Walking Andalucia's Sierra de Aracena



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Spain	3 & 5	694kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Far from southern Spain's busy coast, the Sierra de Aracena offers a taste of traditional Andalusian life. Located north of Huelva in the far west of the region, it's a rugged land of rolling hills cloaked in oak forests, medieval castles, and whitewashed villages stark against the green mountains. Join our expert guides to explore fertile countryside where prized Ibérico pigs roam, mining heritage runs deep, and hilltop hamlets remain much the same as they were centuries ago. Between walks, stay in charming Aracena, a town set within a natural park renowned for its Moorish architecture, gastronomy, and one of Europe's best-preserved cave systems.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Exploring one of Andalucia's most beautiful and protected areas, rich in forests, wildlife and rural heritage
- Walking through landscapes shaped by holm oak, cork oak and chestnut forests, home to the iconic black Iberian pig
- Discovering ancient towns such as Almonaster la Real, Linares de la Sierra, Alájar and Fuenteheridos
- Learning about the region's mining heritage and orange groves

- Staying in Aracena, a welcoming base with traditional restaurants and easy access to walking routes

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Gatwick or London Heathrow, including baggage and transfers
- A choice of 2 guided walks per day with local leaders (on walking days)
- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 7 nights' accommodation in Aracena
- 7 breakfasts & 7 dinners at the hotel
- Welcome drink on arrival & selected drinks with dinner
- All in-destination transport

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Day 1 **Arrival in Aracena**

Fly from the UK to Faro and transfer to our hotel in Aracena. The journey from Faro Airport takes approximately 2 hours to 2 hours 30 minutes by road. If time allows, we'll offer a short introductory walk around the local area.

Day 2 **Aracena and Linares de la Sierra**

Today's walks take us through the Sierra de Aracena y Picos de Aroche Natural Park, one of Andalucía's most important protected landscapes. Mediterranean woodland blankets the hills, with holm oak, cork oak and chestnut trees providing welcome shade along the trails.

Both options walk through Linares de la Sierra, a traditional village surrounded by wooded hills and fertile countryside.

Option 1: Linares de la Sierra to Aracena

Distance: 4.9 miles (8 km)
Ascent: 978 feet (298 m)
Descent: 308 feet (94 m)

Starting in Linares de la Sierra, we follow a gently undulating route through Mediterranean woodland towards Aracena.

Option 2: Aracena, Linares de la Sierra and La Molinilla Circular Walk

Distance: 9.3 miles (15 km)
Ascent: 1,109 feet (338 m)
Descent: 1,109 feet (338 m)

Our longer circular walk begins in Aracena and leads through the surrounding hills to Linares de la Sierra. We return via the wooded slopes of La Molinilla, passing through forests of oak and chestnut along the way.

Day 3 Zumajo Dam and the Orange Groves

The province of Huelva has a mining history stretching back thousands of years. Today's walks explore the distinctive landscape around Rio Tinto, where riverside trails, forest paths and peaceful orange groves contrast with the area's remarkable industrial heritage. We will pass by an active mine and enjoy a stop at a viewpoint on the way to the start of our walk.

Option 1: El Campillo to Rio Tinto

Distance: 4.9 miles (8 km)
Ascent: 540 feet (165 m)
Descent: 505 feet (154 m)

Starting in El Campillo, we follow quiet trails towards Rio Tinto. Our route takes us beside orange groves and through areas of woodland, offering a gentler introduction to this striking landscape.

Option 2: Rio Tinto and Zumajo Dam

Distance: 8 miles (13 km)
Ascent: 715 feet (218 m)
Descent: 715 feet (218 m)

Our longer circular route begins in the mining village of Rio Tinto and passes through extensive orange groves. The varied trail follows riverbanks and forest paths, with sections along quiet lanes and among the orange trees.

Day 4 Almonaster la Real

Today's destination is Almonaster la Real, an attractive hill town in the heart of the Sierra de Aracena y Picos de Aroche Natural Park. Its historic centre is crowned by a 9th-century castle-fortress and the church-mosque of Nuestra Señora de la Concepción.

The surrounding landscape is equally rewarding, with grazing pastures, chestnut groves and woodlands filled with cork and holm oak.

Option 1: Calabazares to Almonaster la Real

Distance: 4.3 miles (7 km)
Ascent: 690 feet (211 m)
Descent: 350 feet (108 m)

Starting in Calabazares, we head west through the peaceful countryside towards Almonaster la Real, passing the town's historic hilltop castle and church-mosque before reaching our walk's end.

Option 2: The Countryside Around Almonaster la Real

Distance: 8.6 miles (14 km)
Ascent: 1,086 feet (331 m)
Descent: 1,086 feet (331 m)

Our longer circular walk explores the pastures and woodland surrounding Almonaster la Real. Along the way, we pass cork and holm oaks, chestnut groves and areas filled with poplar, willow, myrtle and rockrose.

Day 5 Free Day

Today is free for you to relax at the hotel or explore Aracena at your own pace.

You may like to visit the Gruta de las Maravillas, an impressive cave system filled with underground lakes and dramatic rock formations (open daily, although special schedules may apply on certain holidays. Entrance fee applies). Alternatively, walk up to Aracena Castle (entrance fee applies) for panoramic views over the surrounding hills or stroll through the town's whitewashed streets and traditional squares.

You could also visit the Ham Museum (entrance fee applies) to learn more about the area's cured-meat heritage or sample local specialities such as Ibérico ham and chestnut-based dishes. For a more restful day, make the most of the hotel's terraces, pool or spa facilities. Additional charges may apply.

Please note that attraction opening days and times may change at short notice. We recommend checking directly with the attraction before visiting to avoid disappointment.

Day 6 The Hills of Aracena

Dense woodland covers much of the Sierra de Aracena, nourished by a humid climate influenced by the Atlantic. Oak and chestnut trees line the trails, while the surrounding pastures are home to grazing cattle and native black Ibérico pigs.

Both options explore the countryside between Aracena and Corteconcepción, passing through a landscape shaped by traditional farming and the region's celebrated food heritage.

Option 1: Corteconcepción to Aracena

Distance: 5 miles (8 km)
Ascent: 308 feet (94 m)
Descent: 719 feet (219 m)

Starting in Corteconcepción, we follow shaded paths through the wooded hills towards Aracena. This shorter route offers an easy-going way to enjoy the oak and chestnut forests characteristic of the natural park.

Option 2: Aracena and Corteconcepción

Distance: 8 miles (13 km)
Ascent: 856 feet (261 m)
Descent: 856 feet (261 m)

Our longer circular walk heads north from Aracena through peaceful woodland and traditional pastureland. After passing through Corteconcepción, we return to Aracena by a different route through the surrounding hills.

Day 7 Alájar and Fuenteheridos

Today we journey west to explore the villages and fertile countryside around Alájar and Fuenteheridos. Natural springs have long supported the area's orchards and market gardens, creating a green landscape of small fields, woodland and traditional villages.

Option 1: Alájar and Fuenteheridos

Distance: 5 miles (8 km)
Ascent: 1,010 feet (307 m)
Descent: 1,300 feet (396 m)

Our shorter walk starts in Alájar and leads towards Fuenteheridos through a fertile landscape shaped by the area's plentiful springs. We pass orchards before arriving in this attractive whitewashed village.

Option 2: Linares de la Serra, Alajar & Fuenteheridos

Distance: 8 miles (13 km)
Ascent: 1,530 feet (465 m)
Descent: 1,990 feet (605 m)

Starting in Linares de la Sierra, this longer walk passes through the village of Alájar and the viewpoint of Peña de Arias Montano, before finishing in Fuenteheridos. It follows countryside paths through woodland, pastureland and rolling hills typical of the Sierra de Aracena.

Day 8 Departure

Transfer from Aracena to Faro Airport for your flight back to the UK. The journey takes approximately 2 hours to 2 hours 30 minutes by road.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 3

Slightly longer walks, mostly on well-trodden paths, with some gentle gradients plus stiles and steps possible. Typically, 5-6 miles (8-10km) with around 650ft (200m) of ascent.



Moderate walking grade 5

Some walking experience needed. Full day walks which may include some short but steep ascents and descents throughout the day, and varied terrain. Regular stops. Typically, 8-9 miles (13-15km) with around 1,300ft (400m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Barceló Aracena

The Hotel Barceló Aracena is a modern 4-star property set in the Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche Natural Park, offering traditional Andalusian charm. It's an ideal base for exploring western Andalusia on foot, with opportunities to discover dramatic caves, gentle rivers and traditional white-washed villages all in easy reach. Rooms come equipped with all mod cons for a relaxing stay, and facilities include an outdoor pool surrounded by lush gardens and a wellness centre for a range of spa treatments (payable locally).

Your evenings

On the return from your daily walks, our local leaders will tell you about the next day's activities and answer any questions you may have. During the evening, why not relax with your tour manager and companions with a drink or two.

FOOD & DRINK

Our holidays in Aracena are on a half-board basis and include breakfast and evening meal. Breakfast and dinner are buffet style. Dinner includes selected drinks.

Lunch (payable locally)

Lunch can be arranged upon request. Please inform the hotel reception before 17:00 (local time) on the day prior. The cost is €16 per person, payable directly at the hotel.

Alternatively, the town offers several supermarkets, cafés, and coffee shops where guests can purchase food, snacks, and drinks. These options are often more economical than the hotel's packed lunch service.

ROOMS

The hotel has 69 rooms in total. You are staying in a Deluxe Room (25 m²). It comes with a 43-inch TV, minibar (at an additional charge), kettle, king-size or twin beds, a fully equipped bathroom, and free Wi-Fi. Additionally, it boasts a juliet balcony. For an additional cost, you can upgrade to a Deluxe Room with a Panoramic View, subject to availability.

ABOUT YOUR STAY

Set within spacious, beautifully designed grounds inspired by Aracena's hilltop castle and the region's whitewashed villages, the Barceló Aracena Hotel offers a peaceful and welcoming base after a day out on the trails. You can unwind beside the outdoor pool, surrounded by lush gardens and views of the surrounding countryside, or sit by the Pool Bar for light refreshments. Indoors, the hotel's Wellness Centre provides a soothing retreat, complete with a heated pool, thermal circuit and a choice of revitalising treatments (extra charges apply). Please note that the outdoor swimming pool is open during the summer months from beginning of June until the end of September, weather permitting.

TRAVEL DETAILS

Getting there

Address:
Carretera Nacional 433 Sevilla a,
Av. Huelva, Km. 88, 21200 Aracena,
Huelva, Spain

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel.

As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure.

Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting.

For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice.

Passport Requirements

This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long.
We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues.

If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website.

Visa Requirements

Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling.
British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website:
https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Without flights

Tailor your journey to suit you by booking your holiday 'without flights' and you'll have the freedom to book your own flights from your local airport. If you choose this option, transfers are not included in the price. Unfortunately, we are unable to offer our shared transport service in this destination. Anyone arriving on a separate flight to the HF Holidays group must arrange their own onward travel to and from the destination airport.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Safety Information

Walking Safety

Walks may be changed for safety reasons and are subject to a maximum and minimum number of guests.

Leaders always consider the safety of the group as a whole and may need to alter or curtail the walk if the conditions dictate. Your leader may refuse to accept a guest where clothing, equipment or behaviour is unsuitable. In the event of a problem all leaders carry a mobile phone, first aid kit, group shelter, spare maps and a compass.

Please note: If you choose to leave the group your leader is no longer responsible for you.

In the event of a problem

If you become separated from your group, please stay where you are. Your leader will retrace their steps to find you.

All our walk leaders carry a mobile phone, group shelter, spare maps and a compass. In the unlikely event your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack and call the emergency services (call 999 in the UK, or 112 overseas).

Please then try to call the hotel where you are staying to let them know there is a problem.

We advise you carry a copy of these trip notes or note down the contact phone number for your accommodation (details in the travel section) should you need them in case of emergency.

If you have any cause for complaints regarding accommodation, you should notify your leader who can then attempt to rectify the problem.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Drinking Water

Drinking Water

Standards for drinking water vary widely around the world. In many destinations, tap water may not be safe to drink, brush your teeth with, or use for making ice. Where advised, you should drink only bottled or treated water and ensure that bottle seals are intact before use. If bottled water is unavailable, water should be boiled or filtered.

Staying well hydrated is particularly important in hot climates and during active holidays. Carry water with you and drink regularly.

If you are unsure about local water safety, check official country-specific health advice before travel, or ask your accommodation or local guides for guidance once you arrive.

Ticks information

Ticks are tiny creatures that live in vegetation and can attach themselves to passing animals or walkers and may carry a risk of Lyme Disease. Please refer to NHS advice and guidelines for information: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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