

WALKING IN CADIZ

THE GUIDEBOOK

6. VALDEINFIERNO



ANNE MIDDELKAMP

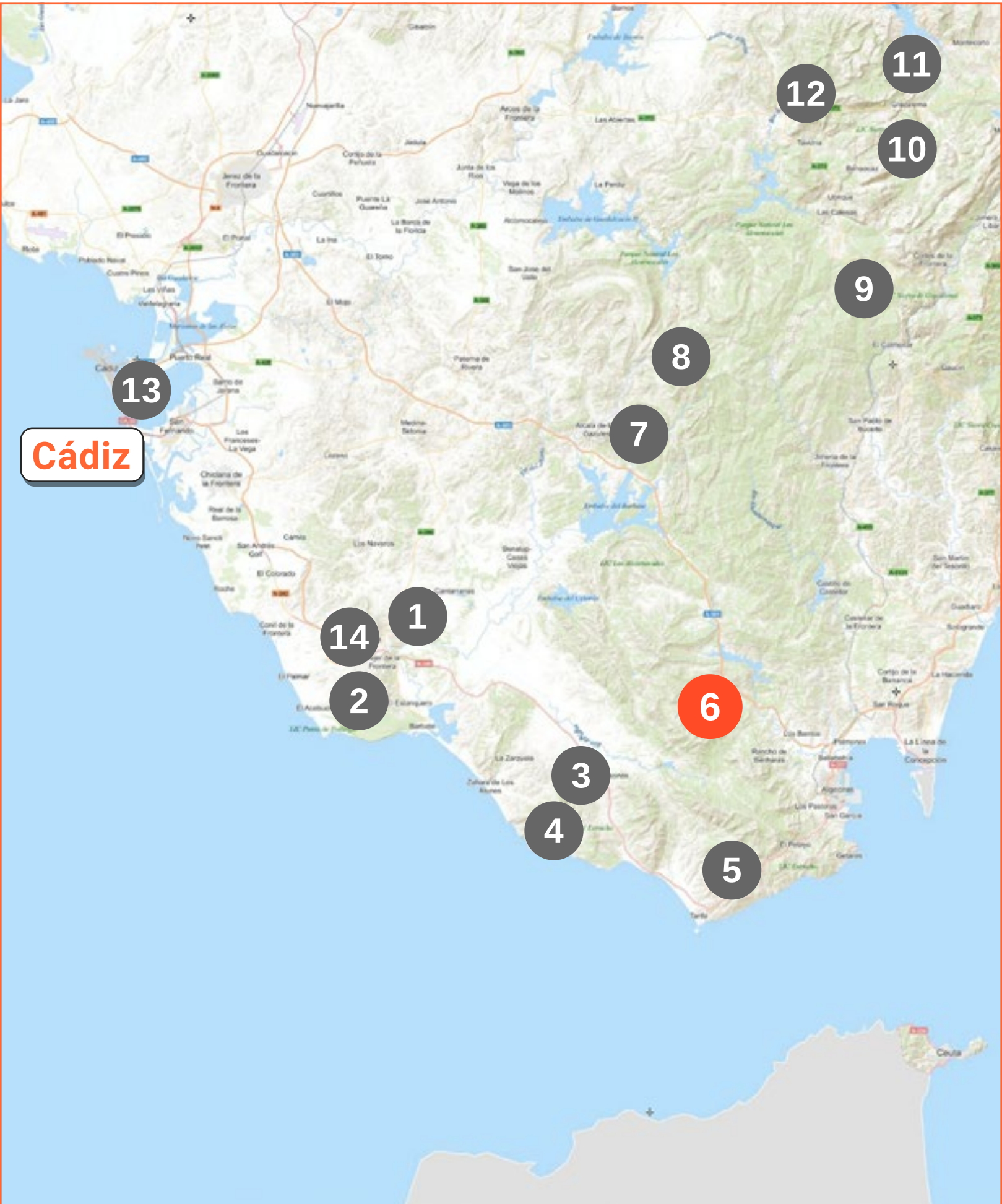
Walking in Cádiz

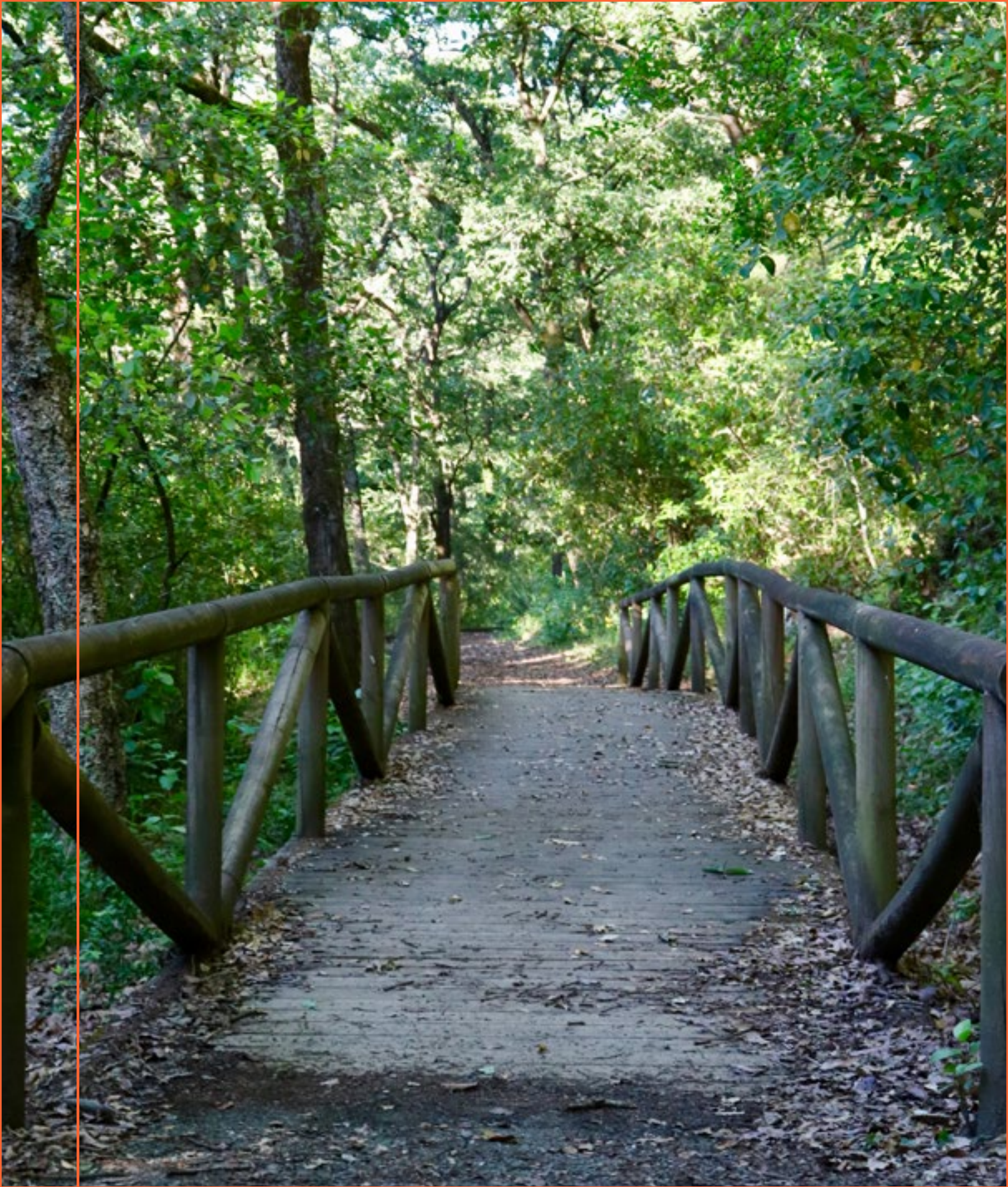
www.walkingcadiz.com

info@walkingcadiz.com

Overview walks

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6. Sendero Valdeinfierno

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The route

- Name: Sendero Valdeinfierno
- Where: Parque Natural Los Alcornocales
- Type of walk: Circular or linear*
- Length: 6 km, *630 m along the river is wheelchair accessible
- Duration: 2.5 hours (without stops)
- Difficulty: Easy
- Shade: About half of the walk
- Highest point: 195 m
- Lowest point: 125 m
- Path type: Marked, dirt road, forest path & wooden walkway
- Remarks: This walk is partially wheelchair accessible



The starting point of this walk is about 10 km west from Los Barrios. From the south you can either go past Medina Sidonia via the A381 to Los Barrios, or via the A2228 to Benalup Casas Viejas and from here the A2226 to Los Barrios. Both are equally long in terms of travel time. On the A381, take exit 73 'Camino y vía de servicio' which leads you to Valdeinfierno. After the exit follow the service road and signs to the walk. You can leave your car right here, in the first parking area. Or drive 2,5 km further up, to the second parking lot, at the start of the official walk.



There's also a parking reserved at the wooden walkway here for visitors with reduced mobility.



The map



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In short

Sendero Valdeinfierno is an agreeable and easy walk through a jungly valley along the river Valdeinfierno. This trail is partially accessible for wheelchair users. From the lookout point Mirador Valdeinfierno you have a great view over the valley and to the south you can distinguish the characteristic shape of 'The Rock', Gibraltar. The walk along the river is delightful with the sound of babbling water and chirruping birds, the fresh

greenery, the ferns and the spring flowers. In autumn you will find numerous mushrooms and see the spectacular colours of the deciduous trees.

The name Valdeinfierno means Valley of Hell. This might be because of the very dense vegetation, which makes it almost impossible to cross the valley, but another story suggests that this name refers to a bloody encounter between Moors and Christians. The latter would also explain the name of a stream that flows into the Valdeinfierno river that is called: 'De Malas Pasadas' (From an evil past).



The walk





The first part of the walk is about 2.5 km on a dirt road with a slow ascent. It crosses the 'Cañada Real' (One of the traditional cattle roads in Spain) from San Roque to Medina Sidonia. After about 800 metres you will see a fence and a sign on the right to the "Mirador", this is where this walk ends. Go straight ahead for another 1,7 km until you see



the ruins of a forester's house to your left. The official walk starts here. There is a second parking lot with space for about 15 cars. Visitors with reduced mobility can leave their car close to the wooden deck. There are various information boards, also in Braille. A low wooden railing of 630 metres runs along this part of the walk.

Fairytale forest and vistas

At the end of the wooden walkway, the path continues straight on into a winding and sloping forest path, with springy, dense foliage. To your left runs



the river where mossy alders extend their long twisted roots into the water. I love this part, the tranquillity, the dappled light of the shady trees and the sound of water and birds.

After about a kilometre the trail leads up, away from the river and from here there are lovely wide views of the plain. In an open area there's an information board that explains about the extensive forest and valleys that surround you: The Loma de Valdespera, the Sierra Blanquilla, the Canuto de los Tajos. Hills and rocks and valleys with endless forests in which you could easily get lost.

Instead, follow the trail until you arrive at a fence that connects this path with the hiking trail Corredor Verde Dos Bahías (a total of 93 km from Puerto Real to Los Barrios). After a bit you are back on the dirt road where you turn left or right, depending on where you left your car.



Parque Natural Los Alcornocales

Los Alcornocales Natural Park (165,000 hectares) is the largest natural park in the province of Cádiz and the most southern protected area in Spain. The park is formed by mountain ridges covered with Mediterranean scrub and formidable masses of cork oaks, the most important forests of this species in Spain. Closer to the coast, the sea mist forms a fairytale 'Bosque de niebla', a cloud forest with huge ferns and forest giants covered with



mosses. The unique landscape here is the remnant of the last original European jungle, a formerly widespread, subtropical forest with the evergreen trees of the laurel family: the Laurisilva. The Alcornocales Natural Park is a vast and empty area, with only a few white villages such as Jimena and Castellar de la Frontera. At the visitor center El Aljibe just before Alcalá de los Gazules you will find a lot of information about the park and the many hiking possibilities.

[Visitor center El Aljibe](#)







Tips

Nearly in Africa

If you are staying on the Costa de la Luz and not in a hurry it's nice to drive back past Tarifa via Los Barrios and Algeciras. Near Algeciras, the largest port in Spain, there is heavy traffic, especially during the week, but you'll be rewarded with impressive views of the rock of Gibraltar along the way. Moreover, on the N340 between Algeciras and Tarifa you are as close as you can get



to Africa from Europe with only 14 kilometres of water between you and Morocco! Stop at the 'Mirador del Estrecho' bar for best views. Please Note: You are not allowed to take a left turn on this busy and winding stretch so the safest thing to do is to drive on a bit further and turn at a next exit or at Tarifa.



Where to eat

Hurricane Beachbar

And, should you choose the above detour: The Hurricane Hotel, just a few kilometres past Tarifa, is a great place for lunch or a drink. The 'Chiringuito', beach bar has a self-service salad bar and a nice terrace overlooking the private beach with views to Morocco. The gardens are spectacular and the macaw parrots that live there have mastered the art of saying hello and swearing in many different languages!

Hurricane Beachbar



Social media



Contact



Ardanza Travel & Media BV

PO Box 1089

1400 BB Bussum

The Netherlands

Tel: +31 (0)6 278 63 776

info@walkingcadiz.com

www.walkingcadiz.com

www.ardanza.nl

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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Author: Anne Middelkamp

Photography: Nikki Schuurman,

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[Studio Fijnbesnaard](#)

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