

Priego de Cordoba

Just a 25 minute winding drive by car through unspoiled and spectacular countryside from Cortijo las Rosas, Priego de Cordoba is typically Andaluz. This prosperous olive-farming town stands on a plateau overlooking the rolling hills of the Subbética Mountain Range, and is famous for its baroque churches such as the Iglesia de la Asunción and the Iglesia de la Aurora, from which a cloaked brotherhood sets out on a procession every Saturday night, singing songs and collecting alms.

The baroque magnificence of Priego was made possible by the town's 18th century silk-production boom, the main monument to which is the Fuente del Rey, an extraordinary fountain in a leafy park with numerous large pools and no less than 139 spouts surrounding a statue of Neptune.

The interesting sights are clearly signposted in Priego de Cordoba. There is a helpful tourist office as well as the small but delightful Museo Historico where imaginative displays cover mainly local archaeology of the prehistory to medieval periods of the town. The Museum is housed in a large house which is worth seeing in its own right, and entrance is free. The old town is built around the Arabic castle at the edge of the escarpment. The castle is XIII century with reconstruction in the XVI century. The old Moorish quarter, known as the Barrio de la Villa has narrow, pretty alleyways with cascades of geraniums and petunias vivid against the white-washed walls.

Priego has many outstanding baroque churches built in the 18th Century. Entrance is also free to the well preserved 16th century slaughter house (Carnicerias Reales), with its enclosed patio and wonderful stone stair case.

The town summer feria is the end of August and the first days of September.

There are many interesting shops and small bars and restaurants.