

# Salamanca



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Photo: Salamanca Tourist Board

PLAZA DE ANAYA

Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism  
Published by: © Turespaña  
Created by: Lionbridge  
NIPO: 086-17-054-7

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*FRONT PAGE: Salamanca Cathedral  
Photo: Salamanca Tourist Board  
BACK: Exterior of the New Cathedral  
Photo: Salamanca Tourist Board*

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# INTRODUCTION

Discover Salamanca, a lively, open-minded city where history can be read in the façades of its buildings and monuments.

Life in this World Heritage City revolves around the eight hundred-year-old **University**, the first to be founded in Spain and the third oldest in Europe. It still attracts thousands of students from all over the world who come to further their education and learn Spanish.

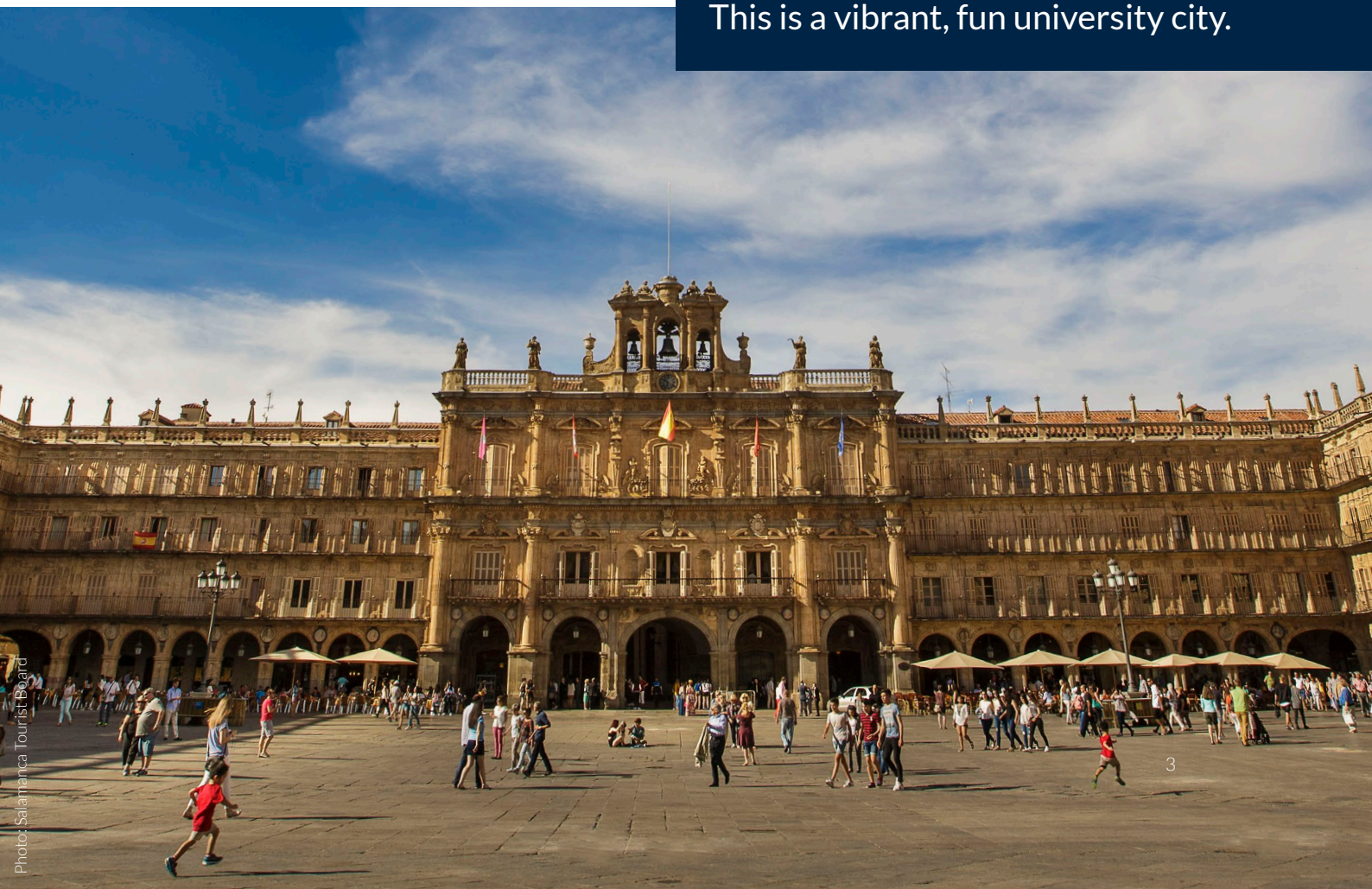
Salamanca has numerous **cultural attractions**, including museums and a comprehensive calendar of concerts, theatre works and exhibitions. Local **gastronomy** includes exquisite products like Iberian cured ham and wine, as well as traditional dishes like *hornazo*

(pastry turnovers).

Salamanca's other great heritage is the city's **natural** surroundings. It stands on the banks of the Tormes River and has unique attractions like the Arribes del Duero Nature Reserve (which it shares with the province of Zamora), with extraordinary cliffs carved out over time and spectacular waterfalls like the Pozo de los Humos and the Sierra de Béjar and Sierra de Francia mountains, which have been declared a Biosphere Reserve.

Come and discover Salamanca. If you've never been before, get ready for a surprise. If you have been before, be prepared to be surprised again. This is a vibrant, fun university city.

▼ PLAZA MAYOR





# DISCOVER SALAMANCA NEIGHBOURHOOD BY NEIGHBOURHOOD



Photo: Salamanca Tourist Board

## CITY CENTRE

Take a walk through the historical city centre known as the *ciudad vieja* or old town. A good place to start is in the famous Baroque-style **Plaza Mayor**, the heart and soul of Salamanca, an ideal place to have a bite to eat and do some shopping. You'll find everything from famous fashion brands to traditional craft work and *gourmet* delicatessens.

The gateways to the square lead to the most interesting buildings. These include the **Church of La Clerecía**. Here you can buy a ticket to visit the **Scala Coeli** exhibition which includes a guided tour of the building. The tour ends at the top of the **La Clerecía Towers** from where you'll have a spectacular panoramic view over the old town.

Right opposite you'll see the **Casa de las Conchas**, a building decorated with more than 300 ornamental stone shells. Legend has it that there is a treasure hidden behind one of them. And then there's the **Clavero Tower**, a unique defensive structure which was part of the Sotomayor Palace. It has a square base but the upper section is octagonal, with a little tower on each side.

Very nearby, in the Patio de las Escuelas, you'll find another of Salamanca's architectural gems, the **University**. It consists of three 15th-century buildings: the Escuelas Mayores and Escuelas Menores buildings and the Hospital del Estudio. The patio of the Escuelas Menores leads to the Cielo de Salamanca ceiling. The Plateresque façade of the Escuelas Mayores building is in extraordinary stone filigree,



where it is traditional to look for a frog. Here's clue: it's sitting on a skull, which symbolises the fate awaiting bad students. Inside there's a spectacular patio and the splendid Escuelas Mayores and Escuelas Menores.

Then cross the **Plaza de Anaya** which leads to a magnificent complex comprising the **Cathedral of La Asunción de la Virgen** and the **Cathedral of Santa María**, popularly known as the **New Cathedral** and the **Old Cathedral**. Inside there are some great masterpieces of religious art, like the wonderful altarpiece in the Old Cathedral.

The towers of both cathedrals together make one of the city's iconic structures, **leronimus**. You can stroll through the interior surrounded by battlements, pinnacles and gargoyles. The terraces, together with the towers of the **Clerecía** (Scala Coeli) and the Convent of San Esteban, offer amazing views of the city.

Salamanca is an eminently Plateresque city, with Gothic and Renaissance elements in all their splendour on the façade of the **Church and Convent of San Esteban**. And there's more inside: the main altarpiece, a masterpiece by the maestro José de Churriguera, and the cloister of Los Reyes crowned with beautiful rib vaults.

Apart from the Christian temples, there are other significant buildings in the city including **palaces** and **stately houses**. Fine examples would be the **Palace of Figueroa**, home to Salamanca's Casino, and the **Palace of Monterrey**, perhaps the most popular Renaissance civil construction in Spain and the most copied







▲ CONVENT OF SAN ESTEBAN

in Latin America.

Another example is the **Palace of Orellana**, which appears to break all the rules for Plateresque architecture. One of its most original features is the stairway between the upper and lower galleries and located at one end of the façade behind the tower.

You can discover mysterious legends and stories about Salamanca in buildings like the **Casa de las Muertes** (House of the Dead). Its name stems from the four skulls carved into the façade and the murder in strange circumstances of four of its inhabitants at the beginning of the 19th century.

You should experience Salamanca by day and also at dusk. This is when the setting sun gives a golden hue to the material used to build most of the monuments, sedimentary clay-based rock from Villamayor.

## THE OESTE NEIGHBOURHOOD

In recent years this neighbourhood has been converted into an open air museum. Neighbourhood associations and groups of artists have been responsible for the emergence of **urban art**, with the participation of young artists from different parts of the world. Together they have created a different reality, a livelier, more colourful neighbourhood, where the canvasses are garage doors, walls and urban furniture.

There are two works you really shouldn't miss on this continuously evolving, contemporary art route and they are the **Casa Nido** on the Calle Wences Moreno, and the **Diosa Ciudadana** on the Calle Papín.

① *You can work out your own route using the [www.galeriaurbanasalamanca.es](http://www.galeriaurbanasalamanca.es) website or the smartphone application with the same name*



# THE ARTS

Salamanca has a very broad cultural agenda, rooted not only in tradition but also facing Modernist challenges.

► ART NOUVEAU AND ART DÉCO MUSEUM  
CASA LIS



Photo: Salamanca Tourist Board

One of the most unusual museums is the one situated in the Casa de Lis, the first Modernist building in Salamanca. The **Art Nouveau and Art Déco Museum**, exquisitely designed and with large stained-glass windows, displays an incredible collection of decorative art from the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries.

Visit the **Salamanca Museum**, located in the historical palace of the Álvarez Abarca family and explore the collections dedicated to archaeology, fine arts and traditional Salamanca life.

The chapter house in the Old Cathedral's cloister and the Chapel of Santa Catalina are home to the **Cathedral Museum** which exhibits some very interesting artistic pieces. A beautiful Mannerist door provides access to art and sculpture galleries with works from the 13th to the 20th centuries.

The Church of San Millán is home to the **Salamanca Monumenta Salmanticae Urban and Architectural Heritage Visitor Centre**, an innovative space using virtual recreations, infographics and other audiovisual elements to display the importance of the city's main buildings and urban spaces.

Culture in Salamanca goes so much further than monuments and historical museums. There are also places like **DA2 (Domus Artium 2002)**, a contemporary art centre dedicated to the latest trends in Spanish and international art.

① **For more information on museums, go to:**  
[www.museocasalis.org](http://www.museocasalis.org)  
[catedralsalamanca.org](http://catedralsalamanca.org)



# TASTING SALAMANCA



Photo: Salamanca Tourist Board

Salamanca has a delicious cuisine featuring **cold meats** (including the traditional *farinato*, made with flour and pig's lard), **pork** and **beef**, **vegetables** and **soups**.

Try some Morucha beef, an indigenous breed of cattle raised in the pastures and meadows of the province of Salamanca.

In most bars in the city your drinks will be served with a great variety of delicious, miniature aperitifs popularly known as **tapas**. The best areas for **tapas** are around the **Calle Van Dyck**, renowned for its grills, and the **Plaza Mayor**, where there is a great selection of restaurants, gastropubs and terraces where you can try some of Salamanca's delicious local cuisine.

The region's traditional cuisine is based on exquisite Iberian cured ham, with the Guijuelo protected designation of origin, one of the most delicious in all of Spain. **Wine** is another essential ingredient and the region produces splendid wines from indigenous varieties of grape like rufete, garnacha tinta and tempranillo. And then there are the white grapes: malvasia and verdejo serrano are used for white wines that will take even the experts by surprise.

In recent years a number of wineries have appeared which have brought Salamanca's wines up to the same level as the best in Spain. They are ideal for accompanying local products like **lentils from La Armuña** and **Arribes cheese**.

One of the regions classic recipes is for **chanfaina**, a filling rice dish with lamb giblets. Another classic is **hornazo** pastry turnovers. They are made with bread dough and filled with **chorizo** sausage, pork loin and sometimes with hard-boiled egg. You should try one in any restaurant or pastry-shop in Salamanca, they're delicious.

Salamanca also has room for the latest in top-end gastronomy, with mouth-watering propositions such as its Michelin-starred restaurants, melding tradition with cutting-edge creativity to offer exquisite experiences for the diner. To make your mouth water!







# SALAMANCA

## BY SEASON

Any time of the year is ideal for enjoying Salamanca and the fascinating surrounding area since each season has its own delights.

▼ PLAZA MAYOR



Photo: World Heritage Cities

## SUMMER

The arrival of summer is synonymous with leisure and street culture, with events like the **Castile-León International Art Festival (FACYL)**. It lasts for a week in June and constitutes a multi-sensory experience in the city's streets and cultural venues led by a group of actors, entertainers and musicians. Theatre, contemporary dance, modern circus, children's activities, gastronomic forums... at FACYL everything is possible.

The **Plazas y Patios** (Squares and Patios) programme consists of wonderful outdoor leisure events. All summer long you can listen to music, watch film screenings and enjoy dramatised tours in some of the city's most important locations, like the Santo Domingo de la Cruz Gardens, the Plaza Mayor and the Patio de las Escuelas.

On 8 September, it is the turn of the **Fair and Festivities in honour of the Virgen de la Vega**, the city's patron saint. The day after the procession in her honour and a beautiful floral offering, the festivities begin which transform Salamanca into a merry-go-round of fun and joy. For a week the city is alive with parades, medieval markets, workshops and attractions in the Aldehuela Fairs enclosure next to the Tormes River. You can stroll amongst the stalls set up in the city centre and try some of the delicious traditional snacks served from midday to midnight. When the sun sets this is when the lights go on in the Plaza Mayor and the concerts with local bands can begin.









## AUTUMN

Each autumn, the “Keys to the city” programme opens up visits to parts of Salamanca that are usually closed.

The forest's autumn colours are ideal for enjoying an original version of active tourism. Works of art are set up along the route for an exhibition entitled **Caminos de Arte en la Naturaleza**, or Pathways for Art in Nature: cages over the valley, mermaids by the river, bronze feathers, asteroids lost in a chapel. Artistic undertakings along several routes which allow a reinterpretation of the landscape and create new sensations. An amazing symphony of art and nature.

We suggest four intriguing tours in the lovely Las Batuecas-Sierra de Francia Nature Reserve, next to the Sierra de Béjar mountains. They are all circular routes and vary between seven and ten kilometres.

We'll start with the **Camino de los Prodigios** or Route of the Wonders, between Miranda del Castañar and Villanueva del Conde. Here, the walker is overwhelmed by the lush vegetation: oak trees, vines, cork oaks and strawberry trees, bridges and terraces appear along the road.

The **Asentadero Bosque de los Espejos** trail runs between Sequeros, Las Casas del Conde and San Martín del Castañar and reminds you of the route taken by Alice in Wonderland. All along the trail you'll discover artistic creations integrated into the natural surroundings.

The **Camino de las Raíces** or Route of the Roots, is a tour of La Alberca and takes you to places where the roots of an ancestral culture, beliefs and the collective imagination of the local people give their account of the past.

You'll get a different perspective on all that surrounds you on the **Camino del Agua** or Water Route which runs between Mogarraz and Monforte de la Sierra. The highlight of the route is the sound of water from the river, streams and waterfalls.

① **For further information go to:**  
[www.salamancaemocion.es](http://www.salamancaemocion.es)



## WINTER

To protect yourself against the winter cold there's nothing better than one of Salamanca's greatest traditions, an exquisite cup of hot chocolate with **churros** (typical fried dough pastries) in the Plaza Mayor. You might try them in the iconic Café Novelty, the oldest in the city, founded in 1905.

You shouldn't miss **University New Year's Eve**, a unique event. Thousands of young people get together in mid-December to celebrate New Year's Day in advance. When the clock strikes midnight, all the students eat twelve jellybeans to the rhythm of the chimes. Afterwards, the fun really starts in the different bars and clubs associated with this fun event.

## SPRING

**Easter week** is one of the most flamboyant and emotional festivals in Spain. Religious devotion, art, gaiety and music all come together in the processions, in which members of the different brotherhoods parade through the streets bearing religious images accompanied by the beat of drums, creating scenes of solemn beauty.

The "Spring in Salamanca" programme is held from April to June, offering free guided tours and activities for the weekend.



# SALAMANCA WITH CHILDREN

▲ OLD CLASSROOMS, UNIVERSITY OF SALAMANCA

Salamanca is a quiet, fun city which is ideal for visiting with children. In the streets and museums there are hidden treasures which will attract the attention of little children. Take your children to explore the façades of the monuments in Salamanca, in many of them their are strange, hidden figures. Look for the astronaut or the dragon eating an ice cream in the Ramos gateway in the **Cathedral**. It will help if you get the **Salamanca in Details** guidebook, free of charge from the Tourist Office.

Near the Plaza Mayor, at the headquarters of the Film Library, you'll find a collection of **Fascinating Gadgets**, an entertaining collection where you'll find out how a magic lantern and a zoetrope work. Then there's the **Casa Lis Art Nouveau and Art Déco Museum** which has a strange collection porcelain dolls, automations and old-fashioned toys which children will love.

Salamanca's beautiful natural surroundings provide alternative leisure opportunities ideal for children. If you cross over the Roman bridge and walk along the **banks of the Tormes River**, you see a large group of ducks and geese that live here. In spring and summer you can take a **boat trip** on the river and you'll get fantastic views of monuments including the cathedrals and the Casa Lis Museum.



# THE HIDDEN CITY

If you still have time and would like to discover more... here are a few suggestions.



Photo: Salamanca Tourist Board

▲ CALIXTO Y MELIBEA GARDEN

## PARKS AND GARDENS

Salamanca has numerous green areas which are well worth a visit. The city centre features the **Campo de San Francisco**, with lush vegetation, stone fountains and sculptures, it is the city's oldest park. If you love reading, you'll be delighted to know that it has a small public library which usually opens during fine weather.

The largest park is the **Parque de los Jesuitas**, ideal for long walks surrounded by roses, poplar trees and fruit trees. In the area around the railway station you'll

find the **Parque de La Alamedilla**, with an artificial lake surrounded by weeping willows which provide shelter for dozens of ducks and swans. In summer the star of the show is a walk-through fountain where both adults and children play.

Beside the old Salamanca city wall, at the end of Calle Arcediano, you'll find the romantic **Huerto de Calixto y Melibea** gardens. Tradition has it that it was the scene for amorous encounters between the leading characters in *La Celestina* (English title: *The Comedy of Calisto and*



Melibea), one of the best-known works in Spanish classical literature. There are wonderful views of the two cathedrals from this little garden.

The **banks of the Tormes River** have some really beautiful natural features where you can relax and enjoy marvellous views of the city. The **Huerta Otea Gardens**, the **riverside pathway** and the **Aldehuela Park**, are three areas which are quite far from the city centre and ideal for cyclists. From here you get a different panoramic view of the city and the bridges joining both banks of the river. Another beautiful walk takes us from the Jardín de La Merced Gardens to the Plaza de Anaya.

## MONUMENTS

The **Keys to the City** programme enables you to discover iconic areas and places through guided tours accompanied by experts in Salamanca's history and architecture. They are free of charge and usually available in November and December.

They include a dramatised tour of the remains of the **Convent of San Vicente**, one of the oldest in the city and located on the hill called the Cerro de San Vicente. Or you could discover the secrets and hidden delights of the **Convent of San Esteban**: the De Profundis Cloister, the Los Aljibes Cloister, the infirmary and Mount Olivetti.

You could also look down into the **Pozo de Nieve** (where they kept snow for making ice) which joins the wall to the remains of the Convent of San Andrés. You could explore the legendary **Salamanca**



▲ POZO DE NIEVE

**Cave**, the crypt in the former Church of San Cebrián, whose origins are attributed to the fabled Hércules. Legend has it that this used to be a school of occult sciences.

The programme includes unique features of the **University of Salamanca** like the old wall in the Geography and History faculty and the **Old Library**, a restricted area which houses thousands of treasures in the form of books.

📍 **For further information go to:**

[www.salamancaymas.es](http://www.salamancaymas.es)

[www.spain.info](http://www.spain.info)







## SECRET MUSEUMS

Some of Salamanca's strangest and most original museums may easily pass unnoticed, such as the Mediaeval Painting Gallery in the Convent of Santa Clara. Here are the most prominent ones, so they won't be missed.

Salamanca has one of the oldest and best-preserved flour mills in Spain. This ancient mill, next to the Roman bridge, is now home to the **Museum of Flour Manufacturing**, it houses the original machinery and recreates the process for milling flour as it was done a hundred years ago.

In the same area you'll find the **Museum of the History of Automobiles**, an exhibition displaying over 200 vehicles. There you'll see everything from the world's first internal combustion engine, the Benz Tricycle, to Formula 1 models used in competition.

For a deeper understanding of this region's customs and traditions you should visit the **Salamanca Museum of Commerce and Industry**. It is located in what used to be an underground water cistern, and consists of an interactive display of key moments in the

▼ HISTORY OF THE AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM





## SALAMANCA

history of Salamanca's commerce and industry from the Roman times to the present day.

In the Calle Libreros, you'll find the **Unamuno House-Museum**. An essential writer for understanding 19th- and 20th-century Spanish literature, with strong ties to Salamanca and its University of which he was the dean.

His presence can still be felt within these four walls, where you'll still find his furniture, his writings and his memories.

① *For further information go to: [museoautomocion.com](http://museoautomocion.com)*

## LOOKOUT POINTS IN SALAMANCA'S NATURAL AREAS

You can enjoy the best panoramic views in the region's natural surroundings and in towns near to the city of Salamanca. For example, from the **Águeda Lookout Point**, in the Plaza del Castillo in the town of Ciudad Rodrigo, there are spectacular views of the Puente Mayor bridge, the Águeda River, the tree-lined avenue along its banks, and the Sierra de Francia mountains in the background.

Up on the craggy outcrop of Peña de Francia, the **Paso de los Lobos Lookout Point** provides an extraordinary perspective of the valleys around the mountains. A sombre landscape inhabited by mountain goats.

For those who aren't afraid of heights, from the **El Fraile Lookout Point**, in the Arribes del Duero Nature Reserve, you get an incredible bird's eye view of the Duero River and the Aldeadávila dam. In fact you may well see vultures flying around in the surrounding area.

Also in the Arribes del Duero Nature Reserve, the **Pico La Vela Lookout Point** has unique views over the Duero River in all its splendour. Very near there, you'll find the Cachón de Camaces, a marvellous waterfall which is well worth taking a look at.







## ENJOY THE NIGHTLIFE...

Like all other university towns, Salamanca starts to get lively when the sun goes down and the streets start to fill with young people out to have a good time.

Your best bet is to start the evening with a few *tapas* on the terraces in the Plaza Mayor where you'll find the city's most interesting bars. Once your stomach is full you can take an evening stroll through the town centre and enjoy the buildings which are all lit up, then you can choose the area which best suits your tastes.

In the **Calle Varillas** and around the **Plaza de San Justo** you'll find the some of the most characteristic places, alternative venues with international music concerts providing the sound track.

In the **Gran Vía** there are all kinds of bars and clubs, just like in **Bordadores**, the area preferred by most people not from Salamanca and where you can listen to live music.

However, it is in the **historical town centre** where you'll find the best selection. There are clubs, LGBTI+ bars, bars for social gatherings and bars presenting monologues and micro theatre.



## TOURS AND WALKS IN THE CITY

Get a different perspective of the city **riding a bicycle** through the riverside park, the university campus, some of the different neighbourhoods and the historical city centre. Bike rides can be reserved at <https://salamancaymas.es>. There's a Youth Centre in the Calle Arco where you can hire a bike at an affordable price and take part in a guided tour through some of the city's most interesting areas.

◀ LAS DUEÑAS CONVENT



Along other routes you'll discover some of the province's most closely guarded secrets. For example, the **Mudéjar Route**, between the towns of Alba de Tormes and Peñaranda. Here you'll see 16 churches representing this style which is a fusion of Christian art and Moorish aesthetics. Along this route you'll also find splendid coffered ceilings in the interiors of buildings in places like Macotera, Cantaracillo and Villoria.

Or follow the road designated the **Silver Route**, the old Roman road that links the north and south of Spain, passing through Salamanca. It's a good starting point for exploring other interesting nearby towns and villages like Guijuelo and Béjar.

In this area interesting remains of the primitive Roman road have been preserved, like flagstones, milestones and

gutters. If you're a fan of skiing, then you ought to know that you're very near the Sierra de Béjar-La Covatilla ski resort.



SIERRA DE BÉJAR-LA COVATILLA.





# WHAT CAN YOU VISIT NEAR SALAMANCA?

If you have time, you can enjoy the following destinations close to the city.

LA ALBERCA

## ALBA DE TORMES

The cradle of the House of Alba, one of Spain's oldest aristocratic families, and the final refuge for Santa Teresa de Jesús, the renowned nun and mystical author, has several delightful features. From the bridge to the Alba family's castle and including churches and convents, it is well worth following the sign-posted route which reveals its secrets to the visitor.

## LEDESMA

Up on a hill carved out by the Tormes River stands the ancient Roman town of Bletisa, with interesting remains like the Puente Mocho bridge. From previous eras there remain the stone bull which stands in the gardens of Ledesma's castle, and an extraordinary menhir. You can also visit the churches of Santa María la Mayor and Santa Elena, the former Hospital de San José and La Alhóndiga.

## LA ALBERCA

La Alberca is surrounded by forests of oak trees and fruit trees, at the foot of the Peña de Francia. The traditional

architecture still bears coats of arms and inscriptions from medieval times. From up on the Alto del Portillo you look out over the beautiful valley of Las Batuecas: oak trees, strawberry trees, old chapels and the Monastery of El Desierto de San José.

## WORLD HERITAGE CITIES: ÁVILA AND SEGOVIA

There are two other UNESCO World Heritage Cities just a few kilometres by road from Salamanca.

The unmistakable hallmark of **Ávila** is the extraordinary **medieval city wall**, one of the best preserved in Europe. Once inside the walls you travel back in time through the historical town centre which is a series of churches, convents and Renaissance palaces.

The main feature of **Segovia** is the Roman aqueduct. The Jewish Quarter is a maze of narrow streets with extraordinary stately houses. A great way to finish the day is a visit to the **Royal Palace of La Granja de San Ildefonso** which really shouldn't be missed.



# HOW TO GET THERE

## TRAIN

The train is another good option for making the journey to Salamanca in complete comfort, from places like Madrid, Ávila, San Sebastián, Bilbao and Barcelona. The railway station is in the city centre and is also a modern shopping and leisure centre which catches the eye on account of its unusual design.

❶ *For further information go to:*  
[www.renfe.com](http://www.renfe.com)

## AIRPORT

Salamanca airport is part of an air base open to the general public in Matacán. It is just 15 kilometres from Salamanca and is served by charter and scheduled flights at certain times of the year. The nearest international airport is Valladolid, less than an hour and a half away by car.

For most international destinations, the best option is to use Barajas airport in Madrid. Other good options for travelling to Salamanca are to rent a car, to take a train or a bus (there is a direct line which leaves from Terminal 1 at Barajas).

## ROAD

Salamanca is linked with the capital, Madrid, by the A-50 highway, while other Spanish towns such as Gijón, Zamora, Cáceres and Mérida can be accessed on the A-66. You can get to Salamanca from Portugal in a few hours on the A-62 motorway.



# HOW TO GET AROUND IN SALAMANCA

It is easy to get around Salamanca **on foot** since the majority of monuments and places of interest are close together.

The urban layout is quite flat, so a **bicycle** is a highly recommended means of transport, be that through the city centre or on the bike lane through the river-side park.

There is also a **network of city buses** with services throughout the city and the outskirts. Taxis are another option, offering local, provincial and inter-provincial services.

You can also take Salamanca's **tourist train** which runs in the summer months. It departs from Plaza de Anaya, next to the cathedral, and stops at the city's main tourist attractions.

❶ *For details of public transport and the tourist train go to the website at*  
[www.salamanca.es](http://www.salamanca.es)





## FURTHER INFORMATION

SALAMANCA TOURIST OFFICE  
 Plaza Mayor 32  
 37002 Salamanca (Castile-León)  
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