

Andalucía Costa del Golf

Golf in Spain: the state of play

More than 20 per cent of Spain's courses are in Andalucía, but despite recent successes in the sport, member numbers continue to fall [\[P6\]](#)



TOURISM

Andalucía with sights set on 30 million tourists

The Junta has been using golf to promote the region at the Fitur travel industry fair [\[P2\]](#)



AMERICAN TOUR

Muñoz narrowly misses out on a top 10 finish

The San Pedro golfer showed consistency and signs of improvement in the Bahamas [\[P5\]](#)

Jaén steps up its commitment to golf

This Andalusian province has superb golfing facilities; La Garza, in an incomparable setting, is the centrepiece [\[P12\]](#)

Andalucía expects a record 30 million visitors this year

At Fitur, the Junta promoted the golf sector because of its ability to attract year-round tourism and the amount of money these tourists spend each day

ALBERTO GÓMEZ

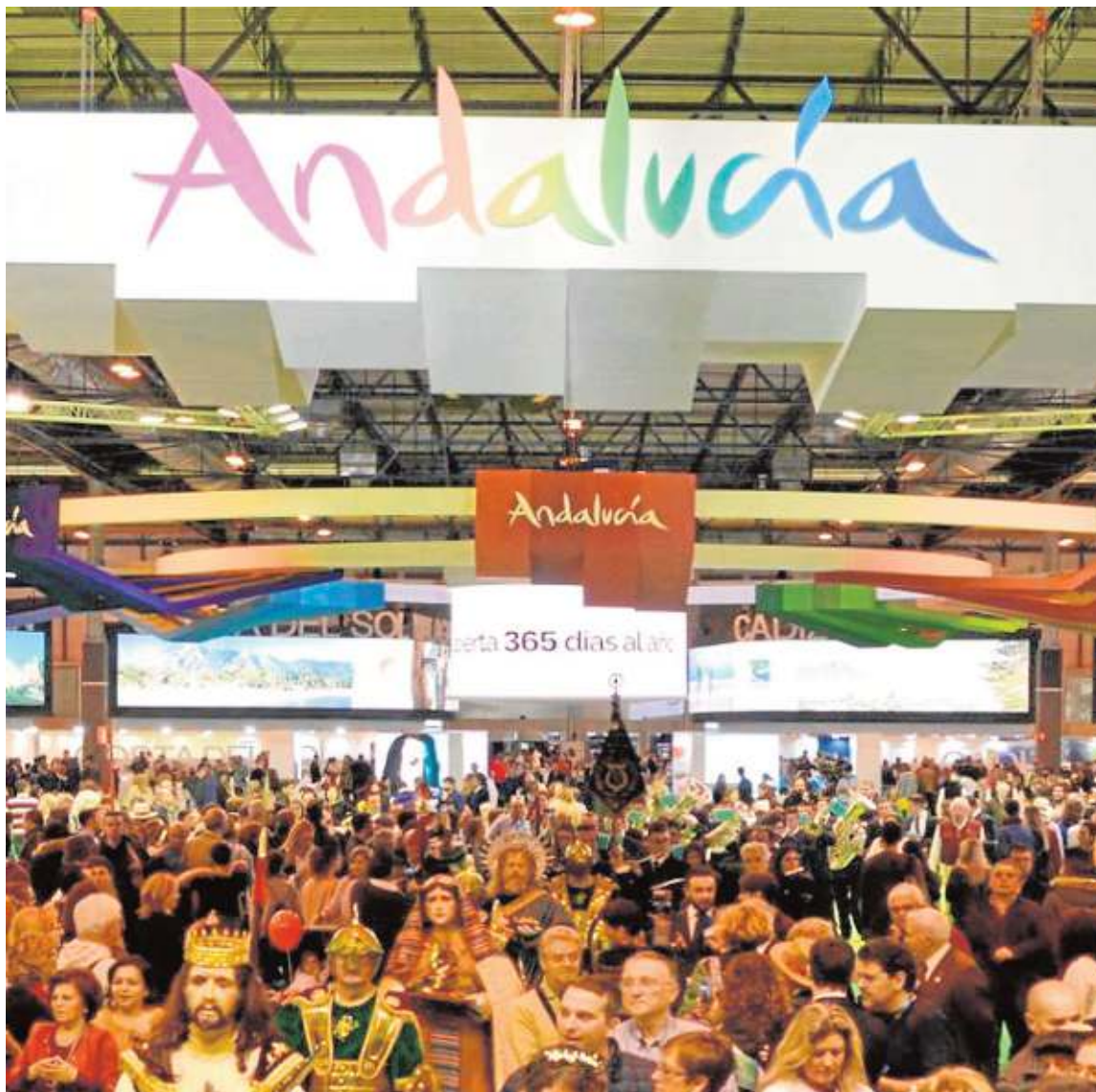
More than 30 million tourists are expected to visit Andalucía this year, which is an increase of around 4.5 per cent. This figure means that once again the destination will be breaking its own record in terms of visitors, something which had not been expected to happen until 2020, as the president of the Junta, Susana Díaz, explained at the Fitur tourism fair in Madrid last month.

The golf sector, which attracts more than 500,000 visitors to the region, is also expecting even better figures this year. "We want to grow in a way which is sustainable, respects the capacity of the destinations and encourages compatible and harmonious coexistence between tourists and the local population," said Díaz, who also explained that the digital transformation of tourism is the biggest challenge for 2018. "Andalucía is going to take advantage of the new technologies to take the leap forward it needs. We will continue to implement technological changes in the sector and to take on young people who are digitally aware and are the future of tourism in our region," she said.

In 2017, for the first time, 29.5 million tourists came to Andalucía, and this was almost five per cent more than in the previous year. The biggest increase was during the summer, and there were positive figures in every province but especially in inland areas such as Seville and Jaén, and coastal cities which normally receive fewer visitors in comparison with the more consolidated Costa del Sol, such as Cadiz and Huelva.

"We have just ended our best year ever," said the president of the Junta, "thanks to the work of the whole sector, which offers a quality product and is taking Andalucía forward." She also stressed the industry's ability to adapt and grow, pointing out that "we have grown especially outside the peak season". The figures, she said, point to the fact that 2018 will be another great year for Andalusian tourism.

Last year the sector generated an income of 20.4 billion euros (4.5



Andalucía, which had a pavilion at Fitur, received over 29 million tourists in 2017. :: SALVADOR SALAS

BUSINESSES NOW HAVE EVEN HIGHER EXPECTATIONS

About 98 per cent of tourism professionals and business owners from Andalucía who visited Fitur in Madrid between 17 and 21 January, say that their attendance was "profitable," according to information given to the Andalusian parliament by the regional minister for Tourism and Sport, Francisco Javier Fernández.

He confirmed that his Ministry's objectives had been fulfilled:



Fernández, in the Andalucía pavilion at Fitur. :: SALVADOR SALAS

to arouse interest in the region among people from elsewhere in Spain, consolidate

the destination in international markets and generate new business.

per cent more in real terms and the best figure ever for tourism in the history of Andalucía), thanks to the significant increase in visitors and the fact that the average stay was practically the same as in the previous year.

The amount of money spent per visitor per day rose to more than 66 euros (an increase of almost 1.50 euros). With regard to accommodation, the figures were the highest ever for the sector, with 22 million travellers and 68 million overnight stays. This was an increase of 3.5 per cent, in both cases. Hotels recorded 18.3 million clients (+2.5 per cent) and 52.4 million overnight stays (+1.6 per cent).

Regulations

At Fitur the Junta de Andalucía's Minister for Tourism, Francisco Javier Fernández, said this is a positive moment for golf in the region, and he explained that regulations in other spheres, such as town planning and the environment, mean that there is no "essential need" to modify the decree which regulates the sector.

Fernández explained that the golf sector is now recovering from the economic crisis and that it is not generating any "social conflict". With regard to the construction of new courses in Andalucía, he said this would depend on demand. It is the leading region for golf in Spain and already has about 100 courses, half of which are in Malaga province.

The numbers of people who visited the Andalucía pavilion at the tourism fair and the volume of business contacts were both high.

Fernández explained that the pavilion was visited by 172,000 people, which was four per cent more than last year, and in terms of contacts made by tourism businesses from the region, six out of every ten were new.

He also said that 78 per cent of Andalusian professionals intend to return to Fitur next year and 65 per cent have better expectations regarding their businesses than in 2017. The overall rating given to the Andalusian pavilion was 8.3 out of ten.

Golf tourists spend a large part of their budget on shopping, eating out and leisure activities

“Having 20 per cent of the golf facilities in Spain is something very valuable for us. Demand will determine whether there will be any new golf courses, but for the moment I think we are fine,” he said.

Golf tourism is one of the most important sectors for Andalucía because it encourages year-round tourism and the visitors spend more than conventional tourists.

According to estimated figures from the Andalusian Ministry of Tourism and Sport, for the past two years the region has received about 530,000 golf tourists, which is 10.4 per cent more than in previous years. The majority of golf tourists in Andalucía are British, followed by Spanish and German.

The importance of golf tourists stems from the fact that they come at all times of year, especially out of peak season in the summer, and they spend a large amount of money, mainly in restaurants and other activities.

In 2016, the latest year for which official figures are available, these visitors spent an average of 117.50 euros each per day, nearly double the 65 euros spent by tourists in general, and they stayed for an average of 10.8 days, two days longer than other visitors. The destination was also given high scores in terms of satisfaction: 9.2 out of 10, the highest rating so far.

Andalucía was presented at Fitur as a unique and remarkable destination with numerous attractions throughout the region. The Andalusian pavilion was based on a new concept to interest visitors from elsewhere in Spain, promote the region to international markets and facilitate the generation of new business.

The new pavilion was 5,300 square metres in size, and was completely different in appearance and layout compared with previous years, with numerous interactive and technological features.

Uncertainty still reigns over this year's Spanish Open

The RFEG, supported by Madrid, is negotiating against the clock to rescue the tournament, which was cancelled last year for the first time since 1965



The tournament could take place at the RACE, after the Madrid federation announced that it would be prepared to pay part of its budget to the RFEG... **SUR**

ALBERTO GÓMEZ

Just as it seemed certain that the Spanish Open would once again be left off the European calendar this year, after it was cancelled last season due to a lack of sponsors, there was some good news. The Spanish Royal Golf Federation (RFEG) is negotiating against the clock to try to hold the tournament this year.

The challenge will be to balance the budget, organise the logistical details and ensure the participation of players who attract the public, such as Sergio García, Jon Rahm, Rory McIlroy and other international stars. The date has now been set for the European Tour, which has always shown an interest in maintaining the championship: it

will take place from 12 to 15 April, just after the Augusta Masters.

The Spanish Open failed to be held last year for the first time since 1965, and the RFEG was criticised by several Spanish players for its inability to find sponsors. That was also the case with the Andalucía Masters (organised by the Junta de Andalucía and the Sergio García Foundation and held at Valderrama) and the Spanish Ladies' Open, which for the past two years has been held in Malaga province after an agreement reached between the Junta, the Malaga provincial government and the Mancomunidad de Municipios of the western Costa del Sol.

This long-established tournament was created in 1912 and has

seen some glorious moments thanks to players such as Severiano Ballesteros, who won it three times, and Sergio García.

Meetings are now taking place to try to come to an agreement in time, to guarantee that the Open will continue after the shock of 2017. Paradoxically, while the tournament par excellence celebrated on Spanish soil suffered cutbacks from the RFEG, which said it would be “irresponsible” to hold the tournament without sponsors and would prefer to spend its money on young players, the players from the ‘Armada’ shone like they had never done before: a stunning performance by Jon Rahm, García’s first victory in a major and a fantastic achievement by Azahara Muñoz at Guadalmina

head the list of successes in Spanish golf last season.

It was the Madrid golf federation which opened the door to the possibility of holding the Spanish Open this year. The technicians began negotiating with small sponsors after discovering that the Madrid federation is prepared to pay half a million euros to the RFEG to organise the championship.

The European Tour, which is very interested in maintaining the Spanish Open brand which has done so well in the history of the tour, would also be willing to pay around a million euros, the same amount which the tournament pays out in prizes (although during the last one, in 2016, it paid out twice as much as that and this will complicate the discussions when trying to attract top level players).

Logically, the tournament would take place in Madrid. All eyes are set on the RACE, whose board of directors still has to give the go-ahead for its course to host the tournament. This may not be easy because there is not a great deal of time to prepare the facilities to the level demanded by the championships on the European Tour and it would probably also be expensive for the club, which has about 21,000 members.

Nor can the participation of major stars be guaranteed. Jon Rahm, who was unlucky in his first professional tournament in Spain because he didn’t make the cut at the Andalucía Masters at Valderrama last year, has said he would be prepared to take part in the Open, but neither Sergio García, who is defending his title at Augusta, nor Miguel Ángel Jiménez, who is focusing more on recovering from his latest physical problems than returning to the senior circuit, which he alternates with professional championships, have confirmed that they would go to Madrid.

At this stage of the season, the players have already closed their agendas, with tournaments in the USA and commitments to their sponsors.






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García maintains his run in Singapore

The Masters champion won his sixth tournament on the Asian Tour and has outlined his schedule for the build-up to his title defence in Augusta

**ALEJANDRO
DÍAZ**

MÁLAGA. Spanish golfer Sergio García has started the new year on the right foot. The 38-year-old came away with the title in the recent Singapore Open, a tournament on the Asian Tour, after a magnificent final day during which he played 27 holes.

García continued to show the high level of competitiveness which has characterised his play for the last couple of seasons, not registering a single 'bogey' at Sentosa Golf Club on the final day and just three in the competition as a whole. There were, however, four 'birdies' on the nine remaining holes of the third round, and another three on the final round. For the final nine holes, García was conservative, coming in on par, determined not to throw away the lead he had gained.

The reigning champion of the Augusta Masters finished up on -14, five shots ahead of his closest rivals Satoshi Kodaira (Japan) and Shaun Norris (South Africa).

García started the tournament well with a card of 66, though his level dipped in the second day with a 70 which lost him his lead. However, the man from Castellón fought back and took back top spot, helping him on his way to victory at the Singaporean tournament.

After his victory, the golfer from Borriol said: "It's always fantastic to start with a win, especially on a course like this with difficult conditions. Fortunately I did it and I'm very happy with my week's work. It was very difficult with the constant breaks in play because of the rain."

This was the sixth victory for Sergio García in the Asian Tour after wins in South Korea (2002), China (2008), Malaysia (2012), Thailand (2013) and Vietnam (2015). What's more, this was his first win since taking the Andalucía Masters in October.

García has won nine tournaments on the American and European Tours; six on the Asian Tour; and two editions of the Nedbank Challenge before its inclusion on the European Tour.

As well as the Augusta Masters, he also won the Catalonia Open while still an amateur in 1997, the 2002 Telus World Skins and the Gary Player Invitational in 2010 as a partner to John Cooke.



Sergio García finished with a five-shot advantage. :: SUR



The Spanish golfer poses with the trophy, his first of the year. :: SUR

CLASIFICACIÓN

1. Sergio García	270
2. Shaun Norris	275
3. Satoshi Kodaira	275
4. Danthai Boonma	276
5. Jazz Janewattanond	277
6. Cameron Davis	277
7. Sean Crocker	278
8. Gavin Green	278

Schedule confirmed

The Masters champion already has his path to Augusta mapped out. Following the final round of the Omega Dubai Desert Classic, Sergio García outlined the tournaments he would be playing in in the build-up to his defence of the green jacket.

García is enjoying three weeks of rest and after that will play in the Honda Classic, the PGA National in Florida, the WGC Mexico Championship (the first world championship of the season), and the Valspar Championship in Tampa, at Innisbrook Resort.

Following those back-to-back tournaments, García will have a free week before playing in the WGC Dell Technologies Match Play in Austin, Texas, though these two weeks will undoubtedly be affected by the birth of his daughter.

After the Match Play he will have another week of rest before the big title defence at Augusta.

Azahara Muñoz narrowly misses out on top 10 spot in first tournament of the season

The Malaga golfer, who last season reunited with her former coach, Marcelo Prieto, showed great form in the Bahamas

ALBERTO GÓMEZ

The marathon final day of the Pure Silk Bahamas LPGA Open, in which the twice-suspended second round and the third and final round were all contested after the reduction to 54 holes, finished with a victory for American golfer Brittany Lincicome (-12). The 32-year-old closed with a card of 66, the second best of the day, to give herself a two-shot advantage over Wei-Ling Hsu (-10) and three over Amy Yang (-9) and Shan-shan Feng (-9).

This is her eighth victory on the LPGA, including two Grand Slams, and the first since her win on the same competition last year.

The only player who managed to outdo her on the third round was Spaniard Carlota Ciganda (-2) who, with seven 'birdies', one 'eagle' and a 'bogey' finished with 65 to regain some of the ground lost in the second round, finishing in 21st spot.

The only Spaniard to better the golfer from Navarre was Azahara Muñoz (-4), who showed consistency despite all the disruption, finishing on 70 - three below the par for the course, just one place outside of the top 10.

Beatriz Recari (par) recovered well on the Sunday after poor showings on Thursday, Friday and Saturday to finish on par with the course in 31st place. Belén Mozo (+8), who was uncomfortable all week, said goodbye



Muñoz has been improving gradually since returning to work with her former coach. :: SUR

to the Bahamas with a 76 to leave her in 75th position.

A special mention goes to Luna Sobrón (+1) from Mallorca. In what was her first tournament on the American tour, she was the provisional leader on the first day, third after the second, and only succumbed on the final day after a hard week filled with tension but also strong winds. 79 shots, ten more than on Thursday, relegated her to 41st place.

The 11th-placed finish from Muñoz makes it an extraordinary start to the season for the San Pedro-born golfer, number 70 in the world. "It was a long week with a lot of delays because of the wind but I enjoyed returning to the Bahamas to compete a lot. I am very happy with my game," she said.

The Malaga golfer, winner of the recent Open de España, continues in a quest to break down the myth that women's golf is only for the rich. In Rio de Janeiro, Muñoz said, just before becoming the first woman to play golf for Spain in an Olympic Games: "People have to change their mindset. Playing golf is cheaper than going on a night out. Before it was a case of only the more fortunate could play but if you look at the women golfers here now, it's not the case; none of us are from privileged families. My parents are teachers."

Muñoz spent most of her formative years in the sport in the United States where the universities offer much more than in Europe for elite sportsmen and women. But now, having returned to her old coach Marcelo Prieto, Muñoz is hoping to get back on course and break into the top 20 in the world once again.



Jiménez finished the tournament with knee issues. :: SUR

Injury blow for Jiménez

Miguel Ángel Jiménez, 54, flirted with the top of the leaderboard at the Dubai Desert Classic but pain in his knee halted his charge

A. GÓMEZ

MALAGA. There is not a golfer in the world with the same enthusiasm as Miguel Ángel Jiménez. The 54-year-old has shown this once more since the start of the new season and was the surprise package in the prestigious Omega Dubai Desert Classic.

For Jiménez, who was competing against players half his age, the only thing that slowed him down was his knee. He started the third

round with discomfort in his right leg; the muscle above the knee which he broke while skiing in Sierra Nevada in December 2012 and which ruled him out for four months, started to fail him. "I have two pins from the operation and the muscle sometimes hurts but I have never had pain on this level. I think it was aggravated by walking on the sand," he told Tengolf.

With scores under 70 (66, 68 and

69), respectively, it was halfway through the latter round that Jiménez started to suffer.

He finished the tournament on -15 in joint 19th place. "I still like to play with the young boys," Jiménez said. "Still like to play on the European Tour. Obviously now I play 90 per cent of the tournaments I play on the Champions Tour but I still love to come here to some tournaments."

Haotong Li came away with the top prize (-23), just one stroke ahead of Rory McIlroy who was hot on his heels throughout.

The best-placed Spaniard was Rafa Cabrera-Bello, who leapfrogged Jiménez into joint sixth place.

Sergio García came in 27th, alongside Alejandro Cañizares (-11).

The state of play for Spanish golf

Although the number of federated members is falling, only football and basketball have more. Andalucía has 21 per cent of the golf courses in Spain, more than Madrid

ALBERTO GÓMEZ

MÁLAGA. Spanish golf is beginning the new year in an excellent state after the successes of last season, which was historic in terms of the number of trophies won. In addition to the victories of Jon Rahm and Sergio García, there is Rafael Cabrera-Bello (who ended the year as number 20 in the world) and the titles won by other Spanish players on different tours, such as Álvaro Quirós, Azahara Muñoz and Miguel Ángel Jiménez.

Spain is the country with the third most players in the top 20, after the USA and Britain. Until now, the highest number was two and that only occurred in 1991, with Seve Ballesteros as number one and José María Olazabal four. They both ended up in the top ten that year, but only Seve can boast of having been number one in the world, back in 1988.

There is no better time to remind ourselves of the successes of the legendary pair formed by Ballesteros and Olazabal, but now we should also include Sergio García, who is still rejoicing at being the first Spanish winner of a major since 1999, and Jon Rahm, with his fantastic debut on the European and PGA Tours.

The triumphs of Spain's players, however, are still not reflected in terms of fans and those who practise this sport. At the end of 2017 the Spanish Royal Golf Federation had 272,084 members, which was a drop of 0.5 per cent compared with 2016. This may not sound much, but it is significant if we take into account that it was the eighth consecutive year during which the numbers dropped. In 2010 there were 338,588 federated members. Since then the decreases have been six per cent (2013), 3.7 per cent (2014), 2.7 per cent (2015) and 1.5 per cent (2016). Madrid, with 81,787 federated members, accounts for 30 per cent of the total number of licences and the highest number of enthusiasts in the country, followed by Andalucía (43,515), Catalonia (29,044), the Valencia region (19,265), the Basque Country (17,543), Castilla y León (13,561) and Galicia (10,524), autonomous regions which have more than 10,000 federated members.

Golf is not a simple sport. Its technical complexity means it takes time to learn the basic rules and how to use the clubs. It can take up to five hours to play 18 holes, although nowadays the 'pitch and putt' smaller-sized courses make a round shorter and more appealing.

The prejudices which have existed about golf for decades, such as



Valderrama golf course, one of the most historic. :: SUR



Aloha is one of the Andalusian clubs with the most licences. :: SUR

that it is a sport for the rich, also continue to cause damage even though it only costs around 70 euros to become a member and on public courses you can play nine holes for 15 euros.

Although the number of licences has fallen, only football and basketball have more. Golf has more federated members than tennis, swimming, judo, handball, cycling or climbing.

Spanish golf ended 2017 with 272,084 federated members; in 2010 there were 338,588 licences

Andalucía has 21 per cent of the golf courses in Spain, more than Madrid, Catalonia and the Valencia region. The course with the



The Centro de Tecnificación (Madrid) has over 6,000 federates. :: SUR



Catalonia has some outstanding courses, such as El Prat. :: SUR

highest number of members in Spain is the Centro de Tecnificación, with 6,548 members, followed by the Villa de Madrid Country Club (6,329) and the Olivar de la Hinojosa golf club (5,535). In Andalucía, with 118 golf courses, the Real Club Pineda de Sevilla stands out, with 1,961 members, followed by the Escuela Pública Cartuja y Club de Golf La Cañada.

In this region, nine courses have

more than 1,000 members, including Sotogrande, Real Novo Sancti Petri, Real Club de Golf Guadalmina, Aloha Golf and the Real Club de Golf de Sevilla. Andalucía is also home to two of the favourite courses for professional Spanish players: Sotogrande and Valderrama.

In Catalonia, the leader in terms of members is Golf Sant Joan, with 2,179, followed by El Prat and Can Cuyas.

Sports tourism is gaining strength in rural areas of Andalucía

Jaén has recently inaugurated La Garza golf course, which is owned by the Junta and will regularly organise tournaments

■ ALEJANDRO DÍAZ

Rural tourism is gaining strength in Andalucía thanks to improvements in the sector in recent years. Jaén city and province have become a perfect example: it is one of the favourite destinations for nature lovers and those who enjoy active tourism and outdoor sports.

In this area the landscapes of olive groves combine with the delights of areas such as the Natural Park of Cazorla, las Villas and Segura. It is home to the source of the Guadalquivir river, which is one of the most popular walking routes in Andalucía. It is advisable for anyone wanting to walk to the source of the Guadalquivir to go on a weekday which is not a public holiday, but whenever you go it is worth it.

Golf is also important here thanks to La Garza course, which is owned by the Junta de Andalucía. Situated in a sports park in the municipality of Linares, it has recently been completely renewed. Pepe Gancedo designed the nine holes, which follow the former layout although there only used to be five. The fairways are bordered by cork oak trees, olives, stone pines, black pines, holm oaks and cypresses. In fact, there are trees on the greens, as well as in the centre of eight of the nine fairways. Four of the holes have water features.

This golf course was first proposed over 40 years ago when some of the fairways were designed. But it was not actually built until 1994, and then with just five holes. As is only to be expected, the course is perfectly integrated in its natural surroundings, as part of Jaén's commitment to attracting nature tourism.

This commitment was also reflected in November last year when La Garza sports park, which is run by the regional government's Ministry of Tourism and Sport, hosted the first Andalucía Golf Open La Garza. It is hoped that this tournament will become a favourite on the calendar of regional amateur competitions, and it started off well with around 100 players taking part. It is an initiative which aims to promote golf in inland areas of Andalucía, and the organisers are already working on next year's tournament.

Heritage

Jaén had a stand at the Fitur international tourism fair in Madrid in January, to promote its World Heritage Site towns, Úbeda and Baeza,



Jaén has excellent golf facilities, including La Garza. ■ SUR



Natural Park of Sierra de Cazorla. ■ SUR



Olive oil, the 'golden ingredient' in Andalusian gastronomy. ■ SUR

Jaén province is home to the biggest natural park in Spain and the second largest in Europe

its wine tourism and, of course, its facilities for active tourism and adventure sports in the heart of nature. The Jaén stand was 320 square metres in size and was inside the Andalucía pavilion, which was opened by the president of the Junta de Andalucía, Susana Díaz.

The president of the Jaén provincial government, Francisco Reyes, and the second vice-president with responsibility for Promotion and Tourism, Manuel Fernández, were also present.

"This year we are putting a special focus on the 15th anniversary of Úbeda and Baeza being classified as a World Heritage Site, on our facilities for active and rural tourism and, of course, in our wine tourism, in the 97 towns and villages in Jaén province. We also promoting our star product, olive oil, which is an emblem of our territory and our way of life," explained Francisco Reyes.

Photographs of the World Heritage towns of Úbeda and Baeza were displayed on the Jaén stand, together with seas of olive groves and Segura de la Sierra, which is now included

in the Association of the Prettiest Villages in Spain.

In addition to these attractions, Jaén has a great deal more to offer visitors such as the Route of Castles and Battles, the Journey to the Time of the Iberians, the Renaissance Route and the four natural parks in the province: Sierra de Cazorla, Segura and Las Villas, Sierra Mágina, Sierra de Andújar and Despeñaperros, among others.

Sustainability

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Natural Areas (CETS) is an initiative by the EUROPARC Federation, with the aim of promoting and developing sustainable tourism in protected areas all over Europe.

The CETS is a method and voluntary commitment to apply the principles of sustainable tourism; it advises those who manage protected natural areas and companies in those areas and helps to define their strategies.

Just over a year ago the natural park of Cazorla, Segura and Las Villas became the natural area with the highest number of companies collaborating with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism because 11 more joined the initiative, bringing the total to 37. The 11 new companies which comply with the requirements of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism were given awards last year at the Sustainable Tourism Fair of Cazorla, Segura and Las Villas.

As well as being in the heart of the biggest natural park in Spain and the second largest in Europe, since 1983, Cazorla, Segura and Las Villas has been a Unesco Biosphere Reserve. Its protection as a natural park has also enabled it to protect its beauty and biodiversity, and to develop the municipalities which lie within the park through activities relating to ecotourism. Its nearly 210,000 hectares have become an example of how protection and defence of the natural heritage goes hand in hand with sustainable development when the people who live in natural areas are able to be involved, participate and have a say in what happens in the park.

And, of course, as well as its ecological value, the province of Jaén offers a wide range of attractions to visitors. It is the first source of Iberian art on the peninsula and the province is home to many monuments of great historic value. The city of Jaén showcases Renaissance perfection with its cathedral, which dominates the urban landscape, and the Moorish baths, which were restored last year and considered the loveliest in Spain. This is the perfect destination for tourists who love sport, history and nature.

THE MONTH IN PHOTOS



▲ **Unigolf.** This year's edition of the Unigolf fair will once more take place in Madrid's fair compound, from 1 to 3 March. One of the main themes will be technology in the sport, including the use of drones. :: **SUR**



▲ **Copa de Andalucía.** Young Malaga golfer Ángel Hidalgo was the winner at the Copa de Andalucía held at Real Club Guadalmina. Consistent throughout, Hidalgo adds this to his victory in the Spanish Championships in 2016. :: **SUR**



▲ **Senior Tour.** José María Olazábal, two-time winner at Augusta and European captain for the epic fightback win in the 2012 Ryder Cup, has outlined his plans to compete on the Senior Tour. Olazábal, who has been out for the past two years with rheumatoid arthritis, has stepped up his recovery and hasn't ruled out playing in a handful of tournaments on the European Tour either. :: **SUR**



◀ **European Tour.** As a result of his showing at the recent Omega Dubai Desert Classic, Spaniard Alejandro Cañizares has lost his right to compete on the European Tour. 'Cañi' finished three shots away from his objective, bringing an end to eleven consecutive years on the Tour. :: **AFP**

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2018 AGENDA

6 March
Parador de Málaga
Senior y Dobles Femenino
Open tournament

20 April
Baviera
Gran Senior Femenino
Open tournament

1 June
Lauro
Camp. España. 3ª Cat.
Open tournament

2 June
Mijas
Gran Premio AFA Fuengirola
Open tournament

14 June
Mijas
ASGA
Open tournament

23 June
Mijas
Gran Premio Solidarios
Open tournament

7 July
Mijas
Memorial Blas Fernández
Open tournament

14 July
Mijas
Maderas Gómez
Open tournament

21 July
Mijas
Gran Premio Electrónica
Open tournament

28 July
Mijas
Premio Lucha Conrta el Cáncer
Open tournament

10 August
Mijas
Memorial Felipe Pérez
Open tournament

18 August
Mijas
Gran Premio Sanitubo
Open tournament

25 August
Mijas
Asociación Tamisuel
Open tournament

30 August
Lauro
Campeonato Infantil Reale
Open tournament

2 September
Mijas
Clubes de Golf de Andalucía
Open tournament