

501

GREAT PLACES TO STAY



Cortijo del Marqués

WHERE:

Camino del Marqués, Albolote,
Granada Province, Andalucía

COST:

Budget

BEST TIME OF YEAR:

March to October offers the best of the weather (but sitting in front of a roaring log fire on a winter's evening is no hardship).

DON'T MISS:

A hearty meal in the restaurant; a moment of peaceful reflection in the wonderful private chapel, built in 1878

THINGS TO DO:

Simply enjoy the peace and quiet of this beautiful building and the Spanish countryside; cycle or hike locally (bike rental available at the manor); sally forth to explore Granada's striking countryside and historic monuments (starting with the awesome Alhambra, naturally)

YOU SHOULD KNOW:

Most visitors simply find the manor chapel interesting. In fact, it actually sees several weddings each year, with the happy couple and their guests accommodated in the big house. The manor does cater for guests with mobility problems.

For an authentic flavour of traditional Andalusian rural life (which happens to be available conveniently close to Granada and the A-44 motorway for ease of access), look no further than Cortijo del Marqués. This fine old restored *cortijo* (manor house) is located between the Pozeuelo and Arana mountains, set amid olive groves and surrounded by fields of sunflowers and wheat. Happily, 'traditional' does not mean 'basic' when it comes to the facilities. The stone-built Marqués does have wonderfully authentic charisma, and the guest rooms have pleasing rustic decor, with wooden or tiled floors and wooden beams. But every one of those spacious rooms has central heating, a fan, private bathroom with a bathrobe and hairdryer provided, and also a seating area. There is free wifi in public areas.

The rooms are all different and with names such as Tower, Pigeon Loft, Granary, Cistern, Church, Lookout and Carpenter's, the character of the spotless accommodation is easy to imagine – and the *actualité* doesn't disappoint. In addition there is a detached cottage that is perfect for families or two couples. Outside, the set-up is excellent, especially for families with kids. The manor house has a terrace with beautiful views of the surrounding countryside, while garden patios provide ideal spots in which to soak up the sun. Children can play safely in the walled garden and an outdoor swimming pool (protected from unauthorized junior incursion by a gate) perfectly complements those hot summer days.

The management cannily proclaim that Cortijo del Marqués is Granada's best-kept secret, but will probably be less than heartbroken to discover that their secret's out.

