



Seville & Andalucía

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Why Go?

A parched region fertile with culture, a conquered land that went on to conquer, a fiercely traditional place that has accepted rapid modernisation: Andalucía has multiple faces. Here, in the cradle of quintessential Spain, the questions are often as intriguing as the answers. Who first concocted flamenco? How did tapas become a national obsession? Could Cádiz be Europe's oldest settlement? Are those *really* Christopher Columbus' bones inside Seville cathedral? And, where on earth did the audacious builders of the Alhambra get their divine inspiration from? Putting together the missing pieces of the puzzle is what makes travel in Andalucía the glorious adventure that it is, a never-ending mystery trail that will deposit you in places where you can peel off the chequered history in dusty layers: edgy Granada, arty Málaga, vivacious Seville, sleepy Grazalema, rugged Ronda, brassy Marbella – places that lodge in your memory like collected souvenirs, luring you back.

Best Places to Eat

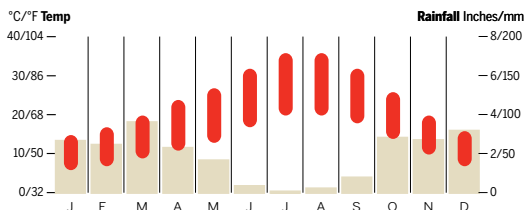
- » Vinería San Telmo (p675)
- » Arrayanes (p752)
- » El Aljibe (p692)
- » Casa Curro (p681)

Best Places to Stay

- » Hotel Casa 1800 (p673)
- » Casa Morisca Hotel (p750)
- » Palacio de la Rambla (p768)
- » V... (p706)

When to Go

Seville



Apr Sombre Semana Santa processions are followed by the exuberance of the spring fairs.

May The weather's still relatively cool; many towns and villages celebrate *romerías* (pilgrimages).

Late Sep The heat diminishes, the crowds go home – but it's still warm enough for the beach.

NATIONAL PARKS

Two of Spain's 14 national parks reside in Andalucía: Doñana in Huelva and Seville provinces, established in 1969, and Sierra Nevada in Granada and Almería provinces, established in 1999.

Fast Facts

- » Population: 8.4 million
- » Area: 87,268 sq km
- » Number of foreign visitors (2011): 7.8 million
- » Annual income: €20,000

Planning Your Trip

- » Book your accommodation at <http://hotels.lonelyplanet.com>.
- » Andalucía is a region of festivals – research what's on and try to incorporate one or two.
- » Check train timetables on www.renfe.es and bus timetables on www.movielia.es.

Resources

- » www.andalucia.com
- » www.andalucia.org

Spain's Finest Railway

The most spectacular train in Spain? The Ronda–Algeciras line is certainly a contender. Opened in 1892 to allow bored British military personnel bivouacked in Gibraltar access to the (then) hidden wonders of Spain, the line was engineered and financed by a couple of wealthy Brits who furnished the towns at each end with two magnificent Victorian age hotels: the Reina Victoria (Ronda) and the Reina Cristina (Algeciras). Still running on single track, the line traverses some of Andalucía's finest scenery including cork oak forest, Moorish white towns, boulder-strewn mountainscapes and diminutive Thomas-the-Tank-Engine stations. Trains run three times a day in either direction.

FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA

It is debatable whether you can truly understand modern Andalucía without at least an inkling of Spain's greatest poet and playwright, Federico García Lorca. Lorca epitomised many of Andalucía's potent hallmarks – passion, ambiguity, exuberance and innovation – and he brought them skilfully to life in a litany of precocious works, including the play *Blood Wedding* and the poem *Romancero Gitano*. Granada produced, inspired and ultimately destroyed Lorca, and it is here that his legacy remains most evident. But, keep your ear to the ground, and you'll feel his influence almost everywhere. Catch a live performance of his work, visit his birth house in Fuente Vaqueros (p755) or just wander the streets and fields of Granada and the Vega and compose your own poetic itinerary.

Best Places for Outdoor Activities

- » **Windsurfing/Kitesurfing** Tarifa (p707), Los Caños de Meca (p706)
- » **Rock climbing** El Chorro (p725)
- » **Birdwatching** Parque Nacional de Doñana (p683)
- » **Hiking** Parque Natural Sierra de Grazalema (p703)
- » **Diving** Tarifa (p707)
- » **Whale-watching** Gibraltar (p711)
- » **Cycling** Vía Verde de la Sierra (p705), Cádiz province
- » **Horse riding** Sanlúcar de Barrameda (p695)