



Cádiz Province & Gibraltar

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Best Places to Eat

- » Sabores (p122)
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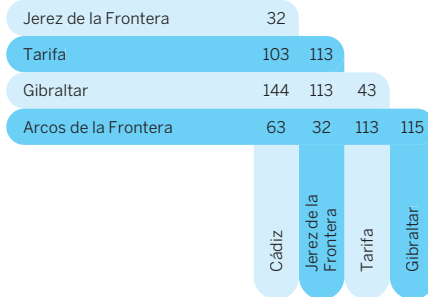
Best Places to Stay

- » V... (p297)
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- » Parador Casa del Corregidor (p297)

Why Go?

If you had to break off one part of Andalucía to demonstrate to aliens what it looked like, you'd probably choose Cádiz province. Emblematic regional highlights are part of the furniture here: thrillingly sited white towns, craggy mountains, endless olive trees, flamenco in its purest incarnation, the original (and best) fortified sherry, the font of Andalusian horse culture, festivals galore, and – just when you thought you'd half-sussed it out – that idiosyncratic British anomaly, Gibraltar. Stuffed in among all of this condensed culture are two expansive natural parks that cover an unbroken tract of land that runs from Olvera in the north to Algeciras in the south. The same line once marked the blurred frontier between Christian Spain and Moorish Granada, and the ancient border is flecked with huddled 'white towns,' many of them given a 'de la Frontera' suffix, testifying to their volatile but fascinating history.

Driving Distances (km)



DON'T MISS

Listen out for word on the street about private flamenco clubs or *peñas* (small private clubs) – few experiences in Andalucía can equal their musical performances for authenticity, drama and raw emotion.

Best White Towns

- » Vejer de la Frontera (p131)
- » Grazalema (p125)
- » Jimena de la Frontera (p138)
- » Arcos de la Frontera (p129)

Best Hikes

- » Salto del Cabrero (p128)
- » Garganta del Verde (p128)
- » Sendero del Acantilado (p132)
- » Sendero de Río Hozgarganta (p138)

Resources

- » **Cádiz Net** (www.cadiznet.com) Expansive guide to Cádiz province.
- » **Cádiz Turismo** (www.cadizturismo.com) Official government overview of tourism in Cádiz province.

Getting Around

Cádiz province is served by two bus companies, Comes and Los Amarillos, which link all the major towns plus a surprising number of small villages. Fast trains from Madrid serve Jerez, El Puerto de Santa María and Cádiz. One of Spain's most scenic train lines runs from Ronda down to Algeciras. With a little advance planning it is possible to cover almost every corner of the province on public transportation. The best driving routes thread through the mountains of the northeast.

THREE PERFECT DAYS

Day 1: Seafaring Cities

Spend the morning in Cádiz getting geographically oriented with a stroll around the urban coastline. Stop-offs should include the **cathedral**, **Museo de Cádiz** and **Playa de la Caleta**. In the late afternoon take the short ferry ride to El Puerto de Santa María for some of Andalucía's best food. Warm up with tapas in the city centre before hitting **Mesón del Asador** or **Aponiente**, depending on your budget.

Day 2: Jerez Sojourn

Jump on a train for a day in underrated **Jerez de la Frontera**. Start with the **cathedral**, a Gothic-baroque masterpiece, before sidestepping to the Almohad-era Alcázar. While in the area, submit to the lure of the **Hamam Andalusi** – 90 minutes of unforgettable bliss. The afternoon is a toss-up between a horse show or a sherry bodega tour; book ahead. Jerez's most reative dinner restaurant is **Sabores**, handily placed for evening sojourns around the legendary flamenco bars of Calle Francos.

Day 3: The White Towns

Drive a car or catch a bus to the white towns. **Arcos de la Frontera**, the closest to Cádiz, is a great place for street wandering. Highlights include the town's splendid **Basílica-Parroquia de Santa María**, and coffee and cake in the eagle's nest **Parador Casa del Corregidor**. After lunch press on via El Bosque to Grazalema, where you can stretch your legs with a couple of gentle mountain hikes. If time allows, motor back via Benaocaz and Ubrique, taking in resplendent mountain scenery.

Accommodation

The white towns sport some splendid *casas rurales* (farmstead accommodation) along with small family-run *hostales* (budget hotels) and hotels. The best boutique options lie in Cádiz, Jerez and Tarifa, while magnificent palace hotels characterise El Puerto de Santa María and Sanlúcar de Barrameda. One of Cádiz's few *paradores* (luxurious state-owned hotels) can be found in Arcos de la Frontera. Read about hotel choices in our dedicated Accommodation chapter (p288).