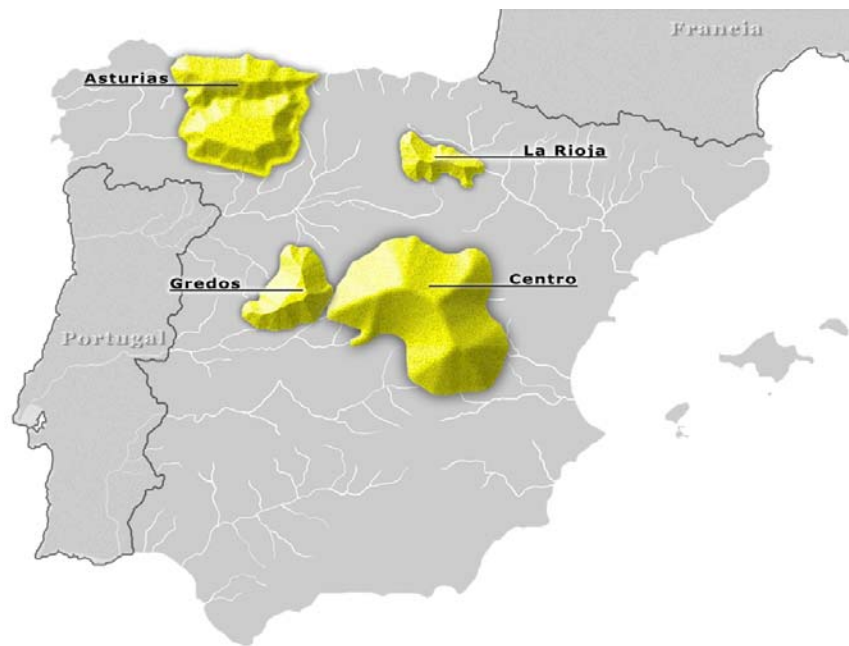


# manual

## the English version

Versión 1 (12 March 2012)  
[Print and Paddle]



KayakSpainguide.com

# The English Version

Welcome to KayakSpain, the definitive Whitewater Kayaking Guidebook for Spain.

We are glad you've got into the page and that probably you are coming to kayak in Spain soon. We've done this guide with the intention to broadcast the amazing Spanish rivers.

In KayakSpainGuide we want to make our information available to everybody so we have created this guide in English to help you understand our guides. We really think this document is helpful, otherwise we wouldn't have wasted time writing it, we strongly recommend the reading.

In this section you are going to find a printable guide in English, but this is NOT a translation of the area guides. This guide gives you all the information you need to use the Spanish guide. Here we explain how the guidebooks work, what are the rivers more likely to have water to paddle, information about permissions, logistics... We don't limit this guide to a small glossary of river terms, it's a more than that, in a few minutes you'll manage the Spanish versions as if they would be in English... or nearly.

When you decide what area you want to paddle in Spain, get into the website and print the guidebook for that area.

Remember that you can use [translate.google.com](https://translate.google.com), or any other page, to see all we have in the page, including the news.

## What is KayakSpainGuide?

It is an independent project from kayakers to kayakers. This project is born out of our own need of needing information from rivers we haven't paddled yet. Until now, there was a lack of information on most of the areas, relying in loose blog descriptions or vague oral descriptions

## Who are we?

The initiative is from Silvia Ocaña, Aitor Arce and Fernando Ayuso helped by a lot of other contributors. At the end of the description of each section you can see the people that has created the description and the people that, after that, has reviewed and enhanced the information.

## Disclaimer. Under your responsibility

The rivers in which we paddle, as a natural environment they are, have dangers and each one is responsible to decide if he wants to be exposed to those dangers. Rivers change, the gauges vary, the floods modify the riverbeds, trees block the rivers, landslides can add sharp rocks to previous easy sections and many other things can make a river change and have unexpected dangers.

The practice of kayaking is potentially dangerous. Its practice can cause serious injuries, of irreversible type, and even the death.

When you get into the water you do it under your entire responsibility. KayakSpainGuide does not have any responsibility over the information that appears in the guides. Your personal criteria must be over what you see in this guide (over any other and over anyone tells you now matter how an expert paddler it can be). You are free, therefore, responsible of your actions.

Also you have to take into account that a river can be very different with different water levels. What today is a simple and pleasant river can become hell with a lot of water. For this reason you should pay attention to the water level and weather forecast. Dams can vary the river levels instantly and drastically, beware of upstream dam release.

KayakSpainGuide tries to have the most accurate possible information, but a kayaker can only trust his skills, the information in this web can be erroneous. We don't assume any responsibility for any accident that can derive of the lack of information or error that you find in this page. This page is made by humans, so the guides will never be perfect.

KayakSpainGuide tries to have all the Spanish rivers documented. Some of the rivers that you see here may be in National or Regional parks therefore paddling can be restricted or prohibited. Legislation can change keep informed. If you get into a prohibited river it is under your responsibility. Yes, we are documenting rivers in which it's forbidden to paddle because we have the hope that these useless prohibitions will sometime be removed by the responsible organizations as there are people looking forward to paddle in those locations and taking care of them.

# Graduation

Grading a river is subjective, all kayaker know it. This always provokes endless discussions. We grade rivers using the imperfect international system that goes from I to VI. We don't get into the debate of the in/adequate of the system. Our objective is to grade all the rivers in a homogeneous way in all the areas. Here you have some examples from easy to difficult:

- **Grade I:** Urumea in San Sebastián, Júcar in Cuenca...
- **Grade II:** Alberche before the reservoir, the Miño from Frieira to Arbo, Cabriel classic, Sella from Arriondas
- **Grade III::** Tormes, Gállego Classic, Ara from Broto to Fiscal, Esca, Alberche clásic
- **Grade IV::** Ara from Torla to Broto, Deza, Asturian Deva...
- **Grade V:** Ara from Bujaruelo, Upper Tea, Leizarán canyon...
- **Grade VI:** Those you are thinking... someone will come and o it.

## *Gavarnie Effect*

*We were driving up the road. In the car we all were saying "stunningly beautiful" but it could also be hear the "it´s lots of wave trains" and "there´s no much dropping". It was 11 a.m., our first run of the Gavarnie(France) was about to happend and the "effect" about to be named.*

*I think it has happened to all paddlers, from the road all seems easy, flat, non pushi, but when you get to do the first rapid you say... Shit! It was about to flip me.*

*This happends us that spring day in the Gavarnie: some wounds, rolls, surprises,faces, chased kayaks, missed eddies... Andoni made a 2 meters falls swimming and hit his coxis agains a rock,it just seemd to be another wave from the height of the road. All finished well, it is still one of our favourite rivers in the Pyrenees and the one that sitill names that "effect", that correction we have to learn about when we see things from the top, from the road. "the Gavarnie Effect".*

*Now in similar situations we try to go to see a rapid or walks to the take out or put in to judge the river better so it does not suprises us, we add the correction and we still get those faces of surprise and those "I didn't expect it so pushy".*

*Fernanod Ayuso*

# Understand Spanish guidebooks

We have divided the country into smaller areas. The concept of area is a region that rivers are nearby and that usually have water during the same period. Normally the region can be travelled within a day being able to paddle a river a day. If a river is farther away it will be indicated.

Here you have a description of each item in the guide.

## Guidebooks

- Cover: contains a list of rivers described, and a schematic map of where they are located. The cover is also the index indicating you what page each river is in.
- After the cover there is a small introduction of the area.
- A table of the rivers and sections of the area. Here you'll know which ones are the ones that are paddled more often and which ones are more beautiful. This are the column translations:
  - "Río": River
  - "Tramo": Section
  - "Grado": Grade
  - Km...
  - "Entorno": Environment
  - "Aguas Bravas": quality of the white water *funwise*. Don't miss the 3 stars!
  - "Posib. agua": How likely is for you to find it with water. The rivers with 3 stars are very likely to have water in the season indicated, the ones with 2 are likely but not warranted. Forget about the ones with 1 or 0.
- A map of the area with the location of the rivers. Remember you need to have a good map, this one is not enough to go around.
- River information, the most important section, this section is explained in detail later.
- Y si no hay agua? Some tips to do if you are unlucky and there is no water at all. We try to include some outdoor options like trekking, some cultural topics as seeing picturesque villages and castles and a gastronomic alternative as we like eating a lot. Our expert in this area is Aitor.
- Permisos. What permits you need to paddle here.
- No todo iba a ser remar. Not everything would be paddling. Here you have the highlights of places to visit near the river, other fun activities you can do and... food, why denying it the older we get the more we like eating.
- En la proxima version. In the next version. Yes, we keep updating the guidebooks including new rivers, sections, changes on flows or anything that has happened in the area regarding the rivers. Before coming check if there is an update of KayakSpainGuide. Newer versions will have more to





- Links. Some useful resources of the area. They can be shops, clubs or any other things you find around that can make your life easier.

## River Descriptions

The table included in each river contains all the information needed. The descriptions is an addition to it with some extra information. The table is generally quite straight forward to understand after reading the following descriptions:

### Title

It will tell you what river we are talking about and what section. Next to it you may find the following icons:

|   |   |
|---|---|
|    | <p>"Verificado": Verified. We have paddled this river personally or we have information we trust 100%. It means the grade is well adjusted and that description fulfils our minimum criteria.</p>   |
|  | <p>"Favorito": Favourite. We love it, one of the best rivers in Spain. Don´t miss it.</p>   |
|  | <p>"Prohibido": Prohibited. The river is in a natural park and it's not possible to paddle. We hope one day there's a more logical system that would let us enjoy this kind of rivers. If that day comes, the description will be ready here.</p> |
|  | <p>"Pescadores": Fishermen. Section with fishermen around. Be respectful, unfortunately in Spain the situation with fishermen is not the best.</p>  |

**The table.** The essential information of the river

- "Embarque": Put in
- "Desembarque": Take out
- "Dificultad": Grade. We indicate the maximum difficulty and in the warnings if a difficult rapid is a must-run. Or if there is a portage.
- "Longitud": Length
- "Duración": approximate time
- "Medidor": gauge that can be in the river or in internet or both.

- "Época": time of the year("primavera" is spring, "verano" is summer, "otoño" is autumn, invierno is winter. lluvia is rain, deshielo es melting)
- "Volumen": approximate volume in cumecs, usually from minimum to maximum
- "Aguas bravas": sporty interest of the whitewater fun you'll get. Rated from 0 to 3
- "Paisaje": landscape beauty and quality rated from 0 to 3.
- "Porteos": portage.
- "Advertencias": warnings
- "¿Poca Agua?": Too little water? Alternatives to go if it's too low.
- "¿Demasiada?": Too much? Alternatives if too high

Additionally you have the description but we don't want to overinform about the rivers. We like to leave some of that discovering feeling for the kayaker. When we start paddling we want to know exactly what's coming next but not all should be discovered in the guidebook. We try to give a balance on the needed information to have a safe descent and the feeling of exploring.

### Landscape stars

- No stars is for places like factories, chopped animals, dumps, constructions, metals, Barbie leftovers, shocks in touch with condoms on the take out, slaughterhouses, places that could be CSI sceneries when they search for the bad guy, buildings declared in ruins, used nappies, diverse nature plastics or train rails that take nowhere. Unpleasant places that you'll leave immediately. Even if we put it this way we won't blame you for not going! Currently we have no rivers in this description.
- 🌟 a normal place, not special
- 🌟🌟 nice place that on Monday you'll talk about to your peers.
- 🌟🌟🌟 an idyllic place to which you'll want to come back, with characteristics that make it special. Just for the landscape worth been there.

### White-water stars

- none. Whitewaterwise does not have an interest. Maybe the landscape.
- 🌟 you've paddled it and it's fine, but you don't think you'll repeat it unless you are cold turkey.
- 🌟🌟 a fun river. You'll want to repeat it.
- 🌟🌟🌟 you'll find hard to sleep remembering it. As you are three... give it a second run.

### Water possibility stars

- An important point for your visit planning, let's be realistic. The rivers with none or one star are very unlikely to have water when you come, don't count on them.
- None: It really nearly impossible to get it. uncommon rain, or it has a very short paddling window or it has a dam that just release on leap years.

- 🌟 It has water once a year, needs a lot of rain and leaves the water very fast. If you are not a local, it's difficult to paddle in these rivers. It wouldn't be realistic to think about these ones when you plan your visit.
- 🌟🌟🌟 It's very likely you find water, but it's not guaranteed. When it has water it keeps it for a couple of weeks even it's advisable to get information before the trip.
- 🌟🌟🌟 It's warranted a minimum level to paddle it in the right time of the year. With this one you'll be right... or nearly!

## Printing

You have two options when you print:

- Print the guidebooks in A4 format. All will be quite big making it perfect to read it while on the car. Print them and put rings or a clip to make a book. Loose pages become lost pages, maybe you lose the one with the best river.
- Print two pages per page. This way you have a smaller more compact guidebook. We have designed the guides in a way that KayakSpainGuide is readable in this size as well. In the printing section of the web page you can see how this is done.

Printing Tips.

- Please, only print what you need. Rivers are nicer with trees on the banks.
- Before printing check you don't have a printed guidebook. Trees are handy to hang the river clothes and have them dry next day.
- Print it two pages if you want. Trees give a nice shade where you can have a snack in summer.
- If you can, print both sides of the pages. Trees help keeping the water so rivers last longer with water.

For technical tips about printing the "Printing" section on the web.

## Insurance

Do you paddle without an insurance? You are doing well, you save quite a good money along the years, in fact, nothing happens ever...

Ensure you have an insurance when you practice a sport like kayaking. It's not that much money and will take you out of a bit of a problem. Spain is starting to charge for rescuing so the bill of a helicopter or 20 people searching for you is not inexpensive. We have a list of the available insurance options in Spain however it's probably easier to check your options in your country.

We always opt for being insured.



## Logistics

We don't include any driving direction here as we think [www.viamichelin.com](http://www.viamichelin.com) or [maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com) maps will do a better job than us.

Ensure you also get a recent road map about the area you are going to. You can, normally, find a good map in a gas station. Check in a bigger gas station on the way as usually you find better choice than in a local one.

## Legislation

Both Galicia and the Pyrenees, which are the most popular foreigners-popular are does not require a permit for kayaks under 2.5 meters. The situation could change so stay tuned. For the rest of the sections, please, keep reading.

Spain has a complicated scenario in what a navigating law refers, the ruling of each area is different and this makes difficult to know how the situation is, specially to foreigners.

The situation is getting better, therefore changing. We recomend you to get into our LEGISLACION section in the web page and get a web translator to go through it. We haven't heard about foreigners being fined, but that could change any time. If you have doubts, please ask.

## In Spain

We don't want to duplicate here the information travelling guidebooks have done greatly. We suggest you to get a travelling guidebook to get information of the currency, timetables, history... this is not our objective, however we include a little section in each of the area guidebooks with the sightseen highlights of the area.

As a kayaker you need to know that in Spain free camping is allowed nearly anywhere, in any village you'll have a small shop where you can buy any kind of food. You also find a restaurant wich normally opens later than in other places in Europe both for lunch and dinner, try to arrive by 9 pm in week days anyway.

Lastly, but not the least important. The three biggest beer manufacturer are Mahou, San Miguel and Cruz campo. The best for us is Mahou, but that depends on the taste. If you paddle in Galicia you can't miss tasting Estrella de Galicia, both in the lager or in the dark variety. And if you go to Catalonia don't miss the special taste of Moritz, a catalonian microbrewry that is not that micro any more than worth tasting it.

Wine is great and much cheaper than in most of other European countries. share a bottle with a traditional spanish food. It is said in Spanish "What runs, swims or flies... to the pan".

## Emergencies

Remember that for any emergency the phone is **112**. Save it your phone, it's 30 senconds.

Bringing the phone with you in the river is as needed as the throwing rope or the helmet.

Appar from the 112, here you have some other numbers that can be good to have on the phone:

- Guardia Civil: 062
- Police: 091
- Fire fighters: 080
- Catalonia fire fighters: 085
- Ambulance: 061 o 112
- Rescue: 1006
- Red Cross emergencies: 901 222 222

## Thanks

Thanks to everybody that contributes in this guide. It's difficult to thanks all the individuals that have help in each river since the first day we got onto a kayak.

At the end of the section description you have the name of the people that have help. Thanks.

## **Safety on the river**

*When we started paddling it seemed that the most important of everything was that at the end of a rapid there should be a buddy with a rope in his hand.*

*Looking back neither the buddy was on the right place, neither he knew had any idea on how to throw the rope nor made sense he threw it in that place. Today we see safety in the river in a different way. The guy with the rope is still important, but the same way there are "passive" safety measures in the car we have "passive" safety kayaking to avoid unpleasant problems in the river.*

*Here are some of the points that can help us have more fun days and less story not to sleep.*

**Know yourself**, also in the river. You need to have clear what you can and can't do. If for example, one day you are too tired for a 6 hour river, recognize it. Or if you get a bad feeling of running a rapid, do it also. Be sincere with yourself.

**Get the adequate information about the river.** To know if the river is adequate to your possibilities, know the level that needs, the right put in and take out or how long it takes to do it. A IV- with a lot of water being frozen and tired can be a bad memory. Fortunately KayakSpainGuide tries to help you to have this topic clear.

**Know your team.** For 2 km of class II probably you don't care, but if it's the first time you paddle Bujaruelo, sure you'll have a better experience if you paddle it with a compact group that work in sync on the river. So, if in a moment something happens to you can have the confidence that your buddies would be paying attention to you and will know what to do to solve the problem in which you are.

**Bring adequate gear.** A spray deck that gets off, a jacket that makes you "a bit too" wet, or maybe the short pants that may be comfy, but if you have to bring a friend out of an undercut warmer pants will prevent you from the.

**Not your day?** Yes, maybe you've run it other times, but there are many rivers that need all your energies, your buddies will be happy to have a male shuttle bunny doing the driving. Plus the river won't move, so I'll be there when you feel like it. Maybe today is the day to paddle an easier section.

**Nutrition.** If you get exhausted for a lack of sugar cycling, you stop and sit to rest. If you are in the middle of a canyoned river you have to continue, and the holes you have to boof with all your

*energy won't care about your lack of sugar. Bring water with you, some energy bars or whatever works for you. It's not a big effort and will help you have the energies when you need them.*

***Have a cold head*** and use your intelligence. Facing the problem, don't craze. Analyze the situation, value the priorities, and take the actions to solve the complication without compromising the safety of each member of the team the minim in.

***Learn and practice.*** The best preparation is the practice and the learning. If you read a safety book 5 times but you've never launched a rope, the reading will be useless.

# Glossary

Afluente: tributary  
Agua: agua  
Agujero: hole  
Alto: high  
Arbol: tree  
Arroyo: stream  
Bajo: low  
Bolo: boulder  
Boof: boof  
Booty: thing we don't do in Spain  
Cañón: canyon  
Cagueta: Chicken, that didn't dare running it  
camino : path, walk  
Carretera: road  
Cascada: fall  
Chorro: chute  
Cliche: boof  
Coche: car  
Comer: eat  
Confederacion  
Hidrográfica: water organization in charge of a basin  
Confluencia: confluenc  
Continuo: continuous  
Contra: eddy  
Corriente abajo: downstream  
Corriente arriba: upstream  
Corriente: current  
Corriente: flow  
Corte: cut  
Crecida: flood  
Creek: creek  
Cruzado: crossed  
Cruzar: to cross  
Cuerda de seguridad: throw rope  
Cuerda: rope  
Darle: go for it  
Debajo: under  
Derecha: right  
Desfiladero: canyon  
Difícil: difficult  
Drosaje: undercut  
Easy: fácil

Embalse: reservoir  
Encima: over  
Entrada: put in  
Esquimotear/esquimotar: roll  
Flotar: Flote  
Fuerte: strong  
Furgoneta: van  
Garganta: gorge  
Gracias: thanks  
Guardia civil, pólice(in green)  
Guay: cool  
Hola: hello  
Izquierda: left  
Jardin de bolos: boulder garden  
Limpio: clenar or clear  
Linea de contra: eddy line  
Llorona, pour over  
Lluvia: rain  
Loop: loop  
Marmita: pothole  
Medidor: gauge  
Mirar: look, scout  
Nada: noting  
Nadar: swim  
Navegable: runnable  
Nieve: snow  
Nivel: level  
Nivel: level or flow  
Obligado: compulsory, must-run(rapid)  
Ola, wave  
Orilla: bank  
Pala: paddle  
Parar: Stops  
Paso: rapid  
Peligro: danger  
Piragua: kayak  
Piragüista: kayaker  
Pista: dirt track  
Plano: flat  
Policía, police  
Porteo: portage  
Posibilidad agua: possibility of finding it with water.

Presa: weir  
Prohibido: prohibited  
Puente de piedra: stone bridge  
Puente: bridge  
Raft: inflatable thing full of screaming clients  
Rampa: ramp, slide  
Rápido: rapid  
Remar: to paddle  
Remo: paddle  
Repentno: sudden  
Represa: small weir  
Riada: flood  
Rio: river  
Roca: rock  
Rulo: hole  
Salida: take out, or horny girl, be careful!  
Salto: drop  
Salto: huck  
Seta: mushroom, boil  
Sifón: siphon  
Surfear: surf  
Tobogan: fun slide  
Tormenta: storm  
Tramo: section  
Tronco: lodge  
Vía de tren: railway  
Volcar: flip  
Volumen: volume