

WALKING IN CADIZ

THE GUIDEBOOK

10. PEÑÓN GRANDE



ANNE MIDDELKAMP

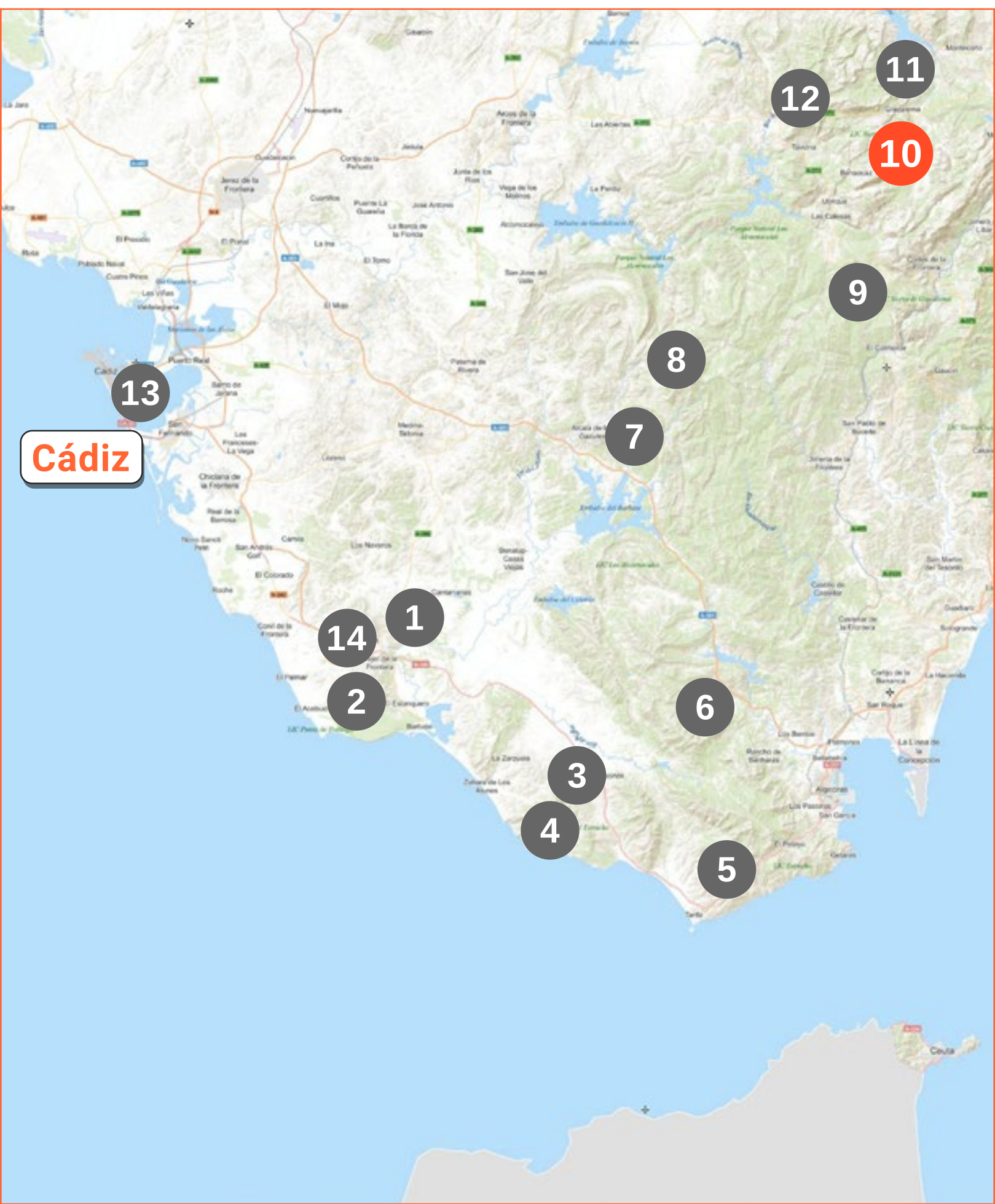
Walking in Cádiz

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Overview walks

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10. Peñón Grande & Llanos del Endrinal

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The route

- Name: Circular Peñón Grande, Puerto de las Presillas & Llanos del Endrinal
- Where: Parque Natural Sierra de Grazalema
- Type of walk: Circular
- Length: 7.5 km
- Duration: 3 hours (without stops)
- Difficulty: Average
- Shade: Here and there
- Highest point: 1.420 m
- Lowest point: 1.090 m
- Path type: Partly marked, easy to follow hiking trail, over rocks, meadows and through forest



This hike starts from the car park at camping Tajo del Rodillo on the A372 near the village of Grazalema. The first part is called ‘Camino de los Charcones’. To get there you have to walk from the car park about 100 metres along the A372 to the west. Camino de los Charcones is a wide, slowly rising gravel path with the Peñón Grande on your left, rising 300 metres above you, a beautiful sight. After half an hour you are at Puerto del Boyar. Tip: From the “Mirador”, the viewpoint, a little further to the right, you have fabulous views to the south, up to the Alcornocales!



The map



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In short

This is an excellent and varied hike with shady forests, lovely meadows and sturdy rocks and the rare Pinsapo tree. The walk brings you to the most characteristic part of the Parque Natural Sierra de Grazalema



with the highest peaks of Cádiz; the Torreón at 1,648 metres, the Simancón at 1,569 metres and El Reloj at 1,535 metres. In winter it can get very cold here and you'll be walking through the snow. But we are 'fair weather walkers' and did this hike in high summer, at about 26 degrees with a refreshing cool breeze at the top.



The walk



After the first part of the trail, Camino de los Charcones, which takes about half an hour, you arrive at Puerto del Boyar. Go left through a gate at the picnic area and then slowly up through the pine forest. After fifteen minutes you arrive at a fork with a signpost, showing to the left the 'nacimiento del río Guadalete' the source of the Guadalete, the main river of Cádiz. And straight ahead to Puerto Presillas. Follow the latter.

Now you slowly go up on a rocky track that is very easy to follow. The view at the end over the vast plain of the Navazo Llano is amazing.





Slightly south on this plain lies the Calera del Navazo, a restored, fenced, lime kiln. Lime was extracted until the last century by heating limestone for 3 days and nights to high temperatures in a kind of igloo-like construction. The lime was used to whiten the houses

and to disinfect stables, water, sick animals and in some cases, people. Mixed with sand, it was used as cement.

Pinsapo and Pacharán

The hike continues to the left, zigzagging further up to the Puerto Presillas. Carved steps and flat rocks make the trail easy to follow. At the top you have reached the beautiful mountain valley Llanos del Endrinal, valley of the blackthorn. Through the ages this wetland has been in use by residents of the surrounding villages. You will encounter man-made features such as





10. PEÑÓN GRANDE

water basins, sheepfolds, snow pits and lime kilns. Also stone refugios, shelters, some restored and all seamlessly blending into the surrounding landscape. This is where the Endrino, the blackthorn grows. Pacharán, blackthorn liqueur, is made from its blue-black berries, which are picked after a frost for improved flavour.



The Llanos del Endrinal is a delightful part of the walk, through the valley with its soft, springy carpet underfoot and the high peaks of the Sierra de Pinar to your right. A little further on you will see information boards about the Lapiaces, the surrounding landscape of exposed limestone. On the left you can discover a huge Pinsapo, Spanish fir, the only one in the valley.

At the end of the valley, follow the path along a fenced area where livestock are kept. Then you reach a T-junction with a signpost to Grazalema, the campsite or the Mirador.



Your car is near the campsite so follow this route. The trail will lead you down, through a wood. In parts the track has loose stones and some larger rocks have slippery surfaces, so take care. At the end you pass a fence and you're back at the start.



Underground rivers and prehistoric caves

The Grazalema Natural Park is a karst area. Karst is the geological phenomena in regions where limestone on the surface of the earth is dissolved by water. This process has formed sinkholes, caves, springs and underground rivers, such as the 8 km long Hundidero - Cueva del Gato system. The river emerges at ground level at the Cueva del Gato where you can take a bracing dip in the ice-cold water. Another unique



place is the ancient and fascinating caves of Cueva de la Pileta, with its stalactites and stalagmites and 25,000 year old drawings of horses, goats and fish. The huge caves were discovered accidentally in 1905 by a farmer, José Bullón while collecting bat manure to fertilize his land.

Inside a cave where he'd seen bats, he discovered bones, ceramic pots and drawings of animals that he had never seen before. Nowadays José Bullón's descendants give tours of the cave, in English too. Note: There is no electricity, you walk by the light of a lantern!

[Cueva del Gato](#)

[Cueva de la Pileta](#)







Tips

Jeep Tours in the Sierra de Grazalema

The best way to discover the secrets of stunning Sierra de Grazalema is to explore it in a Jeep adventure with guide and photographer Chris Mees. Climb into his sturdy, old Landrover for an unforgettable experience with highlights 'a la carte'! He will take you to waterfalls, peaks, gorges, hilltop villages as well



as vulture-spotting and a visit to Ronda's famous wine bodega's too!

[Chris Mees Jeep Tours](#)

Cycling on the Vía Verde

In the north of the Sierra de Grazalema lies one of the most appealing Greenways in Spain. This old, unused railway from Puerto Serrano to Olvera is 37 kilometres long. We cycled it from Olvera because that way the path is downhill - from 450 to 150 metres. There's a great variety of landscapes along the route: hills and mountains,



wheat fields and olive groves. En route you meet a large colony of griffon vultures on the Zaframagón rock. Halfway along the track sits the old train station of Coripe that is now a lovely restaurant and hotel. The many tunnels on this track, thirty in total, add a special touch to this experience. Some tunnels are lit, the shorter ones aren't. Be prepared: Inside the tunnels it is a lot cooler than out in the sun!

The Sierra Greenway



Takeaway cheese

The village of Grazalema has many restaurants and cosy terraces. We have not yet encountered any gastronomic delights but you can eat well, the traditional Spanish tapas are widely available. It's recommended that you don't leave without a piece of Payoyo, Cádiz's delicious traditional cheese. You can buy these and other fine cheeses at La Casa de la Abuela Agustina, Plaza pequeña 7.



Where to stay

Cortijo las Piletas



A warm welcome and a delightful stay awaits you at the postcard pretty Cortijo Las Piletas, a beautiful traditional Andalusian farmhouse transformed in a charming hotel, 15 minutes from Ronda. There are 11 rooms, most of them with a terrace. Beautiful gardens and a pool.

[Cortijo las Piletas](#)



€ 10,- Cashback



When you indicate with your reservation (directly at the hotel, not through agencies) that this is 'Anne's Walking in Cádiz tip' and show this ebook upon arrival you'll receive € 10 Cashback or a € 10 discount!



Social media



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Walking
in Cádiz



**We hope you enjoy
your walks in Cádiz!**

If you have any comments or additions to the routes or a nice tip in terms of food or activities, then I would love to hear that! Please send an email to:

info@walkingcadiz.com



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