

## Trip Dossier for Spain – Rural Andalucia

Trip Code: FSAE Issue date: 20 August 2009 Valid from: 01 January 2010

This trip takes you to a small unspoilt mountain village in rural Spain where life is very much as it was in the last century with donkeys, chickens, goats and locals going to and from the fields. A wonderful chance to relax, unwind and spend some quality time with your family. From your base, a beautifully restored traditional villa, you can choose from a 'menu of walks, activities and learning experiences'. You will experience many aspects of local life; from going to collect eggs from the chickens or milking the goats, to learning crafts, cookery, or farming. There's also an evening of star-gazing, plus opportunities for walking, riding and cycling. You can walk the ancient Camino Real via vineyards, olive and almond fields to traditional white-washed villages. There is plenty to do; but the emphasis is on relaxation rather than action.

### Day 1 Fly to Almeria

Fly to Almeria (via Barcelona) or Granada. On arrival at the airport you will be met and transferred to our Alpujarras base in Mairena. Known locally as the "balcony of the Alpujarras"; Mairena is set on an elevated position with spectacular views down to the Mediterranean coast. You will be staying in a large traditionally restored village house, Casa las Chimeneas, where the spacious bedrooms all enjoy either a terrace or balcony. The house has been restored with such attention to detail and furnished with authentic antiques, that it was featured in a recent edition of 'El Mueble' - the Spanish equivalent of *Homes and Gardens*. Time permitting you may wish to enjoy an afternoon walk, which gives you the opportunity to explore the cultivated terraces above the village. You may follow the ancient waterways up into the low sierra, looking out as you walk over old stone threshing floors and water mills. It is possible to do a circular walk skirting the edge of the forest not far below the snow line where wild boar and foxes are to be seen, and on to a neighbouring village famous for its picturesque old church set on the site of an old mosque. The evenings are spent at the house where dinner can be served on the terrace under the stars in summer or by the log fire in winter. **Guesthouse (breakfast, picnic lunch and dinner seven nights)**

### Day 2 – 7 At Mairena guesthouse. Choose from a list of daily options

On this holiday there is no set itinerary, but you have flexibility to choose seven activities from the following list. You will be the best judge of what your children will enjoy and you can discuss all the options with your hosts David and Emma. Some activities may be weather dependent.

- Spanish lessons and role play
- Local treasure hunts
- A day on the farm – help with fruit picking, planting etc.
- Visit to a rural house
- Learn to cook paella, tortilla and patatas a lo pobre
- Basket weaving and learning local crafts
- Tour of the local prize-winning organic vineyard
- See and help to make local cheese
- Ride on a local donkey
- Visit and help milk the goats

For younger children you might like also like to consider

- Crafts with recycled materials
- Flower collection and identification – make a nature book
- Stone painting

In addition your hosts will be able to advise you on numerous day or half-day walks that are available from Mairena. For these you will be supplied with route notes and maps. You can walk the ancient Camino Reales – still used today taking farmers to and from their olive and almond fields and along the way you can stop at neighbouring whitewashed villages to admire the balconies of flowers and enjoy a leisurely drink in a bar. For the more fit, there are a wide variety of more challenging walks which take you up to the high sierra and peaks of up to 3000 metres.

There are also a number of optional activities that are available to you which can be arranged and paid for locally. These include: A full day's guided hike to peak of El Morro (2730 metres) high in the Sierra Nevada. 15 km mountain bike descent on forest trails back to the house from the mountain pass of Puerto de la Ragua (this is not recommended for children under 10 years old). Visit to the wine growing town of Laujar, last stronghold of the Moors and full day's hike up the river valley towards the snowline with descent along an ancient waterway with



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caves and forests. Various horse-riding excursions on thoroughbred horses high in the sierra. Star-gazing in the high mountains.

Tours include a day trip to Granada with a guided visit to the Moorish palace of the Alhambra and the Generalife gardens, walk with a guide around the old gypsy quarters of the Albaycin and the Renaissance cathedral and the tombs of Isabella and Ferdinand, the first Catholic monarchs of a unified Spain. Day trip to Cabo de Gata - visit the Natural Park and Bird Sanctuary of Cabo de Gata, famous for its flamingos and stunning wild beaches and cliffs. Day trip to Yegen and neighbouring villages - guided tour of local whitewashed villages, in particular Yegen, home of the Hispanophile Gerald Brenan where he wrote his book 'South of Granada' after the First World War detailing the life and customs of the villages of the Alpujarras. Day trip - Trevelez, Bubion and Pampeneira - visit the highest village in Spain, famous for its wind-cured hams and visit the Information Centre for a talk on the geology, flora and fauna of the Alpujarras.

There are introductory courses to Martial Arts, yoga, Tai chi and massage and reflexology. Visit a soap factory and soap making. You could try stained glass making. Older children may enjoy ecological hunting and archery (not with real animals!). A Multi Adventure day includes an introduction to climbing, Tibetan high ropes and rope swings.

## Day 8 Fly to London

Transfer to airport. Depending on the time of your flight, you might like to spend your last half day further exploring the village and perhaps visit one of the old working olive mills and buy some of the local olive oil to take home.

*This itinerary includes our group flights from London. If you are making other flight arrangements, please refer to your Confirmation Invoice and Joining Instructions for details of the start or end of the trip. Please remember international flights and trip dates do occasionally change, so please always purchase flexible tickets.*

*Each itinerary is planned many months in advance and although it is our intention to operate the itinerary as printed in the brochure and detailed here, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of alterations to flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure or other operational factors which are beyond our control. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops may vary from those outlined but we will always endeavour to keep you informed of any such changes. Included meals are indicated in the daily itinerary.*

**Optional Extras** These excursions, if available, can be arranged locally (cost per person unless stated otherwise).

Full day's guided hike to El Morro – based on a group size of 4 or more people	£90.00 per group
Puerto de la Ragua mountain biking	£15.00
Visit to Laujar and full day's hike up the river valley – based on a group size of 4 or more people	£90.00 per group
Horse riding – based on 2 hours ride	From £35.00
Star-gazing in the mountains	£12.00
Day trip to Granada - based on a group size of 4 or more people	£90.00 per group
Day trip to Cabo de Gata - based on a group size of 4 or more people	£105.00 per group
Day trip to Yegen based on a group size of 4 or more people	£60.00 per group
Day trip Trevelez, Bubion and Pampeneira - based on a group size of 4 or more people	£90.00 per group
Introductory course to Martial Arts or Yoga or Tai Chi or Massage and Reflexology	£12.00
Visit to a Soap Factory and Soap Making	£12.00
Stained glass making, including lunch	£49.50
Ecological hunting and archery, 1 hour	£2300
Multi-Adventure Day, min. 4 people, over 8 years, per person	£31.00
Car hire – based on a mid-range vehicle	£150.00 per week

*These prices are a guideline and are subject to change*

**Is this right for your family?** A virtually all year round trip this is ideal for families looking for a non-commercial area in southern Spain. Centre-based so you can choose how active you want to be with a choice of walks to suit all abilities. Car hire can be arranged locally (optional) offering complete independence if you wish to explore

further. This holiday is especially suitable for very young children as on-site baby-sitting can normally be arranged (the owners of the villa have a young family themselves) and activities can be tailor made to suit.

#### Lone Parents

Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries, including the UK, require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the relevant country embassy for further information on exactly what may be required. These details can be found on the Foreign & Commonwealth Website under the appropriate country [www.fco.gov.uk/travel](http://www.fco.gov.uk/travel)

**Climate** Typically Mediterranean, with hot dry summers and mild winters. Snow falls on the mountains in the winter months, but rarely stays in the villages, and clear, sunny days that are the norm here can be enjoyed throughout the year

Average monthly temperatures in Almeria

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
<b>Max °C</b>	16	16	18	20	22	26	29	29	27	23	19	17
<b>Min °C</b>	8	9	11	13	15	18	21	22	20	16	12	9
<b>Rainfall (mm)</b>	31	21	21	28	18	4	0	6	16	25	27	36

**Accommodation** The guesthouse has a total of 8 large en-suite rooms which come in a mixture of accommodation types to suit families of varying sizes. There are three double en-suite rooms upstairs in the main house to which you can add a child bed (ideal for family of three with young child) each with private balcony or terrace, two self contained studios with a double bedroom, kitchenette and lounge area (ideal for family of three with older child) or a two bedroom casita with a double room and a twin room (ideal for a larger family or four or five). All rooms are traditionally furnished to a very high standard with fireplaces and stone floors. The indication of a swimming pool at a hotel should not be taken as a guarantee but rather an indication. You should also be aware that swimming pools at the hotels are often unheated and so can be cold in the winter months or even closed.

**Food and Drink** Full board is included for the duration of this holiday. Breakfast is typically yoghurt, toast, local figs and eggs if requested. Dinner is a set meal with a vegetarian option using local produce – for example homemade soups, local recipes with dried tomatoes and peppers and locally made almond meringues. Packed / picnic lunches can be provided when required. All meals are to cater for both adults and children, specific child meals are not provided.

**Local Costs** Although all meals are included, we've listed local costs in case you decide to eat out.

A small bottle of mineral water (500ml)	£0.75
A large bottle of mineral water (1 litre)	£1.00
A can of coke (soft drinks)	£0.80
A carton or bottle of fruit juice	£1.00
A bottle of beer	£1.00
A light lunch time snack – sandwich for example	£3.00
A two course meal* - excluding drinks	£5.00
A three course meal* - excluding drinks	£8.00

\*Based on a mid range tourist restaurant.

**Currency** The unit of currency in Spain is the Euro € and the current exchange rate at the time of writing (Aug 2009) is €1.15 = UK£1. Credit cards are accepted in many restaurants and souvenir shops.

**Tipping** is a recognised part of life and although at your discretion you will be expected to reward service. Tips should be a way for individuals to thank staff for good service.

**Language** Spanish is the official language, but English is widely spoken. The owners of the villa are English.

**Time** Spain is GMT +1 hours & GMT + 2 in summer (end of March to October)



## Clothing & Equipment List for Spain – Rural Andalucia

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Light-weight comfortable casual cotton clothing is recommended, but bring some warm clothing for the evenings (especially if travelling outside of summer)

The following list of clothing and equipment is intended to be fairly comprehensive and experienced travellers may well take a good deal less luggage than we recommend.

CLOTHING	NUMBER PER PERSON	Check	EQUIPMENT	Check
Walking boots (optional)	1		Soft-sided bag 50 – 80litres	
Trainers or strong sandals	1 pair – all purpose wear		Lightweight daypack	
T-Shirts	3+		Sunglasses	
Long casual trousers	2+		Camera	
Shorts/ Short trousers	2		Guide book & map	
Wind/water-proof jacket	1		Washing kit – wet wipes and dry anti-bacterial handwash are useful	
Long sleeve shirt	2+		Sunhat / baseball cap - Essential (styled to shade face, ears and neck)	
Thin fleece or sweatshirt	1			
Swimwear	1			

ITEM	Check	ITEM	Check
Passport		European travel adapter	
Air tickets			
Money/Cash cards/ visa		Insect repellent	
Insurance documents		Sunscreen – lots of it	
Trip information and itinerary			

For details regarding **hand luggage restrictions** please visit [www.baa.com](http://www.baa.com)