

El agua
en
Andalucía

La Axarquía
Guía práctica zonas / Mapa



La Axarquía



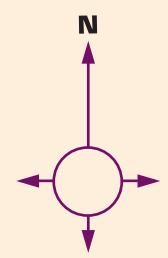
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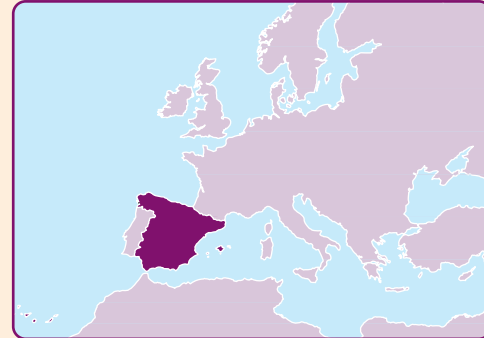
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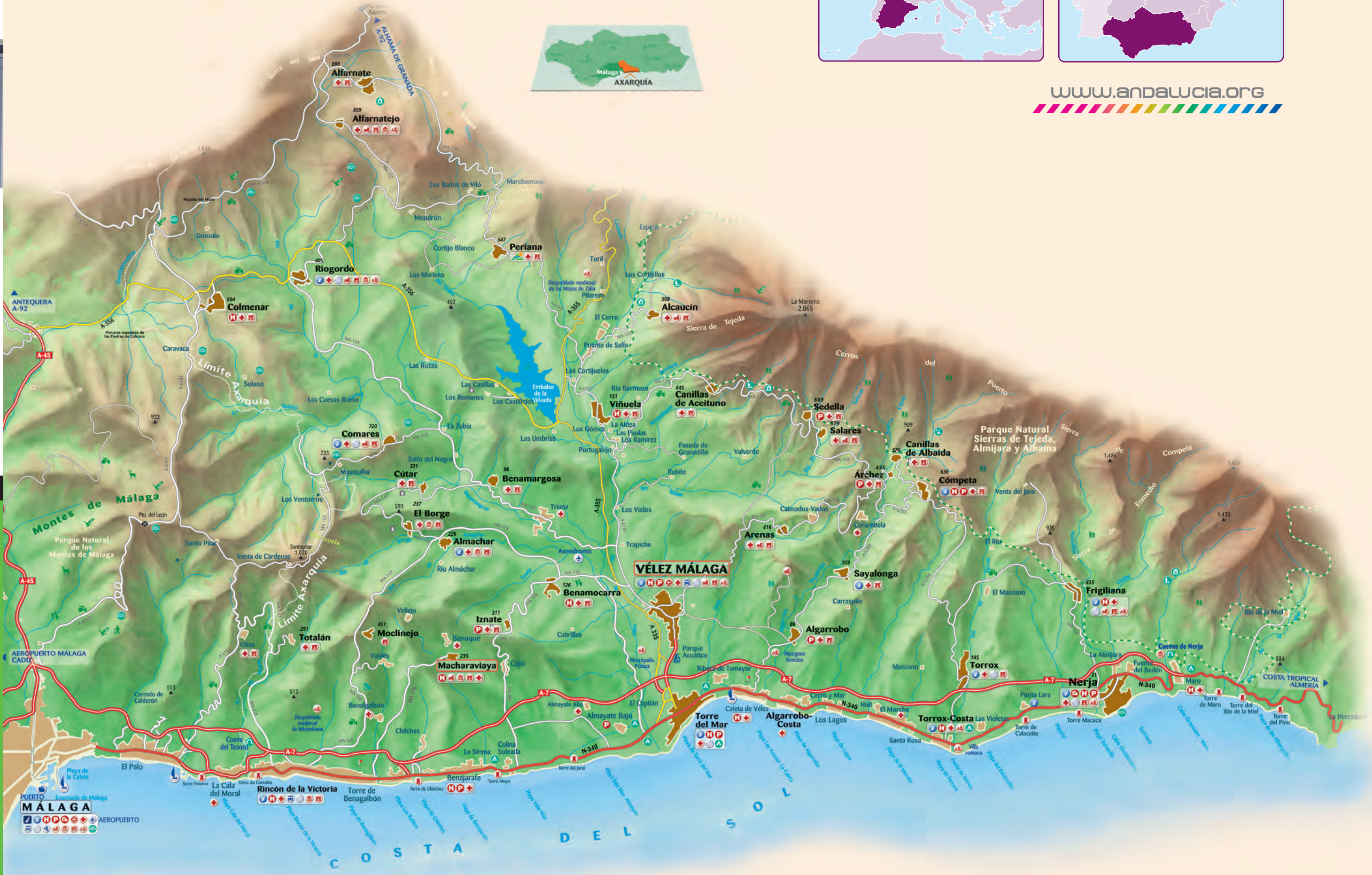
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Located in the east of the province of Málaga, the Axarquía region is marked out, geographically-speaking, by the Sierras of Camarolos, Jobo, Alhama and Tejeda to the north, the Mediterranean Sea to the south, the Sierra de Almijara to the east and the Málaga Mountains to the west. Its landscape is filled with contrasts; on the one hand, the highlands feature mountain peaks that reach altitudes in excess of 2,000 m (La Maroma is 2,065 m high.), while the lowlands are home to terraces of tropical crops which are made possible by the warm, mild local climate; and, of course, to the south, the beaches are lapped by the warm waters of the Mediterranean Sea.

This area has borne witness to the arrival of a number of different cultures since prehistoric times. Proof of this is to be found in the caves of Nerja and El Tesoro and the Phoenician, Greek, Roman and Arabic remains that can be found in practically all of the Axarquía's towns and villages..

The Axarquía is an ideal location for all manner of nautical and aquatic activity, sport, leisure and cultural pursuits. The visitor will enjoy the region's customs and traditions, which include fairs, pilgrimage festivals and, of course, Holy Week, not forgetting the chance to sample some typical Axarquía fare.



The Sun and Avocado route

This route covers most of the eastern Costa del Sol, which is home to the numerous avocado plantations after which it is named.



We set off from the coastal town of Rincón de la Victoria. The earliest settlement in this area dates back to the Higher Paleolithic Period, as witnessed by the paintings to be found in the caves of Higuero and El Tesoro. Nearby, the Muslim legacy is also in evidence at Bezmiliana Castle. After a visit to Macharaviaya, an attractive corner of the Axarquía, we come to the town of Vélez-Málaga, where 22 km of coastline provide an ideal setting in which to enjoy the delights of sun and sand. Vélez-Málaga is teeming with history. Apart from its wealth of archaeological remains, one of its most significant monuments is the complex comprised by the Arabic fortress and its walls, which date back to the VIII century. Other places of interest include the Marquis of Beniel's Palace, the Cervantes House, El Carmen Theatre and its numerous churches. A stroll through the district known as La Villa, with its narrow, winding streets, evokes memories of a Moorish past.



Continuing through avocado plantations, we come to beautiful villages such as Benamocarra, with its typically Muslim architecture, Iznate,



The Sun and Wine route



We begin our journey in Algarrobo, an agricultural white town where we will enjoy a series of magnificent views, not forgetting a visit to the leaning watchtower. Our next port of call is Sayalonga, with its olive trees, vineyards, and curious circular cemetery. Following the



road upwards, we come to the foothills of the Sierra Tejeda, home to Cómpeeta, a clean white town which affords magnificent views, and Canillas de Albaida, an excellent location for mountain excursions. Heading back towards the sea, we find Torrox, which boasts "the best climate in Europe". Its steep streets, squares and nooks are all evidence of a Moorish past.

Worthy of note are the Plaza de la Constitución, La Encarnación Church, the convent and chapel of La Virgen de las Nieves, the former Custom House and Casa de la Moneda and the Sugar Factory. Also to be found here are fine beaches along a coastline guarded by two watchtowers and a fascinating series of archaeological remains which include a necropolis, hot baths, pottery kilns, sauce vats and the village of "Mansio Caviculum".

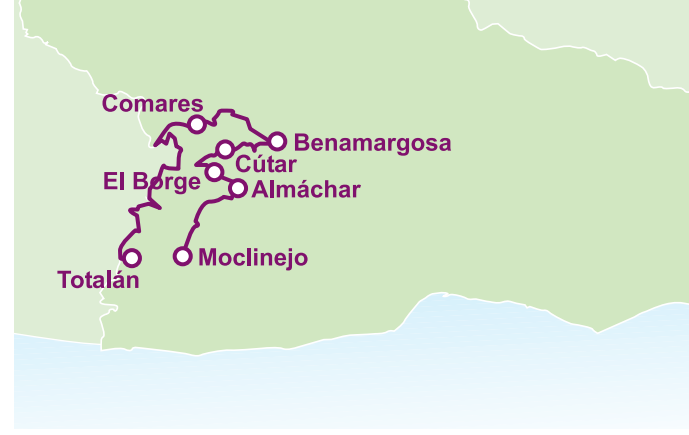
Next, we come to Nerja, which, as its magnificent caves testify, has been inhabited since prehistoric times. The Balcón de Europa, which is perched on the cliff tops, provides excellent panoramic views. We should also take the opportunity to admire the local monuments and, in Maro, visit El Ingenio, Los Acanilados Natural Beauty Spot and El Águila aqueduct. We can also enjoy the beaches with their clear, warm waters which are ideal for water sports.

Moving inland, we come to the last stop on this route, Frigiliana, a beautiful village where a stroll through the charming old Morisco-Mudéjar



where a stroll through the charming old Morisco-Mudéjar centre is a must, taking us back across centuries of history.

The Raisin route



This route takes us across an area rich in vineyards, where the grapes are dried out in the south-facing paseros to produce delicious raisins. Our journey begins at Moclinejo, with its typically-Andalusian combination of whitewashed houses contrasting with the green hilltops and blue sky.

through delightful villages such as Almáchar and El Borge, built on a cliff top, we come to Cútar, which is famed for its olive oil, grapes and raisins. Comares, known as the "Balcony of the Axarquía", affords us magnificent views and the chance to discover its castle.

Our route ends in Totalán, which lies in the extreme east of the area known as the Málaga valley. This village is famous for its grapes and raisins, whose early cultivation gives them a distinctive flavour.

The Oil and Mountain route



The main protagonist of this route is the olive tree, of the "verdial" variety, which is used to produce one of the finest olive oils. The route is also ideal for hiking and camping enthusiasts. Our journey begins in Viñuela, which owes its origins to a crossroads on the way from Málaga to Granada which was a popular stopping point for sustenance in a local inn. Heading



conditions. Our route next takes us to Alfarnatejo and Alfarnate, once an enclave of highwaymen, before finishing in Colmenar, with its steep, winding streets, and Riogordo, whose village centre is home to a number of houses which feature small chapel-niches in their upper levels.

The Mudéjar route



We set off from Arenas, which lies in a small basin and where a visit to Bentomiz Castle, built by the Arabs on the site of a former Iberian settlement, is a must. Our next ports of call are the beautiful village of Árchez and Salares, in the south of the Sierra Almijara, with its cultivated slopes and narrow streets where traffic cannot circulate. Just 4 km down the road from here is Sedella, with its whitewashed streets and delightful nooks. The last stop on this route is Canillas de Aceituno, whose Muslim origins are emphasised by the presence of both an Arabic water tank next to the Hornazuelo Fountain and a building known as the Casa de la Reina Mora. We can also visit Fajara Cave, go hiking in Rahije Natural Beauty Spot, or climb to the top of the area's highest peak, the 2,046-metre-high Maroma.



La Axarquía

Active tourism



The Axarquía is an ideal place in which to pursue all manner of activities: nautical and aquatic pursuits, sports, leisure activities, cultural visits, rural tourism... La Viñuela Dam is perfect for outdoor activities, while the Sierras de Tejeda, Almijara y Alhama Natural Park is ideal for hikers.



Cuisine

The Axarquía offers a wide range of cuisine. Typical local dishes such as the salt cod-based ajobacalao and the aforementioned ajoblanco should not be missed, not forgetting skewered sardines, fried breadcrumbs, local wines, medlar jam, arropía, raisins and grapes. The famous Venta de Alfarnate inn, a favourite haunt of highwaymen, was founded in 1690 and is still serving such typical dishes as huevos a lo bestia, which includes eggs, spicy sausage and fried peppers, the orange-based cachoreñas soup and a chickpea stew known as la olla.

Festivities

The region's customs and traditions are apparent in a number of festivals, not forgetting Holy Week in Vélez-Málaga, "El Paso" in Riogordo, a live representation of the Passion of Christ, "Sayalonga's "Día del Níspero" in honour of the medlar fruit, the "Fiesta del Ajoblanco" in Almáchar, a celebration of this almond-based soup dish, Cómpeeta's "Fiesta del Vino" or wine festival, "Día de las Migas" in Torrox, when this fried breadcrumb dish takes pride of place, Canillas de Aceituno's "Día de la Morcilla" or black pudding day and, last but not least, the "Feria del Melocotón" (peach fair) in Periana.

