

DISCOVER THE DIFFERENT REGIONS OF COSTA DEL SOL





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The province of Malaga is made up of nine regions and 103 municipalities, from the capital of Malaga (which has approximately 600,000 inhabitants) to small, picturesque towns like Atajate (with only 169 residents). Knowing each of these regions and municipalities is essential to understanding Malaga. Travellers will find thousands of surprises every time they visit the province, both in its seaside towns and its steep inland villages.

From its east to west coast, Malaga's beaches offer landscapes that are both incredibly stunning and diverse.

Jaw-dropping cliffs on the eastern coast give way to beautiful white sand beaches, while—in the center of the province—the white villages of Costa del Sol and ancestral routes, like those of the Mozarabic people, give visitors a chance to trek through history and discover small, charming towns that have arisen from past border disputes.



The best climate in Europe

The coastal area of Malaga has a subtropical Mediterranean climate that promises sunny days and pleasant temperatures all year long.

During the summer, the heat is softened by the sea breeze, and in winter, mild weather means locals rarely have to grab a coat. For these reasons and more, the capital of Malaga and its surrounding coastal areas are often acclaimed for having the best climate in all of Europe.



Axarquía

The region of Axarquía has an exciting history—it was one of the first parts of Malaga where human settlements formed. From its unique cultural heritage and dreamy landscapes to its mix of seaside and mountainous white villages, Axarquía is an oasis of tradition, legend, art and nature.

Are you ready to discover it?

How to get there

Geographically speaking, Rincón de la Victoria is the first municipality in Axarquía, and it's just 18 kilometers from the Malaga capital. The Autovía del Mediterráneo (A-7) is a major area highway that crosses through the entire region, making it easy for visitors to access Axarquía from Nerja, Malaga or any other nearby destination.

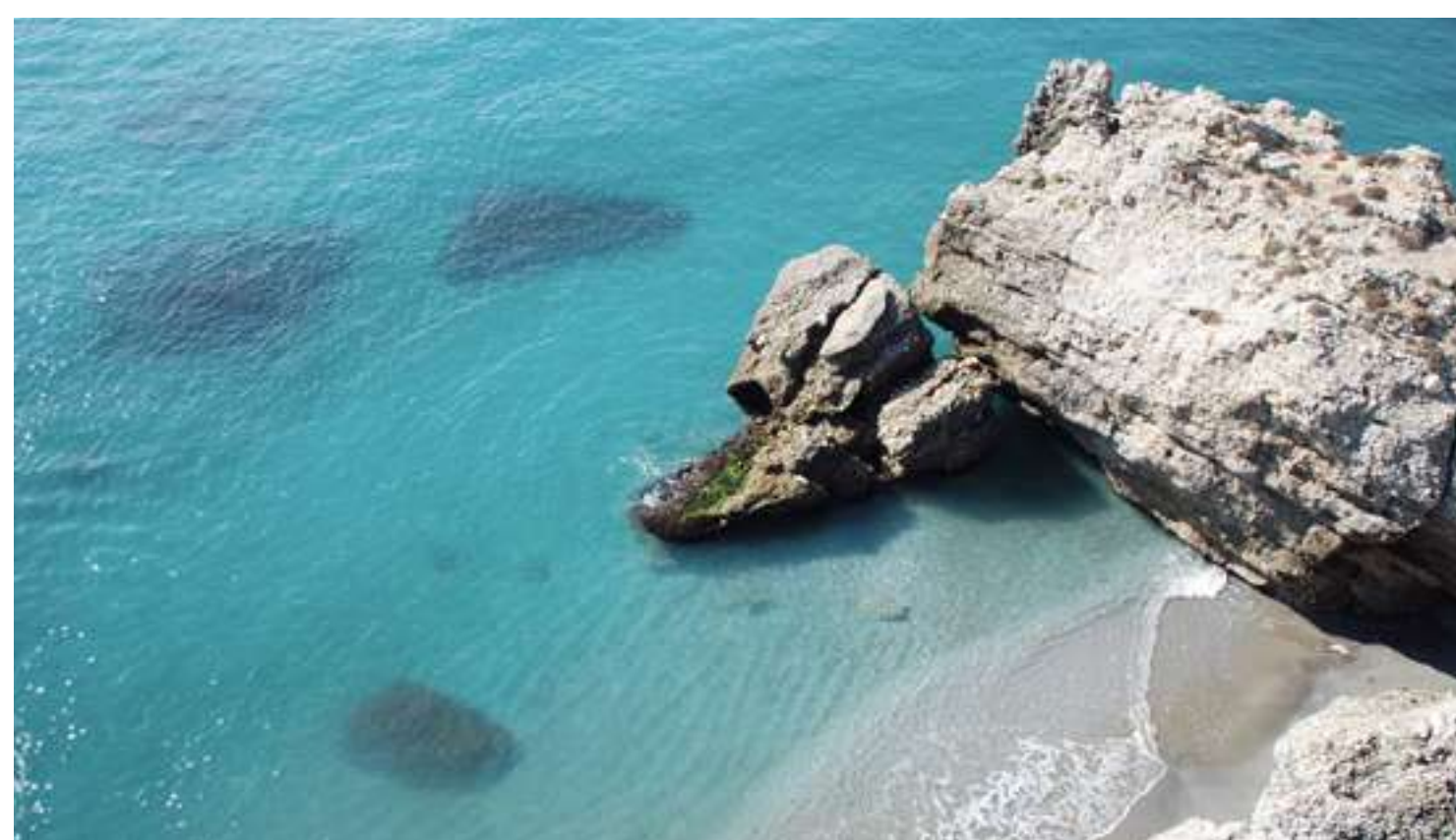




What you should see

Extraordinary beaches

The landscapes of Axarquía are varied, and you'll want to see them all while you're there! Start with the mountains and move down to the eastern coast of Costa del Sol. The municipalities of Rincón de la Victoria, Torre del Mar (Vélez-Málaga), Algarrobo, Torrox and Nerja overlook the Mediterranean Sea, and are home to some of the best beaches in Malaga. Bonus? They're always waiting for visitors, like you, to come enjoy them.



Nature and tradition

Axarquía is dotted with wild landscapes that have become some of the area's most popular attractions. Visit the vineyards of Moclinejo or Cómpeta, where great Spanish wines are made, or wander through the olive groves of Periana, famous for its verdial olive oil.

As you make your way to Almáchar or El Borge, look for the traditional farmhouses where the world's best raisins are made. Likewise, visit Sayalonga and you will understand why the loquat fruit is so popular there.



What to eat

The typical cuisine of Axarquía is as varied as its landscapes. In the coastal towns, seafood rules, while in the interior provinces, diners will find food with a distinctly Arab influence. This part of the world is also home to the only traditional sugar cane factory in Europe, which is located in Frigiliana. Sugar is a popular ingredient in Axarquía, especially when it comes to traditional local dishes like fried aubergines, cod tortillas and arropía (a traditional caramel). Axarquía is specifically known for its famous wines and raisins, which are considered some of the best in the world.

Popular typical products from the region include: the medlars of Sayalonga, the honey of Colmenar and the verdial oil of Periana. If you have a sweet tooth, try the macaroons in Vélez-Málaga or the cakes in Algarrobo.

You don't want to miss...

- The Cave of Treasure (Rincón de la Victoria)
- Alcazaba de Vélez - Málaga
- Balcón de Europa viewpoint (Nerja)
- The Cave of Nerja
- Maro Cliffs - Cerro Gordo
- The historic center of Frigiliana

Comarca de Antequera

Antequera is made up of small hills that are no more than 1000 meters tall. Considered the geographical center of Andalusia, Antequera occupies the northernmost part of the province of Malaga and is rich in landscape and culture. This is a part of the world you want to visit more than once so that you can really get to know its nuances and beauty.

How to get there

Casabermeja is the first municipality in this region, and it's less than a half hour by car from the capital of Costa del Sol. For the fastest route, take the N-331 (A-45) road.





What you should see

A vast cultural and artistic heritage

Throughout Antequera, the landscape is dominated by grains, fertile plains and olive groves. The region's artistic and historical heritage and natural splendor come together to create landscapes that are diverse, interesting and beautiful.

From a cultural perspective, Antequera is home to gems from both prehistoric times and the Andalusian Baroque period. Visitors can't go without seeing Casabermeja, the main gateway to the Antequera region from Malaga, which—crossed by the Guadalmedina river—has an unexpected and stunning landscape. While there, you'll have to see San Sebastián Cemetery. It's listed as a Historic-Artistic Monument.

Natural sites with Hollywood glam

When it comes to nature, this part of the world is a treasure. The Dolmens of Antequera Archaeological Site and two of its enclaves, Peña de los Enamorados and Torcal de Antequera Natural Area (one of the most spectacular karst landscapes in Europe), are all UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Other spots, like the Fuente de Piedra Lagoon, home to the largest flamingo colony in the entire Iberian Peninsula, offer beautiful and unique landscapes that could be the backdrop of any movie.



What to eat

The secret to Antequera's gastronomy lies in its olive oil, which the region is known for, as well as the vegetables and grains grown right in Vega de Antequera.

Cuisine here centers around what's fresh, available and on the "Mediterranean diet." One of Malaga's most famous dishes is porra antequerana—a gazpacho from Andalusia, Spain—and "bienmesabe," an Arab sweet treat made with almonds, sugar and eggs.



You don't want to miss...

- Alcazaba of Antequera
- El Torcal de Antequera
- Dolmen de Menga y Viera and the Cave of Viera
- Dolmen of El Romeral
- Fuente de Piedra Lagoon

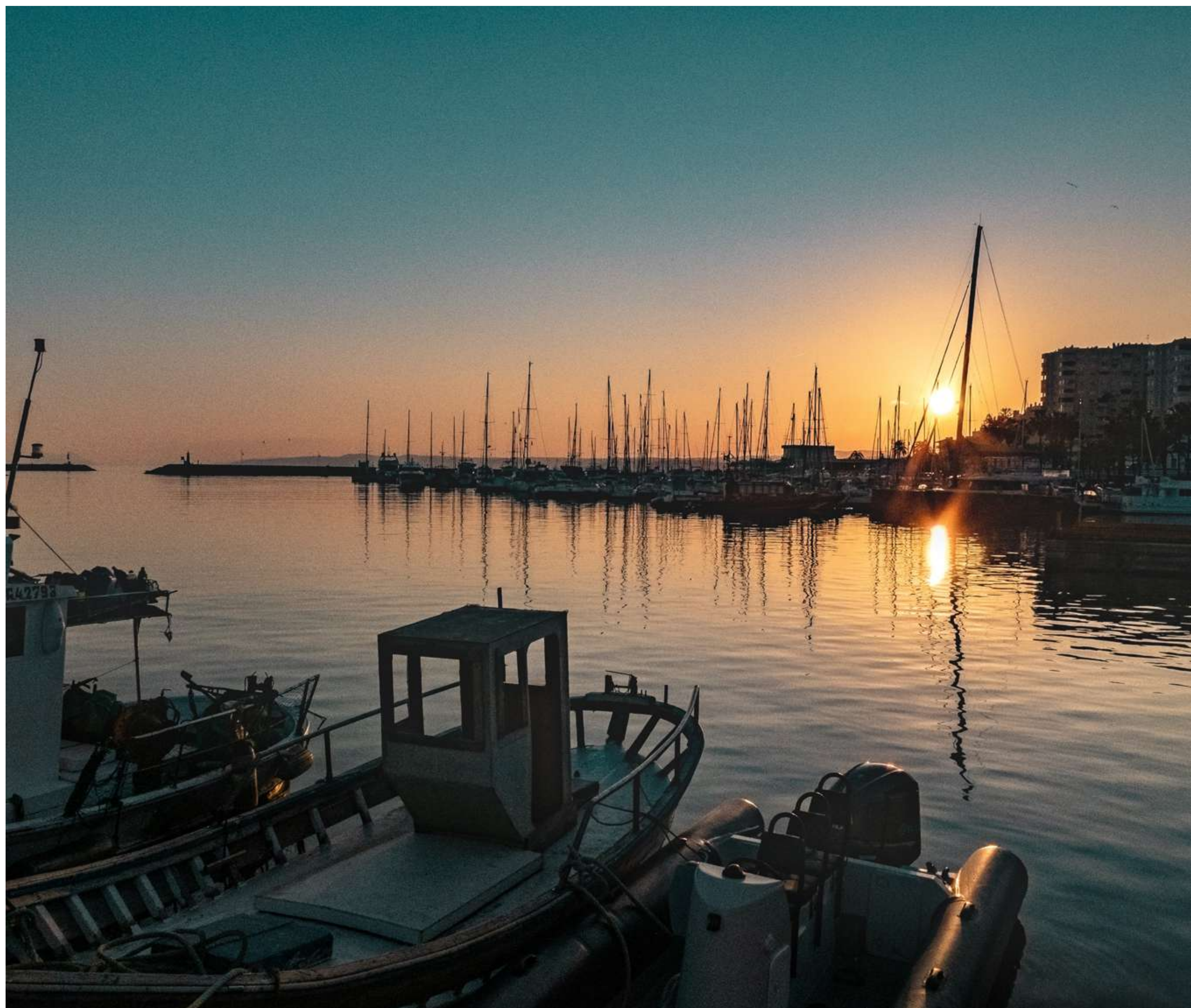
Western Costa del Sol

Western Costa del Sol is made up of nine municipalities (Benahavís, Benalmádena, Casares, Estepona, Fuengirola, Manilva, Marbella, Mijas and Torremolinos), and it extends from Malaga capital all the way to the province of Cádiz. Along with its sunny weather and beaches, this area has beautiful golf courses, marinas, protected natural areas, casinos, convention centers for large-scale fairs and events, parks and delicious cuisine.

There is no doubt that weather plays a huge part in Costa del Sol becoming one of the world's most popular tourist destinations. With over 300 sunny days and a mild climate all year long, Costa del Sol is an idyllic place to vacation in Europe.

How to get there

For those traveling by car, Western Costa del Sol is connected by the N-340, A7 and Costa del Sol AP-7 toll roads. By train, visitors can take the Malaga - Fuengirola commuter line, which leaves from Malaga and passes through the airport and some of the region's primary municipalities, like Torremolinos, Benalmádena - Arroyo de la Miel and Fuengirola, among others.





What you should see

Typical Andalusian lifestyle

Picturesque narrow streets, white facades and colorful flower pots are not exclusive to the capital of Malaga. In Western Costa del Sol, visitors will find elements of authentic Andalusian charm everywhere they look.

If you don't believe us, head to Mijas, Benalmádena, Marbella, Estepona or Casares, and see the essence of Andalusia firsthand.



An Arab past

When you visit the municipalities of Western Costa del Sol, you can take a walk through history. Aside from its natural beauty, this part of the world has a rich heritage, one filled with the remains of Arab fortresses, churches, hermitages and town squares, all in front of an infinite blue backdrop: the Mediterranean Sea. It's just waiting for you to discover it.



What to eat

The fried fish (a local favorite!) from Malaga's coast is thought to be a blessing from the sea.

According to some of the best chefs in Malaga, the secret lies in the quality and freshness of fish itself, the area's high-quality olive oil and taking off any excess fat before frying and serving the dish.

Other typical dishes from this part of Costa del Sol include: anchovies cured in vinegar, "pipirrana" salad, the area's famous sardine skewers and stews like gazpacho majao, the latter of which is a staple in the Manilva area.

You don't want to miss...

- The Benalmádena marina (Puerto Marina) at night
- Costa del Sol from the air, on a Benalmádena cable car
- Puerto Banús (Marbella)
- Estepona Old Town
- Playing any of its golf courses
- Seeing the sunset from Mijas
- Going hiking in the Sierra de Mijas
- Eating fried fish on La Carihuella beach (Torremolinos)
- Visiting the smallest church in the world, hidden in Colomares Castle (Benalmádena)

Guadalteba

Guadalteba is made up of eight small towns (Almargen, Ardales, Campillos, Cañete la Real, Carratraca, Cuevas del Becerro, Sierra de Yeguas and Teba). Go here to relax, get some fresh air and see the beauty of Mother Nature! The Desfiladero de los Gaitanes gorge, the Guadalhorce and Guadalteba reservoirs and the Campillos lagoons are some of the area's most popular tourist attractions.

How to get there

Ardales is about 50 kilometers from Malaga, which is just a 45-minute drive on the A-357. Keep going, and you'll find Carratraca and other nearby towns. If you're traveling by plane, Guadalteba is just 45 minutes from the Malaga airport, one hour and 40 minutes from the Seville airport and one hour from the Granada airport. Once you land, you just have to hop on the A-357 and it will take you right there.





What you should see

A destination that has it all

Few places bring together medieval castles, legendary characters, great lakes, dizzying canyons, tasty cuisine and unique customs quite like Guadalteba.

Visitors will even find sites influenced by other civilizations, like the Cave of Doña Trinidad (Ardales), Castillo de la Estrella and the Carratraca Hot Springs, among others.



A spectacular landscape

The Desfiladero de los Gaitanes Natural Area sits between the municipalities of Álora, Antequera and Ardales. It's one of the most spectacular landscapes in Malaga's highlands, with towering steep walls lining the Guadalhorce river. Here, visitors will find the famous Caminito del Rey, a path made up of hanging walkways that reach as high as 100 meters, in some places.



What to eat

The traditional cuisine in this part of the world is as varied as its landscapes.

Some of the most popular dishes come from municipalities like Almargen, Carratraca, Sierra de Yeguas and Cañete la Real, and include porra almargeña, jarrete a campera, asparagus omelettes and toasted gazpacho. In Cañete La Real, try the famous "piononos."

If you want to return home with a sweet memory, grab a box of Ardales' famous cakes or some wine donuts.

You don't want to miss...

- Los Gaitanes gorge (Caminito del Rey)
- Conde del Guadalhorce reservoir
- Doña Trinidad Cave (Ardales)
- Bobastro Ruins
- Thermas de Carratraca
- Lagunas de Campillos Nature Reserve

Málaga - Costa del Sol

This region only has one municipality: Malaga, the capital of Costa del Sol. Walk through its streets, and you'll find traces of almost 3,000 years of history, all fused with elements of modern-day Spain to create one of Europe's most interesting, cosmopolitan capitals.

How to get there

The Malaga-Costa del Sol airport, popularly known as Pablo Picasso airport, is located just eight kilometers southwest of the capital. From there, a 15-minute bus ride will get you to the center of the city. There is also an 11-minute suburban train to the Centro - Alameda station, which connects to a high-speed line that can get travellers to Madrid in just 2.5 hours.

For those who want to drive, Costa del Sol has an extensive road network that connects the Malaga region with all of the main cities in Spain. From Madrid, take the (A-IV) directly to Córdoba - Sevilla. The Mediterranean motorway connects to the N-340 and A-92, taking travellers from Puerto Lumbreras (Murcia) to Seville, which gives drivers a direct route to and from Costa del Sol.





What you should see

A monumental city

Malaga is filled with some of Costa del Sol's most impressive monuments. The Alcazaba, for one, is a palatial fortification built by the Hammudid dynasty in the early 11th century, and the best preserved alcazaba in all of Spain.

The cathedral is undeniably the most outstanding building from the early days of Christianity in Malaga, and the alleyways surrounding it are a sight to be seen. The Gibralfaro castle offers one of the best views of the city, and you don't want to miss the Roman Theater, Plaza de La Merced or the Sanctuary of Victoria.



Parks and gardens: the green refuge of malagueños

When we're talking about regions with beautiful landscapes, Malaga is one of the best. Its stunning parks and gardens help make the urban center more welcoming, and give locals and visitors alike charming and spacious green areas to walk through, enjoy and use as an escape from the hustle and bustle of city life.

Mecca of culture

With its 30+ museums, Malaga is a haven of art and culture. It's home to some of the most attractive and important art and history collections in Spain.

The Picasso Museum is the undeniable cultural center of reference for Malaga's most prominent painter, Pablo Picasso. On top of that, the Pompidou Center, Malaga Museum, the Automobile and Fashion Museum, the Russian Museum and the Carmen Thyssen museum all stand out for their impressive exhibits.





What to eat

Gastronomy is an important part of life in Malaga, and recipes here are inspired by the flavors of the Mediterranean.

Without a doubt, the culinary icons of the Malaga coast are its famous sardine skewers, which are said to be best eaten during months without an “r” in them (May to August), as that is when the sardines are plumper and more flavorful.

Other popular delicacies in Malaga include fried fish, Malaga’s “ajoblanco,” coquinas and clams with lemon.

You don't want to miss...

- Walking along Pier 1 at sunset
- The Alcazaba and the Gibralfaro Castle
- Malaga Cathedral
- Malaga Roman Theater
- Shopping on Calle Larios
- Visiting (and eating tapas at) Atarazanas Market
- Walking through the Alameda Principal
- Eating sardine skewers at the beach bars on the Pedregalejo and El Palo beaches

Nororma

The Northeast region of Malaga is made up of seven municipalities (Archidona, Cuevas Bajas, Cuevas de San Marcos, Villanueva de Algaidas, Villanueva de Tapia, Villanueva del Rosario and Villanueva del Trabuco), and is a great area to go and experience both the tranquility and adventure of Mother Nature.

Here, tradition, culture and fun go hand in hand.

How to get there

Archidona is a municipality in the heart of Nororma, and to get there from Malaga, visitors can take the A-45 motorway to the A-92, and later, the A-7202. Once in Archidona, you'll find that the area's internal road network is very easy to navigate.





What you should see

Wild nature

From Archidona's lagoons to the banks of the Genil River, the Northeast Region is filled with beautiful natural spaces. One of them is Cueva de Belda, a vast cave system recognized for its huge stone columns and three interior lakes.

Separately, Cuevas de San Marcos is home to the Church of San Marcos Evangelista and the Municipal Archaeological Museum. If you really want to get some peace and quiet, just head to the banks of the Iznájar reservoir.



A little adventure

In Villanueva del Rosario and Villanueva del Trabuco, you can test your spirit at adventurous outdoor activities like hiking, climbing or canoeing.

Villanueva del Trabuco is home to the famous Hundred Years Fountain—an impressive source of water that surprises visitors with its light and energetic sounds. Experience its refreshing qualities for yourself, and you'll be begging to come back to this part of Spain as soon as you can.



What to eat

For a unique taste of Spain, head to Cuevas Bajas. Here, sip on a unique coffee liquor called 'Resolí' or taste "carrot morá," which is said to be an aphrodisiac. After that, stroll past the Juan González store, which is said to have been frequented by bandits in the past.

Don't leave without eating "porra" in any restaurant in Nororma, and make sure you accompany it with local meats from Villanueva del Rosario or Villanueva de Tapia.

You don't want to miss...

- Plaza Ochavada (Archidona)
- Necropolis of the Alcaides (Villanueva de Algaidas)
- The lagoons of Archidona
- The rock hermitages of Villanueva de Algaidas
- Hundred Years Fountain (Villanueva del Trabuco)
- Hiking, climbing or canoeing in Villanueva del Rosario and Villanueva del Trabuco

Serranía de Ronda

Serranía de Ronda is the westernmost region of Malaga. It is made up of 23 municipalities, all of which take you back to a time when Roman castles and palaces ruled the earth.

History, art and nature come together in Serranía de Ronda, giving visitors a mix of prehistoric sites, splendid panoramic views, fascinating landscapes and white villages protected by a labyrinth of valleys and mountains. This part of Spain overlooks Tagus River and is known for its unique cultural heritage.

How to get there

Coming from Malaga capital, drive an hour down the A-357 and you'll find Serranía de Ronda. The first municipality you'll come across is Serrato.





What you should see

“The essence of a typical Andalusian town...”

Travel back in time through palaces, Arabic baths, watchtowers, Roman theaters and even prehistoric caves. Some of the municipalities of Serranía de Ronda are harder to access, which has helped preserve their heritage in every way.

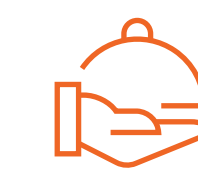
In Cueva de la Pileta, visitors will find impressive paintings and engravings that date back thousands of years, many of which are lit by nothing more than lamp fire. Innumerable poets and writers have visited the region, seen El Tajo and the Serranía de Ronda, and have used them as inspiration for their works of art.

Writers like Juan Ramón Jiménez defined this area as “the essence of a typical Andalusian town” and “a place where you can get lost.” Ernest Hemingway talked about Serranía like it was a perfect place for a honeymoon, describing Ronda and its surroundings as “an authentic, romantic setting.” Serranía de Ronda is a mountainous region with landscapes, roads and trails that will surprise and delight you.

Get reintroduced to Andalusia’s past

Tourists love Ronda because of its immense history, something you can see in its architectural gems. (Some date back to the 18th century!) Many of these constructions were built during the era of the bandits, when bullfighting was a main source of entertainment.

The most recognizable site in this region is the Puente Nuevo de Ronda, an impressive feat of Spanish civil engineering. Serranía de Ronda is filled with vast natural spaces that encourage visitors to explore the beauty of Mother Nature, like Sierra de Grazalema Natural Park and part of Sierra de las Nieves Natural Park.



What to eat

Food in Ronda is delicious, and includes typical dishes like gazpacho, chestnut soup and partridge al tajo. Pair it all with one of the region’s local wines, like a bottle from one of the wineries in Serranía, and you’ll be in heaven.

If you have a sweet tooth, don’t leave without trying “piñonate,” “alfajores” and chestnuts in syrup—all three are local favorites. The most popular sweet treats here, however, are the Arab “pestiños,” or pastries that are deep-fried in olive oil and glazed with honey or sugar.

You don’t want to miss...

- The prehistoric Cueva de la Pileta (Benaolán)
- Discovering the Roman legacy in the city of Acinipo
- Looking out over the Tagus River from the Puente Nuevo de Ronda
- Mondragón Palace
- Visiting the oldest bullring in Spain (Ronda)
- Getting lost in the labyrinth of streets in Genalguacil
- Watching the sunset from Paseo de los Ingleses (Ronda)
- Relaxing (and pampering yourself) in the Arabic baths (Ronda)



Sierra de las Nieves

The Sierra de las Nieves, a mountainous region dotted with small valleys, is located in the central-western part of Malaga. This slice of natural paradise is made up of charming mountain towns and villages, and is known for its fascinating landscape, Andalusian villas, unique festivals and delicious local cuisine.

How to get there

Ojén is considered the gateway to Sierra de las Nieves from the west, and it can be easily reached by both the A-7 motorway and the A-355 highway. This town is an excellent starting point to explore the region—which also borders Serranía de Ronda, Valle del Guadalhorce and Guadalteba.





What you should see

The largest fir forest in the world

Declared a Biosphere Reserve, Sierra de las Nieves Natural Park is a true ecological museum. While here, you can explore the largest fir forest in the world, climb Torrecilla peak (the highest point in the province) or explore the impressive G.E.S.M. (or Sima de la Luz), one of the most important karst areas in Europe.



Nature in its purest form

This region is home to idyllic natural enclaves that pave the way for a variety of outdoor activities, from hiking and climbing to caving and horseback riding.

Sierra de las Nieves Natural Park is home to over 1,500 plant species, 19 of which are exclusive to this area alone. The area is also home to more than 120 species of birds, and the park's most prominent animal, mountain goats.



What to eat

Gastronomy with an Arabic influence

Guaro, a town steeped in the Andalusian tradition, offers traditional delicacies like goat stew, rabbit with almonds and galipuche soup. Soups made with bread and vegetables are also common in this region, like "ponza" broth from Alozaina or "Sopa de los Siete Ramales."

Throughout the region, homegrown aromatic plants are used to season local meats, like rabbit covered in garlic or goat cooked in the pastoral style.

You don't want to miss...

- The largest fir forest in the world
- Climbing to the top of the Torrecilla (Tolox)
- Exploring the water caves (Yunquera).
- Río Verde (Tolox - Istán).
- Río Grande (Yunquera).

Valle del Guadalhorce

Guadalhorce Valley is the bridge between Costa del Sol and the interior of Malaga.

Made up of eight municipalities, this part of Spain offers the perfect combination of culture, gastronomy and outdoor sports.

How to get there

Alhaurín de la Torre and Cártama are less than 20 kilometers from the capital, which is about a half-hour drive. To get to either municipality, just hop on the A-357! If you're going to Alhaurín de la Torre, get off at exit 65 and take the A-7. If you're going to Cártama, drive towards Coín and the A-7057 until you get to your destination.





What you should see

A multicultural past

The Guadalhorce River starts in Antequera and flows right between the Serranía de Ronda and Montes de Málaga mountain ranges. Outside of that, this region is filled with terraced hillsides, pastures dotted with farmhouses, orchards and beautiful valleys.

Álora is a municipality with a rich history and an endless list of tourist attractions. Several civilizations settled on these lands, including the Phoenicians, Romans, Visigoths and Arabs. All of these cultures combined left a hodge-podge of styles that are evident in more ways than one.

If you want to see a piece of Spain from the Middle Ages, when the Arabs and Christians ruled the area, head to Almogía. Here, visitors will find elements of history everywhere they turn—like the Huns-Xan-Biter castle and Torre de la Vela. Almogía is also the birthplace of important pieces of Spanish folklore.

Bird's eye view

This region is also home to Abdalajís valley, an area dubbed the “capital of flight” because it's a top destination for paragliding, hang-gliding and climbing.



What to eat

Garden culture has predominated in the Guadalhorce Valley since ancient times, paving the way for popular local dishes like cabbages, porra and different vegetable soups.

Citrus fruits are also the base of many dishes here, like mojete from Alhaurín el Grande or Cártama's soups from Capo, which are cooked with cod, vegetables and olive oil. When in this part of Spain, lunch is always best accompanied by local sausages and cold cuts of meat.

You don't want to miss...

- Church of the Incarnation (Álora)
- Alora Castle
- The views from the hermitage of Los Remedios (Cártama)
- Source of the Twelve Caños (Alhaurín el Grande)



COSTA DEL SOL
MÁLAGA

Lots for you to do in Costa del Sol

In Costa del Sol, you have everything you could ever want: an interesting culture and history, local traditions, plenty of different sports, beautiful natural surroundings, delicious cuisine and a mild climate all year long. Read our blog and follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to discover the magic of Costa del Sol.

