

Spain and Portugal Tour

Stuart Bonning



During the last two weeks of September, six cyclists from around North America set out on a self-contained (no camping) bike trip across Spain and Portugal. Except for heading to Lisbon, we did not have a set route or itinerary. Each day's route was decided the night before.

Tour riders included Banker John (Wisconsin), Sky-Pilot Bob (Tennessee), Lean Larry (Montana), Weird-Beard Stuart (Maryland), Margen (Washington State), and Sharon (Vancouver, BC). All of us were 63 years or older.

Our route took us from Aranjuez, Spain (suburb of Madrid) through the mountains of Castile. We cycled through the olive groves and vineyards of Andalucía and through the cities of Cordoba and Seville arriving at the Spanish coast near Huelva. A ferry ride took us to the Portuguese coast and from there we rode inland into central Portugal. (Yes, there are mountains in Portugal.) From there we biked west to Lisbon.

The weather was near perfect except for one day of rain showers and a stiff head wind. With traffic light away from the cities, we averaged 40 to 50 miles per day, with 56 miles being the longest. We stayed at small hotels and ate mostly bar food with an occasional restaurant meal. Wine and cheese were cheap and good. People were very friendly and helpful along the way. Three local men, Jesus (Hay-zeus in Spanish), Aberto, and Fernando helped us find rooms and our way. We totaled about 500 cycling miles and used the trains to take us into the bigger cities to avoid the urban traffic.

If you have more interest in our Iberian adventures, email me at stuartbonning@hotmail.com.



Bob, Larry, Me, Margen, and John



Snacks with our host, Fernando



Preparing to depart Las Ventas



Leaving town



Regrouping in the mountains



Entering Andalucía



Montillo