

Córdoba and Zuheros. From Alcalá la Real, in Jaén, and its impressive *Qalat* (fort), we will set out on the last stage of the route towards Almuñécar (*al-Munakab*), where the exiled Umayyad Emir Abderrahmán I, known as *al-Dakbil* (the Immigrant), first entered the Peninsula. Lastly, we come to Granada, which had a forerunner in the Emirate and Caliphate periods in the now vanished city of Madinat Ibbira.



MAP OF THE Umayyad ROUTE IN ANDALUSIA

“UMAYYAD” ENPI PROJECT



“Umayyad” is a project financed by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) within the frame of Cross-Border Cooperation and led by the El legado andalusí

Andalusian Public Foundation. It has a network of partners in seven countries in the Mediterranean region: Spain, Portugal, Italy, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan.

The objective of this project is to create a transnational tourist itinerary (Umayyad Route) which would also have specific national routes in each of the partner countries. All of these itineraries would share the common denominator of a rich heritage left behind by the Umayyad dynasty in their period of expansion along the shores of the Mediterranean.

The action plan for the “Umayyad” Project sets out a number of coordinated actions in each of the seven countries aimed at offering future tourists a high-quality product range based on a shared cultural heritage. At the same time, a variety of different initiatives related with the Route will be carried out, such as participation of local tour operators in promotional and publicity events and the involvement of other tourism and cultural stakeholders.

All of the actions organized within the framework of this project seek to bring about an improvement in territorial cohesion by means of the creation of a sustainable cultural tourism itinerary with a responsible approach towards the environment, which optimizes the accessibility and connectivity of the countries in the Mediterranean basin.

the River Genil where we come to Écija, and thence to Córdoba, the capital of the Umayyad caliphate, its spiritual centre and powerhouse, capital of the arts and of wisdom and home to one of the most important buildings in the Islamic West, the Great Mosque, Abd al-Rahman I. In the Province of Córdoba we will be stopping off in three towns that played important strategic and defensive roles: Carcabuey, Priego de

The Umayyad Route in its more than 600kms, begins in the province of Cádiz and passes through the provinces to finish in Granada. This route offers the traveler landscapes unparalleled beauty.



This route seeks to publicize the profound human, cultural, artistic and scientific relationship between East and West and the way in which the Greco-Roman legacy was passed on to Europe through al-Andalus. In the 10th century, the Hispano-Andalusian civilization was at its peak. At the crossroads between the Christian, Jewish and Muslim cultures, this cradle of literature, science and the arts was a constant source of invention, mixing the legacies from both sides of the Mediterranean. The Umayyad Route begins in Algeciras (*al-Yazirat al-Khadra* in Arabic), the gateway through which Islam entered the Iberian Peninsula and where the new conquerors that crossed the Straits of Gibraltar in the year 711 stationed their armies. It was here that Tariq reorganized his troops that same year before taking on the Visigoths. Our next stop is the nice village of Medina Sidonia. The city of Sevilla already had a dynamic cosmopolitan past when it was conquered by the Muslims in the year 712. *Labbilya* as it was known in Arabic became one of the most important cities in al-Andalus, of which it was briefly the capital. From here we move on to its neighbourhood, Carmona, in the heart of the Sevilla countryside in which Arabic tribes from Yemen settled including the Ibn Khalidun, the family of the great historian of the same name. Our journey continues along the valley of

THE Umayyad ROUTE IN ANDALUSIA

Information Points

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Tel. 956 581 413
- MEDINA SIDONIA**  
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Calle san Juan - Edificio de la Plaza de Abastos.  
Tel. 956 412 404
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Oficina de Turismo de la Junta de Andalucía  
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Tel. 955 471 232  
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- Plaza de las Tendillas, s/n,  
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Tel. 958 631 125
- GRANADA**  
Oficina de Turismo de la Junta de Andalucía  
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Tel. 958 575 202
- Oficina de Información Turística del Patronato Provincial**  
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The Routes of El legado andalusí

From Algeciras to Granada passing through Sevilla and Córdoba



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## ALGECIRAS



The history of Algeciras is a tale of ups and downs played out in time with the bonanza and the conflicts in the Strait

of Gibraltar and in the relations between the shores of Europe and Africa. *Al-Yazirat al-Khadra*, the gateway to al-Andalus from Maghrib, was the first city to be taken by the Muslims. In times of the emirs and caliphs it served as the capital of the "cora", or provincial circumscription, and maintained a strong trading activity with Maghrib, evidence of which can be found in its busy shipyards.

After Tariq ibn Ziyad disembarked in 711, Algeciras became a base for Musa's conquests in Iberia at the dawn of al-Andalus. It grew quickly with the construction of the walled Medina of the Old Town, a great mosque commissioned by Abd al-Rahman I and a fortress for the governor.

## MEDINA SIDONIA

The former Assido with its Phoenician, Roman and Visigoth origins, is located on a strategic crossroads between the sierra, the plains and the coast. It acquired importance in the times of al-Andalus, when it became the capital of the province with an Arab aristocracy and a principally Berber population.



According to chronicles of the Almoravid and Almohad periods, Madinat Saduna or Abu Salim, was noted for its ramparts, the remains of

which, such as Arco de Pastora or Puerta de Belén, still evoke its strength. The church of Santa Maria la Coronada embellishes its enchanting town centre.

## SEVILLA



History, scenery, art and atmosphere come together in one of the most captivating cities, where light, air and colour create a gamut of sensations on the banks of the Guadalquivir, 'big river' in Arabic. It flourished in the times of Tartessos and Rome and achieved the rank of what might be termed metropolis in the course

of the nearly 550 years of Arab-Muslim history. Capital of the city of al-Andalus for a very short time, under the name of *Isbiliya*, still treasures, today, various monuments from the Umayyad period. Of the ancient mosque of Umar Ibn Adabbas (now the collegiate church of San Salvador), which received the faithful from 829 to 1182, we can still see part of its minaret, possibly the oldest in al-Andalus, and two galleries of the Orange-tree courtyard, though greatly transformed, as well as being able to deduce to some extent its size and orientation.

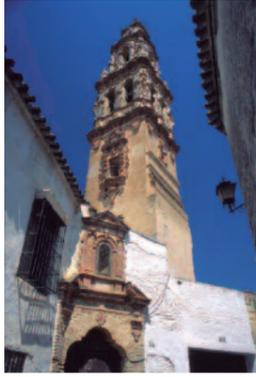
## CARMONA

Already existing in the Ibero-Roman period, when it was known as *Carmo*, this town in the Sevilla countryside has 11th-century mosque, if we go by the arches in the orange-tree courtyard of the convent church of Santa Maria. This work must be the reconstruction of a previous mosque from the times of the emirs, apparent in the characteristics of partially preserved minaret.

Furthermore, the Seville Gate must have had a new arch added in the front of the original Roman ones during the caliphate period. The family of the great writer and historian, Ibn Khaldun, were from Carmona.



## ÉCIJA



This town has remote origins and it was one of the three main towns of Roman Baetica, at the time of al-Andalus, Écija flourished and it even became the centre of one of the countless Taifa principalities for a very brief moment.

Known as *Istiyya* in the times of al-Andalus, the city still retains a few remains from the Umayyad

period. On the one hand, the church of Santa Cruz, where the mosque was presumably located, conserves two inscriptions commemorating the construction of two ablutions fountains, one dated in 930 and the other in 977. On the other hand, there are still some remains of the city walls, dating back to the caliphal period.

## CÓRDOBA

On the banks of the Guadalquivir, history shows that it was the centre of learning and knowledge. It was already of some importance under the Romans; it was where the philosopher Seneca, was born and it was the capital of *Hispania Ulterior*. It became the capital of the Umayyad Caliphate, where the people of three different cultural traditions lived peacefully together and contributed to the recovery of the classical culture of ancient Greece and retrieved it for Europe through its scholars, such as Averroes and Maimonides. Under Abd al-Rahman III, Córdoba became the centre of civilization, a bridge between east and west.

Its Great Mosque, paradigm of mosques in the Muslim West, is the most glorious expression of what once was al-Andalus art and culture.

Still standing, only a few kilometers from Córdoba, are the archaeological site of the palatine city of Madinat al-Zahra. Built to celebrate the Caliphate's power, its architecture and decoration contain the seeds of what would later become Muslim art in al-Andalus and the Muslim West. Al-Zahra was a source of inspiration to other kingdoms.



## ZUHEROS

This is a Moorish town at the foot of a rocky range, from where it has its name *Subayra* which means rock in Arabic. The 9th century castle is perched on top of one of these enormous rocks. Not far is the Cueva de los Murciélagos (cave of bats) with cave paintings and an outstanding vantage point over this extraordinary landscape.



## CARCABUEY



Settled in the limits of the Subbéticas mountain ranges, this town from Córdoba has been marked by the passage of numerous civilizations due to its condition of

frontier town. *Karkabul*, the ancient Arab designation that means mountain pass, is towered by the parish church of La Asunción and by a medieval castle.

## PRIEGO DE CÓRDOBA

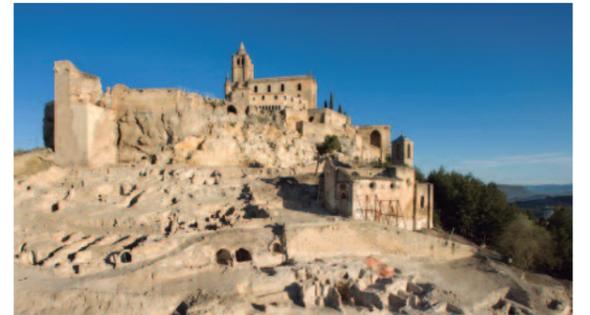


Throughout history, this town has always been important strategically. The historian Ibn al-Khatib stated that in 745 the Egyptian soldiers who had entered the Peninsula settled in *Bago* and built fortresses among the high surrounding hills. *Bagub*, the Arabic name for Priego, probably grew out of one of these fortresses. In the year

889 it became the centre of operations for Ibn Mastana, one of the leaders of the Muwallad revolt, who proclaimed himself lord of Priego and Luque. The town was finally conquered by Alfonso XI and it was not until 1502 when real progress began and a great many buildings were put up.

## ALCALÁ LA REAL

This is a village with an essentially Andalusí history. The first part of its name, as of many other towns, comes from the Arabic *Qalat* (castle), which means fortified settlement. It was a frontier town, key to the valley of the Guadalquivir and to the fertile plains of Granada and its coat of arms has a key right in the middle. It was known to the Iberians and Romans and the Moors lived there for more than six hundred years, during which it grew around the fortress. A high point in Alcalá's Andalusí past was reached in the 12th century.



## ALMUÑÉCAR



*Al-Munakkab*, known in Phoenician and Roman times as Sexi, was where Abd al-Rahman I landed in 756. Under his command, the al-Andalus Umayyad dynasty began. There

is not much left of the medieval city, though the city's layout still remains many details from the al-Andalus period. The castle of San Miguel basically dates from Nasrid times. Below it, a statue of Abd al-Rahman I commemorates the historical event of his landing.

## GRANADA

Granada captivates the visitor through the enchantment irradiated by the palace fortress and constitutes one of the most valued treasures of mankind.

The last capital of al-Andalus embraces one of the most important ensembles of Islamic architecture in the Iberian Peninsula, with the remains of walls, gateways, mosques, houses, palaces and, of course, its most precious treasure, the Alhambra, symbol and apotheosis of al-Andalus culture. Granada is certainly the best example of Muslim culture's contribution to the West.

In emiral and caliphal period, Madinat Ilbira was the most important urban settlement in the cora of Ilbira. Its residents left it and they founded Granada.

The Alhambra was a palace city built on the remains of previous fortifications by the Nasrids as the location of their court.

