



From Madrid to Marbella (Leisure, History, Light Outdoors)

Andalucía has plenty to offer, and if you are the kind of traveler who wants a little outdoor adventure in their trip alongside experiencing the culture and life of a country, then this is the trip for you. On this trip we will offer you the chance to see Andalucía's wild side along with the historical and cultural facets of the region. This trip highlights hiking and horseback riding, exploring ruins and beaches, and ending your day with fine dining and cultural events.



| DAY | ITINERARY | MEALS | ACCOMMODATIONS |
|-----|--------------------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | Madrid | .././D | Hotel first class |
| 2 | Madrid | B.././D | Hotel first class |
| 3 | Madrid/Cordoba | B.././D | Hotel first class |
| 4 | Cordoba | B.././. | Hotel first class |
| 5 | Cordoba/Granada | B.././. | Hotel first class |
| 6 | Granada | B.././. | Hotel first class |
| 7 | Granada/Lanjarón/Granada | B/L../. | Hotel first class |
| 8 | Granada/Antequera/Ronda | B.././. | Hotel first class |
| 9 | Ronda | B.././. | Hotel first class |
| 10 | Ronda/Marbella | B.././. | Hotel first class |
| 11 | Marbella | B.././. | Hotel first class |
| 12 | Marbella/Malaga/Madrid | B.././. | ----- |

MEALS **Breakfast: B** **Lunch: L** **Dinner: D**

Day by day itinerary:

DAY 1: MADRID

Fly into Madrid-Barajas, including pick-up and transport to the hotel. Dinner.

DAY 2: MADRID

Madrid is a gorgeous mix of both the modern and the historic, with a blend of architecture from many eras of Spain's rich past. Bustling and full of life, there are many things to do with your day in Madrid, and getting around the city is as easy as walking. Tour options:

- We invite you to come on a guided walking tour of Madrid Central (or Old Town), including stops for lunch and dinner, starting at the Templo de Debod. Given to Spain by Egypt, it is a lesser temple, located on a scenic overlook. From the Temple, you can walk to the Palace & Plaza Oriente, the Plaza Mayor, and the historic gourmet food market, the Mercado de San Miguel for aperitifs and samples of local food. Then it is off to the center of the country, the Plaza del Sol, and the Hemingway-made-famous Plaza de Santa Ana for lunch. Following lunch comes a sherry tasting in *La Venencia*, which has historically made its own sherry since the 1800s, and finally the tour will end at the City Hall in Plaza Cibeles.

*Please see the optional events for this day listed below!

You are free to explore the city as you please this night.

DAY 3: MADRID/CÓRDOBA

Early in the morning, you will transfer by car to Córdoba, which takes about four hours, but is a peaceful drive through the northern Andalusian countryside.

Once in Córdoba, you will take a walking tour of the city – but you will have several options to choose from, as there are many faces of the city. It is a town with an illustrious history; it was once the largest city of Roman Spain, and then became the seat of the Moorish Caliphate. That is, it was the heart of the empire – for over three centuries. Sadly, with the passing of time there are few completely intact structures from these time periods, but all are worth visiting. They include:

- La Mezquita. Though it had been renovated several times during the reign of the Caliphate, the end result of the construction of the great Mosque is a sprawling red-and-marble palatial structure surrounded by orange groves and ornately carved fountains and baths. The interior is vast, comprising 19 naves, over 1,200 pillars, almost 300 chandeliers, and is lit by nearly 1,500 lamps, including some made from the bells of Santiago Compostela, brought to the mosque by conquered Christians in the mid 13th century. It is easy to spend a half-day strolling the grounds and taking in the tranquility and the marvels of the Mezquita. It is a true testament to the ability of Moorish architects and craftsman, and amazing in its detail and style considering the age in which it was built.
- The Old Town. Between the Mezquita and the Guadalquivir river is the charming stretch of old town Córdoba, peppered with picturesque patios, fruit trees, and terra cotta shingled homes with black iron balconies. You can take a scenic walk all of the way to the river, where the newly

restored Roman Bridge has become pedestrianized, and has a wonderful view of the old Arab waterwheels.

**Please see the optional events for this day listed below!*

DAY 4: CÓRDOBA

Córdoba has many small side streets and incredible things to discover. This day we encourage you to explore the nearby Medina Azahara if you haven't had time, or, choose from our exciting list of optional activities.

**Please see the optional events for this day listed below!*

After your tour, you have your choice of events or to explore the city on your own.

DAY 5: CÓRDOBA/GRANADA

This day we will travel on to Granada, which takes two and a half hours by car. One of the most famous sites in Spain, Granada is the home of La Alhambra, the Red Castle, but has many other wonders hidden all throughout the city. Typically Andalusian in its hospitality and vibrancy, nothing about the food, ambiance, or the people will disappoint. Our tour includes:

- La Alhambra. Called the Red Castle, this structure is the best preserved Moorish structures in Spain, and also dominates the landscape from high atop a hill just outside of the Old Town. Built by the Nasrid Sultans, the Alhambra is the height of Moorish art and architecture. But beyond being a spectacular sight, the Alhambra embodies how the Moors viewed life; as something glorious to be explored and pursued to the fullest extent, not a mere waiting period before death. It is a palace filled with fountains, an impressive feat for late 13th century engineering. It lives and breathes today, full of gardens, light, and people marveling at the precise calligraphy carved into the walls of the Palacio Nazaries. If there is one thing a traveler should see in Spain, truly, the Alhambra is it.

**Please see the optional events for this day listed below!*

After your tour, you have your choice of events or to explore the city on your own.

DAY 6: GRANADA

Today we will take you to see Granada as it was in the time of the Moors. You will go on a small hiking trip to the Albaicín, or the Moorish Old Town of Granada, to view the remains of some Moorish baths and a mosque, then go to the overlook that faces Alhambra for one of the most spectacular views imaginable.

- Optional: From the Albaicín, guest could continue on to La Capilla Real, which is the resting place of Ferdinand and Isabella.

**Please see the optional events for this day listed below!*

After your tour, you have your choice of events or to explore the city on your own.

DAY 7: GRANADA/LANJARÓN/GRANADA

We will get out of the city proper for a day to explore the beauty and curiosities of La Alpujarra. This region is full of some great and unique surprises. We have two optional adventures for you to choose from or combine:

- A hike through the peaceful, infrequently visited paths through the foothills of the Sierra Nevada with a local guide.
- A visit to the freshwater spas of Lanjarón. The town is most famous for being a source of natural spring water, which they have used organically to create curative spas.

Lunch will be at a local hotel and restaurant with a patio overlooking the hills, with a local gastronomy expert who teaches while he prepares meals on an outdoor portable range.

After lunch we will return to Granada, proper, for free time to explore the city on your own.

DAY 8: GRANADA/ANTEQUERA/RONDA

Today you will travel on to Ronda, two and a half hours by car, stopping along the way to visit Antequera.

Antequera is a small town, white walled and topped with terracotta roof tiles. It is clean and quiet, out of the way of most of the tourist attractions in Andalucía, but no less beautiful than its neighboring cities. There is an old Moorish wall, several well cared for churches and mosques, and here we will offer you the chance to eat at an all-local, totally traditional tapas restaurant. The restaurant was once a stable especially for bulls, and most of the original flooring and façade have been maintained. What's more, the recipes of the region, as old as the building itself, have been preserved as well, and the staff are always eager to offer the recipes of any dish on printed cards for you to take home with you and try in your own kitchen!

A small town close to the coast, Ronda has many intriguing aspects, and though it does draw a lot of tourism, this doesn't detract from its beauty and style. It is a bastion of bullfighting and has one of the most frequently visited bullrings in the south. Aside from this, it is rich in unique monuments and history beginning with the coming of the Neanderthals up through the reign of the Moors.

- Optional Day Trip: El Tajo, perhaps once a deep river in the time when the world was new, but now all that remains is a small waterway at the bottom of a 200m gorge. The gorge is easily hikeable, and in some places there are rough but stable steps provided, and the surrounding natural area is beautiful. From the bottom you can get a spectacular view of the Puente Nuevo, a suspended bridge and architectural feat of the 18th century, which spans the gorge and connects Ronda proper to the Moorish old town.
 - Optional Day Trip: Come explore the Caves of Pileta. These caves are just outside of Ronda, and they have what have been declared the some most important Paleolithic cave paintings in Europe. They are excellently preserved images of the hunting and farming life of a Mousterian era peoples, and a journey to see them is not one any traveler in Ronda should miss. **Please note that the hike inside the cave, while not overly difficult, is challenging, and requires shoes with sturdy grip on the soles.**

This day is a free day, and you will have your choice of events or to explore the city on your own.

DAY 9: RONDA

Today is a free day, with time for you to explore Ronda on your own. If you have not had a chance to see what you'd like or experience one of our optional adventures, we invite you to take time today to do so!

***Please see the optional events for this day listed below!**

DAY 10: RONDA/MARBELLA

In the afternoon you will bid farewell to Ronda and carry on to Marbella, which is an hour south by car, and is located on the coast just beyond the Sierra Nevada Mountains. After checking into the hotel, you are free to explore Marbella. It offers pretty beaches and warm water, and a relaxed summertime atmosphere. Here you can take time out and relax, sampling the southern seafood and cozy beachfront restaurants, or explore the white and red Old Town on your own.

DAY 11: MARBELLA

Today we invite you to spend a free day relaxing on the beach or exploring the town. Put your feet up and end your vacation on the beach, in style!

***Please see the optional events for this day listed below!**

DAY 12: MARBELLA/MALAGA/MADRID

Transfer to Malaga airport and fly to Madrid for international connections.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Madrid

- Optional trip 1: Take a guided walking tour of King Phillip II's summer palace, El Escorial. It is still a functioning monastery and many of the rooms have not been altered since Phillip's death in 1598. It also is the resting place of all of the Spanish monarchs save Isabella and Ferdinand, and the mausoleum is open to the public. Along with a breathtaking view of the Sierra de Madrid Mountains, Escorial is a quintessential mountain town with wonderful cuisine and a peaceful atmosphere. From Escorial there is a side trip to the Valley of the Fallen (El Valle de los Caidos), which is a basilica and shrine to the fallen of the Spanish Civil War, and final resting place of Francisco Franco. This trip is a half day and would return to Madrid by dinner.

- Optional trip 2: Museum Hop. For the cost of 44euros, an all day pass can be purchased which gives the visitor access to any museum in the city, the most famous being the Royal Palace, the Prado, which houses mostly renaissance art, the Thyssen, which mostly contains art from the late 18th, 19th, and early 20th century, and the Reina Sofia, which features mostly modern art.
- Optional night event: Enjoy a cooking class based around Madrid's famous Tapas- beautifully crafted appetizers and shared dishes taught in easy-to-make recipes!
- We offer a special optional extension of a day trip to the Medieval city of Toledo, which is easily accessible on the fast train, or, AVE, in about an hour's time. The Medieval town of Toledo is not to be missed. Set on top of a high rise, the city spills down over the mountainside, with twisting streets running like streams through a city of architectural beauty. Toledo is a city that has lasted from the time of the Moors until now, and the houses, synagogues, and mosques sprinkled along the slope reflect architecture from every epoch of its existence – it is no small wonder that the entire city has been declared a National Monument.

Córdoba

- Optional trip 1: There are many "routes" of Córdoba, and we welcome you to take one. We offer 2-3 hour long walking tours that include, Roman Córdoba, Sephardic Córdoba, Córdoba through the Arab, Jewish, and Christian periods, Moorish Córdoba, Córdoba By Night, and the Patios of Córdoba. For more information on any of these, email us!
- Optional trip 2: See the Medina Azahara, (7km from Córdoba). In the 10th century, the Medina Azahara was the governmental seat of the Moorish empire, but was far from any dreary government building. It was built as a fully functioning town that included its own mosques, a mint, several bath houses, workshops, army barracks, and homes. It had three sprawling gardens with shaded terraces, and still has several standing Roman aqueducts. Many walls, frescos, and rooms are completely intact, showing detailed carvings and symbols.
 - The entire complex is undergoing restorations piece by piece, but this does nothing to disturb the view of the ruins or the ambiance. Even the small museum on the edge of the complex has been built low so as not to disrupt the environment around the site.

Granada

- Optional day event: You are encouraged to try a relaxing few hours at one of the city's Arabic baths, based on the style and construction of those used by the Moors.
- Optional night event: Try your hand at cooking like an Andalucian! Tonight we offer a cooking class inside of the gorgeous Sacromonte cave with a world class chef.

Marbella

- Optional day trip: Go horseback riding in the Sierra de las Nieves Mts.

WHAT IS INCLUDED

- 11 nights accommodation in first class hotels.
- 11 breakfasts and 3 dinners
- Assistance at airport on arrival and departure.
- Transport in an a/c minibus.
- Visit and activities as specified in the itinerary including entrances fees
- The group is lead by an experienced English speaking local guide. If the local guide does not speak English, a translator will be present.
- 24hr English speaking assistance by cell phone.

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

- Single rooms
- Flights/train tickets
- Extra nights
- Expenses of personal nature as drinks, laundry, phone, etc..
- Tips of any kind
- Any item not expressly defined as included.

DIFFICULTY

Mainly transport based with walks of **up to 7 kilometers**, and gentle to medium gradients on good tracks or pathways. Caving is optional and hiking boots are strongly suggested. Some days have optional hikes of 5 km on

steep gradients. Horseback riding possible, as well as hiking on steep gradients, and caving, with guides and professionals.

TOUR SIZE

Minimum 10, maximum 12 fellow travelers

DEPARTURE DATES 2015/2016

JUNE: 12, 26
OCTOBER: 2, 16, 30
NOVEMBER: 13
DECEMBER: 5
MAY: 6
JUNE: 3

PRICES

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| PER PERSON IN DOUBLE | 3,151.00 € |
| SINGLE SUPPLEMENT | 963.00 € |

Terms & conditions:

http://www.colorfullyspain.com/terms_conditions.asp

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