



Your Andalucia



7 DAY VILLA BASED SMALL GROUP CULTURAL TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1. We will collect you at Malaga airport on your arrival and time permitting we will start your Andalusian experience with a visit to the mountain town of **Mijas**, one of the most famous 'Pueblos Blancos', (white towns), in Andalusia. Later we will transport you to your accommodation at Villa Samuel, aiming to arrive there at around 6pm.

Day 2. We will collect you after breakfast at 9.00am and head off to visit the romantic city of **Cordoba**, the centre of the Moorish empire of Al-Andalus for more than 300 years. A city that was a beacon of light during the troubled medieval times and where peoples of all faiths and backgrounds lived in harmony. We will park our vehicle fifty metres from the medieval walls of the city and enter in the historic part through the ancient 'Seville Gate'.

The jewel in the crown of Cordoba is of course the incredible World Heritage site of the Mezquita, the 500 year old Cathedral built inside a 1200 year old Mosque, but during our morning walking tour you will also have the opportunity to visit other impressive sites such as the 14th century Alcazar of the Christian Monarchs, (infamously used as the headquarters of the Spanish Inquisition from 1482), the Royal Stables, (now the home of the famous 'Passion and Spirit' Andalusian Equestrian Stable), the 14th century Synagogue, (one of only three medieval Synagogues left in Spain) and the early 15th Century Chapel of Saint Bartholomew, built in the Mudejar style.

We will arrive at the steps of the Mezquita around 1pm, in time for lunch at one of the many quality and reasonably priced restaurants in the area. After lunch we be met by our official cultural guide, and you begin your visit to The Mezquita.

After your guided visit to The Mezquita is finished you will have free time continue exploring the other highlights of the historic city, such as the Roman Bridge, the Calahorra Tower, the Door of the Bridge, Saint Raphaels Triumph, (a monument to the Patron Saint of Cordoba), the ancient Hospital of Saint Sebastian, the Almodovar Door, (one of the seven ancient entrances to the city), and the Arab Baths.

At around 5.30pm we will meet at the pre-arranged point, and you will be driven back to your Villa Samuel accommodation.

Day 3. We will collect you after breakfast at 9.00am and head off to visit the iconic town of **Ronda**, spectacularly set high above the Guadalevin gorge with the hills of the Serrania de Ronda as its backdrop.

Ronda is more than a picture postcard town, it is a place steeped in history, its very name being an adaptation of the name given to the site by the ancient Celts who settled there in the 6th century BC, **Arunda**. Ronda is also the birthplace of modern-day bull fighting and has beguiled many a famous traveler, including Orson Welles and Ernest Hemingway, as well as the famous 20th century German poet, Rainer Maria Rilke, who were all seduced by the beauty and history of this town. Hemingway is said to have been inspired by the famous Puente Nuevo, (New Bridge), in Ronda when writing his account of Spanish Civil War atrocities in his book, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Ronda is the perfect Andalucian town to explore at your own pace.

On arriving at Ronda, we will take the short walk to the historic centre of the town where after which you will have free time to visit the museums and sights and choose one of the many quality restaurants to have lunch.

We will arrange to meet up again in front of the historic bull ring at a pre-arranged time in the afternoon before heading back to your Villa Samuel accommodation.

Day 4. We will collect you after breakfast at 8.30am and head off to visit the Andalucian Capital of **Seville** where our official cultural tour guide will walk you through the historic centre of the city, explaining the background to the important World Heritage sites such as the 15th century Cathedral, the Royal Alcazar and the General Archive of the Indies, as well as the other iconic sites of this magnificent city. We will aim to finish the walk around 1.30pm, in time for lunch in one of the many wonderful restaurants in the area.

After lunch you will be met again by our official guide and begin your visit to the famous Gothic Cathedral of Sevilla.

We will meet up again at the pre-arranged time and place and head back to your Villa Samuel accommodation.

Day 5. We will collect you after breakfast at 9.00am and start the day with a visit to one of the natural beauty spots of central Andalucia, the **El Torcal natural park**, in the mountains above Antequera.

We will drive to the visitor centre, situated at around 4000 feet above sea level and from here we can take a short 45-minute walk amongst the 'natural stone sculptures', formed over millions of years by wind and rain erosion. You will be able to soak up the tranquillity of the area and may have the opportunity to catch a glimpse of the mountain goats and griffin vultures that are often visible during our visits.

After our walk in El Torcal, we will head off to the coastal city of Malaga and have lunch at a typical sea front restaurant, where of course, fresh sea food is the order of the

day. After lunch we will take the ten-minute drive to the historic centre of Malaga and here you will have free time to visit the Cathedral, The Picasso Museum, (or one of the many others Malaga museums), or simply enjoy the café culture that Malaga city is famous for.

At around 5.30pm we will meet at the pre-arranged point, and you will be driven back to your Villa Samuel accommodation.

Day 6. Today we will collect you after breakfast at 8.30am and head off to visit the historical city of **Granada** and the mystical Alhambra Palace Complex, (another World Heritage site), which was the centre of the ancient Moorish kingdom of Granada and the last Muslim stronghold in Spain, until its surrender in 1492.

We will park in the historical centre of the city and begin the walking tour where you will have the opportunity to visit the 16th century cathedral and the Royal Chapel and mausoleum of Queen Isabel and King Fernando, Los Reyes Catolicos, who completed the Christian re-conquest of Spain when they accepted the surrender of Granada on the 2nd of January 1492. Other notable sites include the Basilica of San Juan de Dios, the Bib-Rambla and the Plaza Nueva.

We will complete the city centre tour around 12.30pm, in time for lunch, and at 2pm we will head off in the vehicle to visit The Alhambra Palaces complex where we will be met by our official cultural tour guide and you will begin your visit this magical site, soaking in the wonders of the fantastic monument comprising of palaces, gardens and fortresses. We will meet you again at 5.30pm at the exit from The Alhambra and we will head back to your accommodation at Villa Samuel.

Day7. Today is Departure Day.

Depending on the timing of your flights, we will stop off at **Antequera** on our way to Malaga airport. Antequera is a mid-size market town with over two dozen religious buildings. Here we will take the opportunity to visit the three Dolmens located in the town, (intact Neolithic stone structures dating from around 5,000 years ago), after which, we will continue our journey to Malaga Airport.

