



Spain - Andalusia

The Alpujarras & Mystical Granada – Guided Tour 2009



Guided – Moderate 7 nights

This tour is designed for those wishing to blend inspiring walking landscapes with one of Spain's finest urban treasures, Granada. Our tour theme centers on Moorish Spain and the contributions of this great dynasty. Underlying themes include flora and fauna, rural village life, Moorish art and craft, Flamenco, tapas, wine, sherry and Granada's monumental gems. Five daily walks of 4-5 hours with plenty of breaks, interpretive moments and spontaneous explorations depending on the season! All walks are guided and have delicious tapas picnics with wine in lovely rest areas with fine views. Tour leader lives locally, speaks Spanish and has excellent knowledge of the region and its people. The Granada portion of the tour is fully guided and includes tours up to the Alhambra Palace (Entrance not included but can be arranged), the Albaizan Quarter and insights into Spanish cuisine and the Flamenco world.

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1: (Sunday)

The tour leader meets group at Malaga airport and private shuttle to our base in Capiliera, Alpujarra Valley. Scenic village orientation tour and welcome drinks in a local tavern.

DAY 2: (Monday) - Total Distance 8 km / Level Moderate and hilly

Our first day walk is a pretty circuit that takes in 3 of the Alpujarra's classic white villages. Famous for its white washed houses, twisted narrow alleys and potted geraniums, these hamlets show little signs of change over hundreds of years. Each village has a different story to tell and your leader will offer this insight including highlighting the vast array of wild flowers and fauna.

DAY 3: (Tuesday) - Total Distance 12 km / Level Comfortable to Moderate

Escape the Crowds

1

This morning we venture into a neighboring valley to explore no less than 6 remote villages and some extraordinary countryside with stunning views as far as the sea. A highlight today is an ancient Moorish bridge setting in a forest below some of Spain's (if not Europe's), most oriental hamlets.

DAY 4: (Wednesday) - Total Distance 11 km / Level Moderate

Our third walk takes us into the alpine zone of the Poqueira Ravine and within range of the Sierra Nevada's snowy peaks. Following this ancient path as it meanders along the Moor's hand made terracing and past age-old farms is a reminder of this culture's immense contributions.

DAY 5: (Thursday)

After breakfast a shuttle takes us to the heart of Granada and to our hotel on the lovely plaza Bib Rambla. The rest of the day your guide will escort you on a walking tour (3 hours) through Granada's highlights including the Albaizan district, the Moorish Souks, the Flamenco quarter and more. With your leader, you are guaranteed to make the most of your experience in this fine city – day and night!

DAY 6: (Friday)

Today we transfer by local bus shuttle (20 min) to the Sierra Nevada village of Guejar Sierra for a light walk along a lush river canyon beneath craggy peaks. This day out from Granada offers you another glimpse of the region's exceptional history and geographical beauty. Your tour leader departs after our final group dinner this evening.

DAY 7: (Saturday)

This morning we make an optional walking tour of either the Salamanca hillsides behind the Alhambra or the gorge at Monachil. The afternoon is free for you to visit the Alhambra, shop in the souks or just relax in the "tapas" atmosphere of Granada.

DAY 8: (Sunday)

After breakfast you can make easy connections to Madrid, Malaga, Seville and more...

2010 TOUR DATES AND PRICE

What does the tour price €885.00 per person sharing include?

- 7 nights quality accommodation in double rooms
- All breakfasts, 4 dinners and 4 Tapas Picnics with wine and 1 snack lunch for Granada walk
- Return transfer from Malaga airport to holiday base
- Local shuttles and baggage transfers
- 5 guided walks / 1 guided Granada tour (does not include entrance to) Alhambra Palace
- Knowledgeable local based Spanish Speaking Guide

Single Supplement: €120.00

2010 Tour Dates (all Sundays):

- June 6
- July 25
- August 29
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WHAT TO BRING

What should I bring with me?

Escape the Crowds

2

This depends on what time of the year it is. But normally, you will need to bring the following items:

- Sturdy yet comfortable hiking boots
- A layer of warm weather hiking clothes (shorts/ shirts/ bathing suit)
- A layer of cool weather hiking clothes (trousers/ long sleeve shirt/ vest/ jumper)
- Gloves and warmer hat if between December and early March
- A set of light waterproof clothing (just in case but useful for any high mountain activities)
- A hat, sun cream and sunglasses
- A day pack for walking and your camera
- water bottle (and opt. holder)
- walking stick (optional)
- personal clothes for your relaxation time and day off

Footwear: The importance of good footwear cannot be over stressed. You should not walk in sports training/running shoes; investing in waterproof boots will make you more comfortable. Good strong ankle high walking boots will support the ankle and provide invaluable protection on uneven ground. It is not a good idea to wear new boots on a walking holiday, as blisters are often a problem if boots are not worn in.

During the holiday blisters can be a problem. This can be avoided by wearing well worn-in boots with good fitting woolen socks. However, if you feel a tender spot coming on whilst walking, stop immediately and examine it. If it looks like a developing blister, protect it with a small piece of moleskin or elastoplasts. - It will be too late if left to the end of the day.

Walking stick or retractable ski pole: These have become increasingly popular as a walking aid for walkers of all ages and abilities. They do help enormously when crossing rough ground; they also assist progress when going up and down hills.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation

Night 1 to 4 – Capiliera – Finca Los Llanos (3*): Set just above Capiliera village on the edge of the forest this excellent lodge has cozy modern rooms with mountain views, a large swimming pool, terraced gardens, indoor/ outdoor bar, buffet breakfast and more.

Night 5 & 6 – Granada - Hotel Los Tilos (*2): One of the best locations in Granada; this recently refurbished hotel has superb views onto the Plaza Bib Rambla and the Cathedral. Friendly helpful staff, comfortable rooms and buffet breakfasts make Los Tilos a delightful place to stay.

We do reserve the right to change the accommodation around during, but we will always endeavor to provide a high standard.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Money

The unit of currency is the Euro (€), 100 cent = €1.

Travel Insurance

It is essential to take out holiday insurance to cover cancellation, personal accident, illness, or loss of possessions. This can be obtained from travel agents, airlines; we can also offer you a week long package for €35.00

Travel

The tour begins and ends at Malaga Airport. Once in Malaga, we transport you by mini-bus to our holiday base – normally 2.5-3 hours drive along the scenic, mountainous coast of southern Spain and then inland – away from the busy resorts! When your holiday is complete, you will be transported back to Malaga Airport in time for your next transportation link.

The meeting time at Malaga Airport on the first day of your holiday is normally 16:00 hrs (Terminal II arrivals hall, near Airport Info booth). If you arrive early, we can suggest a few pleasant site seeing options in Malaga city or on the coast and places to relax only minutes from the airport while you wait for the shuttle bus. For example you may hop on the airport shuttle train for the 15 minute journey either to the nearby shops and beaches or into the historic city of Malaga – where the new Picasso museum had recently opened – both destinations are great ways to warm-up to the local culture!

Drop off time to Malaga at the end of your holiday is normally 10 am or dependent on the group's travel times. Please bear these times in mind when arranging your travel to and from Malaga.