

MARIBEL'S GUIDE TO THE SHERRY TRIANGLE ©



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GUIDE BOOKS, WEB RESOURCES AND TRAVEL PLANNING

THE BEST GUIDEBOOKS

- Eyewitness: Seville and Andalusia
- Cadogan's: Andalucía
- Footprint: Andalucía Handbook
- Insight Guide: Southern Spain
- Thomas Cook: Andalucía and the Costa del Sol
- Pallas: Andalucía by Michael Jacobs
- Knopf: Seville and Andalusia

WEB RESOURCES

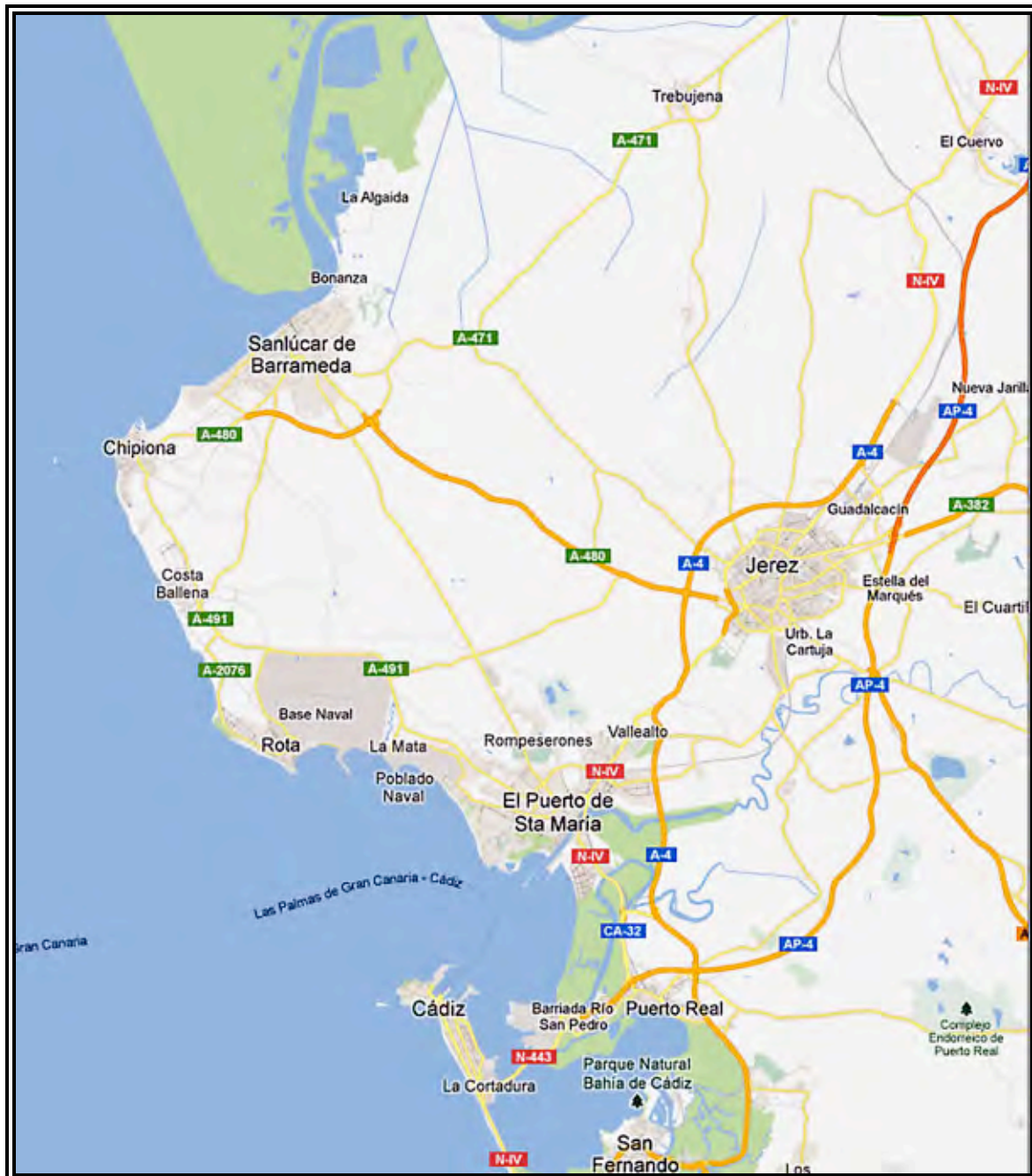
- www.guiadecadiz.com - Info regarding all wine/sherry cellars in the sherry triangle
- www.tgcomes.es - Info on bus service from Sevilla to Cádiz, Sanlúcar and Jerez
- www.renfe.es - Info on train service from Seville to Jerez and Cádiz
- www.cmtbc.es - Transports from Jerez to El Puerto and Cádiz
- www.altur.com - for all of Andalucía
- www.andalucia.com - info for the entire region
- www.elegirhoy.com - Spanish only, for upcoming cultural/musical events; on-line version of the magazine
- www.guiadecadiz.com - for more info regarding all wine/sherry cellars in the sherry triangle

TRAVEL PLANNING SERVICES

*Exclusive Travel Planning Services by **Iberian Traveler & Maribel's Guides**. Contact Maribel to arrange a custom itinerary for your trip to Spain, Portugal, Paris or southwest France.*

Travel planning services are fee based, depending on the length of your trip. The fee includes the preparation of a customized, day-to-day itinerary based on the client's specific interests/travel style/budget, customized sightseeing, dining and shopping guides for each destination, booking of all accommodations, making restaurant reservations, securing of performing arts tickets (theater/opera/ballet/flamenco), setting up winery visits, cooking classes, personal guide services or special day tours, car rentals and consultation by email or phone.

USA Tel: (206) 861-9008 / 364-6723



THE SHERRY TRIANGLE

- Jerez De La Frontera
- Sanlúcar de Barrameda
- El Puerto de Santa María

Head to Jerez the capital of the “**Sherry Triangle**” to take a tour of the sherry bodegas, or to watch an equestrian ballet, the “**Dancing Horses of Andalucía**”.

JEREZ DE LA FRONTERA

SHERRY BODEGA TOURS

The Domecq and González Byass bodegas (the "biggies") are on the far southwest side of town, side-by-side, and a bit hard to reach because the signage in Jerez is poor. If you choose to visit either one, follow the signs on the ring road west, leading you to the N-480 and Sanlúcar de Barrameda, or the N-IV towards Cádiz to reach that side of town. You'll need to park on the street wherever you can find a spot. Domecq has no official parking lot for their tours as a way of not encouraging mass visits.

Please be aware of the "gypsy parking attendants" hovering around, looking semi-official, will offer to help you park, then "guard" your car during your stay, expecting a tip, of course. We had experienced these often in Sevilla so just ignored them. We weren't sure whether we had parked illegally or not due to the lack of signage, and left our luggage in the trunk, which couldn't be avoided, but it was tucked away on a side street with no traffic.



Although the Domecq bodega is the oldest and considered by some to be the most prestigious, with casks autographed by Franco, royalty, celebrities (one of the bodegas has Mezquita inspired architecture), they weren't particularly welcoming at first. We had the feeling that their public relations department offers tours reluctantly since they interfere with their day, make noise, disturb the sherry at rest, and generally just get in the way of their ultra serious sherry production.

Your hotel in Sevilla can arrange Bodegas bus-tours. The horse ballet/bodega tours of Marqués del Tesoro, like a Napa Valley tour, then a drive to Puerto de Santa María in time for lunch, take the boat to Cadiz, where you'll meet the bus for your return trip to Sevilla. It makes a stop at the beach in Puerto where you can take a small tour of city.

If you want to combine the Dancing Horses of Jerez ballet and a bodega tour on your own, after the horse ballet ends at 1:30, you can walk around the long, wedge shaped block to catch the 2:15 English (or Spanish) tour at the Sandeman bodegas, just behind the Royal Equestrian School. While Sandeman is famed primarily for its ports, the 1-hour long tour is quite handy, sleek and well done by young ladies in "Zorro-type" black caped costumes and black Córdoba hats. The tour ends in the "Sacristía" with a very ample tasting of three of its sherry varieties; a fino, a medium and a Pedro Ximénez sweet sherry served with chips

and olives. The exit takes you very through the rather nice gift shop. In you're in need of sustenance by then, walk across the street to the dining room of the 4-star Gran Hotel Palmera Plaza. Lunch is served in the summer in Jerez until 4:00.

SANDEMAN BODEGAS

C/Pizarro, 10, visits available during the week, Monday-Friday, Saturday by appointment only. Closed on Sunday. reservations required. See: www.Sandeman.eu to download the complete schedule.



BODEGA DOMECCQ

We toured the Domeccq bodega in Jerez in June, driving there from our lodging outside of Arcos on our way up to Seville. The desk staff made our reservations, you must reserve ahead for Domeccq, for the 10:00 tour. Tours are only given hourly in the mornings. There were only 5 people in our group and because our friend was the only non-Spanish-speaking member of the group, the tour guide informed us that she would give our tour in Spanish only. After a bit of coaxing, she relented and took the 3 of us off on our own for a private tour in English and her English was impeccable. She turned out to be charming after all. At the end she left us alone in the large tasting room with five full bottles of sherry, from dry fino to sweet rich

Pedro Ximénez, for us to taste to our heart's content.

We could have stayed around for hours, but the sherry is quite potent before lunch. Domeccq has visits from Monday-Friday from 10:00-2:00. The afternoon visit includes a aperitif. They also offer pre-arranged visits in the afternoons and on weekends by appointment only. Book in advance at: AlvaroDomeccq.com

GONZÁLEZ BYASS

Makers of *Tío Pepe*, is still a family run business. Like Domecq, the bodega is a cathedral-like warehouse with cavernous ceilings and high windows that channel the breezes from Africa, which allows the sherry to mature. Wrought-iron lanterns illuminate the rows and rows of dusty barrels, many autographed by royalty and celebrities who have visited over the years. The bodega has (or had) tours at 11:30, 12:30, 1:30, 4:30, 5:30 and 6:30 weekdays and Sunday mornings. You can e-mail to reserve a tour at: GonzalezByass.com.



González Byass is a bit more "tour friendly", accepting large groups, versus Domecq, which is now owned by Seagram and which is the least touristy and most "exclusive".

WILLIAMS AND HUMBERT

Carretera N-IV, Km 641, has one of Europe's largest wine cellars. Makers of Duque de Alba Brandy, one of Spain's best brandies. They offer a free Equestrian Show with the tour on Wednesday and Friday at 10:00 am or noon. Reservations required. See: [Bodegas Williams Humbert](http://BodegasWilliamsHumbert) for complete information.

BODEGAS TERRY

Open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 9:00-1:00. Tours cost €4,50 and includes a visit to the stables of beautiful Carthusian Hispano-Arab horses (www.bodegasterry.com)

Tel: (+34) 956 543 690. Email: bodegas@terry.es

THE DANCING HORSES OF ANDALUCIA

This is a spectacular display of dressage of the beautiful Carthusian horses, cousins to the Lipizzaner Stallions of the *Spanish Riding School* in Vienna, and their riders, in period costumes, “dancing” to classical music. Called the *Cómo Bailan Los Caballos Andaluces*, it's held at the **Real Escuela Andaluza del Arte Ecuestre**, the 18th century *Palacio de las Cadenas* on Avenida de Abrantes.



Performances are held at noon every Thursday during the year and on Tuesdays from March to October. There is also a performance on Fridays from 15 July-31 October. The ballet lasts for 1-1/2 hours with a brief 10-minute intermission. These performances are extremely popular and often sell out a month or more in advance! The best seats are the up-close, €21 “preferencia” seats on both sides of the VIP seats, but other seats are priced at €13 and €17 and have great sightlines. When you pick up your tickets at the box office they will offer you an entrance ticket to the adjacent carriage museum, [El Museo de Carruajes](#), as well.



There is absolutely **no** videotaping or photography allowed during the performance, but they do sell books and tasteful souvenirs in the gift shop and posters of the horse ballet are sold at the coat and camera check stand. During intermission it's customary to sip a quick

sherry at the bar, although run, don't walk. It gets utterly mobbed very quickly, as does the gift shop. You can watch them schooling, or visit the stables on other days.

You can reserve via credit card by phone they speak English, Tel: (+34) 956 318 008, or email and pick up tickets at box office, or book on line at: www.realescuela.org. *Check the special Saturday performances in 2013.*

If you want to do a little sightseeing around the city after the horse ballet, the **Visit Jerez** tour bus departs from in front of the Royal Equestrian School promptly following the show, at 1:30.

DINING IN JEREZ

BAR JUANITO

For tapas in Jerez, go to the legendary **Bar Juanito**, featured in Saveur magazine. It's tiny and tucked away on the minuscule Calle Pescadería Vieja off Plaza Arenal, now run by Juanito's son Faustino. The décor consists of sherry barrels, plants, knick-knacks and hams hanging from ceiling hooks.



They offer 60 varieties of tapas, the best being the artichokes in a sauce of sherry, olive oil, scallions, garlic, parsley and breadcrumbs. Also try the steak braised in Oloroso. Has won the National Gastronomy Prize of Spain (www.bar-juanito.com).

BAR RESTAURANTE TENDIDO 6

For classic, sit-down dining in Jerez, go to where the matadors go, Calle Circo, 10, located in front of the bullring. Specialty is oxtail stew. Closed Sundays (www.tendido6.com).

LA MESA REDONA

The very best table in town can be found at Calle Manuel de la Quintana, 3. It's within easy walking distance of the Real Escuela del Arte Equestre. Closed Sundays (La Mesa Redona).

LODGING IN JEREZ

If you'd like to add a night or two to your stay, particularly during Holy Week, or the Feria del Caballo, the Horse Fair in May, or the Festival de la Vendimia, the Wine Festival in late September, you can consider the following:

5-STAR KROSS PALMERA PLAZA

This stylish, 52 room hotel, is located directly across from the Sandeman sherry bodegas close to the Royal Equestrian School. Jerez's nicest in-town lodging.

5-STAR VILLA DE JEREZ

Is an 18-room manor house in an elegant residential area of the city. All of the rooms face out to the garden or pool (www.hace.es)

4-STAR HOTEL BELLAS ARTES

An 18 century manor house with 20 beautifully furnished rooms with views of the cathedral, a library, piano bar, terraces and Jacuzzi. Breakfast included in the tariff. Can be booked at Inns of Spain (www.innsofspain.com).

3-STAR TIERRAS DE JEREZ

Is owned by the Casas y Palacios group, which also owns the Casas de la Judería and Casas de los Mercaderes in Sevilla (www.intergroupoteles.com)

3-STAR HOTEL CHANCILLERIA

This charming hotel in Jerez's old quarter, at Calle Chancilleria, 21, has a rooftop terrace and it's own highly regarded restaurant, Sabores (hotelchancilleria.com).



Flamenco street music, Jerez

SANLÚCAR DE BARRAMEDA - on a sunny afternoon

Another of the "sherry triangle" towns

DINING IN SANLÚCAR

Sipping cold Manzanilla sherry from Sanlúcar under a blazing summer at mid-day, dining on the world's best "langostinos" (prawns) is what everyone in Seville yearns for. You can either float down the river on a cruise from Seville's Torre de Oro boat dock to this kind of shabbily, languidly charismatic estuary town, or drive in from Jerez. At the top of the hill in Sanlúcar, it's all fragrant white bodegas and fading aristocracy.

Down by the sea on the promenade, called the *Bajo de Guía* (literally bottom of the map), is a fishing village turned cooking village. Take tapas by the beach as the sunsets fire red and kids play at the water's edge. You'll be facing the most important and largest wildlife reserve in Europe, the *Coto de Doñana*. You can take a 4-hour boat trip on the Real Fernando steamer over to Doñana from here. Inquire at the Fábrica de Hielos office.

CASA BALBINO

Is a famous tapas bar in the Plaza del Cabildo, Sanlúcar's main square, legendary for its 50 verities of tapas like shrimp tortilla (tortilla de camarones). Rated as one of top tapas bars in all of Andalucía (casabalbino.com).

CASA BIGOTE

If the weather is chilly for dining, move indoor to *Casa Bigote* (book beforehand) for one of the best meals in Andalucía. Inside is a virtual museum-be sure to have a look at least (restaurantecasabigote.com).



CASA JUAN and MIRADOR DE DOÑANA

But if the weather is nice, then have an alfresco lunch at one of the restaurants on the riverfront promenade overlooking the beach with outdoor terrace, such as [Casa Juan](#) or the [Mirador de Doñana](#).

MANZANILLA

Sanlúcar's version of sherry

BODEGA TOURS**BODEGAS BARBADILLO**

On Calle Sevilla, 25, near the castle, is the major producer, with 70% of the Manzanilla produced. They offer tours Monday-Saturday at noon and 1:00 for €3. Sunday is reserved for groups only (www.barbadillo.net).

Tel: (+34) 956 385 500 Email for reservations at reserves@barbadillo.com.

**BODEGAS PEDRO ROMERO**

Founded in 1860 by Vicente Romero Carranza, this family owned bodega offers tours Tuesday-Saturday in English and Spanish at noon for €6. No prior reservation required. Tour begins in a salon with table surrounded by family pictures. There a Pedro Ximénez is poured while the guide explains the history of the bodega. Then commences a 90-minute tour of the facilities. At the end, the guide pours fresh Manzanilla from the barrel to taste.

Tel: (+34) 956 36 07 36.

EL PUERTO DE SANTA MARÍA

The 3rd sherry triangle city

DINING IN EL PUERTO**ROMERIJO**

You can combine Sanlúcar, Jerez and El Puerto de Santa María on a long, full day trip from Sevilla. Head straight down to the **Ribera del Marisco** facing the water where you'll find the legendary **Romerijo**, filled at all times, one of the most popular spots in all of El Puerto.

Has boiling cauldrons filled with shellfish, *freidurías*, for preparing fresh “pescaíto frito” (deep fried fish, the local obsession). Try either a sampling of their shellfish (a *mariscada*) or a platter of fried fish (*fritura de e'pescado*) and a pitcher of beer.

Open from noon to midnight (www.romerijo.com).

RESTAURANTE FARO DEL PUERTO

For more formal dining at one of the very best restaurants in the entire coast, head out on the highway to El Faro del Puerto written up in *Gourmet*, *Saveur*, etc. Housed in a chalet surrounded by gardens and offering magnificent seafood, a well-chosen wine list and outdoors dining in season.

Closed Sunday nights, except during August (www.elfarodelpuerto.com)

EL PUERTO DE SANTA MARÍA BODEGA TOURS

BODEGAS OSBORNE

To sample El Puerto's sherry production, reserve spots on the guided tours given at Bodegas Osborne's two cellars, the **Bodega de Mora** in town (produces sherry), open Monday-Friday from 10:00-1:30. Tour in English is at 10:30, Spanish at 11:00 and noon. Tour hours are the same at its **Bodega el Tiro** (brandy), on the N-IV highway. Email them to reserve the 90-minute guided tour at visitas.bodegas@osborne.es.



BODEGAS GUTIERREZ-COLOSIA

www.gutierrez-colosia.com