

Duration - 7 days/6 nights

Our private tours are dedicated to the couple, or small group of family/friends who wish to have a 'high end' tour, staying in some of the best 4* City Centre hotels, and with flexibility to start on any date and modify the



tour as you require.

This can include adding additional nights in Cities or even adding different places into the tour, such as white villages or other Cities.

The private tour allows you to have the tour at your own pace and our Tour Leader is there to make any changes, 'in-flight' you may require to fully suit your requirements.

As such, we have a 'template' for these tours and the itinerary below details a 'sample' itinerary for a private 7 days/6 nights tour, which you can build upon if you wish.

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 Andalucia. 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 one of the local tapas bars 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 young daughter, María. One day later, he asked Juliana to go back to Mijas 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

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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.

Departing Mijas, we drive to Málaga and check into your hotel and we will then give you an early evening walking tour of Málaga old town.



Málaga is a lovely Mediterranean City and one of the oldest Cities in Europe. It was a Phoenician seaport and one of the main entry points into the Iberian Peninsula due to its natural harbour. The Phoenicians called it 'Malaka', not too far from how its known today.



There are marble pavements, a mostly pedestrianised old quarter and often a fresh light breeze blowing in from the sea. The massive Alcazaba fortress looms over the ancient Roman Theatre and close by is the birthplace of the famous painter and sculptor 'Pablo Picasso'.

The second largest City in Andalucía, with a municipal population of around 600,000, Málaga is the southernmost large City in Europe and a bustling seaport with goods/cargo passing through daily and also on the Cruise Ship circuit.

With its chilled lifestyle, temperate sunny climate, 'Chiringuito' fresh fish barbeque restaurant shacks on the beach and full

of tapas bars and cafeterias, to be a Malagueño explains why the people are so happy.

Recommended restaurants for consideration for dinner include:

- Citron in Plaza de la Merced
- El Tap<mark>eo</mark> de Cervantes
- Meson Iberico
- Restaurante Vino Mio
- Alumbre
- Buenavista Gastrobar & Tapas





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Day 2: MÁLAGA – RONDA In the morning enjoy free time in Málaga to visit any of the sites, such as the Picasso Museum, the Alcazaba Fortress and/or the Cathedral. We will meet you at your hotel at 12:30 and



drive to East Málaga, where we park up at a locals 'Chiringuito' restaurant near the Mediterranean to have a barbeque of fresh fish cooked on Olive Wood fires. 'Espetos' fresh sardines on bamboo skewers are a speciality, but the freshly barbequed 'Dorada' Sea Bream, and 'Lubina' Sea Bass, are delicious, as well as freshly barbequed 'Calamares'.

These should definitely be accompanied with some 'Patatas a lo Pobre' Potatoes of the Poor.

After lunch, we can take you to the top of the hill to visit the Castillo Gibralfaro with magnificent views over Málaga or start our journey to Ronda, as you prefer.

The spectacular town of Ronda is perched on top of the impressive Tajo Gorge.

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.

It was the hometown of the polymath 'Abbas Ibn Firnas' (810–887), an Inventor, Engineer, Aviator, Physician, Poet and Andalusian musician.

Whilst being an alleged Aviator, many consider him to have achieved the first flight in around 875 near Córdoba, including being recognized by NASA who have named the largest crater on the dark side of the moon, the Ibn Firnas crater.



In the early 19th century, the Napoleonic invasion and the subsequent Peninsula War caused much suffering



in Ronda, whose inhabitants were reduced from 15,600 to 5,000 in three years.

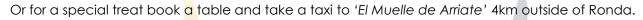
Ronda's area became the base first of guerrilla warriors, then of numerous bandits, whose deeds inspired artists and folklore. In the 19th century, the economy of Ronda was mainly based on agricultural activities and In 1918, the city was the seat of the Assembly of Ronda, in which the Andalusian flag, 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.

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Arriving in Ronda, we check-in to your accommodation and we will give you a short orientation walk before leaving you to enjoy the stunning town.

Recommended restaurants for consideration for dinner include:

- Duquesa de Parcent
- Meson El Sacristan
- Almocabar
- Casa Santa Pola



Voted the top restaurant in Andalucia on Trip Advisor for three years running, it offers fantastic food for excellent value. '*Frank*' the owner knows us well.

https://elmuelle-arriate.com/



Day 3: RONDA - SEVILLE Enjoy free time in Ronda and we will meet you at 14.30 to depart for the elegant and colourful City of Seville.

With its impressive buildings, parks and culture, Seville is an absolute delight and in 2018 was awarded the Lonely Planet Guide's 'Number 1 City to Visit'.

Once the wealthiest City in Europe, as a result of trade with the Americas, it is located on the banks of the Gualquivir river, which empties into the Atlantic some 80km to the west, making Seville once the most inland port in Europe.

We arrive in Seville late afternoon, check-in to your hotel and give you an early evening walking tour of the City.

We will visit the vast '*Plaza de España*' the scene of the 1929 Ibero-Americana exhibition. With its towers, buildings, fountain and ceramics, set in a semi-circle, it has been the setting for several movies, including Lawrence of Arabia and Star Wars.

Walking from the Plaza, we pass by the historic buildings of Seville, telling you their background. until we reach the Cathedral Square where the largest Gothic Cathedral in the world imposes its presence.









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We will meander through the 'Barrio Santa Cruz' the old Jewish Quarter with its tiny lanes 'the kissing lanes', due to the close proximity of the balconies across the lanes almost touching, and cute Plazas.

The capital of the autonomous region of Andalucia, it has a municipal population close to 700,000 making it the fourth largest City in Spain after Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia.

With one of the world's largest Cathedrals, *Mudéjar* Islamic style Palaces, majestic fountains, winding narrow lanes, time in Seville passes in the blink of an eye.

The 'Reales Alcázares de Sevilla' are the oldest Royal Palaces in Europe still in use. Built in the style of the Alhambra Palaces, they are spectacular and a delight to visit.

The 'Sevillanos' people of Seville, love to sing and party and truly know how to enjoy themselves.

Original founded by the Romans, it was called '*Hispalis*' and was taken by the Muslim conquest in 712 and renamed '*Ishbiliyya*'.

In 1147, the 'Almohad' Islamic Sect, meaning 'Those who profess the unity of God' invaded 'al-Andalus' and made 'Ishbiliyya' their centre.

Great constructors, they built the famous Giralda Tower that looms over the City, now the Cathedral Bell Tower, but once



the Minaret of the Great Mosque, which was mainly destroyed as part of the construction of the large Cathedral. The 'Patio of the Oranges' some original walls and some entrances into the original Mosque are all that remain.



As the economic centre of trade with the Americas, Seville grew extremely wealthy opening a new Golden Age of arts and literature. Beautiful impressive Baroque Buildings were built and wealthy merchants commissioned mansions for themselves and their families.

There are three Unesco World Heritage sites in the old quarter: The Alcázar Palaces, the Cathedral and the General Archive of the Indies, which houses the National Archives, including details of '*Christopher Columbus*' voyage to the Americas.

In 1519, Ferdinand Magellan departed from Seville for the first circumnavigation of the Earth.

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When the Guadalquiver river silted up in 18th century, the merchants and trade moved and relocated to Cadiz, deserting Seville and leaving it to enter a serious decline.

The 1929 exhibition was an attempt to regenerate the City, but, unfortunately, it failed to restore trade and its fortunes.

More recently, however, the City has recovered from investment in new industries, financial services, tourism and the University.

The Alcazar Palaces are also star of the glittering screen having been some of the Palaces in 'Game of Thrones' and

the Palaces of Jerusalem in the 2005 Ridley Scott Epic 'The Kingdom of Heaven'.

Known as the City of Opera, Seville is the setting for around 100 operas, the most famous, surely, being

ting for around 100 operas, the most famous, surely, being 'Carmen'. Renowned composers such as 'Beethoven', 'Bizet', 'Mozart', 'Rossini' and 'Verdi' have all been inspired by this fabulous City.

Recommended restaurants for dinner include:

- San Marcos, the beautiful converted Arab Baths
- Taberna de Alabardero
- La Bartola (Tapas)
- La Brunilda (Tapas)
- El Pasaje (Tapas)
- La Bodeguita (Tapas)

Day 4: SEVILLE – CÓRDOBA After breakfast, visit the '*Reales Alcázares*' the oldest Royal Palaces still in use in Europe, with its '*Mudejar*' Patios and scented gardens.

We recommend pre-booking your entrances on online <u>https://realalcazarsevilla.sacatuentrada.es/en</u> and you can do this before coming on the tour.

We suggest an entry time of 10:00.

Simply select the 'General Visit', either with or without Audio Guide, as you prefer.

We meet you after your visit and take a tapas lunch.

After lunch, you have time to visit the Cathedral before we depart for the historic City of Córdoba.







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Once the Capital of both the Roman and Islamic Empires in the Iberian Peninsula, Córdoba is a walled City with the largest official old quarter of any European City, much of it a Unesco World Heritage Site.

A fascinating City of charm and history.

Check-in to your hotel in the old Jewish Quarter.

Spend the evening and night in the atmospheric old quarter.

As a visitor, you feel that you have been transformed back in time.

Once the Capital of both the Roman and Islamic Empires, it was one of the most powerful and important Cities in the world.

Amongst the largest Cities of its time, with a population in the 10th century of up to 1 million inhabitants, it now is roughly the same size as Granada, but has an intimate feel of a much smaller and contained City.

The ancient walls of the City appear almost recently built and they surround the City giving the visitor the feel of emerging into the middle ages as you walk through them.



Famous for its patios packed to the brim with colourful flowers, the courtyards of Córdoba are a lovely and a cool retreat from the heat of the summer sun.

To many, the mesmerising 'Mesquita', the greatest ancient Mosque in the Western World, is the most impressive building in the whole of Andalucia and certainly the only Mosque in the world with a Baroque Cathedral right in the centre.



Córdoba prides itself on its gastronomy with local dishes, such as 'Salmorejo Cordobés' and dishes with a distinct Arabic flavour.

The first references to a settlement is from the Carthaginians, who named this '*Kartuba*'.

Conquered by the Romans in 206BC, it was renamed 'Corduba'. During the Roman Civil War, the City was sacked by Julius Caesar in 45BC due to its Pompeian allegiance.

And it was later settled with veterans by the Emperor Augustus.

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It became the Capital of 'Baetica', one of three Roman provinces in 'Hispania' the Iberian Peninsula, and had a provincial forum and many temples.

The great Roman philosopher 'Seneca' came from Córdoba.

In 711, when the Moors invaded the peninsula, Córdoba was captured by the 'Umayyad' army.

The new commanders established themselves within the city and, in 716, it became a provincial capital, subordinate to the Caliphate of Damascus, known as 'Qurtuba'.



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The Saint Vincent Church was shared for worship by Christians and Muslims, until construction of the Córdoba Mosque started on the same spot under the Umayyad Sultan, 'Abd-ar-Rahman I', in 785.



Designed along the lines of the Great Umayyad Mosque of Damascus, it is now the greatest Mosque in the Western world. The Sultan personally laboured one hour every day laying stones in its construction.

In May 766, Córdoba was chosen as the capital of the independent Umayyad emirate.

Córdoba flourished and was one of the most advanced cities in the world, and a great cultural, political, financial and economic centre. It had a prosperous economy, with manufactured goods including leather, metal work, glazed tiles and textiles.

Agricultural produce included a range of fruits, vegetables, herbs and spices, and materials such as cotton, flax and silk. In particular, filigree silver work, from silver mined in the Sierra Morena mountains behind the City, is a craft that lives on today with many small workshops producing and selling unique jewellery in this fashion.

It was famous as a centre of learning, home to over 80 libraries and institutions of learning, with knowledge of medicine, mathematics, astronomy and botany, far exceeding the rest of Europe at the time.

In 936, a powerful ruler '*Abd-ar-Rahman III*' was inaugurated as the first Caliph of Córdoba and became known as the red haired, blue eyed Caliph due to his non-Arab appearance.

But after his death and several subsequent and weaker rulers, the caliphate collapsed, as did Córdoba's economic and political hegemony, and it subsequently became part of the *Taifa* of Córdoba.







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Of all of the places you visit on our tour, Córdoba is the place where ghosts of the past come alive and the presence of a glowing Golden Age is most felt.

Some of the best Olive Oil in the World come from the Province of Córdoba.

According to the non-profit website 'World's Best Olive Oils' top 50 list, calculated from the results of 17 of the most prestigious international olive oil competitions worldwide, seven of the top ten oils came from Spain and all of the top four oils came from Andalucía, with the top two coming from the Province of Córdoba.

Recommended restaurants for dinner include:

- Casa Pepe de la Juderia
- La Comiendo
- La Bodega Mesquita
- El Churrasco
- Choco
- La Regadera
- La Tinaja
- La Nena



Day 5: CÓRDOBA - GRANADA We recommend that, after breakfast, you visit the Christian Alcazar (close to the hotel), with its beautiful gardens, and we will meet you at the entrance after your visit at 11:00.



We will give you a short walking tour of Córdoba and detail its history.

Admire the beauty of the white-washed houses in the 'Barrio San Basilio' with trailing geraniums in blue pots dangling from the 'rejas', window railings.

We will take a relaxed walk through the cobbled streets to a typical Córdoba Patio and we see the large walls that subdivided the City into districts.

Take a tapas lunch and in the afternoon, visit the 'Mesquita'

the ancient Mosque that some visitors to the region view as the most impressive ancient building.

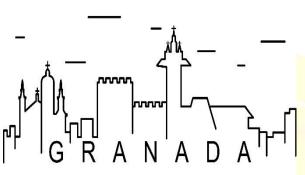
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After the visit, we will collect your luggage from the hotel and drive to the 'Jewel of Andalucía' the City of Granada.

Arriving in Granada, we check-in to your hotel and, in the evening, we will take you to the top of the 'Albayzin' the atmospheric old Arab Quarter, with its winding cobbled streets, and have dinner at 'Restaurante Jardines de Zoraya' who have a great menu and an excellent authentic Flamenco Performance by talented local artists.

We will visit the '*Mirador San Nicolas*' to see the Alhambra lit up at night from across the valley before returning back to the hotel.





Day 6: GRANADA 'Gar-anat' meaning 'Hill of the Pilgrims', now known as Granada, nestles at the bottom of the towering mountain range, the Sierra Nevada.

Romantic and Majestic, it was once wealthy and the home of both Sultans and Christian Monarchs, including the famous 'Ferdinand and Isabella', who made it their final resting and burial place.

The Islamic Kingdom of Granada held on for nearly a quarter of a millennium after the rest of the Iberian Peninsula was recaptured by the Christian '*Reconquista*' and imposing Islamic Fortresses spread throughout the region.

Now it is a vibrant City of Education and Business.

The University of Granada is highly regarded and has an estimated 82,000 students spread over five campuses around the City.

Granada is located at the confluence of four rivers, 'Darro', 'Genil', 'Monachil' and 'Beiro'.

It has an elevation of 738m (2,421 ft) and a municipal population of around 240,000.

After the collapse of the Umayyad Caliphate, when 'al-Andalus' broke down into a series of small independent kingdoms, the Berber 'Zawi ben Ziri' established the 'Taifa of Granada' which was essentially, and surprisingly, a Jewish state in all but name.





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The Muslim King being mainly a symbolic figurehead, the power and control, including the armies, were under Jewish control.

It was the centre of the Jewish Sephardi culture and learning. Early Arabic writers often refer to City as 'Garnata al-Yahud' Granada of the Jews.

The Royal City Complex of the 'Alhambra' is by far the most famous monument in Granada and looms high and visible over the City.

It is a renowned Islamic historical legacy set of buildings, Palaces, Fortress and Gardens and stands as a reminder of the City's great importance.

A spectacular complex of Fortress and Palaces, it is one of Europe's most visited sites, 'al-Qal'at al-Hamrā'

the 'Red Fortress', sits proudly on top of the hill of 'La Sabika' the 'Hill of Gold' an imposing gesture of the dynasties that once ruled this land.

Originally constructed in 889, as a fortress on top of older Roman fortifications, it remained almost a set of ruins until renovation in the mid-13th century by the Nasrid Emir 'Mohammed ben al-Ahmar' who added the Palaces and walls.

Moorish poets describe it as a 'pearl set in emeralds' in reference to the colour of its buildings and the surrounding woods.



It is also often referred to as a ship sailing towards the City of Granada with the large watch tower of the Alcazaba fortress being the prow.



The Gardens and pools of the Alhambra are spectacular with fragrant flowers in abundance.

The Palaces are highly decorative with beautiful columns, stalactite vaulted ceilings and highly ingenious hydraulic water management systems, as featured in the *'Fountain of the Lions'*, where every hour, one of the twelve white marble lion statues would produce water from its mouth. A marvel and baffling visitors of the time.

As you walk around the city you will see the heraldic emblem of Granada cast in rain water downpipes and on other items, the Pomegranate, in Spanish Granada.

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We will meet you at your hotel at 10:00 and take you to explore other areas of the City, including the Baroque Basilica of San Juan de Dios, the most Baroque Church in the whole of Spain.

We will walk around the Cathedral area, through the 'Alcaicería' the Arabic Silk Market. Interestingly, the name means 'Place of Caesar' in reference to the Arabs being given the rights to manufacture and sell silks in the 6th century by the Byzantine Emperor 'Justinian'.



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You will have time to visit the Cathedral and/or 'Capilla Real'

Royal Chapel, now the museum of Granada, and the burial place of the Catholic Monarchs 'Ferdinand and Isabella'.



We will take a short walk along the banks of the River Darro with its charming stone bridges, have a tapas lunch, before returning to the tour vehicle to drive up to the Alhambra.

You will have some time to explore the gardens and other areas before your timed entry into the 'Nasrid Palaces'.

Your Tour Leader will depart after you enter the Alhambra and you can either stroll back down the hill to your hotel or take the local bus or taxi.

Enjoy a second evening and night in Granada.

Recommended restaurants for dinner include:

- La Castanada
- La Fabula
- Entreb<mark>ra</mark>sas
- El Mercader
- La Vinoteca
- Chikito
- Damasqueros





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Day 7: GRANADA – MÁLAGA We depart Granada at an agreed time and, subject to time, we can visit *'El Torcal'* National Park or Antequera before continuing to Málaga and your onward departure.

Many of our previous guests book an additional night or more, in Málaga, or a hotel on the coast, to extend their holiday and we transfer them there.

'El Torcal', the limestone towers, is a natural wonder of towering limestone cliffs with the incredibly shaped 'pancake' rock formations 'Karst' the result of weathering of the exposed sedimentary layers of limestone, formed millions of years ago under the sea.

It is possibly the finest example of such formations in Europe.

In the park there is a 45 minute walk of 1.4km, which you can undertake, but wear suitable shoes.

The park is 1,500m above sea level and there is a very nice cafeteria where you can sit and enjoy the scenery.

If you are lucky, you may catch glimpses of the Spanish 'Ibex', a large mountain goat resembling a small deer.

After the visit, we take the final 45 minute drive to Málaga or the coast.



Reaching your destination, your Tour Leader will say goodbye and you continue your onward travel.

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What's included

- All return tour transportation from accommodation to Cities in one of our air conditioned tour vehicles
- Transfers from airport, train station and local Málaga Hotels between the hours of 09:00 and 18:00
- Dedicated Tour Leader
- Bed and breakfast accommodation
- Orientation and background walking tour in Cities

What's not included

- Any other meals, drinks, subsistence
- Any shows, performances, including the dinner/Flamenco in Granada
- Monument entrance fees
- Any flight, train, bus or other transportation
- Any expenditure not detailed above

Tour Price	Per person	Single Supplements
Private Tour of Andalucia 7 days/6 nights	£2,350	£88 per night

Notes

- Our Tour Leaders will give you background information of the Cities and places we visit, but they will not enter the monuments with you. Audio guides are
- available for rental at the major monuments if you wish to have one
- The walking distance during each day can normally vary between 4km and 8km. Wear comfortable shoes, drink lots of water and use sunscreen cream
- All bookings are subject to our terms and conditions, a copy of which are included in the booking form
- You can add additional nights and/or places to extend your private tour and we will be pleased to quote for this
- Prices are based on two guests sharing a room and are in £GBP

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Typical Hotels

- Málaga
- Granada
- Córdoba
- Ronda
- Seville

- 4* MS Maestranza
- 4* Boutique Villa Oniria
- 4* Casas de la Juderia
- 4* Catalonia Ronda
- 4* Melia Sevilla

Tour Vehicle

Air conditioned Mercedes passenger transport vehicle

