

Spain: Andalusia & Seville

Tour-Only Itinerary

Journey into Andalusia, southern Spain's hidden gem, as you hike through the beautiful Sierra Morena mountains into fertile valleys and iconic whitewashed villages. Get to know the capital of Andalusia, with an independent walking tour of Seville, Spain, a city of colorful mosaics, intense flamenco performances, and lively tapas bars. Travel on to the remote Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche Natural Park, where rolling countryside gives way to dramatic rocky peaks. Meet a local producer of Spain's renowned ibérico jamón, then explore Alájar's maze of cobblestone streets and baroque churches. End each day in family-owned accommodations where innkeepers share their stories over a glass of wine. Combining independent exploration with authentic experiences, this memorable trek through Andalusia will awaken the adventurer in you.



Highlights

Stroll through the cork-oak forests of Aracena and Cortelazor, in rural regions completely overlooked by the tourist crowds of Andalusia's major cities.

Visit a family-run *finca* that specializes in rearing native Ibérico pigs, and chat with the owner to learn how Spain's renowned jamón ibérico is made.

Make time for flamenco and tapas in the one-of-a-kind city of Seville, whose Moorish influences and cobblestone streets delight.

Stay at a traditional *finca* farmhouse that has been beautifully renovated, and whose owner welcomes you with authentic family-style meals served in the kitchen.

On all Self-Guided Adventures you can count on ...



A local representative
available 24/7.



Gracious accommodations
that are a clean, comfortable
home away from home.



Detailed maps & route notes
featuring turn-by-turn
directions and places of
interest.



Experts to handle all the
details, including moving
your luggage between hotels
while you're out exploring.



Scheduled taxi transfers to
bring you to and from each
day's walks.



Access to a Self-Guided
Flight Concierge—ask our
knowledgeable team to find
flights that sync with your
planned trip.



Delicious meals—many
are included.

Activity Level

This tour is one of our Self-Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate, with an average of 6 to 9 miles per day. There are daily ascents and descents, with elevation gains and losses up to 1,650 feet. The walks are on a variety of terrain, from cobble streets to ancient Roman stone roads, old mule paths, packed-earth or gravel single tracks, and country roads. Footing in places includes loose stones and may require attention. Immersed in the scenery of the Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche nature park—a combination of hills and valley, some forested, some covered with open pasture interspersed with cork and oak trees—you walk between ancient villages of whitewashed houses presided over by Moorish castles and forts, mosques, and Renaissance churches. You encounter friendly Andalusians who keep

local culture and festivals vibrant. Exuberant Seville, with its three UNESCO World Heritage sites, is the tour starting and ending point. Remember: preparation is the key to ensuring your tour readiness; the more you walk or participate in aerobic exercise prior to your trip, the more you will enjoy your experience!

DAY 1

Arrival in Seville

Upon arrival in Seville, you check into your boutique hotel, located in the historical center. One of Europe's most authentic urban cores, Seville contains three UNESCO World Heritage sites—the Alcázar palace complex, the Cathedral, and the General Archive of the Indies. For dinner, you can venture out nearby to some of the country's best tapas bars.

Accommodation: Hotel Amadeus & La Musica, Seville

DAY 2

Transfer to the Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche Natural Park. Tasting and visit at authentic producer of Ibérico ham. Transfer to Aracena. Orientation meeting and town exploration

Today you depart Seville and drive north to the Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche Natural Park, a protected range of hills stretching in an arc north of Seville and containing bucolic landscapes of oak and cork forest alternating with valleys, ancient villages, and Moorish forts and castles. In the village of Corteconcepción, you join your local Representative for an interpretive visit of a small, family-run finca. This farm specializes in rearing Ibérico pigs—the famous black pigs that produce the most exclusive hams in the world. You tour the extensive grounds, learning about the flora and the fascinating dehesa ecosystem and its associated farming process. Afterward, you enjoy a tasting of their mouth-watering hams. Following your visit here, you transfer to your home for two nights in the region's capital, Aracena, a town of 8,000 inhabitants, over which stand the ruins of a 12th-century Moorish fortress, which was in large part destroyed by Napoleon's army in 1812. The entire town center has been declared "of Cultural Interest" for its many historical buildings and monuments, lovely squares, museums, and churches. Following an orientation meeting, your local Representative guides you on a short exploration of the town before stopping for a tapas lunch. If you wish, there is time to visit the stunning cave system of the Gruta de las Maravillas (at your own expense) before strolling out to explore the many plazas of Aracena, with ample cafés and restaurants to choose from for an evening drink and dinner.

Accommodation: Hotel Convento, Aracena

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch (and Ibérico Ham Tasting)

DAY 3

Corteconcepción loop

7.7 miles, easy to moderate, 800-ft. elevation gain and loss

This introductory walk takes you out to the pretty village of Corteconcepción, passing farms, gurgling streams, olive groves, and hillsides where you can see the famous Ibérico pigs roaming freely. There is plenty of time for a casual lunch in the village before walking back to Aracena this afternoon, following a different path, giving you a new appreciation for this diverse landscape. This evening, enjoy dinner in town featuring an avant-garde tasting menu created by celebrated chef, Javier Fuster (based on availability).

Accommodation: Hotel Convento, Aracena

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 4

Aracena to Cortelazor

7.7 miles, easy to moderate, 1,000-ft. elevation gain and 1,050-ft. elevation loss

You depart Aracena this morning and are provided with a packed lunch before venturing out into the countryside of chestnut groves and small farms. The last part of your walk is on ancient cobbled pathways—part of the medieval network of paths across Spain known as the Caminos Reales or “royal roads.” Your destination is Cortelazor, a charming village of just 300 inhabitants dating back to Roman times and surrounded by cork and chestnut forests. You may wish to enjoy a drink at one of the bars in the main square, all serving local tapas-style food, as you watch a bit of local life—as throughout Andalusia, the locals are friendly and welcoming. In the center of Cortelazor, you also find a shop, a 16th-century church, and a small crafts museum. For dinner in this authentic pueblo, you walk with your host to one of the village bars for a simple but tasty meal—a true taste of the local life.

Accommodation: La Flamenca Inn, Cortelazor

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 5

Cortelazor loop

8.6 miles, moderate with challenging sections, 1,650-ft. elevation gain and loss

Today, a loop walk takes you out through some of the prettiest and most remote parts of the hills. As well as the cultivated woodlands of the *dehesa*, the mixed forest and pastureland typical of southern Spain and Portugal, you walk through forests and along fertile river valleys between small villages. Along the way, you stop for a picnic lunch in the shade of a chestnut tree looking out over the forested mountains. The Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche nature park has been recognized by the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism. With more than 600 miles of trails, this park in the foothills of the broader Sierra Morena contains archaeological traces pre-dating the Romans. The area is also teeming with bird life, including birds of prey such as an important population of black vultures, and golden, short-toed, and Bonelli's eagles. Almost every village church is topped with a stork's nest, and the endangered black stork is found here. Wandering past streams, sightings of heron and egrets are also common. This evening, enjoy dinner once again in the village.

Accommodation: La Flamenca Inn, Cortelazor

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 6

Cortelazor to Alájar

7.8 miles, easy to moderate, 1,300-ft. elevation gain and 1,000-ft. elevation loss

Today's walk takes you first through oak forests to the pretty village of Fuenteheridos. Passing through *dehesa*, you see farmers working both the land and the trees—producing honey, picking mushrooms and gathering chestnuts, while also harvesting cork and bringing the animals to graze on acorns. In

Fuenteheridos you can rest in the picturesque square and have a drink or snack at one of the many bars and restaurants. From here your path takes you uphill to cross the Sierra through one of the most bountiful chestnut forests of the region. Once at the top, views extend south over the village of Alájar—today's destination—and surrounding mountains, and on a clear day, all the way to sea. A narrow, wooded path leads you all the way to the doorstep of your lovely hotel set high in the hills above the village. You can relax with a drink on the terrace or enjoy a dip in the pool before dinner in the warm dining room.

Accommodation: Finca La Fronda, Alájar

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7

Alájar loop

6.8 miles, moderate, 1,300-ft. elevation gain and loss

This morning starts with a delicious breakfast before you set off down the hill and into the village of Alájar. As you continue walking, you notice the design of cobbled “door mats” in front of the traditional whitewashed houses, unique to this village. The route then continues through the semi-abandoned hamlet of Los Madroñeros and into the beautiful forested countryside leading to Linares de la Sierra. In the village, you may encounter locals still gathering at the communal *lavandería* to wash their clothes. In contrast, it is also the location of one of the best modern restaurants in the region, making it a perfect stop for lunch (based upon availability). This afternoon, you walk uphill for a short distance before emerging into the beautiful grounds surrounding your hotel, or decide to celebrate the week's accomplishments with a visit to the local hammam and take a taxi back instead (not included).

Accommodation: Finca La Fronda, Alájar

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8

Your Spain: Andalusia & Seville tour concludes

Departure from Seville

After breakfast at your inn, you depart by private transfer from Alájar to Seville (1½ hours).

Included Meals: Breakfast

What's Included

Tour Only

Boutique accommodations	✓
14 meals: 7 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 3 dinners	✓
Detailed water- and tear-resistant Route Notes, maps, and use of a handheld GPS unit	✓
Orientation meeting with a Country Walkers representative	✓
Local representative available 24/7	✓
Scheduled taxi and luggage transfers (Please note: If unable to walk, it is possible to transfer with your luggage from one accommodation to the next; there may be an additional charge.)	✓
Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary: Tasting and visit at authentic producer of Ibérico ham and guided exploration of Aracena	✓
Travel assistance available 24/7 provided by Allianz Global Assistance	✓
Access to Self-Guided Flight Concierge—Ask our knowledgeable team to find flights that sync perfectly with your planned trip.	✓