

ALUZ

· COLLECTION ·



ALUZ EXPERIENCES; ACTIVITIES & TOURS

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Equestrian experiences, shows & riding

Real Escuela Andaluza del Arte Ecuestre

Sitting proudly in the centre of the town of Jerez de la Frontera, the famous Real Escuela Andaluza del Arte Ecuestre draws millions of visitors each year. The equestrian centre is built around the Recreo de las Cadenas Palace. The shows are held in the 1600 seat arena. As the distinctive tones of flamenco guitar start up, ten riders dressed in 18th century style costume make their entrance and the impressive equestrian ballet begins. The performance "Como bailan los caballos andaluces" is an authentic equestrian ballet staged on typical choreography taken from classical dressage and advanced equestrian exercises. You can also visit the stables and tack rooms and watch the riders train the horses with the various disciplines.

La Yeguada de la Cartuja

The Dehesa Fuente del Suero is a symbolic location that houses the world's most important stock of Cartujano horses, namely the Yeguada de la Cartuja-Hierro del Bocado stud farm. The yeguada is located close to the Carthusian monastery of Jerez where the excellent pasture provided by the marshlands combined with an unbeatable climate makes it a perfect location for the breeding of Jerezano horses. This activity has continued uninterrupted to the present day and has resulted in the yeguada being home to the most important stock of Cartujano horses anywhere in the world. The yeguada has earned international prestige and it is an object of national pride here in Spain.

Campo Abierto, Finca los Albujeros

Los Alburejos is situated just outside Medina Sidonia and is part of a group of properties belonging to the family of Álvaro Domecq. Here they breed the renowned bullfighting horses (rejoneo) as well as the brave bulls (toros bravos) used in bullrings all over Spain. The finca opens to the public three times a week. You will get a chance to see these majestic animals in their natural habitat and will be treated to a great performance of both classical dressage and doma vaquera, the Spanish style of riding, which originated in the countryside specifically for working and moving cattle.

Private riding excursions

Situated just a half hour drive from the Hacienda and a half hour from Corral del Rey we find a lovely finca and riding centre owned by Alfonso who is a passionate horseman. He has over 30 beautifully schooled horses suitable for all levels of riders including small children.

You can enjoy private rides through the local countryside along sandy trails, through olive groves, fields of wheat, sunflowers and orange trees with plenty of sandy tracks to canter along. We can also organise a great 3 hours ride that includes a lovely picnic lunch underneath the shade of the pine trees. Riding holidays in the Doñana Park are available. A minimum group size is needed for the rides that are run from September through to May.

Excursion to Cortijo Salto al Cielo (Jump to Heaven)

Salto al Cielo is an estate that was once owned by the Cartuja Monastery. The monks would walk here from La Cartuja when they were approaching the end of their lives and is where they would spend their last days, hence its name. They also bred fighting bulls on the land and the cortijo has an ancient bullring, which was built in the 17th century. Today it belongs to the Conde de Peraleja, a member of Alfonso's family.

A private visit to the oldest Spanish horse Yeguada in the world

Situated 35 minutes from Seville is a Pure Spanish Horse farm belonging to a well-known breeder who has won countless prizes over the years. He has over 200 horses at the farm including foals, mares and stallions. He will personally give you a tour of the stables where you will see examples of the beautiful stallions before taking a tour around the farm and out into the pastures to see the mares with their foals. Your local guide, your personal guide who is English and has spent many years in Spain, will accompany you on the tour. She is a keen equestrian.

Riding Safaris in Andalusia

Aurelio has tailored four riding safaris through diverse and contrasting Andalusian landscapes.

A private riding safari on the Costa de la Luz departs through El Palmar beach via Caños de Meca beach and traversing the pine forests in the natural park and ending up in Barbate beach.

A private riding safari in the Coto Doñana National Park, Europe's most important bird sanctuary, departing from Los Hinojos, traversing the pre park of Doñana, riding through "Las Encantadas" and ending up in the town of El Rocio.

A private riding safari along the Via Verde departing from Puerto Serrano along the Andalusian sierras along the decommissioned railway line and ending up in Olvera.

A private riding safari through the marshlands departing from Salinas de Bonanza, through Las Compuestas de Trebujena and ending up in the pine forests of Algaida.



Gastronomy

Cooking class with a Spanish chef

We highly recommend our gastronomic evening and dinner cooking class in Seville with our local culinary expert. Cooking is always a very important pillar in every culture, but when we talk of Andalusia, its cuisine is an essential part of its culture, history and lifestyle. This can be seen in some of the unique ingredients used in the kitchen, such as Iberian ham extra virgin olive oil, sherry wines or tapas. We introduce travellers the Andalusian gastronomic world, so authentic and exclusive. Patricia's hands on cooking classes feature many of Andalucía's wonderful dishes using the best of local ingredients – jamón and pork fed on acorns, seafood, fish, fabulous vegetables and of course lots of glorious wine from the local region.

Cooking class with a Spanish chef + 2 tastings

We highly recommend our gastronomic morning and lunchtime cooking class in Seville with our local culinary expert, Patricia Terry. The day starts with a tasting and you will find out about how extra virgin olive oil is made, how to taste it and how to distinguish it from the bad stuff! You will also get to taste Andalusian cheeses made from sheep and goats' milk. In Spain, ham is almost like a religion and life without it is unthinkable. These animals are treated with the greatest of care. They are reared on the ancient dehesas: rolling hills dotted with home oaks and cork trees that produce the essential bellotas (acorns) which are very fatty and give the meat its unique nutty flavour. The whole process is a slow one and is expensive but the result is a truly exceptional ham. You will get to taste different Iberian cuts of award winning hams, loins and chorizos.

Seville for the tastebuds, a food lover's tour

One of the greatest pleasures in life is enjoying good food and wine. Tapas and sharing dishes is a popular way of eating all over Spain.

There are many tales about the origins of tapas, some claiming various Spanish kings and others that its roots are more humble, coming from farm labourers needing a little sustenance whilst toiling in the fields invented it. Whatever the truth, it's a fantastic way to try a large variety of delicious food whilst at the same time-sharing it with your friends and family. Having a local guide with you will greatly enrich your experience.

Your guide will meet you at the hotel and, depending on your culinary tastes, will tailor the tour for you. You will be taken to three bars/restaurants where the quality of the food on offer is of a very high standard. Your guide will talk you through the menus whilst sharing many anecdotes and stories about life in Seville, its people, customs and traditions. The restaurants and bars have all been personally selected by the local guide for the quality of their ingredients and fantastic dishes on offer so you will get a chance to try some unusual dishes as well as more traditional specialities.

The tour last approximately 3,5 hours and at the end of the tour the guide will walk you back to Corral del Rey. Your guide will also recommend other bars and restaurants for you to try during the rest of your stay and will make restaurant bookings for you if you wish. (Please note, normally you cannot book tables for tapas. In some of the venues, we may order dishes to share which are larger than tapas).

Spanish Delicacies – A Food lovers Tour in Seville

This tour is a great way to learn a little about some of the gourmet products that are used and enjoyed by Spanish foodies. The tour starts with a visit to a very small gourmet olive oil shop where you will try some of the finest oils in Spain, learning about what to look for in an exceptional olive oil. This experience lasts approx. 40 minutes and we highly recommend that you buy some oil at the end of the tour as their selection is superb. From here you will walk to a food market on the other side of the river to see the stalls and also try some Spanish sherry wines, olives, cheese and delicious Iberian ham before walking back over the river to finish up in a traditional Spanish tapas bar to try more local delicacies. These will be accompanied by either sherry wines or Spanish wines depending on your preferences.

This is a great introduction to Spanish food, wine and olive oil.

Sevilla insider's tapas tours, Seville

Understanding how Spain works when it comes to celebrating food can be one of the most revealing experiences of the culture of the country. The Spanish love their excellent food and they like to make a celebration out of every meal, together with family and friends. Food, conversation, wine, laughter and a magical common feeling of thankfulness combine in perfect harmony around Spanish tables to make meals memorable.

Tapas play a key role in the wide variety of options that the country has to offer gastronomy-wise. They are small portions of food that people usually have as an appetizer before a meal. However, especially when eating out, a meal can consist of several different tapas and this is exactly what this tour is about.

Your local Spanish foodie host will meet you at your hotel to take you on a tapas journey through 2 - 3 selected tapas bars of the city, during which you'll be able to taste a selection of 6 - 9 different local tapas dishes, combined with the corresponding drinks. Along the tour, you will be explained about the hectic social life that sevillanos have and how most of it takes place around food in tapas bars.

The Andalusian capital can be overwhelming when it comes to choosing a place to eat so this tour will allow you to relax and to enjoy the magnificent culinary scene of the city, while you also learn about its particular character and identity, together with your local host.

Olive Oil & Cheese, Something Unexpected in the Suburbs of Seville

Many tourists coming to Seville are fairly sophisticated travelers with well-developed palates. They have probably tried the Manchego and Payoyo cheeses, sipped sherry wines from the bodegas of Jerez, as well as sampled many of the red and white wines from all over Spain. They will no-doubt have their Historic Tour already booked and can tick the must-sees from their travel list. But what about delving a little deeper, really going off the beaten track and discovering an artisan cheesemaker working from the basement of his family home? Someone who, having worked his whole life as an economist, decides to give a dream a chance and reinvents himself as a gourmet cheese producer.

This experience is really unique, you will start the morning in the historic part of Seville visiting a small olive shop with high-end olive oil on sale from all over Spain. Here you will try some of the exceptional oils learning about what to look for in an exceptional olive oil. This experience lasts approx. 40 minutes and we highly recommend that you buy some oil at the end of the tour as their selection is superb.

From here you will be transferred to the suburbs of Seville. The drive is approx. 30 minutes and you will be taken to a gated housing estate. This is definitely an area that receives very few visits from tourists! A tiny card is the only sign that perhaps behind the garden walls there is something other than a family home. Here, in the basement Rodolfo, is busy working as a gourmet cheese producer. For the next 1,5 hours he will tell you all about his fascinating story and show you what goes into making his cheeses. There are many top-quality restaurants throughout Spain that are now his regular clients. You will finish up enjoying a tasting of his cheeses. The tour then finishes with a great lunch in a restaurant again, totally off the tourist map. This is in another small suburb which is a short 10 minute drive from Rodolfo's.

Morning gastro tour Sevilla

We highly recommend our gastronomic morning and lunchtime tour of Seville with our local food and wine expert. The day starts with a visit to an olive oil shop where in an upstairs tasting room you will find out about how extra virgin olive oil is made, how to taste it and how to distinguish it from the bad stuff! If you are able to take olive oil back home with you, you should stock up here, as they have a wide range of very fine extra virgin olive oils. It is then a short walk across the river to our next destination, the Triana market, one of the best places in Seville to buy fresh fruit and vegetables as well as meat, fish and other great food. After a walk around looking at the produce and probably asking plenty of questions, you will stop at a stall to taste some great Andalusian cheeses made from sheep and goats' milk. Right nearby, a stall sells olives and other kinds of pickles. You will taste a selection, that as well as olives will include capers and lupin beans. As an accompaniment you will have the chance to try some sherry-based vermouth which is now all the rage, having recently made a comeback. Leaving the market you'll head off on a tour of 3 great bars starting with our favourite place for acorn-fed Iberian ham, then onto a bar that is hidden at the back of a delicatessen's and finishing at a tavern that was founded in 1850. This will not just be a tapas tour with great food but also an introduction to fine authentic sherry with a different style of sherry to accompany the food in each place. You will get to try fino, amontillado and oloroso with your guide explaining the unique ageing process for these singular wines.

For all you foodies out there, this is a great way to spend a morning and lunchtime.

Half-day olive oil tour

This fascinating tour takes place East of Seville near Carmona at a Hacienda dedicated to the production of top quality, award-winning olive oil. The Hacienda was bought by a local family twenty years ago and what started as a hobby has turned into a full-scale business. The family's passion for doing things the right way, their care for detail and striving for excellence has resulted in some of the finest olive oil being produced in Spain today. They now export internationally from as far afield as Japan and the United States.

Your English-speaking guide will pick you up from Seville and accompany you on the visit. Your tour will start in the olive groves where an expert will explain all about the different varieties of olives and the influence of soil types and climate. During your visit you will see where the oil is produced and learn why it is so important that all the right criteria is met: how they pick the olives, when they pick them, the temperatures at which the olives are pressed, quality control, storage etc. You will see how oil was produced previously with huge stone grinders often pulled by mules.

At the end of the tour, there is a tasting session and you will find that the oil really does smell of fruits, tomatoes, pepper and other aromas, captured and bottled by adhering to such a refined and strict process. This family-run business really deserves all the numerous awards and accolades bestowed upon it.

Iberian ham, an excursion to the Sierra of Aracena

In Spain, ham is almost like a religion and life without it is unthinkable. The Iberian pig can trace its ancestry back to inter-breeding with various types of wild boar. Ham was first produced as far back as the Roman Empire and a fossilised leg of ham believed to be 2000 years old was found in Tarragona on the site of the ancient Roman city Tarraco.

These animals are treated with the greatest of care. They are reared on the ancient dehesas: rolling hills dotted with home oaks and cork trees that produce the essential bellotas (acorns) which are very fatty and give the meat its unique nutty flavour. The whole process is a slow one and is expensive but the result is a truly exceptional ham.

This daylong excursion will give you a fascinating insight into the life of the Iberian pig and how it eventually becomes the best ham in the world.

You will start with a visit to small, family run “secadero de jamón” (special drying kilns) where the lengthy process of maturing and drying the ham takes place. The secadero is located in a hamlet surrounded by the cork dehesas. Here the natural conditions and climate are perfect for producing fantastic quality ham.

The secadero is not one of the huge commercial producers but has stuck to the old traditional methods of curing its hams. An expert will show you around and explain the various stages and processes that take place before the final product is ready for consumption. It’s quite something to see all the ham legs hanging from the ceilings. At the end of the visit, there is a tasting session.

From the secadero, you will continue on to a private 800-hectare farm near the village of Zufre. This has been in the same family for hundreds of years. The owner Lesmes Gonzalez Hidalgo who is a keen equestrian and used to compete in show jumping will meet you personally. Lesmes will give us a tour of the farm and we can see the pigs in their natural habitat on the dehesas. Lesmes rears close to 1000 Iberian pigs every year that are the best quality and eventually become the finest Pata Negra ham sold in gourmet shops around the world. It’s fascinating to hear Antonio the Porquero (caretaker of pigs) call them and watch as hundreds of these animals come running through the trees to feast on grain.

After seeing the pigs out on the dehesas you will make our way to Lesmes’s family home where you will have a traditional Spanish aperitif before enjoying a delicious paella lunch. This is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy Spanish hospitality in a family home not normally open to unknown guests. Lesmes is a charming host who has travelled extensively and lived in many countries. You will come away feeling that you have had a truly authentic experience.

Iberian ham, an excursion to the Sierra of Aracena

The Sierra of Aracena in the province of Huelva is a mountainous area north-west of Seville near to the Portuguese border. It is here that the finest hams in the world are made from the Iberian pig. These hams are cured in the mountain air for up to 3 years and are considered by many people to be the jewel in the crown of Spanish gastronomy. This area is situated about 90 kilometres (56 miles) from Seville.

You will be accompanied by an English speaking guide and will first visit a farm to see how the pigs are reared before going on to tour a “secadero”, this is where they prepare and cure the ham. Here an expert will show you around, explaining the processes involved in the production of ham and of other products that come from the Iberian pig. At the end of the visit, you will be able to taste the wonderful ham along with a glass of the best fino. This is followed by a fantastic lunch in one of the charming towns or villages where you can sample the finest local produce including fresh cheese, ham, mushrooms, pork from the Iberian pig, wild asparagus, artichokes etc. Many of the dishes will vary according to the season.

Small Producers of Spanish Olive Oil and Wines - A day trip to the Sierra of Ronda

The drive to Zahara de la Sierra is through open countryside and farmland, passing many large “fincas” bordered by wheat fields, olive and almond trees. The scenery gets more rugged as you approach the Sierra which forms part of the Baetic mountain range. The tour begins with a visit to a very small, traditional olive mill situated just outside Zahara with spectacular views of the reservoir. This has been in the same family since the 1700s and is unusual in that they still use old-fashioned machinery to mill the olives. It is very interesting to learn how they make the oil and then naturally, you get to taste some!

You will then continue by car to a winery in the Ronda Sierra (40 min drive). This area is perfect for growing grapes and many producers have set up business here in the last 20 years. The winery you will be visiting is one of the smaller ones. Here they make natural wines and do absolutely everything themselves. You will enjoy a walk-about the vineyards learning about the grape varieties they use and seeing how much love and dedication they put into their wine-making. The tour ends with a very enjoyable tasting. By now you will probably be feeling hungry and your guide will take you to Ronda where you will enjoy a very good lunch in a local restaurant.

After lunch and a short walk-about in Ronda to see some of its emblematic sights including the famous bridge over the Gorge, you will head back to Seville.

Day trip to Ronda: discovery journey of a stunning town and of its great food and wine scene

This day trip will allow you to immerse yourselves in one of the most interesting food and wine scenes of Andalusia, while you also enjoy the stunning beauty and excellent gastronomy of the most beautiful town in the area: Ronda.

You will start your day being driven from your accommodation to a selected winery in the Ronda area. There you will understand why Ronda has become such an interesting wine region in the international wine scene in spite of its small size. With a common approach to wine making, based on quality and not on quantity, the winemakers from Ronda have formed a solid team that is achieving great recognition and prizes worldwide.

The winery you will visit was a pioneer in this wine scene and is a reference in the local scene. Upon arrival to the winery, you will visit its vineyards first to later be explained about the aging process of their different wines, which are made with different grapes from different areas that have adapted extremely well to the soil and climate conditions of Ronda. This will be followed by a wine tasting accompanied by the corresponding tapas.

After this, you will be transferred to Ronda old town, where you will be taken on a tapas tour of its historical center. You will visit 2 selected bars where the locals like to gather with family and friends to enjoy the many food treats that they offer.

After your tapas lunch, you will be taken on a small walking tour of Ronda old town that will focus on its impressive viewpoints offering breath-taking views of the surrounding nature and on its main landmarks like the oldest bullring in Spain. Along the tour, you will take a stop to sample the local sweets and finally you will be transferred back to your accommodation.

Half-day cooking class in a private home in Vejer de la Frontera

Enjoy this gastronomic experience in one of the charming “Pueblos Blancos” (White Villages). You will gain an insight into the history of the area via your palate. Annie’s hands on cooking classes feature many of Andalucía’s wonderful dishes using the best of local ingredients – jamón and pork fed on acorns, seafood, fish, fabulous vegetables and fruits, chickens from the countryside and of course lots of glorious sherry from the area of Cádiz. In addition, the best part – you get to sit down and enjoy all the dishes you have created. Weather permitting this will take place on the terrace, overlooking the Pueblo Blanco of Vejer de la Frontera with the ocean in the distance, and beyond, the hazy hills of Morocco. You will come away having a deeper appreciation of the culture, the food and the wines of this unique area of Spain as well as at least 6-8 great new recipes to take home with which to stun your guests.

Day trip to Jerez and Cadiz: the undiscovered cities of Southernmost Spain

This day trip will take from Seville with a personal local host and a dedicated driver to discover two hidden gems of Southernmost Spain: the cities of Jerez de la Frontera and Cádiz.

You’ll start being driven first to Jerez. Along the journey, your personal local host will set the context for the day by sharing with you some general information about the geography, history, culture and present character of Southernmost Spain.

Upon arrival to Jerez, you will be taken on a walking tour of the old town aimed at understanding the Hispanic-Muslim origins of the city and the transformations that its architecture, urban planning, social composition and overall personality experienced in the 18th and 19th centuries when the local wines (sheries) became probably the most fashionable drinks in the world. Then it will be time to learn about these wines by taking a private visit of a selected sherry bodega. There you will learn about the aging process of the different types of sherry and you will also do the corresponding tastings.

Then you will be taken for lunch to a selected tapas and sherry bar where you will be given basic practical notions about the art of pairing food and sherry! After lunch, you will be driven to Cádiz: the oldest city in Western Europe. Along the drive, you will enjoy some beautiful views of the Atlantic Ocean and of the famous bay where the city is located.

Upon arrival to Cádiz, you will enjoy a discovery journey of the city, which will have a special focus on its foundation by the Phoenicians 3000 years ago and on the period when the city held the monopoly of all trade with America, formerly established in Seville. Your tour will take you to see beautifully preserved evidence of both periods in order for you to understand the wealth, refinement and openness that the city had in both periods. Then, and with all the memorable experiences of the day, you will be driven back to your accommodation.

Culture and Gastronomy tour of Cadiz old town

Founded in the 11th century BC, the city of Cádiz has amazing surprises to offer to the adventurous traveler with a thirst for art discoveries. Along this tour, you will see incredibly well preserved artistic evidence of the Phoenician past of the city to later travel forward in time to the 18th century, when the city held the monopoly of all trade with the Americas, formerly established in Seville. The cosmopolitan bourgeoisie that settled down in Cádiz in this period collected very impressive pieces of art and commissioned the best architects and artists of that time to build and decorate their houses and places of devotion. You’ll see remarkable evidence of this to later be taken on a gastronomic tour of the city including tastings of selected local produce in the local market, a tapas lunch in a local family-run and family-owned bar and coffee with a sweet local specialty in a historical café to finish.

Day trip to Jerez: Sherry, Spanish horses and a wonderful local lunch

This day trip will take you from Seville to the nearby city of Jerez de la Frontera or simply Jerez. Known for its excellent fortified wines and for its dancing horses, Jerez is also popular amongst Spanish natives for its local gastronomy and this excursion will allow you to experience the best of all three worlds!

You will start being driven from Seville to Jerez old town. Along the journey, you will be explained about the origins and evolution of the city and of the area where it is located which is the Southernmost part of continental Spain. Upon arrival to Jerez, you will take a panoramic tour of the city aimed at enjoying its architecture and at understanding the differences between the quarters located inside and outside the old city walls.

Your panoramic tour will finish in a selected sherry bodega. There you will learn about the aging process of the different types of Sherry. This will be followed by the corresponding tastings and by some basic notions about the art of pairing food and sherry.

After your sherry education, you will be driven to the Royal School of Equestrian Art. There you will witness the breath-taking show "how the Andalusian horses dance" which will include some classic dressage, traditional Spanish country riding and horse carriage driving. Then it will be time for lunch. So your personal local host will take you to a wonderful family owned and family run restaurant for a traditional local lunch.

Finally and surely converted into a Jerez lover, you will be driven back to your accommodation.

Jerez evening tapas tour

Understanding how the city of Jerez works when it comes to celebrating food can be one of the most representative experiences of the local culture. Jerezanos love their excellent local gastronomy and they are masters at pairing each dish with different local wines at different tapas bars and local taverns. This tour is aimed at making you discover, understand and enjoy this local custom with a personal foodie host.

Your local foodie host will meet you at your hotel to take you on a tapas journey through 2 - 3 selected tapas bars of the city, during which you'll be able to taste a selection of 6 – 9 different local tapas dishes, combined with the corresponding drinks, while you are explained about the history, architecture, social composition and overall character of this rather undiscovered city filled with Southern Spanish charm.

Wine, cheese and olive oil: meeting artisanal food and wine producers in the natural park of Grazalema

This foodie day trip will take you from Hacienda de San Rafael or Corral del Rey to the most beautiful mountainous region of South West Spain: the natural park of Grazalema, where together with your local host, you will visit three different small local producers, located in three different areas and specializing in three different local delicacies: wine, cheese and olive oil.

You will visit a winery where you will be welcomed and shown around the vineyard and the cellar by the owner. There you will learn about the history of the area and about the production process of the local wines to finally do the corresponding tastings, accompanied by a selection of tapas. You will also be taken to a small local cheese producer to sample the famous payoyo cheese from South West Spain and to an olive oil mill which still uses traditional methods and where you will also be able to do the corresponding tastings, while you learn about the particularities that make the oil from this small specific industry so unique. Then you will be taken for lunch to a selected local restaurant in the heart of a natural park and finally you will be driven back to Corral del Rey or Hacienda San Rafael.



Outdoor experiences

A hiking experience, choose between two beautiful regions.

One of our Private Label Guides has created a great hiking experience for us. She will personally come and pick you up from Corral del Rey or the Hacienda, and drive you to either the Sierra of Aracena or the Sierra of Grazalema to enjoy a great morning of walking through some spectacular countryside. You can then enjoy a great lunch in a local tapas bar or restaurant at the end of the hike before returning to the Hacienda San Rafael or Corral del Rey.

The Sierra of Aracena

The Sierra of Aracena lies to the north west of Seville: A bewitching landscape of undulating hills, ancient drovers' paths meandering from one village to another, bordered with old lichen and moss covered stalls. Scattered throughout are the ubiquitous Horse Chestnut trees, their leaves turning a beautiful ochre and gold colour in autumn, contrasting dramatically with the deep blue Andalusian sky. One can also see Poplar and Strawberry trees mixed into the landscape, all adding to the vibrancy of colour and contrast. Other parts of the sierra abound with ancient dehesas of Cork and Oak trees and whilst hiking you are very likely to encounter plenty of goats as well as the Iberian black pigs searching for fallen acorns.

The area is scattered with many charming hamlets and villages. Aracena is the main town and is overlooked by its Templar castle. Apart from being able to buy good quality Iberian ham and cheese here, it also has a famous patisserie that produces delicious turrón and traditional cakes and pastries. Many Sevillanos come here to pick mushrooms and buy ham for the Christmas holiday period.

There are various circular routes to walk and generally take between three and four hours to complete. After spending the morning hiking, you will have lunch in one of the restaurants in the area and have an opportunity to explore the town where the restaurant is situated, before being driven back to the Hacienda or Corral del Rey.

The Sierra of Grazalema

To the south east of Seville lies the Grazalema National Park. Its mountain range is 1700m at its highest point and is largely made up of limestone and dolomite. It has the most rainfall in Spain making it quite green for Andalusia and in the springtime, you can see many wild flowers. It is the only area in Spain where you can find the almost extinct Pinsapo pine.

The landscape is varied with Cork and Holm Oak, Eucalyptus, Strawberry trees, Fan palms, Acebuche (wild Olives), Almond and Carob trees. In rocky areas you often find stonecrop and saxifrage plants. It is also home to one of the largest colonies of Griffin Vultures in Europe.

The Grazalema Park is a great area for hiking with all this dramatic scenery and fresh air. Depending on how much of the day you want to spend here, it can be enjoyable to combine the hiking with a visit to a charming, traditionally run olive mill where you will taste the extra virgin oil they produce as well as enjoying some tapas and a cold beer after all that exercise and fresh air!

There are a good variety of hiking routes to walk and generally take between three and four hours to complete. After spending the morning hiking, you will have lunch or tapas in one of the restaurants or local bars in the area, before being driven back to Hacienda de San Rafael or Corral del Rey.

Day trip to hike El Caminito del Rey

Meet your private driver at your accommodation in Seville and be transferred in a modern and comfortable Mercedes vehicle to the start of the majestic hike of El Caminito del Rey.

Upon arrival at the start of the hike, meet your private nature guide and start the approach route first, that will take you through a tunnel and a Mediterranean forest to the control point.

Once at the control point, collect your helmets and start the most scenic part of the hike. El caminito del rey is a walkway with some sections pinned along the steep walls of a stunning gorge, offering amazing views of the surrounding nature. It is a fun and physically easy Southern Spanish adventure for travelers of all ages. Besides, el caminito del Rey has a fascinating history and an impressive geology and biodiversity.

After the hike, return your helmets, reconnect with your driver and, surely hungry, be transferred to a selected restaurant nearby for lunch, so you can enjoy the gastronomy of the area.

Then after lunch, your host will leave you in the most capable hands of your driver and you will be transferred back to Seville.

Experience the White villages of Andalusia

A visit to Andalusia is not complete without taking in some of the charming white towns and villages that are dotted around the hills and sierras of Malaga and Cadiz. These are known in Spanish as the "Pueblos Blancos".

Many of the pueblos were strategic hilltop fortresses that bordered the frontier between the Muslim and Christian territories up until 1492 when Granada was reconquered. This is why they often have as part of their name "de la Frontera" which means on the frontier.

Your local guide, your private guide, will take you first to Arcos de la Frontera, one of the larger Pueblos Blancos (approx. 1,20h from Seville or 35 minutes from the Hacienda). Arcos is situated high up on a rocky ridge. It has many notable monuments, churches and large houses and one can see a mixture of architectural styles including baroque, Mudejar and renaissance.

You will spend just over an hour here visiting some of the monuments and enjoying a walk through the historic quarter.

From Arcos you will be driven to Grazalema. The drive takes approximately one hour and is very beautiful as you drive through the Sierra of Grazalema taking in the dramatic scenery of limestone and dolomite hills, covered in a variety of trees including Cork, Oak, and Poplar. Grazalema is one of the rainiest parts of Spain and is home to the largest colony of Griffin vultures in Europe. Grazalema is a small town with typical whitewashed houses and geranium pots in the windows. You will visit a craft factory that makes famous, traditional woollen rugs and scarves as well as an artisan cheese shop producing top-quality local cheeses.

The tour then makes its way up a very mountainous road (half hour drive) to a traditional olive mill (one of only five left in Spain). Here the owner will show us around and explain how they produce their oil. We will have tasting and small tapas here.

You can then have lunch in a nearby local restaurant before driving back to Seville (approximately 1,5 hours drive or the Hacienda 50 minutes).

Hot air ballooning, Arcos de la Frontera

The ballooning company will carefully monitor weather conditions before confirming the flight. As ideal flying conditions tend to be in the early morning passengers will need to set off from the Hacienda very early. The balloon takes off from a point just outside Arcos de la Frontera, one of the famous white villages and during the flight will sail over the breathtaking scenery of the lowlands that stretch up into the sierras.

The balloon flight lasts for approximately one hour. We recommend you take warm clothes and your camera. You may wish to spend the rest of the morning visiting some of the other white villages and enjoying a drive through the stunning countryside of the Sierra.

Biking excursion in the Sierras of Andalusia

Your guide will be meeting you at the Puerto de Los Alamillos, in the center of the Natural Park Sierra de Grazalema, at an hour driving from Hacienda San Rafael. After a short briefing and bike fit, you will set out for your ride. This route has a beautiful start, cycling through the countryside on an easy, relatively flat singletrack. Later, we turn to a smooth dirt-track through a cork tree forest and then some wide-open areas that, after a few kilometers, will lead us to the next section of single track: a cross-country style sector with some rocky parts, but nothing too difficult.

You will now be riding along the Llanos del Republicano, a long flat area between the mountains. From here, we will reach a gravel road that steadily climbs through a cork tree forest in the direction of the small, charming town of Villaluenga del Rosario. At the top of this 2km climb, you can decide if you continue to turn left back towards the Llanos del Republicano, or...to take the other way: a fast descent to Villaluenga and a ride through the narrow streets of the picturesque village and, obviously, the chance of having a well-deserved drink.

At this point, in Villaluenga, you are approximately halfway in your ride, and you have a couple of options depending on how you feel. First, you can ride back in cross-country style taking the off-road option to return to the Llanos del Republicano by a scenic loop, passing an impressive viewpoint. Later, you could return by some of the tracks that you took on the way out, but as you will be seeing things from a different perspective.

The second option, in case you are tired of cycling off-road or simply want to admire a different landscape, is that you take the quiet, secondary road that goes from Villaluenga to Puerto de Los Alamillos. This option will lead you back to our starting point in an easy and relaxed way, as it is physically not challenging at all and gives you the chance to simply enjoy the mountainous landscape while cycling back.

The elevation gain is 500m approx. The terrain is mix of vehicle-width dirt tracks and single-track, cross-country style. Recommended clothing/gear: bib shorts (if you have them), sportswear, sunglasses, sunscreen, and comfortable, sporty shoes with a decent/stiff sole.

Bird watching, Doñana National Park, Huelva

Doñana National Park, one of Europe's most important wetland reserves. It was once the hunting ground for the kings of Castilla and later the dukes of Medina Sidonia made it their private hunting ground too. The vast wilderness supports an unrivalled wealth of fauna with 250-bird species resident there. The delta waters of the Doñana flood in winter and then drop in the spring when they draw hundreds of flocks of breeding birds making this area a bird watchers paradise. The area is home to the Iberian imperial eagle and the Iberian lynx. Doñana supports bird species like purple and squacco herons, purple swamp hen, white-headed duck, marbled duck, ferruginous duck, red-knobbed coot, booted and short-toed eagles, pintail sandgrouse, bee-eater, golden oriole, lesser short-toed lark, azurewinged magpie, Iberian grey shrike and Isabelline warbler. Mammals like those that Egyptian mongoose, wild boar, badger, genet and Iberian hair can also be seen here.

Experience this wealth of nature with our recommended private guide enjoying a half-day excursion through the park in your personal land rover with many stops throughout. A picnic can be especially prepared by the hotel.

Bird watching, El Brazo Este, Sevilla

Several thousand years ago, the shallow bay that is now known as the Doñana's region began to become a great delta thanks to marine sand deposits and contributions of river sediments. The great Guadalquivir River was divided into many arms that lined those emerging tidal marshes. The so-called Brazo del Este (Eastern Branch) is nothing but the bed of the original largest east branch of the main channel, which surrounded the so-called Isla Menor (Lesser Island). Today it zigzags among farm fields where rice dominate and is still recognizable by the natural vegetation that grows in it.

In the summer, the paddy fields offer refuge and food to a great number of bird species who arrive from the nearby dried up marshes of the Coto Doñana National Park.

In winter, the harvested paddy fields remain flooded and help to keep the water level in the riverbed, supporting a good number of the rare marbled ducks and red-knobbed coots. Large flocks of glossy ibis, seagulls and waders are also attracted here. Purple swamp hen, bittern, short-eared owl, osprey and Spanish sparrows can also be seen.

Experience this wealth of nature with our recommended private guide enjoying a half-day excursion through the park in your personal land rover with many stops throughout. A picnic can be especially prepared by the hotel.

Visit to the kingdom of the Iberian Lynx in Doñana

Collection of the participants in the Hotel and transfer to one of the areas reconquered by the most threatened feline on the Planet: The Iberian Lynx.

In this natural enclave, we can still enjoy the Mediterranean forest, holm oak groves mixed with wild olive trees, stone pine groves, noble scrub and pastured areas in a very good state of conservation.

The Iberian Lynx, catalogued as one of the "Endangered" felines, still survives in natural enclaves like this one within the Doñana region.

During our visit and with the help of an expert guide in nature, we will go through and trace one of the territories where the Iberian lynx still survives in the wild. We will also discover the fauna associated with the Mediterranean forest and that coexists with this beautiful animal in its domains, birds of prey, passerines, mammals, reptiles, etc.

Bird watching, The Sanlúcar marshes, Cadiz

There are also various natural parks around Doñana. Within the Sanlúcar municipal boundaries is the Natural Park of Algaida with free access and a landscape very similar to the pinewoods of Doñana.

The Natural Park of Algaida is a forest of stone pines (*Pinus pinea*) very similar to Doñana, and its extension is of 691 hectares. Its formation is due to the silting of the Guadalquivir River estuary by the sands of the longshore current and sediment carried by the river. The iconic species to be spotted are the white headed duck, red knobbed coot, marbled teal, little bittern, cormorants, gulls, grebes, terns, plovers, stilts, avocets, coots, ducks, egrets, herons, flamingo, osprey.

Special insider tour

Join a local insider host in a horse carriage promenade through the alluring Maria Luisa Park gardens. Admire some of the remaining pavilions of Sevilla's 1929 Ibero American Exhibition and the iconic Plaza de España.

Stroll around in a labyrinth of small passageways with secluded gardens, and hidden patios. On your way, discover stately homes, palaces and convents in this city of appealing contrasts and traditions. Visit local fashion store areas, pop into artisan workshops and food markets and find yourself immerse in Sevilla's vibrant social life.

Feel seduced by an informal tapas experience, sampling delicious local dishes one bite at a time, little home-cooked plates with intense flavours, the highest quality Iberian ham and an infinite choice of delicious fresh products. You will feel yourself in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, participating in one of Sevilla's longstanding socializing tradition, sharing a glass of Sherry wine, while discovering our way of seeing life at a slow pace.

Taylor your experience around your interests to enjoy a day as a local.

Seville on wheels! A Discovery journey of the Andalusian capital by bike

The iconic Guadalquivir River has shaped a very flat landscape in South West Spain that is ideal to explore by bike. The city of Seville is in the heart of this Southwestern area and it features more than 160km of cycle lanes. This allows to pedal through its history, beauty, character and charm in a safe and pleasant way.

This 2,5 hour cycle tour will take you on a discovery journey of its metropolitan area. You will start your adventure by cycling along the city walls, understanding at the same time the system of gates that the city featured in the Muslim times. Then you will cross the river to discover the grounds where the famous 1992 world Expo was held.

From there, your cycle will take you to the quarter of Triana, home of potters, flamenco dancers and bullfighters. Then it will be time to venture into the inner city to enjoy its main architecture gems to later explore the beautiful park of María Luisa, taking stops to enjoy the beauty of its many colorful constructions dating from the 1920s.

Finally, you will make your way back along the most beautiful access to the old town of Seville, which is lined up with buildings designed by architects from different countries for the city's 1929 Iberian-American exhibition.

Electric bike tours, Seville

This is a fun way to tour Seville as these electric bikes require little effort from the rider and reach speeds of 25km/h. It also means you can cover a lot of ground and explore parts of Seville that are off the beaten track. Your local guide will bring the city to life with fascinating stories and intriguing anecdotes. Choose to either tour the main historic parts of the City or go slightly further afield and visit the Roman ruins at Italica.

Private bike tours, Seville

Seville is a wonderful city for cycling. It has many kilometres of cycle lanes, is full of beautiful parks, buildings and has a fascinating history that has left its mark in every corner. Exploring it by bike will give you a good sense of the city's layout and essence. Your guide will take you through several different "barrios" (neighbourhoods), including Triana which is where the Spanish inquisition once had its headquarters and where Seville's gypsy population used to live. You will also cycle along the river banks, passing the famous bullring and ride through the beautiful gardens of the Maria Luisa Park. Your guide will stop at various points along the route to give you fascinating insights into this magical city.

A cycling and gastronomic journey in the Southern Spanish countryside

The stunning Southwestern Spanish countryside offers a landscape of rolling hills, whitewashed villages and small rivers, which is delightful to explore by bicycle. Another highlight of these rural areas of Southern Spain is their gastronomy, which is based on locally grown produce cooked following traditional recipes.

This day trip is ideal for those active and foodie travelers willing to venture into the Andalusian nature for a cycling and gastronomic adventure. The journey starts with a private transfer, with your personal guide and a dedicated driver, from Hacienda de San Rafael or Corral del Rey to the countryside of the nearby province of Cádiz. There you will be given mountain bikes and helmets to start a picturesque 36km cycling route going slightly downhill along a former railway. Your personal host (an experienced local touring cyclist) will accompany you along the journey to show you the way and to provide you with water and some small bites for the adventure. You will cross-farms, tunnels, bridges and olive groves for approximately 3,5 hours before arriving to your destination where you will drop off your bikes and meet your driver again, to be transferred to a selected local restaurant in a picturesque whitewashed village. After lunch, you will explore briefly the village with your host and then you will be transferred back to the Hacienda or Corral del Rey.

Beaches and coastal villages of the province of Cadiz: Vamos a la playa!

With the thousands of kilometres of beautiful and sunny coastline, Spain is one of the most beautiful countries to experience the benefits of going to the seaside. The Southernmost Spanish coastline (known as the coast of light) also features a unique city and many quaint villages of Moorish influence. Furthermore, this part of the country is famous amongst Spanish natives for its gastronomy and wines.

This day trip will take you on a discovery journey of the coastline, towns and gastronomy of this rather undiscovered part of the country, with a native local host.

You will start your day by being driven from Hacienda de San Rafael or Corral del Rey to the colonial city of Cádiz, which hosts one of the liveliest and authentic local markets in Andalusia. Once in Cadiz, you will do a tour of the market, stopping in selected stalls to buy a series of local delicacies for the gourmet picnic on the beach that you will enjoy later. Iberian ham, payoyo cheese, olives, mojama, chicharrones, fresh fruits, freshly baked bread, wine and sweets will fill your picnic basket for today's beach feast! After discovering the charm of Cádiz and of its market, you will travel to the quaint little village of Vejer de la Frontera or simply Vejer. There you will be taken on a guided tour that will make you understand why many people consider it the most beautiful village of Spain. Your adventure will continue with a short drive to an unspoilt beach where you will be able to swim, sunbathe, walk and/or simply relax while your local host fixes you a cocktail and prepares your gourmet picnic. You will be able to enjoy a selection of local treats overlooking the Atlantic Ocean and the African continent. After lunch and some more time to relax, you will be driven back to the Hacienda de San Rafael or Corral del Rey.

Photography courses

Your welcoming hosts Sue and Alberto will teach you not only how to use the controls on your digital camera but also how to best express what you are seeing and feeling through your photography. Capture spectacular landscapes, beautiful buildings, forests and stunning sunsets and learn new photography skills that will stay with you long after the holidays are over. Understanding each of your needs and how we will approach the week; getting to know our cameras, mastering the principal controls that permit us take the pictures we want. Subject matter covered will be basic techniques for good picture taking. ISO, what does it mean and what does it do. Exposure modes, aperture, shutter and manual including exposure compensation. White Balance, how does this affect the look and feel of your image. All these subjects will be dealt with by the use of practical assignments.

Hunting in Andalucía

Partridge shooting started in Spain at the end of the 19th century and today Spain is considered one of the most exclusive destinations for guns looking for high quality shooting. Monterias are driven hunts, the oldest and most traditional form of hunting in Spain. Deer, wild boar and fallow deer are hunted in this way.

Andalucía has several estates that offer both partridge shooting and monterías. We have good relationships with some of these hunting estates and are able to offer hunting weekends and midweek as well as day shoots for groups.

Hare coursing

Hare coursing on horseback is very popular in Andalucía. The greyhounds usually go in pairs and are tested for speed when they are released to chase the hare. The riders must go in a straight line and find the hares that are usually well camouflaged. The hare rarely runs a straight course and this hunt is all about the agility and speed of both hare and greyhound. From October to February, we are able to organise for groups of four or more a morning spent coursing in the open countryside.



Taurine experiences

Bullfighting in Spain can trace its origins back to the Spanish war of Re-conquest (711-1492AD). Both Christian and Moorish knights would relax away from the battlefield by hunting and were offered the greatest challenge by the Iberian wild bull (toro bravo), which unlike other animals, preferred to die fighting rather than fleeing. The thrill of this fight to the death was recreated by capturing some of these brave animals and organising a show in the village. The first real bullfight took place in 1133 at Vera, Logroño in honour of the coronation of King Alfonso VIII.

If you would like to visit a bull-breeding farm and see how these majestic and brave animals are reared, we can arrange private visits to the following:

Fuente Rey, Medina Sidonia

Fuente Rey is a large estate situated along the 'camino del toro' close to Medina Sidonia and 35km southeast of Jerez. It belongs to the Fermín Bohorquez family who, for several generations, have dominated the world of rejoneo (the art of bullfighting on horseback). A private visit is available on request during the week and includes a tour of the estate as well as a visit to the stables to see the horses and bullfighter costumes.

A visit to a Bull breeder's Farm

Southern Spain has been home to some of the most renown matadors in the history of bullfighting and also to some of the most renown brave bull farmers. Each brave bull farmer is known for their particular approach to breeding and for the morphology and behaviour of their bulls. This tour will allow you to understand the complexity and tradition that lies behind the art of breeding brave bulls. You will also be able to enjoy the beauty of the Southern Spanish countryside and of a traditional farm estate.

Your tour will start with a short drive from your accommodation to a selected brave bull farm where you will immerse yourself into this classic tradition. During the drive, your personal local host for the day will set the context for the program that will follow by giving you some basic information about brave bulls, about the farmer and about the area where the farm is. Upon arrival, you will be welcomed by a member of the family who owns the farm and then you will go on a 4 x 4 vehicle to visit the areas of the farm where the bulls are. There you will be explained about the animals, about their diet, their habitat, their routine and their behaviour. You will also understand how the mother cows are selected and what makes a bull ideal for a bullfight. After your tour of the farm, you will be invited to the owner's farm estate, where after an aperitif, a traditional homemade lunch will be served. This will be the perfect setting to ask as many questions as you like and to have further interaction with the farmer. Then after lunch, you will be driven back to your hotel. Finca Los Alburejos, Medina Sidonia

Visits can be organised for groups, which include demonstrations of the tienta, acoso, derribo and apartado, these disciplines will show visitors the unique partnership that ultimately develops between the horse and his rider.

Bullfights

The bullfight is one of Spain's most traditional fiestas. It is considered an art form, part of Spain's history and culture. In Spain, bullfighters are as famous as film stars are. In a typical bullfight, three matadors will kill six bulls and each encounter lasts about 15 minutes culminating in the killing of the bull. The bulls, through instinct and selective breeding will charge at anything that moves and weigh on average 460kg.

If you would like to see a bullfight we can, subject to availability, obtain some very good tickets.



Oenology

Bodegas Gonzalez Byass, Jerez

The bodegas of Gonzalez Byass were established in 1835 when the company's founder D. Manuel Gonzalez Angel formed a successful partnership with Mr Robert Blake Byass, who had been the new company's agent in London. Together they built what has become today's well-known company, internationally recognized for the care devoted to its sherries and brandies and for the high quality standards maintained across its wide product range. The company is still directed by the fourth and fifth generations of the Gonzalez family, preserving the heritage, traditions and culture of sherry and brandy production for over 160 years. Enjoy a tour of the 'bodegas' where you will taste a selection dry and sweet sherries, and learn about the heritage and science of this great Andalusian tradition.

Below are the bodegas of Jerez and Sanlúcar de Barrameda, which we recommend. We are happy to reserve tickets for bodega tours, arrange private tours or organise a day excursion with private guide visiting various premium bodegas. Please inform reception of your requirements.

Bodegas Tradición, Jerez

This is a small bodega and one of the oldest in Jerez dating back more than 350 years. They pride themselves on the use of traditional and ancient methods of production to produce the best quality sherries possible. The bodega also houses a wonderful collection of paintings.

Bodega Fernando de Castilla, Jerez

Fernando de Castilla is undoubtedly one of the most exceptional of the small, independent sherry houses. The Bodega was revitalised in 1999 by Jan Pettersen, a Norwegian with a passion for top quality sherry. He previously spent 15 years working at Osborne. After taking over the cellars, Jan quickly established Fernando de Castilla and masters in the production and ageing of fine, unblended, untreated sherries. The bodega's reputation is based on the excellence of the antique range of intensely pure and complex single solera sherries that continue to scoop every award going. With listings in some of the worlds finest and more prestigious on and off-trade accounts, sales of premium sherry continue to grow steadily, and reflect the popularity for Spanish gastronomy, wine and culture.

Bodegas Emilio Lustau

Emilio Lustau is one of the most exclusive wineries that currently exists in Jerez de la Frontera. In 1896, it was founded as a sherry wine storekeeper in the Nuestra Señora de la Esperanza vineyard, on the outskirts of the City of Jerez de la Frontera. Our wineries are a sanctuary. A quiet space, where time stops creating a unique atmosphere. A building dating back to the 19th century, which houses our wines and defines an identity. The elegance of simplicity, dyed white and white, expand by the 20,000 square meters of our elegant facilities; where more than 15,000 American oak wine boots and steel tanks rest. Tradition and the pursuit of excellence have made us reach the highest levels in quality and recognition. Our wines today are famous worldwide and are awarded by multiple institutions such as the prestigious International Wine Challenge.

Bodegas Hidalgo La Gitana, Sanlúcar de Barrameda

Bodegas Hidalgo La Gitana is a family owned sherry-maker founded in 1792 and based in Sanlúcar de Barrameda. Javier Hidalgo who has spent many years tirelessly promoting their range to more than 30 overseas market runs it. Hidalgo make some glorious sherries aged in the dark, quiet surroundings of the well-ventilated bodega like the Amontillado Viejo, Oloroso Viejo, Palo Cortado Viejo, but the mainstay of the range is La Gitana, a crisp, savoury, bone dry manzanilla. If you are planning to visit Sanlúcar to sample some of the best shellfish in Spain, a visit to this bodega might be of interest.

Sherry and the beautiful city of Jerez

Jerez is an elegant city, smaller than Seville and less touristy. Some of the grander houses and old palacios are slightly decaying, with crumbling facades which just seem to add to the charm of the city and remind the visitor of times gone by. Jerez is of course famous for the sherry wines it has been producing over the centuries and a visit here would be incomplete without taking in a bodega. Jerez is full of bodegas, some of them are huge and produce sherry on a large scale, others are smaller and more intimate, focussing on quality rather than quantity. The sherry bodega we will visit is one of the smaller, family owned bodegas that are producing wines of outstanding quality. You will tour the bodega with a sherry expert and then enjoy a tasting and learn about pairing sherries with different foods and flavours. The bodega visit is followed by a walking tour through the old quarter of Jerez. The experience ends with a great lunch in a local bar or restaurant.

Sherry and the beautiful city of Jerez stopping first at a Private Hacienda

On our way to visit a sherry bodega in Jerez, we will stop at a real hidden gem to discover a unique Spanish property which houses an amazing private collection. The house is eclectic and it feels like you are stepping back in time. It has an air of faded glory about it and this visit will give you a glimpse of what life was once like for the Spanish upper classes who lived in places like this.

In the mid 18th century, Tomasso Miconi y Cambiasso, an eminent Genoese oil merchant and the first Marquis of Merit was responsible for the building of Hacienda la Purísima Concepción, known today as Hacienda Micones.

Set amongst olive groves, it is an imposing neoclassical building and served as a model for later Haciendas in the region. It was most likely built on the site of an even older residence. Evidence of this lies in the multitude of archeological remains found in its vicinity and given that it is located in an area of fertile lands with abundant water, it makes sense that people would want to live here.

Don José Cortines Pacheco bought the property in 1949, an avid collector, he meticulously stored and catalogued many of these ancient pieces and artefacts within the Hacienda creating a wonderful, private collection. He kept detailed journals and archeological notebooks of his travels throughout the region. These journals are remarkable as not only did he make precise notes but detailed drawings also of each piece he found including: fragments of pottery, flint knives, axes.

Today it is his grandson Pepe Cortines who has taken over the running of the Hacienda and who is the charming host for our visit here.

We will be shown around the Hacienda by Pepe who will tell us all about its history as well as the history of his family and the collection and how life has changed over the generations. This is a wonderful insight into a lifestyle in Spain that is of another era.

After this tour which finishes with a glass of sherry, we will continue on to Jerez to tour a bodega in private (approx. 30 minutes away)

From the grape to the glass: an immersion into the world of Sherry wines with lunch in private vineyard

Unlike most of the world's wine regions, Jerez has the particularity of having its aging facilities in town and its vineyards in the country. That's why the overall beauty and complexity (social, historical, economical and oenological) of Sherry wines can only be understood by experiencing the essence of both worlds.

This tour is aimed at providing a comprehensive approach to Sherry, by offering the possibility to venture into both a handpicked bodega in the old town and to a selected Sherry vineyard in the countryside with a local sherry expert (a certified sherry educator by the sherry regulatory board). The tour starts with an introductory walking tour of Jerez aimed at understanding the transformations that the city experienced (architecture, urban planning, social composition and overall character) when the local wines (sherries) became probably the most fashionable drinks in the world. This is followed by private visits (with the corresponding tastings) to both a bodega in Jerez old town and to a Sherry vineyard in the countryside, which is absolutely private and where wines are made and aged only for the family who owns it. A local country lunch paired with sherry, including tapas, starters, main courses, dessert and farewell sherry cocktails will be offered in the vineyard, which overlooks the rolling hills of the Sherry triangle. Then, after lunch and surely converted into a Sherry lover, you will be driven by taxi back to your accommodation.

Sherry bodega excursions to Jerez de la Frontera

Join Roger on a fascinating tour of various bodegas in Jerez. The tour begins with a visit to one of the larger wineries with the greatest selection of sherries in Jerez. You will be taken round spectacular buildings dating from the 19th century. After an in-depth tour of the winery, including a detailed explanation of the unique sherry-ageing process, there will be a tutored tasting of the different styles of sherry. You will also get a chance to sample some very fine sherry vinegar.

Next is a visit to a much smaller family-run bodega. The people who run the winery are great friends of Roger, which means you get to taste their exceptionally fine sherries drawn directly from the cask, not a usual occurrence! The winery is also a producer of high quality brandies; some say the best in Spain, which as with the sherries will be tasted straight out of the cask. The bodega visits are followed by lunch in a local landmark. There is time for a walk around the beautiful old quarter of Jerez before the trip ends.

Exclusive Winery Option near Ronda

Winemaking in Spain was introduced by the Phoenicians almost 3000 years ago. The tradition of vine growing managed to survive for millennia until the end of the 19th century when the phylloxera blight wiped out production. Vines were only reintroduced at the end of the 1980s, and there are now more than 250 hectares of vineyards. The wine sector in the Ronda region is experiencing a revival with the expansion of existing projects and new investment supporting the opening of new wineries.

The area offers a unique terroir with its proximity to both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. At an average altitude of 700 metres there is a good thermal oscillation which helps to keep grapes fresh and healthy. The D.O. currently permits 38 authorised white and red varieties, a mixture of Spanish and international varieties. Soils are a mixture of limestone, clay and decomposed slate.

The bodega we will visit today is unique in that it ages its principal wines and is focused on taking its time to produce excellent quality red wines.

The drive to the bodega from Seville is through open countryside and farmland, passing many large “fincas” bordered by wheat fields, olive and almond trees.

The winery is situated up in the hills with dramatic views all around. The entrance is a drive bordered by tall cypress trees that leads up to the front of the house. Pilar and José Manuel are the protagonists of this dream, 20 years ago they quit their jobs and planted a vineyard on a bare hillside, today the passion that started this endeavour is still as strong as ever. You will be given a private tour, seeing all the steps involved in producing the wine as well as the amazing cellar which looks like it has been under their home for centuries. The tour itself lasts approx 1,5 hours and is followed by a typical Andaluz aperitif and then a delicious lunch, often cooked by José himself.

Sherry tasting evenings at Hacienda de San Rafael

Host sherry tasting evenings at the Hacienda for individuals or small groups. These events are a great opportunity to learn more about this aspect of oenology.

Wine tasting, Seville

El Rinconcillo opened in 1670 is Seville’s oldest tapas bar. Here, in the restaurant on the first floor Roger hosts wine tastings. The main tastings feature wines from Jerez. As well as explaining how the wines are made and tasting the different styles, he will show you how versatile they are with food. Top quality prawns accompany the wines from the Huelva coastline, acorn-fed Iberian ham, Spanish cheese, excellent fish and meat dishes and typical desserts. He also offers tastings of quality Spanish red and white wines.

ALUZ

· COLLECTION ·



Cultural experiences

We offer tours specific to both Semana Santa (Holy Week) in Seville and the famous April Fair. These itineraries are always sent to guests staying with us during these festivals but if you would be interested in receiving them please let us know. Please also check our private label guide for general information about the guides and local hosts we work with.

Below are several tailored tours that are available to our guests throughout the year.

Historical half-day city tour, Seville

Your private historical guide will meet you at Corral del Rey. Your tour will include some of the major sites of historical interest such as the cathedral reputed to be the largest church in the world and built on the site of a 12th century mosque. The Alcázar, originally a Moorish palace that dates back to the 14th century is also a must-see. The tour usually ends with a walk through the Santa Cruz district, the old Jewish quarter that is a maze of narrow streets, wrought iron gates and internal patios with typical fountains and potted plants. You will finally be dropped off at either a restaurant or traditional tapas bar, depending on your preferences.

Jewish heritage tour in Seville

Tradition has it that there were Jews living in Seville at the time of the destruction of the first Temple (586 BC).

The Almohade conquest in 1148 only brought death and destruction to the Jews. When the Christians reconquered Seville in 1248, the few Jews that were still in the city welcomed them warmly. The fate of Spanish Jewry was brutally altered in 1378 when the archdeacon of Écija, Ferrant Martinez, launched a campaign of violent sermons against the Jews. Though he was repeatedly ordered to stop his diatribes, Martinez succeeded in arousing passionate hatred among the masses. A full-scale pogrom broke out on June 6, 1391 and most of the Jews accepted baptism to save their lives. At this point, the so-called "Jewish problem" became the "converso problem". As a result, the once vibrant community never recovered and along with the other Jews of Andalusia, they were exiled in 1483, 9 years before the final expulsion.

The purpose of this tour is not just to visit key sites related with the Jewish past of the city, but also to focus on all aspects of Judaism in Seville.

By walking inside the former Jewish quarter of Seville, your guide Moises will bring to life how the Jewish community lived in this city until the edict of expulsion was issued by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella in 1492.

Tour of the Jewish quarter of Seville

Tradition has it that there were Jews living in Seville at the time of the destruction of the first Temple (586 BC).

The Jews played a significant role in the successful Muslim invasion of the Iberian Peninsula. Seville was not an exception to this fact. During the tour, a description of the relationship with both the Muslim and Christian rulers will be made.

Historians have accurately described the area covered by the Jewish Quarter: it is possible to identify the location of the houses of some significant Jewish characters who lived in it as well as other important elements of the Jewish community such as the synagogues.

From men of sciences to men with political influence. We shall learn about some Jews who played a significant role in the history of the world they lived in.

The tour will combine a visit to the Alcázar and the Cathedral to be able to bring all the history together.

Sevilla hidden corners

This tour gives you an insight into Spain's rich and often forgotten heritage, that of the "conventos de clausura" (cloistered convents). Visiting these places is like entering another world; the convents are often very beautiful and peaceful. The nuns spend much of the day in prayer and for the most part are shut off from the daily life-taking place outside their walls. Over the years, the lure of monastic life has dwindled and many convents are struggling to survive. The nuns work making and selling jams, pastries and biscuits to earn an extra income. You will visit one of Seville's convents founded in the 15th Century that houses a charming museum and lovely church. This is the beginning of the undiscovered Seville. Then, your local guide, your host, will continue to show you quirky parts of town not often visited by the discerning traveller while you begin to experience the authentic way of life away from the crowds. Discovering the fish and vegetable markets in Feria Street and the artisanal stores in La Macarena, the beautiful tranquil plazas, the genuine food stalls, atmospheric tapas bars with locals and hints for raw flamenco in hidden peñas.

This is a fascinating and off the beaten track kind of tour taking you away from the main-stream tourist sites and monuments with their huge queues and flocks of visitors. This walking tour will take you first of all to visit a cloistered convent founded in the 15th century by a Spanish noblewoman and hidden behind thick walls. It is amazing to see the fine pieces of furniture, Mudejar crafted wood ceilings, centuries old fabulous tiles and stunning paintings that decorate its walls. It feels as though time has stood still here. The convent is still inhabited by nuns who make ends meet selling marmalade and jams. They are so charming that you are sure to leave with a few jars of their delicious, organic jams.

The tour then winds its way through Seville's back streets visiting several small shops including a narrow little ceramics shop where dusty tiles are stacked in corners.

Finally, you will visit a charming food market selling everything from the freshest fish and shellfish to acorn-fed Iberian ham. If by now you are feeling hungry, you can enjoy a delicious aperitif at a local stall within the market. After the aperitif if you are still hungry, Gerry will take you up the road to one of her favourite local spots serving great Spanish food.

Seville's enchanting corners enhanced with a few charismatic locals

This is an unusual and fun tour, mixing culture, people and art. Your local guide your hostess has lived in Spain for the last twenty years and has met many interesting, artistic, creative locals who have helped her create this tour, it's as much about people as it is about the sites. Your local guide will pick you up in the morning and you will accompany her walking (so please bring comfortable footwear!)

The first stop is a fascinating cloistered convent founded in the 15th century by a Spanish noblewoman and hidden behind thick walls. It is amazing to see the fine pieces of furniture, Mudejar crafted wood ceilings, centuries old fabulous tiles and stunning paintings that decorate its walls. The convent is still inhabited by nuns who make ends meet selling marmalade and jams. The nuns are also what makes this place so unique and special, some of them are in their 80s and have lived there since they were teenagers.

You will then meander through Seville's back streets, stopping to visit the home and shop of Sebastian who is a retired book-binder. This is still very much his passion so he still has a small business. His workshop is full of his tools, some hundreds of years old. He also makes beautiful blank journals which are for sale.

A final 15 minute walk will then bring you to another hidden gem: the studio and home of Paco who is a renowned local landscape artist. Paco vibrates passion and enthusiasm, he is extremely charismatic. You will spend some time here with Paco, seeing some of his work, learning about his history, techniques and style. The visit will finish with a glass of wine and aperitif with Paco. Your local guide will then take you by taxi for the final and equally enjoyable part of the tour, a great lunch in one of her favourite restaurants on the other side of the river. You will share various dishes, all of excellent quality and accompanied by great Spanish wine. Your local guide will then accompany you in a taxi to meet Angeles for your afternoon's tour of the main monuments.

Craft shops and workshops

Patricia is an expert host; fine wine, sherry, and food connoisseur, cook, and life-long resident of Seville offering huge enthusiasm for her city. Always exploring on her bicycle, she knows every corner of the city and is intimately aware of both its rich history and current flourishing culture. Always aware of the latest developments in art, fashion and gastronomic culture in the city, as well as the true classics that have stood the test of time, it is hard to imagine anyone more qualified to present a more authentic experience of Andalusian life.

As a child, Patricia was introduced to the world of boutique fashion by her mother, who opened one of the first boutique fashion stores in Seville. This led to many wonderful experiences including trips to London, Paris and New York to find and purchase rare stock for the shop, developing her eye for fine fashion early in life.

In the early 80s she was sub-director of Azac, an organisation that welcomes distinguished visitors to the city for cultural events. This led to an active role during the World Exposition in Seville from the '89 to '92, running the Ambiente'92 hospitality centre, working directly with the Exposition's largest sponsors.

Patricia currently works as a host and guide, regularly welcoming visitors to Seville. Her tours are made unique by a special skill set that includes: teaching local cooking styles; creating wonderful personalised shopping tours with her intimate knowledge of the city; true local knowledge that stems from an active life following her passions; and a grounded and charming manner that encapsulates her excellent interpersonal skills.

Patricia will take you to all the hidden gems of Seville where you will meet a array of artists and curators that offer the finest ceramics, sculpture, textiles, antiques, prints, milliners and cobblers.

Venture into the quarter of Triana to be artisans for a day

The famous Guadalquivir River divides the city of Seville into two parts. The Northern part concentrates the impressive World Heritage sites of the city and the vast majority of its hotels. Because of this, travellers rarely venture into the iconic Southern quarter of Triana, historically famous for its bullfighters, flamenco dancers and skilled ceramicists and potters.

This tour will take you from your hotel, across the river into this unique area of the Andalusian capital. Once in Triana, you will be given a short introduction of the quarter to visit later a ceramics and pottery workshop. There you will be explained briefly the different tile-making techniques that have been used in Seville since the Moorish times until today. After this, you will be given your own tile to paint under the supervision of a skilled local potter. Then, taking turns, every member of the group will be called to the potter's wheel, where another skilled local artisan will assist them while they make their own piece of pottery on the wheel, which of course they will be able to take home that day if they like (alternatively and at a separate cost, the piece and the tile can be shipped once they are fired).

After this hands-on experience, you will be escorted back to your hotel or be invited to enjoy the rest of your day in your own leisure in the quarter of Triana.

An Art Class In the Gardens of a Private Country Home

Isabel Andrada-Vanderwilde is a charming and charismatic Andalusian artist who comes from an ancient Spanish family that can trace its roots way back to the Spanish Reconquista and before. An artist born in Granada in 1960, she studied Fine Arts in the faculty of Isabel of Hungary in Seville. She is well-known in Andalusia and has exhibited her art in many Spanish cities.

Isabel has a farm close to Marchena which is just under one hour's drive from Seville. It is very much a traditional Spanish cortijo, rustic and welcoming. She lives here all year round with her husband Pepe and dogs.

Gerry is a good friend of Isabel and will accompany you on your art experience today. She will collect you from your hotel and travel with you to Isabel's farm, acting as translator throughout the day.

Once at the farm, Isabel will start by showing you her studio where she works most mornings. She will then take you to an idyllic spot in the garden where, underneath the shade of trees, you will enjoy an art class a plein-air.

There will be the chance to enjoy a cool beer or glass of fino during the class as well as an aperitif and a traditional lunch cooked by Isabel's housekeeper at the end of the morning. This is a very special opportunity to enjoy a mix of art and creativity as well as Spanish hospitality from within an enclave not normally open to foreigners visiting Andalusia.

Garden tour through Seville

Angela will walk with you amidst the flowers, fountains and the characteristic scent of the orange blossom in the historic gardens of one of the city's most emblematic monuments, the Real Alcázar palace. Seville is home to some of Europe's oldest gardens. You will discover the Cross garden, the 12th century garden, the Moorish garden, the English garden, the Poet's garden, and the Marquis of Vega-Incian garden to name a few. Besides the 170 plant species to be found in the 60,000 square metres of gardens, you can also enjoy the ponds, sculptures, colourful tiles, Canals and fountains.

Besides the Real Alcázar, the Andalusian capital has many parks and gardens that will show you a truly beautiful side of the city. The most famous of these include those at Casa de Pilatos, Las Delicias gardens and those at Casa de Dueñas, the Palace of the Duquesa de Alba, a 15th century house with large gardens and Mudejar patios. You will also visit Parque de Maria Luisa, the city's public park. Most of the grounds that were used for the park were formerly the gardens of the Palace of San Telmo. The Infanta Luisa Fernanda, Duchess of Montpensier, donated them to the city of Seville in 1893 for use as a public park. Jean-Claude Nicolas Foretier rearranged the gardens into their present shapes in 1911.

Private carriage ride through Seville

It is a real luxury to be picked up from Corral del Rey after a long day walking around the city and be driven around a horse drawn carriage around all the main sights while you relax and enjoy the evening light, the sound of the swifts and the gentle breeze off the river Guadalquivir. The coachman will drive you through the historic centre, past the Maestranza bullring, the Tower de Oro, into the Maria Luisa Park, along Plaza de España, past the old tobacco factory and return to the Royal Alcázar and Cathedral before being dropped off at your restaurant for dinner.

Visit to private castles, gardens & patios

Spain is filled with castles, palaces and historical houses that have belonged to the same families for centuries. In some cases one can imagine, by looking at their exterior, what treasures may be hidden within their walls. These hidden treasures remain mostly unseen by tourists with many of these beautiful buildings remaining in private ownership and not open to the public.

Our specialist guide, Maria Andrada, can organise for you a truly special, private visit to some of these magnificent homes. She will arrange for you to meet their owners, learn about their family history and possibly have lunch, dinner or a drink with them.

These visits are bespoke and they depend on the owner's availability. Maria will put together each visit to best suit our guest's requirements. Please give as much advance notice as possible if you would like us to arrange a visit.

Cordoba – Historical private city guide

The Romans founded Cordoba and due to its strategic importance as the highest navigable point of the Guadalquivir River, it became a port city of great importance, used for shipping Spanish olive oil, wine and wheat back to Ancient Rome. The Romans built the mighty bridge crossing the river, now called "El Puente Romano". However, Cordoba's hour of greatest glory was when it became the capital of the Moorish kingdom of Al-Andalus, and this was when work began on the Great Mosque, or "Mezquita", which – after several centuries of additions and enlargements – became one of the largest in all of Islam.

When the Christians reconquered the city in 1236, the new rulers of the city were so awed by its beauty that they left it standing, building their cathedral in the midst of its rows of arches and columns, and creating the extraordinary church-mosque we see today. With the knowledge and insight into the rich history of Cordoba Angeles brings the city to life.

Ronda – Historical private city guide

This tour has been designed to let the visitors know how this picturesque town has been occupied from 2000 years before Christ to today. Its impressive cliff and gorge area was the reason why different cultures such as Celts, Iberians, Romans, Visigoths and Arabs decided to live in this natural fort. The Arab period and the second half of 18th century were the most important times for the history of Ronda. Your host Alfredo will also tell you about the wonderful stories that happened in the past, how many famous travellers during the last two centuries have fallen in love with this beautiful town. The stroll goes from the Bullring area across the New Bridge to the "La Ciudad" which is how local people call the old part of Ronda. Palaces, churches and charming squares will take you back in time.

Granada Tours

Our Granada guides offer a variety of wonderful tours and excursions in and around Granada.



Flamenco Experiences

Museo del Baile Flamenco

The museum has become a reference point to see good flamenco in Seville. In one of the few remaining “Ecijano” courtyards in Seville with theatrical lighting and good sound, the stage sets the scene for the flamenco artists. Every day the artist cast is changed and you will see different styles or “palos” from “alegrías” to solemn “seguidilla” to flamenco “soleá by bulerías” to tragic “taranto” to sensual “tangos”.

Casa de la Memoria

Casa de la Memoria offers varied performances throughout the year focusing on traditional flamenco. You have “cante” (song), baile (dance) and guitar by the best artists of the Andalusian flamenco scene such as Pastora Galvan (National Flamenco Dance Award), Rafael Campallo, Felipe Mato, Adela Campallo, Asuncion Perez “Choni”, Oscar de los Reyes, Maribel Ramos, Juan Carlos Cardoso and Leonor Leal, amongst others. The flamenco voices of Vicente Gelo, Ana Real, Jesus Corbacho or Jeromo Segura and some of the best flamenco guitarists such as Manuel de la Luz, Pedro Sanchez son on the cantaor Naranjito de Triana.

Peña Flamenca Torres Macarena

Peña flamenca Torres Macarena is a raw version of flamenco off the tourist trail that offers performances for the aficionados once or twice a week. Located in the Macarena quarter of Seville, this peña was founded in 1974 in a location on Calle Torres, and so was named “Torres Macarena”. Since then it quickly moved to the Calle Torrijano and a larger space. Today it features 120-seat venue, and the performances are without any kind of sound system, only the voices and instruments as they are heard naturally.

Exclusive flamencos at Hacienda de San Rafael or Corral del Rey

Flamenco artists and groups can be organised at both Hacienda de San Rafael & Corral del Rey. We can arrange a private flamenco in the gardens, courtyards and living rooms of the Hacienda. We can tailor a flamenco to your taste and style and ensure a memorable evening.

Flamenco & Tapas tour

At a glance: this tour focuses on two of the most representative living traditions, one artistic and one gastronomical, of Southern Spain and it's ideal for the curious traveller willing to experience both from a local perspective.

The tour starts with a short walking tour of Seville old town (or of Triana depending on the choice of the client) through which you'll learn how flamenco emerged in South West Spain as a result of a slow fusion of the ancient multicultural musical heritage of Southern Spain with the original gypsy rhythms and musical roots. This will set the context to understand the selected flamenco performance in a small and intimate venue that will follow, with 4 people onstage: a guitar player, a singer and two dancers.

After the performance, you will be taken on a tapas tour of Seville old town (or of Triana) by your local host. You will visit two selected bars where locals like to gather with friends and family and you will taste a selection of 6 - 9 tapas dishes to share that you'll be able to pair with the corresponding wines. This will give you an understanding of what to go for tapas means in Seville (or in Triana), of how it is enjoyed, shared and celebrated. Then you'll be escorted back to your hotel stopping along the way for a sweet local indulgence.

Flamenco classes at Hacienda de San Rafael

Private flamenco dance classes can be arranged at the Hacienda de San Rafael or in Seville. One can learn how to dance "Sevillanas" or "bulerias".



Golf

Montecastillo

The Montecastillo Golf Club, designed by Jack Nicklaus, is a beautiful undulated course with well-placed lakes and spectacular elevated tee boxes surrounded by rolling hills. Montecastillo Golf hosted the 1994 and 1996 Tour España Masters Open and it has been the venue for the exciting final of the European PGA tour, and the Volvo Masters from 1997 until 2001.

Arcos Gardens

Designed by Landmark, creators of PGA West, Palm Beach Polo and the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island the Arcos Gardens Golf course has been developed as a challenge to professionals, whilst providing an enjoyable experience for amateurs. Arcos Gardens was the chosen golf course and golf resort in Andalucía for both the Swedish Golf Federation and the English Golf Union for their winter training facility.

Dehesa Montenmedio

Dehesa Montenmedio golf is situated left of the N340 close to Vejer de la Frontera in Cadiz. Designed by Alejandro Maldonado, the course was set up with the intention to offer a playable 18-hole golf course where one could afford to be a little less accurate from the tee (although the wind can be an important factor). It is renowned for its peaceful natural surroundings, superb greens, advanced practice facilities, and its impressive clubhouse.

Benalup

The Benalup Hotel Golf & Country Club opened in July 2001 and is situated on the top of a hill just outside Benalup. The golf course, designed by architect Baron Paul Rolin, is set within an idyllic landscape with many lakes, which makes play quite challenging.

Real Sevilla

Real Club de Golf Sevilla hosted the 2004 World Golf Championships and both the 2008 and 2010 Spanish Open Championships. José Maria Olazábal was responsible for the creation of this excellent layout that most competitive golfers will immediately fall in love with. The 100 bunkers and 4 lakes that come into play on eight holes make the entire layout even more interesting.

Zaudin

Club Zaudin is considered Gary Players best design in Europe. Surrounded by orange and olive groves and with stunning views across the city of Seville, this may not be as challenging as Olazábal's course, but it offers a very enjoyable round amidst beautiful surroundings.



Ocean experiences

Sailing

The Bay of Cadiz is sheltered and enclosed and the coastline is made up of sandy beaches, marshes and salt pans as well as a complex network of inlets. Sailing areas are spread over three venues, the bay of Cadiz, Rota in the extreme north, Puerto Sherry and Sancti Petri further south. With a prevailing south-westerly wind during the summer, but with the potential for the strong south-easterly Levante to blow out of the straits of Gibraltar, and the hottest surface temperature in Spain, most courses will see challenging yet satisfying conditions. Spain's Mediterranean climate is modified here by westerly North Atlantic winds and occasional warm dry air from the Sahara desert. We can arrange for you to hire a 10 - 15m sailing yacht with an experienced skipper and the Hacienda de San Rafael or Corral del Rey can provide a picnic if required.

Sailing and savoring the iconic bay of Cadiz on the Atlantic Ocean

This tour will take you on a discovery journey of the iconic bay of Cadiz on the Atlantic Ocean. Your tour will start with a short taxi ride from your hotel to the marina of the city of Cadiz. Along the way, you will be explained about the geography, culture, lifestyle and general character of this iconic region in Southern Spain.

Upon arrival to the marina, you will be introduced to your captain to later get on a 12m sailboat to start a 3h sailing trip across the bay of Cadiz. During the trip, you will enjoy the peculiar landscape of fishing towns, nature reserves and unspoilt beaches that the bay is known for. You will also be explained the many historical events that have happened in the waters of the bay during the last 5 centuries. During the sailing trip you will also be offered a drink, some morning snacks and the possibility to anchor and jump in the Atlantic Ocean if you like.

After your sailing trip, you will be taken for lunch to Cadiz old town, where you will enjoy a local lunch in a carefully selected tapas and wines bar. After lunch and a small guided tour of Cadiz old town aimed at learning about its colonial history and about its period of maximum splendor.

Game fishing

The Atlantic and Mediterranean shorelines are ideal for fishing. Trolling or game fishing is possibly the most exciting type of fishing to be enjoyed in this area with Bass, Bonito, Mahi Mahi (Dolphin Fish) and Swordfish available for the catching. Blue fin Tuna are also frequent in these waters. There is a spring run of small Tuna about 60 lb then during August, September and October the larger tuna (150lb plus) frequent local waters. Shark fishing is also popular with plenty of blue shark and the odd Mako being caught. Half-day fishing and full day deep-sea fishing excursions can be arranged with boat, skipper and a crewmember.

Kite surfing

Kite surfing classes can be arranged with one of the best schools in the area. The instructors are Danny, Lucas and Fran who are experts in the sport and place enormous importance on your enjoyment and progression. Their school is mobile which means they can teach anywhere along the coast whenever the wind conditions are favourable. The classes normally take place in Tarifa or Conil. We can arrange four-hour private classes. These are recommended for enthusiasts who already have some kite surfing experience, as complete beginners would benefit more from a minimum two-day course.

Surfing

With hundreds of kilometres of Atlantic coastline, the Costa de la Luz is becoming a renowned surfing destination. We can arrange private surfing classes with an instructor on the beaches of Conil de la Frontera or El Palmar.