EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Moorish Andalucia (SP 2016)

CULTURAL DISCOVERY

TRIPDURATI
14
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Moderate

Tour Type: Small Groups
Accommodation Grade: Standard

Trip Code: SP

Trip Highlights - Moorish Andalucia

- ✓ Seville - The expansive royal palace of the Alcazar
- ✓ Cordoba - The remarkable arcaded hall of the unusual mosque-cathedral of Mezquita
- ✓ Cazorla - Authentic mountain town full of character
- ✓ Granada - The Moorish Alhambra Palace and beautiful Generalife gardens
- ✓ Grazalema Park - Picturesque limestone peaks surrounding the 'Pueblo Blanco'

Trip Essentials

Accommodation:	13 nights Standard Hotel
Included Meals:	13 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners
Start Point:	Join trip: Seville
End Point:	Trip ends: Seville
Transport:	Bus, Train, Public Bus, Taxi
Countries:	Spain

Moorish Andalucia

A perennial Explore favourite that combines Andalucia's highlight cities with scenic walks in places of outstanding beauty. We spend several days enjoying the wild mountains of Cazorla, Ronda and Grazalema. Included walks are graded easy to moderate. Of course, no visit to Andalucia would be complete without seeing the beguiling Moorish architecture, patios and gardens of Granada, Cordoba and Seville.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Accommodation Grade: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Moderate

These moderately paced tours provide some busy days with plenty of experiences to enjoy, as well as time to relax along the way.

Your trip itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

An Explore Leader is an integral part of any Explore trip and your trip will be led by one of our experienced Explore Leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Explore Leaders are the key to the success of our trips; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Explore Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this trip fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join trip in Seville

Arrive in Seville and check-in at the hotel. The Andalucian capital can trace its ancestry back over two thousand years. It is now home to three UNESCO World Heritage sites and is one of the three largest Old Towns in Europe (Venice and Genoa being the other two). Your time is free to make your first impressions of this lively city.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Orientation walk in Seville and visit to Alcazar

This morning we take a walk through the city, taking in its beautiful 'Mudejar' architecture (a mixture of Christian and Moorish styles), culminating in a visit to the Alcazar. This afternoon has then been left free, offering a chance to visit the city's immense Gothic Cathedral, and perhaps even enjoy the views from the top of the Giralda Tower.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3 Train to Cordoba; visit to Mezquita Mosque and Juderia

Today we take the train to Cordoba. Standing on the banks of the Guadalquivir river, Cordoba was one of the most brilliant Moorish cities and is for many, the most beautiful city in Spain. The Arabs established themselves in Cordoba as early as 719 AD, and before that the Romans had left their own mark here. The Roman philosopher Seneca (who was compelled to commit suicide by Nero) was born here. Cordoba has a wealth of treasures locked away in its back streets with secluded patios tucked behind delicate iron grills. The medieval synagogues in Cordoba and Toledo are the only two which remain in Spain today, Cordoba synagogue dates back to the 14th century. This afternoon we visit the renowned Mosque (Mezquita), an extraordinary and unique building where history has superimposed two faiths and erected two oratories on the one site (local guide optional). The early massive structure dates back to the 8th century, its roof supported by a forest of 850 coloured columns. Its jewel is the gleaming and superbly decorated Mihrab, which has survived in its original state. In the evening we suggest you take in some traditional flamenco music and dancing (optional).

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4 Free day in Cordoba with the option to watch a Flamenco show

This afternoon you will have time to explore the city at your own pace.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5 Visit ancient Ubeda en route to the mountain town of Cazorla

This morning we drive by bus to the ancient town of Ubeda, set amid myriad olive groves on the borders of Andalucia and La Mancha (memories of Don Quixote!). Its fine cathedral, seignorial mansions and other edifices in golden stone give an idea of the reconstruction after its recapture from the Moors. We continue to Cazorla, an attractive mountain town nestling in a spectacular natural amphitheatre, overlooked by two Moorish castles. The steep, winding streets, whitewashed houses and balconied windows of its old quarter are full of character. An afternoon orientation walk immediately puts us in touch with the 'real' Spain.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6 El Chorro gorge walk stopping at a Franciscan monastery on the way

Those interested in a full day walk (6 to 7 hours approximately) can join our Explore leader on El Chorro walk. This involves an initial 2 to 3 hours climb, following a path to an isolated Franciscan monastery. We continue to the spectacular gorge of El Chorro where we stop to picnic and marvel at the aerial gymnastics of the local avian population. Our return route provides excellent views over the surrounding countryside. The dark olive groves and (in season) the crimson splashes of poppies against the scorched earth appear as an impressionist painting. Finally we descend the valley back to Cazorla.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7 Drive to Granada with a walking tour on arrival

In the morning we travel by charter bus to the famous Andalucian city of Granada. The Arabic name 'Al Andalus' was given to the part of Spain under Islamic control for some 800 years. We include an afternoon orientation walk around the city which indicates the main points of interest including the Albaicin, the old Moorish quarter where many Islamic traditions are retained, giving the city its characteristic look of white walls and narrow streets. From the highest point are spectacular views across to the Alhambra and Generalife with the Sierra Nevada as a backdrop. When dusk falls, we suggest a stroll around the old Moorish Quarter to see its illuminated patios.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8 Visit Alhambra Palace and the beautiful gardens of Generalife

A major highlight of our trip is our guided visit of the magnificent palace of the Alhambra. In 1239 Muhammad al-Ahmar, founder of the Nasrid dynasty and Sultan of Granada, began work on this, the finest example of Moorish architecture outside the Arab world. The fabulous decoration in stucco, both inside and outside the buildings, reveals the purest expression of a sophisticated civilisation just before its decline. We also visit the Generalife, one of the most beautiful landscaped gardens in the world, which surrounds the summer residence of the Caliphs. It is possible to spend all day enjoying the Alhambra and Generalife, and those who wish to, may stay on after our visit.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 9 Train to the 'white town' of Ronda with a tour on arrival

After a free morning in Granda we travel to Ronda by train. On arrival in Ronda we transfer to our hotel and enjoy an afternoon in one of southern Spain's most attractive towns. Ronda is one of the original 'pueblos blancos' (white towns). There will be time to wander the streets and marvel at the El Tajo gorge and visit the oldest bullring in Spain.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10 Free day in Ronda to perhaps enjoy walks in El Tajo Gorge

Today is left free, you may choose to spend more time exploring Ronda itself or going off for walks in the nearby countryside . A walk down into the gorge and strolling along the bottom of the rocks where the old town is built on gives you a very different vantage point of the town.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 11 Free morning in Ronda before taking the bus to Grazalema

After a free morning in Ronda we will transfer to Grazalema, a delightful white village nestled beneath the limestone peak of San Cristobal, Grazalema is famous for hand-woven blankets first introduced during Moorish times and they are still made here on big old wooden looms. The village is a perfect base for walking. The Grazalema Parque Natural is one of the most stunning and ecologically important parks in Spain. The park is a micro-climate with the highest average rain fall in Spain and contains an ancient forest of Holm Oak and Montpellier Maple. You may get the opportunity to see buzzards and eagles soar high above, while mountain goats graze the mountain slopes. Those wishing to relax can ramble around the cobblestone backstreets whilst others might choose to go off for a walk into the hills.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 12 Free day to relax or enjoy a walk in the surrounding hills

Grazalema by many is viewed as the archetypal Sierra town, and its peaceful beauty is in perfect accord with its surroundings. Spending time in this village gives us the opportunity to try different walks though the rolling countryside and to nearby villages such as Benaocaz (4 to 5 hours). Spending time soaking up the atmosphere in the village square will give you a real taste of rural Spain and makes a fitting end to the walking part of our trip.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 13 Return to Seville

Today we head back to Seville for our final evening.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 14 Trip ends in Seville

Trip ends after breakfast. If you are staying on you may wish to explore the city further, perhaps visit one of Seville's many museums.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 13 breakfasts, 0 lunches,0 dinners included in the price of this trip. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Spain

Lunch £: 6.00 - 10.00

Dinner £: 12.00 - 16.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Spain

Bottle of Beer £: 2.50

Water £: 1.40

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Cordoba - Flamenco show 23 Euros; Arab baths and massage 32 Euros; Local guide for Mezquita and Juderia 10 to 15 Euros
Grazalema - Transport to start and from end of walks 5 Euros; Cueva de La Pileta 9 Euros; entrance; 35 to 40 Euros shared taxi
Seville - Bicycle tour of the city 25 Euros (3 hours); Casa de Pilatos 6 to 8 Euros entrance for either lower level or the whole building

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Explore Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow 10 Euros for tipping.

In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leader may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the trip.

Foreign Exchange

Spain

Major Language: Castilian Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Basque

ATM Availability: In cities and most major towns.

Credit Card Acceptance: Visa and Mastercard are generally accepted in larger restaurants and some shops.

Travellers Cheques: Not recommended.

Local Currency: Euros

Recommended Currency for Exchange: We recommend you take the majority of your spending money in Euros cash.

Where to Exchange: We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

Joining your Trip

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a ‘flight inclusive’ package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific ‘Joining Instructions’ prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

EXPLORE!
The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

Spain: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

Vaccinations & Protection

Spain

Nothing compulsory but Tetanus is usually recommended as a precaution. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider. Vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Preparing for your Trip

Climate

Spain

Overall, spring, early summer and autumn are ideal times for a Spanish trip - though the weather varies enormously from region to region. The high central plains suffer from fierce extremes, stiflingly hot in summer, bitterly cold and swept by freezing winds in winter. The Atlantic coast, in contrast, has a tendency to damp and mist, and a relatively brief, humid summer. The Mediterranean south is warm virtually all year round. Spain's Islands the Canaries and Balaerics experience very mild winters and warm summers making them ideal year round destinations.

Clothing

Outside of the summer months of June to September, Andalucia is generally mild, though the region of the Sierras (highlands) is subject to rain and if you intend to walk we strongly recommend you bring waterproofs. In addition during this time a warm sweater or fleece, is also recommended. Warm nightwear is advised as hotels are not well heated. Lightweight cotton clothing is advised from June to September.

Equipment

During the summer months we recommend you bring a sunhat and sunscreen as temperatures can be very high. A water bottle and a torch is essential. Walking poles recommended.

Footwear

Walking boots or shoes are strongly recommended for the walks in the Sierras, ideally waterproof just in case, plus comfortable trainers for walking around towns. Sandals are useful in summer.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of luggage and a daypack. We recommend a soft kit bag rather than a hard suitcase as we use a variety of public transport and taxis on this tour. A daypack is essential for walking in the Cazorla/Grazalema regions. Remember you are expected to carry your own baggage – so don't overload yourself.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Spain

Population: 46,030,109

Size of Country: 504,782 sq km

Major Language: Castilian Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Basque

ATM Availability: In cities and most major towns.

Religion: Roman Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Electric Supply & Plugs

Spain

2 Pin Round

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, or any number of unusual forms of transport . Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation

  Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern

  Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is ‘Available’ or ‘Guaranteed’ we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2016 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2016. 2017/18 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2017.

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