



Granada & South Coast Andalucía

Includes ➔

Granada	654
Sierra Nevada	675
Las Alpujarras	677
Málaga	681
Costa del Sol	692
Gibraltar	703
Baeza	709
Cazorla	714
Almería	717
Cabo de Gata	721
Mojácar	724

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Hotel Hospes Palacio de Los Patos (p669)
- ➔ Carmen de la Alcubilla del Caracol (p666)
- ➔ Hotel Real de Poqueira (p679)
- ➔ Hotel Misiana (p701)

Best Places for Churros

- ➔ Gran Café Bib-Rambla (p671)
- ➔ Casa Aranda (p687)
- ➔ Café Colón (p719)
- ➔ Café Fútbol (p669)

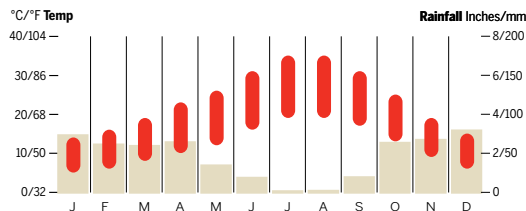
Why Go?

From sprawling coastal condo complexes where Spanish is the second or third language to mountain villages barely changed since Federico Lorca penned his rural trilogy, eastern and southern Andalucía harbour microcosms of Spain, both antediluvian and super-modern. There's the Afro-European cross-fertilisation of Moorish Granada, the fiercely traditional port city of Málaga, sun-kissed tomato-growing Almería, and the shamelessly unsubtle resorts of the Costa del Sol.

Incorporating the four provinces of Málaga, Granada, Jaén and Almería, this region leaves no one uncatered for. Golf fanatics: pack your clubs. Nightclub-loving beach bums: commandeer the sun lounger. Solitude-seeking outdoor types: pack a day bag and find a natural park to get lost in. Attracting all types, half of this part of Andalucía is worryingly overdeveloped; the other half remains innately Spanish and largely ignored by unknowing outsiders. Weave carefully between the two and find your own Spanish spirit.

When to Go

Granada



Mar–Apr A time of festivals and processions, but prices go up. Book ahead.

May–Jun The weather's bearable; there are plenty of activities if you don't mind the crowds.

Nov–Feb Mild winter weather. Accommodation prices fall. Go skiing in the Sierra Nevada.

Wine Regions

Eastern Andalucía has two *Dominiaciones de Origen* (DO), Málaga and Sierras de Málaga, and a long wine-making tradition that has had its peaks and troughs, but is currently enjoying something of a renaissance. The region is known for its sweet dessert wines made from moscatel and Pedro Ximénez grapes. With a high sugar content, the wines are dark, full-bodied and pair well with dried fruit, chocolate and local pâtés.

FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA

It is debatable whether you can truly understand modern Andalucía without some knowledge of Spain's greatest poet and playwright, Federico García Lorca (1898–1936). Lorca epitomised many of Andalucía's potent hallmarks – passion, ambiguity, exuberance and innovation – and brought them skilfully to life in a litany of precocious works. Early popularity was found with *El romancero gitano* (Gypsy Ballads), a 1928 collection of verses on Roma themes, full of startling metaphors yet crafted with the simplicity of a flamenco song. Between 1933 and 1936 he wrote the three tragic plays for which he is best known: *Bodas de sangre* (Blood Wedding), *Yerma* (Barren) and *La casa de Bernarda Alba* (The House of Bernarda Alba) – brooding and dark but dramatic works dealing with themes of entrapment and liberation. Granada produced, inspired and ultimately destroyed Lorca (he was executed by Nationalists there in 1936), and this is the city where his legacy remains most evident.

Churros

Supposedly invented by Spanish shepherds centuries ago, churros are long thin doughnut-like strips that are deep-fried in olive oil and then eaten as a snack dipped in coffee or – even better – thick hot chocolate. In Andalucía churros are enjoyed for breakfast or during the early evening *merienda* (afternoon snack). Good churros cafes or *churrerías* are ubiquitous in the region, although Granada is often held up as the churros capital, in particular Plaza Bib-Rambla and its eponymous cafe (p671). Casa Aranda (p687) in Málaga is another legendary churros spot. The *tejerno* is a distinctively Andalusian version of the churro, a lighter, fluffier doughnut strip rolled into a large wheel.

OLIVE OIL

Jaén province's 40 million olive trees provide about half of Andalucía's olive oil, one-third of Spain's and 10% of that used in the entire world.

Wild Andalucía

- Wildlife-watching in Parque Natural de las Sierras de Cazorla, Segura y Las Villas (p715).
- Diving in La Herradura (p680).
- Rock climbing in the El Chorro gorge (p695).
- Hiking the GR-7 in Las Alpujarras (p677).

Top Five Food Experiences

- Enjoying churros dipped in hot chocolate in Granada.
- Eating sardines straight off the grill at a *chiringuito* (beach bar) in Málaga.
- Dipping your bread in fruity, green, extra-virgin olive oil in Jaén.
- Tasting Arabic sweets in a Granada *tetería* (teahouse).
- Going in search of free tapas in Granada.

Best Hikes

- Mediterranean Steps (p706)
- El Chorro-Bobastro (p695)
- San José-Isleta del Moro (p723)
- Río Borosa (p716)