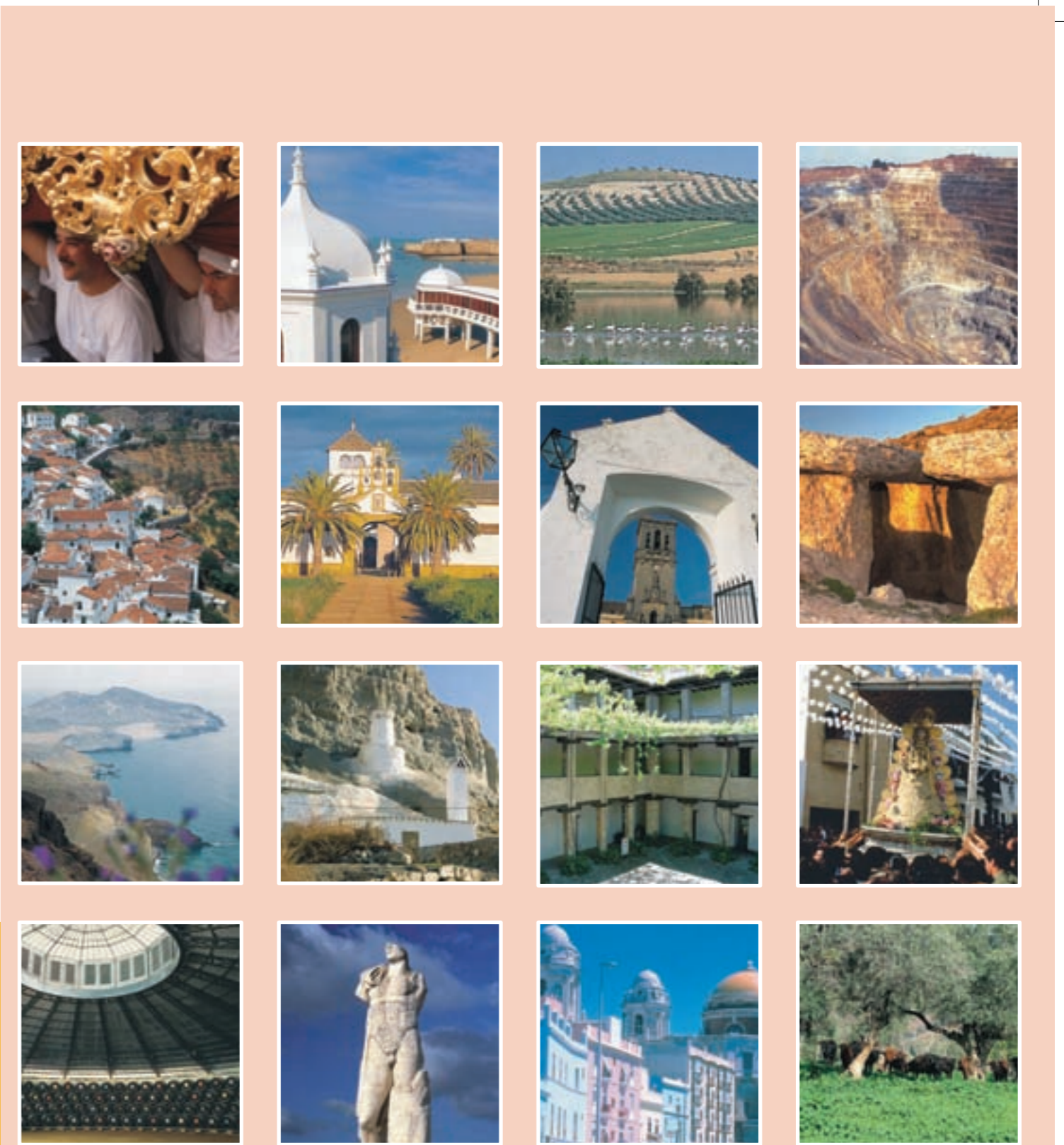


Andalucía



Andalusia, the Betica, al-Andalus..., words created from the **landscapes** that men and women formed through history, with as many homes as distant territories, as many cities as open spaces, as many sierras as coasts, as many forests as deserts, and all having something familiar and distinct, a little something which differentiates them.

Andalusia is made up of fragments of land, nourished by those who arrived and by those who left, by those who remained, by those who departed, by those from the north and by those from the south, by the Atlantic and by the Mediterranean. And these **traces** remain, in one's eye and in one's ear, in touch and in smell, in desires and dreams, in tastes and in thoughts.

Look and you will see around you, in the **farmlands** of the Sierra de Aracena, where holm oaks and enclosures bare silent witness to those, who from long ago, shared the sowing with the cork oaks and tending the animals (Jabugo hams, "appellation d' origine"), between the hidden villages, dominated by castles (Cortegana) and stone churches (Templar Church of Aracena). Some still retain evidence of Roman villas (Cortelazor), al-Andalus mosques and the smell of recently toasted chestnuts.

At the foot of the sierras there remains the memory of thousands of men, who dug out the earth to extract mineral



treasures (Huelva Museum) and construct an opencast landscape, face to face with the elements (Museum and Mines of Riotinto). This path moves on down to the sea in the wagons of a train, to the loading bay in the **Huelva estuary** (Queen Victoria district

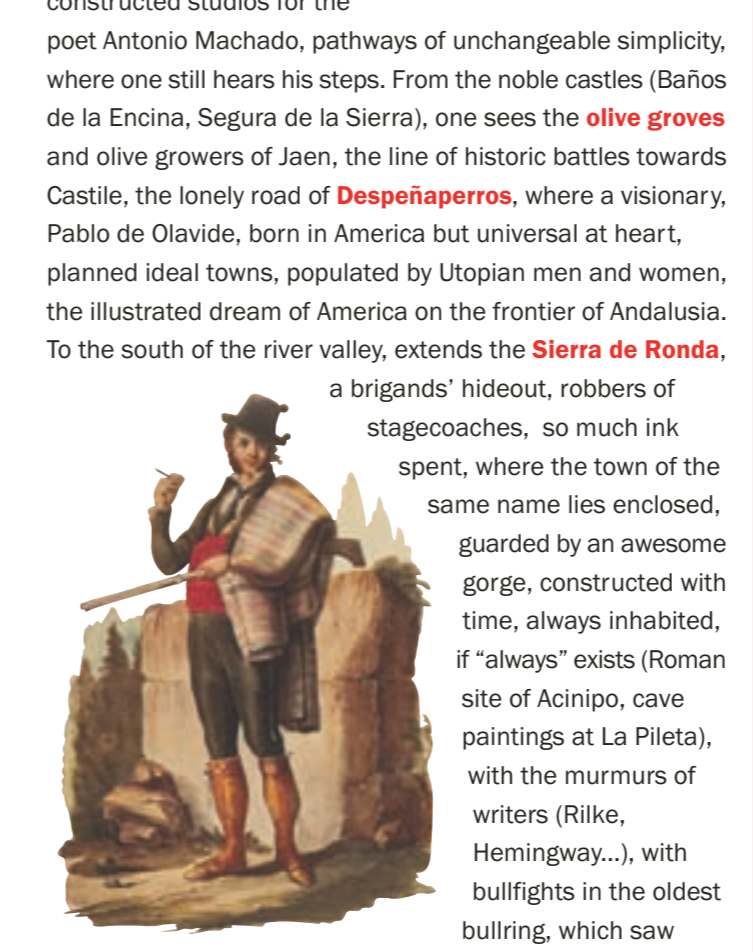
of Huelva), where it smells of the sea, of the marshes of the Rocio, of red earth, of blue sky and of the Atlantic. The Atlantic, which runs the length of its beaches, from Ayamonte to Cadiz, heeding the destinies, of those like Christopher Columbus (Huelva, places relating to him; the Monastery of La Rabida), or of Juan Ramon Jimenez, who, towards the end of his life, looked out from the other side of the ocean (birthplace of the poet, Moguer), and many others, who departed hoping to return. The ships, but not all of them, returned to the **Bay of Cadiz**. There are so many gold galleons there, sleeping in silence, desirous of seeing the the colourful seafront, the cathedral, the streets of the Phoenician city (Cadiz Museum), and the lookout towers, from which the ghosts of those that went and returned await them. And further south, having come from afar, so far, licking the waters of the **Straits**, the silvery tunes waited for them in the ancient nets (canning factories of Barbate; Roman salting tanks in Baelo Claudia, Bolonia); formerly food for sailors and now treasures of the lost seas. There is a white sculptured landscape, between the coast and



the mountains, where impossible streets hang from the castles, dominating the mountains, rivers and Spanish firs, the most ancient trees in Europe, and where remote mysterious thoughts lie high up in the whitewashed villages, **The White Villages** of the Sierra de Cadiz (Zahara de la Sierra, Grazalema...). The **old wine cellars** are built from lime and wood of the vine, the most exquisite young wines, the most tended flavours (El Puerto de Santa María, Chiclana, Sanlúcar de Barrameda...), those most favoured by English gentlemen, those who smile in the fairs, those which are shut up in the magical barrels, like the spirits of desire. And amidst the wine, the stately streets of Jerez de la Frontera, the Carthusian city, the city of flamenco, of thoroughbred horses. The ranches of fighting bulls spread out from here (Medina Sidonia, Benalup...), the golden countryside, the figures which are silhouetted in black on the roads of Andalusia. The paths of sand and sun, which also navigate the waters of the great river, which they call the Guadalquivir. The almost lost walls of the cities reach out to it, the thousand and one daughters of the Andalusian countryside. Large cities like **Seville** and **Cordoba**, which take possession of the ancient symbols of the passage of time (Alcazar, Cathedral of Seville; Mosque, Jewish Quarter, Medinat Al Zahara in Cordoba), together with the new symbols of modern adventure, bridges to the future. **Medium-sized towns** which, from their towers, their churches, their palaces (Network of Medium-sized Towns) and their legends dominate the agricultural towns of always; Roman (Route of the Roman Betica), Mediaeval, Renaissance,

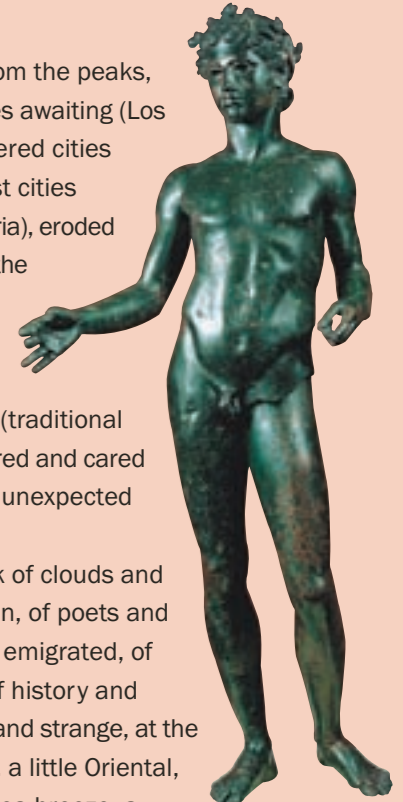


Baroque, from the Enlightenment or the Nineteenth Century, county towns, rich and beautiful, even to-day. Following the beginnings of the Guadalquivir, which gradually extend towards Jaen, the seas of olive groves (Olive Oil Museum, Baeza), where the revival of polished stone (Ubeda and Baeza), constructed studios for the poet Antonio Machado, pathways of unchangeable simplicity, where one still hears his steps. From the noble castles (Baños de la Encina, Segura de la Sierra), one sees the **olive groves** and olive growers of Jaen, the line of historic battles towards Castile, the lonely road of **Despeñaperros**, where a visionary, Pablo de Olavide, born in America but universal at heart, planned ideal towns, populated by Utopian men and women, the illustrated dream of America on the frontier of Andalusia. To the south of the river valley, extends the **Sierra de Ronda**, a brigands' hideout, robbers of stagecoaches, so much ink spent, where the town of the same name lies enclosed, guarded by an awesome gorge, constructed with time, always inhabited, if "always" exists (Roman site of Acinipo, cave paintings at La Pileta), together with the murmurs of writers (Rilke, Hemingway...), with bullfights in the oldest bullring, which saw



blood, pain, grief and applause in its enchanting steets. This sierra ends before it reaches the sea, the Mediterranean, where its history is washed by the waters of Phoenicians, Carthaginians and Byzantines, those who came from the Orient, and those who arrived from the North (Malaga Museum), waters which purr the latest names of its beaches, those, which only two centuries ago, between the coasts of **Malaga** and Granada, saw modernity (Sugar refinery of Motril). Nineteenth Century streets and new suburbs and names from abroad, wealthy English families in the south (Historical gardens of La Concepción and El Retiro), to sculpture the future, to paint the times to come, the Picasso who would be (Picasso Museum, Malaga Centre of Contemporary Art, Marbella Engravings Museum), in the Malaga wine barrels, tradition and modernity (Bodegas Antigua Casa de Guardia, el Pimpi). Following the Mediterranean, the coasts move up step by step to the Kingdom of **Granada**, which lies nestling between peaked mountains, between the snows and the **Alhambra**, between the tales of Washington Irving and the poems of Federico Garcia Lorca (birthplace; Huerta de San Vicente). Between the tombs of the Catholic Monarchs and Boabdil's tears, which still look out to the lost gardens of the Generalife, between the Albaicin, and the excavated **caves** which Time has converted into a lunar landscape (Guadix, Baza, Orce). The Kingdom of Granada, hidden, torn to shreds in the **Alpujarras**, amidst the craggy villages, asleep among hidden traditions, where the secrets of the last al-Andalus remain protected, where Gerard Brenan described profound everyday

lives. And looking eastwards from the peaks, there are still ancient cities awaiting (Los Millares, Almeria), discovered cities (Alcazaba de Almeria), lost cities (Castillo de los Vélez, Almeria), eroded landscapes, the **desert** at the gates of the light, the sea, the sky and of hell (Cabo de Gata Natural Park), where water is treasured (traditional water architecture), nurtured and cared for, excavated paradises, unexpected paradises. This is Andalusia, a chunk of clouds and sand, of sea and mountain, of poets and labourers, emigrants and emigrated, of towns and countryside, of history and myths, something homey and strange, at the same time a little Roman, a little Oriental, a trace of the gypsy, the sea breeze, a Castilian or American nook, and all that remains to arrive..., equal and different to everything else.



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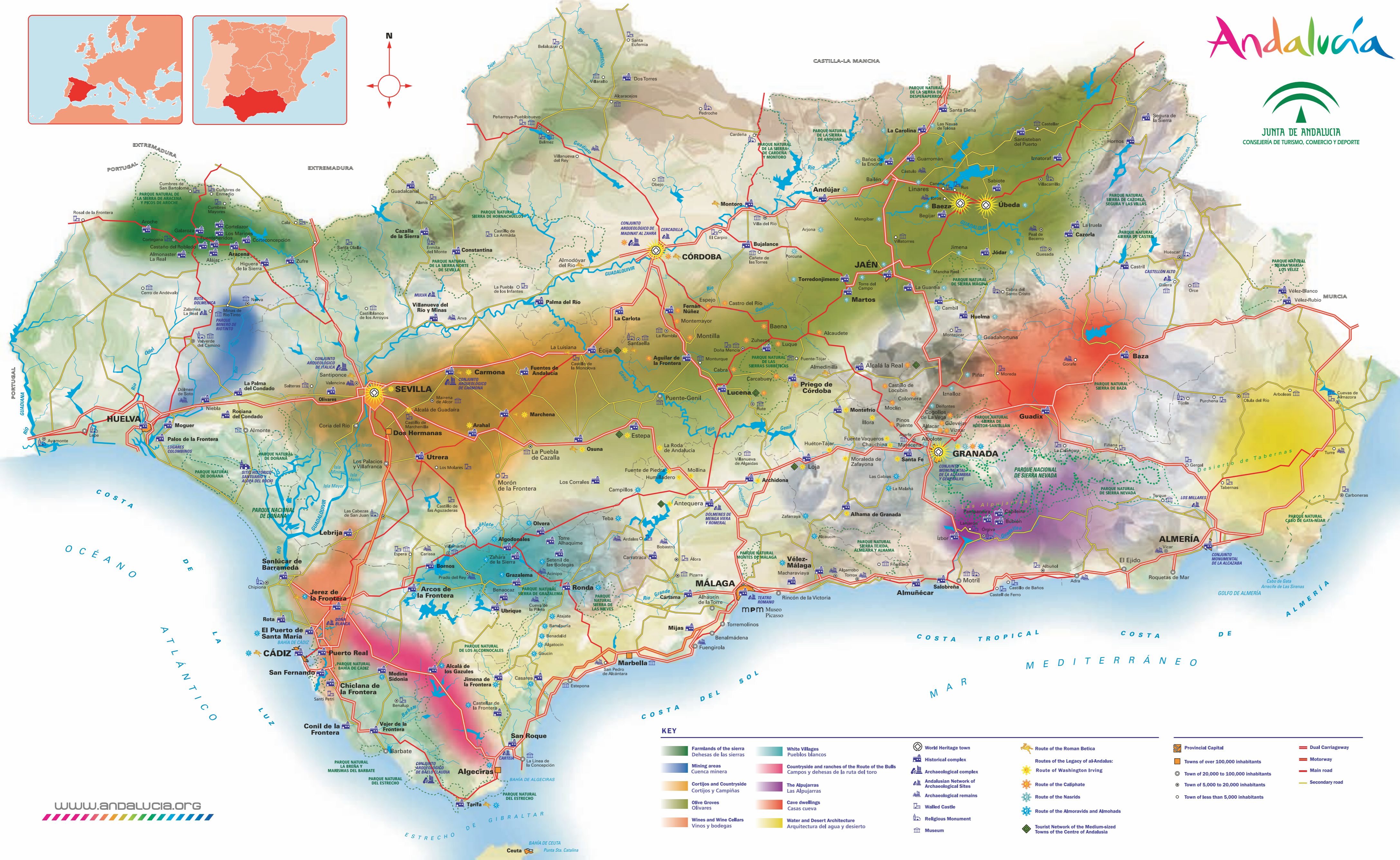
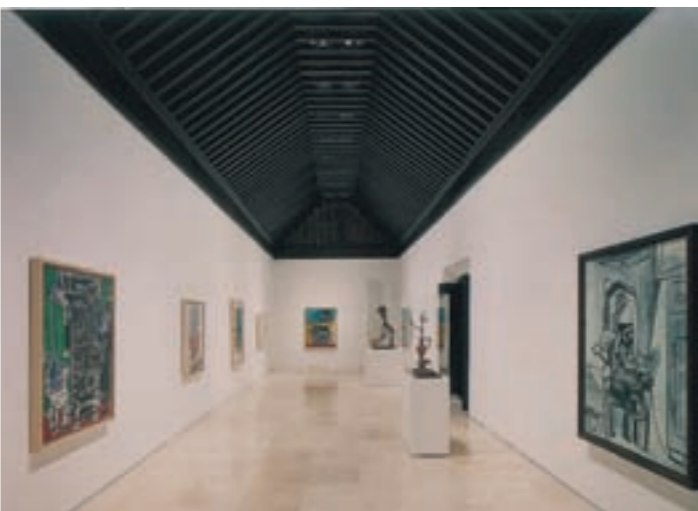
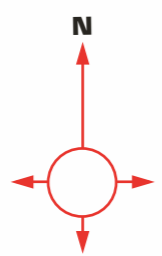
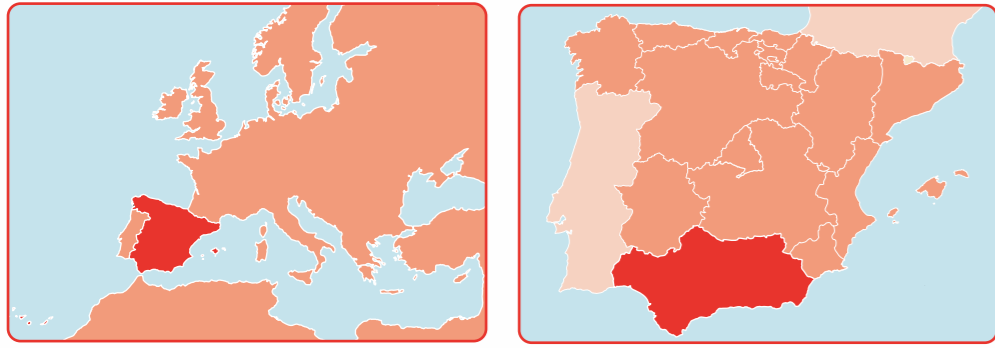
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