



CASTILLA  
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**SOMEWHERE  
IN YOUR LIFE**



## **¿YOU STILL DON'T KNOW WHY YOU SHOULD VISIT CASTILE-LA MANCHA?**

¿Do you think these lands, known because of Don Quixote's adventures, are only wide flat lands, ploughed by roads and railways which cross the centre of the Iberian Peninsula? ¿Don't you think you should already know this particular region, filled with nature, Universal Heritage, unique festivals and delightful gastronomy? Castile-La Mancha awaits you. Enjoy it. Its charm will please, teach and amuse you. Think about what kind of trip you would like to do. **You will find it very close... in Castile-La Mancha.**





## WORLD HERITAGE

If you are looking for monumental and artistic cities, Toledo and Cuenca are declared Cultural Heritage. 2016 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary since they were selected by UNESCO, an exclusive club of the world's wonders.

## TOLEDO

On a hill embraced by the Tajo River, Toledo has hosted all civilisations that have passed through the Iberian Peninsula: romans, Visigoths, Jews, Muslims, Christians... Each one embellished it with the best of their art and culture. It is no wonder it has more than a hundred monuments.

It is difficult to enumerate such beauty. You will spend a lot of hours to traverse its Primate Cathedral, San Juan de los Reyes, the synagogues of Santa María la Blanca, Tránsito, former Hospitals Tavera and Santa Cruz, Cristo de la Luz mosque, The Alcázar, Bisagra, Sol or Cambron doors, the Alcántara and San Martín bridges...

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Cathedral, Alcázar and San Gil Convent of Toledo.



Toledo.









Toledo's shed / Prayer room's Coffered ceiling of Tránsito Synagogue in Toledo.

Wander around its streets, visit churches and chapels searching for incomparable paintings of El Greco. Toledo is the only city in the world where you can find most of his work. Once you have embraced Toledo's beauty there is more. Visit the heart of its unknown heritage: Roman and Arab baths, medieval cisterns and underground caves. All are appealing attractions for tourism. It is as charming as walking around its shelters, ramparts and alleys having as a guide, a good book with Toledo's legends.

## CUENCA

To the world, Cuenca is the city of the Hanging houses. These amazing constructions, which balconies overlook rashly upon Huecar's Gorge, are unique as well as the museums from this city. You will be surprised by its originality, diversity and didactic sense. Delight yourself with your couple, friends or family.

The Hanging Houses open their doors to the Abstract Art Museum, sponsored by Gustavo Torner (from Cuenca) and his friend Fernando Zóbel. The work of internationally well-known Spanish artists will be displayed. Contemporary art is also shown in Antonio Pérez Foundations, with a great collection of this poet, editor and artist during his bohemian life and, with pieces of Antonio Saura, a painter born in Aragón and from Cuenca at heart.



Abstract Art Museum in the  
Hanging Houses of Cuenca.

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Cuenca.







The star of Cuenca's museums is the paleontological. You will find more than two hundred fossil examples taken from different sites which continue growing. Among them stands Pepito, a hunchback dinosaur, scientifically known as *Concavenator Corcovatus* found in Las Hoyas. You will see life-size reproductions of these enigmatic animals which dominated Castile-La Mancha millions of years ago and had great presence in Cuenca. Walk your way through its beautiful mountainous enclaves which some scientists have dubbed as "Atapuerca of the dinosaurs".

The Provincial Museum preserves archaeological remains from Paleolithic to The Middle Ages of ancient Hispanic Roman cities in Segóbriga, Valeria and Ercávia. As you can see, Cuenca has a great past and a charming present.

Cuenca's Cathedral / Júcar River across Cuenca.







## MERCURY AND CAVE PAINTINGS

Together with Toledo and Cuenca, other two special enclaves from Castile-La Mancha are also World Heritage: Almadén Mining Park and Mediterranean Arc Cave Paintings which continue throughout the caves and shelters from the provinces Cuenca, Albacete and Guadalajara.

A third of the mercury consumed has emerged from the bowels of Almadén's Mines, which began to be exploited by the Romans. Strolling through its Mining Park you will be able to go down the hundred-year-old galleries and at the same time learn how the daily life of hardworking miners was.

The Mediterranean Arc Cave Paintings from the Iberian Peninsula are amazing. They represent images of everyday life from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age. In them you will witness scenes such as hunting, fights, animal figures, men and women with dresses or hair ornaments and ritual dances. Castile-La Mancha is one of the six Autonomous Communities where they extend. In the Region there are more than ninety enclaves catalogued, in which Cueva de la Vieja or Cueva del Venado in Alpera, el Abrigo Grande in Hellín, Peña del Escrito and Selva Pascuala in Villar del Humo, Solana de las Covachas sets in Nerpio and Rillo de Gallo, close to Molina de Aragón, stand out.

Cave paintings from Villar del Humo.







Belmonte.



The assets Castile-La Mancha has are much more than only these enclaves recognised by UNESCO. To know them in detail you should tour the region from end to end and make stops in monumental sets such as Sigüenza, Atienza, Hita, Jadraque, Pastrana, Mondéjar Alarcón, San Clemente, Chinchilla de Montearagón, Alcaraz, Belmonte, Villanueva de los Infantes, Almagro, Orgaz or Yepes. Save time to visit Albacete, Guadalajara and Ciudad Real, dynamic provincial capitals, and the cities Talavera de la Reina and Puertollano.

You will not be short of unique accommodations, from eight National Paradors –Sigüenza, Cuenca, Alarcón, Albacete, Almagro, Manzanares, Toledo and Oropesa– to welcoming rural homes or hotels with charm in old mansions and beautifully restored palaces.

Talavera de la Reina / Infanzado Palace of Guadalajara.



Almagro.



## ARCHEOLOGICAL PARKS

The ancient stones of Castile-La Mancha have fabulous and surprising stories. By listening to them you will find your way and understand more these lands. Visit its archeological parks: Segóbriga, Carranque, Alarcos-Calatrava and Recópolis.

Near Saelices, in the heart of Cuenca in La Mancha, you can find the remains from the ancient roman city of Segóbirga, consisting of a theatre, amphitheatre, circus, forum, baths and gymnasium. It is one of the best preserved *Hispanian* urban ensembles of the age. In the upper Guadiana, at about eight kilometres from Ciudad Real, on a hill where the River ford was being watched, you will find the archeological set of Alarcos. The echo from the Reconquest still reverberate among the walls and watchtowers from the naerby Islamic city Calatrava la Vieja, founded during the Umayyad period.

In honor of his son Recaredo, the king Leovigildo raised Recopolis city near Zorita de los Canes, Guadalajara. Surrounded by a great wall, its interior is a treasure of the Visigoth culture, particularly its palatial ensemble, basilica, plaza and crafts workshop. Next to a beautiful spot of the Guadarrama River, the Archeological Park of Carranque opens its doors. Its most valued part is Casa de Materno with twenty rooms paved in gorgeous Roman mosaics.

Calatrava la Vieja / Carranque / Recópolis.







## NATURAL WEALTH

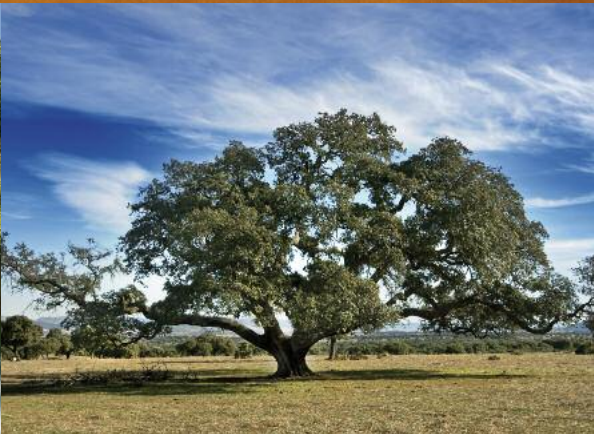
Together with its monumental heritage, Castile-La Mancha offers an extraordinary landscape with natural wealth. Its landscapes invites to: hiking, biking, horseback riding or ATV's, canoeing or caving. You can even enjoy observing the clear skies where there is a star named Cervantes. Its two National Parks, Cabañeros and las Tablas de Daimiel, have unique features. It is evident, in both, the collective effort to preserve and defend these unique natural areas, putting their preservation before other interests.

Cabañeros National Park straddles the provinces of Toledo and Ciudad Real. Its meadows and pastures, dotted with oaks, cork and oak, host colonies of imperial eagles, black storks, black vultures, deer, roe deer and wild boar. It is a Mediterranean ecosystem like no other. In early autumn, the Park lives the bellowing, one of its most attractive periods.

Upstream of the Guadiana River, Lagunas de Ruidera awaits you, a great tourist attraction with bathing and fishing areas with its unforgettable turquoise waters. In the park is the quixotic Cave of Montesinos. Nearby lays the volcanic Campo de Calatrava, with outcrops of hot springs. Heading south you will arrive at the Valle de Alcudia, a traditional wintering area for migratory herds of sheep. The oaks provide a landscape of great beauty and important vestiges of the past, as the ancient Roman city of Sisapo near Bienvenida. You are just one step to Sierra Morena, with famous resorts and great wealth of species.

Another spectacular nature reserve is Cabriel Sickles in the province of Cuenca. There Cabriel River has formed a limestone canyon unparalleled sublimating places of great beauty such as the Sierra de los Cuchillos. Similar gorges and canyons are found in other parts of the Manchuela, a divided region between the provinces of Albacete and Cuenca, forming enclaves as admirable as Alcalá del Júcar or Jorquera, very esteemed vacation destinations.





## Tablas de Daimiel.



The Tablas de Daimiel, in the province of Ciudad Real, are the epitome of what is known as a Damp Mancha, a large area which hosts localities of Ciudad Real, Toledo, Cuenca and Albacete, considered Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO. In its lagoon complexes, formed by the Guadiana, Cigüela, Zánacara, Azuer or Riánsares Rivers nest numerous colonies of birds during their nesting, breeding or migratory seasons. Flocks of flamingos that live there give a colorful and special exoticism to their environment.





The Birth of Mundo River, near Riópar, is another paradise for ecotourism. In “Los Chorros”, the water comes from a large grotto, rushing as a waterfall in an amazing height of two hundred meters. Do not miss out on places such as Ayna-the “Swiss of La Mancha”, Liétor, Alcaraz and Nerpio.

In the eastern half of the province of Cuenca, the erosion and subsidence of the limestone has made strange shapes. Its highest expression is the Enchanted City. Nearby await you two wonderful attractions, “Devil Ventano”, the viewpoint on the mouth of Júcar in Villalba de la Sierra, and the birth of the River Cuervo, in Vega Del Codorno. The beauty it reaches during the cold winter days is amazing. Book your visit to the Hunting Park “El Hosquillo” inhabited by deer, fallow deer, mouflons, roe deer, mountain goats, wolves and even grizzly bears. And before leaving these highlands, look for the Beteta Gorges, locality frequented for its springs of medicinal mineral waters.

The highest levels of Castile-La Mancha are located in the Sierra of Ayllón, in Guadalajara. It is the region of the famous black towns. The Natural Park Hayedo of Tejera Negra is considered a botanical relic. It is Europe's southernmost beech forest. In autumn the reddish color of its leaves gives it a magical charm.

Albalate de las Nogueras / Cuervo River / Pico Ocejón.









Solana Plain.

With a comprehensive network of tourist routes, in Guadalajara you will find the moorlands of Molina and the Natural Park of Cañón del Alto Tajo. A place you should not miss from Valle del Henares, Pelegrina is the Barranco del Rio Dulce. Another natural wonder that Tajo offers, now in the province of Toledo, are the Barrancas de Burujón, which surprising cliffs seem from another planet.

## PLAINSS AND MOORLANDS

Castile-La Mancha has two regions with literary fame: La Mancha and La Alcarria. The vast widths of the first, crammed with vineyards, are truncated by hills where you will see the silhouette of the famous windmills. It is a land of great and popular villages rich in architecture, marked by its whitewashed walls painted indigo skirts. Alcazar de San Juan, Consuegra, El Toboso, Tomelloso, Golf Criptana Villarrobledo, Manzanares, Socuéllamos, San Clemente.

The Alcarria are plateaus and valleys of the rivers Tajo, Tajuña and Henares which cover Guadalajara and Cuenca. It is a countryside populated with oaks, willows, poplars and a variety of herbs, essential for the production of exquisite honey.





In the province of Toledo, bordering Gredos, the massifs of the Sierra de San Vicente are lands of pine, oak and chestnut trees, there you can walk along the “Senda de Viriato”. The regions of Montes de Toledo and Jara complete the mountain range of the province, with such attractive places as “El Chorro”, “Las Becerras” and “Garganta de las Lanchas” in Los Navalucillos and Robledo del Mazo. A good choice for active tourism is to traverse “Via Verde de la Jara”, over an old railway line of Talavera Extremadura.

## **FESTIVITIES...**

There is no town in Castile-La Mancha which does not have a party worth knowing and enjoying. So great is its diversity that to know them well requires much time and will to have fun. Five, declared of International Tourist Interest, are essential: Corpus Christi of Toledo, Albacete Fair and Easter Week in Cuenca, Toledo and Hellin.

Alongside them, the ones recognized as national or regional interest multiply. They are a unique offer: Carnival of Villarrobleto, Herencia or Miguelurtura; Moors and Christians in Caudete or Valverde de Júcar; Easter in Tobarra, Ciudad Real, Ocaña, El Bonillo, Villarrubia de los Ojos, Hiendelancina or Tarancon; the Endiablada of Almonacid del Marquesado; the Caballada Atienza.

The Corpus has unique characteristics in Camuñas, Lagartera, Villanueva de la Fuente or Elche, with its carpet of sawdust. But that is not all: Hita Medieval Festival, Festivities of the Holy Child in Majaelrayo, husks in Talavera de la Reina, Feast of the Olive in Mora, Pandorga in Ciudad Real, Game Faces in Calzada de Calatrava, Holy Vote in Puertollano, Paces Villarta de San Juan, San Mateo Cuenca, Vitor in Horcajo de Santiago Pilgrimage of Rus in San Clemente, Santa Águeda in Cogolludo, Tenorio Mendocino in Guadalajara, Fiesta de la Rosa Saffron in Consuegra, Cow Festival in San Pablo de los Montes, Danzantes del Cristo de la Viga in Villacanas, ... and so on up to hundreds of celebrations that make worth celebrating a popular culture with its generous past and ambitious future.



## TRADITIONAL CRAFT

Craft is art and culture. In Castile-La Mancha people still work on forging, pottery, woodwork, stonework, embroidery or leather goods following techniques passed on from generation to generation. From this tradition, today's master craftsmen make innovated and modern objects using humble materials as clay, wood, iron, wicker, leather, glass, paper, wool, fabrics and threads.

There are unique pieces of pottery and tiles in Talavera de la Reina and El Puente del Arzobispo, cutlery in Albacete, damascene, chiseled and sword making in Toledo, tatting in Almagro, embroidery in Lagartera and Oropesa, or wicker in Cuenca. And those made in many other workshops where the forge is dominated, beautiful potter pieces are moulded, barrels are made, complex coffered ceilings are assembled, images or altarpieces are carved, guitars and musical instruments are made, leather and paper goods are manufactured.

## A BREAK AND EATERY

Olive oil from Montes de Toledo, aubergine from Almagro, purple garlic from Las Pedroñeras, onions from Recas, lamb from la Mancha, marzipan from Toledo, melon from la Mancha, exquisite game, sheep cheese, distinguished legumes, trout from the upper Tajo, vegetables cultivated in meadows of our rivers or the varied wine and liquors produced in the region. Let us not forget the homebrewed beer, which is very popular nowadays.

Seasoning these products with love, imagination, audacity and suitable taste, Castile-La Mancha's kitchen offers mouth-watering dishes that will not disappoint you. From the simplest tapa to surprising menus from our Michelin awarded cooks. The mastery of the stoves is also perceived in our restaurants, with successful symbiosis between tradition and modern architecture. Delight yourself with dishes like pickled partridge, atascaburras (a dish often prepared with salted cod, boiled potatoes, garlic and walnuts), Manchego gazpacho, tiznao (salted cod with vegetables), ratatouille, morteruelo (pork liver with game meat and bread crumbs), garlic soup, carcamusas (stewed meat with tomato and peas), ajoarriero (gravy usually for cod or fish made with potato, egg and garlic), stews, galianos (soupy casserole), zarajos (appetizer of marinated lamb intestines roasted or baked), grilled or roasted lamb chops or crumbs. And delicious desserts as almond soup, Manchega flowers (fried flower shaped dough), sponge fingers, miguelitos (puff pastry), bizcochá (sponge cake) or alajú (toasted pastry made of almond, honey, bread crumbs). No palate will be disappointed.

Manchego cheese, olive oil, Alcarria honey, saffron and wine / Atascaburras.











Castile-La Mancha has the vastest vineyard in the world. Its cultivation, in constant development, has modernised its techniques in order to produce the wine necessary according to the needs. There are wines for all tastes and prices. They are universal and very coveted award winning wines, so refined that you will be embraced by the incredible scent and taste.

In Castile-La Mancha the wine is enjoyed by drinking and looking at it. Its wineries await you. You will be able to spend the night in a lot of them in order to visit its vineyards, feel the quietness of its aging rooms, enjoy the therapeutic properties, participate in the harvest, learn the secrets of tasting or feel the magic its fermentation or maceration.

## **CERVANTES AND EL QUIXOTE**

During 2016, Castile-La Mancha will celebrate the fourth centenary from his death, who in his adventurous life was related to places from these lands, Toledo, Esquivias or Argamasilla de Alba.

In Esquivias he married Catalina de Salazar and Palacios. The matrimony took place in Toledo. There, the writer dealt with merchants, knights, soldiers, clerics and rogues. He took great notes from all for his literary work. It is a popular tradition that being captive in Argamasilla de Alba, in the Medrano Cave, he began to write El Quixote.

Wandering around the most emblematic corners of La Mancha you can re-live this particular gentleman's, confusing windmills with giants, stands with castles, flock of sheep with military armies and wineskin with happy miscreants. You will find the best windmills in Consuegra, Alcázar de San Juan, Mota Del Cuervo and Campo de Criptana.

As this year we are remembering Cervantes, we suggest you to end this trip remembering some written words by Don Miguel: "Who reads much and walks much sees much and knows much". This being said take advantage of this touristic adventure. You will see, learn, enjoy, know and taste much. ¡Oh! And do not forget to keep a copy of El Quixote in your baggage and read it. 🍷





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**IV CENTENARIO  
DE CERVANTES**



**Castilla-La Mancha**