

Overview

Our walking tour extension is for lovers of the outdoors and guests that would like to undertake some easy going walking in the beautiful Andalucían countryside. We have a range of walks to suit all standards.

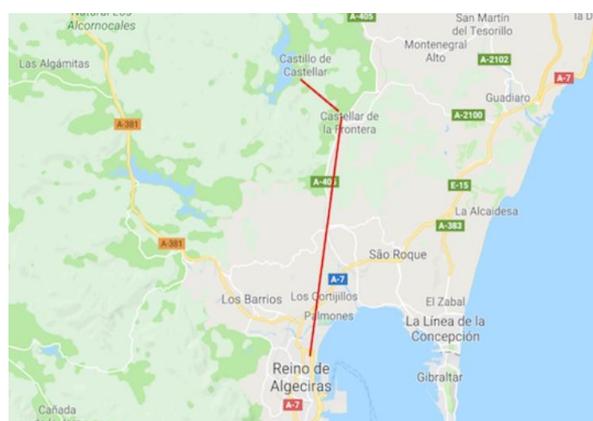


In addition to undertaking some of the lovely ‘Senderos’ marked walks, we also include visits to some of the beautiful ‘Pueblos Blancos’ of Andalucía.

Because some of the walks are on disused railway tracks, they are also used by cyclists and, if you wish, we can bring bicycles along if you would like to have a bike ride on them.

Day 1: MR HENDERSONS RAILWAY

At 09:30, we drive to the Ronda area to walk on one the most popular walks in Andalucía, ‘Mr Henderson’s Railway’. Mr Henderson’s Railway walk between Benaojan and Jimera de Libar is, particularly popular because it is long enough to be a challenge for some, but short enough to really enjoy the walk and see some lovely nature. In the 1890’s, a railway was built by the Algeciras (Gibraltar) Railway Company between Algeciras/Ronda/Bobadilla, where it connected with the existing Cordoba to Malaga line to give access to Madrid and Europe. The visionaries behind this line were a British Engineer *John Morrison* and *Captain Louis Lombard* backed by the wealthy financier *Sir Alexander Henderson*. The line is constructed through some of the most difficult terrain in the Iberian Peninsula.



By the late 19th century Gibraltar was isolated from the rest of Europe. The rough mule tracks that composed the road network in south west Spain did not lend themselves to comfortable travel.

The Spanish War Ministry would have none of it saying, ‘Spain will never consent to any line that would connect the enemy territory of Gibraltar with the Spanish rail network.’

Undeterred, Captain Louis Lombard, John Morrison and Sir Alexander Henderson pressed on and the result was a feat of British engineering



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unequaled in Spain, a railway line from Algeciras to Ronda through some of the most rugged country in the Iberian peninsula. British steel, British rolling stock, British style countryside stations, even the point levers set in the platforms and the wrought iron canopy brackets were manufactured in Britain.

Look out for goats and black pigs that frequent the area, they are quite safe and harmless, but your presence will frighten them. As well, keep an eye on the other side of the railway line, where you may see ibex clattering over the rocks on the mountains, or Griffon Vulture soaring on the air currents eagerly looking carrion. The walk is 7.5km from start to end, and the terrain is suitable for all walkers.



“One of the most picturesque train journeys in Europe.” Michael Portillo



After the walk, we visit Ronda where you can have lunch and enjoy some free time.

Ronda was first settled in the 6th Century BC by the early *Celts* naming it *Arunda*. The current Ronda, though, is of Roman origins, having been founded as a fortified post in the Second Punic War, by Scipio Africanus. Ronda received the title of city at the time of Julius Caesar. In the early 19th century, the Napoleonic invasion and the subsequent Peninsula War caused much suffering in Ronda, whose inhabitants were reduced from 15,600 to 5,000 in three years. Ronda’s area became the base first

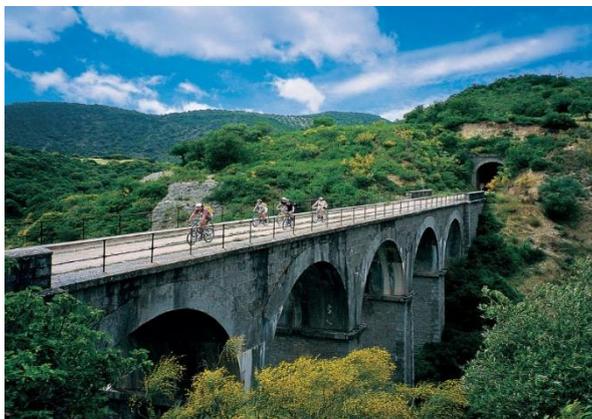
of guerrilla warriors, then of numerous bandits, whose deeds inspired artists and folklore. The iconic Puente Nuevo Bridge, towering 100m above the river below, spans the two parts of the town and the famous bullring, now a museum, is the oldest in Spain.

★ **Day 2: VIA VERDE DE LA SIERRA** After breakfast we depart for the Via Verde de la Sierra. Set in beautiful countryside, the Via Verde de la Sierra is a 36km disused railway line that was built between Olvera and Puerto Serrano in the 1920’s. For political/financial reasons, the tracks were never laid and it is now used by cyclists and walkers.

The natural landscape that crosses the Vía Verde, amongst illuminated tunnels and impressive viaducts, is mainly dominated by the Guadalete and Gaudalporcún rivers, and in the highest part,



the Gaudamanilriver. It passes through areas as spectacular as the Peñón de Zaframagón, the largest vulture reserve in Andalusia and one of the most populated in Europe. There is a Visitor Centre on the route.



We take you to an access point from where you can walk a 10km stretch of it to the mid-point station at Coripe, where you can have lunch.

After the walk we drive to the picturesque white village of Zahara de la Sierra, set high above the reservoir for a short visit and admire the spectacular views.

Zahara de la Sierra is in the province of Cádiz and is perched on a mountain, overlooking a valley and a man-made lake formed by the dam.

The town was originally a Moorish outpost, overlooking the valley.

Due to its position between Ronda and Seville, it was a perfect site for a castle to be built to serve as a fortress in case of attack.

The remains of the Moorish castle still exist.

It was ruled by Arabs until 1407 when it fell to the Christians, but it was recaptured by the Emirate of Granada in 1481. This capture gave a pretext to Castile's war against Granada. It was finally captured by Castilian troops under command of Rodrigo Ponce de León, Duke of Cádiz in 1483.



Day 3: VIA VERDE DE LA ACIETE After breakfast, we depart for the Subbética National Park and a walk on the Via Verde del Aciete in the province of Córdoba.



Another picturesque setting with surrounding mountains, you can walk or cycle this Via Verde.

Via Verde means the Green Route.

After the walk we have lunch and a wander in the white village of Zuheros.

Zuheros is a small village of around 640 inhabitants and is famous for its cheese. Many consider Zuheros to be one of the best of the white villages, even going as far as to claim it the most beautiful village in the world; "*el pueblo mas bonito del mundo*".



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We make a short afternoon visit to the Baroque town of Priego de Córdoba. Priego is found on the *Ruta del Califato* trade route of the Caliphate. It is called “City of the water” because of the many springs and “Jewel of the Baroque Native of Córdoba” for the multitude of its Baroque-style constructions. It has been referred to as “the lock and key to the Kingdom of Granada”.

The oldest section of Priego is its *Barrio de la Villa*. It is bordered on one side by the town’s natural fortress, a high cliff. The alleys that wind through this part of the town are Moorish in style, decorated proudly by the populace with flower pots and religious icons. Some homes retain the ancient tunnel system that went from their cellars (bodegas) to the castle.



The Subbética National Park is the Mecca for Olive Oil, producing some of the best oil in the world and, in particular, the Olive Oil from Priego de Córdoba is highly prized. *Venta del Barón* winning the title of best olive oil in the world for three consecutive years, 2014, 2015 and 2016.



Niceto Alcalá-Zamora y Torres (6 July 1877 – 18 February 1949) was born in Priego de Córdoba. A Spanish lawyer and politician, he served, briefly, as the first prime minister of the Second Spanish Republic, and then from 1931 to 1936—as its President until the start of the Spanish Civil War.

His house is now a museum and well worth a visit, giving a good insight to the lead up to the divisive war.

What’s included

- All tour transportation in one of our air-conditioned tour vehicles
- Transfers to airport, train station and local Málaga Hotels between the hours of 09:00 and 18:00
- Dedicated Walking Guide/Tour Leader
- Bed and breakfast accommodation in the Villa
- Spanish Sales Tax

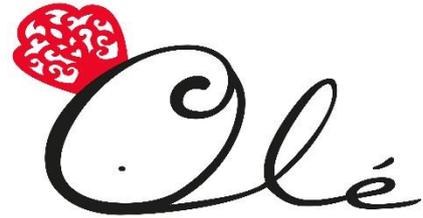


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What’s not included

- Any other meals, drinks, subsistence
- Any flight, train, bus or other transportation
- Any expenditure not detailed above



Notes

- The walks vary in length between 7km and 10km. Wear comfortable shoes, drink lots of water and use sunscreen cream
- In addition to the itinerary detailed here, we have a portfolio of walks of differing levels of difficulty. If you want to change any of the walks or include others, our Walking Guide/Tour Leader will be pleased to make any changes for you
- All bookings are subject to our terms and conditions, a copy of which are included in the booking form
- Prices are based on two guests sharing a room
- Prices are in £GBP

Tour Extension Price ‘Walking’	Per person	Single Supplements
Villa	£385	£70
Room upgrades if available		
Premier Suite	£60	
Junior Suite	£45	
Apartment	£45	
Antequera Hotel	£495	£98
Antequera Parador	£590	£140