

Spain

INLAND



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Front Cover: Salamanca
 Back cover: Alcázar fortress, Segovia. Photo: Jewish Quarter Network

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Photo: Watcharakorn Chotigo 712311rcor

INTRODUCTION

▲ ROYAL PALACE
MADRID

Inland Spain will really surprise you. Come with us as we take a look at its main attractions and go on an unforgettable journey.

Discover its cultural wealth, beautiful landscapes and natural diversity, enjoy the incredible cuisine and try some of the best wines in the world.

Be **prepared** to immerse yourself in a **culture** with thousands of years of history. Discover the origins of the human race in archaeological **sites** like Atapuerca in Burgos, and the towns in La Rioja where the Spanish language was born. Then there **are exciting and** cosmopolitan cities like Madrid, the capital of Spain.

If you love nature, there is so much to choose from. **Come and discover** the **Picos de Europa National Park** in Castile-

León, the natural habitat of deer, wolves and bears. Watch **thousands of birds in the** Tablas de Daimiel and Parque de Cabañeros, two nature reserves in Castile-La Mancha. Or gaze in wonder at the starry sky in the Monfragüe National Park in Extremadura.

Take a journey full of **the most intense** flavours. Traditional and **avant-garde** cuisine. The menu will include some of this country's most renowned, exquisite products, like Iberian cured ham from Extremadura and Salamanca, lamb from Castile-León and the famous **wines** from La Rioja.

DESTINATIONS WITH CHARM

Visit Spain's inland regions and enjoy the unique cultural, natural and artistic heritage.

ARAGÓN

Travel through the region where the famous painter Francisco de Goya was born, enjoy the snow at popular ski resorts and try the delicious traditional cuisine in this region in the northeast of Spain.

In the province of **Huesca** you'll find the Ordesa y Monte Perdido National Park, one of the largest eco-reserves in Europe and the perfect venue for adventure sports. The incredible beech forests, waterfalls and ravines will really impress you. The Pyrenees are ideal for skiing and *snowboarding*. And you really shouldn't leave without trying

the region's extraordinary wines, like Somontano.

If you love the arts and other cultural expressions then you should visit **Zaragoza**, the capital of the Autonomous Region of Aragón and one of the most important cities in Spain. There you'll find the Basilica of Nuestra Señora del Pilar, one of the most important centres in the world for worship of the Virgin Mary.

In Aragón you can also visit the city of **Teruel**, which preserves a significant medieval legacy. Treat yourself to some exquisite ham.



ORDESA Y MONTE PERDIDO NATIONAL PARK
HUESCA



CASTILE-LEÓN

Discover one of the regions with the greatest wealth of monuments and natural diversity in Spain. It has three World Heritage cities, Ávila, Salamanca and Segovia, unique places which will take you back in time.

There are so many destinations you'll fall in love with. Travel back to prehistoric times at the Atapuerca site in **Burgos**, or visit this city and admire the splendid cathedral, a gem of the Spanish Gothic period. Take a break in a bar or restaurant and try some traditional Morcilla de Burgos, similar to black pudding. You'll

soon be asking for more! **Segovia** is home to a true marvel engineering feat, the Roman aqueduct, one of the best preserved in Europe. **Ávila** awaits you with its impressive medieval city walls, churches and Renaissance palaces and then there's **Salamanca** which has one of the oldest universities in Europe.

The provinces of **Zamora** and **Palencia** are home to a truly impressive Romanesque legacy. **Valladolid** has a beautiful Renaissance old town centre and **Soria** is a maze of medieval streets and alleyways.

▼ SIERRA DE URBIÓN Y LAGUNA NEGRA NATURE RESERVE
SORIA



After a very active day you deserve to reward yourself with some relaxation and a typical Castilian roast lamb meal together with a wine from the region. What a treat!

The province of **León** is ideal for a getaway. Relax on a horseback ride along the banks of the Duero River or strolling around Las Médulas, the largest opencast gold mine in the Roman Empire and declared a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO. Here you really have to try the renowned cold meats, the best known being the “cecina”, delicious cured beef similar to Serrano ham.





▲ ALCÁNTARA BRIDGE
TOLEDO

CASTILE-LA MANCHA

There is so much to discover in this region, famous throughout the world as the setting for the novel *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, by Miguel de Cervantes. It is also one of the regions in Europe with the greatest number of protected natural areas.

The city of **Toledo**, the capital of Castile-La Mancha, is an open-air history museum. There are splendid monumental buildings like the "alcázar" or fortress and the cathedral where you can wander through the narrow, winding streets.

In **Albacete** you'll find one of the most important archaeological sites in Spain called the "Tolmo de Minateda", and natural splendours of great beauty like the source of the Mundo River and the Las

Lagunas de Ruidera Nature Reserve (between Albacete and Ciudad Real), where you'll be able to watch birds like the red-crested pochard, the mallard and the purple heron. The province of **Ciudad Real** features castles and beautiful monumental complexes like those in Villanueva de los Infantes and Almagro. This town is especially well known for the 17th century "Corral de Comedias" where the International Classical Theatre Festival is held each year.

In the city of **Cuenca** you'll find the impressive "Hanging Houses" which blend seamlessly with the natural surroundings. Another essential visit is to the Ciudad Encantada in the heart of the Serranía de Cuenca Nature Reserve, an area characterised by curious rocky

EXTREMADURA

This is a region of contrasts where you'll be able to visit exceptionally significant monumental sites, enjoy a whole host of natural landscapes, and sample one of Spain's most highly-prized cured hams.

The Roman legacy is what awaits you in **Mérida**, a city in the province of **Badajoz** where you can sit in the stands of its impressive Roman theatre, a real architectural gem. Nearby you'll find the amphitheatre, the site of fights between gladiators and wild beasts. Both venues spring to life every summer with the celebration of the Mérida Classical Theatre Festival, one of the most important festivals organised in Europe.



The journey continues in the province of **Cáceres**. Visit the historic old town, stroll through the cobbled streets and see incredible fortress houses and Renaissance palaces by day or in the late evening, when all the lights are turned on to highlight each little corner and monument. Travel on to **Guadalupe**, a charming village, and see the breathtaking Real Monasterio de Santa María de Guadalupe, declared a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO.

Springtime is ideal for visiting the picturesque villages in the **Jerte Valley** when it is covered in a blanket of white cherry blossom.



▲ CAMPILLO DE RANAS
GUADALAJARA

formations, sculpted over the centuries by ice, wind and water. The province of **Guadalajara** has a number of towns and villages renowned for their "black architecture" (the main building material used is slate). The city of Guadalajara preserves interesting examples of civil architecture, like the Infantado Palace, and religious architecture, like the Baroque Jesuit church of San Nicolás el Real.

This region is ideal for souvenirs since Castile-La Mancha is renowned for its craft work which includes decorative knives from Albacete and damascene work items from Toledo. And you really have to try typical traditional products like honey from the Alcarria (Guadalajara and Cuenca), marzipan from Toledo and local wines like Valdepeñas.

INLAND SPAIN



THE CRYSTAL PALACE
RETIRO PARK, MADRID

CORRAL DE LA MORERÍA
MADRID



MADRID

This is the region where you'll find Spain's capital city. A truly cosmopolitan city which will welcome you with open arms. Start the day with a stroll through the beautiful historical old town, surrounded by impressive and elegant buildings and palaces. Stop for a little refreshment in one of the lively cafeterias in the Puerta del Sol and spend the morning *shopping* along the Golden Mile, the most exclusive area for shopping in the city. If you're in Madrid on a Sunday, don't miss the Rastro flea market, with hundreds of stalls and little *vintage* shops or just relax on one of the terraces in La Latina, one of the most popular neighbourhoods. Here you'll find out that a "caña" is a small glass of artfully served draught beer.

Visit any of the national museums which include some of the best in the world, like the Prado and the Thyssen-Bornemisza, and relax in beautiful parks like the Retiro and the Casa de Campo, where you can hire a boat or play sport. When it comes to entertainment the choice is incredible, from a musical to a genuine Flamenco *tablaó* or you can just dance the night away.

Photo: Juan Bautista Cofreces/123rf.com



ROYAL PALACE IN ARANJUEZ



In the Madrid Region there are so many more extraordinary destinations. For example, the cities of **Aranjuez**, **Alcalá de Henares** and **San Lorenzo de El Escorial**, all of which have been declared World Heritage Sites. And unique little towns like **Chinchón** and the quaint villages up in the mountains.



ROYAL PALACE
OLITE, NAVARRE

NAVARRE

A region of many contrasts. In Navarre you have the first stages of the Way of Saint James, which crosses over from France in Roncesvalles and takes you to Romanesque gems in the towns of **Estella** and **Puente La Reina**.

Pamplona, the capital of the region, is a delightful city surrounded by an incredible medieval wall. If you come in the second week of July you can experience the amazing atmosphere during the internationally acclaimed Festival of San Fermín. A time not only for the renowned bull-running, but also the local clubs of runners, parading bands and cultural events programmed throughout the city.

Autumn is another ideal time to visit this region when delightful towns like **Olite** celebrate the Grape Harvest Festival, with activities involving wine, running young bulls, carriage parades and a lot of music.



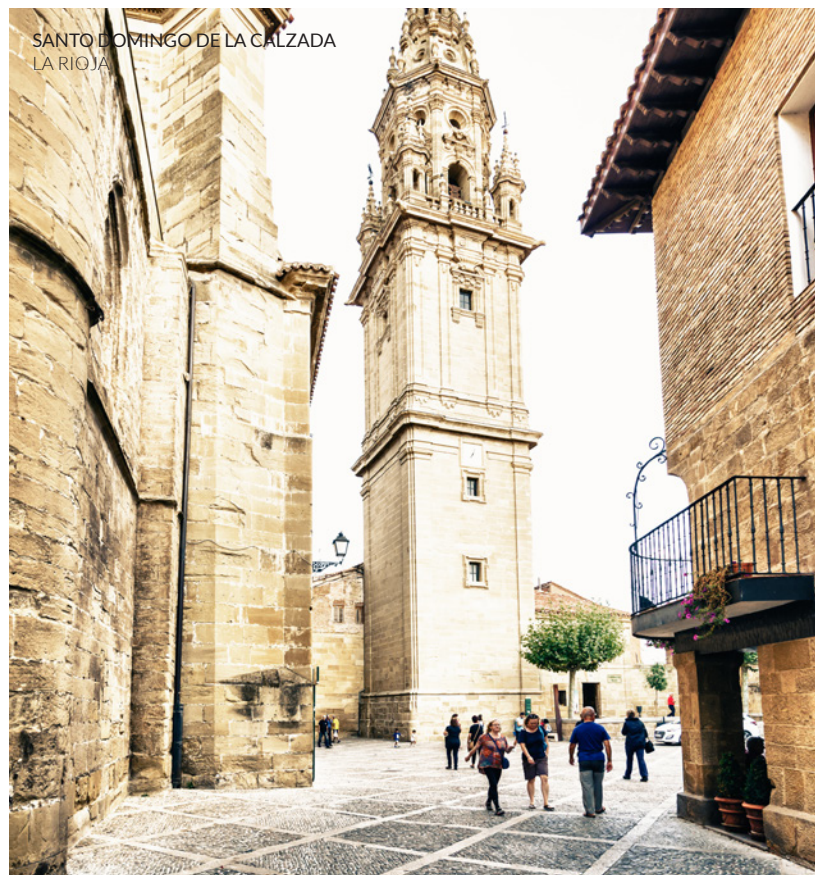
Do you have a special feel for nature? You can visit one of the largest, environmentally richest and best preserved forests of beech and fir trees in Europe: the Irati Forest. In the autumn, the reds and yellows of the vegetation conjure up a fairytale landscape. This is when you'll hear the "rutting", that incredible guttural sound made by deer during the mating season. In the green mountains of the north, near the border with France, you can explore the amazing, magical cave of Zugarramurdi, where legend has it that the local people used to get together to practise witchcraft. In the south you'll find an incredible semi-desert landscape with cliffs and hills with altitudes of up to 600 metres in the Bardenas Reales Nature Reserve, one of the locations for the *Game of Thrones* series.

Red, white and rosé wines and the renowned vegetables from the Navarre gardens, especially the white asparagus, are just some of the gastronomic delights awaiting you in this autonomous region.

LA RIOJA

La Rioja is famous throughout the world for its extraordinary wines. A place where you can enjoy unique experiences: visiting wine-cellars, taking part in wine-tastings and enjoying meals surrounded by barrels of wine.

In this region, you can visit the cradle of the Castilian language in the Yuso and Suso monasteries in **San Millán de la Cogolla**, UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Take a stroll around **Haro**, a noble town which exudes wine tradition from



every stone. And visit **Santo Domingo de la Calzada**, a city that grew as a result of the Way of Saint James, with a maze of medieval streets and a cathedral with extraordinary views of the surrounding area.

Logroño, the capital city of La Rioja, is rich in history and traditions which have been preserved since the Middle Ages with a special mention for the Cathedral of Santa María. You'll just love the atmosphere in the Calle Laurel, renowned for its *tapas*, where you'll find the best products and wines from the region.

Nature is another of the great attractions of La Rioja, with gems like the Sierra de Cebollera Nature Reserve which is home to one of the finest samples of glacier topography in mainland Spain.

EXPERIENCE NATURE

Gaze at the stars from magical locations, observe threatened species and pass through dizzying gorges. Inland Spain provides a privileged setting for anyone with a spirit of adventure.

BIRD-WATCHING IN THE CABAÑEROS NATIONAL PARK (CASTILE-LA MANCHA)

The sight of great Spanish imperial eagles flying over the forests of oak trees is truly amazing. They can be found in the heart of the **Montes de Toledo** (the mountains in the provinces of Toledo and Ciudad Real), a huge protected area renowned for the beauty of its landscapes and its incredible wildlife. Look up into the sky and you'll be able to see nearly two hundred species of birds, including the golden eagle and another threatened species, the black vulture.

This gem of nature, which is home to wild boars and deer, is where you'll find the best in European forests. You can either discover it hiking or by taking a guided tour in a 4x4.

Kayak down the **Bullaque** River or ride through the park on horseback, both different ways of discovering nature. There are numerous wine-cellars and cheese dairies where you'll be able to get your strength back.



TRAVEL ACROSS INLAND SPAIN BY BICYCLE

Get on your bike and explore beautiful landscapes, towns and villages. Here are a few suggestions:

Take the **Don Quixote Route** and discover the world of this universal classic. Discover the five provinces in the autonomous region of Castile-La Mancha by following the route of this Cervantes' character. It has 10 stages and can be completed as a circuit.

Follow in the footsteps of one of Spain's most famous Medieval knights, the Cid Campeador, on the **Way of El Cid**. You'll discover Medieval walls, fortresses, castles and churches in a number of inland regions like **Castile-León**, **Castile-La Mancha** and **Aragón**.

Travel along the route of the **Castilla Canal**, which served in the past to

transport cereals from inland Spain towards the ports in the north before the arrival of the railways. This route has stretches which are practically flat, making it the ideal choice for the whole family. It runs through beautiful towns in the provinces of Palencia, Burgos and Valladolid in Castile-León.

The **Rail Trails** are amazing routes which follow disused railway lines. There are several to choose from like the **Río Oja Rail Trail** in La Rioja, which runs through the famous Rioja vineyards, and the **Tajuña Rail Trail** which runs alongside the Tajuña River, in the Madrid Region.

In inland Spain you'll also find cities which are well-prepared for cyclists, like Zaragoza (Aragón) and Albacete (Castile-La Mancha).



STAR-GAZING IN EXTREMADURA

In the interior of Extremadura there are amazing places where you can enjoy incredible nights of astronomy. The night sky is nearly always cloudless and provides you with the best views of the celestial dome.

In the **Monfragüe National Park** (Cáceres) you'll find incredible locations for star-gazing. Climb up to the **El Castillo lookout point** and observe the Milky Way in all its splendour and learn some of the secrets of the night sky

at the **Torrejón el Rubio astronomical observatory** or the **Portilla del Tiétar** lookout point.

In Badajoz there's another place where you can enjoy the sounds and colours of the night in a unique way, in the **Cornalvo Nature Reserve**. At the heart of this natural area there is an ancient Roman dam and the surrounding area is inhabited by the largest flocks of storks in Spain.

▼ MONFRAGÜE NATIONAL PARK
CÁCERES





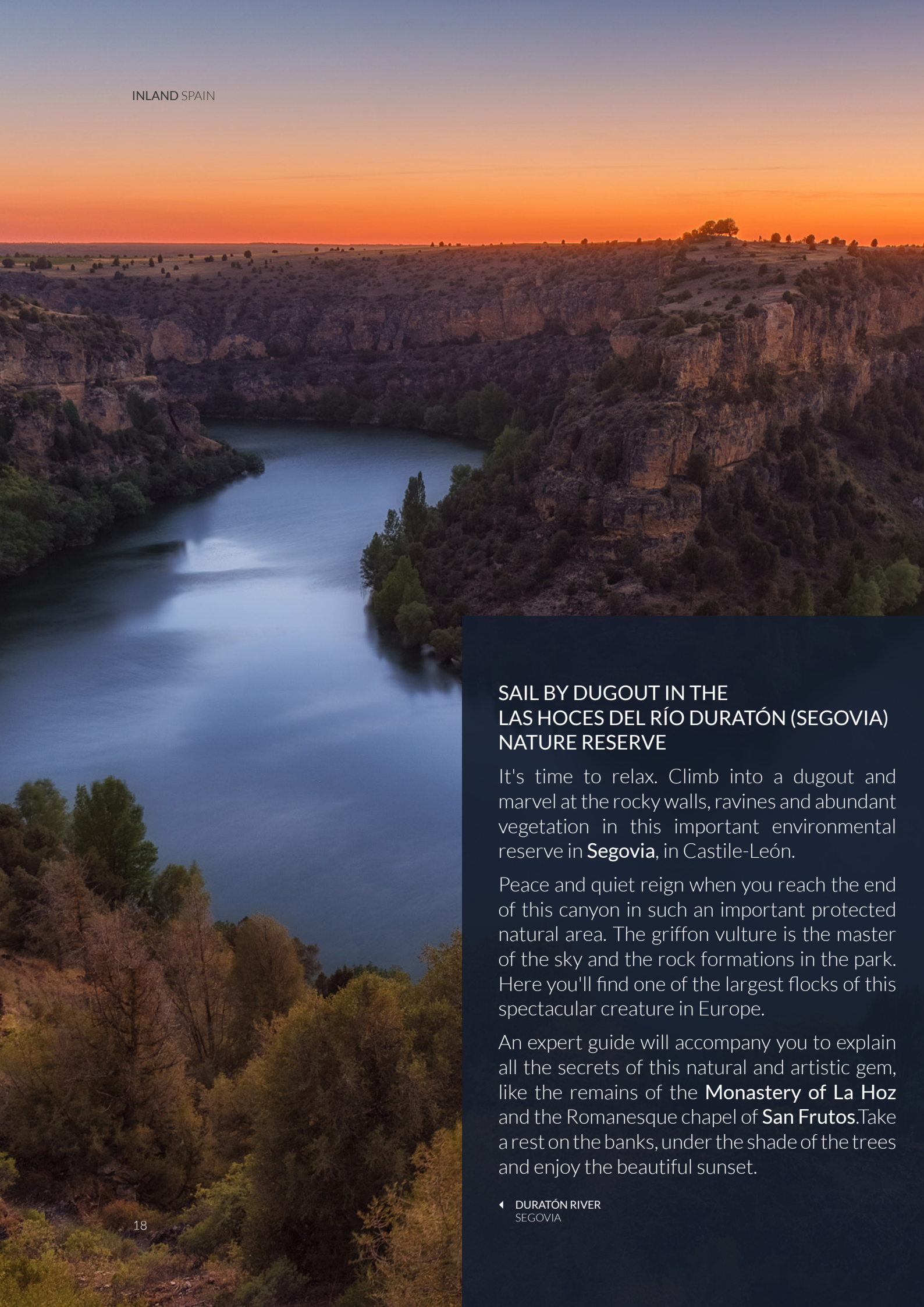
▲ EL ESCORIAL

HIKING IN EL ESCORIAL (MADRID)

How about hiking through the woods where in olden times Spanish kings used to go hunting with their knights and noblemen? You can do this in **San Lorenzo de El Escorial**. Take a walk through a unique natural, historical and artistic environment.

You can start by visiting one of the most important monumental sites in Spain, the **Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This great monument is unique because it is a combination of a church, a Bourbon palace, a monastery and a royal mausoleum all in a single enclosure.

Then you can enjoy the incredible natural surroundings of the **Sierra de Guadarrama** mountains and the **Mount Abantos** pine forests. The ecological trails through the **La Herrería forest** are a paradise for the whole family. You'll be surrounded by lime trees, chestnut and cherry trees as far as the ancient Roman road which will take you to the **Silla de Felipe lookout point**. The views from this ancient Celtic sanctuary are spectacular and make a perfect end to a day of hiking and culture.



SAIL BY DUGOUT IN THE LAS HOCES DEL RÍO DURATÓN (SEGOVIA) NATURE RESERVE

It's time to relax. Climb into a dugout and marvel at the rocky walls, ravines and abundant vegetation in this important environmental reserve in **Segovia**, in Castile-León.

Peace and quiet reign when you reach the end of this canyon in such an important protected natural area. The griffon vulture is the master of the sky and the rock formations in the park. Here you'll find one of the largest flocks of this spectacular creature in Europe.

An expert guide will accompany you to explain all the secrets of this natural and artistic gem, like the remains of the **Monastery of La Hoz** and the Romanesque chapel of **San Frutos**. Take a rest on the banks, under the shade of the trees and enjoy the beautiful sunset.

ENJOY AN EXCURSION IN A 4X4 IN THE TABLAS DE DAIMIEL NATIONAL PARK (CIUDAD REAL)

With the bursting of their banks as they passed through **Daimiel**, the Cigüela and Guadiana Rivers created a wetland which is unique in Europe. This privileged ecosystem is on the yearly migratory route of an endless number of water birds.

A 4x4 is the easiest and most comfortable way of reaching the most protected areas. A guided tour will take you to very special places which are relatively unknown, like the **Zacatena pastures**, a beautiful setting where animals graze, and the **Calatrava La Vieja castle**, with its many legends. The sound of the water in the streams is enchanting and the guides will teach you how to recognise the birds and their songs.

There are other routes which are ideal to take on foot. Along the **Isla del Pan pathway** you get incredible sightings of birds. You can also hike through the forest of the **Sendero de la Laguna Permanente**. In winter, there is a telescope along the **Torre de Prado Ancho pathway** which will give you amazing views of the geese as they fly southwards.

ON HORSEBACK IN CASTILE-LEÓN

Climb onto a horse and ride through the Castilian countryside and allow your senses to absorb the experience at your own pace.

On the **route through La Moraña** (Ávila) you'll ride through fields of wheat and sunflowers and rest in delightful villages renowned for their Mudéjar

art. You can set off from the wetlands of the **Laguna del Oso**, a perfect place for bird-watching, and then be surrounded by pinewoods and fields of cereals before crossing over the **Adaja River**. The Moorish influence is very clear in this area and can be seen in the churches, castles and historical buildings in the towns of **Arévalo** and **Madrigal de las Altas Torres**.

In León you can take a horse and ride through the **Valley of Mampodre** or **Del Silencio**, two of the most beautiful natural areas in the province. For these two rides you will not need to have any previous experience, you just have to follow the guide's instructions.

SNOW SPORTS IN THE ARAGÓN PYRENEES

The **Aragón Pyrenees** is where you can enjoy skiing and other winter sports.

Candanchú, the oldest resort, is ideal for the whole family. It is very near to **Jaca**, so after a day in the snow you can enjoy a lively atmosphere in town, right through the season. *Après-ski* is also one of the great attractions at the Cerler Resort in Benasque, a charming little town full of restaurants and cafés. **Astún**, **Formigal** and **Panticosa** are three more well-known resorts, with all kinds of sports facilities.

If you like mountain skiing and pure, unspoiled snow, then you really ought to try the **Posets-Maladeta massif** Nature Reserve. There you can try something a bit different, Telemark Skiing, a technique for skiing in the mountains. Use snow shoes or take a ride on a

sled pulled by dogs on one of the **Nordic Trails** in Aragón which run for over 150 kilometres through valleys and woods in protected areas.

ENJOY THE SUNRISE OVER THE VINEYARDS IN LA RIOJA

Get a different view of the world of wine. Enjoy the sunrise from a hot-air balloon as you pass over the vineyards of La Rioja. One of the best times for this is in the autumn, when the vineyards turn ochre, red and orange.

It will be an unforgettable experience from when the balloon starts to be inflated at dawn to when you land gently back onto the ground. At the end you will be rewarded with a personalised diploma. Many trips include a typical lunch in a wine-cellar with cold meat, eggs and seasonal products, accompanied of course, by local wine.





CAVING IN NAVARRE

In Navarre a magical world of caves and grottoes awaits you underground. They are to be found in unique surroundings which are ideal for all kinds of active tourism.

Two incredible places for practising speleology are the caves of Los Cristinos, in the **Urbasa y Andía Nature Reserve**, and the Ormazarreta pothole, in the **Aralar Nature Reserve** (located

between Navarre and Guipúzcoa). In the **Larra Nature Reserve** you'll find the **San Martín pothole**, one of the deepest in Europe.

You'll need some experience before you enter these caves as they are difficult to access, but it'll be worthwhile when you contemplate the beauty of the underground lakes, galleries and rock formations.

FLY OVER THE SIERRA DE GREDOS MOUNTAINS IN A BALLOON

You'll feel just like a bird as you glide through the skies with the **Sierra de Gredos** at your feet. Let the wind be your guide and enjoy spectacular views of this mountain range which extends over parts of **Castile-León, Extremadura, Castile-La Mancha** and **Madrid**.

Enjoy the sunrise over lakes, gorges and mountains and leave all your worries behind you. The balloon glides gently over a spectacular and unforgettable landscape, the **Great Circo and Lagoon of Gredos** (Castile-León). From the air you can trace the route of the Roman road from the **Puerto de Pico** mountain pass and spot all kinds of animals and vegetation. At your feet you'll find a paradise for flora and fauna which has been acknowledged in the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.

SAIL THROUGH THE TAJO INTERNATIONAL NATURE RESERVE ON A BOAT (CÁCERES, EXTREMADURA)

Did you know that the Tagus is the longest river in the whole of the Iberian Peninsula? You can navigate its waters on board a boat which cruises right through the Tajo International Nature Reserve. This is an ideal option for families.

There are different routes taking you to the most protected areas in this park which covers thousands of kilometres of wild countryside. From the deck you'll get spectacular views and see the animals for which this area is famous,

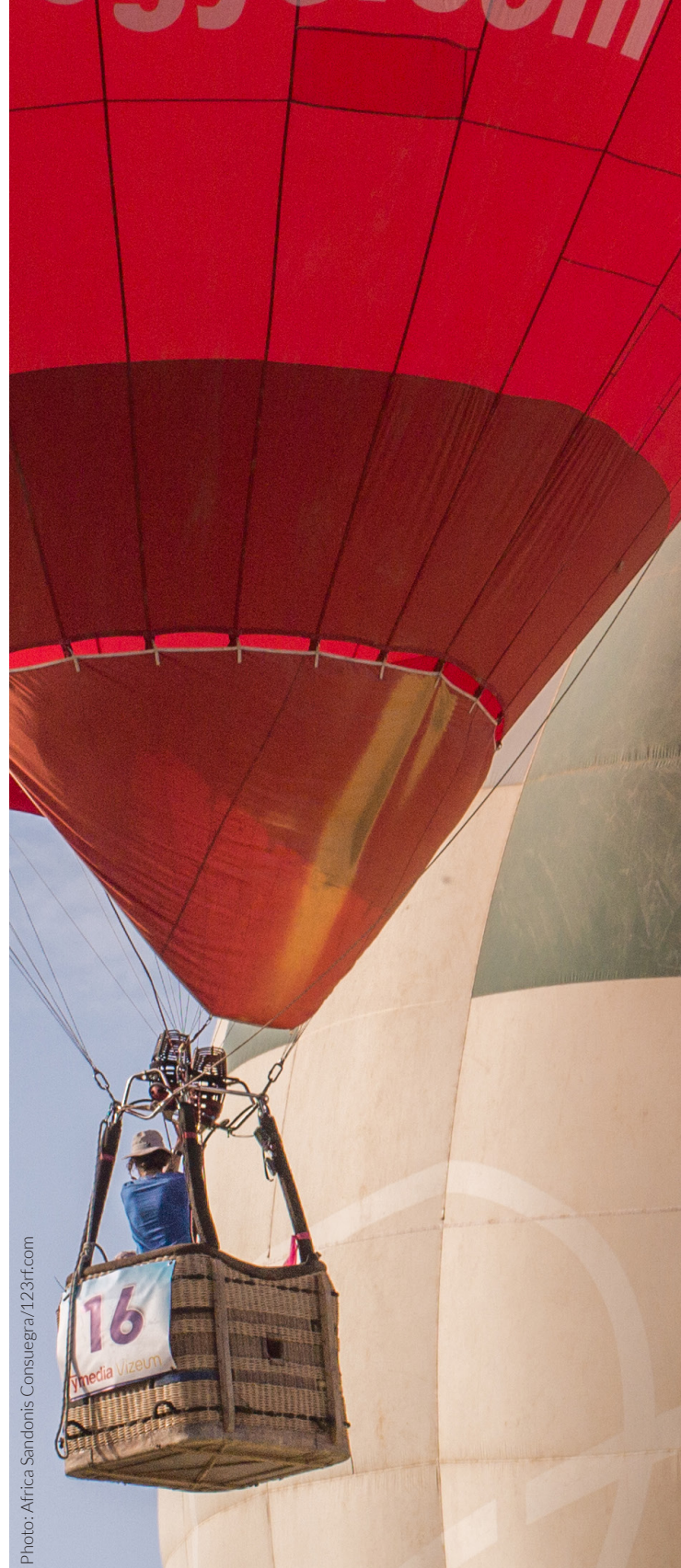


Photo: Africa Sandomis Consuegra/123rf.com

like the black stork, griffon vulture and Spanish imperial eagle. The boat has a guide who will explain all the secrets regarding the flora and fauna of this natural paradise.

GASTRONOMY

Prepare yourself for the excellent vegetables in Navarre, exquisite cured ham in Extremadura and delicious cheeses in Castile-La Mancha. Try traditional dishes like "cocido madrileño", a delicious stew with meat and vegetables, and roast lamb in Castile-León. Discover the amazing new Spanish cuisine with exquisite suggestions by chefs who have made cooking into an art form. Inspired by traditional recipes and with the help of innovative techniques they have created unique dishes that will captivate your senses.



SPANISH OMELETTE



COCIDO MADRILEÑO



IBERIAN CURED HAM



FEEL THEIR PASSION FOR WINE

La Rioja is synonymous with wine. This region produces some of our most internationally renowned wines. Many wine-cellars open their doors to visitors, where you can take part in wine-tasting and try traditional dishes in their incredible restaurants. And if you dare, take part in the Claret Battle in San Asensio during the last weekend in July. A raucous festival where everyone ends up drenched in wine, and then continue sampling tapas in the local bars.

In **Aragón** you can take the **Somontano Wine Route** (Huesca). You'll love the fruity wines and the unique environment where they're produced in the Sierra y Cañones de Guara Nature Reserve.

The **Ribera de Duero Wine Route** (Burgos, Segovia, Soria and Valladolid) in Castile-León is captivating. This region has everything to guarantee an all-round wine-based experience. Try a tasting workshop in a 13th century underground wine-cellar. Try out the local varieties in a wine and cheese pairing or ride through the vineyards on horseback.

In Extremadura you can take the **Ribera del Guadiana Wine Route** (Badajoz). Pair the wines made from Tempranillo grapes with delicious traditional dishes like "migas extremeñas" made from bread, bacon and peppers.

VISIT THE GASTRONOMIC MARKETS

Try an original way of sampling top-quality Spanish cuisine and make your way to an urban market. These markets have reinvented themselves to provide unique gastronomic experiences.

Visit the **San Miguel Market** in Madrid which still preserves its beautiful original facade. A stop-off here is a must for tasting exquisite *gourmet* Spanish and international products. In Spain's capital city you'll also find

the **San Antón Market**, in the Chueca neighbourhood, with three different ambiances all full of flavour.

The **San Agustín Market** (Toledo) is a real surprise. In this modern facility you can learn how to cook, eat in fusion-cuisine restaurants and enjoy the views from the glass-covered terrace while having a cocktail.

▼ SAN ANTÓN MARKET
MADRID



The **Estación Gourmet** in Valladolid is an original place to enjoy tapas. It is right next to the high-speed railway station and near the Plaza España. We can recommend the Iberian ham croquettes, they're irresistible...

The last stop on the gastronomic market route is **Puerta Cinegia** (Zaragoza), a gastronomic leisure centre where they'll cook the ingredients you've just bought in the market.

EXPERIENCE THE BEST GASTRONOMIC FESTIVALS

Celebrate life by joining in festivals where gastronomy becomes an excuse for enjoying traditions, sampling the finest products from the region and sharing an unforgettable experience. Here are just a few of the options.

The **Jornadas de Exaltación y Fiestas de la Verdura** in Tudela take place at

the end of April and beginning of May, and this is where you can discover the treasures from Navarre's vegetable gardens.

In Extremadura there are two essential events. You'll find around 300 types of local, Spanish and international cheeses during the first week of May at the **Trujillo National Cheese Fair** (Cáceres). In September you can try the best Iberian pork products at the **Día del Jamón** fair in Monesterio (Badajoz).

In La Rioja you shouldn't miss the **Grape Harvest Festival** in Logroño, in mid-September.

If you're visiting Huesca (Aragón) in the summer there are two gastronomic events: the **Día de la Longaniza de Graus** (traditional local sausage) in July and the **Fiesta del Cordero de Cerler** (lamb festival) in August.

▼ PLAZA MAYOR IN TRUJILLO
CÁCERES



YOU'LL FIND THE BEST CUISINE IN THE GASTRO HOTELS

Do you like to combine accommodation with fine dining? Then try the **Gastro Hotels** of La Rioja because they offer the possibility of a gastronomic experience as one of their most important features.

There are many to choose from. Sleep surrounded by vineyards and olive trees in a hotel-cum-wine-cellar and treat yourself in a vinotherapy spa or travel back in time in an ancient convent. All these establishments feature excellent seasonal products while many specialise in local cuisine and grow their own vegetables.

VISIT A GASTRONOMIC WORKSHOP

Learn all the secrets of Spanish cuisine from some of the most famous *chefs* at the **Madrid Gastrofestival**, a truly pleasurable experience which takes place at the end of January and beginning of February in markets, restaurants and cultural centres.

Wine-cellars in La Rioja organise numerous **courses and workshops for the study of wine** where you'll learn about tasting, serving and pairing wine from the experts.

On the **Iberian cured ham routes in Extremadura** you'll not only get to taste this incredible delicacy, you can also take part in culinary and ham-carving workshops.

The best place to enjoy typical Aragón cuisine is in Zaragoza, where you can take part in the **Saborea Zaragoza** tastings and workshops which are held throughout the year, except in July and August.



CULTURE

Inland Spain features an extraordinary selection of cultural attractions. There are spectacular monuments, museums and festivals which reflect the legacy left by all the cultures which have passed through this country.

SOME OF THE GREATEST MUSEUMS

Along the **Paseo del Arte** in Madrid three of the most important museums in Europe are only metres apart. The **Prado National Museum** is one of the world's finest galleries. Inside you'll find treasures by masters like Velázquez, Rembrandt and Goya. The **Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum** is very near to El Prado. It houses works from some of the most important painting schools in Western art. The collec-

tions include masterpieces by Dürer, Renoir and Kandinsky. The last stop on this incredible journey is at the **Reina Sofía National Art Museum**, one of the greatest museums in Europe with an incredible collection of contemporary art. This is where you can see Picasso's historic painting *Guernica*.

In the area of **Castile-León**, The **MUSAC** (contemporary art museum), in the town of León, provides a rather distinctive

▼ THYSSEN-BORNEMISZA MUSEUM
MADRID

COLECCIÓN CARMEN THYSSEN- BORNEMISZA

SALAS ROOMS A — H

Desde que comenzó a adquirir obras de arte a mediados de la década de 1980, con una pasión que debió a su marido, el barón Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza, ha admirado la asombrosa capacidad que tienen las obras de arte para emocionar y unir a los seres humanos. Siempre ha sentido que el arte no es para uno solo y que debe ser compartido.

From the time when began to acquire works of art in the 1980s with a passion that I owe to my husband, Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza, I have been profoundly impressed by the remarkable capacity that works of art have to move and unite human beings. I have always felt that art is not for one person alone and should be shared.

CARMEN THYSSEN-BORNEMISZA

COLECCIÓN CARMEN THYSSEN- BORNEMISZA





▲ NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ROMAN ART
MÉRIDA

cultural experience and is one of the most lively and fresh cultural centres in Spain. You can also learn about our origins in the **Museum of Human Evolution**, in the city of Burgos. This spectacular, modern educational centre displays the discoveries from the renowned archaeological site of **Atapuerca**.

During the Roman Empire, the city of Mérida in Extremadura became a living work of art. You can see the remains of this splendour in the **National Museum of Roman Art**.

If you're in La Rioja then the **Würth Museum** in Logroño, with an important collection of avant-garde works of art, is well worth a visit. The **Museum of the University of Navarre** (Pamplona) is home to the legacy of José Ortiz Echagüe, one of Spain's most important 20th century photographers, as well as

a number of works by Picasso, Tapiès and Chillida.

In Aragón you can visit the **Ibercaja Goya Collection Museum**, in the town of Zaragoza, which has one of the most comprehensive collections of engravings by the grand master Goya.

IMPRESSIVE MONUMENTS FOR YOU TO DISCOVER

The wealth of monuments in inland Spain is endless. In Madrid there's the fascinating **Royal Palace**, the residence of Spanish monarchs throughout history. A morning visit will give you the chance to see the changing of the guard and the spectacular uniforms. The views from the dome of the **Almudena Cathedral** are incredible and the **Puerta de Alcalá** gateway and the **Plaza de Cibeles** are well worth a visit.



In Castile-León there is an extraordinary legacy. This is where you'll find gems like **Burgos Cathedral**, a must for lovers of Gothic art, and also home to the mortal remains of El Cid, the hero of the Reconquest in the 11th century. One of the most outstanding engineering works of the Roman Empire is the **Segovia Aqueduct**. Then there are the marvellous **city walls in Ávila**, the beautiful Baroque-style **Plaza Mayor in Salamanca** and the towers of **Peñafiel castle** in Valladolid. Another essential for lovers of history is the **archaeological site of Numancia** in Soria.

Travel back in time and take a seat at the **Roman theatre in Mérida**, one of the most important monuments in Extremadura. You'll love the Gothic-Mudéjar **Royal Monastery of Santa María de Guadalupe** (Cáceres), and a stroll through the **Plaza Mayor** in the city of Cáceres is a real pleasure. You will feel like you are a part of history.

In Castile-La Mancha you'll find one of Spain's Gothic gems, **Toledo Cathedral** with its majestic architecture and incredible works of art. In the same city there's the wonderful **Alcázar**, or fortress, which is now the Military Archive.

Having always been a frontier region, Navarre is a land of castles and fabulous defensive constructions. There are wonderful views of Pamplona from the city walls and you can take a walk through the park inside the military citadel. The beautiful **Olite castle** is like a fairy tale, and there are incredible landscapes around **Javier Castle**, a classic in the list of Spain's prettiest castles.



Your last stop on the route visiting inland Spain's most spectacular monuments could well be in **Zaragoza** (Aragón). There stands the **Basilica of Nuestra Señora del Pilar**. There are some veritable treasures in the interior of this Baroque temple, including two frescoes by the artist Francisco de Goya and the Santa Capilla which houses the image of the Virgin del Pilar.

DISCOVER SPAIN'S WORLD HERITAGE CITIES

Visit the beautiful Spanish cities which have been declared UNESCO World sites, because of their extraordinary cultural and artistic legacy.

In **Alcalá de Henares** (Madrid) you can discover all the secrets of the birthplace

of the renowned writer Miguel de Cervantes, author of one of the crowning works of world literature, *Don Quixote de la Mancha*. The convents, churches and universities will take you back in time to Spain's Golden Age.

Discover why Castile-León is the region with the most World Heritage cities. **Ávila** is famous for its incredible city walls, Renaissance palaces and for the imprint left by Santa Teresa de Jesús on numerous religious buildings. In **Segovia**, there's its magnificent aqueduct, the cathedral and the old historic quarter. **Salamanca** is an open, lively city. Life revolves around the University, one of the oldest in Europe.

▼ ALCALÁ DE HENARES





INLAND SPAIN

ROMAN BRIDGE OVER THE GUADIANA RIVER
MÉRIDA

In Extremadura you should visit the old town centre in **Cáceres**, with Medieval fortress houses and **Mérida** (Badajoz) with an amazing legacy from Roman times.

Castile-La Mancha has surprises like the Hanging Houses in **Cuenca**, 15th century constructions with wooden

balconies hanging out over the cliffs dropping down to the Huécar River. And then there's an unforgettable experience waiting for you in **Toledo**, the "city of the three cultures" where Christians, Moors and Jews coexisted and left a unique monumental heritage.



HANGING HOUSES
CUENCA

ENJOY A WORLD OF FESTIVALS AND TRADITIONS

Inland Spain's calendar is full of popular festivals which fill the streets with joyful, traditional celebrations. Here is a month-by-month breakdown.

On the first of January in Palencia (Castile-León) there is the catholic festival of the **Baptism of the Child Jesus**, with carol singing and an offering of flowers.

Challenge the February cold and enjoy the traditional **rural carnival** celebrations in a number of towns in Navarre, like Lantz and Alsasua. Thousands of people take part in a magic spectacle of fire, mythological characters and legends.

In March you can enjoy the incredible experience of 25,000 people playing the drums together at the **Drum Festival of Hellín** (Albacete, Castile-La Mancha). But in April it is silence and solemnity which prevails in the impressive **Easter** processions, like those in Zamora (Castile-León).

Dress up in a traditional "chulapo" suit and join in the **San Isidro Festivities** which are really popular in Madrid, with a renowned bull-fighting fair, concerts and shows. In June you can enjoy some of Spain's most entertaining festivals, like the **Wine Battle in Haro**, in La Rioja, and the **Gay Pride Festival** which fills Madrid with colour, music and protest.

▼ FESTIVAL OF SAN ISIDRO
MADRID





BURGOS

Are you ready for one of the most famous festivals in the world? July is the time for the renowned **San Fermín** festivities in Pamplona (Navarre). Thousands of people take part in the famous "bull-running" activities. There is so much to enjoy, popular street food, music everywhere you look and an amazing atmosphere by day and by night.

After the traditional **Fair of the Virgin of La Paloma** which takes place in Madrid in August, you have the **Rioja Grape Harvest Festival** in Logroño, an extraordinary celebration which falls in September.

In October you can revel in the **Festival of El Pilar** in Zaragoza (Aragón). The city organises an enormous celebration which includes solemn religious ceremonies, like the spectacular flower offering to the Virgin of El Pilar, firework displays and a host of events.

You can finish the year enjoying the Christmas spirit found in every town and city. In Madrid, thousands of people converge on the Puerta del Sol to hear the clock chime at midnight and see in the New Year.

GREAT CULTURAL ROUTES

Take an unforgettable journey celebrating nature, art and culture on one of the routes criss-crossing inland Spain. The **Route of the Spanish Language** is one of the most beautiful. It covers everything about the origins of the Spanish language from the first writings in San Millán de la Cogolla (La Rioja) to the birth of our most famous author, Cervantes, in Alcalá de Henares (Madrid Region). This route includes a unique experience: the Gregorian chant by the monks in the Santo Domingo de Silos Monastery (Burgos) in Castile-León.

Another famous route is the **Way of Saint James** which, before reaching Santiago de Compostela (Galicia), takes you through parts of Aragón, Navarre, La Rioja and Castile-León. An unforgettable spiritual experience and a pilgrimage showing you incredible cultural and artistic gems along the way.

The routes through the **prettiest towns in Spain** take you to delightful places like the Medieval town square in Chinchón, in Madrid, and incredible castles, city walls and churches in towns of Castile-León, such as Astorga (León), Ciudad Rodrigo (Salamanca) and Medinaceli (Soria).

The **Hemingway Route** will take you to Pamplona (Navarre) where you can discover the places which the Nobel prize-winner fell in love with and where he returned a total of nine times.

Another fascinating possibility is the **Sepharad Route**, an invitation to explore Jewish Spain and its most important monuments. There are over 20 places

of interest along this route. Special mention should go to Toledo, the city which was the spiritual and administrative centre of western Jewish culture for centuries. In Cáceres and Segovia you can also take a stroll through the delightfully restored Jewish quarters.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMING ARTS

Inland Spain offers an amazing selection of cultural activities related to music, theatre, film and more. Here are a few suggestions. The first major festival of the year on Spain's cultural calendar takes place in Logroño (La Rioja). This is the **Actual Escenario de Culturas Contemporáneas**, a contemporary performing arts festival including concerts, theatre performances, film premieres and exhibitions. In March, Pamplona (Navarre) becomes a world centre for documentary films with the **Punto de Vista International Documentary Film Festival**, with activities in different parts of the city for all kinds of audiences.





INLAND SPAIN

ROMAN THEATRE IN MÉRIDA
BADAJOZ

Fans of *indie* music should book their tickets for **Festimad**, Madrid's Indie Festival, which is held in April. Every year they get the most important groups on the current scene, as well as being a platform for up-and-coming groups. Madrid has an incredible cultural calendar no matter what time of year you come. There is such a broad selection, from great theatres showing famous musicals to avant-guard cultural centres like the **Matadero**.

In May you can experience the restless spirit and multicultural atmosphere of **Womad Cáceres** (Extremadura), a world music, arts and dance festival. In this same month of May, in Segovia (Castile-León), you can return to your childhood at **Titirimundi**, the famous international puppet festival.

If you're visiting in summer there are so many open-air events for you to enjoy. In July and August you have the **Mérida International Classical Theatre Festival** (Extremadura) where you'll have the chance to see performances

at the city's incomparable Roman Theatre. In July you have another classic event, the **Almagro International Classical Theatre Festival** (Ciudad Real, Castile-La Mancha). During this month there is also one of the most special musical events, **Pirineos Sur – International Culture Festival**. You can enjoy two weeks of concerts, exhibitions, workshops, markets and parades in the town of Lanuza (Huesca, Aragón) surrounded by the unique natural environment of the Pyrenees.

A good reason for visiting Valladolid (Castile-León) in October is "Seminci", **Valladolid's International Film Week**. You'll see the great film stars parading on the red carpet, and if you book soon enough you'll be able to attend galas and film screenings.

These are just some of the activities. In addition, there are many more concerts, exhibitions and conferences for you to enjoy throughout the year. Check out the cultural calendar for each province.

SLEEP

LIKE A KING

Spend a night in a castle or another kind of significant historic building that has been converted into a hotel, with all the latest commodities. And why not relax and immerse yourself in the thermal waters of contemporary spas and enjoy the gastronomic offer of the wine-themed hotels.

The **Parador Hotels** can be in surprisingly spectacular natural locations or in buildings of great monumental and cultural value. Take a walk in the beautiful gardens of the **Chinchón Parador Hotel** in Madrid, a former convent. In Castile-León, enjoy amazing views of the city from the **Segovia Parador Hotel** or stay at the **Cervera de Pisuerga Parador Hotel** (Palencia), located in the beautiful Fuentes Carrionas Nature Reserve. Spend the night in a Renaissance palace at the **Zafra Parador Hotel** (Badajoz) in Extremadura, and enjoy the Medieval atmosphere surrounding the **Alarcón Parador Hotel** (Cuenca) in Castile-La Mancha. Rest just like a pilgrim in ancient times at the **Santo Domingo de la Calzada Parador Hotel** in La Rioja, or like a knight of the realm in his castle at the **Olite Parador Hotel** in Navarre, or the **Sos del Rey Católico** (Zaragoza) in Aragón.

① *You'll find them all on www.parador.es*

Enjoy a different experience in **wine-themed accommodation** in La Rioja. Stay in fabulous hotels, take part in wine-tasting and undergo exclusive vi-

notherapy treatments. In Castile-León there is all kinds of extraordinary accommodation, **royal inns**, ancient mills, palaces and farm houses which have been converted into really charming hotels. Enjoy the unspoiled nature in a fortress like the **Buen Amor Castle** in Salamanca, or a typical Mudéjar construction like the **Casa de las Manuelas** in Ávila.

In Aragón, Extremadura and Castile-La Mancha there are numerous buildings with centuries of history that are these days home to quiet and peaceful hostels. Enjoy your breakfast surrounded by history in the delightful **Rueda Monastery** in Zaragoza, or even in a sanctuary like **Nuestra Señora de Tejada** in Cuenca.

Treat yourself in one of Aragón's spas like **Sicilia** or **Serón** in Jaraba. After relaxing in the thermal gardens and Japanese baths, you can take a stroll in a unique environment, the Gallocanta lagoon. The **Panticosa Spa**, very near the Panticosa Los Lagos and Formigal ski resorts, is ideal for relaxation after a day enjoying the snow.

THE BEST SUGGESTIONS FOR FAMILIES

In inland Spain we have numerous suggestions for families with children to have fun. Below are just a few of them.

MUSEUMS FOR EVERYONE

Venture into a mine at the **Escucha Mining Museum** in Teruel (Aragón). Or travel into space at the **Castile-La Mancha Museum of Sciences** in Cuenca. The children will just love the planetarium: an enormous, 100-metre diameter dome onto which 6,000 stars, celestial bodies and planets are projected.

Children's traditions are the theme at the **Museum of "Giants and Big-Heads"** in Puebla de Sanabria, in Zamora (Castile-León) and the **Traditional Games Museum** in Serrada de la Fuente (Madrid). In Madrid you can also visit the **Ratoncito Pérez House-Museum** (the home of the tooth fairy) or take part in the educational activities organised by the **Caixa Forum Museum**.

YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGISTS

Do you like Dinosaurs? **Teruel (Aragón)** is home to **Dinópolis**, a theme park where you'll see a frightening T-rex in full swing and one of the best collections of dinosaurs in the world.

Another exciting suggestion is the **Route of the Ichnites** in **Soria** (Castile-León). There you can explore sites containing footprints of these giants, and visit museums, palaeontological centres and classrooms. Are you ready to become



FAUNIA
MADRID

the explorer you always wanted to be? In **El Barranco Perdido**, La Rioja's paleo adventure park, you'll get the chance to use ropes; climb ladders, fly down zip-lines, escape from starving dinosaurs and dig up fossils.

WILD NATURE

In inland Spain you can walk alongside deer and European bison in bioparks like **Lacuniacha** in Piedrafita de Jaca (Huesca), or explore caves and waterfalls in the spectacular **Monasterio de Piedra Nature Reserve** (Zaragoza), both in Aragón.

Adventure is what awaits you in **Sendaviva** (Arguedas, Navarra) when you can fly down a zip-line and take part in a water battle. Another incredible ecological reserve for all the family is

the **El Hosquillo** Nature Reserve (Cuenca, Castile-La Mancha) where you get to see wolves and deer. In Madrid there are several places where you get to observe animals in their different habitats like **Faunia** and the **Zoo Aquarium**.

AMUSEMENT PARKS

Donald Duck and company will be by your side in the **Parque Warner Madrid**, a huge leisure centre divided into themed areas inspired by famous cartoon creatures. The bravest of you can

try one of the highest Giant Drops in the world, as well as other spectacular attractions. Still in Madrid, you can visit the traditional **Funfair**, with incredible roller coasters and rides for the smaller children.

If you're visiting Zaragoza you can visit the funfair there, it's very near the city centre and has a swimming pool and theme areas which will take you to Ancient Egypt, the Wild West and the magic Maya culture.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Our broad network of infrastructures for air and overland travel will give you fast and comfortable access to the main cities in inland Spain.

AIRPORTS

The Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport (Madrid) is the most important. There are a great number of international connections and it is the central hub for air transport to the rest of the country.

From Madrid you can fly to airports like Zaragoza (Aragón), León and Valladolid (Castile-León), Albacete and Ciudad Real (Castile-La Mancha), Badajoz (Extremadura), Pamplona (Navarra) and Logroño (La Rioja).

TRAIN

The Spanish National Railway Network (RENFE) links all the country's main cities and regions. The unquestionable stars of the system are the AVE high-speed trains which serve 25 tourist destinations where you will arrive in 1 or 2 hours. High-speed trains link Madrid with the six capital cities of Castile-León while Castile-La Mancha has a high-speed railway station in each of its provincial capitals. In Aragón, the high-speed line passes through the provinces of Huesca and Zaragoza.

The main cities and towns in inland Spain are also connected by long-distance, middle-distance and suburban trains. A Renfe Spain Pass will enable you to make up to 10 comfortable journeys.

More information: www.renfe.com

There is a network of city buses which will enable you to get around Spain's inland cities and the surrounding area. Taxis are another option, offering local, provincial and inter-provincial services. The main tourist destinations also have bus stations providing connections with the airports. To get around Madrid we recommend the Metro, an extensive, modern underground network comprising 12 lines that covers most of the city as well as some of the nearby towns.

VEHICLE HIRE

Travelling through inland Spain by car will make it easy for you to visit small towns and enjoy spectacular landscapes. There are a large number of car-hire firms where you can book online.



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