

Route of Washington Irving



This Route is one of the vital links of al-Andalus: through Málaga, Seville and Granada, it joins two outstanding cities, two essential cities in the Hispano-Muslim civilization. This itinerary reviews the road followed in 1829 by this romantic American writer who was fascinated by the exotic and exuberant Moorish remains in Andalusia. This was a historical road that in the Middle Ages served as an important trade route between the Nasrid kingdom of Granada and Christian territory. All this area may be considered border country, covering the lowland plains of the Guadalquivir valley and the fertile plains surrounded by mountains near Granada (*vega*). The way includes large towns and villages perched on hills, below *alcazabas* and castles, places with an extraordinary heritage in the midst of widely differing attractive landscapes through the province of Seville, the north of the province of Málaga through Antequera and Granada. The customs and traditions still existing in these villages, where agriculture is the principal occupation, provides an extra inducement for a fascinating journey. The legendary feature of this route is further emphasized in this area by the fact that in the 19th c. it was famous for contraband and highwaymen, such as the well-known *Siete Niños de Écija* (seven children from Écija) and José María *El Tempranillo*.

The legacy of al-Andalus

The Iberian Peninsula went through one of the most privileged periods in its history during the Muslim era, which resulted in a brilliant civilization. During this time, Andalusia became the cultural centre of Europe and the link between East and West.

The Routes of "El legado andalusí" go through those paths which connected the kingdom of Granada with the rest of al-Andalus in the past. Along this itinerary travellers have the possibility of enjoying wonderful landscapes on a quiet journey, tasting exquisite dishes and giving free rein to their imagination by turning past events into a present experience.

Corral del Carbón, Granada, Spain.
Headquarters of El legado andalusí Andalusian Public Foundation.



The Route of Washington Irving follows the historical road between Seville and Granada, from the fertile plains of the Guadalquivir valley, to the sierras and rich valleys north of Málaga and west of the province of Granada. Nowadays, this is covered in the main by the A-92 dual-carriageway, branching off at times on the N-IV and other local roads, such as the 339 and 335. An alternative means of transportation is the railway, very nearly parallel with the highway.

Monument	Museum	Nature	Tower
Legendary	Arch bath	Hiking	Historical Fountain
Archaeological Site	Church	Panoramic viewpoint	Dolmen
Alcázar Castle	Moorish Castle	Civilian building	Horse

Altitudes vary between Seville at only 15 m. asl. to plains between 200 and 400 m. asl. Estepa, around 700 m. asl lies at the beginning of higher land; Antequera at 577 m. marks the average altitude of the road to Granada. On either side, however, there are places at a higher mark. Archidona for example, at about 1,000 m., Montefrío with 833 m. and Alhama de Granada with 888 m. asl.

WASHINGTON IRVING



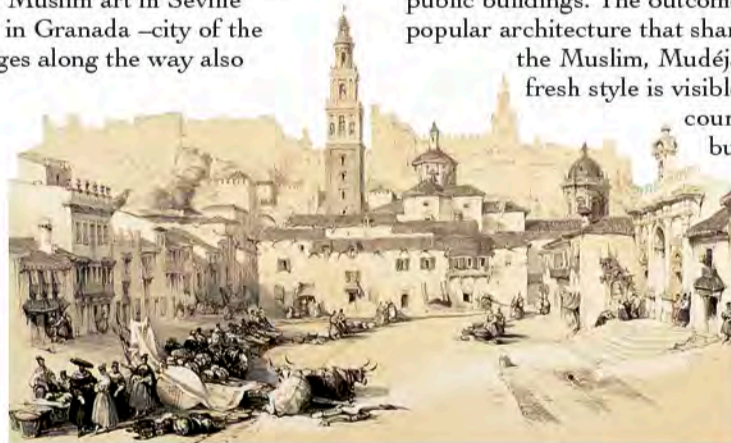
The leading player in this route was an American diplomatist and writer (1783-1859) who is the prototype of the romantic traveller. Charmed by Europe, he was totally bewitched by «exotic» Andalusia. In 1829 he travelled from Seville to Granada where he stayed for a time. His writing at this period was full of Hispano-Moorish references, such as his *The Alhambra tales* that contributed so much to the romantic image of Andalusia.

ARCHITECTURE

MUSLIM, BAROQUE, POPULAR

The considerable architectural heritage in towns and villages along the route provides, in the first place, an extraordinary selection of Hispano-Muslim buildings. This later becomes Mudéjar, Baroque and popular, forming the basis for the large number of Historical-Artistic monuments in the area. Together with the outstanding examples of Muslim art in Seville –Giralda and Alcázar– and in Granada –city of the Alhambra–, towns and villages along the way also provide equally notable buildings –castles and fortresses such as those of

Alcalá, Antequera and Loja, mosques like that of Archidona, baths such as those in Alhama de Granada. There are countless Mudéjar and Baroque buildings in the area, churches with bell towers that are reminders of minarets, and churches with lace-like plaster decorative motifs recalling Muslim crafts, as well as palaces and public buildings. The outcome of all this is a form of popular architecture that shares some common elements of the Muslim, Mudéjar and Baroque styles. This fresh style is visible in town buildings, in country properties and smaller buildings.



Left, a romantic view of Carmona. In the background, the tower of San Pedro inspired by the Giralda tower, looking like a minaret, and the thick walls of the Alcázar of the Seville Gateway, originally Roman, reformed by the Almohads.

Below, typical Moorish baths, *al-hammam* in Arabic, origin of the name Alhama. They consist of a courtyard, hall, cold room, warm room with pool and the hot room, where the steam and hot water is produced by a boiler.



The sober elegance of popular architecture to be found between Seville and Granada is sometimes expressed in a surprising ability to compose a harmonious mixture of textures and colours.



TRADITIONS



FOOD

The food in this part of Andalusia is made from local produce and the results are very appetizing. Alcalá de Guadaíra is famed for the simplest form of food

–bread–, and so is Antequera and many other places near Granada. Olive oil is widely produced in the countryside of Seville, Carmona, Estepa and La Roda. Then from Antequera, center of production with the *hojiblanca* variety of olive, extending as far as Loja and the valley. Huétor-Tájar is known for the excellence of the asparagus produced there and on the whole, the vegetables of this region are very good and widely used in dishes, such as *porra*, *gaspacho*, salads, etc. All the different types of sausage products made in the different places along the way are also very tasty, as it is meat, game and fish. Mention must be made of the sweets, from those made by cloistered nuns in many of the villages, to the widely known *mantecados*, *polvorones* (mostly eaten at Christmas time) and *ravvas*, *alfajores* and many other delightful confections.



HANDICRAFTS

There are countless workshops between Seville and Granada where some of the most representative Andalusian handicrafts are made. For example, there is a wide range in the pottery line in both provincial capitals, as well as in other towns and villages on the way. Wrought iron is also a significant chapter under this heading and so are carpentry and leatherwork, as applied to harness makers and saddlers, and bookbinders. Work with vegetable fibers and other specialities, such as jewellery and the making of guitars complete this view of artisan crafts in the area.



FEASTS

The cycle of festivities in places along the route of Washington Irving follows the usual pattern in Andalusia. It includes Easter, fairs and celebrations in honour of patron saints. The season begins in spring, followed by a very full agenda in summer; Corpus Christi is very popular and so are the different pilgrimages. Flamenco is an unmistakable feature of popular culture throughout this area, to which many festivals and fairs stand witness.



HORSEMANSHIP

An old saying maintains that the reason why horses in the countryside of Seville are so fleet of foot is because the mares are made pregnant by the wind; this is an example of equine lore surrounding the tremendous popularity of the local breed along the route. An image of these swift animals is associated, furthermore, with travellers and with the legendary bandits that frequently featured as part of the landscape. There are studs along the way in Écija, Marchena, Osuna, Antequera, Loja and even nearer Granada devoted to thoroughbred Spanish horses and sometimes, Arabs also. It is therefore, a route where riding part of the way is a real possibility.



Cultural Route of the Council of Europe

From Seville to Granada

Washington Irving

Route of

Information Points

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| SEVILLA
Oficinas de Turismo de la Junta de Andalucía.
- Plaza del Triunfo, 1.
Tel. 954 787 578
- Aeropuerto de Sevilla.
Autopista de San Pablo s/n.
Tel. 954 782 035
- Estación de Santa Justa.
Avda. Kansas City s/n.
Tel. 954 782 002 | ESTEPA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo.
Ayuntamiento.
Plaza del Carmen, 1 y 2.
Tel. 955 912 717 (Ext 526.) | ALHAMA DE GRANADA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo.
Carrera Francisco Toledo, 10.
Tel. 958 380 886 | MONTEFRÍO
Oficina de Turismo.
Plaza de España, 1.
Tel. 958 336 004 |
| ALCALÁ DE GUADAÍRA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo.
Avda. Tren de los Panaderos s/n.
Tel. 955 796 474 | LA RODA DE ANDALUCÍA
Ayuntamiento.
Calle Real, 25.
Tel. 954 016 006 | HUMILLADERO
Ayuntamiento.
Avda. del Emigrante, 1.
Tel. 952 737 023 | ÁLORA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo.
Caleta Pileta s/n.
Tel. 651 909 025 |
| ARAHAL
Oficina de Turismo.
C/ Serrano, 6.
Tel. 955 841 417 | FUENTE DE PIEDRA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo.
Calle Castillo, 1.
Tel. 952 735 453 | CHAUCHINA
Ayuntamiento.
Plaza de la Constitución, 12.
Tel. 958 455 098 | SANTA FE
Oficina Municipal de Turismo.
Isabel la Católica, 7.
Arco de Sevilla.
Tel. 958 613 110 |
| CARMONA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo.
Alcázar de la Puerta de Sevilla s/n.
Tel. 954 190 955 | MOLINA
Ayuntamiento.
Calle de la Alameda, 1.
Tel. 952 740 044 | ANTEQUERA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo.
Plaza San Sebastián, 7.
Tel. 952 702 505 | GRANADA
Oficina de Turismo de la Junta de Andalucía.
Plaza Nueva, Santa Ana, 4.
Tel. 958 575 202 |
| MARCHENA
Oficina de Turismo.
Puerta de Morón.
Calle San Francisco, 43.
Museo Lorenzo Coullaut Valera.
Tel. 955 321 010 | ARCHIDONA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo.
Plaza de Morón.
Tel. 952 716 479 | LOJA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo.
Plaza de la Constitución s/n.
Tel. 958 321 520 | Oficina de Información Turística del Patronato Provincial.
Calle Cárcel Baja 3.
Tel. 958 247 128 |
| ÉCIJA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo.
Edificio Palacio de Benamey.
Calle Elvira 1-A.
Tel. 955 902 933 | OSUNA
Oficina Municipal de Turismo.
Calle Sevilla, 37.
Tel. 954 615 732 | HUÉTOR-TÁJAR
Casa de la Cultura.
Plaza Gregorio Peláez s/n.
Tel. 645 596 752 | Oficina Municipal de Información Turística.
Ayuntamiento de Granada.
Plaza del Carmen s/n.
Tel. 958 246 280 |
| | MORALEDA DE ZAFAYONA
Ayuntamiento.
Ctra. del Canal, 6.
Tel. 958 443 002 | | |

