

A few recommendations

I would like to reiterate that most of the routes described are easy to do and suitable for almost everyone. It is true that you will need a certain amount of training for some of them (they are relatively long routes) and that others run over somewhat steep terrain that will require a certain amount of mountaineering experience. However, there is nothing here that cannot be achieved with a little willpower.

Ankle-protecting hiking boots with a good sole are always preferable to simple trainers. Socks are also basic and should be of good quality and breathable, and should not crease.

For longer routes, we recommend carrying a small backpack with some food and water.

Another basic recommendation is to always use walking sticks. Two are better than one. If you know how to use them properly, they are an invaluable aid, not only for ascents but also for descents, as they increase your points of support and significantly reduce the load on your knees, which at certain ages and on long walks is very much appreciated.

Keep an eye on the weather. Nowadays there are many ways of knowing the forecast in advance, so equip yourself according to the weather you are going to encounter. If it is not good and stable and there is rain in the air, a rain jacket in your rucksack is light and unobtrusive and will protect you from the cold as well as the water. Not to mention a small umbrella, which is certainly the best protection against the rain in the mountains if there is not too much wind.

In sunny weather, never forget to wear a hat or cap and good sunglasses, preferably polarised. And sunscreen is essential, with high protection if possible, even more so if there are children in tow. If the sun is shining, put it on before leaving home and repeat the operation at least every hour.

The clothes you wear will always depend on the temperature and the weather, but they should be comfortable, light and, if possible, breathable. Do not wear tight-fitting clothes, as they do not mix well with sweat and humidity. A tight-fitting T-shirt and long or short trousers with seams can cause unwanted chafing that can derail a hike. A fleece in your rucksack, especially in the off-season, is never a bad thing.

An important detail is to always have a small first aid kit in your rucksack with the essentials for treating or soothing scrapes or small wounds, and it doesn't weigh very much either.

One of the things that you must remember to do is to leave the places you have passed through as they were, without leaving any litter behind. Carrying bags to put any waste you generate in and taking it back for proper disposal is a great alternative.

It is also worth remembering the minimum rules of camaraderie and politeness on the mountain. You should always greet the people you come across on little-used trails and paths; it is something we have always done and it is always appreciated, whether you are on Ermua, on the Pagasarri, in the Pyrenees or on the Matterhorn. Being friendly is never a bad thing. Another important detail is that when you come across other people on very narrow or steep paths, the person coming down must always give way to the person going up, moving to one side to make it easier for them to pass, especially in these times of pandemics.

And finally, beware of venturing into dangerous areas, with unstable ground, very steep drops or getting lost by taking short cuts in unknown areas. Sometimes you get it right, but sometimes you can get into serious trouble or get a scare. Whenever possible, in the text we will warn you of those areas that may pose a hypothetical danger for walkers, although there are very few on these 19 routes.

And that's all, now it's time to choose a route and... off you go!

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