

Landscape

It seems that nature chose Casares to create one of its finest works. This municipality on the Costa del Sol stands out for its Biodiversity and the variety of its landscapes. The fact that Casares is situated between the Straits of Gibraltar, the Serrania de Ronda mountain range and the coast, means that it forms a meeting point between three different types of landscape which are part of the Andalusian Network of Protected Natural Areas.

The municipality contains the Natural Area of the Sierra Bermeja, a massif whose main peculiarity is its volcanic origins and whose name (Bermeja) derives from the reddish colour of the peridotites, the predominant rock in the area. Its particular geological characteristics make it poor in vegetation as only a few endemic plants are able to grow in such hard terrain. This is perhaps the reason why several prestigious botanists set out to explore the area at the beginning of the 19th century. In 1837, this interest led Felix Haenseler and Edmond Boissier to discover the pinsapo, a rare type of fir which is endemic to the area and grows in forests on the peaks of Los Reales, on the Sierra Bermeja, and on El Puerto de la Mujer.



On the western side of the Sierra Bermeja we find a different type of landscape: the limestone formations of the Sierra Crestellina. This massif, which has been declared a Protected Natural Area and owes its name to the jagged and crest-like shapes of its peaks, provides a home and nesting site for beautiful birds of prey such as griffon vultures, whose majestic flight can be admired from the castle of Casares. Also highly recommended is the sign-posted route through the forests of the sierra, climbing up to the mountain shelter and descending again to the town.

Between the sierras of Bermeja and Crestellina lies a spectacular natural frontier, in which the limestone formations blend with the peridotites, creating an unusually rich area: the Monte del Duque. Its lush forests of holm, cork and gall oaks form part of the Natura 2000 Network whilst the area has been categorised as a Site of Community Interest because of the range of its biodiversity.

No tour of the natural delights of Casares would be complete without a visit to the Canuto de Utrera, a spectacular replica of Torcal de Antequera, a place that has emerged from the depths of the ocean, formed by a labyrinth of karsts formations, which is home to one of the most endangered species in the Mediterranean, the short toed eagle; or without seeing one of its true marvels, the River Genal and its valley as they enter into the Alcornocales Natural Park.

