About Andalucía
The region of Andalucía has a surface of 87,000 km² and represents 17% of Spain. It is, on its own, larger than countries like Holland or Austria.

Did you know Andalucía has the best weather in Europe? Here, the sun shines 330 days a year! The Costa del Sol, the beautiful cities Málaga, Cordoba, Granada, Sevilla, Jerez de la Frontera, Ronda, Tarifa and Mijas make a visit to this region very worthwhile. And, for nature lovers, did you know that more than 20% of Andalucía's surface is nature reserve? And did you know more than 50% of the world's olive oil production comes from Andalucía?

Andalucía today is a modern region with well developed infrastructure. It offers a warm welcome to visitors and, while conscious of the need to modernize and move forward with the times, it is also careful to take care of its roots and maintain its important cultural heritage and monuments, legacy of the region’s ancestors.

Andalucía is the main holiday destination for Spanish nationals and one of the principal destinations for overseas tourists. Don’t miss it. Andalucía loves you...

For your convenience, the owner of Casa Escudero has collected some of his personal highlights of this beautiful region, gained in over 20 years of visiting Spain and Andalucía.

Cities Nearby

Málaga
Málaga is the second largest city of the region and also its capital. Start with the Alcazaba (Teatro Romano), the Catedral (Nuestro Señora de la Encarnación), the Plaza de la Constitución and Noria de Málaga, Europe’s largest itinerant ferriswheel. For all necessary background information, surf to www.malagaturismo.com

Some of my personal favorite places to visit are bodega bar El Pimpi (www.elpimpi.com), shop for beautiful jewelry at Unode50 (www.unode50.com) and be sure to take a stroll on the Calle Marqués de Larios, Málaga’s main shopping street. Walk past the harbor on the recently modernized Paseo del Muelle Uno and dine in one of the many fish restaurants. And please, don’t forget to stop over at 17:00 at Casa Aranda for the best churros in Spain, on the Herrería de Rey.
Málaga really is a beautiful city with many architectural wonders and the typical atmosphere of Southern Spain, eat late in one of the many tapas bars and get lost in the casco Antigua, the historic center. Enjoy your visit!

**Marbella**
There are actually two Marbella's, separated by 7 kilometres.

**Marbella old city**
Puerto Bañus is Marbella's world famous harbor town, with yachts only the rich and famous can afford, luxurious shopping streets with all the luxury brands and many somewhat overpriced restaurants. But hey, don't complain paying some extra money to see people driving past in expensive cars, showing off their wealth, knowing they had to pay also for access to the calle Ribera with their toys. It's fun!
And for the nightlife lovers, well, Puerto Bañus offers many good, mediocre and sleazy bars, clubs and places to go to.

**The city of Marbella.** Old town Marbella actually has two main locations, the casco Antigua itself and the harbor area. These area's are separated by the beautiful Parque de Alameda and square Avenida del Mar (park here!). Be sure to study the Sculpturas de Dali on this square; where else do you see these weird statues, exhibited in a public place? My personal favorite restaurant near the harbor is La Taberna del Pintxo (www.latavernadelpintxo-marbella.com), delicious tapas served by waiters walking around, keep the sticks on your plate for checking out, its cheap and really nice. Frequently visited by Dutchies :-).

The casco Antigua deserves your personal exploration. Small alleys, tiny white houses with unique shops, bars and restaurants. The cosy plaza de los Naranjos, my all time favorite tapas bar Estrecho (www.barelestrecho.es), plaza de Altamirano with its famous seafood restaurant (www.baraaltamirano.es), its beautiful art gallery (www.facebook.com/Galeria-de-Arte-Valvaro-Reja-1547542662173090/) and restaurant Zozoi (www.zozoi.com) are all well worth your visit. And for the food lovers, go to Messina, be welcomed by the ever present and sweet owner Pia, and let yourself be immersed in artfully made amuses and Michelin star food (www.restaurantemessina.com). Shops that you should not forget are D'oliva olive oil (www.dolivaonline.com), rare vintage designer clothes plus home decoration (www.vintagemarbella.com) and wine shop casa Pablo (www.tiendacasapablo.es), here I once found a rare bottle of El Nido, long story, nice end! And my latest discovery, not even online yet, right opposite the Capilla San Juan De Dios, the best deli in Marbella by far, be sure to buy the mango's, dried fruit and sugared nuts, absolutely delicious!
During the season there is a ferry service between both locations (www.marbellaazul.com). We've done it several times with our friends. Book a one way trip to Bañus and walk back past the golden mile. A two hour stroll on an beautiful beach boulevard past beautiful mansions.

**La Cala de Mijas**
The nearest town, a 5 minute drive from the Casa. Shop for your groceries at the store of your convenience, they’re all there. The one place you should not forget to visit is wine bar Pura Cepa (www.vinotecapuracepa.com), during the day a wine shop, in the afternoon and evening a bar. Good wines (Aalto!) and the best GT’s ever (over 50 types!). And my favorite beach club in La Cala is chiringuito Los Moreno. Absolutely try the fresh fish from the fireplace for lunch, eating it while your feet rest in the warm sand. Good restaurants are El Olivo (www.elolivodelacala.com) and El Jinete (near the entrance of the resort, a two minute drive, for meat lovers, www.ventaeljinete.es).

**La Cala Resort**
When you don’t feel like driving down to La Cala de Mijas in the morning for breakfast, please be advised that there is a small shop at La Cala itself, in de pro shop near the driving range. Freshly baked bread and some basic groceries are available there. Don’t forget to reserve your bread for the following day when its high season! A 1 minute drive from the Casa. And obviously, the La Cala Hotel offers you many amenities, from the Spa to a cosy bodega, outside dining on the patio with live music and the golf club restaurant, with drinks and snacks.

**Mijas Pueblo**
Well, something of a tourist trap, but similarly beautiful anyhow. The white pueblo on the Pico Mijas can be seen from the Casa’s terrace. Just enter Mijas Pueblo, a typical white Spanish village. Walk around the small streets and visit the numerous shops and restaurants, go to the CAC Mijas museum for beautiful Picasso and Dali art and walk around on the breathtaking Paseo de la Murella while experiencing amazing views of Fuengirola, far down below, with the Mediterranean in the back. On clear days, you can see Gibraltar and sometimes even Africa!

For people with children, go, if you are in to it, to Plaza de Toros de Mijas in the same park (bull fights almost every Sunday), the 2nd oldest bull ring in Spain and unique due to its oval form. Or take a ride on a donkey. Lastly, Mijas has the fine art gallery Tamisa (www.tamisas-shop.com) with the stunning work of Luis Romero, do you recognize him from the two paintings in the Casa?
Fuengirola
Fuengirola is part of the trinity Torremolinos, Benalmádena, Fuengirola. When you rent Casa Escudero, I suspect you’re not into mass tourism. For me, there are three reasons to go to Fuengirola, one is the Hipercor/El Corte Ingles for shopping (clothing, fresh fish and the best Iberian ham), two (when the children were still young) was the Aquaparque (enter at 10:00, leave at 12:00) and three, when you’re homesick a bit, the Dutch Spar Holandes supermarket (www.atten-tholandes.com).

Granada. Alhambra
A 2 hour drive. Obviously, the world famous Alhambra is well worth a visit (www.alhambra.org). But Granada offers much more! For flamenco lovers, go to the Cueva de la Rocio (www.flamencogranada.org/cueva-de-la-rocio) and enjoy the stunning Spanish dance with flamenco dancers right in front of you. And skiing! The Sierra Nevada has 121 kilometers of piste. Be sure to take in the most breathtaking views; the Sierra is a detached mountain range, you will see Granada lying far below in the depth plus 250 kilometers of Spanish plains.

Experiences

El Caminito del Rey
The tripadvisor number 1 for Andalucía. A 1,5 hour drive from the Casa, but worth it. A stunning wooden € 3.5m structure has been erected recently above an old path that leads through steep cliffs with wild running river. The old path was notorious, the new one safe and adventurous, but not suitable for people with vertigo (www.caminitodelrey.info).

Rio Chillar
Near Nerja, a 2 hour drive. A hike through a river that runs from Nerja deep into the Almijara nature reserve. Its starts in a quarry near the cement factory and leads past waterfalls through small gulches to more waterfalls. The children will love this one! Swimming in crystal clear pools under the watchful eyes of mountain deer. Be sure to bring good walking shoes (they will get wet!) and bring your own food and suncream. This adventurous hike has become quite popular in the recent years, so my advice would be to start early in the summer months, not in the weekends, or go in the primavera or caer (spring or autumn:-)).
**Tarifa**
A 2 hour drive. For whale watching and a laid back surfers paradise. In the summer months, the tuna fishers are active in the street of Gibraltar, and guess what; killer whales know this too. Reserve your ticket at www.whalewatchtarifa.net My phone welcomed me to Morocco that day, so be prepared to be boarded for some hours.

**Pico Mijas**
This mountain range sits right in front of you, in 20 kilometers distance, when you lounge at Casa Escudero. It begs you to climb it, at least, that's what it did to me. Drive your car up till the Valtocado settlement, turn right to Mijas Pueblo and park near the forestry track that leads into the higher sections. The orange route leads up to La Bola, the meteorological station on the top of the Pico (1,150m). It is a moderate to hard climb, a 4 to 5 hours round trip, but my-oh-my, what a reward to reach the top. Views of Málaga, the whole Costa del Sol coastline and on clear days….up to Africa.

We once encountered a group of 15 wild mountain goats, the crickets, numerous flowers and pine trees whisk you away from everyday life. It is also possible to start the hike in Mijas Pueblo, just off the Mijas ring road, walk up to the Ermita del Calvario chapel and follow the signs.

**Benamejí**
A 2 hour drive deep into the Spanish inlands brings you to Benamejí. Here you can experience the ultimate rafting opportunity in the river Genil. Two times a day, at 10:00 and 16:00, the river runs high due to an upstream dam that opens. Choose the adults trip (children > 14) and enjoy the ride! (www.alua.es)

**Golf**
The Costa del Sol is the Costa del Golf and has more than 100 courses on 80 kilometers of coastline. Here are some of my favorites:

**La Cala Golf** - lacala.com
With three courses to chose from, La Cala is the biggest golf resort in Spain. Play Campo Asia first, the oldest golf course on La Cala and the most versatile. Look to the right on hole 2 after you teed off, your audience that stayed behind in the Casa will applaud you. My favorite hole here: 12, an exciting drive over a gorge and demanding second shot into a shallow green behind a pond.
La Cala Golf, Campo Europa. The latest addition to La Cala is Campo Europa and is build around the Rio Ojen. Many bridges are needed for the necessary crossings, hole 4 even has 2! Favorite hole, 15, a demanding par 5 where the Amarillo tee can only be reached by a private bridge. Rio Ojen to the right, shrubbery on the left, drive straight here!

La Cala Golf, Campo America. Hole 1 has the most stunning tee you will encounter for a long time, high above the broadest of fairways. Favorite: 9, a double dogleg par 5. Reachable in two, when you dare to cut off over the irrigation pond of La Cala.

Marbella Club - marbellaclubgolf.com
A beauty! You feel welcome here when you arrive, the lovely clubhouse, the friendly staff, Luis, who helps you with your bags, the quality of the food and last but not least, the course itself. When you play here in the morning, be sure to try the MCB, the Marbella Club Breakfast! Fav hole: 18, par 5 with tee high up in the sun, Gibraltar in the back. And 6,7 (also with Gibraltar, take out your camera) and 8, three par fives in a row!

El Chaparral - golfelchaparral.com
Here, you will play many holes through a pine needle forrest. A unique course, due to its 6 par threes, fours and fives. Fav: 8, a fairy tail hole in the midst of the forrest, really beautiful.

Santana - santanagolf.com
Down below in the valley in front of the Casa. A flat course, so finally no buggies needed here. Beautifully maintained. Play from the back tees here, hole 8: 602 meters, you won't find a longer par 5!

Rio Real - rioreal.com
Near Marbella, also flat and walkable. A parkland course, also beautifully maintained and relatively easy to play. Favorite: 19, a very nice clubhouse.

Finca Cortesin - fincacortesin.com
In the past, the European Tour organized two matchplay championship tournaments here. When you play here, you will understand immediately why. Very fast greens, they claim to be the best in Spain, impeccably maintained. Favorite is number 4, a real signature hole of such beauty! Not cheap, but worth every penny.

Alcaidesa - www.alcaidesagolf.com For those who love to play links golf, Alcaidesa is the place to be. A truly magnificent course, right next to the Mediterranean. Unfortunately, this course is situated a 1,5 hour drive from the Casa.
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