



Spain  
Granada

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## INTRODUCTION

The city of Granada, which shares its name with one of the eight provinces making up Andalusia, is one of the most beautiful, historical and legendary in the world. Situated to the east of the region, the provincial capital, flanked by the Rivers Darro and Genil, sprawls across the foothills of Sierra Nevada. To the west lies the flat, fertile region of La Vega; to the north, the Altiplano, or tableland; and to the south, Costa Tropical. A designated Nature Park and Reserve of the Biosphere, Sierra Nevada boasts the highest peaks on the Iberian Peninsula: the Mulhacén towers above us at 3,482 m, while the symbolic Veleta has an altitude of 3,398 m.

Well-blessed by art and history, Granada was the peninsula's last Arab kingdom. Its prize monument, the timeless Alhambra, looks down onto the old districts of Albaycín, Sacromonte and Realejo, while the modern city revolves round avenues such as Gran Vía de Colón and Reyes Católicos.

Granada has an excellent road network: the A-44 Expressway (E-902) goes to the north of Andalusia; the A-92 takes us to Málaga and Seville and, towards the east, to Almería, Murcia

*District of Albayzín*

and Levante; and the N-432, known as the Caliphate Route, covers the distance to Córdoba.

The airport (Chauchina), just 17 km from the capital, runs regular flights to Spain's major cities. For those preferring to travel by train, there is a rail service to the country's mainline stations.

As far as accommodation is concerned, Granada is one of the best choices Andalusia has to offer. In addition to a vast selection of three, four and five-star hotels, we find the much-admired *parador*, or state hotel. Situated inside the Alhambra enclosure, it is one of the most popular on the national network. When it comes to eating, the menus at the city's many restaurants offer dishes to suit all tastes and pockets.

A short but severe winter comes between a mild autumn and spring. Because of the city's proximity to Sierra Nevada, temperatures vary greatly from day to night. Winter visitors are advised to bring warm clothes. In summer, temperatures are lower than in the other Andalusian



capitals and it can become quite chilly after dark. The rainy season comes in the autumn and winter months.

## HISTORY

There is some discrepancy about the origin of Granada. According to one legend, it was founded by one of Noah's daughters, while another claims that this honour fell to Granata, the daughter of Hercules. One thing, however, is clear: long before the arrival of the Moslems, Granada had been





*Sierra Nevada*

important as an Iberian and Roman settlement. The city played a central role in the peninsula's Christianisation. Documents dating back to 60 A.D. speak of the city's patron saint, Cecilio, who started to spread the Gospel in this corner of Roman *Baetica*.

Furthermore, around the year 300, the Spanish Church held its first council in what was then known as *Iliberis*.

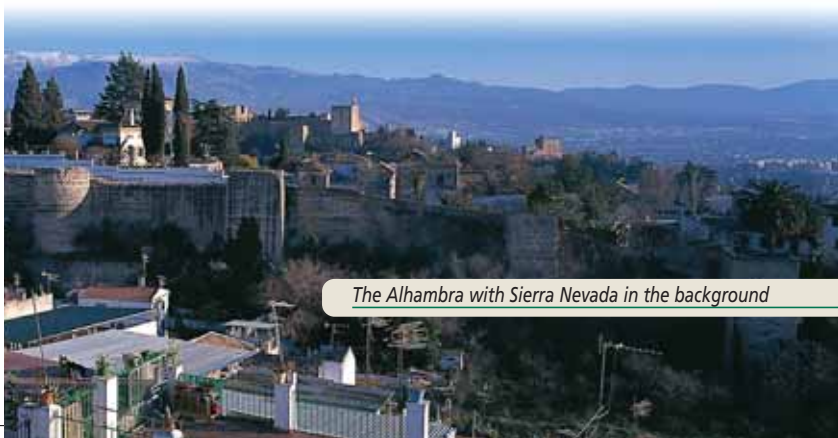
Some time after the Moslems crossed the Strait of Gibraltar in 711, they founded the Caliphate of

Córdoba. On its dissolution, Granada began to acquire greater relevance. In 1030, the city was moved from Elvira to the Albayzín Hill for defence purposes.

Although the North African Zirí Dynasty began to proclaim its first kings at that time, it was not until 1238 that Ibn al-Ahmar, a king born in the province of Jaén, would conquer the city and proclaim the first government under the Nazarí Dynasty.

His descendants governed the last Moslem stronghold on the Iberian Peninsula for 254 years. Particularly noteworthy among the dynasty's kings were Yusuf I and Mohammed V, known, according to the chronicles of the period, not only for their sense of justice and wisdom but also for their part in the construction of some of the most stunningly luxurious quarters at the Alhambra and the Generalife.

Finally, on January 2 1492, King Boabdil surrendered to the Catholic Sovereigns, Ferdinand and Isabella, when they entered Granada and so completed the Reconquest. Initially, the terms of surrender were generous.



*The Alhambra with Sierra Nevada in the background*

While Queen Isabella insisted that cultural co-existence was possible, her great-grandson, Philip II, son of Emperor Charles I, put an end to those dreams of peace and harmony by enforcing decrees restricting the Moslem population's rights and liberties. The year 1500 witnessed the first uprising at Albayzín and 61 years later, John of Austria crushed a Moorish rising in the Alpujarras and with it, the rebel leader, Aben Humeya. In the following centuries, Granada's monumental heritage would multiply. During the 1600s, the city adhered to the principles of baroque, building monasteries, convents and churches in accordance with the artistic canons of the period. With the arrival of the nineteenth century, the city experienced another golden age when the bourgeoisie, which had amassed a fortune from the sugar plantations on Costa Tropical, sponsored the construction of a vast avenue in honour of Christopher Columbus: Gran Vía de Colón. The sides of the avenue

were lined with modernist and historicist buildings of great artistic value. Meanwhile, the city spread to Camino de Ronda, the dividing line between the city and the fertile plain. New parks and gardens were designed, together with long boulevards and a series of communities to accommodate the growing population. After the Civil War of 1936-1939, Granada embarked upon a slow revival in the economic, social and cultural spheres, ensuing in the consolidation of its university, the ever-greater popularity of Sierra Nevada as a winter sports resort and the recovery of a good number of historical buildings, which have since turned into hives of activity as Andalusia's leading cultural centres.

## THE ANDALUSÍ LEGACY AND ITS ROUTES

The *Legado Andalusí*, or Andalusian Legacy, is a touristic and cultural project aimed at the

*Royal crown. Royal Chapel*







Cuarto Dorado

recovery and promotion of the historical features of a civilisation which flourished in the south of the Iberian Peninsula for eight long centuries. Run by a foundation of the same name, the project is based at Corral del Carbón de Granada, an old commodities exchange not far from Calle Reyes Católicos. The foundation has plotted four touristic routes, which together form a designated European Cultural Itinerary. These routes start out from towns and villages with close ties to the historical past of *Al-Andalus* and end at the palatine complex of the Alhambra, the most impressive fortified town born of that culture.

Firstly, the Caliphate Route, running from Córdoba to Granada through open country and olive groves that spread into the southern area of the neighbouring province of Jaén; secondly, the

Washington Irving Route, which starts out from Seville and makes its way past hills, farmland, plains and upland; thirdly, Ruta de los Nazaríes, beginning in the north of Jaén, coming down the Guadalquivir Valley to cross Sierra Mágina and then into the mountains encircling Granada; and lastly, the Almorávides and Almohades Route, setting off from Cádiz and passing through Málaga to end in the capital of the evocative Nazarí Kingdom, with the Granada regions of El Poniente and the Alpujarras to one side.

Visitors are provided with “tourist passports” which they may have stamped at the information booths situated on all the routes making up the *Legado Andalusi*. Afterwards, these passports may be exchanged for a gift at the foundation’s headquarters.



## Tours round the city



entitling the holder to 10 free rides on any of the microbus or city bus routes.

As a rule, museums are open from Tuesday afternoons to Sundays and are closed on Mondays and on Tuesday mornings. Further information is available at the tourist information offices.

As most of the city's sights are within easy reach of one another, the best way to get about is by foot. However, if transport is required, there are taxi ranks on the main avenues and streets while the city bus company runs services to all the districts.

It is a good idea to buy the Granada Tourist's Voucher to avoid queuing when wishing to visit the city's main sights and museums. On sale at the booths in the Alhambra and Generalife and also at branches of the savings bank, Caja de Granada, the voucher covers admission to the cathedral, the Royal Chapel, the Monasteries of La Cartuja and San Jerónimo, Parque de las Ciencias and, of course, to the Alhambra and Generalife. It also includes free admission to several museums while

## Alhambra and Generalife

As far as monuments go, the **Alhambra** is the most prized possession of *Al-Andalus*. Its name is taken from the Arabic term meaning *the red one*. Reclining on the Sabika Hill, separated from **Albayzín** by the River Darro, the Alhambra is much more than a bedazzling palatine complex. The castle, palaces and gardens, charged with

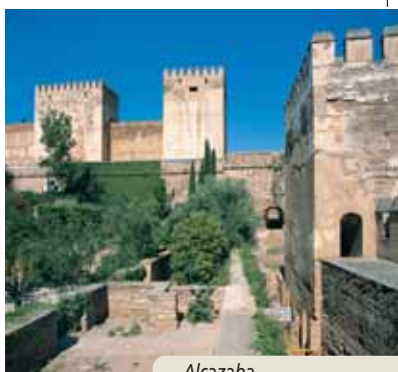




symbolic and mythological content, have earned the Alhambra the UNESCO title of World Heritage Site for their great historical and artistic value.

The usual way to approach the Alhambra is via Plaza Nueva. **Cuesta de Gómez** leads to the Renaissance gate known as Las Granadas, which opens into a thick forest. The path on the left takes us to the pillar, **Pilar de Charles V**. The gate, **Puerta de la Justicia**, is decorated with a huge horseshoe arch crowned by a carved open hand and a key, the dynastic and religious symbols of the monarchs who once resided in the palaces.

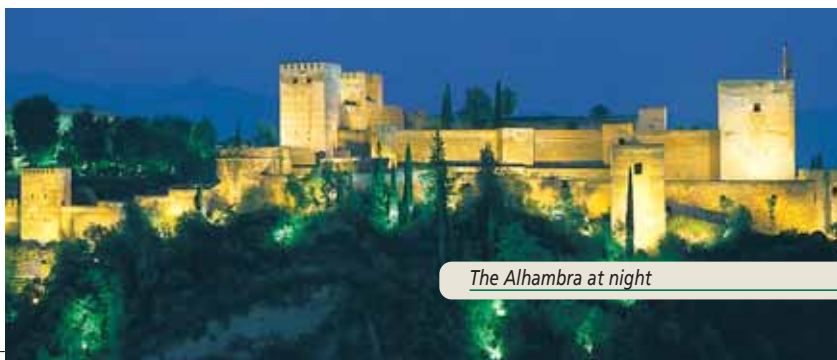
A slope climbs up to Plaza de los Aljibes, to the left of which stands the castle, the **Alcazaba**, the complex's oldest construction, together with the towers, **Torres Bermejas**. With a triangular footing, the castle is surrounded by solid walls defended by looming towers. Inside lie the parade ground and the military



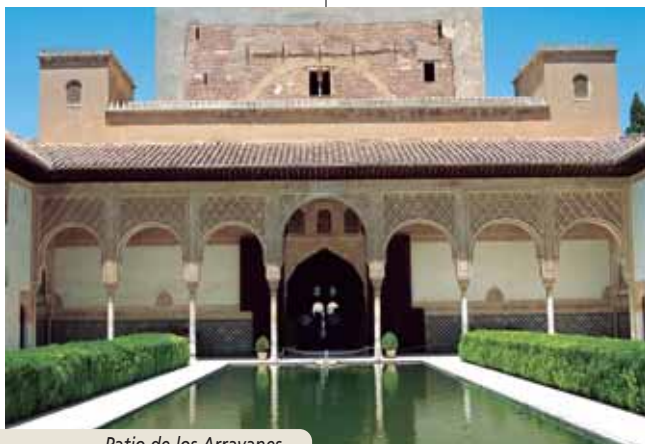
*Alcazaba*

quarter. At the front, we see the tower, **Torre de la Vela**, overlooking Granada and the plain.

The gate, **Puerta del Vino**, leads into the palace quarters. A flight of steps takes us down to the **Mexuar**, once used as a meeting room by councils of ministers. Just opposite, the oratory, adjacent to the **Cuarto Dorado**, or Golden Room, where the sultan would hold his audiences before a bustling court of public servants and administrators. The exquisitely-decorated façade of the **Cuarto Dorado** patio is one of the finest to be found in the Alhambra. In the



*The Alhambra at night*



*Patio de los Arrayanes*

middle, we notice a fountain, a replica of the one built in days of greater glory. There are two doors in the façade: the one on the right led to the family quarters in the time of the sultanate and the one on the left, to Patio de los Arrayanes.

In any Arab construction, the patio is the main feature, all the more so when it forms part of a royal enclosure.

**Patio de los Arrayanes** boasts a huge pond reflecting the tower, **Torre de Comares**, and the seven arches in open plasterwork showing the way into the chamber, Sala de la Barca. The patio, originally built for governmental purposes, is hemmed by the rooms of the palace, Palacio de Comares, the residence of the sultan's four legitimate wives. Inside **Torre Comares**, we find Salón de Embajadores, where the monarch would receive his

most distinguished ambassadors. It was here, for instance, that Boabdil surrendered Granada to the Catholic Sovereigns. This spacious hall is decorated with ceramics, plasterwork and interlaced designs, while the walls bear verses and words of exaltation inscribed by skilful artisans from faraway lands. The most recurrent exaltation reads as follows: "It is to God alone that grandeur, glory, the empire and power belong". Inside, we see nine rooms, all the same except the one in the centre, opposite the entrance. Reserved for the sultan, it looks towards the pool in Patio de los Arrayanes. The breathtaking ceiling, covered in carved cedar wood, depicts the seven heavens of the cosmos, the path which, according to Islamic doctrine, must be travelled by the devotee's soul until reaching the eighth, the home of Allah.



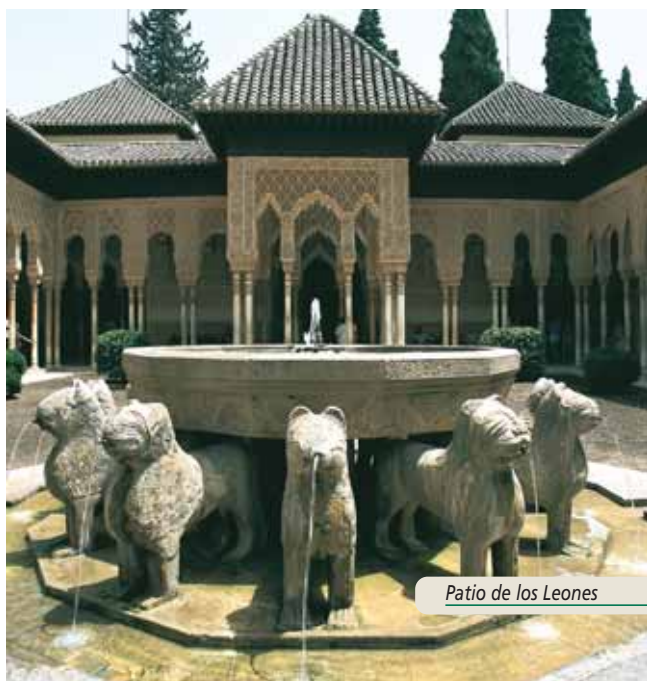
Next to Palacio de Comares stands **Palacio de los Leones**, the monarchs' private residence, built on the instructions of Mohammed V in the last third of the fourteenth century. The palace is laid out round a patio enclosed by 124 slender columns evoking an idyllic palm grove. The decoration, in the form of stalactites, stucco and plasterwork, symbolises one of the finest constructions in the history of *Al-Andalus*.

In the centre sits a fountain, supported by 12 lions. In former times, this fountain was clad in golden hues which heightened its marble background.

Surrounding the patio are the palace chambers, such as Sala de los Abencerrajes, situated at the southern end, opposite Fuente de los Leones.

The chamber takes its name from a powerful North African family who had a confrontation with Granada's last Moorish king. Legend has it that the family's worthiest males were murdered on this very spot. By all accounts, the order was issued by Boabdil himself when he learnt that his wife was having an affair with one of them in the princely gardens of the Generalife.

Sala de los Reyes, situated to one side of Patio de los Leones, is the chamber where





*Gardens at the Generalife*

receptions and festivities used to be held. The vault is bedecked in frescoes, the work of the Genoan artists who lived in Granada during the final years of the Nazari Kingdom. Next, Sala de las Dos Hermanas, leading to the vantage point known as Mirador de Lindaraja, lies beneath a sumptuous cupola from which 5,000 tiny prisms are hung. On its walls, we can read the Alhambra's most renowned verses: "It is a garden that I am, adorned by beautiful things; you will learn of my being if you contemplate my beauty".

Close by Mirador de Lindaraja, we come to Sala de las Frutas, where Julio Aquiles and Alexander Mayner, both

pupils of Raphael, painted the ceiling frescoes in 1537. This is also the chamber where Washington Irving stayed and wrote his famous *Tales of the Alhambra*.

Walking along one of the galleries, we reach **El Partal**, belonging to the Alhambra's early palatial quarters. As we approach the pond, we might stop to admire the reflection of the tower, Torre de las Damas, before continuing towards the Generalife, passing Torre de la Cautiva and a bit further on, Torre de las Infantas.

Above the Alhambra, at the foot of the hillock, Cerro del Sol, awaits the **Generalife**, whose name comes from the



Arabic for *the architect's garden*. This recreational enclosure was used by the Nazarí monarchs as a retreat in the hottest months of the year. Terraced gardens of exuberant vegetation refreshed by countless water features surround Patio de la Acequia, an evocative pavilion looking out onto Granada's old quarters.

The complex forming the Alhambra has a number of post-Reconquest monuments, such as the former **Convent of San Francisco**, now a state hotel. Originally, Isabella the Catholic was buried in the convent's cloister. Years later, however, her body was taken to the chapel, Capilla Real de Granada, to lie beside that of her husband, Ferdinand. Another instance is the **Church of Santa María de la Alhambra**, the city's first cathedral. In the Gothic style, it was erected on the remains of the royal mosque. Adjacent stands the palace, **Palacio de Carlos V**, one of the most impressive Renaissance monuments in Spain. Designed by Pedro Machuca in 1527, the building boasts a dressed-stone façade. The square footing contrasts with the circular, colonnaded patio, nowadays the frequent scene of cultural events. Entering

the Renaissance building, we might visit the museum, Museo de la Alhambra, with its displays of Hispanic-Arab art, covering the period from the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries. In addition to vases and decorative objects, we find an interesting collection of ceramics, polychrome wooden pieces and finely-modelled plasterwork.

Upstairs is the Museo de Bellas Artes, or Fine Arts Museum, with a comprehensive exhibition of pictorial work by sixteenth and seventeenth-century artists. A good number of works of art from the city's churches and convents are kept in the museum's rooms, which have been entrusted with some of Alonso Cano's best canvases.

*Palacio de Carlos V*





## Albayzín and Sacromonte

**Albayzín** is the *Andalusí* district *par excellence*. First inhabited in the eleventh century, it was during the time of the Nazarí Dynasty that it became a solid urban nucleus after the construction of medinas and the main residences and mosques.

Our tour commences at the square, **Plaza Nueva** (1), adjacent to Plaza de Santa Ana, where there is a church of the same name. Designed by Renaissance architect Diego de Siloé, the church was begun in 1501 and completed 62 years later. Salient features include the prepossessing façade, the Mudéjar tower



and the chancel, decorated with beams in the interlaced style so characteristic of Moorish architecture.

To our left, the River Darro, observed by buildings piercing its banks; and, to our right, the bridges leading to the busy districts of Almanzora and Antequeruela, nestling at the foot of the Alhambra.



Along one of the streets climbing up towards Albayzín stands the house, **Casa de los Pisas** (2), a palace dedicated to the life and work of San Juan de Dios and currently in the hands of the religious order known as Los Hospitalarios. Cuesta de Santa Inés, just opposite the bridge, Puente de la Cabrera, leads to the convent of the same name.

Facing the remains of Puente del Cadí, the bridge which once joined the Alhambra to Albayzín, is **El Bañuelo** (3), one of the oldest and best preserved Arab baths in Spain. Dating back to the mid-eleventh century, the rectangular building has a set of arches supported by capitals from various historical periods. Inside, the classical quarters of the *hammam* can still be seen. The cold, warm and hot rooms were once frequented by the inhabitants

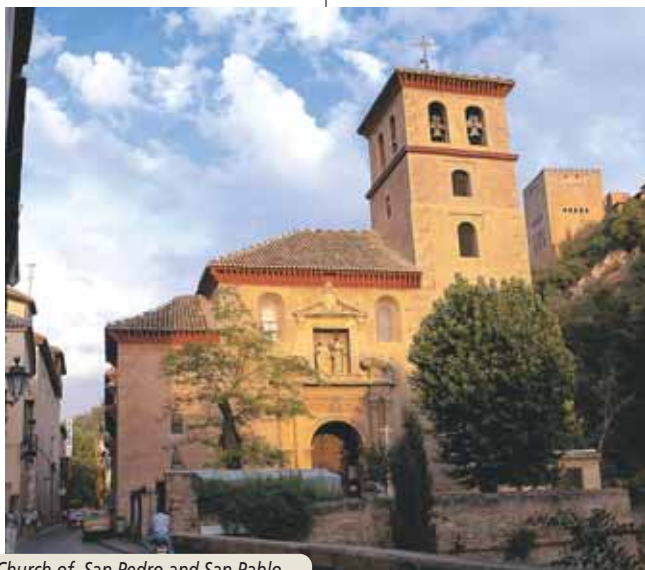
of this densely-populated district, traditionally associated with handicrafts and trade.

Continuing along Carrera del Darro, we arrive at the **Convent of Santa Catalina de Zafra** (4), founded in 1520 by Hernando de Zafra, secretary to the Catholic Sovereigns. The Renaissance frontispiece conceals a Moorish home dating back to the fourteenth century.

**Casa de Castril** (5) is a sixteenth-century palace now housing Granada's Archaeological Museum. The astonishing plateresque façade is attributed to Diego de Siloé. Of particular note is the frontispiece lintel, adorned with carvings of the former occupants' coats-of-arms. Stepping inside, we are struck by the staircase and the arcaded patio. The exhibition rooms contain a display of the

*Plaza Nueva*





*Church of San Pedro and San Pablo*

various cultures that have passed through Granada and province, with a special focus on prehistoric times, the era of Roman civilisation and the early years of Moslem domination.

Opposite Casa de Castril, we are drawn towards the **Church of San Pedro and San Pablo (6)**, with a diaphanous porch opening onto the riverbank. The Latin cross footing is enhanced by chapels in the Renaissance style where baroque images of considerable artistic interest are worshipped. A splendid Mudéjar roof gives the church a finishing touch. Calle Gloria slopes up towards the **Church of San Juan de los Reyes (7)**, built on the remains of an early mosque. The Christian

bell tower was erected on the old thirteenth-century minaret.

Carrera del Darro ends at **Paseo de los Tristes (8)**, one of Granada's liveliest and most cosmopolitan spots. From here, we enjoy a beautiful view of the Alhambra, with Torre de Comares as the focal



point. On the other side of the bridge, Puente de los Tristes, we take the pathway to the fountain, Fuente del Avellano, a meeting point for thinkers, musicians and poets since the early twentieth century. The fountain was once frequented by people of the calibre of Ganivet, Falla and Lorca.

Walking along Cuesta del Chapiz, we pass **Palacio de los Córdoba** (9), now the premises of Granada's Municipal Archive. Further on, we come to **Casa del Chapiz** (10), which has been converted into the School of Arab Studies. Considered to be the city's largest Moorish house, the remarkable building consists of two tastefully-decorated Arab homes dating from the start of the sixteenth century.



*District of Sacromonte*

Taking Calle Peso de la Harina, we reach the district of **Sacromonte**, where most of the cave dwellings have been dug out of the hill known as Valparaíso. Traditionally, the whitewashed, working-class homes, which seem to be embedded in the earth, have been inhabited by gypsy families who live up the evenings by organising flamenco *fiestas*, known locally as *zambras*. At the end of the slope, we see the abbey, **Abadía de Sacromonte** (11), founded by Archbishop Pedro de Castro in the seventeenth century. It is here that the remains of Saints and Martyrs Cecilio and Tesifonte are worshipped and the *Libros Púmbles* were found. According to legend, these books were commissioned by King Solomon.



*Paseo de los Tristes*

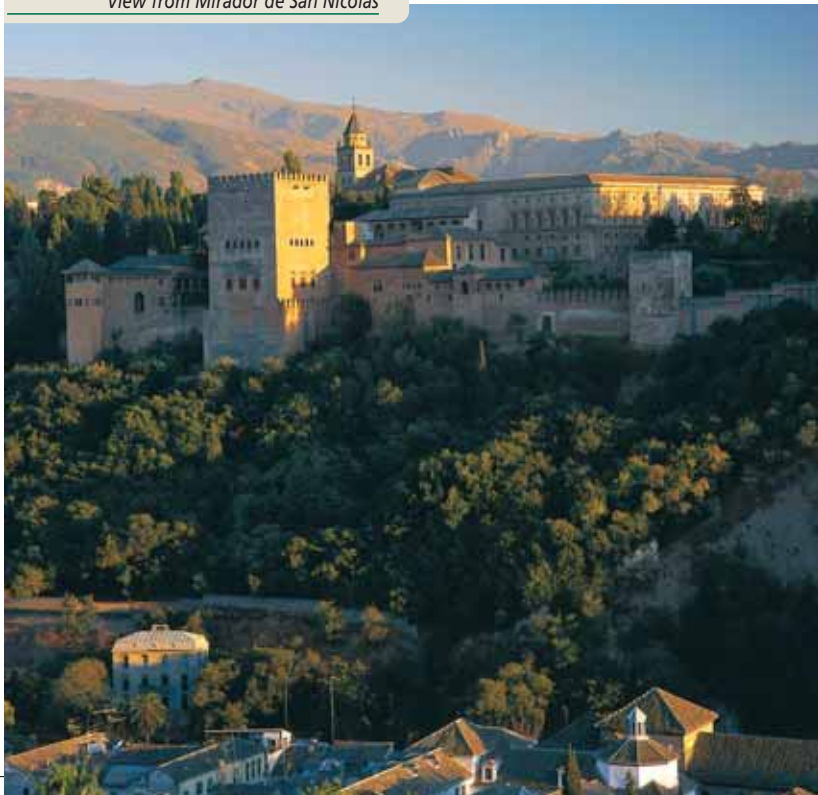


Now we retrace our steps and return to Cuesta del Chapiz to visit the square, **Plaza del Salvador** (12), and the church of the same name, constructed on the remains of another of the many mosques dotting the cityscape in Nazarí times. Inside, the courtyard is still in tact, surrounded by late thirteenth-century pointed horseshoe arches.

Close by Plaza del Salvador is the vantage point, **Mirador de San Nicolás** (13), one of the busiest and best-known squares in Granada. Here, we pause to admire the finest of panoramic views of the

Alhambra and Generalife. On a clear day, it is possible to see the highest peaks of Sierra Nevada on the left and the contemporary city on the right. The square is also the location of the Church of San Nicolás, a plain, mid-sixteenth-century Mudéjar temple not far from the remains of a well going back to Arab times. Just below the square, overlooking the Alhambra, there is a gardened villa which was once the home of Belgian painter Max Moreau. The artist bequeathed his work to the city and it may now be seen alongside temporary photography exhibitions.

*View from Mirador de San Nicolás*





*Casa de Castril and the Church of San Pedro*

A few streets further up, we come to Plaza Larga, the heart of Upper Albayzín, and the arch, Arco de las Pesas, built in the eleventh century by the kings of the Zirí Dynasty. The wall, also known as Alcazaba Cadima, runs parallel to Cuesta Alhacaba. In days long gone, the eleventh-century wall linked up with the gate, Puerta de Elvira. Nowadays, its remaining sections stand close to the palace, **Palacio de Dar-al-Horra** (14), which, as legend would have it, used to be the residence of Sultana Aixa, the mother of King Boabdil. Nearby we come upon the markedly Gothic-Mudéjar monastery, **Monasterio de Santa Isabel la Real** (15), founded by the Catholic Queen. In Plaza de San Miguel Bajo, a church of the same name awaits us and, a few steps away, the **Church of San José** (16), formerly a

marabout mosque which was built in the eleventh century and is considered to be one of the city's oldest constructions. To return to our starting point, Plaza Nueva, we go down Calle Calderería Vieja and perhaps stop off at one of Granada's legendary tea parlours or take a look inside the arts and crafts shops now run by Granada's Moslem community.

*Monasterio de Santa Isabel la Real*





Cathedral

## From the Cathedral to La Cartuja

**Granada Cathedral (17)**, situated at the back of Gran Vía de Colón, was erected on the pillars of the main mosque. Although the original design was of Gothic influence, architect Diego de Siloé would transform it into a colossal Renaissance work which would be finished off in the seventeenth century with Alonso Cano's baroque façade. All three styles co-exist in perfect harmony in one of the most lavish places of worship to be found in the southern peninsula.

The façade, completed in 1667, depicts a vast iconographic scene divided into three sections after the manner of Roman triumphal arches. Inside, the cathedral is split into five large naves designed by the Gothic architect, Enrique Egas. Much later, when Diego de Siloé was put in charge of the works, a series of thick columns adorned with capitals in the classical style was added. In the centre of the basilic footing, we find the high altar, surrounded by an



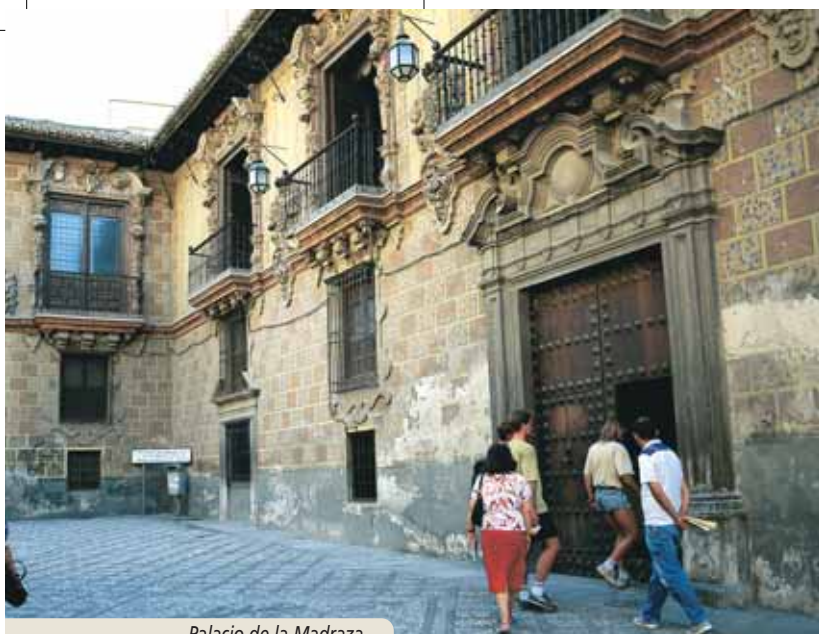


*Royal Chapel*

enormous ambulatory  
spanned by doors opening  
into a group of chapels  
dedicated to various fathers  
of the Catholic Church.

Commissioned in 1505, the  
Royal Chapel or **Capilla Real**  
(18), built in the flamboyant  
Gothic style, guards the  
mortal remains of the  
Catholic Sovereigns, of Jane  
of Castile, also known as Jane  
the Mad, and of her husband,  
Philip the Fair. The crypt is





*Palacio de la Madraza*

entered from the façade, which looks out onto Calle Oficios. Features of interest include the royal pantheons and the stylishly impressive wrought iron grille, the work of Master Bartolomé. The museum at the Royal Chapel possesses one of the most fascinating displays of religious art to be found in the province of Granada. Apart from a collection of tombs, a room has been set aside to exhibit a number of royal appurtenances, such as the crown and sceptre borne by Isabella the Catholic when the city was taken. We also see a large collection of fifteenth-century paintings belonging to the Flamenco School, a gift from the Queen of Castile just before she

died. Wedged between the Royal Chapel and the cathedral are the church, Iglesia del Sagrario, and La Lonja.

Crossing Calle Oficios, we come to the **Madraza** (19), the old School of Koranic Studies founded by Yusuf I. Converted at a later date to house the Town Hall, the building is now part of the University of Granada. A few steps away stands the José Guerrero Centre, named after one of the most outstanding artists in Spain's mid-twentieth-century abstract art movement. A modern building facing one side of the cathedral, the centre is the location of some of the Granada-born painter's best works.

The **Alcaicería** (20) was the leading silk market during the Nazarí Era. Rebuilt after a terrible fire, it preserves its old labyrinthine layout, occupied by small businesses selling jewellery, silverware, ceramics and marquetry work.

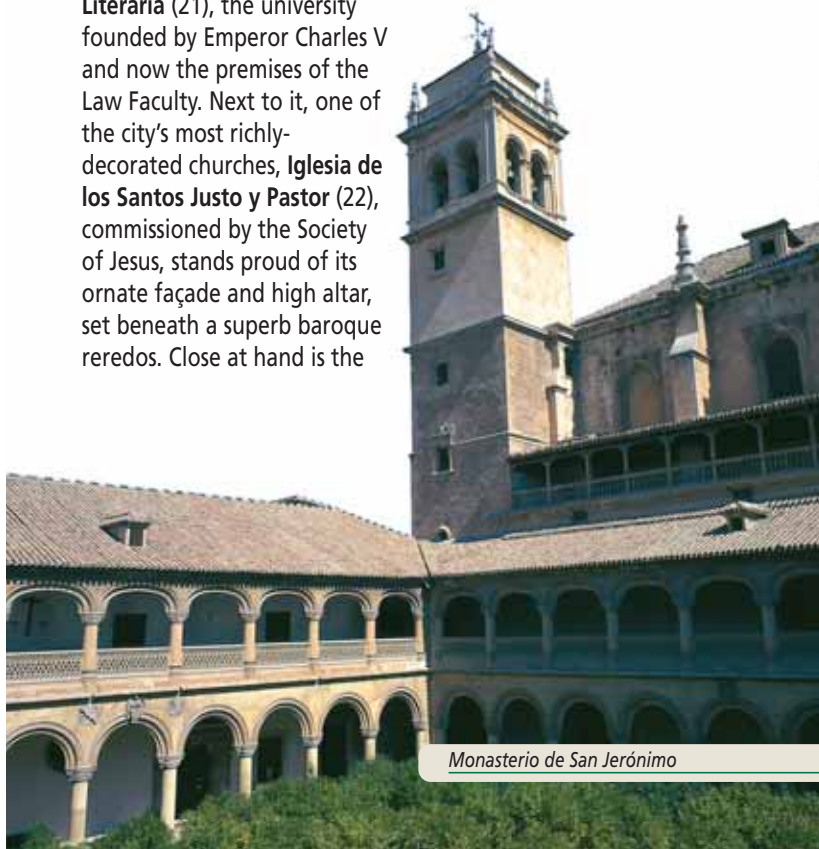
A stone's throw away from the main sightseeing area is Plaza de Bibrambla, popularly known as the Flower Market. This square is ideal for taking a leisurely stroll after the hustle and bustle of the nearby shopping area.

Calle de San Jerónimo runs into Plaza de la Universidad, the site of **Universidad Literaria** (21), the university founded by Emperor Charles V and now the premises of the Law Faculty. Next to it, one of the city's most richly-decorated churches, **Iglesia de los Santos Justo y Pastor** (22), commissioned by the Society of Jesus, stands proud of its ornate façade and high altar, set beneath a superb baroque reredos. Close at hand is the

hall of residence, **Colegio Mayor de San Bartolomé y Santiago** (23), a sixteenth-century building arranged round a lightsome, two-storey cloister.

Walking down Calle de Jerónimo, we reach the church, Iglesia del Perpetuo Socorro, on the corner of the streets, San Juan de Dios and Gran Capitán. If we turn into Gran Capitán, we arrive at the monastery, **Monasterio de San Jerónimo** (24), on which building commenced in 1504.

What strikes us most about the monastery is its two gardened cloisters,



*Monasterio de San Jerónimo*



embellished by fountains and orange trees, not forgetting the adjacent church with its engaging altarpiece and choir, the work of Granada's most celebrated sixteenth and seventeenth-century artists.

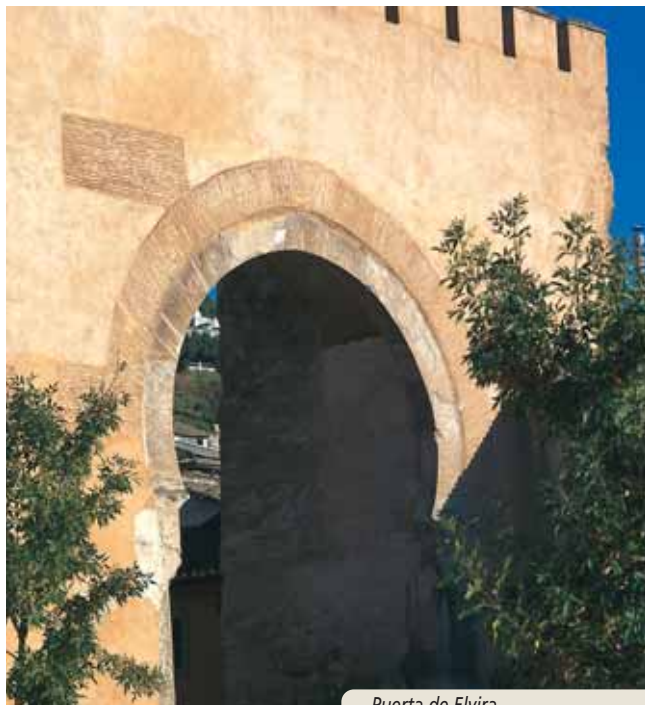
Further up the street, we might stop at **Hospital y Basílica de San Juan de Dios** (25), built in accordance with baroque canons. The hospital runs round two patios decorated in Granada tiling and murals, while the church is noted for its churrigueresque altarpiece, beautifully carved out of fine wood.

Calle San Juan de Dios slopes up towards the gardens, Jardines del Triunfo, passing Gran Vía de Colón on the right. One of the contemporary city's main arteries, Gran Vía was built in the early twentieth century by the sugar barons and is replete with eye-catching historicist and modernist buildings.

The main point of interest in Jardines del Triunfo is **Hospital Real** (26), the first civil work to be sponsored by the Catholic Sovereigns. Started in 1504, the building might be described as being midway

*Hospital Real*





*Puerta de Elvira*

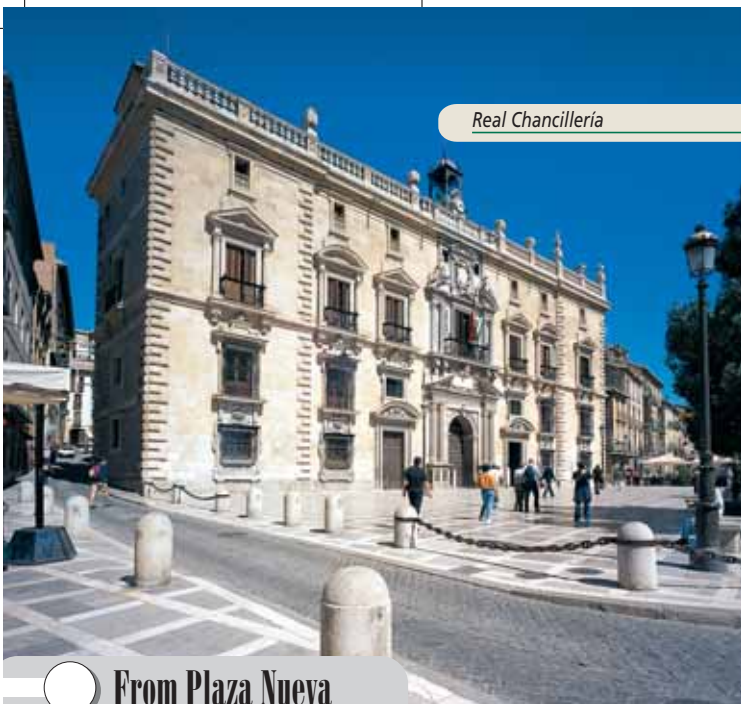
between Late Gothic and Early Renaissance. It is now occupied by the offices of the University of Granada Vice-Chancellor and the Central Library.

removed from the aesthetic canons of that time. The profusely-ornamented church, the sacristy and the sacarium all contain pieces of great artistic value.

Within easy reach of Hospital Real is the gate, **Puerta de Elvira** (27), framed by a huge horseshoe arch dating back to the late eleventh century. Calle Acera de San Ildefonso takes us to Convento de la Merced Calzada and the Church of San Ildefonso, to end up at **Monasterio de la Cartuja** (28), built in the purest baroque style. Although works commenced in 1515, the monastery is far

*Monasterio de la Cartuja*



*Real Chancillería*

## From Plaza Nueva to Realejo

Plaza Nueva acquired its present appearance after a tunnel was built over the River Darro. On one side of the square, our gaze is met by the **Real Chancillería** (29), built in 1530 to the design of Diego de Siloé. The façade is the work of stonemason Martín Díaz and sculptor Alfonso Hernández. Calle Reyes Católicos leads into Plaza de Isabel la Católica, surveyed by a sculpture of the Catholic Queen and Christopher Columbus, the work of Mariano Benlliure. Nearby is the **Corral del Carbón** (30), formerly a







Corral del Carbón



commodities exchange and now the head office of the foundation, *Legado Andalusi*.

The façade is enhanced by a horseshoe arch and a panel of *mocárabes*, or interlaced designs. Inside, the building is split into two arcaded storeys.

**City Hall (31)** runs along one side of Plaza del Carmen. In 1858, it was moved from its previous location in Madraza to the remains of a Calced Carmelite Convent. The classicist façade is the work of architect Juan Pugnaire, who added an impressive row of central balconies. Within the building's walls there is an austere cloister decorated with tiling.



*City Hall*

Plaza de Puerta Real, embellished by a central fountain, Fuente de las Batallas, is the point of convergence of a number of streets: Reyes Católicos, Recogidas, Ángel Ganivet and lastly, Acera del Darro, which follows the course of the River Genil. In the adjacent square, Plaza de Bibataubín, there is a palace of the same name and just opposite, on Carrera del Genil, we see **Basílica de Nuestra Señora de las Angustias** (32), named after the city's patron saint. The baroque altarpiece is embraced by a number of chapels in which religious

images from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are kept.

Continuing along Carrera del Genil towards Camino de Ronda and the ring road, we find ourselves at Parque de las Ciencias, an interactive museum specialising in science and the universe. The rooms are arranged so as to stimulate the public's direct participation while light, lenses and sounds create a world bursting with sensations. Computers are also very much at the forefront, in addition to the planetarium, the butterfly enclosure and the exhibitions organised by *Legado Andalusi*. It is well

worth climbing the tower to enjoy an excellent view of the city.

Back in the centre, our next stop is Plaza de Mariana Pineda, which is beside Plaza de los Campos, the location of **Cuarto Real de Santo Domingo** (33), a palatial tower set in gardens used as a retreat by the Nazarí monarchs during Ramadan. In **Plaza de Santo Domingo** (34), we might care to visit the church of the same name and admire the magnificent, early sixteenth-century façade, complete with three half-pointed arches. The predominantly Gothic interior is complemented by a

number of baroque chapels. Facing us as we come out of the church is Casa de los Girones and, a few blocks away from here, **Casa de los Tiros** (35), the house which once belonged to the sixteenth-century noble family, Granada Venegas. The façade, bearing an inscription of the family motto, "The heart commands", is reminiscent of a fortress. The crenellated turret features two balconies and five symmetrically-arranged caryatids.

Inside the house, we are pleasantly surprised by the room, Cuadra Dorada, and its

*Casa de los Tiros*







*The house of Manuel de Falla*

polychromate ceiling. Next door to Casa de los Tiros is Casa del Padre Suárez, now taken up by the Real Chancillería Archive.

Plaza del Realejo and Calle Molinos make their way up to **Campo del Príncipe** (36), so called because this open space was the spot where Prince John, the son of the Catholic Sovereigns, was married in 1497. Just by Campo del Príncipe stands the Church of San Cecilio, commenced in 1540 on what was originally the site of a mosque. The church is situated opposite Cristo de los Favores, a stone crucifix much revered by the people of Granada. According to tradition, if believers visit the sculpture at three o'clock

on Good Friday afternoon, their prayers will be answered. Devotees claim that this is true.

Calle Antequeruela Baja climbs up to one of the city's most legendary hotels, the Alhambra Palace, whose terraces command an amazing view of Granada and the plain. Afterwards, we might direct our steps towards the nearby foundation, **Fundación Rodríguez Acosta**, and **Instituto Gómez Moreno** (37). Sharing the same villa, the foundation and the institute are girdled by delightful gardens decked out in ponds and classical sculptures.

The foundation's premises include the private quarters of artist Rodríguez Acosta, who designed the garden villa.

His studio is on the upper floor, while some of his paintings, dating back to the early twentieth century, hang in the lower rooms.

At Instituto Gómez Moreno, there is an exhibition of one of the largest private collections in Andalusia.

The archaeological pieces, together with the canvases and sculptural works, were collected by the institute's sponsor.

Strolling down Callejón Niño del Royo, we come out at one of the city's oldest Arab



*Carmen de los Mártires*

constructions, **Torres Bermejas** (38), three towers built as a lookout post for defence purposes.

We now go back the way we came to call at the house-museum, **Casa Museo Manuel de Falla** (39), a small, gardened villa where the great musician composed some of his most celebrated works. Inside, we discover a collection of his personal belongings, books and scores. Calle Antequeruela Alta takes us up to the auditorium, Auditorio Manuel de Falla, a modern building constructed in 1978 by architect José María García de Paredes. The auditorium consists of a large concert hall, rehearsal rooms and a library specialised

in Manuel de Falla's works. Starting on the right-hand side of the building, a pathway leads to **Carmen de los Mártires** (40), yet another of the city's engaging spots. This gardened villa was built on the site allegedly occupied by dungeons for Christian prisoners at the time of the Nazarí Dynasty. Once the city had been conquered, a Discalced Carmelite Convent was built there and, from 1582 to 1587, the priorate was held by mystic poet San Juan de la Cruz. It was not until the eighteenth century that the present recreational villa, set amid gardens, pools and vantage points, was built. Nowadays, it is used for social and cultural events.

## TOURS ROUND THE PROVINCE

### Sierra Nevada

The mountain range of Sierra Nevada boasts the highest peaks on the Iberian Peninsula, with the Mulhacén at an altitude of 3,482 m and the Veleta, looked on as the range's symbol, at 3,398 m. Stretching over more than 86,200 hectares, the Sierra Nevada National Park is surrounded by a Nature Park measuring 169,239 hectares, with 60 municipal districts belonging to the provinces of Granada and Almería scattered over its slopes. The area has also been declared a Reserve of the Biosphere for its sizeable stocks of endemic flora and fauna.

Leaving Granada by the GR-420 Road, thought to be the highest in Europe, we arrive at the ski slopes of Pradollano (Sierra Nevada), one of the continent's leading winter sports resorts. Equipped with ski lifts for transport to the main slopes, Pradollano also caters for visitors with a selection of hotels and restaurants. In summer, when the snow and ice have disappeared, the road from Pradollano to the Alpujarras town of Capileira is clear but may be used only with the permission of the environmental authorities. This road climbs up to the





Pradollano



top of the Veleta, winding its way among glacial cirques and lagoons. During the summer months, we can make out herds of wild goats (*Capra hispanica*) grazing on the mountain

tops; and, at sunset, if we look southwards, we can see the distant Mediterranean Sea and the silhouette of the mountains of Er Rif, Morocco.

## Las Alpujarras

**Alpujarra** is an Arabic word meaning *hill of grass*. In terms of history and scenery, Las Alpujarras is one of the richest regions in the province of Granada. Situated on the southern slopes of Sierra Nevada, it acts as a backcloth to a vast number of whitewashed towns and villages, which combine an original layout with a curious form of popular architecture. Clinging to abrupt hillsides, the villages nestle amid fast-flowing rivers and dense forests of holm oak, chestnut and conifer.

Las Alpujarras was the last stronghold of the Moors before they were driven out for good towards the end of sixteenth century. It was here that the troops of Philip II

engaged in bloody battles against the rebel leaders, the inheritors of a Nazarí Dynasty which had ceased to exist. All that remains of those battles, however, is a memory, for the towns of Las Alpujarras were repopulated by old Christians from Galicia, Castile-La Mancha and Jaén.

The usual way to enter the region is by the A-44 Road. Kilometres further on, the



*Patio. Lanjarón*





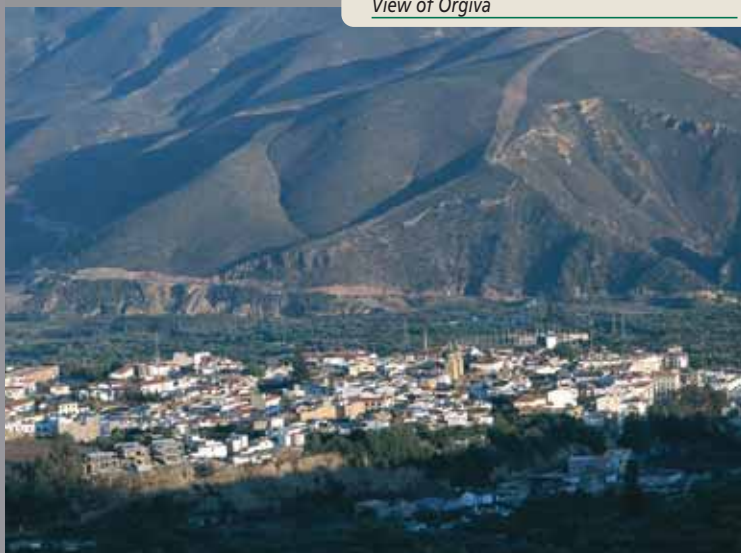
*The spa at Lanjarón*

A-348 Regional Road runs between the town of Durcal and **Lanjarón**, considered to be the historical gateway to Las Alpujarras. Renowned for its medicinal mineral waters, the Lanjarón Spa, dating back to the eighteenth century, has five springs whose waters are specially recommended for rheumatic, pulmonary and digestive complaints, along with obesity and diabetes. In the town centre, just a few

steps away from the hotels opened in the late nineteenth century, stands the Church of Nuestra Señora de la Encarnación. Built in the mid-sixteenth century, it possesses one of the province's most exquisite baroque altarpieces.

What might be described as the anteroom of the Upper and Lower Alpujarras, **Órgiva** has become the region's commercial and

*View of Órgiva*







*Capileira*



administrative centre. Slotted between Sierra de Lújar and the southern foothills of Sierra Nevada, the town used to be an inevitable stopover on the route to Granada's Costa Tropical. This crossroads, lying in the River Guadalfeo Valley, is also the location of the sixteenth-century church, Iglesia de la Expectación, noted for its graceful twin bell towers.

The gully known as Barranco del Poquiera, one of the region's most popular spots, is the setting for three picturesque towns: **Pampaneira, Bubión and Capileira**. As we enter the first, we are greeted by a set of tiles bearing the message: "Traveller, come and live with us". The most interesting aspect of all three towns is the popular architecture reflected in the houses, streets and squares. Steep alleyways lead to clusters of houses topped with grey clay roofing, on which chimney pots crowned with slate are perched. In Bubión, there is a church with a remarkable Mudéjar ceiling and in

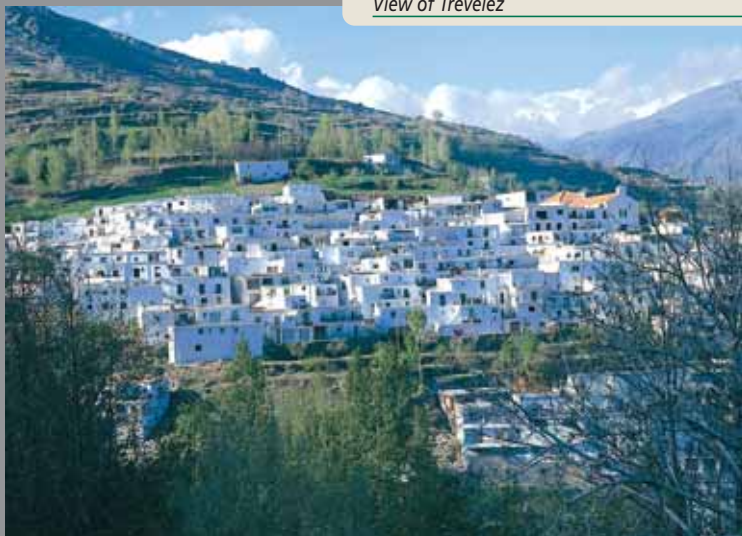
Capileira, we might feel inclined to go round the museum of ethnography and popular customs, dedicated to the memory of Pedro Antonio de Alarcón.

In the nineteenth century, towns like **Pitres** and **Pórtugos**, sitting on the lower ridges of the Mulhacén peak, were a favourite haunt of Romantic travellers and are today very much as they were then. **Trevélez**, known far and wide for its ham-curing techniques, is considered to be the highest village in Spain. Its three districts, lower, middle and upper, are at an altitude of 1,476 m on the banks of the River Trevélez, in whose waters trout swim



*View of Pampaneira*

by the score. The Upper Alpujarra is studded with towns like Busquístar, Bérchules, Cádíar and Válor; and of course, Yegen, where Hispanist Gerald Brenan lived in the first half of the twentieth century and wrote, amongst many other works, *South of Granada*.



*View of Trevélez*



## Costa Tropical

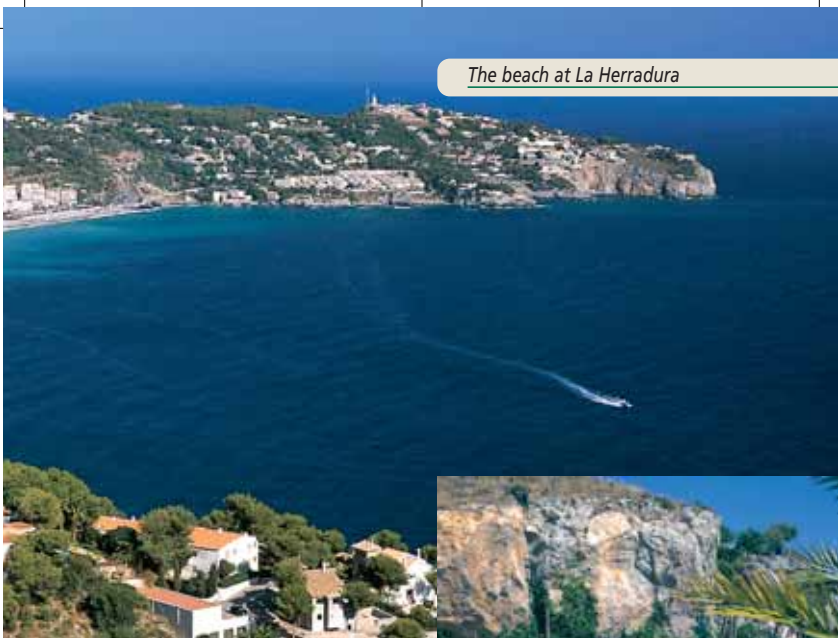
Costa Tropical, stretching along 103 km of shoreline, is a sequence of beaches and coves lapped by clean, crystalline waters. This region of Granada is bathed by the tepid waters of the Mediterranean Sea, once sailed by the leading civilisations of the Western World. Because of its subtropical microclimate, Costa Tropical is blessed with an average annual temperature of over 20 degrees, meaning that bathing is a pleasure all year

round. Added to this, it basks in sunshine for 320 days a year. Such a benevolent climate has led to the widespread cultivation of tropical fruits such as mango, avocado, cherimoya and papaya on the slopes overlooking the beaches. The full length of the coastline is dotted with lookout towers and beacons from which the sea was surveyed during the period of Arab domination. In recent decades, quality tourism has prospered, with the resultant appearance of



año 2004



*The beach at La Herradura*

hotels and restaurants in all the main towns along the route. One of Costa Tropical's main attractions is its nautical sports facilities, where the more adventurous may choose, for instance, between scuba diving and paragliding.

*Marina del Este*

**La Herradura** is a tiny fishing village tucked away in a bay, with the hill known as Cerro Gordo on one side and the Mona Headland on the other. Close by we find the nudist beach, **Cantarriján**, and the pleasure harbour, Marina del Este, ranking among the finest on the Andalusian coastline. **Almuñécar**, the oldest town in southern Granada, is an ideal place for the Archaeological Museum, housed in the cave, Cueva de

los Siete Palacios, where collections of pieces and household articles from the Phoenician, Roman and Arab Eras are on display. The castle, Castillo de San Miguel, is an old Arab fortress looking down onto the old quarter. On the promenade, our attention is aroused by a bronze statue of Abderramán I, who landed on the beach, Playa de San Cristóbal, in 755.



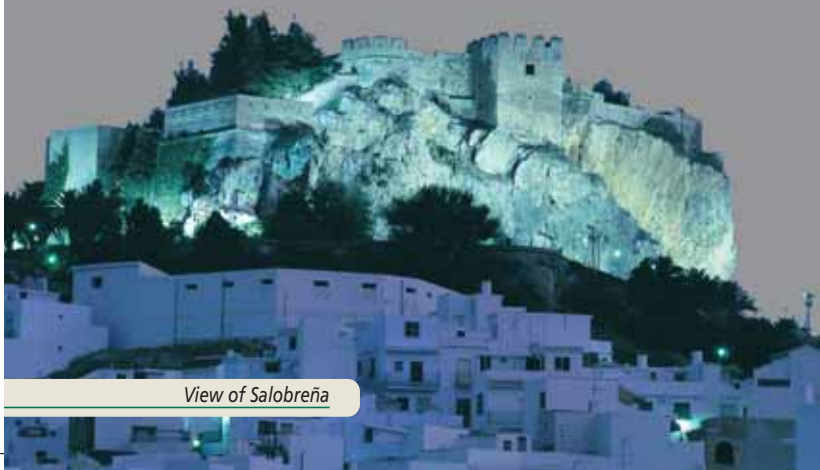
*Nautical sports centre. Motril*

Other places of interest include the Ornithological Park and Parque del Majuelo.

When taking the N-340 Road, running all the way along Costa Tropical, drivers should be mindful of the curves and bends ahead, particularly on the section leading to **Salobreña**. Here, whitewashed houses bespatter a rocky crag capped by an Arab fortress. The quaintest districts in Salobreña are El Albayzín, El Brocal and La Fuente. The Mudéjar Church of Nuestra Señora del Rosario is worth a visit to admire the

sixteenth and seventeenth-century religious images, after which we might be tempted to go down to the beach and take a dip in the welcoming, warm waters.

**Motril**, the province's second most-densely populated town, has 20 kilometres of coastline and seven beaches, the most attractive of which is Playa de Poniente, hemmed by a promenade noted for its nightlife. As far as sights go, the town is proud of its shrine, Santuario de Nuestra Señora de la Cabeza, built on a former summer palace



*View of Salobreña*



*The beach at Castell de Ferro*

belonging to Sultana Aixa, the mother of Boabdil. At the foot of the sanctuary lies Parque de las Américas. While in the town, we should not miss the main church, the baroque Iglesia Mayor de la Encarnación, or Casa de la Palma, a Moslem sugar refinery where the first pre-industrial sugar museum was installed. Going towards the east, we reach **Torrenueva**, sitting on one side of Cape Sacratif. **Carchuna** and **Calahonda** are two small summer holiday resorts in the proximity of **Castell de Ferro**, where a Roman castle looks down at the world while the cliffs at the foot of Sierra de la Contraviesa crash into the sea. **Castillo de Baños**,

**La Marmola**, **Melicena** and **La Rábita** are four small fishing towns which have remained unchanged despite the passing of time. **La Rábita** is a maze of tiny coves and quiet beaches.

*La Mamola*







*Castle turrets. Guadix*

## Guadix and the Altiplano

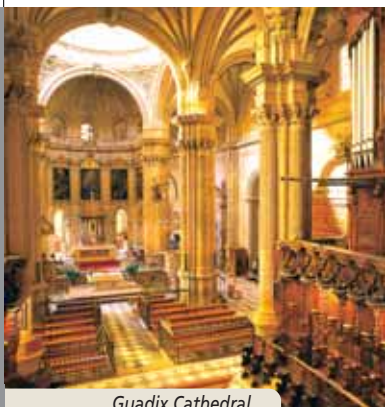
The regions making up northern Granada are squeezed between huge massifs. We see how the northern slopes of Sierra Nevada plunge into Marquesado del Zenete, the home of towns such as **La Calahorra**, with its sixteenth-century castle complete with a superb, marble courtyard in the

Renaissance style; or **Alquife**, famous for its iron mines. From **Jerez del Marquesado**, the region's administrative capital, trips to the northern face of Sierra Nevada are organised.

**Guadix** is the largest town in northern Granada and also the one with most sights to be seen. A crossroads between Levante and Andalusia, it is



*The castle. La Calahorra*



*Guadix Cathedral*



best known for its "troglodyte quarter", where over 2,000 cave dwellings spread through the popular districts of La Ermita and Las Cuevas. One of the caves accommodates the Museum of Art and Popular Customs, where a comprehensive collection of the area's ceramics and handicrafts is on display. Next to the museum is the vantage point, Mirador de la Magdalena, with an astonishing view of the

northern tableland or Altiplano, which has an altitude of 1,000 m.

The town of Guadix has a vast historical and artistic heritage, starting with La Alcazaba, or castle. Declared a National Monument, it is an old construction of Arab origin, flanked by turrets built in the eleventh century. Next, the cathedral, the town's star sight, consisting of a medley of styles.



*The castle. Baza*

Originally Gothic, it acquired a Renaissance air when Diego de Siloé took a hand in the design, to be followed by chapels built to baroque canons. As a matter of fact, the baroque choir is considered to be among the best in Spain. Other churches of interest include Santa Ana, Santo Domingo and San Francisco. The arcaded Plaza del Ayuntamiento has something of the Castilian about it, striking a contrast with the Andalusian ambience pervading the old quarters.

The A-92 Expressway splits as it passes through Guadix. Taking the Almería Road, we reach the region,

Marquesado del Zenete, while the Baza Road will take us to the Altiplano. Baza is an age-old city at the foot of a mountainous chain, now a designated Nature Park. It was here that the Dama de Baza (Lady of Baza) was found, a valuable piece of Iberian origin, dated around the third and fourth centuries B.C. The castle tells of the town's Arab origin, as indeed do the twelfth-century Arab baths, situated in the old Jewish quarter. The Collegiate Church of Nuestra Señora de la Encarnación was erected in the sixteenth century on the remains of what was once the main mosque. Although the footing is in the Gothic style, the façade is plateresque. We should also find time to visit the Town Hall, Palacio de los Enríquez and the fountain, Fuente de los Caños Dorados.

To reach the villages of the Altiplano, we take the A-330 Road and, just seven km from Galera, we call at Orce and perhaps visit the Archaeological Museum, followed by the Museum of Prehistory and Palaeontology, located in the castle keep at Alcazaba de las Siete Torres. Here, most of the palaeontological findings unearthed at nearby Ventamicena are on display.



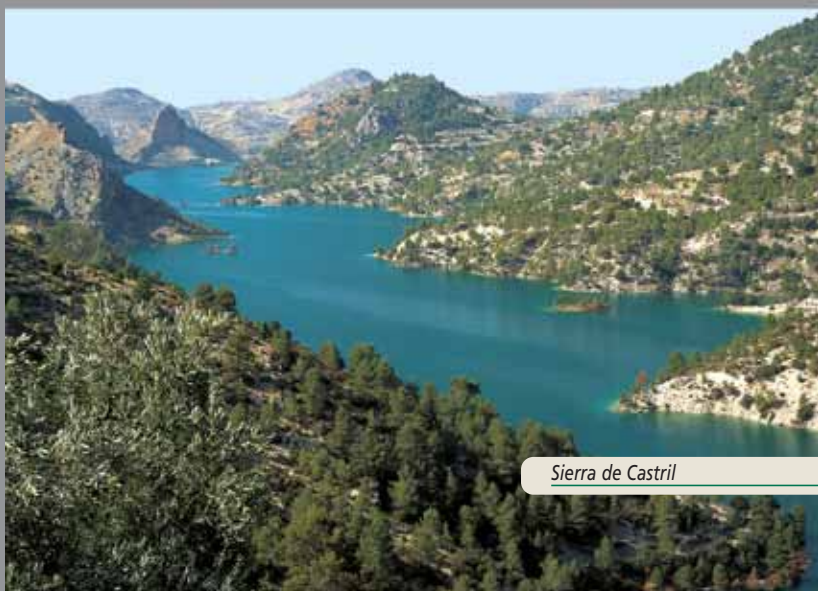


*Street in Orce*

At **Huércar**, a number of interesting sights await us, such as the early sixteenth-century Gothic-Renaissance Collegiate Church of Santa María la Mayor, designed by Diego de Siloé. We notice the old sacristy with its frontispiece from the era of Isabella II and inside, the

Gothic vaults. Next, the Church of Santiago, resting on the remains of the old mosque; the Convent of Santo Domingo; and the Modernist house. Not far from Huércar, we come to **Castril**, the gateway to the Sierra de Castril Nature Park, the continuation of Parque de Cazorla, Segura y las Villas, in the province of Jaén.

**La Puebla de Don Fadrique**, in the area of Sierra de la Sagra, is the last village in northern Granada. The municipal district borders with the provinces of Jaén, Albacete and Murcia. In the old quarter, we find the Church of Nuestra Señora de la Quinta Angustia and Casa de los Patiño, a handsome seventeenth-century ancestral home.



*Sierra de Castril*



## Montefrío

### El Poniente

The A-92 Road runs from Granada to El Poniente, which shares its borders with the provinces of Málaga, Córdoba and Jaén. This region has gone down in history books as the last frontier of *Al Andalus*. In 1492, before making their grand entrance into Granada, the troops of the Catholic Sovereigns set up their camp in the village of **Santa Fe**, situated on the fertile plain irrigated by the River Genil.

At no great distance, we find ourselves in **Fuente Vaqueros**, whose main attraction is the house, now a museum, where poet Federico García Lorca was born.

Lorca spent many a summer in the Garden of San Vicente, where he wrote a lot of his literary works. At what is now a museum and cultural centre, we have the chance to see drawings and paintings by Dalí, for instance, in addition to the original furniture. The exhibition room is used to hold cultural events relating to the poet's life and works.

**Montefrío** is one of the province's quaintest villages. The first buildings to catch our eye are the Arab fortress and the village church, standing together atop a steep crag. Below, we stroll down streets lined with houses in the traditional design to come out

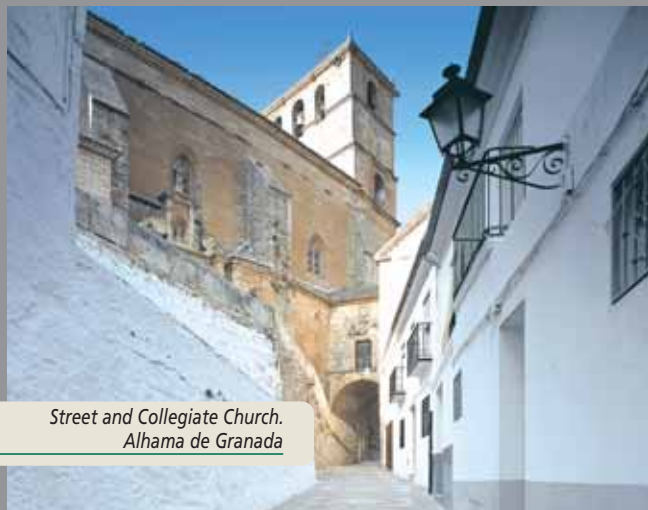


at the square and the church, Iglesia de la Encarnación, which, with its totally circular footing, reminds us of a Roman pantheon. Also worth visiting is the granary or Pósito, an eighteenth-century building now used as a cultural centre.

The Convent of Santo Domingo and the village church, which has been

attributed to Diego de Siloé, complete our sightseeing tour of a village encompassed by countless beauty spots and palaeontological sites. In the area known as Peña de los Gitanos, valuable prehistoric dolmens and diagrammatic cave paintings have been found.

Shielded from the sea by a mountainous ridge, **Alhama de Granada** lies to the



*Street and Collegiate Church.  
Alhama de Granada*





*Casa de la Inquisición.  
Alhama de Granada*

southwest of Granada. Its pretty, whitewashed houses are anchored on a sheer crag, scarred by the waters of a fast-flowing river. We should make a point of visiting the Arab Baths, situated in the interior of Hotel Balneario. The original Roman construction, dating back to the first century B.C., was completed in the Arab Era with a series of arches and vaults in the caliphal style. In the old quarter, we call at the church, Iglesia de la Encarnación, built on the site of the main mosque as commanded by the Catholic Sovereigns. Dated around the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, this Gothic temple reflects the work of the

renowned architect, Diego de Siloé. Beside it, Casa de la Inquisición, once the seat of the Inquisition's regional tribunal. The building is of particular interest on account of the façade, midway between late Gothic and early Renaissance. Before leaving Alhama de Granada, we should find the time to go to the Arab castle, Hospital de la Reina, and the church, Iglesia del Carmen, formerly a Discalced Carmelite Convent. This Renaissance church also has a number of baroque features.

At the side of the A-92 Road as it makes its way towards Seville, Loja comes into view. Looking down at the waters

of the River Genil from the slopes of a valley, the town has a number of attractions for the sightseer, not least, the main church, Iglesia de la Encarnación, which started out as Gothic and ended up in the neoclassical style. Next, we direct our steps towards the house, gardens and mausoleum of Ramón María Narváez, the head of Isabella II's government, completing our cultural tour at the castle, followed by the fountain, with no less than 25 spouts, and the sixteenth-century Pósito, erected on a hill overlooking the town. Close by is the beauty spot

known as Los Infiernos, where crystalline waterfalls pour forth against a backdrop of rocks and crevices relieved by idyllic woodland.

Finally, not far from the border with the province of Málaga, we come to **Riófrio**, a summer holiday resort also known for its fish farm, where Andalusia's most coveted salmon trout are bred along with belugas, the source of prime caviar.

*View of Loja*



## LEISURE AND CULTURE

### Gastronomy

Using the fruits provided by earth, orchard and plain, for centuries, Granada has been evolving its own popular gastronomy, which, as we shall see in the dishes prepared each day in the districts of Albayzín and Sacromonte, is highly reminiscent of the Nazarí Era. The garlic soup and the San

Antón pottages, made from salt pork, dried beans and black puddings from the mountainous regions, are worthy of special mention, while Sacromonte is renowned for its omelettes. At any of the city's restaurants, we might try *gazpacho*; snails, when in season; broad beans with ham; *remoión granadino*, made from cod and oranges; poorman's potatoes with fried eggs; and breadcrumbs mixed with pork produce.

Granada's cuisine varies greatly from one region to another. On Costa Tropical, most dishes are based on

Foodstuffs.  
*Las Alpujarras*





*Seafood*

fish and tropical fruit. At the seafood restaurants, there is no lack of grilled fish, rice and shellfish dishes, blue fish marinades, dried octopus and skewered sardines cooked over an open fire. Motril's traditional dish is *ajo cabañil*, consisting of veal cooked slowly in a garlic sauce, while Costa Tropical is a must for tropical fruit lovers. Here, bananas, papayas, avocado pears and cherimoyas, often served together in a colourful fruit salad, make for an extra-special dessert.

As we can see from the name, *alpujarreño* is the culinary delight of the Apujarras. This solid dish, a combination of poorman's potatoes, fried

eggs, chorizo, *longaniza* (another variety of spiced sausage), black pudding and griddled ham, is sometimes served with *shepherd's breadcrumbs*. Other local delights include chick pea pot stews and Swiss chard and spinach pottages. Trevélez is the place for wild trout, not forgetting that it is also the home of Andalusia's prime cured ham.

In the region of the Altiplano, cooking revolves round Segura lamb. In the cold winter months, whole families gather to prepare meats and sausages. In El Poniente, the town of Montefrío is noted for its *chorizo* and black puddings, roasted over open fires at the local bars.

Granada's confectionery takes its inspiration from Arab and Jewish recipes. On the plain, Santa Fe is famous for the *pionono*, sponge cake filled with *crème patissière* and drenched in syrup. At the convents, a wide variety of delectable sweetmeats is produced: sponges soaked in liqueurs; *torrijas*, or bread soaked in milk and then fried; *huesos de santo*; *pestiños de la Encarnación*, or honey-coated pancakes; and *hojaldres de los Jerónimos*, made with puff pastry. An array of fruit is available at market stalls, where, naturally enough, it is unusual not to find the symbolic pomegranate (*granada* in Spanish) displayed alongside persimmon, prickly pears and hackberries. Out in the countryside, we might treat ourselves to curd (*cuajada de Carnaval*), sponge cakes (*soplillos de la Alpujarra*), or Motril's very own *torta real*.

In the Alpujarras, dried fruit and nuts are used to make liqueurs while Sierra de Contraviesa produces a white wine that combines well with rice and fish dishes.



## Sports

On Sierra Nevada, with more than 60 kilometres of ski slopes, it is possible to practise alpine, Nordic and cross-country skiing, wedeln, telemark and snowboarding. The skiing season usually lasts from November to April. Minimum height above sea level is 2,220 m, with a maximum altitude of 3,300 m. In recent years, the Pradollano ski resort has soared in popularity. Sierra Nevada's best-known slope, Río, descends from Borreguilles, a rest area at an altitude of 2,800 m, midway between Pradollano and the Veleta slopes. An added advantage is that floodlights have been

installed for those wishing to practise their favourite sport at night.

During the summer months, Sierra Nevada turns into a backpacker's dream. In July and August, walks to the peaks of the Veleta and Mulhacén are organised. The road from Pradollano to the Alpujarras town of Capileira takes us to the top of the Veleta, where we may enjoy a breathtaking view of the length and breadth of Andalusia. However, those wishing to drive up must have the permission of the National Park authorities. Another alternative is to take the bus that sets off from Pradollano first thing in the morning and picks passengers up in the early afternoon. For walkers, the paths marked out in the proximity of these, the highest peaks on the Iberian Peninsula, form part of the routes known as Gran Recorrido (GR), or long distance, and Pequeño Recorrido (PR), or short distance.

Here, we shall have the chance to contemplate glacial lagoons, gorges and snowfields, where, at the very top, ice is a permanent feature, even in the summer.

The town of Loja in El Poniente has a flying club, as do Motril and Almuñécar, with paragliding facilities just by the beach. Marina del Este, not far from La Herradura, is one of Andalusia's most popular nautical sports centres, offering anything from sailing and scuba diving to windsurfing and sport fishing.

Costa Tropical is the best choice for golf enthusiasts. Los Moriscos, situated off Playa Granada and within easy reach of Motril, has a surface area of over 200,000 m<sup>2</sup>. Another option is the 18-hole golf course known as Las Gabias, only 10 km from Granada.

Backpackers and mountain bikers will enjoy trips along the many paths to be found in the regions of the Altiplano and the Alpujarras, while







climbing, abseiling and rafting are available at the nature park, Parque Natural de la Sierra de Castril, lying in the north of the province, adjacent to the Jaén park, Parque de Cazorla, Segura y las Villas.

## Culture and fiestas

Culturally speaking, Granada is one of the liveliest cities in Spain. All year round, there are exhibitions, conferences, round tables, music recitals and dramatic art events, which combine with the city's traditional *fiestas* to produce an endless calendar of activities.

On January 2, the day the city was taken by the Catholic Sovereigns is

commemorated. For years, this *fiesta* has been seen as a way of encouraging tolerance among the various peoples that have inhabited the city through the centuries. The first Sunday in February, the *fiesta* in honour of Granada's patron saint, San Cecilio, takes place. Holy Week provides a unique opportunity to watch the astonishingly beautiful processions as they make their way through the city's historical quarters, such as Albayzín and Sacromonte. These processions are designated events of National Touristic Interest. We should not miss the spectacular *Procesión de los Gitanos*, which takes place in Sacromonte, *Procesión del Silencio* or *Procesión de Nuestra Señora de la Alhambra*.

March is set aside for the world-famous International Tango Festival, during which concerts are held at Teatro Isabel la Católica and Palacio de Congresos y Exposiciones.

From March to May, the city is the venue of a music cycle known as *Primavera Musical*, which includes concerts at the auditorium, Auditorio Manuel de Falla, and at Teatro Isabel la Católica, situated in Puerto Real.

On May 3, *Día de la Cruz*, it is custom in Granada to decorate patios, streets, houses and balconies, especially in districts of such traditional significance as Antequeruela and Realejo.

However, Granada's major *fiesta* takes place on Corpus Christi, which falls on a

different day each year.

The procession, watched by thousands of local people and tourists, sets off from the cathedral. Meanwhile, the fairground comes alive and bullfights are held every afternoon. The Flamenco Festival is also on the Corpus Christi agenda, with performances at a number of different venues round the city, especially in Albayzín and Sacromonte.

The last Sunday in June is the day of *Procesión del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús*, a religious event deeply rooted in the hearts of the people of Granada, who flock to the city from all over the province.

The International Music and Dance Festival, *Ciudad de Granada*, is the city's leading



Auditorio Manuel de Falla.  
Granada

cultural event. In June and July, the city's main sights provide the setting for performances and concerts. The ones held in the Nazarí palaces at the Alhambra and the circular patio at Palacio de Carlos V are exceptionally colourful. In recent decades, musicians and composers of international acclaim have taken part in this festival.

On September 29, the pilgrimage in honour of San Miguel starts out from Albayzín, ending at the top of the hill known as Aceituno. The last Sunday in September is the day for the *fiestas* held in the name of the city's patron saint, Virgen de las Angustias, when a variety of festive and social events are organised, including bullfights. November brings the International Jazz Festival, while the theatre and scenic arts season lasts the whole year. Granada's festive calendar comes to an end in December, with Christmas and New Year's Eve.

Many of the province's *fiestas* have been included on Andalusia's list of events of National Touristic Interest. This is particularly true of festivities associated with Holy Week. For instance, in

Almuñécar, we find processions in honour of Virgen de la Antigua and in Motril, Dulce Nombre de Jesús. Nevertheless, summer is the time for most festive and cultural activities. In Íllora, the International Parapanda Folk Festival takes place during the last week of July. Baza and Guadix celebrate *Fiesta del Cascamorros*, where the central figure is an outlandishly-dressed, burlesque character whose japes taunt and bewilder the local people. Lanjarón is the scene of a water festival, *Festival del Agua*. At towns such as Zújar, Moors fight against Christians during the summer months. One of Granada's most curious *fiestas* is held at Bérchules, in the Aplujarras. Ever since December 31 1994, when the town's electricity supply was cut off all through the night, New Year's Eve has been celebrated on August 1. True to Spanish tradition, at midnight, thousands of local people and visitors eat their twelve lucky grapes to the chimes of the municipal clock.





## Handicrafts and shopping

Granada's arts and crafts are steeped in the *Andalusí* heritage. Following a tradition going back centuries, workshops all over the city are open every day of the week. In traditional districts like Albayzín and Sacromonte, we come across craftsmen working in wood, clay and iron. Carpenters specialising in marquetry produce articles painstakingly decorated in shells, mother-of-pearl, metal and polychrome wood. Ceramics are in a class of their own as craftsmen exploit metallic reflections and skills such as *cuerda seca*, a fifteenth-century decorative technique of Arab origin, while

deploying motifs typically associated with *Al-Andalus* and Granada. But this is not all, for Granada is also the home of leading *luthiers* who still follow the old masters' teachings to make guitars. Most *luthiers* belong to local guilds.

The city centre is the best place for shopping. In the Alcaicería, near the cathedral and not far from Plaza de Birrambla, small businesses are open every day of the week for those wishing to buy a souvenir or articles representative of the *Andalusí* tradition. Marquetry work will be found everywhere, although there is no shortage



of gold and silver jewellery and silk and linen fabrics, not to mention decorative metallic objects made by master ironsmiths. In Calle Zacatín, a short walk away from the Alcaicería, a host of family businesses display a kind of ceramics known locally as *fajalauza*, after the place at one of the entrances to Albayzín, where craftsmen used to live and work. Boutiques are mainly to be found on Calle Recogidas, Puerta Real and Reyes Católicos, while antique-hunters should go to the area round Plaza Nueva and Elvira. For literature enthusiasts, yet another attraction is the second-hand bookshops. Practically all these

establishments are in the vicinity of Calle Reyes Católicos and Plaza Nueva.

In the province of Granada, handicrafts go by regions. Las Alpujarras are replete with textile workshops producing the famous *jarapas*, rugs of all shapes, sizes, patterns and colours, made of wool from the cattle grazing in the nearby pastures. At the workshops on the Altiplano, ceramics and pottery are still made in the old way. The towns of El Poniente are noteworthy for their tile-makers' workshops and also for their master ironsmiths, whose speciality is grilles for windows and balconies.

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4. Convent of Santa Catalina de Zafra
5. Casa de Castril
6. Church of San Pedro and San Pablo
7. Church of San Juan de los Reyes
8. Paseo de los Tristes
9. Palacio de los Córdoba
10. Casa del Chapiz
11. Abadía de Sacromonte
12. Plaza del Salvador
13. Mirador de San Nicolás
14. Palacio de Dar-al-Horra
15. Monasterio de Santa Isabel la Real
16. Church of San José

25. Hospital y Basílica de San Juan de Dios
26. Hospital Real
27. Puerta de Elvira
28. Monasterio de la Cartuja








## TOUR III

29. Real Chancillería
30. Corral del Carbón
31. City Hall
32. Basílica de Nuestra Señora de las Angustias
33. Cuarto Real de Santo Domingo
34. Plaza de Santo Domingo
35. Casa de los Tiros
36. Campo del Príncipe
37. Fundación Rodríguez Acosta/Instituto Gómez Moreno
38. Torres Bermejas
39. House of Manuel de Falla
40. Carmen de los Mártires

## TOUR II

17. Cathedral
18. Royal Chapel. Capilla Real
19. Madraza
20. Alcaicería
21. Universidad Literaria
22. Iglesia de los Santos Justo y Pastor
23. Colegio Mayor de San Bartolomé y Santiago
24. Monasterio de San Jerónimo

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