

PROPUESTA ACTIVIDADES TURISMO NATURALEZA HOTEL CASTILLA



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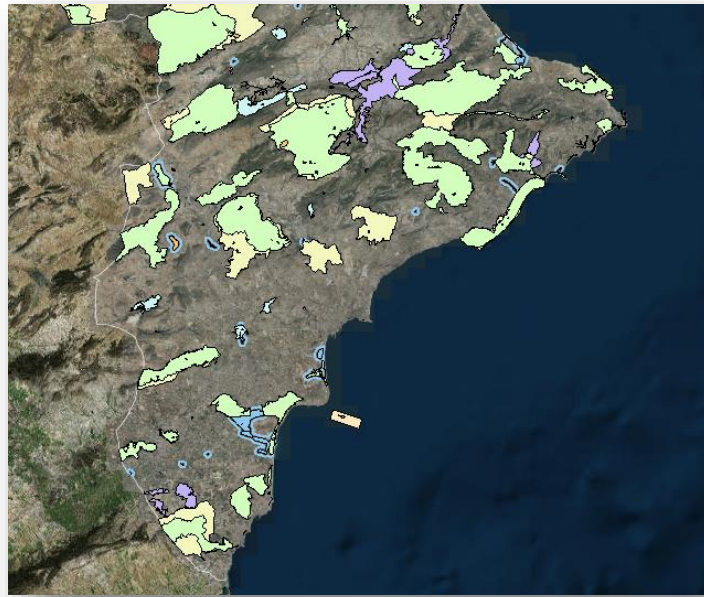
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Oxytours is an innovate company of nature tourism which presents a unique opportunity: Discovering the Costa Blanca as you would never have imagined possible. Through our routes you will have an unforgettable experience immersing yourself in our region's nature, culture and gastronomy.

- Our natives guides are extremely experienced about our Nature and Culture Heritage. We're specialist in Birdwatching tours in Alicante area.
- We offer a wide range of routes which cover both the North and South. Spectacular hiking among mountains, arid areas, valleys and wetlands of the complete Costa Blanca.
- We have handpicked restaurants which only offer the best gastronomy available in our region, using exquisite locally grown products to bring you traditional cuisine of the highest quality.
- There is not need to worry about transport as we collect you from Castilla Hotel. And, of course we return you at the end of your trip.

Whether you choose Hiking, Sailing, Birdwatching, History, or just wish to experience an explosion of natural beauty and flavours; you can be assured of our undivided attention at all times.

Alicante - Costa Blanca is one of the best Mediterranean destinations for nature activities due to its amazing variety of habitats, species of birds and also an astonishing weather along the year, as well as the importance of its international airport, directly linked with more than 115 European cities.



Protected areas in Alicante province

Alicante is the second Spanish province with the highest number of mountains after Huesca and has approximately 30% of its surface as protected areas, offering to its visitors a wide variety of habitats and landscapes that are ideal for hiking enthusiasts. Routes and roads whose beauty is only comparable to the importance of the environmental values that we find there: orchids, yews, unique botanical endemics, spices, protected birds, spectacular geology of cliffs and the Mediterranean, always present. In particular, the importance of their bird species is the claim of birdwatching tourists who travel through the wetlands of southern Alicante or its mountains and cereal areas equipped with telescopes and cameras looking for that variety of birds that few areas like ours can offer in Europe.

Hiking

Propuesta 1

SIERRA AITANA: TOUCHING THE COSTA BLANCA SKY

Known for being the highest mountain on the Costa Blanca at 1.558 metres, Aitana is one of the best places in the Costa Blanca to go hiking, enjoying the spectacular views of the Mediterranean and the Guadalest Valley. Walking through Aitana lets you get in touch with your senses such as the silence and distinct colours present in each season. A silence broken only by the sound of water or its numerous species of birds.

With our guides you will come to know Aitana as the place with the greatest biodiversity thanks to its height and proximity to the sea. Geology and Botany come together to offer unique formations for your enjoyment. Pas de la Rabosa, this narrow passage leads you another aspect of the mountain where you will be amazed by the unbelievable chasm of Partagat, obtaining from here in clear days an extraordinary panoramic view of milestones such as the islands of Ibiza and Mallorca, the city of Valencia or Monte Penyagolosa in Castelló. Learn about how it's inhabitants lived centuries ago, thanks to the remains of snow wells found among beautiful olive groves with almond and cherry blossom trees.

Oxytours has prepared this route to share with you the incredible ambience of Aitana.

Distance	Slope	Difficulty
10 km (aprox)	510 metres	Media

Propuesta 2

SALTED RAVINE OF ALBATERA: THE ALICANTE'S SOUTH DESERT

To walk the salted ravine in Albaterra is to enter a spectacular desert landscape while we're passing through on ancient aqueducts, entering the very heart of the mountain. In this ravine the salt is the protagonist, emerging from the slopes and forcing all the species present there to adapt to live in extreme environmental conditions, where we will discover how the surrounding plants have modified their biology to be able to survive here, where the bed of the Ravine narrows so much that the walls can almost be touched with both hands, resulting in spectacular surroundings.

If something catches the attention of the hikers who travel this place, included in the Natura 2000 Network of protected areas of the European Union and that happens to be one of the most desert areas of the continent, it is the reddish colour of the gullies and slopes of the

ravine, due to the presence of gypsums and clays with a high iron oxide content. These colours contrast with the white of the salt precipitated in the bed of the ravine and in the saltwater springs that we will visit, undoubtedly one of the most outstanding geological and landscape landmarks in the region.

Distance	Slope	Difficulty
7 kilómetros (aprox)	160 metros	Baja - Media

HOJA DE RUTA Rutas de Senderismo.

- 08.30 Pick up from Castilla Hotel and transfer to hiking areas.
- 09.15 Inicio del itinerario guiado.
- 11.00 Break for snack.
- 13.30 End of the journey and transfer to the accommodation.

- (Opcional) 13.30 Lunch in a traditional restaurant in the area.
- (Opcional) 17.00 Arrival at the Castilla hotel and end of the day.

- (Opcional) 17.00 Transfer to press olive oil / Bodega to visit.
- (Opcional) 18.30 Arrival at the Castilla hotel and end of the day.

INCLUDE

- Transfers of participants from the hotel to birdwatching areas.
- Full guide service throughout. Local guides experts in environmental heritage and birdlife of the Costa Blanca (biologists, mountain guides, official tourist guides).
- Languages used during the routes: English, French, Spanish and Valencian.
- Liability insurance.
- Accident insurance.
- Mid-morning snack on route with local products.

NOT INCLUDE

- Optional. 5 course traditional lunch (set menu).
- Tickets, drinks and purchases in visits to winery or olive oil press.

BIRDWATCHING

Propuesta 1

WETLANDS OF ALICANTE SOUTH: Natural reserves of El Hondo, Santa Pola Saltpans and La Mata - Torrevieja lagoons

Few places in Spain attract birdwatching enthusiasts like the Costa Blanca. Here its wetlands are bringing together a great number of peculiar species. You will find the most protected species, some of which are in danger of extinction and impossible to find in other parts of Europe. Oxytours has a wealth of experience in showing these exceptional areas to visitors. The region's importance has earned its declaration as protected natural places and inclusion in international conventions such as RAMSAR.

By a route which takes in the main marshlands of the region we will observe a great variety of birds in the different seasons, among these we find two of the most threatened species of ducks in Europe such as the Marbled teal (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*) and White-headed duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*). We can also admire the slow movement of wading birds as they walk on the water's surface just like the Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) and the rare Glossy ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*), accompanied by Squacco heron (*Ardeola ralloides*), Purple heron (*Ardea purpurea*) and we can even have the opportunity to see the spectacular cobalt blue of the Purple gallinule (*Porphyrio porphyrio*).

The close proximity of the coast makes it possible for us to see interesting seabird species that have made nests in these adjacent marshlands, such as the elegant Audouin's gull (*Larus audouinii*), Slender-billed gull (*Chroicocephalus genei*) and Whiskered tern (*Chlidonias hybrida*). In addition, there are very distinct groups like Collared pratincole (*Glareola pratincola*), Bearded tit (*Panurus biarmicus*), Penduline tit (*Remiz pendulinus*), Moustached warbler (*Acrocephalus melanopogon*), Roller (*Coracias garrulus*) or Bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*), among others.

If you would like to fully know the marshland species, don't hesitate to consult our listing and ask us anything you wish. We are able to provide you with the necessary prismatic lenses or scope so you can thoroughly enjoy your birdwatching.

With Oxytours you can truly discover the aquatic and marine birdlife of the Costa Blanca.

RUTA 2

The sea of cereals, kingdom of the Great Bustard

Inland of southeast Spain between the Costa Blanca and its neighbouring región of La Mancha we cross a totally different sea which has little to do with the traditional coast, just 50 minutes driving from Castilla Hotel. The wind still creates its waves but on occasion gives us such an intense green which later becomes golden toasted crops. The inland seas are a spectacular mosaic of cereal fields which are home to among others the Great bustard (*Otis tarda*), one of the largest birds in Europe, whose nuptial courtship is one of the most amazing seen in nature.

These areas also offer us the chance to see more wonderful birds such as Lesser kestrel (*Falco naumanni*) which brings up its Young in the old abandoned houses of the area. Little bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*), Pin-tailed sandgrouse (*Pterocles alchata*), Black-bellied sandgrouse (*Pterocles orientalis*), Stone curlew (*Burhinus oedicephalus*) or Calandra lark (*Melanocorypha calandra*) are all present in this protected birdlife area designated IBA by the European Union.

The great diversity of the environment coupled with high and low salt content lagoons, little woods oaks and pines, cereal fields or cultivation lands enable us to witness the extraordinary gathering of species just a few kilometres from the coast. You will delight in seeing ducks, flamingos or cranes in this exquisite home of birdlife.

HOJA DE RUTA Rutas de Birding.

- 08.00 Pick up from Castilla Hotel and transfer to birdwatching areas.
- 11.00 Break for snack.
- 14.00 Break for lunch on route (picnic).
- 18.00 End of the journey and transfer to the accommodation.

- (Optional) 14.00 Lunch in a restaurant in the area.
- (Optional) 15.30 Continuation of the ornithological route.
- (Optional) 18.30 Arrival at the Castilla hotel and end of the day.

INCLUDES

- Transfers of participants from the hotel to birdwatching areas.
- Full guide service throughout. Local guides experts in environmental heritage and birdlife of the Costa Blanca (biologists, mountain guides, official tourist guides). Guides members of the Association of birding guides of the Valencian Community (Registration CV-01-054117-V)
- Lending of optical equipment for birding.
- Languages used during the routes: English, French, Spanish and Valencian.
- Liability insurance.
- Mid-morning snack on route with local products.

NOT INCLUDE:

- Optional. 5 course traditional lunch (set menu).