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Situated in the north-central part of the Iberian Peninsula, the province of Palencia covers a surface area of 8,035 km². Although it is timeless and bleak in appearance, all nature of smells, colours and histories are blended into its soil. Not for nothing did civilisations more ancient than the Roman eagles settle in these parts, made up of three clearly-distinguished geographical units: the mountainous region, of awe-inspiring panoramic beauty with its steep, rough outline; the moorland, where ruggedness changes into gently rolling plains; and lastly, the sheer flatness of Tierra de Campos and Cerrato, territories laden with legend and tradition.

The inhabitants of the province of Palencia, numbering 179,623 according to the 1998 census, enjoy a Mediterranean-type climate with long but tolerable winters and dry, hot summers. Generally speaking, rainfall is low, resulting in wooded scenery in the north and scrubland in the rest of the province.

Sitting on the vast plain of Tierra de Campos, on the banks of the River Carrión, the city of Palencia now has a population of 79,745. This strategic enclave of rail and road communications, just 240 km from Madrid, is the capital of a province which,
since 1983, has formed part of the Autonomous Community of Castile and León, the largest region in Europe. A lively city which has travelled far in time, receiving a heritage of old stones, engravings and paintings, Palencia is like a silent epic tale of art and culture.

**Historical background**

Palencia's history goes back to the days when the Celtiberian tribe known as the Vacceos settled there. Included in the province of Tarraconensis after the inrush of the imperial legions, it was the Romans who chose what was then called Pallantia as the regional capital. With the arrival of Theodoric II in 457 A.D., the presence of the Visigoths brought prosperity to the area and the Gothic Fields became Spain's main supplier of grain in that period. Having been reconquered by the Christians after the short stay of the Arab forces, the city gained importance as a political centre, playing a decisive role in the layout of Castile. The reign of Alfonso VIII would be fundamental in the attainment of the greatest glories of mediaeval Palencia. Chosen as a place of residence for royalty, it was here that the country's first university was founded in 1208. Joining the rebellion of the comuneros (followers of the party defending the communities of Castile), Palencia's Tierra de Campos would provide the setting for the conflict, which was finally stamped out by central power. From then on, the area would lapse into a period characterised by a degree of social submissiveness, in which its people concentrated on their usual farming and cattle-breeding activities. It was hoped to alleviate this situation with the opening of the Castile Canal, the purpose of which was to link the area with the coast for the export of Castilian produce. However, modernity and the true economic boom would not arrive until the twentieth century was well under way. The motto on the city's coat of arms reads: Palencia, arms and science, an outright declaration of principles for this very special treasure, a key reference in Spanish history.
As times of admission to buildings of cultural interest are subject to seasonal variations, visitors are advised to enquire at the museums or appropriate tourist office once they are in the area.

THE CATHEDRAL DISTRICT

Palencia’s roots are best reflected in Las Puentecillas (1), a bridge of Roman origin which was rebuilt in 1525. The bridge looks across to the capital’s most characteristic monument, the cathedral (2). Rightly called the unknown beauty, it houses a great variety of artistic works within its majestic structure, which has the form of a Latin cross and three naves. It was erected on a Visigothic basilica which, according to tradition, guarded the remains of San Antolín, the city’s patron saint, and on the primitive, eleventh-century, Romanesque cathedral. A number of remains belonging to both constructions can still be seen in what is now the Crypt of San Antolín. The cathedral as we know it today was commenced in 1321 and, among its countless treasures, we might mention the magnificent high altarpiece with sculptures by Felipe Vigarny and paintings by Juan de Flandes, true masterpieces of the Castilian Renaissance. The retrochoir, lavishly decorated in the style of the period of Isabel II, was built by Juan de Ruesga. Also of particular note is the railing, with its medallions and coats of arms, which runs along the front of the choir. It was made by Gaspar Rodríguez in 1571. As for the chapels, Capilla del Sagrario contains the polychrome tomb of Doña Urraca de Navarra and a Plateresque altarpiece. At the cathedral museum, superb examples of sacred art are to be found, including the San...
Sebastián by El Greco, the collection of Flemish tapestries donated by Bishop Fonseca, along with the monstrance of the Corpus, carved by Juan de Benavente in the sixteenth century, and its baroque canopy, popularly known as the triumphant chariot. Beside the cathedral stands the Church of Las Agustinas Recoletas (3), a seventeenth-century house of worship with a fine altarpiece portraying the expectant state of Mary. Continuing round the cathedral district, we see the Hospital of San Bernabé (4), built as a stately home in the eleventh century. At Palacio Episcopal (5) or bishop’s palace, a well-balanced neoclassic building, it is worth visiting the rooms of the Museo Diocesano or Diocesan Museum to admire the extraordinary collection of stored fonts, the displays of gold and silverware and a select art gallery with works by different artists from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries. Passing by the Church of Santa Marina (6), an old mediaeval temple which was renovated at a later date, we approach one of the city’s most significant buildings: the Convent of San Pablo (7). It was once the seat of the Castilian Courts, which met in the retreat founded by Santo Domingo de Guzmán in the
in the thirteenth century. On the outside, the salient feature is the apse, decorated with large Renaissance windows, whilst the interior boasts exquisite funereal monuments such as that of the Marquis and Marchioness of Poza and the tomb of Dean Zapata, with the great polychrome relief of the Pietà. Close by, in the church of the Convent of La Piedad (8), the Rococo altarpiece should not be missed.

As we walk past the popular station gardens on the left, we reach Plaza de León, the point where the capital’s high street, Calle Mayor, begins. It is on this central, pedestrian thoroughfare that the daily life of the city’s inhabitants goes on at an easy pace in an ambience of commercial activity. First to appear on this artery, which is replete with emblematic colonnades and outstanding buildings, is the Convent of Las Agustinas Canónigas (9), erected in the early seventeenth century.

Further along, we see the graceful contours of the baroque Palace of the Aguado-Pardo (10), its frontispiece enhanced by a flat arch while the balcony bears the time-honoured coats of arms of nobility. We end the trip at the Museo Díaz-Caneja (11), where we can see part of the work of the first-class Palencia landscape painter after whom the museum is named.

Palencia Cathedral
Plaza de la Inmaculada
☎ 979 70 13 47
Open to the public: Mondays to Saturdays, 10.30 to 13.30 and 16.00 to 18.30. Sundays and holidays, 10.30 to 1.30
July and August, 10.30 to 13.30 and 16.30 to 19.30
Admission to the cathedral museum by guided tours

Museo Diocesano de Arte
Palacio Episcopal
Calle General Mola, 34
☎ 979 74 59 00
Open to the public: Tours from Mondays to Saturdays at 11.30, 12.30 and 17.00

Museo Díaz-Caneja
Calle Lope de Vega, 2
☎ 979 74 73 92
Open to the public: Tuesdays to Saturdays, 10.00 to 13.30 and 19.00 to 21.30. Sundays and holidays, 12.00 to 14.00
Closed on Mondays
Formerly the place for fiestas and markets, Plaza Mayor is noted for its monument in stone and bronze by Victorio Macho, dedicated to Alonso Berruguete. The prominent feature of the square, whose origins date back to the seventeenth century, is the Ayuntamiento (12) or City Hall, a nineteenth-century neoclassic building looking out onto the characteristic rows of symmetrical colonnades. At the back stands the church, Iglesia de la Soledad (13), where there is an interesting baroque chapel with plasterwork. The most remarkable building in the area is the Convent of San Francisco (14), which was founded in 1247 and played a role of great relevance in the Palencia of the Middle Ages. Its silhouette makes for a curious sight on account of the steeple.

The visitor is recommended to enter the building to see the coffered ceilings and the grave of Don Alonso Martínez. As we leave behind the Mercado de Abastos (15) or food hall, an eloquent instance of the architecture of iron and glass, our
eyes are met by the fine-looking Neo-Renaissance building which houses the Diputación Provincial (16) or Provincial Council, planned by Jerónimo Arroyo (1906-1914).

Moving on, the Church of Santa Clara (17) forms part of the retreat for coenobites erected in 1378 under the patronage of Enrique II. Within the walls of the temple, which was chosen as the pantheon for the Admirals of Castile, there is an impressive reclining Christ, the source of countless legends. Just opposite is the theatre, Teatro Principal (18), opened in the first half of the nineteenth century. Next comes the Church of San Lázaro (19) in the square of the same name. The outer walls of the church, which, according to legend, occupies the site where the Cid Campeador built an age-old leper hospital, are edged with the coats of arms of the Castilla family.

As we go along in the direction of the River Carrón, the Plateresque facade of the Convent of San Bernardo (20) comes into view. Following our route, we arrive at the Church of San Miguel (21), whose slender
Gothic tower, complete with fretted windows, is one of the city’s main symbols. Legend has it that it was in this church, crowned with battlements reminiscent of a fortress, that the Cid wedded Doña Jimena. A superb, fourteenth-century crucifix is to be admired in the chancel. Nearby is the church, Iglesia de la Compañía (22), next to the Seminario Diocesano or Diocesan Seminary. The wood carving of the patron saint of Palencia, Nuestra Señora de la Calle or La Morenilla, is kept in the tabernacle.

Our tour comes to an end at Casa del Cordón (23) (lit. the house with the cord), a sixteenth-century civil monument which owes its name to the fact that an unusual cord was sculpted in stone on the frontispiece. Inside the building are the rooms of the museum, Museo de Palencia, containing reminders of all the civilisations that have left their mark on Palencia’s soil.

Museo de Palencia
Plaza del Cordón, 1
☎ 979 75 23 28
Open to the public: Tuesdays to Saturdays, 10.00 to 14.00 and 16.30 to 20.00 (October to April); 17.00 to 20.30 (May to September). Sundays and holidays, 10.00 to 14.00

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

There are other spots worth visiting beyond the limits of the city centre, such as the park, Parque Isla Dos Aguas, a patch of green situated in the middle of the River Carrión. The park features two lakes, a range of amusement facilities and a large sports centre. Taking the C-611 road out of the city, we drive along for a bare seven km to find the imposing outline of the Castle of Fuentes de Valdepero looming before us. A little further along the same road stands the Castle of Monzón de Campos, which has been completely renovated and converted into a comfortable hotel; and then, we see the colossal Cristo del Otero, holding sway over the city from its hillock, or otero; hence its name. With a height of 21 m, the sculpture, executed by Victorio Macho in 1930, has become Palencia’s own spiritual guide and stone icon. In the hermitage situated at the statue’s feet, we can visit a museum dedicated to the artist, a Palencia man himself.
☎ 979 749 833
Leaving the capital along the C-617 road, we make our first stop at Villajimena to admire the church and the altarpiece by Nicholas of Holland. Not far away, on the Castellar hill, a Visigothic chapel, complete with burial ground, has been discovered. In Astudillo, the visitor should go to the Church of Santa Eugenia, where he will find a magnificent altarpiece and a collection of Roman mosaics discovered in the surrounding area; not forgetting the Pedro I Palace-Museum, a handsome Mudéjar ensemble, where religious pieces, coins and documents are on display. The pilgrims who made their way along the Road to Santiago would set foot on Palencia soil at Itero de la Vega. Here, we should pause to view the Church of San Pedro, noted for its thirteenth-century facade, and the characteristic hermitage, Ermita de la Piedad. At Boadilla del Camino, a jurisdictional boundary stone from the fifteenth century may still be seen today. Another gem awaits us in the church, Iglesia de la Asunción, in

TRIPS ROUND THE PROVINCE

THE ROAD TO SANTIAGO

(125 Km)

Jurisdictional boundary stone. Boadilla del Camino
the form of the font, which is supported by 12 columns, not to mention the fine altarpieces. Frómista, the capital of Palencia Romanesque, is an absolute must on our itinerary. Churches such as San Pedro and Santa María are first on our sightseeing list, together with the hermitage, Ermita de Santiago, with its image of Virgen del Otero. But the real treasure of what is known as the miracle town is to be found in the Church of San Martín, a work of art conceived as an image. Founded in 1035, the church is particularly striking because of its purity of line and the perfect balance between architectural considerations and the exuberant decoration, all resulting in a splendid blend of light, colours and strokes. Villalcázar de Sirga owes part of its renown to the miracles attributed by the pilgrims to the image of Santa María la Blanca, to whom the monumental thirteenth-century temple, known as the Sistine Chapel of Ogiwal Romanesque, is dedicated. Apart from the wonders to be seen in the interior, such as the thirteenth-century Virgen de las Cántigas, the polychrome stone tombs of Infante Don Felipe and his wife, along with the superb Spanish-Flemish altarpiece dated ca. 1500, the visitor will be struck by the double frieze on the frontispiece. In the upper part, a Pantocrator is the central figure, while the Annunciation and the Epiphany appear lower down. The whole thing is set beneath a series of perfect, castellated arches. Few towns in Palencia can boast of the historical relevance of Carrión de los Condes, whose most representative monument is the Church of Santiago, noted for its impressive Pantocrator. Also worth mentioning is the frieze at the Church of Santa María del Camino, embellished with an Adoration of the Magi. The museum belonging to the Monastery of Santa Clara has displays of sculptures and ornaments, along with a Pietà by Gregorio Fernández. On the
outskirts of the town stands the Monastery of San Zoilo, commenced in the tenth century. Of particular interest is the Renaissance cloister, a true marvel of ornamentation and technique created by Juan de Badajoz.

Carrying on along the C-620, a route trodden for centuries by the steps of pilgrims on their way to Santiago, we reach Quintanilla de la Cueza and, close by, a Roman villa containing hippocausta, or heated rooms, the forerunners of the Castilian stoves. In Terradillos de los Templarios, the former site of the Templars’ convent-house, we take the C-624 to Saldaña. Overflowing with architectural remains from the area, the Church of San Pedro has been made into the monographic museum of Villa de La Olmeda, a third-century aristocratic Roman mansion from which a formidable collection of mosaics with figurative and vegetable elements has been salvaged.
The province of Palencia, above all in the northern area, is home to the largest collection of Romanesque monuments throughout Europe. We shall thus begin our tour at the museum-city of Aguilar de Campoo, a town which takes us back in time, where nothing is artificial. It is overlooked by the twelfth-century castle built on the rocks of Peña Aguilón. One of the most evocative sights is the colonnaded square where the Collegiate Church of San Miguel is situated. Attached to this fourteenth-century house of worship is a museum where the parish treasure, with gold and silverware, paintings and works in ivory, is exhibited. No less significant is the Monastery of Santa María la Real, a prepossessing instance of the Proto-Gothic considered to be among the oldest in Spain. Exquisitely restored, the church houses a museum where a rich and varied collection of the Romanesque is on show. Turning off to the left, we take the P-212 road to Cervera de Pisuerga, a town renowned for its elegance and coats of arms and its square enhanced by stone columns: altogether an

Monastery of Santa María la Real. Aguilar de Campoo
incomparable urban setting. The Church of Santa María is a slender Gothic work from the sixteenth century, where the Funeral Chapel of Santa Ana is worthy of special attention. Equipped with a modern state hotel or parador, Cervera is the gateway to the Protected Area of Fuentes Carrionas, where the serene landscape is speckled with mountain lakes and towering peaks.

Taking the C-627 to Potes, we make our way along a winding road affording spectacular views while, as we look to the left, we pass the Requejada Reservoir, an ecological reserve inhabited by a vast wealth of aquatic birds and animals. We carry on past the Pernía Valley until we come to the picturesque town of San Salvador de Cantamuda, the former capital of this, the dominion of the bishops of Palencia. We must not miss the sixteenth-century boundary stone and the church, erected in 1181 by Countess Doña Elvira. The steeple is one of the finest instances of highland Romanesque. Our route continues upwards amidst woods of beech and oak, taking us to the mountain pass of Piedrasluengas, where the lands of Liébana are met. An unforgettable view may be enjoyed from the pass, with the massive Peña Labra (2,018 m) to the right.

We must now retrace our steps along the C-627 and, as we leave Cervera behind, Perazancas, another of the area’s quaint towns, appears to the south. The visitor will be drawn immediately to the Hermitage of San Pelayo, an astonishing example of Lombardic Romanesque. He should also take a close look at the portico on Mozarabic capitals and the allegorical paintings on the walls. In the
immediate proximity of Olmos de Ojeda, on a private estate, stands the church belonging to what was once the Monastery of Santa Eufemia, the retreat of daughters and widows of kings. Erected on a Mozarabic building, of which there are still some remains, the church is highly representative of the Romanesque house of worship. The visitor should also find the time to take an enjoyable walk round the museum.

(979 18 72 31)

Back on the C-611 road, the next place of interest is Herrera de Pisuerga. The primitive Camala of the Vacceos has been the abode of a varied range of cultures, and played a relevant role in Roman times, when it was the settlement of the Legio IV Macedonica. A burial ground from the days of the Visigoths is still in existence today, while we are reminded of the imperial era of Charles V by a sixteenth-century arch which once formed part of the medieval walls. Stately-looking mansions bear witness to past glory, as indeed does the seventeenth-century hermitage, Ermita de Nuestra Señora de la Piedad, decorated with murals.

The busy town of Alar del Rey marked the starting point of the Castile Canal, a project aimed at forming a link between these open spaces and the coast. Romanesque architecture comes to the fore once more in Becerril del Carpio, with constructions of interest scattered across the town's three districts. A turn-off leads us to the town of Mave, where the monastery, Monasterio de Santa María, founded in 1208, is considered to be one of Palencia’s major Ojival Romanesque monuments. Of the original construction, the church, with three naves ending in semi-circular apses, is still standing. We finish our trip at Olleros de Pisuerga, a stone's throw away from our point of departure. We
must not fail to visit the fascinating, tenth-century rock church, set in wonderful scenery bespattered with archaeological remains; a worthy emblem indeed, where nature is combined with a wide range of human and cultural experiences.

**Museo de San Miguel. Plaza de España. Aguilar de Campoo**
☎ 979 12 26 88
Open to the public: 10.30 to 13.30 and 17.00 to 20.00

**Museo del Románico**
Monasterio de Santa María La Real. Aguilar de Campoo
☎ 979 12 50 00
Open to the public: Summer (June to September), 10.30 to 14.00 and 16.30 to 20.00; Winter (October to May), Tuesdays to Thursdays, 16.00 to 19.00; weekends and holidays: 10.30 to 14.00 and 16.30 to 19.30. Closed on Mondays

From Cerrato to Tierra de Campos (225 Km)

Just a short distance away from the capital, we take the C-620 road as we set off on our trip to the region of Cerrato. In Torquemada, we shall see the Church of Santa Eulalia, which received the remains of Philip the Fair when his wife accompanied him on his final journey. Next, in Quintana del Puente, the Church of San Esteban has a fine collection of Castilian rural art. In Palenzuela, once the feudal estate of the Admirals of Castile, not all the monuments have survived to the present day. Nevertheless, it is still possible to visit the Church of San Juan, the custodian of most of the town’s treasures; and also the gates remaining from the wall.

Moving southwards, we reach Baltanás, the capital of this austere region. The majestic Church of San Millán is of special interest on account of the filigreed choir, the high altarpiece and a number of tombs of Gothic design. Continuing along the C-619, on the left-hand side, we can see the remains of the once magnificent Monastery of San Pelayo, just by Cevico Navero. However, our destination is Hérmes de Cerrato, where we stop to visit the Mozarabic...
hermitage, Ermita de la Virgen de la Era, and admire the horseshoe arch and the font, carved out of a capital. Towards the west, Cevico de la Torre appears on the horizon, where the church makes for a pretty picture with its four-sided tower. Soon, we find ourselves in Baños de Cerrato, a mere 12 km from Palencia. Here, we direct our steps towards the famous Visigothic Church of San Juan Bautista, founded in 661 by Recesvinto and considered to be the oldest religious building remaining intact in Spain. Its basilica-like structure exudes quality and solid, spiritual arguments, further reflected in the votive tablet above the triumphal arch.

Now on the C-620 road, a few kilometres south of the major railway junction, Venta de Baños, we enter Dueñas, which is like an added portico to Palencia’s capital. Once the seat of kings and a nest of conspiring nobles, here, the visitor can still
sense the aroma of the authentic, completely unadorned. The Church of Santa María has a first-rate altarpiece, in addition to Proto-Gothic windows. In the small parish museum, an astonishing Ecce Homo by Diego Siloé is on display. Close by Dueñas is the Cistercian Monastery of the Trappists, whose history goes far back in time. Attached to the retreat for coenobites, the Romanesque church, which was renovated in the nineteenth century, is of a pureness which is quite stunning. Speeding on our way, we start to savour the transparent atmosphere of Tierra de Campos. The castle at Ampudia is one of the most distinguished military monuments to have survived the passage of time since the Middle Ages. Also standing proud and grand is the seventeenth-century Collegiate Church of San Miguel, abounding in artistic treasures. To the north lies Torremormojón, where the church boasts a triptych attributed to Juan de Flandes. Next, having taken the C-610, we shall go to Paredes de Nava, the birthplace of Alonso and Pedro Berruguete and also of poet Jorge Manrique. The Church of Santa Eulalia is notable for its high altarpiece and curious Romanesque tower, together with...
the parish museum, where works by leading Golden Age Castilian artists are on show. On our way back to the capital along the C-613, it is worth making one last stop at Becerril de Campos. Of its churches, the most outstanding is Santa Eugenia, designed by Gil de Hontañón. At the modern museum of the Church of Santa María, there is an exhibition of gold and silverware, sacred ornaments and tableaux by Pedro Berruguete and Juan de Juni.

Museo de Santa Eulalia
Plaza de España, s/n
Paredes de Nava
☎ 979 83 04 69
Open to the public: Mondays to Fridays, please enquire.
Saturdays, 11.00 to 13.00
Sundays, 17.00 to 19.00
Holidays, 11.00 to 12.30 and 17.00 to 19.00

Museo de Santa María
Becerril de Campos
☎ 979 83 33 68
Open to the public: Mondays to Fridays, 11.30 to 13.30 and 17.00 to 20.00
Weekends and holidays, 10.30 to 13.30 and 17.00 to 20.00

LEISURE AND SHOWS

Gastronomy and handicrafts

Palencia’s autochthonous produce forms an inherent part of its cuisine. Tierra de Campos is dotted with dovecotes which provide the raw materials for traditional dishes like stewed pigeon. On the meatside, the star of the show is roast lamb suckling, which should be served golden brown on the outside and juicy on the inside.

The region’s most renowned speciality is vegetable hotchpotch, enriched with delicious veal from mountain-bred calves and, of course, the greens that are grown in the rich lowland areas. Other culinary delights for which the region is known include beans from Saldaña and the flavoursome Torquemada peppers; in a word, typical winter food, like the wholesome chick pea stew, of which there are several versions.

Snails and crayfish are used as basic ingredients at many
popular festivities, just as the ancestral rite of slaughtering the pig produces tasty, nutritional delicacies. Then, to finish, what better than a piece of delectable sheep's cheese, accompanied by any of the local confectioners' specialities, such as leche frita (a dessert made of milk thickened with flour, coated with egg and fried), sweetmeats from Osorno or biscuits from Aguilar de Campoo, all washed down with rosé wine from Dueñas, a hive of culture and activity.

Although handicrafts have been overtaken by the new technologies, there are still several important tanneries at Villarramiel and Paredes de Nava, specialising in the production of shoes and leather garments. However, the province is famous above all for the Palencia blankets, made from the wool of the churra sheep, perfect for keeping out the cold in the bleak winter months.

Fairs and fiestas

In the lands of Castile, hospitality is looked on as an obligation, reflected in the variety of pilgrimages, passacaglia, bullfights and popular festivities awaiting the visitor. The calendar of events begins on January 1 with the Baptism of the Baby Jesus in the province’s capital, when, amongst other things, sweets are thrown from the balcony of the parish house.

Another deep-rooted tradition is the Pilgrimage of San Toribio, which takes place in mid-April. After a procession to the Cristo del Otero, the municipal authorities “stone” the participants with bread and cheese.

Easter Week in Palencia, declared as being of regional touristic interest, is one of the most traditional to be found throughout the autonomous community. A number of sober yet vivid processions, enhanced with statues carved by the best image-makers, wend their way through the city centre. In Frómista, on the Sunday
following Easter Sunday, there is a civic parade known as El Olé, held in honour of San Telmo, the patron saint of sailors. When winter arrives, there is one pilgrimage after another, all connected with the saint or the virgin of each particular town or village. The Festival of the Exaltation of the Crayfish, held at Herrera de Pisuerga on the first Sunday in August, is considered to be of regional touristic interest. The Descent of the River Pisuerga, a well-known canoeing competition which starts off at Alar del Rey, is of a more international scope.

To complete this outline of the recreational activities available, where memory and future come face to face, the capital steps back into the limelight every September 2 with the Fiestas de San Antolín, the patron saint of Palencia. It is a time of merrymaking and good clean fun, when old traditions take over in a city bubbling with life.

Sports

For sport-lovers, there is a wide range of possibilities at different places all over the province. Not in vain is Palencia renowned for its countless nature spots, ideal for enjoying the sun and sailing in a landscape of rivers and lakes and millenarian forests. There is a long list of alternatives for those keen on adventure sports or rural tourism, pure and simple. Here, in the midst of fairy-tale scenery, mountaineers conquer breathtaking, mythical peaks, some of which have an altitude of almost 2,500 m.

To see the very best of the province, we should go to Fuentes Carrionas, where the reserves and rivers are perfect for practising the peaceable sport of fishing. The reservoirs at Camporredondo and Compuerto, bursting with natural charm, provide a splendid setting for yachting, windsurfing and canoeing, all of which are extremely popular in the area. Hunters, cycling tourists and backpackers will also be suited, as there is room for everybody in this optimum geographical universe. When all is said and done, the aim is none other than to enjoy the gratifying experience of being close to nature.
USEFUL INFORMATION

International dialling code: 34

TURESPAÑA tourist information service ☎ 901 300 600
www.tourspain.es

Castile and León
Tourist Information ☎ 902 203 030
www.jcyl.es/turismo

Federation of Tourism Initiative Centres of Castile and León ☎ 983 35 78 99
fax 983 35 79 99

TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICES

Tourism Promotion Office of Castile and León in Madrid
Calle Pensamiento, 27. Madrid ☎ 91 571 46 46
fax 91 571 44 38

Provincial Tourist Board
Plaza Abilio Calderón, s/n
Palencia ☎ 979 71 51 00
fax 979 71 51 31
www.dip-palencia.es

Office of the Regional Government of Castile and León
Calle Mayor, 105. Palencia ☎ 979 74 00 68

Aguilar de Campoo
Plaza España, 15 ☎ 979 12 50 00

Carrión de los Condes
Casa de Cultura ☎ 979 88 09 32

Cervera de Pisuerga
Calle San Roque, 1 ☎ 979 87 04 50
www.mfir.com/monpalentina

Frómista
Paseo Central ☎ 979 81 01 80

Herrera de Pisuerga
Paseo de los Tilos, 1 ☎ 979 14 00 96

STATE HOTELS (PARADORES)

Booking Office
Calle Requena, 3
28013 Madrid ☎ 91 516 66 66
fax 91 516 66 57
www.parador.es
e-mail: info@parador.es

Parador de Cervera de Pisuerga
Carretera de Resoba, km. 2,5 ☎ 997 87 00 75
fax 979 87 01 05
e-mail: cervera@parador.es

TRANSPORT

Palencia has good communications with Madrid by expressway and motorway. It also has excellent railway connections: RENFE, Information and Booking Office, 902 24 02 02 www.renfe.es. Another option is to fly to Villanubla Airport, Valladolid, just 47 km away by expressway. (Airport: ☎ 983 41 54 00 SERVIBERIA ☎ 902 400 500 www.iberia.com)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Bus station ☎ 979 74 32 22
Taxi ☎ 979 74 39 19
National police ☎ 091
Municipal police ☎ 092
Hospital emergencies ☎ 979 74 40 11
Travellers’ Care Centre ☎ 979 74 30 32