



CLASSIC
EDELWEISS TOURS

ANDALUSIA - MOTORCYCLE TOURING AT ITS BEST

“ A tour of Andalusia is about tapas, wine, and scenery –
and about never-ending twisties! ”

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RIDING DAY 1 : MÁLAGA - GRANADA

Standard Route (214 km / 133 miles)

This tour is about putting your motorcycle to work on winding Andalusian back roads. So why not get right to it? After circumnavigating the city, countless turns up the Montes de Malaga will put your riding skills to the test. In return, you will be rewarded with breathtaking vistas of Málaga, the Mediterranean Sea, and the unique mountain scenery of the natural preserve to the west.

Get your first taste of Spanish hospitality during a coffee break in one of the many tiny villages along the route. The valley of the Velez River takes us back down to the world-famous golden beaches of the Costa del Sol and our lunch spot right on the seashore. The sharp contrast of the Sierra del Chaparral, some 4,260 ft. higher than we are, is something to be remembered.

Highlights:

#1: Alpujarras



The fertile high valleys of the Alpujarras, with their chestnut, walnut and poplar trees, cover the south side of the Sierra Nevadas. The architecture of the white villages - dense groups of irregularly shaped houses with high chimneys on flat grey roofs - is unique to Spain. Specialties of the region are the ham dried in the cold air of Trevelez and the colorful hand woven carpets.

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#2: Granada



Of all the cities in Andalusia, Granada has best preserved its Moorish look and Arab heritage. This is particularly evident in the old town of Granada. Its alleys hide Arab baths and tea rooms, bazaars, cathedrals, and convents.

Strictly speaking, Granada has two old towns: the Albaicín and the center around the cathedral. Both quarters could not be more different. While the winding alleys of the Albaicín stretch up and down the hill, the labyrinth of alleys in the lower town extends around the cathedral.

Above it, the Alhambra towers against the backdrop of the Sierra Nevada. The Albaicín in particular is rich in rewarding vantage points from which your gaze falls on the Alhambra or the red roofs of the city. A view that will stay in your mind!

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RIDING DAY 2 : GRANADA - JAÉN

Standard Route (135 km / 84 miles)

Rise and shine! This morning is dedicated to one of the most widely-known works of Islamic art in the world – Granada's Alhambra. Naturally, it ranks among the most popular sights in the world. If you have tickets already or you are able to secure some on the spot, you can spend a few hours inside the Alhambra before you leave Granada with the group or even by yourself if you prefer. If you are not visiting the Alhambra, you can either take it easy, sleep in a little and/or walk around the old town a bit, or follow your tour guide on a morning ride up to the Sierra Nevada. There, over 2,000 m above sea level, you will very likely find some snow, so put your warm sweater on underneath your riding jacket.

In the afternoon, we will take you off the beaten tourist paths into the heart of the real Andalusia. Seemingly endless olive orchards will be our companions as winding secondary roads lead us through the rolling hills of rural Spain. The ride along the limestone ranges of the Sierras before Jaén will mark the end of a perfect riding day.

Highlights:

#1: Alhambra



This impressive architectural work of art was created under Ismail I, Jussuf I, and Mohamed V, the caliphs of the Nasrid dynasty in Granada. To cover the waning of their worldly power, they created their idea of a paradise on earth. They used extremely simple but excellently crafted materials (plaster, wood, and tiles). The Alhambra experienced looting, decay, and not least Napoleon's attempt to destroy it, but was restored; and the craftsmanship still takes the visitor's breath away today.

#2: Moclín



This small town with its castle towering over the village tells of an eventful past. The Castillo Moclín appears unexpectedly around a bend and the impressive sight makes you slow down. You should definitely stop for a photo.

Although the castle itself has obviously suffered the ravages of time, the Cristo del Paño church below survived it all the better. It is surrounded by a still intact double ring of walls.

Both the castle ruins and the town were given their name by their Arab occupiers. They called it 'Hisn Moclín', which means 'castle of the district', with 'shield of Granada' being its leg name. When the Moors occupied large parts of Spain, the borders shifted permanently due to constant expansion. Towards the end of their reign, however, the Spanish rulers reclaimed more and more of their land. During the last decades of Islamic rule, the town of Moclín was located on the border between the Kingdom of Granada and the Christian territory of Jaén. In order to guard and control this border, the Moors built the Castillo Moclín.

#3: Olive orchards



Since Roman times, olives and olive oil have been important parts of Andalusian cuisine. A third of Europe's olive oil production originates from this area. The trees grow very slowly and become very old. The olives, inedible from the tree, are harvested in winter, and will then be preserved as tapas or pressed to oil. Thousands of square kilometers of olive orchards cover the area along our way.

The smell of olive oil mills lingers everywhere.

#4: Jaén



The lively city of Jaén invites you to visit its beautiful old town: take a stroll through the Juderia, the Jewish quarter, and marvel at the numerous churches along the way. With the Palacio de Villardompardo, Jaén also has a real cultural gem. The Arab baths in the basement are one of the largest in Spain. Jaén is also known as the world capital of olive oil. Perhaps you will have the opportunity to do a little olive oil

tasting along your way through the old town. Have you heard about the famous myth of the city of Jaén? At the end of your tour, you should definitely find out what the 'Lagarte de la Malena', also known as the 'Lagarte de Jaén', is all about. You will certainly find out more at the Fuente del Lagarto.

Like a perpetual defense of the city of Jaén, Santa Catalina Castle watches over it. These days, however, it has been transformed into one of the Parador hotels. Its original Arabic layout was modified and extended by Ferdinand III after the reconquest. At the southeastern end of the castle, a short footpath leads to the monumental cross that King Ferdinand had erected there in the spring of 1246. From there, you can enjoy the fantastic panorama over the Guadalquivir Valley and the Sierra Sur.

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RIDING DAY 3 : JAÉN - ANTEQUERA

Standard Route (190 km / 118 miles)

This morning, the A-6050 takes us quickly out of the city of Jaén - an easy and relaxing ride through endless olive tree plantations. White villages built on hills appear again and again in the morning light. About halfway to Antequera, we pass Alcalá la Real with its fortified Fortaleza de la Mota, then we turn southwest and take the winding side road to Iznajar and the Embalse of the same name. This is Andalusia at its best! It's not far to Antequera now.

Highlights:

#1: Fortaleza de la Mota



Alcalá la Real - sounds very dignified, doesn't it? And indeed, the name of this town has a little story behind its origins. The Moorish castle Fortaleza de la Mota, named after the main tower, the Mota, towers above the town. In 713, after their conquest, the Muslim conquerors called the place Qal'at, which means 'fortified city'. And this was indeed the case back then - all life took place within such

walled cities. Hardly anyone built a house in the areas outside a fortified city. In the 12th century, the castle came under the control of the Banu Said family and was henceforth known as Qal'at Banu Said or Alcalá de Beneide. In 1341, Alfonso XI of Castile took over the city and gave it the title 'Real' - 'the royal'. Ever since the town has borne this name. The district around the castle, though, only developed in the centuries following, when the castle lost its importance after the Reconquista and people created their new living space below and around the castle.

#2: Antequera



Antequera (population about 41,000) is an attractive city with a well-preserved historic center, some fine buildings, and some outstanding natural sites close by. About 4,000 years ago, the area was inhabited by people who erected some of Europe's largest megalithic dolmens (tombs of huge boulders), Cueva de Menga and Cueva de Viera.

Menga, the larger of the two, is 82 ft long, 13 ft high, and composed of 31 slabs of stone, the largest of which weighs 180 tons. You can find it about 9.3 miles from the center of Antequera, on the road leading northeast to the N 331.

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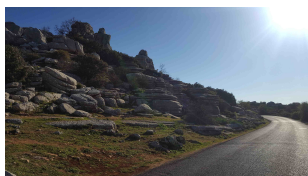
RIDING DAY 4 : ANTEQUERA - SEVILLE (SEVILLA)

Standard Route (285 km / 177 miles)

Can you hear them neighing already, our high-tech horses? Let's get going then! Two completely different landscapes will serve as our playground today. We reach the fertile Guadalhorce Valley through the barren, rugged mountain landscape of the Sierra de Chimenea. A constantly narrowing rocky gorge takes us to one of Andalusia's natural wonders, the "Garganta del Chorro", a gorge into which the river forces its way through a crevice, which is only 10 m wide in places, and along the 180 m high limestone walls. Our day is characterized by numerous witnesses of the Spanish-Moorish past until we finally enter the lonely 'Sierra de Lijar' near Olvera. Towards Seville, you will notice that the area becomes flatter and after a coffee break we approach our hotel from the southeast on the A 375. With more than 700,000 inhabitants, Seville is Andalusia's largest and most exciting city. Its unique atmosphere, its famous past and its lively present entice us to stay longer - tomorrow we will have plenty of time to explore the city on our rest day.

Highlights:

#1: El Torcal



El Torcal is a spectacular limestone rock formation south of Antequera in the otherwise very rural area. 100 million years ago, the whole area was still covered by a huge ocean. The hills and mountains were then shaped during an uplift of the earth shell, maintaining the horizontal layers. From here you have a fantastic view over the whole region, on sunny days you might even see the ocean.

#2: Garganta del Chorro



Along the fertile Guadalhorce Valley, shortly after the village of El Chorro, we come across one of Andalusia's geographical wonders. The Garganta del Chorro is a gorge, in some places a mere 30 ft. wide, which was carved into a 600 ft. sandstone cliff by the river. It can be seen best on the Camino del Rey, a wooden walkway along the cliff. The path was built at the beginning of the 20th century for the construction of the hydroelectric power plant. For the

inauguration, the Spanish king came to see this architectural masterpiece. From then on, the adventurous path got the name "Caminito del Rey", the King's Path.

#3: Embalses - the water reservoirs in Spain



Since the 1950s, the whole country, from Andalusia to Galicia, is dominated by water reservoirs, the so-called "embalses". Most of the 356 water reservoirs were built under the rule of dictator Franco. Aridity is a real problem for sun-blessed Spain. Especially the southern part of the country doesn't get much rain, and during midsummer, most of its rivers will be even completely dried up.

Compared to the rivers of northern Spain, which carry plenty of water, the Ríos of Andalusia and the Extremadura resemble only little streamlets during midsummer. To ensure the supply of water and electricity, water reservoirs have been built throughout the country, and in Andalusia in particular. It is no surprise that four of the twelve biggest water-retaining structures and twenty-eight dams can be found here in the south of Spain. The big difference concerning water supply becomes obvious when looking at the Mediterranean coast between the cities of Murcia and Almería. The extensive greenhouse market gardening in this area represents the biggest user of water. The people living in Andalusia can only dream of the freshwater rivers the northern part of Spain is blessed with.

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RIDING DAY 5 : SEVILLE (SEVILLA)

Standard Route (227 km / 141 miles)

Today the choice is yours: either you use the whole day to explore Seville and its sights, or you climb your motorcycle for a half-day's ride into the Sierra Morena. An entertaining route through hilly and wooded terrain awaits you there and of course, you will have a lot of fun riding on these roads. However, if you are undecided, the question is: how often will you have the opportunity to see the unique city of Seville?

Highlights:

#1: Seville (Sevilla)



With a population of more than 700,000 inhabitants, Seville is Andalusia's biggest and most exciting city. Its unique atmosphere – stylish, confident, ancient, proud, yet also sociable and intimate - makes it an absolute must for every Andalusia visitor. A couple of other must-sees are the city's two great monuments: The Muslim Alcazar and the Cathedral with its famous Giralda. Both during the

Moorish occupation and during the 16th and 17th centuries, this city had its high time. 1992 - the year of the world Expo - was one of the best for Seville in the more recent past, and the results of all this would definitely require more than a day to explore! But we can at least get a good idea of the area and learn a lot about this jewel on the River Guadalquivir!

#2: Sierra Morena



A range of low, rolling hills that rarely reach 3,280 ft. stretches across the northern part of Andalusia and straddles the borders of neighboring Extremadura and Castilla-La-Mancha. The Sierra has a few mining towns, but most of it is very sparsely populated and divided between evergreen oak woodlands and scrub, and rough pasture used for grazing. The roads here, guarantee a very high

level of riding pleasure!

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RIDING DAY 6 : SEVILLE (SEVILLA) - RONDA

Standard Route (235 km / 146 miles)

Hopefully, you are well rested, because today we have a full program. We leave Seville via an extensive rural plain and continue through vast landscapes to Arcos de la Frontera. Arcos is a town of about 29,000 inhabitants and is located in the province of Cádiz. As one of the main towns of the “White Villages” (“Pueblos Blancos”), the old town alone, perched on a steep rock above the river Guadalete, is an attraction in itself. From the parking lot at the highest point, we can enjoy the view over lunch. We then head into more hilly terrain. The road is called the “Ruta de Toros” because the fiery Andalusian fighting bulls are bred on many haciendas along the way. Then it's back to more mountainous regions. We climb the Sierra de Ronda on a bit more remote roads. The route from Jimena de la Frontera to Ronda winds wonderfully with countless long bends and breathtaking scenery. A driving delight and a dream for every motorcyclist.

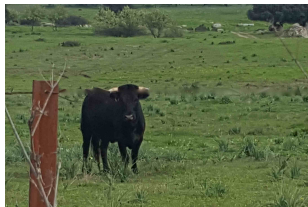
Highlights:

#1: Arcos de la Frontera



Arcos de la Frontera is an archetypal white town, it has a labyrinthine Moorish quarter that twists up to its ruined castle. At its centre is the Plaza de Espana, one side of which gives views across sunbaked plains. Fronting the square are the superb Parador de Arcos de la Frontera and the Iglesia de Santa Maria, a late gothic building, worth seeing for its extravagant Baroque choir stalls and Renaissance altarpiece.

#2: Fighting Bulls (on the meadow)



A typical Spanish fighting bull is primarily bred free-range on extensive meadows in Spain.

Although the actual origins are disputed, genetic studies have indicated that the breeding stock have an unusually old genetic pool.

The fighting bull is characterized by its aggressive behavior, especially when solitary or unable to flee. Mostly colored

black or dark brown, they reach maturity slower than meat breeds as they were not selected to be heavy, but instead to display a well-muscled "athletic" look, with a prominent morillo, a complex of muscles over the shoulder and neck which gives the bull its distinctive profile and strength with its horns. Mature bulls weigh from 1100-1600 lb and the best bulls are selected for the fight with a full matador. For this a Spanish fighting bull must be at least four years old.

Due to their dichromatic vision, the bulls are red-green colorblind which is falsifying the idea that the color red makes them angry; they just respond to the movements of the "muleta".

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RIDING DAY 7 : RONDA

Standard Route (135 km / 84 miles)

Ronda is the perfect location for a rest day, located in the center of a spider web of incredible motorcycle roads. Your tour guide will take you on a short ride towards Ronda's west. The Sierra Ubrique is our destination, with great roads and scenery. Of course, you will have to stop in Grazalema, one of the famous White Villages of Andalusia.

In the afternoon, we recommend taking a stroll through the city of Ronda. The bridge that connects the two parts of Ronda across the River Tejo Gorge is awe-inspiring. You can even walk down on a narrow footpath for an even more spectacular view.

Highlights:

#1: Ronda



Ronda is most dramatically located on top of a sheer limestone cliff. The nearly unconquerable town was one of the last Moorish bastions in Spain. The Puente Nuevo, a bridge spanning the 300 ft. Tajo gorge, connects both parts of the town. Most of the historic sights can be visited during a walk through the older southern part of the town. Ronda is also said to be the cradle of bullfighting and its

bullring is one of the oldest in Spain. Every ambitious matador dreams about fighting here in September, during the Corrida Goyesca.

#2: White Towns of Andalusia



Apart from Grazalema, we will get to see another beautiful example of the Spanish white-washed villages on our route today. Beautifully situated on the Embalse de Zahara, on a mountain ridge, the village of Zahara de la Sierra is a gem among the white villages of Andalusia, and has won awards for the preservation and renovation of its historic buildings - definitely worth the visit. However, you will get the best

impression, or rather the best photo of this village, from a distance.

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RIDING DAY 8 : RONDA - MÁLAGA

Standard Route (250 km / 155 miles)

Today's route is a morning loop down to Estepona at the coast and back to Ronda for lunch. If you still had doubts this far into the trip, this ride will finally confirm your suspicion: You have become hopelessly addicted to roads like these!

Whoever did not get enough curves so far on this tour, well there are plenty left. The loop down towards the beaches of Marbella, where the rich and famous go to play, offers great riding and vistas. The road back to Ronda ranks among the most beautiful motorcycle routes in all of Spain.

Highlights:

#1: Route San Pedro-Ronda



Among Andalusia's most beautiful roads ranks this perfectly curved road, meandering up the Malaga mountains from San Pedro de Alcántara over 25 miles to Ronda, the famous town high up in the mountains. Although the road has a speed limit of 60 km/h, you sure will enjoy a seamless ride that is neither interrupted by traffic lights nor any village or

town. Full of wide sweepers, a perfect road surface, great vistas, and not much traffic – this section is a highlight for all riders. Enjoy it!

#2: Puertos



Puerto means pass and passes usually come with mountains. When people wanted to cross mountains, they did so by using trails through those passes and those trails almost never went straight. Later on, they often paved these trails. Well, you probably know that but what can we say - riding these roads by motorcycle produces many

emotions, and words often fall short of the feeling, you need to experience these roads, and today you definitely will. The names of our emotional places are, among others, Puerto de Alijar, Sierra Palmitera, Puerto del Viento, and Puerto de las Abejas.

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#3: Mijas



When you wander through the narrow cobbled streets of this Andalusian white village, you will understand what has attracted foreigners to settle here over the years. Many artists and writers have made it their home, enjoying the benefits of an excellent year-round climate, without being part of the busier, more commercial coastal towns just 4.4 miles down the mountain side. Despite its huge popularity

with tourists, Mijas Pueblo has somehow managed to retain much of its traditional Andalusian way of life, the locals displaying their unabashed passion for all things festive and an unmistakably relaxed 'mañana' outlook on anything that can be put off for another day.



We wish you a wonderful tour.

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