

TIMETABLE

Andalusia is on Central European Time (CET), or Central European Summer Time (CEST) during the summer months, i.e. Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) +1 in winter and GMT+2 in summer.

Mealtimes

tend to be a little later in Spain than in the rest of Europe: breakfast is continental style and is usually eaten between 8am and 10.30am. In restaurants, lunch is served between 1pm and 3.30pm, and dinner from 8.30 to 11pm. In any case, the majority of tourist establishments adapt their opening times to the European norm, and, in practice, it is normal for cafés and bars to offer all-day service, with tapas, combo dishes, baguettes and "raciones" (dishes to share) available at any time.

Opening times

for shops is 10am-2pm in the morning and 5-8/9pm in the afternoon. Department stores are open continuously 10am-9/10pm. Shops and shopping centres open on Saturday mornings, although in larger cities it is becoming more and more common to see them open on Saturday afternoons and even on some Sundays and public holidays. It is worth mentioning that bars and nightclubs usually remain open until 3 or 4am at weekends.

Chemists

. Chemists open during normal shopping hours, although in larger cities it is becoming more common to find 24-hour chemists. In any case, outside normal opening times there are specific duty chemists open all night. There are lists showing duty chemists for the night placed in the doorway of all chemists in a town.

Museums and monuments

are usually open all day and often close one day during the week, given that they tend to stay open on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays.

Main Post Offices are usually open non-stop 8.30am-8.30pm Monday-Friday, and 9.30am-2pm on Saturdays, closing on Sundays and public holidays. Opening times for other Post Offices vary according to the type of office and where it is. Stamps can also be purchased in "estancos" (licensed tobacco shops).

In general, public bodies (consulates, embassies, town halls, etc.) are open to the public 8.30/9am-2/3pm, Monday-Friday.

HEALTHCARE

Tourists from European Union countries and countries with common immigration regulations (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland) need the European Health Card (EHC) to receive healthcare in Andalusia and the rest of Spain. This card is available from the health service in your country of origin.

Private doctors and hospitals in Andalusia/Spain do not accept the EHC. If you require private healthcare you must settle your own bills or take out an insurance policy that covers it.

If you forget the EHC, you will have to pay any hospital, medical or pharmaceutical bills in advance, and then seek reimbursement from the relevant organisation in your country of origin, providing all corresponding receipts.

Tourists from Andorra, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay or Peru need a special certificate from their country of origin in order to receive healthcare in Andalusia and the rest of Spain.

If you forget said certificate, you should pay any hospital, medical or pharmaceutical costs in advance, and your affiliated body will reimburse these on presentation of the corresponding receipts.

If you are from a country not mentioned above, you have to pay for any healthcare. This means it is advisable to take out a medical insurance policy.

In any case, you should contact the relevant office in your country of origin for full details regarding current requirements to receive medical care in Andalusia/Spain.

To travel to Andalusia/Spain, you do not need **vaccinations** against any illness, although, as in any part of the world, it is advisable to have your tetanus vaccination up to date if you are going to be in contact with nature and the countryside.

Medicines can be purchased at **chemists**, which are marked by a green cross. Bear in mind that only a doctor should prescribe the correct medication for each case.

BANKS

The majority of banks open **Monday-Friday, 8.30am-2/2.30pm**. Only a few branches open on Saturday mornings. Throughout Andalusia there are cashpoints available 24 hours a day, most of which (Servired, 4B, etc...) offer international service.

WHAT DO YOU NEED IN ORDER TO DRIVE?

To drive in Andalusia/Spain you must be 18 years old, and 21 years old to hire a vehicle. Regarding your driver's license:

- **If you are from an EU member state, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein**, you only need your valid driver's license.
- **If you are from any other country** you will require an International Driver's License.

Tourists travelling in their own vehicles should be aware that a Temporary Registration Permit may be required. You can request this permit at Customs and it is valid for 6 months.

Regarding driver's insurance:

- **If you are from an EU member state, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Andorra or Croatia**, you only need to carry your insurance policy along with a payment receipt showing validity of the policy.
- **If you come from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Byelorussia, Israel, Iran, Morocco, Moldavia, Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Tunisia, Turkey or the Ukraine**, you will need to get a Green Card - the International Motor Insurance Certificate.
- **If you are from a country not mentioned above**, you should take out a Frontier Insurance policy (a temporary, obligatory, third party policy for motor vehicles).

Given that conditions may vary, we suggest that you contact the Spanish Embassy or Consulate to verify these requirements before you start your trip.

HOW TO MAKE TELEPHONE CALLS “TO AND FROM” ANDALUSIA/SPAIN

- If you want to call Andalusia/Spain from overseas, you should dial your country exit code, + 34 (the code for Spain), followed by the nine-digit telephone number.
- If you want to call another country from Andalusia/Spain, dial 00 followed by the country code and the telephone number. You can make calls from phone boxes. These work with coins or cards available from post offices, kiosks and "estancos" (licensed outlets for tobacco/stamps).
- If you wish to make calls from Andalusia to the rest of Spain you should dial the number with no prefix. This number should comprise 9 digits, regardless of whether it is a landline or mobile.

If you wish to use your mobile phone in Andalusia/Spain, you should be aware that Spain uses GSM 900/1800 technology (not compatible with that of some countries such as the USA and Japan). If you have a compatible handset, you should contact your mobile operator to make sure you can use your phone in Andalusia/Spain (some operators will have to activate the international roaming service). Once you have taken these steps at home, you will be able to use your mobile in Andalusia/Spain as if it were a Spanish handset. i.e. you should dial 00 + the country code to make international calls.

CURRENCY

Since 1 January 2002, Spain/Andalusia has been using the Euro, the legal currency of the European Economic Community. The Euro is sub-divided into 100 cents. Coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents, 1 and 2 Euro. Notes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 Euro.

You can change money at any bank, although there are also bureaux de change in some tourist areas, airports, railway stations, etc., and many tourist establishments also offer this service.

Most hotels, restaurants and shops accept major credit cards (American Express, Visa, Master Card, 4B...), displaying the corresponding signs at the entrance to the establishment. Traveller's cheques, accompanied by a passport, are also accepted in most tourist establishments in Andalusia.

We should mention that in some establishments (restaurants, shops...), payment with 100, 200 and 500 Euro notes is not accepted.

WHAT TO TAKE

It is vital to take a map of the area you are going to visit, as well as a road map if you are travelling in your own vehicle. There are many up to date tourist maps published by the Regional Government of Andalusia. They are available from tourist offices in Spain and abroad, as well as via the official tourism website.

As far as clothing goes, from April/May through to September/October, it is advisable to take light, comfortable summer clothes, along with something warmer for the night or for outings in the countryside. Don't forget your swimming costume, sun hat or cap, sunglasses and sun cream if you will be enjoying the pool or the beach. Remember that it is advisable to avoid direct exposure and physical activity in the midday sun, June-September, and don't forget to drink plenty of fluids. In winter you will need warm clothes, and these will depend on which part of

Andalusia you will be visiting. Remember that temperatures are milder on the coast, while inland and in the mountains they can fall below zero. Footwear should be strong and comfortable, also depending on the area to visit, the time of year and the activities you will be doing.

Otherwise, anything you need urgently can be obtained in Andalusia.

LEGAL QUESTIONS

- To make a complaint, you are entitled to ask for the "**Hoja de Reclamaciones**" (claims form), which establishments and companies are legally obliged to have available to customers. These complaints are then presented at the corresponding Provincial Consumers' Association.
- Non-EU residents can **claim back I.V.A.** (Value Added Tax) on purchases carried out in Andalusia. Spanish legislation states that the minimum amount spent in one establishment on the same day must reach 90.15 Euro in order to request a tax-free receipt. The refund must be requested at the establishment in question, showing corresponding proof of residence. Within the subsequent 3 months, the purchaser should present the receipt and the items purchased at Customs to be stamped, and he/she should then request the refund from one of the offices of the various management companies located at the main airports in Spain/Andalusia.
- According to European Community regulations, travellers may not bring **foodstuffs** of animal origin into Spain as part of their baggage, with the exception of powdered milk for children, in its original packaging. Other foodstuffs can be brought in, up to a maximum of 1 kg.
- The minimum legal age for the purchase and consumption of alcohol and tobacco is 18.
- In accordance with Spanish Act 28/2005 of 26 December and European regulations, **smoking** is prohibited in public buildings, healthcare and teaching centres, railways, maritime services and city transport services (except open-air), party or leisure venues with access permitted to under 18s, etc. Given the broadly restrictive nature of the Law, it is advisable to check with staff in the establishment in question before smoking.
- According to the current Bill regarding Administrative Jurisdiction, the purchase and **consumption of alcohol** is prohibited in the street and, in general, in other open spaces except those established by the Local Council in question.

NECESSARY DOCUMENTATION

Travelling to Andalusia is easy. Documentation required varies according to the country you come from.

If you are a citizen of any European Union member state, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein, you only need your National ID Card or valid passport. If you are under 18 and travelling on an ID card, this should be accompanied by permission from your father, mother or corresponding guardian.

If you are from one of the following countries:

Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, El Salvador, USA, Guatemala, Honduras, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Monaco, Nicaragua, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Republic of Korea, San Marino, the Vatican, Singapore, Uruguay or Venezuela, you need a valid passport to enter Andalusia/Spain, and you will be entitled to stay up to a maximum of 90 days.

If you come from another country , you should apply for a visa from the Spanish Consulate in your place of residence, **according to criteria established by the EU**. You will also need to present your passport.

Given that conditions may vary, we suggest that you contact the Spanish Embassy or Consulate to verify these requirements before you start your trip.

HOLIDAYS

On national and local holidays, public transport systems run and you will find some museums, monuments, information offices, shopping centres, etc. open. However, these will often have special opening times and/or conditions, given that there may be activities taking place in the area at the same time (fairs, open-air celebrations, religious events, etc.), so you should find out in advance to plan your trip correctly.

New Year: 1 January

Epiphany: 6 January

Andalusia Day: 28 February

Maundy Thursday and Good Friday: date varies year to year (March-April)

Workers' Day: 1 May

Assumption of the Virgin Mary: 15 August

Columbus Day: 12 October

All Saints' Day: 1 November

Spanish Constitution Day: 6 December

The Immaculate Conception: 8 December

Christmas: 25 December

ELECTRICITY

The standard electrical current in Andalusia is 220-240V AC, 50 Hz. Electrical devices from some countries may need a transformer and an adaptor. Plugs have two round pins (European system), and you can find adaptors in any hardware shop

PETS

You should bear in mind that in Andalusia/Spain:

- You will not be able to travel with your pet if it is an endangered species.
- The animal should be identifiable by a microchip or tattoo, and should have the relevant veterinary certificate or passport according to the species.
- The animal should travel with you in a suitable container.
- The majority of establishments do not allow pets.

- The majority of restaurants do not allow pets.

Before you start your trip, we recommend you check with accommodation and transport companies, to see if pets are allowed, and under what conditions.

If your pet is a dog, a cat or a ferret...

Before coming into Andalusia/Spain, your pet should meet a series of sanitary and identification requirements, which may vary according to the country of origin. Furthermore:

- Your pet should be vaccinated against rabies.
- If your pet is less than three months old, there are restrictions for entry into Spain

CLIMATE

Andalusia has a predominantly warm, Mediterranean climate: mild winters with irregular precipitations, and dry, hot, sunny summers, which become more extreme as you move inland from the coast. The average year-round temperature is approximately 18°C, and there are more than 300 days of sunshine per year, with January being the coldest month and August the hottest. The rich, varied biodiversity here means that in Andalusia you can go from the desert climate of Tabernas (Almería) to the snowy peaks of the Sierra Nevada Mountains (Granada) or the marshlands of the Doñana National Park (Huelva).

HOW TO GET AROUND ANDALUCIA

Andalusia is in the south of the Iberian peninsula. You can get to Andalusia by air, sea or land (car, train, bus or taxi).

- **By air:**

In Andalusia there are 4 domestic airports (Almería, Cordoba, Granada and Jerez de la Frontera (Cadiz province)), and 2 international airports (Malaga and Seville) which offer flights to and from the main Spanish cities, and other overseas destinations, with Spanish and foreign airlines.

For further information, get in touch directly with the destination airport or the airline chosen for your trip.

- **By sea:**

Andalusia has 836 km of coastline, with more than 30 marinas, 2 estuary ports, and 15 commercial ports. Special mention should be made of Algeciras Port (Spain's largest in overall traffic), Malaga Port (the Iberian peninsula's second busiest for cruise ships), Almería Port and Cadiz Port.

As well as travelling aboard a cruise liner, you can also get to these ports on scheduled services from Ceuta, Melilla, the Canary Islands and north African cities. Before travelling, it is advisable to get full details of routes and conditions from your travel agent or ferry/liner company.

- **By road:**

1. By car:

The main road route into Andalusia is on the A-4/E-05 through the Despeñaperros Nature Reserve (Jaén province), although there is also good access on the A-92N in Vélez-Rubio and

the A-7/E-15 in Huércal-Overa (Almería province), the N-433 in Rosal de la Frontera and the N-630 in Santa Olalla del Cala (Huelva province), the N-432 in Fuente-Obejuna and the N-420 in Cardeña (Córdoba province), etc.

All the different municipalities in Andalusia are connected by the National, Regional or Provincial Road Networks. The Cadiz-Seville section of the AP-4 and Malaga-Guadiaro section of the AP-7 are toll motorways, and there are other major motorways linking the main cities of Andalusia. It is important to remember that:

- The maximum speed limit for any vehicle is 120 kph, with lower limits on certain roads. You should always respect speed limits in each case.
- Use of seatbelts is obligatory for all passengers in motor vehicles.
- Use of helmets is obligatory when riding motorcycles, mopeds and bicycles.
- Telephones may only be used with "hands free" systems while driving.
- Children under 3 years must be strapped into a suitable seat for their weight and height.
- A reflective jacket must be used when getting out of the car on the road or the hard shoulder.
- If your car is stopped on the road or hard shoulder, use of warning triangles is obligatory.
- In general, the maximum alcohol level permitted is 0.5 g/litre in the blood, and 0.25 mg/litre of air (breathalyser).

Use of snow chains may be necessary, or you may find some road sections closed at certain times of year. This makes it advisable to plan your route correctly and check the state of roads with the "Dirección General de Tráfico" (Highways Agency) before setting off.

In general, the historic centres of major cities can be covered on foot. Given the unusual urban layout of these areas, use of public transport services, rather than private vehicles, is recommended.

2. By train:

The Spanish National Railways Network (RENFE) offers a full range of services interconnecting the major cities of Andalusia and many smaller municipalities: there are Regional Services ("Cercanías") between many towns and villages in the provinces of Malaga and Cadiz, and Medium and Long Distance services throughout Andalusia and the rest of Spain. There is also a High Speed Service (AVE) to Córdoba and Seville (soon to run to Malaga as well). There are special rates available for students, groups, over 60s, return tickets, etc. Contact RENFE or your travel agent for full information before setting off, and check conditions regarding transport of animals, bicycles or goods.

There are currently metro/underground building works underway in Malaga and Seville.

3. By bus:

There are many bus companies operating in Andalusia. They offer an extensive network of services with spacious, comfortable coaches, running to many towns and villages, some of which do not have rail services. These companies usually have an information and booking office at the main bus stations, or they have a customer service telephone number. It is advisable to contact the corresponding company in advance to check conditions on specific routes.

Within cities, there are municipal bus services running between different urban areas during the day, with a few special services by night. Single tickets cost around 1 Euro, and this is reduced if you purchase a Bonobús (card valid for 10 journeys) from the corresponding vending machines, or at "estancos" (licensed tobacco/stamp shops).

4. By taxi:

All cities in Andalusia have full taxi services offering urban and inter-urban transport at any time of the day or night. You can find taxi ranks in different areas of the city and at the main communications hubs (stations, airports, shopping centres, etc.). You can also order taxis by phone. Tariffs are fixed by the local council in question, and there are sometimes additional

supplements payable in specific cases (nocturnal service, public holidays, etc.). You can request a receipt for the amount payable.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

"900" numbers and some emergency numbers are free of charge.

National Police: 091

Local Police: 092

Guardia Civil: 062

Emergencies: 112

Ambulance: 061

Fire brigade: 080

Maritime Rescue and Safety: 900202202

Regional Government of Andalusia, information: 902505505

Youth Tourism Information (INTURJOVEN): 902510000

Women's Line: 900200999

Child Line: 900506113

Consumers' Line: 900849090

Healthcare Line: 902505060

Post Office Information: 902197197

AENA (Spanish airports) Information: 902404704

RENFE – National Rail Services, Information and Bookings: 902240202

RENFE – International Rail Services, Information and Bookings: 902243402

Highways Agency (Dirección General de Tráfico (DGT)) – Roadside Assistance: 900123505

NOTE

- In Andalusia/Spain we use the Metric (Decimal) System, with 7 basic units of measurement. This is also known as the International Unit System (SI), and governs all units of weight, measurement and distance.
- Tapas, a real institution in Andalusia. They are small appetisers which were originally served to cover ("tapar" – hence the name) glasses, thus avoiding dust getting into the drink. They are served in bars, cafés and restaurants, and are sometimes included in the price of the drink. "Raciones" are plates of one thing, larger than tapas.
- Andalusia has two regional television channels, Canal Sur and Canal Sur 2, and three radio stations, Canal Sur Radio, Canal Fiesta Radio and Radio Andalucía Información, offering all the latest regional news and information.

- The major national newspapers print a daily Andalusia section, although there are also local papers such as El Ideal in Granada, Diario Sur in Malaga and El Diario in Cordoba. They are available at newspaper kiosks; sometimes kiosks in major cities and certain tourist towns also sell international newspapers.
- When paying for bars, cafés, restaurants, hotels and taxis, it is common to leave a tip, in addition to the bill, or to round the total up, as long as you are satisfied with the service.
- There are a host of "locutorios" (shops to make cheap phone calls) and cyber cafés (with Internet connection at varying prices) to be found throughout Andalusia, and many tourist establishments also offer clients telephone and Internet services. There are also WIFI areas at airports and major railway stations.
- Although Catholic churches predominate in Spain, in large cities there are also places of worship from other religions, such as mosques, protestant churches, evangelical churches, Buddhist centres, Jehovah's witnesses' chapels, etc. For more information on this subject you should contact your religious community, either at home or at your destination.
- Although drinking bottled water is common in some coastal areas, the supply of safe drinking water from the tap is guaranteed throughout Andalusia.