

magazine traveling

AMERICAN EDITION

TRAVEL AND GASTRONOMY MAGAZINE

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WOW PORTO

Cultural Epicenter that
Transforms Porto

ELIZONDO

The magic of Navarra

BERLIN

Cycling route through
its neighborhoods

WALES

Among legends and landscapes

DIGITAL AND PRINT TRAVEL AND GASTRONOMY MAGAZINE





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Welcome aboard

We've left August behind, and with it, summer vacations for most. However, September greets us with pleasant temperatures and a desire to keep enjoying life. It's the perfect time for short getaways or finally embarking on those trips we've been planning. The adventure continues!

We began our journey by cycling through the streets of **Berlin**, a city that comes alive when explored by bike. This trip allowed us to discover its vibrant culture, iconic landmarks, and those hidden corners that only reveal themselves at a leisurely pace.

From there, we ventured to the landscapes of **Wales**, a place where legends come to life. Its mountains and valleys whisper ancient stories, and its castles remind us of a past filled with mystery and bravery.

Our next stop was **WOW Porto**, where culture and gastronomy intertwine to transform the city into an epicenter of creativity and flavor—a place to delve into Portuguese history and cuisine.

In **Indonesia**, the images speak for themselves. The exotic landscapes captured in our photos transport us to a world of colors and contrasts.

We couldn't forget to mention **Albarracín** and its cathedral, a hidden gem in Teruel, nor the charming village of **Mogarráz** in the Sierra de Francia, a living portrait that tells the story of its people.

In Rural Tourism, we immersed ourselves in the natural beauty of **Elizondo**, a peaceful haven in the heart of Navarra. And for wine tourism enthusiasts, we ventured to **Guanajuato**, Mexico, where the vineyards offer not just wine, but an unparalleled cultural experience.

Finally, to immerse yourself in luxury and nature, there's nothing better than visiting places like **A Quinta da Auga** and **La Torre del Visco**, both members of Relais & Châteaux. These retreats offer the perfect balance of elegance and serenity, inviting you to rest in exceptional natural surroundings where every detail has been carefully crafted to provide an unforgettable experience.

We hope these stories inspire you to continue. Exploring the world with us!



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Waterfall in Elizondo

© Coromina



COVER

Red mullets

© Torre del Visco



Alexanderplatz ©Antonio Castello

Berlin

And its architecture by bike

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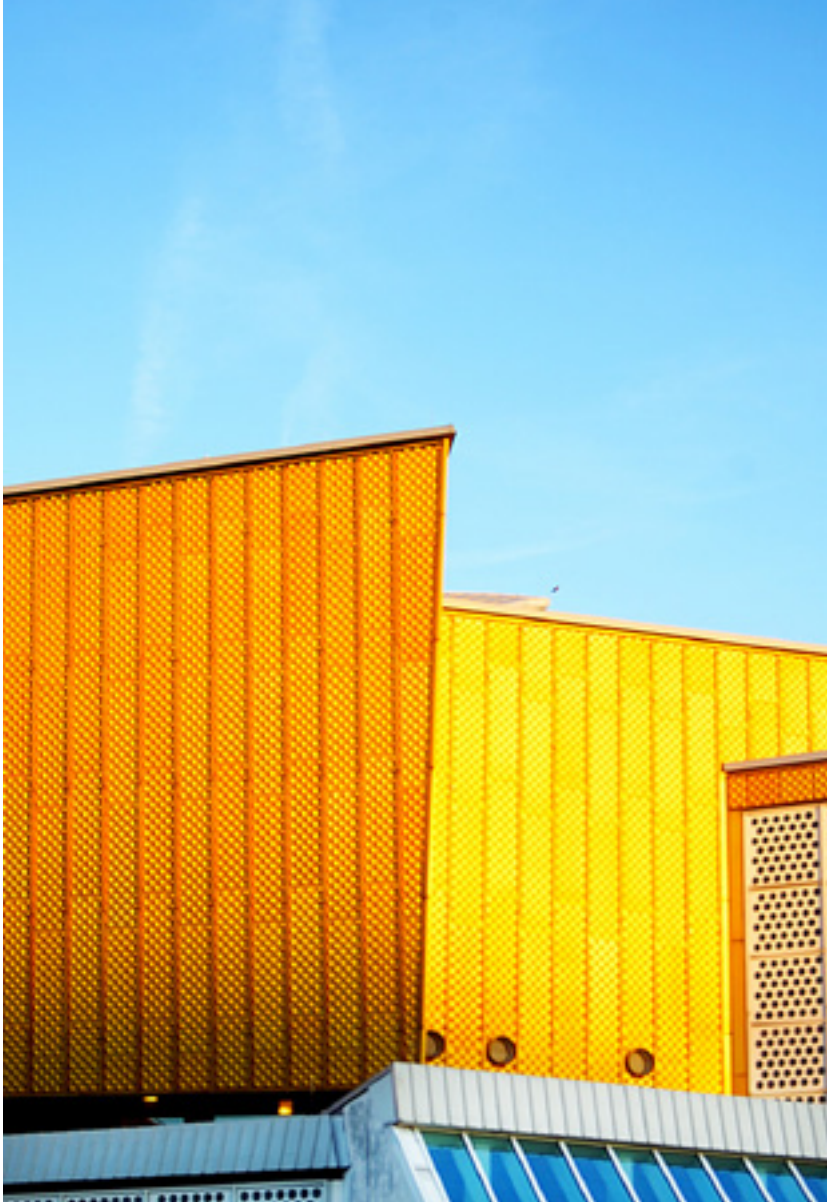
Since the destruction of Berlin during World War II, and later after the fall of the Wall, the German capital has been continuously reinventing itself, creating a collection of architecture unique in the world while also rebuilding ancient palaces, cathedrals, and museums. Berlin is one of the largest cities in Europe, making cycling the best way to appreciate its architectural gems.

Bicycles are gaining more prominence in cities around the world, and Berlin is no exception. The tour we propose is a full sensory experience. We begin our route with Antonio Castello, a Colombian photographer and guide, married to a German and a resident of this metropolis, who has specialized in thematic bike tours through this city.

The Soviet Design of Alexanderplatz

This square is not only the best example of how Soviet design dominated the German capital during the Cold War, but also a central point in the city where various bikes can be rented for a few hours.

Crowned by the TV Tower (Fernsehturm), Alexanderplatz is the symbol of East Germany. The tower, conceived in 1965 and completed in 1969 by the government of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), was created as an icon of Soviet power in the city. Today, it remains a symbol of Berlin, and at 368 meters tall, including its antenna, it is the tallest building in the European Union.



Detail of the Berliner Philharmoniker building ©Antonio Castello



Dutch Embassy

The Award-Winning Dutch Embassy

We continue along the banks of the Spree River until we reach the Dutch Embassy. Winner of the “Mies van der Rohe” architecture prize in 2004 and designed by Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas, the embassy stretches out as a solitary building that integrates modern design with the ancient rules and styles of construction and planning imposed by the crown since the 19th century and later by the socialist government. Its facade is covered by individual cubes and diagonals that create a ventilation system where design and functionality meet.

The Jewish Museum, Potsdamer Platz, and Renzo Piano

Not far from there is the former Berlin Wall border. We continue to cross into the Western side of the city, and within a few minutes, we’ll visit the Jewish Museum. Famous for its extreme angles and brutalist design, the museum tells the story of the Jewish community in Germany and the atrocities they suffered during the war.

From the museum, it takes just a few minutes to reach Potsdamer Platz. In the 1920s, Potsdamer was the center of the city, a place not only for shopping or visiting its cafés but also famous for its nightlife, where jazz and cabaret brought to life a new society celebrating the end of World War I and the new free and democratic government. For the first time in Germany, there was no king, and this was the best place to celebrate and “let your hair down”.



Detail of the National Library ©Antonio Castello

After the city's destruction in 1945, and for over 30 years, this area was confined within the impenetrable walls of the Berlin Wall. Today, thanks to many years of work and the architectural design of Italian Renzo Piano, the area has become a large complex of buildings, revived its former spirit, and has become a commercial hub of the capital, where you can find shops, cinemas, fine dining, and five-star hotels.

The Works of Hans Scharoun

A few meters from Potsdamer Platz stand two of the city's most spectacular monuments: The Philharmonic Hall and the National Library.

Designed by Hans Scharoun in the late 1960s and better known as the "Kulturforum" or Cultural Forum, the buildings were a response to the lack of cultural offerings in West Berlin when the creation of the Wall separated Western residents from their former cultural centers.

The buildings, covered in yellow and gold, give the area a sense of calm, and their design, a mix of Le Corbusier style and Modernism, were for many decades examples of futuristic and contemporary design in Europe that today seem so commonplace.

The Bauhaus Style of Walter Gropius

At this point, after a lot of pedaling, it's normal to feel a bit tired, so it's time for a break at the Bauhaus Archive Museum. This building is a classic example of Bauhaus architecture and the most important in Berlin. Designed by Walter Gropius, this place is ideal for a rest, a coffee, and a taste of the famous German "apfelstrudel."

In its gift shop, hundreds of classic and contemporary design items are available to visitors, a must-stop for architecture lovers.

Bauhaus Museum-Archives ©Antonio Castello





BERLIN BIKE TOUR

After a short shopping session, it's time to get back on the road. We continue north, passing by the "Victory Column" to return to East Berlin, specifically to the Brandenburg Gate.

Gehry's Great Secret

While the gate is worth seeing on its own, this square is also home to one of Frank Gehry's designs, and according to him, his favorite in Germany. The offices of DZ Bank are nothing spectacular from the outside, but once you pass through its doors, a magnificent architectural figure is revealed. Due to strict regulations in the area, Gehry was not allowed to create one of his sculptural facades like the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, so the North American architect decided to create a glass, wood, and steel structure in the shape of a whale inside the building. This is undoubtedly one of Berlin's best-kept secrets.

Gradually, we reach the end of this adventure, and with the strength we have left, we cross the park adjacent to the Brandenburg Gate towards the Reichstag or the parliament building. No building in Berlin tells the city's story as well as this one.

DZ Bank offices designed by Gehry ©Antonio Castello





Reichstag Dome ©Antonio Castello

Created in 1897 by the newly crowned Emperor of Germany, Wilhelm I, to house the first democratically elected government in the country, it was destroyed in 1931 by a fire caused by the dark forces of the Nazis, bombed in 1943 by the English army, and destroyed by the Soviet Red Army during the capture of Berlin in April 1945.

And of Course, Sir Norman Foster

The building fell into oblivion during the Cold War and had to wait until 1991 for its reconstruction to accommodate the new government after German reunification. Its glass dome and design, a blend of modernity and national history, are one of Norman Foster's most famous works, and from there, you can see the entire city in a 360° view. The perfect place to end this architectural tour of Berlin.

About the guide

Antonio Castello is a Colombian photographer and tour guide residing in Berlin. He has designed a series of bicycle tours to guide visitors through Berlin while helping them enhance their photographic skills for their travels.

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Interior of the Glass Dome



Wales, between legends and landscapes

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Visit Wales and Michael Price







Coast near Cardigan

Walking is the best way to fully discover and experience a region. In 2012, the 870 miles Wales Coast Path was completed, becoming the first in the world to cover the entire coastline of a country. This journey, in close contact with nature, will allow us to uncover the beauty and secrets of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.

Dolphins while walking

Walking through New Quay, near Cardigan Bay, it's easy to spot dolphins, seals, whales, and a multitude of seabirds from the Wales Coast Path. In this bay, the River Teifi flows into the sea, forming an estuary that dramatically changes appearance with the tides, which rise as high as 7 meters. Observing the sea waters being pushed upriver by the tide from Cardigan Bridge is a daily double spectacle. The tidal force reverses the river's current, even though the sea is 3,10 miles away. Standing by the bridge as a millennial witness is the castle, one of the 641 in Wales.

Before reaching the sea, the Teifi flows through the "Desert of Wales," so named not because of a lack of rain, but because no one lives there. Here, only pure nature exists: rounded hills, deep valleys, and an abundance of impressive oak forests.

Continuing along the path, step by step, from beach to beach, sometimes through tiny coves, we cross the

shadowy tunnels of trees and walk between high green walls that resemble trenches of vegetation. Suddenly, the path opens up, emerges into the light, and reveals coves nestled between cliffs adorned with sea stacks and islets. This coastline hardly feels European. In summer, you walk between earthy green and marine blue, dotted with the deep purple of heather flowers, while in spring it is covered in yellow.

Secrets in the Thicket

Crossing the estuary of the River Nevern, you enter Newport through a blend of wetland and municipal park, complete with benches to enjoy the natural surroundings, birds, or tides. Upstream from this river, a yew tree is bleeding. It has a seemingly harmless wound that remains open, from which a red liquid flows. Scientifically, this is inexplicable, yet legend tells that an innocent monk was hanged from it, and because of this injustice, it bleeds. The bleeding will not cease until a Welshman occupies the throne of Nevern. This place is reached under the shadow of intertwined, towering century-old yews, leading to the ancient Gothic church of St. Brynachs, situated by the river and an old cemetery filled with Celtic symbols.

This temple, nestled in the heart of a lush forest, exudes a spiritual peace that directly connects with the soul.



Dolphins near New Quay



Let's return to the earthly world by taking a ride on one of those old coal railways that contributed to Wales' main income during the industrial period. Several mines in the area are open to visitors, but now it's time for a craft beer at Tafarn Sinc, an old tavern at a former mining train station. Today, it's a cantina-museum where you can learn and recharge your energy. This bar happens to be near the Mountain of Angels, where the paths twist and climb through meadows with sheep and horses grazing freely. Some of those curves turn into panoramic viewpoints of the rolling rural landscape, and in the distance, the sea, which always accompanies us.

The sun is setting

Let's head to Pen Dal-aderyn, the westernmost point of Wales, facing Ramsey Island, a nature reserve. Nearby is St David's, the smallest city in the United Kingdom, whose symbol is its awe-inspiring cathedral, which takes on the hues of a postcard at sunset. Pope Callixtus II once said that making two pilgrimages to this cathedral was equivalent to one to Rome, and three pilgrimages were equal to one to Jerusalem. According to legend, the devil attempted to sneak into this temple, but St. David, the patron saint of Wales, threw him from the roof, leaving his footprints embedded in a tomb. Those footprints can be found, but beware—if they match your feet exactly, you might be the devil.

On the other side of the River Alun, opposite the cathedral, the remains of the bishop's palace still stand, with the outer walls largely intact, now sheltering a theater stage. These ruins blend seamlessly with nature, surrounded by grass, plants, and trees in perfect harmony.

At its mouth, the Alun has carved out the coastal cliffs, creating a canyon where a unique harbor has been built, with boats resting in dry dock while the tide is low. In the surrounding area, continuing along the shoreline, you'll find picturesque landscapes, including the St Non's Chapel and, beside it, the sacred well. St David was born at this site in the 6th century, and the well is believed to have healing powers. A sign at the chapel reads: "Please keep the door open so the birds can leave."

Looking at the sky

The days offer long, colorful sunrises and sunsets, but after dusk, another spectacle begins. The night sky in Wales is unimaginable because there is no light pollution, allowing for a clear view not only of a star-filled sky but also of the Milky Way in all its glory. And when the moon is full, the coastal landscapes take on a special charm—a blend of earthy tones and Welsh magic.

Looking at the sky © Michael Price
St Non's Chapel, birthplace of St. David in the 6th century

Visit Britain



Visit Wales





WOW PORTO

Cultural epicenter transforming the essence of Porto

Text: Jose Antonio Muñoz - **Photography:** WOW Oporto y Jose A. Muñoz

W

WOW Porto, or World of Wine, is an innovative cultural and tourist complex in Vila Nova de Gaia, overlooking Porto. Located in former wine warehouses and backed by a €100 million investment from The Fladgate Partnership, WOW Porto has revitalized the area. This project not only celebrates the region's rich winemaking tradition but also offers an immersive experience in Portuguese history, culture, and gastronomy.

Spanning 1.19599yd², WOW Porto features seven themed museums, twelve restaurants and bars, a wine school, shops, and spaces for events and exhibitions. Each museum is designed to provide an enjoyable educational experience, exploring various aspects of Portuguese culture. WOW Porto is more than just a tourist destination; it is an emblem of Porto and a representative of its history, essence, and culture.

We'll start by exploring the most important museums and finish with a gastronomic tour without leaving WOW.



The Wine Experience

This museum offers an immersive journey through the history of wine, from its ancient origins to its significance today. Visitors can learn about the wine production process, from vine cultivation to bottling, and explore the various grape varieties and wine types, including reds, whites, rosés, and sparkling wines.

Beyond the technical aspects, the exhibition highlights global wine culture, showcasing how wine has been integrated into different cultures over time, with a focus on associated customs and traditions. The experience is highly interactive, featuring touch stations and audiovisual elements that make learning both educational and entertaining.

The museum also offers expert-guided tastings, where visitors can sample different wines and learn to appreciate their nuances, flavors, and textures, further enriching the experience.



Planet Cork

Planet Cork is a unique museum dedicated to the fascinating world of cork, a material that Portugal markets like no other country. This museum explores the entire life cycle of cork, from its extraction from cork oak trees to its various applications. Visitors can discover the historical uses of cork, such as in ancient architecture and the first wine bottle stoppers, as well as modern innovations in industries like aerospace and fashion. The interactive exhibits highlight the sustainability benefits and environmental value of cork, emphasizing its importance as a renewable resource.



The Chocolate Story

The Chocolate Story is a museum that offers a comprehensive journey through the history and production of chocolate, from the origins of cacao in Mesoamerican civilizations to its global popularization. The museum details the chocolate-making process, from cacao harvesting to its transformation into bars, and explores how chocolate has been integrated into various cultures, including its role in celebrations and rituals.

One of the main attractions is the visit to the “Vinte Vinte” chocolate factory, where visitors can observe the chocolate-making process through glass windows. The museum is highly interactive, featuring machines, historical artifacts, and educational displays. The experience culminates in chocolate tastings, where visitors can sample different varieties, from white chocolate to 100% cacao, and learn to appreciate their flavors and textures, even pairing chocolate with Port wines.





Porto Region Across the Ages

Porto Region Across the Ages offers a historical perspective on the city of Porto and its evolution over time. This museum provides an immersive experience, guiding visitors through significant events that have shaped the region, from Roman times to the present day. Through a combination of artifacts, multimedia displays, and interactive exhibits, the museum highlights key moments in Porto's history, including invasions, discoveries, and cultural transformations. This journey through time helps visitors understand the unique character of the city and the factors that have influenced its development as a major cultural and economic hub in Portugal.





The Bridge Collection

The Bridge Collection is an extraordinary exhibition showcasing a vast collection of wine glasses and goblets amassed by Adrian Bridge, the visionary behind WOW. This museum features over 1,000 pieces spanning 9,000 years of history, from ancient Mesopotamian artifacts to contemporary glass designs. The collection highlights the cultural and historical significance of drinking rituals and the evolution of glassmaking techniques. Visitors can explore the artistic and functional aspects of these vessels, gaining insight into the social and ceremonial roles of drinking across different cultures and eras.





Pink Palace

Pink Palace is dedicated to the world of rosé wine, celebrating its history and cultural impact. This space offers an engaging and visually stunning experience, with exhibits designed to be highly “Instagrammable.” Rosé enthusiasts can explore production techniques and varieties, as well as enjoy interactive displays that emphasize the fun and playful nature of this popular wine. Pink Palace also offers tasting sessions of rosé from Portugal and beyond, making it an enjoyable and educational experience for wine lovers.





Restored painted freshly of the church

The Atkinson Museum

It is a prominent cultural space that combines the rich history of an 18th-century mansion with contemporary art exhibitions of international significance. Originally built in 1760 and historically linked to the Port wine trade, the building has been meticulously restored to host world-class exhibitions. Its adjacent chapel features impressive frescoes that have been carefully restored.

This museum has established itself as an important cultural landmark, thanks to its collaboration with top-tier international institutions. It organizes exhibitions like the DALÍ UNIVERSE EXHIBITION, which will be on display until the end of October 2024. The Atkinson Museum contributes to Porto's prestige as a key cultural destination.

Works and photographs from the exhibition: DALÍ UNIVERSE EXHIBITION



Wine School

The WOW Wine School is a top-tier educational facility dedicated to the art and science of wine. It offers a wide range of courses and workshops tailored to different levels of experience, from beginners to advanced enthusiasts. The school is certified to offer Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET) courses, including Levels 1 and 2, in both Portuguese and English. These courses cover essential topics such as wine tasting techniques, viticulture, and wine production, providing a solid foundation for those looking to deepen their knowledge. In addition to formal courses, the Wine School offers personalized tastings and themed workshops that explore specific aspects of wine, such as regional varieties and pairings. The goal is to make wine education accessible, enjoyable, and popular for everyone.



On a Gastronomic Tour through WOW Porto

After immersing yourself in the cultural richness of the museums, it's time to indulge your palate with a food and wine tour without leaving WOW. This complex features a selection of restaurants and bars offering the best of Portuguese cuisine and exceptional wines.

T&C

This restaurant, with its charming terrace, prepares traditional Portuguese dishes in an elegant and cozy setting. Located in a former Port wine cellar, the menu features traditional dishes with a contemporary twist, such as the “francesinha,” available in both traditional and vegetarian versions, served with a Port wine sauce. Diners can enjoy an intimate dining experience, either on the terrace with views of Porto or inside, where the decor reflects the ambiance of a traditional wine cellar.

Authentic Portuguese cuisine



Root & Vine

An excellent option for vegetarian and vegan cuisine. This establishment offers a culinary experience that combines fresh, local ingredients to create innovative and healthy dishes, including creative salads and vegan dishes featuring delicious stews, curries, and meals based on legumes and whole grains. The atmosphere is cozy and contemporary, perfect for enjoying a quiet, nutritious, and very healthy meal.

Healthy and innovative cuisine



The Golden Catch

Perfect for seafood lovers, where you can select your fish and side dishes. Notable dishes include the rich “sopa de peixe,” the expertly crafted traditional fish & chips, and their seafood platter, one of the standout dishes perfect for sharing. The restaurant offers a modern ambiance with stunning views of the Douro River, making it an ideal spot for a memorable dining experience, whether for lunch or dinner.

Where Land and Sea Unite in a Single Bite





1828 Restaurant

Located within the WOW complex, the 1828 restaurant offers an exceptional culinary experience that pays tribute to a crucial moment in Portuguese history: the Civil War of 1828. This fine dining establishment specializes in high-quality meats, expertly prepared and served in an elegant setting with stunning views of Porto. The menu is designed to showcase the best of Portuguese cuisine, complemented by a curated selection of wines. The restaurant offers unique pairings, including options with young Vintage Port wines, ensuring an unforgettable dining experience.



Fine Dining and Exquisite Aged Cuts of Meat
with a Touch of Portuguese Tradition



Mira Mira by Ricardo Costa

It is a standout restaurant offering a unique culinary experience at WOW Porto. Created by Michelin-starred chef Ricardo Costa, the restaurant combines fresh, local ingredients with innovative techniques, presenting dishes that celebrate the rich culinary traditions of Portugal with a contemporary twist. Its elegant atmosphere and stunning views complement a gastronomic offering that promises to delight even the most discerning palates, making it a must-visit destination for lovers of fine dining.



A unique culinary experience of
Portuguese cuisine with a
contemporary twist



Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Canary islands

Vegueta

Where Las Palmas Preserves Its Memory

Text and Photos: Rosario Alonso



Colón Museum in the Pilar Nuevo square

Nestled in the heart of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Vegueta is more than just a neighborhood; it is the very birthplace of Las Palmas. Founded in 1478 by Castilian conquerors, this foundational district is not only the historical core of the city but also the stage where the roots of Canarian culture, colonial heritage, and vibrant urban life intertwine.

Although the conquest began in 1478, it wasn't until 1483 that the islands were officially recognized as part of Spain. The incorporation of the archipelago into the Crown occurred in two distinct ways: the "islands of lordship" (Lanzarote, Gomera, El Hierro, Fuerteventura) were integrated without battle as the feudal lords offered no resistance; they were simply absorbed. The "royal islands" (Gran Canaria, Tenerife, and La Palma), on the other hand, resisted and had to be conquered by order of the Catholic Monarchs. There was conflict, with the only advantage for the indigenous Canarians being their knowledge of the terrain, as they lacked any form of weaponry. However, their defeat was ultimately a matter of time.

Vegueta, the founding neighborhood of Las Palmas, is a labyrinth of cobblestone streets that tells centuries of history.



Triana Street

Sculpture of one of the 8 dogs of Santa Ana



However, it is believed that before the Spanish arrived, the Portuguese and Normans, and possibly even Mallorcan friars in the 14th century, reached the island, which might explain the devotion to St. Catherine on the island. However, none of their settlements took hold. The truth is that there are only conjectures about the pre-Hispanic period, partly because the indigenous Canarians before the conquest had no form of writing.

It is believed that the first inhabitants came from North Africa, likely a Berber from the Atlas Mountains. The Roman expansion in North Africa could have led to either a flight of the defeated or the very common Roman practice of deportation.

After this brief historical introduction (which can be greatly expanded at the Canarian Museum), we begin our journey through the heart of Las Palmas, a place largely unknown to many.

Walking through the cobblestone streets of Vegueta, one can feel the weight of the centuries in its stone walls, hear the echoes of history resonating between its buildings and squares, and see how the past intertwines with the present at every corner. This neighborhood surprises visitors who come seeking sun and sand, as they discover the rich experiences that await them on its streets.

The fusion of indigenous and Spanish cultures created a unique Canarian identity, an amalgamation of customs, languages, and beliefs that are reflected in the island's architecture, art, and festivals.

VEGUETA, LAS PALMAS DE GRAN CANARIA



Pérez Galdós Theatre and below, the San Telmo Hermitage





Courtyard of the Columbus house

While Vegueta is the historical heart of Las Palmas, the neighboring Triana district represents a bridge to modernity, without losing its traditional charm. Separated from Vegueta by Calle Mayor de Triana, this neighborhood offers a complementary experience, where the past and present coexist in harmony.

Triana is known for its lively commercial life, with a wide range of shops, cafés, and restaurants that invite you to stroll and enjoy the local offerings. The architecture of Triana, though more modern than that of Vegueta, also reflects the rich history of the city, featuring buildings that blend styles from Neoclassical to Art Nouveau and Art Deco.

The Pérez Galdós Theatre, one of Triana's most important landmarks, is a magnificent example of this combination of tradition and modernity. Originally opened in 1890 as the Teatro Tirso de Molina, which later suffered a devastating fire, the theatre has witnessed the cultural evolution of the city and remains a hub of artistic and cultural activity today.

Triana also offers a quieter, more residential side, with tree-lined streets and plazas where locals gather to socialize and enjoy the relaxed atmosphere. Unlike the more tourist-oriented vibe of Vegueta, Triana provides a glimpse into the everyday life of the Canarian people, with a focus on community and tradition.

Vegueta, as the historical epicenter of Las Palmas, is a place where this identity can be felt in every corner. Its streets tell the story of a cultural fusion that gave rise to a diverse and richly nuanced society, one that has managed to preserve its heritage over the centuries. The famous "Carnaval de los Indianos" is a prime example of this.

The incorporation into the Crown of Castile was not the only event that shaped its destiny. The so-called "blood tribute," or the mandatory emigration to "the Americas" for those who wished to trade certain goods, meant sending part of the family across the Atlantic. It is important to remember that colonization often involved repopulation.

These historical migrations, both to and from the islands, have made the Canarian people "Africans with a European mindset and a Caribbean soul."

A great way to begin exploring the historic center of Las Palmas is by starting at the old Ermita de San Telmo (the patron saint of sailors), located near the first port of Las Palmas in the 15th century. From there, you can enter the Triana neighborhood, which has changed significantly over time. The later construction of the Port of La Luz led to the emergence of the more modern and Art Nouveau "Triana" that we know today.

Colorful Art Nouveau facades



VEGUETA, LAS PALMAS DE GRAN CANARIA



Courtyard of the Columbus house

The curious name “Triana,” as well as the names of many of its streets, for a Canarian neighborhood, is believed to have its origins in the 15th-century conquest, as many Andalusians were involved in the conquest and repopulation. Could its founder have been a native of Triana?

We arrive at the **San Antonio Abad square**, the “Real de Las Palmas,” the first settlement of the conquerors, known to have been a palm grove with a plentiful water supply in the form of a ravine.

Here stood the first church of Las Palmas, predating the cathedral. Located on a corner of Street Colón, we already see the next stop.

The Columbus Museum stands as an essential witness to transatlantic history and the crucial role that the Canary Islands played in the Age of Discovery. Although La Gomera was initially chosen as the stopover, a technical failure on one of Columbus’s ships would alter the course of history. Originally located, during the time of the first voyage, on a block of eight houses, it was in the 20th century that it was transformed into this magnificent cultural complex. Columbus visited this site on three occasions during his four expeditions to the New World. This institution offers a window into the past, allowing visitors to explore the life and

Reproduction of his cabin in the Columbus Museum



voyages of Christopher Columbus, as well as the interactions between Europe and the Americas that marked the beginning of modernity.

The building that houses the museum is a gem in itself, with its Mudéjar-style architecture that combines Hispano-Arabic influences with Gothic elements. The museum's rooms are filled with ancient maps, ship models, and artifacts (such as astrolabes) that narrate the story of Columbus's expeditions and his stay in Las Palmas. Additionally, the museum offers insight into the relationship between the Canary Islands and the Americas, exploring how the islands served as a link and a point of cultural exchange between the two continents.

For those seeking to immerse themselves in history, the Columbus Museum is a must-visit. Each object in its collection tells a story, and each room transports the visitor to an era when the seas were routes to the unknown, and Las Palmas was a key port in the network of trade and exploration connecting the Old World with the New.

Its rear facade on Pilar Nuevo square is spectacular; made of green stone (tirna) from a quarry on the island that produces stone of this color. The facade is notable for its three magnificent coats of arms, as well as its balconies, doors, and windows made of Canary pine, which is highly resistant to fire.



Detail of the rear door of the Columbus Museum
Facade of the Canarian Museum





One of the rooms in the Canarian Museum
Santa Ana square and the Las Palmas Cathedral



Continuing along the Los Balcones street, we pass by the Museum of Modern Art and arrive at the **Canarian Museum**.

The Canarian Museum is an invitation to explore the indigenous past of the island, a space dedicated to preserving and disseminating the archaeological and anthropological heritage of the Canary Islands. Founded in 1879, this museum serves as a gateway to the pre-Hispanic history of Gran Canaria, offering a detailed view of the life, customs, and beliefs of the island's indigenous people.

The museum's rooms are filled with artifacts ranging from ceramics and tools to mummies and skeletons, each offering a glimpse into the daily life of the island's ancient inhabitants. The museum is also notable for its collection of trepanned skulls, an ancient medical practice that demonstrates the advanced knowledge of the aborigines in medicine and surgery.

The Plazas of Vegueta: The Heart of Social Life

Vegueta is also renowned for its plazas, which are not only gathering and recreational spaces but also the settings where many of the most important chapters in the history of Las Palmas have been written. The Plaza de Santa Ana, for example, is the heart of the neighborhood; flanked by the imposing Santa Ana Cathedral, the Town Hall, the Regental and Episcopal Palaces, numerous private homes, and boutique hotels.

The square has a distinctly eclectic style (featuring neoclassical, modernist, and classical buildings) shaped by its historical evolution, particularly by two significant events:

1599: The attack by Dutch pirate Francis Drake, which led to a 10-day Dutch occupation of the island and the destruction of much of its architecture and archives.

1842: A devastating fire in the Town Hall that resulted in the loss of its original architecture.

On either side of the square, palm trees, the botanical symbol of Las Palmas, rise up. Guarding the Cathedral are the 8 dogs of Santa Ana, possibly a gift from either a British family or a French navigator, though their exact origin is unknown; they are sculpted in green cast iron and have become a symbol of Las Palmas.

The square is also notable for the numerous plaques commemorating figures and events linked to the city, providing an intriguing narrative of its history.

The current facade of the Cathedral is neoclassical, although it was originally designed in a Gothic style; still unfinished, the social and economic events of the island have influenced its eclectic style, and it remains incomplete. Constructed from gray quarry stone, popularly identified as Canarian basalt, it is one of the city's emblems.

Another notable square is the Plaza del Espíritu Santo, a more intimate and secluded spot where the beauty of a central fountain surrounded by vegetation and Canary-style buildings can be appreciated. This location is ideal for a pause during a tour of the neighborhood, offering a moment of respite amidst the historical and cultural richness of Vegueta.

For the curious traveler, Vegueta and Triana offer a unique opportunity to immerse oneself in the soul of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, to discover the secrets held within its walls, and to connect with an essential part of the history and culture of the Canary Islands.

Espíritu Santo square





Perpignan Castle

Perpignan

Perfect Fusion of Nature and Culture

text and Photos: Jose A. Muñoz

Perpignan is the capital of the French department of Pyrénées-Orientales, the fourth most populous city in the Occitanie region, and the historical capital of the former Roussillon region, which existed from 1659 until the French Revolution in 1790. Perpignan has long been a crossroads where Catalan and French cultures intertwine. Roussillon was a contested territory for centuries, contributing to the uniqueness of its identity. Perpignan stood out as part of the Kingdom of Mallorca (which included not only the Balearic Islands but also territories on the peninsula such as the counties of Roussillon, Cerdanya, and the lordship of Montpellier, among others. Although the Kings of Mallorca governed these lands, they were subordinate to the Kingdom of Aragon). This historical context has endowed Perpignan with a unique character, where Catalan influence is evident in every corner, from its architecture to its cuisine and traditions.

With a deeply rooted history and cultural heritage reflecting a blend of influences, this privileged position not only made Perpignan a crucial political and administrative center during the Middle Ages but also left a lasting mark on its architecture and traditions. Next, we will take a tour of some of its most emblematic monuments, each telling a part of Perpignan's fascinating history.

Courtyard of the Rigaud Museum



The Castle

It is perhaps the most iconic monument in Perpignan. Originally built in 1368 by King Peter IV of Aragon as part of the city's defensive walls, it was transformed into a fortress under the reign of Louis XI in the 15th century. This imposing red-brick structure, which combines Gothic style with military fortification elements, served for centuries as the city's gateway and later as a prison. Today, it houses the Catalan Museum of Arts and Popular Traditions, where visitors can explore the rich culture of the region.

Palace of the Kings of Mallorca

This palace is an impressive testament to the period when Perpignan was part of the Kingdom of Mallorca in the 13th century. Fortified and built in Gothic style, it served as the residence of the Kings of Mallorca until the kingdom was incorporated into the Crown of Aragon. Situated on a hill overlooking the city, the palace offers spectacular views and stands as a symbol of the splendor and influence of the Mallorcan monarchy in the region. Visitors can explore its courtyards, halls, and chapels, all of which preserve the aura of the medieval court.



Interior of the Palace of the Kings of Majorca



PERPIGNAN

Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist

It is another of Perpignan's architectural treasures. Construction began in 1324 under the direction of King Sancho I of Mallorca and was completed in the 15th century. The cathedral is a magnificent example of Southern Gothic architecture, with its wide single nave, high arches, and side chapels. Inside, there are valuable works of art, including an impressive Baroque altarpiece and a monumental organ. The cathedral's bell tower is also notable, adding a vertical element to the urban landscape.

The Loge de Mer

It is an old exchange built in the 14th century, reflecting Perpignan's importance as a center of Mediterranean trade. This Gothic building was where the city's commercial and mercantile activities were regulated. With its decorated facade and elegant structure, the Loge de Mer is a reminder of Perpignan's economic dynamism during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Today, it serves as a venue for exhibitions and cultural events, continuing to play an active role in the life of the city.

The Rigaud Museum

Located in the heart of the city, the Rigaud Museum is a cultural gem that houses a rich collection of art, spanning from the Middle Ages to the 20th century. This museum is particularly renowned for its focus on Catalan artists and its outstanding collection of works by Hyacinthe Rigaud, a court painter to Louis XIV and a native of Perpignan. In addition, the museum features a notable selection of modern art, including pieces by artists such as Pablo Picasso and Aristide Maillol, making it an essential destination for art lovers.

After this cultural visit through the city, autumn in Perpignan is a magical time to enjoy nature, with landscapes bathed in golden hues and cool weather that invites exploration of the city in harmony with nature.

As a suggestion, we propose two routes for this season: **the Roussillon Vineyards Circuit** and a Walk through the **Mas Larrieu Nature Reserve**. Both routes are ideal for immersing yourself in the serenity and beauty of autumn in this region of southern France.

Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist





Central street in Perpignan
Curious parasols
Interior of the Cathedral
Room in the Rigaud Museum



TRAVEL





The Roussillon Vineyards Circuit

It is a 28 miles cycling route of medium difficulty, starting from Perpignan and winding through the Roussillon wine region. Along the way, you pass through vineyards and picturesque villages like Canet-en-Roussillon and Villeneuve-de-la-Raho, with views of the Pyrenees and the Mediterranean. The route can be divided into several stages to enjoy local wineries and wine tastings in a relaxed atmosphere.

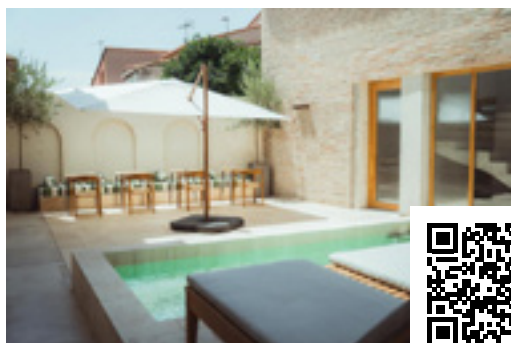
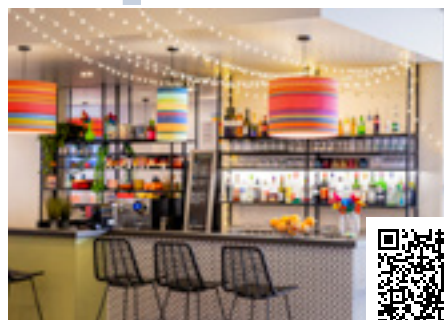
Route through the Mas Larrieu Nature Reserve

It is an 4,97 miles circuit of low difficulty, ideal for a relaxed family walk near Perpignan. The route passes through a nature reserve featuring dunes, marshes, and riverside forests, offering the chance to observe native birds and plants. The well-marked trail is accessible to all levels, making it perfect for a peaceful excursion. At the end of the hike, you can access nearby beaches, perfect for a swim in the Mediterranean during the warmer months.



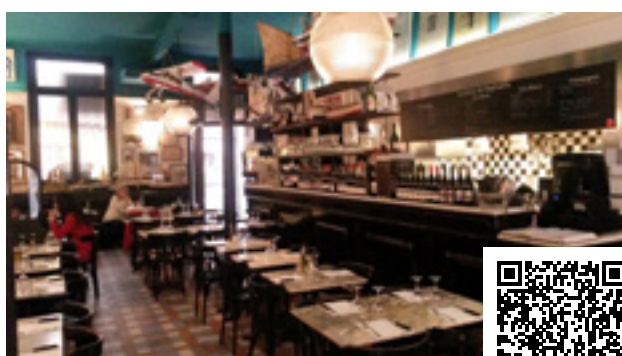
Travel Tips

Ibis Styles Perpignan Centre Gare: It is a modern and functional hotel located in the center of Perpignan, near the train station and the historic center. Its 102 rooms, though compact, are well-equipped with air conditioning, Smart TV, and free Wi-Fi, making them ideal for both business travelers and tourists. The hotel includes a buffet breakfast in the rate and features amenities such as a bar, children's play area, and a coworking space, standing out for its excellent value for money.



Maison Gaïa Hôtel & Spa: It is a newly opened boutique hotel in Torreilles, near Perpignan, offering a luxury experience in a tranquil setting. The hotel features an outdoor pool, spa, and terrace, and the rooms are decorated in a modern, warm style, equipped with amenities such as Smart TV, minibar, free Wi-Fi, and a Nespresso coffee machine. They offer a buffet breakfast with local and healthy options, making it an ideal choice for exploring the surroundings of Perpignan.

Restaurante L'Osмосe: It offers healthy and meticulously prepared cuisine, with a focus on excellence and the careful selection of producers. The seasonal menu is refreshed every two weeks, ensuring a fresh and varied culinary experience. There are always three options available: meat, Mediterranean fish, and a vegetarian menu, along with the chef's specials, which are crafted based on the availability of market-fresh ingredients.



Casa Sansa: It is a historic restaurant in Perpignan, renowned for being one of the oldest in the city and for its dedication to preserving authentic Catalan cuisine, combined with the traditional flavors of regional French gastronomy. The restaurant has established itself as a culinary landmark by using ancestral recipes and high-quality local products.

Les Halles Vauban: In Perpignan, it is a covered market that stands out for its blend of tradition and modernity. It offers a wide variety of fresh local products, such as fruits, vegetables, meats, and artisanal cheeses. Additionally, it is an ideal spot to enjoy local cuisine, with stalls offering prepared dishes and tapas to savor on-site. It's a go-to destination for those looking to experience the authentic culinary essence of the city.





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INDONESIA

Memories of a Journey

By: Nacho Muñoz y Ana Gutiérrez

Our journey through Indonesia was unforgettable, filled with breathtaking landscapes and a cultural diversity that left us in awe. We began in Yogyakarta, on the island of Java, a gem less known than Bali or Komodo but with a cultural richness that deserves to be discovered. The majestic temples of Prambanan and Borobudur are must-see sites that transported us to ancient times.

The sunrise over Mount Merbabu, where the first rays of the sun bathe the landscape, is just one example of the sublime beauty of Indonesia.

From Yogyakarta, we took a trip to Mount Bromo, an experience that left us breathless. Watching the mist slowly dissipate at dawn, accompanied by the warmth of the sun emerging behind the volcanoes, while holding a cup of coffee, is one of those moments that stay etched in memory forever. We then flew to the magical island of Bali, where temples like Pura Ulun Danu Bratan and the iconic Handara

Gate, along with lush forests filled with monkeys, make this island a unique and enchanting place.

After thoroughly exploring, we relaxed on the paradise beaches of the Gili Islands, accessible only by boat, where diving and snorkeling gave us the chance to swim alongside turtles and explore colorful coral reefs. Lombok, our next stop, surprised us with its untouched nature, dominated by towering waterfalls and majestic volcanoes. Although this island has been hit by earthquakes, its natural beauty remains intact, a testament to the resilience of nature.

Finally, we reached Komodo Island, famous for its impressive dragons and the National Park. Boat excursions to Pulau Padar, with its iconic pink sand beaches, are an experience not to be missed. Indonesia is a destination where carrying an extra battery is essential, as every corner of its landscape seems taken from a postcard, offering views that are hard to capture in a single visit.

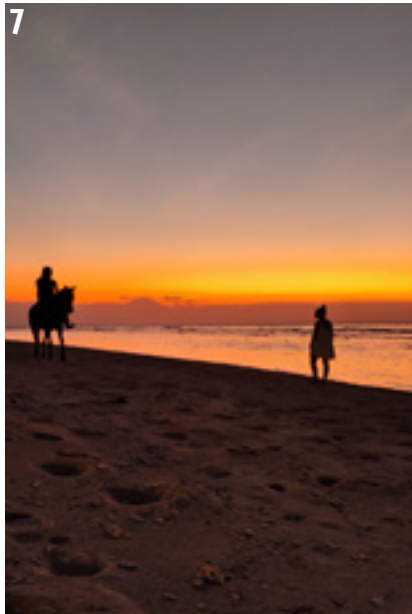


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- 1.- Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park
Java Island
- 2.- Pura Ulun Danu Bratan / Bali
- 3.- Taman Wisata Candi Prambanan
Yogyakarta
- 4.- Sunrise at Mount Merbabu / Java Island
- 5.- Pulau Padar / Komodo
- 6.- Bukit Cinta Rice Terraces / Bali
- 7.- Sunset on Gili Trawangan Beach



Monkey Forest / Bali
Wild Turtle / Gili Trawangan



Handara Gate / Bali





Sunset / Komodo Island

Sendang Gile Waterfall / Mount Rinjani National Park, Lombo



Statue at Pura Ulun Danu Bratan / Bali



Komodo Dragon in the Wild Komodo National Park





Albarracín

Text: Rosario Alonso Photography: Jose A. Muñoz

On a rocky spur, narrow, elongated and crescent-shaped, stands this town of Teruel, probably one of the most beautiful in Spain.

Delimited, in its three quarters by the Guadalaviar river that lulls the village forming a meander, and a medieval wall of the fourteenth century that protects the rest of its perimeter, the first thing that surprises is the reddish color of the whole village; it is the red aljez or red plaster, which is extracted from two types of clay with high concentration of iron, which is obtained from a local quarry and is mandatory for building or renovating; there is only one "romantic exception" of which we will talk later.

Before continuing to walk through its streets, we must make a stop in its history.

When the Caliphate of Cordoba began to fragment, the Berber family of the Banu Razin converted Albarracín into a Taifa or independent kingdom and gave it the name of "Al-Banu Razin" or city of the sons of Razin. Two centuries later, the Muslims ceded the kingdom to the Christian family of the Azagra, cession and not conquest in 1170, of Navarrese lineage that would retain it for another century with its own sovereignty and its own Fueros (The House of the Community, from the 16th century and stone ashlar is the guardian of the Fueros), not without pressure from the kingdoms of Aragon and Castile. A little stop to remember that one of the Azagra married Isabel de Segura and the end of the story reminds us of the most famous of the love stories of Teruel "The Lovers of Teruel" whose end we all know.

Let us return to history; the conquest of Albarracín by the Crown of Aragon did not take place until 1238, with Pedro III of Aragon after a year of siege; the accessibility was difficult, in addition to the physical wall there was the natural one that was the Guadalaviar river. In spite of his conquest, Pedro III had to sign the respect to the Fueros de Albarracín that, although it is



surprising, in some way and on some matter are still in force.

After the story, let's begin to discover it. Albarracín could be defined as a medieval village whose houses form a network of narrow streets, on permanent slopes, with passages and stairways everywhere.

The bases of the houses, that is to say their second floor, are very narrow, gaining surface in each following height, thus extending the house a little more in each section. Because of all this, the houses are dark, almost coming together on the top floors. It is difficult to tell where one house ends and the next begins.

Everything is photographable, from the door knockers with dragon shapes or locks with the Virgin of Pilar, the balconies and forged windows, ailerons that protrude from the roofs, as much as its owner is wealthy, with curious carved drawings, curious corner balconies tempting to balance; also striking is the absence of noble

Albarracín is a medieval village with narrow streets and red houses, where the history and culture of Mudéjar and Christian influences intertwine in its architecture and traditions.

ALBARRACÍN - TERUEL

houses, there was no nobility but an important bourgeoisie (the House of Monterde); the competition is in search of the most irregular (which is the house of Julianeta) and always reddish color that is toned according to the sunlight.

Albarracín is full of viewpoints and charming corners everywhere; from its main square the views are of the remains of the Alcazaba and its cathedral; in it is its sixteenth-century town hall shaped like a horseshoe that in the past also served as a prison.

In the fourteenth century begins the growth of the city, also from this period is its wall, but it will always do so towards the mountain, and thus protect its northern flank. The streets upwards lead to the wall and down to the river. Two watchtowers stand on the top, Doña Blanca and Andador.

The only house in Albarracín that is not red is indigo blue, and like almost everything in the province of Teruel has its own romantic legend. Back in the eighteenth century the Navarro de Arzuriaga family (one of the most powerful of the town whose main economic activity was livestock with transhumance practice included), in one of those trips with livestock, one of its members, a handsome young man was smitten with a beautiful young Andalusian woman who married; the couple took up residence in Albarracín and the young woman despite being the owner of the most important

house of the town, longed for his native Andalusia, its colors and courtyards. Her loving husband put all his efforts to make his beloved happy and painted the house blue and even put an Andalusian patio. That is love!

The state of conservation of Albarracín is impressive, as well as the respect for the rules of building and rehabilitation of the architectural ensemble that is the villa; and this reality is the result of the invaluable work of the Santa María de Albarracín Foundation, which began in 1995 as a school-workshop and with European funds and various sponsors has trained over the years a large group of restorers of the cultural heritage of Albarracín. It is not only the training they receive, and very varied because there are masons restorers, restorers of paintings, murals, books, archaeologists, etc., they also establish unique standards or guidelines for its implementation, but also and very importantly, they take care of giving cultural content to the restored. Perhaps his most important restorations have been that of the Episcopal Palace and the Cathedral of the Savior of Albarracín, the latter has been impressive because it has lasted 10 years, being inaugurated in 2016 and being valued as very purist, having found, in addition, very important findings.

It is possibly located where the old main mosque of Albarracín was. The mosque was consecrated as a Christian temple, after the cession of Albarracín to the Azagra family. On August 16, 1200 the first cathedral was inaugurated, a sober Romanesque temple. In the 16th century it was converted into a Gothic-Renaissance style temple with a single nave and chapels in all its buttresses, all covered by starred ribbed vaults. It is striking that, due to the orography of Albarracín, the buttresses are hanging over the river, as well as the choir is also overhanging (the best way to appreciate it is through a river walkway) and it is due to the need to gain space at any rate.

pels were made in the 18th century. The arrival of the 19th century meant "artistically destroying" the cathedral as it was covered with a gray paint that covered all the original work created over the centuries. This is precisely the work carried out by the Santa Maria Foundation, a task that took 10 years to complete but that reveals its extraordinary value.

The Cathedral of the Savior is not ostentatious, rather it is humble because its bishopric never had much money, but it was able to make up for the lack of it with great solvency. The baseboards are not marble, it is paint that imitates marble (marbled paint); its interior is full of very original and artistic trompe l'oeil.

House of the Navarro de Arzuriaga family





Cathedral High Altar and Altarpiece

The jewel of the cathedral is the "Altarpiece of St. Peter" of its High Altar (XVI century - Renaissance) and even in it you can see the ingenuity of its artists, because the whole set is made of marble pine, of very low quality that grows between sandstone and whose wood is very weak and with many knots; as these soils contain a lot of iron its color is reddish. Each scene of the altarpiece is a pine trunk that has been worked from the outside to the inside; the pieces are sublime and may look like marble.

It is worth remembering here that until 2010 Albarracín has lived from the sawmills, as the Montes Universales, where the Tagus River rises, are huge extensions of pine forest.

The central scene of the Altarpiece is the "Transfiguration of the Savior on Mount Tabor" which was not polychromed until 98 years later, when an enlightened bishop, Fray Pedro Tris, privately contributed the necessary money.



ALBARRACÍN - TERUEL

Some of its chapels include:

Chapel of Saint Anne

This chapel is a blend of architectural styles, with much of it dating back to the 16th century. The stone blocks are Romanesque, from the first cathedral. The altarpiece is a 19th-century neoclassical work. The columns, once again, are made of pine and not marble.

Chapel of the Pillar

For those who may question whether it is indeed the Virgin of the Pillar, three details serve as reminders: she stands on a pillar, the child is holding his mother's mantle, and the child holds the dove of the Holy Spirit in his hand. This chapel dates back to the 17th-18th centuries.

Chapel of the Baptism

This chapel contains the oldest remains of the cathedral, dating to the late 15th century, in Gothic-Flemish style. Baptism was by immersion, and it is believed that the baptismal font dates from the 14th century.

Chapel of the Souls

Once a sort of storage room providing access to the cloister and at some point walled off, this chapel has been restored to reveal its original floor, as well as 16th-century mural paintings done in a technique



- 1.- Chapel of the Pillar
- 2.- Chapel of Saint Anne
- 3.- Chapel of the Souls
- 4.- View of the Central Nave and the Choir
- 5.- View of the Cathedral Tower





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known as “grisaille,” which simulates sculptures (another trompe-l’oeil) and depicts scenes from the life of Christ. It also features a barrel vault in the Italian style, which, although it mimics granite, is actually made of plaster. This chapel was used by the livestock farmers.

Chapel of the Circumcision

The walls are covered with monochrome mural paintings that were completely unknown before the restoration.

Regarding the cloister, it remained uncovered until the mid-17th century but was later covered due to the deterioration caused by weather conditions. Perhaps the most striking features are its alabaster oculi.

Although the restoration is not yet complete, as the crypt and a few other rooms remain to be finished, it can be said that despite its sober and humble nature, the cathedral is a magnificent example of how art does not necessarily require noble materials for its execution.



5



Charming Villages

Mogarraz

A Living Portrait in the
Sierra de Francia

Text: Rosario Alonso Photography: Jose A. Muñoz



In the heart of the Sierra de Francia, in the province of Salamanca, lies Mogarráz, a village that seems frozen in time, surrounded by the deep green of chestnut and cherry trees that blanket the mountain slopes. This small corner of Spain, declared a Historic-Artistic Site, captivates all who seek a place where history, culture, and nature intertwine in a mosaic of beauty and tradition.

Mogarráz is much more than a village; it is a living portrait of its people, an open-air gallery where every house tells a story and every corner reveals a fragment of the serrano soul. In its narrow, cobblestone streets, visitors feel transported to a bygone era, where customs and architecture have withstood the passage of time, preserving an authenticity that is rare to find today.

The village is characterized by houses with timber frames, large overhanging eaves on the roofs, and the irregular layout of its streets. However, it also features a unique construction style not found in other nearby villages of the Sierra de Francia: a greater use of granite in the buildings, the use of alleys or passageways to connect intricate spaces, and staircases that climb from the street to the front doors of the homes.

The History Whispered in Every Stone

The history of Mogarráz is that of a village that has managed to preserve its identity through the centuries. Founded in the 11th century by Mozarabic settlers, the layout of its streets and the architecture of its houses reflect the legacy of its first inhabitants, who left a mark that still endures. The houses of Mogarráz, with their stone facades and timber frames, are witnesses to a rich and complex history, where Muslim influence blends with Castilian tradition. Like other nearby villages, its urban core unwinds either upwards or downwards from the main street that serves as its axis. A stroll along this axis could begin on the outskirts, at the 17th-century Calvario, and then weave through corners such as the Ermita del Humilladero and its Cruz de los Judíos, the Cabolaldea fountain, the church, or the town square.

One of the most distinctive features of Mogarráz is the presence of portraits on the facades of many of its houses. These paintings, which depict the village's inhabitants, were created by local artist Florencio Maíllo, based on photographs taken in 1967 by photographer Alejandro Martín. This project, known as "Retrata2/388," is a tribute to the residents of Mogarráz and a reminder that this village is, above all, a place inhabited by people with deep stories and roots.



Strolling through Mogarraz is like walking through a living art gallery, where each portrait tells a story of effort, hope, and perseverance.

Culture and traditions that pulsate in every corner of the world.

Culture in Mogarraz is a reflection of life in the Sierra de Francia, a region where traditions have been meticulously preserved over time. Here, religious and popular festivities hold special significance, as they not only celebrate faith but also the community and the identity of the village. The festivals of San Blas and San Antonio, celebrated in February

and June respectively, are among the most anticipated events for the people of Mogarraz. During these festivities, the village's streets come alive with color and joy, featuring processions, dances, and music that reflect the deep sense of belonging among the inhabitants. In these celebrations, the culture of the Sierra is experienced in its fullest expression, with traditional costumes, native dances, and gastronomy that delights the senses.

Craftsmanship is another important aspect of Mogarraz's culture. In the Casa de las Artesanías, also known as the Ethnographic Museum, visitors can discover the richness

of traditional crafts that have been passed down through generations. This space is a true cultural treasure, showcasing pieces of ceramics, embroidery, basketry, leatherwork, and even silver filigree, all of which reflect the skill and creativity of local artisans. It is undoubtedly the perfect place to learn about the motifs and colors of Sierra embroidery, which vary among the villages of the Sierra de Francia region.

The museum is not just a place of exhibition but also a space for learning and preserving traditional techniques. Here, visitors can get a close look at the processes involved in crafting these Handcrafted

products, and even participate in workshops where these ancient skills are taught. The Casa de las Artesanías is undoubtedly a meeting point between the past and the present, a place where history comes to life through the hands of artisans who keep the traditions of Mogarraz alive.

An atmosphere that invites tranquility

The atmosphere in Mogarraz is serene and welcoming, an invitation to rest and reflect amidst a natural setting of extraordinary beauty. Surrounded by the Las Batuecas-Sierra de Francia Natural Park, the village is an ideal starting point for exploring the landscapes that characterize this region. The trails that begin in Mogarraz lead through dense forests, cross clear streams, and climb to viewpoints where you can take in the vastness of the Sierra de Francia.



The House of Crafts and Embroidery; Dragon and Dove or Bird

Mogarraz, Main Square





One of the most popular routes is the one that leads to the nearby Sanctuary of Our Lady of Peña de Francia, a pilgrimage site located over 1,700 meters above sea level. From the summit, the views are breathtaking, offering a vast horizon of mountains and valleys that stretch into the distance. This sanctuary, dedicated to the Virgin of Peña de Francia, is a place of great devotion, and the hike there is a spiritual experience in itself, where the landscape and faith merge in a communion with nature.

But the atmosphere in Mogarraz is not only found in nature; it is also felt in the small things—in the quiet conversation with neighbors, in the aroma of homemade stews wafting from kitchens, and in the sound of bells marking the passage of time. It is a place where life is taken at a slower pace, where each moment is savored, and where visitors can disconnect from the fast-paced world outside to reconnect with what is essential.

Visiting Mogarraz is an experience that leaves an indelible mark. This small mountain village, with its rich history, vibrant culture, and natural surroundings, offers a refuge for travelers seeking more than just a typical tourist destination. Here, every street, every house, and every gaze reveals a story—a deep connection with the land and the community that inhabits it.

In Mogarraz,
every street,
every house,
and every
corner connects
you deeply with
the land and the
living history of
its inhabitants.



The Calvary





eco destinations

Zadar

Text: Kiara Hurtado - kiara.hurtado.prensa@gmail.com - **Instagram:** [kiarah.99](https://www.instagram.com/kiarah.99)

Photography: De Luca (Pexels) - Kaštel Restaurant - Hotel Bastion

Photo: The Dalmatian Sea in Zadar, Croatia © De Luca (Pexels)

Following
the Steps
of an
Exciting
Adventure
in the
Dalmatian
Sea

For those seeking deep connections and fascinating stories, the first step is to arrive as close as possible to the Dalmatian Sea, in charming towns like Zadar, where the song of the waters offers the perfect strategy to let tourists be carried away by the moment and experience an unparalleled adventure.

In recent years, Croatia has become the coveted destination for tourists who love summer, fun, and the good life, thanks to the diverse offerings the country provides. While cities like Split or Dubrovnik enjoy popularity during the summer season, the country also harbors other gems like Zadar, where you can experience a more tranquil, romantic, and above all, sustainable adventure at any time of the year.

Zadar is a small town in the central-western part of Croatia that shines with its tranquility from the coastal region of Dalmatia. Strategically, it has excellent connections and direct flights to major European capitals, and its charm lies in the combination of local authenticity, history, and a unique tourism approach focused on respecting its natural surroundings.

When beginning to explore this new destination, it's best to start with the historic center. In Zadar, the streets are a blend of different eras and cultures. Visitors will find traces of ancient Roman streets, making it highly recommended to visit the 9th-century Church of St. Donatus and admire the city's walls, which are a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In the same area, by the sea, another iconic attraction is the Sea Organ, an ecological masterpiece designed by architect Nikola Bašić. The remarkable aspect of this installation is that it transforms the sea waves into music, offering a unique and relaxing auditory experience, especially during the spectacular sunsets. The only danger posed by the sea's song is that its mysterious melodies might entice you to fall in love with everything before you. Additionally, the "Greeting to the Sun" is a circle of solar panels that light up at dusk, creating a light show that reflects the natural beauty of the sunset over the Adriatic, an innovative creation that combines the integration of nature and sustainable technology. Sunset lovers are endlessly grateful for the chance to experience these magical evenings.

While on the coast, Zadar's beaches are an infallible plan. Its crystal-clear waters are perfect for swimming, snorkeling, or simply relaxing in the sun. The city boasts small beaches close to the center where you can easily lose yourself in the calm of the waters. Kolovare Beach is the closest to the center and is ideal for spending a peaceful day enjoying the sea.

Zadar is also an excellent starting point for exploring some dreamy islands such as Kornati, Terascica, or Sakarun. During the summer, various tours offer trips to these islands, whether in large groups or privately. It's definitely worth spending a day discovering the depths of the seas and, of course, swimming in the salty waters. On the other hand, if you're looking to explore more of the natural landscapes on land, Zadar is also a convenient base for visiting nearby national parks, such as Plitvice Lakes National Park, known for its stunning waterfalls and turquoise lakes, or Paklenica National Park, a paradise for hiking and climbing enthusiasts.





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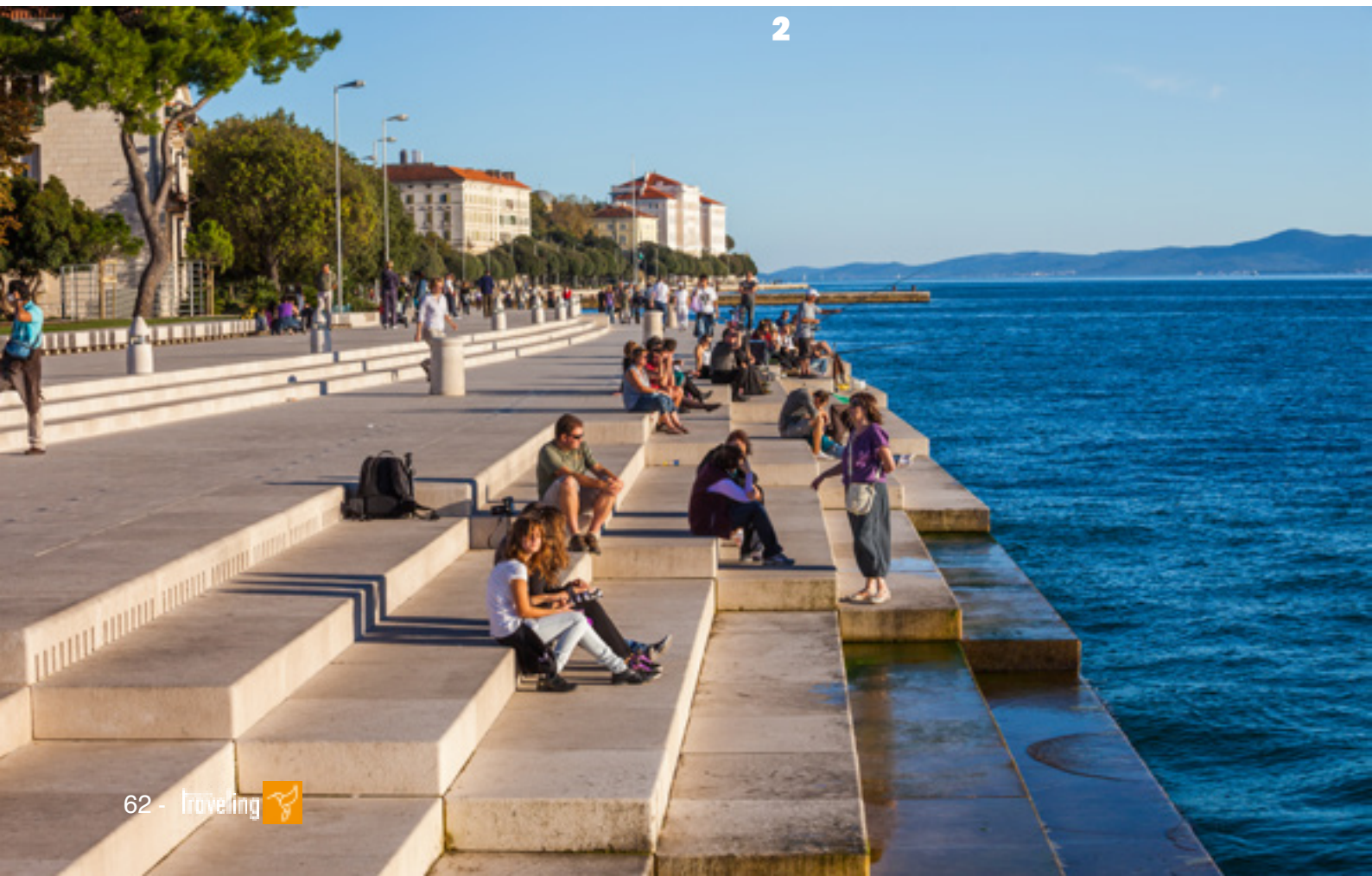
What does Croatia taste like?

Gastronomy is an essential part of fully experiencing Croatia, and Zadar is an excellent gastronomic hub with a local touch, enhanced by the freshness of its first-rate products, such as seafood, olive oils, and regional wines.

Visitors can find excellent options at the local markets and in most family-run restaurants in the historic center. However, for those looking to elevate the experience to another level, a must-visit is the Kaštel restaurant, located in Hotel Bastion, which is distinguished by the sustainable hotel brand Relais & Chateaux.

The restaurant and hotel are situated within the picturesque remains of a 13th-century fortress, and its interiors feature an exquisite selection of dishes based on traditional Zadar recipes. Chef Marijo Čeppek works magic at every table with a culinary offering inspired by the rich heritage of Mediterranean cuisine.

- 1.- Greeting to the Sun
- 2.- Sea Organ
- 3.- Kaštel Restaurant Terrace
- 4.- Hotel Bastion, Relais & Châteaux



2

The gourmet experience here is a celebration of traditional products like cheese, seafood, and olive oil, with the chef meticulously crafting each dish to perfection. When dining, it's best to trust the recommendations, especially when it comes to wine pairings, as the restaurant offers an excellent selection of high-quality local wines. Kaštel holds historical significance and is not only a go-to spot for tourists but also for locals looking to share an intimate moment with someone special.



Relais & Châteaux enforces a protective policy in its gastronomy, ensuring that none of its members worldwide include endangered marine species on their menus. Located right in front of a bay, Hotel Bastion also offers a variety of accommodation and relaxation options. With only 27 rooms, the hotel provides guests with a range of relaxation services, including a spa, massages, and beauty treatments.

Zadar is an intimate and vibrant side of Croatia, where noise fades away to highlight the beauty of tranquility—yet without losing its sense of adventure. The intensity of its crystal-clear waters has the power to break through the walls of reason, inviting us to experience profound emotions.

Traces of a sustainable destination

Creation of ecological attractions: As mentioned above, Zadar's main attractions are the Marine Organ and the Sun Salutation, two architectural designs powered by renewable resources and self-consumption. Within the historic center, there is no access to cars or cabs, so it invites the tourist to discover the destination on foot or by bicycle.

Cultural and educational tourism: By visiting Zadar, tourists not only enjoy a rich and diverse experience, but also contribute to the development of tourism that is respectful of the environment and local communities. The local government promotes various initiatives to protect marine and terrestrial biodiversity as an integral part of the region's sustainability strategy.

Value for local products: Supporting the production and consumption of local food and wine helps reduce the carbon footprint associated with transporting goods and supports nearby farmers and producers. Souvenir houses offer free tastings of their wines and spirits. Also, the local handicrafts have a penetrating particularity, so taking any of these souvenirs with you will be an excellent investment to remember the Croatian essence, as well as supporting the local economy.

5





Elizondo

A magical corner in the heart of Navarre

Text: Rosario Alonso - Photography: Jose A. Muñoz

Nestled in the Baztan Valley, surrounded by mountains and bathed by the waters of the Baztan River, is Elizondo, a small and charming village that seems to be straight out of a fairy tale. Located in the greenest part of Navarre, Elizondo is the capital of this valley that, with its bucolic landscapes, rich history and deep-rooted culture, invites travelers to discover its deep soul and discreet charm.

Elizondo is not just a destination, but a place where time seems to stand still, where its stone houses, painted white and red and wrought iron balconies studded with multicolored flowers, tell stories of a vibrant past.

The Baztan River, a Pyrenean river of transparent waters, where trout swim, divides the town in two. The houses are distributed on both sides of its banks, and the best viewpoint of this vertebral axis is the Txokoto dam. Behind the dam, one of the most beautiful postcards of Elizondo emerges: its beautiful houses reflected in the meek surface of the small pond that precedes it on the other side of the small artificial waterfall.

Here, traditions remain alive, and every corner of the village offers an invitation to explore a cultural and natural legacy that has endured over the centuries.

A walk through history

The history of Elizondo is intertwined with that of the Baztan Valley, a territory that has witnessed countless historical events. Since its origins as a medieval settlement, Elizondo has been a hub for trade and communication between Spain and France. Its strategic position on the Camino de Santiago del Norte route made the town a meeting place for pilgrims, traders and travelers, a crossroads where cultures intermingled and left their mark.

The heart of Elizondo is its old quarter, where cobblestone streets wind between ancestral homes that still have coats of arms on their facades. Two streets form the backbone of this Navarrese town, perhaps one of the most beautiful villages in Navarre: Jaime Urrutia Street, where the ancestral homes and palaces built by

the Indianos stand out, and Braulio Iriarte Street, each on one side of the Baztan River. The latter is more popular than historical. In it we find farmhouses with orchards in the back.

Each building has a story to tell, from the Palace of Arizkunenea, a majestic mansion of the eighteenth century, state-style facade and Baroque style, which now houses a cultural center, to the Church of Santiago, the sixteenth century, inside which keeps an altarpiece dedicated to the apostle James, a Baroque temple that has witnessed the passage of generations of Baztanese and numerous pilgrims.

The beautiful De los Fueros square, a meeting place for the local population, is presided over by the Town Hall, which, how could it be otherwise in Elizondo, occupies a beautiful 17th century building where the General Assembly of Baztan meets, an institution of medieval origin that governs the entire valley. In one corner of the building, a stone or botillo is a witness to the past, a tribute to the "laxoa game", the oldest form of Basque pelota.

But not everything in Elizondo is anchored in the past. The town is also a vibrant place, with weekly markets where local products, such as the famous Baztan cheese, red beans or chistorras, are proudly displayed. These markets are a hive of life, where local colors, smells and flavors mingle, offering visitors an unforgettable sensory experience.



Elizondo Town Council

Facade of the Church of Santiago



Arizkunenea Palace





Local culture: A living tradition

Culture in Elizondo is a treasure that is passed down from generation to generation, a reflection of the identity of the people and the Baztan Valley. Basque traditions are deeply rooted in daily life, and are manifested in festivals, music, dance and gastronomy.

The Baztandarren Biltzarra is one of Elizondo's most important festivities, a celebration that takes place every summer and brings together people from all over the valley for a day of parades, traditional dances and sporting competitions. This festival is an explosion of joy and color, where the essence of the Baztanese culture is revived in its purest form.

Gastronomy also plays a central role in the culture of Elizondo. The local cuisine, based on fresh, quality products, is an expression of the land and the character of its people. Dishes such as lamb "al chilindrón", "migas", or cod "a la vizcaína" are true delicacies that reflect the richness and diversity of Navarre's culinary tradition.

Nature as a refuge: The **Elbete-Elizondo** hiking route is also the gateway to a natural paradise that extends beyond its boundaries. The Baztan Valley is a mosaic of green meadows, lush forests and mountains that invite contemplation and hiking. And one of the best ways to experience the natural beauty of the area is to walk the hiking route that links Elizondo with the nearby village of Elbete.

This route, which begins in the heart of Elizondo, is a trail that winds through idyllic landscapes, crossing stone bridges over crystal-clear streams and winding through oak and beech forests that look like something out of a fairy tale. As you go along, the murmur of water and birdsong accompany you, creating a natural symphony that invites you to meditate and enjoy the tranquility.



Elbete, with its traditional farmhouses and rural atmosphere, is a small village that seems to have stopped in time. Here, life goes by at a leisurely pace, and visitors can revel in the simple beauty of their surroundings. The views from Elbete are breathtaking, with the Baztan valley unfolding in all its magnitude, a sea of green stretching as far as the eye can see.

The route presents no difficulty, making it accessible to almost any type of traveler, from families to experienced hikers looking for a relaxing walk. Along the way, there are several rest areas, perfect for stopping and enjoying a picnic while taking in the scenery.

Returning to Elizondo after the walk, one cannot help but feel that one has touched the very essence of this corner of Navarra.

Elizondo is also an opportunity to connect with nature and with oneself; it is not just a tourist destination. Its streets, squares and surroundings offer a respite from the hustle and bustle of modern life in an unbeatable setting.

One cannot, and should not, talk about Elizondo without mentioning Dolores Redondo and her "Trilogy of Baztan", three novels that hooked us with their plot but also introduced us to its history, landscapes, legends and I would even dare to say the soul of this incredible valley of Navarra that enchants, without any doubt.

When you say goodbye to Elizondo, you take with you not only memories of a beautiful place, but also the feeling of having lived an authentic experience, of having touched the soul of a land that, like few others, knows how to combine past and present, tradition and modernity.



When we think of America and wine, the first countries that come to mind are usually the United States, Chile, or Argentina, as they are some of the world's largest producers. However, it is becoming increasingly common to find references to neighboring American countries like Uruguay, Canada, or Brazil in Europe. We might be tempted to think that Mexico is just another addition to this long list of new wine-producing countries, but that would be an oversight.



Guanajuato

Land of Independent Wines

Text and photos: Alejandro and Luis Paadín

Photo: Winery 'Vinos Guanamé'

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In 1524, Hernán Cortés signed the Ordinances of Good Government, which, among other measures, required the planting of 1,000 vines for every 100 “Indians of repartimiento” in various Mexican territories. It is particularly noteworthy that Mexico is home to the oldest winery in the entire American continent, with the founding of Hacienda San Lorenzo (now Casa Madero) in 1597 under the auspices of King Philip II. Today, 19 of Mexico’s 31 states (two-thirds) produce wine, with some regions being emblematic, such as the Guadalupe Valley in Baja California Norte, and others emerging, like Tlaxcala. Undoubtedly, this is not just another wine-producing country.

As a nation with a long-standing wine-making tradition, the Mexican War of Independence in the early 19th century marked a turning point for the country’s wine industry. Wine began to be seen as a Spanish product, and much of the population turned to traditional agave-based fermented and distilled beverages with patriotic fervor. If there were 70,000 hectares of vineyards in 1554, by 2022 only 34,292 hectares remained, with just a quarter of those dedicated to winemaking.

However, Mexico has gradually been reclaiming its wine identity, with new regions and projects emerging as domestic consumption has increased tenfold over the past 30 years, including a notable 50% rise in 2022, which has continued into 2023. One of these new regions gaining prominence is, interestingly, the birthplace of Mexican independence: Guanajuato.

With an impressive growth in domestic wine consumption, Mexico is reclaiming its winemaking identity and showcasing its potential on the global stage.

”



Harvest of white grapes in Guanajuato

Independence Valley

Today, Guanajuato is one of the most exciting wine regions. Although its current wine industry began to take shape just three decades ago, it now boasts 57 wineries spread across 12 subzones, with several wine routes, including the Independence Valley route as a key highlight. While we may think of wine today as a hedonistic beverage meant purely for enjoyment, not so long ago it served as a political and economic tool, even playing an active role in some of the great imperial revolutions, such as the French Revolution. In 1810, the Mexican Independence movement officially began in the town of Dolores (Guanajuato), sparked by the vineyards promoted by Father Miguel Hidalgo.

Although Mexican Independence cannot be entirely attributed to wine, its use as a means of intimidation was the final straw in an already full cup. In the late 18th century, liberal revolutions in Europe began setting a global precedent, and with the Spanish War of Independence in the early 19th century, political instability in Mexico became increasingly difficult to manage. Any liberal ideals or attitudes were vigorously persecuted.

Father Hidalgo settled in the town of Dolores in 1803 and encouraged the planting of vineyards, teaching and training the natives using advanced documents and books, many of which came from France—thus defying the prohibition imposed by the Viceroyalty of New Spain. This, along with the increasingly organized congregation of liberals in the valley, led the viceroy's troops to destroy all the vineyards in the region. This was the turning point that led the now mature independence ideas to materialize in the "Cry of Dolores" on September 16, 1810. Although measures were implemented over the centuries to try to recover the historic winemaking heritage, other beverages such as tequila, mezcal, and pulque rose to prominence as the proud national drinks.

With some advances in the 20th century, such as the planting of a million vines during the administration of Porfirio Díaz or the approval of "angelorum" wine in 1916 as the first fortified wine for consecration, Guanajuato began to modernize its wine industry in the 1990s. Although the initial efforts were modest, with only 10 hectares and two wineries, a decade later the number of wineries had quadrupled, and the number of hectares increased fivefold.

Currently, Guanajuato has more than 50 wineries managing over 500 hectares, a surface area that aims to be doubled in the coming years. The region is shaped by valleys and mountains—the Sierra Madre Oriental, the Sierra Madre Occidental, and the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt—creating a highly diverse topography ranging from 1,800 to 2,500 meters above sea level. This gives Guanajuato some of the highest-altitude vineyards in all of Mexico and North America.

Guanajuato Wine

Despite being in a warm climatic zone, comparable to Veracruz, the high altitude of the vineyards lowers the average temperature (by 0.5 to 1 degree for every 100 meters of elevation), with cool summer nights preserving acidity while increasing solar exposure (up to 12% for every 1,000 meters of elevation), achieving an almost perfect balance between industrial and phenolic ripening. This allows the successful development of a wide range of grape varieties such as Syrah and Chardonnay, both yielding excellent results. The rainfall patterns warrant special attention. Although the region receives a minimal but sufficient amount of precipitation (just over 400 mm annually on average), its distribution complicates plant development, with very dry winters and summer days that can bring torrential downpours.

While the climate shapes a common territorial identity, the soil defines the unique characteristics of each subzone and winery. With highly varied lithological layers, some distinctly volcanic and others purely calcareous, and a range of textures from clays to gravels and sands, Guanajuato's terroir continues to evolve and establish itself, making it one of the most dynamic wine regions in Mexico.

Nearly two-thirds of Guanajuato's vineyards are located in the municipalities of Dolores Hidalgo and San Miguel de Allende, with the latter's main city being a UNESCO World Heritage site. The tourist appeal of these two cities has fostered a flourishing wine industry, largely driven by wine tourism. While tourism is usually a secondary activity for a winery, in many cases in Guanajuato, wine tourism is the main engine and primary business that ultimately sustains wine production.

Thus, Guanajuato is a land of wine, magic, and cultural development—a fundamental pillar of Mexican identity that is undoubtedly worth exploring.



Winery 'Hacienda San José Lavista'
Winery 'Viñedos San Lucas'





Winery 'Viñedos San Francisco'
Barrel room of 'Hacienda San José Lavista' Winery

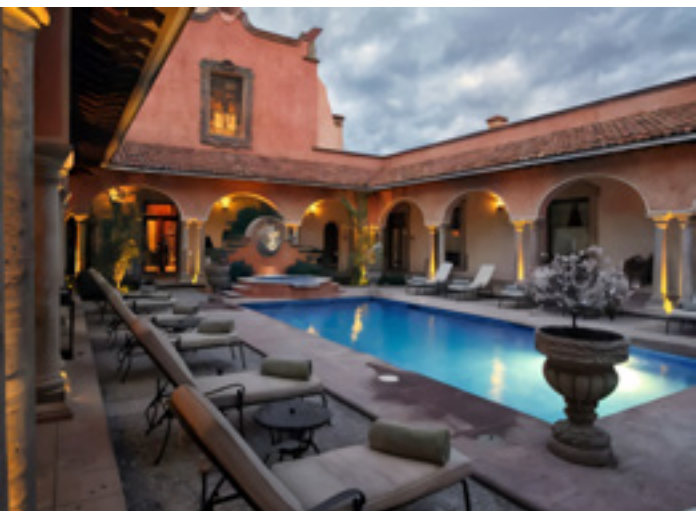
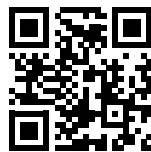


Where do the Paadín family eat?

Latequila Mexican Cuisine

Traditional Mexican cuisine where you can enjoy a wide variety of dishes and traditional recipes, such as the delicious escamoles (a seasonal dish made from ant larvae, known as “Mexican caviar”) or braised beef tongue. In a modern and relaxed atmosphere, they also offer a good selection of traditional Mexican spirits and cocktails associated with them.

Boulevard Juan Alonso de Torres Pte. 2002 - León
Tf.: +52 477 331 0506



Hacienda San José Lavista Iglesia

This wine tourism complex, located on a hill just outside the famous city of San Miguel de Allende, offers a wide range of services beyond wine production. With its distinctive Mexican colonial architecture, the property features spaces for hosting all kinds of events with a capacity for hundreds of guests, as well as tourist accommodations and its own restaurant with a strong Mexican flair. Nuevo Libramiento Km 10.2 - San Miguel de Allende

Tf.: +52 415 113 5541



Hostel Rincón de la Galera

This town, designated a Pueblo Mágico in 2012, has preserved its traditional Mexican identity since its founding in 1542. With just over 600 inhabitants, its colonial streets and monuments do not go unnoticed. Although the culinary offerings are limited due to its small size, it features some local specialties such as caldo de zorra, cecina enchiladas, and walnut mole with rice, all of which can be enjoyed at the Hostal Rincón de la Galera.

Jalpa de Cánovas – Guanajuato



GUANAJUATO

Viña del Gran Padre

Winery located in the other emblematic municipality of Guanajuato: Dolores Hidalgo. This small winery does not have a highly developed tourism industry and focuses all its efforts on producing “artisan wines.” They organize events where the pairing of food and wine is based on traditional Otomí dishes, a pre-Hispanic people historically settled in the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt.

Comunidad El Durazno - Dolores Hidalgo
Tel.: +52 418 109 4307



Street Food

Although street stalls are not as prevalent as in the large metropolises, Mexican street food enjoys great fame for prioritizing artisanal preparations over more industrial products. Tacos, tamales, quesadillas, elotes... can be savored at many of these stalls in major cities like León, all at very reasonable prices. If you're a fan of street food, Mexico is your country—just remember that “Montezuma's revenge” lurks for the most imprudent tourists.

León – Dolores Hidalgo – San Miguel de Allende

Wine Bar by CMB

But if there's one place to enjoy some of the best Mexican wines, it's the Wine Bar by CMB, directed by Carlos Borboa in Mexico City, with Manuel Negrete leading the wine team. Although we're stepping out of the state of Guanajuato, it's well worth extending your layover in the Mexican capital to experience the food and wine selection at this authentic gastrotheque.

Copenhagen 23- Ciudad de México
Tf.: +52 55 2211 0826



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48 hours in

Ljubljana: Green Capital of a Green Country

Text: Editorial staff

Photography: Slovenian Tourist Board

Among centuries-old bridges and cobblestone streets, Ljubljana unfolds its fairy-tale charm, where history, culture, and nature intertwine in a welcoming atmosphere.

Ljubljana, The capital of Slovenia, perfectly fits the description of a fairy-tale city. As you walk through its cobblestone streets and across the bridges that span the winding Ljubljanica River, you can feel a warm and vibrant atmosphere. This small city, often overshadowed by its larger neighbors, offers visitors a unique blend of history, culture, and nature, all wrapped in a halo of sustainability that earned it the title of European Green Capital in 2016.

Most of Ljubljana's sights can be visited on foot or by bicycle. Its historic center is closed to motor vehicle traffic, with the only exceptions being the tourist train and the electric Kavalir vehicles. The city boasts over 542 square meters of public green spaces per capita, making it one of the greenest cities in Europe.

Brief History of Ljubljana

The history of Ljubljana is as rich and diverse as its landscapes. Since its founding by the Romans under the name Emona, the city has witnessed invasions, earthquakes, and numerous reconstructions. However, what truly defines Ljubljana is its ability to rise again, time and time, more beautiful and stronger than before.

The devastating earthquake of 1895 marked a turning point in the architectural history of the city. Much of the reconstruction was led by the architect Jože Plečnik, who infused Ljubljana with his unique vision, blending classical elements with early 20th-century modernism. Thanks to his work, we can enjoy a city today that, despite its small size, overflows with character and beauty.

What to See in Ljubljana in 48 Hours

If you only have 48 hours to explore Ljubljana, it's essential to prioritize and organize your time well to capture the essence of this charming city.

Day 1: Exploration of the Historic Center and Plečnik's Charms

Begin your adventure at Prešeren Square, the city's vibrant heart. From here, you can admire the Franciscan Church of the Annunciation, with its unmistakable pink façade, a place that seems designed for romance and contemplation.

Cross the Triple Bridge (Tromostovje), a masterpiece by Jože Plečnik that connects the square to the old town.



National and University Library

Museum of Modern Art



Triple Bridge



Stroll along the banks of the Ljubljanica River, enjoying the café terraces and picturesque views that seem straight out of a postcard.

Continue to Ljubljana Castle, which majestically rises above the hill. From here, you can enjoy an unparalleled panoramic view of the city and its surroundings. Don't forget to visit the Castle Museum, where you can immerse yourself in the history of Ljubljana and its legends.

In the afternoon, delve deeper into Plečnik's work. Visit the National and University Library, another of his iconic designs, with a monumental entrance reminiscent of a Greek temple. You can also walk towards the Central Market, where Plečnik designed the colonnade that houses the stalls of flowers and fresh produce, a true feast for the senses.

Day 2: Nature and Culture

The second day begins with a visit to Tivoli Park, the green lung of the city. This expansive park is perfect for a morning walk. Inside, you will find the Botanical Garden, one of the oldest in Europe, housing an impressive collection of both local and exotic plants.

At midday, make a stop at the Museum of Modern Art, which hosts an extensive collection of 20th-century Slovenian art. If you have time, also visit the National Gallery, where you can admire artworks ranging from the Middle Ages to the 20th century.



Tivoli park

In the afternoon, relax at one of the terraces by the river and enjoy the tranquility the city offers. You can have a coffee while watching locals and tourists stroll along the quays, or even, if the weather permits, take a boat ride on the Ljubljana River to see the city from a different perspective.

Plečnik's Ljubljana

It's impossible to talk about Ljubljana without mentioning Jože Plečnik. This visionary architect not only left his mark on the Slovenian capital but also transformed it into a unique urban space where every detail has been carefully designed to harmonize with the surroundings. Plečnik's impact is felt on every corner: from the benches in Tivoli Park to the bridges over the Ljubljana, as well as the street lamps, markets, and squares. His style is an eclectic mix that draws from classical antiquity, blending it with modernism and traditional Slovenian architecture.

One of the most fascinating aspects of his work is how Plečnik was able to integrate nature into the city. Examples of this can be seen in the promenades along the river and the tree-lined avenues connecting key points across the city. His work not only defines Ljubljana's aesthetic but also its spirit: a city that looks to the future while embracing its past.

The Ljubljana River and the Central Market at sunset.





Ljubljana Castle



Cultural Events and Festivals

Ljubljana is a city that, despite its compact size, offers a vibrant cultural scene. Throughout the year, the city becomes a stage for numerous festivals and events celebrating music, film, literature, and art.

One of the most prominent events is the Ljubljana Summer Festival, which takes place from June to September. This festival brings together world-renowned artists and offers a wide range of performances, from classical music concerts to contemporary theater and dance. The shows are held in some of the city's most iconic venues, such as Ljubljana Castle and Križanke, a former monastery turned into a stunning open-air stage. Another must-see event is the Ljubljana Jazz Festival, one of the oldest in Europe. Held in late June, it attracts jazz musicians from around the world, offering a mix of performances in both indoor and outdoor settings, creating an intimate yet vibrant atmosphere.

For film lovers, the Ljubljana International Film Festival (LIFFe) is a must-attend event in November. This festival showcases a carefully curated selection of independent films from around the globe and is an excellent opportunity to discover new talents and enjoy screenings in some of the city's most charming cinemas.



Spa Circuit



Text: Rosario Alonso

Photography: A Quinta da Auga

A QUINTA DA AUGA

Detail of the lush vegetation adorning the building



Located on the outskirts of Santiago de Compostela, A Quinta da Auga is a luxurious retreat that invites visitors to disconnect from the everyday hustle and immerse themselves in the natural and cultural richness of Galicia. This establishment is much more than just a hotel; it's an immersive experience that blends history, gastronomy, sustainability, and a deep respect for the environment. With its impressive 10,000-square-meter estate, crossed by the Sar River (which flows powerfully through the ancient channels surrounding the property), and its status as the first Relais & Châteaux hotel in Galicia, A Quinta da Auga represents the perfect balance between modernity and Galician tradition.

A natural environment unrivalled

Just a few kilometers from the historic center of Santiago de Compostela, A Quinta da Auga stretches across a vast green estate, a true natural oasis where the native vegetation thrives in all its splendor. The forest surrounding the hotel is home to over 80 different species of plants and trees, including centuries-old oaks, mimosas, chestnuts, ferns, and countless varieties of hydrangeas, as well as aromatic and native plants.

This green space is not only a visual delight but also provides an environment of



View of the hotel entrance

peace and tranquility where visitors can disconnect from the outside world—a true urban forest. One of the most charming corners of the Quinta is undoubtedly the “bamboo grove,” which has coexisted with the other species since the 18th century in a privileged spot on the estate. The surroundings of A Quinta da Auga are ideal for those seeking a deeper connection with nature.

History and Renovation: The First Relais & Châteaux in Galicia

A Quinta da Auga is renowned not only for its natural beauty but also for its rich history. This building, which housed a paper mill in the 18th century, was sensitively restored by its current owners, María Luisa García Gil (an architect) and José Ramón Lorenzo (a developer), who acquired it in 2003. With a clear vision to preserve the historic character of the site, the couple retained many of the building’s original elements while transforming it into a luxury hotel

that has become a benchmark for eco-hospitality in Spain.

The restoration of the building struck a balance between modernity and tradition, creating a space where guests can enjoy all contemporary comforts without losing the charm of the past. The result is a hotel that, with its historic architecture and carefully selected details, offers a unique lodging experience that combines Galician history with modern luxury.

Galician Cuisine at Its Finest

One of the fundamental pillars of A Quinta da Auga is its commitment to local gastronomy, a facet that is perfectly reflected in its restaurant, Filigrana. Under the direction of Chef Federico López Arcay, Filigrana has become a benchmark for contemporary Galician cuisine, where regional products take center stage, including fish and seafood from the rías and Galician beef.





López Arcay's culinary approach is a tribute to the flavors of Galicia, blending tradition with innovation. The dishes at Filigrana stand out for their respect for seasonality and commitment to sustainability, using fresh, local ingredients in every creation. The restaurant also boasts two of its own gardens, serving as its green pantry.

The chef follows Relais & Châteaux's guidelines for sourcing fish and seafood, paying close attention to breeding seasons and minimum size requirements, which underscores his commitment to species conservation. Filigrana's menus, which change with each season, offer a variety of dishes ranging from oven-baked cod with a broa crust to caramelized filloas filled with rice pudding, all crafted with techniques that enhance traditional Galician flavors.

Commitment to sustainability and community

A Quinta da Auga's commitment to sustainability goes beyond its gastronomy. This hotel has been a pioneer in implementing sustainable practices within the luxury hotel industry in Spain. Since its opening, the hotel has worked to minimize its environmental impact by using

microgeneration systems for electricity and hot water through gas, and by utilizing river water to cool these systems, resulting in significant energy savings.

The hotel has also embraced geothermal energy for its heating and cooling systems, a practice that began well before this technology became widespread, along with solar panels that contribute to its energy self-sufficiency.

However, sustainability at A Quinta da Auga is not limited to the environment. The hotel is also deeply committed to the local community, establishing strong relationships with small regional producers to supply its kitchen and other services. Moreover, its collaboration with both international and national NGOs, as well as local associations, is highly commendable.

A Hotel of disconnection and art

The interior of A Quinta da Auga is designed to offer guests a luxurious experience that complements its natural surroundings. The rooms, particularly those in the Alma category, are spacious and meticulously designed, offering spectacular views of the Galician landscape. The decor is a harmonious blend of traditional and modern elements, personally selected by the owners at European decoration fairs.

Suite room



The hotel is also a haven for art lovers, as the owning family has been collecting unique pieces for over 20 years. Guests can request guided tours to learn about some of the most distinctive works in the hotel's collection.

Its spa, considered one of the best in the region, offers a variety of Western and Asian treatments designed to restore harmony and relieve stress.

Unique and Personalized Experiences

What truly sets A Quinta da Auga apart is its ability to offer personalized experiences tailored to the interests and needs of each visitor. Whether exploring the natural richness of Galicia, indulging in a spa treatment, or participating in one of the gastronomic and cultural tours organized by the hotel, every experience is designed to connect guests with the essence of the region.

One of the most notable experiences is the 'Ruta del Norte,' which allows visitors to discover northern Spain through a series of customizable activities, including gastronomy, culture, and high-quality tourism.

A Quinta da Auga is much more than just a hotel; it is a celebration of Galician culture, nature, and authentic cuisine.



A QUINTA DA AUGA



Filigrana restaurant
View of the living room of the Grand Suite



Classic Room





La Torre del Visco

Text: Rosario Alonso - **Photography:** La Torre del Visco hotel

Located in the heart of the Matarraña region in Teruel, 'La Torre del Visco' is a refuge for those seeking understated luxury, a deep connection with nature, and a gastronomic experience that respects and celebrates the environment. This exclusive hotel, part of the prestigious Relais & Châteaux family, has established itself as one of the most remote and tranquil destinations in Spain, ideal for those who appreciate a slower pace of life.

Location and Extension

The Matarraña region is renowned for its bucolic landscapes, where cypress trees, almond fields, vineyards, and olive groves create an idyllic scene, dotted with small medieval villages. With fewer than 10 inhabitants per square kilometer, it is one of the most sparsely populated and tranquil areas in the country. Amidst this rural paradise,

12 kilometers from the nearest village and accessible via a private unpaved track, lies La Torre del Visco, a unique retreat set on 100 hectares of land, exemplifying sustainability and respect for the environment.

Sustainability and Gastronomy

Since its founding, La Torre del Visco has been a pioneer in the concept of rural luxury and sustainability. The founders, Jemma Markham and her husband Piers, arrived in Matarraña in 1993 with the vision of creating a space where haute cuisine and respect for the environment could go hand in hand, long before terms like "zero kilometer" or "circular economy" became common in the industry. Today, their project remains a model to follow, awarded the Michelin Green Star, a recognition of their commitment to sustainability.

The restaurant El Visco is the crown jewel of La Torre del Visco. Its cuisine, often described as 'zero-meter,' is based on ingredients primarily sourced from the estate itself. With 2,000 olive trees, fruit trees, and an extensive organic garden, the property is self-sufficient in fruits, vegetables, aromatic herbs, and extra virgin olive oil. What is not produced on the estate is sourced from the closest possible radius, ensuring the freshness and quality of every ingredient.

Under the direction of chefs Michael Torres and Andrea Mesa, El Visco offers a menu that changes daily, adapting to what nature provides. Creativity and a commitment to the zero waste philosophy are reflected in dishes like tear peas in different textures or lightly smoked Teruel Duroc pork presa, smoked in-house.

Founders of Rural Luxury

Jemma Markham and Piers are recognized as pioneers of rural luxury in Spain. Their vision was ahead of its time, creating a refuge where hospitality and care for the environment are paramount.

The journey to La Torre del Visco, while challenging, leads to a truly wonderful destination. The pointed battlements of the tower, visible through a dense forest, are the first hint that the effort of the journey will be well worth it.



Access to the kitchen-dining room for breakfasts

'Huerto de Esteve', Esteve and Mónica and chefs Michael Torres and Andrea Mesa



LA TORRE DEL VISCO



Hospitality: The reason for the existence of its human team

Hospitality is at the heart of La Torre del Visco. Jemma and her team strive to make every guest feel at home. This philosophy is evident in every aspect of the hotel, from the fresh flowers that adorn the rooms to the warm, personalized attention from each member of the staff. The rooms, decorated with an intriguing collection of contemporary art, are designed to offer maximum comfort and relaxation: there are no televisions or alarm clocks, and breakfasts are served without time restrictions.

The focus on guest well-being extends to the gastronomy, particularly the breakfasts, which are exceptionally creative.

A place of disconnection

La Torre del Visco is a sanctuary for those seeking to disconnect from the outside world and reconnect with nature, free from light pollution. This is a place where time seems to stand still, inviting visitors to enjoy life at a slower pace. Every detail, from the expansive gardens to the room decor, is designed to promote rest and reflection, offering guests a true escape from the daily stresses of life.

Cuisine of 'Cero miles' and Zero Waste cuisine

The commitment to sustainability and locally sourced gastronomy is one of the fundamental pillars of La Torre del Visco. The 'zero-meter' philosophy means that 60% of the ingredients used in the restaurant come from the estate itself, ensuring not only freshness but also a direct connection to the land. For example, the fish is sourced weekly from l'Ampolla, a coastal town just 60 kilometers away.

Additionally, the restaurant is dedicated to circular economy practices and the zero waste philosophy, aiming to maximize the use of every ingredient. This approach not only minimizes waste but also allows the chefs to experiment and create innovative dishes that surprise with their originality and flavor. Dishes like parsley pannacotta with fava beans and snow peas or red mullet with shrimp emulsion exemplify how culinary creativity can go hand in hand with sustainability.

The Menu and the Pantry of Esteve

The menu at El Visco is a reflection of the season and what the garden has to offer. It changes daily, adapting to both the abundance and the limitations imposed by nature. This flexibility challenges chefs Michael Torres and Andrea Mesa to be imaginative, using natural flavor enhancers and creating dishes that surprise with both their taste and presentation.

One of the most outstanding experiences is the “Esteve’s Pantry,” a deep dive into the hotel’s garden. This experience includes a guided tour of the garden with the gardeners, Esteve and Mónica, who share their knowledge about permaculture and crop association.

Herding Experience: A Homage to Transhumance

As part of its commitment to sustainability and the preservation of local traditions, La Torre del Visco has created the Shepherding Experience. This program is centered around the Maellana sheep, a native breed at risk of extinction. The experience includes two nights of accommodation, breakfast, dinner, and a day in the countryside, accompanying local shepherds and their sheep through pristine landscapes.

Proyecto Integral de Sostenibilidad

From organic farming in its garden to waste minimization and recycling, everything at this establishment is designed to reduce its environmental footprint. The hotel features its own photovoltaic installation, charging stations for electric vehicles, and has eliminated single-use plastics. Additionally, drinking water is filtered on-site, and excess water is reused for irrigation.

This commitment to the environment also extends to the use of eco-friendly cleaning products and the elimination of tablecloths in the restaurant, reducing the need for detergents and fabric softeners.

'La Torre del Visco' is a place where luxury is redefined through simplicity, sustainability, and genuine hospitality.



La Torre del Visco



In September, Fear and Laughter in Entertainment

By: Julián Sacristán - comunicacion@wfm.es



Luis From a young age, he was a director without even knowing it. During summers in Sigüenza, he and his friends would use a Super 8 camera to shoot movies that they would screen for younger children. Although he initially studied economics, his passion for photography and cinema was undeniable. Eventually, his photographic side prevailed, leading to exhibitions and video art. When the opportunity arose to go to the United States, he moved to Los Angeles to attend the California Institute of the Arts, founded by Walt Disney, which over time evolved into a very independent and “hippy” university—something that greatly appealed to him.

He then moved to Seattle to work at a Microsoft startup, where he was in charge of video content. There, he worked on a video game project about Clint Eastwood and even had the opportunity to meet him. Upon returning to Spain, he shot his first and successful short film, “Bamboleho,” which received a special mention at the Venice Film Festival and won the Tribeca Film Festival, providing the momentum to pursue feature filmmaking.

Luis Prieto

The internationally acclaimed director, originally from Madrid, presents his first Spanish film, Estación Rocafort.

How did working in Italy come about?

Before heading to Italy, I filmed a comedy in Argentina, Condón Express, but the production company went bankrupt (it took 10 years to be released). An Italian production company asked to see the film, even though it wasn't finished. They watched it and offered me a project in Italy. The Argentine film was a love story with a protagonist who has a motorcycle, and they had a similar project. I made the movie, and it became the highest-grossing film of that year, so I stayed in Italy. A few years later, a well-known remake was made, “Tengo ganas de ti”

Then you go back to the US as a director?

A British production company had seen my first short film at a festival and contacted me to do a remake. What I proposed instead was to make some changes, which led to the creation of Pusher in 2012. It premiered in the U.S., where it received awards and was featured in festivals like Toronto and the Fantastic Fest in Texas. This opened the doors for me in the U.S. I returned to Los Angeles and came across the script for Kidnap (Desaparecido in Spanish), with the fortunate opportunity to work with Halle Berry as the lead.

Have you also worked for television?

My first adventure in TV has turned into a cult series—it's about zombies. I've also worked on White Lines by Álex Pina and StartUp on Netflix, not to mention Vampire Academy, which was filmed in Spain, specifically in Pamplona. I should also point out that I've shot several British productions here as well.

Although they keep calling you from the USA.

Afterward, I shot Shattered (El Engaño) with John Malkovich and Frank Grillo. I read the project, and during

the casting, we discovered a very young actress, Lily Krug, who is definitely someone to watch.

What an experience working with Malkovich! The day after meeting him, I showed him the wardrobe options, and when Malkovich saw them, he chose a tracksuit featuring Naranjito. I don't think he knew what it represented, even though he loves Spain.

How did 'Estación Rocafort' come about?

When I lived in Barcelona, I met one of the producers, Adrián Guerra, who told me about a cursed train station associated with misfortune and dark legends.

Is it psychological terror?

Estación Rocafort combines both psychological thriller and horror elements. I worked on the script with Ángel Agudo. In the film, Javier Gutiérrez plays a police officer who experienced a traumatic event 24 years earlier, and now finds himself in an unusual partnership with a young woman, played by Natalia Azahara—another remarkable discovery.

Tell us about your experience living in different locations

In Italy I lived in Trastevere, where I came to the conclusion that Fellini made documentaries, he captured the essence of Roman culture.

A souvenir from Rome?

One day when it was snowing, which is unusual, I went to the Pantheon which is an open dome and the effect of the flakes was magical

And in London?

It's hard to choose, in Shoreditch, there's a lot of street art, I also love the area around the Cinematheque, Tate Modern etc.

Regarding Los Angeles?

It's a city with many cities within it. Venice, for example, is right by the ocean and has now become a very chic place.

Future projects?

I have an American project, and I'd love to make a film in Madrid. If I ever ventured into theater, I'd bring it into the world of cinema. And speaking of theater, what better example than Jamming, the com-



Juanma Díez, Lolo Diego, and Paula Galimberti

pany that has been continuously active on the Madrid stage for the longest time. Jamming is an improvisational theater company that has shaped Madrid's cultural scene for 22 years, attracting over 3 million spectators.

How have you managed to become successful entrepreneurs with a cultural enterprise?

Success is more about personal and professional fulfillment than financial gain. Jamming has grown artistically while maintaining a solid business structure. We've gone from performing in alternative venues to taking the stage in large theaters and at major events. For Jamming, the numbers must always align with the freedom of artistic creation, which requires a continuous search for resources.

What is the training to be a good improvisational actor?

Besides acting, you need to have knowledge of dramaturgy and direction. So first, in addition to training, you need to acquire skills in all three disciplines... and then continue to develop those skills through rehearsals, research, watching other creators and artists, testing on stage, and constant renewal. Around 10,000 people have passed through our Jamming School of Improvisational Theater.

On this 22nd anniversary, the creators of Jamming Juanma Díez, Lolo Diego, and Paula Galimberti return in October to Teatro Maravillas, with a renewed proposal.

To say Jamming is to say diversioning insuring.





Manena's window

Traveling Anecdotes

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

'It is those little things...' as Joan Manuel Serrat would sing, which after a trip remain in the memory and when you remember them you smile, cry or laugh out loud. I would like to take some of them out of the boot of my memories and share them with you.

Ourika's Valley at the rhythms of 'Porompompero'

Stories of a journey as beautiful as it is unusual through the sublime scenery of the Moroccan High Atlas Mountains

Families at the stream that supplies water to Tasseltz



It was during Ramadan when we arrived in Marrakech. At dusk, we headed to Djemaa El Fna Square to share in the moment when the daytime fast was broken, and the square filled with lights and food stalls. The next morning, we set off on a journey—and I say journey because it wasn't just a path, a route, or even an excursion. It was an ascending route through the Ourika Valley, discovering the villages of the High Atlas. And I say discovering because these mountain villages don't reveal themselves at first glance—far from it! Built from the very earth that camouflages them and sustains their inhabitants, you need to pull out a telephoto lens or binoculars to spot, from a safe distance, the rectangles that resemble windows. And yes, they are windows, belonging to the red villages, a mirror image of the soil we were treading, where a Berber population resides.

Friends forever

But let's start from the beginning. What made that adventurous yet unforgettable journey so special was meeting a group of people who would become lifelong friends. As the days passed, the beauty and surrea-

lism of the trip brought us closer together. There were endless laughs, even when we reminisced about our first impressions at the airport. “You were wearing those little heels, and I thought, ‘Is that how you’re going to explore the Atlas?’ But later, when I saw you collecting every possible shade of earth from the Ourika Valley on your pants and boot soles, I forgot all about your nightclub outfit...”

Hassan, our guide—friendly and professional—was observing Ramadan, walking alongside us in the 38°C heat, without eating or drinking. Despite this, he always carried a bag full of dates and nuts, and whenever one of us—usually me—started to falter, he would offer us a handful. Like Popeye’s spinach, those snacks miraculously restored our energy, allowing us to keep walking through olive trees, oleanders, and multicolored earth.

I'm falling!

Back then, the football hero was Messi, as evidenced by the kids who would run to see us, proudly wearing his jersey. Parallel to us walked the mules, carrying provisions and gear to set up camp or pitch a tent wherever needed. Photo after photo was taken on that first day, during which we had to reach Tasselt, a village in the valley where a Berber family would host us for a couple of nights. And speaking of photos, it must be said that they practically took themselves. The colors were everywhere—the sky, the olive groves, the houses, the Berber clothing, the jet-black eyes that lit up as we passed by, and those childlike smiles, shining through faces smudged with dirt, that lifted our spirits and eased our fatigue and thirst.

Amid the mysticism of Ramadan, Marrakech welcomed us with the vibrant energy of Djemaa El Fna Square as the fast was broken. From there, we embarked on a journey through the Ourika Valley, delving into the hidden secrets of the High Atlas. The Berber villages, invisible at first glance, discreetly emerge from the landscape, blending seamlessly with the red earth that nourishes and shelters its inhabitants.

Breaking the daytime fast in Djemaa El Fna square, Marrakech





Villages of the Ourika Valley

The question “When will we get there?” might sound a bit immature, but it was what we kept asking our patient Hassan at every turn. His answer was always the same: “We’re almost there!” But for that “almost,” we had to cross a couple of hills—more like mountains—that no one had warned me about. I have to admit that, despite my adventurous life, I’m a real scaredy-cat (though I do try to overcome it). Among my many fears, like claustrophobia (I can’t take elevators), one of the most notable is vertigo.

We were walking single file, chatting, laughing, taking photos, when suddenly, around a bend, I found myself facing a forty-meter drop, with a narrow, slippery gravel path. I froze. Clinging to the rocks, immobile, eyes wide with terror, I thought, “Either I throw myself off this cliff, or a helicopter comes and rescues me.” My companions and Hassan didn’t find either option suitable, so they took my backpack, camera, and me too. One held my left hand, another my right, and I practically closed my eyes as I was guided across the precipice, catching glimpses of Tasselt in the distance, despite our guide’s assurance that it was “just around the corner,” and suspecting I had yet another ravine to cross. And I did... With adrenaline pumping, when we reached the next drop-off, I told myself, “I can’t keep making a fuss. The worst that could happen is I fall.” So, I charged across it like everyone else. This time, Tasselt really was just around the corner, and there, the Berber family with whom we would spend some time was waiting for us.

Our berber family

Of the five members of the family, four of them welcomed us. Hospitable and warm from the very first moment, the mother, with her long black braids, an ironic smile, and wise eyes, showed us the kitchen, how to make tea with mint, and where to fetch the scarce water from a basin in the courtyard. The father nodded at everything she said with pride and a warm gesture that clearly said, “This is your home.” By the way, our dear guide handled the verbal translation.

A little girl, barely five years old, greeted us with a nod before picking up a five-liter plastic jug and resuming her role in the family, which was to constantly trek to the stream to fetch water, as Tasselt didn’t yet have a fountain in the village. I’ll pause here to mention how, after returning home from that trip, I felt a pang of guilt every time I turned on the shower and stood lovingly under the stream of hot water that seemed to flow like magic from the showerhead.

The other family member who greeted us was a beautiful 18-year-old woman, who looked at us with curiosity and a longing to know more about these strangers who had entered her world. She observed these women dressed like men, with cameras hanging from their necks, moving about with the same ease as the men, without protocols or distinctions. Hassan translated for us that the fifth member of the family was a twelve-year-old boy who was currently at school, learning the Quran.

The room assignments were simple. The girls stayed in a room adorned with a photo of the king and cassette tapes of famous singers; the boys stayed in another. We accompanied the little girl to fetch water with her friend, who at just six years old was already suffering from cataracts, a common issue in a place where the intense light is unforgiving. We also went with the young woman to the Ait Inzal Valley to feed the livestock, climbing once again to a dizzying 2,000 meters. Walking with the eldest daughter of the family, her attractive face, beautiful smile, her figure wrapped in brightly colored clothes, and the grace with which she carried a bundle of grass on her head provided endless photographic opportunities. The conversation about the differences between our two worlds naturally arose. Soon, the young woman would marry a husband promised to her since childhood, start having children, and continue carrying grass every day of her life. But she wouldn't lose her smile or the genuine joy they all displayed at the end of Ramadan.

We slept as best we could on the floor, under the watchful eye of the King of Morocco. There were laughs, comments, and a return to childhood that was abruptly interrupted after a deep sleep by the call to prayer from the Muezzin, which was special that day as it announced Eid al-Fitr, the end of Ramadan. Upon leaving the room and after a delicious breakfast of *Beghrir*—pancakes made on the spot and slathered with honey, olive oil, or homemade butter—we were advised to visit the house's hammam to prepare ourselves for a night like no other.

The hammam experience was something else; given the scarcity of water, the little girl made repeated trips to the stream, while the adult women boiled the water. We didn't know how to politely decline, already in the thick of things, without offending them. There was nothing we could do; we exfoliated as best we could, with little streams of water here and there, and then it was time to dress. I removed my pants, which as they had warned, were now a palette of Atlas colors, and put on a kind of tunic. The men dressed in their best outfits, as did my female travel companions, who looked stunning. Yet, even then, we couldn't come close to matching the elegance of the caftans that the women wore for the first time that day, as tradition demands for Eid al-Fitr, nor the impeccable white of the men's *djellabas*, a symbol of purity.



Our berber house



The homemade breakfast in our Berber home



Lovely Children of Our Berber Home

THE OURIKA VALLEY

Sing if you can

Served at the table in that unforgettable courtyard with views of the Atlas Mountains were dates, Beghrir pancakes, Harira—a lentil soup with noodles, chickpeas, and tomatoes—and of course, the exquisite honey and sesame cookies known as Chebakia. While we enjoyed the wonderful appetizers, the man of the house busied himself with roasting the lamb and preparing the couscous. Then, the much-anticipated moment arrived when we all sat down at the table together. Hassan translated jokes and comments for us. The family was in a great mood—Ramadan had ended, they had fulfilled their duties, and a new cycle of the year was beginning.

The father began to sing, his voice deep and calm. His wife joined in, and soon the younger family members picked up mops, buckets, and cans, and in true Stomp style, they formed an amazing orchestra. With beautiful songs and well-tuned music made from these peculiar instruments, the young woman, already promised in marriage, began to sway sensually. When it was our turn to sing, faced with such impressive competition, all we could manage was a somewhat lackluster and arrhythmic rendition of Porompompero before closing the evening with a heartfelt Eid Mubarak! or Happy Eid!

To wrap up the story, I'll share that on our way back to Marrakech, walking through those mountains painted with copper and iron, we sang Porompompero at the top of our lungs, its echo resounding through the valleys. We were determined, at least with that one peculiar song, to learn it properly so that next time, we wouldn't make fools of ourselves.

The houses of the Ourika Valley merge with their land



The adorable little girl in our Berber home



No washing machines



traveling

gourmets



FLAVORS OF LISBON

Its sweetest side

WINERIES MENADE

Between two times

INDOCHINA BRASA

Fire and flavours of
Southeast Asia

QUISPE

Peruvian Haute Cuisine
in Madrid



Canned Goods Mi Huerto



Roasted Escalivada

Pepper, onion and aubergine, a simple and delicious recipe made by roasting these vegetables. Enjoy it with toasted bread or as a garnish for meat or fish, in your salads

It's a project that revitalizes depopulated rural areas like Oliete and Alacón in Teruel by restoring centuries-old olive trees and abandoned orchards. This effort not only rescues agricultural land but also creates jobs and strengthens the local population, countering rural depopulation. The initiative produces extra virgin olive oil and vegetable preserves in an artisanal way, boosting the local economy and promoting sustainability by reusing agricultural by-products.

In addition to creating direct employment for 45 people, "Mi Olivo" has helped keep essential services like schools and businesses open, revitalizing life in these communities. The project also has a positive impact on environmental conservation and the promotion of rural tourism, attracting thousands of visitors and energizing the local economy. With its focus on sustainability and quality, "Mi Olivo" stands as an inspiring model in the fight against rural depopulation, demonstrating how creativity and effort can transform these areas.



preserved leeks

Hand-roasted leeks, packed in extra virgin olive oil. They are known for their tender texture and smoky flavor, achieved through slow cooking over natural embers.



Artichoke Preserves

Artichokes selected and roasted over embers made from the remains of the pruning of centenary olive trees. They are packed in extra virgin olive oil, preserving all their flavor and quality.

Leek Pâté

A soft and delicate pate, made with the best roasted leeks. It is ideal as an aperitif or to add a special touch to your recipes.



Empeltre Olive Pâté

Made with Empeltre olives, a variety typical of Aragon, this pâté combines the characteristic flavor of the olive with a texture that makes it ideal for canapés and toast.

Artichoke Pâté

Made from the same preserved artichokes, this pâté offers a creamy texture and intense flavor, perfect for spreading or as an accompaniment in various dishes.

Mi Olivo



Apadrina un olivo





Flavors of Lisbon

Her sweeter side

Text: Clara Serrano Vega - claraserranovega@gmail.com

Photos: Magazine archive and Visit Lisbon

Known for its rich history and culture, Lisbon also stands out as a gastronomic treasure, and in this article, we will focus on its pastries. Among its traditional cuisine, conventual sweets represent one of the most fascinating aspects of its culinary heritage. These delicacies, perfected in convents and monasteries during the Middle Ages, were made with simple ingredients such as sugar and eggs, becoming true gems of Portuguese gastronomy, cherished both locally and internationally.

Through basic ingredients, Lisbon's pastry tradition has managed to create a wide variety of sweets that not only delight the palate but also evoke a past filled with devotion and religious tradition. Conventual sweets, in particular, reflect centuries of recipe refinement that has endured to this day. During the Middle Ages, nuns and monks began experimenting with recipes that, thanks

to the use of egg yolks and sugar, became local specialties. One of the most popular theories suggests that these sweets emerged as a result of the excess egg whites, which were used in convents to starch religious habits, leaving the yolks for pastry-making.

Each convent and monastery had its own specialty, with recipes kept secret and passed down from generation to generation. As some of these religious places were closed or converted into tourist sites, the recipes began to spread, turning conventual sweets into an essential part of Lisbon's gastronomic offering and its surroundings.

With the arrival of sugar from Brazil in the 15th century, conventual pastry-making became more refined, allowing for the creation of new textures and flavors. This development cemented Lisbon as a center for the production of unique desserts. Today, many of these sweets have become true ambassadors of Portuguese gastronomy, such as the famous Pastéis de Belém or the delicate Queijadas de Sintra.



Pastéis of Belém

One of the most iconic sweets of Lisbon is the Pastéis of Belém, also known as pastéis de nata. These puff pastry tarts filled with a smooth custard cream are a delightful treat that dates back to the 19th century. Their origin is linked to the Jerónimos Monastery in the Belém district, where monks, in an effort to survive after the dissolution of the religious orders in 1834, began selling these pastries to the public.

The original recipe for the Pastéis of Belém remains a closely guarded secret, passed down to only a few pastry chefs from generation to generation. Today, only the bakery near the Jerónimos Monastery produces the authentic pastéis de Belém, making them a tourist attraction in their own right. Thousands of visitors come each year to taste these crispy and creamy pastries, typically served warm and sprinkled with cinnamon and powdered sugar.

Fradinhos of Mafra

Originating from the city of Mafra, Fradinhos de Mafra are small sweets that owe their name, meaning "little friars," to the monks of the Mafra Palace-Convent, who perfected this recipe over the centuries. These treats are made from almond, egg yolk, and sugar, giving them a soft texture and delicate flavor.

The Mafra Palace-Convent is one of Portugal's most monumental buildings and was home to a large religious community for centuries. The monks were not only known for their prayers and Gregorian chants but also for their culinary skills. The recipe for Fradinhos is a testament to the culinary ingenuity of these friars, who managed to create a delicacy that has stood the test of time.



Queijadas of Sintra

Queijadas of Sintra are another iconic sweet from the region, originating in Sintra, famous for its palaces and natural heritage. These small tarts are made with fresh cheese, eggs, and sugar, giving them a creamy texture and delicate flavor that makes them irresistible to both locals and tourists.

The origin of queijadas dates back to the Middle Ages when they were an exclusive delicacy reserved for royal families and nobility. Sintra, with its mild climate and proximity to Lisbon, became a hub for the production of these tarts, which gradually gained popularity among the general public. Today, queijadas can be found in pastry shops all over the region, but the most authentic ones are still made according to traditional recipes.

Travesseiros of Sintra

The Travesseiros of Sintra, whose name translates to "pillows," are another iconic representative of Lisbon's pastry tradition, originating from the same town as the famous queijadas. These puff pastry treats filled with almond and egg cream are renowned for their softness and crunchy texture. Their elongated shape and creamy filling make them a delicacy that offers both a sensory and visual experience.

Travesseiros were created at Casa Piriquta, one of the oldest and most respected pastry shops in Sintra, where they are still made according to the traditional recipe. Although their preparation may seem simple, achieving the perfect balance between the lightness of the pastry and the richness of the filling requires skill.



Nozes of Cascais

The small and picturesque coastal town of Cascais is the birthplace of another traditional sweet: Nozes of Cascais. These treats are made from a base of walnuts and almonds, mixed with sugar and egg yolks, creating a contrast between a crunchy exterior and a soft interior. The distinctive shape of these sweets, reminiscent of a walnut, and their delicate, sweet flavor make them an irresistible choice for nut lovers.

Nozes of Cascais are a clear example of how local ingredients have influenced Portuguese pastry-making. The abundance of walnuts and almonds in the region gave rise to this dessert, which remains a gastronomic symbol of Cascais to this day.

White marmalade (Doce de Gila)

White Marmalade, also known as Doce de Gila, is another specialty of Lisbon's pastry tradition, notable for both its flavor and its unusual texture. This sweet is made from the pulp of a special type of pumpkin called "gila," which, after a cooking process with sugar, develops a fibrous texture and a pale color, hence the name "white marmalade." Traditionally, it is flavored with cinnamon and lemon, giving it a mild and slightly spiced taste.

This sweet is not only enjoyed as an accompaniment to bread and cheese but is also an essential ingredient in many traditional tarts and desserts from Lisbon and other parts of Portugal. Doce de Gila showcases the ingenuity of transforming a humble ingredient like pumpkin into a delicacy that has endured through time.



SWEET FLAVORS OF LISBON

Pastéis de Belém (Lisbon)

Founded in 1837, it is world-renowned for its pastéis de nata, known as Pastéis de Belém, being the historic birthplace of this famous pastry. The original recipe is a well-kept secret, attracting thousands of visitors who line up daily to taste these iconic tarts, often enjoyed with a coffee.

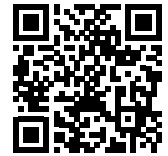
Rua de Belém nº 84 Lisbon



Confeitaria Nacional (Lisbon)

Founded in 1829, it is one of the oldest pastry shops in Lisbon. Known for being the official supplier to the Royal House, it is especially renowned for its famous **Bolo Rei**, a cake similar to the king's cake, traditionally enjoyed during Christmas. It stands as a symbol of traditional Portuguese pastry-making.

Praça da Figueira 18B
Lisbon



Fábrica da Nata (Lisbon)

Located in the heart of Lisbon, this pastry shop is famous for its freshly baked pastéis de nata. Fábrica da Nata offers an experience where visitors can watch the preparation of these delicious tarts. Its modern and cozy atmosphere makes it a highly popular spot.

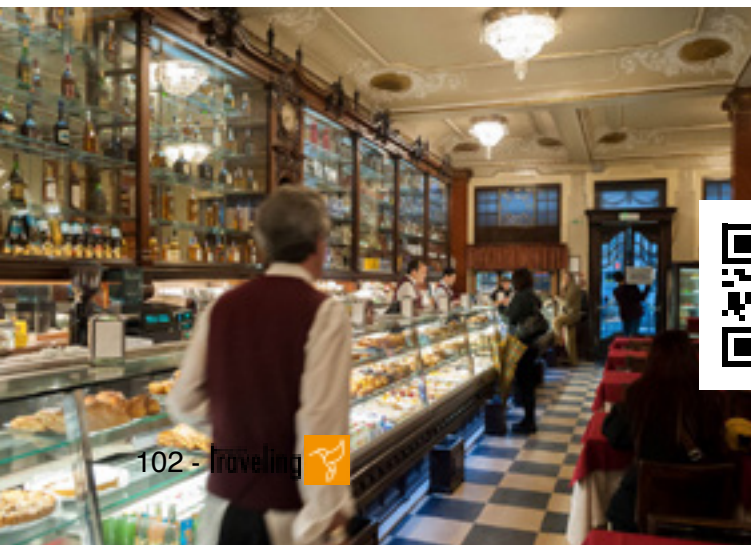
Praça dos Restauradores 62 -68
Lisbon



Pastelaria Versailles (Lisbon)

Founded in 1922, Pastelaria Versailles is one of the most elegant and traditional pastry shops in Lisbon. Located on Avenida da República, it stands out for its impressive art nouveau décor as well as its exquisite pastries. Here, you can enjoy classics like **pastéis de nata**, along with other traditional sweets such as **bolo rei** and **milhojas**. It's the perfect spot for breakfast or an afternoon snack.

Av. da República 15 A Lisbon



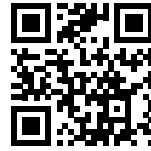
GASTRONOMIC ROUTES



Casa Piriquita (Sintra)

Founded in 1862, this historic pastry shop in Sintra is famous for its **Travesseiros**, a puff pastry filled with almond and egg yolk cream, and its **Queijadas**, small tarts made with fresh cheese. **Casa Piriquita** is a must-visit for anyone exploring the city.

R. Padarias 1, Sintra



Café Saudade (Sintra)

Located near the Sintra train station, this charming café offers a unique experience with its cozy atmosphere and local delights, such as **travesseiros** and **queijadas**. It's the perfect spot to relax before exploring the attractions of Sintra.

Rua Dr. Alfredo da Costa, 21, Sintra



Garrett (Cascais)

Founded in 1934, Pastelaria Garrett in Cascais is known for its wide selection of traditional Portuguese sweets, particularly its version of **Bolo Rei** and **milhojas**. Additionally, it is a must-visit spot in Cascais.

Av. de Nice 54 Estoril



Sacolinha (Cascais)

This famous pastry shop in Cascais is known for its wide range of artisanal products, including bread, pastries, and other traditional Portuguese sweets. Founded in 1986, **Sacolinha** is a go-to spot for those looking to enjoy croissants, **pastéis de nata**, and other delicacies. Its cozy atmosphere and high-quality products make it very popular in the region.

Av. dos Combatentes da Grande Guerra
Nº 107 - Cascais





Wineries Menade

Between two times

Text: Carmen Paredes - carpago23@gmail.com

Photography: Carmen Paredes and Bodega Menade



In the small town of La Seca, with just over a thousand inhabitants, lies the first stop on Bodegas Menade's two-part visit. It's a journey through time in every sense of the word—not only because the visit is divided into two parts and two locations, requiring an “interval” of approximately 7 kilometers, but also because of the temporal contrast between the ancestral winery in La Seca and the modern facility in neighboring Rueda. This provides visitors with the opportunity to explore two methods of winemaking and two distinct periods in the history of these Valladolid lands, where wine has been a part of daily life for centuries.

The winery takes its name from one of its parcels, a name that has been used for decades. The name seemed more than fitting to the Sanz siblings when they decided in 2005 to restore this old winery, which had been out of use since 1968. The inevitable reference to the maenads, the fervent followers of Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, was considered a nod to the history of this cherished beverage. And indeed, history is what you feel when you step into the old winery in the heart of La Seca.

In the peaceful town of La Seca, Bodegas Menade offers a visit that is truly a journey through time. Between the ancestral winery and the modern facility in Rueda, visitors discover two ways of making wine and two key moments in the history of this Valladolid region, where the winemaking tradition has left an indelible mark.



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- 1.- Tasting room, old winery
- 2.- Caves of the old winery
- 3.- Façade of the new winery
- 4.- Old offices
- 5.- Tasting room of the new winery

As we cross the wooden door leading to the quiet village street, we realize we're entering a very special place. A short, curved hallway guides us to an impressive bookshelf made up of dozens of wooden boxes originally intended to hold bottles of fine wine. These shelves are filled with books, most of which were donated or collected. For this reason, this unique bookshelf has been poetically named the "orphanage of books."

The original library isn't the only feature that stands out. The entire space is carefully designed to please and warmly welcome visitors, from the extraordinary one-piece wooden table to the classic desk, all contrasting and blending seamlessly with the modern tasting bar. Every detail has been chosen with care, mixing tradition and modernity with original and slightly eccentric touches. This decorative style in the reception of the old winery—a blend of history and contemporary design—perfectly mirrors what we later find in their wines.

The eclectic decor might distract from noticing the narrow staircase leading down to the cellar, a crowded room filled with barrels. In this small chaos of oak and

clay, we prepare to taste the first wines of the winery. It's surprising, and unusual, to start with the brand's flagship wines, but this spirit of distinction and breaking the norm is evident even in these details.

We begin by tasting the winery's star wines, which they themselves refer to as "La Custodia" (The Custody), reflecting the winemakers' commitment to safeguarding ancestral wisdom and traditional winemaking methods. The main grape variety used in their wines is the original clone of the Verdejo grape, known as Verdeja, which has been revived by the winery. This grape is smaller in size with a thicker skin.

We continue the tour by visiting the old winery, hand-dug over generations into the rocky subsoil, an impressive journey through the cave where wines were made and stored. It's in this part of the visit where the stones begin to tell you about the importance wine had in the daily lives of our ancestors. The wisdom of centuries is locked in these caves, where effort and sacrifice compensated for the modern techniques that didn't yet exist. In these lagares, now used for storing past vintages,



3

experimenting with the evolution of wines, and serving as an educational tourist attraction, the ancestors of the family literally gave their lives to protect their wealth and sustenance, producing what was then a basic food.

After this journey into the past, it's time to move on to the new winery, located just 7 km away but seemingly years apart. At this point, we have our first contact with the land and the vines. The modern building, with its clean and simple lines, is surrounded by a vast plain filled with vineyards, most of them planted in trellises.

Once again, the winery draws on the past to step into the future, following the most in-demand market trends by using traditional techniques to achieve organic certification. A standout among their methods are the pollination gardens, with plants and insects that help maintain the natural balance and encourage the proliferation of native species, keeping vineyard pests at bay while also serving a decorative function next to the main building.

Once inside the building, an immense glass wall surrounds the tasting room, where natural materials, primarily wood, take center stage. This design allows you to feel connected to the outdoors while remaining protected inside, creating the sensation of tasting wine amidst the impressive view of the vineyards, fully immersed in the nature that envelops the building.

In this room, visitors sample the winery's most popular wines—more accessible wines for everyday occasions, yet crafted with the same quality and care as their premium range.



4



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3

- 1.- Goose in the vineyards
- 2.- Centenary Verdejo grape variety
- 3.- Verdejo grapes

Tested wines



Sobrenatural 2017

Reviving tradition, this wine inadvertently aligns with the current trend of natural winemaking, meaning minimal intervention and no added sulfites. Contrary to popular opinion and general trends, this wine is designed for long aging. In fact, at least five years pass between production and bottle aging before it is released to the market. It has a golden yellow color, with aromas of chamomile and straw, complemented by hints of ripe lemon and baked apple. On the palate, the wine is complex, with many layers, volume, and a long-lasting finish.



La misión 2022

Brilliant yellow in appearance. On the nose, aromas of fennel, fresh grass, white flowers, and citrus stand out. On the palate, earthy and mineral notes emerge, derived from the clay amphorae in which part of the wine ferments—these amphorae are partially made from the clay sourced from the same plots where the grapes are grown. This process further ties the wine to its terroir.



Adorado

Harvested late to concentrate its sugars and maximize its alcohol content, the wine undergoes a year of aging in clay amphorae under a veil of flor, maturing slowly through the criaderas and soleras process. The result is an aged wine with an amber color, a pronounced aroma of dried fruits and spices, and smoky notes. This is a complex and structured wine, with a character that is both delicate and elegant. Its long-lasting finish on the palate invites you to take another sip to keep savoring its delightful memory.



Menade Verdejo Organic

Pale yellow. Citrus notes of ripe lemon and apricot stand out on the nose. On the palate the herbal notes, fennel and white flowers are more prominent. Freshness and pleasant acidity that do not prevent a certain volume in the mouth and a pleasant permanence in the mouth. A reference, which being the entry level of the winery confirms the intention of making good wines..



Menade Sweet Sauvignon

Pale yellow with light golden hints is this original semi-sweet Sauvignon Blanc. Aromas of syrupy pear and ripe stone fruit. These aromas are confirmed on the palate. Delicate balance between its soft sweetness and balanced acidity.



1

INDOCHINA

BRASA

Text: Rosario Alonso

Photography: Indochina Brasa

Indochina Brasa, the latest project from María Li Bao and Felipe Bao, emerges as a tribute to innovation in Asian cuisine. Located in the exclusive LaFinca Grand Café in Pozuelo, this restaurant offers diners a unique culinary experience where the ancient traditions of Asian gastronomy meet the power and unmistakable flavor of grilled cuisine.

'LaFinca Grand Café', the new gastronomic epicenter of Madrid, has been designed to offer customers new and unique experiences in a space of luxury and modernity. With 10,000 square meters of space spread across three floors and 600 parking spaces, this shopping center is not just a retail destination but a place where gastronomy comes to life in its fullest expression.

Within this vibrant setting, Grupo China Crown stands out as one of the most prominent offerings. Known for its commitment to showcasing Asian gastronomy in Spain, this group has chosen this space to expand its portfolio with two of its most refined concepts: Indochina Brasa and Tottori. While Tottori brings the essence of Japanese cuisine with an average ticket of 50-60 euros, Indochina Brasa offers a journey through the flavors of Asia, with a special focus on grilled cuisine, all within a price range of 40-50 euros per person.



2

The Cuisine of Indochina Brasa: Tradition and Modernity in Perfect Balance

Indochina Brasa is defined by its ability to balance tradition with modernity. Its extensive and meticulously crafted menu invites visitors on a culinary journey through the rich cultural heritage of Asia, always with a focus on grilled cuisine. This approach not only enhances the flavors but also adds a contemporary twist to recipes that have been part of Asian culture for centuries.

Among its standout dishes are the grilled rolls filled with shiitake mushrooms and vegetables, a dish that combines the softness of the mushrooms with the crispy texture from the grill; the Peking Duck rolls, offering an innovative take on an Asian classic; Cantonese-style rice noodles stir-fried with beef and vegetables, a dish that celebrates the richness of Cantonese cuisine; kai satee, chicken skewers in peanut sauce that delight with their combination of textures and flavors; and the crispy kubak rice with squid and vegetable broth, a dish that surprises with its presentation and intense flavor.

One of the star dishes that Indochina Brasa brings to LaFinca Grand Café is the Imperial Beijing Duck, a delicacy that preserves a recipe originating from the 15th century. This dish was the most coveted by the Ming dynasty, which ruled the Chinese Empire between 1368 and 1664, and its careful preparation, taking over five hours, reflects Grupo China Crown's commitment to authenticity and culinary excellence. The ceremony of its table-side service turns every meal into an experience that goes beyond the culinary, making this dish the ideal choice for those who wish to immerse themselves in the true essence of Asian cuisine.



3

- 1.- View of the restaurant's dining room
- 2.- Grilled tomatoes
- 3.- Beef T-bone steak
- 4.- Reserved area of the restaurant

4





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A Space Designed to Delight

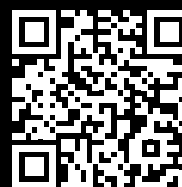
The restaurant's design, crafted by interior designer Alejandra Pombo, captivates from the very first moment. The large windows, offering panoramic views of the golf course, flood the space with natural light, creating a spacious and welcoming atmosphere. Spanning over 700 square meters, Indochina Brasa is not just a restaurant; it's the perfect setting for a wide variety of events and celebrations, from weddings to corporate meetings. Its private rooms provide the ideal ambiance for memorable occasions, where every detail is carefully attended to, ensuring that each event is truly special.

In short, Indochina Brasa at LaFinca Grand Café stands as a must-visit gastronomic destination in Madrid. Its offering, which fuses traditional Asian culinary arts with the modernity of grilled cuisine, provides diners with a rich experience in flavors and aromas. With its meticulous attention to quality and authenticity, and its ability to offer a versatile and elegant space, Indochina Brasa promises not only to delight the palate but also to create unforgettable moments.

In this way, Grupo China Crown reaffirms its position as a leader in Madrid's gastronomic scene, bringing the best of Asian cuisine to an audience seeking more than just a meal: a true cultural experience.

- 1.- Squid Bao Bread
- 2.- Imperial duck lacquered
- 3.- Old cow hamburg

INDOCHINA
BRASA





Galician Veal Chop

Grilled Artichokes



Galician Lobster Dressed with Its Vinaigrette

Asador Gonzaba

The Galician Grill Conquering Madrid

Text: Editorial **Photography:** Asador Gonzaba

The renowned asador, first opened in Santiago in 1976 and now with three locations in Galicia, has arrived in Madrid, right in the heart of the Salamanca district. Its offering: a selection of carefully chosen meats, fish, and seafood from Galicia, with its famous chuletón—an emblem of the house—standing out to delight grill enthusiasts. This establishment, a symbol of gastronomy, is celebrated for its dedication to grilled meats and fish, now bringing its tradition and culinary excellence to the Spanish capital.

A Legacy of Flavor

Originally founded in Santiago de Compostela, Asador Gonzaba has grown to include three branches in Galicia before making the leap to Madrid. José Fernández, the visionary behind the success of the asador, along with his wife and partner Nicoló Miranda, have worked tirelessly to create a space where product quality and a passion for grilling come together in perfect harmony.

A Unique Space in the Heart of Madrid

The new Gonzaba location in Madrid, situated at 103 Calle Hermosilla, is an impressive 800 m² space spread across two floors. The renovation, led by architect Alfonso Azqueta and decorated by the 'Las 2 Mercedes studio', combines contemporary elegance with rustic touches that evoke Galician tradition. On the ground floor, the atmosphere of a modern grill blends with classic elements like antique baskets and walls treated with natural pigments. The upper floor, on the other hand, resembles a bourgeois salon with large windows and contemporary art, creating a cozy and sophisticated ambiance.



View of the room

Wild sea bass



The Gastronomic Proposal: A Journey of Flavors

The menu at Asador Gonzaba in Madrid retains the essence of its Galician predecessors. The grill takes center stage in the culinary offerings, with a selection of top-quality meats and fish. The chuletón, available in various types such as Galician veal, supreme Rubia, Black Angus, Wagyu, and ox, is the star dish for meat lovers. The fish, all wild-caught, include options like sea bass, turbot, and red pomfret, perfect for enjoying either in their natural state or in more elaborate dishes like roasted monkfish in noisette butter with meat jus and green apple.

To start, diners can indulge in signature appetizers such as lobster salad, beef tenderloin steak tartare with grilled marrow, and Santoña anchovy toasts with smoked butter. The ham and sheep cheese croquettes and Iberian acorn-fed ham complete an initial offering that promises to satisfy the most discerning palates.

An Exceptional Winery

The Gonzaba wine cellar, managed by head of service and sommelier Juan Carlos Martínez, offers a selection of 400 national and international wine references. Galician wines are particularly well represented, showcasing a wide range of native varieties in both reds and whites. The selection includes over 90 wines available by the glass, made possible by the Coravin system, which ensures the perfect preservation of wine once opened. This approach allows customers to enjoy a personalized pairing experience, tailored to complement each dish on the menu.

The Complete Experience

Beyond the food and wine, Asador Gonzaba stands out for its attention to detail and commitment to excellence. The decor of the venue, carefully designed to offer a visually pleasing experience, and the personalized attention from the staff ensure that each visit is memorable. Homemade desserts, such as the caramelized torrija with hints of vanilla and the cheesecake with dulce de leche, provide the perfect finishing touch to a culinary experience that celebrates the best of tradition and innovation.

In the words of José Fernández, “Madrid has always been a city passionate about good food, and we are excited to bring a piece of Galicia to this vibrant gastronomic scene.” The opening of Asador Gonzaba in Madrid not only marks a milestone in the expansion of this renowned grill but also enriches the already diverse culinary offerings of the capital.

With its arrival in Madrid, Asador Gonzaba brings not only its reputation and signature dishes but also a proposal that promises to become a benchmark for lovers of fine meat and grilled fish. Without a doubt, a visit to this new grill house is a must for gastronomes and grill enthusiasts in Madrid.



Live Galician lobster

Foie gras ingot



Cheesecake



Quispe

A Sensory Journey through Peruvian Haute Cuisine in the Heart of Madrid

Text: Jose A. Muñoz

Photography: Restaurante Quispe



Since its opening in 2018, Quispe has established itself as a benchmark for Peruvian cuisine in Madrid. Located on Calle Conde de Aranda in the elegant Salamanca neighborhood, this restaurant is the flagship of the eponymous restaurant group led by César Figari and Constanza Rey. Their culinary offering, which refines classic Peruvian recipes with high-quality Spanish market products, elevates Creole, Nikkei, and Chifa cuisine to the level of haute cuisine.

An Innovative Concept

Quispe is more than just a restaurant; it is an embassy of Peruvian gastronomy in the Spanish capital. Its focus is on providing an immersive culinary experience, where the native ingredients, flavors, and colors of Peru are intertwined with culinary techniques from other countries. The ceviches, tiraditos, causas, makis, nigiris, hot dishes, and desserts at Quispe offer a unique sensory journey through the rich culinary diversity of the Andean country.



Hen chilli



Salmon and passion fruit tiradito

The tiraditos, another Peruvian specialty, are offered in variations such as bluefin tuna, salmon and passion fruit, sea bass and avocado, and octopus.

Nikkei cuisine also holds a special place at Quispe, with a selection of makis and nigiris that stand out for their freshness and presentation. Peruvian appetizers include delights such as grilled scallops with ceviche sauce, crispy sea bass and baby squid, corn pie with osso buco and parmesan foam, and Iberian pork anticucho. Two salads, the ceviche-inspired salad and the quinoa and endive salad, bring a fresh touch to the menu.

Main Courses and Desserts

In the main course section, diners can enjoy specialties like prawn and clam achupetado rice, stewed sea bass collar, ají de gallina, Angus short rib stew, and loche squash-filled tortellini. Quispe's desserts provide the perfect finishing touch to this culinary experience, with options like chocolate and lúcuma coulant, lemon tart, suspiro a la limeña, and chirimoya tart.

Origins and Vision

The Industrial engineer César Figari arrived in Spain in 2000 to pursue an MBA at IE Business School in Madrid. However, his passion for the hospitality industry, which was cultivated in Peru where he managed one of the country's largest nightclubs, led him to venture into the gastronomic sector. Together with his wife, Constanza Rey, an architect and interior designer, they have created a space that captures the essence of Peru. Constanza is responsible for the décor of the venues, infusing every corner with an atmosphere that transports diners to the heart of the Latin American country.

The Gastronomic Proposal

Located near the Puerta de Alcalá and El Retiro, Quispe is a slice of Peru in Madrid. Throughout its history, the restaurant has occupied various locations in the city, always maintaining its essence of contemporary Peruvian cuisine. Among its standout dishes are the Angus short rib stew, arroz con pato, and Iberian pork anticuchos. These dishes, crafted with precise techniques and the finest ingredients, offer an explosion of flavors in every bite.

A Journey of Flavors

The menu at Quispe invites diners on a culinary journey through Peru. Ceviches are the undisputed stars, with options such as the classic sea bass ceviche, avocado ceviche with creamy avocado tiger's milk, the 'Q' ceviche with chopped octopus and crispy squid, and the green ceviche with cilantro.

Sea bass and avocado tiradito





Rice with duck



Grilled scallops in olive oil and ceviche

Cheesecake



Cocktails and Ambience

Quispe also stands out for its cocktail offerings, featuring a pisco bar that serves various versions of the pisco sour, Peru's national drink. The menu is rounded out with chilcanos and signature cocktails, inviting guests to continue exploring the flavors of Peru.

The restaurant, with a capacity for about 90 diners, is designed to provide an intimate and welcoming experience. The décor, featuring earthy tones and greens, evokes the life and vegetation of Peru, while the covered terrace and large skylight give the sensation of being outdoors, right in the heart of the Peruvian jungle.

Ambassadors of Peruvian Gastronomy

Quispe not only excels in its culinary offerings but also in its cultural initiatives, such as Quispe Cooks, where guest Peruvian chefs collaborate with the local team to create exclusive menus that celebrate the rich culinary heritage of Peru. These initiatives reaffirm Quispe's commitment to its roots and its role as an ambassador of Peruvian culture and gastronomy in Madrid.

In the words of César Figari, *"Quispe is not just a restaurant; it's an experience that celebrates the diversity and richness of Peruvian gastronomy."* This approach has made Quispe a must-visit destination for food lovers and those seeking a unique dining experience in Madrid.

With its combination of tradition, innovation, and passion, Quispe continues to raise the bar for Peruvian cuisine in Spain, solidifying its position as a reference point for haute cuisine in the capital.

Quispe





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