



Escorted Tours in Andalusia

CLASSIC CULTURAL TOUR: THE HIGHLIGHTS OF ANDALUCIA

(Small exclusive group tour 6-12 people)

On this tour, you will embark on a carefully curated magical journey around Moorish Andalusia which will allow you to discover some of Spain's main World Heritage Sites. Accompanied by a local tour leader & guided by expert historian guides, you will explore and learn about the history of exceptional places in the region such as Granada's legendary Alhambra Palace, Cordoba's distinctive Mosque, and the Sevilla's majestic Cathedral.

Andalusia is truly a melting pot of culture where history meets and blends with myth. The cultural influences that have washed over Andalusia since the first paintings were etched on cave walls are many: Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Romans, Visigoths, and Vandals. But the most influential of all was unarguably that of the Moors, who named the region "Al-Andalus" and who's eighth-century rule left an indelible imprint on the region's culture and its customs.

This is the legacy that we will explore together on this Classic Cultural Tour.

SUMMARY (7 Nights)

Start & End Point: Malaga

2 N Granada

2 N Cordoba

2 N Sevilla

1 N Malaga

What's Included?

- All private transfers
- 4* Boutique Hotels
- Breakfasts & all meals mentioned in the itinerary
- Fluent English speaking Tour Leader
- Fluent English speaking art historian guides
- Skip the line access
- Tips & Gratuities

What's not Included?

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- Small exclusive group tour (6-12 people maximum)
- 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 Zahara de la Sierra 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 breath-taking 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.



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: A first taste of Granada

Early afternoon: Arrive in Malaga, meet & greet at the train station & transfer to Granada

Upon arrival in Malaga, meet with your tour leader with whom you will spend the next 7 days exploring Southern Spain and the rest of your group. Your private driver will then transfer you all to your hotel in Granada's historic centre (approx. 1.5h drive along the scenic coastal road).

Evening: Orientation walk & tapas experience

After check-in, you will be taken on a short orientation walking tour of approx. 1.5h to get acquainted to the city and especially the Albaycin Moorish quarter, constructed on a medieval town plan with cobbled streets and small squares, which will lead you to the San Nicolas viewpoint, offering magnificent views of the Alhambra, Granada and the Sierra Nevada. Your tour guide will then take you to some of the most authentic tapas bars in town to sample traditional dishes and get you immersed in the "granadino tapas" culture and traditions.

Meals included: Evening tapas tour



DAY 2: The wonders of the Alhambra

Morning: Alhambra guided tour

Enjoy a 2.5h tour of the Alhambra Palace & the beautiful Generalife gardens with your local fluent English-Speaking art historian guide. This tour includes entrance tickets and 'skip the line' access.

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.

Lunch will be at a nearby restaurant with beautiful views.

Free Afternoon

Free time to simply relax, explore the city alone or maybe do some shopping?

For those looking for something a little different we can also arrange a nice session at the famous Arabian Baths or a Flamenco show as an optional extra.

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.

Free evening

We will provide you with maps, tips, and recommendations for local bars & restaurants.

Meals included: Breakfast & Lunch



DAY 3: A taste of the countryside

Morning: Montilla olive oil & wine region

On this exciting tour, we will venture out into the countryside to explore the beautiful hills of Montilla. Here you will visit two family-run boutique establishments: an olive oil mill and a winery. You will learn about the production process and will enjoy tastings of their award winning products along with a delicious traditional tapas lunch showcasing this region's products.

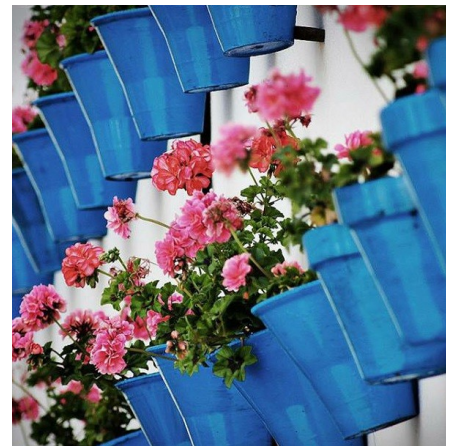
Home of the famed "Gran Capitan", Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, a Spanish general who fought in the Conquest of Granada and the Italian wars. Montilla is also the centre of the Designation of Origin wine zone known as Montilla-Moriles.



Afternoon: Transfer to Cordoba & orientation walk

Get acquainted with this beautiful and historical city with a 2h orientation walk focused on the city centre and the San Basilio district, famous for featuring some of the most hidden treasures and private courtyards in Cordoba.

Meals included: Breakfast & Lunch



DAY 4: The ancient city of Córdoba

Morning: Cordoba guided tour

Walking tour with historian guide of approx. 3h to discover the main sites of this UNESCO listed city. Includes: the Mosque and Cathedral, the Jewish quarter and the Royal Alcazar/Palace. The tour will end at the Julio Romero Museum (the Old Charity Hospital from XVlc), where you will have some free time to visit the museum alone.

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

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.

Free Afternoon to relax or explore the city on your own.

Evening Equestrian Show (optional extra 25 euros per person)

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 equestrian show.

Meals included: Breakfast & Lunch



DAY 5: Medina Azahara & Sevilla

Morning: Guided tour of Medina Azahara

After having breakfast and checking out, your driver and art historian guide will meet you at the lobby of your hotel to take you to explore the archaeological site of Medina Azahara (aprx. 20 min North of Cordoba). Here you will have a guided tour of 3 hrs including: a presentation video, a tour of the archaeological museum and a visit to the site itself.

The medieval palace city of Medina Azahara, once the seat of the Caliphate of Cordoba that existed in the 10th and 11th centuries, has been added to the UNESCO heritage list in June 2018. It is the 47th World Heritage List site to be inscribed in Spain, which already has forty cultural, four natural, and two mixed sites listed.



Lunch: Transfer to the picturesque town of Carmona (approx. 1h 15min, on the way to Sevilla) where you will enjoy a delicious lunch at the Parador Hotel. The restaurant here offers the most **spectacular views** over the Guadalquivir valley and crops.

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.

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

Evening Orientation walk of Sevilla: Approx. 1.5hrs to get acquainted with this charming city.

Highlights: Murillo gardens, Plaza de Espana, Maria Luisa Park & the Torre del Oro.

Meals included: Breakfast & Lunch



DAY 6: Sevilla, the beauty

Morning: Guided tour of Sevilla

Walking tour of approx. 3h with your art historian guide to discover the main historic sites of Sevilla.

Includes: The Cathedral, Royal Alcazar /Palace & the Santa Cruz Jewish quarter. This tour includes “skip-the-line” access to all the main sites.

Lunch

Tapas tour with your guide in the Santa Cruz neighbourhood to taste some of the local specialties.

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.

Evening Flamenco Show & Dinner

An evening of art & emotion at one of the most emblematic 'tablaos' in Sevilla. Witness the excitement and 'duende' of Flamenco first hand, and enjoy a delectable à la carte dinner with dishes of high Andalusian cuisine.



Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 7: Picturesque Ronda

Today you will spend a wonderful day outdoors exploring the most spectacular Andalusian countryside and mountains. You will enjoy a very scenic drive through the Grazalema Natural Park and have the opportunity to take great picture shots and admire the most breath-taking view points at the charming white village of Zahara de la Sierra. We leave the best for the last on this superb day trip by taking a guided tour of the picturesque town of Ronda.

Morning: White villages & Ronda

After a quick early morning coffee at your hotel in Sevilla, 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 to the charming town of Zahara de la Sierra where you will enjoy a lovely Spanish breakfast at a very cosy restaurant with a terrace offering breath-taking views to the lake of Zahara.

After a short visit of the town, you will be driven to the picturesque town of Ronda where you will have an introductory walking tour of approx. 2.5hrs including the old town, the cliffs, the New bridge and the famous bullring in the city centre.

After the guided tour and before heading to your next destination, you will have some **lunch** at the Reina Victoria Hotel in Ronda which offers spectacular views of Ronda's gorge and cliffs.

Afternoon: Transfer to Malaga

Private transfer to your hotel in Malaga's city centre (aprx. 1.5h) where you will check-in at the hotel and have the rest of the evening free to explore the city at your leisure. We will provide you with maps, tips, and recommendations for local bars & restaurants.

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 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.

Breakfast & Lunch



DAY 8: Malaga, window to the Mediterranean

Morning: Malaga Old town & Picasso museum

Your art historian guide will meet you in the lobby of your hotel for a 2.5hrs guided tour in Malaga. The tour will include an orientation walk through the historic old town to help you get your bearings around this beautiful Mediterranean city and understand the past and the present of its history and traditions.

You will also enjoy a guided visit of the famed Picasso Museum and get to learn all about this Spanish artist's relationship with his birthplace.

Along the tour, you will get architectural and historical explanations of the most important sites of the city and their role in the shaping of modern-day Malaga:

- The Renaissance Cathedral
- The Roman theatre
- The Alcazaba or Moorish fortress
- The Thyssen Museum
- The main squares such as Plaza de la Merced o Plaza de la Constitucion.

You will also go off the beaten track to get a feel for Malaga's authentic essence.

This tour will be completed with a **farewell lunch** at one of the most authentic restaurants in Malaga.

Should you need a transfer to your next destination, it will be our pleasure to make the arrangements for you (additional costs may apply).

*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 centre 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.

Meals included: Breakfast & Lunch

End of your trip :(

Unfortunately all good things must come to and end.... We hope you enjoyed this small group tour with us.

If you would like to extend the duration of your trip to explore more of Andalucia and/or other regions of Spain, we will be more than happy to create a customised itinerary for the remainder of your stay

