

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



Photo: World Heritage Cities

INTRODUCTION

▲ ALCALÁ 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.

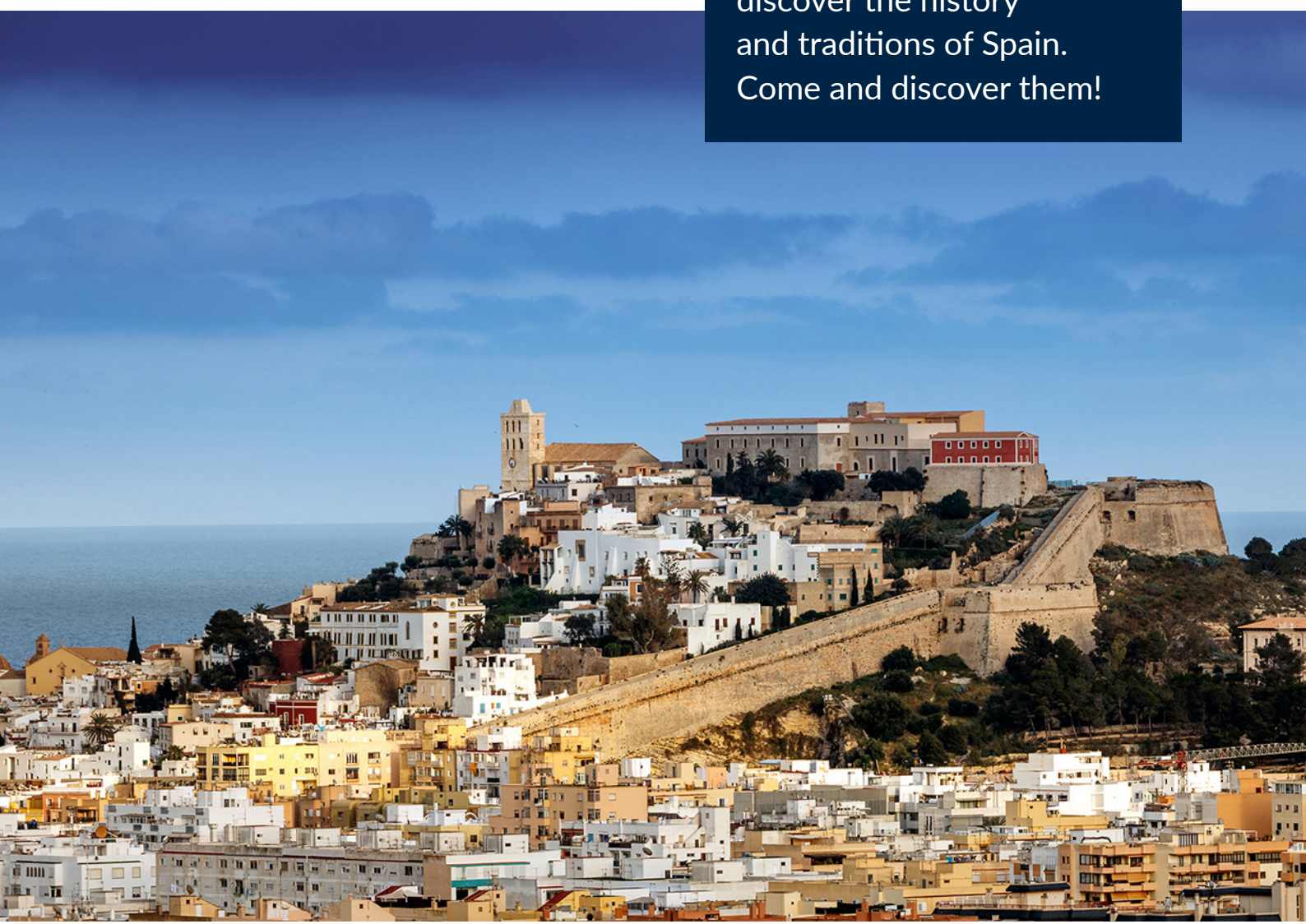
You'll also find the legacy of the Romans awaiting you in **Mérida** and **Tarragona** where you can walk amongst numerous archaeological remains such as amphitheatres, circuses and theatres. **Segovia** is also home to a real feat of engineering, the Roman aqueduct, one of the best preserved in Europe. **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!



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 traditional taverns 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, during the Roman occupation 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 15th 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



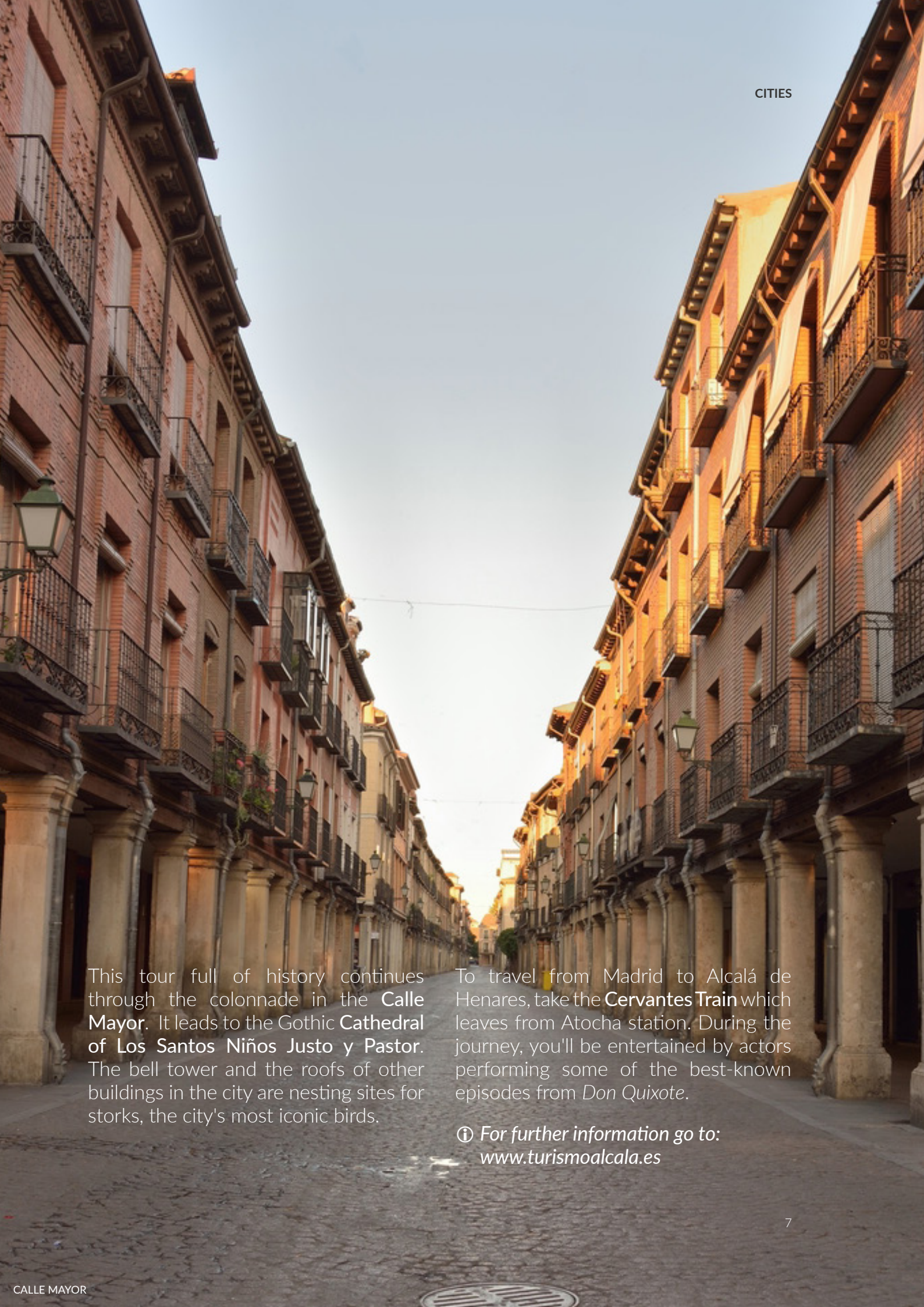
▲ MONUMENT TO DON QUIXOTE AND SANCHO PANZA

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 the very best 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 in the central courtyard of **Don Juan Tenorio**, an emblematic play from the Spanish Golden Age.

Then there's the **Cervantes Birthplace Museum**, a typical 17th 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 **Universos de Cervantes Visitor Centre** 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 **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 leaves from Atocha station. 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 get 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.



▲ 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 full name of the city is 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**. 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.

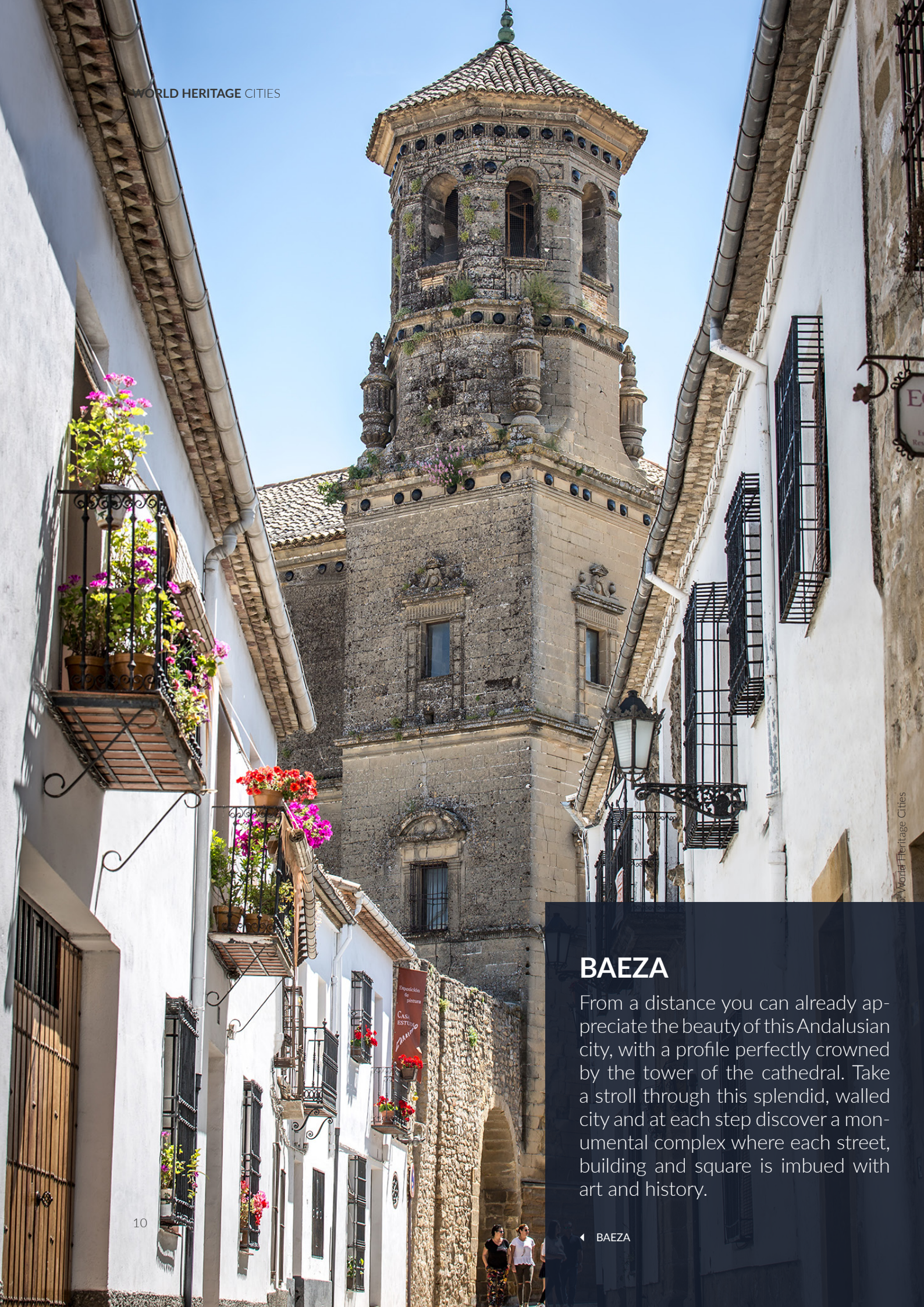
Ávila is the provincial capital located at the highest altitude in Spain. Throughout its history, Ávila has been the birthplace of famous Spanish mystics such as **San Juan de la Cruz** and **Santa Teresa de Jesús**. To learn more about the person known locally as La Santa, or the "Saintess", you should 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. And outside the walls 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 was a great ecclesiastical and educational centre, 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 and which 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**.



▲ 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:*
www.ubedaybaezaturismo.com

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 Gothic building 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 spectacular 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.

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-Andalus** 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 an Intangible Cultural Heritage.



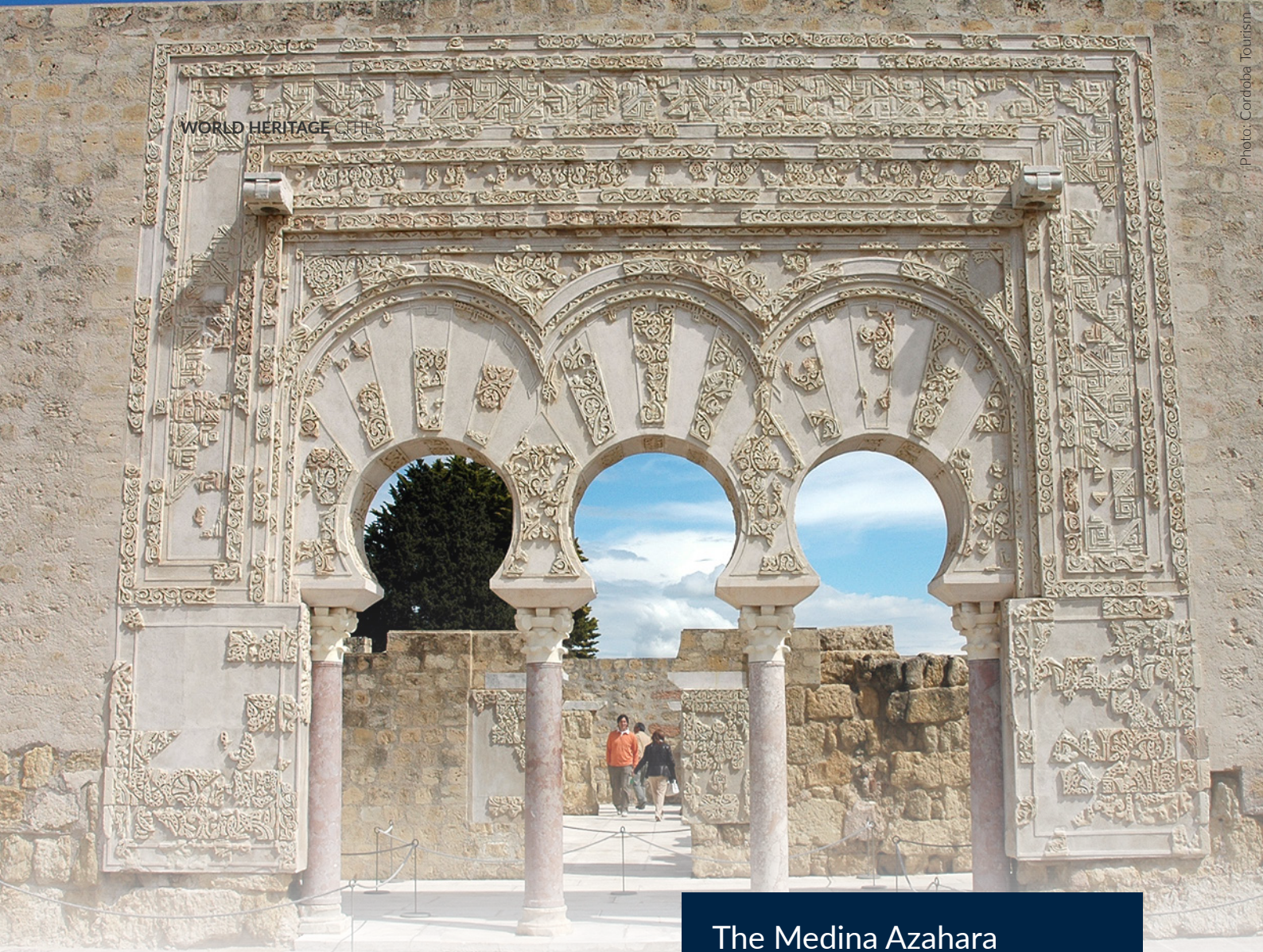
Photo: World Heritage Cities

▲ 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 archaeological complex has been declared a 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 this place, then very near the centre of Córdoba you'll find the archaeological site of **Medina Azahara**, which was one of the most beautiful Palatine cities in al-Andalus. Visit 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

This fortified city is noted for its steep hills, so the best place to start your tour is the area around the **castle**. Your first stop could be the ruins of this old, Moorish fortress at the highest point in the city's historical old town. From high up there are beautiful views of the **Hoz del Río Huécar**, the bend in the river that almost encircles the city.

On the way down you come to a look-out point with wonderful views over the other river which encircles Cuenca, the **Hoz del Júcar**. Then you come down a stone stairway to an esplanade with lush trees and the **Sanctuary of Nuestra Señora de las Angustias**, a delightful 17th century chapel built over the ruins of a previous one.

The city is a maze of medieval alleyways, hills and squares and is surrounded by a spectacular natural environment dominated by pine forests and water.

▼ 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.

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

EIVISSA-IBIZA

The city of Eivissa (Balearic Islands) is located on the east of the island of Ibiza. It was founded by the Carthaginians 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 **Mercado Viejo** 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.



Photo: World Heritage Cities

CITIES



▲ 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 Yabisah 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 recently turned into a large pedestrian area, and then along the edge of the port area until you come to the **Botafoc lighthouse**. The refurbished Marina neighbourhood, what used to be the fishing quarter, and nowadays has become a hive of activity with shops and



restaurants 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:*
turismo.eivissa.es

MÉRIDA

Travel back in time to a city that flourished during 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.

It was the starting point for the ancient **Silver Route** and the capital of the Roman province of Lusitania, making it 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 it still serves the purpose for which it was designed. It is amazingly well preserved and its magnificent appearance will surprise you. Behind it there is a beautiful arcaded garden.

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.

▼ FESTIVAL OF GRECO-ROMAN THEATRE





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

The town centre is the site of the **Temple of Diana** and **Trajan's Arch**, one of the ancient gateways into the city. Take a stroll around the adjacent streets and stop for a rest in one of the bars or restaurants in the **Plaza de España**. Delicious local dishes include lamb casserole, exquisite cheeses and Iberian cured ham.

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, over which there are a number of bridges including the **Lusitania Bridge**, a modern design by the architect Santiago de Calatrava, and the **Roman Bridge**, said to be the longest still remaining in Spain.

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

◀ NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ROMAN ART



CITIES

▲ 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** 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

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 laid-back lifestyle 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. 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 austere **Convent of Santa Catalina de Siena** and the **Chapel of San Miguel Arcángel**, which is now a Cultural Centre.

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



▲ HOUSE OF SALAZAR

Photo: World Heritage Cities

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

▲ 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** (the **Town Hall**).

You could also visit its two important archaeological sites, ancient Guanche settlements (the inhabitants of the Canary Islands before being conquered

by Spain): **La Barranquera** and **Barranco de Agua de Dios**.

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.

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 and 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 in 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 New York architect Peter Eisenman, which has an interesting programme of cultural activities throughout the year and facilities include museums, a library, an opera theatre and a research centre.

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

▼ LA GLORIA DOORWAY



Photo: World Heritage Cities

SEGOVIA

Apart from its icon, the incredible **Roman Aqueduct**, in Segovia you can lose yourself in the maze of streets which make up the Jewish quarter, see extraordinary stately houses and enjoy a stroll in the green belt under the sunshine.

▶ ROMAN AQUEDUCT

CITIES





Photo: Carlos Soler Martinez/123rf.com

▲ SEGOVIA

The Aqueduct, which marks the entrance to the historical old town via the **Plaza de Azoguejo**, will be your companion during your tour of the medieval streets. The **Casa de los Picos** is easy to find, as the façade is unusually decorated with granite points. Other surprising buildings are **La Alhóndiga**, formerly a Gothic granary, and the **Torreón de Lozoya**, a palace which is now a cultural centre. It has an interesting programme of temporary exhibitions.

Your tour should include significant religious buildings like the **Church of San Martín** and the **Church of San Miguel**, where **Isabel the Catholic Monarch** was crowned queen of Castile. Just a short walk from the porticoes in the **Plaza Mayor** you'll find the superb late Gothic **Cathedral of Santa María**. It is known as the Lady of all Cathedrals due to its large dimensions and elegant style. You'll also find the **Cathedral Museum** interesting, with a considerable collection of religious art and the first book that was ever printed in Spain.

You then move on to the neighbourhood called the **Barrio de los Caballeros**, which in the past used to be the home of wealthy families of noble lineage. The buildings that have been well preserved include the **Palace of Valdeláguila**, the **Residence of the Marquises of Lozoya** and the **Casa de las Cadenas**. In the maze of streets which make up the medieval old town you'll find Romanesque gems like the **Church of San Juan de los Caballeros** (which now houses the **Zuloaga Museum**) and the **Church of La Santísima Trinidad**.

From here you should look towards the end of the walled enclosure. On the horizon, beyond the **Reina Victoria Eugenia Gardens** you'll see the amazing **Alcázar**. This extraordinary medieval fortress stands high on a rock and looks just like a fairy-tale castle. You can visit numerous patios and royal rooms full of legends, you can even climb to the top of the tower and enjoy the magnificent countryside.

You should always spare some time to visit the **House-Museum of Antonio Machado**, where the distinguished Spanish poet lived, and the **Esteban Vicente Contemporary Art Museum**, dedicated to the internationally renowned artist.

If you visit at Easter you can enjoy delightful concerts of sacred music in the religious buildings. In July, the patios in the palaces and other charming venues become the scenario for the **Festival of Segovia**. And in springtime you shouldn't miss **Titirimundi**, a magical event which fills the streets with puppets and marionettes.

Both the modern **Parador Hotel** and the traditional restaurants are ideal for sampling the dish for which the city has become famous: roast suckling pig. A wonderful way to end the day is to take a walk along the banks of the Eresma River to the **Pradera de San Marcos**, an ideal place to rest and where you'll get possibly the best view of the amazing Alcázar.

📍 *For further information go to:*
www.segoviaturismo.es

P
▼ SEGOVIA PARADOR HOTEL



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 there is so much to choose from.

In its streets, squares and buildings, ancient Tarraco has some of the best-preserved remains of ancient Rome in the Iberian peninsula. The historical old town of the ancient capital of Hispania is surrounded by a great 2nd century BC wall, alongside which there is an **Archaeological Walkway** that will take you far back in time in a hospitable city which is open to the sea.

The Roman tour starts in the walkway itself and at the **Tarragona Museum of History**, then along the **Rambla Vella** towards the **Vía Augusta**. This leads to the lower part of the city where you'll find the spectacular **Roman amphitheatre**, from where you'll have wonderful picture postcard views of the sea and the city.

The **Tarraco Circus** is in the upper part of the city. Some of the vaults that supported the grandstands have been preserved as have the pillars of numerous buildings, and this leads to such iconic places as the **Plaza de la Font**, full of terraces and with a fantastic atmosphere both day and night.

This square is dominated by the **Town Hall** and is a good spot for watching the **castells** (human towers) at certain times like the **Festival of Santa Tecla**, which takes place in September.



Another attraction not to be missed in the old town is the **Cathedral of Santa Tecla** and its enormous rose window, one of the city's icons. It was built during the 12th century and is basically Romanesque but finished in the Gothic style with a majestic main façade. In the interior there is a surprising gardened cloister and you should climb up to the bell tower where you'll have magnificent views of the city. The beautiful little streets and alleyways around the cathedral lead to the **Plaza del Rey** where you'll find the splendid **Roman tower of El Pretori**.

Tarragona is a perfect blend of the past and the present. The **Rambla Nova** is a broad avenue ideal for taking a pleasant stroll and doing a little shopping. You then come to the **Balcón del Mediterráneo**, a lookout point with a splendid panoramic view over the **El Miracle** beach and the amphitheatre.

Spanish Modernism has a strong presence throughout the length and breadth of the city. The Modernist tour includes the tower and tribune of the **Casa Ripoll**, the iron construction of the **Central Market** and the chapel of the **Sanctuary of Nuestra Señora del Sagrado Corazón** which bears the unmistakable mark of Antoni Gaudí. Proof that Tarragona is not tied down to its glorious past, but has evolved to become a modern city which is very proud of its history.

📍 *For further information go to:*
www.tarragonaturisme.cat



CATHEDRAL



AMPHITHEATRE



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 Moorish rule.

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** 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** which predates the Christian reconquest. 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 **Synagogue of Santa María la Blanca** and the Synagogue of **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 medieval **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.

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 **Collegiate Church 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.





Photo: World Heritage Cities

▲ PLAZA VÁZQUEZ DE MOLINA

In this square 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, hidden away for centuries, will take your

breath away. To appreciate the blend of cultures which have left their mark on the city, 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 December and the **City of Úbeda International Music and Dance Festival** which takes place in May and June.

📍 *For further information go to:*
ubedaybaezaturismo.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 and Baeza, the foundation of the Mediterranean diet.

PAPAS ARRUGADAS (WRINKLY POTATOES) WITH MOJO PICÓN (SPICY SAUCE)



For lovers of fresh, local produce there are plenty of exquisite products for you to try. Meat from the centre of the Spanish mainland 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 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 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 **Ensaimada**, 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 **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

▲ MÉRIDA 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.

If you visit Tarragona in the second fortnight in September you can attend the **Santa Tecla Festival** which includes some of Catalonia's most symbolic tra-

ditional 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 nine levels.

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.

In San Cristóbal de la Laguna music plays a leading role with an **International Jazz Week** and a **Music Festival** which take place in a number of venues in the historical old town throughout the month of 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
stoneandmusicfestival.com
jazzlalaguna.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 performances of both classical and contemporary works by the best Spanish theatre companies.

At the same time, in neighbouring Baez, 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, 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.

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.

▼ CERVANTES WEEK





Photo: Córdoba Tourism (IMTUR)

▲ FESTIVAL OF THE CÓRDOBA PATIOS

Each November the **Medieval Market of the Three Cultures** is set up in the historical town centre 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 and a snake charmer 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

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 Córdoba 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 also get the chance to taste delicious *tapas* from Córdoba and Montilla-Moriles wine.

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 perfor-

mances 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, with two golden eggs 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 processions through the steep streets of the historical old town of Cuenca.

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.

① *Useful links*

www.corpustoledo.org

patios.cordoba.es





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, you have the **Llanos de Cáceres and Sierra de Fuentes** and the extraordinary rock formations of **Los Barruecos**.

Córdoba is one of the best examples when talking of natural wealth. From the Roman bridge you can look out over the **Sotos de 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 sum-



mer 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. 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.

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 pro-



BOROSA RIVER

tected 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**. Hike along the paths amongst the lush forests of laurisilva until you reach the lookouts from where you see the gigantic **Teide**.

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 **Santo Domingo de Bonaval** and **Belvís** Parks in the city centre. They

all feature in their own right amongst the most iconic and visited attractions in the city.

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 **Sierra 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

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 delightful, 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, 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 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.parador.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 de 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.

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 Corrillo. 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 to the Plaza de San Isidro which is very



▼ SALAMANCA CATHEDRAL

near the famous Casa de las Conchas or House of Shells and the end of the tour in the Plaza del Corrillo. 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 de Bracamonte. From there you have easy access to the city's main attractions by taking the par-



Photo: Santiago de Compostela Tourism

▲ ALAMEDA, SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

allel streets of San Agustín, Obispo Rey Redondo and Herradores where you'll find most of the churches and stately houses.

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,

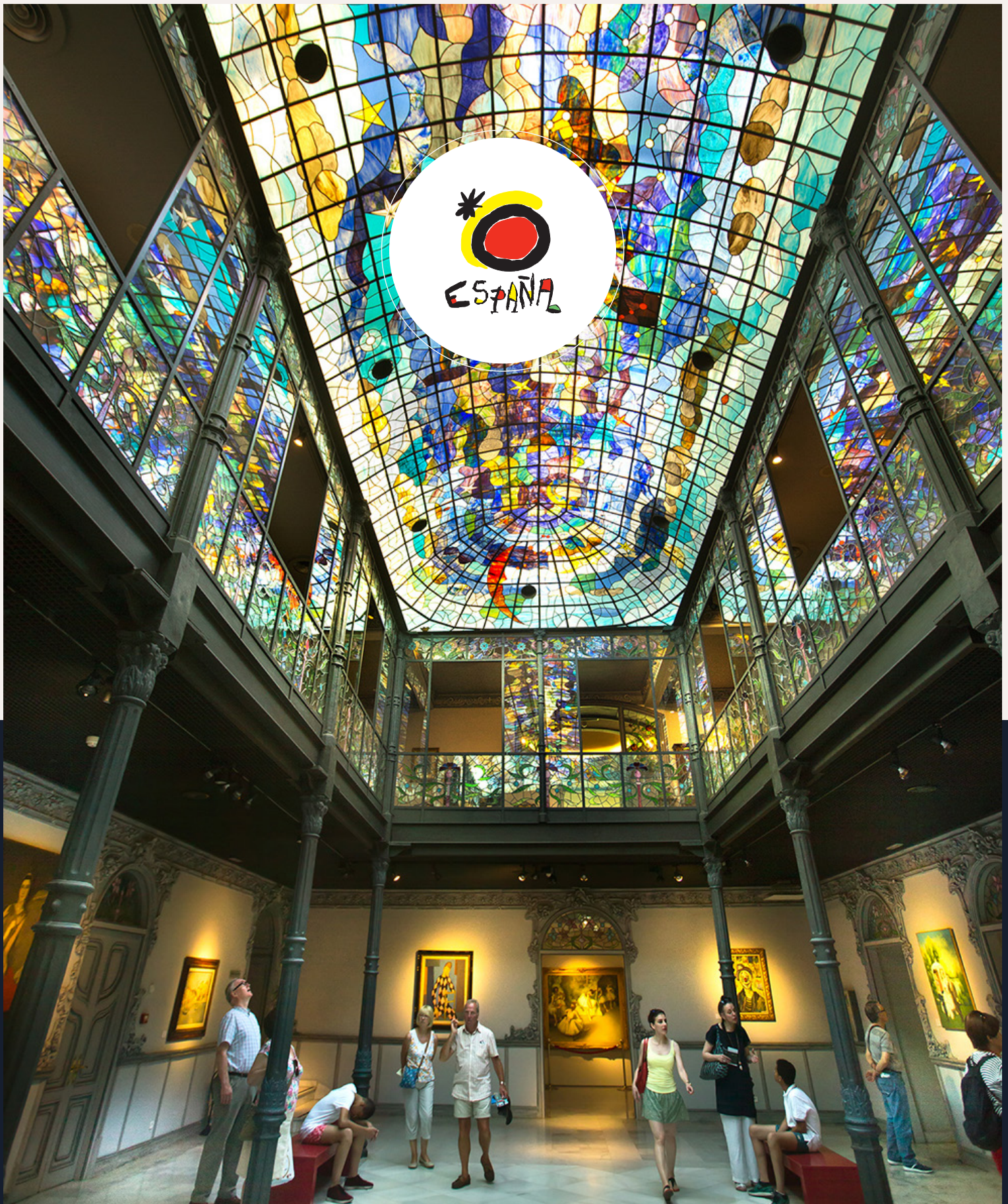
and the Plazas de Praterías, Quintana and Abastos squares. At the start of the tour you can turn off into the Alameda Park and visit the beautiful botanical gardens.

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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