



Royal  
Botanic Garden  
Edinburgh



## Architecture & Gardens of Andalucia including Patios of Cordoba

2 – 9 May 2019

8 days from £1,755 per person

### Itinerary

#### Day 1 – Thursday 2 May 2019

We depart on an afternoon flight from Edinburgh to Seville (approximate flight times 1550/2000hrs). On arrival in Seville we will transfer to our comfortable hotel. A **light supper** will be served.

#### Day 2 – Friday 3 May 2019

After breakfast the whole day is spent in **Seville**. We begin by visiting the **Maria-Luisa Park** and also the **Plaza de España**, laid out in 1929 for a “Fair of the Americas”. This is among the most impressive public spaces in Spain. Nearby is the Tobacco Factory where Carmen - in Bizet’s opera - worked as a cigar maker. Later you will see the **Gardens of Murillo**, planted in honour of the famous painter from Seville, and Seville’s majestic **Cathedral**.

In the afternoon we will visit Seville’s **Orange Tree Courtyard** which belonged to the old mosque and the gardens of the **Royal Palaces of the Alcázar**. The Alcázar is a magnificent palace which mixes Christian and Moorish styles and has several patios and salons all of which are grand and very highly decorated. The ceilings, in particular, are incredibly intricate in design, one with a wooden dome decorated with red, green and gold cells inscribed with Arabic. After the wonder of the palace it is refreshing to walk through the beautiful gardens made up of a mixture of several eras. There is an “English Garden” unlike any garden in this country as the trees and plants are much larger! The gardens are rambling and a leisurely walk here shows orange trees, eucalyptus, palms and many others. You may also see the “Flower of Spain”, so-called because of its colours of the Spanish flag. The gardens are like those of the Alhambra but not so large. There are many fountains and places to sit and admire the great variety of trees and palms.



This evening we will enjoy a **welcome dinner**.

### **Day 3 – Saturday 4 May 2019**

This morning we visit the private gardens at the Palace of the Adelantados Mayores (governors) of Andalusia, better known as the **Casa de Pilatos**, which was chiefly built between the 15th and 16th centuries. There are two gardens here: the Large Garden, which was originally used as an orchard in the primitive Mudejar palace and experienced a deep transformation after the arrival in Seville in 1568 of the Neapolitan architect, Benvenuto Tortello, and the Small Garden which features a pond with a fountain decorated with a bronze of a young Bacchus.

Following our visit we continue to **Las Dueñas Palace**, which was built between the 15th and 16th centuries and is one of the greatest historical attractions of the city. The building itself, including styles from Gothic-Mudejar to the Renaissance, it has significant architectural interest as does its several gardens and patios. The courtyard garden, are divided into four parts but are kept in keeping with its traditional Islamic style, includes tiled paths and a centralized raised fountain.

The remainder of the day and evening is free at leisure. As today is the first day of the **Seville Spring Fair**, the city will be especially lively and the streets will be filled with parades of beautifully decorated horse drawn carriages, men and women in traditional Andalusian costume and much music and dance.

### **Day 4 – Sunday 5 May 2019**

After breakfast we head for **Ronda**, a spectacular town rising dramatically amid a ring of dark, angular mountains set above the gorges of the River Tajo. We will see the **Alameda del Tajo Gardens** set on the edge of the spectacular gorge offering fantastic views. These were completed in the early 19th century and give fine views over the plains. We have also included a visit to the **Palacio de Mondragon**, whose Moorish courtyards and gardens that evoke memories of kings and governors who called Ronda home.

In the afternoon we continue to our hotel where evening is at leisure.

### **Day 5 – Monday 6 May 2019**

Following breakfast we travel to **Granada** to visit the famous **Alhambra Palace** with its **Generalife Gardens**. The Alhambra has one of the most spectacular sites in the world. Alhambra means "red castle", and the buildings are of a seductive pink stone and were built in the 14th Century. We will also visit the gardens of **The Generalife** which was the summer palace of the Sultans of Granada in the 14th Century. In the afternoon, your local guide will accompany you as you wander through the medieval streets of the Albaicín, glimpsing several "**Carmens**", which are the enclosed gardens typical of the Moorish era of Granada and of which many good examples have been maintained by the Christians.



Evening is free at leisure.

### Day 6 – Tuesday 7 May 2019

After breakfast we depart on an all day excursion into the **Sierra Nevada** mountains for a gentle walk looking at the indigenous flora and fauna and enjoying the superb mountain scenery. Lunch is included in a local restaurant. In the late afternoon we return to our hotel Granada where the rest of the evening is at leisure. We also offer the option of a **flamenco show** at Jardine de Zoraya.

### Day 7 – Wednesday 8 May 2019

After breakfast we depart for **Córdoba**, passing through a landscape with millions of olive trees. We will visit the **Great Mosque** with its Orange Grove, which was first laid out in the late 8th Century and must be one of the true wonders of the world. Outside is a huge patio covered in orange trees - **Patio de los Naranjos** - which was originally covered with fountains used for bathing before entering the mosque. On entering you are struck by the vast number of pillars supporting the arches with their distinctive red and white tiles which are so much a symbol of the whole design. The mosque is now a mixture of Moorish and Christian with chapels incorporated into the building and it is stunning in both its appearance and atmosphere. The gardens of **The Royal Palaces of the Alcázar** are Moorish in style, laid out in rows around long pools with numerous fountains. The sound of the water and the smells of the garden make it an experience for all the senses. At the end of one of these long pools are statues of Columbus together with Ferdinand and Isabel symbolising their meeting in Córdoba.

We transfer to our hotel where this evening is free at leisure. There will also be an opportunity for those who wish to visit some private patio gardens.

### Day 8 – Thursday 9 May 2019

After breakfast this morning we will explore on foot some of the private **patio gardens** that will be open for the Patio Festival in Córdoba. No two patios are exactly the same and as we wander from one to another, we can expect an ever-changing kaleidoscope of colour and fragrance. We will also have an opportunity to visit the **Viana Palace**, which has wonderful gardens itself and no fewer than fourteen patios. The fourteenth-century palace is now a museum, with an extraordinary collection of furniture, tapestries, porcelains, ceramics and paintings and a cynegetic library of 7000 volumes (entrance not included). **Note: the usual opening times for the Patios are 11.00am – 2.00pm and 6.00pm to 10.00pm, so you also have an opportunity for those who wish to view some of them on Wednesday evening. There is no entrance charge for the gardens but there is a collection box by the door for donations. Please note that the streets in Cordoba are narrow and cobbled and there are some steps to negotiate.**



Later this afternoon we will begin our journey to **Seville** where we will arrange a late lunch/early dinner for the group before returning to the airport in time for our return flight to Edinburgh (approx.

flight times: 2035/2250).

**Included in the price**

- Seven nights' accommodation on a bed and breakfast basis: three nights at the 4-star Silken Al-Andalus Palace, Seville, one night at the 4-star Catalonia Reina Victoria Wellness & Spa, Ronda; two nights at the 4-star Melia Granada; one night at the 4-star Ayre Cordoba hotel (or similar hotels)
- Light Supper on Day 1, Welcome drink and dinner Day 2, one lunch and a farewell meal
- Return scheduled flights from Edinburgh to Seville
- Visits to Alhambra Palace and Generalife Gardens (Granada), Great Mosque, Royal Palaces and Patio Gardens (Córdoba), Cathedral, Alcázar, Maria Luisa Park and Gardens of Murillo (Seville), Alamedo del Tajo Gardens, Palacio de Mondragon (Ronda)
- Excursion to Sierra Nevada mountains with a local botanist
- Services of a Brightwater Holidays Tour Manager and local guides

**Not included (per person)**

- Single room supplement £385 **If you would be willing to share then please do let us know**
- Optional Flamenco show £45 (Transfers and show. Subject to minimum numbers)
- Entry to private patio gardens (this gives you the freedom to visit as many as you wish)
- Insurance

**To make a booking please contact Brightwater Holidays direct on 01334 657155.**

**Priority booking for Friends of RBGE will open immediately until the 31 January 2019.**

**Bookings for non-Friends will open on the 1 February 2019 at a supplement of £40.00 per person.**

**Please note the flights from Edinburgh to Seville only operate twice a week (only one flight a day) so flights will fill up quickly. We advise you to book early to avoid disappointment.**