GUADIX

Guest Guide

El Rincón de Sofía



European Capital of Caves

1. Historical roots and the art of underground living



JULIA GEMELLA ACCI

Welcome to Guadix, the "Mitred City", one of the oldest continuous human settlements on the Iberian Peninsula. Its name changed with each ruling civilization, and from the Roman root *Acci* stems the traditional demonym of its inhabitants: **accitanos**.

Época / Nombre	Período	Hito urbano y legado
Romana · Julia Gemella Acci	Siglo I d.C. (Tiberio, año 25 d.C.)	Major Roman colony with a monumental Roman Theater.
Musulmana · Wadi Ash	Época andalusí y Reino Nazarí (hasta 1489)	One of the 33 walled medinas of the kingdom; Alcazaba (11th c.). "Wadi Ash" evolved into "Guadix".
Cristiana · Guadix	Desde 1489 (Reyes Católicos)	Urban restructuring; mosques converted into Baroque and Gothic temples.

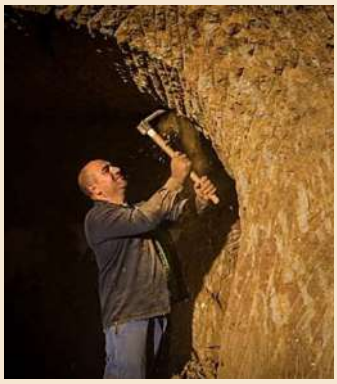
The origin of the Cave District

Following the Christian conquest of 1489, the Morisco population and marginalized minorities were pushed outside the walled city. The first documented underground dwellings used as permanent habitats date back to 1452. The Morisco Rebellion (1568) and the subsequent repression led by Don Juan of Austria accelerated the exodus into the clay hillsides.



BARRIADA DE LAS CUEVAS





EL PICAOR

The ancestral technique of the picaor

- **Facade cut directly into the clay hillside.**
- **Arched doorway created between 1 and 1.5 meters wide.**
- **Downward excavation from top to bottom, shaping exceptionally strong natural vaults.**
- **Internal galleries, wall niches, and whitewashed mortar chimneys.**
- **Waterproofing: traditionally natural oil and lime; today, galvanized mesh and white mortar.**

Living in a cave: bioclimatic well-being

- **Thermal inertia (18–20 °C / 64–68 °F):** constant year-round comfort without air conditioning or aggressive heating.
- **Acoustic insulation:** the surrounding earth creates a deep, restorative silence.
- **Natural humidity (~50%):** ideal balance for healthy respiratory airways.
- **Safety:** hardened clay naturally resists fire, harsh weather, and seismic activity.

2. The Historic Center



CATEDRAL DE LA ENCARNACIÓN

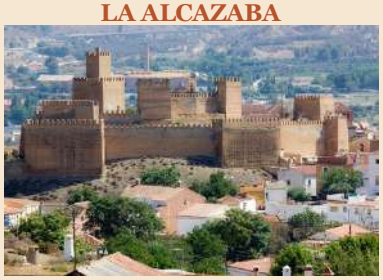
The Cathedral of the Incarnation

Erected atop the "Sacred Hill" (a former Visigothic basilica and congregational mosque), it was constructed between the 16th and 18th centuries under the master direction of Diego de Siloé; Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, and Neoclassical styles coexist harmoniously.

- **Facade of the Annunciation:** a Baroque portal of extraordinary sculptural beauty.
- **Tower of San Torcuato:** houses 15 bells that resonate across the entire valley.
- **Marble Pieta:** precise replica of Michelangelo's masterwork by an anonymous sculptor.

The Muslim Alcazaba (11th century)
A key defensive stronghold of the medina, reinforced during the Nasrid era. Declared a National Artistic Monument in 1931, it stands out for its reddish rammed-earth walls and the Keep (Torre del Homenaje), providing commanding views across the Vega and Sierra Nevada.

LA ALCAZABA





TEATRO ROMANO DE ACCI

The Roman Theater of Acci

Dating back to 25 AD (reign of Tiberius), covering approximately 6,000 m² with two tiers of seating. Buried by a severe river flood and scavenged during the Andalusi period, it was rediscovered in 2007 during construction work for a town car park. Open to visitors on Sundays by appointment.

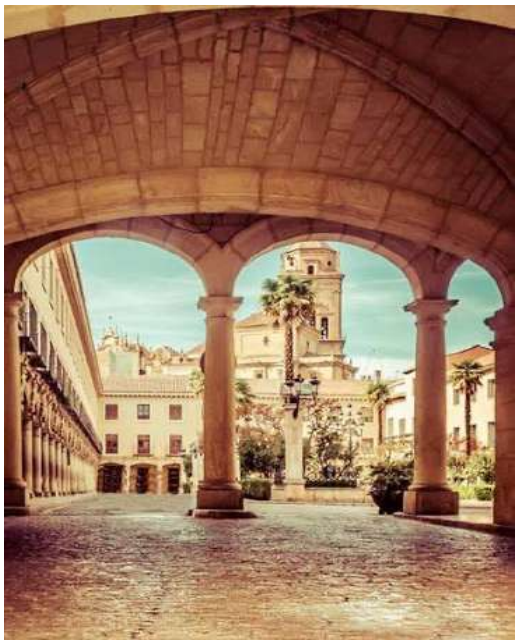
Plaza de la Constitución and Villalegre Palace

The beating heart of public life and tapas culture, housing the Town Hall and the Liceo Accitano. Rebuilt after a fire in 1936, it retains eight original Renaissance arches, where the Tourist Office is located today.

Just steps away stands the Villalegre Palace (16th century), erected by the Fernández de Córdoba family over a former Muslim residence; today it hosts municipal offices and cultural exhibits.



Local Legend: *At sunset, beneath the wooden eaves of Villalegre Palace, accitanos say that the "ghost of the palace" still wanders quietly along its high galleries.*





3. The Cave District



CUEVA DE SAN PEDRO POVEDA

Interpretation Center & Cave of Saint Pedro Poveda

Located in the historic dwellings of the Cruz Úbeda family (inhabited from 1928 to 1980), the Center showcases traditional pottery, esparto craft, and underground life guided by "Pedro, the Master Picaor".

In 1902, the priest Pedro Poveda rented his cave for 4.50 pesetas a month and founded schools with outdoor classes. He utilized stable mangers as bookshelves, creating the neighborhood's first public library.

Practical Info: Plaza del Padre Poveda s/n, Barrio de las Cuevas, 18500 Guadix | Tel. +34 958 665 569 | Email: turismoguadixoficial@optimacultura.com **Admission:** General €5, Reduced €4, Groups (>25 people) €2.05.

Cave-Hermitage of the Virgin of Grace

The *Ermita Nueva*, excavated in the 16th century, features a pulpit sculpted directly out of the earth and a 17th-century canvas attributed to Domingo Chavarito. In 1917, during a severe plague epidemic, local families gathered in prayer overnight, and infections subsided. Today it houses a permanent exhibition of Nativities of the World.



ERMITA DE LA VIRGEN DE GRACIA

The Viewpoints Route

Viewpoint	Location	Panoramic View
Padre Poveda	Plaza de la Ermita Nueva	Hundreds of white chimneys rising above red earth, with the fertile Vega in the background.
Cerro de la Bala	Via Barranco el Armero	The vast sea of cave homes, the Alcazaba, Cathedral, Zalabí Valley, and Sierra Nevada.
La Magdalena	Upper sector of town center	Transition between the Renaissance urban fabric and the troglodyte landscape.



4. UNESCO Geopark, Flavors and Festivities



BADLANDS Y CÁRCAVAS

Guadix serves as one of the primary gateways to the **UNESCO Global Geopark of Granada**. Water erosion acting upon an ancient Quaternary lake bed carved out dramatic gullies and badlands with ever-changing hues. In the Gorafe Desert, **Los Colorados** evoke the iconic Grand Canyon of Colorado and have frequently served as an international movie filming location.

Badlands Route: a 17 km signposted circular hiking trail starting directly from the city.

- **Bread migas: served with fried peppers, melon, or pork cuts.**
- **Garlic rabbit: cooked with almonds and mountain herbs.**
- **Papas a lo pobre: slow-fried potatoes with green peppers and eggs.**
- **Gachas accitanas: savory dish of pastoral origins.**
- **Guadix soup: rich poultry broth with an almond-garlic paste.**



COCINA ACCITANA



EL CASCAMORRAS

Festivities & Traditions

El Cascamorras (Sept 9):

Festival of International Tourist Interest, originating in the 15th century when Juan Pedernal found the Virgin of Piety in Baza.

San Antón Bonfires (Jan): Neighborhood bonfires celebrated with local wine and charcuterie.

Guest Decalogue

1. Surrender to the silence of the earth and disconnect from digital alerts.
2. Embrace the thermal inertia: a steady 18–20 °C without dry drafts.
3. Ventilate using natural airflow between the entrance and the chimneys.
4. Respect the lime plaster on exterior walls: it lets the cave breathe.
5. Preserve water: in a badlands landscape, every drop counts.
6. Stick to marked trails to avoid accelerating soil erosion.
7. Use warm outdoor lighting and respect the clarity of the night sky.
8. Choose local produce: esparto grass crafts, pottery, and regional wines.
9. Rest with peace of mind: natural clay protects against fire and storms.
10. Carry the spirit of the earth with you: Guadix as a sustainable lifestyle.

Have a wonderful stay in Guadix,

where the earth embraces you.