

Andalucia Tour Itinerary

1st day, Thursday, September 20 Granada – Baena – Córdoba

Before lunch we will be travelling by bus through the never ending scenery of one of the world's best D.O. olive growing regions to Baena whose noble lineage was won with its knights' prestige in the Reconquest of Spain, when the Christian kings retook the country from the Muslims. Here we visit the captivating **olive oil mill** of the Núñez de Prado Family which dates from the 18th century and will be offered a special menu for lunch. Check-In at Hotel Hesperia for 2 nights. Dinner will be served at the hotel.

2nd day, Friday, September 21 Córdoba

Capital of the western world in the 11th century, Córdoba is not only a convenient stop in central Andalusia, but the essence of Spain - Iberian, Roman, Visigoth, Jewish, Islamic and Christian civilizations, captured in its stones, its monuments and its collective consciousness: We visit the **Mosque-Cathedral**, a legacy of the Umayyad Caliphate in Spain and Jewel of Hispanic art, with its 850 columns, double arches and Byzantine mosaics. In the medieval streets of the old **Jewish Quarter**, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1984 and one of the largest in Europe, we see the **Synagogue, La Casa de Sefarad** and **La Casa Andalusí**. The **Alcázar Palace** was built in the 13th century and until the late 15th century, the kings of Spain used it as a royal residence. The renaissance gardens, refreshed by abundant fountains and pools, are in Arab style. An exclusive dinner will be served at Bodegas Campos, uniquely located within a winery and specializing in traditional Cordoban cuisine.

3rd day, Saturday September 22 - Córdoba – Medinat az-Zahra – Sevilla

Leaving Córdoba we first stop at **Medinat az-Zahra**, just a few miles from Córdoba. Although today only 10% of the city has been excavated it is easy to appreciate that it was once considered as the perfectly ordered jewel of the Umayyad Caliphate. It would be described by travellers from northern Europe and from the East as a dazzling series of palaces full of treasures never seen before. Then, heading westwards, our route crosses the fertile plains called 'La Campiña' near the Guadalquivir River and leads us straight into the heart of the city of Seville along the magnificent **Avenida de las Palmeras** where you can see the most important monuments of the **Latin American World's Fair Exhibition of 1929** with beautiful pavilions, parks and squares. Check-In at Hotel Zenit (****) for 2 nights. Afternoon visit to the **Iglesia San Salvador**, the site of a Roman temple, Visigothic church, the Friday Mosque and a Christian church in the name of the Virgin and finally the Saviour. We will see the extensive underground excavations and old Moorish ablutions courtyard. In the evening we will have a "Tapas Meal" in a typical bar in one of Seville's old quarters, El Arenal.

4th day, Sunday, September 23 - Sevilla

Seville is without a doubt one of the most beautiful cities in the world and, at the same time, the most majestic city of Southern Spain. It is almost like a living museum, particularly in the evocative old **Jewish quarter**, the Santa Cruz. Unbelievably narrow streets lined with whitewashed palaces and balconies bursting over with fuchsia-coloured

bougainvillea, lead you from one tiny square to the next, inevitably full of orange trees, graceful courtyards and charming Tapas Bars covered in typical tiles and lined with wine barrels. Today we first visit **Itálica**, the extraordinary ruins of the ancient Roman town that lies just outside Seville - with its exceptional amphitheatre, houses and mosaics, the site was also a place of retreat for Muslim mystics (including Ibn 'Arabi). Then back into the city to visit the "**Reales Alcázares**", or "**Royal Fortress**" which houses the amazing monumental complex of Peter 1st, Peter the Cruel. These superb palaces are absolutely stunning for the first time visitor: Intricately carved arches, hand painted tiles with Arabic calligraphy and spectacular gardens can all be enjoyed here. In the afternoon we'll see the huge **Gothic Cathedral** which was the original site of Seville's 12th century Mosque of which only the beautiful Giralda tower is left. Dinner will be served at the hotel.

5th day, Monday, September 24:

After breakfast: individual transfers to Seville Airport or:

OPTIONAL EXTRA TOUR THROUGH SOUTHERN ANDALUSIA

5th day, Monday, September 24: Sevilla – White Villages – Ronda

In the morning we leave Seville and take one of the most beautiful routes through the Andalusian countryside, the **route of the White Villages**: passing through "Los pueblos blancos" (small whitewashed village-towns) perched on dramatic hilltops, we will arrive in the afternoon at the Hotel San Francisco in Ronda (***) for 1 night. It lies close to one of the most dramatic passes in Andalusia, the famous 'Pass of the Doves'. There will be time for a leisurely afternoon walk in the beautiful **Sierra de Grazalema**, a wonderful natural park with plenty of wildlife and birds. Dinner will take place at a charming restaurant within walking distance of the hotel.

6th day, Tuesday, September 25: Ronda - Tarifa

In the morning we shall visit **Ronda**, one of the most dramatic and historic towns in Andalusia, situated amidst a range of mountains, with its great gorge and old streets. With many remnants of Arab and Christian Reconquista times, Ronda is one of the towns not to be missed on any Andalusian itinerary. We will see **Santa Maria la Mayor** church, where parts of the old Friday mosque are still visible, the **Palacio de Mondragón**, the two **bridges** over the gorge and the **Arab baths** and **gateway**. After lunch, we will take a 2-hour drive through the Serranía de Ronda, more stunning scenery and white villages, down to the Mediterranean coast, with views en route across the bay to the Rock of Gibraltar. Our next stop, **Tarifa**, at the southernmost tip of Spain, stands at the crossroads between Europe and Africa, Mediterranean and Atlantic, and is famous as a windsurfing centre. We will visit the **castle** from which the African coast is clearly visible across the straits, and the **old town** with its horseshoe gates. Check-in and supper at Hotel Meson de Sancho (***) for 1 night.

7th day, Wednesday, September 26: Tarifa - Baelo Claudia – Vejer – Caños - Arcos

In the morning we travel up the Atlantic coast, visiting the ruins of **Baelo Claudia**, a thriving town in the Roman era on the Atlantic coast, famous for its garum (fermented

anchovy paste), and then one of the white jewels of Andalusia, **Vejer de la Frontera**. Vejer is a place of great contemplation with its remarkable **Iglesia de Santa Maria de las Olivas** and palm trees. Lunch will be at **Canos de Meca** (Cape Trafalgar) and there will be time for a swim in the warm Atlantic Ocean before leaving for the delightful white town of **Arcos de la Frontera**, with its castle and churches. Check-in and supper at Hotel Cortijo Barranco, a gorgeous hotel in the countryside (***) for 1 night.

8th day, Thursday, September 27: Arcos - Carmona - Sevilla

We will travel via the old towns of **Morón** and **Marchena** to the Roman hilltop town of **Carmona**: with its narrow streets and old churches, Carmona is an atmospheric town with a long history, boasting a large Roman necropolis, and we will visit the **Alcazar Puerta de Sevilla** (the fortress at the Seville gate), the **Prioral Santa María** with its Moorish columns, and one of the most stylish buildings in Andalusia, the 14th-century Arab castle that is now a **Parador** (hotel) with amazing views over the Campiña plain. In the afternoon we return to **Seville**. Check-in at Hotel La Casona de San Andrés (***) for 1 night. Evening meal in Barrio Santa Cruz.

9th day, Friday September 28: Sevilla

This will be a free day in Sevilla for personal exploration and shopping. Participants will be on their own for dinner.

10th day, Saturday September 29: Departure Day

After breakfast, transfer to Seville Airport

Hotel Information

September 20 and 21- Cordoba

Hotel Hesperia

The Hesperia Cordoba has a superb location on the Guadalquivir River in the historic center of Cordoba. It provides incomparable views of the town, and is ideal for exploring the history of one of Andalusia's most famous cities. The most memorable aspect of the hotel is its amazing swimming pool, set in the centre of a traditional Andalusian courtyard.

Hotel Hesperia

Avda. Fray Albino 1

14009 Córdoba

Córdoba Spain

Tel: (+34) 957 421 042

September 22 and 23- Seville

Zenith Hotel

In the heart of the Triana district, next to Betis street and 5 minutes away from the Maestranza, the Zenit Sevilla Hotel combines all the character and harmony that characterise the capital of Seville.

Zenith Hotel
Pagés del Corro, 90
Sevilla- 41010
Spain
Tel: (+34) 95 434 74 34

September 24 - Ronda

Hotel San Francisco

This new hotel is located in the frequently-visited centre of Ronda, also known as the 'Dreamed City', close to the Costa del Sol and The White Towns Route. The friendly, family-orientated hotel boasts charming furnishings and large rooms equipped with all modern amenities for an enjoyable stay.

Hotel San Francisco
Maria Cabrera 18 - 20
Ronda
Malaga 29400
Spain
Tel: (+34) 952 87 32 99

September 25- Outside of Tarifa

Hotel Meson de Sancho

The Hotel Meson de Sancho is located in one of the most privileged places of the province of Cadiz. The Hotel is located in the south limit of the Parque Natural de los Alcornocales, at 9 kilometres of Algeciras and at 9 kilometres of the Tarifa town. From the Hotel, you will see the wonderful countryside of the Straits of Gibraltar and the mountains of Africa. The Hotel is located In front of the incomparable beauty of Los Alcornocales which offers a natural world of fauna and flora.

Hotel Meson de Sancho
Crtá nacional 340 km 94
11380 - Tarifa (Cádiz)
España
Tel. (+34) 956 684 900

September 26- Cadiz

Hotel Cortijo Barranco

This is a charming holiday complex that combines the beauty of the mountains with the rolling farm lands and olive trees groves. It was an old mill and the rooms have been restored and redecorated in a charming and traditional style.

The tranquillity and beauty of the landscape guarantee an unforgettable stay, far from the stress and distractions of the cities.

Hotel Cortijo Barranco
Apdo. de Correos 169
11.630 Arcos de la Frontera (Cádiz)
Tel: (+34) 956 23 14 02

September 27 and 28- Seville

Hotel La Casona de San Andrés

Hotel Casona San Andrés is located in a recently renovated 19th century Casa-Palacio right in the centre of the city. The building is a palace-house from the end of 19th century which has been rebuilt keeping the romantic atmosphere, typical of that time, in all its elements (grounds, show windows, tiles, patio...).

A legend, still to prove, says that before the Spanish Civil War the house was used as hiding place for the Macarena Virgin, one of the images that have more faithful in the city of Seville.

Hotel La Casona de San Andrés
Calle Daoiz 7. Centro Sevilla
Tel: (+34) 954 915 253