

# Granada to Cordoba

Route of the Caliphate (Andalusia, Spain)



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## LA ALHAMBRA (GRANADA)



## Granada to Cordoba Cycling Tour (Andalusia, Spain)!

The Route of the Caliphate refers to the Moors (Muslims, Berbers or Arabs) who ruled parts of Andalusia from the early 8<sup>th</sup> to late 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. Their 800 year rule left a strong mark on southern Spanish culture – in its cuisine, language and architecture.

This cycling adventure links Granada and Cordoba, both important historic cities in Spain. From the Sierra Nevada mountains towering above Granada, the impressive Alhambra fortress, fields yielding the world's largest extra virgin olive oil production through to the mesmerising mosque in Cordoba this cycling tour has something for everyone. Not to mention the 300 days of sunshine per year making Andalusia a dream cycling destination.

During 2018 there are multiple departures for this Granada to Cordoba cycling holiday!

## ITINERARY

### DAY ONE – Granada, Spain

We will be available to meet you at Granada Train Station at 10am. At the tour hotel there will be an initial briefing and time to set-up the bikes before your warm-up ride. Following lunch the ride will take you along the northern edge of the Sierra Nevada mountains and up to a very scenic reservoir. The 5km climb at an average grade of 5% will be the perfect preparation for the coming days!

Tonight you will also enjoy a sensational Flamenco dancing and singing performance in the caves of Sacramonte. There are many places to watch quality Flamenco in Granada but we look forward to sharing with you our favourite Gypsy caves!



**Today's Ride:** 50km cycling  
**Meals:** Dinner & Flamenco show provided  
**Accommodation:** Granada (Andalusia, Spain)



## DAY TWO – Sierra Nevada (Granada) - ‘Pico de Veleta’ climb’

Granada sits directly below the towering Sierra Nevada mountains. The highest peak is 3400m elevation and Pico de Veleta at 3300m is the highest asphalted road in Europe. There are 6 ascents of varying difficulty to the Sierra Nevada ski village. All are perfect for road cycling and our selection will come down to group interest and ability. The climb to the Pradollano ski village is a common Vuelta (Tour of Spain) stage summit finish. During 2017, La Vuelta Stage 15 finish line was positioned at 2500m elevation and was an epic test for the pro peloton at the end of their 30km stage climb! Tonight feel free to join our guides for a tapas dinner through the vibrant university city that is Granada!

*[Note: Tours conducted during May will be unlikely to access the Pico de Veleta summit at 3300m elevation due to excessive snow]*



**Today's Ride:** 80km cycling available  
**Meals:** Breakfast provided  
**Accommodation:** Granada (Andalusia, Spain)

## DAY THREE – La Alhambra Fortress (Granada)

Following breakfast you will enjoy a 3hr morning visit of La Alhambra fortress and Generalife gardens. This UNESCO world heritage site is Spain's most important example of its Moorish heritage. Watching over the city, the fortress was the Moors last stronghold in Spain. Sections of the complex date as far back as the 9<sup>th</sup> Century, however, most of what survives today was built in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century.

Following La Alhambra there will be a 1hr van transfer to Montefrio one of Spain's most picturesque towns. Now you are really in the heart of olive country! After a bite to eat today's ride takes us into the undulating terrain immediately west of Montefrio. The 2-3km climbs and winding descents through olive groves provides a very enjoyable cycling experience. The white washed village of Zuheros is our destination for the night and for those with still some extra energy to expend then the final climb up to the 'bat' caves awaits!



**Today's Ride:** 65km cycling available  
**Meals:** Breakfast & Dinner provided  
**Accommodation:** Zuheros (Andalusia, Spain)



## DAY FOUR – Ride from Zuheros to Montilla

Cycling from the hotel and you will make a perfect circle following the border of the Sierras Subbeticas Natural Park. These quietly trafficked roads are free flowing with vast fields of olive and almond trees. Vultures and peregrine falcons are commonly sighted seeing they live in the eroded limestone rock walls.

The main challenge for the day is the Virgen de la Sierra climb which finishes at a small chapel. This is a Category 2 climb that has been used on several occasions during La Vuelta a Andalucia professional cycling race. It is a 7km climb with a constant 7% grade and two short 10% ramps thrown in for good measure. The views down to the valley make the effort well and truly worth it!

The ride will finish in the small town of Montilla which has an excellent olive oil interpretation centre. There will be time for you to enjoy some olive oil tasting!



**Today's Ride:** 100km cycling available

**Meals:** Breakfast provided

**Accommodation:** Cordoba (Andalusia, Spain)

## DAY FIVE – La Mezquita (Mosque): Cordoba

Cordoba has a strong cycling tradition and the local cycling clubs enjoy the Sierra Morena mountain range that hugs the northern boundary of the city. After four consecutive days on the bikes we will discuss the options with the group. A shorter and flatter ride option could see you follow the Guadalquivir River and its irrigated fields. Otherwise there is the chance to go up and over the mountains and ride a circular loop route back into Cordoba.

During the late afternoon we will organise a visit to the Mezquita (Grand Mosque). Part mosque and part cathedral, Córdoba's La Mezquita is quite a sight to behold with its detailed Arabic arches, heavy gold doors and thick stonewalls. To top everything off we will finish with a fine dining experience in the enchanting Jewish Quarter. After dinner the Sierra guides will say their goodbyes back at the tour hotel.

**Today's Ride:** 50km & 100km cycling options

**Meals:** Breakfast & Dinner provided

**Accommodation:** Cordoba (Andalusia, Spain)

## DAY SIX – Tour Departure

Following breakfast you are free to continue your own travels. Hotel check-out will be until 12 noon. Please let us know if you would like any post-tour accommodation organised in Cordoba.

**Meals:** Breakfast included

## DID YOU KNOW?

**Granada:** There is a lot to see and do in Granada so you may decide to spend some additional days pre-tour enjoying this amazing city. Granada with its domestic airport allows you to travel quickly to Madrid or Barcelona for example.

**Cordoba:** By the 10<sup>th</sup> Century Cordoba was Europe's intellectual centre. Its old town is now a UNESCO World Heritage site. If you need help with additional days post-tour please let us know. The fast train line also connects Cordoba to Malaga and Madrid in only 1-1.5hr.

## TOUR DETAILS

**REGION:** Granada to Cordoba (Andalusia, Spain)

**PRICE:** 2075 € (twin share)

**DURATION:** 6 DAYS / 5 NIGHTS

**SINGLE ROOM:** 300 €

**HOTELS:** Granada (x2), Zuheros (x1), Cordoba (x2);  
3 Star Hotels

**OPTIONAL EXTRAS:**

Carbon Road Bike Hire: 175 €

Pre or Post Tour Hotel: **Please Ask**

Fast Train Tickets: **Please Ask**

**INCLUDED**

5 nights accomm. (twin share) & breakfast  
5 guided cycling stages  
3 dinners (drinks excluded)  
Mechanic & accompanying support van  
La Alhambra & Mezquita tickets  
Flamenco singing & dancing show  
Olive Oil Tasting

**NOT INCLUDED**

Pre or post tour accommodation

**2018 TOUR DEPARTURES:**

20 – 25 May 2018

17 – 22 June 2018

7 – 12 October 2018

28 October – 2 November 2018

**Note:** Minimum of 2 clients required for tour to proceed