



Escorted Tours in Andalusia

GARDEN TOUR:

THE SCENT OF ANDALUCIA

(Small exclusive group tour 4-12 people)

The Andalusia of legends is brought to life on this dream trip. You'll feel captivated by the finest flourishing gardens and the fragrance of the orange trees as you also discover many hidden treasures throughout Southern Spain. We invite you to join this unique opportunity to visit the best selection of Moorish, Renaissance and Tropical gardens hidden in this historic corner of Spain.

SUMMARY (7 Nights)

Start & Finish Point: Malaga

1 Night Ronda

2 Night Sevilla

2 Nights Cordoba

2 Nights Granada

What's Included?

- All private transfers
- Hotels (3/4*)
- Breakfasts & all meals mentioned in the itinerary
- Guided tours with fluent English speaking guides. (includes: skip the line access)

What's not Included?

- International Air Flights
- Medical Insurance
- Meals & Drinks, other than those mentioned in the itinerary
- Tips & Gratuities

HIGHLIGHTS

- Small exclusive group tour (4-12 people maximum)
- Discover the main UNESCO World Heritage sites in Spain such as the Alhambra Palace in Granada, the Mosque of Córdoba and the Gothic Cathedral in Sevilla.
- The explosion of colours in the Andalusian courtyards, the deep smell of orange blossoms on the streets and the water silence of the fountains will make you feel in paradise.
- Enjoy some privileged spots on this land of castles, palaces and gardens.
- Some private houses will open their gardens to you so you can meet the owners, try their food and toast with local wines.
- Stay in character historic buildings converted into charming accommodations for a real feel of the Andalusian architecture.



Just Explore Holidays & Tours SL

T: +34 957 022 902

M: +34 639 933 717

E: info@just-explore.com

www.just-explore.com

Spanish Licence: CIAN-146473-2

ITINERARY

DAY 1:

Malaga

Morning: Meet & Greet. Concepcion

Botanical Gardens

After meeting at Malaga airport in the morning we will take you to La Concepción Botanical Gardens just between Malaga city and the airport. These gardens are a tropical paradise with over 800 species. After visiting the gardens and having some lunch at the coffee shop of the Botanical gardens, we will drive you to the picturesque town of Ronda on a beautiful scenic road connecting the Mediterranean coast and the Serrania mountains. Check-in at your hotel in Ronda, dramatically located overlooking the Tajo gorge and cliffs.

Free evening & welcome dinner

After settled in your room, it's time to relax and enjoy a nice welcome dinner with amazing views

Concepcion botanical and historical gardens were initially created in 1855 by the Marquis of Casa Loring and his wife. The Gardens were subsequently expanded by their second owners, the Echevarria-Echevarrieta family, who acquired the estate in 1911. They were officially declared gardens of historical and artistic importance in 1943 and have now achieved the "BIC" status (Building of Cultural Interest). status (Building of Cultural Interest). In 1990, they were taken over by Malaga city council and were opened to the public on 21st June 1994.

Meals included: Lunch & dinner

DAY 2:

Ronda & Sevilla

Morning: Ronda guided tour

After breakfast, we will visit the most representative gardens in Ronda, starting with the gardens of Casa del Rey Moro: XVIII century mansion built on Morish foundations. The gardens were constructed in 1912 by Forestier and offer excellent views of the Tajo gorge and the surrounding mountains. We will visit next the Palacio de Mondragón: XIV century palace which was the residence to the Moorish kings. Three Mudejar courtyards preserving original stuccowork and mosaics. Walk along the Alameda del Tajo: public garden from the XIX century representing a selection of mature trees typical in ornamental gardening in the Málaga province to end up at the most famous viewpoint to stare down into the gorge. Lunch will be offered in a beautiful traditional restaurant in the old town, where you can sample the local wines from Ronda.

Afternoon: Transfer to Sevilla

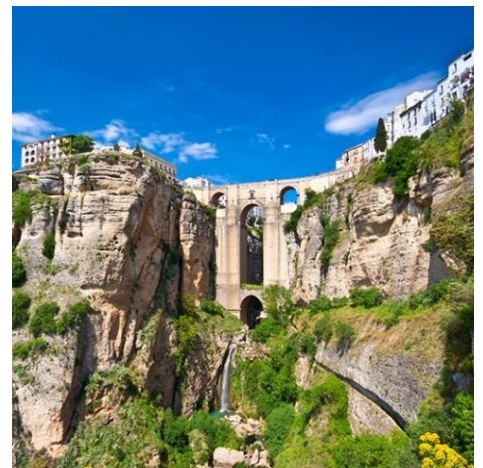
After lunch, you will be transferred to magic Sevilla, the capital of Southern Spain (approx. 1:45h drive) Check-in at a charming hotel in the Jewish quarter.

Free evening

You will have the evening free to enjoy Sevilla at your leisure

Ronda is a mountaintop city that sits in the heart of the Serrania de Ronda. Set dramatically above a deep gorge and surrounded by lush river valleys, it is a place that is absolutely breath taking. The gorge, El Tajo, separates the city's 15th-century new town from its Moorish old town. Puente Nuevo, a stone bridge spanning the gorge, has a lookout offering stunning views and the new town's Plaza de Toros, a legendary 18th-century bullring, is one of the city's most recognizable landmarks.

Meals included: Breakfast & lunch



DAY 3:

Sevilla

Morning: Sevilla guided tour

After breakfast, meet your local art historian guide in the lobby of the hotel to embark you on a 3.5h guided walking tour of the historical centre of Sevilla (one of the largest in Europe), including the Casa Pilatos (XV century Andalus palace and courtyards with a harmonious mixture of Mudéjar, Gothic and Renaissance styles), the Barrio de Santa Cruz (the old Jewish quarter with a labyrinth of tiny alleys and white houses with traditional Moorish courtyards), the Reales Alcazares gardens (an active Royal residence boasting impressive gardens and fountains from the XIV century) and finally the great Cathedral (the third largest Gothic cathedral in the world). The tour will finish at the Giralda tower (Cathedral's bell tower), where you can walk up to the very top (104 m high over ramps, no steps) at your own pace. Later your tour guide will meet you by the exit gate of the Cathedral for a 2h tapas tour, the Sevilla way!!



Free afternoon (suggestions)

Murillo gardens

Take a magical afternoon tea experience at one of the oldest & most beautiful hotels in Sevilla (Alfonso XIII, purely mudéjar style)

Arabian spa

Shopping

Metropol panoramic view (the wooden mushrooms, Plaza Encarnacion)....



Evening: Flamenco show

Flamenco venue and diner. Your tour guide will meet you at the lobby of your hotel to take you to one of the most emblematic "Tablaos" in Sevilla. With more than 40 years of experience this "Tablao" offers the purest Flamenco you can find in Andalusia. Probably the best place in Sevilla to live the excitement and duende of flamenco. Prior to the performance, à la carte dinner with dishes of high Andalusian cuisine will be served (all drinks are included). Towards the end of the dinner, the show will start and last approximately 1.30h. This show features up to 15 of the most professional flamenco artists in the whole Spain. Excitement and enjoyment are guaranteed!



Some cities blast you away, others slowly win you over. Sevilla disarms and seduces you. Its historic centre lorded over by a colossal Gothic cathedral, is an intoxicating mix of resplendent Mudéjar palaces, baroque churches and winding medieval lanes. Flamenco clubs keep the intimacy and intensity of this centuries-old tradition alive whilst aristocratic mansions recall the city's past as a showcase Moorish capital and, later, a 16th-century metropolis rich on the back of New World trade.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 4:

Sevilla & Cordoba

Morning: Maria Luisa Park & Plaza de España (Sevilla)

After breakfast, meet your local art historian guide in the lobby of the hotel for a private guided visit to M^a Luisa Parc and the spectacular Plaza de España

After your tour, a private transfer to Córdoba (approx. 1:30 hrs drive) where you will enjoy a unique gourmet experience at a very trendy food court in town: the Mercado Victoria.

Afternoon: Alcazar Gardens, Patios & Viana Palace

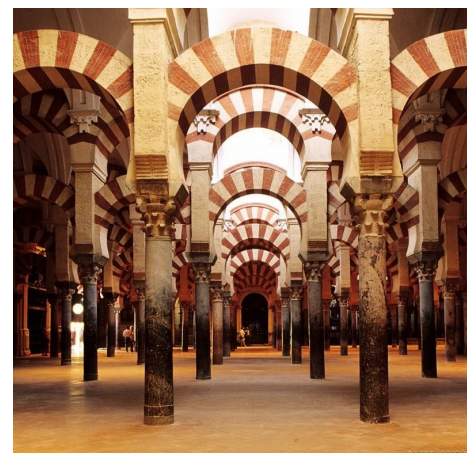
After lunch, you will meet your local guide for a private guided visit to the Alcazar gardens, followed by a short walking tour within one of the most popular areas from Córdoba, San Basilio quarter, to admire some of the most incredible “Patios” (private courtyards recently named UNESCO intangible cultural heritage). This walk will bring you to the Palacio de Viana: XVII century house with 13 interconnected delightful patios and gardens. Later you will Check-in to a charming hotel in the heart of the Jewish quarter where you will have some time to relax and get ready for one of the highlights of this tour: a night visit of the impressive Mosque/Cathedral

Evening: Guided tour of the Great Mosque and Cathedral

It is commonly believed that the site of the Mosque-Cathedral was originally a Christian church dedicated to Saint Vincent the Third, which was divided and shared by Muslims and Christians after the Islamic conquest of the Visigoth kingdom.

Córdoba was an important Roman city and a major Islamic centre in the Middle Ages. It's best known for La Mezquita, an immense mosque dating from 784 A.D., featuring a columned prayer hall and older Byzantine mosaics. After it became a Catholic church in 1236, a Renaissance-style nave was added in the 17th century.

Meals included: Breakfast & lunch



DAY 5: Cordoba

Day Trip to Portocarrero Palace & Gardens

Morning

Your driver and tour guide will take you to **Portocarrero Palace** (approx. 45mins), located in Palma del Rio, which is between the historic cities of Cordoba and Sevilla, by the river bank of the Gualquivir.

The rich history of this Palace goes back 2000 years to Roman times but here you have a summary of the main dates and facts that make of this palace a real gem to be discovered:

- This beautifully restored palace is a 16th century castle surrounded by Almohad walls from the 12th century when the building used to be the Alcazar/fortress of the villa of Palma del Rio.
- Owned by only two families over the past 700 years and the current owners (The Ybarra family) have lived here through 6 generations.
- The Palace is declared BIC (site of cultural interest)
- The Palace is surrounded by Hispanic-Arabic gardens with the original Arab irrigation system, a large citrus collection and possibly the oldest centenary orange orchard of the villa of Palma del Rio (a true live orange museum)
- Film-setting: Ridley Scott chose it for shooting the "Kingdom of Heaven" in 2005
- A great example of exhaustive refurbishment of the fortification part which was totally devastated in the Spanish Civil War.

You will enjoy a private guided tour of approx. 1.5hrs of the Palace, courtyards and gardens, completed with a tasting of delicious tapas, fresh orange juice, tea and pastries.

Cristina Ybarra, the current owner has her main art studio inside the Palace and she is always pleased to show and share her artwork with those discerning travellers who are interested in painting.

After this magical escape to paradise, it's back to Cordoba where you can relax or do some shopping ...

Evening Equestrian Show (optional extra 25€ per person)

Tonight you will enjoy a marvellous equestrian exhibition in which pure bred Spanish horses are the main protagonists. The stage; an emblematic and magical historical building, once the birthplace of the Andalusian Horse and now an unparalleled setting for this enchanting 1-hour equestrian show. The Royal Stables are located next to the Royal Alcázar and just a 5 mins walk from your hotel. We have pre-reserved central seats for you to ensure the best possible view. After the show, you can have dinner (cost not included) at one of the local restaurants in the nearby and authentic "San Basilio" district.

One of the sights you can't miss when visiting the city of Córdoba is the Royal Stables, home to the Cordoba Equestrian Show.

This emblematic and historical building was founded in 1570 by King Felipe II, a great horse lover with the dream of making a pure Spanish thoroughbred. The structure of the Royal Stables is quite grand, with vaulted ceilings and archways. Once the birthplace of the Andalusian Horse and now an unparalleled setting for this unique equestrian show. The performance is a chance to marvel at the beauty and magic of these animals in various disciplines as well as the extraordinary skills of the riders. You will enjoy an enchanting evening of music, lights, and dancing combined with majestic horse dressage

Meals included: Breakfast & lunch



DAY 6:

Montilla, Moriles & Priego

Hidden gems of the Andalusian Countryside

Morning

After breakfast, we will make our way to our next destination but before heading to Granada, we stop at interesting places in the heart of the Andalusian countryside surrounded by hundred years old olive groves...

First stop is a family-run olive oil mill in **Montilla** where you will discover the full process of olive oil making. You will enjoy a tour of the family groves and learn about the different characteristics, culinary uses and health benefits of olive oil followed by a tasting of two of their delicious varieties along with freshly baked bread made by the very same family!

Then, it's on to the lovely wine estate of Santa Magdalena, a local family-run boutique winery located right in the heart of the Sierra de **Moriles**, a stunning rural landscape with endless vineyards and rolling hills. Upon arrival, you will be welcomed by a truly passionate viticulturist who will lead you through their family vineyards, private garden and wine cellar while telling you about the history of this recently restored ancestral property as well as the unique grape variety that grows exclusively in this region, the popular and worldwide known "Pedro Ximenez". You will also learn about the entire process and aging system of these singular dry and sweet wines, a process that is probably the oldest in Spain. The visit will end with a delicious tasting of some of these varieties paired with homemade **lunch** (included) showcasing some of the region's best products.

After lunch, you will head to what many refer to as the jewel of Córdoba's countryside, the white town of **Priego de Córdoba**. This Baroque town's beautiful houses, palaces and gardens bring to this picturesque little town a delicate beauty that can't be missed.

Did you know that Spain is the largest producer of olive oil in the world and that 80% of Spanish production is made in Andalusia? The history of olive oil takes us back to the Phoenician and Greek civilizations settled in the Iberian Peninsula over 3,000 years ago. The importance of olive oil to Spanish culture cannot be overstated; locals actually refer to it as "liquid gold". Spain is also home to an abundance of grape varieties; making it the third-largest wine producers in the world.

The landscape of the Designation of Origin wine zone known as Montilla-Moriles is dry and the soil is a blinding white Albariza (white marl composed of clay, calcium and marine fossils). Its excellent moisture retention is very significant as this area is hotter than almost anywhere else in Spain. The wineries of the Montilla-Moriles Wine Route where the undisputed star is the Pedro Ximénez grape variety and in which the biological aging (for the Fino wine) and the oxidative aging (for the Amontillados, Olorosos, and Pedro Ximénez) take part following the system of criaderas and soleras.

Priego is the capital of the Subbética region and one of the Andalucía's little-known Baroque wonders. The northern approach presents a dramatic view of the whitewashed buildings of its old quarter (Barrio de la Villa), laid out along the edge of a natural gorge (Balcón del Adarve) of impressive height which has guaranteed the safety of Priego throughout history.



Afternoon: Transfer to Granada

After lunch you will be transferred to Granada where you will have the evening free to enjoy at your own leisure

Evening: Orientation walk in Granada

After checking into your hotel in Granada's city centre, you will have some free time to freshen up and relax before meeting up with the group and your tour guide again to go on a short orientation walk of approx. 1.5h. You will walk along the Darro river promenade and through the maze of tiny, narrow cobbled streets of the picturesque Albaycin Moorish district. During the walk you will be stopping at some of the most spectacular viewpoints to admire the stunning Alhambra Palace and take the best pictures shots. A great way to complete this evening tour would be tasting some of the local tapas at some of the most emblematic taverns in town. We invite you to join us for a fun evening to try best food and wine (this is an optional meal that is not included).

Meals included: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 7: **Granada**

Morning: Alhambra guided tour

After breakfast, our tour leader will take you to the Alhambra where you will be introduced you to your local art historian guide who will show you the incomparable Alhambra Palace and the Generalife gardens on a 3h private tour. You will admire the greatest treasure of Moorish Spain.

The Generalife is the image of how paradise is described in the Koran ("shaded, leafy garden refreshed by running water where the fortunate ones may take their rest under tall canopies").

After the guided tour of the Alhambra, you will enjoy a nice lunch at a lovely restaurant nearby with beautiful views.

The Alhambra is Granada's – and Europe's – love letter to Moorish culture, a place where fountains trickle, leaves rustle, and ancient spirits seem to mysteriously linger. Part palace, part fort, part World Heritage site, part lesson in medieval architecture, the Alhambra has long enchanted a never-ending line of expectant visitors. The Generalife was intended to reflect how paradise is described in the Koran ("shaded, leafy garden refreshed by running water where the fortunate ones may take their rest under tall canopies").

Granada was first settled by native tribes in the prehistoric period and was known as Ilbyr. When the Romans colonized southern Spain, they built their own city here and called it Illibris. The Arabs, invading the peninsula in the 8th century, gave it its current name of Granada. It was the last Muslim city to fall to the Christians in 1492, at the hands of Queen Isabel of Castile and her husband Ferdinand of Aragon.



Afternoon: Carmen de los Mártires

We will visit this delightfully tranquil garden filled with palms, cypresses and tinkling fountains. A wonderful oasis where we will spend approx. 2 hours and will take your breathe away... We will make our way down town back to your hotel where you will have the rest of the evening free at your leisure.

Free evening to relax or do some shopping...

Meals included: Breakfast & Lunch



DAY 8: **Granada & Fly Out**

Morning: Granada & Transfer to Malaga airport

After breakfast and check-out, you can leave luggage at reception for a later pick up and transfer to the airport.

This last morning, you will be taken on a short walk within the city centre to admire the magnificent Cathedral and Royal Chapel. To say goodbye to Granada and Andalucia, we will take you off the beaten path to be delighted with the incredible views and the beautiful gardens of one of the most emblematic Moorish “Carmens” in the city. The Andalusian patios are called “Carmens” in Granada and they are little paradises hidden from the outside streets inside the Arabian style houses. Here we will stay for a nice relaxed lunch and simply admire the stunning views of the Alhambra palace in front...



After lunch, you will be transferred to Malaga airport for your evening departure flight (we can also pre-arrange over night accommodation in if needed)

End of your trip

Unfortunately all good things must come to an end... We hope you enjoy your stay with us here in Spain. Hasta pronto!

Meals included: Breakfast & Lunch



PRICE & INCLUSIONS

Andalucia - Garden Tour



ACCOMMODATION

At Just Explore we understand one of the biggest worries when booking a holiday is the standard for your hotel. That's why we only use pre-viewed character hotels with great locations to help you relax and enjoy your stay with us.

Your accommodation will be made up of:

- 3 and 4 Star hotels with double or twin rooms sharing
- Breakfasts included - All centrally located
- Air conditioning - En-suite bathrooms
- (20% supplement applies for single occupancy)

TRANSPORT (all included)

Luxury AC vehicle with driver and tour leader for the duration of the tour

Luggage:

1 suitcase & 1 rucksack size bag per person so we can ensure all the bags will fit in our minivan/minibus. If you are travelling longer and need to bring more than this please advise our office in advance so we can make the necessary arrangements.

Guided Visits & Tours (all entrance fees included)

- Malaga** - Concepcion Botanicals Gardens visit
- Ronda** - Gardens & city tours
- Seville** - 2 city tours
- Cordoba** - City tour + Patios + Mezquita
- Portocarrero Palace** - Day trip
- Montilla, Moriles & Priego** - Day trip
- Granada** - City tour + Alhambra + Carmen de los Martires

MEALS & SHOWS (all included)

- 8 lunches (including wine and coffee)
- 2 dinners: (including wine and coffee)
- Flamenco performance

Assistance During Your Trip

Full support & assistance on hand 24hrs/day

As with all our clients we will provide you with maps, a list of recommended places to visit, bars & restaurants etc. to help you enjoy the authentic Spain whilst you're exploring at your leisure.

Medical Insurance

We recommend that all travelers take out there own private medical insurance whilst traveling to avoid any unforeseen medical expenses...

Please Note:

The above itinerary may change at any time due to circumstances beyond our control. We will duly advise of any such changes as soon as possible.

** Subject to our standard terms & conditions
(full details on separate sheet)*

PRICE* (Per person)

2,900 €

Single supplement + 20%



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T: +34 957 022 902

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