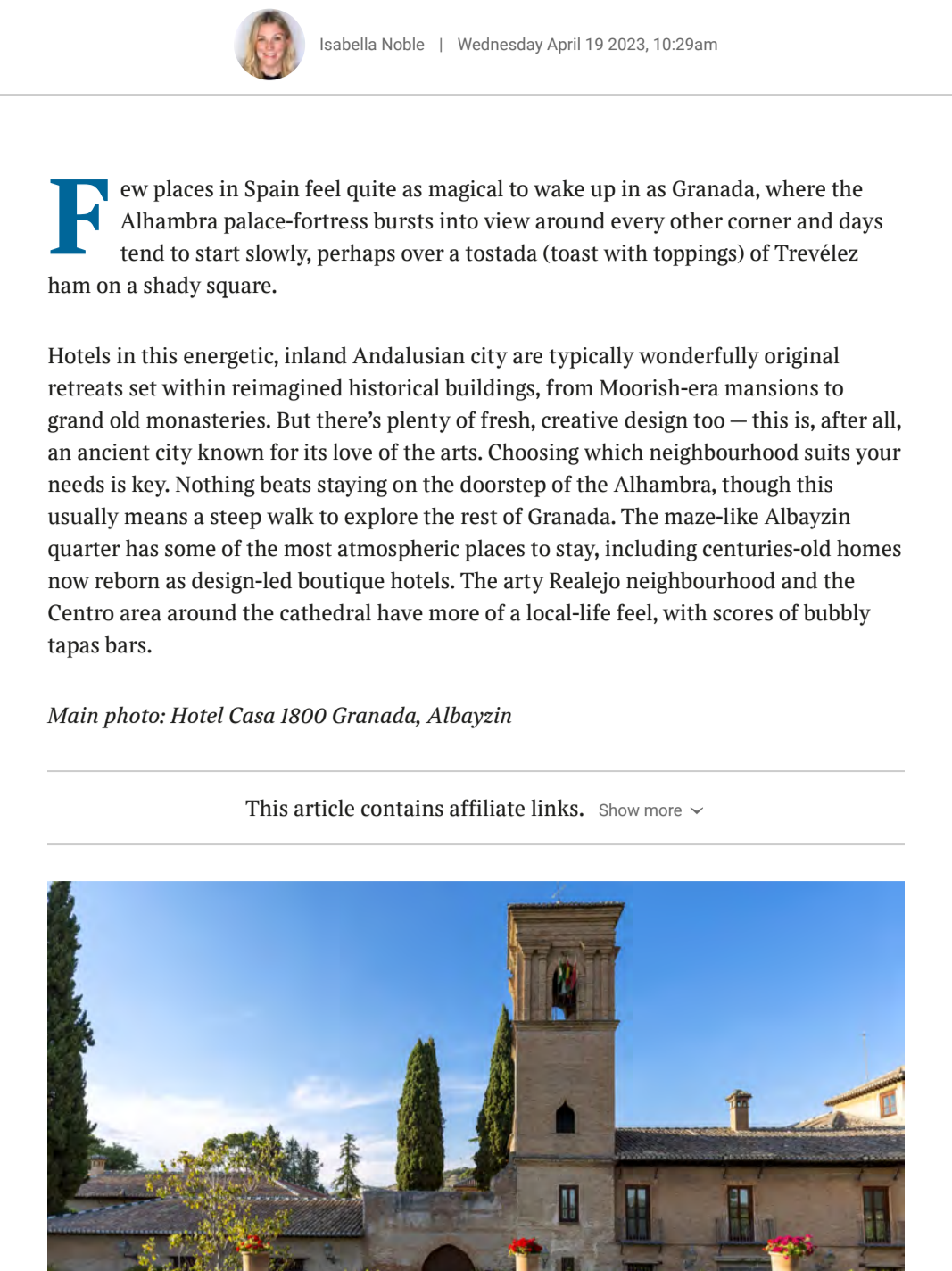


Best hotels in Granada

GRANADA

Under the watch of the UNESCO-protected Alhambra, this dynamic Andalusian city delivers creative boutique retreats, reimaged Moorish-era palaces and design-forward urban hideaways



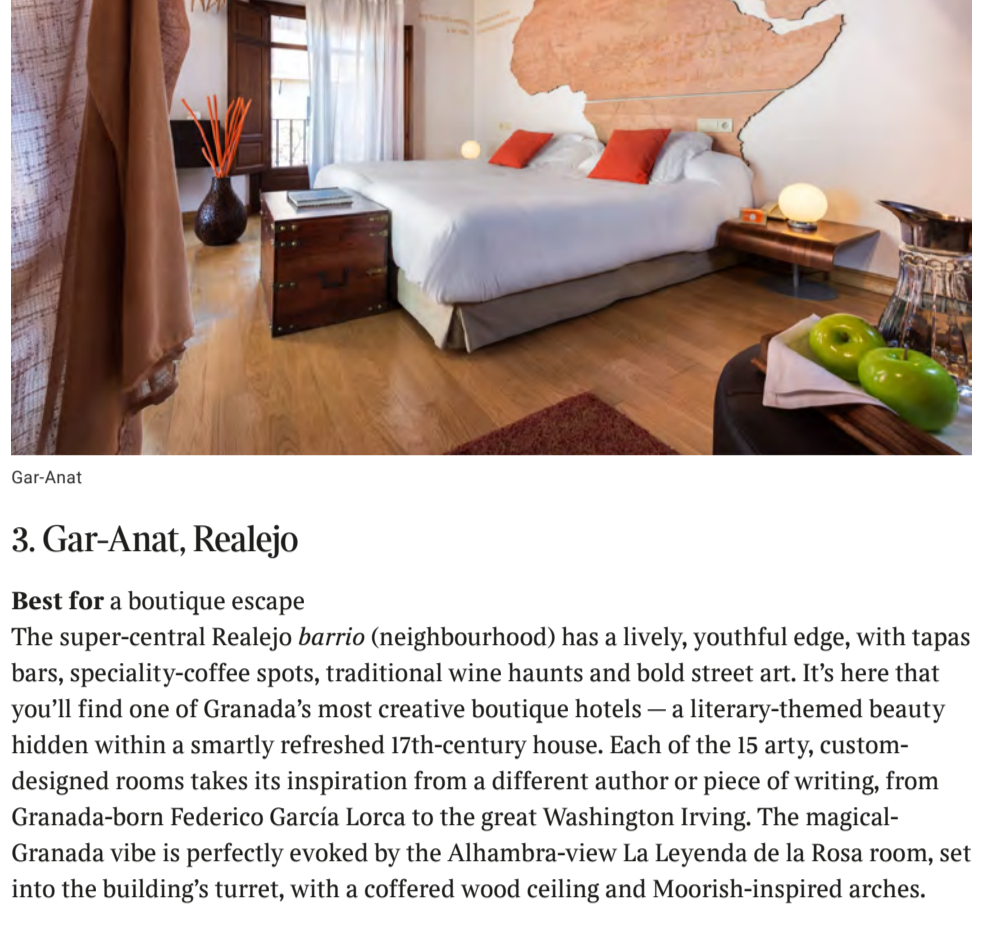
Isabella Noble | Wednesday April 19 2023, 10:29am

Few places in Spain feel quite as magical to wake up in as Granada, where the Alhambra palace-fortress bursts into view around every other corner and days tend to start slowly, perhaps over a tostada (toast with toppings) of Trevelez ham on a shady square.

Hotels in this energetic, inland Andalusian city are typically wonderfully original retreats set within reimaged historical buildings, from Moorish-era mansions to grand old monasteries. But there's plenty of fresh, creative design too — this is, after all, an ancient city known for its love of the arts. Choosing which neighbourhood suits your needs is key. Nothing beats staying on the doorstep of the Alhambra, though this usually means a steep walk to explore the rest of Granada. The maze-like Albayzin quarter has some of the most atmospheric places to stay, including centuries-old homes now reborn as design-led boutique hotels. The arty Realejo neighbourhood and the Centro area around the cathedral have more of a local-life feel, with scores of bubbly tapas bars.

Main photo: Hotel Casa 1800 Granada, Albayzin

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1. Parador de Granada, Alhambra

Best for a heavenly location
There's a reason why this gorgeously converted 15th-century red-brick convent in the Alhambra grounds ranks among Spain's most sought-after hotels. For those who book well ahead, a stay at the Parador de Granada means rolling out of bed within the UNESCO-listed palace-fortress itself, sipping crisp Andalusian wines on a sunny terrace overlooking the Generalife gardens and feasting on fabulous contemporary **Granada** cooking. The rambling building was originally a Moorish palace, and it's a similarly tempting scene when it comes to the smart, calming rooms, the best of which gaze out across the Alhambra complex.

Spa N
Pool N
Price room-only doubles from £290

BOOK A STAY

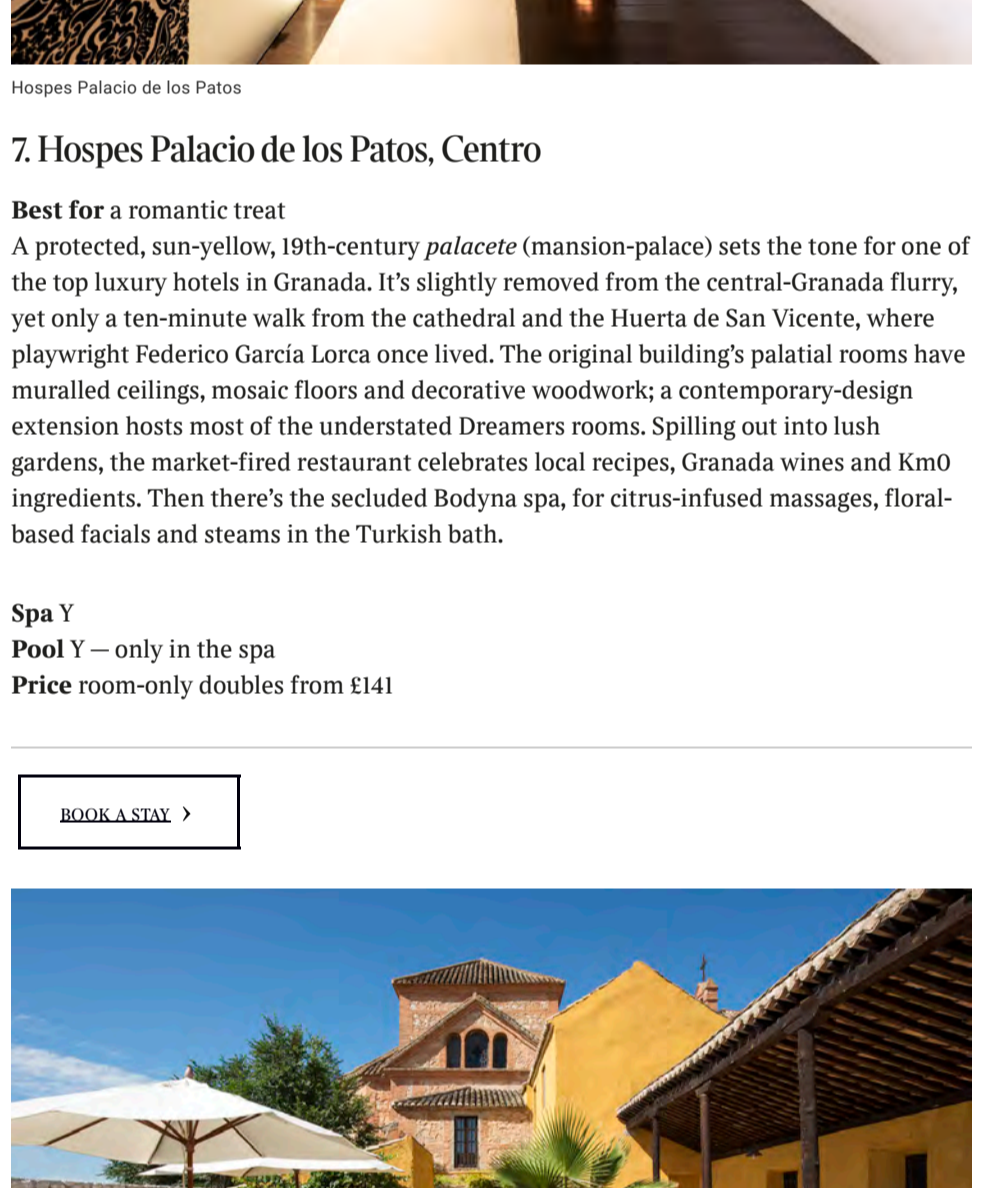


2. Hotel Casa 1800 Granada, Albayzin

Best for historical luxury
Step through a backstreet doorway in the lower Albayzin into this dream of a historical-boutique hideaway, where fresh flowers, handcrafted tiles and original woodwork and murals fill the corridors of a luxurious 16th-century mansion. The 25 soothing rooms bring a splash of old-Granada drama, styled with rich golds, beamed ceilings, terracotta floors and ornate bedheads, and are dotted off a peaceful Andalusian-style courtyard where home-cooked breakfasts arrive. Thoughtful extras shine (massages in your room, complimentary afternoon tea, designer toiletries) and the location near Plaza Nueva is handy for everything.

Spa N
Pool N
Price room-only doubles from £115

BOOK A STAY

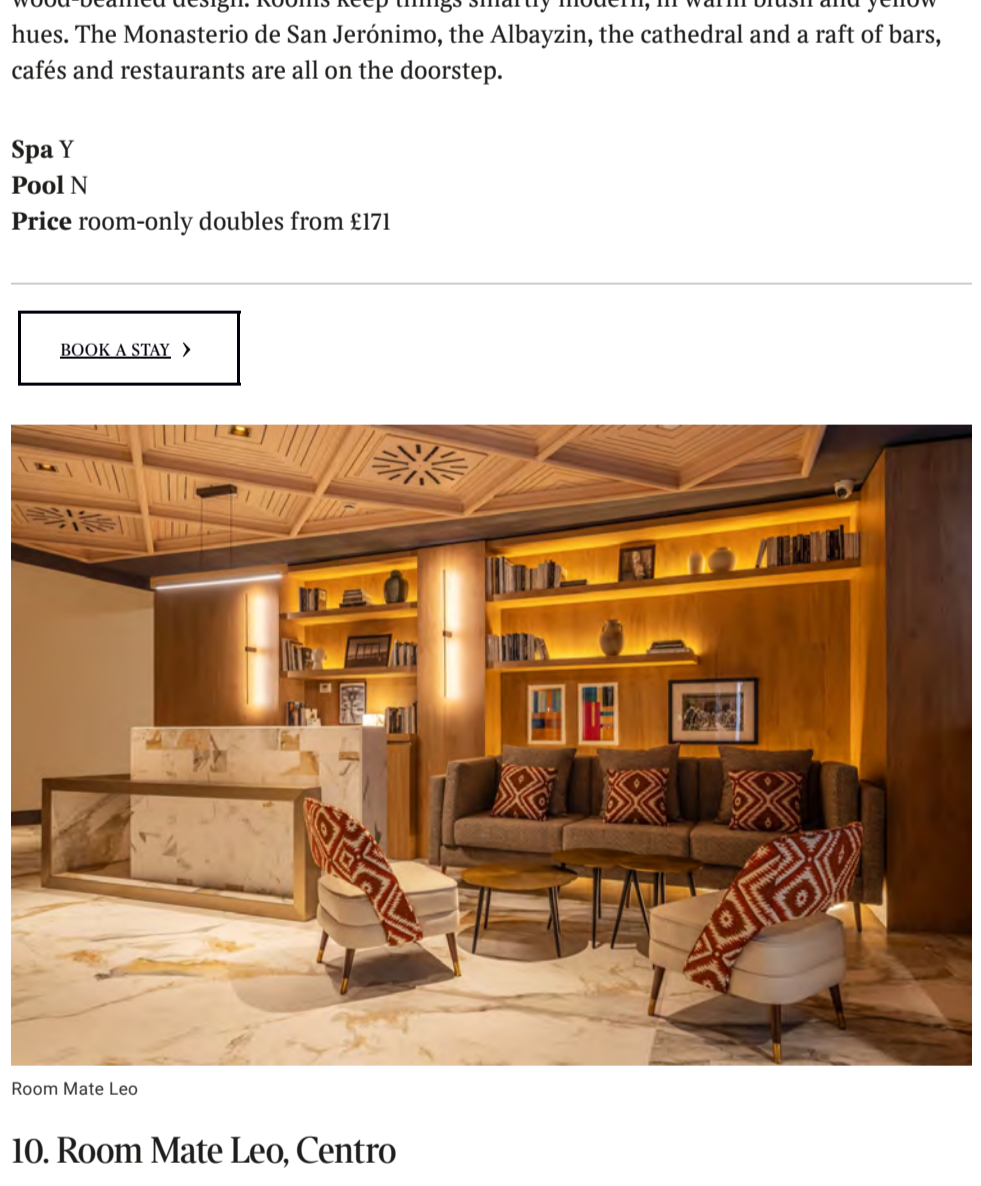


3. Gar-Anat, Realejo

Best for a boutique escape
The super-central Realejo *barrio* (neighbourhood) has a lively, youthful edge, with tapas bars, speciality-coffee spots, traditional wine haunts and bold street art. It's here that you'll find one of Granada's most creative boutique hotels — a literary-themed beauty hidden within a smartly refreshed 17th-century house. Each of the 15 arty, custom-designed rooms takes its inspiration from a different author or piece of writing, from Granada-born Federico Garcia Lorca to the great Washington Irving. The magical-Granada vibe is perfectly evoked by the Alhambra-view La Leyenda de la Rosa room, set into the building's turret, with a coffered wood ceiling and Moorish-inspired arches.

Spa N
Pool N
Price room-only doubles from £60

BOOK A STAY

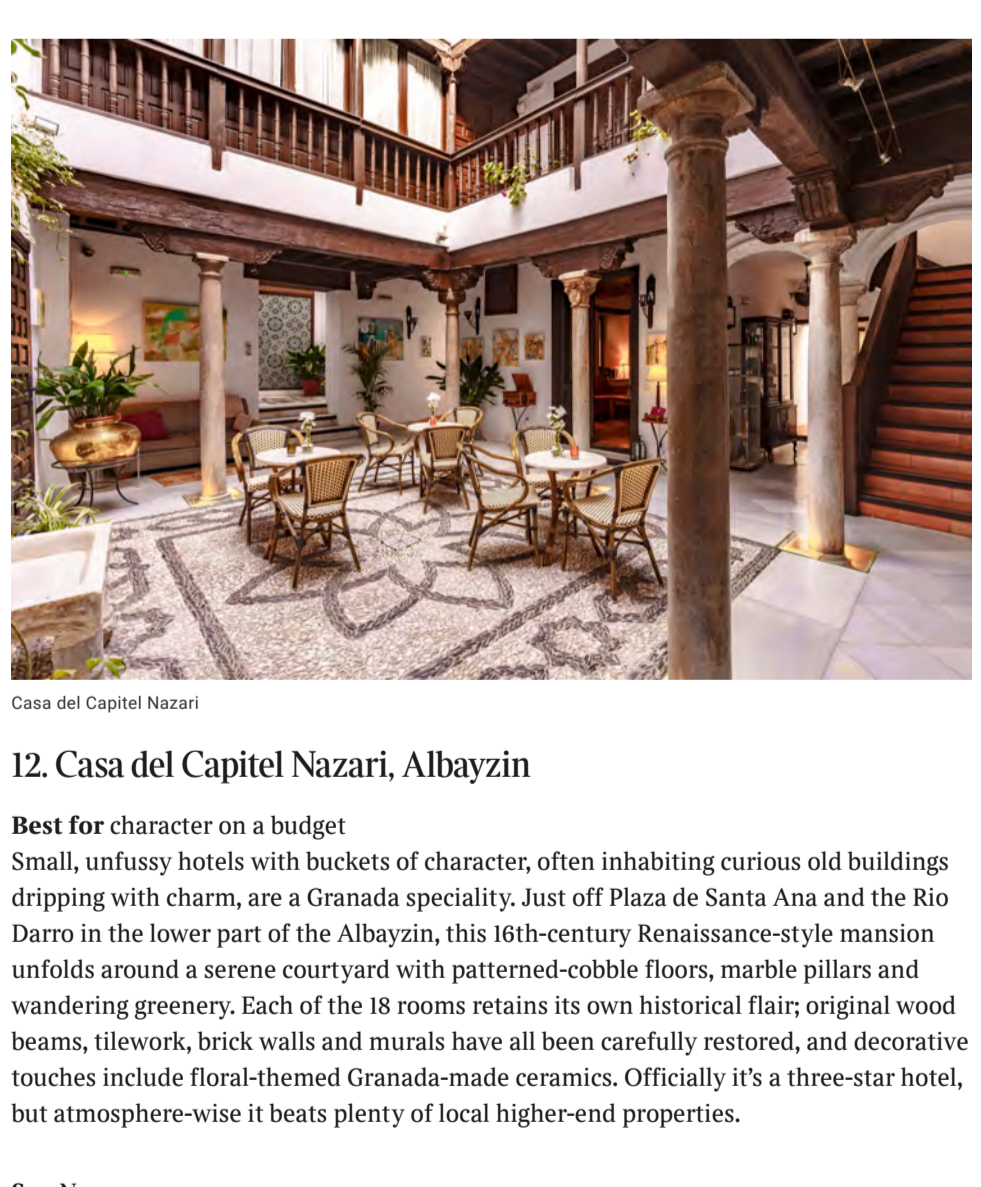


4. Hotel Casa Morisca, Albayzin

Best for Granada architecture
A pioneer of Granada's hotel scene, the adult-only Casa Morisca remains one of the city's loveliest places to stay. The setting is a delight, in a meandering house dating back to the late 15th century, in the lower part of the Albayzin, with just 14 soulful, antique-filled rooms around a terracotta courtyard with a turquoise-tiled fountain. Owner-architect Carlos Sánchez has won multiple awards for this sensitive restoration project, which shows off original features such as wood-beamed ceilings, delicate plasterwork, hidden arches, rich *artesonado* (interlaced-beam ceilings) and even a red-brick *aljibe* (cistern) where breakfasts are served. A handful of rooms have Alhambra or Sacromonte views.

Spa N
Pool N
Price room-only doubles from £101

BOOK A STAY

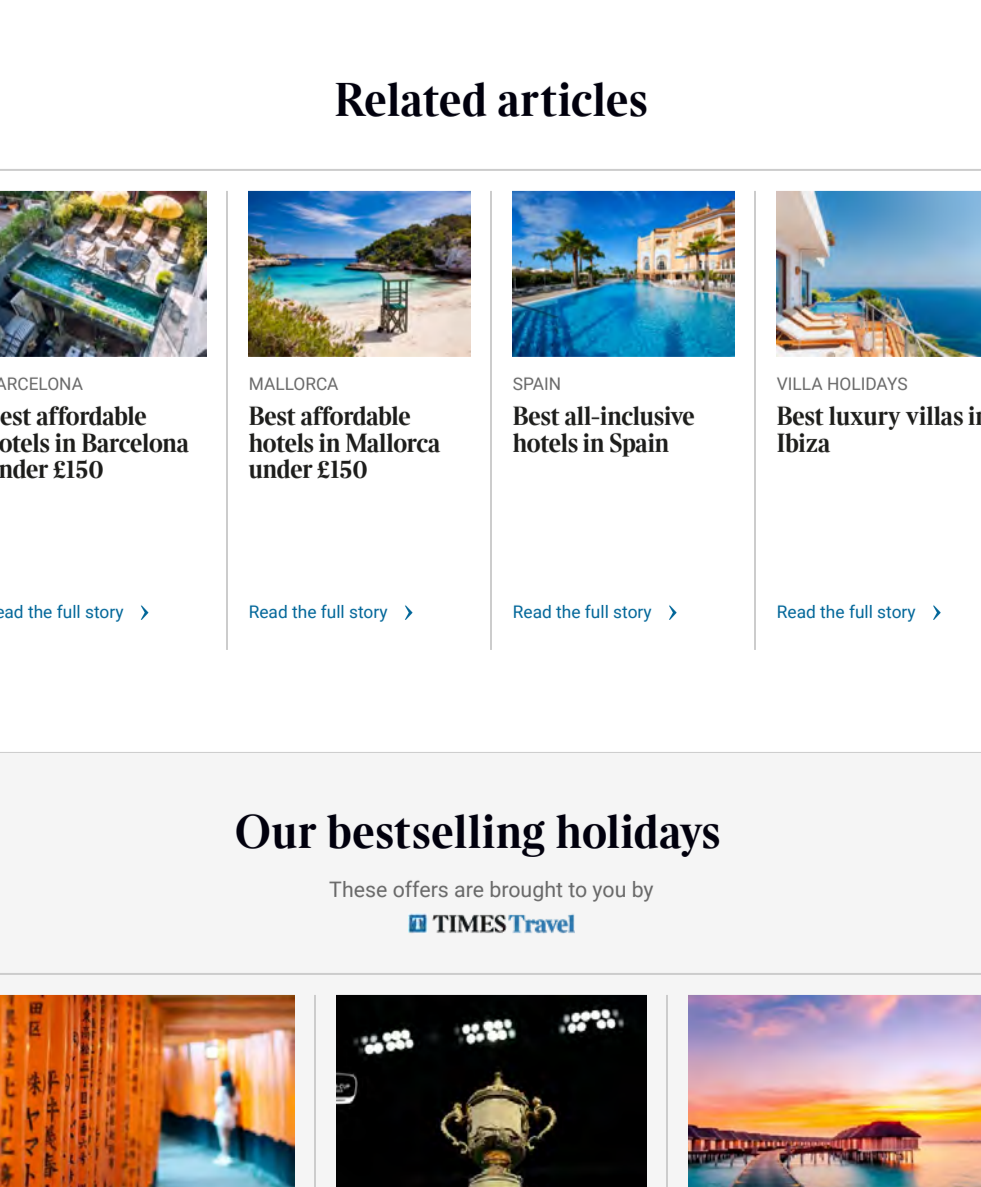


5. Hotel Santa Isabel La Real, Albayzin

Best for dazzling views
With its twisting, turning streets and Alhambra-at-sunset panoramas, the ancient Albayzin is Granada's most evocative neighbourhood. A few steps from the buzzy Placeta de San Miguel Bajo, a thoughtfully restored 16th-century *casa de vecinos* (a place for multiple families) set around a classic Andalusian patio now hosts this charmingly laid-back hotel. Local antiques and wooden beams bring a rustic touch to the 11 rooms, which mostly overlook the Albayzin or the courtyard, while breakfasts of homemade cakes, jams and more kick off the day. In the coveted top-floor Deluxe room, you'll wake up to views of the Alhambra looming beneath the Sierra Nevada.

Spa N
Pool N
Price B&B doubles from £135

BOOK A STAY



6. Carmen de la Alcubilla del Caracol, Realejo

Best for gorgeous gardens
Granada's secluded, Moorish-origin *carmenes* are traditional, private walled-in homes known for their fragrant terraced gardens, so getting to stay overnight at one is a real treat. Dating from the late 19th century, La Alcubilla del Caracol is a warm, family-run place filled with citrus trees, bougainvillea, rose bushes, cypresses and other greenery, on the quieter upper slopes of the Realejo. Days start with a strong café con leche on the terrace gazing out across Granada and the Sierra Nevada. All seven pastel-hued rooms (some with balconies) have Granada views, too, and a leisurely 15-minute walk leads to the Alhambra.

Spa N
Pool N
Price room-only doubles from £145

BOOK A STAY

7. Hospes Palacio de los Patos, Centro

Best for a romantic treat
A protected, sun-yellow, 19th-century *palacete* (mansion-palace) sets the tone for one of the top luxury hotels in Granada. It's slightly removed from the central-Granada flurry, yet only a ten-minute walk from the cathedral and the Huerta de San Vicente, where playwright Federico Garcia Lorca once lived. The original building's palatial rooms have muralled ceilings, mosaic floors and decorative woodwork; a contemporary-design extension hosts most of the understated Dreamers rooms. Spilling out into lush gardens, the market-fired restaurant celebrates local recipes, Granada wines and Km0 ingredients. Then there's the secluded Bodyna spa, for citrus-infused massages, floral-based facials and steams in the Turkish bath.

Spa Y
Pool Y — only in the spa
Price room-only doubles from £141

BOOK A STAY

8. Cortijo del Marques, Albolote

Best for a country retreat
There's some beautiful **Andalusia** countryside sprawling around Granada. The seductive, family-owned Cortijo del Marques inhabits a stylishly restored 16th-century *finca* that even has its own chapel, all surrounded by olive groves 30 minutes' drive north of Granada. Orange trees dot the peaceful courtyard; home-cooked meals make the most of locally grown ingredients and on-the-doorstep wines; and the turquoise pool feels like a dreamy retreat after exploring the city's monuments. Just picking one of the 15 rooms is a joy, with original beams, stone walls, antique furnishings and free-standing baths mingling amid the fresh design.

Spa N
Pool Y
Price B&B doubles from £131

BOOK A STAY

9. AC Palacio de Santa Paula, Centro

Best for a city-centre location
This elegant five-star with centuries of history feels like an oasis of calm in the thick of Granada when you're sipping a glass of local wine under the red-brick arches and bougainvillea of its cobbled courtyard. The skillfully revived 16th-century Convento de Santa Paula and an adjacent 12th-century home are now a hushed haven where marble pillars frame the Moorish-style patio and corridors disappear into a whirl of wood-beamed design. Rooms keep things smartly modern, in warm blush and yellow hues. The Monasterio de San Jerónimo, the Albayzin, the cathedral and a raft of bars, cafés and restaurants are all on the doorstep.

Spa Y
Pool N
Price room-only doubles from £171

BOOK A STAY

10. Room Mate Leo, Centro

Best for value
The popular Spanish Room Mate brand has put itself on the map with its collection of fun, stylish, sensibly priced urban bolt holes with a sustainable focus (upcycled staff uniforms, no single-use plastics). Just a few minutes' stroll from the cathedral, the Granada outpost makes a splash with bold-toned, boutique-feel rooms by designer Lorenzo Castillo, breakfasts running until noon and a rooftop terrace from which you'll glimpse the Alhambra. Go for a dove-grey or pale-pink Deluxe with a tile-walled shower, or if you're keen for a balcony book a gold-and-black-themed Standard room. The surrounding streets are crammed with overflowing tapas bars and local-craft shops.

Spa N
Pool N
Price room-only doubles from £61

BOOK A STAY

11. Aurea Washington Irving, Alhambra

Best for families
A few steps from the Alhambra's entrance, this elegant hotel has been going strong in one shape or another since the mid-19th century. Now reborn as a chic Alhambra-inspired five-star, it makes a refreshing escape from the Granada and the tree-shaded avenues all around and the Carmen de los Martires gardens (an often-overlooked delight) next-door. The American writer Washington Irving (of *Tales of the Alhambra* fame) once stayed here, and there are decorative literary quotes and a mood library. Various room combinations have been designed with families in mind, including the Suite Andalusi which sleeps up to four. But the real highlight is the sun-drenched rooftop pool.

Spa Y
Pool Y
Price B&B doubles from £115

BOOK A STAY

12. Casa del Capitel Nazari, Albayzin

Best for character on a budget
Small, unfussy hotels with buckets of character, often inhabiting curious old buildings dripping with charm, are a Granada speciality. Just off Plaza de Santa Ana and the Rio Darro in the lower part of the Albayzin, this 16th-century Renaissance-style mansion unfolds around a serene courtyard with patterned-cobble floors, marble pillars and wandering greenery. Each of the 18 rooms retains its own historical flair; original wood beams, tilework, brick walls and murals have all been carefully restored, and decorative touches include floral-themed Granada-made ceramics. Officially it's a three-star hotel, but atmosphere-wise it beats plenty of local higher-end properties.

Spa N
Pool N
Price room-only doubles from £52

BOOK A STAY

13. Hotel Palacio de los Navas, Realejo

Best for the Alhambra vibe
It isn't only the Realejo that has marvellous history-loaded mansions rebooted as intimate independent hotels. On a central-Realejo corner (surrounded by neighbourhood tapas bars), the Palacio de los Navas dates from the 16th century, and over the years it has been a hospital, a convent and a private home. These days there are 19 refreshingly contemporary exterior-facing rooms spread across four floors around a Granada-style courtyard washed by a marble fountain; all have terracotta floors and a bright, relaxing white-on-white theme. Best are the top-floor Superiors, with sloping wood-beamed ceilings and (for some) private balconies.

Spa N
Pool N
Price room-only doubles from £60

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