



SIERRA NEVADA  
 PARQUE NACIONAL  
 PARQUE NATURAL

# Responsible behaviour

## AT THE SIERRA NEVADA NATIONAL PARK AND NATURAL PARK



FOR THE CONSERVATION OF OUR NATURAL SPACE

High mountain areas are a fragile and vulnerable environment that is sensitive to impacts. Be aware of the effects your actions have at all times.

Respect the rules and indications on signs and panels in addition to any temporary or permanent access restrictions there may.



# *Responsible behaviour*

AT THE SIERRA NEVADA NATIONAL PARK AND NATURAL PARK

Activities in nature take place in areas of undeniable cultural, scenic and environmental value. We normally spend our time in protected natural spaces, sometimes causing negative effects that impact the ecosystems, species and area visitors as a result of unawareness or carelessness.

By following the simple recommendations that have been grouped into the following sections, we will be able to enjoy our leisure-time, sports or ecotourism experience in the Sierra Nevada without causing any harm to the environment.

1. Do not disturb the animals.
2. Leave no trace of your time here.
3. Practice responsible behaviour towards the cultural heritage by leaving everything as it is.
4. Respect those who live in the area as well as any visitors you may encounter.
5. Enjoy the Sierra Nevada in a safe manner.
6. "The rules are made to be followed". They have your best interest and that of the Sierra in mind.
7. Help us to achieve a responsible model for public use and ecotourism.

Behaving responsibly will aid in protecting this area which is considered a "biodiversity paradise" and a "mountain of opportunities".





# Sierra Nevada

## A BIG MOUNTAIN, A SMALL CONTINENT

The Sierra Nevada majestically rises over the fertile meadows of Granada and the eastern foothills where the Nacimiento and Andarax rivers join together, in Almería, between the high plateau of Marquesado del Zenete and the orchards of the Alpujarras. A mosaic of ecosystems can be found along the slopes of the Sierra Nevada, separating the coast from the mountain peaks in just 30 kilometres. This span, however, resembles the thousands of kilometres that stretch across the European continent.

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# Sierra Nevada

## A BIG MOUNTAIN, A SMALL CONTINENT

- The Mulhacén (at a height of 3,479 m. it is the pinnacle of the Iberian Peninsula) is located in the Sierra Nevada and is accompanied by approximately thirty other peaks that surpass altitudes of 3,000 metres.

- Here there are remains and imprints from the southern-most Quaternary glaciation on the European continent, thus making a natural geomorphology museum out of the high-summit areas. Over 50 high-altitude lakes and ponds are nestled among the ancient cirques and glacial valleys.

- The relationship between humans and the Sierra dates back thousands of years. Neolithic settlements, vestiges from the Metal Age cultures and the arrival of the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Visigoths and Moors have shaped a vast historical legacy.

- The Sierra Nevada is an enclave of great biological diversity.

It is home to a large number of plant species that can only be found here, as well as other formations of great interest such as borreguiles (alpine plants belonging to the nevadense species that are native to the Sierra Nevada), deciduous forests, flora in dolomite rock...

The many ecosystems present in the Sierra Nevada also support a wide range of wildlife. We can thus observe a large number of birds, mammals, reptiles... amounting to a total of almost 300 vertebrates. Many insects that are exclusively found in the Sierra Nevada inhabit its most highly elevated areas, having adapted to the harsh climatic conditions.

Thanks to this natural wealth the Sierra Nevada has received the highest of conservation statuses and recognitions: Biosphere Reserve, Natural Park, National Park, Special Protection Area for Birds (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Green List of Protected Areas and European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.





## *Do not disturb the animals*



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## *Do not disturb the animals*

The Sierra Nevada mountain range is home to an enormous animal biodiversity, part of which has always been connected to human activity due to the use of natural resources in this territory.

The presence of humans in protected natural spaces has increased with the rise in outdoor activities, thus altering the behaviour of the most opportunistic fauna. This situation is detrimental to both animals and humans.

It is important to follow a series of recommendations in order to avoid altering, to the extent possible, the behaviour of our fauna:

- When visiting with your dog, make sure that it does not disturb any wildlife, farm animals or any people. Ground-nesting birds may abandon their nests if they feel threatened by a dog. Effectively controlling our pets means that they must be on a leash.

- Do not feed wild animals as this changes both their feeding patterns and behaviour, possibly becoming a negative element that could affect their survival.

As a result of these changes in habits, foxes increasingly attack and steal food from hikers.

The Iberian wild goat is also becoming more trusting of humans, thus causing this animal to be an easy target for poachers.

- The viper is necessary for protecting the natural habitat balance. Avoid disturbing these snakes and keep yourself safe by wearing the proper footwear.

- Invasive species are a danger to native flora and fauna. Never let your pet go off alone into nature!

- If we make too much noise we will disrupt the wildlife and miss out on the opportunity to observe and listen to it in its natural state.





*Leave no trace of your time here*



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## *Leave no trace of your time here*

- Lakes are very fragile ecosystems where the survival of its inhabitants depends on a delicate balance; this ecosystem can easily be disrupted by people or animals going for a swim.
- For the same reason, avoid using chemical agents out in nature such as soaps or detergents.
- A wide variety of native and unique species can be found in the pastures –called “borreguiles”– that are located close to these lakes. It is important to avoid stepping on or placing anything on these species that could crush them such as tents or camp sites. Always choose a removed and dry area, and you’ll also avoid getting wet.
- Avoid building stone walls in these pastures as shelter from the wind; these can cause damage to the pastures and can cut off the drainage network that feeds the lakes. Look for refuge or a natural shelter to protect yourself.
- Fires can be just as devastating for wildlife and their habitats as they are for people and their belongings, so be careful with fire and cigarettes year-round.
- Do not leave rubbish –even organic waste– out in the countryside. Even some simple skins or peels can significantly spoil the purity of the landscape and can “invite” other hikers to do the same. Biodegradation is slow at high altitudes and litter can upset the environmental balance. Avoid hiding your rubbish under stones or among the rocks.
- An excessive number of visitors in specific areas and at certain times of the year threaten the territory’s assets in addition to affecting the quality of your visit; select places that are not crowded and not as vulnerable. These spots can be selected from the wide variety of locations accessible in the Sierra Nevada (Visitor Information from the Ministry of Environment and Regional Planning, <http://bit.ly/SJCM1F>).
- If we cut or uproot plants –or even pick their fruits, flowers and seeds– we are harming them and preventing others from enjoying these truly precious botanical treasures. Many of these species are unique and native to the Sierra Nevada and some are highly endangered with limited populations.







## *Practice responsible behaviour towards the cultural heritage*

BY LEAVING EVERYTHING AS IT IS



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## *Practice responsible behaviour towards the cultural heritage*

BY LEAVING EVERYTHING AS IT IS

- In the countryside it is common to find items of cultural and ethnographic heritage in different conditions. Avoid climbing or causing damage to the ruins, mills, walls, farmhouses, etc. that you may encounter along the way; let them “tell you their story”.
- Make use of the existing trails and routes. Do not create new paths since this action can lead to processes of erosion and large gullies in addition to directly harming the flora and invertebrate species.
- Avoid walking through streams as well as by the edge of narrow ones since this action can damage or destroy them. Walking by streams is only permitted in the event that there is a clear trail. Likewise, visitors should never pass by or through streams on horseback.
- Be respectful of shelters and campsites; finding them clean, rubbish-free and in good condition is greatly appreciated.





## *Respect those who live in the area*

AS WELL AS ANY VISITORS YOU MAY ENCOUNTER



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## *Respect those who live in the area*

AS WELL AS ANY VISITORS YOU MAY ENCOUNTER

- Be considerate of local communities and of others who are also enjoying outdoor activities. Remember that your actions can affect the livelihood of those who live in or off of the countryside.
- Cooperate with those who are working in the countryside by following their instructions when they are carrying out farming activities.
- Make sure that any human excrement is left out of sight as it can be quite uncomfortable for others to spot human waste.
- When cycling or driving a vehicle reduce your speed as soon as you see hikers; yield to them if need be.
- Respect private property and the activity carried out by farmers. Be respectful of fenced off and enclosed areas as well as all other properties. If you come across gates along the trail, make sure to leave them just as you found them; this will prevent livestock from escaping or entering.
- Buy locally produced goods and take advantage of the services offered in the towns you visit; the locals will see nature tourism as a chance to improve their economy.





# *Enjoy the Sierra Nevada*

## IN A SAFE MANNER



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# Enjoy the Sierra Nevada

## IN A SAFE MANNER

- Properly plan out the activities you will be doing. Look up information about the route. It is a good idea to take along a map of the area you wish to visit as well as a guide, compass or GPS where appropriate. Plan out the activities by estimating how much time you will need to do them.
- If you are unsure of which route to go on, speaking to a local guide is your best option: ([www.ecoturismosierranevada.com](http://www.ecoturismosierranevada.com)).
- Know what you are capable of, what materials you have with you and how familiar you are with the area; do not let a goal put your safety or that of others at risk.
- Mountain weather can change quickly, possibly giving rise to dangerous situations. Stay properly informed about the weather in the area you wish to visit and be prepared by travelling with the proper gear. Remember that the weather in mountainous areas can shift quickly ([www.aemet.es](http://www.aemet.es)).
- Avoid travelling alone. If you end up going alone, make sure to tell others about the route you plan on taking and the time you plan on returning home.
- It is useful to have some basic knowledge of first aid and procedural protocols in the event that someone gets injured or a dangerous situation occurs. In case of an accident call 112.
- Having a mobile phone on you is useful in case of emergency but remember that not all areas have coverage and that you will need to have enough battery life in order to use your phone.
- The terrain in the Sierra Nevada can be extremely rough and steep. Do not wander off the trails or take shortcuts except in the event of justified reasons.
- It is very important to have the proper clothing, gear and supplies in mountainous areas. Be prepared by travelling with the proper clothing and gear with regard to the possible changes in weather for each season of the year, and remember: always use footwear with crampons (a traction device) and an ice axe when hiking in wintry conditions, and be sure to wear sunglasses and sun block year-round.
- Inform yourself about the trail conditions in the area you wish to visit at the Sierra Nevada National Park and Natural Park offices.

Tlfn: 958 98 02 46

[usopublico.sn.cmaot@juntadeandalucia.es](mailto:usopublico.sn.cmaot@juntadeandalucia.es)

*Your safety is our concern,  
but your responsibility.*





*“The rules are made to be followed”*

THEY HAVE YOUR BEST INTEREST AND THAT OF  
THE SIERRA IN MIND



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# “The rules are made to be followed”

## THEY HAVE YOUR BEST INTEREST AND THAT OF THE SIERRA IN MIND

- Mountain bikes and downhill mountain bikes must exclusively use the trails and routes authorised for these activities.
- Wild camping is not allowed in the Sierra Nevada. The only authorised activity is setting up a campsite to spend the night; the tent can be set up at sunset and must be taken down at sunrise. Do not forget to notify the National Park and the Natural Park beforehand.

During the time of year at risk for forest fires (the INFOCA period, from 15 June until 15 October), setting up campsites and camping in wooded areas and/or areas with shrubs is not allowed.

- Setting up barbecues and using fire is generally prohibited year-round in Sierra Nevada recreational areas.

- People and animals are not allowed to swim in the lakes of the National Park.
- Dogs must be watched at all times and they are not allowed to sleep inside of shelters.
- If travelling by motor vehicle on authorised forest roads, remember that the speed limit is 30 km/h and that restrictions apply during the INFOCA (forest fire risk) period.
- If you come across any damaged public-use facilities, inform the Sierra Nevada National Park and Natural Park.

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[usopublico.sn.cmaot@juntadeandalucia.es](mailto:usopublico.sn.cmaot@juntadeandalucia.es)

All of these regulations are listed in the Use and Management Guidelines for the Sierra Nevada National Park and Natural Park (Official Gazette of the Junta de Andalucía (BOJA) No. 155, 9 August 2011)







## *Pick up the waste from your personal hygiene needs*

ASK YOURSELF WHETHER YOU WOULD LIKE TO FIND THAT



### OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Do not disturb the animals • Leave no trace of your visit • Respect the cultural heritage, leave everything as it is • Enjoy the Sierra Nevada, but safely • "The rules are there to be complied with", for your own good and that of the Sierra • Help us to achieve a model of responsible public use and ecotourism

## *Pick up the waste from your personal hygiene needs*

ASK YOURSELF WHETHER YOU WOULD LIKE TO FIND THAT

The increase in visitors to the Sierra Nevada is causing new environmental and sanitary concerns. For example, the accumulation of human excrement, toilet paper, wet wipes etc in some areas, such as around the refuges, recreational areas, viewing points and other places which are regularly frequented, degrades the ecosystems and spoils the experience for other people.

The accumulation of this waste in certain places is starting to become very unpleasant, in addition to the sanitary and environmental aspects. In the best of cases your excrement will take more than a year to disappear; toilet paper takes longer than that and wet wipes, sanitary pads, tampons and nappies longer still.

Also, in high mountain areas the cold temperatures slow down the microbial activity and, therefore, the decomposition process.

Some advice on how to meet your bodily needs in a way which is nicer and more respectful of Nature:

- Look for somewhere away from paths, refuges and other areas of public use.
- Choose a site at least 60 metres away from springs, lagoons and water courses.
- Do not do it over the ice pits
- Bury your excrement. The most effective way to facilitate the decomposition of our human waste is to deposit it in a hole about 20 cms deep and then fill the hole in. If that isn't possible, cover the waste with earth or with stones. If you want to go one step further, take it away with you in a bag.
- Pick up your used toilet paper, wet wipe etc, put it in a bag and take it with you. Do not burn it.
- Deposit the bag in a suitable rubbish container.

*The high mountain area is a fragile,  
vulnerable environment which is sensitive to impact.  
Always be aware.*





*Consume products which are 100% local*

HELP TO PRESERVE THE 'RAZA PAJUNA'  
OF THE SIERRA NEVADA

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Do not disturb the animals
- Leave no trace of your visit
- Respect the cultural heritage, leave everything as it is
- Respect the people who live here and any visitors you meet
- Enjoy the Sierra Nevada, but safely
- "Rules are to be complied with", for your own good and that of the Sierra
- Take your personal hygiene waste away with you
- Support sustainable agriculture and farming
- Consume local products

## *Consume products which are 100% local*

HELP TO PRESERVE THE 'RAZA PAJUNA' OF THE SIERRA NEVADA

The "Raza Pajuna" is considered one of the oldest breeds of cattle in Spain and since time immemorial it has been associated with the coldest, highest areas of the southern peninsula. At the end of spring the herds are moved to new summer grazing grounds towards the Alpujarra mountains of Granada and Almería, in what is known in the Sierra Nevada as 'transtermitance', especially in the region of El Marquesado, on the north side of the Sierra Nevada.

The pajuna breed has a straight profile, dark brown coat and white hairs around the mouth. Its body shape is rustic and it adapts well to the environment, especially in extreme weather conditions. The pajunos can breed and feed in unfavourable areas where other breeds, more specialised in the production of meat, cannot adapt, with no need for large quantities of additional feed. It is a fantastic transformer of pastureland, hillsides and stubble.

Its meat production is lower than that of other breeds, but the quality is excellent. It is very juicy and much tastier than others on the market due to the amount of fat it contains.

The pajuna breed of cattle, which for hundreds of years has been part of the uses and landscapes of the Sierra Nevada area, used to be in danger of extinction but is now recovering due to cross-breeding with bulls of other breeds, the mechanisation of agricultural labour and rural emigration.

On the Cortes estate (Bérchules), which is owned by the Junta de Andalucía and run by its Department of Agriculture, Farming, Fishing and Sustainable Development, an experiment is currently being carried out on the use of cattle in ecologically-certified pastures. It is being organised by the Sierra Nevada National Park and Natural Park, in collaboration with the Association of Pajuno Cattle Breeders and Córdoba university.

The aim is an extensive study into the production of this breed, the quality of the carcass and the meat and the yield from the ecological pasture on the estate, the sustaining capacity and its conversion into pajuna beef.

*Maintaining native breeds is something everyone needs to do,  
and consuming the pajuna breed is healthy and sustainable for  
the Sierra Nevada.*



PAJUNA



# Help us

TO ACHIEVE A RESPONSIBLE MODEL FOR  
PUBLIC USE AND ECOTOURISM AND

*we will help you*

TO MAKE SURE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE SIERRA NEVADA IS  
AS ENJOYABLE, PLEASANT AND SAFE AS POSSIBLE



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## *Help us and we will help you*

All of the recommendations included in this guide are the result of the work carried out by the Sierra Nevada National Park and Natural Park alongside companies that are particularly committed to the sustainability of tourism in the territory and that have developed a unique and respectful ecotourism model through the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism. This acknowledgement was awarded to the Sierra Nevada Espacio Natural in 2004 for its effective progress in the values of responsible tourism.

For more information, visit the Sierra Nevada National Park and Natural Park facilities:

- **El Dornajo Visitor Centre:**

Ctra. de Sierra Nevada, km. 23,  
Güéjar Sierra (Granada).  
Phone: 958 340 625

- **Laujar de Andarax Visitor Centre:**

Ctra. Laujar de Andarax – Berja, km. 1,  
Laujar de Andarax (Almería).  
Phone: 950 51 55 35

- **Puerto de la Ragua Information Centre:**

Ctra. de La Calahorra – Cherín, km. 11.6  
Bayárcal (Almería). Phone: 958 98 02 46

- **Pampaneira Information Centre:**

Plaza de la Libertad, s/n, Pampaneira (Granada).  
Phone: 958 76 31 27

- **Capileira Information Centre:**

C/ Carretera, s/n, Casa de la Cultura,  
Capileira (Granada). Phone: 958 76 34 86

- **Sierra Nevada National Park and Natural Park Administrative Centre:**

Ctra. Antigua Sierra Nevada, km. 7,  
Pinos Genil (Granada).  
Phone: 958 98 02 46

## *You can do more for the Sierra Nevada*

- Hire the services of European Charter for Sustainable Tourism affiliated local businesses (businesses that offer activities, lodging, restaurants...) at: [www.ecoturismosierranevada.com](http://www.ecoturismosierranevada.com)

- Buy locally produced goods such as the recommended certified products with the Andalucía Natural Park seal. These products are associated with the environmental values of the protected natural spaces of Andalucía:

[www.marcaparquenatural.com](http://www.marcaparquenatural.com)

Send your comments and suggestions to the Sierra Nevada National Park and Natural Park:

[usopublico.sn.cma@juntadeandalucia.es](mailto:usopublico.sn.cma@juntadeandalucia.es)

