

- The pretty capital of Santa Cruz

Is This Trip for You?

Activity level 4 - Moderate/Challenging

The walks on this trip vary between moderate and challenging and each day involves a fair amount of ascent and descent (for more details please see the daily itinerary). As this is a self-guided tour, there will be no group or tour leader and you can walk at your own pace. We do recommend that you take some time to rest and enjoy the views!

The terrain and type of path will vary but many of them can be rocky and steep, especially on the gorge walks on days 4 and 5. Good quality walking boots and poles are highly recommended for the type of walking you will be doing. All of the paths walked are approved and monitored by the Federación Española de Montañismo and are well sign-posted. The walks on days 2, 4, 5 and 7 are classed as the more challenging walks of the trip. If necessary on days 3, 4, 5 and 6 it is possible to shorten the walks, this will be discussed with you on your arrival briefing.

Although the walking can be steep we don't anticipate that vertigo sufferers will struggle at any point. However, if this does pose a problem, alternative shorter walks can be organised.

It is likely that you will encounter barking dogs during some of the walks, but walking poles are a useful deterrent.

Whilst the paths are well signed, it is likely that on the first 4 days of walking you will not come across many other walkers (if any), so it feels as though you have the views to yourself.

It is important that you are happy reading maps and following route notes, we make these as accurate as possible and they are regularly checked.

Families

Self-guided walking holidays are a perfect option for families as they offer the freedom for you to take your holiday at your own pace. You can stop as and when you want and need, places and sites that suit your family and that interest you. As a guide we have suggested that 12 years is the minimum age for this trip, but as it is self-guided and you will be leading your own family we will ultimately leave this decision up to you. The daily distances are all published in the trip notes along with a description of each days walking so you have a good idea of what to expect. However, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact one of our experts. The principle idea is that these holidays can be as flexible as you like, with logistical support but no group or leader to dictate the daily activities.

Group

As this is a self-guided holiday there is no group and no leader. Your luggage is transferred and route directions and maps are provided. The route directions contain an emergency assistance telephone number (operating between 08:30 and 22:00hrs). In emergency, the local representative is normally able to dispatch a taxi or pick you up themselves. They may wish to charge for this service.

Adult min age: 12

Itinerary

Day 2

Follow the GR130 long-distance coastal path towards the village of San Andrés

After a short 15 min transfer to Puntallana, today's walk follows the GR130 long-distance coastal path that runs across La Palma, through dramatic barrancos (ravines) with stunning coastal views. You will walk through citrus groves, avocado and mango orchards, small vineyards and banana plantations, arriving in the pretty village of San Andrés, one of the first colonial towns on the island. Take some time to explore the cobbled streets and houses in the historic quarter, visit one of the oldest churches on the island, enjoy a side visit to a local rum factory or take a dip in the seawater pools at Charco Azul. Then walk for another 15 minutes up the coast until you reach your apartment where you spend the night.

Overnight Apartamentos Miriam or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Distance covered: 15 km / 9 miles

Altitude gain (m): 500

Altitude loss (m): 700

Day 3

Walk uphill to Los Sauces; ascend to Barlovento

After breakfast, begin to walk uphill to Los Sauces, a small town with a vibrant atmosphere on the north east coast. Enjoy negotiating the dramatic 'Barranco de Herradura', and then ascend just over 500m through several small villages to reach Barlovento (meaning 'fresh breeze') a village which enjoys breathtakingly beautiful sea views.

Overnight Hotel La Palma Romantica or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Distance covered: 10 km / 6 miles

Altitude gain (m): 600

Altitude loss (m): 200

Day 4

Trek through the 'Dragon Trees Forest' and across the dramatic Barranco de Franceses before a final ascent

From Barlovento, follow a path through the 'Dragon Trees Forest', across undulating coastline with spectacular views towards the cliffs. Navigate a series of barrancos to reach Los Gallegos, and then descend to sea level, crossing the dramatic Barranco de Franceses before ascending to the pretty village of Franceses; At the end of the walk, take the public bus (fare included) back to Barlovento.

Overnight Hotel La Palma Romantica or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Distance covered: 13 km / 8 miles

Altitude gain (m): 600

Altitude loss (m): 750

Day 5

Trek down a steep sided gorge to the tiny hamlet of El Tablado. Then a steep ascent before a public bus back

After a short transfer this morning you use ancient paths to discover the far north of La Palma, one of the most unspoiled parts of the island. Walk across the Barranco de Los Hombres, a spectacular steep-sided gorge, to reach the tiny hamlet of El Tablado. Then a steep ascent to yet another tiny hamlet, Roque del Faro, before taking a public bus (fare included) back to your hotel in Barlovento.

Overnight Hotel La Palma Romantica or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Distance covered: 10 km / 6 miles

Altitude gain (m): 900

Altitude loss (m): 400

Day 6

Morning transfer to experience an exciting section of the GR131 route along the rim of the crater Caldera de Taburiente

Today you take a transfer (1 hour) to walk an exciting section of the GR131 route from the highest point of the island, Roque de los Muchachos, along the rim of the crater Caldera de Taburiente, to the Pico de la Nieve. The route has breathtaking views across the island and the high mountain paths twist and turn across the rocky landscape. In the distance it is possible to see the peak of Mount Teide on Tenerife, emerging from the horizon, 3750m above sea level. After a soft descent, your transfer takes you to the capital of Santa Cruz.

Meals included: Breakfast

Distance covered: 13 km / 8 miles

Altitude gain (m): 250

Altitude loss (m): 750

Day 7

Walk a popular part of the GR131 along the 'Ruta de Los Volcanes'

Take an unforgettable walk today along the 'Ruta de Los Volcanes'. Here you navigate a series of volcanoes in the south of the island, with some of them having erupted only a few years ago. This is the longest walk of the trip, and although it involves a substantial descent it is a very popular and well-marked path, following the GR131 from beginning to end.

Overnight Hotel El Galeon or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Distance covered: 19 km / 11 miles

Altitude gain (m): 550

Altitude loss (m): 1300

Please note that a member of the group may be allocated a single room by default if the make-up of the group means there isn't anyone for them to share with. Paying the supplement in advance is the only way to guarantee a single room.

Single supplements cannot be refunded retrospectively.

Single supplement from \$430.90 USD

Food & Transport

Eating & Drinking

All breakfasts included.

In Santa Cruz and Barlovento, breakfasts are buffets in the hotels and usually include a selection of breads, cereals, pastries, cold meats and cheese, fresh fruit and yogurt. In San Andres breakfast is provided in a local cafe and is usually bread, eggs and fruit.

A packed lunch can be requested from the hotels in Santa Cruz and Barlovento (please request this the night before) or there are some nearby supermarkets where you are able to pick up food for your journey. Supermarkets are generally closed on Sundays so please be prepared for this.

Dinners can be booked in advance as a Half Board (HB) supplement or there are other dining options nearby. Dinners, when the HB supplement is paid in advance, are usually 3 courses and are taken from a set menu at a local restaurant or at your hotel and offer a variety of local specialities and international cuisine. There is a lot of fresh fish available.

Drinks are not included with dinner, but a soft drink should cost €1-2, a beer €2-4, a glass of wine €2-3 and a bottle of wine from €8 upwards.

Vegetarians: Please be aware that meat and fish are staple foods in Spain. Most vegetarians do not experience any problems, however please be prepared to be flexible.

Transportation

Your luggage is transported from hotel to hotel for you. Some of your transfers are in taxis and some are on the public bus (fares included) - details will be provided to you at the welcome briefing.

Weather & Seasonality

Weather Information

La Palma enjoys a relatively balanced climate year round due to the trade winds that affect all of the Canary Islands. These winds from the north east carry moisture and can mean that two different sides of the island can be experiencing completely different weather patterns simultaneously. The winds provide a lovely natural cooling system which is perfect for hiking. However you should be prepared for rain at any time, La Palma is a lush, green island and the weather systems can be quite unpredictable. We offer this trip year round, but please be aware that there can be significant increases in temperature in July and August and this may lead to cancellation of some walking days if the weather is too hot. The best time to trek is from October to May, when the island is a little cooler.

Weather Charts

Location end: Santa Cruz

What to Take

Essential Equipment

As well as casual clothes for travel and days off, we recommend that you bring the following:

Day sack with 30-40 litres capacity

A good quality waterproof/windproof jacket and waterproof trousers

Walking boots with good ankle support and a strong sole

A warm fleece or lightweight down jacket

Sun hat, sun cream and sun glasses

Hat and gloves

Walking poles are highly recommended

Mobile phone (please check your sim card works overseas)

Optional Equipment

Swim suit/trunks

Towel for the pools at Charco Azul



Practical Information

Passport

Spain

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information offered below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Visa

Spain

No visa required for US passport holders.

For further travel advice please visit U.S. State Department at <https://www.state.gov/travelers/>

Visa regulations can change without notice: please check the current regulations in good time to obtain a visa if one is required.

Vaccination

Spain

There are no specific health risks.

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad.

The above information can change at short notice; as we are not qualified to answer all your questions about travel health we strongly recommend you contact your Medical Professional or a Travel Health Clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure for up-to-date information. Please note: vaccinations that are routinely recommended to residents of North America or Australasia are not considered to form part of the travel health advice, and you should ensure these are kept up to date where necessary.

For additional information please visit: Centers for Disease Control C.D.C at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

Insurance - are you adequately covered?

It is a condition of joining any of our holidays that you must be fully insured against medical and personal accident risks (to include repatriation costs and air ambulance or helicopter rescue services where appropriate). On arrival in destination for your trip, you will be asked to present details to your leader or local representative of your policy.

If you are resident of the United States, we recommend the Travelex Travel Select travel insurance policy, this is specifically designed to cover all activities on your trip. If arranging your own policy please ensure that you are covered for all activities that are part of the trip, optional activities that you intend to take part in and/or on high altitude itineraries, that you are covered up to the maximum altitude of the trip.

Local Time

Spain's Timezone: Europe/Madrid CET (GMT +01:00)

Electricity

Spain's Electricity: European plug - 2 round pins. 230 Volts AC.

Money

Spain's Currency

The national currency of Spain is the Euro (EUR), with an exchange rate at the time of publication (October 2017) of approximately 0.84 to the USD, 0.67 to the CAD, 0.66 to the AUD and 0.59 to the NZD.

ATM Availability

ATMs are available in Santa Cruz, Los Sauces and Barlovento. Credit cards are generally accepted in supermarkets, at the hotel in Barlovento and throughout Santa Cruz, but you will need cash for more rural areas.

Extra Expenses & Spending Money

For the meals not included we recommend that you allow €8-15 for lunch if taken in a café or restaurant and €25-40 for dinners. The hotel can arrange a packed lunch for you (approx. €6) if you request it the night before, or you can pick up picnic supplies from a supermarket.

Stargazing (€25 per person) is a very popular activity on La Palma and this can be booked for you in advance. Please speak to a member of Breakaway staff beforehand or talk to the local representative about this in your welcome briefing.



Responsible Tourism

At Breakaway we believe in the power of Responsible Travel.

Every time we travel, we are part of a global movement that creates jobs, builds more sustainable societies, encourages cultural understanding and safeguards common natural and cultural heritage.

Important Information

On all guided trips

Although our leaders are well trained to deal with different capabilities, if they have any concerns about someone's ability to safely partake in an activity, or their impact on other people's enjoyment, we authorize them to take necessary action which, in some circumstances, may involve asking someone to miss that activity.

Although rarely enforced, by booking this trip you agree to section 5 of our Booking Conditions which clearly states that our leaders have the authority to do this. In these circumstances we will ensure anyone sitting out is safely provided for and offered alternative options where possible. Refunds will not be provided for activities missed and customers may be liable for additional costs incurred.

On all trips

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call the Breakaway office and ask to speak to one of the experts on this itinerary.

In an emergency, please contact our 24 hour out of hours service on +44 (0) 844 326 7041.

Every time that you travel abroad you should take the time to read the warnings in the essential information in the brochure.

Full joining instructions including local emergency numbers, and details of how to reach the start point, will be sent to you approximately 2 to 3 weeks prior to departure. If you do not receive these at least a week before departure, or require them earlier please contact our office or your travel agent.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure or website, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure and website. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; in order to enjoy them you should be prepared to be flexible where necessary. Occasionally, as stated in our brochure, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned. This may be for a variety of reasons - climatic, political, physical or other. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements that maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

TRAVEL AWARE – STAY SAFE & HEALTHY ABROAD

The U.S. State Department has up-to-date advice on staying safe and healthy abroad. For more on security, local laws, plus passport and visa information, see <https://www.state.gov/travelers/>

Keep informed of current travel health news by visiting Centers for Disease Control C.D.C at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

For all latest travel information about your holiday, please visit our Travel Safety Advice page.

How to Book

Ready to book? Please contact **Breakaway Adventures on Tel: 1-800-567-6286; International Tel: +1-843-856-9771.**

<https://www.breakaway-adventures.com>

Version 1