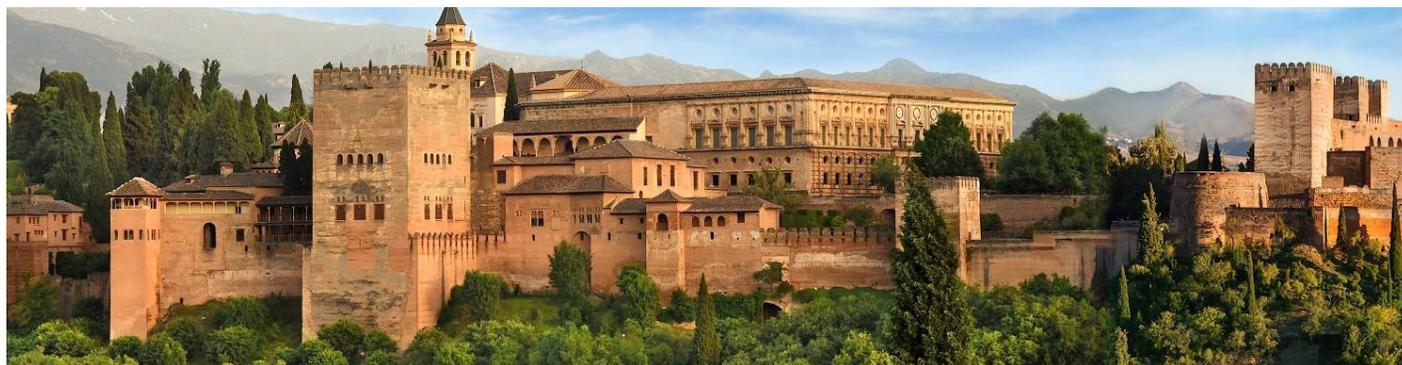


# CLASSIC CULTURAL TOUR: THE HIGHLIGHTS OF ANDALUCIA



## CONTACT DETAILS

Just Explore SL  
t: +34 957 02 29 02  
m: +34 639 933 717  
e: [rosa@just-explore.com](mailto:rosa@just-explore.com)  
[www.just-explore.com](http://www.just-explore.com)

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## ITINERARY

7 Nights

2 N Granada

2 N Cordoba

2 N Sevilla

1 N Malaga

- This classic and magic journey around the most quintessential of the Spanish regions will help you to 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.
- Discover some of the hidden gems such as the picturesque towns of Carmona and Ronda, besides the classic jewels.
- Be seduced by the aura of another era where Christians, Jews and Muslims lived together in harmony and created one of the most important civilizations that the world has ever seen.
- Admire the most spectacular settings and breathtaking views from cliff-top castles to medieval Moorish palaces and charming whitewashed villages within the most idyllic nature reserves.
- Sample and savour the local gastronomy and learn about olive oil production and Andalusian wines by visiting family run farms and wineries.
- Enjoy the soul and *duende* of the purest flamenco in Sevilla and the vibrant atmosphere of the Andalusian cities at night.
- Discover special places which are off the beaten track and you could only find them with the expertise of your local tour guides.
- Stay in character historic buildings converted into charming accommodations for a real feel of the Andalusian architecture.

## RECOMMENDED TIME TO DO THIS TOUR?

All year long is good to explore Southern Spain but Spring (March, April, June) and Fall (Sept, Oct) would probably be the best seasons due to the mild weather. However, if you prefer quiet times, Nov and Dec are good months to visit as well.

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**SUN  
DAY**

**Malaga: meet & greet! (D)**

1

**Early afternoon**

Upon arrival in Malaga, you will meet with your tour leader with whom you will spend the next 7 days exploring Southern Spain. Once you've met everyone in your group, your private driver will transfer you all to your hotel in Granada's historic center (aprx. 1:30 hours).

**Granada orientation walk and tapas tour**

**Evening**

After check-in, you will be taken on a short orientation walking tour of aprx 1h to get acquainted to the city and specially the Albaycin Moorish quarter, constructed on a medieval town plan with cobbled streets and small squares, where you will reach San Nicolas viewpoint, offering magnificent views of the Alhambra, Granada and Sierra Nevada.

Your tour guide will take you to some of the most authentic tapas bars in town to savour traditional dishes and get you immersed with the "granadino tapas" culture and traditions.



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**MON  
DAY**

**Granada (B+L)**

2

**Morning- Alhambra guided tour**

After breakfast, your tour leader will take you to the Alhambra to introduce you to your local art historian guide, fluent English speaking who will show you the magnificent Alhambra Palace and the beautiful Generalife gardens in a 2.50hrs private tour. This tour includes the tickets and 'skip the line' access to save you waiting in long queues.

**Lunch**

As you we will be finishing the Alhambra guided tour at about lunchtime (13-14h), we will have **lunch** at the Parador to enjoy the beautiful terrace overlooking the Generalife gardens.

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**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.



## Afternoon - Granada city guided tour

**After lunch**, we will walk down into Granada city center to meet your art historian guide again at Plaza Isabel La Católica for a 2.5hrs guided walking tour of Granada's city center including a guided visit to the Cathedral and the Royal Chapel.

### Free evening

You will have the evening free to enjoy at your leisure. We will provide you with maps, tips, and recommendations for local bars & restaurants.

**Granada** was first settled by native tribes in the prehistoric period and was known as Illyr. 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. One of the most brilliant jewels of universal architecture is the Alhambra, a series of palaces and gardens built under the Nazari Dynasty in the 14th C. This mighty compound of buildings – including the summer palace called Generalife, with its fountains and gardens - stands at the foot of Spain's highest mountain range, the Sierra Nevada, and overlooks the city below and the fertile plain of Granada.



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## TUE Montilla olive oil & wine region (B+L)

DAY Morning

3

After breakfast and check-out, your private driver/tour guide will pick you up from your hotel and will take you to Montilla (aprx. 40 min ride).

On this exciting tour, we will venture out into the countryside to explore the beautiful hills of **Montilla** (still a very unspoiled wine region south of Córdoba. This tour is designed for curious and adventurous wine-lovers, amateurs and experts alike!

Olive oil, gastronomy, and wine are part of Andalucía's popular wisdom and with this tour, you will delve into the fascinating world of **olive oil and wine**.

Your first stop will be a **family-run olive oil mill** 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. After a visit to the mill and the on-site museum you will watch a very interesting short video about oil production. The experience will be concluded by a tasting of two of their delicious varieties along with freshly baked bread also made by the very same family!

The second experience of the day is a visit to a local **family-run boutique winery** located right in the heart of the of the **Sierra de Montilla**, a stunning rural landscape with endless vineyards and rolling hills. Upon arrival, you will be welcomed by a truly passionate viticulturist who will take you to the family vineyards to tell you about the history of this ancestral winery. Next, you will be guided into the wine cellar, named by the family as "*Sacristia*", a remarkable sacred space where their oldest wines are kept. On this educational tour, you will learn about the unique grape variety that grows exclusively in Montilla, the popular and worldwide known "**Pedro Ximenez**". You will also learn about the entire process and aging system of these unique dry and sweet wines, a process that is probably the oldest in Spain. The visit will end with a delicious tasting session including the 5 different varieties produced in the area: Joven, Fino, Amontillado, Oloroso and Pedro Ximenez dulce. Raise your glass for a toast to a great wine experience! Your olive oil and wine experience will be completed with a lovely **pairing lunch** at one of the most emblematic taverns in town.

**After lunch**, private transfer to your hotel in Cordoba.



## Cordoba - Orientation walk & patios tour

### Afternoon

After checking-in, your tour leader will help you get acquainted with this beautiful and historic city with a short orientation walk of arpx 2hrs mainly focused in the city center and the **San Basilio** district, famous for featuring some of the most hidden treasures private courtyards in Cordoba. You will get to understand not only a very ancestral tradition dating back from Roman times but also a very unique local architecture that has evolved through the years and persists in many homes even today. This part of the tour is particularly more enjoyable during Spring, when Córdoba bursts into bloom and the “patios” offer a visual feast of colorful flowers, stone mosaics an ceramic decoration.

Free **evening** to enjoy at your leisure.



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**WED  
DAY**

**Cordoba (B+L)**

**Morning-Córdoba guided tour**

**4**

Your historian guide will meet you at the lobby of your hotel to take you for an introductory walking tour of aprx. 3hrs to discover the main sites of this Unesco listed city of Córdoba (the Mosque and Cathedral, the Jewish quarter and the Royal Alcazar/Palace). The tour will finish at the Julio Romero Museum (the Old Charity Hospital from XVIc), where you will have some free time to visit the museum on your own and admire the amazing artwork of this Cordoba painter. He was a good representative of the symbolism style and became particularly famous for his erotic paintings of naked women.

**Lunch** will be served at the famous “Bodegas Campos”, a traditional Córdoba house with stunning courtyards and a private wine cellar.



**Córdoba** is a city in the southern Spanish region of Andalusia, and the capital of the province of Córdoba. It was an important Roman city and a major Islamic center 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.

**Free afternoon in Cordoba**

You may want to visit:

- The Viana Palace (a beautiful manor with stunning courtyards and gardens)
  - Julio Romero Museum (a local painter's art collection)
  - The Roman Bridge and The Calahorra Tower (Al Andalus museum)
  - The Roman Temple- Plaza de la Corredera- Plaza de las Tendillas
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## Andalusian Equestrian Show - Royal Stables in Cordoba

### Evening

You will enjoy a marvelous 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 equestrian show.

You will meet with your travel specialist in the hotel lobby who will take you to the Royal Stables which are located next to the Royal Alcázar and at just a 5-7 mins walk from your hotel.

We have made sure to arrange for allocated central seats for you to have the best possible view of the 1-hour-long show.

After the show, you can have **dinner** (on our own expense) at one of the local restaurants in the nearby and authentic "San Basilio" district (i.e. Posada del Caballo Andaluz, Taberna la Viuda o Restaurante Puerta de Sevilla) or close to your hotel in the Jewish quarter (recommendations will be provided)

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.



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## THU Carmona (B+L)

DAY Morning

5

After breakfast and checkout, your private driver and tour guide will pick you up from your hotel to take you to Carmona (aprx 1:30h drive from Córdoba). On this road that connects Córdoba to Sevilla following the course of the Guadalquivir river, you will learn about some other interesting sites such as the archeological site of **Medina Azahara** (a palace and administrative complex built on a dream scale by Caliph Abd ar-Rahman III in 936), the remarkable Moorish castle of **Almodóvar** from the 8<sup>th</sup>-century and the Natural Park of Hornachuelos, the largest in Cordoba province.

In Carmona, you will enjoy a circular walking tour of apr 2.5hrs starting and ending at the Parador. Its strategical location offer the most spectacular views over the valley. Carmona is probably one of the oldest cities in Spain and on this tour you will learn all about its past 5,000 years of fascinating history. The best way to finish your visit of Carmona is by tasting its delicacies, the flavours of its cuisine. Today **lunch** will be served at one of the most emblematic restaurants in town, set in and old olive oil mill overlooking the magnificent fields of wheat and sunflowers.

After lunch, it's off to Sevilla, which is only 30 min drive on the motorway.

**Carmona**, known as the “*shining star of Andalusia*” is a hidden gem sited on a low hill overlooking a fertile plain planted with fields of barley, wheat and sunflowers. Carmona is a small picturesque town that has burst beyond its ancient walls. Founded by the Carthaginians in III-century BC probably on the site of a Turditani Iberian settlement, they named it Kar-Hammon (City of Ball-Hammon) after their great deity-the origin, via the Roman “Carmo”, of its present name. A major Roman town (from which era it preserves a fascinating subterranean necropolis), it awas also an important *taifa state* in Moorish times. Following the *Reconquista*, Pedro the Cruel built a palace within its walls, which he used as a provincial royal residence (now hosting the well known Parador of Carmona). The majority of Carmona's monuments and churches lie inside the ancient walls, except from the remarkable Necropolis which is located on the west side of town, a 10 min walk from the old quarter.



## Sevilla orientation walk & free evening

### Early evening

After checking in and freshening up, your tour guide will take you on an orientation walk of aprx. 1.5hrs in Sevilla to get acquainted with this charming city and to allow you to discover some of the most interesting highlights such as the Murillo gardens, Plaza de España, the Maria Luisa Park the Torre del Oro.

You will have the rest of the **evening** free to enjoy at your leisure.



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## FRID **Sevilla (B+L+D)**

### DAY **Morning**

6

Your art historian guide will meet you at the lobby of your hotel for an introductory walking tour of aprx 3hrs to discover the main historic sites Sevilla (including the Cathedral, the Royal Alcazar /Palace and the Santa Cruz Jewish quarter). This is the perfect way to explore Seville's old town and learn about the important role they playd in the history of the cit. This tour includes "skip-the-line" access to all the sites.

After your guided tour, your guide will take you on a Tapas tour in the Santa Cruz neighborhood for **lunch** to taste some of the specialties of Sevilla.

Some cities blast you away, others slowly win you over. **Sevilla** disarms and seduces you. Its historic center 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. The irresistible city of Sevilla, Andalucia's capital, is located on the shores of the River Guadalquivir. Its population of about 1.5 million makes it the fourth-largest city in Spain. Its Old Town, the third largest in Europe with an area of 4 km2, contains three UNESCO World Heritage Sites: the fabulous Mudéjar Alcázar palace, the Gothic Cathedral and the General Archive of the Indies. In addition to these magnificent buildings, the stunning Fine Arts Museum and a number of remarkable Renaissance mansions. What is captivating about the city, as much as the monuments and works of art, is its essential romantic quality, the greatest city of Carmen, Don Juan and Figaro...



### **Free afternoon in Sevilla**

You will have the **afternoon** free to further explore at your leisure or do some shopping. Here are a few of our recommendations:

- Hotel Alfonso XIII is an excellent example of the Neo Mudejar style. Built in 1928 for the Ibero American exhibition, it belongs to the Sevilla city council & is listed as a protected monument.
  - Plaza del Salvador (Iglesia del Salvador)
  - Plaza Nueva
  - Casa Pilatos (a magnificent example of Italian Renaissance and Andalusian Mudejar style)
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- Hospital de los Venerables (historic building with an important art collection from Murillo and Zurbarán)
- Plaza de la Encarnacion and the Metropol platform for 360° panoramic views over the whole of Sevilla (highly recommend at sunset time but can also be enjoyed at other times of the day)
- Triana district: Triana Market, Calle Betis, Triana Bridge, Triana ceramic workshops
- La Maestranza bullring and museum
- Horse carriage tour (45 min for 40 €).
- "Aire", Arabian baths (hammam/spa)
- River cruise along the Guadalquivir river (aprx 1h)
- Shopping in Calle Sierpes, La Campana or Plaza del Duque



## Flamenco show & dinner

### Evening

Your tour guide will take you one of the most emblematic "Tablaos" in town. 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. Towards the end of the dinner, the show will start and last approximately 1.50hrs. This show features up to 15 of the most professional flamenco artists in the whole Spain. Excitement and enjoyment are guaranteed!



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## SAT Ronda & White villages (B+L)

DAY  
7

Today, you will spend a wonderful day outdoors exploring the Grazalema Natural Park, its charming white villages and the picturesque little town of Ronda.

### Morning – Scenic drive

Your private driver and tour guide will pick you up from your hotel and will take you on a very scenic drive through the spectacular *Grazalema* natural park with sightseeing stops at the charming towns of *Grazalema* and *Zahara de la Sierra*.

You will then have **lunch** at a very cozy restaurant with a terrace offering breathtaking views to the lake of Zahara.

### Afternoon – Guided tour of Ronda

After lunch, you will be driven to the picturesque town of Ronda where you will have an introductory walking tour of aprx 2.5hrs including the old town, the cliffs, the New bridge and the famous bullring in the city center (aprx 1:30h). After the guided tour and before heading to your next destination, you will have some free time to do some shopping or having a drink admiring the spectacular

Once your stay in Ronda is concluded, you will be transferred to Malaga city center where you will check-in at the hotel and have the rest of **the evening free** to explore the city at your leisure.

**Grazalema**, a pretty town whose immaculately kept cobbled streets are lined with whitewashed houses, with wrought-iron *rejas* on its windows and plant pots spilling over with colorful flowers. Grazalema is the most popular base for hikes into the *Parque Natural Sierra de Grazalema*. It's also an age-old producer of blankets, honey, cheese, meat-filled stews and an adrenaline-filled bull-running festival, it has its own special charm.

**Zahara de la Sierra**, is quite simply a place that takes your breath away. It is, without a doubt, one of the most picturesque of all the Pueblos Blancos (white villages) in the Sierra de Grazalema, if not in the whole of Andalucia. The town enjoys an extraordinary setting, sitting at the foot of the Sierra del Jaral, perched on top of a hill and surrounded by the turquoise waters of the Zahara-el Gastor reservoir. Standing guard above the village are the remains of a Moorish castle that command views over the surrounding countryside and the white-washed village beneath.

**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 breathtaking. 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.



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## SUN Malaga (B+L)

### DAY Morning

8

Your art historian guide will meet you in the lobby of your hotel for a 2.5hrs guided tour in Malaga including the old town, the Cathedral, the Alcazaba fortress, the Roman Theatre and the Plaza de la Merced.

After the tour, you will have about an hour free time to visit the Picasso Museum by yourself before getting back together with the group for a **farewell lunch** at one of the most authentic restaurants in Malaga.

#### Late afternoon

We will arrange for a private driver to take you to the airport for your flight home :(

Beyond its port and seafront, **Malaga** city can pleasantly surprise you. The archaeological remains, as well as its monuments from the Phoenician, Roman, Arabic, and Christian eras, make the historic center of the city an open-air museum, displaying its rich 3,000-year history. Overlooking the town and port, the wonderfully preserved fourteenth-century citadels of the Alcazaba and Gibralfaro bear remarkable witness to the city's Moorish past, while the Roman Theatre below predates them by over a millennium. The city also has a trio of outstanding art galleries, including the spectacular Museo Picasso, housing a major collection of work by this Malaga-born artist.

### 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!*

