

ITINERARY
SPAIN: LA MANCHA, COTO DOÑANA & EXTREMADURA
May 4-16, 2019



European Roller is a striking bird that is found in open areas such as the plains of Extremadura. Although the population in general is declining, they seem to be doing well in Spain due to local programs that provide nest boxes for these cavity-nesters. Photograph by guide Chris Benesh.

We include here information for those interested in the 2019 Field Guides Spain: La Mancha, Coto Doñana & Extremadura tour:

- a general introduction to the tour
- a description of the birding areas to be visited on the tour
- an abbreviated daily itinerary with some indication of the nature of each day's birding outings

Those who register for the tour will be sent this additional material:

- an annotated list of the birds recorded on a previous year's Field Guides trip to the area, with comments by guide(s) on notable species or sightings (may be downloaded from our web site)
- a detailed information bulletin with important logistical information and answers to questions regarding accommodations, air arrangements, clothing, currency, customs and immigration, documents, health precautions, and personal items
- a reference list
- a Field Guides checklist for preparing for and keeping track of the birds we see on the tour
- after the conclusion of the tour, a list of birds seen on the tour

In many ways, birders who have traveled through the American West will feel right at home moving through the Spanish landscape. The rugged terrain of Extremadura, the rolling grasslands of the steppes, and the expansive vineyards in many areas bring to mind central California, parts of Arizona, or perhaps the Edwards Plateau of Texas. The sheer granite cliffs of the Gredos are reminiscent of similar formations found in Yosemite National Park. The birding is fantastic, and for European birders, Spain is viewed in much the same way as Southeast Arizona or South Texas is in North America: a birding hotspot with high avian diversity. For both first-time visitors and veterans of European birding, Spain is an excellent choice for a first-rate birding vacation. Not to mention, we have an exciting opportunity to see the very rare Iberian Lynx, one of the world's most endangered mammals!

Our journey through the heartland of Spain will take us first to the bird-rich lagunas of La Mancha, where Montagu's Harrier, Collared Pratincole, and the endangered White-headed Duck nest, then southwestward to the magnificent Parque Nacional de Doñana (Coto Doñana), where Greater Flamingo, Purple Swamphen, Audouin's and Slender-billed gulls, and Azure-winged Magpie are among the exciting possibilities.

From Doñana we'll venture north to wildest Extremadura and the unique Spanish steppes—a harsh land of wide, rolling plains and rugged sierras, birthplace of the conquistadors and a stronghold of the spectacular Great Bustard. Nowhere else in Europe do birds of prey breed in such numbers or such variety. Species to look for include the immense Cinereous (Black) Vulture and Eurasian Griffon, the elusive Eurasian Eagle-Owl, and the locally rare Black-shouldered Kite, while many other fast-declining species are also dependent on the survival of this disappearing habitat.

We'll finish up in the beautiful Sierra de Gredos, where we'll stay at a lovely parador with Western Bonelli's Warbler, Citril Finch, and a number of other birds as possibilities.

About the Physical Requirements &

Pace: Spain offers some of Europe's finest and most diverse birding. That said, birders used to the diversity found in the United States and American tropics are sometimes surprised by the relatively low diversity of Europe. But there's a benefit to this lower diversity as well as to our proximity to birding destinations during the tour: there will be fewer early starts than perhaps some are used to. We will generally offer a pre-breakfast outing lasting an hour or so, followed by a simple breakfast (the standard in Spain and much of Europe). We will then be out much of every day, coming back to the hotel in the late afternoon. Dinners in Spain are quite late, rarely beginning before 8:00 in the evening.

In general the terrain is good. The hike to Laguna Grande in the Gredos is at moderate elevation (6900 feet) and is relatively steep along a good trail and grassy alpine meadow. We'll walk it at a slow pace with stops along the way to take in scenery and birds. Elsewhere, the walking is easy.

If you are uncertain about whether this tour is a good match for your abilities, please don't hesitate to contact our office. If they cannot directly answer your queries, they will put you in touch with one of the guides.



We'll have a chance to bird in some spectacular landscapes, such as Monfragüe National Park. Other areas we will visit include the marshes of Doñana, the plains of La Mancha, and the mountains of the Sierra de Gredos. Photograph by participant Chuck Holliday.

About the Birding Areas

La Mancha region—Like much of the vast central plain (the Spanish *meseta*), the gently undulating but rather treeless landscape of La Mancha is sparsely populated. Dotted here and there among the vineyards are numerous shallow lagunas, some watery places fringed with reeds, others barren and saline—but each with its own fascinating population of birds. Among the many breeding species we may find are Great Crested, Eared (Black-necked), and Little grebes, Red-crested Pochard, Marsh Harrier, Northern Lapwing, Snowy (Kentish) and Little Ringed plovers, Black-winged Stilt, Collared Pratincole, Gull-billed, Black, and Whiskered terns, Bearded Reedling (Tit), Zitting Cisticola (Fan-tailed Warbler), Great Reed-Warbler, and Savi's Warbler. Most importantly, there is a small but thriving population of the rare White-headed Duck here. The surrounding steppe farmland supports good numbers of dry-country birds such as Eurasian Thick-knee (Stone-curlew), European Bee-eater, Eurasian Hoopoe, Crested Lark, Tawny Pipit (rare), and Black-eared Wheatear, while raptors of note include the elegant Montagu's Harrier, the dashing Eurasian Hobby, and several small colonies of Lesser Kestrel.



Doñana—Covering an area of almost half-a-million acres, the *marismas* (marshes) at the mouth of the Rio Guadalquivir form one of the largest and most important wetlands in Europe—the Doñana. Although access to much of the reserve is restricted, there are many excellent birding spots, and we shall visit the best of these during our stay. Among its rich diversity of birds, the Doñana boasts many that are rare or absent elsewhere in western Europe, including Eurasian Spoonbill, Greater Flamingo, Purple Swamphen, Ferruginous Pochard (rare), Red-necked Nightjar, and the lovely Azure-winged Magpie. We can also expect to find a variety of other more widespread breeding species here in May, among them Squacco and Purple herons, Red-crested Pochard, Booted Eagle, Pied Avocet, Short-toed and Lesser Short-toed larks, Common Nightingale, Cetti's Warbler, Spotless Starling, and European Serin. Finally, on the nearby Atlantic coast and in the rice

fields flanking Doñana, we may still find a selection of northbound shorebirds such as Ruff, Sanderling, and Black-tailed Godwit, along with Sandwich Tern and Yellow-legged, Audouin's, and Slender-billed (scarce) gulls.

Extremadura—The drive north to Parque Nacional de Monfragüe passes through mile after mile of unspoiled countryside where centuries of traditional land management have produced the unique *dehesa*—a superb park-like habitat of cork and evergreen oaks frequented by Melodious, Dartford, Sardinian, Subalpine, and shy Orphean warblers, Eurasian Golden Oriole, and the beautiful Azure-winged Magpie. This is one of the finest spots in all of Europe for birds of prey, and we can expect to encounter a dozen or more species, including Red and Black kites, Eurasian Buzzard, Short-toed, Booted, and Spanish (Imperial) eagles, Peregrine Falcon, Eurasian Kestrel, and lots of Cinereous (Black) Vultures and Eurasian Griffons. Black Stork and Eurasian Eagle-Owl also nest in the park, along with Alpine and White-rumped swifts (the White-rumps are rare here at the extreme edge of their primarily African range), Thekla and Wood larks, Blue Rock-Thrush, Black Wheatear, Rock Sparrow, Rock Bunting, Jackdaw, and Red-billed Chough.

Elsewhere in Extremadura, we'll head west and south into the wide rolling plains. Here we should see plenty of Great and Little bustards. The grasslands are interrupted from time to time by low, rocky sierras and slow-flowing river systems. For sheer variety of birds, this whole area is hard to beat. White Storks nest widely, and other breeding species include Little Bittern, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Little and Cattle egrets, Little Tern, Pin-tailed and Black-bellied sandgrouse, Common and Great Spotted cuckoos, Little Owl, Calandra and Greater Short-toed larks, Red-rumped Swallow, Spectacled Warbler, Eurasian Penduline-Tit, and Spanish Sparrow. Before leaving Extremadura, we'll plan a quiet stroll through the narrow, cobbled streets of Trujillo. The conquistadors have long since departed, leaving plenty of White Storks and Lesser Kestrels for us to enjoy—and the view across the plains from the castle's battlements is superb!

Sierra de Gredos—Set high in the mountains, our hotel here commands wonderful views across a swath of bottle-green pines to distant snowy peaks. We should encounter Crag Martin, Western Bonelli's Warbler, Eurasian Nuthatch, Goldcrest, and Cirl Bunting nearby, and perhaps European Honey-buzzard, Bonelli's Eagle, and Citril Finch as well. Later, we'll travel through some of the finest upland scenery in all of Spain as we seek out White-throated Dipper, Gray Wagtail, Crested Tit, European Pied Flycatcher, and Red Crossbill. Yellow Wagtails and Ortolan Buntings breed in the alpine meadows, and the hillsides are thick with broom, where we'll search for the scarce Bluethroat. Higher still in the Reserva Natural de Gredos, we may find Golden Eagle, Water Pipit, Black Redstart, and the exquisite Rufous-tailed Rock-Thrush. If the weather is exceptional, we may venture higher in search of Alpine Accentor. As a bonus, large mammals of note include Red Fox and the rare and imposing Spanish Ibex.

Itinerary for Spain: La Mancha, Coto Doñana & Extremadura

Days 1-2, Sat-Sun, 4-5 May. Departure for Madrid; arrival and transfer to Alcázar de San Juan, and the Lagunas de La Mancha. Most flights from the US will depart in the afternoon or early evening of May 4 and arrive in Madrid on the morning of May 5. Direct flights are available from many North American cities—please contact our office for details. When booking your flight, please choose a schedule that allows you to arrive in Madrid by 8:30 a.m. You will then collect your luggage, clear customs and immigration, and take a private transfer to the hotel to meet your guides in the lobby by 11:00 a.m. Participants arriving early may chose to join the leaders for an 8:00 a.m. morning walk from our hotel in Madrid to a nearby park to do some light birding before we are joined by those arriving internationally.



*The Eurasian Hoopoe is common in Spain, but it is an unusual and striking bird, and we will look forward to seeing them.
Photograph by guide Chris Benesh.*

Please note: If you have the time, we recommend that participants from North America plan to arrive in Madrid a day early to recover from jet lag before the tour begins. (Direct flights are available from many North American cities—please contact our office for details.) Madrid is a lovely city and well worth extra time for individual exploration. Our office will be happy to assist you with reservations for extra nights. Contact your tour manager if you are interested in an optional tour of the city (at additional expense) which journeys through Madrid's Renaissance and Baroque style buildings and visits Museo Nacional del Prado.

Once everyone is assembled, we'll load up our bus and head south to the region of La Mancha, home of Don Quixote, the 17th-century creation of writer Miguel de Cervantes. Many of the windmills featured in this tale have been restored and can easily be seen during our stay in Alcázar de San Juan. After lunch, we'll visit the first of several productive sites. A scope would be helpful but not necessary. The La Mancha region is a rolling landscape of olive orchards and grape vineyards along with scattered villages. In some of the lower depressions between hills there are wetlands (lagunas) rich in bird life and important as stopover sites for migrant shorebirds and waterfowl. Night of Day 2 in Alcázar de San Juan.

Day 3, Mon, 6 May. Parque Nacional de las Tablas de Damiel south to the Sierra de Andújar. We'll be off after breakfast today to the extensive wetlands of Tablas de Damiel. This rich area should provide us with good views of several marsh species, including Bearded Reedling and Savi's Warbler. After a morning birding here, we'll head south to the scenic Sierra de Andújar. While there are some interesting birds to be seen here, our focus will be on a unique opportunity to encounter an Iberian Lynx, one of the rarest wild cats in the world! This range of mountains is home to the largest remaining population of this endangered cat. Night in Andújar.

Day 4, Tue, 7 May. Lynx search in the Sierra de Andújar, Córdoba and travel to Doñana. We'll get an early start today with a local guide to maximize our chances of encountering an Iberian Lynx. From here, we'll continue to the historic city of Córdoba to pay a brief visit to the Mezquita (a complex of Islamic buildings with later Christian modifications dating back to 785). There is also a large rookery of Cattle Egrets and Black-crowned Night-Herons here. The remainder of the afternoon will be spent traveling on to the Doñana region. We will stay the next few nights in historic El Rocío (pronounced ro-THEE-o), home of the Virgen del Rocío. Nearly a million people converge on this small town to pay respects to the virgin's image during the Romería del Rocío. Night in El Rocío.

Days 5-6, Wed-Thu, 8-9 May. Parque Nacional de Doñana. We'll have two full days to explore this interesting area. Access to Doñana is difficult, but we'll have the opportunity to make a couple of excursions into the park. Climbing aboard the massive all-terrain earth-rovers (called unimogs) used to navigate the beach sands and otherwise inaccessible habitats within the park, we will explore the beach dunes near the mouth of the Rio Guadalquivir, where we may encounter Yellow-legged, Audouin's, and Slender-billed gulls, as well as Sandwich Terns, and then move inland to explore the Coto, stable sandy soils supporting cork oaks and umbrella pines, and home to the greatest remaining

concentration of Spanish (Imperial) Eagles, and the park's richest concentration of mammals, which include Red Fox, Red Deer (which we call Elk in America), Fallow Deer, the endemic Iberian Hare, Old World Rabbit, and Wild Boar. Rare possibilities include the endemic Iberian Lynx, Wild Cat, Eurasian Badger, Least Weasel, Egyptian Mongoose (introduced), and Common Genet. Arriving back at the visitors' center in the early afternoon, we'll have time for a few hours of birding at El Acebuche, where we'll watch for Ferruginous Pochard (very rare) and others. On one night, weather permitting, we'll go in search of Red-necked Nightjars, which are common in the area.

On our second day here, we will board range rovers and travel to the Jose Antonio Valverde Visitor Center, another great wetlands site and education center located in the heart of the park, replete with nesting Purple Herons, Little Bitterns, flamingos, and spoonbills. Our remaining time will be spent visiting peripheral sites, which include El Rocío, El Acebuche, and La Rocina. Nights in El Rocío.



Greater Flamingos are one of the species we'll seek at Doñana. Photograph by guide Chris Benesh.

Day 7, Fri, 10 May. Drive to Trujillo. This morning, we'll head to a site south of Sevilla in search of Rufous-tailed Scrub-Robin and Western Olivaceous Warbler before passing through the Sierra Morena on our drive north to Trujillo. Keep a sharp eye out for interesting raptors as we travel through this rugged country. We will make a brief stop to search for Black Wheatear and Bonelli's Eagle before arriving in Trujillo in time to explore the old hilltop section of town and have a relaxing dinner. This region in Spain, known as Extremadura, will remind many of California's oak savanna. Extremadura has spawned some of Spain's most noted explorers, including Francisco Pizarro and Hernán Cortés. Regardless of how one perceives the virtues of their exploits, the influence of these figures has been felt throughout Spain and much of the New World. Night in Trujillo.

Day 8, Sat, 11 May. Bird Trujillo area. Today we'll have a pre-breakfast outing to the pseudo-steppe plains near Trujillo to search for Pin-tailed and Black-bellied sandgrouse, as well as Great and Little bustards and Great Spotted Cuckoo. After breakfast, we'll head out for a full day of exciting birding, covering several important sites in the extensive dehesa covered hills north and west of Trujillo. Possibilities include Alpine and Pallid swifts, Black-shouldered Kite, Common Kingfisher, White and Yellow wagtails, and Cirl Bunting. Night in Trujillo.

Day 9, Sun, 12 May. Parque Nacional de Monfragüe. One of the real treats of any visit to Spain, this nearly 70-square-mile park is both picturesque and birdy. We'll make a couple of short stops on our way into the park in search of Cirl Bunting before arriving at the Santuario y Castillo de Monfragüe in the Sierra de Corchuelas, where we will look for Hawfinch, acrobatic Red-billed Chough, and White-rumped Swifts (rare), among others. Nearby, at Peña Falcon, where the Rio Tajo has cut through the Sierra de Corchuelas, we'll enjoy watching nesting Black Storks and Eurasian Griffons (vultures), and we'll keep a lookout for Spanish Imperial Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Black Redstart, Rock Bunting, and White-rumped Swift, not to mention the striking Ocellated Lizard, an emerald-green reptile dappled with azure spots along its sides. We will also search for the imposing Eurasian Eagle-Owl during our full day of birding and exploring this productive park. Night near Torrejón el Rubio.



The Spanish Imperial Eagle is an endangered species endemic to the Iberian peninsula. We'll have good chances of finding them at Doñana, and possibly also at Monfragüe. Photograph by guide Chris Benesh.

Day 10, Mon, 13 May. Parque Nacional de Monfragüe. We will spend much of today back at Monfragüe, searching for any species still eluding us. Once we've left the park, we will travel toward the Sierra de Gredos, which forms the southern boundary of Spain's Cordillera Central. The climb is steep and scenic, and we will arrive at our parador in late afternoon. This lovely government-run lodging is in an idyllic setting overlooking pine forest. We should see a number of forest specialties from the comfort of the spacious rooftop patio, which overlooks the surrounding countryside. The rock mason wall in the garden below is home to spectacular Ocellated Lizards. Night at the Parador Sierra de Gredos.

Day 11, Tue, 14 May. Sierra de Gredos. We'll have all day for birding in the Sierra de Gredos. Dress for cooler (changeable) weather and take account of the higher elevations here (about 6900 feet). The morning will include a hike in the Reserva Natural de Gredos through spectacular scenery in the shadow of Pico Almanzor, which at over 8550 feet, is the highest peak in this range. We'll take our hike slowly, searching for Golden Eagle, White-throated Dipper, Dunnock, Bluethroat, Rufous-tailed Rock-Thrush, and Spanish Ibex. Keep a sharp eye out for Least Weasel, which we've seen twice here. And don't forget your camera. Night at the Parador Sierra de Gredos.

Day 12, Wed, 15 May. To Madrid. We'll spend a final morning cleaning up in the Gredos. We'll plan to make a short photo stop at the historic, walled city of Ávila before returning to Madrid. Night in Madrid.

Day 13, Thu, 16 May. Departure for home. Our tour ends today. ¡Buen viaje!

About Your Guides

Chris Benesh grew up studying natural history in California, where he was inspired by his father to take up birding as a teenager. After earning a degree in zoology from UC Santa Barbara in 1987, Chris moved to Austin to join the Field Guides staff. Since then, his life has undergone a wonderful transformation. The intervening years at Field Guides have taken him to many corners of the world and across both the Arctic and Antarctic circles!

Chris takes an interest in nearly anything that flies, and you might catch him sneaking a peek at a passing aircraft or stopping to examine a butterfly or odonate. You might also notice him getting especially excited at the sighting of a rare or wonderful mammal (heck, he can get excited about a squirrel).

Chris's passion for education has led to his serving on the Arizona Bird Committee, leading the occasional workshop, presenting at birding conventions, and—we must add—thoroughly explaining in admirable detail the nuances of flycatchers to tour participants and colleagues alike. These days, most of his “down time” is spent at home in Tucson watching his two wonderful kids, Sean and Linnea, grow.

“Chris Benesh is a superb guide and leader, great at finding the birds and great at getting all members of the group good views of the birds.”

W. B., Spring in South Texas

Godfried Schreur developed his interest in wild birds and nature at an early age and became involved as a volunteer in several Dutch naturalist associations. In 1991, after culminating his Bachelor of Science studies on Nature and Landscape Management at the Van Hall Larenstein Institute (Velp, Netherlands) Godfried came to Extremadura for a period of voluntary practices in the conservation NGO ADENEX. Since 1994, Extremadura became his permanent base. Here he founded, together with Ana Cordero, the company ECOTUREX. He was one of the first specialized birding guides in the region, an activity that he continues to practice with great pleasure.

Godfried is a friendly guide with extensive knowledge and experience. He finds great satisfaction in sharing his knowledge and experiencing the beauty of nature with people. He knows the geography of Extremadura and other interesting areas in Spain very well. He is fluent in Dutch, Spanish, and English. The study of bats is another specialty of his. Godfried has also a deep interest in other fauna, flora and man's role in the landscape, culture and history. In addition, Godfried remains active in environmentalism and is not afraid to protest against projects that seriously threaten sustainable development and nature-conservation.

“Godfried Schreur added so much to this trip: it was a huge bonus to have someone so knowledgeable about local geography, history, food, and so forth...He would be a great addition to future Spain trips.” A.D., Spain: La Mancha, Coto Doñana & Extremadura

Please visit <https://fieldguides.com/guides> for a look at the complete tour schedules of all the guides.

Financial Information

FEE: \$4575 from Madrid

DEPOSIT: \$450 per person

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: January 4, 2019

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional): \$450

LIMIT: 12

Other Things You Need to Know

TOUR MANAGER: The manager for this tour is Ruth Kuhl. Ruth will be happy to assist you in preparing for the tour. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call her!

ACCOMMODATIONS: Accommodations are simple but comfortable throughout the trip, though rooms are cozy in typical European fashion. All rooms have en suite bathrooms.

ALTITUDE: We will reach a maximum of about 6900 feet in the Sierra de Gredos. Our hotel in Navarredonda de Gredos sits at about 1525 feet.

DOCUMENTS: A current passport, valid three months beyond the date of your return, is necessary for US citizens to enter Spain. We recommend that your passport be valid for at least 6 months beyond the dates of your visit, as regulations vary from country to country, and are subject to change. If you are not a US citizen, please check with the Spanish consulate nearest you for entry requirements. Information about consulates and entry requirements is generally available online or you can contact us and we will be happy to look this up for you. Passports should have an adequate number of blank pages for the entire journey. Some countries require a blank page for their stamp and as a precaution it is best to have one blank page per country you will visit or transit.

AIR ARRANGEMENTS: *Please note that the tour begins and ends in Madrid. When booking your flight, please choose a schedule that allows you to arrive in Madrid by 8:30 a.m. on Day 2.* When departing from the US, an overnight flight will be required. Field Guides is a full service travel agency and your tour manager will be happy to assist you with flights to join this tour. Field Guides does not charge a service fee for these services to clients booking a tour. However, we understand that tech-savvy clients often prefer to shop online or that you may wish to use mileage to purchase tickets. Regardless of which method you choose, your tour manager will be happy to provide assistance regarding ticket prices and schedules, along with rental cars and extra hotel nights as needed.

Please be sure to check with your tour manager prior to purchasing your ticket to make sure the flights you have chosen will work well with the tour itinerary and that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. Once purchased, most

airline tickets are non-refundable and carry a penalty to change. Field Guides cannot be responsible for these fees. **Also, it is imperative that we receive a copy of your comprehensive flight itinerary—including any and all flights not covered in the tour fee—so that we may track you in the event of missed connections, delays, or other mishaps.**

LUGGAGE: Please be aware that many airlines have recently modified their luggage policies and are charging additional fees for checked bags. Updates could easily occur before your departure, so you may wish to contact your airline to verify the policy. Additional charges for bags on any flights, whether these are covered by the tour fee or not, will be the client's responsibility.

TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS: The **tour fee** is \$4575 for one person in double occupancy from Madrid. It includes all lodging from Day 2 through Day 12, all meals from lunch on Day 2 through breakfast on Day 13, all ground transportation, entrance fees, and the guide services of the tour leader(s). Tipping at group meals and for drivers, porters, and local guides is included in your tour fee and will be handled for the group by your Field Guides leader(s). However, if you would like to recognize your Field Guides leader(s) or any local guide(s) for exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are optional and not expected.

The above fee does not include your airfare to and from Madrid, airport taxes, visa fees, any checked or carry-on baggage charges imposed by the airlines, any alcoholic beverages, phone calls, laundry or other items of a personal nature.

The **single supplement** for the tour is \$450. If you do not have a roommate but wish to share, we will try to pair you with a roommate from the tour; but if none is available, you will be billed for the single supplement. Our tour fees are based on double occupancy; one-half the cost of a double room is priced into the tour fee. The single supplement is calculated by taking the actual cost of a single room and subtracting one-half the cost of a double room (plus any applicable taxes).

TOUR REGISTRATION: To register for this tour, complete the Registration/Release and Indemnity form and return it with a **deposit of \$450** per person. If registering by phone, a deposit must be received within fourteen days, or the space will be released. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to departure, or **by January 4, 2019. We will bill you for the final payment at either 120 days or when the tour has reached sufficient subscription to operate, whichever date comes later.** Since the cost of your trip insurance and airline tickets is generally non-refundable, please do not finalize these purchases until you have received final billing for the tour or have been advised that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate by your tour manager.

SMOKING: Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. If you smoke, please be sensitive to the group and refrain from smoking at meals, in vehicles, and in proximity to the group on trails and elsewhere.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Refund of deposit and payment, less \$100 handling fee, will be made if cancellation is received up to 120 days before departure. If cancellation occurs between 119 and 70 days before the departure date, 50% of the tour fee is refundable. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable.

This policy only applies to payments made to Field Guides for tour fees (and any services included in those fees). Airline tickets not included in the tour fee and purchased separately often carry penalties for cancellation or change, or are sometimes totally non-refundable. Additionally, if you take out trip insurance the cost of the insurance is not refundable so it is best to purchase the policy just prior to making full payment for the tour or at the time you purchase airline tickets, depending upon the airlines restrictions.

The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. The right is reserved to substitute in case of emergency another guide for the original one.

TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EMERGENCY INSURANCE: We strongly recommend you consider purchasing trip cancellation (including medical emergency) insurance to cover your investment in case of injury or illness to you or your family prior to or during a trip. Because we must remit early (and substantial) tour deposits to our suppliers, we cannot offer any refund when cancellation occurs within 70 days of departure, and only a partial refund from 70 to 119 days prior to departure (see CANCELLATION POLICY). In addition, the Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and if it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. US medical insurance plans seldom cover health costs

incurred outside the United States unless supplemental coverage is purchased. Furthermore, US Medicare and Medicaid programs do not provide payment for medical services outside the United States.

When making a decision regarding health insurance, Americans should consider that many foreign doctors and hospitals require payment in cash prior to providing service and that a medical evacuation to the United States may cost well in excess of \$50,000. Uninsured travelers who require medical care overseas often face extreme difficulties. When consulting with your insurer prior to your trip, please ascertain whether payment will be made to the overseas healthcare provider or whether you will be reimbursed later for expenses that you incur.

US citizens will receive from us a brochure regarding optional tour cancellation/emergency medical insurance. Our agent, CSA, will insure for trip cancellation and interruption, medical coverage, travel delay, baggage loss and delay, 24-hour accident protection, and emergency medical transportation. If you purchase the insurance when making final payment for the tour, and cover all non-refundable parts of the trip (including any non-refundable flights), pre-existing conditions are covered. The CSA brochure includes a contact number; you may also purchase your CSA policy on-line by visiting our website at <https://fieldguides.com/travelinsurance.html> and clicking the link to CSA. Please note, once the insurance is purchased it is non-refundable, so please check with your tour manager prior to making the purchase to assure the tour will operate as scheduled. Citizens of other countries are urged to consult their insurance broker.

RESPONSIBILITY: For and in consideration of the opportunity to participate in the tour, each tour participant and each parent or legal guardian of a tour participant who is under 18 agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Field Guides Incorporated, its agents, servants, employees, shareholders, officers, directors, attorneys, and contractors as more fully set forth in the Release and Indemnity Agreement on the reverse side of the registration form. Field Guides Incorporated acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, or other means, and assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity caused by defect in such vehicles or for any reason whatsoever, including the acts, defaults, or bankruptcies of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. Field Guides Incorporated accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. The tour participant shall bear all such losses and expenses. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely.

Participants should be in good health and should consult a physician before undertaking a tour. If you have questions about the physical requirements of a tour, please contact our office for further information. Participants should prepare for the tour by reading the detailed itinerary, the information bulletin, and other pertinent matter provided by Field Guides. Each participant is responsible for bringing appropriate clothing and equipment as recommended in our bulletins.

THE RECEIPT OF YOUR TOUR DEPOSIT SHALL BE DEEMED TO BE CONSENT TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS. EACH TOUR PARTICIPANT AND EACH PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A TOUR PARTICIPANT WHO IS UNDER 18 SHALL SIGN AND DELIVER THE RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION.

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