INSIGHT GUIDES

SOUTHERN SPAIN

ANDALUCÍA & COSTA DEL SOL



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LEGEND

Insight on
Photo Story

THE BEST OF SOUTHERN SPAIN: TOP ATTRACTIONS



△ **Seville**. The quintessential Andalusian city, with a Unesco-listed cathedral and Alcázar, and more tapas bars than you can shake a stick at. The April Feria should be on everyone's bucket list. See page 77.

▽ **Granada**. Home to one of the world's great monuments – the Alhambra – and the medieval winding streets of the Albaicín. Famous for its cave-dwelling gypsies and poet Federico García Lorca. See page 187.





△ **Córdoba**. As a result of its cultural and intellectual importance under the Romans and Moors, the historic centre with its magnificent mosque is now Unesco-listed. Pretty patios add to the charm. See page 161.



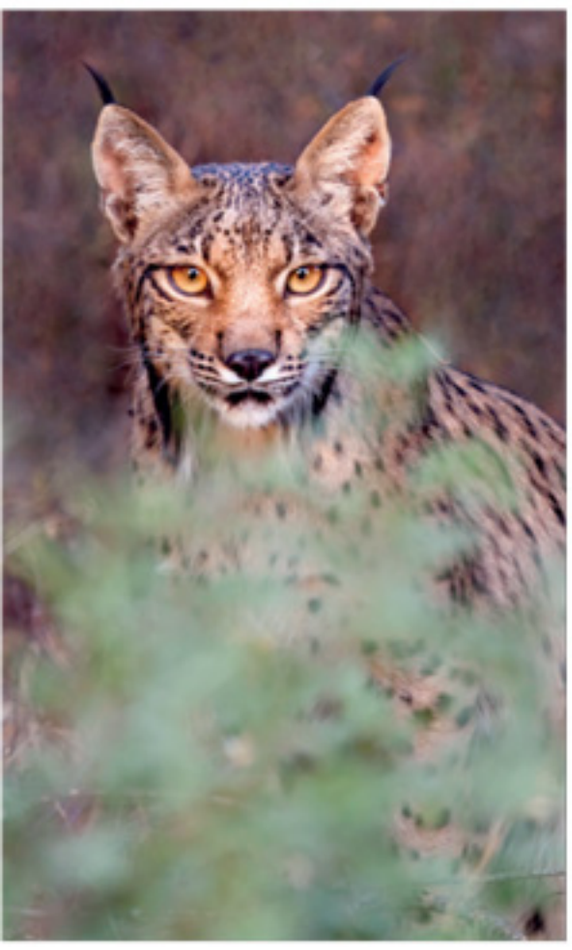
△ **Málaga**. The birthplace of Pablo Picasso has undergone a renaissance in recent years and now boasts some world-class museums. The Soho district is a must visit for fans of street art. See page 142.



△ **Cádiz**. One of the oldest cities in Europe, jutting out into the sea, helped shape modern Spain. Soak up the atmosphere of its ancient streets and savour some wonderful seafood. See page 118.



△ **Las Alpujarras**. This mountainous region to the south east of Granada is dotted with time-forgotten villages, inhabited these days by those in search of the good life. Great walking too. See page 205.



◁ **Doñana National Park**. Home of the endangered Iberian Lynx, this important wetland site offers some stunning scenery and experiences to nature lovers. Best explored on the back of a horse. See page 103.

▷ **Jerez de la Frontera**. With a clutch of sherry bodegas and a lively flamenco scene, this town is good for a lively day and night out. Don't miss the white horses either. See page 111.



◁ **Cabo de Gata**. One of the driest parts of Europe, this protected area in Almería province has wonderful remote beaches where visitors can get away from it all. See page 219.





▷ **Ronda**. Perched on a cliff overlooking the Tajo gorge, this is one of Andalucía's oldest and most stunning towns. No wonder it attracted famous artists and writers like Ernest Hemingway. See page 131.

THE BEST OF SOUTHERN SPAIN: EDITOR'S CHOICE

SOUTHERN SPAIN FOR FAMILIES

Spain is an ultra-child friendly country and even boisterous toddlers can be taken almost anywhere that grown-ups go at any time of day or night without raising an eyebrow.

Waterparks. These are generally open May to September, and can be found at Mijas, Granada, Torremolinos, Córdoba, Seville, Puerto de Santa María (Cádiz), Torre del Mar, Almuñécar, Cartaya (Huelva) and at Vera (Almería).

Theme parks. Visit Seville's attraction-packed Isla Mágica (see page 94), Almería's Wild West-themed Oasys Mini-Hollywood (see page 218) and Tivoli World (see page 145) on the Costa del Sol.

Zoos and Aquariums. Three of the best are on the Costa del Sol: Selwo Aventura at Estepona (see page 149) and Selwo Marina and Sea Life, both in Benalmádena (see page 145).

Cable cars. Take the *Teleférico* at Benalmádena for wonderful views, falconry displays plus elevated walking and cycling routes. See page 145.

Shows. The Real Escuela Andaluza del Arte Ecuestre at Jerez is famous for its dancing horses (see page 111). Oasys Theme Park (see page 218) in Almería exploits a Wild West theme.

The Wild West in Almería.





The Alhambra's distinctive pillars.

BEST BUILDINGS

The Alhambra, Granada. This magnificent example of Moorish architecture dating from the 11th century is one of Spain's most visited attractions. See page 189.

The Mosque, Córdoba. This vast mosque, complete with a 16th-century cathedral in the middle, is one of the world's greatest works of Islamic art. See page 162.

Reales Alcázares, the Cathedral, Archivo General de Indias and the Maestranza bullring, Seville. Seville has much to offer but these four buildings sum up its essence: Moors, Catholics, Christopher Columbus and bull-fighting. See pages 83, 80, 85 and 88.

Arab baths in Ronda, Jaén and Granada. The Moors certainly knew how to live and these baths highlight their love of luxury. See pages 135, 181 and 201.

Castles of Málaga and Almería. Due to its turbulent past, Andalucía is dotted with castles and these are two of the best. See pages 142 and 215.

Menga and Romeral dolmens, Antequera. These dolmens are some of Spain's best examples of prehistoric building. See page 154

Ruins of Itálica and Medina Azahara. A showcase of the advanced civilisations, planning and building know-how of the Romans and Moors. See pages 95 and 169.

THE BEST PLACES FOR ART

Museo de Bellas Artes, Seville. Housed in a 17th-century convent with a superb baroque chapel, Seville's Fine Arts Museum holds works by El Greco, Goya, Murillo, Zurbarán and Velázquez (see page 91).

Hospital de la Caridad, Seville. This 17th-century charity hospital is known for the great artworks in its chapel, including ghoulish works by Valdés Leal (see page 87).

Museo Picasso, Málaga. Picasso was born in Málaga. This collection of 233 paintings, drawings, sculptures and ceramics spans his career (see page 142).

Centre Pompidou Málaga. This branch of the Centre Pompidou Paris brings some of the world's best contemporary art to the Costa del Sol. See page 143.

Museo Ruso, Málaga. Top-class Russian art from the 16th–20th centuries at this offshoot of St Petersburg's Russian State Museum. See page 143.

Museo Carmen Thyssen, Málaga. An exquisite private collection of 19th-century Andalusian art. Highlights include *Bullfight at Éibar* by Ignacio Zuloaga. See page 143.

Museo de Cádiz. Fine examples of Spanish art from the 19th and 20th century. See page 118.

Julio Romero de Torres Museum, Córdoba. See his paintings of sultry Andalusian women (see page 168).

PICTURESQUE PUEBLOS

Arcos de la Frontera. The quintessential white village offers great views from its clifftop location. See page 125.

Capileira. The highest and largest of the villages in the Alpujarras is a good base for walkers. See page 208.

Casares. A Cézanne-like cluster of little white houses climbing up the hillside. See page 122.

Cómpeta, Comares, Frigiliana, Salares. These white towns offer an insight into authentic Andalucía and great hiking. See page 157.

Grazalema. Gateway to the Sierra de Grazalema, it is noted for its local produce and events. See page 126.

Guadix. Famous for its 2,000 cave dwellings and tapas. See page 198.

Priego de Córdoba. Hill-top town with a fine baroque church and medieval castle. See page 172.

Zahara de la Sierra. Near the Sierra de Grazalema, it has great hiking and canyoning. See page 127.

Zuheros. Known for its cave, Cueva de Murciélagos, and cheese. See page 172.



Bullfight at Éibar by Ignacio Zuloaga.

BEST BEACHES

Costa de la Luz. In Cádiz, the best are Caños de Meca (Barbate), Bolonia, Zahara de los Atunes and Cabo de la Plata. In Huelva, head for Punta Umbría, La Casita Azul (El Hoyo), El Asperillo, Torre del Oro, El Alcor.

Costa del Sol. There are still a few nice beaches between the resorts: Costa Natura (Estepona), Lindavista (San Pedro de Alcántara), Tajo de la Soga (Benalmádena), Almayate-Bajamar (near Torre del Mar); Cala del Cañuelo, Cala del Pino, Las Alberquillas and Molino de Papel (all near Nerja).

Costa Tropical. Try Ensenada de los Berengueles (Marina del Este, La Herradura), Cabria (Almuñécar), La Rijana (near Calahonda).

Almería. Recommendations include Cala de En Medio (near las Negras), Cala del Bergantín (Rodalquilar), Cala de las Hermanicas and La Negrita (near San José), Los Genoveses, Cala Chica Cala del Barronal and Monsul.

Kite-surfers at Caños de Meca.



GREATEST GOLF COURSES

Andalucía has more than 60 golf courses, most of them 18-hole. Half of them are on or near the Costa del Sol, aka the 'Costa del Golf'.

Desert Springs Cuevas de Almanzora, Almería. This is Europe's first 'desert golf course', a splash of green on Almería's east coast.

Granada Club de Golf. With stunning views of the Sierra Nevada, this flat course is a good option for lower levels.

Dunas de Doñana Matalascañas, Huelva. Between the beach and the Doñana National Park, this club with a hotel in the middle of the greens is a good place for golf fanatics.

Montecastillo Jerez de la Frontera (Cádiz). Designed by Jack Nicklaus, this course has been used for the Volvo Masters and is considered to be one of the best in Europe.

Club de Campo de Córdoba. A demanding course in the hills north of Córdoba. The pine and cork trees add to the charm.

Westin La Quinta. This beautiful 27-hole course located near Puerto Banús was designed by Ryder Cup golfers and suits all abilities.

Guadalmina, San Pedro de Alcantara. Made up of two parts, north and south, the latter being only for experts because of its thick vegetation.

Los Naranjos. Long-established course 7km (4 miles) from Marbella, designed by Robert Trent Jones. 'Hard par, easy bogey' is the name of the game here.

Antequera Golf. Set at an altitude of 650 metres (over 2,000 ft) and surrounded by mountains. The fairways are separated by 200-year-old olive trees and the lakes act as both obstacles and reservoirs.

A golf course in Málaga.





Salmorejo, a speciality from Córdoba.

A TASTE OF SPAIN

Fish and seafood. Order fish fried or *a la plancha* – cooked on a griddle and therefore much less oily. Málaga (see page 145) has some of the best fish restaurants in the region, as does El Puerto de Santa Maria near Jerez on the Costa de la Luz (see page 113).

Sherry. The world-famous fortified wines are made in Jerez de la Frontera (see page 111). The less well known Montilla-Moriles *denominación de origen* (see page 171) makes similar, equally good wines but without fortifying them with grape spirit.

Gazpacho. This tasty cold soup of pulped tomatoes and garlic, is served all over Andalucía, but some regions have their own versions, such as *salmorejo* in Córdoba and *porra* in Antequera. Another good cold soup is *ajo blanco*, made with garlic and almonds.

Olives and Olive oil. These are the specialities of Jaén province (see page 178). Be sure to try the traditional Andalusian breakfast of toast dribbled with olive oil rather than spread with butter.

Jamón serrano. Dry-cured ham needs clean mountain air for its preparation and the best in Andalucía comes from Trevélez in the Alpujarras (see page 208) and Jabugo in the Sierra de Aracena (see page 108).

Tropical fruits. Grown on the coast of Granada (see page 200). Depending on the season, they include avocados, mangoes and *chirimoyas* (custard apples).