



# Family-friendly Tourism

Special practical guide

Andalucía



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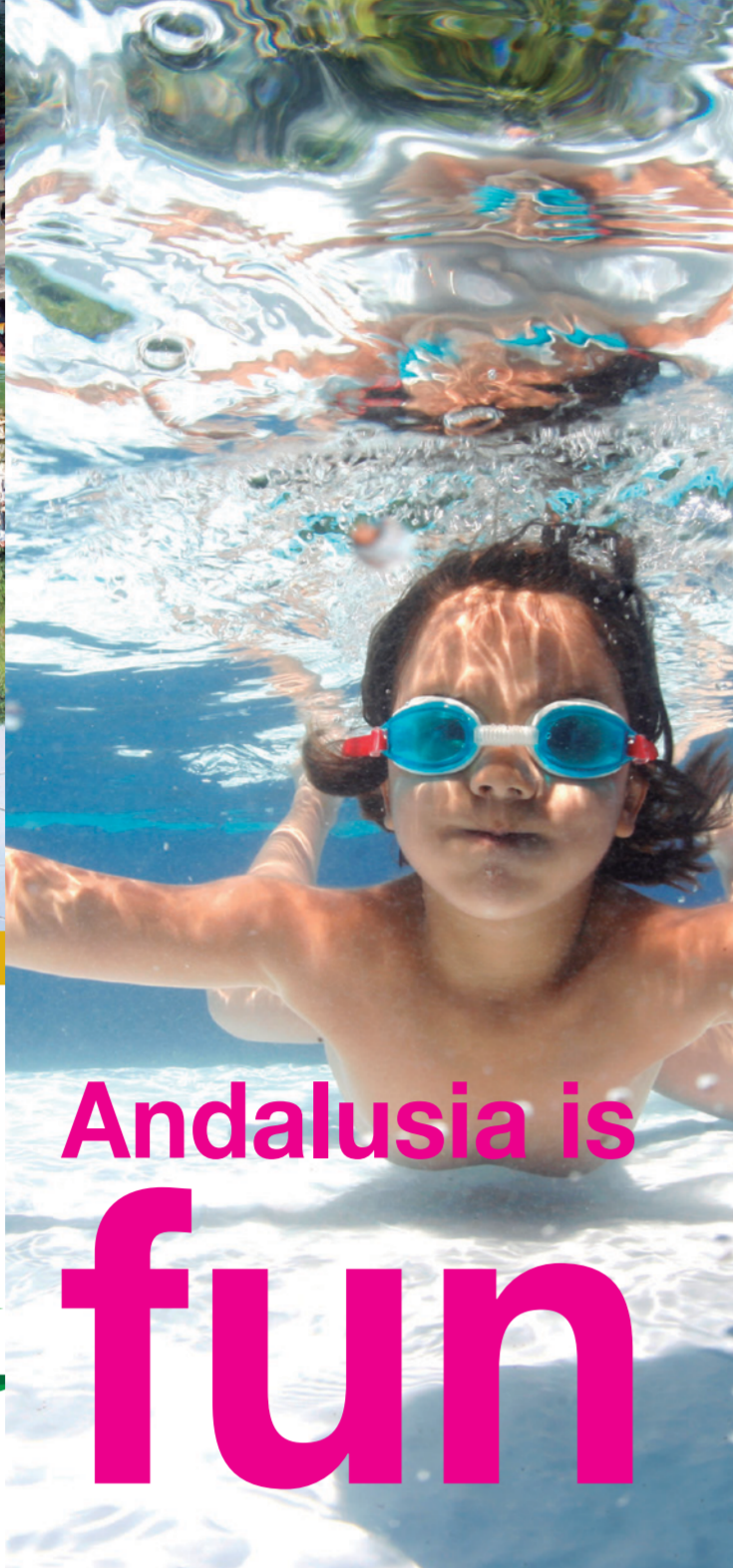


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The use of recycled paper for these brochures means that Andalusia, in 2015, can reduce its environmental impact by:

116.752 kg of waste	17.264 kg of CO <sub>2</sub>	172.614 km of vehicle use
3.158.272 litres of water	193.575 kW/h of power	189.686 kg of wood



# Andalusia is fun

Welcome to Andalusia! We're thrilled that you've picked our region for your family holiday destination. So that you don't miss out on any of the fun to be had, we'll accompany you throughout your stay, showing you everything the region has to offer. We've got rich, natural landscapes ideal for all kinds of activities, charming rural villages where you can get away from it all, stunningly beautiful beaches and leisure parks to suit every taste. You'll also find a whole host of important museums, incredible monuments and cultural routes that will take you to far-flung corners full of flavour and tradition.

As one of the warmest regions in Europe, you'll find the climate here to be very pleasant. The average annual temperature is around 16 °C. With 3,000 hours of sunlight a year, it's a good idea to bring a hat if you're coming during the hottest months. It rarely rains, and when it does it's during spring and autumn. The climate and topography have helped create diverse landscapes, from leafy mid-mountain ranges to volcanic terrains, like the Tabernas Desert, and the snowy peaks of the Sierra Nevada.

Little travellers, bring your camera along and have fun. Ready, set, go!



## /01. Once upon a time

Andalusia is a region steeped in history. Numerous cultures and civilisations have passed through it, leaving behind a veritable trove of artistic treasures, such as Córdoba's historic centre (which includes the Mosque); the Alhambra, Generalife and Albaicín in Granada; the Cathedral, the Alcázar and the Archivo de Indias in Sevilla; the stunning Renaissance-period towns of Úbeda and Baeza; and the Spanish Mediterranean Basin prehistoric rock art sites in Jaén, Granada and Almería. All have been declared UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

As part of a programme called "The Alhambra Closer", the Council of the Alhambra organises family-friendly guided tours, led by expert guides, that focus on specific themes (such as water and gardens in the Alhambra or the use of form and colour in the Alhambra's palaces), as well as suggesting interesting ideas for new tours. And if you bring some comfortable shoes, you can follow the route the kings of old would have taken, albeit on horseback, up the 35 gently inclining ramps of La Giralda in Sevilla.

Now let's wind the clock back several thousand years to visit some of the major archaeological sites. The following are a must-see: the dolmens of Antequera (Málaga), Gorafe (Granada) and Valencina (Sevilla); and the Cueva de los



Murciélagos in Zuheros in the province of Córdoba. When it comes to the powerful Roman Empire, don't miss the city of Itálica (Santiponce), the birthplace of two of Rome's most important emperors: Trajan and his nephew Hadrian; and Baelo Claudia (Tarifa). And words cannot describe the lavish palace city of Medina Azahara, built by Abd al-Rahman III in Córdoba.

The towers, ramparts, dungeons and underground passages of Andalusia's castles and fortresses will transport you to a bygone era of knights and princesses, nobles and pirates. Almodóvar del Río Castle (Córdoba) offers everything from a dramatised, guided tour given by the king's butler, to – for the bravest among you – a spooky night-time tour of the castle. Continue the trail of discovery at, among others, Segura de la Sierra Castle (Jaén), La Calahorra Palatial Castle (Granada), Santiago Castle at Sanlúcar de Barrameda (Cádiz) and Gibralfaro Castle (Málaga). Note: be careful of the heights!

There are a variety of cultural routes you can take. The routes that take in buildings and monuments include the Legacy of Al-Andalus, Roman Andalusia, Castles and Battles of Jaén, Columbus-era Places and Ciudades Medias, which has entertaining dramatised tours. Then there are others based on local customs, like the Lands of José María el Tempranillo Route which visits the former stomping grounds of the notorious highwayman, and includes an exhilarating bandit-style ambush; and the Pirate Route along the towers and fortifications that look out over Cabo de Gata on the Almería coast.

Now let's visit some museums! Andalusia is bursting with culture. It has many museums, each one very different from the next. In addition, children can get really involved thanks to tours, workshops and other tailor-made activities organised, for example, at the Sevilla Museum of Fine Arts as well as at the Carmen Thyssen, Picasso Málaga and the Museum of Contemporary Art, all in Málaga. More unusual museums include the Palacio del Tiempo in Jerez de la Frontera, which has a collection of more than 300 antique clocks from all over the world; the Railway Museum (La Roda, Sevilla), with its working miniature locomotives; the Interactive Museum of Music (Málaga); and the Puppet Museum (Cádiz).

Are you crazy about aeroplanes? If so, don't miss out on the Airport Museum, widely known as the Aeromuseo de Málaga. For the circus lovers among you, check out Cirklas in Umbrete (Sevilla), a place where youngsters and adults alike can gaze in wonder at the magic of the greatest show on earth. In the Riotinto Mining Park, the whole family can take a 12 km train journey over bridges, through tunnels and old locomotive graveyards; go down a real, 200-metre-long mine shaft; visit a genuine Victorian-era house in the English neighbourhood of Minas de Riotinto and wander around the famous mining museum.



## /02. Outdoor adventures

If you like nature and outdoor activities, then you've made the right decision coming to Andalusia! There's an endless array of routes for hiking, touring by bicycle or horse riding that the whole family can do, such as the Sierra de las Nieves (Málaga), Sierra de Grazalema (Cádiz) and Sierra de Cazorla (Jaén). You can even make like Indiana Jones in the Cahorros de Monachil (Granada) and cross a 63-metre-long rope suspension bridge. You can also go on excursions along the Green Routes, going through tunnels, viaducts and former train stations now used as rest stops.



And after a hard day of physical exertion, there's nothing better than taking some food and rest at one of the various rural lodgings available in the region. The rural destinations most popular with families are the White Villages of Cádiz, the Alpujarras mountain range that straddles the Granada and Almería provinces, the Sierra de Arcena in Huelva, the Sierra Norte in Sevilla and the Serranía de Ronda mountain range in Málaga. The latter also boasts the world's only Smurf village, Júzcar, where every weekend various Smurf-themed activities take place, such as paint workshops, treks, shows and the Mercapifuto, a Smurf craft market. What fun! Let's all paint ourselves blue!

Don't miss the opportunity to visit the Doñana Natural Park, one of the natural jewels in Andalusia's crown and a sanctuary for the Iberian lynx. There are four different ways to visit the park: by taking a special bus that forges its way through the dunes; by boat, departing from Sanlúcar de Barrameda on board the Real Fernando, or on a barge from Bajo de Guía; by off-road vehicle; or even by camel. All four ways sound pretty exciting, don't they?

The Teaching Farms and Nature Learning Centres scattered throughout Andalusia are a fun option. There, you can be a farmer for the day, looking after the animals, growing a vegetable patch and learning how to make bread and cheese. In the Bees and Honey Museum, located on the Rancho Cortesano in Jerez de la Frontera (Cádiz),

you can find out about the work that bees do and dress up as a beekeeper. If you like animals, then convince mum and dad to take you to the Refugio del Burrito, a donkey sanctuary in Fuente de Piedra in Málaga. There you'll meet the sanctuary's "residents", hear their stories and tour the farm to see how they are cared for. You can even sponsor one of them.

If you grab a pair of binoculars and put on some comfortable, inconspicuous clothing, you can go birdwatching, something that's easy to do in Andalusia. You might spot migratory birds over the Strait of Gibraltar and Doñana, flamingos in the lagoon at Fuente de Piedra (Málaga), bearded vultures in the Sierra



de Cazorla (Jaén) and griffon vultures in Peñon de Zaframañón (Cádiz-Sevilla). Nestled between the Los Alcornocales and El Estrecho natural parks in Algeciras-Cádiz is Omipark, the new introduction to ornithology park, which has various programmes of activities.

For the young astronomers amongst you, you're in luck because Andalusia is one of the world's most popular starlight tourism destinations, thanks to the region's facilities and the fact there is very little light pollution. Highlights include the areas of Sierra Sur de Jaén and Sierra Morena, where the Almadén de la Plata Astronomical Observatory is located, Spain's main centre for scientific astronomy outreach. Let's stay up in the skies: if you're not afraid of heights, take the Benalmádena Cable Car for a spectacular 15-minute trip up Calamorro Hill. At the top, there's a leisure area, the Valle de las Águilas, where they put on falconry displays.

From up on high you can go down to the very depths and visit the various grottos and caves, magical underground worlds of stalactites, pillars, lakes and labyrinthine passages that will make your jaw drop. Highlights include the Gruta de las Maravillas in the Sierra de Arcena; Cueva de Nerja (Málaga); Cueva del Tesoro in Málaga's Rincón de la Victoria, one of only three visitable caves of marine origin in the world; and the prehistoric Cueva de las Ventanas in Piñar (Granada). You can also make like a genuine troglodyte at the prehistoric settlement of La Algaba (Ronda), an experimental archaeological centre where you'll find out how our ancestors lived.



## /03. Sure-fire entertainment



Zoos, aquariums and botanical gardens take us deep into the heart of the natural environment with direct, open contact with the world of animals and plants. Andalusia's botanical gardens offer surroundings, resources and activities that are ideal for family visits and for sparking the interest of even the youngest visitors. Check out the Córdoba Botanical Gardens; the José Celestino Mutis Botanical Park (La Rábida, Palos de la Frontera); the El Majuelo Botanical and Sculptural Gardens (Almuñécar); the Molino de Inca Botanical Gardens in Torremolinos (Málaga), where you can get lost in its natural privet maze; and the La Trufa Mycological Gardens (Aldea de Zagrilla in Priego de Córdoba), the first gardens in Europe dedicated exclusively

to truffles and wild mushrooms, the homes of forest elves and dwarves. Fingers crossed, you might even see one!

Asian elephant born in Spain and offers a range of adventurous activities, including the longest zip wire in Europe. The enclosure at Cocrófilos Park in Torremolinos has 300 different species of crocodile, while the Benalmádena Butterfly Park houses 1,500 exotic butterflies from all over the world. Lastly, just outside Antequera and in the heart of the Málaga province is Lobo Park, a nature reserve dedicated to wolves.

A thrilling journey through fascinating marine habitats: that's what Andalusia's aquariums have to offer. Try the Roquetas de Mar Aquarium; the Mediterranean Fauna Aquarium in Almuñécar, with its impressive Oceanarium above a 17-metre-long panoramic tunnel; Sea Life Benalmádena; Selwo Marina Delfinarium, which has Andalusia's only ice penguinarium; and the aquarium in Sevilla, which has over 400 marine species and a huge shark tank.

Castellar Zoo (Cádiz) is a zoo like no other. It started out as an animal rescue centre, but these days it offers visitors the chance to interact with the animals. You can feed them, stroke them and see them right up-close. Cádiz is also home to the Jerez de la Frontera Botanical Zoo, which has more than 1,000 animals from over 200 different species from the world's five continents, including endangered species such as the Iberian lynx, the bald ibis and the European bison. Córdoba's zoo has activities such as "Zoo Farm"; while the Loro Sexi Bird Park and Peña Escrita Nature Park, both in Almuñécar (Granada), are well worth a visit.

A visit to the Castillo de las Guardas Nature Reserve in Sevilla is like going on safari. Explore its 15 km route by car or train, and you can feed the herbivorous animals you encounter on the way round. And don't miss the sea lion show. MundoPark Zoo in Sevilla (Guillena) has the largest public collection of bonsai trees in Spain, as well as tigers, owls and a whole throng of birds.

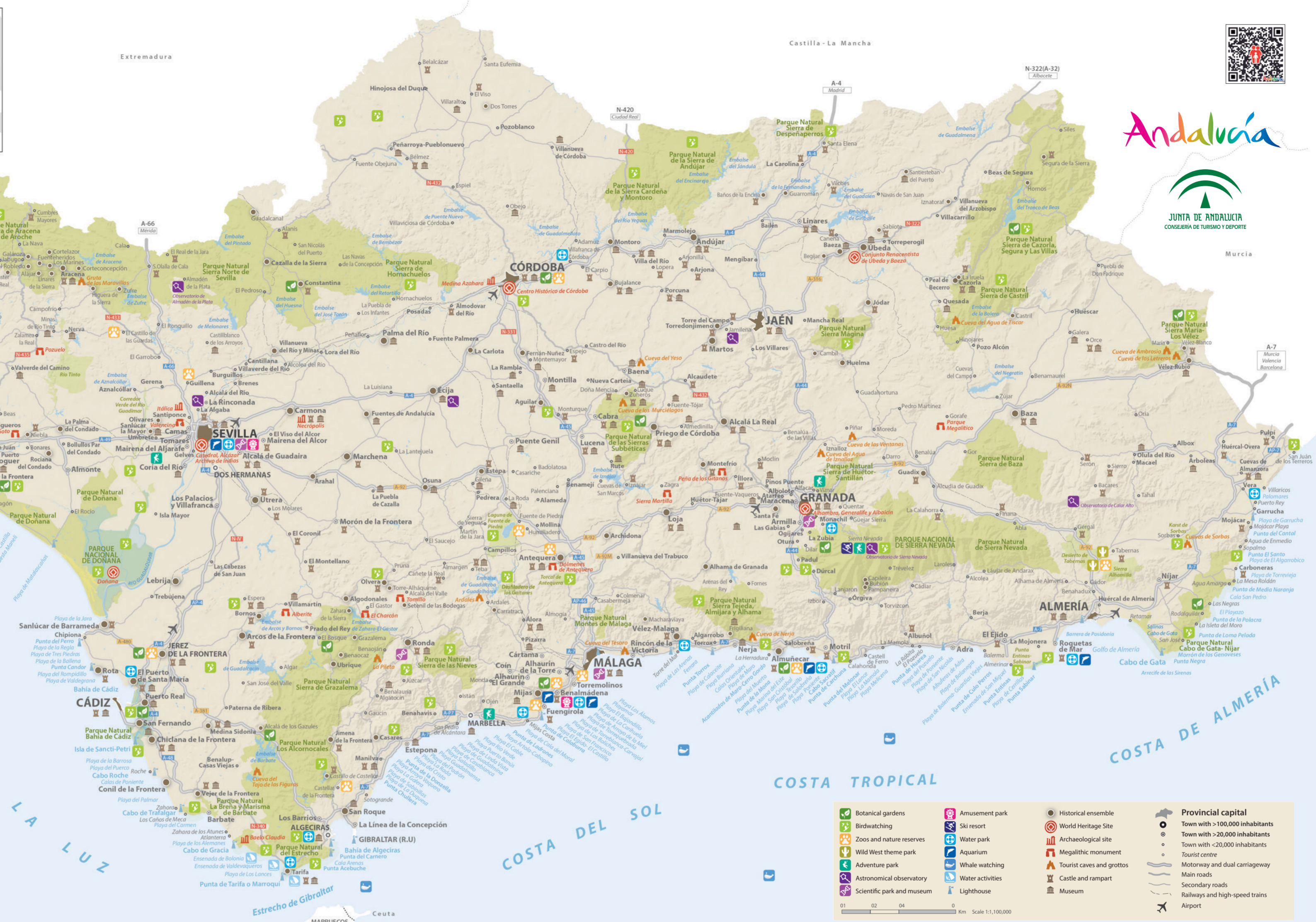
Málaga's Costa del Sol has the largest concentration of zoos and animal reserves. Fuengirola is home to Bioparc Fuengirola, which has a Sumatran tiger, among other animals. Selwo Aventura (Estepona) houses the only

children alike. With an exhibition space of around 70,000 square metres, it has various thematic areas as well as a planetarium, a butterfly house and an astronomical observatory. Sticking with the science theme, the Casa de la Ciencia in Sevilla offers interesting activities and exhibitions such as the sea mammal exhibit, as does the Principia Science Centre in Málaga.

From scientists to the outlaws of the Wild West: back in the day, the Tabernas Desert was the backdrop of some of Hollywood's biggest Westerns. Now it's the scene for two theme parks: Oasis, which blends its realistic Poblado del Oeste (Mini Hollywood) with a Zoological Park; and Fort-Bravo/Texas-Hollywood, which has the largest Western-style film sets in Europe where performances are staged throughout the day, such as cowboy shootouts and bar brawls, bank robberies, can-can dance shows in period costume, and so on.

Amusement parks are the perfect place to enjoy an adrenaline rush, with a diverse range of inventions turned into rides. Highlights include Tivoli Word in Benalmádena; Aventura Amazonia Marbella, the largest treetop adventure park in Andalusia; and Aventura Amazonia Granada (Viznar). Sevilla is the site of El Bosque Suspenso (Bollullos de la Mitación), a treetop adventure park with zip wires, suspension bridges, Tibetan bridges and more; and the Isla Mágica de Sevilla, which has seven large thematic areas where the historical adventures of the Age of Discovery are recreated with amazing attractions, performances, street parades and shows, not to mention its water park: Aqua Mágica. You can have your picture taken with pirates, privateers and buccaneers.





Andalucía



/04. Sun, sand and snow

From tiny coves to long stretches, almost deserted or jam-packed, offers beaches to suit all tastes.

Fans of water-based action can visit the Tarifan beaches of La Ensenada de Valdevaqueros and Los Lances...

One company based at the beaches in Mojácar (Almería) offers a fun and original activity for the whole family: camel trekking.

And if you fancy venturing out to sea, you can experience this sure-fire highlight of any holiday...

And if there's one thing that children love to do in the summer, it's to splash around at a water park.

From the sand and the sea, let's move on to the mountains and the snow. During the winter, there's a place in Andalusia that children just can't resist: the Sierra Nevada Ski Resort.

This is where our Journey ends. We hope you've enjoyed it. See you again soon!



Legend table for the map showing symbols for botanical gardens, amusement park, historical ensemble, provincial capital, etc.



/01. Once upon a time

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/04. Sun, sand and snow

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