

# Andalucía



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Córdoba • Guide to  
**Cultures**



**Diputación**  
de Córdoba



**JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA**

CONSEJERÍA DE TURISMO, COMERCIO Y DEPORTE



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## Few places in the world have such an intense historical legacy as Cordoba.

The earliest historical origins of our province, with its diverse civilizations, are lost in the mists of time, but it is the Roman, Moslem, Jewish and Christian cultures which have left the most lasting mark on the habits, customs, architecture and artistic styles in the city. Roman Corduba was given the privileged title of Patrician Colony by the Emperor Augustus. During the Moslem era, the legendary city experienced its most glorious years – it was considered the capital city of the whole Western Moslem world, and was home to the most influential scientists and sages of the day. In 1236, the Christian king Fernando III conquered Cordoba, and a new era began for the city. Relations between the rival faiths were never entirely free of struggles and violence - however, in the Middle Ages, nowhere were relations between Jews, Christians and Moslems as harmonious as in Cordoba. A stroll round the atmospheric quarters of the city, or the steep, winding streets in many villages takes you back in time, and the colourful floral display of the balconies and courtyards, together with the tinkling of water in the fountains, remind us of the great charm this multicultural heritage still holds throughout the province.

This Guide to Cordoba and its Cultures hopes to take you on a trip through the artistic heritage left by the different cultures, both in the city of Cordoba and in the towns in the province.

A deeper knowledge and understanding of the cosmopolitan air Cordoba has always cherished will spring out in every page of this guide and delight the reader.

# Roman Córdoba





## After the collapse of the Tartessian world

In the mid 6th century BC, Cordoba came under the influence of the Iberian culture. Its privileged geographical position meant that in the mid 2nd century BC, the Roman general Claudius Marcellus founded Corduba and during the Republic, and what was initially a temporary camp grew into the capital of Hispania Ulterior. The splendour of Roman Cordoba can still be seen today in the ruins of the city walls, the temple and even in the hustle and bustle of the marketplace on the site of the ancient forum. The magnificence of Cordoba in this period can be seen in the remains of an impressive 1st century AD amphitheatre, which was the third most important in the Roman world, smaller only than the Colosseum in Rome and the amphitheatre in Carthage. Roman culture spread throughout the province too, thanks to the impressive network of roads the Romans created, and the influence of Roman civilization extended to towns like Almodovar del Rio, Almedinilla, or Cabra.

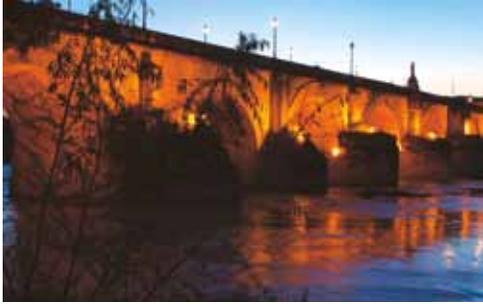




The city's unrivalled strategic position, overlooking the River Betis (today, the Guadalquivir), meant that Cordoba became one of the most important bastions of Roman rule throughout the late Republic and Imperial Eras.

In fact, it held such importance for Augustus, adopted son of Julius Caesar, that he named it a Patrician Colony, despite the fact that the city had supported Pompey during the Civil War.

# what to see



## Cordoba

**Roman Temple.** The few remains recovered suggest that the temple was dedicated to the Imperial cult and formed part of the architectural complex of the Provincial Forum. *Its remains can be found in Calle Claudio Marcelo, just next to the Town Hall.*

**Funerary Monuments at Puerta Gallegos.** These monuments were situated outside the primitive Roman city walls and are a perfect example of Roman funerary architecture. *Paseo de la Victoria s/n.*

**Roman Bridge.** This was constructed over the River Guadalquivir. The only parts surviving from Roman times are the foundations. Dates from 1st century AD. *Rda. de Isasa & Bajada del Puente.*

**Cercadillas Archaeological Site.** At a site on the outskirts of Cordoba, extensive remains have been found of an Imperial Palace dating from the late C. 3rd and early C. 4th AD. This impressive building must have transformed the appearance of Cordoba in the late Imperial period. *Avda. Vía Augusta s/n.*

**Roman Mosaics.** In the modern-day Castle of the Christian Monarchs there is an extraordinary collection of mosaics decorating the walls of two of the halls. *Campo Santo de los Mártires s/n*





### **Archaeological and Ethnological Museum.**

This museum, housed in the former Renaissance palace of the Paez de Castillejo family, holds a sizeable collection of valuable finds from the different civilizations which have settled in Cordoba and its province, including an excellent collection of Roman pieces, such as the sculptural group of Mithras and the Bull found in Cabra, or the crouching Aphrodite found in Cordoba. [Plaza de Jerónimo Páez, 7.](#)

**Ategua.** Near the outlying hamlet of Santa Cruz, the remains of this Iberian-Roman village have lain, almost forgotten, for centuries. It was a fortified settlement, and the mark left by different civilizations over the centuries can be seen in the numerous well-preserved finds discovered here. During the Roman domination, it became specially important when it was besieged by Caesar's troops. [Situating to the south-east of the municipal borough of Cordoba between kilometres 6 & 7 on the CV 261 road \(joining the N-432 with the CV 183\).](#)



R

# the province

## **ALMEDINILLA**

Near the village of Almedinilla on the hill named Cerro de la Cruz lies an exceptionally interesting archaeological site. Both the Iberians and the Romans found this an ideal place for a settlement, and the latter brought prosperity to the town by introducing new developments in Mediterranean agriculture. The remains of the Iberian settlement occupy a hill with plots of land divided into terraces running down the hillside.

C/ Molinos s/n, Paraje de Fuente Ribera.

**El Ruedo.** The Roman villa of El Ruedo was built in the 1st century AD. It was a farming settlement, divided into two main sections - one residential area and another area with irrigation canals and water tanks. C/ Molinos s/n, Paraje de Fuente Ribera.

**Historical Archaeological Museum.** All the museum pieces, mainly Iberian and Roman, were found during excavations carried out on the site. C/ Molinos s/n, Paraje de Fuente Ribera.



# R

## CABRA

**Municipal Archaeological Museum.** The museum houses extensive remains from the different civilizations which have settled here. Some of the finds are from the Roman villas in the area, of which the most important, Mitra, is at *C/ Martín Belda, 25.*

## DOÑA MENCÍA

**Historical Archaeological Museum.** The museum was founded in the 1950s in order to display the finds from the El Laderón archaeological site. Some of the best pieces are marbles and coins from the Republican period. *C/ Juan Ramón Jiménez, 6.*

## DOS TORRES

**El Pozo de la Nieve (The Well of the Snow)** is a small vaulted building dating from Roman times. Although its original purpose is unclear, some believe it was used to store snow collected during the winter. *Camino de San Sebastián, s/n.*

## ESPEJO

The **ancient Ucubi**, nowadays the village of Espejo, according to the written records played an important role in Roman times. Important pieces have been found here, such as a torso belonging to a sculpted thoracata and remains of large public buildings, which reflect the town's importance.



## GUADALCÁZAR

**Cisterns.** These possibly belonged to Roman villas which farmed cereals. They are a magnificent example of the hydraulic works used by the Romans for storing water and increasing the yield of the crops.

## MONTILLA

**Remains of Roman road surfaces.**

**Municipal Historical Museum.** With archaeological finds from the area, the museum is a fascinating insight into Roman culture through the pieces on display. *C/ Padre Miguel Molina, 5.*

## MONTORO

Several stretches of the **Vía Augusta** are preserved here, and the town owed its existence to the strategic position it occupied on the Roman road network. **Municipal Archaeological Museum.** The museum is situated in the Medieval hermitage of Santa María de la Mota, and houses remains from the different cultures which have settled in Montoro. From the Roman period there is an interesting sculpture of a figure in a toga. *Pza. Sta. María de la Mota s/n.*

## VILLAVICIOSA

The Roman settlement of Villaviciosa owed its importance to the mining routes which lay nearby.

## MONTURQUE

**Cistern.** Hydraulic works consisting of three parallel naves, each divided into four square rooms with vaulted ceilings.

**Municipal Historical Museum.** Contains archaeological finds from the area. Most of the pieces are from the ruins of the necropolis of Las Pozas *Paseo de San Mateo s/n.*



## PEDROCHE

**Villa of Los Plazares.** The chance finding of some water cisterns led to the discovery of the Roman villa of Los Plazares, thus shedding further light on the Roman presence in the province.

## PUENTE GENIL

**Fuente Álamo.** A Roman villa from the High Imperial period, where important mosaics have been found, which was recently declared a Site of Cultural Interest by the Andalusian Regional Government. **Municipal Archaeological Museum.** The materials and objects on display date from Prehistoric times up to the Middle Ages, and the Roman finds from Fuente Álamo are of special interest. C/ Contralmirante Delgado Parejo s/n



# Roman Betica Trail

Linking the provinces of Cordoba, Seville and Cadiz, this route runs through the southernmost parts of the provinces, following the route of the ancient Via Augusta. There are many monuments and archaeological remains along the route as well as a series of sites which were formerly settlements.

The stately Via Augusta ran in Roman times through vineyards, olive groves and golden fields of corn, and what was formerly the main thoroughfare through the province of Hispania Ulterior has today become a wonderful tourist route. The cultural and natural heritage along the trail is an immensely rich one, the city of Cordoba but also in the town of the province. AstrollaroundtheancientCarbura(nowAlmodovar del Rio) or Epora (now Montoro) will take you back in time.

# Moslem Cordoba



# The Moslem civilization settled in Cordoba after the swift conquest begun in the year 711 AD.

From then on, Cordoba became the capital city of al-Andalus, and remained so during the times of both the Emirate and the Caliphate. In the latter period, Cordoba was one of the most highly-populated cities in the Moslem world and the most important city in western Europe. Although most activity went on within the city itself, it spread its territory beyond the borders to include neighbouring territories, where fortresses were built as defensive outposts, with settlements established around them. This is the origin of Cordoban towns such as Fernan Nuñez, Montilla, Aguilar de la Frontera, Lucena, Cabra, Priego de Cordoba, Baena, Luque or Zuheros.



In the year 929, Abd al-Rahman III proclaimed himself Caliph and made Cordoba into a kingdom which was independent from Damascus. According to Arabic sources of the period, the city at this time had a million inhabitants and contained over a thousand mosques, three hundred thousand houses, eighty thousand shops and countless public baths. However, these golden years of Moslem Cordoba were soon to come to an end. The continual disputes and internal struggles destroyed the central power, and Andalusia fragmented into independent states, known as Taifa Kingdoms.

Among the numerous sages and artists of this splendid period were the poet Ibn Hazam, the philosopher Averroes and the Jewish doctor and thinker Maimonides.



M



# Cordoba

**Mosque-Cathedral.** The Great Mosque, the undisputed hallmark of the city's grandeur in Medieval times, now contains within its walls the Christian Cathedral. A sublime example of Moslem architecture, the Mosque was built by order of the Omeyyan Emir Abd al-Rahman I at the end of the 8th century over the remains of the former basilica of San Vicente and extended several times until the times of Almanzor. The most important (and most aesthetically pleasing) of these extensions was during the reign of Al-Hakam II in the 10th century: he built the maqsurah (arched façade) and mihrab (prayer-niche) – if the Mosque were a brooch, these would be the jewels. From the time Cordoba was captured by the Christian troops of King Fernando III “the Saint”, in the year 1236, right up until the present day, the Mosque has undergone seemingly endless rebuilding work, but the main work was completed between the 15th and 18th centuries. These works have served to enrich the building even further, and have turned it into a unique work, where Moslem, Gothic, Renaissance or Baroque style rub shoulders in perfect harmony. It is rightfully considered the most representative building in the whole of this World Heritage city. [C/ Cardenal Herrero, 1.](#)

**Episcopal Palace.** On the site of the former Caliphal palace, whose walls stretched as far as the Castle of the Christian Monarchs, stands the present-day Episcopal Palace, home of the Diocesan Museum of Fine Arts. The foundations of the Moslem building, built in turn over the remains of a Visigothic palace, can still be seen inside, skilfully restored alongside the 15th, 17th and 19th century architecture.

**Madinat Al-Zahra (Medina Azahara).** This was the legendary administrative palace-city built by Abd al-Rahman III; he used it as political and ideological propaganda for his newly-established Caliphate, and when it was built in 936AD, no expense was spared on luxurious decoration, right down to the very foundations. Perched on an attractive hillside in the middle of the Cordoba countryside, the rectangular city was laid out on a series of terraces, with the alcazar (castle) overlooking them all. This was divided into two areas, the Caliph's private quarters and a reception area, and visitors were amazed at the stunning architecture. The Throne Room, where foreign embassies to the city were welcomed, was the most splendid room of all, exquisitely decorated with expensive materials. The lower terraces were home to the rest of the population, a market-place and a mosque outside the walls. [Ctra. Palma del Río, Km. 5,5.](#)

## what to see



**The Calahorra Tower.** This Moslem structure was designed as a monumental gateway consisting of an arch flanked by two towers, and it was later used as a fortress. Its present appearance dates from the 14th century, when Enrique II of Trastamara rebuilt it to defend Cordoba against his brother Pedro I. Nowadays, it houses the Institute for the Dialogue between Cultures, and is an interesting and original place to visit, with its novel audio-guide features. [Plaza del Rastro, s/n.](#)

**Caliphal Baths.** Arabic baths originally part of a primitive alcazar (castle). Built during the era of Al-Hakam II. [Campo Santo de los Mártires, s/n.](#)

**Archaeological and Ethnological Museum.** The collection contains some interesting pieces from the Moslem era, such as decorative wells, capitals (like the one of “the musicians”) and the magnificent bronze statue from Medina Azahara known as “the fawn”. [Plaza de Jerónimo Páez, 7.](#)



# the province

## **AGUILAR DE LA FRONTERA**

**Pontón Castle.** Arabic fortress, a witness to the strategic importance on the frontier of this town in Medieval times. Its existence has been known since the end of the century, and nowadays, it is used for cultural activities.

## **ALMODÓVAR DEL RÍO**

**Castle.** This fortress dates originally from Iberian times, but was later rebuilt by the Arabs in the 8th century. It was built on top of the hill known as Cerro Redondo, called al-Mudawwar al-Adna by the Arabs, from which the modern name of the town derives. It has been restored many times, and the latest of these restorations has turned it into a popular site for tourists, where visitors can enjoy Medieval banquets and entertainment.

## **BAENA**

**Castle.** This building dates from the 10th century, and during the Middle Ages was a frontier fortress much feared by the opposing kingdom of Granada. All that remain of the attractive walls which used to circle the town are the Arch of Consolation and the Dark Arch.

## **BELMEZ**

**Castle.** This originally Moslem castle was built in times of the Caliphate to defend the approaches to the town. In the 15th century, it was an important strategic point in the campaign to re-conquer Moslem Spain (“la Reconquista”) and it played a key role too in the Wars of Independence around 1810.



**History Museum.** As well as enjoying the magnificent pieces on display, there are walks to follow such as the Route of the Dolmens. C/ Córdoba, 3.

## **BENAMEJÍ**

**Banu Bashir Castle.** Fortress built by the Emir Abd-Allah during the 10th century Muladi rebellion in Al-Andalus.

## **CABRA**

**Castle.** This Arabic fortress was built over Roman and Visigothic ruins, and was finally converted into the modern-day castle by the Count of Cabra and Dukes of Sessa. Nowadays, the castle is a convent and school run by Escolapias nuns.

**City Walls.** Part of the imposing city walls from the Moslem period have been restored for visitors to enjoy.

Archaeological Museum. There is a wide variety of Arabic remains on show as well as others found in the area and the display attempts to give the visitor an idea of how these civilizations lived. Address: Cabra. C/ Martín Belda, 25.





## CARCABUEY

**Castle.** This castle was originally an Arabic fortress, built on an earlier Roman site. The castle stands on a spectacular rock and the strategic role it played can still be seen by the surviving ruins.

## CASTRO DEL RÍO

**Town walls.** The walls were built in the 12th century during the Almohad period.

According to legend, these stretches of walls were linked by forty square towers.

**Castle.** The castle forms part of the defensive walls at one end.

It is square and quite small, with towers on the corners, three of which are prism-shaped and a fourth cylindrical, the latter containing a round water cistern in the middle which used to store up to 80 cubic metres of water.

## FERNÁN NÚÑEZ

**Aqueduct.** Runs across the Ventogil Stream and thought to be of Arabic origin.

## HORNACHUELOS

**Castle.** The castle was built in the Caliphate period but underwent later reforms. A good deal of the castle survives, such as the Keep or the water tank, which was probably added during the Middle Ages. *C/ del Castillo s/n.*

## IZNAJAR

**Castle.** The ruins of the Moslem fortress of Hish Ashar look down from its rocky pinnacle, on the village of Iznajar. There are towers on each of the four corners and a large courtyard in the middle, with the entrance to an interesting cross-shaped water tank in the middle. The 11th century defensive walls skirt the modern town.

## LUQUE

**Castle.** On a steep slope stands the Castle of Venceire, dating originally from the 9th century but rebuilt in the 13th in the style of the Nazari (Moslem dynasty from Granada). Two of the towers survive to this day as well as remains of the triple defensive wall.

## OBEJO

**Castle.** The Fortress of Ubal stands on the top of the hill the village is built on. Evidence suggests that there was a major settlement here involved in the military control of the area.

## PALMA DEL RÍO

**Defensive Walls.** The walls date from the Almohad period, and are one of the most complete examples of defensive walls surviving in Andalusia. The remains have been officially named a Site of Cultural Interest and there are ruins of an alcazaba or castle.

## PRIEGO DE CORDOBA

**Castle.** The castle is originally Arabic but was rebuilt in the 13th and 14th centuries, and is a plain, austere building, in keeping with the defensive role it fulfilled. It consists of a walled area with towers at the sides. **Historical Museum of Priego.** Carrera de las Monjas, 16.

## PUENTE GENIL

**Castle.** The Fortress of Anzur, overlooking the River Genil, was probably built in the 10th century, and stood on the border between the coras (kingdoms) of Cabra and Rayya (Malaga).

## Archaeological Museum.

This magnificent 17th century building contains an outstanding collection of archaeological finds from the area around the town. [C/ Contralmirante Delgado Parejo s/n.](#)

## LA RAMBLA

**Castle Tower.** The tower, built in adobe, is Arabic in origin and was conquered by King Fernando III in the 13th century.

## RUTE

**Castle.** The Castle of Zambra, standing at one of the highest points in the sierra (hills), belongs to the municipal borough of Rute and was built on a former Visigothic site.



## SANTAELLA

**Castle.** 12th century Arabic fortress, which surrendered to the troops of King Fernando III. **Historical Museum.** The collection is made up of prehistoric, archaeological and ethnological remains and is housed in the Casa de Cultura (Cultural Centre). *C/ Antonio Palma, 27.*

## VALSEQUILLO

**Castle of Aljozar.** Parts of the walls which surrounded the town and the ruined castle are all that is left from the Moslem settlement here.

## VILLA DEL RIO

**Arabic water mill.** The mill stands on the river banks and was used to grind cereals into flour.

## VILLAVICIOSA

**Bridge.** The bridge is from the Caliphate period and spans the River Guadiato. The **remains of defensive works** can be seen, with small sandstone blocks and ceramic tiles.

## EL VISO

**Castle of Madroñiz.** This Moslem fortress might have been built to guard the road leading to Toledo.

## ZUHEROS

**Castle.** This unusual fortress, of Arabic origin, seems to rise up out of the very rock. It is situated in the village square Plaza de la Paz, and there are truly spectacular views over the village from the battlements.



# On the Caliphate Trail

This route links the provinces of Cordoba, Granada and Jaen. Along the route, enjoy the breathtaking countryside between towns steeped in history, art and nature.

# M

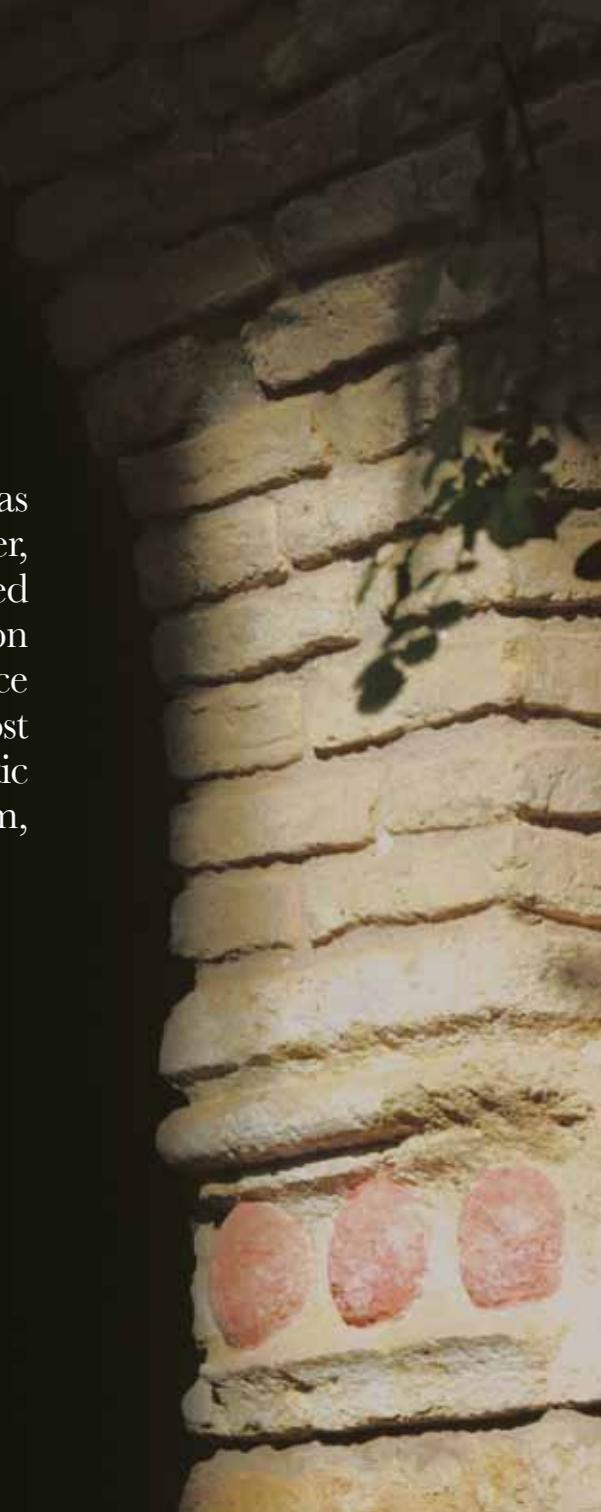
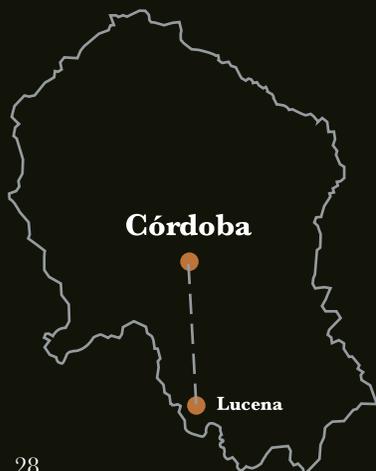
Between castles and fortresses, the stunning countryside of the Sierras Subbeticas Natural Park, bursting with wild flowers, provides the traveller with a delightful interlude. In these hills, steep rocky cliffs alternate with lush green meadows, and there are a host of interesting country walks to choose from. Cordoba was the seat of learning in the Western Moslem world during the Caliphate period, and nowadays offers visitors a wide range of cultural and artistic events not just in the city itself but also in all the towns of the province. Fernan Nuñez, Montilla, Aguilar de la Frontera, Lucena, Cabra, Priego, Carcabuey, Espejo, Castro del Rio, Baena, Zuheros and Luque are the main towns of Arabic origin along the route and we can easily imagine their former splendour by the remains which have survived.

# Jewish Cordoba



# J

Cordoba, for as long as anyone can remember, has always maintained an enlightened tradition of peaceful co-existence between the three most influential monotheistic world cultures: Judaism, Christianity and Islam.



Despite occasional difficulties between members of the three cultures, the city and its people wisely managed to bury their differences and create an ideal atmosphere for arts and science to flourish. The high point of this intercultural and religious unity can be pinpointed between the years 936 and 1031, when the Caliphate was at the height of its splendour. During this golden age, Cordoba was like a magnet to the greatest inventors and thinkers of its day. The harmonious relationship between the three cultures turned the city and the surrounding towns into veritable seats of learning. However, the capture of Cordoba by King Fernando III marked a new era in the relations within the city.

The economic and cultural decline of the previous years had put the former co-existence in jeopardy. Signs of discord began to appear, justifiably or not, between the three cultures.

One of the immediate consequences was the exodus of many Jewish or Moslem citizens to other towns. Finally, the decree expelling the Jews and the conquest of Granada brought this period of intercultural and religious harmony, which Cordoba had nurtured and championed, to an abrupt end.



# Cordoba

# what to see



**Judería (quartier juif).** Le quartier connu sous ce nomThe Jewish Quarter. The area known by this name was declared World Heritage Site by the UNESCO in 1994, and stretches from the gateway Puerta de Almodovar to the site of the Mosque-Cathedral. The area is a maze of narrow, winding streets and every turn of a corner brings a surprise meeting with a small hidden square or charming façade. The very names of the streets or squares take you back to that golden age - Juderia, Judios, Averroes, Manriquez, Deanes, Albucasis, Juda-Levi, Maimonides - and invite you to take a leisurely stroll, soaking in the memories concealed in every corner.

**Almodovar Gate.** This gateway, known as Bab al-Yawz, or Gate of the Walnut Tree, dates from Caliphate times, and is now called Puerta de Almodovar (Almodovar Gate). The gate is built in unmistakably Medieval style, but its main claim to fame is as the gateway to the fabulous district of the Jewish Quarter.

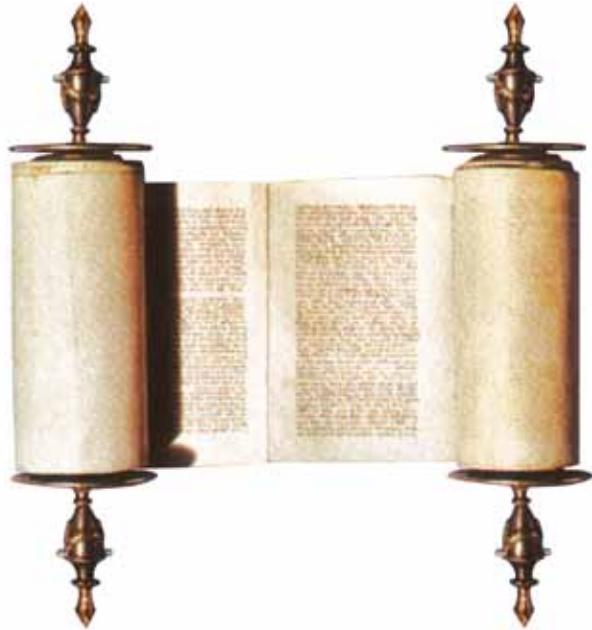


**Calle Judios (Street of the Jews).** One of the main streets of the Jewish Quarter is Calle Judios, running southwards, parallel to the city walls, from the Almodovar Gate. It is a typical example of the narrow streets built in the Moslem period. The design of these streets served a dual purpose - to counter the effects of the high summer temperatures and to make the city easier to defend.

**The Synagogue.** Built in 1315 in the Mudejar style in vogue at the time, it is one of only three Medieval synagogues still surviving in Spain. It retains its original structure, despite the fact that it has undergone continual restoration work. The entrance is through a courtyard leading to a small vestibule attached to the magnificent prayer hall. The holy book, or Torah, was kept in a niche here and the walls and ceiling are decorated with delicate ornamental motifs. [C/Judios](#).

**Plazuela de Tiberiades (Little Square of Tiberiades).** This diminutive square is dominated by the bronze sculpture in honour of the distinguished Cordoban doctor and mathematician, Maimonides. His works of philosophy, which interpreted the theories of Aristotle, left a lasting influence on thinkers of his time and on future generations. He was exiled after quarrelling with the new, less tolerant Almohad rulers and died in Egypt in 1204. His tomb lies in the city of Tiberiades, Israel.

# the province



## LUCENA

Lucena was known as “the pearl of the Sepharad”, and was one of the few places where the Jewish community was able to achieve renown and a degree of cultural splendour during the Middle Ages. There was a School of Talmudic Studies, where the greatest intellectuals and poets of the day met, and Lucena was home to the famous poet Juda Levi. However, the Almoravid invasion, and later, the persecution by the Almohad tribe in the 12th century, put paid to this period of great prosperity and splendour, and most of the Jewish community fled the country.

Nowadays, there are few remains to prove the importance the town held in those years, although there is no end to the conjectures about the possible buildings which might have stood here.

One of these conjectures is that number 4 of the street Calle de la Condesa Carmen Pizarro may have been the site of the Main Synagogue of Lucena.

**Funerary Monument.** This gravestone, dedicated to the Rabbi Amicos, was found here and reflects the grandeur of the Medieval Jewish community in Lucena. It is on display in the Archaeological Museum of Cordoba.



# Christian Cordoba



## In the 13th century, King Fernando III conquered Cordoba.

At the start of the 13th century, the death knell tolled for the beleaguered Moslem community. Fernando III, known as “the Saint”, captured the poorly defended Caliphate city in 1236, and in the years that followed, took over the whole province. The city consisted of two halves - the Villa (formerly known as Medina) and the Axerquia (formerly the district of al-Sarquiyya) – and one of the new king’s first acts was to divide the city into fourteen parishes or districts, seven in each half. Each parish was centred round the focal point of a parish church, known today as Fernandine Churches. However, although they were founded by Fernando III in the early 13th century, it was not until the second half of century that most of the building worked commenced.



# C

The Fernandine Churches in Cordoba are an attractive example of Medieval Christian architecture and in some of them there is a mixture of Late Romanic, early Gothic and Mudejar styles. All of them have certain characteristics in common, such as the use of the local Mosque as a site for building and their minarets as towers (as in the cases of Santiago or San Lorenzo). They also shared a primitive design including three naves and a wooden roof, but in all cases, the original Medieval design was heavily reformed in the Renaissance and Baroque periods.



## what to see

### **The Mosque-Cathedral.**

The Mosque was converted into a Christian cathedral after the city's capture by King Fernando III. From then on, minor building works regularly took place to create chapels and other Christian features. The Catholic Monarchs gave permission for a Main Chapel to be built and in the 16th century, during the reign of Carlos V, the present Christian cathedral appeared. One remarkable fact is that the Christian builders were so in awe of the stunning extension of Al-Harem II that they decided to leave it intact, and the cathedral was built between the areas of Almanzor and Abd-al-Rahman I, in a mixture of styles ranging from late Gothic to Renaissance and early Baroque. [C/ Cardenal Herrero, 1.](#)

### **Castle of the Christian Monarchs.**

After the city had fallen to the Castillian king, he needed to fortify the area where the Moslem castle had formerly stood. So, over part of this site, the magnificent new Christian castle was built. The delightful gardens, with a stunning floral display even in the winter months, are a real joy to behold, and the cool, stone halls in the interior house some of the best archaeological finds from Cordoba, such as a Roman sarcophagus and a collection of Roman mosaics found under the city square La Plaza de La Corredera. [C/Campo Santo de los Martires s/n. Cordoba](#)

# Cordoba

**Church of La Magdalena.** This church is considered the most primitive in style of all the Fernandine Churches built in the 13th century and was probably used as a model for the ones built after. Although the standard proportions for this design of church was established here, the interior of the church has been changed drastically. Nowadays, religious services are no longer held here. [Plaza de la Magdalena s/n.](#)

**Church of Santa Marina.** Standing in one of the biggest parishes in the city, the church consists of three naves and an altar made up of three polygonal apses. The most attractive feature of the interior is the beautiful Orozco Chapel, an exquisite example of Mudéjar architecture, especially notable in the cusped, pointed arch in the entrance to the chapel, and the vaulting in the ceiling above. [Plaza Conde de Priego s/n.](#)



**Church of San Lorenzo.** The church has three naves separated by prism-shaped pillars, and a typical apse in Fernandine style. The three most striking features are the tower, which was built on top of the former minaret of the *Munyat al-Mugûra* mosque, the portico running round part of the church and the Mudejar-style rose window. [Plaza de San Lorenzo s/n.](#)

**Church of San Nicolas de la Villa.** Built in the 14th century, it still exudes from all angles an air of the Mudejar style, despite the later rebuilding. The tower was built over the remains of a former minaret and gives the building a rather military feel. [Gran Capitan Boulevarde.](#)



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### **Convent Church of San Pablo.**

The convent of San Pablo, of which only the church survives, lies half way between the former Cordoban districts of the Medina and the Axerquia. Although the convent was founded in the year Fernando III conquered the city, the building work was completed later, at the end of the 13th century, and on a site where a previous Arabic building had stood. [C/ Capitulares.](#)

**Church of San Miguel.** This church stands in a privileged position in the centre of town, in the area where in Roman times the Colonial Forum stood. The main entrance has an

attractive rose window and the

Medieval architecture of the church is complemented

by the handsome

Baroque tower. [Plaza de San Miguel s/n.](#)

### **Church of San**

**Andres.** Medieval

features can be seen

in the far entrance,

the central apse

and the base of

the tower. In the

18th century, the

existing church was

in ruins, and so a new

one was built on top, at

right angles to the earlier

building, which radically

changed the orientation of the

primitive church. [Plaza de San](#)

[Andres s/n.](#)





**Church of Santiago.** The church was built on the site of the Mosque of Emir Hisam and the minaret has been used as a bell-tower since the 13th century, when it became a Christian church. The architectural structure remains intact, despite the reforms and a major fire, and the apses, a funeral chapel and the main entrance survive. [C/ Agustín Moreno](#).

**Church of San Pedro.** This church is situated in the district of the Axerquia and two original Medieval entrances survive. The most attractive features are the main façade, with a Hernan Ruiz II entrance, and the sacristy. [Plaza de San Pedro s/n](#).

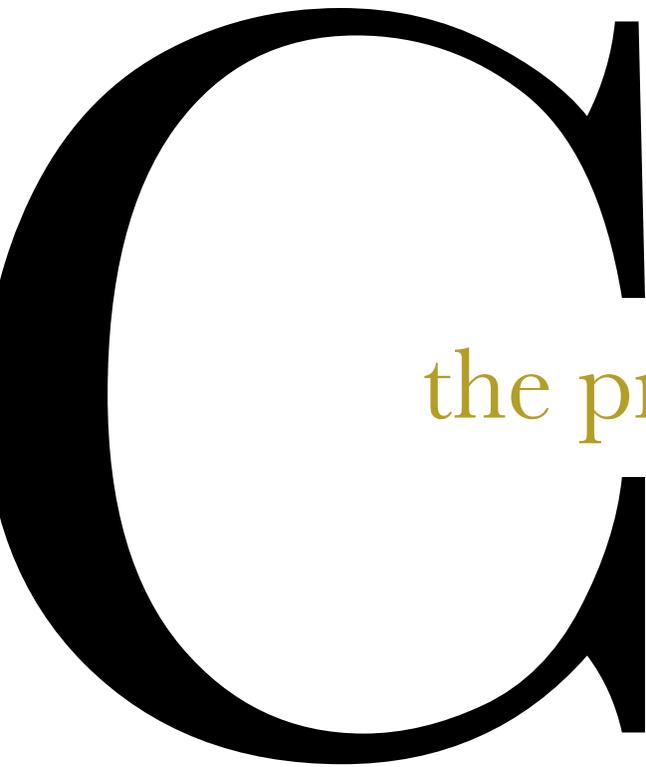
Convent church of San Francisco (formerly San Pedro el Real). **The church of San Francisco** stands midway between the districts of the Villa and the Axerquia. The remains of the cloisters have been recently restored and skilfully blended into the surrounding residential area. [San Francisco Grounds](#).

**Royal Collegiate Church of San Hipolito.** Despite the fact that it does not belong to the group of Fernandine churches, this church is usually included in the tour, as it is an important feature of 14th century Cordoban architecture. It was founded by King Alfonso XI as a royal pantheon and a site for holding masses for deceased monarchs, but the church was not actually finished until the 18th century. During the Baroque period, major changes were made to the transept, naves and façade. [Plaza San Ignacio de Loyola s/n](#).

**Church of San Agustin.** Building work on this attractive church began around 1328. It underwent major changes in the 18th century, when the nave and the two side chapels were reformed. [Plaza de San Agustin s/n](#).







# the province

## **BELALCÁZAR**

**Castle of the Sotomayor family.** The town was known in Moslem times as Gafiq, and the castle was built in the late 15th century by Alfonso de Sotomayor, over the ruins of an earlier Moslem fortress.

## **EL CARPIO**

**Tower of Garci Mendez.** The tower belongs to the fortress built in the 14th century under the rule of Garci Mendez de Sotomayor. He commissioned the building to the master stonemason Mahomad and the present day town of El Carpio grew up around the castle.

## **ESPEJO**

**Castle of Pay Arias.** This fortress was built in the early 15th century by order of Pay Arias. It is rectangular, with towers on the four corners, with a keep in the middle. **Church of San Bartolome.** It was built in the 15th century but redesigned in the Renaissance and Baroque periods.

## **FERNAN NUÑEZ**

**Tower of Fernan Nuñez.** This Medieval tower gave rise to the village and has survived thanks to its incorporation into the base of one of the towers in Ducal Palace.



8

## FUENTE OBEJUNA

**Parish Church of Nuestra Señora del Castillo.** This church was built in the 15th century in late Gothic style and was the scene of the famous assault by the townspeople when they lynched Fernan Gomez de Guzman.

## HORNACHUELOS

**Parish Church of Santa Maria de las Flores.** Only two parts of the building survive from the original Medieval design and it was shortened to build the present-day church. Hermitage of San Salvador. Built over the site of a primitive Medieval hermitage, and the present-day building, with its single, vaulted nave and square presbytery with a cupola, dates from the 18th century.

## MONTEMAYOR.

**Castle.** The original 15th century castle was built by Martin Alonso de Cordoba as the starting point for a new town. Later on, it underwent major reforms and became the property of the Dukes of Frias.

## MONTURQUE.

**Keep.** This tower, formerly a Medieval fortress, has two rooms with vaulted ceilings within, and has been recently restored.

## PRIEGO DE CORDOBA

**Castle.** Although the castle was originally built by the Arabs in the Middle Ages, it was rebuilt by the Christians from the mid 14th century onwards. The castle is rectangular with towers on the corners and a keep in the middle. Remains of the **Medieval defensive wall** have been found in the street Calle de Santa Ana.

## SANTA EUFEMIA

**Castle of Miramontes.** The romantic ruins of the keep are a living reminder of the castle built here by the first ruler of Santa Eufemia in the late 13th century.





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