

**WEDNESDAY JULY 16 (whole day)**

**GUIDED TOUR TO “LAS ALPUJARRAS” (ACCOMPANYING PERSONS)**



**La Alpujarra** (sometimes *Las Alpujarras*) is a mountainous district in Southern Spain, which stretches south from the Sierra Nevada mountains near Granada in the autonomous region of Andalusia. The western part of the region lies in the province of Granada and the eastern part in the province of Almería. In older sources the name is sometimes spelled Alpuxarras; it may derive from Arabic *al Busherat* meaning "the grass-land".

The region consists principally of valleys which descend at right angles from the crest of the Sierra Nevada on the north, to the Sierras Almijara, Contraviesa and Gádor, which separate it from the Mediterranean Sea, to the south.

The region is one of great natural beauty, and it is sometimes referred to as "**The Spanish Switzerland**". Because of a warm southerly climate combined with a reliable supply of water for irrigation from the rivers running off the Sierra Nevada, the valleys of the western Alpujarras are among the most fertile in Spain, though the steep nature of the terrain means that they can only be cultivated in small fields, so that many modern agricultural techniques are impractical. They contain a rich abundance of fruit trees, especially grape vines, oranges, lemons, persimmons, figs and almonds. The eastern Alpujarra, in the province of Almería, is more arid, but still highly attractive.

La Alpujarra was successively settled by Ibero-Celtic peoples, by the Romans, and by Visigoths before the Moorish conquest of southern Spain in the eighth century. The region was the last refuge of the Moors, who were allowed to remain there for nearly 150 years after the fall of Granada in 1492. Following the Morisco Revolt of 1568, the Moorish population was forced from the region after the Moriscos used it as a military base. By order of the Spanish crown, two Moorish families were required to remain in each village in order to demonstrate to the new inhabitants, introduced from northern Spain, the workings of the terracing and irrigation systems on which the district's agriculture depends.

The influence of the Moorish population can be seen in the agriculture, the distinct cubic architecture (reminiscent of Berber architecture in Morocco's Atlas Mountains) the local cuisine, the local carpet weaving, and the numerous Arabic placenames.

The largest villages in the district are **Lanjarón**, with its ruined castle and chalybeate baths, **Órgiva**, Ugíjar, **Laujar**, Berja. All are situated at a considerable elevation, and **Trevélez**, at 1476 metres above sea level, is the highest recognised town in Spain. The three white villages in the gorge of the **Poqueira** valley, **Pampaneira**, **Bubión** and **Capileira**, have become recognised tourist destinations; however there are many other equally traditional villages of similar appearance, for example those in the La Taha municipality to the east of the **Poqueira** gorge. The steepness of the land means that the houses in the villages seem to be piled on top of another, and their characteristic flat roofs, distinctive roofed chimneys, and balconies (*tináos*) extending across the steep narrow streets give them a unique and picturesque appearance.

### **Details of the visit**

This excursion not only includes interesting cultural elements, but is **it also recommended for those interested in nature and landscape** since the places to visit are located in the area of **Sierra Nevada Mountains** by the Mediterranean Sea. The climate variety here has made Las Alpujarras one of the most important areas in Europe for botanists, because of the variety of species to be found. We must also take into account the important Moorish cultural heritage, the characteristics landscape made up of **small white villages** with their earthen, flat-roofed houses, and their small terraces cut into the mountainside for farming, some of which are over 2000 metres above sea level. All of these aspects combine to make a **visit to this unique area a must**.

We will visit **Lanjarón**, a famous spa town with its medical waters, and **Órgiva**, the central town of this mountainous region. In addition to this, we will visit a series of picturesque villages such as **Carataunas**, **Pampaneira**, **Pitres**, **Portugos** with its “fuente agria” or bitter spring water, and **Trevez**, the highest village in Spain, where a cured jam drying place will be visited. We shall then continue through **Capileira** and **Bubión** where we will enjoy a typical regional lunch.

The visit lasts 8 hours approximately. The **bus will pick up** the accompanying persons interested in this tour **at the Conference Center between 8.30 a.m. and 9.00 a.m.** After the excursion, the bus will take them back to the Conference Center.

**Price: 56 Euros** per person, **including** bus + accompanying guide in Spanish and/or English + lunch + tickets to the cured jam drying place in Trevez

**Note: A minimum of 10 persons** is needed in order to prepare the excursion.