

Spain

A CULTURAL CROSSROADS



www.spain.info



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Front Page: Great Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba
 Photo: Botond Horváth/123rf.com
 Back: Carmona, Seville

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INTRODUCTION

▲ THE ALHAMBRA
GRANADA

Spain is a **country full of history** shared by a **multitude of peoples, cultures and religions**. Take a journey back in time and delve into the roots of our multi-cultural past.

Discover **vestiges of prehistory** in places that are key to understanding human evolution, such as the **Atapuerca site**, **Altamira Cave** and the **National Archaeology Museum**.

Different ancient civilisations have left a deep impression on our culture, something you feel in such emblematic places as the **Segovia Aqueduct** or the **Alhambra in Granada**.

Visit our cities to discover our **Roman, Visigothic, Mozarabic, Muslim and Jewish heritage**.

Thanks to the efforts made to **preserve this heritage**, you can enjoy it in all its richness in our country. Visit impressive sites, hundreds of specialised spaces and museums and the 15 cities declared UNESCO World Heritage sites. Learning about the past is also a way of preserving it.

Enjoy our spectacular historical and artistic heritage first hand with **experiences full of contrast, culture and flavours**.

A JOURNEY BACK IN TIME

Climb into our time machine and explore the cultural heritage of Spain through the different civilisations that settled in it. You will discover prehistoric settlements, Phoenician ships, Roman walls and the legacy of many other cultures.



PREHISTORY, BE ENRAPPED BY SPAIN'S ROOTS

Immerse yourself in the remote past and discover the fascinating history of our ancestors in some of the most important archaeological sites in the world.

ATAPUERCA

Feel like an archaeologist for a day at the **Sierra de Atapuerca mountains** (Burgos province): an exciting journey to excavations where human fossils from approximately one million years ago have been discovered.

To visit the area, go to the Sites Access Centre (CAYAC), a meeting point for

visitors from where coaches depart to take visitors to this essential discovery, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Sites Access Centre also has a permanent exhibition on 'The Atapuerca Mountain Range's Natural and Cultural Heritage', as well as temporary exhibitions.

In the company of an expert guide, you can visit three of the most important sites: the Sima del Elefante pit, the Gallery and the Great Sinkhole. These sites are of great importance, where numerous remains of elephants and cave bears have been found, in addition to the human fossil remains that led to the discovery of a new species: *Homo Antecessor*.

To understand better what life was like for these ancient inhabitants of Earth, you can visit the **Experimental Archaeology Centre (CAREX)**, in the outskirts of the town of Atapuerca, a space designed for children and adults to have fun and learn through experiments. Try to start a fire or make tools using the techniques of thousands of years ago. You're sure to be amazed.

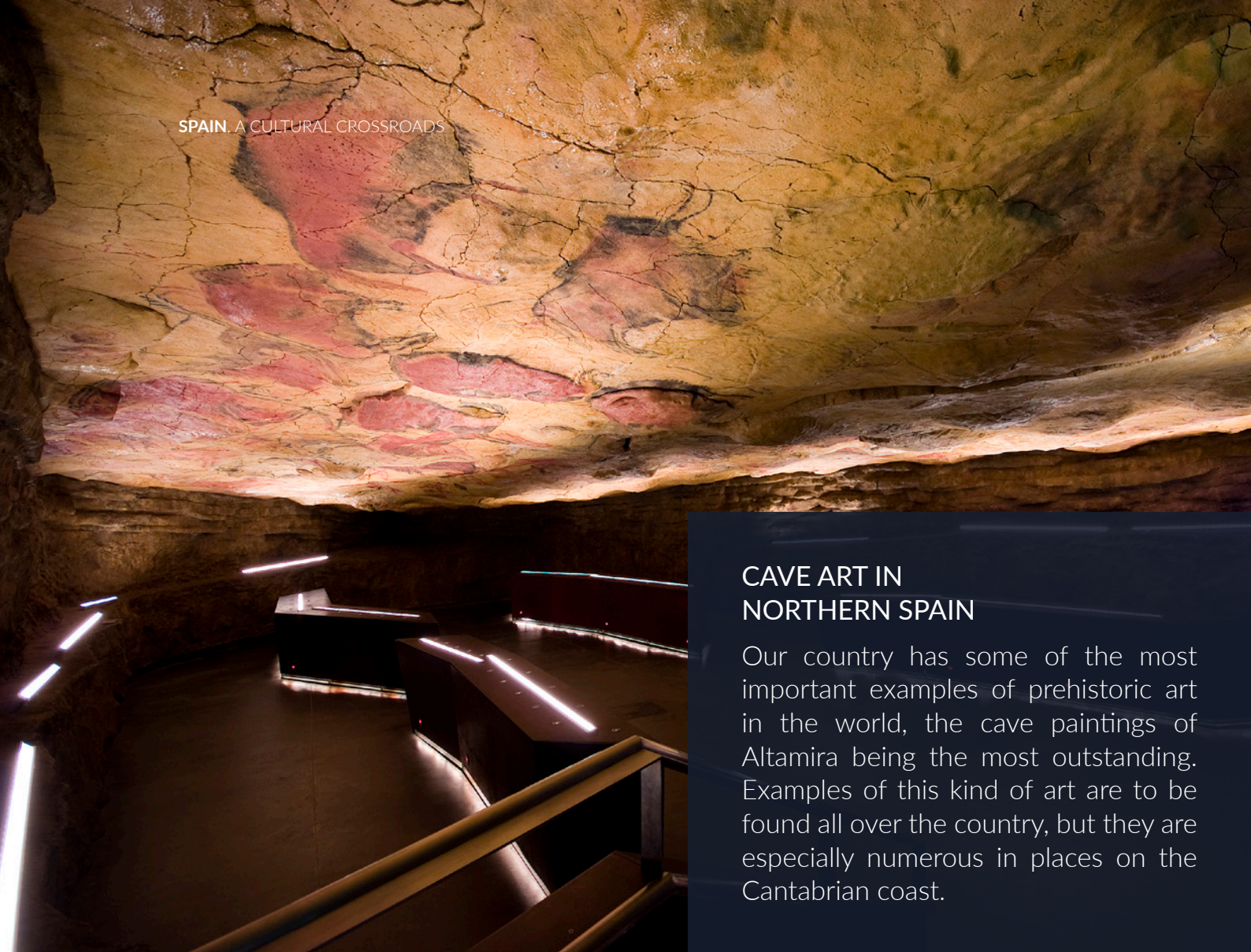
You can see the fossil remains found in Atapuerca at the modern **Museum of Human Evolution (MEH)**, in the city of Burgos. This futuristic architectural space is designed to explain the value and importance of these discoveries, as well as the scientific disciplines and techniques used in researching and explaining them. Among many other activities, you can see ten full-body recreations of the most representative species of our ancestors in the Gallery of Hominids, learn about advances in the theories of human evolution or enter inside a giant brain. To do this, new technologies are used, such as augmented reality, interactive panels and 3D videos for the whole family.



▲ MUSEUM OF HUMAN EVOLUTION
BURGOS

Advance booking is required to visit the sites and the CAREX centre. One of the options includes a guided tour of the three spaces with tickets for entrance to the MEH and for the bus journeys.

① www.atapuerca.org
www.museoevolucionhumana.com



CAVE ART IN NORTHERN SPAIN

Our country has some of the most important examples of prehistoric art in the world, the cave paintings of Altamira being the most outstanding. Examples of this kind of art are to be found all over the country, but they are especially numerous in places on the Cantabrian coast.

▲ NEOCUEVA - ALTAMIRA NATIONAL MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTRE
SANTILLANA DEL MAR, CANTABRIA

Discovered at the end of the 19th century, **Altamira Cave** in Santillana del Mar (Cantabria) was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1985. Its walls and ceilings preserve **more than 260 paintings and engravings** of bison, horses and deer. It is regarded as the 'Sistine Chapel' of cave art.

In order to preserve it in its original state as much as possible, visits to the interior of the cave are restricted. To enjoy this fabulous legacy of the Palaeolithic Age visit the **Altamira National Museum and Research Centre** and explore the Neocueva, an exact three-dimension-

al replica of the cave as it was 18,000 years ago.

📍 www.mecd.gob.es/mnaltamira

The north of Spain has 17 other examples of cave art also on the list of World Heritage sites. The caves of Chufín, El Castillo and Covalanas, all also in Cantabria, are just some of them.

📍 cuevas.culturadecantabria.com

Asturias also conserves surprising vestiges of the palaeolithic, including **Tito Bustillo Cave**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is open to the public between March and October, but it is

necessary to book in advance to visit it. Located in the beautiful fishing village of Ribadesella, the area is a paradise full of prehistoric caves where you can also find the **Tito Bustillo Cave Painting Centre**.

📍 www.centrotitobustillo.com

MEGALITHIC MONUMENTS

Be amazed at the grandeur of some of the most important megalithic constructions in Europe.

The Andalusian province of Málaga has the **Antequera Dolmens Archaeological Complex**, an example of one of the first forms of prehistoric monumental architecture. Located in the municipality of Antequera, the complex comprises the Menga, Viera and El Romeral dolmens,

used for ritual and funerary purposes. You will be surprised by the grandeur of these structures, built with stone slabs weighing several tons.

In 2016, these dolmens, together with the two natural spaces that surround them, **La Peña de los Enamorados** and **El Torcal**, were declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Los Millares (Santa Fe de Mondújar, Almería) is one of the most important archaeological sites of the Copper Age. The settlement, located in a strategic position, had four rows of concentric walls, a large necropolis and several small forts to control all access.



Experience the life of its inhabitants in the visitor centre where several huts and a section of the wall have been recreated. Thanks to the use of augmented reality you can discover what this extraordinary site was like. Download the free Virtual Millares app, point your phone camera at the information panels and see the past in 3D images.

The **Talayots of Menorca**, huge towers built with dry stone walls, stand out for their unique appearance. You can see these Cyclopean constructions at **Trepucó** (Mahón) and **Torre d'en Galmés** (Alaior), two of the largest settlements from Menorca's Talaiotic Period (during the Iron Age).

The neighbouring island of **Mallorca** also preserves important examples of prehistoric art in the form of dolmens and Talayot towers, such as the **Capocorb Vell** site in Lluçmajor.

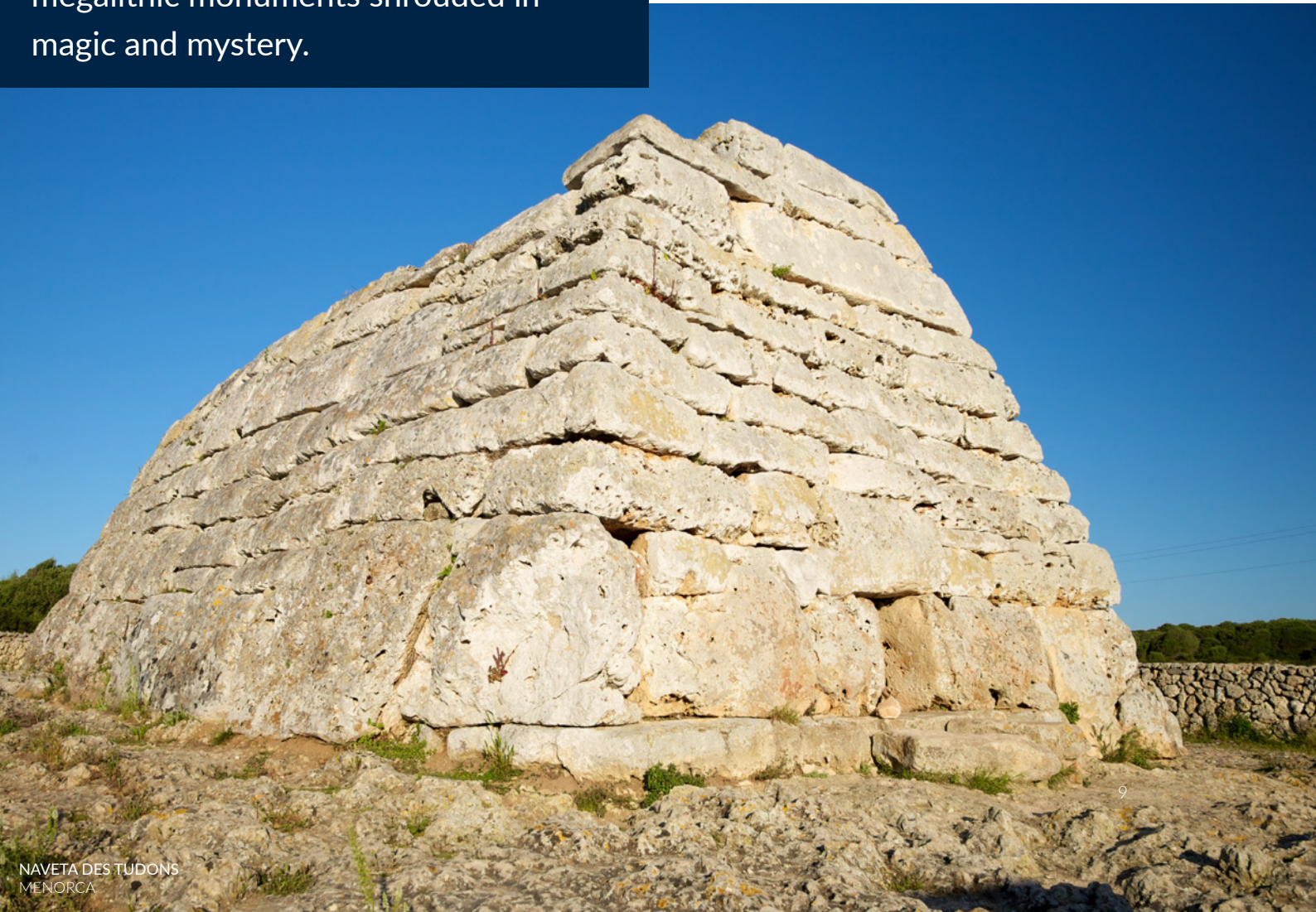
Take the chance on your stay in the islands to visit the **Drach Caves** (Manacor, Mallorca), a spectacular geological formation with a huge underground lake and a daily programme of classical music concerts. A truly unforgettable experience.

▼ DRACH CAVES
MALLORCA





In the Mediterranean Sea, the Balearic Islands boast an amazing treasure of megalithic monuments shrouded in magic and mystery.



PHOENICIANS AND CARTHAGINIANS

The arrival, around the year 1000 BC, of the Phoenicians, a trading and maritime people from the Eastern Mediterranean, led to the foundation of several coastal colonies, especially in what we now know as Andalusia.

From that period come Malaka (**Málaga**), Sexi (**Almuñécar**, Granada), Abdera (**Adra**, Almería), and Gadir (**Cádiz**), a key port on their trade routes. To get an idea of the importance of the Phoenicians, visit the **Archaeological Museum** in the welcoming city of Cádiz, where an extraordinary marble sarcophagus, known as the *Dama de Cádiz* (Lady of Cádiz), is kept.

▼ DAMA DE CÁDIZ (LADY OF CÁDIZ)
CÁDIZ MUSEUM



The most important Phoenician constructions are found at the **Gadir archaeological site**, one of the oldest of such sites in the western world, which also has an important collection of utensils from daily life on show. This settlement, converted into a museum, also conserves buildings from the Roman era: some pools used in the preparation of salted fish.

You will find objects and tools of great historical value from this and other periods in the **National Archaeology Museum** (Madrid), the **Almería Museum** and the **National Underwater Archaeology Museum (ARQVA)** (Cartagena, Murcia).

The Carthaginians, or Punic, also founded several trading and naval colonies in Hispania, especially in the **Balearic Islands** and on the eastern coast of Spain. In the 3rd century BC, in what today is **Cartagena** (Murcia), Qart Hadasht (called Carthago Nova after the Roman conquest) was built, a prosperous metropolis of which part of the wall still remains and the history of which is explained in the **Cartagena Punic Wall Visitor Centre**.

Most of the pieces of Punic craftwork conserved in Spain come from the **Puig des Molins archaeological site**, in **Ibiza** (Balearic Islands), where the Carthaginians founded an important naval base. Take the opportunity to visit its museum and go on a dramatised tour to learn more about the funerary rituals of antiquity.

① www.museosdeandalucia.es
www.mecd.gob.es/mnarqua



ROMAN HISPANIA

Walk on bridges and roads with centuries of history, attend performances of classical drama in amphitheatres or take part in Roman banquets in Almedinilla (Córdoba province). Our country has countless monuments and activities related to ancient Rome.

▲ SEGOVIA AQUEDUCT

SEGOVIA AQUEDUCT

This majestic work of engineering from the 2nd century AD was built to collect water from the Sierra de Guadarrama mountains and distribute it through the different urban facilities.

Climb the **Postigo del Consuelo** steps, which form part of the Segovia City Walls, to get a unique view of this monumental city declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985.

📍 www.turismodesegovia.com

MÉRIDA

Augusta Emerita, today the city of Mérida in the Extremadura region, was the capital of the Roman province of Lusitania and one of the Empire's most flourishing cities. Its biggest attractions, authentic jewels of architecture for which it has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, are the **theatre** and the **amphitheatre**. Both places spring to life every summer when they become stages for the **Mérida International Classical Theatre Festival**.



▲ ROMAN THEATRE,
MÉRIDA

The **National Museum of Roman Art (MNAR)**, designed by the Spanish architect Rafael Moneo, is a good way to end your visit. Its splendid collection of statues, busts and mosaics will help you understand what day-to-day life was like in a Roman colony.

If you visit Mérida in June you will be amazed by the **Emerita Ludica**, a festival recreating history, in which local people dress up in Roman costumes and organise cultural activities that will transport you to the Roman era.

📍 www.turismomerida.org

ROMAN BATHS IN ALANGE

Find out what it felt like to be an aristocrat of Roman Hispania in this spa centre located in **Alange** (Badajoz, Extremadura), a few kilometres from Mérida. From the original Roman baths, known as **Aquae** and declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993, two circular chambers with semi-spherical domes are preserved.





▲ NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ROMAN ART
MÉRIDA

ALCÁNTARA BRIDGE

"Destined to last forever through the world's centuries," reads the Latin inscription on the Roman temple next to this magnificent bridge crossing the Tagus River near the town of **Alcántara** (Cáceres province, Extremadura). This spectacular work of civil engineering remains in perfect condition having undergone several restorations since the 2nd century AD. Over the central pillar there is a Triumphal Arch dedicated to the emperor Trajan.

LAS MÉDULAS

In **El Bierzo** (León province, Castile-León) you will find what was the largest open-cast gold mine in the entire Roman Empire, in what is now declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Visit the **archaeology room** to learn the key facts about these gold mines. You can enjoy simply contemplating the magical environment, framed in a reddish, sinuous landscape, or take a guided tour and go through part of its underground maze of caves and galleries.



NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY MUSEUM

In Madrid, the National Archaeology Museum (**MAN**) awaits you with one of the world's most important collections of pieces from antiquity. You will be amazed by its permanent exhibition of utensils and works of art from different Mediterranean cultures, from prehistory to the modern age.

Through videos, 3D reconstructions, information panels and models, you can learn how the Romans spread across the Iberian peninsula and learn about their different forms of art. Its collection of mosaics from the villas and civil buildings of Roman Hispania is especially interesting.

At the National Archaeology Museum (MAN) you can see the **Dama de Elche** (Lady of Elche), a jewel of the Iberian culture of the 5th and 4th centuries BC. It is a bust of a richly dressed woman, with very perfect features.

Its hallways and rooms also house an important collection of Greek vases, some Visigoth treasures and several sarcophagi and pieces of Egyptian art.

📍 www.man.es

NUMANCIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

On the outskirts of the small town of **Garray** (Soria province, Castile-León) you can explore the history and myth of a Celtiberian settlement that resisted, more than any other, the advances of the Roman imperial troops.

Visit the site, where archaeologists have revealed the existence of two superimposed cities (a Celtiberian one and a Roman one), and relive the siege of the city. Discover the town layout of Numancia and take a look at its history through a 3D reconstruction that will help you understand how the siege was carried out in the seven camps that surrounded Numancia.

📍 www.numanciasoria.es





▲ ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE
TARRAGONA

TARRAGONA

The streets, squares and buildings of what was the ancient city of Tarraco, right on the coast of Catalonia, boast some of the best-preserved remains of ancient Rome in the Iberian peninsula. Its set of archaeological remains was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000. One of the outstanding features are the **walls** from the 3rd century BC which surround the old district. Next to them runs the **Archaeological Walkway**, which will transport you to the remote past of this beautiful city that opens onto the Mediterranean.

Start your tour at the **Tarragona Museum of History**, then walk down **Rambla Vella** to towards **Vía Augusta**. This will bring you to the lower part of the city where you'll find the spectacular **Roman amphitheatre**, with capacity for 14,000 spectators, from where you'll have wonderful views of the sea.

The **Tarraco Circus** is in the upper part of the city. Some of the vaults that supported the stands have been transformed into the pillars of numerous buildings, resulting in such iconic places as **Plaza de la Font**, a square full of terraces and very lively at all hours of the day and night. Visit **Plaza del Rey**, a square with the **Pretori** Roman tower and the underground passages that connected with the Forum.

📍 www.tarragonaturisme.cat

A JOURNEY BACK IN TIME

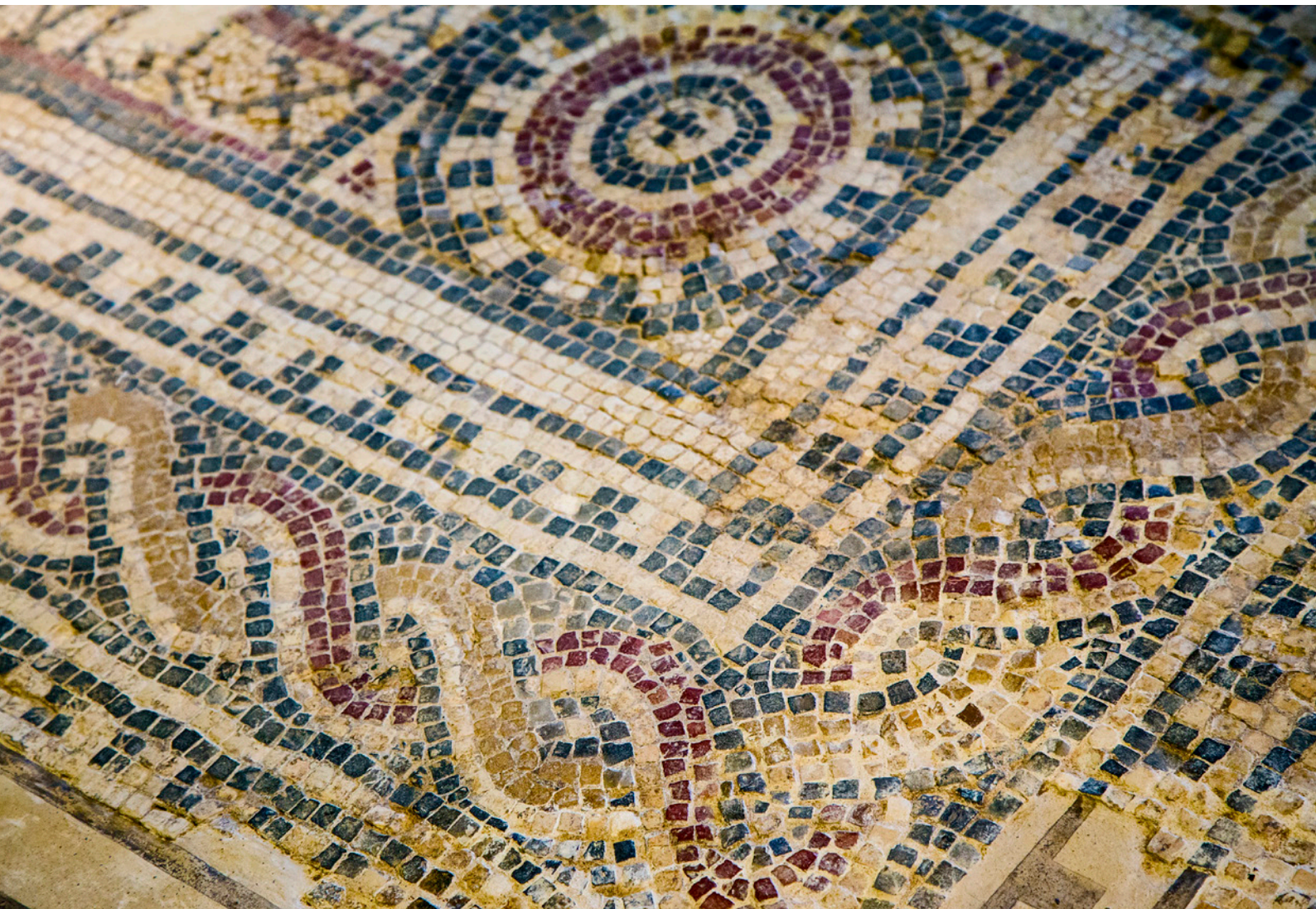


EMPÚRIES

The Roman Empire conquered most of Hispania, including its Phoenician, Carthaginian and Greek settlements and cities. The Greek had founded several colonies from the 6th century BC onwards, such as **Empúries** (Girona province), right on the Costa Brava. There, a few metres from the beaches of **L'Escala**, you can visit the ruins of the temples of **Asclepios and Serapis**, as well as the ancient agora and the remains of the floor of a banqueting hall.

It is the only site in the Iberian peninsula where Greek and Roman remains coexist, since this city was also the first settlement of the Roman Empire in Hispania. Visit its monographic museum to learn what the prosperous **Emporiae** was like, through 3D reconstructions, models and collections of all kinds of objects and sculptures, including the outstanding statue of Asclepius, the Greek god of Medicine.

▼ ROMAN MOSAIC
RUINS OF EMPURIES, GIRONA





▲ ITÁLICA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE
SANTIPONCE, SEVILLE PROVINCE



▲ ROMAN BRIDGE
CÓRDOBA

THE BAETICA ROMAN ROUTE

To travel through Andalusia is to follow the traces of Roman Hispania. This route takes you to 14 cities in the provinces of **Seville**, **Cádiz** and **Córdoba** (the ancient Roman province of Baetica) and through the regions crossed in ancient times by the Via Augusta, the longest Roman road in Hispania.

Of all the vestiges of Baetica, the most important is the **Archaeological Site of Itálica**, in **Santiponce** (Seville province), the city in which the emperors Adrian, Trajan and Theodosius were born. In **Carmona** (Seville province) there is a Roman amphitheatre, an archaeological museum and a **necropolis**, one of the largest and best preserved funerary sites in the Iberian peninsula. To complete the visit, the archaeological site's museum exhibits pieces of great value, such as funerary objects found in the excavations.

In **Córdoba** you can follow the **Seneca Route**, named after the famous philosopher born in the city, taking you to such iconic places as the **Roman bridge** over the Guadalquivir River, which serves as a pedestrian entrance way to the city. What was the capital of Baetica still conserves parts of the walls that surrounded it in good condition. The best stretches are on the **Ronda de los Tejares** avenue and **Paseo de la Victoria**. Nearby, you can visit the **Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos Fortress** and see large mosaics from the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD.

A visit to the **Archaeological and Ethnographic Museum** and to the **Cercadilla** and **Ategua** sites completes this tour of imperial Córdoba.

① www.andalucia.org/es/rutas/ruta-betica-romana

FESTIVITIES ORIGINATING IN THE CROSSING OF CULTURES

Our customs and traditions are linked to the heritage of different civilisations and result from a fusion that has brought a unique richness to our culture. The two festivities we highlight next are good examples.

In May, during the **Festival of the Patios in Córdoba** (declared Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 2012) the whitewashed houses of the old quarter of this Andalusian city are adorned with flowers. The patio, a fundamental element of a traditional Córdoba house, originates from the Roman villas.

Every 23 June, coinciding with St John's Eve, the **Fire Festivals of the summer solstice are held in the Pyrenees**. These come from a pagan tradition common to diverse cultures that symbolises the passage to adult life, fertility or purification. In the Aragonese and Catalan Pyrenees, valleys, mountains and small towns are filled with torches and bonfires, a magical spectacle that has been passed down from generation to generation for centuries. The festival was declared Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 2015.

▼ FESTIVAL OF THE PATIOS IN CÓRDOBA



VISIGOTH CULTURE

After Roman rule, it was the Visigoths who exercised control of Hispania from the middle of the 5th century to the start of the 8th century AD, especially in the central area of the country.

▶ SAN MILLÁN DE SUSO MONASTERY
SAN MILLÁN DE LA COGOLLA



Traces of this Germanic people in Spain are scarce and scattered throughout the country. The capital of their kingdom was **Toledo** (Castile-La Mancha), from where they organised a system that anticipated feudalism.

In some corners of the city's historic district elements of this culture remain. For example, in **Alcántara Bridge**, one of the oldest access roads to Toledo. Although it is of Roman origin, in its structure decorative Visigoth marbles can be seen. Remains of this civilisation have also been found on the walls of **San Román Church** (13th century) and **El Salvador Church** (11th century) and in **Toledo Cathedral**, built over a temple consecrated during the reign of the Visigoth King Recaredo. To complete the route, visit the **Museum of Visigothic Councils and Culture**.

By the Tagus River, near the town of **Zorita de los Canes** (Guadalajara province), is the **Recópolis Archaeological Park**, which conserves the remains of one of the most important Visigothic cities.

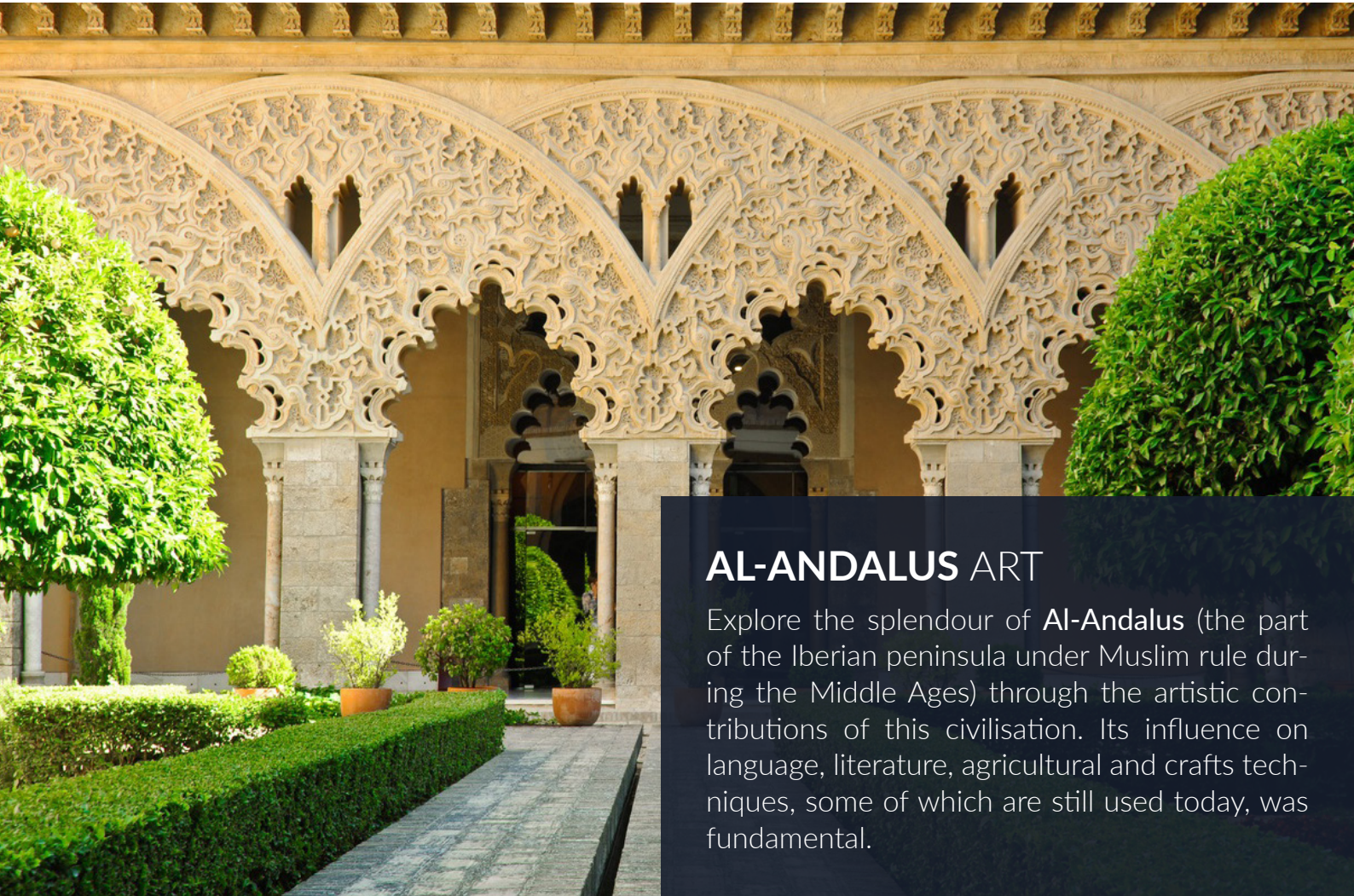
The most abundant examples of this culture in Spain are religious buildings, such as shrines and basilicas. Some examples are **San Juan de Baños Church**, in Venta de Baños (Palencia province, Castile-León), **San Pedro de la Nave Church** in El Campillo (Zamora province, Castile-León) and **San Millán de Suso Monastery** in **San Millán de la Cogolla** (La Rioja), considered the cradle of the Castilian Spanish language.



ALCÁNTARA BRIDGE GATE TOWER
TOLEDO

THE SPAIN OF **THREE CULTURES**

For centuries, Spain was a crossroads of civilisations. Jews, Muslims and Christians lived here, leaving their mark in the form of monuments, customs and traditions throughout the country.



AL-ANDALUS ART

Explore the splendour of **Al-Andalus** (the part of the Iberian peninsula under Muslim rule during the Middle Ages) through the artistic contributions of this civilisation. Its influence on language, literature, agricultural and crafts techniques, some of which are still used today, was fundamental.

▲ ALJAFERÍA PALACE,
ZARAGOZA

ZARAGOZA (ARAGÓN)

Muslims settled in the city of *Saraqusta*, capital of the Upper March of Al-Andalus. In the 11th century they built **Aljafería Palace**, a royal residence and centre of learning.

Explore the rooms and courtyards of this architectural jewel. It has wonderful sur-

prises like the Trovador tower, the oldest part of the palace, the beautiful Santa Isabel courtyard and the imposing Throne Room. The decorative richness of Al-Andalus appears in all its splendour in the Golden Room, also the royal bedchamber of kings of Aragón until the 14th century.

PALMA DE MALLORCA (BALEARIC ISLANDS)

Madina Mayurqa was an important Almoravid city. Visit **La Almudaina Palace**, rebuilt after the Christian conquest of the island, and discover the symbol of civil power in the capital of Mallorca. On your visit you can also see such remnants of the Muslim era as the baths, the towers and the area around the Arco de la Drassana Arch.

Learn about the history of the city through its archaeology at the **Mallorca Museum** and the **Moorish baths**. The hot baths room is still standing, with twelve columns supporting a dome with various round openings.



SANTA MARÍA DE PALMA DE MALLORCA CATHEDRAL AND LA ALMUDAINA PALACE
MALLORCA

TOLEDO (CASTILE-LA MANCHA)

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 Moorish rule.

On your visit be sure to see the **Mosque of El Cristo de la Luz**, in Islamic style and with Romanesque remains, and **the churches of San Sebastián** and **Santa Eulalia**, built by the Mozarabs (Christians who lived in the Muslim kingdom).

The city's Islamic heritage route has other key points: various **city wall gates** (Bisagra, Alcántara, Valmardón, etc.), **El Salvador Church**, built over an old mosque, the remains of the **Tenerías** and **Cabellel Moorish baths**, and the **Cenizal Islamic baths**.



MOSQUE OF CRISTO DE LA LUZ
TOLEDO

ROUTES OF THE AL-ANDALUS LEGACY

Journey to the past on seven routes that take in centuries of history. Discover such important places as the **Great Mosque-Cathedral** and the archaeological site of **Medina Azahara**, in **Córdoba**, the **Giralda Tower in Seville** and old towns of Arab origin, such as **Alcalá la Real** (Jaén).

Follow the steps of the writer **Washington Irving**, author of *Tales of the Alhambra*, from Seville to Granada, passing through towns such as Alcalá de Guadaira, Carmona, Marchena, Écija and Osuna. Or learn about the artistic influences of Almoravids and Almohads,

nomadic Berber groups from North Africa that entered the Iberian peninsula via Algeciras and spread along the coast and inland in the provinces of Cádiz and Málaga. Finally, journey to Almería for a tour of the villages of **the Granada Alpujarra** and its medieval fortifications, and top off your trip in the city of **Granada**, where most of the routes converge. There you can walk through streets, squares and corners with a strong Arab influence.

In Granada you can see **The Alhambra**, the ancient citadel and palatial residence of the Nasrid sultans. The patios in the three palaces are of Persian and Moorish inspiration and represent an earthly paradise. The Courtyard of the Lions, with its fountain, is one of the loveliest places in the complex. Enjoy the magical atmosphere of the **Generalife gardens**, with inspirational spaces like the **Ciprés de la Sultana patio**.

① www.alhambra-patronato.es

The Medina Azahara site has been named a UNESCO World Heritage Site, being a unique example of Umayyad architecture, art and culture in the West.



MUDÉJAR ART

Although this art form spread throughout most of Spain, one of its most important centres was **Aragón**, particularly in the **Collegiate Church of Santa María la Mayor** in Calatayud (Zaragoza province) and **Santa María de Mediavilla Cathedral**, in Teruel (capital of the Aragonese Mudéjar).

The Al-Andalus influence developed into a purely Spanish artistic style, fruit of the fusion of Christian and Muslim culture.

In **Castile-León**, the towns of **Sahagún** (León province) and **Cuéllar** (Segovia province), have the region's best examples of Mudéjar churches. This last town also has the **Mudéjar Art Visitor Centre**, housed in **San Martín Church**.

Explore **Toledo** and discover a unique, profusely decorated style. See **the Church of Santiago del Arrabal**, known as the cathedral of the Mudéjar. In the same style, **Santo Tomé Church** is famous for housing the painting *The Burial of the Count of Orgaz* by **El Greco**.



A CULINARY TOUR OF AL-ANDALUS

Some typical Arab customs and foods have taken root in Spain's gastronomy.

Try dishes with centuries of history, like **migas**. Although the dish has evolved and now includes elements added by Christians (**chorizo**, bacon, sausage...), its origin remains intact: breadcrumbs, garlic and olive oil.

One of the Spanish desserts of Muslim origin is **rice pudding**. The way of preparing it has changed over the centuries, but the basic ingredients remain the same: water, milk, rice, sugar and cinnamon.

Spain's typical Christmas sweets also go back to the time of the Islamic empire.

Try the delicious **nougat**, made with toasted peeled almonds and honey or sugar, and the little **marzipan** figures, made with almonds, sugar and egg, typical of Toledo.



THE CHRISTIANS

The Christian *Reconquista* brought with it one of the most outstanding styles in our artistic heritage: The Romanesque. The influences of French religious art arrived from across the Pyrenees at the end of the 10th century to spread in the north along the Way of Saint James and then, up to the 13th century, in the rest of the peninsula. It has left its mark in churches of simple beauty, located in the midst of nature or in picturesque villages and towns.

THE PRE-ROMANESQUE AND ROMANESQUE ROUTE IN ASTURIAS

You're bound to love the simple, clean lines of the Pre-Romanesque buildings. Discover this monumental complex of 14 buildings, located in the midst of impressive valleys and mountains, and declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

In the area around Oviedo, the elegant and stately capital city of Asturias, you will find places of great spirituality, such as **Santa María del Naranco Palace**, one of the most important examples of the



▲ SANTA MARÍA DEL NARANCO
OVIEDO

European pre-Romanesque. Very nearby, on the same side of Mount Naranco, is **San Miguel de Lillo Church**.

If you stroll through **Oviedo** you will come across its cathedral, where you can visit the **Cámara Santa** (Holy Chamber), declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here you'll find a treasure trove of jewels and precious stones.

In the city itself, surrounded by a beautiful garden, is **San Julián de los Prados Church**, the oldest and largest of the

pre-Romanesque buildings conserved in Asturias. Built in the 9th century and declared a World Heritage Site in 1998, its interior features decorative paintings that evoke ornamental elements from the Roman era.

End your tour with a visit to some other rural churches near the Cantabrian coast, such as in the town of Villaviciosa, where you will find the pre-Romanesque church of **San Salvador de Valdediós** and **San Juan de Amandi Church**.



THE ROMANESQUE ROUTE IN THE BOÍ VALLEY

In the Pyrenees of Lleida (Catalonia), in this fairytale valley, is a set of eight churches and a shrine in Lombard Romanesque style, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000.

This designation was given in large part in recognition of the wonderful replicas of the churches' murals, the original versions of which are preserved in the **National Art Museum of Catalonia (MNAC)** in Barcelona.

The stunning natural environment makes the trip between the towns of **El Pont de Suert**, **Erill la Vall**, **Boi** and **Taüll** a real delight for the senses. Discover places like **Santa Eulàlia Church** and the **Boí Valley Romanesque Centre**, in Erill la Vall, or the churches of **Santa María** and **Sant Climent**, in Taüll, with their characteristic several-storey bell towers.

📍 www.centreromanic.com



THE ROMANESQUE ROUTE IN PALENCIA

Green valleys, rivers, medieval villages and more than a hundred churches await you in the beautiful surroundings of the city of **Palencia**, in Castile-León.

Between **Frómista** and **Carrión de los Condes**, passing through **Ojeda Valley** and the **Palencia mountains** region, this tour includes some of the best preserved churches in Spain, such as **San Martín de Tours Church** in Frómista.

Another of the route's highlights is **Aguilar de Campoo**. In **Santa María la Real Abbey** the **ROM Exhibition Centre** is an ideal place to learn about the historical context of developments in the Romanesque period and about everyday life in the Middle Ages.

These are just a few recommendations on a route with endless possibilities.

THE ZAMORA AND TORO ROUTE

These two cities on the Douro River in Castile-León have many examples of Romanesque architecture.

Enjoy the charm of **Zamora**, the city with most Romanesque buildings in all of Spain. **El Salvador Cathedral**, with its large tower and its ribbed dome covered with scale-like stone, is its main attraction.

Other churches not to be missed are those from the 11th and 12th century

spread throughout the city, such as **San Claudio de Olivares**, considered the city's oldest Romanesque church, **San Cipriano**, **San Juan de Puerta Nueva** and **Santa María la Nueva**.

Less than 40 kilometres away is **Toro**, where you can visit the **Collegiate Church of Santa María**. Its lantern tower, with a ribbed dome, is one of its main features, along with the doorway of La Majestad, in Gothic style, and its lovely sculptures.



SEPHARDIC CULTURE

Jewish culture in Spain goes back thousands of years. The Jews were a prosperous community during the Middle Ages. Explore its presence in the districts, synagogues and archaeological remains that can be visited in the **Spanish Network of Jewish Quarters**.

▼ JEWISH QUARTER
CÓRDOBA



CÓRDOBA

Discover this beautiful Andalusian city, with its **immense cultural and architectural legacy**.

The Jewish presence in Córdoba is almost as ancient as the city itself. Take a stroll through the enchanting **Jewish quarter** with its narrow, paved streets and whitewashed houses. The Córdoba **synagogue** is the only one in Andalusia and one of the best-preserved in Spain.

In the **Calahorra tower**, a Moorish fortress, you can visit the **Living Museum**



of Al-Andalus. One of its rooms is dedicated exclusively to Maimonides, one of the most important philosophers of the period. It also has a representation of the rites that were officiated in the synagogue.

TOLEDO

After the Christian **Reconquista**, 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**, now a research centre, was founded.

The best place to start a tour of Toledo's Jewish vestiges is **Santa María**



▲ SYNAGOGUE OF SANTA MARÍA LA BLANCA
TOLEDO

la Blanca. The simple exterior disguises the majesty and luminosity of the interior, an extraordinary example of Toledo Mudéjar art.

In the **El Tránsito synagogue**, today the **Sephardic Museum**, you can see walls richly decorated with Hebrew inscriptions, as well as pieces of art and various objects used in Jewish religious ceremonies.

CÁCERES

Stroll through the narrow streets of the old Jewish quarter and admire the architectural nobility of this city in the Extremadura region, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1986.

Be sure to include the **Baluarte de los Pozos Visitor Centre** on your route. It

occupies a 12th century defence tower from the top of which you can enjoy one of the best panoramic views of the city and its monuments. The centre consists of a typical house, a garden-lookout point and the tower itself, a magnificent example of an Almohad fortification.

Built in the 16th century, **La Isla Palace** stands on the site of what was the **synagogue of the new Jewish quarter**. In the patio there are several stars of David and a font with inscriptions in Hebrew.

ESTELLA-LIZARRA (NAVARRRE)

Between the imposing **castles of Zalatorri and Belmecher** is the Jewish quarter, a symbol of the great commercial and cultural splendour enjoyed by the city from its foundation until the end of the 13th century. Fruit of this past can be seen in what remains of the Jewish presence in the buildings in the streets of San Nicolás, Rúa and Curtidores.

▼ ESTELLA-LIZARRA
NAVARRRE



RIBADAVIA

Explore one of the beautiful Green Spain locations. In this town in the province of Ourense in Galicia, the capital of Ribeiro wine production, many of the houses have a wine cellar where the wine used to be made.

Explore the Jewish quarter around the street of **Calle Merelles Caula**, at the centre of a winding network of side streets, and take away a souvenir of Sephardic craftwork. In the mansion of the Counts of Ribadavia, located in the Plaza Mayor, you'll find the **Jewish Information Centre of Galicia**. Here you can learn about the history and customs of the Sephardic community in Galicia over the centuries.





▲ RIBADAVIA CASTLE
OURENSE



PESCAÍTO FRITO (FRIED FISH)

A CULINARY TOUR OF SEPHARDIC CULTURE

The basis of Sephardic cuisine is closely linked to what we know today as Mediterranean cuisine. Spanish Jews were responsible for, among other things, the generalised use of **olive oil**.


In Andalusia, *pescaíto frito* is a dish never missing at any restaurant, beach bar or tapas bar. This is fried fish (anchovies, dogfish, red mullet, whitebait, etc.) coated in flour, which Sephardic Jews served with a vinaigrette of several herbs.

The *cocido* and *puchero* stews very typical in different areas of Spain are also Jewish in origin. Jews are forbidden to cook on the *Sabbath* (Saturday, a day set aside for religious worship and rest), so they used stews that could last for several days. They used dried pulses and seasonal vegetables to make dishes like *adafina*, with chickpeas, vegetables and lamb.

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