

Day Tours

Duration approximately 9 hours



Overview

We run private day trips to the Cities of Ronda, Córdoba, Granada, as well as local Wine Bodega trips, from Málaga.



These trips are for private groups from 2 to 50 guests.

You could be a couple or small party from a cruise ship or hotel, wanting to visit historic Córdoba, for instance, or a larger conference group wanting to spend the last day after the conference seeing some of wonderful Andalucía.

For these trips, we charge per person, subject to a minimum charge to cover our costs.

CÓRDOBA At 09:00, we depart for the historic City of Córdoba. 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.

As a visitor, you are transformed back in time. The Capital of both the Roman and Islamic Empires, it was once amongst the most powerful and important Cities in the world.



-Córdoba-

Amongst the largest Cities in the world, in terms of its population in the 10th century, 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 Andalucía and



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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.



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 the Younger, his father, the orator Seneca the Elder, and his nephew, the poet Lucan came from Roman Córdoba. In 711 when the Moors invaded the peninsula, Córdoba was captured by the Umayyad army. The new Umayyad commanders established themselves within the city and in 716 it became a provincial capital, subordinate to the Caliphate of Damascus, known as Qurṭuba.

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. And 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, later caliphate, of al-Andalus. Córdoba flourished, becoming a megacity of the time with widely ranging population estimates of between 400,000 and 1,000,000 people.

In the 10th and 11th centuries Córdoba was one of the most advanced cities in the world, and a great cultural, political, financial and economic centre. Córdoba had a prosperous economy, with manufactured goods



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including leather, metal work, glazed tiles and textiles, and agricultural produce including 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, 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. Of all of the places you visit on one of our tours, 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.



We arrive in Córdoba at the 'Puerta de Sevilla', a small entrance into the San Basilio district of the City. After a short background to the City, we pass through the entrance and see the beauty of the white-washed houses with trailing geraniums in blue pots dangling from the 'rejas', window railings. We take a short coffee and restroom stop in a local cafeteria and then walk the cobbled streets to our first visit, a typical Córdoba Patio.



Continuing through the lovely residential barrio, we see the large walls that sub-divided the City into districts and have a quick look at the Royal Stables 'Caballerizas Reales' where they train the famous Andalusian Horses. A little further up the street we come across the Christian Alcazar with its beautiful gardens. Here you have a 45 minute visit. Leaving the Alcazar we take you for a meander through the old Jewish Quarter with its narrow lanes and atmospheric patios before arriving at the site of the Great Mosque of Córdoba (now a Cathedral) the 'Mesquita'.



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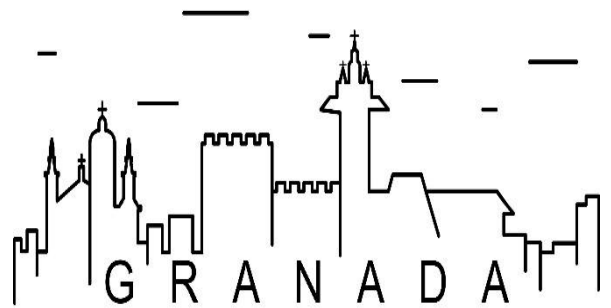
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We stop for a relaxed tapas lunch to sample typical dishes from the region and, after lunch, walk up the little lane of the flowers for an iconic photo opportunity.

You then have free time to visit the Mosque, shop and enjoy the charismatic old quarter before we meet up at 17.00 at the Roman Triumphal Arch, cross the famous Roman Bridge and return to Málaga.

GRANADA At 09:00, we depart to visit the *Jewel of Andalusia*, the City of Granada. 'Gar-anat' meaning 'Hill of the Pilgrims' or 'Hill of the Strangers', 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 a vibrant City of Education and Business, the reminder of its great importance looms high and visible in the form of the Alhambra, the spectacular royal complex of Fortress and Palaces and one of Europe's most visited sites.

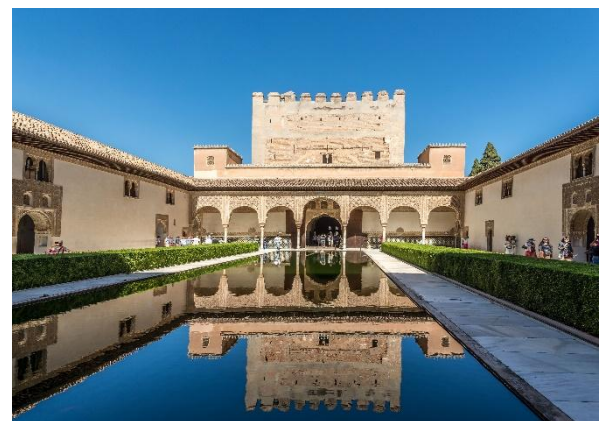


'al-Qal'at al-Ḥamrā', the 'Red Fortress', sits proudly on top of the hill of 'La Sabika', the 'Hill of Gold', as an imposing gesture of the dynasties that once ruled this land.

Granada is located at the foot of the Sierra Nevada mountain range and at the confluence of four rivers, the Darro, the Genil, the Monachil and the Beiro. It has an elevation of 738m (2,421 ft). It has a municipal population of around 240,000.

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

After the collapse of the Umayyad Caliphate, when al-Andalus broke down into a series of 'Taifas' or small independent kingdoms, the Berber Zawi ben Ziri established the Taifa of Granada which was essentially,



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and surprisingly, a Jewish state in all but name. The Muslim King being mainly a symbolic figurehead, the power and control of the Taifa and its armies were under Jewish control. It was the centre of the Jewish Sephardi culture and learning. Early Arabic writers often refer to the Taifa of Granada as 'Garnata al-Yahud', Granada of the Jews.



The Royal City Complex of the Alhambra is by far the most famous monument in Granada. It is a renowned Islamic historical legacy set of buildings, Palaces, Fortress and Gardens.

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 surrounding the fountain 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'.

Arriving in Granada, we park and take a short walk to the beautiful Bib Rambla Plaza where we indulge in a treat of *Chocolate con Churros* before having a walking tour around the Cathedral area, through the 'Alcaicería', the Arabic Silk Market.



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Interestingly, the name Alcaiceria 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. We will take a short walk along the banks of the River Darro with its charming stone bridges.

You are then free to explore, maybe visit the Cathedral or 'Capilla Real' now the museum of Granada and the burial place of the Catholic Monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella.

Returning to the tour vehicle we drive up to the Alhambra 'al-Qal'at al-Ḥamrā'.

You will have pre-booked tickets, either by us on the Agents System or by yourself on the Public System, depending upon availability.

After the visit, we return to Málaga



RONDA We depart Málaga for the spectacular town of Ronda perched on top of the impressive Tajo Gorge.

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.

We will give you a short walking tour around Ronda (or a 90 minute tour with a local guide if you are a group of 10 or more) and show you the key sites.

Above all, however, Ronda is about slowly wandering, enjoying lunch and the spectacular mountain scenery

and splendid gorge.

You are free to wander the narrow lanes of the old quarter and visit any of the monuments, before we meet up at the appropriate time for the return journey back to Málaga.

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 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.



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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. You have free time in Ronda to lunch, wander the narrow lanes of the old quarter, visit any of the

monuments before we meet up at 17:00 for the journey back to Málaga.

What's included

- All return tour transportation from Málaga
- Dedicated Tour Leader
- Orientation and background walking tour in Cities
- Spanish Sales Tax

What's not included

- Any meals, drinks, subsistence
- Any shows, performances
- Monument entrance fees
- Any expenditure not detailed above



Day Trip Prices	Per person
Granada	£125 GBP
Córdoba	£125 GBP
Ronda	£115 GBP
	Subject to a minimum charge of £495 GBP



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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 5km and 10km. 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



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