

# Cycling Safaris

## Andalucía Coastal Explorer 2017

### Guided Tour

Guide in support van | 240 km | 7 nights / 8 days



Roll with us through Southern Spain's finest countryside as we integrate beautiful National Parks, remote white villages and rides along the beaches of the Costa del Luz (coast of light). From Bandit hide-a-ways to Pirate coves and the impressive coastline of Lord Nelson's last battle at Trafalgar point - this is an exciting part of the world still very undiscovered - offering one of the finest blends of cycle touring in the Iberian Peninsula.

The Coastal Explorer brings you places others rarely see. Expect five days of completely diverse riding over some of Andalucía's most historic and culturally varied routes including a rest day in the charming white washed coastal village of *Conil*, where a comfortable 4 star resort with miles of white sand beaches welcome you right out the door!

Highlights of the tour include exploring the White Villages, National Parks, vineyards, scenic coastal roads and classic routes of the Torro (bull) and Sherry. Charming hotels and tasty authentic food en route add to the experience. Riding is a combination of quiet back roads and stunning parkways. Andalucía is a hilly region yet we have done our best to guide you through the most beautiful areas without shattering you on the climbs! The seaside riding days and views to the African continent are especially rewarding...

Above all we consider this tour to be *more* than just a cycling holiday. We invest a lot of time and effort in offering our guests a true glimpse of Spanish life. Every opportunity is taken to sample the variations in local cuisine, taste the wines and Sherries, perhaps visit a Feria (Fiesta) and act spontaneously should an interesting event occur!

## TOUR ITINERARY

*The riding tour is door-to-door with no shuttles in between and covers a wide range of terrain and road types. Road surfaces have been upgraded in the past few years and like good wine, this tour gets better with age! As a bonus, your trip leader offers free nightly interpretive walks at each destination to ensure you get the most from your experience. The sense of accomplishment by riding one of the most scenic tours in Spain will stay with you forever. Bienvenidos!*

### DAY 1 SUNDAY

**(Collection 1600 hours / Malaga Airport Terminal 3 Arrivals / at Tourist Information office where you'll be met by your guide)**

Pick up Malaga Airport / 1 ¼ hour shuttle to our first night in Casares - a beautiful Moorish village steeped in history and charm with fine views to the Med and Africa. Here your leader will walk you on a short tour through the village's narrow lanes to the castle followed by an orientation chat and a welcome group dinner. You will stay in Hotel Casares.

If you are arriving into Malaga by bus or train it is easy to hop on the 20 minute shuttle train to the airport to meet the group and minibus. Please remember that our minibus leaves the airport for Casares at 4.00pm and will return to the airport approximately 10.00am the following Sunday when you are returning home. For your comfort and convenience please bear these times in mind when you are booking your flights.

Please note late arrivals will need to make their own way to Casares. This can be done by taxi direct from the airport (around €110 one way). A limited airport bus option goes to Estepona from the airport (€7-8 approx), then you can taxi to Casares for about €35 or take the bus for much less - pending scheduling.

If you arrive early to the airport there is plenty to do. You can take either the shuttle bus (frequent), or train (every ½ hour) into Malaga city centre (15 min / 1-2 euros max). Here you can visit the Picasso Museum or enjoy a tapas around the Cathedral, rest on the beach or wander up to the Moorish Alcazar castle for fine views. Alternatively, you can train or bus 20 minutes to the seaside resort of Torremolinos for a beach day, lunch or shopping in this bustling coastal town. Please note - there are NO baggage storage areas at Malaga airport. Bags can be left at either Malaga or Torremolinos bus stations in self-paid lockers (reliable). This evening after settling in at the hotel, your guide will orientate you around Casares village followed by a welcoming dinner in a local tavern. (Dinner provided) Hotel Rural Casares where each room offers a balcony with stunning views over the village itself and usually Africa and the Med Sea on a clear evening.

### DAY 2 MONDAY Casares to Jimena de la Frontera 41 km

A gentle start to our week as we pass through orange and avocado groves of the Guadiaro River then along the meandering lanes that border one of the Med's most important National Parks, the *Alcornocales*. Easy, quiet country roads in lush surroundings with thousands of years history. This afternoon is an optional free interpretive walk to the Moorish Castle or you can relax around the rooftop pool at the fabulous and historic [Hostal Anon](#) where we spend the night.

**Level: Easy to Moderate - Gravel section 5 km**

### DAY 3 TUESDAY Jimena to Alcala de las Gazules 53km

Cycle the charming Jimena to Alcala parkway through the stunning *Alcornocales National Park* blessed with cork forests, lush river valleys and glimpses of wildlife such as wild boar, deer, lynx vultures and eagles. Quiet tarmac roads with breathtaking scenery on route! A fantastic day for nature that finishes in the historic Moorish stronghold of Alcala de las Gazules village. (Dinner included). [Hotel San Jorge](#).

**Level: Moderate - Challenging with some extended climbs (this is the most difficult day)**

**DAY 4      Wednesday      Alcala to Conil (coast)      58 km**

Today's journey rolls through the pretty, open landscapes, vineyards and traditional bullfighting *tierra* across open valleys and meadows adorned with wildflowers, natural herbs, cork, almond and olives and a wide array of birds. Nearing the Atlantic coast, we encounter the enchanting medieval centre of *Vejer de la Frontera*, a former Moorish Kingdom set in a stunning cliff top setting with a splendid historic quarter. Soon after, arrive to Conil (beachside), for 2 nights in the 4 star Hotel **Conil Park**. **(Level: Moderate with some hill passes - including optional climb (or minibus transfer) to Vejer village for a cultural visit, tapas and craft shopping.**

**DAY 5      Thursday      REST DAY - Conil**

Your Rest Day offers a wide range of experiences. In Conil you can relax, swim at the hotel or do a little sightseeing - sampling the local tapas and vino in one of many bars in Conil's historic quarter. Alternatively, visit a sherry bodega, stroll the endless beaches or see the famous equestrian show in Jerez (home of Flamenco). Cadiz and Seville cities are a short bus ride away and well worth the visit. Or, if you wish to pedal more, head up to Vejer (approx 16 km each way), or ride the forested paths around Conil itself. Dinner is not provided and there is a wide selection available in Conil. Today your trip leader is only present in the morning to assist you with arrangements and point you in the right direction. *Please refer to the last page for other options on this day.*

**DAY 6      Friday      Conil to Zahara de Las Atunes      40 km**

Today is a charming coastal ride following a network of beach roads, pine forests and inspiring natural parklands. First stopping at *Canos de Meca* where in 1805 Lord Nelson's navy fleet defeated the French and Spanish in the *Battle of Trafalgar* before moving onto the Pirate backwaters of *Barbate* where General Franco regularly sought refuge from the rigors of his own Dictatorship. After a short walk to the watch tower or a swim on a quiet beach, take a coastal lunch of sardinas and a cold cerveza and arrive to the beach side resort of Zahara de las Atunes by mid afternoon. Be sure to take a swim in the pool in **Hotel Porfirio or Hotel Pozo del Duque** before enjoying an Atlantic sunset and vistas of the African continent. **Level: Moderate to easy - rolling with some climbs and flat coastal road to finish**

**DAY 7      Saturday      Zahara de las Atunes to Tarifa      45 km**

From Zahara we ride the colourful beach paths and forested coves to *Bolonia* where we visit a magnificent Roman site before carrying on through magnificent landscapes and dunes leading to *Tarifa* - the most southerly point of continental Europe and the gateway to Africa. Tarifa is like nowhere else in Europe. It blends Moorish African culture with a thriving adventure industry centred on surf and wind sports. The old quarter with its Guzman Castle, ramparts and labyrinth of small courtyards is just exquisite - not to mention the wide range of great tapas bars and cafes on hand! It is also the main corridor for migratory birds between Africa and Europe and offers insight into flora and fauna that is unique to the entire continent. The vibe here is tremendous and it leaves a very fond impression of Spain. Tonight your leader organises a final celebratory meal of local tasty dishes (Dinner included) in **Hotel Alameda**. **Level: Moderate: rolling and undulating countryside with many flat areas to coast and an optional valley ride of 1.5 hours to extend your experience before arriving to Tarifa itself.**

**DAY 8      DEPARTURE - based on group travel time**

Return morning shuttle to Malaga Airport for your continuing travel or return home. We usually depart for the airport around 8.00 a.m. for the 2 hour shuttle. For those wishing to travel onto Seville or other destinations in Spain - Tarifa (and Algeciras city) offer very good transport hubs by bus or train.

*Please note - Itinerary is subject to slight changes and/or direction of travel but quality will not be effected.*

## 2017 TOUR PRICE

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€1,295 per person sharing

€1,445 for single occupancy

(If you are travelling on your own we will endeavour to find a room mate for you)

## 2017 TOUR DATES

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2 April

28 May

1 October

**Please note:** Other requested dates are available for 2 pax (please contact us in the office for more details on the price) and any group over 4 pax at the normal published price. Subject to hotel availability.

## WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

**Lodgings** 7 nights' quality en-suite accommodation in quaint village hotels and guesthouses. Rooms are based on double sharing with single supplements available. Please see hotel list below.

**Meals** Meals are generally taken within your hotel (and sometimes in the villages). Dinners (3 included) normally include a choice of starters, main courses, a light dessert and a drink of your choice. Breakfasts are traditionally Spanish, simple and nourishing. For lunch (not included), there are a number of village and countryside Inns on route where you can sample authentic Spanish cooking or we can assist by organising a picnic for you!

**Transport** Airport shuttles at designated times, baggage and bike transfers (airport and between hotels). Please remember flights and other transportation to our designated starting point (Malaga airport) is not included in the price. A sag wagon is available throughout the day for periods should you not wish to cycle.

**Guide Service** We provide an experienced guide during the riding days who drives the support vehicle. With larger groups, two guides may be present - one driving and one cycling. The guide ensures that hotel, baggage transfers, meals, transport and the riding go smoothly. This person also deals with the general well being of our guests, their safety and looks after bike maintenance and keeps a close watch on road conditions and any route information / changes. Please note that the sag wagon / support vehicle is generally with the group throughout the day providing full mechanical support and back-up to the riding group.

**Trip Notes and Map** We provide detailed route information and maps so that you can cycle at your leisure. Our route notes are updated at least twice a year for quality and safety and have been measured by both vehicle and GPS systems.

**21 speed touring bike and helmet** See below for more details. Please note; it is law in Spain that helmets must be worn on bicycles. For your safety, we strongly suggest you wear a helmet on tour.

**Exclusions:** *Airport transfers to Seville / from Granada at tour end  
Entry fees to monuments  
Some dinners and all lunches*

## WHAT TO BRING

- \* Comfortable cycling clothing – shorts, shoes, gloves etc
- \* A set of light waterproof clothing (usually not needed between June 10 and Sept 1)
- \* Hat, sunglasses and bathing suit with small travel towel
- \* OPTIONAL – personal cycle helmet and gel seat (both are provided at no extra cost)  
e-bike for additional €100 (on request only)

## REST DAY OPTIONS

Conil is a beautiful village situated on the beaches of the Atlantic. It's a great town to just relax or a stepping stone to other popular sites of the region:

### Conil & regional highlights:

- A. *Visit Vejer de la Frontera*
  - Visiting monuments
  - Relaxing in plazas, etc.
  - Gentle countryside ride or walk
- B. *Beach relaxation day*
  - Bus or ride to Canos de Mecca, El Palmar Beaches!
- C. *Day return visit to Cadiz city*
  - Oldest city in Europe
  - Good mix of beaches and architecture
- D. *Day return visit to Seville*
  - Cathedral visit
  - Alcazar Palace visit
  - Flamenco shows
  - City tour of old quarter and Barrio Santa Cruz
- E. *Day return visit to Jerez de la Frontera*
  - Sherry Bodegas (Tio Pepe, Sandemans, Osbourne, etc.)
  - Flamenco culture
  - \*Equestrian show (prebook!)

*\* Your tour leader can assist you with maps and options...*

\*IMPORTANT - If you are interested in the famous Jerez Equestrian show it is imperative to book in advance for tickets <http://www.realescuela.org/ing/home.htm>. Alternatively you can do this by calling:

Real Escuela Andaluz del Arte Ecuestre (34) 956 31 80 08 (English spoken)

Or, for a Bodega (Sherry) tour of Jerez, please let your tour leader know in advance to secure a booking. Osbourne / Gonzalez Byass / Harveys / Sandemans / Domecq and many more...

## ACCOMMODATION

Below are brief descriptions of the lodgings for your riding holiday week. All hotels are selected based on their level of comfort, style and unique offerings to the tour. Casares and Tarifa have limited group options in the old quarters and we have therefore selected the best hotels available under these circumstances. All hotels have WIFI connections and bar/cafe services.

DAY:	HOTEL NAME:	Classification:	LOCATION:	TELEPHONE:
Sunday:	<i>Hotel Rural Casares</i>	<u>Guest house</u>	Casares	(34) 952 895 211
Monday:	<i>Hotel Anon &amp; Other</i>	<u>Boutique</u>	Jimena de al Frontera	(34) 956 640 113
Tuesday:	<i>Hotel San Jorge</i>	<u>3 stars</u>	Alcala de los Gazules	(34) 956 413 255
Wed & Thurs:	<i>Hotel Conil Park</i>	<u>4 stars</u>	Conil	(34) 956 043 000
Friday:	<i>Hotel Porfirio</i>	<u>3 stars</u>	Zahara de las Atunes	(34) 956 449 515
Saturday:	<i>Hotel Alameda</i>	<u>Guest house</u>	Tarifa	(34) 956 681 181

**HOTEL CASARES** - 2 star rural superior / Centrally located in this "very photographed" Moorish white village. Great views of the Med, Africa, Arabic castle and the entire village from your room & balcony. Typically Andalucian, this quality hotel has clean, charming facilities and a great atmosphere with unique Moroccan décor.

**HOTEL ANON** - Boutique / A converted assortment of Moorish Houses with a quirky charm that is irresistible. Expect to be dazzled by the variety of room designs and take time out to enjoy the small rooftop pool and chill zone. Located in the heart of Jimena village, it's one of the most popular boutique inns of Andalucia. Free Wifi connection.

<http://www.hostalanon.com/en/index.html>

**HOTEL SAN JORGE** - 3 star / A modern, comfy village hotel with spacious rooms right in the centre of Alcala village offering all modern conveniences. From here we can explore all aspects of the village and sample the local cuisine, sherry and cured hams. Free Wifi connection.

<http://www.hotel-sanjorge.es>

**CONIL PARK HOTEL** - 4 star / A lovely seaside village with fabulous untouched beaches. Conil Park Hotel is a tastefully designed 4 star sea side resort with swimming pool, garden areas and only minutes walking from both the beaches and Conil's historic quarter adorned with tapas bars and shops. Free Wifi connection. <http://www.conilparkhotel.com/index.php?lang=en>

**HOTEL PORFIRIO** - 3 star / A very comfortable and superbly designed hotel with swimming pool, gardens and all modern conveniences located near the beach in this Atlantic coastal town. Minutes walk to the white sands and 'chiringuito' beach bars of the Costa del Luz. Free Wifi connection. <http://www.hotelporfirio.com> (OR pending season we use the sister hotel / 3 star also): <http://en.pozodelduque.com>

**HOTEL ALAMEDA** - 2 star superior rural / Located centrally in Tarifa's old town, minutes from the bustling fishing and ferry ports and superb beaches. Built into the Fortress walls of the Guzman Castle, it is central to many tapas bars surrounding pretty open courtyards. Tarifa boasts a vivid day and night atmosphere with a frontier like feel within short range of Africa. Free Wifi connection. <http://www.hostalalameda.com>

*Please note – on very rare occasions, our hotels are subject to change depending on availability / group size. Quality and comfort will not be compromised however.*



### **BH (Spanish Made) Hybrid Touring Series**

<http://bhbikes-us.com/>

21 speed Shimano components, aluminium male/female frame options, front suspension, rear support rack, (not shown) water bottle and front carry bag

We use a number of bicycle models to suit your needs. Most of our bikes are 'hybrids'. These bikes are designed for road touring and are also suitable for light trail riding and dirt/gravel roads. Many of our hybrid bikes have light front suspension, a wide range of gears (*21 speed minimum*), comfortable saddles, aluminium frames and quality 'Shimano' components. At times we can also provide lightweight mountain bikes. Generally all bicycles have a rear pannier rack and a small soft bag on the handlebars (*big enough to carry a poncho / rain coat and a light snack*). All bikes also have a water bottle holder and a single water bottle. There's no need for extra baggage on your bike as the support van is always within 30 minutes of the riders and makes plenty of sweeps during the

day (*on guided tour programs only*).

Please let us know in advance if you require any of our FREE EXTRAS – otherwise *they will not be included* with the bikes:

- \* Toe clips (*indicate with or without strap models*)
- \* Gel seat pad

***There is the option of booking an e-bike for a supplement of €100.***

### **Fitness and Pre-Trip Preparation**

The general rule on active holidays is to enjoy yourself. Sure there is physical exertion involved but you wouldn't have chosen a bike tour if you weren't aware of this fact! On the other hand, a bit of mental and physical preparation could help you enjoy your week even more. We suggest that you put in some riding time in the weeks building up to your holiday – even on a stationary bike. Try to get out for some hours on the weekends on varied terrain and if possible on hills, not that any of our excursions are overly strenuous - it's simply a good idea to put in a few miles beforehand!

### **Total Distance**

280 km (over 5 days riding, if rest day is taken)

### **Level Rating**

Days 1-2      Easy to Moderate (mostly flat valley riding with gentle ascents)  
Day 3          Moderate to Advanced moments (long day with final 2 km climb option)  
Days 4-5      Moderate to Advanced at times (mostly rolling / occasional longer climb)

### Personal Money

Outside of the meals not included in your holiday price, you may wish to have some Euros for other purposes. This could include visits to taverns for tapas and beverages or extra drinks during/after dinner, local souvenirs, and the bus/train journey on the rest day and any sites you

- You cycle; we look after all other logistics and provide back-up support too - including shuttles and the extra push too!
- Our routes are "unguided" in the sense that you are free to ride at your own pace. We provide the route information and have a daily support vehicle on the road but otherwise you're free to explore at your leisure – with no group pressure!
- Groups vary from a minimum of 4 to a max of 16. Larger tour groups can also be accommodated to.
- You need only carry water, sun protection, snacks and route information. We look after the baggage shuttles and stick close to you while on the road.
- Just get yourself to Malaga airport and we do the rest from there (except ride the bike for you!).
- Worried about over-exerting yourself? No need, we have alternative routing days and those convenient "ride along" moments!

may visit.

Exchanging money between your currency and the Euro is easy. Some options are:

- *To buy or bring Euros from your bank at home*
- *Use your normal bankcard here in Spanish bank machines (good rates of exchange and low charges)*
- *Buy Euros from banks and moneychangers here in Spain (poorer rates of exchange)*
- *Pay with your credit card (used everywhere)*  
*(Important note – travellers cheques are now a burden in Spain)*

### Telephoning and Internet in Spain

Credit Cards may be used for International calls or a Spanish Phone Card can be purchased for a certain value. Additionally, you can access an International Operator by dialling 025 from any phone. INTERNET wifi (wireless) is frequently available in hotels and cafes throughout the region. Most hotels have wifi connections as well – almost always in the reception but not always in rooms.

### Flights

We encourage our guests to arrange their flights / arrivals to and from Malaga Airport. In addition to Malaga - Seville, Jerez and Granada have more and more regular international arrivals. Please remember, the airport transfers included in your holiday are to/from Malaga airport. If you arrive before the tour date, please be sure to make the 16:00 meeting time on day one at arrival zone III in Malaga Airport.

### Airports

Malaga, Seville, Jerez and Granada have more and more regular international arrivals.



## TRANSPORT CONNECTIONS TO/FROM MALAGA

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### **Train**

There are fast connections to/from Madrid (2.5 hours) and all major Spanish centres. Booking can be done easily and far in advance using [www.renfe.es](http://www.renfe.es) website (English option now available on this website).

### **Bus**

Many bus connections connect direct to Malaga from all major centres (Madrid, Seville, Jerez, Cadiz, Gibraltar, Granada, etc).

Spanish bus companies websites:

[www.avanzabus.com/web/default.aspx?lang=en](http://www.avanzabus.com/web/default.aspx?lang=en)

[www.ctsa-portillo.com](http://www.ctsa-portillo.com);

[www.alsinagraells.es](http://www.alsinagraells.es);

[www.busstation.net/main/busspa.htm](http://www.busstation.net/main/busspa.htm);

[www.continental-auto.es/index.do](http://www.continental-auto.es/index.do)