



Cycling in  
the valleys



## Andalucia challenge

Susan among  
the rocky hills  
in Andalucia

● **Tested by Susan Griffin**

**H**ow can you shift a few pounds and keep the weight off? It's a conundrum Mel and Marie Richards of family-run Rio Frio Holidays have endeavoured to answer at their site in Andalucia, southern Spain.

Your base is the four-star Finca Eslava Hotel in the ancient town of Antequera ([www.fincaeslava.com](http://www.fincaeslava.com)).

Everyone is subjected to a thorough health assessment; height, weight, lung strength, muscle mass and bone density are all measured.

Limbering up starts at 7am, but it's in the local park where you jog, power walk and stretch in the sunshine, overlooking sweeping views across the Andalucian plains.

It's porridge for breakfast before a two-hour hike or bike ride. The hills are a challenge, but the landscape distracts from aching muscles.

In the afternoon, we'd sweat it out on the treadmill,

rowing machine and circuit train for two hours. My muscles were waking up after years of neglect – I'd leave red-faced, but feeling amazing.

You can't deny how good you feel after exercising, so why don't we do it when left to ourselves? To make sense of this, Mel and Marie have a partnership with brain fitness trainer Dr Lissa Dells, who shows how to make positive changes to our daily routine.

Come the final day, I'd lost an inch and a half off my waist and hips. I felt toned and relaxed, my skin was glowing and I'd lost five years off my metabolic age. Now I'm home, I've even signed up to do a half marathon.

● **Seven-night courses cost 1,260 Euros per person (about £967) including accommodation, all meals, airport transfer and activities. For more information, call 0844 313 8498 or log on to [www.rio-frio.com](http://www.rio-frio.com)**