by train to L'Aldea-Amposta-Tortosa (www.renfe.es) and bus to Deltebre (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration between 2 and 3 h Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



Hostal Cling +34 659 335 577 www.hostalcling43.com/?lang=en

To find out more: www.ebrebiosfera.org/en © MARIANO CEBOLL

### GASTRONOMY ROUTE TASTEOF THE DELTA

"Menja't Deltebre" (Taste Deltebre) is a gastronomic route proposed by Hostal Cling, designed to surprise lovers of gastronomy, in this case, the gastronomy of the Ebro Delta. It offers a gastronomic-cultural route by bicycle through Deltebre. The meeting point is the company www.riualebre.com/en (in Deltebre) and from there, you carry out a cycling route passing by different establishments, shops and wineries where local produce is tasted. This route (which can be sweet, savoury or mixed) has a duration of between two and three hours, and is held on Fridays and Saturdays with a minimum of six people. **Q** 

Local products Rural world Cycle touring Farming landscape Traditional architecture



B

Where Sort. El Pallars Sobirà How to get there by bus to Sort (www.alsa.com) or by train to La Pobla de Segur (http://leidalapobla.fgc.cat/home) Duration 1 or several days Participants families and groups When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

El Pallars Sobirà Tourism +34 973 621 002 http://turisme.pallarssobira.cat/en

### MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED SHEPHERDS' ROUTES EXPERIENCE HIGH-MOUNTAIN

The old network of paths that linked the small villages of El Pallars Sobirà now offers the opportunity to immerse yourself in nature and transport yourself to a not-so-distant past. The Tourist Office of El Pallars Sobirà proposes routes to explore the more than "one hundred paths" that cover all the corners of this landscape. There is always a trail to suit you, from small family trips to long journeys for experts. Plus, you'll be able to participate in activities such as grouping the cattle, taking them to the pastures and discovering how *gossos d'atura* (herding dogs) work. You can also spend the night in one of the many mountain refuges.  $\mathbf{9}$ 

High-mountain landscapes Traditional trades Hiking Family ecotourism Traditional architecture Rural world

**AREAS** 

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/aiguestortes http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/alt-pirineu



Where La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park How to get there by bus to Sant Feliu de Pallerols (www.teisa-bus.com/en/index.html) Duration depends on the activity Participants couples and small groups When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and Italian



La Rectoria de Sant Miquel de Pineda +34 693 531 111 www.larectoriadesantmiquel.com/en NATURAL AND CULTURAL ITINERARY **DISCOVER LA GARROTXA** 

La Rectoria de Sant Miquel de Pineda is a rural accommodation that offers multiple nature, adventure, culture and gastronomical activities to be carried out just a few minutes away from its site in La Garrotxa. It is part of the Carrilet Route, a section of the Greenway that links Olot and Girona. In a landscape of volcanoes and unique forests, these paths are ideal for hiking and cycling tourism. You can walk around the crater of a volcano such as Santa Margarida, wander around the slopes of the imposing Croscat or be amazed by the panoramic views at Montsacopa. You will also taste the area's traditional volcanic cuisine. **Q** 

Volcanoes Valleys Cycle touring Hiking Traditional architecture Unique forests Rural world

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/garrotxa





Where Pals. Empordanet How to get there by train (www.renfe.es) and bus (www.sarfa.es) to Pals Duration 1 h 30 min Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



El Xiulet de Pals +34 628 597 972 www.elxiuletdepals.com/en

# RICE PADDIES IN THE NORTH OF CATALONIA ON THE RICE ROUTE

"The Rice Route" experience allows visitors to discover the cycle of rice and observe its natural environment from a tourist train. To do this, we will stop at the old Pals Mill to discover its history (it dates back to 1452, before Columbus' arrival in America), learn about the process of whitening rice and even taste an artisan rice beer (a drink known by very few, apart from those who live on this plain). To conclude the visit, we start the return journey through the rice fields to the medieval village of Pals. All this will be surrounded by the birds that fly high above the Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park. **9** 

Family ecotourism Farming landscape Rural world Traditional trades

To find out more: www.visitempordanet.com/en



Where Vilafranca del Penedès. Natura 2000 Network How to get there pick-up from the centre of Barcelona and by train to Vilafranca del Penedès Duration 7 hours Participants couples and groups When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English ECOLOGICAL FARMING

# WINERIES AND BICYCLES

Discover all the secrets of cava and winemaking with this electric or mountain bike tour. Take a walk through the vineyards of El Penedès, meet a local winegrower, visit an authentic family winery and taste exquisite cava and organic wines. This is a walk that allows visitors to discover this ancestral process of cava and wine elaboration in great detail. Finally, you will taste several cavas and ecological wines that allow you to discover "the taste of the region". **9** 

Farming landscape Rural world Traditional trades Folk traditions Traditional architecture

Penedès Ecotours +34 622 619 870 www.penedesecotours.com/en

BIOSPHERE

To find out more: www.turismevilafranca.com/en





Where Palamós. Empordanet How to get there by bus (www.moventis.es) <u>Duration</u> 2 h 30 min - 3 h 30 min Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French 'TAPAS' WITH A MEDITERRANEAN ESSENCE

# BETWEEN THE SEA AND THE MOUNTAINS

The south of the Costa Brava is full of pathways that wind between the woodlands and small coves of sand and pines. The "Wild, Green 'Tapas'" (playing on the double meaning of the word 'tapas': stoppers and small dishes) route offers a different type of walk in which you will be surrounded by typical Mediterranean woodland. Its paths will lead you to many places, including the area's ancient cork oak groves, which will tell you all about the history of wine and cava. Along the walk, you will come across Salvador Dali's surrealist hut and some traditional fishermen's houses. Whilst walking, you will also enjoy tasting some of the Costa Brava's most typical aromatic wild plants, which grace both the oldest recipes and the most sophisticated dishes of Catalan haute cuisine. **9** 

Observing flora and fauna Coastal and delta landscapes Mediterranean flora Unique forests Traditional architecture Rural world

Naturalwalks +34 662 251 059 www.naturalwalks.com/en

To find out more: https://en.costabrava.org



 Where
 Torroella de Montgrí.

 Montgrí, Illes Medes i
 el Baix Ter Natural Park

 How to get there
 by bus (www.moventis.es)

 Duration 1 h 30 min - 3 h

 Participants

 open to all

 When from April

 to November

 Languages

 Catalan,

 Spanish, English

 and French



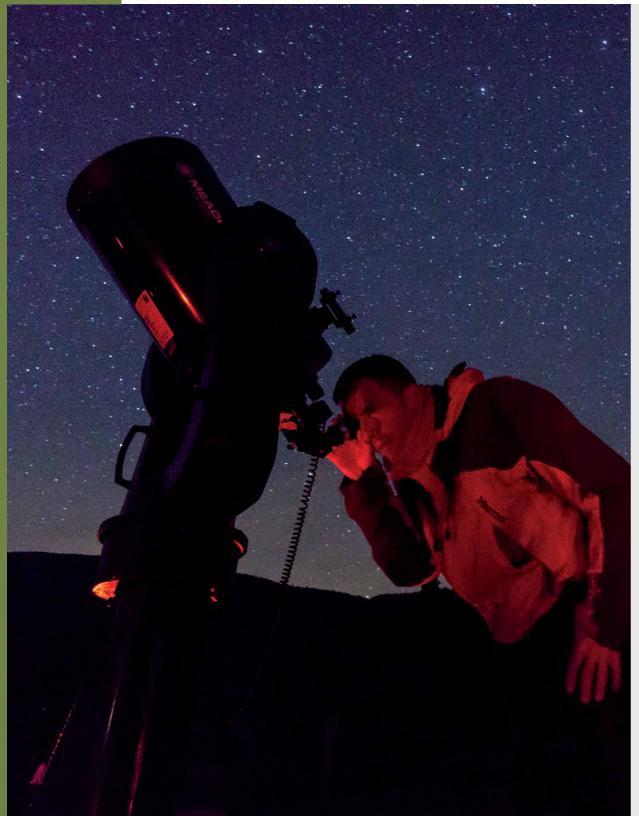
Mas Ramades +34 626 047 340 www.masramades.com/en EARTHY AROMAS

# TRADITION IN EL EMPORDÀ

During the Middle Ages, the area of Torroella and the Montgrí massif became a place of hibernation for the Pyrenean herds and shepherds. The rural tradition and the memories of these nomadic groups have inspired the recovery of country houses such as Mas Ramades, on an 18TH century estate. Its surroundings, its stays and the friendly service are the core of the "Rural Tourism in the Natural Park" experience. You will enjoy rest, nature and healthy, natural food. Plus, it will be the starting point for you to discover, in a sustainable and collaborative way alongside the park's accredited guides, the landscape, history and culture of the Ter plain with the Montgrí, Illes Medes I el Baix Ter Natural Park as a backdrop. **9** 

Cycle touring Family ecotourism Hiking Mediterranean flora Farming landscape Rural world

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/illes-medes



# IN SEARCH OF **STARS**

In Catalonia, there are various areas in the Pyrenees from which you can observe the sky in all its splendour, and there are plenty of observatories and spaces for stargazing. Stand-out options include the Montsec mountain range and the Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park, which have been classified by UNESCO as Tourist Destinations and Starlight Reserves. This certifies them as two of the best areas in the world for astronomic observations thanks to the weather conditions and low levels of light pollution. Discover the sky and the stars too.

OBSERVING THE NIGHT SKY IN THE PYRENEES. © MÓNNATURA PIRINEUS





Where Prades. Muntanyes de Prades How to get there by train to Les Borges del Camp (www.renfe.es) and by bus to Prades (www.empresaplana.cat) Duration 1 night Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

#### WINDOWS TO THE SKY

### **SLEEP UNDER THE STARS**

See the stars before you sleep or sleep under the stars. The silence is absolute, disturbed only by an owl or the movement of leaves in the wind. The sounds of nature envelop us and transport us to another dimension. You can experience this at Xalet de Prades, a rural complex formed by a set of 100% ecological accommodations located in the Muntanyes de Prades. The glass roof of each lodging allows you to experience sleeping under the stars. In the morning, the first rays of sun light up the new day, and a breakfast of local products awaits us. The daytime sun, the moon, and the stars; each sky is different, a unique and unrepeatable experience. •

Observing fauna and flora Farming landscape Rural world Family ecotourism

Xalet de Prades +34 977 868 371 www.xaletdeprades.com/?lang=en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/poblet © XALET DE PRADES



Where Son. Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park How to get there by bus to Esterri d'Àneu (www.alsa.com) Duration 2 hours Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

#### INTRODUCTION TO ASTRONOMY

### A GATEWAY TO THE UNIVERSE

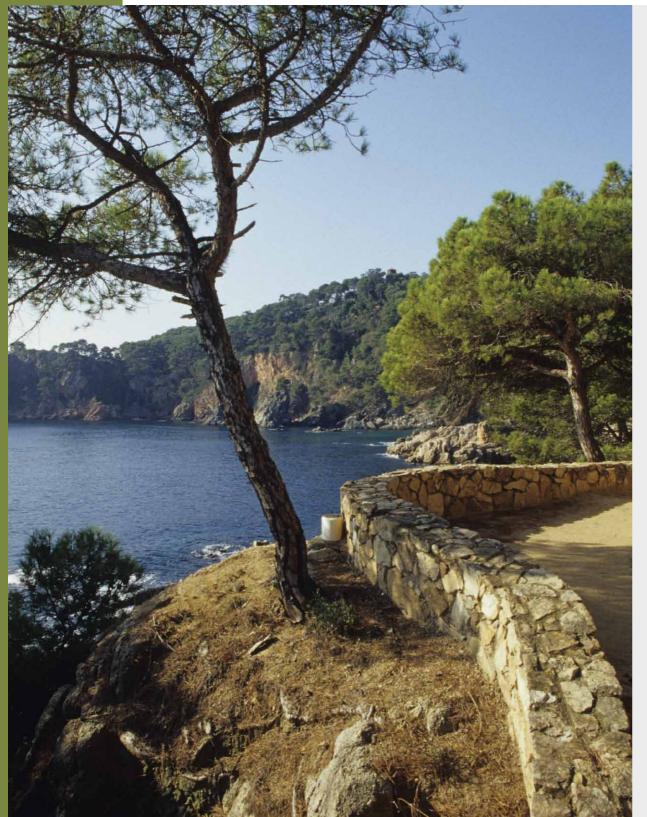
MónNatura Pirineus offers a range of stays and activities aimed at the general public and groups with the aim of publicising the natural and socio-cultural values of this area of the Pyrenees. If you're passionate about astronomy, you can visit an internationally-renowned observatory here. The guided experience "Travel through the Galaxies" is a journey to learn about the different equipment used to observe different elements of the deep sky in detail, take astrophotographs of the night and daytime sky, admire the chromosphere, and so on. The visit includes a session at the planetarium to enjoy a show about age-old stars. •

Family ecotourism High-mountain landscapes



MónNatura Pirineus +34 973 626 722 https://monnaturapirineus.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/aiguestortes



# BETWEEN LAND AND **SEA**

The Catalan coastline stretches for 595 km. The meeting of land and sea, two very different environments, means that the coastal landscapes here are especially biodiverse, from the rugged and photogenic Costa Brava in the far north, to the sinuous Ebro Delta in the south. The Medes Islands occupy pride of place amongst the examples of valuable natural heritage on the Costa Brava, whereas in the Terres de l'Ebre, a plethora of birds swoop over lagoons and rice paddies. Experience the Mediterranean by walking along the Catalan coast.

COASTAL FOOTPATH ON THE COSTA BRAVA. © ARTHUR FRIEDRERICH SELBACH





Where Deltebre. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by train to L'Aldea-Amposta-Tortosa (www.renfe.es) and bus to Deltebre (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration around 3 h **Participants** open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



Riu a l'Ebre +34 600 471 078 www.riualebre.com/en

#### EXPLORING THE EBRO DELTA **BY BICYCLE AND KAYAK**

The "Exploring the Delta" activity starts with a bike ride from Deltebre along the old towpath, which runs between rice fields, to discover the secrets of the cultivation of this grain. Then, by kayak, you will travel on the majestic Ebro to the picturesque town of Balada, located opposite the island of Gràcia. The banks of this mighty river still preserve the riverside woodland's typical flora intact, and we will enjoy the native fauna of this natural space that has been declared a Biosphere Reserve: kingfishers, flamingos, ducks, coots, and more. There are daily departures at 10.30 am. •

Cycle touring Family ecotourism Marshland Coastal and delta landscapes Rural world

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre BIUAI'EBB

Where Amposta.

Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by train to L'Aldea-Amposta-Tortosa (www.renfe.es) and by bus to Amposta (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration 1 h 30 min Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

EUROPARC

MónNatura

Delta de l'Ebre

+34 977 053 801

www.monnaturadelta.com/en

**FIRST HAND** 

### **DISCOVER THE EBRO DELTA**

"Discover MónNatura Delta de l'Ebre" is a self-guided visit to this museum centre. As you explore this modern set up, you will find out about the ecological and natural importance of this vast expanse, as well as the wealth of flora and fauna that lives there. Salt, birds (waders, ducks, seabirds...), the landscape and traditional fishing are the four focuses of this activity that takes you on a one-and-a-half hour walk around the ancient salt flats of La Tancada. This is a 41.2 hectare recovered space that brings to light the great environmental value of the lagoons, and includes leisure activities. For example, you can have a go at punting, one of the resources associated with the traditional way of life in these immense wetlands. •

Marshland Observing flora and fauna Coastal and delta landscapes Family ecotourism Traditional trades

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre

76 / Connect with nature



23

Where Deltebre. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration 3 hours Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French BY BICYCLE AND KAYAK

## THE HEARTBEAT OF THE RIVER EBRO

The Hotel Rull gives us the opportunity to experience the activity "The Heartbeat of the Delta: Land and River by Bicycle and Kayak". It consists of leaving the hotel by bicycle in the direction of the old towpath: it's 8 km to reach the island of Sapinya, following a true delta path with more than 130 catalogued species. The island is a winter sleeping place for all kinds of wading birds and sea crows, among others. Once there, we will leave the bicycles and begin the downstream descent by kayak, until we pass the island of Gràcia and reach the Riu a l'Ebre wharf. **9** 

Observing flora and fauna Marshland Cycle touring Calm waters and reservoirs Coastal and delta landscapes Migratory birds in wetlands



Hotel Rull +34 977 487 728 https://hotelrull.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre © HOTEL RULL



Where Colomers.

Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park How to get there by train to Girona (www.renfe.es) and bus to Colomers (www.ampsa.org) Duration 2 hours Participants open to all When spring, summer and autumn Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French THE RIVER THAT TRANSPORTS US **NATURE ON THE TER** 

At the gates of the Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park, the river Ter flows through one of the best-preserved riverside woodland areas in Catalonia. The descents by kayak cross sections that form part of the Mediterranean biological corridors included in the Natura 2000 Network, with several LIC (Site of Community Interest) points. The "Kayaking down the River Ter (from Colomers to Verges)" activity covers 7.5 km and allows visitors to discover this great biodiversity in a stretch with a ample vegetation on both shores. Here you can easily see birds, water turtles and small mammals. **9** 

Calm waters and reservoirs Observing flora and fauna Family ecotourism



Kayak del Ter +34 662 159 469 www.kayakdelter.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/illes-medes





Where L'Estartit. Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.sarfa.es and www.ampsa.org) Duration between 2 and 3 h Participants open to all When from April to October Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



L'Estartit Tourist Office +34 972 751 910 www.visitestartit.com/en KAYAKING OR PADDLE SURFING



The Medes Islands Marine Reserve is considered one of the best in Europe. The Club Nàutic Estartit (www.cnestartit.com/en/) offers the opportunity to approach it in a kayak or by paddle surfing in an activity with an instructor-guide, who will give you a new  $360^{\circ}$  perspective of the coast and the Montgrí massif. The fierce protection that this area receives mixed with the fresh water from the river Ter bringing an abundance of nutrients, means that a wide variety of animals, algae and plants choose to live in these crystal-clear waters. **9** 

Family ecotourism Coastal and delta landscapes Underwater fauna

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/illes-medes 2

Where L'Estartit. Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.sarfa.es and www.ampsa.org) Duration 2 h 30 min Participants from 6 years of age When from April to November Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

Medaqua +34 972 752 043 www.medaqua.com/en ROWING AND OBSERVING

ECO-KAYAKING IN THE MEDES

Just one mile away from the port of L'Estartit, the Medes Islands Nature Reserve is thought to be the best in Europe. The protection this area receives, along with the nutrients delivered in the fresh water of the river Ter, mean that a great variety of animals, algae and plants make this their home and breeding ground. By taking part in the "Eco-Kayak in the Medes" activity, with the help of a guide you will be able to easily observe close up the fauna and flora of this protected nature reserve. Come and enjoy a rowing adventure around the islets and discover the depths with Neptune grass meadows that are a valuable home to molluscs, corals, crustaceans, gorgonia and more.  $\mathbf{9}$ 

Family ecotourism Underwater fauna Mediterranean flora Coastal and delta landscapes

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/illes-medes





Where L'Estartit. Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.moventis.es and www.ampsa.org) to L'Estartit Duration 4 hours Participants from 10 years of age When July and August Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

#### FROM THE POOL TO THE SEA DIVING BAPTISM

Discover an underwater world in the Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park with El Rei del Mar diving centre. If it's your first time, or you want to repeat this experience, they offer the "Diving Baptism on the Montgrí Coast" activity, in which you'll be taught the basic concepts of diving in a swimming pool before going by boat to enjoy a dive whilst observing the Natural Park's native species such as octopuses, moray eels, lobsters and schools of diverse fish. This is an activity that can be done as a family (with a minimum age of 10 years). Plus, you'll even "graduate" from the activity with a commemorative certificate. •

Underwater fauna Family ecotourism Neptune grass



El Rei del Mar +34 972 751 392 www.elreidelmar.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/illes-medes



Where Cadaqués. Cap de Creus Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.moventis.es) Duration 4 hours Participants open to all When spring, summer and autumn Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

#### KAYAKING AND SNORKELLING **DISCOVER CAP DE CREUS**

"Kayak Snorkel" is a double experience: it combines a kayak route with an snorkelling immersion in the heart of the Costa Brava. With this experience, we will discover typical Mediterranean marine flora and fauna with a guide from the Cap de Creus Natural Park. We will sail through the bay of Llançà in tandem kayaks and disembark in the Cap Ras area for a snorkelling session on Canyelles beach, where we will dive into its rich seabed, which is part of the Natura 2000 Network. This is a uniquelybeautiful underwater landscape in the midst of crystal-clear waters. **Q** 

Coastal and delta landscapes Underwater fauna Mediterranean flora Neptune grass

SK Kayak +34 627 433 332 www.kayakcostabrava.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/cap-creus





Where L'Estartit. Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.moventis.es and www.ampsa.org) Duration 4 hours Participants from 10 years of age When spring, summer and autumn Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

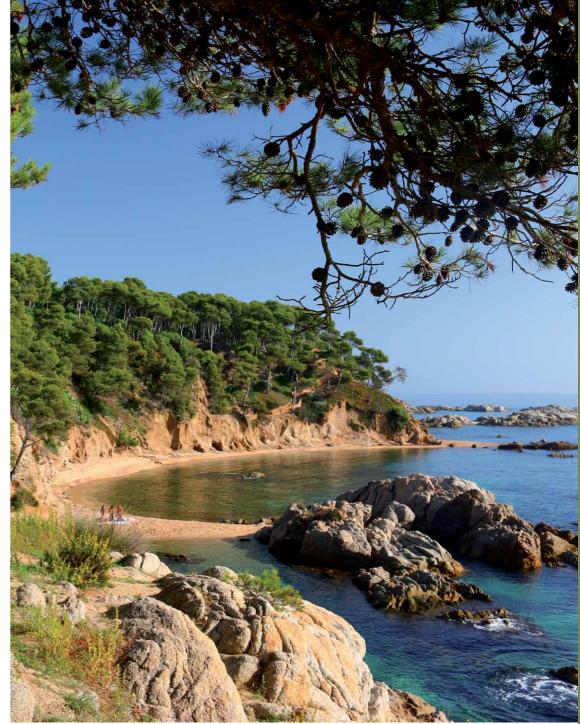


L'Estartit Tourist Office +34 972 751 910 www.visitestartit.com/en COSTA BRAVA BAPTISM UNDERWATER ADVENTURE

The "Immersive Baptism" experience is about discovering the depths of the Costa Brava for the first time from one of its prettiest spots: the Medes Islands and Montgrí. With the guidance of instructors from Aquàtica (www.aquatica-sub.com/en), you will receive some a theoretical introduction in the swimming pool before finishing with an unforgettable underwater "baptism". They will accompany you to discover the best spots in this spectacular hidden habitat with crystal-clear waters, in the special and well-preserved protected space that is the Medes. **Q** 

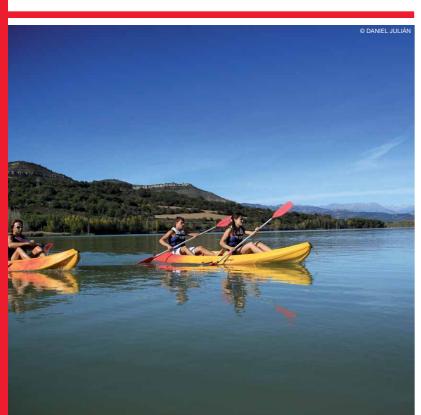
Family ecotourism Underwater fauna Mediterranean flora Coastal and delta landscapes

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/illes-medes © AQUÂTICA



© DANIEL PUNSETI - ARCHIVO CAMI DE RONDA ®



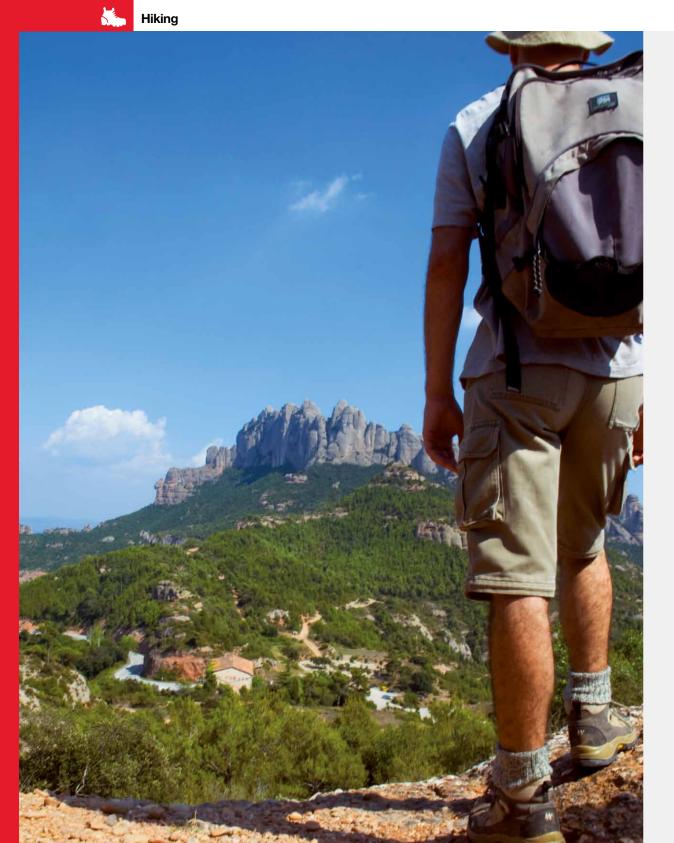








Go on treks **to get to know** in person **the fauna and flora** of valuable natural spaces, **pedal among vineyards** as the landscape of the great region of Cava, El Penedès, unfolds before you, take a "slow travel" route by electric bicycle to see the **ornithological richness** of the Ebro Delta, walk along the Mediterranean coast and discover the most remote **coves** of the **Costa Brava**... Consciously practised **hiking** and **cycle touring** are excellent tools to get in touch with the natural environment, to get to know and feel it first-hand. Several options are available in Catalonia and below are a few examples. **Get moving and immerse yourself in nature. 9** 



# WALKING WITH **AVARENESS**

Interpretive hiking is an excellent way to really get to know the land. It is not only about walking the land, but also about coming into contact with it, understanding it, learning about its orography, its people and history, and above all preserving and respecting it. Catalonia has many natural areas that offer interpretive itineraries and guided excursions, as well as a large network of trails that, with the help of a professional guide, will connect you with nature walks in the area of your choice. Walk with awareness.

PATH AROUND MONTSERRAT MOUNTAIN. © JAVIER MIGUELEZ BESSONS



Hikina

B MADOLIES DE DAS

# HIKING EUROPE

Discovering the different natural areas of Europe is the main objective of the Hiking Europe project, a transnational network of rural routes organised into various itineraries throughout Europe. They are ideal for people who want to escape from the large crowds in tourist areas or in large cities. Enjoy these unique routes in Catalonia and enrich your experiences with other European destinations in this network. To enjoy the different routes offered by Hiking Europe, you only need to put on some mountain boots and be willing to walk unhurriedly among mountains, forests and meadows. The idea is to walk step by step through places that are not part of the most common tourist circuits, beautiful natural areas where you can walk slowly and stress-free to discover nature. For now, the network encompasses routes in four different destinations: Catalonia, Emilia-Romagna (Italy), Dubrovnik-Neretva (Croatia) and Donegal (Ireland).

In Catalonia, for the moment, there are two destinations that are part of this initiative: the El Priorat region and the Pyrenees area. To discover them, it is best to seek the advice of local companies.

In the case of El Priorat, the "Trek & Wine" experience offers you a combination of hiking and wine tourism along a route that covers some of the most beautiful natural areas in the region and visits to several wineries. In the Pyrenees mountains, meanwhile, you can travel along the "El Cinquè Llac" (The Fifth Lake) route, in the region of El Pallars Jussà, a journey that runs through mid-mountain landscapes and small and picturesque villages.



Where La Pobla de Segur. Collegats-Boumort How to get there By bus (www.alsa.com) and the Tren dels Llacs train (www.trendelsllacs.cat/en/index) Duration 5 days Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English, French, German and Russian

#### THE "CINQUÈ LLAC" ROUTE

### AT THE GATEWAY TO THE PYRENEES

The "Tren dels Llacs" train passes four lakes along its route from Lleida to La Pobla de Segur; you'll come across the fifth, Montcortès, at the end of this circular mid-mountain hiking trail. With a total of 102 km divided into five stages, the "Ruta del Cinquè Llac" (Fifth Lake Route) is a self-guided and well-marked route. It passes through a stunning area of the Pyrenees, with a gastronomy based on delicious local products and small rural lodgings that share a common respect for the land, nature and heritage. **9** 

Observing flora and fauna Valleys Peaks Calm waters and reservoirs

To find out more: http://hikingeurope.net/destination/catalonia Pirineu Emoció +34 973 681 518 www.pirineuemocio.com/en

To find out more: www.elcinguellac.com/en



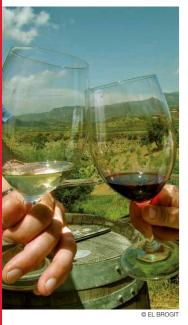


THE 'CINQUÈ LLAC' ROUTE PATHS OF **YESTERYEAR** 

The history of Casa Leonardo dates back to 1913. It is an old village inn now converted into charming rural accommodation, which respects the environment and is adapted for people with reduced mobility. The family that runs it knows the area very well and organises several nature-based activities. Among these, the "Ruta del Cinquè Llac" (Fifth Lake Route), a 102 km circular route. It can be guided or self-guided. •

Observing flora and fauna Valleys Peaks Calm waters and reservoirs

To find out more www.lapobladesegur.cat/en/fer\_visitar/collegats-boumort-2



#### LOSE YOURSELE AMONG THE VINEYARDS **TREK & WINE** PAIRING

The region of El Priorat, birthplace of the designations of origin of the DOQ Priorat and DO Montsant wines, is the ideal place for losing yourself among vineyards and olive and almond groves. "Trek & Wine" invites you to explore its landscapes on foot and at your leisure, and to discover Serra de Montsant Natural Park, the Serra de Llaberia. the cliffs of Siurana or the small town of Porrera. Of course, it also invites you to sample good wine. •

Observing flora and fauna Mediterranean flora Emblematic mountains and geology

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/serra-montsant



Where La Pobla de Segur. Collegats-Boumort How to get there by bus (www.alsa.com) or train (www.trendelsllacs cat/en/index/) **Duration** 7 davs When all year round



Casa Leonardo +34 973 661 787 www.casaleonardo.net/en

Where

Serra de Montsant

How to get there

by train to Falset

from 1 to 8 days

all vear round

EUROPARC

El Broait

+34 689 006 199

www.elbrogit.com

(www.renfe.com/EN/

viaieros/index.html)

Natural Park

Duration

When



Where Amposta. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by train to L'Aldea-Amposta-Tortosa (www.renfe.es) and bus to Amposta (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration free Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English, French and German



Amposta Tourist Office +34 977 703 453 www.turismeamposta.cat/en

# © OFICINA DE TUBISME D'AMPOS



# DISCOVERING THE DELTA

SEA, RIVER AND HORTICULTURE

The Amposta Tourist Office occupies a unique building: the old local slaughterhouse, which was restored and converted into a museum space about the local area. It hosts temporary exhibitions about the history of those who made these riverside wastelands fertile, clearing the plains and slopes of the mountains. They are the creators of a landscape and culture that is recognised as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. To learn more about these sea landscapes and paths between vegetable gardens, rivers and dry lands, the Amposta Tourist Office provides information and materials about the best routes (depending on the group and available times). The most popular are the "Lagoon Route" (26 km) and "Amposta-Casa de Fusta" (27 km), to be covered on foot or by bicycle. •

Migratory birds in wetlands Birdwatching Family ecotourism Marshland

To find out more: www.ebrebiosfera.org/en



Where Sort. El Pallars Sobirà How to get there by bus to Sort (www.alsa.com) or by train to La Pobla de Segur (http://lleidalapobla.fgc.cat/home) Duration 1 or several days Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

#### FEEL THE NATURE IN EL PALLARS SOBIRÀ ACTIVITIES FOR ALL

El Pallars Sobirà has some of the best-kept landscapes of the Catalan Pyrenees. Amongst them is the Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park, which dates from 1955 and is the only national park in Catalonia. Then, we have the Alt Pirineu Natural Park, the largest protected natural area in Catalonia. Both provide maximum protection for the ecosystems and the animals that are found within them. In El Pallars Sobirà Tourist Office, you will find "Activity Proposals for the Whole Year", suitable for all ages, as well as accredited guides. You will discover age-old stories, a rich heritage, a varied wild fauna and magnificent summits and panoramic views. Plus, you will feel like a part of this natural area. 9

High-mountain landscapes Rural world Peaks Valleys Hoofed animals

El Pallars Sobirà Tourism +34 973 621 002 http://turisme.pallarssobira.cat/en To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/aiguestortes http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/alt-pirineu

© OBIOL CLAVERA / TURISME PALLARS SOBIR



Where Sort. Alt Pirineu Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.alsa.com) Duration 3 days Participants open to all (a basic level of fitness is required) When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

### A LANDSCAPE OF CONTRASTS THE MAGIC OF **THE MOUNTAINS**

On this high-mountain crossing, a qualified guide will introduce you to "The Magic of El Pallars", a region with a huge contrast of landscapes: from riverside woodland to alpine meadows and huge peaks. You will come across oak groves and forests of red and black pine trees inhabited by capercaillies, you will discover the villages of the Siarb valley and you will stay in two refuges: one of them in the high mountains and the other in Llagunes. In total, you will journey 44 km covering a height difference of 1,875 m, so you need to be in decent physical condition. •

Observing flora and fauna Peaks Traditional architecture Land caves Alpine flora

**Rutes Pirineus** +34 691 772 966 www.pyreneestrails.com

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/alt-pirineu



Where Solsona. Natura 2000 Parks Network How to get there by bus to Solsona (www.alsa.com) Duration depends on the chosen route Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French TRADITION, CULTURE AND NATURE

# DISCOVER EL SOLSONÈS

This experience will transport us back in time to when we could hear the whirring of the hydraulic mills of the Ora valley, to the salt mines of Cambrils, to the looms in La Vall de Lord or to the sound of children's laughter in the rural school of Castellar de la Ribera. To a time when the 1,000 country houses of El Solsonès were occupied by those who preserved baroque jewels such as the Miracle altarpiece or the Colls altar in Sant Llorenç de Morunys. The "Discover El Solsonès with All the Senses" activity will allow you to experience all this in a tribute to the past and to the products of this area, such as mushrooms, *trumfos*, salt, truffle, honey, *ous d'euga* (pumpkins known as "mare's eggs"), and more. **9** 

Rural world Traditional architecture Folk traditions Local products Farming landscape

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/pedraforca



Where

La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park How to get there by bus to Olot (www.teisa-bus.com) Duration 3 days Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



La Garrotxa Tourism +34 972 271 600 http://en.turismegarrotxa.com/home https://trade.turismegarrotxa.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/garrotxa

# NORDIC WALK BETWEEN VOLCANOES

"Nordic Walking and Natural Wellness in La Garrotxa" is a three-day experience that combines different wellbeing activities in an ideal location: La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park. Accompanied by a specialised instructor, we will start the activities with Nordic walking, which requires no physical preparation. We will visit La Fageda d'en Jordà, a unique beech forest, and the Croscat and Santa Margarida volcanoes. In the afternoon, a therapeutic massage will relax us and provide inner peace and energetic balance. After a night's rest in a rural house, there is a morning yoga session. In addition, we will be able to complete the day with a natural and healthy cooking workshop. **9** 

Unique forests Volcanoes Observing flora and fauna Beech forests

**Consell Comarcal** 

+ 34 973 482 310

http://turismesolsones.com/en

del Solsonès



© COBBOLS DE LUUN

Hikina



FL TORB REFUGES TOUCHING THE SKY

"El Torb Refuges", the great crossing on foot between Núria and Canigó, is a high-mountain itinerary that links the two most emblematic places of the eastern Pyrenees with the two summits that crown them: Puigmal (2,910 m) and Pica del Canigó (2,784 m). Between the two, we find valleys and crests of great hiking tradition, such as Coma de Vaca valley, the Ulldeter cirque, the Rojà fissures, the Pla Guillem, the Marialles valley, Mentet or Carançà. •

Alpine flora Valleys Peaks Land caves

To find out more: www.refugisdeltorb.com/inici/index.php?lg=en



Where from Vall de Núria valley to the Canigó mountain. Capcaleres del Ter i el Freser Natural Park How to get there by train to Ribes de Freser (www.renfe.es) and, from there, by rack train (www.fgc.cat/en/) **Duration** from 5 to 7 days When summer

> A Pas d'Isard +34 628 088 112 www.apasdisard.com/en



© DANIEL PUNSETI / CAMI DE RONDA @

#### COASTAL PATHS **UP AND DOWN BY THE SEA**

The "Costa Brava Crossing on Foot" follows the old Costa Brava coastline path, known as the Camí de Ronda ®. The route intertwines the different beaches, coves and towns on the coast while crossing several protected natural areas. This route runs alongside the sea shore, along paths and trails only suitable for walking, with unevenness and continuous ups and downs, some of which are guite tricky. •

Coastal and delta landscapes Mediterranean flora Traditional architecture

To find out more: https://en.costabrava.org

® Camí de Ronda +34 972 109 358 www.camideronda.com/en.html

Where Costa Brava

Duration

When

How to get there

by bus to Sant Feliu

(www.moventis.es)

from 1 to 8 days

all year round

de Guíxols or Palamós

#### A ROMANESOUE WALK **A MUSEUM AMONGST NATURE**

The "Camí Oliba" is a long trail (GR 151) that connects some of the most emblematic works of Catalan Romanesque art. It runs between Montserrat and the Pyrenees, and passes through some of the most historic towns and villages in old Catalonia: Manresa, Vic, Ripoll and Sant Joan de les Abadesses. It crosses the inland and mid-mountain landscape of El Bages, El Moianès, Osona and El Ripollès regions in an undemanding itinerary surrounded by added-value tourist services. •

Rural world Traditional architecture

To find out more: https://parcs.diba.cat/es/web/SantLlorenc



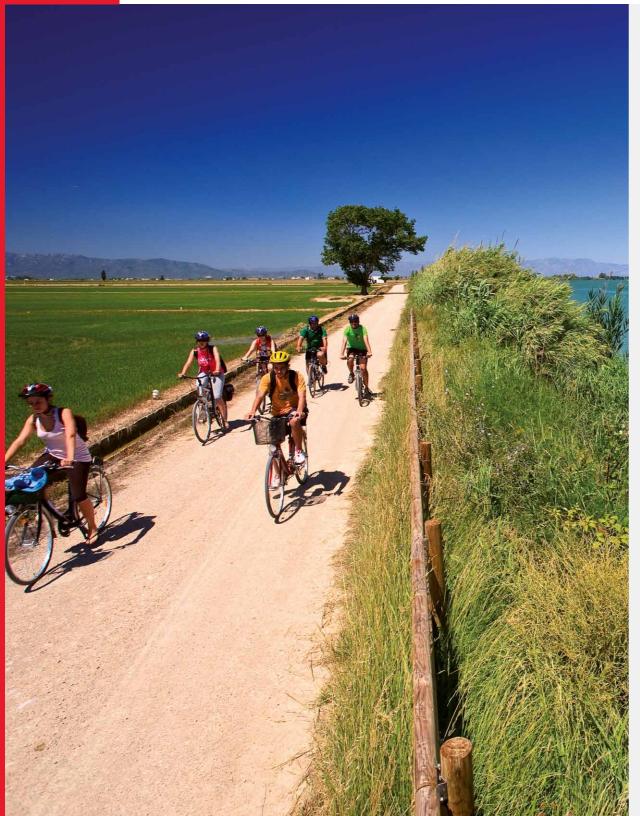
Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac Natural Park How to get there by train (www.renfe.es) or by bus (www.monbus.es/en) Duration fifteen 1-dav stages When all year round

Camí Oliba +34 938 851 715 www.camioliba.cat/en

#### 100 / Be active in nature







# THE COUNTRYSIDE ON **TWO WHEELS**

The secret to exploring nature without polluting or damaging it is to use non-polluting transport. Choosing a bicycle is a great way to travel around the countryside in silence and to do it calmly on secondary roads and traditional pathways. The range of cycling routes on offer in Catalonia is enormous. Discover the landscape in a fun, easy and, above all, sustainable way.

THE BICYCLE, IDEAL TRANSPORT FOR DISCOVERING THE LANDSCAPE. © MARIANO CEROLI A





Where El Poblenou del Delta. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by train to L'Aldea-Amposta-Tortosa (www.renfe.es) and from there by bus (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration 1 day Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

**GREEN ACCOMMODATION** 

# **PEDALLING IN** THE RICE FIELD

Do you want to discover all the richness of the Ebro Delta Natural Park on two wheels? The Hotel l'Algadir del Delta offers you a "Cycle Touring Escapade" to get to know the secrets of this park. One of these escapades is the "Lagoon Route", in which you will become familiar with the flora and fauna characteristic of this area rich in biodiversity, especially ornithology. And you'll do this on a completely sustainable mode of transport: the bicycle. You will be provided with a map with the chosen route or you can benefit from a local guide. •

Birdwatching Migratory birds in wetlands Family ecotourism Local products



Hotel l'Algadir del Delta + 34 977 744 559 www.turismeamposta.cat/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre @ LTUIS CABBO



Where Deltebre. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.hife.es/en-GB). Transfers and bicycles to your doorstep Duration 4 h or all day Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English



Deltacleta +34 648 725 862 +34 606 627 457 www.deltacleta.cat/en

### THE EBRO DELTA ON AN ELECTRIC BICYCLE 'SLOW TRAVEL' **ALONG THE** RIVERSIDE

The best way to travel around a rich and unique natural space like the Ebro Delta is to do it in a sustainable way. Why not choose an electric bike? The "Discover the Ebro Delta on an Electric Bicycle" experience allows you to choose from a variety of cycle touring routes; ride along the shores of La Tancada and L'Encanyissada, the two largest lagoons and reserves for waterfowl and waders; discover the mouth of the Ebro and its wild beaches and dunes; have a look at mussel farming... If you would rather do the route independently, you will be given a self-guiding GPS. •

Marshland Birdwatching Migratory birds in wetlands Coastal and delta landscapes Observing flora and fauna

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre

00





Where Vilafranca del Penedès. Natura 2000 Network How to get there pick-up from the centre of Barcelona and by train to Vilafranca del Penedès Duration 7 hours Participants open to all When all year round Languages Spanish, English and French

Penedès Ecotours +34 622 619 870 www.penedesecotours.com/en

### ALL THE FLAVOUR OF EL PENEDÈS AN INTIMATE JOURNEY AMONGST VINEYARDS

Near to Barcelona, El Penedès is one of the principal wine-growing regions in Spain and is famous for its production of cava, Catalonia's most emblematic drink. If you would like to discover this unique landscape and its traditional values, sign up for a "Bicycle ride (normal or electric) around the vineyards with a tasting of organic wines and cavas". This trip brings you close to the land and the winegrower will share their knowledge of local culture with you. You will also visit a family-run winery and taste some of the best wines in order to discover the true taste of this area. On top of all that, you will be able to enjoy an impressive view of the Montserrat massif, a geological jewel. **Q** 

Farming landscape Emblematic mountains and geology Rural world Traditional trades Local products Traditional architecture

To find out more: www.turismevilafranca.com/en



 Where Olot.

 La Garrotxa

 Volcanic Zone

 Natural Park

 How to get there

 by bus

 (www.teisa-bus.com)

 Duration 6 days

 Participants open to all

 When all year round

 Languages Catalan,

 Spanish, English,

 French and Italian

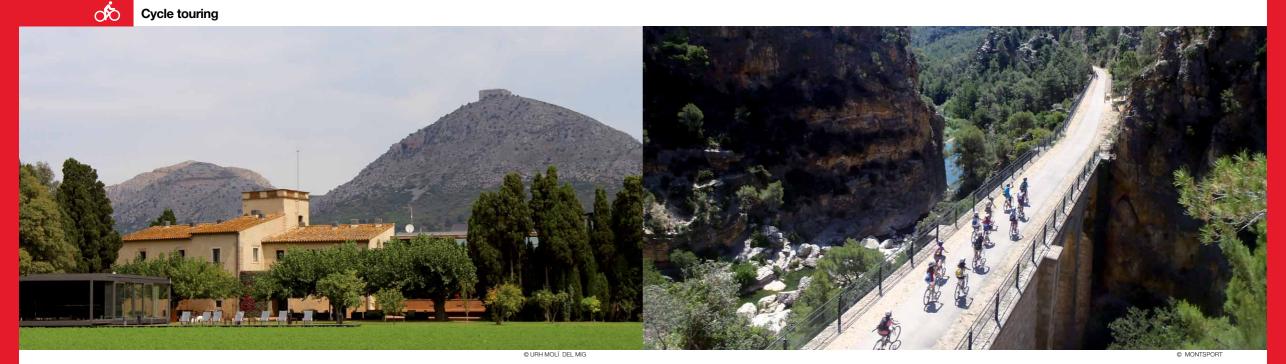
# PEDAL AS A FAMILY GREENWAYS FOR ALL

La Garrotxa is one of the best places for cycling in Catalonia. Within this territory, the "Greenways of Girona: a Family Trip" activity offered by CicloTurisme i Medi Ambient (www.cicloturisme.com), is designed in short stages so that it is an ideal trip even with small children. The itinerary follows the old route of the narrow-gauge train and stands out for its variety of landscapes and ecological and heritage interest. You will see beech forests and volcanic areas, and you will walk through interior plains that are characterised by farming and rural landscape until reaching the Costa Brava. It includes a careful selection of family hotels for overnight stays. **Q** 

Traditional architecture Family ecotourism Rural world Unique forests

CicloTurisme i Medi Ambient +34 972 221 047 www.cicloturisme.com

To find out more: www.viesverdes.cat



Contraction of the second seco

Where Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.sarfa.es or www.ampsa.org) to Torroella de Montgrí Duration 1 h 30 min Participants open to all When from March to November Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



L'Empordà is almost completely flat and ideal for easy cycling trips. That's why they call it "La Plana de l'Empordà" (Plain of L'Empordà). The activity offered by the Hotel URH Molí de Mig to its guests is "Discovering L'Empordà by Bicycle". Riding bicycles rented from the hotel, you can explore this region so characteristic of northern Catalonia with rivers, mountains, valleys, plains and the coast, and with the profile of the Medes Islands always on the horizon. With this route, you are provided with maps that inform you of the different routes to follow by bicycle. Highly recommended: discover the plain of L'Empordà until you reach the bank of the river Ter. **9** 

Farming landscape Rural world Family ecotourism Traditional architecture

2

Where Horta de Sant Joan. Els Ports Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration between 2 and 6 hours Participants open to all When spring and autumn Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

# ALONG THE ELS PORTS GREENWAY **ONA RAILWAY**

The "Pedalling along the Greenway" experience will introduce you to the Els Ports landscape, the rugged natural frontier of southern Catalonia. On this cycle path, which follows the old Val de Zafán railway line, you can pedal between 20 and 50 km over bridges, through tunnels and past waterfalls... All of this in surroundings which are purely Mediterranean with holm oak and white pine forests, vines and almond, olive and orange trees. The track follows two rivers, Canaletes and the Ebro, and you will end up back where you started: Horta de Sant Joan. ♥

Rivers and waterfalls Mediterranean flora Valleys Wild goats Observing flora and fauna

URH Hotel Molí del Mig +34 972 755 396 www.molidelmig.com/en

EUROPARC Sustainable Touris in Protected Areas

> To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/illes-medes

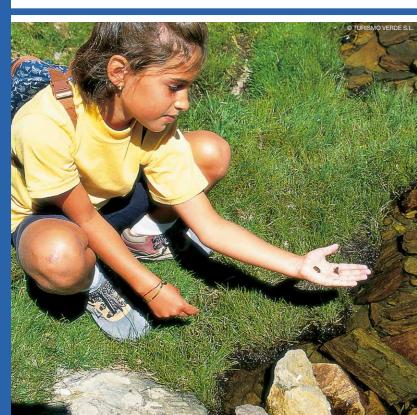
Montsport +34 977 435 074 www.montsport.es/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/ports

108 / Be active in nature



# **FAMILY** ECOTOURISM











© MARIANO CEBOLLA

Going on a **relaxing bike ride or on horseback**, seeing first-hand **how a vegetable garden is cultivated**, visiting a natural park... Practising **family ecotourism** is the perfect alternative **to discover nature** in a different way **together**. You will discover different landscapes and habitats, fauna and the flora, while the little ones will learn to care about their surroundings and develop a desire to understand it, **respect the environment** and **be responsible**. Catalonia is a great place to practise family ecotourism. The following pages offer some **interesting proposals** which you can sign up, but there are lots more. **Don't think twice and find the perfect one for you. 9** 

112 / Family ecotourism



23

Where Deltebre. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration 2 h 30 min Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English A COMBINED EXPERIENCE

# THE DELTA BY LAND AND RIVER

The Ebro Delta offers many possibilities to discover its ecotourism resources in depth. Birdwatching, a rich variety of landscapes, astronomy, sailing, scuba diving, cycling... and much more. In the "Combined Cycling and Kayaking on the River Ebro" experience, you will carry out a circular route, starting off pedalling from the Deltebre river walk, then crossing the photogenic Passador bridge before continuing on to Balada. From there, you will kayak down the river until reaching the starting point again. **9** 

Cycle touring Migratory birds in wetlands Rural world



Camping Eucaliptus +34 977 479 046 www.campingeucaliptus.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre © CAMPING EICALIPTUS



Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by train to L'Aldea-Amposta-Tortosa (www.renfe.es) and by bus to Amposta (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration 3 hours Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English, French and German

#### SHARING TRADITION RICE WITH THE FAMILY

"Family Experience" is an educational and fun activity based around teaching the importance of conserving traditions and ecosystems, as this ensures a more sustainable future. It takes place over a whole morning (from 10 am to 1 pm): in the first part, you will experience a series of traditional activities linked to the art of traditional rice cultivation and obtaining resources. In the second part, you will go on a tour with vehicles to get to know the different ecosystems of the Ebro Delta and its great ornithological richness.  $\mathbf{Q}$ 

Traditional trades Farming landscape Rural world



Delta Polet +34 677 456 224 www.deltapolet.com

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre





Where Deltebre. Ebro Delta Natural Park How to get there by train to L'Aldea-Amposta-Tortosa (www.renfe.es) or bus (www.hife.es/en-GB) Duration 4 h or 1 day Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

### TO THE MOUTH ON AN ELECTRIC BICYCLE RIVER AND SEA LANDSCAPES

The Ebro Delta is one of the most emblematic and biodiverse natural areas in Catalonia. The route's name is self-explanatory: "The Mouth of the Ebro on an Electric Bicycle". In this unique environment and surrounded by rice fields, we will cover an easy route on a comfortable cycle path to the mouth of the Ebro at the end of its 910 km total journey. Once there, we will feel the fusion between the river and the sea, and we will be surrounded by wild beaches and dunes full of Mediterranean vegetation. **9** 

Migratory birds in wetlands Coastal and delta landscapes Cycle touring Mediterranean flora

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/delta-ebre 2

Where Serra de Montsant Natural Park How to get there by bus to Cornudella de Montsant (www.empresaplana.cat) Duration 2 hours Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

EUROPARC Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

Tourist Office +34 977 831 023 www.turismepriorat.org/en IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF OUR GRANDPARENTS TENDING TO THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

Living in the countryside just like when our grandparents or greatgrandparents did is an experience that takes us back to the smell of freshly baked bread, growing tomatoes in the garden or feeding the farm animals. Everything is just like how it was before, when families in the countryside combined tending to the family garden with breeding some animals. In the "Ecological Garden and Small Farm Animals" activity, organised by La Mandorla, you will discover how animals benefit from the garden and vice versa, in a natural cycle that leads to greater food self-sufficiency and a greater connection with the countryside and all its ancestral culture. **9** 

Local products Rural Traditional trades

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/serra-montsant

EUROPARC

+34 648 725 862

+34 606 627 457

www.deltacleta.cat/en

Deltacleta





Where Prades. Muntanyes de Prades How to get there by train to Les Borges del Camp (www.renfe.es) and by bus to Prades (www.empresaplana.cat) Duration 2 hours Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

THE ANIMAL WORLD

### FARM **EXPERIENCE**

The Xalet de Prades is home to an animal farm that will delight the smallest visitors. The question "What came first, the chicken or the egg?" serves as a presentation in this activity with the animals of this farm: birds, rabbits, goats and ponies. This experience is a way for the little ones to discover their habitats and customs. Then they will feed them, and finally, they will collect the eggs from the henhouse. Parents accompany them in their discovery and enjoy with them the chance to be with these animals up close. •

Rural world Traditional trades Local products Farming landscape

Xalet de Prades +34 977 868 371 www.xaletdeprades.com/?lang=en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/poblet



Where Montseny Natural Park How to get there by train (www.fgc.cat/en) and bus (www.sagales.com/en) Duration 1 day Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English



Association of Tourism Businesses of Montseny +34 938 482 008 www.turisme-montseny.com/en

To find out more: https://parcs.diba.cat/es/web/montseny

### FOOD AND ECOLOGICAL TRADITION **ECO-FARM IN** MONTSENY

With "Get to Know the Most Ecological Montseny", the Association of Tourism Businesses of Montseny (AETM) offers the opportunity to spend a morning on an eco-farm. There, we will discover all its secrets thanks to the expertise of the Salgot family, who manage an organic farm in the Montseny Natural Park where they live and raise organic pigs. We will then visit the area of La Calma, where we will enjoy a meal made with organic products in a restaurant that has the Slow Food label. This movement emerged in 1989 to recover local food traditions and revalue local production, as well as its taste and origins. The stay ends in rural accommodation. •

Observing flora and fauna Rural world Traditional trades Local products





Where Montseny Natural Park How to get there by train (www.fgc.cat/en) and bus (www.sagales.com/en) Duration 2 days Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish and English

#### TREASURE HUNT IN MONTSENY

# TREASURE TO DISCOVER

Participants who wish to participate in the activity "Discovering the Treasures of Montseny" will have to pass a series of tests during a trip around the forest. Using all the senses, we will search for treasures hidden in the exceptional area of this natural park and Biosphere Reserve. We will do this in a pleasant and fun way, respecting the natural and human environment. To recharge afterwards, this experience includes a meal in a local restaurant in Montseny before spending the night in a tourist establishment located right in the heart of nature. **Q** 

Observing flora and fauna Mushrooms Butterflies Historic trees Beech forests



Association of Tourism Businesses of Montseny +34 938 482 008 www.turisme-montseny.com/en

To find out more: https://parcs.diba.cat/es/web/montseny



Where Prullans. Cadi-Moixeró Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.alsa.com) Duration 2 h 45 min Participants open to all When Saturdays from May to October Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

#### A PERMACULTURE ECOSYSTEM AN ECOLOGICAL ALTERNATIVE

Cerdanya EcoResort is an ideal base camp for families, hiking enthusiasts or cycle tourists. You can choose between different types of accommodation according to your interests: from family rooms and suites at the Hotel Muntanya & Spa, to the practical bungalows in La Cerdanya camping park or the Ca L'Aurèn aparthotel. Among the multiple ecotourism activities, in the Verger Cerdà vegetable garden you will find an ecosystem created using permaculture. It is a completely ecological vegetable garden, which also ensures that the surrounding area is sustainable. You will visit the greenhouse, the apple orchard and the vegetable and plant patches, and you'll learn which flowers and plants can be used in your cooking. You will also get to know the animals that live there. **9** 

Rural world Farming landscape Local products High-mountain landscapes

Cerdanya EcoResort +34 973 510 260 www.cerdanyaecoresort.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/cadi





Where Colomers. Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park How to get there by train to Girona (www.renfe.es) and bus to Colomers (www.ampsa.org) Duration 2 hours Participants open to all When spring, summer and autumn Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



# THE CALM OF THE RIVER

If you want to walk in the footsteps of those who discovered the great American rivers in the 18th century, we have what you are looking for: "Canadian Canoeing down the River Ter (from Sobrànigues to Colomers)", over a distance of 6.3 km. This descent by Canadian canoe is carried out on a very calm route of great beauty. It is the stretch where the water is quieter thanks to a 16th century lock located in Colomers. This is a different way to enjoy the flora and fauna in a captivating place. Whether in a couple or in a group, it is definitely worth it to do this descent and enjoy all its charms. It can also be done by kayak. **Q** 

Mediterranean flora Migratory birds in wetlands Calm waters and reservoirs



Kayak del Ter +34 662 159 469 www.kayakdelter.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/illes-medes © KAYAK DEL TER



Where L'Estartit. Montgrí, Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park How to get there by bus (www.sarfa.es and www.ampsa.org) Duration 3 hours Participants open to all, 6 years and over When from April to October Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French

# ECO-SNORKEL IN THE MEDES AN UNDERWATER PARADISE

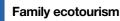
In the activity "Eco-Snorkel in the Medes Islands", you will enjoy a 50-minute snorkelling session with qualified guides. They will help you discover the best spots in this spectacular habitat hidden beneath the surface of the water. Unspoilt nature in a prime location made up of wild and attractive lifeforms such as Neptune grass meadows, marine "trottoirs", a multitude of fish, crustaceans, and more. This activity will also give you the chance to enjoy a boat ride around the islets of the archipelago. If there is time, you can take a quick dip without a wetsuit and then go back to L'Estartit. **9** 

Neptune grass Whales & dolphins Underwater fauna



Medaqua +34 972 752 043 www.medaqua.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/illes-medes







© TURISME GARROTX

FARM ANIMALS EXPERIENCE AND LEARN

The "Visit to Farms" activity is ideal for the whole family and is a perfect opportunity to discover La Garrotxa's local gourmet food products. With this visit to their producers, you will be able to experience, feel, learn and understand first hand what the day-to-day life of a farmer is like, feed the animals, participate in different activities and workshops, and taste their products. **9** 

VolcanoesFarming landscapeLocal productsRural worldTraditional trades



Where La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park How to get there by bus to Olot (www.teisa-bus.com) Duration 2 hours When all year round



La Garrotxa Tourism +34 972 271 600 http://en.turismegarrotxa.com/home https://trade.turismegarrotxa.com/en



Where Pals. Empordanet How to get there by bus (www.sarfa.es) to Pals Duration 1 h 30 min Participants open to all When all year round Languages Catalan, Spanish, English and French



"Rice Route by Train" is the star activity of El Xiulet de Pals. It offers visitors the chance to get to know the world of rice cultivation, from sowing to harvesting. This route is done comfortably by train, starting in the old quarter of Pals where the train stop is located. The journey to the mill takes about 20 minutes and passes through the Pals farming area and typical Baix Empordà croplands. The train stops at the Molí de Pals, where you will learn about the history of the building and also the processing of rice as it has been carried out for more than a century. This is a great way to learn the secrets of rice and the processes involved from sowing until it reaches our table. **Q** 

Observing flora and fauna Traditional trades



El Xiulet de Pals +34 628 597 972 www.elxiuletdepals.com/en

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/illes-medes



#### VISITING PRODUCERS A JOURNEY TO THE ORIGINS

"Benvinguts a Pagès" rediscovers the origins of different foods through visits to orchards, wine estates and livestock farms, flocks, ports... and through meeting the people who work there. Over the course of a weekend, estates and country houses across Catalonia invite you to discover, taste and purchase their products. Over 900 producers participate, and you will also find accommodation with discounts and offers for the weekend, as well as restaurants with special menus. **9** 

Farming landscape Local products

To find out more: www.gastroteca.cat/en

To find out more:

http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/garrotxa



all of Catalonia <u>Duration</u> one weekend <u>When</u> June <u>Participants</u> open to all



Benvinguts a Pagès http://benvingutsapages.cat/en

# © CATALONIA: 12 ECO-ROUTES THAT ARE CLOSER THAN YOU THINK



© ESTANY D'IVARS VILA-SANA



#### 1 ESTANY D'IVARS I VILA-SANA (TERRES DE LLEIDA)

#### AN OASIS OF BIODIVERSITY

Only an hour and a half from Barcelona is the Estany d'Ivars i Vila-sana, the largest lagoon in Catalonia's interior. It is an area of great biological diversity.

#### Distance from Barcelona



This large lagoon came about naturally in this part of the Pla d'Urgell region as a result of the construction of the Urgell canal in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. It was dried in 1951 and recovery began in 2005. Its more than 126 hectares cover an area of great biological diversity, especially when it comes to birds, of which more than 200 species can be observed throughout the year.

The lagoon can be visited at your leisure or through guided tours. In both cases, it is possible to follow the different itineraries or go all the way around the lake (about 6 km) on foot, by bicycle or even on horseback. Along the route you can find viewpoints, observatories, jetties, interpretation panels, picnic areas and information points. When it was recovered, islands with different shapes, slopes, heights and locations were created in the lagoon, and these are ideal for fauna, especially birds, as they have resting, feeding and reproduction points.

In addition to birds, the fauna of this natural space includes otters, pond turtles, small mammals such as the southwestern water vole or the lesser white-toothed shrew, as well as ten different species of bats. Numerous ecotourism activities are organised throughout the year, from night walks to bird banding. **9** 

To find out more: http://estanyivarsvilasana.cat





### 24 HOURS

55 KM

ľ

#### 2 BY BICYCLE IN EL PENEDÈS (PAISATGES BARCELONA) CYCLE TOURING AMONGST VINEYARDS

Few areas embody the close relationship between people and the land as well as El Penedès, one of the main wine-growing regions. This route encourages you to get to know its landscape and culture by bicycle.

There are many routes to cycle through the vineyards of El Penedès, a region famous for its cava, Catalonia's most emblematic drink. The outings are designed for mountain biking enthusiasts as well as for families or groups who prefer more accessible routes that can be covered on normal or electric bikes.

All of them allow visitors to discover the peculiar landscape of El Penedès, as well as the secrets of vine culture alongside winemakers. In addition, you can visit wineries where the whole process of cava and wine elaboration is explained, and taste the different varieties. Some of these routes also take us to small wineries that produce ecological wines. The more family-friendly options include slow and calm trips. The goal is to enjoy the landscape of vineyards and fields, and to admire the dry stone constructions, country houses in the area and other buildings such as castles, hermitages, the region's villages and, of course, wineries. They are usually a few kilometres long and last one day.

In the case of the most demanding routes, ecotourism, culture, gastronomy, traditions, wine and sport are combined in trips passing through mountains, forests, paths and vineyards. These outings usually last more than two days. **•** 

To find out more: www.turismevilafranca.com/en



# SANT LLORENÇ DEL MUNT I L'OBAC (COSTA BARCELONA) DISCOVERING TWO VERY LITTLE-KNOWN VALLEYS

Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac is a natural park of great landscape, biological and cultural interest in a very urbanised area. La Vall d'Horta and La Vall de Mur are two of the secrets it hides.

A landscape of crags and reddish monoliths that contrast with the intense green forests make up the landscape of Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac Natural Park, one of the most unique in Catalonia and located less than an hour from Barcelona. Of great ecological and cultural value, this route allows you to discover two of the park's valleys, Horta and Mur, both located at the headwaters of the river Ripoll and at the foot of the majestic La Mola massif.

La Vall d'Horta surprises with its special beauty and tranquillity. The whole valley is crossed by a stream that has its source in the Font del Llor, and it descends gently between crops and numerous country houses. The route ends in the majestic Marguet de les Rogues, a spectacular modernist building that stands out for its exceptional location between the slopes of Montcau, surrounded by thick vegetation.

There are routes guided by experts to discover the valley's fauna and detect traces of species such as genets, martens, squirrels, foxes or wild boars. Even more unexplored is La Vall de Mur, where the El Dalmau estate stands out. It is of great ecological, historical, landscape and heritage value and is also known for its monumental pines. The symbol of the park is the Pi de les Quatre Besses, a tree more than 25 metres high that has survived fires and wars. It is the only historic tree in the entire park and has four branches with a perimeter of almost 5 m. **9** 

To find out more: https://parcs.diba.cat/es/web/santllorenc





# LA CROSA VOLCANO (COSTA BRAVA) CROSSING THE LARGEST CRATER

Despite its enormous dimensions, good state of preservation and easy access, La Crosa volcano is one of the most unexplored in Catalonia. Different itineraries invite you to discover this natural jewel.

#### 95 KM

24 HOURS



La Crosa volcano is located in the regions of La Selva and El Gironès. It is part of the Catalan volcanic field, in which the best known examples are the famous volcanoes of La Garrotxa.

With a diameter of 1,250 metres, La Crosa is thought to be one of the largest volcances on the Iberian Peninsula. In fact, its projection area covers about 5 km. It is not known exactly how long ago it erupted, but its good state of preservation suggests that volcanic activity occurred relatively recently, more so than at the quaternary volcances of La Garrotxa.

In the interior of the great crater is a second, smaller volcano, which came about during a calmer final stage that also saw the emission of a discrete lava flow.

Despite the small size of the area, there is a mosaic of different conditions and habitats, encouraging a remarkable variety of wildlife to settle there.

You can take several routes ranging from 2.7 km with flat stretches to others with a certain slope, and you can also opt to walk around the entire crater, covering about 6 km across forests, meadows and very relaxing landscapes. In both cases, we will be able to approach its geology from a didactic perspective. **Q** 

To find out more: www.turismegirones.cat/en



### **SEABEDS OF SOUTHERN CATALONIA**

An ideal activity to do with family or friends is to discover the seabed of the wild south coast of L'Ametlla de Mar, on the south coast of Tarragona. A paradise at the entry point to the Ebro Delta.



The coast of Tarragona is home to a marine paradise in L'Ametlla de Mar, just before reaching the Ebro Delta. There are 16 kilometres of beautiful coastline with 30 coves and beaches with crystal-clear waters, surrounded by pine trees and wild nature. A *camí de ronda* (coast path) connects this town with L'Ampolla and allows you to travel this part of the Catalan coast and bathe in paradisiacal places.

Snorkelling allows you to discover the marvellous seabed of L'Ametlla's coast, made up of large Neptune grass meadows that in turn are home to a rich variety of fauna from fish to invertebrates. Alongside an expert who will guide us through the best diving areas in an activity designed for all audiences, we will discover the best places to dive whilst taking advantage of this area's clear Mediterranean waters. This is an activity that can also be combined with pleasant kayaking trips that will allow us to enter the most hidden coves and observe the beautiful cliffs that run along the coast. **9** 

To find out more: www.ametllamar.cat/turisme/en/home





#### <sup>(6)</sup> THE L'ESPLUGA DE FRANCOLÍ CAVES (COSTA DAURADA) CAVING FOR BEGINNERS

This is an experience to enter the fascinating world of geology and speleology (caving) with expert guides in the caves of L'Espluga de Francolí, thought to be one of the most expansive in the world.



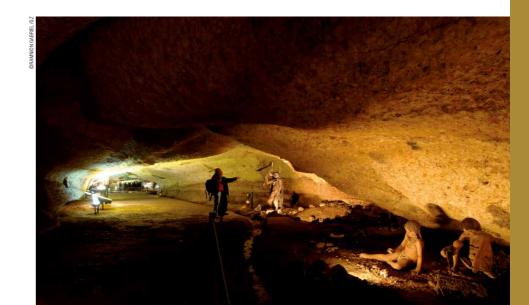
One of the longest visitable caves in the world is in L'Espluga de Francolí, which is located in the region of Conca de Barberà (Tarragona). The Font Major Cave Museum, which covers a significant area of the town centre, is 3,600 metres long and hides a whole world of underground rocks, conglomerates and cavities that were inhabited by humans in different eras.

The speleological expeditions that studied this spectacular cavity from 1956 onwards concluded that it could be considered the seventh longest cave in the world due to its dimensions. Archaeological finds have certified human presence since the Middle Palaeolithic Period 40,000 years ago. to explaining the traces left by humans from prehistoric times to the present day, as well as the geological formation of the cavity. The guided tour is accompanied by audiovisuals, graphics, drawings and representations of prehistoric habitats with life-size figures.

For the most daring visitors, the caves of L'Espluga offer an additional activity: going up the underground river equipped with a wetsuit, helmet and light alongside specialised guides. This experience allows visitors to discover the geological formation, wells, filtering process, water runoff, and more. **9** 

Inside, there is a museum dedicated

To find out more: www.covesdelespluga.info





#### **7** IN THE SERRA DE L'ALBERA (COSTA BRAVA) **THE SECRET LIFE OF TURTLES**

The Albera Turtle Breeding Centre, in the mountains of L'Alt Empordà, allows visitors to observe the efforts to recover endangered species and also find out about their habitats and behaviour.



Investigating, protecting, teaching and promoting are the hallmarks of the Albera Turtle Breeding Centre, which in 1994 opened its doors to the public to reveal the work being done to recover various species of turtles, some of which are seriously endangered. In addition to seeking involvement and awareness from visitors, this ecotourism experience allows us to observe and get to know the habitat and behaviour of these curious animals. The Centre is located in the foothills of the Albera mountain range, a massif that stretches from the last buttresses of the Pyrenees to the Mediterranean Sea.

The aim is the captive breeding of the Hermann's tortoise (*Testudo hermanni*), of which the last natural population on the Peninsula is found in the Albera mountain range, and the European pond turtle (*Emys orbicularis*), so they can be recovered and later released into their natural habitats.

Visitors can observe the Hermann's tortoise in a recreation of its natural habitat and within its geographical distribution area. In addition, you can see the other two species of water turtles native to Catalonia and more than 20 different species from both the Mediterranean basin and the rest of the world. The various aspects of their biology and ecology are explained, and the natural processes of hatching, births and treatment of offspring can be observed. **9** 

To find out more: http://tortugues.cat





48 HOURS

140 KM

Ň

# CADÍ-MOIXERÓ NATURAL PARK (PIRINEUS) A MAJESTIC MASSIF AT THE FOOT OF THE PYRENEES

A nature itinerary presided over by an iconic mountain: the Pedraforca in the Cadí-Moixeró Natural Park. This area of great botanical richness allows us to get to know the medicinal plants and the wise *trementinaires*.

The Cadí mountain range is an impressive mountain formation at the gateway to the Catalan Pyrenees, located just two hours from Barcelona. In addition to a great biodiversity, with more than a thousand catalogued botanical species, it houses a rich variety of fauna in which chamois, deer and roe deer stand out, as well as places of great beauty such as the majestic Pedraforca massif. This is a mountain especially striking for its U-shaped profile, a peculiarity that gives it its name, and it has become one of the symbols of hiking in Catalonia.

There are countless routes that allow you to delve into and discover the forests, meadows, rivers, valleys and hills of this natural area that forms an impressive barrier - with altitudes of over 2,500 metres - and that separates the Segre valley from the headwaters of the Llobregat river.

One of the park's most popular routes allows visitors to get to know its great botanical wealth and the legacy of human presence there. In the Mola valley, you can follow some of the paths used in the 19th and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries by *trementinaires*, women who collected herbs and plants with healing properties that they then sold throughout Catalonia from village to village, a task that required them to be away from home for a few days to several months at a time. A museum pays tribute to them in the town of Tuixent. **9** 

To find out more: http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/cadi



# SEBES NATURE RESERVE (TERRES DE L'EBRE) A WONDERFUL ORNITHOLOGICAL DISCOVERY

In its long journey, the river Ebro leaves behind unique natural treasures. One of the most unknown is the Sebes Nature Reserve and the Flix river bend, a beautiful ecosystem of riverside woodland and an ornithological observatory.

A labyrinth of wooden footbridges delves into the riverside woodland in Flix (Tarragona), until reaching the observatories where we can wait for birds such as the kingfisher to appear, as this reserve is one the best places in Catalonia to admire this bird. Among the diversity of species that can be found, particularly noteworthy is the presence of the otter, the Spanish pond turtle, the grey heron and, since 2001, the stork. As for vegetation, poplars, willows and black poplars are most common.

The best time to visit the Sebes Nature Reserve and the Flix river bend is in autumn and spring, when the weather conditions are most favourable for the presence of fauna, especially birds that come to breed or are in full migration. One of the curiosities of this natural space is that you can also see horses grazing, since they were brought over from the French region of the Camargue. They are animals accustomed to grazing near rivers in wetlands and floodable areas, and they were introduced in 2001 to control the growth of grassland.

The visit can be self-guided - taking advantage of the numerous self-guided itineraries with information panels, footbridges and observatories - or guided. The Mas del Director, which functions as a visitor reception centre, is open almost all year round, and there you can get detailed and up-to-date information on everything you can see during your visit. **9** 

To find out more: www.reservanaturalsebes.org





# EBRO DELTA (TERRES DE L'EBRE) VISITING AN INTERACTIVE RICE PADDY

Birdwatching is one of the great attractions of visiting the Ebro Delta. However, the beauty and attraction of this natural space also have a lot to do with the emblematic rice fields that cover its surface.

175 КМ Ц Many visitors to the Delta are eager to enter and explore the vast rice fields in this natural space. Today, rice harvesting is done mechanically, but, not so long ago, farmers had to sink their feet into waterlogged plantations to plant and harvest rice. For some years now, the Sant Jaume d'Enveja Town Council has offered an interactive rice field to satisfy the growing demand to get to know this typical work of Ebro Delta residents.

For this purpose, the town council set up a municipal plot of land, located between the Passador bridge and the greenway leading to the island of Buda, and turned it into a public rice field. It is open 24 hours a day and, through an explanatory panel, it allows visitors to learn about the rice cycle and, with it, the colours of the Delta during the four months from planting to harvesting.

It has a footbridge that allows you to enter and step in the mud, walk through the flooded fields and touch the rice whilst learning about its different varieties. This space takes on special relevance during the crowded Festa de la Plantada, a festive day with numerous leisure and gastronomic activities where the older farmers remember the old working methods for rice harvesting. **9** 

To find out more: www.santjaumeturisme.cat





# 72 HOURS

#### 11 LA VALL DE BOÍ (PIRINEUS-VAL D'ARAN) THE ENTERTAINING **MARMOT ROUTE**

At the top of La Vall de Boí, in the region of L'Alta Ribagorça in Lleida, starts this beautiful route that is ideal for children, in which you can see marmots in their natural habitat.



This activity consists of a small route in Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park to observe a colony of marmots in their natural habitat. The itinerary starts at the Cavallers dam and goes along a flat but stony path, and stops will be made to observe this friendly mammal with the support of observation material.

nature of the typical high-mountain landscapes, this excursion also allows visitors to enjoy lakes, scree, pastures and peaks of more than 3,000 metres. This is without a doubt an excellent place for the youngest visitors to get an introduction to high-mountain alpine landscapes and meet one of the animals

that make up their fascinating fauna.

295 KM

<u>l</u>ili

With the help and explanations from a guide, you can see marmots amongst large blocks of stone, identify exactly where they are usually located and recognise their alarm whistles. To observe them, we have binoculars that the guide will help us to use correctly. In addition to the spectacular

To find out more: www.turismealtaribagorca.cat/en 72 HOURS

180 KM

Ň

#### 12 MONTSEC ASTRONOMY PARK (TERRES DE LLEIDA) **TOUCHINGTHE SKY**

The Montsec mountain range, at the gateway to the Catalan Pyrenees, is thought to be one of the best places in the world to observe the night sky and stars. This is where the Montsec Astronomy Park is located, which is a centre for scientific research and dissemination that allows you to enjoy different experiences.

Thanks to the weather conditions and low levels of light pollution, the Montsec mountain range and its Astronomy Park have been recognised by the Starlight Foundation as one of the best destinations in the world for astronomic observations. The park is located in the Montsec mountain range, between the regions of La Noguera and El Pallars Jussà (Lleida).

It has two facilities: the Observatory, the scientific area with a large telescope for researchers to complete observations, and the Universe Observation Centre. which has been converted into a fun multi-space. This facility boasts a digital 3D multimedia planetarium, with a mobile dome of 12 metres in diameter on which a film is projected. The session is completed

with an explanation of the night sky. Then, the dome is opened to be able to observe the real sky and identify some of the most outstanding night-time objects with the help of a specialised instructor.

The central building houses a permanent exhibition that encompasses astronomy and space sciences. The telescope park is the observation space of the Universe Observation Centre, where visitors will be able to learn about the different instruments and observe the Moon, planets or nebulas, among other things. **Q** 

To find out more: www.parcastronomic.cat/?lang=en





### **ECOTOURISM CALENDAR**

This natural resources calendar will help you choose the best experiences based on the best time of year to enjoy them. Look for the ones that best suit your expectations, make sure you have the exact dates and start enjoying ecotourism in Catalonia. •

RESOURCE	TIME OF YEAR				
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	
Alpine flora		8	$\bigcirc$		
Beech forests	*	8	٢	Ø	
Bellowing of the stag				Ø	
Birds of prey and carrion birds	*	8		Ø	
Brown bear		8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
Butterflies		8	$\bigcirc$		
Calm waters and reservoirs		8	٢		
Coastal and delta landscapes	*	8	0	Ø	
Emblematic mountains and geology	*	8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
Farming landscape			$\bigcirc$	ø	
Folk traditions	*	8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
High-mountain landscapes	*	8	$\bigcirc$	ø	
Historic trees	*	8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
Hoofed animals	*			Ø	
Land caves	*	8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
Local products	*	8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
Marshland	*	8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
Mediterranean flora		(8)	Ô	Ø	



RESOURCE	TIME OF YEAR				
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	
Migratory birds in wetlands	*	8		Ø	
Mushrooms			Ø	Ø	
Neptune grass		8	Ø	Ø	
Night sky	*	8	Ø	Ø	
Paleontological remains	*	8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
Peaks		8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
Rivers and waterfalls		8	Ø	Ø	
Snow	*	8			
Spring blossoming		8			
Traditional architecture	*	(8)	Ø	Ø	
Traditional trades	*	8	Ø	Ø	
Underwater fauna		8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
Unique forests	*	8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
Valleys	*	8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
Volcanoes	*	8	$\bigcirc$	Ø	
Whales & dolphins		(8)	Ø	Ø	
Wild goats	*			Ø	



#### THE BIODIVERSITY OF **CATALONIA'S NATURAL** HERITAGE

FAMILY

FARMING

121, 125

36, 67, 98

121

101

HIKING

LANDSCAPE

ECOTOURISM

24, 25, 27, 28, 35, 39, 42, 43,

52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 61, 64, 66,

69, 72, 73, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81,

114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119,

120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125

27, 28, 53, 61, 63, 66, 67, 69,

30, 36, 37, 39, 40, 50, 73, 96,

36, 41, 55, 57, 64, 65, 69, 93,

94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100,

HISTORIC TREES

34, 43, 44, 57, 120

30, 37, 38, 39, 96

LAND CAVES

49, 97, 100

HOOFED ANIMALS

72, 98, 106, 108, 115, 118,

FOLK TRADITIONS

**HIGH-MOUNTAIN** 

LANDSCAPES

82, 84, 95, 104, 107, 108,

Below is a list of the huge diversity of natural heritage that you will find in Catalonia. With ecotourism activities and local guides, you can gain an in-depth understanding of this biodiversity and the communities that live in each area. Inform yourself well and enjoy the connection with your surroundings.  $\mathbf{Q}$ 

#### ALPINE FLORA

36, 38, 39, 40, 50, 51, 97, 100 BEECH FORESTS 34, 41, 52, 53, 54, 99, 120

**BELLOWING OF THE STAG** 37

#### **BIRDS OF PREY AND CARRION BIRDS** 30, 37, 38, 50

BIRDWATCHING 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 43, 95, 104, 105

**BROWN BEAR** 30.38

BUTTERFLIES 40, 42, 120

#### CALM WATERS AND RESERVOIRS 78, 79, 93, 94, 122

COASTAL AND DELTA LANDSCAPES 29, 68, 76, 77, 78, 80, 81, 83,

84, 101, 105, 116 **CYCLE TOURING** 

61, 62, 63, 65, 69, 76, 78, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 114.116

LOCAL PRODUCTS EMBLEMATIC MOUNTAINS AND GEOLOGY 34, 38, 42, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 106

#### 26, 35, 36, 42, 62, 63, 98, 104, 106, 117, 118, 119, 121, 125

#### MARSHLAND

24, 25, 26, 29, 60, 61, 76, 77, 78, 95, 105 MEDITERRANEAN

FLORA 28, 41, 68, 69, 81, 83, 84, 94 101, 109, 116, 122

#### MIGRATORY **BIRDS IN WETLANDS** 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 62, 78, 95,

MUSHROOMS

NIGHT SKY

AND FAUNA

REMAINS

PEAKS

97,100

**RIVERS AND** 

WATERFALLS

43.55.109

49

72, 77, 78, 79, 93, 94, 99,

50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 93, 94, 96,

105, 109, 119, 120, 124

PALEONTOLOGICAL

36, 41, 50, 52, 120

NEPTUNE GRASS

98, 100, 101, 106, 107, 108 104, 105, 114, 116, 122 TRADITIONAL TRADES

35, 40, 60, 62, 64, 66, 67, 77, 106, 115, 117, 118, 119, 124, 125

RURAL WORLD

119, 121, 125

TRADITIONAL

ARCHITECTURE

26, 35, 52, 53, 56, 60, 61, 62,

63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 72,

53, 61, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 97,

76, 96, 98, 100, 106, 107,

108, 114, 115, 117, 118,

44, 45, 82, 83, 123 SNOW

51,56 38, 43, 44, 49, 52, 72, 73 UNDERWATER FAUNA **OBSERVING FLORA** 

44, 45, 62, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 123 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, UNIQUE FORESTS 43, 44, 45, 53, 54, 56, 60, 68,

30, 34, 41, 42, 43, 44, 50, 51, 57, 65, 68, 99, 107

VALLEYS 39, 50, 51, 56, 65, 93, 94, 96, 100, 109

VOLCANOES 42, 54, 55, 65, 99, 125

WHALES & DOLPHINS 44, 45, 123

WILD GOATS 34, 43, 109

#### More information

#### Tourism promotion organisations

**Tarragona Provincial Authority Tourist Board** www.costadaurada.info www.terresdelebre.travel

The Patronat de Turisme Costa Brava Girona www.en.costabrava.org

The Patronat de Turisme (Regional Tourist Board) of the Diputació de Lleida www.aralleida.cat/en

The Barcelona Provincial Council www.barcelonaesmoltmes.cat/en/inici

The Turisme de Barcelona Consortium www.barcelonaturisme.com/wv3/en

#### Catalan Tourist Board

www.catalunya.com

(f) www.facebook.com/catalunyaexperience @catalunyaexperience

www.twitter.com/catexperience @catexperience

( www.instagram.com/catalunyaexperience

www.youtube.com/user/CatalunyaExperience

Palau Robert (Centre for Tourist Information on Catalonia) Passeig de Gràcia, 107. 08008 Barcelona +34 93 238 80 91 / 92 / 93 www.gencat.cat/palaurobert

Opening hours from Mondays to Saturdays: 10 am to 8 pm Sundays and public holidays: 10 am to 2:30 pm

Tourist information 012 (Catalonia) 902 400 012 (outside Catalonia) +34 902 400 012 (outside Spain)

Photographs: Cover photo: © Gonzalo Azumendi / ACT Back cover photo: © Miguel Raurich / ACT

© Catalan Tourist Board D.L. B 22595-2019

#### Published by

© Catalan Tourist Board. Passeig de Gràcia, 105, 3.ª planta. 08008 Barcelona Published by: Ediciones Reunidas, SA www.grupozeta.es. All total or partial reproduction of this work by any procedure, including reprography and computerised treatment, and distribution of copies by rental or public lending are strictly forbidden without written authorisation from the copyright holders, and may be sanctioned by law.

#### Foreign branches of the Catalan **Tourist Board**

Benelux info.act.bnl@gencat.cat +32 26 406 151

Nordic Countries info.act.nordic@gencat.cat +358 40 7177 295

France info.act.fr@gencat.cat +33 140 468 448

United Kingdom info.act.uk@gencat.cat +44 20 7583 8855

Central Europe info.act.de@gencat.cat +49 69 7422 4873

Italy info.act.it@gencat.cat +39 02 873 935 73

Spain turisme.blanquerna@gencat.cat +34 915 241 000

Russia info.act.ru@gencat.cat +7 495 567 1871

China promotion.act.cn@gencat.cat +86 10 848 682 84

Southeast Asia info.act.sea@gencat.cat +65 622 04 022

United States of America info.act.usa@gencat.cat +1 212 7823332

South America info.act.latam@gencat.cat

#### Bookings

Experience Catalunya https://experience.catalunya.com



#### Partners / ACT members





Patronat de Turisme

Girona Patronat de Turisme Costa Brava Girona

Diputació Tarragona



Diputació Barcelona

Barcelona

és molt més

Partners













SHOPPING COLLECTIO

**FCB**ARCELONA

més que un club



www.catalunya.com







