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Nature in Cordoba



English



contents

Natural Parks	7
Sierras Subbéticas	8
Sierra de Cardeña y Montoro	10
Sierra de Hornachuelos	12
Nature Reserves	15
South Cordoba Lakes	16
Nature Parks near Towns	17
Fuente Agría	18
Fuente La Zarza	18
La Sierrezuela	19
Los Cabezos	19
Los Villares	20
Natural Beauty Spots	21
Cordobilla Reservoir	22
Malpasillo Reservoir	23
Natural Monuments	25
Sotos de la Albolafia	26
Cueva de los Murciélagos	27
Sierra Morena of Cordoba	29
Route of Sierra Morena of Cordoba	30
Green Route	31
La Campiña Green Route	32
La Subbética Green Route	33
Long-distance Country Paths	35
GR 7	36
GR 39	37
GR 40	38
GR 43	39
GR 48	39
The Guadalquivir Valley	41
Active Tourism	45
Useful Addresses	48



NATURE IN

Visiting the countryside is becoming more and more popular these days, and what better destination than the province of Cordoba with its natural parks, nature reserves, beauty spots and Biosphere reserves which together with Green Routes, country walks and other paths, make our province an ideal place to enjoy nature. Added to these natural resources is a major network of countryside accommodation, hostels and camp sites as well as a range of companies which organise outdoor activities, all of which will make your stay in Cordoba an unforgettable one. In this Cordoba Nature Guide we also offer you a number of recommendations on how best to visit the most picturesque villages in the province, whose fascinating history will take you back in time. One last piece of advice: enjoy the riches nature has bestowed on these lands and its people, in the conviction that these natural wonders belong to you, too.

CORDOBA





Natural Parks



The Sierras Subbéticas Natural Park

Situated in the south of the province of Córdoba, the Sierras Subbéticas Natural Park, which forms part of the Béticas Mountain Range, extends for 31,568 hectares and spans the municipal boroughs of Zuheros, Rute, Cabra, Priego de Córdoba, Iznajar, Luque, Doña Mencía and Carcabuey.

One of its main attractions is the interesting rock formations created by the limestone karst, with abrupt peaks of over 1,500m, narrow valleys and great extensions of hillside covered by steep rocky ground.

The Sierras Subbéticas vegetation is typically Mediterranean, although there are differences depending on the locality: wooded areas of evergreen oak provide ideal ground for peonies, gorse and hawthorn as well as Jerusalem sage, arbutus and Kermes oak. On higher mountainous ground, thorny shrubs thrive such as blue and lesser erinacea, common gorse and spiny bupleurum.

The mainstay of the local economy is the olive grove. However, almond trees are also cultivated on dry ground, and their number has risen sharply over the past few years due to the growing demand for Christmas sweets. The villages in the Sierra have a longstanding tradition of sweet-making, such as the *pancillos de cortijo* ("little farm breads"), *mostachos* and aniseed doughnuts from Luque as well as the *mantecados*, aniseed cakes and aniseed liqueurs from Rute.



Wildlife

Along the banks of rivers and streams we find river bats, kingfishers, dippers, viperine snakes and the emydid turtle.



Griffon Vulture

The commonest birds are birds of prey, especially golden eagles, griffon vultures and the highest concentration in the province of peregrine falcons. There are also blue rock thrush, common rock thrush, alpine accentor and ravens. As for mammals, there are pine martens and mountain goats.

In the areas of shrub live rabbits, warblers, foxes and kestrels.

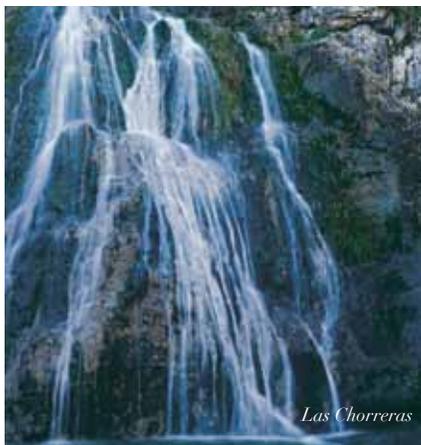
Walks

The Subbetica Green Route runs along the former railway track for a length of 52 kilometres, passing through the provinces of Lucena, Cabra, Doña Mencía, Zuheros and Luque.

La Nava Route: 7.5 kilometres

Vultures Nest Route: 19 kilometres

River Bailon Canyon Route: 4 kilometres.



Las Chorreras

No se pierda

Priego de Córdoba, with its magnificent civil architecture, including numerous minor palaces and stately homes. The Barrio de la Villa (old town) and Fuente del Rey (The King's Fountain) are a must to visit.

Rute is the home of aniseed and the traditional sweets called "mantecados" - a local museum has been set up to display these products.

The castle of Doña Mencía, built in the 15th century.

The Sierras Subbéticas Natural Park



Further information

Centro de visitantes "Santa Rita"
del Parque Natural de las Sierras
Subbéticas ("Santa Rita" Visitors'
Centre Sierras Subbéticas Natural Park)

Ctra. Nac. 340

Cabra - Priego de Córdoba, km. 57.

Teléfono: +34 957 33 40 34

*"Balcón del Adarve" (Viewpoint on the City Walls).
Priego de Córdoba*

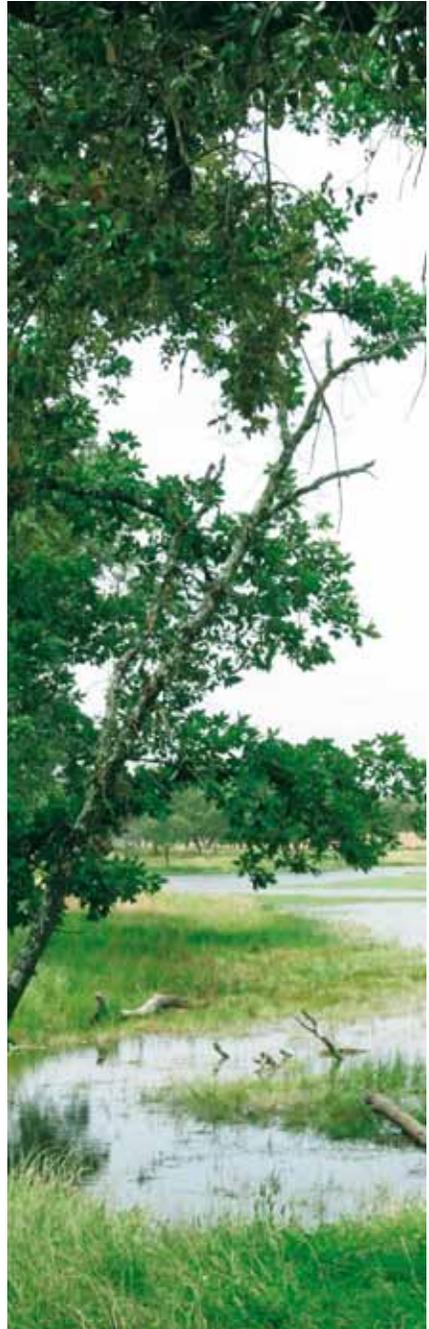


Sierra de Cardeña y Montoro Natural Park

The Cardeña - Montoro Natural Park is situated in the north-eastern part of the province of Cordoba, in the Sierra Morena mountain range. It covers a total area of 41,212 hectares of rolling hills and gentle slopes. The River Yeguas carves its way through the valley, leaving breathtakingly steep ravines and vertical cliff faces.

The park vegetation is made up of woodland of oaks, wild olive and gall oaks, along with a smaller number of cork oaks. Some areas are covered in thick scrubland, made up of arbutus, mastic-trees, kermes oak, gum cistus and heather. The Pyrenean oak woods (*Quercus pyrenaica*) are one of the main features of the park and these woods are considered one of the most attractive areas in the province for their great botanical interest and spectacular beauty.

The main rivers in the park are the Yeguas and the Arenoso, which run along the western and easternmost ends of the park respectively, as well as the Corcome and Martin Gonzalo streams which flow into the Guadalquivir, and another of the attractive features of the park is the thick woodland which flourishes along the riverbanks.



Wildlife

An extremely rich variety of wildlife can be found in the woodland, from much-appreciated game species such as roe deer, fallow deer and wild boar to typical Mediterranean mammals whose distribution range is rather limited, such as mountain cats, foxes, wolves and badgers. The most interesting birds are goshawks, sparrowhawks, eagle owls and booted and Bonelli's eagles. On the river banks, otters, dippers, kingfishers and emydid turtles can be observed, while in the scrubland, you can see rabbits, foxes, ichneumon mongoose, genets and kestrels amongst other wildlife. The pastureland is home to species which feed here but breed in other areas, such as hares, voles, Montagu's harriers and kestrels.

Walks

Aldea del Cerezo- Venta del Charco- Cardeña Route: 14 kilometres.

Camino de Vuelcacarretas Route: 12 kilometres.

Aldea del Cerezo-Azuel Route: 12 kilometres.



Don't Miss

Common Fox

Montoro, whose stunning architecture led to it being declared a Historic-Artistic Site in 1969. The highest tower in the village is the San Bartolomé Tower, and the 15th century Las Doñadas bridge was built by donations from the villagers. The Las Tercias building houses the Municipal Archaeological Museum. There are countless oil presses in the countryside around Montoro, many of which have been converted into rural accommodation.

Cardeña became an independent municipality from Montoro in the last century and has the church of Nuestra Señora del Carmen which features the image of the Fallen Christ, an unpainted wooden sculpture of Christ by Juan Martínez Cerrillo made in 1918.

Aldea del Cerezo (Cardeña)



Further information

Oficina de Información del
Parque Natural
(Natural Park Information Office)

C/ Miguel Gallo, 33
14445 Cardeña (Córdoba)
Teléfono: +34 957 17 43 70
www.cardena.es

Centro de Recepción de Visitantes
"Venta Nueva" ("Venta Nueva" Visitors'
Reception Centre)

Ctra. Nac. 420, Km 79
14445 Cardeña (Córdoba)
Teléfono: +34 667 90 43 09



Sierra de Hornachuelos Natural Park

Covering an area of over 60,000 hectares, the park's official name is the Sierra Morena Open Woodland Biosphere Reserve, and it occupies the north-western corner of the province of Córdoba in the Sierra Morena mountain range. The area of the park spans across slices of the municipal territories of Almodovar del Río, Hornachuelos, Posadas, Villaviciosa de Córdoba, and part of the municipal area of the city of Córdoba itself.

The park is a typical Mediterranean eco-system, with the commonest tree the evergreen oak, although there are also abundant cork oaks and Algerian oaks in the more humid areas as well as wild olives near the Guadalquivir valley plains. There are also areas of more open woodland (called dehesa), consisting of evergreen and cork oaks with pasture land in between. In the southern half of the park there is an area of lime-rich soil where carobs, European fan palms and wild olives thrive. The riverbanks are home to white poplar, alder and ash, often intermixed with ivy and hawthorn.

Most of the park is fenced off for use as a hunting reserve, as deer and wild boar hunting provide the mainstay of the local economy.



Wildlife

The Sierra de Hornachuelos has the second largest breeding population of black vultures in Andalusia and there are also three griffon vulture colonies. Golden and Bonelli's eagles nest in the treetops in the park.

Another interesting rarity to be found is the endangered black stork. The park is also home to up to 30 different species of mammal, such as the Iberian lynx, which is in real danger of extinction, the ichneumon mongoose, the wolf and the otter, together with stocks of wild boar and deer, bred for hunting.



Deer



La Caldera Stream

Walks

Botanical Route: 1,2 kilómetros.

Herrerias Route: 4,8 kilómetros.

Guadalora Route: 7 kilómetros.

Eagle Route: 12 kilómetros.

Bembezar Route: 13 kilómetros.

Los Angeles Route: 11 kilómetros.

Don't Miss

The village of Almodovar del Rio is crowned by a stunningly well-preserved castle, originally built by the Arabs in the 8th century.

Near Almodovar del Rio, in the municipal area of Hornachuelos, is the Palace of Moratalla, which is where the Spanish kings Alfonso XII and Alfonso XIII stayed while invited to hunting parties organised by the Marquis of Viana, who owned the palace in those days. The gardens were designed by the French engineer Forestier, imitating the style of Versailles.

Further information

Centro de Visitantes del
Parque Natural "Huerta del Rey"
("Huerta del Rey" Natural Park
Visitors Centre)

Ctra. de San Calixto, km 1,6
14740 Hornachuelos (Córdoba)
+34 957 64 11 40





Nature Reserves



South
Cordoba Lakes



Little Egret

Nature Reserves of the South Cordoba Lakes

In the south of the province of Cordoba is a group of lakes called Lagunas del Sur which were named as Reserves by law in 1984 and then declared Natural Reserves in 1989 by the Andalusian Regional Government because of their special value as over-wintering and nesting sites for migratory birds. There are six lakes in all: Laguna Amarga, Laguna Tiscar, Laguna Zoñar, Laguna del Rincon, Laguna de los Jarales and Laguna del Salobral.

Laguna de Zoñar is the biggest lake, and the only true lake in Andalusia. Situated near the town of Aguilar de la Frontera, and it is in fact three lakes in one, with a main lake and two smaller lakes alongside. It is the deepest lake in Andalusia, some parts of which are up to 13m deep. Among the wildlife, there are stickleback, relatively uncommon in the Iberian Peninsula, and interesting rare species of birds such as white-headed duck and purple gallinule alongside shelduck and pochard.

Laguna del Salobral is the largest lake in all these Nature Reserves and lies in the municipal borough of Luque. It is unusual in that it is a salt-water lake, which affects the vegetation and wildlife in and around the lake. The most interesting birds are coots, cranes and flamingos.

Laguna de los Jarales lies in the municipal borough of Lucena and is the smallest of all the South Cordoba Lakes. By the month of June, nearly all the lake water has disappeared. The bird population includes the white-headed duck and the purple gallinule.

Laguna Amarga (literally “bitter lake”) is also in the municipal borough of Lucena, and is home to common coots and pochard. Its name comes from the high concentration of magnesium sulphate in the water.

Around the waters of Laguna Tiscar, in the municipal borough of Puente Genil, grow abundant lakeside plants such as reeds, rushes and canes and well as aquatic plants which form great mats of vegetation on the water surface.

Laguna del Rincón is home to bird species such as red-crested pochard, mallard, great-crested and little grebe and lies in the municipal borough of Aguilar de la Frontera, in an area of rolling hills where vines and olives are grown.

Further information

Centro de Visitantes
Laguna de Zoñar.
(Laguna de Zoñar Natural Park
Visitors Centre)

For Further information:
+34 957 33 52 52

Nature Parks near Towns





Cranes. Fuente la Zarza Country Park (Hinojosa del Duque)

Fuente Agria Country Park

Fuente Agria Country Park lies on the hill known as “Fuente Agria y Almendrillos”, occupying 79.69 hectares of land owned by the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, in the municipal borough of Villafranca de Cordoba.

The park takes its name from the iron-rich water which flows from a spring, and most of the park is made up of forests of stone pine. The land is open to the public, and its close proximity to the town of Villafranca de Cordoba, together with the beauty of the surrounding countryside, make it an extremely popular site for the local population.

The local town of Villafranca de Cordoba is well worth a visit, with its attractive parish church of Santa Marina de la Aguas Santas, the Clock Tower and a number of stately homes.

Villafranca de Cordoba Town Hall:
+34 957 19 00 16

Fuente La Zarza Country Park

Fuente la Zarza Country Park is on a hill known as “Fuente la Zarza”, occupying 315 hectares of land belonging to the Autonomous Community of Andalusia. It is situated in the municipal borough of Hinojosa del Duque, on the western side of the great valley known as Los Pedroches. The flat extension of open, evergreen oak woodland, interspersed with pasture land and arable farmland, has been used traditionally as a popular recreation ground by the local population.

One of the most popular natural attractions in the area is the large population of cranes which spend the winter months feeding in the nearby fields.

A visit to the town of Hinojosa del Duque is a must, with the splendid parish church of San Juan Bautista, known popularly as the “Cathedral of the Sierra”, built in the 15th and 16th centuries at the height of the Renaissance movement in Cordoba.

Hinojosa del Duque Town Hall:
+34 957 14 00 50
www.hinojosadelduque.com

La Sierrezuela Country Park

La Sierrezuela Country Park is part of the mountain area known as “La Sierrezuela”, and extends over 442.08 hectares of land owned by Posadas Town Hall, which, in agreement with the Andalusian Regional Government’s Department of the Environment, fenced off 384 hectares for use as a country park.

This natural area, situated one kilometre north of the town, has traditionally been used as a recreation ground by the population of Posadas – apart from being very near the town, the beauty of the landscape as well as the well-preserved pine woodland make it exceptionally attractive to visitors.

Apart from the wealth of natural species, including the European fan palm, the park also has an archaeological site of great historical interest.

The streets of Posadas are well worth a visit, with their beautiful traditional architecture, and we recommend you stop at the Baroque hermitage of Jesus Nazareno as well as at the parish church of Santa Maria de las Flores.

Posadas Town Hall:
+34 957 63 00 13
www.posadas.es

Los Cabezos Country Park

Los Cabezos Country Park is on a hill known as “Los Cabezos”, and covers 15 hectares of land belonging to Palma del Rio Town Hall. It is situated four kilometres north of the town, and has always been a popular recreation ground for the town’s population.

This natural area, set in an attractive landscape, is an extremely well-preserved example of traditional Mediterranean woodland, as has been declared Woodland Area of Recreational Interest as part of the Special Plan for the Preservation of the Environment.

When you visit the town of Palma del Rio, don’t miss the old Medieval town centre with the Palace of Portocarrero, the Convent of Santa Clara and the Chapel of Nuestra Señora de las Angustias.

Palma del Río Town Hall:
+34 957 71 02 44
www.ayto-palmadelrio.es



Los Villares Country Park

Los Villares Country Park lies on a series of hills called “Los Villares Bajos”, and covers 485 hectares of land belonging to the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, within the municipal borough of the city of Cordoba.

The park is used widely as a popular recreation ground by the population of Cordoba due to its close proximity to the city.

There are over 60 hectares with all the necessary facilities to cater for the huge number of visitors who came all the year round: car parks, areas for cooking, tables and benches, running water, sinks, toilets, children’s play areas, sports fields, gym circuits, camping areas and a bar/restaurant, to name but a few.

One of the most popular places to visit near the park is the Cordoba Hermitages, which nowadays belong to the religious order of the Discalced (Shoeless) Carmelites. From here, there are stunning views over the city of Cordoba.

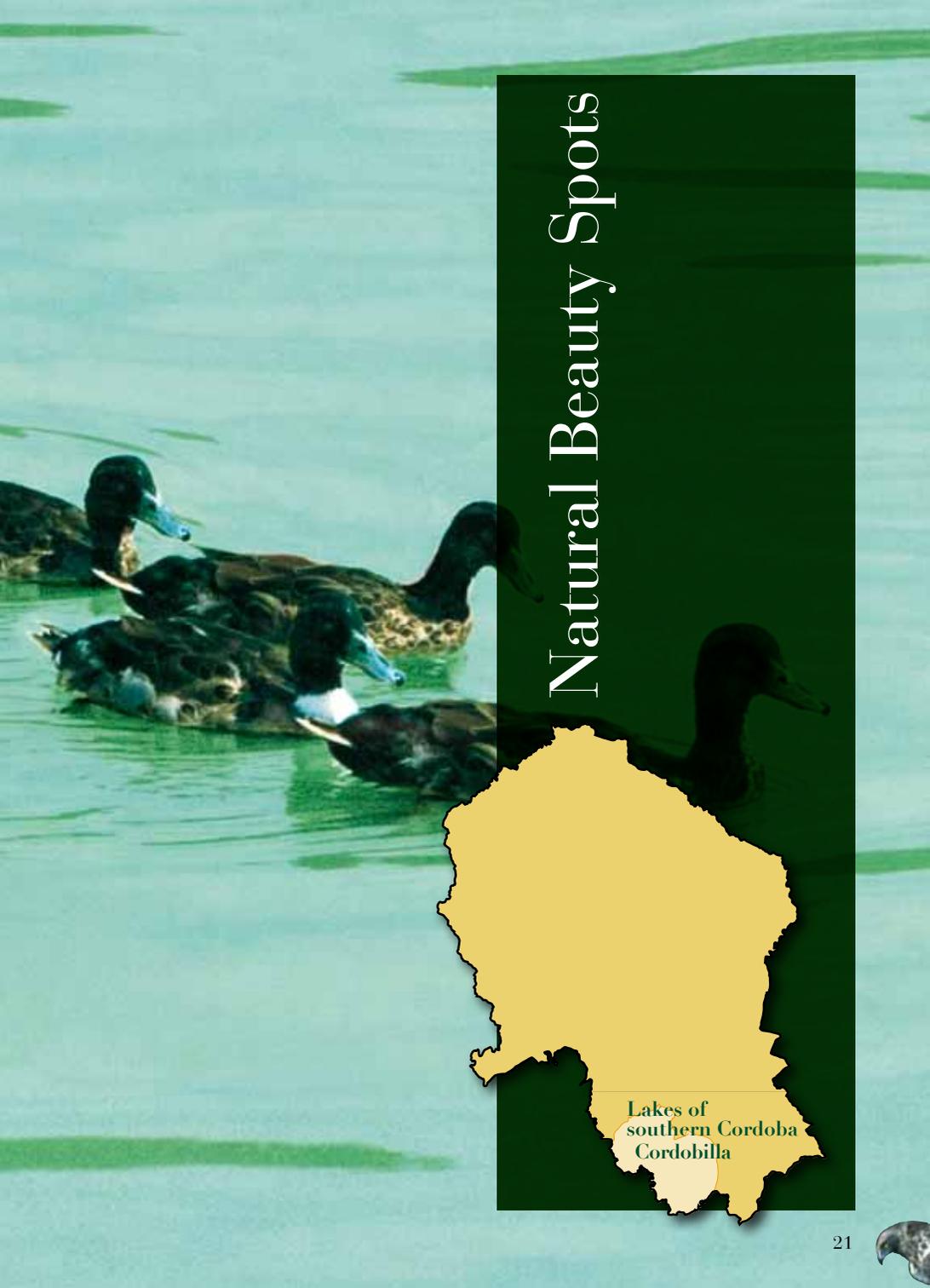
Further information

Delegación de la Consejería de Medio Ambiente de la Junta de Andalucía
(Local Delegation of the Environment-Andalusian Regional Government)
C/ Santo Tomás de Aquino, s/n.
14071 Córdoba
+34 957 00 13 21

Mito



Natural Beauty Spots



Lakes of
southern Cordoba
Cordobilla



Cordobilla Reservoir

On the River Genil, as it passes through the municipal boroughs of Puente Genil and Aguilar de la Frontera, lies the natural beauty spot of the Cordobilla Reservoir, which covers an area of 1,460 hectares.

Its great ecological importance lies in the role it plays in the survival of a large number of endangered species of birds which over-winter or nest here.

The shallow waters of the Cordobilla Reservoir produce highly attractive landscapes where rushes, lilies and reeds flourish.

Wildlife

The commonest birds which can be observed are the white-headed duck, purple gallinule, purple and grey herons, little egret, mallard, shoveler, marsh harrier, cattle egret and coot. Over the last few years, there have also been a growing number of sightings of flamingo and black-winged stint. The waters are home to barbel and carp.

Water snake



Don't miss

To get to the Cordobilla Reservoir you have to pass through Puente Genil, where we recommend you visit the Castle of Anzur, which looks over the village from a nearby hill. It is a 10th century fortress and major battles were fought beneath its walls in the middle ages.



Cordobilla Reservoir

Malpasillo Reservoir

The beauty spot of Malpasillo Reservoir lies on the River Genil, half in the municipal borough of Lucena in the province of Cordoba and half in the municipal borough of Badolatosa in the province of Seville. It extends over an area of 313 hectares, of which 225 are in the province of Cordoba, and it has also been named Special Protection Area for Birds and a Ramsar Site of internationally important wetlands.

Just as in the case of the Cordobilla Reservoir, its close proximity to the Lagunas del Sur lakes gives it added ecological importance as a survival site for numerous protected species of birds.

Most of the bed of the reservoir is silted up, producing vast beds of bulrushes which cover the surface along with smaller patches of lilies and reeds.

Wildlife

The commonest birds which can be observed are the white-headed duck, purple gallinule, purple and grey herons, little egret, mallard, shoveler, cattle egret, flamingo and little ringed plover. In the waters there are barbel and carp.



Don't miss

In Lucena, why not take the route round the churches, especially the Parish Church of San Mateo, built from 1498 onwards in Gothic-Renaissance style.

Another trip worth making is to the village of Jauja, home town of the notorious highwayman Jose Maria "El Tempranillo".



Más información

Delegación Provincial de la Consejería de Medio Ambiente de la Junta de Andalucía (Local delegation of the Department of the Environment-Andalusian Regional Government)

C/ Santo Tomás de Aquino, s/n.
14071 Córdoba
+34 957 00 13 00

Oficina de Turismo de Puente Genil
(Puente Genil Local tourist Office)

Paseo Antonio Fernández Díaz, s/n
Parque de los Pinos. 14500 Puente Genil
+34 957 60 91 61
www.aytopuentegenil.es

Oficina de Turismo de Lucena
(Lucena Local tourist Office)

Castillo del Moral, planta baja.
1490 Lucena
+34 957 51 32 82
www.turlucena.com

Oficina de Turismo de Jauja
(Jauja Local tourist Office)

C/ Ronda s/n. 14911 Jauja
+34 957 51 90 51
www.rutadeltempranillo.org

Oficina de Turismo de Aguilar de la Frontera
(Aguilar de la Frontera Local tourist Office)

C/ Cuesta de Jesús, 2.
14920 Aguilar de la Frontera
+34 957 66 15 67
www.aguilardelafrontera.es





Natural Monuments



Sotos de la Albolafia

The area known as Sotos de la Albolafia is the short section of the River Guadalquivir as it passes through the city of Cordoba, lying between the Roman Bridge and the Bridge of San Rafael.

Its name derives from the old Arabic water wheel which still survives in this stretch of the river.

The Sotos de la Albolafia is best known for the huge number of bird species to be found living there. Over 120 species have been observed, which is quite surprising given that the total area amount to little more than two hectares. Among the rarest species sighted here are the squacco heron and the osprey, one of the most endangered raptors in the peninsula.

There is also a huge range of other species of bird: cormorant, grey heron, laughing gull, great black-backed gull, little bittern, night heron, lesser kestrel, black kite, lapwing, avocet, black-winged stint, moorhen, mallard, purple gallinule and white stork.

The vegetation is made up of a great variety of species, including tamarisk, poplar, ash, eucalyptus and alder, interspersed with bushes of oleander and bramble. On the river banks, and above all, on the small islands in the river, typical aquatic plant species grow, including bulrushes and water lilies, creating a thick mat of plants which sometimes completely hide the land beneath. In the flowering season, the area explodes into colour, with the differing hues of green providing the background to the spectacular pinks and yellows of the oleander and water lilies. The backdrop is completed by the stunning array of monuments crowding all around - the great Mosque-Cathedral, the Fortress of the Christian Monarchs, the Calahorra Tower, the old Roman Bridge, with the patron San Rafael looking down from his column in the shadow of the ancient Arabic flour mills.



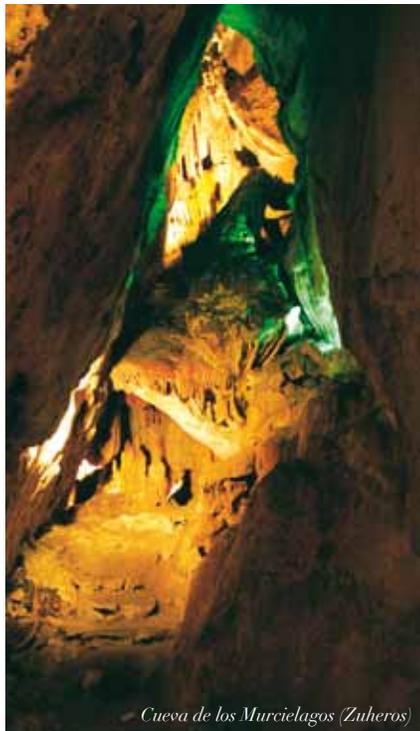
Cueva de los Murciélagos

The natural monument known as Cueva de los Murciélagos (“the Cave of the Bats”) is situated in the Sierras Subbéticas Natural Park, in the municipal borough of Zuheros.

It was recognised as a natural monument because of its value as a habitat for numerous species of bats, although is it also well-known because of the important archaeological finds made there.

Although it was not fully explored until 1938, the Cueva de los Murciélagos is best known worldwide for its cave paintings and archaeological remains. The series of excavations made over the years have established the cave as an important source of information into Neolithic cave activity, although there are remains dating even further back to the Middle Paleolithic period.

Another feature which has made the caves famous is the large number of cave paintings on the walls. Among these there are pictures of goats, the figure of a idol with prominent eyes and various human shapes. All these paintings date from the Neolithic (6000-3000 BC) and the Chalcolithic (3000-2000 BC - early Bronze Age) periods.



Further Information

Oficina Municipal de Turismo
de Zuheros (Zuheros Local Tourist Office)

Casilla de la Cruz Blanca
Ctra. Zuheros - Baena, km. 1.5
14870 Zuheros
+34 957 09 00 33
www.zuheros.es

Oficina de la Cueva
de los Murciélagos
(Cueva de los Murciélagos Office)

C/ Nueva, 1
+34 957 69 45 45
14870 Zuheros (Córdoba)





Sierra Morena of Cordoba



Routes through the Sierra Morena of Cordoba

The Sierra Morena spans across eight municipal boroughs in the province of Cordoba: Adamuz, Espiel, Hornachuelos, Obejo, Montoro, Villaharta, Villanueva del Rey and Villaviciosa de Cordoba. This territory measures 3,179 m² in total and has a population of 28,343 inhabitants, and it is crossed from north to south by the national main road N-432 which connects it to the dual carriageway A-4 linking Andalusia with the rest of Spain.

The route we propose links the natural parks of Hornachuelos and Cardena-Montoro, crossing the eight municipal boroughs which make up the Sierra Morena in Cordoba, by the following route: from Hornachuelos to Villaviciosa on the A-433, from Villaviciosa to Villanueva del Rey on the CP-229, from Villanueva del Rey to Espiel on the N-432, from Espiel to Villaharta on the N-432, from Villaharta to Obejo on the CO-421, from Obejo to Adamuz on the A-2101 and from Adamuz to Montoro on the CO-414.

The route runs through areas of typically Mediterranean vegetation, and countless streams and valleys, each with its own different distinguishing features, as we run from east to west. The routes make up a total of over 500km to cross the Sierra Morena on foot, by bike or on horseback. You can also go mountaineering in the Sierra del Castillo de Espiel or in the Peñon del Aguila in Adamuz, as well as doing water sports such as canoeing, sailing or swimming in the reservoirs and lakes in the area. Don't forget, too, that the Sierra Morena contains over 80% of the large game species in the province of Cordoba, which makes for plenty of opportunities to go hunting.

Finally, you cannot leave the Sierra Morena without visiting its villages. The different

towns in the area contain a wide range of historical monuments in different styles and from different periods. There, together with local people, you can enjoy the village festivals, customs and traditions and guarantee your visit to the Sierra Morena will be one you will not forget for a long time.



Detail of the fruit of the oak acorn

Further Information

Mancomunidad de la
Sierra Morena Cordobesa
(Combined Communities of the Sierra
Morena of Cordoba)

C/ Vereda, 73
14350 Cerro Muriano-Obejo
+34 957 35 02 73

www.sierramorena.org

Green Routes



La Campiña
Green Route

La Subbética
Green Route

Green Route

The Green Tracks (Vías Verdes) programme seeks to reclaim old railway routes, now disused, and convert them into places for walkers, touring cyclists and nature lovers. The use of motorised transport is forbidden on these roads, well away from normal roads, to guarantee the safety of users and ensure a higher degree of ease and comfort. The programme offers an excellent opportunity to give fresh value to an extraordinary Spanish railway heritage currently in disuse and will allow the interconnection of natural spaces, cultural areas and population centres by means of accessible public corridors. In the province of Cordoba there are currently two Green Tracks in use.

The Countryside Green Track (Vía Verde Campiña) has a route 28km long and wanders between the localities of Cordoba, Guadalcázar and La Carlota. Until 1970 the landscape of Cordoba and Seville provinces was crossed by a modest rail line (the “Marchenilla”), which with sharp curves traced an attractive path which today is available to the traveller who wishes to follow the route between Caliph Cordoba and Marchena, an outlying town in the province of Seville.

The Cordoban section of this line, which runs between Valchillón and La Carlota, was reclaimed in 2005 as a Green Track by the Ministry of the Environment. It consists of

Further Information

Mancomunidad de la Subbética
(Consorcio Vía Verde)
(Combined Communities of
La Subbética)

Ctra. Carcabuey-Zagrilla, km 5,750
+34 957 70 41 06
www.subbetica.org

Centro de Interpretación
del Tren del Aceite
(Olive Oil Train Information Centre)

Avda. Santa Teresa Jornet,
s/n. 14940 Cabra (Visitas concertadas)
+34 957 52 31 56 / +34 957 52 34 93

Consorcio Vía Verde de la Campiña
(La Campiña Green Route
Consortium)

Avda. Mediterráneo s/n.
14071 Córdoba
+34 957 21 13 89
www.viasverdes.com

a track with a mixed surface of asphalt and compacted earth, and includes a tunnel and four bridges (with continuous platform), all suited for rambling on foot or by bicycle and adapted for wheelchair users. Nearby both the monumental sites of Cordoba city and the baroque township of La Carlota can be visited.

The Green Track of the Subbética has involved the reclamation of the old “Olive Oil Train”

La Campiña Green Route

www.viasverdes.com





La Subbética Green Route

(Tren de Aceite) track in this area, for use and enjoyment by ramblers, touring cyclists and currently horse riders. Its course runs a total of 58km, through the towns of Lucena, Cabra, Doña Mencía, Zuheros and Luque.

The beautiful countryside of the Subbética natural park and the natural reserve of the lagoon of Salobral combine with preserved railway architecture consisting of bridges, stations, points huts and even a tunnel. The continuation of this Green Track runs into the province of Jaen under the name "Green Track of Olive Oil" (Vía Verde del Aceite), the two together forming all of the route of the old Olive Oil railway. The Cordoban section includes four zones designated for Active Sports. These are found at the Zuheros bridge (km 72.09) and the Sima bridge (km 83.85).

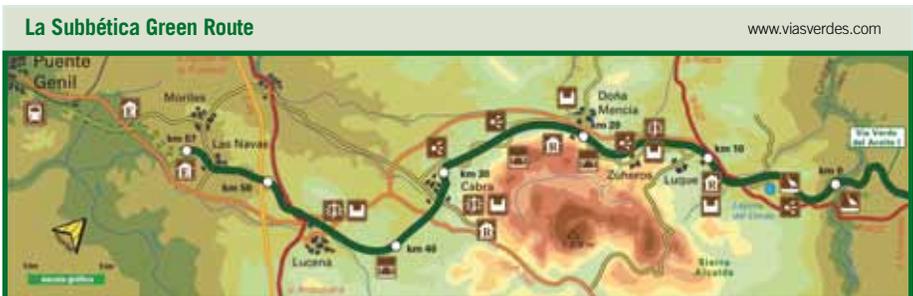


La Subbética Green Route

A total of four viaducts are included in the route of this track. The two most important, based on length and the view provided, are the Sima viaduct (132.30m.) and the Zuheros viaduct (104m). There are also four rest areas provided with benches, tables, rubbish bins and cycle stands. The Subbética Green Track includes five stations and a train halt.

At the Zuheros halt there is a Tourist Information Point, and Cabra station houses both an Interpretation Centre for Olive Oil and the seat of Subbética CIT. In Lucena station can be found the Centre for Leisure and Tourism, aptly named "La Estación".

Along the route can be found the 139m Plantio tunnel (at km 81.48), and the lagoon of Salobral or the Count, the largest in the Subbética natural reserve.





Long-distance Country Paths



Long-distance Country Paths

The Long-distance Country Paths (called GR in Spanish) are signposted public footpaths, avoiding wherever possible, tarmac roads or motorized traffic. Those classed as GR are all over 50km in length and link distant towns, running through areas, districts, regions and even countries which are often far apart from each other.

These routes are ideal for all fans of country walks, and those who love nature and enjoy looking at the countryside as they walk.

The GR are all signposted, which makes it practically impossible to get lost, and so are ideal for an outing with the whole family. You can also follow the paths in either direction.

Iznájar Reservoir



Country Paths in the Province of Cordoba

GR 7

This route runs right across the Iberian peninsula through the communities of Catalonia, Valencia, Murcia and Andalusia. It enters our province from the province of Jaen, in the municipal borough of Almedinilla, where a majestic landscape of olive trees meets the eye in full view of the Sierra de los Judios, leading on to the village of Aldea de la Concepcion. Here the path runs downhill towards the town of Priego de Cordoba, prime example of Baroque architecture in Cordoba province, with a number of outstanding monuments to be seen. After Priego de Cordoba comes the longest and toughest stretch of the route as it passes through the province, which is the stretch through the Sierras de las Subbeticas. Along the route, you can see the peaks of Tiñosa, the highest in the province at 1,570m, and Bermejo. 21.5 kilometres further down the route, we come to the village of Rute, home of aniseed liqueur and “mantecado” sweets. The last stretch of the GR7 in the province starts from here on, and leads to the province of Malaga, not before passing the Iznajar reservoir, known popularly as the “Lake of Andalusia”.

GR 43

The GR 43 route starts at the city of Cordoba and runs for 62 kilometres towards the province of Jaen through valleys of arable farmland. The first stopping place after the city of Cordoba is the town of Castro del Rio, 35.5 km away, and the traveller can see that Cordoba's rich historical heritage lies not only in the cities and villages, as shown by two Roman bridges, dating from the 1st or 2nd century AD, which span streams along the route. 13 kilometres from the city of Cordoba, the paths skirts a hilltop where the ancient Roman city of Ategua stood. The route continues, sometimes coinciding with country roads, as far as the town of Castro de Rio, where walkers can take a rest and enjoy what the town has to offer. The second stretch begins next and leads to the small village of Albendin, and 12 kilometres further along the route, travellers can stop at the cave "Cueva del Yeso", the longest horizontal cave in the province and the fifth longest in Spain. The cave was formed by underground streams, and so investigating inside the cave is only recommended for expert cave explorers. After crossing the stream called Torre del Moro, walkers can enjoy the stunning views of the open farmland with its traditional whitewashed farmhouses and a monumental cross which marks the arrival in Albendin and the end of the route.

River Almedinilla





River Guadalmellato

GR 48

The GR 48 route runs across the province of Cordoba linking the provinces of Jaen and Seville with a total length of 133 kilometres. It enters the province of Cordoba through the municipal borough of Hornachuelos, from which we recommend a visit to Posadas with its fascinating parish church of Santa Maria de las Flores. The second stretch of the route starts in Posadas, and leads to Almodovar del Rio, which impresses the visitor with its imposing 8th century castle. The third stretch leads to Santa Maria de Trassiera where a visit to the area around the Bejarano stream is a must. The fourth part of the route leads to the city of Cordoba itself, which will enchant the visitor who

strolls down its streets with its history, its art and the beauty of its three cultures. The fifth stretch leaves Cordoba and continues up to the urbanization of Encinares de Alcolea, where the next part leads the traveller to the reservoir of Guadalmellato. From there, after continuing on over 14 kilometres, you arrive at the municipal borough of Adamuz, with its attractive 16th century Clock Tower. The next stretch leads to the village of Montoro, a picturesque village built on a meander of the River Guadalquivir, with its parish church of San Bartolome and Las Donadas bridge. Here begins the last stretch of the GR 48 before it leaves the province of Cordoba, passing by the River Yeguas dam.

GR 40

The GR 40 route, also known as the Royal Soriana Cattle Track, enters the province of Cordoba from the region of La Mancha and runs for 103 kilometre as far as the city of Cordoba. The first stretch runs up to the municipal borough of El Guijo, after passing the hermitage of Nuestra Señora de Veredas. The second part leads the traveller to the the municipal borough of Pozoblanco, economic and administrative centre of the Los Pedroches Valley area, with its attractive hermitages and churches. The third stretch takes us to the Calatraveño Pass, with fine views over the surrounding countryside. The fourth stretch leads to the village of Villaharta, where you can visit the ancient barite mines of Guillermin, which were abandoned only a few years ago. The fifth stretch takes the walker to Cerro Muriano, close by the former spa of Santa Elisa, which although derelict and fallen into disuse, still retains some of its former charm. The monastery of Pedrique, which has been converted into a museum of the artist Aurelio Tena, is also well worth a visit. At Cerro Muriano the sixth and final stretch of the route starts, leading the traveller through spectacular countryside of pine and eucalyptus forests. The route enters the city of Cordoba via an old Roman bridge over the Pedroches stream.



Cerro Muriano

GR 39

The GR 39 route, also known as the Mesta Cattle Track, connects the provinces of Ciudad Real with Badajoz and passes through the municipal boroughs of Los Pedroches and El Guadiato. The first part of the route coincides with the GR40 and goes as far as the municipal borough of ElGuijo. Here it joins the Mesta Cattle Track and leads to the village of Hinojosa del Duque, along a stretch of over 37 kilometres. It is worth your while stopping here to visit the Church of San Juan Bautista, popularly known as the Cathedral of the Sierra. The third part of the route leads to the village of Valsequillo, and is difficult going in winter, as it passes over a number of streams which may be in spate in this season of the year. The fourth stretch leaves Valsequillo, through the hamlet of La Granjuela and reaches the town of Fuente Objeuna. Here begins the fifth and final stretch of the route, taking us to the municipal borough of La Coronada in the province of Badajoz.

Further Information

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Federación Andaluza de Montañismo (Andalusian federation of Mountaineering)

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+34 958 29 13 40





The Guadalquivir Valley



Encinarejo. Meandro del Guadalquivir.

The Guadalquivir Valley

The River Guadalquivir, from its entrance into the province of Cordoba close to Villa del Rio all the way to its exit near Palma del Rio, is the main focal point of the whole area. The Guadalquivir Valley encompasses not only the river, but all the tributaries and reservoirs which irrigate the valley, making its lands fertile and offering, in addition to the visual aspect, a place where visitors can do a wide range of water sports, go fishing or simply enjoy a trip in a rowing boat. There are a large number of reservoirs to choose from: El Bembezar, El Rio Yeguas, El Martin Gonzalo, El Embalse del Salto, El Retortillo or La Breña all grace the Guadalquivir Valley with their peaceful waters.

The Guadalquivir Valley provides a rich natural setting with breathtaking views and valuable ecosystems. Following the tributaries of the river upstream we reach two of the largest natural parks well known for their stunning countryside: the Cardeña-Montoro Natural Park and the Hornachelos Natural Park. Here in thousands of hectares of countryside, different country routes allow us to enjoy the spectacular views of the country and the unique wildlife and plants. The abundance of deer and wild boar makes the parks ideal sites for hunting large game.

The historical and cultural heritage of the Guadalquivir Valley is a major part of its attractiveness. The wealth of historical interest to be found in the towns of Palma del Rio, Montoro or Bujalance, as well as in the city of Cordoba itself, in the middle of the valley, is added to the vast number of historic buildings to be found in all the villages, as well as the remains of settlements which sprang up in ancient times in the fertile river valley. The most amazing of these remains is the Castle of Almodovar, from which we can observe la Vega, la Campiña and la Sierra, the names given to the three different systems which make up the valley.

Different water features make an added attraction of special interest. Waterfalls, irrigation channels, water wheels, mills and bridges can be found all along the course of the River Guadalquivir looking down like impartial observers on the water passing through this land.

In the valley, too, there is the strange phenomenon of the settlements made by Carlos III, which gave rise to the colonies of La Carlota and Fuente Palmera, whose history as colonists brought from central Europe to repopulate Andalusia is a fascinating one.



*Villafranca de Cordoba.
Dawn of the Guadalquivir river island*



In this extremely fertile valley, the lands are suited to a wide range of crops. In La Campiña, near towns like Bujalance and Cañete de las Torres, the olive tree holds sway, where the rich quality of the olive oil it produces can be tasted in any of the numerous olive presses. Enormous quantities of top quality fruit and vegetables are produced in the allotments in the Guadalquivir Valley and it is particularly attractive to see huge orchards of orange or other fruit trees cultivated and irrigated following traditional methods. The richness of the land has given rise to excellent quality of the local dishes, lovingly prepared and served in the local restaurants, inns and eating places in villages up and down the valley.

Further Information

Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir
(Combined Communities of the Upper Guadalquivir)

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www.altoguadalquivir.com

Mancomunidad de la Vega del Guadalquivir
(Combined Communities of the Vega del Guadalquivir)

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+34 957 63 20 60
www.vegadelguadalquivir.org

Asociación para el Desarrollo Rural del Medio Guadalquivir
Association for Rural Development of the Guadalquivir

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14730 Posadas
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www.medioguadalquivir.org
www.valledelguadalquivir.es



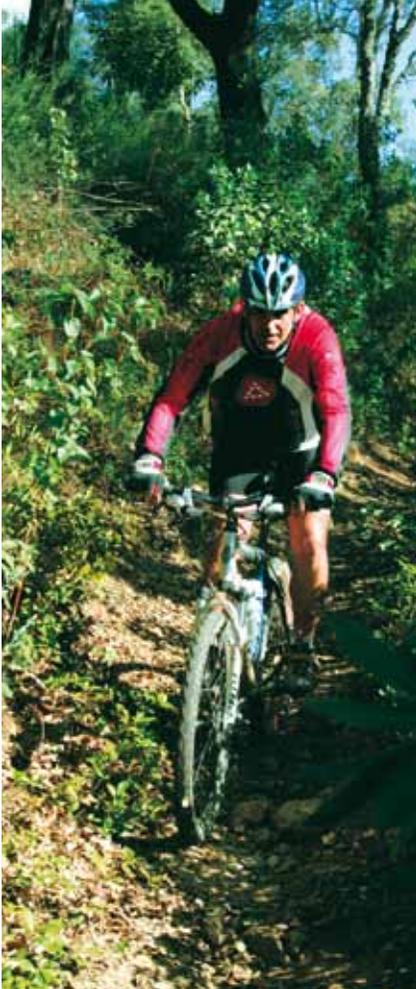


A person wearing a white cap and a red life vest is kayaking in a red kayak on a river. The river is surrounded by dense green trees and foliage, with a large fallen log visible on the left bank. The water is calm and reflects the surrounding greenery. A dark green vertical bar is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text 'Active Tourism'.

Active Tourism

Doing sports in the open air has become over the last few years one of the best ways to enjoy nature and to do the tourist trails. To give the public easier access to these activities, a number of companies organising Active Tourism have sprung up recently, who organise these sports for everyone who wants to have a go. In natural country settings around our province, you can try a whole range of activities and sports:

Routes by Bike



- **Routes by Bike:** these routes can follow Natural Parks, Green Routes, long-distance country paths or other routes to be found all around the province. They are ideal for all the family, since there are different levels of difficulty and there's always something to suit everyone.
- **Country walks:** on Green Routes, short- and long-distance country paths or other routes to be found all around the province

Climbing



- **Routes on horseback:** an alternative way to get to know the countryside along Green Routes, country paths and other routes in the province. The itinerary is arranged to suit the level and experience of the participants.

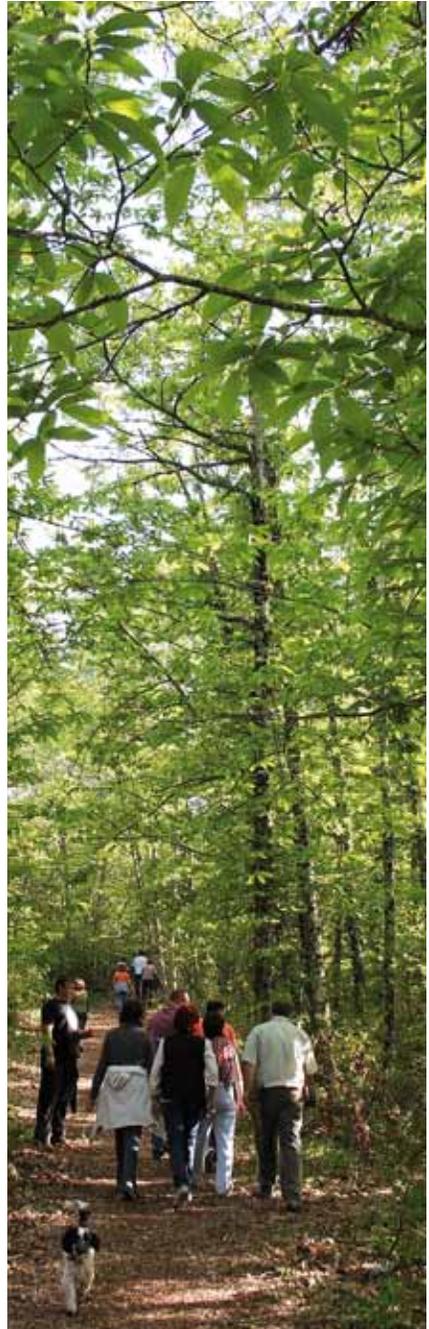
- **Cave exploring:** first and foremost is the safety of our visitors, so the outings are made to caves which need no special knowledge or experience. Not recommended to those who feel claustrophobic or are unfit, as the route involves squeezing through crevices in the rock or sliding down in the mud, but once you've tried it you'll want to go again!

- **Canoeing and water sports:** you can take part in these sports in calm waters such as the Reservoir of Iznazar or in the rapids like the River Guadajoz as it flows past Baena.

- **Climbing:** you can do this sport in any of the mountain ranges in the province and it is also open to those who have never tried it before and aren't very fit. We climb up rock faces along pre-prepared routes with different levels of difficulty to suit all climbers.

- **Bird-watching:** there are routes in the wetlands in the south of the province as well as round the Lagunas del Sur lakes in Cordoba and the reservoirs, where a wide range of protected bird species nest. Other routes take visitors to rocky mountain peaks to get a closer look at birds of prey.

- **Paintball:** try this game, which consists of shooting your friends with paint-filled balls.



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