

WALKING IN CADIZ

THE GUIDEBOOK

14. VEJER DE LA FRONTERA



ANNE MIDDELKAMP

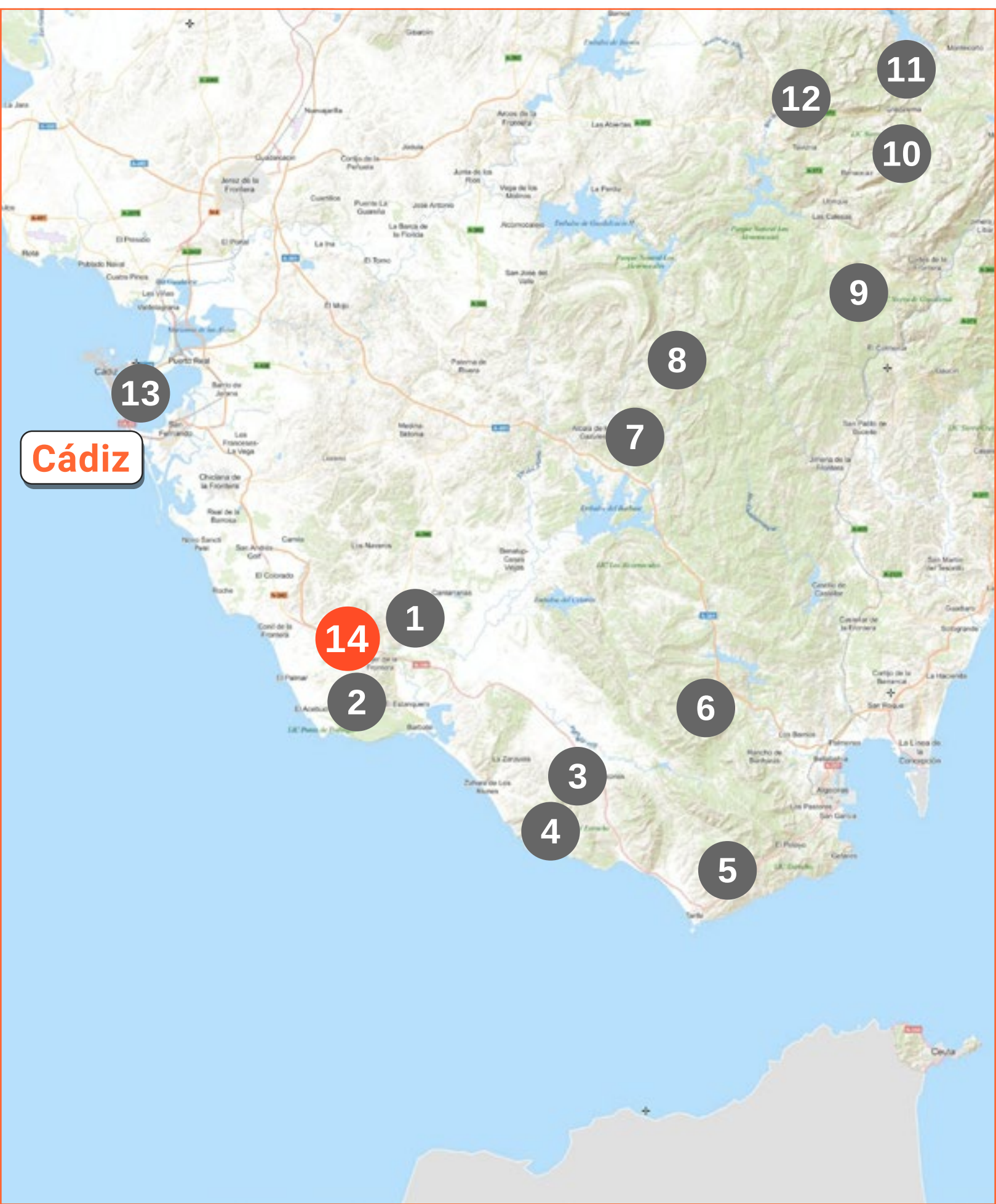
Walking in Cádiz

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Overview walks

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About Vejer

Vejer de la Frontera is a beautiful white fortified town that sits atop a 200 metre high hill, ten minutes from the virgin beaches of the Costa de la Luz. With her back to the sea and looking out over the mountains of the Alcornocales and the rolling fields of the former La Janda lagoon. Vejer is a classic



pueblo blanco, with whitewashed houses surrounding the sandstone church, the castle and the Arab city walls. Vejer is also called “La niña mimada del sur” - the beloved damsel of the south.

I’ve been living here for eight years now and every day I love this amazing place and its sweet people more and more. I’m never leaving...

Besaro, Bashir, Vejer, an unyielding fortress

In Vejer de la Frontera traces of dwellings have been found from 800 BC, but this area has been



inhabited much longer; cave art from Neolithic times (6500-3000 BC) has been found close by. The Romans called this town Besaro, the Moors Bashir. Due to its elevated position, Vejer was a strategic location, but the massive fortress walls held back attackers and Vejer never fell into the hands of pirates and slave traders who plagued these shores. In the medieval times you could reach Vejer from the ocean by boat over the Río Barbate. La Barca de Vejer, at the foot, was the port and transfer point. From the year 711 on the Moors governed Vejer for more than five and a



half centuries. Remnants of this rich culture can still be found, like the horseshoe-shaped gate of the castle, the city walls and the street plan. The Arab city wall has 4 gateways: the Arco de La Segur, Puerta de Sancho IV, Arco de la Villa and Arco de la Puerta Cerrada. There are three watchtowers in Vejer: San Juan, Corredera and Mayorazgo Palace. Climb the latter for fantastic views!

A walk in and around Vejer

You can walk all the way around the old centre following the Paseo de las Cobijadas, with



a different view around each corner. Most of the old centre is car-free and you can wander here for hours. Pretty back streets include the Callejón Oscuro, Arco de las Monjas, the Judería. From Calle Tripería and Calle Arrieros you have a beautiful view of the old village.

On the outskirts of Vejer you will find a number of windmills that seem to come straight from Cervantes' Don Quixote.

It is almost impossible to discover all Vejer's jewels in one walk! We have highlighted a few places and leave you to



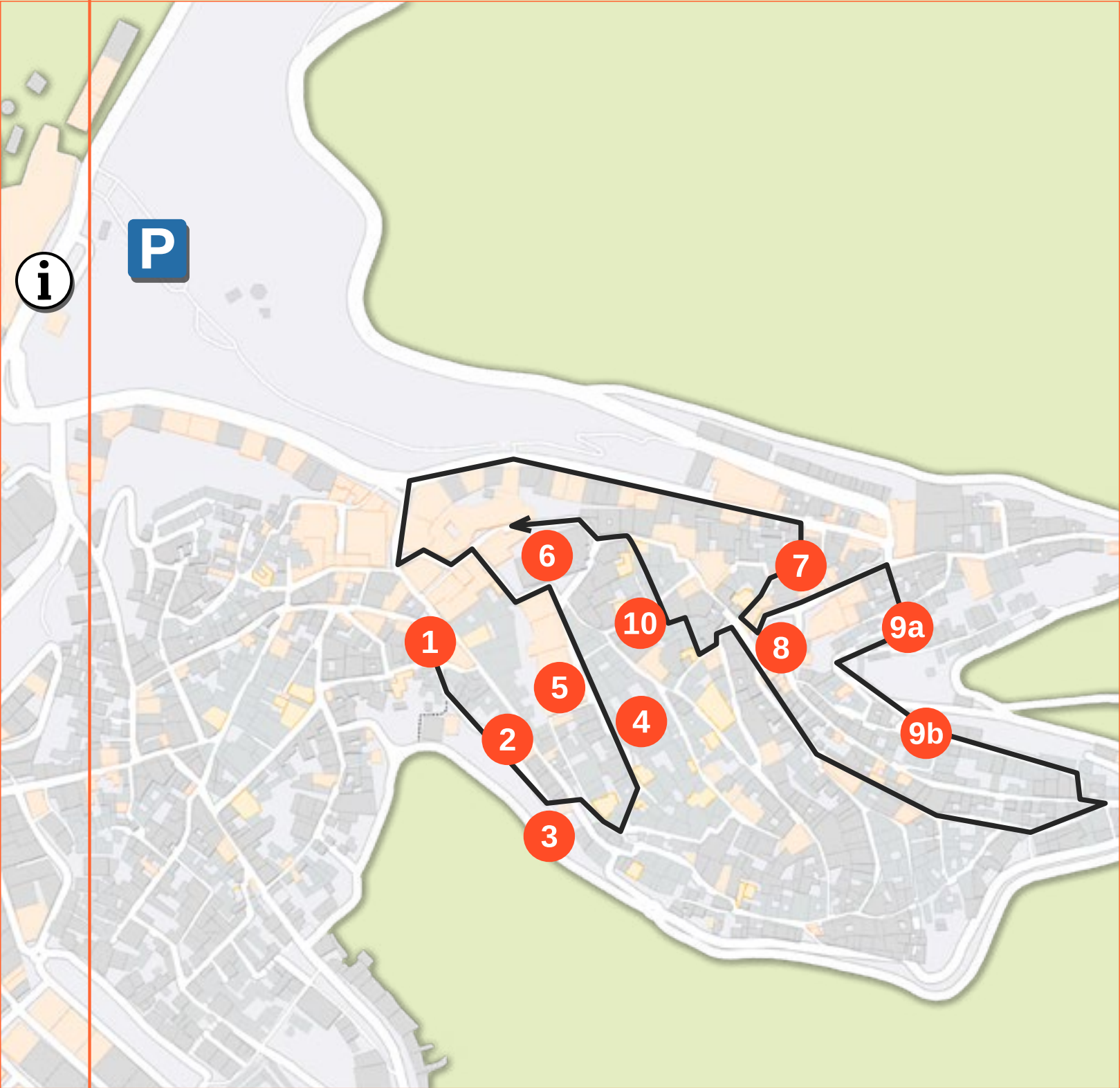
discover the labyrinth of streets and alleys at your own pace. If you follow the numbers in order you'll get the best experience of this pretty town, enjoy!



The map



14. VEJER



The walk



1. Scrumptious pastries

Pastelería Galván is Vejer's oldest patisserie with delicious cakes from its own bakery.

Many are still traditionally made of not much more than flour, eggs, water, a touch of oriental spices, heritage of the Arab past. The old-fashioned tearoom is covered with yellowing photos of the village, like the one of the bull on the Plazuela square that raced into the bar and scared the hell out of the guests.

2. 600 antique radios in a hidden away museum

At no 26, Calle Juan Bueno, is the electric & souvenir shop of Ángel Tinoco, aged 81, historian and electrician who has been repairing radios and other equipment here in his workshop for years. Over time, many foreign radios were left behind, beyond repair because of the difference in voltage between Spain and the rest of the world. They became so numerous that Ángel made the collection into a museum. At the back of his store there is a room where the walls are covered from floor to



ceiling with old radios and other electric devices. You'll definitely recognize ones your parents or grandparents had!

mysteriously
veiled lady

3. La Cobijada - the veiled one 📍

In this square you can see the statue of La Cobijada: the symbol of Vejer: A mysteriously veiled lady, completely wrapped in a black cloak. It resembles an Islamic garment, but the origin is Castillian, from the sixteenth

and seventeenth centuries. A black robe covers a white skirt and a bodice, often lavishly decorated with lace, covering her up completely, except for the left eye.



4. The castle

In the 10th century Bashir, as Vejer was called then, had a medina, a kasbah and a mezquita and at the highest point of the walled city a Castillo was built. Of this small fortress, the horseshoe-shaped gateway has been preserved. It was the seat of the Gúzman dynasty and later of the Duques de Medina. The castle has a beautiful courtyard with fragrant jasmine. From the passage you have a beautiful view of the town. The castle is being restored in 2020.

5. Convento de las Monjas Concepcionistas and Arco de las Monjas

Next to the Convento de las Monjas Concepcionistas with its Renaissance gate, nowadays the museum of Costumbres & Tradiciones de Vejer (Ethnology), lies the most photogenic street in Vejer: Arco de las Monjas. The arches of this alley were constructed to support the wall of the monastery after the earthquake of 1773.





6. Iglesia del Divino Salvador 📍

This church was built in the year 1300 at the highest point of town, over the remains of a Moorish Mezquita. Observing the arches and decorations you can distinguish two different periods in which it was built.

Half Mudejar style, half Gothic. Next to the altar lie figures that are carried around the village during Semana Santa, the holy week, by both men and women, sometimes barefoot. They are very heavy pieces and it takes a lot of concentration to manoeuvre them through the sometimes impossibly narrow and winding streets.

7. Casa del Mayoralazgo

Casa del Mayoralazgo is a Baroque mansion from the eighteenth century with a medieval watchtower that served to warn the village against

pirates and other enemies. Visits to the tower are free and from it you have beautiful views of the Plaza España, the old town and the ocean further south. To get to it you have to cross two pretty courtyards, where Manuel nurses the 400 pots of flowers. Don't forget to leave a small donation to help him keep this work up.


8. Plaza de España

In the 16th and 17th century bullfights were held at the Plaza España. The beautiful frog fountain in the middle with its hand-painted Sevillian tiles was

built in 1957 and used to have goldfish swimming in it. Since then it has also been called Plaza de los Pescaítos (Square of the little fish). There are some inviting terraces on this square. The nearby Italian restaurant La Piccolina is the place to head for a great Italian cappuccino and delicious croissants.

9. Some beautiful views

A lovely continuation of the walk is to take the steep steps of calle Jesús at the first right towards the Calle Merced. Halfway you cross a beautiful alley full of

flowers and pots, Cilla Vieja, but continue downhill and then to your right. From here walk up again past Pizzeria Isabela to Calle Tripería and Arrieros  from where you have great views of the old village. Cross Calle Fuente and walk back to Plaza España via Palomina, Misericordia and San Juan.

10. Callejón Oscuro - Dark alleyway

Go through the Arco de la Villa on the left into Canalejas and take the first street on the right, up the stairs, then immediately right again: Callejón Oscuro. That's fun! Via Calle Badillo you are back at

the church. Pass the gateway
the Arco de Segur, past our
favourite pub with the vines, la
Bodeguita. Go down the steep
Calle Nuestra Señora de la Oliva
back to the Plazuela.



Tips

Where to eat

For those visiting Vejer de la Frontera for the first time, the sheer number of excellent eateries is a pleasant surprise, here's a few of our favourites!

El Jardín de Califa

El Jardín del Califa remains one of the most popular restaurants in Vejer. Book a table in the



beautiful courtyard and enjoy Moroccan-inspired cuisine. Excellent local wines.

El Jardín de Califa

Taberna la Judería

The snug Taberna la Judería in the prettiest alley of Vejer is a great place for an informal lunch or dinner. The staff are super nice, the creative menu has delicious vegetarian dishes too. Splendid local wines and there's a fantastic view over the village from the terrace.

Taberna la Judería



Viña y Mar

Viña y Mar is Vejer's only sherry bar. There is a small menu with fine tapas and the best local meat and fish Ramón can lay his hands on. They boast an ample selection of interesting wines and over 40 different sherry-wines by the glass. The terrace is our favourite spot for watching people sauntering past.

Viña y Mar

Corredera 55

Corredera 55 is a welcoming restaurant with a great terrace on the pretty 'boulevard' of Vejer. Open all day for lunch



and dinner. An innovative menu, tapas with a twist and international cuisine. Have yourself be pampered by Ellie Cormié and her amiable staff.

Corredera 55

La Piccolina

For a delicious breakfast with real cappuccino or an Italian lunch with fine pasta dishes and delicious salads, go to La Piccolina at the Plaza España. Inside there are only 3 tables, but outside is a nice terrace.

La Piccolina



Flamenco

Musica, fiesta and a sunset cocktail

Bar Caragato

At the Plaza del Paz you will find the Caragato bar where Flamenco performances take place on weekends. Lovely terrace under the trees on this flower-filled square.

Bar Caragato



La Bien Pagá

La Bien Pagá is a charming 'Flamenco tablao' where Flamenco performances are held at the weekends in high season.

La Bien Pagá

La Bodeguita

A lively hub under a canopy of vines right by the Arco de la Segur is the Bodeguita, our favourite pub, with live music on Friday nights.

La Bodeguita



Bar Poniente

Bar Poniente is our 'country pub' located just outside Vejer, on the Camino de Soldados. The wonderful garden and terrace area is the best place for enjoying sunsets over the ocean with a cocktail or watching paragliders hurl themselves off the hill right next to you!

Bar Poniente



Where to stay

La Casa del Califa

La Casa del Califa is a delightful hotel, spread over 11 historic buildings that are connected by corridors and stairs, a fairytale of a place! The Africa suite at the top is a beauty. A very hospitable and professional welcome awaits you. The hotel also has a famed restaurant.

La Casa del Califa

Las Palmeras

Next to La Califa lies the monumental mansion Las



Palmeras with a patio and a swimming pool. The large suites on the top floor with their private terraces are ideal for families.

Las Palmeras

Casa Shelly



Casa Shelly by Chris and Javier is a pretty boutique guesthouse in the old centre. There are 7 stylish rooms and an Andalusian courtyard with a fountain. The interior is a delightful mix of the two countries of origin of the owners: cool Swedish and lively Spanish.

Casa Shelly



€ 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!



Outside of Vejer

Dehesa de Montenmedio

Located 6 km outside Vejer, on the N340 towards Tarifa, is the vast Montenmedio estate and the NMAC Foundation, an open-air contemporary art museum where you can admire outdoor sculptures and installations by national and international artists in the pine forest. In addition to the permanent collection, there are temporary installations. Workshops for children are held on weekends and holiday



periods, in addition to theatre, dance and music performances.

[Fundación NMAC](#)

Horses and Golf

On the same estate you will find an 18-hole golf resort and an equestrian centre where in February and March the famous dressage and jumping event the Sunshine Tour is held with 1500 horses and 700 riders from 46 different countries. Even if you're not crazy about horses, it's fun to spend a sunny Sunday there and soak up the atmosphere of this world of high-level equestrian sport.

[Dehesa Montenmedio - Golf](#)



The beaches of Vejer

Vejer also has its own beautiful, sandy beach: El Palmar. A 12 kilometre drive through the gently undulating landscape brings you to this laid back spot. It's very popular with surfers, who make up the majority of the population outside the high season. El Palmar is backed by countryside and a line of low-rise buildings at the seaside, with perpendicular, sandy roads into the meadows. You may see cows wandering around on the beachfront promenade, where you will also find a number of excellent (fish) restaurants and



cool beach bars. From here it is a nice walk along the beach to Conil and back (about 8 kms out and back)

Freetours Vejer de la Frontera

Photographer and guide Juan José Moreno offers tours in Vejer. When the tour ends you pay whatever you feel the tour was worth.

[Freetours Vejer](#)



Social media



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**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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