

# WILD PHOTOGRAPHY HOLIDAYS



## NORTH SPAIN SEASCAPES

OF ASTURIAS, GALICIA AND  
THE BASQUE COUNTRY

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Outstanding seascapes
- Wild empty beaches
- Island of San Juan de Gaztelugatxe
- Sea stacks and arches
- Spectacular Catedrales Beach, Galicia
- Picturesque fishing villages
- Authentic working harbours
- Lighthouses
- Start & finish in Bilbao
- Scenically located hotels
- Delicious traditional food
- Excellent opportunities for long exposure, low light & macro photography

### INTRODUCTION

We have chosen to start and finish this new workshop in the fascinating area of Bilbao as it is well served by direct international flights from many European hubs and is home to some incredible coastal landscapes. Most photographers have a deep fascination and connection to these vast expanses of water that stretch endlessly, seemingly to the edge of the world. This magnetic draw often begins as a child, exploring an exciting world of mysterious rock pools with darting sea creatures, collecting shells, dancing in waves and marvelling at patterns in the sand; it is a totally absorbing activity. The nostalgia, and sense of possibility of the seashore has for many

of us a deep emotional pull that can lead us to some tremendously inspired and inspiring images. Our ten day itinerary includes the best Bay of Biscay locations of the Basque country (Euskadi), Cantabria, Asturias and Galicia. North Spain's coastline has outstanding sea-landscapes comprising wild beaches, fabulous rock formations, sea stacks, arches, caves, fishing villages and turquoise seas. Although this area is very accessible, it is a total enigma outside of Spain. The whole coastline has a gentle simplicity and in many ways seems like a land that time forgot. The local people are kind, laid back and fun loving. English is very little spoken and the Spanish spoken here has either a local dialect or in the case of the Basque country their own



unique language. We have chosen four lovely hotels that are very well placed for our best seascape locations. First stop is Bilbao, a vibrant and cosmopolitan city and home to the splendid Guggenheim Museum. Our first two and last night hotel will be in the quaint coastal town of Mundaka just north of Bilbao. On Day 3 we travel west where we base ourselves for three nights in Cudillero, known within Asturias as one of its most picturesque fishing villages. Heading further west we spend two nights in Galicia close to the UNESCO site of the Catedrales Beach. En route back to Bilbao for our last night, we will spend night 8 in a gorgeous hotel overlooking the Bay of Biscay's La Franca Beach in Cantabria.

## YOUR TUTORS

[Martin Sammtleben](#) and [Geraldine Westrupp](#) have a base in Asturias and together they know North Spain intimately. Their connection with this dramatic coastline goes back more than two decades. They have been running workshops, tours and holidays here for many years. Creating this new coastal workshop has been an absolute joy

for them and they are truly excited to share their local knowledge with you.

## ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHY

### Macro Photography

There will be great scope for macro photography. In addition to the spring flowers adorning the cliffs and meadows, the beaches are rife with opportunities for macro and creative abstracts. The receding tide exposes a labyrinth of rock pools which are teeming with sea life. Walking over the rocks, you will encounter anemones, starfish, sea snails, aquatic plants, fish, barnacles and more. The strikingly coloured rocks with various coloured strata and smooth pebble beaches provide ample opportunity for absorbing macro photography.

### Low Light and Long Exposure Photography

The ebb and flow of the sea is a hypnotic motion. There will be many opportunities to capture the gentle ghostly movement of water that many photographers love. We will teach you how to capture the movement of the sea in a way that is both creative and pleasing to you. The op-



portunity for low light and long exposure photography will present itself at sunrise, sunset and sometimes cloudy days. We will learn how to effectively compose seascapes, use ND filters and choose appropriate camera settings.

### Locations

The following itinerary does not give a day by day account of our photographic locations. We will be very flexible and are to a large extent dependent on the tides, weather, sunrises and sunsets. The timing for when the low tide coincides with sunrise is especially crucial here. Needless to say our main focus as always is lots of photography in as many great locations as possible. There will be quality tuition in the field and help with post processing. We are always happy to return to locations more than once if needed.

## DAILY ITINERARY

### Day 1&2: Arrive and Transfer to Mundaka

Our first meeting as a group for introductions and a trip briefing will be at our hotel in Mundaka at 17:00. The local airport is Bilbao and is well served with flights from



Europe. Please contact the office if you require further information. We will include transfers to the hotel meeting flights coming into Bilbao Airport between 10:00 and 16:00 on Day 1. If you choose to stay in Bilbao the night before Day 1, please contact the office for transfer details. If you are arriving outside of these times taxis are available at the airport and cost around 40€. Following our introductory meeting we will go out locally for sunset followed by dinner in a restaurant. Huge swells roll in from the Bay of Biscay and slam into the rocky coastline of the Basque Country. The estuary at Mundaka has created a perfect sandbar which forms a famous world class surfing wave that can be watched

from the town's harbour wall. Our hotel is in one of the prettiest areas of of Mundaka, the old port area with colourful traditional Basque houses, small fishing boats, a lovely little sandy beach and a great tidal estuary. Hotel 2 nights (B,L,D)

### **Day 3–5: Cudillero**

The day will begin with a sunrise location followed by breakfast. Afterwards we will set off to Cudillero. We will take in a couple of locations en route and enjoy a picnic lunch on a beach. Cudillero is known within Asturias as one of its most picturesque fishing villages. Colourful houses are squashed together and piled on top of each

other. Topped with rust coloured terracotta roofs they are built on a mishmash of steep terraces that tumble down to a tiny harbour with turquoise water and bobbing boats. Many of these traditional Asturian houses are crumbling and abandoned. Essentially a fishing town, late afternoon the boats come back in with their catch and they head to the market to auction them off. Along the walls by the harbour we sometimes find lines of fish called 'curadillos' stretched and hanging in the sun to dry. The village is famous for eating fish and drinking Cider. Our small traditional hotel is right here in the midst of the village just a stones throw from the harbour. We spend three nights here as it is a very short distance to many

high quality coastal locations. We are also very well placed for good photography in and around the village itself. Close by are several seascapes for us to visit and photograph including Luarca with its busy working harbour fish market and the close by Campiecho Beach where we have literally spent hours exploring. The most striking features are natural caves, pointed sea stacks and fabulous rock pools. Playa de Silencio is maybe the most dramatic of all with its close neighbour the rocky and little visited beach of Gueirúa, a truly fabulous sunrise location.

Hotel 3 nights (B,L,D)

#### **Day 6&7: Catedrales Beach Galicia**

This morning we travel for around 1 hr into Galicia with a possible stop at the lively port town Ribadeo. The Ría de Ribadeo separates Galicia from Asturias. The old town of Ribadeo between Plaza de España and the harbour is an attractive mix of handsome old galleried and stone houses. Praia As Catedrais ten kilometres away, is one of Galicia's most spectacular strands. It has been described as one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. We time our visits here to avoid the tourists. Our modern hotel sits atop a small cliff and overlooks a lovely beach. Each of our rooms will have a terrace looking out to the sea. It is just a five minute drive from our hotel to the main attraction which is the rock formations on As Catedrais beach. The weird and wonderful rock formations are magical and they do resemble Gothic cathedrals. Our photography here will be to a certain extent dictated by the tides. We have chosen neaps moving into springs allowing us some good photographic windows at the right time of the day. Wellingtons (waterproof boots)



will be a must. We have enjoyed photographing from both the beach and from the cliffs above.

Hotel 2 nights (B,L,D)

#### **Day 8: La Franca Beach Cantabria**

This morning we will start our journey back west towards Bilbao with a night by the beach of La Franca. This is only a couple of hours journey with photographic stops en route including, Playa de Sablón, Cuevas del Mar and the Río de las Cabras o Bedón where we find the isolated monastery of San Antolín de Bedón located close to yet another fine beach. Our hotel tonight overlooks the beach of La Franca where we will enjoy sunset photography before an evening meal at our hotel.

Hotel 1 night (B,L,D)

#### **Day 9: To Bilbao**

Following sunrise photography and a leisurely breakfast we will head west to Bilbao. This is a journey of just under two hours. There are several locations fairly close to our hotel that we may visit for the afternoon and sunset including the island of San Juan de Gaztelugatxe which looks like it's straight from a movie set and indeed it featured in Game of Thrones. Whether you are a fan of the series or not, San Juan de Gaztelugatxe will dazzle you with its unique situation. The island is connected to the mainland by a man-made stone bridge. The bridge transitions into a narrow path that contains 241 steps and zigzags its way back and forth to the top. These steps have even been recognised as one of the world's grandest staircases.

Hotel 1 night (B,L,D)



### Day 10: Bilbao

This morning our trip finishes after breakfast. Your return flights will probably be at different times today. You will be free to leave at any time after breakfast although there will be an 11:00 AM checkout from the hotel. If you have homeward flights morning/early afternoon we will transfer you to the airport. If not then you will need to get a taxi. It is worth considering an extra night in Bilbao to explore this famous and unique Basque city. The dining and tapas bars are world famous as is the Guggenheim museum. We would be able to drop you at a hotel leaving you with the day and evening to explore. (B)

### JOINING ARRANGEMENTS AND TRANSFERS

The local airport is Bilbao, which is well served with flights from many international hubs. Please contact the office if you require further information. We will provide transfers to the hotel meeting flights arriving between 10:00 and 16:00 on Day 1.

If you are arriving/departing outside our official transfer times, taxis will be available at both the airport and the hotel. They cost around 40€ each way.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- 9 nights accommodation
- 9 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 9 dinners
- Airport transfers

### WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- International flights
- Alcoholic beverages
- snacks, soft drinks and hot beverages
- Travel insurance

### ACCOMMODATION

We stay in small scenically located coastal hotels with single/double rooms and private bathrooms.

### FOOD

The food will be Spanish, wholesome and filling local dishes. Breakfast is taken in the hotel. There will be a



substantial picnic lunch on most days making good use of local bread, cheeses, meats and salad. Dinner is usually three courses with starter, main course and dessert.

### SPENDING MONEY

Depending on whether or not you intend to buy presents, souvenirs we would suggest around 150 Euros. Credit- & debit cards are widely accepted and ATMs are available in most places.

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is recommended that you take out appropriate insurance to cover personal accident, medical costs, repatriation, holiday/flight cancellation and loss of baggage. We will need a copy of your travel insurance policy.

### PASSPORT & VISAS

For residents of the European Union, European Economic Area and the UK a passport with 6 months remaining validity is sufficient.



Visas are generally required for all other tourists. Check with the Spanish embassy or consulate in your country of origin. Also see [Spain's official tourism website...](#)

## HEALTH

We will have a first aid kit to hand at all times. Please bring with you any personal medicines and a very simple kit with plasters etc.

## CLIMATE

Northern Spain is known for its changeable weather. Although most of the region's precipitation occurs in winter, it can rain at any time of the year. Conditions will

sometimes be comfortable for shorts and short sleeved shirts. As with any coastal area there is the risk of some poor weather, with rain and even mist/fog.

## TRAVEL INFORMATION

Spain is 1 hour ahead of GMT (Greenwich mean time). Electricity is 220 volts and electrical sockets have two round pins. The currency is Euro and the language Spanish with local dialects just to make it interesting.

## SUGGESTED CLOTHING

Generally we would hope that the weather will be warm and sunny, but in mountain areas it can rain and become

a little chilly at times so a few items of warm clothing should be brought along in addition to your normal casual clothes for travel and the hotel!

- Lightweight trousers
- Long sleeved shirt/tee-shirt for sun protection
- Light warm jacket
- Lightweight waterproof jacket/trousers
- Pair sturdy walking trainers/boots/shoes (either)
- Wellington boots (rubber boots)
- Sun hat
- Shorts
- Light warm hat
- Pair of light gloves

- Scarf (cotton/silk) for protection against sun on neck

#### Useful Extras:

- Very small basic first aid to include plasters, and any personal medicines
- Litre water bottle
- Small penknife

#### SUN PROTECTION

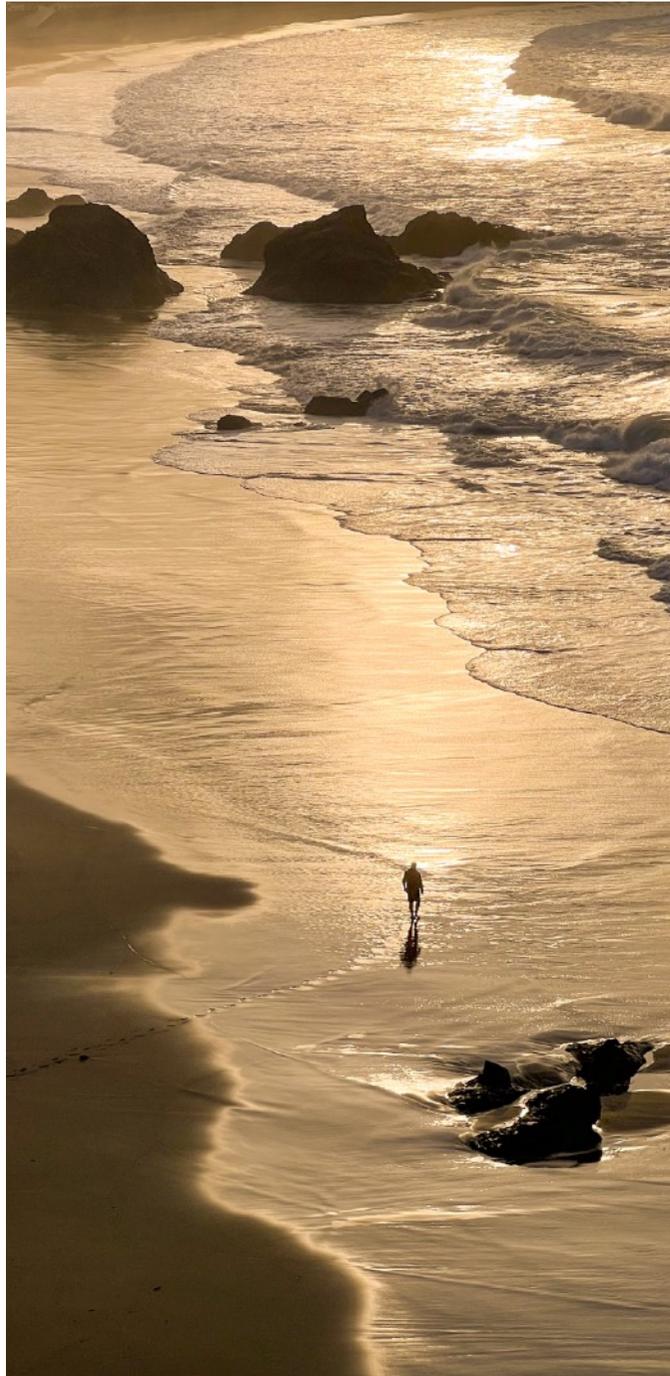
Temperatures during the day can be warm and the sun can be quite penetrating on the beaches so please ensure that you have some sort of sun protection.

Sun Lotion with an SPF for UVA & UVB of 15+; a lightweight hat to protect your head and neck from the sun; good sunglasses with high quality non-tinted lenses and high degree of UV protection.

#### PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT/INFORMATION

- In addition to your chosen camera equipment you will need to carry a day pack that will also hold a few extra items such as water, spare layer etc. Specially designed camera rucksacks like F-Stop, Lowepro and Peak design will be fine.
- A camera with interchangeable lenses such as a digital SLR or a compact system camera/mirrorless camera.
- A set of lenses to cover the whole range from wide-angle to telephoto, for example...

For full-frame cameras: 16–35mm wide-angle, 24–105mm mid-range and a 70–200mm or longer tele zoom. For crop format cameras: 10–20mm wide-angle, 17–50mm mid-range and a 70–200mm or longer tele zoom.



- Spare camera (highly recommended)
- Sturdy tripod for low light photography
- Remote release to avoid shake on long exposures
- Neutral density, graduated filters and polariser, if you use these. At least one neutral density filter in the range of 4–6 stops is recommended.
- Lens cloth
- Sensor cleaning device (optional)
- Lightweight 'trekking' absorbent towel for drying cameras and equipment
- Rain cover for camera and camera bag.
- Sufficient memory cards for the whole holiday as it may not be possible to buy more during the trip.
- Film users should bring enough film, as it may not be possible to buy in many places.
- A laptop or tablet with the image editing applications of your choice, essential for checking and presenting images during the trip and for one-on-one sessions with the tutor. All of the places we stay in have Wi-Fi.
- Backup storage device (optional)
- Spare batteries and chargers
- All the electrical sockets are European two-pin, so you might need a travel plug adapter.

#### PARTNERS

Non-photographer partners will be very welcome although this is primarily a photography holiday. We also visit some very beautiful and relaxing places. If any participants do not wish to join the walks/photographic ses-

sions they will be able to relax in and around the accommodation. The cost will be the same for photographers and non-photographer.

### **OUTDOOR TRAVEL**

This is an outdoor travel photography holiday and the itinerary will be dependent on the vagaries of the weather, local conditions and other variables. Wild Photography Holidays may use their discretion to change the itinerary should conditions dictate this; your health, safety and enjoyment will always be our primary concern when making such changes.

### **MORE QUESTIONS?**

While we hope that this information has answered most of your questions about the holiday, we know it will not give you all the information you need. If you have any more questions, please get in touch. Talking to us on the phone (we will always call you back) can often be a quick way of sorting out individual questions. It also helps us to get to know each other before the holiday.

### **BOOKING THIS HOLIDAY**

Contact us [through our website](#) where you can also fill in the [online booking form](#), or phone +44 (0)1270 440222.

### **LINKS**

View [images and information](#) for this tour on the website. Read about [our approach to teaching photography](#)

