

magazine traveling

AMERICAN EDITION

TRAVEL AND GASTRONOMY MAGAZINE

N°65 year 2024 free digital magazine



ZARAGOZA
Cultural and
Gastronomic Tour

MEXICO
Riviera Diamante
Jewel of Acapulco

**ECO
DESTINATIONS**
Luxembourg
Green Heart of Europe

FREE DIGITAL TRAVEL AND GASTRONOMY MAGAZINE





**Free Walking Tour
Dresden**



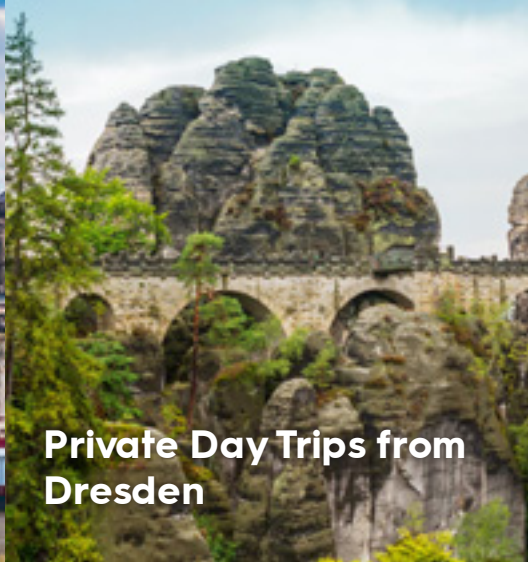
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Welcome aboard

Just after the summer solstice, the spirit of travel is like oxygen: a necessity. Who doesn't get anxious if they don't already have something planned? We all need plans for the coming months, and for that, we present our selection.

Mauritania, a country that always surprises, invites us to return to its roots, that essence that will always be there; no matter how many years pass, its history and the spirit of its people will endure.

Acapulco and its Riviera Diamante, newly revived after the onslaught of relentless weather, await us to show what resilience and human effort can achieve.

Saxon **Dresden** knows a lot about resilience and dignity; a German city reborn from the rubble of humanity's worst evil, war, that, without forgetting history, invites us with a forward-looking spirit to its present and future.

We will recreate legends and love stories in the Spanish city that most emphatically affirms its existence: **Teruel**, which also hosts one of the most beautiful Spanish artistic styles: Mudejar.

In Eco Destinations, we travel to **Luxembourg** and the beautiful **Las Canteras Beach in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria**.

We visit one of the most impressive wineries on the Toro Wine Route: **Bodega Monte La Reina**. For a Gastronomic and Cultural Tour, we head to **Zaragoza**, one of the most stunning cities in Spain.

Hyperactive Madrid also invites us to discover some of its gastronomic temples: **Rhudo and Caluana**. For spiritual retreat and contact with nature, we choose **Mas d'en Bruno in Priorat**.



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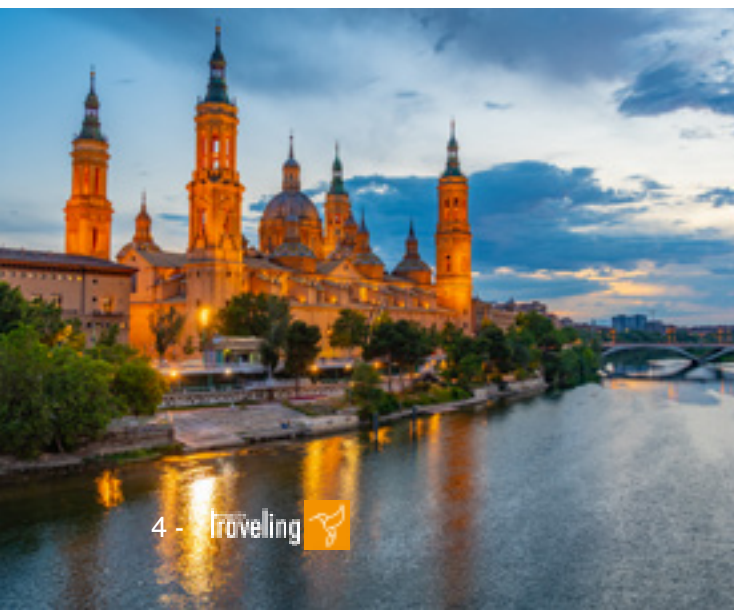
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Woman in the Sahara Desert
©Caroline Zaninotto



COVER

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Rest. Rhudo Madrid



Mauritania

Return to the Roots

A Journey to Authenticity

Text: Drafting

Photo: National Tourism Office of Mauritania y Caroline Zaninotto (Cover photo)



 **mauritania**
journey to authenticity



Berbers in the Desert © Nath Gibon

In a world increasingly saturated with distractions and superficialities, Mauritania stands out as a sanctuary where luxury takes on a new and profound form: that of authenticity and an intimate connection with nature. Far from the ostentatious artifice of major metropolises, each visitor is invited to discover a different kind of wealth, one that emerges from the simplicity and depth of lived experiences.

The Infinite Desert: Return to the Essentials

In the heart of its vast desert expanses, Mauritania offers a landscape both austere and magnificent, inviting profound reflection on life and oneself. The golden sand dunes sculpted by millennia-old winds and the ancient rock formations bear witness to a history as old as time itself. Each grain of sand seems to whisper the secrets of the vastness, inviting travelers to abandon their daily hustle and connect with the essence of their being.

The desert lands of Mauritania are not only a testament to untamed nature but also a melting pot of cultures and civilizations that have settled and thrived in this hostile environment. The earliest known inhabitants, the Bafour, a Mande ethnic group, left traces of their existence intertwined with those of the Berber and Arab tribes that later dominated the region.

This blend of African and Arab influences has given rise to a rich and diverse culture that is reflected in the daily life, music, dance, and religious traditions of the country.

The modern history of Mauritania is marked by its struggle for independence from French colonial rule, achieved in 1960, and the subsequent challenges of establishing a national identity amidst ethnic and political tensions. The construction of the state and the economy, based on agriculture, fishing, and the exploitation of mineral resources like iron, has been an arduous and ongoing task.

Despite these obstacles, the beauty of the Mauritanian landscape continues to be a source of inspiration and wonder. The Sahara Desert, with its endless dunes and absolute silence, offers a refuge for those seeking to escape the distractions of the modern world and reconnect with the essentials. In this vast natural setting, each sunset paints the sky with shades of gold and purple, reminding us of the grandeur and simplicity of life.

Path between Oualata and Tichitt



Camel Excursions © Antoine Collas





Aerial view of the Terjit oasis

The Green Oases of Mauritania: Refugees of Peace and Renewal

Mauritania, with its vast desert expanse, hides authentic sanctuaries of life and greenery among its dunes: the oases. These places are not only a testament to human resilience and ingenuity but also represent nature's ability to thrive in extreme conditions. Here, visitors can enjoy the coolness of palm trees, the murmur of springs, and the enveloping peace that reigns in these oases.

Oasis of Terjit

One of the most well-known oases in Mauritania is Terjit, located about 45 km south of Atar, in the Adrar region. Terjit is situated in a gorge on the western edge of the Adrar plateau, and its palm grove stretches along a stream that flows from a spring. This oasis is popular among tourists for its charm, fresh waters, and shade, and has historically been used for religious ceremonies and the coronations of African princes. Visitors can stay in charming tents within the palm grove.



Berber tent in the palm grove of Terjit

Water pools, Terjit Oasis © Caroline Zaninotto





Panoramic view of the Adrar region
View of the oasis of El Berbera



The Oasis of El Berbera

Located about 130 kilometers south of Atar in the Adrar region of Mauritania, El Berbera is a hidden gem in the heart of the Sahara Desert. This paradisiacal corner is situated in a canyon that opens to the Ouad Timinit on the southern edge of the Adrar plateau, surrounded by a palm grove that extends along a stream fed by a natural spring.

The journey to El Berbera begins on paved roads, which eventually turn into desert tracks. As you approach the oasis, a small, semi-deserted village appears at the top of the canyon. Here resides the guardian of the palm grove, who welcomes travelers and guides them to the bottom of the canyon, where the oasis is located. As you descend the sandy path, you enter a cool and shaded microclimate, where silence and peace reign, interrupted only by the gentle murmur of water and the song of birds.

The landscape in El Berbera is astonishing. The rock formations around the oasis have created unusual natural shelters, providing refuge and shade. Under the rocks, where the water drips, you can take a refreshing shower, surrounded by lush vegetation and the beauty of palm trees.

For those who wish to explore further, a path carved into the rocks around the oasis leads back to the top of the plateau, offering an impressive view from above. This oasis, although little known, represents a refreshing and magical pause in the vast Sahara Desert.



Beaches of the Arguin Bank

Along more than 700 kilometers of Atlantic coastline, the beaches of Mauritania offer a haven of serenity and contemplation. These beaches, known for their purity and solitude, invite deep meditation on the grandeur of nature. Visitors are transported to a state of calm, where the rhythm of the waves and the sparkle of the sun on the water create a connection with the vastness of the universe.

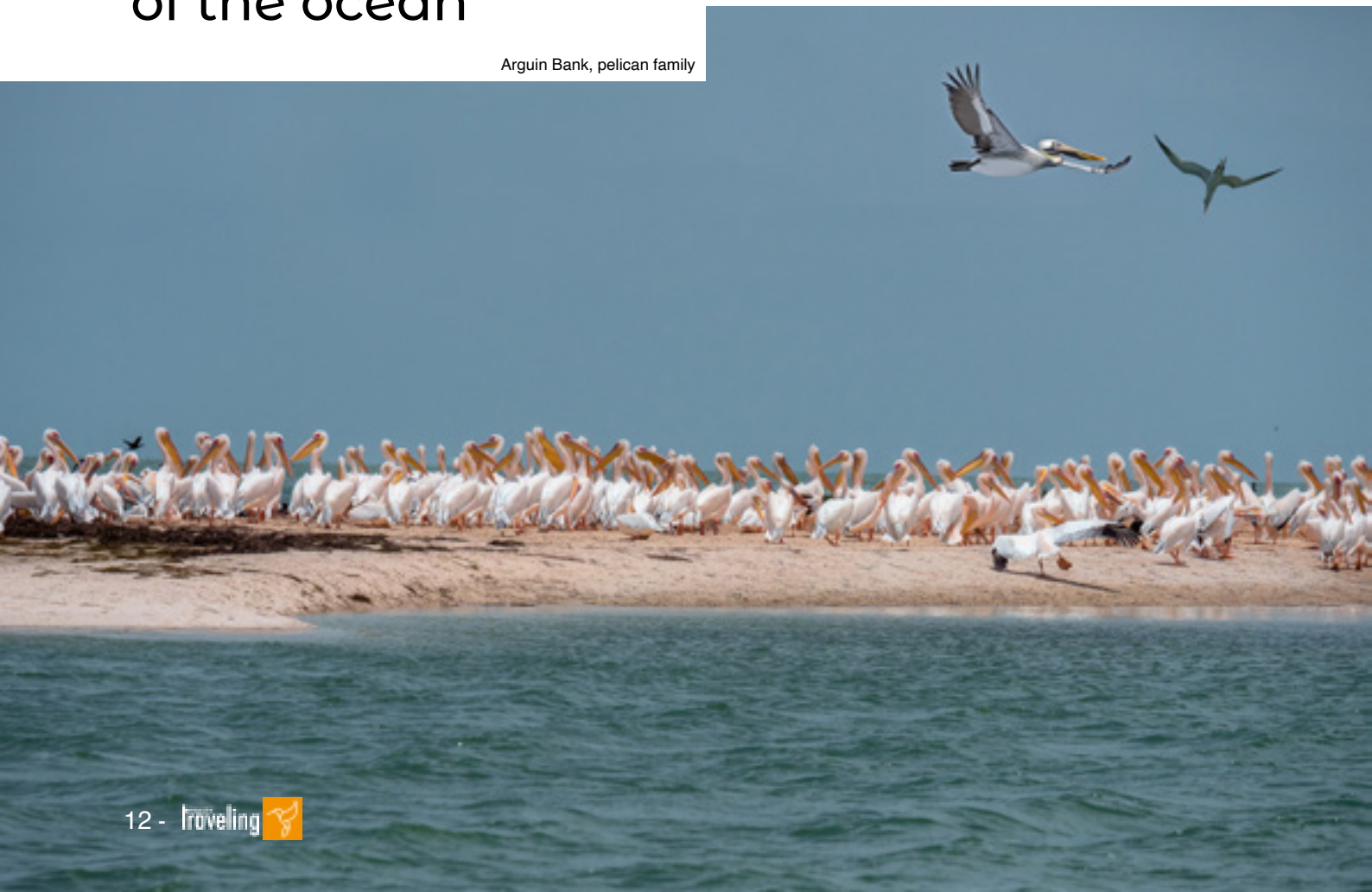
Mauritania, with its vast desert expanse and historic cities, holds a yet to be discovered treasure along its Atlantic coast. From the beaches of Nouakchott to Cap Blanc, where the desert meets the sea, the landscape is both stunning and serene.

The Magic of the Banc d'Arguin

The Banc d'Arguin National Park, a site of global importance for biodiversity conservation, offers some of the most unique coastal experiences in the world.

Immaculate Beaches: Meditation in front of the infinite of the ocean

Arguin Bank, pelican family





Aerial view of the Arguin Bank

This vast system of wetlands, islands, and beaches is a sanctuary for an impressive variety of migratory birds and marine life. At Banc d'Arguin, you can observe flamingos, herons, and pelicans in their natural habitat, while beneath the crystal-clear waters, dolphins and sea turtles are common sights.

This protected area is not only a paradise for nature lovers but also a place of profound spiritual significance, where contemplating wildlife in its natural environment can lead to a deeper connection with the natural world.

Mauritanian beaches are ideal for those seeking the vastness of the ocean and the solitude of the shores, creating an atmosphere conducive to relaxation. Here, the connection with nature is felt intensely, and each moment can be an opportunity to admire the strength and peace that Mother Earth provides.

Visiting these beaches is an experience that transcends the visual, becoming a journey inward driven by the immensity of the ocean and the purity of the surroundings. The Mauritanian coasts offer a sanctuary of peace and serenity, where nature becomes a gateway to the infinite.

Nuakchott beach © Caroline Zaninotto





Soninke women

The Mauritanian People: Keeper of an Ancient Tradition

Women on a street in Chinguetti



Mauritania, beyond its stunning landscapes, vast desert expanses, and endless beaches, is a country whose true treasure lies in its people. The Mauritanians, with their warm hospitality and ancient wisdom, are the guardians of a rich cultural heritage that has endured through the centuries. Their lifestyle, simple yet deeply rooted in traditions passed down through generations, offers an invaluable lesson about the true values of life and the beauty of simplicity.

Unmatched Hospitality

Mauritanians are renowned for their hospitality, a deeply ingrained characteristic of their culture. From the bustling streets of Nouakchott to the remote desert settlements, Mauritanians welcome visitors with a genuine smile and unparalleled generosity. The custom of "teranga," which means hospitality in the local language, involves sharing everything one has with guests, even in difficult times. This hospitality is not just a courtesy but an integral part of Mauritanian cultural identity.

Ancient Wisdom

The ancient wisdom of the Mauritians is manifested in their deep respect for nature and their traditional knowledge. In the desert's nomadic communities, this wisdom includes essential survival skills, such as the ability to find water and food in an arid environment. Nomadic life, though challenging, is a testament to human resilience and adaptation.

Simple Life and Deep Traditions

The Mauritanian lifestyle is a celebration of simplicity. In rural villages and nomadic camps, life unfolds at a leisurely pace. Families gather at sunset to share stories and traditional songs, keeping alive the legends and myths of their ancestors. Ceremonies and festivals are moments of great significance, where music, dance, and poetry play a crucial role in preserving their cultural identity.

Ethnic and Cultural Diversity

Mauritania is a melting pot of cultures and ethnicities. The main groups include Arab-Berbers, Haratines, and Black Africans, each with their own language, customs, and traditions. This ethnic diversity enriches Mauritanian culture, creating a multifaceted society. The interaction between these diverse cultures has led to a rich blend of traditions that define Mauritanian identity.

Resilience and Adaptability

Throughout their history, Mauritians have demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability. They have learned to thrive in an environment that can be extremely hostile, developing ingenious strategies to face the challenges of the desert. The ability to adapt to changing environmental and social conditions is a defining characteristic of the Mauritanian people, who continue to confront and overcome difficulties with determination and hope.

Nomad in the desert





City of Chinguetti

Heritage Cities Festival: A Cultural Journey to the Heart of the Mauritanian Sahara

Seif Library of Chinguetti, Quran book



For a decade, the Festival of Ancient Cities in Mauritania has established itself as a prominent cultural event in the Sahara. Each year, this festival attracts artists and visitors to four caravan cities recognized as UNESCO World Heritage sites: Oualata, Chinguetti, Tichit, and Ouadane. These unique and dazzling gatherings captivate Sahara enthusiasts seeking isolated and exceptional experiences.

Oualata

Oualata, with its decorated houses and colorful facades, stands out for its architectural beauty and rich history. Founded in the 11th century, Oualata was an important commercial and religious center on the trans-Saharan caravan route. Its murals and frescoes bear witness to an artistic tradition that has remained alive over the centuries. Today, Oualata continues to attract tourists and scholars interested in its cultural and artistic heritage.

Chinguetti

This year, in December 2024, all eyes turn to Chinguetti, the jewel of the Mauritanian desert. Nestled among rolling dunes, Chinguetti enchants with its narrow alleys and ochre stone houses, living witnesses to a millennia-old history. Founded in the 13th century, Chinguetti is known for its ancient libraries housing valuable Islamic manuscripts. As a sacred and spiritual city, Chinguetti offers visitors an authentic immersion into the culture and tradition of the ancient desert cities, providing an experience at the crossroads between past and present.

Tichit

Tichit, founded in the 12th century, is another gem of Mauritania's ancient cities. Its stone and adobe structures blend harmoniously with the surrounding desert landscape. Tichit was a center of trade and knowledge, known for its Quranic schools and hospitality. Visitors to Tichit can explore its labyrinthine alleys and discover the rich cultural heritage that has endured through the centuries.

Ouadane

Ouadane, founded in the 11th century, is perhaps the most remote of these cities. Situated in a region of rugged plateaus and vast deserts, Ouadane was an important stop for caravans crossing the Sahara. The city is known for its well-preserved ruins and its stunning natural landscape. Visitors can wander through the ancient walls and admire panoramic views of the desert, connecting with the history of the trans-Saharan trade routes.

A Cultural Gathering

The Festival of Ancient Cities in Mauritania not only celebrates the history and heritage of these cities but also promotes cultural diversity and artistic exchange. Each year, the festival features a variety of activities, including art exhibitions, traditional music performances, academic conferences, and craft markets. Local and international artists have the opportunity to showcase their work and collaborate on creative projects.

Mauritania stands out as a destination where luxury is defined by the simplicity and depth of lived experiences. Whether through its endless deserts, verdant oases, pristine beaches, or its rich and authentic culture, every moment in Mauritania is an invitation to reconnect with the essentials and enjoy the raw beauty of our planet. Festivals like the Ancient Cities Festival perfectly illustrate this cultural wealth and invite everyone to discover the hidden treasures of this fascinating country.

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Seif Library of Chinguetti





Acapulco Bay from the Las Brisas Hotel

Riviera Diamante

Jewel of Acapulco

Text and photos: Jose A. Muñoz



After the passage of “Otis,” the devastating hurricane that struck this area of the Mexican Pacific in October 2023, the social responsibility demonstrated by all the staff at Grupo Mundo Imperial has been remarkable. They ceased to be cooks, receptionists, or executives and became electricians, masons, and carpenters. Thanks to their tremendous effort, they managed to rebuild and rehabilitate the hotels and buildings in record time, reopening and starting anew, surviving a disaster of unimaginable magnitude.

With this important note, which we couldn't leave unmentioned, let's talk about the Riviera Diamante in Acapulco for what it truly is: golden beaches, starry nights, glamorous parties, and iconic and privileged places where you can enjoy spectacular views of the bay, which happens to be one of the most beautiful in the world. In summary, it is a seductive destination for tourists seeking that touch of exclusivity while discovering the authenticity, nature, and glamour that surrounds it.

Cuauhtémoc, the Training Ship of the Mexican Navy

Mundo Imperial is at the forefront of the Riviera Diamante project. After meeting Seyed Rezvani, president of the business association and general director of the group, we have seen firsthand the tremendous effort made in record time to restore normalcy to this Pacific destination.





View of the Riviera Diamante and its golf courses

Acapulco boasts a rich history that dates back to pre-Columbian times; originally inhabited by indigenous peoples such as the Yopes and the Tepoztecos, Acapulco gained prominence when the Spanish arrived in 1531 as a strategic point on the trade route between America and Asia. Known as the “Manila Galleon,” also called the Nao de China or the Acapulco Galleon, these ships crossed the Pacific Ocean once or twice a year between Manila and Acapulco. The route, inaugurated in 1565 by Spanish sailor and friar Andrés de Urdaneta, was one of the longest trade routes in history and operated regularly for two and a half centuries; the last ship sailed from Acapulco in 1815. This route transformed the city into a major center of cultural and commercial exchange. During the colonial era, the port hosted the famous Acapulco Fair, an annual event where valuable goods brought by the Manila Galleon, from silks and spices to porcelains, were traded.

In the 20th century, Acapulco emerged as an internationally renowned tourist destination. In the 1950s and 1960s, its natural beauty and idyllic climate attracted Hollywood stars and the international elite, solidifying its reputation as a glamorous getaway. However, the end

of the century and the beginning of the new millennium brought a decline in international tourism, which is now being actively revived.

Despite these challenges, Acapulco has persevered and remains a popular international and national tourist destination, attracting visitors from Mexico City, which is just a four-hour drive or less than an hour by plane. The government, local communities, and companies like **Mundo Imperial** continue to work hard to revitalize its image and boost its economy, reminding the world of Acapulco's unique place in Mexico's history.

At the heart of this renaissance is Riviera Diamante, a privileged enclave stretching along Acapulco's southern coast. This area spans from the Naval Base, located at one end of Acapulco Bay, to Barra Vieja, integrating iconic zones such as Guitarrón, Pichilingue, Puerto Marqués, Revolcadero, and Bonfil.

The development of Riviera Diamante has focused on offering a high-end experience with facilities such as the **Hotel Palacio Mundo Imperial**, located just meters from the Convention Center (**Expo Mundo Imperial**),



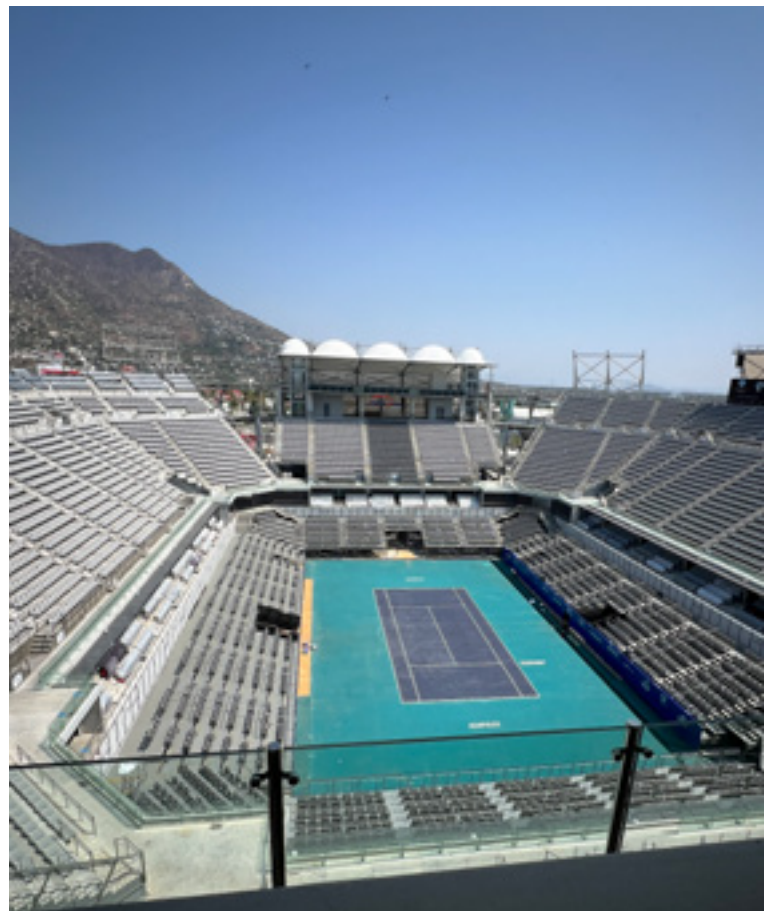
View of the Princess Golf Course on the Riviera Diamante

and the **Princess Mundo Imperial**, a beachfront resort close to one of the best golf courses in the world and the Arena GNP Seguros Stadium. These two hotels exemplify very different concepts, providing a wide range of services and activities that cater to the needs of various types of visitors. In their unique restaurants, renowned chefs offer diners dishes that blend the best of Acapulco cuisine with Asian touches, creating true culinary masterpieces.

Near the Princess Hotel is the **Princess Golf Course**, one of the 25 best golf courses in the world according to Golf Digest magazine. It was designed by architect Ted Robinson.

Adjacent to the golf course is the **Arena GNP Seguros**, an accessible stadium with a capacity of 10,500 spectators, home to the Mexican Open, the most important tennis tournament in Latin America, one of the four Padel Majors held worldwide, and other major musical and sporting events.

View of the GNP Arena Stadium



Gastronomy

One of the pillars that distinguish Riviera Diamante is its gastronomic offerings, as we've mentioned. There is an enormous culinary diversity ranging from high-end international cuisine to the best of traditional Mexican flavors. Restaurants like Tony's Bistro, Zibu, Tabachín, and Gaviotas 2 (on Barra Vieja beach) offer very different dining experiences and completely different flavors, but all of them fuse traditional recipes, local ingredients, and modern techniques, creating dishes that are both a visual delight and a feast for the palate. Renowned chefs such as Susana Palazuelos (Zibu restaurant), who served lunch to Queen Elizabeth II during her visit to Acapulco; Juanxo Sánchez, born in Asturias but Mexican at heart, who became the chef of the Presidency of the Basque Government and is currently the gastronomic director at Mundo Imperial; and Sabina Bandera, a Guerrero native famous for her "Seafood Cart," which received an award in 2011 at the World Street Food Fest in Singapore-Indonesia, and her restaurant "Sabina Restaurante" with branches in Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Monterrey.

With its vibrant nightlife, golden beaches, and rich culinary fusion, is the perfect place for those who love to indulge.

And last but not least, Aquiles Chávez, born in Tabasco, a chef who works in Hidalgo where he has his restaurant "SOTERO" and in Texas "La Fishería" specializing in Mexican seafood cuisine; a chef by conviction and a rocker by vocation, as well as a beloved and approachable showman who hosts several television programs such as Toque de Aquiles, Aquilísimo, and Motochefs. They are the gastronomic driving force behind much of Mexico, giving a new dimension to its rich and subtle cuisine.

Nightlife

The nightlife offers standout venues ranging from wine bars, lounges, and wonderful terraces at the resorts to beach clubs where the most famous DJs set the soundtrack to Acapulco's nights, and iconic nightclubs like Baby'O, where Carlos Gardel, the owner, has been welcoming all kinds of personalities from various fields for over 50 years.

Another legendary music venue is Palladium, owned by Tony, who boasts numerous anecdotes from this nightclub's rich history.

View from the terrace of Susana Palazuelos' Zibu restaurant





View of the terrace of Tony's Bistro restaurant

It has also been operating in Acapulco for more than half a century, with even Michael Jackson enjoying nights out during his stays in this Pacific city. These places have hosted Hollywood celebrities, international artists, and notable politicians; stepping into these music temples is to relive those unforgettable and glamorous nights that define Acapulco.

Connection with Nature

A portrait of Riviera Diamante would be incomplete without mentioning its natural charms. Beaches like Playa Revolcadero, with its golden sands and miles of shoreline perfect for long walks, offer diverse activities for the adventurous, such as quad rentals, horseback riding, or paragliding. Its waters, with intense waves, are a big draw for experienced surfers due to the currents and the distance from the shore to catch the waves.

Entrance to the legendary Baby'O discotheque in Acapulco





View of Revolcadero Beach from the Pierre Hotel



Fishermen on Revolcadero Beach



Fishermen's and fishermen's houses on the Tres Palos lagoon

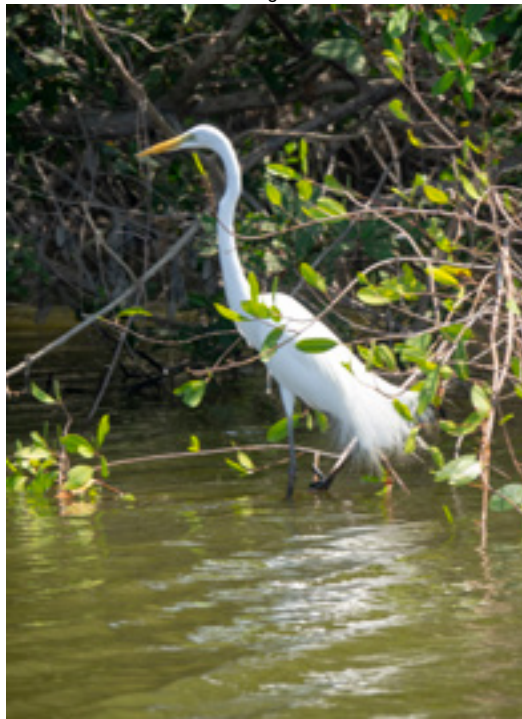


The Tres Palos lagoon

The wild nature is another attraction, such as the *The Tres Palos lagoon*; a wonderful and unforgettable excursion for those seeking tranquility and who are nature lovers. It's a spectacular boat ride, a way to spend a few hours enjoying the calm waters and spotting hundreds of bird species, navigating through mangroves, and immersing yourself in nature. With the boatman as your guide, you'll learn the secrets of this natural area, the fields of water lilies, and the dense reed forests. As you sail, you'll observe fishermen casting their nets and birds posing for the perfect shot. But... that's for another article.

Riviera Diamante is more than a tourist destination; it's a microcosm of culture, leisure, and modernity. Its constant evolution promises to keep Acapulco on the map as a world-class premium destination, where every visit offers something new and exciting. Whether it's the tranquility of a sunset on the beach or the thrill of a gala night, Riviera Diamante not only reflects Acapulco's glorious past but also looks to the future, innovating and adapting to remain a top international destination. This is a place where every street, every beach, and every dish tells a story, inviting you to be part of it.

White heron in the Tres Palos lagoon



Travel tips



Aeroméxico proudly celebrates its 90th anniversary, connecting passengers to more than 90 destinations across three continents, solidifying its position as one of Latin America's leading airlines. Over nearly a century, it has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to innovation and customer satisfaction. Its modern Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft are part of its next-generation fleet, known for their advanced technology and efficiency. These planes not only reduce fuel consumption but also minimize jet lag thanks to their optimized pressurization system and increased cabin humidity. This ensures a more comfortable flight and less fatigue for passengers, often eliminating the famous jet lag.

gastronomy on board

Aeroméxico elevates the flight experience with its exquisite in-flight dining, crafted by renowned chefs. It offers a variety of culinary options that highlight the best of Mexican and international cuisine, providing a gourmet experience at altitude.

In addition to its modern fleet and delicious onboard food, Aeroméxico stands out for its customer service and Mexican hospitality. ¡Déjate Apapachar! (Let yourself be pampered!)



Mundo Imperial Expo

Located in Riviera Diamante Acapulco, it is the most advanced convention and exhibition complex in Latin America. With a total area of 68,000 m², the venue includes 22,500 m² of column-free exhibition space, perfect for large events. Its facilities include:

- More than 50 meeting rooms that can be configured for various types of gatherings.

- Two fully equipped auditoriums for conferences and presentations.

- 44,500 m² of outdoor spaces ideal for open-air events.

- Parking with 2,300 spaces, a business center, medical services, and several catering and restaurant options, not to mention the Mundo Imperial Palacio Hotel located within the complex.

Mundo Imperial Forum

The Forum Mundo Imperial, with a capacity for 4,000 people, is designed to host top-tier conferences, conventions, and shows. It stands out for its cutting-edge technology and exceptional service, hosting concerts, theatrical productions, and events of all kinds. It is equipped with advanced sound, lighting, and projection systems.

Expo Mundo Imperial and Forum Mundo Imperial are not only premier convention and entertainment centers but also offer a wide range of additional services such as catering, customized setups, and audiovisual services, ensuring the success of any type of event.



View of Forum Mundo Imperial

Expo Mundo Imperial



Forum Mundo Imperial





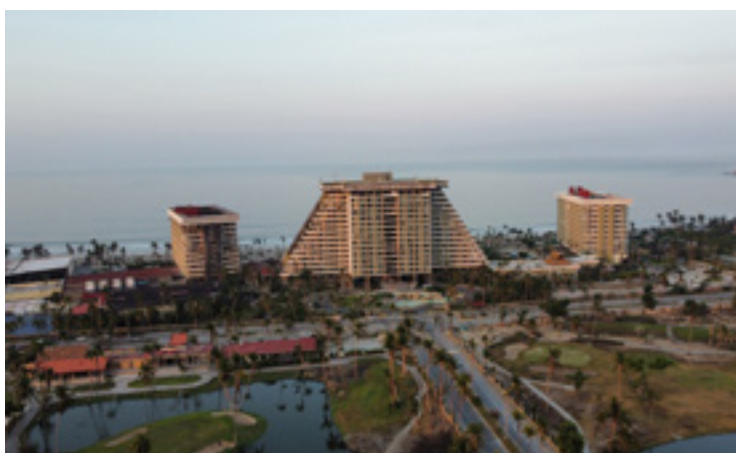
Pierre Hotel

It is perfect for beach lovers, located on Playa Revolcadero with pristine sands. It is a hotel for families, couples, and groups. Built in 1957 by philanthropist J. Paul Getty, this hotel offers timeless Mexican architecture, lush gardens, and magnificent views of the Pacific Ocean, creating a relaxing retreat for beach and relaxation enthusiasts.



Princess Hotel

An icon of Aztec architecture, Princess Mundo Imperial is located on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. This hotel offers numerous possibilities; it is a beach hotel but also perfect for sports activities. Surrounded by 480 hectares of gardens, waterfalls, and palm trees, the hotel is ideal for a relaxing vacation. It features five swimming pools, two golf courses, and professional-level tennis courts. To end the day, unwind with a treatment at Elan Spa & Wellness Experience.



Mundo Imperial Palace Hotel

Palacio Mundo Imperial invites you to discover a world of innovation and endless possibilities. Relax at Elan Spa, delight your palate with exclusive cuisine, browse luxury shops, and enjoy the Promenade. Take a dip in the pools or create unforgettable moments at Scala Ocean Club. This tourist oasis will captivate you. Attend conferences at Expo Mundo Imperial and enjoy shows at Il Duomo. Forum Mundo Imperial is the ultimate entertainment venue, hosting concerts and live performances throughout the year.



Encanto Hotel

One of the most luxurious boutique hotels in Acapulco, designed by Mexican architect Miguel Ángel Aragonés. Its modern architecture harmonizes with the natural surroundings. The rooms, featuring custom white furnishings, offer stunning views of Puerto Marqués Bay and the Pacific Ocean. It boasts an infinity pool surrounded by lush vegetation. The restaurant Origin, led by chef Mónica Patiño, fuses Mexican and Asian flavors. Additionally, it has a spa with luxury treatments and a fitness center with spectacular views.



Las Brisas Hotel

Hotel Las Brisas Acapulco, situated on a hill with spectacular views of Acapulco Bay and the Pacific, offers individual casitas with private or semi-private pools and terraces. Opened in 1957, the hotel features two restaurants, one offering international cuisine and the seafood restaurant La Concha. Guests enjoy a complimentary daily breakfast delivered to their casita. Recreational facilities include panoramic pools, a gym, and water activities at its Beach Club. The spa offers massages and wellness treatments.



Zibu Restaurant

Restaurant Zibu in Acapulco, founded by chef Eduardo Palazuelos, son of Susana Palazuelos, offers a unique fusion of Mexican and Thai cuisine, known as "Mex-Tai." Located on the Scenic Highway to Puerto Marqués, the restaurant boasts impressive views of the sea and Acapulco Bay. Its menu features innovative dishes such as Tom Yam soup, Thai fish, and shrimp with dried fruits. The outdoor dining area is decorated with wicker tables and lamps, creating an elegant and very tropical atmosphere.



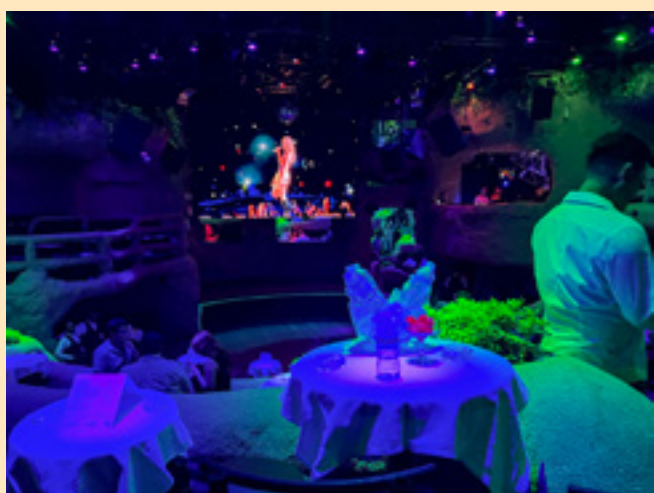
Tony's Bistro Restaurant

Tony's Bistro is a romantic restaurant in Acapulco with spectacular views of Santa Lucía Bay. Its international cuisine menu offers a fusion of truly surprising dishes. Additionally, they have an extensive wine list and a very interesting mixology bar.



Disco Baby'O

Baby'O is one of Acapulco's most iconic and exclusive nightclubs, inaugurated in 1976 by Rafael Villafañe and Eduardo Césarman. Located on Avenida Costera Miguel Alemán, this nightclub has been a gathering spot for both national and international celebrities, including Luis Miguel, Madonna, Michael Jackson, and Bono, among others. With a capacity for about 250 guests, Baby'O offers a party atmosphere with a variety of music, ranging from pop and rock to reggaeton and techno.



DRESDEN, CULTURE AND BEAUTY ON EVERY CORNER



DRESDEN

Culture and Beauty on Every Corner

By: Rosario Alonso y Jose A. Muñoz

Dresden is a city that combines the splendor of the past with the vibrant culture of the present. Known as "the Florence of the Elbe" for its stunning baroque architecture and dedication to art and culture, Dresden invites you to explore its fascinating history, marvel at its restored monuments, and savor its rich gastronomy.

The history of Dresden, the majestic city on the banks of the Elbe River, is both a chronicle of splendor and dark tragedies, reflecting humanity's capacity for both creation and destruction. Over the centuries, Dresden has been shaped and transformed by events that have left an indelible mark on its character and urban landscape.

Dresden began as a modest fishing village, strategically located on the Elbe River, making it ideal for trade and defense. Over time, this primitive settlement became a thriving commercial city in the High Middle Ages. As its economic importance grew, so did its political and cultural stature.

The true transformation of Dresden began in the 15th century when it became the seat of the Dukes of Saxony and later the capital of the Electorate and Kingdom of Saxony. This ascent marked the beginning of an era of great cultural and artistic prosperity.

Dresden's heyday came in the 18th century under the reign of Augustus II the Strong, who was Elector of Saxony and King of Poland after converting to Catholicism. Augustus was a patron of the arts and an ambitious leader who wanted Dresden to rival the great capitals of Europe in splendor. During his reign, the city

was adorned with remarkable baroque buildings, such as the Zwinger Palace and the Semper Opera House, and became a renowned center of art and science.

Augustus also founded the famous Meissen porcelain manufactory, attracted artists and musicians from across Europe, and amassed one of the continent's most impressive art collections in the Old Masters Gallery.

However, Dresden's fate took a dramatic turn during World War II. On the night of February 13-14, 1945, in the final months of the war, Dresden was subjected to a devastating bombing by Allied forces. This bombing, one of the most controversial of the war due to the magnitude of destruction and high number of civilian casualties, left the city in ruins. Much of its beautiful architectural and cultural heritage was reduced to rubble.

After the war, situated in communist East Germany, Dresden began a slow reconstruction. Although the initial reconstruction focused more on functionality than restoring the former splendor, with German reunification in 1990, Dresden experienced a cultural and architectural renaissance. Ambitious projects such as the reconstruction of the Frauenkirche, completed in 2005, and the reconstruction of the Royal Palace have restored much of the city's former glory.

Today, Dresden remains a symbol of resilience and renewal, a city that has risen from its ashes and reclaimed its place as one of Europe's cultural gems. Its rich history and vibrant present continue to attract visitors from all over the world, eager to explore its museums, stroll through its ancient streets, and experience the enduring beauty of the Florence of the Elbe.

The majesty of its historical monuments intertwines with its rich cultural heritage, offering an unforgettable experience at every turn

Places of Interest

Frauenkirche: This church is a symbol of Dresden's ability to rise from the ashes. Destroyed during the bombings of World War II, it was meticulously rebuilt and reopened in 2005. Today, it is not only a place of worship but also a monument to peace and reconciliation. The church's dome offers one of the best panoramic views of the city. Located in Neumarkt Square, this baroque-style Lutheran church is surrounded by colorful buildings and restaurant terraces.

Zwinger Palace: This palace is a supreme example of German Baroque. Built in 1711, it is more than just a palace; it is a complex of buildings around a large central garden with several fountains and a terrace with impressive views, originally intended to host parties and events for the Saxon royalty of the 18th century. Today, it houses multiple museums, including the Meissen Porcelain Museum and the Old Masters Gallery, the Glockenspiel Pavilion, the Crown Gate, and more. Its gardens are perfect for a relaxing stroll among statues and fountains.

Old Masters Gallery: Located within the Zwinger Palace, this gallery is world-famous for housing Raphael's "Sistine Madonna," among other masterpieces of the Renaissance and Baroque.

Furstenzug (Parade of Princes): This is the largest porcelain mural in the world, 102 meters long and made of 24,000 Meissen porcelain tiles. Located on Augustusstrasse, in the heart of the old town, it depicts a procession of riders, members of the House of Wettin including monarchs, dukes, and counts; this dynasty occupied the Saxon throne for 800 years. It is also one of the few monuments that survived almost intact the devastating bombings of World War II.

Semperoper: The Semper Opera House is undoubtedly one of the most important theaters in Europe. It is where R. Wagner and R. Strauss premiered some of their best operas. It was destroyed in 1945 and rebuilt in 1986.

Residenzschloss (Royal Palace): This eclectic palace in terms of architectural styles has been the usual residence of the Kings of Saxony. Inside, the "Green Vault," one of the oldest museums in the world, features several Baroque-style chambers. The Jewel Room, the Bronze Hall, its inner courtyard, and the curious bridge that connects it to the building opposite are some of its most notable attractions.

Hofkirche (Cathedral of the Holy Trinity): This baroque-style cathedral, with an ornate exterior featuring numerous statues of saints and an impressive 83-meter tower, surprises with its sober





interior, broken only by the Rococo inspiration of its pulpit and organ. Located on Theaterplatz and built in sandstone, it was commissioned by Augustus the Strong in the mid-18th century, who converted to Catholicism to obtain the Polish throne. It houses the tombs of the Kings of Saxony.

- 1.- Palace Zwinger
- 2.- Ópera Semper
- 3.- Furstenzug ou Parade of the Princes
- 4.- Frauenkirche Church on Neumarkt square



- 1.- Elbe Embankment or Brühl Terrace
- 2.- Moritzburg Palace
- 3.- Academy of Fine Arts
- 4.- Striezelmarkt Christmas Market
- 5.- Dresdner Christstollen
- 6.- Sauerbraten, a typical roast beef roast
- 7.- Mulled wine stall at Striezelmarkt



The Elbe Embankment or Brühl Terrace: deal for an evening stroll, this long boulevard along the Elbe River, nicknamed the Balcony of Europe, is a beautifully landscaped promenade along the riverbank. It utilizes what were once the city walls, allowing visitors to discover some of Dresden's most iconic buildings, including the Parliament, the Academy of Arts, and the Sekundogenitur Library. The walk offers unparalleled views of Dresden's skyline and is a popular spot for locals and tourists to relax and enjoy nature.

Neustadt: Outside the city center, in Dresden's young district, this alternative area full of urban art features Kunsthofpassage, an open passage every day with free entry, connecting five inner courtyards surrounded by facades decorated with colorful murals, each with its own theme. Cafes, terraces, chic shops, and small gardens introduce us to 21st-century Dresden. Also in Neustadt is the world's most famous dairy, Pfunds Molkerei, known for its original hand-painted tiles and spectacular lamps; it also offers regional products such as cheese, wine, and toiletries.

Christmas Markets: Dresden, the capital of Saxony, is world-renowned for its Christmas markets, with the Striezelmarkt, founded in 1434, being the oldest in Germany. Christmas might be the perfect time to discover this surprising city, ideal for a getaway from Berlin or Prague, which are also famous for their traditional Christmas markets.

Yenidze Tobacco Factory: A curious Byzantine-style building from the early 20th century stands out in a city that blends classical and avant-garde elements. The Turkish-owned company chose this unique building, the first in the world with a concrete structure, which also has an intriguing detail about its architect: he was Hitler's brother-in-law.

Local Gastronomy

Saxon cuisine reflects the rich agricultural and winemaking culture of the region. Sauerbraten is a must-try dish for any visitor; this pot roast is marinated in a mixture of vinegar, water, herbs, and spices and is traditionally served with Rotkohl (braised red cabbage) or Klöße (dumplings). Another emblem of local gastronomy is Christstollen, a traditional Christmas cake made with dried fruits, nuts, and spices, covered with a layer of powdered sugar. Local markets and festivities, such as the Striezelmarkt Christmas market, offer perfect opportunities to taste these and other local products. This sweet bread, synonymous with Christmas in Germany, is linked to the Stollen Fest.

Dresdner Christstollen: The "Dresdner Christstollen" is so renowned that it has its own registered trademark protection to ensure its authenticity. During the festival, a gigantic Stollen parades through the streets of the city

before being cut and distributed among the crowd, a tradition that celebrates the city's rich culinary heritage.

Weinböhlaer Wein: Although less known than wines from other German wine regions, Saxony produces exquisite wines that reflect the unique terroir of its river valleys. Weinböhla, near Dresden, is notable for its white wines, which are ideal for pairing with local cuisine.

Dresden is undoubtedly an excellent place to explore Saxon gastronomy. Besides Stollen, visitors can enjoy Glühwein (spiced hot wine), Bratwurst (grilled sausages), and a wide variety of local delicacies that are perfect for consuming on-site or taking home as souvenirs or gifts.

The city has also been home to illustrious composers and artists, including Richard Wagner and Caspar David Friedrich, whose work is deeply influenced by the landscapes and atmosphere of Dresden.



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Panoramic view of one of the city's hills.

Amman

The City Of Stairs

Text: Joaquín del Palacio - joaquineografo@gmail.com

Photo: Joaquín del Palacio y Oficina de Turismo de Jordania

T

he history of Amman is quite unique and resembles its hilly landscape: sometimes at the peak, other times in the valley.

Its origins go back centuries; the first settlers on the hill known as the Citadel were the Ammonites, who gave the city its name. Later, this hill became home to the Roman city of Philadelphia, part of the Decapolis. From the Romans, several remnants have survived to decorate the capital, such as the theater and the odeon, the magnificent fountain, and the Temple of Hercules, a true symbol of Amman.

In later centuries, it remained abandoned, dormant until the brief operation of the railway from 1908 to 1916 awakened it, transforming it into a metropolis with a population of three million by the end of the century. This rapid growth explains its homogeneous construction.

White yet very colorful, Amman is chaotic but tranquil just a few meters away, with crowds in some establishments and terraces where you can hear birds. It is full of winding streets and, above all, stairs leading to charming corners; walls and steps decorated with graffiti by renowned artists who choose where to empty their spray cans to illuminate the walls. They don't paint just anywhere; they do it respectfully. Here, urban art is a legal practice that adorns the city.

Numerous painted stairs or those covered with colorful umbrellas lead to clothing shops, small art galleries, or charming cafes in courtyards or gardens. Although it appears white, its spirit and its most charming street are multicolored. The curved Rainbow Street, as its name suggests, boasts diverse colors and all the charm of unique shops. It runs from the center to the first of the famous eight roundabouts along the main avenue of the expansion area. The Fifth Roundabout is where the luxury hotels are located. Amman expands westward because the desert dominates the east, and it is striking that it harbors so many urban gardens despite being one of the driest capitals in the world.



Interior of the King Hussein Bin Tala Mosque



An unforgettable sound

The night ends and the light breaks in the sky; soon the sun will rise, illuminating the whitish limestone of all the facades, hence its lovely nickname: The White City. But before dawn, the call of the muezzin to the first of the five daily prayers will resonate throughout the city, still empty of cars and pedestrians. This pronounced topography creates a multitude of echoes from the minarets, producing a peculiar, hoarse, and deep sound that characterizes the urban awakening in the nighttime silence.

From its mythical origin on seven hills to its current spread over twenty, Amman has become a city of light and bustle, very busy, noisy, and intricate in its unique terrain.

Amman has become a city of light and bustle, very busy, noisy, and labyrinthine.

3D Labyrinth

It's not just the maze of winding streets, countless stairs, and similar houses; the hilly terrain constantly confuses and prevents you from knowing your exact location. The disorientation is three-dimensional. It's not easy to pinpoint your position in a city full of slopes and similar architecture. However, this makes you pay more attention to the landscape, looking for landmarks and unique details, which is why Amman captivates you. It engages in a dialogue with you. It hooks you with its unique urban character.

The sight of its facades from a distance resembles a geometric puzzle of light walls broken up by dark windows. A true street collage that painters capture in their works and sell in the small art galleries hidden among the stairs and alleys. An exclusive and affordable souvenir.

Its urban structure is very complex, so much so that even mail carriers don't dare to deliver the mail individually to homes in the center. Instead, they deposit it in communal boxes where the neighborhood mailboxes are located.

View of the Roman theatre and the city





View of one of the labyrinthine streets in the centre of Amman - Photo below Graffiti by Frits Meyst





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Cheerful, confident and tolerant

This city embodies the character and atmosphere of a metropolis because many of its inhabitants are refugees from conflicts in the surrounding regions, as Jordan is a beacon of security and hospitality in the area.

Around the Roman theater, crowds fill the sidewalks and streets, with vehicles moving along. People are commuting, strolling, or shopping. There are numerous shops and a market that blends seamlessly with the streets. It's a perfect place to indulge your senses: the colorful and chaotic sights, the sounds of voices and cars, enticing aromas, and the taste of local sweets, for example.

Among the aromatic and rich food shops, Habibah Bakery stands out, always bustling with people. It specializes in the most typical sweet, kanafeh, a type of juicy and exquisite pastry that draws queues at any hour.

People flock to the shops, but at prayer times, they head to the mosques, often located next to churches. Different religions coexist peacefully, with mutual respect, although mosques are the primary places of worship. The King Abdullah I Mosque, known as the Blue Mosque, is an architectural gem and open to visitors, except during prayers. A large, column-free circular dome accommodates 3,000 people and houses a museum on Islam with models, artifacts, photographs, and more.



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- 1.- Graffiti around the city
- 2.- Tea terrace
- 3.- Stall in one of the traditional markets
- 4.- Typical shop to buy 'almost everything'.
- 5.- Kanafeh, local cake, Habibah Bakery
- 6.- Interior of the King Abdullah I Mosque





Detail of the coffered ceiling of the Cathedral of Teruel
 Tower of the Cathedral of Santa María de Mediavilla

T

eruel, with its compelling blend of history, romance, architectural grandeur, and gastronomy, invites travelers to step off the beaten path and immerse themselves in its enduring charm. From the touching story of the Lovers of Teruel or the legend of Zoraida, Omar, and Abdala (associated with the construction of two of its most iconic towers) to the rich ornamentation of its Mudéjar heritage and the savory notes of its famous ham, the city offers a mosaic of experiences waiting to be discovered. Whether you're a history enthusiast, a romantic, or a culinary adventurer, Teruel promises an unforgettable journey.

The Mudéjar Legacy: A Universal Heritage

The city of Teruel is globally distinguished for being the birthplace of Mudéjar architecture, recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1986. This unique artistic form developed on the Iberian Peninsula as a hybrid of Islamic and Christian influences, flourishing between the 12th and 17th centuries. In Teruel, Mudéjar reaches its highest expression in the iconic Four Towers —the Tower of San Martín, the Tower of El Salvador, the Tower of the Church of San Pedro, and the Tower of the Cathedral, along with its roof and lantern—, whose ornate structures tell the story of cultural coexistence through the centuries.

The Four Towers: Guardians of History

Each of the four towers offers a testament to the craftsmanship and cultural fusion characteristic of Teruel. The Tower of San Martín and the Tower of El Salvador, both built in the 13th century, stand out for their use of brick as a construction material and their facades adorned with glazed tiles that shine under the Aragonese sun. These towers, along with the Tower of San Pedro and the Tower of the Cathedral, are not only bell towers for their respective churches; they are also bastions of history and art that attract scholars and tourists alike.

Teruel

A Tapestry of History, Mudéjar Art, Romance, and Gastronomy

Text: Rosario Alonso
Photos: Jose A. Muñoz



Founded in 1171 by Alfonso II of Aragon, Teruel was strategically established in the border area between Christian and Muslim territories. This position not only granted it military importance but also influenced its rich cultural blend, a legacy that endures in its architecture and traditions. Its location on a crucial trade route connecting the Spanish Levant with the interior fostered its economic flourishing, culminating in the 13th century with a construction boom that adorned the city with the most notable examples of Mudéjar architecture. This historical period, the Middle Ages, witnessed the most famous stories and legends associated with the city: the legend of the Lovers of Teruel and that of Zoraida, Omar, and Abdala; romantic-tragic tales immortalized in various artistic forms and local celebrations.

In the 16th century, Teruel experienced a decline due to economic and demographic crises, significantly marked by the expulsion of the Moriscos, which severely affected the region. Nevertheless, the city managed to maintain its regional importance, although it did not regain its former economic splendor until the early 19th century with the arrival of the railway, which revitalized its economy and increased its accessibility. At the dawn of the 20th century, Teruel embraced new trends and modernist influences, corresponding with a period of splendor for the city's bourgeois and intellectual elites, infused with the spirit of modernity and progress that also swept through other Spanish cities.

From this era are magnificent buildings and artistic displays such as La Casa del Torico, La Casa Ferrán, and La Madrileña.

The Cathedral of Santa María de Mediavilla: A Treasure in the Heart of Teruel

The Cathedral of Teruel is another splendid example of Mudéjar art. Initially conceived as a Romanesque church, it was transformed in the 13th century to reflect the flourishing Mudéjar style. The highlight of the cathedral is its coffered ceiling, an impressive canvas of painted wood that narrates stories from the Old and New Testaments, as well as scenes from medieval daily life. This ceiling is not only a visual feast but also a historical document that offers a window into the medieval world of Teruel.

Plaza del Torico: El Corazón Palpitante de Teruel

In the heart of Teruel lies the Plaza del Torico, where the life of the city has unfolded for centuries. Dominated by the small statue of the Torico perched atop a column in the center, this plaza is a hub of gatherings, festivities, and daily life. The irregularly shaped plaza is surrounded by historic buildings that showcase a mix of architectural styles, making it a dynamic setting where the past and present converge. The design of the plaza, with its pavement simulating a starry mantle through the use of colored stones, and the strategic arrangement of fountains and lights, ensures that the plaza transforms at night with illumination that enhances architectural details, creating an almost magical atmosphere.

As with everything in Teruel, the Plaza del Torico has its own legend linked to the Reconquista. Naturally, the protagonists are a bull and a star, which determine the exact location where the city would be founded.

The Legend of the Lovers of Teruel

You can't talk about Teruel without mentioning the tragic love story of the Lovers of Teruel, Diego de Marcilla and Isabel de Segura. Their legend, similar to that of Romeo and Juliet and much older, still resonates in the hearts of the people of Teruel and is celebrated annually with a dramatic reenactment that attracts visitors from all over. This story has not only been immortalized in local art and culture but also serves as a symbol of eternal love and passion. The story of the "non-kiss" is indelibly linked to the city.

Diego and Isabel were denied marriage due to the socio-economic division typical of feudalism, becoming entangled in a tragic romance. When Diego was denied Isabel's hand due to his lack of wealth, he set off to amass a fortune, only to return after Isabel was forcibly married to another. The story culminates in their deaths, almost simultaneously, thus symbolizing eternal love.



Torico square, the city center
 Mausoleum of the Lovers of Teruel
 View of the Cathedral



TERUEL

The Church of San Pedro is an essential stop for lovers of romantic stories, and of course, for art enthusiasts as well. It is here that the remains of these ill-fated lovers rest in an impressive funerary construction that pays tribute to eternal love.

Now is the time to talk about the involvement of the people of Teruel in preserving their rich historical legacy. Numerous cultural and educational initiatives seek to promote and disseminate this legacy, as well as their most deeply rooted traditions and festivals.

In this regard, the world-famous "Fiesta del Ángel" in July pays homage to the founding of the city. Historical reenactments such as the "Semana Modernista," which recreates characters and customs from early 20th-century Teruel (November), or the renowned reenactment of the story of Las Bodas de Isabel de Segura, "Fiesta de los Amantes," in February coinciding with Valentine's Day, also contribute to this celebration.

Gastronomy: A Reflection of the Land and Tradition

The culinary richness of Teruel complements its artistic and cultural heritage. The Jamón de Teruel, with its delicate flavor and refined texture, is just the beginning of the gastronomic journey this region offers. Jamón de Teruel,

which holds a D.O.P. status, is cured in the dry and cold climate of the mountains for at least 14 months, a crucial requirement that guarantees its quality.

The Black Truffle, the black gold of gastronomy, is another star product of Teruel's cuisine, ideal for enhancing dishes with its earthy aroma. Cheeses from Albarracín or Tronchón, made from sheep's milk, have intense and very characteristic flavors.

Migas a la pastora, made with breadcrumbs, local ham, chorizo, or pancetta, and garlic, is a dish that has nourished shepherds and field workers for centuries. It is served hot and often accompanied by grapes and a fried egg on top. Ternasco, which can be roasted, grilled, or stewed, is another highlight. It is a young, tender, and juicy lamb.

Other recipes feature more seasonal and equally exquisite products: game meats and local mushrooms offer a palette of flavors that reflect the land and its history.

Among the typical desserts are mantecados, almond sweets, adoquines (hard candies), candied almonds, Torta de Alma, adulones (a type of aniseed doughnut), and finally, the best tribute to the lovers, the "suspiricos" de amante, simply delicious.

Teruel is also a land of exquisite wines with denominations Matarraña, Maestrazgo, and Bajo Aragón, featuring Garnacha, Tempranillo, and Syrah varieties. The wine culture is also an integral part of the visit to the city.

Óvalo Staircase, fountain dedicated to the Lovers



Travel tips



Teruel airport

To reach Teruel, you can travel to Zaragoza by car, plane, or AVE (high-speed train). If you are driving, take the A-23 motorway (Autovía Mudéjar) south, covering approximately 170 kilometers. Follow the signs to the city center upon arrival.

If you prefer to travel by bus, go to the Central Bus Station in Zaragoza, located next to the Delicias Station, and check the schedules of the Samar company. The journey takes between 2 and 2.5 hours.

To travel by train, head to the Zaragoza-Delicias Train Station and check the Renfe schedules. The journey takes between 2.5 and 3 hours.

For **ACCOMMODATION** in Teruel, Hotel Mudayyan is an unbeatable option. Perfectly located on Calle Nueva, just a few meters from Plaza del Torrico and the Escalinata de la Estación or Torán, it combines several modernist buildings designed by Catalan architect Pablo Monguió in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As a "hidden treasure," the basement houses an archaeological ensemble dating back to the 14th century, an ancient passage that connected the priest's house (one of the buildings that make up the hotel) with the Church of El Salvador in the Middle Ages, whose tower is almost within reach from some of its rooms. The hotel, full of charm and a family atmosphere, has 28 rooms. Its staff, especially María José, the owner, are undoubtedly the best ambassadors of the "city of love."

Hotel Mudayyan



El Mercao



La Torre



Teruel ham



Yain

The traditional and avant-garde gastronomy of Teruel can be sampled and enjoyed at several notable restaurants. El Mercao, located at Plaza de los Amantes 1, under the Tower of San Pedro, offers a delightful culinary experience. La Torre, situated under the beautiful Tower of El Salvador, is another excellent choice. Additionally, there's the restaurant Yain, located in Plaza de la Judería. Yain means wine in Hebrew, and during the construction of the restaurant, the remains of an ancient winery dating back to the 14th century were discovered, including a winepress, amphorae buried as fermentation jars, and typical ceramics from the era.



eco destinations

Luxembourg

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Photography: Archive - Photo: Neumünster Abbey and view of the Grund district in the old town

When the purpose of a trip is to hide away and find beauty, nature, and inner peace in the calm, our next destination will be Luxembourg. Like precious stones, this small country possesses an unexpectedly invaluable charm, thanks to its historical origins, multicultural essence, and above all, its immense and privileged natural surroundings.

Nestled between the lush landscapes of Germany, Belgium, and France, and with only 672,050 inhabitants, Luxembourg and its namesake capital not only serve as an energetic hub but also as a driving force for the economic and sustainable growth of its neighboring countries. It is undoubtedly a place to reconnect with our most intimate and tranquil side.

Luxembourg is easily accessible by any means of transport. Upon arrival—regardless of the mode of transport we choose—the country gleams like an emerald on the surface, as green as it is precious. Although the vast landscapes may seem intimidating, step by step, we will see that it is a capital designed to please the eye and cater to good taste, where the ideal way to discover it is by walking and sighing at each of its viewpoints.

European Lung

The city's merit lies not only in its lush surroundings but also in the circular economy it shares with its neighboring countries. To understand this concept more deeply, Mathieu Clausel, Director of Hotel Le Place d'Armes and a member of the Relais & Châteaux firm since 2012, tells *Traveling Magazine* how the country's multiculturalism forms the foundation of all its successful sustainable policies.

Relais & Châteaux, the firm that identifies sustainability in boutique hotels worldwide, is known for promoting various environmental protection initiatives. One of the main examples is in the gastronomic sector, where many kitchens strive to enrich local consumption by applying policies such as zero kilometers. Considering that Luxembourg's production is not as large and diverse as other countries, it is challenging to rely solely on Luxembourgish suppliers, so they support neighboring localities. Rather than seeing this as a weakness, it is an opportunity for these towns, as being less than 35 minutes from the center of Luxembourg, they benefit from the city's consumption. For Mathieu, "caring for the planet is everyone's responsibility," and this is "a fair reward that characterizes the multi-border capital." This year, one of the brand's main initiatives is #Heal, with which the group's chefs worldwide have decided to stop including endangered species on their menus, such as eel.

Internally, Hotel Le Place d'Armes is the jewel within the jewel. As the only five-star hotel in the central Ville Haute, the renovated house hotel represents local culture in all its splendor. In the past, it consisted of individual houses and offices connected by mysterious hallways. In fact, one of the earliest paper printers in the city was found in these premises.

When it first opened, the hotel had only five rooms; today, it boasts 30 rooms, each different from the others.



Vianden Castle





The hotel adopts an exquisite style, which only means pleasure and disconnection. Its enigmatic hallways are as cozy as they are classic, perfect for enjoying its interiors when Luxembourg's weather is less than sunny. It features three renowned restaurants, each adaptable for different occasions. Le Plëss Rôtisserie offers local flavors crafted by Chef Patrice Noël. The Café de Paris brings a Mediterranean touch, representing European-influenced cuisine, while La Cristallerie, recognized in the Michelin Guide, is where refinement and elegance dominate the table, with gold leaf and Art Nouveau stained glass creating a very "Grand Siècle" atmosphere. Even if you don't stay at the hotel, visiting this restaurant is a guaranteed success, worthy of "sincere cuisine." The most social spot is The Bar On 18, a space where the pleasure of "sharing" is the flagship cocktail, endowed with an elegance that only admirers of true beauty can appreciate.

With the arrival of Mathieu in 2023, the hotel focused on certifying its sustainable measures, considering that tourists are increasingly conscious and demanding of environmental policies. Believing in the power of joint efforts, the Director of Hotel Le Place d'Armes also encourages greater communication of the country's brand, as in his eyes it is "the best-hidden diamond of the European Union."

What to Visit in the City

Following these insights, some of the main attractions of the capital include the impressive system of underground tunnels known as the Casemates

- 📍 La Gëlle Fra (in Luxembourgish "Woman in Gold")
- 📍 Hôtel Le Place d'Armes, Relais & Châteaux



5 Curiosities about Luxembourg:

- It has three official languages: Luxembourgish, French, and German.
- It has one of the highest GDPs and per capita incomes in the world and is one of the founding countries of the EU.
- It has over 50 castles scattered throughout the country.
- It is notable for its active policies in renewable energy, electric mobility, and the promotion of ecotourism.
- Public transport is free.



Hôtel Le Place d'Armes, luxury hotel, Relais & Châteaux

of Bock and Pétrusse, which were once the scene of battles and strategic defenses. Additionally, the historical power of the city can be found in the Grand Ducal Palace, the official residence of the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, and the majestic Notre-Dame Cathedral.

The Grund district, on the banks of the Alzette River, offers an emotional experience through its cobblestone streets, while Place Guillaume II and Place d'Armes represent the soul of the city with their lively and vibrant atmosphere. Surrounded by restaurants and fashionable shops, Place d'Armes is the ideal place to stay once you arrive in this charming city.

For those looking to delve into the country's history, the Museum of History unveils the enigmas of Luxembourg and its grand duchy, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the historical evolution of this gem. Beyond the capital, it is possible to combine hiking and tourism, as the country is home to the Castle of Vianden, one of the largest and most beautiful in Europe, and the picturesque region of Mullerthal, known as Luxembourg's Little Switzerland.

Discovering the city is an energetic gift for the soul, as exploring its mysteries reveals personal answers for a tourist seeking exclusivity, tranquility, and history.

Grand Ducal Palace in the city centre





LAS CANTERAS BEACH

Por: Rosario Alonso



The history of Las Canteras Beach is intrinsically linked to the development of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Since pre-Hispanic times, the coast where the beach is now located was known by the indigenous Canarians, who took advantage of its marine resources. However, the true transformation of Las Canteras began with the Spanish colonization in the 15th century.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria became a significant Atlantic port, serving as a supply center and a mandatory stop for colonial ships, mainly British. Las Canteras Beach, located to the west of the city, started to be used as a quarry for extracting construction materials. This valuable sandstone, popularly used to purify seawater (through the classic “talla”), was also employed in the construction of the city's cathedral. These quarries are the origin of the beach's name.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Las Canteras underwent significant changes, primarily due to the construction of a new port in 1883. This development led to the formation of the new city, the



construction of the first hotels, and the birth of tourism, initially linked to the port's economic activities. The natural beauty of the beach, its mild climate year-round, and its proximity to the city made it an attractive destination for European tourists, especially the British. This foreign influence left a notable mark on the architecture of nearby buildings and the lifestyle of the area, including the emergence of "canarilinglish," a charming blend of Canarian Spanish and English.

Las Canteras Beach, spanning just over 3 km, is considered the best urban beach in Europe. Its fine sand, varying from golden to black volcanic, and its different sections (Playa Grande, Playa Chica, Peña La Vieja, Cícer, and Lloret) offer diverse experiences, with surfing being the dominant sport in the last two sections. The "panza de burro" (donkey belly) clouds, more intense in summer than in winter, cool the environment and can be surprising to newcomers as they often dissipate after a few hours. The beach's natural reef supports diverse ecosystems.

The natural reef of Las Canteras Beach, a rock formation, has been the subject of numerous geological studies that date its formation to the last interglacial period, about 110,000 years ago. Over 150 species of flora and

fauna inhabit this reef, creating a natural aquarium just over 200 meters from the shore. It runs parallel to the coast, acting as a breakwater and creating natural pool conditions during low tides. These crystal-clear, shallow waters with abundant marine life are perfect for snorkeling. Las Canteras Beach is also a passage for dolphins and other cetaceans and is home to numerous bird species.

The beach is globally recognized for being a well-preserved urban beach where fishing is prohibited, motorized vehicles are banned except in emergencies, and it remains noise and smoke-free with daily cleaning. On the hottest summer days or during certain festivities, the beach can host up to 80,000 people. The continuous use, maximum conservation, renaturalization, and preservation of the natural reef are the city's top priorities to protect this resilient beach.

Las Canteras is not only a recreational spot but also a place where various cultural traditions that are part of the soul of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria are celebrated. Among the most notable is the Fiesta de San Juan, the patron saint of the city. Every June 23rd, the beach becomes the epicenter of the celebrations.

LAS CANTERAS BEACH (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria)

Thousands of people gather on the sand to light bonfires, enjoy fireworks displays, and take a midnight swim in the sea, a tradition believed to bring good luck.

Another important tradition is the Romería del Pino, in honor of the Virgen del Pino, patroness of Gran Canaria. Although the pilgrimage itself takes place in the town of Teror, many pilgrims stop at Las Canteras to refresh themselves before continuing their journey. This event reflects the deep religious and community spirit that characterizes the Canarians.

Additionally, the beach is the setting for sports and cultural events throughout the year, such as the beach film festival, the Canary Sand Nativity Scene, surfing competitions, open-air concerts, and various Canary Latin Sailing competitions. These activities not only strengthen the sense of community but also attract visitors from around the world, contributing to the dynamism and vitality of the area.

The Sand Nativity Scene at Las Canteras Beach celebrated its 18th edition in 2023. This event included eight nativity scenes sculpted by nine international artists and featured the largest representation of Canarian sculptors

to date. Visitors could watch the artists work in real-time, and solar panels were installed for lighting, showcasing the beach's commitment to sustainability.

Las Canteras Beach has also been the setting for numerous film productions. Its natural beauty and clear waters have attracted directors and producers seeking paradisiacal locations. Movies and TV series have used this incomparable setting to create memorable scenes, contributing to its international fame. Examples from the past include "Moby Dick" (with Gregory Peck staying at the Hotel Santa Catalina during filming) and more recent productions like "The Mother" with Jennifer Lopez.

Moreover, the beach is a gathering point for local artists and musicians who find inspiration in its surroundings. It is common to see painters capturing the essence of Las Canteras on their canvases or to hear musicians playing melodies that blend with the sound of the sea. This creative and bohemian atmosphere adds a special charm to the beach.

Surfing and Las Canteras have been a duo for many years. Along with Donostia and Ribamontán al Mar (Cantabria), Las Canteras Beach (with Cícer and Lloret being



the designated areas for this sport) is part of the World Surf Cities Network, the only three cities in Spain. It is estimated that around 20,000 people come to the beach each year to surf, with schools for all levels right on the beach, as well as shops where equipment can be rented or purchased, and venues (bars, restaurants, etc.) exclusively for surfers. Up to four championships, including one for adaptive surfing, are held annually at Las Canteras Beach.

The largest waves can be enjoyed in front of the fabulous Alfredo Kraus Auditorium, designed by Catalan architect Oscar Tusquets, enriched with a series of original sculptures by artist Juan Bordes, notably the monument to Alfredo Kraus himself by Víctor Ochoa Sierra.

Another notable curiosity is that Las Palmas de Gran Canaria may have been the first Spanish destination chosen by so-called "digital nomads" about 10 years ago when the phenomenon was practically just beginning.

- 1.- Las Canteras Promenade
- 2.- Alfredo Kraus Statue
- 3.- Alfredo Kraus Auditorium
- 4.- Surf School
- 5.- Sunset Drinks on the Promenade





MONTERREI

Wine tourism destination

Text and photos: Jose A. Muñoz
Photo above: Gargalo Vineyards



Godello grapes

Monterrei, located in the province of Ourense in Galicia, is a wine region rich in history and tradition. Known for its thermal waters, castros (Celtic forts), and especially its wine production, Monterrei is the first wine region you encounter in Galicia, well-connected to the rest of Spain thanks to high-speed rail. This territory, with its mild and transitional climate, is influenced by the Atlantic air and the temperate air of the Castilian plateau that travels through the Támega River. This unique environment has fostered the development of a prolific viticulture that dates back to the Roman Empire.

Grape Varieties and Types of Wine

Viticulture in Monterrei is characterized by the diversity of its grape varieties and the richness of its soils, which include schist, granite, slate, and sediment. Godello is the region's most emblematic grape variety, known locally as Verdello. This grape produces elegant and fruity

wines that reflect the unique terroir of both the valleys and the slopes. In addition to Godello, other important white varieties in the region include Treixadura, also known as Verdello Louro due to the golden tones its skin acquires; Albariño; Dona Branca; Loureira; and Caíño Blanco. These white wines are known for their intense aromas, freshness, and balance.

As for red wines, Mencía is the predominant variety, producing cherry-red wines with fruity aromas and a persistent flavor. Other red varieties cultivated in Monterrei include Tempranillo (Araúxa), Merenzao (Bastardo), and Sousón. These grapes are used in both single-varietal wines and blends, adding complexity and depth to the region's wines.

All these wines coexist in a relatively small area, comprising 29 wineries, 6 municipalities, and 720 hectares of vineyards, which are gradually increasing as areas once dominated by vines are reclaimed.

Climate and Geography

Monterrei has a temperate Mediterranean climate with continental tendencies, influenced by the Atlantic Ocean. Summers are hot and dry, while winters are cold. The region experiences considerable thermal variability during the grape ripening period, which contributes to the complexity and quality of the wines. The vineyards are located at altitudes ranging from 300 to 800 meters, allowing for a great diversity of microclimates and expressions in the wines.

Cultura e Historia

The viticultural history of Monterrei dates back to Roman times, as evidenced by archaeological remains such as rock wine presses, presses, and vessels that demonstrate a thriving wine industry taking advantage of the favorable climatic and geographical conditions. During the Middle Ages, wine production expanded significantly under the influence of religious orders, with monks using wine as payment to monasteries and feudal lords. The Monterrei castle played a crucial role in protecting and promoting viticulture. In the 16th century, Monterrei established itself as a prominent wine region with the construction of wineries and improvements in cultivation and production techniques. Although viticulture declined at the end of the 20th century, the official recognition of the Denomination of Origin (D.O.) Monterrei in 1994 revitalized the industry, ensuring the production and quality of its wines.

Currently, wines made with Godello are very trendy, and Monterrei is undeniably the heart of Godello, making the potential for expansion of this region indisputable.

One of the most significant historical vestiges of Monterrei are the rock wine presses, structures carved into the rock dating back to Roman times. These presses, along with other archaeological remains such as wine presses and vessels, underline the historical importance of wine in the region. Visiting these presses offers a fascinating perspective on ancient winemaking practices and the evolution of wine production in Monterrei.

Landscape of the Monterrei Valley



MONTERREI

A landmark site is the Monterrei Castle, located in the parish of Santa María de Monterrei. Built on the remains of Castro de Baroncelli, an ancient Celtic settlement, this fortress-palace stands on a hill dominating the valley of the Támega River. This impressive historical monument, dating back to the 10th century, is one of the best-preserved fortresses in Galicia and was declared a National Monument in 1931. It is currently a Site of Cultural Interest and a Parador Nacional de Turismo.

To fully experience "Monterrei," you must not miss the Verín Carnival, known locally as Entroido, one of the most significant cultural events in the Monterrei region. This festival, which lasts for two weeks, is notable for its "fariñadas" (flour battles) and the iconic figure of the "Cigarrón" (masked men who run around and encourage people to participate).

The celebration begins with Jueves de Comadres and Domingo de Corredoiro, marked by the first gathering of Cigarróns and a fariñada in the Plaza Mayor. Later, on Jueves de Comadres, women, dressed in costumes, leave the men at home and go out for dinner, culminating in a massive nighttime reception for the Carnival procession and the opening speech that inaugurates the main festivities. These



Rock Wine Press of Xan Petro
Monterrei Castle



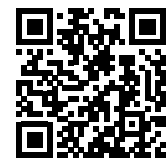
Gastronomy

Monterrei's gastronomy is deeply rooted in the region, heavily influenced by its proximity to the Portuguese border. Among the most notable gastronomic products are Oímbra peppers, Riós chestnuts, and beef. These products perfectly complement the region's wines, creating unique culinary experiences. A typical meal in Monterrei might include roasted Oímbra peppers paired with a valley Godello, cod with Broa bread paired with a hillside Godello, and braised shank served with a Mencía.

Monterrei is a wine region that combines history, culture, and a rich tradition in producing high-quality wines. Its diverse grape varieties and soils, along with a unique climate, allow for the creation of elegant and complex wines that reflect the distinctive character of the region. The combination of its cultural heritage, gastronomy, and festive events makes Monterrei an unparalleled wine tourism destination.



Ladairo Winery Vineyards



D.O. Monterrei

MONTERREI

Ladairo Winery

Ladairo winery, a family winery founded in the 1980s by José Luís Vaz Vilera in O Rosal, Oímbra (Ourense), is renowned for its commitment to producing high-quality wines in the Monterrei region. The winery, which was the first to register with the D.O. Monterrei in 1994, boasts over 20 hectares of vineyards and modern facilities capable of producing 300,000 bottles annually.

Ladairo cultivates various grape varieties, including Mencía, Godello, Araúxa, Treixadura, Loureira, Albariño, Bastardo, Caíño, and Sousón. Their wines, such as Ladairo Tinto Barrica 2020 and the Family Collection, have been repeatedly awarded, standing out as some of the best red wines in Galicia.



C/ Ladairo, 42 - O Rosal,
Oímbra – Ourense
Tlfno.: 988 422 757
Mail: info@bodegasladairo.com



Gargalo Winery

Gargalo Winery, founded by Roberto Verino and located in Verín, Ourense, in the Monterrei region, cultivates 18 hectares of vineyards with traditional Galician white and red grape varieties. Situated at the foot of Monterrei Castle, the winery focuses on producing high-quality wines that reflect the essence of Galician viticulture.

The winery's philosophy combines tradition and innovation, which has led to its wines receiving international recognition. Additionally, it offers wine tourism experiences for visitors to enjoy the landscape and the winemaking process.



Rúa do Castelo, 59 - 32619 Verín
Teléfono: 988 59 02 03

Terras do Cigarrón Winery

Terras do Cigarrón Winery, located in Albarellos de Monterrei, Ourense, is a cooperative founded in 2002 by two dozen winegrowers. Three years later, in 2005, their facilities were officially inaugurated. Their vineyards are situated between 400 and 500 meters above sea level, with sandy-loam soils, ideal for cultivating the Godello grape, which is the main variety used for their wines.

The winery produces varietal wines such as Terras do Cigarrón and Mara Martín, both made with Godello. Additionally, they cultivate other varieties and produce wines like Mara Moura, which combines Godello and Treixadura. The location of the vineyards and the quality of their grapes contribute to the creation of wines with a unique and distinctive personality.



Ctra. General 18, 32618, Albarellos, Monterrei (Ourense)
Tlf: +34 988 418 703



Triay Winery

Founded in 1840, Bodegas Triay has witnessed the work of six generations dedicated to viticulture. This tradition is reflected in the artisanal care applied at every stage of the process, from manual harvesting to controlled temperature fermentation and static wine stabilization. The winery has six hectares of its own vineyards, cultivated sustainably and without herbicides, producing native varieties such as Godello and Mencía.

Among its special wines is Triay 38 Sousón, made from a nearly extinct grape variety and aged in French oak barrels.



Rúa Ladairo, 36 (O Rosal)
Oímbra - Ourense
info@bodegastriay.es
+34 988 422 776



Daniel Fernández Winery

Founded in 2015, Bodegas Daniel Fernández is an innovative winery with architecture inspired by the Keep of Monterrei Castle, blending tradition and modernity. Its four hectares of vineyards cultivate native varieties such as Godello, Treixadura, Dona Branca, and Mencía, on slate, schist, granite, and sandy soils, which give their wines unique characteristics.

The winery's standout wine is Galván Godello Treixadura, which received the Acio de Oro award for the best wine of the D.O. Monterrei in 2016. Additionally, the winery produces Galván Mencía, a red wine that combines Mencía and Tempranillo.

With an annual production capacity of 70,000 liters, Bodegas Daniel Fernández focuses on quality and innovation to capture the essence of the Monterrei Valley, remaining at the forefront of the Galician wine sector.

Quinta de Arriba, s/n
Autovía Rías Baixas Salida 160
Verín (Ourense)
info@bodegasdanielfernandez.com
Teléfono : 988 59 08 64



Monterrei Rock Wine Presses

Recovered since 2011, they have allowed us to rewrite the history of Galician wine, with the highest concentration found in the D.O. Monterrei. With over 60 stone structures distributed throughout the territory, they provide the perfect excuse to explore the area's mountains, go hiking, and enjoy nature. The municipality of Oímbra has the largest number of wine presses and offers several hiking trails around these archaeological remains.

Avenida de Oímbra, 18. Oímbra
Tf.: +34 988 426 185
concello@oimbra.gal





The Aljafería

11th Century Architectural Jewel in Zaragoza

Text: Rosario Alonso - Photography: Jose A. Muñoz

The Aljafería is actually three palaces: one Muslim from the 11th century and two Christian, one from the 14th century and the other from the 15th century.



Gardens connecting the two wings of the Muslim Palace

Islamic Origins or Islamic Palace

The Aljafería Palace was built in the second half of the 11th century by order of Abu Yaafar Ahmad ibn Sulayman, known as Al-Muqtadir, the king of the Taifa of Zaragoza (Taifa of Saraqusta). In this century, the disintegration of the Caliphate of Córdoba occurred, leading to the birth of independent Muslim kingdoms or Taifas. Originally, the palace was called Qasr al-Surur, meaning "Palace of Joy," and it was conceived as a summer palace where Abu Yaafar gathered with his "friends," who were the great scholars of the time (mathematicians, scientists, astronomers), making it a significant cultural center. This name reflected its function as a recreational residence, located outside the city walls in an area of orchards and irrigation channels. The initial structure included a fortress with walls and semicircular towers surrounding a central courtyard with gardens and cisterns. Notable features included the Golden Hall or Hall of Marbles, used for receiving embassies, and a small mos-

que with a richly decorated mihrab, which served as the king's oratory. The function of this oratory was to avoid the king's need to travel to the main mosque located in the current Torreón de la Zuda, about two kilometers from the summer palace, for the five daily calls to prayer. The oratory's square base, which becomes octagonal in height with interlaced arches in the lower part and decorated with ataurique, was a true novelty of its time.

The polylobed arches still display the traditional polychromy of Islamic art (red, green, blue, and gold), which would be repeated in subsequent expansions carried out by Mudéjar artisans.

Reconquest and the First Christian Palace

In 1118, Zaragoza was reconquered by Alfonso I the Battler, and the Aljafería became the residence of the Kings of Aragon. During this period, significant renovations were carried out, largely respecting the original Islamic structure. One of the most

significant moments in the palace's history was during the reign of Peter IV the Ceremonious in the 14th century when the palace's dependencies were expanded, and new rooms were constructed, adorned with rich Mudéjar coffered ceilings. This architectural style is characterized by the blend of Islamic and Christian elements, a fusion that defines much of Aragon's cultural heritage.

Peter IV's epithet "Ceremonious" refers to his fondness for hosting elaborate ceremonies and festivals with strict protocols. He was known as a very cultured king who was often depicted wearing a helmet topped with a crown, and above the crown, a dragon. This representation can be seen in many rooms of the Aljafería through successive expansions, as well as isolated dragon motifs, which have always played an important role in Aragonese art.

In this first Christian palace, one of the most striking features is the aljarfe, or ceiling with exposed beam framework, decorated with family



Arab Palace, Abu Ya'afar's rooms

crests that welcome guests into the rooms. In these crests, the Mudéjar artisans, faithful to the Islamic style, used the same colors as in the original Taifa palace.

In this second palace, a showcase of cultural fusion, it is possible to see Gothic-Christian pointed arches with Muslim decoration.

Reformation by the Catholic Monarchs and the Inquisition

In the late 15th century, the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, undertook a significant transformation of the Aljafería, approximately between the years 1488-1493. They built a new palace over the north wing of the original Islamic structure,

introducing Renaissance elements and significantly altering the building's appearance. The Tower of the Troubadour, the oldest part of the Aljafería, was used as a prison during the Inquisition, a function it maintained until the 19th century.

Two of the rooms in the palace of Peter IV the Ceremonious were designated for the Tribunal of the Inquisition. Thanks to the writings of Cosimo de' Medici, we know what these rooms were like: painted red, with a table for three inquisitors and a silver cross. The judgment room had two doors: one for the condemned and one for the acquitted. The prison and the torture chamber completed the "wing of justice."

From this last renovation, the Throne Room stands out. The walls, which now appear bare, were likely covered with tapestries that would be changed periodically. The most spectacular feature of the room is undoubtedly the ceiling, consisting of 30 wooden square coffers. The same colors that Muslims and Mudéjar artisans had been using since the 11th century were employed here. Additionally, the yoke and arrows, the emblem of the Catholic Monarchs, appear, along with over 60 dragons depicted on the ceiling, this time with a defiant expression or devouring their prey. A spectacular Latin inscription runs along the perimeter of the room, extolling the individual qualities of the Catholic Monarchs.

astly, the dates in Roman numerals of the Discovery of America and the end of the Reconquista are inscribed.

The Hall of the Lost Steps, or the waiting room for the royal audience, features a labyrinth on the floor that provided entertainment during the wait. The ceiling's wooden representation, both in letters and images, depicts King Ferdinand of Aragon's famous motto "Tanto Monta" with the cutting of the Gordian knot, which translates to "the end justifies the means."

Curiosities of the Aljafería

The Patio de Santa Isabel, once the core of the Islamic palace, remains a peaceful and refreshing oasis with its orange trees and abundant vegetation, standing as a notable example of Islamic gardening and architecture.

The Tower of the Troubadour and the well are considered to predate the Aljafería, dating back to the 9th century. The Tower of the Troubadour inspired the play by Antonio García Gutiérrez in 1836, which in turn inspired Giuseppe Verdi's "Il Trovatore," narrating the trials and tribulations of a troubadour imprisoned in this historic place.

The monumental staircase of the Catholic Monarchs is another example of the opulence and power that the monarchs wanted to display through architecture, asserting their place in history by incorporating their emblems and symbols of authority, wordplays, and imagery to leave a lasting impression of who they were and what they represented.

Uses Throughout History

Over the centuries, the Aljafería has had various uses. Besides its function as a royal residence,

the palace has served as a military fortress, a prison, and the headquarters of the Inquisition. During the Peninsular War, it suffered significant damage but was restored in the second half of the 20th century. Today, the Aljafería houses the Aragonese Parliament, thus reclaiming its historical role as a center of political power.

Cultural and Heritage Significance

The Aljafería was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1986, recognizing its historical and architectural value. It is one of the finest examples of Islamic and Mudéjar architecture in Spain, and along with

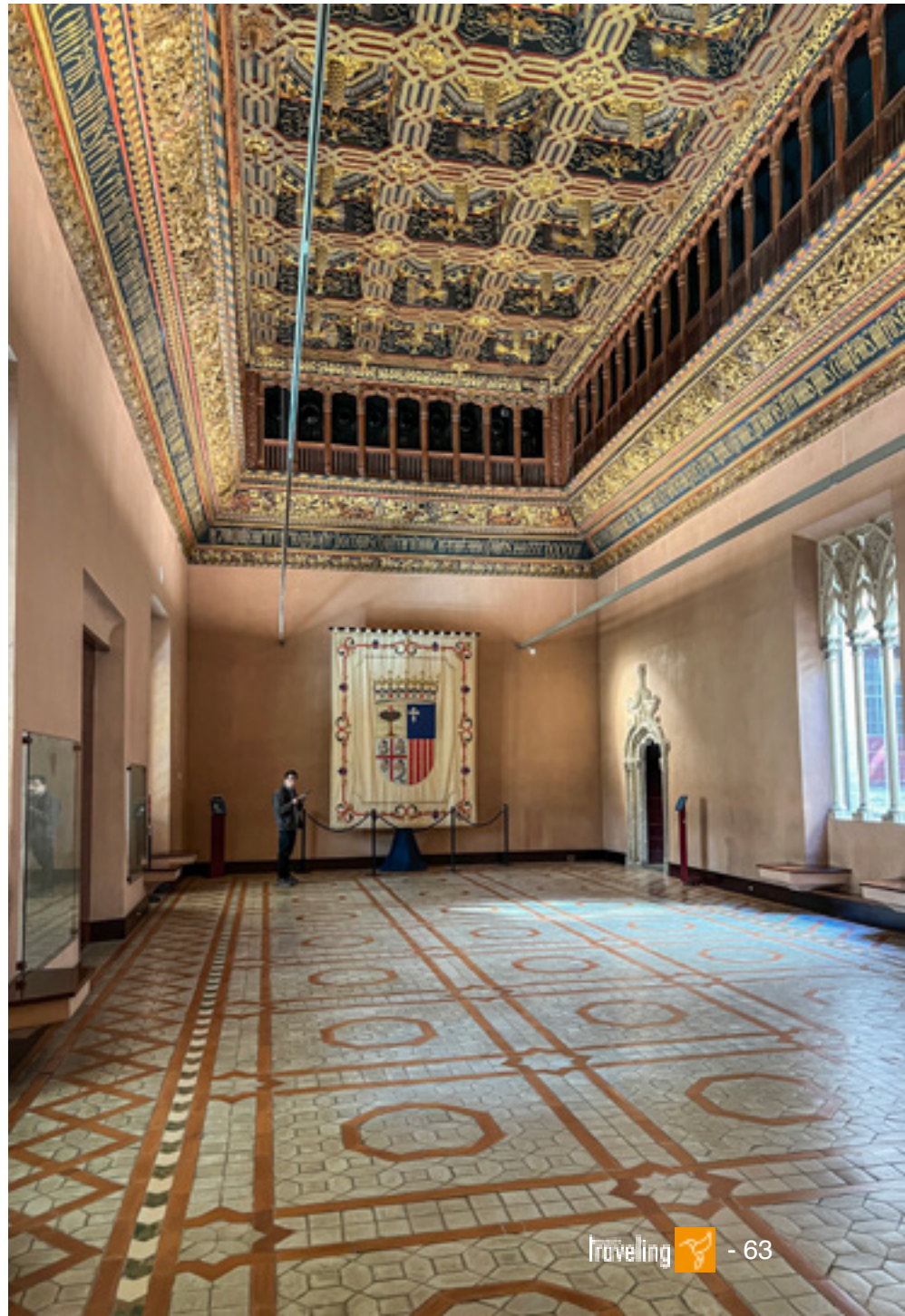
the Alhambra in Granada and the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba, it forms the triad of the most important Hispano-Muslim monuments.

Today, as the seat of the Aragonese Parliament, it remains a symbol of political power and culture, preserving the historical and artistic legacy it represents.



Information and Reservations

Pedro IV Palace





The Royal Glass Factory of La Granja: A Historical and Cultural Jewel

Text and Photos: Miguel Ángel Muñoz Romero - www.comoencasaencualquierlugar.com

This distinguished institution, founded in 1727 by King Philip V, played a pivotal role in the development of the glass industry in Europe.

Closely linked to the construction of the Royal Palace of La Granja de San Ildefonso, Philip V aimed to emulate the grandeur of Europe's majestic palaces. He decided to establish a glass factory near his new royal residence to supply high-quality glass and mirrors. Under the direction of master glassmakers from European countries such as France and Bohemia, the factory began producing glass pieces that quickly gained fame for their exceptional quality and beauty.

The tour of the Royal Glass Factory begins at the Glass Museum. This museum houses a collection of historical and contemporary pieces, showcasing the evolution of glass over the centuries.

One of the museum's highlights is the opportunity to witness the glassmaking process in the functioning workshops. Visitors can watch master glassblowers blowing and shaping molten glass with impressive skill. This live demonstration not only illustrates the traditional techniques used for centuries but also the factory's ongoing commitment to high-quality craftsmanship.



“

In the workshops, which are still in operation, visitors can watch master glassblowers blowing and shaping molten glass with impressive skill.

”









Rita González

By: Julián Sacristán - comunicacion@wfm.es

Rita González, the young actress from "La Academia," the surprise hit series of recent months, stars in a teen drama set in the training school of Apolo F.C., where a group of teenage boys and girls dream of becoming top footballers for the club. The series is flavored with the typical problems and emotions of adolescence, and the families of the main characters play key roles in the development of the storyline.

In Rita's words, "Lara and I are similar in that we are both very hardworking and have a clear vocation. Additionally, the world of football has similarities to what we actors experience, since, considering that only a small percentage reach the top, you have to be very persistent."

Despite her youth, Rita is quite well-traveled. She visited Costa Rica as a child, has been to New York, Morocco, and Cameroon, where she did volunteer work to provide potable water.



What does this series mean to you?

Something very special and unforgettable.

And Microtheater?

It's very interesting; in 15 minutes, you tell the whole story. My mother, who is an actress, helps me a lot by giving me advice like "enjoy the process and the series."

What were your impressions on the first day of filming?

I was very impressed. Everything works like a well-oiled machine; everyone knows what they have to do. It's overwhelming, and I learned that concentration is very important.

How is the cast of colleagues?

Everything was very new. Some of us had met in schools before. Additionally, as usual, we did a lot of rehearsals beforehand, which made us more like a family.

Is the artistic team very different from other series?

Yes, out of the younger cast, five of us are actresses and the rest are professional footballers. It was wonderful working with them in the

football scenes. For the role, we trained for five weeks before filming.

What does theater mean to you?

It's very alive; it's ephemeral and no two performances are the same. It's an experience where a special energy is created.

In cinema, who would you like to work with?

It's a difficult question, but without a doubt, Carla Simón.

What would you highlight about the series?

It portrays today's youth and their issues very well: eating disorders, lack of communication with parents, misunderstanding, and gender inequality.

Which scene do you remember especially?

Emotional scenes impact me a lot. The sit-in scene was very real; the extras were very into it and the footballers lived it fully.

The series was filmed in Tarrasa, in a hotel that was

transformed into a football school. What did the footballers tell you?

Mapi León visited us and explained that she started playing with the boys, and that you never know if your teammates are just that or also rivals. The role of the psychologist in a team is fundamental due to the pressure.

And after this success?

I'm still doing castings full force.

What do you like most and least about doing castings?

The least, the minute before entering, the nerves. The most, when you're doing the scene.

What role would you like to play?

Something in a horror movie, playing the villain, haha.

We leave football behind to move on to opera with Talia del Val.





T

alía del Val, Renowned singer and actress of major Spanish musicals, Talia

del Val began her training in acting, singing, and dancing at a young age, while also working in the audiovisual field. She holds a degree in Stage Direction from RESAD. As a solo soprano, she has sung in thousands of concerts, with a repertoire ranging from Gershwin, Sondheim, Webber, and Menken to Radiohead. Creation and education are constants in her life, which is why she composed a musical titled "Fugitivos."

At 16, she began her theatrical career, and we have seen her perform as Belle in "Beauty and the Beast," Cosette in "Les Misérables" over three seasons, Maria in the latest production of "West Side Story," Mary in "The Doctor," Irene Adler in "Sherlock Holmes" during the pandemic, and more...

Talia del Val



When did the bug bite you?

When I was very young. I've been dancing and singing since I was 7 years old, and in an adult world, I realized I was training without even knowing it.

Did you start in the audiovisual world?

I started doing films, and TV series were like an extracurricular activity for me. In "Dime que me quieres" with Lidia Bosch, I realized that popularity wasn't for me. At school, it was fine, but strangers could sometimes be unpleasant. That made me a bit averse to popularity. Besides, I'm passionate about theater. Theater is pure addiction; this is my place, theater is my passion - Your life is the theater because you live theater as your life.

Your life is the theater because you live the theater as your life.

For example, in High School Musical, I was doing my second year of English philology, and from one day to the next, I went on tour throughout Spain. The world of tours with High School Musical and Mamma Mia encouraged me to go out and explore the places we visited. They were two shows where we did a lot of promotions and enjoyed the locations. However, when you do a tour like Les Misérables or Beauty and the Beast, the role prevents you from making many plans.

Do you remember any special place?

In West Side Story, the last tour was through the north of Spain, and I discovered that Santander is one of my favorite cities.

And the food?

I love eating, and I enjoy it a lot when I'm on tour. I've discovered many new gastronomic delights, like sea urchins and sea anemones.

What about your characters in musicals?

In Les Misérables, Cosette is a light lyric character. The good thing was that I had less responsibility and learned a lot. Then I went on to do Beauty and the Beast and came back at 27 years old.

West Side Story, playing Maria, was tough because it carries a lot of responsibility, and it coincided with my studies. Also, vocally, it's quite similar to Christine in The Phantom of the Opera.

In The Phantom of the Opera, Christine is the prototype of a 19th-century woman, but we've focused more on the psychological aspect. Her father dies, and a teacher who isn't what she thought appears. At the same time, a childhood friend wants to help her but doesn't, and the character suffers. The cemetery song is very significant; it's where the character becomes more human. She is a character with a vast inner world that she has to manage.

In The Phantom, my colleagues are all great figures and also very young

and professional people. It's a very united cast, and our energies complement each other.

What musical theater character did you dream of playing?

I always wanted to play Christine, and now I am. It's a gift.

Awards and Future Plans Talia del Val has been awarded **Best Actress in a Musical** in the second edition of the **Talia Awards** for her impeccable portrayal of **Christine Daaé**, and **Julio Awad** for **Best Musical Direction**. After the success in **Madrid**, they will be in **Bilbao** for **ASTE NAGUSIA** and will return to **Madrid** for the second season on **September 27th**. Mark your calendar!





Grand Hotel Mas d'en Bruno

Text: Rosario Alonso - **Photography:** Hotel Mas d'en Bruno



Recently incorporated into the exclusive Relais & Châteaux network, Gran Hotel Mas d'en Bruno stands as an emblem of luxury and wine culture in Torroja del Priorat, in the province of Tarragona. This article delves into the features that make this 24-room boutique hotel a must-visit destination for lovers of the good life and fine wine.

Location and Surroundings

Situated in a privileged setting, surrounded by the vineyards of Priorat and close to the Montsant mountain range, Gran Hotel Mas d'en Bruno offers the perfect escape for those seeking to disconnect in an atmosphere of tranquility and natural beauty. The Priorat region, known for its high-quality wines and stunning landscape, provides the ideal backdrop for this luxurious retreat.

Design and Accommodation

Surrounded by vineyards and the lush Montsant mountain range with its many trails, this fully renovated historic farmhouse features only 24 rooms dedicated to peace and tranquility. The hotel combines rustic elements with modern comforts, creating an environment where luxury and tradition intertwine. Each room is individually designed to offer a unique experience to every guest. Among them, the Bruno's Suite stands out for its spaciousness and panoramic views of the vineyards, situated in the main building with 120 m² and a private 20 m² terrace. Meanwhile, the Bruno's Villa offers privacy with its spectacular terrace and private pool. Ten Garden Suites, five Suites, four Junior Suites, and three Terrace Suites complete the carefully curated offerings of Mas d'en Bruno. The interior design, by Astet Studio, reflects a commitment to excellence and comfort.



Gastronomy

The hotel's restaurant operates under two distinct concepts depending on the time of day, reflecting the region's rich gastronomy. During the day, Tarra-co serves dishes inspired by Mediterranean cuisine with Italian influences, while at night, Vinum offers a culinary experience enriched by perfect wine pairings. Josep Queralt, the chef in charge of this dual-personality space, has been recognized for his ability to fuse tradition and innovation in every dish. Awarded Best Chef of Camp de Tarragona and Terres del Ebre in the first edition of the Tarragona Gastronomic Awards (2021), Queralt has spent most of his career at Can Bosch (Cambrils, Tarragona), a Michelin-starred restaurant, and has also trained at other prestigious establishments such as Can Roca and Azurmendi.

For a lighter meal or dinner, a snack, or a tapa made with the best local produce, Bistro is the perfect place. It is the "pool bar," located on a large elevated terrace with trees offering a dreamlike panorama.

Lastly, Bruno's Bar is the perfect enclave for mixology enthusiasts with its wide selection of cocktails and other beverages.

Wine and Enology

Wine is an integral part of the experience at Mas d'en Bruno. The hotel houses a Wine Bar where guests can enjoy guided tastings by an expert sommelier. This space not only offers local wines from Priorat and Montsant but also renowned labels from around the world, making each tasting an educational and pleasurable oenological adventure.

The region's winemaking tradition originated in the Middle Ages on the lands of the former prior of the Escaladei Carthusian Monastery, who brought his enological knowledge from Provence. This building, the first Carthusian monastery on the Iberian Peninsula, is very close to the hotel.



Relaxation and Wellness

The hotel's spa, located in what used to be the old wine press of the farmhouse, is an oasis of peace. With exclusive Natura Bissé treatments and the option to enjoy vinotherapy, guests can deeply relax while immersed in the site's history and nature. The ability to privatize the spa and wine cellar adds a touch of exclusivity to the wellness experience.

Cooling off in the hotel's infinity pool or reading a good book in its library are other moments of full enjoyment offered by this boutique hotel, which prides itself on privacy and exclusivity.

Events and Activities

Mas d'en Bruno is also an ideal venue for events, from corporate meetings to weddings and other celebrations. With the flexibility to adapt its spaces, the hotel can transform its terraces and gardens into the perfect setting for any event, ensuring a memorable experience accompanied by spectacular views and first-class service.

Exploration and Culture

The hotel's location offers guests the opportunity to explore the rich history and culture of the Priorat region. From visits to the ancient Escaladei Carthusian Monastery to excursions in the Montsant Natural Park, there are plenty of activities for those interested in history, nature, and sports. Additionally, the proximity to picturesque villages such as Siurana allows visitors to discover the medieval heritage of Catalonia.



Grand Hotel Mas d'en Bruno





Vall de Núria Hotel

A Retreat in the Heart of Nature

Text: Redacción - **Photography:** Hotel Vall de Núria

The Hotel Vall de Núria is a true oasis nestled in a dreamlike valley, accessible only by an exciting journey on a rack railway. This hotel offers a unique experience that combines comfort, history, and local gastronomy, all set in an atmosphere of tranquility and natural beauty.

A History Dating Back to the 20th Century

Located at an altitude of over 2,000 meters, Hotel Vall de Núria is housed in a building with a rich history. The valley's church was inaugurated in 1911, and shortly after, the hotel was built, which continues to welcome visitors from around the world to this day. This historic establishment has witnessed countless stories and remains an ideal refuge for those seeking to escape the hustle and bustle of the city.

Accommodation for All Tastes

The hotel boasts 75 fully equipped rooms, including 4 suites and 10 superior family rooms that offer a warm and elegant atmosphere. Additionally, there are 20 apartments with a maximum capacity of 6 people, designed to provide a comfortable and unique stay. For events and meetings, the hotel offers three newly renovated rooms with a maximum capacity of 50 people, ideal for meetings and small events. There is also an auditorium with 140 seats on the lower floor of the building, perfect for presentations and larger events.



Local Gastronomy

The gastronomic offerings at Hotel Vall de Núria highlight the use of locally sourced products, emphasizing the value of local resources. Visitors can enjoy these delights in various dining spaces such as the hotel's restaurant, the Shepherd's Cabin, the Finesstrelles Bar, and El Racó de la Vall. Each of these places offers varied proposals to satisfy all palates.

Commitment to Sustainability

The Sant Josep building has been recently restored, maintaining its exterior and promoting its integration with the natural surroundings. Thanks to a careful design based on maximum energy efficiency criteria, this building has received the European Union's GreenBuilding sustainability award. This award reflects the hotel's commitment to energy optimization and savings in all its facilities. The hotel also has a comprehensive recycling plant for glass, organic waste, paper and cardboard, and packaging.

Activities for Everyone

Hotel Vall de Núria offers a wide range of activities for all ages. Guests can enjoy these activities during their stay, and the little ones have their own play space, the Cau de la Marmota, where they can learn and have fun with guided activities for the whole family.



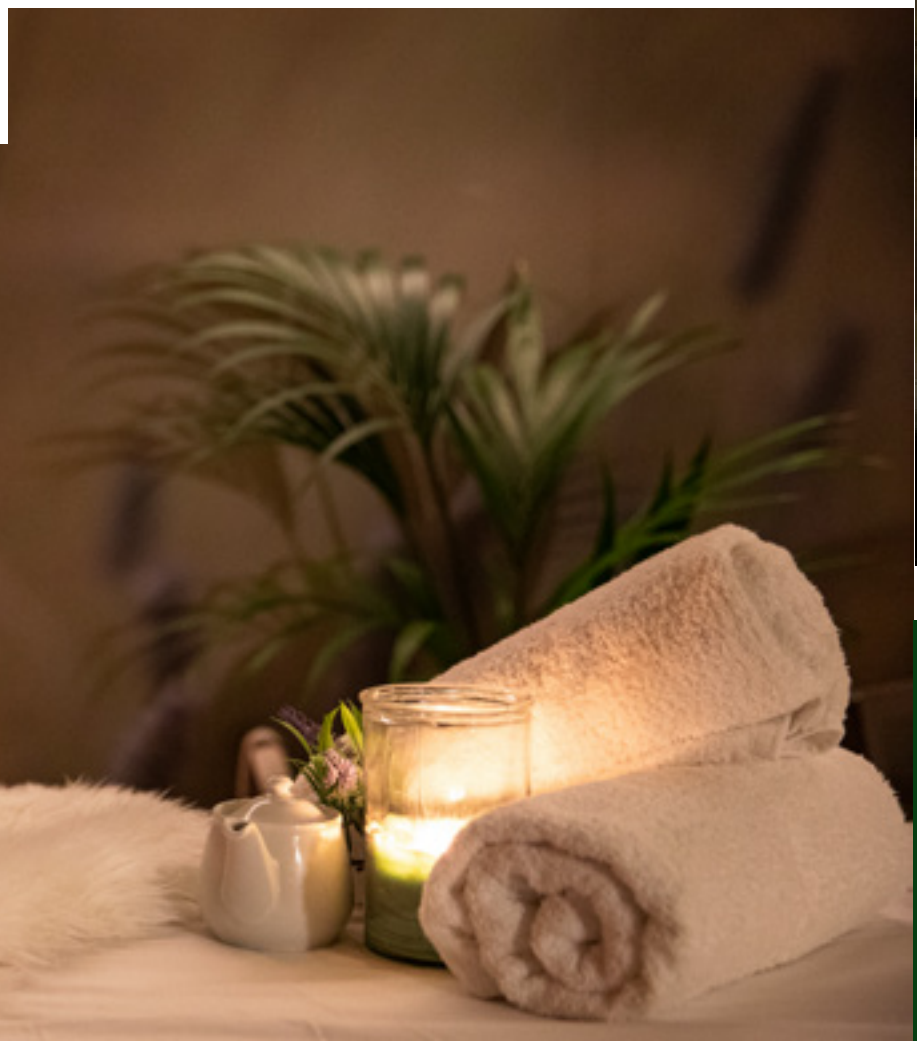
HOTEL VALL DE NÚRIA

In spring and summer, the snow gives way to other activities around the lake, such as kayaking, mountain hiking, canyoning, bird watching, and stargazing. On the shortest night of the year, an event called "Full Moon Boats" was held, where participants enjoyed the full moon on the night of San Juan while on a boat.

After a day in the mountains, what better way to end it than with a spa session? The hotel has a professional team in its spa offering massage treatments, heat treatments, mud therapy, and body peeling.

The Rack Railway: A Jewel of Engineering

The Núria Rack Railway is the only means of transportation to access the Vall de Núria, covering 12.5 km and overcoming a gradient of more than 1,000 meters. Inaugurated in 1931, this train has been a symbol of railway engineering, allowing visitors to enjoy a panoramic journey through spectacular landscapes. The journey starts in Ribes de Freser and passes through Queralbs and Fontalba before reaching Núria, offering impressive views and a unique experience with each trip.





A Valley Full of History

The Vall de Núria is known not only for its natural beauty but also for its rich cultural and religious heritage. The Basilica Sanctuary of Our Lady of Núria, an ancient Marian pilgrimage center, is one of the valley's highlights. According to tradition, the sanctuary was founded in the year 700 by Saint Giles, who carved an image of the Virgin that is still venerated in the neo-Romanesque church.

An Unforgettable Getaway

Whether you are seeking a tranquil retreat, an exceptional gastronomic experience, or an outdoor adventure, Hotel Vall de Núria promises an unforgettable escape. Its combination of history, comfort, sustainability, and natural beauty makes it an ideal destination for any traveler.

Val de Nuria Hotel



The Rack Railway
of Nuriá





Manena's Window

Travel Anecdotes

Photos and text: Manena Munar manena.munar@gmail.com

"Those little things..." that Joan Manuel Serrat would sing about, are the ones that linger in the memory after a trip. Remembering them brings a smile, tears, or bursts of laughter. I'd like to take some of them out of my memory chest and share them with you.

Peru, from Cusco to Lake Titicaca (part 2), a journey in style

One of the most enjoyable ways to travel from Cusco to Machu Picchu is aboard the legendary Hiram Bingham train, named after the American explorer who rediscovered the hidden sanctuary of Machu Picchu in 1911, one of the most stunning landscapes in the world. The train begins to move, covering miles to the sound of boleros played by a musical group, while travelers enjoy an excellent meal. Through the window, the most beautiful postcards of the Urubamba River canyon unfold, until the Ceja de la Selva appears, and the Andean landscape transforms from the ochre tones of the Sacred Valley to the lush jungle surrounding the mountains of Machu Picchu and its surroundings. As is common in the Americas, even the trees, mountains, rivers, and lakes are much larger than in Europe. Upon disembarking from the train in the town of Aguas Calientes, a transfer awaits to take guests to the Belmond Sanctuary Lodge, the only hotel privileged to be located at the gates of the Incan universe.

Machu Picchu, the Andes, the white city of Arequipa, the extraordinary Patapampa, the flight of the Andean condor, and Lake Titicaca mark the end of an unparalleled journey through the Peruvian lands.

Chivay, main town of the Colca Valley



From the jacuzzi at Belmond Sanctuary Lodge, hidden amidst lush vegetation, you can see Huayna Picchu (New Mountain) shrouded in mist and hear the song of the hummingbird. I closed my eyes and opened them again, a few times, to make sure it wasn't a dream. Machu Picchu was just steps away, and I could almost touch it while enjoying a relaxing massage surrounded by the jungle.

The Empire of the Sun

A dreamlike preview before entering the Inca sanctuary that seems to emerge from the clouds. Close your eyes again and feel the weight of history, imagining the daily life of the sun worshippers. I quickly realized that I wouldn't be climbing Huayna Picchu, with my vertigo and fears. No, I was content with walking the gentle and flat slope of Machu Picchu. Meanwhile, my travel companion sat on a comfortable rock with views of Huayna Picchu and meditated in such a magnificent setting. While the meditation lasted, I explored the House of the Nobles and the Sacred Plaza, peering through the Three Windows of the homonymous temple, until I reached the Ceremonial Temple of the Moon, excavated in a cave. Those daring enough, without vertigo, said that climbing Huayna Picchu is a remarkable experience, rewarding with a breathtaking panoramic view at the summit. For the less adventurous, it is highly recommended to take the beautiful and tranquil walk along the Machu Picchu (Old Mountain) trail, enjoying the majestic landscape.



The alpachetas, ancient offerings to the gods

The Misti volcano is the star of Arequipa's life



Of Andean Legends

We had a more than special evening. The director of the Lodge, a hospitable and charming man, dined with us, sharing stories about the enchanting landscape. Initially, he and his wife may have felt somewhat isolated upon their arrival, but soon, the language of the jungle, its people, and the many daily anecdotes made them fall in love with their new destination. The conversation grew livelier, and we ended up listening to fascinating legends and realities of that Andean environment, where waves of majestic history still float.

Another Option: From Cusco to Titicaca on the Andean Explorer, a Belmond Train

The first luxury overnight train in South America, the Andean Explorer, as its name suggests, skirts the Andes, specifically the Cordillera de la Raya, and makes a spectacular journey from Cusco to Lake Titicaca. Traveling through the ochre tones of mountains and earth, it reaches Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world. The train passes by many markets selling llama and alpaca textiles that line its route, tempting travelers into a purchase. I succumbed, buying a llama wool sweater that I cling to in winters because it's so soft and warm.

Arequipa, Under the Volcano's Influence

Our guide, Juan Marcelo, knows what he's talking about. He speaks with authority and an undiminished passion despite his many years of guiding in Arequipa. When he mentions the Misti volcano, he humanizes it, treats it with respect, and integrates it as a key part of life in Arequipa. The volcanic sillar stone that adorns the buildings comes from the volcano, as do the benevolent winds and the bad airs. It affects the good or bad mood of the Arequipeños in their daily lives and might even guide the pen of Nobel laureate Mario Vargas Llosa, a native of Arequipa. Without a doubt, the Arequipa watched over by the volcano is a beautiful, lively city where one feels like staying for a while to experience its full splendor.

Discovering Patapampa

After lively Arequipa, and on the way to Puno, you must cross Patapampa. Climbing to 4,000 meters in an almost deserted landscape can bring feelings of desolation and altitude sickness, leaving your limbs heavy and your head out of place. However, if the unusual excursion is made with Juan Marcelo, the experience changes radically. He knows all its secrets, legends, and dreams. Where at first glance there seems to be nothing, he finds a hidden plant, food for llamas and alpacas.



- 1.- Chivay, the main town in the Colca Valley.
- 2.- On board of the Andean Explorer, to Belmond Train.
- 3.- The wool of the llama is light and transmits warmth.
- 4.- You have to be brave to climb Huayna Picchu



2

3



He knows that the stone pyramids, the apachetas dotting Patapampa, were ancient offerings to the gods that have become amulets to ensure the safe return of those who build them. And he knows that if you desire something strongly, you must make an offering to Mama Pacha (Mother Earth) with three coca leaves as the base and a plant, a small animal, or a cherished keepsake on the leaves, depending on the importance of the request. When the altitude starts to take its toll, Juan Marcelo pulls out a coca leaf, encouraging you to chew it, and your body responds, returning to normal. As he recounts Andean anecdotes, he nests a handful of coca leaves in his mouth with a catalyst of ashes that help withstand the altitude. "Don't chew them!" he says. "Just keep them in your cheek, and they will do their job."

4



Without him, it would have been difficult to notice the mossy llareta that only grows at 4,000 meters and even harder to spot the wild rabbit called vizcacha camouflaging among the rocks. Juan Marcelo is a friendly man with an Andean physique, speaking fondly of his land and indifferently of those who don't understand it. He greets Doña Margarita, who sells alpaca and llama textiles on the high plateau. He knows her life and asks in Quechua about her children and her husband, who left days ago to walk to the nearest town to trade cochineal dye he cultivates for provisions, following the barter system still functioning in Patapampa.



The Condor Fly

Upon arriving in Chivay, the main city of the Colca Valley, Juan Marcelo meets his colleagues who take the same route. They discuss the highlight of the trip, the Colca Canyon, with the hope that the condor, whose wingspan can reach up to three meters, will make an appearance so that those who traveled to witness its majestic flight can leave with their wish fulfilled. A brief note on how the Colca Canyon was brought to international attention by the Polish explorer Jerzy Majcherczyk during an expedition in 1981, a point of pride for my travel companion, who is from Poland. As we reach the canyon, people gather at the edge, eager to see the condor appear. At that moment, as if by magic, a circular rainbow appears, and the condor chooses this moment to surprise its spectators, soaring majestically over the canyon and spreading its wings, making it one of the largest birds on the planet.

1



2

On Reed Islands

Ending the Peruvian journey aboard a reed canoe on Lake Titicaca is a true privilege. On an island constructed from totora reeds, one of its inhabitants, a member of the Uros people, explains the secrets of Titicaca, its fauna, and flora, using a pointer on a map of the lake. He concludes the lesson, and with a hand signal, his compatriots, dressed in the most colorful costumes imaginable, invite us to enjoy freshly caught lake trout and a Cusqueña beer.

- 1.- The condor fly through the Colca Canyon
- 2.- Learning the history and geography lesson from the Uros in Lake Titicaca
- 3.- The totora reed islands of the Uros, inhabitants of Lake Titicaca

3



Traveling

gourmets



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ZARAGOZA, GASTRONOMIC AND CULTURAL



Zaragoza

Gastronomic and cultural Tour

Por: Rosario y Jose A. Muñoz

**Z**

Zaragoza, the capital of Aragon, stands as a fascinating destination for lovers of history, culture, art, and gastronomy. Bathed by the waters of the Ebro River, this ancient city offers a plethora of experiences that invite visitors to immerse themselves in its rich heritage and vibrant contemporary life. Walking through its streets, one encounters an architectural heritage that spans from Roman times to modernity. The Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar, one of the city's most emblematic symbols, majestically rises on the banks of the Ebro, attracting both devotees and admirers of its imposing Baroque structure. Nearby, the Seo Cathedral of San Salvador, blending Romanesque, Gothic, Mudéjar, and Baroque styles, offers a journey through centuries of history through its walls and chapels.

The city's Roman legacy is also evident in its ancient forums, baths, and theaters, preserved to allow visitors a journey back in time. The Museum of the Forum of Caesar Augusta provides a unique opportunity to explore Zaragoza's roots and understand life in the ancient Roman colony.

However, Zaragoza does not live solely in its past. The city boasts a vibrant cultural scene, with a wealth of museums, galleries, and theaters reflecting its current dynamism. The Pablo Gargallo Museum and the Goya Museum - Ibercaja Collection are must-visits for art lovers, while the CaixaForum and the IAACC Pablo Serrano stand out for their contemporary exhibitions and cultural events.

Strolling through the old town is another highly recommended experience when visiting the city. Its cobblestone streets and charming squares invite you to stop and enjoy the local gastronomy in one of its many bars and restaurants. Tapas and Aragonese wine are ideal companions for a day of discoveries. El Tubo, with its multitude of establishments, offers a variety of food, from traditional Aragonese recipes to top-notch oriental fusion cuisine. Wines and beers, pinchos, and an enthusiastic atmosphere will make you feel right at home.

Thus, Zaragoza reveals itself as a city of contrasts, where history and modernity coexist in perfect harmony, offering an enriching and memorable experience. We will start our tour with the most emblematic places, visit some of its museums, and end by discovering some of its best restaurants and bars. Will you join us?



Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar

The Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar is one of the most iconic landmarks in Zaragoza and Spain. Built in the Baroque style, it stands out for its domes and towers that dominate the city's skyline. Inside, visitors can admire frescoes by Francisco de Goya and other artists. The Pilar Chapel houses the revered image of the Virgin of the Pillar, the patroness of the Hispanic world. Visitors can also climb one of the towers for panoramic views of the city.



Stone Bridge

This medieval bridge over the Ebro River is one of the oldest in the city and offers stunning views of the Basilica of the Pillar and the historic center. It's a perfect spot for an evening stroll and to take panoramic photos of Zaragoza.

Aljafería Palace

This Islamic palace was built in the 11th century and is one of the most important monuments of Hispano-Muslim architecture in Spain. Originally a recreational residence, the Aljafería underwent various transformations and uses, including a Christian fortress and a royal palace. Today, it houses the Aragonese Parliament. Visitors can explore its courtyards, halls, and the Troubadour Tower.



Courtyard de la Infanta

This Renaissance courtyard is an architectural gem that originally belonged to a 16th-century palace. It is now located inside the Ibercaja building and is known for its elegant columns and sculptural details. It is an excellent example of Aragonese Renaissance architecture.

- 1.- Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar and Stone Bridge
- 2.- Aljafería Palace
- 3.- Courtyard de la Infanta

Cathedral of San Salvador (La Seo)

Located in Plaza de la Seo, the Cathedral of the Savior is an impressive blend of architectural styles, including Romanesque, Gothic, Mudéjar, Renaissance, and Baroque. It is especially known for its "Parroquieta wall," a magnificent example of Aragonese Mudéjar art. Inside, it houses the Tapestry Museum, which boasts one of the finest collections of Flemish tapestries in the world.



CaixaForum Zaragoza

This cultural center is known for its modern architecture and diverse temporary exhibitions. In addition to contemporary art displays, CaixaForum offers a program of educational activities, lectures, and workshops. The building, designed by the Carme Pinós architecture studio, is a work of art in itself.

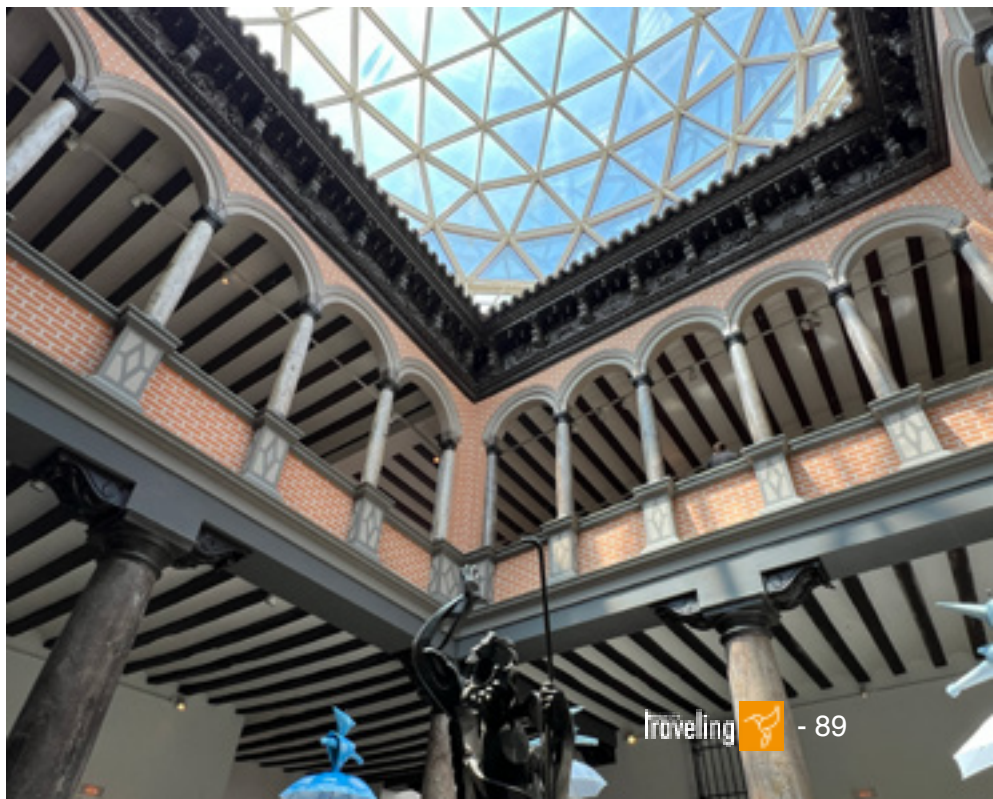


Museum of the Forum of Caesaraugusta

This underground museum is located in Plaza de la Seo and showcases the remains of the Roman forum, the political and social center of Caesaraugusta. Exhibits include remnants of public buildings, streets, and sewer systems, as well as everyday objects that provide insight into life in the Roman city.

Pablo Gargallo Museum

Dedicated to the Aragonese sculptor Pablo Gargallo, the museum is housed in the Palace of the Counts of Argillo, a Renaissance building. The collection includes a wide range of sculptures, drawings, and models that illustrate Gargallo's artistic evolution. Highlights include his works in bronze and iron and his ability to create dynamic and expressive forms.



- 1.- La Seo, Cathedral of San Salvador
- 2.- Museum of the Forum of Caesaraugusta
- 3.- Courtyard of the Museum of Pablo Gargallo



Goya Museum Ibercaja Collection

This museum is located in the Palace of the Pardo, a Renaissance building in the old town of Zaragoza. The collection includes a wide selection of works by Francisco de Goya, as well as other Aragonese and Spanish artists. It offers a unique opportunity to appreciate Goya's artistic evolution, from his early works to his more mature pieces.

José Antonio Labordeta Park

This expansive park is the perfect place to relax and enjoy nature. In addition to its gardens, fountains, and tree-lined walks, the park features sculptures and monuments, such as the one dedicated to José Antonio Labordeta, a beloved Aragonese singer-songwriter and politician. There is also a small train that runs through the park, ideal for children.



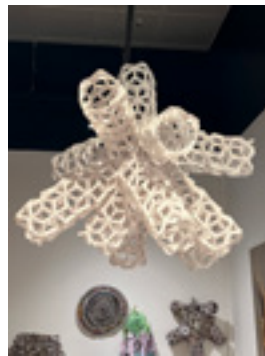
Romano Theater

Discovered in 1972, the Roman Theater of Caesar Augusta is one of the most significant remnants of Roman Zaragoza. Built during the reign of Emperor Tiberius and completed under Emperor Claudius, its construction was finalized in the mid-first century AD. The site includes an interpretation center that provides historical context and displays objects found during the excavations. At its peak, the theater could accommodate up to 6,000 spectators, making it one of the largest in the Iberian Peninsula.

Origami Museum

The Zaragoza Origami Museum (EMOZ) is the first museum in Europe dedicated to the art of paper folding. Inaugurated in 2013, the museum is located on the second floor of the History Center, a historic building that retains elements of an 18th-century convent. EMOZ houses an impressive collection of paper figures created by some of the world's best origami artists, such as Akira Yoshizawa and Eric Joisel. Every three months, the museum completely renews its exhibitions, showcasing new works and folding techniques.

In addition to the exhibitions, the museum offers introductory origami workshops on weekends, attracting more than five thousand visitors a year, mainly students. It also features a shop where visitors can purchase specialized origami supplies and books.



Mobility Museum

The Mobility Museum is an innovative space dedicated to sustainable mobility and technology. The museum explores the evolution of transportation and its impact on society and the environment. It offers interactive exhibits, including driving simulators and informational panels on renewable energies and electric vehicles. It is an ideal place to learn about the latest trends in urban mobility and sustainability and their importance for the future of our cities.



ZARAGOZA, GASTRONOMIC AND CULTURAL

To complement this cultural experience, Zaragoza offers a rich gastronomic scene that should not be overlooked. Here, we present some of the best places to enjoy local cuisine.

Casa Pedro

Casa Pedro has been a gastronomic emblem in the heart of Zaragoza's historic center since 1950, renowned for its fusion of tradition and modernity. Under the direction of brothers Luis and Javier Carcas since 2006, the restaurant has evolved while maintaining its roots, having been acquired from Santiago, the son of founder Pedro. Both brothers, who are also chefs, have taken the helm of this establishment deeply rooted in traditional cuisine and infused it with their refreshing, contemporary, and creative cooking style, incorporating their techniques into both traditional and new products.

Their cuisine, which can be described as contemporary, remains faithful to Aragonese tradition, focusing on product quality and flavor. Dishes like lamb, borage, snails, mushrooms, and guinea fowl cannelloni showcase their innovation with avant-garde techniques and creative presentations, offering a unique culinary experience through their tasting menu with an astonishing quality-price ratio. Casa Pedro invites its diners to enjoy an unforgettable gastronomic experience in a friendly atmosphere, enhanced by their fantastic maître d'.

Luis and Javier Carcas are excellent ambassadors of the young Spanish culinary scene. Humble yet gastronomic artists, they trained at the San Lorenzo de Huesca School of Hospitality and worked in renowned kitchens. This solid foundation has allowed them to win numerous culinary awards, both national and international.



Los hermanos y Chefs Luis y Javier Carcas



Aragon lamb shoulder ingot with roasted apples

Upstairs lounge



Casa Pedro

Dirección: Calle Cadena,6
Casco Antiguo, Zaragoza
Teléfono: 976 291 168

Los Cabezudos

With over 35 years of experience, Los Cabezudos has established itself as a gastronomic reference in Zaragoza. Its trajectory is distinguished by quality cuisine and a dedication to fresh, seasonal ingredients, following the principles of traditional market cuisine with avant-garde touches.

Los Cabezudos opened its doors in 1985 as Gran Taberna. Since then, it has embraced Aragonese tradition not only through its name and food but also through its décor, created by Ignacio A. Zuloaga in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Situated in one of the neighborhoods where Goya lived in his youth, Los Cabezudos is filled with artworks by various renowned painters.

The gastronomic proposal of Los Cabezudos is based on traditional Mediterranean cuisine. Its menu includes red meats, wild fish, live seafood, baby eels, fruits of the sea, rice dishes, vegetables, and local products such as wild mushrooms, Aragonese stews, and roasts. All are transformed into succulent dishes that stand out for their flavor and quality.


The Los Cabezudos Group comprises three restaurants located in the heart of the city, each with different gastronomic offerings and atmospheres but sharing a common philosophy: to delight the customer with every dish and provide the best service.





Truffled eggs with potatoes and carabinero



Los Cabezudos

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Zaragoza

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Rubén and Natalia

Gastrobar Amontillado WineBar & Shop

This modern gastrobar combines traditional cuisine with avant-garde touches. Its menu includes innovative dishes that use high-quality local ingredients, showcasing Zaragoza as the Ibero-American Capital of Sustainable Gastronomy.

Open since November 2020, its highlights include Iberian ham croquettes and tuna tataki.

Its extensive wine list is perfect for those who love to try new things, offering 50 wines by the glass that rotate periodically, and around 200 bottle options, which you can also enjoy at home. Additionally, there is a magnificent selection of craft beers. If you want to taste Garnacha, a typical grape from Aragon, this is the right place.

The relaxed and contemporary atmosphere of the venue makes it an ideal spot for enjoying a casual dinner.



Artichokes, one of its star dishes



Gastrobar Amontillado WineBar & Shop



C/ Hnos García Mercadal 5
Zaragoza

Teléfono: 976 87 67 93

Carpaccio of matured beef (40 days) and mustard cream



La Clandestina

Located in the historic center of Zaragoza on Calle San Andrés, La Clandestina is renowned for its creative and locally-sourced cuisine, using organic and sustainable products. Under the direction of chef and owner Susana Casanova, known for her self-taught training and experience with renowned chefs, La Clandestina offers an innovative gastronomic experience.

The restaurant stands out for its fusion of traditional flavors and modern techniques, presenting dishes such as "Chancho Viajero" and "Ensalada de Conejo." Additionally, their brunch is very popular, featuring healthy and delicious options.

La Clandestina has received numerous awards, including first prize at the Official Spanish Tapas and Pinchos Championship in 2023 for their tapa "Cruz de Navajas."





Chef Susana Casanova


This culinary creation, which combines razor clams in ajoblanco, pickled Calanda peach, and Aragonese cava gel, is an example of their innovative approach and dedication to using local products.



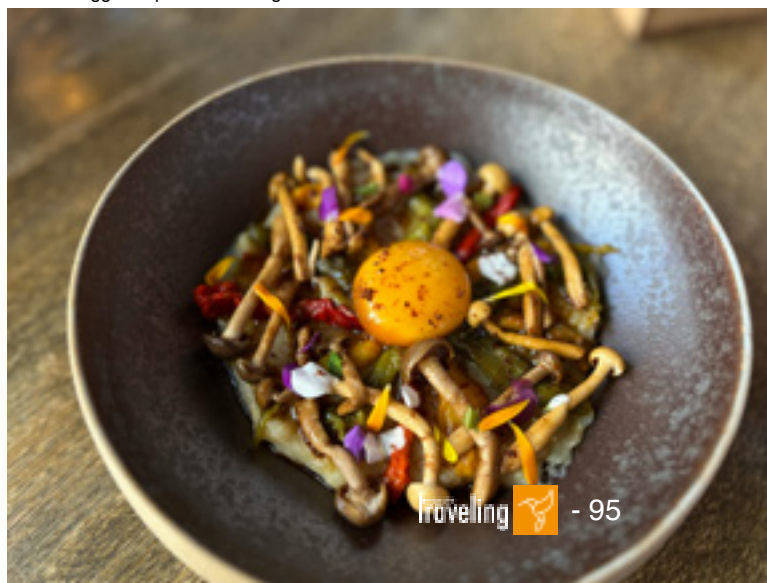
La Clandestina

 C/ San Andrés, 9 Esq, Calle de San Jorge
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Truffled egg with porcini and vegetables





Conservas EMILIA

Text: Editorial
Photos: Conservas Emilia

Artisanal
tradition of
the finest
Cantabrian
anchovy



In the heart of Santoña, CONSERVAS EMILIA continues to preserve the meticulous canning tradition with unparalleled precision. Their artisanal methods, maintained over the years, ensure excellence in every product. Among these, the Cantabrian anchovy stands out as the star, although CONSERVAS EMILIA offers a wide range of high-quality seafood products.

A Family Tradition Filled with Excellence

At CONSERVAS EMILIA, the team takes immense pride in their work, constantly striving for excellence. Quality is paramount, driven by a passion for the finest products. Their dedication to detail is evident in every step of their process: "With our own hands and a lot of time. That's the secret. Nothing we do will allow us to shorten the production process of our products. The anchovies are a good example." The story of CONSERVAS EMILIA is one of hard work, effort, and overcoming challenges.

The main driving force behind this project was Emilia Fuentes Ruiz, the true architect of a brand that is today synonymous with quality. It is a family business, founded in the late '80s. Emilia, the founder, had a clear objective: "To revitalize the traditional artisanal production of Cantabrian anchovies to offer a final product of the highest quality." Supported by her family, she launched what is now a company of recognized prestige.



An Excellent Proposal

CONSERVAS EMILIA is a well-known brand throughout Spain, famous for the quality of its products. Located in Santoña, the factory covers 2,250 square meters and offers guided tours. This initiative allows visitors to see the production process firsthand and understand each meticulously followed step to craft Santoña's anchovies artisanally.

Beyond anchovies, CONSERVAS EMILIA presents a wide range of artisanal products, including Cantabrian tuna, Cantabrian anchovies, salads, baby eels, pâtés, prepared dishes, sardines, sprats, and now also octopus cooked in its own juice.

At CONSERVAS EMILIA, the work is only understood in an artisanal way: "We work with our own hands and a lot of time. That is the secret. Nothing we do will allow us to shorten the production process of our products. The anchovies are a good example. The same hands that care for the hook-caught northern bonito, also cut and pack it in glass jars with oil to preserve its quality. "In olive oil or escabeche, the natural flavor and texture of the fish are preserved. We prepare our pâtés and salads with the same care and attention." Always taking time and the utmost care, the result is a first-class product. In 2019, CONSERVAS EMILIA was awarded for the best Cantabrian anchovy and received two gold stars at the Superior Taste Award in Brussels.





Cantabrian Anchovies

The anchovy undergoes a 100% artisanal salting process. It all begins in spring when the bocarte is bought at the fish market, as this is the best time to catch it. When it arrives at the factory, it is manually beheaded and gutted, then placed in barrels, layering fish and salt until each barrel is full. Several presses are placed on top of the barrels to compress the anchovy, expelling water and starting the maturation process with the salt. This process lasts about 12 months. Subsequently, the fish is washed to remove the salt and pressed to eliminate excess moisture. Each fish is then individually trimmed, split into two fillets, the central bone is removed, and all bones are meticulously extracted. This is done by expert hands, and at that moment, they are ready to be packed in different formats, with oil added and the containers sealed.

CONSERVAS EMILIA



Cultivated in Cabo de Gata Almería - Spain

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The authentic Raf tomato, the best in Spain



www.flamencoraf.es



María José Meda

La chef María José Meda, conocida por su experiencia y frescura creativa que refleja su juventud, se ha consolidado como una figura destacada en la gastronomía española. Su enfoque culinario se centra en una cocina de sabor y territorio, donde cada plato elaborado tiene un sabor nítido y auténtico. Meda se mantiene fiel a la utilización de productos locales, sin renunciar a incorporar ingredientes de calidad procedentes de regiones cercanas, lo que enriquece sus propuestas gastronómicas.

Hospedería El Batán



Uno de los pilares de su cocina es la metodología de la gastronomía circular, un enfoque que busca aprovechar todas las partes de los productos, minimizando el desperdicio y otorgando un valor especial a cada ingrediente. Esta práctica no solo refleja su compromiso con la sostenibilidad, sino que también demuestra su habilidad para transformar incluso los ingredientes más simples en recetas sorprendentes y deliciosas. Su destreza en combinar creatividad y técnica le permite ofrecer experiencias gastronómicas únicas, tanto con productos sencillos como con los más exquisitos.

María José Meda ha sido reconocida en múltiples ocasiones por su talento y contribución al sector. Entre sus numerosos galardones, se destacan el premio a la Mejor Chef de Aragón en los años 2017 y 2018, y el título de Mejor Cocinera Innovadora en 2019. Además, su capacidad empresarial ha sido reconocida con el premio a la Mejor Empresaria Turística Hostelera de Aragón. Su trayectoria también incluye la Medalla al Mérito Turístico otorgada por el Gobierno de Aragón, y la Medalla a la Mujer Rural en la 2ª Edición de los Premios del Clúster de Turismo Sostenible de Aragón. Además de estos reconocimientos, Meda forma parte del Patronato Español de Restaurantes Sostenibles, un organismo que promueve prácticas gastronómicas responsables y sostenibles.

Su participación en diversas organizaciones y su recepción de numerosos premios reflejan no solo su talento culinario, sino también su dedicación al avance de la gastronomía sostenible y de calidad.

How Did You Start and When Did You Know You Wanted to Be a Chef?

My journey began 25 years ago, specifically in May 1999. Many years have passed since those days when I was very young and mostly self-taught, but I was full of enthusiasm to start a new life and gain experience in the culinary world. I knew it was going to be hard and challenging, but my excitement and desire to turn this project into reality were boundless. Today, it feels like it was just yesterday; I feel just as young and as eager and excited as I did at that first moment. In the beginning, you tremble with the desire to do well, to make sure your dishes are enjoyed, and to learn every day. However, with a significant difference today: the experience gained and the clearer and more determined concepts; knowing what I seek in the kitchen, what I want to convey through each bite...

I've always been a very methodical person, but with many dreams, ambitions, and a great deal of creativity in different aspects of my life, which I believe has helped me a lot in dedicating myself exclusively to cooking. I have always been open to listening to others, and that also helps you improve as a professional or admit your mistakes to continue evolving. Cooking is a continuous evolution, and that's how I always feel, evolving and growing a "young, dreamer spirit."

Tell Us Briefly About Your Day-to-Day at the Restaurant

For me and the entire team at El Batán, the week starts on Wednesday because we are closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. On Monday mornings, I meet with Sebastián, my partner, to review the weekly plan, reservations, any events, or any important information to plan the week. This allows me to focus on orders and organization, determining which days I will receive each product, how frequently, and whether I will personally go to pick up any goods.

On Wednesdays, with the whole team at the company, we communicate and discuss the organization of the week. We assign roles, make



María José and Sebas her salon manager

necessary changes to accommodate allergies or intolerances, and distribute daily tasks to ensure each service at the restaurant runs smoothly. Besides managing the kitchen staff, my work also involves personnel management, scheduling, social media communication, and other functions related to the hotel where the restaurant is located.

What Inspires Your Cooking?

Since I started, I have always been very clear that I live in a part of Teruel characterized by depopulation but with great agri-food value. We have top-quality raw materials that often don't stay in our territory but are exported. I am a firm advocate of the products from my surroundings and like to highlight them through gastronomy. In every recipe or bite I create, my territory is present, sometimes transforming a traditional recipe into a creative version or sometimes researching each raw material to bring out the best in each one reflected in a dish. In summary, it is a cuisine of

territory and seasonality but with a personal essence.

What Does a Michelin Star Mean to You and How Much Work Is Behind It?

For Hospedería El Batán, having a Michelin Star is recognition of the hard work done every day from our restaurant, making it worth traveling to this remote place to enjoy and savor every moment in our modest restaurant. Every day requires a very high level of self-demand for work done at the highest level. Michelin stars are revalidated each year, which is why the work well done is so important, both in the kitchen and in the overall experience we offer to our guests on a personal and team level, both in the kitchen and the dining room, we strive for excellence in service, friendliness, approachability, and making our guests feel at home. Since we first received the Michelin Star, having a rural establishment far from many gastronomic and tourist circuits has made foreign tourists

MARÍA JOSÉ MEDA

travel specifically to our restaurant to experience it.

We have clients who fly in private jets from the Netherlands or Germany to the Teruel Airport just to come and dine at our restaurant.

To give the best of ourselves and our cuisine, we put in many hours of preparation and work every day. Each of us must give our best to ensure everything turns out perfectly.

Háblanos de tu equipo, ¿quiénes forman el alma del Restaurante El Batán?

The human team at El Batán, apart from Sebastián Rosello and myself (we are not only partners but also a couple), consists of an annual average of 14 people. Some of them are dedicated to the hotel part, while the rest work in the dining room and kitchen. Additionally, we have collaborating companies that help manage the business, such as accounting firms, IT specialists, gardeners, and marketing or social media teams, who also make our project possible. Each and every one of them is very important because, without them, achieving excellent results would not be possible. Both Sebastián and I have complete trust in the team; the work is a team effort, and everything



Tuna and egg yolk

is thanks to the team. Of course, my role is to lead the team, organize them, motivate them, and trust in them.

Who Is or Has Been Your Chef of Reference and Why?

From the beginning, Martín Berasategui has always been an idol to me. His humility, his perfection in every dish, his love for each product... However, I must also acknowledge the team of Oriol, Eduard, and Mateu at Disfrutar. They marked a significant before and after in my career. They taught me a lot, not only in creativity and team spirit but also in self-confidence. Working alongside them taught me to value innovation and experimentation in the kitchen. Every day with them was a lesson in dedication and passion. Their meticulous approach and ability to constantly reinvent themselves inspire me to keep growing and improving in my culinary career.

If You Had to Choose Your Signature Dish from Spanish Cuisine, What Would It Be?

If I have to choose personally, it would be paella. But if I observe around me, in our hotel catering to both international and Spanish tourists, I can say that the most requested dish is Jamón (ham), whether to have with vermouth, wine, or beer before a meal, for a casual bite, or to accompany a glass of wine among friends during a leisurely afternoon.

Is There Anything You Would Like to Add to the Interview?

Well, I believe that being a chef is a unique gift, something that one either possesses or doesn't. Not everyone in the kitchen has that special aptitude or the innate ability to be both different and extraordinary simultaneously. Being a person who can convey something truly special through their cooking—with a combination of flavors, aromas, techniques, and presentations—is akin to a painter who creates magic on a canvas or a singer who moves hearts with a song. Just as these artists can transmit something profound and special to their audience, a chef can evoke emotions and create memorable experiences through their culinary creations.

Personally, I find a lot of inspiration in music when I am creating a dish. The rhythms and melodies ignite my creativity and help me envision new culinary masterpieces. Additionally, walking through my surroundings and immersing myself in the natural beauty around me sparks my imagination. The sights, sounds, and smells of nature blend together to provide endless ideas and drive my passion for cooking. This connection to the environment and music fuels my desire to create dishes that are not just meals, but experiences that resonate with those who enjoy them.



THE RECIPE

Ceviche of Perrochicos, Chanterelles, and Sea Bass with Aragon Vegetables and "Leche de Tigre". By M^a José Meda

Ingredients

INGREDIENTS for the ceviche

- 30 g Mushroom perrochicos
- 30 g Chanterelles
- 50 g sea bass
- 50 g of vegetables: - green Tramacastilla beans
 - beetroot
 - red cabbage from the mountains
 - Onion from Fuentes de Ebro
- Maldon salt
- pink pepper
- old mustard
- extra virgin-Alcañiz olive oil
- juice of 1 lime
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Myrin vinegar

INGREDIENTS for the leche de tigre:

- 30 g lemon juice
- 30 g lime juice
- 30gr Fuentes de Ebro onion
- 30gr red cabbage from the mountains
- 30 grams of prawns
- 30gr fresh fish
- 30gr celery
- 15 g coriander
- fish fumet
- salt, pepper and cayenne
- pelleted ice

Preparation

Squeeze the juice of 1 lime and 1 lemon into a bowl. Add the prawns and fresh fish to the juice and let them marinate for 5 minutes. Once marinated, start blending the ingredients in the following order.

Lime+lemon+prawn shrimps+fresh fish

To the previous mixture we will add celery+cilantro+salt+pepper+cayenne

To the previous mixture we add red onion + red cabbage + fish stock.

And finally the ice cubes to give it a very cold touch.

Remembering, it is very important that the order in which you add the ingredients and blend each step is fundamental to the final result.



Preparation of ceviche de mushroom perrochicos, chantelleres and sea bass:

It's extremely important how the fish is cut, hirisukuri (perpendicular to the cutting board, always breaking the fish's fibers).

We squeeze the juice of the lime and lemon and separate it into two different containers.

To one container, we add a splash of mirin vinegar. This container is the one we will use for making the perrochicos ceviche.

We clean the perrochicos thoroughly with water and a brush and cook them in the lemon-lime mixture for a few minutes.

We do the same with the sea bass.

We cut the sea bass and cook it in the lime-lemon mixture for 4 minutes.

Meanwhile, we julienne the green beans, onion, and red cabbage; season with salt, pink pepper, oil, mirin vinegar, and whole grain mustard.

Plating

Sobre un plato hondo colocamos la ensalada de vegetales de Aragón, y la acompañamos del ceviche de perrochicos y rebozuelo y del ceviche de lubina. Este plato lo acompañamos de unas fresitas silvestres de los pinares de la Sierra de Albarracín y servido con la leche de tigre, que nos ayuda a conseguir una explosión de sabores.

Casual restaurant to go with friends

CANALLA BRISTO

Whenever we want to enjoy good weather, sun, terraces, and some fun, it's a great excuse to travel to Valencia. Here, you can have an informal yet high-quality dinner with friends. I highly recommend Canalla Bistro by Ricard Camarena. There is a lot of creativity in every bite, with a fusion of different cultures' cuisines. You can savor each bite in an excellent dinner accompanied by friends (talking, laughing, drinking, dining, and above all, sharing laughs with friends...)—the perfect place.



A Romantic Restaurant

ATRIO

For me, visiting Atrio is a complete experience where you can enjoy the haute cuisine they offer in their restaurant, featuring delicacies made from top-quality, local products. This, combined with the experience of staying in their charming boutique hotel, makes for a premium experience. Every detail is taken care of, from the comfort of the accommodation to the common areas (terrace, solarium, pool...). The relaxation and tranquility, along with the privacy of a hotel that boasts its own terrace and solarium with spectacular views of the city and a pool to cool off in, create a micro-universe all its own.



To eat good fish

APONIENTE

If I have to recommend a restaurant focused exclusively on fish and that has left a lasting impression on me, it is undoubtedly "APONIENTE." I find it admirable that an entire gastronomic menu is based 100% on fish and seafood, especially with a focus on sustainability. Adding to this is the creativity in every bite you take. It was extraordinary to me. For me, dining in a restaurant is more than just tasting a dish or product; it has to convey something more, and when it stays in your memory, it is something special. For this reason, Aponiente is a standout if I have to recommend a fish-focused restaurant.



For Eating Good Meat ALBA DEL SUR

In this section on meat, it's very clear to me that I would stay in Teruel, as it boasts top-quality meats from our region (game, duck, lamb, Wagyu, beef...). I wouldn't move away from my surroundings; I would stay at our restaurant, Alba del Sur. This is a new restaurant we opened in 2024 within the same hotel, where we wanted to highlight the products of our territory, particularly the meats, in a simple and traditional way for all those who love good food in a more casual and informal setting, but still of high quality. A good roast Ternasco de Aragón, a fine grilled beef, a game stew, or Mudéjar Wagyu...



A Restaurant for International Cuisine

L'ATELIER DE JOËL ROBUCHON-ETOILE

I would go to Paris. I always remember the restaurant L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon-Etoile, which, in addition to being very modern inside, has a kitchen that exudes creativity with influences from all over the world. It's a traveling cuisine in an incomparable setting, where clients from any country can enjoy that symbiosis of space, decor, and international gastronomy. Above all, the service, kindness, and hospitality are exquisite.

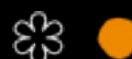


Guesthouse El Batan

It is a regional cuisine primarily based on local raw materials, always respecting their seasonality and sustainability. This gastronomic cuisine is founded on the creativity of updating traditional recipes, always from the personal perspective and vision of María José, a staunch defender of her region and its local products, which often travel around the world but are native to Teruel. Making the journey to Hospedería El Batán is an experience well worth it; it is unique and unforgettable. It combines gastronomy with accommodation, peace, and tranquility. It unites rest with cuisine and nature. It is a complete experience that aims for visitors to return, despite being off the beaten path.



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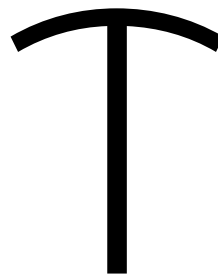




Monte La Reina Winery

Text: Rosario Alonso

Photography: Bodegas Monte La Reina



en Kilometers separate this winery from the Zamorano municipality of Toro, situated on the largest agricultural estate in all of Castilla y León.

Bodegas Monte la Reina has established itself as a benchmark in the Toro Denomination of Origin. This winery is renowned for its red wines, which reflect the region's terroir, and for pioneering the production of Verdejo in this area. Carolina Inaraja, the youngest winemaker in the D.O. Toro, is the first in her family to enter the wine industry. With over ten years leading the winery, Carolina has combined tradition and modernity in her approach, supported by winemaker José Nuño. This project, deeply rooted in winemaking tradition, also aims at the forefront, offering an innovative and groundbreaking proposal.

The Heart of Monte la Reina

The 300 hectares of their own vineyards are the heart of Monte la Reina. The Tinta de Toro and Verdejo grapes are the stars, producing six red wines and two white wines under the D.O. Toro, giving this family winery a unique character. Monte la Reina boasts pre-phylloxera vines, some over 100 years old, which bring exceptional depth and complexity to their wines.

A Multifaceted Complex

The winery is part of a larger complex that spans 1,400 hectares. This includes fields with various crops, a multidisciplinary building with a restaurant and extensive gardens, and a 19th-century neo-Gothic castle that operates as an eight-room boutique hotel known as Posada Real. This setting offers visitors a unique experience, combining wine, countryside, and leisure.

History and Tradition

Castilla y León, a land of character and personality, is distinguished by its rich winemaking tradition. The region has numerous denominations of origin, including the D.O. Toro, which is irrigated by the Duero River and extends through the provinces of Zamora and Valladolid. Monte la Reina, located on the namesake agricultural estate, is one of the foremost exponents of this distinction.

Winemaking Process

In September, the harvest takes place, carried out both manually and mechanically, depending on the vineyard's characteristics. The grapes are transported to two production rooms equipped with temperature and humidity control systems to ensure rigorous fermentation monitoring. The winery's barrel park is mainly composed of French oak, with some barrels from the Caucasus and Transylvania for special wines.





Enology and Wines

José Nuño, president of EnoDuero, brings over 30 years of winemaking experience. Originally from Moral de Calatrava, Ciudad Real, Nuño has worked in important wine regions of Spain such as Alicante, Ribera del Duero, and Rueda. Alongside Carolina Inaraja, he creates wines with unique character and charisma, which have won numerous international awards. Monte la Reina's wines include both D.O. Toro references, such as the Inaraja reserve, and more casual options under the Carolina brand.

A Unique Setting

The winery building, designed by Jesús Juárez, resembles a camera, capturing the stunning views of its surroundings. Built with noble materials and semi-buried into a hillside, the winery combines aesthetics and functionality to maintain an optimal temperature in its various rooms.

International Recognition

Monte la Reina has gained recognition both nationally and internationally for the quality of its wines. Under the D.O. Toro, it produces six reds and two whites that have secured a significant place in the market. The dedication of Carolina Inaraja and her team has elevated Monte la Reina's prestige and contributed to the global projection of the D.O. Toro.



Red Wines

Winemaking Process

The grapes used at Monte la Reina undergo cold maceration in stainless steel or concrete tanks. Fermentation is carried out under strict temperature-controlled conditions, and in many cases, the grapes also undergo malolactic fermentation in the same tank. This detailed process ensures the quality and distinctive character of each wine. Barrel aging in French oak varies from six to sixteen months, with the exception of the young wine, which does not undergo barrel aging.

The wines:

Young:

Fresh, fruity, and easy to drink, this wine is the most versatile reference of the winery. It stands out for its fruity notes of strawberry and raspberry, accompanied by a creamy yogurt memory, typical of a correct malolactic fermentation.

Oak:

With six months of barrel aging, this wine is balanced and elegant. It offers a smooth passage in the mouth, distinguished by its volume and glyceric character, translating to a great taste intensity.

Crianza:

With twelve months of aging, this wine embodies the philosophy of the D.O. Toro. In the mouth, it is dry, broad, and balanced, with a silky entry revealing notes of noble woods and memories of black fruits and candied plums.

Cuvée Privée:

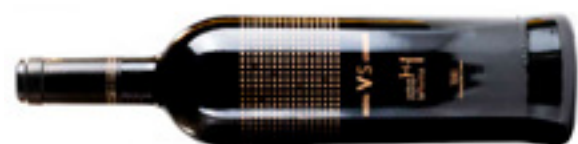
The most awarded wine of the winery. With fourteen months in new French and Caucasian oak barrels, it maintains the primary values of the grape. Its aromatic potential is complex, with ripe fruits, toasted and sweet notes, and notable minerality.

Selected Harvest:

This wine, synonymous with elegance, is made with grapes from century-old vines and aged for fourteen months in new French oak barrels. It is dry and balanced, with mature and sweet tannins reflecting the quality of the grapes and oak.

Inaraja:

The flagship wine of Monte la Reina. Powerful and flavorful, with balsamic, smoky, toasted, and mineral notes, this wine is aged for sixteen months in French oak barrels. It comes from the winery's century-old vines, offering a unique wine experience.



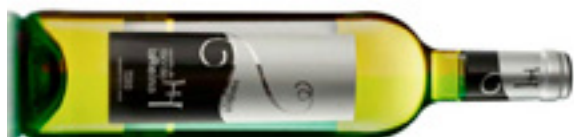
WHITE, ROSÉ AND SPARKLING WINES

Winemaking Process

The soils and climate of the region are ideal for cultivating the Verdejo grape, one of the best white varieties in Spain. The harvest begins in early to mid-September when the grapes reach optimal ripeness and an alcohol content of approximately 12.5%. The grapes are pneumatically pressed, and the must ferments in stainless steel tanks, with careful work done on its lees.

The result is an intense, fruity, and vibrant Verdejo wine with aromas of pineapple and ripe apple. On the palate, these wines are powerful and structured, with a long and persistent finish.

The wines:



Verdejo:

This white wine is intense, unctuous, and has good acidity on the palate. It is a balanced, fresh, and tasty wine, showing great harmony between the fruit notes, a fresh acidity, and a characteristic bitter finish.



Barrel-Fermented Verdejo:

This is the jewel of Monte la Reina's white wines. It rests for 5 to 7 months in French oak barrels and ages for eight years in the bottle. It is an expressive wine with nuances of ripe fruit and white flowers.



Pinktone:

Made with 85% white Verdejo grapes. A smooth, fresh, and elegant wine. Pale pink in color, it highlights aromas of red fruit like raspberry and strawberry, all surrounded by an exquisite floral component.



Claudia Moreno Sparkling Wine:

This sparkling wine is composed of 50% Verdejo and 50% Chardonnay, made using the Charmat method. It presents with a pale yellow color, clean and crystalline. Aromatically, it has an intense varietal character with citrus nuances and hints of white fruits. On the palate, it is structured with finely integrated bubbles.



Reina Frizzante 5.5:

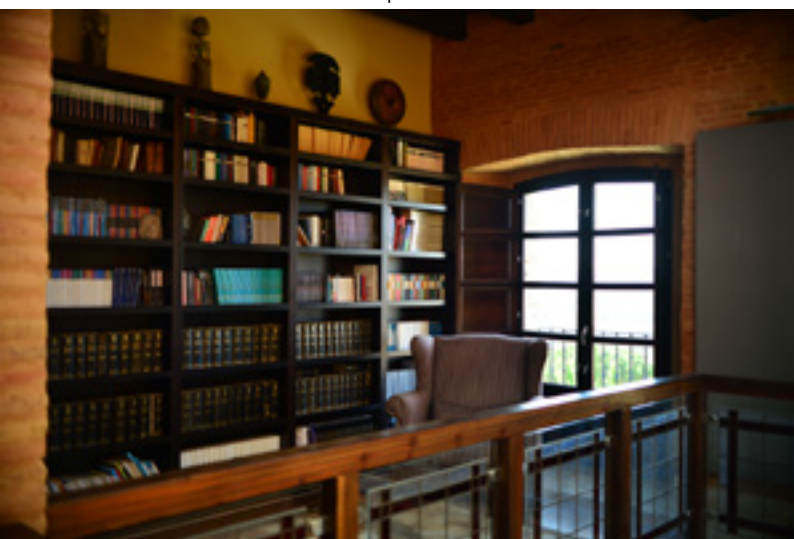
This sparkling wine, made from 100% Verdejo using the Charmat method, has a pale yellow color, clean and bright, with slight gray and greenish reflections. Its bubbles are fine and persistent. It stands out for its intense freshness and pleasant notes of tropical fruit. On the palate, it is characterized by a balance between residual sugars and acidity, with sparkling bubbles.

wine tourism

This boutique hotel is located in a 19th-century neo-Gothic palace, decorated in a modern and contemporary style. It features eight fully equipped rooms that maintain their historical essence, providing a homely feel.

Situated in a privileged location, it offers incredible views of the Vega del Duero and the vineyards. It is a peaceful and sunlit place where you can only hear the birds and the natural breeze. Near the hotel, you will find the D.O. Toro wineries, which produce a variety of wines. Additionally, the hotel serves as the starting point for hiking routes in the area. It is an ideal destination for those seeking unique and charming accommodation.

Different rooms of the hotel and partial view of the castle



**Monte La Reina
Winery**





RHUDO Madrid

Text: Editorial - Photos: Rhudo Madrid

The new
gastronomic
and social
epicenter of
the Salamanca
neighborhood





Located in the heart of the exclusive Salamanca neighborhood at Velázquez 64, Rhudo Madrid is an ambitious project set to revolutionize the gastronomic and social scene of the capital. This new establishment is the result of an unprecedented collaboration between two Michelin-starred chef Paco Roncero and a stellar team from the entertainment and sports industries: acclaimed actors Álex González and Miguel Ángel Silvestre, Spanish national team player Marcos Llorente, and world champion Antoine Griezmann.

Rhudo Madrid is more than just a restaurant; it's a space where exceptional food meets a vibrant atmosphere, creating a unique place to see and be seen. Chef Paco Roncero, known for his avant-garde cuisine, has opted to fuse Mediterranean and Latin gastronomy, offering a flavorful menu designed for sharing.

A Culinary Journey Through the Mediterranean and Latin America

Rhudo Madrid's gastronomic offer stands out for its innovative approach to Mediterranean cuisine, enriched with strong Latin influences, especially from countries like Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia. This fusion is evident in vibrant and nuanced dishes where overseas spices and fruits play a crucial role, adding an exotic and distinctive touch to each creation.



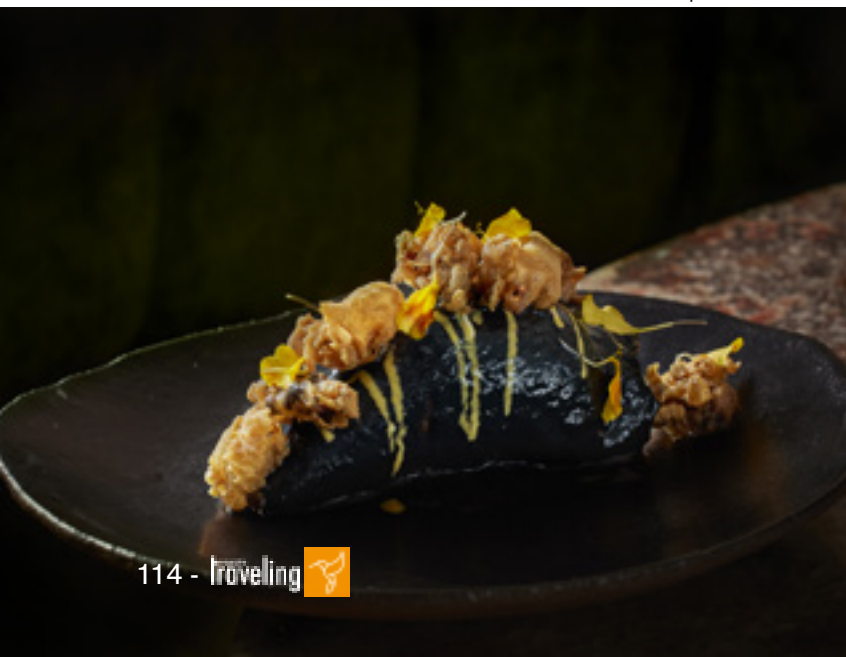


Rice with Roasted Lamb Shank



Turbot with sofrito of pickles

Stuffed Squid in their own ink



Raw Dishes: The Heart of the Menu

Raw dishes occupy a central place in Rhudo Madrid's proposal. The Guillaudeau n°3 oysters, offered both natural and with innovative dressings such as tiger milk with hearts of palm and passion fruit mignonette, are one of the menu's highlights. The octopus carpaccio with Greek eggplant salad and feta cheese combines delicacy with intense flavors. The ceviches also stand out. The corvina in red adobo and the prawns in coconut, cilantro, and lime aguachile offer fresh and tropical flavors, ideal for lovers of light dishes.

The philosophy of sharing is essential at Rhudo Madrid. Dishes like the huacatay mussels, dressed with a Peruvian aromatic herb sauce, and the creamy and spicy pumpkin seed dip are designed to be enjoyed in a group.

The rice dishes vary according to the season. The lamb shank and huitlacoche rice fuses Mediterranean tradition with Mexican flavors. The meats also shine, such as the beef tenderloin steak tartare with aji cream and sunchoke chips, and the beef or Iberian pork ribs. Finally, the grilled bone marrow with scarlet shrimp, which combines roasted marrow with the intense flavor of scarlet shrimp, exemplifies Paco Roncero's creativity.

A Place for All the Senses

The interior design of Rhudo Madrid, by Archidom Studio, is an essential part of the project. The studio has created minimalist and comfortable, yet highly expressive spaces that aim to influence the interaction between the body and the space. During the day, the restaurant serves lunches and dinners, while at night it transforms into a sophisticated club, with DJs and a lively atmosphere. Excitement and intrigue are ensured with surprises each night, making each visit a unique and unpredictable experience.

A Great Team

Rhudo Madrid's team consists of top professionals. Besides Paco Roncero, the dining room is managed by Bruno Serenelli, and the Italian sommelier Angelo Casali, both from Lío Ibiza, manage a cellar with over 500 references. The wine list includes national and international labels from the best producers in Spain, Italy, and France, as well as the New World, with special selections contributed by Llorente and Griezmann.

In the mixology section, Miguel Pastor, known for his participation in the world's best cocktail competitions, has created a selection of signature cocktails. These are designed to pair with the culinary offerings and, like the food, are sprinkled with Latin ingredients and innovative textures. Examples of these cocktails include the "Atila," with tequila, spearmint, chili, avocado, and lime, and the "Casio," based on rum, roasted pineapple, honey, almond, and citrus.

Paco Roncero: A Master of Culinary Innovation

Born in Madrid in 1969, Paco Roncero trained at the Madrid School of Hospitality and Tourism and interned at renowned restaurants such as Zalacaín and the Ritz Hotel. Since 1991, he has worked at the Casino de Madrid, and in 2005 he won the Chef L'Avenir Award from the International Academy of Gastronomy. With his restaurant La Terraza del Casino, he has earned two Michelin stars and multiple accolades.

Roncero is also the creator of Paco RonceroTaller and Sublimotion, a performance where avant-garde gastronomy meets technological innovation to create a unique sensory experience. Additionally, he has developed concepts such as Gastrohub and Estado Puro, and has participated in various schools, congresses, and international gastronomic events.

Rhudo Madrid promises to be more than a restaurant; it is an integrated experience where high-level gastronomy meets innovative design and vibrant nightlife. With its focus on Mediterranean and Latin cuisine, Paco Roncero offers a menu full of flavor and color, perfect for sharing and enjoying in a sophisticated and exciting atmosphere. The Rhudo team, composed of renowned professionals passionate about fine dining, ensures an unforgettable gastronomic and social experience with each visit.

RHUDO Madrid



Seafood Bolognese with Lobster

Rice dessert





Zucchini Parmigiana

Caluana

Italo-Spanish Fusion cuisine in Madrid

By: Editorial- Photography: Caluana



Situated close to Puerta del Sol, Caluana emerges as a beacon of culinary innovation in Madrid by masterfully blending two of the world's most revered cuisines: Spanish and Italian. Under the guidance of talented chefs Joaquín Serrano and Jorge Velasco, Caluana offers a culinary journey with a modern and avant-garde approach. Serrano and Velasco, with their solid backgrounds in the restaurant industry, focus on highlighting local and seasonal products, ensuring dishes that evoke the essence of the land and sea. Each creation is a tribute to the culinary culture of both countries, presented with a contemporary touch.

A Journey to the Italian Renaissance

The restaurant, designed like an Italian Renaissance villa, impresses not only with its gastronomic offerings but also with its ambiance and decor. Located in the historic building that once housed the old Madrid Stock Exchange and the Church of Santa Cruz, Caluana transports diners to a time of artistic and cultural splendor. The restaurant is spread over two floors, offering two distinct but equally charming spaces: 'El Olivar' on the ground floor, with a majestic vaulted ceiling, and 'El Invernadero' on the upper floor, an intimate space filled with greenery, mirrors, and plenty of light.

Grilled scallops with carbonara sauce and Iberian pork jowl veil



CALUANA

Appetizers and Starters: A Prelude of Flavors

Under the motto 'Sharing is Enjoying,' Caluana presents a selection of appetizers inviting diners to explore a unique fusion of flavors. Among them, the crocchetta di patate (potato croquette with Iberian jowl) stands out for its crispy texture and deep flavor. The grilled scallop with carbonara sauce offers a perfect combination of sea and land, while the parmigiana di calabacín a la Idiazábal (zucchini millefeuille with Idiazábal béchamel) surprises with its delicacy and taste.

Pasta and Rice: Fusion at Its Best

The 'La Pasta Castiza' section at Caluana is a highlight of the restaurant's culinary fusion, where Italian pasta is reinvented with Spanish touches. Dishes like the pumpkin ravioli with caramelized onion and provolone balance sweet and savory, and the oxtail lasagna combines the richness of oxtail with the softness of pasta. The calamaretti with scarlet shrimp celebrate the flavors of the sea. Rice lovers can enjoy options like creamy rice with beef cheek, truffle and shrimp rice with mushrooms and seafood, all balanced to highlight the quality of the ingredients.



Grilled octopus

Main Courses: A Feast for the Senses

Caluana's main courses are a true feast for the senses, combining traditional techniques with modern presentations. The grilled octopus, served with sweet potato puree and aioli, stands out for its tender texture and intense flavors. The pistachio-crusted snapper offers a delightful combination of sea and land, while the Iberian pluma with grilled lettuce pays homage to rustic and authentic flavors. The grilled aged beef chop and venison with boletus duxelle complete a selection of main courses that satisfy the most demanding palates.

Sweet Temptations: A Perfect Ending

The sweetest moment at Caluana is found in its desserts, which combine creativity and tradition. Highlights include the limoncello French toast, a modern interpretation with vibrant flavor, the three-cheese tart with sweet gorgonzola, and the creamy chocolate tart, perfect for cocoa lovers.

Maldita Gioconda: Cocktails and Art

Maldita Gioconda, a clandestine bar run by renowned bartender Daniel Álvarez, is ideal for starting or ending the evening. It combines top-tier mixology with art, featuring a cocktail menu that changes periodically and is currently inspired by music, offering drinks that represent different musical styles.

Creamy chocolate cake



Caluana



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