

World Heritage CITIES



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*Front Cover: Ibiza, Balearic Islands.
 Back cover: Casa Lis Art Nouveau and Art Deco Museum, Salamanca. Photo: World Heritage Cities*



INTRODUCTION

▲ COLEGIO MAYOR DE SAN ILDEFONSO (UNIVERSITY)
ALCALÁ DE HENARES

Spain is one of the countries in the world with most assets acknowledged by the UNESCO, and the **15 World Heritage Cities** are living proof of this. We'll take you on a journey to discover them and enjoy unforgettable experiences surrounded by culture, history, architecture and customs dating back over a thousand years. A heritage that the UNESCO defines as an extraordinary legacy from our past which we should take care of, maintain and pass on to future generations.

Toledo, a city famous historically for the harmonious coexistence between Muslims, Jews and Christians, and **Salamanca**, renowned as the home of one of the oldest universities in the world, invite you to discover the his-

tory of Spain through their streets and monuments. Visit the picturesque historical old town of **Cordoba** and discover its greatest treasure, the Mosque-Cathedral, one of the finest examples of Moorish art.

You'll also find the legacy of the Romans awaiting you in **Mérida** and **Tarragona** where you can walk amongst numerous archaeological remains such as amphitheatres, circuses and theatres. **Segovia** is also home to a real feat of engineering, the Roman aqueduct, one of the best preserved in Europe. **Ávila**, with its imposing city walls, and **Cáceres**, with its cobbled streets, medieval fortress-houses and towers, will transport you back in time to the Middle Ages.

Alcalá de Henares, the birthplace of Cervantes, is home to one of Europe's oldest open-air theatres, while in **Santiago de Compostela** you'll find Romanesque, Gothic and Baroque treasures. Other World Heritage cities not to be missed include **Úbeda** and **Baeza**, with their incredible Renaissance palaces and churches, and **Cuenca**, where you'll see the astonishing Hanging Houses blending seamlessly with the natural surroundings.

And you'll also find numerous priceless cultural attractions in the islands. The streets in the city of **San Cristóbal de La**

Laguna in Tenerife offer an insight into the origins of Latin American town planning. Finally, in the Mediterranean, the Balearic Island of **Ibiza** has been recognised by the UNESCO for its walled city along with other cultural and natural treasures.

In each of these cities you can appreciate extraordinary artistic and archaeological gems of incalculable value, enjoy the cuisine and discover the history and traditions of Spain. Come and discover them!

📍 For further information go to:
www.ciudadespatrimonio.org



CITIES

ALCALÁ DE HENARES

Just a short distance from Madrid, a visit to the birthplace of Cervantes is like a journey through the History of Europe. A dazzling university town with numerous palaces, surprising gastronomic offering and quiet streets, ideal for taking a stroll on a sunny day.

A good place to start is at the **Archaeological Museum of the Madrid Region**, located in the old **Convent of La Madre de Dios**. Take a journey in time from prehistory to the present and discover what life was like for the first settlers, in Roman times and in the Middle Ages.

Your tour could finish with a visit to the archaeological remains of the **Roman city of Complutum** which eventually became Alcalá. There you'll find the remains of the forum, the baths, the market and the **House of Griffins**. There are a number of guided tours available, which is the best way of discovering the details of the city's historic past.

Alcalá enjoyed its period of greatest splendour after the creation of the prestigious *Universitas Complutensis*. In the **University** it is worth visiting the **San Ildefonso Residential College**, a 16th century building with beautiful cloisters and patios in the interior. The Auditorium is a place of great political and cultural significance and where the Cervantes Award is presented each year, one of the most important literary awards in the Spanish language.



Photo: World Heritage Cities

CITIES



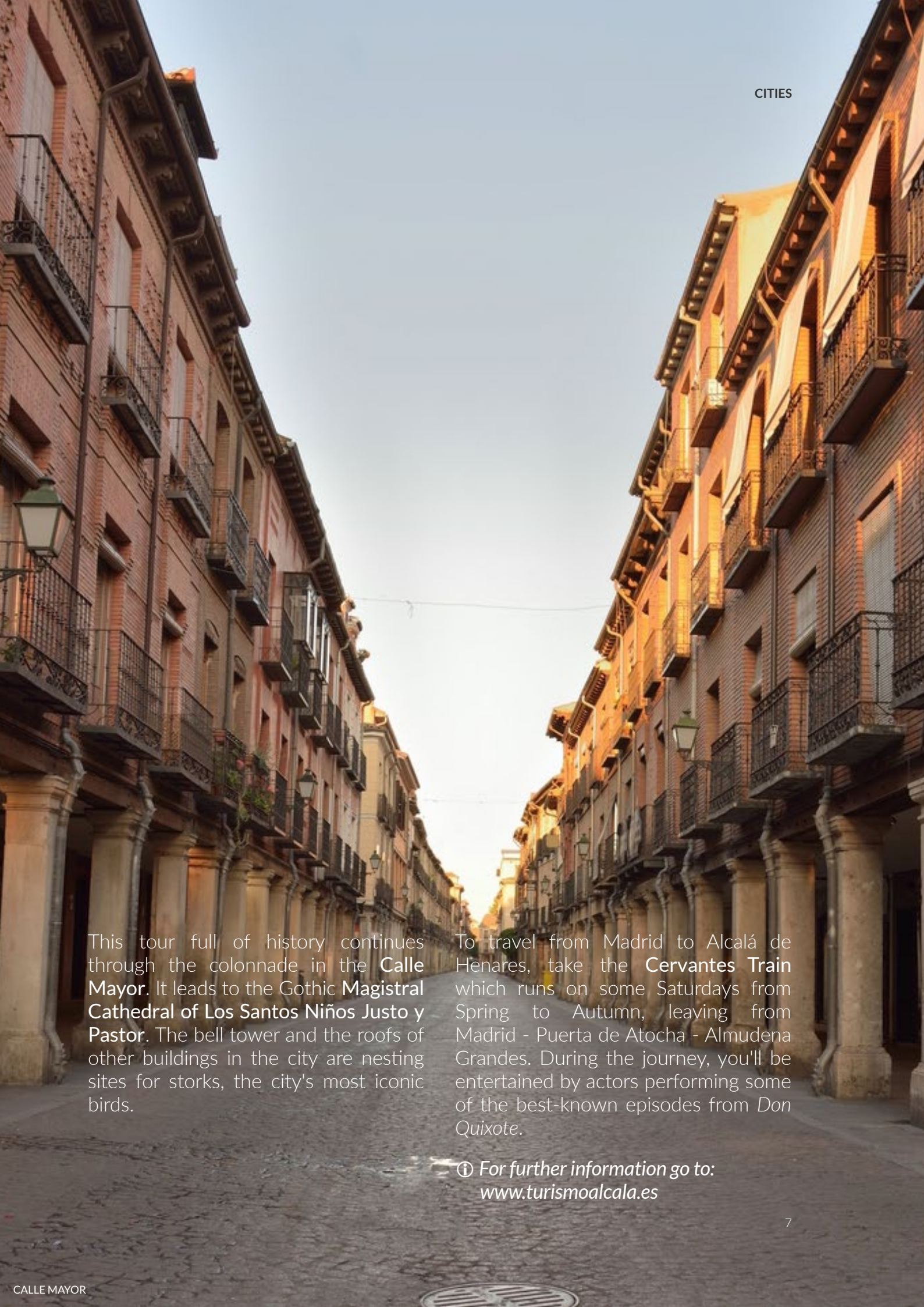
▲ MONUMENT TO DON QUIXOTE AND SANCHO PANZA

The name of Alcalá de Henares is engraved in universal literature. This is where **Miguel de Cervantes**, the illustrious author of *Don Quixote*, was born and spent his childhood.

Nearby you'll find the **College of San Jerónimo**, which is home to the Trilingual Patio, so called because Latin, Greek and Hebrew classes were given here. You could also stop by the **Hostería del Estudiante**, now part of the Parador Hotel network. Here you can try some of exquisite Castilian cuisine.

Part of the walled enclosure of Alcalá de Henares lies in the area around the **Archbishop's Palace**, formerly the residence of monarchs and archbishops. If you're visiting in November, you can attend a performance inside the walls of **Don Juan en Alcalá** (National Tourist Interest Festival), which takes the famous play from the Spanish Golden Age, *Don Juan Tenorio*, to the stage.

Then there's the **Cervantes Birthplace Museum**, a typical 16th century Castilian dwelling which houses a splendid collection of editions of works by Cervantes. From here, it's just a short walk to the **Plaza de Cervantes** where you'll find the **Corral de Comedias**, an open-air theatre where plays by great authors of Spanish classical theatre like **Lope de Vega** and **Calderón de la Barca** were performed. The **Town Hall**, the **Oidor Chapel** and the **Convent of Santa Úrsula** are also located in the surrounding area.



This tour full of history continues through the colonnade in the **Calle Mayor**. It leads to the Gothic **Magistral Cathedral of Los Santos Niños Justo y Pastor**. The bell tower and the roofs of other buildings in the city are nesting sites for storks, the city's most iconic birds.

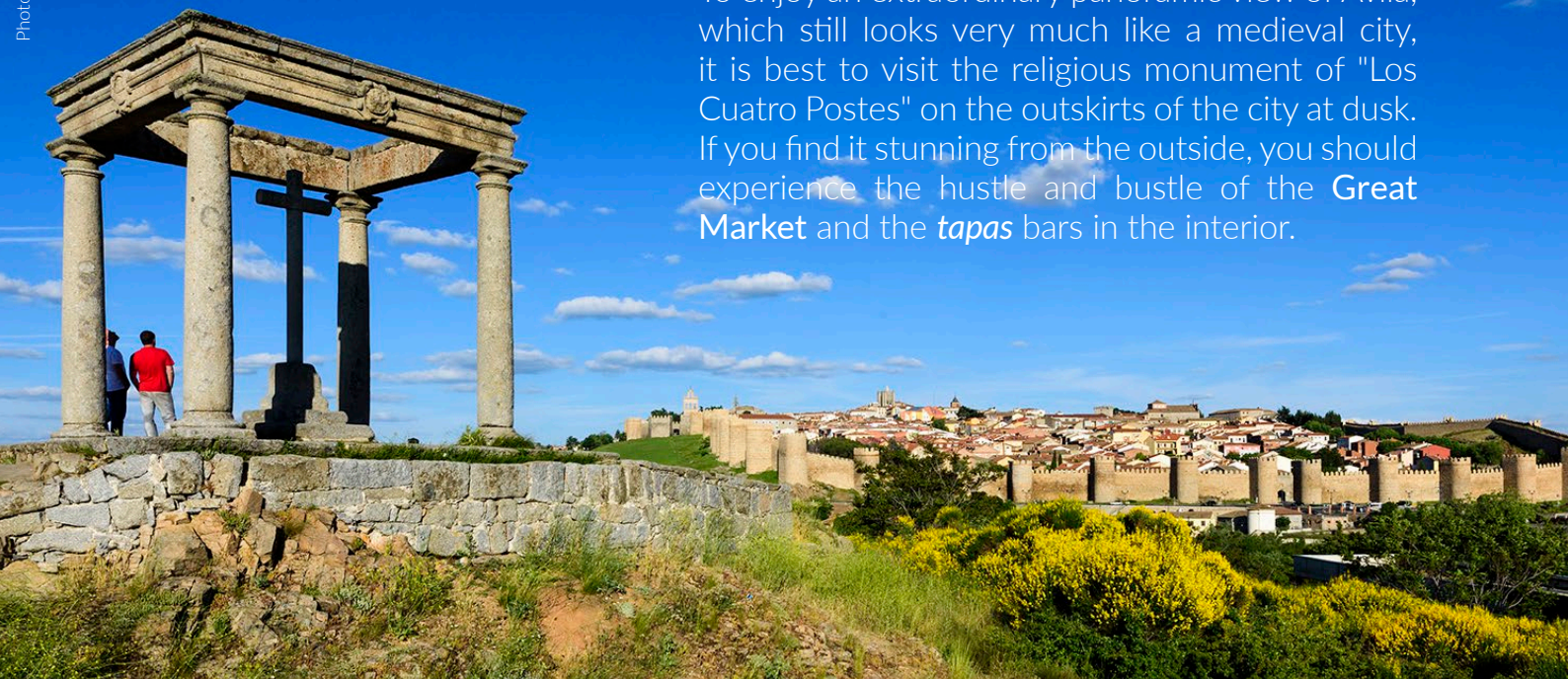
To travel from Madrid to Alcalá de Henares, take the **Cervantes Train** which runs on some Saturdays from Spring to Autumn, leaving from Madrid - Puerta de Atocha - Almudena Grandes. During the journey, you'll be entertained by actors performing some of the best-known episodes from *Don Quixote*.

📍 For further information go to:
www.turismoalcala.es

ÁVILA

To enjoy an extraordinary panoramic view of Ávila, which still looks very much like a medieval city, it is best to visit the religious monument of "Los Cuatro Postes" on the outskirts of the city at dusk. If you find it stunning from the outside, you should experience the hustle and bustle of the **Great Market** and the *tapas* bars in the interior.

Photo: World Heritage Cities



▲ ÁVILA

The unmistakable symbol of Ávila is the **medieval city wall**, one of the best preserved in Europe. It features battlements and defence towers. There are four access points, including one for persons with reduced mobility (the **Gate of El Puente**).

Once inside the walls you enter the historic town centre which is a series of churches, convents and Renaissance palaces. Most of them date back to the 16th century, when the textile industry was largely responsible for city's prosperity.

One of the main entrances is through the **Gate of Los Leales**, which leads directly to the **El Salvador Cathedral**, said

to be the first to be built in the Gothic style in Spain. It is an austere temple which looks very much like a fortress, a blend of warlike fervour and religious feeling typical of Ávila. It houses the **Cathedral Museum** which has a valuable collection of religious art.

Within the city walls you'll find areas with a very medieval aspect, like the **Plaza de Pedro Dávila** interspersed with dozens of Renaissance mansions which used to be the residences of noble families. The fact is, the city's old name was Ávila de los Caballeros or the "City of Knights". Examples are the **mansion of the Velada family**, the **Palace of Valderrábanos**, that of **Núñez Vela** and that of the **Dávila family**.

It's a short walk to the **fortified tower of Los Guzmanes**, which is currently the headquarters of the **Provincial Government**. Keep walking to reach the Renaissance-style **Palace of the Superunda-Colección Caprotti**, where you find pieces by painter Guido Caprotti and two portraits by Joaquín Sorolla. You can then continue as far as the **Plaza del Mercado Chico** in the centre of the city where the old Roman forum used to be located. There you'll see the beautiful façades of the **Town Hall** and of the **Church of San Juan Bautista**. While you're there you should try one of the restaurants around the square where they serve local specialities like the renowned Ávila T-bone steak, casseroles, white beans from El Barco and desserts like **Yemas de Ávila** (typical local pastries). Or you could try the famous **tapas**, delicious aperitifs to accompany a beer or a glass of wine.

Ávila is the provincial capital located at the highest altitude in Spain. The city has seen historical figures, such as the famous mystics and writers **San Juan de la Cruz** and **Santa Teresa de Jesús**. To learn more about the person known locally as La Santa, or the "Saintess", you should visit the **Monastery of La Encarnación** where the abbess spent most of her life.

Outside the city walls you should visit the stately **Casa de los Deanes**. It currently houses the **Ávila Museum**, which has fascinating sections dedicated to archaeology, ethnography and fine arts. You could also visit the **Post-Medieval Hornos** or Ovens, interesting remains of a pottery workshop located in the Calle del Marqués de Santo Domingo, or the **Tenerías Judías de San Segundo**, a leather tanning complex that may have operated from the late 14th century. And towards the north, the **Sepharad Memorial Garden**, in grounds where there the city's Jewish cemetery used to stand.

Next comes the **Royal Monastery of Santo Tomás**, the construction of which was finished during the reign of the Catholic Monarchs. It was once the seat of the inquisition and a university, and what were once its royal rooms are now home to the **Museum of Oriental Art**. Your visit to this ancient city ends at the **Los Cuatro Postes lookout point**. From here you'll have the very best view of this extraordinary medieval complex.

📍 *For further information go to:*
www.avilaturismo.com





BAEZA

From a distance you can already appreciate the beauty of this Andalusian city, with a profile perfectly crowned by the tower of the cathedral. Take a stroll through this splendid, walled city and at each step discover a monumental complex where each street, building and square is imbued with art and history.

◀ BAEZA

Baeza has been inhabited since remote times by Iberians, Romans, Visigoths and Moors. Its golden age was in the 16th and 17th centuries, when it became a great ecclesiastical and educational centre, and one of the most important Renaissance communities in Spain.

Your tour starts in the **Plaza de Santa María**, dominated by a magnificent stone fountain and the **Cathedral of La Natividad de Nuestra Señora**. A number of buildings will catch your eye in this area, like the **San Felipe Neri Seminary** and the **Jabalquinto Palace**. Opposite the palace you'll find the **Church of La Santa Cruz**, the best-preserved Romanesque church in Andalusia, and the **old university**, where you can visit the classroom where the poet Antonio Machado used to teach.

You really shouldn't miss the picturesque **Plaza del Pópulo**, dominated by the **Fountain of Los Leones**. Here you'll find the **Casa del Pópulo**, which houses the tourist office, and the **Antiguas Carnicerías** or Ancient Slaughterhouses. This iconic square is also where the **Villalar Arch** and the **Jaén Gateway** stand, they are the remains of the old city wall which protected the city during the Moorish era.

From here it's just a short walk to the gardened **Plaza de la Constitución**, where local residents come for a stroll and to meet. It is flanked by porticoes where the old craft guilds used to be. The most representative and prominent of its monuments include the **Alhóndiga** or Grain Market, the **Balcón del Concejo** or Council House and the **Fountain of La Estrella**.



Photo: World Heritage Cities

▲ JABALQUINTO PALACE

To learn about the city's remote past you should visit the **Cerro del Alcázar** archaeological site and then you could enjoy the atmosphere and some delicious Andalusian cuisine in the busy **Plaza de España**. We recommend the cod with tomato and pine nuts, the walnut tarts and the different jams.

📍 *For further information go to:*
turismo.baeza.net

CÁCERES

Any time of the year is ideal for visiting this monumental city in Extremadura and its medieval town centre. You can stroll through the cobbled streets and see incredible fortress houses and Renaissance palaces either by day or in the late evening when all the lights are turned on to highlight each little corner and monument. It's an unforgettable experience which will take you back in time. In fact, the city has been used as a location for countless films and TV series.

The historical old town is bordered on two sides by a wall which was originally Roman and then Moorish and in which many of the defence towers have been preserved. You could start by visiting the **Plaza Mayor** where you'll find the remarkable **Bujaco Tower**. From the battlements there are amazing views over the city.

There is a magnificent stairway leading up to the **Gateway of La Estrella**, which is the main point of access to the wall. Once inside the medieval town centre there are palaces and stately houses everywhere you turn. The peaceful, narrow streets are ideal for strolling around amongst these extraordinary buildings.

Cáceres is known as the City of the Thousand and One Crests because of the incredible number of coats of arms to be seen outside the mansions and palaces.

▼ CÁCERES





▲ PALACE OF LOS GOLFINES DE ABAJO

The **Plaza de Santa María** is surrounded by palaces and dominated by the **Co-Cathedral of Santa María**, a 15th century Romanesque building with transition elements to Gothic, with a beautiful Plateresque altarpiece. The buildings around this square include the **Mayoralgo Palace**, one of the largest in the city, and the **Carvajal Palace**. It has a unique corner balcony and a charming patio with a fig tree which is over 400 years old.

Nearby stands the **Golfines de Abajo Palace**, with a Renaissance façade with Gothic and Mudéjar features and it is where the Catholic Monarchs used to stay over five centuries ago.

There is so much of interest within the walled city of Cáceres, but special mention should go to the **Veletas Palace**, which houses a historical water cistern and the **Cáceres Museum**.

The city's prehistoric origins can be explored in the **Maltravieso Cave Visitor Centre** where there are some spectacular engravings and cave paintings.

An ideal end to the tour would surely be a visit to the **Sanctuary of La Virgen de la Montaña**, the patron saint of Cáceres, from where you can enjoy a magnificent panoramic view of this monumental city.

In Cáceres there are countless experiences for you to enjoy. For a little adventure you could fly over Cáceres in a hot-air balloon. Or you could take a dramatised night tour of the city to learn about its history in an original and entertaining way.

📍 *For further information go to:*
www.turismo.caceres.es



*El Grupo de...
del siglo XVII...
Establecidos por...
Cecilia y Angel...
para el año 1750.
Disfrutaron de las delicias de este
lugar y de la hospitalidad de
sus dueños.
/Ayacatecillos/*

CÓRDOBA

The origins of Córdoba are lost in the depths of time. On the border between the East and the West, during the Middle Ages it became Europe's principle metropolis, a point of reference as a cultural and political guiding light, home to the great scientists, philosophers, astronomers and mathematicians of the time.

For one of the most beautiful views of this Andalusian city you should go to the **Calahorra Tower** just to get a preview of this extraordinary, spectacular city. There you can visit the **Living Museum of al-Ándalus** which demonstrates the co-existence of the three cultures: Jewish, Christian and Moorish.

Cross the **Roman Bridge** over the Guadalquivir River and enter the city through the **Puerta del Puente** gateway. It's just a short distance to the heart and soul of the city, the **Great Mosque-Cathedral** which you reach via the **Puerta del Perdón** gateway. The beautiful **Patio de los Naranjos** leads to the incredible forest of columns with two-tone arches in the interior. The Catholic Cathedral, which is a blend of Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque, stands proudly in the centre of the mosque.

As you leave the Great Mosque-Cathedral you enter the **Jewish Quarter**, with cobbled streets and white-washed houses, one of the most popular images of the city, and you can visit the only medieval **synagogue** in Andalusia. In this neighbourhood you'll find some of the oldest patios in Córdoba, they are especially beautiful at the beginning of May when the **Festival of the Patios** is held, an event declared UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage.



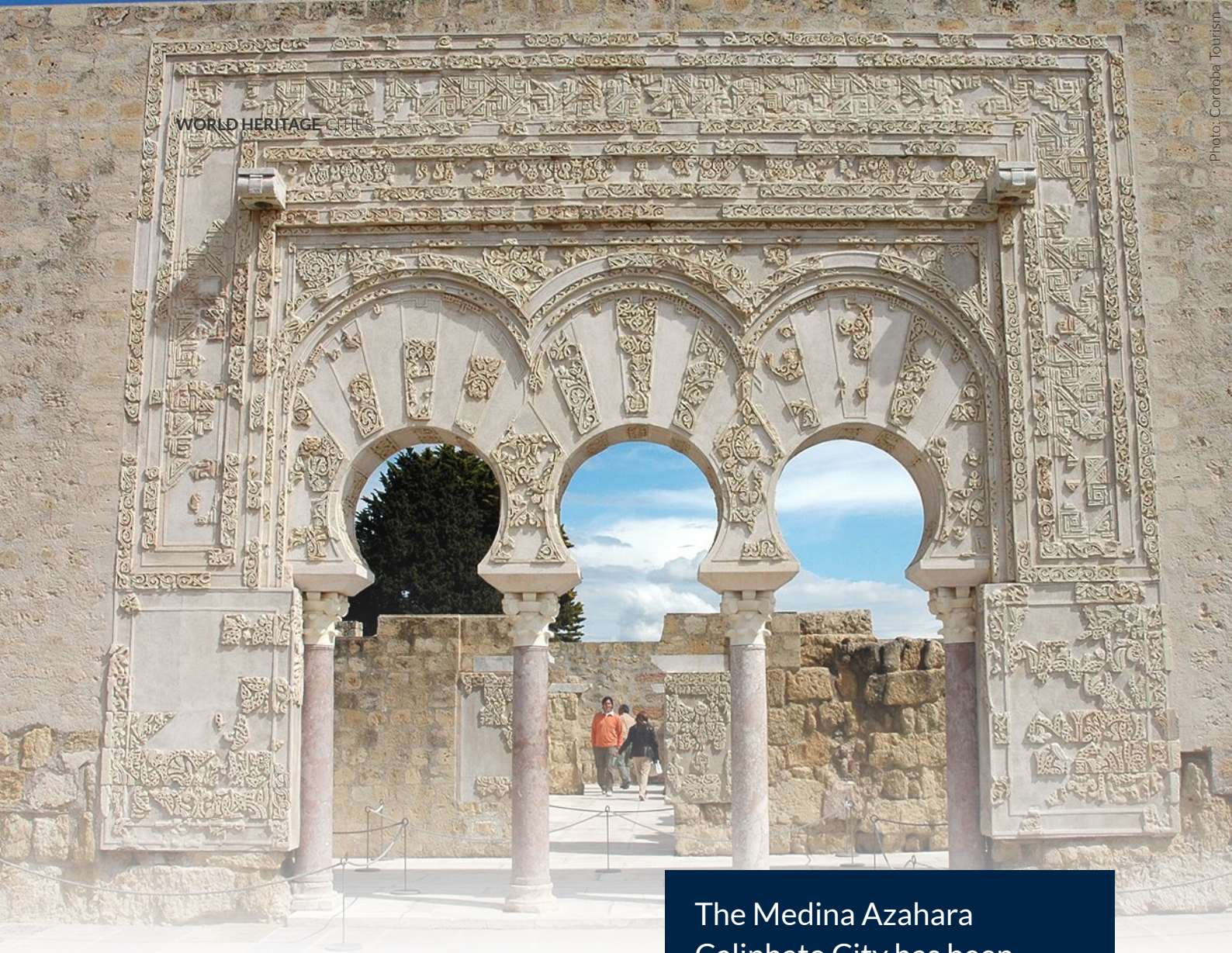
Photo: World Heritage Cities

▲ GREAT MOSQUE-CATHEDRAL

Visit the **Alcázar Viejo neighbourhood** and admire the numerous patios which you can visit on your own or accompanied by a guide. Check the timetables because they are not always open to the public.

You can also visit the **Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos**, an ancient fortress where the discovery of America was planned and has Moorish gardens which are a true delight. In the same square you'll find the **Royal Stables**, where you can attend equestrian performances.

To try some of the typical cuisine from Córdoba, like **salmorejo** (chilled tomato soup similar to **gazpacho**) and fried au-



▲ MEDINA AZAHARA

The Medina Azahara Caliphate City has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

bergines with honey, you should go to the monumental **Plaza de las Tendillas**, a traditional meeting point and venue for events. Stop at the remains of the **Roman Temple** and enjoy the **Plaza de la Corredera**, the only one in this style in Andalusia.

In the middle of the hidden **Plaza de los Capuchinos** stands the statue known as the **Cristo de los Faroles** (Christ of the Lanterns), one of the iconic symbols of the city. You can also visit the **Museum of Julio Romero de Torres**, one of Andalusia's most characteristic artists, and the **Viana Palace**, a stately mansion with a Mannerist façade. You'll love the

garden, the rooms and the twelve patios, which are splendidly decorated with flowers in the springtime.

If you'd like to delve deeper into the history of Córdoba, about 7 km away, you'll find the archaeological site of **Medina Azahara**, which was one of the most beautiful Palatine cities in al-Andalus. Explore it on your own or take a guided tour to discover the roots of its magnificent past.

① For further information go to: www.turismodecordoba.org

CUENCA

Cuenca offers an exceptional combination of nature, culture and history in a single location. Its unique and fascinating landscape, where the land is interlaced with traditional cuisine that has evolved towards high-quality gastronomy, is an irresistible invitation for travellers wishing to enjoy new culinary experiences.

Strategically located in the heart of Spain, Cuenca is connected to the main regional capital cities by high-speed trains and modern motorways, which provide access to unparalleled beauty and opportunity.

City nestled in a spectacular landscape of pine forests and water, among a maze of medieval alleyways, hills and squares.

▼ HANGING HOUSES





Photo: World Heritage Cities

▲ PLAZA MAYOR

Stroll around the streets and discover the delights of medieval Cuenca. The main streets converge on the **Plaza Mayor** where you'll find the **Cathedral of Santa María y San Julián**, built in the 12th and 13th centuries over an old mosque. The structure is a blend of Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque styles. The monumental façade is accompanied by the colourful walls and wrought iron balconies of the adjoining stately mansions.

You can stop for a rest and try some of the city's typical dishes, like *morteruelo* (pâté made from pig's liver, spices and breadcrumbs) and *ajoarriero* (cod with potatoes, garlic, olive oil and parsley) on the terrace of one of the bars in the square.

It's less than a minute's walk to the city's greatest distinguishing feature: The **Casas Colgadas**, or Hanging Houses,

built in the 15th century, with wooden balconies leaning out over cliffs above the Huécar River. In the interior of these extraordinary buildings you'll find the **Museum of Spanish Abstract Art** which is also well worth visiting.

There you just need to cross the **San Pedro Bridge**, another of the city's iconic symbols uniquely designed in iron and wood, to reach the **Convent of San Pablo** which has been restored and is now a Parador Hotel.

The area surrounding Cuenca is a natural paradise as well as providing the visitor with an open window onto the past in the **archaeological sites of Segóbriga, Valeria and Ercávica** with the remains of forums, a necropolis and buildings from the Roman era.

📍 *For further information go to:*
<https://visitacuenca.es/>

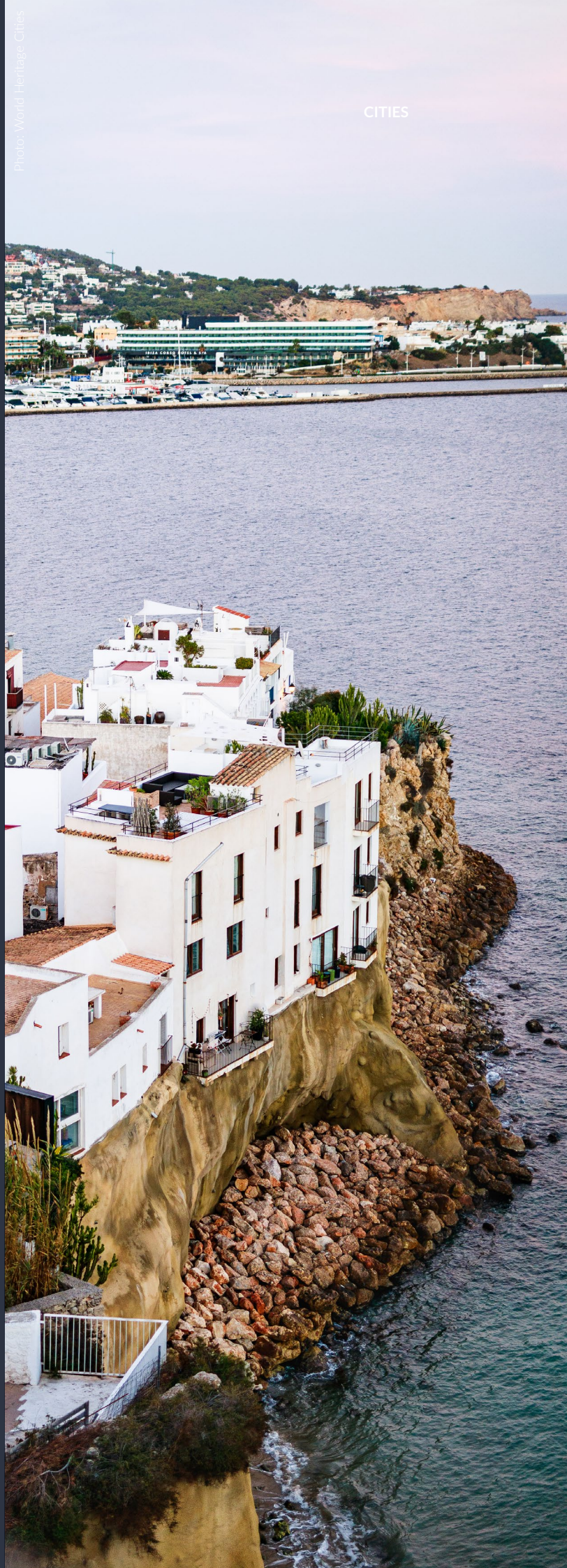
EIVISSA-IBIZA

The city of Eivissa (Balearic Islands) is located on the east of the island of Ibiza. It was founded by the Phoenicians and throughout history has been occupied by a number of civilisations: Punic, Roman, Moorish and Christian. The historical old town consists of the fishing and crafts neighbourhoods of **La Marina** and **Sa Penya** and the monumental area located in the upper part of the city, called **Dalt Vila**. On top of the Puig de Vila hill stands the **Almudaina Castle**, the tallest monument in the city which was built before there were any walls.

If you climb up to Dalt Vila you'll have fantastic panoramic views, with the old town and the port at your feet. This district is completely surrounded by impressive Renaissance city walls which were built to protect the town against pirates and have been recognised by the UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The most monumental of the five access gates is the **Portal de ses Taules**, next to the **Mercat Vell** or Old Market.

It is a real pleasure just to stroll through the maze of squares and narrow streets. The most striking features are the defensive bulwarks, the **Ayuntamiento** or Town Hall (in what used to be a Dominican Convent) and the tiled vaults of the **Church of Santo Domingo**.

All roads lead to the **Cathedral of Santa María de las Nieves** which was built over the old Moorish walls. It shares the cathedral square with the **Episcopal Palace** and the **Casa de la Cúria** (medieval courthouse) with a typical white-washed façade.



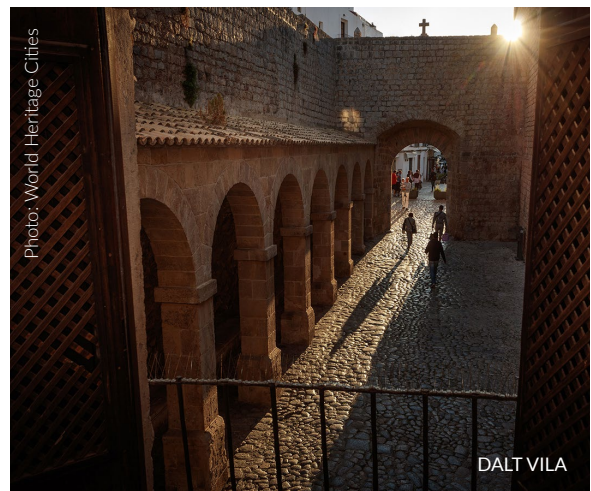


▲ EIVISSA-IBIZA

Not to be missed is the **Monographic Museum and Punic Necropolis in Puig des Molins**. Over 3,500 tombs have been discovered in this Phoenician-Punic cemetery which is one of the best preserved in the world. The next most significant archaeological sites on the island are those of Ses Païsses de Cala d'Hort and Sa Caleta.

Also well worth a visit are the modern art museum or **Museu d'Art Contemporani d'Eivissa (MACE)**, the **Puget Museum** and the **Madina Yabisa Visitor Centre**.

You can take a walk through the lively Paseo Vara de Rey and the Plaza del Parque in the centre of the town and turned into a large pedestrian area, and then along the edge of the port area until you come to the **Es Botafoc lighthouse**. The refurbished **Marina** neighbourhood, what used to be the fishing quarter, and nowadays has become a hive of activity with shops and restau-



rants where you can sample the island's cuisine on a terrace right by the sea. Then you can really enjoy the world-famous Ibiza nightlife. Or you could just relax in one of the sandy coves or beaches like **Ses Figueretes, Platja d'en Bossa, Es Viver** and **Talamanca**.

📍 *For further information go to:*
www.turismo.eivissa.es

MÉRIDA

Visiting Mérida is travelling back in time to one of the best preserved cities from the Roman Empire. If you come in June you can take part in Emerita Ludica, a festival recreating history in which local residents dress up in Roman costumes and organise cultural activities which will take you back to this era.

Throughout the year, you can enjoy an extraordinary cultural offering focusing on its archaeological heritage: the **International Classic Theatre Festival** in the summer; **Easter Week** and its spectacular Stations of the Cross in the Roman Amphitheatre; the **Emerita Lvdica** festival where 1st-century Avgvta Emérit returns to the streets at the end of May; **Heritage Night**; **Roman Carnival** and the **Unreleased Film Festival** – these are just some examples of the never-ending activity in this millennium-old city.

Starting point of the old Silver Road (**Vía de la Plata**), it was the capital city of the Roman Lusitania, and became one of the most prosperous cities in the Empire.

Its greatest attraction, a true architectural gem, is the **Roman Theatre**. It was built in the 1st century BC, and its condition and imposing presence will leave you speechless.

Nearby you'll find the **amphitheatre**. Both venues spring to life every summer during the **Mérida Classical Theatre Festival**, one of the most important festivals organised in Europe, and during Emerita Lvdica and its gladiator fights.

▼ FESTIVAL OF GRECO-ROMAN THEATRE





◀ NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ROMAN ART

From here it is just a short walk to one of the best-preserved **Roman Circuses**. There is a visitor centre where you can learn what it used to look like and what it was used for. And at the **National Museum of Roman Art**, designed by the Spanish architect Rafael Moneo, you'll find a splendid collection of exhibits which will help you understand what day-to-day life was like in the Roman colony.

The town centre is the site of the **Temple of Diana** and **Trajan's Arch**, the former entrance to the sacred space of a gigantic Imperial temple. Take a stroll around the adjacent streets and stop for a rest and sample Mérida's gastronomy. Savour a lamb casserole, served with good local wine; or dishes prepared with D.O. products from Extremadura, produced in the surrounding area. You will be feel like a Roman Emperor!

In the evening you can visit the Moorish **Alcazaba**, a fortified enclosure surrounded by a great ditch. In the patio of the fortress there's a section of the main Roman road and remains of the city wall. Inside there's a splendid water cistern decorated with Visigoth pilasters.

From here you'll have beautiful views over the Guadiana River, and its nature. Cross over the **Roman bridge**, said to be the longest still remaining in Spain, and the **Lusitania bridge**, a modern design by the architect Santiago Calatrava.

① *For further information go to:*
www.turismomerida.org



▲ CASA DE LAS CONCHAS HOUSE

SALAMANCA

Salamanca is an open, vibrant city. Life revolves around the **University**, one of the first to be founded in Spain and one of the oldest in Europe. It still attracts thousands of students from all over the world who come to learn Spanish.

Take a walk through the historical city centre known as the **Ciudad Vieja** or "old town". A good place to start is in the famous Baroque-style **Plaza Mayor**, the heart and soul of Salamanca, an ideal place to have a bite to eat and do some shopping. You'll find everything from famous fashion brands to traditional craft work and delicatessens selling the fantastic cold-meat products from the region. This is where you'll hear the surprising, cheerful music of **La Tuna**, groups of young university students who do the rounds playing traditional popular songs, dressed as they would have looked in times gone by.

The gateways to the square lead to the most interesting buildings. These include the **Church of La Clerecía**. Here you can purchase an entry ticket for the **Scala Coeli** permanent exhibition which includes a guided tour of the building. The tour ends at the top of the **La Clerecía Towers** from where you'll have a spectacular panoramic view over the old town.

Right opposite you'll see the **Casa de las Conchas**, a building decorated with more than 300 ornamental stone shells. Legend has it that there is a treasure hidden behind one of them. Very nearby you'll find Salamanca's architectural gem, the **University**. The Plateresque façade is in extraordinary stone filigree, where it is traditional to look for a frog. Here's clue: it's sitting on a skull, which symbolises the fate awaiting bad students. Inside there's a great library, a patio, a staircase and the splendid Escuelas Mayores and Escuelas Menores, where the lecture theatres are located.

Then cross the **Plaza de Anaya** which leads to a magnificent complex comprising the **Cathedral of La Asunción de la Virgen** and the **Cathedral of Santa María**, popularly known as the **New Cathedral** and the **Old Cathedral**. In the first of these, you should look carefully at the **Puerta de Ramos** doorway, in which the figure of an astronaut is hidden. From there you walk down the **Calle Tentenecio** to the **Casa Lis Art Nouveau and Art Decó Museum**. This is a delightful museum, located in a Modernist building with stained-glass windows.

You should experience Salamanca by day and at dusk. This is when the setting sun gives a golden hue to the material used to build the monuments, sedimentary clay-based rock from Villamayor. And when night falls, you can stroll amongst the brightly-lit buildings in the old town and enjoy the atmosphere of the student nightlife.

① *For further information go to:*
www.salamanca.es

▼ NEW CATHEDRAL



SAN CRISTÓBAL DE LA LAGUNA (CANARY ISLANDS)

The island of Tenerife is not only idyllic beaches and unspoiled nature. It is also the colonial layout of its colourful first city, San Cristóbal de La Laguna, which was founded over five centuries ago. You'll love the pedestrian streets, the palaces, the religious buildings and the life-style of the Tenerife people.

Photo: World Heritage Cities

▲ SAN CRISTÓBAL DE LA LAGUNA

You'll see how the city is laid out like a grid, designed using maritime navigational instruments. As you stroll through the elegant streets in the centre of the town you can't help but notice the lively presence of students from the two-hundred-year-old **University**, the first to be founded in the archipelago.

The city was also a powerful ecclesiastical centre and a number of churches were built here. Some of the most significant of these are the **Parish Church of Nuestra Señora de la Concepción** and the **Holy Cathedral Church of Nuestra Señora de los Remedios**. You can also visit the old **Convent of Santo Domingo de Guzmán** and the **Chapel of San Miguel Arcángel**, which is now an exhibition hall

Everywhere you look there'll be palaces and stately houses with brightly coloured façades and stone porches.



▲ HOUSE OF SALAZAR

One of the best preserved is the **Casa de Salazar** with strange, zoomorphic gargoyles which remind you of Pre-Hispanic Mexican art.



Photo: World Heritage Cities

▲ CALLE DE LA CARRERA. SAN CRISTÓBAL DE LA LAGUNA

Other examples of stately architecture are the **Palace of Lercaro** (now the **Tenerife Museum of History and Anthropology**), the **Palace of Nava** and the **Casa del Corregidor** (one of the Town Halls).

The city is also proud of its magnificent coastal area and the **Anaga**

Rural Park which is home to one of our greatest treasures: the laurel forest. An extraordinary area, declared a Biosphere Reserve, which nobody visiting La Laguna should miss.

① *For further information go to:*
turismo.aytolalaguna.es

SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

Legend has it that it was the discovery of the remains of Saint James the Apostle that led to the creation of Santiago de Compostela, the capital of Galicia. It would soon become a holy city together with Jerusalem and Rome, and a destination for pilgrims that eventually gave rise to the **Way of Saint James**. Each year thousands of pilgrims from all over Spain and the world come to reach the incredible **cathedral**, the final destination of the Way of Saint James.

► PLAZA DEL OBRADOIRO



An excellent way to start in the morning is to stroll around the streets of the historic town centre. Here you'll find a series of narrow streets, squares and granite buildings with centuries of history, many of them dating from the Middle Ages. Special mention should go to the cathedral with a majestic façade towering above the **Plaza del Obradoiro** Square. In the interior, you can not only see the extraordinary **Gloria Gateway** and the Apostle's tomb, you can also experience the pilgrim's mass. In some of the religious services the **botafumeiro** (gigantic incense burner) swings over the temple's central aisle. You should also visit the cathedral's Archive-Library which houses documentary gems like the **Codex Calixtinus**.

The other three squares surrounding the cathedral, **Quintana**, **Inmaculada** and **Praterías**, provide a good example of the blend of styles in a city which lives and breathes its history and university

atmosphere. Before you continue, head for any of the bars and restaurants in the area. There you can sample some of Galicia's delicious dishes: **pulpo á feira** (spicy octopus), pastries and Padrón peppers, followed by a slice of Santiago tart for dessert.

It's a good idea to spend the first few hours of the afternoon in one of the many beautiful parks and gardens to be found in Santiago. The most central is the **Alameda Park**, with wonderful views of the historic town centre.

Another possible route along the north of the city starts in the **Plaza Cervantes**, known in the 12th century as the Forum as it was a popular meeting place. Nearby you'll find the market called the **Mercado de Abastos**, one of the most visited attractions in Santiago. Here you can buy fresh produce at the stalls and take it to the bar in the market where they'll prepare it for you to eat right there.



▲ PLAZA DE CERVANTES

In the evening you can visit the nearby **Pobo Galego Museum**, which encapsulates Galician ethnography in a section dedicated to archaeological finds within the region. Next door, there's the **Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea** (Galician Contemporary Art Centre), famous not only for the exhibits but for the building itself, designed by the Portuguese architect Álvaro Siza.

If you're staying for more than one day you should take a bus and visit the huge **City of Culture** on Mount Gaiás. This is an architectural complex designed by the American architect Peter Eisenman, which has an interesting programme of cultural activities throughout the year and facilities include museums, exhibitions, a library and research centres.

① *For further information go to:*
www.santiagoturismo.com

▼ LA GLORIA DOORWAY



Photo: World Heritage Cities

SEGOVIA

Segovia, one of Spain's historical jewels, welcomes visitors with its majestic **Aqueduct**, at the entrance to its historical centre. At its foot, you can find the **Visitors' Centre**, with a detailed model of the city and all the information you need to explore it.

▶ ROMAN AQUEDUCT

CITIES





Photo: Carlos Soler Martinez/123rf.com

▲ SEGOVIA

Stroll along **calle Real** until you get to **Casa de los Picos** and its façade decorated with granite points, and to the **Torreón de Lozoya**, currently a cultural centre with temporary exhibitions. Make sure to climb to the top of the tower.

Immerse yourself in the past with the Romanesque churches of **San Martín**, **San Millán** and **la Trinidad**, and discover the church of **San Miguel**, at **plaza Mayor**, where Isabel the Catholic Monarch was crowned queen of Castile.

The majestic Cathedral of **Santa María**, known as the Lady of all Cathedrals, offers an incomparable visit with its late Gothic style and fantastic panoramic view over the city. The Painting Room, under the cloister, is not to be missed.

Near the cathedral, you can explore the **Jewish Quarter** (and the **Jewish Educational Centre**). And walk five minutes to reach the **Caballeros neighbourhood** and the Romanesque churches of **San Juan de los Caballeros** and **Santísima Trinidad**.

Segovia's walls, fully preserved, feature the **San Andrés Gateway**, the **Segovia Museum** and the **Santiago Gateway**. Inside, you can find a permanent exhibition of **puppets by Francisco Peralta**.

You will particularly enjoy a visit to the **Rodera Robles Museum**, located in a 15th-century noble home; the **Bishop's Palace**, and its amazing collection of religious art; the **Antonio Machado Museum-House**, about the famous Spanish poet; and the **Esteban Vicente Contemporary Art Museum**, with pieces from this internationally famous painter.

In the distance, behind the **Gardens of Queen Victoria Eugenia**, you can see the **Alcázar**, a fairy tale-like Medieval fortress. Explore its patios and royal rooms, and climb up to the tower for some impressive views.

If you visit at **Easter**, you can enjoy delightful concerts of sacred music in its religious buildings. In July, the **Segovia Music Festival (Museg)** brings music to the patios of palaces and other venues. And in Springtime, **Titirimundi** fills the streets with puppets and marionettes.

The local gastronomy is delicious, with **roast suckling pig** as the main attraction in traditional restaurants.

End the day by walking about the **Eresma Riverside** to the **Pradera de San Marcos**, an ideal place to rest and where you'll get possibly the best view of the amazing Alcázar. And don't forget to visit the **Casa de Moneda**, a rare factory building from the 16th century, and an excellent starting point to explore the **Parral Monastery**, the **Church of Vera Cruz**, the **Convent of San Juan de la Cruz** and the **Shrine of la Virgen de la Fuencisla**, patron saint of Segovia.

📍 *For further information go to:*
www.turismodesegovia.com



TARRAGONA

Discover the goddess who protected the gladiators in the **Tarragona National Archaeological Museum**, feel the sea breeze as you look out from the "Balcón del Mediterráneo" and enjoy a stroll through the streets and alleyways of the historical old town. In Tarragona, the options are countless and you can find the right plan for the right time of year.

◀ ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE

The Mediterranean, quiet beaches and coves, mild and sunny climate, gastronomy with its own personality, very lively traditions and historical heritage that has earned it a place on the list of the 15 World Heritage Cities of Spain – Tarragona is an ideal destination. We explain its formula to disconnect and enjoy all year round.

one hour from Barcelona and two and a half hours on a high-speed train from Madrid, we find one of the best kept secrets in the Mediterranean. In Tarragona, a two-thousand-year-old city founded by the Scipios and converted into an imperial city by Augustus, the Roman footprint of an archaeological complex declared World Heritage Site by the UNESCO in 2000 coexists with the daily life of this friendly and quiet

town, where you can taste rice or fish with local wine among vestiges of its extensive past.

Along with the spectacular nature of its iconic **Amphitheatre** on the seashore, its excellently preserved **Roman Circus**, or its monumental **Les Ferreres Aqüeduct** (also known as Devil's Bridge), Tarraco's Roman past merges with current Tarragona in the streets of its **historic centre or Part Alta**, turning the city into a true open-air museum.

The Roman archaeological complex is joined by the early Christian heritage, a medieval legacy starring its imposing **Cathedral** and numerous modernist buildings. On the strength of these buildings, Tarragona has been described on countless occasions as "the city of history".



▲ TAMARIT CASTLE

In addition to its heritage, Tarragona surprises with the possibility of enjoying natural landscapes and beaches in the city itself, something that is less and less common. 10 beaches and coves over 15 kilometres of sparsely urbanised, crowd-free coastline invite us to enjoy beautiful landscapes throughout the year, such as the hidden **Cala Fonda** or **Cala Jovera**, authentic Mediterranean paradises; the lush **Marquesa Forest**; or the medieval castle of **Tamarit**, right near the beach.

The city also has a wide range of campsites (some of them ranked among the best in Europe) where you can enjoy the Mediterranean paradise of the Tarragona coastline with your family. And a network of greenways within the city

itself, perfect for exploring on foot or by bicycle, complete the natural offering of a surprising destination.

But Tarragona still has many more surprises, and one of them is its original gastronomy. In its fishing neighbourhood, **El Serrallo**, you can enjoy the city's own dish, the **Tarragona romesco**, a sauce with a multitude of variants but that is basically prepared with pepper, nuts, garlic, bread and olive oil, and is used in countless recipes and varieties. It is especially recommended to savour it with local fish, of excellent quality, and served with one of the **wines from the Designation of Origin Tarragona**, another of the city's pleasant surprises.





▲ BARRIO DEL SERRALLO

El Serrallo and the **Port of Tarragona** are must-see stops to learn about its fishing and port tradition. So, don't miss **The Museu del Port** (Port Museum).

In Tarragona, you can also enjoy the **castells**, spectacular human towers of up to 10 levels, which are one of the hallmarks of Tarragona culture. Throughout the summer, "Tarragona, city of castells" offers visitors numerous examples of this cultural expression. Four colles castelleres (groups of people that form the towers) keep alive a tradition declared Intangible World Heritage by the UNESCO in the year 2010.

The performances are joined by traditional festivals such as the festival of **Sant Joan, Sant Magí** or the two of **Santa Tecla**, Tarragona's main festival, which fills the town with tradition, music and dances at the end of September. One of the most character-full festivals in Catalonia. The biennial event of the **Concurs de Castells in the Tarraco Arena** puts the cherry on top of one of the best human tower offerings in the autonomous region.

If the city's attractions were not enticing enough, a getaway to Tarragona is an open door to exploring an area that houses undiscovered architectural and landscape treasures, including essential stops to learn about the south of Catalonia on their own merits. Less than half an hour by car from Tarragona, we can visit the impressive **medieval monasteries of Poblet and Santes Creus**, on the Cistercian Route; the **Montferri Sanctuary**, also known as the Little Sagrada Familia; or learn about the wine culture of the territory through the D.O. Wine Route. Tarragona, where **wineries such as Nulles** stand out for their impressive modernist architecture.

① *More information at:*
www.visittarragona.es



Photo: World Heritage Cities

TOLEDO

You're standing in a true open-air museum of history. The first thing you notice are the narrow winding streets that used to be home to mosques, baths and bustling bazaars when it was under Muslim rule.

During the Middle Ages, Toledo became the **City of the Three Cultures**. Christians, Jews and Moors coexisted here for centuries, a time of peace and splendour when the city was the seat of the court and the capital of the Castilian monarchy. This was when the renowned **Toledo School of Translators** was founded and which is now a research centre.

Each of these three communities bequeathed its own architectural legacy on the city, and this can be appreciated throughout the labyrinthine historic town centre. The main access is through the **Puerta de Bisagra** gateway. This leads to the picturesque, bustling **Plaza de Zocodover**, surrounded by arcades. You should look out for the little shops selling finely crafted gold, Damascene objects.

Then visit the **Mosque of El Cristo de la Luz**, the oldest monument in Toledo and one of the most important Hispanic-Muslim and Mudejar architectural examples in Spain. Good examples of Mozarabic architecture (by Christians living in the Moorish kingdom) are the **Churches of San Sebastián** and **Santa**

Eulalia. The Mudejars (Muslims living amongst Christians) in Toledo meanwhile left a legacy of profusely decorated art. You'll love the **Church of Santiago del Arrabal** which is known as the Mudejar Cathedral. The **Church of Santo Tomé** is in the same style and is renowned for being home to the painting entitled *The Burial of the Count of Orgaz* by the world-famous painter, **El Greco**. Some of his masterpieces are on display in the **El Greco Museum**, located in the **Paseo del Tránsito**.

You can also visit the remains of the Jewish community, like the **Synagogues of Santa María la Blanca** and **El Tránsito** which houses an interesting **Sephardic Museum**.



▲ SYNAGOGUE OF SANTA MARÍA LA BLANCA

The finest example of the Catholic legacy is the Gothic **Cathedral of Santa María de Toledo**. It is particularly notable for the main façade which consists of three doorways: the doorway of Hell, of Forgiveness and of the Last Judgement. The cathedral houses a great treasure, the Sacred Processional Receptacle of Arfe, which plays a leading role in the traditional procession to celebrate the Santísimo Corpus Christi.

Your tour ends with a visit to the **Alcázar** or fortress. Behind its sturdy walls you'll find a military museum and one of the largest libraries in Spain. It also has a lookout point with magnificent panoramic views over the Tagus River and the area surrounding the city.

📍 *For further information go to:*
<https://turismo.toledo.es/>

ÚBEDA

Surrounded by the valleys of the Guadalquivir and Guadalimar Rivers, in the midst of a sea of olive trees, this Andalusian city amasses a treasure trove of incredible monuments which is unique in Spain. In the historical town centre you'll find some of the finest architectural gems of the Andalusian Renaissance.

As you walk through the streets and squares you'll feel like you're back in the 16th century. At the heart of the **Route of the Andalusian Renaissance** and the **Nasrid Route**, it's an ideal base from which to explore the whole region.

Beautiful Úbeda, with a backdrop of palaces and towers, is an extraordinary city with a cultured and courtly past. The best place to start your tour is the

Plaza de Vázquez de Molina where you'll find some of the city's most outstanding buildings. The **Sacred Chapel of El Salvador**, the **Deán Ortega Palace**, now a Parador Hotel, and the **Vázquez de Molina Palace**, all works by the architect Andrés de Vandelvira, are well worth your close attention.

Right opposite the latter stands the magnificent **Basilica of Santa María de los Reales Alcázares**. On the same spot where Bronze Age remains, a Roman temple dedicated to the goddess Diana and a Moorish mosque were found, they built what would be the Principle Church in Úbeda from the 13th century onwards. It has splendid façades, a beautiful cloister and interior chapels which are a blend of a number of different artistic styles.

▼ SACRED CHAPEL OF EL SALVADOR.





▲ PLAZA VÁZQUEZ DE MOLINA

In the most traditional neighbourhood in the old town, you should climb up to the **San Lorenzo Lookout Point** where you'll have extraordinary views of the olive groves and the Sierra Mágina mountains.

The city is full of architectural wonders where Moorish, Gothic and Baroque elements blend in perfect harmony. You'll find remains of the Moorish legacy in the **Granada Gateway** and in the city walls surrounding the historical old town. The mysterious **Synagoga del Agua** or Synagogue of the Water, hid-

den away for centuries, will take your breath away. To appreciate the blend of cultures which have left their mark on the area, you should visit the extraordinary **Archaeological Museum**, located in a 14th century Mudejar building.

Úbeda has a very busy cultural agenda. Examples of this are the **Theatre Forum** which is held from September to November and the **City of Úbeda International Music and Dance Festival** which takes place in May and June.

📍 *For further information go to:*
<https://www.turismodeubeda.com>

HISTORY THROUGH CUISINE

Enjoy the finest Spanish cuisine in each of the World Heritage Cities and discover the incredible variety of their traditional dishes and gastronomic specialities. You could start with some **papas arrugadas con mojo picón**, baby potatoes boiled in their skins and served with a spicy Canary Island sauce, or some excellent **extra virgin olive oil** from Úbeda, Baeza and Córdoba, the foundation of the Mediterranean diet.



For lovers of fresh, local produce there are plenty of exquisite products for you to try. Meat from the centre of the Iberian Peninsula will leave you asking for more. There's **T-bone steak from Ávila**, which is so big it is usually served on a large platter because it doesn't fit on a plate. Then there's roast lamb, kid goat and suckling pig from Segovia, where you'll find numerous top-class restaurants as well as a

splendid Parador Hotel. Or you could try the **cold meats from Salamanca**, where the Guijuelo designation of origin is a guarantee of quality.

Toledo is proud of its game and there they serve delicious **casseroled partridge** and **venison with wild mushrooms**, while Cuenca is renowned for its **casseroled lamb** and offal dishes like **zarajos** (marinated sheep's intestines).



▲ IBERIAN CURED HAM

Vegetables are a very important part of the Mediterranean diet. Special mention should go to white beans with designation of origin from Ávila, lentils from La Armuña in Salamanca and chick peas which are traditional in most parts of mainland Spain. You can try them in the famous **cocido madrileño** (traditional chick pea stew) whilst you're in Alcalá de Henares or in a **broad bean and chick pea casserole** in Baeza.

The king of Spanish gastronomy must surely be **Iberian cured ham**. Nowhere in the world will you find one better than in Córdoba, Salamanca, Mérida or Cáceres, each with its own particular flavour and denomination of origin. In Córdoba it is also an important ingredient in dishes like **salmorejo**, a chilled tomato broth similar to **gazpacho** and served with fine slivers of

ham. Or **flamenquín**, which consists of diced cured ham rolled into pork loin and fried in breadcrumbs.

In cities like Santiago de Compostela, Ibiza and Tarragona, the fruits of the sea take on special importance. The **seafood in Galicia** is truly first-class, with an extraordinary variety of excellent products: scallops, goose barnacles, spider crabs... Accompanied by Albariño and Ribeiro wines for perfection. **pulpo á feira**" (spicy octopus), with potatoes, olive oil and paprika, is another of the delicious dishes you could try in Santiago de Compostela.

Tarragona is outstanding for anchovies and sardines with the Tarragona Blue Fish designation of origin. Try the **fish or seafood in Romesco** (nut and red-pepper based sauce) in the El Serrallo fishing quarter.

In Ibiza, the menu includes delicious **scorpion fish cooked with fine herbs**, **lobster casserole** and **Ibiza-style tuna**.

You'll also find good fish in the cities in Spain's interior. Cáceres is renowned for its **tench**, usually fried but also served pickled or in a delicious casserole.

You should try **Baeza-style cod**, which is traditionally served in Baeza at Easter, floured and fried, accompanied by a pepper sauce, tomato and fresh peas. Or **andrajos de Úbeda**, casserole of cod, clams, prawns and vegetables, thickened with cake flour.

Hornazo or pastry turnovers are served all over Spain but they are especially traditional in Salamanca. They are made with bread dough and filled with **chorizo** sausage, pork loin and sometimes with hard-boiled egg.

You should try one in any restaurant or pastry-shop, they're delicious.

The World Heritage cities are also famous for their traditional desserts. You really shouldn't miss out on **Ensaïmada**, an exquisite, sugared pastry-cake with different fillings, for breakfast or afternoon tea in Ibiza. In Mérida and Cáceres you have to try the **buñuelos**, local doughnuts. Other specialities are **alajú** (sweet, almond-based tart) in Cuenca, **yemas de Ávila** (sweetened egg yolks), **tarta de Santiago** (almond-based tart) from Santiago de Compostela, **gachas dulces** (aniseed-flavoured sweets) in Úbeda and **virolos** (light, flaky pastry) in Baeza.

And you really shouldn't leave San Cristóbal de la Laguna without trying the **laguneros** (puff pastry filled with Cabell d'àngel and icing), one of the most popular dishes in the city, and the **Canary Island bananas** and the amazing variety of tropical fruits that are grown in the islands.

HORNAZO PASTRIES FROM SALAMANCA





FESTIVITIES BY SEASON IN THE WORLD HERITAGE CITIES

If you like to run, from April to December, you can join the “**Ciudades Patrimonio de la Humanidad**” **Race Circuit**, by taking part in amateur races at these 15 Spanish cities. You can also explore them at another special occasion, the **Heritage Night**, held one Saturday in September in all these cities, including an extensive programme with guided tours, open museums and monuments, and the Escena Patrimonio dance festival.

▲ MÉRIDA INTERNATIONAL CLASSICAL THEATRE FESTIVAL

SUMMER

During the **Mérida International Classical Theatre Festival**, which is held in July and August, you can enjoy the splendid 1st century BC Roman theatre, an incredible scenario for performances of Greco-Latin based works, but also open to the performing arts in general, including music and films. For the **Stone & Music Festival** which takes place in August and September, the Roman theatre welcomes top Spanish and international artists.

During the first fortnight in July, the **Córdoba Guitar Festival**, one of the most important in the world, brings well-known artists and musicians to the city to celebrate this instrument. In the first weekend in September, the streets of Ávila return to Medieval times during the “**Mercado de las Tres Culturas**” **Medieval Festival**, with activities for all

ages, including jousts. Tarragona in the second fortnight in September you can attend the **Santa Tecla Festival** which includes some of Catalonia's most symbolic traditional festivities. The streets are full of people dressed up as devils and dragons, testing your reflexes by throwing firecrackers, which is what they call the *Correfoc*. Or you can marvel at the amazing ability of the **castellers**, human towers which can reach up to ten levels, a tradition awarded the World Intangible Heritage declaration.

Summer is the best season for visiting the coastal areas of the islands and learning about history in Ibiza and San Cristóbal de la Laguna. Starting on 30 July Ibiza celebrates its **Festes de la Terra**, a summer festival with concerts, children's activities and shows all around the city.



▼ CERVANTES WEEK IN ALCALÁ DE HENARES

In San Cristóbal de la Laguna music plays a leading role during the **Actúa Festival**, a festival of music, culture and leisure, which takes place in a number of venues in the historical old town in June.

A good time to visit Santiago de Compostela is 25 July to celebrate the **Festivity of Saint James the Apostle**, the patron saint of Galicia and Spain. You'll see how the whole city becomes an enormous festival. Festivities include a number of fantastic music, dance and theatre shows, and close with a great firework display.

📌 **Useful links:**

www.festivaldemerida.es

www.stoneandmusicfestival.com

AUTUMN

The cultural side of Andalusia is most prominent in September, October and November. Visit Úbeda during these months to enjoy the **Autumn Theatre Forum**. This is a cycle consisting of per-

formances of both classical and contemporary works by the best Spanish theatre companies.

At the same time, in neighbouring Baeza, you can discover the secrets of Flamenco singing and dance at the **Flamenco Cultural Autumn Festival**. The city's Flamenco club organises literary gatherings, exhibitions and concerts around this typically Spanish art form.

In October, Córdoba hosts the biggest contemporary floral art event in the world, the **FLORA International Flower Festival**. Gaze at the installations by prestigious flower artists across the city's patios.

Also in October, Alcalá de Henares celebrates **Cervantes Week**, a great opportunity to take a closer look at the legacy left to the city by Miguel de Cervantes, the author of Don Quixote. The streets are filled with literature, leisure and gastronomy, including a Medieval Cervantes Market where you'll find local products and lovely craft work souvenirs.

In November, music is the protagonist in San Cristóbal de la Laguna with the **International Jazz Week**.

📌 **Useful links:**

<https://festivalflora.com/>

<https://semanacervantina.ayto-alcaladehenares.es/>

<https://jazzlalaguna.com/>



Photo: Córdoba Tourism (IMTUR)

▲ FESTIVAL OF THE CÓRDOBA PATIOS

WINTER

Carnival is especially colourful all over Spain, but in cities like Santiago de Compostela it is especially enchanting. The capital city of Galicia shows its vocation for masks, make-up and fancy dress especially during the parade on Carnival Tuesday, with the participation of floats and troupes of friends and neighbours parading through the city. A special feature of the Compostela Carnival is the **Entroidos dos Xenerais**, a tradition in which a number of people dress up and ride through the streets on horseback, accompanied by a veritable army of people with flags, choirs and pageants.

Each November the **Medieval Market of the Three Cultures** is set up in the Monumental City of Cáceres, where you are invited to travel back in time and discover the extraordinary blend of Moorish, Jewish and Christian traditions. Apart from visiting the stalls selling craft work, you can enjoy a broad programme of street entertainment,

including falconry as well as theatrical and musical performances.

At the end of November, beginning of December the **Úbeda and Baez Ancient Music Festival** takes place, which each year commemorates a specific aspect of historical music from a number of perspectives. Apart from concerts in some of the most beautiful auditoriums and Renaissance palaces in both cities, the programme includes top-level exhibitions, presentations, courses and conferences.

📍 Useful links

festivalubedaybaeza.com

<https://xeneraisdaulla.gal/>

SPRING

If you visit Córdoba in May you'll see the extraordinary **Popular Cross Competition**. Large crosses are set up in patios and squares and decorated with flowers and Manila shawls. All to

the sound of *sevillanas* and Flamenco dance shows in the evenings.

May is also the time for the **Festival of the Cordoba Patios**, declared Intangible Cultural Heritage by the UNESCO. For two weeks, the people of the city proudly open the gates to their patios in the historical old town and deck them out specially for the occasion with pots full of geraniums, carnations and jasmines. They can be visited at practically any time of the day and you can also complement each route at the historical taverns, while discovering its exceptional gastronomy and its Montilla-Moriles wines.

The **Festival of San Jorge** (the Spanish name for Saint George) on 23 April is celebrated in many parts of Spain, but it has special significance in Cáceres. It is a day for watching theatrical performances of the battle between Moors and Christians, seeing how they burn a great paper and cardboard dragon and taking part in an entertaining search for the golden hens, hidden in the city.

In March and April, Cuenca gets ready to solemnly celebrate **Easter Week**. There you can attend the procession known as the Camino del Calvario ('the Road to Calvary') to the sound of *Las Turbas*. This is what they call the incredible din made by drums and trumpets parading in front of the image of Jesus Christ in the procession through the steep streets of the historical old town of Cuenca.

Ávila is also a unique setting for Easter Week. Some of the best moments are the Stations of the Cross around the walls on Holy Thursday, or the processions of the Cristo de las Batallas, Pasos or Santo Entierro.

Towards the end of spring you can attend the festivity of **Corpus Christi** in Toledo. A solemn parade in a city adorned for the occasion with ancient standards and tapestries on the balconies of the houses and flower arrangements in the streets.

📌 **Useful links**
patios.cordoba.es
www.corpustoledo.org

▼ EASTER WEEK





NATURE IN THE CULTURAL HERITAGE CITIES

▲ LOS BARRUECOS NATURE RESERVE

Buildings and remains from ancient times are the very soul of our Cultural Heritage Cities, but many of them have wonderful green areas inside and outside their walled enclosures.

In Alcalá de Henares, **O'Donnell Park** is the nearest green lung to the historical town centre. You'll love the spectacular rose garden and the lake full of ducks. From there you can go to the **Pasillo Verde del Camarmilla**, a green walkway where the ecosystem surrounding the stream which runs around Alcalá has been recovered.

The parks in Mérida are mostly on the banks of the **Guadiana River**. If you're looking for really large natural areas, the best of them will be found a few kilometres from the city. In the **Cornalvo Nature Reserve** and the area surround-

ing the **Proserpina Reservoir** you'll find an irresistible blend of Roman archaeological remains, local biodiversity and Mediterranean vegetation. A little nearer to Cáceres, in a Special Protection Area for Birds (ZEPA), you have the **Llanos de Cáceres and Sierra de Fuentes** and the extraordinary rock formations of **Los Barruecos**. **Cáceres** also has a ZERPA area, since its buildings house a large colony of lesser kestrel, a small bird of prey.

Córdoba is one of the best examples when talking of natural wealth. From the Roman bridge you can look out over the **Sotos de la Albolafia**, the islets and banks of the Guadalquivir River populated by an amazing variety of species of trees. Wend your way through the maze of palm, orange and lemon



trees in the **gardens of the Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos**. It's a great idea to take a guided night tour during the summer months. Near the **Cruz Conde Park** you have the **Córdoba Royal Botanical Gardens** and the so-called **Ciudad de los Niños**, a park with endless attractions and swings for little children, ideal if you're travelling with the family.

Salamanca, Ávila, Toledo and Segovia, in the middle of mainland Spain, are all surrounded by extensive natural areas. The first three, for example, share (with the province of Cáceres) the Sierra de Gredos. In the Salamanca region, the **Sierras de Béjar y Francia** mountains and the **Arribes del Duero Nature Reserve** have both been declared Biosphere Reserves by the UNESCO in recognition for their environmental qualities. In Salamanca itself there are plenty of green areas. Take a walk in the **Huerto de Calixto y Melibea** and you'll get an incredible view of the cathedral, or in the **Los Jesuitas Park** in the heart of the city, and enjoy the peace and calm amongst the trees.

In the province of Segovia, apart from the green areas within the city like the **Dehesa Park** and the beautiful **Zuloaga Gardens**, you'll love the amazing nature reserves like the **Hoces del Duratón**. the **Sierra de Guadarrama National Park** and the **Sierra de Ayllón**.

To see Toledo from a different perspective, you should take the **Ecological Path**, which starts at the Puente de Alcántara bridge and provides spectacular views of the city and the Tagus River. Further north, outside the historical town centre, you'll find the **Three Cultures Park**, with spacious gardens.

BOROSA RIVER, IN CARZOLA

The natural wealth of Spain's islands is extraordinary. Ibiza not only has wonderful, fine sandy beaches, it also features dense forests of Mediterranean pine. The great variety of flora and fauna is especially evident in the **Ses Salines Nature Reserve**. This is a protected area that includes the salt pans which are home to flamingos and extensive fields of *posidonia oceanica* on the seabed. In the Canary Islands, near San Cristóbal de La Laguna, you can visit the **Anaga Rural Park**, a Biosphere Reserve. This space is a natural lung with exceptionally beautiful landscape, biological diversity and extremely unique cultural values. One of the must-see stops in Tenerife.

In Tarragona you have the Mediterranean sea and great natural spaces in the surrounding area. Just a few kilometres from the historical town centre you can cross the Roman aqueduct of **Les Ferreres** also known as **Puente del Diablo** or Devil's Bridge, surrounded by nature.

The countryside around Santiago de Compostela is noted for the green forests surrounding the city. The presence

of nature is highlighted by the historic gardens of the **Parque de la Alameda** and the **San Domingo de Bonaval** and **Belvís** Parks in the city centre. They all feature in their own right amongst the most iconic and visited attractions.

Both Cuenca, Úbeda and Baeza, the smallest of Spain's World Heritage Cities, can be proud of the natural areas around them. Let your imagination hold sway as you admire the **Ciudad Encantada**, the incredible rock formations in the **Serranía de Cuenca Nature Reserve**. A surprising geological phenomenon which gives the natural surroundings an air of magic in an area which also features the source of the Cuervo River.

You'll simply love the **Sierras de Cazorla, Segura y Las Villas Nature Reserve** and the valleys, rivers and forests very near Úbeda and Baeza. Take a boat trip on the **Tranco Reservoir**, enjoy a little hiking alongside the **Borosa River** and take a close look at the **Chorro Gil waterfall**.

PARADOR HOTELS IN THE WORLD HERITAGE CITIES

Spain has an extensive network of Parador Hotels which are ideal for rest, relaxation and enjoying **memorable experiences**. They are located in delightful historical buildings with up-to-date facilities and blend perfectly with their picturesque surroundings. The excellence of their **cuisine** and the variety of services are a **guarantee of top quality and comfort** for the visitor.

ALCALÁ DE HENARES

Located in a 17th century college-convent, the Parador Hotel is ideal accommodation when staying in the city of Cervantes. The hotel is a blend of tradition with elegant, minimalist décor.

ÁVILA

The Piedras Albas Palace, the Parador Hotel in Ávila, backs onto one of the best-preserved city walls in Europe and is very near this medieval city's most iconic attractions. The rooms are spacious, ideal for relaxation and decorated in a cosy, intimate style. The dining room has lovely views of the garden and the city walls through a glass-covered patio.

▼ ALCALÁ DE HENARES PARADOR HOTEL





CÁCERES PARADOR HOTEL

CÁCERES

Spend the night in a Renaissance palace in the heart of the historical city centre. The Parador Hotel is in a complex of three, refurbished stately buildings which have been interconnected respecting their original style. The architecture is

truly beautiful and you'll really enjoy the delicious cuisine served in the cosy garden restaurant. Sleep surrounded by vaults and pointed arches and enjoy the peace and tranquillity of this extraordinarily beautiful building.

CÓRDOBA

The city's Parador Hotel stands over what used to be the ruins of the summer palace belonging to Abd al-Rahman I, the first independent emir of Córdoba. It is an elegant building with magnificent views of the city and has a delightful garden. The interior consists of bright, spacious rooms, decorated simply and in good taste.

CUENCA

The hotel occupies what used to be a convent with an extraordinary location overlooking a bend in the Huécar River, with views of the magical **Casas Colgadas** or Hanging Houses. There is a fascinating, glass-enclosed cloister and the former chapel, now a cosy café. It also features a swimming pool and there are incredible panoramic views of the city from the superior rooms.



▲ CUENCA PARADOR HOTEL

MÉRIDA

The hotel is an old, 18th century convent, built over the remains of a temple dedicated to the Concord of Augustus. Here you'll find a perfect combination of tradition, comfort and good service. Within the beautiful interior cloister a Garden of Antiquities has been created, an archaeological complex consisting of Mudejar, Roman and Visigoth elements.

SALAMANCA

The Salamanca Parador Hotel stands on a hillock facing the monumental town centre. There are panoramic views over the city from the lounges, a swimming pool and most of the rooms are simply some of the best in the city. After spending the day strolling around the streets and visiting museums and monuments, there's nothing like just coming back here and enjoying the sunset.

SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

It stands in the Plaza del Obradoiro and is regarded as one of the oldest hotels in the world. It started out as the Royal Hospital in 1499 and was used as lodgings for pilgrims on their way to Santiago. In the interior a hotel-museum awaits you with four delightful cloisters, spectacular rooms and a luxurious dining room.



▲ TOLEDO PARADOR HOTEL

SEGOVIA

The Parador Hotel has incomparable views of the city of Segovia and the surrounding mountains from the spacious gardens and the balconies in the rooms. In winter you can take a dip in the heated indoor pool and in summer cool off in the fantastic outdoor pool.

TOLEDO

The City of the Three Cultures is best enjoyed by strolling around the cobbled streets. The location of the Parador Hotel makes it ideal for relaxing after a hard day's tourism and for admiring the extraordinary mon

umental architecture. You'll feel right at home enjoying the cosy, friendly atmosphere of the splendid facilities.

ÚBEDA

This 16th century Renaissance palace is in the heart of the historical town centre. There is a beautiful, column-lined interior patio tucked away behind the façade. Most of the rooms in this Parador Hotel have spectacular panoramic views of the square in which it stands, very near the city's main attractions.

i *Further information and bookings, go to www.paradores.es*

HERITAGE CITIES, ACCESSIBILITY

The top priority of Spain's World Heritage Cities is accessibility for those with any kind of disability and with this in mind **specific routes** have been created which you'll find on the app for mobile phones and tablets called **Accessible Cities** or on the following website:

www.ciudadespatrimonio.org/accesibilidad

▼ ÁVILA CATHEDRAL



In most tourist offices you'll find **guidebooks for accessible tourist resources** with information on hotels, restaurants, transport and monuments. You can also book **guided tours**, find **parking spaces** reserved for those with reduced mobility and **taxis with wheelchair facilities**.

In **Alcalá de Henares** the recommended circular route, adapted for all kinds of accessibility, departs from the tourist office in the Plaza Cervantes. From there it takes in all the main tourist attractions in the historical town centre in the following order: Town Hall, Corral de Comedias Open Air Theatre, Cervantes

Birthplace Museum, Archaeological Museum, Madrid Gateway, Plaza de Los Santos Niños, and returns via the Calle Mayor to the Plaza de Cervantes.

The tour in **Ávila**, specially recommended for those with impaired mobility and hearing, departs from the Visitor Centre and follows the city wall as far as the Calle San Segundo. From there it continues through the Puerta del Peso de la Harina gateway which leads directly to the square in which the cathedral stands. On leaving the walled city through the Puerta del Alcázar gateway, you then visit the Plaza de Santa Teresa and the Mercado Grande or Great Market. The route continues alongside the city wall to Rastro Park and then to the Puerta de la Santa gateway to access the Convent of Santa Teresa and the Palace of the Superunda-Colección Caprotti.

Mérida also has an interesting tour to help those with reduced mobility discover the city's Roman past. It starts in Mérida's Museo Abierto or Open Museum and continues with the amphitheatre and the Roman Art Museum, with stops at the Pórtico del Forum arcade and the Trajan Arch. The tour finishes in the Plaza de Las Méridas del Mundo, opposite the Roman bridge.

In **Salamanca** there is a tour adapted to all kinds of accessibility. It departs from the Municipal Tourist Office in the Plaza Mayor, and takes you out through the archway which leads to the Plaza del Corriño. It continues along the Rúa Mayor pedestrian street as far as Calle Cardenal Pla y Deniel. On the left you have the entrance to the cathedral and on the right the access points for the University of Salamanca. The route then takes you along the Calle Libreros



▼ SALAMANCA CATHEDRAL

near the famous Casa de las Conchas or House of Shells and the end of the tour in the Plaza del Corriño. In addition to this route there is also a programme called "Salamanca for all the senses" which includes special adapted passes for dramatised tours of squares and patios, personalised visits to the Cerro de San Vicente Archaeological Park and some of the performances in the Keys to the City programme.

The city of **San Cristóbal de La Laguna** is flat and has a grid-plan layout, ideal for those with reduced mobility. Also, the historical town centre is pedestrian and vehicle access is severely restricted. You could start your tour in the tourist office in the Casa de Alvarado-Bracamonte. From there you have easy access to the city's main attractions by taking the parallel streets of San Agustín, Obispo Rey Redondo and Herradores where you'll find most of the churches and stately houses.



Photo: Santiago de Compostela Tourism

▲ ALAMEDA, SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

In **Santiago de Compostela** a route has also been created in which most of the streets are pedestrian and quite flat, so it is specially recommended for those with reduced mobility. It takes in the main monuments in Santiago and departs from the Hotel Compostela. From there it is easy to reach the Plaza del Obradoiro, where the cathedral stands, and the Plazas de Praterías, Quintana and Abastos squares. At the start of the tour you can turn off into the Alameda Park and visit the beautiful botanical gardens.

In **Segovia**, the tour specially recommended for those with impaired mobility and hearing departs from the Visitor Centre facing the Aqueduct, then along the Calle Real leading to the Plaza Mayor. It continues along the Calle Marqués del Arco and the route ends at the incredible Alcázar de Segovia fortress.

As you can see, Spain's World Heritage Cities are extremely well prepared for receiving visitors with different kinds of impairment. In 2014 and 2017, Cáceres and Úbeda were officially recognised as Accessible Tourist Destinations. In spite of the cobbled streets, both Toledo and Tarragona have special routes.

▼ TOLEDO





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