



**EXPERIENCEPLUS!**  
BICYCLE TOURS SINCE 1972

## Grand Cycling Tour of Andalucia in 13 days

October 02 - 14, 2016

## Seville to Cordoba in 7 days

October 02 - 08, 2016

### Day 1 – Sevilla

#### Highlights: Arrive in Sevilla, Andalucía

*We gather today in Seville and will fit bicycles later this afternoon. We highly recommend you come in a few days earlier to enjoy this beautiful city, capitol of Andalucía. If you have time this afternoon, be sure to visit the Giralda, the famous bell tower built by the Moors and later restored. Also, don't miss Seville's Cathedral, where Christopher Columbus is buried, and which by some standards is the largest in Europe! After introductions and a glass of sherry or juice, we'll walk together towards tonight's restaurant where we will celebrate the beginning of our tour with a special dinner together this evening and experience some signature dishes of the region.*

#### This evening's hotel:

Las casas de la Juderia

Tel: +34 954 415 150

Plaza Santa Maria la Blanca, 5.

Fax: +34 954 42 21 70

41004 Sevilla

#### Tour Leader phone numbers:

Montse: + 34 650 818 499

Philipp: + 34 667 982 055

Joan: + 34 696 201 215

#### In an emergency call 112

**Fit Bicycles:** We'll meet this afternoon for brief introductions and a safety talk at 2 p.m. Come dressed in your bike gear, because after that we'll fit bikes and have a warm-up ride for you.

**Lunch and Dinner:** We are on Spanish time now, so we'll be eating late this evening. For lunch, check our note in the hotel lobby for lunch recommendations. We'll walk to dinner together around 7:30 p.m.

**You Might Like to Know:** The capital of Andalucía, Sevilla, is located at the highest navigable spot on the Guadalquivir River. The Iberians and Phoenicians, attracted by deposits of copper and silver in the mountains north of the area, had settlements here. The Carthaginians named the town Hispalis, and when the Romans came and conquered, they renamed it Julia Romula, capital of the Roman province Baetica. An equally important city in the day of the Romans was Italica, about 15 kilometers north of Sevilla. Birthplace of the Roman emperors Trajan and Hadrian, the ruins of Italica can be visited today. The Moors took Sevilla in 712, shortly after their entrance to the Iberian Peninsula. It was the Moors who named the river *Wadi El Kabir* meaning big river, which through time has become **Guadalquivir**. Under Moorish rule, the city was first subject to the Caliphate of Córdoba, but in 1023, it became an independent *taifa*, or state.





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The Christian king Fernando III conquered the city in 1248 and Sevilla soon became a favorite city of the Spanish royalty. It was here that Isabel received Christopher Columbus before his first trip to the New World. Due to its favor with the monarchy and its strategic location on the Guadalquivir, Sevilla became quite wealthy as gold and other valuables poured into the city. The **Torre del Oro** stands as a symbol of that time. At one point, the population in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century reached an estimated 150,000 people! Sevilla's luck began to run out as the river silted up and navigation became difficult, pushing the main port activities downstream to the city of Cádiz. Plagues and earthquakes didn't help the situation.

Sevilla's modern age is marked by two world expositions. The Latin American Exposition of 1929, although less than ideally successful due to the Wall Street crash, left its mark on the city. We can still enjoy today the **María Luisa Park** and the **Plaza de España** as well as several other pavilions built for the exposition. More recently, the EXPO '92 brought the high-speed train from Madrid to Sevilla, as well as a massive influx of tourists and vast improvements in the city's infrastructure.

Today the mass unemployment of the 1980s and early 1990s has come to a halt, and Sevilla is the capital of a vibrant and booming Andalucía. Its Semana Santa celebrations and April Fair draw tens of thousands of Spaniards and foreigners to the city each spring.

The **Cathedral of Sevilla** is a magnificent structure—in terms of volume it is the largest in the world, and it has the highest Gothic arches ever built. As customary in the day, the Cathedral was built on the site of the former mosque, which in turn was built on the site of a Visigoth church, which of course, occupied the site of a Roman temple. Undoubtedly, the site was considered sacred by cultures prior to the Romans as well. Observed from the outside, its Gothic heritage is evident, but many other architectural styles were incorporated over the four centuries it took to finish it. Of curious interest is the **Giralda** tower, symbol of Sevilla, which was indeed originally the mosque's minaret, from where Muslims were called to pray five times per day. Instead of stairs, you can "climb" to the top on a series of 35 ramps, built to be summited on horse or donkey. The change in styles is quite obvious from the outside between the original minaret, built in 1184 on top of a Visigoth base, and the Renaissance belfry added later. Inside the Cathedral, you can see one of the most enormous and ornate gold leaf *retablos* or altarpieces, in Spain, life work of the Flemish carver Pieter Dancart. Another interesting item is the monument to Christopher Columbus, who in his coffin is being carried by the four monarchs of Aragon, Castile, Leon and Navarra. It is still up to debate whether the actual remains of Columbus are in the Cathedral's crypt, or whether it is another Columbus buried there. DNA testing may soon tell the story!

Get a map from the front desk and enjoy the city.

Tonight we will have dinner together at "Antigua Abaceria de San Lorenzo".





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If you arrive in Seville early here are some of our favorite places for lunch/dinner:

- **El Contenedor:** Calle San Luis 50, Sevilla, +34 954 916 333, Open daily. (modern and Mediterranean fusion cuisine)
- **Albarama Restaurante Tapas:** Plaza de San Francisco, 5 +34 954 229 784 Open daily. (author tapas restaurant).

Each of these are slow food cuisine and are walking distance (El Contenedor is a good 20 min walking distance) from our hotel. Ask the front desk for directions.

**Bicycle Safety Note:** Make sure your helmet is safe and properly fitted. If your helmet has been in a crash or shows any cracking in the foam, you should replace it immediately. Good helmets last at least five years, but if yours is older than that you should consider replacing it. As far as fit goes, it should sit level on your head and low on your forehead – about two finger-widths above your eyebrows. The sliders on the side straps should meet under and slightly in front of your ears. The buckle should close under your chin, tight enough so that no more than one or two fingers fit under the strap.

Sources, and for more information: [www.bhsi.org](http://www.bhsi.org) and <http://www.helmets.org/replace.htm>





**Day 2 – Seville to Carmona**

**Highlights: Calatrava's Bridge in Seville, Carmona and its Roman History**

*Pedal along the Guadalquivir river and pass Seville's famous Santiago Calatrava bridge. Your destination today is Carmona, once a Roman stronghold this historic city has been settled for over 5,000 years, making it one of the oldest urban settlements in the entire Iberian Peninsula. Enjoy the historic city center before dinner together this evening. Distance: 62 km (38 miles)*

**This evening's hotel:**

**Hotel Alcacer de la reina,  
Plaza Lasso,2  
41410 Carmona, Sevilla**

**Tel: +34 954 196 200**

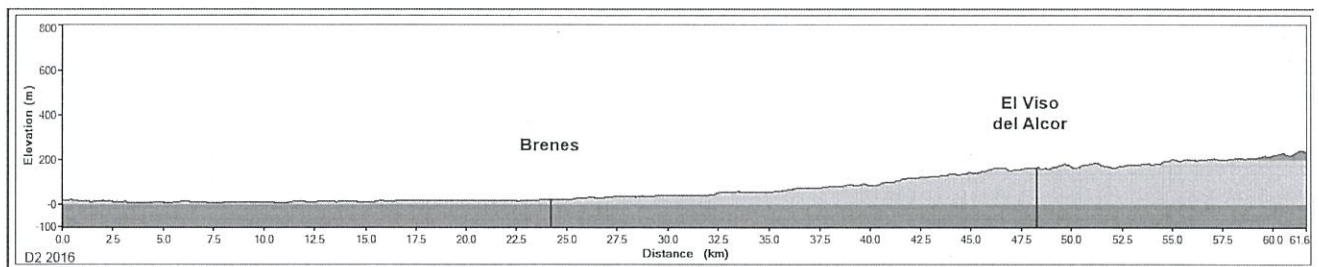
**Tour Leader phone numbers:**

**Montse: + 34 650 818 499  
Joan: +34 696 201 215**

**Philipp: + 34 667 982 055**

**In an emergency call 112**

**Today's Ride:** As with leaving any large city, the beginning of today's ride requires a bit of caution and concentration! We'll leave the city on a bike path most of the way out of Seville. Then we'll pedal along the Guadalquivir River until Brenes, where we'll turn and head south toward El Viso del Alcor and then to Carmona.



**Lunch and Dinner:** We recommend lunch in El Viso del Alcor. In Carmona you'll find plenty of nice options for dinner on your own tonight.

**You Might Like to Know:** Situated on the plain of the River Corbones, Carmona is a city which stands out due to its size and the traces left by the various cultures that have populated it during its extensive history. Its churches, palaces and city walls form part of the broad artistic heritage it houses in its historic quarter, dominated by the imposing image of its Arab fortress, the Alcazar del Rey Don Pedro. Its position, a few kilometers from Seville, allows you to enjoy the enormous monumental and artistic heritage, as well as the numerous possibilities for leisure offered by the capital of the province of Seville. Carmona also offers a rich gastronomy in which the most succulent recipes of Sevillian and Andalusian traditions are represented.

Populated since very early times, Carmona has a long history which has seen the passage of the widest variety of cultures. It was first of all inhabited by Tartessians, and later became a **Phoenician colony**. Centuries later, **Romans and Arabs** settled in the area, and these civilizations have left their own impression on the rich monumental legacy hidden in this Sevillian town. Of Roman origin is the walled enclosure, to which the Cordoba and Seville gates and the **amphitheatre** belong. Also Roman is the **necropolis** (I B. C.), located on the outskirts of the city, which has hundreds of tombs and rich burial chambers excavated from rock. Within its old walls, the old quarter of Carmona has been able to retain its appearance of an Arab medina, with streets on which beautiful displays of civil and





religious architecture can be seen. The **church of Santa María la Mayor**, built in the XV century over a former Arab mosque, can be seen above the outline of the city. Other churches of interest are those of **San Felipe** (XIV c.), in the Mudejar style and **San Pedro**, baroque, whose tower is similar to that of the Giralda in Seville. At every step you can see Mudejar style houses, built between the XV and XVII centuries, **Renaissance and baroque buildings**. Some famous buildings are the **Palace of los Aguilar**, the IRueda palace or the **House of the Marquis de las Torres**, now the site of the city's Museum of Archaeology and Customs. A journey through Carmona should continue with a visit to the XVIII century **Convent of the Discalced** and the **Alcazar of the Seville Gate**, of Carthaginian origin. Or, if you prefer, you can go up to the highest point in the city. Here is where the **Almohad King Don Pedro Fortress** rises, now a Parador. Built during the Arab period, the original fortress was the residence of the monarchs of Taifa. In the XIII century, under the reign of Pedro I "The Cruel", major reformation works took place on the fortified precincts until they acquired their current appearance. According to the legend, this luxurious palace became one of the favorites of the Castilian king.

**Bicycle safety tips:** Don't coach or suggest to other cyclists when it is ok to go. Let them decide for themselves!

This is especially useful at intersections where EVERYONE should stop. Encouraging others to roll through an intersection leads to bad habits.

**Spanish Lesson of the Day:** If you want to look for certain shops, you might find these useful: where is the closest pharmacy? *Dónde está la farmacia más cercana?*

*The names of the different shops:*

Butcher shop: *carcuteria*

Bakery: *Panaderia*

Super Market: *Supermercado*

Sports shop: *tienda de deportes*

Fruit shop: *fruteria*









### Day 3 - Carmona to Constantina

#### Highlights: Foothills of the Sierra Morena, cork trees, bulls and Andalucian White Village

*Our route takes us into the foothills of the Sierra Morena mountains where you will pass by cork tree groves with (peaceful!) bulls grazing under them. It's a fun and hilly ride. Our destination is Constantina where you will feel as though you've walked back in time as you explore the old town's white-washed houses. The Sierra Morena mountains add a dramatic flair to the scene and offer the perfect backdrop to the village. Distance: 59 km (37 miles).*

#### This evening's hotel:

**Hotel Los Pozos de la Nieve**  
Ctra. Constantina a Cazalla, km 1,5  
41450 Constantina

**Tel: +34 955 669 266**

#### Tour Leader phone numbers:

**Montse: + 34 650 818 499**

**Philipp: + 34 667 982 055**

**Joan: +34 696 201 215**

#### In an emergency call 112

**Today's Ride:** Today we are going to start easy with a leisurely downhill ride to the Guadalquivir River and to Villanueva del Rio y Minas, where we begin a beautiful climb through a natural park to Constantina at 555 meters.



**Lunch and Dinner:** We recommend buying a *bocadillo* (sandwich) for a later picnic or have a light lunch in Villanueva del Rio y Minas before the climb. Alternatively, enjoy a nice snack in Villanueva del Rio y Minas and then reward yourself at the end of the ride with a real tapas style lunch in one of the small plazas in Constantina. We'll enjoy dinner together tonight.

**You Might Like to Know:** Constantina, like Sevilla, is the site of settlements of many cultures: Iberians, Celts, Carthaginians, and even Phoenicians and, of course, the local population. The Romans made Constantina an important center for silver and copper mining. Moors and even the French have since occupied the town.

Located in the heart of the *Parque Natural de la Sierra Norte* or "North Mountain Natural Park", Constantina is tucked in beautiful and pleasant countryside, frequently visited by Sevillanos escaping the crowded and hot city at the weekends and in the summer. As we reach the hills, you'll notice the bulls grazing under the cork trees as well as the pigs feasting on acorns. These pigs are destined to be prized "jamon serrano" hams as the animals feed almost exclusively on acorns.

Every year Constantina hosts one of the most important horse fairs in Andalucía, attracting tourists, horse ranchers, and trainers from afar. Bullfighting is an important cultural focus of the town, and there are several expensive ranches that raise fighting bulls in the area. In addition, Constantina is



known for its gastronomy, based on wild game, and for its autumn celebrations of wild mushrooms and truffles.

**Bicycle safety notes:** Be aware of things going on around you (situational awareness)

65% of crashes among our customers over the last 3-4 years might have been avoided with better situational awareness:

**Expect the unexpected:** 35% of crashes happened when a dog, cat or car came onto the road from the side

**Give yourself space:** 30% of crashes happened when cyclists were too close to one another and failed to communicate properly.

**Spanish Lesson of the Day:**

Directions: "*izquierda*" is left; "*derecha*" is right; watch out because "*derecho*" is straight (very similar to right!). You'll notice that if you ask for directions people will use landmarks to give directions more than mileage-so you take a left at the tree and then a right at the church, etc. If you want to ask where something (a city, town or street) is, you can ask "*donde está...*" – remember, if you want to ask for a town down the road, ask for the next little town on the map.



Day 3 Bicycle from Carmona to Constantina

Towns for Navigation: Alcolea del Río (18 km) - Villanueva del Río y Minas (25 km) - Constantina (55 km) - Hotel (59 km)

Extra 36km







**Day 4 - Constantina to Palma del Rio**

**Highlights: Sleep in a restored Convent, cycle through the Andalucian Sierra**

*Coast back down to the river valley and out of the foothills towards Palma del Rio on your bicycle ride today. Some of the orange groves you'll pass today have trees over 200 years old! Our hotel tonight is one of the main attractions of Palma del Rio, an otherwise sleepy town. Christopher Columbus slept here when it was a Convent in the 15th Century. Distance: 66 km (41 miles)*

**This evening's hotel:**

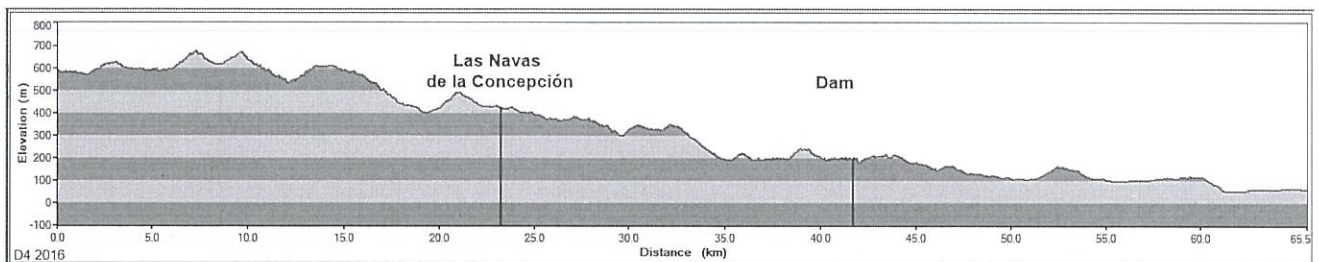
**Hotel Monasterio San Francisco Tel: +34 957 42 0335**  
**Avda Pio XII**  
**14004 Palma del Rio, Cordoba**

**Tour Leader phone numbers:**

**Montse: + 34 650 818 499      Philipp: + 34 667 982 055**  
**Joan: +34 696 201 215**

**In an emergency call 112**

**Today's Ride:** It's a beautiful ride through the hills of Sierra Norte and Hornachuelos Natural Park. The ride starts off with some rolling hills and then will start heading back down into the valley of the Guadalquivir River.



**Lunch and Dinner:** We recommend Navas de la Concepción as an early lunch option or buy a bocadillo and have a picnic along the lake. We'll have dinner together this evening.

**You Might Like to Know:**

We just touch on the southwestern edge of the Hornachuelos Natural Park, one of the best preserved Mediterranean riverine forested areas in the Sierra Morena mountain ranges. The mountains in this park are full of holm oak, cork and Portuguese oak that cover the mountains which follow the snaking Bembézar River. While we probably won't see any because we are not deeper into the park, this park hosts one of Andalucia's largest colonies of black vultures, and several other birds of prey also live here. Once south of the natural park, we continue to our destination of Palma del Río. While this small village is the western-most one in Cordoba's province, its proximity to Sevilla merges much of the Sevillian art with the beauty and serenity of Córdoba.

It is located in a privileged place on the left banks of the Guadalquivir, and seated on an old terrace of the Genil. This position, bathed by two rivers, allows it to be fertile and produce the most precious treasure of Palma del Río: its agricultural products and, especially, the ultimate fruit, the orange. The fields of Palma del Río form a forest of orange trees that shape a spectacular image, especially in



spring, sprinkling the greenness of their trees with orange blossom that scent the fields, streets and avenues, and in harvest-time they brighten up the winter landscape with the brightness of fruit.

You can go for a walk through its streets and visit the Casco Antiguo where most of the monuments in town, surrounded by the Enclosure Wall, form an architectural-historic-artistic group of great importance that combines different eras and cultures.

**Bicycle safety tips:** Avoid passing other vehicles (bikes, cars, trucks) on the right as other road users don't expect you to pass here. Also, large vehicles (buses and trucks have large blind spots on their right - be aware and beware).

**Spanish Lesson of the Day:** If you want to refer to certain reference points, here follow some tips:  
Which is the name of this mountain? *Cual es el nombre de esa montaña?*

River: *Rio*

Forest: *Bosque*

Valley: *Valle*

Road: *Carretera*

Street: *Calle*

Bridge: *Puente*



**Day 4 Bicycle from Constantina to Palma del Rio**

**Towns for Navigation:** Las Navas de la Concepción (23 km) – Dam and Lookout point (42 km) –  
Palma del Rio (67 km)







**Day 5 - Palma del Rio to Cordoba**

**Highlights: Museums and history of Córdoba, Mezquita de Cordoba**

*Take your time today and enjoy your ride to Córdoba, as tomorrow you can take a rest day to explore the city. Córdoba's heritage has Roman origins, and was also one of the earliest Islamic cities in Spain. Immigrants from Damascus arrived by 719 AD, and Córdoba thrived for three centuries under the Damascus Caliphate. Distance 64 Kms (40 miles)*

**This evening's hotel:**

**Hotel NH Amistad Córdoba**  
**Plaza de Maimonides 3**  
**14004 Córdoba**

**Tel: +34 957 420 335**

**Tour Leader phone numbers:**

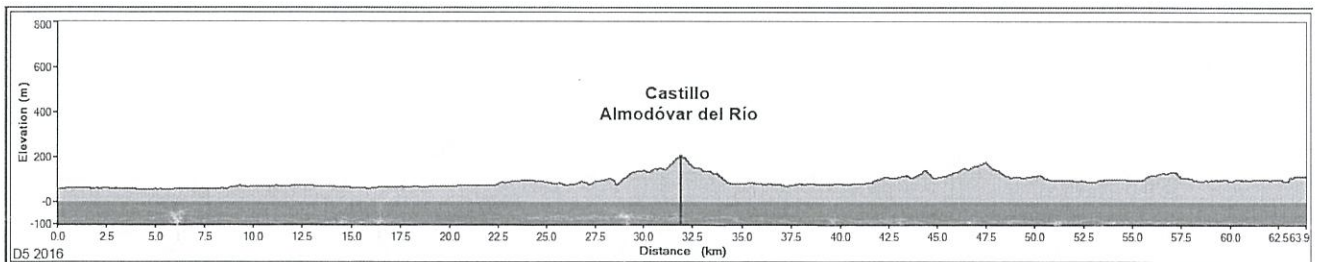
**Montse: + 34 650 818 499**  
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**Philipp: + 34 667 982 055**

**In an emergency call 112**

**Today's Ride:** Today we'll ride along the basin of the Guadalquivir River. For those who want to add some extra climbs, we recommend the climb to the Castle of Almodóvar del Rio. If you do this, please be careful of the very steep climbs in narrow alleys.

Be forewarned that our arrival into Córdoba is through an industrial area but then we'll pick up a bike path that takes you through the busier part of town. As in all cities though, please be aware that there will be some traffic. The last couple hundred meters we'll try to put as few arrows as possible – for that reason you also find a detailed map of Córdoba leading us to the hotel from the Roman bridge.



**Lunch and Dinner:** We recommend an early lunch in Posadas or a late lunch in Cordoba. Dinner will be on your own tonight in Cordoba.

**You Might Like to Know:** Córdoba is a seductive city with many attractive monuments of which the **Cathedral/Mosque** is the largest and the only one of its kind in Europe. It's comprised of a lavish mosque within which they built a cathedral with Gothic, Baroque, and *Plateresque* elements. It's a fascinating building offering surprising light and color effects, as well as beautiful doors and nearly a thousand columns.

Córdoba was converted from settlement to city by the Romans, who made it an olive oil transportation center for exportation to Rome. It reached perhaps its greatest splendor as the capital of Al-Andalus, the name for the part of the peninsula under Moorish rule the word "Andalucía" comes from. Under Muslim rule, Córdoba was the cradle of culture, producing many poets, philosophers, and scientists, such as the Muslim Averoes and the Jewish Maimonides. Under early Moorish rule, Córdoba was perhaps the most impressive example of how Muslims, Jews, and



Christians could live in relative peace and harmony, appreciating one another's contributions to the culture of the day. There were, of course, periods of strife and intolerance and later Muslim rule proved far less open-minded.

Córdoba's main monument is the **Mezquita**. Begun in the year 785 on the site of a Visigoth church, the original mosque was successively expanded three times over the years. A curiosity of this red and white arched wonder is that the *mihrab*, or prayer niche, does not face Mecca. Some historians say this is because the original builders decided to take advantage of a standing wall of the Visigoth church. Others argue that this slight was intentional and that the builders constructed the mihrab facing Damascus, from where the current Umayyad Emir Abd al-Rahman had fled when the eastern Abbasids assassinated his family.

In perhaps one of the greatest architectural crimes of history, in 1523 the Emperor Charles V sanctioned the building of a vast renaissance Cathedral in the middle of the mosque. Although Charles himself eventually recognized that something unique in the world had been destroyed in the process, we must acknowledge that this architectural abomination may well have saved the remains of the mosque that we can see today. If it weren't for the Cathedral in the center, the entire building may have been destroyed. The Cathedral still functions as a place of worship and we highly recommend you visit it.

#### **Bicycle safety tips:**

ABC Quick Check (30 second safety check)

Every day check for:

A: Air in your tires;

B: Brakes - make sure they are working properly and don't drag on the wheel;

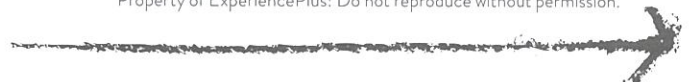
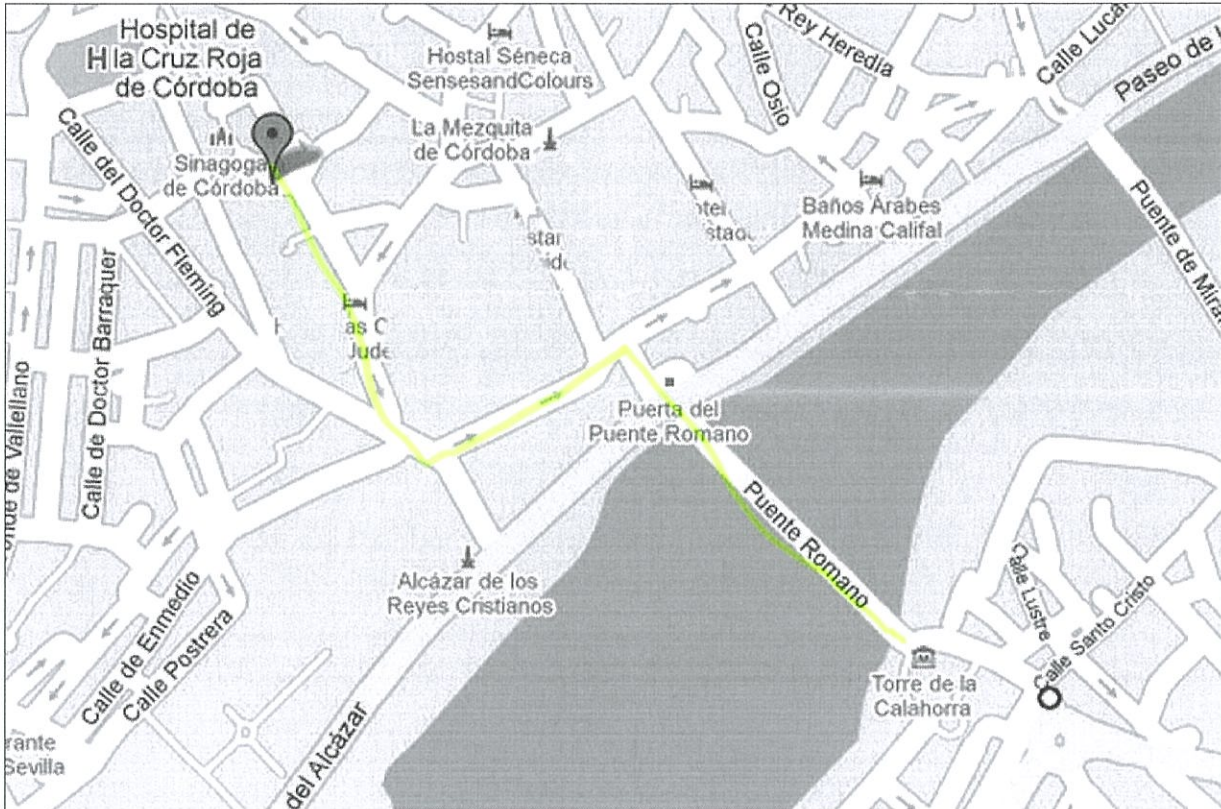
C: Chain, crank and cassette - make sure the drive train is working smoothly (rain yesterday? Check for debris or oil, etc.)

Quick Check: Double check all your quick releases

**Spanish Lesson of the Day:** Tapas are one of the most common ways to eat, drink, and snack in Spain. Sometimes the word "*tapas*" just refers to the size or portion of whatever food you are ordering (so you will see the "*tapas*" size or the "full" "*racion or media racion*" size on some menus). In many bars the cold tapas are in the display case and in a good café you'll find a list of hot tapas on the wall (which they make in the kitchen). The term to eat tapas is to "*picar*" or "*tapear*". You might hear a bartender ask if you want something to "*picar*" which means to snack on. Cold tapas often are cold salads made up of a combination of things including olives, eggs, green peppers, beans, and other delightful tidbits. Warm tapas are usually made of meat in sauces, shell fish or other fish, with tasty sauces, or the famous *Tortilla Española* – Spanish Omelette made with potatoes and eggs.



**Cordoba City** - How to get to the hotel from the other side of the river. Please walk across the Roman bridge.





Day 5: Bicycle Palma del Rio to Cordoba

Towns for navigation: Posadas (23 km) – Castillo Almodóvar del Río (32 km) – Cordoba (64 km)







**Day 6 – Loop ride out of Córdoba**

**Highlights: Visit the Mezquita and Jewish Quarter. Optional bicycle ride to Medina Azahara**

*Enjoy a free day today in Córdoba, one of the oldest cities in Spain. Or, if you prefer to get out on the bike take a ride into the foothills and visit the impressive archeological ruins of Medina Zara. This afternoon we'll join a local guide to tour the Mezquita of Córdoba, and the old Jewish Quarter enjoying Córdoba's whitewashed neighborhoods with flower filled patios along the way. This evening we have dinner together to say goodbye to anyone doing the 7-day itinerary. Distance 41 Kms (25 miles)*

**This evening's hotel:**

**Hotel NH Amistad Córdoba**  
**Plaza de Maimonides 3**  
**14004 Córdoba**

**Tel: +34 957 420 335**

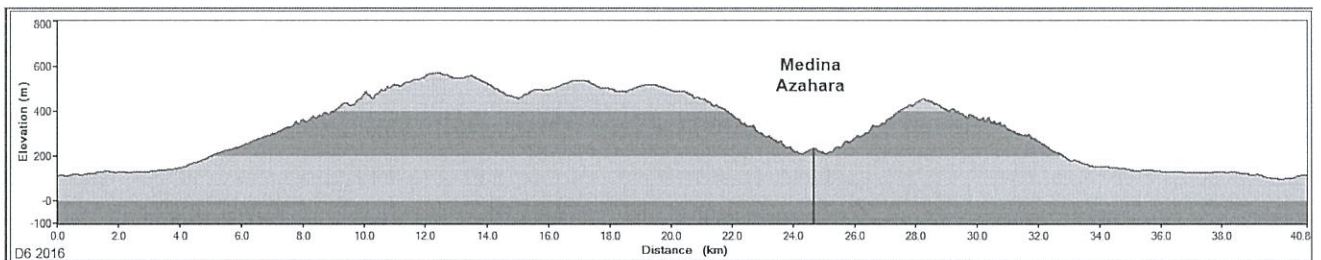
**Tour Leader phone numbers:**

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**In an emergency call 112**

**Today's Ride:** For those of you who are looking for extra mileage, challenging climbs, an archeological site and gorgeous views, the loop taking us to the excavations of the ancient Moorish city Medina Azahara offers it all!



**Lunch and Dinner:** Córdoba offers many great tapas spots all around the historic part of town. Tonight we will enjoy dinner together to say good bye to some of our fellow riders and welcome the new riders for the next leg.

**You Might Like to Know:**

Córdoba is a city that must be seen on foot so that as you wander through the narrow streets you can peep into the shady patios where dozens of potted plants and the most colorful, scented flowers are displayed. In the old Jewish quarter you can admire the one-time synagogue, and not very far away from there the Gate of Almodóvar and the Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos, with its beautiful gardens, Caliph baths, and pointed vaults.

The ruins of the **palace-city Medina Azahara** lie 7 km northeast of Córdoba. When finished, it was home to not only the Emir Abd-Al Rahman who ordered it built, but 20,000 others, including royals, ministers, nobles, and servants. Considered one of the most luxurious palace-cities ever built, no expense was spared during its construction. It is said that 10,000 men worked on building it. It had its own mosque, baths, gardens, aviary, and even a zoo! Amazingly enough, the creators of the city



built-in several special effects intended to impress and intimidate visitors, including foreign dignitaries. For example, crystals threw rainbows on walls and a large pond of mercury reflected sunbeams and magnified the palace, giving the impression of something "larger than life". It just goes to show that "marketing" is not a new concept! The city lasted a mere 75 years however, before being looted during a popular revolt in 1010. Bits and pieces of the building materials, especially columns, have turned-up in other buildings all over Andalucía, including the Reales Alcázares in Sevilla and the Mezquita of Córdoba.

**Bicycle safety tips:** Be predictable and communicate with fellow cyclists ESPECIALLY your main riding partner(s).

Leave at least a bicycle length of space between you and the next rider. If you would like to socialize or ride together make sure you have adequate visibility front and back for oncoming cars. When a car comes decide which of you will drop back (usually the cyclist closer to the center of the road).

When turning or stopping call out, "right turn" or "stopping."

### **Spanish Lesson of the Day:**

Drinking coffee in Spain is not as complicated as at Starbucks or maybe a bar in Italy, but if you are picky about your milk to coffee ratio, here are some things to think about when you order at a café:

*Café con leche* – like a latte (milk and a shot of espresso)

*Café cortado* – mostly coffee with a bit less milk. The coffee is like an espresso shot, but a bit more.

*Café solo* – just the coffee (espresso)

*Café doble* – double shot (and then you can add milk *leche* or not)

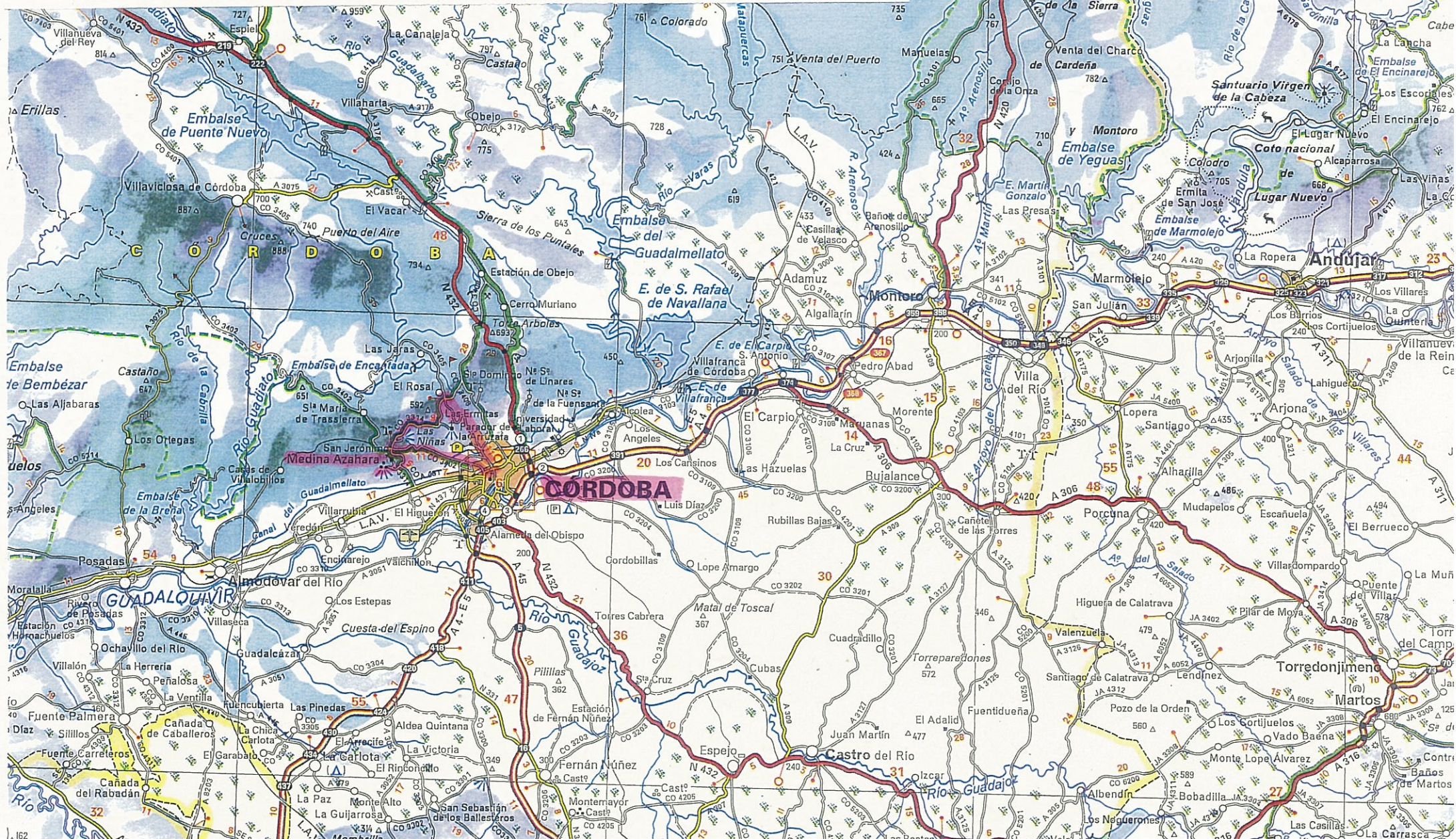
Coffee is usually consumed during breakfast, after lunch, and sometimes mid-afternoon and after dinner.



Andalucia Cycling: Seville to Cordoba  
Grand Cycling Tour of Andalucia  
Scale 1:400.000

Day 6 Bicycle Cordoba loop ride

Towns for Navigation: Cordoba – Medina Azahara Archaeological site (25 km) – Cordoba (41 km)







**Day 7/2 – Into the Olive Groves, Córdoba to Zuheros**

**Highlights:** Hills of Andalucía visit an olive mill.

*Start with a shuttle out of Córdoba where we'll stop and visit an artisanal Sherry producer and gather samples to taste at the end of the day. The ride will have you pedaling over hills and through olive groves into the heart of the Córdoba province. We have a special tapas lunch today to help fuel you over the climbs. The last leg of the ride is on a rails to trails path that takes us right to our hotel. This region produces some of the world's finest olive oils and we'll visit a press today. Distance: 44 km (27 miles)*

**This evening's hotel:**

Rural Hacienda Minerva  
Cra. Luque - D<sup>a</sup> Mencia km 9,8  
14870 Zuheros

Tel: +34 957 09 09 51

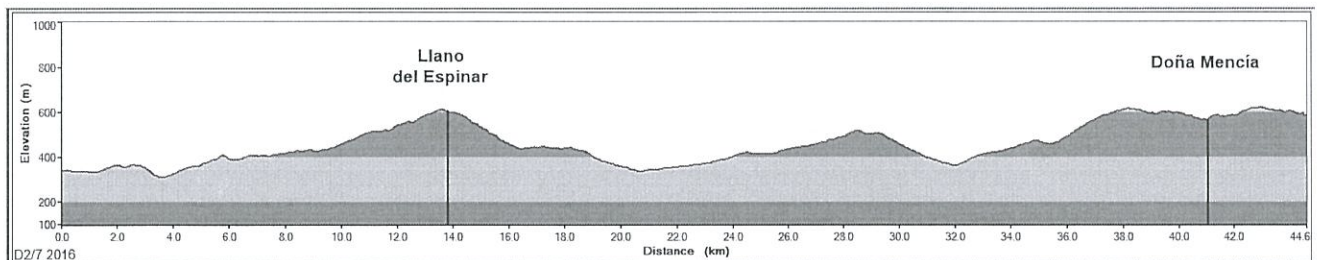
**Tour Leader phone numbers:**

Montse: + 34 650 818 499  
Joan: +34 696 201 215

Philipp: + 34 667 982 055

**In an emergency call 112**

**Today's Ride:** We'll start with a shuttle to Montilla cutting out traffic and poor roads. We'll ride into the Lagar region – a region where sherry style wines are produced. And then enter the lands of olive groves, where our ride through continuous rolling hills will lead us to Zuheros. Our hotel tonight is on a rails to trails path in between the small villages of Doña Mencia and Zuheros.



**Lunch and Dinner:** For lunch we'll have some tapas at a local winery. Dinner will be together tonight at our hotel's restaurant.

**You Might Like to Know:** Today we follow the “**Route of the Caliphate**” that united two of the most important Moorish capitals: Córdoba and Granada.

The Caliphate Route combines the most important cities of the Moorish era in Spain with the valley of the Guadalquivir river and the fertile Vega.

The itinerary runs through the Sierras Subbéticas Natural Park with its tiny settlements, of which we will go through Castro del Río which rarely is visited by tourists. Castro del Río's main economic activity is the production of olive wood.

The **Vía Verde de la Subbética** is a 57 km rails to trails path started in 1993 that the Spanish railway has slowly converted into a lovely path through the countryside and connecting several small villages.

**Zuheros**, once dubbed by National Geographic as the most picturesque village in Andalucía is our destination, although we will stop 3 km before town in our rural hotel. **Rural Hacienda Minerva,**





our quaint lodging tonight, was an important hacienda belonging to the Fernandez-Guerra family from the mid 1800s. Recently converted into a rural hotel, its hope is to offer relaxation to its guests through its location and amenities such as the Arab Baths they have on the premises!

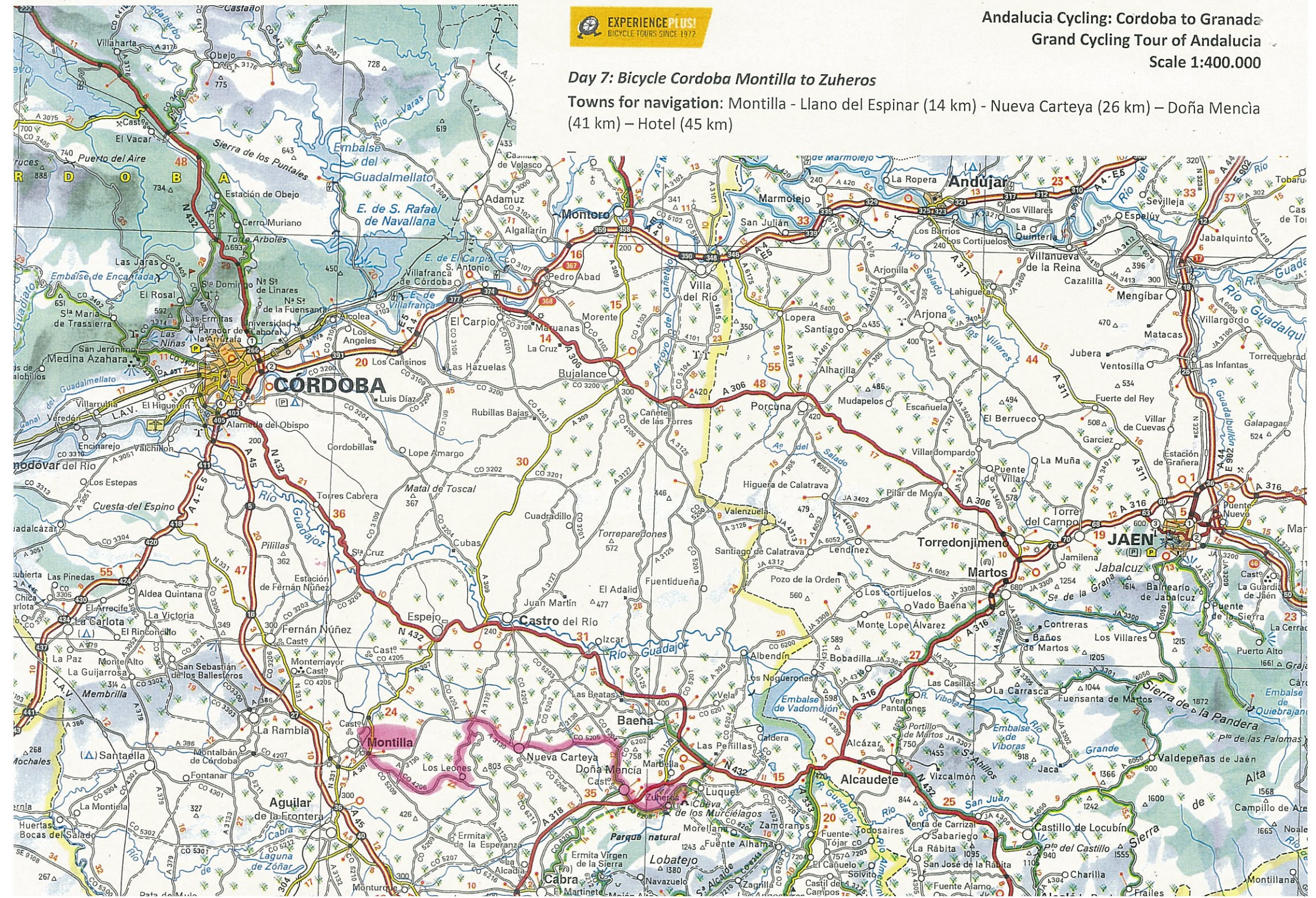
**Bicycle safety tips:** When riding into or out of towns or cities keep your distance from other cyclists and from parked cars. If possible, ride a full six feet from parked cars. In this way you don't have to watch for opening car doors and you can watch other things going on around you. Drop back from your fellow cyclist 2-3 bike lengths so you have a good view of the road including potholes, broken glass or other debris. You can also see a surprise dog or cat coming onto the road. DON'T WORRY ABOUT holding up traffic. Motorists are generally used to cyclists on the road.

**Spanish Lesson of the Day:** Thank people by telling them "*gracias*" (Thank you) or "*muchas gracias*" (many thanks). Remember that in Spain the "c" in *gracias* sounds like a "th" in English. The language in Spain is called *Castellano* (Castilian Spanish) and most other Spanish speakers throughout the world will recognize it due to the "th" or lisp sound a "c" makes when pronounced.



Day 7: Bicycle Cordoba Montilla to Zuheros

Towns for navigation: Montilla - Llano del Espinar (14 km) - Nueva Carteya (26 km) - Doña Mencía (41 km) - Hotel (45 km)







**Day 8/3 - Rolling Hills of Andalucia, Zuheros to Jaén**

**Highlights: Jaén and its olive groves, stay and dine in a Moorish Castle**

*We'll start the ride out on the same rails to trails path we came in on yesterday. After just a few miles you'll be back on the road and enjoying vistas of an endless sea of olive groves. You are now in one of Europe's largest olive growing regions - some estimate that there are over 150 million olive trees in this province. This afternoon enjoy the views from our hotel, a restored Moorish Castle. Distance: 79 km (49 miles).*

This evening's hotel:

Hotel Parador de Jaén  
Castillo Santa Catalina, s/n  
23001 Jaén

Tel: +34 953 23 00 00

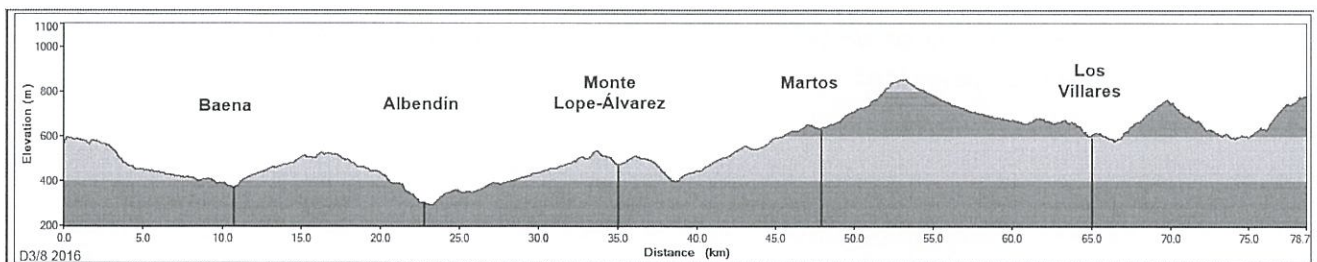
Tour Leader phone numbers:

Montse: + 34 650 818 499  
Joan: +34 696 201 215

Philipp: + 34 667 982 055

In an emergency call 112

**Today's Ride:** Today's ride will take us through the classic Andalucian countryside and will work on our legs. Don't forget to enjoy the views when you made it to the top of the hills. Speaking of hills... tonight's hotel, the Parador of Jaen, is situated on an impressive hill. If you would like a shuttle, the van will be available.

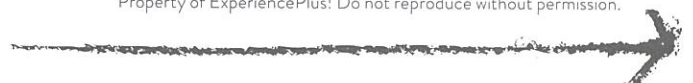


**Lunch and Dinner:** We recommend lunch in Martos or in Los Villares. Dinner is together tonight in the Parador.

You Might Like to Know:

The first town we come to today, **Baena**, is a center of olive oil production of such importance in Andalucía that it has its own "denomination of origin" meaning that all of the oil coming from the area must meet specific and rigorous requirements for both the cultivation of the olive and its processing into oil. The town itself is named for a Roman, Baius, who lived at a large villa in the area. The Moors settled here as well—the bell tower of the Church of Santa María was undoubtedly the minaret of the town mosque, formerly build on the site. The castle dates from the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

Historically, **Jaén** was developed in its present location because of the availability of water. The oldest remains of the town date back to 2500 B.C. The same populations that developed Seville and Córdoba also lived in Jaén, such as the Carthaginians, Romans, Arabs, and Spaniards. Today its population is 116,731 (2012), about 1/6 of the population of the province.



After the 8<sup>th</sup> century Moorish invasion of Spain, the city, then known as Jayyan, was developed as a trade center. Remains of the Moorish fortifications and citadel can be seen as you enter town high above the city. Among the many points of interest in town, the most important is the Renaissance-style cathedral, begun in 1532 and completed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The most impressive monument of Jaén is the castle we are staying in tonight, so make sure you explore it.

Jaén is also known as the *World Capital of Olive Oil*, as it's the biggest producer of this "liquid gold." The importance of olives to Jaén's economy is clear when (as we have seen) 77% of the land in this province is used to cultivate olives. Within the region there are 55 *almazares* or olive oil presses, and their principle function is to produce extra virgin olive oil. That is, olive oil produced purely through physical pressing and no chemical means. To be considered extra virgin, an olive oil needs to have an acid content of less than 1%. After that, there are varying degrees of acidity that pertain to each type of oil.

**Bicycle safety tips:** Braking: your front brake is your friend - but use it carefully and never alone! In general use both brakes together for normal stops. As you become more experienced you will find that applying 2-3 times the pressure to your front brake will stop you faster. Be careful, however, not to overuse your front brake or to use it alone or you will go over the handlebars.

### **Spanish Lesson of the Day:**

Ordering a beer is quite easy, as is wine:

*Una cerveza por favor* will get you a beer (usually a "*caña*" the small size). If you want bigger, you can ask for a *tubo* which usually implies half a pint (a tall glass/tube literally), or you can ask for a "*cervezagrande*" and they will probably show you the different sizes that they have.

For wine you can ask for a *copa de vino* (glass of wine) - *tinto*(red) or *blanco* (white wine). Don't forget to get a *tapa* with your drink as well!





# Andalucia Cycling: Cordoba to Granada Grand Cycling Tour of Andalucia Scale 1:400.000

## Day 8 Bicycle from Zuheros to Jaén

Towns for Navigation: Zuheros (2 km), Baena (11 km), Albendín (22 km), Monte Lope Alvarez (35 km), Martos (48 km), Los Villares (65 km), Jabalczuz (72 km), Jaén (79 km).







**Day 9/4 – Jaén to Úbeda**

**Highlights: Renaissance town of Úbeda**

*The ride today takes us through beautiful countryside from Jaén to the monumental city of Úbeda, our home for the next two days. Úbeda was a wealthy Renaissance town and it retains that character particularly in the old quarter. This afternoon we'll visit a famous local ceramics studio and enjoy an artist's demonstration. Take time to join the locals for a café con leche at an outdoor café. Our hotel this evening is a remodeled Renaissance Palace and truly fit for royalty. Distance: 70 km (43 miles).*

**This evening's hotel:**

**Hotel Palacio de Ubeda**  
C/ Juan Pasquau, 4  
23400 Úbeda

**Tel: +34 953 81 09 73 / 75**

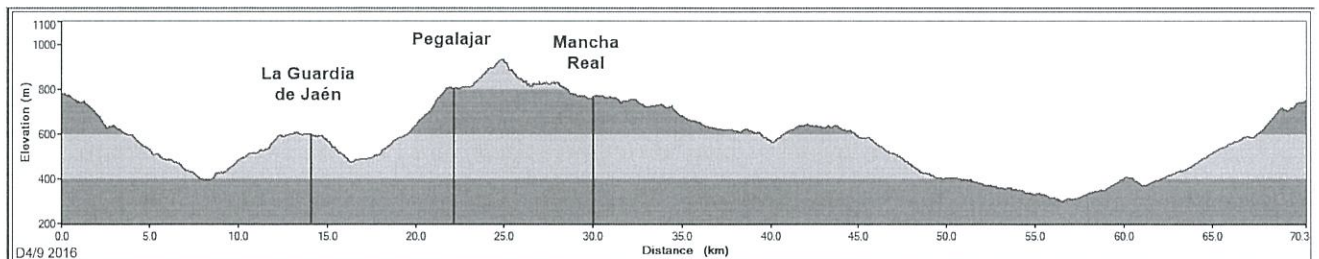
**Tour Leader phone numbers:**

**Montse: + 34 650 818 499**  
**Joan: +34 696 201 215**

**Philipp: + 34 667 982 055**

**In an emergency call 112**

**Today's Ride:** Please be aware of traffic exiting Jaén. More rolling hills and more olive groves today as we wind our way towards Úbeda. It's a nice challenging ride, so pace yourself!



**Lunch and Dinner:** We recommend lunch in Mancha Real. Dinner together tonight at a local restaurant.

**You Might Like to Know:** The wonderful town of **Úbeda** is one of Spain's little-known treasures. Its geographic remoteness, combined with poor connections by public transportation ensures that few international tourists go out of their way to visit.

The Romans called their settlement on the site of the current town *Betula*, named for the river *Bethis* that we now know as the Guadalquivir River, which has its origin in the nearby *Sierra de Cazorla*. The Moors originally walled the city in 852, naming it *Ub-badat al-Arab*. From Ub-Bada we derive its modern name. The craft industries of ceramics and esparto work begun under Moorish rule survive today. There is a fine shop right next door to our hotel, and many others around town.





Conquered by Fernando III in 1234, Úbeda attracted many noble families involved in the Reconquista who were greedily in line to take over lands formerly inhabited by the departing Moors.

Feuds for power among these families frustrated Isabel the Catholic to such a degree that she ordered the demolition of the defensive walls of the city in the year 1503. The town reached its greatest influence in the 16<sup>th</sup> century when local textiles were exported throughout Europe, bringing much wealth to the area. The patronage of two noblemen, Juan Vásquez de Molina and Francisco de los Cobos, along with the vision of the architect Andres de Vandelvira, are responsible for the incredible Renaissance quarter in the historical center of town.

Two churches flank the main Renaissance town square, the *Plaza Vásquez de Molina*. The Church of *Santa María de los Reales Alcázares* sits at the southeast side and occupies the site of the former Muslim mosque. The main chapel stands on the site where the first Christian mass was held after the reconquering of the town. The *Sacra Capilla del Salvador*, at the northeast end, was designed by Diego de Silóe, who built the Cathedral of Granada. This fascinating building served as the private burial place of the family of Francisco de los Cobos. Also in the square is the Condestable Dávalos Palace, a 16<sup>th</sup> century mansion that now serves as a government-run Parador hotel, and the old granary, which served as the town prison and is currently the police station.

The *Plaza del Primero de Mayo* holds the *Iglesia de San Pablo* and the old government town hall, dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. From its balconies, the local officials presided over *autos da fé* in which heretics, mainly suspected of being Jews, were tried and often burned at the stake. The site of the fires is now the bandstand.

**Bicycle safety tips:** Learn to shift your weight as you turn: Make a right turn by leaning the bike to the right and putting your outside (left) pedal in the down position. Most of your weight will be on that outside pedal.

**Spanish Lesson of the Day:** When you meet someone and you want to introduce yourself you can say "*me llamo*" (don't forget the double "l" is a "y" sound – so in this case it sounds like "yamo"). If you want to ask someone their name, you can ask "*como se llama?*" for the formal question or "*comote llamas*" if you are talking to someone informally, like a child or someone you are familiar with. After meeting someone, you can say "*mucho gusto*" which means "with pleasure (to meet you)".

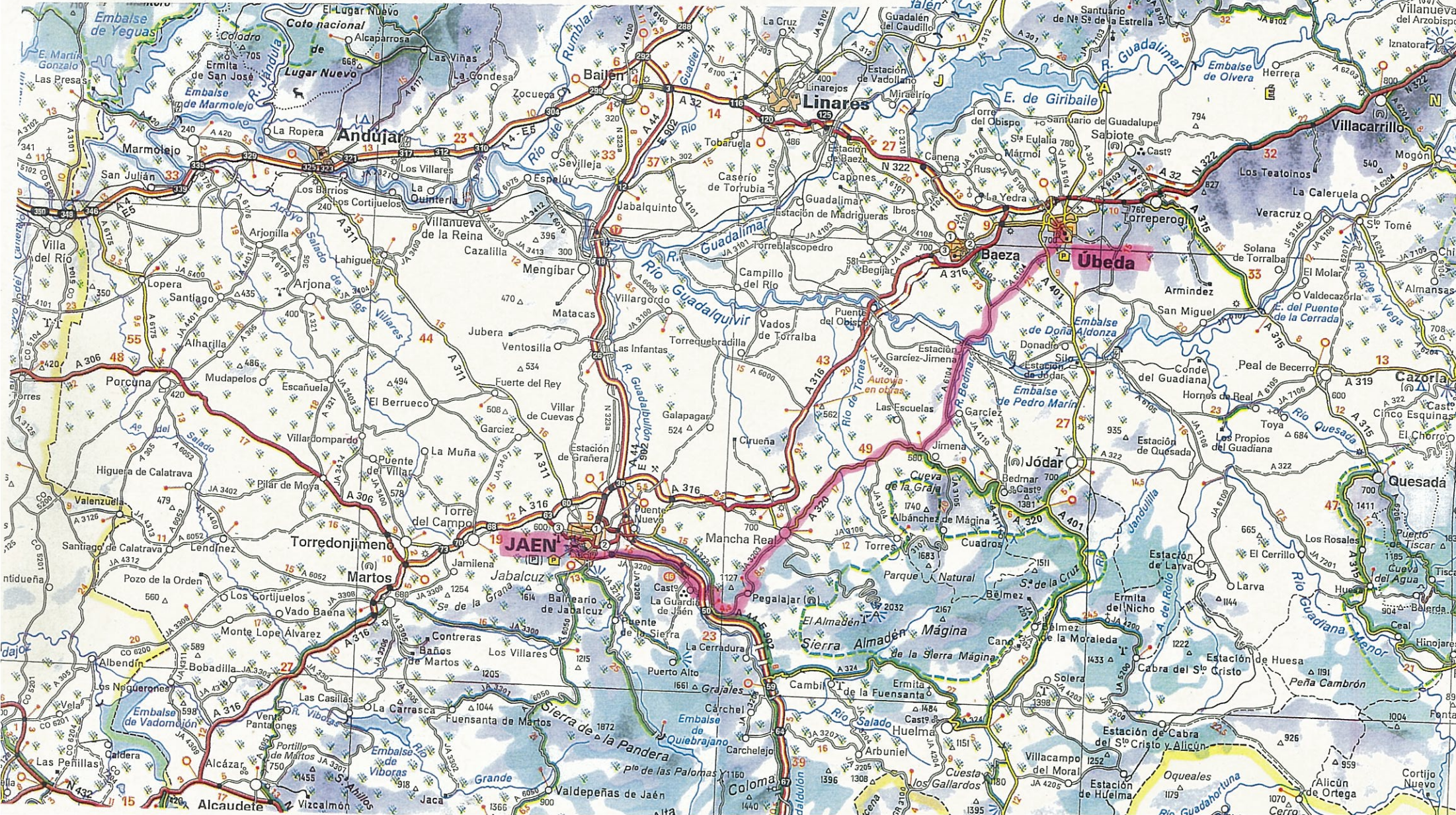




Andalucia Cycling: Cordoba to Granada  
Grand Cycling Tour of Andalucia  
Scale 1:400.000

Day 9 Bicycle Jaén to Ubeda

Towns for Navigation: La Guardia de Jaén (14 km), Pegalajar (22 km), Mancha Real (30 km) –  
Ubeda (70 km)







**Day 10/5 - Rest day in Úbeda**

**Highlights:** Discover the UNESCO sites of Renaissance Architecture of Úbeda and Baeza with an enjoyable ride into the hills

*This is a free day to enjoy the intriguing city of Úbeda though we do encourage you to join us for a visit of the synagogue which was recently discovered during restoration work and is nearly completely intact. Then the rest of the day is yours to walk through the historic Renaissance district or consider cycling into the hills to Baeza, another prominent Renaissance town. The ensemble of Renaissance monuments of Úbeda and Baeza are on UNESCO's list of World Heritage sites and should not be missed. Distance: 48 km (30 miles).*

**This evening's hotel:**

**Hotel Palacio de Ubeda**  
C/ Juan Pasquau, 4  
23400 Úbeda

**Tel: +34 953 81 09 73 / 75**

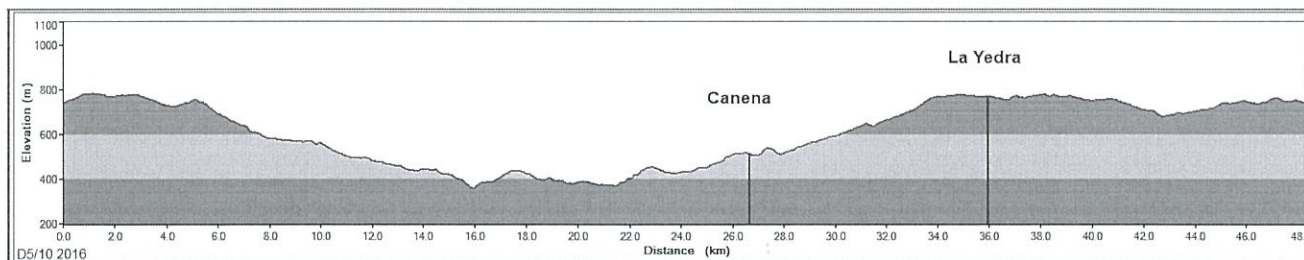
**Tour Leader phone numbers:**

**Montse: + 34 650 818 499**  
**Joan: +34 696 201 215**

**Philipp: + 34 667 982 055**

**In an emergency call 112**

**Today's Ride:** Another loop ride for mileage and climbing junkies through very rural Spain on small roads with some very nice views.

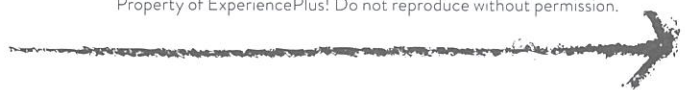


**Lunch and Dinner:** We'll suggest places to eat in Úbeda. Dinner tonight is on your own, check our note at the front desk for suggestions.

**You Might Like to Know:** The so-called **Synagogue of Water** was opened to the public a couple years ago after the renovation works were completed. It's located in the old town of Úbeda. The Water Synagogue might be what remains of an ancient Jewish Synagogue. It has seven wells connected to each other and a mikvah (Jewish ritual bath). Several ruins of the ancient synagogue have been discovered, such as the entrance door, some stone works, and other religious symbols. The Synagogue of Water also displays different valuables, such as painted ceramics, documents, and architectural and decorative elements of the building. In the Interpretation Centre the mixture of Hispanic, Arab, Jewish and Christian cultures can be appreciated.

Experts believe that the only similar site in Spain is in Besalú (Girona), although in this case the bathrooms are on the top floor of the temple.

The temple was occupied by the Inquisition, and was previously a synagogue with a ritual bath of purification on the ground floor. A unique discovery that can't be missed!





**Bicycle safety tip:** Shift your weight as you descend switchbacks on a mountain road: As you descend a curvy road you should constantly shift your weight so your outside pedal is down and your inside pedal is up. Lean your bike in the direction of your turn but shift your weight to the outside pedal so that almost all of your body weight is there. And keep your body low so the center of gravity is on your pedals. You should also slide your seat back, maybe even lift it off the saddle so most of your weight is on your pedals.

**Spanish Lesson of the Day:** When you sit down to eat you can wish everyone a “good appetite” by saying “*buenprovecho*”. You can toast with a drink and say “*salud*” – to health!





Andalucia Cycling: Cordoba to Granada  
Grand Cycling Tour of Andalucia  
Scale 1:400.000

Day 10 Loop ride from Ubeda  
Towns for Navigation: Canena (26km) – Rus (29km) – La Yedra (31 km) – Baeza (36 km) - Ubeda (48 km)





**Day 11/6 - Úbeda to Benalúa de Guadix**

**Highlights:** Ride towards the Sierra Nevada, "cave" hotel, winery visit

*We head south today on our way to Benalúa de Guadix and towards the hills of the Sierra Nevada. Enjoy a change of scenery as you enter the "southwest" of Spain. You'll cross the Sierra Magina on your route and then head down towards the clay formations of Guadix. It is easy to imagine how for the past 500 years most houses of the villages in this valley were built as caves inside clay mounds. Even today about a third of the towns here are built in caves! Tonight we'll visit the winery of our cave hotel. Distance: 105 km (65 miles).*

**This evening's hotel:**

Cuevas la Granja  
Camino de la Granja, S/N  
18510 Benalúa, Granada  
Guadix

Tel: +34 958 676 000

**Tour Leader phone numbers:**

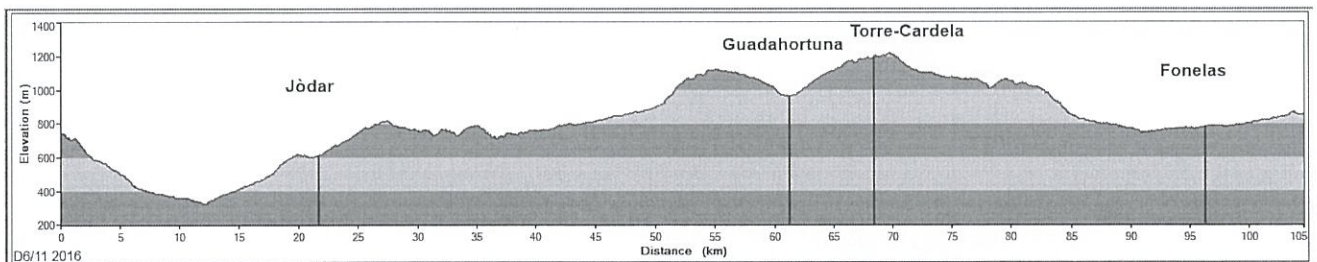
Montse: + 34 650 818 499

Philipp: + 34 667 982 055

Joan: +34 696 201 215

**In an emergency call 112**

**Today's Ride:** Today's ride is a beautiful ride up and over the Sierra Mágina. The last 40 km of today's ride are a welcome change along the Altiplano de Guadix as it's relatively flat and we start to see different crops along the way.



**Lunch and Dinner:** We recommend lunch in Guadahortuna. Dinner tonight is together at our hotel.

**You Might Like to Know:**

**Benalúa de Guadix** is a village in the outskirts of Guadix, a town established by the Romans in the year 45 BC as a center for mining copper, silver and iron. The Moors later established a profitable silk industry here. Today it is mainly an agricultural town, and still home to more than 10,000 cave dwellers! Today's caves probably bear little resemblance to the prehistoric dwellings however, as some are quite luxurious. The caves maintain a temperature of about 17<sup>o</sup> C year round, and modern ones have electricity, plumbing, and even cable TV.

**Bicycle safety tip:** Shift your weight as you descend switchbacks on a mountain road: As you descend a curvy road you should constantly shift your weight so your outside pedal is down and your inside pedal is up. Lean your bike in the direction of your turn but shift your weight to the outside pedal so that almost all of your body weight is there. And keep your body low so the center of gravity is on your pedals. You should also slide your seat back, maybe even lift it off the saddle so most of your weight is on your pedals.





**Spanish Lesson of the Day:** If you are trying to converse with someone here are some useful phrases to get you started:

*Estamos viajando en bicicleta por Andalucia* – we are traveling by bike in Andalucia

*No Entiendo* – I don't understand

*Lo siento* - I'm sorry

*Por Favor* - Please

*Cómo se dice?* – How do you say....?

*Habla español?* – do you speak Spanish?

*Dónde estan los baños/aseos* – where are the bathrooms (either word, baño or aseo work)









**Day 12/7 – Bicycle Benalua de Guadix to Granada**

**Highlights: Views of the Sierra Nevada, orientation walk in Granada**

*Today we ride to Granada situated in the shadow of the Sierra Nevada mountains. Enjoy a fun downhill stretch and pedal past fields of asparagus and tobacco as olives and grapes give way to more diverse crops. Our destination is the glorious city of Granada, home of the Alhambra (the 13th and 14th century complex of buildings representing the finest example of Moorish architecture left in Spain). On the way you'll pass by the famous village of Purullena, known for its ceramics. We'll have a final dinner together after a stroll to see some of Granada's main sites and hidden secrets. Distance: 55 km (34 miles).*

**This evening's hotel:**

**Hotel Villa Oniria**  
**Calle San Anton 28**  
**18005 Granada**

**Tel: +34 958 53 53 58**

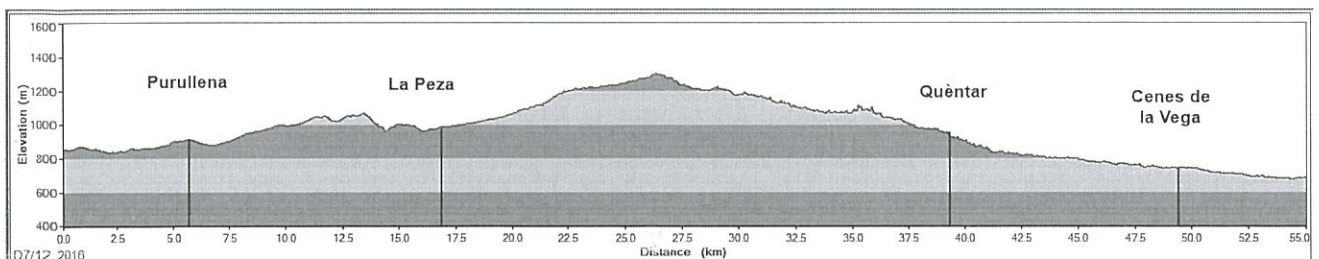
**Tour Leader phone numbers:**

**Montse: + 34 650 818 499**  
**Joan: +34 696 201 215**

**Philipp: + 34 667 982 055**

**In an emergency call 112**

**Today's Ride:** Enjoy this last ride of the tour, and especially the endless downhill toward our final destination, Granada. Once we reach Granada and after checking in, you can get a taste of this interesting Moorish-like city with its narrow streets. Tomorrow morning we'll enjoy a guided tour of the Alhambra together.



**Lunch and Dinner:** We recommend lunch in Granada. Final dinner together tonight.

**You Might Like to Know:** Remains of a bronze-age settlement have been found near the small town of **Purullena**, now best known for its ceramic industry. Although they all seem to look the same, each little shop offers some of its own unique specialties. Look for *botijos*, of varying sizes. From simple terra cotta to ornately designed, these traditional water jugs amazingly keep water fresh and cool, even on the hottest summer day!

**Granada**, last bastion of eight centuries of Moorish presence in Spain, still celebrates the “Día de la Toma” on January 2, the day that Boabil surrendered Granada to the Catholic Monarchs. This conquest was considered the greatest jewel in Queen Isabel’s crown.

Iberians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians and Romans had all seen fit to settle on the site of the current city. Its location at the foot of the Sierra Nevada Mountains guaranteed water and security





over the ages. Under Visigoth rule, the city gained more importance, and it was the Jewish community that gave Granada its name—they called it *Garnatha Alyehad*. The Moors maintained this name, calling it *Karnattah*. Garnatha, Karnattah or Granada—all three mean pomegranate. You can see this symbol of the city all over town, as well as on all the shields of the Spanish Monarchy dating from the Catholic Monarchs.

You can still visit the Jewish Quarter, called *El Realejo*, now a traditional family district on the hill leading up to the Alhambra. The old Arab Quarter known as the *Albaicín* is the whitewashed neighborhood found on the hill opposite the Alhambra. The Albaicín's alleyways and plazas beg to be explored, and highly recommended is a visit to the *Mirador San Nicolás*, a lovely spot from which to view the Alhambra against the stunning backdrop of the snowy Sierra Nevada mountains. The gypsy quarter, known as *Sacromonte* or sacred mountain, though still home to many, is now the tourist center for *flamenco shows* – some of which are quite good. The gypsy community traditionally lived in cave dwellings in this area.

The Cathedral of Granada, one of the finest Renaissance churches in Spain, was built between 1518 and 1563. Next door is the *Capilla Real*, where the Catholic Monarchs are buried along with their daughter, *Juana la Loca* (Juana the Mad) and her husband, *Felipe el Hermoso* (Phillip the Fair). The coffins are in the crypt underneath the marble tombs. Don't miss the private art collection of Isabel, which includes works by several Flemish masters.

A curiosity in Granada's bars and taverns is the time-honored tradition of offering a free *tapa*, or small ration of food, with an order of a glass of wine, beer, or even soda. The tapas vary, from cheese or olives to small sandwiches to potatoes or meat with sauce. The variety is endless! Some tapa bars allow you to choose your tapa from a small menu, and others have standard tapas for your first, second, and third drinks, usually getting better all the while to entice you to stay longer in the same bar! Tapa comes from the word "tapar" meaning to cover, as bartenders used to cover the glass of wine or beer with a round of salty cured sausage or perhaps bread topped with cheese, which created thirst and therefore the purchase of another beer. Talk about good salesmen!

Tomorrow we'll enjoy a spectacular guided tour of the **Alhambra**, which dates back to the Nasrid Dynasty. What is today the Alhambra is really four separate groups of building. The **Alcazaba**, now in ruins, was the 11<sup>th</sup> century military fortress. The **Royal Palace** was built later, during the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The **Generalife** was the summer palace and gardens of the sultan. After the Christian conquest of the city, Carlos V authorized the building of a **Renaissance palace**, quite out of place in the midst of the delicate Moorish architecture. Truly amazing is the network that brings water to the Alhambra from the nearby mountains.

**Bicycle safety tips:** Braking on downhills: Control your speed and brake before you need to! This means to brake before you go into a turn and before you feel it's time to brake.

**Tomorrow's plan:**

**Spanish Lesson of the Day:** Saying goodbye—the formal way to say goodbye is to say "*Adios*" which literally means "to God – or Farewell." Informally, you can say "*hasta luego*" – which means "until later" but often is less formal.





# Andalucia Cycling: Cordoba to Granada

## Grand Cycling Tour of Andalucia

Scale 1:400.000

### Day 12: Bicycle to Granada

Towns for Navigation: Bejarin (3 Km) - Purullena (6 km) - La Peza (17 km) - Embalse de Quentar (35 km) - Quentar (39 km) - Cenes de la Vega (49 km) - Granada (55 km)

