

50 EXPERIENCES TO ENJOY

# in Spain



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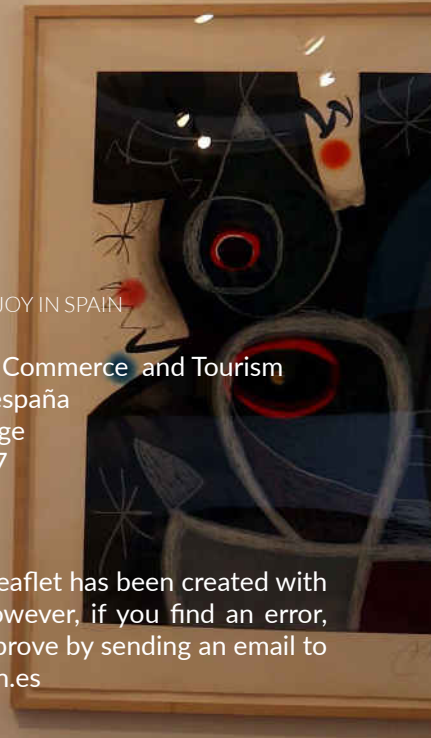


50 EXPERIENCES TO ENJOY IN SPAIN

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# DISCOVER MODERNISM IN BARCELONA

If you'd like to learn more about this avant-garde movement, the best idea is to visit Barcelona. In the **Eixample** district, and more specifically in the area known as the “**Quadrat d'Or**” or “golden square”, you'll see the largest cluster of modernist buildings in the city. And everywhere you look you'll observe the spirit of Antonio Gaudí, the movement's greatest exponent and an icon of Barcelona. All his work is breathtaking, but the places you can't afford to miss are the Basilica of the Sagrada Família, Güell Park, Casa Vicens, and La Pedrera and Casa Batlló, all of which have the UNESCO World Heritage designation.

But on your route you'll see much

more than works by Gaudí. The Sagrada Família, the **modernist ensemble of Sant Pau** and the **Palau de la Música** by the architect Lluís Domènech i Montaner have all been awarded the UNESCO's World Heritage designation. And a visit to the **Casa de Les Punxes** or Casa Terradas, built in 1905 and designed by the architect Josep Puig i Cadafalch, will make you feel you're in a fairytale.

You can wind up your visit in the **Modernism Museum**, located in a former warehouse in the Eixample neighbourhood, and itself another modernist building.

▼ GÜELL PARK  
BARCELONA





▲ THE GREAT MOSQUE OF CORDOBA

## EXPLORE THE HERITAGE OF AL-ANDALUS IN THE GREAT MOSQUE OF CORDOBA AND THE ALHAMBRA IN GRANADA

In southern Spain you'll find yourself transported back in time to the tale of *the thousand and one nights* in these two must-see World Heritage settings. The **Great Mosque** located in the historic heart of Cordoba. Its maze of columns and the Christian cathedral that emerges out of their midst is a sight that will linger in your mind's eye. After your visit you can relax in the **Orange Trees Courtyard** outside the building where admission is free.

The place where you'll really experience the legacy of eight centuries of Arab presence in Spain is in the **Alhambra** in

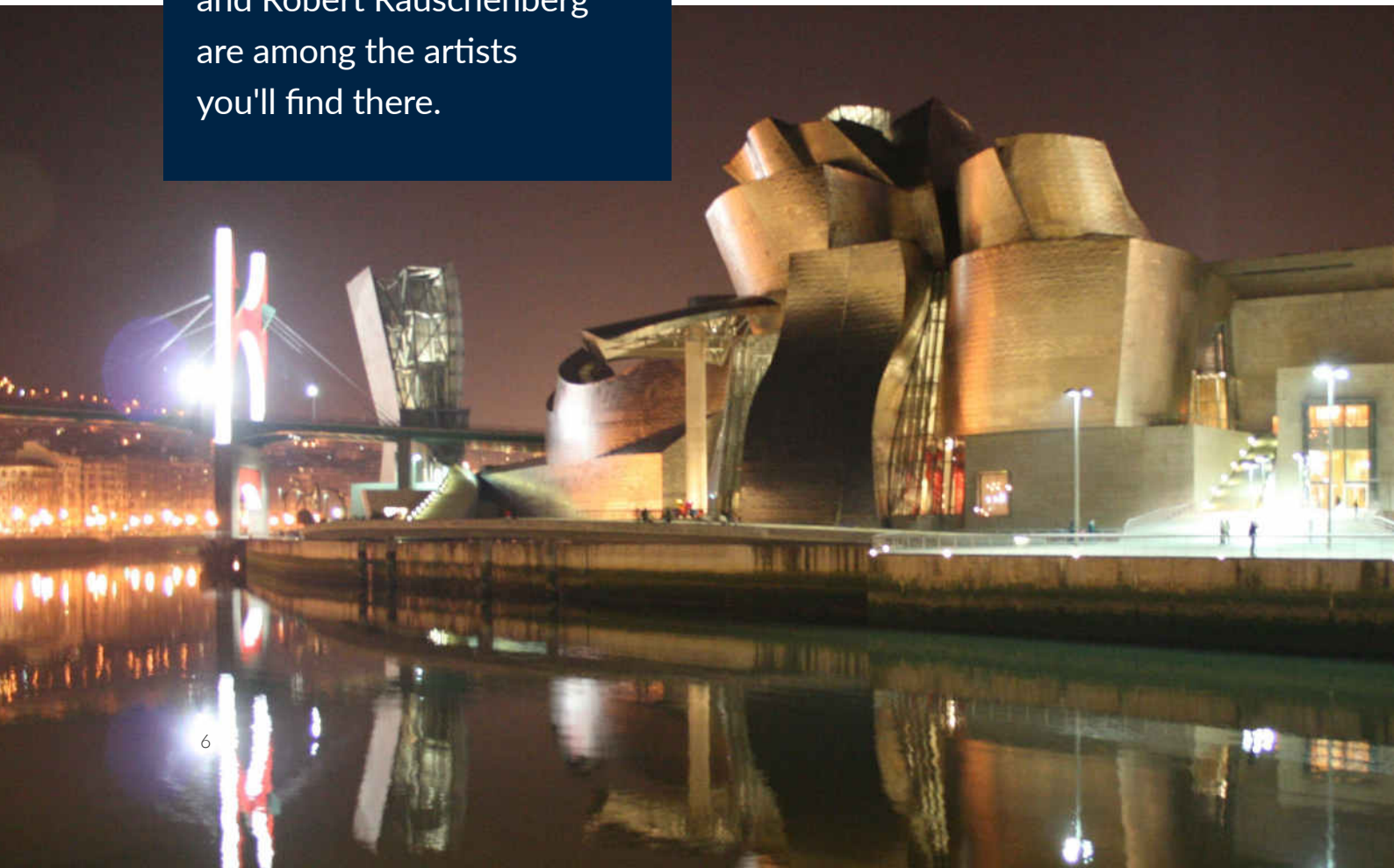
Granada, once the political and aristocratic heart of the Muslim world in the West. Wander through its beautiful rectangular courtyards and past its multiple fountains and recreate the aura of supreme luxury found in the Nasrid buildings that served as home to the kings and their servants. The **Courtyard of the Lions** with its fountain is one of the loveliest places in the whole ensemble. **The Alcazaba**, an imposing military fortress, is the oldest building on the complex. Climb to the top of the Vela tower for fabulous views over the Alhambra and Granada.

# IMMERSE YOURSELF IN THE AVANT-GARDE IN THE GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM IN BILBAO

The ground-breaking design by the Canadian architect Frank O. Gehry makes the **Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao** the perfect place to enjoy contemporary art. Built in 1997, it is the foremost exponent of the acclaimed urban transformation of the city.

The first thing you'll notice when you arrive are the colour transitions as the natural light falls on the museum façade, and its reflection in the estuary. You'll be welcomed by Puppy, the floral sculpture by Jeff Koons that stands outside the entrance. One interesting fact about its design: you won't find a single flat surface in the entire museum structure.

Much of the museum space is given over to exhibitions. David Salle, Chillida, Jeff Koons, Louis Bourgeois and Robert Rauschenberg are among the artists you'll find there.





REINA SOFIA NATIONAL ART MUSEUM

## STROLL THROUGH A WHOLE WORLD OF ART IN MADRID

In only one kilometre you can visit the past, present and future of painting. You can do so in the “**Paseo del Arte**” or “Art Walk” in Madrid. It is home to three of the world's most important collections:

The **Prado National Museum** has the most comprehensive collection of Spanish painting from the 11th to the 18th centuries, along with many other masterpieces from the Flemish, Italian and German schools, among others. You can spend hours exploring the work of artists like El Greco, Goya, Titian, Van Dyck and Rembrandt. Velazquez's *Meninas*, Goya's *Majas* and the *Garden of Earthly Delights* by Hieronymus Bosch are among the pictorial wonders on display.

The **Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum** is a chance to see one of the most valuable private collections in the world. A journey through Western painting from the 13th century to the foremost 19th- and 20th-century movements. In its rooms you'll find pictures by Monet, Van Gogh, Cezanne, Klee and Kandinsky, among others.

A landmark of contemporary art, the **Reina Sofía National Art Museum** is a chance to enjoy the work of artists such as Miró, Dalí, Tàpies, Juan Gris, René Magritte and Chillida, and one of the icons of modern art and the history of Spain: the *Guernica*.



## WANDER AROUND THE NARROW STREETS OF THE JEWISH QUARTER IN TOLEDO

Toledo, the city of the three cultures, has been awarded the UNESCO World Heritage designation. Explore the city that for centuries was the spiritual and administrative centre of the Jewish community in the West. As you stroll through the narrow alleyways you can conjure up the supreme influence and power the Jews latterly enjoyed in this place.

You'll see two of the most representative Mudejar monuments in Jewish Toledo in the Calle de los Reyes Católicos: The **synagogue of Santa María La Blanca** (13th century) with its impressive columns; and the **El Tránsito Synagoge** (14th century), the home of the Sephardic Museum.

Nearby, at the Travesía de la Judería, you'll find the **Casa del Judío**. Its courtyard still conserves numerous works of carved plaster and in the basement you can visit a Jewish liturgical bath or *miqva*.



## SEE A PLAY IN A ROMAN THEATRE WITH 2,000 YEARS OF HISTORY

Every summer the **Roman Theatre in Mérida** (Badajoz) hosts the International Classical Theatre Festival: an event that transports this magical venue back in time to the 1st century B.C. to recover all its splendour and its original purpose. Hidden for centuries, it was literally dug out of the ground at the beginning of the 20th century. Travel back in time and take a seat in the best preserved Roman theatre in Europe.

The theatre and amphitheatre are part of the archaeological site in Mérida, one of the most important and largest in Spain, awarded the World Heritage designation by the UNESCO.



# GO BACK 18,000 YEARS IN TIME AT THE MUSEUM OF ALTAMIRA

Just two kilometres outside the beautiful village of Santillana del Mar in Cantabria, you'll come to the Altamira cave, the jewel in the crown of Spanish rock art. Its cave paintings are 18,000 years old, and have been awarded the World Heritage designation by the UNESCO, together with 17 other caves in northern Spain.

Visits to the original Altamira cave are tightly restricted for conservation reasons, but don't worry –the **Altamira Museum** is home to the **Neocave**, a stunning life-size replica of the entrance and interior of the most important series: the **Hall of Polychromes**. This vault is 18 metres long by 9 metres wide and contains over thirty figures depicting bisons, horses, wild boars and deer.



# LEARN ALL ABOUT SURREALISM IN THE DALÍ TRIANGLE

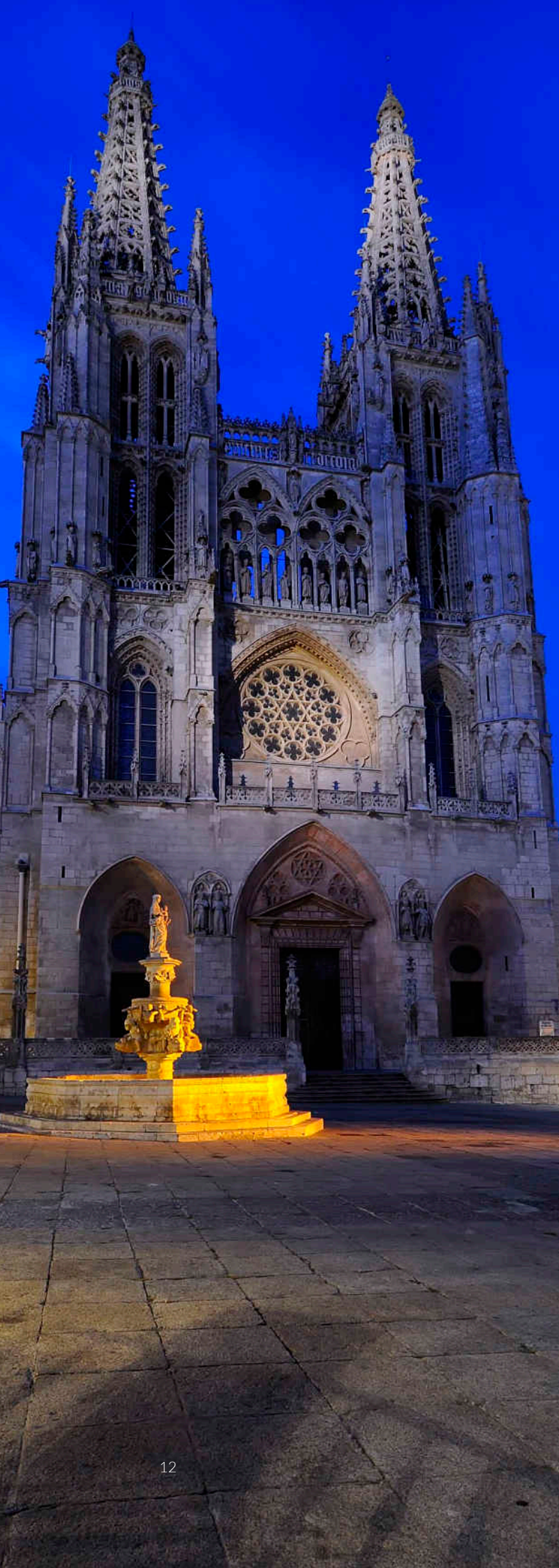
The best way to understand the work of the eccentric and brilliant Dalí is to explore the **Dalí Triangle** that links Púbol, Portlligat and Figueres (Girona), the three places where he lived all his life.

**Figueres**, the town where he was born and died, is home to the **Dalí Theatre-Museum**. Its flamboyant façade is just the first surprise –on the inside you'll find a wide range of works by this genius of Surrealism. The memory of the artist is present everywhere in the town: his birth-place, the Church of Sant Pere, Hotel Durán...

From Figueres we continue on to **Cadaqués** and make for Dalí's house in **Portlligat**, a labyrinthine structure in which he lived and worked from 1930 until the death of Gala, his spouse and muse, in 1982.

In **Púbol**, the last point of the triangle, you can visit the **Gala Dalí Castle**, the genius's last studio, conceived as a mausoleum for his muse.





## EXPLORE THE GOTHIC STYLE WITH A VISIT TO BURGOS CATHEDRAL

**Burgos Cathedral** is one of the finest examples of Spanish Gothic art. It was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1984.

The highlight of its main facade, known as the **Puerta del Perdón**, is the rose window framed by a Gothic arch that sends light into the nave, from where you can admire the beautiful stained-glass windows. Its loveliest sculpture group can be found on the **Puerta del Sarmental**, with the image of a **Pantocrator** surrounded by apostles and evangelists.

The **dome** on its interior is regarded as one of the most majestic in the whole of the Spanish Renaissance. Below it lie the remains of Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, El Cid Campeador, and his wife Doña Jimena. Apart from its architectural riches, the **Cathedral Museum** also contains a unique collection of paintings, sculptures, documents and codices.

## LISTEN TO CLASSICAL MUSIC IN THE DRACH CAVES (MAJORCA)

Can you imagine listening to a classical music concert in some underground caves with more than 5,000 years of history? You can enjoy this experience in the **Drach Caves** in Manacor. These are four interconnected caves, in which you can see thousands of different shapes created by enormous stalactites and stalagmites.

Inside you'll find **Lake Martel**, one of the largest underground lakes in the world, where you can hear a short concert of classical music on board a boat. The caves have exceptional acoustics.

Photo: Drach Caves

## COMBINE SKIING AND THE SEASIDE IN GRANADA

In Sierra Nevada in Granada, much of the skiing season takes place under sunny skies with the sea as a backdrop. You'll find over 400 ski instructors available for you. The ski resort is located inside the **Sierra Nevada Nature Reserve**, declared a Biosphere Reserve by the UNESCO.

After a morning of sport, you can head for the **Costa Tropical**, between the Costa del Sol and the Almeria coast, to relax and have fun. This part of the coast is sheltered by its location, which has produced a microclimate with mild temperatures. The area offers such attractions as Almuñécar, Salobreña and Motril, with a multitude of beaches and unique places.





# ENJOY A ROUND OF GOLF WITH A SPA SESSION AT THE LA MANGA CLUB (MURCIA)

▲ LA MANGA DEL MAR MENOR  
MURCIA

Thanks to the privileged climate of Murcia, you can play golf all year round in **La Manga**. You'll find several courses within a 15-minute drive from the capital, including the Mosa Trajectum Golf Club, one of the best in Europe, and the Altorreal Golf Club in Molina de Segura.

The Torre-Pacheco Golf Club in the town

of the same name boasts of being the only course in the Mediterranean that stays open at night. Other options include the La Manga Club in Los Belones and the Hacienda del Álamo in Fuente Álamo.

To relax after all that exercise we suggest a visit to the spa at **Archena** or **Fortuna-Leana**.

## RIDE THE WAVES IN SOMO-RIBAMONTÁN

If you're looking for a special surfing destination, head for **Ribamontán al Mar** in Cantabria. The fine sand and superb wind make this area a paradise for lovers of this sport. In 2012, it was named Spain's top surfing resort.

The sea at **Somo** guarantees year-round waves, and if you're a beginner you can take lessons at the surf school you'll find on the seafront. You can see the Bay of Santander from the seafront promenade.

Whatever your level, you'll find waves to suit everyone in other villages and towns in the area like **Loredo**, **Lángre** and **Galizano**.

# TOUR MINORCA BY BIKE

There's nothing better than cycle-touring in the Balearic Islands. In **Menorca** you'll find routes with explanatory panels along fully adapted ancient rural tracks.

Its gentle rolling landscape is ideal for touring by bike. The route of **El Camí de Cavalls** runs for 185 kilometres around the whole island and offers views over beautiful coves. It's a long ride, but you can always choose to do it over several days or pick just a particular route.

You can also select other shorter paths taking between 20 minutes and two hours, requiring practically no advance planning. For example, Ciutadella - Ferreries, 16.5 km; Ferreries - Es Mercadal, 15.5 km; Mahón - Es Castell, 8 km; and Ciutadella - Punta Nati, 4 km.

You will find all the information on the island's routes at the tourist offices. If you're not bringing your bike with you, you can rent one in almost any tourist area.







## EXPLORE THE SEABED IN EL HIERRO

If you fancy seeing large schools of fish, turtles, manta rays and dolphins, **El Hierro** in the Canary Islands is the destination for you. This island has been declared a Biosphere Reserve by the UNESCO and is home to amazing natural pools and clear waters, making it a perfect place for scuba diving. You can try your hand at this sport for the first time or improve your technique in any of the numerous centres and schools.

The village of **La Restinga** is your gateway to the spectacular marine reserve in the **Mar de las Calmas**. If you also like photography, you can compete with other amateurs in the Open Fotosub underwater photography competition. And back on land, you'll be able to enjoy the views over its 500 open and 300 covered craters.

You'll get a better view of the night sky in **La Palma** than almost anywhere else on earth. The island's geographical situation and meteorological characteristics make this one of the best places for stargazing.

You'll find up to thirteen natural vantage points around the island in the **Network of Astronomical Viewpoints**. And in the **Caldera de Taburiente National Park** in the centre of La Palma, you'll find a spectacular cirque like a cauldron with a diameter of 8 kilometres, and a difference in altitude of almost 2,000 metres. There you can visit the **Roque de los Muchachos Observatory** after booking first on their website.

## GO STARGAZING IN LA PALMA (CANARY ISLANDS)

When you visit the **Timanfaya National Park** you'll feel like you've travelled to the moon. You'll find out why it's the second most visited park in Spain. Formed by 25 active volcanoes, the eruptions that took place in the 18th and 19th centuries gave rise to numerous geomorphological structures that will remind you of the moon's surface. You can take the **Volcano Route** for a guided tour through the park's 11 kilometres. And you can take a dromedary ride over the hot earth. When you're right in the centre of the park, beside the restaurant, you'll see the popular **geysers**, living proof that the magma is roaring beneath your feet.

Finally, from the natural vantage point of **Montaña Rajada**, one of the volcanoes in the park, you can look out over a vast sea of lava that flows down to the coastline.

## WALK AMID VOLCANOES IN TIMANFAYA (LANZAROTE)



## ENJOY THE SIGHT OF POSIDONIA SEAGRASS IN FORMENTERA

Formentera is home to the largest *Posidonia oceanica* meadow in the Mediterranean. You can marvel at the beauty of the island's transparent turquoise waters, whose colour is due to the presence of this native Mediterranean plant. It can be seen on beaches like Ses Illetes, Levante, Migjorn,

Caló des Mort and Es Trucadors. There are established routes you can sign up for, such as the one that takes in the beaches inside the **Ses Salines Nature Reserve**. This meadow and the one in Ibiza have been declared a World Heritage site by the UNESCO for their excellent state of conservation.

# TAKE A TOUR OF THE RIBEIRA SACRA REGION

Awaiting you in the southern part of the province of Lugo and the northern part of the province of Ourense in Galicia you'll find the **Ribeira Sacra** region, declared Biosphere Reserve by the UNESCO and a wine country formed by the plains of the Cabe, Sil and Miño rivers. You'll see spectacular natural spaces such as the gorge of the Sil River and you'll have the chance to visit as many as 18 medieval monasteries. You can even spend the night in one, the monastery of **San Esteban de Ribas de Sil** in Nogueira de Ramuín, which is now a Parador hotel. Nearby you'll find one of the most famous viewing points in the region: the **Balcones de Madrid**.

Continue your journey to Montederramo and the **Monastery of Santa Maria**. You'll be amazed by **San Pedro de Rocas** in Tarreirigo, a chapel carved out of the stone.

You can also stop at Ferreira, the site of the Convent of the **Madres Bernardas**, or experience the charm of the Monastery of San Paio de Abelada, now in ruins. A good place to end your route is in **Monforte de Lemos**, an interesting town with medieval origins.





## GO DEEP INTO THE IRATI FOREST (NAVARRE)

At the headwaters of the Irati River, between the Aezkoa and Salazar valleys, stands the **Irati forest** formed by over 17,000 hectares of beech and fir trees. On your visit you'll see one of the largest, environmentally richest and best preserved forests in Europe.

In autumn, the reds and yellows of the vegetation conjure up a fairytale landscape. It is in this season when you can hear the "berrea" or "rutting" –the impressive guttural sound made by deer in the mating season. In the winter months you can practise cross-country skiing in the **Sierra de Abodi**, and spring is the perfect season for sports like hiking and mountain biking.

# TAKE A STROLL ALONG THE CLIFFTOPS, OR A BOAT TRIP AROUND THE BASQUE COAST GEOPARK

The **Basque Coast Geopark** covers the area between the Bay of Biscay and the Basque mountains, and the towns of Mutriku, Deba and Zumaia. It has 13 kilometres of cliffs with over 60 million years of history. You can walk along the top of them or admire them from a boat. Or best of all, both.

Inside the geopark, formed by limestone mountains, you'll find enclosed hidden valleys where traditions and

landscape have remained almost unchanged. You'll find several guided tours for your convenience on your visit. Notice the fine black film that is evidence of the impact of an enormous asteroid and the extinction of the dinosaurs.

And don't miss a visit to the best group of horses ever depicted in cave art, found in the **Ekain cave** and declared a part of our World Heritage.





Photo: Antonio Acedo

## FLAMENCO BIENNIAL IN SEVILLE

The emotion of the flamenco guitar, the strength and expressiveness of the dance, the passion of the singing... The magic of flamenco awaits you in a unique event held every two years in Seville: the **Flamenco Biennial**. This is the most important international event for this superb Spanish art, which has been declared Intangible Cultural Heritage by the UNESCO.

Pay a visit to some of the main theatres in the city, in such emblematic venues as the **Alcázar palace in Seville** and as traditionally Sevillian as the courtyard of the **former Hotel Triana**. This is a meeting point for famous artists and up-and-emerging young talents.

Whether you want to learn more about genuinely traditional flamenco or to experience bolder, more experimental avant-garde styles, the Biennial is an event that should on no account be missed.

# CARNIVAL IN TENERIFE

Rhythm, colour, abandon and –of course– breathtaking spectacle. Come and enjoy the fun and high spirits in the **Carnival in Santa Cruz de Tenerife**: the most “Brazilian” of all those held in Spain and one of the most popular in the world. For a whole fortnight you can experience the high spirits, gay abandon and imagination that invades the streets of this city in the Canary Islands, as it welcomes hundreds and thousands of people coming from every corner of the planet.

One event not to be missed is the **gala for the election of the Carnival Queen**, where the glamorous candidates form a procession wearing spectacularly extravagant costumes that can weigh more than 100 kilos. Another event not to be missed is the **parade announcing the carnival**, and which marks the start of the street festivities. Dance to the rhythm of the musical bands and mingle with the thousands of people teeming through the streets for hours forming a multicoloured chain of merrymaking and devil-may-care joie de vivre.

For over one week, the city is swept up in a whirlwind of music and festive high spirits, which culminates on the Tuesday, or Mardi Gras, with “**el Coso**”, a **spectacular parade** that thrills everyone who sees it. The next day the **Burial of the Sardine** marks the end of the festivities: the spirit of Carnival, symbolised by the sardine, is carried through the streets on a funeral bier, and then set on fire.



# CELEBRATE GAY PRIDE IN MADRID

In the last week of June you can see and take part in **Gay Pride in Madrid**, one of the most popular events of its kind in the world. The city centre fills with rainbow flags and is transformed into a utopia where all kinds of affection are permitted. To see it from up close, you need to go to **Chueca**, Madrid's LGBTIQ+ quarter, which has numerous stages during the event featuring live music and cultural activities. The Madrid Town Hall, in the **Plaza de Cibeles** square, is

bedecked with multicoloured lights to welcome thousands of people from all over the planet.

Experience the explosion of high spirits and colour in the massively popular parade of floats on the Saturday, the high point of the event. After that, Plaza de España is usually the venue for the concert that provides the finishing touch for one of the most socially radical festivities in the capital.





## EXPERIENCE THE DEVOTION OF EASTER WEEK IN ZAMORA

**Easter Week** is one of the most solemn and moving festivals in Spain, and in **Zamora** (Castile-León), it is a particularly special experience. You'll notice a big difference between the daytime and nighttime processions: silence and seclusion are the key features of the religious associations that come out by night and in the early morning, whereas the daytime processions are full of music and light. Whatever your beliefs, this is a commemoration that is guaranteed to move you.

The cortege of the **Cristo de las Injurias**, whose procession takes place on Easter Wednesday, is almost legendary. The pro-

cession of the Brotherhood of **Jesús Yacente** takes place on the night of Maundy Thursday, and after midnight, the streets fill with the sound of the **Miserere** (a solemn chant based on a psalm from the Bible asking for forgiveness for sins). A highlight on Good Friday is the procession of **La Congregación**, with thrilling moments such as the emergence of the image of the **Camino del Calvario** and the famous bow made by all the other floats before the **Virgen de la Soledad** in the avenue of Las Tres Cruces. You can end your tour in the Easter Week Museum.



## MAKE YOUR OWN LEATHER BAG IN UBRIQUE

Between the mountain ranges of Ubrique and Grazalema stands the town of **Ubrique**, one of the stops on the **Route of the White Villages**. Wander its streets and discover its picturesque popular architecture and its ancient tradition of leather craftsmanship. Visit the ancient convent of the Capuchin monks, where you'll also find the **Leather Museum**. In the cloisters you can learn about the changes in the different machines used in the manufacturing process, and even make your own simple leather bag in a replica of a leather workshop.

The museum is also the setting for other activities such as talks, concerts, theatrical performances and more. Round off your stay by a visit to the historic quarter of Ubrique.

If luxury shopping is right up your street, the **Paseo de Gracia** is your place. This is one of the main avenues in Barcelona, where you'll not only find all the top brands, but you can also see spectacular works of modernist architecture. The head offices of banks that previously occupied the lovely buildings in this area have been replaced by exclusive flagship stores and avant-garde restaurants and cafes.

Just one suggestion: after a long day's shopping it's a nice idea to visit the **Perfume Museum**, where you'll find objects designed by Dalí or belonging to Marie Antoinette, and perfume bottles from different civilisations. Stay in an exclusive hotel and sign up for the services of a personal shopper. Pamper yourself!

## ENJOY THE LUXURY AND EXCLUSIVENESS OF THE PASEO DE GRACIA





## TASTE IBÉRICO HAM IN THE “DEHESA DE EXTREMADURA”

On the **Dehesa de Extremadura Ibérico ham route** you'll discover some of the most attractive villages in Extremadura, and all producers of Ibérico ham.

You'll find a carefully tended ecosystem of almost 1 million hectares, where one of the biggest stars of Spanish gastronomy is raised in the open air: **Black Iberian pig**.

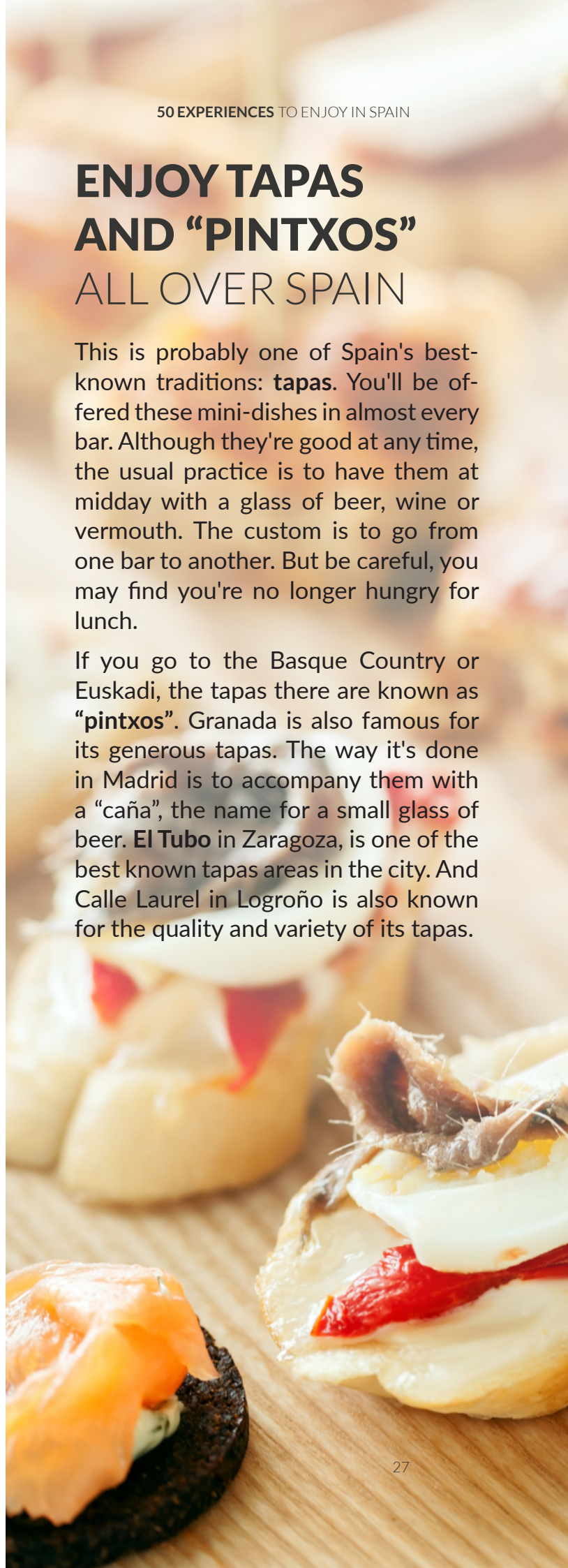
Follow the **Sierras Ham Route** in Badajoz, which includes 33 towns and villages, and the **Montánchez Route** in Cáceres, with 19. There you'll have an opportunity to taste the finest hams in the area.

Not only that, but all these routes are an opportunity to discover historic towns and villages, see the traditional wooded pastures known as “dehesas”, visit a curing plant and take part in a ham carving workshop.

## ENJOY TAPAS AND “PINTXOS” ALL OVER SPAIN

This is probably one of Spain's best-known traditions: **tapas**. You'll be offered these mini-dishes in almost every bar. Although they're good at any time, the usual practice is to have them at midday with a glass of beer, wine or vermouth. The custom is to go from one bar to another. But be careful, you may find you're no longer hungry for lunch.

If you go to the Basque Country or Euskadi, the tapas there are known as “**pintxos**”. Granada is also famous for its generous tapas. The way it's done in Madrid is to accompany them with a “caña”, the name for a small glass of beer. **El Tubo** in Zaragoza, is one of the best known tapas areas in the city. And **Calle Laurel** in Logroño is also known for the quality and variety of its tapas.





▲ WINE CITY  
ELCIEGO

## ENJOY A WINE EXPERIENCE IN LA RIOJA AND LA RIOJA ALAVESA

If you'd like to sample some of Spain's wines, come and visit **La Rioja**, one of the most famous wine-growing areas in the world, and with its own designation of origin. You can have lunch surrounded by wine casks, visit a winery and take part in a wine tasting session, sleep in hotel-wineries and relax after the perfect food and wine pairing with a wine therapy treatment. All this and more is on offer in this wine-growing region. You'll find over 500 wineries here.

Around 80 of them are open to visitors.

You'll find the **Route of La Rioja Alavesa** in the Basque Country. You'll be amazed at the new cathedrals to wine in this area: avant-garde buildings and wineries, the work of prestigious contemporary architects such as Santiago Calatrava, the creator of Bodegas Ysios in Laguardia, or the City of Wine by Frank Gehry in Elciego. All around these areas you'll find numerous opportunities for spas and relaxation to round off your experience.

# DINE IN A MICHELIN-STARRED RESTAURANT IN SAN SEBASTIÁN

Do you fancy a gastronomic treat? Then San Sebastián is the perfect place for it. The great names of the new Spanish gastronomy have chosen to make their mark here in this town in northern Spain and in the surrounding area. Their award-winning restaurants are a chance to try surprising and delicious dishes.

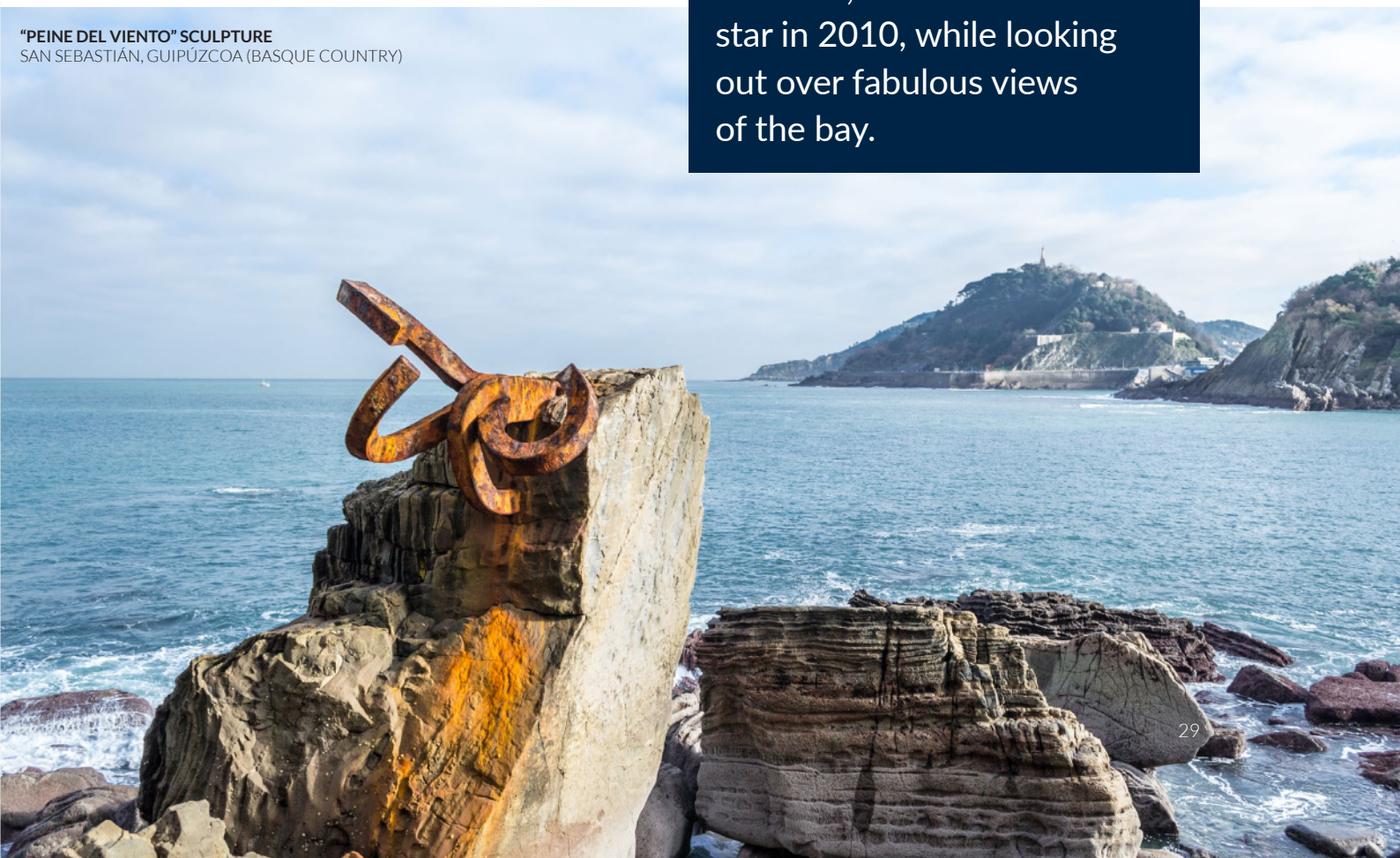
This is cuisine d'auteur in the truest sense of the term: Juan Mari Arzak and his restaurant **Arzak**; Pedro Subijana and his **Akelarre** on Mount Igueldo overlooking the Cantabrian Sea; and

**Martín Berasategui** and his iconic venue at Lasarte-Oria.

Other examples of avant-garde gastronomy include **Kokotxa**, by chef Daniel López, and **Mugaritz**, run by Andoni Luis Aduriz in Errentería, which will captivate diners with their daring creations.

Located at the **Ulía viewing point** on one of the hills surrounding the city, diners can enjoy delicious dishes prepared by chef Rubén Trincado, who won his first star in 2010, while looking out over fabulous views of the bay.

"PEINE DEL VIENTO" SCULPTURE  
SAN SEBASTIÁN, GUIPÚZCOA (BASQUE COUNTRY)

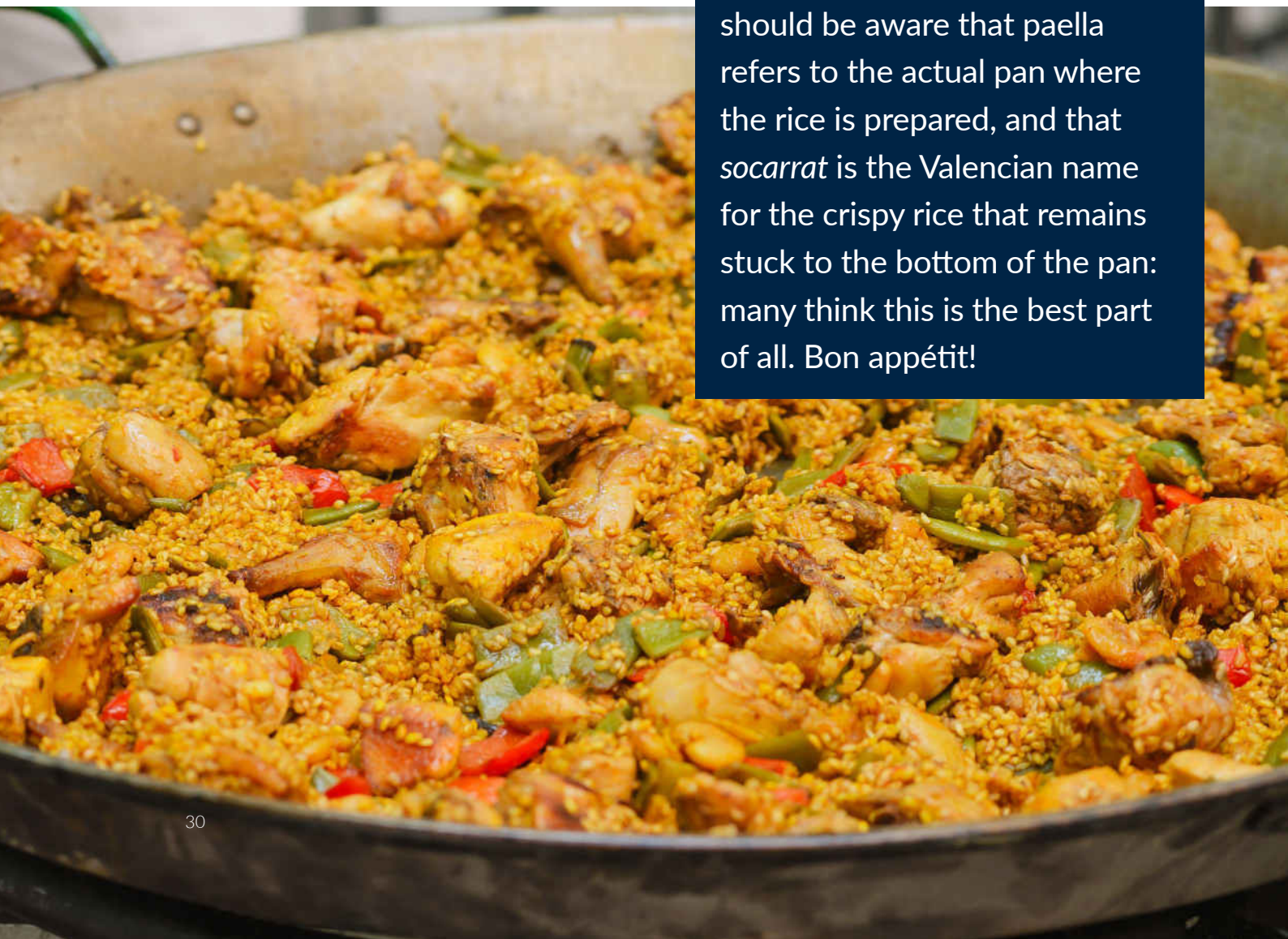


# ENJOY A PAELLA OVERLOOKING THE SEA IN THE REGION OF VALENCIA

Savour a plate of paella with some excellent white wine as you're caressed by the breeze from the Mediterranean: that's the way to really experience Spain. In the area around the port and on the beaches of **Las Arenas** and **La Malvarrosa** in Valencia, the cradle of paella, you'll find fantastic venues overlooking the sea where you can enjoy Spain's most international dish.

Which one to order? The genuine Valencian paella is made with rice, rabbit, snails, chicken, a typical local bean and saffron, although variations are also permitted, such as the seafood or mixed paella (with meat and shellfish), black paella and black rice... It's up to you.

And just so you know what the locals are talking about, you should be aware that paella refers to the actual pan where the rice is prepared, and that *socarrat* is the Valencian name for the crispy rice that remains stuck to the bottom of the pan: many think this is the best part of all. Bon appétit!





## VISIT THE CHEESE FARM AND CIDER PRESSES OF ASTURIAS

Taste a delicious cheese washed down with cider in Asturias. If you want to enjoy the experience like a real Asturian, you should pay a visit to a traditional **cheese farm** or **llagar** (cider press). If you like cheese, you'll find this region in Spain a paradise. It has no less than 40 different varieties! Some of the best-known are Afuega'l Pitu, Gámoneu and Cabrales. You can also take a tour of some of the cheese dairies that offer guided visits. In the **Concejo**

de **Cabrales** area you can visit some of the natural caves where they make Cabrales, one of the finest blue cheeses in the world. You can take part in a tasting session and learn about the life of the shepherds in a unique setting: the Picos de Europa mountains.

“Llagar” is the name given to the place where they make cider, the typical drink of Asturias. Cider is served here in a wide glass. Learn how to pour it in the typical manner: raise your arm, holding the bottle as high as you can, and try to ensure the stream falls directly into the glass held in your other hand as low as possible. It's not easy, but it's great fun.



## TAKE A TOUR OF THE GASTRO SPOTS IN SPAIN'S CITIES

Would you like to sample Spain's gourmet products and exquisite gastronomic creations from all over the world in a unique setting? You can enjoy unique experiences in the **gastro spaces**, former markets, cinemas or factories restored for culinary recreation. In addition to sampling delicious dishes, and you'll be able to listen to music, visit exhibitions, take part in tasting sessions and workshops, and much more.

The food hall of Galería Canalejas is sure to surprise you. In this culinary space, you'll be able to enjoy restaurants from different nationalities serving various delicacies, including the creations of Michelin-starred chefs. Also in the capital, you're bound to love the markets of **San Miguel** and **San Antón**.

Treat yourself to a glass of cava with some oysters in an old restored modernist garage in **El Nacional**: a key spot for the new gastronomic trends in Barcelona. You'll find one restaurant, four gastronomic spaces and four bars specialising in beer, wine, cava and cocktails. In the heart of the Rambla in Barcelona stands one of Spain's most iconic markets, **La Boquería**.

Don't miss the **La Ribera Market** in Bilbao, with its delicious selection of pintxos and Basque dishes prepared to the sound of live music.



## DINE IN A CATALAN FARMHOUSE

Turn off your mobile phone and get ready to enjoy one of the best cuisines in Spain, the cuisine of Catalonia. With its exquisite decoration, sturdy stone walls, and all the best local produce, these traditional Catalan farmhouses are the perfect place to enjoy dining in a unique setting.

Sample Catalan cuisine in the heart of nature in an old 11th-century castle designated a part of City of Barcelona's Artistic Heritage, or beside the Montseny Nature Reserve. In any of these farmhouses you'll find a cuisine that's close to its roots, created using local products harvested according to traditional methods, and you'll feel the history ingrained in its walls.



# CLIMB ABOARD THE TRANSCANTÁBRICO AND DISCOVER NORTHERN SPAIN

Leave all your cares and woes behind, look out of the train windows and enjoy the landscapes of green Spain. You'll stop at unique destinations such as **León Cathedral**, the **Peine de los Vientos** sculpture in San Sebastián and the **Picos de Europa National Park** across the provinces of Asturias, Cantabria and Leon, declared a Biosphere Reserve.

The trains are genuine railway treasures where you'll be treated to a whole host

of luxuries: lounges with bars and dance floors, *deluxe* suites and premium category rooms with ensuite bathrooms, hydrosauna, turbomassage, steam bath...

The Transcantábrico is an invitation to discover nature, culture, and of course, good food. On your journey you'll be served wonderful buffet and à la carte breakfasts. But you'll also have lunch and dinner in some of the finest restaurants in the regions along your route.

Discover the north of Spain on board one of the world's best tourist trains: the **Transcantábrico**. This is an experience you're bound to love.

▼ TRANS-CANTABRIAN TRAIN  
EBRO RESERVOIR



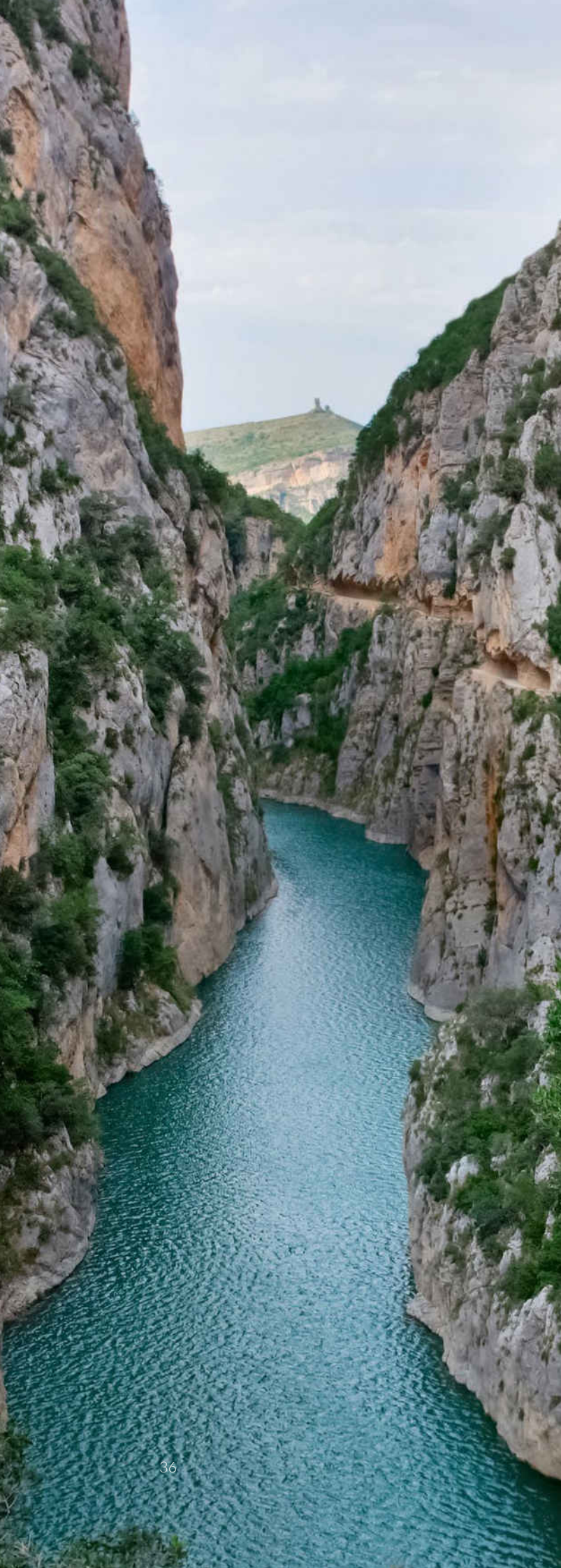
## FOLLOW THE SILVER ROUTE ON A MOTORBIKE

Put on your helmet and get ready to enjoy the views on one of the loveliest motor-cycling routes in Spain: the **Silver Route**, which goes from Gijón through several regions to Seville. This itinerary links the north and south of Spain and follows an ancient Roman road whose origins date back to the late Bronze Age.

The whole route is 800 kilometres long, and can be done on a motorbike by following the modern A-66 dual carriageway or the classic N-630 road, with different speed limits and a less convenient itinerary, but with very interesting landscapes. On this route you'll pass mountains, plains and rivers, and you'll go through the interior of several cities with the World Heritage designation (Salamanca, Cáceres and Mérida).

The road is all yours. Discover it at your own pace. One tip: pick up the “**Pasaporte Rúa Vía de la Plata**”, which offers discounts in a range of establishments.





## ENJOY THE VIEWS IN THE MONT-REBEI GORGE

Put on your hiking boots and discover one of the most spectacular gorges in Spain: the **Paso de Mont-Rebei**. Located on the boundary between Huesca (Aragon) and Lleida (Catalonia), this is one of the few unspoilt gorges that is not yet spanned by any roads, railways or electricity lines. You'll be rewarded with some spectacular views: its walls rise vertically to heights of up to 500 metres and there are points where the route is only 20 metres wide.

Dare to walk across hanging bridges like the one in the **Sant Jaume gorge**, suspended forty metres above the river, or the **Montfalcó walkways**. Heaven and Earth within your reach. Are you going to miss it?

# COME AND MARVEL AT THE **WAY OF SAINT JAMES**



Throw your rucksack over your shoulder and get ready to enjoy an unforgettable adventure that combines companionship, personal challenge, sport, culture and nature. Hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world come to follow the **Way of Saint James**. This is a different way of travelling around northern Spain, along several itineraries which all converge at the same destination: the **Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela** in Galicia, the site of the tomb of the apostle Saint James.

Disconnect from everything and relax by sharing experiences with pilgrims come from every corner of the world on the paths and at the hostels you'll find along the way.





## IMMERSE YOURSELF IN THE SCENT OF CAMELLIAS IN GALICIA

Enjoy some local Albariño wine in a traditional manor house set amid camellias, stroll through historic gardens and above all, discover the beauty of this flower, chosen by Chanel as the symbol of elegance. The route of the camellias wends its way through Pontevedra and along the Rias Baixas, from **Vilagarcía de Arousa** to **Vigo**, through some spectacular gardens where you can discover the over 8,000 varieties that are grown in Galicia.

In the **Pazo de Rubianes** in Vilagarcía, you can visit the small shop selling soap prepared by the nuns from the Order

of Saint Clare. The **Pazo de Ribadumia** in the Salnés valley has been used as a set for films and television series, and produces its own highly-prized Albariño wine. In Vigo you'll find the **Pazo de O Castro**, located on a high point in the city and offering beautiful views over the port and the estuary.

Did you know that camellias bloom in winter? You can see them at their best from late December to mid-March.

## SLEEP LIKE A KING IN A PARADOR HOTEL

If you choose a Parador as your hotel in Spain, you're guaranteed an unforgettable experience. You can spend the night in an ancient castle, monastery or palace with centuries of history. You'll sleep where kings and queens have slept before you.

If you fancy a medieval castle, you can stay in the **Parador de Ciudad Rodrigo**

(Salamanca) or the **Parador de Sigüenza** (Guadalajara). Or you can stay the night in a palace in the **Parador de Úbeda** (Jaén) or in a convent in the **Parador de Almagro** (Ciudad Real).

There are currently over 90 Parador hotels in Spain. There are plenty to choose from. They tend to be located in spectacular places, in the heart of nature, on amazing vantage points or in historic city centres. Many of these hotels are historic monuments in their own right. If you like the idea of experiencing history up close, this is the option for you.

**PARADOR DE ÚBEDA**  
JAÉN (ANDALUSIA)

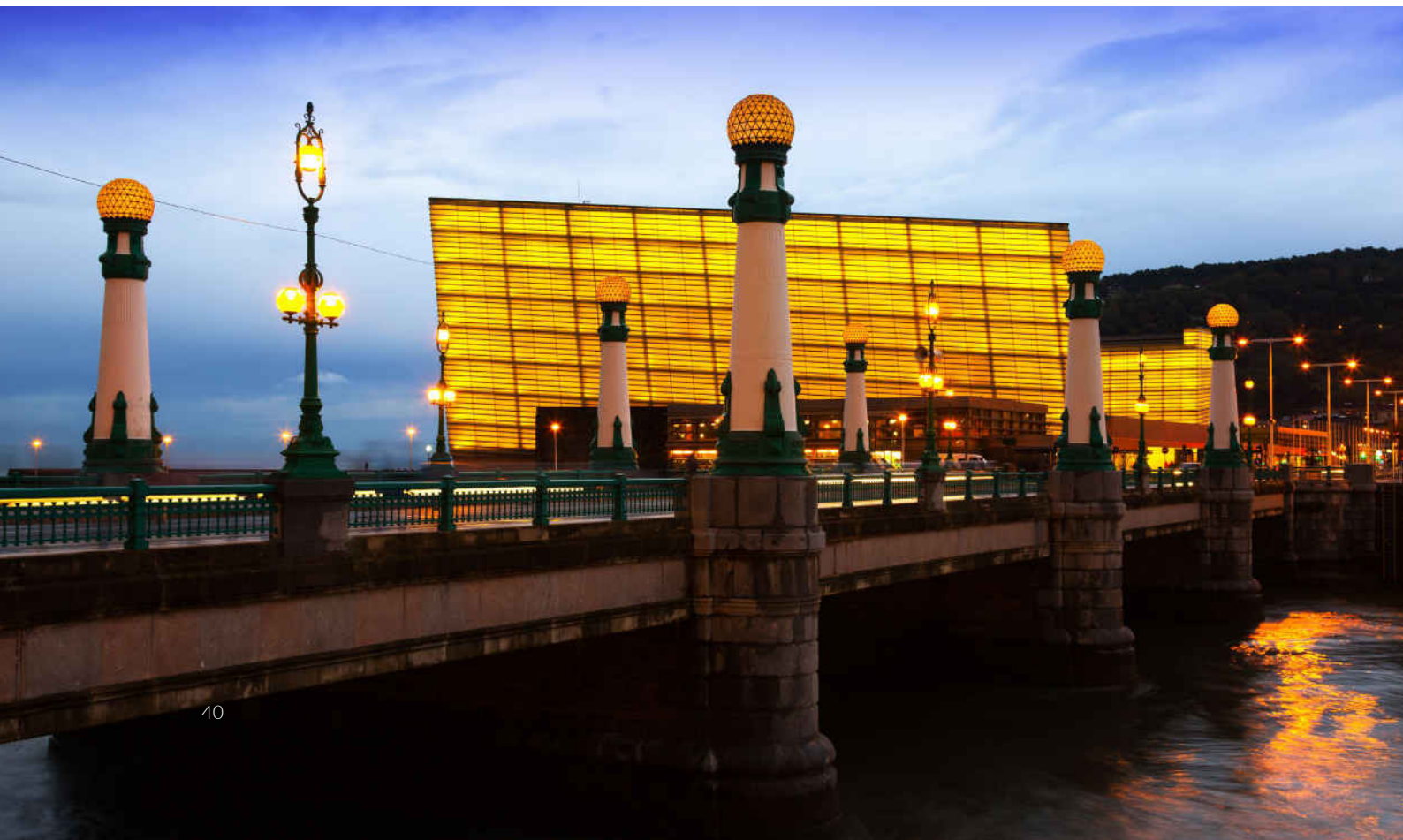


# DISCOVER CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE IN SPAIN THROUGH THE PRITZKER PRIZEWINNERS

The Pritzker is regarded as the Nobel prize for architecture. **Rafael Moneo** was the first Spanish architect to win the award in 1996, and you can see his work all over Spain. The **Kursaal Conference Centre** and **Auditorium** in San Sebastián; the remodelling of **Atocha Station** in Madrid; the **Town Hall** in Murcia; the **Science Museum** in Valladolid and the **National Roman Art Museum** in Mérida are just a few examples of his legacy.

Other Pritzker laureates are **Rafael Aranda**, **Carme Pigem** and **Ramón Vilalta** from the firm RCR Arquitectes (Girona), in 2017. Most of their work can be seen in Catalonia. Don't miss the **library of Sant Antoni** – **Joan Oliver**, in the Eixample district in Barcelona, the **2x1 Athletics Stadium** and **Pavilion** in Olot (Girona) and the **Piedra Tosca Park** in Les Preses (Girona).

▼ **KURSAAL CONFERENCE CENTRE**  
SAN SEBASTIÁN, GUIPÚZCOA (BASQUE COUNTRY)





## RIDE A HOT-AIR BALLOON OVER SOME OF SPAIN'S WORLD HERITAGE CITIES

They say you need to take a balloon ride at least once in your life. In Spain you can do so while enjoying views of World Heritage cities.

In **Segovia**, the view from the heights of the aqueduct and the Alcázar fortress will leave you speechless. You'll find flying over **Avila**'s city walls and its Cathedral, with the Gredos mountains in the background, a unique experience. Enjoy the architecture of **Toledo** from the air as you follow the meanders of the Tagus river and admire the universities of **Salamanca** and **Santiago de Compostela**. See how the Mediterranean Sea encircles the white island of **Ibiza**.

These are just some of the universal cities you can enjoy from a bird's eye view.



# FOLLOW THE ROUTE OF DON QUIXOTE

Immerse yourself in a classic of world literature, *Don Quixote of La Mancha*. This route runs through the centuries-old villages, historical paths and nature areas described by Miguel de Cervantes.

There are many places to see, but every tour has to include **Toledo**, the capital of the Castile-La Mancha region. There you can visit some of the places mentioned in the novel and even the house where the writer himself lived, in the **Plaza de los Tintes**.

Other highlights are the famous windmills in **Campo de Criptana** (Ciudad Real) that Don Quixote fought. Essential stops include **El Toboso**, the hometown of Dulcinea, Don Quixote's lady love, and **Almagro**, among whose important historic-artistic attractions are its Plaza Mayor square and the spectacular courtyard theatre known as the Corral de Comedias.

In Ossa de Montiel (Albacete) you'll be able to recreate two of the book's most famous scenes: Montesinos' cave and the Castle of Rochafriada.

▲ WINDMILLS  
CONSUEGRA

## EXPLORE SPAIN'S FILM SETTINGS



▲ SAN JUAN DE GAZTELUGATXE  
BERMEO, BASQUE COUNTRY

Would you like to visit the settings for *Game of Thrones* or the places where the adventures of James Bond, Indiana Jones or Anakin Skywalker were filmed? Spain is a film destination, and in many cities you'll find itineraries related to the seventh art. Choose yours.

The streets of Calatañazor in Soria were chosen by Orson Welles to be witnesses to his famous *Chimes at Midnight*. If you're a *Game of Thrones* fan, you have to visit Seville: the Alcázar fortress and the ruins of Itálica have witnessed some of the key scenes in the series. You'll recognise the arid landscapes the dragons fly over in the sixth season in the Bárdenas Reales Nature Reserve (Navarre).

The Almería desert, the backdrop for numerous westerns, still resonates to the footsteps of Clint Eastwood (you can visit the old film studios),

and Princess Amidala can be seen walking through Plaza de España square in Seville, recreated as the galactic world of Naboo in *Star Wars*.

James Bond has visited us several times. Follow the routes of the famous spy through the streets of Cadiz (*Die Another Day*) and the area around the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao (*The World is not Enough*). In Las Fraguas (Cantabria) you can explore the Los Hornillos Palace, the house that terrorised Nicole Kidman in *The Others*.

The desert and lunar landscapes of Fuerteventura (Canary Islands) have been the setting for films such as *Exodus* by Ridley Scott and *Allied* by Robert Zemeckis. And the south of the island was chosen by the *Star Wars* team to shoot some of the new episodes in the saga.



## PRACTISE YOGA IN IDYLIC PLACES

Enjoy nature, gastronomy and relaxation while you practise yoga outdoors in beautiful natural spaces. The best seasons to do so are spring and summer. In almost all Spanish regions you'll find "retreats" offering activities to do with yoga.

If you're in Madrid and need to disconnect, go to the **Retiro Park**, a special place for yoga beginners and experts alike. There are also numerous retreats in the mountains around Madrid.

Spain's beaches are a common meeting point for yogis from all over the world. In the heart of **Cala Sol den Serra** in Ibiza, you'll find courses for all levels. And in **Caños de Meca**, also beside the sea, in addition to yoga classes, you can also enjoy other activities such as biodance. The fabulous setting of **Las Alpujarras** offers a chance to attend a retreat while you practise your English. Spain is yoga-friendly.

## IMMERSE YOURSELF IN HISTORY ON A DRAMATISED ROUTE

Would you like to see for yourself what a city was really like in the past? In Spain you'll find original visits and dramatised routes in a multitude of destinations. Join the one organised by the **Lope de Vega House Museum** to explore the Barrio de las Letras quarter in Madrid and learn all about the writers of the Golden Age. In **Alcala de Henares** (Madrid) you can relive the adventures of its most famous inhabitant: Miguel de Cervantes, the author of *Don Quixote*. If your destination is Barcelona we recommend the **themed tours on Gaudí or Picasso** and the dramatised visit to the **Casa Batlló**.

In Andalusia, follow in the footsteps of **Federico García Lorca** around the city of Granada or the **opera routes in Seville**. World Heritage cities also offer a whole range of options: from Cáceres, where you can explore the spectacular old town in the company of Queen Isabella La Católica, or Segovia, where you can take a walk accompanied by minstrels who will regale you with tales of the city.



# TAKE A TOUR AROUND SOME OF THE LOVELIEST TOWNS IN SPAIN

Spain boasts towns as beautiful as **Ronda (Malaga)**. Stroll across its Puente Nuevo bridge, standing almost 100 metres high and offering incredible views of the mountains and its old town, declared of Cultural Interest. **Trujillo (Cáceres)** will captivate you with its narrow cobbled streets converging in its lovely Plaza Mayor square. In **Cadaqués (Girona)** you'll find the Dali House Museum overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. This is one of the loveliest towns on the Costa Brava. Enjoy its coves and tour the Cap de Creus Nature Reserve by bike.

If you're in Galicia, it's well worth visiting **Combarro (Pontevedra)**, a typical Galician fishing village, and one of the best preserved of its kind. The imposing fortified enclosure of **Albarracín (Teruel)** will take you back in history to another era. The ancient capital of a kingdom of "taifas", this small village has retained all its Islamic and medieval flavour.

And if you're a nature lover, you'll be in your element in **Tejeda (Gran Canaria)**: located in the highest part of the islands, this is the site of the natural monument of Roque Nublo, the symbol of Gran Canaria. It's a perfect area for hiking and stargazing.

These are just a few, but there are many more charming towns and villages waiting to be discovered, such as **Valldemossa** in the **Balearic Islands**; **Santillana del Mar** in **Cantabria**; **Almagro** in **Castile-La Mancha**; **Hondarribia** in the **Basque Country**; and **Pedraza** in **Castile-Leon**...

On the official website of the "The most beautiful villages in Spain" Association ([www.lospueblosmasbonitosdeespana.org](http://www.lospueblosmasbonitosdeespana.org)) you'll find more recommendations to visit.





## DISCOVER HOW THE ANDALUSIAN HORSES DANCE

▲ ROYAL ANDALUSIAN SCHOOL OF EQUESTRIAN ART  
JEREZ DE LA FRONTERA

How do Andalusian horses dance? With consummate skill. You can see for yourself in places such as the **Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art** in Jerez de la Frontera (Cadiz). In the show “How the Andalusian horses dance”, you'll be amazed to see the horses move and perform dance steps and choreography to the rhythm of popular Spanish melodies. History, art, aesthetics, entertainment... This show offers a colourful display that will thrill audiences of all ages.

While you're there, make a point of visiting the Royal Equestrian School to find

out more about the Spanish thoroughbred, an animal with 3,000 years of history. You'll be able to see the riders' daily workouts in the **ring**; the stables where the animals rest and are pampered; the “galopaderos” for galloping and the warm-up tracks... If you still have time, stop by the **Carriage Museum**, which houses a collection of historic carriages and saddles, and the **Equestrian Art Museum**, an interactive multimedia space that will introduce you to this fascinating world in an original and entertaining way.

# SALAMANCA, A CITY OF CULTURE AND NIGHTLIFE

You can do anything you like in Salamanca. Wander around the old town, a UNESCO World Heritage site, go out for tapas in its bars and taverns and enjoy the city's university atmosphere. Visitors won't want to miss the **New Cathedral**, the **Old Cathedral**, the **Casa de las Conchas**, the **Clerecía**, the **Las Dueñas convent** and the **Plaza Mayor square**.

Salamanca is bustling day and night, during the week and on weekends.

If you prefer the idea of a quieter evening, why not sign up for the hour-long guided visit entitled 'While the Cathedral sleeps', which invites you to explore the spaces in the documentary exhibition on an itinerary packed with surprises, including light shows and background music. The tour ends in the belltower, where you can send your own personalised bell peal and see Salamanca illuminated from the best possible vantage point.





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