# Territorio Cueva

# Where to find us

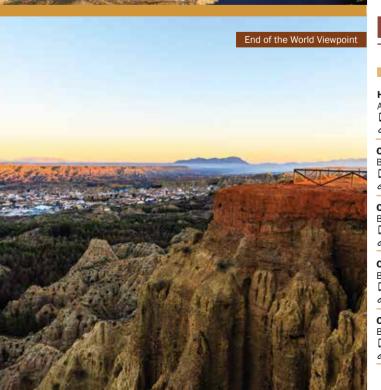
The Territorio Cueva is found in Andalusia, in the south of Spain, specifically in the Valles del Norte de Granada. The origin of the **Cave Houses** is in the unique landform of the area, with wide depressions wedged between mountain ranges, full of natural corridors, passages and shelters that are a result of water erosion over millions of years.



The clay hills in the Granada areas of **Hoya de Guadix** and the **High** Plateaus of Baza and Huéscar are home to the largest **concentration** of cave houses in the Andalusian region. The most significant collection of cave houses in Europe is found in the Granada town of **Guadix**. It is the so-called **Barrio de Cuevas**, which is spread out forming a complex network full of nooks and crannies that houses up to two thousand caves. Without leaving the region, Benalúa stands out as the second town with most inhabited caves, **Gorafe**. in the middle of the canyon of the river Gor, with one cave per inhabitant and **Purullena** and, up in the High Plateau, the Troglodyte neighbourhoods of Baza, Benamaurel, Galera and Huéscar.

In the city of Granada, cave houses are distributed throughout the Valle del río Darro, where the neighbourhoods of **Sacromonte** and **el Albaicín** are located. We can also find examples of this age-old underground architecture in Alhama de Granada, Huétor Vega and Monachil (all in the province of Granada), Hinojares and Pegalájar, in the Jaén region and in the Caves of the Almanzora and Pechina in Almería. Lastly, standing out due to their uniqueness and spectacular nature are the houses carved out of rock in the Cádiz town of Setenil de las Bodegas with an aesthetic very similar to that of the cave houses.





# A lunar landscape

The landscapes that can be seen in the **Territorio Cueva** prove that the beauty of Nature cannot easily be exceeded by artificial things. Its unique **geology** gifts us picture-perfect views that take us to places as faraway as **Death Valley in California**, the **Grand Canyon in** Colorado or the 'wadis' of the deserts of Israel or Jordan.

With a bird's eye view, the Hoya de Guadix-Baza offers itself as a very wide plain, a thousand metres high, bordered by forest mountain ranges with exuberant nature, among them Sierra de Castril, Sierra de Baza and the Sierra Nevada National and Natural Park. On the ground it becomes a mosaic of overflowing landscapes, ravines, paleontological and archaeological sites, reservoirs with crystal-clear waters and lush forests.

But, without doubt, the most characteristic image is that of its **badlands**, thus named due to the aridity and rocky character they display, with the **Cárcavas de Marchal**, declared a Natural monument, like one of its reference points. The gullies become reddish in the area of Guadix, giving the spectacular **Desierto de los** Coloraos in Gorafe its name and they are a more whiteish colour in Baza and Huéscar due to the levels of lake plaster that sometimes form **big crystals** that shine with the reflection of the sun.

# Granada Geopark

In the northern part of the province of Granada, you can find one of the most surprising and unknown spots of the Peninsula. It is the area of the **Granada Geopark**", that is spread across 4,722 km<sup>2</sup> and 47 towns in the regions of Guadix y Marquesado and El Altiplano. It reflects the geological history of a river and an internal sea and the evolution of the landscapes and the fauna of the Quaternary over millions of years. Its characteristics make it unique in Europe. Here we can also find the areas with the **greatest concentration of** cave houses in the whole of the province.

It has a unique landscape of gullies and badlands, with more than 70 places of geological interest, some of them of great international relevance, such as the outcrops of seismites in Galera, the Falla de Baza, the gypsum of Castilléjar and the badlands in the Region of Guadix, among others.

Here you can also find the most extensive and chronologically broad collection of paleontological sites of continental vertebrae from the European Quaternary developed in the open air, without which, we would know little or nothing about many aspects of this spectacular and unique natural past. Therefore, it is essential to visit the Valle del Río Fardes Paleontological Station, in Fonelas and the basin of the river Orce with the site of Venta Micena, where the remains of the famous Orce Man can be found. Another essential stop is the Yacimiento argárico de Castellón Alto in Galera.

Other emblematic places in the Granada Geopark are the **End of the** World Viewpoint, the Megalithic Park of Gorafe, the beautiful reserve of the **Desierto de los Coloraos** (Gorafe), the **Jabalcón** Viewpoint, that offers a spectacular 360° panorama over a large part of the northern province of Granada, and the incredible White **Desert** of the Altiplano (between Castillejar and Galera).

# Directory

# **ACCOMMODATION**

Hospedería Rural El Ventorro Alhama de Granada (Granada)

☐ Tel. 958 350 438 / 608 355 878 

Cuevas Balcones de Piedad Bácor (Granada) Tel. 649 908 906 / 638 102 001 www.cuevasbalconesdepiedad.es

Cuevas de la Luz Bácor, Guadix (Granada) ☐ Tel. 627 704 079 / 958 342 533 

**Cuevas Al Jatib** Baza (Granada) ☐ Tel. 958 342 248 / 667 524 219

**Cuevas Alcobas** Baza (Granada) ☐ Tel. 637 247 427 www.alcobas.org **Cuevas Hammam Abuelo José** eiarín (Granada) ☐ Tel. 625 560 371 / 652 894 584

Cuevas La Chumbera Benalúa (Granada)

Cuevas La Granja Benalúa (Granada) Tel. 958 676 000 / 666 558 030 

Cuevas Complejo Enoturístico Palenga Cortes y Graena (Granada) ☐ Tel. 958 666 299 www.facebook/cuevascompleioeng

Cuevas El Mirador de Galera Tel. 958 739 559 / 639 600 234

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⇒ www.cuevasabueloiose.com

☐ Tel. 858 990 812 / 661 292 097 

Guadix (Granada) ☐ Tel. 958 563 689 

Cuevas de Rolando ☐ Tel. 670 799 138

Cuevas Algarves de Gorafe Gorafe (Granada) ☐ Tel. 699 584 393 

Cuevas Abuelo Ventura

**Granada Geopark** 

Cueva La Candela Gorafe (Granada) ☐ Tel. 661 890 955 

**Cueva El Cortijo Gachas Cuevas Cortijo Solteros** Guadix (Granada) ☐ Tel. 647 757 424 / 656 593 909 ☐ Tel. 680 536 680 

HUELVA

OCÉANO ATLÁNTICO

Casas Cueva Cazorla Hinojares (Jaén) ☐ Tel. 678 312 321 / 685 314 922 → www.casascuevacazorla.com

Casas Cueva La Tala

**Cuevas Pedro Antonio** 

Guadix (Granada)

□ Tel. 958 586 104 / 670 059 394

Tel. 958 664 986 / 617 358 641

Guadix (Granada)

Cuevas La Atalaya Huéscar (Granada) Tel. 666 396 193 ∂ angelatalaya1@gmail.com

Cuevas Fuencaliente Huéscar (Granada) ☐ Tel. 687 447 009

SEVILLA (1)

→ www.elmolinodefuencaliente.com Cuevas del Zenete La Calahorra (Granada) Tel. 958 698 296 / 615 299 693

CÁDIZO

**Cuevas Almagruz** Purullena (Granada) Tel. 658 923 971 / 685 928 812 

Cueva La Carmela /illanueva de las Torres (Granada) Tel. 645 385 518 / 620 617 050 

ARAB BATHS

Baños Árabes Cuevas Al Jatib **Bodegas Pilongo** Tel. 958 342 248 / 667 524 219 □ Tel. 958 500 067 

### INFORMATION CENTRES **Hammam Kabir** Beiarín (Granada)

□ Tel. 625 560 371 / 652 894 584

🛚 Tel. 958 348 752 / 695 904 104

Tel. 958 666 299 / 605 880 769

**Bodegas Palenzuela García** 

Cortes y Graena (Granada)

Cortes y Graena (Granada)

WINERIES

Pago de Almaraes

Benalúa (Granada)

**Bodegas Muñana** 

### Centro de Interpretación del Megalitismo Gorafe (Granada) ☐ Tel. 616 944 605

MUSEUMS AND

interpretacion-del-megalitismo Centro de Interpretación Cuevas

de Guadix- Cueva Museo Guadix (Granada) ☐ Tel. 958 665 569 www.mcicuevasdeguadix.blogspot.com

Fundación Pintor Julio Visconti Guadix (Granada) ☐ Tel. 630 719 883 

Centro de Interpretación "Hábitat Troglodita" Almagruz ☐ Tel. 958 670 715 / 686 257 200 Purullena (Granada Tel. 658 923 971 / 685 928 812 almagruzhabitattroglodita.blogspot.com

> Red de Centros de Divulgación del Geoparque de Granada

## ACTIVITY

COMPANIES

### Trópolis Multiespacio Cultural (Guideo tours, bread and cheese workshops)

**OMÁLAGA** 

Alcudia de Guadix (Granada) 🛚 Tel. 958 698 286 / 665 611 436 Green Walk (Geological routes

scientific tourism) Baza (Granada) ☐ Tel. 958 861 114 **Granada Geopark Experiences** 

Tourism experiences and activities) Benalúa (Granada) ☐ Tel. 685 812 661 🔗 www.granadageoparkexperi Centro Ecuestre Almaraes (Routes-

Caniles (Granada)

☐ Tel. 669 514 340

riding lessons-restaurant) Benalúa (Granada) ☐ Tel. 622 013 051 www.facebook.com/clubhipicoalmarae 'eguada y Granja Escuela "La Dehesa" Horse riding and visits to the school farm)

🔑 www.yeguadaladehesa.com

MAR MEDITERRÁNEO

**Ecoactiva Turismo** (Active tourism) Castril (Granada) ☐ Tel. 637 155 484 

**Turismo Astronómico** (Astronomical observations, astrophotography and divulgation Complejo Astronómico Los Coloraos ☐ Tel. 669 445 830 ∠ www.turismoastronomico.org 

astronomico.org **Glovento Sur** (Balloon flights) Tel. 958 290 316 / 695 938 123

Visita Guadix y la Comarca (Touristic train and guided visits)

guides) Guadix (Granada) eoparque de Granada ☐ Tel. 670 957 025 / 670 957 026 ⊓ Tel. 679 529 844 / 650 504 684

**Azimut Sur** (Adventure and ecotourism agency) Guadix (Granada)

Protected Natural Spaces

Territorio Cueva

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Andalvoia

Junta de Andalucía

La Casona de la Luz (Events, workshops, yoga...) Guadix (Granada) ☐ Tel. 616 062 864 de-la-Luz-1530409523722528

☐ Tel. 619 533 497 / 622 518 554

Cronos Patrimonio y Cultura (Tourism Experiences) Huéscar (Granada) ☐ Tel. 687 447 009

 ${\cal O}$  cronospatrimonioycultura.blogspot.

(Geopark & Sierra Nevada specialized

### RESTAURANTS

CALMERÍA

Zambra/Tablao flamenco

Hiking/MTB

Hot-air balloon trips

Skiing/Winter sports

Restaurante Oasis Benalúa (Granada) ☐ Tel. 958 676 437 restauranteoasisbe

Cuevas La Granja Benalúa (Granada ☐ Tel. 958 676 000 / 666 558 030 

Casa Cueva

Restaurante Casa Cueva

Baños árabes Casa Cueva

Bodega Casa Cueva

Almazara de Paulenca Guadix (Granada) ☐ Tel. 629 642 445

Brasería La Tinaia Guadix (Granada) ☐ Tel. 629 135 673

Restaurante Cuevas Abuelo Ventura Guadix (Granada)

☐ Tel. 958 563 689 





**Restaurante Cuevas** 

Restaurante Boabdil

☐ Tel. 636 844 417

www.facebook.com/palengaplaza

**TABLAOS FLAMENCOS** 

El Templo del Flamenco. Granada.

☐ Tel. 654 373 136 / 622 500 052

Resto Bar Palenga Plaza

Guadix (Granada)

Guadix (Granada)

☐ Tel. 958 666 299

Pedro Antonio de Alarcón

☐ Tel. 958 664 986 / 617 358 641

∠o cuevaspedroantonio.es/restaurante

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# From caverns /01.to modern caves

Our **prehistoric ancestors** who chose the inside of caves as a refuge were the first to discover millennia ago the multiple advantages of the well-known Troglodyte habitat. The **Cueva de las Ventanas de Piñar** in Granada, refurbished to perfection for tourism use and visiting, is a good

Over time, caves were added to these natural caverns that were carved by the human hand out of steep slopes that would end up having different uses and purposes, becoming at times a refuge and also the only affordable home for the poorest population. The Muslim culture is particularly relevant in the development of the cave, awarding it the consideration of constructive work, into which the installations and services were progressively incorporated that a few years before were being introduced into homes to make them more comfortable and practical. **Refuge caves in cliffs** can be seen in Cortes y Graena (Tía Micaela Cave), Purullena (Almagruz), Gorafe (Algarves) and Las Hafas in

Since the end of the last century, locals as well as foreigners have started to invest in its rehabilitation and refurbishment, recovering for its personal and touristic use one of the most sustainable and unique constructive traditions in Europe. Currently, the Asociación Andaluza de Cuevas Turísticas, through their tourist brand Andalusian Cave **Hotels**, is responsible for raising awareness of these homes where we can find everything from modern accommodation to a flamenco venue, not forgetting a winery or a museum.

# /02. architecture

Carved out of the slopes of mountains and ravines, the caves and cave houses have no previous plan, paying attention only to the landform that they are part of and the position of the sun. The most appropria te **terrain** is clay soil, **soft** for the pickaxe but at the same time compact. Clay is also a natural insulating material that prevents noise, water leaks and humidity and keeps the inside of the cave at a constant temperature for the whole year (18-22°C).

A faithful reflection of historic, social and cultural changes, the architecture of cave houses possesses an expressive plastic beauty due to its curvilineal forms.

The exterior elements with the greatest visual impact are, without doubt, **the facade and the chimney**, two of their distinguishing features. The different ways of attaching the house to the cave offer a complete repertoire of facades, almost to the taste of each dweller. The chimneys, carved from the inside, vary in their physiognomy depending on the region: there are ones with a cone shape and others more similar to prisms and cylinders; made of mortar, brick or stone; whitewashed

It is impossible to find two identical caves. Each is a different world, because they are carved to the taste of their owners, thanks to the work of the picadors or pickaxe masters, a trade passed down from generation to generation. They are the ones who carve out rooms and corridors, situating firstly the **living room or kitchen** that receives the traveller, whilst the more inner rooms are reserved for the **bedrooms**. Natural light filters through to the inside through the skylights. The uniqueness of the caves is the silence, temperature and darkness.



f there is a type of accommodation that is perfectly adapted for Silent **Tourism** it is without doubt the Cave House, a unique place to make a stop on your journey, getting away for a few days from the digitalised world that generates stress. It is accommodation located in **natural** surroundings that allows you to sleep in an environment of peace and silence that encourages rest. The **bioclimatic character** of the cave nouses, with a temperature that ranges from 18 to 22 degrees throughout the whole year, its **soundproofing** (thanks to its walls made of natural mouldable clay), the direct contact with nature and the level of comfort of the rooms are clear elements of value in this experience of sleeping inside the earth. Conscious of the importance of placing yourself at the cutting edge of one of the tourist models that is most in vogue, this accommodation offers its clients unique experiences **priented towards escape**. Among them, activities related to the unexplored nature of the region stand out, as well as relaxation and meditation, astronomic observation or Hammams and spas.



# /04. Slow Tourism

The proposal of the Andalusian cave houses is very eco-friendly and is closely linked to ecotourism and slow tourism, since it offers enriching experiences linked to local traditions in a natural environment where life passes by at a different rhythm.

In light of energy waste, cave houses as a tourist lodging are **a** sustainable alternative, due to their bioclimate (that makes heating and air conditioning unnecessary) as well as its building, that guarantees natural light, heating and a dry environment.

Respect for the environment is based primarily on the architectural concept of the cave house, made with 100% natural materials that are imitated in the landscape that surrounds it. The **clay** extracted in the excavation is also used as a raw material for popular crafts. For the **decoration of the caves**, traditional materials and objects are also recovered which are given a new use (threshing boards, wash basins, beams, fences...).

Increasingly, cave houses opt for **environmentally educating** their guests by offering them for example the chance to consume products from the area in their restaurant. In the cave territory, the Tropolis cultural Multispace offers the visitor the chance to learn how to make bread, wine, cheese and local crafts; to make them and take them home to enjoy them.

# /05. Astro-tourism



The areas in which the Andalusian cave houses are concentrated can claim to have the cleanest skies in Europe, hence there are a meeting point for fans of Star Tourism. They are natural environments devoid of **light pollution**, that have been accredited by the prestigious **Starlight Foundation** for their excellent sky quality as well as for representing an example of protection and conservation.

In the province of Granada, the town of Gorafe, which has the first Starlight Park in Andalusia, stands out. Moreover, there is also an Astronomical Complex, Los Coloraos, very involved with astronomical tourism and located in the desert. A little further to the North of the province, we can find The Observatorio de la Sangra in La Puebla de Don Fadrique.





# Territario Cueva



Embalse del Negratín



# /06. Cultural heritage





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del Turismo y del Deporte de Andalucía, S. A.

The Cave Territory in Andalusia treasures an immense artistic and cultural richness headed by the Alhambra and El Generalife along with the Albaicín, in Granada, and the Renaissance Ensemble of Ubeda and Baeza, in Jaén, both declared World Heritage.

Continuing with the monumental trip, it is essential to visit, in the region of Granada, the **Castillo de la Calahorra**, that keeps inside a magnificent Renaissance palace, the Arabian Legacy Interpretation Centre in Ferreira, as well as the historic quarters of Guadix (Cathedral and Roman Theatre), Baza (Almohad baths of la Marzuelva), Orce and Castril (Yacimiento Castillo de Castril).

For **pre-history lovers**, we have several very interesting proposals. They are the Paleontological Station of Fonelas and the Megalithic Park of Gorafe, with its Interpretation centre. Continuing in the direction of the Highlands, we will find the Interpretation Centre of the Bastetanos Archaeological Sites and the Archaeological Museum (both in Baza), the Archaeological Museum of Galera, the Prehistory and Palaeontology Museum of Orce, the Interpretation Centre of the First Settlers of Europe and the Cerro de la Virgen Interpretation Centre (both also in Orce) and the Castellón Alto Sites and the Necropolis of Tútugi, in Galera.

There is also a range of cultural activities more linked to the cave **house** that will help us to better understand life in a Troglodyte habitat. In the area of Guadix and the Marquesado, the **Almagruz Troglodyte** Habitat Interpretation Centre (Purullena) stands out, with the evolution of the cave throughout history; as well as **Tropolis**, as a cultural and leisure multispace in Alcudia de Guadix; the Covarrones and Tía Micaela Interpretation Centres, in Cortes y Graena, and the Guadix Caves Interpretation Centre. In Benamaural, the collection of medieval caves of las Hafas de la Moralea is found behind the typical Troglodyte neighbourhood of Alhanda and in the Almerian province you can visit the **Ethnographic Museum Cave** of Almanzora Caves.

# /07. and flamenco



# /08. Nature and Active Tourism

Nature and active leisure go hand in hand with the Cave Territory, this pairing being one of its great tourist traps. In the Espacio Natural Sierra Nevada you can enjoy incredible reserves such as the Dehesa del Camarate, known also as the Enchanted Forest, an authentic botanical treasure worthy of being photographed. Winter sport lovers will be able to opt for the **Puerto de la Ragua**, with its Recreational Sport Station, deal for practicing cross-country skiing and contact with the snow

owards the west of Granada we find the Parque Natural Sierras de Tejeda, Almijara y Alhama, the Natural monument of the Tajos de Alhama, one of the most fascinating river canyons in Andalusia and the Embalse de los Bermejales.

To carry out activities linked to nature and active tourism, it is recommended that you contact the specialised services of some of the companies that organise these experiences.

As we get close to the **Hoya de Guadix**, the landscape swaps its green **Desierto de los Coloraos** (Gorafe), the **Cárcavas de Marchal** and the Valle del río Gor from the air, hot air balloon rides being one of the star tourist attractions. The **4x4 routes** through these same scenes are also a good option. In the centre of Granada's Highlands, that also houses the Parque Natural de la Sierra de Baza (ideal for hiking), the Embalse del Negratín, is found with beaches and facilities for practicing windsurfing, water skiing or kayaking and the giant limestone massif of the Cerro del Jabalcón can also be found, to take flight paragliding, hand gliding or powered paragliding.

The Parque Natural Sierra de Castril, with its landscape of wild karstic crags and waterfalls is a natural paradise for practicing extreme sports such as climbing, rafting or canyoning. Very nearby, the **Sierra de la** Sagra is an excellent scene for practicing hiking, accommodating on its slops an **unexpected grove**, exceptional in Europe with gigantic sequoias, in the surroundings of La Losa farm. The gullies of el Guardal, between Castilléjar and Galera, are impressive to discover on foot or by bike.

n the Jaén province, the Parque Natural Sierra de Cazorla, Segura y Las Villas shines with its own light and is ideal for observing fauna and for practicing hiking, horse riding, MTB, 4x4 and water sports in the Embalse de La Bolera.

# /09. heritage



Over the last few years, **Gastronomic culture** has been gaining a leading role in the whole tourist experience, becoming an **intrinsic cultural aspect** of each destination, that is highly valued by the visitor. And the Cave Houses have not been indifferent to this trend, offering their clients thought-provoking proposals.

We cannot forget to mention the tapas, those small portions of typical Andalusian food that are served free with a drink throughout the whole Territorio Cueva.

Wineries like Pilongo (Monachil), Pago de Almaraes (Benalúa), Muñana (Graena) or Palenga (Cortes y Graena) have opted for growing their vines inside the cave, with optimal conditions of darkness and constant temperature for the barrels. Restaurants like La Tinaja, Boabdil, Resto Bar Palenga, Oasis, Almazara de Paulenca, La Granja or Pero Antonio de Alarcón offer on their menus local products and traditional recipes. In Huéscar, you can visit the Interpretation Centre of Segureño Lamb, to discover the details of this local product. The Cave Territory offers a perfect contrast of flavours through **typical ancestral recipes** passed down without losing the essence of the past that use quality raw materials and local produce.

# **Sacromonte**

Sacromonte is, along with the Albaicín, the most emblematic neighbourhood of the city of Granada. Located opposite the Alhambra and on the banks of the river Darro, it is known for its caves that are now converted into restaurants, cave houses, tourist accommodation and flamenco venues such as the Templo del Flamenco.

In the **Barranco de los Negros** in the capital of Granada, the Sacromonte Cave Museum is located, with ethnographic and environmental content, also displaying extensive information on Troglodytism and the history of flamenco.



