

Away from Home

By Jaime Bartolome



Some people say I have the best job in the world! I get to explore hidden parts of my beautiful country of Spain while designing new cycling routes for my clients in a family venture that involves the expert opinion of my British wife and two kids.

When you book a holiday with Away from the Crowds, it's a personal experience from beginning to end: Sylvia answers your initial questions and, with her wealth of local knowledge, helps you to decide on which holiday is best suited to you. Jorge is our logistics man. He takes care of all the details from luggage transfers and bike selection to local travel arrangements and meals. Cristina will send you last minute tips and information before you travel and keep you informed throughout on our Facebook page. Vanesa will take care of all the bills and behind the scenes admin.



As a company we are committed to sustainable tourism. Many of our tours take you through protected areas and Natural Parks of breath-taking beauty where you can experience first-hand the rich diversity of Spain's natural heritage. We also calculate the CO₂ emissions of each holiday and compensate them through reforestation projects in tropical regions. Locally, your economic input makes a big difference to fragile rural communities.



When we set up Away from the Crowds, 10 years ago, we knew we wanted to take travellers to the parts of Spain we love and that are usually out of reach to tourists.

Our self-guided routes reflect that, combining our love of cycling with our passion for Spain's rich culture, delicious food and wine, and traditional way of life. These are some of my favourites:

1. For a real grassroots experience: **Landscapes of Castile.**
This tour takes you into the depths of unexplored rural Spain to discover the raw natural beauty of the country.

From the foothills of the Guadarrama Mountains National Park, winding country lanes will take you through red stone villages and medieval towns. I love the first glimpses of the isolated black slate villages with their bewitching atmosphere! In the distance looms the impressive Jadraque castle of El Cid which is well worth a visit. The canyon of the "Rio Dulce" then escorts you to the real highlight of the trip....the magnificent medieval town of Sigüenza with its beautifully restored medieval castle and historic cathedral.

www.awayfromthecrowds.com/holidays/cycling/land-of-el-cid

2. The home of Away from the Crowds...what can we say...we love this place! : **Segovia's medieval villages**

This fabulous route begins in my home city of Segovia. I never cease to marvel at Segovia's incredible Roman Aqueduct, an impressive feat of civil engineering! You'll then take the cycle lane to visit the Royal Palace of San Ildefonso. This route transports you back in time with visits to traditional stone villages and the 13th century Pedraza Castle. My favourite part of this cycle tour is undoubtedly the Duratón Canyon Nature Reserve. The powerful forces of the River Duratón have excavated deep gorges in these limestone lands, and a great number of large birds swoop overhead, so close that you can hear the beating of their wings. Don't forget your binoculars!

www.awayfromthecrowds.com/holidays/cycling/segovia-s-medieval-villages

3. For a different perspective: **Asturias, from Mountains to Sea**

This tour is an adventure full of contrasts. It starts in the planes of Northern Castilla - a little-known area full of beautiful Romanesque churches from medieval times. Despite crossing the Picos de Europa National Park, most of the cycling is downhill as the route meanders its way to the Northern coast. The highpoint of this trip is the cable car ride to the Fuente Dé cable car - a dizzy 1823m high! An unforgettable experience with breath-taking views. Another day in the mountains will give you the opportunity to visit the isolated village of Bulnes, which is only accessible via a funicular railway. The tour ends gloriously by the sea in the popular fishing town of Llanes.

www.awayfromthecrowds.com/holidays/cycling/across-picos

Our self-guided tours give you the opportunity to enjoy yourselves and go at your own pace while we take care of all the logistics of your trip. And should you need us, our helpful team are only a phone call away.

There are so many other fabulous places off the beaten track waiting to be explored and the best way to do it is by bike!

Website : www.awayfromthecrowds.com

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