

Explore the southern region of Spain: Andalucia

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ANDALUCIA, SPAIN



From the gateway cities of Spain, Barcelona and Madrid, to the green landscape of Northern Spain, Galicia and Basque Region... we are now taking you to the romantic and majestic southern region of Spain, Andalucia.

Get ready to be amused as we introduce to you its main cities where we will take you to a journey of Spanish traditions and preserved cultural beauty all in one region.



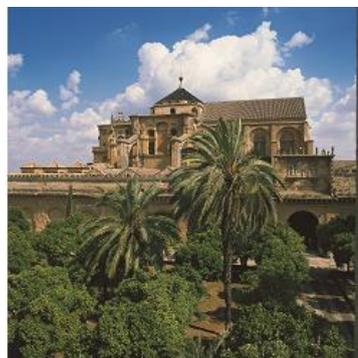
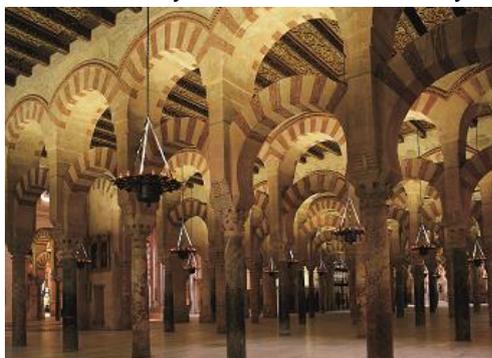
Caption: Cordoba Feria (left), Plaza De Sevilla (centre), Sala Dos Hermanas (right)

CORDOBA

This UNESCO World Heritage City boasts its rich cultural history and important monuments present in its white streets and tiny patios.

A symbol of the splendour of the Omeya Dynasty, the Mosque is the place to start the visit. Expect a Cathedral, a Synagogue and a Roman temple not far one from each other as Cordoba has an incredible historical richness that make locals proud of their city.

The Mosque of Cordoba is one of the most stunning Muslim monuments preserved in the Western World. It is now the valued symbol of the city as it traces the history of the Arab civilization in Cordoba.



Caption: Mezquita (left, Centre), Mezquita El Mihrab (right)

Another important Muslim structure is the Medina Azahara. It is an archaeological site of a palatine city founded in the 10th century. Find a set of palaces, fortress and administrative offices only some kilometres from Cordoba (shuttle bus available).



Caption: Medina Azahara

Catch a great view of the Mezquita at night in the beautiful medieval Roman Bridge of Cordoba. This 230-metre bridge is situated across the Guadalquivir River and leads to the Torre de la Calahorra, a 14th century structure that used to be the defence gate of the historical centre of the city. Make your way to the top of this tower to enjoy a panoramic view of the city.



Caption: Roman Bridge (left), Torre De Calahorra (right)

Festival of Patios

Every May, the tiny neighbourhoods of the old town of the city of Cordoba turn into a colourful and charming garden. It is the time of the year where the people of Cordoba open their private patios to give access to the public to witness and experience its hidden beauty like the very beautiful displays of flowers, Islamic mosaics, striking water features and exotic scents. The “Festival of the Patios” has been added in the UNESCO’s list of World Intangible Cultural Heritage sites in 2012.



Caption: Patios (left), Cruces De Mayo (right)

GRANADA

Gypsy caves, fairy-tale Moorish fortress, an old quarter where you will want to be lost for days (easily done) and a lively university town make up Granada’s charm.



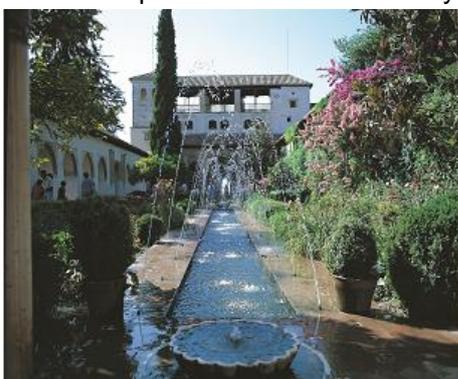
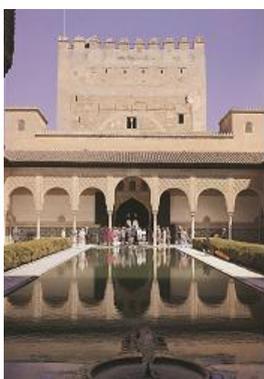
Caption: Granada (left), Carrera del Darro (right)

Let's go back some centuries ago, it's 1492. Catholic Sovereigns are entering Granada, the last Arab kingdom after more than 700 centuries in Spain. King Boabdil leaves behind the greatest symbol of the Andalusian Legacy: The Alhambra Palace.



Caption: Alhambra

Located on the top of a hill with "Sierra Nevada" (literally "snowed mountains") behind, and the Darro River separating it from the main part of the city, La Alhambra is a complex of different palaces that you can't miss. Imagine yourself on a hot summer's day in Boabdil's time with the sound of rushing water coming from the fountains placed in the patios and the fresh air of the mountain passing through the elaborated pointed arcs. Enjoy the great carving on the ceilings and the tiles on the wall that talk about the sophistication of the old days.



Caption: Alhambra (left), The Generalife Garden (centre), Alhambra (right)

We highlight La Alhambra but this doesn't mean it's the only thing Granada has to offer...not at all!

Albaicín neighbourhood is simply gorgeous, no doubt it might be a challenge to climb the hill it is located on but you will spend a memorable time if you simply stroll the quiet white streets until you find a bar to replenish your energy. Famous San Nicolas viewpoint is here, and it's the best view you can get of La Alhambra.



Caption: Albayzin (left), Mirador San Nicolas (right)

Curious on how a true gypsy experience feels like? Then Sacromonte area is your choice; just enter any of the caves where you can enjoy a Flamenco show ...a secret, it is also possible to enjoy disco music there, just find the right cave!



Caption: Barrio Sacromonte

For tapas with history head to Calle Elvira area, where you will not only witness the Cathedral and the “Royal Chapel” but possibly join the university students enjoying an afternoon snack.



Caption: Cathedral Granada (left), Granada Tapas (right)

Al Andalus legacy is the result of Moorish influence in Spain and is spread all over Andalucia region. If you want to leave the city trail and discover some incredible castles and tiny towns that have changed little from medieval times, grab a car and choose any of the following routes:

Caliphate Route: Connects Cordoba and Granada through open country and olive groves

Washington Irving Route: Starting in Seville and makes it way past hills and farmlands

Nazrids Route: Beginning in North Jaen and coming down to the mountains encircling Granada

Almorades Route: Setting off from Cadiz and passing through Malaga

SEVILLE

Seville is well known for how majestic it is...and its lively cultural scene (that is a polite way of saying they have a very intense festive calendar) with **Easter Week** and **April Fair** as the top two.



Caption: Sevilla April Fair (left), Sevilla Flamenco (centre), Sevilla Holy Week (right)

The city is divided in two by the Guadalquivir River and thanks to it, Sevilla became the economic head of Andalucia in the times of the discovery of the New World. It is the reason why it hosts so many impressive buildings.

The Gothic Cathedral (which includes the famous Giralda bell tower and the Arab “Patio de Los Naranjos” is a must see. The Royal Fortress, convents and buildings that date to colonial times will lead you to the Jewish District, another historically charming part of the city.



Caption: Gothic Cathedral (left), Alcazar De Sevilla (centre), Giralda Bell Tower (right)

If you have to recover some strength, Sierpes street is the perfect place to do so with tasty bites in any of the many bars and restaurants. To digest it all, rest in the shadow of the parks of the old 1929 Latin America Fair and its symbol, the outstanding Plaza de España.



Caption: Horse Carriage Tours in Plaza Espana (left), Sierpes Street (centre), Plaza De America Sevilla (right)

Triana neighbourhood is said to be the most authentic in Sevilla. At the left side of the river, it offers the best view of the “Torre del Oro” (literally “Tower of Gold” as was where the gold coming from America was kept) and watching a football match of the local football team in a bar can be an experience to be remembered.



Caption: Triana (left), Torre Del Oro (right)

Looking for a relaxing, comfortable and modern accommodation in Sevilla? Then, Silken Al-Andalus Palace is right for you. This hotel stands out with their state of the art facilities, spacious rooms and first class guest services.