

RECREATING EXTREMADURA ITINERARY

27th October – 2nd November 2019

It's hard to think of a more perfect location for nature-writing course in 2019 than south-west Spain's Extremadura region.

About twice the size of Wales, it holds some of the richest and most beautiful landscapes in the country - a blend of ancient agriculture, kaleidoscopic natural beauty and astonishing wildlife diversity. The area's steppes and unique oak parklands, known as dehesas, extend to a far horizon and have a history stretching back well before the Romans. They are a wonderful cultural landscape in their own right, but they are also home to some of the highest levels of natural abundance in Europe

It is the proximity to so much wildlife that makes our writing course unique. We are delighted to offer it again in 2019. We have also developed a sister course - 'Extremadura through 360°'. It is also advertised on this site.

'Recreating Extremadura' involves two full-day excursions that book-end the three-day writing programme. During our outings into the surrounding countryside we will experience a wide range of landscape types as well as much of the wonderful wildlife for which the region is famous: its oak wood pasture, the river valleys including the Tajo, Iberia's longest river system, the extraordinary Henry-Moore-like granite monoliths around Trujillo and the extensive grassland plains. In November the days are warm and pleasant so vultures and eagles are riding the thermals at Monfragüe NP. Yet one major plus at this time of year is the 'second-spring' effect triggered by the autumn rains. It returns the seared vegetation of summer to green and even encourages plants to re-flower. The autumn colours are strong and wood smoke rises everywhere in the landscape as the farm workers prune and burn off cuttings from the groves of olives and live oaks.

Our excursions supply us with a fund of encounters which we can use and explore during the indoor sessions. These are based at the Kelsey's family-run finca Casa Rural el Recuerdo. It has six double rooms and our intended group size is 6-8 participants.

Our participants said:

"A transformative experience and the wildlife was stunning."

"There couldn't be a better guide than Martin, not just for intimate knowledge of the best places ... but also for an immense fund of erudition, always modestly delivered. I feel my writing has taken a step forward thanks to Mark's wonderfully put-together course and encouragement."

"What I enjoyed most was the combination of living in a beautiful rural landscape for a week and going out and scrutinising it for what was actually in it, with expert guidance from you and Martin. I hope it will bring new depth and honesty to my own writing that gets beyond the superficial beauty of a landscape."

Prices and arrangements

£1375 (£175 discount for participants in shared room) includes all transfers to and from Madrid airport, all transportation, meals including packed lunches, and accommodation. Martin Kelsey and Mark Cocker will accompany all excursions. Additional costs only for drinks and snacks during the day and drinks with dinner. A £150 deposit is payable on booking.

For further details

Email: info@birdingextremadura.com