



VILLA ETERNA

Tourist Information

Andalucia Tourist
Office Registration
No. **VFT/CA/01522**

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1 TORREGUADIARO

Torreguadiaro is the first village on the Mediterranean Coast in Cadiz province.

It retains its mainly Spanish feel and it is a peaceful holiday destination easily reachable by the closest airports (Malaga and Gibraltar).

Its location at the extreme west of the Costa del Sol makes it ideal for visiting Gibraltar, the laid back resort of Tarifa and the relatively undiscovered Costa de La Luz on Spain's southwestern Atlantic coast.

From the small bay you can enjoy splendid views towards the sea, Gibraltar and the coast of Africa.

The sandy beach is popular with Spanish daytrippers in summer, but during the week it is relatively quiet. From mid-June to mid-September there are two popular beach bars (chiringuitos) offering food, drinks sunbeds and parasols. The village offers several restaurants and bars with delicious food that attracts a lot of customers every night.



The name of Torreguadiaro is coming from the two towers that are in town. The original tower (called **Torre Quebrada de Guadiaro**) can be seen in open ground, adjacent to the beach access car park. The tower was constructed in the 15th century and was used as a refuge for shepherds as well as a lookout. It was struck by lightning at the beginning of the 16th century and split in half. A new and bigger tower was constructed with shaped stone blocks about 200m to the east on slightly higher ground. This tower (called Torre Nueva de Guadiaro) has two floors, stairs, a chimney and an exterior entrance door at a safe height that was accessed via a rope ladder.

In the area between the towers and the beach is an area of protected marchland of particular interest to birdwatchers..

There is a picturesque wooden walkway along the beach and the marshland that will take you to Sotogrande Port and will allow you to view the marchland without damaging it. There is also a birdwatcher hide.



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EVENTS

NOCHE DE SAN JUAN- takes place on the 23rd of June, it marks the Summer Solstice. At Midnight figurines called Juanillos are burned on a bonfire. There are myths which say that if you bath in the sea at Midnight you will receive eternal beauty. No surprise then that everybody is jumping in the water after the bonfire.

Annual Feria in July Music, celebrations and Fair

2 PLACES TO VISIT LESS THAN AN HOUR AWAY BY CAR

SOTOGRADE (10 MINS - 1 KM)

Accessible by car or on foot from Torreguadiaro, Sotograde with its 500 or so moorings are home to a sleek selection of yachts. It is close to many beautiful & challenging golf courses (including Valderrama). In summer the numerous polo fields attract many tournaments along with many spectators.

There are several designer boutiques and stores that line the harbour and plenty of bars and restaurant where enjoy a drink or a meal. It's a perfect setting for a stroll or an evening meal. Most Sundays in the year there is a clothes and craft market at the Marina.



Sotograde somehow combine the glamour of Puerto Banús with its very own stamp of sophistication. Residents of Sotograde are detached from the often-frenetic madness of the coast, yet still play an integral part in its social scene.



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Sotogrande is great for golfers and horse riders and a paradise for sailing enthusiasts and polo players. There are tennis and padel courts galore in Sotogrande, but the resort's most famous sporting facilities are its polo fields, which are considered some of the finest in Europe.

CASTELLAR (20 MINS - 17 KM)

This old village perched high on a hilltop dates back to the prehistoric and bronze ages. It was a working village up to the 1960s when the residents were moved to the newly built "Nuevo Castellar". There are great 360 degree views including the Guadarranque reservoir

It's well worth a stroll around and inside the village walls. The more adventurous might like to explore one of the walking trails through the Parque Natural Los Acornocales.



Castellar de la Frontera has commanding views over the Guadarranque reservoir. This historic fortress village is famous for its castle - the word 'Castellar' meaning literally, 'site of the castle'.

The prehistoric presence is still evident in the many caves around the area, where enthusiasts can see the wonderful cave drawings as proof of its heritage. It played an important role in the wars between the Spanish and the Muslims. In such a high up advantageous strategic position, people of many cultures wanted to control this strong vantage point.

When the inhabitants of the old town were re-housed with modern amenities in Nuevo Castellar the old town became a hippy colony. Today some bohemian people still live there. At the entrance of the walled town every day in summer there is a market. It is certainly worth a visit. You can drive all the way but be advised to park the car in one of the signed car parks and walk the last hundred metres to the castle gates. There is a hidden balcony inside the walls from where you can enjoy a fantastic view of the reservoir.



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Events

Romeria is on the first Sunday in May, The Sunday Romeria and procession used to be called "el Domingo de los ingleses" (Sunday of the English people) because of the number of Gibraltarians who came along to join in the celebrations.

Flamenco Festival in July

Festival of San Salvador on the first weekend of August, when there is flamenco singing, traditional dancing and other events

Nuevo Castellar

New Castellar, a model new town with its well-appointed modern houses, wide streets and avenues and open green zones, is quite a contrast to the old town. The striking new white houses are distinctive against the green of the well-tended gardens. The inhabitants of the old town were pleased to move into these new living conditions, since the old mountain village houses lacked all the 'mod cons' we tend to take for granted.

Nuevo Castellar is now Castellar and the Castle sits on top of the hill outside the village. Although modern it is interesting to visit. Plaza de Andalucia in the centre with its planted areas, fountains, sculptures and a church bell tower that looks like the year it was built. There are a number of bars and cafes and mini supermarkets.

CASARES (25 MINS - 23 KM)

25 minutes in a car from Villa Eterna lies a traditional mountain hugging white village. Watch the giant Griffon Vultures circle in the hot air currents. Visit the castle of Arab origin and walk the quiet streets of this town. There are great views of Sierra Bermeja, Gibraltar and the Coast. Also plenty of options for the energetic to get some hilltop walking on one of the well-trodden hiking routes.



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Events

Medieval Market in July with streets decorated for the occasion with flags and banners. Craft market, tearoom and medieval tavern.

GIBRALTAR (20 MINS – 25KM)

The British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar occupies an area of only 6.7 km² (2.6 sq mi) and is the home to over 30,000 Gibraltarians and other nationalities. As with many colonial outposts, 'the Rock' overstates its Britishness (e.g. old school red telephone and letter boxes)

The Rock itself is a 5km long limestone ridge with dramatic cliffs, Barbary macaques and great views of Africa & Europe. It can be explored with a guided tour, on foot for the energetic or simply a cable car from the town centre to the main viewpoint.



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Red pillar boxes, fish-and-chip shops and creaky 1970s seaside hotels: Gibraltar – as British writer Laurie Lee once commented – is a piece of Portsmouth sliced off and towed 500 miles south. Poised strategically at the jaws of Europe and Africa, Gibraltar, with its Palladian architecture and camera-hogging Barbary macaques, makes for an interesting break from Cádiz province's white towns and tapas. Playing an admirable supporting role is the local history; lest we forget, the Rock has been British longer than the United States has been American.

This towering 5km-long limestone ridge rises to 426m, with dramatic cliffs on its northern and eastern sides. Gibraltarians speak English, Spanish, and a curiously accented, sing-song mix of the two, swapping back and forth midsentence. Signs are in English.



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JIMENA DE LA FRONTERA (40 MINS - 32 KM)

Jimena clings jealously to a hill, topped with the remains of a castle. Steep cobbled streets lead up to it and are lined in places with great little restaurants which provide good value.

The Hozgarganta River flows around the base of the hill and there are a number of good spots to bathe in. The surrounding countryside is beautiful and there are various, fairly easy hikes to enjoy.



The words 'de la Frontera' which follow the names of numerous villages and towns in Cádiz province refer to the fact that this was frontier land when Spain was being fought over by Christians and Moors.

Events

Annual Village Fair in the second week of August

Devotion to the Reina de los Angeles in the first week of September

Annual Music Festival in the second week of July, featuring Classic, Jazz, Flamenco, Celtic and Ethnic music



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TARIFA (45 MINS - 50 KM)

Tarifa's laid back character, its miles of white sandy beaches, its unique location right at the foot of Spain (the most southerly part of continental Europe) and its invitingly bohemian atmosphere is a draw for all types of people – young and old – from around the world. It's also the windiest part of the continent too, making Tarifa a haven for wind & kite surfers.

Promenade along the extensive beach and walk around the narrow alleys of the Old Town. Beautiful views of the Gibraltar Straits & Africa and a great place to chill out and see the sun disappear in the Ocean.



Punta de Tarifa is a small fist of land that juts out as an archipelago right down at the very bottom of Spain. Across the Straits of Gibraltar, Morocco is a mere 11km away, and so it is little surprising to learn that Tarifa – back when it was nothing more than a peaceful fishing village – was the first point of the Moorish Invasion that poured across what is now Southern Spain in 711. Five centuries later and with the Reconquista in full swing, the retreating Moors fled from Tarifa and its surrounding ports, leaving the continent for good, but also leaving their indelible mark on Andalucía.

For most of the year hundreds of wind and kite surfers, whose brightly coloured masts and taut kite lines zip across the horizon, create a fascinating spectacle for sunbathers to gaze upon as they enjoy their own, considerably less energetic pastime.

Its old town is almost garrison-like: castle walls surround the cramped and narrow alleys that run between decrepit old buildings, their windows encased in wrought iron bars, the outside world kept at bay by splintered shutters slammed firmly shut.

Next to The Alameda are plenty of charming tapas bars in the heart of the Old Town, making it a great spot to head to in the evening for an affordable and delicious meal with friends.

The resort's most iconic stretch of sand is the stunning Punta Paloma Beach, which is located three kilometres west of Tarifa's Old Town. The first thing that is immediately noticeable as you approach via the



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road is the huge sand dune that forms the beach's spine, formed over the centuries by the strong winds that blow across the bay on an almost daily basis. At the far end of the beach is a natural mud spa. Set among the shallows at the foot of a rocky outcrop, the rocks here give off a gritty residue when rubbed that can be applied to the skin, allowed to dry, then washed off in the fresh salty waters of the Atlantic, leaving the skin feeling rather silky.

Events:

Feria Tarifa in September - Grand Horse Parade that brings the Nuestra Virgen de la Luz to town

Historical recreation of Tarifa site in 1812 in October – Simulation of the battle against the French

VALDEVAQUEROS (50 MINS - 59 KM)

Roughly 50 minutes in a car from Villa Eterna you will find the beautiful, fascinating and exposed sand dunes of Valdevaqueros. They are situated 10 km from Tarifa and are a certain "not to miss" during a trip to Tarifa and surrounding areas. Expect wind and sand ploughs.....



Home to the annual world wind surf championships and also popular with those who enjoy kitesurf and sailing. A small lagoon lies behind the sand at the north end.



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MIJAS (55 MINS - 85 KM)

The beautiful village of Mijas sits into the mountainside (428 metres above sea level) like a huge overhanging balcony overlooking the Mediterranean. A tour through the lively streets of Mijas reveals Moorish style whitewashed streets, buildings and monuments of historical interest, including the local churches and hermitages.



The village is typically Andalusian, steeped in culture and full of charming alleys and nooks, where you will feel like you have been taken back in time.

The bullring, with its unusual quadrangular exterior, the sanctuary of the Virgen de la Peña (17th century) and the church of la Concepción (16th century) are some of the principal monuments of the village.

It is also worthwhile visiting the Auditorium and taking a quiet stroll along the wall and around the gardens and balconies, which provide exceptional views of the Costa del Sol. There are also the charming donkey-taxis, which offer trips around the centre and the outskirts of the village.

EVENTS

The night of San Juan: on the 24th of June Celebration of the longest night of the year and spectacular fireworks display at midnight.

Corpus Christi in June is celebrated in the traditional Spanish way, by covering the village streets in 'romero' (rosemary). The village takes on a somewhat mediaeval air with the wonderful smell of these herbs and the overall traditional atmosphere.

Flamenco Dance Festival in July, when you can see wonderful traditional dance displays by local and national groups. **Latin American Night** in August turns the village square into a South American dance festival. You can join in the music and dancing for a hot summer night.

Mijas Fair in September is a week long celebration, in honour of the patron saint of Mijas, Various stalls and bars and traditional Sevillana dancing. Procession of Spanish horses and an array of spectacular flamenco dresses.



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3 PLACES TO VISIT 1-2 HOURS AWAY BY CAR

MEDINA SIDONIA (1 HOUR - 95 KM)

Set atop a hill called "Cerro del Castillo" (at an altitude of 300 m), it is definitely worth stopping and strolling around this medieval village. Founded by the Phoenicians, it became an important Roman colony and was also capital of the Muslim district of Sidonia.

Medina Sidonia is famous for its pastries and in particular the 'Alfajor de Medina', a traditional Spanish sweet of Arab origin made from almonds, hazelnuts, sesame, cinnamon and cloves.



Medieval remnants include the ruins of the Castle, erected on the old Muslim fortress, and Torrestrella Castle (both dating from the 12th-14th Centuries). Noteworthy medieval arches dating from the period of Muslim occupation and before the conquest include the following arches: Arco de la Pastora (10th Century), Arco del Sol (10th-13th Century) and Arco de Belén (12th-15th Century)



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BOLONIA (1H05 MINS - 75 KM)

The unspoilt small isolated small ex fishing and farming village of Bolonia boasts a population of 117 people. It is the site of one of the three most important Roman archaeological excavations in Andalucía. Its stunning dunes and beach make it a very popular beach day out. Bring your own picnic or eat and drink at one of the chiringuitos (beach bars).



The ruins of the Roman town of Baelo Claudia are located near the beach, considered to be the most complete Roman town ruins yet uncovered in Spain.

You can walk round Baelo Claudia following the suggested route, which takes you from the museum, past the east aqueduct and towards the salting vats on the seashore. Then you can see the forum and the basilica (with many columns intact), followed by administrative buildings and shops. Further along, the path takes you to the market and baths, and finally, at the top of the town, the theatre - with its complex system of doors and passageways, for each section of audience, arranged into three areas by class - and temples.



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JEREZ DE LA FRONTERA (1H15 MINS - 120 KM)

Not far inland from Cádiz, there is the famous fortified wine Sherry producing town of Jerez de la Frontera. Jerez boasts a huge number of amazing bars and restaurants, where you can enjoy the local product with some quality tapas. There are a few old sherry tabancos: barrel rooms where wine is sold by the glass and by the bottle.

A must-do while here is to take a tour in one of the town's old bodegas – Harveys, Gonzalez Byass or Williams & Humbert to name just a few.



The town dates back to Moorish times and possesses a charming old town, *casco antiguo*, with beautiful palm lined squares. The 11th century Moorish fortress, or Alcazaba, has been partially restored. Of special interest is its church, originally built by the Arabs as a mosque.

Jerez is famous for its long - standing Flamenco tradition, making it an excellent place to watch this great art.

Events

Jerez Flamenco Festival : The International festival attracts flamenco artists from all over the world. It usually begins in late **February** and continues for a fortnight.

Jerez Feria del Caballo (Horse Fair): the Feria de Jerez happens each year around **May**, and is one of the most important regional celebrations

There are fantastic and colourful processions of Horses and Carriages dancing shows and competitions, plus some amazing flamenco music too and firework displays most evenings.

Jerez's Sherry Festival takes place on the first Saturday of **September** every year as part of "Las Fiestas de la Vendimia y Otoño". This is a three week party involving sherry, horses and flamenco. The origin of the festival is the annual celebration of the grape harvest.



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ATLANTERRA (1H20 MINS – 95 KM)

Atlanterra is a secluded private residential development located on the Cabo de Plata and is accessed by the only road leading south from the small fishing village of Zahara de los Atunes. It has a crescent shaped golden sandy beach which is accessible from the roads in Atlanterra.

Head up to the clifftop lighthouse (Faro de Camarinal) where a decked walkway leads to great views of this stretch of largely unspoilt coastline. If you scramble over cliffs with you towel and bathing suite one can access the pristine secluded beach of "Playa de Canuelo" from paths leading from the lighthouse headland.





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MALAGA (1H20 MINS - 110 KM)

A historic and culturally rich provincial capital with a tastefully restored historic centre, its Gothic cathedral is surrounded by narrow pedestrian streets flanked by traditional and modern bars, and shops that range from idiosyncratic and family owned, to urban-chic and contemporary.

There is a varied skyline of church spires, red tiled roofs and lofty apartment buildings. The 11th-century Gibralfaro castle sits grandly aloft and provides the best view of all.

The port has been grandly rebuilt and is now a great place to stroll, meet up for a drink, eat or just boat and people watch.



Events

SEMANA SANTA- in April, it is one of the busiest weeks in Málaga's calendar, the city becomes enveloped in cheerful music and good spirits.

NOCHE DE SAN JUAN- takes place on the 23rd of June, it marks the Summer Solstice. Originally a Pagan tradition the ritual was later given sanction by the Christians, to celebrate the Solstice. At Midnight on the 23rd, figurines called *Juas* (usually caricatures of public figures) stuffed with flammable substances such as paper and sawdust are burned on a bonfire. It is not uncommon for participants to bring old furniture to burn, to keep the fire going. The Night of San Juan is said to be magical and enchanted. There are myths which say that if you bath in the sea at Midnight you will receive eternal beauty.

MÁLAGA FERIA takes place in August and is an exuberant week-long street party with plenty of flamenco and 'fino'(sherry) and firework display. The fair commemorates the re-conquest of the city by Isabella and Ferdinand in 1487 and lasts for ten full festive days.



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LA FRONTERA (1H20 MINS – 105 KM)

Conil de la Frontera lies on the edge of a 14km stretch of beautiful coastline made up of fine white sandy bays and coves or 'calas'. The beaches are spectacular and spread out from Conil up and down the coast, to the North and South. You only need to stroll down through the town to the Paseo del Atlántico, along the wooden walkways and out on to the sand to get a sense of just how far the sand stretches away into the distance.



EVENTS

Romeria de San Sebastian, on the Sunday nearest to 20 January;

El Colorado - the spring feria in the first week of June;

Nuestra Señora de las Virtudes, is celebrated around 8 September;

Ruta del Atun de Almadraba in May/June, many restaurants offer special tuna dishes.



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VEJER DE LA FRONTERA (1H20 MINS - 100 KM)

Perched on a hillside a little inland from the coast with its whitewashed walls built right into the Cliffside of a steep hill, Vejer is the most spectacular of the white villages (pueblos blancos) of Cadiz province. The village is a network of narrow and twisting streets which regularly breakout for great views of the countryside and sea.

It is a very tranquil place but there are ample food and drink options in one of the comfortable little cafes and bars to be found in the village.



The green meadows in the natural park around Vejer de la Frontera is where they breed the "toros bravos" - the famous bulls for bullfighting, which are the symbol of Andalusia.

Vejer de la Frontera is in contrast to other villages at the coast not a party place. Those who come to spend their holidays here, really appreciate the tranquillity and peace of the town

EVENTS

Toro embolado: the biggest event in Vejer de la Frontera is at Easter time. Young men come from near and far to show their courage as they run along with a huge bull through the streets of this little village. Other people watch this event from a safe place behind the barricades and enjoy the ceremony all day long.



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CADIZ (1H30 - 125 KM)

Built on a narrow spit of land, Cadiz is accessed by a single road over the sea, which gives it a magical air. Columbus set out from here twice on his voyages to the New World.

The city's golden age was during the 18th century and this is evident in the architecture of its rambling old town, a maze of lanes and broader streets. Bars, cafes and many of the shops have a wonderful 'vintage' feel to them.



The old city looks quite Moorish in appearance and is intriguing with narrow cobbled streets opening onto small squares. The golden cupola of the cathedral looms high above long white houses and the whole place has a slightly dilapidated air. It just takes an hour to walk around the headlands where you can visit the entire old town and pass through some lovely parks with sweeping views of the bay.

EVENTS

CARNIVAL: The streets of Cadiz's historic centre and the oldest neighbourhoods of the city are flooded with dancing, music, parades and festivities during the Cadiz Carnival that is one of the most popular celebration of the town.



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ARCOS DE LA FRONTERA (1H30 MINS - 150 KM)

The town is a visual treat with all the hallmarks of a white village - maze-like cobbled streets and pretty, white-washed little squares. The castle is 15th century and there are any number of grand old churches and buildings from the 16th and 17th centuries to wander around before lunch in one of the town's countless restaurants.

There are also many viewpoints of the stunning surrounding countryside.



Perched on a sandstone ridge, like most pueblos blancos the town has Moorish history - a number of Moorish banners were seized during the nearby battle of Zahara and have been on display in a church in Arcos for over five hundred years.



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RONDA (1H20 MINS – 80 KM)

Ronda retains much of its historic charm, particularly its old town. It is famous worldwide for its dramatic escarpments and views, and for the cavernous and deep El Tajo gorge that carries the rio Guadalevín through its centre below the Puente Nuevo

Ronda has a number of brilliant viewing platforms that deliver dramatic views of the surrounding plains and distant mountains. There are also beautiful plazas, boutique-lined streets and fancy bars.

Beyond the town, there's 52,000 hectares of lush, rugged and varied terrain to traverse in the Sierra de Grazalema. Reaching heights of 1,600 metres above sea level, this wild and undulating terrain is home to plenty of varied flora and fauna, including some of the most impressive examples of birds of prey found anywhere in Europe like Lion Buzzards, Black Vulture, Osprey and Eagles



EVENTS

Feria Goyesca de Pedro Romero: it takes place during the first week of September every year. The main attraction of this fiesta is the bullfight. Before the bullfight there is a procession of horse drawn carriages through the streets of Ronda with everyone dressed in 18th century Goyesque costumes. The matadors themselves also wear this traditional attire.

Virgen de la Cabeza: very popular and picturesque pilgrimage in first Sunday of May. Bright colours and festive music with a procession that brings the "Virgin of the Head" statue from the la Merced Church, across the famous "Puente Nuevo" with its dizzying views and out of town to the hermitage. The enthusiastic participants in the Virgen de la Cabeza pilgrimage dress for the occasion with bright, fancy flamenco dresses and traditional country attire for men.



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GRAZALEMA (1H50 MINS - 120 KM)

The village was established in Moorish times by Berber settlers who discovered a striking similarity with the mountains of their homeland and those of the Sierra de Grazalema. The existing pueblo blanco overlooked by a dramatic outcrop, is the most popular base for the visitors who flock here for climbing and hiking.



The area abounds with artisan food products such as Queso Payoyo, a unique and sweeter-than-usual goat's cheese and the town itself has a long heritage of woollen mills, one of which is still operating and makes ponchos, rugs and scarves. The surge in rural tourism has swelled the town's compliment of bars and restaurants so it isn't all about the great outdoors, although that is undoubtedly the main draw here.



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ZAHARA DE LA SIERRA (1H50 MINS - 125 KM)

The white village of Zahara de la Sierra has one of the most stunning settings in the province of Cadiz. There is a castle built on a rocky peak high above the turquoise waters of a lake. The town is built on the sides of the hill whose height ranges between 300m and 1100m. The name of the town probably comes from the Arab word sahra meaning desert.



EVENTS

The famous **fiesta of Corpus Christi** has been declared to be of National Tourist Interest. The people of Zahara dress up the fronts of the houses with branches and rushes, making the whole place town as if it were part of the countryside.



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EL TORCAL DE ANTEQUERA (1H50 MINS – 160 KM)

El Torcal park and the protected El Torcal Natural Area is known for its unusual limestone rock formations. Located about 30 km north of Málaga city in the direction of Antequera one of the most dramatic and exceptional karstic landscapes in Europe. This surreal and lunar grey limestone plateau, dating from the Jurassic period, is riven by deep gullies and characterised by its fantastically weathered natural sculptures, like the Tornillo Natural Monument. The whole area was under sea until one hundred million years ago.

Then the violent movements of the Earth's crust forced it upward into hills and mountains up to 1.300 m, the limestone still kept its layered horizontal formation. Because of this, over the millions of years the rain and wind have been able to chisel away at these layers to form incredible shapes.



Although its most marked characteristic is the bareness of the rock, the Spring and Autumn rains provoke the explosion of colourful plant life with the clay ground soil in the caves and passages covered with a green herbaceous carpet, pinpointed with lilies, nazarenes and vivid red peonies with their distinctive soft velvety texture.

The charm of El Torcal and its magical beauty are increased still more at night. A particularly unforgettable sight is the August moon, for example, rising far above the peaks and best seen from the Las Ventanillas viewpoint. The harsh forms of the mountain soften in the distance while, in the foreground, the contrasts of light and shade are more defined and the rocks seem almost a mystical appearance.



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4 PLACES TO VISIT MORE THAN TWO HOURS AWAY BY CAR

GRANADA (2H30 MINS – 235 KM)

Granada is typically Andalucían. Taking life as it comes, Granada's 240,000 residents create a laid-back vibe mixed with the passion of its gypsy tradition. Weave your way through the white-washed alleys of the Islamic Albaicín, explore the intriguing caves of Sacromonte, Granada's traditional gypsy neighbourhood, and the bustling Granada centre to discover the cultural scene's wealth of treasures.

Along with its one-of-a-kind display of Islamic and Christian architecture, the city is a stage for fantastic festivals and a hotbed of restaurants, cafés, museums, bars, and flamenco venues... just to name a few! With delicious food, breath taking architecture, the scent of orange blossoms and jasmine, heart-stirring music, and so much more, a trip to Granada is without a doubt a treat for the senses.



Despite boasting one of Spain's finest palaces, and in such close proximity to the highest peak and busiest ski resort on mainland Spain, Granada can offer much more than skiing and gazing at grand buildings. Granada is simply sophistication personified.

The Alhambra Palace sits atop a steep terrace that keeps watch on the city below. In the background sit the breath taking peaks of the Sierra Nevada mountain range, and a rolling horizon stretches out for miles before it. The setting is both dramatic and defensive – it is easy to see why the Moors chose this particular spot in which to build their citadel. Inside, the scope of beauty of the Alhambra will take your breath away. The peaceful and enchanting Generalife Gardens echo to the sound of rippling water and gently swaying branches, a perfectly preserved Arabian garden set under the Spanish sun.



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There is a lovely Old Town- a massed huddle of hilly, twisting and tight cobbled streets that are home to brilliant tapas bars where the actual practice of a free tapa still exists.

What it also has in abundance is impressive monuments and historical buildings. Aside from the Alhambra, the old quarter of Granada is also home to the majestic Cathedral, the delightful Santa Ana Church, the Basilica of St. John of God, the Castril Palace which houses the Architectural Museum of Granada, the Charterhouse, the Albayzín, the Gate of Elvira and the Almorabitin.

The nearest beaches – those found on the Costa Tropical at the foot of the beautiful Alpujarras region – are lovely and worth spending the entire day upon, while the skiing at Sierra Nevada is fantastic.

SEVILLA (2H05 MINS – 205 KM)

Sevilla is one of the best cities to visit if you want to savour the Andalusian way of life in its purest form. Seville manages to combine the atmosphere of old Spain with a twist of modernity. It has a remarkable abundance of beautiful and historic architecture and you will find its historic city centre in perfect condition. Also it has managed to keep the historic city centre free of traffic with only horse and carriage, trams and bicycles allowed through the centre, which retains the city's aged charm.

The "La Triana" quarter is where countless artists, bull fighters and flamenco artists, both past and present were born and lived. It was the old "Gitano" gypsy quarter until the 1950s and is considered the spiritual heart of Flamenco.



According to myth, Seville was founded 3000 years ago by the Greek god Hercules.



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Like all great cities, Seville has historical layers. Roman ruins testify the settlement's earliest face, memories of the Moorish era flicker like medieval engravings in the Santa Cruz quarter, while the riverside Arenal reeks of lost colonial glory. Yet, one of the most remarkable things about modern Seville is its ability to adapt and etch fresh new brushstrokes onto an ancient canvas.

Spectacular architecture, vibrant festivals and flamenco flamboyance; Seville has plenty of peacock oomph. There is the cathedral designed so that "those who see it built will say we're mad"; its Plaza de España, created for the world expo in 1929; the Real Alcázar (royal palace), as seen in Game of Thrones; plus the winding alleys of the Jewish quarter (Santa Cruz). Add in private palaces, Moorish patios, Roman columns here and there, and a golden tower.

The best way to experience the ne neighbourhoods of Triana, just across the river, and buzzy Alameda, a short stroll to the north is on foot

So cross the beautiful Puente de Triana and be prepared for anything – a friendly wave, street flamenco, hidden bodegas serving delightful local delicacies and strong sherries, unseen squares where families spend the entire day picnicking and chatting...anything goes in Triana.

EVENTS:

SEMANA SANTA (Easter Time) streets fill for eight days and nights as long processions of *pasos* (floats) bearing tableaux of Christ, virgins or saints make circuits of the city, surrounded by cheerful crowds.

FERIA DE ABRIL A week of drink, food and dance which takes place day and night in more than a thousand mounted tents (*casetas*). Parade of men on their fine horses and women that dance Sevillanas in brilliantly coloured gypsy dresses.



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CORDOBA (2H40 MINS - 265 KM)

Located in the very heart of Andalucía, the beautiful city of Córdoba is as Spanish as could be, yet is also home to the third largest mosque in the world – the majestic Mezquita. Córdoba oozes antiquity. The city has existed since 169 B.C., and was founded by the Romans.

Its beautifully varied architecture makes it one of the most picturesque cities in Spain, harbouring a peaceful atmosphere that draws upon the city's visual majesty and fantastic climate to create a warmth and charm that is highly infectious to all who visit.



Lovers of classic Andalusian and Moorish architecture are in for a rare treat – Córdoba's delightful Old Town is a testament to the brilliance of the human mind with its tightly winding streets, whitewashed walls decorated with hanging flower pots, and the endless number of pretty patios.

In ancient times water and shade were signs of power and prosperity. Córdoba's ubiquitous patios, which are central to everyday life in the city were designed to provide shelter and privacy, many used to echo to the sounds of running water manipulated through and around them. The water helped cool the air, and create a peaceful atmosphere. Today, much of these water features are gone, but the patios are a great place for breakfast, lunch, a siesta, evening barbecues and generally cooling off. You will find them dotted all over the city, and they are always a welcome sight.

Main attraction of the town is the Mezquita. First a church, then a mosque, then a Royal Temple, then a cathedral and today a member of the diocese of Córdoba, the Mezquita's rich and varied tenancy history is a result of Córdoba's strategic importance over the centuries. A marked feature of the Mezquita is its giant arches that are supported by 856 columns made of granite, marble, jasper and onyx. Inside, the mihrab forms the focus of the monument's beauty – smoothly constructed and artistically decorated, this internal Garden of Eden captivates visitors from the very moment they step inside.



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Córdoba delights with its tapestry of tapas bars, its collection of clubs and its brilliant bodegas. Al fresco dining is a way of life here, more so than in most other places in Spain due to the reliably warm weather.

EVENTS

May Crosses Festival, which is, simply, a festival that celebrates ornately decorated crosses. Awards are dished out for the most impressive crosses, while the larger public crosses form mini hubs of entertainment, delivering local dishes and music for the duration of the festival.

SIERRA NEVADA NATIONAL PARK (>3 HOURS - 310 KM)

The Sierra Nevada is a dramatic, rugged and extensive mountain range. The protected area encompasses 86,208ha of torrential rivers, sheer-sided gorges, stony scree slopes, glacial lakes between snowy summits and, in the foothills of the Alpujarras, cultivated terraces of almond trees and vegetables.

There are over 20 peaks more than 3,000m, which makes it the second highest mountain range in Europe after the Alps. The two highest peaks in the Iberian Peninsula are in the park, the Mulhacén at 3,482m, closely followed by the Pico del Veleta, at 3,396m. On a clear day these mountains can be seen from as far away as Africa.



When seen from the north, from the Granada basin, it creates a spectacular horizon of hilly peaks marked by glacial erosion dating back to the Quaternary period, the southernmost in Europe. They hide a unique, spectacular landscape of deep valleys, cirques, lakes, lateral moraines and ridges, such as **Laguna de la Caldera**. The mountains have snow almost all year round, which melts in late spring to feed not only the many famous baths and spas, such as Lanjarón, but also an extensive, colossal and historic network of irrigation channels that run through La Alpujarra...



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ALMERIA (>3 HOURS - 315 KM)

Almeria is one of the last stretches of unspoilt Mediterranean, one of the driest and sunniest place in Spain. It is home to the only European desert that was the stage of several western films.

It is located at the foot of a mountain range which is crowned by the magnificent Alcazaba, an Arab fortress built by the Caliph of Cordoba, with three huge walled enclosures (in the second of which are remains of a mosque, converted to a chapel by the Catholic kings). The Alcazaba is the second largest Muslim fortress in Andalucia behind the Alhambra in Granada.

In Almeria Province Cabo de Gata and Mojacar deserve to be mentioned as beautiful places to visit.



Mojacar

The town of Mojacar clings to a rocky hillside like a gargoyle watching over the Mediterranean Sea. Mojacar still remains remarkably true to its Moorish past and it is a place that begs to be explored by foot. You will encounter incredible views with nearly every step.

Cabo de Gata

From volcanic beginnings, the landscapes of the natural park have evolved into a region of hills and mountains, gorges, ravines, and arid plains, with a dramatic rocky coastline hiding remote and unspoilt beaches and coves. The main roads through the park offer access to the villages of the park, both coastal and inland, however it must be noted that many rural areas and several beaches and coves can only be reached by tracks and sometimes only on foot. The park provides many signposted walking trails from which to appreciate the best of the landscapes.