

Overview

Our ‘Flavours of Andalusia’ tour, is a ‘mini-tour’ focusing on enjoying the aspects of Andalusia that are not City based. From the famous ‘Pueblo Blancos’ white villages to its gastronomy, the region is a gem for guests wishing to get under its skin and sample some of its unique and amazing countryside, produce and life.



Many previous guests of ours have said how they would love to come back to Andalusia and, having visited the spectacular Cities, would really like to see and experience more of the region, so this tour is ideal for them as well as lovers of regional culture and produce.

For this tour, you stay at the 4* Antequera Parador Hotel for four nights and enjoy being transported to some of the best places outside of the

Cities that Andalusia has to offer. You will visit an Organic Wine Bodega and an Organic Olive Oil Producer. You even get to cook your own Paella lunch as part of a cooking demonstration. In the evenings you get to enjoy the delightful and historic Antequera with its great restaurants and attractive architecture. Each of these tours is for between four and six guests with its own tour vehicle and Tour Leader.

★ **Day 1: ARRIVAL** We collect you in Málaga from the airport, train station or local hotel and, subject to time, we take you to visit the pretty ‘Pueblo Blanco’ mountain village of Mijas. The Pueblo Blancos are the white villages of Andalusia. Set high above the Costa del Sol with lovely views over the Mediterranean below, you can wander the pretty lanes with colourful trailing geraniums in bright blue pots contrasting against the white walls. Have some lunch in the shady ‘Secret Garden’ of Restaurant/Cafeteria ‘AROMA’ and maybe make some purchases from the craft stores that surround the main Plaza and down the little lanes. The quality of the leather goods in Mijas is exceptionally high. Originally



founded by the Tartessians in prehistoric times, the Romans used to mine Marble from the area, calling the village *Tamisa* before it became a Moorish mining town *Mixa* which morphed later on into *Mijas*. The Mijas residents resisted the attacks from the Catholic Monarchs during the siege of Málaga in 1487, but after Málaga fell, the inhabitants surrendered with most being sold into slavery. A beautiful jewel of the Costa Del Sol, it sits 400m above sea level offering superb vistas all around. It is the ideal location to ease yourself into a holiday frame of mind and relax. During the Spanish Civil War which started in 1936, Manuel Cortés Quero (1906-1991), aka ‘El Topo de Mijas’ (The Mole of Mijas) was the last Republican Mayor of Mijas during the Civil War. On 6 February 1937, Cortés fled Mijas, soon to be assaulted by the Nationalists, together with his wife, Juliana, and their daughter,

María, aged one year and a half. One day later, he asked Juliana to go back to Mijas with Maráa and joined a group of fighters heading to Almería. Secretly back to Mijas on the evening of 17 April 1939 after the disbanding of his unit in Valencia, Cortés hid in his own house for the next three decades in a secret room with the entrance through a wardrobe. On 28 March 1969, he heard on the radio the amnesty granted by the Government for all "crimes" committed between 18 July 1936 and 1 April 1939. After his "re-birth", Cortés said to his friends: "The war is finally over for me". A replica of the bedroom has been reconstructed in the Folk Museum of the village.

★ **Day 2:** At 10:00, we take you to the white Moorish village of Frigiliana, one of the prettiest villages in Andalusia and the whole of Spain. Wander through the Moorish quarter and enjoy a tapas lunch in the mountain setting with sea views. Frigiliana is historically important. *El Fuerte*, the hill overlooking the village, was the scene of the final bloody defeat of the Moors of the Axarquía region in their 1569 rebellion. At the top of the hill are some remains of an ancient fort from which some of the Moors reputedly threw themselves rather than be killed or captured by the Spanish. It is said that bones and rusted weapons dating from this encounter still lie among the scrub on *El Fuerte*.



Whilst it is a magnet for visitors, Frigiliana hasn't yet succumbed to the demands of mass tourism with innumerable souvenir shops and overpriced bars. It retains its traditional feel and charm.

A spiders web of narrow cobbled streets packed with whitewashed houses, brilliant red geraniums tumble from bright blue pots



attached to the wrought iron railings. Small plazas provide a welcome shade and a place to relax and admire the beautiful setting. As expected, local craft shops selling pottery and ceramics, including decorative Arabic design plates are abundant in the village.

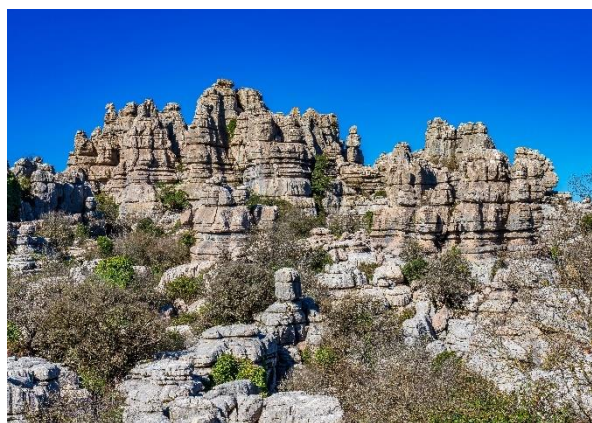
After lunch, we visit the amazing Nerja Caves *Cuevas de Nerja*, a system of limestone caves with large columns, stalactites and stalagmites. Stretching for almost 5 kilometres, the caverns are one of Spain's major tourist attractions. Concerts are regularly held in one of the chambers, which forms a natural amphitheatre.

Approximately 5 million years ago, during the Upper Miocene, water penetrated the fissures of the marble rock and dissolved it, forming a huge cavern. Seismic movement and landslides forced the water to find new pathways through the cave system and began the formation of the giant stalactites and stalagmites.

Skeletal remains found in the caverns indicate that they were inhabited from about 25,000 BC, up until the Bronze Age. Cave paintings from the Paleolithic and post-Paleolithic eras have been discovered on the walls of the cave. For about 4,000 years from 25,000 BC the caves were used seasonally by a small group of humans, and were occupied by cave hyena during the periods that the humans were absent. By 21,000 BC the human population had taken up year-round residence in the caves and had increased in number. A culture based on hunting in the local area had evolved, illustrated by first cave paintings found in the cave which date to around the time. Pine nuts and snails were also important elements of the diet. Up until around 10,800 BC the hunting culture continued to develop with more prey species being taken, including goats, rabbits, fish and marine mammals. A wide variety of animal bones, shells and fish bones from this time have been found in the cave, including the remains of a number of offshore species, along with stone and bone tools. By 4500 BC, domesticated animals were being kept and the area around the cave was being used for farming and the production of pottery. By 3800 BC textiles and more advanced styles of pottery were being produced and parts of the cave were being used as a burial chamber. The caves were re-discovered in modern times on 12 January 1959 by five friends, who entered through a narrow sinkhole known as "La Mina". After the visit, we return to Antequera arriving around 17:30.



★ **Day 3: EL TORCAL & ORGANIC OLIVE MILL** At 09:30, we drive up to the stunning El Torcal National Park where you can have a 45 minute walk of 1.4km through the amazing rock formations. Wear suitable footwear. A magnificent park



of towering limestone columns and ‘pancake’ shaped layered rocks, formed millions of years ago under the sea, this *Karst* limestone is the result of weathering of the sedimentary layers of the rock. It is possibly the finest example of such formations in Europe. In the park, there is an interesting reception and exhibit centre and a nice cafeteria where you can sit and enjoy the scenery if you don’t wish to undertake the walk.

The Jurassic age limestone is about 150 million years old and was laid down in a marine corridor that extended from the Gulf of Cádiz to Alicante between the present Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea. These sea beds were uplifted to an elevation of over

1300 meters during the Tertiary era, resulting in a modest mountain range of flat-lying limestone, which is rare in Andalusia. Later, a series of fractures, cracks and faults at right angles were exploited by erosion and produced the alleys between large blocks of limestone visible today. The blocks themselves have been subjected to both dissolution by water (karstification) and

freeze-thaw splitting action which, working on the limestone's horizontal beds, resulted in the various shapes visible today, many of which resemble, and have been named after, everyday objects such as the Sphinx, the Jug, the Camel, the Screw, etc. Other flat surfaces have been karstified into rugged, rocky lands. Like many massive limestones, El Torcal includes caves and other underground forms, some of them of historical importance like the Cueva del Toro (Cave of the Bull) with its Neolithic artifacts. If you are lucky, you may catch glimpses of the Spanish *Ibex*, a large mountain goat resembling a small deer.



After the visit to El Torcal, we go to a nearby Organic Olive Oil producer

Molino del Hortelano for a tour and tasting. Located in the Montes de Malaga, an exceptional setting in southern Andalusia whose latitude, climate and soil fertility that gives the oil extraordinary character and quality. At the Molino, we also have a Paella cooking lesson, where you make your own Paella for lunch.



The Cabello-Montiel family, fourth-generation master millers, grows its own olive grove and produces and sells Organic Extra Virgin Olive Oil. We take the greatest care with every step of the production process, from the harvesting of the fruit to the pressing, cold extraction, decanting and storage in stainless steel tanks of the authentic olive juice. As well as outstanding quality, in Molino del Hortelano's extra virgin olive oil you will find a selection of more than 6 different varieties of oil. You

will see how the modern olive oil mill works, from the moment the olives arrive to when the oil is bottled. You can also see the original old stone mill from the 18th century, which used to be a wine press. After lunch we return you to your hotel for some free time in Antequera.

★ Day 4: DOLMENS, SETENIL DE LAS BODEGAS,

RONDA & A SPECIAL DINNER

At 10:00, we visit the 5,000 years old monumental megalithic structures, the Dolmens of Antequera. The largest of these *Menga* is the largest monumental megalithic burial site in Europe. The three structures also represent

amongst the most complete megalithic structures of their type in the continent. In 2016, the dolmens, along with two mountains closely connected to the dolmen complex, were declared UNESCO World Heritage. The Antequera Dolmens are the seventh WH site in Andalusia.





The Menga Dolmen is famous for its significant geographical location - on the summer solstice, 21 June, the morning sun shines over the peak of the Rock of the Lovers *Peña de los Enamorados* and straight along the dolmen's entrance corridor. This very exact positioning would have held mystical importance for the prehistoric tribes who built the dolmen thousands of years ago.

We then travel to the Organic Wine Bodega of Joaquin Fernández for a light lunch, tour and wine tasting. The Bodega Joaquin Fernandez has been producing wines since 2002. It is situated in a magical place,

surrounded by mountains, at an altitude of 700m, sloping vineyards of 15% and separated from Ronda by a beautiful valley. Still in perfect synergy with this environment, ORGANIC wine production is in 5 hectares of vineyards, keeping in the property a natural ecosystem, surrounded by olive trees, oaks, lavender and myrtle. The wines have aromas of Mediterranean forest, are fruity, with notes of aromatic plants, spices and soft tannins. They produce a “rosado” with fermentation in oak, a young red wine and two red wines aged 12 months in the barrel, *Merlot & Syrah* and *Igualado*.



After the visit, we depart for the white village of Setenil de las Bodegas, where the rocks overhang the buildings and you can have a drink sitting at the bottom of the gorge cut through the village by the river that runs through it. Have a wander around the village. Named after its once flourishing wineries *Bodegas* it is said that the Romans used to store their wines in stores cut into the rocks to retain a more constant year round temperature. Unique among the Pueblos Blancos, white villages of Andalusia, it developed out of caves in the cliffs rather than being perched on top of them. The white houses seem to emerge from the rocks being totally integrated with them.



Late afternoon, we travel to the lovely town of Ronda to spend a couple of hours. Ronda was first settled in the 6th Century BC by the early *Celts* naming it *Arunda*. The current Ronda, though, is of Roman origins, having been founded as a fortified post in the Second Punic War, by Scipio Africanus. Ronda received the title of city at the time of Julius Caesar. In 1918, the city was the seat of the Assembly of Ronda, in which the Andalusian flag, coat of arms, and anthem were designed. The iconic

Puente Nuevo Bridge, towering 100m above the river below, spans the two parts of the town and the famous bullring, now a museum, is the oldest in Spain.

At 19:30, we meet up to travel to the fabulous *El Muelle de Arriate* restaurant a few kilometers outside of Ronda. Voted amongst the top restaurants in Andalusia on Trip Advisor, we have a ‘multi-course’ gastronomic delight of a dinner.

The restaurant is owned and run by Frank who knows us and he spends time to explain about the different dishes and wines.

After dinner we return to Antequera with a big smile on our face for a wonderful final day before departure.



★ **Day 5: DEPARTURE** Depending upon your time of departure, we will either take you straight to the airport/train station/local hotel or down to Málaga to enjoy time before you leave. If you have the time, we will go to a local’s *Chiringuito* in East Málaga, where the barbeque fresh fish near the Mediterranean, to have lunch.

What’s included

- All return tour transportation from accommodation in one of our air conditioned tour vehicles
- Transfers from airport, train station and local Malaga Hotels between the hours of 09:00 and 18:00



- Dedicated Tour Leader
- Bed and breakfast accommodation
- Multi-course dinner at Muelle de Arriate
- Entrance to the Nerja Caves
- Organic Olive Oil Visit with tour, tasting and Paella Cooking
- Organic Wine Bodega Visit with lunch, tasting and tour
- Spanish Sales Tax

What’s not included

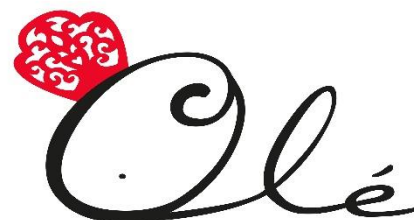
- Any other meals, drinks, subsistence
- Any shows, performances,
- Any Monument entrance fees
- Any flight, train, bus or other transportation
- Any expenditure not detailed above

Tour Price

Accommodation (4 nights)	Per person	Single Supplements
4* Antequera Parador	£895	£140

Notes

- The hotel is subject to availability, we will advise of alternative similar quality accommodation if full
- All bookings are subject to our terms and conditions, a copy of which are included in the booking form
- This tour is confirmed based on a minimum of two guests
- Please request or download a copy of the latest tour schedule for the dates of the tours
- Prices are based on two guests sharing a room, single supplement is detailed above
- Prices are in £GBP



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