

## La Alhambra in Granada, one of the most beautiful and admired monuments in the world.



*An old legend says that the Alhambra was built by night, in the light of torches. Its reddish dawn did believe the people of Granada that the color was like the strength of the blood.*

### The Alhambra, a monument of Granada for Spain and the world.

La Alhambra was so called because of its reddish walls (in Arabic, («qa'lat al-Hamra'» means Red Castle ). It is located on top of the hill al-Sabika, on the left bank of the river Darro, to the west of the city of Granada and in front of the neighbourhoods of the Albaicin and of the Alcazaba.

The Alhambra is one of the most serenely sensual and beautiful buildings in the world, a place where Moorish art and architecture reached their pinnacle. A masterpiece for you to admire, and it is in Granada, a city full of culture and history. Experience the beauty and admire this marvel of our architectural heritage. Let it touch your heart.

Granada is the Alhambra and the gardens, the Cathedral, the Royal Chapel, convents and monasteries, the old islamic district Albayzin where the sunset is famous in the world or the Sacromonte where the gypsies perform flamenco shows in the caves where they used to live...Granada is this and many more things.

The Alhambra is located on a strategic point in Granada city, with a view over the whole city and the meadow ( la Vega ), and this fact leads to believe that other buildings were already on that site before the Muslims arrived. The complex is surrounded by ramparts and has an irregular shape. It limits with the valley of the river Darro on its northern side, with the valley of al-Sabika on its southern side and with the street Cuesta del Rey Chico on the eastern side. The Cuesta del Rey Chico is also the border between the neighbourhood of the Albaicin and the gardens of the Generalife, located on top of the Hill of the Sun (Cerro del Sol).

### Visiting the Alhambra

You may choose among several means of **transport**. You must always take into account that it is located on top of a hill. The different ways to get to the Alhambra will be now explained, but we strongly recommend going by foot and enjoying the natural and artistic aspects of the surroundings, which many not be seen when taking other means of transport.

**By foot** - There exist basically two different paths to get to the Alhambra by foot from Granada city centre. The most beautiful and historically interesting of them is the one taken from Plaza Nueva into the street Cuesta de Gómez.

The Gate of the Pomegranates (Puerta de las Granadas) is the first monument that you will see and it marks the beginning of the tree-lined avenues of the Alhambra . Pedro Machuca built this gate under the orders of Charles V around the year 1536 on the «Bib al-Buxar» or «gate of the glad tidings», a defensive tower that was one of the gates of the city. This gate leads to the tree-lined avenues of the Alhambra and to the area within the ramparts.

Once on the other side of this gate, you will be walking along the tree-lined avenues of the Alhambra , which was a poplar grove during the Christian period and which has modified its appearance with time. The tree-lined avenues you may see nowadays are the result of the redesign carried out in the 19th century.

Further up, to the left and next to the esplanade of the Justice Gate (Puerta de la Justicia), entrance to the complex of the Alhambra, you will find Charles V Pillar. It's a three-spout fountain that Pedro Machuca built in the 16th century under the orders of the Count of Tendilla and which was restored in the 17th century by the local architect Alonso de Mena.

It is also possible to get to the Alhambra by foot via the street Cuesta del Rey Chico, which means the Little King's Slope, so called in honour of the last Nasrid king, Boabdil «el Chico», that is «the Little King». This street is popularly known as the Cuesta de los Chinos, or Pebble Slope, because of its paving.

The street starts from the left bank of the river Darro, at the end of the Paseo del Padre Manjón, popularly called the «Paseo de los Tristes», which means Sad People's Avenue, because it was part of the road that the funeral processions took to the old cemetery. The slope goes along the ramparts and comes to an end at the Mimbres, next to Fuentepeña, (Generalife's esplanade).

This second path is less interesting from the historical and artistic points of view, but it is instead a very romantic walk, a lot more pleasant when going down back to the city after visiting the Alhambra , between the walls of the citadel and the hill's vegetation.

Using **public transport** - Two bus routes reach the Alhambra Palace, routes 30 and 32, which start their route at Plaza Nueva and drive up the Cuesta de Gómez.

Taxis may also drive to the Alhambra with no restrictions, which means that you may use accesses that may not be used by private transport, like the street Cuesta de Gómez.

**By car** - If you would rather drive your own car to the Alhambra, we recommend taking the Ronda Sur (the city's ring road), following the direction of Sierra Nevada. You may leave your car under surveillance at one of the two car parks in the Generalife while visiting the Alhambra.

## Nowadays

Granada is an important cultural reference at international level. Its University, already 475 years old, has a great reputation. Students are an essential element of the city, as they are one of the driving forces of its economy and its culture. Granada is a modern city that preserves its extremely rich historical and artistic heritage and integrates different cultures. This has been possible thanks to the city's geographical and historical link with the Islamic world, the University's exchange programs and the great number of visitors who come to Granada every year.

## Important information:

- \* Total duration of the visit to Alhambra has approximately 3 hours. The final pass ends one hour before closing time.
- \* Confirmed tickets are spending 100% change or cancellation.
- \* Alhambra is closed on December 25th & January 1<sup>st</sup>
- \* The visit to the Nasrid Palaces is strictly limited to the half-hour indicated on the ticket due to the restrictions on maximum capacity in this area (300 people each thirty minutes). Visitors will be refused admission to this area outside this time slot. Admission to this area will finish one hour before closing time.



## ALHAMBRA OPENING TIMES

- March to October:

### **FULL & GENERALIFE VISIT**

#### **Monday to Sunday:**

Morning: 8.30 to 14.00 h.  
Afternoon: 14.00 to 20.00 h.

#### **NIGHT VISIT**

#### **From Tuesday to Saturday:**

Time: 22:00 to 23.30 h.  
Maximum total capacity: 6.600 visitors / day

- November to February:

### **FULL & GENERALIFE VISIT**

#### **Monday to Sunday:**

Morning: 8.30 to 14.00 h.  
Afternoon: 14.00 to 18.00 h.

#### **NIGHT VISIT**

#### **Fridays & Saturdays:**

Time: 20:00 to 21.30 h.  
Maximum total capacity: 5.400 visitors / day



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### History

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The first historical documents known about the Alhambra date from the 9th century and they refer to Sawwar ben Hamdun who, in the year 889, had to seek refuge in the Alcazaba, a fortress, and had to repair it due to the civil fights that were destroying the Caliphate of Cordoba, to which Granada then belonged. This site subsequently started to be extended and populated, although not yet as much as it would be later on, because the Ziri kings established their residence on the hill of the Albaicin.

The castle of the Alhambra was added to the city's area within the ramparts in the 9th century, which implied that the castle became a military fortress with a view over the whole city. In spite of this, it was not until the arrival of the first king of the Nasrid dynasty, Mohammed ben Al-Hamar (Mohammed I, 1238-1273), in the 13th century, that the royal residence was established in the Alhambra. This event marked the beginning of Alhambra's most glorious period.

First of all, the old part of the Alcazaba was reinforced and the Watch Tower (Torre de la Vela) and the Keep (Torre del Homenaje) were built. Water was canalised from the river Darro, warehouses and deposits were built and the palace and the ramparts were started. These two elements were carried on by Mohammed II (1273-1302) and Mohammed III (1302-1309), who apparently also built public baths and the Mosque (Mezquita), on the site of which the current Church of Saint Mary was later built.

Yusuf I (1333-1353) and Mohammed V (1353-1391) are responsible for most of the constructions of the Alhambra that we can still admire today. From the improvements of the Alcazaba and the palaces, to the Patio of the Lions (Patio de los Leones) and its annexed rooms, including the extension of the area within the ramparts, the Justice Gate (Puerta de la Justicia), the extension and decoration of the towers, the building of the Baths (Baños), the Comares Room (Cuarto de Comares) and the Hall of the Boat (Sala de la Barca). Hardly anything remains from what the later Nasrid Kings did.

From the time of the Catholic Monarchs until today we must underline that Charles V ordered the demolition of a part of the complex in order to build the palace which bears his name. We must also remember the construction of the Emperor's Chambers (habitaciones del Emperador) and the Queen's Dressing Room (Peinador de la Reina) and that from the 18th century the Alhambra was abandoned. During the French domination part of the fortress was blown up and it was not until the 19th century that the process of repairing, restoring and preserving the complex started and is still maintained nowadays.

The Nasrid architecture marked the end of the glorious period that started with the Umayyads in Cordoba in the 8th century. The architects of the Cordovan mosque, which was built a long time before the Alhambra, did not influence this architecture. It includes some of the typical elements of the Andalusian architecture, such as the horseshoe arch with spandrel (square wide frame which envelops the arch) and the arch scallops (arch scallop of triangular shape), as well as its own special elements such as the capitals of the columns of the Alhambra.

The greatest concern of the architects of the Alhambra was to cover every single space with decoration, no matter the size of the space. No decorative element was enough. Most of the interior arches are false arches, with no structure; they are there only to decorate. Walls are covered with beautiful and extremely rich ceramics and plasterwork. And the coverings have wooden frames that have been exquisitely carved, etc.

Even though the Muslim art bans the representation of figures, the decorating themes in the Alhambra are quite varied. The classical calligraphic decoration is used, in particular cursive and kufic inscriptions, which reproduce the words of Zawi ben Ziri (founder of the Nasrid dynasty): "Only God is Victor", and poems written by different poets of the court. The decorative elements most often used by these architects were stylised vegetal forms, interlacing decoration and the nets of rhombuses.

The Alhambra of Granada was built with its own special type of column, which is not used in any other building. This column has a very fine cylindrical shaft, the base of which has a big concave moulding and is decorated with rings on the top part. The capital is divided into two bodies and the first one, cylindrically shaped, has a very simple decoration and a prism with a rounded-angled base and stylised vegetal forms as decoration. One of the most impressive decorative elements used in the Alhambra is the mocarabe vault, formed by little cells or alveoluses placed one on top of the other one and which may be admired in the Hall of the Abencerrajes (Sala de los Abencerrajes) and the Hall of the Two Sisters (Sala de las Dos Hermanas).

Many art works were destroyed by Arab Catholics. The Alhambra is the coexistence of religions in Spain. During the years 1700's and 1800's the Alhambra was occupied by beggars and the homeless. Parties were in a state of ruin and neglect. In 1808 to 1812, the Alhambra was occupied by Napoleon's troops. The Alhambra was preserved until 1870 when it was declared a national monument.

After the arrival of the Christians to the city, many of the Muslim inhabitants migrated to Africa. The inhabitants that stayed in Granada gathered in the neighbourhoods of the Albaicin and the Alcazaba until the expulsion of the Moriscos (Moorish inhabitants that converted to Christianity). The Moriscos were expelled from the country between 1568 and 1571, as a consequence of the uprisings in the Alpujarra mountains. Meanwhile, the city was being rebuilt and converted to Christianity, at the same time as it maintained the importance it had had during the Muslim period. Granada paradoxically became the headquarters of the Archbishopric and the Royal Chancellery (Real Chancillería) was established. The emperor Charles V created a university in 1526 and established the Court in the Alhambra, but, in exchange, Granada started losing its Arabic roots when the Renaissance and the Baroque periods developed.

The Golden Age also left its print in Granada and the city developed a very intense artistic activity. A great number of buildings, churches, façades, canvases, sculptures, etc. decorate every spot of the city, as an explosion of creativity that seems to be saying goodbye to the glorious moments of the past.

The new century brought a stop to the growth of the Granada city. During the French occupation the Alhambra was nearly destroyed, some of its buildings were blown up and many of the city's works of art were stolen. Hardly anything was done in exchange, a few buildings of artistic value were built, but in general the city and the whole country were left mentally, materially and economically exhausted. Nevertheless, once the country was liberated from the French occupation, not many improvements were achieved. Revolutions and revolts took place at the end of the 19th century and carried on destroying the city. Afterwards, the city suffered a building boom (which destroyed the neighbourhood of the Mosque in order to build the Gran Vía (one of the main streets of the city)), the crisis of the sugar refineries and political revolts until 1936.

During the Spanish Civil War, Granada did not suffer great damage, although the villages around and the capital city were on opposing sides. During many years the economy of the city was based on the services sector and it went through a wild real estate speculation process and an uncontrolled growth.



## Memorable quotes:

"If we were to visit one city in Spain, that should be Granada". Ernest Hemingway.

"Every curious traveler keeps Granada in his heart, even without having visited". William Shakespeare.

"What work light leaves Granada" Federico García Lorca (1898-1936)

"You should see Alhambra and Granada It's like a fairy work; It is magic, glory and love, not like anything known" François René (1768-1848). French writer and traveler.

"I begin to think that there is an even greater pleasure than to see Granada and it's to see her again "Alexandre Dumas (1802-1870)

"Granada excited to undo and melt all the senses." Henri Matisse.

"Granada is like crystal bride of our dreams, everyone who sees it, is hoping to visit again." Chateaubriand



Granada is home to two of Spain's most famous Unesco World Heritage Sites. The Gardens of the Generalife, the Alhambra Palace and Albaizyn district were declared by UNESCO in 1984.

***"Give him alms, woman, in life there is nothing like the pain of being blind in Granada"***



## La Alhambra in depth

Once the residence of the Muslim rulers of Granada and their court, the Alhambra is now one of Spain's major tourist attractions exhibiting the country's most famous Islamic architecture, together with Christian 16th century and later interventions in buildings and gardens that marked its image as it can be seen today. Within the Alhambra, the Palace of Charles V was erected by Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor in 1527.

## Etymology

The Alhambra (from Arabic "Al-Hamra", literally "the red one"; the complete name was "al-Qal'at al-Hamra" = "the red fortress") is a palace and fortress complex of the Moorish rulers of Granada in southern Spain (known as Al-Andalus when the fortress was constructed during the mid 14th century), occupying a hilly terrace on the southeastern border of the city of Granada.

## The monument

The terrace or plateau where the Alhambra sits measures about 740 m (2430 ft) in length by 205 m (674 ft) at its greatest width. It extends from WNW to ESE and covers an area of about 142,000 m<sup>2</sup>.

Its most westerly feature is the alcazaba (citadel); a strongly fortified position. The rest of the plateau comprises a number of palaces, enclosed by a relatively weak fortified wall, with thirteen towers, some defensive and some providing vistas for the inhabitants.

The river Darro passes through a ravine on the north and divides the plateau from the Albaicín district of Granada. Similarly, the Assabica valley, containing the Alhambra Park on the west and south, and, beyond this valley, the almost parallel ridge of Monte Mauror, separate it from the Antequeruela district.

## History

Completed towards the end of Muslim rule in Spain by Yusuf I (1333-1353) and Muhammed V, Sultan of Granada (1353-1391), the Alhambra is a reflection of the culture of the last days of the Nasrid emirate of Granada. It is a place where artists and intellectuals had taken refuge as Christian Spain won victories over Al Andalus. The Alhambra mixes natural elements with man-made ones, and is a testament to the skill of Muslim craftsmen of that time.

The literal translation of Alhambra "red fortress" derives from the color of the red clay of the surroundings of which the fort is made. The buildings of the Alhambra were originally whitewashed; however, the buildings now seen today are reddish.

The first reference to the Qal'at al Hamra was during the battles between the Arabs and the Muladies during the rule of the 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad (r. 888-912). In one particularly fierce and bloody skirmish, the Muladies soundly defeated the Arabs, who were then forced to take shelter in a primitive red castle located in the province of Elvira, presently located in Granada. According to surviving documents from the era, the red castle was quite small, and its walls were not capable of deterring an army intent on conquering. The castle was then largely ignored until the eleventh century, when its ruins were renovated and rebuilt by Samuel ibn Naghralla, vizier to the King Badis of the Zirid Dynasty, in an attempt to preserve the small Jewish settlement also located on the Sabikah hill. However, evidence from Arab texts indicates that the fortress was easily penetrated and that the actual Alhambra that survives today was built during the Nasrid Dynasty.

Ibn Nasr, the founder of the Nasrid Dynasty, was forced to flee to Jaén in order to avoid persecution by King Ferdinand and his supporters during attempts to rid Spain of Moorish Dominion. After retreating to Granada, Ibn-Nasr took up residence at the Palace of Badis in the Alhambra. A few months later, he embarked on the construction of a new Alhambra fit for the residence of a king. According to an Arab manuscript published as the Anónimo de Granada y Copenhague, "This year 1238 Abdallah ibn al-Ahmar climbed to the place called "the Alhambra" inspected it, laid out the foundations of a castle and left someone in charge of its construction..." The design included plans for six palaces, five of which were grouped in the northeast quadrant forming a royal quarter, two circuit towers, and numerous bathhouses. During the reign of the Nasrid Dynasty, the Alhambra was transformed into a palatine city complete with an irrigation system composed of acequias for the gardens of the Generalife located outside the fortress. Previously, the old Alhambra structure had been dependent upon rainwater collected from a cistern and from what could be brought up from the Albaicín. The creation of the Sultan's Canal solidified the identity of the Alhambra as a palace-city rather than a defensive and ascetic structure.

The Muslim rulers lost Granada and Alhambra in 1492 without the fortress itself being attacked when King Ferdinand II of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile took the region with an overwhelming force of numbers.

## Art

A room of the palace and a view of the Court of the Lions. The decorations within the palaces typified the remains of Moorish dominion within Spain and ushered in the last great period of Andalusian art in Granada. With little influence from the Islamic mainland, artists endlessly reproduced the same forms and trends, creating a new style that developed over the course of the Nasrid Dynasty. The Nasrids used freely all the display of stylistical resorts that had been created and developed during eight centuries of Muslim rule in the Peninsula as the Calliphil horse-shoe arch, the Almohad sebka or the Almoravid palm, and unused combinations of them, beside novelties as the stilted arches and the capitals of muqarnas, among others. The isolation with the rest of the Islam, and the commercial and political relationship with the Christian kingdoms also influenced in the space concepts. Columns, muqarnas and stalactite-like ceiling decorations, appear in several chambers, and the interiors of numerous palaces are decorated with arabesques and calligraphy. The arabesques of the interior are ascribed, among other kings, to Yusef I, Mohammed V, and Ismail I.

Damage produced in Later Era After the Christian conquest of the city in 1492, the conquerors began to alter the Alhambra. The open work was filled up with whitewash, the painting and gilding effaced, and the furniture soiled, torn, or removed. Charles V (1516–1556) rebuilt portions in the Renaissance style of the period and destroyed the greater part of the winter palace to make room for a Renaissance-style structure which has never been completed. Philip V (1700–1746) Italianised the rooms and completed his palace in the middle of what had been the Moorish building; he had partitions constructed which blocked up whole apartments.

Over subsequent centuries the Moorish art was further damaged, and, in 1812, some of the towers were destroyed by the French under Count Sebastiani. In 1821, an earthquake caused further damage. The work of restoration undertaken in 1828 by the architect José Contreras was endowed in 1830 by Ferdinand VII; and after the death of Contreras in 1847, it was continued with fair success by his son Rafael (d. 1890) and his grandson. Designed to reflect the very beauty of Paradise itself, the Alhambra is made up of gardens, fountains, streams, a palace, and a mosque, all within an imposing fortress wall, flanked by 13 massive towers.

## Setting

Moorish poets described it as "a pearl set in emeralds," in allusion to the colour of its buildings and the woods around them. The palace complex was designed with the mountainous site in mind and many forms of technology were considered. The park (Alameda de la Alhambra), which is overgrown with wildflowers and grass in the spring, was planted by the Moors with roses, oranges and myrtles; its most characteristic feature, however, is the dense wood of English elms brought by the Duke of Wellington in 1812. The park has a multitude of nightingales and is usually filled with the sound of running water from several fountains and cascades. These are supplied through a conduit 8 km (5 miles) long, which is connected with the Darro at the monastery of Jesus del Valle, above Granada.

In spite of the long neglect, willful vandalism and sometimes ill-judged restoration which the Alhambra has endured, it remains an atypical example of Muslim art in its final European stages, relatively uninfluenced by the direct Byzantine influences found in the Mezquita of Córdoba. The majority of the palace buildings are, in ground-plan, quadrangular, with all the rooms opening on to a central court; and the whole reached its present size simply by the gradual addition of new quadrangles, designed on the same principle, though varying in dimensions, and connected with each other by smaller rooms and passages. Alhambra was added onto by the different Muslim rulers who lived in the complex. However, each new section that was added followed the consistent theme of "paradise on earth." Column arcades, fountains with running water, and reflecting pools were used to make add to the aesthetic and functional complexity. In every case, the exterior is left plain and austere. Sun and wind are freely admitted. Blue, red, and a golden yellow, all somewhat faded through lapse of time and exposure, are the colours chiefly employed.

The decoration consists, as a rule, of stiff, conventional foliage, Arabic inscriptions, and geometrical patterns wrought into arabesques. Painted tiles are largely used as panelling for the walls. The palace complex is designed in the Mudéjar style which is characteristic of western elements reinterpreted into Islamic forms and largely popular during the Reconquista, a period of history in which the Christian kings reconquered Spain from the Muslims.

## Overview

The Alhambra resembles many medieval Christian strongholds in its threefold arrangement as a castle, a palace and a residential annex for subordinates. The alcazaba or citadel, its oldest part, is built on the isolated and precipitous foreland which terminates the plateau on the northwest. That is all massive outer walls, towers and ramparts are left. On its watchtower, the Torre de la Vela, 25 m (85 ft) high, the flag of Ferdinand and Isabella was first raised, in token of the Spanish conquest of Granada on January 2, 1492. A turret containing a large bell was added in the 18th century and restored after being damaged by lightning in 1881. Beyond the Alcazaba is the palace of the Moorish rulers, or Alhambra properly so-called; and beyond this, again, is the Alhambra Alta (Upper Alhambra), originally tenanted by officials and courtiers.

Access from the city to the Alhambra Park is afforded by the Puerta de las Granadas (Gate of Pomegranates), a triumphal arch dating from the 15th century. A steep ascent leads past the Pillar of Charles V, a fountain erected in 1554, to the main entrance of the Alhambra. This is the Puerta de la Justicia (Gate of Judgment), a massive horseshoe archway surmounted by a square tower and used by the Moors as an informal court of justice. The hand of Fatima, with fingers outstretched as a talisman against the evil eye, is carved above this gate on the exterior; a key, the symbol of authority, occupies the corresponding place on the interior. A narrow passage leads inward to the Plaza de los Aljibes (Place of the Cisterns), a broad open space which divides the Alcazaba from the Moorish palace. To the left of the passage rises the Torre del Vino (Wine Tower), built in 1345 and used in the 16th century as a cellar. On the right is the palace of Charles V, a smaller Renaissance building.

The Royal Complex consists of three main parts: Mexuar, Serallo, and the Harem. The Mexuar is modest in decor and houses the functional areas for conducting business and administration. Strapwork is used to decorate the surfaces in Mexuar. The ceilings, floors, and trim are made of dark wood and are in sharp contrast to white, plaster walls. Serallo, built during the reign of Yusef I in the 14th century, contains the Patio de los Arrayanes. Brightly colored interiors featured dado panels, yesería, azulejo, cedar, and artesonado. Artesonado are highly decorative ceilings and other woodwork. Lastly, the Harem is also elaborately decorated and contains the living quarters for the wives and mistresses of the Arabic monarchs. This area contains a bathroom with running water (cold and hot), baths, and pressurized water for showering. The bathrooms were open to the elements in order to allow in light and air. The Harem also features representations of human forms, which is forbidden under Islamic law. The Christian artisans were most likely commissioned to design artwork that would be placed in the palace and the tolerant Muslim rulers allowed the work to stay.

The present entrance to the Palacio Árabe, or Casa Real (Moorish palace), is by a small door from which a corridor connects to the Patio de los Arrayanes (Court of the Myrtles), also called the Patio de la Alberca (Court of the Blessing or Court of the Pond), from the Arabic birka, "pool". The birka helped to cool the palace and acted as a symbol of power. Because water was usually in short supply, the technology required to keep these pools full was expensive and difficult. The aim of the pools was to give the impression that the pool had mystical powers because it never evaporated, making them form a good opinion of their leader. This court is 42 m (140 ft) long by 22 m (74 ft) broad; and in the centre, there is a large pond set in the marble pavement, full of goldfish, and with myrtles growing along its sides. There are galleries on the north and south sides; that on the south is 7 m (27 ft) high and supported by a marble colonnade. Underneath it, to the right, was the principal entrance, and over it are three windows with arches and miniature pillars. From this court, the walls of the Torre de Comares are seen rising over the roof to the north and reflected in the pond.

The Salón de los Embajadores (Hall of the Ambassadors) is the largest in the Alhambra and occupies all the Torre de Comares. It is a square room, the sides being 12 m (37 ft) in length, while the centre of the dome is 23 m (75 ft) high. This was the grand reception room, and the throne of the sultan was placed opposite the entrance. It was in this setting that Christopher Columbus received Isabel and Ferdinand's support to sail to the New World. The tiles are nearly 4 ft (1.2 m) high all round, and the colours vary at intervals. Over them is a series of oval medallions with inscriptions, interwoven with flowers and leaves. There are nine windows, three on each facade, and the ceiling is decorated with inlaid-work of white, blue and gold, in the shape of circles, crowns and stars. The walls are covered with varied stucco works, surrounding many ancient escutcheons.

The Patio de los Leones (Court of the Lions) is an oblong court, 116 ft (35 m) in length by 66 ft (20 m) in width, surrounded by a low gallery supported on 124 white marble columns. A pavilion projects into the court at each extremity, with filigree walls and light domed roof. The square is paved with coloured tiles, and the colonnade with white marble; while the walls are covered 5 ft (1.5 m) up from the ground with blue and yellow tiles, with a border above and below enamelled blue and gold. The columns supporting the roof and gallery are irregularly placed. They are adorned by varieties of foliage, etc.; about each arch there is a large square of arabesques; and over the pillars is another square of filigree work. In the centre of the court is the Fountain of Lions, an alabaster basin supported by the figures of twelve lions in white marble, not designed with sculptural accuracy, but as symbols of strength and courage.

The Sala de los Abencerrajes (Hall of the Abencerrages) derives its name from a legend according to which the father of Boabdil, last king of Granada, having invited the chiefs of that line to a banquet, massacred them here. This room is a perfect square, with

a lofty dome and trellised windows at its base. The roof is decorated in blue, brown, red and gold, and the columns supporting it spring out into the arch form in a remarkably beautiful manner. Opposite to this hall is the Sala de las dos Hermanas (Hall of the two Sisters), so-called from two white marble slabs laid as part of the pavement. These slabs measure 50 by 22 cm (15 by 7½ in). There is a fountain in the middle of this hall, and the roof—a dome honeycombed with tiny cells, all different, and said to number 5000—is an example of the so-called "stalactite vaulting" of the Moors.

Among the other features of the Alhambra are the Sala de la Justicia (Hall of Justice), the Patio del Mexuar (Court of the Council Chamber), the Patio de Daraxa (Court of the Vestibule), and the Peinador de la Reina (Queen's Robing Room), in which there is similar architecture and decoration. The palace and the Upper Alhambra also contain baths, ranges of bedrooms and summer-rooms, a whispering gallery and labyrinth, and vaulted sepulchres.

The original furniture of the palace is represented by the vase of the Alhambra, a specimen of Moorish ceramic art, dating from 1320 and belonging to the first period of Moorish porcelain. It is 1.3 m (4 ft 3 in) high; the ground is white, and the enamelling is blue, white and gold.

Whilst fountains and flowing water are a common feature around the Alhambra, they are particularly prevalent in the Palacio de Generalife. Of the outlying buildings in connection with the Alhambra, the foremost in interest is the Palacio de Generalife or Ginalife (the Muslim Jennat al Arif, "Garden of Arif," or "Garden of the Architect"). This villa probably dates from the end of the 13th century but has been restored several times. Its gardens, however, with their clipped hedges, grottos, fountains, and cypress avenues, are said to retain their original Moorish character. The Villa de los Martires (Martyrs' Villa), on the summit of Monte Mauror, commemorates by its name the Christian slaves who were forced to build the Alhambra and confined here in subterranean cells. The Torres Bermejas (Vermilion Towers), also on Monte Mauror, are a well-preserved Moorish fortification, with underground cisterns, stables, and accommodation for a garrison of 200 men. Several Roman tombs were discovered in 1829 and 1857 at the base of Monte Mauror.

The Court of the Lions (Spanish: Patio de los Leones) is the main court of the Nasrid Palace of the Lions. It is located in the heart of the Alhambra, the Moorish citadel formed by a complex of palaces, gardens and forts in Granada, Spain. It was commissioned by the Nasrid king Muhammed V. Its construction started in the second period of his reign, between 1362 and 1391 CE.



## Background and architectural influences

The Palace of the Lions, as well as the rest of the other new rooms built under Muhammad V, like the Mexuar or Cuarto Dorado meant the beginning of a new style, an exuberant mixture of Moorish and Christian influences that has been called Nasrid style. During the period that Muhammad V was ousted as sultane of Granada by his stepbrother, Abu-I Walid Ismail, he discovered in exile a host of new aesthetic influences that were not in the language of his predecessors, not even in his own first contributions to the enrichment of the Nasrid palaces of the Alhambra. In Fes he saw the Almoravid mosque of Qarawiyyin, built by Andalusian architects. The splendor of the decorations, specially the profuse use of the muqarnas that had once decorated the palaces and mosques of Al-Ándalus, stunned the ex-sultan, as did the ruins of the Roman city of Volubilis, where he could directly examine the classical orders, Roman ornamentation and, above all, the disposition of the Roman 'impluvium'; the Roman ruins at Volubilis were particularly well preserved since they had been abandoned for a period of time in the Middle Ages and later constructively re-used as a necropolis. Muhammad became an ally of his personal friend, the Christian king Pedro I of Castile, who helped him to regain the throne and defeat the usurpers. Meanwhile, he was also astonished with the construction of the palace of Pedro I, the Alcázar of Seville, built in Mudéjar style by architects from Toledo, Seville and Granada. The influence of this Mudéjar style of King Pedro in the future Palace of the Lions was going to be decisive, especially the structure and disposition of the Qubba rooms along two axis of the 'Patio de las Doncellas' ("Court of the Maidens").



## Description of the court

The Court of the Lions is an oblong court, 116 ft (35 m) in length by 66 ft (20 m) in width, surrounded by a low gallery supported on 124 white marble columns. A pavilion projects into the court at each extremity, with filigree walls and light domed roof, elaborately ornamented. The square is paved with coloured tiles, and the colonnade with white marble; while the walls are covered 5 ft (1.5 m) up from the ground with blue and yellow tiles, with a border above and below enamelled blue and gold. The columns supporting the roof and gallery are irregularly placed, with a view to artistic effect; and the general form of the piers, arches and pillars is most graceful. They are adorned by varieties of foliage, etc.; about each arch there is a large square of arabesques; and over the pillars is another square of exquisite filigree work. In the center of the court is the celebrated Fountain of Lions, a magnificent alabaster basin supported by the figures of twelve lions in white marble.

## Meaning of its formal structure

The structure of the court, has, as it has been said, a direct influence of the Sevillian Patio de las Doncellas, but its meaning and origins connect with the Persian roots of the Islamic gardening and its Charbagh, the court divided in four parts, each one of them symbolizing one of the four parts of the world. Each part is irrigated by a water channel that symbolize the four rivers of Paradise. This court is, therefore, an architectural materialization of Paradise, where the gardens, the water, and the columns form a conceptual and physical unity. The slender column forest have been said to represent the palm trees of an oasis in the desert, deeply related with Paradise in the Nasrid imagination. In the poem of Ibn Zamrak on the basin of the fountain, a further meaning is stated clearly: The fountain is the Sultan, which smothers with his graces all his subjects and lands, as the water wets the gardens.

Nowadays the flower garden has been substituted by a dry garden of pebbles, in order not to affect the foundation of the palace with the watering. In Nasrid times, the floor of the quartered planting beds was slightly lower than the general level, and the visual effect was like a tapestry of flowers, as the top of the plants were cut to the same level of the court, and these were carefully chosen to cover a host of color nuances.

The Fountain of the Lions. The origin and meaning of the Fountain of the Lions has generated many legends, mainly due to its unusual themes for a Muslim palace: twelve figurative lions. By the time when the palace was built the isolation from the rest of the Islam, and the relations of friendship with the Kingdom of Castile originated a two-way influence stream, and the use of figurative motifs was not strange to the Nasrid art, as seen in the paintings of the Hall of the Kings. The fountain and the lions had a model in the Fountain of the Temple of Solomon, described in the Books of Chronicles of the Old Testament. The parallels are explicit in a poem of the Hispano-Hebrew Ibn Gabirol, which is a tissue of quotes and parallels of the Hebrew Bible: *....and there is a full sea, matching Solomon's sea "There is a pond, like the Sea of Solomon It doesn't rest over bulls but over lions arranged in circles: They seem to roar to their prey. Water flows from their mouth without end, it springs like the torrents of a stream. It runs to their feet through channels arranged like open drainpipes under the Sun to irrigate the bloomed parterres. Their limpid streams flood the grass They want to refresh the Garden of the Myrtles! They elevate themselves over clouds just up to the top of the trees and they scatter balsamic perfumes smelling just like the scent of the myrtles and the incense. The birds chirp on the branches, looking beneath the date palm trees. The flowers form lusty private open rooms of rose, narcissus and camphor tree scents. Their varieties are countless!"*

The lions were re-used, probably taken from a Cordobese Caliphal palace, where they would had been located two by two in a linear disposition. The basin was changed when Mohammed V moved the fountain to its definitive location: the poet and minister Ibn Zamrak was commanded to write a poem to describe the beauty of the courtyard. It was going to be carved around the border of the new basin. Excerpt of Ibn Zamrak's poem on the basin *"...Such a translucent basin, sculpted pearl! Argentic ripples are added on it by the quiet dew And its liquid silver goes over the daisies, melted, and even purer. Hard and soft are so close, that it would be hard to distinguish liquid and solid, marble and water. Which one is running? Don't you see how water overflows the borders and the warned drains are here against it? They are like the lover who in vain tries to hide his tears from his beloved..."*



## Generalife Gardens

The Palacio de Generalife (Arabic: Jannat al-'Arif? - Architect's Garden) was the summer palace and country estate of the Nasrid sultans of Granada. The palace and gardens were built during the reign of Muhammad III (1302-1309) and redecorated shortly after by Abu I-Walid Isma'il (1313-1324).

The complex consists of the Patio de la Acequia (Court of the Water Channel or Water-Garden Courtyard), which has a long pool framed by flowerbeds, fountains, colonnades and pavilions, and the Jardín de la Sultana (Sultana's Garden or Courtyard of the Cypress). The former is thought to best preserve the style of the medieval garden in Al-Andalus. Originally the palace was linked to the Alhambra by a covered walkway across the ravine that now divides them. The Generalife is one of the oldest surviving Moorish gardens.

The present-day gardens were started in 1931 and completed by Francisco Prieto Moreno in 1951. The walkways are paved in traditional Granadian style with a mosaic of pebbles: white ones from the River Darro and black ones from the River Genil.

## Granada

The city of Granada is placed at the foot of the Sierra Nevada mountains, at the confluence of three rivers, Beiro, Darro and Genil, at an elevation of 738 metres above sea level yet only one hour from the Mediterranean coast, the Costa Tropical. At the 2005 census, the population of the city of Granada proper was 236,982, and the population of the entire urban area was estimated to be 472,638, ranking as the 13th-largest urban area of the Spanish Kingdom.

The Alhambra, a Moorish citadel and palace, is in Granada. It is one of the most famous items of the Islamic historical legacy that makes Granada a hot spot among cultural and tourist cities in Spain. The Almohad urbanism with some fine examples of Moorish and Morisco constructions is preserved at the part of the city called the Albaicín.

Granada is also well-known within Spain due to the prestigious University of Granada and, nowadays, vibrant night-life. In fact, it is said that it is one of the three best cities for college students (the other two are Salamanca and Santiago de Compostela).

### Pre-Nasrid history.

The city has been inhabited from the dawn of history. There was an Ibero-Celtic settlement here, which made contact in turn with Phoenicians, Carthaginians and Greeks. By the 5th century BCE, the Greeks had established a colony which they named Elibyrgé or Elybirge (Greek). Under Roman rule, in the early centuries CE, this name had become "Illiberis". As Illiberis, the city minted its own coins. The Visigoths maintained the importance of the city as a centre of both ecclesiastical and civil administration and also established it as a military stronghold. It was also managed by Byzantines for 60 years.

A Jewish community established itself in what was effectively a suburb of the city, called "Gárnata" or "Gárnata al-yahud" (Granada of the Jews). It was with the help of this community that Moorish forces under Tariq ibn-Ziyad first took the city in 711, though it was not fully secured until 713. They referred to it under the Iberian name "Ilbira", the remaining Christian community calling this "Elvira", and it became the capital of a province of the Caliphate of Cordoba. Civil conflicts that wracked the Caliphate in the early eleventh century led to the destruction of the city in 1010. In the subsequent reconstruction, the suburb of Gárnata (Arabic) was incorporated in the city, and the modern name in fact derives from this. With the arrival of the Zirid dynasty in 1013, Granada became an independent emirate Taifa of Granada. By the end of the eleventh century, the city had spread across the Darro to reach what is now the site of the Alhambra.

### Nasrid Kingdom of Granada - Emirate of Granada

In 1228, with the departure of the Almohad prince, Idris, who left Iberia to take the Almohad leadership, the ambitious Ibn al-Ahmar established the longest lasting Muslim dynasty on the Iberian peninsula - the Nasrids. With the Reconquista in full swing after the conquest of Cordoba in 1236, the Nasrids aligned themselves with Ferdinand III of Castile, officially becoming a tributary state in 1238. The state officially became the Kingdom of Granada in 1238.

Granada was held as a vassal to Castile for many decades, and provided trade links with the Muslim world, particularly the gold trade with the sub-saharan areas south of Africa. The Nasrids also provided troops for Castile while the kingdom was also a source of mercenary fighters from North Africa.

On January 2, 1492, the last Muslim leader, Muhammad XII, known as Boabdil to the Spanish, surrendered complete control of Granada, to Ferdinand and Isabella, Los Reyes Católicos ("The Catholic Monarchs"), after the city was besieged.

See Nasrid dynasty for a full list of the Nasrid rulers of Granada. The most prominent members of the dynasty were: • Mohammed I ibn Nasr (died 1273), the founder of the dynasty • Yusuf I (1334–1354) • Muhammed V (1354–1391), builder of the royal palace within the Alhambra • Muhammad XII of Granada, the last of the line, who surrendered in 1492 to Ferdinand and Isabel and was given the Alpujarras mountains to rule to the East of Granada, although he left for Tlemcen in Morocco.

### Granada after 1492

The capture of Muslim Granada by the forces of Ferdinand and Isabella is one of the more significant events in Granada's history. The terms of the surrender treaty explicitly allowed the city's Muslim inhabitants to continue unmolested in their faith and customs.

By 1499, however, Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros grew frustrated with the slow conversion efforts of Granada's first archbishop, Fernando de Talavera, and undertook a program of forced baptisms. Cisneros's new tactics, which were a direct violation of the terms of the treaty, provoked an armed revolt centered in the Alpujarras, a rural region to the southwest of the city. In response to the rebellion, in 1501 the Castilian Crown rescinded the surrender treaty, demanding that Granada's Muslims convert or emigrate. While many elites chose to emigrate to North Africa, the majority of the city's Muslims converted to Christianity while keeping their Islam secretly, becoming Moriscos, Catholics of Moorish descent.

Over the course of the sixteenth century, Granada took on an ever more Christian and Castilian character, as immigrants flocked to the city from other parts of the Iberian Peninsula. The city's mosques, some of which had been established on the sites of former Christian churches, were converted to Christian uses. New structures, such as cathedral and the Chancillería, or Royal Court of Appeals, helped transform the urban landscape, and in the wake of the 1492 Alhambra decree that expelled Spain's Jewish population, Granada's Jewish neighborhood was demolished to make way for new Christian and Castilian institutions.

The fall of Granada holds an important place among the many significant events that mark the latter half of the 15th century. It ended the eight hundred year-long Islamic presence in the Iberian Peninsula. Freed from internal conflict, a unified Spain embarked on its greatest phase of expansion around the globe, leading to the arrival in the Americas by Isabella's protégé Christopher Columbus. Subsequent colonization led to the creation of the Spanish Empire, the largest empire of the world for its time.

## Architecture

There are many important Moorish and Catholic architectural sites in Granada: • The Alhambra and Generalife • The Palace of Charles V • Granada's Cathedral • Capilla Real. Royal Chapel, with the tombs of Isabella and Ferdinand, the Catholic Kings • The Albayzín, or Albaicín: The ancient Arab quarter, containing many original houses from the 16th century • The Charterhouse: A Carthusian monastery; one of the most impressive pieces of ornamental Baroque in Spain. • Calle Calderería: An Albayzín street where you can taste Arab typical food, especially teas and desserts from North Africa • El Carmen de los Mártires: A lovely palace with a beautiful botanic garden near the Alhambra • Santa Ana Church: 16th century, Mudejar Style • San Salvador Church: 16th century, Mudejar Style. With Moorish Almohad patio from the former mosque • Corral del Carbón: Deposit of merchandise and shelter of merchants. Adapted after 16th century for theater plays • Hospital Real: Founded in 1504 by the Reyes Católicos, now part of the University • Santo Domingo Church: Founded in 1512 by the Reyes Católicos • San José Church: On the site of the "moans" • Almorabítin, the mosque of the Almoravids, one of oldest in Granada, dating from the 10th century • Sacromonte Abbey: Founded in the 17th century. Legend says that the catacombs under the church were the site of the martyrdom of San Cecilio, the city's first bishop and now its patron saint • Old University: Originally Granada's Jesuit college, this building now houses the law school of the University of Granada. The building is particularly notable for its original 17th century facade. • Bermejas Towers: Strongpoints on the encircling wall of the Alhambra, they date from the 8th and 9th centuries • Basilica of St. John of God (San Juan de Dios): The remains of this saint are preserved in this Baroque basilica. • The Gate of Elvira: The principal gate to the old city. Part of the Moorish wall • Casa de los Tíros, 16th century. With a complex iconographic program of sculpture and painting about Spanish history and full of cryptograms, it was the palace of Gil Vázquez-Rengifo, who helped the Catholic Kings in the fight for the city. Nowadays it's a museum where visitors can follow the history of Granada from the Middle Age to the present day • The 16th century Castril palace which hosts the Archaeological Museum of Granada • The Cube: Main building for CajaGranada has won a lot of international architects awards. • Zaida Building: Situated in the city centre, this residential building designed by Alvaro Siza is a good example of modern architecture surrounded by historical structures.

Although many Muslim buildings were destroyed by the Catholics, who forced conversion to Catholicism during the Christian era in Granada, those that remain comprise the most complete group of Moorish domestic architecture in Europe. Palaces like Dar al-Horra, or Alcazar Genil, or houses like the house of the Horno de Oro, the house of Chapiz, or the house of Abén Humeya, are only some of the most famous. Granada's public baths, like El Bañuelo or the Alhambra Baths, and the complex of Arab public fountains and wells (aljibes), are unique in Europe. The Nasrid infrastructure net (acequias) that feeds the public fountains and wells still functions in its majority. Among the best known of Granada's acequias are the Royal Acequia and the Cadí Acequia.

### Districts of Granada

The Realejo, was the Jewish district at the time of the Nasrid Granada. The Jewish population was so important, that Granada was known from the Al-Andalus Country under the name of Granada de los judíos (in Arabic, Garnata). It's today a district made up of many Andalusian villas, with gardens opening onto the streets, called Carmenes.

The Cartuja. This district contains the Carthusian monastery of the same name: Cartuja. This is an old monastery started in a late Gothic style with Baroque exuberant interior decorations. In this district also, many buildings were created with the extension of the University of Granada.

Bib-Rambla. The toponym existed at the time of the Arabs. Nowadays, Bib-Rambla is a high point for gastronomy, especially in its terraces of restaurants, open on beautiful days. The Arab bazaar (Alcaicería) is made up of several narrow streets, which start from this place and continue as far as the cathedral.

The Sacromonte neighborhood is located on the extension of the hill of Albaicín, along the Darro River. This area, which became famous by the nineteenth century for its predominantly Gitanos inhabitants, is characterized by cave houses, which are dug into the hillside. The area has a reputation as a major center of flamenco song and dance, including the Zambra Gitana, Andalusian dance originating in the Middle East. The zone is a protected cultural environment under the auspices of the Centro de Interpretación del Sacromonte, a cultural center dedicated to the preservation of Gitanos cultural forms.

The Albayzín, (also written as Albaicín), located on a hill on the right bank of the river Darro, is the ancient Moorish quarter of the city and transports the visitor to a unique world: the site of the ancient city of Elvira, so-called before the Zirid Moors renamed it Granada. It housed the artists who went up to build the palaces of Alhambra on the hill facing it. Time allowed its embellishment. Of particular note is the Plaza de San Nicolás (Plaza of St Nicholas) from where a stunning view of the Alhambra can be seen.

El Albayzín is a district of present day Granada, Spain that retains the narrow winding streets of its Medieval Moorish past. It was declared a world heritage site in 1984, along with the more famous Alhambra.

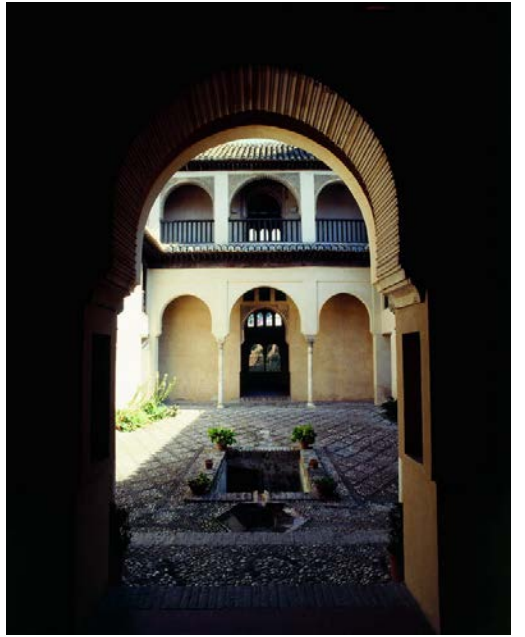
It rises on a hill facing the Alhambra and many tourists journey into the Albayzín primarily for the spectacular views of the Alhambra from the viewing point by the church of San Nicolás.

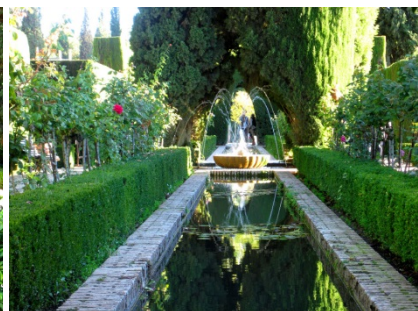
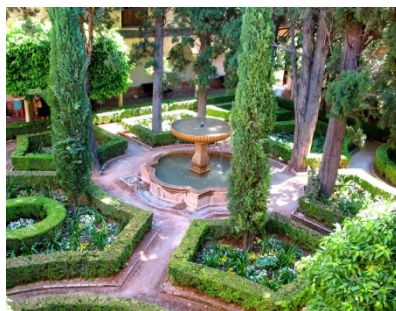
Highlights within the area include the remains of an Arab bath complex, Granada's archeological museum, and the church of San Salvador, built on the remains of a Moorish mosque. Albayzín also contains some original Moorish houses and a wide-range of restaurants, including several streets whose eateries are inspired by North Africa.

The Zaidín. This blue collar neighborhood houses 100,000 residents of Granada, making it the largest neighborhood. Traditionally populated by gypsies, now many residents are from North and West Africa, China, and many South American countries. Every Saturday morning it hosts a large outdoor market or "mercadillo", where many gypsies come and sell their wares of fruits, vegetables, clothes, shoes, and other sorts of odds and ends.

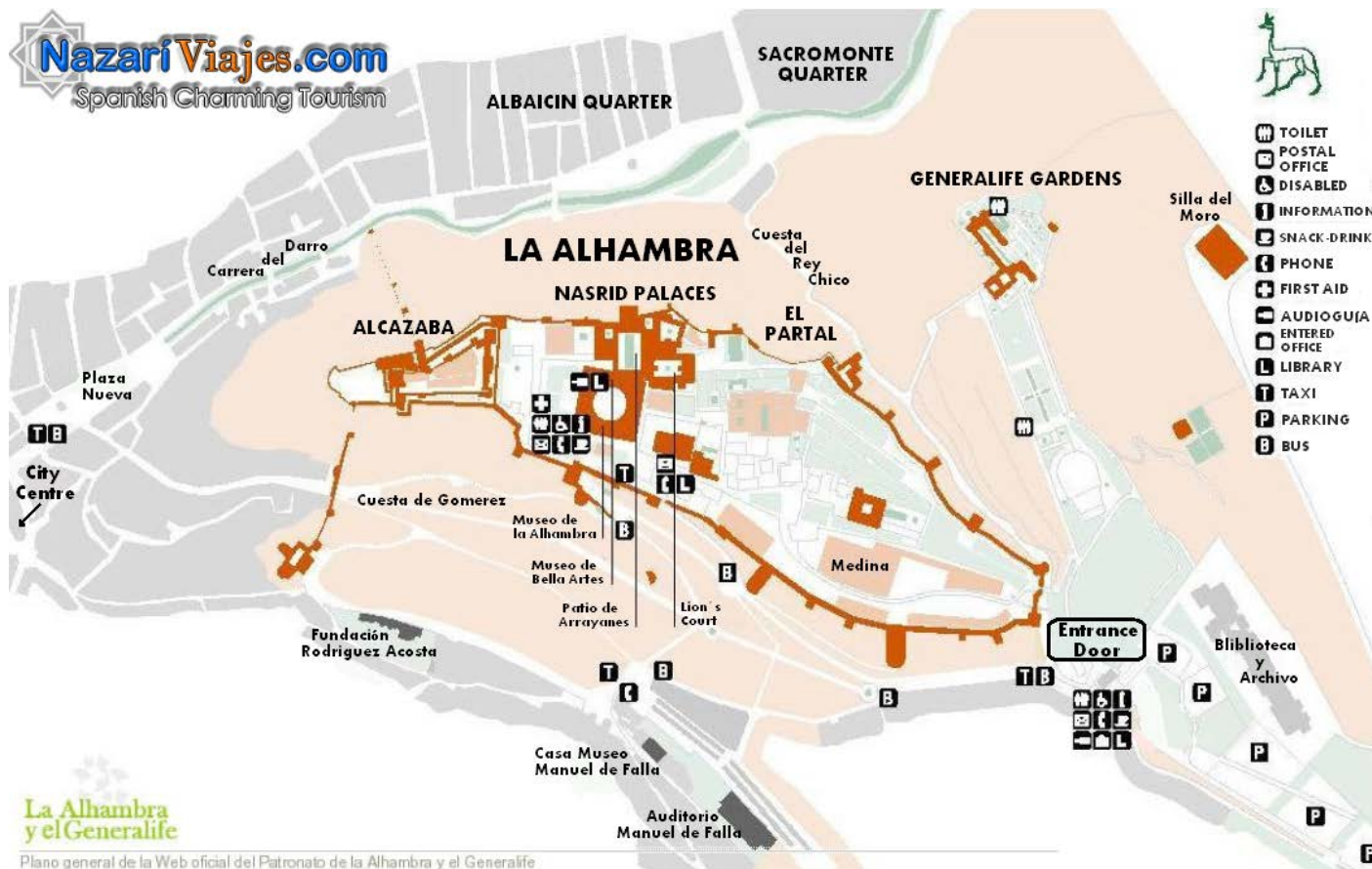
Images:







# Map of the Alhambra and the Generalife monument in Granada.



# Access plan to the Alhambra and the Generalife in Granada.



## Public services for visitors in Alhambra monument

**Information and visitor's service** - La Alhambra y el Generalife offers the personal Visitor Service staff at several spots of the Monumental Complex:

- Entrance Pavilion
- Parking Box Office
- Square in front of the Palace of Charles V
- Pavilion of Services next to the Gate of Wine
- Entrance to the Nasrid Palaces
- Calle Real (Visitor Information Point)

Visitor service is provided in five languages (Spanish, English, French, German and Italian), around three fields:

- Information on the public visit to the Monument
- Management of reservations for the guided visits organised by the Council of the Alhambra and the Generalife
- Support tasks in the institutional relations of the Independent Organism

**Vending machines of food and drink** - The Council of the Alhambra and the Generalife has installed vending machines in several areas of the Monumental complex to allow visitors to buy food and drink, while the services of cafeteria and restaurant are implemented. Vending machines are located in the following areas:

- Car park of the Alhambra complex
- Entrance Pavilion
- Pavilion of Services next to the Gate of Wine

**Store** - Alhambra's shops in the Monumental Complex are located at the Entrance Pavilion and the Palace of Charles V. Here, visitors can purchase different monographs and the Official Guide to the Alhambra, in addition to books, documents and other publications about the Alhambra and its surroundings, as well as a great variety of souvenirs. There is also a Tienda de la Alhambra shop in Granada's city centre, on Calle Reyes Católicos nº 40. Here, one can also purchase and collect admission tickets to the site paying by credit card. Official maps and leaflets of the different programmes and activities to take place at the site are furthermore available.

**Car Park** - The Council of the Alhambra and the Generalife has implemented a public car-park with 500 places to facilitate visit to the Monumental complex. It goes from the roundabout of the cemetery's entrance to the Entrance Pavilion, where the ticket offices are located. It is distributed in several areas according to the type of vehicles: a car park for buses and caravans (the first to be found) in addition to three additional areas for private cars.

**Audio-guide** - The Patronato de la Alhambra y el Generalife offers an audio guide service to facilitate the visit and understanding of the cultural heritage of the Monumental Complex. The audio guides offer insights about the different places and aspects of the public visit tours in several languages. For rental, please proceed to the Entrance Pavilion next to the ticket offices or to the Palace of Charles V. Languages (Spanish, Catalan, Basque, Galician, German, English, Italian, French, Dutch, Portuguese) Rental price: 5€ - Reservation is NOT necessary.

**Sign Language Guide** - Sign Language Guides are available in Spanish and English, to guide visitors with hearing disabilities around the site. The service is offered free of charge at the Entrance Pavilion, close to the ticket offices.

**Restrooms** - Due to the difficulties to install restrooms in a monument like this, there is a limited, although sufficient number of public restrooms. Take this circumstance into account before starting the visit.

- Entrance Pavilion (toilets adapted for people with disabilities)
- Pavilion of Services, next to the Puerta del Vino (toilets adapted for people with disabilities)
- Low gardens of the Generalife
- Sultana's Court in the Generalife

**First aid** - This is a service provided by staff of the Red Cross. It is located in the Hall Services, Wine gate of the Alhambra.

**Mailbox** - Mailboxes are located in the Calle Real of the Alhambra and in the Entrance Pavilion.

### Public telephones

- 2 telephones next to the Bookstore of the Alhambra
- 1 telephone near the Hotel Alhambra Palace
- 2 telephones in the area of the Entrance Pavilion
- 2 telephones next to the Restaurant "La Mimbre"
- 1 telephone in the car park area
- 2 telephones in the Pavilion of Services next to the Gate of Wine

**Lost and found** - Information about lost objects can be obtained at the entrances of the Monument.



**Checkroom** - The Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife has installed two checkrooms to leave suitcases, bags and prams. You can find the lockers at:

- Entrance Pavilion next to the ticket offices
- Pavilion of Services next to the Gate of Wine

**Baby carrier** - The Patronato de la Alhambra y el Generalife offers the checkroom service to leave prams and rent baby carriers for free. Visitors can leave their prams in the Checkroom of the Gate of Wine and get a baby carrier instead (up to 12 kg), making the visit a more comfortable experience as well as helping to preserve the Monument.

**Headphones** - IMPORTANT FOR GROUPS: It is mandatory the use of hearing aids for all organized groups and guided tours. According to the rules of the Andalusian "organized tourism groups should be used during the entire visit, a hearing system that allows each member of the group receiving the guide's explanations personalized way." ... "The Board will not allow access to guided groups that do not have such a system, unless the number of members of the group does not exceed six visitors."

**Official tourist guides or interpreters** - The Council of the Alhambra has no official tourist guides or interpreters for the visits to the Monument.

**Wheelchair** - You can get a wheelchair for travel. The number of seats is limited, in order to get one should ask in the Entrance Pavilion or directly to the staff of the Monument. It is not possible to visit all parts of Alhambra if you are disabled but there is a special route.

#### ATMs, cash machines

- Entrance pavilion next to the lockers (tickets office).
- Services Pavilion next to the Gate of Wine

**Touch points** - The Alhambra continues working hard to make the Monument more accessible. There are installed "Touch points" along the route, so that visually handicapped people and indeed any other visitors can touch and in this way perceive the details of the different features that decorate the Monument. By touching the touch points instead of the original decorations, they will also be participating in the preventive conservation of the monument.

## More info of La Alhambra in other languages:

Español - <http://nazariviajes.com/comprar-entradas-Alhambra-de-granada.aspx>

Deutsch - <http://nazariviajes.com/languages/deutsch/Kauf-Online-Tickets-zu-Besuch-Alhambra-in-Granada.aspx?lang=gr>

Français - <http://nazariviajes.com/languages/francais/achat-online-billets-visite-Alhambra-de-Grenade.aspx?lang=fr>

Dutch - <http://nazariviajes.com/languages/nederlands/aanschaffen-online-tickets-to-visit-Alhambra-in-granada.aspx?lang=nl>

Português - <http://nazariviajes.com/languages/portugues/comprar-obter-bilhetes-tickets-online-visitas-tours-Alhambra-granada-espanha.aspx?lang=pt>

Italiano - <http://nazariviajes.com/languages/italiano/acquisto-online-biglietti-da-visita-Alhambra-in-granada.aspx?lang=it>

Русский - <http://nazariviajes.com/languages/russian/purchase-online-tickets-to-visit-Alhambra-in-granada-russian.aspx?lang=rus>

Română - <http://nazariviajes.com/languages/romana/achizitionati-online-bilete-la-vizita-Alhambra-in-granada.aspx?lang=rom>

한국어 - <http://nazariviajes.com/languages/korean/purchase-online-tickets-to-visit-Alhambra-in-granada-korean.aspx?lang=ko>

日本語 - <http://nazariviajes.com/languages/japanese/purchase-online-tickets-to-visit-Alhambra-in-granada-japanese.aspx?lang=jap>

हिन्दी - <http://nazariviajes.com/languages/hindi/purchase-online-tickets-to-visit-Alhambra-in-granada-hindi.aspx?lang=hi>

简体中文 - <http://nazariviajes.com/languages/chinese/purchase-online-tickets-to-visit-Alhambra-in-granada-chinese.aspx?lang=zh>

ة برعل ا - <http://nazariviajes.com/languages/arabic/purchase-online-tickets-to-visit-Alhambra-in-granada-arabic.aspx?lang=ar>

## THE ALHAMBRA AND THE MYSTERY OF THE SILVER ROCKET

Written in the twenties by John J. Healey, an American writer, hides the fact that the Alhambra in its corridors a life-size copy of the Chrysler Building in New York.

Diego Carrasco journalist writes in his article that the New York Public Library, found in one of the depositories of treasure chambers a short note in a German magazine in the twenties, dedicated to the architecture, no longer in print, and that article contained the following account:

When Walter P. Chrysler commissioned William Van Allen to design a building for the Chrysler Corporation in 1928, secrecy was of the utmost importance. The skyscraper was still a bold and new concept. Chrysler wanted the tallest building in the world.

Many companies were contemplating a way to praise equally phallic manhood capitalist and, of course, \* the design of the largest \* was of great value.

In order to avoid the spies from other architectural firms, it was decided to build and test a final model in a foreign country. Thanks to Chrysler's lover, a beautiful family Granada \* well \*, the country chosen for the project proved to be Spain.

More specifically, it was agreed that all work be carried out in two huge tunnels whose existence was known only to a privileged few. Both tunnels were about one kilometer long and had been made by the Moors in 1394, to connect the Alhambra in Granada with the Gardens of Generalife.

They are accessed through a wide arch found in the basement of the building now occupied by a nightclub, the night club "El Rey Chico, near the Paseo de los Tristes, and both men came and went always tools of Night tunnels where the different designs and materials were tested over a period of sixteen months.

With the new aluminum alloy, which by then was chosen for much of the outside of the building, was built in bed, a lifesize model of Art Deco skyscrapers.

Granada While sleeping, while the seasons changed in the grounds of the Alhambra, beneath its foundations, very deep, there was the building like a huge silver rocket. Plans to build the final structure in these tunnels, and then shipped to the United States in pieces then be assembled on site on 42nd Street and Lexington Avenue in New York.

When the model was finished there was a costume ball with Moorish-futuristic theme for all those involved in the company secret. Technicians arrived dressed as creatures from outer space, and with those outfits danced with secretaries wearing suggestive clothing Arab girls.

A flamenco guitarist was born in the Sacromonte, blindfolded, and said that the party went on until dawn. In a rather prophetically, the same Van Allen, it was said, had appeared disguised Boabdil, the last Moorish king of Granada.

The strange noise from the party finally reached the Patio de la Acequia, where two students had spent the night. Young followed the sound to its source by one of the air intakes of the tunnel, and thus came close to the gleaming skyscrapers that was lying, while Mars and electricians who seemed young slaves of New York dancing the Charleston smoking Camel.

One student, a girl of Jaén, for what is said, had a striking resemblance to Evelyn Nesbit, died immediately of a heart attack, while his companion suffered a psychotic breakdown was reduced to spending the rest of his life entered in a mental institution.

Instead of keeping the scandal hushed, Van Allen and all his lustful company engineers had to go. They sailed from port of Motril, with plans and all, in the private yacht Walter. P. Chrysler, on board of which - allegedly - the party continued for another week.

The tunnels were sealed with the building still inside. There is, silent and empty, even today, buried, as a galactic sword and a silver Giralda modern times, buried in darkness, as inaccessible as the Giralda fake Stanford White."

\* All these expressions are in Spanish on the original. John. J. Healey / Translation Ana Poljak



White/black Photos (in order of appearance): 1-Two workers on gargoyles that adorn the corners of the Chrysler Building 59th floor. 2 - Margaret Bourke, a photographer from Life magazine, which made the picture in 1946 with Gandhi spinning wheel, made a report around the Chrysler Building.



## Legend of the 12 lions of the Alhambra in Granada

They say that long ago, an Arab princess came to the Moorish kingdom of Granada with his father and he guards to stay during a season in Alhambra.

Zaira was a beautiful girl with big dark eyes, vivid look of great intelligence and sensitivity. But his father was the opposite: Evil, sullen, moody and even cruel.

Never allowed the princess left the palace to keep an eye on and under control, something that Zaira willingly accepted from the beginning, and soon fell in love with the palaces and gardens, the Alhambra placed at his feet.

Suddenly one afternoon, a guy jumped the wall to the surprise of the princess who at that time was resting in the shade.

Arturo, such was the young Christian, declared his having been long hours watching from rooftops love.

Zaira could only surrender to the boldness and courage of the boy, who was playing life if they were caught.

Zaira made him promise that he would leave soon, as his father would soon appear with 11 royal guards, so the boy nodded and promised to return the next day.

He kept his word Arturo, with such bad luck that in their flight, one of the royal guards discovered their presence. As soon as the king was informed, he was in prison waiting to be executed the next morning.

After the sad news, Princess Zaira did not stop mourn, so the halls of the palaces hours before seemed paradise, were now little more than a living hell where her beloved come to an end very soon.

Then he discovered by chance the diary of his father in one of the rooms that the king frequented, and even though it was not his intention and by those avatars of fate, opened it to the exact page where the king declared:

"I have killed the king and the queen. Princess I have pity. Now I'm the king and she will never know the truth, and though I possess all the power of the kingdom, his talisman hides a terrible curse created by her mother knows I hope never to use. "

Seeing that, Zaira not believe I could be, so he called together the king and his guards in the courtyard of the palace of Muhammad V to ask for explanations hitherto believed was her father.

This, without thinking twice, and seeing his clothing you against such accusations guards, told him the truth: "Indeed I am not your father."

Zaira's eyes filled with tears of bitterness and anger at this revelation.

Tightly clutching the talisman that hung from his neck since he was a baby, the fury of a lion through his body and activated the curse that the gift from his mother kept, making the king and his eleven guards in twelve stone lions still They continue to bear the weight of the central source of the palace of the king of Granada.

Zaira freed Arturo from his chains, fled the city and lived happily for the rest of their lives.

Since then this courtyard of the Alhambra is called The Court of the Lions (El Patio de los Leones).