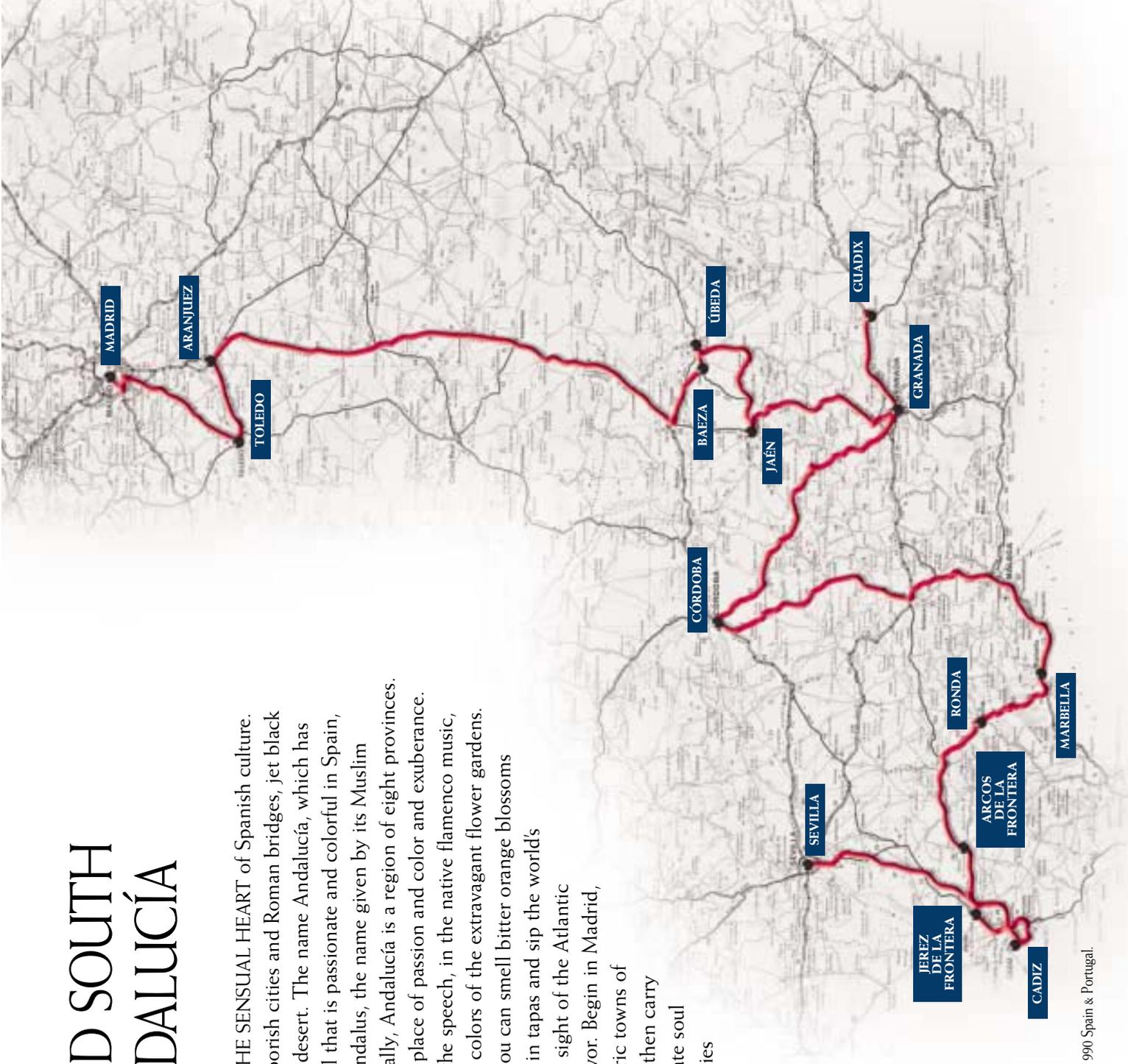


MADRID SOUTH TO ANDALUCÍA

ANDALUCÍA IS THE SENSUAL HEART of Spanish culture. It's a region of Moorish cities and Roman bridges, jet black beaches and high desert. The name Andalucía, which has come to signify all that is passionate and colorful in Spain, derives from Al-Andalus, the name given by its Muslim forbearers. Politically, Andalucía is a region of eight provinces. Emotionally, it's a place of passion and color and exuberance. That's evident in the speech, in the native flamenco music, and in the riotous colors of the extravagant flower gardens.

It's a land where you can smell bitter orange blossoms in the air, indulge in tapas and sip the world's best sherry within sight of the Atlantic that gave it its flavor. Begin in Madrid, pause at the historic towns of central Spain and then carry on to the passionate soul of Spain in the cities and countryside of Andalucía.



MADRID SOUTH TO ANDALUCÍA

(Mileage is estimated from each preceding city or site. Before you begin your trip, please note: For space reasons, we could not provide the most detailed map with this brochure. We recommend the use of Michelin Map #990 Spain & Portugal in conjunction with this guide.) To order Michelin maps, call 1-800-223-0987.

MADRID—Start by flying into Madrid's Barajas Airport. Before heading south to begin your exploration of Andalucía, you may want to spend a few days in Spain's dynamic capital. From its elegant public squares and royal palace to its extraordinary art museums and some of the best dining and nightlife in the country, Madrid is one of the most exciting cities in Europe.

53 miles

TOLEDO—The Romans came first to Toledo, followed by the Visigoths, who made it the first capital of Spain. By the Middle Ages, Toledo had evolved into a vibrant blend of Christian, Muslim and Jewish cultures. Perched on a hill above the Tagus River, this city has preserved the architectural treasures of all these previous inhabitants. The most astonishing of all is the cathedral, built on the site of a Visigothic cathedral. Considered the spiritual heart of the Spanish church, this edifice was under construction from 1226 until 1493. That accounts

for its peculiar blend of French Gothic and Spanish Mudéjar, or Moorish, design. The cathedral is a riot of frescoes, polychrome reredos (sculpted altarpieces) and carvings. El Greco's *The Descent of Christ* was painted especially for this cathedral and hangs in the sacristy. Toledo also boasts the Alcázar, the fortified palace of Carlos I. Visit the Sinagoga del Tránsito, if only to see the most elaborate Mudéjar interior in the city. And don't miss the Casa-Museo de El Greco, which houses an important collection of the 16th-century painter's work.

34 miles

ARANJUEZ—This oasis on the dry Castilian plateau was once the site of a Habsburg hunting lodge and evolved into a favorite 18th-century residence of the ruling Bourbons. Later it became a retreat for Madriños, and even today it exhibits a kind of faded elegance. The high point is the Palacio Real, which suggests how infatuated the Bourbons were with French culture. The gardens alone are worth a pause, but the Porcelain Salon, a room completely sheathed in porcelain, is an indicator of the excesses of the period. Stop by the Casa del Labrador or the Farmer's Cottage, which was built by Carlos IV in 1804 and sits like a precious jewel at the edge of town. And do stop for the famous Aranjuez strawberries and cream, which are sold roadside in summer throughout the town.

196 miles

BAEZA—Traveling the rolling hills and silvery green olive groves of Andalucía, Romans and Visigoths passed through Baeza. But under the Moors, the city flourished and became the seat of a Moorish taifa, or principality. The evidence remains in a wealth of Renaissance mansions and churches. But when the nearby town of Jaén developed years later, Baeza was bypassed, which is why it's seemingly preserved in aspic. Wander through the arcaded Paseo de la Constitución, visit the cathedral and examine the intricate facade of the Palacio del Marqueses de Jabalquinto.

6 miles

ÚBEDA—The sister city of Baeza, Úbeda had a similar trajectory of wealth and prosperity followed by years as a forgotten backwater. The town's Zona Monumental is where you'll find the greatest concentration of 16th-century architecture in Spain. Sites include the Sacra Capilla del Salvador, the most elaborate church in the town, and the Palacio de Vela de los Cobos, a splendid 16th-century palace.

38 miles

JAÉN—Situated in the foothills of the Sierra de Jabalcuz, Jaén's name derives from an Arabic term that means "Route of the Caravans." It formed the crossroads between Castile and Andalucía and was the site of many skirmishes. Today, the Castillo de Santa Catalina, perched high on a rocky crag, gives some idea of the city's storied past. Jaén's cathedral, which was begun in the 15th century yet completed only in the 18th, is a masterpiece by Andrés de Vandelvira, who was responsible for many of the buildings in Baeza and Úbeda. A wonderful stroll takes you through the old part of town, to the 11th-century Baños Árabes (Arab baths) and the Museo Provincial.

67 miles

GRANADA—Granada has a majestic setting, rising from the plains onto three hills, with a backdrop of the snow-capped Sierra Nevada mountains. The pink and gold palace of the Alhambra sits atop one of those hills, an incredible architectural wedding cake of arches and cupolas, a riot of plaster and wood and tile. From this vantage point, you can see the roofs of the Alabaicín, the city's old Moorish quarter. Go explore this whitewashed neighborhood, and take note of the resorted villas and lush gardens, the cobbled alleyways and labyrinthine streets. Visit 16th-century palaces like the Casa de Castañal or La Cartuja, a 16th-century Carthusian monastery just north of the city. Or simply pause at the market on Plaza Larga and later engage in a tapeo, a tapas version of a pub crawl, around Plaza Nueva.

42 miles

GUADIX—The cave dwellings of Guadix date back several hundred years. What's more amazing is that the caves are still lived in and constitute one of the largest gatherings of underground homes in the world. A few miles outside of town is La Calahorra, a marvelous hilltop castle with impressive gardens that are worth a detour.

150 miles

CÓRDOBA—The capital of Al-Andalus when it was at its peak in the 10th and 11th centuries, Córdoba was the capital of Islam in the West and ranked among the world's great cities in terms of art, science and scholarship. A thousand years later, Córdoba's Muslim influence can best be seen in the old quarter, Judería. A walk through here shows why Córdoba is perhaps the most perfect Arab city in the West. At the center of this medieval neighborhood lies the Mezquita, or mosque, whose interior red and white arches have been likened to billowing tents. The Museo Arqueológico is a treasure house of Roman and Moorish artifacts. But to see another aspect of Spanish culture, head to the Museo Taurino, which celebrates the bullfight. Costumes, photographs and posters are on display, as are mounted bulls' heads and mementoes of such great fighters as El Cordobés.

220 miles

MARBELLA—Once a haven for the jet set, this town on the Costa del Sol still has a lot of panache. Start in the Casco Antiguo, or old quarter, with its narrow cobblestone streets and wrought-iron balconies.



Then carry on to the new section, where you can often find live music in the parks and gardens at night. The restored seafront, the Paseo Marítimo, is a lively boardwalk with outdoor restaurants, ice cream shops and stalls selling Spanish pottery. The beaches are best for sunbathing and dining in a chiringuito. These restaurants, really glorified beach shacks, rent beach chairs, mattresses and umbrellas and serve delicious local specialities like grilled sardines and tortillas españolas.

34 miles

RONDA—Ronda is one of the "pueblos blancos", stunningly white Moorish villages that are situated atop craggy mountains and green hills. Dramatically set on a limestone shelf next to a steep gorge called El Tajo, the section called La Ciudad is the old town, a typical Moorish labyrinth. Don't miss the Plaza de Toros, Ronda's bullring, which is revered as one of the most beautiful and classical in all of Spain. Ronda's bullfighting museum, Museo Taurino, is also a splendid tribute to this most Spanish of passions.

56 miles

ARCOS DE LA FRONTERA—Declared a national monument in 1961, this city sits high on a limestone ridge above the Río Guadalete. It's a place of 18th-century palaces and convents, with a Moorish fortress and beautiful streets such as Maldonado. It's a city for a peaceful wander, even at night, when many of the monuments are illuminated.

24 miles

JEREZ DE LA FRONTERA—This is the heart of sherry country, famous since the Phoenicians first planted grapes here some 3,000 years ago. Jerez is the most prosperous of the region's wine-producing cities and has a marvelous old quarter as well as an Alcázar, or fortified palace. At the Plaza Arenal, you'll find a host of tapas bars. The Barrio de Santiago is the gypsy quarter, a place of tiny streets, and it was here that the bulería, one of the most festive forms of flamenco, was born.

34 miles

CÁDIZ—Residents of the city of Cádiz, founded as Cadix by

the Phoenicians more than three millennia ago, still refer to themselves as "gaditanos." It's an intensely atmospheric place, located on the tip of a peninsula, with seaside light soaking its 18th-century streets. Climb the Torre Tavira, the highest of the city's old watchtowers, for a panoramic view of the city and the Atlantic Ocean. And wander through the market at Plaza de Topete to get a real sense of daily life in Cádiz.

74 miles

SEVILLA—It can be argued that you saved the best for last. Sevilla is the queen city of Andalucía, an imperial city that still pulses with life. By all means take in the cathedral, which is just slightly smaller than St. Peter's in Rome, and the Alcázar. But you should also visit the streets of the Macarena neighborhood. Dip into the Barrio de Santa Cruz with its whitewashed houses and potted geraniums. And explore the Barrio Triana, the alleged birthplace of flamenco. Those in search of castanets and lace mantillas can head for the shops along Calle Sierpes. But don't miss seeing the

Museo de Bellas Artes, one of the greatest in Spain, or taking a walk through the gardens of the Parque María Luisa. Do have a look at the Plaza de Toros de la Real Maestranza, possibly the most famous, if not the most beautiful, bullring in the world. Even if you don't attend a fight, you should know that Bizet commemorated this splendid 18th-century ring in *Carmen*.

HOTELS

Hostal Cardenal is located in the stately 18th-century residence of Cardinal Lorenzana, which was built right into the city walls. It's now a 27-room inn with a fine restaurant. 24 Paseo de Recaredo, Toledo. Tel: 800 645 3876 or 34 925 224 900 Fax: 34 925 222 991

Palacio de Santa Inés. This is something of a mini-palace in the Albaicín, set river-side with a view of the Alhambra. The frescoes on the patio are faded but are attributed to Alejandro Mayner, a disciple of Raphael. 9 Cuesta de Santa Inés, Granada. Tel: 34 58 222 362 Fax: 34 58 222 465

Palacio de la Rambla. A romantic, antique-filled palace in this historic town, where the current Marquesa lets out eight rooms. 1 Plaza de Marqués, Úbeda. Tel: 34 53 750 196 Fax: 34 53 750 267

Parador de la Arruzafa. Perhaps the most comfortable accommodation in Córdoba, with peaceful gardens, located just outside of town. The restaurant is noted for its buffet. 33 Avenida de la Arruzafa, Córdoba. Tel: 34 57 275 900 Fax: 34 57 280 409

The **Hotel Alfonso XIII** is a neo-Mudéjar hotel that was built in 1928 to be one of the most luxurious in Europe. It has an atmospheric bar and the flavor of a Moorish palace. 2 Calle San Fernando, Sevilla. Tel: 34 54 222 850 Fax: 34 54 216 033

The **Parador de Ronda** is a modern hotel tucked behind a historic façade of the former town hall, located at the edge of the gorge. Plaza de España, Ronda. Tel: 34 52 877 500 Fax: 34 52 878 188

RESTAURANT

Mirador de Morayma Restaurant in Granada has intimate dining rooms decorated with old paintings, antique furniture and ceramics, with a spectacular view of the Alhambra. Dine on salmorejo, a kind of gazpacho, move on to tortilla Sacromonte, a stuffed omelette, and finish with the almond desert called tarta de Zaira. 2 Calle Pianista Ca., Carillo, Granada. Tel: 34 58 228 290



ISLANDS

