Welcome to Andalucía  
Map...........................................  2
17 Top Experiences ........  6
Need to Know .................  16
What’s New .................  18
If You Like ......................  19
Month by Month ...........  21
Itineraries ....................  24
Eat Like a Local ..........  28
Outdoor Activities ..........  34
Travel with Children .......  38
Regions at a Glance .........  41

Andalucía Today .............  312
History ..................................  314
Andalucian Architecture  327
Landscape & Wildlife ......  334
Flamenco .......................  339
Andalucian Arts ...........  345
Bullfighting .................  349
The Andalucian Kitchen  352

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In-depth reviews, detailed listings and insider tips

Accommodation p288

ON THE ROAD

Survival Guide

VITAL PRACTICAL INFORMATION TO HELP YOU HAVE A SMOOTH TRIP

Directory A–Z .......... 358
Transport .................. 365
Language .................... 372
Index ......................... 384
Map Legend ................ 391

THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

Brendan Sainsbury
John Noble, Josephine Quintero, Daniel Schechter
Every listing is recommended by our authors, and their favourite places are listed first

Look out for these icons:

- **TOP CHOICE** Our author’s top recommendation
- ![Leaf Icon] A green or sustainable option
- ![Free Icon] No payment required

SEVILLE.

HUELVA & SEVILLA PROVINCES.

HUELVA.
AROUND HUELVA.
Lugares Colombinos.
Costa de la Luz.
EAST OF HUELVA.
Parque Nacional de Doñana.
El Rocío.
NORTH OF HUELVA.
Minas de Riotinto.
Aracena.
Sierra de Aracena.
SEVILLA PROVINCE.
Santiponce.
Dehesa de Abajo.
Carmona.
Osuna.
Écija.
Parque Natural Sierra Norte de Sevilla.

CÁDIZ PROVINCE & GIBRALTAR.

CÁDIZ.
THE SHERRY TRIANGLE.
El Puerto de Santa María.
Sanlúcar de Barrameda.
Jerez de la Frontera.
THE WHITE TOWNS.
Zahara de la Sierra.
Olvera.
Grazalema.
Parque Natural Sierra De Grazalema.
Arcos de la Frontera.
COSTA DE LA LUZ & THE SOUTHEAST.
Vejer de la Frontera.
The Vejer Coast.
Tarifa.
Around Tarifa.
Parque Natural Los Alcornocales.
GIBRALTAR.

MÁLAGA PROVINCE.

MÁLAGA.
COSTA DEL SOL.
Torremolinos & Benalmádena.
Fuengirola.
Marbella.
Estepona.
Mijas.
THE INTERIOR.
Ronda.
Around Ronda.
Ardales & El Chorro.

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Fuengirola.
Marbella.
Estepona.
Mijas.
THE INTERIOR.
Ronda.
Around Ronda.
Ardales & El Chorro.
See the Index for a full list of destinations covered in this book.

On the Road

Antequera ............... 171
Around Antequera ........ 174
EAST OF MÁLAGA ........ 174
La Axarquía ............... 175
Nerja ..................... 178

CÓRDOBA PROVINCE ........ 181
CÓRDOBA ............... 183
SOUTH OF CÓRDOBA .... 196
Baena ..................... 196
Parque Natural Sierras Subbéticas ........ 196
WEST OF CÓRDOBA .... 199
Almodóvar del Río ...... 200
Hornachuelos & Parque Natural Sierra de Hornachuelos ........ 200
NORTH OF CÓRDOBA ... 201
Los Pedroches & Around ... 201

JAÉN PROVINCE .... 203
JAÉN ..................... 205
North of Jaén ............ 211
Parque Natural de Despeñaperros & Santa Elena ........ 211
EAST OF JAÉN ........... 212
Baeza ..................... 212
Úbeda ..................... 216
Cazorla ................... 221
Parque Natural Sierras de Cazorla, Segura Y Las Villas .... 222

GRANADA PROVINCE .... 227
GRANADA .................. 229
LA VEGA & EL ALTIPLANO ... 251
Guadix ...................... 251
La Calahorra .............. 252
Baza ....................... 253
SERRA NEVADA & LAS ALPUJARRAS .... 254
Sierra Nevada .............. 254
Las Alpujarras ........... 256
COSTA TROPICAL ......... 262
Salobreña .................. 262
Almúñécar & La Herradura ........ 263

ALMERÍA PROVINCE .... 265
ALMERÍA .................. 267
NORTH OF ALMERÍA .... . 275
Desierto de Tabernas ... 275
Nijar ....................... 276
Sorbas ...................... 276
LAS ALPUJARRAS DE ALMERÍA ...... 277
Laujar de Andarax ........ 278
COSTA DE ALMERÍA ... 279
Parque Natural de Cabo de Gata-Níjar ....... 279
Mojácar .................... 282
LOS VÉLEZ .................. 285
ACCOMMODATION ...... 288
Andalucía

Seville
Gothic church meets Mudéjar palace (p46)

Córdoba
Western and Islamic architecture spanning 1000 years (p183)

Tarifa
Andalucía’s windsurfing and kiteboarding capital (p133)

Ronda
Clifftop town in brawny mountain setting (p165)

Costa de la Luz
Room to loaf on broad yellow-sand beaches (p131)

Cádiz
Dive into the riotous fun of Europe’s oldest city (p103)

Parque Nacional de Doñana
Island of biodiversity in the Río Guadalquivir delta (p117)
Top Experiences

**Baeza & Úbeda**
Perfectly intact Renaissance architecture (p212 & 216)

**Parque Natural de Cabo de Gata-Níjar**
Wild, rugged and protected (p279)

**Sierra Nevada**
Ski and hike the snowy mountains (p254)

**Granada**
Towering Moorish citadel, the Alhambra (p229)

**Málaga**
Decipher Picasso’s works in the city of his birth (p148)
OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that’s all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, Across Asia on the Cheap. Within a week they’d sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony’s belief that ‘a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse’.

OUR WRITERS

Brendan Sainsbury
Coordinating Author, Seville, Cádiz Province & Gibraltar

An expat Brit, now living near Vancouver, Canada, Brendan once worked in Andalucía as a travel guide, leading cultural and hiking trips in the hills of Grazalema and the Sierra del Terrib. He fell unashamedly for the region’s romantic charms when he met his future wife in a small white village not far from Ronda in 2003. He has been back numerous times since, and has developed a special passion for flamenco guitar and the city of Granada. Brendan has also written for Lonely Planet in Cuba, Italy and the Pacific Northwest.

Read more about Brendan at: lonelyplanet.com/members/brendansainsbury

John Noble
Andalucía Today, History

Originally from England’s Ribble Valley, John has lived in the provinces of Cádiz and Málaga since the mid-1990s. He and his late wife Susan Forsyth raised their two children in Andalucía and wrote the first two editions of this guide, also playing a part in every subsequent edition. John has explored Andalucía from end to end but still finds its nooks and crannies endlessly intriguing to investigate, with every little village and valley revealing more about its fascinating story.

Read more about John at: lonelyplanet.com/members/ewoodrover

Josephine Quintero
Málaga Province, Jaén Province, Granada Province, Almería Province, Travel with Children

Josephine moved to Spain after a seven-year stint in Kuwait where she was the editor of the Kuwait Digest until the Iraq invasion. Some 20 years on, the relaxed way of life in Andalucía continues to appeal and she happily divides her time between a pueblo (village) cottage in La Axarquía and a big-city Málaga suburb. Josephine loves escaping the crowds and enjoying tantalising new sights and experiences in her home province. A highlight of this research trip was visiting a recently excavated synagogue in Úbeda and discovering some incredibly talented craftspeople who have set up shop in Las Alpujarras.

Read more about Josephine at: lonelyplanet.com/members/josephinequintero

Daniel C Schechter
Huelva & Sevilla Provinces, Córdoba Province

Daniel C Schechter has lived on the Iberian Peninsula for a total of four years (Lisbon, Barcelona) and returns there often to travel, work or visit old friends or make new ones. As a Lonely Planet author, he has covered five of Spain’s autonomous communities and independently explored four more, including the Canary Islands, where he once washed up on a small Dutch yacht. He currently resides and cycles in the Netherlands.

Read more about Daniel at: netherlandsbikeways.blogspot.com
whether you’ve got six days or 60, these itineraries provide a starting point for the trip of a lifetime. want more inspiration? head online to lonelyplanet.com/thorntree to chat with other travellers.

Two Weeks
Highlights

You’ll need months to poke into every corner of Andalucía, but two weeks can bag you the highlights. The best starting point is unmissable Seville, deserving of three days, where the famous cathedral and Alcázar stand side by side in surreal juxtaposition. Head 150km east by train and a few centuries back in time to explore Córdoba, site of the ancient Mezquita and guardian of hidden patios. Free tapas, shadowy tea-rooms and the incomparable Alhambra beckon in Granada, where you could fill at least three days reclining in Moorish bathhouses and deciphering the Lorca paraphernalia. Easily reached by bus, Málaga is understated by comparison. Spend a day absorbing the Picasso museum and sample fresh-from-the-Med seafood. Ronda is a dramatic contrast, surrounded by mountains and doused in bullfighting and rebelrousing history. You’ll be unlucky to hit Jerez de la Frontera and not take in a festival; the city is also famous for its horses, sherry bodegas and flamenco. Forty minutes away by train, Cádiz has an abundance of free sights including a fine city museum and an aficionado’s flamenco club. You can contemplate your trip’s achievements while walking its romantic malecón (sea drive).
Lucky devils with a month to spare can linger a few days in Seville, visiting the obvious sights (the cathedral, Alcázar and some festivals) and the less obvious ones (Casa de Pilatos, Triana, and some quirkier flamenco haunts). Sorties to the west lead to Huelva province, which is prime hiking country if you head to the north where the gentle pastoral hills around Aracena promise legendary walks between sleepy villages. Passing back through Seville, head east, stopping for a day in gentle Carmona before a serendipitous escape to the serially overlooked Sierra Norte. On week two, head to Córdoba, long a historical foil to Seville, where you can map Andalucian history in its whitewashed streets, Roman relics and Islamic architecture. Tracking east to Jaén province delivers you to the land of olive oil and weighty Renaissance architecture. The former can be seen pretty much everywhere you look. The latter is concentrated in the twin towns of Baeza and Úbeda. Further east, Cazorla is the gateway to Andalucía’s largest protected area, but one visited only by a small minority. Granada is a more mainstream sight at the start of week three, but loaded with exotic majesty. Checking all the provinces you’ll need to circumnavigate the Sierra Nevada to Almería, the dry east that once hosted Spaghetti Western films. Hit the coast at the unadulterated Spanish town of Almuñécar and follow it west through ever-growing resorts to Málaga, the Costa del Sol city that is actually nothing like the Costa del Sol. Start your last week in Ronda, which has been on most itineraries since Hemingway visited, and for good reason – a bullfighting museum that contains work by Goya, plunging gorges and premier white-town status lure the masses. The white towns continue across the border in Cádiz province; pick and choose between Olvera, Grazalema and Ubrique and enjoy the surrounding natural parks. Attempts to bypass Arcos de la Frontera are normally futile – the sight of the spectacular hilltop settlement practically drags you off the bus. Your final week can be spent tying up the threads of Andalucía’s culture in Jerez de la Frontera and Cádiz, two ancient yet quintessential cities that contain all the ingredients that have made this region so great.
If you have to pick a smaller region-within-a-region that best sums up Andalucía’s essence, head west to the triangle of territory between Seville, Cádiz and Jerez de la Frontera. With excellent air, rail and bus connections, Seville is the best starting point for this sojourn. Lap up the Moorish-meets-Gothic architecture and seemingly limitless festivals for a day or two. Fast trains now forge south to Jerez de la Frontera, first stop on the ‘sherry triangle’ where you can spend two days mixing bodega tours with horse shows, authentic flamenco and perhaps a hammam. Continuing west by bus to Sanlúcar de Barrameda gives you the option to compare fino with manzanilla and bag some of the best seafood tapas in Spain. This is also a good base for forays into the bio-diverse Parque Nacional de Doñana. Spend the evening in El Puerto de Santa María, home of more bodegas, festivals and fish restaurants. Surrounded by sea, Cádiz feels like the edge of Europe and the home of something mystical and old. The beaches here are famously broad and they continue south along the Costa de la Luz. Explore them from a base in Vejer de la Frontera, a dramatically perched white town with a refined air.
Three Weeks

The Coast

The coast looms large in Andalucía, lapping five of its eight provinces with most towns linked by bus. Empires were once built here, although more recently resorts have colonised the littoral. Start in underdeveloped Cabo de Gata, a spectacular combination of cliffs and salt flats. Tracking west you’ll dock in Almería, worth a stop for its Moorish Alcazaba and winding streets. Granada’s Costa Tropical is precipitous and authentic; Almuñécar is a great base for exploring and La Herradura offers good diving. A short bus ride west, Nerja has tempered its development better than other resorts while excellent hiking beckons in La Axarquía. Málaga deserves three days of this trip; its international reputation has sky-rocketed in recent years thanks to its fine art and inventive gastronomy. Marbella is possibly the most interesting stop on the busy Costa del Sol, though Mijas merits a day trip. Further west, Gibraltar guards the jaws of Europe with British pubs and fascinating military history. Starting in windsurfing mecca Tarifa, the Costa de la Luz harbours a variety of flavours and different food. While away three days in Barbate and Los Caños de Meca with a grand two-day finale in Cádiz.

Two Weeks

The East in Detail

The east is Andalucía’s less obvious itinerary filled with more esoteric attractions. Spend three days each in the two big-hitter cities. Córdoba is a must-see, the one-time Iberian capital with one of the finest Islamic mosques ever built. Granada showcases the later Nasrid era, in its Alhambra, Albayzín and Moorish-style bathhouses. You can use both cities as base for rural forays into nearby mountainous regions. Córdoba province’s ample wilderness includes the Parque Natural Sierra de Hornachuelos. Granada has the Parque Nacional Sierra Nevada and Las Alpujarras, the valleys that embellish their southern slopes. Detours from here can include Guadix, with its unusual inhabited caves, and coastal Almuñécar, a bit of domestic seaside bliss detached from the Costa resorts. Jaén is olive-oil heaven and guard of fine tapas bars, while Baeza and Úbeda are unique for their Renaissance architecture. Almería province is Andalucía’s far east: Mojácar promises a sometimes boho, sometimes glitzy taste of the Levante; Cabo de Gata is the region’s most unspoiled coastal enclave; while Almería, the city, is a kind of Granada-on-the-sea with plenty of mystic Moorish relics.