

BAJO GUADIANA ROUTES



Publisher
JUNTA OF ANDALUSIA
 Council for Trade and Tourism
 Public Company for the Management
 of Tourism and Sport of Andalusia, S.A.
 C/ Compañía, 40, 29008 Málaga
 www.andalucia.org

- Interest Phone Numbers
- | | |
|---|---|
| Municipal Council of Alcoutim
Tel: +00351 281540500
Posto de Turismo de Alcoutim
Tel: +00351 281546179 | Paymogo Council
Tel: +0034 959570654 |
| Aroche Council
Tel: +0034 959140201
Tourist office of Aroche
Tel: +0034 959140201 | Rosal de la Frontera Council
Tel: +0034 959141001 |
| Ayamonte Council
Tel: +0034 959470376
Tourist office of Ayamonte
Tel: +0034 959320737 | San Silvestre de Guzmán Council
Tel: +0034 959388151 |
| Municipal Council of Castro Marim
Tel: +00351 281510740
Tourist office of Castro Marim
Tel: +00351 281531232 | Santa Bárbara de Casa Council
Tel: +0034 959570001 |
| El Granado Council
Tel: +0034 959388510 | Municipal Council of Serpa
Tel: +00351 284540100
Tourist office of Serpa
Tel: +00351 284544727 |
| Encinasola Council
Tel: +0034 905454325 | Municipal Council of Vila Real de Santo António
Tel: +00351 281510000
Tourist office of Vila Real de Santo António
Tel: +00351 281542100 |
| Municipal Council of Mértola
Tel: +00351 286610100
Tourist office of Mértola
Tel: +00351 286612573 | Villanueva de los Castillejos Council
Tel: +0034 959387007 |



DISCOVER



ALCOUTIM

The **castle** offers a privileged viewpoint with marvellous views of the town, river and surrounding area. The **Archaeological Museum** is located inside. The **Iglesia de San Salvador** (14th to 16th century), is one of the best examples of the architectural style known as the First Algarve Renaissance. The **baroque stairway** (17th to 18th century) joins the church with the city. In the district of **Guerreiros do Rio**, you can visit the **Roman settlement of Montinho das Laranjeiras** and the **River Museum**. Alcoutim has a river port and an attractive beach suitable for bathing.



AROCHO

Its **Almohad castle** (12th century) houses the unique **plaza de toros**. Of its **Historic-Artistic Group**, declared in 1980, of particular note are the **Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de la Asunción** (15th to 16th century), the **artillery wall** from the 17th century and the **Convento de la Cilla de Los Jerónimos** (18th century), which includes the **Visitor Centre**, the **Archaeological Museum**, the **Museum of the Holy Rosary** and an **Information Point** for the **Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche Natural Park** and for the **Peñas de Aroche**, and **Sierra Pelada y Rivera del Aserrador Natural Sites**. The **Roman city of Turóbriga** (1st century BC) is a testimony to the splendour of the Roman period; just next to this is the **Ermita de San Mamés** (13th to 18th century).



AYAMONTE

In the **La Villa neighbourhood** the **Museum of Soledad-Templo de San Francisco** (16th Century), the **Iglesia de las Angustias** (16th century) and the **Templo de la Merced** (17th century) are of particular interest. The remains of the **Baluarte de Las Angustias** (16th century) and the **Torre Canela** are still conserved, the tower is one of the fortifications that formed part of the coastal defensive line. The **Ciudad de la Luz** has an excellent range of hotels, golf courses and two outstanding beaches, **Isla Canela** and **Punta del Moral**, together with two leisure ports. Other attractions are its zoological offer, boat trips to Portugal, river cruises along the Guadiana, routes through the **Isla Cristina Marshlands Natural Site**, the **salt works**, some of which can be visited, and the **Molino El Pintado Interpretation Centre**.



CASTRO MARIM

The **fort of Sao Sebastião** (17th century), the **Ermita de Santo António**, a restored **historic windmill** and the **Regional Interpretation Centre** stand on the Revellin hill. On the opposite hill stands the **medieval castle** (13th century), which houses the **Archaeological Museum** and holds a lively **medieval fair** in the month of August. The **Iglesia de Nossa Senhora dos Mártires** (18th century) is a focal point of the old quarter. In the immediate surroundings of the town is a wetlands of great ecological interest, the **Sapal Nature Reserve**. The **Odeleite reservoir**, in the interior of the municipality, offer corners of incomparable natural beauty where nautical and mountain sports can be practiced. It also has an interesting range of golfing options and beautiful beaches.



EL GRANADO

The **Ermita de la Santísima Trinidad** (15th century), in the Gothic-Mudejar style, and the **Iglesia Parroquial en Honor a Santa Catalina** (18th century), in the neo-classical style, are of particular note in its heritage. There is a good variety of windmills from its farming past, the restored **Molino de la Solana** (18th century) and the **Museum of Ethnography and Farm Ploughs**, located nearby. From its century of mining splendour, **Puerto de la Laja** still remains, just 8 km from the town, where the manganese and iron ore arrived (from the mines in the area), as well as the old mining rail line that today forms part of the **Guadiana Green Route**.



ENCINASOLA

Its old quarter centres around the **castle** (13th century) and **Iglesia de San Andrés** (16th century). In a visual line with the castle are two forts, **Fuerte de San Juan** and **Fuerte de San Felipe** (17th century). The first houses the **Information Point** for the **Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche Natural Park**. The **Pilar de Acá** and the **Pilar de Allá** gather together ethnological elements from the farming tradition: pillars and drinking troughs, enclosures, corrals and huts. Unique cultural displays are the **Danza del Pandero**, which dates back to the 13th century and is only performed by women, and the **fandango de Encinasola**, which dates back to the 16th century.



MÉRTOLA

The **Casa Romana**, the **Basílica Paleocristiana**, the **Islamic Art Museum**, the **Sacred Art Museum**, its **Iglesia Matriz** (12th - 16th century), the **castle**, and in front of the town, the **Archaeological Excavation Camp**, the **Textile Museum**, the **Miner's House Museum**, or the **Water Museum** are only a few of the elements of cultural heritage in the **Museum City of Mértola**. The historic **Sao Domingos mines** and the river port of **Pomarão** and the natural site of **Pulo do Lobo (Parque Natural Vale do Guadiana)**, where the Guadiana forms a narrowing of the river with beautiful narrows and waterfalls, are places of particular interest in the surrounding area of the city.



PAYMOGO

Its **castle** was built in the 15th century and later reconstructed during the wars with Portugal in the 17th century. Inside, we can find the **Iglesia Parroquial de Sta. Maria Magdalena** (16th century). In the surrounding area of the town there are two small chapels, the **Ermita de San Sebastián** (17th century) and the **Ermita de la Santa Cruz** (20th century). In the town, of particular note is the **Pósito** (18th century), an ancient grain silo which is now the **Municipal Library**. Every year there is the **Transfronter Gastronomic Gurmucelo Fair**, where a great variety of mushrooms can be sampled.



ROSAL DE LA FRONTERA

Near to the town is the impressive **Cromlech de la Pasada del Abad**, a megalithic structure of which three menhirs of great size and three rose granite monoliths still remain. In its typical urban structure as a repopulated town, of particular interest are the central square, **Plaza de España** where the main buildings are located, the **Town Hall**, the **Iglesia de San Isidro Labrador** (14th century) and a historic stately home. The building where the great poet Miguel Hernandez was imprisoned after being arrested at this frontier in 1939, is today the **Miguel Hernandez Cultural House**, which includes an **Interpretation Centre** about his life and works, as well as a recreation of the cell that he occupied.



SAN SILVESTRE DE GUZMÁN

The urban centre is centred around the **Iglesia Parroquial de San Silvestre** (16-17th century), formally gothic with a graceful bell tower, and the **Plaza de España**. The domestic architecture of the town maintains the traditional constructive typology, which gives the town a certain charm. The surroundings nearest to the centre, **Ruedo de San Silvestre**, is a traditional agricultural area that has maintained its character over the centuries and contains a great number of elements of cultural, ethnologic and scenic interest, such as the renovated **Molino de Vilán**, wells and ponds for farming use, and stone enclosures.



SANLÚCAR DE GUADIANA

The **Baluarte de San Jerónimo**, located next to the **Iglesia Parroquial Nuestra Señora de las Flores**, in the Baroque style, as well as the **Castillo de San Marcos** (17th Century), which dominates the hill and offers a magnificent viewpoint over the town and the river, speak volumes about the town's status as a frontier town. Of the old splendour of the river port, through which a great deal of trade would have passed in the 19th century, only a charming **river port** remains, which today is frequented by tourist cruisers and small recreation boats. The trip by barge between Sanlúcar and Alcoutim is another of its tourist attractions. The **windmills**, evidence of its grain producing past, stand on the nearby hills and are also excellent viewpoints.



SANTA BÁRBARA DE CASA

The **Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de la Piedad** (18th century) stands out among a typical, traditional, popular architecture with whitewashed walls and beautiful cobbles. From the **Mirador de la Santa**, where the **Ermita de Santa Bárbara** (16th century) is situated, some breathtaking views can be enjoyed. Upon a line of nearby hills stand several **windmills** (18th century), and on the banks of the Casa stream is an old **watermill**. The ritual of the **slaughtering of the pig** is one of the most deeply rooted traditions. The **Transfronter Tourism and Gastronomy Fair** is held every February, where visitors can sample the local specialities.



SERPA

The Muslim **castle** (13th - 17th century) conserves the **walls** and the **aqueduct-waterwheel**, which was added in the 17th century in perfect architectural harmony with the castle to supply water to the **Palacio de los Condes de Ficalho** (16th century). The **Clock Tower** (15th century) and the **Church of Saint Mary** (16th century) are other buildings of monumental character. The **Archaeological Museum** and the **Ethnographic Museum** have exhibitions on the local history. The small **Clock Museum**, located in the **Convento del Mosteirinho**, has a curious collection of more than 1800 watches. **Queijo Serpa**, the internationally famous cheese, can be sampled at the Alentejo Cheese Trade Fair, held every year in the month of February. It is the land of **Alentejo singing**, and an interesting music festival is held at the beginning of June.



VILA REAL DE SANTO ANTONIO

Re-founded and designed in 1774 by the Marquis of Pombal after being devastated in 1755 by the earthquake of Lisbon, it has a geometric layout that centres on the monumental **Plaza Marqués de Pombal**, framed by the **Townhall** and the **Iglesia Matriz de Nossa Senhora da Encarnação** (18th century). The port has a shuttle service to nearby Ayamonte, and for cruise liners that travel along the river. At nearby **Cacela Velha**, a small fishing village a few kilometres from the town, there is a **medieval church** that was remodelled in the 16th and 18th century and a **fortress**, from which a spectacular view of the **Ria Formosa Natural Park** can be appreciated. **Monte Gordo**, a popular holiday destination with a **casino**, has a magnificent beach with a full range of services.



VILLANUEVA DE LOS CASTILLEJOS

The earthquake of 1755 razed the town to the ground, destroying its main buildings, among which was the **Iglesia Parroquial de la Purísima Concepción**, rebuilt at the end of the 19th century. In this century, Napoleonic troops used the town as their head quarters, leaving it devastated after their retreat. After the War of Independence, the town began to revive and dedicated itself to agricultural labours, the **Zahurdón Mill** stands as a reminder of this period. In the beautiful spot of Prado de Osma is the **Ermita Nuestra Sra. de Piedras-Alba**, (15th century), a place of pilgrimage for pilgrims. The **Iberian Pig and Industry Agro-livestock Fair** is held annually in the town.



CHOOSE YOUR ROUTE

CULTURAL HERITAGE ROUTE

The extent and intensity of the history lived by the towns of Bajo Guadiana, which has always been a **frontier** land between Muslims and Christians, and between the Spanish and the Portuguese, is made evident with the presence of a rich historic legacy of noteworthy cultural and touristic interest. Megalithic constructions, Roman cities and towns, medieval and renaissance castles, forts, bastions and defensive towers, traditional rural architecture, gastronomy, music and other examples of regional and recognised **art form** part of this cultural legacy.



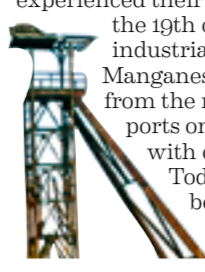
THE MILL ROUTE

Ancient windmills can be seen scattered over the Bajo Guadiana landscape, all witnesses to a time in which each small community and town milled its own grain, taking advantage of the most favourable natural resources. In the marshlands, **tidal mills** were built over channels to take advantage of the tidal energy. Others, inland, would harness **the power of the wind** using a blade structure using wood and cloth. There were also **watermills**, which were located over river currents to capture the force of the water current. Today, these mills, many of which have been restored, are exhibited with pride and as a sign of identity for the towns.



MINING ROUTE

The sierras of Andévalo Occidental and Bajo Alentejo experienced their greatest period of mining splendour in the 19th century, thus causing the arrival of the industrial age to this corner of the Iberian Peninsula. Manganese, iron and other minerals were transported from the mines by narrow gauge railway to the river ports on the Guadiana, from where boats loaded with ore navigated the river towards the estuary. Today, these evocative **mining landscapes** can be visited and some of the sections of the railway lines have been reconditioned into natural or green routes.



THE SALT ROUTE

Over a good part of the history of the human civilisation, whoever controlled the salt controlled the power of the world. In Bajo Guadiana, the Phoenicians found a Garden of Eden which also had very favourable conditions for obtaining sea salt: lowlands that would periodically flood, the **marshes** and many hours of sun. The activity still continues and **traditional salt mines** are being restored that offer guided tours amongst the live nature and the countryside where this tradition is still practiced accompanied by the silence and singing of birds.



NATURE ROUTES

Nearly half of Bajo Guadiana is classified with some degree of environmental protection, both in Portugal and in Spain, which provides an idea of its recognised natural value. Coastal marshes, sea cliffs, dunes and beaches, semi-arid steppes, extensive pastures, forested mountains, woods, river valleys, beautiful riverbank coves and landscapes all make up a mosaic of ecosystems of great scenic, ecological, botanical and faunistic value. A **biological and scenic diversity** that is difficult to find in other geographical areas of the same size.



BIRDWATCHING ROUTE

The Guadiana valley, along with its coastline and its mountainous landscapes, has a mosaic of habitats and landscapes of great environmental and ecological value, something that is increasingly rare in Europe, especially for a group of illustrious inhabitants, birds. Guadiana means "the river of ducks". The diversity of **aquatic, steppe, woodland and river birdlife** concentrated in the Bajo Guadiana countryside, makes this territory an authentic paradise for lovers of ornithological tourism.



FOR GETTING CLOSE TO NATURE

For those that prefer to live closer to nature and enjoy the rural world at a slower pace, Bajo Guadiana, on the Spanish side, offers three Non-Motorised Natural Routes, especially adapted and prepared for either cyclists or walkers. They are the **Guadiana Nature Route**, the **Guadiana Green Route** and the **Green Coastal Path Route**. Portugal has two important routes that connect with Bajo Guadiana, the **Coastal Ecopath** and the **Interior Ecopath or the Algarve Path**.



NAVIGATING THE GUADIANA

The important historical weight and heritage of Bajo Guadiana is due to the cultural influences that have arrived by boat over the millennia. The river and estuary towns have always communicated by boat between themselves and the outside. One of the best ways to take in the natural grandeur of the Guadiana estuary is to get to know it from the inside. And it is possible to do so. The quays of Ayamonte and Vila Real de Santo António offer evocative **boat trips** that travel the river Guadiana until arriving at the small ports of Alcoutim, Sanlúcar del Guadiana and Puerto de La Laja.

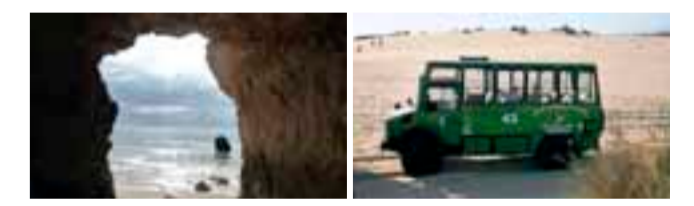


BAJO GUADIANA ROUTES



FROM CABO DE SÃO VICENTE TO DOÑANA

The coast of the Algarve and Huelva, even the Doñana National Park, offer **spectacular coastal landscapes**, characterised by the impressive cliffs, paradisiacal beaches, extensive marshes, and estuaries. There are also charming cities, full of history and cultural heritage, a unique golf offer, excellent tourist services, and renowned seafood gastronomy and beaches and sun in abundance.



FROM SEVILLE TO MÉRTOLA

The **interior mountains** of the Bajo Guadiana, its pig heritage and the appreciated Iberian cured ham are no less attractive than its coastline. Coming close to them from the world-famous Seville or the historic museum-city of Mértola is an unforgettable experience. The town of Sierra de Huelva and those of Bajo Alentejo are full of history and heritage, culture and traditions, folklore and unique music. They also offer a beautifully prepared and ancestral mountain gastronomy using local and recognised products.



Bajo Guadiana territory

- Cities
- Rivers, water masses and reservoirs
- Red de carreteras
- Natural Areas